

Russian Rule in Turkestan:
A Comparison with British India through the Lens of World-Systems Analysis

THESIS

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By

Timothy Andrew Dempsey

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Master's Examination Committee:

Scott C. Levi, Adviser

Nicholas Breyfogle

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Abstract

This thesis is an attempt to analyze the Russian conquest and subsequent colonization of southern Central Asia using Immanuel Wallerstein's world-systems approach. In the middle of the nineteenth century the Russian empire's position in the European-centered, capitalist world-system was weakening. Its economy was gradually becoming more geared to low value-added production, and its military prowess vis-à-vis other European powers like France and Britain was badly compromised after its defeat in the Crimean War. In order to prevent its complete peripheralization within that system Russia undertook to conquer southern Central Asia in order to create a captive market for its manufactures and to secure a more reliable supply of raw cotton for its burgeoning textile industry. As a result of this process, Central Asia was incorporated into the periphery of the expanding capitalist world-system, whereby it underwent a number of painful social and economic transformations that were observable in other lands that had been colonized by European powers. Following the example of Alexander Morrison, this thesis compares the colonial experience of Russian Turkestan with British India, but instead of comparing the administrative structures of the two colonial regimes, it seeks to find similarities in effects of economic colonization on the indigenous populations. Russian colonization of

Turkestan, however, was tempered by the fact that the Russian empire, being a semiperipheral power in the capitalist world-system, had fewer resources to facilitate an efficient exploitation of its southern colony. In addition, the Russian autocracy remained too strong in relation to its national bourgeoisie and actively inhibited the accumulation of capital in the core by preventing total exploitation of Turkestan.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my roommate Shannon Potter, who provided invaluable emotional and moral support during the process of writing it.

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Vita

May 2000 The John Carroll School
2004..... B.A. Russian, Juniata College
2008 to present Master's degree student, Center for Slavic
and East European Studies, The Ohio State
University

Fields of Study

Major Field: Slavic and East European Studies

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Introduction

Over the course of the twentieth century, not a few monographs were published in the West analyzing the tsarist conquest and colonization of Central Asia. While there was no dearth of academics publishing books on this subject, seemingly none had attempted an explicitly comparative analysis of the tsarist colonial regime in Turkestan and the colonial regimes of other European powers at that time. The first historian to have undertaken this task is Alexander Morrison in his recent book *Russian Rule in Samarkand 1868-1910: A Comparison with British India*.¹ To be sure, British India is by no means a bad choice for comparison, since, as Morrison himself points out, a number of Russians at that time saw British India as a model for their colonization of Turkestan. Morrison's book indeed does much to draw out the similarities between the two regimes' approaches to the administration of their colonial possessions, but also points to a number of crucial differences. He likewise provides some important new insights on power relations between Central Asians and Russian administrators, demonstrating that Russians exercised far from total control over the natives. Ultimately, Morrison draws the conclusion that Russian rule was far less onerous for the native residents of Turkestan

¹ Alexander Morrison, *Russian Rule in Samarkand: A Comparison with British India*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

than British rule was for the Indians because Russian rule in his estimate was not only less imposing, but far less effectual.

While Morrison's book certainly has much to recommend it, its attempt to place Russian Turkestan and British India in a comparative perspective misses a great deal due to its rather narrow focus on administrative issues. Morrison pays scant attention to the economic aspects of both colonial regimes and seems almost oblivious to the far reaching social and economic changes that Russian rule produced in Turkestan as a whole. The reason for this neglect is Morrison's categorical rejection of any and all claims that Russia's conquest and subsequent administration of Turkestan had any underlying economic motives. Morrison stresses throughout his book that security was the only priority of the Russian administrators ruling over Turkestan and that economic considerations on the part of the state were unlikely because, he claims, the region was never anything but a drain on the empire's financial resources.

This paper seeks to refute Morrison's claims that the conquest and colonization of southern Central Asia, particularly Turkestan, was undertaken independent of any economic considerations. More to the point, the primary aim of this paper will be to place Russia's conquest of Central Asia and its subsequent colonization of Turkestan in the context of global processes. Following Morrison's example it will also attempt to compare and contrast the colonial experiences of India and southern Central Asia, but in

this case with a mind to exploring the social and economic transformations these two regions underwent as a result.

The paper will strive to show that the changes that occurred in the Turkestan *guberniya* of the Russian empire from approximately 1820 to 1915 correspond with the processes of incorporation and peripheralization outlined by Immanuel Wallerstein in the third volume of his *The Modern World System*.² In accordance with Wallerstein's schema, it will be argued that during the course of the early nineteenth century, Central Asia began to move out of the "external arena" of the expanding European world-system and was being gradually incorporated into that system through Russia, which itself was already a semiperipheral state. Due to Russia's competition with other states in the European system, particularly Britain, and its general desire to prevent itself from being wholly peripheralized, Russia began to step up noticeably its military and diplomatic activities in Central Asia during the second quarter of the nineteenth century in order to improve its commercial advantages in the region. As a result of certain events in the European world-system at the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century, members of the Russian bureaucracy, military and bourgeoisie began to view the conquest of Central Asia

² Wallerstein mentions in that volume that once Russia was incorporated into the European world-system and became a semiperipheral entity around 1750, Central Asia moved into the external arena of that system. See Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System III: The Second Era of Great Expansion of the Capitalist World-Economy, 1730s-1840s*, New York: Academic Press, 1989, p. 167. He gives no details, though, on the region's actual incorporation or peripheralization – perhaps because his account of events cuts off in the early 1840s. See, however, his comments in Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Two Modes of Ethnic Consciousness: Soviet Central Asia in Transition?" in Edward Allworth, ed., *The Nationality Question in Soviet Central Asia*, New York: Praeger Publishers, pp. 168-175.

as essential for advancing Russia's commercial and strategic interests. Once Russia conquered the region and incorporated land from the former Kokand khanate and parts of the Bukharan Emirate and Khivan khanate into a directly administered Turkestan *guberniya*, its governor-generals in concert with Russian commercial interests worked to transform that area into a colony servicing the development of the Russian core. At the heart of this colonial economy was cotton, which was needed to supply Russia's burgeoning textile industry. Russian colonialism in Turkestan produced a number of social and economic changes that were very similar to those of other lands being incorporated into the European world-system, particularly India. Nevertheless, it will be argued that Russia's colonial exploitation of Turkestan was very much tempered by the semiperipheral character of the Russian state, but also the autocratic power of the tsar, which impeded capital accumulation in the metropolitan country.

World-Systems Analysis

It will be useful here to briefly review some of the terms and theoretical frameworks that will inform the central arguments of this paper. As mentioned above, the events and socio-economic changes occurring in Central Asia beginning around the second decade of the nineteenth century will be analyzed using Wallerstein's world-systems analysis. As world-systems analysis is a rather complex theory, it is impossible to provide a full exegesis of it here. Thus what follows will be a necessarily brief synopsis, which in turn will be followed by a brief discussion of some of the debates surrounding the world-systems approach.³

World-systems analysis posits that there is a modern world-system that currently encompasses the entire globe.⁴ It is what Wallerstein terms a world-economy, and it was initially formed in Europe and the Americas in the sixteenth century and spread out from there to eventually span the entire globe. Wallerstein defines a world-economy as "a large geographic zone within which there is a division of labor and hence significant internal

³ The following synopsis is drawn from Wallerstein's own short introductory text. See Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004. For a fuller understanding of Wallerstein's thought and the details of the historical development of the modern world-system, see his original three-volume work *The Modern World System*, New York: Academic Press (I) 1974, (II) 1980, (III) 1989.

⁴ Wallerstein clarifies that "world systems are not a system, economy or empire *of the* (whole) world, but *that are* a world...[it] represents a spatial/temporal zone of activity and institutions which obey certain systemic rules." Wallerstein, *Introduction*, pp. 16-17.

exchange of basic or essential goods as well as flows of capital and labor.”⁵ One of the defining characteristics of a world-economy is that it is not bounded by a singular political unit and encompasses multiple states in an interstate system. The division of labor is in fact what unifies the system. This world-economy is capitalist. According to Wallerstein, a capitalist system is not the “mere existence of persons or firms producing for sale on the world market with the intention of obtaining a profit” or even “the existence of persons working for wages”, since those phenomena have existed for thousands of years across the world.⁶ Instead he defines capitalism as *a system* that “gives priority to the endless accumulation of capital.”⁷

This accumulation process is largely facilitated by the creation of monopolies by firms – although usually they are only quasi-monopolies – through the aid of state machinery. Capitalism requires a world-economy, as it needs large markets and a multiplicity of states so it can circumvent individual attempts by states to inhibit the accumulation process. Key to the capitalist system’s efficacy is the axial division of labor between core production and peripheral production processes, which results in an unequal exchange favoring those involved in core-like production processes. The ultimate result of this unequal exchange between core and peripheral products is that surplus value flows to those states with the most core-like processes. The core is concerned with monopolized

⁵ Ibid., p. 23.

⁶ Ibid., p. 24.

⁷ Ibid. This concept is drawn from Braudel and will be discussed below.

productions because they are more profitable, but as those (quasi-)monopolies begin to dissolve and become more competitive – and thus less profitable – they begin to shift to peripheral zones.⁸

⁸ Ibid., p. 28. Wallerstein absolutely stresses here that, “in world-systems analysis, core-periphery is a *relational* concept, not a pair of terms that are reified, that is, have separate essential meanings.” Ibid, p. 17. Emphasis his.

World-Systems Analysis as Eurocentric?

Like any theory attempting to explain world history and crucial moments of discontinuity within it, world-systems analysis has been the subject of fairly fierce debate ever since the publication of Wallerstein's first volume of the *The Modern World System*. Criticism, as well as praise, have come from various corners of academia and have been expressed by individuals representing a very wide range of theoretical traditions. For this reason it is difficult to summarize these debates in a coherent fashion, since the critics, their criticisms and their motivations are so varied.⁹ Moreover, the focus of the debate over world-systems analysis has seemingly shifted over the last two decades from the transition from feudalism to capitalism in Europe to the origins of divergence between Europe and Asia. It is to this latter debate that this paper will turn its attention.¹⁰

Over the course of the 1990s, world-systems analysis came to be increasingly criticized by a number of scholars for being Eurocentric (there are perhaps two separate camps making this claim). This likely came as a shock for partisans of world-systems analysis, as Wallerstein's critical rewriting of world history from the sixteenth century advanced the perspective that "the rise of the Europeans in the modern world was due to

⁹ Wallerstein himself divides these critics into four different camps: nomothetic positivists, orthodox Marxists, state autonomists and cultural particularists. For a bibliography of their critiques, see Wallerstein, *Introduction*, p. 103.

¹⁰ Jason Moore makes this observation and provides a useful listing of the main texts forming this debate. See Jason Moore, "The Modern World System as Environmental History?: Ecology and the Rise of Capitalism," *Theory and Society* 32, 3 (Jun. 2003), n.2 on pp. 359-360.

profit-seeking colonial expansion, commercial warfare, and might makes right rather than to some intrinsic European advantage in culture, character, or intellect.”¹¹ Indeed that was why his *The Modern World System* had seemingly irritated so many orthodox economic historians. His anti-Eurocentric critics nevertheless remain unconvinced. Their claims in this regard vary, but as one version goes, Wallerstein and his collaborators failed to acknowledge the economic, technological and social supremacy of Asian powers like India and China in comparison with Europe throughout much of the crucial period that world-systems analysts define as the rise of Europe. Alternative but related claims from this camp argue that capitalism was not uniquely a European phenomenon and existed already in China and/or India and/or elsewhere long before it developed in Europe. Still others argue that there has been a single world-system for thousands of years and that Europe’s ascent within it was largely fortuitous and is destined to be short-lived.¹²

Ironically enough, one of the leading exponents of this particular “world-systems analysis as Eurocentric” camp was Andre Gunder Frank, whose earlier work on dependency theory represented a major theoretical contribution to world-systems analysis. Having become dissatisfied with a number of tenets of world-systems analysis, Frank himself published in 1998 a critical rewriting of world economic history entitled

¹¹ Willaim Darity Jr., “Review of *The Modern World System III: The Second Era of Great Expansion of the Capitalist World-Economy, 1730s-1840s* by Immanuel Wallerstein,” *The Journal of Economic History*, 52, 1 (Mar., 1992), pp. 261-262.

¹² For a sampling of these arguments, see Stephen K. Sanderson, ed, *Civilizations and World Systems: Studying World-Historical Change*, Walnut Creek, CA: 1995; but also Andre Gunder Frank and Barry K. Gills, “The World System: Five Hundred Years or Five Thousand?”, *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations*, 18, 1 (Spring 1992), pp. 1-79.

Re:Orient, which contained a sharp polemical attack on his erstwhile collaborators in the world-systems analysis school based on most of the aforementioned arguments of the anti-Eurocentric critics.¹³ At the core of Frank's argument was the claim that there had been a single Afro-Eurasian world-economy stretching back for at least five thousand years, which was Asian-centered until only very recently. He similarly denied any historic break had occurred in that system in the fifteenth century and underscored the absolute continuity of the system. Frank even questioned the usefulness of the term capitalism in these debates, since all of Europe's supposedly unique economic, political and social institutions had Asian counterparts that often pre-dated those of the former. Frank ultimately attributes the rise of Europe to so-called geographical advantages it obtained by its conquest of the Americas.

¹³ See Andre Gunder Frank, *Re:Orient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

Market Economy versus Capitalism

Unsurprisingly, Frank's attempt to present an Asian-centric rewriting of world-history – one that was even more grandiose in scale than Wallerstein's – was met with no small amount of criticism from many of the same quarters that reacted so negatively to Wallerstein's project. Needless to say, however, it was well received by many of the anti-Eurocentrics since it so forcefully argued in favor of their perspective(s). But whatever strengths Frank's *Re:Orient* may have had in terms of dispelling some genuinely Eurocentric assumptions about Europe's rise, it was a very poor reply to world-systems analysis. Firstly, Frank's book was an exceedingly economistic work that focused almost singularly on bullion flows and lacked the kind of analytical sophistication that made world-systems analysis so original at its outset; such as discussions of class conflict; the relation between European racism, the nation state and imperialism; agro-ecological transformation; socio-physical conjunctures and so on.¹⁴ Secondly, Frank does not take care to differentiate the arguments of world-systems analysts from those of other scholars that he labels as Eurocentric and usually conflates the two groups in a bid to accomplish maximum smearing of his former collaborators.¹⁵ Lastly, Frank's book side-steps, or at

¹⁴ See Moore's commentary on this score. Moore, "MWS as Environmental History?," pp. 310-313, but passim. See also Amiya Kumar Bagchi's comments on Frank's economism. A.K. Bagchi, *Perilous Passage: Mankind and the Global Ascendancy of Capital*, New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2005, p. 11.

¹⁵ As Ellen Meiksins Wood points out, "There are serious problems...involved with lumping together a very wide variety of writers in the category "Eurocentrism," as if they were all centered on Europe in the same way, and as if they

least downplays, many of the most important observations of world-systems analysis regarding the connection between Europe's rise and European imperialism and colonialism. This in particular is a most unfortunate approach, as it serves to white-wash some truly historic crimes committed by Europe against global humanity.¹⁶

While Frank is right that Wallerstein in his *The Modern World-System* fails to examine or explicitly acknowledge the continued strength and vitality of Asian economies relative to Europe right up to the nineteenth century, it is not fair to claim or even imply that Wallerstein and world-systems analysts denied the existence of capitalists, capitalist firms and vigorous commercial societies in Asia during Europe's ascent. As the intellectual father of world-systems analysis, Fernand Braudel, observed in the third volume of his *Civilization and Capitalism*:

Everywhere from Egypt to Japan, we shall find genuine capitalists, wholesalers, the rentiers of trade, and their thousands of auxiliaries – the commission agents, brokers, money-changers and bankers. As for the techniques, possibilities or guarantees of exchange, any of these groups of merchants would stand comparison with its western equivalents. Both inside and outside India, Tamil, Bengali and Gujerati merchants formed close-knit partnerships with business and contracts passing in turn from one group to another, just as they might in Europe from the Florentine to the Lucchese, the Genoese, the South Germans or the English.¹⁷

all shared the same contempt for non-Europeans.” E.M. Wood, *The Origins of Capital: A Longer View*, London and New York: Verso, 2002, p. 11.

¹⁶ For a fairly grim account of these crimes, see Bagchi, *Perilous Passage*, pp. 195-207, pp. 249-64, but also Mike Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Nino Famines and the Making of the Third World*, London and New York: Verso, 2001.

¹⁷ Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century, vol. I: The Perspective of the World*, New York: Harper and Row, 1984, p. 486 quoted in Arrighi et al, “Historical Capitalism, East and West” in Giovanni Arrighi et al, *The Resurgence of East Asia: 500, 150 and 50 Year Perspectives*, New York: Routledge, 2003, p. 276.

Braudel stresses, however, that the existence of capitalists and capitalist organizations *does not* a capitalist system make. According to Braudel:

Capitalism only triumphs when it becomes identified with the state, *when it is the state*. In its first great phase, that of the Italian city-states of Venice, Genoa, and Florence, power lay in the hands of the moneyed elite. In seventeenth-century Holland the aristocracy of the Regents governed for the benefit and even according to the directives of the businessmen, merchants, and money-lenders. Likewise, in England the Glorious Revolution of 1688 marked the accession of business similar to that in Holland.¹⁸

The preeminent China historian, R. Bin Wong, sees much wisdom in making the distinction between market economy and capitalism in the way that Braudel does. Pointing out that “institutions matter,” Wong remarks that “China certainly had market institutions, but it did not have some of the organizational forms and financial institutions of early modern Europe that promoted the creation of commercial capitalism.”¹⁹ Wong notes that this is partly due to the fact that Chinese state *was* a relatively wealthy and stable entity, as opposed to the poorer, eternally warring European states who constantly tapped European commercial wealth to expand their base of revenue. As Wong explains, the late imperial Chinese state, on the other hand, had less reason “to imagine new forms of finance, huge merchant loans, and the concept of public as well as private debt”,

¹⁸ Fernand Braudel, *Afterthoughts on Material Civilization and Capitalism*, Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1977, p. 64-65 quoted in Arrighi et al, ed., *The Resurgence*, p. 277.

¹⁹ R. bin Wong, *China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1997, p. 51.

because they did not depend on merchant wealth to support the state.²⁰ Just as significant though, “they also feared the potentially disruptive consequences of both concentrated wealth and the pursuit of such wealth.”²¹ R. bin Wong points out that ultimately there is a strong political factor involved in capitalism that is not present in the ordinary market economy. To quote him at length:

I argue for a crucial political component to my distinction between market economy and commercial capitalism, based on Fernand Braudel’s discussion of economic behavior, actors and institutions. Market exchange among many buyers and sellers at prices determined by supply and demand conditions is economically and socially very different from the transactions masterminded by a small number of very rich merchants who can set the terms of exchange with producers and consumers to make large profits, often minimizing competition through monopoly and force. European governments created the conditions for commercial capitalism both within Europe and across the globe. The Chinese state, in contrast, had no incentive to promote any sort of capitalism. This statement is different from the common complaint that the Chinese state somehow blocked market activities and commerce. The Chinese state, I argue, supported a market economy in an agrarian society but did not promote much commercial capitalism, excepting those merchants engaged in monopolies for salt, and foreign trade. Chinese officials created conditions for the formation of considerable merchant wealth either when they needed to tap merchant wealth for resources, as with the salt monopoly or when they were controlling foreign access to China. In general, Chinese rulers had no reason to imagine, let alone promote, the mercantilist policies invented by European rulers.²²

The renowned Indian developmental and political economist Amiya Kumar Bagchi in his recent book *Perilous Passage* has argued alongside Frank that Mughal India, and even its many successor kingdoms and principalities, remained rather vibrant

²⁰ Wong, *China Transformed*, p. 146.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., pp. 146-147.

commercial lands with relatively high standards of living and economic growth right up to middle of the eighteenth century. That process was only interrupted when the British began to systematically conquer it.²³ Nevertheless, Bagchi agrees with R. bin Wong that India was not capitalist. Like Wong, he finds Braudel's "distinction between 'commercial capitalism'...and 'market economy'... useful to help understand the roots of the great divergence...between India and Europe from the late eighteenth century."²⁴ Moreover, in his introduction to a collection of articles on finance and credit in India since early medieval times published by the Indian History Congress, Bagchi likewise emphasizes that the system of finance in India, despite its amazing sophistication, did not function or follow the trajectory of similar institutions in Europe. In fact, he argues that the lack of a public credit system, which he defines as "a system under which the state borrows money regularly from lenders, many or even all of whom are anonymous, and regularly services that debt according to the contract made at the time the borrowing takes place", was a major reason that absolutist states like Mughal India proved to be powerless against the onslaught of the capitalist states enjoying just such a system.²⁵ Bagchi stresses that a public credit system "requires the state to be a constitutional authority which is answerable to an assembly of common people, aristocrats or moneyed oligarchs," and

²³ Bagchi, *Perilous Passage*, pp. 145-166.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

²⁵ Amiya Kumar Bagchi, ed., *Money & Credit in Indian History: From Medieval Times*, New Delhi: Tulika Books, 2002, p. xv.

therefore it is no accident that such a system arose in the Italian city-states like Genoa, Florence and Venice around the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.²⁶ This system was then successfully replicated by the Dutch and later the English. Conversely, the Mughal state managed to keep the financiers subordinated to the ruling power as long as central authority remained concentrated and thus “did not have to worry about the way the loyalties of those financiers might waver in moments of crisis.”²⁷ The situation changed dramatically, though, once central authority disintegrated after 1712, and the successor states began competing and fighting with one another. Bagchi observes:

The states had to draw increasingly on the credit extended by particular bankers or sets of bankers for paying their way, especially in situations of war. The European chartered companies used that opportunity to extend their power and territory...As the Indian financiers came gradually to perceive that the naval and military organizations of the Europeans...were superior to those of the local rulers, their loyalty shifted: they thought that their future would be better protected if they sided with the victor...The Indian princes opposing the European marauders not only failed to match the European technology of warfare on the sea and land, they could not create a structure that would depend on the credit of a mass of loyal subjects rather than that of a small group of financiers whose loyalty would shift as they saw the fortunes of their erstwhile patrons seriously threatened, or would actively conspire...against their patrons. Thus would the house of Jagatseth conspire against Siraj-ud-daula and later Mir Kashim in Bengal, and thus would the firm of Nathji Arjunji Travadi side with the British in western India and help them against the Marathas. Indeed, during the Anglo-Maratha wars from the late eighteenth century, the British repeatedly utilized the services of not only the local bankers but also those of the bankers of Banaras for raising funds and transferring subsidies from their richest prize till that date, namely the Presidency of Bengal.²⁸

²⁶ Ibid., pp. xv-xvi.

²⁷ Ibid., p. xvi.

²⁸ Ibid., pp. xvii-xviii.

Given these facts, it does not seem Eurocentric that world-systems analysts have claimed that a capitalist system arose in the European regional system, whereas the Asian regional systems were characterized by a market economy, albeit with the presence of advanced capitalist institutions. One is willing to give Frank the benefit of the doubt and simply interpret his book as an impassioned protest against the triumphalism and European ethnocentrism that has undoubtedly characterized the social sciences for all these years. But his approach does not seem to escape the Eurocentric assumptions he so strenuously decries. To be sure, it is not surprising that non-Western scholars or certain Western scholars studying China and India have become so insistent on claiming capitalism for their respective countries. World-systems analysts have reasonably argued that this in itself is a product of Eurocentrism. In the Eurocentric social sciences, capitalism – usually defined obscurely in terms of market institutions or wage-labor – has been proclaimed to be the very essence of modernity, progress, civilization, sophistication and so on. Having been at the sharp end of that stick of “progress,” one would think that most non-Europeans would be skeptical of such claims. But so powerful is the “all-embracing epochal Weltanschauung” of Eurocentrism that even the most critical often fail to escape it, Andre Gunder Frank included. On this subject Wallerstein himself notes appropriately:

I think we have to start by questioning the assumption that what Europe did was a positive achievement. I think we need to engage ourselves in making a careful balance-sheet of what has been accomplished by capitalist civilization during its

historical life, and assess whether the pluses are indeed greater than the minuses...My own balance-sheet is negative overall, and therefore I do not consider the capitalist system to have been evidence of human progress. Rather, I consider it to have been the consequence of the breakdown in the historic barriers against this particular version of an exploitative system. I consider that the fact that China, India, the Arab world and other regions did not go forward to capitalism is evidence that they were – to their credit – better immunized against the toxin. To turn their credit into something which they must explain away is to me the quintessential form of Eurocentrism.²⁹

This analogy of capitalism as toxin or virus is likewise utilized by Giovanni Arrighi, Po-Keung Hui, Ho-fung Hung and Mark Selden in their essay “Historical Capitalism, East and West” to explain the development of capitalism in the European regional system versus the East Asian one:

In pinning down the difference between a regional system that was and one that was not becoming capitalist, it may be useful to conceive of the transformation as an epidemic, or more precisely, a “rash of epidemics”. In the European system the capitalist virus spread rapidly from its original focus in tiny city-states and expatriate business networks to larger and ever more powerful territorial states. These more powerful states “internalized” capitalism by following in the footsteps of the city-states in seeking to promote and reap the profits of long distance trade, and by encouraging their own nationals to undertake activities previously monopolized by foreigners organized in transnational business networks. As a result, capitalism as a mode of accumulation and rule turned from an interstitial into a dominant property of the system.³⁰

In East Asia, on the other hand, capitalism never became identified with the more powerful states of that regional system. The capitalist “virus” existed there to be sure, but

²⁹ Immanuel Wallerstein, “Eurocentrism and its Avatars: The Dilemmas of Social Science,” *New Left Review*, I, 226 (Nov.-Dec. 1997), pp. 104-5. For a fuller reply to the anti-Eurocentrics, see his essay “The West, Capitalism, and the Modern World-System,” *Review*, xv, 4 (Fall 1992), pp. 561-619.

³⁰ Arrighi et al, “Historical Capitalism,” p. 278.

always at the margins, and the “immune system”, so to speak, remained strong enough to prevent any rash of epidemics. Capitalism in East Asia, they write:

Became embodied ever more exclusively in the Overseas Chinese diaspora and was marginalized in Southern Chinese coastal areas, with the result that its influence on the region’s main seats of power remained insignificant, despite its importance in linking the Chinese coast to Southeast Asia. *At the level of the system*, that is, capitalism was “externalized” in the sense that it developed most fully on the outer rims rather than at the center of the region’s most powerful states.³¹

Extremely important to understanding this new *capitalist* world-economy was its structure, which involves the creation of peripheries that specialize in low value-added production processes so that the core areas could involve themselves with high-value added production processes. Asia historian Kenneth Pomeranz has acknowledged that this was a unique and critical feature of the European regional system that simply was not an observable pattern within the Asian one.³² It was this difference, Pomeranz writes, that “allowed European technology and investment to develop in labor-saving, land and energy-gobbling directions at the very moment when the intensification of resource pressures previously shared by all core regions were forcing East Asian development

³¹ Ibid. They list three possible exceptions, namely Southeast Asia after the Ming’s disengagement from the area; Japan in the Ashikaga period (1368-1573); and the Zheng commercial empire that formed between the transition from the Ming to the Qing. Ibid, p. 278-279. Wong, however, is skeptical that even these formations were truly capitalist. See R. bin Wong, “The Search for European Differences and Domination in the Early Modern World: A View from Asia,” *The American Historical Review* 107, 2 (Apr. 2002), pp. 447-469.

³² Indeed, Wong notes that in the Chinese tribute-trade system the “periphery” almost always benefited more than China itself! According to him, “Political expansion to incorporate new frontiers committed the government to a shift of resources to the periphery, not extraction from them.” See Wong, *China Transformed*, p. 148. Arrighi et al also make a revealing comparison between China’s tribute relationship with its peripheries and Britain’s tribute relationship with India. See Arrighi et al, “Historical Capitalism,” p. 291.

along ever more resource-saving, labor absorbing paths.”³³ Bagchi argues, however, that the importance of colonies to Europe’s development and the great divergence was more than just that though. Summing up his explanation for the rise of Europe, Bagchi writes:

The armed competition between European states not only heightened the striking power of victorious states but also prepared the ground for the rise of large plantations and factories where labor was subjected to the same kind of discipline as on a parade ground or a naval vessel. The conquest of the Americas by the Spaniards and the Portuguese, with the help of superior military technology and the ideology of a superior race, and the subsequent establishment of plantations of sugarcane, cotton, and tobacco with slave labor proved critical in the progress of European capitalism. The flow of precious metals, especially silver, extracted from American mines was essential in settling western Europe’s accounts with the Baltic region, Asia, and much more importantly, the Levant; control of this flow was also critical for expanding the trade of the leading contenders for European hegemony. And, of course, millions of hapless Africans captured in not-so-peaceful trade and raids supplied the necessary muscle power for running the plantations whose produce augmented European diets.³⁴

The colonies also provided an exhaust valve for northern Europe’s excess population.

According to Bagchi:

There was a massive migration of Europeans, to the New World and Australasia, during what has been styled as the long nineteenth century. Massey has argued that “overseas migration played a vital and generally unrecognized role in the process of European economic development” and was a major factor in facilitating the transformation of European countries “from rural peasant societies to modern industrial powers.” As population growth accelerated in Europe, and

³³ Kenneth Pomeranz, “Women’s Work, Family, and Economic Development in Europe and East Asia: Long Term Trajectories and Contemporary Comparisons,” in Arrighi et al, *“The Resurgence”*, pp. 126-127; but see also Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: Europe, China and the Making of the Modern World Economy*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 19-22. The orthodox Marxist historian, Robert Brenner, still contends that the answer to the origins of divergence lay in the dynamics of English agriculture. See his rebuttal to Pomeranz in Robert Brenner and Christopher Isett, “England’s Divergence from China’s Yangzi Delta: Property Relations, Microeconomics, and Patterns of Development”, *The Journal of Asian Studies* 61, 2 (May, 2002), pp. 609-662.

³⁴ Bagchi, *Perilous Passage*, p. 175.

increasing use of nonlabor inputs raised per capita productivity in agriculture, peasants migrated to manufacturing towns and cities, “which expanded to produce a widening array of goods for consumption. Higher wages and more people earning those wages increased aggregate demand, leading to more employment and additional demand.”³⁵

Once those European settler colonies were established, surplus extraction in the non-European colonies was increasingly stepped up to provide more capital for investment in the former.³⁶

It is this last point about the creation of peripheries to service the core that will be the focus of this paper. The Central Asian khanates’ subjugation to the Russian Empire and the changes it underwent thereafter corresponded rather closely to events in other lands that were gradually incorporated into the periphery of the capitalist world-system before them. India, the Ottoman Empire and even Russia itself had all recently been forced down this path by European core states – France and Britain in particular. Central Asia’s incorporation, however, was not without its own peculiarities, since the process was initiated by and mediated through Russia, which was something of a semiperipheral state at that point in time. In any event, it will be useful to review now the processes of incorporation.

³⁵ Ibid, pp. 115-116.

³⁶ Bagchi notes that surplus extracted from India played a crucial role in settling British accounts with the U.S. and provided much of the capital for its investments in other settler colonies. Ibid, pp. 229-248.

Wallerstein's Theory of Incorporation

To speak of 'incorporation' in essence means that at least some significant production processes in a specific geographic location become integral to various links of the commodity chains that comprise the ongoing divisions of labor of the capitalist world-system. A production process is said to be integrated when its production is responding to some degree to the ever-changing "market conditions" of this world-economy and is the result of the efforts of those who control these production processes to maximize the accumulation of capital within this "market". In this regard, the processes of incorporation and then peripheralization invariably lead to the creation of larger decision making units that alter production decisions in light of what they believe to be altered conditions in some market.³⁷

There are certain stipulations regarding how and where these larger decision-making units are created and then operate. Firstly, they may occur either at the site of direct production (for example, by creating a plantation) or at a site of mercantile collection of production, but for the latter case to work, the merchant has to have some mechanism of controlling the activities of multiple petty producers, like debt obligations or other debt peonage schemes. Secondly, the decision to ramp up or reduce production must allow for this larger decision-making unit to acquire and, if necessary, rid itself of

³⁷ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System III: The Second Great Era of Expansion of the Capitalist World Economy, 1730-1840s* (Henceforth: *MWS III*), New York: Academic Press, 1989, pp. 130-131.

responsibility for the inputs of the production process, such as machines, materials, capital and human labor. Crucially, labor must be “coercible” in some way. Thirdly, the likelihood that those who control production processes will respond to the new market conditions is higher if the political institutions that have relevant power and authority, permit, abet and subsidize such responses. Lastly, responses require an institutional infrastructure of reasonable security and appropriate currency arrangements.³⁸

In addition to the creation of these larger (economic) decision-making units, a new pattern of imports and exports is detectable, whereby peripheral raw materials are exchanged against core manufactures. For an incorporating zone to be able to concentrate on production of raw materials for export, however, production often needs to change in two directions. First and foremost is the creation or substantial expansion of cash crop exports intended for sale on the market of the capitalist world-economy. The other change is the reduction or elimination of local manufacturing activities.³⁹

The expansion of the cash crop economy inevitably involves a rather drastic spatial reordering within the country affected. As the percentage of land area specialized in growing specific crops for “export” becomes ever greater, other land units begin to specialize in growing food for sale to workers on the first set of land units. In response to these developments, still other lands might begin to specialize in exporting people to

³⁸ Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 131.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

labor on both the cash-crop lands and the food-crop lands.⁴⁰ With the growing specialization in cash crops, exports to the core tend initially to increase at a pace that outstrips that of imports, but, significantly, the balance of payments is no longer being settled by means of bullion exports from the core, and, instead, raw materials are being exchanged for manufactures.

As was mentioned above, a crucial component in fostering a cash crop economy geared towards export for sale in the capitalist world-economy is the ability of the larger economic units to coerce labor. As Wallerstein observes, “for a worker, especially an agricultural worker, involvement in cash-crop production, particularly but not only within plantation-like structures, offered little intrinsic attraction, since it inevitably reduced the time for and physical availability of all sorts of subsistence practices which offered guarantees of survival and even of relative well-being.”⁴¹ That is why the laborers had to be coerced directly or indirectly to work in the appropriate places at the appropriate rhythm.

Coercion was accomplished in various ways. Corvee labor on plantations or plantation-like land concentrations was common in terms of cash crop production, but more and more frequently coercion was being accomplished indirectly through the establishment of large-scale merchant bottlenecks that provided “advances” to petty

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 138. Wallerstein notes “The emergence of a three-tiered spatial specialization within a zone – “export” cash crops, “local market” food crops, and “crops” of migrant workers – has been a telltale sign of incorporation of an erstwhile external arena into the ongoing divisioning of labor of the capitalist world-economy.”

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 157.

producers.⁴² Simply put, payments were made in advance for supplies to be delivered in the future, which tended to prevent sale on an open market. This enabled merchants rather than producers to decide the optimum time for world resale, and “since the money lent tended to be expended by the time of delivery of the goods, if not overspent, the producer was always tempted to perpetuate the agreement.”⁴³ This placed the producer in a state of debt peonage, which proved to be highly effective in changing the cultivating behavior of peasants in various lands all over the world.⁴⁴ This was the point though, since the only way the large-scale merchant could rapidly alter patterns of production in accordance to the whims of the world market in a manner profitable to him was through the instrument of debt bondage.

⁴² Wallerstein, *MWS III*, pp. 152-153.

⁴³ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, (Henceforth *MWS I*) New York: Academic Press, p. 122.

⁴⁴ In India an exploitative “putting-out” system based on contracts was also used for inducing production of certain cash crops like indigo. It was also present in the craft industry. See Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 153, p. 159. Coerced production through debt bondage became the norm for cotton production after the American Civil War. See Sven Beckert, “Emancipation and Empire: Reconstructing the Worldwide Web of Cotton Production in the Age of the American Civil War,” *The American Historical Review* 109, 5 (December), 2004.

The Case of India

These developments were observable in several regions and countries of the world beginning roughly in the 1750s. One of the most prominent examples is perhaps India, which is convenient in this case given Morrison's comparison between British India and Russian Turkestan. Britain was initially able to reverse the bullion flow by the aid of tax revenues collected through the Bengal Presidency, but also through the process of 'hypothecation', beginning in the mid-1760s, whereby "the East India Company sold bills in London on the Indian Presidencies, and bought bills in India upon England."⁴⁵ Running parallel to this process of de facto plunder was the establishment of large economic decision-making units, such as plantations – especially for indigo – and large-scale merchant bottlenecks granting credit to small-scale producers on usurious terms.⁴⁶

Accompanying the establishment of these units specializing in cash crop production was the evolution of two systems of land tenure under the Permanent Settlement of 1793: *zamindari* and *ryotwari*. The former was a novel reworking of an

⁴⁵ Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 139. Wallerstein explains: "The Indian goods exported through the Company to English mercantile houses were "hypothecated" as collateral security for the Company's loans in England with which the Company bought the British exports to India. The Company meanwhile advanced money to sellers of goods in India, which loans were repaid with goods serving as Indian exports to Britain. Bullion flows were in such cases not needed, and the Company received in addition the shipping profit plus any differential on higher interest rates on its Indian loans than on its London borrowings."

⁴⁶ According to Asiya Saddiqi, the credit loaned by the latter was rapidly called in "at the earliest sign of a recession", which precipitated land confiscation and further contributed to the concentration of land holdings. Saddiqi, Asiya. *Agrarian Change in a North Indian State: Uttar Pradesh, 1819-1833*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973, p. 151 quoted in Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 153.

existing system whereby the *ryots*, or peasants, would be tenants to the *zamindars*, except that the *zamindars* would now have more definitive quiritary rights, and would be able to raise rents on the former and even evict them. Conversely, under the *ryotwari* system the *zamindar* was cut out of the picture, and the peasant was nominally the owner of the land.⁴⁷ While the potential for exploitation in the *zamindari* system might be more obvious, the seemingly freer, more ‘progressive’ *ryotwari* system was apparently no better for small-scale producers. As regards the development of this system in indigo production, Narendra Sinha observes:

Even in the best of seasons cultivation of indigo barely paid at the rate which indigo planters would allow...Advances were forced upon the *ryots* [by the indigo planters] and the *ryots* could not furnish the quota of land demanded for indigo cultivation...It would not be wrong to describe the system of indigo cultivation as indigo slavery.⁴⁸

Similarly, as raw cotton was produced more and more for export, there came to be “an increasing grip of usury and trading capital over production...[as the] real burdens of rent and interest became...heavier.”⁴⁹ By 1848, F.W. Prideux could announce to the House of

⁴⁷ On the Permanent Settlement and the *zamindari* system, see Bagchi, *Perilous Passage*, p. 257. On the *ryotwari* system, see Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 159.

⁴⁸ Sinha, Narendra Krishna. *The Economic History of Bengal, III: 1793-1848*. Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 1970, p. 339 quoted in Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 159.

⁴⁹ Guha, Amalendu. “Raw Cotton of Western India: Output, Transport, and Marketing, 1750-1850”, *Indian Economic and Social History Review* IX, 18, p.28 quoted in Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 153.

Commons Select Committee that “nothing is cultivated in India without advances – sugar, indigo, and everything which is cultivated to be exported from that country.”⁵⁰

Given these events, it should not be surprising that by the first half of the nineteenth century Indian exports were dominated by four raw materials, which then accounted for as much as 60 percent of all goods exported: indigo, raw silk, opium and cotton.⁵¹ Tellingly enough, as cash-crop production for the world market grew, market-oriented food production expanded alongside it. For instance, in Madras at this time increasing specialization in cash crops like cotton, indigo, pepper and tobacco in one area led to a growing specialization in grain in another one, while yet other areas started to provide indentured servants to work both sets of lands.⁵²

Britain’s ability to initiate a shift in India from export of textiles toward raw materials was only made possible by various political machinations. Before 1800, India was one the world’s greatest producers of textiles. Despite the fact that India’s textile producers did not utilize particularly sophisticated technology, the sheer dexterity of its cotton weavers prevented the British from establishing market supremacy in that

⁵⁰ British Parliamentary Papers, Reports from Committees. (1848a). IX. *Report from the Select Committee n the Growth of Cotton in India*, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on July 17, p. 21 quoted in Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p.154.

⁵¹ Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 139. Increased production in all four had been contrived by the British, which promoted them largely in reaction to various shifts in production in the world-economy, such as the American Revolution (indigo) and the Napoleonic Wars (cotton and silk).The only exception is opium, which was grown simply to penetrate the Chinese market. *Ibid.*, p. 140.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 148. See also, Bagchi, *Perilous Passage*, pp. 175-176; and Michael Perelman, *Farming for Profit in a Hungary World: Capital and the Crisis in Agriculture*, Montclair, New Jersey: Allanheld, Osmun & Co. Publishers, Inc., 1977, pp. 109-111.

country.⁵³ For this reason, the British resorted to tariffs and other unfair trade practices.

As Bagchi points out,

The British government severely restricted the import of Indian cotton cloth from 1701 – long before they conquered any part of Indian territory. It kept those restrictions in place after the EIC had conquered most of India. Moreover, the duties on imports of textiles into Britain for home consumption were increased to prohibitive levels by the end of the eighteenth century. In fact, as was pointed out by the British administrators and traders themselves, under British rule Indian textiles suffered reverse discrimination: they paid higher duties than English imports. This was happening at a time when continental European states and the United States took measures to protect their nascent cotton mills against imports of British textiles.⁵⁴

It is important to note that India's decline in manufacturing under British rule was no accident of fate, as George G. de H. Lampert, chairman of Britain's East India and China Association, made clear in a testimony to the House of Commons in 1840. Lampert stated rather bluntly:

⁵³ Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 148. This same issue would come up in regard to China. Marx himself remarked on the amazing vitality of traditional society when landholdings and social relations are not disturbed by colonial restructuring. In a December 3, 1859 article for the *New York Daily Tribune*, Marx recounts a story about how British textile manufacturers dispatched an agent to survey Chinese manufactures and determine the viability of a market for their goods there. To their dismay, the agent found that they could never compete with the peasant manufactures. Marx comments:

Whence this inability in the most advanced factory system of the world to undersell cloth woven by hand in the most primitive looms? The combination we have already pointed to, of minute agriculture with domestic industry, solves the riddle...It is this same combination of husbandry with manufacturing industry, which, for a long time, withstood, and still checks, the export of British wares to East India; but there that combination was based upon a peculiar constitution of the landed property which the British, in their position as the supreme landlords of the country, had it in their power to undermine, and thus forcibly convert part of the Hindu self-sustaining communities into mere farms, producing opium, cotton, indigo, hemp, and other raw materials, in exchange, for British stuff. In China the English have not yet wielded this power, nor are they likely ever to do so.

See Marx, Karl, "Trade with China," *New York Tribune*, December 3, 1859; reprinted in Shlomo Avineri, ed., *Karl Marx on Colonialism and Modernization*, Garden City: Double Day Books, 1969, pp. 370-375.

⁵⁴ Bagchi, *Perilous Passage*, p. 176. He adds that "The British in India systematically suppressed Asian traders competing with them and coerced handloom weavers to supply goods at prices fixed by them, and the British Parliament legislated to end the import of higher-value Indian textiles." Ibid., p. 177. Bagchi provides a more in-depth discussion of deindustrialization in India under British rule on pp. 152-154.

This company has, in various ways, encouraged and assisted by our great manufacturing ingenuity and skill, succeeded in converting India from a manufacturing country into a country exporting raw produce.”⁵⁵

As a result of these conscious efforts on the part of Britain, Indian industrial output to total world output of manufacturing came down from 24.5 percent in 1750 to 2.8 percent in 1880 and 1.4 percent in 1913.⁵⁶

India was not an isolated example of this phenomenon. Similar developments occurred in West Africa, the Ottoman Empire and Russia.⁵⁷ What is important to note, however, is that the latter two, in contrast with India, were not directly colonized by Britain or any other European power.⁵⁸ While the experiences of the Ottoman Empire and West Africa during this period are no less relevant, Russia’s incorporation will be of greater interest, since it is through Russia that Central Asia would likewise be incorporated into the world-system.

⁵⁵ Except, as discussed above, it was not so much their ingenuity and skill, but their political machinations. Quote from British Parliamentary Papers. Reports from Committees. (1840b). VII. *Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords appointed to consider the petition of the East India Company for Relief*, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on June 4, p. 24 quoted in Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 150.

⁵⁶ Bagchi, *Perilous Passage*, p. 152. See also Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 149.

⁵⁷ See Wallerstein, *MWS III*, pp. 129-189 for his side-by-side analysis of these four zones’ incorporation.

⁵⁸ Wallerstein contends that initial contact between the modern world-system and states located in what he terms ‘the external arena’ can actually lead to a strengthening of the state-machinery of the latter as it tries to maintain a relationship of equal exchange between the two. When, however, the increased strength of state machinery in the external arena proved to be so great that it was an outright barrier to incorporation, “power-holders in the European world-economy [would be moved] to invest in the relationship still more force in order to break down this ‘monopolistic’ barrier...” Ibid., p. 134.

Russia Becomes a Semiperipheral State

The date of Russia's incorporation into the modern world-system is a matter of controversy amongst world-systems analysts. Some see this process as occurring in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, whereas Wallerstein argues that Russia's incorporation was not fully evident until the 1750s.⁵⁹ Since the date of Russia's incorporation into the world-system – whether before or after 1750 – does not substantively impact on the topic of Russia's conquest of Central Asia and colonization of Turkestan, this paper will assume the dating suggested by Wallerstein.

From 1750 to 1850 there was a noticeable uptick in trade between Russia and Europe, although the substance of Russian exports changed rather drastically during those years. Export of manufactures declined during this period, whereas exports of raw materials like timber, hemp and flax – vital for Britain's manufacturing industry – grew apace.⁶⁰ An important factor in this process was the collapse of the Russian iron industry at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when Britain began to develop new coke smelting technology.⁶¹ Iron was then replaced by wheat, the sowing and production of

⁵⁹ For arguments on an earlier date of incorporation, see Boris Kagarlitskii, *Periferiinaia Imperiia: Rossiia i mirosistema*, Moscow: Ultra.Kultura, 2004, pp. 125-158.; and Hans-Heinrich Nolte, "The Position of Eastern Europe in the International System in Early Modern Times," *Review* 5, 1982, pp. 25-84. Kagarlitskii and Nolte see Russia's relation to Europe as already being virtually indistinguishable from that of eastern Europe's beginning in the sixteenth century. For Wallerstein's opposing view, see Wallerstein, *MWS I*, pp. 301-324.

⁶⁰ Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 141; Kagarlitskii, *Periferiinaia Imperiia*, pp. 291-292.

⁶¹ By the mid-nineteenth century, Russia actually began to import cast iron from Britain. Kagarlitskii, *Periferiinaia Imperiia*, p. 290. It is notable that imports of serf-produced Russian iron likely played a major part in the British

which came to be promoted more and more by the nobility as world prices rose at that time.⁶² The development of both these exports, however, and their competitiveness on the world market, had been made possible by the Russian state's, and by extension the Russian nobility's, increased coercion of peasant labor.

While the Russian peasantry had continually seen its rights limited by the state since the second half of the fifteenth century, it was under the reigns of Peter I (1682-1725) and later Catherine II (1762-1796) that Russian serfdom was intensified in a way that would ensure maximum exploitation of the peasant and make it "increasingly to resemble chattel slavery."⁶³ For instance, a 1721 law permitting factory owners to buy whole villages of serfs (who were then known as "possessional serfs" and were attached to a factory, although not to its owner) was a crucial factor in developing Russia's iron industry in the eighteenth century, whereas Catherine II's comprehensive land survey led

industrial revolution, which in turn allowed for such innovations in coke smelting. As the Soviet historian S.G. Strumilin observed, "Russian metallurgy, which had fed its iron to British machine-building and quickened the pace of the industrial revolution in Britain, felt the consequences of this revolution in especially painful fashion." Strumilin, S.G. *Izbrannye proizvedeniia: Istoriia chernoi metallurgii v SSSR*. Moscow: Nauka, 1967, p. 174 quoted in Kagarlitskii, *Periferiinaia Imperiia*, p. 289.

⁶² Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 142.

⁶³ Peter Kolchin, *Unfree Labor: American Slavery and Russian Serfdom*, Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1987. Quote on p.2, but see also pp. 41-43. See also Kagarlitskii, *Periferiinaia Imperiia*, pp. 183-208, pp. 239-265; Wallerstein, *MWS III*, pp. 162-163. Kolchin argues that the almost simultaneous advent of serfdom in Russia and slavery in the Americas in the sixteenth century was no accident, but was a response to certain world processes, which gives credence to Kagarlitskii's view that incorporation began much earlier.

to a greater consolidation of land holdings and “ratified the spoliation of free peasants and petty serf owners.”⁶⁴

The Russian aristocracy played an especially important role in transforming agricultural production in that country.⁶⁵ Since a considerable amount of land was already concentrated in the Russian nobility’s hands, the important change occurring during Russia’s incorporation was that economic decision-making itself became more concentrated, which allowed cash crop production to be duly intensified. The seigniors became the chief suppliers of grain to the market, and in the late eighteenth century the rural economy began to increasingly assume a mercantile quality. This development in turn was marked by a shift from *obrok*, which was a payment in kind or money, to *barshchina*, a form of corvée.⁶⁶ The increase in *barshchina* allowed for an expansion of estate lands at the expense of peasant plots, since estate lands were “more flexible and more capable of reaping short-term gains from the changing market situation.”⁶⁷ This

⁶⁴ Raeff, Marc. “Pugachev’s Rebellion,” in R. Forster & J.P. Greene, eds. *Preconditions of Revolution in Early Modern Europe*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1975, p. 168 quoted in Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 162. Notably, Catherine II also signed the Anglo-Russian Commercial Treaty of 1766, which provided low duties on raw material exports – a development that proved most favorable to Britain. Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 186.

⁶⁵ The nobility also played a role in the development of industry. Kagarlitskii writes, “Given the excessive masses of peasants under the control of the landowners, the latter were afforded the chance of trying their hand at industry. It was precisely the serf-holding estate owners, who possessed both financial resources and surplus labor that had the opportunity to set up relatively advanced productive enterprises on their lands. The construction of factories in Russia was not so much an affair of the bourgeoisie as it was of the large landowners.” Kagarlitskii, *Periferiinaia Imperiia*, p. 256.

⁶⁶ Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 155; Kolchin, *Unfree Labor*, p. 3, pp. 22-23.

⁶⁷ Kahan, Arcadius, “The Costs of ‘Westernization’ in Russia: The Gentry and the Economy in the Eighteenth Century,” *Slavic Review* 25, 1, (Mar., 1966), p. 54, quoted in Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 161. Despite everything, it was useful to still maintain *obrok*, since the combination of *barshchina-obrok* guaranteed for the lord an estate labor supply as well as some liquid income from *obrok* during poor harvest years.

commercialization of the serf estate was what allowed Russia to become what Kagarlitskii terms “the breadbasket of Europe” in the nineteenth century.⁶⁸

Despite these telltale signs of incorporation Russia in the nineteenth century was still able to maintain some degree of industrial development. According to Kagarlitskii, Napoleon’s attempted blockade of Britain under the Continental System had the effect of creating some breathing room for Russian industry, particularly the textile industry. For instance, according to E.Y. Liusternik, if in 1775 there were only 16 textile enterprises in Russia, by 1800 there were 240 and by 1814 there were 424.⁶⁹ The resumption of trade, however, between Britain and Russia after the disintegration of the Continental System took its toll on these infant industries.⁷⁰ Nevertheless, after the 1830s Russia was able to maintain an internal market for its textile industry through relatively high tariffs and the import of technology.⁷¹ In light of this, Wallerstein concludes:

This limited ability to resist total deindustrialization, to which the continued relative strength of the Russian army was not an insignificant contributing factor, explains in part their ability to play a different role in the world-economy at the beginning of the twentieth century from either India or Turkey.⁷²

⁶⁸ Kagarlitskii, *Periferiinaia Imperiia*, pp. 267-302.

⁶⁹ E.Y. Liusternik, *Russko-indiyskiye ekonomicheskie, nauchnye i kul’turnye svyazi v XIX veke*, Moscow: Nauka, 1966, p. 42, n. 1.

⁷⁰ Kagarlitskii, *Periferiinaia Imperiia*, p. 290. Kagarlitskii writes, “The [blockade’s] positive effects were felt right up to 1819, when a new customs tariff again provided complete freedom of trade in Russia for British importers. Russian merchants told one another that ‘in London there was much celebrating over this development’. Unable to withstand British competition, numerous Russian factories fell derelict.” Ibid., p. 276.

⁷¹ They were also able to maintain a beet sugar refining industry. See Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 152. The British worked tirelessly to get these tariffs removed or dramatically lowered throughout the 1840s, but were never really satisfied by the various concessions made. See Kagarlitskii, *Periferiinaia Imperiia*, pp. 298-299.

⁷² Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 152.

For this reason, Wallerstein refers to Russia as a “semiperipheral” state, since it was involved in both core (textile) and peripheral (grain, flax, etc) production processes. This is also what made Russia such a peculiar state in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, since it at once exhibited features of a industrial capitalist polity, yet retained many characteristics of a traditional, patriarchal autocracy supported by basically feudal landlords. This contradiction would turn out to be an important factor in how the Russian Empire interacted with its new colonial space in Turkestan and, in part, explains some of the peculiarities of Russian colonization in comparison with other empires of the time.

Russia Eyes Central Asia

There has been no shortage of controversy regarding the motives behind the Russian conquest of Central Asia. Many Western scholars have been quick over the years to dismiss Soviet historians' claims that the Russian government conquered the region in order to create a captive market for its manufactures and secure a domestic source of cotton for its burgeoning textile industry. Morrison, as mentioned, is no exception. Like many before him, he cites Russian generals' lust for military glory and honors as the real reason for the conquest, thus making the process seem something altogether accidental.⁷³ Although Morrison avers that the conquest of Central Asia was a textbook example of Schumpeter's "atavistic imperialism", and was based on "aggressiveness itself", Russia's plunge into southern Central Asia seemed to have had quite a few economic underpinnings, albeit some more direct than others.⁷⁴ Schumpeter is not irrelevant to this discussion, though, as he actually seemed to capture the spirit of the Russian Empire in an earlier work. To quote him at length:

⁷³ Morrison, *Russian Rule*, pp. 30-36, but see also Seymour Becker, "The Russian Conquest of Central Asia and Kazakhstan: Motives, Methods, Consequences," in Hafeez Malik, ed., *Central Asia: Its Strategic Importance and Future Prospects*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, pp. 21-38. For strong arguments in favor of not rejecting economic motives out of hand, see Scott Levi, "India, Russia and the Eighteenth-Century Transformation of the Central Asian Caravan Trade," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 42, 4 (1999), pp. 532-544; and Dietrich Geyer, *Russian Imperialism: The Interaction of Domestic and Foreign Policy, 1860-1914*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997, pp. 86-100.

⁷⁴ Morrison asserts that the Central Asian case corresponds perfectly to Schumpeter's thesis of "Imperialism as Atavism." Morrison, *Russian Rule*, p. 31.

The king, the court, the army, the church and the bureaucracy lived to an increasing extent on revenue created by the capitalist process, even purely feudal sources of income being swelled in consequence of contemporaneous capitalist developments. To an increasing extent also, domestic and foreign policies and institutional changes were shaped to suit and propel that development. *As far as that goes*, the feudal elements in the structure of the so-called absolute monarchy come in only under the heading of atavisms which in fact is the diagnosis one would adopt at first sight. Looking more closely, however, we realize that those elements meant more than that. The steel frame of that structure still consisted of the human material of feudal society and this material behaved according to precapitalist patterns. It filled the offices of state, officered the army, devised policies – it functioned as a *class dirigente* and, though taking account of bourgeois interests, it took care to distance itself from the bourgeoisie. The centerpiece, the king, was king by the grace of God, and the root of his position was feudal..., however much he availed himself of the economic possibilities offered by capitalism. All this was more than atavism. It was an active symbiosis of two social strata, one of which no doubt supported the other economically but was in turn supported by the other politically.⁷⁵

There is considerable evidence that Russian officials and military officers had an eye to conquering Central Asia for the sake of the economic development of the empire from the very start of the nineteenth century. According to Harvard historian, Sven Beckert:

In Imperial Russia...for nearly half a century before the American Civil War, far-sighted government bureaucrats, along with a group of merchants and manufacturers, had envisioned Transcaucasia and Central Asia as a source of raw cotton for the domestic industry, with the Russian commander-in-chief in the Caucasus, Baron G.V. Rosen, hoping that “there would be our Negroes.”⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1943, p. 136.

⁷⁶ Beckert, “Emancipation and Empire,” p. 1430. Tellingly enough, the British had similar hopes for their Indian subjects regarding production of cotton, with the Manchester Commercial Association’s J.A. Turner testifying to the House of Commons in 1848 that “India, with its cheap labor, will at all times be able to compete with the slave labor of America.” Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 160.

That there was already some interest in Central Asia's cotton producing potential at the turn of the nineteenth century was by no means surprising, since, as mentioned earlier, the number of textile mills in Russia had increased exponentially from 1775 to 1814.⁷⁷ Likewise mentioned above, this growth in the Russian textile industry had been made possible largely by Napoleon's Continental System, as it served to reduce competition from British manufacturers during those years. Although the industry suffered serious setbacks as a result of the Moscow Fire in 1812 and the resumption of a liberalized trade regime with Britain in 1819, efforts were made by the state to protect it after the 1830s. These protectionist trade measures, which were maintained in the face of intense British opposition, are likely a sign that the Russian government viewed this industry as important to its national economic development, but also likely a sign that the industrialists involved in this sector were becoming increasingly influential within the government.⁷⁸

To be sure, expansionist policies in the East were often justified by Russian administrators and provincial governors on the basis of improving conditions for Russian merchants and manufacturers. When the governor of Orenburg, Count V.A. Perovskii,

⁷⁷ According to Michael Thurman, the (less than total) blockade of Britain under the Continental System increased the export of cotton from Central Asia at that time as well. This is likely what caught the attention of Russian textile merchants at that time. See Michael Thurman, "Irrigated Agriculture and Economic Development in the Ferghana Valley under the Qoqand Khanate," Unpublished master's thesis, Bloomington: Indiana University, 1995, p. 42. See also M.K. Rozhkova, *Ekonomicheskaya Politika Tsarskogo Pravitel'stva na Srednyem Vostoke vo Vtoroy Chetverti XIX Veka I Russkaya Burzhuaiziya*, Moscow and Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1949, pp. 22-24.

⁷⁸ This is the case Rozhkova makes. See Rozhkova, *Ekonomicheskaya Politika*, pp. 326-380. See also Scott Levi, *The Indian Diaspora in Central Asia and Its Trade, 1550-1900*, Boston: Brill, 2002, p. 243.

undertook a full-scale military expedition against the Khivan khanate in 1839, one of his primary objectives was to obtain navigation rights up the Amu Darya for Russian vessels, in light of the “the growing trade potentialities of the Russian business and manufacturing community.”⁷⁹ Although Perovskiĭ was unsuccessful in that initial mission, he persisted in these efforts, eventually establishing the Syr Darya line in 1847-50 and seizing Ak Mechet from Kokand in 1853. While the Crimean War did produce a lull in active eastern expansion, the disastrous results of the conflict for Russia made an aggressive “Asian policy” all the more attractive.⁸⁰ Therefore, after the war, three Asian missions were undertaken between 1857 and 1859, the most instructive of which was Count N.P. Ignatiev’s embassy to Khiva and Bukhara.⁸¹

Before being sent off on his mission, Ignatiev had already been of the opinion that Central Asia could serve as a point of leverage in Russia’s rivalry with Britain. In a note to the foreign minister Prince Gorchakov in 1857 Ignatiev stressed that an aggressive Central Asia policy should not be regarded as an advance on India, but “as a means of

⁷⁹ Mary Holdsworth, *Turkestan in the Nineteenth Century: A Brief History of the Khanates of Bukhara, Kokand and Khiva*, Oxford: St. Antony’s College, 1959, p. 50. See also Rozhkova *Ekonomicheskaya Politika*, pp. 222. Holdsworth explains that “the belief in rivers as the trade routes *par excellence* is consonant with all the traditions of Russian commercial and imperial history, and since the navigation difficulties of the Amu-Darya, being at that time largely unknown, the idea of opening it up for Russian vessels was very attractive.” *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁸⁰ N.A. Khalfin, *Prisoedinenie Srednei Azii k Rossii*, Moscow: Nauka, 1965, pp. 81-101. Kagarlitskii describes the upshot of Russia’s defeat in the Crimean War as follows: “For the tsarist government, the main negative result of the Eastern War was the loss of its fortresses and naval fleet in the Black Sea. For the Western allies, the main positive outcome was the elimination of Russian industrial protectionism, thus opening the Russian market, as well as free access to Near Eastern markets.” Kagarlitskii, *Periferiinaia Imperiia*, p. 315.

⁸¹ Ignatiev would become the head of the Asian Department of the Foreign Ministry from 1860-64. Holdsworth, *Turkestan*, p. 70.

keeping peace with Britain, through making her respect Russia's friendship."⁸² He elaborated:

In the event of a breach with Britain, it is only in Asia that we can enter into conflict with her with some probability of success and damage the existence of Turkey. In time of peace, the difficulties brought about by Britain in Asia and the increase of our prestige in countries separating Russia from British possessions will serve as the best guarantee of preserving peace with Britain. Besides, Asia is the only sphere left for our trade and the development of our industry, since they are both too weak to enter into successful competition with Britain, France, Belgium, America and other countries.⁸³

When Ignatiev was dispatched to Bukhara and Khiva in 1858, two of the most urgent instructions he received were to 1) secure the opening up of the Amu Darya and 2) study the methods of British trade in the area.⁸⁴ In addition, the War Minister had instructed him "to collect topographical, statistical and general military information in the course of the journey...and if possible to estimate the military capacities of Khiva, Bukhara and Balkh."⁸⁵ While negotiations with the khan of Khiva were not altogether fruitless, Ignatiev became rather impatient with the diplomatic process, writing to General Katenin, the Governor of Orenburg at that time, that "treaties with Khiva are useless until

⁸² Holdsworth, *Turkestan*, p. 54.

⁸³ Khalfin, *Politika Rossii v Sredney Azii, 1857-1868*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Vostochnoy Literatury, 1960, p. 88. Khalfin points out that Ignatiev had very close ties to the empire's financial and industrial circles.

⁸⁴ There had been much gnashing of the teeth in the Russian elite press over British "dumping" in Eastern markets. Kagarlitskii notes that such was the superiority of British entrepreneurs compared to their Russian competitors that, "in both Turkey and Central Asia they could sell their goods at 'throwaway' prices (according to Russian sources sometimes even at a loss), just so long as they assumed a commanding position in the market." Kagarlitskii *Periferiinaia Imperiia*, p. 298. See also Rozhkova, *Ekonomicheskaya Politika*, p. 311; Khalfin, *Politika Rossii*, pp. 46-49; Holdsworth, *Turkestan*, p. 56.

⁸⁵ Holdsworth, *Turkestan*, p. 56. See also Khalfin, *Politika Rossii*, p. 91; and John L. Evans, ed., *Mission of N.P. Ignat'ev to Khiva and Bukhara in 1858*, Newtonville, MA: Oriental Research Press, 1984, p. 15.

the Khivans are convinced of the need to obey us and solemnly keep their promises...this is impossible for us to achieve merely by discussion and arguments...”⁸⁶ Ignatiev had a more positive experience in his dealings with Nasrullah in Bukhara, who was more willing to make concessions. The emir feared, erroneously as the case may be, that the Russians might align with Kokand against him. Ignatiev, however, was unable to capitalize on the more generous offers made by Nasrullah, as the former did not have the authority to accede to the khan’s request for Russian military assistance in his war with Kokand. In any event, his reconnaissance operations regarding both the trade and military situation in the region left Ignatiev confident about “the position which we must and can occupy in Central Asia...as well as of the objectives we must pursue for a more real and powerful protection of our essential interests.”⁸⁷ In the coming years Ignatiev’s views would come to be shared by many in the military caste, with which he was obviously in close correspondence. As Khalfin observed, the writings and conclusions of Ignatiev and his colleagues from the mission demonstrated that, “more and more political and military representatives of Russia leaned toward the idea that it was time to move from diplomatic negotiations with the Central Asian khanates to direct military pressure and opening the

⁸⁶ Holdsworth, *Turkestan*, p. 57; Khalfin, *Politika Rossii*, p. 99.

⁸⁷ Evans ed., *Mission*, p. 126; Holdsworth, *Turkestan*, p. 58; Khalfin, *Politika Rossii*, p. 103.

markets of Central Asia through armed means.”⁸⁸ It was the events of the early 1860s, though, that were likely what proved to be the decisive factor in spurring on conquest.

The 1860s proved to be a fateful period for the cotton industry throughout the world. The onset of the American Civil War and the subsequent blockade of the South by the Union navy removed approximately seven million bales of cotton from global markets between 1861 and 1865.⁸⁹ This global cotton shortage ultimately led to a recasting of the world wide web of cotton. As Sven Beckert explains:

The Civil War...focused the energies of capitalists and statesmen in unprecedented ways, and, indeed, their efforts resulted in a sustained increase in cotton production in India, Brazil, Egypt and Central Asia. Aided by dramatic advances in transportation and communications technology, their activities rapidly expanded capitalist social relations through a sharp surge of global economic integration, resulting in a long-lasting commercialization of regions that before 1861 had remained more remote from world markets.⁹⁰

Russian capitalists were certainly in that number. Between 1861 and 1864 cotton prices tripled, stimulating a 4.6 percent increase in exports from Central Asia, amounting to

⁸⁸ Khalfin, *Politika Rossii*, p. 105. Khalfin also notes that it can hardly be a coincidence that several of the recommendations that Ignatiev made were carried out around the time he became head of the Asian Department. Ibid., p. 94.

⁸⁹ Beckert, “Emancipation and Empire,” p. 1406. The American South was providing the vast majority of cotton to the industrializing countries’ textile industries before the war, including 92 percent of Russia’s supply. Ibid., p. 1408. See also Khalfin, *Prisoedinenie*, pp. 144-45; M.K. Rozhkova, *Ekonomicheskiye Svjazi Rossii so Sredney Aziiyey: 40-60-e gody XIX Veka*, Moscow: Izdatel’svo Akade mii Nauk SSSR. 1963, pp. 61-64. According to Liusternik, however, since all cotton generally came to Russia through Britain, shipments likely also consisted of Egyptian and Indian cotton. See Liusternik, *Russko-indiyskiye*, pp. 44-45.

⁹⁰ Beckert, “Emancipation and Empire,” p. 1421. Beckert notes that after the collapse of slavery in the American South, cotton came to be grown almost exclusively by “cultivators who would work their own or rented land with the input of family labor and metropolitan capital”, and who would now live in a countryside characterized by “sharecropping, crop liens and powerful local merchants in control of capital.” Ibid., p. 1424.

about 24 million pounds.⁹¹ During the Civil War years, a group of cotton mill owners, united under the Central Asian Trading Association, met in Moscow to discuss how they could expand production in Central Asia.⁹² The Russian textile industry had already been reeling from the increased competition it faced due to the virtual free trade regime imposed on Russia by Britain and France in the wake of the Crimean defeat.⁹³ The ensuing cotton famine of the Civil War years only made things worse, forcing twenty two of Russia's fifty seven textile companies to close between 1860 and 1863.⁹⁴ This is likely why Russia's textile moguls looked with envy at British manufacturers' access to raw materials from England's colonies in the East, which allowed them to create new supply zones in relatively quick order.⁹⁵

Around this same time, the issue of colonizing Central Asia for the sake of national development began to be actively discussed by economists and other officials in

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 1430. See also P.I. Liashchenko, *Istoriia Narodnogo Khozjastva SSSR*, vol. 2. 3rd edition. Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Politicheskoi Literatury, 1952, p. 542.

⁹² Beckert, "Emancipation and Empire," p. 1430. See also Muriel Joffe, "Autocracy, Capitalism and Empire: The Politics of Irrigation," *Russian Review* 54, 3 (Jul., 1995), p. 367; Khalfin, *Prisoedinenie*, p. 143.

⁹³ The Crimean War had also produced shortages of and rising prices for cotton, which, Richard Pierce argues, had given Russian manufacturers impetus "to give serious attention to Central Asian cotton" already in the 1850s. See Richard Pierce, *Russian Central Asia, 1867-1917: A Study in Colonial Rule*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1960, p. 164.

⁹⁴ Thurman, "Irrigated Agriculture," p. 43. See also John Whitman, "Turkestan Cotton in Imperial Russia." *American Slavic and East European Review*, 15, 2 (Apr., 1957), p. 193.

⁹⁵ See Beckert, "Emancipation and Empire," p. 1415. Table 1 in his article shows a dramatic expansion of cotton exports from India, Egypt and Brazil during the 1960s. For a decent English language summary of the possible economic motivations for Russian conquest, especially regarding the cotton question, see Seymour Becker, *Russia's Protectorates in Central Asia: Bukhara and Khiva, 1865-1924*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968, pp. 21-23. Although Becker ultimately rejects Soviet historians' claims that economic considerations were the primary impetus, he fails to convincingly refute the leading Soviet proponent of this thesis, N.A. Khalfin, who presents document after document of bureaucrats, military officials and diplomats remarking on the economic necessity and benefits of conquest. See Khalfin, *Prisoedinenie*, passim.

Russkii Vestnik, with the arguments of Y.A.Gagemeyster, from the Finance Ministry, being fairly representative:

With Russia's industrial development, the need for export markets had become pressing and while Russia is not in a position to compete with the products of western Europe, she can nevertheless count on the superiority of her products over the uniform Asian goods; the markets of Central Asia must represent all the more guaranteed outlet for Russian goods since it is Russia alone that has need of their products. While so far trade with Central Asia forms only a small portion of Russia's total trade turnover, nevertheless it is developing on the right lines since the export of manufactured goods to those markets is growing.⁹⁶

In light of this situation Gagemeyster argued that the southern Central Asian khanates needed to be conquered.⁹⁷ Russian manufacturers then began to actively petition the finance ministry for aid to seek the raw materials and export markets they needed in Central Asia to face the cotton famine of the 1860s as well as the increasing competition from foreign textile companies.⁹⁸ It seems they also found sympathetic ears in the Ministry of War.

⁹⁶ Holdsworth, *Turkestan*, p. 52. Holdsworth points out that this "was the conclusion of a varied number of people – not only bankers and industrialists, but service personnel charged with making studies and reports." Ibid., p. 51. For a rather rich collection of quotes from economists and other opinion shapers on this score, see Khalfin, *Prisoedinenie*, pp. 63-70, 143-146.

⁹⁷ David MacKenzie, "Turkestan's Significance to Russia (1850-1917)," *Russian Review* 33, 2 (Apr., 1974), p. 168. See also Khalfin, *Prisoedinenie*, pp. 140-143.

⁹⁸ Edward Allworth, ed., *Central Asia: 130 Years of Russian Dominance, A Historical Overview*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1994, p. 131. See also, Khalfin, *Prisoedinenie*, p. 139. Beckert, "Emancipation and Empire," p. 1430; Joffe, "Autocracy," p. 367.

The Russian Conquest

In a number of Western accounts, with Morrison's once again being no exception, it is emphasized that the Russian conquest of the Central Asian khanates – beginning with General M.G. Cherniaev's capture of Tashkent in June 1865 – was undertaken in piecemeal fashion by ambitious and “uncontrollable” generals trying to make a name for themselves in contradiction of various warnings and protests from both the foreign and finance ministries.⁹⁹ Such an argument is not utterly groundless, especially given the nature of Russia's land-based empire. Historically speaking, Russia's eastern and southern borders were most certainly difficult to secure. Raids or incursions by natives (real or fabricated) always served as a pretext for reprisals and further expansion. It is possible that there were instances during the Empire's expansion into the various corners of the empire that Cossack commanders would present the powers-that-be in St. Petersburg *fait accompli* that the latter were naturally then be loath to overturn. The drive into Central Asia, however, was not undertaken by Cossack forces. These were fairly seasoned military commanders in the regular army, who certainly were as keen to keep their jobs as they were to gain military honors. It is probably also the case that the recent

⁹⁹ Peter Morris points out that over the years there has been an oscillation between two camps that see either “uncontrollable” or “totally controlled” generals, with the first thesis being advanced by British historians in the first half of the twentieth century and the second thesis maintained by Soviet historians and some Western historians specializing in nineteenth century Russia in the second half. It seems as though it is now oscillating back to the “uncontrollable” thesis, given Alexander Morrison and Seymour Becker's most recent works. See Peter Morris, “The Russians in Central Asia, 1870-1887,” *The Slavonic and East European Review* 53, 133 (Oct. 1975), pp. 521-538.

ignominious defeat in the Crimean War left many military leaders pining for action and new victories in order to restore the honor of the Russian army, but it does not seem to be true that the Central Asian officer corps was made up of social and career misfits seeking either to redeem themselves or bury their past.¹⁰⁰ Lastly, there can be no doubt that the conquest and subsequent military administration of Central Asia was bound up with a number of security and strategic concerns of the Russian Empire in relation to its conflict with Britain. That in no way renders economic concerns irrelevant or even secondary.¹⁰¹ Security and stability are important for facilitating both trade and economic colonization.

Those motivations and dynamics notwithstanding, it would be an error to assume that, in the specific case of Central Asia, Russian military commanders were not influenced by considerations of economic nationalism or that they were unaware of the kind of discussions occurring in elite journals regarding the potential commercial value of the region for Russian industry.¹⁰² It may have been a case of the War Ministry versus the Foreign and Finance Ministries, but that ignores the fact that the latter two were hardly monolithic in their views on the issue, as demonstrated in the writings and

¹⁰⁰ See Morris's comments on this score. Morris, "The Russians in Central Asia," p. 536.

¹⁰¹ Much of what Eric Hobsbawm terms "the anti-anti-imperialist" literature on imperialism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries tends to stress the importance of strategic issues over economic concerns, but this has little explanatory power in fact. As Hobsbawm points out, the search for markets was indeed a major motivator of imperialism and colonial expansion (even if those ventures did not always turn out to be so rewarding). We know this because government officials of the leading capitalist countries in Europe were not afraid to admit these things in the late nineteenth century. See Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire 1875-1914*, London: Abacus, 2007, pp. 60-73.

¹⁰² For example, in 1857 in a response to a letter from the Viceroy of the Caucasus, Prince Baryatinskii, concerning the possible entry of the British into the Caspian through Herat, A.O. Sukhozanet of the War Ministry wrote that the British were not likely to seize the area militarily, but that their commercial advances into the area were certainly of great concern to Russia. See Evans, ed., *Mission of N.P. Ignat'ev*, p. 10; Holdsworth, *Turkestan*, p. 54.

pronouncements of Gagemeyer (Finance) and Ignatiev (Foreign). Moreover, the situation was likely far more complex than a simple matter of competing bureaucracies. Peter Morris has argued that during the period of Russian conquest, “there was no such simple relationship between central government and local officers as is implied in phrases like ‘uncontrollable’ or ‘tightly controlled’ military”, and that “local officers did not undertake expeditions without specific permission: but they did lobby for them, and lobby hard.”¹⁰³ The Foreign Ministry may have been unaware of or even opposed to the actions of the War Ministry under D.A. Milyutin, but the tsar himself was by no means in the dark.¹⁰⁴ The real questions are to what degree the tsar was influenced by the military, and what degree the military was influenced by commercial interests within Russia.

To be sure, economic concerns and considerations were not alien to the military officers in the region. Not long before Tashkent was taken by Cherniaev, General N.A. Kryzhanovskii, governor of Orenburg, wrote:

In our hands should be the main commercial, caravan and military routes and passages from Bukhara and Kokand on the north and north-west, and also from Kashgar via Alatau to China...all our efforts...should be devoted to...introduce and consolidate favorable commercial relations with the Central Asian people.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Morris, “The Russians in Central Asia,” p. 529.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 526 but *passim*. Morris contends that what is key to understanding the situation in Central Asia is that the local officers often had a monopoly on information, which made it easy to persuade higher officials and by extension the tsar.

¹⁰⁵ Quoted in MacKenzie, “Turkestan’s Significance,” p. 169.

After Cherniaev's conquest of Tashkent there was considerable debate over whether it would be made an independent khanate or city-state under Russian protection or simply annexed directly into the empire.¹⁰⁶ Out of deference toward the Foreign Ministry's strong preference for the former option, Kryzhanovskii was dispatched to Tashkent to assemble a group of influential citizens that would elect a sovereign. When those prominent public figures presented him with a document in Uzbek proclaiming the need for religious life in the city to be controlled by the Qazi Kalan, Kryzhanovskii promptly abandoned the idea and instead urged Milyutin "to direct all his current effort to the transformation of Tashkent into the true commercial hub of Central Asia."¹⁰⁷ According to Helene D'Encausse:

Under Milyutin's stimulus, several of the most important Russian commercial enterprises, Sava Morozov & Sons, Ivan Khludov & Sons, and Baranov Bros., joined together in January, 1866 in "an association for trade with Tashkent and Central Asia." Through Colonel D.I. Romanovskii, who was to play the role of instigator and a veritable representative of the government, they asked from the government certain guarantees (protection of convoys and insurance of the goods) and important concessions (lands in Western Turkistan, posts, and the right to buy raw materials from the government at wholesale prices) in return for a systematic orientation of business toward Central Asia. In its discussions with the

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 266. The issue of whether Cherniaev violated his orders or not in taking Tashkent has long been a point of controversy. The Soviet historian, N.A. Khalfin, seems to demonstrate rather clearly that no such violation occurred. Khalfin, *Prisoedinenie*, pp. 182-201. Somewhat contradicting his claim about uncontrollable generals, Morrison himself admits that, "Cherniaev stretched but did not exceed his instructions in taking Tashkent", as he had been "ordered to break Kokand's hold on the city and place it under Russian rule." Morrison, *Russian Rule*, p. 31. This seems to accord with Peter Morris' contention that once permission was granted to officers to undertake a given expedition "they tended to take two steps rather than the one authorized." Morris, "The Russians in Central Asia," p. 529. In any event, the tsar had actually approved the capture of Tashkent when it was first proposed by the previous governor of Orenburg, A.P. Bezak four years earlier. See George Wheeler, *The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia*, New York: Frederick A Praeger, Inc., Publishers, 1964, pp. 57-60.

¹⁰⁷ Allworth, ed., *Central Asia*, p. 138.

Association about the dispatch of scientific missions to make an inventory of Western Turkistanian resources, the government clearly showed the importance it attached to the problem.¹⁰⁸

Given these extensive efforts to make Tashkent the major hub of Russia's eastern trade, as well as the military gains being achieved by the Bukharan emir's armies at that time, the tsarist government sided with those advocating an annexation and issued an imperial decree to that effect in August 1866.¹⁰⁹

Following the annexation of Tashkent, negotiations over trade rights continued with the emir of Bukhara, but when these proved fruitless Cherniaev undertook a new military campaign against Bukhara, conducting an assault on Jizzakh, a major trade center northeast of Samarkand.¹¹⁰ Due to a number of serious miscalculations on Cherniaev's part, however, the expedition was a wash and the general was removed of command.¹¹¹ Tellingly enough though, Cherniaev was then replaced by General D.I. Romanovskii, who, as seen above, had been a prominent promoter of Russian industrialists' interests in Central Asia up to that point. Romanovskii continued Cherniaev's plunge into Bukharan territory and began to make in-roads into Kokand. New, more audacious demands, mostly

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. According to Sven Beckert, "On January 8, 1866, Tsar Alexander II received a memorandum written by the minister of finance in favor of the exertion of greater influence on Central Asia, which listed among the supporters of such a project the names of a group of Russian capitalists, including owners of such prominent cotton ventures as Ivan Khludov & Sons, Sava Morozov & Sons, V.L. Tertyakov, and D.I. Romanovskii." Beckert, "Emancipation and Empire," p. 1430, n. 71.

¹⁰⁹ Allworth, ed., *Central Asia*, p. 139.

¹¹⁰ Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 24.

¹¹¹ Allworth, ed., *Central Asia*, p. 140. This appears to be the real reason for his dismissal, and not the supposed violation of orders regarding the capture of Tashkent. It seems that the authorities in St. Petersburg were not too perturbed by Cherniaev's actions, since upon his return, "his salary was restored, he received honors and decorations, and his policies in Central Asia were continued." Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 24.

commercial in nature, were then made of the emir, whose refusal in turn provoked new assaults, such as Kryzhanovskii's seizure of Jizzakh and Ura Tube.¹¹²

Once a governor generalship was set up in 1867 to organize the territories that had already been conquered, Russian economic actors began to more vigorously assert themselves in the region, actively intervening "to win acceptance for its view that total conquest was imperative."¹¹³ Russia's commercial class derived immediate benefit from the annexation of Tashkent, which is likely why it was pushing for further expansion.¹¹⁴

As D'Encausse observes:

With the capture of Tashkent, the rapid penetration of Russian trade into Central Asia began, and the merchants increased their *demarches* so as to pressure the government into pursuing the work of conquest. Newspapers, such as *Moskva* and *Birzhevye vedomosti*, supported their position and insisted on the necessity of conquering Bukhara, the vital commercial center of Central Asia. Thus, von Kaufman, arriving in Western Turkistan in 1868, proceeded first to settle this question which had been widely raised by public opinion. Before grappling with Bukhara, whose forces he also thought were formidable, von Kaufman, in January 1868, signed a commercial accord with Khudayar Khan which, in point of fact, placed Khokand under complete economic dependence to the empire.¹¹⁵

Kaufman indeed then forcibly opened both Bukhara and Khiva for trade, which, judging from the terms imposed in the treaties, had been the principle aim of his endeavor.¹¹⁶

¹¹² Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 25. On Russian demands, see Allworth, ed., *Central Asia*, p. 140. A general pattern is detectable during the conquest whereby the Russians would make demands of the khans, the khans would refuse, and the Russians would conquer new territories proffering yet more exacting demands. That the demands were primarily of commercial concern should speak volumes about their priorities.

¹¹³ Allworth, ed., *Central Asia*, p. 141.

¹¹⁴ MacKenzie, "Turkestan's Significance," pp. 169-170.

¹¹⁵ Allworth, ed., *Central Asia*, p. 141. On Khudayar's concessions, see also Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 25.

¹¹⁶ Becker, *Russia's Protectorates*, p. 32. See also Allworth, ed., *Central Asia*, pp. 142-147.

These two protectorates, however, were never officially annexed into the empire and were allowed to retain a certain degree of independence.¹¹⁷ While a number of scholars have tended to deride the supposed independence of Bukhara and Khiva during this period, their governments retained enough autonomy to prevent implementation of various colonial policies. This made a significant difference in how both these states would experience Russian colonization versus the lands of Kokand, which after repeated rebellions, were unilaterally annexed into the empire in 1876.

¹¹⁷ Bukhara, even under the exacting terms of the 1873 treaty, enjoyed a much more equal relationship with Russia than Khiva, although its formal privileges gradually eroded with time. See Becker, *Russia's Protectorates*, pp. 77-78.

The Beginning of Central Asia's Peripheralization

The kind of social, spatial and economic transformations that occurred in India, such as the development of a three-tier division of labor and space; increased coercion of labor through debt peonage; growing land concentration and proletarianization as a result of land reforms; and increased raw material export at the expense of manufacturing are also observable in southern Central Asia during the period following Russian conquest. These transformations were by no means evenly distributed. While they were most visible in the Turkestan *guberniya*, the Bukharan and Khivan protectorates were affected by the process of incorporation as well. Even in Turkestan, however, these processes were tempered by certain peculiarities of the Russian Empire, which were related to its semiperipheral status in the expanding European world-system. Nevertheless, the new administration in Turkestan would take the necessary steps to turn the region into a colonial dependency that exhibited all the familiar characteristics of peripheralization.

When von Kaufman ascended to the new post of governor generalship of Turkestan, he instituted a number of important reforms that would kick start the transformation of the Turkestan *guberniya* region (consisting of the Ferghana, Syr Darya, Samarkand and Transcaspia oblasts) into a “cotton colony of Russian capitalism.”¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ Liashchenko, *Istoriia Narodnogo Khozjastva*, p. 543.

From the point of view of Russia's textile industry, reforms in Central Asian agriculture were absolutely vital.¹¹⁹ Not only were the Central Asians producing cotton that – from the Russian industrialists' point of view – was of substandard quality, they were producing it with extremely primitive means on overly fragmented holdings.¹²⁰ Because peasants utilized relatively rudimentary tools for the tasks, growing and processing cotton were highly laborious tasks, which perhaps explains why many peasants were loath to cultivate large quantities of it, even when it could fetch them a decent profit in the increasingly monetizing economy.¹²¹ Furthermore, as John Whitman explains:

It was [the] heavy labor requirements, as much as the shortage of draft power and the need to insure oneself against the effects of drought in the grain-producing rainlands, which inhibited the cotton farmer from putting all his arable acreage under that crop alone.¹²²

¹¹⁹ It seems very likely he was responding to textile industrialists' proposals. According to Levi, one merchant, R. Keler, who had offices in both Moscow and Tashkent published a list as early as 1870 that included many of the reforms and initiatives that Kaufman and successive administrators would undertake. See Levi, *The Indian Diaspora*, p. 249.

¹²⁰ Whitman, "Turkestan Cotton," p. 191; Liashchenko, *Istoriia Narodnogo Khozjastva*, p. 541. On the "inferiority" of the native variety of cotton, see Arminius Vambéry, *Travels in Central Asia*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1865 (reprinted by Arno Press & The New York Times), 1970, pp. 469-73; but also Liashchenko, *Istoriia Narodnogo Khozjastva*, p. 543; Rozhkova, *Ekonomicheskiye Svjazi*, pp. 54-55. According to Sven Beckert, British manufacturers were also unsatisfied with the quality of the native Indian cotton that they began importing en masse during the cotton famine of the Civil War years, thus leading a number of Manchester manufacturers to begin sending new seeds to India. See Beckert, "Emancipation and Empire," pp. 1411, 1413.

¹²¹ Liashchenko, *Istoriia Narodnogo Khozjastva*, p. 542.

¹²² Whitman, "Turkestan Cotton," p. 191.

Therefore, before the Russian conquest, there was likely precious few who would or could choose to specialize in it *exclusively*.¹²³

Likewise hampering development of a vigorous export market for Central Asian cotton were problems in the marketing methods and transport infrastructure. Since merchant middlemen would buy cotton in either urban bazaars or in the remote villages, the purchase-sale act could at times be “a highly disorganized affair.”¹²⁴ Michael Thurman similarly notes that, “sellers often mixed rocks and other foreign material in with the product to increase its weight, while the purchaser attempted to discount as much as possible from the calculation.”¹²⁵ The upshot of these practices was that it rendered much of the crop unusable, or least undesirable, to Russian manufacturers. To make matters worse, the transportation methods of those times only served to reduce yet further the quality of the cotton, while also raising its price. As most cotton from the region was carried by camel, it could take as many as five to six months for a caravan to reach the rail lines in Orenburg from Tashkent.¹²⁶ Suffice it to say, the cotton could become rather

¹²³ According to recent research by Scott Levi, there is evidence that Indian merchant-financiers played a significant role in encouraging peasants to grow cotton for the Russian market beginning in the late 1700s. Whether they were using the kind of debt mechanism that came to characterize the cotton sector under Russian rule is not clear, but Levi makes it plain that the interest rates tended to be very high. See Levi, *The Indian Diaspora*, pp. 210-220.

¹²⁴ Iuferev, V.I., *Khlopovodstvo v Turkestane*, Leningrad: Ivan Fedorov, 1925, p. 22-23, quoted in Thurman, “Irrigated Agriculture,” p. 42.

¹²⁵ Thurman, “Irrigated Agriculture,” p. 42. See also Whitman, “Turkestan Cotton,” p. 192.

¹²⁶ Thurman, “Irrigated Agriculture,” p. 42.

degraded during such a trek, although this was partly due to how it was packed in the first place.¹²⁷

It was these “inefficiencies” that von Kaufman would seek to rectify. The first steps were taken in the 1870s when von Kaufman dispatched experts to the United States to study cotton farming and bring back some new strands of cotton with which to experiment.¹²⁸ Upon the experts’ return an experimental farm was set up outside Tashkent and another larger one at Merv in Transcaspia known as the Emperor’s Plantation.¹²⁹ After a number of abortive attempts to grow Sea Island cotton, the American upland variety was successfully cultivated in 1884 on 300 *desyatinas* (800 acres), whereupon the Turkestani administration began distributing seeds and information on how to grow it free of charge. To provide extra incentive, tax breaks were granted to peasants who cultivated precisely this variety of cotton.¹³⁰

In addition to the introduction and dissemination of the upland strand, the Kaufman administration initiated some important changes in land tenure in Turkestan. In 1873 all the land in Turkestan was declared crown property and, similar to the *ryotwari*

¹²⁷ According to Schyuler, “No cotton presses are used. The cotton is stuffed loosely into a large sack, and on arriving in Russia it is found that several inches of the exterior are so full of sand and dirt as to be utterly useless. The loss in this way is never less than 25 percent, often 50 percent, and on the average 35 percent.” Eugene Schyuler, *Turkistan: Notes of a Journey in Russian Turkistan, Khokand, Buchara, and Khuldja*, vol 2. New York: Scribner, Armstrong and Co, 1876, pp. 295-96. See also Whitman, “Turkestan Cotton,” p. 192.

¹²⁸ Igor Lipovsky, “The Central Asia Cotton Epic,” *Central Asian Survey* 14, 4 1995, pp. 529-530; See also Whitman, “Turkestan Cotton,” p. 194; Joffe, “Autocracy,” p. 367.

¹²⁹ Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 165; Joffe, “Autocracy,” p. 367. On the Emperor’s Plantation, see Whitman, “Turkestan Cotton,” p. 194.

¹³⁰ Lipovsky, “Cotton Epic,” p. 530; Whitman, “Turkestan Cotton,” p. 195; Holdsworth, *Turkestan*, p. 20.

system introduced by the British in India, tenants on large estates were granted the right of perpetual utilization, in addition to the right of transferring property through inheritance.¹³¹ While a number of Western historians have posited that this move stemmed more from a desire to undermine the local aristocracy and the power of the religious elites (sometimes one and the same) than from a progressive “land to those who work it” ethos, it all the same served to break up the larger native-controlled estates.¹³² With the initial transfer of title of all land to the state, however, “hundreds of merchants, officials, officers and other state employees threw themselves into the growing of cotton” – all of them attempting to establish cotton plantations in the American fashion.¹³³ As this “white gold” rush began before the introduction of the upland variety and was based on hired local labor, it quickly proved to be unprofitable for the vast majority of the would-be entrepreneurs, who all quickly went bankrupt or liquidated their holdings.¹³⁴

¹³¹ Whitman, “Turkestan Cotton,” p. 196; Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, pp. 147-148; Lipovsky, “Cotton Epic,” p. 531. In his recent study of the land reform question, Alexander Morrison argues that there was no “revolutionizing” of land ownership under Russian rule, as this state of affairs had already become the status quo due to the mass exodus of the *beks*, which had been precipitated by the conquest itself. See Morrison, *Russian Rule*, pp. 110-112.

¹³² Adeeb Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998, p. 66. See also Whitman, “Turkestan Cotton,” p. 196; Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 148. D.S.M. Williams speculates that Kaufman may have been inspired to make such a reform due to his experience as governor-general of Poland prior to his stint in Turkestan. See D.S.M. Williams, “Land Reform in Turkestan,” *The Slavonic and East European Review* 51, 124 (Jul. 1973), p. 428; but also Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 148. Morrison argues that the regime’s dispersal of the native elite, who had been feared for their alleged religious fanaticism, proved to be a major error, since the *aksakals* elected by the peasants were no easier to control. See Morrison, *Russian Rule*, pp. 102-118.

¹³³ Demidov, A.P., *Ekonomicheskie ocherki khlopovodstva, khlopovoy trgovli i promyshlennosti v Turkestane*, St. Petersburg, 1910, p. 42 quoted in Lipovsky, “Cotton Epic,” p. 530.

¹³⁴ Whitman, “Turkestan Cotton,” p. 196; Lipovsky, “Cotton Epic,” p. 530; Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 167. The failure of Russian cotton plantations worked by hired hands in Central Asia seems to accord with Sven Beckert’s contention that, after the collapse of slave-based plantations in the American South, cotton was only ever successfully

This movement was laid to rest once and for all in 1886, when a more formal declaration on land tenure was passed known as “the Statute for the Administration of the Turkestan Region,” which recognized the right to buy and sell private property in Turkestan, but explicitly barred Russians and other foreigners from acquiring land in there.¹³⁵ As John Whitman points out, with the rapid expansion of advances and credit, this stipulation would “determine in large part the national composition of the structure of credit relationships which arose in the cotton economy.”¹³⁶ This is perhaps the primary reason why Russian textile concerns and financial institutions would come to prefer to work through native intermediaries, as only the latter had the legal right to appropriate the land of a defaulting creditor, i.e. peasant cotton farmer – more on which shortly.

As was the case with several other regions of the world being mined for cotton in the wake of the 1860s cotton famine, Turkestan’s colonial period was accompanied by a railroad boom.¹³⁷ Although Kaufman proposed the construction of a Tashkent-Orenburg line to facilitate faster trade in the 1870s and even conducted several surveys to map the route, he was not able to get the funds released for the project.¹³⁸ The first rail line would instead be built in 1879 from Krasnovodsk on the Caspian Sea to an outpost in Kizil

cultivated by plantations with indentured servants or indebted peasants working on individual plots. See Beckert, “Emancipation and Empire,” p. 1415, 1423-24.

¹³⁵ Williams, “Land Reform,” p. 429 but *passim*.

¹³⁶ Whitman, “Turkestan Cotton,” p. 197.

¹³⁷ On the railroad boom in Berar, India around the same time, see Beckert, “Emancipation and Empire,” pp. 1424-1425.

¹³⁸ Jeff Sahadeo, *Russian Colonial Society in Tashkent, 1865-1923*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007, p. 120. See also MacKenzie, “Turkestan’s Significance,” p. 173.

Arvat to aid a military campaign against the Turkmen, with a subsequent extension to Samarkand completed in 1888.¹³⁹ As the laying of this line was demonstrated to have enormous economic benefits, Governor-General Rozenbach along with N.I. Reshetnikov, a leading merchant, began to lobby hard for the extension of the railroad to Tashkent with a branch line to Ferghana – a request which was granted in 1895.¹⁴⁰ With the completion of that line, the minister of war, N.A. Kuropatkin, began lobbying the tsar in 1898 for a Tashkent-Orenburg line, citing economic and military necessity, which was approved in 1900 and completed in 1906.¹⁴¹ The construction of the Central Asian Railroad, as it came to be called, proved to be a major development in Turkestan, as it touched not only on the region's economy, but cultural and political life as well.¹⁴²

These policies had an enormous impact on the economy of Turkestan. The introduction and free distribution of the American upland cotton strand, coupled with preferential tax treatment for those growing it, quickly led to a complete abandonment of

¹³⁹ Becker, *Russia's Protectorates*, pp. 127-128. A railroad from the Caspian to the Aral Sea was first proposed by Prince Baryatinskii, Viceroy of the Caucasus, in the 1850s, who suggested such a line would have both military and commercial benefits. See MacKenzie, "Turkestan's Significance," p. 168; Holdsworth, *Turkestan*, p. 51. While it is often emphasized that the Transcaspian railroad was built solely out of military considerations – namely pacifying the Turkmen – it should also be considered that the Transcaspian province itself was created "partly in answer to renewed pressure from the business and manufacturing community [so as to] shorten the caravan routes to Bukhara, Herat and Kabul by some 900 km..." Holdsworth, *Turkestan*, p. 60. Hence the need for pacification. The British also built railroads in India for security purposes (namely for the quick transport of troops to quell insurrections), but that did not preclude their use for economic purposes. See John Bellamy Foster, *The Vulnerable Planet: A Short Economic History of the Environment*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1994, p. 89.

¹⁴⁰ Sahadeo, *Russian Colonial Society*, p. 120.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 120-121. See also MacKenzie, "Turkestan's Significance," pp. 180, 182; Whitman, "Turkestan Cotton," p. 198; Allworth, ed., *Central Asia*, p. 328.

¹⁴² Sahadeo, *Russian Colonial Society*, pp. 120-127; Khalid, *Muslim Cultural Reform*, p. 62, but passim. See also D'Encausse, *Islam and the Russian Empire: Reform and Revolution in Central Asia*, Quintin Hoare, trans. London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd., 1988, p. 39.

native varieties. While only three hundred *desyatinas* were under American cotton in 1884, almost fifty thousand were planted with it by 1889. By the turn of the century it was already impossible to find any field in Turkestan *guberniya* under anything other than American cotton.¹⁴³

The railroad was undoubtedly a major boon to the cotton economy in Turkestan. Coinciding with the successful and rapid dissemination of the new American strand was the construction of the Transcaspian railroad. According to Pierce, “in 1888 [shipments of Turkestan cotton] totaled 873,000 poods, in 1889, 1,470,000 poods, and in 1890, 2,673,000 poods.”¹⁴⁴ With the addition of the Andijan and Tashkent branches, there was a 54 percent increase in cotton acreage between 1898 and 1900, with approximately four million poods of cotton being shipped to Russia in 1899.¹⁴⁵ The defining moment in the Turkestan cotton trade, however, would be in 1906 when the Tashkent-Orenburg line was finally completed. If 6.9 million poods were being shipped in 1901, 10.7 million puds were sent off in 1909 and a little over 13 million in 1911.¹⁴⁶ With the construction of the T-O line cotton acreage in Turkestan, which had been fluctuating between 200,000 and 250,000 *desyatinas* for five years prior, rose to 300,000 in 1909 and 423,000 in 1914.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ Whitman, “Turkestan’s Cotton,” p. 194; The figures quoted vary, but see also Joffe, “Autocracy,” p. 369; Lipovsky, “Cotton Epic,” p. 530; Allworth, ed., *Central Asia*, p. 275; Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 165; Khalid, *Muslim Cultural Reform*, p. 63.

¹⁴⁴ Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 165.

¹⁴⁵ Whitman, “Turkestan’s Cotton,” p. 198; Joffe, “Autocracy,” p. 369.

¹⁴⁶ Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 166.

¹⁴⁷ Whitman, “Turkestan’s Cotton,” p. 198.

Once the Ferghana oblast was linked by railroad, its specialization in cotton became close to total, with lands under cotton increasing by 71 percent between 1902 and 1913.¹⁴⁸

To be sure, the boom in cotton was not solely attributable to the construction of railroads and the proliferation of American seeds. Beginning in the 1880s, the tariff on foreign cotton was steadily raised, standing at 40-50 kopeks per pood from 1879-1884 and rising to 1 ruble 75 kopeks in 1887 (in 1903 it was raised to 5 rubles 25 kopeks per pood).¹⁴⁹ This was a development that Russian capital did not fail to notice and gave them all the more incentive to try to obtain more and more cotton from Turkestan. Even the relatively modest increases in production in the 1880s seem to have excited Russian government officials. After attending the Tashkent Exhibition in 1890, the Finance Minister I.A. Vyshnegradskii was moved to call Turkestan “a jewel in the crown of the Russian tsar.”¹⁵⁰ More would have to be done.

Determined to increase cotton production in the Turkestani *guberniya*, the Turkestani administration issued a decree in 1900 stipulating that cotton-sown land would henceforth be taxed at the same rate as grain land, despite the higher profitability of

¹⁴⁸ Allworth, ed., *Central Asia*, p. 275. See also Khalid, *Muslim Cultural Reform*, p. 63; Whitman, “Turkestan’s Cotton,” p. 201.

¹⁴⁹ Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 166; Joffe, “Autocracy,” p. 368; MacKenzie, “Turkestan’s Significance,” p. 182. See also Whitman, “Turkestan’s Cotton,” p. 198. Whitman argues these were not protectionist measures as such, but were adopted for revenue generating purposes. Nevertheless, he admits that such tariff increases certainly had a strong protectionist effect. According to W.E. Curtis, in 1910 the Duma was preparing to levy a special tax on Russian cotton as well for the purpose of creating a fund that would improve cotton cultivation in Central Asia and the Caucasus. The fund would be exclusively managed by the Cotton Manufacturers’ Association. See William Eleroy Curtis, *Turkestan: The Heart of Asia*, New York: Hodder and Stoughton, 1911, pp. 304-305.

¹⁵⁰ Quoted in MacKenzie, “Turkestan’s Significance,” p. 178.

cotton and its greater thirst for water.¹⁵¹ This policy had the predictable effect of creating the kind of three-tier division of labor identified by Wallerstein and observable in the Indian example above. With more and more farmers sowing cotton, it became increasingly profitable for other farmers in the region to begin to sow grain to sell to them.¹⁵² The Russian government, however, was keen to have the entire area sown under cotton, viewing the local grain as competition for its Siberian provinces. Instead of trying to expand irrigation networks to increase the cultivatable area for cotton, which was an expensive prospect, the Russian government opted for a cheaper route. As Pierce explains:

In 1893 a cheap freight rate was set on wheat shipped from European Russia by way of the Caspian Sea and over the Trans-Caspian Railroad to Samarkand. As a result, the price of grain in Turkestan fell in ensuing years, causing more of the natives to turn to the raising of cotton. The process was also aided by a fall in Russia's grain exports during the early 1890s and a consequent surplus of cheap grain for the home market. The Orenburg-Tashkent Railroad, constructed in 1899-1905, provided another more direct means for the import of grain into Turkestan.¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 166. See also Lipovsky, "Cotton Epic," p. 530; Whitman, "Turkestan Cotton," p. 199; Morrison, *Russian Rule*, p. 216, Holdsworth, *Turkestan*, p. 20.

¹⁵² To what degree grain production in this region came to be dominated and directed by merchant bottlenecks is unclear as it has not been specifically studied, at least as far as this writer can tell. Whether there was a specific zone that became specialized in human labor for the cotton zones is also unclear, although growing land eviction in the cotton zones themselves likely provided a steady stream of laborers, as will be discussed below.

¹⁵³ Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 167. See also Whitman, "Turkestan's Cotton," p. 198. Plans were already being made for construction of a Turkestan-Siberian line that would facilitate the import of grain.

That the Russian government intended to turn the region into a giant cotton farm fed by the Siberian provinces was seemingly confirmed in a 1912 pronouncement of the Minister of Agriculture, A.V. Krivoshein:

The present development of cotton plantations can and should be intensified still further by means of further reduction in the quantity of grain crops planted on irrigated land...Every extra pood of Turkestan wheat means extra competition for Siberian and Kuban wheat; every pood of Turkestan cotton means competition for American cotton. Therefore it is better to give the territory imported wheat – even at extra cost – but to make irrigated land available for cotton-growing.¹⁵⁴

The result of this policy, of course, was that the cotton growing regions would become more and more dependent on grain from Western Russia.

Returning to Wallerstein's point about the need for labor to be coercible, it must be asked how so many peasants in the Turkestan *guberniya* were induced to specialize in cotton, given their obvious reluctance to place their fields exclusively under this crop. While part of the answer seems to lie in a few of the factors discussed above – such as tax incentives – the rise of commercial firms providing credit to farmers on usurious terms, and thus enticing them into a system of debt peonage, is perhaps the most important one. Given the failure of the plantation system in the 1870s, Russian textile manufacturers and banks found it more expedient to finance production on individual peasant plots and build cotton ginning plants to ensure the proper cleaning and packing of the cotton. As these operations grew and became more complex, native firms began to spring up that assumed

¹⁵⁴ Krivoshein, A.V. *Zapiska glavnoupravliaiushchego zemledeliem i zemleustroistvom o poezdke v Turkestanskii krai v 1912 godu*, St. Petersburg, 1912, p. 7 quoted in Khalid, *Muslim Cultural Reform*, p. 63.

the role of intermediaries.¹⁵⁵ With the enactment of the 1886 law forbidding Russians and foreigners from owning land in Turkestan, the Russian enterprises began to provide credit almost exclusively through large local firms, since only these native lenders were legally able to seize the land of a defaulting peasant.¹⁵⁶ To this end staffs of agents were organized to buy cotton against future delivery with cash advances made to the peasants. The peasants were highly receptive to such offers given the high price offered for American varieties (but also due to the need to now pay a strictly monetary tax as imposed by the Russian colonial authorities), which prompted them to expand production on their land under this crop.¹⁵⁷

Since the peasants were growing a cash crop, their cash needs expanded significantly, both for hired labor and food, which before they had grown themselves.¹⁵⁸ Although Russian banks and manufacturers offered relatively low interest rates for credit, once these loans moved through the intermediary firms and the network of agents, interest

¹⁵⁵ Joffe, "Autocracy," p. 368; Khalid, *Muslim Cultural Reform*, p. 65; Lipovsky, "Cotton Epic," p. 532; Whitman, "Turkestan's Cotton," pp. 199-200. Levi points out that before these firms came onto the scene highly capitalized Indian merchant-financiers had been the ones providing credit to the peasants for growing cotton. Once they began to seize the plots of numerous defaulting peasants in the aftermath of the Russian conquest, the Turkestani administration waged a relentless campaign against them. See Levi, *The Indian Diaspora*, pp. 250-258. Levi dismisses the possibility that this campaign was motivated by suspicion of the Indian merchants' potential ties with Britain, but there seems to be no other explanation for why Indian lenders were targeted more than the new native firms.

¹⁵⁶ Whitman, "Turkestan's Cotton," p. 197. According to Bartol'd and D'Encausse, these new native firms were an entirely different phenomenon in terms of their modus operandi and scale than the traditional Indian usurers in the city. See V.V. Bartol'd, "Istoriia kul'turnoy zhizni Turkestana", in *Sochineniia*, 9 vols., Moscow: Nauka, vol. 2, pt.1. pp. 362-363; D'Encausse, *Islam*, p. 45.

¹⁵⁷ Whitman, "Turkestan's Cotton," p. 200.

¹⁵⁸ On the growing monetization of rural society and the disintegration of the natural economy during Russian rule, see Elizabeth Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rule: A Study in Cultural Change*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1966, p. 108; but also Khalid, *Muslim Cultural Reform*, p. 62; Whitman, "Turkestan's Cotton," p. 200, p. 202; MacKenzie, "Turkestan's Significance," pp. 182-83.

charges could range anywhere from 40 to 200 percent.¹⁵⁹ In light of these highly profitable conditions, it is not surprising that the agents of these firms began to roam the countryside looking for peasants to entice into their trap. As Whitman observes:

Taking advantage of the farmer's lack of resources and insufficiency of transport, these so called *arbakeshi* toured the provinces, waited until the peasant was desperate for cash, and then made a take-it-or-leave-it offer. A single poor season was sufficient to put the peasant in their power, while two were his ruin.¹⁶⁰

Adding to the peasants' susceptibility to such offers was their unfamiliarity with the new arrangements and terms of credit. D'Encausse explains:

When an advance on their crops was proposed to the peasants...they never imagined that someone would one day come and demand both the loan itself (whose value...was already far greater than the product of the harvest) and interest upon it. Their inability to comprehend the full implications of the usurious loan – legally non-existent in Muslim society – led the entire peasantry...to deliver itself bound hand-and-foot to the middlemen. When the moment of repayment came, the peasants, unable to settle their debts, borrowed anew. From one loan to another they ended up losing their land, sometimes even finishing up in prison.¹⁶¹

As a result of these developments, many peasants were “drawn into a desperate cycle of debt and poverty.”¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 169; Liashchenko, *Istoriia Narodnogo Khozjastva*, p. 546; Whitman, “Turkestan Cotton,” p. 200; Bartol'd, *Istoriia kul'turnoy zhizni*, pp. 362-363; D'Encausse, *Islam*, p. 44.

¹⁶⁰ Whitman, “Turkestan Cotton,” p. 200. For more details on how the peasants were drawn into the debt trap, see Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 168.

¹⁶¹ D'Encausse, *Islam*, p. 45. In this passage, D'Encausse is actually referring to the Bukharan peasants, but it does not seem too presumptuous to suggest that the same dynamic was present in the Turkestan *guberniya*.

¹⁶² Joffe, “Autocracy,” p. 368. Joffe adds that this was not an invention of Soviet historians as it was recognized by prerevolutionary historians and commentators as well. See n. 17 on same page. For a fairly straightforward Soviet account, see Liashchenko, *Istoriia Narodnogo Khozjastva*, p. 546.

As this system became widespread, many farms failed and thousands of peasants were evicted from their land, roving the countryside looking for work as agricultural laborers – usually for very low wages.¹⁶³ Pierce describes the situation as follows:

When the peasants failed to meet their obligations their lands were sold for debt. Local magnates, the *bais*, could then purchase them cheaply. As a result a few individuals acquired ownership of hundreds and even thousands of desyatines, and accumulated fortunes totaling millions of rubles. In 1912 the percentage of landless in Ferghana oblast and in Ashkabad uezd (Transcaspian oblast) reached 30 percent. Some of these became sharecroppers (*chairiker*), perhaps on land formerly their own. Virtually enserfed, they paid up to 80 percent of their harvests to the landowner. Others became day laborers (*mardiker*), hired only when they were needed the most.¹⁶⁴

Aside from work as sharecroppers or hired farm hands, not a few of these landless peasants would find work building railroads or in the burgeoning mining industry, where they would occupy the least skilled, and, by extension, the lowest paying and most physically debilitating positions.¹⁶⁵

The expansion of cotton production through this system of debt peonage experienced a serious crisis on the eve of World War I. To a significant degree, this was

¹⁶³ For a detailed account of the changes in agricultural production and labor practices during this period, see S.P. Tolstova et al, *Narody Sredney Azii i Kazakhstana, vol. 1*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1962, pp. 180-184.

¹⁶⁴ Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, pp. 169-170. Whitman claims there were already 200,000 landless agricultural laborers in Ferghana by 1910. Whitman, "Turkestan Cotton," p. 200. On growing landlessness, see also MacKenzie, "Turkestan's Significance," p. 183; Whitman, "Turkestan Cotton," p. 197; Bartol'd, "Istoriia kul'turnoy zhizni," pp. 362-63; Bacon, *Central Asians*, p. 108; Khalid, *Muslim Cultural Reform*, p. 65.

¹⁶⁵ Allworth, ed., *Central Asia*, pp. 180-81. On the divide between skilled Russian and unskilled local labor, see also Lipovsky, "Cotton Epic," p. 532; Sahadeo, *Russian Colonial Society*, p. 121; Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 197. On pay differences between native and Russian labor, see Khalid, *Muslim Cultural Reform*, p. 73; Liashchenko, *Istoriia Narodnogo Khozjastva*, p. 550. Drafting ever increasing numbers of dispossessed peasants into (dangerous) work in mines was a widespread phenomenon in the colonial world. See Moore, "MWS as Environmental History?" pp. 307-377.

due to the tsarist government's failure to expand adequately the cultivatable area through new irrigation projects.¹⁶⁶ In addition, however, the crisis was linked to growing poverty amongst local farmers, land exhaustion, and rising grain prices.¹⁶⁷ To be sure, the debt crisis had become most serious in the main cotton growing areas. According to Pierce, "out of a total indebtedness of the Turkestan rural population in November, 1912, of 156,700,000 rubles, 80,000,000 rubles was borne by the inhabitants of the Fergana [sic] oblast."¹⁶⁸ This led to some attempts by the Turkestan administration to set up new credit facilities that would make loans and advances directly to the peasants at low interest rates; however, it seems that the crisis was actually only overcome by expanding cotton production in the Bukharan and Khivan protectorates between 1913 and 1916.¹⁶⁹

As could be expected, the process of incorporation and peripheralization produced a change in the pattern of imports and exports in Turkestan as well as a decline in native manufacturing. At the start of the nineteenth century, Central Asia still exported a fair

¹⁶⁶ The majority of irrigation expansion in Ferghana in the nineteenth century was accomplished under the Kokand khanate. See Thurman, "Irrigated Agriculture," pp. 18-24; Morrison, *Russian Rule*, p. 205. Even when irrigation on the Hungary Steppe was expanded through the Emperor Nicholas I Canal, the land was made available only for Russian settlers, who, being inexperienced in the ways of irrigation-based agriculture, did not make good use of it. See Morrison, *Russian Rule*, pp. 205-208.

¹⁶⁷ MacKenzie, "Turkestan's Significance," p. 183; Lipovsky, "Cotton Epic," p. 532.

¹⁶⁸ Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 169.

¹⁶⁹ On the creation of low-interest credit facilities, see Liashchenko, *Istoriia Narodnogo Khozjastva*, pp. 546-547; Lipovsky, "Cotton Epic," p. 532; Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, pp. 170-171. On expanding production in the protectorates after 1913, see Becker, *Russia's Protectorates*, p. 183. Becker dismisses the significance of these developments, emphasizing that the absolute percentages of land under cotton versus grain was still decidedly in the latter's favor – a point which seems to miss the larger context of this sudden expansion of cotton production and export. MacKenzie unfortunately fails to recognize the connection as well. MacKenzie, "Turkestan's Significance," p. 183. According to Curtis, the expansion in cotton in the protectorates was facilitated by Russian textile manufacturers who commissioned a British ginning company to invent a machine that would help the Bukharan peasants process the native strands of cotton faster. See Curtis, *Turkestan*, p. 308.

amount of textiles and yarn to Russia, but after 1820, a gradual shift toward the exclusive export of raw cotton became noticeable, reflecting the growing sophistication of the Russian textile industry.¹⁷⁰ Nevertheless, it seems that it was not until the Kokand khanate was abolished and Ferghana formally annexed that Russia was able both to initiate those lands' transition to cash crop specialization and to seriously undermine its domestic manufacturing industry.¹⁷¹ Once Russia did assert its dominance over the lands that would comprise Turkestan and established a monopoly of trade, the influx of Russian metal wares and textiles gradually began to take their toll on the local craft industries.¹⁷² While some crafts, such as carpets, reemerged as a luxury or specialty trade, they were badly deformed by the new market conditions.¹⁷³ This in itself might be related to the emergence of a putting-out system in Central Asia, whereby some local firms "promoted 'home industries' based on the larger scale organizations of local crafts."¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁰ Thurman, "Irrigated Agriculture," p. 38, p. 46.

¹⁷¹ Thurman claims that, although Russia was the main trading partner of Kokand on the eve of conquest, the khanate was neither a major import site for Russian textiles nor a significant exporter of raw cotton. See Thurman, "Irrigated Agriculture," pp. 37, 44. Due to its silk exports, Kokand still maintained a favorable balance of trade with Russia in 1871. *Ibid.*, p. 38. Levi, however, cites figures taken from *Istoriia Uzbekistana* that contradict this claim. See Levi, *The Indian Diaspora*, p. 27.

¹⁷² Khalid, *Muslim Cultural Reform*, 1998, p. 62; Bacon, *Central Asians*, pp. 109-110; Holdsworth, *Turkestan*, p. 19. Native textile manufacturing persisted nonetheless. Those peasants who retained their right to work a plot of land, i.e. the means of production, were still able to produce some cotton for their own textiles. See Allworth, ed., *Central Asia*, p. 310.

¹⁷³ Bacon, *Central Asians*, pp. 109-110.

¹⁷⁴ Holdsworth, *Turkestan*, p. 16. Whether this putting-out system was also based on a sort of debt bondage system as it was in India remains to be investigated. The degraded quality of the crafts may reflect intense pressure from the "organizers" to produce the goods. See also Liashchenko, *Istoriia Narodnogo Khozjastva*, p. 546. Curtis claims that many women involved in carpet weaving were having materials advanced to them by commission men of "the big rug houses". See Curtis, *Turkestan*, p. 320.

Replacing many of the traditional artisan and craft industries were the ginning operations sprouting up along the railroad lines in Turkestan, which obviously reflected the economic priorities of the Russian state. By 1913, cotton ginning represented eighty to eighty-five percent of Turkestan's industrial output.¹⁷⁵ It also provided the greatest employment of any industry in the Turkestan *guberniya*.¹⁷⁶ While a majority of these gins were owned and operated by local firms, the largest of them were controlled by Russian companies.¹⁷⁷ These gins would be the limit of industrial development allowed by the Russian colonial authorities in Turkestan. Indeed, the Tsarist regime had no intention of Central Asia fulfilling any role other than cotton colony.¹⁷⁸ This was demonstrated quite clearly in an episode in 1910, when a Russian entrepreneur applied for permission to build a textile factory in Samarkand. According to Soviet historian A.S. Aminov, Governor-General Samsonov (1909-1910) responded, "Give him an unfavorable reply...Indicate that developing a cotton mill industry in this region [would]...undermine that industry in central Russia and deprive the railroads of freight."¹⁷⁹ Even Pierce, who

¹⁷⁵ Liashchenko, *Istoriia Narodnogo Khozjastva*, p. 547; Whitman, "Turkestan Cotton," p. 202; Lipovsky, "Cotton Epic," p. 533; Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, pp. 196-197; Mackenzie, "Turkestan's Significance," p. 183; Allworth, ed., *Central Asia*, p. 320.

¹⁷⁶ Allworth, *Central Asia*, p. 320.

¹⁷⁷ Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 197. See also Liashchenko, *Istoriia Narodnogo Khozjastva*, p. 549, who remarks on the monopolistic character of Russian ginning operations.

¹⁷⁸ A state report in 1911 stipulated that "Fergana [sic] and Turkestan...would fulfill their economic purpose only if cotton and silk output were developed to the utmost." See MacKenzie, "Turkestan's Significance," p. 182. See also, D'Encausse, *Islam*, p. 43.

¹⁷⁹ Quoted in MacKenzie, "Turkestan's Significance," p. 138.

evaluated the new trade relationship between Russia and Turkestan as being generally positive, was forced to admit it was strongly slanted in the imperial core's favor:

Although trade between European Russia and Central Asia was demonstrably to the advantage of each, Central Asia nevertheless remained in the more dependent, less advantageous position. Like most colonies of that day, it was limited to being a producer of raw materials, which were partly processed and sent to European Russia to be converted into final form, after which they were often sent back to Central Asia for sale as manufactured goods.¹⁸⁰

¹⁸⁰ Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, pp. 198-199. See also Allworth, ed., *Central Asia*, p. 330; MacKenzie, "Turkestan's Significance," p. 184.

Balance Sheets

In consideration of these developments, it would seem difficult to claim that the tsarist government was not consciously seeking to turn the region into a cash cow for the empire. While Morrison's recent account of the Russian colonial period has dredged up tsarist era claims about Turkestan being a wholly unprofitable drain on the imperial treasury, such assertions were effectively debunked long ago.¹⁸¹ Morrison is undoubtedly right that if the Russian Empire had taken the British approach and raised a native army to police Turkestan while charging the local population for the upkeep of that army, Turkestan would have been a far greater source of revenue for the tsarist regime.¹⁸² The Russians' paranoia regarding Muslim "fanaticism", however, was such that this approach was not even considered an option.¹⁸³ Therefore, it was true that the determination of the Russian authorities to maintain an imperial garrison in the colony added significantly to expenditures there, but it seems they were not so much as to make Turkestan a loss producing enterprise. But even if one were to accept claims that expenditures in the new

¹⁸¹ Morrison, *Russian Rule*, pp. 32-33. For a convincing refutation, see MacKenzie, "Turkestan's Significance," pp. 173-75, p. 185. See also, David MacKenzie, "Kaufman of Turkestan: An Assessment of His Administration 1867-1881," *Slavic Review* 26, 2 (Jun., 1967), pp. 272-74, 276.

¹⁸² Morrison, *Russian Rule*, p. 31. Indeed it was by sleight of hand in counting military expenditures that opponents of the Turkestan project in the Finance Ministry and elsewhere were able to "prove" that the colony was not performing its necessary role of revenue generator for the mother country. For a fairly extensive catalogue of Britain's methods of surplus extraction in India, see Bagchi, *Perilous Passage*, pp. 239-248.

¹⁸³ On the tsarist regime's primordial fear of Islam, see Daniel Brower, *Turkestan and the Fate of the Russian Empire*, New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, pp. 29-35; but also Morrison, *Russian Rule*, pp. 51-86; Khalid, *Muslim Cultural Reform*, pp. 59-61.

colony exceeded revenues due to the amount of military operations needed to stabilize the region, the Finance Ministry itself was forced to admit that Turkestan was definitely turning a profit for Russia by 1906.¹⁸⁴ Moreover, regardless of the overall revenue generated for the state, one should not lose sight of how profitable Turkestan became for Russian industrialists and bankers, whose interests in the colony were not overlooked by the authorities, many of which hoped the colony would free Russia of its dependence on American cotton.¹⁸⁵ In any event, Russia's trade turnover with Central Asia (including Bukhara and Khiva) had reached four hundred million rubles by 1910, with the latter exchanging mostly raw materials for finished products and manufactures from the former.¹⁸⁶ In addition, Russia's commanding position in Turkestan also allowed it to increase its trade with surrounding countries like Iran, Afghanistan and China. Trade with these countries would equal about thirty two million rubles by 1910, with the pattern of trade being similar to that of Russia and Central Asia.¹⁸⁷ These basic facts would lead one to believe that Turkestan (along with the so-called protectorates) was considerably profitable for the Russian Empire and was thus accordingly a highly valued acquisition.

¹⁸⁴ MacKenzie, "Turkestan's Significance," p. 185. It is likely that only with the completion of the Central Asian Railroad could Turkestan generate enough revenue for the state to make it impossible for the Finance Ministry and other opponents to sustain the misleading statistics regarding its unprofitability.

¹⁸⁵ This hope was expressed not only by successive agricultural ministers but by Count Pahlen himself during his investigations of Turkestan. See MacKenzie, "Turkestan's Significance," pp. 180, 183.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., pp. 184-85.

¹⁸⁷ That is, raw materials were exchanged for Russian manufactures. Ibid., p. 185.

Although the new colonial order was undoubtedly beneficial to the Russian Empire and many of its most privileged subjects, one would be hard pressed to say the same for Turkestan itself. It is not to be doubted that a goodly number of native entrepreneurs and merchants were able to capitalize on the new terms and methods of commerce that the Russian Empire introduced. As Adeeb Khalid points out, the advent of the cash crop economy led to the “emergence of a prosperous city-based class of merchants and middlemen”, which, incidentally, “did more to alter the social terrain in Central Asia than any conscious government policy.”¹⁸⁸ In other words, a native bourgeoisie was fashioned during this period – the members of which indeed became fantastically wealthy. This, however, says nothing about the masses of peasants working in the fields and mines, or on the railroads (and often they did a mixture of these things).

To be sure, the state of change in the rural areas was so great that even Bartol’d was moved to acknowledge it, quoting an official 1911 report on the Ferghana region that noted widespread phenomena “like ‘sale of land for repayment of debt, concentration of land in the hands of wealthier individuals, the formation of an agricultural proletariat’, [and] in general ‘a deep disturbance of the economic life of the native population’.”¹⁸⁹ These findings by the tsarist representatives in Turkestan do not give one the impression that living conditions were vastly improving for the peasantry under the colonial regime.

¹⁸⁸ Khalid, *Muslim Cultural Reform*, pp. 62-63.

¹⁸⁹ Bartol’d, “Istoriia kul’turnoy zhizni,” pp. 362-363.

Unsurprisingly, the tremendous wealth being generated in the region was being distributed most unequally, while at the same time the Turkestan administration was failing to adequately expand the amount of irrigated land for the natives. As John Whitman explains:

It must be kept in mind that the population of the General Gubernija increased by fully one-third during the period 1897-1913, resulting in a congestion on the land which made per capita gains in consumption difficult to achieve. The real profits from cotton went rather to the new bourgeoisie, largely native, who carried out credit operations and the processing of raw cotton. Utilization rights and rents for an increasing portion of the irrigated area passed into the hands of the first of these groups. Those in the second group came to dominate the industrial life of Turkestan...It is probable that, on balance, the peasant's living standards underwent no appreciable change as a statistical average, the profits of the more enterprising and fortunate of them being cancelled by the losses of those who fell into the class of hired laborers or tenant farmers.¹⁹⁰

That such developments like increasing class differentiation, growing land concentration and an expanding population with limited employment opportunities led to a gradual erosion of already low living standards need not be strongly doubted, since these phenomena have been observable in peripheralizing countries all over the world.¹⁹¹ This

¹⁹⁰ Whitman, "Turkestan Cotton," p. 202. Thurman suggests that land congestion in Ferghana was a major barrier to standard of living increases during the rise of the Kokand khanate as well. See Thurman, "Irrigation Agriculture," p. 49.

¹⁹¹ See, for example, Andre Gunder Frank, *Dependent Accumulation and Underdevelopment*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1979, pp. 152-153. The decline of the global peasantry through these processes continues even today. See Farshad Araghi, "The Great Global Enclosure of Our Times: Peasants and the Agrarian Question at the End of the Twentieth Century," Ed. Fred Magdoff et al. *Hungary for Profit: The Agribusiness Threat to Farmers, Food and the Environment*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000, pp. 145-159.

was certainly true of British India, where the native population suffered a substantial decline in living standards and income levels as result of colonization.¹⁹²

Rural women were likely also negatively impacted by the new colonial order, as has been the case in many other countries. According to developmental economist Ester Boserup's landmark study, women's impoverishment has historically worsened under colonial regimes. As Boserup explains:

Those rulers who had for centuries subjugated and reduced their own women to the status of deskilled, de-intellectualized appendages, discriminated against the women of the colonies on access to land, technology and employment. The economic and political processes of colonial underdevelopment were clear manifestations of modern Western patriarchy, and while large numbers of men as well as women were impoverished by these processes, women tended to be the greater losers. The privatization of land for revenue generation affected women more seriously, eroding their traditional land use-rights. The expansion of cash crops undermined food production, and when men migrated or were conscripted into forced labor by the colonizers women were often left with meager resources to feed and care for their families.¹⁹³

Although the issue has been insufficiently investigated, Elizabeth Bacon asserts that the transition to cash-crop monoculture meant women were forced to spend far more time doing agricultural work in addition to their normal duties.¹⁹⁴ According to the Soviet ethnographers, Tolstova et al, toward the end of the nineteenth century, women's presence in *mardikor*, or day labor, had grown immensely in the cotton areas, where they

¹⁹² Before the British conquest and colonization, living standards were arguably higher for the average Indian than for the average Brit. See Bagchi, *Perilous Passage*, pp. 145-166, but also Wallerstein, *MWS III*, pp. 157-58.

¹⁹³ Boserup, Ester. *Women's Role in Economic Development*. Allen and Unwin, London, 1960. Block quote is a summary of her work provided by Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva, *Ecofeminism*, London: Zed Books, distributed in the USA by St. Martin's, 1993, p. 74.

¹⁹⁴ Bacon, *Central Asians*, p. 111.

were paid significantly less than men for picking cotton.¹⁹⁵ In the Turkmen oases, the Russian colonial authorities' abolition of slavery prompted the Turkmen to send their women out to the fields to do the agricultural work that their Persian slaves had always done.¹⁹⁶ In the urban areas too though, women were seemingly having greater constraints placed on their freedom of movement and dress; partly in reaction to the influx of Russians to the area, but also due to the changing norms and financial means of the new merchant class located in the city.¹⁹⁷

Accompanying the process of incorporation and peripheralization of Turkestan was the familiar development of accelerated environmental devastation.¹⁹⁸ While this aspect of the Russian colonial period in Turkestan has apparently also been scantily studied, there are some things that are known. Peasant agriculture in Turkestan was long plagued by the overly fragmented nature of landholdings, which drastically limited the ability of farmers to practice crop rotation, whereby a substantial portion of his land might be left fallow.¹⁹⁹ Nevertheless, since farming was mostly of a subsistence nature

¹⁹⁵ Tolstova et al, *Narody*, p. 184. They point out that the fact that *mardikor* labor was paid in money was in and of itself a major change for the region, as it had previously been paid in kind.

¹⁹⁶ Bacon, *Central Asians*, p. 105.

¹⁹⁷ Khalid, *Muslim Cultural Change*, pp. 222-23. See also Douglas Northrop, *Veiled Empire: Gender & Power in Stalinist Central Asia*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004, pp. 42-46; Marianne Kamp, *The New Woman in Uzbekistan: Islam, Modernity, and Unveiling under Communism*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006, pp. 29-31, pp. 134-144.

¹⁹⁸ On the expansion of the European world-system and its consequences for the environment, see Moore, "MWS as Environmental History?," *passim*; Foster, *Vulnerable Planet*, pp. 85-107.

¹⁹⁹ Whitman, "Turkestan Cotton," p. 197. It would be surprising if the American variety, being alien to region, was not also more susceptible to native varieties of pestilence. This factor would be duly amplified in any event due to the fact that it was grown in monoculture.

before the Russian conquest, there was adequate diversity in the crop culture as well as some efforts at soil nutrient restoration – usually accomplished by planting alfalfa for fodder.²⁰⁰ Beginning in the 1880s, however, as the peasants were continually driven to cultivate cotton as a result of tax incentives and the debt cycle, this already fragile balance was definitively upset. The peasants began growing the much thirstier American variety in an intensive fashion, with little to no opportunity to rotate crops, much less leave land fallow. This had the predictable effect of rapidly exhausting the soil, which undoubtedly contributed to the agricultural crisis of 1914, not to mention peasant misery.²⁰¹ The introduction of the American variety of cotton itself constituted yet another instance of the imperial “plant transfer” known to almost all European colonial possessions, and thus played a crucial role in the reordering of both the economy and ecology of Turkestan.²⁰²

In addition to these disruptions, Turkestan’s few forested lands were subjected to vigorous exploitation in the early days of colonization as whole tracts of forest were burned off by charcoal merchants supplying fuel for the growing cities, while the forests of the Semirechie area were ravaged by Cossacks and peasant settlers.²⁰³ The construction of railroads across the desert prompted the removal of lots of desert shrubbery to provide

²⁰⁰ Ian M. Matley, “The Golodnaya Steppe: A Russian Irrigation Venture in Central Asia,” *Geographical Review* 60, 3 (Jul.1970), p. 329.

²⁰¹ MacKenzie, “Turkestan’s Significance,” p. 183; Lipovsky, “Cotton Epic,” p. 532.

²⁰² On plant transfer and “ecological imperialism,” see Foster, *Vulnerable Planet*, p. 93. The Russians introduced other new crops to Turkestan, like Chinese ‘dry’ rice, Spanish and French grapes (for alcohol production) and sugar beets. Honey bees were also imported. See Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, pp. 173-174. Needless to say, they were all introduced for the benefit of the Russian economy.

²⁰³ Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, p. 195.

fuel for the trains and to remove perceived obstacles. This had the unforeseen effect of removing an important anchor for the sand and thus led to the formation of many large dunes that began to inhibit train transport in the Transcaspian region.²⁰⁴ The advent of commercial extractive industries in Turkestan such as mineral and coal mining, as well as oil extraction, almost surely had its own consequences for the health of both local ecosystems and the human beings (namely displaced peasants and nomads) involved in them. Lastly, tsarist canal building and irrigation projects caused the salinization of large tracts of land due to their imperfect design and the inexperience of Russian settlers – for whom the land was being irrigated – with this form of agriculture.²⁰⁵ These developments in Turkestan, of course, paled in comparison with the ecological destruction visited on India by British colonization. Military campaigns against the recalcitrant forest dwelling peoples and railroad construction all took a tremendous toll on India's forests, which in turn gave rise to a number of other problems such as soil erosion and flooding.²⁰⁶ Given Turkestan's relative barrenness, there was less need for such destructive behavior on the part of the Russian military and colonial authorities.²⁰⁷ It is instructive, however, that

²⁰⁴ Ibid., pp. 195-96. Arguably this was only a hindrance to Russia's colonial operation, but the effect on local ecology may have been substantial.

²⁰⁵ Matley, "The Golodnaya Steppe," p. 337. British canal construction in India was apparently even more destructive. See Bagchi, *Perilous Passage*, p. 256.

²⁰⁶ On British ecological destruction in India, see Bagchi, *Perilous Passage*, pp. 164-165, pp. 256-259.

²⁰⁷ This was more the case with Russia's conquest of the Caucasus. See Thomas Barrett, *Edge of Empire: The Terek Cossacks and the North Caucasus Frontier, 1700-1860*, Boulder, CO: Westview, 1999.

once these destructive activities began to impinge in some way upon commercial activities in the region, certain conservation measures were finally undertaken.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁸ On Russian conservation efforts, see Pierce, *Russian Central Asia*, pp. 195-96. On British efforts, see Bagchi, *Perilous Passage*, pp. 165, 256-57.

The Significance of Protectorate Autonomy

The difference that direct Russian rule in Turkestan made in terms of transforming the economy, society and space of the region can be easily measured by comparing these annexed lands to the Khivan and Bukharan protectorates. Neither Bukhara nor Khiva were affected in the way, or at least to the degree, that Turkestan and Ferghana were. The protectorates maintained a formal independence that allowed them to flout many of Russia's demands regarding trade rights and access for Russian merchants.²⁰⁹ The land reforms carried out in Turkestan were never implemented in the protectorates, which, incidentally, had the effect of placing a tremendous tax burden on the protectorates' peasantry, who were effectively being forced to pay the taxes that the Russian government imposed on the Bukharan and Khivan states in addition to the usual taxes owed to the emir/khan and their tax collectors.²¹⁰ This also meant the tsarist government could not resort to the kind of tax manipulation it employed in Turkestan to encourage the cultivation of cotton, particularly the American strands. For that reason, the majority of cotton produced in Bukhara and Khiva continued to be of the old native varieties throughout the period of tsarist colonization.²¹¹ This also meant that the two protectorates

²⁰⁹ Becker, *Russia's Protectorates*, pp. 170-180.

²¹⁰ On their exclusion from land reform, see Lipovsky, "Cotton Epic," p. 531. On the onerous tax burden placed on Bukharan peasants, see Becker, *Russia's Protectorates*, p. 199; D'Encausse, *Islam*, pp. 49-51.

²¹¹ Becker, *Russia's Protectorates*, p. 182; Whitman, "Turkestan Cotton," p. 193. Curtis claims, however, that the Bukharan peasants had wanted to plant upland cotton, but "the planters...are not permitted to pick their cotton until the

would not come to specialize in cotton to the degree that Turkestan, especially Ferghana, did – although there is evidence that a division of labor between cotton and grain arose in some parts.²¹² This is not to say that the protectorates were ultimately immune from these processes, but they tended to absorb the influence of the Turkestan administration's measures "in a much more gradual and partial fashion."²¹³ Therefore, Russian commercial banks lending money to native middlemen, merchant bottlenecks, debt peonage, land eviction and concentration, proletarianization and a decline in native manufactures were not unknown in the protectorates – they were just not as generalized.²¹⁴ Nevertheless, both protectorates developed a pattern of exchange with Russia whereby they exported raw materials and imported finished goods, although this was only definitively accomplished with the improvement of transport links and the incorporation of Bukhara into Russia's customs border in 1895.²¹⁵ Moreover, toward the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, the emir himself began to sell land directly to Russian capitalists who sought to develop it for cotton growing, while the

government officials come around to assess the crop for taxation, and they take their own time. If the assessor delays too long the planter is likely to lose his whole crop [because if the fibre of the upland plant is not picked promptly it falls out and it ruined], but the native cotton remains in the boll and therefore is safe; and they cannot take chances." Curtis, *Turkestan*, p. 307.

²¹² Becker, *Russia's Protectorates*, p. 183. Regarding the growing division of labor in Bukhara, as opposed to Khiva, see Holdsworth, *Turkestan*, p. 26.

²¹³ Whitman, "Turkestan Cotton," p. 193.

²¹⁴ On the presence of these phenomena, see D'Encausse, *Islam*, pp. 39-46. On their limited nature in comparison with Turkestan, see Becker, *Russia's Protectorates*, pp. 170-191.

²¹⁵ On the change in exports and imports, see D'Encausse, *Islam*, p. 42. On the establishment of new transport links and the customs border as the crucial elements in this transformation, see Becker, *Russia's Protectorates*, pp. 170-180.

continued independence of the protectorates was coming under sustained attack.²¹⁶ The tsarist regime had long resisted calls for the protectorates' annexation, since many influential figures in the government felt it would be too costly and unproductive an affair. The government was more concerned with maintaining Tashkent as the cultural and commercial center of the region; and, according to documents presented by the Soviet historian N.A. Khalfin, the tsarist government felt it better to keep Bukhara and Khiva around so as to show how progressive Russian administration was compared to the repressive and ultra-taxing governments of the protectorates.²¹⁷ Nevertheless, in 1912 diplomatic instructions were sent to the Turkestan governor-generalship that stated the tsarist regime did not rule out the possibility of direct annexation in the future, but qualified that this act would be put off until that moment when "for political or other reasons the imperial government acknowledges it to be timely."²¹⁸ Therefore, the abolition of the protectorates was likely only a matter of time.

²¹⁶ Becker, *Russia's Protectorates*, pp. 187-88, 211-225. The sale of land in Bukhara to Russian entrepreneurs was a significant event since Russians were forbidden to buy or own land in the Turkestan *guberniya*.

²¹⁷ Khalfin, *Muslim Cultural Reform*, pp. 406-419.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 417.

Russian Autocracy versus Capitalism

In his explanation of capitalism's need for a multi-state system, Wallerstein asserts that:

[A] capitalist system requires a very special relationship between economic producers and the holders of political power. If the latter are too strong, as in a world-empire, their interests will override those of the economic producers, and the endless accumulation of capital will cease to be a priority.²¹⁹

As mentioned above, Russia's ability to resist deindustrialization, along with its expansion into the southeast, enabled the country to assume a position as a semiperipheral state in the modern world-system, as opposed to becoming a wholly peripheralized one.²²⁰ Yet at the same time, Russia seemed to maintain a kind of world-empire dynamic that arguably operated in the fashion that Schumpeter described above. The Russian monarchy appreciated the economic role the bourgeoisie played in the empire and did much to create a favorable environment in which those economic actors could operate. Nevertheless, the regime maintained a separate, indeed outmoded, understanding of its own interests, which were almost never subordinated to those of the bourgeoisie.²²¹ This state of affairs undoubtedly impeded the process of capital accumulation that Wallerstein sees as being so crucial to success in the modern world-system.

²¹⁹ Wallerstein, *Introduction*, p. 24.

²²⁰ Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 152, 186-187.

²²¹ To be sure, those interests were certainly being defined in a most atavistic fashion, namely: Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality (Pravoslavie, Samoderzhavie i Narodnost).

This dynamic seems observable in the Russian Empire's expansion into and colonization of southern Central Asia. The Russian monarchy, persuaded by certain members of the bureaucracy and military caste, seemingly sanctioned the conquest of the Central Asian khanates to expand the commercial opportunities of the empire's bourgeoisie and to gain some kind of political and diplomatic leverage over Britain by threatening her possessions in India.²²² Thus the Kokand khanate was pushed back (and eventually abolished), whereas Bukhara and Khiva were forcibly made to accede to all of Russia's long standing trade demands. Tashkent, which was placed firmly under Russian control, was then fashioned into the new commercial center of the region, largely in a bid to usurp Bukhara's prestige and influence. Russian trading posts were set up on Bukhara's borders with Iran and Afghanistan, so that Russia could conduct more direct trade with those countries. With the abolition of Kokand, the most fertile lands of the region, located in the Ferghana Valley, were directly annexed to Russia. The tsarist administrators then set about colonizing the lands directly under Russian control, which proved to be quite profitable for Russian commercial interests. The tsarist state also bore the costs of maintaining domestic order and built the railroads and telegraph lines that became crucial for the industrialists' activities.

²²² As Kagarlitskii points out, though, one cannot neatly separate Russia's strategic and diplomatic concerns vis-à-vis Britain from its economic ones. See Kagarlitskii, *Periferiinaia Imperiia*, pp. 344-47.

Nevertheless, the Russian state, while undoubtedly having performed some critical services in Turkestan for the Russian bourgeoisie, limited its capitalists' ability to extract profit in the region in a number of important ways. Despite its wariness of Muslim "fanaticism", the tsarist regime was still intent on pursuing the policy of *grazhdanstvennost'* (citizenship) and *sliianie* (rapprochement), whereby Turkestan would, in theory, gradually be integrated into the legal and administrative structures of the Russian empire, which in turn would occasion the native population's cultural integration.²²³ This overarching goal would lead the governor-generals in charge of the territory to enact "paternalistic legislation to protect Central Asians from outsiders."²²⁴ While such paternalistic policies were undeniably linked to concerns of the state and its local representatives about maintaining stability in the region, they stemmed ultimately from a desire of the authorities to demonstrate the enlightened ways of the Russian empire and distinguish it from brutal colonial powers like Britain and France.²²⁵ In any event, these policies served to inhibit economic exploitation of the region by metropolitan capital and thus interfered with the process of capital accumulation in Russia proper. A few brief examples should illustrate this.

²²³ For a discussion of this policy in relation to Turkestan, see Brower, *Turkestan and the Fate*, pp. 27-35. For a useful explanation of this policy's origins and evolution as well as how it was applied in other borderlands, see Paul Werth, *At the Margins of Orthodoxy: Mission, Governance, and Confessional Politics in Russia's Volga-Kama Region, 1827-1905*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002, pp. 133-40.

²²⁴ Khalid, *Muslim Cultural Change*, p. 64.

²²⁵ According to Morrison, Russia's attempts to implement a more "enlightened" colonial policy in Turkestan was done partly to undermine British authority in India. See Morrison, *Russian Rule*, pp. 1-30. Ironically, the Soviet government would pursue a similar policy – termed the 'piedmont principle' by Terry Martin – in all its borderlands in the 1920s.

As Wallerstein points out, an important moment in the process of incorporation and peripheralization is when the multitier structure of trading begins to be broken down in a way that allows the merchants of the imperialist power more direct control over the producers:

At the [colonies'] ports there were merchants, or exporter-importers, who represented European firms and were usually Europeans. These merchants dealt in turn with large-scale brokers or intermediaries who were itinerant traders (in French, the *negociants*), who in turn dealt with other intermediaries who were itinerant traders (in French, the *traitants*), and it was they who normally dealt with direct producers. It is usually at the level of the brokers that we have concentration wherever there was small-scale production. It is these brokers who would later be absorbed and replaced by the European firms, as the zone fell under colonial rule.²²⁶

In the case of Russian Turkestan, however, the possibility of Russian capitalists replacing the local intermediaries was made virtually impossible by the restrictions that the 1886 legislation placed on Russians and other foreigners in terms of land ownership. Therefore, far from being phased out or replaced, the native intermediaries were in fact institutionalized and became something of a competing faction of capital in the region. This was obviously a significant barrier to greater capital accumulation in the imperial center and prevented the kind of improvements in Turkestan's agriculture that might have increased efficiency and thus yields. This situation was not much different in Bukhara. Even when the emir himself attempted to sell land to Russian entrepreneurs for development, the imperial state actively intervened to try to prevent the transaction, albeit

²²⁶ Wallerstein, *MWS III*, p. 157.

to no avail.²²⁷ Meanwhile, the Russian state apparently expended little effort to protect its traders and merchants from the Bukharan government's discrimination and illegal taxes, its installation of a British India-style 'political agent' notwithstanding.²²⁸ The situation in Khiva was similar, if not worse.²²⁹ The tsarist government was by no means indifferent to these violations of its merchants' trade rights, but the only real solution to the problem would have been to dissolve the protectorates and annex them directly to the Russian empire – a move that the government was loath to make.

In addition to these bans on property ownership by non-Central Asians, the tsarist regime also proved rather reluctant to allow Russian capitalists to invest in or control major infrastructural projects. Although the regime had placed a high priority on facilitating Russian migration to the area in order to consolidate its rule there, this policy was greatly retarded by insufficient expansion of irrigation.²³⁰ Given the high costs of building new irrigation networks and canals, the state began to solicit private capital to undertake these projects. A group of Moscow textile manufacturers responded to these overtures by forming the Moscow Irrigation Company in 1909. This new venture, however, was less interested in irrigating new lands for Russian settlers, which was the state's priority, and more concerned with expanding irrigation in Ferghana, where natives

²²⁷ Becker, *Russia's Protectorates*, pp. 186-188.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 172-175.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 178-180.

²³⁰ MacKenzie, "Turkestan's Significance," pp. 185-187.

were producing the cotton that Moscow capitalists' factories needed.²³¹ The state's paternalistic approach to the natives, and its demands for favorable water access for colonists, proved to be highly discouraging for the company, which did not view such conditions as being particularly conducive to profit-making. Adding insult to injury the government demanded that the irrigation works eventually be turned over to the state for exploitation.²³² As Joffe points out, ultimately, "the state sought to reap the benefits of the entrepreneurs' labor."²³³ The tsarist regime thus sought to exploit its own bourgeoisie, instead of helping it to exploit the natives of Turkestan, a far different approach than that of the British government in India.

²³¹ Joffe, "Autocracy," pp. 371-388.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Ibid., p. 380.

Conclusion

The changes that Turkestan underwent as a result of the Russian conquest and colonization of the region evidently correspond with the transformations that Wallerstein identified in several other regions of the world around the same time, particularly India, with which Morrison had sought to compare Central Asia. As the zone was incorporated into the modern world-system, there was an obvious shift in import and export patterns, whereby raw materials were increasingly being exchanged for finished goods and manufactures. In order to coordinate and organize the production of raw materials, larger decision-making units developed that established a bottleneck through which a multitude of petty producers would channel their products. These petty producers were in turn coerced by the instrument of debt bondage. Subsistence farming and the natural economy were undermined by increased monetization of the economy, cash crop specialization, dispossession and proletarianization. Spatial and ecological transformation was accomplished through plant transfer, the construction of railroads, ginning factories and new irrigation works – all of which had an impact on the physical integrity of the local environment and the human beings residing there.

These transformations were tempered, however, due to the fact that they were facilitated by a state that was being increasingly peripheralized itself. As a result, comparatively little capital was available for the exploitation of colonial possessions. In

addition, the tsarist autocracy, bolstered mainly by a landed aristocracy that was engaged largely in peripheral production processes (i.e. grain production for export) in the European portion of the empire, was insufficiently supportive of its merchant and industrial capitalists' efforts at capital accumulation in the empire. At the same time, the Russian monarchy likewise remained too strong in relation to the bourgeoisie, and would at times actively prevent their efforts at capital accumulation whenever the latter's interests impinged on the monarchy's rather anachronistic notions of state interests. This put a firm brake on the level of exploitation of the colonies that Russian capital was allowed to pursue. This is why Alexander Morrison is likely correct when he writes in the conclusion of his recent study that Russian colonial rule in Turkestan was not quite as bad as British rule in India. Indeed, despite the obvious misery of many of the peasants living in the Turkestan *guberniya* – especially in Ferghana – the region never suffered the kinds of mass famines that came to characterize British India at the end of the nineteenth century.²³⁴ In light of the tsarist regime's paternalism vis-à-vis the natives, it is difficult to imagine a situation whereby the governor-general of Turkestan would have allowed Russian capitalists to intentionally hoard grain to maintain high prices for those goods

²³⁴ On Britain's colonial policies in India and the rise of mega famines, see Bagchi, *Perilous Passage*, pp. 252-260; Beckert, "Emancipation and Empire," p. 1434. See also Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts*, passim.

even in the face of mass peasant starvation.²³⁵ Outright starvation was likely prevented in Turkestan due to the import of cheap, subsidized grain from European Russia, whereas in India, British capitalists were exporting grain out of that country. Starvation came to Turkestan only once grain shipments were interrupted during the civil war. Nevertheless, since tsarist policies of deliberately creating grain dependency in Turkestan were obviously responsible for this state of affairs, the regime was no less responsible for the resulting famine.

Paternalistic policies of the tsarist regime notwithstanding, the overall trajectory of its policies in Central Asia pointed to an increasingly thorough exploitation of the region. As Muriel Joffe observes:

In many areas, the tsarist government's plans for the development of the region foreshadowed those adopted by the Soviet authorities. In addition to the obvious emphasis on cotton advocated by both governments, the Soviets built many of the irrigation networks envisaged by tsarist planners, as well as certain railroads linking Central Asia with Siberia. Had the tsarist government been able to implement its plans for the region, its policies might have resulted in some of the environmental problems associated with Soviet irrigation policies and promotion of monoculturalism in Central Asia: soil exhaustion, a reduction in agricultural productivity and the desiccation of the Aral Sea.²³⁶

²³⁵ This was what Britain did though. See Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts*, passim. According to Michael Perelman: In 1878, India saw the establishment of the famed parliamentary Indian Famine Commission, which told Parliament that the best response to the problem of famine was to let the market take its course. "[T]his, it is believed, will best subserve the interests of both Europe and India." The British, who stole the lands and rigged the economy, even opposed giving preference to railroad cars moving toward famine-stricken areas; such an action would violate the sacred laws of supply and demand. Perelman, *Farming for Profit*, p. 111.

²³⁶ Joffe, "Autocracy," pp. 387-88.

Similarly in the dying days of Russian tsardom, increasing pressure from Russian industrialists was leading to a gradual erosion of the ban on foreign property ownership and prohibitive regulations on water usage.²³⁷ Tsarist officials were likewise calling for the liquidation of native firms providing credit to local farmers in favor of more direct loans from Russian banks and textile manufacturers.²³⁸ All this gives one the impression that, in time, a more efficient exploitation of Turkestan might have come about had the tsarist regime not been toppled. Yet, it is likely that the restrictions placed by the tsarist regime on capital accumulation by its bourgeoisie (in addition to the more powerful landed aristocracy's specialization in low value added export of raw materials to western Europe) was a not insignificant factor in the tsarist regime's demise.

²³⁷ Ibid., pp. 379-85

²³⁸ MacKenzie, "Turkestan's Significance," pp. 182-83.

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