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The First Central Asian Episode in US Foreign Relations: Eugene Schuyler, Turkestan, and America's Tacit Acknowledgment of Russia as a Eurasian Power

Abstract

Eugene Schuyler was the first American to travel to Central Asia. Recognized as a scholar diplomat, he had written extensively on Russia and served as the US consul to Reval and the secretary of the American legation in St. Petersburg. During his diplomatic service in Russia, Schuyler was granted absence of leave to visit Central Asia and witnessed the Russian conquest of the region. He was also accompanied by the Russian army to visit the Ili region in Xinjiang amid the Dungan Revolt (1862–1877). Schuyler's unusual experience was detailed in his travelogue *Turkistan, Notes of a Journey in Russian Turkistan, Khokand, Bukhara, and Kuldja*. This paper aims to analyze his travelogue to track down the earliest American contact with Central Asia. It argues that the US, even though aware of Russian military activity in the region from Schuyler's report, tacitly acknowledged Russia's hegemony in Asia. This could be attributable to Schuyler's partiality to Russia's cause, the generally congenial atmosphere in the US-Russia relations in the 1870s, and the absence of perceived US interests in Central Asia. The US foreign policy decision of the 1870s had far-reaching economic consequences and lasting political implications into the 19th century and beyond.

Keywords: Central Asia, Eugene Schuyler, US Foreign Relations, Russian Empire, Turkistan, Xinjiang



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Introduction

The sudden disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 resulted in the emergence of 15 juridically independent states on the world stage. Among them, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan substantiated the five republics of Central Asia and quickly re-established their relevance to the world economy and a new global geopolitical configuration. Historically, the geographical region covering today's five Central Asian states and the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China (PRC) were known as "Turkestan" or "Turkistan", which means "the land of Turks" in the Persian language. The Russian territorial expansion to Tashkent by 1865 revived the historical term "Turkestan", and the Russians established the "Turkestan Government" in its conquered territory, to be replaced by the "Governor-Generalship of Turkestan" in 1867.¹ The Bolshevik policy of national delimitation in 1924 recognized pre-classified six major ethnicities in Central Asia (the Kazakhs, Turkmens, Uzbeks, Tajiks, Kyrgyz, and Karakalpaks) as nations and absorbed them into the republics of the Union.² Although the Soviets initially fostered nationalism as a temporary strategy to pacify the local resistance, paradoxically, nationalism developed in Soviet Central Asia and incubated national distinctions that were necessary for the birth of independent Central Asian states.³

As Central Asia has gone through tremendous transformations since the past two centuries, the term "Turkestan" is increasingly losing its historical relevance and its contemporary usage is susceptible to political interpretations. While the PRC government remonstrates against the identification of Xinjiang as "Eastern Turkestan" for fear of term's association with the East Turkestan independence movement and the so-called "Three Evils" (terrorism, separatism, and religious extremism),⁴ the Arab world sometimes embraces it. This is evident from the Arabic translation and publication of Uyghur leader Muhammad Amin Bughra's book, "History of Eastern Turkistan",⁵ in its original title, which signifies the Arabs' favorable reception of the term. A few Arab historians also insist on terming modern Central Asia as "Western Turkestan"⁶ to stress the region's historical and religious connections with the Arab world. They even ascribe the collapse of the USSR to its absence of religious freedom and hope that the former Russia's

¹ Alâeddin Yalçinkaya, 'The Frontiers of Turkestan', *Central Asian Survey* 16,3 (1997), p. 435.

² Steven Sabol, 'The Creation of Soviet Central Asia: The 1924 National Delimitation', *Central Asian Survey* 14,2 (1995), pp. 225–241.

³ Ibidem.

⁴ The PRC's intolerance of the term "Eastern Turkestan" culminated in the publication of the white paper on the historical issues of Xinjiang in 2019, see State Council Information Office, 'Xinjiang de ruogan lishi wenti 新疆的若干历史问题' [Some Historical Issues of Xinjiang], The State Council, Viewed 2 July 2023, <https://www.gov.cn/zhengce/2019-07/21/content_5412300.htm>.

⁵ Muḥammad Amīn Būḡrā, *Tārīḥ Turkistān aš-Šarqīyya* [History of Eastern Turkestan], (trans.) Muhammad Qāsim Amīn, Makka 1429 H.

⁶ Maḥmūd Šakir, *Turkistān al-Ġarbiyya* [Western Turkestan], Bayrūt 1970.

forbidden region would return to Islam to solve its newfound identity crisis under the tutelage of Saudi Arabia.⁷

However, a more realistic Arab scholar in International Relations would recognize that the Arabs' limited influence can hardly revert to the historical term "Turkestan" within the modern geopolitical context of "Central Asia." Instead, the emphasis would be on Russia's continued strategic investments in the region, while the United States emerges as a new stakeholder that may occasionally clash with Russia's presence and influence in the region and the Caspian Sea.⁸ The United States was among the first countries to recognize Central Asian states' independence and has demonstrated strong support for their independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity since 1992.⁹ After the September 11 attacks in 2001, the US invited Central Asian states to participate in the "Great Anti-Terrorist Game" and consequently led an anti-terrorist coalition in the region to facilitate US military operations in neighboring Afghanistan.¹⁰ In 2004, Central Asia was associated with the Greater Middle East Initiative (GMEI) by the administration of former President George W. Bush to deepen cooperation in war on terror and promote democratic transformation of regional governments.¹¹ On July 20, 2011, former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton delivered a speech in Chennai, India to announce the "New Silk Road Initiative" (NSRI) that would encourage "a more prosperous India and a more prosperous South Asia" to meaningfully engage Central Asia in terms of economic cooperation, security issues, democracy building, and the revival of trade and energy routes.¹² Hillary's subsequent speech on October 22, 2011 at a meeting called the "Town Hall with Women, Youth, and Civil Society" in Dushanbe, Tajikistan further confirmed Central Asia's importance in the Initiative.¹³ Nevertheless, former President Barack Obama failed to appreciate the strategic value of the NSRI and replaced General David Petraeus, the mastermind behind the Initiative, with General James Mattis, who

⁷ 'Ābid Qārī Muḥammad Ġān, *Al-Ġumhūriyyāt al-islāmiyya min al-zulumāt ilā an-nūr* [Islamic Republics: From Darkness to Light] Ġudda 1417 H.

⁸ 'Abd al-Nāṣir Muḥammad Surūr, 'As-Širā' al-istirāṭīġī al-amrīkī – ar-rūsī fī Āsiyā al-Wuṣṭā wa-Baḥr Qazwīn wa-tadā'iyyātuḥu 'alā duwal al-miṭṭāqa: 1991–2007 [The U.S.-Russian Strategic Conflict in Central Asia and the Caspian Sea and its Implications for the Countries of the Region: 1991–2007] *Mağallat Ġāmi'at al-Azhar, Silsilat al-'Ulūm al-Insāniyah* 11,1 (2009), pp. 43–78.

⁹ Maria A. Blackwood, *Central Asia: Background and U.S. Relations*, CRS Report, R46924, 2021, Viewed 3 September 2022, <<https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R46924/2>>.

¹⁰ Sadia Sulaiman, 'Geopolitical Patterns in Central Asia After September 11', *Strategic Studies* 22,3 (2002), pp. 247–264.

¹¹ Dona J. Stewart, 'The Greater Middle East and Reform in the Bush Administration's Ideological Imagination', *Geographical Review* 95,3 (2005), pp. 400–424.

¹² Hillary Rodham Clinton, 'Remarks on India and the United States: A Vision for the 21st Century', U.S. State Department, Viewed 3 September 2022, <<https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/20092013clinton/rm/2011/07/168840.htm>>.

¹³ 'US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton discusses New Silk Road Initiative; lauds AKDN for 'Creating Opportunities for the Tajik People'', Aga Khan Development Network, Viewed 3 September 2022, <<https://www.akdn.org/press-release/us-secretary-state-hillary-clinton-discusses-new-silk-road-initiative-lauds-akdn->>>.

maintained that the New Silk Road strategy was the US State Department's business and completely cut off the funding for the project, as the Commander of the United States Central Command (CENTCOM).¹⁴

It became evident that the PRC quickly capitalized on the relative lack of interest in Central Asia manifested by the Obama administration. On September 7, 2013, President Xi Jinping delivered a speech at Kazakhstan's Nazarbayev University and proposed the vision of "Silk Road Economic Belt",¹⁵ which is now known as the "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI). The PRC's growing influence in the region worried former President Donald Trump and the Trump administration in alliance with India sought to recommit the US to the NSRI, while in another direction to focus on the building of Indo-Pacific Economic Corridor that connects South Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Asia.¹⁶ Trump's latter strategic vision "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" reinvigorated the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD), initiated by former Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe in 2007; and the Joe Biden administration inherited this Trump legacy and formalized the QUAD organization with the US, India, Australia, and Japan as its core members.¹⁷ Notwithstanding the absence of Central Asia in President Biden's grand strategy, Russia's revitalized territorial ambitions in 2022 and China's recent involvement in the regional great power politics could be conducive to the formation of "Indo Pacific Plus" that would expand the scope of encouraging regional stability and prosperity from maritime Indo-Pacific to terrestrial Eurasia.¹⁸ Considering Central Asia's expressed cynicism toward the US after the withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan, its complicated relationship with Moscow after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and resurgent violence and unrest in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan's autonomous republic of Karakalpakstan in 2022, Washington restated its continuity in its Central Asia policy that commits to "human rights and democracy alongside counterterrorism cooperation."¹⁹ More than ever had US Secretary

¹⁴ Leif Rosenberger, 'The Rise and Fall of America's New Silk Road Strategy', *TheStreet*, May 12, 2017, Viewed 3 September 2022, <<https://www.thestreet.com/economonitor/emerging-markets/the-rise-and-fall-of-americas-new-silk-road-strategy>>.

¹⁵ 'President Xi Jinping Delivers Important Speech and Proposes to Build a Silk Road Economic Belt with Central Asian Countries', MFA of PRC, September 7, 2013, Viewed 3 September 2022, <<https://www.mfa.gov.cn/ce/cegy/eng/zgyw/t1076334.htm>>.

¹⁶ 'US, India to Revive 'New Silk Road' Seen as Counter to China's Belt and Road Project', NDTV, May 24, 2017, Viewed 4 September 2022, <<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/us-india-to-revive-new-silk-road-to-counter-chinas-belt-and-road-obor-project-1697632>>.

¹⁷ Abhishek Kumar, 'Role of Donald Trump in Biden's Indo-Pacific Strategy', *The Geopolitics*, August 22, 2022, Viewed 4 September 2022, <<https://thegeopolitics.com/role-of-donald-trump-in-bidens-indo-pacific-strategy/>>.

¹⁸ Kei Hakata and Brendon J. Cannon, 'Where Does Central Asia Fit in the Quad's Indo-Pacific Plans', *The Diplomat*, May 25, 2022, Viewed 4 September 2022, <<https://thediplomat.com/2022/05/where-does-central-asia-fit-in-the-quads-indo-pacific-plans/>>.

¹⁹ Navbahor Imamova, 'Top Diplomat Recommits to Pillars of US Policy in Central Asia', *VOA News*, July 7, 2022, Viewed 4 September 2022, <<https://www.voanews.com/a/top-diplomat-recommits-to-pillars-of-us-policy-in-central-asia/6649529.html>>.

of State Antony Blinken in his Central Asian trips attempted to boost greater ties with Central Asia.²⁰

Overall, Central Asia has been increasingly assignable in contemporary American geopolitical calculation since the last 30 years to counter the threats of global terrorism, isolate Russia from its intended “sphere of influence”, and facilitate the US’s and India’s strategic competition with China. However, it remains obscure to most policy makers, strategists, and political scientists that Central Asia had first arrested the Americans’ attention in the 1870s. In 1873, two Americans made their excursions to Central Asia. One of them is Januarius MacGahan, a journalist and war correspondent employed by *New York Herald*. The other is Eugene Schuyler, one of the first three Americans to receive a doctorate degree from an American university²¹ and the then Secretary of the American Legation at St. Petersburg. The two traveled together until MacGahan headed to Khiva to make reportage of Russia’s conquest of the last bastion of Islam in Central Asia, satisfying American readers’ desire for exotic information.²² His first-hand stories from the Central Asian war zone were compiled into a book and published in 1874.²³ Schuyler, on the other hand, made an extensive official report on his tour of observation in 1874,²⁴ which was revised and expanded into a two-volume travelogue *Turkistan* two years later.²⁵

Given Schuyler’s role as a diplomat and his direct official connections with American foreign policy makers, his account unravels the historical American perspective on Central Asia, which viewed the region as being encompassed within Russian and Chinese influences that excluded the entry of foreign geopolitical players. Through Schuyler’s perspective, it is possible to compare his observations of Turkestan during Russia’s conquest with modern scholarship to shed light on how the studies of the region have witnessed continuities and changes within the scope of political and academic contexts. From this juncture, I aim to show how Schuyler’s insight into the region had contributed to the shaping of American

²⁰ ‘Blinken in Central Asia to Boost Ties Amid Russia-Ukraine War’, Al Jazeera, February 28, 2023, Viewed 2 July 2023, <<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/2/28/blinken-in-central-asia-to-boost-ties-amid-ukraine-war>>.

²¹ For information of his doctorate and dissertation, see Ralph P. Rosenberg, ‘Eugene Schuyler’s Doctor of Philosophy Degree: A Theory Concerning the Dissertation’, *The Journal of Higher Education* 33,7 (1962), pp. 381–386. According to Rosenberg, Schuyler’s article ‘Wedgwood on English Etymology’, published in *Bibliotheca Sacra and Biblical Repository*, XIX (1862), might have been his dissertation paper. The publication of the article marked the first time in the American scholarly history to have the author bear the abbreviation “PH.D.” Additionally, Schuyler assisted lexicographer Noah Porter significantly with the editorship of the *Webster’s Dictionary*. Thus, Schuyler contributed to the American usage of the English language. For Schuyler’s scholarship in comparative philology, see Eugene Schuyler, ‘Wedgwood on English Etymology’, *Bibliotheca Sacra and Biblical Repository*, XIX (1862), pp. 726–749.

²² F. Lauriston Bullard, *Famous War Correspondents*, Little, Brown and Company, Boston 1914, p. 123.

²³ J.A. MacGahan, *Campaigning on the Oxus, and the Fall of Khiva*, Harper & Bros., New York 1874.

²⁴ No. 524. Mr. Jewell to Mr. Fish, Enclosure, ‘Mr. Schuyler’s Report on Central Asia’, March 10, 1874, in: *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, Transmitted to Congress, with the Annual Message of the President, December 7, 1874*, pp. 816–831.

²⁵ Eugene Schuyler, *Turkistan: Notes of a Journey in Russian Turkistan, Khokand, Bukhara, and Kuldja*, 2 vols., Scribner, Armstrong & Co., New York 1876.

knowledge of Turkestan, and how this knowledge could impress the Russian, the British, and the Americans, respectively, leading to their divergent responses, while his oversight gave a wide berth to certain crucial aspects regarding the Russians' successes and failures in their proposed development of Turkestan, the development of Sino-Russian relations revolving around the issues of Kulja and Kashgaria, and the loss of US commercial interests in trade with China after the cultivation of poppy and cotton in Turkestan. Additionally, delving into the historical background of Schuyler's activities can offer explanations as to why his collection of regional information did not initially spark America's geopolitical interest in Central Asia. Understanding the broader historical frame of reference helps contextualize the reasons behind the reception and impact of his writings and findings at the time. Thus, the contemporary value of Schuyler's works could be defined in terms of at least three key facets. First, they complement the contact history between the US and Central Asia, predating the former's interest in the latter during the 20th century when its geopolitical importance was recognized. Second, they serve as sources to validate or challenge modern Central Asian scholarship. And third, they offer a revelation about Schuyler's unique experiences and the tumultuous world politics of the late Victorian era.

This paper is divided into eight sections. The introduction part serves to offer a quick outline of Central Asia and the current political interests of Russia, China, and America in the region, allowing for a comparative analysis of Great Powers' approaches toward the region throughout history. The section titled "Visions of Research Value in Schuyler's Writings on Central Asia" will provide a brief overview of the historiography surrounding Schuyler's works, highlighting the potential value in utilizing his sources to investigate the earliest relationship between the United States and Central Asia, as well as the relationship between the United States and Russia during that period. After a concise summary of Schuyler's personal background that motivated him to take the journey, his ethnography will be analyzed not only to illuminate the hidden achievement of Schuyler as the first American anthropologist and ethnographer, but also to demonstrate that his ethnographic efforts were tied to his general endorsement of Russia's guardianship and governance in Turkestan. The next two sections will explore Schuyler's observations of Russian and Chinese Turkestan, some of which will undoubtedly engage contemporary intellectual debates, making Schuyler's perspective particularly interesting. I argue that Schuyler was fully aware of the economic motivations behind Russia's conquest of Turkestan. He perceived Russian Turkestan as a revival of ancient Silk Road networks, yet exclusive to Russia and distinguished by its enlightened approach to the abolishment of slave trade and the maintenance of the region's peace. On the other hand, the political instability of Chinese Turkestan and the potential British interference into Kashgaria constituted the *raison d'état* for Schuyler to justify Kaufman's occupation of the Ili Valley and Russia's five-phased conquest of Central Asia to rival with Great Britain. Then, I will place the reading of Schuyler's works against the background of the "Monroe Doctrine", the "Great Game", and the "Eastern Question" to illustrate how the production and reception of the text could be put under the sway of politics and ideology. In the end,

this paper finds that there is a stark contrast between America's present political interest in Central Asia and the historical period when the US government exhibited minimal to negligible interest in the region. Although Schuyler informed the US audience of Imperial Russia's activities in Central Asia in detail and mostly in accuracy, the US by no means intended to contain Russia's expansion. Instead, the US tacitly consented to Russia's hegemony in the region. This result was not entirely due to the isolationist character of US foreign policy in the Gilded Age but might be attributable to Schuyler's partiality to Russia's cause, the generally congenial atmosphere in the US-Russia relations in the 1870s, and the absence of perceived US interests in Central Asia. The US foreign policy decision in the 1870s resulted in both immediate economic repercussions felt in the rest of the 19th century and a lasting political aftermath that extends from the 20th century to the present day.

Visions of Research Value in Schuyler's Writings on Central Asia

Turkistan was immediately appreciated after its publication in London in 1876 by British critics who were eager to understand the policy of their chief rival Russia in Central Asia. They evaluated the travelogue as "most accurate and interesting" and "will long remain the standard English work on Central Asia."²⁶ For the same purpose of monitoring the rival's activities in the land of the Turkic peoples, an abridged Ottoman Turkish version of *Turkistan* was published in Istanbul in 1877 under the sponsorship of Sultan Abdul Hamid II,²⁷ who presided over the Russo-Turkish War in the same year. Schuyler's contribution to Central Asian studies was recognized by Baltic German Iranist Carl Salemann for his providing rich materials for discussion.²⁸ As Schuyler had referenced numerous sources in Central Asian historiography for the publication of his book, French Orientalist Maurice Courant noticed *Turkistan*'s value of secondary research and used it as a secondary source for the part delineating Manchu-Mongolian relations in his doctoral thesis *Asie centrale aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*.²⁹

The appraisal of Schuyler's experience in Central Asia can be biography-oriented in the Anglophone academia. Marion M. Coleman vividly tells the story of Schuyler's diplomatic role in Russia and characterizes his journey notes as a mirror that reflects the author's poetic and encyclopedic soul.³⁰ Peter Bridges is persuaded by the praise of Schuyler as the "only diplomatist" by *New York Times* and wrote a concise biography to portray Schuyler's

²⁶ *The Athenaeum* (London) 2552, September 23, 1876, p. 392.

²⁷ Eugene Schuyler, *Musavver Türkistan tarih ve seyahatnamesi* [The Illustration of Turkistan: History and Travelogue], Si'adat Basirat Gazetesi Matba'asi, Istanbul 1877.

²⁸ C. Salemann, 'Centralasien', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 33 (1879), p. 75.

²⁹ Maurice Courant, 'Asie centrale aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles : empire Kalmouk ou empire Mantchou?' (PhD diss. Faculté des lettres de l'Université de Lyon, 1912), pp. 94, 113.

³⁰ Marion Moore Coleman, 'Eugene Schuyler: Diplomat Extraordinary from the United States to Russia 1867-1876', *The Russian Review* 7,1 (1947), pp. 33-48.

diplomatic service.³¹ More often, Schuyler's writings are employed to analyze the Russian conquest and administration of Turkestan.³² Sometimes different interpretations of Schuyler's writings can trigger an intellectual debate. After an abridged version of *Turkistan* came out in 1966, David MacKenzie, associate professor of History at Wells College, in 1967 published an article in the *Slavic Review* that eulogized the laissez-faire, yet effective Kaufman administration of Turkestan and argued that Schuyler misrepresented K.P. Kaufman's governorship.³³ This had led Frank G. Siscoe, a Foreign Service officer specializing in Eastern European affairs, to defend the good image of Schuyler and emphasized the value of his works in providing accurate information of malpractices in Kaufman's governance.³⁴ MacKenzie later compromised that Schuyler was sincere in his remarks, but contended he was "misled" by Kaufman's enemies to exaggerate individual cases of corruption and to assess his governance in an unbalanced manner.³⁵ Still, contemporary researchers are referring to Schuyler's works for comparing historical information to assess the Russians' conduct in the region. For example, Ron Sela checked Schuyler's observation against MacGahan's war correspondence to ascertain General N.N. Golovachev's innocence in the massacre of Yomut Turkmens in the Khivan campaign and identify Kaufman's responsibility of ordering the Cossacks to commit atrocities.³⁶

Recently, scholars with Central Asian background in the Russophone academia have been conspicuously devoting their attention to Schuyler's *Turkistan*. Schuyler is listed by A.K. Kamalov as one of the Western travelers who observed the religious life of the Kazakh people; and the Kazakh society, in the eyes of Schuyler, pretended to be Islamic, while retained religious elements from local beliefs systems dominantly.³⁷ S.I. Koval'skaya by summarizing Schuyler's description of the Kazakh steppe believes that the information contained in his writings were sufficient enough to substantiate a certain time capsule of the geography, history and ethnography in Kazakhstan.³⁸ O.O. Zaripov finds that Schuyler was quite precise in describing land tenure in Central

³¹ Peter Bridges, 'Eugene Schuyler, The Only Diplomatist', *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 16,1 (2005), pp. 13–22.

³² See Norman Saul, *Concord and Conflict: The United States and Russia, 1867–1914*, Lawrence 1996, pp. 92–102; James Seay Brown, Jr., 'Eugene Schuyler, Observer of Russia: His Years as a Diplomat in Russia, 1867–1876', (PhD diss., Vanderbilt University, 1971), pp. 155–206.

³³ David MacKenzie, 'Kaufman of Turkestan: An Assessment of His Administration 1867–1881', *Slavic Review* 26,2 (1967), pp. 265–285.

³⁴ Frank G. Siscoe, 'Eugene Schuyler, General Kaufman, and Central Asia', *Slavic Review* 27,1 (1968), pp. 119–124.

³⁵ David MacKenzie, 'Schuyler: Honorable but Misled', *Slavic Review* 27,1 (1968), pp. 124–130.

³⁶ Ron Sela, 'Invoking the Russian Conquest of Khiva and the Massacre of the Yomut Turkmens: the Choices of a Central Asian Historian', *Asiatische Studien: Zeitschrift der Schweizerischen Asiengesellschaft = Études asiatiques: revue de la Société Suisse-Asie* 60 (2006), pp. 459–477.

³⁷ A.K. Kamalov, 'Zapadnye puteshestvenniki o lokal'nykh verovaniyakh kazakhov XVIII–XIX vv.' [Western Travelers on the Local Religious Beliefs of the Kazakhs of the XVIII–XIX cc.], *Izvestiya NAN RK. Seriya obshchestvennykh i humanitarnykh nauk* 2 (2016), pp. 23–24.

³⁸ S.I. Koval'skaya, 'Kazakhskaya step' v opisaniyakh Yudzhina Skajlera' [Kazakh Steppe as Described by Eugene Schuyler], in: *Lyudi imperii – imperiya lyudej: personal'naya i institucional'naya istoriya Aziatskix okrain Rossii: sbornik nauchnykh statej* [People of Empire – Empire of People: Personal and Institutional History of the Asian Outskirts of Russia: Collection of Scientific Articles], ed. N.G. Suvorova, Omsk 2021, pp. 559–566.

Asia under the jurisprudential principles of Sharia law, and Schuyler's comments on the redistributive land policy, proposed by the Governor-Generalship of Turkestan, that aimed to secure a government ownership of Central Asian land and turn all local inhabitants into state's tenants were reflective of the policy-making contradiction between the Imperial Government in St. Petersburg and the Governorate in Turkestan.³⁹ Generally, Central Asian scholars resort to Schuyler's writings to rediscover the history of the region and its people. It should also be emphasized that knowledge production in/on Central Asia is currently bearing the process of derussification, and more academic papers are appearing in Turkic languages. In 2019, the abridged version of *Turkistan* was translated from English to Uzbek by historian Z.A. Saidboboev.⁴⁰ S.R. Turayeva used this translated version as a source to analyze the interactions between local *beks* and the Bukhara government in mining activities.⁴¹ It is foreseeable that translation of Schuyler's works would generate more relevant scholarly interests in Central Asia. Occasionally, Schuyler's works transcend scholarly interests and extend into the realm of diplomacy. Erzhan Kazykhanov, former Ambassador of Kazakhstan to the US, cites Schuyler's unique experience to illustrate the Kazakhs' recognition of "ties between our peoples long before the official establishment of diplomatic relations."⁴²

Nevertheless, the value of Schuyler's writings on Central Asia in indicating US relations with the Russian Empire and the American attitude toward Russia's making Central Asia as the "Pivot to the East" has been rarely recognized so far. In fact, Schuyler's dispatches to Washington and other diplomatic texts were deemed authoritative, especially when there was a reshuffle in America's diplomatic mission in Russia or when American Ministers to Russia were on vacation.⁴³ Further, his reports and books responding to the Russian conquest of Central Asia were considered as *chef d'oeuvre*.⁴⁴ Although Schuyler's trip to Central Asia did not take place at an official or diplomatic level, he was still a diplomat serving America's national interests and his activities in the region factually constituted an act of intelligence gathering. To a certain extent, it was exactly the non-official nature of his visit that exempted him from the charge of espionage.

³⁹ O.O. Zaripov, 'Vzglyad amerikanskogo diplomata na zemel'no-vodnye otnosheniya v Turkestane' [An American Diplomat's View of Land-Water Relations in Turkestan], in: *Stolica i provincii: vzaimootnosheniya centra i regionov v istorii rossii* [Capital and Provinces: Mutual Relations Between Center and Regions in Russian History], ed. V.A. Veremenko, V.V. Karpova and V.O. Levashko, St. Petersburg 2021, pp. 48–53.

⁴⁰ Yujin Skayler. *Turkiston: Rossiya Turkistoni, Qoqon, Buxoro va Guljaga sayohat qaydlari / kiriş, iñliz tilidan qisqartirilgan tarjima, izohlar va kōrsatkiqlar muallifi- t.f.n., dots. Z.A.Saidboboyev* [Eugene Schuyler. Turkistan: Notes of a Journey in Russian Turkistan, Khokand, Bukhara, and Kuldja / Introduction, Abridged English Translation, Comments and Indexes by Ph.D., Docent Z.A. Saidboboev], Tashkent 2019.

⁴¹ Sayyora R. Turayeva, 'Buxoro Xonligi Ijtimoiy – Iqtisodiy Hayotida Toğ – Koñçilik İşlariniñ Tutgan Őrni (XVI–XIX Asrlar)' [The Role of Mining in the Socio-Economic Life of the Bukhara Khanate (XVI–XIX centuries)], *Őtmişga nazar* 20,2 (2019), p. 14.

⁴² 'Preface by Ambassador Erzhan Kazykhan', in: S. Frederick Starr & Svante E. Cornell (ed.), *Strong and Unique: The U.S.-Kazakhstan Partnership Over Three Decades*, Washington D.C. 2021, p. 8.

⁴³ Saul, *Concord*, p. 94.

⁴⁴ Brown, Jr., 'Eugene Schuyler', p. 155.

The Background of Schuyler's Trip to Central Asia

Schuyler developed his initial interest in Russia in 1863 when the Russian flagship *Alexander Nevsky* arrived in New York in the middle of the Civil War, and he became acquainted with Russian Imperial Navy officers.⁴⁵ He later fell in love with the Russian language and published his translation of Ivan Turgenev's novel *Fathers and Sons* in 1867.⁴⁶ In the same year, his *esprit chercheur* brought him with the appointment of Consul at Moscow.⁴⁷ But Schuyler's fascination with Central Asia preceded his interest in Russia. The very first book that Schuyler purchased in his childhood was Thomas Moore's Oriental romance *Lalla Rookh*.⁴⁸ Moore's lyrical poem must have engaged the young Schuyler "in proud BOKHARA's groves."⁴⁹ Already in 1866, as an independent analyst of world politics, he published his first essay on Central Asia "The Progress of Russia in Asia" in *The Nation*.⁵⁰ In the analysis, Schuyler noted that Russia had been pursuing a two-track ambition of territory aggrandizement in Asia, with an encroachment on the Amur river that threatened China and extended the Russian influence to Japan, and a series of conquests in "a rectangular-shaped patch on our maps called Independent Tartary, with its three cities of Khiva, Bokhara, and Khokand, and with the Sea of Aral in its center."⁵¹ He pointed out that the Russian expansion to Central Asia indeed brought Russia closer to British India and the capture of Tashkent by Russia would invite the Russians to exploit resources in the valley of Syr Daria and hence stimulate regional trade.⁵² He further predicted that "Bokhara, another large trading city, is likely to follow the fate of Tashkend, and the Russian occupation to extend to the Oxus."⁵³ However, Schuyler did not seem to be aware that Russia's growing interest in Central Asia at the time was accelerated by the American Civil War. As the Union imposed a blockade that stifled the Confederacy's cotton exports to Europe, fifteen Muscovite merchants besought the Russian Minister of Finance to help them secure raw materials from Central Asia, while the solidification of British rule in India further urged the tsarist government to strategically take control of the region.⁵⁴ Schuyler eventually came to recognize the role

⁴⁵ Eugene Schuyler and Evelyn Schuyler Schaeffer, *Eugene Schuyler: Selected Essays*, New York 1901, p. 20.

⁴⁶ Ibidem.

⁴⁷ Ibidem, p. 21.

⁴⁸ Ibidem, p. 13.

⁴⁹ Thomas Moore, *Lalla Rookh*, London 1849, p. 20.

⁵⁰ 'The Progress of Russia in Asia', unsigned, *The Nation* 2,42, April 19, 1866, pp. 488–490.

⁵¹ Ibidem, p. 489.

⁵² Ibidem, p. 490.

⁵³ Ibidem.

⁵⁴ Hélène Carrère d'Encausse, 'Systematic Conquest, 1865 to 1884', in: *Central Asia: 120 Years of Russian Rule*, ed. Edward Allworth, Durham and London 1989, p. 131. The Soviet literature, rooted in the ideology of Marxism-Leninism, often emphasizes the economic motivations behind Russia's conquest of Central Asia, the access to raw materials for example, in order to validate Vladimir Lenin's theses on "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism" and the development of capitalism in Russia, see N.A. Xalfin, *Prisoedinenie Srednej Azii k Rossii (60–90-e gody XIX v.)* [The Accession of Central Asia to Russia (60–90s of the 19th century)], Moscow 1965, pp. 226, 427–433. However, as Alexander Morrison argues, Russia's conquest of the region began as early as 1853

of the petition from Russian merchants during his time in Russia and regarded it as a collection of “plausible arguments full of fine phrases” that advocated for advancing Russian trade with Asia in Turkestan.⁵⁵

Schuyler found himself in close physical proximity to Central Asia when he journeyed to Orenburg, Russia’s military outpost on the frontier with the nomadic peoples, in 1868. “Orenburg”, to him, “contains just that mixture of European and Oriental that one might expect to find at the threshold of Central Asia.”⁵⁶ There he was arranged by his Russian companion Vassili Alexeitch (*sic.*) and a Tartar professor Mirsalikh-Bektchurin (*sic.*) to visit “Kirghiz” (Kazakh)⁵⁷ villages by driving the *tarantass*, a horse- or camel-driven box-like cart, across the Ural and south into the steppe.⁵⁸ He recorded in words the structure of pastoralist yurts, or *kibitkas*, the nomadic lifestyle, the Kazakhs’ courting manners, and the horses they bred and rode.⁵⁹ His impression of the Kazakhs was, however, hardly positive: “The Kirghizes have all the vices and few of the virtues of savages; they are

when the Khokandi fortress Aq Masjid was sieged. Therefore, he found the Soviet literature on Russia’s search for a captive market implausible and called it “Cotton Canard”, see Alexander Morrison, ‘Introduction: Killing the Cotton Canard and Getting Rid of the Great Game: Rewriting the Russian Conquest of Central Asia, 1814–1895’, *Central Asian Survey* 33,2 (2014), pp. 131–142. Nevertheless, Xalfin cited Russian economist A.P. Shipov’s suggestion in the 1850s that the Russian Empire could learn from Great Britain, which had begun to grow cotton in India and Australia, to reduce dependence on American cotton imports. According to Shipov, the Russian Empire “can use its efforts, through skillful commercial or other relations, to establish and improve...Cotton cultivation in Central Asia, for this should have very important consequences for the development of Russia’s productive forces” (cited in Xalfin, *Prisoedinenie*, p. 88). Therefore, the Russians should have at least in the 1850s imagined that access to Central Asia would protect Russia against the unpredictable price of raw materials in the world market. For this reason, I find Morrison’s argument for a complete rejection of the cotton thesis debatable and Xalfin’s view not entirely baseless.

⁵⁵ A Russian commission was appointed in 1870 to study the details of establishing a fair at Tashkent, and according to the reasons for appointing such a commission, as Schuyler had translated and included the relevant Russian order in the work: “The exchange of the manufactures from the internal provinces of the Empire for the raw material (cotton and silk) of the Asiatic countries has up to this time been chiefly carried on at two fairs: those of Irbit and Nizhni Novgorod. Closer relations between consumers and producers, and the consequent permanency of price and of commercial relations, would doubtless be greatly facilitated by bringing the center of exchange nearer to the Central Asiatic markets.” Schuyler calculated that a fair at Tashkent would be economically useless since it was the trading center at Nizhny Novgorod that decided the prices of Asian goods and held political factors that would change the flow of commerce to Russia’s benefits responsible for establishing the Tashkent fair: “This place [Tashkent] was chosen in order to draw native commerce away from the native influences which prevailed in the old town, to subject it to close governmental supervision, and to render it amenable to governmental control.” See Schuyler, *Turkistan*, I, 209. Morrison also highlighted the Central Asian market’s importance of trade for Russia, see Alexander Morrison, *The Russian Conquest of Central Asia: A Study in Imperial Expansion, 1814–1914*, Cambridge, UK 2020, pp. 15–16.

⁵⁶ Eugene Schuyler, ‘On the Steppe’, *Hours at Home* 9,4, August 1869, p. 325.

⁵⁷ The Kazakhs were generally called as “Kirghiz” at that time by Russians to distinguish them from the Cossacks (in Russian *Kazak*, *Kazak*), while the Kyrgyz people were known to Russians as “Kara Kirghiz”, literally “Black Kirghiz” in Turkic languages.

⁵⁸ Schuyler, ‘On the Steppe’, p. 326.

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 326–329.

good friends and bad enemies, cowardly, thievish, lazy, and improvident.”⁶⁰ Though Russia was considered by many not as “civilized” as other European countries, Schuyler’s Manichean division of civilization and savagery led him to regard Russia’s dream of reaching Himalayas *en route* from Central Asia as a *mission civilisatrice*, as he wrote in another article in *The Nation*: “A scheme nearly two centuries old, and the execution of it has, ever since its conception, been pursued night and day, summer and winter, with a patience, a perseverance, and single-mindedness which, considering the state of Russian civilization, has been truly remarkable.”⁶¹ He believed that Russia’s grand strategy of connecting St. Petersburg with the Himalayas was becoming a reality.⁶²

10 years before Schuyler undertook his Central Asian journey, Hungarian Orientalist Ármin Vámbéry, motivated by linguistic interest, claimed to successfully travel from Iran to Central Asia in the guise of a dervish and published his celebrated travelogue in the US in 1865.⁶³ But in 1869 Schuyler questioned the reliability of Vámbéry’s recount by revealing many factual inaccuracies in his claims and stated that Vámbéry’s real intention was to manipulate his knowledge of Central Asian affairs to “stir up a strife between Russia and England.”⁶⁴ Schuyler’s opinion, given his sympathy with Russia, was classified by *The Nation* editors as “a Philo-Russian source.”⁶⁵ In the autumn of the same year, Schuyler was reappointed as the Consul at Reval (now Tallinn) in Russian Estonia, but later he resigned the consulship, as Andrew Curtin, former Governor of Pennsylvania and new America’s Minister to Russia offered him the position of Secretary of Legation.⁶⁶ From 1870 to 1872, Schuyler served as the *chargé d’affaires* in St. Petersburg, handled affairs that were pertinent to US-Russian relations, and sent dispatches to inform Washington of the historical background of Anglo-Russian rivalry in Central Asia, the progress of boundary negotiations between the Russians and British, and Tsar Alexander II’s plan of organizing a campaign against Khiva.⁶⁷ Schuyler contemplated a journey to Central Asia in January 1873, and his plan received significant support from General Kaufman. The General personally extended an invitation to Schuyler to visit Central Asia, while MacGahan offered to cover Schuyler’s travel expenses in exchange for assistance in securing permission for MacGahan to report on the Khivan expedition from Russian military authorities.⁶⁸ In December 1872, James L. Orr replaced Curtin as the Minister to Russia and he approved Schuyler’s request for leave of absence in March 1873, enabling Schuyler to realize his travel plan to Central Asia that lasted from March 23

⁶⁰ Ibidem, p. 327.

⁶¹ ‘The Russians and English in Central Asia’, unsigned, *The Nation* 7,172, October 15, 1868, p. 307.

⁶² Ibidem.

⁶³ Arminius Vámbéry, *Travels in Central Asia*, New York 1865.

⁶⁴ ‘Literary’, *The Nation* 8,207, June 17, 1869, p. 474.

⁶⁵ Ibidem.

⁶⁶ Schuyler and Schaeffer, *Selected Essays*, 31.

⁶⁷ Frank G. Siscoe, ‘Prelude to Schuyler’s ‘Turkistan’’, *Asian Affairs* 1,3 (1970), p. 302.

⁶⁸ Ibidem, p. 303. MacGahan’s trip was in the end not authorized by the Russians and the Russians even misidentified him as Schuyler in Khiva, see Morrison, *The Russian Conquest*, p. 308, n. 4.

to November 15, 1873.⁶⁹ The opening of *Turkistan* begins with Schuyler's words full of excitement: "I had long been desirous of visiting Central Asia, but various circumstances had prevented my doing so. Finally the opportunity presented itself unexpectedly to me."⁷⁰

Schuyler's Ethnography of Central Asian Peoples

It is arguable that the very concept of nationality in Central Asia originated from the Russian colonization, while national identities of the five Central Asian states were the end results of Soviet national policy.⁷¹ Accordingly, it was the classificatory devices of Russian imperial functionaries and the Soviets that were directly responsible for both the Soviet and post-Soviet nationalism of the Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Tajiks, Uzbeks, Karakalpaks, and Turkmens. However, Schuyler's descriptions of Central Asian peoples suggest that national identities were not entirely exogenous to the natives in the region and group consciousness was chiefly endogenous.

In terms of lifestyle and modes of production, Schuyler took the opinion from local peoples and stated that "the whole population of the country is divided into two classes – settled and nomad; the nomads are called Kazak, vagabond, or wanderer; and the settled population go by the name of Sarts."⁷² Interestingly, in Central Asia the word "Kazak" could be used a hypernym to denote any nomadic people for their shared wandering nature, yet could also be used as hyponym referring to the Kazakhs specifically. Schuyler found that the Kazakhs resisted being referred to as "Kirghiz", the Russian exonym for Kazakhs to avoid ambiguities in calling the Cossacks, by insisting on labeling themselves as "Kazak", and Central Asian peoples recognized this fact: "They [Kazakhs] do not call themselves Kirghiz...but are known only as *Kazak*."⁷³ Though Schuyler for convenience named the Kazakhs as "Kirghiz", he understood the differences between the Kazakhs and Kyrgyz, as he wrote, "these nomads [Kazakhs] who inhabit the western Steppe are not the same people as the true Kirghiz or Buruts⁷⁴ [Kyrgyz] who live about the lake Isskyk-Kul and in the mountain ranges of Khokand, and are called by the Russians Kara-Kirghiz, and also *Dikokamenny*, or wild mountain Kirghiz."⁷⁵

⁶⁹ Siscoe, 'Prelude to Schuyler's', pp. 303–304.

⁷⁰ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, I, p. 1.

⁷¹ Saulesh Esenova, 'Soviet Nationality, Identity, and Ethnicity in Central Asia: Historic Narratives and Kazakh Ethnic Identity', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 22,1 (2002), pp. 11–12.

⁷² Schuyler, *Turkistan*, I, p. 104.

⁷³ Ibidem, p. 30.

⁷⁴ Schuyler did not explain in his publications why the Kyrgyz were also known as "Buruts." The Kyrgyz were recorded in Chinese, Manchu, and Dzungarian sources as "Bulute" (in Ch. 布鲁特) or "Burut." For the etymology of "Buruts", see A. Abdykachykov, 'O termine 'buruty'' [On the term 'Buruts'], *Sovetskaja jetnografija* 1 (1963), pp. 123–129; Ju.A. Zuev, 'Kirgizy-buruty (k voprosu o totemizme i principah jetnonimoobrazovanija)' [Kyrgyz – Buruts (on the question of totemism and principles of ethnonyms formation)], *Sovetskaja jetnografija* 4 (1970), pp. 74–86.

⁷⁵ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, I, p. 30.

To classify Central Asian peoples by Western standards, Schuyler introduced the concept of “race” as an identifier: “So far as race is concerned the inhabitants of Turkistan may be broadly divided into those which are of Iranic or Persian origin and those of Turkish descent.”⁷⁶ “To the former [Iranic] belong the Tadjiks”, while “the Uzbeks are the descendants of the Turkish tribes who at various times migrated to this part of Asia”, and “the Karakalpaks, the most of whom occupy the delta of the Amu, near Khiva, though a number of them live near Samarkand, are considered to be only a clan of Uzbeks.”⁷⁷ Regarding the Turkmens, they “are thought by some to be Uzbeks who have become somewhat more separated from the rest; at all events they were a similar confederacy of the same race [Turkic].”⁷⁸ Correspondingly, the Uzbek identity could be positioned as a middle ground between race and ethnicity, serving as a pan-Turkic signifier that encompasses the Karakalpaks, the Turkmens, and the Uzbeks. Alternatively, in a narrower sense, it specifically refers to the ethnic group of Uzbeks. To find an answer to this phenomenon, Schuyler returned to the etymology of “Uzbek”: “Their name means ‘independent’ or ‘free’, from *Uz*, self, and *bek*, a bek, and their origin must be sought in one of those free confederacies which was founded in the fifteenth century.”⁷⁹ Thus, the mention of a historical political alliance among Turkic beks continued to evoke a sense of pan-nationalism (Pan-Turkism) due to the significant role played by the amalgamation of diverse Turkic groups in forming the Uzbek confederacy. Paradoxically, this alliance also played a critical role in shaping a modern Uzbek nationality, as the historical interactions among Turkic peoples toward a shared objective served as an essential source for reimagining the political group, which may have appeared loosely connected in the past though, as an ethnic collective with a shared political will.

Race and living modes, however, were only answerable to the Central Asian identity problem limitedly. Despite the word “Sart” could be vaguely used to mean the settled peoples such as the Tajiks and Uzbeks, its connotation could be problematic sometimes for “this name has no ethnological significance.”⁸⁰ Schuyler then, by comparing lexicological usages, traced the multivalence of “Sart”, ranging from “a city inhabitant” (proposed by Mr. Lerch), “inhabitants of the valley of the Syr” (usage by old local writers), non-Uzbek “settled dwellers” in Khiva or Tajiks in Bukhara (usage by Abul Ghazi), to “a cowardly and effeminate person” (a pejorative usage by nomad tribes).⁸¹ Nevertheless, the complexity of the “Sart” identity leads Schuyler to no certain conclusions. There was no consensus on the term “Sart” until the end of 19th century that it designated “an Uzbekized urban Tajik.”⁸² Half a century later, Soviet ethnographers echoed Schuyler in finding that the term “Uzbek” could be inclusive of a mix of Turkic peoples and the “Sart” hardly nominated

⁷⁶ Ibidem, p. 105.

⁷⁷ Ibidem, pp. 105–107.

⁷⁸ Ibidem, pp. 107–108.

⁷⁹ Ibidem, p. 106.

⁸⁰ Ibidem, p. 104.

⁸¹ Ibidem, pp. 104–105.

⁸² Paul Bergne, *The Birth of Tajikistan: National Identity and the Origins of the Republic*, London 2007, p. 8.

an “ethnographically distinct” group.⁸³ The difficulty in separating those self-identified “Sart” from Uzbeks and Tajiks contributed to the inclusion of Tajikistan in the Uzbek Socialist Soviet Republic, according to the initial Soviet attempt of creating political units based on classification of nationalities in 1924. Contrastingly, Karakalpakstan, after several internal transfers of sovereignty, became a part of Uzbekistan at last in 1936.⁸⁴ Schuyler’s mentioning Karakalpaks’ connections with the Khiva and Bukhara khanates may help explain its eventual “reunification” with the Uzbeks. To a certain extent, Schuyler’s ethnographic research foresaw the difficulties of ethnicity identification in Soviet Turkestan and endorsed the autonomous status of Karakalpakstan within Uzbekistan.

Scholar Steven Sabol, in his comparison of American and Russian internal colonization, argues that in the 19th century the Americans and Russians, by retrieving information of nomadism from the histories written by the Greeks, Romans, and Chinese, had developed a common epistemological stereotype of the indigenous populations in North America and Central Asia.⁸⁵ Schuyler, too, had stereotypes toward Central Asian peoples, but his prejudice was idiosyncratic. Compared to his description of the Kazakhs in his 1868 steppe trip, the image of Kazakhs somewhat “improved” when Schuyler encountered them again five years later: “The Kirghiz, owing to the simplicity of their life, are far more children of nature than most other Asiatics, and have all the faults and virtues of children.”⁸⁶ His infantilization of the Kazakh people seemed to suggest a needed Russian guardianship for the “childish” Central Asian peoples, but elsewhere he explained that the Kazakhs became Russian *protégés* involuntarily because they faced the military threat from Dzungaria in the east in the early 18th century.⁸⁷ Even though Schuyler acknowledged the necessity of Kazakhs’ subjecting themselves to the Russians, he found nomadic elections of their leaders similar to democratic practices in America and he sympathized with the Kazakhs for their dissatisfaction with the Russian suzerainty. He further criticized Russian authorities for their ignorance of its subjects and their mistaken policy in ignoring free elections of Khans. Russia’s arbitrarily choosing pro-Russian Khans turned out to be a failure in bringing peace to the steppe.⁸⁸ Therefore, his depiction of the Kazakhs as “children of nature”, instead of his previous label of “savages”, was a subtle critique of the Russian authorities. This shift in depiction also revealed his influence from the prevalent 19th-century American notion of the “Noble Savage” myth.

⁸³ Francine Hirsch, ‘Toward an Empire of Nations: Border-Making and the Formation of Soviet National Identities’, *The Russian Review* 59,2 (2000), pp. 221–222.

⁸⁴ The Karakalpak region from 1925 to 1930 belonged to the Kazakh ASSR, had been a part of the Russian SFSR since 1930 and an autonomous republic in 1932, and has been an autonomous republic within Uzbekistan since 1936. See Lawrence Krader, *Peoples of Central Asia*, Bloomington 1963, pp. 111–112.

⁸⁵ Steven Sabol, *“The Touch of Civilization”: Comparing American and Russian Internal Colonization*, Boulder, Colorado 2017, p. 33

⁸⁶ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, I, p. 38.

⁸⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 31.

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 31–32.

However, Schuyler was not immune to “scientific racism”, and he concluded ethnic traits of the Tajiks and Uzbeks by employing the method of physiognomy, which is now considered as pseudo-scientific:

The Tadjiks and Uzbeks are readily distinguished from each other, not only in appearance but also in character. The Tadjik is larger and fuller in person, with an ample black beard, and with an air of shrewdness and cunning. He is fickle, untruthful, lazy, cowardly, and boastful, and in every way morally corrupted. The Uzbek is taller and thinner, with a scanty beard, and a longer and more strongly marked face. He is simple in his manners and dress, while the Tadjik is devoted to his personal appearance, and fond of adorning himself.⁸⁹

He additionally used the representations of Uzbeks and Tajiks in “Shirin and Ferhat”, a Central Asian variant of Persian love story “Khosrow and Shirin”, to confirm Tajiks’ craftiness and Uzbeks’ integrity.⁹⁰ The effeminacy of Tajiks in Schuyler’s writings not only confirmed the “laudable” masculinity of Uzbeks but also evinced the anxiety of Kaufman and the tsarist administration in reshaping Russian Tashkent as a centerpiece for Russia’s civilizing and modernizing project in Asia, while at the same time firmly keeping it under the state and military control in the masculine domain of “Turkestan.”⁹¹ Schuyler’s comparison between Tashkent and Denver, as well as his parallel between the Sarts and Native Americans, reflected the American narrative of reclaiming masculinity through the conquest of the Wild West, guided by the notion of Manifest Destiny. Similarly, it mirrored the Russian eagerness to showcase its colonial masculinity to other Western powers through the subjugation of the perceived “effeminate” Central Asian peoples: “By daylight, however, Tashkent seems more like one of the Western American towns – Denver, for instance, though lacking in the busy air which pervades that place, and with Sarts, in turbans and gowns, in place of Indians and miners.”⁹²

Evidently, Schuyler employed certain stereotypes in his ethnography, and these stereotypes ultimately supported his justification of Russia’s mission to export civilization to the region. He argued that the Russians’ interaction with Central Asians was even smoother than the American treatment of Native Americans or the British rule over Indian subjects, as he stated: “The Russians have always displayed a certain facility in dealing with half-civilized peoples. Personally they have not so much of that contemptuous feeling toward the natives which is so marked in the dealings of the Anglo-Saxon race with people of lower culture and civilization.”⁹³ Many years before Schuyler started to show interest in Russia’s activities in Central Asia, John Stuart Mill introduced the

⁸⁹ Ibidem, p. 108.

⁹⁰ Ibidem, pp. 108–109.

⁹¹ Jeff Sahadeo, *Russian Colonial Society in Tashkent, 1865–1923*, Bloomington 2007, pp. 1, 65.

⁹² Schuyler, *Turkistan*, I, p. 76.

⁹³ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, II, p. 233.

idea of what may be called now as “benevolent dictatorship”: “We are not speaking of children, or of young persons below the age which the law may fix as that of manhood or womanhood... We may leave out of consideration those backward states of society in which the race itself may be considered as in its nonage... Despotism is a legitimate mode of government in dealing with barbarians, provided the end be their improvement, and the means justified by actually effecting that end.”⁹⁴ In the end, Schuyler’s portrayal of child-like Kazakhs, feminized Tajiks, and masculinized Uzbeks corresponded neatly to Mill’s notion of “nonage” and law-fixed “manhood” and “womanhood”, serving to endorse Russia’s paternalistic ruling style.

The publication and circulation of *Turkistan* forged the first images of Central Asian peoples to the American audience. American politician George M. Towle, famous for his translation of Jules Verne’s works, was one notable critic who found Schuyler’s description of Central Asian races particularly absorbing. In his review of the book, titled “Turkistan and its People”, he recognized that “Mr. Schuyler’s residence in Russia has inclined him to take up her defense as against England”, but “the political features of Mr. Schuyler’s volumes are less novel and less interesting than his graphic descriptions of the peoples and places he saw during his sojourn in Central Asia.”⁹⁵ Persuaded by Schuyler’s discriminating observations on the Central Asians and his calculation of the costs and the benefits of the Russian government, Towle concluded that “the influence of the Russian conquests and settlements in Turkistan upon the people has been on the whole civilizing” and “this civilizing influence is exercised outside of the formalities and oppressions of law and government, by the contact of the natives with a body of men who, in comparison with them, are enlightened.”⁹⁶ Through Schuyler’s narrative, an accord between the Americans and the Russians could be observed in their shared *mission civilisatrice*.

Though Franz Boas is generally recognized as the “Father of American Anthropology” for his ethnographic fieldwork among the Baffinland Eskimo in Canada between 1883 and 1884 and for his historicist paradigm that identifies factors of history, psychology, and environment in shaping a culture,⁹⁷ Schuyler’s collection of ethnographic information of peoples in Central Asia was nothing unlike field research conducted by an anthropologist. As a scholar-diplomat, he appeared unbothered by the classical debates on positivism and historicism in the discipline of anthropology at the time of his writing and chose to be faithful to his field observation. On the one hand, he utilized the concept of race to generalize ethnicities of Central Asians and seriously believed in the explanatory power of “scientific racism” for a summary of ethnic characteristics. On the other, he recognized the role of geographic dispersion of Central Asian peoples in molding ethnic distinctions, supported indigenous voices to affirm group identity, and identified the historico-political factor in constructing the proto-national consciousness. Schuyler did

⁹⁴ John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, London 1859, pp. 22–23.

⁹⁵ George M. Towle, ‘Turkistan and its People’, *Appletons’ Journal* 2,1 (1877), p. 57.

⁹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 60.

⁹⁷ William W. Speth, ‘The Anthropogeographic Theory of Franz Boas’, *Anthropos* 73,1,2 (1978), pp. 1–31.

not list his full references, but a closer examination of Schuyler's writings will reveal that he was very likely to be influenced by French diplomat and anthropologist Julien Girard de Rialle's article, published in *Bulletins de la Société d'anthropologie de Paris* in 1874, which introduces anthropological methods in Central Asian studies.⁹⁸ Schuyler should be suspected of incorporating cutting-edge European anthropological methods in his time to study Central Asian ethnicity. For present-day readers of *Turkistan*, it is evident that Schuyler's remarks were biased. However, it is worth noting Schuyler's achievement of identifying nearly all the ethnicities that currently constitute the nation states in Central Asia. This accomplishment highlights the close connection between the past study of ethnography and the contemporary reality, rendering Schuyler's historical perspective less distant.

Russian Turkestan, Slavery and Cotton, and the Creation of an Orchestrated Trans/Inter-national Trade Hub

Known for its strategic location at the crossroads of civilizations, Central Asia was the center of the ancient Silk Road trade networks. Central Asia's natural resource endowment and economic potential, with its increasing connectivity with India, China, Russia, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Europe, continue to spark business opportunities in the modern era. During Schuyler's time, the region might have been even more enticing for business and trade, representing a microcosm of regulated global commerce between the East and West. This was one of the reasons Schuyler cited for Russia's control of Turkestan, and he presented a vivid picture of the economic life of Central Asia under Russia's supervision.

The Russians' presence did not prevent the old representatives of the Silk Road from being present, and foreign agents were quite discernible in the region: "In every city, and even in many of the smaller towns of Central Asia, there are numbers of Hebrews and Hindoos, the former having been in the country for centuries, the latter coming temporarily from the neighborhood of Shikarpur for the purposes of trade."⁹⁹ Central Asia might be the only place in the world where liquor promoted Judeo-Islamic relations. Even though the Quran prohibited the consumption of liquor, as Schuyler found out, most people in Central Asia were not averse to drinking.¹⁰⁰ One of the Jews' business activities was to make liquors such as red wine or a kind of brandy from grape, and offer them to the natives.¹⁰¹ Caravanserais served to store goods for wholesale merchants or as temporary accommodations for foreign merchants.¹⁰² Indian merchants were active

⁹⁸ Girard de Rialle, 'Instructions anthropologiques sur l'Asie centrale', *Bulletins de la Société d'anthropologie de Paris*, II^e Série, 9 (1874), pp. 417–463.

⁹⁹ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, I, p. 111.

¹⁰⁰ Ibidem, p. 126.

¹⁰¹ Ibidem, pp. 126, 297.

¹⁰² Ibidem, p. 184.

in the caravanserais and their main occupation, according to Schuyler, was usury.¹⁰³ They competed with Jews, Afghans, and even native Muslims in the business of lending money.¹⁰⁴ Muslims could become bankers as well by lending without interest, while in return receiving articles from borrowers to evade Sharia's restrictions in making contracts that involve interest payment.¹⁰⁵ As Schuyler complained that regional commerce was hindered by "the absence of any banking facilities, not even a private bank being in existence",¹⁰⁶ Indian loans, Jewish moneylending, and Islamic finance substituted for the role of modern banks preponderantly. Schuyler also took note of some social outliers, yet important economic players, such as Central Asian gypsies (Lyuli): "There are to be seen at times in the towns people called Liuli, who are apparently the same as our gypsies. The women tell fortunes, cure the sick, and carry on a small traffic. The men trade in horses, and have almost a monopoly of leeches."¹⁰⁷ Ostensibly, Russia had been pursuing a "open policy" in Central Asia, which facilitated transnational commercial operations. Yet it simultaneously paved the road for the British Raj to send spies disguised as traders for collection of market information. Based on his contact experience with an Indian from the caravanserais, Schuyler took conclusion from his companion and conjectured that "he must have some secret mission from the Indian Government to report on the conditions of things in Tashkent."¹⁰⁸

Exchange of goods and services mainly took place in the bazaars. The bazaars acted as a major source of revenue for former rulers. Khudayar, Khan of Kokand, after submitting to the Russians and losing much of his political influence, took possession of the bazaars and therein harvested profits.¹⁰⁹ In the bazaars, Schuyler witnessed a boom of silk goods trade. Historically, China exported silk to the West through Central Asia. But this was no longer the case since the region was capable of producing and processing silk on its own. Schuyler discovered that more and more local silk goods were exported to the European market as their embroidery patterns were crafted increasingly in the European fashion; and he was optimistic that Russian silk reeling industries would complement Central Asian sericulture.¹¹⁰ Schuyler's characterization of Indian merchants as usurers was also not by coincidence. Central Asian raw silk and silk goods, despite favored by English traders, did not suit the Indian market; and the Ladakh region, the transit emporium between India and Central Asia, only imported silk in small quantities, while from 1867 to 1872

¹⁰³ Ibidem, pp. 185–186.

¹⁰⁴ Ibidem, p. 186.

¹⁰⁵ Ibidem.

¹⁰⁶ Ibidem, p. 204.

¹⁰⁷ Ibidem, p. 111.

¹⁰⁸ Ibidem, p. 185. Schuyler and his companion's suspicion of Indian merchants was not groundless and confirms Scott C. Levi's finding that "the British did, in fact, use some Indian diaspora merchants to spy on the Russians. But, at least in terms of the policies he directed toward the Indian merchant communities, the Russian Governor General of the Turkestan Krai, Konstantin Petrovich von Kaufman, was not concerned with British espionage." See Scott C. Levi, *The Indian Diaspora in Central Asia and Its Trade, 1550–1900*, Leiden 2002, p. 224.

¹⁰⁹ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, I, p. 354.

¹¹⁰ Ibidem, pp. 190, 199.

imported silver ingots that amounted 130,572 rupees from Russian Turkestan.¹¹¹ A silver coin issued by Kokand and Bukhara, or a *tenga*, was valued 4 Indian annas, but when it was circulated in Yarkant, Chinese Turkestan, it was valued higher since no coinage operations were found in Yarkant.¹¹² In Punjab, a *tenga* was also valued over 4 annas.¹¹³ Thus, the lucrativeness of Indian moneylending lay not only in usury *per se*, but also in arbitrage and in the appreciation of *tenga* for British India to trade with Chinese Turkestan.

However, there was also an unpleasant finding in the bazaar trade. Despite restrictions of slave trade outlined in the 1868 commercial treaty between Russia and the Emirate of Bukhara, Emir Muzaffar only paid a lip service to treaty articles and countenanced the practice of slavery. To prove the existence of slave trade, Schuyler purchased a Persian slave openly from a bazaar in Bukhara; and bought another slave and took him to Samarkand and Tashkent.¹¹⁴ Marshall Jewell, erstwhile Minister to Russia, reported this evidence of slave trade to Hamilton Fish, then Secretary of State, in a hope that the Russian government would pressure Bukhara to strictly observe treaty articles.¹¹⁵ Imperial Russia did make an effort to nudge Central Asian rulers to enforce the abolition of slavery. On October 10, 1873, Russia restressed the abolishment of slave trade in Article 17 of its treaty with Bukhara.¹¹⁶ The Russians also took advantage of the rhetoric power of abolitionism in justifying its military subjugation of the Turkmens as a humanitarian operation and claimed a moral high ground to which the slave-holding Qajar Iran not even tried to aspire. MacGahan reported that when the Russian army marched to Khiva, “the Persian and other slaves hailed with wild delight the approach of the Russians; for the emancipation of the slaves has always followed the occupation of any place in Central Asia by the Russians.”¹¹⁷ Though, as scholar Jeff Eden argues, Russia’s abolition of slavery in the region aimed at emancipating *Russian* slaves, while left others to their own devices,¹¹⁸ the Russian theoretical abolitionism must have persuaded American observers at the time that Russia was a civilized “emancipator.” The post-Civil War America might have also left a favorable impression on the Central Asians, as Schuyler discovered that one local man in Central Asia viewed a picture of Abraham Lincoln and expressed admiration for the former

¹¹¹ J.E.T. Aitchison, *Handbook of the Trade Products of Leh, with the Statistics of the Trade, from 1867 to 1872 Inclusive*, Calcutta 1874, pp. 46, 217–218.

¹¹² *Ibidem*, p. 45.

¹¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 256.

¹¹⁴ No. 518, *Mr. Jewell to Mr. Fish*, December 31, 1873, in *PRFRUS* 1874, pp. 807–808.

¹¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁶ Article 17 in original Russian: “Согласно с этим постановлением Сеид Музафар ныне же рассылает ко всем бекам строжайшее в этом смысле предписание, в пограничные же города бухарские, куда привозятся из соседних стран невольники для продажи бухарским подданным, пошлетя кроме помянутого предписания о прекращении торго невольниками, еще и повеление о том, что если, вопреки приказанию Эмира, будут туда привозиться невольники, то таковых отобрать от хозяев и немедленно освободить.” ‘Dogovor Mezhdru Rossiej i Buxaroj’ [Treaty Between Russia and Bukhara], in: *Sbornik dogovorov Rossii s drugimi gosudarstvami 1856–1917* [Collection of Russian Treaties with Other States 1856–1917], ed. E.A. Adamov, Moscow 1952, p. 139.

¹¹⁷ MacGahan, *Campaigning on the Oxus*, p. 310.

¹¹⁸ Jeff Eden, *Slavery and Empire in Central Asia*, Cambridge 2018, pp. 183–212.

American president's physical attractiveness, potentially associating the United States with abolitionist ideals.¹¹⁹

Besides the bazaars, there were also shops where "wines, potted meats, *pâtés de foie gras*, English ale, and tinned American lobsters" could be found to cater for foreign travelers.¹²⁰ Schuyler's market research suggests that American goods entered Central Asia earlier than most people have expected. American revolvers were among the common articles found in Bukhara and Tashkent markets.¹²¹ But the most coveted thing from the other side of Atlantic by the Russian colonial administration turned out to be American cotton. To ameliorate the varieties of cotton planted in the region, Kaufman sent a commission to the US to investigate cotton culture methods and the Government of Turkestan imported the seeds of American Sea Island (*Gossypium barbadense*) for experiments.¹²² Schuyler predicted that the introduction of America's Sea Island cotton would not prove to be successful in Central Asia, a region so dry and far away from the sea coast, and the Turkestan cotton in Tashkent and Samarkand was good enough and "grew beautifully."¹²³ By the time Schuyler visited the region, cotton, was not yet treated as "white gold" by locals: "It [cotton] is cultivated only among other things, and there is probably no agriculturist who has all of his land under cotton."¹²⁴ Speculators who came to the region to make a fortune usually diversified their investment and specialized in none. For example, Schuyler had an acquaintance with a Tartar who was from South Russia and came to Central Asia for wildcat capitalistic experiments, such as planting American cotton, opening a soap factory, and introducing machines for spinning silk and gins for cleaning cotton, all of which were feared by Schuyler as future failures.¹²⁵ However, the year 1873 marked the starting point of cotton monoculture, which would take several decades to reach its full maturity and has been a defining characteristic of the Central Asian economy for over a century. Notwithstanding Schuyler's finding that Kaufman's land reform of transferring title of all Turkestan lands to the state would violate the natives' rights of property and accordingly decimate their motivation in production, agriculture, and trade,¹²⁶ for his unawareness of cotton as an compelling motive for Russia's accelerated conquest of the region, he did not foresee that the reform by seizing lands of local aristocracy and Muslim clergy would invite more intensive cultivation of

¹¹⁹ "Curiously enough everyone seems to have heard of America, and one man had even seen a picture of Lincoln – whom he thought a very handsome man." Schuyler and Schaeffer, *Selected Essays*, p. 45.

¹²⁰ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, I, p. 46.

¹²¹ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, II, p. 94.

¹²² Schuyler, *Turkistan*, I, p. 296.

¹²³ *Ibidem*.

¹²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 294.

¹²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 90. Schuyler's doubt of the introduction of new industries in Central Asia was also confirmed in vol. II of *Turkistan*: "I [Schuyler] have already spoken of the little which has been done for commerce and manufactures, of the commercial treaties which are practically useless, of the effort to establish a fair, and of the failure of so many projects for starting factories for spinning cotton and silk, not to mention others of less importance" (*Turkistan*, II, p. 234).

¹²⁶ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, I, pp. 300–307.

cotton in the 1870s and 1880s,¹²⁷ which resulted in an eventual contribution to Russia's "cotton autonomy" from the US while a dependent economy in Central Asia several decades later. Interestingly, Abul-Gaffar Bek, whom Schuyler met in Bukhara, imagined America as "a place about as large as Bukhara, where people chiefly devoted to the culture of cotton."¹²⁸ The bek's fancy of America as almost a cotton monoculture country was likely influenced by the perception that America had exported a significant volume of cotton to Russia prior to the Civil War. As Russia shifted its focus to the Central Asian market for cotton, Abul-Gaffar Bek should have witnessed an unprecedented boost in demand from Russia, realizing that Central Asian cotton was replacing American cotton. This realization led him to envision America as an analogue for Bukhara, suggesting the growing importance of cotton cultivation in Turkestan.

Opening new trade routes was equally important for the Russian authorities. Russian naturalist P.A. Chixachev in 1849 pointed out the importance of Russia's opening a new market in Central Asia because the Anglo-American rivalry for China's market would be detrimental to Russia's trade relations with China, while Central Asia was not affected by the influence from Great Britain and the US, and its rich raw materials would meet the Russian industries' demands.¹²⁹ As Schuyler noted, the Russians in 1847 tried to build a small fortification, known as Fort Raim, at the mouth of the Syr Darya to initialize its course of conquest. To prevent flooding, it was transferred to the Kazala branch of the main river and renamed as Fort Kazala (now Kazaly) in 1855.¹³⁰ Once more, Schuyler likened the Russian outpost to the American frontier due to their similar geographic features and colonialization endeavors: "This country [Kazala] reminds me a good deal of the plains of Colorado, but I suppose it is still more like Arizona."¹³¹ He predicted that Kazala would become a commercial center since it was the major post on Syr Darya and connected Orenburg with Khivan, Bukharan, and Tashkent trade routes.¹³² The Kazakh steppe hence was critical to Russia in terms of pooling and transferring resources and goods from the new acquired land along and between Syr and Amu Darya.

¹²⁷ "Upon a part of the lands thus acquired, large numbers of Russians, including bureaucrats, officers, merchants, and others, enthusiastically took up the cultivation of cotton in the 1870's and 1880's." See John Whitman, 'Turkestan Cotton in Imperial Russia', *The American Slavic and East European Review* 15,2 (1956), p. 196. Beatrice Penati identified Kaufman's introduction of American seeds of cotton and the initiative of "private Russian and Muslim entrepreneurs" as two key factors contributing to the "cotton boom" in the 1870s and 1880s, see Beatrice Penati, 'The Cotton Boom and the Land Tax in Russian Turkestan (1880s–1915)', *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 14,4 (2013), p. 746. However, as mentioned in previous notes, Schuyler did not have confidence in Russian and Muslim entrepreneurs' imperialistic capitalism at all and he was equally pessimistic of the introduction of Sea Island seeds. Schuyler's observation contradicted Penati's analysis. The 1873 land reform, which was not mentioned by Penati and overlooked by Schuyler for its aftermath of intense cotton cultivation, but emphasized by Whitman, may have been a more responsible factor to the "cotton boom" in the 1870s.

¹²⁸ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, II, p. 66.

¹²⁹ N.A. Xalfin, *Politika Rossii v Srednej Azii (1847–1868)* [Russian Policy in Central Asia (1857–1868)], Moscow 1960, p. 21.

¹³⁰ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, I, p. 44.

¹³¹ Schuyler and Schaeffer, *Selected Essays*, p. 43.

¹³² Ibidem, p. 45.

Additionally, through the Kazakh steppe Russia secured a direct access to the Chinese market. Previously, Russia traded with China in Nerchinsk and Kyakhta, according to the Treaty of Nerchinsk (1689) and the Treaty of Kyakhta (1727). The Kazakhs, on the other hand, established a special political relationship with the Qing court based on the “Master-Slave” relationship (in Mon. *Ejen-Albatu* or in Ch. 主僕關係) that recognized Qing Emperor Qianlong as the ultimate arbiter in Central Asian affairs in the latter half of the 18th century.¹³³ Kazakhs’ political submission to the Qing enabled Kazakh caravans to enter Ürümqi, Ili, and Tarbagatai (Tacheng) to trade their livestock and horses for Chinese tea and silk goods. They were the intermediary in binding the two largest empires and never stopped being so even when Qianlong decided to close the Kyakhta trade amid Sino-Russian trade conflicts and to strictly prohibit the Kazakhs from bringing Russian goods to China.¹³⁴ However, in 1822 Governor M. M. Speranskij issued the “Statute on the Siberian Kirghiz” (in Rus. *Устав о сибирских киргизах*), which was the first step to politically subjugate Kazakh khanates to West-Siberian Governor-Generalship.¹³⁵ The Kazakhs of the Middle Zhuz who connected West Siberian cities such as Omsk and Tobolsk on the Russian Irtysh line with Ili turned out to be the chief economic loser because they were later confined in *okrugs* of the Oblast of Siberian Kirghiz in 1854, and their movements could hardly extend beyond the right bank of Irtysh.¹³⁶ Doubtlessly, restricting the Kazakhs’ freedom of movement, together with the conclusion of the Treaty of Kulja in 1851 that granted Russian merchants to trade in Ili and Tarbagatai, would boost Russians’ commercial salience on the Irtysh line. Schuyler was fully aware of Russia’s takeover of Kazakhs’ direct trade route with China. In appendix IV of *Turkistan* vol. II, he attached an article regarding Russian policy in Central Asia, in which Russian Orientalist and political adviser V. Grigorief highlighted the profitability derived from Russia’s direct control of the trade route from Petropavlovsk (now Petropavl) to Semipalatinsk (now Semey) on the Irtysh line and “this advantage was the only one which their [Kazakhs’] nominal allegiance brought us [Russians].”¹³⁷ Nevertheless, Schuyler did not regard Russian trading interest an annoyance. For him, it was under the Tsar’s peace that merchants with different backgrounds could converge and participate in the regional trade more freely and safely, as Vernyi (now Almaty), a boisterous trading town that had “all the races of this part of Asia”, including the Sarts, Tartars, Kazakhs, Kalmyks, Chinese, and Afghans, testified.¹³⁸

¹³³ Onuma Takahiro 小沼 孝博, ‘Shinchō to kazafu yūboku seiryoku to no seiji teki kankei nikansuru ichi kōsatsu’ 清朝とカザフ遊牧勢力との政治的關係に関する一考察 [A Political Relationship between the Qing Dynasty and Kazakh Nomads], *Journal of Asian and African Studies* アジア・アフリカ言語文化研究, 72 (2006), pp. 39–63.

¹³⁴ Lin Yongkuang 林永匡, and Wang Xi 王熹, *Qingdai xibei minzu maoyi shi* 清代西北民族贸易史 [Internationality Trade in the Northwest During the Qing Period], Beijing 1991, pp. 245–248.

¹³⁵ Zh.K. Kasymbaev, *Istoriya Kazaxstana (XVIII vek–1914 god)* [History of Kazakhstan (from the 18th century to 1914)], Almaty 2012, p. 73.

¹³⁶ Ibidem, pp. 73–74.

¹³⁷ V. Grigorief, ‘The Russian Policy Regarding Central Asia: An Historical Sketch’, in: *Turkistan II*, by Schuyler, p. 409.

¹³⁸ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, II, p. 146.

Colonial governments and policymakers often prioritize infrastructure development as a key strategy to support trade and stimulate economic progress. The Russians first took water communication into consideration for developing regional trade, but it proved difficult to improve river navigation without dismantling established irrigation systems in a region where water loss was taking place due to deforestation along the mountain course of rivers.¹³⁹ Therefore, a plan of Central Asian railway had been mooted with two propositions: Frenchman Ferdinand de Lesseps's proposition of a railway that connects Calais, France to Calcutta, India by way of Orenburg, Tashkent, Samarkand, Kabul, and Peshawar; the alternative being a railway turning from Tashkent to Kokand, Kashgar, Karakoram, and Ladakh.¹⁴⁰ These two routes suggested two contrasting trade preferences, the former leading to Afghanistan and India, while the latter communicating with the Himalayas and the area south of the Tian Shan mountain ranges. Considering engineering difficulties, costs in construction and running, and differences in the Russian and British Asian policy, Schuyler instead suggested a construction of a direct railway from Siberia to Central Asia first and found the area from Petropavlosk to Akmolinsk (now Astana) especially conducive to railroad colonialism.¹⁴¹ Schuyler's suggestion was based on the American experience of internal colonization by building the transcontinental railroad in the 1860s: "A railway here could be as easily constructed as was the Pacific railway in the United States; and were lands along the line to be granted to the railway company, sufficient colonization might be attracted from the northern and inclement parts of Russia, to go a great way towards paying the expenses of the railway."¹⁴² The Russians seemingly also understood the importance of railway communication in securing control of territories. In a dispatch sent by Schuyler to Fish, an excerpt from a leading article in the *Journal of St. Petersburg* was translated and enclosed to imply that Russian political analysts considered rumors regarding Mexico's further cession of its northern states to the United States not unreliable by learning that the lack of railway connections between northern Mexico and the Mexican federal authorities was the main cause of revolts in several northern states; and the Mexican government might evaluate an American annexation of these unmanageable territories as a relief.¹⁴³ From the 1870s onward, the Governor-Generalship of Turkestan continued to utilize Treasury funds for the support of the regional railroad project, while progressively easing constraints on the entrepreneurs in terms of private concessions to accelerate the railroad conquest.¹⁴⁴ However, the direct railway line from Orenburg to Tashkent did not open until 1906, despite this route was confirmed by

¹³⁹ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, I, pp. 221–222.

¹⁴⁰ Ibidem, pp. 222–224.

¹⁴¹ Ibidem.

¹⁴² Ibidem, p. 224.

¹⁴³ No. 532. Mr. Schuyler to Mr. Fish, Enclosure, "Extract from the Journal de St. Petersbourg, August 12, 1874", August 12, 1874, in *PRFRUS 1874*, 842–843.

¹⁴⁴ I.B. Bochkareva, 'Chastnyj kapital v processe zheleznodorozhnogo stroitel'stva v Turkestane (70-e gg. XIX–nachalo XX v.) [Private Capital in the Railway Construction Process in Turkestan (70s of the 19th–Early 20th Centuries)]', *Izvestija Altajskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta, Istoricheskie nauki i arxeologiya*, 5 (2020), pp. 13–18.

scientific expeditions organized in 1877, 1878, and 1879 as the optimal direction for the Central Asian railroad,¹⁴⁵ and it was the completion of the “Turkestan-Siberian Railroad” in 1931 that finally realized Schuyler’s vision.

Despite Russian merchants’ fear of being elbowed out of the market, the abrogation of the customs frontier of Orenburg and Southern Siberia in 1868–1869 literally created a free-trade zone that allowed foreign goods to enter Central Asia duty free, and the Russian Ministry of Finance decided to unify taxes and duties within Turkestan in 1875 under the Russian code.¹⁴⁶ Was the Russian Empire a practitioner of the free market idea? Schuyler did not believe so. He reasoned that the Governor General had ordered an import ban on nearly all European articles in 1869 and barred Indian tea to protect the Kyakhta merchants.¹⁴⁷ In addition, unless with special written permission from the Governor-General, Europeans for purposes of trade were not granted admission to Turkestan.¹⁴⁸ That being so, Russia’s development plan in the region was to transform Central Asia into its exclusive domain to trade with China, compete with the British Raj, support Russia’s industrialization process, and ward off European influence. Notably, “Turkistan” was not mentioned at all in Schuyler’s instructive book on US diplomacy, *American Diplomacy and the Furtherance of Commerce*, which earns him the reputation as the “diplomatist” and emphasizes the interplay between diplomacy and international trade as vital components for promoting America’s global commercial interests.¹⁴⁹ Obviously, Schuyler’s witness to Russia’s conquest of Central Asia had convinced him of the established fact that commerce in the region was monopolized by the Tsar and America could hardly enter the market.

Chinese Turkestan, the Kashgar Question, and the Unexpected Birth of a New Frontier of Opium

Schuyler’s journey ended in the then Russian occupied Kulja (Yining), Chinese Turkestan, a region known as “ice jecen” in Manchu or “Xinjiang” in Chinese, literally the “new frontier.” Chinese Muslims, called by Europeans as Dungans or by the Chinese *Hui*, declared a *jihad* against the Qing government and Han Chinese in Shaanxi, Gansu, and Ningxia provinces in 1862. Soon, in 1864 their revolt was met with zealotry by Dungans and other Turkic peoples in Xinjiang. In the last days of 1864, the Kokandi general, Ya’qub-Bek, together with Büzürg Khan, invaded Southern Xinjiang and took

¹⁴⁵ Ibidem, p. 15.

¹⁴⁶ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, I, pp. 206–207.

¹⁴⁷ Ibidem, p. 207. Non-Russian European goods, including English, French, and German goods were found by Schuyler in the Bukharan market, see Schuyler, *Turkistan*, II, p. 94.

¹⁴⁸ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, I, p. 48.

¹⁴⁹ Schuyler only mentioned that an English consul was refused by Russia in the Caucasus due to his “expressed strong opinions about Russian movements in Asia.” Schuyler took this as an example to illustrate that it was common to see the refusal of the exequatur. See Eugene Schuyler, *American Diplomacy and the Furtherance of Commerce*, New York 1886, p. 96.

Kashgaria. By 1865, Ya'qub-Bek had subdued the Dungan and Chinese resistance in the region and secured his absolute authority by deposing Büzürg Khan.¹⁵⁰ The Ya'qub-Bek's regime assumed the name *Yettishar* ("Seven Cities") and was an Islamic theocracy. As the Qing government was unable to repel the Dungan uprising, which seriously disrupted Russia's communication and trade route with China, Tsar Alexander II approved the plan of a joint Russian-Chinese suppression of the rebellion in 1871. Though the Tsarist government rejected Kaufman's idea of occupying the Ili River Valley in 1870, Kaufman, for fear of Ya'qub-Bek's aggression, sent fewer than 2,000 troops to take Kulja presumptuously on July 4, 1871.¹⁵¹ This was the background against which Schuyler visited Kulja.

Russian lieutenant general M. A. Terent'ev once expressed the inevitability of the Ili expedition: "The fertile Ili River Valley and its wonderful climate, without our intervention, might have fallen into the hands of Dungans, or Ya'qub-Bek, who could easily penetrate here by conquering Ürümqi."¹⁵² Even though Schuyler stated that he was not agreeable with Terent'ev's chauvinistic tone and anti-English sentiment,¹⁵³ he totally supported the Russian military's rhetoric of justifying Kaufman's *fait accompli*. Schuyler, like Terent'ev, explained Kaufman's decision as an intolerance of Ya'qub-Bek's significant advancements in capturing Ürümqi and Turfan. To prevent Ya'qub-Bek from advancing to Ili, the Muzart Pass had also been strategically occupied by the Russians. He further praised General G. A. Kolpakovskij for his shrewd report sent to St. Petersburg. The report presented an argument for occupying Ili so as to secure the frontier and contain Ya'qub-Bek's influence.¹⁵⁴

It is certain that Kaufman was antipathetic to Ya'qub-Bek. He, according to Schuyler, had tried to persuade Khudayar to exercise suzerain rights of the Kokand Khanate over Ya'qub-Bek as a step to annex Kashgaria, but Khudayar refused to do so while sent a letter to Ya'qub-Bek advising him to establish friendly and commercial relations with the Russians. Ya'qub-Bek, on the other hand, insisted on being treated as an equal even under the military threat from Kaufman. For both possibilities of war and peace, Kaufman with military operations prepared sent Baron Kaul'bars to sign a commercial treaty with Ya'qub-Bek.¹⁵⁵ Schuyler's narrative reveals the Russian military officers' security concerns yet obscures the trade desire and geopolitical calculations from St. Petersburg. The Qing government granted Russian merchants to trade in Ili and Tarbagatai in 1851 but did not approve of Russia's commercial activities in Kashgaria in case it should excite British

¹⁵⁰ Demetrius Charles Boulger, *The Life of Yakoob Beg: Athalik Ghazi, and Badaulet; Ameer of Kashgar*, London 1878, pp. 92–119.

¹⁵¹ S.C.M. Paine, *Imperial Rivals: China, Russia, and Their Disputed Frontier*, Armonk, New York 1996, pp. 120–121.

¹⁵² M.A. Terent'ev, *Rossija i Anglija v Srednej Azii* [Russia and England in Central Asia], St. Petersburg 1875, p. 130.

¹⁵³ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, II, p. 264.

¹⁵⁴ Ibidem, p. 186.

¹⁵⁵ Ibidem, pp. 320–322.

India's enterprise in Southern Xinjiang. However, the 1860 Treaty of Peking made Russian commercial and missionary activities in Southern Xinjiang legitimate.¹⁵⁶ After the fall of Kashgaria, the British expected Russia to liaison with Ya'qub-Bek, while Russia feared that Ya'qub-Bek would make alliance with the British.¹⁵⁷ Both parties tried to win Ya'qub-Bek over to their respective cause.

Since the establishment of Ya'qub-Bek's regime, Kashgaria's trade with China proper had been interrupted. British observers and Punjab officials saw it as a great opportunity of exporting Indian goods to Kashgar through Ladakh. Ya'qub-Bek also wished to build closer commercial relations with British India and at the beginning of 1868 sent an envoy to meet the Lieutenant-Governor of Punjab in Lahore.¹⁵⁸ Later in 1868, British tea businessman Robert Shaw traveled to Kashgar privately and ended up with a happy meeting with Ya'qub-Bek.¹⁵⁹ He persuaded Richard Bourke, Lord Mayo and Viceroy of India, to change former Viceroy John Lawrence's non-interference position and to establish diplomatic relations with Ya'qub-Bek's regime.¹⁶⁰ In 1870 Punjab officer Douglas Forsyth was sent by the Indian Office to visit Yarkant, gather information of Turkestan, and examine business prospects.¹⁶¹ Russian authorities estimated that British secret missions aimed at excluding Russian influence on new Muslim khanates, and they were impatient to conclude a treaty with Ya'qub-Bek before the British took action so that both Kashgar and Russian merchants would resume their former business and trade, and Russia would hold Ya'qub-Bek accountable for any breach of the treaty.¹⁶² Ya'qub-Bek's response to Kaul'bars was positive. He blamed the "bloodthirsty" policy of the British colonial authorities toward Indian Muslims and considered taking patronage from the Governor-General of Turkestan an honor.¹⁶³ Accordingly, it is safe to surmise that at least Russia's Imperial Government wanted no war with Kashgaria and sought to side with Ya'qub-Bek to oppose British India as peaceful and diplomatic as possible. Surely, Ya'qub-Bek understood the importance of involving other powers in the region, and submitted his state to the Ottoman Sultan in 1873 as a vassal in order to build legitimacy, use the Caliph's authority to supersede the rights of local religious figures,

¹⁵⁶ Wang Ke 王柯, 'Guoji zhengzhi shiye xia de xinjiang jiansheng' 國際政治視野下的「新疆建省」[The Establishment of Xinjiang Province in the Context of International Politics], *Twenty-First Century* 二十一世紀 2 (2007), p. 41.

¹⁵⁷ Noda Jin, 'Reconsidering the Ili Crisis: The Ili region under the Russian Rule (1871–1881)', in: *Reconceptualizing Cultural and Environmental Change in Central Asia: An Historical Perspective on the Future*, eds. M. Watanabe and J. Kubota, Kyoto 2010, p. 171.

¹⁵⁸ G.J. Alder, *British India's Norther Frontier 1865–1895: A Study in Imperial Policy*, London 1963, pp. 25–26.

¹⁵⁹ Boulger, *The Life of Yakoob Beg*, pp. 215–216.

¹⁶⁰ Alder, *British India's Norther Frontier 1865–1895*, pp. 32–33.

¹⁶¹ Douglas Forsyth, *Autobiography and Reminiscences of Sir Douglas Forsyth, C.B., K.C.S.I., F.R.G.S.*, London 1887, pp. 54–89.

¹⁶² S.V. Moiseev, 'Prichiny i posledstviya zakljuchenija russko-kashgarskogo torgovogo dogovora 1872 g.' [Causes and Consequences of the Conclusion of the Russian-Kashgar Trade Agreement of 1872], *Izvestija Altajskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta* 6 (2019), pp. 75–80.

¹⁶³ Ibidem, p. 78.

or *khojas*, and align with the Ottoman Empire to rejuvenate Islamic fundamentalism and to jointly confront the European invasion of Muslim societies in Asia.¹⁶⁴ Schuyler knew that the British, the Russians, and the Ottomans were building relations with Ya'qub-Bek, but he saw Kashgaria's relationship with Russia as a forced one under military pressure, ignoring Ya'qub-Bek's commercial interests with Russia; and he underrated Ya'qub-Bek's ambition of maneuvering an equidistant diplomacy to his own advantage.

Schuyler was known to be proficient in French, German, Italian, and Russian, and possess language skills in Latin, Greek, Bulgarian, and Finnish.¹⁶⁵ But his illiteracy in the Chinese language rendered him ignorant of the ongoing defense and foreign policy making process of the Qing government. While Schuyler remained skeptical of the Russian government's promise to return Kulja to China due to their vested interests in the region and lack of determination shown by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs,¹⁶⁶ he did not realize that Russia's indecision could exert pressure on Chinese statesmen, represented by Zuo Zongtang (左宗棠), into a belief that Russia was hatching a plot to invade China by entrenching their military force on the Ili basin first and into an argument that recovering territories lost to Muslim rebellions would be necessary to smash Russia's contrivances.¹⁶⁷ In fact, Chinese statesmen's concerns were not uncorroborated because Russian explorer and naturalist N. M. Przheval'skij,¹⁶⁸ perceiving the incompetence of Manchu-Chinese forces, urged the Russian government to war with China; yet Eastern Turkestan was only of secondary importance in his scheme, as he believed Russia's "center of gravity of our [Russian] struggle against China" would then shift to Khalkha Mongolia.¹⁶⁹ The Urga (now Ulaanbaatar) region provided a "starting point" to invade Peking, and Russia would manipulate the Dalai Lama to exert leverage on the entire Buddhist world if the British were to invade Tibet and force him to take refuge in Urga.¹⁷⁰ If Russia constituted a hazard to inland China, Japan posed another threat to coastal China. In 1874, Japan launched a punitive expedition to Taiwan in retaliation for the murder of Ryukyuan sailors committed by Paiwan aborigines three years earlier. Consequently, Qing officials engaged in the so-called Great Policy Debate. Zuo Zongtang advocated a frontier defense thesis

¹⁶⁴ Kemal H. Karpat, 'Yakub Bey's Relations with the Ottoman Sultans: A Reinterpretation', *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique* 32,1 (1991), pp. 17–32.

¹⁶⁵ Schuyler and Schaeffer, *Selected Essays*, pp. 20, 108; Rosenberg, 'Eugene Schuyler's Doctor', p. 385.

¹⁶⁶ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, II, pp. 198, 326–327.

¹⁶⁷ Zuo Zongtang's proposition in original classical Chinese: 「欲杜俄人之狡謀,必先定回部;欲收伊犁,必先克烏魯木齊。」 Luo Zhengjun 羅正鈞, *Qing Zuo wenxianggong Zongtang nianpu* 清左文襄公宗棠年譜 [A Chronicle of the Life of Zuo Zongtang] 1897; repr. Taipei 1981, pp. 515–516.

¹⁶⁸ Schuyler had the opportunity to meet N. M. Przheval'skij on two occasions in 1874. Following Przheval'skij's untimely passing in Karakol the previous year, Schuyler wrote a concise biography of him in 1889, see Eugene Schuyler, 'The Russian Traveller Prjeval'sky', *Journal of the American Geographical Society of New York* 21 (1889), pp. 87–98.

¹⁶⁹ A.I. Andreev, *Tibet v politike carskoj, sovetsoj i postsovetsoj Rossii* [Tibet in Tsarist, Soviet and Post-Soviet Policy], St. Petersburg 2006, pp. 65–66.

¹⁷⁰ Ibidem. Przheval'skij's criticism of the Chinese Government in Turkestan was also noted by Schuyler, see Schuyler, 'The Russian Traveller Prjeval'sky', p. 98.

(in Ch. 塞防論), prioritizing the pacification of Xinjiang in order to protect Mongolia, and eventually Peking; whereas Li Hongzhang (李鴻章) proposed a maritime defense thesis (in Ch. 海防論), championing the modernization of Chinese navy to confront Western maritime powers and Japan.¹⁷¹ In the end, the frontier defense thesis prevailed, and the Qing court decided to appoint Zuo imperial commissioner in charge of military affairs in Xinjiang in 1875.¹⁷²

Evidently, Schuyler's oversight prevented him from observing Qing's military preparation to reclaim Xinjiang. Upon finishing his analysis of Kashgaria in 1875, Schuyler was still entertaining the Russian idea of either occupying Kashgaria first and handing it over to the Chinese later or keeping Kashgaria in Russia's possession.¹⁷³ His contemplation of the possibility of Russia's taking control of Kashgaria was reflected in his cartography process. During his travels, Schuyler made a conscientious effort to gather geographical information with the intention of using it to update both the topographical features of Turkestan and the political atlas of Central Asia. In Schuyler's map, he included Kashgar as "part of Russian Turkistan" (see Map 1 for general reference and Map 2 for more details) yet excluded the Russian occupied Kulja. Schuyler's mapping choice suggests that he perceived Russia's security prioritization of Kashgaria over the Ili basin in his assessment.



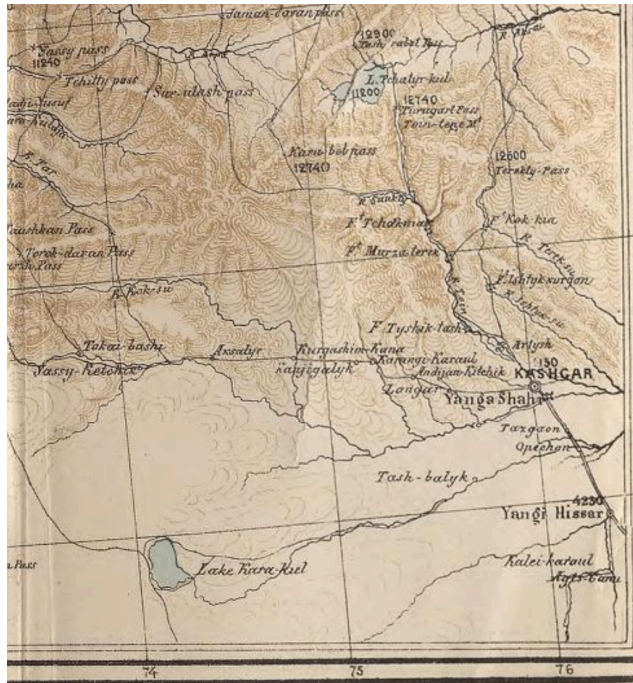
Map 1. Map of the Khanates of Bukhara, Khiva, and Khokand and Part of Russian Turkistan

Source: Schuyler, Eugene, Creator. *Map of the Khanates of Bukhara, Khiva, and Khokand and Part of Russian Turkistan*, London 1875. Map, Viewed 14 October 2023, <<https://www.loc.gov/item/2021668452/>>.

¹⁷¹ Immanuel C.Y. Hsü, 'The Great Policy Debate in China, 1874: Maritime Defense Vs. Frontier Defense', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 25 (1964–1965), pp. 212–228.

¹⁷² *Ibidem*, p. 227.

¹⁷³ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, II, pp. 325–326.



Map 2. Kashgar in Schuyler's Map of Russian Turkistan

Source: Schuyler, Eugene, Creator. Map of the Khanates of Bukhara, Khiva, and Khokand and Part of Russian Turkistan, London 1875. Map, Viewed 14 October 2023, <<https://www.loc.gov/item/2021668452/>>.

However, Russia, Great Britain, and Schuyler all underestimated the Qing's resoluteness and the conflicts between Ya'qub-Bek's regime and its subjects. Contrary to Uyghur political activist Rebiya Kadeer's claim that Ya'qub-Bek was an "Uyghur hero" who led Eastern Turkistan to independence,¹⁷⁴ Ya'qub-Bek's regime was staffed by officers, military and civilian, of Kokandian origin mostly; and it discriminated in favor of foreigners.¹⁷⁵ Massacre against civilians took place and excessive taxes and levies were extorted in the territory conquered by Ya'qub-Bek.¹⁷⁶ As a result, Ya'qub-Bek's rule provoked widespread indigenous resentment from both civilians and *khojas*, which weakened the legitimacy of his regime and facilitated Zuo and Liu Jintang (劉錦棠)'s campaign to retake Xinjiang and provincialize the region so that it would be reconditioned into the orbit of the Qing

¹⁷⁴ Alexandra Cavelius and Rebiya Kadeer, *Dragon Fighter: One Woman's Epic Struggle for Peace with China*, Carlsbad 2009, p. 6.

¹⁷⁵ Shinmen Yasushi 新免 康, 'ya-ku-bu-begu seiken no seikaku nikansuru ichi kōsatsu' ヤークブ・ベグ政権の性格に関する一考察 [The Character of the Government of Ya'qub Beg], *Shigaku zasshi* 史学雑誌 96,4 (1987), pp. 415–456.

¹⁷⁶ Pan Zhiping 潘志平, *Zhongya haohanguo yu qingdai xinjiang* 中亚浩罕国与清代新疆 [Khanate of Kokand in Central Asia and Xinjiang in Qing Period], Beijing 1991, pp. 167–169.

government.¹⁷⁷ By 1877, the Qing government almost restored its authority in Xinjiang, except for the Russian occupied Ili basin. It was during a dinner in March 1878, with General M.D. Skobelev and MacGahan also in attendance, that Schuyler finally learned about the decisive crackdown by the Chinese on Ya'qub-Bek in Kashgaria. Skobelev explained that Kaufman "disliked the Chinese as neighbors, he yet liked them better than the English" and once the Russians "saw the English waver in their policy [on Ya'qub-Bek] they took advantage of it, and egged on the Chinese – even supplying them with money and arms."¹⁷⁸ The resolution of the Kashgar question, although there was a Chinese perspective, was comprehended by Schuyler through the Russian narrative that Russia showed a slight preference for supporting a strong Chinese government in the region, rather than a Muslim nation, as a means to hinder British expansion. However, the return of Kulja was still in the Chinese agenda. What Skobelev did not inform Schuyler was that, due to the prevailing circumstances in the Balkans and the fear of potential British backing of China in Central Asia, the Tsar had decided to initiate negotiations with Peking regarding returning the Ili Valley to China within days of the Treaty of San Stefano, despite Minister of War D.A. Milyutin's reservations.¹⁷⁹ The Qing's territorial dispute with Russia was eventually settled in the Treaty of Saint Petersburg (February 1881). Schuyler, during the same year, appeared to be unaware of the border demarcation between Russian and Chinese Turkestan, as he did not touch upon the topic in his diary. Likely, Schuyler's attention was diverted by the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in March¹⁸⁰ and he was preoccupied negotiating a commercial treaty between the US and Romania for the promotion of economic development between the two countries.¹⁸¹

It is intriguing to pay attention to how Schuyler explained China's expansion to Eastern Turkestan in the first place and how he observed its subsequent colonization project. He adopted a historical perspective and mentioned that the disintegration of Genghis Khan's empire had led to the rise of Dzungarian Mongols in Northern Xinjiang, who later proved to be a security threat to the Chinese, Turkic peoples, Tibetans, and other Mongolian tribes. To eliminate the menace from the Dzungars, Ming and Qing China had launched many wars with them. It was the Qing that defeated Dzungars and conquered Eastern Turkestan to secure the region's peace.¹⁸² Schuyler spoke briefly of the Dzungar genocide ordered by Emperor Qianlong to avoid any future trouble relating to the Dzungars, and the "country was therefore open for settlement, and inhabitants were

¹⁷⁷ Kim Ho-dong 金浩東, 'Jwajongdangui singangwonjeonggwa iseuillam jeonggwonui bunggoe' 左宗棠의新疆遠征과 이슬람 政權의 崩壞 [Zuo Zongtang's Xinjiang Expedition and the Collapse of Islamic Regime], *Dongamunhwa* 동아문화 29 (1991), pp. 47–89.

¹⁷⁸ Schuyler and Schaeffer, *Selected Essays*, p. 129.

¹⁷⁹ Beryl Williams, 'Approach to the Second Afghan War: Central Asia During the Great Eastern Crisis, 1875–1878', *The International History Review* 2,2 (1980), p. 224.

¹⁸⁰ Schuyler and Schaeffer, *Selected Essays*, p. 143.

¹⁸¹ Paul D. Quinlan, 'Early American Relations with Romania, 1858–1914', *Canadian Slavonic Papers / Revue Canadienne des Slavistes* 22,2 (1980), p. 197.

¹⁸² Schuyler, *Turkistan*, II, pp. 165–169.

found by sending military colonies from Mantchuria, by deporting Chinese criminals and by bringing agriculturists [Taranchis] from Eastern Turkistan.”¹⁸³

Those Chinese criminals, known as *Tchampsans*, settling near the banks of the Ili, were referred to by Schuyler as poppy cultivators.¹⁸⁴ Despite Schuyler’s recognition that the Chinese possessed a superior “economy and well-organized system of cultivation”, compared to the supposedly “shiftless” Russians in the Ili Valley, which was seen by him as “the only part of Central Asia that will ever repay the expenses bestowed upon it”,¹⁸⁵ he underestimated the economic influence of opium in the Semirech’e region and failed to anticipate the emergence of transnational commercial networks pivoting on opium within Semirech’e as a result. In the latter half of the 1870s, as scholar Niccolò Pianciola finds out, opium was produced in Xinjiang not only by the Chinese, but also by Dungans, Taranchis, Sibes, Solons, and Oirat Mongols for reasons of economic recovery; as poppy cultivation expanded to the bordering Tsarist Semirech’e region and mass cross-border migration took place in the 1880s, Tsarist officials were able to mobilize Dungans for grain-poppy cultivation in Semirech’e and employ Kazakhs and Kyrgyz for opium smuggling into Xinjiang, regenerating Kaufman and Kolpakovskij’s failed fiscal plan of colonizing Ili by poppy cultivation to compete with the British monopoly of opium trade with China and generate revenues channeled from China in silver for covering his unauthorized Ili expedition, which emptied Russian Turkestan’s Treasury.¹⁸⁶ According to Russian agronomist E.I. Svirlovskij, by selling opium at favorable prices in July, the Dungans, Kyrgyz, and even certain Russians were able to afford paying workers and purchasing essential agricultural items for reinvestment in the agricultural sector, thus relieving the impoverishment among the local population.¹⁸⁷ Opium pieces weighing 3–4 pounds were wrapped in leaves or petals of the poppy, parchment, or often in waxed paper or coated fabric. This type of packaging, known as Dungan or Chinese packaging, was highly suitable for transportation of raw opium to China, but not for dried opium since the locals had not yet engaged in processing opium.¹⁸⁸ Apparently, poppy cultivation in Central Asia was showing prospect in Schuler’s sojourn and had later reached its maturity in generating a full cycle of production, consumption, and distribution of opium to provide a financially sound plan to support agriculture in Russia’s Turkestan.

¹⁸³ Ibidem, p. 168.

¹⁸⁴ Ibidem, p. 173. Chinese criminals sent to Xinjiang for dirty work were known in modern Chinese as *qianfan* 遣犯. Russian Turkologist F.W. Radloff (V.V. Radlov) in 1862 reached Ili from the Kazakh steppe to study local languages and made a report of these criminals. Likely, Schuyler took this piece of information directly from Radloff, see Wilhelm Radloff, *Proben der Volksliteratur der Nördliche Türkischen Stämme. Teil VI: Der Dialekt der Tarantschi*, St. Petersburg 1886, pp. 41–44.

¹⁸⁵ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, II, p. 198.

¹⁸⁶ Niccolò Pianciola, ‘Illegal Markets and the Formation of a Central Asian Borderland: The Turkestan–Xinjiang Opium Trade (1881–1917)’, *Modern Asian Studies* 54,6 (2020), pp. 1828–1875.

¹⁸⁷ E.I. Svirlovskij, *Kul’tura maka i dobyvanie opiya v Semirech’e* [Poppy Culture and Opium Production in the Semirech’e region], Petrograd 1917, p. 11.

¹⁸⁸ Ibidem, pp. 29–30.

It should be noted that American merchants were also active in opium trade and they reexported Turkish opium to compete with the British in China's market before the Opium War.¹⁸⁹ Article 5 of the 1858 Addendum to the Treaty of Tientsin with the US further permitted American opium trade as long as custom duties were paid.¹⁹⁰ But since 1881 mutual opium trade between China and the US had been prohibited according to Article 2 of the Addendum to the Angell Treaty.¹⁹¹ Some Chinese historians under the influence of Marxist historical materialism explained that the US's waiving its previous right to opium trade was due to the shift of America's economic gravity from foreign trade to domestic development in the late 19th century, and abandoning opium trade allowed the return of overseas American capitals to satisfy the financial demand of the Westward Movement and America's industrialization progress.¹⁹² However, as statistics from New York Chamber of Commerce (see Table 1) show, opium export remained robust until 1877, had plummeted since 1880, and never recovered to the pre-1877 level for the rest of the century.¹⁹³ Credibly, the cultivation of opium poppies in Xinjiang and Semirech'e and its consequent pouring of opium products into the market of China proper have rendered America's reexported opium less competitive and less profitable. According to Svirlovskij, the Chinese buyers initially paid opium for 40–50 rubles per *jin* (weight equal to 500g) of raw opium, but later had to pay for 100 rubles or more per *jin*.¹⁹⁴ If we take Svirlovskij's observation of the Chinese buying price of opium in 1917 (100 rubles for 1 *jin*), and 100 rubles would buy 9 American dollars in 1917,¹⁹⁵ 1 *jin* of raw opium was equal to 200.44 current dollars.¹⁹⁶ If we take the year 1890 (see Table 1), the last year that witnessed America's high volume of export of opium, raw opium with duty paid was approximately 6.24 dollars per pound, which was equal to

¹⁸⁹ Jacques M. Downs, 'Merchants and the China Opium Trade, 1800–1840', *The Business History Review* 42,4 (1968), pp. 418–442.

¹⁹⁰ In original Chinese: 「第五款 一、向來洋藥、銅錢、米穀、荳石、硝磺、白鉛等物，例皆不准通商，現定稍寬其禁，聽商遵行納稅貿易。」 Wang Tieya 王铁崖, *Zhong-wai jiu yuezhang huibian di yi ce* 中外旧约章汇编 第一册 [Collection of Old Treaties and Regulations, Chinese and Foreign, Vol. 1], Beijing 1957, p. 138.

¹⁹¹ In original Chinese: 「第二款 中國與美國彼此商定，中國商民不准販運洋藥入美國通商口岸，美國商民亦不准販運洋藥入中國通商口岸，並由此口運往彼口，亦不准作一切買賣洋藥之貿易。所有兩國商民，無論僱用本國船、別國船及本國船為別國商民僱用販運洋藥者，均由各本國自行永遠禁止；再此條，兩國商定彼此均不得引一體均沾之條講解。」 Ibidem, p. 380.

¹⁹² Xu Xiaodong 许晓冬 and Wang Xun 王询 'Meiguo duihua yapien cong zousi dao gongkai maoyi de yanbian' 美国对华鸦片从走私到公开贸易的演变 [The Evolution of American Opium Trade from Smuggling to Open Trade in China], *Guizhou wenshi congkan* 贵州文史丛刊 2 (2015), pp. 80–85.

¹⁹³ Siddharth Chandra, 'Opium Export Data for New York Chamber of Commerce 1870–1912', *Harvard Dataverse*, V2, UNF:5:6PIWmBNaC1O5DMuHbN9DbA=[fileUNF], 2015, Viewed 14 October 2023, <<https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/29203>>.

¹⁹⁴ Svirlovskij, *Kul'tura maka*, p. 11.

¹⁹⁵ Kira Egorova & Ksenia Zubacheva, 'The Ruble's Journey Through Time, From the Middle Ages to the Present Day', *Russia Beyond*, May 14, 2020, Viewed 12 July 2023, <<https://www.rbth.com/business/332176-history-russian-ruble>>.

¹⁹⁶ I used the historical currency conversions (<https://futureboy.us/fsp/dollar.fsp>), developed by Alan Eliassen, to convert the dollar value in history to current dollar value.

6.88 dollars per *jin*, denoting 227.62 current dollars. America's raw opium, as long it was subject to customs duty, costed higher in 1890 even than that of Russia in 1917, when the price of Turkestan opium had already hiked. Considering what Svirlovskij had also found that the Chinese, disguising as market entertainers, exploited the Muslim holiday season of Uraza Bayram (Eid al-Fitr) to come to Tokmak (now Tokmok) in order to buy opium from the Dungans at a lower price of 30–40 rubles per pound,¹⁹⁷ while the cost of production of opium were 15 (first grade), 12 (second grade), 9 (third grade), and 7 (fourth grade) rubles per pound (with the labor cost of 3–5 to 7 rubles per day added in calculation),¹⁹⁸ the profit rate of Turkestan opium should have far exceeded America's reexported opium. While Schuyler "found the process of smoking [opium] so interesting that I [Schuyler] at last concluded to try a pipe myself",¹⁹⁹ he could hardly have imagined that a market of opium would soon flourish in the region he had just visited. Neither Schuyler, nor his American compatriots, the Chinese, or the British, could anticipate that Russia, through its conquest of Turkestan, would displace other foreign opium traders who had previously benefitted from China's treaty port system. This conquest opened up a Poppy Road that saw significant growth in the 1880s and 90s, reaching its peak between 1908 and 1930, connecting Turkestan and Xinjiang, and later expanding to encompass Manchuria and the Far East.²⁰⁰

In the end Schuyler understood the Qing administration of Eastern Turkestan as a multiethnic colonial project. Taranchis, whose name literally means agriculturists, formed the economic basis in the Ili Valley by cultivating the government-assigned land and paying tax in kind, providing labor to government infrastructure projects, and supplying extra grain and horses in wartime.²⁰¹ The Chahar Mongols, who had previously fought with the Manchus in southern Inner Mongolia and exacted tribute from the Chinese, were given subsidies to colonize lands in Xinjiang and to form military colonies, along with the Solons and Sibes who were sent from Manchuria to garrison the frontier.²⁰² Some (the Torghts) of those Kalmyks, who under the menace of the Dzungars fled to the Volga region in search of Tsar's protection, returned to China and led a nomadic life in Eastern Turkestan.²⁰³ Chinese garrison troops, or the Green Banner, under the leadership of a Manchu officer, stationed between the Solons and Taranchis or around cities whose majority population were the Chinese.²⁰⁴ The secret of governing this multiethnic region, as Schuyler echoed F. W. Radloff, was to exploit inter-ethnic hatred so that the governed

¹⁹⁷ Svirlovskij, *Kul'tura maka*, p. 7.

¹⁹⁸ Ibidem, p. 10.

¹⁹⁹ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, II, p. 147.

²⁰⁰ See Niccolò Pianciola, 'Maki dlya bol'shevikov: opium na turkestan-sin'czyan'skom prigranich'e v 1914–1929 godax' [Poppies for the Bolsheviks: Opium on the Turkestan-Xinjiang Borderlands in 1914–1929], *Acta Slavica Iaponica* 43 (2022), pp. 127–148.

²⁰¹ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, II, p. 169.

²⁰² Ibidem, p. 171.

²⁰³ Ibidem, pp. 171–172.

²⁰⁴ Ibidem, p. 172.

would not unite in opposition to the Manchu rule.²⁰⁵ Schuyler hence revealed the true nature of the Qing court; it was not a traditional Chinese dynasty dominated by the Han Chinese and organized by Confucian principles of governance, but a Manchu empire that divided and ruled its subjects for the realization of the universal peace all under the heaven. It took another century for a new generation of American sinologists, known as the “New Qing History” school, to realize that the Qing dynasty was *ipso facto* Manchu-centered and to rediscover the Inner Asian dimension of Chinese history.²⁰⁶

Though Schuyler noted that the Manchus were experiencing Sinicization, and they gradually forgot their own language, the Manchu identity was preserved well in Xinjiang since they mixed with Solon and Sibe colonists who spoke tongues that were similar to Manchu.²⁰⁷ Indicatively, the Manchu frontiersmen, by undertaking colonial projects and military service, resisted the tempting, yet corruptible Chinese way of life.²⁰⁸ Given this, the Manchus were not that different from those Americans who went westward or Russians who advanced eastward and southward. Hence, Russia’s conquest of Western Turkestan, Qing’s claim of Eastern Turkestan, and America’s westward expansion were all rationalized by Schuyler as outstanding examples of settler colonial exceptionalism, approximately 20 years before Frederick Jackson Turner submitted his celebrated “Frontier Thesis.”

After *Turkistan*: The Long Shadows of the Monroe Doctrine, the Great Game, and the Eastern Question

Of Schuyler’s official report on Central Asia, it may be said, as Jewell said of the author by selecting the word “impartial”, that “many prominent Russian officials have requested his unbiased opinion.”²⁰⁹ A dispatch from St. Petersburg confirms Schuyler’s popularity in Russia for his outspokenness: “Mr. Schuyler’s remarkable dispatch on Central Asia has naturally created a great sensation here. The public are so unaccustomed to the free criticism of official acts and to expressions of blame against individuals occupying official positions.”²¹⁰ Russian Foreign Minister A.M. Gorchakov, however, was perturbed by Schuyler’s criticism of the Russian government, as he protested in a dispatch published by *New York Times*: “Mr. Schuyler is doubtless looked upon at this

²⁰⁵ Ibidem, p. 174.

²⁰⁶ William T. Rowe, *China’s Last Empire: The Great Qing*, Cambridge 2009, pp. 1–6.

²⁰⁷ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, II, p. 170.

²⁰⁸ Emperor Qianlong worried that Sinicization would corrupt the Manchus, warned the Manchus personally against the Chinese way of life, and demanded them to study and obey the Manchu way, learn mounted shooting, be familiar with the national language (Manchu), advocate (Manchu’s) simplicity, and abandon (Chinese) sophistication and flamboyance (「咸知舊制，敬謹遵循，學習騎射，嫻熟國語，敦崇淳樸，屏去浮華」). *Rixia jiuwen kao* 日下舊聞考 [Examination of Ancient Things Heard from the Throne] (Peking, 1788), compiled by Yu Minzhong 于敏中, 卷十三 vol. 13.

²⁰⁹ No. 524. *Mr. Jewell to Mr. Fish*, p. 815.

²¹⁰ ‘Russia in Central Asia’, *The Times* (London), March 26, 1875.

moment as a monster of ingratitude, because, after being permitted, as a particular favor, to visit the Russian possessions in Central Asia, he has presumed to find fault, here and there, with what he saw.”²¹¹ Nevertheless, Schuyler’s official career in Russia remained unaffected by Gorchakov’s remarks and he stayed there until he left for Constantinople in 1876, the year that witnessed the publication of *Turkistan*.

The Russian military circles initially found the appearance of Schuyler’s book infuriating, for Schuyler had blamed the officers of the Turkestan detachment for their pursuit of vanity against the Turkmens in the Khiva campaign, which led them to favor MacGahan’s account instead.²¹² But their irritation did not prevent the arrival of *Turkistan* to the educated readers in Russia. As late as in October 1876, George H. Boker, Schuyler’s successor in St. Petersburg, observed that *Turkistan* was allowed for sale at English bookstores free of censorship and Russian censors even expressed that Schuyler’s criticism of Kaufman and Russian mishandlings in Central Asia would be bearable.²¹³ Clearly, Schuyler’s report and publications on Central Asia did not seriously affect the US-Russia bilateral relationship. On March 7, 1878, Schuyler had breakfast with General Skobelev, who had participated in the conquest of Central Asia and had recently emerged victorious in the Russo-Turkish War following the conclusion of the Treaty of San Stefano on March 3. Skobelev first paid Schuyler a compliment on his *Turkistan* and then confided in him, revealing that several individuals whom Schuyler had mentioned in the book were now facing accusations and undergoing trials and “General Kaumann was making a regular clearing out.”²¹⁴ *Turkistan*, unexpectedly, became a book of evidence in Russia for subjecting certain members of the expedition force to court-martial jurisdiction.

To what extent can Schuyler be considered “impartial”? While he openly criticized Kaufman, it is evident that he uncritically praised the administrative approach of General M.G. Chernyaev. Schuyler’s preference for Chernyaev over Kaufman suggested his inclination toward an alternative model for governing Central Asia.²¹⁵ Even though Russia’s rule failed short of Schuyler’s expectations, he still viewed it as enlightened absolutism when compared to native dynasties. “Notwithstanding the many faults which may be found in the administration of the country”, he stated, “the Russian rule is on the whole beneficial to the natives, and it would be manifestly unjust to them to withdraw her protection and leave them to anarchy and to the unbridled rule of fanatical despots.”²¹⁶ This pro-Russian judgment was cited by O.A. Novikova, an expatriate Russian writer and activist based in London, as part of her propaganda efforts to defend her stance that “there was more need for Russians in Central Asia than there was Englishmen in

²¹¹ *New York Times*, March 25, 1875, quoted in Saul, *Concord*, p. 101.

²¹² See Morrison, *The Russian Conquest*, 308 n. 5; 363–364.

²¹³ ‘From G.H. Boker. St. Petersburg, October 26, 1876’, in: *Selected Essays*, Schuyler and Schaeffer, pp. 83–85.

²¹⁴ Schuyler and Schaeffer, *Selected Essays*, pp. 128–129.

²¹⁵ Brown, Jr., ‘Eugene Schuyler’, pp. 179–182.

²¹⁶ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, II, 388.

Bengal” since “India had a civilization of her own”, while “the Khanates were hotbeds of savagery and fanaticism.”²¹⁷ While there were instances in Schuyler’s works where he appeared “impartial” in his observations, he was overwhelmed after all by his partiality to draw a conclusion favorable to Russia. Schuyler’s accolades for Russia as a Leviathan – like political authority in introducing regional order is understandable. As scholar Lee Kwang Tae finds, rivalry between Central Asian “tribal dynasties” had troubled regional caravan trade in the first half of the 19th century and the Turkmens’ shift of allegiance from Khiva to Bukhara in Merv invited Russia’s rival, Qajar Iran, to meddle in regional affairs; therefore, Russia had to interfere and establish protectionates so that regional trade would not be disturbed and a *Pax Russica* would be secured.²¹⁸ There are certain areas of common ground between contemporary scholarship and Schuyler’s research concerning Russia’s endeavor to foster an enlightened and uninterrupted regional market.

Bridges believes that Schuyler was correct in pointing out that Russia would continue to advance in Central Asia, yet he failed to predict a “Great Game” between Russia in Central Asia and Britain in India for he was more concerned about a possible Anglo-Russian conflict in Persia.²¹⁹ On the contrary, Schuyler was right in the height of the so-called “Great Game”²²⁰ and fully aware of the Anglo-Russian rivalry. Even before the term “Great Game” was made popular by Rudyard Kipling in his 1901 novel *Kim*, Schuyler made the following observation in 1866 to highlight the tension between the two expansionist empires: “Soon English and Russian soldiers may encounter each other on the slopes of the Himalayas. The knowledge of the exact extent of these recent acquisitions has been slow in reaching Europe, but such items of intelligence have been made known from time to time as strongly to excite the feelings of the western nations.”²²¹ Despite that,

²¹⁷ O.A. Novikova, *Is Russia Wrong? A Series of Letters*, London 1876, pp. 108–109.

²¹⁸ Lee Kwang Tae 이광태, ‘19세기 chojungyeop jungangasia jeongchi hwangyeong byeonhwawa buhara-hiba gwangye’ 19세기 초중엽 중앙아시아 정치 환경 변화와 부하라-히바 관계 [The Politics in Nineteenth-Century Central Asia and the Relationship between Bukhara and Khiva], *Jungangasiayeongu* 중앙아시아연구 26,1 (2021) pp. 159–180.

²¹⁹ Bridges, ‘Eugene Schuyler’, p. 19.

²²⁰ Perhaps the most renowned work on the Great Game was Peter Hopkirk’s *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia*, New York 1992. Hopkirk did include Schuyler’s work in his bibliography for reference (*The Great Game*, p. 540). Part of MacGahan’s and Schuyler’s experiences in Central Asia and Bulgaria were also covered in Chapter Five and Six in Karl E. Meyer and Sharen Blair Brysac, *Tournament of Shadows: The Great Game and the Race for Empire in Central Asia*, New York 1999. Like the “Cotton Canard”, Alexander Morrison equally sees the “Great Game” as a failed narrative of Russia’s conquest of Central Asia since it “marginalizes or ignores completely Central Asian rulers, states, and peoples”, see Morrison, ‘Introduction’, pp. 132–135 and *The Russian Conquest*, pp. 10–13. He instead opted for “microhistories” to bring into focus the underlying Russian motives and ideologies (‘Introduction’, p. 138). The critique of the “Great Game” narrative is also found in E.Yu. Sergeev, *Bol’shaya igra, 1856–1907. Mify i realii rossijsko-britanskix otnoshenij v Central’noj i Vostochnoj Azii* [The Great Game, pp. 1856–1907: Myths and Realities of Russo-British Relations in Central and East Asia], Moscow 2012. However, Schuyler’s own writings suggest a distinct penchant for the grand narrative of the Anglo-Russian rivalry. The “microhistory” of Schuyler’s journey to Central Asia would not have taken place without his keen understanding of realpolitik in his time.

²²¹ ‘The Progress of Russia in Asia’, p. 489.

military confrontation was less likely to take place, in Schuyler's judgment. As his previous report to Fish suggests, Schuyler believed that diplomatic efforts between Great Britain and Russia would ultimately prevent their competition in the region from escalating into war.²²² Nonetheless, after the trip, Schuyler felt that the Anglo-Russian rivalry intensified, as their race to conquer Asia reached a white-heat. In the Chapter XIV of *Turkistan*, titled "The Russian Foreign Policy in Asia", Schuyler delineated Russia's Asiatic strategy into five theaters of operations, ordered according to the pace of Russian conquest: first Kokand, second Bukhara, third Afghanistan, fourth Kashgaria, and eventually Kulja and Tarbagatai.²²³ Schuyler considered Russia's expansion as a reasonable response to the British conquest of India and found the recrimination against Russia to be quite unfair, given that the British were engaging in precisely the same actions.

With much greater force might it be said that the extension of the British rule in Asia is the result of a long-matured and traditional policy of Asiatic conquest; yet no one who knows how the spread of British rule in India and the adjacent countries has been brought about would think of accusing the English Government of such a design. Why, then, should such accusations be brought against Russia?²²⁴

Furthermore, he held the judgment that Russian expansion in Asia was inevitable and irreversible. According to his assessment, the Russians' *fait accompli* not only served to advance the "civilizing mission" in the region, but also provided an opportunity for the United States to counterbalance British supremacy on a global scale.

On the whole, the Russian influence is beneficial in Central Asia, not only to the inhabitants, but to the world, and it certainly is greatly for our interest that a counterpoise should exist there against the extension of English dominion in Asia. Having once taken possession of the country, it will be almost impossible for the Russians, with any fairness to the natives, to withdraw from it.²²⁵

The strategy of offshore balancing, as John Mearsheimer propounds, enables great powers to pass the buck to their favored regional power so that they will avoid dealing with their chief rival directly.²²⁶ Schuyler's judgement of America as an offshore balancer certainly provided a historical example to this strategy. Accordingly, despite his uncomfortableness with Kaufman's and Russia's mismanagement of Central Asia, he was in great measure partial to the Russian cause.

²²² No. 335. *Mr. Schuyler to Mr. Fish*, in *PRFRUS* 1873, p. 772.

²²³ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, II, pp. 258–329.

²²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 260.

²²⁵ No. 524. *Mr. Jewell to Mr. Fish*, Enclosure, pp. 824–825.

²²⁶ John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York 2001, pp. 18–22.

Jewell assumed that Schuyler's report would be of "great interest" to Fish.²²⁷ It is difficult to ascertain whether Fish was genuinely impressed by Schuyler's insightful analysis. However, it seems he did not perceive Russia's new possession in Asia as conflicting with America's national and foreign interests, as he provided no further directives. Ulysses S. Grant, the 18th President of the US and Fish's superior, after leaving office traveled to Russia in 1878. At the end of a conversation that involved topics on US warfare with Native Americans between Grant and Alexander II, the Tsar, satisfied with learning from the American experience of encountering cultural and racial others, said: "Since the foundation of your Government, relations between Russia and America have been of the friendliest character, and as long as I live nothing shall be spared to continue this friendship." The former President replied: "That although the two Governments were very opposite in their character, the great majority of the American people were in sympathy with Russia, which good feeling he hoped would long continue."²²⁸ Unquestionably, even though American readers and foreign policy makers were informed of Russia's progress in Central Asia through Schuyler's and MacGahan's publications, the US went along with Russia's recent expansion.

Did the American acquiescence in Russia's expansion suggest that Central Asia was too remote for the US to project any meaningful influence? Most likely not. The US understood its capacity to interfere in the region, yet found intervention at that moment dispensable, as Schuyler indicated to Rahmet Ullah Bek of Uch-kurgan (Uchqo'rg'on) that "we [Americans] could even make an impression on Central Asia in connection with Russia, if it were necessary to do so."²²⁹

Several reasons may explain why the US chose not to transform intelligence into diplomatic activities. First of all, the US in the 1870s wished to shake off the shadow casted by the Catacazy Affair in America's relations with Russia. While European nations feared that the Alaska purchase would contribute to a possible Russian-American alliance, K.G. Katakazi (spelled Catacazy at the time), Russian minister to the US (1869–1871), saw the US's negotiations with Great Britain for the *Alabama* claims would influence Russo-American relations and attempted to interfere in the negotiation process by exploiting mass media for dissemination of disinformation so that a wedge between the Americans and the British would be driven for the benefit of Russia.²³⁰ Grant, realizing the danger posed by Katakazi in swaying American public opinion, asked Fish to request the Russian government to recall him.²³¹ This diplomatic scandal tarnished the previous

²²⁷ No. 524. *Mr. Jewell to Mr. Fish*, p. 815.

²²⁸ John Russell Young, *Around the World with General Grant: A Narrative of the Visit of General U.S. Grant, Ex-president of the United States, to Various Countries in Europe, Asia, and Africa, in 1877, 1878, 1879. To which are Added Certain Conversations with General Grant on Questions Connected with American Politics and History, Part I*, New York 1880, p. 468.

²²⁹ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, II, p. 34.

²³⁰ Lee A. Farrow. *The Catacazy Affair and the Uneasy Path of Russian-American Relations*, New York 2021, p. 40, 43–49.

²³¹ 'Correspondence of the State Department with Mr. Curtin', *New York Times*, December 7, 1871.

cordial friendship between the two countries. In order not to provoke Russia further, the US government had reasons to keep silent on Russia's Central Asian affairs, as they did not conflict with American interests apparently.

Second, the Americans were sympathetic to Russia regarding the Eastern Question. The Serbs and Montenegrins declared war on the Ottoman Empire in 1876 while at the same time Bulgarians revolted against the Ottoman authorities. Schuyler, as the American consul general in Constantinople, learned that the Turkish were conducting a massacre against Bulgarian civilians. Later, MacGahan hurried to Constantinople and published a report on Turkish atrocities, which shocked not only the Americans but also the world, with the help of Schuyler.²³² The Ottoman hostility toward the Balkan Slavs spawned Russia's intervention in the region under the flag of Pan-Slavism. Russia's Central Asian campaigns and war with the Ottoman Empire necessitated a significant demand for weapons. The 1870s witnessed Russia's gargantuan importation of American arms.²³³ The interests of America's arms dealers and the support from American people for Russia in the Great Eastern Crisis certainly played a persuasive role in the US's decision to maintain friendly relations with Russia.

Third, Central Asian affairs belonged to Old World politics. As the Grant administration strictly adhered to the Monroe Doctrine, punishing any European challenge to this idea in the Western Hemisphere and tolerating great power politics in the Old World,²³⁴ it is comprehensible that Fish felt unnecessary to give any instruction to Schuyler regarding Central Asia. The New & Old-World dichotomy was outstanding in Schuyler's mind. Alexander von Humboldt, who received sponsorship from the Russian government and traveled to Central Asia for geographical research, regarded Europe as a natural extension of Asia.²³⁵ Similarly, Schuyler opined that the Mongols' legacy in Russia was critical for the latter's relations with Asia and forged the path for Russia's extension to Asia.²³⁶ Humboldt, as scholar Ottmar Ette argues, by relating his Central Asian findings to his exploring experience in America, transformed the geographical concept of Central Asia into a transcontinental subject of knowledge through which a comprehensive sense of life science (*Lebenswissenschaft*) would be invoked by intertextuality in his writings.²³⁷ Thus, Humboldt was in an attempt to overcome this dichotomy for the sake of universality in natural science. Schuyler, on the other hand, was consistent in treating Central Asia as Russia's designated sphere for its expansion to the Himalaya region. He only compared

²³² Januarius MacGahan and Eugene Schuyler, *The Turkish Atrocities in Bulgaria, Letters of the Special Commissioner of the "Daily News" J.A. MacGahan, Esq., with An Introduction & Mr. Schuyler's Preliminary Report*, London 1876.

²³³ Joseph Bradley, *Guns for The Tsar: American Technology and the Small Arms Industry in Nineteenth-Century Russia*, DeKalb 1990, p. 115.

²³⁴ Charles W. Calhoun, *The Presidency of Ulysses S. Grant*, Lawrence 2017, p. 152.

²³⁵ "L'Europe, considérée, dans sa configuration générale, comme un *prolongement péninsulaire* occidental de l'Asie." Alexander von Humboldt, *Asie Centrale*, Tome 3, Paris 1843, p. 25.

²³⁶ Schuyler, *Turkistan*, I, pp. 152–153.

²³⁷ Ottmar Ette, 'Amerika in Asien: Alexander von Humboldts *Asie centrale* und die russisch-sibirische Forschungsreise im transarealen Kontext', *Alexander von Humboldt im Netz* VIII,14 (2007), pp. 15–30.

Russia with America to showcase a Russian version of Manifest Destiny. Starting from this point, Schuyler's account of Przheval'skij's adventure in Asia served to encourage an American discovery, in contrast to an European exploration as Humboldt had undertaken, of the New World: "It might be as well, therefore, for us to consider whether we could not do better to explore our continent for ourselves, whether North or South America, rather than leave the greater portion of the task to English, French and Germans."²³⁸ Plainly, Fish was occupied with the Virginius Incident between 1873 and 1875 when Schuyler was preoccupied with Central Asian affairs. Should Fish have read Schuyler's reports and publications closely, he would likely have found an emerging Russian hegemon in Eurasian landmass a remake of the Monroe Doctrine in the Orient. If the Alaska Purchase had dissuaded Russia from pursuing further territorial expansion in America, Russia's subsequent expansion into Central Asia would have reinforced its Eurasian identity. This could have mitigated any future conflicts between these Russia and America in the Western Hemisphere. The American background of Schuyler's scholarship colluded with the strategic thinking of Pan-Americanism of the US foreign policy makers for their non-interventionism in Central Asia.

More cogently, unlike the Ottomans and British who were eager to publish Schuyler's works in order to monitor the actualities of Central Asia under the Russian rule and to better grasp the Russian strategy in the region, the US had no conflicting interests with the Russian Empire in the region. The US was not burdened with the Ottoman Empire's Pan-Islamism or the Pan-Turkic idea of politically uniting all Turkic peoples, including those residing in the Volga-Ural region, the Crimea, and Central Asia. The US did not side with either party in the "Great Game"; for it just restored friendly relations with Great Britain by signing and ratifying the Treaty of Washington in 1871, while simultaneously hoped to continue its cordial relationship with Russia since the American Revolution. The US had no missionary interests in Central Asia and commercial relations were almost non-existent. American businessmen had been used to reexporting sugar from New England via Havana and later exporting cotton from Southern ports through the Sound to Baltic Russia in exchange for iron, hemp, and cordage²³⁹ until American industrialism incentivized "reaper kings" to harvest the wheat of Russian grain lands in the 1870s²⁴⁰ and encouraged American consulate in Russia to appreciate Odessa as a trade depot for importing US manufactured goods in the 1880s.²⁴¹ Central Asia was the least likely channel for American business intercourse with Russia. America's commerce and trade with China were governed by the Treaty of Wanghia of 1844 that confined American business in China's treaty ports, while the Burlingame-Seward Treaty of 1868 discouraged any US intervention in the domestic administration of the Chinese government.

²³⁸ Schuyler, 'The Russian Traveller Prjeval'sky', p. 98.

²³⁹ Kalevi Ahonen, *From Sugar Triangle to Cotton Triangle: Trade and Shipping between America and Baltic Russia, 1783–1860*, Jyväskylä 2005.

²⁴⁰ Milton Plesur, *America's Outward Thrust: Approaches to Foreign Affairs, 1865–1890*, DeKalb 1971, p. 21.

²⁴¹ Leander E. Dyer, 'Extension of American Trade in Russia', in: *Commercial Relations of the United States*, Washington 1881, pp. 463–465.

No US interests were found in Kashgaria, which was then occupied by Ya'qub-Bek's theocratic regime. Therefore, despite Schuyler's providing a unique American assessment of Ya'qub-Bek's relationship with the great powers, his analysis and his oversight of the Qing's strategy did not have any influence on US policy toward the region whatsoever. Schuyler, American businessmen, and foreign policy makers could not have forecasted Russia's competition with the US in opium trade. As long as the US's commercial interests with Russia and China were not perceived to be impeded by Central Asian affairs, there was no need for the US to take action to support or protest Russia's dominion in Asia. At last, America's overall nonchalance proved to be deficient in commanding a view of the political implication of Schuyler's works and estimated his travelogue no less than an American's exotic escapade in a distant and bygone land, best exemplified in the review of *Turkistan* in *Scribner's Monthly*, which hinted merely at his travel anecdotes and historical depiction of the region.²⁴²

The reception of *Turkistan* appeared to be more positive in England compared to America, evident by its fifth edition in the former and only its second edition in the latter by December 1876.²⁴³ *The Annual Register* even broke the rule that "only criticisms on British authors are inserted in the ANNUAL REGISTER [*sic.*]", but the editors "do not think an apology is necessary for including among such criticisms Mr. Schuyler's work, touching as it does on a subject which is nearer to the hearts of Englishmen than of any other people in the world – the progress in Asia of our great rival in the East."²⁴⁴ Thanks to its extensive coverage of strategic information concerning Russia, *Turkistan* was listed as one of the recommended books for understanding the situation along the north-west frontier of India by *The British Quarterly Review*.²⁴⁵ Schuyler was also selected to the Royal Geographical and Royal Asiatic Societies for his original contribution.²⁴⁶

However, some British readers seemingly approached the book through the lens of the anxieties stemming from the Anglo-Russian rivalry, potentially leading to a distorted appraisal of Schuyler's work as being against the Russians. One review of *Turkistan*, featured in the journal of the Royal Geographical Society, *The Geographical Magazine*, overlooked the partiality that Schuyler exhibited toward the Russian government at the expense of the local population. Instead, it treated Schuyler's critique of Russia's mismanagement as his declaimer "against Russian barbarism and maladministration in Asia, which tend to the weakening of the moral influence of Russia among her Asiatic subjects."²⁴⁷ While Schuyler believed that both the British and Russians would resort to diplomatic channels to alleviate the tension, the reviewer expressed concerns that

²⁴² 'An American in Turkistan', *Scribner's Monthly* 13 (1876), pp. 211–222.

²⁴³ Schuyler and Schaeffer, *Selected Essays*, p. 92.

²⁴⁴ *The Annual Register: A Review of Public Events at Home and Abroad, for the Year 1876*, London 1877, p. 378.

²⁴⁵ 'The North-West Frontier of India', *The British Quarterly Review* LXVII (1878), p. 200.

²⁴⁶ Schuyler and Schaeffer, *Selected Essays*, p. 92.

²⁴⁷ 'Turkistan', *The Geographical Magazine* 3 (1876), p. 333.

“the means which Russia [employed in Central Asia] might one day employ for piercing the Anglo-Indian armour.”²⁴⁸

The renewed anxiety experienced by British readers after reading *Turkistan* was logical since Schuyler’s assessment of the British foreign policy in *Turkistan* centered around the premiership of William Ewart Gladstone, yet a shift in foreign policy making occurred when Benjamin Disraeli defeated Gladstone and assumed the position of Prime Minister in 1874. While both Gladstone and Disraeli were aware of the growing Russian influence in Central Asia during their respective tenures and recognized the potential risk of Afghanistan falling under Russian control, akin to what had already happened with Turkestan, they differed in their ways to deal with the situation. Gladstone’s diplomatic approach in 1873 was to prefer negotiation with Russia and strive for neutrality in Turkestan. On the other hand, the Disraeli’s Ministry took a more assertive stance and even pursued military action when necessary. Disraeli’s primary objective was to focus on transforming the British Empire from a “reluctant” empire into a commercial and strategic empire, with a particular emphasis on the East, rather than Africa, where most of Gladstone’s annexations occurred; and the new ministry aimed to strengthen the Ottoman Empire and placed hope on the Turkish to contain the expansion of Russia.²⁴⁹

Disraeli’s pro-Ottoman policy had motivated the equally pro-Ottoman *Pall Mall Gazette* to exploit Schuyler’s account of Russia’s war crime against the Central Asian Turks to question Russia’s activities in the Turkish Balkans: “The particularity of Mr. Schuyler’s evidence is that it implicates all classes of the Russian community through the acts of representative sections of the Khiva force... It is, then, established by Mr. Schuyler’s evidence that Russia cannot by her direct authority civilize any part of Turkey, but must deepen its barbarism... The very things which General Kaufmann ordered are the very things which Servo-Russian officers would be forced to do in Turkish provinces. They would meet with as stern a fanaticism among the Mussulmans of Turkey as among the Central Asian population.”²⁵⁰ It should be noted that the *Pall Mall Gazette* was also keen on the topic of Turkestan and some of the gazette’s articles were utilized by George Robert Aberigh-Mackay, an Anglo-Indian writer, to sensationalize Russia’s threat to British India.²⁵¹ The *Pall Mall Gazette*, thus, acted as a mouthpiece endorsing Disraeli’s imperial policy.

In the context of the British media’s politically motivated rendition of Schuyler’s *Turkistan*, Gladstone, who was out of office and eagerly awaiting the opportunity to defeat Disraeli in the next election campaign, emerged as a more critical reader of the book and exhibited his savoir faire in mobilizing Schuyler’s ideas to defend his own political view.

²⁴⁸ Ibidem.

²⁴⁹ Stephen J. Lee, *Gladstone and Disraeli*, London & New York 2005, p. 108.

²⁵⁰ ‘The Competition of Barbarism’, *Pall Mall Gazette*, October 17, 1876, p. 10.

²⁵¹ G.R. Aberigh-Mackay, *Notes on Western Turkistan: Some Notes on the Situation in Western Turkistan*, Calcutta 1875).

In his review at *Contemporary Review*, Gladstone showed deep understanding of Schuyler's partiality for Russia. "The question of Turkistan", as Gladstone asserted categorically and positioned it in relation to the humanitarian and "civilizational" rhetoric, "in its largest aspect, bears on the solution of among the world-wide problems of politics and morality, the regulation of the relations between superior and inferior races or communities when brought locally into contact."²⁵² Gladstone saw the merit of Schuyler's laborious work in its providing details to support the finding that "the relations of Russia with this country [Turkestan] are of old date", when Russia began "by having herself to shake off a Tartaric influence",²⁵³ suggesting that Russia had to deal with its own "Eastern Question" first in order to rejoin the Western civilization. "Causes analogous to those, which have brought our vast empire in India", he continued, "have led Russia onwards into the heart of Asia; but perhaps with more of necessity, and certainly with much less of inducement."²⁵⁴ To explain the indispensability of Russia's military operation in Turkestan, Gladstone sympathized with Schuyler's depiction of Khudayar and employed deductive reasoning to justify Russia's expedition to Khiva: "The ruler of Khokand, whom the Russians expelled, and also sheltered, was a consummate scoundrel, repeatedly driven out by his subjects; and there seems no reason to doubt that, in the case of Khiva."²⁵⁵ Schuyler's writing on Russia's efforts to eliminate slavery constituted reasons for humanitarian intervention since "wherever the flag of Russia has been planted, slavery, and the accompanying trade in slaves, have been abolished."²⁵⁶ Aware of Schuyler's criticism of Russia's government in Turkestan, Gladstone chose to blame no Russian officials while instead attributed the ruling difficulties to Islam in the region because there the religion "is neither in moral subordination, as in India, nor in a forced and unnatural ascendancy, as in European Turkey."²⁵⁷ By meaning "unnatural ascendancy", Gladstone was referring to the peril of the Ottomans' efforts in fomenting the religious character in the national identity, which led to the Turkish mistreatment of their Christian subjects in the Balkans. Hence, Russia's endeavor to subdue political Islam in Turkestan was seen by Gladstone as consistent with its offering a responsible guardianship for the Balkan Christians. Considering that "the Russians have to carry the torch of civilization amidst barrels of gunpowder",²⁵⁸ Gladstone contended "the possession of Turkistan seems to me to be a burden laid on Russia rather than a boon granted to her."²⁵⁹ "In a word, the entire detail, as we draw it from the pages of Schuyler", according to Gladstone's interpretation, "exhibits a career of marked moderation and prudence, and a rather reluctant submission to the inexorable causes which

²⁵² W.E. Gladstone, 'Russian Policy and Deeds in Turkistan', *Contemporary Review* XXVIII (1876), p. 873.

²⁵³ *Ibidem*, p. 875.

²⁵⁴ *Ibidem*.

²⁵⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 876.

²⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 877.

²⁵⁷ *Ibidem*.

²⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 879.

²⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 881.

drove them [Russians] forward in an anxious, costly, and uninviting career.”²⁶⁰ Since Schuyler believed that Gladstone’s foreign policy to Russia could help with solving the regional tension diplomatically, Gladstone chose to rally Schuyler’s position to warrant his achievement during term of office and wrote that “it is satisfactory to observe the relations exhibited in this volume between the Russian and the British authorities, in matters of reciprocal concern.”²⁶¹

The only, yet crucial, discord between Gladstone and Schuyler lies in the latter’s writing on the massacre in Khiva. Gladstone dedicated the rest of the review to falsify Schuyler’s account, mainly relying on two sources. The first is the memorandum, which had been published in the *Daily News* just before Gladstone’s review, of General A.P. Gorlov, the Russian military attaché in London; the second is MacGahan’s war correspondence.²⁶² Why did Gladstone develop a fixation with the situation in Khiva? Gladstone was right in office when the Khiva expedition took place, but he did not react to the event actively for he was persuaded by the Russian government. On 8 January, 1873, Count P.A. Shuvalov conveyed to Foreign Secretary Lord Granville Leveson-Gower that the Tsar had no intention of taking possession of Khiva and had issued “positive orders” to prevent a prolonged occupancy of the region.²⁶³ The one-sided statement by Russian diplomats in London further confirmed this point. The Gladstone Ministry consequently informed the Parliament that the sole objective of the Russian Government’s expedition to Khiva was to suppress slavery and secure the release of some Russian captives. Additionally, they clarified that there were no intentions or desires for Russia to annex Khiva and assured that the Russian troops would be withdrawn promptly once the captives were freed.²⁶⁴ However, Khiva, following a treaty signed on August 23, 1873, ceded the delta and the right bank of the Oxus to Russia and itself became a complete vassal state of Russia.²⁶⁵ Russia’s annexation of Khiva had left Gladstone in a particularly embarrassing situation, resulting in criticism from Conservative politicians. On this account, he was in dire need of finding relevant materials to extricate himself from the predicament and shape public opinion in his favor before the *Pall Mall Gazette* would seize the opportunity.

Ironically, it was based on the “credibility” of Schuyler’s works, which was praised by Gladstone, that the *Pall Mall Gazette* compared the Khiva massacre with Turkish atrocities in Bulgaria to indicate that Russia would perhaps be worse than the Turkish in the Balkans. Earlier in 1876, Gladstone in his pamphlet *Bulgarian Horrors* thanked Schuyler specifically for providing an independently researched American report of what the Ottoman government had done in Bulgaria.²⁶⁶ “Every European State is more or less

²⁶⁰ Ibidem, p. 876.

²⁶¹ Ibidem, p. 882.

²⁶² Ibidem, pp. 884–886.

²⁶³ Fred Burnaby, *A Ride to Khiva: Travels and Adventures in Central Asia*, New York 1877, pp. 213–214.

²⁶⁴ ‘Russia’s Advance Upon India’, *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* 136 (1884), p. 131.

²⁶⁵ Burnaby, *A Ride*, p. 219.

²⁶⁶ W.E. Gladstone, *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East*, London 1876, p. 18.

open to the imputation of bias”, in Gladstone’s judgment of Great Powers’ responses to the massacre after the April Uprising, “but America has neither alliances with Turkey, nor grudges against her, nor purposes to gain by her destruction. She enters into this matter simply on the ground of its broad human character and moment; she has no ‘American interests’ to tempt her from her integrity, and to vitiate her aims.”²⁶⁷ However, Gladstone, after being asked to review *Turkistan* for the *Contemporary Review*, faced a dilemma: discrediting Schuyler’s account of Turkestan would render Gladstone’s praise for Schuyler’s report on the Ottoman atrocities in Bulgaria uncritical and weaken his stance on the Eastern Question, while accepting it would invite criticism from the *Pall Mall Gazette*, claiming that both the Turkish and the Russians were equally barbarous.²⁶⁸ Thus, citing MacGahan’s war correspondence was a necessity for Gladstone, not only because it could conflict Schuyler’s account, proving that there were indeed differences between Russia’s activities in Turkestan and its recent involvement in the Balkans, but also for the reason that his previous confirmation of the validity in Schuyler’s works was based on the Americans’ political distance from Old World politics; and by comparing the Americans’ writings, Gladstone was closer to “truth” than any other British newspaper critic.

The other person that Gladstone turned to for help was Novikova, as his letter to the latter reads: “At this very moment my time is mainly spent in reading Schuyler’s *Turkestan* [*sic.*]. His errors I have no means of correcting; but I wish to learn and I am to tell in the next *Contemporary Review* whether, and how far his evidence has been falsified. *If you can supply me at once with the means of correcting any errors into which he may have fallen, I shall be greatly obliged to you.*”²⁶⁹ Novikova then approached Gorlov with a request for a memorandum, which aimed to disprove Schuyler’s claims in *Turkistan* (II, 356-57), by stating that Russia’s alleged order for the complete destruction of the Yomuts and their families had not been executed in Khiva.²⁷⁰ The memo was quickly published by the *Daily News* so that Gladstone could cite it as another source for disputing Schuyler’s narrative.²⁷¹ By manipulating Gorlov’s memo and MacGahan’s writings to counter Schuyler’s unfavorable evidence, while appropriating Schuyler’s words for rationalizing Russia’s expansion, Gladstone, through his review of *Turkistan*, attempted to cleanse the blemishes in his Russia policy and reposition the Ottoman Empire as an immoral religious “other”, thus presenting it as the true cause of the “Eastern Question” and questioning Disraeli’s foreign policy orientation. Gladstone hoped that his review would be supplied “to millionaire drawing-rooms, to the loungers in arm-chairs at clubs, to Tory members of Parliament”, in order to refute the *Pall Mall Gazette* and support

²⁶⁷ Ibidem, pp. 18–19.

²⁶⁸ Chris Miller, “The M.P. for Russia’: Olga Novikova, William Gladstone, and the Crisis of 1878”, *Orbis* 64,3 (2020), p. 470.

²⁶⁹ Gladstone to Novikova, Oct. 1, 1876, quoted in William Thomas Stead, *The M.P. for Russia: Reminiscences and Correspondence of Madame Olga Novikoff*, London 1909, vol. 1, pp. 296–297. The italicized part was made by Gladstone.

²⁷⁰ Stead, *The M.P. for Russia*, pp. 297–298.

²⁷¹ Miller, “The M.P. for Russia”, p. 471.

the liberal-minded *Contemporary Review*, which he deemed “in the faintest perfume of humanity smells a dangerous fanaticism.”²⁷²

Certainly, Gladstone was conscious of the political nature in the review and his criticism was not pointed at Schuyler, but to accuse the editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, who “gives and exaggerates the statement in Schuyler, and passes without notice, in its judicial work, the evidence of MacGahan long ago set before the world.”²⁷³ In his private letter to Schuyler, Gladstone expressed his “share of gratitude for your [Schuyler’s] services to truth, justice, and humanity”, and asked for Schuyler’s forgiveness for his critical remarks: “Pray do not be uneasy about the Turkestan business.”²⁷⁴ Gladstone’s political review of *Turkistan* demonstrated a stark contrast to Fish’s indifferent reading of Schuyler’s official report and Towle’s apolitical interpretation of the book as an ethnographic work. This disparity in reading experiences within the English-speaking publishing world originated from the broad context that the British politicians had invested stakes in Central Asian affairs to compete for imperial diplomatic strategies, whereas their American counterparts had no involvement with the region and were at ease with Russia’s expansion.

Conclusion

Curiously, after the publication of *Turkistan* in 1876, Schuyler translated Leo Tolstoy’s novel *The Cossacks* and published it in 1878.²⁷⁵ Olenin, the protagonist of the novel, grew weary of life in Moscow and sought refuge in the Caucasus to embark on a fresh start. The plot certainly paralleled Schuyler’s world-weariness of working as *chargé d’affaires* in Saint Petersburg and his desire to visit Central Asia to introduce a new chapter in his career. The following translated words should quote Schuyler’s excited memory of his reaching Orenburg, overlooking the steppe on the other side: “Olenin felt himself again, without any visible cause, thoroughly happy. He had come to the Lower Prototsk post on the Terek, opposite a peaceable Circassian settlement on the other side.”²⁷⁶ As Tolstoy began his tale of the Caucasus in 1852, the first episode between America and Central Asia, naturally, began with Schuyler’s gaze into Central Asia in 1868.

Overall, Schuyler, in his later adventures, undertook a ground-breaking task of documenting a *terra incognita* that the US had no prior knowledge of. The non-official

²⁷² Gladstone, ‘Russian Policy’, p. 891.

²⁷³ Ibidem, p. 889.

²⁷⁴ ‘From Gladstone. January 29, 1877’, in: Schuyler and Schaeffer, *Selected Essays*, pp. 102–103.

²⁷⁵ Leo Tolstoy, *The Cossacks: A Tale of the Caucasus in 1852*, translated by Eugene Schuyler, London 1878. As a translator of Tolstoy’s and Turgenev’s works, Schuyler had a keen awareness of the evolving relationship between these two literary giants. His translation of Turgenev’s letters to Tolstoy, which include Turgenev’s assessment of Schuyler’s translation of *The Cossacks* as “literal, but dry and matter of fact”, could be found in *Selected Essays*. A portion of these materials were edited and republished by *New England Review*, see Eugene Schuyler, ‘The Quarrels Between Tolstoy and Turgenev’, *New England Review* 33,2 (2012), pp. 186–194.

²⁷⁶ Tolstoy, *The Cossacks*, p. 16.

nature of the journey enabled him to conduct a certain form of public diplomacy, facilitating the exchange of information between Russia and America, as well as between America and Central Asia. As an inquisitive scholar, Schuyler, introduced major and minor ethnicities in Central Asia to the American audiences, much like an anthropologist would. Although his account was influenced by “scientific racism”, but considering that the common denominator of the scientific paradigm has evolved over time,²⁷⁷ his prejudice in fact unveiled the epistemological context of his time, where ethnography of local populations was skewed in a partial manner to rationalize imperialistic motives. As long as he concluded that the advantages of Russia’s governance over Turkestan surpassed its drawbacks, Schuyler harbored no opposition to the Eurasian empire. He commended its capacity to sustain regional trade and maintain the King’s peace, drawing a parallel between this and America’s westward expansion as well as British colonization in India. Kaufman’s preemptive occupation of Kulja presented Schuyler with a distinctive chance to visit Chinese Turkestan. However, as Russian sources served as the main conduit of information for Schuyler, his assessment of the intricate realpolitik involving Ya’qub Bek, Russia, Qing China, and Great Britain displayed favoritism toward Russia, in contrast to his comprehensive proficiency in chronicling Xinjiang’s colonial history. The sensation that Schuyler’s works had caused in the British political arena and Russian military circles was at variance with the reception among the novelty-seeking American audience. On the other hand, the US government, thanks to Schuyler’s efforts, had immediate access to the information regarding Russia’s expansion in Central Asia, yet unvoiced its official stance due to the observation of no conflicting interests, thus tacitly acknowledging the conquest as a *fait accompli*.

Nevertheless, the US real interests were affected unexpectedly in defiance of the lack of US perceived interests in Central Asia. Economically speaking, Russia’s capture of Turkestan forced America to modify the articles that it could trade in the international market. The smuggling activities of opium along the Turkestani borderlands led to the decline of the American business of reexporting opium to China. Additionally, from 1870 until the Russian Revolution of 1917, as the sowing area of cotton increased in hand with the railroad construction in Turkestan, the Russian authorities raised up the custom duties on cotton as well to protect the regional cotton industry (see Table 2). The impact of Russia’s import substitution was felt by American Consul Leander E. Dyer at Odessa. According to his commercial report in 1879, “within a few months [in 1878] a duty has placed on raw cotton of 40 kopecks”, while “cotton from the Central Asian khanates is excepted from the operation of this law.”²⁷⁸ Based on the findings that Turkestani cotton was to mix with American and Egyptian cotton and “the encouragement of the present protective tariff will make Russia independent of America in this regard”, Dyer

²⁷⁷ Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Chicago 1962.

²⁷⁸ *Report upon the Commercial Relations of the United States with Foreign Countries for the Year 1879*, II, Washington 1880, p. 611.

concluded: “I do not think that the trade in this article [cotton] can greatly develop.”²⁷⁹ Therefore, Russian Turkestan, as a regulated, exclusive trading hub not only restricted Europe’s access to the region, but also kept American cotton out.

As reexporting opium to China and exporting cotton to Russia ceased to be profitable for the US, America began to export manufactured cotton goods to China starting from 1873. Despite fluctuations, the trade generally prospered during the 1880s and 90s (see Table 3). However, the 1881 Treaty of Saint Petersburg, of which Schuyler took no notice, also granted the Russian subjects the privilege to conduct duty-free trade in Mongolia and Xinjiang, up to the Great Wall,²⁸⁰ setting the prelude for Russia to maneuver Eurasian trade routes to compete with the US, whose China trade depended upon the treaty port system. Once Russia opted to extend its commercial influence into Xinjiang, it posed a direct challenge to the US in terms of cotton trade with China. In the early 1900s, the Kashgar branch of the Russo-Chinese Bank distributed a considerable number of American cotton seeds to the local population without charge for experimenting on cotton cultivation in Xinjiang.²⁸¹ Beyond Kashgaria, the representative of the Russian trading house “Kokovin & Basov” had devised its own plan to promote the cultivation of American cotton in Turfan and opened a factory of cotton gin to improve processing fibers in the region.²⁸² Among Russia’s imports of raw materials from Xinjiang, Turfan supplied 60 percent of the cotton crop; and in 1902 Kashgar was able to export some 1,350,000 rubles worth of cotton cloth to Russia.²⁸³ The raw materials from Chinese Turkestan complemented the more industrialized Russian Turkestan for a greater Eurasian economic integration in terms of division of labor. This could partially explain why America’s cotton goods trade with China dropped significantly from 1902 to 1904, until the Russo-Japanese War, which disrupted Russia’s domestic productivity and political influence in Xinjiang, drove up the Chinese demand of American cotton again in 1905 (see Table 3). Ironically, it was Schuyler who noticed the production of opium and cotton during his trips in the first place. However, he failed to recognize that the significant profits from opium could potentially offset the losses incurred from the governance of Turkestan. Similarly, his skepticism about the success of Sea Island cotton led him to underestimate Russia’s resolve in refining Turkestani cotton by introducing the American

²⁷⁹ Ibidem.

²⁸⁰ Article 12 in original Russian: “Русским подданным предоставляется право попрежнему торговать беспошлинно в подвластной Китаю Монголии...Правом беспошлинной торговли русские подданные будут равным образом пользоваться в городах и прочих местах Илийского, Тарбагатайского, Кашгарского, Урумцийского и прочих округов, лежащих по северному и южному склонам Тянь-шанского хребта, до великой стены.” “Dogovor Mezhdru Rossiej i Kitaem ob Ilijskom Krae. [Treaty between Russia and China on the Ili region]” in *Sbornik dogovorov*, p. 217.

²⁸¹ N.V. Bogoyavlenskij, *Zapadnyj Zastennyj Kitaj* [Western China Beyond the Great Wall], St. Petersburg 1906, p. 179.

²⁸² Ibidem, p. 180.

²⁸³ James A. Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads: A History of Xinjiang*, New York 2007, p. 157.

upland variety (*Gossypium hirsutum*) in the early 1880s.²⁸⁴ The faint shadow of cotton and opium, during Schuyler's visit, turned out to cast a giant shadow in the region's development in the 20th century.

Politically, Schuyler and other American foreign policy makers might have viewed Russia's increased involvement in Central Asia during the 1870s as a diversionary opportunity to secure Russia's commitment to the Alaska Treaty of Cession and to deter Russia from harboring any potential interest in North America. Consequently, Russia would have shifted away from its Eurasian-American identity and focused on its Eurasian project of empire building, while America could have maintained the Monroe Doctrine in the newly acquired territory, formerly known as Russian America. What they did not anticipate was a future regime change in Russia that would create an ideologically hostile superpower to the US. As English geographer Halford J. Mackinder emphasizes, the control of Eurasian landmass ("Heartland") opened the door for the domination of Afro-Eurasia ("World-Island"), and eventually the world.²⁸⁵ Russia's conquest of Central Asia in the 19th century endowed the USSR with a strategic depth to confront the US during the Cold War. When the USSR restricted foreign travelers and researchers from visiting Central Asia, Schuyler's works resurfaced on the market. British Lieutenant-Colonel and historian Geoffrey Wheeler, thereby, wrote in the introduction to *Turkistan*: "Indeed, although the life of the people has undergone great changes since Schuyler's visit, study of his book is still essential for anyone wishing to understand the basic characteristics of the people of Central Asia and the significance of the Russian presence there."²⁸⁶ It was not until the collapse of the USSR that ushered in a "New Great Game" reinvolving the US, China, and Russia in Central Asia.²⁸⁷

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²⁸⁴ Richard A. Pierce, *Russian Central Asia, 1867–1917: A Study in Colonial Rule*, Berkeley and Los Angeles 2020, pp. 164–165.

²⁸⁵ Halford J. Mackinder, 'The Geographical Pivot of History', *The Geographical Journal* 23,4 (1904), pp. 421–437.

²⁸⁶ Eugene Schuyler, *Turkistan: Notes of a Journey in Russian Turkistan, Kokand, Bukhara and Kuldja*, ed. with an intr. by Geoffrey Wheeler, New York 1966, p. xii.

²⁸⁷ 'The New Great Game in Asia', *New York Times*, January 2, 1996.

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Appendix

Table 1. American Opium Export Trade, 1870–1899 (pieces)

Year	Country	State	Product	Quantity in lbs	Port of New York	Aggregate of All Other US Ports	Total United States of America
1870	United States of America	New York	opium and extract of	110,937	\$736,944	\$63,987	\$800,931
1871	United States of America	New York	opium and extract of	115,432	\$682,567	\$27,258	\$709,825
1872	United States of America	New York	opium and extract of	118,276	\$466,129	\$8,076	\$474,205
1873	United States of America	New York	opium and extract of	138,298	\$654,704	\$226	\$654,930
1874	United States of America	New York	opium and extract of	127,245	\$716,485	\$2,664	\$719,149
1875	United States of America	New York	opium and extract of	131,256	\$930,732	\$8,821	\$939,553
1876	United States of America	New York	opium and extract of	105,591	\$460,180	\$5,432	\$465,603
1877	United States of America	New York	opium and extract of	64,116	\$261,045	\$2,766	\$263,811
1878	United States of America	New York	opium and extract of	74,335	\$272,553	\$1,136	\$273,689
1879	United States of America	New York	opium and extract of	60,368	\$200,688	\$14,202	\$214,890
1880	United States of America	New York	opium and extract of	30,988	\$114,193	\$1,153	\$115,346
1881	United States of America	New York	none listed	.	.	.	.
1882	United States of America	New York	opium and extract of	34,563	\$129,617	\$8,062	\$137,679
1883	United States of America	New York	opium and extract of	20,626	\$65,230	\$4,052	\$69,282
1884	United States of America	New York	crude (paying duty)	19,344	\$54,314	\$2,576	\$56,800
1885	United States of America	New York	none listed	.	.	.	.

Table 1. (cont.)

Year	Country	State	Product	Quantity in lbs	Port of New York	Aggregate of All Other US Ports	Total United States of America
1886	United States of America	New York	crude (paying duty)	41,109	\$92,685	\$3,323	\$96,008
1887	United States of America	New York	not listed	.	.	.	.
1888	United States of America	New York	crude (paying duty)	31,887	\$84,652	\$3,395	\$88,047
1888	United States of America	New York	prepared for smoking (paying duty)	.	.	\$375	\$375
1889	United States of America	New York	crude (paying duty)	36,835	\$81,627	\$10,877	\$92,504
1890	United States of America	New York	crude (paying duty)	32,879	\$205,026	\$2,032	\$207,078
1891	United States of America	New York	crude or unmanufactured (free of duty)	5,778	\$9,522	\$3,884	\$13,406
1891	United States of America	New York	Crude (Dutiable)	5,149	\$13,787	\$5,374	\$19,161
1891	United States of America	New York	opium prepared for smoking (articles paying duty)	.	.	\$499	\$499
1892	United States of America	New York	opium prepared for smoking (articles paying duty)	.	.	\$279	\$279
1892	United States of America	New York	crude or unmanufactured (free of duty)	809	\$2,990	\$5,601	\$8,591
1893	United States of America	New York	crude or unmanufactured (free of duty)	4,189	\$9,215	\$3,211	\$12,426
1894	United States of America	New York	crude or unmanufactured (free of duty)	.	.	\$1,682	\$1,682
1895	United States of America	New York	prepared for smoking and other containing less then nine per cent of morphia (articles paying duty)	.	.	\$820	\$820

Table 1. (cont.)

Year	Country	State	Product	Quantity in lbs	Port of New York	Aggregate of All Other US Ports	Total United States of America
1895	United States of America	New York	crude or unmanufactured (free of duty)	2,288	\$5,000	\$428	\$5,428
1896	United States of America	New York	opium, prepared for smoking and other, containing less than 9 percent of morphia (paying duty)	.	.	\$58	\$58
1896	United States of America	New York	crude or unmanufactured (free of duty)	4,825	\$9,296	\$4,013	\$13,309
1897	United States of America	New York	none listed	.	.		
1898	United States of America	New York	Crude or unmanufactured	7,535	14,934	\$828	\$15,762
1898	United States of America	New York	Prepared for smoking, and other, containing less than 9 percent morphia	.	.	\$25	\$25
1899	United States of America	New York	none listed	.	.		

Source: Chandra, 'Opium Export Data for New York Chamber of Commerce 1870–1912'.

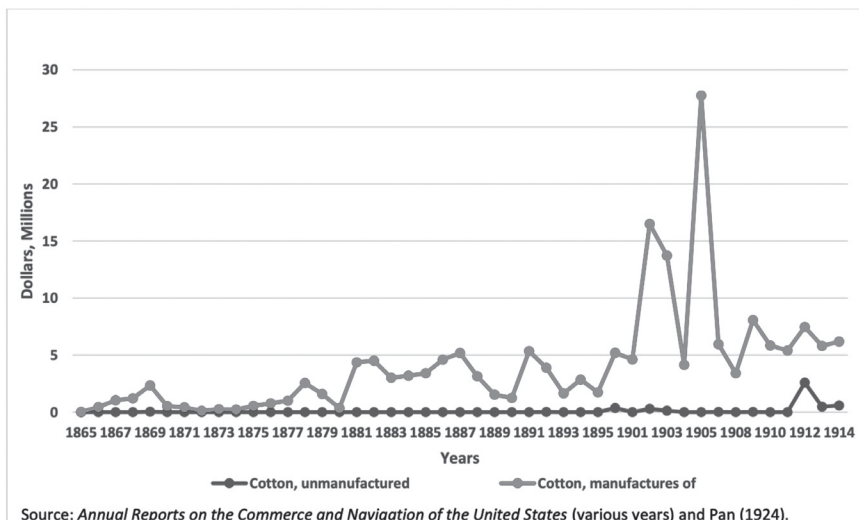
Table 2. Changes in the Sowing Area of Cotton in Turkestan, the Growth of Import Duties on Cotton Fiber, and the Development of Railway Construction in the Region



Dashed Line: 1 Division of Import Duties = 20 Kopecks of Newly Imposed Duties; Black-and-white Line: 1 Division of Railway = 200 Versts [1 Verst = 1.07 Kilometers]; Solid Line: 1 Division of the Sowing Area = 20000 Dessiatinas [1 Dessiatina = 2.7 Acres].

Source: V.I. Yuferev, *Xlopkovodstvo v Turkestane* [Cotton Cultivation in Turkestan], Leningrad 1925, p. 69.

Table 3. America's Exports of Unmanufactured Cotton and Cotton Manufactures to China, 1865–1914



Source: Kathryn Gaydos, 'A Lost Opportunity? Trade between the United States and China, 1865–1914', Honors thesis, College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University, 2014, p. 34.