

‘Applied Orientalism’ in British India and Tsarist Turkestan

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‘We cannot promise to those who may choose Oriental scholarship, that they shall find themselves abreast, in all the various high-roads of life which lead to profit and distinction, with the men who shall have devoted themselves to acquiring the knowledge which in these days is power, the intellectual treasures which make fifty years of Europe better than a cycle in Cathay, which are the sinews of peaceful empire as surely as money is the sinew of war.’¹

Writing in 1872, Sir Alfred Lyall, Governor of the North-Western Provinces of British India, was talking about the reluctance amongst many of the old Muslim scholarly class of North India to embrace the modern, enlightened, learning of the West. For Lyall to be an ‘Orientalist’ was to be one of those Anglo-Indian advocates of state support for ‘Oriental Learning’ - the study of Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit - in the tradition established by Warren Hastings and Sir William Jones, who had been worsted by the ‘Anglicists’ led by Lord Macaulay in 1835. To adopt the meaning popularised by the late Edward Said, we might say that whilst Lyall makes a classic ‘Orientalist’ judgement about the value of Eastern civilization, he is also making an observation about the relationship between knowledge and power which still resonates today. Lyall is consciously echoing Macaulay’s notorious statement, that ‘a single shelf of a good European Library was worth the whole literature of India and Arabia’,² which has often been taken as a byword for the arrogance of Europeans confronted with an Orient to which they felt themselves superior. The obvious point is that Macaulay had no interest in Oriental knowledge or knowledge of the Orient: he was not an Orientalist at all. Perhaps this is why Said himself dealt with Macaulay only tangentially.³

This vignette shows clearly enough how the meaning of ‘Orientalist’ has changed (and continues to change) over the years. For the purposes of this article I will use the term (without inverted commas) to indicate a scholar who studies the East, normally the Islamic world and its dominant languages of Arabic, Persian and Turkic. When referring to Edward Said’s largely pejorative use of it, I shall place it in inverted commas. As the example of Macaulay suggests, sometimes a distinction needs to be made between ‘Orientalist’ attitudes, and the role played by Orientalists and the knowledge they produced in furthering or securing European colonialism. Although this is not a meaning he intended, Lyall’s observation also suggests that the link between the acquisition of Oriental knowledge by Europeans and their exercise of power over the Orient is not as clear as is often assumed. I do not wish to engage in a general debate on the nature or merits of Said’s ideas in *Orientalism*: this has been covered exhaustively by scholars much better-qualified than me to engage fully with his arguments, particularly at the level of discourse and representation.⁴

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¹ Alfred Lyall ‘Islam in India’ *Asiatic Studies* (London, 1882) p.252

² L. Zastoupil & M. Moir (ed.) *The Great Indian Education Debate. Documents relating to the Orientalist-Anglicist Controversy* (London, 1999) p.165

³ Edward Said *Orientalism. Western Conceptions of the Orient* (Harmondsworth, 1995) p.152

⁴ In opposition, the classic statement was made by Bernard Lewis ‘The Question of Orientalism’ *New York Review of Books* 29/11 24th June 1982; Aijaz Ahmad pointed out that Said’s analysis of the relationships of power between West and East concentrated on culture to such an extent that it largely omitted class and other forms of social hierarchy: *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures* (London, 1992) pp.159-219; More recently Robert Irwin’s *For Lust of Knowing* (Harmondsworth, 2006) covers the problems with Said’s ideas in relation to academic Orientalism more exhaustively than I could ever hope to.

Said occasionally hinted that the vast epistemological construction which he outlined in *Orientalism* was capable of producing its own reality, that denigrating and manipulative ‘Orientalist’ stereotypes could be absorbed and internalised by their subjects, rendering them ripe for Western imperial domination, but this question was less important to him than the discursive practices which produced this body of knowledge in the first place.⁵ Said also concentrated largely on European writing about Middle-Eastern territories which, with the exception of Egypt, had been either independent or under Ottoman Rule during the heyday of Imperial expansion in the 19th century. However, even before *Orientalism* was published other scholars had begun to argue that there was an intimate relationship between academic and literary knowledge of the Orient and the extension of European imperial power in the oldest and most extensive European possession in the Orient, namely Algeria and, the pre-eminent example, British India. It was here that colonial states existed which could use the knowledge produced by Orientalists in creating revenue settlements, drawing up law codes, administering censuses and formulating policies that might directly affect the lives of millions: as Lyall also wrote in 1872

‘...there are other cases in which the action of our own law courts, in stereotyping and enforcing invariably customs that were naturally very elastic and varying, tended to check the natural modifications according to circumstances, the sloughing off of decayed forms...’⁶

The manner in which ‘colonial knowledge’, once employed by the colonial state on a mass scale, could begin to transform colonised societies, was something first explored by the late Bernard Cohn, to a large extent independently of Said, and others have followed his lead.⁷ There is now a rich literature covering the transformation of legal systems under colonial rule,⁸ the role of ethnographic knowledge in sustaining colonial rule in India,⁹ and the ‘Neo-Orientalisation’ of Indian Society in the early 19th century.¹⁰ Perhaps the most innovative use of Said’s ideas was by C. A. Bayly in demonstrating how the exploitation of pre-existing Indian intelligence and knowledge networks by the East India Company provided it with accurate information which proved crucial to sustaining colonial rule.¹¹

⁵ Said *Orientalism* pp.5, 40, 55, 94, 129-30, 322-8

⁶ Sir Alfred Lyall ‘The Religious Situation in India’ *Asiatic Studies* p.304

⁷ B.S. Cohn ‘The Census, Social Structure and Objectification in South Asia’ *An Anthropologist Amongst the Historians and other essays* (Delhi, 1987) pp.224-254; *Colonialism and its forms of Knowledge. The British in India* (Princeton University Press) 1996

⁸ See for instance D.A. Washbrook ‘Law, State and Agrarian Society in Colonial India’ *Modern Asian Studies* (MAS) 15/3 (1981) pp.649-721; David Powers ‘Orientalism, Colonialism and Legal History: The Attack on Muslim Family Endowments in Algeria and India’ *Comparative Studies in Society & History* (CSSH) 31/3 (1989) pp.535-571; Scott Alan Kugle ‘Framed, Blamed and Renamed: The Recasting of Islamic Jurisprudence in Colonial South Asia’ *MAS* 35/2 (2001) pp.257 – 315; Nandini Bhattacharya-Panda *Appropriation and Invention of Tradition. The East India Company and Hindu Law in Early Colonial Bengal* (Delhi, 2008); Virginia Martin *Law and Custom on the Steppe* (London, 2001); see also Paolo Sartori ‘An Overview of Tsarist Policy on Islamic Courts in Turkestan: Its Genealogy and its Effects’ in Svetlana Gorshenina, Sergey Abashin (ed.) *Turkestan russe: une colonie pas comme les autres?* (Paris, 2009, forthcoming) which is the first instalment in a major project on Islamic courts in Russian Turkestan.

⁹ Nicholas Dirks *Castes of Mind* (Princeton, 2001); Dirks’s dense textual and archival analysis convincingly portrays the pernicious influence which certain types of colonial ethnography have had on his own discipline (although he plays down the diversity of opinions even in the colonial period), but he leaves the impression that the modern Indian idea of caste is largely a result of colonial ‘hegemony’ and manipulation, which infantilises those whose history is ostensibly being ‘rescued’ from colonial narratives.

¹⁰ Washbrook looks at economic transformations in early nineteenth-century India which operated hand in hand with British policies on law, caste and religion in ‘Neo-Orientalising’ Indian society: D.A. Washbrook ‘India 1818-1860’ *The Oxford History of the British Empire* Vol.3 (Oxford, 1999) pp.395-421; this draws on a seminal article by Eric Stokes ‘The First Century of British Colonial Rule in India: Social Revolution or Social Stagnation?’ *Past & Present* 58 (1973) pp.136-60; Seema Alavi provides an interesting case-study of the East India Company’s reinforcement of high-caste ritual and practice in the Bengal army in this period: *The Sepoys and the Company* (Delhi, 1995) pp.75-94

¹¹ C.A. Bayly *Empire and Information* (Cambridge, 1996)

Recently there has been a good deal of debate about the application of theories of ‘Orientalism’ and ‘Colonial forms of Knowledge’ to the Russian Empire:¹² Said himself, as Adeeb Khalid has noted, specifically excluded Russia from his analysis of Western ‘Orientalism’,¹³ although ironically Vera Tolz has shown that in some ways the intellectual genealogy of Said’s ideas can be traced back to critiques of Western scholarship by Russian Orientalists in the late Tsarist period.¹⁴ However, the direct employment of Orientalists and the knowledge they produce by colonial states, together with the actual impact of ‘Orientalist’ attitudes on colonial governance and law, what I call ‘applied Orientalism’, have received less attention than they deserve in the Russian context,¹⁵ and almost none in Central Asia.¹⁶ As Elena Campbell has suggested, this is particularly unfortunate as the development of Oriental Studies in Russia in the 19th century was often closely linked to the administrative needs of newly-conquered borderlands.¹⁷ One reason for this gap is that until 1991 the provincial archives of the various republics of the USSR, whose records were essential for serious historical research on Russian Imperialism, were closed to foreign scholars. Another reason is that, as Vera Tolz has pointed out,¹⁸ despite some valuable contributions in literary studies,¹⁹ much of the writing on this subject has tended either to apply Said’s ideas rather uncritically to Russia or else to argue that Russia’s *Sonderweg*, her status as a ‘Eurasian’ rather than a European Empire, means that Said’s ideas are not applicable to Russian Imperialism at all.²⁰ In this article I wish to look at what I call ‘Applied Orientalism’ in the Russian context – that is, the points at which the study of Oriental languages, religions and societies and the exercise of Imperial power actually intersected. By examining the activities of Orientalists in comparative perspective within the British and Russian empires, I hope to shed more light on the vexed question of whether Russian ‘Orientalism’ was distinctive, or even qualitatively different from that in the Western European Empires, and also the extent to which Orientalists and the knowledge they produced were employed in the structures of Russian Imperial governance.

¹² Although not, alas, in Russia, except insofar as *Orientalism* has been misused to claim that the Russian Empire was solely a victim of ‘Orientalism’ and never a perpetrator. See the devastating critique both of the Russian translation of Said and of those writers who have used his ideas in this way by Vladimir Bobrovnikov ‘Pochemu my marginalny? Zametki na polyakh russkogo perevoda “Orientalizma” Edwarda Saïda’ *Ab Imperio* (AI) 2/2008

¹³ Adeeb Khalid ‘Russian History and the Debate over Orientalism’ *Kritika* 1/4 (2000) pp.694-5

¹⁴ Vera Tolz ‘European, National and (Anti-) Imperial. The Formation of Academic Oriental Studies in late Tsarist and Early Soviet Russia’ *Kritika* 9/1 (2008) pp.78-80

¹⁵ See however Robert Geraci *Window on the East* (Ithaca, NY, 2001); David Schimmelpenninck Van der Oye *Toward the Rising Sun* (DeKalb, Ill.) 2001 esp. 42-60; Austin Jersild *Orientalism and Empire. North Caucasus Mountain Peoples and the Georgian Frontier 1845-1917* (Montreal, 2002)

¹⁶ Marlène Laruelle briefly considers the Turkestan Circle of the Lovers of Archaeology and its members in *Mythe aryen et rêve impérial dans la Russie du XIX^e siècle* (Paris, 2005) pp.169-178, but she is only concerned with uncovering ‘aryanist’ ideas in their writings and not with any possible influence that these had on colonial policy; See however Jeff Sahadeo *Russian Colonial Society in Tashkent* (Bloomington, IN, 2007) pp.57-68 which does consider the role of intellectuals in the Russian colonial administration.

¹⁷ Elena Campbell ‘K voprosu ob Orientalizme v Rossii’ *AI* 1/2002

¹⁸ Vera Tolz ‘Orientalism, Nationalism and Ethnic Diversity in Late Imperial Russia’ *The Historical Journal*, 48/1 (2005) pp.129-131

¹⁹ See Susan Layton *Russian Literature and Empire* (Cambridge, 1994); ‘Nineteenth-Century Russian mythologies of Caucasian Savagery’ in Brower & Lazzerini (ed.) *Russia’s Orient* (Bloomington, IN, 1997) pp.80-99; Harsha Ram *The Imperial Sublime. A Russian Poetics of Empire* (Madison, 2003); Sara Dickinson ‘Russia’s first “Orient”. Characterising the Crimea in 1787’ *Kritika* 3/1 (2002) pp.3-25

²⁰ For examples of the first approach see Kalpana Sahni *Crucifying the Orient* (Bangkok, 1997); Ewa Thompson *Imperial Knowledge: Russian Literature and Colonialism* (Westport, Conn., 2000); of the second Nathaniel Knight ‘Grigor’ev in Orenburg, 1851-1862: Russian Orientalism in the Service of Empire?’ *Slavic Review* 59/1 (2000) pp74-100; To some extent these two views came head to head in a famous debate in *Kritika*. Khalid ‘Debate over Orientalism’ & Nathaniel Knight ‘On Russian Orientalism: A response to Adeeb Khalid’ *Kritika* 1/4 (2000) pp691-715, although Khalid’s approach is much less intemperate and uncritical of Said (and far better-informed) than either Sahni or Thompson, whose ignorance of the basic facts of Russian colonial history is at times startling. See the critique of the former by Harsha Ram in *The Journal of Asian Studies* 57/3 (1998) pp.860-862

The ‘Oriental’ as Orientalist

Said wrote that ‘the Orientalist is outside the Orient’, and considered a strict separation between self and other to be characteristic of ‘Orientalist’ Scholarship. One aspect of this was that ‘Orientals’ themselves were not permitted to participate in its production, so that instead their history, languages and culture were re-created and appropriated by Western authorities for their own ends.²¹ Nicholas Dirks and Ronald Inden both remark on this separation and deny the relevance of dialogue and collaboration in the production of knowledge under colonial ‘hegemony’, whilst Gyan Prakash writes that ‘Orientalism was a European enterprise from the very beginning. The scholars were European; the audience was European; and the Indians figured as inert objects of knowledge.’²²

Confronted with this sort of statement, historians of the Russian empire often point triumphantly to the figure of Mirza Alexander Kazem-Bek, a Persian from Resht who converted to Christianity and became Professor of Arabic and Islamic law at Kazan University,²³ or more famously still Chokan Valikhanov, the Kazakh nobleman whose works became a touchstone for Russian understanding of the Steppe:²⁴ these cases, Nathaniel Knight has argued, show that Russian Orientalism is different from its Western counterpart.²⁵ However, in his pioneering examinations of the colonial census and law Bernard Cohn describes what is clearly a collaborative enterprise of knowledge formation in India, pointing to the importance of Indian census enumerators, and of the Pundits and Maulvies who were the gatekeepers of legal and religious knowledge. Eleven Pundits were responsible for providing Warren Hastings with the Sanskrit text which eventually became Nathaniel Halhed’s *Code of Gentoo Laws*, whilst others would later work with Sir William Jones and Henry Colebrooke.²⁶ James Tod, to take one of the ‘Orientalists’ singled out for particular attention by Ronald Inden, relied upon ‘a learned Jain’ and upon Jati Gyanchandra, the chief pundit at Udaipur, for most of the material that he would later work into that neo-Gothic extravaganza, *The Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*.²⁷ That British Orientalists subsequently re-wrote, distorted and manipulated the knowledge they received from their Indian interlocutors - partly simply through ignorance and misunderstanding but also to serve particular administrative purposes - is undeniable.²⁸ Nevertheless the reasons why, for instance, the Brahminical understanding of Hinduism and the caste system came to predominate amongst the British in India have a great deal to do with the fact that the principal informants for the likes of Jones and Colebrooke were Brahmins, and they had their own agenda to push.²⁹ This

²¹ Said *Orientalism* pp.21, 97

²² Ronald Inden *Imagining India* (Oxford, 1990) pp.3, 36-43; N. Dirks ‘Foreword’ in Cohn *Colonialism and its forms of Knowledge* pp.x-xv; *Castes of Mind* pp.306-12; Gyan Prakash ‘Writing Post-Orientalist Histories of the Third World’ *CSSH* 32/2 (1990) p.384; on the weaknesses of ‘discourse theory’ see D.A. Washbrook ‘Orient and Occidents: Colonial Discourse theory and the Historiography of the British Empire’ in *The Oxford History of the British Empire* Vol.5 (Oxford, 1999) esp. pp.604-611

²³ Devid Skhimmel’pennink van der Oie ‘Mirza Kazem-Bek i Kazanskaya shkola vostokovedeniya’ Gerasimov *et al* (ed.) *Novaya Imperskaya Istoriya Postsovetskogo Prostranstva* (Kazan, 2004) pp.256-69

²⁴ N.I. Veselovskii (ed.) *Sochineniya Chokana Chingisovicha Valikhanova* (St Pb., 1904); S.N. Abashin ‘Osobennosti Rossiiskogo Orientalizma’ *Tsentral’naya Aziya v Sostave Rossiiskoi Imperii* (Moscow, 2008) pp.332-3

²⁵ Knight ‘Grigor’ev in Orenburg’ p.96

²⁶ Cohn ‘The Census and Objectification’ p.248; ‘Law and the Colonial State’ pp.66-72

²⁷ James Tod *The Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan* ed. W. Crooke (Oxford, 1920) Vol.I pp.lxii, 23; Inden in *Imagining India* pp.172-6 interprets Tod’s work as ‘othering’ India through a concept of ‘Rajput feudalism’, suggesting that this is merely a cunning disguise for the usual British beliefs about caste as a uniquely Indian ‘essence’. In fact Tod barely mentions caste at all, and his most elaborate flights of fancy concern the imagined kinship of the Rajputs with the ancient Celts and Scandinavians *Annals and Antiquities* Vol.I pp.73-96; see Norbert Peabody ‘Tod’s Rajasthan and the Boundaries of Imperial Rule in Nineteenth-Century India’ *MAS* 30/1 (1996) pp.185-220

²⁸ Bhattacharya-Panda *Appropriation and Invention of Tradition* pp.5-10, 238-253; she criticises the notion that the production of the code of Hindu personal law was a collaborative process, arguing instead that Brahmin pundits were involved only as salaried servants and were distrusted by their British interlocutors.

²⁹ O.P. Kejariwal *The Asiatic Society of Bengal and the Discovery of India’s Past* (Delhi, 1989) pp.78-9; Susan Bayly *Caste, Society and Politics in India* (Cambridge, 1999) p.95

process of information transfer from Indians to the British helped the latter to rule more effectively until the 1830s, privileging certain groups within Indian society. When a growing sense of racial and cultural superiority led the British to begin to ignore Indian informants and disregard ‘Oriental Knowledge’ in the 1840s and 50s, this information failure contributed heavily to the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny.³⁰

All such examples are open to the objection that this involvement in the early stages of the production and transfer of knowledge does not make ‘Orientals’ equal partners in the enterprise, still less suggest that they gained any representation or recognition in the academic discipline of Orientalism as Mirza Kazem-Bek did in Russia.³¹ However, if we look at published texts and translations (and it is worth remembering that most Orientalists spend most of their time producing these), we can find examples of this in the British Empire as well. The early years of the canonical Gibb series of Oriental texts are dominated by the collaboration between Edward Granville Browne and the Persian scholar Mirza Muhammad Qazvini, culminating in the latter’s seminal text edition of Juwaini’s *Ta’rikh-e Jahan-Gusha*, the first volume of which was published in 1912; in 1949 Arthur Arberry could refer to him as ‘the doyen of modern Persian Studies’.³² Michael Dodson’s recent work on the Government Sanskrit College at Benares has shown that the scholarly work produced there was the product of dialogue between British Sanskritists and Brahmin Pandits, with a preponderant role played by the latter, whose goals and interests were often very different from those of the British.³³ If we now look in detail at the membership and publications of the original Orientalist institution, the Asiatic Society of Bengal, a very different picture emerges from that sketched by Inden or Dirks, or indeed Said himself.³⁴

In his original address on the founding of the Society in 1784 Sir William Jones had said that ‘whether you will enrol as members any number of learned natives, you will hereafter decide’.³⁵ As Dr Rajendra Lal Mitra recalled in the Society’s ‘Centenary Review’:

‘At first it was not expected that the natives of this country would join the society [...] and the question was not mooted for many years afterwards. On January 7th, 1829, Dr H. H. Wilson proposed some native names, and they were elected; similar propositions were subsequently made from time to time, and duly adopted. In the Code of Rules now in force, it is laid down, that “persons of all nations shall be eligible as members of the society.”’³⁶

Although the number of Indian members remained small, as early as 1838 one Babu Ramcomul Sen had been made a Secretary of the Society, and in 1853 he was joined by Ram Gopal Ghose, who in 1858 became a Vice-President.³⁷ Thereafter there was always at least one Indian Vice-President of the Society, although in 1865 there were still only fifty-two Indian members, as opposed to 324 Europeans.³⁸ However if their role in the Society’s governance was limited at this stage, Indians were prominent contributors to its publications. The very first volume of *Asiatick Researches*, the Society’s scholarly proceedings, carried a contribution from an Indian scholar, Pandit Ramlochan, who had been Jones’s Sanskrit tutor.³⁹ It was the Asiatic

³⁰ Bayly *Empire and Information* pp.365-76

³¹ R O’Hanlon & D.A. Washbrook ‘After Orientalism: culture, criticism and politics in the third world’ *CSSH* 34/1 (1992) pp.161-3

³² Mirza Muhammad Ibn ‘Abdu’l-Wahhab-i-Qazvini (ed.) *The Ta’rikh-i-Jahan-gusha* (London, 1912 – 37) 3 Vols. Arthur Arberry *Fifty Poems of Hafiz* (Cambridge, 1949) p.10

³³ Michael Dodson *Orientalism, Empire and National Culture* (London, 2007) pp.184-92

³⁴ Dirks *Castes of Mind* p.105; Inden *Imagining India* pp.45-6; Said *Orientalism* pp.78-9

³⁵ William Jones ‘A Discourse on the Institution of a Society, for inquiring into the History, Civil and Natural, the antiquities, arts, sciences and literature of Asia’ (1784) *Asiatick Researches* Vol.1 (1806) ppix-xvi

³⁶ R. Mitra ‘History of the Society’ *Centenary Review of the Asiatic Society of Bengal from 1784-1883* (Calcutta, 1885) p.8

³⁷ Appendix B *Centenary Review of the Asiatic Society* p87

³⁸ ‘Members’ *Asiatic Society of Bengal Proceedings* (Jan-Dec 1865) (Calcutta, 1866) pp.17-26

³⁹ Ramalochan Pandit ‘A Royal Grant found at Tana’ *Asiatick Researches* Vol.I (London) 1806 pp.357-67; Kejariwal *The Asiatic Society of Bengal* p.47

Society, Dr Mitra recalled, which came to the rescue of the *Bibliotheca Indica* series of publications of important Indian historical, linguistic and philosophical works when its funding was withdrawn by the East India Company following the overthrow of the Orientalists by the Anglicists in the wake of Macaulay's 1835 Minute.

“The Pandits and the Maulvies who had been employed by the Government to edit the works volunteered their services free of charge, and one gentleman, Nawab Tanhar Jang of Chitpur, undertook to defray the entire cost of printing the *Share ul-Islam*.”⁴⁰

Dr Mitra himself produced the first descriptive catalogue of the Society's Sanskrit manuscripts, and the list of Arabic and Persian publications produced in the *Bibliotheca Indica* series by 1883 shows that all but one (the *Ain-i Akbari*) was produced with the involvement of a Muslim scholar (most of them described as ‘Maulvies of the Calcutta Madrasa’,⁴¹ with two, the *Muntakhabat al-Lubab* and the *Maasir-i Alamgiri*, edited by Maulavi Kabir al-Din without any European involvement at all.⁴² The Sanskrit series was edited by a group of two German, three English and five Indian scholars, and out of the total of 266 fascicles produced before 1883, 181 were edited by Indian scholars, Mitra producing thirty of them.⁴³ The list of papers and contributions to the Society's *Proceedings* until 1883 showed 178 articles by Indian scholars, although admittedly 114 of these were by the indefatigable Dr Mitra, mostly on Sanskrit and Pali inscriptions. Interestingly, Mitra also played an important role in drawing up a list of the social precedence of the castes of Bengal for the 1881 census which became a matter of fierce dispute amongst Indian scholars and officials.⁴⁴

By the turn of the century the Asiatic Society was as much an Indian (or at any rate, Bengali) as it was a British institution. In 1908 its President was the Hon. Mr Justice Asutosh Mukhopadhyay, and the list of ordinary members included 146 Indians, or 35% of the total, as opposed to 271 Europeans. Of the thirty-six authors who contributed to that year's *Journal and Proceedings*, nineteen were Indians, although admittedly some were writing on scientific rather than historical or linguistic topics.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, the overall conclusion could hardly be clearer: Orientalism in India was *not* an entirely European enterprise.

The problem with Russia

However, historians of the Russian Empire are often unaware of how inapplicable Said's East-West binary opposition can sometimes be even to those arch-colonialists, the British in India. This is seen in a well-known debate between Nathaniel Knight and Adeeb Khalid in the pages of *Kritika* in 2000, and to some extent in that which followed in *Ab Imperio* in 2002.⁴⁶ Khalid convincingly demonstrated the often close connection between some branches of Russian academic Orientalism and Imperialism, but as Maria Todorova pointed out in her response to the debate, he occasionally uses Said too uncritically, in particular in his assertion that the dichotomisation of the world into East and West by Europeans ‘dates back to the Greeks’, something which does not do justice to Herodotus in particular, but which also makes too many

⁴⁰ Mitra ‘History of the Society’ p.59

⁴¹ *Ibid* p.66; This was an institution established by Warren Hastings for the pursuit of Islamic learning.

⁴² Appendix B pp.95, 101-3

⁴³ Mitra ‘History of the Society’ p.66

⁴⁴ Cohn ‘the Census and Objectification’ pp.245-6. He describes Mitra as ‘the outstanding Indian Sanskrit Scholar of the time’, and notes that his ranking system became so controversial the Census Commissioner, H. Risley, did not use it in his 1891 publication on the *Tribes and Castes of Bengal* and listed them alphabetically instead.

⁴⁵ *Journal & Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*. New Series Vol.IV 1908 (Calcutta, 1910) p.iii

⁴⁶ Khalid ‘the Debate over Orientalism’ & Knight ‘On Russian Orientalism’ pp.691-715; Devid Skhimmel’pennink van der Oie ‘Orientalizm – delo tonkoe’ *AI* 1/2002

assumptions about the continuity of attitudes in the subsequent two and a half millenia.⁴⁷ For Western Europeans Russia (and before that Byzantium) was sometimes considered part of the ‘Orient’, sometimes not, whilst in terms of power the ‘dichotomy’ between Europe and Asia Khalid speaks of only really begins to emerge with the growth of European military and technological superiority in the eighteenth century.⁴⁸

Meanwhile Knight’s approach here and in earlier work was to argue that Russian Orientalism, whether represented by individuals or considered as an entire academic discipline, was ‘idiosyncratic’, different from its French, British and German counterparts because of Russia’s distinctive position between East and West.⁴⁹ Taking as his example the Petersburg-trained Orientalist V.V. Grigoriev, Knight writes that he did not hold ‘Orientalist’ views because he believed that the Kazakhs (or to use the passage quoted by Knight ‘separate individuals from a lower, immature race’) could be raised up to the Russian level, regardless of their race.⁵⁰ Grigoriev’s clear assumption is that European culture is ‘higher’ and more ‘mature’ than the Asiatic, something which lies at the heart of ‘Orientalism’ as Said describes it, and his belief in the possibility of improvement through education echoes Macaulay’s hope for the emergence of ‘a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and intellect’.⁵¹ As Khalid pointed out, ‘Orientalism invests heavily in romantic, civilizational ideas of the nation rather than racial ones’,⁵² and to this we might add ‘Utilitarian’, as neither Macaulay nor even the notorious James Mill thought that Indians were *essentially* backward; rather they considered that this backwardness had been produced environmentally by bad government, false religion and defective education (something Mill warned would happen in England as well, without political reform).⁵³ The difference, Knight suggests, lies in Grigoriev’s belief in the value for Asiatics of maintaining or ‘rediscovering’ their ‘national’ traditions, but this too has its echoes in Western Orientalism, most obviously in the work of James Tod or Max Müller. Presented thus, Grigoriev’s beliefs lie in a strange no man’s land between the Anglicists and Orientalists of British India, but taken to their logical conclusion they would appear to doom Asian civilizations to eternal backwardness.⁵⁴ Some of Grigoriev’s successors, (most notably V.V. Barthold)⁵⁵ as Vera Tolz has shown, would later come to criticise this sort of ‘civilizational’ stereotyping of the East as well,⁵⁶ but although their targets were mostly western scholars, Grigoriev’s example in fact shows clearly enough that, in this respect, Russian ‘Orientalism’ did not differ significantly from its Western counterparts.

Knight adds further that, far from assisting in Russian imperial expansion, Grigoriev opposed the Russian policy of conquest in Central Asia and wished to see the Kazakhs only

⁴⁷ Maria Todorova ‘Does Russian Orientalism have a Russian Soul?’ *Kritika* 1/4 (2000) p.720; Khalid ‘the Debate over Orientalism’ p.693; here Khalid is echoing Said *Orientalism* pp.56-7; See Irwin *For Lust of Knowing* pp.9-18 for a critique of Said’s ideas on this theme.

⁴⁸ Harsha Ram suggests that in the literary sphere Lomonosov’s Khotin ode of 1739 marks the beginning of Russia’s sense of superiority over Asia: *The Imperial Sublime* pp.23-4, 77-8

⁴⁹ Knight ‘On Russian Orientalism’ p.705; ‘Grigor’ev in Orenburg’ pp.77, 99

⁵⁰ *Ibid* p.96

⁵¹ Zastoupil & Moir (ed.) *The Great Indian Education Debate* p.171

⁵² Khalid ‘the Debate over Orientalism’ p.696

⁵³ Mill’s *History of British India* (London, 1817) 3 Vols. is thus an ignorant and unpleasant book, but not an ‘essentialising’ one. The claim by Ronald Inden that this was a ‘hegemonic’ text for the British understanding of India in the 19th century is hard to sustain in any case, given that in his notes to the fourth and fifth editions (London, 1840 & 1858) H.H. Wilson more or less demolished all of Mill’s arguments about the ‘backwardness’ of Hindu culture, something Inden acknowledges merely as another form of ‘othering’ *Imagining India* pp.45, 90-3. See Javed Majeed *Ungoverned Imaginings: James Mill’s ‘The History of British India’ and Orientalism* (Oxford, 1992) pp.123-50, 200 which situates Mill’s ideas firmly in the Utilitarian and radical milieu where they belong.

⁵⁴ Knight ‘On Russian Orientalism’ p.708; Peabody ‘Tod’s Rajast’han’ pp.204-9; Kejariwal *The Asiatic Society of Bengal* pp.232-3

⁵⁵ Vasilii Vladimirovich Barthold (1869 – 1930), known as ‘the Gibbon of Turkestan’, was the leading Russian Orientalist of his generation. His best-known work is *Turkestan v epokhu Mongol’skogo Nashestvie* (St. Pb., 1897) translated as *Turkestan down to the Mongol Invasion* (London, 1928)

⁵⁶ Tolz ‘European, National and (Anti-) Imperial’ pp.71-3

under indirect rule, with the Khanates of Khiva, Bukhara and Kokand remaining entirely independent.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, if we turn to India once again we find that in this his attitude is no different from that of James Tod, who similarly argued against the outright annexation of the Rajput States of North-Western India by the British, and in his dedication to the *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, addressed to George IV, asked that

‘...their admirer and annalist may, perhaps, be permitted to hope that the sighs of this ancient and interesting race for the restoration of their former independence, which it would suit our wisest policy to grant, may be deemed not undeserving of Your Majesty’s regard.’⁵⁸

Seventy years later Edward Browne, whom we have already encountered working with Muhammad Qazvini, would be supporting the Persian Constitutional movement against British and Russian encroachments, drawing international attention to Russian atrocities in Northern Persia and even attacking the Indian Civil Service.⁵⁹ Anti-Imperialist Orientalists were hardly a peculiarly Russian phenomenon, but it has always been true that, whatever their personal views, the knowledge they produce can still be made use of by the Imperial state for aggressive and conquering purposes. As Knight writes ‘the mechanisms through which specialised knowledge of the orient is transformed into colonial power are not always clear, even in the context of Western Imperialism’. In fact Grigoriev himself, perhaps unwittingly, helped to produce a text which could have been of considerable use to the military authorities in Central Asia. Mirza Shams Bukhari’s *Ta’rikh-e Bukhara, Khoqand va Kashghar* was commissioned by Grigoriev in 1859 from a Bukharan *Mirza* who was then living in Orenburg, having fled the Emirate during Emir Nasrullah’s reign, and then translated and published by him.⁶⁰ It provided some of the most detailed analysis the Russians then possessed of the internal politics of the Emirate under Nasrullah, and together with Nikolai Khanykov’s *Opisanie Bukharskogo Khanstva* was one of the few sources on recent Bukharan history available to the Russians at the time of the conquest.⁶¹ However, Bukhari was a political exile and had a particular interest in painting Emir Nasrullah in the blackest of colours; his description of the brutalities of Nasrullah’s reign, which chimed with older Russian narratives of the massacre of Prince Bekovich-Cherkasskii’s Khivan expedition in 1721, confirmed a number of Russian prejudices about those who became their new Central Asian subjects after the fall of Tashkent in 1865.⁶²

Islamophobic paranoia in Turkestan

Under Catherine the Great the Russian state had espoused a policy of enlightened toleration of Islam, seeking to christianize it by creating a muftiate and spiritual assembly in the border town of Orenburg which mirrored the state-controlled hierarchies of the Orthodox Church. The state even despatched Tatar mullahs into the Steppe to ‘civilise’ the Kazakhs,⁶³ printed and distributed officially-sanctioned copies of the Koran, and sought to play an important confessional role in the lives of its Muslim subjects.⁶⁴ However, the mid-nineteenth century saw a sea-change in Russian attitudes towards Islam, partly owing to increasing instances of apostasy

⁵⁷ Knight ‘Grigor’ev in Orenburg’ p.87

⁵⁸ Tod *Annals & Antiquities* Vol.I p.v; Peabody ‘Tod’s Rajast’han’ pp.207-8, 216

⁵⁹ Irwin *For Lust of Knowing* pp.206-7; E.G. Browne *The Persian Crisis of December 1911* (Cambridge, 1911). For more on Browne see Geoffrey Nash *From Empire to Orient* (London, 2005) pp.139-68

⁶⁰ V.V. Grigor’ev (ed.) *O nekotorykh sobytiyakh v Bukhare, Khokande i Kashgare* (Kazan, 1861)

⁶¹ N.A. Khanykov *Opisanie Bukharskogo Khanstva* (St.Pb., 1843); Khanykov was also a product of St Petersburg University, although he attended it before the Oriental Faculty was founded. B. V. Lunin (ed.), *Istoriografiya obshchestvennykh nauk v Uzbekistane* (Tashkent, 1974) pp.356-63

⁶² Grigor’ev (ed.) *O nekotorykh sobytiyakh* trans. pp.29-32

⁶³ Grigoriev attacked this policy as having led to the Islamisation of the Kazakhs, a common Russian misconception. V.V. Grigor’ev *Russkaya Politika v Otnoshenii k Srednei Azii. Istoricheskii Ocherk* (St Pb., 1874) p.17

⁶⁴ Robert Crews *For Prophet and Tsar* (Cambridge, Mass., 2006) pp.31-142

amongst the baptised Tatars of the Volga Region,⁶⁵ but primarily because of the bloody war in the North Caucasus, where the Russians believed that Shamil and other Naqshbandi *Isbans*⁶⁶ had formed the backbone of the lengthy resistance to them. Alexander Knysh has suggested that this was unjustified, but that it contributed to an increasingly fixed idea of the danger posed by Sufi orders, or '*Myuridizm*' as the Russians referred to it.⁶⁷ This suspicion was extended to Muslims more generally, including the '*ulama*' with whom the Russians had previously cooperated, as the idea of the enlightened, multi-confessional State began to lose ground to secular notions of '*grazhdanstvennost*' (Civic values), Russian nationalism, fear of Muslim 'fanaticism' and pessimism over the prospects for the integration of Muslims into Imperial Society.⁶⁸ This change is clear from the decision in 1867 of the first Governor-General of Russian Turkestan, Konstantin Petrovich von Kaufman, to exclude the newly-conquered province from the jurisdiction of the Orenburg mufti and introduce *Ignorirovanie*, the 'not knowing' of Islam. Under this system the state was supposed to sever its connection with Islam, and von Kaufman believed that this, together with the example set by the Russians of the superiority of Western civilization, would be enough to woo Muslims from their faith.⁶⁹

Paradoxically, an exaggerated fear of Muslim revolt combined with a lack of resources meant that the colonial regime in Turkestan did nothing very active to undermine Islam, although the writings of colonial officials indicate clearly that they would have liked to.⁷⁰ Christian proselytisation was banned, *waqf* property only very rarely confiscated and largely untaxed, the *Qazis*' courts were preserved, and plans were even put in place to regulate the *Hajj*, although they came to nothing.⁷¹ However, it was fear of what colonial officials invariably referred to as '*Musul'manskii Fanatizm*', rather than a continued belief in Islam's utility as a tool of Government, which led to these survivals.⁷² Such 'Orientalist' ideas of the inherent 'fanaticism' of Russia's Muslims gained wider currency through the unpleasant polemical writings of M.A. Miropiev, who was a product of the Anti-Islamic division of the Kazan theological academy, and later those of Agafangel Krymskii, who was educated at Kiev University, and who believed that the racial characteristics of Russian Muslims, particularly Turks, rendered them 'fanatical'.⁷³ In the aftermath of the 1857 Rebellion similar views of Muslims as 'fanatical' could be found amongst some British writers and officials in India, most notably the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta, Dr W.W. Hunter, but there these were challenged to a much greater degree, not least

⁶⁵ Paul Werth *At the Margins of Orthodoxy* (Ithaca, NY, 2001) pp.180-3

⁶⁶ A Persian honorific (literally 'they') often applied to Sufi spiritual leaders.

⁶⁷ Alexander Knysh 'Sufism as an Explanatory Paradigm' *Die Welt des Islams* 42/2 (2002) pp.139-173. I am grateful to Beatrice Penati for this reference.

⁶⁸ Dov Yaroshevski 'Empire and Citizenship', Austin Lee Jersild 'From Savagery to Citizenship' & Daniel Brower 'Islam and Ethnicity: Russian Colonial Policy in Turkestan' *Russia's Orient* pp.69-70, 101-111, 115-122; Jersild *Orientalism and Empire* pp.126-8

⁶⁹ Gen.-Ad't. K. P. fon-Kaufman *Proekt Vsepoddanneishego Otcheta Gen.-Ad'yutanta fon-Kaufmana po Grazhdanskomu Upravleniyu* (St Pb., 1885) p.10; Adeeb Khalid *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform* (Berkeley, 1998) pp.51-3

⁷⁰ See for instance L.F. Kostenko *Srednyaya Aziya i Vodvorenii v nei Russkoi Grazhdanstvennosti* (St Pb., 1871) p.85

⁷¹ Daniel Brower 'Russian Roads to Mecca: Religious Tolerance and Muslim Pilgrimage in the Russian Empire' *Slavic Review* 55/3 (1996) pp.567-584

⁷² I realise that my view of this question is in sharp contrast to that of Crews who in *For Prophet and Tsar* pp.254-60, argues for the persistence of the 'Confessional State' throughout the Empire until 1917; strangely on pp.296-316 Crews provides a clear description of just how Russian attitudes towards Islam changed in mid-century, but without making a connection with the Caucasus or allowing it to affect his judgements about the colonial regime in Turkestan.

⁷³ M.A. Miropiev *religioznoe i politicheskie znachenie khadzha* (Kazan, 1877) & *O polozhenii russkikh inorodtsev* (St Pb., 1901); A. Krymskii *Musul'manstvo i ego budushchnost* (Moscow, 1899); On the anti-Islam division of the Kazan theological academy see Geraci *Window on the East* pp.47-9, 54-61; See also Mark Batunsky 'Racism in Russian Islamology: Agafangel Krymsky' *Central Asian Survey* 11/4 (1992) pp.75-8; M. Batunskii *Rossiya i Islam* (Moscow, 2003) Vol.II pp.242-60, 323-372 (Miropiev) & Vol.III pp.61-112 (Krymskii)

because the British sought (not always successfully) to turn India’s Muslims into allies against the remainder of the population.⁷⁴

In the continuing debate amongst Turkestan’s colonial officials over whether military rule could be slackened and greater elements of civilian *grazhdanstvennost* introduced to the region, the dangers of ‘Islamic fanaticism’ invariably turned out to be the clincher which ensured the continuance of military control.⁷⁵ This fear of Islam was brought to a head by the most significant violent challenge to Russian rule before the turmoil of the war years: the Andijan uprising of 1898. On the night of the 13th May an *Ishan* called Muhammad Ali, known as ‘Diwana’ (‘the mad’) or the ‘Dukchi *Ishan*’ (because his father had been a spindle-maker) from Ming-Tepe in the Ferghana Valley led his followers, most of whom were nomadic Kipchaks, in an ill-coordinated attack on the Russian garrison. Twenty-two soldiers were killed and twenty wounded, but the uprising had already been suppressed by the time the news reached Tashkent.⁷⁶ Nevertheless Andijan seemed to confirm Russian assumptions about the inherently ‘fanatical’ nature of Turkestan’s Muslims, and the consequent dangers of an Islamic revolt and holy war; it also called into question the whole policy of *Ignorirovanie*, and led the then Governor-General, Dukhovskoi, to advocate the creation of a state-sponsored Islamic hierarchy in the region, an appeal which fell upon deaf ears.⁷⁷ This was not only because of a fear that there would be more rebellions stemming from ‘backwardness’, but because of a perceived new Pan-Islamic threat: there were suggestions that the Dukchi *Ishan* had received a *khalat* and other encouragement from the Turkish Sultan.⁷⁸

Building on earlier paranoia, the aftermath of the Andijan revolt saw the elaboration of a *Légende Noire* around Naqshbandi Sufism in Central Asia which is highly reminiscent of that created by the French about the Sanussiyya in North Africa.⁷⁹ V.P. Salkov’s virulently anti-Islamic book on the uprising was circulated to all secondary schools, free libraries and reading-rooms.⁸⁰ It accused the *Ishan* of raping a minor and contained lurid (and imagined) descriptions of him inciting his followers to revolt.⁸¹

“The *Ishan* ordered the declaration of a holy war against the hated *uruz*, and immediately on all sides could be heard the awful, ill-omened, cries, which beggar description:
Ghazava! Ghazava! Ghazava!”⁸²

As part of the official response to Andijan the Samarkand Military Governor, Major-General Fedorov, assembled a committee (which included two local Orientalists, V.P. Nalivkin⁸³

⁷⁴ Dr. W.W. Hunter *Our Indian Musalmans. Are they bound in Conscience to rebel against the Queen?* (London, 1871); Alfred Lyall criticised Hunter in ‘Islam in India’, whilst Sir Syed Ahmad Khan’s influential pamphlet *The Causes of the Indian Revolt* (Benares, 1873) did much to dispel the British belief that there had been a Muslim conspiracy in 1857. See Peter Hardy *The Muslims of British India* (Cambridge, 1972) pp.66-80

⁷⁵ Daniel Brower *Turkestan and the Fate of the Russian Empire* (London, 2003) pp.20-3

⁷⁶ ‘Bezporiadki v Fergane’ *Turkestanskaya Vedomosti* (TV) 21st May 1898 No.37; V. P. Sal’kov «*Andizhanskoe Vozstanie*» v 1898g (Kazan, 1901) p64; See Bakhtiyar Babajanov ‘Dukchi *Ishan* und der Aufstand von Andijan 1898’ in Von Kügelgen et al (ed.): *Muslim Culture in Russia and Central Asia* (Berlin, 1998) Vol.II pp.167-191; B.M. Babadzhanov (Trans. & Comm.) *Manakib-i Dukchi *Ishan** (Almaty, 2004), a little-known hagiography of the *Ishan*. For a full list of earlier publications relating to the uprising see Yuri Bregel’s *Bibliography of Islamic Central Asia* (Bloomington, IN, 1995) Vol.I pp.620-1

⁷⁷ Elena Campbell ‘The Muslim Question in Late Imperial Russia’ in Burbank, von Hagen & Remnev (ed.) *Russian Empire. Space, People, Power 1700-1930* (Bloomington, IN, 2007) pp.325-6

⁷⁸ Sal’kov «*Andizhanskoe Vozstanie*» p39; A *Khalat* is a robe of honour

⁷⁹ Jean-Louis Triaud *La Légende Noire de la Sanussiyya. Une Confrérie Musulmane sous le regard Français (1840-1930)* (Paris, 1995)

⁸⁰ The title-page of the Bodleian’s copy has a label indicating this.

⁸¹ Sal’kov «*Andizhanskoe Vozstanie*» p.32

⁸² *Ibid* p.54

⁸³ Vladimir Petrovich Nalivkin (1858-1918) was a leading educational bureaucrat, pioneering Ethnographer and Orientalist in Turkestan, and perhaps more than any other the voice of the ‘Third Element’ in that region. From the nobility of the Moscow Province, he was educated at the Pavlovskaya Military Academy and had joined the

and V.L. Vyatkin⁸⁴) to put together a handbook on the tenets and practices of Islam for the edification of colonial administrators, a copy of which was placed in every district chancellery. This was replete with Islamophobic sentiments, denouncing ‘*Dervishizm*’ and ‘*Myuridizm*’, pointing up the dangers of the *Haj*, describing Central Asian maktab and madrasahs as ‘the main supporters of Musulman obscurantism’ and looking forward to Islam’s imminent demise: ‘naturally, at this time no-one has any doubt any longer that Muslim culture has outlived its time and with each day comes closer to final fall and dissolution.’⁸⁵ However, this bragging triumphalism was mostly bluff. Fear was much more evident in a passage which came just a few pages after the confident prediction above

‘In conclusion we cannot fail to answer directly the question which arises unwillingly for every Russian with the memory of the recent sad events in Ferghana: how dangerous is Sufism to us with its *Isbans*? The recent history of so-called *Myuridizm* in the Caucasus, the development of Sufism in Turkey and the current state of dervishism in Africa⁸⁶ are all too well-known to every educated man to need further circulation. They serve as an excellent illustration of the vitality and strength of Sufism.’⁸⁷

A lesson which was further underlined in lurid essays on ‘Dervishism in Turkestan’ and ‘Jihad or Ghazavat’ (‘it is not really holy war, but wild barbaric brigandage’).⁸⁸ As Martin Thomas has suggested, Orientalist stereotyping of this kind (and in particular exaggerated fears of Islamic ‘fanaticism’) could compromise the intelligence networks of colonial states, not least because it often led to them chasing red herrings: one mark of a particularly talented or well-informed operative was the ability to see beyond such stereotyping.⁸⁹ In the atmosphere of heightened paranoia after the Andijan uprising rumours of further conspiracies abounded, and one bizarre case which began three months later provides a fine example of ‘applied Orientalism’ - an object-lesson both in the damaging effect which ‘Orientalist’ prejudice about Muslim ‘fanaticism’ could have on a colonial administration, and in the usefulness of having an Orientalist (without inverted commas) amongst its personnel.

For over a year, from August 1898 to September 1899, the Russian administrators of the neighbouring *Uyezds* (districts) of Chimkent and Aulie-Ata, in what is now Southern Kazakhstan, tied themselves into knots pursuing a will o’ the wisp of Islamic conspiracy and Sufi ‘fanaticism’, after a Kazakh informant spun a yarn to a series of credulous officials about the Dukchi *Isban* having distributed firearms amongst the local population. He subsequently embellished this by persuading the Russians that the Amir of Afghanistan, ‘Abd ur-Rahman Khan, had sent a letter under his seal inciting the Kazakhs to rise up in a *ghazavat* against the Russians. Despite the fact that these accusations centred on the informant’s father-in-law, against whom he had a grudge, not only was he believed, but several officials went out of their way to affirm his trustworthiness. His allegations attracted the attention of the Tashkent *prokurator* (state prosecutor) and sparked a

Orenburg Cossack Brigade in 1871, serving the Turkestan administration as a civilian from 1878. Natal’ya Lukashova ‘V.P. Nalivkin: eshche odna zamechatel’naya zhizn’ S. Panarin (ed.) *Evrasiya. Lyudi i Mify* (Moscow, 2003) pp.72-94 & M.K. Baskhanov *Russkie Voennye Vostokovedy* (Moscow, 2005) p.170

⁸⁴ Valentin Lavrentievich Vyatkin (1869-1932) was then a translator in the Samarkand Chancellery and had founded the first Museum there in 1896. In 1908 he discovered the site of Ulugh-Beg’s observatory, and would later carry out the first excavations at Afrasiab. Lunin *Istoriografiya* pp.138-45

⁸⁵ ‘Kratkii obzor sovremennogo sostoyaniya i deyatelnosti musul’manskogo dukhovenstva’ V.I. Yarovoi-Rabskii (ed.) *Sbornik Materialov po Musul’manstvu* Vol.1 (St Pb., 1899) pp.22, 39

⁸⁶ This observation was based upon Louis Rinn’s *Marabout ef Khuan* [sic: *Marabouts et Khouan*] *Etude sur l’Islam en Algerie* (Alger, 1884) pp.62-76. Rinn (1838-1905) served in the *Bureaux Arabes* in Algeria, and his work examines the threat which Sufi orders posed to French rule in North Africa. Triaud *La Légende Noire* Vol.I pp.347-61

⁸⁷ Yarovoi-Rabskii ‘Kratkii obzor’ p.28

⁸⁸ E.T. Smirnov ‘Dervishizm v Turkestane’ & ‘Dzhikhad i Gazavat’ *Sbornik Materialov po Musul’manstvu* Vol.I pp.49-71, 101-128

⁸⁹ Martin Thomas *Empires of Intelligence. Security Services and Colonial disorder after 1914* (Berkeley, CA, 2008) pp.74-8

search for weapons amongst the Kazakhs of the Aulie-Ata district which lasted for over a year, but produced almost nothing. The bubble finally burst when the Kazakh informant was interviewed by the assistant to the *Nachal'nik* (commandant) of the Chimkent district, Captain Nil Sergeevich Lykoshin, who immediately reported that he considered him to be not entirely sane. Lykoshin's subsequent investigations, working with the Chimkent *'ulama*, finally revealed that the whole affair was a mare's nest, whilst their textual analysis of the letter from 'Abd ur-Rahman Khan showed that it was an unconvincing forgery.⁹⁰ By then, however, not only had the local administration been engaged in a wild-goose chase for a year, but over one hundred and twenty folios of *Doznanie* (witness statements) had been accumulated.

The reason Lykoshin's involvement made such a difference was that he spoke fluent Turkic and Persian; he was a significant contributor to late-Tsarist Oriental studies who had first given notice of his talents with a series of articles for *Turkestanskaya Vedomosti* (the Government newspaper) on life in the 'native' quarter of Tashkent.⁹¹ Since then he had translated the early Bukharan historian Narshakhi from Persian into Russian in collaboration with V.V. Barthold, and would later do the same with Muhammad Sadiq Kashghari's *Code of Eastern Proprieties* on which he based a book of instruction in Muslim social mores for his less refined compatriots (first published in the second, more scholarly volume of the handbook on Islam for administrators referred to above).⁹² Lykoshin (1860-1922) was a hereditary nobleman from Pskov who studied at the Pavlovskaya Military Academy, and began his administrative career as a *Pristav* (Police-chief) in the small town of Ura-Tepe in 1889; he never saw active military service. After serving in Chimkent he became Commandant of the Khujand District from 1905 to 1912 and ended his career as a Major-General and Governor of Samarkand Province from 1914-1917.⁹³ Although Lykoshin did not have an academic background he is perhaps the most prominent example of the overlap to be found between the production of scholarly work on Russia's colonial territories and their administration. His output was a mixture of conventional Orientalist scholarship (his translations of Narshakhi and the eighteenth-century Sufi poet Mashrab),⁹⁴ semi-ethnographic work,⁹⁵ writings on land-settlement, the functioning of the 'native' administration, including *Qazis'* courts, and the progress of 'civilization' amongst the natives.⁹⁶ Lykoshin's views of Russia's mission in Turkestan are best described as paternalist. Although he hoped that this would be the ultimate outcome of colonial rule, he did not believe that Muslims were yet deserving of Russian citizenship, something which would be clearly revealed in his response to the events of 1917.⁹⁷ Nevertheless, Lykoshin's views cannot be reduced to the simple 'Orientalist' belief in Muslim 'fanaticism' which predominated amongst his less talented compatriots: instead he was often able to use his abilities as an Orientalist to dispel some of these fears, and, not for the last time, render signal service to the colonial regime in Turkestan.

⁹⁰ The (unintentionally hilarious) narrative of this case is to be found in a file from the Central State Archives of the Republic of Kazakhstan (TsGARKaz) F.124 'Chimkentskoe Uezdnoe Upravlenie' Op.1 D.7 'Materialy doznaniya po voprosu tainogo snabzheniya oruzhiem naseleniya ishanom Kh. Abdurakhmanovym' especially pp.8, 25-29, 41-8, 163-4. It deserves to be analysed in more depth than I can manage here, and I hope to discuss it in detail in a future article about Lykoshin's career and writings.

⁹¹ N.S. Lykoshin 'Pis'ma iz Tuzemnogo Tashkenta' *TV* 13th February 1894 No.11

⁹² N.S. Lykoshin (Trans.) 'Adab-ul-Salikhyn. Kodeks Prilichii Na Vostoke' in V.P. Nalivkin (ed.) *Sbornik Materialov po Musul'manstvu* (Tashkent, 1900) Vol.II pp.23-86; *"Khoroshii Ton" na Vostoke*. (St Pb., 1915); Lykoshin published his memoirs just before the revolution: *Pol Zhizni v Turkestane. Ocherki Byta Tuzemnogo Naseleniya* (Petrograd, 1916); Interestingly the copies of his works in the library of the Oriental Institute of St Petersburg all bear autographs indicating that they were presented by him to V. V. Barthold.

⁹³ Baskhanov *Voennye Vostokovedy* pp.145-7

⁹⁴ N.S. Lykoshin (Trans.) & V. V. Bartol'd (ed.) *Istoriya Bukhary Mukhameda Narshakhi* (Tashkent, 1897); *Divana-i-Mashrab. Zbizneopisanie populyarneishago predstavitehya mistitsizma v Turkestanskom Krae* (Samarkand, 1911)

⁹⁵ N.S. Lykoshin *O gadanii u Sredneazjatskikh tuzemtsev* (Samarkand, 1908)

⁹⁶ N.S. Lykoshin 'Kazii (Narodnye Sud'i)' *Russkii Turkestan. Sbornik* Vol.1 (Tashkent, 1899) pp.17-57; *Rezultaty sbliizheniya russkikh s tuzemtami* (Tashkent[?], 1903); *Chapkullukskaya Volost' Khodzentskogo Uezda Samarkandskoi Oblasti* (Samarkand, 1905); 'K desyatiletiiu Andizhanskoi rezni (1898-1908g)' *TV* 30th - 31st May 1908 Nos 115-6

⁹⁷ Lykoshin *Pol Zhizni v Turkestane* pp.5-16; Khalid *Muslim Cultural Reform* pp.249-50

Orientalists in the service of Russian Imperialism

Vera Tolz has argued that clear distinctions should be made between different types of Orientalist ‘experts’ who served the Russian empire, suggesting that the difference in attitude towards Muslim peoples between Grigoriev and N. P. Ostroumov (see below), highlighted in the *Kritika* debate between Knight and Khalid, was at least in part owing to the fact that the former was educated in the Oriental Faculty of St Petersburg University, the latter in the anti-Islamic division of the Kazan theological academy.⁹⁸ Even in this case it is worth noting (as Knight in fact does) that Grigoriev too was hostile to Islam, but it seems to me that this is not the most important point: Orientalists with ‘Orientalist’ attitudes can be found amongst University-educated academics as well (Krymskii being a good example), whilst Lykoshin was not prejudiced against Islam in the same way despite having had a purely military education. What really matters is the degree to which the worlds of scholarship and colonial rule were interpenetrating. As Jeff Sahadeo has suggested, the degree of state control over learned societies and institutions was particularly high in Russia, whilst in remote frontier areas it was easier for the intelligentsia to perceive the Tsarist state as a ‘progressive force’. This, together with an often greater degree of intellectual freedom than at the centre, rendered state service more attractive to scholars.⁹⁹ Hence even if one follows Knight in regarding Grigoriev’s role within the administration of Count Perovskii, (the Governor of the frontier town of Orenburg in the 1840s and 50s) as merely ‘decorative’ it is difficult to accept his broader assertion that overall the Russian state had low levels of ‘permeability’ to the academic discipline of Orientalism without some qualification.¹⁰⁰ M.K. Baskhanov’s biographical dictionary of *Voennye Vostokovedy* (Military Orientalists) lists 450 military officers and administrators who made contributions to the discipline of Oriental studies in Russia. Admittedly these include many whose work is of dubious intellectual worth, such as von Kaufman himself, but there are also many important scholars such as Lykoshin and Nalivkin. This has its parallels in Western Orientalism: Richard Burton began his career as an officer in the Bombay Army, Snouck Hurgronje was an adviser to the government of the Dutch East Indies, and Gertrude Bell closely involved with the British Mandate in Iraq.¹⁰¹ During WWI the Arab bureau which managed British intelligence in the Middle East also counted large numbers of academics in its ranks¹⁰² - but the degree of interpenetration if anything was greater in the Russian Empire. Alexander Marshall has shown that, just as they did in Britain, the worlds of Military Intelligence and Oriental Studies overlapped extensively in Russia. This is seen most clearly in the career of Andrei Evgenievich Snesev, a General Staff Officer who spent most of his career before the revolution in Tashkent, where he wrote about British India and edited a collection of articles designed to give serving officers detailed knowledge of the Empire’s Southern Asiatic frontiers,¹⁰³ before becoming the head of the Institute of Oriental Studies in Moscow in the Soviet period.¹⁰⁴

Beyond the military there were other, more strictly academic Russian Orientalists who also ‘served the Empire’. Nikolai Pantusov, best known as the editor of the Persian text of an important 19th-century history of Kokand, spent much of his early career at the disposal of the Military Governor in Vernoe, the capital of Semirechie Province, and was sent to the newly-annexed region of Kuldja in the Ili valley in 1877 in order to produce a detailed statistical report

⁹⁸ Tolz ‘Orientalism, Nationalism’ pp.130-1

⁹⁹ Sahadeo *Russian Colonial Society* pp.58-9

¹⁰⁰ Knight ‘Grigor’ev in Orenburg’ p.87

¹⁰¹ See Said *Orientalism* pp.210-254

¹⁰² See Bruce Westrate *The Arab Bureau: British Policy in the Middle East 1916-1920* (University Park, PA, 1994)

¹⁰³ A.E. Snesev *Severo-Indiiskii Teatr (Voenna-Geograficheskoe Opisanie)* (Tashkent, 1903); *Indiya kak Glavnyi Faktor v Sredne-Aziatskom Voprose* (St Pb., 1906) & (ed.) *Svedeniya kasayushchiyasya Stran, sopredel’nykh s Turkestanskim Voennym Okrugom* (Tashkent) Vyp.I-XIX 1898 - 1900

¹⁰⁴ Alexander Marshall *The Russian General Staff and Asia* (London, 2006) pp.154-8, 192

for the administration.¹⁰⁵ Another early example is the unfortunately-named Alexander Ludwigovich Kun, best known as the editor of *Turkestanskii Al'bom*, the remarkable photographic survey of the region commissioned by General von Kaufman.¹⁰⁶ The son of a Hungarian immigrant, Kun graduated from the Oriental Institute of St Petersburg University in 1864, having written a thesis entitled ‘A review of the religious and judicial-political aspects of the Al-Koran’. He was transferred from Orenburg to the Zarafshan Valley in November 1867, when Russian troops were still fighting the Bukharans.¹⁰⁷ He subsequently took part in military expeditions to Iskander-Kul in the upper Zarafshan valley, Shahrisabz and Khiva, gathering information about newly-conquered territory even as the troops marched in.¹⁰⁸ During the Khivan campaign he was part of a team of six Military Orientalists who accompanied the expedition,¹⁰⁹ and, with the help of his interpreter Mirza ‘Abd ur-Rahman, a Samarqandi Tajik, selected and removed a large collection of documents from the archives of the Khanate which, it was hoped, would be useful in developing Russian policies on landownership and taxation.¹¹⁰ During a subsequent campaign in Kokand (where the Russians suppressed a revolt against their client Khan, Khudoyar, which eventually led to the outright annexation of the Khanate) Kun worked alone. In his obituary his friend, the military statistician N.A. Maev, recalled how:

‘In 1875 A[lexander] L[udwigovich] for some reason or other took part in the Kokand Campaign; but his expectation of obtaining remarkable books or manuscripts in Kokand was unfulfilled. Khudoyar Khan paid little attention to bookish wisdom and in his palace they found nothing apart from Korans and two or three uninteresting *Tarikh*i (histories). Learning from the natives, that there was an enormously rich library in the palace of the *Bek* of Andijan, Nasir ud-din (Khudoyar Khan’s son), Alexander Ludwigovich, disregarding the warlike times and the disturbed agitation of the people, bravely set off there without any escort apart from three *djigits* [mounted bodyguards]. Two days after his arrival in Andijan the well-known Andijan uprising broke out. Abdurahman Avtobachi and the so-called Pulat Khan rose at the head of the rebellious Andijan *Kipchaks* [a semi-nomadic tribe living at the eastern end of the Ferghana Valley]. Alexander Ludwigovich was almost captured and imprisoned and was only saved thanks to the help of the *Bek* [Governor] of Balykjan, who conveyed him at night by a secret route from Andijan to Namangan.’¹¹¹

This could be seen as a selfless dedication to the advancement of oriental scholarship, but a less sympathetic observer might remark that the risks Kun chose to run are nothing unusual in the world of spying and intelligence collection. He did not spend all his time campaigning however. Initially General von Kaufman assigned Kun to find and catalogue the legendary library of Tamerlane in Samarkand, but after lengthy enquiries failed to reveal its whereabouts he turned to humbler fare. It was his work on land tenure, *waqf* (religious endowments) and taxation which should have proved most useful to the colonial regime. By questioning local *Qazis* (judges) and collecting and interpreting deeds of *waqf* in the Zarafshan Valley, Kun attempted to introduce an entirely unfamiliar system of Islamic taxation and irrigated agriculture to colonial officials, whilst

¹⁰⁵ TsGARKaz F.822 ‘Pantusov, N.N., Orientalist’ Op.1 D.28 ‘Svedeniya o Kul’tzhinskom raione za 1871-77 god, sobrannye N.N. Pantusovym’ pp.1-90; N.N. Pantusov (ed.) *Tarikh Shakhbrokhi. Istoriya Vladelei Fergany* (Kazan, 1885)

¹⁰⁶ This can be found at http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/coll/287_turkestan.html; ‘Kun’ means ‘backside’ or ‘anus’ in Persian/Tajik.

¹⁰⁷ Sankt-Peterburgskii Filial Institut Vostokovedeni RAN, Arkhiv Vostokovedov (AV) F.33 ‘Kun, Aleksandr Ludvigovich’ Op.1 D.33 ‘Lichnye Dokumenty A.L. Kuna’ pp.1, 14

¹⁰⁸ AV F.33 Op.1 D.23 ‘Ocherk Shahrishabskogo Bekstva’

¹⁰⁹ AV F.33 Op.1 D.6 ‘Zametka o razlichnykh oblastei russkikh issledovaniya v Turkestanskom Krae’ pp.15-19

¹¹⁰ Yu. E. Bregel *Dokumenty Arkhiva Khivinskikh Khanov po Istorii i Etnografii Karakalpakov* (Moscow, 1967) pp.59-62. I am grateful to Paolo Sartori both for the reference and for suggesting that Mirza ‘Abd ur-Rahman’s role recalls that of Indian informants working with British Orientalists referred to *passim*.

¹¹¹ N.A. Maev ‘A. L. Kun’ *TV* 22nd Nov. 1888 No.46

his survey of *waqf* was supposed to reveal which estates had dubious titles which would allow them to be resumed or subjected to ordinary taxation.¹¹² In 1876 he and his successor as ‘Orientalist attached to the Chancellery of the Zarafshan *Okrug*’, M.N. Rostislavov (another product of the St Petersburg Oriental Faculty), would be organisers and delegates at the 3rd International Congress of Orientalists in St Petersburg.¹¹³

However, in concrete terms, Kun’s efforts had surprisingly little impact: the documents he seized in Khiva remained largely unused until the Soviet period, whilst the Russians never succeeded in mastering the Bukharan system of revenue collection, which was based on the Islamic cess of *Kheraj*, a 20% tithe of the crop, assessed at prevailing prices every year. Instead in 1873 they were forced to switch to a fixed land-tax based on a notional 10% of the value of the crop from irrigated land, and to devolve the assessment of this to local *Aksakals* (village headmen).¹¹⁴ It would be another thirty years before the Russians attempted to carry out the sort of accurate agricultural surveys (or ‘Settlements’) which were undertaken regularly by the British in India, and in the interim the system of revenue collection remained strikingly ineffective.¹¹⁵ Although he became inspector of Schools in Turkestan, Kun was dismissed from this post by fellow-Orientalist N.I. Veselovskii (for reasons which remain unclear) and his premature death meant that his impact on Oriental scholarship was limited.¹¹⁶ His incomplete survey of Samarkand *waqf* was still being cited by Vyatkin forty years later as the most extensive work that had yet been done on the subject, and no complete survey of *waqf* property would be completed anywhere in Turkestan except in Ferghana, where it was overseen by V.P. Nalivkin.¹¹⁷ Until 1924 the Islamic institution of *waqf* in Turkestan still remained largely intact, untaxed and unsupervised.¹¹⁸

‘The patriarch of Turkestan studies’

The ‘Empire-serving’ Russian Orientalist *par excellence*, as Adeeb Khalid has suggested, was Nikolai Petrovich Ostroumov.¹¹⁹ Like Miropiev, Ostroumov was a pupil of Nikolai Ilimskii in the anti-Islamic division of the Kazan theological academy, where he was associated with the missions to convert the pagan peoples of the Volga-Kama region to Orthodoxy by educating them in their native tongues. Ostroumov’s early work on Islam is typical of that produced in Kazan, and in particular at its Theological Academy in the latter part of the 19th century and does not make for edifying reading:¹²⁰ his thesis was a crude Islamophobic polemic, partly influenced by Ernest Renan, in which he devoted half his time to refuting passages from the Koran by quoting the ‘correct’ versions of the same stories and doctrines from the Bible, and the other half

¹¹² AV F.33 Op.1 D.20 ‘Zametki o byvshii bukharskikh poryadkakh vzimaniya pozemel’noi podati v Zaravshanskoi doline’, a version of which was published in *TV* 1873 No.32; AV F.33 Op.1 D.25 ‘Vyborki iz vakufnykh dokumentov, medresya i mecheti, nakhodyashchiesya v sadakh za gorodom’

¹¹³ Lunin *Istoriografiya* pp.206, 319; Rostislavov also published on land tenure: *Ocherk Vidov Zemelnoi Sobstvennosti i Pozemel’nyi Vopros v Turkestanskoi Krae* (St Pb., 1879)

¹¹⁴ fon-Kaufman *Proekt Vsepodannaishego Otcheta* pp.69-70

¹¹⁵ A.S. Morrison *Russian Rule in Samarkand 1868-1910. A Comparison with British India* (Oxford, 2008) pp.117-8, 186-7; Thanks to Paolo Sartori for insisting that I make this point.

¹¹⁶ N.P. Ostroumov *2-i Turkestanskii General-Gubernator General-Leitenant M.G. Chernyaev* (1882-1884gg.) (Unpub. Typescript, Navoi State Library, Tashkent, 1930) pp.6-7; Nikolai Ivanovich Veselovskii (1848-1918) taught at the Oriental Faculty of St Petersburg University and produced numerous works on the history, religion and archaeology of Central Asia. Lunin *Istoriografiya* pp.126-137

¹¹⁷ V.L. Vyatkin *O Vakufakh Samarkandskoi Oblasti* (Samarkand, 1912) pp.95-6

¹¹⁸ Paolo Sartori & Niccolo Pianciola ‘Waqf in Turkestan. The colonial legacy and the fate of an Islamic institution in early Soviet Central Asia, 1917-1924’ *Central Asian Survey* 26/4 (2007) pp.475-498

¹¹⁹ Khalid ‘the Debate over Orientalism’ p.691; See also I. L. Alekseev ‘N.P. Ostroumov o problemakh upravleniya musul’manskim naseleniem Turkestanskogo Kraia’ *Sbornik Russkogo Istoricheskogo Obshchestva* No.5 (153) (Moscow, 2002) pp.89-95

¹²⁰ Skhimmel’pennink van der Oie ‘Mirza-Kazem-Bek’ pp.269-70; Geraci *Window on the East* pp.86-115

to denying Muhammad’s status as a prophet in openly abusive terms.¹²¹ A fair sample of the tenor of his argument is this passage:

‘History tells us that, just as the study of the Koran threatens the intellectual, moral and social life of humanity, so the study of the Evangelists assists in the development of that life.’¹²²

Robert Geraci has observed that Ilminskii, whom Ostroumov claimed as his mentor and who certainly acted as his patron, had little time for polemical proselytising, but if so he had not taken this lesson to heart. In fact he seems to have been much more heavily influenced by Father Evfimii Malov, who was the Professor of anti-Islamic studies at the academy when he was working there, and whom Ostroumov briefly succeeded in this position.¹²³ In 1877 Ostroumov was recruited as an ‘expert on Islam’ by Governor-General von Kaufman to serve as Inspector of Schools in Turkestan.¹²⁴ There Christian proselytisation was forbidden and Ostroumov was forced to swallow his missionary zeal, although he did translate the Bible into Turkic. He turned his attention instead to the fields of education, publishing, ethnography, the study of Islamic law and, latterly, of Islamic reformism, whilst from 1883-1917 he was the editor of what for most of this period was the sole native-language newspaper, the Government-controlled *Turkestanskaya Tuzemnaya Gazeta*.¹²⁵

Ostroumov became the first port of call for every Governor-General of Turkestan whenever they wanted an expert opinion on matters Islamic or more generally connected with local life, as well as acting as censor for publications in Turkic and Persian. As B.V. Lunin put it in a Soviet-era critique of Tsarist Orientalists, he was:

‘A prominent figure in the colonial administration in the sphere of education, “the patriarch of Turkestan studies” (in the words of V.V. Barthold), the author of “interesting and useful works on ethnography” (in the words of S.F. Oldenburg and V.R. Rozen) “A great expert on the local region” and “the representative of all Central Asian Orientalism” (in the words of I.Yu. Krachkovskii) and at the same time one of the most reactionary figures amongst the “serving *Turkestantsy*”, an inveterate monarchist and sworn foe of the revolution.’¹²⁶

Notwithstanding the fulsome tributes recorded by Lunin, Ostroumov was not taken very seriously by many academics (Barthold in his review of *Sarty*, Ostroumov’s *magnum opus*, remarked that ‘it is of more journalistic than scientific interest’).¹²⁷ However, Ostroumov’s published views on Islam, the *Sharia*, educational policy and Turkestani history and society more generally were enormously influential in official circles. Clearly in some respects his career and writings are an instance of Said’s contention that Orientalists often acted as handmaids of Empire: he was closely involved in structures of Imperial rule, his published work was used extensively by colonial administrators, and he had a typically rigid and dogmatic understanding of Muslim belief. Hostility towards Islam and the culture which it had produced is a hallmark of his work, as is a conviction of the relative backwardness of the natives of Turkestan and the benefits brought by Russian Imperial rule:

¹²¹ N.P. Ostroumov *Kriticheskii Razbor Mukhammedanskogo Ucheniya o Prorokakh* (Kazan, 1874) pp.10, 196-236

¹²² *Ibid* p.233

¹²³ Geraci *Window on the East* pp.57, 90

¹²⁴ *Ibid* p.90

¹²⁵ *Turkistan Wilayatining Gazeti* or *Turkestan Native Gazette*; N.P. Ostroumov ‘Turkestanskaya Tuzemnaya Gazeta’ *Sarty – Etnograficheskie Materialy* 3rd edition (Tashkent, 1908) pp.156-205

¹²⁶ B.V. Lunin *Srednyaya Aziya v Dorevolutsionnom i Sovetskom Vostokovedenii* (Tashkent, 1965) p.35

¹²⁷ Quoted in B.V. Lunin ‘Turkestan v materialakh Lichnogo Arkhiva V.V. Bartol’d’a’ *Obshchestvennye Nauki v Uzbekistane* Vol.6 (1965) pp.48-54

‘In a word: the Sarts – are a people with a future; their cultural capabilities are undoubted. What is also beyond doubt is that the bad, unsympathetic traits of their national culture can with time be smoothed and changed for the better under Russian influence.’¹²⁸

Such views should not be taken as representative of all Russian Orientalism in Turkestan. Lunin’s critique reflects the fact that Ostroumov remained an Orthodox conservative to the end of his days, dying under house-arrest in Tashkent in 1930;¹²⁹ his contemporary V.P. Nalivkin similarly employed his linguistic talents and knowledge of Islam in the service of the colonial regime, but was a radical free-thinker who came to believe that Russia was incapable of any beneficial influence on native society, and joined the Tashkent Soviet in 1917.¹³⁰

Unlike Barthold, Veselovskii and other ‘classical’ Orientalists who considered that the only interesting periods of Islamic civilisation lay in the distant past, Ostroumov took a profound interest in the Muslim society which he saw around him, and in particular in the modernising intellectual developments and reform movements which developed in the latter years of Tsarist rule, generally known as ‘Jadidism’.¹³¹ Thus although he quoted with approval the infamous 1883 lecture by Renan on ‘Islam and Science’ in which the latter claimed that all so-called Arab contributions to medieval science were the work of ‘Aryans’, the conclusion Ostroumov drew from this was that progressive, enlightening movements in Islam had deeper roots outside the Arab world, exemplified by the activities of the Young Turks, which offered hope for Turkestan.¹³² Although he harboured suspicions of Islamic modernism, suspecting its proponents of having a pan-Islamist or pan-Turkic agenda, he engaged with it intellectually to a far greater extent than any of his Russian contemporaries.¹³³ He grudgingly acknowledged some of its achievements, and considered it an improvement on earlier ‘fanatical’ attitudes, although he also called for a greater advocacy of *sblizhenie* – *rapprochement* – amongst reformist leaders.¹³⁴ Whilst his published correspondence with Muslim reformers such as Devlet-Kildeev, Murza-Alim and Akhund Bayazid was often quite combative, it acknowledged them as intellectual equals who could be engaged in constructive debate.¹³⁵ Adeeb Khalid has examined his private correspondence with the pioneering Crimean Tatar reformer Ismail Bey Gaspirali, which was by no means consistently hostile – indeed when Gaspirali died in 1914 the *Turkestarskaya Tuzemnaya Gazeta* published a lengthy obituary, together with an appreciation by Ostroumov himself.¹³⁶ In a curious way he became a patron to the late 19th-century generation of Muslim intellectuals, such as the poet Furqat, publishing their essays, short stories and poems and even being eulogised in Turki verses himself in the pages of the *Turkestarskaya Tuzemnaya Gazeta*, which remained almost the sole public forum for the expression of Muslim reformist views until censorship was relaxed

¹²⁸ Ostroumov *Sarty* (1908) p.90

¹²⁹ Lunin ‘Turkestan v materialakh’ p.54

¹³⁰ Nalivkin wrote in 1913: ‘The knowledge the natives have of us for a long time has extended no further than a belief that all Russians smell of fish. For our part we have grasped no more than the absurd and contradictory pronouncements of self-styled “experts” [perhaps a veiled reference to Ostroumov?] everything has become more and more confused in the chaos, springing from our own ignorance, lack of culture and self-importance. These have been, in their broad outlines, our relations with the native world.’ V.P. Nalivkin *Tuzemtsy, Ran’she i Teper* (Tashkent, 1913) p.69

¹³¹ For a history of ‘Jadidism’ in Central Asia see Khalid *Muslim Cultural Reform*

¹³² N.P. Ostroumov *Islamovedenie. Vvedenie v Kurs Islamovedeniya* (Tashkent, 1914) pp.18-19; Marlène Laruelle in *Mythe aryen et rêve impérial* p.173 suggests that Ostroumov had an ‘aryanist’ bias, something which seems to be based on a partial reading of his work.

¹³³ See by contrast the ripe abuse in Miropiev *O položeniï russkikh inorodtsev* pp.3-7, 43-50

¹³⁴ Ostroumov *Islamovedenie* (1914) pp.24-6, 55, 67-8, 77

¹³⁵ N.P. Ostroumov *Koran i Progress. Po povodu umstvennogo probuzhdeniya sovremennykh rossiiskikh musul’man* (Tashkent, 1901) pp.6 – 10

¹³⁶ Khalid *Muslim Cultural Reform* pp.89-91, 180-1; Ostroumov’s *Fond* in the Uzbek archives is No.1,009, but unfortunately I have not been able to make use of his private papers as I was refused permission to work there on my last trip to Tashkent.

after the 1905 Revolution.¹³⁷ Interestingly, Ostroumov did not view the great expansion of reformist newspapers after this date as a negative phenomenon: instead he welcomed it as evidence that it was the *Turkestanskaya Tuzemnaya Gazeta* which had educated Muslims in the value of print.¹³⁸

Thus, although both an Orientalist who harboured ‘Orientalist’ views and one who served the colonial regime, Ostroumov turns out to be a slightly more complex figure than Khalid suggests in his debate with Knight.¹³⁹ Furthermore, although he clearly had a better relationship with the regime than either Grigoriev or Kun, it is not clear just how useful his advice and writings were. His opinion that Islamic law was more or less identical in India and Turkestan, together with his advocacy of the use of a Russian translation (from English) of a key Anglo-Indian judicial text, the *Hedaya*,¹⁴⁰ strongly influenced an attempt by Senator Count K. K. Pahlen’s reforming commission of 1908-9 to use ‘Anglo-Muhammadan’ law as the basis for a codification of the *Sharia* in Turkestan (despite Barthold’s arguments to the contrary).¹⁴¹ This led more or less directly to its failure, as the congress of *Qazis* assembled by Pahlen in Tashkent to consider the code, according to at least one eyewitness, rejected it with a firm ‘no’.¹⁴² Although Mirza Kazem-Bek did produce his own ‘codified’ version of the *Sharia* at Kazan University, the rigid understanding of its norms which he shared with Ostroumov was never imposed across the Empire.¹⁴³ The contrast with the British codification of both Hindu and ‘Anglo-Muhammadan’ personal law, which were incorporated into the Indian penal code (and the latter of which is still in force in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh), is striking. In both cases the British transformed what had been more flexible compilations of ‘correct conduct’ (the Dharmashastras) and jurisprudential commentary (Burhan ud-din al-Marghinani’s *Hedaya*) into ‘codes’ informed both by Roman law and British case law. The peculiarly colonial nature of this enterprise might be open to question, given that in the 1890s Amir ‘Abd al-Rahman Khan was carrying out a successful bureaucratisation of Islamic law in Afghanistan (also using the *Hedaya*).¹⁴⁴ Similarly the degree of Indian involvement in the creation of these codes and their actual impact on Indian religious and social practice are matters of debate, but the successful reifying and employment of these forms of knowledge by the colonial state in India is clear.

Conclusion

The first conclusion I would draw is that in many respects there was nothing especially distinctive about Tsarist ‘Orientalism’. In this, as in other aspects of Russia’s relationship with its Asian borderlands, the lively ‘Asianist’ sub-strand of Slavophile thought which represented Russia as bridge between East and West was little more than a way of legitimising colonial rule, and a useful rhetorical device when confronted with Western European attempts to exclude Russia from the family of European nations. It did not affect the mentality or behaviour of the Imperial

¹³⁷ *Ibid* pp87-8; for the reference to poems in praise of Ostroumov I am indebted to a fine paper by Aftandil Erkinov given at a conference on Ostroumov’s life and work held at the Orthodox Eparchate in Tashkent in May 2007.

¹³⁸ Ostroumov ‘*Turkestanskaya Tuzemnaya Gazeta*’ p.172

¹³⁹ Khalid ‘the Debate over Orientalism’ pp.691-2

¹⁴⁰ N. P. Ostroumov *Islamovedenie 4. Shariat po Shkole Abu-Khanify* (Tashkent, 1912) pp.4, 16-19, 24; this was a reprint of pieces which had first appeared in *TV* in 1909; The *Hedaya* was originally written in Samarkand by Burhan ud-Din al-Marghinani (d. AD 1197), but the English translation which Grodekov used had been made in Calcutta in 1791 (from a Persian translation, not the Arabic original), and contained numerous inaccuracies. Charles Hamilton (Trans.) *The Hedaya* (2nd Edition 1870); Kugle ‘Framed, Blamed and Renamed’ pp.272-3

¹⁴¹ I. D. Yagello (ed.) *Sbornik Materialov po voprosu ob izuchenii Tuzemnykh yazykov sluzhashchimi po voenno-narodnomu upravleniyu Turkestanskogo kraya* (Tashkent, 1905) p.109; See Khalid *Muslim Cultural Reform* pp.70-1; Morrison *Russian Rule in Samarkand* pp.274-82 for a discussion of this episode.

¹⁴² M. Antonovich ‘Po povodu s’ezda po voprosam pravovogo byta musul’mam’ *Turkestanskii Kur’er* Nos. 113-117, 119 in *Turkestanskii Sbornik* Vol.508 (1909) p.92

¹⁴³ Skhimmel’pennink van der Oie ‘Mirza Kazem-Bek’ pp256-69; Crews *For Prophet and Tsar* pp178-89

¹⁴⁴ Ashraf Ghani ‘Disputes in a Court of *Sharia*, Kunar Valley, Afghanistan, 1885-1890’ *International Journal of Middle-East Studies* 15 (1983) pp.356-7

ruling elite in Central Asia or Transcaucasia, or have any influence on colonial policy.¹⁴⁵ It is true that many Russian Orientalists were critical of European Imperialism; that much (if not all) of their work did not reproduce or sustain ‘Orientalist’ stereotypes and even worked to dispel them, and that there are many examples of Orientals participating in the early stages of the production of Oriental knowledge in Russia or gaining full recognition in the academic discipline of Orientalism: but all these things are to be found in the British Empire as well, even in its oldest and most archetypal Asian colony, India. If we look at connections between the Colonial State and Orientalist scholars, then Russia’s distinctiveness perhaps even lies in the fact that there was a much greater interpenetration of the worlds of scholarship and colonial rule than in the British Empire, at least in terms of the number of officers and administrators who became recognised authorities in the field of Oriental Studies, and the number of academic Orientalists who were attached to the administration in Turkestan.

Secondly, the existence of a pervasive and denigrating Russian ‘Orientalist’ stereotype of all Muslims, and Sufi groups in particular, as ‘fanatical’, originally produced by the experience of war in the North Caucasus and subsequently exacerbated by the Andijan uprising, was a handicap to Russian Rule in Turkestan, not an asset. Again, there is nothing particularly distinctive about this. Bayly has shown how the rise of cultural and religious prejudice against Indians in the 1840s and 50s helped to make the *Raj* less, rather than more secure (although here the error was complacency rather than paranoia).¹⁴⁶ In general the notion that forms of ‘colonial knowledge’ which demonise and ‘other’ the colonial subject invariably play a role in strengthening colonial rule is open to question. In this case, the discourse of Muslim ‘fanaticism’ was one which remained largely confined to the colonial rulers themselves, and, rather than becoming ‘internalised’ by the colonised (a process whose actual mechanics remain extremely obscure), it was instead robustly contested.¹⁴⁷ The fear engendered by Andijan triggered what Bayly has called an ‘information panic’, as the colonial administration consumed much of its energy in pursuing red herrings, often the products of spurious denunciations, spying on Muslim reformers it suspected of being pan-Islamists, and clerics and Sufis it believed were fanatical.¹⁴⁸ Recent research suggests that most of this was entirely unjustified.¹⁴⁹ The curious mixture of bluster and timidity in Russian official attitudes led them to be much more cautious about interfering with the Muslim institutions of *waqf*, the *Haj* and the religious courts than their hostile rhetoric towards Islam might lead one to expect.¹⁵⁰

Finally, and most tentatively, it is perhaps when we look at the role of the colonial state that the most significant distinction between ‘applied Orientalism’ in Tsarist Central Asia and in British India begins to reveal itself. In India, partly because colonial rule and the scholarly tradition associated with it were of much longer standing, partly because the colonial state was stronger and less paranoid than in most of the borderlands of the Russian Empire, the British made much more interventionist use of the knowledge created for them by Orientalists and, indeed, other scholars. Whilst in the Russian Empire Catherine the Great had established the

¹⁴⁵ N.A. Riasanovsky ‘Asia through Russian Eyes’ W. S. Vucinich (ed.) *Russia and Asia* (Stanford, 1972) pp.3-29; Alexander Morrison ‘Russian Rule in Turkestan and the Example of British India’ *Slavonic & East European Review* 84/4 (2006) pp.706-7; Sahadeo *Russian Colonial Society* p.5

¹⁴⁶ Bayly *Empire and Information* pp.315-7, 365-76

¹⁴⁷ Unfortunately there is no space here to expand this point, but the combative responses of *Jadid* writers to Ostroumov and Miropiev are a clear enough case of this. Whilst the *Jadids* were also critical of Sufism and *Ishans* as ‘backward’, their critique was as much social as religious, and this was a common characteristic of modernist Islam and not simply a reflection of a colonial discourse. Khalid *Muslim Cultural Reform* pp.51-3, 149-50

¹⁴⁸ Bayly *Empire & Information* pp.171-3

¹⁴⁹ See Bakhtiyar Babajanov ‘Russian Colonial Power in Central Asia as seen by Local Muslim Intellectuals’ in Beate Eschment & Hans Harder (ed.) *Looking at the Coloniser* (Würzburg, 2004) pp.75-90 & Hisao Komatsu ‘Dar al-Islam under Russian Rule as understood by Turkestani Muslim Intellectuals’ in Tomohiko Uyama (ed.) *Empire, Islam, and Politics* (Sapporo, 2007) pp.3-21, both of which make the point that most of the ‘*ulama* and reformist intellectuals in Turkestan came to characterise the colonial regime as *Dar al-Islam*.

¹⁵⁰ Morrison *Russian Rule in Samarkand* pp.51-87

Muftiate to administer the Empire’s Muslims at roughly the same time that Warren Hastings initiated the British attempt to codify Hindu and Muslim law in India in the late 18th century, this approach to Islam fell out of favour after the 1850s and was not extended to the Steppe or to Central Asia, where the colonial administration attempted (not always successfully) to keep Islam at arm’s length. The example of Alexander Kun, together with that of Grigoriev presented by Knight, suggests that the Russian state did not always make very good use of those Orientalists in its service, and even when they were listened to, as in the case of Ostroumov, the advice was not always terribly helpful. Lykoshin’s role in unravelling the complicated chimera of the Kazakh *ghazavat* shows how useful they could be at times; subsequently in 1916 at the time of the Central Asian Revolt, Lykoshin would also use his linguistic skills to play a crucial role in defusing tensions in Samarkand, where he was then the Military Governor.¹⁵¹ However, Lykoshin was an unusually talented officer, and the case summarised here still occupied the administration for over a year before he wound it up.

So defective was the Russian colonial administration’s knowledge of Turkestan that it took almost forty years from the fall of Tashkent before that most basic and essential taxation tool of the colonial state, an accurate agricultural survey, had been completed.¹⁵² Although by 1917 Russian scholars had produced a large body of specialised Orientalist and Ethnographic knowledge about Turkestan, this did not lead to the sort of grandiose classificatory and codificatory projects which we associate with the colonial state in British India (although much of it would later come to be used in the early years of the Soviet Union).¹⁵³ Only one, incomplete Empire-wide census was carried out in Russia before 1917, and the ‘ethnic’ categories which the 1897 census used in Central Asia (particularly that of ‘Sart’) were highly inconsistent and contested.¹⁵⁴ In many ways this is unsurprising: the general weakness of the Tsarist State in its under-governed borderlands, and the fragmented and contradictory nature of its modernising project,¹⁵⁵ meant that whilst the British in India were re-writing Hindu and Muslim law and codifying and (some would argue) solidifying Indian castes through their censuses and courts, there was no single system of law even in European Russia.¹⁵⁶ Not until the very last years of Tsarism do we see anything approaching the creation of ‘Anglo-Muhammadan Law’ in Central Asia, and even then the attempt proved abortive. Frederick Cooper’s observation that we should not take the power and modernity of the colonial state for granted seems to be amply confirmed in the relative failure to ‘Apply Orientalism’ in Russian Turkestan.¹⁵⁷

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¹⁵¹ Richard Pierce *Russian Central Asia 1867-1917* (Berkeley, 1960) p.273; Brower describes Lykoshin’s gloomy verdict on the revolt in some detail: *Turkestan* pp.5-6

¹⁵² Morrison *Russian Rule in Samarkand* pp.117-8, 186-7. And even then I would cast some doubt on the accuracy of the returns, although Beatrice Penati’s ongoing research on the Land and Water Reform in the 1920s suggests that the Soviet Regime made use of the data collected by the late-Tsarist Land Tax Commissions in Turkestan, so I may have underestimated their importance.

¹⁵³ Francine Hirsch *Empire of Nations. Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union* (Ithaca, NY, 2005) pp.30-61

¹⁵⁴ Khalid *Muslim Cultural Reform* pp.199-209; Brower *Turkestan* pp.52-3; N.P Ostroumov *Sarty – Etnograficheskie Materialy* 2nd Edition (Tashkent, 1896) pp.1-52 Although early Soviet ethnographers believed that they had ‘pinned down’ the ‘Sarts’ as ‘Turkicised Iranians’, the category would nevertheless be abolished in response to Jadid demand in the 1920s; I.I. Zarubin *Naselenie Samarkandskoi Oblasti* (Leningrad, 1926) p.20; Adeeb Khalid ‘Theories and Politics of Central Asian Identities’ *AI* 2005/4; Arne Haugen *The Establishment of National Republics in Soviet Central Asia* (London, 2003) pp.145-9

¹⁵⁵ Sviatoslav Kaspe ‘Imperial Political Culture and Modernization in the Second Half of the nineteenth century’ Burbank *et al* (ed.) *Russian Empire* pp.455-489; Brower *Turkestan* pp.ix, 174-5

¹⁵⁶ Jörg Baberowski ‘Law, the Judicial System and the Legal profession’ *Cambridge History of Russia* Vol.II (Cambridge, 2006) pp.346-8, 356-9

¹⁵⁷ Frederick Cooper *Colonialism in Question* (Berkeley, 2005) pp.142-4