THE RUSSIAN GENERAL STAFF AND ASIA, 1800–1917

Alex Marshall

The Russian General Staff and Asia, 1800–1917

During the nineteenth century, Russia was an important player in the so-called 'Great Game' in Central Asia. Between 1800 and 1917 officers of the Russian General Staff travelled extensively through Turkey, Central Asia and the Far East, gathering intelligence that assisted in the formation of future war plans. This book examines the role of the Tsarist General Staff in studying and administering Russia's Asian borderlands. It considers the nature of the Imperial Russian state, the institutional characteristics of the General Staff, and Russia's relationship with Asia. It goes on to consider tactics of imperial expansion, and the role of military intelligence and war planning with respect to important regions including the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Far East. In the light of detailed archival research, it objectively investigates questions such as the possibility of Russia seizing the Bosphorus Straits, and the probability of an expedition to India. Overall, this book provides a comprehensive account of the Russian General Staff, its role in Asia, and of Russian military planning with respect to a region that remains highly strategically significant today.

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For Anya

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Abbreviations

CAR	Central Asian Review
CAS	Central Asian Survey
CMRS	Cahiers du Monde russe et sovietique
CMR	Cahiers du Monde russe
CSP	Canadian Slavonic Papers
CSS	Canadian Slavonic Studies
EEQ	East European Quarterly
HJ	The Historical Journal
IM	Istorik Marksist
IV	Istoricheskii Vestnik
JGO	Jahrbucher fur Geschichte Osteuropas
JMH	Journal of Modern History
JRCAS	Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society
JSEES	Japanese Slavonic and East European Studies
JTH	The Journal of Transport History
KA	Krasnyi Arkhiv
KS	Kavkazskii Sbornik
MAS	Modern Asian Studies
NAA	Narody Azii i Afriki Istoriia, ekonomika, kul'tura.
NV	Novoe Vremia
OSP	Oxford Slavonic Papers
RR	The Russian Review
RS	Russkaia Starina
RUSI	The Royal United Services Institute Journal
SEER	The Slavonic and East European Review
SR	The Slavic Review
SS	Sibirica (The Journal of Siberian Studies)
VA	Vestnik Azii
VE	Vestnik Evropy
VI	Voprosy Istorii
VIR	Voina i Revoliutsiia
VIZh	Voenno-Istoricheskii Zhurnal
VMU	Vestnik Moskovskogo Universiteta (Istoriia)
VO	Vostok Oriens. Afro-Aziatskie obshestva: Istoriia i Sovremennost'
VS	Voennyi Sbornik

Introduction

This book sprang from an interest in Asian Russia which was first fostered in my early youth by a guilty and politically incorrect fascination with the paintings of Vasilii Vereshchagin (1842–1904). This Russian artist possessed a distinctive style that appeals even today to young eyes; he had a natural grasp of colour, depth, light and detail which attracts the attention of even the casual viewer. His portraits of Russian Central Asian campaigns and of Russian wars in the Balkans were my very first visual introduction to the past history of the Russian people. Vereshchagin portrayed an Asian Russia that was both exotic and entrancing; a world of fierce hand-to-hand military engagements, ambushes and sieges, despotic khans, sun-dappled courtyards, mosques and minarets. At the time it all seemed far cry from the standard history of the Russian revolution we were taught at school, and far more interesting indeed than most European history in general. My boyhood corruption was later continued by reading an old, battered, handed-down copy of Lesley Blanch's *Sabres of Paradise*, a popular general history of Shamil's war with the Russians in the North Caucasus, which in the fashion of a nineteenth century novel liberally romanticized that conflict. As I became older I naturally began to gain a more objective perspective on Russia's Asian possessions and her general history in that region. I learned that Vereshchagin's pictures not only depicted an exotic Orient designed to correspond with European views of the Orient in general, but that his work included the first attempts at modern ethnographic portraits of the Central Asian peoples. I also became aware that Vereshchagin physically accompanied the Russian army on its expeditions in both the Balkans and Central Asia in order to gain visual material, much as a modern combat photographer today might work. Vereshchagin's images themselves had an important impact on how the educated Russian public perceived the empire. Vereshchagin himself meanwhile died dramatically during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05, standing at the prow of a Russian ship that hit a Japanese mine as it steamed out of Port Arthur to engage the enemy. Such an end always seemed deeply symbolic to me, marking not only the death of an individual but also the borderline between the perception of an Orient that was exotic, decadent and in decay and one that was both modern, aggressive and ruthless, an Orient now fully married to the military technology that was to later kill thou-

sands during the First World War. Moreover although he has been dismissed by some as a banal, racist and arch-imperialist genre painter (particularly by most modern Uzbek historiography), Vereshchangin's views of war and humanity in general were complex and ambiguous. His portraits of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78 and the fields of corpses which that conflict produced caused disquiet at the Imperial Court, where they were interpreted as implicitly criticizing Russia's military commanders. His stark single painting of an immense hill of skulls in Central Asia, entitled 'The Apotheosis of War', though ostensibly merely a visual reference to the rule of Tamerlane, seemed to represent, if anything, a dark and deeply morbid view of humanity in general. Vereshchagin's paintings ultimately led me to ask more questions, which is surely the greatest compliment that can be paid to any work of art, be it visual, musical or literary, regardless of its moral content. They led me in the long-term to question the role of the Russian military in Asia, so often the subject of Vereshchagin's work, and to question the extent to which that army itself knew and examined Asia, alongside the manner in which it both planned and executed campaigns there. The work that follows is an attempt at least in part both to set the questions and provide some of the answers that I have reached.

My work could not have begun properly without the assistance and support of a number of people, most notably Professor Simon Dixon, who first encouraged my studies of Russian history at Glasgow University and who made the mistake of introducing me as an undergraduate both to Kliuchevskii and to the Eurasianist school of Russian historical thought. Mention must also be made of Professor Geoffrey Hosking, who provided much sound friendly advice during a year's study in London, Shirin Akiner at SOAS who has always been supportive of my interest in Central Asia, and Dr. Pete Duncan at SSEES. Professor Evan Mawdsley at the University of Glasgow supervised the majority of the thesis upon which this work is based and was throughout of inestimable assistance. Friendly advice, productive intellectual exchanges and help over the years has also been provided by Bill Buckingham, Hew Strachan, Dominic Lieven, Peter Holquist, Sean Pollock, Adeeb Khalid and Alexander Morrison, as well as by Donnacha O'Beachain, Vladimir Sergeevich Boiko, Mikhail Dolbilov and Seva Bashkuev. Much of the material upon which this book is based comes from archival sources, and I could never have achieved all that I have without the help and assistance of the workers at both the State Historical Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF) and the Russian State Military-History Archive (RGVIA). All mistakes and errors that remain are entirely my own. Finally, I dedicate this book with much love to my wife Anya, whose Old Believer ancestors as a consequence of official state persecution were among the first to settle some of Russia's most distant Asian frontiers. The willingness of her family to accept me as a guest at their remote village in the republic of Buriatiia, a region with long historical and cultural ties to Mongolia, China and Tibet, provided me with a true insight into local life on a distant frontier that I have never forgotten.

1 Imperial Russia and the Asian Frontier

Between the sixteenth century and the end of the nineteenth century the Russian Empire assumed almost unparalleled geographic extent. Beginning with Ivan IV's conquest of Kazan in 1552, Tsarist power expanded dramatically both southward and eastward, sweeping aside and subjugating the vast and diverse but mainly Muslim tribal confederations that had dominated the steppe regions in the past. The humiliation of medieval Rus' (later so powerfully documented in Andrei Tarkovskii's classic film Andrei Rublev), its two hundred-year long subjugation to the Golden Horde after 1242, now appeared to be dramatically avenged as thousands of Asian subjects increasingly swore an oath of allegiance to the 'White Tsar' in Moscow and, later, St. Petersburg. Long before any sense of intrinsic national identity had any chance to develop, Russia was already an empire, with a vast multiethnic population bound together by an intricate web of tribute-payments (*yasak*), hostage taking, punitive expeditions, and diplomatic treaties. The sheer scale and speed of the Russian advance alarmed many European contemporaries, particularly in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when Asia became a sphere of general imperial competition. One prominent scholar of Russian expansion in Asia at the very end of the nineteenth century calculated that between 1581 and his own day, Russia's Asian territories had expanded at an average rate of 20,643 square miles of territory annually. An empire of only 1,530,000 square miles of territory in 1584 had by 1899 reached an extent of 8,660,282 square miles. The vast majority of this expansion had occurred in Asia, where Russia's domains by the end of this period were three times the size of its European territories. In the view of this nineteenth century scholar, such calculations left it only a matter of time 'supposing Russia continues to absorb territory at the same rate' till she became 'mistress of the world'.[1] Among those contemporaries most disturbed by the Russian advances in Asia in the nineteenth century was Sir Henry Rawlinson, a civil servant, soldier and orientalist in British India who was also the British Empire's most prominent and vocal Russophobe. Rawlinson ascribed the Russian advance in Asia to a vast strategic masterplan and advocated a British response on a comparable strategic scale, with forward defence of India's northern frontiers and a policy of Anglo-Indian

intervention in Afghan politics.[2] Rawlinson reflected and expressed the concerns of many contemporaries over an imperial rivalry between Russia and Britain in Asia that many scholars have since come to label 'the Great Game'.[3]

Since Rawlinson first wrote in the 1860s, geopolitical explanations for Russia's rapid advances in Asia have multiplied. Three of the most popular geopolitical explanations have all to varying degrees ascribed Russian advances to the workings of a grand strategic masterplan. The first theory, perhaps the most easily dismissed, relates to the so-called testament of Peter the Great, a forged document which first came to light in 1812 and that allegedly laid out a grand strategic design of Peter's in Asia that subsequent Russian rulers followed.[4] Though this myth enjoyed a certain degree of credibility in the first half of the nineteenth century, it has since been roundly discredited. A second, related, theory attributes the entire course of Russian military advances in Asia to a long-standing desire to gain warm-water ports. Thus the ultimate goal of all Russian advances in Asia, so this theory runs, was to gain access to the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Again, it takes but little study of the contemporary day-to-day records of Russian diplomatic relations with its various Asian neighbours to discredit this theory, though this goal was occasionally voiced by individual Russian statesmen and political actors. In recent years however a third and more developed variation on the geopolitical explanation has been advanced by John P. LeDonne, conflating the warm-water port theory, Mackinder's 'heartland' thesis, and a Russian desire for material resources to again present Russian expansion across the centuries as the outcome of a grand strategic design. LeDonne's thesis goes so far as to present Russian territorial annexations as organized strategic operations, with the Russian annexation of Central Asia in the 1860s for example represented as a distinct four-stage pincer movement.[5] Aware of the distinct lack of documentary evidence to support such a hypothesis, LeDonne falls back on the argument of the 'implicit rationality' of his proposed design. He brings to the debate a wealth of factual data on diplomatic treaties, but devotes very little if any attention to actual Tsarist war planning, an area obviously of acute relevance if one is to level accusations against the Russian state of consistent and coherent strategic aggression.

Out of the long list of Russian statesmen of the nineteenth century, one of the few to truly merit the label of being a geopolitical thinker was Aleksei Kuropatkin (1848–1925), the Russian War Minister between 1898 and 1904. As War Minister Kuropatkin inaugurated his reign with a grand strategic review of Russia's physical frontiers and the tasks facing the Russian state in the twentieth century. However, as this book will hopefully help demonstrate, underlying contradictions within Kuropatkin's own thought and the effects of his actual actions as War Minister served to undermine rather than strengthen policy formation, and serve to illustrate the difficult gulf between geopolitical theory and messy everyday reality in the Russian Empire. Figures such as Kuropatkin therefore serve to weaken rather than strengthen

a case such as LeDonne's for Russian Imperial expansion as the product of a grand geopolitical design.

LeDonne's work, though undoubtedly sophisticated, in many ways represents a last-ditch attempt to explain Russian expansion by means of pure geopolitics. As early as 1889 George Nathanial Curzon, the future viceroy of British India, questioned the geopolitical explanation of Russian expansion, remarking that 'so far from regarding the foreign policy of Russia as consistent, or remorseless, or profound, I believe it to be a hand-to-mouth policy, a policy of waiting upon events, of profiting by the blunders of others, and as often of committing such [blunders] herself'.[6] In 1930 Prince Alexander Lobanov-Rostovsky, a prominent Russian émigré well qualified to look back on the Tsarist period, more directly rebuffed the whole notion of a grand geopolitical design on the part of Russia by remarking that '[s]uch romantic generalizations have an appeal for certain minds'.[7] Since he first ventured his opinion, new generations of scholars benefiting from greater archival access to Tsarist-era materials have moreover substantially altered our understanding of Russian-Asian relations in general across the whole period. Developing from the groundbreaking work of Andreas Kappeler, scholars such as Michael Khodarkovsky, David Schimmelpenninck Van Der Oye, Austin Lee Jersild and Mark Bassin now present a more graduated and localized picture of Russian imperial expansion, in which imperial ideologies of absorption and control and even the very ideology of expansion itself varied dramatically over discrete periods of time.[8]

Whatever its ultimate motivation however, Russian imperial expansion in Asia during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was an incontrovertible fact, with roots stretching back several centuries. Consequently almost the whole of modern Russian history, as the Tsarist historian Kliuchevskii remarked, was that of a nation colonizing itself.[9] The Ural mountains, an ostensible boundary line between Europe and Asia in classical geography, were an arbitrarily selected point given the fact that they posed no significant hindrance to migration from either side, and Russian fur-traders and military expeditions had penetrated deep into Siberia as early as the sixteenth century.[10] Russian penetration further southward encountered a variety of obstacles however, from the raids organized by the Crimean Tatars, allies of the Ottoman Empire, along the Black Sea coast, to a military repulse received at Chinese hands in 1685.[11] Russia's powers of military offence during much of the seventeenth century remained relatively weak, and even during the early eighteenth century, in the era of Petrine reform, a Russian expedition to the Central Asian Khanate of Khiva ended in complete military disaster. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries however, for military and political reasons that this book will examine, the last remaining local obstacles to Russian expansion along the southern frontier were gradually overcome.

In part the ultimate success of Russian military expansion southward and eastward was simply a long-term consequence of the gunpowder revolution

of the sixteenth century, the Muscovite state having long recognized the critical value of cannon and musketry against its nomadic opponents in the steppe. As early as 1532 Muscovite troops armed with cannon and arquebuses had been deployed to repulse a threatened Crimean Tatar invasion, and in turn pleas for firearms became a regular demand among Russia's steppe allies. By the early eighteenth century this firepower revolution, made even more effective by the Russian adoption of European-style fortified lines, was practically complete, and entirely altered the local balance of power in the steppe.[12]

Important as firearms alone are to explaining the Russian military advance, military reform, intellectual developments and changes within the Russian army were of equal if not even greater significance. The development of a military doctrine best suited to penetrating the steppe and defeating nomadic tribal opponents depended implicitly not just upon firepower and political calculations but upon successive generations of military thinkers both learning and inculcating the lessons of the past and present and then propagating them. For any army in the modern period the main burden of such a task, whether in regard to European or Asiatic warfare, fell upon its General Staff. Staff officers became a general phenomenon in all European armies around the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries. Their role was associated primarily with the growing technical demands of warfare – with the maintenance of supply trains, the provision of topographical materials and also, though at first only to a limited extent, with the gathering of relevant political and military intelligence. Such a career in the early modern military was gained as much through patronage as talent. The concept of a staff officer had been known in Russia since at least 1763, but for a long period remained a fairly flexible term, often only applying to a general's aide or a member of his entourage rather than to a trained professional. Russia's renowned eighteenth century commanders like Rumiantsev and Suvorov fought often dazzling campaigns in the south against the Ottoman Turks, one of Tsarist Russia's most traditional opponents, but few at the time drew long-term lessons from their tactical and doctrinal practices. Combat in the southern steppe in the eighteenth century led to a growth both in the use of light infantry ('jaegers') and light cavalry in the Russian army, but the production of military doctrine remained devolved down to regimental level for much of the period.[13] Military doctrine in eighteenth century Russia was also torn between two warring intellectual traditions, between those like Suvorov who supported the development of a 'native' Russian military art and those by contrast associated with a 'German' school of military art that stressed Prussian-style drill regulations and harsh training. Russian staff officers of the period were also few in number, and often fell victim to imperial whimsy. During his short and controversial reign, Tsar Paul I for example abolished the Russian General Staff, preferring the service of officers who owed their allegiance and promotion directly to him alone (the so-called *Gatchintsy*).[14] Such a

political and intellectual balance, and the absence of any autonomous military body to formulate doctrine, initially seemed to present little hope for the study and development of consistent war-fighting techniques either in Europe or along Russia's southern frontiers. Circumstances however soon came to provide an answer almost by default.

In Russia the need for more staff officers and for a large and fairly efficient administrative system by the early nineteenth century was particularly pressing, since in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars Russia, unlike the other European powers, in effect did not demobilize, but maintained her forces under arms at three times their pre-war peacetime size.[15] In response to the need to administer this huge force Tsar Nicholas I (r. 1825–55) and Baron A. H. Jomini, one of the foremost European military thinkers of the day, founded the Nicholas General Staff Academy in 1832 for the regularized training of General Staff personnel. The development of such an institution in Russia was the product not of centuries of steppe warfare but of the experience of European military conflict, in particular the recently concluded Napoleonic Wars. Two central models for the creation of such an institution already existed, both products of the Napoleonic experience. The Prussian Kriegsakademie set up at Berlin in 1810 reflected Prussia's desire to learn the lessons from her defeat at Napoleon's hands in 1806 and was itself in part an imitation of the French Ecole Superieur Militaire set up at St. Cyr in 1803. Such academies reflected the increasingly technical and broad-ranging scope of warfare of the day. They aimed both to produce intelligent, vocationally trained officers and to serve as centres for the development of strategic theory. They were motivated by the belief firstly that war was now a specialized profession and secondly that the essentials of war were fundamentally teachable. The analytical history taught in such schools was designed 'to pare out the dead wood of circumstantial phenomenality of past military events to reveal eternally recurring patterns or truths'.[16] Consequently the first concerted attempts to enunciate the basic principles of war – concentration at the decisive point, economy of force, the superiority of interior over exterior lines of communication – date from around this period.[17] The Russian military consciously sought to apply such principles in action. Jomini, the leading European military intellectual of his day, and a former disciple of Napoleon, served as a kind of unofficial adviser to the Russian high command in the Balkan theatre during the Russo-Turkish war of 1828–29, though not all subsequently viewed his influence upon events in a favourable light. This steady growth in the field of military education was later accelerated by the general move in late nineteenth century European armies from being long-standing professional bodies to short-term conscript forces capable of rapid wartime expansion, a move fostered by Prussia's dazzling military success during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71. Though such a shift was unforeseeable when the Nicholas Staff Academy was founded in 1832, this factor also became a major consideration in Russia following the introduction of universal military service in

1874. The training of Russian civilians to wartime standards within a relatively short period of peacetime service required a well-educated officer corps. So too did the task of analysing and assessing the increasingly rapid technological developments of the latter part of the nineteenth century, which saw a changeover from muzzle-loading musket to the rapid fire magazine rifle within the space of a single generation. However the Russian military were relatively slow in coming to recognize and accept these trends and developments. Only after the debacle of the Crimean War of 1853–56 did the Russian General Staff undergo much-needed reform under War Minister D. A. Miliutin, and only from the 1880s onwards did Staff officers come to assume a truly distinct professional identity within the army as a whole.[18]

Although the Russian General Staff and the military as a whole underwent its greatest transformations in this period under the impact of European events and challenges – first the Napoleonic and then the Crimean Wars – Russian advances in Asia did not halt but, by contrast, grew exponentially. The involvement of staff officers in planning and conducting campaigns in Asia correspondingly increased, as Tsarist Russia during the course of the nineteenth century acquired vast new territories in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Far East. In many of these new regions the Russian army not only played a key role in conquering such new territories but also found itself delegated with their subsequent administration, undertaking significant day-to-day governmental duties. Of these new territorial acquisitions, the Caucasus presented perhaps the greatest military and administrative challenge. The whole first half of the nineteenth century was dominated by the protracted and painful subjugation of the Caucasus, a war officially calculated to have lasted sixty-two years (1802–64) and to have cost the army some 90,072 casualties, with non-battlefield losses from disease generally thought to run at three times that figure.[19] Resistance to Russia in the North Caucasus was primarily organized by three successive religious Imams of the local Sufi Naqshbandiya sect, each of whom urged all Muslims in the region into holy war against the infidel. Of these local Imams by far the most significant was the Imam Shamil (1796–1871), who directed and inspired the resistance movement between 1838 and his capture in 1859.[20] Russian General Staff officers played a prominent role in the Caucasus from an early stage, gathering topographical material and political intelligence on local tribal cultures. In this regard the Caucasus served as a theatre in which to deliberately 'blood' young officers of the then still-nascent Russian General Staff, it being the only region where combat could be guaranteed in 'peacetime', and Nicholas I dispatched officers there with this specific intent from the 1830s onwards.[21] A special injunction by Nicholas in 1836, combined with a natural wave of volunteers, meant there were never less than 25–33 officers of the Russian General Staff serving in the Caucasus at any one time between 1833 and 1855.[22] The work of these officers was frequently attended by extreme risk.[23] The expedition of Baron

Tornau to the Black Sea coast in 1836 for instance resulted in his being captured by a Kabardian prince and held to ransom.[24] On another occasion, mountaineers repeatedly attacked a survey party sent to work in the Kuban region under the guise of a commercial convoy. One topographer was wounded by a bullet in the chest, several Cossacks were killed, and the plane-table and topographical instruments were themselves badly damaged by the mountaineers' swords, a vivid expression of local feeling against the scientific instruments that sought to encompass them. Inevitably some staff officers engaged in such enterprises also paid the ultimate price. A survey party sent to work in Avaria (part of modern day Dagestan) in 1838 and led by Lt.-Colonel Berengeim of the General Staff was completely wiped out by mountaineer attack. Awards for such work were correspondingly high. Baron Tornau, a typical example, on his release from captivity was given promotion, the order of St. Vladimir Fourth Class, and a 4,000 rouble monetary grant. Therefore although the Russian General Staff's official historian may have later lamented that the experience of officers in the Caucasus failed to translate into reforms in the wider army, unlike the French officer corps in Algeria, the input of these staff officers did play a significant role in ultimately shortening the conflict at the local level.[25]

A large part of the overall work of the General Staff in the Caucasus consisted in identifying elements hostile to Russian power and those by contrast who could be reconciled to the Russian presence in the region. It was perhaps unsurprising therefore that the conclusion of the Caucasus conflict culminated with a mass migration of many of the 'unreconciled' Muslim peoples from the region, a movement that the Tsarist military initially did much to encourage. The vast majority of the Adygei-Circassian population departed for the Ottoman Empire, to be replaced by Russian settlers, a peace settlement being concluded in 1864. At least 400,000 Circassians, and somewhere in the region of a million individuals in all, departed Russian shores.[26] In the wake of this mass migration, one of the largest of modern times, those Muslim mountaineers who remained in the North Caucasus continued to be monitored and administered by the General Staff through a special military-political administration known as the Caucasus Mountaineer Administration (*Kavkazskoe Gorskoe Upravlenie*).[27] The anthropological work of this administration bore comparison in several significant respects to the work of the contemporary French 'Arab Bureau' in colonial Algeria.[28] Though initially intended only as a temporary expedient, this institution remained in existence, engaged in perpetual, expensive Orientalist vigilance over the North Caucasus mountaineers, till 1917.

As the long war to subjugate the Caucasus slowly drew to a close during the 1850s, Russian General Staff officers were equally busy on the Central Asian and Far Eastern frontiers, where territorial expansion again brought about rapid changes in the nature of Russia's security interests in the region. Russian infringement on Central Asia had begun in earnest during the early

1850s but had been set back by the Crimean War.[29] In the early 1860s the Russian border was still troubled by raiding parties from the independent khanates of Khiva, Kokand and Bukhara, with the occasional abduction of Russian settlers to serve the Central Asian slave trade proving a particular source of aggravation. The decision in February 1863 to close a gap that had developed between the Syr-Darya and West Siberian frontier lines was intended to provide some solution to this problem, in the form of a firm border. However, the actions of a local soldier, Major-General M. G. Cherniaev, in then going on to annex Chimkent and Tashkent, parts of the Kokandian khanate, in 1864 and 1865 respectively, created the conditions for further strategic debate. Though his actions did not meet with the complete approval of all his contemporaries, Cherniaev was applauded and urged on by his personal friend at the time, Colonel V. A. Poltoratskii, the latter then serving as the first head of the Asiatic Department of the General Staff. Cherniaev would later invite Poltoratskii to join him and help develop a new administration for the territories he had helped annex.[30] Although Cherniaev was subsequently relieved of his post as military governor following his failure to take the Bukharan town of Dzhizak, being replaced by D. I. Romanovskii in 1866, a significant section of the Russian policy-making administration, most notably War Minister Miliutin himself, now favoured the adoption of a forward policy in Central Asia. Romanovskii continued the conflict with Bukhara begun by Cherniaev, and governmental realization of the need for a more organized administration in this expanding new province led in 1866 to the creation of the Steppe Commission. As a result of the Steppe Commission's recommendations a new province of 'Turkestan' was officially created in 1867 and a new military Governor-General, K. P. von Kaufman, was despatched to replace Romanovskii and administer the region with extensive civil and military powers. Kaufman governed the region till his death in 1881, by which time Kokand had ceased to administratively exist, Khiva and Bukhara had both become protectorates of Russia, and the Russian sphere of influence in the region had officially extended southward to the northern border of Afghanistan. The Russian military that had conquered the region also remained substantially in control of it, with Central Asia, like the Caucasus, governed by a military-political administration in which army generals held the reins of power. Kaufman's successors were all military men with the last of them, General Kuropatkin in 1916–17, also having held the distinction of having once served as Russian War Minister. Advances in the region again expanded Russia's security responsibilities. Increasing disquiet in British India over Russian advances led first to an attempted joint demarcation of spheres of influence between the two empires in 1873 and later to the formation of a three-way Anglo-Afghan-Russian border commission designed to resolve all disputes over territorial frontiers in 1885. Tensions in the region continued however till the outbreak of general European warfare in 1914.[31]

Though not accompanied by the violent military campaigns that characterized Russian territorial expansion in Central Asia and the Caucasus,

Russian expansion in the Far East during the second half of the nineteenth century was, in purely territorial terms, even more dramatic. The combined political efforts of Governor-General N. N. Murav'ev, the Tsar's military-political representative in Eastern Siberia, and N. P. Ignat'ev, a former General Staff officer and Russia's diplomatic envoy to Peking, led to the Russian border with China moving dramatically southward to the Amur river between 1859 and 1861.[32] Russia absorbed several hundred thousand square miles of new territory, gaining in the process a riverine boundary that led to the sea, and antagonizing China just as she was slowly beginning to emerge from over a decade of civil war. Murav'ev gained the honorary title of Murav'ev-Amurskii for his efforts and Ignat'ev went on to become head of the Asiatic Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry, before later becoming Russian consul at Constantinople and a short-lived Interior Minister. Though the acquisition of such a vast new territory naturally led to a pause while the new region was integrated into Russia, imperial rivalry created the conditions for yet further potential expansion before long. The development of a Russian rail route across Siberia by the 1890s, and in particular the creation of the Chinese Eastern Railroad, a Russian railway line running across Chinese Manchuria along a strip of land legally demarcated as extraterritorial, would soon raise the prospect of Russia potentially annexing the whole of northern Manchuria. Imperial competition in the region would also lead indirectly to the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–5, a conflict whose outcome for Russia-political defeat-was perceived at the time as representing a dramatic challenge to Russian rule not only in the Far East but across the whole of its Asian borderlands.

Russian imperial expansion in Asia during the nineteenth century was therefore in many ways the dramatic culmination of trends stretching back to the sixteenth century, but it also occurred in a social and political environment that differed markedly from preceding centuries. It was the professionalization of the Russian army during the nineteenth century, and in particular the development and growth of its General Staff service, which was to have perhaps the greatest impact on the nature of Russian rule in Asia during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and which was to most distinguish Russian methods in that period from those of preceding centuries. The Russian General Staff in Asia during the nineteenth century undertook a unique and distinctive historical role in mapping, studying, strategically analysing and statistically categorizing the various Asian peoples that it was now so often charged with administering. Dependent upon his posting, a Russian General Staff officer might now be required to possess an intimate knowledge of the finer details of Muslim *Shar'ia* law and cultural customs one year, and to be acquainted with all the major topographical features of a territory and their strategic implications the next. For a growing number of Russian General Staff officers during the nineteenth century, Asia and the understanding of Asia became their whole career, and many came to make important contributions to the scientific

fields of ethnography, geography, topography, and anthropology, achievements that are still internationally recognized even today. However General Staff officers never worked in isolation from society as a whole, and the manner that they saw their role and functions was inevitably affected by trends within Russian society as a whole, by the growth of scientific institutions, and by the emergence of 'eastern studies' (*vostokovedenie*) in Russia's new university institutions. Some of these parallel trends within both army and society and the manner that they affected each other are examined in the next chapter.

2 The Russian State, the Russian General Staff and Asia, 1714–1885

Philosophies of Rule, Institutions and Personnel

> The three years in the Staff College were one uninterrupted string of examinations: solving of tactical problems, mapping, sketching, etc. The things one was supposed to know and remember were appalling; all the details of the important battles, from Alexander the Great's campaigns to the modern wars, all the organisation of the different European armies, etc. But the worst were statistics.
>
> Tsarist Staff officer regarding education at the Nicholas General Staff Academy.[1]

During the course of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries Russian governmental attitudes towards the administration of their Asian borderlands fundamentally changed. These changes occurred in part through the force of domestic events in Russia itself and in part also through Russia's inescapable cultural dialogue with Europe. These shifts in turn produced new administrative institutions and new definitions of professionalism within Russia's ruling elite. Though still wed in principle to the dogma of monarchical infallibility, Russian government in practice became increasingly 'systematized', implicitly undermining the Tsar's theoretically near-limitless authority and desacralizing the ruling dynasty in the process.[2] This growth of the 'expert' within Russia was particularly visible in the often-overlapping fields of science, topographical studies, economics, and military security.

Until the nineteenth century, Russian strategic expansion towards the East, both military and administrative, lacked any outstanding proponents or sponsors within Russian governmental policy-making. The reasons for this were twofold. First, there was still the absolute dominance of the ruling monarch in decision-making, a position not significantly challenged till the 1860s. Thus, the expeditions mounted by Peter the Great to the Aral and Caspian Seas and the disastrous expedition to Khiva in 1714–17 came about, it has been suggested, largely through the personal interest of the Tsar as a mercantilist in exploration and expanding trade.[3] Such interest could wax and wane fairly rapidly, as it did after Peter's death, though it could prove temporarily very influential. As late as 1801 Russian troops

could still be dispatched on a suicidal mission to invade India purely on the personal whim of Paul I.[4]

The second factor, which may have restricted the capacity of Asiatic interests to create a fracture in strategic decision-making, was the presence of unified strategic councils, in which the interests and advice of the various military and diplomatic groups of the administration were regularly reconciled in a single body. Such emergency conferences were a vital factor in Russia's eighteenth century imperial successes. These two conditions – Tsar and *konferentsiia* – served, in practice, to concentrate government attention and military affairs to the west, to the absorption of Poland and the Ukraine, and Paul's schemes on India were in fact a good indicator of that particular monarch's alleged madness, the cause of his subsequent assassination.

Below the level of strategic decision-making however, Peter the Great's early incursions to the East, however militarily disastrous, did start a trend towards oriental studies (*vostokovedenie*) in Russian cultural circles, and V. V. Bartol'd (1869–1930), perhaps the greatest Russian exponent of this science, dated its beginnings to this period.[5] In particular it was from this time, through the journeys of Russian travellers, the Russo-Turkish wars, the Persian expedition of 1721–22 and the mediation of Russian envoys that Russia began to acquire a significant stock of manuscripts in eastern languages, many kept in Tsar Peter's 'Room of Rarities'. However, Peter's interest in eastern affairs grew out not so much through Muscovy's traditional contacts with Muslim states as through his own 'Westernization' project for Russia – as one scholar has put it, 'Peter tried to understand the Orient in terms of Western Europe'.[6] Through the efforts of scholars such as Professor Georg-Iakob Ker (1692–1740) and Vasilii Kirillovich Trediakovskii (1703–69) Russia by mid-century had translations of many important eastern texts, including the Koran, either from the original or from other (European) translations.[7] Ker himself sought the creation of an Asiatic Academy, a theme that would be taken up, again unsuccessfully, by future Minister of Education S. S. Uvarov in 1810. Ker for his part wanted academy-trained orientalists to be part of every Russian mission to both the East and Europe, to acquire manuscripts. He linked the proposal to create the academy with a plan for the Russian conquest of Turkey and Central Asia – an early indication of how the Russian quest for knowledge and rationalization of the unknown often tied itself to military instruments for its attainment. Peter's reign also saw the extension of Russian contacts much further east, the dispatch of a number of monks to China in 1716 to learn the Chinese and Mongolian languages lay the basis for a permanent Russian religious mission in Peking that was later also active in scholarly work.[8]

Following Peter's death Russian policy towards the East became more static, the reigns of Anna Ivanovna and her successor Elizabeth Petrovna being chiefly marked by violent Christianization campaigns run through the 'Commissions of the Newly-Baptized'. Even at this relatively late stage in Russian imperial development, conversion to Russian Orthodoxy and

explicit loyalty to the ruling family remained among the primary criteria for formerly tribute-bearing non-Russian nationalities to enter the ruling imperial bureaucracy.[9] In 1743 the government ordered that 418 out of the 536 mosques in the Kazan region be destroyed, while in the Siberian provinces of Tobolsk and Tara 29 out of the existing 40 mosques were also subsequently destroyed.[10] The rule of Catherine the Great however saw a policy of more liberal re-engagement with the East allied to a period of renewed imperial expansion. Catherine's general policies, in direct contrast to those of all her immediate predecessors, inaugurated the most tolerant period of Russian governmental relations towards non-Christian peoples since the middle of the sixteenth century. The Empress' policies, in part purely pragmatic, were also influenced by the eighteenth century Enlightenment. Catherine herself saw the eastern half of her empire as a distinct area, a zone requiring a different political and administrative approach. Fascinated by the reports of local governors on native customs and habits, reports themselves part of the European Enlightenment's fascination with the discovery of the 'Other', Catherine sought to incorporate her eastern empire not through expulsions and war but through an intimate knowledge of local conditions and trade. As a result, she famously embarked on a mosque-building program, seeking to replace local tribal loyalties with a wider community loyalty to Islam.[11] Her 1773 Edict of Religious Tolerance, recognizing Islam and allowing the free practice of certain essential religious rites, set a standard in Russian-Muslim relations that succeeding regimes would respond to with varying degrees of compliance. In 1787 the Empress directed the Russian Academy of Science to print a complete Arabic text of the Koran, an edition reprinted in 1789, 1790, 1793, 1796 and 1798. By the first half of the nineteenth century the number of Korans produced from Russian presses ran into the thousands, achieving a wide distribution not only within the Russian Empire but across the whole Muslim world as well.[12] In 1788 Catherine also established the first Muslim religious administration at Ufa and in 1794 a further 'muftiat' was organized in the Crimea. Montesquieu's belief that peoples were shaped by local conditions, requiring study and accommodation by the central regime, though not shared by all Enlightenment figures or indeed by all those with power and influence in Russian government, would continue to filter through and inform those Russian nineteenth century bodies attempting to rule and master the East. This intellectual current would most notably continue to influence the Russian Imperial Geographical Society and the Asiatic Department of the Russian General Staff. This trend underwent a subtle shift however; from Catherine's day, when the Muslim birth rate was seen as advantageous to the Russian Empire, to the last decades of the nineteenth century when the large Muslim population came to be regarded as a threatening, potentially subversive force. In short, there occurred over time a shift in the psychological undercurrent from rationalist self-confident expansionism to a form of strategic paranoia.

One of the most prominent early nineteenth century bureaucrats following the Catherinian line of scientific categorization and flexible integration of subject peoples was Mikhail Speranskii, who played a large role in attempting to integrate Russia's Asiatic possessions via a unified legal code. Speranskii, responsible for the administration of Siberia from 1819 to 1822, and seated on the Asiatic Committee formed in 1820,[13] incorporated into his ambitious empire-wide law codification the Kazakh customary law, or *adat*, contained in Khan Tauke's Jhety Jharga. Speranskii's reform of 1822 marked a significant new level of Russian incursion into the Kazakh nomadic way of life, attempting to both accommodate and alter that system. The Adat law was maintained in adjudicating disputes but Speranskii divided the Kazakh territory up into new administrative districts and attempted to encourage the Kazakhs to become sedentary farmers through land incentives. This attempt however created difficulties that foreshadowed the later Russian experience in Central Asia; the new administrative divisions creating chaos along the traditional migration routes while Russian maintenance of local sultan-administrators bred corruption and local resistance.[14] Speranskii's policy of trying to strike an administrative balance of regulation with rather restricted intervention in Siberia has been judged 'moderately successful' by later historians, but attempts to pursue a similar policy in the Caucasus, Finland and Central Asia were to prove more problematic.[15] At a deeper level however Speranskii's statute of 1822 served to permanently encode in fixed judicial terms the demarcation in terms of rights and privileges between the '*inorodtsy*' or non-Russians and the 'natural' (*prirodnye*) inhabitants of the empire.[16] Nationalities in the former category thereafter came to be regarded by some through the same type of lens with which contemporary Europeans looked at 'Asiatics' as a whole. The *inorodtsy* became an object of considerable scientific and ethnographic curiosity, their study as a distinct group by organizations like the Imperial Geographical Society and the Russian General Staff now sanctioned and given further impetus by their legally distinct status within the empire. Speranskii's statute therefore marked a significant fault-line in the longer term between the pre-modern and modern Russian visions of the imperial space.[17]

At the same time, an informal series of contacts between court and army in the first half of the nineteenth century formed a group increasingly advocating a firmer Russian policy in the East generally. Minister of Internal Affairs L. A. Perovskii for example, an important early patron of the generation of bureaucrats who would reform the Russian state in the 1860s, long expressed concern over the vulnerability of the eastern borderlands, while his younger half-brother, General V. A. Perovskii, carried out Russian Central Asian policy on the ground itself from the governor-generalship of Orenburg. This kin-relationship undoubtedly led to the Minister arranging that one of his own recruits, the young orientalist (*vostokoved*) V. V. Grigor'ev (1818–81), serve in Orenburg under his brother from 1851 onwards in a series of administrative posts. Grigor'ev's responsibilities ranged from

organizer of the campaign chancellery for the Kokandian campaign of 1853 to becoming chairman of the Orenburg border commission.[18] Such an arrangement would appear to be a fair exchange, since Lev Perovskii's own closest administrative assistant, the philologist V. I. Dal', had entered his service after having first served under his younger brother during the Khivan campaign of 1839–40.[19] Such practices serve to indicate the increasingly sophisticated network between specialist governmental, military and academic institutions in Russian Asiatic affairs of this period. Grigor'ev himself would later cite the 1820s as marking a crucial positive turning point in the development of Russian *vostokovedenie* and Russian knowledge of the East in general.[20] The key members of the group supporting such developments at a governmental level in the Nicholaevan era (1825–55), advocates of a more active policy in both Central Asia and the Far East, were the Perovskii brothers, Minister for State Properties Pavel Kiselev, and the future head of the Asiatic Department of the Foreign Ministry, E. P. Kovalevskii. This group was united in general by a vision of a reformed, rejuvenated Russia, and along the road to this goal, in their eyes, a turn away from Europe towards Russia's 'natural' sphere of influence in Asia played a large part.[21] Such developments also occurred against a shifting background, as aforementioned, in which Russian government in general was becoming more and more systematized. One scholar has accurately demarcated the period 1802–61 in Russian history as a period of transition to a bureaucratic administration, with the subsequent period 1861–1905 as the period when bureaucracy became the predominant factor in government.[22]

The start of the nineteenth century saw the establishment of a number of Asian-orientated bureaucratic institutes who were destined to become competitors for resources with more Western-orientated departments as the eighteenth century legacy of strategic conferences was subsumed to bitter inter-departmental rivalry from Alexander II's reign onwards. The Russian Foreign Ministry established in 1802 rapidly became one of the most powerful bureaucratic institutions in Russia during this period, both as a major employer of the Empire's educated nobility, and as a bastion of prestige, privilege and real political power. Some insight into just how high up in the imperial hierarchy the Foreign Ministry regarded itself can be seen in the exaggerated claim of one of the Foreign Ministry's most famous heads, Chancellor Gorchakov, that:

> In Russia there are only two people who know the policy of the Russian cabinet; the emperor who makes it and myself who prepares and executes it.[23]

Throughout almost the whole course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries however the Foreign Ministry was also destined to be perpetually at odds with the Russian War Ministry over the correct course of Russian

foreign policy. The Foreign Ministry jealously guarded its prerogative in foreign affairs and took a particularly dim view of War Ministry attempts at foreign intelligence gathering in either Europe or Asia, regarding their efforts as amateurish and therefore prone to harm the course of good diplomatic relations. Inter-departmental disagreements over intelligence gathering abroad also arose from differing strategic perceptions of the empire's main concerns; in particular as to whether it was external or internal enemies that most directly threatened the empire. In direct contrast to its antipathy towards the War Ministry, the Foreign Ministry regarded far more favourably Interior Ministry (MVD) attempts to combat by its various intelligence-related activities abroad the work of the Russian revolutionary parties. The *Okhrana*, the Interior Ministry's vanguard in fighting the revolutionary menace, had established a foreign section in Paris by 1882 and was engaged extensively in both espionage and diplomatic code breaking before 1914.[24]

Prominent among the structural developments within the Foreign Ministry in this early period was the granting of total autonomy in 1819 to what had already become a separate department of the old college (ministry) of Foreign Affairs in 1797, the Asiatic Department.[25] This innovation was designed to help provide a unified administration for Russia's Asiatic possessions, its immediate predecessor having neither the cadres, the money nor the experience to deal with Russia's growing involvement in the Near and Middle East.[26] As well as dealing with mountaineer affairs in the Caucasus and handling correspondence regarding relations with the Kazakh Hordes, this department also took under its wing the Ecclesiastical Mission in Peking. Such a state of affairs regarding China continued until the formalization of Sino-Russian diplomatic relations in 1861, after which the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission assumed the purely religious function its title implied.[27] Sections within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the first half of the nineteenth century also handled the enciphering of correspondence and code breaking, a task that included the encoding of correspondence regarding eastern affairs and Central Asia. This again reflected the Foreign Ministry's jealously guarded dominance in the intelligence field, although by the 1840s the War Ministry was also beginning to develop its own codes.[28] By its very nature meanwhile, being a gathering centre for orientalists, cartographers, linguists and diplomats, the Asiatic Department of the MID was destined to be an important player in Russian eastern policy, as well as an ambiguous partner to the European-orientated foreign policy establishment. R. R. Rosen, a Russian diplomat of the period, opined that:

> . . . the Asiatic Department . . . was considered, from the social point of view, inferior to the Chancellery [but] . . . the Balkan Peninsula and Egypt, as well as the whole American continent belonged to the domain of this department whose very name seemed to indicate . . . that after all Asia was considered or instinctively felt to be the real and most important field for all the activity of Russia's foreign policy.[29]

Rosen himself, as a graduate of the Asiatic Department, would later come to embody some of the conflicts of interests that members of this establishment could have with the main Chancellery of the Foreign Ministry. In his memoirs, written after 1917, he recalled that, as far as he personally was concerned, from an early age:

> . . . two convictions were formed in my mind; first, that the expansion of the Russian Empire on the Continent of Europe had reached its extreme limit . . . and secondly, that the true interests of Russia lay in the development of her Siberian Empire and her possessions in Central Asia.[30]

The Asiatic Department of the MID was not the only section of that ministry concerned with the study of the East by the first half of the nineteenth century. In 1823 the Academic Department of Eastern Languages of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was established, its first director, G. M. Vlangali (1781–1834), being an expert in the Persian and Turkish languages who had earlier (from 1820) served as first translator to the High Commander in Georgia, General A. P. Ermolov.[31]

The first half of the nineteenth century also saw a period of great organization and cataloguing of eastern texts through the emergence of new university institutions. Among the most important were the Asiatic Museum established by S. S. Uvarov in 1818, based on Peter the Great's 'Room of Rarities' and headed by the Near Eastern expert Kh. D. Fren (1781–1851), the Eastern Department of St. Petersburg University (est.1819), and the Lazarevskii Institute (est. 1815–16) in Moscow. The last was originally a private school for Armenians that came to be used for the language training of government officials serving in the Trans-Caucasus. It was also the school at which I. A. Zinov'ev (1835–1917), a future head of the Foreign Ministry's Asiatic Department, received his first training. All of these developments, a product of the new university statute of 1804, marked a significant step forward, both in organization and scientific training, in the practice of *vostokovedenie* as a Russian academic science.[32] Academic knowledge continued to advance hand-in-hand with Russian arms, the fall of Ardebil to Russian forces in 1828 for instance leading to the valuable library in the mosque of that town being sent to St. Petersburg. The famous *vostokoved* Senkovskii had already written a memorandum forwarded to Count Paskevich suggesting that such ancient manuscripts be part of the war indemnity from the Persians.[33] A proposal by Professor Fren that Arabic, Persian and Turkish manuscripts also be collected from captured Turkish towns led to an equally rich harvest of academic material being gained through the assistance of the military arm the following year, during the Russo-Turkish war of 1828–29.[34]

Russian interest in eastern studies ran parallel with a growing interest in anthropological expeditions and the discovery of 'lost civilizations' by

Europeans in general, important discoveries being made in Egypt, Java and Turkey in the same period. In the process of what one scholar has termed the 'Oriental Renaissance' of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Russia played a fully active participatory role.[35] Scientific excitement was mirrored by a cultural growth within the contemporary 'Romantic' genre literature in which German writers like Goethe and Herder presented the Orient as the exotic and mysterious source of all human knowledge. When the future Russian Minister of Education S. S. Uvarov drew up his own proposal for the establishment of an Oriental Academy in St. Petersburg in 1810, repeating the call made by Ker for forming such an institution nearly a century before, Goethe was among its most enthusiastic foreign backers. Uvarov himself, proposing the Academy as one means to make Russia 'the mediatrix between European civilization and Asian wisdom', lavished praise on the work of European scholars, including the Calcutta Society, German Biblical scholars and the translators of Sanskrit, and made clear that he shared their view that the Orient was 'the cradle of all civilization in the universe'.[36] A similar desire to celebrate Russia's unique geopolitical position by the acquisition and categorization of its rich cultural, ethnographic and archaeological inheritance within a single scientific framework lay behind the calls for a 'national museum' that were voiced just a few years later. The motivation behind these proposals was both patriotic (in the Imperial sense) and cosmopolitan; the petitioners were non-Russians working within the Russian bureaucracy, and they envisaged a Russian national museum emerging in parallel to a similar pan-European trend in the development of such institutions elsewhere.[37] The French fashion in this period for all things Chinese meanwhile, reflected in the term *chinoiserie*, had its natural Russian counterpart in the elite infatuation with *kitaishchina*. When this Europe-wide intellectual movement began to move from seeing the Orient in general as Herder's 'soil of God' towards a position of contempt towards societies so clearly (in their eyes) stagnant and decayed, many Russians again followed this trend.[38] Nonetheless, in the process Russia gained an academic infrastructure of considerable intellectual standing, while Russia's unique position between Europe and Asia often led Russian Orientalism to pursue unique cultural courses differing from the general European trend.[39] By the mid-1850s, university institutions in Russia with chairs in eastern studies, increasingly clustered around Kazan and St. Petersburg, were recognized as leaders in their field not only at home, but also worldwide.

Parallel with these general developments in Russia, the Russian General Staff, developing its own 'culture of knowledge' by the 1830s, based on a drive to quantify and objectify the surrounding world, also effectively divided its scientific attention between Europe and Asia from an early period, many officers undertaking travels to the East in this period to expand geographical knowledge. The first officially recorded activity by Russian staff officers operating in an intelligence-gathering capacity in Asia dates to 1792, when staff officers accompanied the diplomatic mission of M. I.

Golenishchev-Kutuzov to Constantinople, gathering and developing materials still used decades later in the Russo-Turkish war of 1828–29.[40] An important early role in Staff activities in Asia was played by the institution of the Quartermaster service; 19 of the 175 members of this force on the 1st July 1805 were serving in the Trans-Caucasus, Orenburg and the Far East.[41] Russian officers of the cartographical section conducted a topographical sketch of the Trans-Caucasus in 1801–03, while staff officers conducted field trips in Kazakhstan in 1803–04 and accompanied the diplomatic mission of Iu. A. Golovin to China in 1805–07. Continued geographical and cultural ignorance played a large role however in Russian military errors and reverses during the first Russo-Turkish and Russo-Iranian wars of the nineteenth century (1806–12 and 1804–13, respectively).

Undoubtedly the single most important figure in raising the level of the army's geographical knowledge and scientific capability in the early nineteenth century was the honorary father of the Russian General Staff, Prince Petr Mikhailovich Volkonskii (1776–1852). A veteran of the Napoleonic Wars and arguably one of the major organizers of victory in the campaigns of 1812–14, Volkonskii's impact on the Russian staff began with his appointment to the Quartermaster section in 1810. In that year, on the proposal of the Prince, there was established a Staff of the Chancellery of the General-Quartermaster, with a corresponding attached library and a significant collection of astronomical and mathematical instruments. Appointed Chief of the Main Staff of His Imperial Highness in 1815, Volkonskii's seven-year reign in that post would produce its most lasting testament in 1822 with the creation of the Corps of Military Topographers. This innovation served to put the practice of military topography on a fully scientific basis for the first time and created a cadre system designed to avoid the delays in topographical work due to lack of trained personnel that had been experienced in the past. A guide by the director of the Corps, F. F. Shubert, published in 1826–27, testified to the new level of organization in the conduct of such work, containing among other things a complete collection of all astronomical points calculated up until that period in the Russian Empire.[42] In 1818, meanwhile, Prince Volkonskii charged K. F. Tol', the Quartermaster-General of the Main Staff, to compose a comprehensive collection of information about the fortifications and armed forces of all the major European states, including Turkey.[43] The consequence of this was a series of important intelligence-gathering trips by Russian officers to Constantinople and Asia Minor, including significant work by Adjutant-General P. D. Kiselev (the future Minister for State Properties) and Count F. F. Berg, the positive results of which were reflected in Russia's war against Turkey in 1828–29.[44] This tradition of closer study of the Near East was continued by M. P. Vronchenko, an outstanding linguist and member of the Quartermaster section of the General Staff who during his three-year appointment to the consulate in Smyrna in the 1830s studied the country in depth and logged 100 new points of astronomical observation. A brief

alliance with Turkey in this period also expanded the interests of the Russian General Staff beyond their traditional geographic sphere, with staff officers visiting Syria and Palestine to map the country and follow the progress of the contemporary Egyptian revolt under Mohammed-Ali.[45] What was most striking about the activities of the General Staff overall however was not merely the new level of organization gradually being applied to its study of Asia, but the qualitative difference between this newly-acquired knowledge and what was known before. This held true even regarding lands with which Russia had been territorially contiguous for centuries. In 1832 A. I. Levshin, developing a new map from the recent topographical surveys conducted by Russian officers in the Kazakh steppe, commented that the data now emerging demonstrated that all previous maps of that territory, with one individual and recent exception, contained significant faults and even completely inaccurate details. In the past mountains had been shown where it was now clear there were plains, lakes where there was no water, and even rivers flowing in completely the wrong direction.[46] Thus the 1820s marked as much a fundamental turning point in the knowledge possessed by the Tsarist military of the East as they did for Russia's other departments of state.

The increasing activation of Tsarist foreign policy in the Near and Middle East and the accompanying build-up of increasingly experienced and specialized officer cadres was perhaps reflected most strongly in the career of I. F. Blaramberg (1800–78), an individual who in effect spent his entire career engaged in the study of Asiatic states. Having served in the Russo-Turkish war of 1828–29, Blaramberg went on to work in the Caucasus Corps, later composing a major military-statistical portrait of that area of the Empire. Appointed in 1837 as military advisor to the consulate of Major-General Simonich in Persia, Blaramberg witnessed the Persian siege of Herat in 1838 at first hand, and during his period of service there dispatched numerous reports back to the General Staff in St. Petersburg on contemporary conditions in Persia and Afghanistan. This culminated in his 1841 statistical portrait of Persia, covering nearly every aspect of the contemporary life of that state. Transferred to the Orenburg corps under General Perovskii in 1840, he went on to direct the first siege of the Central Asian fort of Ak-Mechet in 1852 before returning to St. Petersburg and being made head of the Military-Topographical Department, going on to become head of the Corps of Military Topographers in 1866.[47] Blaramberg symbolized a general trend, where prominent staff officers not only began to spend their whole careers in Asia, but also began to recognize the need to study Asiatic theatres of conflict as regions singular and distinct from European warfare. In 1819 the aforementioned P. D. Kiselev, as Head of Staff of the Second Army, proposed embarking on an extensive program of research into the five Russo-Turkish wars fought between 1711 and 1812 in order to extract general lessons for future military action. Kiselev's enthusiasm for such endeavours led him to support the groundbreaking study of his subordinate, Colonel I. P. Liprandi, which provided details on the ethnic, religious and

psychological characteristics of the Ottoman forces. At this early period in the Russian General Staff's development however, such enthusiasms at the local level still created tensions between the Russian army on the frontier and the General Staff in St. Petersburg, the latter jealously guarding its pre-eminence in the formation of official army doctrine.

By the start of the 1840s therefore the Russian General Staff had already evolved a loose but vibrant tradition of staff work and topographical studies within the often-inhospitable environment of Inner Asia. However the scientific structure under which these missions carried out their tasks owed its greatest debt to the work of D. A. Miliutin (1816–1912), the future Minister of War, who created the General Staff Academy's Department of Military Statistics almost single-handed in 1846–47. In 1846 Miliutin wrote the foundation text of Russian military statistics, 'A Critical Study of the Importance of Military Geography and Military Statistics', wherein the discipline of military statistics was defined as 'studying at a given moment the strength and capabilities of a state in a military regard'.[48] Such a doctrinal approach soon came to be applied to all Tsarist Russia's potential opponents, whether in Europe or Asia. Miliutin was later to serve as Tsarist Russia's most brilliant nineteenth century War Minister, presiding over the post-Crimean reform of the Russian army and the introduction of universal military service in Russia. In the past however Miliutin's general reform achievements have also somewhat obscured the fact that much of his career was also closely associated with the military penetration of Asia and with the birth of military intelligence as an intellectual discipline in Russian doctrinal thought.

As a young staff officer Miliutin had first earned his spurs in the Caucasus, being wounded during the siege of Akhulgo, an episode in the war against Shamil, in 1838. Personal illness and a subsequent appointment to the still relatively new Staff Academy interrupted his active service, but in 1856 he had returned to the Caucasus as Chief of Staff to serve beside the new viceroy in the region, Prince Alexander Bariatinskii, where he did much to bring the long war there to a successful conclusion. Appointed War Minister in 1861, Miliutin would later also preside over and support Russian expansion into Central Asia during the 1860s and 1870s. Following his retirement in 1881 from the War Ministry he spent the remainder of his long life pondering the problems of citizenship in the multi-ethnic Russian Empire and writing his memoirs. The Caucasus in particular was a region about which he always wrote about with great feeling throughout his life, to the extent of labelling it on one occasion 'the Promised Land'.[49] During his later career as War Minister in the early 1860s, when the region had since ceased to be his chief daily concern, Miliutin still found the time to attend 'Caucasus evenings' in St. Petersburg where Caucasus veterans gathered in a social setting to exchange their reminiscences.[50] He was later to choose a fellow veteran and attendant at these gatherings, Colonel Dmitri Romanovskii, to serve as a major theatre commander in Central Asia.

Moreover when the time finally came to appoint a full governor-general to the new Russian province of Turkestan, Miliutin would again appoint a man, Konstantin Petrovich von Kaufman, who had both served in the Caucasus and worked closely alongside him in the General Staff in formulating and implementing the new military district system across the empire.

Miliutin's whole career therefore was in many ways dominated both by his lifelong interest in Russia's Asian possessions and by his dedication to scientific, statistical methods as a means to incorporate those realms into the Tsarist Empire. His early efforts as a young lecturer in the Staff Academy would help to see the initiation of a programme in 1847 that two decades later resulted in the first military-statistical portrait of the entire Russian Empire.[51] A personal proponent of the statistical method, Miliutin's later service as Chief of Staff in the Caucasus also saw him put principle into practice, his actions there being marked by the belief that 'without knowledge, control was impossible'.[52] Like Speranskii before him therefore, Miliutin and his followers in the War Ministry saw in the enumeration, quantification and statistical rationalization of scientific data a means to harmonize and administer the Russian Empire.[53]

Despite these positive early developments during the first half of the nineteenth century, it was recognized during the period following the Crimean War that Russian statistical data and intelligence gathering was in a state of chaos-a victim of the same crisis of management organization that gripped the rest of the Russian bureaucracy.[54] Data about the availability and quantity of Russia's basic resources was often lacking, and data was not collected or analysed with a view to its intrinsic value but simply gathered in without prioritization, resulting in repetition of effort and a dangerous level of strategic ignorance. From the beginning of Alexander II's reign onwards, reform proposals led to statistical data being published and hence opened to critical examination (*glasnost'*). This marked the military's recognition, shared with the rest of the Russian bureaucracy, that expertise was only useful if information was freely available. Within the field of the General Staff's burgeoning interest in Asiatic studies, a policy of *glasnost'* had particular significance in that previous travellers accounts were in future fully open for officers like Baron Mannerheim to consult before they undertook their own trips.[55] This helped them review the level of previously gained knowledge and suggested new avenues for investigation, making intelligence-gathering missions generally more effective, though the growing burden of reading soon became too much for any one individual and made some consequent repetition of effort, though reduced to a bare minimum, inevitable.[56] A similar discipline dominated the contemporaneously-blooming international sciences of map-making and botany – 'observed data [was not] complete until [it was] reconstituted within the archive of knowledge'.[57]

On Miliutin's detachment to the Caucasus in 1856 the course in Military Statistics at the General Staff Academy was taken over by two of his main protégés, Lt.-Colonel A. I. Maksheev (1828–91) and Guards Captain N. N.

Obruchev (1830–1904).[58] Both men later enjoyed prestigious careers, but Obruchev in particular achieved a high degree of prominence as Chief of the General Staff between 1881 and 1897, where his impact on Russian military war planning has been compared by one scholar to that of his more famous German counterpart, Moltke the Elder.[59] If Obruchev later built his reputation by becoming closely associated with European war planning however, Maksheev quickly became associated with the scientific study of Asia. Both men thus mirrored in microcosm the twin sides of Miliutin's own personality. At the academy following Miliutin's departure in the 1850s Maksheev taught that section of the course related to the statistical study of Russia itself, while Obruchev dealt with foreign, primarily Western European states. However Maksheev's experiences in the statistics course led him in the 1860s to present reform proposals on the manner in which Russia's statistical data was collected. His policy, largely accepted and followed thereafter, by setting fixed parameters according to function on necessary information, rationalized the chaotic gathering process of the past into a pattern the staff would effectively continue to pursue well into the 1880s.[60] At the same time, the introduction from 1865–66 of cartography lectures into the general curriculum for staff candidates (previously only compulsory for students of the geodesic section) meant that all graduates were better equipped, at least in theory, to carry out the type of work Maksheev's new parameters demanded. Reflecting his own personal interests, Maksheev also petitioned for an expanded section within the course on Russia's Asiatic possessions, and began giving lectures on Russia's relations with the Central Asian states from 1865 onwards. To aid this effort, Maksheev was commandeered to the Turkestan military district for six months study in 1867.[61] Maksheev's proposal to then form a new academy course covering the military history, ethnography, statistics and economies of China, the Central Asian khanates, Persia and Afghanistan was rejected by the Academy, fearful of the burden of teaching such a vast new mass of information which would only prove useful in the activities of a minority of officers. The need to bolster teaching on Asiatic countries at the Academy was recognized however, and to this end a separate course of non-obligatory lectures was instituted from 1875. Invited to give these was Colonel Mikhail Ivanovich Veniukov (1832–1901), a full member of the Russian Imperial Geographical Society who had already from 1870 delivered a series of non-obligatory lectures at the Academy on the military forces of China and Japan and on the military significance of Russia's Asian frontiers.[62] Veniukov was well qualified to speak about these matters, having joined and worked alongside Murav'ev-Amurskii in the Far East as soon as he graduated from the Staff Academy in 1856 and having gone on under the patronage of Miliutin to visit both China and Japan personally. In his later memoirs Veniukov made clear that the first lectures were given largely as a means to help him out of serious financial difficulties, but he also remarked that they were well attended, and included some adjutant generals in the audience.[63]

As implied previously, the input of the cadres built up by these new military and university institutions was complemented by the efforts of the Imperial Geographical Society, (IRGO, est.1845) which despite an official non-political stance often sponsored missions to investigate strategic questions as much as to expand geographical knowledge. The influence of the military upon the Geographical Society's activities was profound from the very outset. Two of its founding members, F. F. Berg and M. P. Vronchenko, had first honed their geographical skills, as we have seen, in military service, while D. A. Miliutin, the future Minister of War, served on the Society's governing council between 1849 and 1852. In the keynote address that inaugurated the very opening of the society in 1845, Admiral Litke cited the Topographical Department of the General Staff and the Naval Ministry's Hydrological Department as natural partners in the society's activities.[64] A key early mission of the Geographical Society was to improve the scientific community's geographical and cultural knowledge of Asia, based initially upon a drive to republish and supplement (and, implicitly, to improve upon) the work already done by the famous German scientist Carl Ritter.[65] This early interest did not abate with that task complete, and the Geographical Society's most famous later beneficiary, General Przheval'skii, could rest assured that: 'as long as Semyonov-Tyan-Shansky [*sic*] was at the Imperial Geographic Society and Milyutin [*sic*] at the Ministry of War, [he] got whatever he asked for'.[66]

The Imperial Geographical Society also served as a tool through which the Asiatic Department of the Foreign Ministry spread its influence, several important individuals such as E. P. Kovalevskii, Baron Osten-Saken and N. V. Khanykov serving as members of both institutions.[67] The role of the Naval Ministry and its head, the Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich, in reinvigorating the very principle of empire through the dispatch of ethnographic missions in the 1850s, also served as an important precursor to these later combined War Ministry-Geographical Society missions.[68] Not least, they set the precedent for military-civil cooperation in the working of empire, which some imperial servitors, notably General Kaufman, would seek to build upon and encourage. The end result of these cross-disciplinary developments fostered by Miliutin and Semenov Tian-Shanskii would be a new branch of military science itself, a branch that General Andrei Evgen'evich Snesarev (1865–1937) would later attempt to pass on to the Soviet armed forces under the title 'Military Geography'. Snesarev subsequently defined in this branch of the military art four main areas of study:

(1) Territory (on a broad scale, including climate)
(2) Population (ethno-demographic and socio-political analysis)
(3) Means of war (the economy of the country and its links with the world economy)
(4) Armed forces.[69]

Area studies based on these principles would blossom during the latter nineteenth century on Russia's new territories in the East as Russia pursued, in parallel with other empires of the day, the 'scientific and rational construction of space'.[70] With their fascination with statistics, charts, and minute analysis, many of these texts in fact read eerily like later Communist works – an indication of just one of the levels of continuity apparent between many aspects of the Tsarist and Soviet military systems. Indeed, as one American anthropologist has recently noted:

> Owing to their extremely effective capacity to constitute individuals as productive subjects, these forms of knowledge (e.g. cartography, statistics) flourished during the Soviet period. Despite their Imperial pedigree there was certainly no question of the Soviet state doing away with them any more than there is of the independent states trying to dispense with them today.[71]

Undoubtedly the most important nineteenth century military department coordinating the efforts of this new generation of statisticians, geographers, translators and ethnographers was the Asiatic Department of the Russian General Staff, yet another product of Miliutin's reign as War Minister. In 1856 there had been created a temporary section, or committee, for dealing with the affairs of the Caucasus army, the independent Orenburg and Siberian corps, and the forces deployed in Eastern Siberia. In 1863 however a permanent organization, the Asiatic Department, replaced this temporary section within the General Staff. This department was charged with the military-political administration of the Caucasus, the Orenburg *krai*, Western and Eastern Siberia, control over the movement and reinforcement of all forces assigned there, and all proposals relating to the development of forts and lines of communication within those districts.[72] The department took its position in the command structure for much of this period from the reforms carried out by Miliutin in 1862–67 of the Main Staff, and lasted in this basic form until 1903. Until the full establishment of the Asiatic Department alongside the Military-Scientific Section in 1863, intelligence collection in Russia, as already noted, had traditionally been laid at the door of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, although the Tsar's 'Instructions to Agents dispatched abroad' of June 1856 had already effected some change in this direction.[73] With the creation of the Military-Scientific Section and the Asiatic Department however the General Staff gained for the first time its own centralized, albeit deeply imperfect, intelligence-gathering sections. Like the Military-Scientific Section, the Asiatic Department underwent several name changes over the years (from *chast* to *otdel* to *deloproizvodstvo*), none of which marked any significant alteration in its basic form or function. Unlike the Military-Scientific Section, the precise parameters of the Asiatic Department's intelligence-gathering activities were never defined by statute. Headed by a Colonel or a Lieutenant General, the Asiatic Department soon came to be concerned with almost

every aspect of the military's relationship with the Muslim peoples of the East, from the gathering of military intelligence to the regulation of trips abroad by Muslims, including the monitoring of pilgrimages to Mecca and other countries.[74] The department was comprised for most of its existence of three general sections. The first two sections dealt directly with the Asiatic military districts while the third was concerned with the problems of Russian military action in Asia, military statistical work and the funding of agents and exploratory missions abroad. As a consequence of the empire's growth the department's responsibilities continually expanded, a new statute of 1886 setting out a more extended range of functions than the statute of 1869, with a slightly increased workforce, and a report of 1894 preceding yet further expansion. Each expansion reinforced the position of the Asiatic Department as a distinct branch of the central intelligence network.[75] The department, following one of its last periods of expansion in 1895, comprised one chief, three desk heads, four aides, two bureaucrats and a 'topographical officer'.[76] Financial constraints however meant that officers placed on special detachment from the Main Staff often supplemented the work of these men outside the general expansions to the department noted above. The department's activities were regulated alongside and to some degree shared with the Asiatic Department of the Foreign Ministry. Consuls of the Asiatic Department of the Foreign Ministry were occasionally tasked with gathering military intelligence were a military agent not specifically present, and individual agents might help coordinate Asiatic opinion with the military's campaigns.[77] The most outstanding example of the latter case were the actions of the Foreign Ministry Asiatic Department's representative in Persia, Zinov'ev, in gaining Persian logistical support for General Skobelev's 1880–81 campaign against the Turkmen.[78] In a similar way, the reports of the military department's foreign attachés were often shared with the Foreign Ministry, officer's reports on local events and their assessments of foreign governmental personnel, in particular, often proving of wider general diplomatic value. However, the Foreign Ministry lost ground to the War Ministry in areas where the Russian army was actively advancing, so that by 1873, for example, the Foreign Ministry's Asiatic Department virtually ceased to have administrative responsibility for the peoples of Central Asia.[79] In turn, and in natural consequence, the War Ministry then became engaged in almost constant bureaucratic conflict with the Russian Interior Ministry over the correct administration of what were meant in effect to be integral parts of the Russian Empire. The refusal of General Kaufman to allow the establishment of a Muslim muftiat in Russian Turkestan, for example, was linked at least in part to the fact that such institutions in Ufa and the Trans-Caucasus served in practice as tendrils of MVD influence.[80]

The Asiatic Department of the General Staff and the Military-Scientific Committee took administrative responsibility for the cadres of 'officer-orientalists' who did so much of the military's analytical work on the East. A particularly significant factor in this regard of course was the selection and posting by the Military-Scientific Committee of formal 'military agents' to

consulates abroad, a practice employed by the Russian General Staff in both Europe and Asia alike. The number of military agents disposed of by the War Ministry rose dramatically across this whole period, from only four in 1856 (only one of whom, Staff-Captain Frankini in Istanbul, could be considered to work in an 'Asiatic' country) to twenty-two, including aides, in Europe and Asia by 1914.[81] A statute of 1864 finally gave military agents an officially sanctioned position within Russian embassies abroad, with all the diplomatic rights and privileges, including diplomatic immunity that came with that status. The Russian General Staff often attempted to gain information through both 'secret' and 'open' military agents, the former being officers officially retired from the military service and appointed to secretarial posts in foreign consulates, the latter retaining their official military position within foreign consulates. However, the use of 'secret' military agents proved problematic. Aside from the security difficulty attendant upon appointing apparently over-qualified men to fairly low consular posts, the 'secret' military agents often had an acrimonious relationship with their official 'public' counterparts. The 'secret' military agent appointed in 1896 to China for instance, Colonel Desino, lacked even desultory diplomatic cover due to his aide being an active army officer, and had a poor relationship with the official military agent there, Colonel K. I. Vogak. This situation was only finally resolved by Desino's promotion to being the second 'public' military agent to Shanghai in 1899.[82] At the same time, when discussing these military agents, it is necessary to remember that officers so assigned received no special training in covert intelligence work, such a possibility only being investigated after the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05. One contemporary recalled that until then at the Academy secret intelligence had been regarded as a rather 'dirty' occupation, the province of undercover policemen and other 'shady characters'.[83] The majority of military agents across the period were also ex-Guards officers, and the St. Petersburg military district accordingly remained the favoured recruiting ground for military agents. Though the aristocratic background of many military agents therefore made them well qualified for the court functions and grand balls that constituted everyday diplomatic activity in the major European capitals, it did not necessarily grant them the personal skills needed to acquire valuable military intelligence about foreign states. Post-1905 attempts to lay a greater burden of responsibility upon the military agents in terms of covert intelligence gathering led to protests among some of the leading military agents of the day, several complaining that they were too closely watched in their country of placement to carry out such tasks. However, the lack of any General Staff cadres to supplement their work by operating covertly in foreign countries led to the main burden of such work continuing to be laid upon the military agents despite both their own complaints and their personal shortcomings.[84]

An important additional element in this form of work of course, in Asia at least, was the degree of linguistic training given Russian officers in

oriental languages across this period. The opening of the Nepliuevskii military college in Orenburg in 1825 marked the first establishment of a medium-level military-scientific establishment for the teaching of eastern languages in Russia. In this institution there was taught the Tatar, Arabic and Persian languages, but the number of graduates were relatively small and the effect felt only at a local level. The teaching of languages at the Staff Academy in St. Petersburg during the first half of the nineteenth century, meanwhile, was of a poor quality and overwhelmingly European-orientated, although future War Minister D. A. Miliutin did recall that some of his classmates studied eastern languages in their spare time.[85] In 1849 the War Ministry finally investigated the possibility of introducing eastern languages into the curriculum of the Staff Academy and consulted the former professor of the Eastern Department of St. Petersburg University, O. I. Senkovskii, on the issue. Senkovskii drew up a programme for a three-and a half year academy course in Arabic, Persian and Turkic-Ottoman, while A. I. Maksheev, recently returned from Central Asia, helped institute a cash prize for the officer-graduate producing the best Persian manuscript.[86] A series of 63 lectures given at the Staff Academy in 1853–54 (on the eve of the Crimean War) in the Turkish language by the equally distinguished orientalist Professor A. K. Kazem-Bek did not improve the overall situation, which was only finally eased in the wake of the Miliutin reforms of the 1860s. The education officers subsequently received at the Staff Academy, including (for some) courses in Arabic, Turkish, Persian and Tatar, came in this later period to be supplemented by language courses through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, courses at the Eastern Institute in Vladivostok, or studies in Tashkent itself. Officers completing the course begun with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 1883 onwards and covering the Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Tatar languages had to serve for at least four and a half years in either the Turkestan or Caucasus military districts. Between 1886 and 1898 this programme produced 55 linguistically trained officers. Specialist schools in Urga and Kul'dzha (though at the latter only in the period 1880–96) served to further train officers in Chinese.[87] In 1897 the staff of the Turkestan military district began running a course on Urdu, in which outstanding officers were sent to India to perfect their mastery of the language. On this foundation there was formed in 1908 the Tashkent officers' school, in which apart from languages there was also studied history, geography and military statistics. Sixty-six officers finished the course on Urdu run between 1897 and 1909. Over time the English, Persian, Uzbek, Afghan and Chinese languages were also taught through this institution, alongside instruction on Muslim law.[88] From 1906 onwards meanwhile, around 20 officers graduated annually from the Eastern Institute in Vladivostok, trained in the Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Mongolian, Manchurian, French and English languages. Established in 1899, the Eastern Institute was an academic institution that accepted four, six, and eventually eight officer-students each semester in

return for a significant subsidy from the War Ministry. In addition the army or the consular service took four to eight students from the Institute annually to carry out fieldwork. Practical experience showed this system to have positive, although strictly limited, results. Eight of the eleven interpreters in Japanese available to the Russian army during the war of 1904–05 were graduates of the Eastern Institute. It was recognized after the war however that this number of interpreters had proven grossly inadequate in proportion to the sheer scale of the task facing them. Furthermore, the General Staff remained dissatisfied by the quality of student being produced from Vladivostok, with GUGSh (the Main Directorate and 'operational brain' of the General Staff after 1905) noting in 1909 that officer graduates from there were knowledgeable only in language theory and were insufficiently versed in practical communication.[89] Although efforts in this direction increased to meet a growing need across this period therefore, such efforts remained very much on an ad hoc basis with continual financial restraints. Typical in this regard were the details behind the courses begun for officers through the Foreign Ministry after 1883.

M. A. Gazamov, responding to the petition of a particular officer to enrol in the Academic Department, had first raised the issue of running oriental language courses for officers with the War Ministry as early as 1881. The concept was welcomed and developed by the Military-Scientific Committee. A statute on this issue was then formulated and subsequently approved, but the War Ministry's lack of funds to recompense the language professors for their work led to the act being delayed. Only Gazamov's notifying the War Ministry in 1883 that his employees were willing to offer their services free of charge for this task led to the courses then being initiated, and even then initially only for Guards officers.[90] Problems then developed over finding suitable places for graduates of this three-year course, officers finding the training they had received inadequate for the comprehension of local dialects and rapidly finding themselves overwhelmed by the number of bureaucratic tasks they were asked to perform. Appointments to be military agents abroad were the exception to the rule, many graduates having to be content with lowly *pristav* positions in local governmental administrations. The lack of prestige and social advantage attached to such a career necessitated the introduction in 1885 of a statute compelling graduates to work in the Asiatic districts for the fixed period outlined above.[91]

The inadequacy of such ad hoc arrangements in the eastern-language training of Russian officers became all too evident both during the Russian military intervention in China in 1900 and with even more serious consequences during the course of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05. The lack of officer-interpreters in this field became a minor public scandal after the latter conflict, openly discussed in the press, and led to concerted attempts by the Asiatic Department of the General Staff to introduce for the first time a unified programme of language training across Russia's Asiatic military districts. The course and consequence of these efforts at reform will be

more fully discussed in later chapters of this work, in the context of the general crisis of confidence that seized Russian military *vostokovedenie* in this later period.

The General Staff's Asiatic Department coordinated its efforts with the Chancellery of the Military-Scientific Committee, the War Ministry (naturally), and with the Chief of Police and Ministry of Internal Affairs. The MVD in particular helped collate summaries of the foreign press related to Asiatic affairs, ranging from newspaper articles to the latest books.[92] Across this whole period the various heads of the Asiatic Department of the General Staff played a critical, hitherto almost unrecognized, role in Russian policy-making regarding Asia. They represented the apex of a new colonial military structure that came to rule large tracts of Asiatic Russia, a military elite whose everyday policies affected the lives of thousands of Muslims and whose strategic mindset affected Russian military planning and thinking towards states ranging from Ottoman Turkey to Chinese Manchuria. The mentality of this colonial military elite was affected by a complex web of factors-interpersonal relationships, personal military experience, military education, and the study to a limited degree of the actions of other European empires in their own Asian dominions. Of all the experiences that shaped the outlook of this new colonial elite however, perhaps the most decisive and the one that had the greatest long-term impact upon the outlook of many was the Russian experience in conquering the Caucasus. The lessons learnt in the Caucasus would be to a greater or lesser extent imbibed and reapplied by Russian officers on a gigantic strategic arc stretching from the Black Sea to the Pacific. Quite why the Caucasus was such a crucible for the new colonial military elite that ruled large stretches of the Russian Empire during the latter part of the nineteenth century therefore merits closer attention.

Table 2.1: Heads of Asiatic Department, Russian General Staff to 1918[93]

Heads of Department	Dates of Service
V. A. Poltoratskii	1863–1867
A. P. Protsenko	1868–1878
A. N. Kuropatkin	1878–1879
L. N. Sobolev	1879–1882
G. I. Ivanov	1882–1887
L. F. Kostenko	1887–1891
A. P. Protsenko	1891–1898
D. V. Putiata	1898–1902
F. V. Vasil'ev	1902–1906
S. V. Tseil'	1906–1913
M. M. Manakin	1913–1917
A. A. A. Davletshin	1917–1918

Table 2.2: Military Agents in Asia, 1860–1914: Turkey[94]

Turkey	Dates of Service
Lt.-General V. A. Frankini	1856–1871
General A. S. Zelenyi	1872–1879
Colonel V. N. Filippov	1880–1886
Colonel N. N. Peshkov	1886–1895
Peshkov; arrival of aide Lt. Colonel V. N. Shebeko	1896
Colonel Peshkov & Shebeko	1897–1898
Colonel E. Kh. Kalnin	1899–1900
Colonel Kalnin & aide Lt. Colonel M. N. Leont'ev	1900–1901
Colonel (later Major -General) Kalnin	1902–1903
Lt. Colonel A. P. Alekseev	1904–1906
Lt. Colonel (later Major -General) I. A. Khol'msen.	1906–1912
Maior-General M. N. Leont'ev	1913–1914

Table 2.3 Military Agents in Asia, 1860–1914: China

China	Dates of Service
Lt.-Col. Bodisko	1880–1883
Colonel N. Ia. Shneur	1883–1885
Colonel D. V. Putiata	1886–1892
Colonel K. I. Vogak	1892–1893
Colonel K. I. Vogak, military agent in China and Japan	1893–1896
Colonel K. I. Vogak, military agent in Ch ina	1896–1900
Vogak; arrival of Colonel K. N. Desino as official aide.	1900–1902
K. I.Vogak & K. N. Desino	1903
Vogak & Desino; arrival of Colonel F. E. Ogorodnikov	1904
F. E. Ogorodnikov; K. N. Desino, aide.	1905
Ogorodnikov & Desino; arrival of aid e Captain S. V. Afanas'ev	1906
Ogorodnikov & Afanas'ev. Desino leaves; arrival of aide, Colonel Val'ter.	1907

Table 2.4 Military Agents in Asia, 1860–1914: China

China	Dates of Service
Departure of Ogorodnikov; arrival as military agent of Colonel L. G. Kornilov	1908–1909
Kornilov, Afanas'ev & Val'ter.	1910
Kornilov & Val'ter; Afanas'ev leaves; arrival as aide Captain V. V. Blonskii	1911
Kornilov leaves; Val't er made military agent, Blonskii and Lt. -Colonel A. M. Nikolaev, aides	1912–13
Colonel (later Major -General) Val'ter, with aides: Blonskii, Nikolaev.	1913
Major General Val'ter and Blonskii. Nikolaev leaves; arrival as aide of Lt-Colonel A. A. Tatarinov	1914

Table 2.5 Military Agents in Asia, 1860–1914: Japan

Japan	Dates of Service
Colonel K. I. Vogak; served simultaneously in China (See above).	1895
Departure of Vogak; arrival of Colonel N. I. Ianzhul	1896
Colonel N. I. Ianzhul	1897–1899
Lt. Colonel G. M. Vannovskii	1900–1902
Lt. Colonel V. K. Samoilov. L eft 1905; returned 1906 -made Colonel.	1903–1906
Colonel Samoilov; arrival of aide Lt. Colonel B. A. Semenov	1907
Colonel Samoilov; B. A. Semenov	1908–1912
Colonel Samoilov; aide Lt. Colonel N. M. Morel’	1912–1915
Colonel N. M. Morel’	1915–1916
Colonel V. Iakhontov	1916–1918
Colonel M. P. Podtiagin	1919–1923

3 The Emergence of a Colonial Military Elite

Prince Bariatinskii and the Asian Geopolitical Debate in Russia, 1856–98

A social elite at any time in history is the product both of an organized, widely respected and recognized set of legal divisions and of a more indefinable but still vital web of social and personal contacts. Within Russia the increasing structuralization of ruling elites began with Peter the Great's table of ranks in 1722 and reached its pinnacle in the nineteenth century with the bureaucratization of government and the creation of a number of major policy-forming ministries. Nonetheless even as the Russian government became more structuralized, political patronage and, for leading ministers, personal access to the Tsar, remained as vital as ever. This contradiction within the heart of Russian society was summed up by a word used by ordinary Russians in both Tsarist and Soviet times to resignedly address the inconveniences of everyday life – '*proizvol*', a word roughly translated as 'arbitrariness'. Russian peasants tolerated the evils of everyday life by the belief that wicked ministers intervened in the relations between them and their saintly 'Tsar Batiushka' or 'Little Father', creating corrupt policies. During the Soviet period thousands would similarly cling to the personal conviction that Stalin himself never received their petitions for aid or mercy, and that he was being deceived over the true situation in the countryside by the reports of corrupt intermediaries. This inability of Russian society to fully metamorphose into a German-style *rechstaat* was a source of frustration for many Tsarist ministers in the late imperial period, becoming a particular hobbyhorse for Finance Minister Sergei Witte. Having risen to power through the personal support of Tsar Alexander III, Witte experienced the career consequences of losing the support of his son, Nicholas II, at first-hand in 1903, and his later memoirs were in part a prolonged, albeit somewhat hypocritical, call for a more law-governed Russian society. For the newly-emergent Russian colonial elite meanwhile, access to figures of power within that elite and the use of patronage to secure career advancement were no less important than for Russia's civilian administrators. Two individuals in particular figured large in the patronage network of this new colonial elite in the latter nineteenth century – War Minister D. A. Miliutin and the man who had himself once enlisted Miliutin as his assistant, Prince Aleksandr Ivanovich Bariatinskii (1815–79), one-time viceroy of the Caucasus. Together these two men achieved the greatest strategic coup in the Russian colonial sphere of this

period – the capture of Shamil in 1859 – but they also affected the career patterns and life views of a whole generation of officers who either served under them or later emerged in their shadow.

A member of one of Russia's oldest noble families, Prince Bariatinskii was also a childhood friend of the future Alexander II, a drinking companion of the Russian writer Lermontov, and a scion of Russia's very highest social elite. His father had intended him for service in either the Finance or Foreign Ministries and had striven to provide him as a child with the very best form of contemporary 'enlightened' education.[1] Following his fathers' death however Bariatinskii had made his career in the army, joining the Caucasus line in 1835 and gradually gaining fame and recognition as well as steady promotion through participating in numerous military campaigns against the mountaineers. In the process he also become increasingly interested in developing an overall strategy for the pacification of the Caucasus. A chance encounter with an 1854 report by D. A. Miliutin on the same theme laid the roots for a later strategic partnership when Bariatinskii eventually became Viceroy of the Caucasus in 1856. Together the two men worked harmoniously in the final campaigns against Shamil, but Miliutin's subsequent rise to the rank of War Minister later soured relations between the two men. As Miliutin's star was in the ascendant, Bariatinskii's gradually entered eclipse, his reputation sullied by a marriage disapproved of by the court and by disagreements between Miliutin and his former chief over the course of military reform in Russia. However despite this personal setback, Bariatinskii's influence not only on the military thinking but also on the cultural mindset of Russia's succeeding generation of imperialists was profound. While the emphasis here will be on his strategic influence therefore, it is necessary also to note in passing his personal influence on the Slavophile movement within the army.

Bariatinskii's Slavophile tendencies emerged most strongly during the Polish crisis of the 1860s, but he also had a direct personal influence on the individual who would later emerge as the army's most ardent Slavophile campaigner, General Cherniaev, the Russian conqueror of Tashkent.[2] Cherniaev's passionate Slavophile beliefs ultimately led him to desert the Russian army and to join the Serbian forces in their struggle against the Ottoman Empire in 1876, an act that brought him both national renown among the Russian public and infamy at the imperial court. Slavophilism would in fact continue to prove a potent ingredient in many aspects of the New Russian Imperialism of the late nineteenth century, as the figures of Generals M. D. Skobelev, Fadeev and E. P. Kovalevskii also demonstrate.[3] Skobelev was another colonial general who basked in Bariatinskii's friendship, and, like Cherniaev, earned War Minister Miliutin's enmity as a result. Though Skobelev had already gained many laurels in his Central Asian campaigning, during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78 in which he gained his greatest public fame he was also in deep disfavour both with the court and with Miliutin himself, at least in part through his known association

with Bariatinskii. Fascination with the East among Slavophiles meanwhile ultimately mutated to produce an ideological movement, the *Vostochniki*, some of whose members and supporters, Prince Ukhtomskii and Minister of Finance Sergei Witte in particular, were actually to briefly guide Russian state policy in the 1890s and early 1900s.[4]

Bariatinskii's key significance to the Russian school of eastern strategy lies, however, in two other aspects aside from his Slavophilism: in his personal actions in the Caucasus and in the influence he had on the small cadre of officers that he gathered around himself there. Bariatinskii was an individual possessing, as one scholar recently put it, 'a penchant for promoting the most diverse strategic, diplomatic, domestic and foreign policy projects'.[5] While the wildness of some of these schemes was undoubtedly one factor in his later fall from favour, during his period as Viceroy of the Caucasus he was also responsible for inspiring a generation of soldiers with a vision of Russia's potential in the East in a way very few others had.

One of Bariatinskii's most distinctive traits was his ability to see both the Caucasus and Central Asia as part of a united strategic sphere demanding special interest and care. Thus he was among the first to see a link between Russian reverses in the Black Sea and Britain's position in India – to sense that 'the road to Constantinople lay through Herat'.[6] When a campaign to India was proposed in 1878 in response to the general Eastern Crisis created by the presence of a Russian army at the walls of Constantinople, Bariatinskii, to Miliutin's ire, was among the most forthright supporters of such an enterprise.[7]

While a number of offensive plans based upon this principle appeared in 1878, Bariatinskii's earliest thoughts on these matters were actually defensive. The Crimean War had created a paradigm that was to guide Russian strategic policy till 1870, that of a European coalition attacking Russia on its most distant borderlands. This posed as grave a threat in Asia as in the Baltic and Black Sea.[8] Indeed, the Crimean War itself had seen small-scale but significant action by an Anglo-French naval force bombarding the Russian port of Petropavlovsk-na-Kamchatke in the Far East.[9] Fearing a British strike from the East in 1856, Bariatinskii recommended establishing friendly relations with the Turkmen, opening relations with the rulers of Central Asia generally, building observation points on the Caspian and renewing relations with Persia.[10] To help accomplish these schemes he recommended dispatching a military-scientific mission to the Central Asian khanates to gather information-the genesis of the Ignat'ev Mission of 1858.[11] Bariatinskii found in Ignat'ev, until then the Russian military agent in London, an ally and protégé who shared his views on the inevitability of a future Anglo-Russian conflict in Central Asia. Before departing on his travels Ignat'ev had already written an influential note to his superiors on the need for better Russian intelligence regarding Central Asia, Afghanistan and Persia.[12] Ignat'ev's mission was ultimately destined to be one of three intelligence 'probes' deployed by the War Ministry with the aid of the Asiatic

Department of the Foreign Ministry and the Imperial Geographic Society in 1856–58. The other two comprised the trip of N. V. Khanykov to Iran and Herat and the groundbreaking expedition of the Kazakh explorer Captain Chokan Valikhanov to Kashgar. However Ignat'ev in particular, brought to the Tsar's attention by Bariatinskii, went on to become one of the major inheritors of Bariatinskii's eastern legacy. As head of the Asiatic Department of the Foreign Ministry he and War Minister D. A. Miliutin were later to oversee the first stages of the annexation of Central Asia, a movement for which Ignat'ev was an impassioned proponent.[13]

Bariatinskii also initiated in 1857 some of the first actual staff feasibility studies on Russian strategy in the East, utilizing the talents of two staff officers of the Caucasus military district-Lieutenant-General A. A. Neverovskii (1818–64) and Major-General E. I. Chirikov (1805–62), while Lieutenant-General S. A. Khrulev (1807–70) also contributed an independent study on his own initiative. These men were characteristic of the types of staff officer interested in Asian affairs who would go on to typify personnel at the Asiatic Department of the General Staff. Neverovskii, a staff graduate of 1838, had served in the Caucasus in 1840–45, taking part in many expeditions and going on to publish in the War Ministry's 'Military Journal' articles such as 'A Historical View on Dagestan' and 'On the Beginning of Unrest in Northern and Central Dagestan'. Chirikov was a staff officer equally experienced in Asian affairs, having served in the Russo-Turkish war of 1828–29 and also having helped mediate in delimiting the Russo-Turkish and Russo-Persian borders between 1848 and 1853. Chirikov's earlier studies, once communicated back to St. Petersburg, had resulted in the production of 96 plans of localities along the joint Turco-Persian frontier as well as the working out of potential route marches as far as Mecca, Medina and Bahrain. Such an enterprise, which far exceeded the remit of the border commission in which Chirikov participated, testified to Russian military-political interests at the time stretching as far as the Persian Gulf.[14] Khrulev meanwhile had directed the siege and storm of the Kokandian fort of Ak-Mechet (renamed Perovskii) in 1853 and had served in the Caucasus Corps since 1856.

Neverovskii on Bariatinskii's prompting wrote a cautious presentation on a possible Russian expedition to India, urging that the Russians must determine whether they wished to conquer the country or merely drive the English out. He set out four preconditions he regarded as essential, including a Persian alliance and the certainty that war would not erupt in Europe. Only exceptional circumstances, such as an uprising against the English, could justify so risky a venture as a Russian advance on India. Chirikov meanwhile, dividing Anglo-Russian rivalry in Asia into three categories – political, commercial and military – concluded that an armed collision was unlikely, although in that event he foresaw Kokand as a supply area and Bukhara as a forward base for Russian forces. The creation of a Caspian flotilla capable of landing Russian troops on the Persian bank,

perhaps at Astrabad, (present-day Gorgan) could have important political effects in terms of securing Persia's loyalty. Examining at the same time the situation in the Persian Gulf, Chirikov again recommended political over military measures – manipulating American and French interests in the region for instance – to forestall English goals of local hegemony. In particular he recommended the patronage of Muslim pilgrims from the Trans-Caucasus as a possible means for the Russian military to gain intelligence agents in Baghdad, Bushire, Shiraz and Mohammer.[15] Khrulev's memorandum meanwhile, submitted independently during the course of the Crimean War itself, and largely reiterated during the Polish crisis of 1863, remained the most visionary. He outlined a Russian expedition from Astrakhan to Peshawar and Atok that would take either 82 or 109 days depending on the precise route of advance, through either Khiva or Persia, respectively.[16]

These early staff studies on Russian strategy in the East initiated by Bariatinskii were decisively rejected by the Foreign Ministry and by War Minister N. O. Sukhozanet. The latter in particular wrote a lengthy report to the Tsar on the impracticality of a Russian expedition to India, particularly given Russia's parlous financial condition. In this memorandum he portrayed Britain as an all-powerful manipulator, infinitely capable of avoiding battle while buying off Persia, Turkey and Afghan tribesmen till the moment came when they could fall on the weakened Russian armies, taking advantage of their over-extended supply line. Even a limited expedition to seize Herat, in his view, could not really promise decisive political results in Russia's favour.[17] He recommended measures closer to home, including the stockpiling of Astrakhan and Baku with military supplies and the more rapid rearmament of the Caucasus corps with rifled carbines and percussion arms as a means of attaining security in the East. In particular he recommended the creation of a general reserve in the Volga area, comprising the VIth and IVth army corps, a strategic theme that the Russian General Staff would curiously later return to in 1910. The rapid dispatch of these forces in wartime he assigned to river traffic rather than to rail lines however, and to this end he also urged an increase in military and commercial traffic on the Volga river and Caspian Sea. Though prone to exaggeration and displaying shortcomings in geographical knowledge, these studies indicate that Russian staff officers had begun to seriously consider the geopolitical significance and difficulties of their Asian frontiers long before the full conquest of Central Asia was ever undertaken. In this regard, as in so much else, the Crimean War served to sound a strategic alarm call for Russia's policy-forming elites, and Bariatinskii led the way in highlighting the dangers that had emerged and in focusing attention on potential corrective measures.[18]

Bariatinskii's influence was not merely strategic however, but administrative. Another officer who served under him and who went on to serve in Central Asia was D. I. Romanovskii. The two had initially met in 1847, when Romanovskii came to the Caucasus to gain combat experience prior to his

enlisting at the Staff Academy.[19] Later, Bariatinskii would visit Romanovskii at the academy to discuss with him his own ideas on warfare in the Caucasus, comparing the Prince's plans with the lectures on the Caucasus that Romanovskii was then receiving at the academy from Miliutin. Romanovskii's service in the Caucasus gave him an opportunity to observe strategy being made there at the highest level. Some indication of the confidences he was let into is evident in a letter Bariatinskii sent to Miliutin in 1856, when Bariatinskii set about asking the latter to become his Chief of Staff:

> I dispatch to you, by way of a plenipotentiary envoy, Captain Romanovskii, to pass to me and receive from you explanations, which might escape or be difficult to express on the page; he is to me a person I can trust and I dare to think that he might manage to win your trust as well.[20]

The future Russian War Minister later recalled Romanovskii as an individual in fact 'worthy of trust' and credited him with having played a major role in the persuasion process that led Miliutin to subsequently join Bariatinskii in the Caucasus.[21] Romanovskii's key role as an intermediary and disciple of the two men would have a direct impact on his own (very successful) military career. On writing his own later lectures on warfare in the Caucasus in 1860, Romanovskii praised Bariatinskii as the only commander to have grasped the torch of understanding dropped since the death of Vel'iaminov – the only general to see the Caucasus as essentially an administrative problem akin to a siege.[22] These lectures were based in part both upon Romanovskii's first-hand observations of the Caucasus and upon personal talks he had had with Shamil, the defeated rebel leader, when Romanovskii was himself the head of the General Staff's temporary Asiatic Department in 1859.[23] Romanovskii's lectures, which in the newfound spirit of the times aspired to be a 'military-statistical portrait',[24] with accompanying emphasis on geography and ethnography, shared Bariatinskii's view on Russia's future in the East:

> If Peter the Great founded St. Petersburg to break through a window through which Russia could look at Europe, then in our time by pacifying the Caucasus we break through a window for the whole of Western Asia, for Persia, Armenia, Mesopotamia, sunk in an age of torpor.[25]

In writing his lecture series then, Romanovskii was striving very much to formulate a strategic paradigm from the Caucasus experience that might be usefully applied as Russia sought to expand its influence over other Muslim lands. The work of Bariatinskii and Miliutin in the Caucasus already suggested a number of fruitful approaches. Between them, they had rearranged the Caucasus military system on a more logical supply and

command pattern of military districts – a pattern Miliutin would repeat of course in his later, wider reform of the Russian Empire. Such a pattern reinforced the distinction of the Caucasus and Central Asian armies from the metropole – Bariatinskii establishing in law what Vorontsov had already achieved in theory, that the Caucasus demanded an 'independent high command'.[26] The military district system sanctioned local staff networks to supplement the St. Petersburg centre with their own expertise; a system unlikely to have been formally instituted had not Bariatinskii proven its worth in defeating Shamil. Miliutin himself went on to acknowledge in his memoirs the importance of the Caucasus experience to his own later development of the concept.[27] In the words of one recent scholar, there therefore grew up out of the Caucasus experience a military staff system across the empire with 'its own geography of talent, which complemented its emerging culture of talent'.[28] Stress upon individual drill and training in the Caucasus Corps including fencing, gymnastics, literacy and arithmetic produced a crack force that Miliutin, again, would try to reproduce in his later wider reform of the army.

This remarkable burst of administrative effort was reinforced by the emphasis Bariatinskii placed upon accurate analysis of the *social* problem of the Caucasus, best demonstrated in his report 'on the internal condition of the Caucasus'.[29] Having attributed the strength of Shamil's revolt to the Russians' initial misunderstanding of the balance between clan and clergy, *shari'a* and *adat* law, Bariatinskii proposed that the creation of long-term peace in the Caucasus would rest on separating civil from spiritual society, so weakening the temporal powers of the Muslim clergy. This would turn the people gradually towards embracing the legal civic role of Russian nationality while – and this was a pet project of Bariatinskii's – a reinvigorated Armenian Christian church would gradually take the place of the Islamic faith in people's spiritual lives.[30] While containing elements that were Bariatinskii's own, this formula foreshadowed Kaufman's later policy of officially ignoring the Muslim religion in Central Asia rather than directly intervening, and marked a stark contrast from the spasmodic attempts at forced conversion and intervention attempted by the Russian state in the Muslim borderlands in the past.[31] This policy of attempting to create what Romanovskii termed a '*modus vivendi*' of imperial accommodation with the local Muslim population would become the governing policy of the Asiatic Department in subsequent years. Bariatinskii's own belief that in supporting local nobility the Russians had in fact driven the population into the hands of the fanatical clergy would also prove a particularly influential point of view just a few years later. The period of the Great Reforms in Russia during the 1860s saw the formulation and introduction of what one scholar has since termed 'citizenship strategy' in the eastern borderlands. In this policy Miliutin, among others, would support a direct break from traditional Russian military – political practices in the past. From now on along its Asiatic frontiers the Tsarist administration would desist from issuing medals

and awards to traditional tribal nobility, favouring instead the establishment of new institutions of self-government and reformed courts. It is difficult to interpret this new policy instituted from 1868 onwards as anything other than a direct legacy of Russia's Caucasus experience.[32]

The lessons Romanovskii (and by implication Miliutin, Romanovskii often merely serving as his mouthpiece) drew from Bariatinskii's campaigns was that the subjugation of Muslim lands should rest on clearly attainable military goals appropriate to a strategic siege in conjunction with conciliatory political measures. These measures would be designed to avoid local unrest and at the same time to create new bonds of civic loyalty to Russia. Examining the results of the recent revolt by the 'unwarlike' Indian people against the British, Romanovskii pointed out that the use of measures of 'excessive constriction' in the Caucasus, so much more warlike and inaccessible, would lead to a 'war of annihilation' which 'would demand sacrifices that Russia in its present condition could barely sustain'.[33] Romanovskii also came to actually apply some of the administrative experience of the Caucasus during his own period of command in Central Asia, guided by his mentor during that later period, Miliutin. Utilizing Bariatinskii's actions in the Caucasus as his model, Romanovskii reinforced and reorganized the power of native courts (*mekhkettas*) in order to challenge and undermine the power of the traditional Muslim clergy.[34]

The *mekhketta* is a useful symbol of how the Russian General Staff attempted to understand and adopt local customs and then apply them across a broad scale. Such secular courts had first spread with the Arab Empire, but with its passing had steadily lost ground and influence to the Islamic clergy. Seeking any traditional civil structure that would undermine the clergy's dominance, Russian forces in the Caucasus had first reinstituted these courts during the reign of Ermolov, but it took the efforts of Bariatinskii to get them enough funding to escape charges of corruption and abuse of power. Bariatinskii had consciously based his actions here both upon the precedent set earlier by Ermolov and upon the use made by the French of similar institutions in Algeria.[35] Study of the French experience for comparison was by no means a novel approach on Bariatinskii's part however. As early as the 1840s the head of the Caucasus Committee had drawn up for Nicholas I a comparative study of Russian and French administrative policies in the Caucasus and Algeria, respectively.[36] Nonetheless, once they had earned a reputation for fairness, demand for the courts Bariatinskii promoted in the Caucasus in this later period spread enormously, creating an active counterbalance to the rougher instant justice of Shamil's subordinates (*naibs*). With Miliutin's support, Romanovskii promoted the use of such courts in Central Asia on a similar principle, and instituted two parallel systems, one for the urban Sarts based on *shari'a* and *adat* laws, and one for the less deeply indoctrinated nomad population based largely on traditional custom. Members of the court were elected, disputed decisions were to be referred to the Russian governor-general, while in the

Tashkent *mekhkettas* there was to be one 'indispensable' member – the *kazi*, or traditional judge. Within the Central Asian context however, as later critics have noted, the Russian adoption of such institutions in practice had as much a disruptive as placatory effect. The formal election of *kazis* replaced the older system of having these men appointed by khans, and led to governmental corruption in consequence.[37] Local unrest in the 1860s meanwhile led to the *mekhketta* system being abandoned and contributed indirectly to Romanovskii's replacement as the local commander-in-chief. Nonetheless the principle of legislative toleration for local law and custom continued to be practiced by the Russian army in its Asiatic military districts and other spheres of influence in Asia, most notably in Manchuria.[38]

The Caucasus War, therefore, had a deep and long-lasting influence upon Russia's succeeding generation of Asiatic experts in both geopolitical and administrative terms. Administratively, it firmly entrenched in the Russian military consciousness an undoubtedly already latent respect for, and abiding fears regarding, 'Muslim fanaticism'. As late as 1911 the now aged Miliutin, having long since ceased to be War Minister, but still possessing a sharp mind and a strong interest in state affairs, wrote an advisory note on the problems facing all contemporary multi-national states, comparing the experience of Russia to Austria-Hungary, Switzerland, Turkey, America, Britain, and China. In this private note Miliutin considered religion to be one of the main obstacles to the absorption of a people by the modern state, a factor in his view second in importance only to the cultural level of a people at the moment of absorption. In a comment undoubtedly informed both by his personal experiences in the Caucasus and by his later role as War Minister in suppressing the Polish uprisings, Miliutin wrote: 'Of all the faiths, the worst influence has Mahommedism with its fanaticism, and Roman Catholicism with its pretensions to authority'.[39]

Miliutin nonetheless went on to urge as much governmental restraint and tolerance as possible, advising that the clergy of these faiths should feel as much protection under the law as the clergy of the official state church, and that the main tool of the state in battling such influences should be its educational policies. Thus Miliutin in his old age retained faith in the liberal Catherinian line of flexible integration towards the eastern borderlands that he had helped institute during the 1860s, even as in the early twentieth century other governmental actors, most notably Prime Minister Stolypin, began instead to see a program of aggressive state-led Russian colonization of the borderlands as an ultimate solution to these problems.[40]

In strategic terms meanwhile, with a few notable exceptions such as Lomakin's 1879 expedition to Geok-Tepe, the Russians in this later period deployed their troops to attainable goals, aiming at the type of gradual strategic envelopment advocated by Vel'iaminov, Bariatinskii and Romanovskii. This was a policy guided not only by the Caucasus experience but also by the simultaneous steppe expeditions of the 1840s and 1850s. The desert proved as unforgiving as mountain terrain to military attempts at

fighting lightning campaigns, as Perovskii's 1839 expedition against Khiva had demonstrated. Russian thinkers came to lay stress on the virtues of this firm but gradualistic approach by comparing it favourably to the British policy on the Northwest Frontier of India; to many Russians it became another symbol of their greater understanding and superiority in dealings with Asiatics.[41] The majority of the participants in the conquest of Central Asia had previous experience in 'Asiatic' or steppe warfare, so therefore we can say that their actions were to a degree coordinated simply by virtue of common training and by the aforementioned 'Caucasus legacy'. This was evident in the preference for limited, fixed objectives and close tactical formations discussed in the next chapter, alongside the already-noted administrative preferences towards subjugated peoples. The generals operated with the explicit support of Miliutin and the War Ministry, often against the advice of the Foreign Ministry and its Asiatic Department, creating an understandable image of deliberate diplomatic duplicity in the eyes of foreign observers.[42] The colonial elite raised in Russia's conquest of the Caucasus also had both a direct interest and an active personal role in the conquest of Central Asia. During the early stages of that conquest, Caucasus veterans helped form the new Central Asian line battalions and wore their Caucasus medals with pride; later on, Russia's Central Asian forces sang old Caucasus songs, substituting the names of their own generals in place of the names of heroes from the Caucasus War.[43] Caucasus generals like Ermolov had also expressed a strong strategic interest in the eastern bank of the Caspian since the 1820s, and later on Caucasus generals came to occupy significant administrative posts in Central Asia. To cite just one example, General A. V. Komarov, a formidable expert on the Caucasus mountaineers' *adat* law, would also later come to serve as head of Turkestan's Trans-Caspian *oblast'*.[44] The personal interests of this Caucasus *clique* also resulted in the administrative anomaly that until 1899 the Trans-Caspian *oblast* formed part of the Caucasus Military District. However, although the geopolitical advantages of expansion to the East had been understood by Bariatinskii and officers of the Russian General Staff serving in the Caucasus before the 1860s, the conquest *itself* did not unfold in the ways they had either foreseen or recommended.[45] Noting these factors does not however invalidate the general conclusion that a distinct 'Asiatic lobby' of military and diplomatic personnel was now a genuine influence in Russian policy-making. The form this lobby group took was especially marked in Central Asia during the governor-generalship of K. P. fon Kaufman, himself an enthusiastic patron of scientists and Asiatic experts.[46]

As Governor-General in Central Asia Kaufman continued the traditions of patronage and autocratic, paternalistic rule practiced by Bariatinskii and Vorontsov in the Caucasus, with the same effect on the career patterns of staff officers who served under him. The Staff Academy's official historian meanwhile also noted an overall increase of General Staff – trained officers serving on the Asiatic frontiers in this period, particularly after Alexander II allowed

officers of the Caucasus military-political administration to enrol in the General Staff after 1865.[47] One of Kaufman's most notable protégés in Central Asia was Staff Captain A. N. Kuropatkin, an officer who would ultimately of course go on to rise to the very top of his profession and serve as Russian War Minister at the turn of the century. In the eyes of both contemporaries and later critics, Kuropatkin was the quintessential Russian imperial soldier. Though he would assist in preparing Russian war plans for Europe in the 1880s, Kuropatkin, like Miliutin and Bariatinskii before him, had first earned his spurs fighting Russia's wars in Asia. In the process he became, in the view of the British politician and future Indian viceroy George Nathanial Curzon, 'the leading exponent of Central Asian tactics in the Russian army'.[48] Kuropatkin's interest in Asian campaigns would even lead him briefly, in the 1870s, to visiting the French Saharan Corps in Algeria and becoming in the process an honorary French Legionary. His absorption and complete inculcation into Miliutin's school of statistical methodology meanwhile would also lead him to later initiating, when he himself became War Minister, an enormous geopolitical survey of Russia's frontiers with an accompanying assessment of the main tasks facing the Russian army in the twentieth century. A major aspect of Kuropatkin's personality throughout his whole career was the extent to which he, like Bariatinskii and Miliutin, consistently assessed Russia's position in world affairs from an imperial perspective. In 1885, over ten years before he even became War Minister, Kuropatkin was already confiding to his secret diary where he hoped to see the Russian Empire after 50 years. In this private note he visualized a world scene that either favoured Russian imperial interests or presented a dark threat to them, and he accordingly supported a strict Russifying educational policy in the borderlands. For Kuropatkin in 1885 a positive outcome for Russia after 50 years would be a 200-million strong empire linked breadthways by railways, with warm water ports in both east and west and with a population both speaking and thinking in Russian. In such an empire a Baltic German visiting Berlin, a Helsinki Swede or a Sart from Tashkent on pilgrimage to Mecca would each answer proudly, if asked about their origins by foreigners, 'We are Russian!' The dark alternative to this vision of Russia's future was a German-dominated Eastern Europe, with German guns on the Bosphorus, and the vast unplumbed territories of Eastern Siberia annexed and occupied by a Chinese army modernized by means of German finance and military assistance.[49]

As a true imperial soldier who spent almost his whole career before he became War Minister serving in Turkestan, Kuropatkin appears to have never forgotten the role of Kaufman in his own professional development, much as Bariatinskii had influenced both the views and career ascent of Romanovskii and Miliutin. A significant portion of Kuropatkin's later unpublished memoirs was devoted to a glowing and laudatory account of Kaufman's administration in Central Asia.[50]

By the end of the nineteenth century therefore the colonial elite within the Tsarist military had reached the very apex of its development, and members

of this school were gaining the highest posts in government. Thanks to Miliutin's own influence as War Minister, colonial experience was viewed remarkably positively, to the extent that Kuropatkin, himself in many ways a 'colonial' general, could become War Minister in 1898. A backlash against this process only began following the Russo-Japanese War in 1904–05, when Kuropatkin in particular became the lightning rod for criticisms regarding the whole system. A. A. Svechin, a participant in the Russo-Japanese War who later taught at the Soviet General Staff Academy in the 1920s, subsequently summed up all Kuropatkin's failures as a field commander by specific reference to his very personality as a 'colonial' soldier:

> Regarding the negative influence of the practical school of colonial wars through which Kuropatkin passed in Algeria and Central Asia, it made itself felt in a weakened sense of war as a field of risk, as an area in which it is essential to take decisions in the dark . . . The pluses and minuses of being a commander in colonial campaigns were all visible in Kuropatkin in full measure.
>
> His experience, foresight and organizational talents in regard to meeting the material needs of the troops were exceptional. But he tried to conduct a great war without taking risks, like a colonial expedition.[51]

Before 1905 though, although the differences between the Russian army in the western borderlands and the army of the southern 'colonial' regions remained in many ways just as singular and distinct as in other, overseas, empires, service in the Asian borderlands was nonetheless, thanks to Miliutin's own influence, treated not as a hindrance to military promotion but rather as a positive benefit. The discord that this newborn colonial elite had displayed during the conquest of Central Asia did not bode well for their future work together however, in contrast to Russia's 'Western' strategic lobby for whom the menace of Germany after 1870 became an unchallenged strategic orthodoxy, favouring unified effort.[52] In the end only the Far East or Turkey would come to pose a similar focus to Russia's school of Eastern strategists, and even here a firm commitment to either one or the other theatre created a clear divergence of strategic interests. Before going on to consider the wider strategic commitments examined and undertaken by this new generation of Asiatic experts however, a look at the tactical level – the tools through which any proposed strategic plan had to operate – seems appropriate. Such a tactical study forms the substance of the next chapter.

4 Tactics of Expansion, 1714–1885

> Asiatic crowds may inconvenience us, but they cannot hinder us in the accomplishment of our designs. We have reached the stage in which, with judicious and systematic action – possessing artillery and ammunition beyond the proportions needed in European warfare – we can strike with effect in the open field and in the mountains.
>
> In a word, with our present experience . . . there is no Asia capable of preventing us carrying out the broadest strategical designs which we might conceive.
>
> General Skobelev, 1877[1]

The armies that Russia sent to conquer, guard and govern its Asiatic frontiers in the nineteenth century were often both metaphorically and literally armies of exile. Throughout much of the period under review, the rail network in the Asiatic provinces was even weaker than in European Russia, if not entirely non-existent. Consequently much of the tactics and strategy developed by the armies on the Asiatic frontiers aimed at achieving the greatest results with the least possible numbers. In Central Asia even in 1875, reinforcements might take a year to arrive, *marching on foot*, and War Minister Miliutin noted in his diary that assigning reinforcements there could prove a pointless exercise, since they could easily arrive too late to be effective.[2] Such conditions lay behind the extensive civil and military powers granted Governor-General Kaufman during his reign there. A degree of administrative autonomy proved the most logical option in the Caucasus, on the other hand, due not so much to long lines of communication as to the sheer complexity of governing the local multi-ethnic community.

Although Russia's Asiatic frontier by the end of the nineteenth century was governed by climactic extremes – from Adzhariia in the southwest Caucasus, the warmest part of the Russian Empire, to the frozen Siberian taiga of the Far East – in general the border terrain could best be summed up by the terms *mountain* and *steppe*. Mountainous terrain limited lines of approach, while the steppe was dominated by the opposite characteristic – complete freedom of movement, restricted only by the great aridity of the land and the extent and capacity of local water resources. In general,

geographic differences on either side of the border were nowhere so dramatic that analysis of past difficulties would have been entirely fruitless in the formation of future war planning.[3] Nonetheless the explorer Mikhail Veniukov complained that mountain and steppe warfare was comparatively ignored by the Russian tacticians of his day, despite the fact that 'both these types of warfare in Russia's borders are continual'. Veniukov credited A. I. Maksheev with producing the first work on steppe tactics in both his lectures to the Staff Academy and in an official entry on the subject in the Military-Encyclopedic Lexicon.[4] Veniukov's own article on the subject was intended to widen debate on the area in Russian military circles, but in the years that followed, commentary on the type of warfare Russia encountered on her Asiatic frontiers remained comparatively scanty, easily dwarfed by coverage of contemporary European military developments. The general balance of interest at the Russian Staff Academy is reflected in a catalogue of that Academy's library from 1879, when the library is recorded as containing 3,297 books. Under the category of 'wars in Asia from ancient times to the present era' the library had 100 works in various languages. This collection included diverse and often instructive material, such as an 1800 account of the English war in India against Tipu Sultan, a study of British operations in the Mahratta War of 1817–19, General Wolseley's account of war in China in 1860 and Kaye's history of the First Anglo-Afghan War. That collection was dwarfed however by the section in the library of holdings on 'wars in Europe from the Classical period to the present', which contained 2,313 works. On the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 alone the library possessed 296 works – i.e. there were more than twice as many works *on that one war alone* as there were works on wars in Asia.[5] Against this background, undoubtedly the two foremost campaigners within Russian military circles for greater study of steppe campaigns and Asiatic warfare were Lt.-Colonel A. I. Maksheev and General M. I. Ivanin (1801–73).

Both of these men were veterans of Russian warfare in the steppe in the 1830s to 1840s who had risen to serve in prominent posts by the time of Russia's major expansion in Central Asia in the 1860s and 1870s. Of the two, Maksheev had the greater claim to be influential given his holding of a teaching post in later life at the Nicholas Staff Academy. The single overriding principle that both Ivanin and Maksheev strove to inculcate in their listeners and readers was that Asiatic warfare demanded special techniques and careful study. Although heat, aridity and disease posed major obstacles to the movement of large bodies of troops in Asia, study of the campaigns of past conquerors – Chinggis-Khan, Tamerlane, Nadir Shah – proved that these obstacles were far from insurmountable. In his study of General V. A. Perovskii's Khivan campaign of 1839 (in which he participated), Ivanin pointed out at the outset that the purely seasonal factor of winter in the steppe should not be considered the sole overriding explanation for the failure of the expedition. As evidence he reminded his readers that both Chinggis-Khan and Tamerlane had campaigned successfully in the steppe in

winter in the past.[6] Ivanin attributed the failure of the Russian campaign primarily to disorganization and corruption in Perovskii's own supply train, a fact that again pointed indirectly to the need to study and organize for such campaigns more seriously and scientifically. The greatest scientific legacy Ivanin would himself leave was destined to be a comprehensive study of the campaigns and military tactics of Chinggis-Khan and Tamerlane. Based both upon eastern texts and the works of leading orientalists of the day, this work included campaign maps and diagrams of Mongol and Timurid battle-drill, and came to be published posthumously by the Russian General Staff.[7] In their activities both Ivanin and Maksheev also played some small role as progenitors of a school demanding the creation of a distinct and uniquely 'Russian' military art. As Maksheev wrote to a friend in 1858:

> To me it seems that one of the main insufficiencies of our academy comprises this, that it takes on entirely military science from the West and does not direct sufficient attention to the peculiarities of our own Russian historical experience and mission. The academy talks a great deal, for example, about Turenne and Montecuccoli and so on and, if I am not mistaken, not one word is said about Chinggis-Khan, Tamerlane, Nadir-Shah and others, and particularly about Ermak, at a time when for a long time we have not fought on the model of Montecuccoli and are regularly continuing the business of Ermak. They say, that in the actions of the Asiatic commanders and our Cossack-heroes, conquering Siberia, there is no military art, no science. This is true, according to the model of German systemization and dogmatic infallibility, so current among us in the last war (in 1855) – there is none really, but there is a science, lively and practical, which is experienced in Asia by those who are successful participants in our movement to the East.[8]

Maksheev and Ivanin were destined to be the leaders of a very small sect in Russian military-philosophical thought however. In the development of a school of 'Russian' military art that grew apace at the Staff Academy in the 1890s the role of steppe warfare would play no real part, overshadowed by memories of the military glories associated with Suvorov, the cult of the bayonet, and the war of 1812.[9] Nonetheless a study of the output of academy pupils during Maksheev's main period of employment there would suggest that his efforts in transmitting his personal concerns on to his listeners were not entirely fruitless.

In 1855 it was decided that officers enrolled in the Academy, aside from their course work, be asked to compose annually presentations on military-scientific themes. In 1860 the Academy resolved to assess these presentations on a scale of marks, the authors having to defend their works publicly before an examining board much in the manner of a *viva* for modern day postgraduate students at any major university. At the same time it was decided to print collections of the best such presentations for the benefit of the wider

military public. Maksheev served as editor on the first collection, a study of actions in the Trans-Caucasus theatre during the Crimean war. More unusual however was a piece contained in the collection published the following year, a detailed study by Lt. Khakovskii on the seventeenth century wars of Bogdan Khmel'nitskii against the Crimean Tatars. This study was accompanied by detailed diagrams of the make-up and deployment formations of the Tatar forces, thus giving a full overview of traditional nomad tactics. Khakovskii justified his unusual choice of subject on two main grounds, both of which echoed Maksheev's concerns. Firstly, the tactics employed by the study's main protagonist, Khmel'nitskii, differed significantly from those employed in the rest of Western Europe of the time, but were no less effective for all that. The Ukrainian commander's tactics were an entirely original, home-grown phenomenon through which he had nevertheless gained significant victories over the Polish forces, despite the fact that the latter were seen by contemporaries at the time as no less militarily advanced than the Swedish troops of the great Gustav Adolphus. Study of such phenomena in Khakovskii's eyes therefore demonstrated that the 'Russian' school of military art was in no way inferior to its European counterpart, and need not slavishly borrow from the West. Secondly, study of Khmel'nitskii's campaigns against the Tatars could in Khakovskii's view carry over a direct practical application for the present – 'allowing into our tactics a section on mountain warfare, we must not forget that war in the steppe has its own characteristic peculiarities . . . It will not be superfluous to study wars conducted in the steppes'.[10]

Such declarations indicate that Maksheev's vocal calls for the study of relevant past campaigns against Asiatic opponents in order to prepare directly for the present was therefore not falling entirely on deaf ears.

A lively interest in geographical conditions in Asia and European methods of colonial rule there would inform all of Maksheev's work meanwhile, including his trips abroad to Algeria and Egypt.[11] As early as 1856 Maksheev wrote a study of steppe warfare for the leading Russian military gazette of the day, striving to draw lessons from 'my own personal observations and experiences'. This study covered nearly every aspect of warfare in Russia's Central Asian theatres, from transport to fortifications, while also pointing the reader in the direction of Ivanin's earlier writings on Chinggis-Khan and Tamerlane. In short, a full ten years before the period of major expansion by Russian forces in Central Asia even began, Maksheev was already seeking to establish an organized and systematic method for studying warfare in such theatres.[12] Much of what follows therefore owes a large debt both to his own works and to those of a tiny band of followers who categorized lessons from combat in Central Asia retrospectively after the major period of expansion there.

Most of the conflicts Russia fought in expanding its Asiatic frontier fell under the contemporary category of 'small wars' (*malye voiny*). This was a term well understood in Russia, an officer of the General Staff having

produced a work of that title as early as 1850.[13] Russia had enormous experience of fighting partisan conflicts ranging from its conflicts with Poland to border clashes with China stretching back to the sixteenth century. Nonetheless the majority of analysis on this subject in Russian military thought concentrated on irregular warfare within the context of larger, regular-style conflict (such as the *Franc-Tireurs* of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870). Such operations were of great interest to the Russian General Staff since, based both on their study of the cavalry raids of the American Civil War and on the writings of the famous Russian partisan leader Denis Davydov from 1812, their war plans for Europe for much of this period were orientated upon a partisan-style cavalry raid upon the German rail network. In 1867 for example, during war games in the Warsaw military district, a cavalry detachment of 600 troops was despatched on a mock raid into the enemy rear area to a depth of 160 versts.[14] Planning for partisan-style actions also played a role in Russian war planning for the Far East, particularly during the Russo-Japanese War, where the Russians planned to utilize 'partisan detachments' of 200 officers and men each to operate in the Japanese rear in the event of a Japanese breakthrough in the Primor'e military district. This overall emphasis meant that Russian experience in actually *combating* irregular opponents received by contrast relatively meagre attention.

Given these proclivities, what characteristics *did* the Russian army therefore exhibit in the realm of tactics during its campaigns in Asia? Great distance and isolation could breed suspicion and distrust between periphery and metropole in the Russian Empire, just as it did in other, overseas empires. This alienation often expressed itself in direct visual and cultural terms. Early on in the Caucasus, the arrival of the new Viceroy, Vorontsov, brought at the same time a shining collection of staff-officers from St. Petersburg, whose expensive, inappropriate uniforms and refined manners contrasted sharply with the hardened, practical and more ragged Caucasus Corps.[15] This same feature was visible later in Central Asia, where the group of young officers out to gain rapid promotion from attending a single campaign were contemptuously referred to as *fazanii* ['pheasants'] by the long-suffering Turkestantsy.[16] For its part, the metropolitan army held officers who had gained all their experience and promotion fighting in Central Asia in low regard, wondering what possible military virtue could be attached to defeating the 'nightgowns'.

General Kuropatkin, himself of course a 'Turkestanets', felt that Central Asian officers had a closer bond to their men than the regular line officer, due to the greater call for sanitation precautions and the need to use every available blade and bayonet in battle.[17] Conditions in the Caucasus in the early part of the century were even more primitive, the Caucasus Corps becoming renowned for dividing its time between warfare, agriculture, and building its own accommodation on the ground, with a self-sufficiency ethic that recalled the Roman legions.[18] Yet not everybody saw the administrative

independence developed by the armies in the borderlands as a benefit. General M. I. Dragomirov felt that Central Asia was a 'vast factory for upstarts' where 'technique [had] been spoiled by the experience of small expeditions'. The very virtues noted by Kuropatkin regarding the predominant importance of sanitation were viewed by Dragomirov as vices, leading Dragomirov to fear the results should these officers encounter a tactically more imposing foe.[19] For the same reason a Russian officer confided to the English newspaper correspondent David Ker that:

> Turkestan is to us what Algeria has been in France-a kind of training school for more serious work. A good many of our young officers will learn their first lessons [here] . . . and will be all the better for it; but taken all together Asiatic warfare is hardly a good school for European soldiers . . . [20]

Criticism concerning Turkestan officers in the Russian army was particularly fierce following the Russo-Japanese war, a conflict that proved the undoing of a great many of them, not least Kuropatkin. Typical were the concerns expressed by M. V. Alekseev, one of a younger generation of professional staff officers whose career was mostly spent in the Western frontier districts, but who in 1904 was invited by A.V. Kaul'bars to serve as his general-quartermaster in the newly formed 3rd Manchurian army. While initially enthusiastic, upon joining Kaul'bars Alekseev was soon thoroughly bored by the older man relating details of his many previous steppe expeditions during the long train journey to the Far East. Later, observing Kaul'bars incapacity in combat, Alekseev commented that Russian commanders in general were badly trained to command in the field and noted contemptuously in particular that:

> The Kaul'bars-type of individual 'I have made eight campaigns' I am sickened with. A movement with two Cossack *sotnias* in Turkestan, a campaign with ten companies and two *sotnias*, carrying everything on camels with them, he has the audacity to call a campaign and to dream that he has experience in administering armies.[21]

Nonetheless whatever their merits or later failings, the Russian military experience in these theatres did produce a generation of soldier-ethnographers and geographers – Komarov, Kostenko, Sobolev, Maksheev, Kuropatkin, Przheval'skii, Veniukov – whose expertise and career path lay precisely in this very area of Asiatic warfare.

Like most armies of the period, the Russian army never codified its Asiatic experience, partly from the difficulty of collating first principles over a long time period, partly from the already-noted predominance given to European warfare throughout this period.[22] Maksheev himself assigned the crucial learning curve in the Russian army's tackling of steppe warfare to

the period 1847–63, a perhaps natural preference given that his own period of active military service in Central Asia dated from that time. Maksheev appears to have felt that the efforts of his own generation in mapping and studying conditions in Central Asia, laying down the roots of later victories, had been overshadowed by the more superficially spectacular (in terms of both political excitement and territorial gains) campaigns of 1865–73. During his trip to Central Asia in 1867 to prepare a new series of lectures for the Staff Academy, Maksheev's hottest and most bitter argument with Governor-General Kaufman concerned the neglect shown by the latter toward a local memorial commemorating those who had fallen in the Ak-Mechet campaign of 1853.[23] His emotional commitment to his own generation's achievements aside, Maksheev's argument for the campaigns of 1847–63 as a turning point in tactical training had a serious factual foundation. In the aftermath of the failed Khivan campaign of 1839–40, which was carried out in winter explicitly in the belief that the steppe was impassable in summertime, the Orenburg and West Siberian forces had entirely altered their approach, and set about finding out how to march in the hot dry conditions of the Kazakh steppe. From 1847 onwards annual campaigns were conducted along the Syr-Darya in place of the infrequent and unfocused probing expeditions of the past, and through this punishing regimen of regular campaigning seasons there was accumulated a large body of hard practical experience by the local unit commanders. General V. A. Obruchev, head of the Orenburg *krai* and a distant relative of the future Chief of the General Staff, drew up a regulation for steppe expeditions that allowed his men to march in shirtsleeve order, carrying only a musket and a bag of ammunition across the shoulder. Their greatcoats and satchels were carried on carts or across artillery gun carriages and the men were allowed to march freely, without observing the rigid marching-step associated with the 'paradomania' that elsewhere characterized Nicholas I's army. Obruchev's successor, Perovskii, improved matters yet further by agreeing to all suggestions regarding the reform of unit transport that were brought before him based on the experience and lessons of previous campaigning seasons. In this way the capacity of the future Turkestan forces to endure and even march great distances across the steppe in the height of summer increased rapidly.[24]

A further factor in the Russian development of steppe warfare was of course the evolution of certain distinctive tactical forms.[25] A prominent substitute for numbers early on became the triumvirate of mass, discipline and manoeuvre. Russian armies in both the Caucasus and Central Asia demonstrated a clear preference for solid formations in the face of their more mobile opponents. This approach was not without its critics, particularly in the Caucasus, where Russian columns were often a perfect target for mountaineer marksmen. It was an inheritance from Russia's eighteenth century wars with the Turks, the Russians having adopted squares as a means of repulsing their more mobile and numerous opponents, and also perhaps a legacy of the amalgamation of the Ukrainian land militia with the regular

army and the methods developed by the former for dealing with Tatar raiding parties.[26]

In the Caucasus, the Russian forces perfected the technique of 'carrying the column in a box' as the only way to avoid defeat in detail.[27] During his campaign against the Turkmen in Central Asia, General Skobelev insisted that: 'The main principle of Asiatic tactics is to observe close formations'.[28] Skobelev saw the discipline of the close formation as Suvorov had, as being in itself a force multiplier; in this respect, he insisted that in Turkestan conditions even a company was the equivalent of a 'moving Strasbourg'.[29] Other men whose tactics in Central Asia were drawn directly from the Caucasus experience supported his views on the advantages of discipline and organization. General Komarov, advancing on Merv in 1884, confided to one of his fellow officers that he felt little to fear:

> from his wide acquaintance with local customs and native warfare, gained by him in the Caucasus . . . these robber-tribes have no organized commissariat and cannot remain concentrated in one spot for any length of time.[30]

During his converging advance on Khiva, General Kaufman's columns marched without any continuous defended lines of communication, moving rather like ships at sea, a policy which preserved his own numbers but made life distinctly precarious for newspaper correspondents attempting to catch up with his troops.[31]

In Central Asia expeditionary columns, designed to ward of attack from all sides, became a tactical commonplace (see diagrams 1 and 2). The advance guard marched within sight of the main column, in contrast to normal European military practice. Immediately behind it came a sapper company, for the clearing of the route and the repair or even construction of roads and bridges. On all sides of the main column marched pickets of infantry or Cossacks, all defending the transport upon which Asiatic warfare depended, local resources being either meagre or non-existent.[32] Nighttime bivouac camps were similarly disposed to form defensive fields of fire, the transport being wheeled round to form a natural fort (*vagenburg*) on the steppe. Russian writers explicitly compared such formations and modes of fighting to those developed and used by the French in Algeria.

The raising of transport was a prodigious effort, the Khivan expedition of 1839–40 demanding for instance over 10,000 camels, while its 1873 successor demanded for one detachment alone over 8,800 camels.[33] Such demands created dissatisfaction among the local population having to provide both camels and camel guides (*lauchi*), while also alerting Russia's opponents of the onset of a Russian expedition. It was for these reasons that General Ivanin recommended in 1873 the formation of a permanent camel transport service on the model of the French in Algeria or the British in India.[34] The expense of a large corps could be avoided if even a cadre system

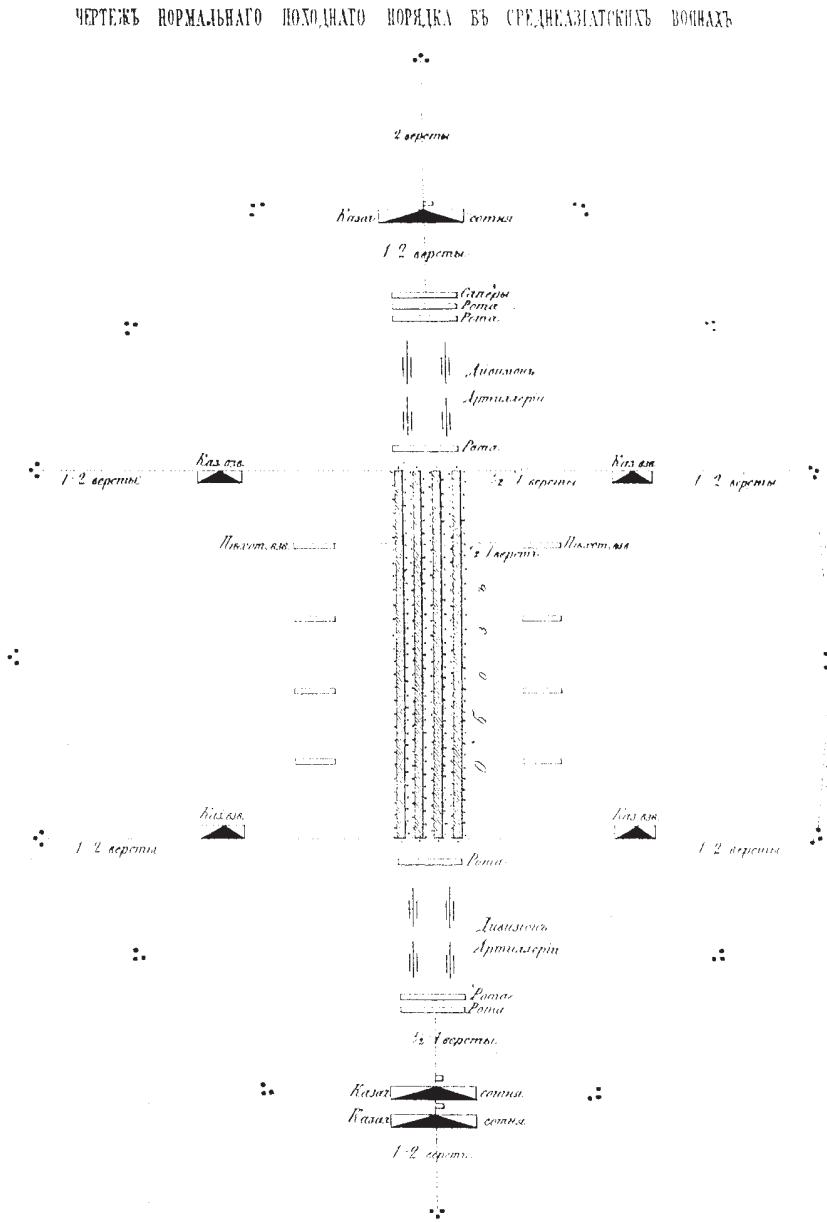

Figure 4.1 Tactics 1
Source: Kostenko, Turkestanskii Krai. Opyt voenno-statisticheskago obozreniia. Endpapers.

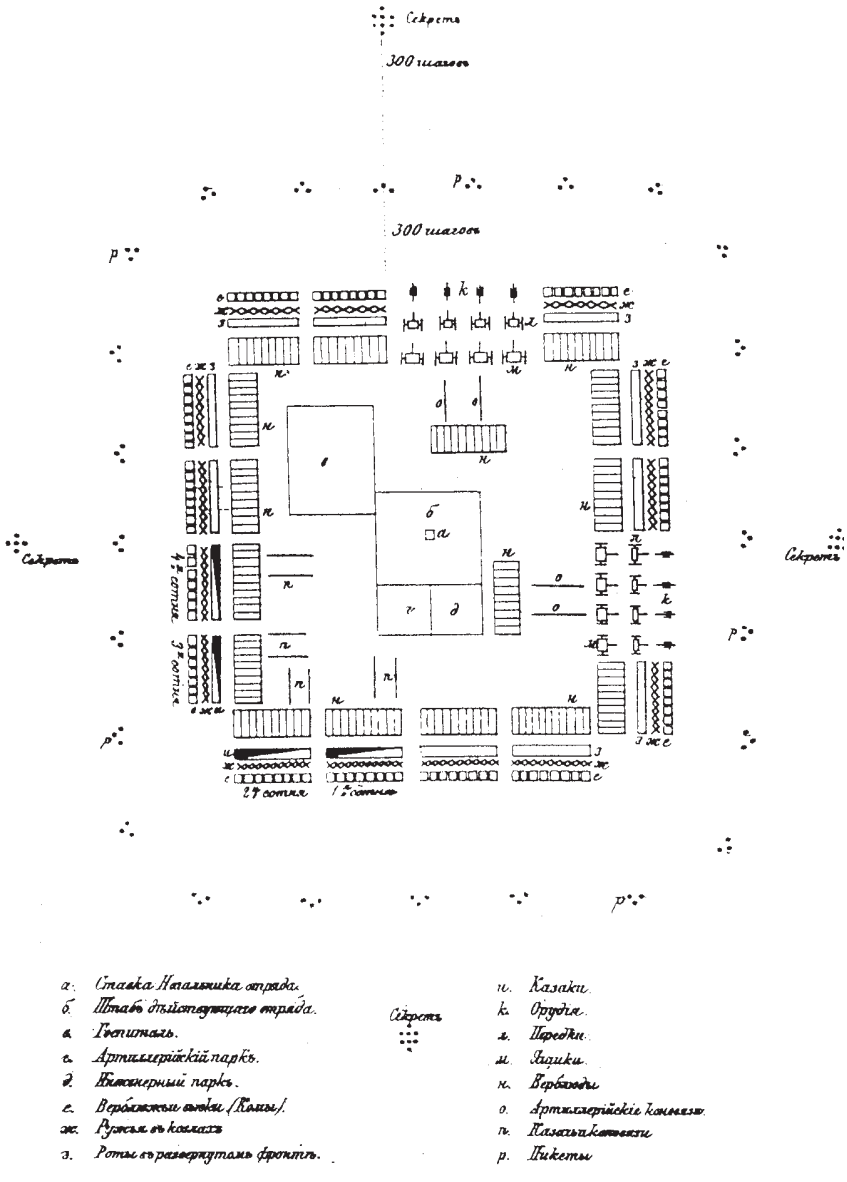

Figure 4.1 Tactics 2
Source: Kostenko, Turkestanskii Krai. Opyt voenno-statisticheskago obozreniia. Endpapers.

were to be set up in peacetime to avoid the disruption caused by creating a complete camel transport service on the outset of war. A. N. Kuropatkin, freshly returned from his trip to French-occupied Algeria in 1875, also spoke out in favour of the establishment of such a system on the basis of his own observation of it in practice at the French forward fort of Laguat.[35] It might be especially helpful, he hypothesized, at a forward post like Petro-Aleksandrovsk, which was required to constantly dispatch flying columns against raids of the predatory Turkmen. Ivanin's proposals, submitted to the Military-Scientific Committee of the General Staff and the Turkestan district staff, were rejected on the grounds that Russian expeditionary columns had to be routinely larger than anything used by the French in Algeria. The camel transport question was laid aside, eventually overtaken by the appearance of railroads in Central Asia. The only progressive reform made was that noted by L. F. Kostenko, that camels were better hired on the more expensive contract rather than warrant system, since this ensured that both healthier camels and more experienced camel leaders were provided.[36] Russian interest in the transport methods of the other European powers in their colonies continued however, and this was reflected in the Russian Main Staff's specialist publication on military and diplomatic developments in Asia, the *Sbornik . . . po Azii*. The *Sbornik* of 1885 contained a lengthy translation of a work on military transport by the Deputy Assistant Quartermaster-General of London that granted insights into British experience in this field gained during both the Abyssinian campaign of 1867–68 and the Second Afghan War of 1878–80.[37]

The burden borne by all this precious transport was of course overwhelmingly devoted to the maintenance of the soldier himself, local conditions being too poor to sustain large bodies of troops. Even in areas where the local soil was not completely barren, the restrictions and expense of local production could still act as a limitation on the size of force that could be deployed there. Veniukov noted that in the Amur region in the Russian Far East the price for every type of local bread actually *rose* continuously between 1866 and 1869 due to the still low level of local agriculture.[38] The majority of supplies had to be carried therefore, a situation that continued everywhere until the gradual introduction of the railway. Few studies of steppe warfare were complete without a listing of the rations – dried rusks, meat, dried cabbage, oats, brick tea, salt, sugar, biscuits – regarded as essential to the maintenance of the Russian fighting man. The pepper and vinegar issued troops to ward off fever in the damp subtropical conditions of the Black Sea coast were regarded as potentially harmful irritants in the dry conditions of the steppe.[39] Tinned conserves, the lifestuff of the colonial soldier by the turn of the century, were still too unreliable at the time of the major Russian expansion in Central Asia to be recommended except in case of dire necessity for flying columns. The British experiment in Abyssinia with large mobile field ovens to produce fresh bread was noted with interest by the Russians, but rejected on the grounds of both expense and practi-

cality. Rusks remained cheaper than bread, and the field ovens had proven so cumbersome that only pack-elephants could move them in the field.[40] Alcohol however was regarded as an extremely useful stimulant in hot, arid conditions, and so just as the French soldier had his absinthe and the British trooper his rum ration, so the Russian was issued a wine portion to sustain him. Since, however, 'immoderate application' of such spirits in these conditions was held to cause 'derangement of mind, complete paralysis and sometimes . . . instantaneous death' the portion was reduced across the period, from over a cup a day at the time of Prince Bekovich-Cherkasski's expedition to Khiva in 1717 to around four half-cups a month by 1873. The use of alcohol as a stimulant was gradually replaced by the greater application of tea, introduced as a regular ration for the Russian soldier in 1871.[41] The small scientific parties that scouted Russia's Asiatic borderlands of course experienced all the same problems that affected large expeditionary columns even more intensely. Among the many other scientific legacies left by Major-General N. M. Przheval'skii from his expeditions in Central Asia was a guide for his fellow General Staff officers and successors as to how best to travel in such country. Przheval'skii recalled that on his fourth expedition the party departed bearing, among other rations, 24 bottles of cognac, 12 jars of pickles, 25–30 small bottles of cranberry extract, 15–20 cans of condensed milk and 140 cans of sardines and other preserved fish. Alongside a catalogue of the instruments required for such reconnaissance work, including thermometers, binoculars, hypsometers, a compass, a good chronometer and a quantity of mercury, Przheval'skii noted that he provisioned his parties heavily with weaponry, each man bearing a Berdan infantry rifle and a Smith & Wesson revolver with 500 rounds of ammunition per rifle. All such precautions, as he pointed out, were conditioned by the fact that 'the handful of men that is an expedition, flung into the depths of Asiatic deserts, is more isolated than a boat at sea from the rest of the world'. These conditions also justified in his opinion the entirely military character of such enterprises, with Cossacks and Russian regular troops complementing each other's abilities.[42]

If local conditions made life difficult for infantry, they were even harder upon cavalry. Throughout this period the only form of cavalry Russia deployed along her Asiatic frontiers were the Cossacks, who in many areas closer approximated irregular forces rather than regular, disciplined troops. The Cossack served a dual function as both soldier and military settler, the latter role still being seen as a vital one by many administrators along Russia's Asiatic frontier for much of this period. Both M. N. Annenkov, commander of the Siberian Corps in 1853, in his review of the Semirech'e region in that year, and A. I. Bariatinskii as viceroy in the Caucasus in 1858, stressed the importance of military settlements in pacifying these distant, restless frontiers. Cossack settlements in the Caucasus after 1850 were supplemented by groups of retired married soldiers with 15 years' service in the Caucasus Corps, and by large groups of 'undesirable elements' –

religious schismatics like the Dukhobors and Molokans. As late as 1874 meanwhile Alexander II authorized the despatch of 100 Cossack families of the West Siberian forces to settle and farm the crucial strategic region with China around Lake Zaisan and Kuchum.[43] Nonetheless Russian Asiatic administrators throughout much of the latter nineteenth century expressed grave doubts over the continued utility of Cossacks, in direct contrast to Western observers who saw the Cossacks as the uniquely advantageous aspect of the Russian imperial system. In the Caucasus, General Vel'iaminov had complained of the poor impact made by the Cossacks against Shamil's men, attributing the superior horsemanship and swordsmanship of the Murids to the fact that they were not required to divide their time between military training and agriculture as the Cossacks were.[44] In one of his many analyses of the Caucasus as a young officer, D. A. Miliutin admitted that Cossack settlement near tribal areas seemed the only sure method of interdicting mountaineer raiding parties, but felt that the Cossacks' own 'carelessness' rendered them less than wholly efficient in such work.[45] Later, as War Minister, Miliutin almost immediately used the opportunity to come forward with proposals to reduce the size of the Cossack service. The Cossacks, he believed, were useful as irregular cavalry but defeated the main purpose of their existence in that even though they partially equipped themselves they were costly rather than economic to maintain. Only the renewed need for a large body of cavalry on the western frontier to meet the perceived growing menace of Germany persuaded Miliutin, by expediency, of the need to retain a system of universal military service among the Cossack *voiskos*.[46]

Poor Cossack tactical performance was repeated on other stretches of the Asiatic frontier. In Central Asia Cossack forces were no match for the Turkmen in individual combat and, being outnumbered, often dismounted to engage their opponents with gunfire rather than launch the traditional sabre charges of the past, mirroring the experience of contemporary European soldiers in other parts of Asia.[47] Skobelev forbade his cavalry to attack unshaken Turkmen horse and ordered rigid formation discipline, to the extent of making knee-to-knee cavalry charges, to make up for the Cossack's deficiency in single combat.[48] These orders were striking enough to elicit surprised comment from at least one British contemporary then engaged in a study of irregular warfare.[49]

In contemporary European eyes the epitome of the Russian Asiatic character therefore, in Russian eyes the Cossack was ironically often not 'savage' enough. Equally problematic, though less often stated in official accounts, was the question of the Cossacks' reliability and political loyalty. One recent study of the Terek Cossacks in the North Caucasus identifies a continuous incidence of Cossack defections and desertions, some Cossacks repeatedly changing loyalties between mountaineer rebels and the Russian government to the extent of even changing religious faith. Cossack settlements traded continually with their supposed Muslim enemies and relied upon the mountaineers for the best weapons, cloaks and horses. Upon the conclusion of

hostilities with Shamil, the Russian War Ministry eventually had to issue an amnesty to no fewer than 642 lower ranks that had deserted to join the mountaineer cause.[50] Reviewing the Russian forces that would be available for a campaign against China meanwhile, General Przheval'skii felt that the Cossack troops formed by far the weakest element of Russian forces on this section of the frontier, for moral and cultural as much as for technical reasons. Przheval'skii felt that:

> not one of the Cossack forces [available] can satisfy the demands of wartime. Such a sorrowful phenomenon is caused by the complete absence over years (even centuries in the case of the Siberians) of military training and by the very poor composition of the officer corps.

Highly critical reports regarding the firearms training of the Amur Cossack forces in both 1882 and 1899 suggests that Przheval'skii's criticisms in a technical sense were far from unfounded.[51] However the horrifying *cultural* conclusion Przheval'skii also reached upon reviewing Cossack settlements on this frontier was that:

> we do not influence Asiatics by our culture, but the other way about. The Cossacks adopt the language and customs of their *inorodets* neighbours . . . the Cossack parades in Chinese clothes, speaks in Mongol or Kirghiz; everywhere is preferred tea and the milk-beer [*kumus*] of the nomad. Even the physique of our Cossack degenerates and more frequently resembles the appearance of his neighbour.[52]

Such local conditions were inimical to a Russian General Staff that saw itself as the proponent of a 'civilizing' mission in Asia, just as the 'nativization' of Cossack communities was likewise a source of horror to the Russian Orthodox Church's missionary workers in the steppe.[53] Consequently, after 1864 the Cossacks were increasingly sidelined, their former political and cultural role on the Asiatic frontier now increasingly taken up by the Russian regular army and by the department specifically charged with regulating relations there, the Asiatic Department of the General Staff. In Central Asia, General Kaufman set the new trend in colonization by his explicitly expressed preference for Russian civilian settlers as opposed to the Cossack settlements of the past. Kaufman's contemporaries and successors in Central Asia all likewise favoured extensive civilian settlement, though following the Andizhan uprising of 1898 many Russian settlers also came to be issued with firearms.[54] The Cossacks themselves were either increasingly 'regularized' into the wider army, or co-opted to provide escorts for the new generation of scientific explorers charged with monitoring the Russian Asiatic frontier. This latter task proved to be the last sphere in which the Cossacks' traditional linguistic and cultural versatility continued to prove useful. By the time he came to deliver his lectures at the Staff Academy in

1871, Mikhail Veniukov would emphasize to his military listeners the strictly auxiliary role of the Cossacks in preserving Russia's Asiatic frontiers, the basic security there resting, as he stressed, on the '*regular forces*, namely the line battalions'.[55] In the Russian Far East meanwhile, while the size of the Cossack forces by both peace and wartime establishment continued to increase across the latter half of the nineteenth century, by the start of the twentieth century the proportion of Cossack to regular forces in the region was nearing the same balance pertaining everywhere else in the empire.[56]

A further characteristic of Russia's 'Asiatic' theatres of war, and another mark of the Russian preference for deliberation, was the reliance their forces came to put upon siege tactics and the taking of fixed positions. Siege conflicts met the question of how to bring Russian and Asiatic troops to a point of direct contact and make Russian technological superiority decisively felt. Fixed positions also, in modern military parlance, formed an easily identifiable enemy 'centre of gravity'. Paskevich's masterful wars against the Turks and Persians in 1827–29 were marked by an almost eighteenth century dedication to the importance of siege and supply. During the war with Shamil, siege techniques proved an important factor in the taking of the Murids' numerous *auls* [mountain villages]. Shamil learnt to respond to siege rapidly, demanding corresponding countermeasures. Low sheltered positions were built by the mountaineers, less vulnerable to artillery fire than the high towers of the past, and on occasion whole villages were turned into deathtraps for the Russian troops.[57] At the same time, following the siege of Akhulgo in 1839, Shamil himself actively sought to avoid being trapped within a besieged area, and the Russians did not again catch him in such a fixed position until Gunib in 1859. In the later conquest of Central Asia, the whole conquest came to turn on the taking of fixed positions and local capitals. The taking of capitals, of course, led local elites and nobility to fall into Russian hands, leading to more rapid subjugation of the surrounding countryside by means of 'indirect' rule. Sieges in Central Asian warfare were very much more haphazard affairs than in the Caucasus of course, due to the generally much lower quality of local resistance.[58] Realization of the inadequacy of Central Asian fortifications led to the abandonment of the painstaking investments of the 1850s for a policy, under Cherniaev, of direct escalade of the city walls. This approach led to comparatively high casualties however, and was itself later replaced by a system of always creating a breach in the walls for a storming party using closely positioned artillery.[59] In the most fiercely contested and closely-studied Central Asian siege of the period, that of Geok-Tepe, General Skobelev went to the extent of digging parallel approach trench lines and mining under the walls to achieve success. Colonel C. E. Callwell, a British observer, picked up on the importance Russians attached to the taking of the fixed position in Asiatic warfare in his advice to colonial officers on the importance of solid objectives. Callwell praised the Russians in that:

> They compassed the downfall of the khanates [of Central Asia] by gradually absorbing the cities . . . the capture of one city was generally held sufficient for a year, but it thereupon became a Russian city. Such is the military history of the conquest of Central Asia. It is a record of war in which desultory operations were throughout conspicuous by their absence.[60]

Technological superiority proved vital in these direct battlefield encounters with Asiatic opponents, and Russia, much like the other European powers, at times found its Asiatic provinces a useful testing ground for the latest equipment in a period of unprecedented technological change. During the 1820s in the Caucasus, before Shamil acquired cannon and trained personnel to serve them, General Ermolov boasted that Russian guns so overawed the naïve mountaineers that the expenditure of a few token rounds assured peace in the camps at night.[61] As early as the 1850s Prince A. I. Bariatinskii was requesting the latest rifled carbines for his troops to compete with the weapons of the mountaineers, some of which came from the British.[62] Contemporaries, rightly or wrongly, attributed much of the final success in the Caucasus to the new issue of rifled weaponry.[63] While the very earliest campaigns in Central Asia were notable for the significant results achieved with equipment which by European standards was outdated, the later conquests were all achieved by troops equipped in the most scientific manner then available, including the machine gun and the hand grenade. Rifled cannon, in particular, made a quicker job of destroying the clay fortifications of Central Asia than the smoothbores of the past.[64] The Russians also used rocket batteries from an early stage in their Central Asian flying columns, these being both powerful and lighter to transport than conventional guns. The direct technological antecedents of the fearsome Soviet 'Katiushka' rocket batteries of the Second World War, such weapons proved particularly effective in Central Asia in shattering the attack of Asiatic cavalry. Consequently most writers agreed that a rocket battery should accompany even the smallest Russian detachment.[65] Mounted rocket companies also added to the effectiveness of the Cossacks. General Romanovskii attributed the victory of Irdzhar (1866) to the power of the Russian cavalry's organic firepower: 'For the first time in Central Asia our Cossacks moved in formation and in mass as a regular cavalry with its own artillery and rocket launchers'.[66]

General Skobelev, another firm believer in the power of artillery to terrify Orientals, utilized petroleum-filled shells in his siege of Geok-Tepe as a form of primitive prototype napalm bombardment. In studying the use of artillery in this theatre, Skobelev claimed that Asiatics judged the size of an enemy army directly from the number of field guns it deployed. By this measure therefore the presence of a large artillery train accompanying Russian forces in Central Asia was bound to have a particularly devastating

moral effect upon the natives.[67] Whether correct or not, such views and the actual practical experience of campaigns in Asia further underlined for the Russians the importance of artillery, an arm which, as many foreign observers across the centuries have noted, always formed one of the largest and best-organized branches of the Russian armed forces. It was therefore perhaps also appropriate that Asia at the turn of the century was again a testing ground, this time for the latest breech-loading artillery technology. The Russian intervention during the Chinese Boxer Rebellion of 1900, a relatively minor colonial conflict, nonetheless marked the active debut of the M-00 76mm field gun, one of the most powerful artillery pieces of its day, and a direct precursor of the field gun design that Russia would later use throughout the First World War.

Scientific methods, therefore, interacted with a Russian concern to maintain prestige and inflict a cult of fear upon their opponents-the view that 'Asiatics react only to material force' being one commonly held at the time.[68] In this respect Russian reliance on making warfare dramatically and with maximum destruction was not mere grandstanding but had actual psychological effect – one British observer reported Turkmen cowering on hearing a Russian military band playing at a ceremonial opening. The last occasion they had heard such a noise was during the storm of Geok-Tepe five years before.[69] The Russians were quite conscious of the effect of their methods and of the importance of display, of banners and flags, in keeping Asiatics in awe of the 'White Tsar'. State Councillor Veinberg, a civilian Persian specialist who served in Governor General Kaufman's administration in 1873–78, wrote in 1878: 'It is difficult to overestimate the importance of the parade to the history of the domination of Russian arms and intelligentsia in Central Asia'.[70]

However Veinberg was at times also critical of the extremes taken by individual Russian commanders in pursuing such psychological effects. Writing to Baron Osten-Saken at the Foreign Ministry in 1876, he condemned 'heartless egoists' like General Skobelev who 'knew no bounds in their inhumane treatment of people' and who during the Kokand expedition of 1875 had killed hundreds of peaceful civilians in their homes.[71] Whatever the extent or effect of such terror, another British commentator of the early twentieth century noted that: 'It may be gathered . . . that Russia's position and prestige among her Central Asian subjects rank very high and go far to consolidate her position there'.[72]

Though Russian civilian officials would make periodic attempts to align Turkestan more closely to Russian (European) legal and social norms throughout the latter nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the military dogma that rule there was still ultimately based on awe-inspiring displays of military force and parade ground ritual would nonetheless remain dominant, right through to the Central Asian revolt of 1916.[73]

The demands of the Central Asian and Caucasus corps for the latest equipment and other resources had of course wider strategic consequences.

As late as the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78, the Caucasus Corps was the *only* army group outside the elite Corps of Guards to be completely issued with the new Berdan No.2 rifle, perhaps the most elegant weapon ever made, and at that time the best Russian troops had ever received.[74] With its metallic cartridges and bolt-action system, the American Berdan design, in the words of one study, inaugurated 'the beginning of the era of high-power small bore rifles with great range and accuracy and relatively flat trajectory'. It was also symbolic of the benefits Russian weapons technology gained at this time from a period of unique cross-fertilization with the American small arms industry and the accompanying acquisition of the new machine-making tools that were revolutionizing the whole arms market in this period. The Berdan rifle itself was praised by a future participant in the Russian annexation of Khiva, and in Russian hands saw its first active field service in Turkestan in 1870. Exactly a year later the Russian government acquired four hundred examples of another type of American weapon destined to later prove useful in Central Asia, with a license to manufacture more, the Gatling machine gun.[75]

In Central Asia, meanwhile, while the commitment of army *personnel* represented only a relatively small fraction of the army's whole throughout this period – certainly compared to the Polish theatre – it remained a far higher military commitment, per head of local population, than the British had in India at the time.[76] The Russians remained haunted by the Caucasus experience, where Shamil's revolt had only finally been ended by the commitment of nearly 300,000 men. Consequently, with the exception of the Far East before 1900 (Eastern Siberia presenting truly daunting logistical problems), they garrisoned their Asiatic frontiers comparatively heavily.[77] The strategic debates created by these circumstances will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

The final most obvious tactic of the Caucasus and Central Asian army corps, and one connected to the interest in capitals mentioned above, was their tendency to adopt political measures towards the local population, to attempt to gain the aid of local elites and special interest groups. As Romanovskii wrote of the Caucasus: 'if it is difficult to imagine the subjugation of the Caucasus without the use of arms, it is also not easy to imagine when its subjugation could have been completed if our actions were based solely on arms'.[78]

Russian administrative tactics of this sort prevailed along almost the whole of the Asiatic frontier for centuries. Local elites whose claims to authority referred back to Chingizid times continued to be respected and utilized within the Russian imperial bureaucracy well into the nineteenth century. The Bukeev Khans of the Kazakh Inner Horde traced their lineage back directly to Chinggis-Khan himself, and one of the first representatives of this clan, Dzhangir-Khan, was appointed by Nicholas I as a Major-General in the Russian army in 1840. Granted the full benefits of a European education, including language training, all his sons were also enlisted in the

prestigious Corps of Pages. Dzhangir's descendants were gradually weaned away from managing Horde affairs but were compensated by Imperial recognition of their lineal claims, Alexander II in 1858 commissioning a heraldic coat of arms for the family incorporating symbols associated with Chinggis-Khan. One of Dzhangir's direct descendants, cavalry general Gubaidulla Chinggis-Khan (1840–1909), became the first Kazakh to earn a Russian general's rank through actual field service, serving with distinction in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78. Although he fought the Tsar's Ottoman foes, he also remained a faithful Muslim, obtaining Alexander II's permission to make the pilgrimage to Mecca in 1880. A recognized expert on Asiatic affairs, he served on several important administrative committees in the Tsarist government, sitting on an 1884 committee to produce a new administrative statute for Turkestan, and personally chairing an 1885 committee on administering *waqf* land in the Crimea.[79] Russian efforts to forge political links with local communities bore fruit as well during the later annexation of Central Asia. Samarkand was surrendered without a battle in 1868 in part through the diplomatic efforts of the Jewish and merchant community within the city walls; Andizhan fell in 1875 not only to force of arms, but from the dissatisfaction of the local religious authorities with the Russians' main opponent.[80] The Russian attempt to advance their cause through colonial 'subalterns', while it perhaps had its most spectacular example in the Russian treatment of Shamil's eldest son, Dzhemmal-Eddin, (captured at the age of four and given a Russian military education), was therefore also repeated in the later subjugation of Central Asia.

This later period offers two particularly striking examples of the virtues and dangers of such a policy. Lt.-General Alikhanov-Avarskii (1846–1907), the first Russian-appointed governor-general of Merv in Central Asia, and therefore a central figure during Anglo-Russian tensions in the region in 1884–5, was a Lesgin born in Dagestan, allegedly to a father who had fought the Russians during the Caucasus War. His Muslim background later rendered him perfect for conducting reconnaissance work for the Russian General Staff in Central Asia, where he played a key role in the annexation of Merv. Returning to the Caucasus in 1890, he went on to become closely associated with the policies of the new Viceroy, Count Vorontsov-Dashkov, in repressing the local revolutionary movement in 1905–06. As a governor of Kutaisi province in modern day Georgia, Alikhanov led three punitive expeditions through Guria, Mingrelia and Imerti, employing tactics, in the words of one later, clearly hostile, Soviet account of 'beating, robbing, and putting to fire and sword whole towns and villages'.[81] Becoming one of the most hated symbols of the Tsarist autocracy in the region, this prominent Muslim officer was the victim of at least two assassination attempts by terrorist bombs, of which the second in 1907 succeeded in its goal.[82]

For every loyal servant and ally of the Tsarist state like Alikhanov however, there was a figure like Musa Kundukhov (1818–89) to demonstrate

the dangers of such a policy. Kundukhov, an Ossetian eventually promoted to the rank of Major-General in the Russian service, came from a family that perfectly represented the divided loyalties of the local peoples. Kundukhov himself served in the Tsarist army in the Caucasus alongside his uncle and younger brother, but his elder brother switched sides to Shamil (who regarded him with suspicion) and died fighting against the Russians. In 1860 following Shamil's final surrender and exile, Kundukhov himself became head of all local forces in Chechnia and in 1865 he managed to persuade the commander of the Terek *oblast*, Loris-Melikov, to let him organize the emigration of almost five thousand Muslim villagers from the North Caucasus to Turkey. Kundukhov himself however, increasingly disillusioned with the Tsarist regime, also used this occasion to defect to the Turks and subsequently led a mountaineer contingent against the Russians in the war of 1877–78.[83] Before his death in 1889 Kundukhov went on to become head of staff of the Ottoman army in Anatolia, while his son later became a Turkish Foreign Minister. Kundukhov's treachery was neither forgotten nor forgiven; during the First World War, when Russian troops occupied the Turkish border town of Erzerum, they destroyed his grave, and a soldiers' song recording his treachery was still preserved in the Tsarist army right down to 1917.[84] Individual failures like this did not undermine Russian belief in the value of recruiting local elites however. Though the Tsarist army never recruited and integrated Muslims into its ranks on the scale of its Soviet successor, some 35,000 Turkic-Muslims served in its lower ranks by 1914 while by then no less than 10 Generals and some 186 Tsarist Colonels, Captains and Lt.-Colonels also professed the Muslim faith.[85] As representatives of the social elite within their respective societies these men often played a political and social role in the subsequent revolution, civil war and post-war events to a degree altogether disproportionate to their actual numbers. They also form some of the most neglected figures in the existing historiography. Perhaps the ultimate irony however came at the end of the Tsarist period, when it fell to a Muslim officer serving in the General Staff, Colonel Abdul Aziz Davletshin, to both oversee the running-down of the Asiatic Department of the General Staff and also to promote some of the institutional groundwork for its Soviet successor organization.[86]

By the latter nineteenth century therefore, many of the problems hindering Russian military success in the steppe and other Asiatic theatres in the past-tenuous supply lines, barren local conditions, climactic extremes and the difficulty of how to conduct war against tribal populations had been analysed and steadily overcome. Such an achievement came about both through a practical learning process acquired over decades and to a lesser extent through analysis by some staff officers of the difficulties encountered both by past military commanders and by other colonial powers operating in similar theatres of war. In their tactics and approach to subjugating and ruling their respective spheres, the Russian armies of the Caucasus and

Central Asia shared many similarities, a fact no doubt connected to the tendency of personnel from one theatre to serve in the other. In their longer-term approach to ruling and administering these territories and defending them, however, the Russian colonial army and its staff mechanism also proved to be an equally fruitful source of strategy.

5 China, Europe and the 'Yellow Peril'

Far Eastern War Plans, 1871–1914

> The tragedy of the Tsarist army in 1904 was that it had prepared to fight in the West but came to act in the East.
>
> Major-General A. A. Svechin, 1937[1]

> Around these worries regarding the Far East, remaining as before puzzling and secret, there has begun to spring up various legends. What kind of legends? They are diverse, but the most characteristic and critical is that 1912 is now considered the year when a new war with Japan will begin. [. . .]The worrying information coming from the Far East serves to warn us that we must now be much more seriously involved in the study of contemporary conditions there.
>
> Colonel A. E. Snesarev, circa 1910[2]

By the time the Russian Army had completed the majority of its conquests in Central Asia, with a sound though by no means entirely satisfactory border with Afghanistan by 1885, it had come to inherit, as Bariatinskii had foreseen, a unified strategic sphere stretching from the Black Sea to Herat. This sphere, united as it was by its geopolitical position and the common Islamic faith of the majority of its inhabitants, overlapped two further spheres however. In the western, Caucasus theatre, the continual threat of war with Turkey threatened also to draw in the European powers, as was underlined by the Berlin Congress of 1878. Turkey was seen further as an external sponsor to possible internal instability in the Caucasus, much as British influence was feared in northwest China and northern Afghanistan, both situations requiring constant political and military intelligence. To the East, the Central Asian theatre, by virtue of its unstable border with China, overlapped its area of responsibility with the Far Eastern theatre. Therefore, as late as 1910, Kuropatkin continued to view a possible war with China or Japan as a joint planning priority of the Central Asian and Siberian forces.[3] However, for much of this period, war planning upon the Asian frontiers was not a high priority with the Tsarist General Staff, being overshadowed by European concerns.

As a result of the strategic conference of 1873 (the prelude to the introduction of Universal Military Service in Russia), Russian war plans for

Europe were largely defensive for most of this period, with stress laid upon fortification of the vulnerable Polish salient. The historian William Fuller has argued along with many others that the conference of 1873 was vital in creating a 'Eurocentric' approach in the Russian War Ministry, since analysis on a *technical* rather than a *political* level indicated that Germany and Austria-Hungary were the main threats to Russia's national security:

> It did not matter whether Berlin or Vienna was currently planning a war against Russia or not. The fact was . . . they had the power to defeat Russia. The consequences of a potential defeat in Central Europe were particularly grave because if Russia lost there *it might lose everywhere.*[4]

Such was certainly the view of General N. N. Obruchev, Russia's leading strategist of the period, who in 1885, in response to a letter of Alexander III, wrote a memorandum, *The Basic Historical Missions of Russia*, which was to guide state security policy for the next ten years.[5] It amounted in the main to a summary of the views that Obruchev himself had held and promoted since at least 1864. In it, he compared Russia to a comet, with a still underdeveloped European core and 'a horrifying Asiatic tail, stretching from Tiflis to Vladivostok' that drained away much needed material and moral strength. In order to pursue a policy reflecting Russia's true priorities, he consistently argued his own view of the basic missions facing the Russian state-a framework within which 'the Caucasus, Central Asia, Siberia . . . are only adjuncts, having a point only until [there is established] a living and whole strictly national Russian body. Consequently, our first concern must be-to stand firm in Europe'.[6] Obruchev identified the two main dilemmas facing Russian security policy to be the Polish and Eastern Questions, believing firmly that 'only for the Bosphorus and Carpathian Rus could Russian blood be unconditionally shed'.[7] It was as a direct consequence of such thinking that between 1881 and 1894 over 45 percent of the Russian peacetime army were concentrated in the Western provinces, placed there to compensate for the superior mobilization rates of the German and Austro-Hungarian forces.[8] Russia after 1880 pursued a twin offence-defence strategy in Europe, planning to attack Austria while defending against Germany. The offensives planned in Asia may therefore be seen as a way of more rapidly staving off the danger of joint commitment were a crisis to simultaneously develop in Europe, where the defensive position was considered much more grave for most of this period.[9] How this viewpoint came to change, at first gradually and then, after the Russo-Japanese War, dramatically, and the role of the Asiatic Department of the General Staff in that change, forms the theme of the following three chapters. However undoubtedly one of the largest factors altering the balance of Russian strategic horizons were changing military intelligence assessments regarding its largest Asian neighbour, China, with whom Russia shares even toady the single longest land frontier in the world.

The threat to Central Asia from Chinese aggression in the late nineteenth century was interlinked with the earlier policies of the East Siberian Governor-General, N. N. Murav'ev-Amurskii (1809–81), in the Far East. The diplomatic history of Sino-Russian relations has had many commentators in the past, and any summary here will be restricted to the immediate security implications.[10] Murav'ev-Amurskii was a relative outsider in the school of Russian military Asiatic experts in the nineteenth century. He had served long enough in the Caucasus in the 1840s to appreciate the Russian Army's poor understanding of the Muslim community there, but being viewed as something of a maverick, was reduced to transmitting his own plans for subjugating the Caucasus via his brother in the hope they would somehow gain official attention in St. Petersburg.[11] Before long however he was transferred to the Far East, where by virtue of a series of remarkable diplomatic treaties with China between 1858 and 1864 he and N. P. Ignat'ev (1832–1908), the Russian diplomatic agent in Peking, rapidly annexed to Russia around 665,000 square miles of territory.[12] Murav'ev's approach to securing this new theatre remained defiantly unorthodox however, as almost alone among late nineteenth century Russian administrators he maintained a faith in the virtues of the traditional Cossack-colonist. The results of his policies were to do much to discredit this policy of settlement on the Asiatic frontier. Murav'ev dispersed the Amur Cossack Host in a manner designed more for symbolic than practical effect, and communication lines remained grossly inadequate. Plans to turn the Amur River line into a self-sufficient grain basin came to grief upon the actualities of the local climate, and raids in the 1860s by Chinese bandit gangs (the local Manza population forming 'Hunhozes') exposed the vulnerability of the Cossack perimeter defence. The Russian traveller Przheval'skii's visit to one Trans-Baikal Cossack settlement in the late 1860s filled him with disgust – he found a settlement in decay, dank with 'filth, hunger and paupery'.[13] Cossack weaponry at the time was in many cases inferior even to that wielded by the Manza raiders. When M. I. Veniukov wrote his work on Russia's Asiatic frontiers, a hefty volume based upon lectures given at the Russian Staff Academy, and itself intended to educate the average General Staff officer on the geography and strategic points of Asiatic Russia, he made it clear that he regarded the Far East as the most vulnerable sector of Russia's frontier. So great did he feel this danger to be that he devoted a special section in his work to Manchuria, writing that: 'Manchuria is not a neighbour like other Central Asian lands; from here one can expect great danger'.[14]

Most appalling to Veniukov in 1873 was the unfortified state of the Far East; a situation he blamed both on Russian financial constraints after the Crimean War and, explicitly, upon the vacillation of local commanders in selecting strategic strong points.[15] Local forces, meanwhile, performed more manual labour than they did military training, and Veniukov considered the local dismounted Cossack forces practically untrained. The existence of a single land communication line with European Russia, the Amur and Ussuri

river lines, which also formed the state frontiers, and the lack of any lines of retreat to the north, meant that a Chinese army based on the Lesser Khingan range only had to march a few miles north to cut off the Amur *krai* entirely from Russia itself. To counter this threat, Veniukov urged the maintenance of screw-propeller ships on the Amur and the establishment of larger military depots with a central, stone-fortified depot at Khabarovsk.[16]

Veniukov's views did not meet complete agreement within Russian governmental circles; Veniukov himself noted in his memoirs that diplomats of the Foreign Ministry's Asiatic Department considered him an alarmist.[17] The chief of staff of Western Siberia meanwhile, General I. F. Babkov, had suffered the criticism of Veniukov, Poltoratskii and others in the 1860s over the form of the western frontier he had helped demarcate with China in 1864–68 through the treaty of Chuguchak (also known as the Treaty of Tarbagatai). As both a staff officer and head of the West Siberian branch of the Imperial Geographical Society, Babkov clearly felt that both his professional and scientific capabilities were under attack, and later devoted the greater part of his unfinished memoirs to a scathing rebuttal of his critics. In particular, writing from the hindsight of the Boxer Rebellion of 1900, following which Russia came to politically and militarily dominate Manchuria, Babkov confidently asserted that '. . . the Chinese danger threatening our settlements in the Ussuri *krai* and Vladivostok itself, of which Veniukov scared the public, in reality does not exist and, as we see, was not observed before'.[18]

Veniukov's views nonetheless reflected genuine concerns at the time, and these perceived failings in the Far East came to have increased relevance in the period after 1870 when the possibility of conflict with China at some future date grew, a possibility heightened by Turkestan Governor-General von Kaufman's actions during the Ili Crisis (1871–81). By the 1880s Russia was engaged in urgent reinforcement of the Far Eastern theatre, issuing the troops there with rapid-fire rifles and the latest steel long-range ordnance alongside a significant increase in their numerical strength. This policy cost the overstretched Tsarist exchequer over eleven and a half million roubles.[19] Administrative reform that was aimed at strengthening Russia's position in the Far East also resulted in the creation of the Priamur military district with its own governor-generalship, wielding extensive military and administrative powers, in 1884. The first Governor-General, Baron Korf, immediately upon arrival set about a study of the readiness of the newly created district in regard to the military front of Mongolia and Manchuria.[20] This military build-up continued at the turn of the century – between 1892 and 1903 Russia's military strength east of Lake Baikal increased from 23 to 89 battalions, from 13 to 35 squadrons and from 8 to 25 batteries.[21] This process was accompanied by a degree of engineer work in the proposed theatre of military operations itself. Vladivostok, which until 1882 comprised no more than an earthen field battery system, saw the setting up of new coastal batteries and an inland field fortification system during the Anglo-Russian war scare

of 1885, and work was begun on a road network both to these fortifications and in the Ussuri *krai* generally. However these defences continued to be recognized as severely deficient as late as 1895. The comparison in terms of the time, money and labour expended upon fortification of the Far East compared with the crucial strategic triangle in European Russia of the Warsaw, Novogeorgievsk and Zerghze forts, covering the railway network of the forward European theatre, was stark.[22]

The cause of dispute with China, aside from the large annexations made by Murav'ev and Ignat'ev ('unequal treaties' which continued to aggravate Sino-Russian relations well into the twentieth century), rested with Kaufman's annexation of the Ili Valley in northeastern Turkestan in 1871. Although officially a response to the treatment meted out a Russian emissary by the Taranchi Sultan Adil-Ogly, this was clearly a move to implicitly threaten the autonomous state in neighbouring Kashgaria set up by Yakub Bek in the period 1866–77, a Bukharan adventurer who had already faced the Russians at Tashkent. It created the 'Kul'dzha Question' that continued to sporadically disturb the Asiatic Department for many years.

Unlike the majority of the Chinese Empire, the population of northwestern Xinjiang (as it was called after 1884 – the Chinese 'New Kingdom') were predominantly Muslim, with all the potential problems of co-religious fraternity with Central Asian Muslims that condition implied. Russian concerns were heightened in the 1860s when the Dungan uprising led to the Chinese losing control of Chinese Turkestan and created the prospect of an independent Muslim state bordering the Russian domain in Turkestan. Russia viewed Yakub Bek, who had moved in and gradually become the dominant figure in this province in the wake of the Muslim uprising against the Chinese, with particular suspicion as a potential alternative centre of power and pawn of Britain.[23]

In 1875 rumours reached State Councillor Veinberg of a potential alliance between the Emir of Bukhara and Yakub Bek, thereby threatening earlier hopes that a weak Muslim buffer state to the east would act as a counterbalance to Russia's restless protectorates in Central Asia. Captain A. N. Kuropatkin, a young officer on Kaufman's staff at the time, was dispatched in 1876 to gain all the political and military intelligence he could while delimiting the Fergana-Kashgar border. Kuropatkin's work supplemented that of three earlier Russian missions, those of Captain Reintal (1870, 1875) and General Staff officer and official emissary Baron A. V. Kaul'bars (1872).[24] These missions in turn supplemented earlier work by both the Kazakh explorer Captain Chokan Valikhanov, who had recommended Kashgaria's annexation as a protectorate, and by Poltoratskii and Veniukov.[25] Kuropatkin's journey in 1876 involved a trip of some 2,000 miles through Kashgaria, mapping the country and making observations of its geography, industry, ethnic balance and military forces. The party was even accompanied by a naturalist, A. I. Vil'kins (1845–92), to make scientific observations. For this work, Kuropatkin was awarded the Imperial

Geographical Society's small gold medal. The Kashgarian army was of interest since it was on the receiving end of a number of European armaments as a consequence of Anglo-Russian rivalry to gain influence in the region, and consequently presented a good example of an Asiatic army in a period of transition. Yakub Bek's army bore an integrated character that was both unique and characteristic of the region, a traditional crossroads of invading armies and clashing cultural influences. Within it coexisted the traditional structure of a Muslim army alongside elements of Chinese military organization and Turkish and European military technique. In equipment it bore Bukharan and Afghan arms, Chinese pikes and *taifury* and, latterly, European percussion arms and artillery.[26] The troops disposed of by Yakub Bek failed to impress Kuropatkin however – most were still armed with crude, semi-rifled muzzle-loading muskets and discipline was weak, with the army only able to manoeuvre in square. The field artillery consisted of one battery of muzzle-loaders and one of 3-pound breech-loading Indian mountain guns, but the breech mechanisms on five of the latter were broken at the time of Kuropatkin's visit. Kuropatkin's account of the parades he witnessed, with cavalrymen falling off their horses and the flintlock-armed infantrymen scattering powder across the parade ground as they fired blindly by volley, suggested a low level of general discipline. Local fortifications also presented no significant obstacles, being thinly walled, many of them overlooked by higher points, lacking *glacis* and possessing only rudimentary artillery.[27] Kuropatkin's review served to correct earlier Russian impressions that, as a consequence of new armaments and a degree of European-style training, Yakub Bek's army would present a more formidable force than those encountered in either Khiva or Bukhara. In 1876 meanwhile the Russian authorities in Turkestan learnt *via* Staff Captain Pevtsov, then accompanying a trade convoy in Mongolia and Dzhungaria, of the advance of a Chinese army some 42,000 strong, divided into three corps, towards Dzhungaria on a mission to reconquer China's western provinces.[28] By 1877 Yakub Bek was dead, possibly by his own hand, Xinjiang had been reconquered by the Chinese army, and the Russian and Chinese empires were once more face-to-face in Central Asia. The question of the Russians then returning the Ili district to China, a province officially annexed on China's behalf, thereafter became a source of diplomatic conflict between the two states.[29]

Kuropatkin, as head of the Asiatic Department of the General Staff in 1878, recommended that the Chinese pay ten million pounds in gold as compensation for the Russian occupation of Ili, with the money being put towards construction of the Siberian railroad that was already under discussion at this time.[30] Following an initial diplomatic parlay relations grew tense however, and war seemed imminent, the Russians fortifying the Barokhorinski ridge. It was this state of affairs that caused Przheval'skii to draw up the bare outline of a war plan for operations against China, a plan to receive many supplements in subsequent years.[31] This officer's qualifica-

tions for such a role were considerable. In his lifetime Major-General N. M. Przheval'skii (1839–88) gained fame across the length and breadth of the Russian Empire by his series of four daring expeditions undertaken through Mongolia and Inner Asia between 1870 and 1885, fulfilling tasks that were at once related both to the development of geographic knowledge and to military intelligence.[32] As well as being a noted explorer, Przheval'skii was also one of the leading proponents of what historian David Schimmelpenninck Van Der Oye has since labelled 'conquistador imperialism'. An arch imperialist, he spent much of his career seeking to persuade both the Russian public and governmental circles that the entire non-Chinese population of Central Asia hungered for benevolent Tsarist rule and that Tsarist annexations were also victories 'for the good of mankind'.[33] The last chapter of his final book contained a series of considerations on war with China that were based on his own earlier reports to the Russian General Staff and in particular on his input at an 1886 conference assessing the security of Russia's Far Eastern frontiers.

A tactical offensive movement often characterized Russian war plans on the Asiatic frontiers, even where the overall strategic plan was defensive. This was due not only to the contemporary cult for offensive action common to European armies as a whole, but also from the specific experience of the Asiatic corps of the psychological power of even small active expeditionary columns. There was much fear too, of the effects on 'Asiatic' popular opinion were the Russian army seen as purely reactive, not aggressive. There was also the tactical reason that troops on the ground were in practice often too few in number to assume an effective active defence – Kuropatkin claimed that Kaufman chose the offensive against Bukhara in 1868 for this very reason.[34] It is understandable then, that although Russia strategically was only concerned at the time with the defensive goal of retaining the Ili Valley in the event of war with China in 1880, the 'Ili Battle Plan' drawn up by the staff of the Turkestan military district opted for the offensive in that:

> generally, in all Asiatic wars the best method of operations against the enemy consists in hurrying him into an encounter and in defeating him before [he enters] into our boundaries, because the approach of an enemy towards our territory can have a bad influence on the minds of the indigenous population.[35]

The plan, which would have been discharged by one of Kaufman's most trusted subordinates, General G. A. Kolpakovskii,[36] in the event of a diplomatic break, envisaged a main attack out of the Kul'dzha region through the Talkin and Achal gorges down onto the old Chinese Imperial road to Dzhin-ho and Shikho. A subsidiary group was to be concentrated in the Fergana *oblast* for operations against Kashgaria itself consisting of 16 companies, 11 *sotnias*, 22 guns, 8 rocket-carriages and 4 mortars.[37] This force concentration, which British observers considered rather inadequate to take

on the troops of the talented Chinese general Tso Tsung-t'ang (1812–85), was to have its overall effect bolstered by the actions of the Russian Far Eastern fleet and by a partisan detachment of the West Siberian military district.[38] This latter group, composed of 12 Cossack *sotnias*, 4 guns, and 8 rocket batteries, was to march from Zaisanskii post southwards into the Chinese rear, wreaking havoc among their supply and transport columns. Snow on the mountain passes meant that the timing of the offensive was crucial, with May the optimum month-earlier, and the Semirech'e forces could not cross the passes, leaving the Chinese to tackle the Siberian troops in their rear unmolested. Any later and Chinese forces falling back from the advance in the west would envelop and destroy these same Siberian troops. In the event the war plans came to nothing. Russia was overstretched by her Balkan commitment and the Chinese army was something of an unknown quantity to the Russians at the time – a situation that staff studies in the next ten years did much to correct. The greater bulk of the Russian forces in Turkestan in 1878–79 were concentrated not on the eastern border with China, but on the border of Afghanistan, ready to pose a political threat to British rule in India. Despite later claims by one prominent Tsarist historian that the Russian troop concentration that did occur served to bring the Chinese to their senses,[39] the overall outcome of the Ili Crisis was something of a diplomatic reverse for Russia and a vivid demonstration of just how unprepared this frontier was for warfare against a major opponent.[40] What information the Russian General Staff did possess in the period 1880–81 inspired caution rather than boundless optimism, despite Przheval'skii's personal contempt for the military capability of the Chinese. On the ground, Governor-General Kaufman frankly confessed his own ignorance regarding the capabilities of the Chinese army, complaining that what information he did receive from so-called experts was contradictory, and pointing to supply difficulties and the need to significantly disperse his own detachments in conducting a campaign against the Chinese.[41] On the 20th October 1880 meanwhile L. N. Sobolev, Kuropatkin's successor as head of the Asiatic Department of the General Staff, wrote a report on military considerations in the event of war with China that incorporated a short review of the wars of the British and French with the Chinese in 1857–60. This report dwelt gloomily on the difficulties presented the Russians by such an operation. It estimated that the conquest of Western China would take two years, years in which Russian Turkestan, still only recently conquered, would be left in a dangerously undermanned state. Maintaining a fresh division in Turkestan for two years to cover all eventualities would add 6,000,000 roubles to an already expensive campaign plan, with no guarantee meanwhile that the occupation of Western China would compel the Peking government to sue for peace. This latter goal would only be achieved by a direct naval operation against Peking itself, an operation that, when the British and French employed it against a Chinese army still completely unmodernized, had even then required 20,000 troops and a large fleet of over 300 ships. A Russian

operation of such a type would involve drawing troops away from the European theatre and an expense of 30,000,000 or perhaps even 300,000,000 roubles. Given these considerations, Sobolev wrote that for Russia in its present condition war with China presented a 'calamitous' prospect and advised that 'all possible measures' should be pursued in order to 'with honour' avoid such a conflict.[42]

Though the Ili Crisis was settled diplomatically, staff officers based in the region or travelling through it regularly, like Przheval'skii, continued to advise on war plans. The main axis of debate in this early period centred around whether to attack the Chinese heartland through Mongolia or Manchuria. Przheval'skii soon became a stern advocate of the Mongolian option, pointing out that possession of Urga would carry both strategic and moral significance, the town being considered by Mongolian Buddhists the second most holy city after Lhasa itself.[43] The Manchurian theatre of operations gained precedence over time however in Russian strategic thought due to evidence of its richer resource base.[44] The extent to which Russia took steps to correct its previous ignorance of China evoked the rather paranoid respect of one prominent Russophobe at the turn of the century:

> From 1881 till 1895, Russia devoted her utmost energies to the gaining [of] information respecting China. Surveying parties were despatched in all directions. Scientific observers, always protected by Cossack escorts, were despatched to various parts of the empire, until her geographers knew more of the physical features of China, and her military surveyors more of her strategic possibilities, than the Chinese themselves. In these respects Russia has beaten the record. Her knowledge of China is more complete and more reliable than that possessed by any other country . . . [45]

This expansion of effort by the Russian General Staff had both a public and a private face in that nearly all the officers involved were also members of the Russian Imperial Geographical Society. Russian science was blessed at this time by an outstanding trinity of military *vostokovedy*, all of whom were to varying degrees disciples of Przheval'skii. The names of M. V. Pevtsov (1843–1902), V. I. Roborovskii (1856–1910) and P. K. Kozlov (1863–1935) would come to be indelibly linked, like Przheval'skii, with a golden age of Russian scientific and ethnographic exploration in Inner Asia.[46] All made their reports both in public session to the Geographical Society and in private to the Russian General Staff, with Pevtsov for example also being appointed on the 10th March 1887 as a desk-head in the Asiatic Department of the General Staff.[47] During this period military officers also frequently accompanied what were ostensibly civilian expeditions, while the Russian academic community through the IRGO also volunteered its aid. The Russian geographer and ethnographer G. N. Potanin (1835–1920), whose name was destined to be preserved for posterity by a glacier in the remote

Altai mountains, conducted many trips in the Far East in this period, encompassing northern China, eastern Tibet, central Mongolia (1884–86, 1892–93) and Manchuria (1899). These journeys furnished much information that was also of interest to the Russian War Ministry. During his first expedition in southeast Asia in 1877–78 meanwhile, Potanin had also been accompanied by Staff-Captain P. A. Rafailov of the Topographical Corps, who composed a map on a one inch-to-fifty-verst scale of northwestern Mongolia as a result of the expedition.

This increased emphasis on the Far East by the General Staff's Asiatic Department was further reflected in the Kotsebu Commission of 1881's considerations on the reorganization of the central organs of the War Ministry. The Commission proposed a much greater focus on intelligence gathering in the Far East for the Asiatic Department than that originally outlined in the statute of 1867. Financial considerations in the wake of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78 meant that the Kotsebu Commission's proposals were not realized however, and the Commission's recommendations, which would have led to the creation of a truly independent intelligence arm within the General Staff, were set aside until the issue was again raised in 1903.[48] In 1886 the General Staff's Asiatic Department was finally expanded in view of its rapidly increasing responsibilities, but this marked a change in budget and an increase in personnel rather than a fundamental reorientation.

China continued to be considered a dangerous force on the grounds of the sheer quantity of its population. The colonization programme begun in northern Manchuria was considered particularly threatening, there being thirty times more Chinese colonists there than there were Russians in the neighbouring Amur and Primor'e *oblasts* in 1882–90.[49] Writing an advisory note to the Main Staff in this period, Asiatic expert L. N. Sobolev opined that along the whole Asiatic border, only China 'under certain political conditions, independently and directly, could threaten our interests and position in Asia'.[50] According to calculations by officers of the Amur district, it would take eighteen months for Russian troops in route march to reach the Primor'e *oblast*; calculations like these lay behind the laying of the Trans-Siberian railway in 1891–1904, the purpose of which was largely strategic.[51] From the second half of the 1880s onwards Russia's Minister of Communications, K. N. Pos'et, until then almost a lone advocate for the building of a Trans-Siberian line, gained a powerful governmental ally in the person of War Minister P. S. Vannovskii, himself influenced by the concerns expressed by his Far Eastern Governor-Generals. The task of geographically delimiting the best route for such a line, much of it across great tracts of Asia largely unstudied and unmapped in the modern sense, was assigned to the Corps of Military Topographers, the only government department with the expertise to take on such a role.[52] Between 1896 and 1903 officers of the Russian Topographical Corps in Manchuria fixed over 200 astronomic and geodesic points, helping produce a new map of Asiatic Russia on a scale of

100 versts to an inch, a new map of the southern border strip of Asiatic Russia, a map of the Far East (10 versts to the inch) and a map of the Liaotung peninsula. In 1900 however, in a move destined later to have painful political and military repercussions, a proposal by the head of the Priamur district's topographical section, Colonel M. P. Polianovskii, to conduct an extensive topographical survey of northern Manchuria, was rejected by the Russian Main Staff on financial grounds, the project requiring 115 men and an expenditure of 600,000 roubles.[53]

Unlike many 'Asiatics', the Chinese army itself, in either attack or defence, could not be too easily dismissed. Hesitant modernization and a complicated organizational structure made the Chinese army difficult to assess.[54] The army at this time consisted of three types of troops – local militia, the Chinese army (the so-called 'Green Standard' forces), and the 'Eight-Banner' troops, the latter of which had brought the Manchu dynasty to power in the seventeenth century and consequently occupied a hereditary, privileged position within the Chinese state. The majority of the Eight-Banner troops were deployed in Manchuria, the ruling dynasty's heartland, and formed the most technologically backward section of the Chinese army, being armed with arrows, spears, swords, and worthless matchlock muskets. Their reform would not be significantly noticeable until after 1905, when a new wave of military reforms was instituted in China.[55] Within the militia and the so-called 'Green Standard' forces however the story was rather different. During the course of the Taiping Rebellion (1850–64), the militias of Tseng Kuo-fan, Li Hung-chang and Tso Tsung-t'ang had proven the only effective forces in combating the Taiping troops. The effectiveness of these militias was in large part based both upon their own organization and discipline, including a ban on opium smoking, and upon the use to a limited degree of Western technology. These militia armies remained standing forces, though in reduced numbers, after the rebellion, and their leaders important proponents of military modernization in China. The infantry of Li Hung-chang's army when he was governor of Chihli, for example, came in the main to be armed with the Mauser 71 rifle, a weapon that would become among the most common of modern arms in Chinese service in subsequent years. Their artillery comprised Krupp guns of German make, and German instructors trained the troops in Prussian drill. After 1885, on the suggestion of General Gordon of Khartoum fame, two military academies were set up, while a handful of Chinese officers began to be sent abroad to study. The reorganization of sections of the Green Standard troops into so-called 'Disciplined Forces' also represented an attempt to transfer the virtues of the Taiping-era militia forces to the larger Chinese army. Modernization remained painfully slow however, the Japanese General Staff estimating in 1895 that only three-fifths of the Chinese troops mobilized against them had some type of firearm, many carrying only a pike, spear or sword.[56] Complicating the question of assessment further was the fact that until the start of the twentieth century, military reform was

uneven, dependent on the whim (and level of corruption) of local governor-generals. Initially the balance of modern arms in China lay in Russia's favour, China having devoted most attention to its coastal defences following the repeated trauma of foreign intervention from that direction in the earlier part of the century.[57] One Russian military traveller in the first half of the 1880s noted that the degree of advanced military technology in China appeared to vary depending on the distance from the northern frontier. In Urga matchlock muskets were still to be found, in Kalgan percussion arms were stored in the arsenal and in Peking and the southern ports the Chinese forces bore breech-loading Sniders.[58]

Assessment of China and the Chinese army in Russian eyes was of course the direct responsibility of the Russian military agent in China, an innovation in Sino-Russian relations that had been introduced during the height of the Ili Crisis in 1879–80. On the 8th March 1880 the military commander of the East Siberian military district reported to the Main Staff that the Chinese counted on having 10,000 armed troops in Manchuria in the event of an outbreak of hostilities. It was resolved in the light of this and other reports to dispatch two officers of the General Staff to China via Europe to judge the extent of the Chinese military build-up from a review of the arms orders received in European capitals and observation of Chinese forces at first-hand.[59] The Main Staff proceeded to launch an intelligence operation that remains impressive today by its scale, range, and depth of coordination. The two officers selected for the principal task were General Staff Lt.-Colonel Shneur and Staff Captain (soon Lt.-Colonel) Bodisko. Both officers were to make a grand tour of Europe, gathering information on Chinese arms orders, Shneur being assigned the southern half of Europe and Bodisko the north. Meeting up in Britain, they were then to go to America, to investigate the possibility of supplying the Primor'e military district by sea from that country (an obvious stopgap solution to the supply problem given the non-existence at the time of the Trans-Siberian railway). Their final destination would be China itself. The two officers were to be assisted by agents of the Russian Foreign Ministry throughout, the Foreign Ministry promising the Military-Scientific Committee the aid of its consulates in London, Rome, Berlin, Vienna, the Hague, Brussels, Tokyo, Paris, Washington and Peking.[60] These plans underwent some slight alteration at the outset, Bodisko being sent directly on to America and then to China 'where the most rapid presence of our officer was recognized . . . as an urgent necessity' and Shneur being left to work in Europe alone.[61] The consequence of these actions was the receipt of a constant stream of detailed reports to the Military-Scientific Committee (and passed on from there to the Asiatic Department of the General Staff) throughout the latter half of 1880 on the state of Chinese military modernization. On the 28th July/9th August for instance, the military agent in Berlin reported the purchase of 6,000 Snider carbines, 4,000 Vittena rifles, 3,000 Peabody-Martinis, 2,000 old Remington rifles, and the order of around 15,000 Mausers, all destined for China. These orders, with

the exception of the Mausers, produced through the Dreyse factory, were made with Hamburg firms who operated without any degree of quality control, and the arms were old, cheap, and in a bad state of repair.[62] The consul in Antwerp on the 19th September meanwhile reported the timetables of all vessels sailing from Antwerp to China with their accompanying loads of arms and military materials, and the General-Consulate in San Francisco on the 8th/20th October gave a detailed breakdown of all ships sailing to China between January and September of that year with a precise enumeration of all the boxes of rifles and ammunition that they bore.[63] Based on his review of arms orders in Europe, Shneur estimated that in the spring of 1881 China would dispose of in the region of 260,260 rifles of modern make, the majority of them (94,500) Mausers, alongside modern artillery and torpedoes.[64] He also dismissed the possibility of supplying the Primor'e district by engaging in contracts with American shipping firms, the terms of trade he was offered by American merchants being nearly twice as unfavourable as those he received in Europe.[65]

Once he reached China Shneur met up with Bodisko and awaited new instructions, the Ili Crisis having passed its most critical stage. Shneur was eventually instructed to return to Russia via India, investigating en route the impression made by Russia's latest successes in Central Asia upon the Indian population, while Bodisko stayed on as the official military agent in China.[66] He had been active there while Shneur travelled through Europe, one of his first reports, passed on to the chief of staff of the Turkestan military district on the 26th May 1881, being concerned with the number, type and disposition of heavy artillery pieces in Western China.[67] Short periods of service and excessively large spheres of responsibility meant that neither Bodisko nor his successor, Shneur, proved fully effective as military agents in China however, Shneur for example being tasked during his term of office (in addition to his primary responsibility) with providing data on both Korea and Japan.[68] Only the arrival of D. V. Putiata in 1886 for a relatively long period of service served to put the role of military agent in China on a satisfactory basis. Putiata himself was destined to spend most of his career engaged in the study of Asiatic states, having come up through the ranks from the Turkestan military district and served as assistant head of the General Staff's Asiatic Department immediately prior to his appointment to China. After his service in China he would continue to be attached as a desk-head to the Asiatic Department of the General Staff, being appointed military adviser to the Korean government in 1896 before eventually becoming head of the Asiatic Department in 1898–1902. This career path made his views on the Far East in general far more influential over the long-term than those of his predecessors.

Putiata's reports to the General Staff after 1886 kept it updated on the latest developments in Chinese military organization and secured his place as the Russian staff's leading expert on the history and military potential of that country, despite the fact he himself did not speak Chinese. His standing

was not unchallenged by the academic community however, particularly when Putiata ventured publicly outside study of the purely military sphere. His 1895 book on the history, religion, economy, culture and armed forces of China came in for a blistering critique from the leading Russian *vostokoved* of the day, Dmitri Pozdneev, who attacked nearly every aspect of the work, from its faulty transliteration system to its presentation of Chinese Buddhism. Pozdneev attributed these errors chiefly to the sheer scope of the programme Putiata set himself, a task he was 'completely unable to fulfil'. Nonetheless Pozdneev did not criticize Putiata's analysis of Chinese army, recognizing that in this area Putiata was a well-qualified judge.[69] The chief characteristics of Putiata's reports to the General Staff, meanwhile, were his steady focus on the efforts at reform and military reinforcement undertaken by the Chinese in Manchuria and a consequent stress upon this area as the most crucial section of the long Russo-Chinese frontier.

In 1885 the Chinese formed in the three provinces of Manchuria troops of what Putiata termed 'auxiliary contingents', that is to say combined-arms detachments (infantry, cavalry, artillery) in the main towns of each province. These formations were significantly better armed, trained, and led than standard Chinese troops, the infantry bearing Mausers, the cavalry Winchester carbines and the artillery Krupp field guns.[70] Observing the manoeuvres of the Mukden detachment of these forces in 1888, Putiata opined that under the leadership of knowledgeable officers and with improved training these forces could soon master European tactics.[71] In addition the Chinese undertook for the first time attempts to create a modern fortification system in Manchuria, three forts being constructed at Ekho (north of Ninguta), Sanhsing and Khun-ch'un, and attention being paid to the improvement of communication routes in this area. The disposition of these forts was designed to cover China from the side of the Russian South Ussuri *krai*. Of

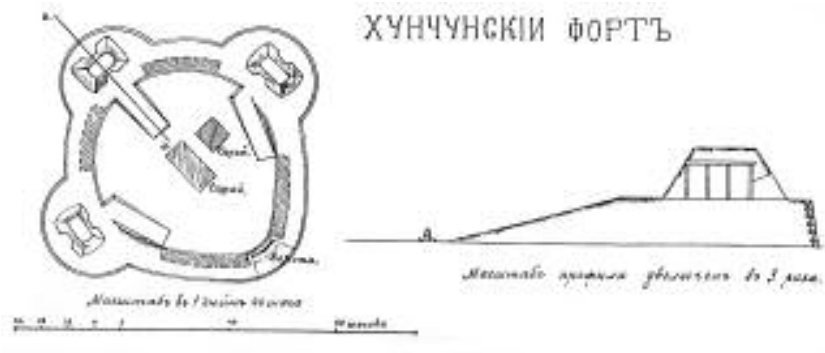

Figure 5.1: Chinese fortified positions at Khun-ch'un, 1888

Source: Putiata, 'Otchet o poezdke po Man'chzhurii cherez Inkou, Mukden, Girin, Dalin, Ashikho, Paiensu, San'-Sin', Ningutu, Khunchun' vo Vladivostok' 1888g', SGTSMA XXXVIII, 1889, endpapers.

this group of fortifications only those at Khun-ch'un resembled anything more than earthen fortified camps however. Even the Khun-ch'un forts, consisting of oval earthen walls with rondels mounting 15cm. Krupp cannon, (see previous page) shared the faults of their brethren elsewhere in being poorly constructed and dominated by neighbouring heights. Putiata reported that the Krupp guns, recently installed, were already rusted beyond use by neglect and that their gun carriages were stored, disassembled, in great disorder.[72] The local brigades at Khun-ch'un were relatively well-armed and disciplined, the troops bearing Winchester, Remington and Hotchkiss rifles, and a special officer being appointed to oversee cleaning and maintenance of the arms. Faulty mainsprings in the majority of these repeating weapons made firing practice extremely inaccurate however.[73] Nonetheless Putiata felt that the measures China had taken 'must arouse suspicion regarding the true intentions of the Chinese in the Manchurian region'.[74]

A review of the whole length of the Russo-Chinese frontier in a topographical regard led Putiata to emphasize the dominating strategic importance of Manchuria. With the exception of the border region in the Ili district, he felt China could not be seriously threatened in the west, although local unrest would probably require a Russian occupation along the lines of 1871 in the event of renewed hostilities of any kind. In regard to Mongolia, he utilized personal study of Russian steppe operations in Turkestan, the campaigns of Chinggis-Khan, and the Chinese invasion of Mongolia in 1696 to argue that Mongolia presented an obstacle to military movement from either side. In Turkestan, steppe wells could not support the provision of over 270–300 men in 24 hours; wells in Mongolia must be expected to reproduce this performance. At the same time each column could not be expected to advance at more than 30 versts a day, a standard set by the cavalry raids of Chinggis-Khan. The Chinese operations of 1696 meanwhile best illustrated the difficulties that would be presented to movement in that country by a large, modern army. On that occasion a sizable Chinese force had covered two-thirds of the distance from Peking to the Russian border in 72 days, including 26 days of rest, and had repeatedly almost been overwhelmed by both the natural elements and local resistance. Such figures supported Putiata's contention that forces of the requisite size for serious military operations (circa 100,000 men) could not traverse the area between eastern Mongolia and the Russian border in less than 104 days or, in other words, three-and a half months.[75] These conditions in Mongolia and Xinjiang, and Chinese military reinforcement in the Manchurian theatre, rendered inescapable in his view, 'the overwhelming importance, in a military regard, of the extreme eastern section of the Russo-Chinese frontier'.[76] Chinese defeat in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95, Putiata admitted, demonstrated the bankruptcy of many of the military measures the Chinese had undertaken in Manchuria, but 'it does not exclude the reality of their former intentions', implying that Russia must maintain a policy of strict vigilance in this area.[77]

Through the study and reports of the Russian military agent on the ground therefore, among other factors, Manchuria came to dominate the strategic thought of the Russian General Staff in regard to China. However the outbreak of the Boxer Rebellion in 1900 and the corresponding question of organizing a Russian expeditionary force to Peking still came as something of a surprise to some elements within the General Staff. As General Rediger, the future War Minister, at this time serving in the War Ministry Chancellery, recalled:

> Nobody in St. Petersburg thought seriously about war in the Far East; war with China appeared simply inconceivable since, ever since the time of Przheval'skii, we had maintained the conviction that one battalion could go through the whole of China. Therefore mobilization was prepared only as a precaution, in the assumption that this work, properly speaking, was pointless; the very quality of the Siberian forces was seen as doubtful, since the Siberians from time immemorial had not participated in any military actions.[78]

Rediger's comments must be treated with caution. As he himself admitted, he spent the great majority of his service in a section of the General Staff that played no part in war planning or strategic mobilization – therefore his knowledge of the 'strategic mindset' of the General Staff was almost inevitably bound to be quite limited.[79] That not all within the Russian General Staff necessarily shared this attitude regarding China, or Przheval'skii's personal contempt for the Chinese army, is evident in the already noted moves towards strategic reinforcement taken in the Far East and the concerns expressed by officers like L. N. Sobolev. Nonetheless, Rediger's comments probably *do* reflect a collective disparaging attitude that existed in the General Staff *as a whole* towards the potential threat of China before 1900.[80]

The question of a potential invasion of Western China as a secondary theatre of military operations continued to fascinate the Russian General Staff meanwhile, the Ili and Kashgaria districts being subjected to further surveys by officers of the Turkestan military district in 1899–1900. One side-affect of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95 was a dramatic weakening of Chinese forces in her western borderlands, one third of China's best troops in the region being despatched back to the capital to meet that crisis. These forces had still not returned in 1900 when news of a possible imminent break with one or more of the Western great powers reached Urumchi from Peking by telegraph. A side-effect of this chain of events was the increased difficulty the local Chinese authorities faced in dealing with even minor uprisings such as that of the Dungans in 1899, that rebellion having compelled them to hastily form a local militia. To add to these difficulties, an anti-Ch'ing secret society was uncovered in the military forces disposed of in Xinjiang, leading to the removal and arrest of the heads of two local *lianza* detachments. In

Kashgar the Chinese authorities attempted to respond to the worsening security scenario by the conduct of military drill and training exercises, the issue of 1,300 Mauser magazine rifles and the expulsion of around 2,000 of the most destitute and politically unreliable elements from the town into villages in the surrounding countryside. In July anti-Russian demonstrations by Chinese-Manchu settlers in the Kul'dzha region posed such a threat to the Russian consulate and merchant community there that Russian troops in neighbouring Turkestan began to mobilize and concentrate on the Semirech'e border, a move sufficient to provoke the Chinese to take rapid measures to calm the situation. Russian military analysis was carried out against the backdrop of this period of renewed unrest and administrative instability.[81] Appointed to assess Kashgaria in 1899 was Lt.-Colonel Lavr Kornilov, later to serve as military agent in China before rising to national prominence in the revolutionary events of 1917. Although Kornilov estimated there were now enough breech-loading rifles in the region for the Chinese on the outbreak of war to be entirely armed with Mausers, he still considered the defensive capacity of the country to be very low.[82] General Staff Lt.-Colonel Fedorov of the Turkestan military district simultaneously studied the Ili region in both a military, geographic and ethnographic regard, his review emphasizing in its conclusions the advantages to be gained from again occupying the region in the near future. The Russian General Staff rejected the idea of re-annexing the Ili district however as a goal hardly imminently attainable given the existence of tasks of a much more immediately urgent and pressing character.[83] The General Staff concluded generally that Chinese difficulties in Xinjiang, outside of mistakes made in Chinese administrative policy, were symptomatic of a more general Islamic militancy also experienced by the Russians in the 1898 Andizhan uprising in Central Asia. In particular, the presence in Kashgaria of suspected Turkish or Afghan political agents was taken as indicative of ' . . . the presence of certain secret and still elusive links gradually arising among followers of the Sunni branch of Islam, not only in various countries but also across various parts of the globe'.[84] Indeed, from separate accounts we now also know that at around this very time, in 1901, a Turkish mission bearing Pan-Islamic propaganda, led by General Hasan Enver Pasha, actually visited the Muslims of Western China.[85]

Assessment of China's western provinces in the light of the new wave of military reforms being instituted in the country was also of course the task of Baron C. G. E. Mannerheim, the future president of Finland, during his famous trip through the country in 1906–08.[86] Mannerheim found the new wave of reforms only beginning to touch the Chinese troops in the western provinces. In particular he, like many observers, felt that the Chinese army's greatest continuing weakness was the lack of a fully trained and professional officer corps. The Chinese performed their new drill manuals, which consisted in the main of high-speed formation marching, dazzlingly well, but demonstrated no knowledge of extended order or tactical use of ground.

Armament, which Kornilov noted in Kashgaria in 1899 to vary between muzzle-loaders, Winchesters, and Mauser 71–84 rifles, among others, remained cripplingly diverse at the time of Mannerheim's visit, complicating tremendously the question of supply. In addition the railway network spreading in the Chinese central provinces in this period had yet to reach these outer borderlands. Reflecting the consensus within the Russian General Staff of the time, Mannerheim felt that Manchuria would be the main theatre of war in any future conflict. Nonetheless, considering all the logistical and technical failings outlined above, he urged the staff to take advantage of China's weaknesses in Xinjiang to annex the western provinces as a political trophy at peace negotiations in any future war. Essential to success above all was the seizure of the central military depot at Urumchi. Kashgaria to the south could by contrast be practically ignored, since the scattered Chinese garrison forces there would be pinned down in monitoring the local Muslim population. In Mannerheim's scheme a cavalry detachment equipped with horse artillery and machine guns would debouche from the Tekes and Yulduz valleys, seize the towns of Karashar, Khami and Barkul, place the camel route from Gul-Khua-Chen to Guchen in Russian hands, and effectively cut off the western provinces from China as a whole. Mannerheim again identified May to September as the optimum period for such an attack over the mountain crossings. Any further advance from the west beyond the operation outlined above, Mannerheim saw as attended by ever-increasing difficulties due to stretches of desert, dense woods and mountainous districts, not to mention the number of forces needed to secure an ever-extending communication line. A direct advance towards the capital from Manchuria could moreover achieve similar final results quicker and easier. Much less exertion would be needed, on the other hand, according to Mannerheim, to arm and train some of the dissatisfied local elements in Gansu province-primarily the Dungans. The Japanese, he noted, would not be squeamish about using such means, any more than the French in Indo-China.[87]

A similar interest in the loyalties of the local border populations in the Chinese western provinces lay behind the trip of the Muslim officer R. A. Syrtlanov in the year following Mannerheim's expedition. Ravil Shakh-Aidarovich Syrtlanov was the senior adjutant on the staff of the Turkestan military district at this time, and was therefore charged with intelligence-collection in neighbouring countries.[88] Officially undertaken as a supplement to the work of the recently deceased B. V. Dolbezhev, an outstanding student of the Eastern Faculty of St. Petersburg university, and an expert on the Mongolian language, Syrtlanov's 1909 study considered the loyalties of two prominent border nationalities, the Mongols and the Chinese Kirghiz.[89] Of the three major Mongol tribal groupings in the western regions of China – the Torguts, Chakhar and Olot – Syrtlanov concluded that despite the damage to Russia's prestige from the recent Russo-Japanese War, even the most outwardly loyal and trusted of these tribes – the Olot – would defect to Russia were the fortunes of any future war to clearly run Russia's way. The Kirghiz meanwhile,

of whom over 236,000 lived in the regions studied by Syrtlanov, had not been fully incorporated into the Chinese administration, were exempt from military service, and utilized Chinese fears that they would defect to Russian citizenship to extract certain privileges from the local administration. Nonetheless this state of affairs did not allow the Chinese-Kirghiz to be considered pro-Russian. Syrtlanov concluded instead that the Russian and Chinese authorities were held to be equally alien by the Kirghiz nomads, and that in many ways those living in Chinese territory enjoyed greater privileges than their counterparts in Russian territory, where of late there had been growing clashes between this group and new waves of Russian settlers. The Kirghiz also confided to Syrtlanov, as a fellow Muslim, that they would fear for their faith under a Russian administration. Finally Syrtlanov noted that the Kirghiz were of the belief, as a consequence of the Russo-Japanese War, that in a future, inevitable, Sino-Russian conflict, it would be the Chinese, with Japanese aid and leadership, who would be the victors. In a future conflict therefore, the Kirghiz would closely observe the first battles, and only substantial victories by Russia would draw them onto Russia's side. In the event of even a temporary Russian reverse on the other hand, the Kirghiz would cause the Russians considerable difficulties by attacking their rear areas and hampering cavalry reconnaissance.[90]

A crucial role in these later intelligence expeditions was also of course the monitoring of Japanese penetration into northern China. As the foregoing has emphasized, one cannot analyse the Russian staff's assessment of China after 1904 without taking into account the impact and consequences of the Russo-Japanese War, a war which had caught Russia's intelligence community apparently crucially under-prepared.

Underestimation of Japan was to prove one of the most significant intelligence failures of the Russian General Staff, with costly military and political consequences. However, as the cause and course of the war is traditionally blamed on the influence of a court clique – that group led by Bezobrazov – the culpability of the military has rarely been independently examined.[91] It is therefore perhaps worthwhile to review how this intelligence failure came about, particularly as this underestimation is traditionally attributed purely to racism on the Russians' part. The overall failure of Russian intelligence towards Japan is the more striking since war with Japan by 1904–05 was far from unexpected. It is true that initially the Japanese armed forces had not been regarded as a significant threat. Until 1875 in fact, as George Lensen has shown, harmony and warmth characterized Russo-Japanese relations.[92] Typical were the lectures of Veniukov to the Staff Academy in 1871 which, while they noted the pace of Japanese military modernization since 1868, went on to consider the threat other countries posed to Japan rather than any threat Japan might pose to them.[93] In part also the Russian General Staff, in common with many other European powers before 1894, simply considered China a more significant regional power. Thus a special edition of the General Staff's *Sbornik . . . po Azii* from the early 1880s on the armed forces

of China and Japan devoted 169 pages to the former and only 16 pages to the latter.[94] However, Japan was kept under close observation following the Triple Intervention of 1895, and a special committee of the Naval Ministry in that year actually noted that Japan's accelerated shipbuilding programme, designed to outpace the completion of the Trans-Siberian railroad, made conflict in the period 1903–06 a real possibility.[95] The Triple Intervention itself involved a significant degree of strategic work on the part of the Asiatic Department of the Russian General Staff, Russia being the power able to most directly threaten the Japanese forces deployed in Manchuria. Thus 1895–96 saw the first development of a strategic war plan for conflict with Japan, the mobilization to a wartime footing of the Priamur military district, the despatch of reinforcements from European Russia, and the upgrading of Vladivostok from a grade three to a grade two military fortification. In the wake of demobilization following the end of the immediate war scare it was resolved to increase the military forces permanently stationed in all of the Siberian military districts.[96] General Staff Lt.-Colonel Strel'bitskii conducted a reconnaissance of the route between Hailar and Tsitsikar in late 1894, a route which, although the probable operational line of the Trans-Baikal and West Siberian military forces in the event of hostilities, the Asiatic Department noted had until then been completely unstudied. Captain Manakin meanwhile, later to serve both as a consul in Tsitsikar and as a head of the General Staff's Asiatic Department, conducted a reconnaissance between Mergen and the Russian border town of Blagoveshchensk two years later. At the same time the reports of Colonel K. I. Vogak, the Russian military agent in the Far East during the immediate prelude and course of the Sino-Japanese conflict, conveyed almost with awe the level of efficiency and training visible within the Japanese armed forces. Noting that during the course of one attack on a Chinese redoubt a Japanese brigade caught in a crossfire continued on to its allotted position despite losses in the leading companies of 100 per cent of its officers and 75 per cent of its lower ranks, Vogak concluded that this army now easily compared with that of any European force and undoubtedly formed the strongest military body in the Far East. Its sole remaining weakness lay in the capabilities of its higher commanders, former *samurai* not fully trained in modern military thought, and this defect would be eradicated over time by the natural processes of retirement and the promotion of younger officers.[97]

Colonel Putiata meanwhile, by now serving as a desk-head with the Asiatic Department of the General Staff, took the opportunity of the clear turning point of 1895 to write a detailed report on proposed policies to secure Russia's future position in the Far East. As the base of this programme he took it as axiomatic that: 'the probable consequence of the presently proceeding events will be a still greater development of the armed forces in the neighbouring with us Asiatic states'.[98]

China, he noted, had spent the last thirty years buying new arms, hiring European military instructors, building new fortresses and constructing

arsenals. This policy however, due to the arbitrariness of its execution in the provinces, had failed to create either a modern army or a real fleet, and China had 'been in need of a lesson to convince it of its mistakes'. Consequently, he continued: 'If China is now conscious that it lies upon it to fundamentally alter its military system . . . then through its material means it will become a more threatening neighbour than it was up until the present time'.

Japan meanwhile had, he believed, been left unsatisfied by its war with China, a war in which there was no military glory, and ' . . . it is natural to expect that later on there will arise the need [for it] to find new laurels in a war with a more suitable opponent, in another nearby theatre of military action, such as is presented by our Pacific coast'.[99]

In consequence Putiata urged a whole series of measures to improve Russia's position in the Far East, including encouraging the activities of missionaries, increasing the number of posts occupied by Russians in the Chinese customs service, and creating separate military agents for China and Japan. This latter suggestion was carried out the following year, when Colonel Vogak, military agent for China and Japan since 1893, became responsible for military intelligence in China alone and Colonel N. I. Ianzhul was appointed the first independent military agent in Japan. Putiata appears to have underestimated the difficulties of intelligence collection in Japan however, writing that since Japan had a well-developed communication system and an open press, intelligence collection there could be assigned to one man 'without special harm to the affair'. Intelligence collection in China he saw as altogether more difficult due to poor communications, traditional Chinese secretiveness, and the extreme poverty of published information, and for this country he argued that having military agents in place in at least three distinct regions would be a necessity in the near future.[100] At the same time as Putiata wrote his report, General Obruchev expressed his own views as a traditionalist 'Westerner' on the implications of the Sino-Japanese War. Acknowledging the strategic advantage that could be gained in the annexation to Russia of northern Manchuria, thereby shortening the land frontier from 3,185 to around 1,400–1,600 versts, Obruchev deprecated achieving this goal through conflict, particularly with Japan. Russia had sufficient enemies in Europe and Central Asia, he wrote, without creating a new foe in an opponent with a 40-million strong population, a powerful fleet, and a well-organized army. By implication therefore, Russia's strategic priorities should remain concentrated upon the security of the Western frontier. However, although his estimation of the difficulties that would be presented in fighting a war with Japan proved prescient, Obruchev's remarks also displayed a distinct lack of understanding regarding what the local Chinese or Japanese response would be to even such 'peaceful' annexations as he proposed. This indicated a certain degree of ignorance in regard to the true diplomatic situation in the Far East.[101] Obruchev's proposals for a Russo-Japanese rapprochement were rejected

and Russian foreign policy in 1895 followed the line of intervention advocated by Finance Minister Sergei Witte and supported by War Minister Vannovskii.[102]

Despite Obruchev's personal orientation, a growing sense of the Japanese menace in this area came to impinge in almost every regard upon the strategic issue with China. Russia's military agents in China, more effective in intelligence terms than their counterparts in Japan, reported after 1898 a continuous stream of Sino-Japanese military exchanges as Japan sought to become the sole foreign mentor of Chinese military reform. This process, interrupted by the Boxer Rebellion, continued and even increased after that event, Japanese arms proving cheaper than their European competitors. Most troubling to the Russian General Staff were Colonel Vogak's reports that, despite Chinese official denials, Japanese military instructors and spies were now also operating in the northern regions of China, Russia's traditional sphere of influence.[103] The Russian navy's strategic 'game' of 1903 meanwhile was specifically based on the possibility of a war between Russia and Japan, and even included, in an eerie premonition, the premise of conflict ensuing from a surprise Japanese naval attack on Port Arthur. Nonetheless, reorganizations in the intelligence services, disagreements over proposed war plans, and deficiencies in the very process of intelligence gathering itself served to hinder the Russian Staff on the eve of war with Japan. A reorganization of the General Staff in 1900–03 had culminated in intelligence collection regarding foreign countries being assigned to the VIIth Section of the Second Quartermaster Directorate, leaving the Asiatic Department with jurisdiction over the purely Russian territories (the Caucasus, Central Asia, Siberia). Intended to improve the conduct of intelligence affairs, this reform bore ambiguous and unsatisfactory results. The statute initially brought in to establish the new VIIth Section was inadequately drafted, leading to improvised reform thereafter, and the special organization subsequently created within the VIIth section to handle the correspondence and funding of military agents abroad (operational affairs) suffered from poor financial support and a difficult working environment. The intolerability of such conditions entailed this two-man operational section undergoing painfully high turnover rates in personnel – between the 1st May 1903 and the 1st March 1905 the individual personnel manning the section changed completely no less than three times.[104] Such difficulties within the central intelligence apparatus were compounded at the local level when in 1903 Bezobrazov persuaded the Tsar to form a special Viceroyship of the Far East under Admiral Alekseev. The Viceroy's special conference (*soveshchanie*) then took charge of Russian military preparations in the Far East, reducing War Minister Kuropatkin and the Russian Main Staff to an advisory capacity. In particular, this meant that the reports of Russian military agents in the Far East were now sent directly to the Viceroy. This divided authority was to continue to have a deleterious effect during much of the course of the subsequent conflict.

The Russian military agent in Tokyo from 1903 onwards, Colonel V. K. Samoilov, after an uncertain start, actually provided sound, accurate reports on the Japanese military build-up, largely through collaborating with other foreign intelligence agents in that country. This cooperation continued during the course of the war itself, one of the most able agents of the Tsarist intelligence service being the French journalist Bale, an individual fluent in Japanese. In the naval sphere the Russian naval agent in the Far East since 1900, Lieutenant A. I. Rusin, likewise held the military capacity of the Japanese battlefleet in a far higher regard than many of his contemporaries. One of the few to assess Japanese intentions correctly, Rusin's reports served at least to convince Admiral Alekseev, the new Viceroy in the Far East, of the inevitability of war with Japan.[105] For the Russian army however, Samoilov marked a late breakthrough in intelligence about Japan, the General Staff having been persistently dissatisfied by the quantity and quality of information provided by his immediate predecessor G. M. Vannovskii, a nephew of the former War Minister, who served as military agent in Tokyo between 1900 and 1902. Vannovskii's own immediate predecessor, Ianzhul, attributed much of this comparative failure by Russia's military agents in Japan to the lack of reliable interpreters. Russian military agents were not trained in Japanese, and local interpreters were unreliable, compelling the military agent either to dispatch indiscriminately any secret documents that fell into his hands on the long journey to St. Petersburg to be translated, or to abstain from attempting to gather such documents altogether.

Perhaps even more serious however in terms of the formation of Russia's strategic view of Japan between 1895 and 1904 was the marked change in Vannovskii's own views toward the Japanese army compared with those of his predecessors. Vogak's successor to the post in 1896, Colonel Ianzhul, was somewhat critical of the Japanese army's high command, cavalry and artillery, but nevertheless still felt that in training, equipment and mobility this army could compare favourably with that of any European power. One of Vannovskii's first reports however, written while he was still in St. Petersburg, marked a dramatic turnaround from these previous assessments. This report claimed that it would be decades, perhaps centuries, before the Japanese army acquired the moral foundation to compete on an equal footing militarily with 'even the weakest' of the European powers. Apparently unconscious of the parallel that could be made with Russia, he noted that the army would only reach even this low stage if the Japanese nation as a whole were able to endure 'the internal disorder that proceeds from too rapid an influx of ideas foreign to its historical and cultural existence'. This report met high-level approval, War Minister Kuropatkin noting with satisfaction in the margin: 'I read this. The enthusiasm of our former military agents towards the Japanese army is ended. This view is sober'.[106]

Vannovskii's views towards the Japanese army grew if anything even more critical as he gained greater opportunities to observe it in action. His assessment of the 1901 military manoeuvres in Japan, taken together with

data on the performance of the Japanese in China in 1900, concluded by remarking that the infantry were poorly trained tactically and physically weak, the artillery poorly commanded and almost immobile, and the cavalry ineffective in every regard. Against such an army, he wrote, a strong cavalry detachment provisioned with artillery and acting in a partisan-style action could operate with certainty of a decisive success. These views were corroborated and further elaborated in the highly critical comments of the Chief of Staff of the 1st East Siberian corps, Major-General Ivanov, another spectator at the 1901 Japanese manoeuvres. Less critical was Captain Gorskii of the 10th East Siberian rifle regiment, also present, who noted that European observers at these manoeuvres divided generally into two groups-those who were highly critical, and those more cautious in their assessments. To the latter group appertained the German contingent – they in particular admired the level of discipline the Japanese displayed. The General Staff in St. Petersburg treated the varied assessments it received with caution. Major-General Zhilinskii, head of the Quartermaster-General section of the Main Staff, noting that Ivanov exhibited a clear prejudice against the Japanese army, was of the view that:

> There is no doubt that the Japanese army in every regard is still very far from perfection and can in no way compare with the main European armies and in particular with our own. Nonetheless it would appear . . . desirable to be more impartial, without any bias in evaluating the military capability and training of our probable opponent.[107]

Over the course of the next few years however, Vannovskii as military agent continued to stress what he saw as weaknesses in the Japanese army and state, including mutinies in the fleet, widespread corruption, and the demise of a whole battalion of Japanese infantry from cold and starvation while on manoeuvres abroad in January 1902. This latter event, Vannovskii was convinced, demonstrated the incapability as yet of the Japanese army to mount a winter campaign in regions of northeast Asia where that season was climactically much more severe than in northern Japan. In terms of shaping strategic perspectives on Japan therefore, the period Vannovskii spent in office as military agent in Tokyo marked a critical, and in retrospect deeply harmful interlude between the respect in which that army was held by Vogak and Ianzhul and the urgent, last-minute warnings of Samoilov. Probably the most famous consequence of these shortcomings of Russian military intelligence on the ground was the erroneous pre-war Russian estimates of the size of the Japanese army. These estimates set the size of that force at some 200,000 men when its real strength closer approximated 600,000 under arms.[108] The situation was further complicated by the views of the War Minister himself, A. N. Kuropatkin famously visiting the Far East on the very eve of war in 1903.[109] The Far East as a whole was not high on the agenda of Kuropatkin's strategic priorities at this time; as he confided to Vogak during his visit to Japan:

> Russia and the Imperial throne is threatened from the West, and not from the East. . . . Wilhelm and all of Germany is glad at each new expenditure of Russia in the Far East for, weakening ourselves in the west, we also gradually lose the right of Russia to a voice in European affairs, befitting Russia as a great European, and not an Asiatic, power.[110]

Kuropatkin returned to report that Russia could rest secure in the safety of the Priamur district and Port Arthur, and of the 130 million roubles allotted the War Ministry in 1904–09 for fortifying the Far Eastern border, only 9 million was released for improvements in Nikolaevsk, Port Arthur, Vladivostok and Pos'et. Kuropatkin also took the opportunity of his visit to the Far East to form and deliver his own verdict on the Japanese army. Among the factors Kuropatkin felt contributed to the inability of this army to participate in modern war was the absence among their officers and soldiers of any religious feeling – 'without religion, without faith in providence, an individual might bear the casualties and losses of the heavy test of war, but the mass will not'. Such an evaluation only served to underline Kuropatkin's own basic scholastic ignorance regarding Japan however, since the Japanese state religion – Shinto Buddhism – was in fact an intrinsic ideological element behind Japanese militarism right up until 1945.[111]

Even improved efficiency at the lower-intelligence gathering levels was not sufficient therefore to shift the accretions of arrogance and lethargy that had gathered at the very highest levels of the Russian government, not least with the Tsar himself, who personally and most famously regarded the Japanese as no more than trained monkeys. The General Staff itself on the eve of war prepared a report to the Tsar based on the collected information of their agents in Japan, China and Korea, setting out in fine detail the accelerated pace of Japan's training and mobilization over 1903. Despite the submission of this report to the Tsar approximately a month before war began, no complimentary intensified preparations took place on the Russian side. Literally a day before the outbreak of hostilities, on the 26th January/8th February 1904, there crossed Kuropatkin's desk in St. Petersburg for his signature a report that accurately outlined Japanese strategic intentions almost exactly as they were subsequently played out in the war itself. It predicted the campaign beginning by an attack on the Russian fleet to gain command of the sea, an invasion of southern Manchuria, and the cutting-off and rapid siege of Port Arthur. Kuropatkin signed the document but noted that it remained a series of educated suppositions, not backed by covertly obtained documentary evidence. Thus, even this did not inspire the Russian General Staff to order the majority of its forces in the Far East into a state of war readiness, nor to set about more general mobilization measures.[112] Grulev, a General Staff officer who participated in many scientific expeditions in the Far East in this period, helping select the site for the Russian town of Kharbin in 1895, later complained in his memoirs that

officers who had visited Japan and strove to warn of the Japanese military build-up, like Samoilov and Agapeev, were reprimanded for 'timidity before the enemy'. Grulev himself suffered similar reprimands from his superiors on the eve of war for attempting to give, as he saw it, a more realistic picture of Japan's military strength.[113]

An overall survey therefore suggests that, despite the chaos caused by last minute reorganizations of administrative structure and previous weaknesses, the relevant sections of the Russian General Staff itself were, on the very eve of war, actually providing detailed and accurate information. However, the placing of more active and effective military agents in both Japan and Korea on the eve of war was no substitute for the absence of a broad, well-organized agent network in these countries. Moreover, the Russian intelligence system then broke down rapidly upon the actual onset of hostilities in the theatre of war itself, emphasizing the fragility of what had been created. Intelligence reports initially only reached the army staff through the staff of the Far Eastern Viceroy. The secret agents deployed by the intelligence chief of the Manchurian army staff to Japan and Korea had to dispatch their reports by a roundabout route through Europe. The officer assigned organization of the Manchurian army's long-range intelligence, Major-General V. A. Kosagovskii, had such fractious relations with the Quartermaster-General, Major-General V. I. Kharkevich that he later confided to his diary that by the end he felt like strangling the latter. As a result of these and other factors, delay, administrative discord, general disorganization, and an overall failure at the tactical level characterized Russian military intelligence throughout the war.[114] Battlefield defeats exacerbated these difficulties. After the battle of Mukden, during the Russian retreat, the Japanese captured Russian field staff documents that compromised several agents of Russian intelligence working in Japan and Korea. In addition, after that battle, the recruitment of Chinese agents by the Russian field intelligence sections, always difficult and unsatisfactory before, became practically impossible, not least due to the severe punishments the Japanese always inflicted on any Chinese caught in the act of espionage. The Russian army's gradual retreat into northern Manchuria also placed it in the difficult position of falling back into territory for which it lacked adequate maps, largely as a consequence of the official rejection that had met Colonel Polianovskii's proposal in 1900. In the immediate pre-war period the smallest scale maps suitable for tactical actions covered the Liaotung peninsula and part of southern Manchuria. This was a situation the War Ministry considered perfectly appropriate given that their 1903 war plan envisaged playing for time while concentrating forces along the southern end of the Chinese Eastern Railroad. Once concentrated there, these troops were to move into a counter-attack and, ultimately, invade Japan itself, and so no fall back to positions further north had been envisaged. In addition to this difficulty, money allotted for increasing the number of maps and distributing topographical materials to the troops had only been assigned three months before the very outbreak of hostilities. The dispatch of maps to the troops

was frequently dilatory, while materials already at the disposal of the General Staff were underdeveloped and often published too late to be useful. In 1903 the head of the Corps of Military Topographers, Lt.-General N. D. Artamonov, generalizing from his own and other topographers experiences in the Russo-Turkish war twenty-five years earlier, had recommended the creation of a full topographical section to accompany the field staff of the active army. On the outbreak of hostilities Kuropatkin had ignored such advice, relying instead only a ludicrously inadequate number of topographers attached to his own army staff and those of each individual corps.[115] As a consequence the despatch of trained staff officers who could have fulfilled more vital tasks on the military front into the countryside instead, to draw up maps of the surrounding area, formed a recurring theme in many officers' post-war memoirs, fostering the later myth that the Russian War Ministry had entirely neglected to study the Far Eastern theatre of military operations in the pre-war period.[116] In actual fact of course, as should be already evident from the foregoing, the General Staff's greatest problem was the rational organization and effective utilization of materials and information that were already in principle at its disposal. Perhaps most devastating and unexpected of all however was the effectiveness of Japan's own intelligence service, which spread its net to Europe, funding the leaders of the Polish, Finnish and Russian revolutionary movements. The Japanese devoted no less than 1 million yen (35 million of today's dollars) to this cause.[117] At the general level, the Japanese outspent the Russians in the area of intelligence acquisition. Before the war, the Russian Main Staff assigned 56,590 roubles annually to intelligence work, to be distributed among district staffs, each district receiving between 4–12,000 roubles. The only exception to this financial pattern was, as we shall see in the next chapter, the Caucasus. The Japanese, by contrast, on the run-up to war, devoted (in Russian terms) around 12 *million* roubles to the cause of intelligence.[118] As a result the superiority of the Japanese intelligence service throughout the conflict contributed significantly to Japan's final victory. Thereafter, in logical consequence, the improvement of its intelligence-gathering capabilities in Asia became one of the major tasks facing the Russian General Staff in its post-war reforms.

Nowhere was the psychological impact of the Russo-Japanese War more evident subsequently than in the writings of Kuropatkin, the former War Minister and initial Russian commander-in-chief in that war. Even as a young officer Kuropatkin, in contrast to his then direct superior at the Main Staff during the 1880s, Obruchev, had been deeply impressed by the potential military dangers facing Russia in the Far East. Concern over the manner in which the growing accessibility of modern weaponry to Asian peoples might change the global strategic balance was moreover a marked feature of Kuropatkin's military writings as early as 1887.[119] Nonetheless, in his later actions as War Minister, Kuropatkin did little to prepare Russia for a potential two-front war in Europe and Asia. Instead he remained mesmerized by

the threat to the Western frontier that had become the central mantra of Russian strategic thought since the days of Miliutin and Obruchev. During his own reign, no organized mobilization plans were developed by the Main Staff at the central level for war against either China or Japan. Instead the responsibility for developing a war plan in the event of a conflict with Japan remained largely devolved to the Priamur military district staff, whose obvious inexperience in making preparations for the mobilization and concentration of a Russian army in the Far East several hundred strong bore baneful effects upon the whole course of the subsequent conflict. No warehouses, artillery parks or barracks existed in the Far East to shelter and maintain an army in such numbers, nor was the question of railway timetabling properly thought through. Such a turn of events was a direct product of Kuropatkin's own indecisive and contradictory character, in that he was fundamentally unwilling to turn away from the West, even when recognizing growing dangers in the East.

In the massive strategic review undertaken upon his taking up the post of War Minister in 1898, Kuropatkin had already appraised Russia's frontiers for the twentieth century as generally satisfactory. In this he had for example rejected the opinions of other Russian Asiatic experts, L. N. Sobolev and Mikhail Veniukov among them, that the Hindu Kush rather than the Amu-Darya would form a more natural physical and political border for Central Asia.[120] His general model for potential future conflict while serving as War Minister followed that of his former chief, N. N. Obruchev, and envisaged defensive wars in the West and Far East while retaining a limited offensive capacity in Central Asia.[121] Yet even in this massive geopolitical review at the turn of the century, underlying contradictions in Kuropatkin's thought were already visible. While on the one hand he regarded Russia's present frontiers as entirely satisfactory, on the other he saw seizure of the Bosphorus, the establishment of a firm base on the Pacific, and access through Persia to the Indian Ocean as important unfinished tasks for the twentieth century. These contradictions became more public in 1901 when, in clashes with Witte and Lamsdorf, Kuropatkin insisted that Northern Manchuria should become an autonomous or near-autonomous province subordinate to Russian influence in the same manner as Bukhara in Central Asia.[122] By 1903 Kuropatkin had again shifted towards a more conciliatory tone, but this continual wavering heightened the difficulty of producing a consistent governmental policy in the Far East. Kuropatkin had always retained a patrician interest in Asian affairs during his term as War Minister, and pushed forward some strategic improvements in Russia's Asiatic military districts, most notably steps towards construction of the Orenburg to Tashkent rail line, a link he saw as a strategic necessity. Obruchev's most recent biographer for these very reasons came to the general conclusion that: 'For Obruchev, Turkestan and China did not signify anything, and for people like Kuropatkin it signified everything'.[123]

As we have seen, in the eyes of some contemporaries Kuropatkin's greatest weakness in fact was that he never ceased to be a 'Turkestanets' in terms of both clan allegiance and, in their view, mental development.[124] Yet ironically it was perhaps for these underlying psychological reasons (sensing how others perceived him) that in the run-up to the Russo-Japanese War Kuropatkin in reality acted as a 'Westerner', arguing that the Eastern frontier was a distinct second priority compared to the menace of Germany. The subsequent conflict itself only underlined the fact that Kuropatkin's own geopolitical imaginings and patrician concern for Russian forces in Asia were not backed up by sufficiently clear and consistent practical measures. Though to some degree himself an original thinker, Kuropatkin in practice remained overawed by the strategic legacy created by Obruchev in the 1880s, and as War Minister in 1898–1903 he continuously sacrificed the demands of other military districts to the need to remain strong in the West.

By 1910 Kuropatkin was free to attempt to reformulate his own views in public without the burden of having to formulate practical policy proposals. Despite his personal fall from grace after 1905, his writings remained influential, while the experience of the Russo-Japanese War itself magnified his always-present but earlier suppressed fears regarding the safety of the Russian Far East. In 1910 he foresaw a century in which the subjugated Asiatic races would collectively rise up against their European masters. A review of the European experience in other parts of Asia and Africa – the Anglo-Boer war, the triumph of the Abyssinians over the Italians – convinced Kuropatkin that the non-European peoples would increasingly challenge their masters, using the 'armed fruits' of European culture against them in the coming century.[125] This would assume particular importance in Asia since in the twentieth century the value of Asiatic markets would increase-external trade from China alone in the past fifty years had risen more than ten times, to say nothing of the consumer power of the Chinese population.[126] As a result of what Kuropatkin saw as the growing threat of costly Asiatic insurrection, the Central Asian situation, to take just one example, had already grown more complicated: 'Now, instead of the five or six battalions with which we conquered the country, we have two whole army corps in Turkestan'.[127]

A particularly large threat in Asia was what Kuropatkin defined as the 'yellow peril', a fear greatly inspired of course by the Russo-Japanese War, and which had not played so great a role in the thinking behind his original review of 1898–1900.[128] China and Japan, Kuropatkin now warned, could each field armies of several millions, with the Chinese army now going through a period of considerable military reform via German instructors. Chinese children practised European military exercises on the streets and the motto 'China for the Chinese' was on everybody's lips.[129] In this oncoming conflict the role of the Muslim in Kuropatkin's eyes was ambiguous (*zagadochno*); were the 'yellow races' to win the first battles he might well side with them, resulting in two enemies to every one European.[130] To meet

this threat in the coming century, Kuropatkin in 1910 began urging the creation of a European union, enabling Russia to redirect forces away from its western frontiers. A particular pet project was unification of English and Russian railway lines in Central Asia, an issue that dated back in Russian thought to the 1870s. Here again contradictions were evident in Kuropatkin's views over time. In 1899–1900 he had in fact opposed Finance Minister Witte's proposal to unify English and Russian railroads in Asia when the Finance Minister had promoted this very measure on purely economic grounds. By 1910 however, just such a unification became a necessity in Kuropatkin's eyes for *security* reasons, as 'a union of two peoples of the white race against the encroaching danger from the oncoming awakening of the yellow races'.[131]

In the area Kuropatkin had studied as a young officer, Kashgaria, he now reckoned only the local Dungans might provide assistance to Russia in the event of a conflict, the other local races in the contested border area-the Kirghiz, Taranchi (Uigurs), and Kashgartsy-having effectively become subordinated by the Chinese. He particularly feared the political influence of Chinese-Kirghiz on Russia's own Kirghiz in the event of an invasion through the Dzhungarian Gate.[132] Kuropatkin still felt, as he always had, that to meet this threat Russia had to revitalize and utilize its own immense natural and spiritual resources, a policy best summed up by the motto Kuropatkin proposed for the twentieth century, which headed all three volumes of his main literary work of the period: 'Russia for the Russians' (*Rossiia dlia russkikh*).[133] The estimates of the famous scientist Mendeleev on Russian population growth in the twentieth century gave Kuropatkin some hope that Russia could eventually secure its Far Eastern possessions through colonization.[134] In the meantime however, not sharing Przheval'skii's high estimate of the Mongol character and their powers of resistance, he recommended in 1913 a dramatic southward realignment of the Russo-Chinese border to recreate a barren strip of influence between the two empires along the 'natural' borderline of the Gobi Desert.[135]

Kuropatkin's own reconsideration of the 'Kuld'zha Question' in the first decades of the twentieth century reflected contemporary military developments, most particularly renewed Sino-Russian tension over Chinese attempts after 1906 to renegotiate the St. Petersburg agreement of 1881.[136] In 1911 during 'manoeuvres' Russian troops again crossed into Xinjiang, and in 1912 again moved into the Kuld'zha area in response to requests from local Russian consuls worried by the threat of social anarchy, although the Foreign Ministry overruled proposals at the time to reoccupy the whole Ili District. Contemporary military planning for full-scale operations in Western China was marred by disagreements between GUGSh and the Omsk and Turkestan district staffs, but among the most ardent advocates of a forward movement was the Turkestan Governor-General, Samsonov. Samsonov warned that while Ili remained in the hands of the Chinese, they possessed an 'open door' for action against the Russian town of Vernyi. A

Russian occupation of the district on the other hand would be an advance to a 'natural frontier line' and would push the area of Chinese military concentration back to Urumchi, from where Chinese forces would have to operate across a broad strip of desert.[137] Thus, just a few years before the outbreak of the First World War, the strategic debates that had first been raised during the 'Ili Crisis' some decades earlier were suddenly revitalized.

Another direct outcome of the Russo-Japanese War, meanwhile, was a renewed interest by the General Staff in Mongolia, culminating in Outer Mongolia becoming a Russian protectorate in 1911–12.[138] In the aftermath of the battle of Mukden in 1905, rumours had reached the Russians of a Japanese turning movement through Mongolia allegedly involving 20,000 men with artillery. The Russian staff then discovered that it lacked the topographical and statistical data necessary to judge whether such a flanking movement was possible, or even likely. This in itself was an indirect comment on the level of organization of the Russian field staff in that war, since Staff officers like Pevtsov, Przheval'skii and others had reported extensively on Mongolia in the past. A fresh series of expeditions were despatched in 1905 throughout the country, and these reported that there were no Japanese forces in the country other than a group of Japanese officers allegedly directing a band of *hunhozes*. They also made reports on various routes, concluding that Mongolia was too barren for the movement of so large a detachment as had been reported, and established diplomatic relations with Mongolian tribal leaders.[139] These trips and one by Life-Guard Hussar Lieutenant Kushelev in 1911 laid the strategic groundwork for the later Mongolian-Russian *rapprochement*.[140] Kushelev's work in particular was later openly printed and circulated, ensuring it a wider readership than that traditionally associated with the General Staff's *Sbornik . . . po Azii*.[141] One significant aspect of all these officers' later activities was the manner in which they re-envisaged Mongolia in geographical terms in order to make political engagement in this country seem a pressing necessity. This was a familiar pattern, repeating in reverse the manner in which the Amur had earlier been 'envisaged' by Russian governmental personnel in the first half of the nineteenth century. That river had at first been seen as a 'Russian Mississippi' and was then later downgraded as geographical reality intervened upon illusion. Clearly if the Russian General Staff were now interested in Mongolia, it was not now perceived as the strategic wasteland between Russia and China that had earlier been portrayed by Putiata. Kushelev probably did most among military officers in altering the popular perception of Mongolia, writing that Mongolia *had* been considered a buffer state in view of its large expanses of 'shifting sands, wild mountains, [being] deprived of irrigation, communication routes and means of subsistence . . . and being generally completely unsuitable for settlement by a cultured [. . .] population, and equally not fit as a theatre of military action . . . '. This perception, Kushelev attempted to persuade his military and governmental readers, had now been proven

wrong – 'for the past few years there has been emerging completely different information'. The Chinese were advancing in a 'great wave' to colonize the country, revealing the whole territory of Mongolia to be not unfertile but, 'on the contrary [agriculturally] rich', facilitating the approach of a 'yellow peril' towards the Russian border.[142] Furthermore, Kushelev claimed, the whole country was naturally passable for the movement of large bodies of troops, particularly cavalry and mechanized transport. This was particularly important in view of the strategic consideration pointed out by both Kushelev and (separately) General Staff Colonel V. F. Novitskii in a survey of Eastern Mongolia conducted in 1906 – namely, that with the loss of a Russian presence in southern Manchuria, the shortest possible route from the Russian border to Peking now ran through Mongolia.[143] In response to all these considerations, Kushelev personally called for the construction of a strategic railroad linking Trans-Baikal to Kiakhta, Urga, and eventually Kalgan, alongside developing the cotton market in Ili in order 'to be saved from the cotton yoke of America', and exploitation of the 'indisputably rich' mineral reserves in the mountains of the area where 'everywhere there are signs of gold'.[144] Kushelev's own fantasies aside, Russian actions in general were also guided by an awareness of Japanese competition in the same region and by the actions of local players. Russian relations with the princes of Inner Mongolia after 1908 were significantly shaped by the presence among the border guard staff of the Trans-Amur military district of the Buriat-born Ts. Tsydypov, a future leader of the so-called Pan-Mongol movement subsequently purged under Stalin during the 1920s.[145] Mongol petitioners for Russian aid also explicitly threatened to turn to the Japanese for arms in the event of a Russian refusal. In early 1907 the Russian government had learnt via their leading sinologist, Dmitri Pozdneev, of the formation in Tokyo of a new society seeking to increase the influence of Japanese Buddhism among the Mongol Lamaist branch of that faith. Russian intelligence also particularly feared the spread of the new 'Pan-Asian' propaganda in the region, permeating Mongolia and percolating through the border to influence Russia's own Buriat subjects in the Trans-Baikal region. Such fears were fortified by military intelligence reports in the immediate aftermath of the Russo-Japanese War in which Japanese agents in Outer Mongolia were reportedly particularly intensive in studying routes leading to Trans-Baikal.[146] By 1913, in response to such pressures, the Russians had trained a Mongolian Brigade equipped with rifles and machine guns and commanded by a Russian officer appointed by the War Ministry. In a pact with Russia, China recognized the 'autonomy' of Outer Mongolia shortly thereafter.

The Russo-Japanese War also instituted a series of strategic reforms within the Russian state that came to generally reflect Kuropatkin's publicly expressed fears, as well as a policy of strategic retrenchment in the Far East. Kuropatkin's successors at the War Ministry were faced with correcting his muddled legacy and with preparing Russia properly for a potential two-front

war in both Europe and Asia. Immediately after the Russo-Japanese War both the War Ministry and the Russian Foreign Ministry drew up plans to unify all intelligence operations in Asia in future, be they military, political or economic, under the aegis of a single department, but nothing ultimately came out of either proposal.[147] Another more practical consequence of the war, again a result of a desire to improve intelligence operations in future, was the creation of permanent intelligence staffs within the local military districts in 1906. In 1908 and 1910, for the more successful coordination of central and local intelligence organs, conferences were held bringing together the senior adjutants of the intelligence organs of these military districts. The 1910 conference brought together those staffs directly concerned with intelligence operations in the East, and heading this later conference was General Staff Colonel Oskar Karlovich Enkel', head of the 5th (Far Eastern) operational desk of the 3rd Quartermaster-General section (Asiatic fronts) of GUGSh, the organization which sent him to the Far East at the start of 1910. Enkel' returned with a bulky and often highly critical report regarding the intelligence operations of the military district staffs, military agents and secret agents in the region, with accompanying recommendations for future improvements.[148] Enkel' praised the work of certain intelligence networks in the Far East, and was particularly impressed by the work of the Russian consulate in Kharbin, which had successfully established an extensive agent network in Mongolia. This network, a reflection of Russia's renewed strategic interest in Mongolia at the time, cost around 850 roubles a month and was largely comprised of Chinese-speaking Mongols, almost all of whom Enkel' regarded as excellent agents.[149] However Enkel' also uncovered significant instances of corruption and inactivity among the military district staffs of the Far East – of the 51,000 roubles assigned the Priamur military district alone between March 1896 and December 1909, only 25,640 roubles had been expended by that district on matters directly related to intelligence.[150] Though damning in many areas, Enkel's report did relatively little to immediately provoke active intelligence reform in the Far East. At the very start of 1914 however P. I. Aver'ianov, a trusted staff officer of long standing within the Third Quartermaster-General Section of GUGSh reluctantly accepted a proposed appointment to become head of staff of the Irkutsk military district, with the specific intent of putting the intelligence and operational work of this district staff into some kind of order. The entirely unexpected outbreak of European conflict in August however threw all the hopes invested in Aver'ianov into permanent suspension.[151]

A further result of the Russo-Japanese War was increased expenditure upon intelligence operations by the General Staff generally. In 1906–09 the General Staff received annually for 'secret' (intelligence) expenditures 344,140 roubles, compared to the pre-war figure of 56, 590 roubles. In 1909 a State Duma-voted supplement increased this expenditure to around half a million roubles, and in 1910 the War Ministry managed to obtain a further increase again that brought the figure on intelligence expenditure to 1,947,850 roubles.

A final financial boost in 1914 to the western military districts in particular meant that state expenditure on military intelligence between the start of the century and the First World War rose by 2000 per cent.[152] Though this rise nonetheless remained inadequate, the Far East did benefit from application of these increased sums, to the extent of there even being some divergence from Russia's traditional strategic interests. As late as 1913, out of the total intelligence budget, 311,600 roubles were devoted to intelligence operations in the East, compared to 203,600 roubles in the West.[153]

A 1909 report by GUGSh highlighted the need to direct all efforts towards raising the 'till now very scanty' level of knowledge regarding Japan as a potential opponent and about the Far Eastern theatre of war generally. The main means towards fulfilling these goals the Russian General Staff saw as the creation of an efficient agent network, the most notable oversight in Russian pre-war military policy in the region. The Russian military agent in Tokyo, Colonel Samoilov, on returning to his post in 1906, reported almost immediately that intelligence collection directly under the eyes of the Japanese remained as difficult as ever, and for this reason he advocated in 1908 the establishment of a bureau outside the country for directing intelligence. At the end of 1909 the Main Directorate of the General Staff concurred with this suggestion, and in 1911 laid upon the shoulders of the assistant military agent in Shanghai, Lt.-Colonel Nikolaev, the task of organizing an agent network – No. 31 – which conducted intelligence in Japan. This network remained in existence at considerable expense (35,000 roubles annually) until 1914, when the General Staff finally transferred the greater burden of its intelligence-gathering activities to the European frontier.[154]

The General Staff undertook on an equally ambitious scale the preparation of material on the potential future theatre of military operations. Up until this time the largest single source of information on the Far East in Russian was the two-volume work on Manchuria of the distinguished Russian Sinologist Dmitri Pozdneev (Putiata's sharp critic). This major work was prepared in the 1890s on the explicit instructions and with the backing of the Finance Minister, Sergei Witte. At that time the Russian War Ministry lacked any statistical compilation on the region that was remotely comparable in scale.[155] This enterprise demonstrated explicitly both the predominant influence in that earlier period of the Finance Ministry in the Far East, and also the wiliness of Witte in poaching experts to serve his own cause. The immediate prelude to the Russo-Japanese War had marked the passing of the Witte period of patronage in Far Eastern affairs however, and in its aftermath the need for the Russian General Staff to have its own *independent* body of knowledge and statistical data on the region became obvious. An attempt to answer this need was thereafter expressed in the production of three large volumes of statistics entitled simply 'The Far East', edited by the leading military expert on such questions, Colonel Bolkhovitinov, and produced through the Main Directorate of the General Staff in 1911.[156]

The Russo-Japanese war had also inflicted enormous material losses in terms of transports, guns and other equipment upon the Russian army, losses disproportionate to the actual number of troops engaged. The false economy of Kuropatkin's concentration upon the West was demonstrated when conflict in the Far East ended up dramatically weakening Russia's western defences as well. In the chaotic and piecemeal mobilization of 1904–05, 2,100 of the latest rapid-fire field guns were ultimately diverted to the Far East, leaving only 300 such guns on the critical front with Germany and Austria-Hungary.[157] Many of these guns were subsequently lost in action or simply abandoned. Consequently only in 1910 did the Russian General Staff again feel capable of formulating a complete war plan and mobilization schedule based upon planned and existing technical capacity.[158] This plan was the first in Russian imperial history that developed full mobilization schedules for combat on the entire Eurasian continent, again reflecting the General Staff's new sense of vulnerability in Asia. It made provision for war against China, Japan, China and Japan in alliance, war in the Caucasus, and war in Turkestan, while at the same time continuing to provision for the traditional European threat.[159] This schedule marked a complete break from the legacy of Kuropatkin, Miliutin and Obruchev, when the European theatre (Poland) had traditionally been subject to the most detailed mobilization planning and the Asiatic theatres, if considered at all, were allotted only short-term contingency schedules. This new plan however represented the Russian General Staff's recognition of the completely altered strategic environment. Accustomed to analyse threats by the study of facts rather than diplomatic promises, the Russian military were generally unplacated by the assurances of their diplomatic counterparts that the 1907 Anglo-Russian Convention and later agreements with Japan had effectively neutralized the threat from that direction. More pertinent from their perspective was the prospect that in any future conflict in the Far East Japan would deploy an army 1.5 times bigger than that encountered in the conflict of 1904–05 (475 as opposed to 300 battalions), with those forces rearmed, re-equipped, and well-trained.[160] In addition the course of military modernization in China had to now also be considered. The survey conducted by the Main Directorate of the General Staff in 1909 of the Chinese armed forces noted the remarkable advances in modernization made there over the preceding five years, already visible from the Chinese manoeuvres of 1905 and 1906. New European-style formations had been adopted and moves towards a standardization of arms taken in the form of the 1888 model Mauser infantry rifle and Japanese and German field guns of 75mm calibre. This study concluded that ' . . . this army in and of itself cannot [any longer] be ignored and the more so in joint action with the army of another strong power'.[161] Russian war planning in 1910 would make abundantly clear whom the General Staff saw as most likely to comprise this other 'strong power'.

The Russian war plan of 1910, although it was produced well after he had already left office, bore the intellectual imprint of one man, Chief of the General Staff F. F. Palitsyn. The possibility of redistributing Russia's reserves

from their traditional concentration points – the Vil'na, Warsaw and Kiev military districts-to a more central area, the Volga region, had first been raised by Palitsyn in 1907.[162] In a critically important 1908 report setting out defence plans for the state over the next ten years, Palitsyn and Major-General M. V. Alekseev, in addition to noting the traditional threats of Germany and Austria-Hungary, had noted darkly the emergence in the Far East of 'young, warlike, energetic powers, thirsting for action and [future] conquests'. The only resolution to this dilemma as they saw it was that, in future, Russia should prepare for a war on two fronts; Foreign Ministry arguments that the Far East represented a strategic distraction were explicitly rejected.[163] Palitsyn's own perspective on strategic threats to Russia during his term of office as both Chief of Staff and head of GUGSh was unconventional, at least when compared to the decades-old focus on Poland first instituted under Obruchev. In his pursuit of a unified military doctrine, Palitsyn had revitalized the study of Asia within the Russian General Staff in a manner not been attempted since the era of Maksheev in the 1860s. As well as entrusting two of his most talented subordinates, Colonels Bolkhovitinov and Aver'ianov, with operational planning, Palitsyn in 1906–08 also directed them to deliver lectures at the General Staff Academy on the statistics of the Far East, Asiatic Turkey, and Afghanistan.[164] In a note to Stolypin from 1908 meanwhile, expressing concern over the security of St. Petersburg given the changing balance of power among the Scandinavian states, Palitsyn also added that although the threat to Russia's Pacific coast presented a less immediate danger to her national interests, additional fortification to Vladivostok should now take priority over fortification in the Western European theatre.[165] As early as September 1905 Palitsyn had also presented a project to the Tsar in the presence of War Minister Rediger that sought to take measures in the event of a renewed outbreak of hostilities with Japan. This project foresaw the creation of two armies, one in Trans-Baikal and one in the Priamur military district, both to be transported by railroad to Kharbin from where they would engage the Japanese in Manchuria. As Aver'ianov later noted, the most controversial aspect of Palitsyn's concept was that it foresaw the concentration of Russian forces occurring in Manchuria – effectively foreign territory, a practice outwardly opposed to all normal military convention.[166] Rediger objected to the proposal on the grounds that it would strip the Priamur region of its defences, where the garrison of Blagoveshchensk in particular anchored the Russian centre. By 1907 however the plan was approved, but Rediger used his financial powers as War Minister to hinder the fulfilment of its implications, in particular the transformation of Kharbin from a civilian town into an enormous military arsenal.[167] Nonetheless fears regarding the Far East remained, and the Russian war plan of 1910 fixed the concentration point of the Russian forces deep in northern Manchuria exactly as Palitsyn had earlier intended. Palitsyn had continued to pursue his Far Eastern war plan until his fall from grace in 1908, and War Minister Sukhomlinov produced a report in 1909 that differed in only minor details from Palitsyn and Alekseev's 1908

analysis. In a report delivered to the Council of Ministers in April of that year, Sukhomlinov outlined to the assembled members the military might of Japan and declared that it would be impossible in future to concentrate the whole strength of Russia's military forces on the western frontiers.[168] Sukhomlinov's own visit to the Far East persuaded him of the need to upgrade Vladivostok from a grade two to a grade one military fortification, a reform that the Tsar himself fully approved of. Vladivostok itself subsequently became the greatest single symbol of Russian reinforcement of the Far East after 1905. The fortification carried out according to a previous scheme of 1899 had envisaged only the repulse of an 'Asiatic' opponent possessing large quantities of infantry but lacking heavy artillery, and the fort had therefore been relatively lightly manned. However the Japanese siege of Port Arthur in 1904–05, conducted with heavy calibre guns, had clearly changed the strategic balance in the Far East. The fortification of Vladivostok that took place according to the 1910 project entailed the construction of a complex series of tunnels, lunettes, galleries, and concrete strong points that transformed it into one of the most sophisticated fortifications in the world at that time. By 1914 the fort disposed of around 50 coastal batteries, 18 forts and over 8km of covered tunnels with electrical lighting. Several of the innovations in fortification introduced in Vladivostok at the time were absent from all contemporary European fortifications and would not be introduced in Western Europe until 1917, when the harsh test of war proved them necessary.[169]

Mobilization plans to concentrate in northern Manchuria were complemented later on in this period by political discussions over the future fate of Manchuria itself. In 1910 War Minister Sukhomlinov recommended to the Council of Ministers the annexation of northern Manchuria to Russia 'on strategic grounds'.[170] At the same time, Russian diplomatic circles for their part increasingly toyed with the prospect of a complete physical division of Manchuria between Russia and Japan, as had been provisionally arranged in a secret clause of the Russo-Japanese convention of 1907. A special session of the Council of Ministers on 19th November/2nd December 1910 under the chairmanship of P. A. Stolypin reviewed the whole Manchurian issue. Examining what was regarded as a hostile policy by China in the area of Manchuria under Russian influence – mistreatment of Russian subjects, increased Chinese colonization, and the sudden appearance of Chinese vessels on the Amur – the conference concluded that with Japanese aid the 'Manchurian question' should now be resolved by annexation. Thus the higher leadership of the Tsarist state in 1910 accepted in principle the decision to annex northern Manchuria to Russia, thereby 'straightening' the line of the Sino-Russian frontier. In April 1911 the Russian General Staff accordingly prepared a top-secret note reporting the military-political situation in northern Manchuria to be 'highly favourable' for such an intervention, citing such factors as growing Sino-Mongol tensions, growing friendship between the Mongols and Russians, and an absence (as yet) of rival international

interests in the region.[171] Differences between the War and Foreign Ministries over Tsarist policy in the Far East therefore were now over means rather than ends; both departments were now essentially pursuing a 'forward policy'. Acting Foreign Minister A. A. Neratov objected to War Minister Sukhomlinov's proposal to increase the number of Russian forces guarding the Chinese Eastern Railway (a necessary preliminary to further action) on the grounds that the initial diplomatic groundwork had yet to be laid by his department, i.e. consultation with the Japanese.[172] At the November 1910 conference the Foreign Ministry had however agreed on the need to take a 'firmer tone' with China in future, and permitted the consideration, in case of need, of an actual military attack on China.[173] Diplomatic attempts by the Russian Foreign Ministry to reach an agreement with the Japanese on the division of Manchuria over the following years were hindered largely by the unwillingness of either side to become the actual initiator in this process. On 27th June 1911 Neratov informed Sukhomlinov that the Japanese government had 'categorically refused' a plan of jointly dividing Manchuria, but Neratov himself remained privately hopeful of still cooperating with Tokyo in the near future over the issue.[174] The Chinese revolution in October that same year reignited the question and in November the Russian War Ministry assigned a mobilization schedule to forces in the Irkutsk and Priamur military districts to occupy northern Manchuria in the event of Japan occupying the south, an event that again never came to pass. However talks were again resumed over the issue in 1912 before finally becoming permanently stalled by a change in the Japanese government that occurred at the end of that year.[175]

These concerns over the security of the Far East were also reflected in the work of military commanders and statisticians working on the spot. Among the most distinguished Russian military students of the Far East was V. K. Arsen'ev (1872–1930), a man whose career, like that of Kozlov, was destined to span both the Tsarist and Soviet epochs.[176] Inspired by a love of nature and exploration in his youth by reading the works of Przheval'skii and Pevtsov, and as a young soldier by access to the *Sbornik . . . po Azii*, Arsen'ev had achieved his life's ambition in 1897 when he was transferred to the 8th East Siberian line battalion. From this posting he had almost immediately embarked on a series of increasingly large scientific expeditions into the mountains and *taiga* of the Russian Far East, invariably accompanied after 1902 by a series of native guides whose spirit he later immortalized in the literary figure of 'Dersu Uzala'. His reports on the archaeological remains of local tribal cultures soon attracted the interest of the local Priamur section of the IRGO, several members of which were General Staff officers, and this organization funded his main expeditions in the period from 1901 to 1911. These expeditions provided the material for his comprehensive military-statistical study of the Ussuri *krai*, published in 1912 by the Priamur military district staff. Covering the geology, fauna, climate, lines of communication, economy, local population and the degree of Russian colonization in the *krai*, this study was specifically orientated around illustrating the dominant

characteristics of the district and how they would affect any fighting in the event of a Japanese invasion.[177] Arsen'ev's study survives as solid evidence of the seriousness with which just such a prospect was regarded by the Tsarist Staff's military-scientific arm in the aftermath of the 1904–05 conflict, particularly in the Far East.

In December 1906 Arsen'ev's foremost sponsor, the Governor-General of the Priamur military district, P. F. Unterberger, wrote to the Council of Ministers urging the military reinforcement of the Far East alongside increased civilian settlement.[178] Earlier that same year, the newly-created State Defence Council had ordered the construction of bases in the Ussuri, Trans-Baikal and Siberian military districts to maintain troops concentrated there, and instructed the Chief of the General Staff to look into improving communication routes in the region, including the creation of an Amur flotilla and the building of an Amur railway. The construction of the latter soon became of overriding concern, since without it, a future Japanese attack could easily seize the Chinese Eastern Railroad and cut off Vladivostok and Khabarovsk from Russia as a whole, paving the way for a policy of conquest and annexation. War Minister Rediger supported Governor-General Unterberger on the need to construct the Amur railroad, writing to Stolypin that to delay construction by even one year would be highly dangerous and that delay from financial considerations could result in the loss of the whole Primor'e *krai*.[179] Stolypin went on to explicitly use the 'yellow peril' analogy to push through the necessary monetary grant for the construction of the Amur railway in the State Duma.[180] Strategic concern for Russia's position in the Far East would lead to the building of this railway through some of the most difficult terrain in the world, the work finally being completed in 1916 at a total cost to the state of some 400 million roubles. Military considerations dominated the construction, the line being built ten to eighty miles from the borderline, a distance considered sufficient to protect the track from enemy interdiction while retaining a reasonably short deployment time for troops transported along this route.[181] Moreover, in direct contrast to the policy pursued earlier with regard to the Chinese Eastern Railway, and in a move reflecting the mood of the times, the 'yellow races' were specifically excluded from participating as cheap labour in the construction of the Amur line, Russian workers being imported instead at considerable expense.[182]

The 1910 strategic war planning meanwhile reflected the importance of defending the existing Chinese Eastern Railway, with a special district being set up in the Kazan region to reinforce the Central Asian and Siberian fronts and allocated by War Minister Sukhomlinov 320 battalions, most transferred from the Western frontier. Eight corps and three rifle brigades were set-aside in the borders of European Russia and the North Caucasus as a general reserve in the event of fighting breaking out independently on the Asiatic fronts.[183] The most famous consequence of this strategic realignment of reserves was the dismemberment of Russia's traditional fortress system in

the West. Forts like Ivangorod which had screened Russian Poland for decades were now abandoned, only Novogeorgievsk being left intact, to hold out 'to the last cartridge and rusk' against an invader. As a consequence of the destruction of the old fortification line and the incompleteness of the new one, Russia would go to war in the west in 1914 with no fully organized defensive system.[184] The after effects of this redeployment and the strategic uncertainty it created regarding the true value of Russia's western fortifications would come to be most painfully felt during the Great Retreat of 1915.

In May 1910 Sukhomlinov wrote to the commanders of the Priamur, Omsk and Irkutsk military districts ordering them to present their considerations on the latest mobilization schedule for war in the Far East, informing them that 'we need now to consider China [with Japan] . . . which in recent years has significantly improved its military forces'.[185] This mobilization schedule, itself no more than a more detailed development of Palitsyn's earlier proposals, foresaw the creation of three significant armies to fight a Japanese opponent or a Sino-Japanese military alliance. The so-called 1st Trans-Baikal army, formed from the forces of the Irkutsk military district, was to advance into Manchuria to cover the Chinese Eastern railway, deploying between Kharbin and Tsitsikar. The 2nd and 3rd Trans-Baikal armies were to be commanded by the heads of the Moscow and Kazan military districts respectively. As these districts also had a role to play in the event of war breaking out on the western frontier, the 1910 mobilization schedule therefore required those district commanders to be ready to deploy either east or west. The 2nd Trans-Baikal army from Kazan was to be formed of the XVIth, Vth, VIIth and VIIIth army corps, Siberian cavalry regiments and the Irkutsk cavalry division, plus automobile, aeroplane and auxiliary sections, in all 152 battalions, 76 squadrons, 596 guns, 26 engineer companies and an engineer park. This force was to begin movement to the Far East at the end of the second month of mobilization.[186] The 3rd Trans-Baikal army was to comprise the XIIIth army corps, IIIrd Caucasus army corps, the XXIth and Ist army corps, the Ural Cossack division, automobile and auxiliary elements-in all 136 battalions, 68 squadrons, 540 guns, 29 engineer companies and one engineer park. This was to begin movement to the Far East at the end of the fifth month of mobilization.[187] This planning schedule, and the role allotted in it to the XVIth corps, would appear to fully confirm the claim of the late Russian military historian, A. A. Kersnovskii, that Sukhomlinov's creation in Kazan of two new corps-the XVIth and XXIVth-was designed not to put Russian army organization on a territorial basis (an explanation which he contemptuously commented only laymen believed) but to have a reserve ready in the event of an outbreak of war with Turkey or Japan.[188] Defence of the Chinese Eastern Railway, meanwhile, also hinged upon the construction of new fortifications there. On the basis of reports from General Evert, commander of the Irkutsk military district, the Russian War Minister resolved in 1913 that a new round of fortification along this line was a necessity. Following an initial scheme to set up a series

of temporary defences, a programme to construct permanent concrete strong points at a projected cost to the state of 1,200,000 roubles was soon adopted. This sum did not include the cost of guns, machine-guns and searchlights. Informed by the Assistant War Minister of 'the extraordinary significance of the Chinese Eastern railway as a strategic line', the Council of Ministers after some deliberation in 1913–14 approved the carrying out of this work. From the 10th June to the 13th July 1913 P. I. Aver'ianov conducted a personal trip to Manchuria with the military engineer entrusted with drawing up and constructing these new fortifications, and work continued on building these new strong points near bridges and railroad tunnels along the CER right up to 1916.[189]

Such Russian measures at military reinforcement as did occur in the Far East in the meantime served as grist to the mill for the more militant circles in the Japanese government, leading to a worsening of relations on the immediate eve of war in 1914. There was published in Japan a series of articles and books across 1913–14 speculating on the imminence of the next Russo-Japanese War, a war which Baron Motono, the Japanese consul to St. Petersburg, informed Russia's military attaché Samoilov in Tokyo would be fought by the Japanese 'to the last drop of blood'.[190]

Although some of the thinking behind this strategic retrenchment and redeployment came to be rejected by the General Staff after 1912, there was insufficient time to prevent its actual practical effects-a slowdown in concentration times in the West accompanied by a general diversion of resources-from being felt in 1914.[191] Moreover, at least one prominent official within the Russian bureaucracy was still arguing the implications of 1910 on the very eve of the First World War. The famous Durnovo Memorandum of February 1914 argued for an alliance with Germany rather than England on the basis that a European war would be disastrous for Russia. This argument was specifically predicated upon the thesis that Russia's most natural strategic objectives were the Pamirs, Persia, Kuld'zha, Kashgaria, and Mongolia-areas where international friction was created by England, not Germany.[192] The strategic impetus created by Palitsyn's thinking in 1906–08 remained powerful, and Aver'ianov later concluded that in 1914 an enormous work had been accomplished in developing general operational plans, though detailed implementation still remained to be done.[193] In many respects therefore Russia in 1914 was still preparing for a two-front war.

6 The Caucasus

> I think that this Pan-Islamic movement is one of our greatest dangers in the future, and indeed is far more of a menace than the "Yellow Peril".
>
> Sir Arthur Nicolson, British Ambassador to St. Petersburg, January 1911[1]

The other area most immediately and directly threatened on the Asiatic frontier, and therefore of direct relevance to the Asiatic Department of the General Staff and Russian war planning of this period, was the Caucasus and the Russo-Turkish border. Of Russia's seven major wars in the nineteenth century, four were fought over issues stemming from Balkan affairs, each conflict seeing military activity on this frontier.[2] In contrast to China, Russia had direct experience of fighting Turkey in this theatre stretching back to the eighteenth century, and the geography of the immediate border region had become well known since the political consolidation of the Trans-Caucasus in 1828. War planning in this area was directly affected by the actual course of military events in this period as well, the retention of Kars, Ardahan and Batum following the war of 1877–78 presenting a new security challenge to the Russian General Staff. Within this later period the most obvious overall change in the local balance of power lay in the inability of Persia to any longer present a military threat to Russia. A study conducted by staff officers of the Caucasus military district in 1889 stated at the outset that a conflict with Persia in future was only foreseeable were Persia drawn into an international alliance against Russia by the 'money, glorious promises, and threats' of other hostile powers. This study then concluded that even in that event the sudden appearance of a Russian detachment at Tabriz, just beyond the line of the Russo-Persian border, would serve to drive Persia out of the war. The forces involved on the Russian side for such an operation would be minimal – six to eight infantry battalions and a brigade of cavalry – sufficient to deliver the strategic equivalent of a bloody nose.[3] An intelligence trip by officers of the Caucasus military district in the Russo-Persian border region ten years later underlined Persia's continuing weakness. These officers reported that the local Persian forces devoted more time attempting to avert imminent starvation

than to military drill and training. For their often antiquated and defective rifles the individual Persian foot soldiers were issued just five cartridges for self-defence and received no instruction in firing, while being simultaneously financially cheated by the officers who were allocated the funds for feeding and maintaining them. Morale and *espirit d'ecorps* were therefore non-existent.[4] Such considerations, alongside the fact that Russia increasingly held political influence in the Persian capital through the institution of the Persian Cossack Brigade after 1879, meant that Turkey and internal insurrection formed the main remaining threats to Russian power in the Trans-Caucasus.

That foreign opponents might try to incite internal revolt in the Caucasus to coincide with external difficulties was not mere speculation, but something the Russian Staff had acute experience of both from the exploits of the British adventurer David Urquhart in the late 1830s and more directly from Turkish policy in the latter part of the century. In 1877–78 the Turks had undertaken an amphibious operation, seeking to land 2–3,000 Circassians and Abkhaz with 30,000 rifles to arm the local population and create an internal uprising to assist the general Turkish war effort. The Russian authorities in Tiflis was hindered from immediately dispatching reserves to meet the threat by fear of a rising in Chechnia and Dagestan, a fear justified in Chechnia by the actions of one Haji Ali Bey in declaring himself *Imam*.[5] The Caucasus through geography also possessed its own unique strategic characteristics. The extremely broken nature of the mountain country, with a population still largely tribal, dictated that large armies were restricted to certain lines of approach, while the open sea coast left open the possibility of a *desant* or combined-arms operation by either side. These were all conditions quite different, as the former Tsarist officer and later Soviet historian A. M. Zaionchkovskii noted, from those likely to be encountered in the European theatre.[6] The nationalities problem in the area, with the corresponding difficulties of carrying out warfare with a significant 'political element', in turn demanded officers acquainted with local customs and beliefs.[7] In contrast to the other theatres under its consideration, the Asiatic Department could also count on a considerable degree of support from the War Ministry as a whole in regard to safeguarding the Caucasus since, as we saw in the preceding chapter, Chief of the General Staff N. N. Obruchev considered the Bosphorus to be one of Russia's few truly vital strategic interests. In later years the Bosphorus became for Obruchev, in Witte's phrase, his '*ideé fixe*'. Faced towards the end of his career with a young emperor fascinated by Far Eastern affairs, Obruchev merely tailored his arguments to present seizure of the Bosphorus as the natural solution to all of Russia's security problems, including the Far East.[8]

This near-general consensus within the Russian General Staff that in any future conflict Turkey would probably prove to be one of the major opponents was reflected both in the highly organized level of Russian military intelligence in Asiatic Turkey, and in the sums of money allotted for

intelligence gathering later in this period. Following the ending of hostilities in 1878, the Caucasus military district staff rapidly set up an extremely capable network of agents in Asiatic Turkey. The guiding genius behind this network was Lt.-General A. S. Zelenyi, a Russian General Staff officer who before the war served as Russia's military agent in Istanbul, and who went on to serve as head of the Caucasus military district's intelligence section continuously until 1900. Fluent in English, French and German, Zelenyi had also served on several border commissions regarding Turkey, Persia and Afghanistan and was, in the assessment of one contemporary, an 'outstanding orientalist' whose own modest, never-fulfilled ambition was to one day serve as head of the Asiatic Department of the Russian General Staff.[9] The MID allowed Zelenyi to emplace four military vice-consuls in the strategically critical Turkish towns of Rize, Erzerum, Van and Hami, and the men occupying these posts had the virtue of serving there for prolonged periods of time. Colonel Griaznov, the military vice-consul in Van, during his stay there personally rode more than 70,000 versts through Asiatic Turkey, drawing up detailed maps that eventually formed part of a major military study, while the man whom he had replaced in that post in 1889, Koliubakin, had during his own occupancy already gathered so much data that he had to turn down a post at the Asiatic Department of the General Staff in order to find time to collate all the material.[10] Colonel Maevskii served continuously as a military consul in Asiatic Turkey for more than 20 years, first in Van and then after 1900 in Rize, where he remained till 1914. Colonel Przheval'skii (not to be confused with the Central Asian explorer) was appointed a military consul in Erzerum at the very start of the 1890s and remained there almost ten years until replaced by P. I. Aver'ianov.[11] In stark contrast to its less fortunate frontier counterparts elsewhere meanwhile, and as a consequence of the Tsar's personal resolution in 1895, the Caucasus district staff until 1905 were also annually assigned 56,890 roubles for intelligence acquisition in Persia and Asiatic Turkey – more than all the other military district staffs put together.[12] During the bout of increased intelligence expenditure that followed the Russo-Japanese War, the Caucasus retained this relatively privileged position in annual expenditures, the district staff being allotted in January 1914 the sum of 65,000 roubles for intelligence collection – still more than any of the other individual military districts, even those on the western border, for that year.[13] This personal decision by the Tsar created considerable discontent within the General Staff in St. Petersburg however, and led, as we shall see, to a fierce debate over the best use of resources between the St. Petersburg elite and the intelligence community of the Caucasus military district who benefited from such unusual financial largesse.

The special position assigned the Caucasus was also evident from the very beginning of the post-reform period in the 1860s in more general military planning. The Caucasus was the one major military district outside the European theatre to be closely examined in the great strategic review of

1873. The Grand Duke Mikhail Nikolaevich, then viceroy of the Caucasus, predicted that the local population would rebel on the outbreak of war and recommended a strategic offensive to offset this – again reflecting the general approach of staff officers that only an offensive strategy was appropriate in Asiatic theatres. The lines of attack selected in 1873 were directed at Kars, Erzerum and the Saganulskii pass-points that would dominate both planning and action in the war of 1877–78 and for many years afterward. In the Caucasus the traditional moral arguments for an offensive were reinforced by the great difficulty of carrying out a defensive on the ground itself – the wide mountain ranges, however inaccessible, demanded large and widely scattered bodies of men to be defended adequately. The strategic planning for the conflict of 1877–78 in both Europe and Asia was the work of the ubiquitous Obruchev, though the overwhelming emphasis of much of this planning lay on the Balkan theatre and need not be examined here.[14]

Changes in Balkan politics following the war of 1877–78 increasingly denied Russia the opportunity of an attack against Turkey through the European theatre, and staff planning correspondingly switched to investigating the possibility of a naval *desant* (a combined-arms landing operation) on the Bosphorus.[15] The Turks had fortified this approach to Constantinople in the period 1765–95 with the assistance of French engineers, and these fortifications had been periodically updated ever since. Plans in this direction were worked out throughout the reign of Alexander III, but the concept did predate his reign, Obruchev having made a personal reconnaissance of potential landing sites in 1873 or 1874. In the early 1870s Mikhail Veniukov, experiencing increasingly fractious relations both with the head of the Geographical Society and with his direct superior at the Asiatic Department of the General Staff, A. P. Protsenko, and increasingly disillusioned by the General Staff in general, also asked for a two month leave to visit Karlsbad and Turkey. Part of the inspiration for the trip came from rumours circling in the General Staff at the time that war with Turkey was imminent. Lt.-Colonel Bobrikov, the member of the Military-Scientific Committee directly concerned with the study of Turkey, declared that the Serbs would probably initiate this conflict and that Russia would then send a 40,000-strong corps through Austria to fight the Turks. Veniukov harboured the personal belief that the greatest damage could be inflicted on Turkey by a blow through the Asiatic rather than the European theatre, but felt he lacked the first-hand knowledge to convincingly substantiate his views before his colleagues. Unexpectedly given a 2,700 rouble monetary grant for his leave, Veniukov made a circular trip across the length of the Ottoman Empire, beginning from Vienna and ending in the Russian Caucasus, and making notes on the country's geographic, ethnographic and economic characteristics as he went.[16] One major consequence of this trip was a specific plan of the Bosphorus contributed to the *Voennyi Sbornik* in 1874.[17] Veniukov considered the Bosphorus fortifications outdated, floating gun batteries being able to achieve the same goal, but admitted their utility

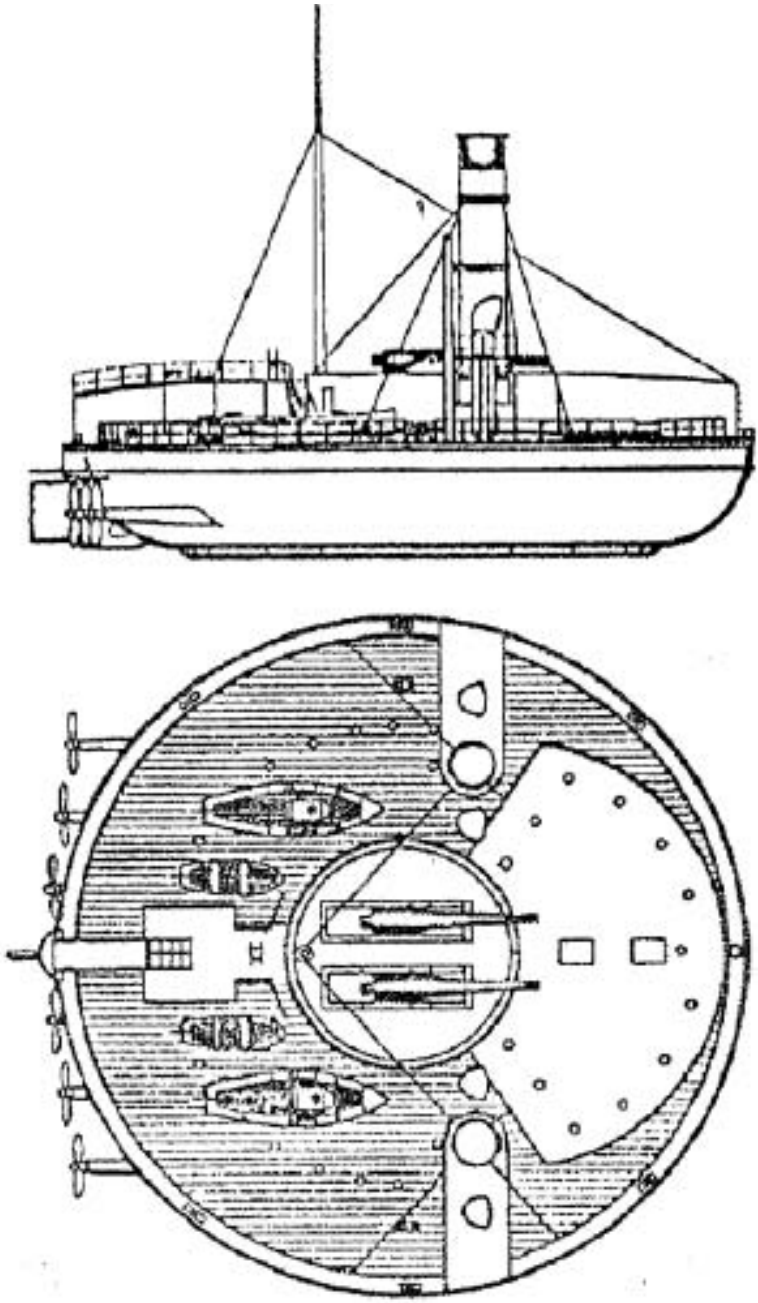

Figure 6.1: Russian coastal defence in the Black Sea in the 1870s: the '*Popovki*'
Source: A. B. Shirokorad Russko-Turetskie voiny 1676–1918gg, p. 515. With permission of AST publications.

in giving the Turkish fleet freedom of action. Like subsequent observers however, he noted these fortifications' vulnerability to being turned from the rear by landward-based forces and their often-restricted field of fire due to embrasured gun positions.

In 1882 Alexander III resolved to revitalize the Black Sea fleet, changing the local balance of power in the region and giving Russian war planning serious intent.[18] In December of that same year in connection with the English occupation of Egypt the Russian consul in Constantinople, A. I. Nelidov, wrote the Tsar the first of a series of famous notes recommending Russia occupy the Bosphorus Straits. Initially at least technical considerations instantly invalidated such proposals. The Paris peace agreement of 1856 neutralizing the Black Sea had hindered Russian naval construction in the region for decades, leaving Russia without a serious ocean-going fleet during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78. In a desperate bid to secure the Caucasus and Crimean coasts the Naval Ministry in 1871–76 had commissioned the construction of two monstrous floating gun platforms, the '*Popovki*' (so-called after the initiator of their construction, Admiral A. A. Popov) whose design originated in a Glasgow shipyard. With poor manoeuvrability as a result of their circular design, the *Popovki* were built at considerable expense to the state and soon proved almost criminally, comically useless. Able only to fire in volleys, since a single shot could send them spinning into an uncontrolled turning circle, full-scale charges for their shells were also forbidden since practice-firing with such rounds had already resulted in damage to the plating of their hulls and upper superstructure.[19]

Naval design after 1882 in the wake of deneutralization of the Black Sea banished the memory of such horrors and produced unique designs specifically created for offensive action in the Bosphorus Straits. Between 1883 and 1893 four mighty vessels, three with names evoking past Russian victories over the Turks – the '*Catherine II*', '*Chesma*' and '*Sinop*' – were commissioned and brought into service, each bearing six powerful 305mm cannon positioned in three mountings, two at the front and one at the rear. Deploying therefore of four rather than the more normal two forward-firing main guns, these vessels were battering rams of the artillery age, designed

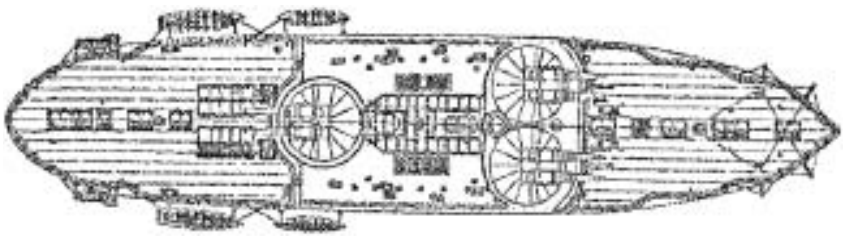

Figure 6.2: On the offensive in the Black Sea, 1880s: the gun layout of the '*Sinop*'
Source: A. B. Shirokorad Russko-Turetskie voiny 1676–1918gg, p.588. With permission of AST publications.

not to conduct the broadsides normally associated with open-sea naval combat but to blast their way through the narrow gates of the Turkish Straits and to obliterate any fleet contesting their passage.[20]

In connection with developing war plans for the Bosphorus, a special commission was set up in the Odessa military district in 1885 to study the problem, and it was with the goal of gathering more information on potential landing sites and coastal defences that A. N. Kuropatkin was dispatched in 1886 undercover on a secret intelligence mission, coordinated with the Russian military agent in Constantinople, Major-General Filippov.[21] Kuropatkin felt that the Turkish coastal defences presented no particular difficulties at that time; in his view the main batteries on both banks could be knocked out by naval gunfire and the coast itself, while wild and presenting significant logistical difficulties, offered opportunities for creating successive defensive positions to the Russian landing forces. That same year, undoubtedly as a result of his joint work with Kuropatkin, Filippov presented a strategic overview of the Bosphorus coast that practically laid out in black-and-white how a Russian *desant* could be undertaken in this theatre.[22] The planning for such a *desant* at the time was unusual, since it amounted in effect to a seize-and-hold operation. By gaining the heights of the mountain chain of the Istrandzh-dag above the Turkish capital, the main watershed of the region, and by fortifying selected plateaus, the Russians hoped to seize Constantinople's main water supply and place the town effectively in a state of siege. The contemporary problems of how to conduct a joint operation would therefore be almost entirely avoided, since almost as soon as they disembarked the Russians would be constructing a commanding entrenched position. Filippov considered the Turkish forces to be in a worse condition for combat in 1886 than they had been in 1877–78, with the regular army (*Nizam*) no longer meeting in their training camps and the Turkish reserve being practically untrained. The Russians by contrast, in his view, presently possessed significant technical advantages in the form of the latest naval mines, electric searchlights, telephones and telegraphic equipment. Therefore any Russian expeditionary corps should be provided with these means in abundance, in particular to assure communication and mutual support between the forces landed on both banks of the Straits. Naval mines would hinder either Turkish or foreign naval intervention while searchlights would halt any Turkish attempts at nighttime counterattacks, thereby facilitating the success of a potential strategic *coup de main*.[23]

Kuropatkin returned to Sevastopol in April-May 1886 where the Tsar was reviewing the latest Russian fortifications and oversaw the first Russian experiments with underwater craft. These vessels were small and apparently submerged and surfaced with some difficulty, and Kuropatkin later speculated that what the Tsar saw convinced him of Russia's poor preparedness for carrying out *desant* operations on the Bosphorus.[24] Training for such an operation reached its height in the late 1880s however; in 1885, 1891 and 1893 practice combined-arms operations were conducted around Odessa, in

1886 in the southwest Crimea, in 1887 and 1892 around Sevastopol, in 1893 around Ochakov and in 1890 around Sudak. These operations typically involved the disembarkation of 3–4.5 battalions of infantry, 0.5–1 squadron of cavalry, and 4–8 guns.[25] In connection with these plans there was created in Odessa in 1886 a top-secret 'special supply' of heavy artillery pieces (6 and 12-inch guns) for transport and emplacement on both banks of the Bosphorus where they were intended to consolidate Russian gains. Numbering 78 guns in 1894, this stockpile was supplemented over the following years by the addition of twenty-four Maxim machine guns, fifty 6-inch guns of various descriptions and ten 57mm Nordenfeldt guns, with the whole being serviced by a special reserve of 7,000 troops. From the mid-1890s onwards this 'special supply' began to carry in addition a new series of 9-inch light mortars. Easily transportable, the limited range of only 3km on these mortars made them unsuitable for conventional operations but perfect for the narrow Straits, where from coastal positions their 140kg vertical-trajectory shells would easily penetrate the decks of the latest warships in any incoming British fleet. From 1895 it was decided in addition not to store this special artillery reserve any longer in coastal warehouses, but to have it based on the transport ships ready for immediate movement.[26]

Although Turkey devoted most of her resources in this period to the fortification of the Dardanelles, chastened by the British fleet's bombardment of Alexandria in 1882, awareness of Russian intentions led to naval mines being deployed in the Bosphorus after 1895. Russian planning in this direction probably came nearest to fulfilment in 1896–97; on that occasion commanders were actually assigned to conduct such an enterprise and plans worked out for a deception operation to cover Russian movements. The fleet commander had at his disposal the *Catherine II*, *Sinop* and *Chesma* along with an array of minelayers and torpedo boats. Armenian massacres in the Turkish capital provided the incentive for foreign intervention and Nelidov, still the Russian consul in Constantinople at the time, travelled to St. Petersburg in November 1896 to again press the case for a *desant*. On this occasion he was also taking advantage of the recent sudden death of Prince Lobanov-Rostovsky, which had created a temporary power-vacuum in the leadership of the Russian Foreign Ministry.[27] A *desant* on the Bosphorus was averted however when the Main Staff calculated that it lacked the naval assets to transport more than 20,000 men in a two-week period. These numbers were judged insufficient to achieve the *fait accompli* demanded by the tense international environment of the time.[28] Perhaps even more persuasive however was the distinct coolness shown towards such an enterprise by Russia's major ally of the period, France. Not being officially informed, the French nevertheless heard rumours of Nelidov's project. The French at the time managed 60 per cent of the Ottoman Empire's state debt and had large investments in Turkish railroads and industry; correspondingly, they had little interest in seeing the Ottoman Empire divided and dismantled as Nelidov's scheme implied. Their expressed resistance as much as technical

considerations led to Nelidov's project being discreetly shelved, to the disappointment of Obruchev and War Minister Vannovskii but much to the relief of Finance Minister Witte.

A new inquiry by the Foreign Minister on the occasion of the Boer War in 1900 revealed conflicting strategic intentions regarding Russia's proper missions along the southern frontier. While Navy Minister Tyrtov remained unenthusiastic about the prospect of seizing the Bosphorus, preferring to see Russia's naval position consolidated in the Far East, War Minister Kuropatkin, undoubtedly reflecting the influence of his former mentor, Obruchev, saw seizure of the Bosphorus as the single most important task facing Russia arms in the twentieth century.[29] Despite Admiral Tyrtov's reservations, by the turn of the century war plans on the Bosphorus had assumed significant dimensions. The signing of a secret treaty between Russia and Bulgaria in 1902, itself a counter-response to a secret Austro-Romanian pact that Russian intelligence learnt had been signed the previous year, granted Russia for the first time the wartime use of transport and harbour facilities along the Bulgarian coast. Sensing a new strategic horizon opening up, Nicholas II ordered the construction of a long-distance battlefleet in the Black Sea with an accompanying compliment of cruisers and minelayers.[30] From Black Sea war games in 1903 it was considered that on the ninth day after mobilization (M+9) Russia could have concentrated in its Black Sea ports the designated ground forces – four and a half infantry and one and a quarter cavalry divisions. By the eleventh day (M+11) these troops could begin disembarking in the Bosphorus, and 170,000 men might be gathered in the Bosphorus by day nineteen (M+19). Turkey by contrast would be in a position to dispatch no more than 215,000 men by the sixteenth day (M+16) to meet the threat, 60 per cent of them *redifs* with insignificant trained cadres.[31] Nonetheless the 1903 manoeuvres, involving a practice *desant* by two operational groups on the coast around Ochakov, revealed considerable shortcomings in the planning and conduct for such an assault. The Odessa contingent of forces were despatched without proper attention being paid to their food, water and sanitation requirements, while the launches used to disembark the troops became overloaded and shipped water. Naval gunfire failed to suppress the coastal defences, Russian ships fired on their own launches mistaking them for the enemy, and artillery for the *desant* detachments was both gathered and dismantled too slowly and was poorly handled when on land.[32] The main problem however lay not in the military planning, but in the intervention of the other great powers again seen as inevitable at some point after any future war was declared.[33]

The course and immediate aftermath of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05 inaugurated a period of flux and change in the planning for a Bosphorus *desant*. The immediate effect of the conflict with Japan was to almost completely destroy Russia's war-fighting capability in the Black Sea, since the 'special supply' in Odessa was stripped back to help equip Russian forces fighting in the Far East. It was with this in mind that War Minister Rediger

at the end of 1907 recommended to the State Defence Council the dissolution of the Odessa naval battalion – with the loss of so many other resources, this was effectively a force now devoid of a strategic role.[34] The Tsar rejected this suggestion however, while the concept of an operation on the Bosphorus continued to have its defenders, most notably in Chief of the General Staff Palitsyn and Foreign Minister Izvol'skii. Izvol'skii in particular gave a new impetus to thinking behind this direction through his own apparent delusion that the recent Anglo-Russian agreement ensured that for the first time for several generations the British would not contest a Russian intervention in the Straits. The whole of the Foreign Ministry in the meantime shared the premonition that 'the sick man of Europe' (Turkey) was now about to succumb to his long-term 'illness'. The Russian Foreign Minister's personal interest in Near Eastern affairs would of course ultimately culminate, ironically, not in the fall of the Ottoman Empire but in the destruction of his own career. Palitsyn's interest meanwhile stemmed from concern over recent Turko-Persian border clashes, and at the start of 1908 he urged military preparations in readiness for an open break with Turkey. Rediger, never one of Palitsyn's defenders, later opined in his memoirs that the Chief of Staff dreamed of deliberately inciting a war between Russia and Turkey.[35] Nonetheless part of the blame in this instance must also fall on the staff of the Caucasus military district itself, since in the winter of 1907/08 the district staff transmitted back to St. Petersburg a mass of erroneous intelligence reports that Turkey was about to launch a surprise attack on Russia.[36] Spurred on by such data, most of Palitsyn's focus centred on reinforcing the Caucasus military district, but these plans did incorporate an aspect encompassing a Bosphorus expedition, since Palitsyn felt it would be useless for Russia to acquire more territory in Asia Minor. For him, only possession of the Bosphorus presented an object of vital strategic interest. Nonetheless Palitsyn also confessed to his French counterparts around this time that he saw a Bosphorus expedition as a rather 'chimerical' project, for all the staff planning involved, a response which was either duplicitous or reveals some underlying internal doubts in his own thinking.[37]

Under these influences strategic planning for the Black Sea revived, but with new variations on the old theme. In particular the Chief of the General Staff now instructed the Third Over-Quartermaster Section (Asiatic Fronts) to prepare plans for possible landings on the coast of Asia Minor. Schemes for such an operation, with one corps being landed between Trebizond and the line Sivas-Samsun to assist the main efforts of the Caucasus Army, were accordingly presented in October 1908. Such a plan possessed the merit not only of potentially gaining operational surprise, but also of relieving the severe mobilization pressure that would be exerted on the Trans-Caucasus railway on the outbreak of hostilities. A conference was also held on the same theme under Major-General Skerskii, head of GUGSh's Third Over-Quartermaster Section. This conference considered the whole *desant* issue afresh and revealed divergent views between the army and naval General

Staffs. While the navy saw its main role as the blocking of the Straits, the army sought the seizure of Constantinople, a *desant* on Trebizond, and foresaw a possible fleet action with the Turkish or even Austrian navies – tasks for which the navy complained it was completely unprepared and lacked the resources.[38] A series of conferences held in 1911 helped iron out these disagreements to a pessimistic conclusion – that an assault on the Bosphorus was at present impossible and a series of landings on the Black Sea coast at best doubtful. In accordance with these conclusions Sukhomlinov obtained Nicholas II's approval to the final dispersion of the 'special supply' in Odessa. Nonetheless successive Near Eastern crises meant that the Bosphorus question continued to be revived until the outbreak of the First World War, but with little in practical technical terms being done to reverse the decay that had eaten into these preparations since 1905. A practice mobilization by the new head of the Odessa military district in 1911 revealed drastic shortcomings that highlighted the continued gap between the General Staff's paper planning and reality. Of the forces mobilized, the first-line troops lacked 40 per cent of their machine-gun complement, 15 per cent of their cartridges and had no high-explosive shells whatsoever for their light artillery pieces. Second-line troops lacked their machine-guns and small arms ammunition altogether. The district commander grimly concluded that the VIIth army of which these units in theory formed the main part in practice did not exist – a damning indictment that the Tsar underlined eight times in the subsequent report.[39] A renewed inquiry by the Foreign Minister in 1912 meanwhile, inspired by the contemporary Turkish-Italian conflict, revealed it would take two weeks to transfer two corps from the Odessa military district to Constantinople – a time period still too slow to be considered a surprise attack.[40] At the same time, the report of the Russian military agent in Constantinople, Colonel Khol'msen, sounded the most pessimistic note yet about a proposed *desant* operation on the Bosphorus succeeding. A strengthened Turkish fleet meant that Turkey would soon be able to contest Russian supremacy on the Black Sea, while Turkey's modernized rail network meant that Russian landing forces, even if successful on the first day, would soon face an overwhelming superiority in enemy numbers. Examining the landing sites on the European and Asiatic shores proposed by his predecessors, and by Filippov in particular, Khol'msen concluded that any attempt to seize these sites now under present conditions was simply untenable. The traditional logistical difficulties aside – including steep, rocky, wooded ground that would involve manhandling the artillery into position – military technology in general had changed. The improved range and accuracy of artillery meant that the Turks could now not only enfilade but strike into the very rear of the proposed landing positions, creating the potential for a military disaster.[41] The extremely able Russian naval agent in Constantinople in this period, Captain A. N. Shcheglov (1875–1953), shared this pessimism on the potential for a successful *desant* operation.[42] These views on the ground were reinforced by those of War Minister Sukhomlinov,

who as an observer had been unimpressed by the Black Sea war game of 1903, and who sent his representative to talk down Russian diplomatists' enthusiasm for seizing the Bosphorus when the issue was again raised at the start of 1914.[43] At a conference in February 1914 the Quartermaster-General of the General Staff, Danilov, deprecated action against the Turkish Straits as a strategic distraction from a future war in the West against Germany and Austria-Hungary. That same year Admiral A. I. Rusin, the former naval agent to Japan and now head of the Naval General Staff, opined to his superiors that Russia would not be ready for war in the Black Sea until after 1917.[44] These considerations rendered stillborn plans evolved the previous year by the chief operations officer of the Black Sea fleet, Captain Ivan Kononov. Kononov's plans if accepted would have resulted in effect in a full-scale revival of technical preparations for a Bosphorus *desant*. Alongside a risky transfer of two warships from the Baltic to the Black Sea fleet, Kononov proposed the creation of a specially trained 'Landing Corps' equipped with light artillery, and the use of armoured floating gun platforms to suppress Turkish coastal defences. His scheme gained some support in both naval and diplomatic circles but was sidelined by the February conference in 1914. Shcheglov himself was appalled by Kononov's ideas, and in their later years of post-war exile abroad, debate between the two over the scheme's relative merits raged in the pages of the Russian émigré press.[45] Nonetheless, on the eve of the First World War, the Tsarist state, after thirty years intelligence work on the problem, became much more cautious about seizing the Bosphorus, paving the way for the disastrous Allied attempt to seize the initiative and resolve the same type of problem at the Dardanelles. When the question was raised of a Russian push on the Bosphorus to aid the Allied operation that began there in April 1915, the Tsarist General Staff initially demurred, with many influential figures within its ranks-Alekseev, Danilov-maintaining their pre-war scepticism. The Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaevich in January 1915 felt the Black Sea fleet would not be ready till May at the earliest, and Danilov felt such an operation, lacking the element of surprise, would demand at least 8 to 10 infantry corps, troops that Russia could not easily spare till Germany was defeated. Danilov also felt that the cooperation of Bulgaria in such an operation would be essential as well. The possibility of that happening had been practically ruled out since August 1914, when Bulgaria closed her coastal ports and sealed them with mines, a move presaging her later defection to the Central Powers. In the event subsequent Russian practical preparations for a *desant* operation on the Bosphorus in 1915, including the gathering of military transport craft, were undertaken for purely demonstrative purposes with the intention – ineffective as it later emerged – to distract Turkish attention from the Dardanelles operation.[46] Planning to seize Constatinople was again revived in 1916–17 but with even less being done in practice than before, and the revolution finally brought to an end all prospect of this venerable military design being implemented.

As changing evaluations of the possibility of a naval *desant* demonstrate, assessment of the threat of Turkey could often only be evaluated by the actions of agents of the Russian General Staff on the ground. Of particular importance of course was the condition of the Turkish army and the degree of political infiltration Turkey achieved in the Caucasus in peacetime given opportunities like the regular *hajj* of Muslim pilgrims to Mecca and other holy sites. The Caucasus was the largest single source of Muslim pilgrimage within the Russian Empire in this period. In tandem with dramatic change in the Turkish state itself throughout this period, which appeared in the eyes of many to make Turkey more militarily effective, fear of Islamic political movements, in particular Pan-Islamic threats, became of increasing concern to the Russian General Staff. The position Russia inherited in the North Caucasus after 1859 was in many ways unique, since Shamil had created the primitive outlines of an entire state system – the *Imamate* – to pursue his decades long struggle against the Russian Empire. This essentially theocratic system had its own bureaucratic hierarchy, taxation system, and local government organization and had, of course, disposed of trained military forces.[47] It was this system the Russians had had to dismantle, adopt, and build upon in setting up their own administration after 1859, while being continually conscious of the contested legitimacy of the Russian model created by local memory of Shamil's long reign.

In principle the Russian state in the aftermath of the mass migrations of the early 1860s pursued the same policy in the Caucasus as it did in Central Asia and elsewhere in the latter nineteenth century, namely, attempting to create a social sphere of 'imperial citizenship'. For the mountaineers, this involved a special form of military-political rule (*voenno-narodnoe upravlenie*); for the Trans-Caucasus, the establishment of Russian-appointed local institutions, such as separate Sunni and Shi'a religious boards in 1872. During the course of the long Caucasus conflict the local nobility had been harried from both sides, being deprived of their special status and private militias by the Russians on the one hand, and facing physical extermination at the hands of Shamil and his *naibs* on the other. Following the official cessation of hostilities this emasculation of the traditional tribal nobility continued, the Russian authorities refusing all requests to restore lost rights and lands even with Shamil now gone. The loyalty of the North Caucasus mountaineers in theory was now meant to be directed not through feudal khans and beks but through state-sponsored political institutions, and the Russian authorities loudly trumpeted 'progressive' acts abolishing such practices as the human slave trade. In practice however, in parallel with this 'civilizing' programme, the Russian General Staff was compelled to maintain a position of perpetual vigilance over the Sufi Islamic sects of the North Caucasus, which were now officially banned.

From the very start of the nineteenth century, the North Caucasus had been distinguished by the fact that the great burden of Russia's ethnographic and statistical material on the *krai* had been achieved almost wholly through

the military arm to the near-exclusion of the civilian, a consequence of the almost continuous warfare occurring in the region.[48] In the aftermath of Shamil's surrender and the settlement of 1864 this situation was moderated but not dramatically altered. Indeed, one of the most distinguished scholars on the local Caucasus dialects, Baron Petr Karlovich Uslar (1816–75) began his career as a General Staff officer, being entrusted by the High Command of the Caucasus Army in 1858 to write a history of the region from the time of Alexander of Macedon. With the coming of peace Uslar continued his scientific activities in the region till his death, becoming involved both with creating alphabets and primers on the local languages and with promoting programmes of secular education. These schemes proposed to draw the mountaineers away from traditional forms of religious scholastic education in the Arabic language to secular education, first in their own native dialects and ultimately in Russian. 'Literacy in ones' [own] language' – Uslar proclaimed – 'is the first step to enlightenment'.[49]

Schemes like Uslar's fell under the consideration of the new structures of military administration created by Bariatinskii in the Caucasus, most particularly the special Caucasus Mountaineer Administration (*Kavkazskoe gorskoe upravlenie*). Bariatinskii's successor after 1863 as Viceroy in the Caucasus was the mediocre Grand Duke Mikhail Nikolaevich, but the latter was able to rely to a considerable extent upon talented subordinates, including Lt.-General D. S. Starosel'skii (1832–84). In 1864 Starosel'skii, also a member of the Caucasus branch of the Imperial Geographical Society, was appointed head of the Mountaineer Administration. He thereafter spearheaded efforts at building up the Caucasus district staff's knowledge of local institutions and customs, and to this end, among other endeavours, he commissioned the short-lived journal '*A Collection of Information about the Caucasus Mountaineers*' (*Sbornik svedenii o kavkazskikh gortsakh*). Officers of the Mountaineer Administration were often also members of the local branch of the Imperial Geographical Society, the Caucasus branch set up in 1851 in Tiflis having been the first regional branch of that organization. Among the largest tasks facing the officers of the Mountaineer Administration, one that they carried out in painstaking detail, was the recording and categorization of the mountaineer's system of *adat* laws, the customs by which they were henceforth to be ruled and governed. In performing this ritual the General Staff corps involved functioned in effect as social anthropologists.[50] However, workers within the Mountaineer Administration were also at times openly condemned by outside observers as not being up to their responsibilities, much as the Russian military administration in neighbouring Turkestan was also criticized for corruption and inefficiency. As early as 1878 Veniukov, in one of his first works published abroad, characterized the workers of the Mountaineer Administration as ' . . . selected, i.e. even if a supposedly honourable administration, one soon filled by bribe-takers, frequently Armenians . . . who managed to establish a strong clique in Tiflis'.[51]

One of the most significant legacies of Shamil's rule meanwhile was the continuing employment by the Russians of his *naibs* within the framework of the Mountaineer Administration. To begin with the Tsarist administration took a politically sensitive approach to the employment of these local administrators. Instructions from both the Tsar and Viceroy decreed that local mountaineers were to be preferred to the appointment of Russian officers or representatives of the Cossack forces to such posts, while the number of *naibs* employed should be maintained or even increased, but never allowed to drop from their pre-conquest level. Changing administrative policies under Alexander III that sought to bring local institutions into line with general Russian law, combined with disillusion following the revolt of 1877–78 (in which many *naibs* assisted the mountaineer rebels) led to a change in governmental attitudes however. The number of *naibs* was reduced and the recruitment of 'natives' for such posts discouraged, until finally in 1899 the existence of such an institution was abolished altogether, replaced by a Russian-style equivalent.[52] Alexander III's reign was also marked by the abolition in 1882 of two institutions which had traditionally symbolized the Caucasus's specialized administrative status, namely the local Viceroyship and the Caucasus Committee, the latter of which since its creation in 1839 had formed part of the State Council.[53] The general effect of these changing policies across this period however was actually a sharpening of local tensions, precipitating the reappointment of a Viceroy to the Caucasus, Vorontsov-Dashkov, on the 26th February 1905. Whatever the other merits of the Mountaineer Administration meanwhile, it did little towards pacifying the traditionally warlike North Caucasus mountaineers. Between 1859 and 1877 there were 18 different revolts in Dagestan alone. One of the largest of those risings, that in Unkratil' in 1871, ended with the arrest of around 1,500 individuals who were sent to Temir-Khan-Shura for relocation to Russia. The population of five whole villages was transferred to Stavropol, and these families were only finally permitted to return in 1875, and even then not to their original homes.[54] The later revolt of 1877 presented a particular crisis to the security arms of the Russian state, since the punitive relocation of approximately 5,000 mostly Dagestani mountaineers to Saratov province in the Russian interior created particular logistic and administrative difficulties. Relocated mountaineers refused to take up farming or to utilize their state-sponsored and erected mosques, nor did they adopt the normal administrative practices employed in villages in central Russia. Evidence of such ingrained stubbornness and a corresponding and alarming rise in the (essentially self-inflicted) death rate from illness and starvation forced the Russian state to admit defeat; in 1883 what was left of this exiled mountaineer community was permitted to return to Dagestan.[55] Individuals also played a consistent role in these recurring uprisings that implicitly perpetuated Shamil's struggle against the Russian authorities. In 1861 Atabai Ataev and Uma Duev, both former *naibs* of Shamil, led a revolt in Ichkeriia and the Argun region. Following the repression of the uprising both men were

exiled, but Uma Duev returned to Chechnia fifteen years later to again become a ringleader (at the age of 69) in the rebellion of 1877, for which offence, following capture, he was hanged.[56] Shamil's eldest son, Kazi Magomet, whom the Russian administration had hoped would become a loyal servant to the Tsarist regime following his father's surrender, also later defected and served on the Turkish side during the war of 1877–78.

It was against this institutional and ideological background that the Tsarist military attempted to monitor the security of the Caucasus and its neighbouring regions. On the orders of the Asiatic Department in 1884, the staff of the Caucasus military district prepared a report on the annual pilgrimages made by the natives of the Caucasus, detailing their numbers, ethnic makeup and the routes used, while suggesting ways individuals might be used as intelligence agents.[57] Security concerns in this direction also increased with the development of Pan-Islamic trends in Turkey and military and political changes in Asia Minor. The recently annexed regions of Kars, Ardahan and Batum, which experienced what modern day Turkish historiography still refers to as 'forty dark years' of Tsarist rule between 1878 and 1918, presented peculiar political difficulties as sensitive border zones where the memory of Ottoman citizenship among the native population was still fresh. During the Balkan wars at the start of the twentieth century the Muslims of the southwest Caucasus raised funds for the Ottoman army, passing on either gold or promissory notes to the Ottoman consul in Kars. Before long moreover, charitable work was supplemented by a clandestine political organization, the Teskilat-i-Mahsusa, designed to create an Ottoman 'fifth column' in the Russian Caucasus in the event of future conflict between the two empires. Active leaders of this organization resided and operated from Batum, Erzerum and Trebizond.[58] From the mid-1880s onwards meanwhile the Russian Main Staff received regular reports both from its agent in Constantinople and from officers of the Caucasus district staff on proposed and actual military reforms in the Ottoman Empire's Asiatic border districts. Such considerations included, for example, the installation of Krupp artillery pieces on raised rotary platforms at Trebizond, projects for new railway lines in Anatolia, and a new round of fortification to strengthen Erzerum.[59] In 1898 Staff-Captain Davletshin, a future head of the Asiatic Department, accompanied the annual *hajj* of Muslim pilgrims to Mecca, reporting on the geographical division of the Hejaz, the number and makeup of the Ottoman forces disposed there, and the ethnic composition of and point of origin of Russian pilgrims. Davletshin was particularly concerned to discover whether the *hajj* had any political significance in terms of unifying Muslims of various nationalities, but reported that no such merger was observable, and that on the *hajj* 'even our Kirghiz and Tatars do not want to know one another'.[60] The General Staff remained unplacated regarding the potential political dangers from this direction however and at the turn of the century the Caucasus military district staff began a robust campaign to gain more military agents in the sensitive Trans-Caucasus border region. In particular in

October 1903 the Caucasus staff petitioned for the appointment of military vice consuls in Bitlis and Diarbekir alongside a military agent in Mosul to cover the Turkish VI corps in Mesopotamia. The latter was a region that, with the building of the Berlin-Baghdad railway, appeared set to gain increased strategic significance.[61] In support of their demand for permanent military agents in these regions in place of temporarily commandeered officers, the district staff submitted in 1904 the report of Staff-Captain Shelkovnikov, recently returned from an intelligence-gathering operation in Mesopotamia. Shelkovnikov pointed out that the standard cover given on such operations – that of being attached to various Russian archaeological or geographical societies – was rapidly wearing thin in this particular region. During Shelkovnikov's own trip, only the fact that he had himself graduated from the archaeological institute in St. Petersburg and therefore had some knowledge of Babylonian-Assyrian cultures prevented him from being exposed when in the presence of 'real' German and American archaeologists near Baghdad. Shelkovnikov was therefore an ardent advocate for new methods of providing cover; if the setting up of permanent military agents in the region were financially impossible, then officers on temporary intelligence assignments should be given the more believable cover of being temporarily-attached bureaucrats to local consulates of the Russian MID.[62] The result of all these suggestions however was only the development of a bitter paper war between the War Ministry and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The MID objected strongly to the possibility of replacing diplomatic consuls by military men. As Lamsdorf rather primly responded in March 1904:

> it is essential that our consular institutions, even if allowing into their composition military secretaries, are CONSULATES and not merely military intelligence networks. This holds true in particular regarding the towns of Tabriz, Erzerum, Bitlis and Baiazet; the political significance of the last three is rising as they now appear in recent years as centres of the developing Armenian movement.[63]

The Foreign Minister gave rather grudging consent meanwhile to the principle of providing diplomatic cover for officers on *komandirovka* in the area, but insisted that his Ministry be appraised of every detail of the proposed missions, down to their period abroad and the very subject of their investigation. This bureaucratic war of words burst into life again following the Russo-Japanese War, in large part as a consequence of the War Ministry gaining in 1907 the right to have its personnel serve in an expanded series of consular posts in the Near and Middle East. The performance of military personnel in such positions led to urgent petitions from the Foreign Ministry to have these posts returned to its jurisdiction. In 1908 for example, the MID consul in Damascus used the occasion of Shelkovnikov's departure from the post of vice-consul in Hami to deliver a stinging and detailed diatribe against the practice of using military men in such posts.[64] The presence of such offi-

cers, meanwhile, allowed the Russian General Staff to investigate strategic horizons previously closed to them. The Russian General Staff had learnt of Arab uprisings in the Ottoman Empire from their agents in Constantinople during the period 1901–06, and in 1906 GUGSh asked Shelkovnikov to assess the possibility of creating a Bedouin uprising in the event of a Russian war with Turkey. Shelkovnikov reported that unfortunately the Bedouin had no mental conception of Russia, their political outlook being restricted to Britain and France and their attitude to a conflict between Russia and Turkey being one of indifference. Given their numbers and the quantity of arms among them, the Arabs could nevertheless prove useful allies, but the main question in that event would be one of money – an assessment with which the British officers T. E. Lawrence and General Allenby some years later would undoubtedly have concurred.[65]

Intelligence operations continued to be further circumscribed by financial restrictions, as may be seen from the following examples. Undoubtedly one of the Russian General Staff's leading military experts on contemporary political conditions in the Trans-Caucasus border region was Lt.-General P. I. Aver'ianov (1867–1929). A secretary at the Russian consulate in Erzerum from 1901 to 1905, Aver'ianov would go on to serve in the Third Over-Quartermaster Section (Asiatic fronts) of GUGSh under Palitsyn before going on, during the First World War, to become Chief of the General Staff in 1916. Under the Kerenskii government in 1917 he would occupy simultaneously the posts of Commissar in Turkish Armenia, Head of Supply for the Caucasus front and commander-in-chief of the Caucasus military district. The collapse of the Caucasus front that same year saw him leave Georgia to follow the path taken by many émigrés, journeying from the Crimea to Constantinople and thereafter to Yugoslavia, exiled from Russia for the remaining years of his life. Therefore the great majority of his active service career was spent directly or indirectly on affairs related to the Caucasus, and his memoirs form a rich source for the period.[66]

At the turn of the century, while still a Staff Captain, Aver'ianov had already been charged by the Chief of Staff of the Caucasus military district, Major-General N. N. Beliavskii, with drawing up a military-historical portrait of Russian relations with the Kurds during her wars with Turkey and Persia for the past hundred years.[67] This work, incorporating in its appendixes a wealth of documents drawn from the Caucasus district staff's own archives, concluded that the political significance of the Kurds in the border zones in a potential future conflict situation was set to increase. From the beginning of the 1890s onwards the Ottoman government had introduced into Eastern Anatolia a new military organization, the Hamidi, units of Kurdish irregular cavalry initially utilized to help suppress the local Armenian movement. The Hamidi militias were also intended to perform a range of intelligence and scouting functions as units attached to the regular Ottoman army in the event of full-scale conflict on the border. Within a very short space of time however the Hamidi had come to be viewed with

considerable suspicion by their Ottoman masters, and it was here that Aver'ianov saw an opportunity for increasing Russian political influence in the region. In 1908, by now serving in GUGSh as a full Colonel of the General Staff, Aver'ianov returned in one of his reports to the possibility of drawing the Kurdish population onto the Russian side in the event of a future war.[68] The Hamidi were badly paid and poorly maintained; a well-salaried Kurdish militia serving on Russian territory could therefore be counted upon to have a significant political influence on their Ottoman counterparts across the border. Palitsyn, the Chief of the General Staff, had himself personally read Aver'ianov's earlier work, and was an enthusiastic proponent of despatching a powerful cavalry force in the direction Erevan-Alashkert-Bitlis upon the outbreak of any future hostilities in order to help incite a general Kurdish revolt.[69] Aver'ianov's report therefore met with initial approval and a scheme was developed for the formation of a Kurdish militia within the Russian border in peacetime suitable for future expansion in wartime. The Caucasus military district staff drew up a list of families, the heads of whom it would be essential to draw into the service; branches of these Kurdish families already served administratively on both sides of the Russian-Ottoman frontier. It was proposed to form two Kurdish *sotnias* attached to the Caucasus Cossack Divisions and a Kurdish mounted platoon attached to the Viceroy's convoy. However at the beginning of May the War Minister abruptly brought an end to the discussion over the development of these formations in peacetime, citing their expense.[70] Aver'ianov subsequently lamented that evidence later verified his belief that, without proper preparation in peacetime, nothing could be expected in wartime; during the First World War when two whole Russian army corps occupied Lesser Kurdistan, the Kurdish population still remained entirely passive.[71]

In 1908 the staff of the Caucasus military district also responded to a request of the Main Directorate of the General Staff to present a plan on the organization of intelligence in Turkey in wartime. The creation of a superior intelligence network in Asiatic Turkey was of increasing concern to the General Staff in St. Petersburg by this time, GUGSh having been unimpressed by the debacle of the Caucasus military district's faulty intelligence regarding Turkish intentions in the winter in 1907/08. The district staff's scheme again relied on Aver'ianov's expertise, utilizing a plan he had first drawn up in 1903. This scheme hinged on being able to despatch into Asiatic Turkey officers trained in the relevant languages and able to pass for Turks or Tatars. It demanded an expansion of the presently existing peacetime intelligence organization in Asiatic Turkey, requiring in addition to current annual expenditures an annual boost of 18,400 roubles and a one-off supplement of 20,000 roubles. Even then positive results were not expected to be forthcoming until two or three years had elapsed.[72] Financial constraints again made these plans unrealistic. Even in the aftermath of the Russo-Japanese War and the increased intelligence expenditures it brought about, as we have seen, the Caucasus military district benefited only marginally,

retaining but not substantially improving its already privileged position in this regard. Not even a modified scheme by the Chief of the General Staff, Palitsyn, involving the despatch of just 2–4 officers into Asiatic Turkey at an expense of 12,000 roubles annually was fulfilled.[73]

The aftermath of the Russo-Japanese War was seen however as presenting a renewed danger to the Caucasus theatre in the eyes of the newly arrived Viceroy, Vorontsov-Dashkov. Following his arrival on the scene and actions in dealing with the internal revolutionary insurrections of 1905, Vorontsov-Dashkov presented a nightmare picture to the Tsar of a district he claimed to be even more poorly prepared for war than the Far East had been. He identified shortages in the supply, communications and medical systems and urged a more rapid rearmament of the artillery, particularly the mountain guns. Even the fortresses, he claimed, could not perform their allotted role due to shortages in men and equipment, and only a reinforcement of troops from the Russian interior would avert disaster at the outset of a new war that he now feared was imminent.[74] A further element in Vorontsov-Dashkov's reports were calls for a greater level of autonomy to be granted the work of local administration in the Caucasus; a full return in effect to the old Viceregal system. Such a system would help meet, he felt, both the rising social and political tension in the Trans-Caucasus so recently experienced in the local 'Armenian-Tatar war' and the perceived failings of the Mountaineer Administration in the North Caucasus. The latter system, he wrote in a brochure in 1907, by placing the bureaucratic reins of government in the hands of military officers and by allowing the local peoples to regulate themselves by their traditional *adat* laws, now answered 'neither the general tasks of the state, nor the needs of the population'.[75] Vorontsov-Dashkov's critique of the Mountaineer Administration mirrored growing criticism in the contemporary press, although on slightly different grounds. One correspondent in particular attributed continued unrest in the North Caucasus to the poor quality of administrative personnel, corruption, and a lack of faith by the locals in the court system, which was itself hampered by a lack of reliable interpreters. The result, he wrote, was ever-growing levels of crime and repeated skirmishes between the army and local populace that threatened at times to break out into full-scale partisan warfare.[76] In promoting greater decentralization Vorontsov-Dashkov also attempted to manipulate of course his special relationship with Nicholas II. In 1908 War Minister Rediger reprimanded the Count for conducting Caucasus affairs through a private correspondence with the Tsar, reminding him that 'in matters of military administration the Caucasus is in no way distinct from other military districts . . . To allow another order of things would signify allowing the violation of the army's unity'.[77]

Nonetheless the present situation was widely seen as unsatisfactory and change was on the wind, not least because Vorontsov-Dashkov himself frequently expressed his desire to resign as Viceroy due to considerations of age and failing health. In April 1908 Stolypin confided to assistant War

Minister Polivanov that in the event of Vorontsov-Dashkov leaving his post, administrative reform might be undertaken to divide the Caucasus into two new and distinct districts, north and south.[78] Just as in neighbouring Turkestan however, major administrative reform was destined to be delayed until the outbreak of war in 1914 rendered all further thinking in this direction irrelevant.

In the meantime, while there was undoubtedly an element of exaggeration in the Viceroy's reports to advance his own cause, particularly as regards the Turks' supposedly crushing superiority, the military agent at Constantinople reported to the General Staff that the Turks were definitely manoeuvring for a superior strategic position in the Trans-Caucasus. In particular, they were seeking to eliminate the possibility of a Russian advance on Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf in the event of a war. The 1908 report of General M. V. Alekseev of the General Staff, soon to be Chief of Staff (and, effectively, commander-in-chief) of the wartime Russian army, and heavily involved at this time in calls for a scheme of national defence, confirms an escalating fear towards Turkey in General Staff thinking after 1905.[79] Alekseev warned that Turkish army reform (changing to a three-year rotation system) and German plans for a Berlin to Baghdad railway made the position in the Caucasus now no less threatening than in Europe. In response he urged creating a broader railway network, with a line through the main Caucasus range connecting Tiflis with the Russian interior, a line from Borzhum to Kars, and a further line in the Tiflis-Kars-Erevan area for forward concentration of forces and lateral communication on the Caucasus front.[80] He also recommended strengthening Kars, a strategic fortification the General Staff recognized to be quite outdated by the turn of the century, by building strong points on its approaches. In the event only Alekseev's railway recommendations were to be in any way fulfilled by the outbreak of war, the Russian rail net in the Caucasus undergoing considerable improvement in 1912 while Kars remained neglected, continuing to lack both mortars and heavy ordnance.

The need for a new strategic railroad in the Caucasus had long been recognized. At the time of the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78 a railroad had only existed between Tiflis and Poti, and only in the years following that war had a line been constructed linking the railhead at Tiflis with European Russia through Elizavetpol, Baku, Petrovsk and Vladikavkaz. This line was extremely circuitous however – eight times longer than a direct line between Vladikavkaz and Tiflis – and the need for a new railroad across the main Caucasus range had been acknowledged in a special session of the Council of Ministers in 1894.[81] In a report to Stolypin in November 1910 War Minister Sukhomlinov urged redoubled efforts in this direction, pointing to Turkish efforts to improve their own road and rail communications. Also significant was the fact that Ottoman Empire was able to concentrate forces on the Trans-Caucasus border several times exceeding the number of forces that could be maintained in the Caucasus military district in peacetime. This

made maintaining Russian superiority in the speed of initial mobilization and a secure deployment of troops from European Russia a strategic priority. In addition to a line crossing the main Caucasus range Sukhomlinov therefore reiterated calls for additional lines along the Kars-Borzhum and Kars-Sarykamysh axes of advance.

In the meantime, Colonel Khol'msen in Constantinople presented regular reports to the General Staff stressing the importance the Turkish government, in the aftermath of the Young Turks' consolidation of power in 1909, were now putting on intelligence activities in the Caucasus. The Turkish War Minister's correspondence with the Grand Vizier, to which Khol'msen had access, showed that the War Ministry had approached the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to transfer several consular posts to military officers, these posts being on the Black Sea coast and in Kars. Khol'msen also noted that Turkestan and the Caucasus were now being 'inundated' with Pan-Islamic printed material. In addition the Turks had organized their own counter-espionage service in Constantinople, forcing Khol'msen himself to operate with greater caution. The military agent urged the Russians to organize a counter-espionage service on Turkish territory in response, a task he proposed be laid upon the civilian political police (the *Okhrana*) rather than on the already overworked consular service.[82] Traditional service rivalries between the MVD and the War Ministry prevented such proposals being clearly implemented however, while Khol'msen's own reading of events was challenged by the official Russian ambassador in Constantinople (and former political agent to Bukhara), N. V. Charykov. While Khol'msen interpreted Turkish military reform as directed against Russia, Charykov interpreted these reforms as being directed against Greece and Bulgaria.[83] Only in the autumn of 1911 meanwhile did the War Ministry satisfy its domestic needs by establishing independent counter-intelligence sections at the military district level.[84]

In 1910 meanwhile, in accordance with its new mobilization schedule, the General Staff worked out four war plan variants for possible combat on the Turkish-Transcaucasian border. The first foresaw a war with Turkey alone, the second a war with Turkey as a member of a hostile coalition, the third a war which Turkey did not enter till some point after other powers had already begun hostilities (as actually occurred in 1914). The fourth variant covered, which obviously carried no direct combat implications for the Caucasus, foresaw Turkey maintaining its neutrality in a general conflict. The worst variant was correctly seen to be the third one, a war in which the Caucasus forces would be hard pressed to meet both internal and external threats having already dispatched half their strength to the European front.

In both the first two variants Russian forces were initially to pursue offensive action, the main striking force being concentrated on the crucial Kars-Erzerum axis while a large force of cavalry was to gather in the Erevan sector on the Russian left for flanking and security duties. The cavalry and other troops were to debouch onto the Bayazet and Alashker plains and cut

off Erzerum from Turkish forces marching up from the south. Subsequently they were to dispatch a strong detachment to the Alla-Dag and Sharian-Dag ranges to raise the local population against the Turks and carry out other important intelligence tasks. In the first variant the Caucasus forces could look to reinforcement from European Russia of four corps, facilitating a general advance into Anatolia, the main operational base of the Turkish army. In the second these reinforcements would not be forthcoming, and the possibility of a change from an initial offensive to a defensive was taken into account, the Caucasus forces being instructed to secure defensive positions appropriate to small forces.

As the war actually developed along the third variant in 1914, most of these plans were at first thrown into disarray by the Turkish offensive, and the only reserve upon which the Caucasus corps could draw was the 2nd Turkestan corps. Nonetheless this basic planning was sound, and reflected a series of assessments and prognostications that had been formed since the nineteenth century under General Beliavskii, the Caucasus military district's long-serving Chief of Staff. Unlike other military districts, the Caucasus was geographically resistant to radical shifts in war planning since the district itself presented dramatic hindrances to the movement or deployment of any more than seven army corps.[85] Comparing the planning for the European and Caucasian fronts, Zaionchkovskii commented favourably on the clear operational goals the Caucasus corps had been set, which he compared in glowing terms to the very general and almost aimless disposition given the European forces by the staff planning of 1910. Possibly he also saw in the Caucasus army, where operational clarity made a virtue of small numbers in a complicated political situation, a model for the early Soviet army. His final comment reflected the fact that the Caucasus military district staff throughout this period had managed to defend their traditional autonomy in operational matters despite periodic criticism from the centre:

> The Caucasus and European theatres present a case, not only in regard to preparatory work but also in the character of conducting war when it occurred, where it is almost as if there were two different armies and two different general staffs.[86]

7 The Russian General Staff and Central Asia

> The Afghans are sharply differentiated from the surrounding peoples of the yellow East . . . The civilization borne everywhere by the English into countries that they have conquered has not weakened the Afghans' moral qualities . . . The Afghans by contrast have drawn from it its one good quality, and have turned their attention primarily to improvements in military affairs.
>
> Tsarist officer B. L. Tageev, 1904[1]

Probably the potential military theatre dealt with by the Asiatic Department of the General Staff that drew the greatest attention and coverage in the West was that of India and Afghanistan. It was fear of a Russian invasion of India that dominated most British analysis of Russian campaigns and war planning in Asia, and that sent the journalist Charles Marvin to specifically question the head of the Asiatic Department of the General Staff, L. N. Sobolev, over Russian intentions in 1882. Following the initial investigations of Bariatinskii's staff, which amounted to little more than strategic speculations, Russian war planning for the Indian and Afghan theatres became much more detailed following the conquest of Central Asia itself as a consequence of the natural increase in geographical knowledge. This had particular relevance in the sphere of river borne transport, which had played a prominent place in Russian thinking towards Central Asia since the time of Peter the Great. Many Russian strategic thinkers up until the conquest of Central Asia had theorized as to the use that could be made of the Amu and Syr-Darya rivers with their accompanying inland seas, the Caspian and Aral, as communication routes for consolidation and further expansion. The strategic plans of Khrulev in 1863 were typical in this regard, being tied up with his own plans for a commercial venture, which envisaged a river and rail network based around a commercial colony in Balkhan bay on the eastern bank of the Caspian. This route he prophesied would overtake in speed of delivery contemporary commerce routes across the Suez isthmus or round the Cape of Good Hope, underlining how many Russian thinkers continued to tie together military strategy and commercial exploitation.

With the conquest of Central Asia however the limitations of riverine transport, and the consequent need for railways, became fully apparent. This was thanks in large part to the statistical-geographical work carried out by talented members of Governor-General von Kaufman's new administration, including men such as Colonel L. F. Kostenko, the naturalist A. P. Fedchenko, Major-General N. A. Maev (1835–96), and the future Slavophile hero M. D. Skobelev.[2] Regarding river routes, it became apparent that the Amu-Darya was prone to unexpected and dramatic shifts of course due to moving sandbanks and erosion, while the Syr Darya was non-navigable due to braiding of its channels and shallow waters in its lower reaches. In addition sections of both rivers freeze in winter and dry out in the summer. Attempts to use these rivers as strategic lines of communication were to prove as doomed as earlier attempts in the 1850s to create a substantial Aral Sea fleet, which had similarly foundered upon the reality of local environmental conditions.[3] General Kaufman emerged a firm advocate from the very beginning for the importance of railway construction as an alternative source of military mobility in Central Asia, pointing out that it had taken the War Ministry ten months in 1868 to reinforce Central Asia to meet the threat of Muslim revolt there.[4] The strong case he built up may have rested partly on his own natural inclinations, being an engineer by original training, and partly from contemporary conceptions that technological penetration would lead to the more rapid 'civilization' of unstable borderlands. Bariatinskii had been a supporter of railway penetration in the Caucasus for the same reason, and Finance Minister Sergei Witte, nephew of the famous Caucasus general R. A. Fadeev, later came to apply some of the same thinking to Siberia. Russian thinking on this issue also matched the general European intellectual current of the time. Kaufman supported railway construction both from the point of view of security and from its commercial advantages, but never lived to see the full network he advocated built. Before 1880 Russia did not possess a single railway line in Asia, in contrast to the 15,000km of track in British India, a situation only gradually corrected by construction of the Trans-Caspian line in 1880–88.[5] The Grand Duke Nikolai Konstantinovich (1850–1918), a graduate of the General Staff Academy, and a major participant in the expedition to Khiva, conducted three expeditions in the period 1877–79 to determine the optimum route for a Central Asian railway, but not till 1905 was his recommendation of a line via Orenburg to Tashkent constructed. The ultimate goal of railway development in Asia, the linkage of the Central Asian and Trans-Siberian lines, although proposed in the Tsarist period, had to wait till Soviet times for its full accomplishment.

Geographical knowledge was critical not only to the planning of transport corridors but also to the demarcation of future state frontiers. Up until the 1870s Russian knowledge of the southern borders of Central Asia lagged far behind that of their British rivals in India. The British administration, and in particular the Great Trigonometrical Survey of India under the guid-

ance of the brilliant military engineer Thomas Montgomerie had for many years employed cadres of well-trained native agents – the so-called 'Pundits' – to covertly map areas of Asia where no European could safely tread.[6] Russia by contrast boasted no comparable organization on such a scale, and consequently when in 1872–73 the first attempt to delimit spheres of influence between the two empires took place, British geographical knowledge of the Pamirs region in particular exceeded that of their Russian counterparts. Not till 1869–72 did the Russian naturalist Fedchenko conduct a truly scientific survey of parts of the Pamirs, and not till 1876 did a military-scientific expedition led by Skobelev produce new maps of the Pamir and Altai region that surpassed in significant respects earlier British efforts.[7]

The conquest of Central Asia also had the natural consequence of bringing Russia into more direct diplomatic contact with Afghanistan and India. These contacts soon emphasized to the Russian General Staff the cultural and political fluidity of the area they had come to inherit. As early as 1867, Lt.-Colonel Abramov[8] at Iany Kurgan near Samarkand encountered an envoy from the ruler of Indor in India. This man, after an arduous and eventful two-year trip, bore with him offers of support from that ruler in the event of a Russian invasion of India. The Russians did not take this declaration, written rather dramatically in invisible ink, very seriously since it lacked specifics and appeared to be based mainly on rumours circulating in India about Russian conquests. Nevertheless, although the military governor of Turkestan refused to open diplomatic relations, the event was noted at the time for its political interest.[9] The activity of adventurers like Ramchandr Baladzhi and Iskander-Khan also had the effect of somewhat increasing Russian knowledge of the area. Such contacts were particularly important given the exceptional constriction the General Staff suffered throughout the period on this frontier, that of not having a military agent in the neighbouring state available to provide on-the-spot information.

The presence of Afghan refugees in Central Asia was a commonplace by the time of Russia's arrival in the area, many Afghans fleeing the civil strife that had swallowed their own country in 1863–68. A great number of these refugees joined the armies of the Central Asian rulers, and Afghan mercenaries fought alongside the Emir of Bukhara's subjects during the Russian siege of Tashkent in 1865.[10] Iskander-Khan, grandson of Dost Mohammed and nephew of Shir Ali Khan, both Amirs of Afghanistan in their time, had fled to Bukhara and then Turkestan after 1866. In 1868 the Afghan émigré fighting detachment he led joined forces with the Russians, and Iskander-Khan himself enlisted in the Russian service, being made a Lt.-Colonel. Taught the Russian language in Tashkent by M. A. Terent'ev, it was not long before, in response to his own petition, the young Afghan *sardar* departed for St. Petersburg to receive a proper military education. Requests by Governor-General Kaufman to the Amir Shir Ali to allow this young Afghan to return to his homeland were met by a cool diplomatic silence. The Amir had good cause to be suspicious of a potential rival to the throne who

now possessed the benefits of a Russian military education. Dissatisfied with what he saw as the Tsarist government's passivity, Iskander-Khan tendered his resignation in 1871 despite the protests of both Kaufman and Miliutin, and sought employment in Britain. There he was to be equally disappointed in attempts to gain support for his personal cause, and after travelling to Turkey during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78, he settled in Persia.

Another Afghan who found refuge in Russian Turkestan in this period, one destined for a much more prestigious fate, was of course the future Amir 'Abd al-Rahman. Interviewed in 1870 by L. N. Sobolev, Rahman related details both on the route of his flight from Afghanistan and on the armed forces of Bukhara and Afghanistan (repaying in the process the distinct coldness shown towards him by the Emir of Bukhara). Rahman estimated the size of the Afghan army at that time at around 40,000 men and informed the Russians of English encouragement to Afghan expansionism in the contested border area between the Bukharan and Afghan realms.[11] Governor-General Kaufman was initially daunted by the costs involved in maintaining the upkeep of Rahman and his suite, which comprised around 230 men. However Rahman struck Kaufman as 'a very clever man, decisive . . . and attractive'. The Afghan *sardar* told Kaufman that:

> I know the English, I know how they love you; now they are at peace with you, but give it a year or two, and your interests in Central Asia will collide, you will inevitably fight, and then I will be useful to you.[12]

Kaufman noted in his letter to Miliutin regarding this conversation that 'maybe he is right', and undertook the financial maintenance of Rahman and his followers in Samarkand at the considerable cost of 21,000 roubles a year.

Ramchandr Baladzhi, meanwhile, was a European-educated Indian who claimed to be a nephew of the famous Indian Mutiny rebel Nana Sahib and who spent the latter half of his own life trying to gain foreign support to liberate his homeland. Arriving in St. Petersburg from Europe in 1878, Baladzhi soon made a useful series of political and social contacts, and at the special petition of the leading *vostokoved* V. V. Grigor'ev he had accompanied the Grand Duke Nikolai Konstantinovich on his third research trip through Central Asia in 1879. The Grand Duke enthusiastically thanked Grigor'ev for proposing Baladzhi as a travelling companion, emphasizing his value in reconnaissance of routes for the war against the English in India that was 'inevitable'.[13] The Indian was recalled from the Grand Duke's party however due to suspicions in higher quarters about his character and his 'bad influence' on the Grand Duke.[14] On his return, L. N. Sobolev, head of the Asiatic Department, questioned the Indian, who reported that a Sikh envoy he claimed to have met while in Central Asia, one Charn-Singh, promised the support of around 300,000 armed men if Russia ever invaded India.

Baladzhi provided the General Staff with much general information, some of it useful and some of it of negligible value, the latter based on

misconstrued notions of the kin-relationships of the Indian princely states. He was considered useful enough however to be granted the sum of 400 roubles to help him out of his immediate financial difficulties, and efforts were made to recruit him to the Asiatic Department of the Russian General Staff. He was to be placed at the disposal of General Skobelev for relations with the Turkmen and Iskander-Khan, the latter then residing in Persia. Unhappy at the lack of positive commitments from his interviews with Russian War and Foreign Ministry officials however, Baladzhi left for Persia. There he aided for a while in Japanese-Persian diplomatic negotiations, writing later from Baghdad to inform his St. Petersburg mentors that he would render them no further aid. In September 1880 Sobolev reported such difficulties with the Indian as an agent that the decision was ultimately taken to discontinue his subsidy and sever all communication with him.[15] A last ill-fated attempt by Baladzhi to gain credit with the Russian authorities by participating in General Skobelev's expedition against the Turkmen ended catastrophically. Skobelev regarded the Indian as a potential English spy and confined him to work in the Russian transport column. Disillusioned both by his own treatment and the brutality of the Russian military campaign, Baladzhi attempted to leave for Herat but was arrested by the Russians and sent, first to Baku and then on to Moscow, the decision ultimately being taken to expel him, penniless, from the country. Contact was subsequently entirely discontinued.[16]

The Sikh envoy encountered by Baladzhi, a certain Charn Singh, was also personally questioned by Lt.-Colonel Korolk'ov of the General Staff serving in Zeravshan *okrug*, but returned to his home in October 1879 without contact being renewed.[17] War planning was aided and affected by all these developments, the Russians carrying out their first exercise in serious war planning for the Central Asian theatre during the diplomatic crisis of 1878.

Action in Central Asia in the event of a break with England during the Balkan crisis was the subject of a special meeting of the Tsar, War Minister and the Asiatic Governor-Generals, among others, on the 8th April 1878. Here various suggestions were considered. Baron Tornau, a member of the State Council, recommended the acquisition of Persian Astrabad (present-day Gorgan) in return for territory Persia would acquire by Russia's deal with Turkey at San Stefano. Such a deal, and the consequent gaining of Persia as a diplomatic ally, was decisively rejected by the head of the Foreign Ministry's Asiatic Department, N. K. Giers, who pointed out that England was in a position to strike immediate and direct blows at Persia in the event of such an alliance. In Giers' view, Persia could prove substantially more useful to the Russian cause as an officially neutral state.[18] Governor-General von Kaufman meanwhile saw a demonstration in Central Asia as the best means to affect Britain politically in India. For this he recommended the dispatch of two (in practice, later three) columns, one through Bukhara to around the town of Shirabad and the second, composed of forces of the

Caucasus military district, towards Merv. The Orenburg Governor-General, Kryzhanovskii, was extremely pessimistic about such a demonstration achieving anything significant; only an invasion force of around 150,000 men advancing toward Herat would influence British policy in his view. Given the poverty of communications and the immense fiscal and military resources such a plan would require, this scheme must have appeared clearly impracticable at the time. Kryzhanovskii was suggesting by proxy in fact that Russia lay in no position to offer any immediate threat to England in the East. Kryzhanovskii's opposition to Kaufman's proposals may in part have been influenced by professional jealousy, Kryzhanovskii having originally coveted Kaufman's role as governor-general in Turkestan. The council resolved to carry out a demonstration along the lines suggested by Kaufman, although it rejected his request for an increase in the permanent forces stationed in Turkestan on the grounds of expense. The Caucasus and Turkestan columns were to coordinate with one another by flying column or other means if possible and an ambassador was to be dispatched to the Amir of Afghanistan to assure him this movement implied no hostile intent towards him. This latter consideration resulted in the Stoletov Mission to Kabul, probably the most famous outcome of this session, and the root cause of the subsequent Second Anglo-Afghan war.[19] General Stoletov himself was selected as an officer well acquainted with the customs and habits of the East, knowing the Persian language and having founded the town of Krasnovodsk on the eastern bank of the Caspian in 1869.

During this period, unsurprisingly, the General Staff intensified its military-statistical work by covert missions in the Afghan and Persian theatres, seeking to bolster the unreliable knowledge provided by adventurers like Iskander-Khan and Baladzhi. This effort foreshadowed similar developments in British India, the British rapidly increasing their intelligence activity in the aftermath of the Second Afghan War with the creation of the Intelligence Department.[20] Both the Russians and the British later sought, in particular, to expand their network of agents in the sensitive border regions, the British for instance by establishing a permanent consul at Mashad in 1885 obtaining an agent network, the so-called 'C' and 'D' agencies, that had active native emissaries in Russian-held Samarkand and Sarrakhs.[21] On the Russian side, Colonel Matveev of the General Staff conducted an extensive reconnaissance through the Bukharan and Afghan realms in 1877, concluding that the Kabul plain would be the site of any future large-scale Anglo-Russian conflict. This mission made use of the warmer diplomatic relations existing at that point between Shir Ali's government and the Russian Tsar, a window of opportunity that would not pertain in future. Matveev was tasked to investigate not only the shortest possible route between Russian Turkestan and the Indian border, but also to pursue a range of political and scientific questions. These included assessing the mood of the tribal population towards Russia and determining the heights of the local mountain ranges and the positioning of key geographical points

in what was still at the time a highly understudied region. For this reason a civilian astronomer, Shvartz, who at that time was filling the post of director at Tashkent observatory, accompanied the mission.[22] However the onset of winter and the opening of Anglo-Afghan hostilities, as Matveev himself admitted, left these tasks only half-completed. Investigating the existing pack-roads in northern Afghanistan and eastern Bukhara, Matveev gave an assessment of which routes would be most suitable for the movement of artillery and military transport. As the best route (from Hissar to Balkh) passed through a near-waterless desert, Matveev supplemented this study with reports on the shortest routes to nearby water resources such as the Amu-Darya. He noted the suspicion with which his party were regarded by their Afghan escorts, many of whom suspected the Russians of being covert propagandists for the rival to the Afghan throne, 'Abd al-Rahman, who was then of course still living in Russian-held Samarkand. The Afghan army itself Matveev felt to be fairly well equipped and disciplined, particularly in comparison to its Bukharan counterpart, where troops often paraded with muskets lacking locks or even trigger mechanisms. Afghan regular troops by contrast bore smooth-bore percussion arms of British make and drill was carried out according to British manuals, the instructions being translated into Afghan or Persian. In a passage that might have been expected to dissuade Soviet military planners in 1979 had they read it, Matveev noted the Afghans' natural warlike spirit and that 'despite their lack of moral training, the Afghan forces possess a good military spirit and are always ready to meet an enemy no matter from what side he comes from'.[23] Areas like Kafiristan south of the Hindu Kush had also, he noted, conspicuously foiled the efforts of conquerors throughout history, from Alexander of Macedon to Tamerlane to Nadir Shah. The tribal populations of these areas could deploy significant numbers of irregular warriors – the area of settlement around the left bank of the river Swat alone allegedly disposing of around 30,000 riflemen. Such figures, Matveev noted, 'even if exaggerated, testify . . . to the significant, although scattered, military forces of Afghanistan'.[24] Matveev concluded his study with a strategic review of possible theatres of Anglo-Russian conflict in the region. This pointed out that the Turkestan forces acting on their own could only undertake action of a limited and purely demonstrative character, with their very furthest reach a possible advance through mountainous Badakhshan across the Baraghil pass and down to the headwaters of the river Indus. Such considerations undoubtedly influenced General Kaufman's own very conservative proposals in April the following year and contrast dramatically with English fears in the same period that the Russians intended a full-scale invasion of India. In contrast to both contemporary and later Western accounts that set the size of the Russian force mobilized in Turkestan in 1878 at a fantastic 20–30,000 men, Kaufman, making use of every single man available to him, in reality only deployed 12,500 troops southward toward the Bukharan border.[25]

Herat itself was also the subject of a visit by Colonel Grodekov (1843–1914), a talented linguist and ethnographer, in 1878, under very different political circumstances and with a very different outlook from Matveev's mission. In Grodekov's own words, this mission was undertaken when Kaufman had already gathered the Turkestan forces on the Bukharan border, ready 'to move south to the borders of Afghanistan and further if circumstances demanded it'.[26] Grodekov himself briefly served as Chief of Staff to this Turkestan expeditionary force. In strategic terms, Grodekov's study was among the first to advocate the division of Afghanistan, with the special region of Afghan Turkestan being turned into a Russian protectorate. He pointed out that the second largest khanate in the region, Maimana, had only been subjugated by the Afghan central government under Shir Ali three years previously. The local Uzbek population in northern Afghanistan suffered the oppression of high taxes with no access to arms or positions of authority, and during his own trip in the region Grodekov witnessed Afghan soldiers filling their leisure time by beating Uzbeks with whips in the streets. As a consequence, according to Grodekov's account, the whole of the local Uzbek population anxiously awaited a Russian advance southward, having heard tales of the fairness and justice of Russian rule from Central Asian Muslims on pilgrimage every April to Ali's alleged tomb in Mazar-i-Sharif.[27] Grodekov's arguments reflected a general Russian view at the time that only the Hindu Kush would form a final natural border to Russian Central Asia. In the spring of 1877 Mikhail Veniukov already longed for an British invasion of Afghanistan, on the basis that British defeat there would free Russia's hands from the treaty of 1873, and particularly the conditions it set on Maimana, Badakhshan and other regions north of the Hindu Kush, 'without control of which we can never peacefully administer Turkestan'.[28]

The Afghan army itself Grodekov felt to be composed of good-quality material, but the infantry in particular was, he argued, actually hampered by their drill-manuals based on English models, which Grodekov regarded as ill-suited to the Afghan character. British influence in equipment and training extended as far as belt-buckles and other fittings bought in India, which consequently bore such incongruous mottoes as '1st Regiment Bengal Light Cavalry' and 'God Save the Queen'.[29] Grodekov's survey included a review of routes to Herat and advocated the use of special transport carts to move artillery in the region. The Russians in the Fergana valley had first utilized such carts in 1877, serving as an indication of the Russian army's growing expertise in steppe and mountain warfare. He also noted that several local nationalities, such as the Hazzaris and Jamshanids, would probably aid a Russian advance on Herat. The Hazzaris had already, uninvited, assisted the Russians in their local campaigns against the Tekke Turkmen.[30]

At the same time, during the height of the Second Afghan War, Kaufman elected to despatch to Bukhara a man 'well acquainted with native languages and customs', Captain G. A. Arendarenko, for the gaining of political intelligence regarding Bukhara and northern Afghanistan.[31] Arendarenko, later the

primary candidate for the role of political agent in Bukhara in 1886 (a post ultimately taken up by N. V. Charykov of the Foreign Ministry), was an individual fully experienced in local administration in Turkestan. His journal reports were read by Kaufman and members of the Turkestan administration and passed on to the War Ministry and the MID, and formed a vital source of intelligence at this time on the Central Asian border region of the Russian Empire.

The ultimate result of Russian military preparations and intelligence probes across the Turkestan border in 1877–80 was in the end however to emphasize to the Russians how uncertain all political and military planning truly remained. In 1880 Kaufman assisted the return of 'Abd al-Rahman to Afghan territory, where he ultimately assumed the throne. However the hopes earlier invested in Rahman as a potential ally of the Russian cause were completely crushed within the space of a few years, forming what one Tsarist commentator still bitterly referred to over twenty years later as a 'dark page' in the history of Russian diplomacy in the region.[32] At first Rahman skilfully played off the Russians as he consolidated control over his own territory, giving periodic cause for hope even though he had already accepted a sizeable British subsidy. In one particularly artful episode in 1882, Seid Vali Khan, a Turkestani Ishan returning from Mecca to his home via Afghanistan, reported to the Russian authorities that the new Afghan Amir still remembered 'with great satisfaction' his quiet life in Samarkand and Tashkent, that he regarded the Russians as 'good people', and that he was 'very grateful to them'.[33] Correspondingly the Russians at the time remained aloof from supporting 'Abd al-Rahman's political opponents, refusing either aid or Russian citizenship to the ruler of Maimana as he attempted to resist reconquest at Rahman's hands, and denying political refuge to Ayub Khan, the former ruler of Herat, and a rival of Rahman's who enjoyed considerable popularity among the Afghan population. However the Penjdeh crisis of 1885 served to painfully disillusion the Russian authorities over the Amir's true loyalties. As many third-world rulers of the twentieth century were later to do, 'Abd al-Rahman had played a masterful double game, but upon finally feeling confident in his own strength, he clearly no longer felt compelled to continue this particular balancing act.

In addition to this bitter lesson, the general experience of 1877–80 also led to calls to hasten the absorption of the Turkmen lands into the Russian Empire in order to gain a secure transport corridor and also to establish better political intelligence in general in future. As early as 1879, a certain Colonel Petrusevich, recently returned from Khorassan and drawing up a military-statistical portrait of that region for subsequent boundary negotiations, lamented the low general level of Russian knowledge regarding the East. Russian efforts in his view compared particularly badly alongside those of her 'natural enemy in the East', England. Despite the great distance of North Persia from Peshawar, for example, British travellers like Butler and Baker had provided the Anglo-Indian authorities with extensive data on

that region. Russia by contrast was in the main compelled to continue to employ data first gathered by the Khanykov expedition twenty years before. He therefore argued that Russia urgently needed to become better acquainted both with the tribes and territory between Herat, Kabul and the Indian border, while also maintaining a net of military agents in Persia (where up until now she had deployed only diplomatic representatives) alongside a military agent in Afghanistan.[34]

Four years after his 1878 study meanwhile, Grodekov wrote a supplementary note, reviewing routes running between Russia's now newly founded Trans-Caspian province and Herat. This review began by admitting that when Kaufman had gathered his columns on the border in 1878, the Russian high command knew nothing of the country through which they may have had to pass, nor of the nationalities they would meet there.[35] As a result of subsequent events, Grodekov felt that the experience of 1878 had demonstrated the fact that 'the heroic period of Turkestan . . . is now ended'. Hopes to use the Turkestan theatre as a base from which to menace India had foundered upon the lack of geographical exits the region provided; consequently the onus for providing this advantage now fell upon the Trans-Caspian region. At the same time, past experience had demonstrated the fragility of Afghan promises; the Russian government could not count for certain on finding friends in Afghanistan in the event of an expedition towards India. Afghanistan was more a federation than an organic nation-state. It was perfectly possible for the Afghan government to sign a treaty of alliance with Russia, but this treaty would hold no authority among the warlike tribes of Afghanistan, many of whom only acknowledged the government of Kabul in a purely formal sense. Consequently many of these tribesmen would simply regard the Russians as *kafirs* (infidels). Even Stoletov, when staying in Afghanistan as the Amir Sher Ali's own guest, had been advised by the Amir not to leave his residence, as the Amir could not vouch for his safety on the streets of the capital. In short, as Grodekov ruminated ominously, 'what if we find in Afghanistan not friends, but enemies?' Such a state of affairs, he concluded, required that Russian military intelligence devote far greater attention to Afghanistan than in the past in order to determine the true political state of affairs in that country.[36]

Grodekov's critique of 1882 reflected a wider swing in Russian strategic policy in the region as greater and greater attention in the early 1880s was devoted to potentially penetrating Afghanistan from the west, i.e. from the new railheads available in the Trans-Caspian province. In this same period the Russian General Staff worked up its most detailed war plan yet for the Central Asian theatre. In a war with England alone, the premise of this plan began, 'in view of our comparatively weak fleet in the Baltic, White Sea and Eastern Ocean, we must go on the offensive in Central Asia'.[37] This plan foresaw three distinct stages to such an operation – the occupation of Afghan Turkestan and Herat, the occupation of part or all of Afghanistan with a concentration of forces on the Indian border, and an invasion of

India. Despite this ambitious outline, the detailed development and working-up of such a scheme then extended only as far as its initial stage, i.e. the occupation of Herat and northern Afghanistan. Moreover the war plan admitted that given 'the very modest and fragmentary information' available regarding the political mood in Afghanistan and India, the frequent declarations of support received from the local populations by the Russians in the past had to be treated with the greatest caution: 'We can only count on this, that hatred towards us is less strong than hatred towards the English and that we, even unloved, are respected'.[38]

The plan itself hinged upon the creation of two operational groups, one on the Amu-Darya and the other, and main striking force, in Trans-Caspia. The latter grouping, initially comprising 12.5 battalions, 24 guns and 18 *sotnias*, were to receive reinforcements from European Russia and move on Herat. The war plan contained appendices regarding maintaining the health of troops in desert conditions, taking into account in passing British experience in both Africa and Egypt. In addition to this was attached a detailed scheme for the siege of Herat itself using the incremental approach of parallel trenches dug by engineer forces over successive nights in cooperation with heavy artillery fire, with accompanying diagrams of that city's medieval walls and gates.[39]

In its general pursuit of knowledge on the region in this period meanwhile the General Staff did not neglect to also use academic instruments. Professor Ivan Pavlovich Minaev (1840–90), a senior lecturer in Sanskrit literature at St. Petersburg university, carried out three research trips to India in the period 1874–86. As one of Russia's leading Indologists, Minaev was deeply involved in helping resolve Russian Asiatic policy throughout this period, studying contemporary events alongside the ancient history of his area of expertise. Recent archival research has demonstrated however that this undertaking also included previously unsuspected links with the Russian War Ministry. Following his trip to India in 1880 Minaev met repeatedly with both L. N. Sobolev of the General Staff's Asiatic Department and with Chief of the General Staff N. N. Obruchev, while Governor-General Kaufman had already consulted him about the Indian Namdkhari sect in connection with the Charn Singh mission of 1879.[40] General Kaufman also attempted to get one of the topographers on his military staff to accompany Minaev on his first trip to make surveys around Peshawar, the first major town beyond the Khyber Pass. The Military-Scientific Committee of the Main Staff, meanwhile, communicated to Minaev questions on a series of points it would be militarily valuable to learn more answers to. These included the attitude of the Sikh states, in view of the envoys recently received in Turkestan and information gained by General Stoletov in Kabul, the situation in the northeast (Burma and Assam), and the stance of India's other native rulers, in particular the sovereigns of Gwailor and Indor. Although Minaev provided the staff with little information of long-term value, he did provide insights into some of

the difficulties facing English rule in India, including the unwillingness of Indian troops to fight in Europe, and the complaints and unrest caused by the tax burden and the unpopular Afghan war. Minaev was himself under observation by the British authorities during the duration of his second stay, and he urged on Obruchev the need to form a large network of 'unofficial' (i.e. secret) agents to obtain information in future.[41] On his third trip in 1885–86, Minaev was accompanied by Captain A. Timler of the Russian army, of whom he formed a low general opinion, the most common expression used with regard to this officer in Minaev's diary being *durak* (fool). Timler himself observed the manoeuvres then being conducted in the Anglo-Indian army, and reported on the same, writing articles later published in the *Voennyi Sbornik*.[42] Minaev himself was a pessimist on the chances of any Russian expedition to India succeeding, and to his diary confided his horror that in conversation with staff officers like Obruchev such a prospect was raised even theoretically. The main goal set Minaev during his trips to India was not the gathering of strategic information but the evaluation of the Indian nationalist movement and any aid it might render the Russians in the event of Russian pressure in this direction. Unimpressed by the Anglicized leaders of the newly formed Indian National Congress however, Minaev recommended that the Russians count on nothing from the Indian intelligentsia.[43]

Undoubtedly the most aggressive Russian strategist with regard to a possible invasion of India in this period was L. N. Sobolev (1844–1913). He was the aforementioned head of the General Staff's Asiatic Department at the time of Charles Marvin's visit and a full member of the Imperial Geographical Society, having already received the coveted gold medal for his statistical work in the Zeravshan *okrug*. Sobolev had a reputation as Russia's most experienced man on Anglo-Afghan affairs, writing a long commentary on the course of events as they occurred during the Second Afghan War in the pages of the *Russkii Invalid*. This labour was later also reflected in a book, entitled 'A Page from the History of the Eastern Question: the Anglo-Afghan feud'.[44] In an addendum to the work he listed various plans for Russian invasions of India, including those of Napoleon and Paul I, and gave a brief historical account of all past invasions of that country from Cyrus and the Mongols to Nadir Shah. This obsession of Sobolev's with previous invasions of India probably reached its zenith in 1886–88, years that saw the publication in the *Voennyi Sbornik* of a fifteen-part series by him on the past conquerors of India.[45] During his time in Central Asia before joining the General Staff, Sobolev had also of course become acquainted while in Samarkand with 'Abd al-Rahman, the man who would later replace Shir Ali as Amir of Afghanistan. His views on the topic were shaped therefore both by intense study of the contemporary situation and of its historical aspect; as he told Charles Marvin on his visit to the War Ministry: 'if Nadir Shah could march from Askabad [*sic*] to Bokhara [*sic*] on the one side, and to Meshed, Herat, and Candahar [*sic*] on the other, we could do the same'.[46]

These views Sobolev expounded more fully both in his book on the Anglo-Afghan war and in a pamphlet at the turn of the century entitled 'Would a Russian expedition to India be possible?'[47] In this latter publication Sobolev continued to espouse the conviction that, based on historical experience, such an expedition was possible – though not necessarily desirable. Perhaps unsurprisingly given that he also briefly served as minister-president for the Russian-backed Bulgarian government, Sobolev set settlement of the Black Sea line of influence as the key to Anglo-Russian harmony in the rest of Asia – 'the weaker . . . English rule in India . . . the more compliant they will be in Europe'.[48]

Marvin encountered profound disagreement with Sobolev's plans among some of his most prominent contemporaries however. Grodekov, who as we have seen personally visited Herat in 1878, and who later became a Governor-General in both Central Asia and the Far East, in particular questioned Sobolev's true grasp of local conditions:

> Soboleff [*sic*] has never served in any campaign in Central Asia. He does not know what warfare in Central Asia is. He lived for a time at Samarcand, [*sic*] but Samarcand is a town, and a journey thither alone in a carriage is very different from a march with an army on foot. He regards the subject more from a civilian than a military point of view. [At Geok Tepe] . . . we killed 20,000 camels during that campaign, in which only 5,000 troops were engaged. We should need a good 300,000 men to invade India, and where could we obtain the transport and supplies for such a number? Rest assured that a Russian invasion of India is an impossibility.[49]

Grodekov's publicly expressed reservations to Marvin were underlined by the considerations in the aforementioned private note he had written for the General Staff in 1882 on 'the state of affairs in Central Asia'.

If the question of a full invasion of India was a source of contention within Russian staff circles however, the other factor in the Central Asian equation, namely the need to have knowledge of northern Afghanistan in order to facilitate (in the event of a diplomatic break) an invasion of that sector of the country, remained an accepted strategic constant. It was the northern Afghan theatre that the General Staff saw as the main intended target, following traditional principles of always conducting an offensive in Asia rather than awaiting attack, in the event of any future clash between either Afghanistan and Russia or an Anglo-Afghan coalition and Russia. This was spelt out in staff writings on the subject as late as 1903, the strategic plans on that occasion envisaging four-fifths of a proposed assault force moving from Merv on Herat while the remaining troops in two groups moved to encircle Mazar-i-Sharif.[50] Later diplomatic considerations only served to intensify the General Staff's need to acquire knowledge regarding the region. The Franco-Russian agreement of 1900–01 provided that in the

event of Britain fighting France alone, Russia would undertake to concentrate 300–350,000 troops on her Afghan border to menace the British position in India. In the event of Britain attacking Russia, France was to reciprocate by entering the English Channel and threatening a naval *desant* on the British coast of 100–150,000 men.[51] In practice of course either operation would have been attended by considerable difficulty. The concentration of these 300,000 men on the Afghan border, which Grodekov in 1882, as we have seen, regarded as impossible given the limitations of animal transport, appeared more practicable in this later period given the slow egress of railways across Central Asia. In its private considerations however the Russian General Staff nonetheless remained considerably more conservative over the number of troops it could realistically concentrate and deploy in this region than they were in mutual security pacts with their French counterparts. Moreover the Russian General Staff's own knowledge of northern Afghanistan had only begun to acquire satisfactory dimensions during the course of the earlier Anglo-Russian war scare of 1885 and remained contested thereafter.

In March 1885 the military commander in Turkestan, Governor-General Rozenbakh, had successfully petitioned for a 10,000 rouble monetary grant for conducting intelligence operations in the border regions, with a further grant of 5,000 roubles being assigned in December that same year.[52] Among the results of these awards was the despatch of an intelligence agent from Tashkent into Afghan Turkestan in March. This agent commented upon the difficulties already presented by work in 'Abd al-Rahman's security state; in all the major towns he found himself detained and questioned on arrival. He reported the population of Mazar-i-Sharif, who were in the main Afghan, Uzbek and Tadjik, to be anti-Russian. In the event of a Russian invasion there would be a national uprising and all would fight. The Afghans themselves however were not loved in many areas, in part due to the large tax burden imposed on this region, in part from their habits and the difficulty of communication, particularly between Afghans and Turkmen. This correspondent reckoned there to be 8 500 infantry, 3 800 cavalry, 2 heavy and 26 light guns in the whole of northern Afghanistan at that time.[53] Staff-Captain Trusov of the Turkestan military district amalgamated the collected data gained by the Turkestan military district in this period into a massive military-statistical portrait of the region. This study covered everything from a general geographical review to studies of the agricultural productivity, mineral wealth, administration, taxation system and tribal composition of northern Afghanistan. As an individual work it probably represented the Tsarist General Staff's greatest and most comprehensive intelligence achievement on the region during the nineteenth century.[54] In the aftermath of this tense period of relations, the financial resources allocated for studying northern Afghanistan were reduced, while 'Abd al-Rahman's ever-tightening security state made the gaining of such data increasingly complex. Such information as was obtained was therefore often limited to geographical

descriptions or brief outlines of local political events. In 1893 for example the Russian Political Agency in Bukhara felt compelled to apologize to the Turkestan Chancellery for the low quantity and quality of data it had managed to collect on the region, blaming:

> the very difficult and unsuitable circumstances attending its acquisition, since the vigilant patrols of Afghan border guards . . . deprived us of the chance to despatch intelligence agents well-acquainted with local conditions . . . and thus we had to be satisfied as far as possible with the interrogation of caravans and individuals arriving from Kabul and *Char-vilayet*.[55]

Intelligence gathering in Afghanistan before 1906 continued to remain deeply problematic due to both fiscal and political constraints. In 1899 Governor-General Dukhovskoi complained that political intelligence regarding both India and Afghanistan remained completely unorganized and was based primarily on bazaar rumours. The scheme he presented to alter this state of affairs was rejected however due to its cost – 10,000 roubles was requested to help implement it.[56] Dukhovskoi's grasp of the political difficulties was also questioned by those at the central level – when Dukhovskoi urged the creation of an agent network in Afghanistan 'on the same footing as that which we already have in Asiatic Turkey', War Minister Kuropatkin noted in the margin 'And from where will we get permission for this [*A razreshenie*]?'[57]

The porous nature of the Russo-Afghan border and the potential threat *from* Afghanistan were also of concern to the Asiatic Department of the Russian General Staff. The Amir 'Abd al-Rahman saw in the Afghan regular army a major bulwark for his state policies as a whole, and his reign witnessed several innovations in Afghan military organization. These included the acquisition of heavy artillery and mountain guns, as well as the creation of supply bases at important strategic points around the country and the formation of an army transport park. In addition to this, and in opposition to the council of his own advisors, the Amir in 1895 introduced a more regulated recruitment system designed to facilitate the creation of a larger standing army with a trained reserve.[58] These reforms within the Afghan armed forces, at a time when the full effectiveness of military reforms in Japan had not yet become clear and undisputed, led some to regard the Afghan army in the general Asian context with an undoubtedly excessive degree of respect. In 1901 Boris Leonidovich Tageev, a Persian-speaking Russian officer who had served in the Pamirs mountain detachment in Central Asia during the 1890s, but who had since left the army under something of a cloud, undertook a private expedition to Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif disguised as a Tadjik pilgrim. Though officially undertaken upon his own initiative, Tageev retained personal links with both the Imperial Geographical Society and Russian military intelligence circles in

Turkestan, both of whom remained interested in the results of such a trip. The conclusions that Tageev reached based upon his observations of the country were expressed in a book published three years later.[59] In all of his writings, including this work, Tageev was consistently outspoken in his view that the Afghans were the most militarily capable of all the Asiatic peoples, and that the reforms in Afghanistan placed it further ahead, in a military sense, than all other Asiatic states. Though these views did not necessarily reflect reality, they did reflect a growing respect for Afghanistan as a potential military opponent among some within Russian military circles.

Islam meanwhile formed one of the central ideological bastions that the Amir 'Abd al-Rahman utilized to support his state policies, and to this end during his reign he also directed the composition of two religious books, with a large publication run, advocating the importance of *jihad* (holy war) against the infidel. Staff Captain Lavr Kornilov during a rare and daring intelligence trip into northern Afghanistan in 1898 obtained a copy of one of these tracts for the Turkestan military district staff, a translation being made under the direction of famed local academic N. P. Ostroumov and passed on to the Russian War Ministry.[60] Such phenomena only served to fan the Russian General Staff's fears that the Amir in a Russo-Afghan conflict would seek to raise Russia's own Central Asian Muslim population against them. In the wake of the 1898 Andizhan uprising in Central Asia, Governor-General Dukhovskoi warned that the Turkestan authorities were sitting on top of a metaphorical volcano, that the sympathy of Muslim fanatics was more and more being drawn towards 'Abd al-Rahman, and that the Amir was 'stirring up fanaticism and hatred against Russians'. For this reason he advocated that 'the sooner we finish with the Afghans, the better' – a Russian occupation of Herat and *Char-vilayet* would serve to redirect the Amir's attention to the south instead. However War Minister Kuropatkin, perhaps surprisingly given both his long service and close personal identification with Turkestan, had never been a supporter of either a campaign to India or the annexation of northern Afghanistan. In July 1885, as a young officer in the Main Staff, he had already toyed in his secret diary with the idea of dividing Afghanistan in two between Britain and Russia, but saw this as only a compromise solution at best, with the most desirable outcome in his view being in fact if the British were to annex the whole of Afghanistan. Kuropatkin's view was always that Russia's main enemy was Germany, not England.[61] By 1898 his views on the subject had hardened, and he rejected Dukhovskoi's conclusions as 'highly exaggerated and . . . tendentious' and an invasion of northern Afghanistan as pure adventurism, though he sanctioned a series of measures to strengthen the Turkestan military district.[62] Such measures were undoubtedly necessary, since on the Russian side of the border the Amu-Darya and Trans-Caspian frontier guards late on into the period deployed barely one man per kilometre of border, with intervals of 90 versts between frontier posts along one recorded section. Dukhovskoi's alarmist cries regarding the balance of military forces in the region also

echoed on sufficiently long to bring concrete, though modest, results. In 1900 D. V. Putiata, by then the head of the General Staff's Asiatic Department, calculated that, under existing conditions, military mobilization in Turkestan would be prolonged and inadequate. Forces north of the Amu-Darya would mobilize in 48 days and the forces disposed in Semirech'e would take even longer – 82 days. Moreover, taking into account that one-third of the forces disposed of in Turkestan would have to remain behind to secure railheads and internal security, the Turkestan military district could only dispose of 40,000 men and 100 guns on the field of battle against a potential opponent. Putiata saw these figures as clearly insufficient given the threat of a 'warlike Afghanistan' and the 'fanatical Muslim population' of the Turkestan military district.[63] For this reason, taking advantage of a sympathetic War Minister, border garrisons such as Kushk were built up and fortified at the turn of the century. Kuropatkin in 1901 also became the first War Minister in Russian history to actually visit Turkestan personally, and his subsequent report was characteristically riddled with patricianly concern over the state of communications in the region and the health of the troops there.[64] Alongside the reinforcement of Kushk, measures were also taken to increase the carrying capacity of the Trans-Caspian railroad, assisting the more rapid deployment of the 2nd Caucasus Army Corps to the Afghan border in case of need, while steps were taken to introduce the system of divisional organization to the Turkestan brigades. Though the cavalry were to be somewhat reduced, the Turkestan district was intended henceforward to deploy 70,000 as opposed to 50,000 infantry and 184 as opposed to 114 artillery pieces.[65] Fears about the porousness of this border were not misplaced; within the early Soviet period an almost identical initial correlation of border troops to frontier allowed roving bands of *basmachi* to operate between Afghanistan and Central Asia with relative impunity.[66]

Events in northern Afghanistan also exercised the Asiatic Department of the General Staff to the greatest degree politically, the most important event following the disappointments experienced with Iskander-Khan and 'Abd al-Rahman in the 1870s being the revolt of Ishaq-Khan in 1888. This revolt was again intimately connected to the ethnic makeup of Afghan Turkestan itself, the Hazzaris and Jamshanids alongside Central Asian Uzbek, Tadjik and Turkmen elements forming 'the Achilles heel of Afghan despotism'. According to the Amir 'Abd al-Rahman, his cousin Ishaq himself joined the Naqshbandiya sect of Sufi Islam in order to ingratiate himself with the Turkmen and enlist their support in his own uprising.[67] Such elements could also potentially advance the Russian cause in the event of an invasion. Envoys from these tribal elements had met up with Prince Dondukov-Korsakov during the visit of the latter to Merv in 1885, although the Russians ignored their declarations of devotion on that occasion. Later attempts in the early 1890s by these tribes to find safety on Russian territory from the persecution of 'Abd al-Rahman met refusal from the Russian authorities, anxious to maintain as good relations as possible with 'the Iron

Amir'.[68] However, undoubtedly the most important event in relation to these tribal groupings' attraction toward Russia was Ishaq-Khan's revolt in 1888. Traditional Soviet studies of this event emphasized the Tsarist government's unwillingness to become in the least way involved with this rebellion.[69] However, this has always left open the question, as one more recent study has pointed out, of why Ishaq-Khan's envoy, Ahmed Khan, remained in Russian Turkestan for over three months, and what role Russian envoys *did* play in the revolt.[70] The picture that emerges from the archival evidence is of a division within Tsarist policy-making bodies on the issue, with Foreign Ministry 'doves' very much attempting to rein in the more hawkish War Ministry.

On the 31st July 1888 a new envoy from Ishaq-Khan arrived in Russian Turkestan requesting aid for the *sardar's* revolt against 'Abd al-Rahman in the form of rifles, ammunition and, if possible, Russian forces. The policy debate this then provoked in Russian governmental circles highlighted internal divisions from the very first. On the 12th August Major-General Kostenko, head of the General Staff's Asiatic Department, declared himself in favour of supporting Ishaq-Khan's cause by covertly supplying him with arms while publicly maintaining Russia's recently-concluded diplomatic agreement with England. Kostenko noted that:

> Such a form of action is practiced in Europe quite frequently, and in Asia is applied nearly always. [. . .] If Ishak [*sic*] Khan is triumphant he will place relations regarding us in the same state as that in which now exists the Bukharan and Khivan khans. And this will be quite natural, since as a consequence of geographical, ethnographic and historical conditions *Char-vilayet* comprises one whole with the territory of the Bukharan and Khivan khans.[71]

Such a course of action was firmly supported by the General Staff's reigning Anglo-Afghan expert, L. N. Sobolev, who in a report five days earlier had advocated the despatch of both arms and Muslim officers to aid Ishaq-Khan. Northern Afghanistan, he pointed out, was populated primarily by Uzbeks and Tajiks, 'who were and always will be enemies of the Afghans'.[72] However, both the Russian political agent in Bukhara, N. V. Charykov, and his superior at the MID, Foreign Minister N. K. Giers, were opponents from the very first to the idea of supporting this local uprising. On the 7th August the War Minister, P. S. Vannovskii, wrote to the Tsar that he had been advised by persons 'serving in Asia' that to react 'indifferently' to Ishaq-Khan's rebellion could seriously damage Russian prestige in Asia, and he therefore officially proposed supplying the *sardar* with rifles and ammunition. Alexander III rejected the War Minister's suggestion however, declaring Ishaq-Khan's revolt a 'domestic affair' in which Russian intervention was unnecessary.[73] The desires of the War Ministry were further frustrated at a special conference held on the 17th August, a session at which the War Minister, Foreign Minister, the head of the MID's Asiatic Department and

the head of the General Staff's Asiatic Department, Kostenko, were all present. At this session a serious blow was struck the War Ministry's cause by the attitude of I. A. Zinov'ev, head of the Asiatic Department of the MID, who deprecated giving assistance to Ishaq-Khan, a character 'about whom we have only very insufficient information'.[74] This statement appears to contrast sharply with views that Zinov'ev had been expressing only a few days earlier. When one also takes into account the fact that Zinov'ev traditionally allied with the military over their policies in Central Asia, one may hypothesize that he had been pressurized by his superior, Giers, into presenting a united MID front against the War Ministry's plans.[75] Despite the protests of Vannovskii and Kostenko that the secret despatch of arms to Ishaq-Khan would carry no risk of longer-term strategic complications, the resolution of the conference settled upon merely reinforcing the border garrison of Kerki. This setback to the General Staff's desires in the region effectively ended their window of opportunity; on the 14th September Ishaq-Khan's forces were routed by those of 'Abd-al Rahman, and the defeated Afghan *sardar* fled northwards across the border. He was destined to spend the remaining years of his life in exile in Russian Turkestan on a comfortable pension provided by the Russian War Ministry.

The repercussions from this affair were long lasting. The Asiatic Department of the General Staff kept a special copy of the minutes from the August conference in a part of its own files reserved for matters of special instructional importance and value, thus commemorating this bureaucratic defeat in the department's institutional memory. During the nineteenth century the last individual to attempt to promote intervention in northern Afghanistan was Governor-General Dukhovskoi in 1898. War Minister Kuropatkin in his strategic review of 1900, with Dukhovskoi's renewed appeal no doubt still fresh in his mind, felt compelled to outline specific arguments *against* the annexation of northern Afghanistan, effectively ending the issue. Kuropatkin's arguments were a near-explicit riposte to those raised by Kostenko and Sobolev over a decade earlier. In particular, Kuropatkin wrote:

> in moving our frontier up to the edge of the Hindu Kush, we should be forced to take over tribes of Afghan descent, and yet at the same time exclude some non-Afghan races kindred to those we had already taken over. Where the inhabitants of the valleys are peasants, Uzbegs [*sic*], and Tajiks, they would probably submit to us without opposition, but the hillmen, even those of non-Afghan descent, would fight fiercely for their liberty. Even after conquering them, we, like the British in India today, would have no peace. [. . .] Finally, it must be remembered that the people of Afghan Turkestan and Herat, who now look on us as their liberators from Afghan oppression, might, when taken over, change their feeling toward us. The consequence would be that, instead of keeping neighbours well disposed towards us, and ready to assist us

> when called upon, we should be acquiring fresh responsibilities in the shape of discontented subjects, who would require military garrisons for their control.[76]

The resolution upon a policy of non-intervention in northern Afghanistan decided upon in 1888 and underlined by Kuropatkin's analysis twelve years later therefore marked the last time an extension of Russian political and military influence in Central Asia southward to the line of the Hindu Kush was seriously posited. Just as in the other theatres under its direct consideration however, the Asiatic Department by the turn of the century was also becoming increasingly concerned over the *internal* stability of its Central Asian possessions.

Given the coverage already devoted to his views, it should be unsurprising that perhaps the most alarmist of Turkestan's governor-generals regarding its internal stability was S. M. Dukhovskoi. A staff graduate of 1862 and a Caucasus veteran, Dukhovskoi served as governor general of the Amur Province before taking up his post in Turkestan in 1898 in the wake of the Andizhan uprising. Like Kaufman, Kostenko and so many others therefore, he had spent most of his military service in one way or another upon the Asiatic frontiers. Yet in the aftermath of the Andizhan revolt he lost faith in the stability of the rationalist project proposed by General Kaufman in Central Asia. Like other Tsarist administrators before him, he viewed Islam in Central Asia from the perspective of his Caucasus experience; consequently he saw Sufi Islamic sects as the greatest threat to Russian colonial rule. To further ignore Islam, trusting in its natural decay was, he wrote, impossible; sterner measures were required.[77] Dukhovskoi's program sought to initiate a new, more aggressive inculcation of rationalism among the Turkestan native population through the despatch of native Turkestani students to study in Moscow and St. Petersburg, the translation of major Russian literary works into the native languages, and the opening of the first local museum.[78]

Undoubtedly the most ambitious scheme in regard to the declared need for increased monitoring of the population of Turkestan however came later on, in the proposal of one of Dukhovskoi's successors, Governor-General Mishchenko. On the 14th of March 1909, this Turkestan Governor-General presented a detailed, top-secret report to the War Minister, which included a review of relations between the natives and the Russian governing administration in Turkestan over the preceding forty years.[79] This review focused specifically on the sporadic and failed attempts of previous Governor-Generals – Kaufman, Cherniaev, Dukhovskoi – to create language schools and the accompanying cadres of officials closely acquainted with the languages and customs of the natives of Turkestan. The basis for Mishchenko's own proposals were founded in the work of one of his most recent predecessors, Lt.-General Subbotich, who in 1906 had set up a special commission to study in depth the need for officials to be acquainted with

local languages in the region. The work of this earlier commission had led to a lively exchange of opinions in the Turkestan press, including the locally printed *Turkestanskii Vedomosti*, and members of the academic Orientalist community had been drawn into the debate. The most interesting articles were subsequently gathered by the administration of the *krai* and published in collected form as a booklet.[80] The language schools that had been opened by Subbotich had to be closed following his departure however, and the proposals by both himself and his successor, Grodekov, to make knowledge of the local languages a compulsory facet of service in the Turkestan administration encountered resistance from the War Ministry. However, the 'awakening' of the Muslim East begun by the Russo-Japanese War made the need for such schools now, in Mishchenko's eyes, a pressing necessity. As evidence of the political developments he spoke of, including the penetration of Pan-Islamic or Pan-Turanian ideas into Turkestan, he enclosed with his report an intercepted letter from a member of the Young Turk Foreign Ministry to a native of the Fergana *oblast*. As a result of what he described as these 'new influences, new currents in the local Muslim world', Mishchenko formed his own special commission of representatives of the Turkestan administration to develop the appropriate corresponding political measures. All the members of this commission agreed upon the need to organize a wide and systematic intelligence network among the local Muslim population, periodically drawing up reports on the position and mood of contemporary Islam. Observation would be carried out in the large towns and settlements, 'the centres of the economic and spiritual interests of the Muslim population'. To coordinate this gathered intelligence it was proposed to hold periodic conferences of the main personnel involved – chiefs of district staffs, diplomatic bureaucrats and heads of *Okhrana* sections, under the chairmanship of the Turkestan Governor-General's aide. As a natural accompaniment to this programme it was proposed to institute courses of *vostokovedenie* and language studies to raise the knowledge of members of the local *uezd* administrations, along the lines of the project developed in 1906.[81] The total number of agents hypothesized in the detailed plan that accompanied Mishchenko's report was 18, spread out across the Turkestan military district, their wages calculated at 50 roubles a month, in all 1080 roubles a year. Since the head of the local *Okhrana* section was already overburdened and would lack both the language skills and orientalist training necessary to process the reports of these native agents, it was proposed to set up a new post of assistant to the *Okhrana* section to handle this task. This was foreseen as a job for a man well acquainted with the Turkic and Persian dialects, on a salary of 'not less' than 2,000 roubles a year.[82]

Mishchenko's proposals filtered into a general governmental review of the whole of the Turkestan administration being conducted at this time, his entire report being passed along on the 7th April 1909 to Senator K. K. Palen, the individual charged with reviewing the local administration in Turkestan and drawing up reform proposals.[83] Ironically, one of the products

of Palen's own investigations was to be the retirement of Mishchenko himself, outraged over the departure of individuals close to him who had become tainted by the scandal of administrative corruption that the Palen commission exposed in Turkestan. In August of that same year Samsonov, Mishchenko's successor as Governor-General, wrote to War Minister Sukhomlinov pointing to reports from his secret emissary in the Emirate of Bukhara on the penetration of revolutionary propaganda into the madrasas of the area, and asking that Mishcheko's programme of political surveillance be rapidly implemented.[84] The following year however the Asiatic Section of the Main Staff informed the Turkestan administration that Mishchenko's proposals would now be considered and conclusions implemented only as part of the whole Palen commission review. In practice, although this was unforeseeable at the time, this meant that no new measures were undertaken before the First World War intervened.[85] In 1909 Samsonov on his own initiative proposed to reinvigorate the all-round scientific study of Turkestan, an ambition expressed during the following year in a series of circulars and printed programmes. This initiative intended to improve the organized study of Turkestan in a statistical, ethnographic and anthropological regard, with the study of local languages and religion being assigned to the field of anthropology. These ambitions got no further than a series of conferences and projects however, with very little concrete being achieved. In 1913 one Russian writer gloomily concluded that after nearly half a century of Russian rule in the region, 'the *internal life* of the native Muslim population and every aspect of their spiritual lives, flowing from centuries of Islam, still remains till the present moment very little known by us'.[86] Such a conclusion was subsequently underlined by the Central Asian revolt of 1916, which caught the majority of local military administrators in Turkestan, including some of the most experienced and long-serving personnel, completely by surprise.

The aftermath of the Russo-Japanese War produced several renewed outbursts about the dangerously poor quality of intelligence collection along the Central Asian border, just as it did in other Asiatic districts. In the years immediately preceding that war, the interest of the Russian General Staff in regard to India had received fresh impetus due to the English alliance with Japan and the final resolution of the question of establishing a Russian consulate in India. In 1895 Obruchev had informed the Minister of Foreign Affairs that:

> in view of the growing might of Japan and the absence in India of Russian representatives, it is proposed to despatch there from time to time young officers, giving them prolonged leave for this purpose with retention of all the privileges of active service.[87]

The majority of officers who performed this work in the course of the following ten years were, naturally enough, men attached to the Turkestan

military district. An interesting sidelight on the strategic mindset behind these missions is given by the memoirs of General Grulev, a Russian staff officer serving in the Tashkent military district in this period. Already a source of suspicion for some in the Russian army at the time through his Jewish background, Grulev made himself even less popular through his insistence that any thought of Russia presenting a threat to India was simply nonsensical. Grulev presented these views at a strategic conference in the 1890s and was even thanked by Colonel Iudenich, the future Chief of Staff of the Caucasus military district, then serving in Turkestan, for his frankness. Grulev nonetheless felt that one result of his forthrightness was his being overlooked a few years later when the question came up of dispatching officers to India, his place being taken instead by a 'notorious drunkard, who squandered his fare even before he left Tashkent'.[88] Grulev was clearly felt to be insufficiently hawkish to perform the strategic missions laid upon this band of officers, and he later opined that only military failure in the Far East 'sobered up' the General Staff regarding what could be realistically accomplished in Asia as a whole.

The question of establishing a Russian consulate in India, meanwhile, dated back as far as 1875, when this proposal was first raised in exchange for a British consulate at Tiflis. The issue made no progress over the course of the next twenty years, till in 1898 repeated Russian diplomatic pressure on London finally secured a breakthrough when the British government gave its agreement in principle to the establishment of such a consulate at Bombay. Attempts by the British government to secure additional advantages on its side in the form of new consulates in Irkutsk and Samarkand delayed matters further however. Only in 1899 did the Russians receive a note giving formal agreement to the establishment of their consulate in Bombay, and only in 1905 did the British concede the granting of the title 'General' to this institution.[89] No Russian military agent was appointed however, and close British surveillance of the consulate's members inevitably meant that they were still able to do very little in the form of real intelligence work. The Foreign Ministry issued the first Russian consul in Bombay, V. O. Klemm, highly detailed secret instructions. These highlighted the importance of gaining information of a military character, including the number of forces disposed of in India, the defensive means of the country, and the positions of railroads and fortresses, and closely followed detailed guidelines prepared by War Minister Kuropatkin on the responsibilities of a secret military agent in India. In November 1901 however Klemm reported almost insuperable difficulties in recruiting agents and gaining accurate intelligence; servants watched and reported on the movements of every member of the consulate and the consular mail regularly bore the marks of having been tampered with before arrival. As a result Klemm had come to the conclusion that only indirect routes of gaining political and military intelligence through third parties stood any chance of success. Meanwhile even Klemm's attempts to move freely around the country in response to the changing

seasons raised British suspicions and increased diplomatic tensions.[90] The situation for visiting Russian officers meanwhile was no easier. In 1904 Lt.-Colonel Lavr Kornilov visited India. Having suffered the misfortune of being identified almost immediately on the steamer out from Egypt by a party of British officers, Kornilov was thereafter unable to travel incognito. Although treated with outward hospitality by the military authorities upon arrival in India, Kornilov was closely watched by the civilian police and suffered the indignity of having his suitcases robbed of photographs and notebooks during his stay in Peshawer, an act almost undoubtedly conducted by agents of Anglo-Indian intelligence.[91]

This continued frustration in the gaining of accurate intelligence in the region was reflected in the renewed bout of introspection over intelligence matters that occurred in Russian military circles during and after the Russo-Japanese War. In 1905 in one polemical work, Staff-Captain P. A. Rittikh emphasized the new importance given to intelligence by the Russian General Staff by particular reference to Afghanistan:

> The main principle of the military preparity of a state is its knowledge of neighbouring states. In this regard in Turkestan we turn out to be, as in Manchuria, completely bankrupt, since *we do not know Afghanistan and India and we do not want to know them*.[92]

Rittikh urged several reforms, including the creation of more schools on eastern languages for Russian officers and the greater use of 'the native element' in intelligence work. For the language schools he recommended the model he had seen used by the British in India, namely voluntary schools in which officers nonetheless received a monetary supplement for attendance. To highlight the value to be given by native agents, he pointed out the great service recently rendered the Russian Geographical Society by Tsybikov, a trained Buriat Mongol, who had recently returned from a trip to Lhasa in Tibet having gained more information from one stay than had been reaped by Nikolai Przheval'skii on the region during his whole lifetime. Tsybikov's personal abilities were so great that he subsequently went on to become a lecturer at the Eastern Institute in Vladivostok.[93]

Undoubtedly the individual most qualified to be critical however was Rittikh's close friend, the man who had helped him write his work and to whom Rittikh's own book was dedicated, Colonel A. E. Snesarev. A dazzling combination of military theorist, linguist, statistician, mathematician, geographer, philosopher and orientalist, Snesarev saw the ultimate resolution to tension in Central Asian politics as social revolution in India itself. One of the select group of Russian Staff officers who actually visited India from the 1890s onwards under Obruchev's programme, Snesarev's massive two-volume 1903 study of the Indian northwest frontier established him as the leading Russian military Indologist of his or perhaps any generation.[94] In one of his most famous books from 1906, Snesarev laid bare in almost Marxist

terms what he saw as the social and economic corruption of the British regime in India, based on observations made during his own visit there. Believing in the imminence of revolt in this country, he also urged that: 'it is impossible to look upon [India] as a theatre of secondary significance – it must have the same right to our attention [now] as have, for example, our western theatres'.[95]

After a long apprenticeship serving in the Turkestan military district, working in particular in the Pamirs mountain detachment, A. E. Snesarev had an opportunity to make his views more widely felt when he joined the Main Staff and GUGSh in 1905–10. There he worked in the Third Quartermaster-General section, that branch of the General Staff that was directly concerned with planning potential military operations on the Turkestan front and in Northern India. His work in this regard was inaugurated however in August 1905 by a devastating critique delivered to the General Staff on the level of Russian intelligence operations regarding Afghanistan up until this period. In his view, despite the fact that Russia had held its present frontiers in Central Asia for over 20 years, and in some areas for over 40, 'our information about neighbouring countries and especially about Afghanistan is weak in the extreme'.[96] The majority of information at the Staff's disposal was often unreliable or simply antiquated-among sources of practical military information there existed little to supplement the studies of Grodekov and Matveev, conducted almost thirty years before. Not only was there a lack of raw data to formulate campaign plans for that country, there was no data to draw up even general sketches and dispositions. As a consequence 'all our plans and intentions as soon as they cross the state frontier are suspended in the air and scarcely sound'.[97]

Snesarev ascribed this weakness to both general and particular causes and drew up a programme of proposed measures to correct this system. Among the general causes he highlighted a traditional Russian disregard of the importance of accurate military intelligence, the consequences of which were now being painfully felt to 'a fatal degree in the present [Russo-Japanese] war'. The consequence of this was a lack of system in the organization of intelligence and this was then expressed in the *particular* factors of disarray in the intelligence system of the Turkestan military district. This assertion was then backed by use of devastating examples of neglect that Snesarev had observed during his own period of service there. To take just one of case, one head of the Pamirs mountain detachment had, according to Snesarev, confined his reports for a whole year to reporting the movement of two Afghan horsemen along the Piandzhu river and to an outbreak of epileptic sickness. Moreover there was no allocation of areas of study to the heads of district detachments, resulting in wasteful administrative overlap. Snesarev pointed out to his superiors that intelligence collection in Asia was *quantitatively* different from intelligence gathering in Europe – that in the absence of printed statistical material and even astronomically determined points, in Asia it was necessary 'to study everything and to study

broadly'. Snesarev's passions in this field were also aired in public as well as in private. As a member of the prestigious government-backed Society of *Vostokovedenie*, Snesarev helped set up in March 1905 a special commission for the study of Afghanistan and India, which examined such questions as Afghanistan as a potential theatre of Russian military operations and British policy towards Afghanistan. Three years later the Commission would

Figure 7.1: A. E. Snesarev

Source:V. V. Balabushevich & Grigory C. Kotovsky (eds), *Andrei Evgen'evich Snesarev. Zhizn' i nauchnaia deiatel'nost*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo "NAUKA" Glavnaia Redaktsiia Vostochnoi Literatury, 1977. Frontispiece.

produce a voluminous bibliography of Afghanistan, edited by Snesarev himself, and listing around 1,500 works on that country in both Russian and foreign languages. In 1905 however the programme of change Snesarev advocated privately to the General Staff included making the military agent in London a General Staff officer acquainted with Central Asia; establishing a programme of intelligence training and a stricter allocation of intelligence tasks in Turkestan; and having a network of trained and experienced agents living permanently in the population centres of neighbouring states.[98]

Snesarev's criticisms represented a growing general concern at the time, and over the course of the next few years the General Staff itself undertook renewed efforts to improve its knowledge vis-à-vis India and Afghanistan. In September 1905, just a month after Snesarev's report, Palitsyn wrote to Major-General K. I. Vogak, the military agent in London, reprimanding him for concentrating primarily on political events in the British capital to the detriment of military intelligence. Palitsyn reminded Vogak that the primary task of the military agent in London was to assess the military capability of Britain at home and in its colonies, 'particularly in the presently-important Central Asian theatre'.[99] On the 24th September 1907 Palitsyn also began a long correspondence with the Russian Foreign Ministry, requesting that the Russian linguist and ethnographer M. S. Andreev, only recently returned from a trip to India via the Karakorum Pass, be permitted to return to India to serve on a fixed post at the Russian consulate in Bombay, with that posting to serve as a cover for military intelligence activity. Andreev's academic skill at local languages had already, Palitsyn pointed out, brought great results when applied to gathering military and political intelligence, and a permanent field posting would grant Russian military intelligence in India the firm foundation that it had so far lacked. The Foreign Ministry stonewalled over granting Andreev an official posting, fearful of any repercussions were Andreev later uncovered in light of the recently signed Anglo-Russian agreement. Andreev nevertheless returned to India in 1908 on the pay of the Russian War Ministry and remained there covertly gathering military and political intelligence on the country in an unofficial capacity right through to 1914.[100]

Snesarev's report and administrative efforts at the central level over the longer term helped provoke a more general flowering of Russian military intelligence on India and Afghanistan before 1914. In 1908, Captain Skurat, who since 1905 had occupied the post of consular convoy agent in the Persian town of Khorassan, and who was charged with gathering intelligence on the surrounding region, including Afghanistan, had his post upgraded to that of military attaché with increased financial support.[101] In October 1910 War Minister Sukhomlinov also successfully petitioned that the Russian military agent in London, by then Lt.-General N. S. Ermolov, be permitted to visit India the following year for the gathering of information on the state of the country and the condition of the Anglo-Indian army. The open nature of this trip meant that the British authorities in India were

able to dictate Ermolov's movements and meetings, but he was nonetheless able to gain valuable information, and copies of his report were passed on to the Tsar, the Foreign Ministry and the Turkestan military district.[102]

In March 1907 the Turkestan military district staff by way of an experiment also began attempting to send personnel into Afghanistan on a regular basis. The first individual selected for such a role, Second Lieutenant Bekimov, spent 15 days in Afghanistan and returned with a verbose and incomplete report. However the very fact that he was able to penetrate Afghanistan at all was treated as an encouraging success.[103] In 1907 two more non-Russian officers, Captain Mulkhanov and Second Lieutenant Chanyshev travelled to Bukhara to investigate the possibility of setting up a formal intelligence post close to the Afghan border.[104] At the beginning of 1908 the Turkestan military district formally established a new set of intelligence posts along the Afghan border, and at the start of 1910 this intelligence network brought significant results when detailed plans were obtained of the northern Afghan fortress of Deidadi.[105] In 1909 meanwhile the staff of the Turkestan military district had come to the conclusion from its previous experiments that the carrying out of deep intelligence in Afghanistan could only be conducted by individuals possessing an excellent knowledge of the native languages and customs and able themselves to pass for natives. Such an assessment ruled out the use of Russian officers. Officers of the 'native type' were most suitable, and to this end there was again selected a Tatar officer, Lieutenant Chanyshev of the 1st Turkestan rifle regiment. Chanyshev was dispatched under the cover of being a pilgrim to Mecca for a four-month reconnaissance, at a cost to the state of 2,500–3,000 roubles. In this role Chanyshev went on to visit both Turkey and Afghanistan in 1910, providing valuable information on the town of Maimana in northern Afghanistan in particular. He noted that the modernized Afghan army still lagged far behind European standards, but that in the event of an invasion the Afghans would destroy all wells in an invaders' path, attack his rear, engage in night attacks, and generally 'trouble him all the time'.[106]

The consequence of all this fresh activity after 1906, both at the military district and higher diplomatic level, was the production of large and regularly issued volumes of political and military intelligence on Afghanistan and India, the quantity, quality and regularity of which far surpassed anything that the Russian General Staff had managed to achieve in the nineteenth century. The actual content of these reports meanwhile testified to heightened military readiness in Afghanistan, as the new Amir Habibullah enlisted German craftsmen to serve in his arms factories, Turkish officers to help train his troops, and set about acquiring the latest magazine rifles and the construction of improved fortifications. At one point the sheer quantity of new weapons flooding the country led one deputation of tribal elders to urge the Amir to immediately declare a *jihad*.[107]

Increasing Russian pessimism regarding the viability of rapid military operations in Afghanistan was meanwhile evident from the very start of the

twentieth century. In 1902 it was recognized that the current war plan of employing the Turkestan forces alongside reinforcements comprising two corps from the Caucasus and one mixed corps from the Moscow and Kazan military districts created an expeditionary corps too weak to reach the Indus. Consequently the main object of any conflict would be to occupy Afghan Turkestan and then develop communication routes, a task which the commander of the Turkestan military district in 1903 correctly identified as an affair not of weeks or months but 'of no less than several years'. The General Staff in St. Petersburg fully concurred with this assessment, reflecting the fact that nineteenth century dreams of a full-scale invasion of India had by now been completely discarded.[108] This new level of caution was also clearly apparent from the 1908 study of General Staff Captain A. I. Andogskii on 'Afghanistan as a region for offensive operations by the Russian army'. Andogskii emphasized in this short study the difficult mountainous terrain of the country, the problems of supply, and the role that both the Afghan regular army and local militias would play in hindering Russian operations. In conclusion he posited that the Russian army would never be able to pass through Afghanistan at a single stroke. Successive operations would be necessary, with an initial campaign devoted purely to securing the line Mazar-i-Sharif, Herat and Faizabad and then constructing rail links; a whole subsequent campaign to then secure the southern line Kabul-Gazni-Kandahar; and only then the consideration of a final campaign to invade British territory. Such a scheme suggested an overall war plan encompassing numerous operational pauses to rest and regroup. Andogskii in short concluded that contemporary Afghanistan presented numerous military difficulties and had become a true 'buffer' state in exactly the way that England desired. Snesarev, who shared many, though not all, of Andogskii's views on the difficulty of such an operation, reviewed this work extremely positively in the pages of the official War Ministry journal *Russkii Invalid*.[109] This new pessimism remained the predominant strategic trend right through to 1914; in 1912 the Russian General Staff set the final goal of any campaign against an Anglo-Afghan coalition as merely the occupation of Kabul itself rather than further operations towards British India.[110]

Continued concern regarding the internal situation both in Turkestan and on the Russo-Afghan border nonetheless prompted further efforts to increase the efficiency of the forces disposed of in the Turkestan military district, efforts that continued right up to the eve of the First World War. Here again the Russo-Japanese war acted as the incentive in this area, the Anglo-Japanese alliance creating, as Obruchev had foreseen, a unified security threat to Russia's land frontiers east of the Caspian. Heightened Anglo-Afghan tensions had coincided with the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese war and led to Habibullah taking measures to increase the size and military capacity of his forces. It was initially unclear to Russian intelligence against whom these measures were immediately directed, while it was also simultaneously evident that the English strove in every way to aid their

Japanese ally by applying pressure on Russian Central Asia. Among British demands to the Afghan Amir was a repositioning of the Durand line (the territorial border between India and Afghanistan) and the deployment of Anglo-Indian forces to northern Afghanistan, around Balkh and Mazar-i-Sharif. As one direct consequence, in 1904–05 Russia's Turkestan battalions remained locked in Central Asia, unable to be redeployed to the Far East. The Asiatic Department of the General Staff suspected the Anglo-Indian army of also intending to penetrate Tibet and Western China, suspicions apparently confirmed by Younghusband's occupation of Lhasa, the Tibetan capital, on the 4th August 1904.[111] In response to heightened tensions in the region the Turkestan forces during the course of the war with Japan were boosted by the addition of artillery elements despatched from Moscow and by the employment of troops due for demobilization whose discharge was delayed.[112] In June 1905 the Russian Foreign Ministry insisted on the need to increase the size of Russian forces in Central Asia in order to have there 'an army completely organized in a military regard . . . [ready to] rebuff the English'.[113] On the 18th July 1905 General Palitsyn presented a project to the State Defence Council to reinforce the military forces in Turkestan in readiness for a rapid strike on Herat. Part of the incentive for the plan undoubtedly came from a certain Colonel Polovtsov, who had just returned from India and bore witness to the urgent reforms within the Anglo-Indian army being conducted there under Kitchener.[114] At the start of 1906 Palitsyn pointed to what he regarded as a series of menacing new factors – recently concluded Anglo-Japanese, Anglo-Afghan and Sino-Japanese treaties, and intelligence reports pointing to engineering work being conducted around Herat and the Hindu Kush passes– as evidence of the need to undertake corresponding countermeasures in the region. In this he gained the support of Foreign Minister Lamsdorf, who urged a strengthened defence in Central Asia 'as soon as possible, remembering the awful consequences of our unpreparedness in the Far East'.[115] Rediger, the newly appointed War Minister, disapproved of the plan, feeling that it would merely alert the English to reinforce Herat. He was overruled in the Council, but used his financial powers as War Minister to delay the fulfilment of Palitsyn's project.[116]

The question of improving the forces in Turkestan in a technical regard continued to occupy the General Staff following Rediger's departure however. In 1909 the head of the Turkestan military district informed War Minister Sukhomlinov that, on the basis of a war game run the previous winter by Mishchenko, the railroad forces should be retained in Turkestan in order to secure a reasonable deployment time in the event of an advance on Herat.[117] In August 1910 in response to injunctions from the Main Directorate of the General Staff on increasing the military capability of the Turkestan army, plans were outlined for building a railroad to Termez and unifying the Tashkent line through Vernyi and Semipalatinsk with the Trans-Siberian line. Among the technical recommendations in the report was the distribution to the forces in the district of light automobile companies, dirigi-

bles and fixed balloons in order to maintain communications and conduct reconnaissance along the strategic Kabul-Kandahar line of advance.[118] Among the other options and requirements under discussion at the time was the need for bridging material at Termez in order to be able to rapidly span and cross the Amu-Darya into Afghanistan in the event of mobilization. To meet this need there was raised the possibility of gaining this bridging material from the old Novogeorgievsk fort in the Warsaw military district, where it was laid aside for spanning the Danube. Thus this appears to form another striking example of a case where the stripping back of defences in the West directly or indirectly facilitated the reinforcement of Russia's southern and eastern borders. Another recommendation that was actually followed through in 1913 was the reallocation of artillery resources in the district. Light field guns were reduced from 104 tubes to 72, while mountain guns were increased from 24 to 72 pieces and six new mortar batteries were added. The latter were regarded as particularly important assets since, in the event of a march into Afghanistan, the Turkestan army would encounter clay fortifications, against which the direct fire of field guns was proven to be highly ineffective.[119]

One witness to these increasing efforts at professionalization within the Turkestan forces was the future Chief of the Soviet General staff, Boris Shaposhnikov. On his departure from his first military home, the 1st Turkestan rifle battalion, for the Nicholas Staff Academy in 1907, Shaposhnikov had been only the third officer in the whole history of his unit since its formation in 1867 to apply for this distinction – the first having been Kuropatkin in 1871. The unit he left held staff officers in low esteem and did little in the way of effective peacetime military training beyond diligent rifle practice and long and rapid route marches – a tradition of the Turkestan rifle units. Yet on his return in 1910 Shaposhnikov noted an entirely different military atmosphere on this southern section of Russia's Asiatic frontier. The 'old Turkestan atmosphere' in the life of the regiment had vanished, and there was now nothing to distinguish it from an ordinary infantry unit, while the new Governor-General, Samsonov, was conducting war game manoeuvres between Russian and 'Afghan' forces with a view to practical training for war.[120] Samsonov himself feared an independent attack from Afghanistan at this time, in part due to the Amir Habibullah's continuing distaste for the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, and partly also due to the spreading tide of Pan-Islamic propaganda in Asia in general.[121]

In general, relations between Russia and Afghanistan after 1907 worsened dramatically. In 1908–09 around 10,000 nomads of the Jamshanid tribe of northern Afghanistan had fled to find refuge from the Amir in Russian Trans-Caspia, from where they had formed raiding parties that ravaged Afghan settlements across the border. The Turkestan authorities had been forced to restrain the actions of these groups and also to place the Jamshanids' tribal leaders, who were plotting to participate in a general revolt in northern Afghanistan in 1909, under close observation. In addition

to these concerns, demarcation of the joint Russo-Afghan border remained an ongoing source of contention due to the decay of boundary markers and the complexity of the local terrain.[122] These sharpening regional tensions were dryly reflected in a summary by a Russian officer writing in 1913, reviewing three-and a half centuries of Russian expansion across the steppe. Examining the condition of Turkestan's neighbours, he outlined a picture where 'normal' relations were still far from being obtained. Kashgaria remained disturbed, England remained a 'sabre-rattling rival' in India despite the alliance against Germany and, most of all, Afghanistan remained a 'nest of various harmful for us and alarmist movements' – a centre of Muslim fanaticism, and more recently 'a shelter for German military instructors from the Turkish army, dreaming of turning Afghanistan into a new Japan for [Russia] with lightning – fast military progress'. All these trends, the writer stated, had compelled the transformation of Russian Turkestan into a 'first-class' military front, and the army there had been reformed in line with the general changes brought through in the wake of the Russo-Japanese War.[123] Until the very eve of the First World War therefore the Russian forces in Turkestan, as elsewhere in Asia, continued to be maintained and even improved in both quantity, quality and efficiency in response to a strategic situation that was perceived in the eyes of many in the General Staff to be increasingly dangerous. It was also altogether characteristic of these growing local tensions that, when Russian forces in Turkestan *were* finally mobilized in August 1914 for an entirely different conflict, the Afghan authorities across the border initially suspected the Russians of preparing to launch an attack against them.[124]

8 The Last Days of the Asiatic Department

> When in the last war we proved to have a serious shortage of interpreters and appeared very ignorant regarding the countries of the Far East, the press raged and fulminated on this point. Such a phenomenon is repeated periodically . . . [However] a government or ministry will always react weakly regarding affairs towards which society and the press itself is indifferent, and while they are guilty for certain oversights in the East, guilt also appertains to a certain, even to a large degree, to the indifference of [Russian] society . . .
>
> Colonel A. E. Snesarev, 1908[1]

By the end of the Tsarist period, the study of the East by the Russian military had passed through a distinctive period of evolution, in which Tsarist officers and administrators strove to categorize and scientifically encompass an area stretching from the Black Sea to the Pacific. In strategic terms this period embraced a natural overarching strategic trend, from the initial military and political expansion of Russia in Asia, to consolidation and reinforcement, to increasing worries over the defence of these attained goals by the eve of the First World War. Across this period, in regard to what one may term the development of eastern studies within the Russian military, it is probably easiest to see the evolution of this branch of Russian military art in three distinct generational stages, each stage being characterized by the contribution of certain outstanding individuals.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, under the sponsorship of Nicholas I, who was far from the unimaginative pedant of popular myth, the Russian military, and its General Staff structure in particular, began to come to terms with the difficult task of conquering and administering the Caucasus and assessing Russia's expanding sphere of influence in the Near East and Central Asia. This period was marked by the creation of essential institutional structures such as the Asiatic Department of the Foreign Ministry and the Corps of Military Topographers, and also by the contribution of outstanding individuals such as I. F. Blaramberg, D. A. Miliutin, P. D. Kiselev and A. I. Maksheev. The contributions of these men, in particular the formation in the 1840s by D. A. Miliutin of the discipline of

'military statistics', were to have a great influence on subsequent generations of Russian military explorers and geographers in Asia. Of this generation, the one individual wielding the single greatest long-term influence was undoubtedly Miliutin himself, through his membership of the Imperial Geographical Society, his service as Chief of Staff in the Caucasus, and his later benign patronage as War Minister during the period of major Russian expansion in Central Asia. Given this background, it is entirely understandable that, upon his retirement as War Minister, Miliutin was at one point briefly considered for the role of Viceroy of the Caucasus.

In the aftermath of the Crimean War of 1853–56, Russian military *vostokovedenie* entered its second and most active stage, with dramatic physical expansion in Central Asia and the Far East being accompanied and facilitated by the creation for the first time of a centralized military institutional structure for the study and assimilation of these areas, the Asiatic Department of the General Staff. This department was charged with the defence, administration and strategic coordination of Russia's Asiatic military districts. Its specialized status was reflected in the fact that the heads of this department after 1886 had to be men having had direct service in one of the Asiatic military districts.[2] Following service in this post it also became customary for former departmental heads to serve as Governor-Generals in one of the Asiatic districts, further prolonging the influence of these men in this sphere. Thus Protsenko on his first retirement from the post in 1878 governed in both the Semipalatinsk and Turgai *oblasts*, while G. I. Ivanin upon leaving the Asiatic Department in 1887 became military governor in the Turkestan province of Semirech'e. For his own part, D. V. Putiata after leaving the department in 1902 became military governor of the Amur *oblast* and Ataman (military commander) of the Amur Cossack forces. In terms of specialized personnel in the field, this period was marked by a dazzling array of talent, particularly in Central Asia – the names of N. M. Przheval'skii, P. K. Kozlov and M. V. Pevtsov being linked even today with scientific achievements of the highest calibre. This period was also marked by repeated attempts to form a sufficiently large number of language schools producing linguistically trained officers to serve in the Asiatic military districts, via institutions such as the Academic Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Tashkent officers' school.

By the turn of the century, as eastern studies within the Russian army entered its third and most mature phase, the extent to which the military had become an accepted facet of the Russian scientific enterprise in the study of the East was reflected by the presence of military men on the governing boards and membership lists of the most prominent Orientalist organizations of the day. Both Chief of the General Staff F. F. Palitsyn and War Minister A. N. Kuropatkin were members of the Society for *Vostokovedenie* (from 1910 the 'Imperial' Society for *Vostokovedenie-Imperatorskoe Obshchestvo Vostokovedeniia*), created on private initiative but with the support of Minister of Finance Sergei Witte in 1900. The goals of this

society were 'to spread among eastern peoples an exact and correct knowledge of Russia, and also to acquaint Russian society with the material needs and spiritual life of the East'.[3] The chairman of the scientific section of the society was Professor A. M. Pozdneev, director of the Eastern Institute in Vladivostok, and among the society's most active members was Colonel A. E. Snesarev. The emphasis of the society lay in the practical study of the East with a view to facilitating Imperial Russia's military-political missions in that sphere of the world. In 1911 for example the Interior Ministry organized courses of Islamic study through the society, the goal being to produce personnel capable of serving in a bureaucratic regard among the Empire's Muslim population.

Another society raised at the time and notable for its emphasis on the 'practical' study of the East was the Russian Committee for Studying Central and Eastern Asia, created in connection with discussions held at the International Congress of Orientalists in Rome (1899) and Hamburg (1902). In 1903 the Head of the Asiatic Department of the General Staff, F. V. Vasil'ev, was appointed by Kuropatkin the War Ministry's representative to this academic body, again reflecting the extent of the War Ministry's involvement in this sphere by the turn of the century.[4]

One final indication of the closeness of the military's involvement with the scientific community by the turn of the century was the degree to which events and activities in one field could carry professional consequences in the other. Such trends were already becoming apparent earlier on, during the second phase of the Russian army's evolution in the field of eastern studies. M. I. Veniukov, the Russian officer most famous for his explorations of the Far East, served in the Asiatic Department of the General Staff in the early 1870s. There his work consisted of studying Khorassan, Afghan Turkestan, and India and in delivering articles on recent events in Asia to the official War Ministry journal, the *Russkii Invalid*. However he also suffered strained relations with his direct superior, A. P. Protsenko, who, according to Veniukov, feared that the latter would replace him as head of the department or even worse become a governor-general in one of the Asiatic military districts before Protsenko did. Protsenko was one of the General Staff's most experienced bureaucrats in Asian affairs, having served on the 1866 Steppe Commission that created the Turkestan military district before going on to become the only individual to serve twice as head of the Asiatic Department of the General Staff. However he also jealousy guarded his pre-eminence in this field. Kuropatkin, who knew him and replaced him at the Asiatic Department in 1878, admitted that Protsenko knew Asia and was an intelligent bureaucrat, but also characterized him as 'power-hungry and hot-blooded'.[5] It was these characteristics that Veniukov also experienced. As a result of their disagreements, Veniukov's chief began a whispering campaign against him, alleging among other things that he worked for the Cherniaev newspaper *Russkii Mir*, a paper that took a strong anti-Miliutin line. However, Veniukov did not see this rivalry as the crucial

factor that effectively destroyed his career and that would lead to his departure for Paris in 1877 to become a writer for the émigré press. The key turning point in Veniukov's account was the hostility he encountered in the society of which he was also contemporaneously a member, that is to say the Russian Imperial Geographical Society. According to Veniukov, during his period as secretary of that society, a dispute with leading figures within that organization, including Semenov Tian-Shanskii, led to the creation of a fatal degree of ill-will against him. As a consequence the Chief of the Main Staff, General Obruchev, informed Veniukov that his 'behaviour' in the Geographical Society had had a very unfavourable effect on his future fate, i.e. his future opportunities of military promotion. In short, links between the General Staff and the scientific community were so close by the second half of the nineteenth century that disagreements in one sphere could affect the other, and actually have a detrimental effect upon one's whole career.[6]

The strain of administering this vast territory in this second period also took its toll on the personnel of the General Staff's Asiatic Department more generally however. Writing in 1895, Protsenko, again serving as head of department, noted that recent political complications – the Pamirs question and, in particular, Sino-Japanese relations – had significantly increased the internal workload, and petitioned for an increase in personnel. Correspondence on purely military matters, he noted, comprised barely half the total correspondence running through the department, compared to extensive communication on political, financial and legal matters relating to local administration in the military districts. As a consequence the personnel of the Asiatic Department of that time – one desk head and two assistants – had laid upon each of them an extremely heavy and diverse workload, frequently requiring the men to work late into the evening and during their holidays.[7] On one staff officer alone, Protsenko recorded, there had recently been laid responsibility for all the correspondence regarding the Turkestan and Omsk military districts, all matters of a political and financial character related to the Afghan and Chinese frontiers, and all the paperwork concerning relations with the khanates of Khiva and Bukhara. On another unnamed officer there was laid the burden of all correspondence regarding the Priamur and Irkutsk military districts, military reinforcement of the Far East, and also all reports on the administration of forces of the Trans-Caspian military district, including that district's relations to Persia. On this latter luckless individual there had also been laid, through force of necessity, correspondence regarding the administration of the Kars and Dagestan military districts and the mountaineer population of the North Caucasus – another distinct and entirely discrete set of political and administrative responsibilities. Taking into account the calculation that the sheer physical volume of correspondence passing through the Asiatic Department of the General Staff in 1886 (when it was last reformed) amounted to 2240 pages, and in 1895 to 4097, and it is easy to see why Protsenko felt his men were becoming overburdened.[8]

It was this sense of drift and imperial overstretch which was to become the dominant concern during the final period of Tsarist military involvement in Asia between 1895 and 1917, and which was to be the predominant theme and topic of criticism for the third generation of military orientalists. Perhaps the most vocal and talented member of this generation would be A. E. Snesarev. The main complaint of this third generation was that the 'practical' study of the East had become neglected amidst day-to-day bureaucracy, while Russian society as a whole had become alienated from Russia's imperial mission in the East. Many among this group hoped that defeat in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05 would serve as a final wake-up call, allowing both radical military reform of the War Ministry and a revival in the study of eastern languages and cultures. These hopes remained only half-fulfilled however, and this sense of imperial crisis was to continue till the downfall of the Tsarist empire, its implications being taken up, confronted and transformed by its Soviet successor.

The most obvious open expression of this phenomenon, particularly in the aftermath of the Russo-Japanese War, was the debate conducted both in public and private on the language training of Russian soldiers and other officials serving in Asiatic countries. A prominent voice in this debate was that of the young orientalist V. V. Bartol'd, who in 1905 began to deliver for the first time a series of lectures in a groundbreaking area of historiographical research, 'The History of Asian studies in Europe and Russia' (*Istoriia izucheniia Vostoka v Evrope i Rossii*). These lectures amounted to a scathing criticism of the level of Russian understanding and knowledge of the East, and although the role of the Tsarist military was not particularly highlighted, it also included specific criticisms of their role and aptitude in this area. Among the criticisms Bartol'd levelled both here and elsewhere was the accusation that only a handful of officers in Tsarist Central Asia were acquainted with the local languages, and that the War Ministry was dilatory in the publication of educational material on eastern countries. Enthusiasm for studying the region in a scientific regard had not outlasted the initial period of military expansion there, and 'scientific tasks set nearly half a century ago remain until now unfulfilled'.[9] Of Russian *vostokovedenie* in general Bartol'd famously concluded that Russian science had preferred to utilize foreign (European) texts rather than the rich resources directly at its disposal both within the Empire and along its borders. This charge was a particularly sensitive one to make of course. The whole course of the development of eastern studies in Russia, both military and civilian, had been marked since the late 1840s by a passionate drive to make this a 'Russian' science and banish the ghosts of the German and French scholastic influences that served as midwives at its birth. As early as 1838, driven by a desire to establish Russia's uniqueness and cultural distinctiveness (*samobytnost*), the leading Russian orientalist V. V. Grigor'ev had written that: 'The best means to counteract the influence of the west is to rely on the study of the east'.[10]

This process involved both great verbal rhetoric on the part of many of Russia's orientalists and the actual physical removal of reminders of this inheritance, such as the purge of Germanically-named scholars from the governing board of the Imperial Geographical Society in the 1850s. These men had come to be regarded by Semenov Tian-Shanskii, among others, as a 'collection of German teachers, who kept the Society in its outgrown, and in spirit foreign, swaddling clothes'.[11] Bartol'd was now in 1905 saying in effect that Russia had scorned its unique cultural inheritance and missed the opportunity which that gave to surpass others in the field of oriental studies – Russia had once again proven itself 'backward' in comparison to, or at least no better than, Europe. In this field, as in so many others, Russian ideologues had sought a means to surpass the West. Bartol'd's criticism was now implying that they had failed, and that the Russian army, as part of this system, shared in that failure.

In the Soviet period Bartol'd was to posthumously become the 'grand old man' of Russian Central Asian studies and this 1905 lecture series later became the touchstone of both Russian and Western assessments of the development of Russian *vostokovedenie*.[12] In the process however Bartol'd's arguments perhaps inevitably became a matter of faith and comparatively few set this lecture series within the context of its time. Yet in many ways Bartol'd's diatribe was a classic product of a fierce debate occurring within Russian military and academic circles at the time in the wake of the Russo-Japanese War. Moreover, Bartol'd was scarcely an impartial, Olympian academic observer in this debate. As a member of both the Imperial Society of *Vostokovedenie* and the Russian Committee for Studying Central and Eastern Asia, he had had opportunity to become acquainted at first hand with the representatives of the military, foreign policy and financial institutions of the Russian state engaged in study of the East. His editorship of the first society's journal, *The World of Islam* (*Mir Islama*), ended dramatically in a bitter spat with the head of the Russian Interior Ministry over the high scholastic tone he gave that publication, an argument violent enough to lead to his removal and replacement by D. M. Pozdneev. Pozdneev, a former head of the Eastern Institute in Vladivostok, rapidly moved the subject matter of the journal following Bartol'd's departure from academic research to practical, political goals, with the publication of articles on issues that were at the time of most direct concern to the Russian War, Foreign and Finance Ministries. Pan-Islam, Pan-Turkism and the scholastic training of young Muslims in the Russian Empire thereafter dominated the journal's pages.[13] Bartol'd's lecture series therefore probably reflected in part the bitterness of an earnest, highly gifted young man towards the Russian governmental establishment. More than this however, his comments reflected a general and acute sense of malaise and unease at the time among the Russian intellectual establishment, shocked into retrospective analysis by the impact of military defeat in the Far East. Criticisms similar to Bartol'd's flourished in the contemporary press and, in one prominent instance, provoked the irritated response of the Asiatic Department of the General Staff itself.

Fairly representative in this regard was an article in *The Herald of Asia* (*Vestnik Azii*), the journal of the Society of Russian Orientalists based in Kharbin, which was published in June 1910. Significantly, the editor of this journal, I. A. Dobrolovskii, had himself served as a translator for the Russian army in Manchuria during the war.[14] Taking as his starting point the need to have large numbers of Chinese and Japanese interpreters which had been highlighted by the Russo-Japanese War, and also the contemporaneous debate being conducted in the *Turkestanskii Vedomosti* on language training, this article's unidentified author went on to propose a wide ranging programme of reforms. These included the setting up of compulsory programmes of language training for all Russian officials serving in the Asiatic military districts, and for those serving in border districts, a compulsory requirement to know the language of the neighbouring state. In addition the author saw a need to require a basic knowledge of Muslim and customary law; and for those persons working in eastern states, knowledge of the history, geography, and the military and political order of the state they served in. Workers in this field should be given one year to become acquainted with their area of service and a second year to brush up both their grasp of the literary and local languages; the minimum knowledge required being an ability to check translations. Testing commissions should be set up to regulate both entrants into the Russian service in these areas and the line of promotion. Only such measures, in the author's opinion, would effectively diffuse a working knowledge of eastern languages among Russia's administrative personnel.[15]

The debate on language training raged at somewhere near its fiercest, as has already been implied, in the Turkestan military district, in part as a natural consequence of efforts sponsored by the local administration itself to investigate the issue. A particular source of acrimony here was the work of one Colonel Iagello, head of the Tashkent officers' school and author of a Persian-Arabic-Russian dictionary.[16] In the course of a general debate over the quality of language courses run through the Tashkent school, Iagello's own qualifications and expertise came under increasing attack, both in the pages of the locally-printed *Turkestanskii Vedomosti* and in the wider military and civilian press.[17] It was the input of an orientalist to the *Novoe Vremia* (*The New Times*) in December 1910 that finally provoked the wrathful response of the Asiatic Department of the General Staff however. In a piece apocalyptically entitled 'Do we know the East?' the anonymous author launched a scathing attack on the level of Iagello's scholarship. Quoting the opinion of Fozi-Khuri, a student of the Lazarevskii Institute, that anyone wishing to learn Persian through Iagello's dictionary would only be wasting their time, the author went on to cite the opinion of F. E. Korsh, a teacher at the aforementioned institute, that the dictionary in inexperienced hands could prove 'positively harmful' in its influence. In conclusion the author wondered whether it would not be better for the War Ministry to lean on the expertise of the Russian academic community rather than

funding such efforts as Iagello's dictionary, which had become the object of such criticism.[18] Major-General Tseil', the head of the Asiatic Department of the General Staff at the time, had already become irritated by earlier criticism of the Tashkent school published in the March issue of the military journal *Razvedchik*.[19] This December article in *Novoe Vremia* evoked a detailed counter-response by an unnamed worker within the General Staff's Asiatic Department. In January 1911 this individual launched an impassioned defence of Iagello's work, bringing to the cause of the defence two very large volumes recently published in London on the organization of oriental studies in England.[20] Given that the London commission was highly complimentary on the level of oriental studies within the Russian army, the author asked, how could one explain the discrepancy between this opinion held abroad and that held at home by the Russian academic community? The author concluded, unsurprisingly, that the latter were holding unrealistically high expectations and charged the anonymous author of the article in the *Novoe Vremia* (whom the writer suspected to be 'a person well known to us', namely Professor A. Khashchab, lecturer in Arabic at St. Petersburg university) to be more exact in sourcing the criticisms he so freely quoted. Impartial observation would, over time, this officer was convinced, lead to a more moderate opinion on Colonel Iagello and his dictionary than that currently being expressed in the Russian press.[21]

These debates in the press of course both fed and fuelled a debate occurring in the General Staff itself over the system of training for officers in eastern languages in the wake of the Russo-Japanese war. On 27th October 1907 GUGSh initiated a commission to investigate the setting up of a new programme of language training in this field. After a year, in November 1908, the membership of the commission was widened and A. Z. Myshlaevskii, the Chief of the General Staff, appointed its chairman. The commission's membership comprised some of the General Staff's most distinguished personnel in the field of Asian affairs. It included A. E. Snesarev, S. V. Tseil', (the aforementioned head of the Asiatic Department at the time), and Colonel A. G. Tumanskii, a graduate of the Eastern language school of the MID and author of a major scholarly work on Islamic Baha'i sects in Central Asia. A significant part of the commission's work was to review the manner in which eastern languages were studied in other armies – A. E. Snesarev used his expertise on India for example to present a report on language studies among officers of the Anglo-Indian army.[22] Unsurprisingly the representatives of the military districts presented different preferred schemes for the future training of officers in eastern languages. The Priamur military district proposed a system of a two-year *komandirovka* of the relevant officers abroad, preceded by a brief six-month course at a special preparatory school in the military district itself. The Caucasus military district staff, daunted by the expense and risk of despatching officers abroad, sought almost the direct opposite – a two-year training course with the local staff followed by the gaining of experience in dialects by trips within the

bounds of the military district. The Turkestan district staff opted for a midway line, with a two-year course of theoretical training in winter being complemented by summer *komandirovkas* of the relevant officers to regions both in-district and abroad for four months each year.[23] In the event it was the proposals of the Priamur military district that gained approval. It was furthermore agreed that the setting up of language schools in the local military districts should be accompanied by the closing down of the language courses for officers run through the Eastern Institute and the MID which had until now proven so unsatisfactory.[24] The linguistic training schools thereafter set up in the Priamur, Turkestan and Caucasus military districts were to take in students on the basis of exams in Russian, the French or English languages, geography, the modern history of the relevant Asiatic states, and topography. Emphasis was placed, at the end of completing their training abroad, on officers' ability to translate from books and papers on primarily military themes.[25] Tiflis and Tashkent were to enrol five officers annually and Vladivostok twelve, reflecting the General Staff's strategic priorities at this time on the Asiatic frontier. Officer graduates would gain the rank of interpreter with the right to increased pay conditional upon service in the eastern military districts. Finally the whole programme, developed by the commission over the course of 1910 and introduced by statute on 21st July 1911, was to come under review again after two years in order to judge what progress had been made on the basis of the experience of the 'first wave' of graduates. Accordingly, in 1913, the Asiatic military districts began to report back on what effect this new system of training had had.

Feedback from the military districts in 1913 about the new courses, which, after a relatively short period of theoretical training involved such a long period of essentially independent practical study abroad, was generally highly positive, but carried an undercurrent of recognition that still more needed to be done. The Chief of Staff of the Priamur military district noted a need to expand the qualifications for entry to the district language schools, in order to ensure that matriculating students had a full grasp of the geography and history of neighbouring Asiatic states. He also advocated increasing the period of officers' *komandirovka* abroad from two to three years to help perfect their ability to read handwritten documents, a notable shortcoming in the present batch of graduates.[26] The need to introduce the teaching of Chinese into the school of the Tashkent military district, with the corresponding establishment of a fixed teaching post in this discipline at that district school was also highlighted. The Main Staff acknowledged these reservations, being advised by experts that the reading and writing of the Chinese and Japanese languages presented special difficulties compared to Near Eastern dialects. In November 1913 it was also agreed to set about the 'second part' of the task facing the Russian General Staff in this sphere, namely the need to produce not just competent linguists (which could be broadly satisfied by the 1911 statute) but to have at the Staff's disposal 'Officer-*Vostochniks*' – men acquainted not just with the languages, but with

the history, geography, religion, and political position of Asiatic states, upon whom could be laid 'more difficult tasks according to their specialties'. For this, three alternatives of further training for the best graduates of the present system were proposed. The most outstanding officer-translators should either undergo supplementary courses through the Eastern Institute and the Academic Department of the MID, or be enrolled in the Eastern Practical Academy in St. Petersburg, or be sent abroad for a further two years. S. V. Tseil', still head of the Asiatic Department at the time, asked on 12th November 1913 for a new conference to be held to discuss this issue.[27] The replacement of Tseil' by Manakin as head of the Asiatic Department of the General Staff in December 1913 delayed the formation of this commission, and in June 1914 GUGSh raised objections to some of the proposed changes to the existing statute presented by the Asiatic Department, fearing that some of their implications would attract adverse attention from the State Duma. Finally of course, the outbreak of the First World War permanently suspended any further discussion of the question.[28] With the declaration of mobilization in Russia the foreign *komandirovka* of officers from the district schools was ended, the schools themselves were closed down, and officers were recalled to their respective units.[29] Thus in language training, as in so much else, the General Staff found its attempts to be militarily better prepared for managing its numerous responsibilities on the Eurasian continent cruelly interrupted by its oldest and greatest nightmare, the eruption of hostilities on the western frontier.

The question of language training for officers in the Asiatic military districts raised its head once more during the actual course of the war itself, but again outside events – revolution and civil war – were destined to interrupt any proposed resolution. On the 14th July 1917 the Chief of Staff of the Siberian military district received a telegram from OGENKVAR (the Quartermaster-General Section of GUGSh responsible for intelligence and counter-intelligence operations) proposing to expand and reorganize intelligence operations in the Far East and requesting local input in this process. The aim was to create a better agent network in the region 'in the event of complications in the East'. The Russian military position in the Far East in general had notably weakened during the course of the war itself as a consequence of the despatch of all railway guards on the Chinese Eastern Railway to the German front in 1915, their replacements being youths and elderly reservists armed with outdated equipment.[30] In addition Russo-Japanese diplomatic relations had notably deteriorated from their pre-war position, presaging later Japanese military intervention in Russia during the Russian civil war. The Omsk head of staff responded positively the next day, pointing to the rising level of Chinese emigration to the district-' . . . before the war it was difficult to find one or two Chinese in the town of Omsk and now they appear in the town and surrounding area in their thousands'-as one factor in making the reorganization of the local counter-intelligence arm a pressing necessity.[31] This officer concluded that: 'The contemporary political situation

and all the developments and complications of life both in our East and the neighbouring Chinese and Japanese realms urgently demands the existence of officer-*vostochniks* attached to the staffs of the Asiatic military districts, including Omsk'.[32] Given political developments in the region over the course of the following twenty-five years, this plea would prove prescient. In August 1917 OGENKVAR announced the organization of a special conference to develop and work out a plan for organizing military intelligence in the region. Intelligence representatives from the staffs of the Far Eastern military districts were duly invited to attend the conference in Petrograd that September. At this conference the representatives of the Priamur military district presented a proposed statute for 'officer-*vostochniks*' worked out by the district staff. This statute envisaged the opening of a special military section in the Eastern Institute in Vladivostok, where officers would enrol to undergo courses on the military geography, history and military organization of countries in the Far East. A five-year course was envisaged, with four years to be spent in the Institute and the fifth on a foreign *komandirovka* to a country of special study for perfection in its language. In the opinion of the district staff, such a programme would correct the shortcomings that had been observed in the pre-war training programmes and would provide the men, in the now familiar cry, regarded as essential in intelligence work; men 'versatile in understanding the whole structure of life of the enemy, his language, customs, and so on'. This was particularly important in the Far East, where 'the future for us, after the end of the war, is pregnant with events, and these far from good for us [*daleko ne v nashu pol'zu*]'.[33] The subliminal aim of this programme was also, of course, to re-forge the special relationship that had always existed between the Russian military in the Far East and the Eastern Institute in Vladivostok, a link that had been sharply broken by the language training statute of 1910–11. As the most organized presentation, the Priamur staff's proposal met general approval, aside from the inevitable disputes among the district staffs as to who should be the greatest beneficiaries of this new array of talent graduating from Vladivostok.[34] Revolution prevented the General Staff from implementing its plans however, and it was left to the Provisional Government's Soviet successor to create training programmes and dispositions appropriate to the newly emerging post-war situation in the Far East.

These intense pre-war debates on eastern language programmes, meanwhile, formed practically the last major administrative responsibility of the Asiatic Department of the General Staff. Increasingly shorn of strategic responsibilities following the reorganization of the central military administration in 1900–03 and the creation of GUGSh in 1905, the Asiatic Department spent its last remaining years overseeing the development of language programmes and the day-to-day administration of the Asiatic military districts, including most importantly the proposed overhaul of the military administration in Turkestan. Symbolic of this change was an alteration in the wording of the department's responsibilities in 1906 from

dealing simply and broadly with 'military-political questions' to 'political questions having links with administrative affairs and military-civil administration'.[35] Such an order of things took some time to settle-in December 1906 Palitsyn complained that political information regarding Persia and India was still being routinely sent to the Asiatic Department of the Main Staff, for whom it could now have only 'theoretical interest', rather than to the new formation of GUGSh.[36] Once settled however, this trend was not reversed.

At the start of 1914 the head of the Asiatic Department, M. M. Manakin, made one last, doomed plea for his department to be expanded. Pointing to the enormous bureaucratic burden being created by reviewing the legislative proposals for a new administration in Turkestan, Manakin claimed that only by chance was the Asiatic Department able to handle this task – i.e. only the fact that it presently had on its establishment exceptionally long-serving, experienced personnel enabled it to tackle the issues the new legislative proposals raised. That this happy situation arose by accident pointed to the need to expand the number of personnel permanently serving on the department. Manakin asked for two assistant desk-heads and an assistant secretary to be added to the existing establishment of one head of department, three desk-heads, one assistant desk-head and one secretary.[37] This would ease the burden of work on the department, which presently involved, among other things, the head of the department during 1913 having had to participate in no less than 20 governmental commissions and committees on Asiatic affairs.[38] A special *deloproizvodstvo* should be set up in the Asiatic Department purely for tackling the issue of the new Turkestan statute and a commission set up to oversee the implementation of the project. On the 19th June 1914 however Manakin was informed that it had been decided to set aside his proposal 'until such a time when the [military] establishment generally will be reviewed'.[39] As a result here too the plans of the General Staff's Asiatic personnel were never to reach full fruition, interrupted by the outbreak of war in 1914.

Over the course of the subsequent World War the establishment of the Asiatic Department of the General Staff itself withered on the vine as a natural consequence of the concentration of all material and human resources upon the western frontier. By 1915 four men had already left the department, leaving just two men to handle the administration and forcing the temporary head of the department at that time, Davletshin, to petition the War Ministry for replacements, one of whom came from the Foreign Ministry.[40] Question marks over the future existence of the department itself also served to heighten the difficulties the department experienced in wartime in maintaining sufficient personnel on its establishment. In 1917 the staff of the Caucasus military district offered the Asiatic Department the services of a certain Colonel Smirnov, one of its personnel, as a desk-head with the department. Smirnov possessed excellent qualifications for the role, having served in peacetime as a tutor to the young Shah of Persia and during the course of the war itself having conducted political work among the

Kurdish population as well as service in the intelligence and counter-intelligence section of the Caucasus army. Davletshin, by now full head of department, was forced to turn down the offer of his services however, 'in view of the proposed-in-the-near-future abolition of this section [i.e. the Asiatic Department] and the transfer of its affairs to the Interior Ministry'.[41] In 1918 the last head of the Asiatic Department of the Russian General Staff, Colonel Abdul Aziz Abdulich Davletshin, watched over the winding down of the department and the retirement of its personnel for family or medical reasons. The last communication passing through the department from the *Narkom* on military affairs dated from 28th September 1918.[42]

Conclusion: the Myopic Guard

The Russian General Staff and the 'Knowledge Economy' of the Twentieth Century

> Only this narrow brotherhood of General Staff officers, and perhaps a handful of engineers, knew that the whole world and Russia with it had slid without noticing into a New Age, in which everything, even the atmosphere of the planet, its oxygen supply, the rate of combustion, the very clockwork was new and strange. All Russia, from the imperial family to the revolutionaries, naïvely thought that it was still breathing the same air as before and living on the same earth – and only those few engineers and soldiers were aware of the changed zodiac.[1]
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> Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *August 1914*

The period from 1906 to 1917 marked in many ways the culmination of the strategic and doctrinal debates created by the expansion of the Russian Empire's Asian frontiers in the nineteenth century, and this was reflected in the role and position of the Asiatic Department of the General Staff. In the course of this expansion the Russian Empire continued to differ markedly from other imperial powers in several significant regards. Firstly, in that, with the exception of Sakhalin Island, this was a vast empire that was geographically contiguous with the core area; and secondly, in that the Russian administration never possessed a 'Colonial Office' in the manner of other European empires for administering their 'Asiatic' territories.[2] The Russian Empire accordingly never evolved in the manner of other empires facing modernization and the increasing politicization of its subject peoples. There was no parallel in the Russian case to the Colonial Conference of 1907 where it was resolved that Britain's self-governing colonies henceforth be labelled 'dominions' under pressure from the colonial governments themselves. Russia possessed no exact equivalent either of the British Committee of Imperial Defence, formed immediately before the First World War specifically to tackle the growing strategic burden of Britain's far-flung frontiers, though the short-lived State Defence Council of 1906–08 arguably represented a step in this direction. Instead Imperial Russia had towards the end of its existence developed distinct subsections within its main ministries for the administration of these frontiers, in the form of the Asiatic Departments of the General Staff and Foreign Ministry. The integrated nature of these

departments within their larger bureaucratic units made the conciliation of agreed strategic missions a continual headache and placed Russia in a unique strategic position by 1914. Natural conflicts of interest were liable to be aggravated and further complicated by the patrimonial nature of Russian government, in which each ministry competed for the attention of the Tsar. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, for example, there is good reason to argue that Tsarist foreign policy in the Far East was more the product of internecine bureaucratic conflict between the War, Foreign and Finance ministries than anything else. In this period calls grew in the Russian press for the creation of a ministry tasked with overseeing and ordering the economic and social life of the Russian borderlands, but these calls were destined to remain unfulfilled. One prominent consequence of this situation was, as one commentator noted, that an extremely heavy administrative burden fell upon the Asiatic Department of the Foreign Ministry, imposing a wide range of tasks for which 'the competence of this department is not always sufficient'.[3] Much the same criticism could be (and was) made of the Asiatic Department of the Russian General Staff in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Looking back on his term of office as head of the Asiatic Department in the late 1870s, Kuropatkin in his memoirs later concluded that none of his superiors– neither Miliutin, nor Chief of the Main Staff Count Geiden, nor even the latter's assistant General Meshcherinov – really 'knew' Asia. This situation in Kuropatkin's view therefore gave the head of the Asiatic Department of the General Staff 'more influence and authority in these affairs than was altogether healthy', and Kuropatkin himself relied heavily on the experience and advice of his counterpart in the Foreign Ministry, Zinov'ev, to try to ease the burden.[4]

At the same time these 'Asiatic Departments', for all their flaws, performed, at least on the surface, a panoptic surveillance function akin to that attributed by Foucalt to the modern state in general (the so-called 'panoptic guard' of Jeremy Bentham's ideal prison, a concept itself in part inspired by Bentham's own tour of the Russia of Nicholas I). The Palestinian scholar Edward Said later famously went on to apply Foucault's definition of the panoptic guard to western orientalist societies in particular.[5] Here at least the Russian General Staff's preoccupation with the gathering and assimilation of statistical information seems superficially to conform to the modern vision of the performance of Western European governments in general in regard to their colonial theatres: 'colonialism was itself a cultural project of control. Colonial knowledge both enabled conquest and was produced by it; in certain important ways, knowledge was what colonialism was all about'.[6]

This was certainly the view at the time of some Tsarist administrators, who viewed their empire in specifically comparative terms alongside the policies and methods pursued by other imperial systems. On departing for Siberia in 1819 for example, Speranskii had gone armed with the wisdom imparted by Dominique de Pradt's treatise *Des colonies*. This advised the

would-be colonial legislator to create laws appropriate to the spiritual and intellectual needs of the subject peoples, based on the historical warning of Spain's disastrous colonial policy in the Americas.[7] During his long service in the Caucasus meanwhile, General A. P. Ermolov had been equally influenced by a broad study of relevant foreign scholarship, keeping in his personal library both European translations of the Koran and works by the leading French orientalists of the day.[8] Parallels were even more tempting of course for those who actually travelled abroad. On his first visit to North Africa, made with specifically comparative intent, L. F. Kostenko, subsequently a head of the Asiatic Department of the General Staff, noted with surprise that the French government 'reiterates those mistakes practiced by us in the last and at the start of the present century' – namely the bolstering of Islam by the sponsoring of mosques and other religious institutions. This was all the more surprising since 'the French clergy is famous from time immemorial by their missionary zeal'. Russian policy he felt to be clearly superior by its evolution to its present policy of 'indifference' (*ravnodushiia i indeferentizma*) regarding Islam.[9]

Some contemporaries saw the Asiatic Department of the General Staff within this general pan-European imperial framework, as a panoptic instrument of enlightened control and governance. Visiting the department in 1882, the journalist Charles Marvin was unimpressed by the 'rabbit-warren' of rooms in the upper storeys of the War Ministry, the 'bare, cheerless walls' and the 'ordinary-looking' room that was L. N. Sobolev's office, but concluded however that:

> the world is governed by men, not by habitations. England, in all likelihood, would gladly part with the grand and imposing public office in Downing Street, if she could get in return a powerful and consistent foreign policy [*sic*], such as is pursued by the political officials in one shabby wing of the General Staff office at St. Petersburg, and supported by the military officials in the other.[10]

This myth of the omnipotence of the imperial department head, suspended above a hidden web of knowledge more relevant than material institutions, rather like the millionaire financier of Joseph Conrad's *Nostromo* – 'cobwebbed aloft by the radiation of telegraph wires'-was just that, a myth.[11] The reality reflected all the frictions and local misunderstandings one would expect from the administration of an enormous land frontier. One individual particularly disenchanted with the directions given from the centre in this period was the Chief of Staff for Western Siberia, General I. F. Babkov. Babkov's case is particularly poignant and instructive since he began his career as an element of centralist control, one of a generation of academy-trained officers who took up field commands in regions where in the past the presence of staff officers was not traditional. As a representative of the St. Petersburg centre, Babkov's early career was blighted by fractious relations

with local military officialdom. Yet long service on the frontier soon converted Babkov to the efficacy of regionalist solutions. In his memoirs, looking back over his lengthy career, he blamed the complexities of Sino-Russian relations in the 1870s upon the fact that:

> we had at that time an excessively centralized [authority], as in St. Petersburg was concentrated even the smallest springs of the state mechanism. Plans were not developed in places where they would be put into action, but in St. Petersburg chancelleries and special commissions.[12]

In this unmistakable attack upon his superiors at the Asiatic Department of the General Staff, Babkov quoted in his support the view of Prince Dondukov-Korsakov, governor-general of the Caucasus. The governor-general also expressed the opinion that the history of the war against Shamil proved that when local affairs were left in the hands of local men, matters prospered, while directives and the intervention of representatives from the centre invariably led to disaster. The lessons for Babkov were clear that given 'the rapidly changing events of a political character' characteristic of Asiatic states, a devolution of political and administrative responsibilities on Russia's Asian borderlands was a necessity.

Such tensions expressed by those involved at the very heart of the machine serve to indicate that the Asiatic Department of the General Staff was very far from the smoothly functioning and omnipotent state mechanism seen by outsiders like Charles Marvin. By the end of the period under study, calls were growing, as we have seen, for the abolition of the Asiatic Department altogether. One prominent voice in these debates was that of Vasilii Fedorovich Novitskii (1869–1929).[13] A graduate of the Staff Academy (class of 1892–5), Novitskii's military service led him to become acquainted at first hand with practically all of Russia's Asian concerns. He began his career as commander of a Turkestan rifle battalion, visited British India for eight months study in 1898, and participated in the 1900 intervention in China before, after a short-term in the Main Staff, joining the 2nd Manchurian Army in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05. Post-war service then saw him conduct military-scientific expeditions in both Mongolia and Manchuria, as well as serve in the Third Quartermaster-General section of GUGSh, while his pre-war journeys in the Bukharan and Pamir mountain regions facilitated his 1910 study of the Afghan theatre of military operations.[14] Yet as a veteran of the Russo-Japanese War and a prominent contributor to the military press of his day, including one journal quickly banned for its critical views, Novitskii was not merely a typical product of Russia's Asian military districts, but also part of a new generation of 'Young Turks' in the General Staff. These men advocated dramatic military and economic reform in the years leading up to the First World War. Like so many others in this category, he would later join the Soviet side in the Russian Civil War and go on to serve in the Red Army Staff Academy of

the 1920s. He likewise shared with many of his generation an impatience regarding the many ancillary functions that had been laid upon the Russian War Ministry as a consequence of the Miliutin reforms of the 1860s, and this became evident in one prominent work of 1909 advocating fundamental military reform. Supporting the return of GUGSh to the War Ministry, Novitskii in this work also advocated the removal of all those administrative accessories that detracted from the General Staff's ability to plan for war itself. These included the Cossack administration, which was largely involved in land and economic questions, and the Topographical Department. Undoubtedly one of his most dramatic proposals however was the removal of Central Asia from being the responsibility of the General Staff's Asiatic Department, since he felt that the head and bureaucrats of that section were insufficiently qualified to handle the complex legal, financial and economic questions involved in governing that region.[15] Since this area formed one of the last major areas of responsibility for the General Staff's Asiatic Department, Novitskii's proposals in practice implied the abolition of that department. His views suggest in general that for many younger officers engaged in practical operational work on the Asiatic frontier, this Miliutin-era institution was simply no longer viewed as relevant or meaningful in the twentieth century. Moreover, views such as Novitskii's during this later period enjoyed a degree of high-level support. As early as 1906 War Minister Rediger declared to the Council of Ministers the desirability of turning Turkestan over to a civilian administration, a declaration that encouraged the appointment of the Palen commission two years later. To his uncomprehending governor-general in Turkestan, Mishchenko, Rediger explained that he knew nothing of the administration of Turkestan, and was consequently forced to conduct matters according to the prompting of Colonel Tseil', the head of the General Staff's Asiatic Department. In what might be read as a veiled criticism of Tseil', Rediger explained that he therefore wanted to end this 'abnormal' situation and to 'put the matter into competent hands'.[16] The Palen report itself favoured a greater measure of civil (as opposed to military) administration in Turkestan, but as we have seen from previous chapters, nothing was done in practice before the outbreak of war in 1914. Governor-General Samsonov of Turkestan favoured a greater devolution of power, with more responsibility being given to the local commander, thus mirroring calls heard from the Viceroy of the Caucasus, Vorontsov-Dashkov, in this same period. However, at an inter-departmental conference on this subject in 1911 under the chairmanship of State Inspector P. A. Kharitov, it was resolved to reject Samsonov's pleas to expand his powers on the grounds that this would lead to the separation of the region from the rest of the Empire.[17] Dilemmas of regionalization versus centralization would remain unresolved therefore before the outbreak of war in 1914.

Across the great majority of this period, several factors had hindered the Russian General Staff from obtaining a full and correct panoptic knowledge of its Asiatic frontiers and their immediate neighbouring states. Among these

factors, undoubtedly the two greatest were financial and organizational. During the period of office of War Minister Vannovskii (1881–97) the Russian armed forces budget was cut to a barely sustainable minimum, the effects of which were felt at every level of the military infrastructure. With large expenditures reserved for the complex process of complete re-armament, such as those associated with the introduction of the Mosin-Nagant magazine rifle in the 1890s, the drive for savings at every level was reflected and typified in the position of the regimental *artel*. The *artel*, a form of soldiers workshop, took responsibility for putting together and maintaining uniforms in the Russian army, the War Ministry finding it cheaper to issue raw materials rather than complete tailored uniforms to the forces under its command. As a result many soldiers marched to war against Japan in 1904 in ill-fitting boots and with inadequate greatcoats. The considerable expense attendant on Russia in staying in the late nineteenth century European arms race meanwhile formed at least one of the reasons for Nicholas II calling for the Hague Peace Conference of 1899. The astringency attending such efforts at military economy undoubtedly carried over some side-benefits as well, in terms of developing a certain sense of economy, a hatred of waste, and in cultivating the reputation for robustness and durability associated both with Russian weaponry and the Russian soldier in general. Russian officers took pride in the fact that their troops remained in vigorous and robust health despite a basic and monotonous diet of tea, bread, rusks, and cabbage soup. Indeed, it was believed such a regime increased their men's stamina and hardiness for the harsh test of war. The performance of Russian soldiers throughout history demonstrated that such beliefs were not entirely unfounded. Nonetheless in other areas this drive for economy undoubtedly carried dire consequences. Nowhere was this more evident than in the field of military intelligence, always a poor candidate for state investment given the inability to deliver an immediate, visible and reliable return. In the second half of the nineteenth century the expanding nature of the modern battlefield placed a premium on the ability to generate real-time and accurate strategic and operational intelligence, both in peace and in time of war. Yet the Russian military budget made no allowance for such factors, and only in the aftermath of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05 did the inadequacy of allotting a mere 56, 590 roubles annually to the cause of intelligence across the whole Russian Empire become evident to the War Ministry. Such practical drawbacks contrasted dramatically with the often highly developed intellectual dialogue within the General Staff itself, illustrating a classic military dilemma between theory and performance. The scientific structures and methods of analysis inculcated into General Staff thinking by men like Miliutin and Maksheev had become undermined by the parsimony of a military administration which could not even afford to give its men properly-fitting boots.

The second factor obstructing the most effective use of even these limited resources was organizational. Unlike the Military-Scientific Committee,

with its clear linear responsibility for managing the correspondence of Russia's military agents abroad, the role of the Asiatic Department of the General Staff in intelligence gathering was never clearly defined or demarcated. By statute it had if anything a dual function, given that its responsibilities involved the monitoring of events in regions bordering Russia's Asiatic frontiers *alongside* the internal administration of Russia's Asian military districts. In practice, as might have been expected, attention to intelligence concerns was often sacrificed on the altar of daily military administration, with A. P. Protsenko noting in 1895, as we have seen, that over half the correspondence of his department did not relate to military matters at all. These twin factors of tight financial restraints alongside a less than coherent organizational system meant that despite the presence of talented and often outstanding individuals working on its Asiatic frontiers, military scholars like Przheval'skii and Kozlov, the Russian General Staff was not able to deal with its numerous responsibilities across the southern frontier in what would nowadays be termed a 'joined-up' fashion. Russia went to war with Japan in 1904 armed with inadequate maps, with a poor cultural knowledge of its opponent, and with a critical lack of reliable interpreters. All this came about despite numerous military-scientific expeditions in the region in the past, military agents in the relevant countries, and a military presence in the Far East dating back several decades. A significant and understudied aspect of Russia's post-war military reforms was therefore aimed at directing a more organized, better funded, and single-minded gaze at Russia's Asiatic responsibilities.

The reduction of the Asiatic Department's responsibilities after 1903 reflected not any diminished importance being assigned to the administration of these frontiers but rather the increasing military commitments these districts demanded. Such commitments could only be handled by a large central military administration containing several desks for both the collection and processing of military intelligence, a need that the organization known under the acronym of GUGSh largely provided after 1905. Within the Third Over-Quartermaster General section of GUGSh that dealt with Asian operational planning in 1906–08, General Palitsyn managed to enrol an unprecedented array of specialists in Asian military affairs – A. E. Snesarev, Bolkhovitinov, P. I. Aver'ianov, V. F. Novitskii and Lavr Kornilov.[18] The reunification of GUGSh with the Main Staff in 1909 ended significant areas of administrative overlap between the two organizations and created a central administration capable of planning for the next major conflict in both a doctrinal and technical regard. It was these developments that simultaneously undermined the relevance, in the eyes of many younger officers like Novitskii, of retaining the older Asiatic Department at all. Nonetheless even here organizational contradictions were far from completely eradicated, since the Asiatic Department, as we have seen, retained responsibility for organizing the training of officers in eastern languages, training that obviously qualified them to perform an intelligence role in the East alongside everyday adminis-

trative duties. Right up until the end of its existence meanwhile the Asiatic Department also continued to be headed by men – Manakin, Davletshin – who had risen to prominence in their earlier careers as intelligence-gathering agents both within and beyond Russia's Asian frontiers.

In some ways of course this 'knowledge panic' that afflicted the Russian General Staff in the wake of its defeat in the Far East- expressed in its concern over lack of cadres, native intermediaries, basic statistical data and translators-was far from exceptional. Indeed, ironically, it was again typical of and paralleled the other imperial, knowledge-based colonial systems of its day.[19] What was striking however was the scale and urgency of the concern in the Russian case given again the indivisibility of its European and Asiatic strategic concerns; strategic balance and accurate information for Russia were *peculiarly* vital.

In the wake of the Russo-Japanese War the Russian military and the state in general was left with a whole raft of organizational and administrative reforms regarding Turkestan, the Caucasus, and the Far East, few of which had time to fully evolve before the outbreak of a new and wider war. The operational prognostications for a two-front war developed by Palitsyn by 1908, including the intention to concentrate the Russian army in northern Manchuria in the event of a renewed Far Eastern conflict, remained the strategic blueprint of the Russian army right through to 1914. This was in part due to the soundness of Palitsyn's proposals, but was also the product of the extremely strained and fractious relations that pertained within the central operational planning sections of GUGSh following Palitsyn's own departure. The sheer overwork of day-to-day demands after 1908 hindered the workers of the General Staff from ever again indulging in such long-term strategic thinking.[20] By 1914 much had been done to implement the implications of Palitsyn's design, but the question of reform at the military district level remained unresolved. Whether the Russian state could have properly developed its administrative and strategic policies in Asia had war not interrupted in 1914 therefore remains one of the most intriguing 'what if' questions of modern history.

Changing institutions aside, the organized study of the East by the Russian General Staff left long legacies in other areas as well. In particular, the Russian General Staff did on occasion apply the tool of military statistics to practical policy goals in some of the panoptic forms envisaged by Foucault and Said-as Peter Holquist has recently argued:

> Military statistics was an applied science in the most direct sense of the term. To a significant degree what was known by the Imperial government about its subjects, i.e. their numbers, where they lived, and even their health, it learned from military statistics.[21]

The creation of psychogenetic group identifications fostered by military statistics undoubtedly paved the way for the sometimes extremely brutal

manner in dealing with ethnic groups that the Tsarist Government pursued in both Eastern Europe, the Trans-Caucasus and Central Asia in 1914–17. During the course of its dealing with the Central Asian rebellion of 1916 for example, the Turkestan administration under Kuropatkin targeted an entire ethnic group, the Kirghiz, and by its policies exiled many of them *en masse* across the border to China. This group had been singled out as early as 1910 by Staff Captain Fedorov of the Turkestan military district as a politically unreliable element given their retention of a strong (and hence culturally impenetrable) internal clan structure. At the time Fedorov had advocated increased Russian colonization as a means to balance the native element and thereby assure security in the sensitive Semirech'e border region with China.[22] Kuropatkin in 1916 therefore was essentially only acting out political strategies for which the intellectual groundwork had already been paved years before by earlier generations of Russian staff officers exploring and studying Russia's Asian borderlands. Within Eastern Europe the analyses by pre-war Staff officers of the political reliability of elements within the local population bore similar fruit in wartime-some 800,000 Jews were deported from their homes by the Tsarist army during the First World War due to fears over their political reliability and suspicions that they were engaged in widespread espionage for the German cause. Nor was the Tsarist government alone in this trend towards scientifically-justified 'population policy'; the German government also pursued policies in Eastern Europe in the same period that may have been inculcated and fostered by earlier German administrative practice in Africa.[23] In the immediate pre-war period of course, the British administration in India, by their extensive support for the Amir 'Abd al-Rahman, and in defence of their so-called 'scientific' frontier in Afghanistan, also indirectly backed a population policy that amounted in effect to organized genocide against the nationalities of northern Afghanistan.

It is furthermore undeniably true that in the development and deployment of knowledge-based systems of control and administration, the Russian War Ministry in the Tsarist period played an exceptionally significant role, far greater than many civilian bodies. Within Tsarist Russia generally, science rapidly became an institutionalized occupation, a state of affairs that the Soviet Union would inherit and continue. The emphasis upon knowledge for military needs was reflected in the development, before the First World War, of a map of the Asiatic border zone on thirty-two sheets (scale 1 inch: 40 verst) and a military road map of Asiatic Russia (1 inch: 50 verst). Civilian-sponsored geographical programmes by contrast, such as the cadastral survey begun in 1765, took a significantly longer period to carry out with, in the case of the cadastral project, the task uncompleted till 1915.[24] The exceptional importance the Russian military attached to rendering Asia knowable was further reflected by the distribution of topographical officers within the Asiatic border zones. In 1866, following the precedent set by the establishment of an independent topographical section for the Caucasus Corps in

1854, D. A. Miliutin directed that four of the new military districts – Orenburg, Western and Eastern Siberia, and Turkestan – be allotted topographical sections of 20–40 men each as opposed to the 2–4 topographers attached to the military district staffs elsewhere.[25] Nonetheless practical problems remain with applying the post-modern 'orientalist' model to the Tsarist military bureaucracy and strategic thinking as a whole. As should be already evident, the Tsarist government's capacity to convert knowledge into power was severely restricted by both economic and practical restrictions, i.e. by the sheer burden of the cataloguing and monitoring of archival knowledge. The fundamental inescapable fact of the unwieldy nature and inefficiency of the central bureaucratic institutions, so familiar a theme to students of Russian Imperial history, held as true here as it did elsewhere.[26] It should be noted however that this represented a rather different problem than that posited by Edward Said for European orientalism as a whole. In Said's view orientalism was in effect a 'representation' of the 'true' Orient that was inextricably bound up within the parameters of an avaricious European colonialism. According to this theory, all forms of orientalism, whatever their claims, were directed only at continually re-evoking and re-emphasizing 'the chasm between intelligent, logical and mentally disciplined Europeans and 'Orientals,' whose minds are so disorganized that they cannot even walk on a paved road'.[27] European orientalists were incapable of perceiving or representing the 'true' patterns of cultural development in the East because they were imperialists enraptured by this dichotomy and because, at a deeper level, in Said's view, all forms of representation are inevitably bound to be forms of *mis*representation. Within the framework of Russian military *vostokovedenie* this claim begins to look rather peculiar. Although inevitably bound by professional requirements to study the past to a certain degree, military *vostokovedy* were primarily concerned with the contemporary situation in Asiatic states. Had they begun with the cultural precept that the nature of the Orient was unchanging and backward, this region by definition could never have been perceived as forming any type of security threat. In reality, by contrast, it was the military's perception of the very real cultural and technological changes occurring in Asia that led them, in the Russian case, to devote increasing amounts of attention to the region. This would suggest that Said's thesis of an instinctively racialist and blinkered orientalism, to the extent that it is compatible with reality at all, remains entirely inapplicable to the forms of analysis deployed by the Russian military with regard to the East. It was the very consciousness of the fact that the East *was* changing, and awareness of the poverty of its instruments to monitor this development, which caused increasing levels of concern in the Tsarist military's policy-forming departments. If military analysts were often inclined to associate these technological changes with aggressive intentions in formulae that carried racist overtones (the so-called 'yellow peril' threat of the 1905–10 period), then this was probably no more than a by-product of the Hegelian and atavistic world-view which

dominated all strategic thought at the time and which applied as much in Europe as in Asia.[28]

Throughout all this later period meanwhile the increased strategic significance assigned to the Asiatic frontiers is the most striking (and most overlooked) factor of Tsarist military and political policy in the immediate pre-war period. While Tsarist generals were understandably anxious in their post-war memoirs to assert that Russian pre-war military policy remained firmly fixed on the menace of Germany, the actual technical and strategic changes of the 1905–14 period – the running down of fortifications in the West, alongside the construction of new fortifications and major rail links in both the Caucasus, Turkestan and the Far East – presented a rather different picture. This resulted in the paradox that by 1914 Russian field fortifications in the West were in disarray, but in Vladivostok in the Far East by contrast, Russia possessed what was at that time one of the most modern and sophisticated artillery fortifications in the world. In the immediate aftermath of the Russo-Japanese War, Palitsyn and the State Defence Council had drawn up a series of measures and plans for the reinforcement of both Central Asia and the Russian Far East. War Minister Rediger opposed these measures and used his financial powers to delay their implementation, but his successor, Sukhomlinov, had proven far more disposed towards such a reorientation of resources. The cost and effort involved in these changing dispositions was neither cheap nor undertaken lightly. State finances in this later period came under the scrutiny of the State Duma as well as the Tsar and were truly 'political' questions in the modern sense of the term.[29] The ultimate cost of the Amur Railroad alone – 400 million roubles – came at a time when the annual expenditure of the Russian state budget amounted to less than three billion roubles.[30] Such redispositions can only have been undertaken therefore because a majority within the Tsarist governmental system, not merely its military wing, saw them as highly necessary. Russia's Interior Minister at the time, P. A. Stolypin (Interior Minister 1906–11), was himself fascinated by the threat of Pan-Islam and by the so-called 'Muslim Question', to the extent that he convened a inter-departmental conference in Kazan on the issue in 1910, the very year that the Russian military were themselves producing a new war plan that paid greater attention to Russia's Eastern frontiers. Stolypin's close aide and short-lived successor, A. A. Makarov, shared Stolypin's fascination with the 'Muslim Question' and revisited the issues raised by the conference in 1912.[31] In short, on the eve of the First World War the Russian Empire felt increasingly threatened along its Asiatic frontier in both a strategic, political and economic regard. In the words of one scholar who has studied this phenomenon from an economic perspective, this undoubtedly 'contributed to the atmosphere of general crisis for the [T]sarist regime in July 1914'.[32] It did not, to say the least, facilitate the formulation of a unified strategic response. In the words of another economic historian on the matter:

> In practice, this meant a desperate attempt to maintain adequate troops in readiness for an offensive against both Germany and Austria-Hungary, without ignoring the defence of Russia's borders in the Far East and in Central Asia. As if this was not enough, the Tsar insisted that Russia be provided with a fleet that had an offensive as well as defensive capability.[33]

Tsarist Russia's Asiatic concerns were also played out at a wider level of very public policy debate after 1905 on the whole future of Russian strategy across Eurasia, a debate that exposed fundamentally opposing viewpoints and beliefs. Proponents of the political alliance with Japan sought thereby to gain a free hand for Russia in the Balkans, Europe and the Near East. Those who believed in the inevitability of a new war with Japan by contrast argued for an alliance with America and a settlement of affairs with Germany and Austria-Hungary, leaving the strategic 'rear' of Europe secure in order to prepare for renewed conflict in the Far East.[34] These debates played themselves out within the academic and orientalist societies of the day of which so many military and diplomatic personnel were by now members. At a key sitting of the Society for *Vostokovedenie* in May 1910 the retired General K. I. Druzhinin presented a paper arguing for 'transferring the centre of gravity of state defence' to the Trans-Baikal region. This proposal involved building up the railway net there, setting up field fortifications and concentrating troops. Such measures, he suggested, would help prepare for a sharp pre-emptive strike against both Japan and China in the very near future. This paper drew support from prominent members of the society, including Colonel A. E. Snesarev and the Sinologist Dmitri Pozdneev. Such supporters of a re-orientation of strategic resources on Asia were therefore by proxy 'Germanophile', a charge levelled against Snesarev in 1907 when it was suspected that the newspaper he ran, running pieces critical of the recent agreement with Japan, had German financial backing.[35] Snesarev himself was certainly an unrepentant Anglophobe-to his fellow General Staff officers within the Third Over-Quartermaster-General section of GUGSh, he regularly criticized the 1907 agreement with England as a strategic mistake of historic proportions.[36] However Druzhinin's 1910 presentation was criticized and voted down by the majority of the Society, including Palitsyn himself, who despite his own anti-Japanese inclinations (he was an opponent of both the 1907 Anglo-Russian and associated Russo-Japanese conventions) found such a plan too radical and in his view too unrealistic for even his own tastes.[37] Probably the greatest opponents of any redisposition of strategic resources however (and even of such changes as *did* occur) were individuals within the Russian Foreign Ministry, and in particular Foreign Minister Izvol'skii. In a confidential letter to a colleague as early as 1906, Izvol'skii lamented that the Russian General Staff, in his view:

> have learnt nothing and forgotten nothing; they talk of Seistan, the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean &c. exactly as the talk used to be before the Japanese war, of Manchuria, Korea, and the Pacific Ocean.[38]

Debate on these issues both in private and in the press led to Izvol'skii's successor, Sazonov, making the famous statement to the State Duma in 1912 that:

> one must not forget . . . that Russia is a European power, that the state was formed not on the banks of the Black Irtych but on the banks of the Dnieper and of the river Moskva.[39]

The growing importance attached to the Asiatic frontier by the Russian military in this later period was also shaped by factors that were as much psychological as physical. The southern frontier by the end of the Tsarist period was seen implicitly in the eyes of many Tsarist officers as part of a long single 'causal chain', in which events in one theatre would carry inevitable political repercussions elsewhere along the line. During his term in office as Governor-General in Turkestan in the 1890s, General Dukhovskoi for example, spurred on by N. P. Nalivkin, one of his civilian advisers, had speculated over possible explosive links between the rising tide of Pan-Islamic propaganda and recent political events in China. Dukhovskoi felt in general that Europeans must expect in the coming century the declaration of a universal Muslim *gazavat*, (holy war, *jihad*), an event in which Russia, by the nature of its geographical position, would be at the epicentre. In particular however, he warned that in the event of even minor military reverses in a potential Sino-Russian conflict, Muslims could be inspired by the Chinese example to pursue a similar policy of *revanchism*.[40] Even the slightest military setback might therefore spark political instability right along the frontier line. An even more paranoid variation on this theme was expressed in a letter by Vorontsov-Dashkov, the viceroy of the Caucasus, to the Tsar in 1908, wherein he reported rumours that Japan had signed a military pact with Turkey, that Japanese officers were present in the Turkish army, and that Japanese converts to Islam were rampaging through Asia Minor propagating *jihad*.[41] Though the Sultan of Turkey, Abdul Hamid, was genuinely fascinated by Japan's military victory in 1905, and though Japanese spies certainly visited the Caucasus, such representations remained far removed from reality on the ground itself. The southern frontier towards the end of this period was nonetheless seen to be under political pressure from both ends of the line in the eyes of many- from political developments in Turkey after 1909 and from the evidence of Japanese and Chinese modernization after 1904–05. Central Asia formed the natural crux, the region where the crosshairs of these two influences, as it were, met, and where the third and unique problem of Anglo-Russian tension over Afghanistan created a complicating factor that correspondingly came under increasing pressure for political resolution.

While they did not necessarily conform to the patterns of Said's 'Orientalism' meanwhile, the forms and methods of thought developed by the Tsarist military and academic community outlived the Tsarist regime itself and went on to have a significant impact upon early Soviet modes of government. On the one hand this was simply a matter of a chronological continuity of personnel – of individuals who had begun their careers under the Tsars going on to spend their last years serving under Stalin. On the other hand this continuity was also in some regard both scientific and ideological. For many, assuming they survived the war and revolution, 1917 marked less of a change or turning point in the nature of their careers or even their thinking than it may outwardly appear. In the immediate course and aftermath of the Civil War, Russia's new rulers found themselves in a terrifying state of strategic and scientific ignorance. In 1919 one official of Stalin's Commissariat of Nationalities noted to his superiors that the only things known about the natives of the Trans-Baikal region, the Buriat and Enisei Tunguz, was that they were Mongols, Lamaists (they were in fact neither) and that they were 'quite wild, and that is about it'.[42] As late as 1926 delegates at a session of the Central Executive Committee warned that 'it would be difficult to maintain power' in the non-Russian provinces if local administrators did not learn more about their charges.[43] The only immediate solution to these enormous tasks facing the Soviet government, in every field, was the employment of Tsarist-era bureaucratic, academic, and administrative personnel.

The Tsarist legacy in terms of personnel was visible in nearly every Asian administrative region of the newly formed Soviet Union. In the Far East, the Eastern Institute in Vladivostok continued to train translators in its 'practical programme' for the pursuance of the Soviet regime's political goals in China. The eminent Tsarist sinologist Dmitri Pozdneev helped set up language training programmes in the Red Army, a contribution that did not spare the octogenarian from summary state execution in 1937 on the charge of being a Japanese spy.[44] The legacy of the practical courses developed in the Russian Far East since 1899 was destined to have a deep and long-lasting impact on the evolution and course of Soviet Sinology. In the field of exploration, both P. K. Kozlov and V. K. Arsen'ev would continue their scientific researches into the Soviet epoch, although the latter had a particularly uneasy relationship with the ruling regime. Narrowly dissuaded in the 1920s from dedicating one of his works to his former patron and mentor, the exiled Unterberger, in all likelihood only his sudden death in 1930 spared Arsen'ev from the later purges. Kozlov meanwhile dedicated his last active explorations during the 1920s to the study of the field first opened up by his patron and mentor, Przheval'skii, with expeditions in Mongolia and Tibet. This continuity of personnel in the military field was also apparent in Central Asia where, as Soviet authority also gradually entrenched itself, the local Bolshevik commander M. V. Frunze summoned Iagello, the Tsarist officer behind the controversial Tashkent officers'

language school of the pre-war era, to return and again organize courses of *vostokovedenie* in Tashkent.[45]

At a wider level, the committees formed by the Tsarist government in wartime for assessing the internal structure of the Tsarist Empire went on to become the most direct outward expressions of scientific continuity into the Soviet regime. The collection of scientists, ethnographers and statisticians assembled under the Committee for the Studying of Natural Industrial Resources formed in 1915 (KEPS for short) and the Commission for the Study of the Tribal Population of Russia and the Borderlands (or, confusingly, KIPS, formed in February 1917) would both go on to serve the Soviet government. For both committees their primary task would remain the problem of the gathering and assimilation of knowledge and its practical application. The empire-wide ethnographic study organized by KIPS continued even during the Russian civil war, with the scholarly study of Turkestan that was begun in the fall of 1917 completed only in early 1920. The papers delivered by A. E. Snesarev at such societies' gatherings in the immediate post-war years meanwhile reflected a continued dissatisfaction with the level of knowledge available to the central government (the 'knowledge crisis') that Snesarev had already identified and expressed under the Tsars. At the first all-Russia conference of scientific societies for the study of local areas in December 1921, Snesarev pointed out that data regarding even the most basic facts about Asiatic states, such as climate, population density and social movement, all too often remained conjectural or non-existent.[46] He further lamented that the careers of the great Asiatic commanders, such as Tamerlane and Chinggis-Khan (men whose achievements in his own view surpassed those of Frederick the Great, Turenne, Gustavus Adolphus and Eugene of Savoy) were still ignored or, worse, slandered and misunderstood by the arrogance of European science and historiography. He assured his listeners however that: 'In this matter of scorn or arrogance towards Asiatics we [Russians] are much less culpable than Europe'.[47]

In Snesarev's view, the position of Russia geographically would make her play a large role in the resolution of all Asian political questions generally, while the special position of the Russian Far East as a buffer in the emerging struggle between Europe and the 'yellow peril' demanded particular attention. These were themes and issues that had all already evolved latently in the Tsarist period; Snesarev was but one lightning rod of such concerns to the new Soviet order. Andrei Evgen'evich had joined the Red Army in 1918 and became head of the General Staff Academy in 1919–21 before retiring and becoming rector and professor at the Institute of Oriental Studies from 1921 to 1930.

Delivering a series of lectures during his term at the Staff Academy on the discipline of 'Military Geography' (a direct outgrowth of Miliutin's old course on 'Military Statistics'), Snesarev included a military-statistical portrait of the one country he had felt in the Tsarist period to be most understudied, namely Afghanistan.[48] This eloquent study warned on the

basis of a great deal of evidence that an invasion of Afghanistan would present a nightmare scenario for a Soviet army, fighting in difficult territory against a fanatical population. Snesarev's activities at the Staff Academy meanwhile overlapped with the opening of a faculty of Oriental languages for Russian staff officers and students of the Foreign Ministry. According to Snesarev himself, the main initiator behind the idea of an 'Eastern Section' at the General Staff Academy was Colonel Davletshin, the loyal Muslim officer who had presided over the last days of the old Asiatic Department. Davletshin was appointed head of the new Eastern Section in 1918 but, as Snesarev later sadly recalled, he died 'practically on the very day that his cherished ideas were realized'.[49] One of the very first entrants to these language courses meanwhile, a man who enrolled to study the Persian, Hindustani and Arabic languages in addition to his normal military studies, still recalled the inspiring inaugural address given by Snesarev at the opening of this institute decades later:

> I am myself he said 'going to conduct the course in the military geography of Sinkiang, Tibet, Pamir, northwest India, Baluchistan, Afghanistan and Persia, whose roads I have travelled many times on foot. I have lived with the native peoples in these countries and spoken their languages. I shall tell you all you need to know about these countries as [both] Soviet General Staff officers and diplomats.[50]

This individual witness, who after service in Turkestan against the *basmachi* transferred to the diplomatic corps, later noted in exile the enormous role that the Oriental Institute under Snesarev's guidance had played in building up the Soviet Union's cadres in Asia. Within five years, he estimated, more than three-quarters of the Soviet diplomatic and consular corps in the Near and Middle East were his fellow-graduates, including the Russian ambassadors to Persia and Japan and the Russian minister in Arabia, not to mention 'a score of young generals who later served as advisers to Chiang Kai-Shek or as military attachés in the countries of Asia'.[51] Among those whom we know definitely came to Andrei Evgen'evich's desk seeking help and advice during this period was Iakov Bliumkin, the ambitious Chekist who as an SR had earlier shot German ambassador Mirbach in 1918, but who also dreamed of becoming the post-war Soviet 'Lawrence of Arabia'. Bliumkin's whole career during the 1920s would be marked by an almost continuous series of bold undercover missions across the Near and Middle East, including one covert journey to British India.[52] Only state execution under the suspicion of being a Trotskyite lackey and spy in 1929 cut short this dazzling career, begun under Snesarev's tutelage. Measured by any scale therefore, Snesarev's role in preparing the Soviet Union to tackle the problems of military *vostokovedenie* that he had already witnessed and experienced under the Tsars was immense.

Snesarev spent much of the 1920s engaged on his life's work, a multi-volume study of India. This enterprise, of which only the first part was ever printed in Snesarev's lifetime, he explicitly intended for use both by students of the Oriental Institute and the Eastern Section of the General Staff Academy, indicating that even here he saw an overlap between general academic concerns and those of military science.[53] Arrested in 1930 like so many other *voenspetsy* on unsubstantiated charges, he was released in 1934 without rehabilitation and with his health ruined, to die in 1937.[54] While the tradition of military *vostokovedenie* developed in the Tsarist period may have undergone some surface adjustment in the Soviet era therefore, its traditions and challenges alongside its actual practitioners remained an important element in the development of Soviet military thought right up until at least 1937. The very framework of analysis meanwhile – the application of geographical and ethnographic knowledge to state-centred political goals, the rigid institutionalization of science – remained the same. Moreover, dilemmas of regionalization versus centralization became, if anything, even more painful, particularly during the time of the purges that engulfed Snesarev.

The modes of thought developed in the Tsarist period for understanding Asia and the dilemmas uncovered then are also far from irrelevant for Russia today. Seventy years of gross Communist governmental mismanagement however have also changed the overall strategic position of Russia in Asia since Snesarev's day. At the beginning of the twentieth century Kuropatkin and Mendeleev, basing their statements on Tsarist-era population statistics, calculated that by the year 2000 Russia's population would reach an estimated 400 million, more than enough to populate the vast expanse of Siberia and secure Russia's numerous far-flung frontiers. However Stalin's senseless and deranged extermination of the Soviet peoples via deliberate state persecution and malign economic planning – casually massacring some 10 million people through forced collectivization alone – destroyed all such hopes and calculations. By 1998, according to official UN figures the population of Russia hovered at a dangerously low 148 million. Free-market reform conducted by Yeltsin and Gaidar with a criminal recklessness equal to that of the former Communist regime had effectively worsened the demographic situation even further, and has led some to since question whether recovery is now ever possible. The demographic disaster inflicted upon Russia by the actions of the Soviet regime has now also made the 'Yellow Peril' menace of Chinese migration in the Far East a particularly hot topic in contemporary Russian politics, matched perhaps only by the fears and concerns raised by blossoming Muslim birth rates since the 1960s. In terms of military administration meanwhile, conflicts between the Russian General Staff and the Defence Ministry over the course of military reform suggest that the bureaucratic feuds of the early 1900s are now being re-fought in the early twenty-first century.[55] As the Russian General Staff now seeks to again return and gain inspiration from concepts and thinkers previously reviled

under the Soviet regime, most notably through a greater interest in the 'science' of geopolitics, the legacy of the Tsarist General Staff in the study of Asia – a body that in its own day also had to deal with the problems of crippling under-funding, corruption, and strategic overstretch – may today prove to be more relevant than ever before.

Notes

1 Imperial Russia and the Asian Frontier

1 Alexis Krauss, *Russia in Asia: A Record and a Study*, London: Curzon Press, 1900, pp. 2–12.
2 Rawlinson's views are most clearly expressed in his work *England and Russia in the East*, London: John Murray, 1875.
3 For a generalized introduction to the theme, see Peter Hopkirk, *The Great Game: On Secret Service in High Asia*, London: John Murray, 1990.
4 See L. R. Lewitter, 'The Apocryphal Testament of Peter the Great', *Polish Review* 63, 1966, pp. 27–44. Though long discredited, the use of Peter the Great's apocryphal will as a geopolitical explanation for Russian expansion has recently been revived by the Iranian scholar Pirouz Mojtahed-Zadeh: see his *Small Players of the Great Game: The settlement of Iran's eastern borderlands and the creation of Afghanistan*, London & New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004, pp. 18–19.
5 John P. LeDonne, *The Russian Empire and the World: The Geopolitics of Expansion and Containment*, New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. 130–3.
6 G. N. Curzon, *Russia in Central Asia in 1889 and the Anglo-Russian Question*, London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1889, p. 315.
7 Prince A. Lobanov-Rostovsky, 'The Shadow of India in Russian History', *History* XIV, 1930, p. 225.
8 Though it would be wrong to present such scholars as part of a uniform historical 'school', they have in varying ways supported this more graduated and localized image of imperial expansion in the following works: Michael Khodarkovsky, *Russia's Steppe Frontier: The Making of a Colonial Empire, 1500–1800*, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2002, Andreas Kappeler & Alfred Clayton, (trans.) *The Russian Empire: A Multiethnic History*, England: Pearson Education Ltd., 2001, David Schimmelpenninck Van Der Oye, *Toward the Rising Sun: Russian Ideologies of Empire and the Path to War with Japan*, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 2001, and Austin Lee Jersild, *Orientalism and Empire: North Caucasus Mountain Peoples and the Georgian Frontier, 1845–1917*, London/Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002.
9 V. O. Kliuchevskii, *Kurs Russkoi Istorii: Chast ' I*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo "Mysl"', 1987, p. 50.
10 M. Bassin, 'Russia between Europe and Asia: the ideological construction of geographical space', *SR* 50, 1, 1991, 2–3, 6.
11 An account of the latter clash can be found in Fred W. Bergholz, *The Partition of the Steppe: The Struggle of the Russians, Manchus, and the Zunghar Mongols for Empire in Central Asia, 1619–1758*, New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1993, pp. 223–30.

12 Michael Khodarkovsky, *Russia's Steppe Frontier*, pp. 20–1.
13 For a useful summary, see Bruce W. Menning, 'The Imperial Russian Army, 1725–96', in F. W. Kagan & R. Higham (eds), *The Military History of Tsarist Russia*, New York: Palgrave, 2002, pp. 47–76 and his earlier piece 'The Army and Frontier in Russia', in C. W. Reddel (ed.), *Transformation in Russian and Soviet Military History*, Washington DC: United States Air Force Academy, 1990, pp. 28–9.
14 John L. Keep, *Soldiers of the Tsar: Army and Society in Russia, 1462–1874*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985, p. 245.
15 Frederick W. Kagan, *The Military Reforms of Nicholas I: The Origins of the Modern Russian Army*, London: Macmillan, 1999, p. 2.
16 Carl Van Dyke, *Russian Imperial Military Doctrine and Education, 1832–1914*, USA: Greenwood Press, 1990, p. 14. For an old but useful survey of the development of military general staffs in Europe and America across this period see J. D. Hittle, *The Military Staff: Its History and Development*, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1944/1975.
17 The principles of war most often cited down to the present day are: the offensive, concentration of forces (mass), economy of force, manoeuvre, unity of command, security, surprise, simplicity, planning and command. However, the exact number of principles varies according to the writer; Jomini spoke of only 2, Marshal Foch of 4, Clausewitz of 4 rules with 3 general principles of defence, 14 for offence, 8 for troops and 17 for use of terrain. C. Bellamy, *The Evolution of Modern Land Warfare: Theory and Practice*, London: Routledge, 1990, pp. 13–15.
18 M. Mayzel, *Generals and Revolutionaries: The Russian General Staff during the Revolution: A Study in the Transformation of a Military Elite*, Osnabruck: Bibilio Verlag, 1979, pp. 16–19. For a useful overview of this extremely complex period in Russian military administration, see the entry 'Administrative System and Policy-Making Process, Central Military (Before 1917)', in David R. Jones (ed.), *The Military-Naval Encyclopedia of Russia and the Soviet Union* Seven, incomplete vols. Gulf Breeze, Florida: Academic International Press, 1978–97, vol. 2, pp. 34–169.
19 Dmitri Vedeneev, '77 tysiach' *Rodina*, 1–2, 2000, 108–9.
20 For standard texts on the Caucasus conflict see J. F. Baddeley, *The Conquest of the Caucasus*, London: Curzon Press [reprint], {1908/1999} and Moshe Gammer, *Muslim Resistance to the Tsar: Shamil and the Conquest of Chechnia and Daghestan*, London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1994. On the Naqshbandiya, see Anna Zelkina, *In Quest for God and Freedom. The Sufi Response to the Russian Advance in the North Caucasus*, London: Hurst & Company, 2000. Amongst Russian accounts of the Caucasus War, undoubtedly some of the most outstanding are also among those most recently published. The work of M. M. Bliev and V. V. Degoev, *Kavkazskaia Voina*, Moscow: 'Roset', 1994 represents the fruits of over ten years of research. Degoev has also recently written what is probably the definitive biography of Shamil: V. Degoev, *Imam Shamil: Prorok, Vlastitel, Voin.*, Moscow: Russkaia panorama, 2001. The dazzling work of N. I. Pokrovskii meanwhile, *Kavkazskie Voiny i Imamat Shamilia*, Moscow: Rosspen, 2000 is a much older work, dating back in first draft to the 1930s, but not published during Pokrovskii's lifetime due to political considerations. In the Tsarist period the most thorough and detailed account of the conflict was without question that of N. F. Dubrovin: *Istoriia voiny i vladychestva russkikh na Kavkaze*, St. Petersburg: Tipografiia Departament Udelov/V. A. Berezovskogo/I. N. Skhorokhodova, 1871–86, T.1–6.
21 E. Willis Brooks, 'Nicholas I as Reformer: Russian Attempts to Conquer the Caucasus, 1825–55', in *Nation and Ideology: Essays in Honour of Wayne S. Vucinich*, NY: Columbia University Press, 1981, p. 251. Glinoetskii, *Istoriia*

Russkogo General'nogo Shtaba, Tom II. 1826–55, St. Petersburg: Voennaia Tipografiia, 1894, pp. 200–66 and his earlier articles 'Sluzhba general'nago shtaba pri kavkazskikh voiskakh s 1832 po 1853' *VS* 7-8-9, 1888, pp. 38–66, 249–66, 30–60.

22 Glinoetskii, *Istoriia Russkogo General'nogo Shtaba*, Tom II, pp. 200–1.

23 For a review of the literary legacy of some of these expeditions, see Pokrovskii, *Kavkazskie Voiny i Imamat Shamilia*, pp. 41–53. For an individual example of their work, see Polkovnik Rakint, '"Kratkii istoricheskii ocherk khristianstva kavkazskikh gortsev so vremen Sv. Apostolov do XIX v." (Publikatsiia V. A. Zakharova)', in I. A. Nastenko (ed.), *Sbornik Russkogo Istoricheskogo Obshchestva* 2, p. 150, Moscow: Russkaia Panorama, 2000, pp. 15–38.

24 Tornau's reminiscences of his expedition and period of captivity have recently been reprinted: Baron F. F. Tornau, *Vospominaniia Russkogo Ofitsera*, Moscow: 'AIRO-XX' 2002.

25 Glinoetskii, *Istoriia Russkogo General'nogo Shtaba* Tom II., pp. 200–4.

26 Paul B. Henze, 'Fire and Sword in the Caucasus: The 19th Century Resistance of the North Caucasian Mountaineers', *CAS* 2, 1, 1983, pp. 34–5 and his 'Circassia in the Nineteenth Century. The Futile Fight for Freedom', in Chantal Lemercier-Quelquejay, Gilles Vinstein, S. E. Wimbush (eds) *Turco-Tatar Past: Soviet Present*, Paris: Editions Peeters and Editions de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 1986, p. 273. Shamil himself had earlier engaged in population transfers in order to create an area of 'scorched earth' between himself and the Russians: Gammer, *Muslim Resistance to the Tsar*, p. 150 and Baddeley, *The Russian Conquest of the Caucasus*, pp. 444–5. A Ph.D dedicated to this whole subject is that of Marc Pinson, Russian Expulsion of Mountaineers from the Caucasus, 1856–66 and Its Historical Background-Demographic Warfare – An Aspect of Ottoman and Russian Policies, 1854–66. Unpub. Ph.D. diss., Harvard University 1970. See also V. V. Popov, 'Imperator Aleksandr II: " . . . delo polnogo zavoevaniia Kavkaza blizko uzhe k okonchaniiu."' *VlZh* 6, 1995, pp. 71–77; Alan Fisher, 'Emigration of Muslims from the Russian Empire after the Crimean War' *JGO* 35, 1987, pp. 356–71, Brian Glyn Williams, '*Hirja* and forced migration from nineteenth century Russia to the Ottoman Empire. A critical analysis of the Great Tatar emigration of 1860–61' *CMR* 41/1, 2000, pp. 79–108, N. I. Silaev, 'Migratsionnaia politika Rossiiskogo pravitel'stva na severnom kavkaze vo vtoroi polovine XIXv. {:} praktika i rezul'taty', *VMU* 3, 2002, pp. 73–91.

27 For a short history of the organization, see V. O. Bobrovnikov, 'Voenno-narodnoe upravlenie v Dagestane i Chechne: Istoriia i Sovremennost', in G. G. Lisitsyna & Ia. A. Gordin (eds), *Rossiia i Kavkaz skvoz dva stoletiia*, St. Petersburg: Zhurnal 'Zvezda', 2001, pp. 91–107.

28 V. O. Bobrovnikov, *Musulmane Severnogo Kavkaza: obychai, pravo, nasilie: Ocherki po istorii i etnografii prava Nagornogo Dagestana*, Moscow: Izdatel'skaia firma 'Vostochnaia Literatura' RAN, 2002, pp. 171–5.

29 Although full of lively prejudices and deeply controversial in its own day, M. A. Terent'ev's history of the Russian conquest of Central Asia remains unrivaled up to the present in its depth of detail: M. A. Terent'ev, *Istoriia zavoevanie Srednei Azii s kartami i planami*, St. Petersburg: Tipografiia V.V. Komarova, 1906, T.1–4. The work of A. G. Serebrennikov meanwhile represents a dense collection of documents on Russian policy in the area compiled on the suggestion of War Minister Kuropatkin. Unfortunately the chronology of the published series only runs up until the mid-1860s, but it remains nonetheless an invaluable source. A. G. Serebrennikov (ed.), *Sbornik materialov dlia istorii zavoevaniia Turkestanskogo krai* Tashkent: Tipografiia Shtaba Turkestanskogo Voennogo Okruga, 1908–15, T.1–10. In the Western historiography, see R. Pierce, *Russian Central Asia, 1867–1917: A Study in Colonial Rule*, Berkeley, California: University of California

Press, 1960 and D. MacKenzie, *The Lion of Tashkent: The Career of General M. G. Cherniaev*, Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1974. In Russian meanwhile, the modern work of N. A. Khalfin, *Prisoedinenie Srednei Azii k Rossii (60–90-e gody XIXv.)*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo NAUKA" Glavnaia Redaktsiia Vostochnoi Literatury, 1965 is essential.

30 MacKenzie, *The Lion of Tashkent.*, pp. 31–52.

31 An invaluable contemporary account of the 1885 commission's work from the English side is Lt. A. C. Yate, *England and Russia Face to Face in Asia: Travels with the Afghan Boundary Commission*, Edinburgh & London: William Blackwood & Sons, 1886. For a recent excellent analysis of the continuing security difficulties in the region between 1907 and 1914, see Jennifer Siegel, *Endgame: Britain, Russia and the Final Struggle for Central Asia*, London & New York: I. B. Tauris, 2002.

32 Both men have been the subject of biographies, though Ignat'ev has generally garnered greater attention. On Murav'ev-Amurskii the best study, though hagiographic, remains the nineteenth century compilation of I. Barsukov: *Graf Nikolai Nikolaevich Murav'ev-Amurskii: Po ego pis'mam, ofitsial'nym dokumentam', razskazam sovremennikov i pechatnym istochnikam (Materialy dlia biografii)*, Moscow: Sinodaln'naia Tipografiia, 1891. Ignat'ev by contrast has benefited considerably from a recent modern study that will probably become definitive: David Mackenzie, *Count N. P. Ignat'ev: The Father of Lies?* East European Monographs No. DCVI New York: Columbia University Press, 2002.

2 The Russian State, the Russian General Staff and Asia, 1714–1885

1 General P. A. Polovtsoff [Polovtsov], *Glory and Downfall: Reminiscences of a Russian General Staff Officer*, London: G. Bell and Sons Ltd., 1935, p. 48.

2 George L. Yaney, *The Systemization of Russian Government: Social Evolution in the Domestic Administration of Imperial Russia, 1711–1905*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973, deals with significant aspects of this process.

3 Alton S. Donnelly, 'Peter the Great and Central Asia', *CSP* 17, 1975, pp. 202–17. Evgenii V. Anisimov & John T. Alexander (trans.), *The Reforms of Peter the Great: Progress Through Coercion in Russia*, Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1993, pp. 255–63.

4 For a summary of these events using contemporary records, see Lt. Colonel Batorskii, 'Proekt ekspeditsii v Indiiu, predlozhennykh', Napoleonom Bonaparte imperatoram Pavlu i Aleksandru I v 1800 i v 1807–08 godakh. SGTSMA XXIII (1886), pp. 1–104.

5 B. V. Lunin, *Sredniaia Aziia v dorevoliutsionnom i Sovetskom vostokovedenii* Tashkent: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA' Uzbekskoi SSR, 1965, p. 69.

6 Richard N. Frye, 'Oriental Studies in Russia', in Wayne S. Vucinich (ed.), *Russia and Asia: Essays on the Influence of Russia on the Asian Peoples*, Stanford California: Hoover Institution Press, 1972, p. 35. A useful review of this process with particular reference to Siberia and the peoples of the Arctic North is given in Yuri Slezkine, *Arctic Mirrors: Russia and the Small Peoples of the North*, Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1994, pp. 47–71.

7 Lunin, *Sredniaia Aziia v dorevoliutsionnom i Sovetskom vostokovedenii*, pp. 69–71.

8 Frye, 'Oriental Studies in Russia', p. 35. It was one of the members of this Ecclesiastical Mission, the Archimandrite Palladi, who was eventually responsible in the nineteenth century for developing the Cyrillic-Chinese transliteration system still in use today. For details on the development of Russian Sinology, see P. A. Skachkov, *Ocherki istorii russkogo kitaevedeniia*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA' Glavnaia Redaktsiia Vostochnoi Literatury, 1977; D. Wolff, *To the*

Harbin Station: The Liberal Alternative in Russian Manchuria, 1898–1914, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1999, pp. 146–67, pp. 181–90 and, on the Ecclesiastical Mission itself, E. Widmer, *The Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Peking During the Eighteenth Century*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1976.

9 Though that process was changing, in part as historians of the period increasingly sought secular rather than religious reasons to justify autocracy. See R. G. Suny, 'The Empire Strikes Out. Imperial Russia, "National" Identity and Theories of Empire', in R. G. Suny & T. Martin (eds), *A State of Nations:Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 38–41 for a very informed discussion of this point.

10 Khodarkovsky, *Russia's Steppe Frontier*, p. 194.

11 On Catherine see Dov B. Yaroshevski, 'Imperial Strategy in the Kirghiz Steppe in the Eighteenth Century', *JGO* 39, 2, 1991, pp. 221–4.

12 R. G. Landa, *Islam v istorii Rossii*, Moscow: Izdatel'skaia Firma 'Vostochnaia Literatura' RAN, 1995, p. p.135.

13 This committee, formed to deal with relations with the Khan of Khiva and the Kazakhs, and chaired by the director of the Foreign Ministry's Asiatic Department held session frequently between 1820 and 1824, ceasing to meet after 1847 with the subjugation of the Kazakhs. Edward Allworth, 'Encounter', in E. Allworth (ed.), *Central Asia: 130 Years of Russian Dominance, A Historical Overview*, Third Edition USA: Duke University Press, 1994, pp. 55–56.

14 Martha Brill Olcott, *The Kazakhs*, Stanford, California: Hoover Press, 1987, p. 15, pp. 58–62 and see also Yuri Slezkine, *Arctic Mirrors*, pp. 73–92. The attempt to provide a codification of local law was never completed, Nicholas I being unwilling to accommodate cultural traditions differing widely from Russia's, particularly in the case of Poland. On Speranskii and the law codification see Marc Raeff, *Michael Speransky: Statesman of Imperial Russia*, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1957, pp. 320–44 and his earlier *Siberia and the Reforms of 1822*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1956. Like Ermolov in the Caucasus, Speranskii later came under suspicion in that many of his co-workers proved to be Decembrists.

15 Marc Raeff, 'Patterns of Russian Imperial Policy', in E. Allworth (ed.), *Soviet Nationality Problems*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1971, p. 37.

16 On the categorization and evolution of the term *inorodtsy* see John W. Slocum, 'Who, and When, were the *Inorodtsy?* The Evolution of the Category of Aliens in Imperial Russia', *RR* 57, 1998, pp. 173–90.

17 Kappeler & Clayton (trans.), *The Russian Empire: A Multiethnic History*, pp. 170–1. The law codification marked the culmination of an increasingly complex process by the modern state to classify the difference between 'self' and 'other' by a barrage of physical, spiritual, verbal, cultural and observational tests; how a nationality ate, how they smelt, physical appearance, their attitude to sexual relations and so on. On the situation before 1822, see Yuri Slezkine, 'Naturalists versus Nations: Eighteenth-Century Russian Scholars Confront Ethnic Diversity', in D. Brower & E. J. Lazzerini (eds), *Russia's Orient. Imperial Borderlands and Peoples, 1700–1917*, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1997, pp. 27–57.

18 For a highly intelligent analysis of Grigor'ev's mission, set within the framework of modern-day 'Orientalist' discourse, see Nathaniel Knight, 'Grigor'ev in Orenburg, 1851–62: Russian Orientalism in the Service of Empire?', *SR* 59, 1, 2000, pp. 74–100. A debate on Knight's arguments can be found in the journal *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* under the heading 'Orientalism and Russia', *Kritika*, 1, 4, 2000, pp. 691–727.

19 W. Bruce Lincoln, *In the Vanguard of Reform: Russia's Enlightened Bureaucrats 1825–1861*, DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1982, p. 87.
20 S. V. Soplenkov, *Doroga v Arzrum: rossiiskaia obshchestvennaia mysl' o Vostoke (pervaia polovina XIX veka)*, Moscow: Izdatel'skaia firma 'Vostochnaia Literatura' RAN, 2000, p. 24.
21 M. Bassin, *Imperial Visions: Nationalist Imagination and Geographical Expansion in the Russian Far East, 1840–1865*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp. 123–5.
22 George L. Yaney, *The Systemization of Russian Government*, p. 7.
23 Robert C. Tucker, 'Autocrats and Oligarchs', in Ivo J. Lederer (ed.) *Russian Foreign Policy: Essays in Historical Perspective*, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1962, p. 177.
24 K. K. Zvonarev, *Agenturnia razvedka: Russkaia agenturnaia razvedka do i vo vremia voiny 1914–1918gg.*, Moscow: Izdatel'skaia gruppa 'BDTs-press', 2003, pp. 18–19 and Michael Herman, *Intelligence Power in Peace and War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 20. There is an extensive and rich literature on the Okhrana but, strangely, it still awaits a truly definitive, comprehensive study.
25 Two excellent thesis dissertations exist on the Asiatic Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry, although the department remains a disappointing blank spot in the existing openly printed historiography: G. B. Ritchie, 'The Asiatic Department during the reign of Alexander II, 1855–81', Unpub. Ph.D diss. (Columbia University, 1970) and J. T. Koot, 'The Asiatic Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry and the Foundation of Policy toward the Non-Western World, 1881–95', Unpub. Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1980.
26 John P. LeDonne, *The Russian Empire and the World, 1700–1917*, p. 117. M. A. Lobyntseva, 'K voprosu o sozdanii Aziatskogo departamenta Ministerstva inostrannykh del Rossii', in N. A. Kuznetsova (ed.), *Iran (Sbornik statei)*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA' Glavnaia Redaktsiia Vostochnoi Literatury, 1971, pp. 84–91.
27 Koot, 'The Asiatic Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry and the Foundation of Policy toward the Non-Western World, 1881–95', p. 281.
28 T. A. Soboleva, *Tainopis' v istorii Rossii (Istoriia kriptograficheskoi sluzhby Rossii XVIII-nachale XXv.)*, Moscow: 'Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniia', 1994, p. 165–7.
29 R. R. Rosen, *Forty Years of Diplomacy*, vol. 1, London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1922, p. 18. See also however the recollections of A. D. Kalmykov, who recalled that members of the Turkish and Balkan sections *within* the department ' . . . considered themselves part of European diplomacy and looked down on us who transacted the correspondence within the far away regions of Asia', A. D. Kalmykow [Kalmykov], *Memoirs of a Russian Diplomat: Outposts of the Empire, 1893–1917*, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1971, p. 19.
30 R. R. Rosen, *Forty Years of Diplomacy*, vol. 1, p. 18. (emphasis added). On Rosen and the Russian foreign policy establishment, see also D. Lieven, *Russia and the Origins of the First World War*, London: Macmillan, 1983, pp. 83–101.
31 G. F. Kim & P. M. Shastitko (eds), *Istoriia Otechestvennogo Vostokovedeniia do serediny XIX veka*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA' Glavnaia Redaktsiia Vostochnoi Literatury, 1990, pp. 155–6.
32 Lunin, *Sredniaia Aziia v dorevoliutsionnom i Sovetskom vostokovedenii*, pp. 71–2; M. S. Kapitsa, 'Vostokovedenie kak rossiiskaia nauka', *VO* 1, (1994) p. 6.
33 Baddeley, *The Russian Conquest of the Caucasus*, p. 175, see also, pp. 198–9. Osip Ivanovich Senkovskii (1800–58) professor in eastern languages at St. Petersburg University from 1822. For brief notes on his character and career see Lunin, *Sredniaia Aziia v dorevoliutsionnom i Sovetskom vostokovedenii*, pp. 77–8. For details on the acquisition of the Ardebil collection, see Iu. E. Borshchevskii,

'Istoriia priobreteniia ardebil'skogo sobraniia rukopisei Rossiei', in N. A. Khalfin (ed.), *Formirovanie gumanisticheskikh traditsii otechestvennogo vostokovedeniia*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA' Glavnaia Redaktsiia Vostochnoi Literatury, 1984, pp. 204–17.

34 M. R. Ryzhenkov, 'Rol' voennogo vedomstva Rossii v razvitii otechestvennogo vostokovedeniia v XIX-nachale XX vv. (Opyt istochnikovedcheskogo issledovaniia dokumentov Tsentral'nogo gosudarstvennogo voenno-istoricheskogo arkhiva SSSR) Dissertatsiia na soiskanie uchenoi stepeni kandidata istoricheskikh nauk, Moscow: Institut Vostokovedeniia Akademiia Nauk SSSR, 1990, p. 95. Although inevitably not fully comprehensive, Ryzhenkov's work forms the best existing written guide to this particular area of War Ministry activity. Significant sections of this work are incorporated into the two-volume *Istoriia Otechestvennogo Vostokovedeniia* published through RAN in 1990 and 1997.

35 Raymond Schwab, *The Oriental Renaissance: Europe's Rediscovery of India and the East 1680–1880*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1984.

36 Cynthia H. Whittaker, 'The Impact of the Oriental Renaissance in Russia: The Case of Sergej Uvarov'. *JGO* 26, 1978, p. 511.

37 Kevin Tyner Thomas, 'Collecting the Fatherland: Early Nineteenth-Century Proposals for a Russian National Museum', in J. Burbank & D. L. Ransel (eds), *Imperial Russia: New Histories for the Empire*, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1998, pp. 91–107.

38 Bassin, *Imperial Visions*, pp. 49–52.

39 On the manner in which the writings of several Russian orientalists differed from the stereotype of this science created by Edward Said, see Nathaniel Knight, 'Grigor'ev in Orenburg, 1851–62: Russian Orientalism in the Service of Empire?', pp. 88–97.

40 N. P. Glinoetskii, *Istoriia Russkogo General'nogo Shtaba*, Tom I. 1698–1825, St. Petersburg: Voennaia Tipografiia 1883, pp. 120–1.

41 Kim & Shastitko (eds), *Istoriia Otechestvennogo Vostokovedeniia do serediny XIX veka*, p. 174.

42 *Istoricheskii Ocherk deiatel'nosti Korpusa Voennykh Topografov: 1822–1872*, St. Petersburg: Izd. Glavnogo Shtaba, 1872, pp. 84, 97–105.

43 B. M. Dantsig, *Blizhnii Vostok v Russkoi nauke i literature (Dooktiabr'skii period)*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA', 1973, p. 148.

44 However, on continued flaws in the Russian military machine exposed by this conflict, see in particular: Frederick W. Kagan, *The Military Reforms of Nicholas I*, pp. 102–31.

45 M. R. Ryzhenkov & I. M. Smilianskaia, *Siriia, Livan i Palestina v opisaniakh rossiiskikh puteshestvennikov, konsul'skikh i voennykh obzorakh pervoi poloviny XIX veka*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA' Glavnaia Redaktsiia Vostochnoi Literatury, 1991, pp. 168–81 and Ryzhenkov, 'Rol' voennogo vedomstva Rossii v razvitii otechestvennogo vostokovedeniia v XIX-nachale XX vv, pp. 99–100.

46 Soplenkov, *Doroga v Arzrum*, p. 16.

47 N. A. Khalfin, 'Zhizn' i trudy Ivana Fedorovicha Blaramberga in I. F. Blaramberg, *Vospominaniia*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA' Glavnaia Redakstiia Vostochnoi Literatury, 1978, pp. 1–24.

48 M. Alekseev, *Leksika Russkoi Razvedki (Istoricheskii Obzor)*, Moscow: 'Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniia', 1996, p. 84.

49 L. G. Zakharov (ed.), *Vospominaniia General-Fel'dmarshala Grafa Dmitriia Alekseevicha Miliutina 1816–1845*, Moscow: Rossiskii fond kultury studiia 'TRITE' Nikity Mikhailova 'Rossiiskii Archiv', 1997, p. 10.

50 L. G. Zakharov (ed.), *Vospominaniia General-Fel'dmarshala Grafa Dmitriia Alekseevicha Miliutina 1860–1862*, Moscow: Rossiskii fond kultury studiia 'TRITE' Nikity Mikhailova 'Rossiiskii Archiv', 1999, pp. 37–8.

51 On Miliutin's activities in the Staff Academy, see in particular: E. Willis Brooks, 'D. A. Miliutin. Life and Activity to 1856' Unpub. Ph.D Dissertation, Stanford University 1970, pp. 112–14.
52 Rich, 'Imperialism, Reform & Strategy: Russian Military Statistics, 1840–80', p. 629.
53 David A. Rich, *The Tsar's Colonels: Professionalism, Strategy, and Subversion in Late Imperial Russia*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998, p. 15, p. 74. Speranskii's law codification in fact served as a model of inspiration for Imperial statesmen, military and civilian, till the twentieth century: Lincoln, *In the Vanguard of Reform*, p. 48.
54 On the heights of bureaucratic inefficiency visible within the civilian ministries for much of the first half of the nineteenth century see in particular Lincoln, *In the Vanguard of Reform*, pp. 19–25.
55 Bilof, 'The Imperial Russian General Staff and China in the Far East 1880–88. A Study of the Operations of the General Staff', Unpub. Ph.D.diss., Syracuse University 1974, p. xx.
56 This crisis of information management, in which volume of information threatens to overwhelm coherent rationalization, continues to affect many bureaucracies today, the transfer of recording methods from paper to computer data having destroyed or at least disturbed the prioritization systems developed by most professions since the mid-nineteenth century. At the same time, at the military level, the development of 'Information Technology' – systems for aiding rapid command decision-making given the new data processing burdens modern warfare imposes – are creating what some have seen as a new revolution in military affairs (RMA). Analysis of the 'staff revolution', in Europe in the nineteenth century poses a question mark over how innovative this new development really is however. For a survey, see Jacob W. Kipp, 'The Contours of Future Armed Conflict and their Interpreter: Implications for National and International Security Policy', in General Makhmut Gareev, *If War Comes Tomorrow? The Contours of Future Armed Conflict*, London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1998, pp. 1–45.
57 Matthew H. Edney, *Mapping An Empire: The Geographical Construction of British India, 1765–1843*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997, p. 96.
58 N. P. Glinoetskii, *Istoricheskii Ocherk Nikolaevskoi Akademii General'nogo Shtaba*, St. Petersburg: Tipografiia shtaba voisk gvardii i Peterburgskago voennago okruga, 1882, pp. 162–3.
59 As Bruce Menning has pointed out however, Obruchev under P. S. Vannovskii (War Minister 1881–97) was in a difficult position, he had access to information and high persons without the full trust and authority necessary to implement measures he deemed appropriate for the army's continued welfare and development. Menning, *Bayonets before Bullets: The Imperial Russian Army, 1861–1914*, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1992, p. 90. Undoubtedly the two most significant studies of Obruchev's work in recent years have been David A. Rich, *The Tsar's Colonels* and O. R. Airapetov, *Zabytaia kar'era 'Russkogo Mol'tke', Nikolai Nikolaevich Obruchev (1830–1904)*, St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo 'Aleteiia', 1998.
60 Rich, *The Tsar's Colonels*, pp. 73–6.
61 Glinoetskii, *Istoricheskii Ocherk Nikolaevskoi Akademii General'nogo Shtaba*, pp. 272–3. Maksheev's account of the trip is recorded for posterity in 'Prebyvanie v Vernom i vstrecha Kaufmana. (Iz chetvertogo puteshestviia v 1867 A. I. Maksheev)', Soobshch. N.A.Maksheeva *RS* T.153 Kn.3, 1913, pp. 644–9.
62 Glinoetskii, *Istoricheskii Ocherk Nikolaevskoi Akademii General'nogo Shtaba*, p. 274.

63 M. I. Veniukov, *Iz Vospominanii. Kniga Vtoriaia 1867–1876*, Amsterdam: no pub., 1896, pp. 144–5.
64 Nathaniel Knight, 'Science, Empire, and Nationality: Ethnography in the Russian Geographical Society, 1845–55', in Burbank & Ransel (eds), *Imperial Russia: New Histories for the Empire*, p. 110.
65 P. Semenov [Tian-Shanskii], *Istoriia poluvekovoi deiatel'nosti Imperatorskogo Russkogo Geograficheskogo Obshchestva 1845–1895*, Chast 1 Otdel I, II & III, St. Petersburg: Tipografii V. Bezobrazova i Komp., 1896, pp. 8 8–92. On the impact of European science upon Russian geographical and oriental studies, see also Kalpana Sahni, *Crucifying the Orient: Russian Orientalism and the Colonization of Caucasus and Central Asia*, Thailand: White Orchid Press, 1997, pp. 18–20. On the significance of Ritter and his magnum opus, *Die Erkunde*, see Geoffrey J. Martin & Preston E. James, *All Possible Worlds: A History of Geographical Ideas*, Third Edition, New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1993, pp. 126–32.
66 D. Rayfield, *The Dream of Lhasa: The Life of Nikolay Przhevalsky (1839–88) Explorer of Central Asia*, London: Paul Elek, 1976, pp. 111–12.
67 Ritchie, 'The Asiatic Department during the reign of Alexander II', pp. 231–2.
68 Catherine B. Clay, 'Russian Ethnographers in the Service of Empire, 1856–62', *SR* 54, 1, 1995, pp. 45–62. The Imperial Geographical Society served as an important gathering point for a generation of liberals, many of whom were to go on to shape policy in the period of the Great Reforms. Studies of its personnel and influence are made in Lincoln, *In the Vanguard of Reform*, pp. 91–101. A less often noted but equally important relative of the IRGO was the Russian Archaeological Society (RAO), established in 1846 in St. Petersburg.
69 A. M. Riabchikov, 'A. E. Snesarev kak geograf', in V. V. Balabushevich & Grigory C. Kotovsky, (eds) *Andrei Evgen'evich Snesarev (Zhizn i Nauchnaia Deiatel'nost)*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA', Glavnaia redaktsiia vostochnoi literatury, 1973, p. 80.This definition of 'Military Geography' corresponds almost exactly to the modern understanding of 'Military Intelligence'. For biographical details on Snesarev, see E. A. Snesarev, 'Andrei Evgen'evich Snesarev' *NAA* 4, 1986, pp. 117–22 and V. Dudnik, & D. Smirnov, 'Vsia zhizn'-nauke' *VIZh* 2, 1965, pp. 47–57.
70 Edney, *Mapping An Empire*, p. 36. See also, pp. 1–36 on imperialism and geographical studies as a tool of control.
71 Brian Silverstein, 'Discipline, knowledge and imperial power in Central Asia: 19th century notes for a genealogy of social forms', *CAS* 21, 1, 2002, p. 92.
72 RGVIA F.400 Op. 1 D.1060 l.4ob-5. and P. A. Zaionchkovskii, *Voenny Reformy1860–70 godov v Rossii*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo Universiteta, 1952, p. 101.
73 M. Alekseev, *Voennaia Razvedka Rossii ot Riurika do Nikolaia II*, Moscow: Izdatel'skii dom 'Russkaia razvedka', 1998, (Kniga I.), pp. 55–9. The dispatch of military agents abroad by Russia actually dated back to the 1830s, but was dogged by bureaucratic difficulties; see also Gudron Persson, 'The Russian Army and Foreign Wars 1859–71', London School of Economics and Political Science Doctoral Dissertation, 1999, pp. 61–7.
74 Podpolkovnik S. M. Nebrenchin, 'Musul'manskaia Vostok i Russkaia Armiia', *VIZh* 4, 1995, pp. 37–8. On the explosion in Muslim pilgrimage created by more efficient European transport systems – the railway and the steam liner – and on the specific response of the Tsarist bureaucracy, see Daniel Brower, 'Russian Roads to Mecca: Religious Tolerance and Muslim Pilgrimage in the Russian Empire', *SR* 55, 3, 1996, pp. 567–85. More generally, see F. E. Peters, *The Hajj: The Muslim Pilgrimage to Mecca and the Holy Places*, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994, pp. 266–301 and Kemal H. Karpat, 'The *hirja* from Russia and the Balkans: the process of self-definition in the late Ottoman state', in Dale F.

Eickelman & J. Piscatori (eds), *Muslim Travellers: Pilgrimage, migration, and the religious imagination*, London: Routledge, 1990, pp. 131–52.

75 Alekseev, *Voennaia Razvedka Rossii* (Kniga I.), pp. 70–1.

76 Alekseev, *Voennaia Razvedka Rossii ot Riurika do Nikolaia II* (Kniga I), p. 71.

77 Ritchie, 'The Asiatic Department during the reign of Alexander II', p. 391.

78 Ibid., p. 185, p. 425. Zinov'ev was also crucial in persuading the Russian government of the need to launch the expedition; in this he was strongly supported by the Grand Duke Mikhail Nikolaevich, Viceroy of the Caucasus. See Firuz Kazemzadeh, *Russia and Britain in Persia 1864–1914: A Study in Imperialism*, New York: Yale University Press, 1968, p. 58. Zinov'ev went on to become head of the Foreign Ministry Asiatic Department.

79 Ritchie, 'The Asiatic Department during the reign of Alexander II', p. 229. In 1856 the Foreign Ministry Asiatic Department had already been relieved of jurisdiction over Kazakh relations. Allworth, 'Encounter', in Allworth (ed.), *Central Asia 130 Years of Russian Dominance, A Historical Overview*, p. 56.

80 Petr Petrovich Litvinov, *Gosudarstvo i Islam v Russkom Turkestane (1865–1917) (Po arkhivnym materialam)*, Elets: Epetskii gosudarstvennyi pedagogicheskii institut, 1998, pp. 65–7.

81 E. Iu. Sergeev & Ar. A. Ulunian, *Ne podlezhit oglasheniiu: Voennye Agenty Rossiiskoi Imperii v Evrope i na balkanakh: 1900–1914gg*, Moscow: IVI RAN, 1999, p. 44, M. Alekseev, *Voennaia Razvedka Rossii: Pervaia Mirovaia Voina* (Kniga III) Chast Pervaia, Moscow: Izdatel'skii dom 'Russkaia Razvedka', 2001, p. 21.

82 Alekseev, *Voennaia Razvedka Rossii* (Kniga I.), pp. 90–4.

83 I.V. Derevianko, 'Russkaia agenturnaia razvedka v 1902–5gg', *VIZh*, 5, 1989, p. 76. The view was that of Major-General A. A. Ignat'ev. For a similar appraisal, see Polovtsoff [Polovtsov], *Glory and Downfall*, p. 55.

84 Shelukhin, 'Razvedyvatel'nye organy v strukture vysshego voennogo upravleniia rossiiskoi imperii nachala XX veka (1906–14gg.)', *VMU*, 3, 1996, pp. 27–8.

85 D. A. Miliutin, *Vospominaniia: Tomsk, 1919*, Newtonville, Mass.: Oriental Research Partners, 1979, pp. 119–20.

86 RGVIA F.544 Op. 1 D.321 l.12–23ob.

87 L. G. Beskrovnyi, *Russkaia armiia i flot v XIX veke: Voenno-ekonomicheskii potentsial Rossii*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA', 1973, p. 190; R. K. I. Quested, *'Matey' Imperialists? The Tsarist Russians in Manchuria 1895–1917*, Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong Press, 1982, p. 32, p. 339, footnote 51; P. A. Skachkov, *Ocherki istorii russkogo kitaevedeniia*, pp. 242–5.

88 Shastitko (ed.), *Russko-Indiiskie Otnosheniia v XIXv*, p. 331 footnote 1, p. 334 footnote 5; N. A. Khalfin & P. M. Shastitko (eds), *Rossiia i Indiia*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA', Glavnaia Redaktsiia Vostochnoi Literatury, 1986, p. 194; A. N. Kononov, *Istoriia izucheniia tiurkskikh iazykov v Rossii: Dooktiabr'skii period*, Leningrad: Akademiia Nauk SSSR, Institut Vostokovedeniia, 1982, pp. 192–3.

89 Alekseev, *Voennaia Razvedka Rossii*, Kniga II, p. 46.

90 M. Pevtsov, 'Ofitserskie kursy vostochnykh' iazykov pri aziatskom departamente ministerstva inostrannykh del i ikh vospitanniki. (Kratkii ocherk). *VS* 2, 1902, pp. 186–7.

91 Ibid., pp. 194–5.

92 Nebrenchin, 'Musul'manskaia Vostok i Russkaia Armiia', p. 38, p. 42. The Russian army was far from alone in intelligence-gathering in Asia-such activities formed an important part of the Anglo-Russian 'Great Game'. On the British case, see I. P. Morris, 'British Secret Service Activity in Khorassan', *HJ* XXVII, 3, 1984, pp. 657–75, Derek Waller, *The Pundits: British Exploration of Tibet and Central Asia*, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1990, and Richard J.

Popplewell, *Intelligence and Imperial Defence: British Intelligence and the Defence of the Indian Empire 1904–1924*, London: Frank Cass, 1995. For a discussion of British India's Political Department, see W. Murray Hogben, 'British Civil-Military Relations on the North-West Frontier of India', in A. Preston & P. Dennis (eds), *Swords and Covenants: Essays in Honour of the Centennial of the Royal Military College of Canada, 1876–1976*, Canada: Rowman & Littlefield, 1976, pp. 123–47.

93 RGVIA F.400 Op. 1 D.4347 l.119–20, pp. 158–60. K. I. Velichko, and others (eds) *Voennaia Entsiklopediia*, T.X, XIII, XVIII, St. Petersburg: Tipografiia T-va. I. D. Sytina, 1912, 1913, 1915. *Spisok General'nogo Shtaba*, St. Petersburg: Voennaia Tipografiia, 1897–1914. Alekseev, *Voennaia Razvedka Rossii* (Kniga 1) p. 278.

94 RGVIA F.401, Op. 4, D.56 dl.1–2, and F.447, Op. 1, D.11, dl.10–20ob. Alekseev, *Voennaia Razvedka Rossii*, (Kniga 1), pp. 316–17, pp. 319–20, Kniga II, pp. 519–20, E. Podalko, 'Voennyi agent v Iaponii General V. K. Samoilov (1903–16), iz istorii rossiskoi diplomatii XX veka', *JSEES* 22, 2001, p. 76.

3 The Emergence of a Colonial Military Elite

1 On Bariatinskii see A. L. Zisserman, *Fel'dmarshal kniaz Aleksandr Ivanovich Bariatinskii, 1815–79*, Tom I-III, Moscow: Universitetskaia tipografia, 1890, Alfred J. Rieber (ed.), *The Politics of Autocracy: Letters of Alexander II to Prince Bariatinskii 1857–64*, Paris: Mouton & Co., 1966, and V. M. Mukhanov, 'Kniaz' Aleksandr Ivanovich Bariatinskii VI 5, 2003, pp. 60–86.

2 See for instance the letter of Cherniaev to Bariatinskii in Zisserman, *Fel'dmarshal 'kniaz' Aleksandr 'Ivanovich' Bariatinskii*, Tom III, pp. 343–5 and also MacKenzie, *The Lion of Tashkent*, pp. 26–28. In arguing the primacy of the conquest of the Caucasus in the formation of this ideology in the imperial context, I am following in part the argument deployed by Thomas Barrett in 'The Remaking of the Lion of Dagestan: Shamil in Captivity', *RR* 53, 1994, pp. 353–66.

3 On Skobelev see Hans Rogger, 'The Skobelev Phenomenon: the Hero and his Worship', *OSP* IX, 1976, pp, 46–78. At around the same time that General E. P. Kovalevskii, head of the Foreign Ministry Asiatic Department (1856–61) was advocating imperial expansion in Central Asia, he was also attempting to recruit Ivan Aksakov to produce a Pan-Slavic journal: M. B. Petrovich, *The Emergence of Russian Pan-Slavism*, 1856–70, New York: Columbia University Press, 1956, p. 115, pp. 120–1. Chris Bellamy makes the point that Slavophilism could encourage the study of Russia's Asiatic heritage in military works since this experience formed part of Russia's unique and hence distinctive cultural heritage: Chris Bellamy, 'Heirs of Genghis Khan: The Influence of the Tartar-Mongols on the Imperial Russian and Soviet Armies', *RUSI* 128, 1983, pp. 56–9.

4 On the *Vostochniki* see A. Malozemoff, *Russian Far Eastern Policy, 1881–1904 with special emphasis on the causes of the Russo-Japanese War*, Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1958, pp. 41–50 and David Schimmelpennick Van der Oye, 'The Asianist Vision of Prince Ukhtomskii', in Evtuhov, Gasparov, Ospovat, & Von Hagen (eds), *Kazan, Moscow, St. Petersburg: Multiple Faces of the Russian Empire*, Moscow: O.G.I., 1997, pp. 188–202. The latter article is based in part on Van der Oye's comprehensive thesis on the *vostochniki*, which significantly increases existing knowledge on the subject: '"Ex Oriente Lux" Ideologies of Empire and Russia's Far East, 1895–1904' Yale Doctoral Dissertation 1997, now also a book: Van der Oye, *Toward the Rising Sun. Russian Ideologies of Empire and the Path to War with Japan*, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 2001.

5 V. G. Chernukha, 'Imperator Aleksandr II i fel'dmarshal kniaz' A. I. Bariatinskii', in A. A. Fursenko (ed.), *Rossiia v XIX-XX vv. Sbornik statei k 70-letiiu so dnia rozhdeniia Rafaila Sholomovicha Ganelina*, St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo 'Dmitri Bulanin', 1998, p. 113.
6 Rieber, *The Politics of Autocracy: Letters of Alexander II to Prince A. I. Bariatinskii 1857–64*, p. 73.
7 T. N. Zagorodnikova (ed.), *'Bol'shaia Igra' v Tsentral'noi Azii: 'Indiiskii Pokhod' Russkoi Armii. Sbornik arkhivnykh dokumentov*, Moscow: IV RAN, 2005, p. 30.
8 William C. Fuller, *Strategy and Power in Russia 1600–1914*, New York: The Free Press, 1992, pp. 265–8, p. 458 and Andrew D. Lambert, *The Crimean War. British grand strategy, 1853–56*, Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 1990, pp. 341–7.
9 For details, see John J. Stephan, 'The Crimean War in the Far East' *MAS* III, 3, 1969, pp. 257–77.
10 Zisserman, *Fel'dmarshal kniaz' Aleksandr Ivanovich' Bariatinskii*, Tom II, pp. 120–1. A similar fear of British designs lay behind the slightly earlier urgings of Murav'ev-Amurskii to pursue a more active policy in Siberia: S. C. M. Paine, *Imperial Rivals. China, Russia and their Disputed Frontier*, Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1996, pp. 36–9.
11 For an English translation of Ignat'ev's account of this mission see J. L. Evans, (trans., ed.) *Mission of N. P. Ignat'ev to Khiva and Bukhara in 1858*, Newtonville MA: Oriental Research Partners, 1984. For an overview, see N. A. Khalfin, *Tri Russkie Missii. Iz Istorii vneshnei politiki Rossii na Srednem Vostoke vo vtoroi polovine 60-kh godov XIX veka*, Tashkent: Izdatel'stvo SAGU, 1956.
12 D. Mackenzie, *Count N. P. Ignat'ev: The Father of Lies?*, pp. 13–18.
13 N. S. Kiniapina, 'Sredniaia Aziia v planakh i deistviiakh Rossii v 60–80-e gody XIX veka', in S. L. Tikhvinskii (ed.), *Rossiia i strany blizhnego zarubezh'ia: Istoriia i Sovremennost'*, Moscow: IRI RAN, 1995, p. 130.
14 I. V. Alekseev, E. I. Zelenev, & V. I. Iakunin, *Geopolitika v Rossii. Mezhdu vostok i zapadom (konets XVIII-nachalo XXv.)*, St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo S.-Peterburgskogo universiteta, 2001, pp. 70–1.
15 Shastitko (ed.), *Russko-Indiiskie Otnosheniia v XIXv*, pp. 87–93.
16 Ibid., pp. 128–35. Khrulev justified his scheme by making reference to the plans of Napoleon, who had set himself the even more radical timetable of a 55-day march.
17 Ibid., pp. 94–100.
18 Milan Hauner, *What is Asia to Us? Russia's Asian Heartland Yesterday and Today*, Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990, p. 79.
19 D. I. Romanovskii, 'General Fel'dmarshal kniaz Aleksandr Ivanovich Bariatinskii i Kavkazskaia voina. 1815–79', *RS*, XXX, 1881, 268–70.
20 Zisserman, *Fel'dmarshal kniaz' Aleksandr Ivanovich' Bariatinskii*, Tom II, p. 105.
21 D. A. Miliutin & L. G. Zakharov (ed.), *Vospominaniia General-Fel'dmarshala Grafa Dmitriia Alekseevicha Miliutina 1843–56*, Moscow: Rossiskii fond kultury studiia 'TRITE' Nikity Mikhailova 'Rossiiskii Archiv', 2000, pp. 461–2.
22 D. I. Romanovskii, *Kavkaz i Kavkazskaia Voina. Publichnyia lektsii chitannyia v zale passazha v 1860 god*, St. Petersburg: Tipografii Tovarishchestvo 'Obshchestvennaia pol'za', 1860, pp. 412–13.
23 Romanovskii, 'General Fel'dmarshal kniaz Aleksandr Ivanovich Bariatinskii i Kavkazskaia voina, 1815–79, p. 286.
24 Romanovskii, *Kavkaz i Kavkazskaia Voina. Publichnyia lektsii*, p. 2.
25 Ibid., p. 48 A similar metaphor was used around this same period for Governor-General Murav'ev's seizure of the Amur; see Bassin, *Imperial Visions*, pp. 158–9.
26 Ibid., p. 407–8.

27 Zakharov (ed.), *Vospominaniia General-Fel'dmarshala Grafa Dmitriia Alekseevicha Miliutina 1860–62*, p. 266.
28 Rich, *The Tsar's Colonels*, p. 71.
29 Zisserman, *Fel'dmarshal kniaz' Aleksandr Ivanovich Bariatinskii*,Tom II, pp. 277–9.
30 On Bariatinskii's administrative ideas regarding local religions, see Firouzeh Mostashari, 'Colonial Dilemmas: Russian policies in the Muslim Caucasus', in R. P. Geraci & M. Khodarkovsky (eds), *Of Religion and Empire. Missions, Conversion and Tolerance in Tsarist Russia*, Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2001, pp. 235–8.
31 In the Caucasus War, the Russian administration in the past had also however attempted to utilize the Muslim clergy against Shamil. See for example: L. Klimovich, *Islam v tsarskoi Rossii. Ocherki*, Moscow: Gosudarstevennoe Antireligioznoe izdatel'stvo, 1936, pp. 26–7.
32 Dov Yaroshevski, 'Empire and Citizenship', in Brower & Lazzerini (eds), *Russia's Orient*, pp. 69–70. Yaroshevski does not establish the link with Bariatinskii's views as I have done, although he does mention Miliutin.
33 Romanovskii, *Kavkaz i Kavkazskaia Voina*, p. 366.
34 D. I. Romanovskii, *Zametki po Sredne-Aziatskomu voprosu*, St. Petersburg: Tipografii Tovarishchestvo 'Obshchestvennaia pol'za', 1868, pp. 259–61.
35 'Thus, this peculiarity is used both by us in the Caucasus and by the French in Algeria', Romanovskii, 'General Fel'dmarshal kniaz Aleksandr Ivanovich Bariatinskii i Kavkazskaia voina, 1815–79, p. 283. Bariatinskii was also influenced by comparison of the mekhketta system used in Chechnia to Russian policy in the Transcaucasus: V. N. Ivanenko, *Grazhdanskoe upravlenie Zakavkaz'em ot prisoedineniia Gruzii do namestnichestvo Velikogo Kniazia Mikhaila Nikolaevskaia. Istoricheskii ocherk*, Tiflis: Tipografiia Kantselerii Glavnonachal'stvuiushchogo grazhdanskoiu chast'iu na Kavkaze, Loris-Melikovskaia ulitsia, dom kazennyi, 1901, pp. 437–48. On the extent to which Russian experience in the Caucasus, Siberia and Kazakhstan was used in the formation of the administration of Turkestan see also D. V. Vasil'ev, 'Organizatsiia i funktsionirovanie glavnogo upravleniia v Turkestanskom general-gubernatorstve, 1865–84 gg, *VMU* 3, 1999, pp. 48–61.
36 I. P. Petrushevskii (ed.), *Kolonial'naia politika rossisskogo tsarizm v Azerbaidzhane v 20–60-kh gg. XIXv*, Chast' 2, Moscow/Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1937, pp. 286–90.
37 Seymour Becker, 'The Russian Conquest of Central Asia and Kazakhstan: Motives, Methods, Consequences', in H. Malik (ed.), *Central Asia: Its Strategic Importance and Future Prospects*, London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1994, p. 27. Count Palen, author of the largest Tsarist report on the administration in Turkestan, felt the attempt to undermine the force of the *Shari'a* by deference to 'local custom' was misguided in that the absence of just such 'local custom' amongst the natives merely allowed native judges to follow their own arbitrary will: D. S. M. Williams, 'Native Courts in Tsarist Central Asia', *CAR* XIV, 1, 1966, p. 10.
38 Quested, '*Matey' Imperialists? The Tsarist Russians in Manchuria 1895–1917*, p. 115.
39 D. A. Miliutin & Dmitri Arapov (ed.), 'Zakonnaia gosudarstvennaia tsel'-polnoe ob'edinenie, sliianie raznykh plemen D. A. Miliutin i ego stat'ia 'O raznoplemennosti v naseleniii gosudarstv', *Istochnik* 1, 2003, p. 61.
40 Ibid., p. 61–2. On this shift in state attitudes after 1900, and its particular effect in Russian Turkestan, see Daniel Brower, *Turkestan and the Fate of the Russian Empire*, London & New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003, pp. 140–51.
41 Marvin compared Russian methods of 'advancing, punishing and remaining' to a British policy of 'alternately advancing and retiring'. Both General Cherniaev

and Semenov Tian-Shanskii supported the Russian method as superior. C. Marvin, *The Russian Advance on India: Conversations with Skobeleff, Ignatieff and other distinguished Russian generals and statesmen on the Central Asian Question*, London: Sampson, Low & Co., 1882, pp. 130, 145.

42 Ignat'ev's successor as Head of the Foreign Ministry Asiatic Department, P. N. Stremoukhov (served 1864–75) was opposed to a specifically military conquest of Central Asia, preferring the route of commercial expansion. Miliutin overruled him, though his pet project for establishing a base at Krasnovodsk was accepted: Ritchie, 'The Asiatic Department', pp. 324–8 and D. Mackenzie, 'The Conquest and Administration of Turkestan, 1860–85', in M. Rywkin (ed.), *Russian Colonial Expansion to 1917*, London: Mansell Publishing Ltd, 1988, pp. 212–13.

43 RGVIA F. 165 Op. 1 D. 1741 l.28, 67.

44 N. S. Kiniapina, M. M. Bliev & V. V. Degoev, *Kavkaz i Srednaia Aziia vo vneshnei politike Rossii (Vtoraia polovina XVIII-80-e gody XIXv.)*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo Universiteta, 1984, pp. 221–6, V. O. Bobrovnikov, *Musulmane Severnogo Kavkaza*, p. 169.

45 Bariatinskii for example had advocated a railway linking the Aral and Caspian Seas. On such projects, alongside their commercial implications, see Khalfin, *Prisoedinenie Srednei Azii k Rossii (60–90-e gody XIXv.)*, pp. 88–101.

46 At the end of the 1860s for example Kaufman invited the Russian 'Society for the Lovers of Natural Science' to send experts to study his newly conquered region: A. P. Fedchenko, *Puteshestvie v Turkestan*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo geograficheskoi literatury, 1950, p. 9.

47 Glinoetski, *Istoricheskii Ocherk Nikolaevskoi Akademii General'nogo Shtaba*, p. 351.

48 Curzon, *Russia in Central Asia*, p. 331.

49 RGVIA F. 165 Op. 1 D.1765 l.101–4.

50 This chapter was recently published: 'Iz vospominanii generala A. N. Kuropatkin 1867–82gg', *Istoricheskie Arkhiv* 4, 1994, pp. 185–95.

51 A. A. Svechin, 'Stategiia XX veka na pervom etape. Planirovanie voiny i operatsii na sushe i na more v 1904–5 gg', in *Predrassudki i boevaia deistvitel'nost*, *Moscow: Izdatel'skii dom 'Finansovyi kontrol'*, 2003, pp. 170–1.

52 Rich, *The Tsar's Colonels*, pp. 86–114.

4 Tactics of Expansion, 1714–1885

1 H. Sutherland Edwards, *Russian Projects Against India: From the Czar Peter to General Skobeleff*, London: Remington & Co. Publishers, 1885, p. 284.

2 P. A. Zaionchkovskii (ed.), *Dnevnik D. A. Miliutina 1873–1875*, T.1, Moscow: Gosudarstvennaia ordena Lenina biblioteka SSSR, 1947, p. 86.

3 For an effective geographic summary of this terrain, see David Christian, *A History of Russia, Central Asia and Mongolia. Volume 1: Inner Eurasia from Prehistory to the Mongol Empire*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 1998, pp. 3–19 and Robert N. Taafe, 'The geographic setting', in D. Sinor (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp. 19–40.

4 M. Veniukov, 'Zametki o stepnykh' pokhodakh v Srednei Azii *VS* XVI, 1860, pp. 269–70.

5 *Sistematicheskii Katalog biblioteki Glavnogo Shtaba*, St. Petersburg: Tipografiia Golike, Nevskii No. 106, 1879, pp. 416–20.

6 M. Ivanin, *Opisanie zimniago pokhod v Khivu 1839–1840*, St. Petersburg: Tipografiia Tovarishchestva 'obshchestvennaia pol'za', 1874, pp. 5–7.

7 M. I. Ivanin, *O voennom iskustve i zavoevaniiakh' Mongol-Tatar i Sredne-Aziatskikh narodov pri Chingis-khane i Tamerlane*, St. Petersburg: Tipografiia Tovarishchestva 'obshchestvennaia pol'za', 1875.
8 A. I. Maksheev, *Puteshestviia po Kirgizskim Stepiam i Turkestanskomu Kraiu*, St. Petersburg: Voennaia Tipografiia (v zdanii Glavnogo Shtaba), 1896, p. 2.
9 On the formation of this intellectual current in the Staff Academy, see P. A. Zhilina (ed.), *Russkaia Voennaia Mysl' konets XIX-nachalo XXv.*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA', 1982, pp. 147–89.
10 Poruchik Khakovskii, 'Opyt' izucheniia voin Bogdan Khmel'nitskogo. Sostoianie voennogo iskusstva v Krymskikh Tatar i Zaporozhtsev. Pervyi pokhod Bogdan Khmel'nitskogo do pribytiia ego pod Beluiu tserkov', in *Sbornik sochinenii ofitserov Nikolaevskoi akademii General'nogo Shtaba*, Kn. 2, St. Petersburg: V tipografiia V.Golovina, 1863, p. 58.
11 Maksheev, *Puteshestviia po Kirgizskim Stepiam i Turkestanskomu Kraiu*, pp. 2–3.
12 A. I. Maksheev, *Stepnye Pokhody, (Iz No.19-go i 20-go 'Russkogo Invalida' 1856)*, St. Petersburg: Voennaia Tipografiia, 1856.
13 See 'Malaia Voina', in K. I. Velichko, *et al*., (eds), *Voennaia Entsiklopediia*, Moscow: Tip. T-val. D.Sytin, 1914, pp. 136–7.
14 V. V. Kvachkov, '" . . . front partizanskoi borby znachitel'no rasshirilsia i pereshel pod kontrol' armii." Otechestvennyi i zarubezhnyi opyt spetsial'nykh deistvii v tylu protivnik. *VIZh* 1, 2004, p. 16.
15 Baddeley, *The Russian Conquest of the Caucasus*, p. 392.
16 Marvin, *The Eye-Witness Account of the Disastrous Russian Campaign against the Akhal Tekke Turcomans*, London: W. H. Allen & Co., 1880, p. 167, p. 294.
17 A. N. Kuropatkin, *Zadachi Russkoi Armii*, Tom. II, St. Petersburg: Sklad V. A. Berezovskogo, Kommissionera voenno-uchebnykh zavedenii, 1910, p. 143.
18 Baddeley, *The Russian Conquest of the Caucasus*, pp. 127–8.
19 Van Dyke, *Russian Imperial Military Doctrine and Education, 1832–1914*, p. 137.
20 Dr Robert F. Baumann, *Russian-Soviet Unconventional Wars in the Caucasus, Central Asia and Afghanistan*, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas: Leavenworth Papers No. 20, 1993, pp. 76–7.
21 O. R. Airapetov, 'Russkaia armiia na sopkakh Man'chzhurii', *VI* 1, 2002, p. 66.
22 Of publications of the day intended to provide general guidance to an army officer in the colonial sphere based on study of past tactical and strategic situations, only the British *Small Wars* by C. E. Callwell, first published in 1896, revised in 1899 and 1906, aimed to be in any way comprehensive. Recently reprinted: *Small Wars: A Tactical Textbook for Imperial Soldiers*, London: Greenhill Books, 1906/1990. On the British experience, and the conflict over European and colonial war-fighting techniques, see also T. A. Moreman, *The Army in India and the Development of Frontier Warfare, 1849–1947*, London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1998. The American frontier army in its wars with the Indians presents another typical picture of accumulated experience often being represented in the actions and writings of individuals rather than in the production of doctrine: Robert M. Utley, *Frontiersmen in Blue: The United States Army and the Indian, 1848–1865*, Lincoln & London: University of Nebraska Press, 1967, p. 57.
23 Maksheev, 'Prebyvanie v Vernom i vstrecha kaufman (iz chetvertogo puteshestviia v 1867 A. I. Maksheev)', p. 648.
24 A. I. Maksheev, *Istoricheskii Obzor Turkestana i nastupatel'nogo dvizheniia v nei russkikh*, St. Petersburg: Voennaia Tipografiia (v zdanii Glavnogo shtaba), 1890, pp. 171–218.
25 On the British counter-case, see again: Moreman, *The Army in India*, pp. 1–30.
26 For a discussion of the development of the square and the Russian Asiatic military experience see Fuller, *Strategy and Power in Russia 1600–1914*, pp. 161–4 and Menning, 'The Army and Frontier in Russia', pp. 28–9.

27 Baddeley, *The Russian Conquest of the Caucasus*, pp. 269–70. The vulnerability of these dense columns in the Caucasus was mitigated to some extent by the use of sharpshooter companies who served as a security cordon around them. In the dense forests of Chechnia however such sharpshooter groups were often ambushed and overwhelmed, hence the reason why eradication of the forests formed such an important part of Russian tactical policy in the Caucasus throughout this period.
28 'O.K.', *Skobeleff and the Slavonic Cause*, London: Longmans Green & Co., 1883, p. 201.
29 Baumann, *Russian-Soviet Unconventional Wars . . .* , p. 72.
30 N. V. Tcharykow [Charykov], *Glimpses of High Politics: Through War & Peace 1855–1929*, London George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1931, pp. 173.
31 The news correspondent MacGahan set off to meet Kaufman armed with two shotguns, three revolvers, one double-barreled rifle, a Winchester rifle, and 'a few knives and sabres', J. A. MacGahan, *Campaigning on the Oxus and the Fall of Khiva*, Fourth Edition, London: Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1876, p. 30.
32 L. F. Kostenko, *Turkestanskii Krai: Opyt voenno-statisticheskago obozreniia*, St. Petersburg: Tipografiia i khromolitografiia A.Transhelia, 1880, Tom III., pp. 276–8.
33 Ibid., p. 130.
34 Ibid., p. 130. For details on Ivanin see also Chris Bellamy, 'Heirs of Genghis Khan . . . ', pp. 57–8.
35 Kapitan A. N. Kuropatkin, *Alzheriia*, St. Petersburg: Tipografiia V. A. Poletiki 1877, p. 309.
36 Kostenko, *Turkestanskii Krai: Opyt voenno-statisticheskago obozreniia* Tom.III, p. 133.
37 'Izvlechenie iz sochineniia Fersa o voennom oboze "Military Transport by Lieut. Col. George Armand Furse. Deputy Assistant Quarter Master-general, London"', SGTSMA XIX, 1885, pp. 1–80.
38 M. I. Veniukov, *Opyt Voennogo Obozreniia Russkikh Granits' v Azii*, Vypusk. I, St. Petersburg: Tipografiia V.Bezobrazov i Komp., 1873, p. 139.
39 Veniukov, 'Zametki o stepnykh' pokhodakh v Srednei Azii, pp. 280–1.
40 V. Potto, 'O Stepnykh' pokhodakh (Publichnyia lektsii, chitannyia pri Orenburgskom' iunkerskom' uchilishche, v. 1872)', *VS* 5, 1873, p. 31.
41 Ibid., pp. 31–2.
42 N. M. Przheval'skii, 'Kak puteshestvovat' po Tsentral'noi Azii SGTSMA XXXII, 1888, pp. 145–63.
43 A. M. Plekhanov, '"Protivupostavit sil'neishii oplot . . . pokusheniam inozem tsev", O perselenicheskoi politike Rossii v XIX veke', *VIZh* 2, 1997, pp. 66–71.
44 See Baddeley, *The Russian Conquest of the Caucasus*, pp. 114–16.
45 Ia. T. Starapuu, 'Kavkazskii Vopros vo vzgliadakh i deiatel'nosti D. A. Miliutina', *VMU* 3, 1998, p. 84. Miliutin did however attribute this quality to the Russian people as a whole, underlining his general criticism at the time that Russian policy in the Caucasus lacked method.
46 Robert H. McNeal, *Tsar and Cossack, 1855–1914*, Oxford: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1987, pp. 33–8.
47 Kostenko, *Turkestanskii Krai: Opyt voenno-statisticheskago obozreniia*, Tom III, p. 287.
48 'O.K.', *Skobeleff and the Slavonic Cause*, p. 203.
49 Callwell, *Small Wars*, pp. 414–15.
50 Thomas M. Barrett, *At the Edge of Empire: The Terek Cossacks and the North Caucasus Frontier, 1700–1860*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999, p. 176.

51 O. I. Sergeev, *Kazachestvo na russkom dal'nem vostoke v XVII-XIXvv*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA', 1983, p. 88.
52 N. M. Przheval'skii, 'O vozmozhnoi voine s Kitaem', SGTSMA I, 1883, pp. 299–300.
53 On the latter, see in particular: Robert P. Geraci, 'Going Abroad or Going to Russia? Orthodox Missionaries in the Kazakh Steppe, 1881–1917', in R. P. Geraci & M. Khodarkovsky (eds), *Of Religion and Empire*, pp. 301–3.
54 Daniel Brower, *Turkestan and the Fate of the Russian Empire*, pp. 129–30.
55 M. Veniukov, 'Obshchii obzor' postepennogo rasshireniia russkikh predelov' v Azii i sposobov' oborony ikh', *VS* 2, 1872, pp. 211–12. (Emphasis in the original.)
56 Sergeev, *Kazachestvo na russkom dal'nem vostoke v XVII-XIXvv*, pp. 82–91.
57 Gammer, *Muslim Resistance to the Tsar*, p. 97.
58 To the extent where General Cherniaev could take Tashkent, a city of 30, 000 inhabitants, with just 1,951 men and twelve guns in 1865.
59 Kostenko, *Turkestanskii Krai: Opyt' voenno-statisticheskago obozreniia* Tom III, p. 288.
60 Callwell, *Small Wars*, p. 37.
61 Baddeley, *The Russian Conquest of the Caucasus*, pp. 107–8, p. 125.
62 One of the earliest childhood memories of the Russian diplomat A. D. Kalmykov was being shown a pistol captured from a North Caucasus mountaineer and bearing the maker's stamp 'Birmingham' on the barrel. Kalmykow [Kalmykov], *Memoirs of a Russian Diplomat*, p. 3.
63 Moshe Gammer has argued that the influence of rifles was overrated, and political developments the more significant factor, the mountaineers having proved highly adaptable to new techniques used against them in the past. Both Bariatinskii and his subordinates praised the rifle highly in their reports to the Tsar. Russian experience in the Caucasus probably *did* reinforce the perception created in the Crimea that the whole army now needed this new weaponry. See Gammer, *Muslim Resistance to the Tsar*, pp. 286–90 and Zisserman, *Fel'dmarshal' kniaz' Aleksandr' Ivanovich' Bariatinskii*, Tom. III, pp. 309–10. See also V. G . . . n', 'O vvedenii nareznago oruzhiia v Kavkazskoi Armii' *VS* 6, 1859, pp. 171–6. This experienced Caucasus campaigner actually opposed the full introduction of rifles in the Caucasus on the grounds of the training complications they would introduce. Also, in dense woods, where in his view rapidity of fire was of more import than accuracy, the musket was equal to the rifle of that period.
64 E. U., 'Stepnaia voina v Turkestanskom krae', *VS* 7, 1880, pp. 91–3.
65 Veniukov, 'Zametki o stepnykh' pokhodakh v Srednei Azii', p. 285.
66 D. MacKenzie, 'The Conquest and Administration of Turkestan, 1860–85', in M. Rywkin (ed.), *Russian Colonial Expansion to 1917*, p. 218. Romanovskii's after-action report, which praises the role of artillery throughout the battle, has recently been reprinted: Podpolkovnik S. B. Pavlenko (ed.), 'Poslednii oplot vlasti Emira . . . vziat shturmom' *VIZh* 1, 1998, pp. 35–6.
67 N. I. Grodekov, *Voina v Turkmenii*, Tom. III, St. Petersburg: Tipografiia V. S. Balasheva, 1883–4, p. 199.
68 See for instance N. P. Ignat'ev in Evans (trans., ed.), *Mission of N.P. Ignat'ev to Khiva and Bukhara in 1858*, p. 30.
69 Curzon, *Russia in Central Asia*, p. 84.
70 Nebrenchin, 'Musul'manskii Vostok i Russkaia Armiia', p. 39.
71 Vladimir Bukherta (ed.), 'Voina byla vedena s nashei storony s krainei zhestokost'iu' Iz istorii prisoedineniia Srednei Azii k Rosssiiskoi imperii', *Istochnik* 3, 2002, p. 58.
72 Captain Gervais Lyons, *Afghanistan: The Buffer State. Great Britain and Russia in Central Asia*. Madras-London: Higginbotham & Co. – Luzac & Co., 1910, p. 96.

73 Daniel Brower is eloquent on this point: D. Brower, *Turkestan and the Fate of the Russian Empire*, pp. 58–65.
74 F. V. Greene, (First Lt. Corps of Engineers U.S. Army and lately military attaché to the United States Legation at St. Petersburg) *The Russian Army and its campaigns in Turkey in 1877–1878*, Second Edition, London: W. H. Allen & Co., 1880, p. 53.
75 John Bradley, *Guns for the Tsar: American Technology and the Small Arms Industry in Nineteenth-Century Russia*, DeKalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1990, pp. 108–16. Bradley is fundamental on the remarkable American-Russian trade in skills, ideas and weaponry in this period.
76 MacKenzie, 'The Conquest and Administration of Turkestan, 1860–85', p. 231.
77 General Sherman, visiting Russia in 1872, remarked of the Caucasus: ' . . . in the case of a European war, she [Russia] could not withdraw these forces, as the natives would surely rise', Norman E. Saul, *Concord and Conflict: The United States and Russia, 1867–1914*, Kansas: University of Kansas, 1996, p. 74 cited by Persson, 'The Russian Army and Foreign Wars . . . ', p. 148.
78 Romanovskii, *Kavkaz i Kavkazskaia Voina*, p. 366.
79 Sergei Dmitriev, 'Rossiiskie dvoriane Chingis-Khany' *Rodina* 2, 2004, p. 69 and Dmitri Arapov, '"Ne posiagat' na religiiu i ne stesniat' obychaev." General Chingis-Khan i "musul'manskii vopros"' *Rodina* 2, 2004, pp. 70–2.
80 D. N. Logofet, 'Zavoevanie Srednei Azii', in *Istoriia Russkoi armii i flota*, vol.12, Moscow: Tipografiia Russkogo Tovarishchestvo "Obozrenie", 1913, p. 87; Nebrenchin, 'Musul'manskii Vostok i Russkaia Armiia', p. 37.
81 V. Semennikov (ed.), 'Pis'ma I. I. Vorontsov-Dashkov Nikolaiu Romanovu (1905–15)', *KA*, XXVI, 1928, p. 7.
82 'Alikhanov-Avarskii', in K. I. Velichko, *et al.*, (eds), *Voennaia Entsiklopediia*, 1911, pp. 330–2. As if to stress the complexity of loyalties within this family, Alikhanov's brother, himself a Tsarist officer, died during the course of a Muslim uprising in the Caucasus following the Russian Civil War, perishing whilst fighting *alongside* the Muslim resistance against the Bolshevik forces. See M. B. Broxup, 'The Last Ghazawat: The 1920–21 Uprising', in Marie Bennigsen Broxup & A. Avtorkhanov, (eds), *The North Caucasus Barrier: The Russian advance towards the Muslim World*, London: Hurst & Company, 1992, p. 142.
83 Austin Lee Jersild, 'From Savagery to Citizenship: Caucasian Mountaineers and Muslims in the Russian Empire', in Brower & Lazzerini (eds), *Russia's Orient*, pp. 102–3 and Karpat, 'The *hirja* from Russia and the Balkans: the process of self-definition in the late Ottoman state', in Eickelman, *et al.*, (eds), *Muslim Travellers: Pilgrimage, migration, and the religious imagination*, 1990, p. 145.
84 D. I. Oleinikov, 'Chelovek na razlome kul'tur. Osobennosti psikhologii russkogo ofitsera-gortsa v period Bol'shoi Kavkazskoi voiny', *Zvezda* 8, 2001, p. 96.
85 S. M. Iskhakov, 'Tiurki-musul'mane v rossiiskoi armii (1914–17)', in S. G. Kliashtornyi *et al.*, (eds) *Tiurkologicheskii Sbornik 2002: Rossiia i Tiurkskii mir*, Moscow: Izdatel'skaia firma 'Vostochnaia Literatura', RAN, 2003, p. 245.
86 For details, see the chapter marked 'Conclusion.'

5 China, Europe, and the 'Yellow Peril'

1 A. A. Svechin, 'Stategiia XX veka na pervom etape. Planirovanie voiny i operatsii na sushe i na more v 1904–5 gg', in *Predrassudki i boevaia deistvitel'nost'*, p. 105.

2 A. E. Snesarev, 'Griadushchaia dal'nevostochnaia politika', in V. I. Marchenkov (ed.) *Afganskie Uroki: Vyvody dlia budushchego v svete ideinogo naslediia A. E. Snesareva*, Moscow: Voennyi universitet russkii put, 2003, pp. 89–90.
3 Kuropatkin, *Zadachi*, Tom II, pp. 146–7.
4 [Emphasis added] Fuller, *Strategy and Power*, pp. 297–8.
5 Airapetov, *Zabytaia kar'era "Russkogo Mol'tke"*, pp. 246–52.
6 Vladimir Zolotarev *Voennaia Bezopasnost Otechestva (Istoriko-pravovoe issledovanie)*, Moscow: Kanon-Press, 1998, pp. 252–4.
7 Ibid., p. 265.
8 William C. Fuller 'The Russian Empire', in Ernest R. May (ed.), *Knowing One's Enemies: Intelligence Assessment Before the Two World Wars*, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984, p. 109. On the manner in which these dispositions affected army morale, see also Fuller's later work *Civil-Military Conflict*, p. 15.
9 One of the best surveys of Tsarist planning for European warfare remains A. M. Zaionchkovskii's *Podgotovka Rossii k Mirovoi Voine (Plany voiny)*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe Voennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1926. Norman Stone's *The Eastern Front 1914–1917*, London: Hodder & Staughton, 1975, is still the best English-language account of Russia's experience in the First World War. Stone is particularly damning of the Tsarist army's views on fortification and cavalry. See also N. Stone 'The Historical Background of the Red Army', in J. Erickson & E. J. Feuchtwanger (eds), *Soviet Military Power and Performance*, London: Macmillan Press, 1979, pp. 3–17 and I. I. Rostunov, *Russkii front pervoi mirovoi voiny*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo "NAUKA", 1976.
10 See for instance Paine, *Imperial Rivals*; Malozemoff, *Russian Far Eastern Policy*; Quested, *'Matey' Imperialists? The Tsarist Russians in Manchuria 1895–1917*; Clubb, *China and Russia: The "Great Game"*; Romanov & Jones (trans.), *Russia in Manchuria (1892–1906)*. For an overview: Stephan, *The Russian Far East: A History*.
11 N. N. Murav'ev 'Zapiska o predlagaemykh voennykh deistviiakh protiv Shamilia', in Ivan Barsukov (ed.), *Graf Nikolai Nikolaevich' Murav'ev-Amurskii: Po ego pis'mam',ofitsial'nym dokumentam', razskazam sovremennikov i pechatnym istochnikam' (Materialy dlia biografii)*, Tom II., pp. 1–17. For character details see also W. Bruce Lincoln, *The Conquest of a Continent: Siberia and the Russians* London: Jonathan Cape, 1993, pp. 189–96.
12 Paine, *Imperial Rivals*, p. 352. Murav'ev ceased to be East Siberian Governor-General in 1860. Ignat'ev persuaded the Chinese to sign the Treaty of Peking that same year, though the western delimitations implicit in that treaty were not settled till the Treaty of Tarbagatai in 1864.
13 Rayfield, *The Dream of Lhasa*, pp. 27–8. See also Steven G. Marks, *Road to Power: The Trans-Siberian Railroad and the Colonization of Asian Russia 1850–1917*, London: I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd., 1991, pp. 14–27 on Cossack settlements and living conditions in the Far East, and Malozemoff, *Russian Far Eastern Policy*, pp. 1–19. The most comprehensive treatment of Russian disillusionment with the Far East, including Murav'ev-Amurskii's personal fall from grace, is given in Bassin, *Imperial Visions*, pp. 233–73.
14 Veniukov, *Opyt Voennogo Obozreniia Russkikh Granits' v Azii* Vypusk. I, p. 168.
15 Ibid., p. 95.
16 Ibid., pp. 137–9.
17 Veniukov, *Iz Vospominaniia*, T.2, p. 145. Veniukov had a particularly acrimonious relationship with the director of the Asiatic Department of the MID, Stremoukhov, whom he labeled 'a fop' who 'always damaged the Russian cause' (Ibid., pp. 162, 168.)

18 I. F. Babkov, *Vospominaniia o moei sluzhbe v zapadnoi Sibiri 1859–1875g: Razgranichenie s zapadnym Kitaem 1869g,* St. Petersburg: Tipografiia V.F.Kirshbauma, d. M-va Finansov, na Dvorts. Ploshch., 1912, pp. 485–517.
19 Bilof, 'The Imperial Russian General Staff and China in the Far East 1880–88. A Study of the Operations of the General Staff' p. ix and Gen. Sht. Podpolkovnik Ragoza *Kratkii ocherk zaniatiia Amurskogo kraia i razvitiia boevykh' sil' priamurskogo voennogo okruga,* Khabarovsk: Tipografiia Shtaba Priamurskogo Voennogo Okruga, 1891, pp. 130–1.
20 Gen. Sht. Podpolkovnik Ragoza, *Kratkii ocherk zaniatiia Amurskogo kraia i razvitiia boevykh' sil' priamurskogo voennogo okruga*, pp. 141–2 and John J. Stephan, *The Russian Far East*, pp. 55–6.
21 Hauner, *What is Asia to Us?*, p. 82.
22 (Sekretno) *Obzor deiatel'nosti Voennogo Ministerstva v Tsarstvovanie Imperatora Aleksandra III 1881–1894*, St. Petersburg: Gosudarstvennaia Tipografiia, 1903, pp. 183–9. On the European fortifications, see also O.V. Saksonov, 'Zarozhdenie i razvitie otechestvennoi voennoi strategii', in V. A. Zolotarev (ed.), *Istoriia voennoi strategii Rossii*, Moscow: Kuchkovo Pole Poligrafresursy, 2000, p. 96.
23 On Kaufman's changing assessments of the situation in Kashgaria, see S. Rostovskii, 'Tsarskaia Rossiia i Sin'-Tszian v XIX-XX vekakh' *IM* 3, 55, 1936, pp. 34–5.
24 On the geographical results of these missions, see Jack A. Dabbs, *History of the Discovery and Exploration of Chinese Turkestan*, The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1963, pp. 41–9. For a brief survey of Anglo-Russian diplomatic rivalry in this region see Louis E. Frechtling, 'Anglo-Russian Rivalry in Eastern Turkestan, 1863–81' *JRCAS* 26, 3, 1939, pp. 471–89. A study unseen by the present author of events in Kashgaria is the thesis of Ho-dong Kim, 'The Muslim Rebellion and the Kashgar Emirate in Chinese Central Asia, 1864–77', Ph. D. diss., Harvard University 1986. In this connection, see also Paul Henze, 'The great game in Kashgaria: British and Russian missions to Yakub Bey' *CAS* 8, 2, 1989, pp. 61–95 and Kemal H. Karpat, 'Yakub Bey's relations with the Ottoman sultans: a reinterpretation' *CMRS* XXXII, 1, 1991, pp. 17–32.
25 On Valikhanov, see Kermit E. McKenzie, 'Chokan Valikhanov: Kazakh Princeling and Scholar', *CAS* 8, 3, 1989, 1–30. On the diplomatic background to Valikhanov's work in the 1850s, see V. A. Moiseev, *Rossia i Kitai v Tsentral'noi Azii (Vtoraia polovina XIX v.-1917g.)*, Barnaul: Az Buka, 2003, pp. 36–9.
26 M. K. Baskhanov, 'Vostochnyi Turkestan: Zagadki Voennoi Istorii', in *Problemy Voennoi Istorii Narodov Vostoka (Biulletin' Kommissii po voennoi istorii narodov vostoka)* Vypusk I, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA'Glavnaia Redaktsiia Vostochnoi Literatury, 1988, p. 38. On Turkish arms trading with Yakub Bek, see Kemal H. Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith and Community in the Late Ottoman State*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 57–63.
27 A. N. Kuropatkin & Walter E. Gowan (trans.) *Kashgaria [Eastern or Chinese Turkistan] Historical and Geographical Sketch of the Country; its military strength, industries and trade*, Calcutta: Thacker, Spink & Co., 1882, pp. 202–40.
28 V. S. Kadnikov, 'Iz istorii kul'dzhinskogo voprosa' *IV* CXXIV, 1911, 898.
29 The two best existing studies of this diplomatic crisis are Immanuel C. Y. Hsu, *The Ili Crisis: A Study of Sino-Russian Diplomacy 1871–1881*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965, and, more recently, and based on new archival research: A. D. Voskressenskii, *Diplomaticheskaia istoriia russko-kitaiskogo Sankt-Peterburgskogo dogovora 1881 goda*, Moscow: Pamiatniki istoricheskoi mysli, 1995.
30 Kuropatkin, *The Russian Army and the Japanese War*, pp. 92–3.

31 For Przheval'skii's first war plan against China, see 'O vozmozhnoi voine s Kitaem' SGTSMA I (1883), pp. 293–306.
32 On Przheval'skii as a popular phenomenon, see Daniel Brower, 'Imperial Russia and its Orient: The Renown of Nikolai Przhevalsky' *RR* 53, 3, 1994, pp. 367–81.
33 Schimmelpenninck Van Der Oye, *Toward the Rising Sun*, p. 24, and more generally, pp. 24–41.
34 Kuropatkin, *Zadachi*, Tom.II, p. 101.
35 'The Ili Battle Plan' SGTSMA XXVIII, pp. 304–6, quoted in Bilof, 'The Imperial Russian General Staff and China in the Far East', p. 182.
36 Kolpakovskii, Gerasim Alekseevich (1819–96) Organizer of the Semirech'e Cossack forces. Military service began at 16, at 21 participated in action in the Caucasus, going on the serve in Moldavia, Hungary and Central Asia. A frequent substitute for Kaufman in times of illness, Governor-General of the Steppe following the administrative reorganization of Turkestan after 1882. '...a typical representative of the Turkestan forces, having spent all his life in steppe expeditions', Logofet, 'Zavoevanie Srednei Azii', p. 108.
37 Bilof, 'The Imperial Russian General Staff and China in the Far East', p. 183.
38 Hsu, *The Ili Crisis*, p. 100 and Terent'ev, *Istoriia Zavoevaniia Srednei Azii* Tom III, p. 256.
39 Lt.-Gen. M. A. Terent'ev, *Istoriia Zavoevaniia Srednei Azii* Tom III, pp. 258–9.
40 See for example Miliutin's assessment: Zaionchkovskii (ed.), *Dnevnik D. A. Miliutina*, T.III, pp. 239–40.
41 Kadnikov, 'Iz istorii kul'dzhinskogo voprosa', p. 903.
42 RGVIA F.846 Op. 2 D.21 l.1–44.
43 Przheval'skii, 'O vozmozhnoi voine s Kitaem' SGTSMA I (1883), pp. 301–5, and supplement, pp. 317–21.
44 Bilof, 'The Imperial Russian General Staff and China in the Far East', pp. 98–147, 165–8. The main area of dispute lay as to which theatre presented the best environmental conditions for a Russian advance; Manchuria was well provisioned but conditions could be severe, with flooding, marshes, and plagues of horse flies. In addition too great an advance from this base would expose a weak supply line between the Ussuri *oblast'* and European Russia, and Russian columns could fall victim to partisan attacks. The Mongolians by contrast were seen as being friendly to the Russians. Mongolia offered the shortest direct route to Peking but scarcity of resources, most particularly water, would require Russian troops to move in split detachments, and deep gorges and walled towns further along the route could slow columns already severely taxed by a long desert march. The Soviets were forced to consider many of the same type of problems when planning their offensive against the Japanese in 1945. They opted for a combined assault through both Mongolia and Manchuria, using Mongolian cavalry in a special horse-mechanized group to pass through the Gobi Desert: Alvin D. Coox, *Nomonhan: Japan Against Russia, 1939*, California: Stanford Press, 1990, pp. 1033–74 and LTC David Glantz, *August Storm: Soviet Tactical and Operational Combat in Manchuria, 1945*, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas: Leavenworth Papers No.8, 1985.
45 A. Krausse, *Russia in Asia*.p. 180.
46 For standard biographies on these figures, mostly hagiographic but often incorporating their original reports, see for example: T. N. Ovchinnikova, *P. K. Kozlov-Issledovatel' Tsentral'noi Azii*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA', 1964, P. K. Kozlov, *Russkii Puteshestvennik v Tsentral'noi Azii: Izbrannye trudy k stoletiiu so dnia rozhdeniia (1863–1963)*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1963, & S. A. Ogurtsov, *Mikhail Vasil'evich Pevtsov: Geograf-puteshestvennik*, Omsk: Omskoe Knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1960.

47 G. M. Iskhakov, *Etnograficheskoe izuchenie uigurov vostochnogo Turkestana russkimi puteshestvennikami vtoroi poloviny XIX veka*, Alma-Ata: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA', 1975, p. 97.
48 I. S. Makarov, 'Formirovanie tsentral'nykh organov upravleniia voennoi razvedkoi rossiiskoi imperii (posledniaia tret' XIX-nachalo XXv.) in *Rossiia v mirovom politicheskom protsesse. Materialy vtoroi mezhdunarodnoi nauchno-teoreticheskoi konferentsii*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Rossiiskogo universiteta druzhby narodov, 1997, p. 58.
49 Malozemoff, *Russian Far Eastern Policy 1881–1904*, p. 22.
50 L. N. Sobolev, 'Oborona russko-kitaiskoi granitsy' quoted in Bilof, 'The Imperial Russian General Staff and China in the Far East', p. 149.
51 Malozemoff, *Russian Far Eastern Policy*, pp. 24–6, 39–40. On the Trans – Siberian railroad see also Marks, *Road to Power*, D. Geyer, *Russian Imperialism: The Interaction of Domestic and Foreign Policy, 1860–1914*, Leamington Spa.: Berg Publishers Ltd., 1987, and Theodore H. Von Laue, *Sergei Witte and the Industrialization of Russia*, NY & London: Columbia University Press, 1973. Geyer argues for the predominance of commercial over strategic considerations in Witte's railway project; his assessment has not met general consent amongst historians however.
52 V. V. Gushkov & A. A. Sharavin, *Na karte General'nogo Shtaba-Man'chzhuriia*, Moscow: Institut politicheskogo i voennogo analiza, 2000, pp. 235–43. Towards the end of this period there was compiled a literary memorial to this expansion of effort by the military topographical department. See M. N. Levitskii (ed.), *V trush-chobakh Man'chzhurii i nashikh vostochnykh okrain.' Sbornik ocherkov, raskazov i vospominanii Voennykh Topografov*, Odessa: Tipo-litografiia Shtaba Okruga, 1910.
53 Gushkov & Sharavin, *Na karte General'nogo Shtaba-Man'chzhuriia.*, pp. 325–6.
54 For a brief survey of this important period of Chinese military history, the reader is advised to consult the work of David B. Ralston: *Importing the European Army: The Introduction of European Military Techniques and Institutions into the Extra-European World, 1600–1914*, Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1990, pp. 107–41.
55 'Reorganizatsii vos'mi-znamennykh' voisk' (Pa-Tsi)' SGTSMA LXXXV (1912), pp. 89–152.
56 Ralph L. Powell, *The Rise of Chinese Military Power 1895–1912*, NY. & London: Kennikat Press, 1955, pp. 19–45. V. Nedzvetskii, 'Voennyia Reformy v Kitai' Inostrannoe Voennoe Obozrenie. *VS* 12, 1886, 191–208.
57 See for example: 'Svedeniia o peremenakh v vooruzhenykh sil Kitai za 1882–83g. (Iz Jahresberichte uber die Veranderungen und Forschritte im Militarwesen, Lobell 1883)' SGTSMA XII (1884), pp. 286–9. On the Chinese strategic dilemma in this period see Paine, *Imperial Rivals*, pp. 51–3.
58 'Zapiska o Kitae Praporoshchika 2 Vostochnogo Sibirskogo Strelkovogo bataliona Shulyngina' SGTSMA VII (1884) p. 122.
59 RGVIA F.447, Op. 1, D.11. l.2–7ob.
60 *Ibid.*,l.20–20ob.
61 RGVIA F.401, Op. 4, D.56. l.1.
62 RGVIA F.846 Op. 1 D.55.l.2–3.
63 *Ibid.*,l.38–41ob, 57–57ob.
64 RGVIA F.401, Op. 4, D.56. l.2.
65 *Ibid.*,l.3.
66 The section of Shneur's trip relating to his journey through India can be found printed in Shastitko (ed.), *Russko-Indiiskie Otnosheniia v XIXv*, pp. 251–5.
67 RGVIA F.1396 Op. 2 D.127. l.4–5ob.
68 RGVIA F.447 Op. 1 D.11. l.128–29, 161–64.

69 D. Pozdneev, *Kriticheskaia zametka o knige polkovnik D. V. Putiata 'Kitai'* St. Petersburg: Tipografiia V. S.Valasheva i Ko., 1895, pp. 9–20.
70 Gen. Sht. Polkovnik Putiata, 'Kitai: Geograficheskie ocherk. Naselenie. Gosudarstvennyi budzhet v vneshnaia torgovlia. Vooruzhennyia sily. Russko-Kitaiskaia granitsa', SGTSMA LIX (1895) p. 261.On Chinese attempts to reform the Banner forces, see also Robert H. G. Lee, *The Manchurian Frontier in Ch'ing History*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press 1970, pp. 123–5.
71 Gen. Sht. Polkovnik Putiata, 'Otchet o poezdke po Man'chzhurii cherez Inkou, Mukden, Girin, Dalin, Ashikho, Paiensu, San'-Sin', Ningutu, Khunchun' vo Vladivostok' 1888g', SGTSMA XXXVIII (1889), pp. 36–7.
72 Ibid., pp. 89–91.
73 Gen.Sht. Polkovnik Putiata, 'Vooruzhennyia sily Kitaia i printsipy voennogo iskusstva v tolkovanii drevnikh kitaiskikh polkovodtsev. Beregovaia oborona Kantona 1886 goda. Zametki o porte Artur. Svedeniia o Kitaiskikh voiskakh v Khunchune 1888', SGTSMA XXXIX (1889), pp. 171–2.
74 Putiata, 'Kitai: Geograficheskie ocherk. Naselenie. Gosudarstvennyi budzhet v vneshnaia torgovlia. Vooruzhennyia sily. Russko-Kitaiskaia granitsa', p. 263.
75 Ibid., pp. 237–51.
76 Ibid., p. 265.
77 Ibid., p. 265.
78 Rediger, *Istoriia Moei Zhizni: Vospominaniia Voennogo Ministra* T.1, p. 316.
79 Ibid., p. 357.
80 On Russian attitudes to the Boxer Rebellion, see David Schimmelpenninck Van Der Oye, 'Russia's ambivalent response to the Boxers', *CMR* 41, 1, 2000, 57–78 and Malozemoff, *Russian Far Eastern Policy 1881–1904*, pp. 124–44.
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83 GSh Podpolkovnik Fedorov 'Kratkii voenno-statisticheskii obzor' Iliiskago kraia' *Dobavlenie k sbornik materialov po Azii* No. 7 (1902), pp. 160–1 and 'Kratkii Ocherk sovremennago polozheniia v zapadnom' Kitae (Kashgarii i Chzhungarii) k 20 Dekabria 1900', p. 74.
84 'Kratkii Ocherk sovremennago polozheniia v zapadnom' Kitae (Kashgarii i Chzhungarii) k 20 Dekabria 1900', p. 77.
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86 Polkovnik Baron Mannergeim, 'Predvaritel'nyi otchet o poedzke, predpriniatoi po Vysochaishemu poveleniu cherez Kitaiskii Turkestan i severnyia provintsii Kitaia v gorod Pekin', v 1906–7, i 8 gg', SGTSMA LXXXI (1909). For a study of the scientific results of this expedition, including Mannerheim's collection of 1370 photographs, see P. Koskikallio & A. Lehmuskallio (eds), *C. G. Mannerheim in Central Asia 1906–1908*, Helsinki: National Board of Antiquities, 1999.
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88 Alekseev, *Voennaia Razvedka Rossii* (Kniga 2.) p. 502.
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90 Ibid., pp. 87–113.

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92 G. Lensen, *The Russian Push Toward Japan: Russo-Japanese Relations, 1697–1875*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1959, pp. 447–71.
93 M. I. Veniukov, 'O sovremennom sostoianii voennykh' sil' i sredstv' Iaponii i Kitaia po dannym' 1869–70 godov', *VS*, 8, 1871, 239–43.Veniukov concluded that only Britain, as a major naval power in the region, could threaten Japan.
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95 Alekseev, *Voennaia Razvedka Rossii*, Kniga I, pp. 77–78.
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99 Ibid., l.11.
100 Ibid., l.13–13ob. This change regarding the number of military agents in China was shortly to be carried out, again indicating Putiata's level of influence in such matters.
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103 E.V. Dobychina, 'Razvedka Rossii o Iaponskom voennom vliianii v Kitae na rubezhe XIX-XX vekov', *VI*, 10, 1999, 127–31.
104 Zvonarev, *Agenturnia razvedka: Russkaia agenturnaia razvedka do i vo vremia voiny 1914–1918gg.*, pp. 24–5.
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106 *Russko-Iaponskaia Voina 1904–1905gg: Rabota Voenno-Istoricheskii Kommissii po opisaniiu Russko-Iaponskoi Voiny* T.1, pp. 430–1.
107 Ibid., p. 441.
108 Menning, *Bayonets before Bullets*, p. 154, Van Der Oye, 'Russian Military Intelligence on the Manchurian Front, 1904–05', p. 26.
109 The flawed assumptions made by Kuropatkin on this trip later formed one of the major charges of blame levelled by Finance Minister Witte over the mishandling and outcome of the Russo-Japanese War in the messy post-war period of mutual recriminations within Tsarist governmental circles.
110 Gushkov & Sharavin, *Na karte General'nogo Shtaba-Man'chzhuriia*, p. 55.
111 Ibid., pp. 60–1.
112 Alekseev, *Voennaia Razvedka Rossii*, Kniga I, pp. 164–5.
113 M. Grulev', *Zapiski generala-evreia*, Paris: no.pub., 1930, pp. 205–6, 233.
114 I.V. Derevianko, 'Russkaia razvedka i kontrrazvedka v voine 1904–5gg', in *Tainy Russko-Iaponskoi Voiny*, Moscow: Izdatel'skaia gruppa 'Progress': 'Progress-Akademiia', 1993, pp. 143–57.
115 Gushkov & Sharavin, *Na karte General'nogo Shtaba-Man'chzhuriia*, p. 87, pp. 341–5, pp. 368–9.
116 On these 'blanks on the map', in wartime, see for example: Polovtsoff, [Polovtsov] *Glory and Downfall*, pp. 66–7.
117 For details on this operation, see D. B. Pavlov & S. A. Petrov, 'Iaponskie den'gi i russkaia revolutsiia', in *Tainy Russko-Iaponskoi Voiny*, pp. 7–69 and Motojiro Akashi, *Rakka ryusui: Colonel Akashi's Report on His Secret Cooperation with the Russian Revolutionary Parties during the Russo-Japanese War: Selected chapters*

translated by Inaba Chiharu and edited by Olavi K.Falt and Antti Kujala, Helsinki: SHS, 1988. On Russian counter-measures, particularly code-breaking, see Inaba Chiharu, 'Franco-Russian Intelligence Collaboration against Japan during the Russo-Japanese War, 1904–05' *JSEES* 19, 1998, 1–23.

118 I. V. Derevianko, 'Russkaia agenturnaia razvedka v 1902–5gg' *VIZh* 5, 1989, 76.

119 A. N. Kuropatkin, *Ocherk dvizheniia russikh' voisk' v Srediuiu Aziiu* St. Petersburg: Tipografiia shtaba voisk Gvardii i Peterburgskago Voennogo Okruga 1887, pp. 31–2.

120 A. N. Kuropatkin, *The Russian Army and the Japanese War*, pp. 64–5.

121 Van Dyke, *Russian Imperial Military Doctrine and Education, 1832–1914*, p. 117.

122 Iu. F. Subbotin, 'A. N. Kuropatkin i Dal'nevostochnyi konflikt. 'Dela na Dal'nem Vostoke mogut privesti nas k konfliktu s Iaponiei', in I. S. Rybachenok (ed.) *Rossiia: Mezhdunarodnoe polozhenie i voennyi potentsial v seredine XIX-nachale XX veka: Ocherki*, Moscow: IRI RAN 2003, pp. 132–3, 140.

123 Airapetov, *Zabytaia kar'era 'Russkogo Mol'tke'*, p. 270.

124 Van Dyke, *Russian Imperial Military Doctrine and Education, 1832–1914*, p. 137.

125 Kuropatkin, *Zadachi*, Tom.III, p. 253.

126 Ibid., p. 253.

127 Kuropatkin, *The Russian Army and the Japanese War*, p. 87.

128 For this turnaround in the thought of Kuropatkin and others, from 'Westerners' to 'Easterners', see Fuller, *Strategy and Power*, p. 424. The reader will note however in the foregoing some ambiguity expressed as to whether the issue was ever so black-and-white insofar as Kuroptakin was concerned.

129 Kuropatkin, *Zadachi*, Tom.III., pp. 420–3.

130 Ibid., p. 255.

131 Kuropatkin, *Zadachi*, Tom.II, p. 147. On Witte's earlier proposals see D. Brower, *Turkestan and the Fate of the Russian Empire*, pp. 83–4.

132 Kuropatkin, *Russko-Kitaiskii Vopros'*, p. 172.

133 The phrase was taken from Alexander III.

134 Kuropatkin, *Russko-Kitaiskii Vopros'*, p. 174. Mendeleev was himself a vocal advocate for an eastern shift in the Russian Empire's natural centre of gravity. See Hauner, *What is Asia to Us?*, pp. 152–7.

135 Kuropatkin, *Russko-Kitaiskii Vopros'*, pp. 174–84.

136 See E. A. Belov, 'Russko-Kitaiskii spor v 1911–12 gg. po voprosu peresmotra Peterburgskogo dogovora 1881g. (Po russkim arkhivnym dokumentam.)' *VO*, 5, 1993, 143–54 and S. S. Grigortsevich, 'Dal'nevostochnaia politika Rossii', in *Istoriia vneshnei politiki Rossii* T.2, p. 288. On Sino-Russian diplomatic tension in this period, including a real war scare in the 1910–11 period, see also Quested, *'Matey' Imperialists? The Tsarist Russians in Manchuria 1895–1917*, pp. 197–208.

137 RGVIA F.2000 Op. 1 D.3611 l.50–55.

138 On this issue, see for example: Alpo Juntunen, 'The influence of railway construction in Mongolia: the shift from Chinese to Russian/Soviet protection' *JTH* 12, 2, 1991, 175. I am most grateful to Dr. Juntunen for his help and hospitality during my stay in Helsinki. For details on Tsarist policy regarding Mongolia, see A. L. Popov, 'Tsarskaia Rossiia i Mongoliia v 1913–14gg', *KA* 37, 1929, 3–68.

139 I. V. Derevianko, 'Russkaia razvedka i kontrrazvedka v voine 1904–5gg' Dokumenty. in *Tainy Russko-Iaponskoi Voiny*, pp. 190–3.

140 Lt. Kushelev, 'Otchet o poezdke s voenno-nauchnoiu tsel'iu v Mongoliiu' SGTSMA LXXXVI (1913), pp. 284–374.

141 Iu. Kushelev, *Mongoliia i Mongol'skii vopros*, St. Petersburg: Russkaia Skoropechatnia, 1912. On the problems associated with the labeling of reports in the *Sbornik . . . po Azii* 'secret', see contemporary complaints in, for example: RGVIA F.400 Op. 1 D.4273 l.10. These complaints are confirmed by my own experience of handling copies of the *Sbornik* in Helsinki, where very often whole

sections in preserved editions were found with their pages uncut-exciting for a researcher, but troubling for a General Staff seeking to expand its membership's knowledge of Asia!

142 Kushelev, 'Otchet o poezdke s voenno-nauchnoiu tsel'iu v Mongoliiu', pp. 287–8.
143 V. F. Novitskii, 'Voenno-geograficheskii obzor' raiona Vostochnoi Mongolii, obsledovannogo v 1906g. ekspeditsiei Gen. Sht. Polk. V. F. Novitskogo' SGTSMA LXXXII (1909) p. 104.
144 Kushelev, 'Otchet o poezdke s voenno-nauchnoiu tsel'iu v Mongoliiu', pp. 299–300.
145 B. V. Bazarov, *Neizvestnoe iz istorii Panmongolizma*, Ulan-Ude: Izdatel'stvo Buriatskogo nauchnogo tsentra SO RAN 2002, p. 7.
146 S. S. Grigortsevich, *Dal'nevostochnaia politika imperialisticheskikh derzhav v 1906–1917gg*, Tomsk: Izdatel'stvo Tomskogo universiteta, 1965, pp. 392–4.
147 Zvonarev, *Agenturnia razvedka: Russkaia agenturnaia razvedka do i vo vremia voiny 1914–1918gg.*, pp. 91–5.
148 Shelukhin, 'Razvedyvatel'nye organy v strukture vysshego voennogo upravleniia rossiiskoi imperii nachala XX veka (1906–14 gg.)', p. 19; Alekseev, *Voennaia Razvedka Rossii* (Kniga 2.) p. 140.
149 Zvonarev, *Agenturnia razvedka: Russkaia agenturnaia razvedka do i vo vremia voiny 1914–1918gg.*, pp. 152–3.
150 Ibid., p. 150.
151 GARF F.7332 Op. 1 D. 1 l.259–60ob.
152 Shelukhin, 'Razvedyvatel'nye organy v strukture vysshego voennogo upravleniia rossiiskoi imperii nachala XX veka (1906–14 gg.)', pp. 24–25; Sergeev & Ulunian, *Ne podlezhit' oglasheniiu*, pp. 27–28.
153 Alekseev, *Voennaia Razvedka Rossii* (Kniga 2.) p. 41.
154 Ibid., pp. 109–27.
155 D. Pozdneev (ed.), *Opisanie Man'chzhurii (s kartoi) sostavleno v kantseliarii ministra finansov* T.1–2 St. Petersburg: Tipografiia Iu. N. Erlikh, 1897. On this habit of Witte's for the institutional poaching of talent, see Wolff, *To the Harbin Station*, pp. 187–90.
156 *Kolonel Nadezhnyi, Polkovnik Bolkhovitinov & Lt.-Kolonel Iu: Romanovskii (eds)* Dal'nii Vostok Glavnoe Upravlenie General'nogo Shtaba *(3 vols.) St. Petersburg: Tipografiia Gr. Skachkov/Ministerstva Putei I soobshcheniia/A.Benke, 1911.*
157 A. A. Svechin, 'Stategiia XX veka na pervom etape. Planirovanie voiny i operatsii na sushe i na more v 1904–1905 gg', in Predrassudki i boevaia deistvitel'nost', p. 191.
158 General Iu. N. Danilov, *Rossiia v mirovoi voine 1914–1915gg.*, Berlin: Knigoizdatel'stvo 'Slovo', 1924, p. 32.
159 Ia. Ia. Alksnis, 'Nachal'nyi period voiny (stat'ia pervaia)' *VIR* 9, 5, 1929, 10.
160 N. Romanovskii, 'Iaponskaia Armiia v 1911godu', *VS*, 5, 1911, 108.
161 *Vooruzhennyia Sily Kitaia (Po dannym k 1 Ianvariia 1909 goda) Izdanie Glavnogo Upravleniia General'nogo Shtaba (Po chasti 3-go Ober-Kvartirmeistera)*, St. Petersburg: Voennaia Tipografiia (v izdanii Glavnogo Shtaba), 1909, p. 85.
162 Fuller, *Strategy and Power*, pp. 423–6.
163 RGVIA F. 2000 Op. 1 D. 156 l. 8–9.
164 GARF F. 7332 Op. 1 D.1 l.159ob-60.
165 Sergeev & Ulunian *Ne podlezhit' oglasheniiu*, pp. 160, 199–200.
166 GARF F.7332 Op. 1 D.1 l.161.
167 Rediger, *Istoriia Moei Zhizni: Vospominaniia Voennogo Ministra* T.1, pp. 464–6.
168 Grigortsevich, *Dal'nevostochnaia politika imperialisticheskikh derzhav v 1906–1917gg*, p. 259.
169 N. B. Aiushin, V. I. Kalinin, S. A, Vorob'ev, N. V. Gavrilkin, *Krepost' Vladivostok*, St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo Ostrov, 2001, pp. 70, 131–88.

170 Tang, *Russian and Soviet Policy in Manchuria and Outer Mongolia, 1911–1931*, p. 102.
171 E. A. Belov, *Rossiia i Kitai v nachale XX veka: Russko-kitaiskie protivorechiia* v *1911 – 1915gg*, Moscow: IV RAN, 1997, p. 57.
172 E. A. Belov, 'O nekotorykh aspektakh politiki Tsarskoi Rossii v Man'chzhurii v 1911–13gg', *VO*, 3, 1997, 104–5.
173 Rostovskii, 'Tsarskaia Rossiia i Sin'-Tszian v XIX-XX vekakh' *IM* 3, 55, 1936, 47.
174 E. A. Belov, *Rossiia i Kitai v nachale XX veka*, p. 58.
175 Ibid., pp. 59–60.
176 For a standard biography, see N. K. Kabanov, *V. K. Arsen'ev: Puteshestvennik i naturalist 1872–1930*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo Obshchestva Ispytateli prirody, 1947.
177 V. K. Arsen'ev, *Kratkii voenno-geograficheskii i voenno-statisticheskii ocherk Ussuriiskogo kraia, 1901–1911*, Khabarovsk: Tipografiia Shtaba Priamurskogo voennogo okruga, 1912.
178 Alekseev, *Voennaia Razvedka Rossii* (Kniga 2.), pp. 14–15; Grigortsevich, *Dal'nevostochnaia politika imperialisticheskikh derzhav v 1906–1917gg.*, pp. 259, 110–11.
179 Grigortsevich, *Dal'nevostochnaia politika imperialisticheskikh derzhav v 1906–1917gg*, p. 116.
180 Wolff, *To the Harbin Station*, p. 158.
181 Steven G. Marks, 'The Burden of the Far East: the Amur Railroad Question in Russia, 1906–16', *SS* 1: 1, 1993/94, 15–18.
182 On these laws, and the political mood of the period in general, see Lewis H. Siegelbaum, 'Another 'Yellow Peril': Chinese Migrants in the Russian Far East and the Russian Reaction before 1917. *MAS* 12, 2, 1978, 321–4.
183 Zaionchkovskii, *Podgotovka.*.pp. 112–16; Fuller, *Strategy and Power*, pp. 423–32.
184 V. A. Melikov, *Strategicheskoe razvertyvanie (Po opytu pervoi imperialisticheskoi voiny 1914–1918gg: i grazhdanskoi voiny v SSSR)*, T.I. *Pervaia Imperialisticheskaia Voina 1914–1918gg*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe voennoe izdatel'stvo Narkomata Oborony Soiuza SSR, 1939, pp. 215–28. For different strategic reasons the Soviet Union would eerily repeat this situation in 1939–41.
185 RGVIA F.2000 Op. 1 D.1054 l. 15–23, 35.
186 Ibid., l.49–51.
187 Ibid., l.46.
188 A. A. Kersnovskii, *Istorii Russkoi armii*, T.3, Moscow: 'Golos', 1993, pp. 137–8. In addition Kersnovskii believed that Stolypin had sought to have army corps deployed in Russia's central provinces in order to put down the threat of internal rebellion. The territorial explanation for these new deployments has however been the one adopted even by some modern historians: Menning, *Bayonets before Bullets*, pp. 222–6. I believe I have now proved that other considerations were in reality at play.
189 Tang, *Russian and Soviet Policy in Manchuria and Outer Mongolia, 1911–1931*, pp. 98–100; Quested, '*Matey' Imperialists? The Tsarist Russians in Manchuria 1895–1917*, p. 249, GARF F.7332 Op. 1 D.1 l. 254ob, RGVIA F. 2000 Op. 1 D. 7768 l. 1–21.
190 Grigortsevich, *Dal'nevostochnaia politika imperialisticheskikh derzhav v 1906–1917gg.*, pp. 425–6.
191 Fuller, *Strategy and Power*, p. 444–5. Reconsideration was brought about by disagreements within the Russian General Staff, but the French response to the Russian war plan of 1910 and its implicit 'retreat from Europe' was also extremely negative. On this latter fact, see Pertti Luntinen, *French Information on the Russian War Plans 1880–1914*, Helsinki: SHS, 1984, pp. 120–6.

192 Several studies exist of Durnovo and this well-known memorandum. See for example: M. Aldanov, 'P. N. Durnovo, Prophet of War and Revolution', *RR*, 2, 1942, pp. 31–45, and Lieven, *Russia and the Origins of the First World War*, pp. 77–81.
193 GARF F. 7332 Op. 1 D. 1 l. 259.

6 The Caucasus

1 Hew Strachan, *The First World War: Volume 1: To Arms*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 660.
2 The literature on the Eastern Question is voluminous. As a general point of reference, I have utilized: M. S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question 1774–1923*, London: Macmillan, 1966.
3 L. K. Artamonov, *Persiia, kak nash protivnik v zakavkaz'i: Soobshcheniia, proiznesennyia v sobranii ofitserov General'nogo Shtaba Kavkazskogo voennogo okruga*, Tiflis: Pechatano po prikazaniiu Ego Siatel'stva Komanduiushchogo voiskami Kavkazskogo voennogo okruga, 1889, p. 1, p. 192.
4 Sht. Kapitan Aver'ianov & Polkovnik Ia. F. Shkinskii, *Otchet o poezdke po severnomu Aderbeidzhanu Polkovnika Shkinskogo i Kapitana Aver'ianova v kontse 1899 goda*, Tiflis: Tipografiia Shtaba Kavkazskogo voennogo okruga, 1900, pp. 78–81.
5 Henze, 'Fire and Sword', p. 35 and N.V. Skritskii, 'Naprasno gortsy zhdali Turok' *VIZh* 4, 1995, pp. 46–51. For a review of Western diplomacy during the period of the earlier Caucasus War see Polkovnik V. V. Popov, 'Voiny na Kavkaze i zapadnoevropeiskie 'tsivilizatory', *VIZh* 4, 1997, pp. 60–70 and G. H. Bolsover, 'David Urquhart and the Eastern Question, 1833–37', *JMH* 8, 1936, pp. 444–67.
6 Zaionchkovskii, *Podgotovka*, p. 27.
7 'Sostav naseleniia v Armenii i v Zakavkaz'e, vrazhdebnyi gospodstvuiushchim natsional'nom, mog vnesti v voennye operatsii v bol'shoi doze politicheskii element. Kharacter vsego teatra . . . daval vozmozhnost' razvit' v bol'shikh razmerakh maluiu voinu', Ibid., p. 28.
8 Airapetov, *Zabytaia kar'era 'Russkogo Mol'tke'*, pp. 274–5.
9 GARF F.7332 Op. 1 D.1 l.32ob-33.
10 RGVIA F. 846 Op. 4 D.7 l.117–20, GARF F.7332 Op. 1 D.1 l.90.
11 GARF F.7332 Op. 1 D.1 l.90ob.
12 Derevianko, 'Russkaia agenturnaia razvedka v 1902–5gg', p. 76; Alekseev, *Voennaia Razvedka Rossii*, Kniga I, p. 145.
13 Alekseev, *Voennaia Razvedka Rossii*, Kniga II, p. 511.
14 Undoubtedly the most detailed recent work on war planning for the conflict of 1877–78 is that of David Rich, *The Tsar's Colonels*, pp. 115–48.
15 Obruchev was scathingly critical in the aforementioned memorandum of 1885 of what he saw as the petty rivalries and ingratitude of the Balkan states; a primary reason, as he saw it, to launch a naval rather than a land-borne assault in future: Zolotarev, *Voennaia Bezopasnost' Otechestva (Istoriko-pravovoe issledovanie)*, pp. 260–2.
16 Veniukov, *Iz Vospominaniia*, T.2, pp. 189–203.
17 M. Veniukov, 'S dorogi po Turtsii (iz pisem puteshestvennika)(s kartoiu Bosfora)', *VS* 8, 1874, pp. 365–93.
18 W. E. D. Allen & P. Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields: A History of the Wars on the Turco-Caucasian Border 1828–1921*, Nashville, TN: Cambridge University Press/The Battery Press,1953/1999, p. 225.
19 A. B. Shirokorad, *Russko-Turetskie voiny 1676–1918gg*, Moscow/Minsk: "Kharvest-Ast", 2000, pp. 512–14.
20 Ibid., p. 588.

21 A. N. Kuropatkin, 'Razvedyvatel'naia missiia v Turtsiu', *VIZh* 4, 1995, pp. 68–77.
22 Major-Gen. Filippov, *Strategicheskoe opisanie Bosfora*, St. Petersburg: Voennaia Tipografiia v zdanii Glavnogo Shtaba 1886. For a history of the meaning of *desant* operations in Russian military thought, including the actual naval *desant* operations carried out across the Black Sea in 1916, which owed at least something to these pre-war military preparations, see Peter Vigor 'The 'Forward Reach' of the Soviet Armed Forces: Seaborne and Airborne Landings', in Erickson & Feuchtwanger (eds), *Soviet Military Power and Performance*, pp. 183–212.
23 Filippov, *Strategicheskoe opisanie Bosfora*, p. 85.
24 Kuropatkin, 'Razvedyvatel'naia missiia v Turtsiu', pp. 76–7.
25 Airapetov, *Zabytaia kar'era 'Russkogo Mol'tk'*, p. 253.
26 Shirokorad, *Russko-Turetskie voiny 1676–1918gg*, p. 591 and K. F. Shatsillo, *Ot Portsmutskogo mira k pervoi mirovoi voiny: Generaly i politka.*, Moscow: Rosspen, 2000, p. 59.
27 V. Khvostov, 'Problemy zakhvata Bosfora v 90-kh godakh XIX veka', *IM* 10, 1930, pp. 110–11.
28 Fuller, *Strategy and Power*, pp. 367–72.
29 Popov & Pokrovskii (eds), 'Tsarskaia diplomatiia o zadachakh Rossii na Vostok v 1900g', *KA* 5, 18, 1926, pp. 18–22.
30 O. R. Airapetov, 'Na Vostochnom napravlenii. Sud'ba Bosforskoi ekspeditsii v pravlenie Imperator Nikolaia II', in Airapetov, (ed.) *Posledniaia Voina Imperatorskoi Rossii: Sbornik statei*, Moscow: 'Tri Kvadrata', 2002, pp. 159–60.
31 *Redifs*: the Turkish first-line reserve forces, as opposed to the regular peacetime army (*Nizam*) which had replaced the janissaries after 1828.
32 O. R. Airapetov, 'Na Vostochnom napravlenii', pp. 163–4.
33 Zaionchkovskii, *Podgotovka . . .* , pp. 48–9.
34 Shatsillo, *Ot Portsmutskogo mira k pervoi mirovoi voiny: Generaly i politka*, pp. 61–2.
35 Rediger, *Istoriia Moei Zhizni: Vospominaniia Voennogo Ministra*, T.2, p. 209.
36 Zvonarev, *Agenturnia razvedka: Russkaia agenturnaia razvedka do i vo vremia voiny 1914–1918gg*, p. 153.
37 Luntinen, *French Information on the Russian War Plans 1880–1914*, p. 116.
38 Shatsillo, *Ot Portsmutskogo mira k pervoi mirovoi voiny: Generaly i politka*, pp. 62–4.
39 Ibid., p. 68–9.
40 Fuller, 'The Russian Empire', in May (ed.), *Knowing One's Enemies: Intelligence Assessment Before the Two World Wars*, p. 99–100.
41 Major-General Khol'msen, & Colonel Gudim'-Levkovich', *Turtsiia (Chast' II) Pribosforskii raion': Sekretnoe dopolnenie k 'Materialam k voenno-geograficheskomu opisaniiu'*, St. Petersburg: Tipo-litografiia 'Svet', 1912, pp. 17–23.
42 V. I. Sheremet, *Bosfor: Rossiia i Turtsiia v epokhu pervoi mirovoi voiny: Po materialam russkoi voennoi razvedki*, Moscow: Tekhnologicheskaia shkola biznesa, 1995, pp. 45–6.
43 V. Sukhomlinov, *Vospominaniia*, Berlin: Russkoe Universal'noe Izdatel'stvo, 1924, pp. 198–200.
44 Iu. A. Pisarev, 'Rossiia i Turtsiia nakanune pervoi mirovoi voiny', *VI* 12, 1986, pp. 37–8.
45 George Nekrasov, *North of Gallipoli: The Black Sea Fleet at War, 1914–1917*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1992, pp. 12–15.
46 O. R. Airapetov, 'Na Vostochnom napravlenii', pp. 204–17.
47 For details, see M. Gemer, [Moshe Gammer]'Gosudarstvo Shamilia', *VO* 2, 1993, pp. 37–47 and, in particular, Anna Zelkina, *In Quest for God and Freedom*, pp. 203–25.

48 S. A. Tokarev, *Istoriia Russkoi etnografii*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA' 1966, pp. 176–8.
49 A. Gadzhiev, *Petr Karlovich Uslar-vydaiushchiisia kavkazoved*, Makhachkala: Dagestanskoe Uchebno-Pedagogicheskoe izdatel'stvo, 1966, p. 13. Uslar's scheme bears an obvious resemblance to, and is worth comparison with that advocated by the Russian pedagogue Il'minskii in Kazan. On Il'minskii, see Wayne Dowler, *Classroom and Empire: The Politics of Schooling Russia's Eastern Nationalities*, London/Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press 2001. On Uslar see also Austin Jersild, *Orientalism and Empire: North Caucasus Mountain Peoples and the Georgian Frontier, 1845–1917*, London/Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002, pp. 80–4.
50 On the collection and classification of customary law in this context, see Jersild, *Orientalism and Empire*, pp. 89–109.
51 Z. Kh. Ibragimova, *Chechnia posle Kavkazskoi voiny (1863–1875gg.) (po arkhivnym istochnikam)*, Moscow: MAKS Press, 2000, p. 24. One of the most notable military-administrative figures to emerge from the Caucasus in late nineteenth century Russian governmental history, Loris-Melikov, was himself of course an Armenian.
52 R. A. Gubakhanova, 'K voprosu ob organizatsii upravleniia Dagestanom vo vtoroi polovine XIX v', in V. G. Gadzhiev, (ed.) *Iz istorii dorevoliutsionnogo Dagestana (Sbornik nauchnykh trudov)*, Makhachkala: Dagestanskii Filial AN SSSR, 1976, pp. 118–19.
53 On the Caucasus Committee, see G. G. Lisitsyna, 'Kavkazskii Komitet-vyshee gosudarstvennoe uchrezhdenie dlia upravleniia Kavkazom (1845–82)', in G. G. Lisitsyna & Ia. A. Gordin (eds), *Rossiia i Kavkaz skvoz' dva stoletiia*, pp. 154–68.
54 A. I. Ivanov, 'Natsional'no-osvoboditel'noe dvizhenie v Chechne i Dagestane v 60–70-kh gg. XIX v', *Istoricheskie Zapiski* 12, 1941, 184–5. V.O. Bobrovnikov, *Musulmane Severnogo Kavkaza: obychai, pravo, nasilie*, pp. 44–5.
55 Austin Lee Jersild, 'Imperial Russification: Dagestani mountaineers in Russian exile, 1877–83', *CAS* 19, 1, 2000, 5–16.
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58 E. V. Kliukin, *Iugo-Zapadnaia Kavkazskaia Respublika*, St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo S.-Peterburgskogo universiteta, 2002, pp. 13–14.
59 RGVIA F.450 Op. 1 D.102 l.80–126.
60 *Otchet Shtabs-Kapitana Davletshina o komandirovke v Khidzhaz*, St. Petersburg: Voennaia Tipografiia (v zdanii Glavnogo Shtaba), 1899, pp. 117–18.
61 RGVIA F.846 Op. 4 D.42 l.13–14ob.
62 Ibid., l.44–45.
63 Ibid., l.63–66.
64 Alekseev, *Voennaia Razvedka Rossii*, Kniga II, p. 81.
65 RGVIA F.2000 Op. 1 D.1004 l.93–96ob.
66 Averianov's own memoirs are in GARF F.7332 Op. 1 D.1–3.
67 Gen. Sht. Kap. I. Aver'ianov, *Kurdy v voinakh Rossii s Persiei i Turtsiei v techenie XIX stoletiia: Sovremennoe politicheskoe polozhenie Turetskikh, Persidskikh i Russkikh Kurdov*, Tiflis: Tipografiia Shtaba Kavkazskogo Voennogo Okruga, 1900, p. ii.
68 RGVIA F.2000 Op. 1 D.7693 l.1–2.
69 GARF F 7332 Op. 1 D.1 l.165.
70 RGVIA F.2000 Op. 1 D.7693. l.27–28.
71 GARF F. 7332 Op. 1 D.1 l.165ob.
72 RGVIA F.2000 Op. 1 D.7691 l.8–9.
73 Alekseev, *Voennaia Razvedka Rossii*, Kniga II, p. 260.

74 A. S. Arutiunian, *Kavkazskii Front, 1914–1917gg*, Erevan: 'Aiastan', 1971, pp. 32–3.
75 Graf Vorontsov-Dashkov 'Vsepoddanneishaia zapiska po upravleniiu Kavkazskim kraem general-ad'iutant grafa Vorontsova-Dashkova', *Rodina* 1–2, 2000, p. 149.
76 Akhmed Ts–ov'. 'Russkaia biurokratiia i Kavkazskie gortsy', *VE* 9, 1909, pp. 298–315.
77 Rediger, *Istoriia Moei Zhizni: Vospominaniia Voennogo Ministra*, T.II, p. 199.
78 A. A. Polivanov, *Iz dnevnikov i vospominanii po dolzhnosti voennogo ministra i ego pomoshchika, 1907–1916g*, edited by A. M. Zaionchkovskii, Moscow: Voen.Tipografiia Shtaba R. K. K. A., 1924, p. 45.
79 Zaionchkovskii, *Podgotovka*, pp. 78–80. See also Fuller, *Strategy and Power*, p. 436.
80 Zaionchkovskii, *Podgotovka*, pp. 78–80.
81 RGVIA F.2000 Op. 1 d.3871 l.8.
82 V. M. Gilensen, '"Osinye Gnezda" pod konsul'skoi kryshei', *VIZh* 5, 1997, pp. 53–4.
83 Fuller, 'The Russian Empire', in May (ed.), *Knowing One's Enemies*, p. 123. See also Charykov's memoirs: N.V. Tcharykow [Charykov], *Glimpses of High Politics*, pp. 273–9.
84 Gilensen, '"Osinye Gnezda" pod konsul'skoi kryshei', pp. 53–4. On the travails of organizing a counter-intelligence service, see also Shelukhin, 'Razvedyvatel'nye organy v strukture vysshego voennogo upravleniia rossiiskoi imperii nachala XX veka, 1906–14 gg, pp. 21–23.
85 GARF F. 7332 Op. 1 D. 1 l.28–30, RGVIA F. 2000 Op. 1 D. 3591 l.182.
86 Zaionchkovskii, *Podgotovka*, p. 338.

7 The Russian General Staff and Central Asia

1 B. L. Tageev, *Po Afganistanu: Prikliucheniia Russkago puteshestvennika*, Moscow: Izdanie D. P. Efimova, B. Dmitrovka, D. Bakhrushinykh, 1904, p. 56.
2 Kostenko produced two major works on Central Asia; his earlier *Sredniaia Aziia i vodvorenie v nei Russkoi grazhdanstvennosti*, St. Petersburg: Tipografiia v. Bezobrazova i komp, 1871, examined the value of Central Asia as a market for Russian goods and remained hopeful about the possibilities of the Central Asian rivers, whilst noting their difficulties. His more comprehensive three-volume *Turkestanskii krai: Opyt voenno-statisticheskago obozreniia* of 1880, performed as closely as possible to the outlines of the Military-Scientific Committee of the General Staff (Tom I, p. ii), remains the key text on communication routes in Turkestan in the period. The whole of the second volume was dedicated to this topic, and stresses overland routes. On the general efforts of the impressive group of specialists that Kaufman gathered around himself, as well as the imperial context of their work, see in particular D. Brower, *Turkestan and the Fate of the Russian Empire*, pp. 43–56.
3 Crean, 'The Governor-Generalship of Turkestan under K. P. von Kaufmann, 1867–87', pp. 25–6; Marvin, *The Russian Advance Toward India*, p. 295.
4 Shastitko (ed.), *Russko-Indiiskie Otnosheniia v XIXv*, pp. 160–1.
5 Hauner, *What is Asia to Us?*, p. 99.
6 The work of the Great Trigonometrical Survey and the Pundits has been immortalized in several worthy academic books, amongst the most important being: Derek Waller, *The Pundits: British Exploration of Tibet and Central Asia*, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1990, John Keay, *The Great Arc: The Dramatic Tale of how India was Mapped and Everest was Named*, London: HarperCollins, 2000 and Matthew Edney, *Mapping an Empire.*

7 A. V. Postnikov, *Skhvatka na 'Kryshe Mira': Politiki, razvedchiki i geografi v bor'be za Pamir v XIX veke (Monografiia v dokumentakh)*, Moscow: 'Pamiatniki Istoricheskoi Mysli', 2001, pp. 122–42.
8 Lt.-General Aleksandr Konstantinovich Abramov, (1836–86). A major participant in the conquest of Central Asia, from 1868 head of the Zeravshan *okrug* and from 1877 head of Fergana *oblast*. Member of the IRGO and, as an amateur *vostokoved*, indirect discoverer of the valuable Koran Uthman. This was later returned to Central Asia by the early Soviet government as a propaganda gesture. For a short biography, see A. V. Ostrovskii 'Boevoi General-nachal'nik Ferganskoi oblasti', *VIZh* 9, 2002, p. 39.
9 Shastitko (ed.), *Russko-Indiiskie Otnosheniia v XIXv*, pp. 139–41.
10 Iu. V. Gankovskii (ed.), *Rossiia i Afganistan*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA', Glavnaia Redaktsiia Vostochnoi Literatury, 1989, pp. 70–1.
11 RGVIA F.400 Op. 1 D.4795 l.1–6.
12 K. P. Kaufman & Vladimir Bukhert (ed.), '"Voiska nashi takaia prelest', chto nel'zia predstavit' nichego luchshego." Pervyi Turkestanskii general-gubernator: 12 let perepiski', *Istochnik* 1, 2003, p. 15.
13 Shastitko (ed.), *Russko-Indiiskie Otnosheniia v XIXv*, p. 210. On Ramchandr Baladzhi, see also M. I. Salonikes, 'Indiiskii patriot v Rossii', *VI* 9, 1999, pp. 143–9.
14 In later years the Grand Duke Nikolai Konstantinovich became the black sheep of the Romanov family, continually involved in scandals and afflicted by what most contemporaries interpreted as mental illness, the outward symptom of which was kleptomania. As a result Central Asia became his place of permanent exile from the royal court, and there he rapidly became a minor local celebrity of some infamy to all those who visited or worked in the *krai*. See for example Grulev', *Zapiski general-evreia*, pp. 218–19, and Sukhomlinov, *Vospominaniia*, pp. 248–49.
15 Shastitko (ed.), *Russko-Indiiskie Otnosheniia v XIXv*, pp. 216–17.
16 M. I. Salonikes, 'Indiiskii patriot v Rossii', pp. 147–8.
17 Shastitko (ed.), *Russko-Indiiskie Otnosheniia v XIXv*, pp. 243–4. It is unclear from the sources whether this Charn-Singh was the same 'Charen-Singh' Baladzhi claims to have met, but the laws of probability make this highly likely.
18 Giers probably had in mind the Anglo-Persian war of 1856–57, which had been directly motivated by earlier British fears of Russian manipulation of Persian policy. N. K. Giers has been credited in the past with helping to 'tame' the Asiatic Department of the Foreign Ministry; in 1875–82 he was joint head of both the Chancellery and the Asiatic section. See Robert M. Slusser 'The Role of the Foreign Ministry', in Ivo J. Lederer (ed.) *Russian Foreign Policy: Essays in Historical Perspective*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1962, pp. 204–5. For a balanced view of Giers' influence, see also Ritchie 'The Asiatic Department during the reign of Alexander II', p. 342 and Koot 'The Asiatic Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry and the Foundation of Policy toward the Non-Western World, 1881–95', pp. 331–3.
19 Shastitko (ed.), *Russko-Indiiskie Otnosheniia v XIXv*, pp. 205–8. Miliutin notes this meeting in his diary but says little about it: Zaionchkovskii (ed.), *Dnevnik D.A.Miliutina*, Tom III, pp. 45–6.
20 On British activities see L. P. Morris, 'British Secret Service Activity in Khorassan, 1887–1908' and P. Morris, 'Intelligence and its Interpretation: Mesopotamia 1914–16', in C. Andrew & J. Noakes, (eds) *Intelligence and International Relations 1900–1945*, Exeter: University of Exeter, 1987, pp. 77–101.
21 Morris, 'British Secret Service Activity in Khorassan', pp. 663–5.
22 Polkovnik Matveev, 'Poezdka general'nogo shtaba polkovnika Matveeva po Bukharskim' i Avganskim' vladeniiam' v fevrale 1877g', SGTSMA V, 1883, pp. 1–2.

23 Ibid., p. 43.
24 Ibid., pp. 44–50.
25 T. N. Zagorodnikova (ed.), *'Bol'shaia Igra' v Tsentral'noi Azii: 'Indiiskii Pokhod' Russkoi Armii*, p. 256.
26 Polkovnik Grodekov, 'Poezdka Gen.-Sht. Polkovnika Grodekova iz Samarkanda cherez Gerat' v' Afganistan' (v 1878 godu)', SGTSMA V, 1883, p. 58.
27 Ibid., pp. 63–4. Ali's actual tomb is in Iran.
28 M. I. Veniukov, *Ocherk politicheskoi etnografii stran', lezhashchikh mezhdu Rossieiu i Indieiu*, St. Petersburg: v tipografii V. Bezobrazova i komp, 1878, p. 20.
29 Ibid., p. 105.
30 Ibid., p. 97.
31 N. A. Khalfin, (ed.) *Bukhara i Afganistan v nachale 80-x godov XIX veka (Zhurnaly komandirovok G.A.Arendarenko)*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA', Glavnaia Redaktsiia Vostochnoi Literatury, 1974, pp. 7–15.
32 P. A. Rittikh, *Avganskii Vopros' (voenno-geograficheskii i politicheskii etiudy)*, St. Petersburg: Tipografiia Shtaba Voisk Gvardii i Peterburgskago Voennago Okruga, 1905, p. 15.
33 RGVIA F.VUA D.6942 l.47ob-48.
34 *A*. Il'iasova (ed.), Prisoedinenie Turkmenii k Rossii (Sbornik arkhivnykh dokumentov), *Ashkhabad: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk Turkmenskoi SSR*, 1960, pp. 372–4.
35 General-Maior Grodekov 'Zapiska G.-Sh. General'-Maiura Grodekova o putiakh' iz Zakaspiiskago Kraia na Gerat' (30 Maia 1882 goda)', SGTSMA V, 1883, p. 108.
36 This report appears in two sources, neither of which reprint the note in full, but which can be effectively put together to give an overview. See A. Il'iasova (ed.), *Prisoedinenie Turkmenii k Rossii*, pp. 664–7 and General-Maior Grodekov 'Zapiska G.-Sh. General'-Maiura Grodekova o putiakh' iz Zakaspiiskago Kraia na Gerat' (30 Maia 1882 goda)', SGTSMA V, 1883, pp. 109–19. Sections of this note have also more recently been reprinted: General N. I. Grodekov & Dmitri Arapov (ed.), 'Chto, esli my naidem v Afganistane ne druzei, a vragov?', *Istochnik* 5, 2002, pp. 31–2.
37 RGVIA F.402 Op. 2 D.34 l.1.
38 Ibid., l.2–3.
39 Ibid., l.35–91.
40 A. A. Vigasin, 'I. P. Minaev i russkaia politika na Vostoke v 80-e gody XIX v', *VO* 3, 1993, 108–23; N. A. Khalfin, & P. M. Shastitko, (eds) *Rossiia i Indiia*, pp. 155–6.
41 *Russko-Indiiskie Otnosheniia v XIXv*, pp. 181–98, 263–4.
42 A. A. Vigasin, 'I.P.Minaev i russkaia politika na Vostoke v 80-e gody XIX v', p. 110.
43 Ibid., pp. 113–14.
44 L. N. Sobolev, *Stranitsa iz istorii vostochnogo voprosa: Anglo-Afganskaia raspria (ocherk voiny 1879–1880)*, St. Petersburg: Tipografiia 'Russkaia Skoropechatnia', 1885. This work was a very mixed compilation of material, consisting in the main of recitations of the telegraphic correspondence of the English authorities alongside newspaper reports and descriptions of the key actions-Maiwand and the Kabul to Kandahar march.
45 L. N. Sobolev, 'Pokhody v Indiiu', *VS* 3,4,5,6,7,8,1,5,7,8,1,2,3,4,5 (1886–88), pp. 30–56, 205–28, 30–53, 185–206, 41–58, 195–212, 50–60, 30–50, 27–39, 179–91, 29–48, 223–42, 24–44, 234–56, 23–38.
46 Marvin, *The Russian Advance Toward India*, pp. 78–9.
47 L. N. Sobolev, *Vozmozhen-li pokhod Russkikh v Indiiu?*, Moscow: Tipografiia Okruzhnago Shtaba, 1901.

48 Ibid., p. 23 For details of Sobolev's appointment in the Bulgarian administration see John P. LeDonne, *The Russian Empire and the World*, pp. 142–3, M. S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question*, p. 229, Firuz Kazemzadeh, 'Russia and the Middle East', in Ivo J. Lederer, (ed.) *Russian Foreign Policy. Essays in Historical Perspective*, pp. 495–6. Future Minister of War A. F. Rediger left a useful account of his own service in the Bulgarian administration, mentioning Sobolev's policies whilst he was there: Rediger, *Istoriia Moei Zhizni*.T.1, pp. 120–56. Sobolev also left his own, tendentious, account of his experience in Bulgaria: L. N. Sobolev, 'K noveishei istorii Bolgarii', *RS* 51, 52 (1886), pp. 703–52, pp. 475–84.
49 Marvin, *The Russian Advance Toward India*, p. 152.
50 Ia. A. Karamov, 'Granitsa s Afganistanom v kontse XIX-nachale XXv. v voenno-strategicheskikh planakh Rossii', *VMU* 5, 1999, p. 54.
51 A.V. Ignat'ev 'Politika v Evrope, na Blizhnem i Srednem Vostoke', in *Istoriia vneshnei politiki Rossii*, T.2, p. 95.
52 RGVIA F.445 Op. 1 D.26 l.7–7ob.
53 Ibid., l.21–34.
54 RGVIA F.445 Op. 1 D.27 l.11–319.
55 RGVIA F.1396 Op. 2 D.2214 l.12.
56 RGVIA F.846 Op. 4 D.43 l.214–23.
57 RGVIA F.400 Op. 1 D.2339 l.1.
58 Iu. V.Gankovskii (ed.), *Istoriia vooruzhenykh sil Afganistana 1747–1977*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA', Glavnaia Redaktsiia Vostochnoi Literatury 1985, pp. 58–65.
59 B. L. Tageev, *Po Afganistanu*. On Tageev's extraordinary career, which included service in the British armed forces, work as a correspondent for the 'Daily Express', and a close friendship with the American car manufacturer Henry Ford, see V. V. Abramov & V. N. Frolov, 'Voennyi uchenyi-vostokoved Tageev ob'ezdil polmira, a rasstrelian v Moskve' *VIZh* 4, 2002, pp. 77–80.
60 RGVIA F.445 Op. 1 D.35 l.10. On Kornilov's trip, see N. A. Samoilov, 'Aziia (konets XIX-nachalo XX veka) glazami russkikh voennykh issledovatelei (Po materialam L. G. Kornilova, A. I. Denikina, P. N. Krasnova), *Strany i Narody Vostoka* Vy, p. XXVIII, St. Petersburg: Tsentr 'Peterburgskoe vostokovedenie', 1994, pp. 294–7.
61 RGVIA F.165 Op. 1 D.1765 l.101ob-102.
62 RGVIA F.400 Op. 1 D.2338 l.5ob-29ob.
63 RGVIA F.846 Op. 3 D.95 l.37–38.
64 A. N. Kuropatkin, *Otchet o sluzhebnoi poezdke Voennago Ministra v Turkestanskii voennyi okrug v 1901 godu* St. Petersburg: Voennaia Tipografiia (v zdanii Glvnago Shtaba), 1902, pp. 45–6, p. 137.
65 RGVIA F.846 Op. 3 D.95 l.39.
66 Karamov, 'Granitsa s Afganistanom v kontse XIX-nachale XXv. v voenno-strategicheskikh planakh Rossii', pp. 50–9. V. M. Gilensen, 'Razgrom basmacheskikh baz v Afganistane', *VIZh* 1, 2000, pp. 31–41.
67 Mir Munshi Sultan Mahomed Khan (ed.), *The Life of Abdur Rahman: Amir of Afghanistan. With a new introduction by M. E. Yapp*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1980, vol. 1., pp. 264–5.
68 A. S-'. 'Stranitsa iz istorii nashei politiki v srednei azii', *VE* 3, 1908, pp. 685–98.
69 N. A. Khalfin, 'The Rising of Ishaq Khan in Southern Turkestan (1888)' *CAR* VI, 3, 1958, pp. 253–64.
70 Lee, *The 'Ancient Supremacy'*, p. 502.
71 RGVIA F.846 Op. 2 D.51 l.66–68.
72 Ibid., l.70.
73 Iu. V. Gankovskii (ed.), *Rossiia i Afganistan*, p. 118.
74 RGVIA F.846 Op. 2 D.51, l.144.

75 On Zinov'ev's traditional pro-military outlook, see Koot, 'The Asiatic Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry and the Foundation of Policy toward the non-Western World, 1881–98', pp. 335–6.
76 Kuropatkin, *The Russian Army and the Japanese War*, vol. 1, pp. 64–5.
77 S. M. Dukhovskii, 'Vsepoddanneishii doklad Turkestanskogo general-gubernatora General ot infanterii Dukhovskogo: Islam v Turkestane', Tashkent: no pub., 1899.
78 Shoshana Keller, *To*, Moscow, *Not Mecca: The Soviet Campaign Against Islam in Central Asia, 1917–1941*, London: Praeger Publishers, 2001, pp. 18–19.
79 RGVIA F.400 Op. 1 D.3772 l.1–13.
80 *Sbornik materialov po voprosu ob izuchenii tuzemnykh iazykov sluzhavshchimi po voenno-narodnomu upravleniiu Turkestanskogo Kraia*, Tashkent: Tipografiia Shtaba Turkestanskogo Voennogo Okruga, 1906.
81 RGVIA F.400 Op. 1 D.3772 l.5ob-7ob.
82 Ibid., l.21–22.
83 Ibid., l.34.
84 Ibid., l.44ob-59ob.
85 Ibid., l.67–67ob. On the inter-departmental conflict that deadlocked the recommendations of the Palen Commission, see Brower, *Turkestan and the Fate of the Russian Empire*, pp. 102–13.
86 [My italics] V.V. Bartol'd 'Istoriia kul'turnoi zhizni Turkestana', in *Sochineniia* II chast' 1, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Vostochnoi Literatury, 1963, pp. 388–9.
87 A. Popov, 'Angliiskaia Politika v Indii i Russko-Indiiskie otnosheniia v 1897–1905gg', *KA* XIX, 1926, p. 59.
88 Grulev', *Zapiski general-evreia*, pp. 215–16.
89 Ibid., pp. 58–9.
90 Shastitko & Zagorodnikova (eds), *Russko-Indiiskie Otnosheniia v 1900–1917gg*, pp. 76–83.
91 Ibid., pp. 132–7.
92 P. A. Rittikh, *Avganskii Vopros'*, p. 82 (Emphasis in the original).
93 As interest in his field of study has grown recently, Tsybikov's collected works have been reprinted: Tsybikov, *Izbrannie trudi v dvukh tomakh*. Novosibirsk: 'NAUKA' Sibirskoe otdelenie, 1991.
94 A. E. Snesarev, *Severo-Indiiskii Teatr (Voenno-Geograficheskoe Opisanie)*, Tashkent: Tipografiia Shtaba Turkestanskogo Voennogo Okruga, 1903.
95 A. E. Snesarev, *Indiia kak glavnyi faktor v sredne-aziatskom vopros'*, St. Petersburg: Tipografiia A. S. Suvorin, 1906, p. 173.
96 RGVIA F.2000 Op. 1 D.969 l.100–100ob.
97 Ibid., l.102.
98 Ibid., l.104ob-107ob.
99 Sergeev & Ulunian, *Ne podlezhit' oglasheniiu*, p. 57.
100 T. N. Zagorodnikova 'Indiiskaia strantitsa v knige zhizni akademika M. S. Andreev', *VO* 5, 2001, pp. 102–9.
101 Jennifer Siegel, *Endgame: Britain, Russia and the Final Struggle for Central Asia*, p. 29.
102 M. T. Kozhekina, '"Dlia Anglii..nesomnenno vygodnee . . . imet' sosedom velikuiu derzhavnuiu Rossiiu" razvedyvatel'noi missii general-leitenanta N. S. Ermolova v Indiiu v 1911 godu', *VIZh* 4, 2000, pp. 3–11.
103 RGVIA F.1396 Op. 2 D.2279 l.48ob-49.
104 Ibid., l.120-ob.
105 RGVIA F. 2000 Op. 1 D.7646 l.100-ob.
106 RGVIA F. 2000 Op. 1 D.3721 l.1–60 and Alekseev, *Voennaia Razvedka Rossii*, Kniga II, p. 156. Alekseev was unable to find the reports Chanyshev delivered as

a consequence of this mission in the archives, and was therefore unable to comment on its effectiveness as I have done.

107 See for example RGVIA F. 400 Op. 1 D. 3757 l.133ob, 152, and F. 2000 Op. 1 D. 7646 l. 47, 173, 267–8.

108 RGVIA F.400 Op. 4 D.483 l.16–36ob.

109 Andogskii's study has recently been reprinted in slightly edited form within a collection reviewing the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979: A. I. Andogskii, Iu. I. Drozdov, V. N. Kurilov & S. G. Bakhturin, *Afgan, snova Afgan . . .* Moscow: Voenizdat, 2002, pp. 3–26, but see also V. I. Marchenkov (ed.), *Afganskie Uroki: Vyvody dlia budushchego v svete ideinogo naslediia A. E. Snesareva*, pp. 663–6. Andogskii's chief subsequent claim to fame was that he became head of the Nicholas General Staff Academy in 1917–18, shortly before the academy and all its personnel defected to the side of Admiral Kolchak in the Russian Civil War.

110 RGVIA F.2000 Op. 1 D.3591 l. 166.

111 The history of Anglo-Russian intrigues over Tibet has recently produced an extensive number of new works, the revelations of which can obviously not all be detailed here. Strong representative examples of this new genre are: John Snelling, *Buddhism in Russia: The Story of Agvan Dorzhiev, Lhasa's emissary to the Tsar*, Shaftesbury: Element Books Ltd. 1993 and Tatiana Shaumian, *Tibet: The Great Game and Tsarist Russia*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

112 O. Iu. Danilov, 'Russko-Iaponskaia voina i angliiskaia ugroza s iuga', *VO* 6, 2000, pp. 28–32.

113 I. I. Rostunov, *Russkii front pervoi mirovoi voiny*, p. 23.

114 Polovtsoff, [Polovtsov] *Glory and Downfall: Reminiscences of a Russian General Staff Officer*, pp. 100–1.

115 N. A. Ivanov & V. P. Ponomarev (eds), '"Neobkhodimo usilenie Turkestanskogo voennogo okruga" Iz istorii russko-angliiskikh protivorechii v Srednei Azii. 1906g', *Istoricheskii Arkhiv* 2, 1997, pp. 158–60.

116 Rediger, *Istoriia Moei Zhizni*.T.I, pp. 444–6.

117 RGVIA F.2000 Op. 1 D.3586 l.64.

118 *Ibid.*,l.207–13ob.

119 RGVIA F.2000 Op. 1 D.3635 l.11.

120 B. M. Shaposhnikov, *Vospominaniia * Voenno-nauchnye trudy*, Moscow: Voenizdat 1974, pp. 172–85.

121 Jennifer Siegel, *Endgame*, pp. 70–1.

122 S. B. Panin, *Rossiia i Afganistan, 1905–1918*, Irkutsk: Irkutskii gosudarstvennyi pedagogicheskii institut, 1995, pp. 51–74.

123 A. D. Shemanskii, 'Zavoevanie Srednei Azii', in *Istoriia Russkoi armii i flota*, vol. 12, Moscow: Tipografiia Russkogo Tovarishchestvo 'Obozrenie', 1913, pp. 193–5.

124 S. B. Panin, *Rossiia i Afganistan, 1905–1918*, p. 32–4.

8 The Last Days of the Asiatic Department

1 V. I. Marchenkov (ed.), *Afganskie Uroki. Vyvody dlia budushchego v svete ideinogo naslediia A. E. Snesareva*, p. 366.

2 RGVIA F.400 Op. 1, D.1060 l.55–60.

3 Dantsig, *Blizhnii Vostok v Russkom nauke i literature*, pp. 280–1.

4 RGVIA F.400 Op. 1 D.3030 l.10 and Skachkov, *Ocherki istorii russkogo kitaevedeniia*, pp. 273–8.

5 RGVIA F.165 Op. 1 D. 1759 l.148.

6 Veniukov, *Iz Vospominaniia*, T.2, pp. 187–8. In overall terms, a similar interconnectedness, both structural and ideological, was visible in many Western societies

engaged in imperialism in the period, although often conditioned by particular events and attitudes in each country. See for example: D. V. McKay, 'Colonialism in the French Geographical Movement, 1871–81', *Geographical Review* 33, 1943, 214–32.

7 RGVIA F.400 Op. 1 D.1831 l.6–6ob.
8 Ibid., l.6–7.
9 V. V. Bartol'd, *Sochineniia* IX, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'NAUKA', Glavnaia Redaktsiia Vostochnoi literatury, 1977, p. 525.
10 Knight, 'Grigor'ev in Orenburg, 1851–62: Russian Orientalism in the Service of Empire?', p. 80.
11 Bassin, *Imperial Visions*, pp. 95–6.
12 To the extent that Bartol'd's work formed the essential point of reference even for those who disagreed with aspects of his argument. See for example V. A. Romodin, 'Iz istorii izucheniia afgantsev i Afganistana v Rossii', in *Ocherki po istorii Russkogo Vostokovedeniia*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1953, pp. 148–84.
13 Dantsig, *Blizhnii Vostok v Russkom nauke i literature*, pp. 282–3. For an insight into some of the tensions behind this feud, see Robert Geraci, 'Russian Orientalism at an Impasse: Tsarist Education Policy and the 1910 Conference on Islam', in Brower & Lazzzerini (eds), *Russia's Orient*, pp. 138–61.
14 B. G. 'K voprosu o rasprostranenii v Rossii znaniia vostochnykh iazykov', *VA* 5, 1910, pp. 138–41. On the activities of this society, see Amir Khisamutdinov, 'Obshchestvo Russkikh Orientalistov v Kharbine', *VO* 3, 1999, pp. 104–14.
15 Ibid., pp. 140–1.
16 For a brief biography of Iagello and coverage of this affair, see T. N. Zagorodnikova, '" . . . svoimi znaniiami byta musul'man i znaniiami mestnykh narechii mog by prinesti pol'zu" Russkii voennyi vostokoved I. D. Iagello i izuchenie novoindiiskikh iazykov v Rossii', *VIZh* 7, 2002, pp. 46–51.
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