Chapter 4

Invitation, Adaptation, and Resistance to Empires: Cases of Central Asia

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International relations in Central Asia and its neighboring regions during the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century have been described as a "Great Game" of empires. Rivalries between powers for influence over Central Asia and the Caucasus after the fall of the Soviet Union have been called the "New Great Game." However, most accounts of the old Great Game are journalistic and stereotyped, focusing on adventurous secret agents and military men of the British and the Russian Empires.[1] The new Great Game is likewise regarded as a competition between Russia, the United States, and China for oil, gas, and military footholds. There is almost no research elucidating what these rivalries between empires and great powers have meant for Central Asia in terms of the long historical perspective.

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1 Examples of well-informed, but still stereotyped works are Peter Hopkirk, *The Great Game: On Secret Service in High Asia* (London: Murray, 1990); Karl E. Meyer and Shareen Blair Brysac, *Tournament of Shadows: The Great Game and the Race for Empire in Central Asia* (Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint, 1999).

An especially problematic aspect of the old Great Game narrative is the treatment of local people as passive or irrational actors.[2] Their cooperation with or hostile actions against empires are described episodically, and their motives and backgrounds are rarely analyzed in detail. As we shall see in this paper, local actors were, in most cases, not at all passive, but had their own strategies and tactics.

Recent imperial and colonial studies have been addressing interactions between imperial powers and local peoples—in particular, the latter's interests in engagement with empires. In the field of study of the British Empire, Ronald Robinson presented a theory of "collaboration" as early as 1972, arguing that non-European elites' collaboration (or resistance) constituted a central mechanism of European imperialism, a view that has had much resonance and influence on subsequent studies.[3] In recent years, students of the history of the Russian Empire have also acquired rich knowledge of mutual relationships between imperial power and non-Russian, especially Muslim, societies, based both on Russian archival sources on local governance that became accessible after the fall of the Soviet Union and on sources in non-Russian languages.[4] There

2 Even in Sergeev's recent book, which provides an excellent account of British-Russian relations, local people appear as only minor actors. E. Yu. Sergeev, *Bol'shaia igra, 1856–1907: mify i realii rossiisko-britanskikh otnoshenii v Tsentral'noi i Vostochnoi Azii* (Moscow: KMK, 2012).

3 Ronald Robinson, "Non-European Foundations of European Imperialism: Sketch for a Theory of Collaboration," in Roger Owen and Bob Sutcliffe, eds., *Studies in the Theory of Imperialism* (London: Longman, 1972), pp. 117–142; Wm. Roger Louis, ed., *Imperialism: The Robinson and Gallagher Controversy* (New York: New Viewpoints, 1976).

4 Researchers have found close interactions between the Russian state and Muslim society in, above all, the Volga-Ural region. Robert D. Crews, *For Prophet and Tsar: Islam and Empire in Russia and Central Asia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); Naganawa Norihiro, "Molding the Muslim Community through the Tsarist Administration: *Maḥalla* under the Jurisdiction of Orenburg Mohammedan Spiritual Assembly after 1905," *Acta Slavica Iaponica* 23 (2006), pp. 101–123. It should be noted that the interactions between state and society through such institutions as the Muslim Spiritual Assembly, *zemstvo*s, and military conscription, were characteristic to the Volga-Urals, but not to many other Muslim regions of the Russian Empire, including Central Asia.

are also attempts at comparing these kinds of interactions in different empires, most notably Alexander Morrison's work on Russian Central Asia and British India.[5]

In considering local factors in imperial expansion and inter-imperial rivalry, Sean Pollock's use of the concept of "empire by invitation" is highly suggestive. He demonstrates that Russian empire-building in the Caucasus was a negotiated process: Sometimes Caucasian leaders attempted to drag Russia into local affairs even when the latter preferred the status quo, and other times Russia forced them to request its protection, while ignoring them at its peril.[6] However, like most students of empire, Pollock is mainly interested in imperial policy. He uses documents of the imperial administration and does not analyze local situations and local actors' strategies in a sufficiently systematic manner.

This chapter aims at analyzing mutual relationships between empires (Russian, British, and Chinese) and local actors in Central Asia and its neighboring regions (including India) during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, occasionally referring to earlier and later periods. I focus on the strategies and logic of local actors, rather than on those of empires, and try to elucidate what imperial expansion, rule, and rivalry meant for this region. Needless to say, this is an extremely difficult task, as documents written by local actors are much fewer than those written by representatives of imperial institutions, and they are recorded in various languages. To cover regions in sufficient diversity to deduce different patterns of interaction, I am compelled to rely more on secondary sources than on primary ones.

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5 A. S. Morrison, *Russian Rule in Samarkand 1868–1910: A Comparison with British India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

6 Sean Pollock, "Empire by Invitation? Russian Empire-Building in the Caucasus in the Reign of Catherine II" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2006). The term "empire by invitation" seems to have been first used by Geir Lundestad, although Pollock does not mention him. Geir Lundestad, "Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945–1952," *Journal of Peace Research* 23:3 (1986), pp. 263–277. While Lundestad holds a one-sided view that the rising influence of the United States was requested and welcomed in Western Europe and other areas of the world after World War II, Pollock's view is more balanced, taking into account not only Caucasian people's "invitation" but also their resistance to Russia and contacts with other empires.

Roles of Local Actors in Russian and Qing Expansion into Central Asia

The concept of "empire by invitation" is largely applicable to Central Asia. Russian expansion into Central Asia was a long and complicated process, and its first step was taken in 1730 when Abul Khayr Khan, the ruler of the western part of Kazakhstan, asked the Russian Empress Anna to make peace between the Kazakhs and the Bashkirs, expressing his loyalty to her. The Kazakhs then frequently waged war with the Zunghars and had sought alliance with or protection from Russia since 1717. But Russia was reluctant, probably because the Zunghars could become an important card for Russia in its relations with the Qing Empire of China. The Zunghars fought also with the Qing, but when the Qing army temporarily withdrew after Emperor Kangxi died in 1721, the Zunghars launched an all-out attack on the Kazakhs. The large-scale Kazakh refugee flows led to devastation in a large part of Central Asia and to conflicts with Bashkirs, Kalmyks, and Cossacks in Russia. This situation heightened Russia's interest in expanding its influence on the Kazakhs to stabilize the frontier and the trade with Central Asia. Negotiations between Russian and Kazakh representatives resulted in the mutual decision to make the Kazakhs Russian subjects in 1731.

Abul Khayr Khan used his position as a vassal of the Russian tsar not only to stabilize relations with the Zunghars and the Bashkirs, but also to strengthen his power inside the Kazakh Khanate and to expand his influence on Khiva and other adjacent areas. He sometimes raided caravans of Russo-Central Asian trade to pressure Russia into giving more help. For him, Russian subjecthood was not total obedience, but an alliance that gave him privilege and that he could manipulate. Soon, however, his intention backfired. From the 1740s onward, Russia interfered in the affairs of the Kazakh Khanate by building fortress lines, instigating conflicts in the ruling families, and assuming the power to approve the title of khan.[7]

7 Irina Erofeeva, *Khan Abulkhair: polkovodets, pravitel' i politik* (Almaty: Sanat, 1999).

The Qing conquest of Zungharia was closely connected to the internal strife of the Oyirats (the Zunghars were an Oyirat tribe). After the demise of the powerful chief of the Zunghars, Galdan Tsering, in 1745, there occurred a succession struggle and killings. Some members of Oyirat ruling families, including Amursanaa, an active participant in the struggle, appealed to the Qing for help. The Qing army, appointing Amursanaa as a commander, easily defeated the Zunghars. Soon, dissatisfied with his treatment, Amursanaa declared himself leader of all the Oyirats and rose against the Qing Empire to regain independence, but the Qing were determined to completely subjugate Zungharia. Amursanaa fled first to Kazakhstan and then to Siberia, where he died.[8]

The conquest of Zungharia made the Tarim Basin, which had been ruled by the Zunghars, easy prey for the Qing Empire. Initially, the Qing supported the Aqtaghliq branch of Kashgar *khwaja*s to control the Tarim Basin, and Aqtaghliq *khwaja*s used this support to attack rival Qaratagh-liq *kwaja*s. Soon, however, Khwaja Jahan and other Aqtaghliq leaders rebelled against the Qing, and the Qing army invaded and occupied the Tarim Basin in 1758–59. Muslims of the Tarim Basin, where each oasis had a distinct history and identity, were divided, and there were a number of local leaders who cooperated with the Qing in opposing Khwaja Jahan. It should be added that people in Hami and Turfan, located to the east of the Tarim Basin, had already surrendered to the Qing Empire by the 1720s to escape Zunghar rule.[9]

The Russian conquest of Central Asia in the nineteenth century was also entangled with rivalries between local actors. By mid-century, groups of Kazakhs and Kyrgyz in Semirechie swore allegiance to Russia one after another to escape the tyranny of the Kokand Khanate,[10] although

8 Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005), pp. 256–289.

9 Saguchi Tōru, *18–19 seiki Higashi Torukisutan shakaishi kenkyū* [Social history of East Turkestan in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries] (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1963), pp. 45–66.

10 *Kazakhsko-russkie otnosheniia v XVIII–XIX vekakh (1771–1867 gody): sbornik dokumentov i materialov* (Alma-Ata: Nauka KazSSR, 1964); *Khrestomatiia po istorii Kyrgyzstana*, 2nd ed. (Bishkek: Raritet Info, 2004).

there were also Kazakhs and Kyrgyz who cooperated with the Kokandis. A Kokand chronicle states that, when the Russian army began to occupy Kokandian fortresses along Syr-Darya in 1864, Kazakhs around the city of Turkistan, resenting the greedy Kokandian governor, urged the Russians to quickly seize Tashkent, the largest city in the region.[11] When the Russian army occupied Tashkent the next year, it met strong resistance from citizens who had hoped for help from the Bukharan Amirate, although some Tashkent merchants cooperated with the Russians in expectation of an end to the disorder under Kokandian rule and a revival of trade.[12] The Bukharan army chose to seize another city, Khujand, by taking advantage of the Kokandian crisis, rather than to fight the Russians to rescue Tashkent.

Interestingly, there were a number of people who (or whose family members) once resisted Russia but later contributed to Russia's warfare or political deals. Akhmet Kenisarin, the son of Kenesary Qasymov, the leader of a major Kazakh rebellion in 1837–47, served in the Kokandian army after his father's death but became a Russian subject in 1861 and greatly helped Russia's war with the Kokand Khanate.[13] Jurabek and Bababek, the *bek*s of Shahrisabz who continued to resist Russia for two years after the Bukharan Amirate practically became a vassal state of Russia in 1868, later participated in the Russian army's operations to suppress revolts in the Kokand Khanate and, ultimately, to liquidate the khanate.[14] Makhtum Quli Khan, one of the Turkmen leaders in the fierce

11 T. K. Beisembiev, *"Ta'rikh-i Shakhrukhi" kak istoricheskii istochnik* (Alma-Ata: Nauka KazSSR, 1987), pp. 126–127.

12 M. A. Terent'ev, *Istoriia zavoevaniia Srednei Azii*, vol. 1 (St. Petersburg: Tipo-litografiia V. V. Komarova, 1906), pp. 306–321; Edward Allworth, ed., *Central Asia: 120 Years of Russian Rule* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1989), p. 19.

13 TsGA RUz (Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Respubliki Uzbekistan), f. 1, op. 2, d. 56.

14 Valerii Germanov, "Politika formirovaniia v Turkestanskom krae loial'noi Rossii natsional'noi elity," in *Rossiia–Uzbekistan: istoriia i sovremennost'*, vol. 4 [Zhurnal *EvroAziia*, no. 7] (Moscow: Istoricheskii fakul'tet MGU, 2008), pp. 85–89.

battle against the Russian army in Gokdepe in 1880–81, soon pledged allegiance to Russia and persuaded his co-ethnics in Merv to become Russian subjects.[15] All these people were given officer ranks in the Russian army, and some of them also worked as administrators. Even Shamil, the leader of the Islamic state and of the fiercest anti-Russian resistance in the North Caucasus for a quarter-century, was welcomed by the Russian emperor and public after his surrender in 1859 and was given the status of an aristocrat. He appealed to his compatriots to stop fighting and to be loyal to the tsar.[16] George N. Curzon, the prominent British participant and observer of the Great Game, noted that Russia enjoyed popularity in Central Asia because of its fraternal and laissez-faire attitude toward the locals and, unlike the British practice, its employment of former enemies.[17] For a number of local actors, resistance and collaboration were interchangeable strategies they could adopt depending on circumstances.

The above-mentioned cases show some patterns in common. In a situation of antagonism among local actors, the intention of one party to ally with a great power to defeat the adversary often led to imperial expansion, with the empire in some cases enthusiastic about expansion from the beginning, and in other cases not. In the short run, local actors were able to use the empire and even to twist it around their little fingers, but in the long run, their intentions backfired and they were subjugated by the empire. In some cases, the empire employed local elites, including those that had resisted it, for the purpose of local administration or the conquest of new lands.

How Local Actors Tried to Exploit Imperial Rivalries

The previous section observed relations between one empire and Central Asian elites. This section examines the attitudes of local political leaders who engaged two or more empires.

15 TsGA RUz, f. 1, op. 2, d. 1215, ll. 1–2ob.; M. N. Tikhomirov, *Prisoedinenie Merva k Rossii* (Moscow: Izd-vo vostochnoi literatury, 1960).

16 M. N. Chichagova, *Shamil' na Kavkaze i v Rossii* (St. Petersburg: S. Muller and I. Bogel'man, 1889).

17 George N. Curzon, *Russia in Central Asia in 1889 and the Anglo-Russian Question* (London: Longmans, 1889), pp. 388–391.

The most spectacular example of engagement with empires was the policy of Ya'qub Beg, a military commander from Kokand who established a de facto independent state in 1867 in East Turkestan, where the Qing Empire had lost control because of Muslim revolts. As the British Empire hoped to have a pro-British government in this region and the Ya'qub Beg regime was interested in the possibility of restraining Russia with the help of Britain and of purchasing arms from British India, the two sides opened diplomatic relations. Later, however, the British were disillusioned with the commercial capacity and strategic importance of East Turkestan. Ya'qub Beg also appealed to the authority of the Ottoman sultan as the leader of the Muslim world by acknowledging his suzerainty, and he received arms and military instructors from his empire. The relations between the Ya'qub Beg regime and Russia were strained, as Ya'qub Beg negated trade privileges in East Turkestan that Russia had gained from the Qing government, and Russia occupied the Ili (Kulja) region to prevent his regime's northern expansion and sought to incite the Kokand khan to subjugate East Turkestan. Nevertheless, the Ya'qub Beg regime succeeded in making Russia recognize its de facto independence by concluding a commercial agreement. Neither of these three empires, however, had precise information or a clear strategy on East Turkestan, and they were unable to prevent the Qing reconquest of this region in 1877.[18]

The mountainous regions from the Pamirs to Kashmir, being situated between the Russian Empire and British India, provide various examples of local actors' attitudes to imperial rivalries. The first maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir, Gulab Singh, who had been the raja of Jammu, which was subordinated to the Sikh kingdom of Punjab, was given Kashmir and the status of maharaja by the British after he went over to them during the First Anglo-Sikh War (1845–46). His indebtedness to Britain notwithstanding, he was anxious to keep his territory free from British influence and to maintain direct relations with Central Asian khanates. His son Ranbir Singh, the next maharaja, sought to establish friendly

18 Kim Hodong, *Holy War in China: The Muslim Rebellion and State in Chinese Central Asia, 1864–1877* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), pp. 138–158.

ties with Russia, which had just conquered core parts of Central Asia, and even sent a mission to Tashkent (Turkestan governor-generalship) in 1870, according to some sources, to offer help for a possible Russian invasion of India. Russia showed interest in the trade of Kashmir shawls, but to avoid provoking Britain, it did not make political deals. Still, Kashmir's contact with Russia heightened the caution of the British and resulted in a tighter British grip over Jammu and Kashmir.[19]

Hunza, a principality on the Karakoram that had sometimes conflicted with and other times approached Kashmir was in deep confrontation with it in the 1880s and was wary of the British Empire's attempts to expand its influence on Hunza through Kashmir. Just then, in 1888, an ethnic Polish captain in the Russian army, Bronislav Grombchevsky, went there for geographic exploration. This is a favorite episode in the Great Game narrative that allegedly indicated Russia's ambitions for this region, but although he probably performed intelligence tasks, he was not given any rights to conduct political negotiations. Nevertheless, the ruler of Hunza, Safdar Ali, lavishly welcomed him as a Russian ambassador and requested that Russia make Safdar Ali and his country subject to it. Grombchevsky answered that he had no authority and suggested that Safdar Ali consult with the Russian consul in Kashgar. Safdar Ali dispatched a mission to Kashgar and Tashkent, but the Russian side did not allow it to reach Tashkent and gave only non-committal answers to letters from Hunza. After all, Grombchevsky's visit heightened Britain's caution against Russian expansion and hastened the British conquest of Hunza, which occurred in 1891. Safdar Ali continued to seek Russian protection even after he exiled himself to East Turkestan in China.[20]

The Western Pamirs were a focus of the Russo-British delimitation of spheres of influence. Here local leaders' internal strife and relations with Afghanistan and Bukhara often created situations unintended by

19 K. Warikoo, *Central Asia and Kashmir: A Study in the Context of Anglo-Russian Rivalry* (New Delhi: Gian Publishing House, 1989), pp. 13–45.

20 B. L. Grombchevskii, *Nashi interesy na Pamire* (Novyi Margelan, 1891) <http://militera.lib.ru/research/grombchevsky/01.html>; N. L. Luzhetskaia, *Ocherki istorii Vostochnogo Gindukusha vo vtoroi polovine XIX v.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1986), pp. 46–58; Warikoo, *Central Asia and Kashmir*, pp. 45–54.

the Russians and the British. The two empires agreed in 1873 to make the Panj River the northern border of Afghanistan, but in the same year, Afghanistan imposed tribute on the principality of Shughnan, which straddled the river, and established direct rule with its troops stationed there in 1883. The Afghans dispatched the troops primarily out of territorial ambition, but the ostensible reason was a letter from Sayyid Farrukh Shah and other influential Ismaili religious leaders asking the Afghan amir to remove Shughnan's despotic and unpopular ruler, Yusuf Ali Khan (a Sunni). Russia protested, and at its request, Britain half-heartedly demanded that Afghanistan withdraw from the right bank of the Panj. The Afghan amir ignored this demand, and the two imperial governments took no further measures for a while.

The Afghan occupation proved disastrous to the Shughnanis, including to Sayyid Farrukh Shah. They repeatedly rose against the Afghans and expressed their wish to become Russian subjects. After long hesitation, Russia began to send troops in 1891. Russia and Britain agreed on a final demarcation of the Afghan northern border in 1895, and the Afghans finally withdrew from the right bank of the Panj. But Russia gave Shughnan and its northern neighbor, Rushan, to the Bukharan Amirate in 1896, in compensation for the latter's relinquishment of the part of Darvaz on the left bank of the Panj. People in Shughnan and Rushan strongly resisted Bukharan rule, and they persuaded Russia to establish de facto rule in 1905.[21]

The Eastern Pamirs, sparsely populated by Kyrgyz, were more vulnerable to external intervention, and it was difficult for the people there to take independent actions like the Shughnanis had done. This area enjoyed relative stability under the Kokand Khanate in the mid-nineteenth century, but from the 1870s it was devastated by successive invasions of troops from Ya'qub Beg, Qing China, and Afghanistan. As a

21 A. V. Postnikov, *Skhvatka na "Kryshe Mira": politiki, razvedchiki i geografy v bor'be za Pamir v XIX veke* (Moscow: Pamiatniki istoricheskoi mysli, 2001), pp. 183–188; *Istoriia Gorno-Badakhshanskoi avtonomnoi oblasti*, vol. 1 (Dushanbe: Paivand, 2005), pp. 332–340, 351–371; D. Ivanov, "Shugnan: Afganistanskie ocherki," *Vestnik Evropy* 3 (1885), pp. 638–643.

result of the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1895, people in the Eastern Pamirs accepted Russian rule without resistance.[22]

As the above-mentioned examples show that, when their independence was threatened by a larger country, small countries often tried to enlist the help of another large country or an empire by exploiting rivalries among them. Empires that received calls for help reacted in various ways, but they were often cautious to avoid provoking another empire. They even respected its interests when it already dominated the small country in question, as the Russian attitude to Kashmir showed. The halfhearted involvement of empires without clear strategies was counterproductive to tiny countries like Hunza, and it could not ultimately rescue even shrewd players like Ya'qub Beg. Empires used small countries as pawns in certain situations, but in the final analysis, empires were interested in maintaining the international order of the great powers. One may recall in this connection that the British Empire, deeply engaged in Tibetan affairs in fear that Tibet might fall into the sphere of Russian influence, never recognized its independence from China even when it was de facto independent. However, in some cases, like that of Shughnan, determined local leaders did persuade imperial authorities and changed the situation in their favor.

Adaptation to Empire: How Muslims Justified Infidel Rule

For Muslims, the majority population of Central Asia, all the empires that engaged this region were infidel. As long as relations remained diplomatic, almost no one seemed to have explained or criticized their rightfulness in religious terms. Once imperial rule began, however, Muslims often discussed whether it was acceptable from an Islamic point of view. According to Islamic—particularly Hanafi—jurisprudence, the world is divided into *Dār al-Islām* (the House of Islam), where Islamic law

22 B. L. Tageev, "Pamirskie kirgizy," *Niva* 38 (1897) <http://zerrspiegel.orientphil.uni-halle.de/t1056.html>; *Istoriia Gorno-Badakhshanskoi*, vol. 1, pp. 348–350; E. Maanaev and V. Ploskikh, *Na "Kryshe mira": Istoricheskie ocherki o pamiro-alaiskikh kirgizakh* (Frunze: Mektep, 1983), pp. 61–67.

prevails, and *Dār al-Harb* (the House of War), which antagonizes Islam and where Islamic law is not in force. Muslims who find themselves in *Dār al-Harb* should, in theory, declare war (Jihad) against infidel rulers or migrate to *Dār al-Islām*. In practice, however, the way of determining whether Islamic law is in force has been open to discussion.

In Russian Turkestan, not a few Muslims justified Russian rule by saying it was better to be ruled by just infidels than by Muslim tyrants. Mainstream Islamic scholars argued that Russian Turkestan was *Dār al-Islām*, because Muslim judges enforced Islamic law (only at the local level, to be precise), and *volost'* (canton) and village administrators were also Muslims. A part of the Muslims, in contrast, denounced infidel rule and the corruption of Muslim judges and administrators, and some of them participated in the Andijan Uprising of 1898. But many Islamic intellectuals condemned the uprising, which they thought was doomed to failure and only brought death and suffering to Muslims.[23] This opposition to the uprising may have been related to conflicts between different strata of Muslim society, as the leader of the uprising, Dukchi Ishan, a man of low birth and without proper education, was popular among the common people but was despised by intellectuals and administrators.[24]

In India, Anglo-Mohammedan law, a civil law system based on Islamic law as interpreted and modified by the British, was applied to Muslims. But some Muslims called for Jihad and/or migration, deeming British India *Dār al-Harb*, a notable example being that of the Mujahideen Movement in the mid-nineteenth century. Around 1870, Islamic scholars debated whether British India was *Dār al-Islām* or *Dār al-Harb*, and many of them, using subtle arguments based on Islamic jurisprudence and avoiding a clear answer to the question, concluded that the British were just rulers who protected Muslims' rights and that there was

23 Komatsu Hisao, "*Dār al-Islām* under Russian Rule As Understood by Turkestani Muslim Intellectuals," in Uyama Tomohiko, ed., *Empire, Islam, and Politics in Central Eurasia* (Sapporo: Slavic Research Center, 2007), pp. 3–21.

24 Aftandil S. Erkinov, *The Andijan Uprising of 1898 and Its Leader Dukchi-Ishan Described by Contemporary Poets* (Tokyo: Department of Islamic Area Studies, The University of Tokyo, 2009).

no reason to rebel against them.[25] Behind this conformist attitude, we may discern Islamic scholars' regret over the large number of victims in the Indian Rebellion of 1857.

In East Turkestan, there were calls for Jihad during repeated rebellions. Objectively, there was reason to call East Turkestan under Qing rule *Dār al-Islām*, as Islamic courts continued to function without much change because of the lack of clear Islamic policy in the empire, but we have found no sources indicating that Muslims in this region actually supported such an argument. There were, however, other ways for Muslims to justify Qing rule. For example, *Tārīkh-i amniyya*, a chronicle completed by Mulla Musa in 1903, cited the following arguments: the justice and fairness of the Qing emperor; the "obligation of salt," a concept of ancient Turkic origin, according to which one has to be loyal to gracious rulers who give salt and bread; and the idea that every reality, including infidel rule over Muslims, was the result of divine providence.[26]

Thus, many Muslim intellectuals in Russian and Chinese Central Asia, as well as in British India, accepted infidel rule, using various rationales, including in particular the important Islamic concept of justice (*'adl*). This attitude may have reflected the realism of the people in these regions, which have historically experienced the reigns of various foreign rulers.

Tacit Resistance, or Miscommunication between Colonizers and Colonized

Needless to say, adaptation to imperial rule was not necessarily sincere, and it could be two-faced, although tacit resistance usually appears in historical sources in a subtle manner that requires delicate reading. Using Mulla Musa's *Tārīkh-i amniyya*, the same source we cited as an example of Muslim justification of Qing rule, Shinmen Yasushi points out that the author called only Ya'qub Beg, and not the Qing emperor, "His Majesty

25 P. Hardy, *The Muslims of British India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), pp. 107–115.

26 Hamada Masami, "'Shio no gimu' to 'seisen' to no aida de" [Between the "obligation of salt" and "holy war"], *Tōyōshi kenkyū* 52:2 (1993), pp. 122–148.

(*janāb ʻālī*)," and that he wrote, "this dark cloud shadowed the brilliance of noble Islam," in relation to the fall of the Ya'qub Beg regime and the Qing reconquest.[27] Apparently, for Musa, Qing rule was a reality he accepted but did not welcome.

Another type of subversion,[28] intentional or unintentional, was more commonly observed: Colonized people appropriated colonial institutions for their profit in manners unexpected by the empire. After Russia eliminated the post of chief Muslim judge (*qāḍī kalān*) in Tashkent in 1867, a post whose holder had only occasionally accepted appeals for revision of judgments issued by ordinary judges, Muslims began to lodge numerous appeals with tsarist administrators and to obtain favorable revisions of judgments, taking advantage of the Russians' insufficient knowledge of Islamic law and their distrust of Muslim judges.[29] When Russia promoted the sedentarization of nomads in Semirechie around the turn of the twentieth century, some Kyrgyz petitioned for the formation of a settled *volost'* with the aim of separating from a nomadic *volost'* dominated by a rival group, even though the petitioners had no intention of actually being settled.[30]

27 Shinmen Yasushi, "'Henkyō' no tami to Chūgoku: Higashi Torukisutan kara kangaeru" [Peripheral people and China: A view from East Turkestan], in Mizoguchi Yūzō et al., eds., *Ajia kara kangaeru*, vol. 3, *Shūen kara no rekishi* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1994), pp. 117–119.

28 In analyzing imperial rule other than its earlier stages, Paul Werth considers the concept of "subversion" more useful than "resistance," because when the imperial and the indigenous become ever more thoroughly intertwined and entangled, smaller manifestations of opposition may complicate significantly the exercise of power even as they themselves are engendered and structured by that power. Paul W. Werth, "From Resistance to Subversion: Imperial Power, Indigenous Opposition, and Their Entanglement," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 1:1 (2000), pp. 21–43, esp. 22.

29 Paolo Sartori, "Behind a Petition: Why Muslims' Appeals Increased in Turkestan under Russian Rule," *Asiatische Studien/Etudes Asiatiques* 63:2 (2009), pp. 401–434.

30 Akiyama Tetsu, "Roshia teikoku shihaika no Kuruguzu shakai: Seigansho ni utsushi dasareta shakaiteki shokankei to sono henbō" [Kyrgyz society under the rule of the Russian Empire: Transformation of social relations reflected in petitions], *Nairiku Ajiashi kenkyū* 18 (2003), pp. 39–62.

An even more widespread phenomenon was corruption related to the elections of local native administrators and judges, a system introduced by Russia into Central Asia from the 1860s. Elections became a venue for factional strife, and they cost candidates large sums for buying votes and offering bribes to Russian officials. Once elected, the candidates levied unlawful taxes on the population in order to recoup expenses. Such corruption strengthened Russian officials' resentment toward intermediaries, a common trope of imperial polemics in many colonies,[31] and some Russians called native administrators an "impermeable curtain" or "living wall" that obstructed the former's knowledge of Muslim life.[32] The lack of trust and miscommunication between Russian and native administrators made Russian officials' grasp of local situations shaky.

When open resistance occurred, the imperial administration was shocked by the injury to imperial prestige. Not only did the administration often launch violent repression, but it also made major policy changes, sometimes in an excessive manner. The Qing Empire treated Hui Muslims (including Salars) as equal to Han Chinese until the mid-eighteenth century, but the revolts of followers of the Jahriyya Sufi order in 1781 and 1784 in Gansu abruptly strengthened the government's misgivings about them. Repression of Huis spread to Xinjiang (East Turkestan), nurturing a discontent that ultimately led to long and repeated revolts in the second half of the nineteenth century.[33] The British revised their policy in India after the rebellion of 1857, putting even more emphasis on the role of maharajas and other local elites who were believed to serve as their collaborators by maintaining the traditional social order, while slowing modernization projects such as mass education.

31 Morrison, *Russian Rule in Samarkand*, pp. 149–150.

32 Uyama Tomohiko, "A Particularist Empire: The Russian Policies of Christianization and Military Conscription in Central Asia," in Uyama, ed., *Empire, Islam, and Politics*, pp. 47–48; V. P. Nalivkin, *Tuzemtsy ran'she i teper'* (orig. pub. 1913), in *Musul'manskaia Sredniaia Aziia: Traditsionalizm i XX vek* (Moscow, 2004), pp. 63–64, 76–77.

33 Ka Ritsu [Hua Li], "Kenryū ki no Shinkyō Kaimin dan'atsu to Shinkyō he no hakyū" [Oppression of Jahriyya Muslims during the Qianlong era and its spread to Xinjiang], *Higashi Ajia kenkyū* 45 (Osaka University of Economics and Law, 2006), pp. 79–92.

The Andijan Uprising tempted Russian high officials to introduce a more rigid system of religious administration. Although their attempts led to almost no systematic changes of policy, the Russian administrators' distrust of Central Asian Muslims increased after this event, despite the fact that, as already mentioned, many Muslims, including Islamic scholars, condemned the uprising. Even the peaceful resistance of Tatars who had earlier been (forcibly) baptized but who reconverted to Islam in the mid-nineteenth century,[34] combined with other factors such as the exodus of Crimean Tatars to the Ottoman Empire, made the Russian government hostile to Islam and caused it to restrict Muslim Tatars' activities outside their own community. Thus, miscommunication between colonizers and colonized, and the former's overreaction to resistance, led not only to the latter's misfortune but also to the instability of imperial rule.

Imperial Rule and Modernization Movements

We have seen that, while the people of Central Asia and its neighboring regions held diverse attitudes toward empires, there were no fundamental differences among regions, in the sense that people were quite flexible in forming relationships with empires and were able to switch between resistance and collaboration. In the long run, however, people's destinies greatly diverged depending on which empire they belonged to. While former British India achieved independence in 1947 with partition into India and Pakistan, and the five countries of the former Russian/Soviet Central Asia rather unexpectedly became independent in 1991, East Turkestan and Tibet remain in China, despite the people's strong aspirations for independence. We will not discuss why one or another region has or has not been able to achieve independence, but we will shed light on the divergence of the colonized people's attitudes toward empires in the course of modernization.

34 Paul Werth warns researchers against exaggerating the scale of "apostasy" of baptized Tatars, noting that while tens of thousands of them repudiated Orthodoxy in favor of Islam, a much larger number—about 120,000—remained formally Christian. Werth, "From Resistance to Subversion," pp. 37–38.

We have mentioned that Islamic intellectuals in Russian Turkestan regarded this region as *Dār al-Islām* because Islamic law was still in force to some extent; in fact, this concerned only sedentary areas. Nomadic people, to whom the Russian authorities did not allow the application of Islamic law, were in a different situation. The famous Kazakh poet Abay (1845–1904) clearly wrote that they lived in *Dār al-Harb*. But he wrote this not to call for Jihad or migration, but simply to demonstrate the difficulty of learning Arabic there. He wrote that the Russians had knowledge, wealth, art, and science, and that it was necessary to learn their language and receive their education.[35]

Kazakh intellectuals were discontented with the Russian policy to alienate the Kazakhs from Islam, but ultimately it was more important for many of them to learn Russian and acquire European culture and technology, in order to improve their rights and cultural level. They struggled to achieve autonomy within Russia in cooperation with both Russians (liberals and socialists) and fellow Muslims.[36] In sedentary areas of Turkestan, intellectuals were more Islamic-oriented, but the cultural environments created under Russian rule were essential for their mental development and movements for reform and autonomy.[37] During the tsarist and the Soviet periods, people in Central Asia, adapting themselves to Russian/Soviet rule, acquired administrative skills and established national culture. These proved to be favorable preconditions for independence.

35 Abay, "Jiirma besínshí söz" [The twenty-fifth word], in his *Shïgharmalarïnïng ekí tomdïq tolïq jinaghï*, vol. 2 (Almaty: Jazushï, 1995), p. 176.

36 Uyama Tomohiko, "Two Attempts at Building a Qazaq State: The Revolt of 1916 and the Alash Movement," in Stéphane A. Dudoignon and Komatsu Hisao, eds., *Islam in Politics in Russia and Central Asia* (London: Kegan Paul, 2001), pp. 77–98; idem, "The Changing Religious Orientation of Qazaq Intellectuals in the Tsarist Period: *Sharī'a*, Secularism, and Ethics," in Niccolò Pianciola and Paolo Sartori, eds., *Islam, Society and States across the Qazaq Steppe (18th – Early 20th Centuries)* (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2013), pp. 95–118.

37 Adeeb Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

In British India, elites were eager both to preserve classical culture based on Sanskrit and Persian and to learn European culture. Even when the British were negative about expanding English education, Indians learned English on their own initiative.[38] Unlike Russia, Britain had established democracy in the metropolis, and Indians could easily refer to democracy as a criterion for criticizing British policy in India and for demanding more political rights. Indian elites also eagerly sought to be employed as high officials and to be elected to assemblies.[39] This created preconditions for a vibrant independence movement and relatively smooth decolonization.

East Turkestan's cultural relationship with China was radically different from that of Central Asia with Russia and that of India with Britain. From the 1880s onward, the Qing Empire promoted Chinese education among the Muslims in this region, without much success. In the early twentieth century, Muslim intellectuals in East Turkestan launched cultural and reformist movements, following the examples of Russian and Ottoman Muslims, not of Chinese.[40] Some of these turned into independence movements in the 1930s and 1940s. In 1933, rebels in Turfan asked the British consul-general in Kashgar for help, claiming that the Chinese were holding them back from developing in a civilized way: "The Chinese deprived us of civil rights. They have kept us away from science, technology, industry, and trade . . . The world-famous tyranny of the Chinese placed us in an uncultured and uncivilized state, and subjected us to misfortune."[41] An

38 Lynn Zastoupil and Martin Moir, eds., *The Great Indian Education Debate: Documents Relating to the Orientalist-Anglicist Controversy, 1781–1843* (Richmond: Curzon, 1999), pp. 25–31.

39 A prominent example of active participation in British politics and criticism of British policy in India was that of Dadabhai Naoroji, the first Indian to be a British Member of Parliament (1892–95) and the author of *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India* (1901).

40 Ōishi Shin'ichirō, "Uiguru jin no kindai: Jadīdo undō no kōyō to zasetsu" [Modernity of the Uyghurs: Rise and fall of the Jadid movement], *Ajia yūgaku* 1 (1999), pp. 24–39.

41 Shinmen Yasushi, "Shinkyō Musurimu hanran (1931–34 nen) to himitsu soshiki" [The Muslim rebellion in Xinjiang (1931–34) and secret organizations], *Shigaku zasshi* 99:12 (1990), pp. 1–42, esp. 12.

organization that played a central role in the establishment of the East Turkestan Republic in 1944 issued a political declaration emphasizing China's backwardness and its distance from East Turkestan: "The Chinese invaded our East Turkestan from faraway China across the Gobi Desert, and established their domination by arms and whips, taking advantage of our yearning for peace and sincerity . . . Being the most backward nation in the world, they could not give us bright life, could not advance our culture and education, and could not improve living conditions of the people."[42]

Tibetans in the first half of the twentieth century also were not favorably disposed to China, nor even to the West, as they were deeply confident of the value of Tibetan/Indian Buddhist culture. The influence of Chinese culture remained superficial, and attempts at modernization were feeble. The English school that opened in 1924 was closed after two years under pressure from the monks.[43]

Meanwhile, under the threat of imperialist encroachment by the West and Japan, China from the late Qing period became increasingly tenacious in claiming sovereignty over its peripheries. Outside powers intervened haphazardly, using independence movements as bargaining chips with China: The Soviet Union, initially a principal patron of the East Turkestan Republic, abandoned it in mid-1945 and supported the Republic of China in return for the latter's agreement on the joint use of railways and ports in Northeast China and readiness to recognize Outer Mongolia's independence.[44] Up to now, people in East Turkestan and Tibet have had difficulty in cooperating with movements of other ethnic groups in the country (unlike Central Asians in the late tsarist and late Soviet periods), and they have been unable to refer to democracy in the

42 Ō Ka [Wang Ke], *Higashi Torukisutan Kyōwakoku kenkyū: Chūgoku no Isuramu to minzoku mondai* [A study of the East Turkestan Republic: Muslims and the national question in China] (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1995), p. 102.

43 David Snellgrove and Hugh Richardson, *A Cultural History of Tibet*, rev. ed. (Boulder: Prajñā Press, 1980).

44 Sergey Radchenko, "Choibalsan's Great Mongolia Dream," *Inner Asia* 11:2 (2009), pp. 231–258, esp. 242–250.

metropolis to justify their causes (unlike Indians in the British Empire). Ironically enough, the Central Asians in the former Russian/Soviet Empire and the Indians, who had adapted to imperial rule to a considerable degree, gained independence, whereas people in East Turkestan and Tibet, many of whom chafe under Chinese rule, have not yet been able to gain independence.

In conclusion, we can observe that great powers are not simply self-creating, but owe much to relationships with other powers and actors. They compete and coexist with other great powers, and attract or subjugate small countries and regions. This chapter has demonstrated that actors in small countries and regions have played important roles in imperial expansions and rivalries, and have sometimes even outplayed empires. In the long run, however, their initiatives often led to subjugation by empires. As long as imperial rule brought justice and stability, more people chose adaptation and collaboration than chose resistance, but rulers' distrust and misgivings sometimes alienated them. The same people were able to change between collaboration and resistance, and the same ideology, such as Islam, could justify both. In the period of modernization, the ability or inability of an empire to provide cultural and political models and opportunities could determine colonized people's attitudes to the empire.