Police in the Borderlands

The years that saw the central authorities struggle to strengthen the police in the Empire’s heartland witnessed similar efforts in the Baltic provinces, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Kingdom of Poland, and Siberia. The center’s goal—in the first four regions—was to tighten control over non-Russian groups that were themselves fractious or had potential foreign champions. Except in Central Asia, a theater of military operations requiring special treatment, it also sought to achieve an administrative standardization that most Russian rulers since Catherine the Great had pursued. Their success varied greatly from region to region. By the time of Alexander II’s death the Baltic provinces retained a police system that had been little changed for centuries. Not until well into the reign of Alexander III would Russia extend its police system to these provinces. In Poland, in contrast, the tsarist authorities regarded the police system created in the 1860s as a model for Russia to emulate. The Caucasus and Siberia fell in between the Baltic and Polish cases, and Central Asia lagged behind all the others with a military police system that remained unchanged for decades.

Russia’s efforts to strengthen the police in its border regions deserve our attention on several grounds. They illustrate the enormity of the challenge tsarism faced, the monetary and other resource requirements that limited its freedom of action in the heartland of the Empire, and the complexity of imperial politics. St. Petersburg’s varying commitment to reshaping police in the borderlands also has much to tell about its priorities and the drivers of its decisions.
Appendix

Russian Empire in 1914: from European Border through Western Siberia


The Baltic Provinces

Estland, Lifland, and Courland, which covered much of today’s Estonia and Latvia, had been under Russia’s control since the eighteenth century. Russia acquired the first two in the Great Northern War (1700-1721) and the third
in the 1795 partition of Poland. Although subordinate to a single Governor-General, the three had separate legal and administrative systems. Each, however, was dominated by ethnic German noblemen organized in knightly corporations. The Baltic Germans were widely seen as more civilized and polished than the Russian gentry. As a result, they often held important positions in the Imperial bureaucracy.¹ Benkendorf, Chief of the Third Section under Nicholas I, and Reutern, the Minister of Finance under Alexander II, were Baltic Germans. So too were numerous military officers. In 1871, 58 percent of the Russian General Staff were Germans, many from the Baltic provinces.²

Even as they prospered in the service of the tsar, the Baltic German nobles exercised near total control of provincial and local government, most definitely including the police. This continued after the emancipation of their serfs, which occurred separately in each of the three provinces during 1816–1819. Their powers began with the right to enforce the law and punish lawbreakers on their own estates. Peasant-elected village police also were subordinate to them and they headed the influential parish courts.³ The nobility’s major police power, however, was its monopoly of the positions analogous to—but more powerful than—Russia’s rural sheriffs. In Courland, this official was known as a Hauptman and was elected for life. In Estland, he was known as a Hakenrichter, was elected for fixed term, and while having no full-time assistants, could deputize other noble landowners should circumstances warrant this. In Lifland the noble landowners elected two Ordnungsgerichter and their assistants in each county for terms of several years.⁴ Few cities had separate police forces. In those that did the police resembled those in Russian cities, but the police boards were dominated by ethnic German guilds and corporations of the nobility.⁵ In Estland’s Dorpat, a university town now

³ For a detailed description of the manorial, peasant, and parish police, see *2nd PSZ*, 31 (1856): no. 30693, arts. 645–703.
⁴ *MSVUK: OA*, part 1, sect. 11 no. 2 (1873): 112–16.
⁵ *MSVUK: OA*, part 1, sect. 11 no. 2 (1873): 116–17.
known as Tartu, for example, the board had to include an official with academic rank.6

Unjust as the Baltic police system was, it was not ineffective. Throughout the nineteenth century, foreign and Russian visitors described the three provinces as models of good order, often contrasting them with the rest of the Empire. Writing in the Journal of the Ministry of Justice, for example, two Russian authors identified Lifland and Estland, as the provinces least plagued by crime.7 In a rejoinder the revolutionary Peter Tkachev disputed their interpretation of the statistics that underlay their analysis, but agreed that the incidence of crime was lowest in the Baltic provinces. While arguing that cities were the breeding grounds for crime, he described the Baltic cities as exceptions to this general rule.8 As Latvian and Estonian scholars would later argue, crediting the German elites for the positive conditions in the Baltic, while inaccurate or simplistic, was a widespread, even typical view.9

The political reaction of the tsarist authorities to the privileges of the Baltic Germans was a different matter than their admiration for the Germans’ abilities. The police powers of the Baltic nobility had drawn sporadic criticism from the central authorities since the eighteenth century. Time and again, however, pro-German rulers protected the Baltic elite. Catherine the Great was herself an ethnic German who openly imitated Baltic models in her 1775 statute on provincial and local government. Still, she found herself at odds with the German elites in her efforts to standardize the machinery of government. The 1775 statute and the 1785 charter of the nobility reduced the German nobility’s privileges.10 Her successor, Tsar Paul I, however, restored them.11 Alexander I, Paul’s son, took a harder line. Specifically, he pressed the Baltic gentry to liberate their serfs, albeit without giving up land. According to Richard Pipes, Alexander’s successor Nicholas I was “arguably the most pro-German of Russian rulers.” In 1849, he impris-

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6 2nd PSZ, 36 (1861): no. 37607.
9 See, for example, Bilmanis, “The Grandeur and Decline of the German Balts,” 56–58.
11 1st PSZ, 24 (1796–97): no. 17584.
Police in the Borderlands

oned the Slavophil Iurii Samarin for circulating a manuscript that was critical of the Baltic Germans.\(^{12}\)

The Romanovs’ admiration for the German Balts aside, their special status became increasingly anomalous in the 1860s. Alexander II, while less pro-German than Nicholas I, was a supporter of the Baltic elite.\(^{13}\) Still, when Russia was emancipating its own serfs and reforming its police and courts, he had little option but to allow discussion of Baltic privileges. In 1862, the State Council addressed reform of the police and courts in in the three Baltic provinces but did so with little effect.\(^{14}\) Distracted by its ambitious reform agenda and the 1863 Polish Uprising, and influenced once again by the Baltic Germans’ defenders, the central authorities chose not to act. While the Temporary Rules of December 1862 took away the Russian gentry’s right to elect rural sheriffs, the Baltic gentry retained this right. A decree of February 1866, however, did restrict the Baltic nobility’s ability to interfere with peasant self-government. It also required the estate owner to hand over suspects detained on their estates to the local court rather than punishing them themselves.\(^{15}\) In 1866, the State Council also recommended realigning the Baltic police along the lines of those in the heartland. The case for reform was made with particular eloquence in an undated note prepared by Active State Secretary Leont’ev that argued for reform out of concern for justice for all the provinces’ inhabitants as well as for the strengthening of the Tsar’s control.\(^{16}\) It also recommended bringing Baltic police and judicial institutions in line with those in the Russian provinces, but for years the recommendation was ignored.\(^{17}\)

In the 1870s, the unification of Germany under Prussia’s auspices gave the Baltic nobles a potential foreign champion. This aroused some Russian concern

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16 MSV’UK: OA, part 1, sect. 11, no. 2, 93–130.
that the provinces might become a second Schleswig-Holstein, duchies with a large German population that Prussia had annexed from Denmark in 1867.\(^{18}\) The 1872 Kreenholm strike, Europe’s largest to that point and a disturbance sparked by the abuses of factory-operated police, also led to increased Russian interest in tightening control of the Baltic.\(^{19}\) Alexander II, however, continued to ignore these concerns. The 1870 Russian Municipal Reform instructed the Governor-General of Lifland, Estland, and Courland to discuss the introduction of that measure into the Baltic provinces.\(^{20}\) But it was not until 1877 that this occurred, in effect breaking the Baltic Germans’ control of the city police.\(^{21}\) The three provinces escaped the terrorist violence of Alexander’s final years and measures responding to such violence. As a result, the new mounted rangers were not introduced there. Nor were the other changes to the European Russian police enacted in the final years of Alexander II’s reign.

The German-dominated police system in the Baltic provinces might have persisted indefinitely had it not been for the ascension of Alexander III, the least pro-German of Russia’s nineteenth-century tsars. In March, 1882, his nationalist Minister of Internal Affairs Nikolai Ignat’ev asked a senatorial inspector, N. A. Manasein, later the Minister of Justice, whether the police system in the Baltic provinces met the needs of the populace.\(^{22}\) His negative response set in motion a russification effort that would be completed under Count D. A. Tolstoi, yet another Minister of nationalist views. A. A. Polovtsov, a member of the State Council and the founder of the Russian Historical Society, advised Alexander and Tolstoi to complete the reform of the Russian police before expanding their system to the Baltic. The Tsar, however, ignored this advice and moved to replace the German-dominated police with government-appointed officials under St. Petersburg’s control.\(^{23}\) Under the terms of a June 1888 State Council recommendation approved a month later by the Tsar, the existing Baltic police system was abolished and replaced by one modeled closely after that in the Russian provinces. The

\(^{18}\) Thaden, “The Abortive Experiment,” 141.

\(^{19}\) Zelnik, Law and Disorder on the Narova River, 27, 38, 40, 66.

\(^{20}\) 2nd PSZ, 45 (1870): no. 48498, art. 3.


new police included 21 county sheriffs, 194 rangers, and 458 city patrolmen.\(^{24}\) Although much of the county police continued to be staffed by Germans, large numbers of Russians were appointed to the new force.\(^{25}\)

The absence of “before-and-after” statistics on the fight against crime or other police duties precludes a high confidence assessment of the impact of the 1888 changes in the Baltic. Manasein’s critique and Polovtsov’s call for a delay, however, make it clear that the decision to replace the German-elected police had little to do with police effectiveness. Manasein, like Leont’ev in the early 1860s, had argued not that the Baltic police regime was ineffective, but that it was unjust. To have argued the former would have fled in the face of the numerous accounts of the tranquility and prosperity of the three provinces. Polovtsov, in turn, was referring to failings of Russia’s police that were well known to contemporaries. Prior to the 1880s, many, and perhaps most, senior tsarist officials probably believed that the Baltic provinces were better policed than the rest of their Empire. In introducing the new system tsarist officials were acting in the belief that the Latvians and Estonians would prefer Russian-appointed police to German landlords. With ethnic Germans still economically dominant, however, and Estonian and Latvian nationalism on the rise, any popular support that the new police did enjoy would prove short-lived.

The Caucasus

The imposition of Russia’s rule took longer and was more violent in the Caucasus than in the Baltic. Russian administrators distinguished between the Caucasus’s Northern and Southern Regions. The former included Chechnya, Dagestan, North Ossetia, and other territory now part of the Russian Federation. The latter included today’s Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan and parts of northern Turkey and Iran. In the Southern Caucasus, Georgia was annexed in 1801, but it was 1828 before the remainder of the region came under Russia’s control after wars against the Turks and the Persians. In the North, Russia established control of the lowlands during the same period. In the mountains, however, it had to fight a 30-year war

\(^{24}\) Third PSZ, 8 (1888): no. 5188.

Appendix

(1829–1859) against tribal leader Shamil and more years of war against the Circassians to pacify the region. Both North and South were subordinate to a single official, known first as High Commander and later as Viceroy. The Northern Region was known as the Caucasus Oblast from 1827–1847, when it became Stavropol Province. The Southern Region was known as the Transcaucasus Krai and underwent a succession of administrative reorganizational over the same period, going from 13 provinces and oblasts in 1830 to two in 1840, to four in 1846, and to five three years later.

Unlike in the Baltic, where it left the existing police system intact, Russia imposed police systems in the Caucasus Oblast and the Transcaucasus Krai. In the South Caucasus, however, it initially included natives in the staffing and control of the local police. The 1801 Statute on the Incorporation of Georgia, for example, provided for the election of two members of the Georgian gentry to the county police boards. It also urged the appointment of Georgian police chiefs in the cities. In the countryside local notables policed their own estates. Native elders and peasant wardens also policed their villages under loose police supervision. As late as 1825, the Russian authorities authorized the use the Legal Code of King Vaktan VI, an eighteenth-century Georgian monarch, in civil disputes. Also the 1827 Statute on the Administration of the Caucasus Oblast, while making the Russian bureaucracy responsible for appointing all uniformed police officials, included the various native groups in policing the towns and countryside. The statute made different arrangements for Armenians, Georgians, and mountain tribesmen, for Christians and Moslems, and for nomadic and sedentary peoples. Often, however, the powerful High Commissioners ignored or openly opposed the center’s efforts. Gen. K. V. Knorring, the High Commissioner in 1801–1802, did the first. Gen. I. V. Gudov, the High Commissioner in 1806–1809, did the second.

26 2nd PSZ, 1 (1827) no. 878; 22 (1847): no. 21164.
28 1st PSZ, 16 (1800–1801): no. 20007.
29 1st PSZ 40 (1825), no. 30172.
30 2nd PSZ, 2 (1827): no. 878.
Under Gen. I. F. Paskevich, High Commissioner in 1827–1831, outreach to the native groups gave way to ruthless russification in both the Caucasus Oblast and the Transcaucasus Krai. An 1833 decree put military officers in charge of the police in Transcaucasia’s Armenia Oblast. In 1837, the Imperial Corps of Gendarmes created a division exclusively for the Caucasus. In the same year, military officers replaced all the police officials in Caucasus Oblast. The same occurred in the Transcaucasus Krai two years later. Russian administrators also abolished the use of customary law. Then, in 1840, they introduced a police system like the 1837 statute in force in Great Russia and staffed it entirely with Russians.

Russia’s inability to impose its will on the Caucasus with a purely punitive approach eventually led to a change of course. In 1844, Nicholas I appointed Field Marshal M. S. Vorontsov to the new position of Viceroy reporting directly to him. The Tsar’s instructions were to adopt more moderate policies in the South and concentrate on defeating the North. A hero of the 1812 War against Napoleon, Vorontsov had served in the Caucasus under Prince Tsitsianov, one of the first High Commissioners, and had a reputation as a friend of the Caucasian peoples. In his nine years as Viceroy, Vorontsov achieved a remarkable rapprochement with the Georgian gentry, the Tatar sultans, khans, and other Moslem potentates, and the Armenian merchant class, appointing native notables to positions of responsibility in the police and elsewhere and pleasing the merchant by his encouragement of trade. As a military commander, he was less successful. In 1845 a large force under his command suffered massive losses at Shamil’s hands, escaping complete destruction out of sheer luck. It would be 1859 before Shamil was defeated. Still, the combination of carrots and sticks enabled Russia to achieve effective control of both the Southern and Northern Regions by the early 1860s.

34 2nd PSZ, 8 (1833): no. 6282.
35 2nd PSZ 12 (1837): nos. 10241, 10779; 14 (1839): no. 6282.
38 Suny, The Making of the Georgian Nation, 73.
Russia’s strengthened control was reflected and furthered by its reorganization of the police. In 1862 it created a 2,100-man rural guard for the Transcaucasus. Staffed by native and Russian volunteers, this force assumed the duties formerly imposed on the local communities as a type of feudal obligation. These duties were to protect important travelers passing through their territory, delivering mail, and suppressing rural banditry. More important moves to strengthen the police came in 1867 with a major reorganization of the police in both the Northern and Southern Caucasus. Under its terms, the December 1862 Temporary Rules on the Police in the Great Russian Provinces were extended to Stavropol Province. This made county sheriffs responsible for policing the towns as well as the countryside except in a few of larger cities, which had police chiefs. District inspectors supported the sheriffs and police chiefs, but there were no elected police boards. In the Transcaucasus the local police were organized along slightly different lines. County Superintendents (emphasis added), one grade higher than sheriffs or police chiefs in the Table of Ranks, were responsible for policing the countryside. Unlike Stavropol Province’s sheriffs they had assistants and other staff that generally enabled them to do without rural districts. Exception was made, however, for a few areas whose remoteness or unique populations required the creation of districts. In effect, after 1867 there were no major differences between the police systems of the Caucasus and those in the Great Russian provinces. The year 1867 also saw the introduction of the 1864 Judicial Reforms into Stavropol Province and Transcaucasus Krai. Investigating Magistrates had already been introduced in the former and in 1874 the Municipal Reform of would be introduced into the latter, further narrowing the difference between the administrative structures of Great Russia and the Caucasus. In 1888, the same year that saw the imposition of Russia’s police system in the Baltic provinces, the nationalist Tsar Alexander III would narrow the gap further by dividing the Transcaucasia’s 37 counties into 125 districts like those that had existed in Russia since 1837.

40 2nd PSZ, 37 (1862): no. 38026.
41 2nd PSZ, 37 (1862): no. 45259.
42 2nd PSZ, 37 (1862): nos. 45260, 45261.
43 2nd PSZ 39 (1864): no. 41275; 49 (1874): no. 53996.
44 3rd PSZ, 8 (1888): no. 5188.
Contemporary commentators offered mixed assessments of the impact of the various changes on police performance. The Russian memoirist A. L. Zisserman, who served in the Caucasus from 1842 to 1867, including as a district police inspector, described police corruption and drunkenness as rampant when he arrived in the region. He maintained, however, that both problems lessened under Vorontsov.\footnote{Arnol’d L’vovich Zisseman, Dvadtsat’ piat’ let na Kavkaze, 1842–1867, 2 vols. (St. Petersburg: A. S. Su vorin, 1879), I: 18, 30–31.} While resentful of Vorontsov’s efforts to enlist non-Russians into the Caucasus police, Zisserman reported that this effort was no sham, noting that he had been well supported by an Armenian deputy during his time as district inspector.\footnote{Zisseman, Dvadtsat’ piat’ let na Kavkaze, I: 276–77. Elsewhere (I: 119–21) Zisserman complained that Vorontsov’s policy often undermined the authority of Russian officials. He also (I: 323–25) described being rebuked by his superiors for threatening to seize cattle from a village that was refusing to turn over suspected robbers.} Viscount James Bryce, a British professor and later a longtime Liberal Member of Parliament, had more praise for Russia’s efforts to enlist Caucasian elites. While judging British police in India to be more capable than the Caucasus police, he credited Russia with achieving better relations with the native peoples of the Caucasus.\footnote{James Bryce, Transcaucasia and Ararat, being notes of a vacation tour in the autumn of 1876, 4th ed. (London: Macmillan & Co.: 1896), 124.} At the same time Bryce had harsh words for the Caucasus rural guard, whom he described as often in league with robber bands.\footnote{Bryce, Transcaucasia and Ararat, 196.} His countryman John Buchan Telfer, a naval officer and geographer, echoed Bryce’s charge that the rural guard cooperated with robbers. He also reported that a guard’s detachment refused its commander’s orders to provide an escort for his party.\footnote{J. Buchan Telfer, The Crimea and Transcaucasia, Being the Narrative of a Journey in the Kouban, in Gouria, Georgia, Armenia, Osetiya, Imeritia, Svanetry, and Mingrelia and in the Tauric Range, 2 vols. (London: Henry S. King & Co., 1876), I: 189, 264–65.}

The most damning criticism of the Russian police in the Caucasus was that a centralized bureaucratic system was ill suited to a region with so many different languages and cultures. In his account of his travels in the Caucasus in 1842–1843, Baron von Haxthausen observed that while a centralized bureaucracy was “particularly adapted” to Russia, it would be “wholly unsuited and perhaps fatal” to the Caucasus.\footnote{August Freiberr von Haxthasen, Transcaucasia: Sketches of the Nations and Races between the Black Sea and the Caspian, trans. John Edward Taylor (London: Chapman and Hall, 1854), 69.} The many languages in the
region and the insularity of the villages were depicted as particular barriers to effective centralization. Zisserman, who spoke Georgian and Tatar as well as Russian, recounted that his first deputy, while a capable officer, spoke not a word of Russian. A German explorer who traveled through the Caucasus in the 1850s described a visit to Ossetia where the police superintendent was a Georgian speaker unable to communicate with the locals. Both the county and the municipal police employed translators, but this may have heightened the population’s sense of being under a foreign organization. Also, language differences aside, the culture of the Caucasian villagers was worlds apart from that of their Russian conquerors. Zisserman closed his memoir with a detailed description of a group of Chechens who chose to die rather than surrender to Russian troops. The incident persuaded him that the region was home to “special types” of people unlike others Russia sought to rule. Zisserman believed that Russia’s inability to understand such differences was resulting not just in continuing military failure but also in a broader failure to have any impact at the grassroots level. While his comments applied to the Russian presence in general, they had particular relevance to the police. As British visitor James Bryce observed, in going about their business as if they were in Novgorod, its officers may have reassured their masters that all was well, but their behavior had little relevance to the world of the Caucasus.

Central Asia

Central Asia was the last of the borderland regions to come under tsarist control, with most of its conquest occurring in or shortly after the reign of Alexander II. By the late 1850s Russia had enveloped most of today’s Kazakhstan with a ring of forts and established three oblasts in the Kazakh Steppe, one under the Governor-General of Orenburg and two under the Governor-General of Western Siberia. In the next few years the search for alternatives to the cotton formerly supplied by the Confederate States, geo-

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51 Zisserman, Dvadtsat' piat' let na Kavkaze, 1: 276.
53 Zisserman, Dvadtsat' piat' let na Kavkaze, 2: 439–41.
54 Bryce, Transcaucasia and Ararat, 122.

As in the Caucasus, the administration of Central Asia underwent a long series of changes, with oblasts being established, renamed, subjected to border adjustments, and combined under governors-general. By the early 1880s, the region included two General Governorates—for the Steppe and for Turkestan—with five oblasts between them and two Steppe oblasts reporting directly to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The Kokand Khanate had been abolished. Khiva and Bukhara were Russian protectorates, and the Turkmen oases had become the Transcaspian Oblast. The oblasts were divided into counties, the number of which varied from four to seven over time and from place to place.\footnote{S. A. Tarkhov, “Izmenenie administrativno-territorial’nogo delenie Rossii za poslednie 300 let,” \textit{Geografia} 15 (2001), https://geo.1sept.ru/view_article.php?ID=200101502; Pierce, \textit{Russian Central Asia}, 48, 51–58; \textit{2nd PSZ}, 50 (1875): no. 55061.}

The key police officials in this system were the heads of the counties and of the small number of cities. County superintendents and city magistrates held positions analogous to those of the sheriffs and police chiefs in the European Russian provinces. Like the sheriffs and police chiefs, they were responsible both for maintaining law and order and for administering their jurisdictions. They differed from their counterparts in the interior, however, in being active duty military officers. As such, they were authorized to exercise both military and civilian power in some counties. Elsewhere, while legally lacking such combined authority, they were often perceived to have it, which greatly increased their influence.\footnote{The county superintendents had both military and civilian power in the Steppe oblasts of Ural’sk and Turgai, according to \textit{2nd PSZ}, 50 (1875): no. 55061. According to Pierce (\textit{Russian Central Asia}, 67–68) in other oblasts they had no formal military authority, but local units often deferred to them rather than to their military superiors.}

Eugene Schuyler, an American...
diplomat who traveled widely in Central Asia and elsewhere in the Empire, described the county superintendents as more powerful than the sheriffs in European Russia. Much the same was true of the police chiefs in the major cities. Under the terms of an 1865 statute, Russian officers were to head the city governments, which generally had separate Russian and native districts. They could draw on the local garrisons to patrol the streets and maintain order. They also could call on a native police that maintained order in the non-Russian quarters and regulated the bazaars and visiting caravans.

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The Russian officers from whose ranks the county superintendents and city magistrates came were ill prepared for their positions. As soldiers, they had been trained to fight wars, not administer counties or cities. Also, as a German officer attached to their forces in 1873 observed, they were generally ignorant of the native languages. Eugene Schuyler encountered an exception—a Bashkir captain in the Russian Army who was fluent in several Central Asian languages and headed the Tashkent police. But he also noted that the captain, a Moslem, was charged with fanaticism and dismissed. Worse than such limitations, so many troublemaking officers had been transferred to Central Asia that the region had a reputation as “a refuge for the scum of military society.” Their low salary and need to spend lavishly to entertain native notables and superiors en route to military campaigns also encouraged them to engage in extortion and embezzlement.

The result of these many failings was a police force notorious for corruption and poor performance. According to Schuyler, county superintendents lived in luxury by levying unauthorized taxes on the native peoples. He also was told that when informed of such abuses, military governors often simply moved the miscreants to other counties.

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60 2nd PSZ, 40 (1865): no. 42172, arts. 38–41.
61 Hugo Stumm, Russia in Central Asia. Historical sketch of Russia’s progress in the East up to 1873, and of the incidents which led to the campaign against Khiva; with a description of the military districts of the Caucasus, Orenburg, and Turkestan, trans. by J. W. Ozanne and H. Sachs (London: Harrison, 1885), 161–62.
62 Schuyler, Turkistan, 1: 267.
63 Pierce, Russian Central Asia, 68–71.
64 Schuyler, Turkistan, 2: 247–49.
lar author Frederick Burnaby repeated Schuyler’s reports in his own account of travel in Central Asia in 1875. Russian satirist Saltykov-Shchedrin, once the author of plan for reform of the police in European Russia, depicted the Tashkent force and their fellow officials as so venal and incompetent that he became a hated figure in the city. But his account also made Tashkent synonymous with official corruption.

Observers also faulted the police for undermining native local government by manipulating the elections of village elders and other local officials to ensure their compliance with Russian rule and silence about local abuses. Except in Transcaspia, one of the last parts of Central Asia to fall under its control, the tsarist regime pledged to leave most of local administration in Central Asia in the hands of the native peoples. This control was to be exercised via a combination of traditional native governance and a system of villages and townships like those in European Russia. In a departure from traditional practice, however, local leaders once selected on the basis of their age, wisdom, and clan or family ties were to be elected for three-year terms. Most observers depicted these elections as a sham. Schuyler, for example, reported that it was “always easy for the Russian authorities to insist upon the election of anyone they wished.”

British clergyman and explorer Henry Lansdell, who traveled through Central Asia after Schuyler, witnessed the election of a township elder that he described as well run, with multiple candidates and a secret ballot. But he also reported that the men elected were generally weak men beholden to the Russians and having little credibility among the natives.

The governors-general and the central authorities made numerous attempts to remedy these abuses, but fear of native separatism, continuing military operations, and reluctance to weaken the instruments of control limited their freedom of action. Neither the zemstvo nor the judicial statutes of 1864, both of which were linked to police reform in the interior provinces, were introduced into Central Asia. Governor-General von Kaufman did introduce a modified version of the 1870 municipal reform in Tashkent.

Appendix

in 1877. More so than in the interior, however, the powers given to the community were narrowly circumscribed and the reform had little impact. In 1886 the Tsar approved a new statute on Turkestan that may have worsened the corruption problem by increasing the number of police positions to be filled. Specifically, it divided the counties into precincts headed by inspectors to support the county superintendents. The 1867 statute, which the new law replaced, had made no mention of these positions. Complaints that the law weakened both the governor-general’s power and other controls on the native peoples eventually blocked its implementation. When Lord Curzon, later the Viceroy of India, traveled to Turkestan in 1889, however, he described the provisions for police precincts as being in force. As in European Russia after the 1874 military reform, the new law called for replacing the troops who policed the Russian areas of Turkestan’s cities with hired policemen. In 1891, a Temporary Statute for the administration of the five steppe oblasts also authorized the superintendents to hire policemen. Such measures paled in comparison with those in other borderlands. Transcaucasia, the other region where Russians were heavily outnumbered by peoples of a different race and religion, had had a civilian police guard since 1862. Siberia had a similar but smaller force. Central Asia would see nothing that even approximated this.

The failure of the two statutes to address the corruption of the police and their superiors fueled increasing criticism from the public and officialdom in the next two decades. The resistance of many Central Asian officials to the resettlement of peasants from west of the Urals, the official government policy since the late 1880s, exacerbated this. It also led to calls for bringing the region’s institutions more in line with those in European Russia. Defenders of the status quo, however, had powerful supporters. Alexei Kuropatkin,

69 Pierce, Russian Central Asia, 80.
70 3rd PSZ, 6 (1886): no. 3814, art. 61.
71 Pierce, Russian Central Asia, 84–85.
72 George N. Curzon, Russia in Central Asia in 1889 and the Anglo-Russian Question (London: Longman, Green, and Co., 1889), 257.
73 3rd PSZ, 6 (1886): no. 3814, art. 70.
74 3rd PSZ, 11 (1891): no. 7574, art. 43.
Minister of War in 1898–1904, for example, had headed the Transcaspian Oblast in 1890–1898. As Minister, he continued to involve himself in its affairs. Also, as events would later show, Alexander Krivoshein, head of Russia’s Department of Peasant Resettlement in 1904–1905, rejected criticism of the Turkestan police as a distraction.

The debate over Central Asia sharpened in 1908 when the Senate sent Konstantin Palen to Turkestan to lead an inspection. Palen was instructed to determine the feasibility of extending civilian government and preventing the military from impeding colonization. In Transcaspia his inspection led to the suspension, dismissal, or indictment of two-thirds of the oblast’s officials. Among those who faced criminal charges was Ashkhabad’s police chief, who was accused of murder. Palen then produced a final report that, in effect, ignored his instructions. Instead, he proposed introducing zemstvos for Russians and settled natives, modestly extending civilian government, and increasing reliance on the county police. His proposals reportedly were discussed at great length in St. Petersburg. Once again, however, the authorities chose to do nothing.

Palen’s inspection was the last major effort to address the problems of Central Asia’s administration and its police. Both would survive until tsarism’s collapse. Their survival, however, was a poor measure of success. In the interim, Central Asia’s military-police regime perfectly illustrated the arbitrary power, incompetence, and corruption that brought about the autocracy’s downfall.

**Congress Poland**

The police that many tsarist officials came to regard as a model to emulate emerged after a series of failed Russian attempts to establish a system capable of maintaining order in the Kingdom of Poland. Entrusted to Russia by the Congress of Vienna in 1815, the Kingdom initially enjoyed substantial autonomy, having its own parliament, its own laws, its own army, and its own police. As in the provinces of European Russia at that time, police in

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77 *Pierce, Russian Central Asia*, 87.
78 *Pierce, Russian Central Asia*, 89–90.
79 *Pierce, Russian Central Asia*, 88–89.
the Kingdom were largely confined to the cities. In the rural areas nobles enforced the law on their own estates and policed the powiats or counties through elected representatives. Tsars Alexander I and Nicholas I chafed under the limitations on their control and frequently clashed with the Polish elite until 1830 when the Poles’ November Uprising resulted in war with Russia. After defeat by a Russian army in 1831, Congress Poland retained its separate administrative status within the Empire but lost its constitution and separate army. Paskevich, the victorious Russian commander was appointed Viceroy and as he had done in the Caucasus launched a long period of repression.\footnote{Edward C. Thaden, *Russia’s Western Borderlands, 1710–1870* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 144–68.}

Police measures, particularly the introduction of Russian military police, were critical elements of Paskevich’s restriction of Polish freedom. In February 1832 the Russian General Staff established a special unit of the new Imperial Corps of Gendarmes—the Third Gendarme District—to be based in Poland.\footnote{2nd PSZ, 7 (1832): no. 5165.} When fully staffed, the District would include about 1,000 officers and men, half stationed in Warsaw and half spread out in 39 other cities and two fortresses.\footnote{2nd PSZ, 18 (1843): 17038, shtaty i tabeli.} The authorizing decree specified that because a knowledge of Polish was critical to the gendarmes’ mission, Polish natives would be allowed to serve in the lower ranks. It was stipulated, however, that Polish recruits should have already served at least five years in the Russian armed forces.

Even as Russian gendarmes were being introduced, the local police continued to exist and remained largely in Polish hands.\footnote{Thaden, *Russia’s Western Borderlands*, 152.} Warsaw, where the police commissioners were Russian army officers, was something of an exception. Even there, however, political reliability was not the only criterion for service. Russia continued to rely on wounded Russian veterans to staff the Night Watch.\footnote{2nd PSZ, 8 (1833): no. 6291.} And as late as the early 1860s, Polish natives still accounted for much of the capital’s police.\footnote{MSVUK: OA, part 1, section 11, no. 3 (1871): 178.}

To a far greater degree than in European Russia, the gendarmes and the regular police differed sharply in their missions. In effect, Congress
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Poland had two police forces. The gendarmes were instruments of an occupying power responsible for enforcing its writ. The regular police, while also charged with maintaining public order, were instruments of the local authorities. Widely viewed as powerless relative to the gendarmes, they still were important because of the multitude of responsibilities for everyday government. In the rural areas the local police were assisted by Cossacks, first in unspecified numbers and later in groups of 25 per county. With a reputation for being violent and abusive, the Cossacks were criticized even by Poles who favored cooperation with Russia and in the early 1860s the number of Cossacks attached to the police was reduced to five per county.87

From the standpoint of the Russian authorities, the gendarmes were by far the more successful force. For almost three decades after their introduction in 1832, they maintained order in Poland, even in 1846–1848 when so much of Europe and Austrian and Prussian Poland experienced revolution.88 The local police, in contrast, like their counterparts in Russia, were both overburdened and undermanned. Nikolai Miliutin, one of the architects of Russia’s police reform, maintained that the effect of these problems was to deny Poland a real local police.89

In 1863, Russian repression and misrule sparked violent Polish resistance that lasted until well into 1864. One Russian response was to introduce yet another police force and put the military in control of all the Kingdom’s police until the restoration of order there. In December 1863, Russia’s War Ministry established the Military Police Administration of the Kingdom of Poland. All military and civilian police were to be under a new Policemaster-General. Military Police Superintendents responsible for one or two counties or for special military districts in some provinces would support this official. They, in turn, had the local gendarme commanders as their deputies and controlled the civilian police superintendents.90

Effective as an immediate response to rebellion, the new police regime had a makeshift organizational structure that reflected its temporary status. The Third Gendarme District, for example, had eight provincial commands. These corresponded to the eight provinces that had existed at its founding.

87 MSVUK: OA, part 1, section 11, no. 3, 175.
88 Thaden, Russia’s Western Borderlands, 153.
89 MSVUK: OA, part 1, sect. 11, no. 3, 133.
90 2nd PSZ, 38 (1863): no. 40456.
The number of provinces, however, had dropped to five in 1845. To correct this and prepare for the departure of the Military County Superintendents, the Ministry of War reorganized the Third Gendarme District into—five counties—in 1864. St. Petersburg also began to discuss a more orderly arrangement of its Polish police and a major reform of the Kingdom’s government and society.

The leader of the reform effort was Nikolai Miliutin. Although his views on Emancipation had made him anathema to Russian conservatives, Miliutin had an antipathy to the Polish gentry and Catholic Church that his conservative critics shared and that would win him their support in his efforts to reshape the Kingdom. At the request of Alexander II, Miliutin prepared proposals for emancipating Congress Poland’s serfs and ensuring their control of the reformed community (gmina) assemblies formerly dominated by the local gentry. Both won quick approval. He was assisted by the Slavophil Iurii Samarin, a critic of the Polish gentry as he had been of the Baltic Germans. Together they also prepared and won the implementation of laws to reform provincial and county institutions and the local police. The first of these doubled the number of provinces and counties in the Kingdom—to 10 and 85, respectively—in an effort to reduce officials’ workload and allow closer surveillance of the populace. The counties were to be headed by superintendents appointed by the Viceroy. Except in Warsaw, provincial capitals, and the city of Lodz, these officials were also to command the municipal forces in their jurisdictions. Each was to have two deputies, one for administration and one for police. The second law set the strength of the rural guard at 2,683 officers and privates to be recruited from the most capable members of the local police and from county gendarme commands, which were to merge with the guards. No more than 10 percent were to be native Poles. They were to operate under the county commanders and be distributed into new police precincts, with a ratio of guards to pop-

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91 2nd PSZ, 20 (1845): no. 18136a.
92 2nd PSZ, 39 (1864): no. 40600.
94 2nd PSZ, 39 (1864): nos. 40609, 40610.
96 2nd PSZ, 41 (1866): no. 44012.
A study by the Commission on Provincial and County Institutions later claimed that 80 percent of the guards could read and write.\textsuperscript{98}

Even as the new rural guard increased the power of the rural police, its absorption of the gendarmes’ county commands allowed a redistribution of the gendarmes’ resources. Within weeks of the creation of the rural guard the Ministry of War reorganized the Kingdom’s gendarmes, doubling the number of provincial commands, limiting lower level commands to 34 of the 85 counties, and establishing a railroad division. The statute describing the Gendarme District’s mission and staffing barred the transfer of Poles or Catholics into its ranks.\textsuperscript{99}

Unlike Miliutin’s plans for the Russian provinces, the 1866 changes to the local police in Poland were moves to strengthen the bureaucracy rather than steps toward the transfer of police powers to independent courts or elected local governments. True, in 1875 a version of the 1864 judicial reform would be introduced into Congress Poland.\textsuperscript{100} For a time this may have placed limits on the power of the police there as it did in the Russian provinces. In tsarism’s remaining decades, however, the authorities would move to undue much of the judicial reform throughout the Empire. And never would they expand the 1864 zemstvo legislation into the erstwhile Kingdom. As a result, while Valuev, Timashev, and other tsarist ministers would point to the Polish police as a model for Russia, it is better evaluated as a tool of tsarist imperialism than a system for enforcing the law and protecting the public. With more and better qualified personnel than their counterparts elsewhere in the Empire, the local police in Poland may have been better in controlling crime and maintaining public order. Their primary purpose, however, was to control the Poles.

**Siberia**

The forces that shaped the police in Siberia differed greatly from those that shaped their counterparts in the other borderlands. Unlike the Baltic
provinces or Poland, Siberia had no entrenched nobility challenging the center for control of their territory. Members of the nobility were not only few in number; they consisted largely of officials and military officers with personal nobility attained by serving the state.\textsuperscript{101} Also, in contrast to the war-plagued Caucasus, Central Asia, or rebellious Poland, by the start of the nineteenth century Siberia was a conquered region that had been effectively pacified. As a result of these factors, the tsarist bureaucracy had virtually carte blanche to develop and implement its police plans. It also was able to introduce a police system managed entirely by appointed officers. At the same time, with territory half again as large as Europe, and a population of only about one million in 1800, Siberia posed challenges to effective policing not encountered in the Baltic, Caucasus, Central Asia, or Poland.\textsuperscript{102} These would be compounded by the center's use of Siberia as a place of exile and punishment or criminals whose frequent escape from their places of confinement disrupted social order in the region.

Siberia's police system and its entire government were largely the work of one man, Michael Speranskii, the earliest—and, to some, the greatest—of Russia's enlightened bureaucrats.\textsuperscript{103} As Governor-General of the region in 1819–1821, Speranskii developed a knowledge of and commitment to its needs that led to the drafting and enactment of a landmark 1822 statute. This Siberian Charter was to shape Siberia's government institutions until tsarism's fall.\textsuperscript{104} The Charter was a bureaucratic document \textit{par excellence}. Under its terms the region was to consist of two governorates-general—for Western and Eastern Siberia— separated by the Yenisei River. Each included two provinces and one oblast. The provinces were divided into regions with administrations that differed with the size of their territory and population, the number of native peoples within their borders, and their accessibility. The native peoples were grouped according to whether they were settled or nomadic, with the nomadic people further broken down on the basis of their frequency of movement. Cities were divided into large, small. The oblasts and maritime districts had simpler but still multi-layered structures.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{101} Igor Naumov, \textit{The History of Siberia} (London: Routledge, 2006), 102.
\item \textsuperscript{103} On Speranskii’s impact on Siberia, see W. Bruce Lincoln, \textit{The Conquest of a Continent: Siberia and the Russians} (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 155–62.
\item \textsuperscript{104} 1st PSZ, 58 (1822); no. 29125.
\end{itemize}
As did the provinces of European Russia, Siberia had separate rural and urban police. The rural police consisted of 36 sheriffs, one per each region.\textsuperscript{105} None of Siberia’s towns, even the five classified as large, had police commissioners as did large Russian cities. Instead, all 44 Siberian cities were headed by magistrates, as in the small towns of European Russia.\textsuperscript{106} In most rural regions the sheriff had two or more associates. The city magistrates had district inspectors and in the largest cities, sergeants to assist them.

Minor differences in titles and organizational structure aside, Siberia’s rural police differed from those in European Russia in two important ways: the much larger size of their territories and their status as appointed rather than elected officials. In 1822, Russia’s rural police did not yet include the 1,207 district inspectors introduced in 1837 and were mostly elected by the local gentry. Still, European Russia’s rural sheriffs numbered in the hundreds rather than in the dozens. The small size of Siberia’s population meant that its sheriffs had far fewer people to oversee. The vast distances from one settlement to another, on the other hand, made support from the elders and wardens in the tiny villages and native settlements more difficult to come by. The elected elders and wardens, whose communities would remain under the sheriffs’ direct control until the end of the nineteenth century, were no more useful than their counterparts in the European provinces, but the sheriffs had no alternative to them.\textsuperscript{107}

Appointed though they were by the higher authorities in their provinces or oblasts, Siberia’s sheriffs were no better in enforcing the authorities’ orders than their gentry-elected counterparts in European Russia. According to Herzen, as Governor-General, Speranskii had inspired such fear in the Siberian police that they bribed the peasant villagers not to report their abuses. Herzen also reported, however, that after a few years the corrupt police were back to their former offenses. In addition, with a small pool of local recruits to draw on, the authorities had little choice but to lower their standards. According to a study by a Russian historian, runaway exiles some-

\textsuperscript{105} On the sheriffs’ organization, duties, and numbers, see \textit{1st PSZ}, no 29125, part 1, chapter 3, sect.2, arts. 75–79, and \textit{Tabeli razdeleniia Sibiri}.

\textsuperscript{106} \textit{1st PSZ}, no 29125, part 1, chapter 3, sect. 5, arts. 105–115, and \textit{Tabeli razdeleniia Sibiri}.

times were chosen to be sheriffs.\textsuperscript{108} From time to time the central authorities offered salary premiums and other inducements to attract better qualified officials.\textsuperscript{109} The harsh conditions and isolation of Siberia, however, generally undermined such offers. Siberia’s urban police, also appointed officials as were those in European Russia, had similar recruitment problems. Speranskii’s Charter gave the Committee on Wounded Soldiers the right to name candidates for city magistrate and, as elsewhere in the Empire, injuries qualifying candidates for the positions often prevented them from performing their duties.\textsuperscript{110} As in European Russia at the time, there were no hired policemen to man guard posts or maintain order in the cities. Instead the magistrates had relied on Cossacks who were both untrained as police and often notorious for their own disorderly conduct.\textsuperscript{111}

Fewer and less qualified than the police in European Russia, Siberia’s police also faced a criminal problem that police in the interior did not. For centuries, Russia’s rulers had used Siberia as a place for criminals sentenced to hard labor or exile. In the early nineteenth century, these groups generally accounted for less than 10 percent of the overall population of Siberia, but were concentrated in a few regions where their share was far greater. Most convicts worked in the Nerchinsk Mining Region, some 800 miles east of the eastern shore of Lake Baikal.\textsuperscript{112} Speranskii had addressed the management of Siberia’s exiles in a detailed statute—one of nine issued along with the Charter for Siberia.\textsuperscript{113} In part to reduce the burden on the police, this law provided for a military command to accompany exiles to their place of confinement and officials to monitor them subsequently. His plans for the exiles may, as an English traveler to Siberia observed, have been “utopian” from the outset.\textsuperscript{114} In either event, the criminalization of vagrancy in the Empire in 1823 increased the number of exiles to a point that soon overwhelmed the system for controlling them. With vagrancy a crime, the number of exiles


\textsuperscript{109} For examples, see \textit{2nd PSZ}, 7 (1832): no. 5267 and 10 (1835): no. 8164.

\textsuperscript{110} \textit{1st PSZ}, no. 39115, part 1, chapter 6, art. 178.


\textsuperscript{112} Beer, \textit{The House of the Dead}, 27, 80.

\textsuperscript{113} \textit{1st PSZ}, 38 (1822): no. 39128.

\textsuperscript{114} Charles Herbert Cotrell, \textit{Recollections of Siberia in the years 1840 and 1841} (London: John W. Parker, 1842), 264.
Police in the Borderlands

soared. In 1819–1822, it averaged 4,000 per year. In 1826–1846, this doubled.\textsuperscript{115} The result was to make a shambles of the mechanism for monitoring them. According to Daniel Beer, in 1838–1841 about 51,000 convicts fled their place of exile, only a third of whom were captured.\textsuperscript{116} Vagrants and political exiles doubtless made up some of these numbers. Most, however, were a mix of murderers, rapists, arsonists, bandits, and burglars.\textsuperscript{117} Often they joined the ranks of what contemporaries called “General Cuckoo’s Army,” wandering bands of fugitives who sometimes resorted to violence.\textsuperscript{118}

The fugitives’ behavior provided grist for gory tales to foreign visitors. Charles Cottrell was told of one escaped convict who murdered 26 people, culminating in the stabbing and disemboweling of a 10-year-old girl.\textsuperscript{119} Such violence did not, however, move the authorities to create more police. Instead the only notable increase in the police occurred in Siberia’s gold fields, which experienced a boom after the legalization of private mining in 1824, when the introduction of gold panning made prohibition infeasible.\textsuperscript{120} In 1838, the tsarist government required regions with significant gold production to have special officials eventually known as “mining sheriffs” to maintain order in the gold fields and provide security for shipments.\textsuperscript{121} Each sheriff had 20 Cossacks under his command and in case of need could get more support from Cossacks or the military.\textsuperscript{122}

In 1847–1861, Eastern Siberia’s Governor-General was Nikolai Murav’ev whose impact rivalled Speranskii’s. A military hero from a noble family, Murav’ev was worlds different than Speranskii, the classic bureaucrat and son of a priest. Under instructions to claim territory along the Amur River contested by China, he did this so well that he received the title Count Amurskii. He also became famous for rooting out corruption.\textsuperscript{123} Neither he

\textsuperscript{115} Beer, \textit{The House of the Dead}, 21.
\textsuperscript{116} Beer, \textit{The House of the Dead}, 212.
\textsuperscript{119} Cottrell, \textit{Recollections of Siberia}.
\textsuperscript{120} Lincoln, \textit{The Conquest of Siberia}, 185–86.
\textsuperscript{121} 2nd PSZ, 13 (1838): no. 11188; 19 (1844), no.17775.
\textsuperscript{122} 2nd PSZ, 13 (1838): no. 11188, arts. 78–79.
\textsuperscript{123} On Murav’ev’s domestic and foreign policy accomplishments, see Lincoln, \textit{The Conquest of a Continent}, 190–96.
nor his counterpart in Western Siberia, however, expanded the police. In 1856, there were four fewer sheriffs and ten fewer heads of municipal police than provided for in the Siberian Charter.\textsuperscript{124}

Even when poised for major reforms west of the Urals the tsarist authorities rejected suggestions for similar change in Siberia. In 1856, the government committee that oversaw Siberia observed that Speranskii’s Charter needed no major changes and called for stricter adherence to its terms rather than for reform. At the same time, it noted that updating the Siberian police system to bring it in line with that in European Russia might be appropriate.\textsuperscript{125} Still, it would be 1867, five years after the issuance of the Temporary Rules for the police in European Russia, before such action was taken. The new statute on the Siberian police merged the rural and urban police in all but 14 Siberian cities. The sheriffs who commanded the combined units were given full-time assistants, but there was no increase in the number of sheriffs and no mention of city guards or patrolmen. As did the Temporary Rules for the European Russian police, the 1867 Statute left the police’s duties unchanged. With neither the zemstvo nor the judicial reform to be introduced into Siberia, however, there was no indication that the 1867 statute was to be temporary. Other than the municipal reform of 1870, which from the outset was scheduled to be implemented in Siberia, there was no other legislation affecting the Siberian police’s duties in the remainder of Alexander II’s reign.\textsuperscript{126} In 1879, however, Alexander approved the State Council’s recommendation to create a police guard in Western Siberia. The guard was to consist of hired personnel, include both mounted and foot police, be under the command of the sheriffs, and replace the Cossacks. Their number and salary were left to the discretion of the Governor-General with the proviso that total spending could not exceed 37,407 rubles, less than 2 percent of the amount budgeted for the mounted rangers in Russia, the year before. The guardsmen were to carry weapons and wear badges. The Ministry of War was to provide the weapons at no cost.\textsuperscript{127}

\textsuperscript{124} Compare 2nd PSZ, 31 (1856): no. 31222, shtaty i tabeli with 1st PSZ, 38 (1822): no. 29125, Tabeli razdeleniia Sibiri.

\textsuperscript{125} 2nd PSZ, 31 (1856): no. 31124.

\textsuperscript{126} 2nd PSZ 45 (1870): no. 48498; 47 (1872): no. 50723.

\textsuperscript{127} 2nd PSZ, 54 (1879): no. 59737.
The Tsar Liberator’s successor, Alexander III, limited his changes to Siberia’s administration to bureaucratic reshuffling, but also began what would prove a new stage in the history of the region. In 1882, his government eliminated Western Siberia as an administrative unit, putting Tomsk and Tobol’sk on the same footing as provinces in European Russia. It also transferred Semipalatinsk and Akmolynsk Oblasts to a new Governor-General of the Steppe.\textsuperscript{128} Two years later it split Eastern Siberia into two new governorates-general: Primursk and Irkutsk.\textsuperscript{129} At the same time, Alexander’s reign saw the beginning of construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway, a development that would transform Siberia’s history. By allowing quicker access from the Russian heartland to Siberia, the Railway would have a major impact on both. The provinces west of the Urals would benefit from increased trade, greater contact with the countries of the Pacific and Far East, and migration opportunities for land-starved peasants. Siberia, for its part, would experience an influx of wealth and people to the cities.\textsuperscript{130} The Railway would also link Siberia to the social and political upheavals that would put an end to tsarism in the twentieth century.

**Impact and Implications**

Whatever their effect on the borderlands, the changes in the police systems of those regions had a major impact on the center’s ability to accomplish its goals—police and otherwise—in European Russia. In addition, analysis of the measures they took in these regions has important contributions to make to our understanding of tsarist decision making.

The sizable resources committed to strengthening the police in the Caucasus and Congress Poland probably offer the clearest example of how the tsarist government’s actions in the borderlands affected its ability to achieve other goals. In the mid- and late-1860s when Valuev and then Timashev were calling—unsuccessfully—for the creation of a rural guard in the Great Russian provinces, the government was paying for 2,017 guards in the Caucasus and another 2,683 in Congress Poland.\textsuperscript{131} The laws creating

\textsuperscript{128} 3rd PSZ, 2 (1882): no. 886.
\textsuperscript{129} 3rd PSZ, 4 (1884): no. 2366.
\textsuperscript{131} 2nd PSZ, 37 (1862): no. 380262 and 41 (1866): no. 44013.
these forces were vague as to whether all their members would be *mounted* police but imply that most would be so. Each was larger than all the mounted patrols in the provinces then under the Temporary Rules. Together, they were almost as large as the 5,000 rangers established in 1878 in response to terrorist violence.

**Table 27:** Spending for Local Police in the Caucasus and Congress Poland in 1868 (rubles)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Rural Guards</th>
<th>Sheriffs, Police Chiefs, and Staffs</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caucasus</td>
<td>562,664</td>
<td>484,848</td>
<td>1,047,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress Poland</td>
<td>599,310</td>
<td>737,925*</td>
<td>1,337,235*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,161,974</td>
<td>1,222,773*</td>
<td>2,384,747*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Excludes spending for Warsaw city police

*Sources: 2nd PSZ, 37 (1862): no. 38026; 41 (1866): nos. 44013 & 44015; 42 (1867): no. 45268; 43 (1868): no. 45480.

In monetary terms the two forces (Table 27) were also costly, amounting to half as much as spending on the local police in all of European Russia. Neither Siberia nor the Baltic Provinces would have mounted police guards until 1879 and 1889, respectively, and in Central Asia Russia relied on military police. The central authorities spent very little on police in the Baltic, but in 1869 the local police in Siberia cost about 400,000 rubles.\(^{132}\) Police spending figures for Central Asia are harder to come by, pertain to later years, and are separate for Turkestan and the rest of the region. Planned police spending in Turkestan in 1887 was 244,000 rubles; for the Five Steppe Oblasts in 1892 it was 345,000 rubles.\(^{133}\)

In light of the frequent complaints of Finance Minister Reutern and Minister of War Miliutin in the 1860s that the government could not afford to spend more on the police in European Russia, the commitment of so much manpower and money to the Caucasus and Congress Poland cries out for explanation. Responding is challenging because this study had no access to archives or other sources with details on tsarist decision making.

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\(^{132}\) 2nd PSZ, 42 (1867): no. 44681.

\(^{133}\) 3rd PSZ, 6 (1886): no. 3814, shtaty i tabeli and 11 (1891): no. 7574, shtaty i tabeli (combined figures for county and city police forces in both cases).
Police in the Borderlands

on police matters in these regions. Also, extrapolating Russian ministers’ positions on Polish police matters from their stances on police reform in European Russia would often be mistaken. For example, Nikolai Miliutin, an advocate of reforming rather than expanding the local police in Russia, favored the opposite course in Congress Poland. His brother Dmitrii, the Minister of War, opposed Valuev’s plans for the creation of a rural guard in Russia but supported increasing police controls in Poland.¹³⁴ Finance Minister Reutern, in contrast, consistently opposed expensive government projects other than railroads out of a desire to reduce Russia’s budget deficit.¹³⁵

For all the limitations of our sources, the nature and the timing of the government’s police measures in the borderlands provide some insight about what caused it to act as it did. In the case of Congress Poland, for example, there can be little doubt that maintaining the Empire’s control in the face of violent resistance was the center’s primary motive. As would be the case in 1878 when the government created the mounted rangers, armed resistance proved an effective antidote to ministerial bickering and indecision. The motivation for Russia’s police-related actions in the Caucasus, on the other hand, is much less clear. By 1862, when Russia created a rural guard there, the long war against Shamil’s forces was at an end. More to the point, the new guard was based not in the North Caucasus but in Transcaucasia, which had no recent history of anti-Russian resistance. Rather, the one notable instance of peasant violence—in Georgia’s Sangrelo Province in 1857—had been directed at members of the hereditary Georgian elite and was settled only when the Russian military enforced an armed peace. This background and Russia’s encouragement of native participation in Transcaucasia’s rural guard—something it discouraged in Poland—suggest the region’s elites may well have supported or even requested a force to police the countryside. In Georgia, where emancipation proved more protracted and more favorable to the landlords than in Russia, the nobility had particular reason to do so. Still, when violence did occur in the emancipation years—as happened in

Abkhazia in 1866—the rural guard was unable to control it without the army’s assistance.136

In the Baltic Provinces and Siberia, the government’s slower and more modest police activities reflected different aspects of tsarist decision making. While far from the most notorious example of the arbitrariness of Russia’s rulers, tsarist policy toward the three Baltic provinces clearly illustrated the perils of the concentration of power in the hands of a hereditary sovereign. For decades the fondness of a succession of Russian rulers for the German nobility—in effect, their personal whims—allowed the Baltic elites to retain a police system that was archaic and blatantly unjust, and at times to ignore the center’s efforts to change it. The abrupt imposition of the Russian police model despite senior officials’ recommendation to first complete its reform also was driven by the monarch’s whim—a nationalist disdain for Germans. In Siberia, in contrast, while Nicholas I took a personal interest in Siberia as a foreign policy tool vis-à-vis China, both he and other rulers tended to rely on powerful governors-general to manage Russia’s interests. Both the enlightened bureaucrat Speranskii and the swashbuckling Nikolai Murav’ev—men with no knowledge of Siberia before serving there—became legendary figures for their efforts to transform Siberia. Both, however, would be followed by officials of lesser ability and lesser commitment and would prove unable to overcome the combination of Siberia’s remoteness, harsh climate, and status as a place of exile. Siberia in the nineteenth century was a place to which people were sentenced or went to seek their fortunes rather than a place to live. As such, it had need for prison police and mining police but its regular police would remain underdeveloped until the railway and peasant migration transformed society there.

Central Asia’s police development—or, more accurately, the failure of its police to evolve—was yet another story. When Lord Curzon visited Central Asia in 1889, he noted that an unnamed author’s remark that “martial law is the normal condition” was truer in Tashkent than anywhere else in the Empire.137 Much the same could accurately have been said of the Caucasus in the 1830s or Poland in 1863. In these areas, however, reliance on military

137 Curzon, Russia in Central Asia in 1889, 240.
officers or military units to police the towns and countryside was temporary stage that eventually gave way to the development of civilian forces. In Central Asia the police continued to be commanded and staffed by an officer corps that was ill prepared for such duty. To some extent, this reflected St. Petersburg’s continuing concern with the possibility of military operations against Britain or China. To a much greater extent, however, it probably reflected the tsarist authorities’ belief that there was no alternative to military rule in a region where Russians were surrounded by much larger numbers of native peoples of a different race and a non-Christian faith. In 1912 upon his return from Turkestan, Minister of Agriculture Krivoshein illustrated this belief in explaining why the regime had chosen not to act on Palen’s recommendations: “The introduction of a general civilian administration in place of the military or the establishment of the zemstvo are . . . useful . . . but only if there is a strong Russian population in the region. . . . Meanwhile the actual Turkestan is a sea of natives . . . When one has seen the universal predominance of the natives in Turkestan, one cannot but feel that this is still a military camp, a temporary halting place during the victorious march of Russia into Central Asia . . . The uezd commandants (county superintendents RA), the main working force in the local administration are very well selected...”

Krivoshein, was a conservative but no reactionary, and was one of the few ministers able to get along with both the Duma and the Imperial family. As such, he expressed the views of what could accurately be described as mainstream educated society. His disdain for the native peoples and his belief that they were not ready for civilian rule, therefore, do much to explain the persistence of a military police system that had long since seen its day in the rest of the Empire.

138 As translated in Pierce, Russian Central Asia, 89–90.