

Russian Colonial Expansion to 1917

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With a foreword by
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Foreword

The Turkic peoples of Central Asia were among the first to accept Islam in the seven century A.D., the first century of the Hijra. Thereafter, Islamic civilization had a brilliant flowering in that region. Names like Samarkand, Bokhara and Tashkent even to this day stir luminous memories in the Muslim heart. Memories? Yes! For although these regions are still, in a manner of speaking, Muslim regions, the vigor and vitality that characterized their era of Islamic effulgence has somehow abated. With a reality too painful to contemplate, the Muslim psyche has found comfort and refuge in the distant past and has left the present to fend for itself.

Not too long ago at the Rabat summit of Muslim heads of state a vigorous effort was made to include the Indian delegation as an active participant in the deliberations. The proponents of the idea argued that with a Muslim population of 70 million (at that time), India was entitled to legitimate representation in international Muslim councils.

The Muslim population of the Soviet Union does not equal that of India. But it is close to a not inconsiderable 50 million. And it is growing. Based on current rates of growth, it is estimated that by the year 2000, the Soviet Muslim population will increase by over 100 percent. Indian Muslims by comparison will increase by only 71 percent in the same period (1980-2000). In 1980, one out of every six Soviet citizens was a Muslim but by the year 2000, one out of three will be a Muslim. In India in 1980, the population ratio was one Muslim out of every ten Indians. Since the *total* Indian population is estimated to increase by 55 percent as compared to the total Soviet population growth

of 22 percent, by the year 2000 the Muslim ratio in India will increase to one Muslim out of every seven Indians.

Furthermore, since the creation of Pakistan, with the exception of the state of Kashmir in the northwest and a handful of offshore islands in the Indian Ocean, the Muslim population in India is quite diffuse. Indian territories contiguous to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan are wholly non-Muslim territories (again, with the exception of Kashmir). The Muslim regions of the Soviet Union, on the contrary, constitute today (and have constituted since the ninth century) the border lands of the world of Islam. It has been estimated that 75 percent of Russian Muslims live south of the Syr-Darya river in regions that are contiguous to firmly established Muslim lands: Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey, Pakistan and Chinese Turkestan.

Consanguinity of race, language and culture across the borders is significant enough to have caused repeated headaches to the Russian imperium.

All these facts put together may not amount to a convincing argument in favor of opening up membership in the organization of the Islamic Conference for the Soviet Union, but they do serve to underscore the strange phenomenon of neglect that the Muslim world as a whole has been guilty of with respect to these pioneer communities of Islam in Central Asia.

In Muslim polemics of recent times one hears a great deal about the historic encounter of Islam with the West. Nothing looms larger in Muslim consciousness than the persistent threat that the Muslim world has faced from the West (now represented by "decadent America") since the twelfth century A.D. This threat has been looked upon as both political and cultural, thus large chunks of Muslim territory fell under the control of sundry Western powers, and Westernization (or Occidentosis) became the order of the day in Muslim societies.

Much of this, however, is now history. Almost all Muslim lands once occupied by West European powers have been relinquished, and with growing confidence the Muslim world is now challenging the hegemony of the West over its mind and thought.

But what about the Russians? From Ivan the Terrible's triumph over the Muslim Khanate of Kazan in 1552 to the 1979 invasion of Afghanistan, the history of the Russian onslaught on the Muslim world is no less long and no less gory. What is more, it still persists. Unlike the West European threat, it is not likely

to fade away. Besides, it is not directed at land only—oil fields, warm water outlets, strategic waterways, these are all grist to the expanding Soviet mill, but its chief target is the Muslim spirit and no less. As one observer has recently noted: "For the first time since the Prophet's triumphant return to Makkah, Islam has come face to face with a power determined to eradicate the religion as such and to convert Muslims from faith to infidelity" (Gai Eaton, *Islam and the Destiny of Man*, London, 1985, p. 25).

It is no doubt understandable to an extent that in the first decades of its emancipation, the world of Islam was preoccupied with its own problems of stability and consolidation. But surely the time has now come for it to take a measure of its international Islamic commitments. According to one recent estimate, no fewer than 350 million Muslims live as minorities in non-Muslim states. This figure constitutes close to one-third of the total Muslim world population and can be overlooked in any planning of Muslim futures only at grave peril to the Ummah.

The Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs since its inception in 1976 has repeatedly drawn attention to the gravity of this situation. Through its research and publication activities, it has sought to provide accurate and reliable information about the conditions of life of Muslim minority communities in all parts of the world, and particularly of those of the Soviet Union and China. To date, the Institute is the only body of its kind devoted to this essential task. It is hoped that on the basis of the information thus provided, community leaders as well as national and international organizations within the Muslim world and outside it will see the urgency of formulating long overdue policies for the preservation of the Islamic identity of these communities and of ensuring for them, through practicable means, their civil and religious rights.

The publication of *Russian Colonial Expansion* by the Institute may be viewed as a step in this same direction. The book is not, of course, exclusively an account of Muslim encounter with the Russians. But as even a casual student of history would recognize, the tide of Russian expansion has principally been (and continues to be) at the expense of Muslim lands and the Islamic way of life. This would suffice to explain (if, indeed an explanation was needed) the interest the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs has in sponsoring, along with the Association for the Study of the Nationalities, this excellent book for publication.

I earnestly hope that *Russian Colonial Expansion* will receive wide dissemination and that it will be a forerunner of other such studies that will help to awaken the Muslim mind to the full nature and extent of the Soviet threat to the Muslim world, past and present.

Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs, London
Syed Z. Abedin
Director

Preface

Michael Rywkin

The history of Russian colonial expansion is of particular interest, both from the historical point of view and from its continuing relevance in our days.

First of all, the Russian Empire is the only one that is still in existence, all other European powers having lost their colonial possessions in the twentieth century. True, the Russian Empire, following the 1917 Revolution, underwent important change; areas conquered throughout its history were given various degrees of autonomy in accordance with the status awarded to them by Moscow (union republics, autonomous republics, autonomous regions, national districts), local languages were recognized, and vast programs of economic, social, medical, and educational assistance were promoted, lifting most of the formerly colonized peoples to the levels of the metropolis. If this were the whole story we should not be able to speak of a survival of a colonial empire. Unfortunately, socio-economic correctives have been balanced by continuous political control. Thus Russian cadres have been maintained in key power positions and in control over native cadres. Russian troops and security forces are as much in charge as during the time of the tsars. Some national or national-religious groups are trusted, others distrusted, all on the basis of their allegiance to Russia. Some nationalities have been punished but rehabilitated, others punished but not "forgiven." Nationalism is tolerated at the level of nepotism, but rarely above; separatism is viewed as treason. On the other hand, Russian chauvinism, equally suppressed after the October Revolution, is being increasingly tolerated, passing for patriotism.

Secondly, the Russian Empire has been the only European

empire to acquire colonial possessions not across the seas—a classical colonial pattern—but across endless land masses of steppes, forests and taigas, a situation not always properly recognized as equally colonial. The limits of Russian penetration were either natural obstacles (such as the Pamir Mountains or Pacific Ocean) or opposition from nations strong enough to resist further Russian penetration (Turkey, China, Japan).

Works on tsarist Russian colonial expansion are by no means of purely historical interest. They are indispensable background studies for understanding contemporary Moscow policies towards non-Russian nationalities conquered during the process of expansion. And Soviet reactions to Western historical writings on that subject reflect the current standing of the given nationality in Moscow's eyes.

Contemporary Soviet historiography has stressed several principles justifying Russian colonial expansion. First of all, the foreign policies of the Russian tsars are pictured as having been almost as peaceful and benevolent as the Soviet ones. Next, Russian conquest of national groups still under punishment, such as the Crimean Tatars, is presented as a defensive measure on the part of Russia; that of nations whose entry into the Russian empire was rather voluntary, such as Armenia or Georgia, is described, on the other hand, in a more balanced (if not always truthful) fashion. Finally, all attempts by conquered nationalities to gain independence from tsarist Russia, while not always condemned (as was done in the 1950s with the Shamil revolt), are slanted to look like social, not national conflicts. Thus the Bashkir eighteenth-century struggle against Russian landlords would be justified, while Kokand's fight against advancing Russian armies would be seen negatively in the eyes of present-day Soviet historians.

In the case of Muslim peoples, who ever since the sixteenth century have been the main target of Russian expansionism, their conquest is presented in the most distorted way, with Russia appearing as carrier of progress and civilization at the given place and time. Muslim states, on the other hand, are made to appear as both backward and aggressive. Islam as a reactionary faith, and Muslim masses as more oppressed by their own co-religionaries (from feudal lords to merchants) than by conquering tsarist Russian armies.

The eleven contributions making up this volume, written by

ten authors, each a specialist in his (or her) field, have not been conceived as a collection of essays on a related subject. Instead, they were planned as chapters, with areas to be covered and chronological limits set in advance. The story of Russian colonial expansion has been from the outset the key point of this volume, with other matters, however important, relegated to second place. Thus international relations have been discussed in the light of our key issue, and Russia's westward drive (a conquest, but not a colonial one in the proper sense of the word) excluded, except for the Ukraine as part of the southward drive. To make the subject more manageable, we also excluded areas that only temporarily fell into Russian hands (i.e. Alaska, Manchuria, etc.), and avoided the Jewish issue as outside of our scope.

In our first chapter, Rein Taagepera presents a short survey of the growth of the Russian Empire, both in comparison to other colonial empires and as measured by a yardstick of average yearly expansion.

Michael Rywkin's contribution deals with the central colonial administration (first in Moscow, then in St. Petersburg) and attempts to trace some political continuity, patterns of governance and long-term administrative trends as they emerge from the acts of colonial administration.

Janet Martin surveys the first Russian colonial expansion, which started even before the Mongol invasion and ended with the absorption of numerous small Finnish tribes dwelling to the north and northeast of Kievan Rus'. The northward extension of Russian territory gave Russia two important advantages: first, a refuge from the Mongols, then a springboard for later movement towards the Volga and the Urals.

Henry Huttenbach presents Russia's conquest of Muslim Kazan and Astrakhan as keys to all further colonial expansion. His second piece follows Russia's jump from the Urals to the Pacific Ocean, accomplished in seventy-five years (as compared to the hundred and fifty years that it took the Americans to reach the Pacific from the Appalachian Mountains). Both expansions, albeit almost two centuries apart, were crucial in propelling these two countries to great-power status at a later date.

Stephan Horak's study of Russian annexation of the Ukraine brings up the problem of primacy among the Slavic nations. The victor in the Polish-Russian struggle for the Ukraine, already strengthened by the conquest of Siberia, became the great power.

With her western borders secure, Russia was able to turn her attention to the south, towards the Crimea and the Caucasus, with the Cossacks prominent in carrying St. Petersburg's colonial conquests.

Edward Lazzarini depicts the Crimean part of that expansion. With no Poland to contend with, the last Islamic outpost in Europe outside of the Turkish possessions in the Balkans fell into Christian hands in the way a few centuries earlier Muslim Granada had succumbed to Spanish reconquista.

Muriel Atkin covers the early Russian thrust into the Caucasus, an inevitable consequence of the elimination of protective Tatar power first from Astrakhan and then from the Crimea. Russia's role as both the protector of Christian Georgians and Armenians and once again colonizer of Muslim lands clearly emerges in this chapter.

It was our original intention to include the Russian pacification of the Caucasus as well, but the requested piece failed to materialize, leaving Muriel Atkin's chapter alone in covering the Russian expansion into that area.

Alton Donnelly deals with the gradual absorption of the Kazakh Steppe, a movement that finally brought Russia to the gates of Central Asia.

David MacKenzie follows with the story of the Russian conquest of the three Central Asian khanates and the pacification of the Turkmen tribes, as well as with the initial setting of the Russian colonial administration in that area.

Finally, Seymour Becker surveys the consolidation of the Russian colonial empire in Central Asia, the most classically colonial of all tsarist Russian conquests and the most similar to the case of the French North African empire. In both cases, two states were made into protectorates and the central one absorbed (Kokand by the Russians, Algeria by the French). In both cases the conquerors were Europeans, the conquered were Muslims, and in the two cases the justifications given for the conquest were quite similar.

Our project on Russian colonial expansion, conceived by the American "Association for the Study of the Nationalities (USSR and Eastern Europe)" and dealing to a large extent with the Russian conquest of Muslim lands, attracted the attention of the London Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs. This shared interest has resulted in a common sponsorship, publication, and distribu-

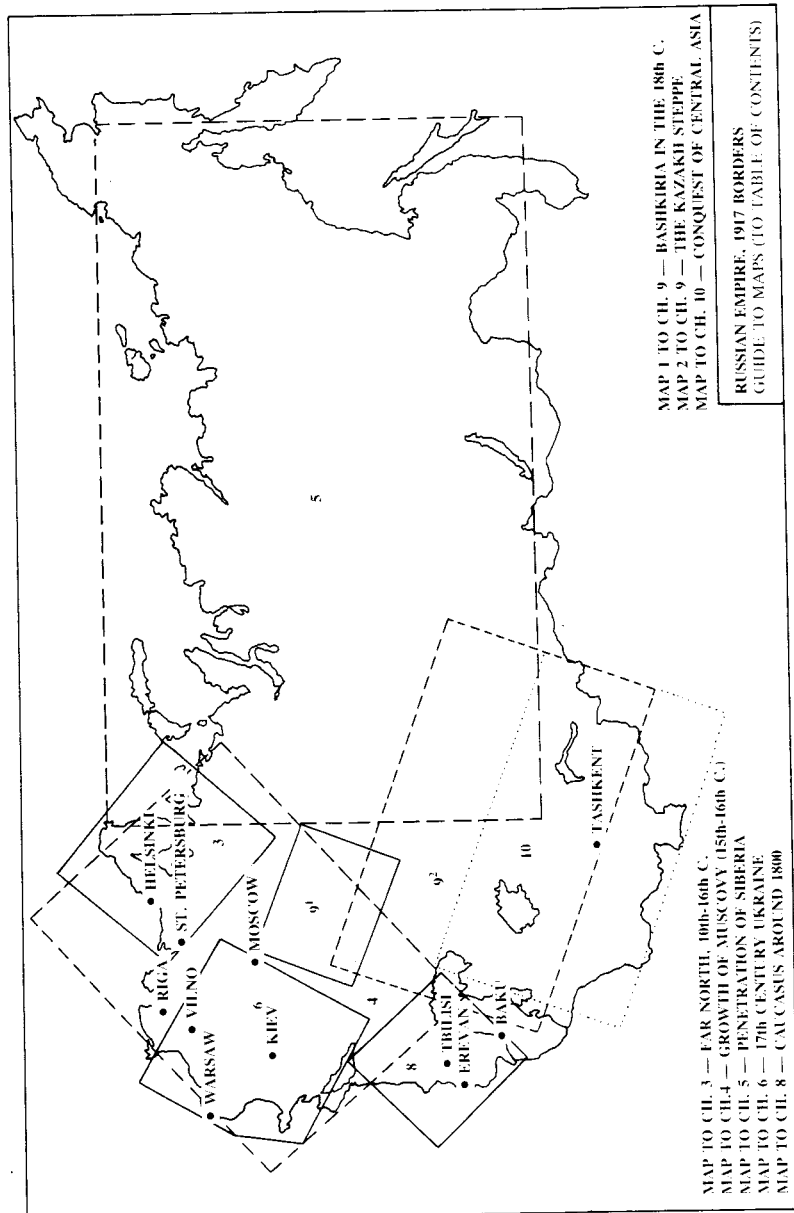
**The Ethnic Composition of the Population of the Russian Empire
(within census borders)**

Peoples by language group	1719		1914/17	
	in 1000s	in %	in 1000s	in %
Russians	11.127	70.7	76.672	44.6
Ukrainians	2.026	12.9	31.023	18.1
Belorussians	383	2.4	6,768	4.0
Poles	—	—	11.208	6.5
Lithuanians	—	—	1.786	1
Latvians	162	1	1.635	1
Moldavians	—	—	1.216	0.7
Jews	—	—	7.253	4.2
Germans	31	0.2	2,448	1.4
Tadjiks ¹	—	—	488	0.3
Ossetians ²	—	—	237	0.1
Armenians	—	—	1,989	1.2
Greeks	—	—	261	0.2
Georgians	—	—	1,748	1.0
Kabardians ¹	—	—	103	0.06
Cherkes ¹	—	—	59	0.03
Chechens ¹	—	—	253	0.1
Peoples of Dagestan ¹	—	—	772	0.5
Finns	164	1.0	2,697	1.6
Udmurts	48	0.3	535	0.3
Estonians	309	1.9	1,154	0.6
Mordva	107	0.7	1,188	0.7
Tatars ¹	293	1.9	3,010	1.8
Bashkirs ¹	172	1.1	1,733	1.0
Chuvash	218	1.4	1,124	0.6
Azeri Turks ¹	—	—	1,996	1.2
Nogai ¹	114	0.7	57	0.05
Turkmen ¹	—	—	361	0.2
Kazakhs ¹	—	—	4,698	2.7
Kirghiz ¹	—	—	737	0.4
Uzbeks ¹	—	—	1,964	1.2
Iakuts	35	0.2	227	0.1
Kalmyks	200	1.3	169	0.1
Buriats	48	0.3	279	0.2
Others	301	2.0	3,902	2.26

Source: S.I. Bruk, V.M. Kabuzan, "Etnicheskie sostavy naseleniia Rossii (1717-1971 gg)", *Sovetskaia etnografia*, N. 6 (1980).

Notes: ¹Muslims ²Half of them are now Muslims.

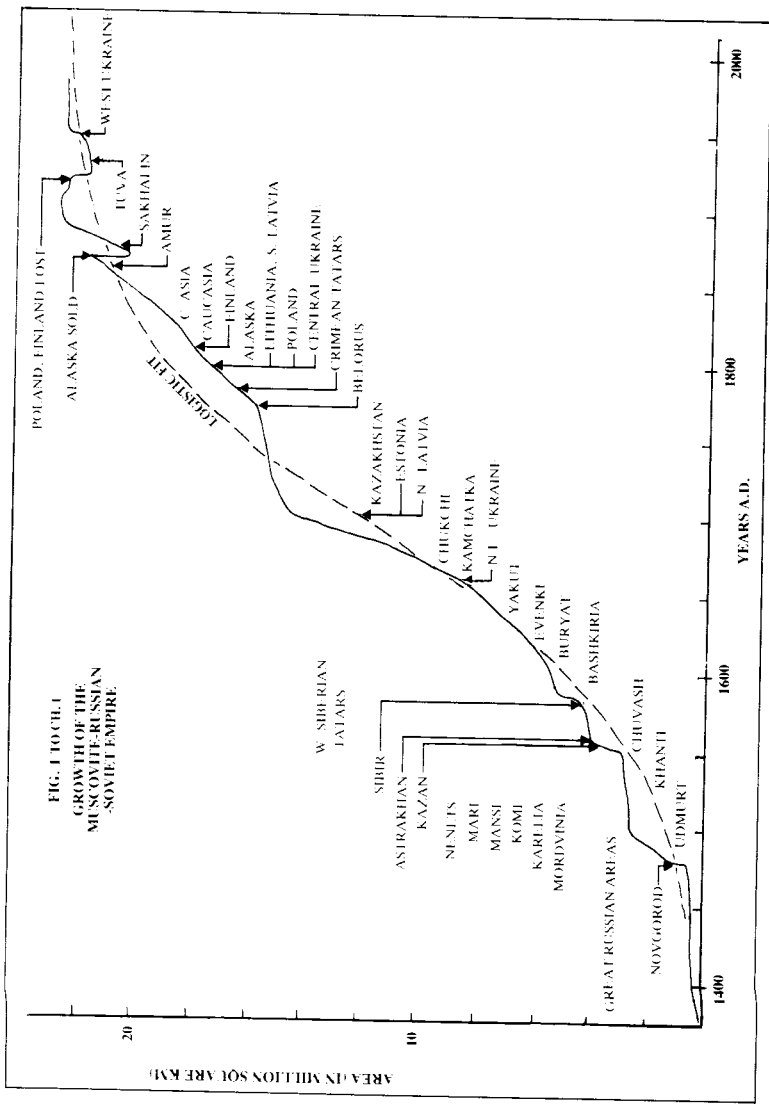
tion of this volume. Written by ten authors, each of whom is solely responsible for the content of his/her contribution, the work presents some inevitable problems, from a variety of political views and academic approaches, to different methods of presentation and style. But despite all the shortcomings and omissions in the text that our critics might justifiably uncover, this volume, we hope, will provide basic data and proper perspective on a subject too little known, but very much alive: the colonial expansion of the only major world power that still manages to preserve its territorial conquests.



MAP 1 TO CH. 9 — BASHKIRIA IN THE 18th C.
 MAP 2 TO CH. 9 — THE KAZAKH STEPPE
 MAP TO CH. 10 — CONQUEST OF CENTRAL ASIA

RUSSIAN EMPIRE, 1917 BORDERS
 GUIDE TO MAPS (TO TABLE OF CONTENTS)

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 MAP TO CH. 4 — GROWTH OF MUSCOVY (15th-16th C.)
 MAP TO CH. 5 — PENETRATION OF SIBERIA
 MAP TO CH. 6 — 17th CENTURY UKRAINE
 MAP TO CH. 8 — CAUCASUS AROUND 1800



I

An Overview of the Growth of the Russian Empire

Rein Taagepera

Starting from a tiny core, the Principality of Moscow eventually developed into a Russian-dominated empire that now is called the Soviet Union. It is the third-largest empire that has ever existed, ranking after the British and the Mongol empires. Its combination of size and duration is unique in world history, since it has outlasted by far the other large empires. Its slow but relentless growth over five centuries, though not unique, also comes close to the record of steadiness of expansion. These claims will be documented in a later part of this overview.

This brief sketch will not describe the methods through which expansion was achieved and maintained. Building a large empire obviously indicates superior ability to organize people socially, by more or less ruthless means.¹ This is not to suggest that large empires are the optimal way to run the world. On the contrary, empire-building may prove to be a major foolishness of our species. The following description of growth does not take a stand on whether it was healthy or cancerous.

The growth of Muscovy–Russia in terms of its dry land area is shown in Figure 1 where area is plotted versus time.² This figure further indicates the approximate major areas conquered or subdued by Muscovy–Russia at various time periods.³

First mentioned in chronicles in 1147, Muscovy after 1300 started to incorporate other Russian states at a rate (in terms of square kilometers) that increased as its own size increased. After the destruction of Novgorod in 1478 most Great Russian areas were conquered, and so were some Volga Finnic (Mordvin) and Baltic Finnish (Vote, Vepse and Karelian) areas. By 1533 the conquest of Great Russian areas was complete, and some

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Permian Finnic (Udmurt-Votyak and Komi-Zyrian) and Samoyed (Nenets) areas to the northeast also were controlled.

In 1552–1556 the collapse of the Tatar khanates of Kazan and Astrakhan extended Moscow's grip to Turkish (Tatar, Chuvash, Bashkir) and Finnic (Mari-Cheremis) areas throughout the Volga basin. The overthrow of the Khanate of Sibir in 1581 submitted to Moscow Turkish-Tatar and Ugric (Mansi-Vogul, Khanti-Ostyak) populations in the lower Ob basin. Displacement of Lithuania–Poland from northeastern parts of the Ukraine (1667) came simultaneously with further seizure of vast stretches of Tatar and Samoyed lands in the present Western Siberia where the Yenissei became the frontier around 1630. By 1690 the Buryat Mongol, Evenki (Tungus) and Yakut lands could be considered subdued—nearly the whole of present-day Siberia, except the Amur region claimed by China, Kamchatka, and the indomitable Chukchis to the far northeast.

By 1700 Russian area expansion slowed down for almost a century. The conquests of Estonia, northern Latvia, and the Finnish Ingermanland around the present Leningrad (1721) were of great strategic and economic importance, but added little to the land mass of the now large empire. Incorporation of Kamchatka and the Chukchi area completed the conquest of northeastern Siberia. East of the Volga, Russian aggression was kept in check for centuries by Bashkir and Kazakh resilience, and by the destruction of a Russian army of invasion by the Turkmen (1717). To the west, Sweden, Poland and the Crimea held their ground, and Russian conquests in the Ukraine alternated with reverses.

In 1772 a new wave of major Russian expansion started, as the Russians took from Poland parts of Belorussia. The Crimean Tatar country and the southern Ukraine were annexed in 1783. The partition of Poland in 1793–1795 gave Russia all of the Ukraine east of Galicia, all of Belorussia, Lithuania, and southern Latvia. Between 1801 and 1828, Finland, most of ethnic Poland, Bessarabia, and most of Transcaucasia came under Russian rule. Between 1822 and 1854 Kazakh resistance was gradually crushed, and Russian penetration of the Arctic regions continued from Siberia to Alaska.

The latter part of the nineteenth century saw the final slowing-down of the Russian imperialist push. In 1858–1863, China was forced to cede the Amur and Ussuri districts. In 1863–1875

Sakhalin was occupied. In 1878 Armenia's Kars region was taken from Turkey. From 1855 to 1885, the three khanates of Turkestan—today's Kirghizia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and finally Turkmenia—were conquered. Meanwhile, Alaska became untenable and was sold to the USA in 1867.

The Russian Empire had reached practically its largest extent ever by 1885. Minor expansion in Pamir (1895), power play in the Balkans, and gradual infiltration of Manchuria led to antagonisms with Great Britain, Austria, China, and finally Japan.

In retrospect, the year 1905 marked the end of Russian expansion, and the beginning of the shrinking of the empire. The area of the Soviet Union has never surpassed the geographical size the tsarist empire had in 1904. Southern Sakhalin and claims in Manchuria were lost to Japan in 1905. In 1917–1920 Poland, Finland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia declared and successfully defended their independence, and Romania recovered Bessarabia. Turkey and Poland occupied the Kars region, the western Ukraine and Belorussia, respectively.

Under the new name of "Soviet Union" the Russian Empire managed to defeat the emancipation attempts of other non-Russian areas, at the cost of giving them some cultural and symbolic autonomy. From 1935 to 1945 the Soviet Union reclaimed earlier tsarist conquests in the Baltic states, eastern Finland and Romania, western Belorussia, and southern Sakhalin. It also annexed some areas that had never belonged to the tsarist empire: Tanu Tuva, eastern Galicia, Bukowina, Transcarpathia, Lithuania's Klaipeda district, a slice of East Prussia and the southern Kuril islands. Of the former tsarist possessions, Alaska, Finland, Poland and the Kars region remained outside the Soviet Union.

Like the tsarist empire with its sphere of influence and occupation in Manchuria, Mongolia, Sinkiang, Iran and the Balkans, the Soviet Union has established a string of satellites and client states at its periphery. The trend of the last twenty years does not suggest that any of them are likely to be eventually absorbed into the Soviet Union, unless Chinese pressure on Mongolia increases.

The Russian expansion is seen in Figure 1 to be quite steady. It can be fitted fairly closely by a simple mathematical expression, the so-called logistic equation, which is widely used in biological and demographic studies of growth. The basic model expressed

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by the logistic equation is the following: growth proceeds first at a constant percentage rate (like money in a savings account at constant interest), but later it gradually slows down as the size approaches an eventual maximum size. This is the way a bacterial colony grows in a laboratory dish with fixed space and food supply.

The logistic fit shown as a dashed curve in Figure 1 corresponds to the following equation:

$$A = \frac{22.4}{1 + e^{-.015(t-1690)}}$$

where A is the area in million square kilometers, and t is time in years A.D. The maximum stable area reached is 22.4 million square kilometers (which is the present actual area). Time of fastest growth was around A.D. 1690. During its early growth, Muscovy's land area increased by 1.5% per year, according to this logistic approximation. A similar approximation to the growth of the Roman Empire yields a similar rate of early growth: 1.8% per year. The early Ottoman and US area growths were much faster: 3.2 and 3.6% per year, respectively. One may wonder whether slow growth leads to a better-built and hence more durable empire.

Figure 2 shows the Russian area curve in the company of those of some other major empires since 1200.⁵ As mentioned earlier, the Russian empire is the third-largest ever, surpassed in size only by the Mongol and British empires, and trailed by the Chinese (Manchu), Spanish, French and Baghdad Muslim empires, with Rome a distant twenty-fourth.⁶

Regarding durability at fairly stable size, Russia has not yet reached the age of such major empires as the Roman-Byzantine, Parthian-Sassanid, Lithuanian-Polish or Ottoman ones. All these lasted at more than half of their maximum size for 4 to 7 centuries. At present Russia has reached 2.9 centuries, but of course its duration is still incomplete. Nonetheless Russia is already among the twenty most durable political entities throughout history by this criterion, with the list also including such enduring ministates as the Church State and San Marino.

When one takes into account both size and duration of empires, Russia comes by far ahead of the British and Mongol empires (which had a short duration—cf. Figure 2) and also of

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the Roman and Sassanid ones (which stayed small by present standards). A suitable measure of this combined size–duration effect is the so-called “time integral of area,” i.e. the area under the area curve in Figure 2.⁷ It is 65 million square-kilometer-centuries for Russia, while the closest runners-up (British, and post-Mongol Chinese, from Ming to Mao) are around 45, followed by Rome, Baghdad, Han China, Sassanid Persia, Sung-Tang China and the Mongol Empire at 30 to 20 million square-kilometer-centuries. As far as the impact of an empire depends on how much land it controls for how many centuries, Muscovy–Russia–USSR already holds the record in world history. While the combined Chinese empires, from Han to Mao, add up to much more, they are separated by long breakdown periods compared with which Russian times of trouble have been negligible.

How long is the Russian empire still likely to last? There is some indication that biological and political entities that grow slowly tend to last longer. More specifically, the duration at half or more of the maximum size tends to be about three times the time it takes to rise from 20 to 80% of maximum size.⁸ To the extent that this very tentative observation applies, the Russian empire could be expected to retain at least half of its present area for 4 more centuries, since its rise time from 20 to 80% of maximum size was 2.4 centuries and it reached half of its maximum size area around 1690, i.e., three centuries ago.

While such projections should not be taken as very precise, they serve to give an idea of how the slow but relentless growth of the Russian empire can be expected to affect the stability of the resulting structure. Forms of government of the empire have changed occasionally, and may change again. Minor or even not-so-minor chunks of land may detach themselves. But the bulk of the Russian empire is likely to stay together long after the 1980s, if the experience of past major empires can be taken as a guide.⁹

Notes

1. For a comparison of American and Russian policies towards technologically simple people, see Taagepera, R., and R. Michelsen (1977). “If the Navajo were in the Soviet Union: a comparative approach to the Russian nationality policy.” In I. Kamenetsky, ed., *Nationalism and Human Rights: Processes of Modernization in the USSR*. Libraries Unlimited, Littleton, Colorado.

2. From Taagepera, R. (1968). "Growth curves of empires," *General Systems*, 13:171-175, with corrections based on Bjorklund, O., H. Holmboe and A. Rohr (1970). *Historical Atlas of the World*. Barnes & Noble, New York; Chew, A.F. (1967). *An Atlas of Russian History*. Yale University Press, New York; Hammond (1968), *Hammond Historical Atlas*. Maplewood, N.J.; and Kinder, H., and W. Hilgemann (1964). *dtv-Atlas Zur Weltgeschichte*. Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, Munich.
3. Based mainly on Katz, Z., ed. (1975). *Handbook of Major Soviet Nationalities*. Free Press, New York; Rywkin, M. (1963). *Russia in Central Asia*. Collier Books, New York; and Estonian Soviet Encyclopedia (1968-1976). *Eesti Nõukogude Entsüklopeedia*. Valgus, Tallinn.
4. R. Taagepera (1968).
5. Based on unpublished measurements. The Golden Horde, Ottoman and Spanish empires at times surpassed Russia in size, prior to 1700. They are not shown in Figure 2, in order to avoid cluttering it up.
6. R. Taagepera (1978). "Size and duration of empires: systematics of size," *Social Science Research* 7:108-127.
7. R. Taagepera (1978). "Size and duration of empires: growth-decline curves, 300 to 600 B.C." *Social Science Research* 7:180-196.
8. R. Taagepera (1979). "Size and duration of empires: growth-decline curves, 600 B.C. to 600 A.D." *Social Science History* 3:115-138.
9. These projections can apply only if humankind does not meanwhile reach a dangerous "megacrisis" due to accelerating population and technology explosion—cf. R. Taagepera (1976). "Crisis around 2005 A.D.?—A technology-population interaction model," *General Systems* 21:137-138; and (1979). "People, skills and resources: an interaction model for world population growth." *Technological Forecasting and Social Change* 13:13-30.

II

Russian Central Colonial Administration

From the prikaz of Kazan to the XIX Century, a Survey

Michael Rywkin

The business of supervising the central administration in charge of non-Russian nationalities annexed by the growing Russian Empire was traditionally entrusted to the empire's patrician councils: to the Boyar Duma until the time of Peter the Great, to the State Senate thereafter, and to the State Council from 1810 to 1917. Whether this can be conceived as a sign of discrimination against the non-Russians whose affairs were deemed beneath the tsar's dignity to handle, or rather as a sign of benevolence towards the conquered nations whose Russian administration was thus made accountable to a kind of jury instead of one man, or again to the tsar's wish to share the rule over the aliens with his country's peers, remains unclear. According to Kliuchevskii, in the second half of the seventeenth century the Boyar Duma was in control of several *prikazy* (*Posol'skii*, *Pomestnyi*, *Razriadnyi*) as well as of the "colonial" *Kazanskii*, and had specific hours set aside to hear their reports.¹

The fact of accountability to a larger body of peers of the realm meeting in chamber to hear the tsar's orders, administrative reports and subjects' complaints must have provided some restraints to the actions of state officials in charge of colonial administration.

The latter has been traditionally organized according to territorial principles, each colonial conquest dealt with separately, with no attempt at British-style overall administration concentrated in a single "Colonial Office." It is only when Russia was expanding exclusively eastward, with little success elsewhere, that such unity occurred, by chance, under the umbrella of the central office in charge of Kazan and Siberian territories, namely the *prikaz* of the Kazan Court.

The appearance of a separate *prikaz* of Siberia, formerly a desk of the Kazan *prikaz*, did not change the situation very much because of the close relations between the two *prikazy*. The togetherness of the two offices was underlined by the fact that both *prikazy* were, for at least a quarter of a century after their formal separation, headed by the same boyar, sometimes even assisted by the same *diaks*. This provided for a basic unity in colonial policy.

Subsequently, when Russia began to expand southward and westward, and later into the southeast, each newly conquered area, at least temporarily, was provided with its own central territorial administration located in Moscow, or later in St. Petersburg. Thus when at some point in the seventeenth century there existed the *prikazy* of Kazan, Siberia, Malorussia (Ukraine), the short-lived ones of Lifland (Latvia, 1660–1666) and Lithuania (i.e., conquered areas of the Grand Duchy, 1656–1667), and even a Cossack *prikaz*, there was no single colonial office to unite them under one roof, each *prikaz* administration remaining separately accountable to the Boyar Duma. Some conquered nations were placed under most unusual tutelage. Thus the Kalmyks were moved in 1678 from the Moscow *prikaz* to the one of the new *chetvert*.² In the nineteenth century, when Russia was pacifying the Caucasus and expanding into Central Asia, again each area was dealt with in a separate manner. It thus appears that the "colonial office" of the Kazan *prikaz* was an accident of history not to be repeated again.

Stages of Absorption

There is in Russian history a clear pattern of downgrading of the conquered lands from being states brought under the rule of the Muscovite crown to being centrally administered colonial territories, and finally to becoming simple provinces, administratively indistinguishable from neighboring Russian provinces. This transition is clearly visible through the succession of stages of administrative dependence most conquered territories seem to have passed through.

At first the conquered state (we are excluding tribal units that did not reach that level) would remain under the jurisdiction of the *Posol'skii prikaz* (later the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). Referred to as a separate unit and linked to Russia in the usual

feudal tradition of having a common monarch, it would retain if not the essence, at least a legal form of sovereignty. At the second stage, a territorial *prikaz*, bearing the name of the conquered state (such as the one of Kazan), accountable not only to the monarch, but to the peers of the realm (Duma, Senate, Council), is in charge. Finally, the former state loses all separate identity and is treated as an ordinary Russian province and its inhabitants as ethnic or national minorities living in the Great Russian Christian Orthodox state.

Almost all the conquered lands went through this process of diminishing autonomy: Kazan, Siberia, Georgia, Crimea, even Ukraine. This process, irreversible in the long run, lasted until the end of the tsarist empire in 1917. Thus while the two sister *prikazy* of Kazan and Siberia together with the *Posol'skii* shared responsibility for Russia's eastern policy, the dividing line between their respective jurisdiction in dealing with an eastern nation was that nation's degree of independence from Russia. Since the *prikazy* always acted in the name of the monarch, it is often difficult to separate the policy of the tsar from that of the *prikaz*. What is clear is that passing of jurisdiction from the *Posol'skii* to a territorial *prikaz* was a sure sign of decline in the status of the nation concerned.

Thus the shift of the Kasimov "tsardom" in Meshchera from the jurisdiction of the *Posol'skii prikaz* to the Kazan *prikaz* in the 1660s is considered to be the end of the autonomy of the "Kasimov tsars" (or "tsarevichs"), although their dynasty survived until 1681.³ While the jurisdiction of the *Posol'skii prikaz* meant a recognition of formal sovereignty, that of a territorial *prikaz* was just an acceptance of national-cultural separateness within a framework of residual sovereignty.

During the second stage, that of residual sovereignty, when the area was provided with a Moscow- or St. Petersburg-based central territorial administration supervising the one of the territory itself, there were five levels of administrative control:

1. The council (Boyar Duma, Senate, State Council) to which the central territorial administration remained accountable;
2. the above-mentioned administration itself (*prikaz*, committee, commission);
3. the provincial administration (headed by a *voevoda*, *namestnik*, governor-general, governor), accountable to the central administration;

4. the city or district administration responsible to the *voevoda*, governor, etc.;
5. the native self-government at communal levels.

The native elite of the conquered area could seldom aspire to positions within the Moscow or St. Petersburg state councils. The appointment to the *prikaz* of Kazan in 1604–1606 of Prince Vasilii Kazi-Kordiukovich Tcherkasskii cannot be viewed as a concession to Kazan Muslim natives, the boyar's family having been converted and Russified since at least half a century prior to his appointment. According to Kokoshkin, the Siberian and Kasimov *tsarevichs* baptized into the Christian faith, although by rank and *chest'* (honor) higher than the boyars, still "do not sit in the *duma* since they and their states were conquered after military defeat, precedents are lacking, and one may fear something from them."⁴

Native presence at the *prikaz* level seldom went beyond assisting or advising. At the provincial level, only Christians were at some points allowed to share control with the Russians. In Asia, by the time of the October Revolution, only the protectorates of Khiva and Bukhara, formally sovereign, managed to retain full provincial-level control.

At the city/district level Russian control was generally milder, but it is only at communal levels that Moscow/St. Petersburg followed a policy of noninterference in native affairs. Thus Russia increasingly sought administrative centralization through tight control at all administrative levels, but consistently stayed away from purely local matters, especially from those involving native customs and religion, except for limited periods of missionary effort in the Volga area and in Siberia, and for attempts to spread Russian as a *lingua franca*. Thus throughout the centuries the basic colonial policy of Russia was native communal autonomy below, Russian administrative control above.

The Prikaz of Kazan

The first among Moscow-based central territorial administrations charged with handling a specific newly acquired possession was the *prikaz* of Kazan. Its origins date to the times of Vasilii III (1503–1533), when the Meshchera territory of Mordva was wrested from Kazan in the 1520s and a Meshchera Court

(*Meshcherskii dvor*) was set up in Moscow to take care of the affairs of the territory, a part of which was left under the nominal rule of its Russian puppet "Kasimov tsars."⁵

The Meshchera Court was initially placed under the control of the *Posol'skii prikaz* (Foreign Office)⁶, but later combined with the Kazan Court, created in 1553, a year after the takeover of Kazan by Tsar Ivan the Terrible.

The Kazan Court was originally one among several regional administrations created probably out of Boyar Duma desks⁷ to manage villages taken over by the Crown in areas annexed by the Muscovite state. It was first known as *izba* (old Russian for office) in the 1560s, sometimes as *dvor* or *dvorets* (a court or a palace), and finally as the Kazan *prikaz*.⁸ It was already so mentioned in the 1570s, but officially known as such only after 1599. Until the early seventeenth century, the *prikaz* was still referred to as the "Kazan and Meshchera Court" (*Kazanskogo i Meshcherskogo dvortsa*).⁹ The second part of the name was later dropped. During the reign of Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich (1616–1645), regional departments in charge of ethnic Russian territories were absorbed by the *prikaz* of the Great Court (*Bol'shoi dvorets*). The one of Kazan, being in charge of non-Russian areas, was, on the contrary, upgraded to the status of a regular *prikaz*.¹⁰ and became "a fully independent office in charge of general administration, albeit with territorial character."¹¹ Thus from roughly 1553 to 1720 it administered the territories of the former Tatar kingdoms of Kazan and Astrakhan known as the "Tsardom of Kazan." From the 1590s to 1637, the newly conquered regions of Siberia were also temporarily under its jurisdiction.

By the end of the seventeenth century, the territory administered by the *prikaz* of Kazan comprised the lands of all present-day non-Russian Volga republics as well as the rest of the Volga basin from the Caspian Sea to the Urals, and was divided into twenty-six provinces.¹²

The *prikaz* of Kazan was considered in the sixteenth century to be among the four most important in the Russian administrative system. The three others were the *Razriadnyi* (General Military Administration), *Posol'skii* (Foreign Office), and *Pomestnyi* (Land Holdings and Grants).¹³

Like other *prikazy*, the one of Kazan had its headquarters in Moscow and was headed by a boyar or *dvoretskii* (head of a

prikaz), assisted by two *diaks* (officials). The heads of the Kazan *prikaz* were traditionally boyars (state officials, members of the Boyar Duma) rather than *dumnyi diaks* and included a real roster of high Russian nobility: Shuiskii, Trubetskoi, Dolgorukii, Odoevskii, Sitskii, etc. Its first head was the boyar Danila Romanovich Iur'ev-Zakharin, an aide to Ivan the Terrible and a kinsman of his first wife.¹⁴ The last was Prince Boris Alekseevich Golitsyn, a top aide to Tsar Peter the Great. However, because of the tradition of appointing as heads of *prikazy* prominent boyars regardless of ability,¹⁵ the real authority in the *prikaz* often fell into the hands of the better-trained *diaks*.

In the "Tsardom of Kazan," the *prikaz* was represented by *voevody* (military governors), originally several per province, headed by a *boyarin i voevoda bol'shoi* (boyar and chief governor). Only Peter the Great's reform of 1708 established the principle of one-man rule.¹⁶

All matters under the *prikaz* jurisdiction were divided among desks (*stoly*). Among them were justice (*sudnyi*), finance (*denezhnyi*), police (*streletskii*), and general military administration (*razriad*).¹⁷

The collection of moneys was one of the primary tasks of the *prikaz* of Kazan: it collected taxes (*obrok*) from villages belonging to the Crown. This was carried on in the provinces by *prikaznye liudi* (officials from the *prikaz*) in charge of overseeing the management of Crown lands.¹⁸ The *prikaz* through its provincial agents collected a variety of transit taxes and duties from merchants engaged in overland and Volga commerce. Only the powerful Stroganov family, entrenched in the Far North, managed to bypass the Kazan State House and deal directly with the *prikaz* offices in Moscow.¹⁹

The *prikaz* is also known to have collected duties at fairs at nearby monasteries, a task usually assigned to the *prikaz* of the Grand Treasury (*Bol'shaia Kazna*).²⁰ The *prikaz* of Kazan, like the one of Siberia, was in charge of gathering the traditional Tatar *iasak* tax, which successfully survived Russian conquest. The *prikaz* was a disbursing agency as well. Thus it had its own budget, a revenue of over 30,000 roubles by the end of the sixteenth century,²¹ and paid salaries both to officials in the Moscow headquarters and to those in local offices in the provinces under its jurisdiction, in accordance with a salary scale established for the *prikaz*.²² The *prikaz* also paid craftsmen

employed in military constructions, foreign experts working on its territory, and local chieftains who supported Russian rule.²³

The *prikaz* of Kazan, like the other regional ones, kept estate grant documents, processed land grants and settled disputes.²⁴ The *prikaz* also took care of numerous cases of runaway serfs and deserters. In the latter task it cooperated with the *Tainyi* (Secret) *prikaz*, the prototype of the Russian secret police. Following the usual pattern of the *prikazy* system, the *prikaz* of Kazan acted as a court in adjudicating disputes under its jurisdiction and in prosecuting local officials for graft, theft or incompetence.²⁵

While Muslims were absent from the *prikaz* hierarchy, there was not much racial or religious discrimination otherwise. Many Muslims served the Crown on equal terms with the Russians in all except the highest positions. Some Belorussian serfs captured during the war against the Polish-Lithuanian state, even though Christian, were sold to both baptized and Muslim Kazan Tatars in the early 1600s.²⁶

After 1563, and long before Siberia, the Kazan lands were places of exile for both domestic enemies and foreign prisoners of war, and the *prikaz* was in charge of the technical side of deportation matters. Moreover, its headquarters contained cells for the temporary incarceration of offenders under its jurisdiction—the usual practice in the absence of a coherent prison system. In addition, military orders concerning troops from the Kazan territory were channeled through the Kazan *prikaz* and not directly through the *Razriad* as in Russia proper. Acceptance of local chieftains coming under the tsar's sovereignty in neighboring nomadic areas was also handled by the *prikaz*. Finally, the *prikaz* was supposed to protect the natives from willful land seizures and extortions by Russian settlers, a task not always carried out with much diligence.²⁷

The Crown was careful not to ignore the *prikaz* when dealing with "oriental" matters. For example, grain requisitioned in excess of delivery quotas was "borrowed" rather than "taken" from the *prikaz*; a demand for silk addressed to the *voevoda* of Simbirsk bypassed the *prikaz*, but still directed that half of the merchandise be sent to Kazan. Even the visit of the Persian shah, Abaz, to Moscow in 1664 was handled for the tsar by a Kazan *prikaz diak*, not by the Foreign Office.²⁸

The *prikaz* of Kazan insured the economic exploitation of the area by the Crown, the officialdom, the Orthodox clergy and the

Russian nobility. It provided law, order, and basic protection for the natives in return for their submission to Moscow. Nevertheless, during its existence, and despite the encroachments upon its authority by other *prikazy*, especially by the *Razriad*—a usual occurrence caused by ill-defined limits of jurisdiction among governmental institutions in pre-Petrine Russia—the *prikaz* of Kazan managed to maintain a degree of separateness for the “Kingdom of Kazan.” The *prikaz* disappeared around 1720, when Peter the Great’s reforms of the central government were finally implemented. Its functions were then split among various departments (collegiums) of the new administration. During the 1763 Senate reform, Kazan was assigned to a “desk” (*stol*) of the Third Department of the Senate, a pale reminder of its former importance;²⁹ the Volga basin became simply a part of Russia, administratively indistinguishable from the rest of the empire.

Siberian Prikaz

Following the conquest of western Siberia in the 1580s, the newly acquired territory was entrusted initially to the *Posol’skii prikaz* (Foreign Office) and to the *chetvernoi prikaz* of *diak* Andrei Shchelkalov, soon afterwards to the Novgorod *chet’* of *diak* Ivan Vakhromiev, next to the special *chetvert’* (office below the *prikaz* level) headed by *diak* Varfolomei Ivanov (1596–1599), and finally, soon afterwards, subordinated to the *prikaz* of Kazan. For the next thirty-eight years (from 1599 to 1637) Siberia remained under a special department within the *prikaz* of Kazan.³⁰ In 1637, a separate Siberian *prikaz* was established, at first managed by the officials in charge of the Kazan *prikaz*. The importance of the new office reached its summit under the vigorous leadership of the *dumnyi diak* A.A. Vinius, first appointed in 1695. An enterprising Dutchman’s son, Vinius was instrumental in promoting the exploitation of the mineral resources of the Urals, but he finally ended in disgrace. The *prikaz* itself fell victim to Peter’s reforms. Reduced to a provincial office in 1710, it was closed in 1725. But owing to an accumulation of unresolved cases, it was reestablished after Peter’s death and survived for another twenty-five years (1730–1755). Afterwards, the area’s administration was not much different from that of the rest of the country, but its non-Russian population remained under special supervision of the Senate

throughout the 1760s. Thus it was the Senate that in 1759 gave permission to build mosques in Tatar areas.³¹

Almost a century later, first between 1821 and 1838, then again between 1852 and 1864, a special Siberian committee of the State Council was entrusted with Siberian affairs' supervision. But after 1864 it was total integration once again, and this time for good.

During its long existence, the Siberian *prikaz* was in charge of all Siberian affairs, appointing and firing *voevodas*, governors, *diaks* and scores of lesser officials, exercising military authority over troops stationed in the area, collecting *iasak* taxes from the non-Russians and taxes in kind from the Russians, as well as supervising deportees from Russia proper. The *prikaz* was also in charge of the so-called "Sable Treasury" (*Sobolinaia kazna*), a major source of export revenue for the Russian state.

Like the *prikaz* of Kazan, the Siberian *prikaz* was accountable to the tsar and to the Boyar Duma. To present reports to either of the higher instances, the boyar (or the *dumnyi diak*) in charge of the *prikaz* would appear flanked by two *diaks*. Reports were generally prepared by one of the *diaks* and decisions taken *na verkhu* ("upstairs") were usually rendered immediately upon hearing the report.

There were four kinds of decrees or orders issued through the *prikaz*:

1. Personal decrees (*imennye ukazy*), the tsar's orders addressed to a specific person. They were generally issued after hearing the *prikaz* presentation of the matter.
2. *Ukaznye gramoty*, general decrees issued in the name of the tsar, often responses to the prior *prikaz* presentation.
3. Instructions or memos (*nakazy, nakaznye gramoty*) setting policies to be followed and usually addressed to the *voevoda(s)* in Siberia.
4. Simple orders (*gramoty*) dealing with particular instances and issued by the *prikaz* itself.³²

The *prikaz* also issued lists describing documents on file and kept track of correspondence with other *prikazy*, mostly with the *Razriad* but also with Land Grants and Foreign Affairs.³³ An example of such correspondence is the discussion about deported Circassians with the Malorussian *prikaz*.

The *prikaz* also acted as a disbursing agency, paying its clerks (*poddiachie*) in Siberia, reimbursing travel expenses, assigning

moneys for deportees, for grain deliveries to Siberia, and for office expenses.³⁴ A permanent peculiarity of Siberia was the absence of serfdom, a concession made by the authorities to attract badly needed settlers to this enormous and often inhospitable land.

Details of local administration in Siberia are too numerous to be included in this chapter. By and large its differences from prevailing all-Russian administrative practices gradually decreased. First known as the "Siberian kingdom," another jewel in the Muscovite crown, Siberia was ruled by a *voevoda* assisted by special clerks from the *prikaz* and responsible to the latter. During Peter the Great's *gubernia* reforms, it was made into a governorship divided into two provinces. After the *prikaz* disappeared, Siberia was split into more governorships and provinces. Catherine the Great was initially reluctant to introduce her 1775 reform of territorial administration into Siberia, but it was finally implemented by 1782–1783.³⁵

Under the newly established Siberian Committee of the State Council, governor-generals in charge of several governorships were appointed (1822). Unlike regular governors, they were entrusted with military powers over their respective regions, a practical necessity given the state of communication at that time. By the last quarter of the century this was still the situation in eastern Siberia and in the maritime provinces, but no longer in western Siberia, already integrated into a standard Russian administrative system. By the end of the century these last traces of special treatment disappeared as well.

Malorussian Prikaz

Already prior to the "reunion" of the Ukraine with Muscovy and in reaction to Polish difficulties with the Cossacks under Polish rule, a special Cossack *prikaz* was set up in Moscow (1616–1646), a forerunner of the Malorussian *prikaz*.³⁶ However, the Malorussian (Ukrainian) *prikaz* failed to develop into a fully fledged central administrative institution empowered to conduct its own affairs over some historical lifespan. Organized sixteen years after the closing of the Cossack *prikaz* and eight years after Khmel'nitsky's oath of allegiance to Russia, it remained independent from other *prikazy* only from 1662 to 1687. At that time it was subordinated to the *Posol'skii* (Foreign Affairs) *prikaz*, a

state of affairs that lasted until its demise. In 1708 it was reorganized into a "collegium" and was given administrative, judicial, financial and policy powers over the Ukraine, still remaining under Foreign Affairs supervision. Among other matters, it was also in charge of Russian troops operating in the Ukraine, but Moscow's administrative hold over the area was somehow alleviated by the fact that Ukrainian *hetmans* remained elected (albeit not without Russian influence on the election process) and nominally still in charge of local self-government.

Between 1709 and 1722, Peter the Great's centralization drive altered the situation, matching *hetmans* with Moscow-dispatched *namestniks* (a Russian version of English viceroys), a direct consequence of Hetman Mazepa's betrayal of Moscow in favor of Sweden before the famous battle of Poltava. *Namestniks* were supposed to exercise joint authority with the *hetmans* in the following fields: maintenance of peace and prevention of treason, supervision of foreign relations, appointment of higher officials, imposition of sentences involving capital punishment, distribution (or withdrawal) of land grants. Such extended powers restricted the *hetmans'* authority to lesser matters. At provincial levels, Cossack *starshinas* (elders) were matched by Russian commanders in a similar manner. Finally, by 1722 the *namestnik-hetman* pattern (a forerunner of today's first Party secretary native, second secretary Russian) was replaced by appointed *hetmans*.

At Peter's death the Malorussian collegium was abolished and Ukrainian "freedoms," including elected *hetmans*, restored (1727), a state of affairs that lasted under Catherine I and Peter II. However, under Empress Anne, it was decided to return to Peter's practices and during the 1734 vacancy no new *hetman* was elected. Empress Elisabeth changed this again in 1747, subordinating the *hetman* to the Malorussian collegium of the Senate, the heir of the old *prikaz*.

Under Catherine II, the last of the *hetmans* was forced to resign and the government of the Ukraine was entrusted to an eight-member commission.³⁷ Then, in 1763, the commission was reformed into the newly created Second Department in charge of "governorships under special statute" (*na osobom polozhenii*), meaning Ukrainian and Baltic areas with their remnants of local self-government.³⁸

In 1764, the position of *hetman* was abolished for the last time and all local administrative organs dealing with the Ukraine as a

unit eliminated by 1765. In 1775 the Cossack *Zaporozhie sech'*, the territorial base of Cossack autonomy, was abolished and in 1781 the division of the Ukraine into traditional *voiska* (regiments) was terminated. A year later, regular Russian-style *gubernias* were introduced and provided with standard Russian administrations. Finally, in 1783 the Russian poll tax was extended into the Ukraine.

The Malorussian collegium itself lasted a few years longer, probably to wind up its paperwork, and was finally closed in 1786. In 1793, the year of the second partition of Poland, Russian administrative institutions were introduced into the annexed right-bank Ukraine as well. The right of Ukrainians to be judged in accordance with traditional "Lithuanian codes," still in force in the middle of the century and more democratic than Russian ones, was eliminated as well. For a short time during the reign of Paul I some elements of Ukrainian self-government, such as elected judges, were briefly revived,³⁹ to be terminated by the end of the century.

Georgian Kingdom

The case of Georgia is only marginally within the scope of this chapter, Georgia having never been provided with a separate St. Petersburg-based administration, a practice already obsolete at the time of Georgia's incorporation into the Empire. Nevertheless the tsar, having overcome his "extreme disgust . . . to accept that kingdom into Russian domain, considering appropriation of alien land unjust"⁴⁰ (1801), provided Georgia with a special local administration under General Tsitsianov, himself a Georgian, but in Russian service. Thus Georgian "expeditions" replaced the usual Russian departments, and Russian police chiefs were given Georgian adjuncts. This special status lasted until 1840, when regular Russian administration was introduced. But owing to Muslim upheavals in the north calling for closer ties with Christian Georgians, some relief was granted: a Russian *namestnik* of the Caucasus was appointed (1844) and Georgian nobles were again called to assist the new administration. Simultaneously, a Caucasian Committee of the State Council was established in St. Petersburg (1845–1882). Georgia was just one of several territories placed under its jurisdiction. A special Caucasian army was also created (1859) and the *namestnik*

provided with five departments of his own: general administration, finances, state property, control, and even diplomacy. But throughout the 1860s and 1870s, with the extinction of the Muslim Shamil revolt, the powers of the *namestnik* were gradually curtailed, first by withdrawing his diplomatic prerogatives, then by introducing the 1874 all-Russian city reform. In 1882 the no longer needed Caucasian committee was disbanded and a year later the system of *namestniks* was abolished. From that time on, Georgia, with the rest of the Caucasus, was treated like an ordinary Russian province.

Conclusion

Russia's constant imperial conflict has been between centralized conformity and the variety and diversity of its ethnically alien outlying areas. In addition, nationalities incorporated into the empire were not viewed on equal terms. Variances and leeways granted to each group reflected such variables as their level of development as perceived by Moscow or St. Petersburg, their numerical importance, and their degree of acquiescence to Russian rule. Ethnic closeness to the Russians often played a negative role in the struggle for special treatment, as was the case with the Ukraine.

Until Peter the Great, the primacy of the Crown prevailed over that of the empire, and conquered nations were viewed as more "kingdoms" under the same tsar. With the emergence of the concept of *Rossiiskaia imperiia* (all-Russian empire) as opposed to *Rusaskaia* (Russian), former "kingdoms" were pulled down to provincial levels and their specific administrative setups aligned with those of the rest of the country. This tendency was somehow arrested after Peter's death, but renewed by Catherine the Great. The trend of diminishing local autonomy for newly acquired lands was repeated with each new nineteenth-century conquest, but this was only on provincial levels, since no St. Petersburg-based central "colonial" office was ever reestablished.

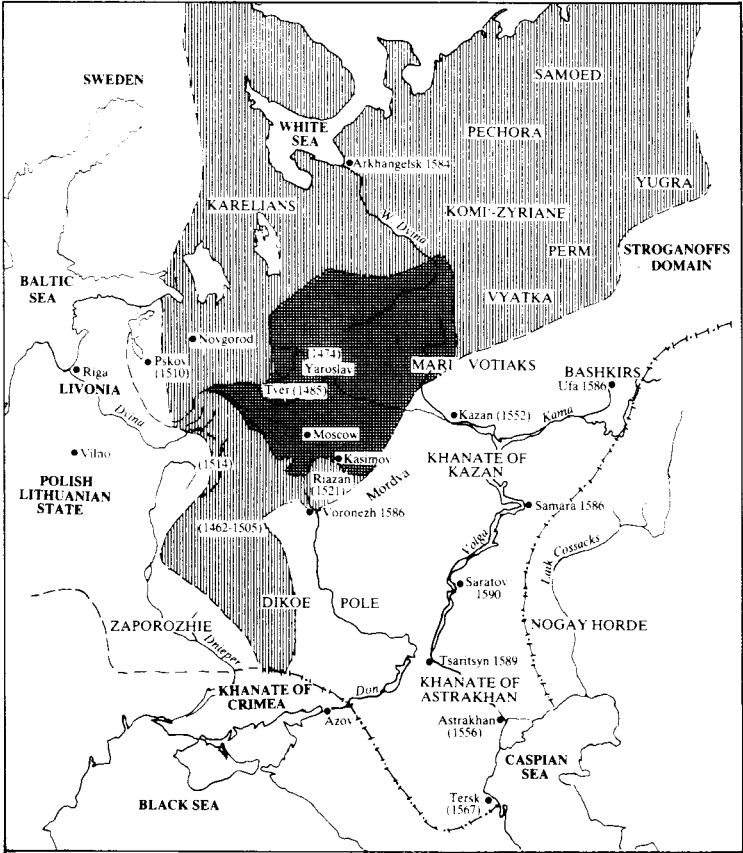
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3. V.V. Veliaminov-Zernov, "Izledovanie o kasimovskikh tsariakh i tsarevichakh." *Trudy vostochnago otdeleniia imperatorskago arkheologicheskago obshchestva*. III (St. Petersburg, 1866), p. 486–87.
 4. Grigorii Kotoshikhin, *O Rossii v tsarstvovanie Alekseia Mikhailovicha*, 4th ed. (St. Petersburg, 1906), p. 27.
 5. See M. Rywkin, "Russian Colonial Expansion before Ivan the Dread," *The Russian Review*, XXXII, no. 3 (July 1973), p. 293.
 6. Veliaminov-Zernov, pp. 275 and 485.
 7. Debol'skii, p. 461.
 8. At some point a combined Kazan–Nizhnii-Novgorod section existed in Moscow's *Razriad* (General Military Administration).
 9. Mikhail Grigor'evich Kurdiunov, "Opisanie aktov khраниashchikhsia v arkhivakh imperatorskoi arkheograficheskoi kommissii." *Letopis' zaniatii imperatorskoi arkheograficheskoi kommissii za 1906 god*, vypusk 19, p. 165 (item 50).
 10. A. Zimin, "O slozhenii prikaznoi sistemy na Rusi." *Akademiia Nauk, Institut Istorii Doklady i soobshcheniia* (Moscow, 1954), vypusk 3, p. 175. In the middle of the sixteenth century there existed, for example, *dvortsy* of Riazan', Dmitriev, Tver', Uglich, as well as the *dvortsy* of Kazan and Nizhnii-Novgorod. Some of them were probably just sections of the *Razriad*.
 11. I.I. Verner, *O vremeni i prichinakh obrazovaniia moskovskikh prikazov* (Moscow, 1907), p. 43.
 12. M.M. Boguslavskii, *Petr I* (Moscow, 1948), p. 278.
 13. N.P. Likhachev, *Otviet surovomu kritiku. Vozrazheniia na retsenziuu D.V. Korsakova o knigie "Razriadnye diaki XVI veka"* (Moscow, 1890), p. 12.
 14. According to I.I. Smirnov, *Ocherki politicheskoi istorii russkogo gosudarstva 30–50kh gg. XVI veka* (Moscow–Leningrad, 1958), pp. 203ff, the newly appointed *dvoret'skii* shared Ivan's lenient approach toward Kazan Muslims, opposing Prince Kurbskii's demands for their annihilation. For a different view see J.I. Fennell (ed.) *Prince Kurbsky's History of Ivan IV* (Cambridge, 1965).
 15. This custom, known as *mestnichestvo*, was formally abolished in 1682, but is known to have survived for years thereafter.
 16. S. Porfir'ev, "Spiski voevod i diakov po Kazani i Sviiazhsku, sostavlennye v XVII stoletii," *Izvestiia obshchestva arkheologii, istorii i etnografii*, XXVII (Kazan, 1911); pp. 63ff gives a full list of governors of both provinces to the times of Peter the Great.
 17. Porfir'ev, "Neskol'ko dannykh o prikaznom upravlenii v Kazani v 1627 g.," *ibid*, p. 75ff.
 18. Boris Nolde, *La formation de l'Empire Russe. Etudes, notes et documents*, vol. I (Paris, 1962), p. 78.
 19. A.A. Vvedenskii, *Dom Stroganovykh v XVI–XVII vekakh* (Moscow, 1962), pp. 279ff, 288ff.
 20. *Akademiia Nauk. Arkheograficheskaiia ekspeditsiia*, IV, 427, act. 289.

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21. Debol'skii, p. 486.
22. Letopis' zaniatii imperatorskoi arkheograficheskoi komissii . . . vypusk 21 (1908–1909), p. 25, cites the case of a *poddiachii* of the Kungur *izba* in the 1680s.
23. For detailed sources, see Michael Rywkin, "The *prikaz* of the Kazan Court: First Russian Colonial Office," *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, vol. XVIII, N.3. (Sept. 1976), p. 298.
24. A.A. Zimin, *Oprichnina Ivana Groznogo* (Moscow, 1964), note p. 380.
25. Letopis' zaniatii imperatorskoi arkheograficheskoi komissii . . . vypusk 31, p. 217 (31 Aug. 1704); Arkheologicheskaia ekspeditsiia, IV, 209 (12 Sept. 1667) and p. 409 (Aug. 1683): "Diela tainogo prikaza," *Russkaia istoricheskaia biblioteka*, XXI (St. Petersburg, 1907), p. 503.
26. *Russkaia istoricheskaia biblioteka*, XXVII, pp. 92–93.
27. For detailed sources, see Rywkin, "The *prikaz* of Kazan . . ." p. 299.
28. *Russkaia istoricheskaia biblioteka*, XXI, 996, 1003, 1125, 1146–46.
29. Aleksandr Vitsyn, *Kratkii ocherk upravleniia v Rossii ot Petra Velikago do izdaniia obshchego uchrezhdeniia ministerstva* (Kazan, 1855), p. 67.
30. N.N. Ogloblin, "Obozrenie stolbtsov i knig Sibirskago prikaza (1592–1768)," in *Cheniia v imperatorskom obshchestve istorii i drevnostei rossiiskikh pri Moskovskom universitete*, vol. 173 (1895), p. 7.
31. A. Gradovskii, *Vysshaia administratsiia Rossii XVIII st. i general-prokurory* (St. Petersburg, 1866), p. 179.
32. Ogloblin, pp. 6–9.
33. *Ibid*, pp. 21–25, 31–32, 52–54.
34. *Ibid*, p. 65.
35. Vladimir Grigor'ev, *Reforma mestnago upravleniia pri Ekaterine II. Uchrezhdeniia o guberniakh 7 noiabria 1775 g.* St. Petersburg, 1910, p. 208.
36. Debol'skii, p. 515.
37. M. Florinski, *Russia. A History and an Interpretation* (New York, Macmillan, 1955), vol. II, p. 555.
38. BSE, vol. 29(A), p. 514.
39. Gradovskii, p. 14.
40. *Ibid*, p. 121.



MAP TO CH. 4.

MUSCOVY BY 1452

MUSCOVY BY 1505 ADDED

MUSCOVY BY 1533 (1514)

BORDERS BY 1598

CITIES TAKEN: Kazan (1552)

CITIES ESTABLISHED: Arkhangelsk 1584

Muscovy's Conquest of Muslim Kazan and Astrakhan, 1552–56

The Conquest of the Volga: Prelude to Empire

Henry R. Huttenbach

I

Muscovy's triumphant annexation and subsequent absorption of the Volga valley and its restless inhabitants in the middle of the sixteenth century were pivotal events in the history of the entire Eurasian continent, having far-reaching consequences well beyond those felt directly in the region. The impact of Muscovy's military victories and territorial gains had immediate repercussions in the leading capitals throughout Europe and Asia. In grafting onto itself this geopolitically significant river network with its fertile adjacent lands, Muscovy transformed itself into a major power ready to challenge such large political entities as the dual kingdom of Poland-Lithuania to the west and the far-flung Ottoman Empire on its southwestern flank. What had seemed to the Catholic and Muslim rulers in Krakow and in the Porte a distant and relatively unimportant Orthodox power, now, with these unexpected acquisitions of the strategic khanates of Kazan and Astrakhan, appeared as a viable rival, even as Muscovy was poised to plunge eastward into the vast reaches of the continental ocean that is Siberia.

For centuries, the Volga had been a frontier separating the sedentary societies that grew up west of the river from the shifting nomadic peoples who roamed the expanse to the east. Again and again, from the earliest times of recorded history, nomadic hordes would sweep across the Volga and disrupt the agricultural life that had taken root north of the Black Sea. Even in the early formative stages of Kievan Rus', its Varangian princes recognized that security along the Dnieper meant control

of the Volga basin. It was no grandiose scheme that spurred Svyatoslav to conquer the Bulgars on the middle Volga and the Khazars on the mouth of the river; on the contrary, his daring campaigns during the 960s were explicitly designed to close the door to the marauding nomads, to the Pechenegs and to the Polovtsy, the former already dominant along the Black Sea littoral and the latter poised to cross the Don River and to further destabilize the steppe lands. As subsequent history bore out, a primary reason for the fall of Kievan Rus' was the failure of Svyatoslav's successors to consolidate his empire between the Dnieper and Volga rivers. Because they lost their grip on the Volga, the fatal flood of nomads continued to spill across until the entire region fell under the sway of the Mongols in the middle of the thirteenth century.

Historical memory ran deep in the Orthodox Christian East Slavs: recollections of their former glory along the Dnieper echoed in their poetry and prayers. Their chronicles were reverently copied but imaginatively adorned to give emphasis to heroic days before the onset of the humiliation at the hands of the heathen-turned-Muslim. They are replete with recollections of military victories and conquests, as well as dreams of eventual redemption from the onus of occupation and a recapture of the lands that had once been under Slavic and Christian domination. Generations of clerical scribes couched the past in Biblical imagery, portraying the people of Kievan Rus' with their princes, and those that fell heir to them, as a chosen people destined for ultimate triumph. The years of Mongol tutelage were seen as an interim similar to the exile suffered by the Children of Israel during their exile in Babylon. A deep faith stirred all the élite of the northern principalities that a miraculous time would come when they too would emerge from political darkness and rebuild their destiny between the Dnieper and the Volga. Thus, as political circumstances altered radically during the sixteenth century, and the fortunes of the cluster of Orthodox principalities on the upper Volga showed steady improvement vis-à-vis their Mongol overlords, historical consciousness surfaced again and again to provide Russian princes, especially those of Muscovy, with a motif for political action. The reconquest of the Volga was infinitely more than what it seemed to the observer—the capture of a river route to the Caspian Sea or a foot into the rich forests and steppes to the east: to Muscovy it was nothing less than a

crusade, a divinely condoned vindication of its historic heritage and a just defeat of those who had usurped its presence along the entire stretch of the river.

In order to appreciate the drama (for so it was in the minds of contemporaries) of the struggle for possession of the vital Volga valley—with its prelude, climax and dénouement—one must not only grasp it in its more mundane terms, but also in the emotional fervor of the times. Just as the battle for mastery of the Atlantic Ocean captured the imaginations of western Europeans, so did the contest for control over the strategic riverway give rise to epic visions of a new historic future. The stakes were high; for, as all the antagonists were acutely aware, the fate of the Eurasian landmass lay in the balance. Not only was the heir to the Mongol Empire in question but whether Christianity or Islam would dominate the central landmass of the globe, and, thereby, profoundly change the power balance between two universalist rival cultures for the hearts and minds of man.

II

Muscovy's successes in the Volga valley came in the wake of a complex evolution of political relations with the region to which, originally, all the Russian principalities had been subservient since the imposition of Mongol control in the middle of the thirteenth century. At the outset, Mongol administration established a western unit of power based in the city of Saray on the lower Volga; Saray, in turn, was assigned administrative responsibility over the Slavic territories to the northwest, an imperial subregion known as an *ulus*. It was to Saray that Russian princes had to travel in order to receive the coveted *iarlyk* granting them the privilege to collect taxes for the khan; and it was from Saray that khans sent forth punitive expeditions into Russian lands whenever the princes failed to acknowledge the overlordship of the khan, military campaigns that tested the true balance of power between the steppeland of the lower and middle Volga and the forest region of the upper Volga. In order to avoid depicting Tsar Ivan IV's triumph as a unique event, it is necessary to place it in the context of two hundred years of complex power shifts that made possible the revolutionary transition to Muscovy's overlordship over the Volga domain of

the khans, the once invincible territory of the Golden Horde.

A psychological and symbolic turning point during the two-century-long era of Mongol domination took place on 8 September 1380, when Prince Dmitry of the then small principality of Muscovy, in alliance with a handful of other Russian princes, inflicted a surprise defeat upon Khan Mamay's army, sent to reassert the Mongol authority that he claimed to represent.¹ The Russian victory in 1380, coming in the wake of a previous military success—the battle at the Vozha River in 1378—aroused enormous enthusiasm among the Christian Orthodox forces, who interpreted the victory as an event of religious significance. Whereas the battle of 1378 had been seen in purely secular and local terms, namely, as just another incident in the chronic competition between Russian princes and one or another Mongol faction in the respective juggling for political advantage, the 1380 campaign had received the blessing of both Metropolitan Kiprian, the administrative senior official, and Abbot Sergei, the head of the prestigious Holy Trinity Monastery, the spiritual center of Russian Orthodoxy. The latter had sent along with Prince Dmitry two of his monks to give the campaign all the qualities of a crusade, superimposing on the political purpose a religious cause. With the victory, therefore, both prince and Church could claim that divine purpose had been served and that they had read recent human events correctly as providential signs that the misfortunes of the subjugated Christians were about to change. The *Velikaia Zamiatna* (the Great Confusion) plaguing the Mongol Empire since the assassination of Khan Berdibeg in 1359 had become a signal for Russian national revival and religious independence from a conqueror whose recent turn to Islam had fundamentally altered the morality of Orthodox Russian subservience to Mongol authority.

The call to rally around a single prince, making political unity a religious imperative, was a consequence of internal developments in the northeastern Russian principalities, in the middle of which was located the city of Moscow. As a result of its geographic position, Moscow became one of the major Russian cities, soon rivaling the traditional capital, Vladimir, and its princes challenged those of Tver for primacy, a political duel that repeatedly took them to Saray to argue their case before the khan for possession of the *yarlik*. One of the more astute Muscovite

princes to exploit the position of chief tax farmer for the Mongols and thereby enrich his fiefdom was Prince Ivan Kalita (1325-1341). Shortly after his accession, Moscow's prestige was further enhanced by Metropolitan Peter's decision in 1326 to transfer his see to Moscow, immediately making the city the religious center of Orthodoxy. No less significant was the building in 1367 of a stone wall around the heart of Moscow, a construction that reflected its wealth and provided it with practically invulnerable defenses against an enemy lacking artillery. Subsequent attacks on the city never penetrated the Kremlin, thereby denying the invaders ultimate political victory, despite the destruction they wreaked on the population and its properties.

The wealth of Moscow's princes, the presence of the metropolitanate, the safety of the city, all combined to account for the rise of Muscovy as a formidable nucleus of power, a fact lost neither to other Russian princes nor to the rival successors of Khan Berdibeg, who tried to play off one against the other, especially those of Tver and Moscow. While the various khans continued to favor one or another in the hopes of keeping political conditions among their Russian satellites off-balance, the real political equation showed itself in 1375 when the military predominance of Muscovy forced a reluctant admission from all the princes that the ruler of Muscovy was indeed a *primus inter pares*, no matter what the disputing khans dictated. A major force behind this open expression of unity, however tentatively acknowledged, was the Russian Church.

In the previous decades, the Church had undergone both a cultural revival as well as a change of heart with respect to its political strategy of survival. Since the early part of the century, religious pioneers had pushed into the wilderness and established monastic centers which brought Christianity to the forest inhabitants. At the same time, the Church produced a spate of religious personalities who, on the one hand, looked with enthusiasm upon this expansion of the faith, yet, on the other, harbored increasing concern over the potential dangers of having to tolerate the dictates of a Muslim overlord. Whereas originally, since the middle of the thirteenth century, the Church had counseled caution, discouraging imprudent acts of defiance against the Mongols, calculating that its survival had precedence over political or secular interests, a century later it began to see

the advantages of placing itself under the protection of a single Orthodox monarch backed by the cooperation of the other Russian princes. The rise of Muscovite power, the seeming declining ability of the Golden Horde to exercise the bidding of the Great Khan, and the ominous rise of Islam as the major cultural force among the Tatars combined to motivate the Orthodox Church to preach a policy of national unity around the prince of Muscovy against what it depicted as the forces of evil. The most eloquent voice in favor of this new approach to further the Christian faith was that of Abbot Sergey Radonezhsky, to whom Prince Dmitry had gone for his blessing before the battle of Kulikovo in 1380.

For his victory, Dmitry was rewarded with the honorific soubriquet Donskoy, in memory of the momentous battle on the banks of the River Don. More important, Dmitry won for himself a permanent place in the ranks of those Russian princes who were revered as saints for their immortal deeds.² In the fertile medieval Russian imagination, Dmitry ranked alongside Grand Prince Saint Vladimir (who in the tenth century had brought Christianity to the eastern Slavs) and Alexander Nevsky (who in the thirteenth century had successfully fought off the Swedes); in this context, Dmitry Donskoy was equal to Prince Igor, who in 1185 had saved Kievan Rus' from the Polovtsy Horde. For years, the ringing verses of the twelfth-century epic *The Song of Igor* had counteracted the tragic and defeatist verses of the thirteenth-century *Slovo o pogibeli zemli russkoi* (Elegy to the Ruin of the Russian Land), which sadly commemorated the defeat of the Russians at the hands of the Mongol Horde. Through the years, the calamity had weighed heavily on the Russian psyche till the victory at Kulikovo, a hundred and twenty years later, opened up new vistas of hope and self-esteem, a self-respect preached by the Church and now made tangible by the triumph of arms. As a testament to the quickened Russian sense of rejuvenation, an unknown poet wrote the resounding verses of the *Zadonshchina*, a hymn of joy for Russian heroism and an impassioned panegyric to the church militant. Though it would take another century to achieve permanent freedom from the Mongol yoke, the spirit of the *Zadonshchina* would never again flag despite several severe setbacks in the war against the powers on the Volga.

Expectations of their permanent decline, as it turned out, were

premature. The routing of Mamay's forces did not strike at the heart of Tataro-Mongol power. Revival came in the form of Khan Timur, who emerged out of Central Asia as the true heir of such personalities as Chingis-Khan, the founder of the Mongol Empire a century earlier. Timur, or Tamerlane, was a master at intrigue and extended his power westward via Tokhtamysh, a general he had won over from the camp of a rival khan. Tokhtamysh steadily moved his army closer to the Volga, forcing Mamay either to declare his loyalty or to pick up the gauntlet and fight for his claim of the Volga region ruled from Saray. In preparation, Mamay sought to tame the Russians and force them to join forces with him, especially the armies of Muscovy. Having failed to assert his supremacy in 1380, Mamay had to face Tokhtamysh alone, losing to him the following year. Whereupon Tokhtamysh lost no time in declaring war on the Russian princes and invading their territories in 1382, inflicting a terrible defeat that left Moscow in flames and the remaining principalities cowed and fragmented.³ With that, Tokhtamysh restored the primacy of the Golden Horde but regranted the *yarlik* to Prince Dmitry, a generous gesture that, in the long run, proved fatal, for it accelerated the recovery and eventual primacy of Muscovy as a center of power that would in the end permanently overcome the rule of the Golden Horde.

Once again the pendulum swung back, this time favoring Muscovy, as political decline broke the Golden Horde asunder. Not surprisingly, tensions developed between Tokhtamysh, now khan of the Golden Horde, and his sponsor the Great Khan Timur in Central Asia. For the next ten years the two waged a bloody war, depleting their wealth and sapping their strength; by the time Timur managed a definitive defeat of Tokhtamysh in 1395, the future of the empire was predictable. At best, it was a pyrrhic victory: in order to restore his authority over the Golden Horde, Timur literally had put the region to the torch before he could extract compliance from its local rulers. It so exhausted Timur's military capacity that he was unable to mount one more campaign against the Russians, who had shown ambiguous loyalty to Tokhtamysh even after his break with Timur. Timur returned home to Central Asia to recoup but then focused his attention on India till his death, leaving Central Asia, the crossroads of the trans-Eurasian trade, in chaos. The repercussions of the disruption of trade considerably weakened the once

affluent Golden Horde, which depended on the caravan routes passing through Saray. The overall economic decline, matched by continuous internal strife (which included the failure of Tokhtamysh to return to power), quickly led to political fragmentation, despite the emergence of a powerful personality in Khan Edigey (Idigu), a former associate of Tokhtamysh.

In order to compensate for the loss of revenue, Khan Edigey raised taxes, prompting after his death in 1414 a series of secessions that proved to be irreversible. The breakup of the Golden Horde came about, in part owing to Edigey's failure to assert his military superiority over the Russian principalities in 1408, a clear sign of the shifting balance of power. In the 1420s the Nogay Horde announced its independence and began to trade directly without Saray's acting as entrepôt. In 1438 the Khanate of Kazan followed suite,⁴ and in 1449 Khan Geray of the Crimea did likewise with the express hope of ultimately reconstituting the Golden Horde from the Black Sea peninsula, where a lively international trade helped fill his coffers. Without losing much time, Khan Geray began to interfere in the internal politics of Kazan, where he competed with Muscovite agents for control of the khanate. His efforts, however, were thwarted by two factors: his inability to tame the lower Volga, where an independent pirate-khanate based in Astrakhan preyed on all the shipping through the delta channels; and the fall of Constantinople in 1453 to the Osmanli (Ottoman) Turks. The latter quickly imposed their hegemony on the entire Black Sea littoral, ultimately forcing the Edigey dynasty to become a vassal state of the new Muslim empire on the Bosphorus in 1475.⁵ Soon thereafter, in large measure because of the political orientation of the Porte, the Crimean Khanate redirected its military power against Poland rather than against its steadily growing neighbor to the north, the Grand Principality of Muscovy. In acting as an extension of Ottoman foreign policy, the Crimea dissipated its energies and forfeited its last opportunity realistically to challenge Muscovy for control of the steppe and of the Volga valley. By the time the Crimea resumed its hostilities against Muscovy in the early sixteenth century (again partially prompted by the sultan), it was too late. There was no viable political unit to reconstitute the Golden Horde other than Muscovy.

The rise of Muscovy as a major regional power paralleled the decline and disintegration of the Golden Horde. As the latter

broke apart, the former experienced greater territorial unification and political centralization. While Kazan remained as the only real threat from the east, from the moment of its separation from the Golden Horde its real hold over Muscovy was more circumstantial and theoretical than in actual fact. Were it not for the drawn-out civil war in Muscovy during the 1440s, the real power balance would have emerged far earlier than towards the close of Vasily II's reign. After setting up a buffer vassal state under a Kazan prince, the Khanate of Kasimov, in 1453,⁶ Grand Prince Vasily prepared a major campaign to ward off a counterattack from Kazan in 1459. The outcome was so much in Muscovy's favor that in 1461 Kazan sued for peace and agreed to pay annual tribute as a sign of its vassalage to the Christian power on the upper Volga. The ascendancy of Muscovy continued in the following reign with even greater intensity.

Ivan III (1462–1505) managed to bring virtually all the northeastern Russian principalities under Moscow's jurisdiction, thereby thoroughly transforming the entire political configuration of the region both to the west and east of Muscovy. The gathering of the Russian lands and the uniting of the Orthodox people automatically elevated Muscovy above its two hostile neighbors, Catholic Lithuania and Muslim Kazan. In 1478, Ivan III completed the absorption of the Republic of Novgorod, whose fur empire reached as far as the mouth of the Ob' River in western Siberia. In 1485, the Grand Principality of Tver finally submitted to its old rival Muscovy after years of flirtation with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. In 1489, the lands of Viatka—strategically situated north of Kazan—at long last bowed to Ivan after a major show of force⁷ that resulted in their complete annexation, a punitive action taken in part for their refusal to honor the 1459 agreement of vassal status.⁸ Then, in his last year, in 1503, Ivan integrated half of Ryazan (a principality located on the frontier between the forest zone and the open steppe). With each acquisition, Ivan's Muscovy altered the fundamental power relationship with his neighbors. His triumph over Lithuania, a story apart from this chapter, had its positive consequences in his dealings with Kazan, for it deprived the khanate of its principal ally.

Ivan's primary interest in Kazan was assurance that Muscovy's trade with Persia along the Volga would not be interrupted, a concern that would be minimal as long as Crimean influence

could be kept out of the khanate's internal politics. The buffer khanate of Kasimov attracted more and more deserters from Kazan, thereby lessening the danger of an attack and serving as a springboard for Muscovite intervention.⁹ Though Ivan failed to conquer Kazan in the late 1460s, he did manage to extract from the khanate a declaration of vassalage. More important, as a result of his successful negotiation with the Crimean khanate,¹⁰ Ivan completely isolated Kazan. His two-month siege of the city in 1487 allowed Ivan to impose his own candidate, Khan Mohammed-Amin. Part of the political arrangement was that all correspondence between Kazan and the Crimea be sent via Moscow.

These dual successes, the neutralization of Kazan and the diversion of the Crimea, encouraged Ivan to take the final step of Muscovy's full emancipation from the east, namely the renunciation of any form of tutelage. Whereupon in 1476, Ivan publicly terminated tribute payments to the khan of the Golden Horde, an act of humiliation long a source of grievance.¹¹ Khan Ahmed, however, had to delay his punitive campaign until he had assembled allies to launch a viable military force. Both the four-year delay and his search for a coparticipant were symptomatic of his chronic weakness.¹³ Though the khan's preparation caused considerable anxiety in Muscovy, the 1480 expedition sent by Ahmed proved an utter fiasco: the Lithuanians failed to arrive in time, and his own army had to withdraw without engaging the enemy.¹⁴ After all the bravura made by Ahmed of being heir to the great khans of former times, his campaign was little more than the theatrical saber-rattling of an impotent splinter group roaming the steppes, a nomadic element no match to the superior state established in the forest zone. His failure quickened the imagination of the entire population of Muscovy as it sensed the opening of a new historic era.

The Church counted thousands of converts from Islam as they turned towards Muscovy as the wave of the future; more and more Muslims from Kazan accepted Christianity and many entered the highest ranks of the Muscovite court. At the same time, adventurous peasants moved into the steppeland, out of Muscovy proper and into the rich fertile zone to the southeast, penetrating further and further along the Don watershed. With them they brought not only their pioneering free spirit but a tenacious loyalty to Christianity that transformed them into an

increasingly potent demographic and military wedge in the midst of the Muslim-dominated steppe. For the Russian Orthodox Church, this promise of greater dominion was nothing less than a divine corroboration of Muscovite eschatology, an optimistic historical perspective that had substituted Muscovy as the political center of orthodox Christianity for the defunct Byzantine Empire. Even before the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the Russian Church hierarchy had claimed the right to elect its own metropolitan, breaking from a tradition that granted the right of selection to the Patriarch of Constantinople. The 1448 election by the Church Synod of Bishop Iona of Ryazan came in response to Byzantium's eleventh-hour alliance with the Papacy in Rome in return for military assistance against the Ottoman Turks, who stood before the Orthodox capital. For the Russians, this affiliation with the Catholic world, especially in the light of the dogmatic decisions taken at the Council of Florence (1438–1443),¹⁵ was tantamount to heresy, a betrayal of the true faith, a permanent loss of the right to represent Orthodoxy. In their eyes, this act of infidelity justified Moscow's claim, after 1453, to being the rightful heir of Byzantium as the spiritual custodian of Orthodoxy. Thus was born the idea of Moscow as the Third Rome, an ideological stance that matured during the reign of Ivan III, less as a concrete goal of foreign policy than as a statement of principle outlining Muscovy's self-assessment on the stage of history in a time when religious identity was synonymous with political identity. The encroachment into Muslim territory, the winning of Muslim souls and the claim to the imperium that once had been that of the khans, all were expressions of Orthodox Muscovy's coming of age as the world around it lost its virility. According to its polemicists, among them the stern Iosif Sanin, abbot of the highly influential monastic community of Volokolamsk, the primary function of the secular power was simultaneously to guard the integrity of faith from heresy as well as to extend the range of the Church by expanding the frontiers of the state. The symbolic victory over the remnant of the Golden Horde in 1480 was seen as a divine signal to Muscovy that its march eastward against Kazan was in the context of a just war.

The dramatic victories of the Turks, first of the Seljuks and then of the Osmanlis, against both Orthodox and Roman Christian powers, stood as evidence of Muscovy's lone legitimacy

against Islam. The piecemeal fall of Byzantium, the bulwark of Christianity against Muslim advances—Macedonia in 1371, Bulgaria in 1393, and lastly Constantinople in 1453, not to mention the onslaughts against Poland–Lithuania and the control of the Mediterranean in the latter half of the fifteenth century—all these pointed to Muscovy as the last Orthodox Christian state confronting a new Muslim empire on the Bosphorus, replacing the Mongol–Tatar entity that had once dominated the lands east and west of the Volga. The survival of Christianity, in the eyes of Muscovy’s strategists, lay in large measure in wresting control of the Volga valley from the hands of the petty-Muslim khans from Kazan to Astrakhan. The interests of the Grand Prince and of the Metropolitan of Muscovy coincided in their eagerness to gain access to a region rich in souls and rich in resources.

Though outright conquest was still out of the question, Ivan III’s Muscovy managed to manipulate the politics of the Volga region in the manner that the Golden Horde had once practiced, especially in the latter half of his reign. Seeing Ivan’s suzerainty over Kazan assured, others fell in line: in 1490, an embassy from the Nogay Horde called for an alliance against what remained of the Golden Horde.¹⁶ That same year, an envoy from one of the distant Central Asian khanates also paid respects to Ivan.¹⁷ Two years later, a mission from Christian Georgia hailed Ivan as the protector of all Christians against the danger of Islam.¹⁸ While his grip on the East was constantly undermined by intrigue from within Kazan and conspiracy fostered from without, the essential power relation and its steady evolution in favor of Muscovy remained undisturbed. It was just a question of whether Muscovy was content to remain an external power and play an indirect role in bringing the Volga valley under its aegis or if it would finally decide on direct administration through occupation and annexation. Though Ivan could have annexed the Kazan Khanate as early as 1487, he decided against it in order not to undermine his relations with the Crimea. The bloody anti-Muscovite revolt in Kazan in 1505, the year of Ivan’s death, and the ensuing massacre of Muscovite merchants may have forced the foreign policy planners to rethink their strategy.

During the reign of his successor, Vasily III (1505–1533), the policy of the former reign—the orchestration of Kazan’s politics from afar and a treaty of neutrality with the Crimea—became

obsolete. The Golden Horde disappeared completely, entirely replaced by the weak Khanate of Astrakhan, which no longer posed a threat to the Crimea. The destruction of the Nogay Horde in 1502 by the Crimea removed its primary rival for control of the southern steppe and terminated the need for an alliance with Muscovy. Instead the Crimea slowly shifted its stance vis-à-vis Lithuania, which eventually led to an arrangement freeing the Crimea to attack Muscovy and to contemplate extending its rule over the remaining Volga khanates. The 1521 attack on Muscovy by Khan Mohammed Girey ushered in a new chapter of confrontation, necessitating a revised policy on the part of Muscovy to safeguard its southern frontier and to protect its eastern flank. The possibility of a pro-Crimea party seizing control of Kazan and the unreliability of Astrakhan as a buffer against Crimean expansion dictated a new approach to the rulers of Muscovy as soon as circumstances permitted. Through the eyes of the Church and its Third Rome orientation, the safety of the Christian kingdom demanded a more aggressive policy, if necessary one of expansion beyond the traditional patrimonial lands. While the Church dictated no specifics, it harbored the same anxieties as the secular authorities when it came to the possible encirclement by heretical powers increasingly politically unified. The joining of the Volga khanates to the Crimea as part of the Ottoman Empire had to be averted at all costs, a goal that was conceived in the last years of Vasily III's reign but, for a number of reasons (among them his death and the ascension of the three-year-old Ivan), had to be delayed.¹⁹ Nevertheless, ideology (religious imperatives) and considerations of state (practical calculations) soon overlapped to become virtually mutual complements.

While the line of fortifications erected south of Moscow proved sufficient to blunt major attacks from the Crimea, radical measures were called for with respect to Kazan. Even though the years of Ivan's youth were marred by internecine palace intrigue for control of the Regency, none of the factions disagreed on the urgency of having to intervene in Kazan and to establish some kind of direct Muscovite rule. Despite the shifts from one faction to another between the years 1533 and 1547 military discipline held. A number of raids from the south were successfully repulsed, including a long campaign by Khan Sagib Girey in 1541.²⁰ A purely defensive stance against Kazan, however,

proved ineffective as the anti-Muscovites in league with Crimean agents gained the upper hand. Throughout the 1540s more and more attacks from Kazan drained off tens of thousands of Russians into captivity, an intolerable loss of manpower. Two campaigns, one in 1547 and a second in 1549, were mounted to force Kazan into compliance and extract a pro-Muscovite policy from it whether it was ruled by sympathizers or not.²¹ Great expense and time went into the preparations of these expeditions, largely the results of the initiative of Metropolitan Makary. Makary, a staunch disciple of Iosif Sanin, had managed to bring order to the chaos around Ivan. As his first item on the agenda he had Ivan crowned as tsar in 1547 as an open declaration of the autocracy desired by the Church. Next, Makary promoted the campaigns to the east, placing them into the able hands of new advisers he had brought into the court. Though the military might mustered was sufficient to defeat Kazan, the plans came to naught, victims of feudal bickering among the nobility about the appropriate military ranking each one considered his due.

Once again, in 1551, after a series of reforms, including the 1549 abolition of *mestnichestvo* (the system of ranking according to family status,²²) a third campaign took shape.²³ Only this time, very careful preparations preceded the actual attack, including the timing of the battles, a series of diplomatic overtures, and the recruiting of foreign siege experts. Frontline Muscovite fortifications convinced local tribes to switch their allegiances to Muscovy, their loyalty assured by promises of tax exemptions. A last-minute flurry of diplomatic negotiation fell through under the weight of non-negotiable Muscovite conditions: the return of captives, territorial annexation, and acceptance of a pro-Muscovite khan, conditions calculated, no doubt, to be too onerous to honor, thereby providing a convenient *casus belli* for the Muscovites, who for some time now had looked to total domination as the only solution to the Kazan problem.

Since the collapse of the negotiated formula of 1551 was predicted, all the preparations for war remained in place. As soon as the weather permitted, an attack on the city of Kazan began in the summer of 1552. A combination of the brilliant use of sappers and the application of artillery accounted for a Muscovite victory, which immediately set in motion a series of steps to incorporate Kazan and its territories into the Muscovite system. This, in fact, meant a revolutionary change for the entire

khanate; for the Muscovites realized that nothing short of an entire revamping of the society and its culture would guarantee its permanent and complete subordination to the authorities in Moscow. The day Tsar Ivan rode into the conquered city, Adashev, his senior adviser, counseled him that the only way to consolidate the victory was to introduce to Kazan a policy of unabashed Russification. Metropolitan Makary must have thought the same.

III

The victory of 2 October 1552 unleashed an explosion of joy in Moscow. The young tsar was welcomed as hero and saint. For the populace, the defeat of Kazan provided an opportunity to give expression to an abundance of pent-up national pride and hope for prosperity: what Ivan III had achieved in 1480 had now been crowned by the 1552 triumph of his grandson; having attained seniority, Ivan IV promised to carry on his grandfather's great tradition of nation building and seemed to possess the ability to overcome the centrifugal forces that had brought Muscovy to the verge of civil war during his youth. The divisiveness of the era of boyar rule, the so-called "Nepravda," seemed over, thanks to the young tsar. The birth of an heir, less than a month after the conquest of Kazan, guaranteed the continuity of the House of Rurik. Little wonder that Ivan emerged as a hero. No less was he regarded a saint according to Muscovite tradition for his success in leading a Christian crusade against a Muslim state. For the Church, his accomplishment was seen as a pious act of obedience to the preachings of Metropolitan Makary, who, like Abbot Sergey of Radonezh, shortly before the Battle of Kulikovo in 1380, had also preached war in terms of its religious obligation and significance. For the metropolitan, the attack upon Kazan was to be an invasion to eradicate Islam and to make room for Christianity, to complete the work of centuries of patient waiting and preparation. The militant church of Muscovy and the expansionist state were fused in a common mission of historic importance.

The work of integrating Kazan began immediately.²⁴ The day after the tsar's victory march into the city, a solemn but jubilant event took place, the dedication of the ground upon which a splendid cathedral would arise. In the company of senior clergy

who had traveled with Ivan to Kazan, the young tsar watched as holy water was sprinkled on the former site of a mosque. Where once an Islamic edifice had dominated the proud city, a multidomed Christian architectural monument would serve as a permanent reminder of the supremacy of that religion. Throughout the city and in its immediate surroundings, plots and large tracts of land were seized to make room for churches and monasteries. Within a decade, monastic communities extended along the banks of the river network of the former khanate, linking with those of Viatka to the north and Kasimov to the west. The thousands of freed Russian captives provided congregations and labor for the religious communities, though their ranks quickly swelled with waves of converts. Nothing was more persuasive to prompt a change of faith than military power, especially in an age which believed that armies were the extension of God's will. The well-publicized conversion of many high-ranking nobles from Kazan did no harm: these included the last khan, Yadigar, whom Metropolitan Makary personally baptized as Simeon, and Ivan promoted to one of his senior military commanders.

Even as the Church engineered its revolution of Kazan, so did the secular authorities impose their stamp on the former khanate. Taking advantage of the huge expanses of land in comparison to the more densely populated Muscovite heartland, the occupying forces allocated generous grants of estates to those who served in the campaign and chose to remain in the new territory. In return for continued military service, thousands of lower-ranking men received land grants that, until the recent conquest, would have been impossible for the land-hungry state to allocate. The majority of the men recruited for the 1552 campaign were demobilized and chose to return home, but many lower-ranking gentry, the *sluzhilye liudy*, recognized the opportunity of self-aggrandizement and remained in a setting where they would enjoy greater status and advancement as against the more frozen social circumstances prevailing in Muscovy with its attendant conservatism. The lure of the frontier, not the wild frontier of the steppe that drew the likes of Cossacks but the frontier of annexed territories within the borders of the state, offering at once social mobility as well as security—this was the dynamics that propelled the process of Muscovite takeover.

In the city of Kazan, Ivan left a military force to supervise the

first stage of the transformation of the conquered region from a Muslim khanate to a Christian province of Muscovy. In charge of the Muscovite forces was the senior *voevoda* (general) Prince Alexander Gorbaty. In the garrison Ivan stationed in Kazan were one thousand five hundred *dieti boiarskie*, military servitors from impoverished gentry who profited from the land grants offered them as bait to keep them on a permanent basis in the new territories. They acted too in the capacity of administrators. Besides them, Gorbaty had three thousand *streltsy* (musketeers), whose primary function was to guard the city walls in the event of an assault from the several Finno-Turkic tribes in the surrounding countryside. To pacify the hinterland and to project the power of the new rulers of Kazan beyond the city walls, Prince Gorbaty had a few units of mounted Cossacks at his disposal, cavalry forces that regularly patrolled past nomadic tribes giving visibility to the power of the victorious tsar.

One other initial step was taken to establish the Muscovite presence. Until 1552, Muscovite trade along the Volga had depended on the goodwill of Kazan. Merchants from Muscovy had had only temporary residence permits and were subject to expulsion whenever the political wind shifted. Their wares could be seized at any time and compensation was unlikely. Now, among the reconstruction plans of the city, there was to be a special merchants' quarter where Muscovite businessmen could set up permanent quarters and enjoy the undisturbed use of the marketplaces. As for Muscovite shipping, the annexation of Kazan removed one major obstacle along the Volga: fluctuating taxes and tolls for the privilege of sailing through the territories of the khanate. Since the city lay somewhat removed from the Volga itself, special fortifications were erected along the waterway to protect shipping from marauders, piracy having become a major scourge of trade once the Golden Horde had disintegrated.

However, a Pax Muscovitica would not come easily to replace the long-eroded Pax Mongolica. Shortly after the defeat of Kazan, several Tatar *murzy* (princes) from Kazan who managed to escape the city and join the tribes beyond it began to plan a counterattack by sowing dissent among the nomadic peoples. By the winter of 1552–53, Muscovite spies learned of impending revolts, and in the spring full-scale rebellion broke out on the east bank of the Volga. Rumors from Moscow suggesting that Ivan lacked support for investing more resources into Kazan

encouraged the anti-Muscovite forces to evict the Christian conquerors.²⁵ With a victory of their own they hoped to restore the status quo that had prevailed between Muscovy and Kazan. News of Ivan's illness in March and of his impending death further fueled their hopes that an internal political crisis in Moscow might work in their favor.²⁶ Besides, the death of his infant son Dmitry brought on the possibility of a long dynastic crisis that would cripple Muscovite foreign policy.²⁷ But Ivan did not die and recovered to resume Muscovy's thrust into the Volga, whose tranquility had become a *sine qua non* for all subsequent Muscovite economic and military plans.

Securing the Volga for its own sake rested on economic consideration, trade with the East: to reach the markets of Persia, India and even China depended on a riverine highway either to the transcontinental caravans that headed eastward from the lower Volga or on access to the Caspian Sea in order to link up with the caravans in northern Persia. The promise of even greater trade as a consequence of Muscovite control of the river fortuitously presented itself in the summer of 1553 when English merchants accidentally found themselves in Moscow, after suffering a shipwreck off the White Sea coast. There they learned of the geopolitical advantage of a Muscovy in possession of the Volga and immediately began negotiations for transit rights for Anglo-Persian and Anglo-Central Asian commerce via Muscovy. In order to reap these unexpected benefits (which for Ivan included a vital relationship with a European power, an opportunity to break through the isolation of Muscovy imposed by the Catholic powers in eastern Europe), Muscovy recognized the need not only to stamp out rebellion around Kazan but to complete the process of subjugation all the way to the mouth of the Volga. Thus, in its quest for domination of the riverway, Muscovy became an actor in that greater global drama—the search for trade routes to the Far East—which had the Atlantic Ocean as its major stage.

The Volga campaign of 1552 and the forthcoming one of 1554 had a second reason: as a precondition for attacking either Lithuania or the Crimea. While Muscovy's foreign policy architects were divided on the priorities of these two goals, they were of one mind with respect to the securing of the eastern front as the basis for any aggressive move either southward or westward since both the Crimea and Lithuania could exploit an

independent Kazan as an ally to open a second front against Muscovy. News of the defeat of Kazan had created great concern, especially in the Crimea, where the khan lost no time in sending help to the rebels in order to frustrate Muscovy's ambitions. Once in possession of the entire Volga, Muscovy would automatically reduce the Crimea to a permanent second-rate power, and assure its subordinate status to the Ottoman Turks, a condition the khanate hoped to terminate as soon as it had gained control of the entire steppelands stretching from the borders of Poland to the plains inhabited by the remnants of the Nogays along the River Yaik. To thwart this scheme, Muscovy had to follow up on its victory in Kazan with an invasion of Astrakhan. Otherwise, the Crimea could always hold hostage Muscovy's future foreign policy ambitions.

Using the rebellion of the Cheremis and Votiaks as an excuse to go back to war, Ivan ordered an army capable of going well beyond the goal of pacifying the tribes. The campaign was clearly a pretext to go further than the territories of these tribes, whose combined strength was really only a nuisance factor. Without external aid they could not possibly recapture Kazan, which Muscovy defended with cannons and muskets. The rebels quickly dispersed before the superior Muscovite troops; these included large contingents of Kazan Tatars, many of them recent converts eager to prove their loyalty to the tsar. Opposition crumbled and the armies marched on towards Astrakhan, which fell in the summer of 1554 with barely any resistance.²⁸ The victory was almost anticlimactic and seemed to have caused little domestic response, almost as if it were a commonplace event. Yet it accelerated the rate of cultural reconstruction that had begun in 1552.

As early as 1553, a stream of Russian peasants in search for more land entered the western parts of Kazan, a process of spontaneous colonization that the authorities did not discourage. Whereas the exodus of peasants to the Don valley meant a loss of manpower and revenue from taxes, the population shift into Kazan was seen as a definite advantage, not least as an equalizer in the still predominantly Muslim region. Besides, they provided instant agricultural labor for the new monastic communities and, overall, lent support to the crash program of Christianizing the entire region.

About the time Astrakhan fell, the metropolitan decided to

make Kazan a separate administrative unit of the Muscovite Church. A special *sobor* (Church council) was convened where, in the presence of the tsar, the Church hierarchy expressed its agreement that Kazan become an *eparkhia* (archdiocese) whose jurisdiction would include the wide expanse of the lands of Viatka. The assembled bishops and abbots elected Abbot Guri from Tver to be the first archbishop of the see of Kazan. With considerable pomp and ceremony, Guri was inaugurated on 3 February 1555. To help the sickly but saintly Guri, the *sobor* chose a monk, Varsonofi, to accompany him, rewarding the latter with the leadership of the new Monastery of the Transfiguration in Kazan. While the archbishop's staff handled matters of finance and Church policy in general, the abbot and his monks took on the formidable task of missionary work.

Together they received instructions that amounted to making Kazan a springboard for Orthodox Christianity. No expense was spared to keep up the momentum of Christianization. Metropolitan Makary enjoined all his diocese and monasteries to contribute funds and grain to back up the Kazan mission, a request that amounted to a special tax. Tsar Ivan reserved a tenth of the revenues collected by the state in Kazan for the Church in the newly established *eparkhia* and added to his munificence large grants of land. Not surprisingly, of all the archdiocese in the Muscovite empire, that of Kazan soon became the wealthiest and most important. (A half century later, it was one of the largest contributors in the campaign of national liberation in 1612 to evict the Poles from Moscow.)

The appointment of Prince Piotr Ivanovich Shuisky as *voevoda* of Kazan in May 1555 brought a highly competent man to complement the work of the Church. In no other region of the Muscovite empire did Church and state work more in tandem and in harmony than in Kazan. Their cooperation needs to be seen in the light of official injunctions to both men made separately by both Tsar Ivan and Metropolitan Makary that the new *voevoda* and archbishop "take care of their affairs jointly." To mark the occasion of Kazan as a regional Christian capital, the richly ornamented cathedral, the Pokrovskii Sobor, was formally dedicated on 1 October, three short years after the capture of the khanate. The nine-chapel structure and its golden cupolas was completed in 1557 and could be seen from miles away, a monument to Muscovy's victory and eastward orientation.

In the wake of the invasion of Astrakhan came a flurry of diplomatic activity emanating from the steppe. The rise of the Muscovite imperium supplementing that of the khans persuaded many petty rulers to pay obeisance to the tsar. For reasons not too clear, Khan Yadigar of Sibir praised Ivan for his victory and hoped the tsar would accept him as his vassal. Princes as far as the Caucasus asked for the tsar's protection from both the sultan and from one another.³⁰ Evidently, Muscovy's military triumphs along the Volga had created a new power balance throughout the Caspian region and in west Siberia. Its irreversibility seemed indisputable, especially through the eyes of the minor khans, who had to risk their political future on being able to guess which of the great powers would endure and with whom to throw their lot. Judging from their spontaneous turn to Moscow, they shared a consensus about its continued success.

What had been a relatively minor military engagement, the invasion of Astrakhan, had, in fact, major political implications which entered into the calculations of the peoples in these areas. The invasion had taken place under the camouflage of an intervention to secure the throne of Astrakhan for a pro-Muscovite candidate. For some time, the politics of Astrakhan had been subject to meddling by both the Nogays to the east and the Crimeans to the west. By 1553, a segment of the Nogays and the khan of the Crimea supported an anti-Muscovite candidate. Had they succeeded, Muscovy's victory over Kazan would have been seriously compromised. Moscow had no choice but to back up its support for Khan Dervish Ali with a show of force that had to be more than symbolic but sufficient to ward off any Crimean military challenge.

Once Muscovy had its puppet firmly established in Astrakhan, it realized that it must keep a permanent military presence there to assure itself of his loyalty and to prevent his deposal. The mouth of the Volga was a prize Muscovy was not about to abandon voluntarily without a fight. A year later, in 1555, the Crimea, backed by Turkish troops sent by the sultan, mounted a counterattack on Astrakhan, but to no avail. Russian troops repulsed the invaders and started the rapid fortification of Astrakhan by garrisoning a permanent force of *streltsy* there. The half-anticipated defection of Dervish Ali in the midst of the struggle led the Muscovites to the only logical solution to the Astrakhan problem, namely, to take full control of it without

attempting to keep up the fiction of local autonomy. Faced with the possibility of severe retribution, the population of Astrakhan swore its loyalty to Ivan, hoping they would not be punished for Dervish Ali's treachery. In his stead, they received not another khan drawn from their midst but a Muscovite *voevoda* as the tsar's viceroy; in 1556 Muscovy formally annexed Astrakhan and placed the entire Volga River under its direct control, extending the same program of cultural reconstruction to the lower Volga as it had adopted in Kazan. To secure the internal tranquility of the conquered regions, the Muscovites hit upon a shrewd plan to neutralize the potential troublemakers who might contemplate renewed rebellion. In preparation for the Livonian War, large contingents of Tatar warriors were attached to the Muscovite army assembled in the northwest. When Ivan launched his campaign for an outlet to the Baltic Sea, he had fighting for him cavalry from the nomadic peoples of the middle and lower Volga. With the best troops siphoned off no plot would get off the ground. In their place heavily armed Slavic soldiers, whose loyalty was beyond question, were stationed in the new territories. It had not taken Muscovy long to apply the ancient imperial principle of *divide et impera*, a policy whereby a multiethnic domain with the danger of succumbing to centrifugal forces can be transformed into a cohesive body politic with all the diverse parts working at the behest of the central authority.

The successful transfusion of Christianity into the peoples of the Volga and the rapid imposition of Muscovite governmental institutions made possible the smooth annexation of Kazan and Astrakhan. What the Mongols had failed to do, namely, to acculturate their Russian subjects by weaning them away from Christianity, the Muscovites managed in a few decades. There is little evidence of real resistance to conversion; the Russian clergy did not come with cross in one hand and sword in the other. They were experienced at bringing their faith to non-Christians and they arrived in Kazan and Astrakhan with the assurance of ones bearing a superior culture. The artistic renaissance of Orthodox Muscovy that came to its apogee during the reign of Ivan IV expressed this self-confidence in visible form, from the peaks of a majestic stone cathedral to the delicate miniatures bordering a small wooden icon. The extent of the integration of the length of the Volga can best be measured by its early history till the death of Tsar Ivan in 1584. Its defense depended considerably on the

cooperation of the local populations. Provocateurs operated among them, constantly trying to destabilize Muscovite rule. Spies of the sultan and friends of Tatar nobles in exile sought to stir up resentments that would prove useful when a counterattack came from out of the Crimea, but no serious rebellion broke out. Muscovite control of the Volga split the Muslim world in the steppelands, and Muscovite influence into Caucasia via the Kabardian tribes threatened to obstruct the Ottoman Empire's war against the Persian Empire, an epic struggle between the Sunni and Shiite factions of Islam. With the Muscovites able to project their power across the mountains, the war of the reunification of Islam seemed to be permanently frustrated. It was, therefore, essential to the Porte to reassert itself at least on the lower Volga. Its 1569 campaign³¹ was designed to throw the Muscovites out of Astrakhan. Sultan Selim II and Khan Devlet Girey of the Crimea, each for his own reasons, joined forces that included cannons, ships and a special corps of engineers to dig a canal to link the Don to the Volga. The latter scheme was scrapped, but the daring of its vision is testimony to the determination of the Muslims to oust the Christian enemy. The effort is reminiscent of Philip II's expediting the Armada against Elizabeth I. Just as the Spanish fleet was defeated by the elements and human daring, so were the Turks, the Crimeans and their Nogay allies destroyed by the heat of the desert between the bend of the Don River and Astrakhan and by the tenaciousness of the Muscovite defenders. Even as lilliputian English ships pricked at the Spanish galleys, so did small Don Cossack detachments harass the dejected, retreating troops as they made their way back to Azov, the nearest port. As in 1588, very few survived to tell the story of their defeat in 1569. Astrakhan survived and its people had remained loyal. Thanks to the arrival of supplies and reinforcements from Kazan, the Muscovite defenders held out; the Volga had proved a veritable lifeline. As in so many instances in the next centuries, control of the Volga would determine the future of Russian history.³²

In the same decade, the first advantages of the conquest of Kazan manifested themselves. Pioneering entrepreneurs in search of fur, salt, and iron found Kazan at the doorstep of vast resources. The Stroganov family is the most famous of those who recognized the commercial potential, and quickly consolidated its ties to the court, winning monopoly privileges to harvest fur and

to mine minerals for the state in the Kama River valley. Since 1558, the Stroganovs had gained permission to colonize, to fortify and to recruit militias in the name of the tsar. In 1568, Ivan IV gave them permission to go beyond the Kama and to penetrate the lands of the Chusovaia River, a tributary of the Ob, the first of the three great rivers that flow through Siberia. Thus, just as the final defense of the Volga took place against the Turks, another chapter in the history of Muscovy's territorial expansion opened up, the conquest of Siberia. This next episode rested entirely on the foundation of the conquest of Kazan and Astrakhan, without which Muscovy would have remained essentially a Slavic, Christian, and European state. As a result of its victories along the Volga, Muscovy broke out of these confines and became both a Eurasian body politic and multicultural society, one of whose characteristics was its permanent involvement with the Muslim world lying astride its southern frontiers. The repercussions of that proximity still reverberate today and are an integral part of the global dynamics of the contemporary scene.

Notes

1. On the battle of Kulikovo see *Troitskaia letopis'* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1950), pp. 419-420.
2. On the twinning of prince and saint see Michael Cherniavsky, *Tsar and People* (London, 1961).
3. *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisei* 11, pp. 78-79. (Henceforth: PSRL.)
4. The date of Kazan's break from the Golden Horde is disputed. It is sometimes given as 1445. On the establishment of the khanate see B. Nolde, *La formation de l'empire russe*, vol. I (Paris, 1952), pp. 1-13.
5. George Vernadsky, *Russia at the Dawn of the Modern Era* (London, 1959), p. 68.
6. On the Khanate (or "tsardom" as it is referred to in Russian sources) of Kasimov see V.V. Veliaminov-Zernov, *Issledovanie o Kasimovskikh tsariakh*, Vol. 1, (St. Petersburg, 1863), pp. 96-98.
7. *Ustiuzhskii letopisnyi svod* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1950), pp. 96-98; Vernadsky *op. cit.*, pp. 100-101.
8. George Vernadsky, *The Mongols and Russia* (London, 1953), p. 329.
9. Vernadsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 331-332.
10. The first treaty was signed in April, 1480. *Sbornik imperatorskogo istoricheskogo obshchestva*, Vol. 41, pp. 16-20.
11. In fact, Ivan III and his father had not paid any annual tribute since 1452 though, interestingly, they had not stopped collecting it.

- Dukhovnye i dogovornye gramoty velikikh i udelnykh kniazei XIV–XVI vekov* (Moscow–Leningrad, 1950), pp. 197 and 209.
12. The khan, in order to avert a military confrontation (which he feared he might lose), had tried diplomatic pressure in order to obtain tribute payments, only to be rebuffed. *Kazanskaia istoriia* (Moscow–Leningrad, 1954), p. 55.
 13. An attack in 1460 had failed. *PSRL* 12, p. 113.
 14. The basic source for the 1480 incident is *PSRL* 6, pp. 225–230.
 15. This had to do with the so-called “filioque” clause inserted into the Catholic Apostolic Creed and rejected by the Greek Orthodox.
 16. K.V. Bazilevich. *Vneshniaia politika russkogo tsentralizovannogo gosudarstva. vtoraiia polovina XV veka* (Moscow, 1952), pp. 146–166.
 17. *PSRL* 8, p. 228.
 18. *PSRL* 12, p. 232.
 19. Vernadsky. *Russia at the Dawn*, pp. 71–77.
 20. George Vernadsky. *The Tsardom of Moscow 1547–1682* (London, 1969). Part 1, p. 51.
 21. For Ivan IV's Kazan campaigns in the late 1540s see *PSRL* 13, pt. 1, pp. 155–176 and pt. 2, pp. 457–517.
 22. With its abolition, Ivan won the right to make military appointments according to merit or any criterion other than social standing, as dictated by the *mesnichestvo* tradition by which ranks were determined according to detailed records kept in the so-called *Razriadnye knigi* (Tables of Ranks), which chronicled previous rankings.
 23. On the 1552 campaign see *PSRL* 13, pt. 1, pp. 177–223; the definitive monograph on the history of Muscovy's defeat of Kazan is Jaroslaw Pelenski. *Russia and Kazan: conquest and imperial ideology (1438–1560s)* (The Hague, 1974).
 24. For a brief survey of this process see Vernadsky. *The Tsardom of Moscow* I, pp. 59–63.
 25. *PSRL* 13, pt. 2, p. 523.
 26. *PSRL* *ibid.*, pp. 522–526.
 27. *PSRL*, 13, pt. 1, p. 232.
 28. On Astrakhan see *PSRL* 13, pt. 1, pp. 235 and 274–275; S.M. Solov'ev. *Istoriia Rossii s drevneishikh vremen* 6 (Moscow, 1961), pp. 480–487.
 29. *Akty arkheograficheskoi ekspeditsii* I, No. 241, pp. 260–261.
 30. N.A. Smirnov. *Politika Rossii na Kavkaze v XVI–XIX vekakh* (Moscow, 1958), pp. 26–28.
 31. Solov'ev, *op. cit.*, pp. 601–606; N.A. Smirnov. *Rossii i Turtsiia v XVI–XVII vekakh* (Moscow, 1946), pp. 100–159.
 32. The strategic benefits were first exploited by Muscovy in the next reign. Alexander Benningsen and Mihnea Berindei. “Astrakhan et la politique des steppes nord pontiques (1587–1588)” in *Eucharisterion* (Essays presented to Omelijan Pritsak on his Sixtieth Birthday), *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* Vol. 3 (1979).

VII

The Crimea under Russian Rule
1783 to the Great Reforms

Edward Lazzerini

In his mid-sixteenth-century account *Of the Russe Commonwealth*, Giles Fletcher, English ambassador to the court of Ivan IV, devoted a chapter to Muscovy's troublesome southern and eastern neighbors, particularly the Crimean Tatars.¹ From hearsay and the popular misperceptions of his Russian hosts, he evoked a titillating if dubious vision of Tatar society whose culture as well as political, social, and economic organization had all the distinctions of barbarism and primitiveness. Not only does Fletcher characterize the Tatars as bellicose, savage in their manners, and conniving in their relations with outsiders, but he insists that "knowing no arts of peace nor any civil practice" they are enjoined by nature and custom to "take or steal from any stranger whatsoever they can get." Such ruthlessness is tempered only by the quaint aboriginal quality of this mythical society: according to Fletcher's version of reality, the Tatar realm knew no permanent buildings or urban centers, no agriculture or coinage, no learning or written law.

Not surprisingly, the facts do not bear out Fletcher's second-hand description of Tatar life in the sixteenth century, except insofar as he correctly reveals the military might of the Crimean Khanate and the ability of its rulers to influence events in much of eastern Europe. Supposedly lacking even the rudiments of a state structure, a codified legal system, and a diversified economy, the Tatars ensconced along the northern Black Sea littoral had, on the contrary, achieved a level of social development that equaled or surpassed that of their neighbors. With a complex, stable political structure, the khanate was able to mobilize significant human and material resources to sustain a

sophisticated, literate culture lacking in none of the components expected of a contemporary civilized society.²

By the end of the seventeenth century, however, the khanate would see its pivotal role in eastern European and steppe politics diminished considerably. Changes in the region's geopolitical balance occasioned by the simultaneous enhancement of Muscovy's position and deterioration of the Ottoman Empire's have often been cited as reason enough to explain the rather sudden turn of Crimean fortune. But to this consideration must be added the certain if poorly documented evidence of internal decline. Of particular significance domestically was the reduction of financial resources available to the khans, resources traditionally sustained by plunder from yearly raids against the khanate's neighbors, by captives either sold into slavery or ransomed, by tribute money from Poland and Muscovy, and by donations from the Turkish sultan as payment for the khanate's protection of the Ottoman Empire's northern marches. Without these substantial annual revenues, not only did the fragile compromise between the khans and the great Tatar clans collapse, thereby throwing Crimean politics into turmoil, but the end of the slave trade undermined perhaps the most important sector of Crimean economic life, with as yet poorly analyzed but clearly profound social consequences. Thus, what Peter the Great's Russia faced along its expanding southern frontier on the eve of the eighteenth century was the shadow of a once mighty foe, still able to defend its home base, but no longer the uncontrolled terror stalking the steppes or visiting destruction deep into the Russian lands. The ability of the khanate to stave off final defeat at Russian hands until 1783 had less to do with real Crimean strengths than St. Petersburg's preoccupation with its own domestic problems and its western neighbors, and the short-term success of Tatar diplomacy.

The long series of events that culminated in the loss of Crimean independence still awaits its historian, but the final stages that were played out during the reign of Catherine II (1764-1796) have been amply described and analyzed recently.³ While the complex and fluid relationship between Russia and the khanate need not detain us here, we ought to note that four invasions of the peninsula by Russian troops were required between 1771 and 1782 before the empress reluctantly consented to the region's annexation and ended her years of hopeful

experimentation with alternative solutions to this border problem.⁴ Not surprisingly, once made, this decision led to the Crimea's rapid territorial and administrative reorganization and integration into the Russian imperial system. In the process, however, the Tatar people were promised that their traditional economic, social and religio-cultural life would be little disturbed. How well this promise was kept over the next eighty years and how the Tatar people fared as a minority not only within the empire as a whole but especially within their own traditional territory are the subjects of the remaining pages of this chapter.

Salient Features of Crimean Life under Russian Rule

Administrative Organization

Except for scattered and limited outbursts of anti-Russian military action in the immediate aftermath of Catherine's annexation proclamation, pacification of the Crimea proceeded with exceptional ease. Much of the reason for this can be found in the substantial emigration to the Ottoman Empire of many who might have otherwise offered continued resistance; but also instrumental were those members of the Tatar secular and religious élite willing to accommodate themselves to the new order and serve its interests. The quick end to military conflict permitted Catherine's agents to move toward establishment of a new political structure that initially combined a Russian military administration with a native civil government. The former was responsible for maintaining the occupation army and defending the empire's newly acquired province from external attack and internal rebellion. Entirely in Russian hands, it was given the further duty of collecting local taxes. The native civil government, on the other hand, in a transparent effort by Russian authorities to smooth the transition from independent khanate to Russian province, was staffed largely by Tatars with experience in the administrative affairs of the old regime. In addition to its reliance on native personnel, the civil government followed the organizational pattern established under the khan: six regions subdivided into varying numbers of districts, all of whose heads wielded broad judicial and police authority.⁵

This original compromise between Russian and Tatar political interests was too generous to last very long. Within a year, pressure to integrate the region fully into the imperial framework

led to the abolition of the peculiar and expedient arrangement only recently devised. In its place was installed a unified system with organs typical of imperial practice elsewhere in the realm and with participation by native personnel increasingly restricted. The administrative organization of the region went through a series of changes until 1802, when the government of Alexander I (1801–1825) set its final pre-1917 shape, and in the process the Crimea—by being merged with other Russian territory and settled by Russian and foreign colonists—and its people lost much of their identity and the last vestiges of their independence.⁶

Demographic Trends

What is most striking about the demographic aspect of our subject is the depletion of the native population and the subsequent relegation of the Tatars to minority status within their own homeland. While reliable data are unavailable for the size of the Crimea's preannexation population—scholars have generally accepted the unsubstantiated total of 300,000 proposed in a number of sources—a survey ordered by Baron Igel'strom in 1784 to determine the socio-economic condition of the region produced an estimate of 150,000 Tatar inhabitants.⁷ A little over twenty years later, in 1805–1806, statistics compiled for a special commission created to adjudicate land disputes showed a Tatar population of slightly more than 129,000.⁸ Assuming these figures to be approximately correct and in the absence of fertility and mortality rates, which would have to be startling to prove meaningful in this circumstance, massive emigration must account for the apparent population decline.⁹ In fact, contemporary literary evidence invariably notes the significant level of Tatar flight, mostly to the Ottoman Empire, and offers estimates ranging as high as 100,000–110,000 for this early period. The bulk of those who abandoned their homeland did so following the signing of the Treaty of Jassy in January 1792, which brought to a close the latest Russo-Turkish conflict and dashed Tatar hopes of recovering their independence. Anti-Russian propaganda spread by pro-Turkish elements and the economic threat posed by the influx of colonists further contributed to the exodus.

During the first half of the nineteenth century the flood of emigrants receded to a steady trickle sustained by an economic depression particularly severe for many Tatar peasants. The Crimean War, however, set the stage for a second mass exodus

that involved over 181,000 people by 1863.¹⁰ Economic distress, fears of accelerated efforts at Russification through schools and religious institutions, threats of deportation to the Russian interior, and the passage of approximately 16,000 Nogai emigrants through the Crimea on their way to the Ottoman Empire combined to create the panic that resulted in the reduction of the Tatar population by two-thirds. By the time the government, which had initially facilitated the request for exit permission, acted to halt the human tide, the Tatars numbered around 100,000 out of a total Crimean population of close to twice that figure.¹¹

The non-Tatar component—a clear majority by the mid-1860s—had gained its demographic prominence as a result not only of Tatar emigration but also of decades of colonization sponsored by the Russian government and private interests. Under the khanate this segment of the population represented no more than a small minority of Armenians, Georgians, Greeks, and Karaim Jews, who, despite their numbers, played a major role in the economic life of the realm. Under Russian colonial administration such traditional Tatar neighbors as these were supplemented in two ways: firstly by Serbs, Moldavians, Vlaxhs, Bulgarians, Poles, Germans, and many other foreigners attracted by financial assistance, free land, and extensive privileges; and secondly by Russian and Ukrainian peasants brought from other areas of the empire by serf owners who had acquired landholdings in the peninsula and needed field hands. While the concept of systematically settling large numbers of foreign colonists in Russia dates from the early 1760s and had resulted in the recruitment of 30,000 immigrants for the Volga region by 1775, the Crimea could boast of a similar number of such settlers only in the 1850s. In addition to the slow pace at which foreigners settled in the region, their presence was always numerically less significant than that of imperial colonists, who accounted for over 70,000 inhabitants of the peninsula on the eve of the Crimean War.¹² Taken together, these colonists succeeded in acquiring some of the best land that the Crimea possessed and restricting the opportunities that Tatar peasants might otherwise have had to sell their labors. The economic crisis that plagued the Tatars during much of the early nineteenth century was undoubtedly aggravated by these twin developments.¹³

Economic Developments

On 30 October 1793, after following a circuitous route that took him from St. Petersburg to Moscow and then down the Volga, a middle-aged academician with a distinguished reputation arrived in Simferopol to gather material on the Crimea's flora and fauna, topography, economic geography, and ethnography. Petr Semenovich Pallas, at the request of P.A. Zubov, the local chief administrator, took upon himself the additional task of surveying the region's productive strength and assessing its potential for further development. In his reports to Zubov and in later publications, Pallas was optimistic about the Crimea's future as a major entrepôt serving Russia's commercial ties with the Mediterranean nations, provided her ports were improved, warehouse facilities expanded, and a more flexible tariff policy initiated. He was equally hopeful that through investment and proper management the natural agricultural wealth of the region would support the revival and development of two potentially lucrative enterprises: viticulture and sericulture. So convinced was he of the future of Crimean wines, for example, that he predicted Russia would one day manage to do without French imports!

Much would have to be changed, however, before such rewards could be reaped, and much would depend upon state initiative as well as private capital. To begin with, he argued, the government ought to auction all state-owned land, selling to anyone who would guarantee the property's use for intensive cultivation and who would take an active interest in improving the yields of his holdings. In addition, the government would have to respond imaginatively and boldly to the problem of acute labor shortage (and the slothful nature of the Tatar peasant) by inviting foreign colonists to settle the region and encouraging voluntary migration of hardworking imperial subjects skilled in various agrarian pursuits: Russians, Ukrainians, and Poles to work the rich valleys and grow grain or raise livestock; Armenians and Moldavians to establish vineyards and silkworm plantations in the hills. Above all, the government would have to overcome the most serious obstacle to economic development by resolving the divisive disputes between Tatars and non-natives over land ownership and between peasants and landowners over the former's rights and obligations as tenant farmers.¹⁴

Pallas's hopes for the future of the Crimean economy were only partially realized, and even then provided much less benefit to the native Tatar inhabitants than to those Russian and foreign newcomers who managed to acquire sometimes massive estates or settled in the new port cities of Sevastopol and Balaklava to participate in the expansion of Russia's southern commerce. Developments in the peninsula's rural economy provide a case in point. Owing in large measure to the decision not to introduce serfdom into Tatar society and the widespread labor shortage resulting from emigration, agriculture in the hands of estate owners became increasingly specialized and commercialized: by the 1830s and 1840s large-scale enterprises devoted to wheat farming, sheepbreeding, and wine-making, with their promise of generous profits through national and international marketing, had come to dominate the local economy.¹⁵ In the process, however, the Tatar peasantry, while legally free from the burdens and restrictions of serfdom, found its traditional rights and access to the land severely diminished in the face of pressure from large landowners. Taking advantage of their socio-political power (bolstered by favorable imperial policies) and greater financial resources, as well as the limited defense that the peasantry could muster on its own behalf, the region's nobility (including some of its Tatar members) managed over these decades to purchase state lands at undervalued prices, to seize peasant holdings when ownership could not be proved, and to raise the labor demands (*barshchina*) of their peasant tenants beyond the prescribed three days a week. Particularly onerous was the growing practice of *mesiachina*, whereby the landowner denied his peasants any land for their own use and obliged them to work only for him.¹⁶ Little wonder that so many Tatars opted to emigrate, although in fairness to the local nobility, exploitation of peasants increased throughout the empire in the decades just prior to the abolition of serfdom, contributing to the pauperization of the class as a whole and its decline in absolute number.

Cultural Conditions

In 1821 the Russian government commissioned two men to lead an expedition to the Crimea with the goal of surveying the many antiquities scattered across the peninsula. Besides identifying the extant monuments of Tatar and pre-Tatar culture, they were ordered to determine which of these ought to be preserved. In a

report later submitted through bureaucratic channels, the expedition's architectural expert recommended that 41,000 roubles be appropriated from state funds to subvent the task of restoring and maintaining eight structures, including mosques in Kozlov, Eski Sarai, and Feodosiia. Following extensive discussion at the highest administrative level, the Minister of Internal Affairs informed authorities in Tavricheskaia Guberniia that 10,000 roubles would be allotted, but only for antiquities of Greek and Italian origin; Tatar and Turkish monuments, being less valuable, would have to rely upon the beneficence of local natives for their survival.¹⁷

In this response is reflected an indifference, if not antagonism, toward Tatar culture that probably represents the general attitude of most Russians during this period. At its best, such an attitude contributed nothing to the preservation of splendid mosques, caravanserais, public baths, or fountains, let alone cemeteries or private dwellings; at its worst, it encouraged their destruction in the name of progress. However much a Pushkin, for example, might lament the way in which the khan's palace in Bakhchisarai had been allowed to decay, poetic indignation could do little to prevent such common but tragic acts as the leveling of major Tatar structures around Simferopol's great square to make room for an enlarged parade ground.¹⁸ And the deaf ears were not only to be found among top bureaucrats: when the Ministry of Internal Affairs issued a circular in 1827 to all provincial governors for information on antiquities in their administrative areas, the response from Tavricheskaia Guberniia was shocking: only two local officials acknowledged any architectural monuments at all in their districts, and each counted only one!¹⁹

Is this to be explained by some conspiracy of silence among the rest, motivated by a conscious detestation of Tatar culture, or does it better reflect bureaucratic incompetence, avoidance of duty, or ignorance as to what an antiquity was? For that matter, ought we not at least entertain the likelihood that many Russians in the Crimea were unable to judge the value of Tatar architectural monuments because the latter were considered to be part of a culture that, however defeated and decadent, still thrived and ought to be maintaining those very structures itself? And, finally, given the abandonment of many Tatar buildings as a result of mass emigration, ought we to be surprised by the sometimes cavalier manner in which they were razed by local

Russian authorities, especially in urban areas (always more important to local Russian interests) where the need for development was most pressing? Until such time as the records of local government are opened to examination, answers to these and other important questions are likely to remain elusive.

If the material achievements of Tatar culture suffered from Russian neglect, disdain, and, at times, brutal onslaught, its spiritual aspect endured more subtle forms of pressure that were probably no less destructive for all their apparent harmlessness. From the moment of annexation the Russian government pursued a dual policy regarding the Islamic religion. It preferred, for instance, to leave all matters of dogma, ritual, and familial concern in the hands of clergy unless requested to intervene in appellate fashion by a disgruntled litigant. Even when the government undertook to regulate (though not determine) Islamic practice, as through the code of 1831 and other nineteenth-century decrees, the bases for such regulation were invariably the *Sharia* (Islamic jurisprudence) and pre-1783 custom. As one commentator observed laconically, in such matters "Kuranic law proved stronger than state law."²⁰

But religion is more than dogma and ritual. Generally it also spawns a body of specialists or professional interpreters (in the case of Islam, the *ulema*) who, because of their wisdom, virtue, or other socially valued personal attributes enjoy a position of leadership among the faithful. Desiring to exploit the social authority of the Tatar *ulema*, and fearful that if left unfettered this authority could be used to promote anti-Russian sentiment, the tsarist government sought to bind the Islamic clergy to state service. Two approaches were taken. On the one hand, Catherine's regime moved quickly in the early postannexation years to court clerical loyalty by issuing a number of decrees that: (1) granted salaries to all religious personnel; (2) assured that the clergy would retain their positions, spiritual authority, and control over religious education and *vakifs* (vast landholdings traditionally serving as revenue-producers to support mosques, schools, and charitable institutions); (3) exempted *vakifs* and the clergy from state taxation and other levies; (4) bestowed upon the clergy the right to operate movable property and on the *mufti* (officially recognized as chief cleric) the status of nobility; and (5) ordered allocation of state funds to finance construction of mosques, schools, and caravanserais, as well as the printing and

distribution of the Kur'an. Taken together these measures engendered a patron–client relationship that inevitably fostered clerical subservience and self-imposed censorship as largely unconscious expressions of gratitude.

On the other hand, the government maneuvered more cautiously but no less effectively to reinforce financial and psychological dependency and restrict clerical autonomy by insisting that civil law was indeed paramount where the corporate status of the clergy, the organizational principles underlying clerical life and authority, the procedures for establishing clerical rank, and the performance of certain duties were involved. In this light, for example, we can discern the purpose behind the creation of an Islamic governing body that ultimately took the form of the Muslim Spiritual Assembly (1794), the promulgation of the code of 1831 (which, among other things, defined the responsibilities of the clergy, their positions, and the procedures for election to high posts), and the requirement for clergy to maintain registers of births, deaths, and marriages beginning in 1834.

Such well-aimed thrusts in combination with material and psychic rewards worked remarkably well to achieve for the government its goal of clerical subservience. What the latter's effect upon Crimean society was, however, is more difficult to determine. Before the 1880s we know virtually nothing about the relationship between the clergy and the faithful to be able to demonstrate that its co-optation had the negative consequences that many have long presumed and which analogous situations would indicate. Yet if complaints by lay and religious reformers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are a reliable gauge of more widespread attitudes, then state patronage succeeded in diminishing significantly clerical esteem and authority. Servility and obsequiousness had rendered the clergy socially impotent.

Educational and Intellectual Trends

During the late 1860s, officials from the Ministries of Public Education and Internal Affairs met with school administrators, teachers, and local notables throughout the empire to discuss the state of education among non-Russian subjects and the possibility of expanding instruction beyond current limits. At provincial conferences, in official publications, in the press, and in the "fat

journals" that were so important for the dissemination of information beyond St. Petersburg and Moscow, a seemingly endless stream of opinion poured forth for public scrutiny. Concerning education among the Tatars of Tavricheskaia Guberniia, the consensus held that the government had accomplished little since 1783 to foster secular schooling and instruction and that the quality of native Islamic schools was inferior at best. Such complaints were proffered by Russians knowledgeable of the local situation and echoed by Tatars concerned with the lack of development in the region and their brethren's cultural retardation.²¹

Education and intellectual life within Crimean Tatar society had not always been so dismal. During the heyday of the khanate a vigorous literate culture was sustained by a generously supported network of domestic *mektebs* (primary schools) and *medresses* (advanced theological institutions) that served well the limited needs of a traditional society.²² The intimate association of religion and education, of course, encouraged the latter's development, as did the Islamic injunction that boys should study between the ages of six and fifteen. How this precolonial, religious educational system was affected by the imposition of Russian rule, however, defies analysis for the present. We might expect that the number of schools would have dwindled during the early nineteenth century as a consequence of population movement and decline as well as of the widespread and worsening economic distress of most Tatars who remained behind. The lack of empirical data, unfortunately, precludes the making of even this basic judgment. Nevertheless, the complaints against the narrowness of the curriculum in the Islamic schools and the poor overall quality of their instruction are borne out by the efforts of native reformers in the 1880s and the following decades. Likewise the absence of any literary activity among the Tatars before the same period attests to the general cultural decay of their society since annexation.

We are on somewhat firmer ground when addressing government involvement in the education of Crimean Tatars, but even here information is spotty, often contradictory, and maddeningly ambiguous. In general, Catherine II's promise to respect the clergy's traditional control of religious education was maintained by her successors. Through the mid-nineteenth century, succeeding administrations showed little interest in either the quantity or

quality of local Islamic schools and did nothing to foster or hinder their functioning. Only in the areas of language instruction and teacher preparation did the government fitfully develop programs and allocate some public funds. Thus, between 1824 and 1854 several projects were drawn up to introduce the study of Russian and secular subjects into some Islamic schools while establishing a Tatar section within the Simferopol Gymnasium with instruction of and in the Tatar language. The impediments to full implementation of the various proposals, however, were multiple: chronic underfunding, lack of Tatar texts for classroom use, and, above all, widespread suspicion among Tatars of the government's motives for encouraging the study of Russian. As a result, all but a tiny number of Russified natives (primarily from *murza*, or noble, families) refused to send their children to the few Russian-sponsored schools or to permit Russian instruction in native institutions. The educational experience of someone like Ismail Bey Gasprinskii (1851–1914), the great Tatar reformer, was thus exceptional for its association with Russian institutions: first the Simferopol Gymnasium, followed by enrollment in Voronezh and Moscow military academies. How exceptional schooling of this kind was for a young Tatar is attested to by figures for the number of enrollees in and graduates of the Tatar section of the Simferopol Gymnasium: only seventy and twenty-five respectively for the period 1827–1854.²³

In the 1860s the more serious Russian interest in minority education was stimulated by the desire to bring greater numbers from among such people as the Tatars into the mainstream of imperial life. State-sponsored education, emphasizing instruction of and in the Russian language and involving a more aggressive role for the Russian Orthodox Church, was expected to foster assimilation (*sblizhenie*) while simultaneously dissipating the political threat that ethnic and religious consciousness posed ultimately to the territorial integrity of the empire. Considered by Russian nationalists as a tool for preserving the status quo, education became instead an instrument for the revitalization of local native culture and the creation of a modern native intelligentsia increasingly critical of Russia's dominant influence in contemporary society.

Conclusion

In Bakhchisarai, two days after the centennial anniversary of Russia's annexation of the Crimea, Ismail Bey Gasprinskii published the initial number of the first Tatar newspaper, *Tercüman/Perevodchik*. In a lead article hailing the important event of one hundred years earlier, he noted how "on 8 April 1783, the small khanate, worn out by disorder and bloodshed, was made a part of the greatest empire in the world and, under the patronage of a mighty power, received peace and the protection of just laws . . ." Continuing in this euphoric vein, he added: "Celebrating this day . . . the Crimean Muslims cannot fail to recall all of those good deeds from which they have already profited for a century."²⁴

Considering the years of frustration he endured before receiving official permission to publish a newspaper, Gasprinskii might be forgiven the fervor of his gratitude. But hyperbole aside, is there any truth to his assessment of Russia's contribution to Tatar society? Were the Tatars recipients of Russian beneficence and sympathy in the years from 1783 to the 1860s? Had they indeed profited from their association with the Russian Empire? Not long ago Western intellectual bias buttressed by the unspoken assumptions of modernization theory might have prompted us to respond affirmatively to such questions. While recognizing that Tatars suffered from Russian political, economic, and social domination, we nevertheless would have emphasized some presumed long-term benefit of Russian (i.e. Western) influence. With a faith born of the reality of Western political, military, and technological might, we often argued for the universal applicability of the Western experience and the value of its acceptance by other societies. For all who tread the Western path, short-term social dislocation and personal intellectual traumas were small prices to pay for the inevitable rewards of industrialization, social egalitarianism, political democracy, and modern science.

More recently this vision of human history has come under sharp attack. Where once Western civilization was proclaimed the ideal against which other civilizations and cultures were to be measured, and where once imitation of the West was a *conditio sine qua non* of the construction of a better society, now many are much less sanguine about what the West has to offer the rest

of the world. As a result, answers to questions of the type posed above no longer come as easily; nor are they as likely to be positive.

If we descend from this philosophical level of discourse, however, then the significance of the khanate's destruction and the incorporation of the peninsula and its people into the tsarist empire is undeniable and clear. By the mid-1860s, after barely eighty years of Russian rule, Crimean Tatar society had been largely integrated into the imperial order. While the peasants had escaped being caught up in the institutional net of serfdom, their autonomy was more apparent than real, especially in view of their economic plight. As for the clergy and remnants of the old *murza* families, both were transformed into estates in keeping with current Russian practice, and both found their social authority diminished by association with and dependency upon Russian officialdom. Emasculated and servile, the traditional élite could no longer provide independent local leadership.

Socially, then, the effect of Russian conquest was substantial and fundamental. The same conclusion, moreover, can be drawn for other aspects of Tatar life. Demographically, the cost to the Crimea was extraordinary; in some shorter periods, staggering. Economically, the establishment of a colonial presence, for all its promise, succeeded only in aggrandizing a minority of the Russified native élite and its colonial counterpart, and aggravating the difficult conditions under which peasants usually work. Culturally, Tatar society appears to have become a wasteland unable to sustain even a modicum of intellectual, literary, or artistic activity. While the Russian government was hardly solely responsible for the grim condition in which Tatar society found itself by the middle of the nineteenth century, it certainly did little to ease the transformation, which it had a hand in fostering, of a once vital culture.

Notes

1. For this discussion I have used the edition of Fletcher's work found in L. Berry and R. Crummey (eds.), *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968), pp. 191–202.
2. This is one of Alan W. Fisher's major arguments in *Crimean Tatars* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1978). Chapters 3–5.
3. See Alan W. Fisher, *The Russian Annexation of the Crimea, 1772–1783* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

4. On this subject, once again, Alan W. Fisher has added substantially to our knowledge with two studies: "Enlightened Despotism and Islam Under Catherine II," *Slavic Review*, XXVII, No. 4 (December 1968), pp. 542-553, and "Sahin Girey, the Reformer Khan, and the Russian Annexation of the Crimea," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, XV, No. 3 (September, 1967), pp. 341-364.
5. The following provides the basic information concerning the first years of Russian administration of the Crimea: F.F. Lashkov, "Statisticheskiiia svedeniia o Kryme, soobshcheniia kaimakanami v 1783 godu," *Zapiski imperatorskago odesskago obshchestva istorii i drevnostei*, XIV (1886), pp. 91-156; A. Fisher, *Crimean Tatars*, pp. 70-78.
6. The peninsula was initially combined with territory beyond Perekop to form Tavricheskaia Oblast' (Tavrida Region). In 1796 Paul I's government decreed the unification of the *oblasti'* with Voznesenskaia and Ekaterinoslavskaia Gubernii (Provinces) to create the super-province of Novorossiiskaia. Finally a decree of 1802 redefined the Crimea as part of the province of Tavricheskaia. Meanwhile the internal organization of the Crimea had likewise undergone several changes before the number of *uezdy* (districts) was set at five in 1838: Simferopol'skii, Feodosiiskii, Evpatoriiskii, Perekopskii, and Ialtinskii.
7. F.F. Lashkov, "Statisticheskiiia svedeniia," p. 103.
8. F.F. Lashkov, "Sbornik dokumentov po istorii krymsko-tatarskago zemlevladieniia," *Izvestiia Tavricheskoi uchenoi arkhivnoi kommissii*, XXVI (1897), pp. 84-154.
9. On this subject see: A.I. Markevich, "Pereseleniia Krymskikh tatar v Turtsiiu v sviazi s dvizheniem naseleniia v Krymu," *Izvestiia Akademii Nauk SSSR, Otdelenie gumanitarnykh nauk*, 7th series (Moscow, 1928), pp. 375-405 and 7th series (Moscow, 1929), pp. 1-16; and M. Pinson, "Russian Policy and the Emigration of the Crimean Tatars to the Ottoman Empire, 1854-1862," *Güney-Dogu Avrupa Arastirmalari Dergisi*, I (1972), pp. 37-56.
10. Iu. Ianson, *Krym. Ego khlebopashestvo i khlebnaia trgovlia* (St. Petersburg, 1870), p. 8.
11. See *Sbornik dokumentov i statei po voprosu ob obrazovanii inorodtsev* (St. Petersburg, 1869), p. 84, n., for the range of figures compiled by different official organs.
12. A. Fisher, *Crimean Tatars*, p. 93.
13. The question of foreign colonization in Russia generally and in the southern part of the empire particularly is treated in: R.P. Bartlett, "Foreign Colonies and Foreign Rural Settlement in the Russian Empire," *Modern Encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet History*, XI (Gulf Breeze, Fla.: Academic International Press, 1979), pp. 210-215, and *Human Capital: The Settlement of Foreigners in Russia, 1762-1804*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979; also see J.A. Duran, "Catherine II, Potemkin, and Colonization Policy in Southern Russia," *The Russian Review*, XXVIII, No. 1 (January, 1969), pp. 23-36.

14. This brief introduction to Pallas's views is based upon E. Druzhinina, "Nachalo nauchnogo izucheniiia Kryma," in *Voprosy sotsial'no-ekonomicheskoi istorii i istochnikovedeniia perioda feodalizma v Rossii. Sbornik statei k 70-letiiu A.A. Novosel'skogo* (Moscow, 1961), pp. 345–350. A. Markevich has written a more thorough study entitled "Akademik P.S. Pallas. Ego zhizn,' prebyvanie v Krymu i uchenye trudy," *Izvestiia Tavricheskoi uchenoi arkhivnoi kommissii*, XLVII (1912), pp. 167–242.
15. M. Maksimenko. *Krest'ianskoe dvizhenie v Tavricheskoi gubernii nakanune i posle otmeny krepostnogo prava* (Simferopol', 1957), pp. 14–21.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 8–25, *passim*. Despite government establishment of several commissions to resolve conflicting claims on landed property in the Crimea, and despite the favorable judgement that some Tatar peasants eventually won after filing suit before these bodies, land ownership remained a source of grave social tension well beyond the era of Great Reforms. The fullest study of this problem prior to 1861 is found in F.F. Lashkov, *Istoricheskii ocherk krymsko-tatarskago zemlevladieniia* (Simferopol', 1897), Part III.
17. This episode is recounted in A. Steven, "Dela arkhiva Tavricheskago gubernskago pravleniia, otnosiashchiasia do razyskaniia, opisaniia i sokhraneniia pamiatnikov stariny v predelakh Tavricheskoi gubernii," *Izvestiia Tavricheskoi uchenoi arkhivnoi kommissii*, XIII (1891), pp. 37–41.
18. A. Fisher, *Crimean Tatars*, p. 95.
19. A. Steven, "Dela arkhiva," pp. 42–44.
20. I. Aleksandrov, "O musul'manskom dukhovenstve i upravlenii dukhovnymi delami musul'man v Krymu posle ego prisoedineniia k Rossii," *Izvestiia Tavricheskoi uchenoi arkhivnoi kommissii*, LI (1914), pp. 218–219.
21. *Sbornik dokumentov*, pp. 97–156.
22. See F.F. Lashkov, "Statisticheskiia svedeniia," pp. 113–115, for statistics compiled by Baron Igel'strom in 1784. The figure for *mektebs* (26) is clearly too low in relationship to the number of *medresses* (23). Note also Fisher's comments concerning Tatar cultural life in *Crimean Tatars*, pp. 28–36, and in "Crimean Separatism in the Ottoman Empire," in *Nationalism in a Non-National State: The Dissolution of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. by W. Haddad and W. Ochsenwald (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1977), pp. 57–76.
23. *Sbornik dokumentov*, p. 90.
24. "Stoletie," *Tercüman/Perevodchik*, No. 1 (10 April 1883), p. 1.