

identity which is at once unifying yet dynamic, which incorporates a unique sense of 'Russianness' to ease concerns that Russia will be assimilated into a neo-liberal Western identity operating under the guise of globalising transnationalism, which defies the more vulgar and destabilising elements of an 'embattled' Russian identity, and which caters for the diverse range of sub- and transnational identity groupings within the vast Russian Federation. A chapter more explicitly analysing processes of national and transnational identity formation would have been appropriate, as would a chapter on the differing political rhetoric regarding globalisation. Nonetheless, *Russia and Globalisation* is unquestionably a valuable scholarly contribution, and gives clear indication of the awesome task confronting Russia in the age of globalisation.

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A. S. Morrison, *Russian Rule in Samarkand 1868–1910: A Comparison with British India* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 364 pp.

At least since the publication of Dominic Lieven's study of imperial Russia (2000), Andreas Kappeler's multi-ethnic history of the Russian empire, and Terry Martin's *The Affirmative Action Empire* (both 2001), the topic of empire has enjoyed sustained interest among students of Russian history. In part this has to do with the current fashionableness of empire studies, which, in recent years, has experienced a veritable boom. A. S. Morrison's detailed analysis of Russian rule in Samarkand thus not only fits the current fascination but also answers a need for more focused studies.

There are a number of good things to say about *Russian Rule in Samarkand*. First and foremost, it is comparative in scope. For someone like this reviewer who holds an almost religious belief in the value of comparative histories, this fact alone suffices to make Morrison's analysis worth reading. Studying history in a comparative context provides insight into broader trends and patterns that national histories simply cannot deliver. Second, in writing *Russian Rule in Samarkand* Morrison set himself the goal to challenge the claim frequently advanced by discourse theorists that imperial rule was absolute and its knowledge hegemonic. He puts it bluntly: 'Both power and knowledge are required for one people to be

able to rule another, but it is foolish to assume that the conquerors will have a monopoly of either, or that the conquered will remain entirely passive' (5).

Instead of paying tribute to the Foucauldian paradigm, Morrison highlights the importance of local agency as part and parcel of the imperial project. To support his claim, Morrison has done an impressive amount of research. His sources include memoranda, petitions, and reports from archives in Uzbekistan and Russia, documents held by the British India Office library, and Islamic chronicles from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In addition, his study is augmented with a large number of useful statistical tables covering such issues as taxation, military records of officers serving in Samarkand, the administration of canals, land ownership, etc.

The text itself is divided into an introduction, seven chapters, and a conclusion. After describing the geographical setting and discussing the issue of Islam, Morrison goes on to examine the creation of the colonial administration, the military bureaucracy, the 'living wall' of native administrators, irrigation, and the judiciary. Throughout, his emphasis is on the 'structures, ideologies, and personnel of the Russian empire in Turkestan' (2). Each chapter includes a brief comparison with analogous problems or institutions in the British Raj.

The Russian quest for control of Central Asia began in the early 1860s. In 1865 Tashkent fell to the invader, and three years later the Russians took Samarkand from Bukhara. Samarkand Province turned out to be of limited commercial value (thus contradicting the Leninist identification of imperialism as the last stage of capitalism). The rationale behind the Russian occupation was mostly military and diplomatic. This is a key point, although Russia certainly took its civilizing mission seriously and established the cultural institutions requisite for its implementation. In the event, the effort to 'lift up' and assimilate the locals was largely unsuccessful. Fearing what they termed '*musulmanskii fanatizm*', the colonizers deliberately treaded carefully. In contrast to British India, there were no efforts to convert the new subjects to Christianity. The differences between the two powers did not end there. Unlike the administrators of the Raj, the Russian officers who occupied the most important executive positions worked actively, and ultimately successfully, to undermine the indigenous land-owning elite instead of co-opting it for their own purposes. Instead, they decided to create a class of petty officials. There were problems both with the Russian and the local administrators. Russian officials lacked the necessary education

and basic linguistic skills to fulfill their task efficiently and, rather than educate themselves, preferred to drink and gamble. The situation was scarcely more encouraging among native administrators, the equivalent of the *zemstva* (local organs of self-government which did not exist in military governorships such as Turkestan). Corruption was an endemic problem among the ‘living wall’ and affected the population in direct ways. In dealing with the all-important issue of irrigation, which the Russians never managed to get a handle on, the problem became especially alarming. Failing to understand its workings, the Russians lost a tool of coercion that would undoubtedly have allowed them to strengthen their position – again in contrast to British India where the imperial state managed irrigation matters much more efficiently.

What can be concluded from all this? Mainly that European imperial powers did not uniformly wield the ‘colonial knowledge’ considered essential to successful rule. Its corollary, the significance of local agency, equally holds true. As a result, the Russian imperial administration of Turkestan was neither effective nor particularly harmful. Once again the contrast with the Raj is instructive. While the Indian administration paid for itself, in part because of the existence of rather severe taxation schemes, and could claim some success in ‘civilizing’ Indians, the Tsar’s men achieved neither of these goals in Turkestan. On the other hand, their policy of benevolent neglect had not only negative effects.

Morrison concludes that Russian rule in Samarkand, precisely because it was characterized by lack of money, knowledge, and power, turned out to be far less intrusive and hence destructive than its Soviet successor would be.

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John Dunn and Shamil Khairov, *Modern Russian Grammar: A Practical Guide* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), xx + 469 pp.

It is gratifying to see that, at a time when the role of Russian as a *lingua franca* throughout the world has been much diminished, guides to the study of the language continue to appear. There have been numerous excellent English-language instances in the post-Soviet years. Wade’s *A Comprehensive Grammar* (1992, 2000), Smyth and Crosbie’s *Rus’* (2002) come immediately to mind, not to men-