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The Khanates of the Eastern Caucasus and the Origins of the First Russo-Iranian War

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Yale University

in Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

Muriel Ann Atkin

May 1976
ABSTRACT

THE KHANATES OF THE EASTERN CAUCASUS AND THE ORIGINS
OF THE FIRST RUSSO-IRANIAN WAR

Muriel Ann Atkin

Yale University, 1976

In 1813, war between Russia and Iran was officially ended by
the Treaty of Golestan. The war had been costly for both sides but
especially for the recently established Qajar dynasty of Iran, which
suffered the double humiliation of defeat by a Christian state and the
loss of most of the eastern Caucasus, from Georgia to Darband and Tâlesh,
an area traditionally considered part of Iran. In retrospect, Russia's
first territorial acquisitions in the eastern Caucasus were also seen
as the preface to the heated Anglo-Russian rivalry in Iran and Central
Asia. The aim of this dissertation was to inquire into the development
of Russia's interest in the eastern Caucasus and Iran, the methods by
which it attempted to fulfill its ambitions in that region, and the
reaction of Iran and the Caucasian khanates to those efforts.

The traditional Russian and western European interpretations of
Russia's conquest of the Caucasus cannot be supported by the historical
evidence. Russia's ambitions regarding Iran and its Caucasian border-
lands developed during the reign of Catherine the Great, not as the
result of knowledgeable investigation but of mistaken impressions often
colored by anti-Muslim prejudice and the self-serving distortions of
opportunistic agents in the field. The goals developed in that manner
centered on the use of the Caucasus as a military base for operations
against the Ottoman empire and as a commercial base for trade with Asia. However, there was also a self-perpetuating drive behind Russia's involvement in the area during the reign of Catherine and her successors, Paul and Alexander, because the greater the level of involvement, the more shameful disengagement appeared and the more necessary it became to crush any opposition.

Although some of the Caucasian khans were willing initially to use Russia as an ally against traditional rivals, they were unwilling to submit to Russian political control. That country's reliance on military coercion instead of negotiation and its anti-Muslim policies alienated all the khans. In the end, all the khanates absorbed into the Russian empire were acquired by force.

The cause of the war between Russia and Iran is usually attributed by Russian and Western writers to an Iranian invasion of the eastern Caucasus. However, Iran's actions could also be viewed as a defense against Russian aggression. The Qājār Shahs could claim the eastern Caucasus on the basis of previous Iranian hegemony in the region, most recently under the Safavis and Nāder Shāh. Russia's argument that its presence was justified by the treaties it had signed with the King of Georgia and other Caucasian rulers had no legal merit in Iranian eyes since a treaty made by a traitorous vassal was invalid. Moreover, possession of the eastern Caucasus had a special significance for the newly established Qājār dynasty as a symbol of its legitimacy as the heir to the Safavis as rulers of a reunified Iran. Although the first two Qājār shahs made several attempts to force Caucasian rulers to acknowledge their suzerainty, the war with Russia did not begin until 1804, when Russia began the conquest of Caucasian khanates which the Qājārs considered part of their realm. Neither side was willing to
compromise on the issues which had brought them into conflict. Therefore, the struggle between them continued until the decisive Russian military victories of 1812 and 1813.
PREFACE

Russian expansion has been a subject of deep concern to the nations of Europe and Asia ever since Peter the Great established his country as a major power. This process of expansion transformed the map of Europe and Asia and sparked a host of wars and diplomatic rivalries from Peter's first war with the Ottoman empire (1695-1700) to the American-Soviet competition of the present day. One of the areas in which Russian penetration was particularly significant was Iran. The end of the First Russo-Iranian War in 1813 brought Iran the humiliation of its first defeat by a European Christian power and the simultaneous increase in European influence over its domestic affairs. The same factors also stimulated a process of self-questioning and the gradual beginnings of a reform movement among the elite. Another result of Russian expansion was the sudden transformation from without of the political, economic, and social status of the inhabitants of the eastern Caucasus. In retrospect, the Russian victory was seen as the foundation of that country's expansion across Iran and central Asia towards India, a drive which was marked by an almost frantic determination in some English circles to contain the advance in the era known as the "Great Game" in the later nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries.

Strangely enough, the years between 1780 and 1813, when Russian objectives regarding Iran were formulated and, to a large degree, obtained, has received very little attention from historians. Most of the literature in English and French deals with the reaction of
Great Britain and the Napoleonic empire to Russia's actions. The
Russian perspective has been virtually ignored in the West.¹
Although Russian works do not share that flaw, they, too are un-
satisfying. In pre-revolutionary Russia, anti-expansionists did not
write on the subject, leaving the field in the exclusive possession of
those who justified the empire builders' every act. Soviet writers
have followed essentially the same line since the post-revolutionary
government has followed essentially the same policy.

The aim of the present research has been not only to re-examine
the wealth of Russian documents in a more analytical light but also
to study the attitudes of the Iranian government and the Muslim
inhabitants of the disputed border territories, facets of the contro-
versy which have received even less attention than the Russian
perspective.² The dissertation concentrates on four central themes:
the development of Russian interest in Iran; the methods by which
Russia attempted to reach its goals; the reaction of the inhabitants
of territories Russia wished to acquire to the extension of Russian
authority; and, finally, the reasons Iran went to war with Russia for
control of the eastern Caucasus. The events discussed fall within a

¹. A few exceptions are: F. Kazemzadeh's article, "Russian Penetration
of the Caucasus", which covers a much broader timespan, beginning
with the fifteenth century; T. Hunczak, ed., Russian Imperialism
from Ivan the Great to the Revolution (New Brunswick, N.J., 1974),
pp. 239-263; D. M. Lang, The Last Years of the Georgian Monarchy
1658-1832 (New York, 1957); L. H. Rhinelander, Jr., "The Incor-
poration of the Caucasus into the Russian Empire: The Case of
Georgia, 1801-1854", unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (Columbia
University, 1972).

². There have been some works which deal with the Georgians' position.
See particularly Lang and Rhinelander.
period between 1780, when Russia's modern interest in Iran began, and 1806, by which time Russia had taken control, at least superficially, of all the territory ceded by Iran at the end of the war, and the war itself had recently begun.  

In referring to the disputed border zone, I have used the term eastern Caucasus in preference to the Russian name "Transcaucasia" or the Iranian names Azerbaidjan or Dagestān. "Eastern Caucasus" is a politically neutral description of the location of Georgia and the Muslim-ruled khanates which had formerly been part of Iran and became part of Russia. In contrast, "Transcaucasia" reflects a Russian perspective while the Iranian names, apart from presuming that country's hegemony over the region at a time when that was hotly contested, are subject to confusingly different interpretations. In Safavi times, "Azerbaidjan" was applied to all the Muslim-ruled khanates of the eastern Caucasus as well as the area south of the Aras River as far as the Qezel Uzān River, approximately the same as the modern Iranian ostāns of East and West Azerbaidjan. Apart from a few references to the entire region, it seemed clearer to me to use Azerbaidjan only for the southern part of the province which has remained under Iranian control. The term "Dagestān" was used occasionally by the Iranians and frequently by the Russians to refer to the territories on the north-eastern slopes of the Caucasus, including Darband and Qobbeh. (The Russians also applied it to Bakū, Shirvān and Shaki, on the southeastern side of the High Caucasus.) The problem with this term is that it does

3. Except for Tālšeh, an area of peripheral concern to Russia, which did not conquer it until 1813.
not distinguish the khanates, which, despite the large number of their tribal inhabitants, had long traditions of sedentary urban culture and links to Iran, from the Avars, Lesgis, Qumuqs, and other tribes of the High Caucasus, whose traditions were markedly different. Moreover, these tribes were brought into the Russian empire by a much longer process than the inhabitants of the khanates.

As regards other geographical terms, I have used the form familiar in English, if it exists, such as "Iran" instead of "Irān". I have followed a similar rule with regard to non-geographical terms, like "bazaar" or "shah" (rather than "bazār" or "shāh") except when a title is quoted as part of a person's name, as in the case of Fath 'Ali Shāh. In transliterating unfamiliar Persian words (and loan-words) I have tried to indicate the way they are pronounced in Persian rather than impose the theoretical reconstruction of the pronunciation of classical Arabic. For the letter 'ein I have used the symbol '; for hamzeh, '. In transliterating Russian, I have used the simplified Library of Congress system now in general use in the United States.

The different calendars in use in Russia, Iran, and western Europe present a possible source of confusion. By the end of the eighteenth century, western Europe had already adopted the Gregorian calendar, which Russia did not do until 1918. From 1700 until that date, it used the Julian calendar, which lagged behind the Gregorian by eleven days in the eighteenth century and twelve in the nineteenth. In the same era, Iran used the Arabic lunar calendar of 354 days reckoned from the date of Mohammed's departure from Mecca for Medina
(July 16, 622 A.D.). Since the sources I have quoted which use the Arabic calendar frequently do not give a month or day, I have given the Arabic year and the Gregorian years it overlaps. Since I have made many references to Russian documents and comparatively few to western ones, it seemed simpler to write all dates referring to events within the Russian empire or quoted in Russian sources according to the Julian calendar rather than have repeated discrepancies between dates in the text and the footnotes.

4. Since 1925, Iran has used a solar calendar of 365 days based on the same starting point as the lunar calendar.
Abbreviations Used in Footnotes

AGS  Russia, Council of State, *Arkhiv Gosudarstvennago Soveta*, 5 volumes (St. Petersburg, 1869-1904)

Akty  Russia, Viceroyalty of the Caucasus, *Akty sobrannie kavkazskoiu arkheograficheskoiu komissieiu*, 12 volumes (Tiflis, 1866-1904)

AKV  Vorontsov, M.S., *Arkhiv Kniazia Vorontsova*, P. Bartenev, ed., 40 volumes (Moscow, 1870-1895)

EI  *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 4 vols., (Leiden and London, 1913-1934)

VPR  Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Vneshniaia Politika Rossii*, series I, 7 volumes (Moscow, 1970)
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Chapter I

The Development of Russian Policy towards Iran and the Eastern Caucasus

Before 1722, when Peter the Great set out on his campaign to take control of Iran's western and southern Caspian coast, contacts between Russia and Iran had been of limited political or economic importance. Commercial relations between the two nations developed gradually from the second half of the fifteenth century, paralleling the emergence of a re-unified Russian state under Muscovite hegemony. The first major increase in trade occurred in the sixteenth century, following Ivan the Terrible's conquest of Tatar-ruled Kazan (1552) and Astrakhan (1556), which opened the Volga-Caspian route between Muscovy and Iran. From that time until the latter half of the seventeenth century, the Muscovite state was a commercial center for western European merchants interested in buying Russian products (notably lumber, flax, and furs) and products from Iran (especially silk and Indian goods available in Iranian markets). Russian merchants also purchased Iranian luxury goods for domestic consumption. Tsar' Alexei Mikhailovich was particularly fond of such items and acquired many Iranian rugs, jewels, and silks. Members of his court


also wore silks, brocades, and precious stones from the East. ³

Whatever the potential for increased Russo-Iranian trade or
diplomatic relations may have been, there were too many obstacles to
the further development of these ties until the peace of Nystadt
between Russia and Sweden in 1721. Moscow had, of necessity, been
preoccupied by other concerns: the periods of disruption known as the
Time of Troubles, in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries;
the schism sparked by church reform in the second half of the seven-
teenth century; and the rebellion of Stenk'ka Razin (1670-71), which
centered on the Volga region, cutting off communications between
Russia and Iran. There were also recurring wars between Moscow and
Poland, Sweden, and the Ottoman Empire. Apart from major outbreaks
of fighting, there were other serious obstacles to Russo-Iranian
communications, in particular, raids by marauders along the route and
confiscations by Iranian officials.⁴ Russia was unable to take
military action against Iran for any grievances because, until the
reign of Peter the Great, it lacked a fleet to transport its army
across the Caspian Sea and thus circumvent the hazards of the route
through the Caucasus Mountains. Despite the many obstacles, Russo-
Iranian trade, especially in silk, continued into the eighteenth century,
although its international significance decreased after several western

³ S. Carlisle, La Relation de trois ambassades (Paris, 1853), 35,
84, 85; A. Mayerberg, Voyage en Muscovie (Paris, 1858), 146-7;
Solov'ev, VI, 565-6.

⁴ Solov'ev, VI, 562-3, 572; J. de Rhodes, "Sostoianie Rossii v
1650-1655 gg. po doneseniiam Rodesa", B. G. Kurts, tr., Chtenia
Moskovskogo Obshchestva Istorii i Drevnosti Rossiiskikh, 1915,
part ii, 68, 127.
European nations established direct contact with the markets of India.  

Peter the Great, once he had built up a modern army and navy, transformed his country's administrative system, and ended the last of his European wars, turned his attention to Iran. Even before he was free to put his Iranian project into effect, he had shown an interest in that region. In 1717, Peter's ambassador to the Safavi court, Artemii Volynskii, concluded a commercial treaty with Shāh Soltān Hosein. As a result of that treaty, a Russian consulate was established in the Caspian coastal province of Gilān. Peter was determined to establish a Russian colony along the Caspian coast from Darband in the northwest to Astarabad in the southeast in order to use this foothold as the various East India Companies used their establishments in India. In this way, he hoped to re-establish Russia as the intermediary in Europe's trade with Asia.  

The formal justification for Peter's intervention in Iran was an attack made in 1721 by several Dāghestāni tribes on the city of Shemākhi, capital of the Iranian province of Shirvān in the eastern Caucasus. In the course of the attack, some Russian merchants who traded there were killed and perhaps half a million rubles-worth of  

5. B. Kafengauz, Vneshniaia politika pri Petre I (Moscow, 1942), 77.  
7. P. G. Butkov, Materialy dlja novoi istorii Kavkaza s 1722 po 1803, 3 volumes (St. Petersburg, 1869), I, 146, 147, hereafter referred to as Materialy; Kafengauz, 77; Lockhart, Safavi Dynasty, 59, 179.
their property was seized. (Safavi officials and other Shi'a Muslims in the city fared still worse. Some four to five thousand of them were massacred by the Sunni Dāghestānis in reprisal for the anti-Sunni policies of the Safavi government.) As Peter gathered his forces for the coming campaign, the Safavi empire entered the final stages of collapse. In October 1722 Shāh Soltān Hosein was overthrown by the Afghan leader Mahmud Ghalzai, who had besieged Esfahān for eight months.  

Two months before the fall of Esfahān, more than one hundred thousand Russian troops, with Peter at their head, landed on the Dāghestāni coast. The most significant achievement of the expedition was the surrender of Darband in September. This marked the end of the first stage of Peter's campaign. He still wanted to acquire more territory along the Caspian coast and march inland into Azerbāijān to join forces with a Georgian-Armenian army but a critical shortage of supplies, widespread illness (which was responsible for most of the thirty-three thousand deaths), and fear of a clash with the Ottoman empire over Caucasian territory convinced him to reduce the scale of his activities in the Caucasus for the time being. Two weeks after the submission of Darband, he led his army back along the Dāghestāni coast to the Russian border. Only a small contingent was left behind

to garrison the city and the newly built fort. Although Russia extended its control over the port city of Baku and the agriculturally rich province of Gilan in the next few months, Peter himself never returned to the area.

The final phase of Peter’s campaign was the dismemberment of Iran by two treaties, one with Shah Tahmasb II Safavi, the other with the Ottoman empire. The Russo-Iranian treaty was never valid since Tahmasb, indignant over the extent of the concessions made by his negotiator, refused to sign it. This fact was conveniently overlooked by Russian authorities. The provisions which so angered Tahmasb called for the cession of Darband, Baku, Gilan, Mazendaran, and Astarabad (over which he had no control at the time) to Russia. There were also provisions for the encouragement of trade between Russia and Iran as well as for military co-operation. Russia, for its part, did not aid Tahmasb against the Afghans but did maintain its garrisons in Darband, Baku, and Gilan. It never took control of Mazendaran.

Not until the reign of Catherine the Great was there an attempt to establish a Russian base in Astarabad.

Like Russia, the Ottoman empire took advantage of Iran’s weakness to acquire territory. In 1724, Russia and the Porte divided northern and western Iran between them. The treaty gave the Porte Georgia,

12. Baddeley, 28-30; Kafangauz, 80-81; Lockhart, Safavi Dynasty, 238-46.
most of Āzerbāijān, and all the territory west of the Caspian coastal zone claimed by Russia.¹⁴

After the death of Peter the Great, Russian interest in Iran waned considerably, while the latter country, under the leadership of Shāh Tahmāsb and his able general, the future Nāder Shāh, began to retake the lost provinces. Finally, as the result of concessions made by Empress Anna in the treaties of Rasht (1732) and Ganjeh (1735), Russia withdrew all its troops stationed south of the Caucasus Mountains.¹⁵ Russian interest in these lands remained dormant until late in the century. When Russians of Catherine the Great's era looked back on their country's Iranian policy only the successes were remembered; Anna's treaties were ignored.

There are several points of similarity between Peter's ambitions regarding Iran and those of Catherine and her successors. In both eras, military intervention by Russia was justified as vengeance for an unlawful attack against people under Russian protection by a party which was not the rightul government of Iran. In 1721 the casus belli was the Dāghestānī attack on Shemākhi. Additional justification was provided by the Afghan challenge to Safavi hegemony. Therefore, Peter's manifestos portrayed Russian military actions on the Caspian coast as attempts to aid the legitimate ruler of Iran in his battle against the Afghan rebels.¹⁶ Catherine justified her project to acquire

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¹⁵. Butkov, Materialy, I, 110-3; 131-1; Lockhart, Nadir Shah, 58, 82-4.

Iranian territory as a reprisal for the 1795 attack on Georgia by Āqā Mohammad Khān, the founder of the Qājār dynasty. She proclaimed to all the peoples of the region that her intention was not only to safeguard the Christian Georgians, who had been under Russian protection, theoretically at least, since 1783\(^1\) but to protect all Iranian subjects, including Muslims, from the tyrannical rule of the usurper, Āqā Mohammad Khān.\(^2\)

Another similarity between Peter's and Catherine's campaigns was their interest in the Armenians and Georgians. Both these Christian communities strenuously encouraged the Russians to send troops into the area, not only to take them under Russian protection but to conquer Iranian territory as well. The Christians of the Caucasus also promised the Russians active military co-operation in both the 1720's and the 1790's. In the first instance, they went as far as to gather troops to join with Peter's army, although he never took advantage of the opportunity.\(^3\) By the end of the eighteenth century, neither the Georgians nor the Armenians were in a position to organize substantial military forces of their own, although spokesmen for both groups continued to promise co-operation with Russian troops, should any be sent to the region.\(^4\)

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20. Lang, 194-5, 215 ff; King Giorgi to General K. F. Knorring, August 29, 1800, *Akty*, I, 145; Notes from the Georgian ambassadors to
Until the decision was made in 1800 to incorporate Georgia directly into the Russian empire, a consistent trait of Russian policy was the welcoming of open avowals of support for Russia by Georgians and Armenians without giving them support in return against Iranian claims of sovereignty. In the case of Peter's campaign, King Vakhtang of Georgia was hopelessly compromised with the Iranian authorities because of his preparations to join forces with Peter. This cost him the governorship of Georgia and forced him into exile in Russia, where he spent the rest of his life. The Armenians who had joined Vakhtang fled to the mountains. During Catherine's reign, the Georgians complained repeatedly of inadequate protection by Russia once King Erekle had broken with Iran and signed the Treaty of Georgievsk. The most serious of Russia's failures in this regard was the refusal of General I. V. Gudovich, the commander of Russia's troops in the north Caucasus, to send aid when Āqā Mohammad Khān attacked Georgia in 1795. Without Russian assistance, the Georgians were unable to prevent Āqā Mohammad Khān from plundering the capital, Tbilisi, and enslaving thousands of its inhabitants.

St. Petersburg, September 23, 1800, ibid., I, 180; Yuzbashi Gabriel to General P. D. Tsitsianov, August 15, 1805, ibid., II, 626; Dubrovin, II, 32, III, 57-58, 68, 179.

21. In the Safavi empire, the Georgian monarch was considered the vāli (prince-governor) of the province of Gorjestān. He was ranked third among the four vālis of the empire, each of whom administered an important border province. V. Minorsky, ed. and tr., Tadhkīrat al-Mulūk, E. J. W. Gibb Memorial, New Series, XVI (London, 1943), 44.

22. Lockhart, Safavi Dynasty, 189.


24. Lang, 213ff, 220; Rezā Qoli Khān Hedāyat, Rouzat os-Safā-ye Nāseri, addition to the chronicle of Mir Khānd, 10 volumes (Tehran, 1339, Shamsi), IX, 271.
A different aspect of Russia's relations with Caucasian Christians was the desire of Peter and of Prince G. A. Potemkin, if not of Catherine herself, to establish a powerful Georgian-Armenian state under Russian suzerainty. In neither case was such a state created. Peter was able to attract a number of Caucasian Christians to settle in the part of Gilan occupied by his troops but plans were not carried beyond that point. In the 1780's, Prince Potemkin made bold plans for reviving Armenia and Georgia but he had to give precedence to more immediate concerns: the annexation of the Crimea (1783); the development of Russia's Black Sea Coast; and another war with the Ottoman empire (1787-92).

One apparent similarity between the two monarchs' Iranian campaigns which concealed an important change was the strength of the Iranian government at the beginning and the end of the eighteenth century. Those who shaped Russian foreign policy thought they were viewing the same phenomenon when they looked at Iran, namely, the collapse of the national government and the outbreak of civil war among contenders for power. As Russia discovered to its considerable cost, conditions in Iran between 1795 and 1813 were the exact opposite of what they had been in 1721-5. It was true that after the death of Nader Shah in 1747, Iran was without a strong national government and suffered from divisive warfare among local rulers. However, the 1780's and 1790's marked the end of that era of political fragmentation and the emergence of a new and comparatively powerful government under Aqa

25. Lockhart, Safavi Dynasty, 249.

26. Dubrovin, II, 31-4; Lang, 182.
Mohammad Khān Qājār.

Although Catherine failed to appreciate the full significance of the change taking place in Iran, her analysis of conditions there in 1796 seemed plausible. She viewed the political history of eighteenth century Iran as a series of internecine wars among power hungry usurpers. One of those usurpers, Nāder Shāh, had managed to reunify the country but only for a short time. In Catherine's opinion, Nāder met the "inevitable fate of oppressors", violent death, and civil war resumed.\textsuperscript{27} By the time Catherine wrote these words, a man whom she considered to be another particularly cruel usurper, Āqā Mohammad Khān, had seized control of "almost . . . all of Persia".\textsuperscript{28}

By using this particular turn of phrase, Catherine emphasized that Āqā Mohammad, however powerful, was not the legitimate sovereign of Iran. In this context, it appeared logical to Catherine to expect Āqā Mohammad's rule to be as transitory as Nāder's had been. Regardless of the merits of her argument, her prediction about the fate of Āqā Mohammad proved accurate. He was assassinated on June 17, 1797, half a year after her own death. At once, tribal leaders and provincial governors began to lay claim to the throne or assert their local independence, as Catherine had anticipated. Contrary to her expectation, the chosen heir to the throne, Fath 'Ali, was soon able to overcome his rivals.\textsuperscript{29}

Despite the similarities between Russian interests in Iran in the

\textsuperscript{27} Catherine to V. A. Zubov, February 19, 1796, Dubrovin, II, 74.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., II, 77.
\textsuperscript{29} Hasan-e Fasā'ī, History of Persia under Qājār Rule, H. Busse, ed. and tr. (New York, 1972), 78-79, 81-86, 89-91.
early and late eighteenth century and despite the immense prestige which came to be attached to Peter the Great's deeds, Russian policy in the latter period owed extremely little to his influence. The real beginning of Russia's modern interest in Iran and the eastern Caucasus was in Catherine's reign. This was the era in which Russia's attitudes and goals regarding that region were shaped. They would change very little during the reigns of Paul and Alexander. Occasional references were made to Peter's campaigns or treaties but these were always used as subsidiary arguments. Catherine did not send an army to the eastern Caucasus to imitate the Petrine campaign of seventy years before. Instead, she formed her Iranian policy on the basis of her analysis of conditions which existed in her own time. Peter's achievements were used to legitimize a policy already formulated. For example, in her 1796 manifesto to the Iranian and Caucasian peoples announcing the war against Āqā Mohammad Khān, she cited the precedents of Peter's territorial acquisitions and treaties but put far greater emphasis on more recent events, especially Russia's obligation to protect Georgia and the harm done both countries and Iran as well by Āqā Mohammad Khān's brutal misrule. In the manifesto, Catherine laid claim to those Iranian "provinces which had been conquered by the just and victorious arms of Emperor Peter the Great, who is worthy of eternal glory."30 However, the preponderant theme of the manifesto was that the abuse of power by Āqā Mohammad Khān obliged Russia to intercede to destroy the tyrant and establish security and

30. Manifesto of March 27, 1796, Dubrovín, III, 125, 127.
justice in the afflicted territories. 31 Catherine's references to Peter's achievements also avoided studiously any mention of Peter's treaty with the Porte, according to which, the latter obtained control of all of Georgia and most of Azerbāijān.

The Petrine legacy influenced Catherine even less than her references to them would seem to indicate. In another statement on the subject of Russia's claim to parts of the Iranian empire, Catherine insisted that Āqā Mohammad Khān be made to cede the provinces on the western and southern shores of the Caspian. The territory in question was the same as that ceded to Russia by the treaty of 1723. However, Catherine based her claim not on that treaty but on the short-lived agreement made by her officials with 'Alī Morād Khān Zand, who ruled much of western and southern Iran from 1781 to 1785. 32

Although Catherine and her officials did not view Peter's Iranian project as a model which they were compelled to duplicate, they nonetheless admired the goals for which it had been launched. In Catherine's ukaz to V. A. Zubov, the commander of the 1796 expedition to the Caucasus, she praised Peter's "wise and far-sighted intentions" in attempting to acquire Iranian territory to use as a base for trade with the East. 33 In a similar tone, Zubov, in a memorandum on Russia's Asian trade, written some time between January and September 1802, observed wistfully that Russia had lost a wonderful opportunity to trade with India when Peter's Iranian project fell

31. Ibid., III, 125-9.

32. Catherine to Gudovich, September 4, 1795, Dubrovin, III, 25.

33. February 19, 1796, ibid., III, 70.
through.

There was one crucial difference between Catherine's and Peter's Iranian interests which overshadowed all others -- the shift of focus from the Caspian coast to Georgia. In the 1720's and 1730's, the only parts of Iran which Russia actually garrisoned were on the coast. Peter had plans for the Georgians and Armenians but when circumstances forced him to reduce the scale of his operations, it was the joint campaign with King Vakhtang which he chose to eliminate. The revived Christian state which Peter hoped to create was to be formed by the mass migration of Armenians and Georgians from their homelands to the Caspian province of Gilan, a predominantly Muslim area. Catherine's priorities were the opposite of Peter's. She, too, believed that Russia could derive great commercial advantage from the possession of the Caspian coast but the keystone of her Iranian policy was Georgia. When her plans had to be curtailed, it was the Caspian coast which

34. Akty, VI, part ii, 858; V. A. Zubov, "Obshchee obozrenie torgovli s Azielu", Russkii Arkhiv, 1873, book 1, p. 882. The editors of Akty attributed this unsigned document to Admiral Mordvinov, who was a member, along with Zubov, of the committee on Caspian Sea trade created by the Council of State on Alexander's orders on January 25, 1802. (AGS, III, part ii, col. 103) There are reasons to dispute this attribution. Alexander referred to having received such a memorandum from Zubov but there are no indications of the existence of several memoranda on the subject at that time. (Alexander to P. D. Tsitsianov, September 26, 1802, Akty, II, 8) An edition of the memorandum, based on a document in Zubov's papers, was published in Russkii Arkhiv in 1873 (book 1, pp. 879-94) two years before the version published in Akty. It is the verbatim twin of the Akty text save for a few differences in transcribing unfamiliar Persian words. If the memorandum was not written solely by Zubov, then it must have been the product of the committee on Caspian trade to which he and Mordvinov belonged. At the very least, Zubov must have been in full accord with its contents since he allowed his name to be associated with it.
received less attention. The coastal cities of Darband and Baku assumed new significance in Russia's eyes as supply links between Astrakhan and the Russian troops inland in Georgia.35 The desire to increase trade with Asia was not forgotten but it was the Georgian question which sparked the major Russian actions. Catherine did not agree to a request for military assistance from Hedāyatollāh Khān of Gilān, an opponent of Āqā Mohammad Khān,36 nor did she punish the latter for attacking the small Russian settlement near Astarābād in 1781 or for harassing the Russian consular staff and merchants when he took Gilān in 1786.37 The only determined effort Catherine made to gain control of Iranian territory came in 1796, in response to Āqā Mohammad's attack on Georgia.

The concern of Catherine and her advisers over Georgia developed slowly and spasmodically over a period of more than twenty years. During most of that time, Russia was interested in Georgia primarily for its usefulness against Russia's arch-enemy, the Ottoman empire, and only secondarily against a weak and disunited Iran. Active Russian involvement in Georgia had what might appear to be three false starts were it not for the fact that these three episodes had a cumulative influence on the evolution of Russia's attitudes towards the eastern Caucasus and Iran.

In the early 1770's, while Russia was at war with the Porte, Georgia was used as a base of operations for diversionary attacks on

36. Ibid., II, 154-5, 160-1.
37. Ibid., II, 156, 200.
Turkish territory in the western Caucasus. This strategy backfired when the blunders of the Russian commander permitted the Turks to win a decisive victory at P'oti. In the wake of that debacle, Russian enthusiasm for involvement in the Caucasus waned. During the war, King Erekle of Georgia, an ally of Catherine against the Porte, tried to convince her to take his kingdom under her protection. However, the Empress took a skeptical view of his offer, concluding that he was only trying to use Russia to fight his battles while offering no advantages to his benefactress. The ambitious plans for the acquisition of Caucasian territory still had not taken shape in Catherine's mind. In a move she probably regretted later, she ordered the withdrawal in October 1774 of the garrison established a few months earlier in Darband. The troops had been sent there at the request of its ruler, Fath 'Ali Khān (no relation to Fath 'Ali, the second Qājār shah), who was in difficulty in his war with the Qarāqaitāqs of Dāghestān. Catherine admonished Fath 'Ali Khān to look to Iran for protection since he was a subject of that empire and Russia was Iran's good neighbor.

In any event, Catherine was preoccupied by the first partition of Poland, the Pugachev rebellion, and the colonization of the northern coast of the Black Sea, gained by Russia in the treaty of Kūchūk

38. Lang, 170.
39. Ibid., 170, 172-3, 177.
40. Ibid., 173, 174.
41. AGS, I, part ii, cols. 788-9; Butkov, Materialy, II, 15, 21-7.
Qainarje (1774). Although Russia did not lose sight of the possibility of using Georgia against the Porte, from the peace of Küçük Qainarje until the outbreak of Alexander's war with the Porte in 1806, Russian authorities were determined not to do anything in the Caucasus which might provoke a Turkish counterattack in the region even during Catherine's second Turkish war (1787-92).

Not until the 1780's did Russia again show some interest in the Caucasus. This change came about in part because Catherine had put Prince Potemkin, a trusted assistant and proponent of increased Russian influence in western Asia, in charge of Russia's dealings with all of Asia, and in part because internal conditions in Iran and the Caucasus made the prospects for Russian expansion in the region appear promising. The immediate results did not seem particularly important at that time, especially since this period of increased activity was followed by one of disengagement during the second Russo-Turkish war. However, the long term result was significant for Russia and its neighbors because developments at that time helped prepare the way for a permanent Russian military foothold in Georgia.

The very fact that Catherine placed someone she valued as much as Prince Potemkin in charge of Russia's relations with Iran is a reflection of the extent of her desire to increase Russia's role in Iranian affairs and to use her Iranian policy to strengthen Russia's position against the Ottoman empire. Prince Potemkin was already in


43. Lang, 210-11.
charge of Russo-Turkish relations. In that capacity, he formulated the plans for the colonization of Russia's newly acquired Black Sea territories and the undermining of the Crimea in 1783.  

Potemkin planned to create a Christian state under Russian suzerainty in the Caucasus. This plan was directed against both the Ottoman empire and Iran, since it was intended that the new state be formed from the districts with large Armenian and Georgian populations on the borders of both Muslim states. The Prince also hoped to arrange for an alliance between Russia and Iran against the Turks. Specifically, he intended to create an Armenian state out of the former Iranian provinces of Qarābāgh, Qarājedāgh, Iravān (Yerevan), and Nakhjavān, then add Ganjeh and other parts of Āzerbāijān to Georgia, and use the two enlarged states as a bulwark against the Porte. At first, Potemkin intended to reach his objective by military means. However, military disorganization, ignorance of the routes, and the expectation of war with the Porte forced him to postpone the measures he had planned for 1784. Hopes for success were revived when it seemed possible that 'Ali Morād Khān Zand, who was having some success in his attempt to become ruler of Iran, might give Russia the territorial concessions it wanted in return for Russian support of his claim to the Iranian throne. As the talks between Potemkin's


45. Dubrovin, II, 31; Ioannisian, 98-103.

representative and 'Ali Morād continued during 1784, the latter began to question the wisdom of agreeing to the proposed alliance. Then, in 1785, 'Ali Morād died and a multi-sided struggle for power resumed. Potemkin never had the opportunity to revive his plan for a campaign in the Caucasus. The long-awaited war with the Ottoman empire broke out in 1787 and he died four years later while the war was still going on.

There was one Russian success in the Caucasus during the Potemkin years and it profoundly altered Russia's attitude toward the region. That success was the conclusion in 1783 of the Treaty of Georgievsk, making Georgia a protectorate of Russia. Georgia had been subject to Iran for most of the Safavi era ruled by its own kings of the Bagration dynasty, who were simultaneously members of the Safavi administration as vāli (prince-governor) of Georgia. When the Safavi state fell apart, the Iranian claim to Georgia could not be enforced. For twelve years, Georgia was ruled by the Ottoman empire, in accordance with the Russo-Turkish treaty of 1724. Later, Iranian suzerainty was re-established by Nāder Shāh as part of his attempt to revive the Iranian empire. Following his death, there was another period of political turbulence during which Georgia was once again outside Iranian control. Georgia grew in strength under the rule of King Erekle, who refused to acknowledge Iranian suzerainty and looked for a powerful state to protect his realm from the Turks, Iranians, Caucasian tribes, and

46. Ioannisian, 100-1, 103, 104; Butkov, Materialy, II, 148-51, 154; Chancellor A. A. Bezborodko to P. V. Bakunin, May 31, 1784, AKV, XVIII, 53-54.

47. Lang, 141, 149ff.
members of his own family who conspired against him. 48

An indication of the extent to which Russia's Caucasian policy was centered around the idea of using Georgia against the Ottoman empire is the provision of the Treaty of Georgievsk which called for Russia and Georgia to co-operate in the event of war in the Caucasus. 49 Of course, this provision could have been invoked against Iran but that cannot have been as pressing a concern for Russia in 1783 as the need to prepare for war with the Porte. In 1783, no Iranian ruler laid claim to any Caucasian territory. In fact, communications between Russia and 'Ali Morād seemed to bode well for friendly relations between the two countries. Russo-Turkish relations were another matter. There had already been fighting between the two nations in the Caucasus a decade earlier and another war, over the fate of the Crimea, seemed imminent. An indication of Russia's preoccupation with the Porte, rather than Iran, as the enemy is found in a letter from the imperial chancellor, Prince A. A. Bezborodko, to P. S. Potemkin, a relative of Prince Potemkin and commander of the Russian forces in the north Caucasus from 1782 to 1790. In Bezborodko's opinion, the agreement Russia was negotiating with 'Ali Morād would be useful because "no one doubts that from your quarter one should await not only the spread of our strength in the direction of Persia but also, in case of war, a strong diversion against the Turks." 50 Ironically, when the expected war


49. Ibid., 183.

50. "Pis'ma k grafu P. S. Potemkinu", Russkii Arkhiv, 1879, #8, 429 (misprint for 430); Bezborodko voiced the same opinion in a report to Catherine in 1784 on the negotiations with 'Ali Morād. Ioannisian, 101.
finally did break out in 1787, Russia, instead of using its troops in Georgia to open another front against the Turks, withdrew to the Terek River, north of the Caucasus, after one unsuccessful attack on the Turkish stronghold of Anapa in the western Caucasus. Contrary to the provisions of the Georgievsk treaty, Russia told Erekle to make whatever security arrangements he could with local powers.51

Thus ended the second stage in the evolution of Catherine's policy toward Georgia. For the next few years, Russia was too absorbed with fighting the Porte as well as developments in France and Poland to give much attention to Georgia. Not until 1795 was Catherine forced by the attempt of Āqā Mohammad Khān to re-establish Iranian hegemony over Georgia and Āzerbāijān to decide how serious her ambitions in the Caucasus really were.

One of the consequences of Russia's shift of focus from the Caspian coast to Georgia was that Russia decided to extend its suzerainty in the Caucasus largely on the basis of the strategic relation to Georgia of the other states in the region. These decisions were influenced considerably by King Erekle and other Caucasian Christians. St. Petersburg knew little about the Caucasus -- its politics or geography -- which gave the information provided by the Christians of the area particular weight in shaping Russia's opinions. As matters developed, the Georgia-centered policy, which Russia followed for its own benefit, also harmonized with what many Caucasian Christians wished.

Catherine was interested in the political history and social

51. Lang, 210-11.
conditions of the Caucasus and Iran and analyzed these subjects in terms of her philosophy of government. In her ukaz to V. A. Zubov of February 19, 1796, she discussed the turbulence in Iran from the fall of the Safavis to the rise of Āqā Mohammad Khān, emphasizing what she viewed as a recurring pattern of usurpation, tyranny, and civil war and showing an awareness of the major events and personalities of the period. She was also sufficiently interested in the Muslim world to learn about the differences between the Sunni and Shi'a sects of Islam. When considering whether Iran and the Ottoman empire might conspire against Russia, she dismissed the possibility on the grounds that the two Muslim states would not be able to overcome the animosity stemming from their sectarian differences.

Few Russian officials of Catherine's reign or later appreciated the significance of those differences or showed much understanding of the people they were trying to subject. For example, General I. V. Gudovich, despite years of service in the Caucasus, thought the Sunni-Shi'a rift was minor compared to the common bond of Islam. Therefore, in 1806, he put a Shi'a vassal on the throne of the predominantly Sunni khanate of Shakki. Contrary to the general's expectations, the action provoked considerable opposition and added to

52. Dubrovin, III, 69-78.
53. Catherine to Gudovich, September 4, 1795, ibid., III, 22.
54. Commander of Russia's north Caucasian frontier, the Caucasian Line, 1790-1795 and commander-in-chief of the Caucasus, 1806-1809.
55. Gudovich to Major-General P. F. Nebol'sin, November 12, 1806, Akty, III, 269-70; Alexander's gramota proclaiming Ja'far Qoli the Khan of Shakki, December 10, 1806, ibid., III, 271.
Russia's difficulties in maintaining control over Shakki. 56

Most of the high officials in St. Petersburg on whom Catherine relied for the detailed execution of her plans knew very little about Iran. For example, P. A. Zubov, her favorite and adviser in the last years of her life and a self-proclaimed expert on Iran, was of the opinion that the Iranian new year's day, No Ruz, was May 14, although, in reality, it falls on the vernal equinox. 57 In 1793, when the State Council pondered how Russia might best establish suzerainty over Baku, its members were hampered by the fact that none of them knew what the khanate's current political status was. 58

Prior to the decision in 1795 to go to war with Iran, Russian policy makers had access to few sources of information about that country or its Caucasian marches. It is virtually impossible to know what books published abroad were available in the original apart from the massive study of Safavi Iran, Jean Chardin's Voyages du Chevalier Chardin in Perse, et autres lieux de l'Orient, first published in London in 1686, and a composite work, Memoires historiques et geographiques sur les pays situees entre la mer Noire et la mer Caspienne, published in Paris in 1793. 59 A few other foreign books dealing mostly with events in the first half of the eighteenth century were available in translation. These included the account of an Englishman, John Bell,

56. Gudovich to Nebol'sin, January 1, 1807, ibid., III, 274-75.
57. P. A. Zubov, Shest' pism o Gruzii i Kavkaze (Moscow, 1834), 60.
59. P. G. Butkov had access to these works when he wrote his study of Russia and the Caucasus in the early nineteenth century. Materialy, III, pp. xxii, xxx.
who accompanied the Volynskii mission to the court of Shāh Soltān Hosein, published in Russian in St. Petersburg in 1776.60 There was also a translation of an unidentified French history of Nāder Shāh.61 For the later eighteenth century, there were studies written by the German scholars, S. G. Gmelin62 and J. A. Guldenspūdt.63 However, the latter's work was published posthumously and was marred by many inaccuracies.64 Whether Catherine or her advisers consulted any of these works is not known. There is evidence to indicate that by the early nineteenth century, several members of the Academy of Sciences decided that the available literature on the Caucasus and Iran was woefully inadequate. In the words of one of the Academicians, Count Jan Potocki, "It is certain that many calamities have happened in Russia in consequence of the want of information respecting distant provinces. . ."65

St. Petersburg's decisions regarding Iran and the Caucasus were made largely on the basis of information received from officers in the field and local Christians. The officials were not necessarily well informed, nor were their analyses of conditions always sound, as is

60. _Travels from St. Petersburg in Russia to Various Parts of Asia_ (Glasgow, 1763).

61. _Istoriiia o persidskom shakh Takhmasp-Kuli Khane_, three editions (St. Petersburg, 1762, 1788, 1790); see Butkov, _Materialy_, III, pp. x, xix.

62. _Reise durch Russland_, 3 volumes (St. Petersburg, 1770-74).

63. _Reisen durch Russland und in die Caucasischen Gebirge_, 2 volumes (St. Petersburg, 1787-91).

64. J. von Klaproth, _Travels in the Caucasus and Georgia performed in the years 1807 and 1808_, F. Shoberl, tr. (London, 1814), 2-3, hereafter referred to as _Travels_.

65. _Ibid._, 5.
demonstrated by Gudovich's insistence that Āqā Mohammad Khān's 1795 attack on Georgia could be repulsed by the joint forces of Imereti (a west Georgian principality), Georgia, and Qarābāgh. A decade earlier, Prince Potemkin had been encouraged to launch a campaign for the conquest of Āzerbāijān and the Caspian coast by the reports he received from his agent in Tbilisi, an adventurer named Dr. Reineggs. Reineggs offered Potemkin the prospect of easy and profitable success as he predicted that the Armenians would overthow their Muslim rulers at the Russians' approach and enticed his master with stories of rich deposits of precious metals in the Georgian soil. Reineggs neglected to mention that mining operations in Georgia had been unprofitable for years. He also reported that the best route from Russia to Georgia went overland from Astrakhan via Kizliar (on the eastern end of the Caucasian Line) and Qarābāgh. If Potemkin had been free to carry out his plans, this misinformation might have hindered the success of the venture. Reineggs was evidently unaware of the raids by mountain tribes, the stretches of desolate land, and the mountainous terrain, which all contributed to the perils of the route he recommended.


67. Ioannisian, 97; Klaproth, Tableau historique, geographique, ethnographique, et politique du Caucase et des pays limitrophes entre la Russie et la Perse (Leipzig, 1827), 175, hereafter referred to as Tableau.

68. Report to the State Council, June 24, 1801, AGS, I, part ii, col. 795.

69. Ioannisian, 97.
Although Armenians and Georgians were not handicapped by ignorance of the Caucasian lands as were the Russians, their reports were not necessarily reliable either. The Caucasian Christians who communicated with Russia often did so for the purpose of convincing that country to act to their advantage. 70

One of the Caucasians on whom Russia relied the most was an Armenian archbishop who lived in Russia, Iosif Argutinskii-Dolgorukov. A fervent advocate of Russian intervention in Caucasian affairs, he was an adviser to Russian officials when such a course of action was contemplated in 1783 and 1796. 71 It is difficult to judge to what extent his views shaped Russian policy decisions and to what extent they confirmed decisions reached independently. One indication of the value Prince Potemkin placed on information provided by Argutinskii-Dolgorukov was his order to publish the latter's account of Russo-Armenian relations during the reign of Peter the Great. 72

Argutinskii-Dogorukov urged Platon Zubov to put A. V. Suvorov, Russia's greatest living general, in command of the 1796 campaign

70. References to the Armenian and Georgian role in Russia's acquisition of the eastern Caucasus have been made for the purpose of showing these peoples' influence on the course of Russo-Iranian relations, not for judging their actions. In light of the traditionally close relation between religion and political authority in the region, it was not unreasonable for the Caucasian Christians to seek the help of their co-religionists in creating a political framework in which they would no longer be second class subjects.


72. Pobuditel'nyia prichiny posol'stva Karabakhskikh Melikov, s istoricheskim opisaniem otnositel'no, k Ego Imperatorskomu Velichestvu Petru Velikomu, i o izdannykh Imaniynkh Ego Ukaz na sii obstoaitel'stva (no place of publication given, 1790); see Butkov, Materialy, III, pp. xix-xx.
against Āqā Mohammad Khān. Zubov made the offer but Suvorov refused it.\(^{73}\) One of the Archbishop's principal concerns was that Georgia could never be safe until Russia took Darband, Bāku, Ganjeh, Shakki, and Shīrvān, after which it would be able to take the areas with large numbers of Armenian inhabitants as well.\(^{74}\) As he wrote at the outset of the 1796 campaign, "Armenians, who are located throughout Persia, want, at the earliest date, to see the Russians and attain liberty . . ."\(^{75}\)

The Archbishop rendered a variety of practical services to the Russians. He had the only Armenian and Persian type fonts anywhere in Russia at his Astrakhan press. This was where Cathe...\(^{76}\) e's manifesto announcing the 1796 campaign to the peoples of Iran and the Caucasus was printed.\(^{76}\) When Platon Zubov's younger brother, Valerian, was given command of the campaign, Argutinskii-Dolgorukov was sent to accompany and assist him. He served as a hostage for the safe return of the Khan of Shīrvān when the latter went to negotiate at Valerian Zubov's camp. He also sent word to the Armenians of the eastern Caucasus that the Russians had come to deliver them from Muslim rule. In fact, the only problem the Russians had with him was that he was so militantly anti-Muslim that he antagonized and alarmed some of the Caucasian Muslims whose co-operation the Russians desired.\(^{77}\) When the

\(^{73}\) Dubrovin, III, 57; F. V. Rostopohin to S. R. Vorontsov, February 1, 1796, AKV, VIII, 12.

\(^{74}\) Dubrovin, III, 58.

\(^{75}\) Ibid., III, 86.

\(^{76}\) Ibid., III, 57.

\(^{77}\) Ibid., III, 84, 145, 146, 148.
Catholicos of Echmiadzin, the head of the Armenian Church, died in 1799, Russia obtained the office for Argutinskii-Dolgorukov, who held it until his death in 1801.78

King Erekle, too, encouraged Russia to extend its suzerainty over the eastern Caucasus and the southern coast of the Caspian. When he counselled the Russians on what terms to seek in the negotiations with 'Ali Morād Khan Zand in the 1780's, he advised them to demand that the Zand prince cede all of Āzerbāijān, Gilān, Māzandarān, and Astarābād since 'Ali Morād did not control those provinces.79 Ever since the 1770's, Erekle had been trying to convince Russia that all the Muslims as well as Christians living between Georgia and Darband were ready and willing to submit to Russia.80 He also tried to win Russian backing for his disputed claim to Yerevan and Ganjeh by reporting that the khans of both had been generally acknowledged as vassals of Georgia for forty-five years and ought, therefore, to be part of Russia's Georgian protectorate.81

Russia was also interested in using Armenians and Georgians to further the development of its Asian trade. St. Petersburg believed that Georgia could be useful for commercial as well as military purposes because it could serve as a base for trade with Iran and

78. Ibid., IV, 211, 224.
79. Ibid., II, 186.
81. Erekle to Prince G. Chavchavadze, August 29, 1795, ibid., II, part ii, 93.
because Georgians could help Russia establish close communications with the Armenians living in Iran. 82 Russia had other plans for direct dealings with the Armenians. A large part of the attractiveness of the Armenians to the Russians lay in their reputation as the ubiquitous and indispensable merchants of western Asia. Therefore, Prince Potemkin sent a representative in 1782 to establish communications with the Catholicos at Echmiadzin and the Armenian merchant community in Yerevan. 83 There were also plans to send Armenians to inhabit proposed commercial establishments near Astarābād (1781) or in Darband (1784). 84 It was also hoped that through them Russia could gain control of the silk trade between India and Europe. 85

Even though Russian authorities saw a special relationship between themselves and their fellow Christians in the Caucasus, Catherine's policies were not altogether anti-Muslim. When Sheikh 'Ali Khān of Darband first agreed to submit to Russia in 1794, he was allowed to demonstrate his loyalty by kissing the Qur'ān instead of taking the usual oath on the Bible. 86 In her manifesto announcing the Zubov expedition, Catherine insisted that wherever Zubov went, he would establish secure government for all inhabitants, regardless of their

82. Butkov, Materialy, II, 367-8; V. A. Zubov's memoir on trade with Asia, Akty, VI, part ii, 860 and Russkii Arkhiv, 1873, book 1, 885-87.

83. Ioannisian, 97.

84. Dubrovin, III, 34, 156.

85. F. V. Rostopchin to Vorontsov, November 5, 1796, Akv, VIII, 151.

86. Session of the Council of State, February 20, 1794, AGS, I, part ii, col. 796.
religion, and that no peaceful individual would suffer any injury to
his person or property. In any event, Russia's military position
in the Caucasus was not nearly strong enough to permit it to risk
antagonizing the Muslims living there.

The buffer state Catherine and her advisers wanted to establish
in the Caucasus was to be based on Georgia with the addition of areas
which had some Armenian inhabitants or were, in Russia's opinion,
rightfully subject to Georgia. This applied to three Muslim-ruled
khanates, Ganjeh, Qarabagh, and Yerevan. Judging by the rough popu-
lation estimates made early in the nineteenth century, only one of
those khanates, Yerevan, was inhabited predominantly by Armenians.
Even so, it had a substantial non-Christian minority, perhaps a third
or more of its population, made up of Muslim Iranians, nomadic
Turkomen and Kurds, and a number of Jews. Ironically, this was the
one khanate among the three which Russia made no more than a half-
hearted effort to acquire in 1796. By comparison Qarabagh's
population was approximately ten percent Armenian. Ganjeh, too, was
predominantly Muslim, with Georgians as well as Armenians forming the
Christian minority.

87. Manifesto to the Caucasian and Iranian peoples, March 27, 1796,
Dubrovin, III, 127.

88. S. Bronevskii, Noveishiia geograficheskiiia i istoricheskiiia
izvestiia o Kavkaze, 2 parts (Moscow, 1823), I, 60; Klaproth,
Tableau, IV, 38.

89. General A. P. Tormasov to Privy Counsellor Gur'ev, August 2, 1810,
Akty, IV, 38.

90. Ibid., 37; R. Gordon, "Journal", British Museum, Additional
Russia's attitude towards the three khanates casts some light on the relation between Russia's Caucasian policy and local Christian influence. The Caucasian Christians were able to implant their partisan views in Russian minds but were not able to make Russia do anything which it did not consider beneficial to itself.

In recognizing Georgia's claim to Yerevan and Ganjeh, Russia accepted one version of a story which was really much more complicated. It was true that Erekle had compelled Yerevan and Ganjeh to recognize him as their suzerain but the Caucasus was an area in which sovereignty had changed many times. From the thirteenth century to the eighteenth, many parts of the eastern Caucasus, including Georgia, Yerevan and Ganjeh, had been subject at times to an Iranian government, at times to the Ottoman state. Even Catherine was of the opinion that Nāder Shāh's Caucasian conquests marked the restoration of territories, including Georgia, Yerevan, and Ganjeh, which were traditionally part of Iran.

In light of the double standard by which Russia viewed its own territorial claims and those of other nations, acts of hostility toward Georgia, particularly the participation of some Yerevanis and Ganjevis in Āqā Mohammad Khān's 1795 attack, were interpreted as proof of the necessity of incorporating both khanates into Georgia. The Russians did not inquire into the possibility that these actions might


92. Minorsky, "Tiflis", EI, IV, 758-60; Lang, 1ff; Lockhart, Nadir Shah, 83-91.

93. Catherine to V. A. Zubov, February 19, 1796, Dobrovin, III, 72.
have been provoked by the Georgians themselves, which was the way it appeared to the Yerevanis and Ganjevis. In 1780, Erekle attacked Yerevan for the purpose of forcing its khan to pay tribute. Georgian soldiers burned many homes, carried off many prisoners, and took much booty. Yerevani Armenians, who provided much of the khan's tax revenue, were forcibly resettled en masse in Georgia. Erekle attacked Ganjeh during the same campaign. He and his ally Ebrāhīm Khalīl Khān of Qarābāgh, deposed and blinded the khan of Ganjeh and put the government of that place into the hands of their own lieutenants. Even Erekle's grandson, Prince David, conceded that the soldiers from the two khanates were so ferocious in pillaging Tbilisi in 1795 "out of vengeance because the Georgians, in taking the cities of Ganjeh and Yerevan, burned their homes."

Russia's attitude toward Qarābāgh was more complicated than toward Yerevan or Ganjeh because it, unlike the latter two, had maintained an alliance with Erekle, even to the point of co-operating with him against fellow Muslims. There was an interval of hostility toward Georgia as a result of that country's submission to Russia in 1783 but in the later 1780's and the 1790's, Qarābāgh resumed its policy of co-operation. Ebrāhīm Khalīl Khān alone among the neighboring khans succeeded in defying Āqā Mohammad Khān's command that he

94. Bagrationi, 168; Brosset, II, part ii, 224-25; Lang, 78.
96. Bagrationi, 168.
97. Dubrovin, II, 51, 149, 175; Brosset, II, part ii, 224.
98. Dobrovin, II, 41; III, 149; Brosset, II, part ii, 263; Lang, 207.
submit in 1795 and withstood the Iranian siege of the capital, Shushā, in that year.

Since Qarābāgh was in a unique position among the Caucasian khanates vis-à-vis Georgia, Russia’s policy toward it was not consistent. Sometimes, it was considered no different from the other khanates of Iranian Armenia. Sometimes, it was considered a potential ally. Prince Potemkin wanted to overthrow Ebrāhim Khalil Khān and make Qarābāgh part of the Caucasian Christian state he hoped to create. Catherine, however, thought there was good reason to establish a protectorate over the khanate, leaving its ruler in power. The two attitudes represent two different concepts of Russian imperial power.

Catherine actively sought to project an image of herself as an enlightened monarch but she also believed that she was in truth what she proclaimed herself to be. Just as she assumed that the people of Iran and the Caucasus would prefer her enlightened rule to what she considered the barbarous tyranny of Āqā Mohammad Khān, she was certain that a Russian protectorate over Qarābāgh like the one established in Georgia "could serve as an example of this country's gentle proprietorship and a stimulus for many of our neighbors there to imitate the example of these two rulers Ėrekle and Ebrāhim Khalil." Catherine did not recommend this course of action merely as a modest effort at a time when Russia could act as boldly as it would wish. On

99. Catherine’s manifesto to the Caucasian and Iranian peoples, March 27, 1796, Cubrovin, III, 125-29.

100. Catherine to Prince Potemkin, May 5, 1783, N. K. Shil'der, ed., Sbornik Imperatorskago Russkago Istoricheskago Obshchestva, XXVII (1880), 256.
the contrary, she voiced this opinion in early May 1783, as plans for a large-scale Russian campaign in the Caucasus and Iran were being made. Her attitude toward Qarabagh and its ruler persisted into the 1790's. In her instructions to V. A. Zubov given on February 10, 1796, shortly before his departure for the Caucasus, Catherine made special mention of Ebrāhīm Khalīl, who "firmly and bravely is opposing Āqā Mohammad Khān."\textsuperscript{101} Therefore, she ordered Zubov to ensure that Ebrāhīm Khalīl kept power even though she also ordered him to strengthen ērekle and the leaders of the Armenian community (maleks), some of whom lived in Qarabagh.\textsuperscript{102}

In contrast, Prince Potemkin advocated a more aggressive policy in which ultimate goals were to be achieved quickly. He struck a dramatic, messianic tone, emphasizing the revival of beleaguered Caucasian Christendom, which was to be granted independence and prosperity through him. One month before Catherine informed Prince Grigorii of her wishes regarding Qarabagh, he wrote that Ebrāhīm Khalīl had to be removed from power and Qarabagh turned into a model province to attract Armenian settlers. In a letter to General P. S. Potemkin he stated that

It is necessary to overthrow Ebrāhīm Khalīl Khān of Shusha because after this Qarabagh will form an Armenian province independent of all except Russia. You will use all efforts there so that this new province will be organized in the most beneficial form for the people. In this way, other strong Armenian provinces will either follow their example or will come to Qarabagh in large numbers.\textsuperscript{103}

\textsuperscript{101} Dubrovin, III, 79.

\textsuperscript{102} Ibid., III, 79.

\textsuperscript{103} Ioannisian, 98.
The nature of the relationship between Prince Grigorii and his Empress was such that he did not take it upon himself to ignore Catherine's preference for a negotiated settlement with Qarābāgh. On the Prince's orders, P. S. Potemkin urged Ebrāhim Khalil to put himself under Russian protection and agree to pay tribute. The argument he used with the Khan has ironic overtones and seems to reflect the basic conception of both Potemkins of what Qarābāgh's ultimate relation to Russia would have to be. The General assured Ebrāhim Khalil that being a subject of Russia would make the Khan more powerful than he had been hitherto, just as had occurred in the case of Shahin Giray of the Crimea, whom Catherine had put in office twice.104 Shahin Giray was indeed made Khan of the Crimea by Russia on two occasions, in 1774 and again in 1776, after he had been overthrown by an uprising. However, Shahin Giray was hated by his subjects for being a Russian puppet. In 1778, a massive uprising forced him from power, this time permanently. He spent the remaining nine years of his life as a powerless exile.105 Moreover, just about the time General Potemkin sent this letter to Ebrāhim Khalil, Catherine, aided by Prince Grigorii, dispensed with indirect rule over the Crimea altogether and on April 8, 1783 decreed its incorporation into the Russian empire.

The two Potemkins' efforts to procure the negotiated submission of Ebrāhim Khalil illustrates an unexpected and unwanted repercussion of the Russo-Georgian agreement, a repercussion which plagued Russia


and the Caucasian rulers for the next several decades. If Russia viewed its relations with Georgia as the model for its relations with all but the most recalcitrant khans, it did not intend to treat all its vassals equally.

Ebrāhim Khalil had been of two minds about how to handle what he viewed as the Russian threat to his power brought about by Erekle's submission to Russia and the establishment of a Russian garrison in Georgia. He was also concerned over communications between some of his Armenian subjects and the Russians in Tbilisi. Eventually, he decided to follow Erekle's lead rather than risk fighting Russia.

Although Ebrāhim Khalil could not have known of the specific letter which Prince Grigorii sent General Potemkin, stating that Georgia must have pre-eminence over Qarābāgh, he did perceive Russia's attitude, especially after the General refused to aid him in taking complete control of Ganjeh, which was then under joint rule by Qarābāgh and Georgia. Ebrāhim Khalil's statements made it clear that he was afraid that Russia desired his political undoing. That is why he sought some assurance from General Potemkin that Russia would not limit his authority as Khan or alter the borders of Qarābāgh. Instead of reassuring him, the General replied that Ebrāhim Khalil was not allowed to make any stipulation regarding his submission but had to accept whatever terms the magnanimous Catherine would choose to

106. Dubrovin, II, 32, 34.
107. Ibid., II, 41.
108. Ibid., II, 41.
However, Erekle had proposed to the Russians the terms for his own submission and these bore a general resemblance to the provisions of the formal treaty, including Russia's recognition of Erekle and his heirs as the rulers of Georgia. Well kept political secrets were virtually nonexistent in the Caucasus. Rumors abounded and accurate information leaked out as well. In light of the special relationship between Georgia and Qarabāgh as well as Erekle's role in advising Ebrāhim Khalil to seek Russian protection, the Khan must have known something about the similarity between the terms proposed by Erekle and those of the treaty. Therefore, General Potemkin's unwillingness to allow Ebrāhim Khalil to submit terms must have appeared particularly ominous to the Khan. When he began to improve the fortifications of Shushā because he feared attack by Russia, General Potemkin offered him no reassurance, only the threat that the Russian army would not be daunted by the defenses of Shushā and that the only way to prevent attack by Russia was to submit quickly. The effect of the Potemkins' tactics was to make Ebrāhim Khalil stop trying to become a Russian vassal. His last attempt to offer terms to Russia was made in 1784. There was no reply.

It is not surprising that V. A. Zubov, whose self-confidence was

109. Ibid., II, 35; Butkov, Materialy, II, 144.

110. Lang, 183; Dubrovin, II, 1, 2.

111. A. Javānshir, "O politicheskom sushchestvovanii Karabakhskogo khanstva (s 1747 po 1805 god)", E. B. Shukiurzade, tr. and ed., Istoriia Karabakhskogo Khanstva (Baku, 1961), 75; Dubrovin, II, 35-36.


113. Ibid., II, 35-36.
matched only by his ambition, agreed with Prince Potemkin on the desirability of creating a larger Georgian state by the addition of the neighboring Muslim khanates, including Qarabagh. However, he also believed that, for practical reasons, any khan who was willing to co-operate with Russia ought to be left in power for the time being. This attitude reflected another characteristic of Russia's policy towards the Caucasian Christians. Russia's concern for their plight under Muslim rule was not so great as to compel it to undergo any inconvenience on their behalf. Three considerations shaped this policy: the wish to avoid provoking the Ottoman empire into war in the Caucasus; the hope of winning the support of Caucasian khans so that they, rather than Russia, would bear the burden of defending Georgia; and the need to settle for whatever could be achieved by compromise when the army was unable to bring about the desired results. As Zubov explained to one of the generals under his command, it was necessary "to put off until the proper time" the liberation of the Christians.

With this in mind, St. Petersburg ordered that no troops be sent to Yerevan, which was on the Turkish border. It was hoped that Mohammad Khān would submit voluntarily or that Erekle would be able to conquer the khanate, neither of which occurred. Zubov refused to send troops to help Erekle conquer Ganjeh after Javād Khān agreed to allow a Russian garrison to occupy the citadel of his capital.

116. Ibid., III, 67, 175, 177, 179.
117. Ibid., III, 174-75; 'Abbas Qoli Āqā Bakikhanov, Giulistan-Iram (Baku, 1926), 147.
Zubov was willing to go to great lengths to avoid a confrontation. When he uncovered a plot against his life devised by Ebrāhim Khalil, he chose not to use this as a pretext to overthrow the Khan and incorporate his realm into Georgia. Instead, he acted as if nothing had happened and continued to express his desire for amicable relations. This allowed Ebrāhim Khalil to change his mind and submit without being humiliated and at the same time spared Zubov from having to fight to subdue him.  

Increased interest in Georgia affected Russia's attitude not only toward Iranian Armenia but toward the other khanates lying between Georgia and the Caspian. This area now seemed necessary not only as a base for commercial and military dealings with Iran but also for the maintenance of Russia's position in Georgia. The road from Mozdok, on the Caucasian Line, to Tbilisi, a distance of only one hundred forty-five miles, appeared more direct than the route from Astrakhan across the treacherous waters of the Caspian to Darband or Baku and from there across some four hundred miles inland to Georgia. However, the Mozdok-Tbilisi route proved even more dangerous than the route from Astrakhan. Some of the difficulties were physical. The road was narrow, even after General Potemkin had it widened, and steep and high as well, crossing as it did the mountain barrier of the High Caucasus. Even the key pass, the Darial, was almost eight thousand feet high. The road was closed by snow about half the year; with the thaw came

118. Dubrovin, III, 153.
119. Baddeley, 20; Bronevskii, I, 260.
swollen rivers and rock slides. One of the worst dangers was not geological but human. The road could be cut by mountain tribesmen who were hostile to Russia. This happened in 1785 and taught Russia a painful lesson. When the Chechens were fighting the Russians of the Caucasian Line, they prevented any communications by the Mozdok-Tbilisi road. The two Russian battalions stationed in Georgia received no pay or materiel from Russia for two years and were forced to rely on Erekle, who was unable to supply more than a minimum of their needs. As a result, the Russian troops would have been incapable of fighting had they been required to do so. As Colonel Burnashev, the Russian commandant in Georgia at that time, reported to St. Petersburg, it was crucial for Russia to have a corridor connecting the central Caucasus with the Caspian ports. Consequently, Russia came to view the territories of Darband, Qobbeh, Baku, Shirvan, and Shaki as forming an indispensable link between Georgia and Astrakhan. Baku was a place of special interest to the Russians because of its harbor, the best on the Caspian. For that reason, Catherine selected it as the supply headquarters for the 1796 expedition. Various members of the

120. R. Ker Porter, Travels in Georgia, Persia, Armenia, Ancient Babylonia, etc. during the years 1817, 1818, 1819, and 1820, 2 volumes (London, 1821), I, 67, 72, 76, 89, 90-92; R. Mignan, A Winter Journey through Russia, the Caucasian Alps, and Georgia, 2 volumes (London, 1839), I, 42-43; R. Lyall, Travels in Russia, the Crimea, the Caucasus and Georgia, 2 volumes (London, 1825), I, 503; Count Kenson to Marquis F. O. Paulucci, February 22, 1812, Akty, V, 25; Prince M. B. Barclay de Tolley to Paulucci, July 14, 1811, ibid., V, 37; Dubrovin, III, 36-37.

121. Dubrovin, II, 137; Lang, 210.

122. Ioannisian, 99.

123. Catherine to V. A. Zubov, February 10, 1796, Dubrovin, III, 80.
Russian government also hoped to gain access to Iranian markets through Baku's trading connections. 124

Another result of the reconsideration of Russia's strategic position in the Caucasus once Georgia had become the prime concern was the conclusion that the line at which Iranian sovereignty had to end was the Aras River. This was partly the accidental result of the fact that the khanates forming Iranian Armenia and the corridor to the sea occupied the land up to the Aras but it also reflected a deliberate decision to use that large river as a clear cut and strategically advantageous border. 125

Although Georgia had become the keystone of Russia's Caucasian-Iranian policy, Catherine and her counselors had a lively interest in Asian trade as well. No matter how optimistic they may have been about the potential benefits of Russo-Iranian trade, the state of that trade in the eighteenth century did not bode well for future success. The problems involved more factors than the want of enlightened government, which Catherine expected to remedy by controlling Iranian affairs. Any project to expand Russo-Iranian trade would have to deal with the shortage of skilled manpower, ships, and commercial facilities as well as serious natural obstacles.

To conduct trade between Astrakhan and the Iranian ports required a large merchant fleet consisting of skilled seamen and well-built vessels. Russia lacked both. In 1784 when an English traveler, George

124. Session of the State Council, February 23, 1792, AGS, I, part ii, col. 795; V. A. Zubov's memoir on Asian trade, Akty, VI, part ii, 859; Butkov, Materialy, II, 389, 418; Dubrovin, III, 14, 80.

125. Catherine to V. A. Zubov, February 10, 1796, Dubrovin, III, 84.
Forster, sailed on a Russian merchant ship to Bāku from Mashhad-e Sar, the principal port of Māzandarān, he found the crew to be ill-qualified for their work. The captain had great difficulty in reading a compass but most of Russia's merchant ships on the Caspian were not equipped with them anyway.126 (However, Forster was favorably impressed by the abilities of the crew of a Russian naval vessel he observed at Bāku.)127

Russia's merchant ships were no better suited to the navigation of the Caspian than were their sailors. Most ships were in the one hundred fifty or two hundred fifty ton class.128 In comparison, England had 1,599 ships of two hundred tons or more, including 310 of three hundred sixty tons or more by 1788. There were close to 8,000 smaller ships in England as well but ships of the largest sizes sailed from many of the country's ports, not only London.129 Some of Russia's ships were built with flat bottoms, which may have been an advantage in negotiating the poor harbors along the Caspian coast but decreased the ships' maneuverability. In general, Russian merchant ships were not designed to sail in any direction save the one in which

126. Prince P. D. Tsitsianov to Count V. P. Kochubei, January 15, 1803, Akty, II, 792.


128. J. Bell, Travels from St. Petersburg in Russia to Various Parts of Asia, 2 volumes (Edinburgh, 1788), I, 52; J. Spilman, A Journey through Russia into Persia by two English Gentlemen (London, 1742), 10.

the wind was blowing at the time.130

Adam Olearius, who set sail from Astrakhan in 1636 with members of the Duke of Holstein's embassy to Iran, gave a vivid description of the terrors of sailing the Caspian in a Russian ship. Not far from Darband, the travelers encountered a storm which broke off the ship's main and mizzen masts and swamped it with water faster than its pumps could empty it. The travelers finally saved themselves by running the ship aground.131

The poor quality and inadequate number of Russia's Caspian merchant ships and seamen remained a problem into the early nineteenth century.132 Yet, for all its shortcomings, the Russian merchant fleet still played an important role in trade between Baku and the southern coast of the Caspian, as well as from Astrakhan.133

The most common Iranian merchant boat, the karaji (called kirzhim by the Russians), was a small, flat-bottomed vessel, on which the only shelter was provided by bundles of branches along the sides. A sack of stones did duty as an anchor.134 The karaji was used more for fishing and local shipping than for the main commercial runs.135

130. Bell, I, 52, 54; Forster, II, 212-13; Tsitsianov to Kochubei, January 15, 1803, Akty, II, 791-92.


133. Forster, II, 217, 222; Spilman, 10-11; Bell, I, 54.

134. Gmelin, II, 84; Forster, II, 217.

135. Bell, II, 44, 63.
There were other kinds of serious obstacles to increased Russo-Iranian trade which could not be solved by political means. Most Caspian ports, including Anzali, the most important commercial center on the southern coast, had no harbor. This forced ships to anchor several miles off shore in open waters, which, as Olearius' experience showed, put travelers at the mercy of severe storms. If the Russians wanted more sturdy or elaborate "factories" from which to conduct business, they would have to build them, as they tried to do with some difficulty in Anzali and at several sites near Astarābād.  

As the exceptionally high mortality rate of the troops that occupied Gilān from 1722 to 1732 showed, the Russians found the hot, humid climate of the southern coast of the Caspian, with its swamp-bred diseases, to be at least as much an impediment to their success in that region as any political hostilities. Also, the foremost attraction of trade with Iran, the silk industry of Gilān, suffered a severe reversal during the years of the Russian occupation, when many of those involved in the production of silk fled the province. It took years for the industry to revive.

For all these reasons, as well as the political turbulence which gripped Iran during most of the eighteenth century, Russo-Iranian trade was not extensive. There were efforts to stimulate its growth by the establishment of a "Persian Trading Company", founded by Peter the Great in 1723, and, later, by the abolition of that company in 1762,

137. Spilman, 28.
in the hope that private merchants would be more successful. Neither approach produced the desired results.

Russia exported to Iran iron and steel, a variety of fabrics, dyes, and perfumes, as well as goods from western Europe, including Dutch and English fabrics and sugar from English colonies in the West Indies. The most important of Russia's imports from Iran was Gilāni silk, which was considered Iran's best. Russia also bought cotton, rice, fruits, spices, and opium in Iranian bazaars. Much of the Russo-Iranian trade, especially in iron and steel, was transacted via Bāku.

Few of the merchants involved in this trade were Russian or Iranian. Instead, Armenians, many of whom lived in Russia, had dominated commerce between the two countries ever since Russia's withdrawal from Gilān in 1732. Indians also played an active role. They maintained a permanent settlement in a quarter of Astrakhan while

138. Butkov, Materialy, I, 147, 149.

139. Comments of Petr Soimonov, President of the College of Commerce, on a report on Caspian trade, n.d. /1798/ AGS, II, cols. 722-26; Report by A. R. Vorontsov and V. P. Kochubei to the State Council, June 24, 1808, ibid., III, part ii, col. 1203; Alexander to Tsitsianov, September 26, 1802, Akty, II, 9; Spilman, 4-5, 9.


141. Forster, II, 217, 220; Bell, I, 155; Olivier, III, 176.

142. Forster, II, 227; Spilman, 11.
Parsees maintained a fire temple near Baku.\textsuperscript{143}

Despite the existing state of affairs, St. Petersburg believed that trade with Iran was a potential source of great wealth for Russia. In Catherine's opinion, Iran was not condemned by nature to poverty. Therefore, the cause of the low volume of Russo-Iranian trade could be eliminated by the intervention of the enlightened Russian government. Catherine referred to the Iranians as people who were "so generously endowed by nature with the bounties and riches of their lands..." whose prosperity until that time had been limited only by the exactions of "the greedy plunderers of Persia."\textsuperscript{144} One of the accusations she made against Aqā Mohammad Khan was that, according to her interpretation of events, he "hindered all the benefits and advantages of our commerce" and overthrew the khans "who are devoted to Us and always favor our trade."\textsuperscript{145} A recurrent theme in the official pronouncements of Catherine and her officials was that Russia had to ensure stable government which would provide security of persons and property in Iran and the Caucasus. A revival of trade and increased prosperity would be the result.\textsuperscript{146} Moreover, Catherine was convinced that the 1790's were an especially opportune time in which to achieve

\textsuperscript{143} Spilman, 10-11; Forster, II, 228-29; Bell, I, 44; Soimonovich's comments on the Caspian trade, \textit{AGS}, II, col. 725.

\textsuperscript{144} Catherine to V. A. Zubov, February 19, 1796, Cubrovin, III, 72-73.

\textsuperscript{145} \textit{iIbid.}, III, 73; Manifesto to the Caucasian and Iranian peoples, March 27, 1796, \textit{iIbid.}, III, 126.

\textsuperscript{146} Catherine to V. A. Zubov, February 19, 1796, \textit{iIbid.}, III, 72-74; Manifesto of March 27, 1796, \textit{iIbid.}, III, 125, 127; Manifesto of P. S. Potemkin to the khans of the eastern Caucasus and Iran, April 12, 1783, \textit{iIbid.}, II, 163-64.
this ambition as there was no Iranian ruler who was strong enough to oppose Russia. 147

Catherine's approach to relations with Iran was not uncommon among Europeans who had dealings with Asia. George Forster, who passed through northeastern Iran and Baku in 1783-4, voiced sentiments regarding Russo-Iranian trade which closely resembled those expressed by Catherine on the eve of the Zubov expedition. While describing Baku, Forster remarked:

The influence acquired by Russia in the northwest corner of Persia, has been accompanied by reciprocal benefits, and that were it wholly annexed to the Russian dominion, the body of people would derive security, of which they have long been deprived, and by subjection to the orders of a civilized, active government, they would necessarily become useful subjects and profitable members of society. 148

In addition to the opportunity to purchase silk, trade between Russia, Iran, and the Caucasian khanates offered the alluring possibility of access to the riches of India. Catherine and her officials believed that commerce between western Europe and India brought great advantages to the Westerners. Valerian Zubov, in his memorandum on Asian trade, referred to "trade with India, from which Europe derives a most significant part of its riches . . ." 149 His brother, Platon, also believed fervently in the desirability of Russia setting up a commercial foothold in the Caucasus to function like the British East India Company and become its rival. 150

147. Ukaz of April 19, 1793, Butkov, Materialy, II, 287.
148. Forster, II, 233-34.
149. Akty, VI, part ii, 861.
Catherine's reign was an era during which the Russian elite sought to acquire prosperity comparable to that of Western Europe. They purchased their own Western luxury goods and also looked, at least in some cases, for the key to the West's success. This led not only to the borrowing of Western technology and scholarship but also the desire to tap what appeared to be the very source of the West's riches -- its far-flung commercial empires. There is also the possibility that late eighteenth century Russians viewed such a commercial empire as the sign of having earned membership in the community of advanced, civilized states.

In any case, Catherine was full of optimism over the projected establishment of Russo-Indian trade via Iran. As she explained to V. A. Zubov:

The establishment of peace and order in Persia will open to us rich markets not only along the shores of the Caspian Sea but within the borders of the Persian provinces. By means of the latter it would be easily possible to open the routes to India and, attracting this very rich commerce toward us by much shorter routes than those which all the European nations follow, going around the Cape of Good Hope, it will be possible to turn to our benefit all the advantages being obtained by the Europeans.  

There are some indications that even members of the aristocracy who did not have a personal stake in the government's Oriental ambitions shared the enthusiasm for trade with Iran and India. For example, S. R. Vorontsov, the ambassador to London (1785-1800 and 1801-6), was deeply interested in many aspects of English civilization, yet he thought it important to point out to his brother, Alexander, then President of the College of Commerce and a member of the State Council,

151. Catherine to V. A. Zubov, February 19, 1796, Dubrovin, III, 73.
that if only St. Petersburg placed more importance on the government of Astrakhan, its Caspian port, it could develop "a great commerce with Persia."¹⁵² A few years later, S. R. Vorontsov again pressed his brother for information about Russo-Iranian trade.¹⁵³ G. R. Derzhavin's poem celebrating V. A. Zubov's capture of Darband reflects the optimism of the Empress' admirers over the prospects for trade with India. Derzhavin compared Zubov's successful siege of Darband to the victory of Alexander the Great over Darius and added:

Oh happiness! See already thronging to us
Elephants, laden with riches,
Covered with carpets from India!
Throng of people!
Silver and gold flow like beneficent rain from heaven!¹⁵⁴

If the predictions of the ease with which the Russians would become the dominant force in Europe's trade with India appear to be the fanciful delusions of people who knew very little about the route from the Caspian to the Subcontinent, it should be noted that G. A. Olivier, who traveled through Egypt and Syria from 1794 until he reached Iran about the time of the Zubov expedition, drew exactly the same conclusions as Catherine. He, too, believed Russia could corner the market on jewels, fabrics, and other sought after Indian goods, transport them overland at small cost, and undercut the prices of the British East India Company. The only obstacle he anticipated was the unsettled condition of the southern fringe of Russia.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵². February 2, 1787, AKV, IV, 96.
¹⁵³. January 4, 1790, ibid., IX, 163.
¹⁵⁵. Olivier, III, 176.
As a step toward the improvement of Russia's Asian trade, Catherine attempted to establish trading centers under military protection on the southeastern Caspian coast, near Astarābād, and the southwestern coast, at Anzali. The Astarābād region was particularly attractive to the Russians because they saw it as the best connecting point for trade with India. As V. A. Zubov wrote some years later, Astarābād was "only about one thousand versts across the mountains" from India.156 (One thousand versts equals about six hundred sixty miles. The real distance from Astarābād to the Indus is approximately twice that.)

In 1781, Catherine sent troops under Count Voinovich to found a fortified commercial establishment on the southeastern shore of the Caspian. Voinovich first tried to set up a trading post at Ashraf, a town located five miles inland from Astarābād Bay. However, the local ruler, Āqā Mohammad Khān, objected, despite Voinovich's efforts to intimidate him, and an agreement was reached whereby the post was moved about sixteen miles east to Qarādovin. Soon after, Āqā Mohammad became suspicious of the Russians for building a fort large enough to hold one thousand people and for buying at high prices and selling at low ones. He later explained that he had received a report that the expedition was really directed against him and that Iranian merchants had already been imprisoned in Russia. At his orders, all the members of the Russian expedition were imprisoned but were later released on condition that they return to Russia, which they did in 1782.157

156. Notes on trade with Asia, Akty, VI, part ii, 861.

157. Butkov, Materialy, II, 84-99; Rabino, Mazandaran and Astarabad, 67-68; Forster, II, 201; Malcolm, II, 282; Lang, 180.
Catherine cited Āqā Mohammad's actions in this matter as one of the offenses against Russia for which V. A. Zubov would punish him.\textsuperscript{158} Despite the failure of the Voinovich expedition, Russia was able to maintain a very modest commercial settlement at Mashhad-e Sar on the Māzandarān coast, at least as of 1784. There, George Forster saw a few wattle houses occupied by Russians. While he was in the village, three Russian merchant ships from Bāku made one of their infrequent visits.\textsuperscript{159}

Russian interest in turning Iran's Caspian provinces into a commercial center was encouraged by the apparent willingness of various rivals for power in Iran to cede this region to Russia in return for its support. Even though the territorial provisions of the Russo-Iranian treaty of 1723 had long ago been rendered irrelevant and the plans for a treaty with 'Ali Morād Khān Zand had collapsed with his death, the 1780's and 1790's presented the Russians with what seemed to be promising opportunities to obtain new territorial concessions from an Iranian ruler. The unsuccessful manner in which Russia pursued this goal vividly illustrates two related problems which that country experienced in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in trying to extend its influence over Iran and the Caucasus. The first problem was the danger that the officials responsible for the execution of Russian policy would, for personal reasons, act in a manner detrimental to the attainment of St. Petersburg's goals. The other problem was that members of the central government were so unfamiliar with Iran

\textsuperscript{158} Catherine to V. A. Zubov, February 19, 1796, Dubrovin, III, 74-75.

\textsuperscript{159} Forster, II, 212-213.
and the Caucasus that they were often unable to see through the self-
justifying explanations given by local officials for their actions.

About the time of 'Ali Morād's death, another ruler of part of
Iran Hedāyatollāh Khān of Gilān, turned to Russia for help. Hedāyatollāh
was made Khān of Gilān sometime in the mid-1750's by Mohammad Hasan
Khān Qājār, Āqā Mohammad's father. After Mohammad Hasan's death,
Hedāyatollāh was alternately hostile or submissive to the Zand rulers
Karim and 'Ali Morād. His first clash with Āqā Mohammad occurred in
1196 AH (1781/2), when the latter drove him into exile in Shirvān, in
the Caucasus, where he remained until his return to power four years
later. He antagonized Āqā Mohammad by giving shelter to the latter's
rebel brother. Therefore, in 1785, when Āqā Mohammad again demanded
that he submit, surrender the offending brother, give hostages, and
pay tribute, Hedāyatollāh offered instead to submit to Russia and
was accepted. However, there were displeasing conditions attached to
Russia's acceptance. This is another example of the way Russia's
determination to establish suzerainty over Muslim rulers without
offering any encouragement or compromise led to the frustration of
Russia's plans. The demands which antagonized Hedāyatollāh were the
sending of one son and other relatives to St. Petersburg as hostages,
the payment of a token tribute, and most significantly, the cession of
part of Anzali to the Russians. This last demand in particular made
Hedāyatollāh doubt Russia's good will. Once Āqā Mohammad turned his

du Monde Musulman, XXXII (1916-17), 473-75; "Abd or-Razzaq
Domboli, Ma'āser Soltāniyeh (Tehran, 1392 (Qomri)), 18;
Fasā'i, 14-15.
attention away from Gilān,\footnote{In 1786, he had to retake Esfahān from Ja'far Khān Zand and subdue a rebellion in the vicinity of Qazvin. Fasā'ī, 24.} Hedāyatollāh lost interest in becoming a Russian vassal.\footnote{Dubrovin, II, 178-79, 183.}

However, Russia was still interested in acquiring an enclave at Anzali. In pursuing that goal, Russia proved the accuracy of Hedāyatollāh's fears that it sought his undoing.\footnote{Ibid., II, 180-82.} During 1786, Skilichii, the Russian consul in Anzali, and the former consul, Tumanovskii, urged Āqā Mohammad to attack Hedāyatollāh while they withheld aid from the latter. By then, Hedāyatollāh was so desperate that he was willing to agree to all of Russia's demands. On September 30, 1786, his last stronghold fell and he was forced to take refuge on a Russian ship. Tumanovskii and Skilichii then turned him over to his mortal enemy, the Khan of Shaft,\footnote{Shaft was a district of Gilān. A blood feud between its khans and Hedāyatollāh's family, the khans of another district, Fuman, began in the early eighteenth century and continued until 1800. Rabino, "Les Provinces Caspiennes de la Perse Le Guilan", 179-80.} who killed him.\footnote{Dubrovin, II, 184-85, 188, 191, 193-94, 197-98; Domboli, 19.}

Russia's failure to obtain control over Gilān by establishing close ties with its Khan was largely the result of its own miscalculations. The Russian policy of making any khan who wanted to submit meet certain demands before Russia would agree to protect him postponed Hedāyatollāh's submission and encouraged animosity and mistrust on both sides. However, the principal cause of Russia's failure was the
implacable determination of the officials immediately responsible for dealing with Hedāyatollāh to bring about his downfall. Skilichii turned against him because of his initial rejection of Russia's demands. The Consul was unable to appreciate why Russia's terms were objectionable and decided instead that Hedāyatollāh confirmed his opinion of the Iranian, "insolent and uncouth; he does not understand gentleness and has grown arrogant because until now he has not been punished."\textsuperscript{166} Tumanovskii's unscrupulousness and his loathing for Hedāyatollāh were even greater than Skilichii's. Even after Hedāyatollāh agreed to all Russia's terms, Tumanovskii obtained Russian weapons on the pretext of using them to defend Russian merchants in Anzali and then turned the weapons over to Āqā Mohammad. When the Qājār chief considered lifting the siege, Tumanovskii offered additional help, although that proved unnecessary. After it became clear that Āqā Mohammad would win, Hedāyatollāh asked to be evacuated by the Russians. Tumanovskii used this request to try to extort a large bribe, which, after some haggling, Hedāyatollāh's representative disgustedly refused to pay.\textsuperscript{167}

In their reports of developments in Gilān, Skilichii and Tumanovskii portrayed all of Hedāyatollāh's actions in the most negative light. Prince Potemkin and General Potemkin accepted these assessments. For example, Prince Grigorii's initial displeasure over his agents' harsh treatment of Hedāyatollāh gave way to approval when he learned from their dispatches that the Khan had imposed a tariff on Russian

\textsuperscript{166} Dubrovin, II, 183.

\textsuperscript{167} Ibid., II, 197, 199.
merchants in Anzali and had plotted to seize Skilichii and Tumanovskii. The dispatches did not take into account any justification he might have had for these actions. He did indeed tax Russian exports from Gilān but he badly needed money to oppose Āqā Mohammad. He had asked for help from Russia to enable him to withstand the pressure but had not received any on terms he could accept. Therefore, he had to look to his own resources for financing; tariffs were his main source of revenue. His attempt to capture Skilichii and Tumanovskii was made because the presence of his avowed enemy, Tumanovskii, and two Russian warships must have convinced him that Russia intended to seize Anzali, especially since Russia had already demanded that he surrender part of the town. Shortly before this, P. S. Potemkin had criticized Hedāyatollāh for building a wall around Anzali to prepare for a Qājār attack. The wall, said the General, was an improper restraint on the movement and freedom of the Russian subjects, whose quarter in Anzali was not subject to Hedāyatollāh.

Despite the crucial role of Russian officials in the downfall of Hedāyatollāh, Catherine referred to Āqā Mohammad's attack on him as one of the steps in the Qājār leader's deplorable usurpation of the Iranian throne. She added that he had obtained control of Gilān "more by treachery than by courage". She did not mention the activities of her representatives there or the provocation given Āqā Mohammad by

168. Ibid., II, 201.
169. Ibid., II, 180, 190.
170. Ibid., II, 187, 189-90.
171. Catherine to V. A. Zubov, February 19, 1796, ibid., III, 75.
Hedāyatollāh's support for the former's rebel brother. These accusations were made not in a propaganda tract for public consumption but in her instructions to V. A. Zubov, in which she set forth her analysis of Russo-Iranian relations.

As the Russian attempt to arrange the submission of Hedāyatollāh foundered, officials tried to arrange for the submission of Āqā Mohammad instead. Russia had already missed the opportunity to improve relations with him on two previous occasions. First, there was the debacle of the Voinovich expedition. After that, Āqā Mohammad sent an ambassador to St. Petersburg in 1783 for the purpose of easing the tensions between the two countries. However, Catherine refused to receive the ambassador and sent him back with a note saying that she did not consider the Khan to be the legitimate ruler of Mazandaran or Astarahād and warning that his actions had put him in danger of "stern punishment" by Russia. 172

In the mid-1780's, Āqā Mohammad still had much work to do to overcome his rivals before he could claim the throne of Iran. Russian support might have been helpful in furthering his ambitions while that country's hostility threatened his prospects. Therefore, when Skilichii and Tumanovskii urged him to attack Gilān, he expressed his desire for friendly relations with Russia. 173 However, Āqā Mohammad was a man of far different mettle and ambition from Hedāyatollāh or the other khans who tried to make some agreement with Russia. Even though in 1786 much of Iran remained outside his control, the tone of his

172. Butkov, Materialy, II, 95.
173. Dubrovin, II, 184, 194, 195.
letters to Russia showed that he viewed co-operation with that country as an alliance between two sovereigns, not the submission of a vassal to his Empress.174 Still, he did not wish to antagonize Russia over trade with Iran. He reassured the Russians that he would not do anything to impede commerce between their two countries and promised that there would be no tax on Iranian silk.175 Despite these conciliatory gestures, Āqā Mohammad was deeply mistrustful of Russia's expansionist designs. This was expressed in a recurring theme of his dealings with Russia in Astaraabād and Anzalī and in the negotiations for a commercial treaty. Under no circumstances would he consent to Russia's building fortifications anywhere in Iran.176

The developing accord between Āqā Mohammad and Russia collapsed at the moment of apparent success, the downfall of Hedāyatollāh. The cause was not the inherent difference between the concepts held by Russian officials and Āqā Mohammad of the kind of relations which should exist between them. The rupture, which had momentous consequences, was caused by bizarre, non-political developments. Shortly before completing the conquest of Gilān, Āqā Mohammad offered the venal Tumanovskii seventy thousand rubles if the latter would refrain from aiding Hedāyatollāh. After Āqā Mohammad's victory, Tumanovskii complained that he had not received the promised bribe, to which Āqā Mohammad replied that Tumanovskii and Skilichii had secretly taken possession of Hedāyatollāh's valuables and, therefore, ought to pay

174. Ibid., II, 185, 193, 194.
175. Ibid., II, 184, 194.
176. Ibid., II, 180, 201, 204.
him two million rubles as his share of the booty. Skilichii refused, which led Āqā Mohammad to show his defiance by placing a tariff on all imports from Russia.177 Despite all these difficulties, General Potemkin tried once more, in the spring of 1787, to reach some agreement with Āqā Mohammad. As before, the latter was willing and promised Russia that its merchants would be allowed to trade freely throughout Iran. The failure of this attempt had nothing to do with the intentions of either side. Āqā Mohammad's emissary to Potemkin killed one of his own servants while on Russian soil and was therefore deported. After that, Russia turned its attention instead to Āqā Mohammad's brother Mortazā Qoli.178

Russian sources neglect to mention that Mortazā Qoli, whom they depicted as the victim of a lawless tyrant, had been forced into exile in Russia not because of some vicious whim of his brother but because he had tried to make himself ruler of Iran and had been defeated after four years of warfare. Even then, Āqā Mohammad pardoned his brother and put him in charge of Astarābād and eastern Māzandarān but Mortazā Qoli fled and sought Russian support for his claims.179 From 1787 on, Russia attempted to back Mortazā Qoli's claim to the provinces of Gilān, Māzandarān, and Astarābād. The initial efforts on his behalf failed because of poor co-ordination between Russian support troops and Mortazā Qoli's attacks on Gilān. Moreover, there was very little support for the pretender within Iran. Between 1787 and 1792, any

177. Ibid., II, 194-95, 200
178. Ibid., II, 202, 205.
179. Malcolm, II, 268; Fasā’ī, 6, 13, 17.
plans to aid Mortazā Qoli had to yield precedence to the war against the Ottoman empire. 180

Since Mortazā Qoli was a refugee with scant resources and no way to enforce his claim to any territory, he offered extensive concessions in return for Russian backing. He promised the submission of Gilān, Māzandarān, and Astarābād to Russia, the outright cession of Anzali and the peninsula on which it is located, and the payment of ten thousand rubles to support a Russian garrison in that town on the condition that Russia build a fort there. 181 Once the fighting between Russia and the Porte was over, Catherine was quite eager to aid Mortazā Qoli. Even so, she put Russian commerce first, insisting that no action be taken if it would jeopardize Russian trade. 182 Eventually, she was persuaded to wait for an opportune moment, when some Caucasian vassal could be made to do battle for Mortazā Qoli in Russia's stead. In the meantime, the impoverished refugee was allotted a pension and permitted to live in Russia. 183 Nothing more was done about him until the 1796 expedition, when he was sent to accompany V. A. Zubov. 184 Plans to aid him were among the many which had to be dropped when the campaign met with unexpected difficulties.


181. Session of the State Council, January 12, 1792, AGS, I, part ii, col. 790.

182. Ibid., II, part ii, col. 793.

183. Ibid., I, part ii, cols. 793-95; Dubrovin, III, 5.

The principal result of Russia's support for Mortazā Qoli was that it further antagonized Āqā Mohammad. The latter's appointee as governor of Gilān, Soleimān Khān, responded to Russia's actions by cutting off the Russian settlement in Anzali from all communications with the outside world. This led to the disruption of Russian commerce and considerable personal suffering among the Russian community in Anzali. 185

By the last year of Catherine's reign, Russia had embarked with deceptive ease on a policy of increased involvement in the affairs of the countries which lay south of the Caucasus Mountains. Russia's goals and its methods of attaining them were essentially defined by this time in the form they would maintain during succeeding decades. The concentration on Georgia as the keystone of its operations, the reliance on Caucasian Christians as informants and allies, the designation of which territories should be acquired, and the anticipation of great riches to be won had already taken on the luster of irrefutable truths. At the same time, other patterns of Russia's Caucasian involvement had also emerged clearly. St. Petersburg was barely able to control its ambitious officers in the field. Virtually every Russian official, in the field or the capital, appraised conditions through the distorting filters of great ignorance and well nigh obsessive contempt for the people with whom they had to deal. It seemed as if the only step remaining was for Russia to stage a simple military operation in order to realize its ambitions in this quarter.

185. Ibid., II, 302-3.
Chapter II

The Khanates of the Eastern Caucasus

on the Eve of the Russian Conquest

By the time Catherine decided to put her Georgia-centered policy into action, that country was much weaker than it had been at the time it became a Russian protectorate. Between the signing of the Treaty of Georgievsk in 1783 and the permanent incorporation of Georgia into the Russian Empire in 1801, the population was reduced from sixty-one thousand families to thirty-five thousand.¹ Many of those who remained abandoned their farms and moved to Tbilisi in the hope of finding shelter. Thus farms which might have been producing food lay idle while the refugee farmers barely eked out a living as shopkeepers.²

By comparison, the Muslim-ruled khanates of the eastern Caucasus covered a larger area and had a much larger population, estimated at more than eighty thousand families.³ These khanates occupied the territory from Yerevan, bounded on the north by Georgia and on the west by the Ottoman Empire, to Baku, on the Absheron peninsula, which extended eastwards into the Caspian Sea. The region's northernmost territory was Darband, on the edge of Daghestan, its southernmost,

¹. Knorrning to Emperor Alexander, August 28, 1801, Akty, I, 426.
². Tsitsianov to Executive Expedition, April 1, 1804, ibid., II, 49; Alexander to Knorrning, September 12, 1801, ibid., I, 435.
³. Based on the estimates given for specific khanates, see below.
Tâlesh, just north of Gilân on the Caspian coast. There was considerable diversity among the khanates with regard to religious and ethnic composition as well as economic and political strength. Muslims of the Sunni and Shi'a sects, Orthodox and Armenian (Monophysite) Christians, and Jews all lived in the region. Azeri Turkish was the mother tongue of most Muslims but Persian was widely understood as the language of government, learning, and commerce. In the areas of political and social structure, the khanates had much in common.

At the top of the political system in each territory was the khan, the head of the administration, commander in chief of the army, and final arbiter of legal matters in cases subject to secular common law (urf), with the authority to decide the life or death of the accused.

For all the khans' power, they were subject to certain constraints.

A European observer noted that at least some khans were expected to

4. See, for example, the letters of various khans to Russian officials: Javâd Khân of Ganjeh to Knorrin, n.d., Akty, I, 607-08, Mohammad Khân of Yerevan to Kovalenskii, n.d., ibid., I, 614-15, Salim Khân of Shakhki to Tsitsianov, n.d., ibid., II, 640, Mostafâ Khân of Shirvân to Tsitsianov, n.d., ibid., II, 659-60; Bronevskii, II, 338, 339-40, 382, 401; Serebrov, 176, 178, 179; I. Berezin, Puteshestvie po Dagestane i Zakavkaz'iu (Kazan', 1850), II, 45; P. G. Butkov, "Vyderzhki iz 'Proekta ocheta o persidskoj ekspeditsii v vide pisem' 1796 g.", Kosven and Khashaev, 203, 204-05 (hereafter referred to as "Vyderzhki"); G. T. Keppel, Personal Narrative of a Journey from India to England (London, 1827), 280.

5. Treaty of submission to Russia of Mostafâ Khân of Shirvân, December 25, 1803, see Tsitsianov to Alexander, December 27, 1805, Akty, II, 676; treaty of submission to Russia of Ebrâhim Khalil Khân of Qarâbâgh, May 14, 1805, ibid., II, 705; negotiations between Allâh Verdi Beg and Tsitsianov, see Tsitsianov to Alexander, March 31, 1803, ibid., II, 730; terms of Bâku's submission as approved by Allâh Verdi Beg, March 31, 1803, ibid., II, 731; treaty of submission of Ja'far Qoli Khân of Shakhki, December 31, 1806, ibid., III, 274.
consult with a divân (council) of begs (nobles) and others of military
distinction before making any decision on matters of political or
military importance or judging legal matters, especially criminal
cases. Moreover, if a khan acted in a manner which was not consonant
with traditional standards, he was liable to the wrath of his subjects. 6
In the eighteenth century, four rulers 7 who were considered intolerably
harsh or otherwise unacceptable were overthrown by uprisings of their
subjects in conjunction with the efforts of rival claimants to power. 8

A khan was not only the ruler of his territory, he was, to a
considerable extent, its owner. For example, the khans owned most of
the arable land. 9 In return for tilling the khan's land or grazing
flocks upon it, his subjects paid an annual tax of a portion of the
harvest and the flocks. The tax on animals was usually two for every

6. F. Marschall von Bieberstein, Tableau des provinces situées sur la
côte occidentale de la mer Caspienne entre les fleuves Terek et
Kour (St. Petersburg, 1798), 98.

7. Hāji Mohammad 'Alī, Khān of Shirvān under Nāder Shāh, Malek Najaf,
Khān of Shakkī under Nāder Shāh, Qāsem Khān of Shirvān (early
1790's), and the Georgian and Qārabāghi officials who administered
Ganjeh in the 1780's.

8. Gmelin, III, 61; B. Dorn, "Geschichte Schirwans unter den Statt-
haltern und Chanen von 1558-1820", Mémoires de l'Académie Impériale
des Sciences de St-Pétersburg, Vère serie, sciences politiques,
histoire, philologie, V (1845), 418; (Kerim Āgā Fath?), "Kratkaia
istoriia shekinskikh khanov", F. Babaev, ed., Iz istorii shekinskogo
khanstva, (Bāku, 1958), 45-47, hereafter referred to as "Shekinskie
khany"; Hāji Seyyed 'Abd al-Hamīd, "Rodoslovnaia shekinskikh khanov
iikh potomkov", Babaev, 58-59; Bakikhanov, 131, 140-41.

9. J. Klaproth, 149; J. F. Gamba, Voyage dans la Russie méridionale et
particulièrement dans les provinces situées au-delà du Caucase, fait
depuis 1820 jusque' en 1824, 2 vols. (Paris, 1826), III, 283-84; Kh.
M. Ibragimbeili, Rossiia i Azerbaidzhan v pervoi treti XIX veka
(Moscow, 1969), 44.
hundred head. The kind of crops grown and the financial needs of the various khans differed substantially, making it difficult to generalize about the size of the harvest tax and the crops on which it was levied. In Ganjeh and Qobbeh, where grain cultivation was a principle economic activity, barley, wheat and other cereals were the commodities most important for tax purposes. However, Shirvān and Shakki, which were noted for their silk, taxed that commodity much more than grains.

If a khanate had some other lucrative asset, that too was considered the property of the ruler, who then rented out a concession for the exploitation of that resource. Oil, salt, and seal hunting were particularly good revenue producers in Baku. The oil concession brought the khan the equivalent of about 70,000 rubles annually; seal hunting brought in about 30,000 rubles. The concession for fishing in the vicinity of Sāleyān brought the khan of Shirvān several tens of thousands of rubles annually. In Yerevan, where cotton was an important crop, the khan held a monopoly on its export.


11. Report on the revenue and expenses of Ganjeh concessions, April 1804 to October 1805, Akty, 601; Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 205.


were run as concessions from the khans in Baku and Ganjeh. The khan of the latter was also considered the owner of all the shops within his realm. Khans taxed imports and exports but these were administered as concessions sold to tax farmers. There were also taxes on more mundane economic activities such as the sale of most staple foods, cloth, and thread.

Finally, the khans levied a head tax (in Qobbeh, a hearth tax) on all adult males, except those in the higher levels of service, religious authorities, and certain others who had special exemptions. The amount of the tax varied among the khanates but, in general, it was the equivalent of a few rubles per year. A single man paid slightly more than half the rate for a married man while Christians and Jews paid almost twice as much as Muslims, except in Yerevan, where they paid a larger share of their harvest instead. The surtax on Christians and Jews was not unique to the Caucasus. The practice of assessing a head tax (jizya) on tolerated non-Muslim communities in return for their protection by the Muslim state was begun in the


18. Report on revenues and expenses of Ganjeh concessions, ibid., II, 601; Gur'ev to Gudovich, May 16, 1807, ibid., III, 355; Ivanov to Tomasov, June 25, 1809, ibid., IV, 82; Bronnevskii, II, 404, 436; Bélangier, II, 100.


20. F. F. Simonovich, "Opisanie iuzhnogo Dagestan, 1796 g.", Kosven and Khashaev, 150; Dreniakin, 171; Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 205; Bronnevskii, II, 392, 436; Bélangier, II, 200-01.
seventh century and extended throughout the Islamic empire.

It is not clear whether fees for the use of water, which played such an important role in economic relations on the Iranian plateau, existed in the Caucasian khanates as well. The fact that many parts of the Caucasus had ample natural water supplies in the form of rivers and streams does not preclude the existence of water regulation. According to Chardin, water was sold from rivers of all sizes in Safavei Iran. He also reported that in Esfahān, located on the Zāyandeh River, water fees brought the government forty thousand tumāns a year.21 European travellers remarked on the presence of water channels (ganāts) in Darband and New Shemākhī (capital of Shirvān).22 Since these man-made subterranean aqueducts, which were expensive to maintain, were in use at least in some parts of the Caucasus, there is reason to suspect that water taxes existed. A Russian study of the revenues of Javād Khān of Ganjeh does not mention any such fees,23 but another document reveals that the farmland there had man-made irrigation works.24

Khans also received income of a less official nature in the form of gifts from beggs to attract the khan’s favor. To pay for these gifts, the beggs took additional money from their tenant farmers and


extracted a percentage of the booty collected on raids staged by fellow tribesmen.²⁵

Most khans minted their own coins made of silver alloy (the 'abbāsī) and copper.²⁶ The value of the local currency varied considerably, especially since the metals from which the coins were struck were debased to varying degrees.²⁷ In 1796, the Qobbeh 'abbāsī was worth one-fifth of a ruble while the Bāku 'abbāsī was worth not quite three-quarters of a ruble in the last years before the Russian conquest of that khanate in 1806.²⁸ Iranian, Russian, and Dutch coins were used in addition to those minted locally.²⁹

The office of khan was inherited through the male line of the ruling families in each territory. Political rivalries and chance, non-political occurrences caused disputes in the succession in most of the khanates in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Although there was a preference for succession by the eldest son, the issue was more often resolved on the basis of who was available -- healthy and old enough -- to handle the responsibilities of the position. For that reason, a khan's younger brother succeeded to power in place of the late khan's son in several cases. Illness and murder often removed some.

of the possible claimants during the lifetime of the incumbent. Power struggles between the brothers and sons of eldest sons who had died before becoming khan led to bitter feuds in Qarābāgh and Shakki,\(^{30}\) while rivalries with neighboring rulers led to the deposition and murder of khans in Ganjeh and Shīrvān.\(^{31}\)

The pattern of succession in Shakki in the second half of the eighteenth century illustrates the kinds of forces which affected the transfer of power in all the east Caucasian khanates. Hāji Chelebi, who ruled Shakki from 1156 A.H. (1143/44) to 1168 A.H. (1754/55), had four sons. The eldest died in battle during his father's reign so the second son, Āqā Kishī, became the new khan in 1754/55. He ruled for five years and then was killed by his father-in-law, the chief of the Qāzi Qumuq tribe of Dāghestān, who was in league with a rebellious district governor. After occupying Shakki for about a month, the Qāzi Qumuqs were expelled by an uprising of the inhabitants supported by Fath 'Alī Khān of Qobbeh.\(^{32}\) Although Āqā Kishī was survived by a son, Fath 'Ali intervened to make a child, Hosein, son of Hāji Chelebi's eldest son, the new khan.\(^{33}\) Presumably, Fath 'Ali's intention in backing Hosein was to make sure the titular khan would be a person he could control easily.

Soon after Hosein's installation, Ja'far, the third son of Hāji

\(^{30}\) Javānshīr, 74-75; "Shekinskike khany", 48-50; Hāji Seyyed 'Abd ol-Hamid, 60-61.

\(^{31}\) Bakikhanov, 132-33, 135-41; Qarābāghi, 130.

\(^{32}\) "Shekinskie khany", 48; Hāji Seyyed 'Abd ol-Hamid, 60.

\(^{33}\) "Shekinskie khany", 48-49; Bakikhanov, 130.
Chelebi, returned from self-imposed exile and asserted his claim to the title. According to one Shakkī source, the argument used by Ja'far's supporters was that "You are Hāji Chelebi's son while Hosein Khān is only his grandson . . . ." Support for Ja'far became so strong that Hosein arranged to have his rival killed. At that point, the last of Hāji Chelebi's sons, 'Abd ol-Qāder, turned against Hosein. He led some supporters to a district along the Kur and proclaimed himself khan. Since Hosein had the backing of Fath 'Ali Khān of Qobbeh, 'Abd ol-Qāder was able to win the support of Fath 'Ali's rival, Ebrāhīm Khalīl Khān of Qarābāgh. The struggle between uncle and nephew lasted about twenty years. At one point, Hosein sent his son, Mohammad Hasan, to deliver a conciliatory message but 'Abd ol-Qāder had him seized and sent to Qarābāgh to be killed. However, Ebrāhīm Khalīl had other plans. He kept the young man alive but sent word that the execution had been performed.

In 1780, 'Abd ol-Qāder finally overthrew and killed Hosein. When that happened, Ebrāhīm Khalīl sent Mohammad Hasan to live openly in Jaruteleh, a district of Georgia inhabited by warlike Lesgi tribes. Three years later, Mohammad Hasan, leading a Lesgi army, took control of Shakkī and pursued 'Abd ol-Qāder into Shirvān, where the latter had hoped to find shelter with a contender for the throne of that khanate. Instead, he was turned over to Mohammad Hasan, who killed him along with all his sons.

Once in power, Mohammad Hasan determined to protect himself from the dangers which had undone so many of his relatives. He ordered his

34. "Shekinskie khany", 49.
popular younger brother blinded and held under house arrest.\textsuperscript{35} The youngest brother, Salim, learned that plans were also being made to eliminate him from the succession. Therefore, he fled with a group of beys to Jaruteleh where he gathered an army and waited for the opportune moment to move against his brother.\textsuperscript{36}

There is scant evidence of the khans' concept of their office, whether, like the ideal of the Iranian monarch, they believed they had a duty to promote justice and prosperity in their realm, or viewed the territory under their control as a source of income which might serve as the base for the conquest of additional territory. In the latter half of the eighteenth century, the khans' energies were devoted, whether by choice or necessity, to domestic struggles for power and battles with their neighbors. Many khans came to power by the violent overthrow of their predecessors; any khan who was strong enough tried to expand his realm by conquest. One ruler, Qāsem, who in 1796 was made Khan of Shirvān by the Russians in place of a truculent incumbent, realized the improbability of his remaining in that position, especially since his oppressive and capricious behavior had provoked a rebellion against him the first time he held power, a few years previously.\textsuperscript{37}

Therefore, he openly raided his own subjects in order to gather what

\textsuperscript{35} Physical handicaps were usually considered disqualifications from rule in Muslim countries.

\textsuperscript{36} "Shekinskie khany", 48-50; Hāji Seyyed 'Abd ol-Hamid, 60-61; Bakikhanov, 135, 136; Serebrov, 192; Minorsky, "Shekki", Ei, IV, 347; genealogical table of the rulers of Shakki, Akty, V, 1120.

\textsuperscript{37} Bakikhanov, 140.
 riches he could before his deposed rival's return. In an era when no khan could be assured of an unopposed reign, Qāsem's attitude may have been shared by many rulers. Moreover, most khans were tribal chiefs whose first loyalty was to their tribe, not to the khanate as a whole with its farmers, artisans, and merchants. In any event, wars, epidemics, and famines had so weakened most Caucasian territories that it would have been very difficult for any khan to have embarked on a program of social reform or patronage of art and learning had he wished to do so.

Below the khans in status were the nobles, the begs. Beg is a broad term denoting hereditary noble status. At the highest levels of society, a beg might be the brother or son of a khan. A beg might also be the administrator of a populous district or one inhabited by a few dozen families.

When a khan was strong enough to compel the obedience of his subjects, it was the beg's duty to serve his khan in whatever capacity, civil or military, required of him. In the turbulent events of the

38. Araratskii, 82-83.

39. The title āqā following a man's name had the same meaning.

40. Ughurlu Āqā to Alexander, n.d., Akty, II, 595; Tsitsianov to Mostāfā Khān of Shirvān, August 15, 1805, ibid., II, 664-65; Tsitsianov to Alexander, May 22, 1805, ibid., II, 703; Tsitsianov to Alexander, November 28, 1805, ibid., II, 725; Gudovich to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Saitykov, January 11, 1809, ibid., III, 291; Gudovich to Aslan Soltān and Hāji Bābā Beg, October 8, 1808, ibid., III, 238; Col. Aseev to Gudovich, February 19, 1808, ibid., III, 347; "Shekinskies khany", 50; Gmelin, III, 60; A. Haxthausen, Transcaucasia (London, 1854), 183; G. B. Abdullaev, "Iz istorii Azerbaidzhana vo vtoroi polovine XVII v.", Trudy Institut Istorii, Akademiia Nauk Azerbaidzhanskoj SSR, XIV (1960), 70.

41. Akhverdov, "Opisanie Dagestana. 1804 g.", Kosven and Khashaev, 221; Ibragimbeili, 41; A. Sh. Mil'man, Politicheskii stroi Azerbaidzhana v XIX-nachale XX vekov (Baku, 1966), 33.
early nineteenth century, beggs were repeatedly used by their khans as negotiators and military leaders. Begs were used with particular frequency to fill the offices of nā'eb, malek or soltān, all of which were titles applied to the governors of a mahall (district). These district governors could be powerful figures who exercised authority similar to a khan's, with the difference that they did so within a more limited area and at the sufferance of the khan who appointed them.

In return for his service, a beg enjoyed certain benefits and privileges. His khan paid him either a direct salary in cash, a portion of the harvest, a grant of income from land (tuyul) or the ownership of land outright (molk). By tradition in the Iranian empire, the recipient of a tuyul (tuyuldār) became the de facto ruler of the land he had been given. It was considered his duty to promote the prosperity of those who lived on the land as it was their duty to obey him as their governor. However, this system was vulnerable to

42. Tsitsianov to Alexander, March 31, 1803, Akty, II, 729; Tsitsianov to Medet Beg, December 23, 1802, ibid., II, 780; Gudovich to Ja'far Qoli Khān, October 17, 1808, ibid., III, 290.

43. In Iran and the eastern Caucasus, unlike the Ottoman Empire, the term soltān was ordinarily used to refer to a district governor and only with extreme rarity to the emperor.

44. Anonymous information on Shamshadilo Shams od-Dinlu, n.d., Akty, I, 594; Lazarev to Knorring, August 5, 1801, ibid., I, 602; Gudovich to Aslan Soltān and Hāji Bābā Beg, October 8, 1808, ibid., III, 238; Major Grekov to Gudovich, May 5, 1807, ibid., III, 279; Bakhkhanov, 141, 149, 150, 152; Gmelin, III, 13, 34; "Shekinskie khany", 50; Mil'man, 44; Ibragimbeili, 68; Dubrovin, III, 139.

45. Akhverdov, 221; Gur'ev to Gudovich, December 27, 1806, Akty, III, 351; Bronevskii, II, 392; Ibragimbeili, 41; Mil'man, 33, 46; Minorsky, "Tiyul", IV, IV, 799-801.
serious abuses. There is evidence that during the Safavi era toyuldārs not only governed their lands, they wrung from the peasants all the money they could, as much as fifty times the officially determined revenue. In addition to compensation in land or cash, a beg was exempt from the head and land taxes (on land he owned outright) and the levies imposed on various commercial activities.

The rest of the administrative system of the khanates was staffed by the scribe-bureaucrats (mirzās), village headmen (kadkhodās or yuzbāshīs), their subordinates, who were in charge of a quarter within a town or village, and the tax farmer (yasāvol). The noukars, the begs' retainers, in addition to serving their lord served in the khan's army.

Another kind of privileged person was the mo'af ("exempt"), who, as the title implies, was exempt from paying the head tax. This exemption was hereditary and was given in return for some service to the khan, such as membership in his guard and, when necessary, in his army. They provided their own weapons and horses in either case. The mo'af were drawn from a wide variety of groups, ranging from the khan's personal retainers to kadkhodās and more prosperous peasants. This privilege was also granted to those who gave their khan gifts for that purpose. Tribes which provided cavalry for a khan's army were also

47. Bronevskii, II, 392; Ibragimbeili, 42; Dorn, 417.
48. Gemelin, III, 66; Gur'ev to Gudovich, December 27, 1806, Akty, III, 351; Ibragimbeili, 44; Mil'man, 45-46.
49. Ibragimbeili, 43, 45.
mo'af, as in the case of the Kangerlu of Nakhjavān, the khan's own tribe.\textsuperscript{50}

The Muslim holy men -- the experts on religious law, teachers, and descendants of the Prophet (‘olamā, mollās, and seyyeds) -- also had special status. They were exempt from government service as well as from taxes.\textsuperscript{51} A kind of grant known as vaqīf, which provided income primarily from farming villages, caravanserais, and shops, was given for their support. The mosques of Shushā, the capital of Qarābāgh, held particularly large vaqīf grants.\textsuperscript{52}

With a single exception, there is no mention in the sources of the reaction of Caucasian Muslim religious leaders to Russian attempts to gain control over the region. The only mention of efforts made by 'olamā to rouse opposition to Russia comes from an 1802 report by the rather unreliable Russian consul, Skibinevskii (who was then living in Bāku instead of Anzali). According to Skibinevskii, 'olamā in Shirvān and Bāku warned their followers that submission to a Christian state was sinful and condemned Russian behavior as grossly offensive to Muslim standards of decency.\textsuperscript{53} Apart from this report, there is virtually no information about the role of the 'olamā in east Caucasian society at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries. The only city in which foreign visitors reported seeing a madrasah

\textsuperscript{50} Minorsky, Tadhkīrat al-Mulūk, 85, 86; \textit{idem.}, "Nakhjavān", EI, III, 840; Ibragimbeili, 42-43; G. B. Abdullaev, 64.

\textsuperscript{51} Bronevskii, II, 392; Ibragimbeili, 42.

\textsuperscript{52} Mil'man, 32.

\textsuperscript{53} Skibinevskii to Knorring, February 26, 1802, \textit{Akty}, I, 640.
(theological college) was Darband. Whether it was a center of religious education for the region or whether students also went to Iran or the Ottoman Empire for their training is not known. Nor do the local histories give any example of religious leaders exerting influence on behalf of the populace during political or economic difficulties.

On one occasion when the dispute between a khan and his subjects was largely religious -- the oppression of the Sunni inhabitants of Shakki by a Shi'a khan who ruled with the support of Nāder Shāh -- it was not the 'olamā but the begs and kadkhodās who rallied the opposition and eventually began a rebellion.

There is a similar scarcity of information about relations among the various religious groups. In light of the violent conflicts between Sunni and Shi'a in the first half of the eighteenth century, as evidenced by the anti-Shi'a uprisings in Shirvān (1721) and Shakki, it would appear plausible that friction between the two groups continued in the second half of the century, especially since members of both groups were to be found in most khanates. Yet the only place where Shi'as were reported to be living in isolation from the Sunnis was Darband, where they were not a small minority and where the khan was also Shi'a (although he followed a conciliatory policy towards the Sunnis).

Non-Muslims were under certain disadvantages, notably the obligation to pay a higher tax than the Muslims. However they do not seem to

55. "Shekinskie khany", 45, 47.
56. Berezin, II, 42; Serebrov, 177; Gmelin, III, 34.
have suffered active persecution. Armenians, and to a lesser extent Jews, played a central role in the economic life of all the khanates, not only Yerevan, where Armenians were in the majority. They were farmers, artisans, and, above all, merchants. In every major commercial center, including Baku, the most important in the region, the Armenians dominated trade. 57

In the countryside, Christians and Jews lived in their own villages but, if Darband is typical of the region, the Armenians, at least, were not restricted to a ghetto in the cities. 58 Those living in villages were not without advantages. They were governed by their own maleks, subordinate, in theory, to the khan's authority. In some cases, these maleks were extremely powerful. Their military support played a crucial role in the establishment of Panah Khan Javanshir as the independent ruler of Qarabagh. 59 Christians and Jews were not prevented from maintaining their own churches, monasteries, and synagogues, employing priests and rabbis, or obtaining religious literature. 60 The capital of Armenian Christendom was the monastery of Echmiadzin, in Yerevan, where the Catholicos resided. There were reports, from

57. Forster, II, 228; Bronevskii, II, 423; Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 37, 38; Keppel, 280; Kh. Kh. Steven, 'Mémoire sur les provinces qui avoisinent le Caucase, tiré du Voyage fait au Caucase en 1810 par le conseiller de collège Stewen', 4 parts, Le Moniteur Universel, III (February 28, 1812), 240 (hereafter referred to as 'Mémoire'); Kovalenskii's observations on Georgia, August 1800, Akty, I, 118.


60. Gmelin, III, 34; Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 202, 205; Marschall von Bieberstein, 28.
Christian sources, of the persecution of Armenians in Qarabagh after the signing of the Russo-Georgian treaty of 1783. However, the Armenian leaders had antagonized Ebrāhim Khalīl Khān by asking Russia to take them under its control and promising to overthrow him. 61

The largest group in each of the Caucasian khanates was the peasantry. There were two main groups of peasants, the ra'yats and the ranjbars. Since the land itself was considered the property of a khan or beg, all peasants were tenant farmers. Still, the ra'yats, the more numerous group, were not without property of their own. They usually owned their own homes, tools, and animals. To their landlord, they paid a portion of the harvest and flocks and rendered corvée services. 62 In at least one khanate, Qarabagh, there was an attempt made during the turbulent period at the end of the eighteenth century to bind the ra'yat to the land. 63 However, it must have been extremely difficult to enforce such a decision since the entire region was underpopulated and the possibility of escaping to the forests or mountains remained. The ranjbars owed the same taxes and services to their lord as the ra'yat and had in addition to spend part of their time working the lord's fields, the entire product of which was the lord's property. 64 Ranjbars were bound not to the land but to their masters, who could move them from village to village. 65

61. Dubrovin, II, 29, 32, 34; Butkov, Materialy, II, 142, 144.
62. Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 205; Ibragimbeili, 44.
63. G. B. Abdullaev, 65.
64. Ibragimbeili, 44, 45.
Slavery also existed in east Caucasian society. The leading slave raiders in the 1780's and 1790's were the Dāghestāni tribes, whose incursions into Georgia contributed significantly to the depopulation of that country. Slavery did not carry with it the same stigma as in some other societies. Georgian women in particular were sought after as slave-wives. Mostafā Khān of Shirvān (d. 1844), Ebrāhim Khālil Khān of Qarābāgh (d. 1806), and Mohammad Hosein Khān of Shakki (d. 1776) all had Georgian slave-wives. One of the most persistent foes of Russian expansion in the Caucasus, Sheikh 'Ali Khān of Qobbeh, was the son of an Armenian slave-wife. Although boys were also enslaved, there is no report that they were used to fill important administrative posts or serve in the army as they were in Iran and other parts of the Muslim world.

The nomadic tribes of the Caucasus were neither isolated from the affairs of the khanates in which they lived nor completely a part of them. In almost every case, families from these tribes controlled the government of the khanates. Most of the tribes were Turkomans: the Qājārs in Ganjeh and Yerevan, the Javānshirs in Qarābāgh, the Kanglers in Nakhjavān, and the Khān Chopān in Shirvān.

66. Bakikhanov, 152; Dubrovin, II, 81, 141.

67. Qarābāghi, 133; Akty, II, 641, n.; genealogical table of the khans of Shirvān, ibid., V, 1111.

68. Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 206; genealogical table of the khans of Qobbeh, Akty, VI, part ii, 907.

69. Olearius, 222-23.

70. Domboli, 23, 109; Eskandar Monshi, Tārikh-e alam ārā-ye 'abbāsi, 2 vols. (Tehran, 1334-35 (Shamsi)), II, 1087; Hedāyat, IX, 272; Mohammed Hashem Asef, Rostam ot-Tavārikh, Mohammad Moshiri, ed.
Many Turkoman tribes, including the Qājārs and Javānshirs, came west from Central Asia to Syria and Anatolia with the Mongol armies. Temur brought them east again but sources differ over whether it was at this time or under the Safavids that they settled in the Caucasus. This western branch of the Qājārs became known by the title Zīādāghlu (Ziyādlu) as opposed to the Qoyunlu (Qavānlu) and Davālu branches living in the vicinity of Astarābād. 71 During the Safavi era, in 1601, the Qājārs and Javānshirs, along with other members of the Qezelbāš confederation of tribes of Āzerbāijān, were incorporated into the Shāhsavan confederation but by the eighteenth century they were separate once again. 72 The tribe which continued to be known as Shāhsavan lived for the most part in the area between Ardabil and the Mughān plain although some lived exclusively or periodically in the region north of the Aras and the Kur. 73 The population of Yerevan also included a branch of the Afshārs, a tribe whose members lived in many parts of Iran. 74

There were also Turkoman nomads living under Georgian rule in the districts of P'ambak, Qazzāq (Qazzāqlu), and Shams od-Dinlu, between that country and Yerevan. The tribes after whom these districts were named

(Tehran, 1348 (Shamsi)), 351; Minorsky, Tadhkirat al-Mulūk, 166; Klaproth, Tableau, 135; Serebrov, 179; Akhverdov, 224; Akademiia Nauk Azerbaidzhanskoi SSR, Institut Istorii, Istoriiia Azerbaidzhana, 3 vols. (Baku, 1958), I, 335.

71. Domboli, 4-7; Bakikhanov, 142; Hedāyat, IX, 296-97; Eskandar Monshi, II, 857; Javānshir, 69; Fasā'ī, 1-2.


74. Domboli, 163.
regularly migrated between winter quarters in the Kur valley and summer quarters in the mountains near Lake Gokcha.\textsuperscript{75} Their travels frequently took them beyond their districts to Yerevan and Ganjeh.\textsuperscript{76} In addition to the Turkoman nomads, there were Armenian farmers living in these border districts.\textsuperscript{77}

Other east Caucasian tribes were of non-Turkoman origin. The government of Qobbeh and Darband was in the hands of a branch of the Qaitāqs (related to the Avars)\textsuperscript{78} who had moved south from Dāghestān in the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{79} There were Lesgi (Lakz) tribesmen, who were indigenous to Dāghestān,\textsuperscript{80} living in areas which bordered the High Caucasus, particularly Qobbeh, Shakki, and Jaruteleh, the last, subject to Georgia.\textsuperscript{81} Another important group of non-Turkic nomads was the Kurds, some of whom lived in Yerevan, Qarābāgh, and in the vicinity of the Mughān plain. This group included the Shaqāqi tribe, one of the most powerful political forces in Iran's northwestern border in the late eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{82}

\textsuperscript{75} Now called Lake Sevan.
\textsuperscript{76} Steven, "Mémoire", III, 240; Knorring to Alexander, May 25, 1802, \textit{Akty}, I, 593-94.
\textsuperscript{77} Knorring to Alexander, May 25, 1802, \textit{Akty}, I, 594; Kariagin to Knorring, May 9, 1802, \textit{ibid.}, I, 624; Hahthausen, 162; Steven, "Mémoire", III, 240.
\textsuperscript{78} Klaproth, Tableau, 92.
\textsuperscript{79} Minorsky, "Kubba", EI, II, 1088.
\textsuperscript{80} E. Sarkisyantz, \textit{Geschichte der orientalischen Völker Russlands bis 1917} (Munich, 1961), 124.
\textsuperscript{81} Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 203; Gmelin, II, 34; Bronievskii, II, 383-84; Klaproth, Tableau, 152; Serebrov, 180.
\textsuperscript{82} Minorsky, \textit{Tadhkīrāt al-Mulūk}, 167; \textit{idem.}, "Shakāki", 290. Klaproch, Tableau, 155.
Nomads, who had to be self-sufficient and mobile even under ordinary circumstances, were better equipped than most sedentary peasants to escape the unwelcome impositions of a khan or the hardships of nature since they could move with comparative ease to a more attractive location. The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw large-scale emigration of nomads and some non-nomads away from Ganjeh, Qarābāgh, and the predominantly Muslim border districts of Georgia.  

Although the Kangerlu enjoyed the advantage of mo'af status in Nakhjavān, other nomadic tribes accepted the obligation of paying taxes comparable to those paid by sedentary peasants. For example, the Lesgis living in Qobbeh were assessed the same fraction of their grain harvests and flocks as the farmers living in the lowlands, the only difference being that the Lesgis paid their grain tax in barley instead of wheat since they only grew the former. Since animal husbandry was one of the principle economic activities of most Caucasian nomads, khans would have deprived themselves of an important source of revenue had they not demanded several head of cattle from the herds of their nomadic subjects. The nomads of Shirvān cultivated silk, the khanate's most important product, as did their sedentary neighbors; therefore, they also paid a tax of one-tenth of their annual

83. Bakikhanov, 139; Brosset, II, part ii, 253; Knorrning to Alexander, May 25, 1802, Akty, I, 475; anonymous information on Shams od-Dinlu, n.d., ibid., I, 594; Lazarev to Knorrning, July 13, 1801, ibid., I, 599; Lazarev to Knorrning, August 5, 1801, ibid., I, 602-03; Tsitsianov to Ebrāhim Khalil Khān, September 2, 1805, ibid., II, 665; Gudovich to Major General Akhverdov, February 26, 1808, ibid., III, 230-31.

84. Bronevskii, II, 392.

85. Bronevskii, I, 392; Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 205; Dreniakin, 171.
silk production. Nomads were also important to the khans as the providers of skilled cavalrymen to form the backbone of the army.

Although each of the capital cities of the eastern Caucasus served some commercial function, if only as the place for the exchange of goods among the local farmers, nomads, and city dwellers, one city, Baku, surpassed all others in commercial significance, dominating the trade of the entire region.

Baku was the least typical of the khanates. It was the smallest, consisting of Baku city and some thirty-odd villages clustered around it on the Absheron peninsula. In the absence of a comprehensive census for any Caucasian state in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries, population estimates can be taken only as a very rough indication of the number of inhabitants. Estimates made of the population of Baku in the first decade of the nineteenth century differ considerably, from a low figure of about five hundred families (about three thousand people) to ten thousand adult males. The khan of Baku and most of his subjects were Shi'as but there were also permanent communities of Sunnis, Armenians, Jews, Indians, and "Persians" living in or near the capital. These "Persians" might be merchants from

86. Dreniakin, "Opisanie Shirvana. 1796 g.", Kosven and Khashaev, 171.
87. Akhverdov, 224; Ibragimbeili, 42-43.
88. Marschall von Bieberstein, 25; Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 38; Bronevskii, II, 398; Butkov, "Svedeniiia o Kubinskom i Derbentskom vladeniakh", Kosven and Khashaev, 210 (hereafter referred to as "Svedeniiia").
89. Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 38; Director of Astrakhan Customs Ivanov to Tormasov, June 25, 1809, Ibid., IV, 82; Akhverdov, 222.
90. Gmelin, III, 55; Bronevskii, part II, 401; Tormasov to Gur'ev,
Gilân, one of Bâku's most important trading partners. However, Russian writers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries used that designation broadly, applying it to any Muslim of the eastern Caucasus (excluding Dâghestân) as well as to subjects of the shah. The vast majority of the capital's inhabitants were merchants. In the early eighteenth century the Muslim population of the capital underwent a major transformation. When the Russian forces sent by Peter discovered a plot against them in 1724, they executed those of the leaders who had not escaped and exiled most of the other Muslims, except for some of the poorest, to Russia. Apart from the poor Muslims, the only inhabitants left in the city were the Armenian and Indian merchants. Three years later, Russian authorities tried to repopulate the khanate by sending Tatars from Russia to the capital and other villages.

Bâku's location was both its greatest asset and its greatest nemesis. The whole region extending along the Caspian coast from southern Qobbeh to the lower reaches of the Kur River, including Bâku and southeastern Shirvân, was unsuited to cultivation, being in places too salty or rocky, in others, contaminated by the oil which seeped through the ground. In addition, water was scarce. The area had no

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91. Serebrov, 178; Forster, II, 227.
93. Keppel, 294; Klaproth, Tableau, 148; Serebrov, 178; Forster, II, 231; Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 38; Bronevskii, II, 351, 358.
rivers of any importance and an annual rainfall of but ten inches. 94 Only a small number of springs and wells provided the water to sustain life in the hostile environment. 95 These sources were contaminated by oil seepage and by the parasite which causes the "Baghdad boil" (exanthematicus) common to western Asia. 96

Agriculture was practiced on a modest scale in keeping with the limited water supply and the poor quality of the soil. The khanate's most significant agricultural product from a commercial standpoint was saffron, of which fourteen to twenty thousand pounds were marketed annually. 97 Like other inhabitants of the eastern Caucasus and Iran, many people in Baku maintained gardens, which were reported to produce excellent fruits. 98 The rest of Baku's agriculture centered on the cultivation of wheat and barley. Even when harvests were good, these staples were not produced in sufficient quantities to meet the needs of the population. 99 In general, those who tried to make their living by farming were extremely poor. 100

94. Akhver dov, 222; Bartol'd, "Talish", EI, IV, 642.
95. Akhver dov, 222; Bron evskii, II, 400.
97. Gmelin, III, 55; Klaproth, Tableau, 149; Kvanov to Tormasov, June 25, 1809, Akty, IV, 81; Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, ibid., IV, 38; Bron evskii, II, 402.
98. Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 38; Serebrov, 178.
99. Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 38.
100. Ibid., IV, 38; Gur'ev to Gudovich, December 27, 1806, ibid., III, 351.
The salt and petroleum which hindered agriculture were also responsible for much of the khanate's economic strength. Baku's salt came partly from mines but primarily from two lakes. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, about 7.2 million pounds were produced annually, enough to fill the needs of most of the eastern Caucasus and parts of Iran. Of even greater importance than salt was oil. The output of Baku's fifty wells was used to make "naft" in its less refined "black" and highly refined "white" forms. "Naft" was used not only as a fuel for heating, lighting, and cooking but for lubricating machines, encouraging silk worms to produce cocoons, waterproofing the flat-roofed buildings, and as medicine for human consumption. About one-third of the annual naft production was used locally. The rest was exported, above all to the Iranian port of Anzali in Gilan province, secondarily to the other Caucasian states.

Salt and oil were the two most important sources of Baku's profits and provided the funds with which the khanate bought the food it could not grow on its own soil. The Khan's profits from

101. Ivanov to Tormasov, June 25, 1809, ibid., IV, 81; Akhverdov, 222; Bronevskii, II, 402.


105. Akhverdov, 222; Klaproth, Tableau, 149; Serebrov, 178; Simonovich, 144; Bronevskii, I, 225; II, 402.

106. Gmelin, III, 55; Akhverdov, 222.

107. Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 38.
the oil concession averaged 70,000 rubles a year; the salt tax netted another 7,000.\textsuperscript{108} Another major source of profit was seal hunting. The last Khan of Bāku, Howein Qoli, gave a group of Russian merchants the seal hunting concession for a fourteen year period for an annual fee of 30,000 rubles.\textsuperscript{109}

Bāku's other great economic asset was its large harbor, which enabled it to become the center of trade among Russia, Āzerbāijān, and Iran. The harbor was the best on the western Caspian, from fourteen to forty-two feet deep and sheltered from the storm winds of the sea on all sides except the southwest.\textsuperscript{110} In comparison, the ports of Darband and Anzali could only accommodate small vessels, forcing merchant ships to anchor in open water and ferry their cargoes to shore.\textsuperscript{111}

In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, ships belonging to merchants from Bāku, Shirvān, Iran, and Russia carried goods between Bāku, Astrakhan, Gilān, and Māzandarān.\textsuperscript{112} From Astrakhan, Bāku imported Russian and European goods, particularly objects made of lead, iron, and steel, a variety of fabrics, including silks and woolens, as well as dyes, perfumes, and sugar.\textsuperscript{113} Many of these items were forwarded

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{108} Gur'ev to Gudovich, May 16, 1807, \textit{ibid.}, III, 355.
\item \textsuperscript{109} Gudovich to Gur'ev, November 21, 1806, \textit{ibid.}, III, 350.
\item \textsuperscript{110} Akhverdov, 222; Serebrov, 178; Bronevskii, I, 224-25; II, 399.
\item \textsuperscript{111} Freygang and Freygang, 156; Forster, II, 212; Bronevskii, I, 224.
\item \textsuperscript{112} Gmelin, III, 54; Forster, II, 227; Bronevskii, I, 225; Spilman, I.
\item \textsuperscript{113} Forster, II, 227; Serebrov, 178; Bronevskii, II, 403.
\end{itemize}
to markets throughout the eastern Caucasus and northern Iran. Baku also imported the products of Gilan, Mazendaran and its Caucasian neighbors, partly for its own consumption, partly for transshipment to Russia. From the Iranian provinces came silk, cotton, carpets, shoes, rice, dyes, spices, lumber, and a host of fruits and nuts, including lemons, peaches, and pistachios. Baku was linked by caravan with the khanates of the eastern Caucasus from which it imported silk and silken goods (especially from Shirvan and Shakki), cotton fabrics, carpets, wheat, rice, fruits, nuts, and wine.

There were also contacts with India. Merchants from that country traveled to Baku by two routes, one of which went via the Persian Gulf and Basra, the other via Qandahar and Herat. A Russian observer writing in 1809 noted that a large supply of English fabrics, coffee, and spices had reached Baku along these routes.

Baku's economic position was weaker than its central role in commerce would seem to indicate. The khanate's commercial strength had been on the wane for decades as the result of the political strife in the Caucasus, especially in the rich agricultural and silk-producing khanate of Shirvan, Baku's neighbor to the west. Its

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114. Dreniakin, 170, 171; Bronevskii, I, 225; II, 403.

115. Gmelin, III, 55; Ivanov to Tormasov, June 25, 1809, Akty, IV, 82; Akhverdov, 222; Simonovich, 144; Bronevskii, II, 403.

116. Gmelin, III, 55; Butkov, "Vydershki", 203; Dreniakin, 170, 171; Simonovich, 144; Bronevskii, II, 382, 403, 441.

117. Forster, II, 228.

118. Ivanov to Tormasov, June 25, 1809, Akty, IV, 82.

financial resources were also depleted by the fighting between Mohammad Qoli Khan and the nephew he overthrew in 1791. The latter had the support of the khans of Qobbeh who twice sent him with an army to regain power. This caused special expenses in addition to the cost of raising an army to oppose the ousted khan. During the first battle, Mohammad Qoli was concerned that his subjects might support his rival. Therefore he bought their support by distributing the valuables amassed by the founder of the dynasty during the reign of Nader Shāh. One year later, there was a second campaign to help the deposed khan regain power. By that time Mohammad Qoli was dead and his successor, Hosein Qoli, was forced to make an agreement by which the khanate, including all its mineral resources with their attendant revenues, were divided between himself and his opponent. This situation continued until 1209 AH (1794/95), when Hosein Qoli, with the help of the Khan of Shirvān, expelled his rival from Baku. 120

Although Baku's revenues were still greater than most of its neighbors', so were its expenses. 121 Because of its small size, it could only field an army of two thousand men. 122 Therefore, the Khan had to give a substantial portion of his income to neighboring khans, particularly the Khan of Qobbeh, for protection. 123 The poor quality

120. Bakikhanov, 139-40, 141-42.

121. Even after commerce was further reduced by the hostilities between Russia and Iran, the total value of the khanate's imports and exports as of 1810 was about half a million rubles. Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 38.


123. Bakikhanov, 127, 128; Akhverdov, 222.
and limited amount of arable land caused a two-fold drain on Baku's finances. In addition to necessitating the importation of most of the khanate's food and lumber, the Khan had to rely on cash payments to supplement land grants as compensation to those who served him.\(^{124}\)

The city of Baku was built on a hill on the southern coast of the Absheron peninsula. It was trangular in shape, with one side of the triangle paralleling the shore. Like all important Caucasian towns, it was fortified. Within a deep, dry moat were two sets of rather low walls about one mile in circumference with towers of varying height. However, the Caspian had risen along the eastern side of the city so that, by 1770, part of the outer wall had collapsed.\(^{125}\) Baku was a city of single story buildings lining narrow, unpaved streets.\(^{126}\) Its most distinguished structure was a high-domed mosque attributed to Shah 'Abbās the Great (ruled 1585-1628).\(^{127}\) The Shirvānshāhs, who ruled Baku until their power was broken by the Safavis in the sixteenth century, embellished the city with a palace atop the hill and a mosque with minarets (fifteenth century). In 1723, this palace served as the headquarters of the Russian army of occupation but by the second half of the century, it was sorely in need of repairs. Fifty years later, it was in ruins. The mosque survived in better condition.\(^{128}\)

\(^{124}\) Gur'ev to Gudovich, May 16, 1807, Akty, III, 355.

\(^{125}\) Lerch, "Auszug", 13; Gmelin, III, 52, 53-54; Forster, II, 227, 228; Akhverdov, 222; Bronevskii, II, 399, 400; Berezin, III, 13.

\(^{126}\) Gmelin, III, 35, 54.

\(^{127}\) Berezin, III, 17; Bronevskii, II, 399.

\(^{128}\) Lerch, "Auszug", 14; Gmelin, III, 53; Berezin, III, 15, 17, 18.
building currently in use as the khan's residence was located at the harbor's edge.\textsuperscript{129} Also in the harbor district was the town's main mosque, an undistinguished building near the bazaar.\textsuperscript{130} Associated with the bazaar were the public baths, which were solidly built and well maintained.\textsuperscript{131} Of the various caravanserais in the city, one particularly large one was reserved for Armenian merchants, another was for foreigners. Several caravanserais were located alongside the docks, enabling ships to unload directly into them.\textsuperscript{132}

Before the establishment of Mongol rule in Iran, Bāku had been a much less important port than Darband. It was during the Il-Khānī era that Bāku's commercial significance increased while Darband's decreased.\textsuperscript{133} Until the mid-sixteenth century, Bāku was a part of Shirvān. Between the latter part of that century and the middle of the eighteenth, it was alternately under Iranian and Ottoman suzerainty, except for the interval of Russian rule (1723-35). It was at this time, while Shirvān was under Ottoman rule, that Bāku became a separate state. When under Iranian rule, it was a part of the province of Āzerbāijān under the governorship of a khan approved by the shah.\textsuperscript{134} Between the death of Nāder Shāh (1747) and the rise to power of Āqā Mohammad Khān

\textsuperscript{129} Gmelin, III, 54.
\textsuperscript{130} Berezin, II, 20-21.
\textsuperscript{131} Lerch, "Auszug", 14.
\textsuperscript{132} Ibid., 14; Gmelin, III, 54; Freygang and Freygang, 156.
\textsuperscript{133} Bartol'd, "Bāku", EI, I, 609.
\textsuperscript{134} Minorsky, Tadhkīrat al-Mulūk, 102; Bartol'd, "Bāku", 609; \textit{idem.}, "Shirwan", EI, IV, 382.
Qājār in the 1790's, there was no Iranian ruler who was able to enforce a claim to Bāku. The khanate was ruled by the descendants of Dargāh Qoli Beg, the commander of the Iranian garrison in Bāku at the time of the Russian occupation. He attempted to make himself khan, first with the support of Russia, later of Nāder Shāh. However, Nāder made one of his favorites khan instead. Dargāh Qoli's son, Mirzā Mohammad, took control of Bāku following Nāder's death. He and his successors paid tribute to the khans of Qobbeh. 135 With the weakening of Qobbeh following the death of Fath 'Ali Khān in 1789, Bāku attempted to end its dependence upon its northern neighbor and substitute an alliance with Shirvān. 136 The last Khan of Bāku, Hosein Qoli, came to power upon the death of his uncle in 1792. 137

No other Caucasian market could rival Bāku for the range and volume of its trade. In the late eighteenth century, the only one which could begin to compare was the Sāleyān district, the center of which was an island in the northern branch of the Kur River, almost one hundred miles south of Bāku. 138 This area had been under the control of Shirvān at various times, including the reign of Nāder Shāh. Later, it was taken for Qobbeh by Fath 'Ali Khān. After several years of struggle following Fath 'Ali's death, Shirvān regained

135. Bakikhanov, 127, 183; Mirzā Jamāl Javānshir Qarābāghi, Istoriiia Karabaga (Bāku, 1959), 130; Gmelin, III, 55; Butkov, Materialy, I, 70, n. 2, 138; Akademiia Nauk Azerbaidzhanskoi SSR, Istoriiia Azerbaidzhana, I, 335.

136. Bakikhanov, 140, 141-42.

137. Ibid., 141; genealogical table of the khans of Bāku, Akty, V, 1119.

control. 139

Of the approximately two thousand families inhabiting Sāleyān, somewhat more than 10 percent lived on the island of that name, the rest, in approximately twenty villages on the banks of the Kur. 140 Their numbers included Shirvānis and other Āzerbāijānis, Dāghestānis, and Armenians. Most of the Muslims were adherents of the Shi'a sect. 141 In addition to the permanent inhabitants, Shāhsavans and other nomads occasionally brought their flocks to graze on the pastures of the district. 142

The inhabitants of Sāleyān cultivated cereals, fruits, and silk and gathered lake salt. 143 However, the key to Sāleyān's economic significance was the fishing industry. Even before it became part of the Russian empire along with the rest of Shirvān (1805), Russian ships went there twice yearly, in the spring and fall, to fish in local waters. 144 An average year's catch brought these fishermen almost 800,000 fish, including varieties of sturgeon, salmon, pike, carp, and herring, as well as 60,000 pounds of caviar and 18,000 pounds of fish glue. 145 For permission to fish in the area, merchants from Astrakhan

139. Ibid., II, 359; Bakikhanov, 138, 140, 149; Gmelin, III, 76; Ibragimbeili, 68.

140. Serebrov, 177; Bronevskii, II, 423.

141. Dreniakin, 169; Bronevskii, II, 423; Gmelin, III, 75; Serebrov, 177.


143. Ibid., II, 418, 419; Serebrov, 178; Steven, "Mémoire", III, 240; Gmelin, III, 75; Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 38.

144. Serebrov, 177; Bronevskii, I, 226.

145. Gmelin, III, 77; Bronevskii, II, 419.
paid the khan of Shirvān tens of thousands of rubles a year. (The exact sum varied considerably.) These profitable fishing expeditions had additional significance. Because Russian fishing boats visited Sāleyān semi-annually, that place became a center for trade with Russia. Every year during the periods of March-April and September-October, people living in Bāku, Shirvān, Ganjeh, Qarābāgh, and the Mughān plain sent their wares to Sāleyān and purchased goods the Russians brought from Astrakhan.

For all its economic attractiveness, Sāleyān was an unhealthy place. The area was infested with snakes and with diseases from the contaminated waters of the Kur. In one year during the period of Russian rule in the first half of the eighteenth century, an entire Russian garrison of four hundred men was killed there by such diseases.

The commercial significance of Darband existed mostly in the minds of the Russians. This city served as the market in which the tribesmen of Dāghestān could trade their carpets and other products for the cereals, fabrics, salt, and "naft" available in Darband. There was also some trade directly with Russia, particularly in madder root.

146. Perezin, III, 81; Serebrov, 178; Bronevskii, II, 418.
147. Serebrov, 177; Bronevskii, I, 226.
148. F. A. Kotov, Khozhdenie Kuptsa Fedota Kotova v Persiiu (Moscow, 1958), 73; J. B. Fraser, An Historical and Descriptive Account of Persia (Edinburgh, 1834), 68-69.
150. Gmelin, III, 15; Simonovich, 139; Bronevskii, II, 339.
(a red dye), saffron, and silks, via the overland route to the garrison town of Kizliar at the eastern end of the Caucasian Line. Darband's inferiority to Baku in the commerce of the eastern Caucasus is indicated by the fact that the latter was the intermediary for some of Darband's most important commercial transactions, including the export of madder root and the import of metal and other items from Russia. Similarly, Darband bought Iranian goods, especially silks and cottons, in Shirvan and sold some of its own products, particularly saffron, in that place.

Although in earlier centuries Darband's stone walls extended into the sea to create an artificial harbor, by the sixteenth century, these structures had fallen into ruin. Ships had to anchor about a mile off shore, where they were exposed to the turbulent weather of the open seas.

Although Darband's location was disadvantageous for communications by sea, it provided a great strategic advantage on land. The city occupied a tract little more than a mile wide between the High Caucasus and the sea. Between the two was a wall enabling whoever controlled the city to prevent the passage of a hostile army along the coastal route. The city's three sets of walls, considered among the strongest in the Caucasus, were believed to make it impregnable, although by the late eighteenth century they had been damaged in quite a few places as

151. Simonovich, 143; Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 203; Bronevskii, II, 338.
152. Simonovich, 139; Gmelin, III, 15.
153. Lerch, "Auszug", 10; Gmelin, III, 6, 15; Gamba, II, 337; Freygang and Freygang, 156; Bronevskii, I, 224; Bartol'd, "Derbend", EI, I, 941, 942, 944.
the result of various attacks. These stone and cement walls were, at points of greatest size, twenty feet thick at the base and thirty feet high, with a parapet above that. They were also studded with bastions and towers and surrounded by a dry moat. Between the outer and middle walls was a rubble-strewn expanse which had formerly been occupied by gardens. These had been abandoned and the area turned into a corral for the city dwellers' flocks. (Newer gardens were located outside the walls and extended for about two miles north and south of the city.) The inhabitants themselves lived in the slightly smaller zone between the middle and third (citadel) walls. At the core of Darband's fortifications was the citadel, named Narin Qal'eh. It occupied the highest land in the city, at the foot of the mountains, and commanded a view of the whole area. This was where the khan's residence and the reservoir holding the city's water supply were located.

Darband was a city of winding narrow streets lined with low houses made of mud and stone. The main mosque was built in the

154. Lerch, "Auszug", 8; Kotov, 69, 71; Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 201; Landes' description of Darband, n.d. /1796/, Akty, II, 780; Bell, I, 53; Akhverdov, 217.

155. Ibid.; Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 201-02; Lerch, "Auszug", 8; Keppel, 300.


159. Ibid., 202; Akhverdov, 217.

fourteenth century, although modified later. It was a spartan building, undecorated except for Qur'ānic inscriptions. Adjoining the mosque were a madrasseh (theological college) and public baths. The bazaar and six caravanserais were located near the heart of the city. Nāder Shāh embellished the city with a palace but this new adornment could not conceal the fact that many buildings lay in ruins. Darband's location was considered comparatively healthy, although decidedly unpleasant during the winter rains.

Within the walls of the capital lived perhaps two thousand families. The approximately fifteen villages which made up the rest of the khanate were inhabited by somewhat more than half that number.

Because of the Russian visitors' faulty understanding of the differences between the Sunni and Shi'a sects, there are conflicting reports as to which predominated. A more knowledgeable Russian who traveled through Darband in the 1840's concluded that the Muslims living in


162. Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 202; Berezin, II, 37-40; Lerch, "Auszug", 9; "O pokhode Rossiiskikh voisk v 1796 godu v Dagestane i Persii pod komandoi Grafa Valeriana Aleksandrovicha Zubova", Otechestvennye Zapiski, 2 parts, June 1827, I, 153 (hereafter referred to as "O pokhode").


166. Butkov, "Svedeniia", 210; Serebrov, 176.

167. Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 38; Serebrov, 176; Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 202; Bronevskii, I, 28; II, 338.
the capital were predominantly Shi'a while those living in the mountains were Sunni. 168 Apparently, the Shi'a community was descended from settlers who had come there during the Safavi era. 169 In the 1790's there were about ninety Armenian families in the khanate. 170 There was also a small number of Jewish families living there. 171 Darband was known for its skilled craftsmen, who operated between four and five hundred workshops. 172 Fabric weaving, particularly silks and cottons, was among their most important occupations. 173 Carpet making by women was another leading industry. 174 In the khanate as a whole, agriculture and animal husbandry were the main economic activities. Unlike Baku, Darband was well suited to these uses of the land. Streams fed by the snows which permanently covered the nearby mountains provided an ample water supply. The khanate also boasted good forests and pastures. 175 Saffron, reputed to be of particularly high quality, was one of Darband's most important

168. Berezin, II, 42.
169. Serebrov, 177.
172. Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 202; Gmelin, III, 14; "0 pokhode", I, 153; Bronevskii, II, 338.
174. Serebrov, 177; Simonovich, 139.
175. Gmelin, III, 14; Akhverdov, 220; Landes' description, Akty, II, 780.
Another important agricultural product was the root of the madder plant, which was plentiful in the wild. The khanate also produced an ample supply of grains, including rice, wheat, and barley, and a wide variety of fruits and nuts, including apples, pomegranates, figs, plums, and almonds. Quantities of silk and cotton were also cultivated.

Like Baku, Darband had once been subject to the Shirvanshahs but it began to break away during the Mongol era when it was occasionally under local rule. Under the Safavis, Darband was considered a part of Azerbaidjan and was ruled by a khan who, in some cases, was a slave amir, sent from the court in Esfahan. Nader Shah reclaimed the khanate for Iran after the Russian withdrawal in 1735. It was ruled by a local khan from Nader's death in 1747 until its conquest by Fath 'Ali Khan of Qobbeh in 1758 and remained part of the latter (except for a few months in 1796-97) until its incorporation into the Russian Empire in 1806.

176. Gmelin, III, 15; Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 202; Gamba, II, 337; Keppel, 301; Klaproth, Tableau, 142; Serebrov, 177; F. F. Simonovich, "Opisanie Iuzhnogo Dagestana, 1796 г.", Kosven and Khashaev, 143.

177. Akhverdov, 220; Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 202-03; Gamba, II, 337; Serebrov, 177; Bronevskii, II, 340.


179. Akhverdov, 219, 220; Serebrov, 177.


182. Bakikhanov, 127, 131; Butkov, Materialy, I, 90, 137, 138; Bartol'd, "Shirwan", 383.
In the second half of the eighteenth century, Qobbeh was one of the most powerful and prosperous khanates in the eastern Caucasus. Some six to eight thousand families lived in the capital and approximately two hundred fifty villages.\textsuperscript{183} Most of the inhabitants were Sunni but there was also a Shi'a minority whose members had been resettled there during the eighteenth century by the khans Hosein 'Ali and his son, Fath 'Ali.\textsuperscript{184} Hosein 'Ali Khan and his successors were themselves Shi'a but Fath 'Ali reportedly followed a conciliatory policy towards the Sunni community.\textsuperscript{185} Most of the Shi'as were of the Shâhsavan tribe who migrated between summer quarters in the mountains and winter quarters along the coast.\textsuperscript{186} In addition to the Shâhsavan tribesmen, Sunni Lesgis lived in the more mountainous reaches of the khanate.\textsuperscript{187} There were also about two hundred Jewish families living in Qobbeh.\textsuperscript{188} These people may have been Tats, speakers of an Iranian language who lived in Qobbeh and Darband, some of whom were Jewish, some Sunni.\textsuperscript{189} Most of Qobbeh's Jews lived in a village near the capital and helped

\textsuperscript{183.} Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, \textit{Akty}, IV, 38; Butkov, "Svedenija", 210; \textit{idem.}, "Vyderzhki", 203; Serebrov, 177; Bronevskii, I, 59; II, 391.

\textsuperscript{184.} Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 203-05; Serebrov, 177.

\textsuperscript{185.} Gmelin, III, 34.

\textsuperscript{186.} Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 204-05; Serebrov, 177; Bronevskii, II, 382-83.

\textsuperscript{187.} Gmelin, III, 34; Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 205; Bronevskii, II, 383-84.

\textsuperscript{188.} Gmelin, III, 33-34; Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, \textit{Akty}, IV, 38; Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 205.

\textsuperscript{189.} B. Geiger et al., \textit{Peoples and Languages of the Caucasus} ('s-Gravenhage, 1959), 49.
to run soap works and a tannery. Until the recall of the Russian expeditionary force early in 1797, there were about one hundred eighty Armenians living in the khanate.

Qobbeh's economy was dominated by the products of the earth, which, in Qobbeh, were comparatively abundant and made the inhabitants somewhat more prosperous than their neighbors. The key to the khanate's agricultural strength was the presence of the eastern spur of the High Caucasus, which occupied about half its territory. The higher elevations were ill-suited to the planting of most cereal crops, although there was enough land to grow barley and hemp. Instead, the area was used primarily as pasturage for tribal flocks and for keeping bees, honey and wax being two of Qobbeh's principle exports. The mountains were also important because the snows which covered their summits fed a host of streams and rivers which flowed across the khanate to the sea. This ample supply of water made extensive farming possible in the hills and lowlands. The latter formed the breadbasket of the northeastern Caucasus, producing large

190. Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 38; Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 205.

191. Gmelin, III, 34; Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 205.

192. Serebrov, 117.


194. Ibid., 203.

195. Ibid., 203; Bronevskii, II, 390-91.

196. Excerpts from Steven's report on Russia's new Caspian territories, Barclay de Tolley to Paulucci, July 14, 1811, Akty, V, 37; Butkov, "Vyderzhki", 203; Gamba, 331; Klaproth, Tableau, 145.
quantities of wheat, hay, barley, and rice to be exported to the
surrounding khanates and mountain tribes. Large herds of animals,
especially sheep, grazed on the lowland pastures. Much of the land
was covered by forests, which enabled the inhabitants to sell lumber
to the treeless Baku. Locally produced silk, cotton, hemp, and
wool were woven by the inhabitants into a variety of rough fabrics
but cloth of higher quality had to be imported from Iran and Russia
via Baku. Qobbeh's wool was also used to make carpets, some of which
were highly sought after.

Qobbeh enjoyed a number of strategic advantages. Its many rivers,
by their swiftness and depth, were a source of difficulty for any army
which attempted to operate in the area, as the Russian expeditionary
force would discover in 1796. The events of 1796 would also show that
the forests and mountains could provide dissatisfied inhabitants with
a haven over which it was extremely difficult for Russia to exert any
authority.

The capital of Qobbeh was a small, new town of about six hundred
families. It was moved to its present location on the Qodeyal River

197. Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 38; Barclay de Tolley
to Paulucci, July 14, 1811, ibid., V, 37; Akhverdov, 221; Gamba,
328; Simonovich, 139, 144; Bronevskii, II, 381.

198. Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 38; Gamba, 328;
Klaproth, Tableau, 145; Bronevskii, II, 381.

199. Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 38; Dreniakin, 171;
Serebrov, 177.

200. Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, IV, 38; Butkov, "Vyderzhki",
203; Dreniakin, 171; Simonovich, 139; Gamba, 329; Klaproth,
Tableau, 145; Bronevskii, II, 381.

201. Klaproth, Tableau, 145.

202. Tormasov to Gur'ev, Akty, IV, 38; Serebrov, 177; Simonovich, 144.
sometime around 1750. Brick walls some six feet high protected the
town on three sides. On the fourth was a drop of more than sixty
feet to the Qodeyāl. Qobbeh's appearance differed from that of
most Caucasian towns. As befitted the capital of a thickly forested
region, its buildings, even its mosques, were made of wood rather than
the usual mud and stone.

The last rulers of Qobbeh before its incorporation into Russia
in 1806 were members of the Qaitāq tribe who had migrated south from
their home in Dāghestān. The founder of the dynasty went to the court
of Shāh Soleiman Safavi (1666-95) where he converted to Shi'a Islam,
won the Shah's favor, and was appointed Khan of Qobbeh and Sāleyān.
Another member of the ruling family, Hosein 'Ali, kept power by
becoming the vassal first of Peter the Great, then of Nāder Shāh, and
continued to rule after the latter's death. Hosein 'Ali's son,
Fath 'Ali, made himself one of the dominant forces in Caucasian
politics from the 1760's to the 1780's. In addition to conquering
Darband, maintaining control of Sāleyān, and collecting tribute from
Baku, Fath 'Ali Khān enforced his suzerainty over the easternmost
region of the Caucasus from Dāghestān to Ardabil and beyond. In the
process he became the overlord of the large Shāhsavān tribe and the

204. Gmelin, III, 33; Akhverdov, 221; Klaproth, Tableau, 145.
207. Butkov, Materialy, I, 183-39; Bakikhanov, 127.
khans of Tāleşeh and Gilān. He also controlled affairs in Shirvān, won the cooperation of Shirvān's erstwhile ally, Shakki, helped the inhabitants of Ganjeh succeed in their rebellion against the joint rule of Georgia and Qarābāgh and carried out a devastating raid on the last-named khanate.

After Fath 'Ali's death in 1789, Qobbeh's fortunes declined. His eldest son, Ahmad, succeeded to the throne without the contest of power which so frequently disrupted the Caucasian khanates but he was a dissolute young man of undistinguished abilities. He died in 1791, while still in his early twenties, leaving his thirteen year old half-brother, Sheikh 'Ali, to become the next khan. Mostafā Khān of Shirvān used this opportunity to retake Sāleyān, the loss of which further weakened Qobbeh by depriving it of the large revenue from taxes and concession fees. Gradually, Sheikh 'Ali rebuilt Qobbeh's power. By the time of the Russian campaign of 1796, he was able to field an army of ten or eleven thousand men, primarily cavalry, supplemented, to the extent that his reduced revenues permitted, by Dāghestāni tribal mercenaries.

One of Qobbeh's most intransigent enemies was Shirvān, a khanate which resembled it in a number of ways. Shirvān lay on the south side

209. Bakikhanov, 132, 138; Javānshīr, 75; Qarābāghi, 130; Dubrovin, II, 77-80.
210. Bakikhanov, 139-40.
212. Akhverdov, 221; Butkov, "Svedenīia", 210; Bronevskii, II, 340.
of the mountains from Qobbeh and its eastern district was part of the
same desert as southeastern Qobbeh and Baku. The mountainous zone
was thickly forested and unsuited to agriculture but did have good
pastures on which large herds of animals, especially sheep, grazed. As in Qobbeh, streams which rose in the mountains brought water to the
lowlands although, in this case, they flowed into the Kur instead of
the Caspian. The Shirvanis grew large quantities of the same kinds
of grains and fruits as the people of Qobbeh, rice being a principal
export.

Shirvan's greatest economic asset, apart from the recently
regained Saleyin fisheries, was its silk industry. The khanate had
been a center of the silk trade for centuries even though its silk
was considered coarser than Gilan's. In the late eighteenth century,
Shirvan produced about four hundred tons of silk annually, four times
more than any of its neighbors. This silk was spun into thread by
the women and children and turned into much admired carpets and fabrics,
which were exported in large quantity to Russia and throughout western


214. Steven, "Memoire", III, 240; Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810,
Akty, IV, 38; Dreniakin, 171; Bronevskii, II, 356, 425.


216. Forster, II, 216, 231; Bell, I, 77; Lerch, "Nachricht", 415;
Gmelin, III, 68; Akhverdov, 225; Serebrov, 179; Dreniakin,
170; Tormasov to Gur'ev, Akty, IV, 38.

217. Olearius, 222; Bell, I, 77; Kotov, 71; Gmelin, III, 67;
Bartol'd, "Shirvan", 382; Forster, II, 220.

218. Forster, II, 228; Serebrov, 179.
Asia. Shirvān was also noted for its metalwork. Shirvāni craftsmen made some of the best weapons in the Caucasus as well as domestic utensils.

In the seventeenth century, and perhaps in the eighteenth as well, Shirvān was a center for trade with Dāghestān. Carpets from Tabasaran, horses, and children of both sexes intended for slavery were brought for sale to the bazaar of Old Shemākhi.

The Shirvānis endured difficult times in the middle and late eighteenth century. For most of that period, there was no real government, only warring domestic and external rivals for power. The inhabitants were forced to move back and forth between two capitals (Old and New Shemākhi), both of which were periodically besieged and despoiled by Avar raiders, Nāder Shāh, and successive khans of Qobbeh. To add to the Shirvānis' misfortunes, the khanate was struck by a severe outbreak of plague during the 1760's. Not surprisingly, the silk industry and the economy as a whole suffered a sharp decline during this period. Yet, somehow, conditions must have begun to improve by the end of the century because the Shirvānis...

219. Olearius, 222; Bell, I, 77; Serebrov, 179; Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 38.

220. Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 38; Barclay de Tolley to Paulucci, July 14, 1811, ibid., V, 37.

221. Olearius, 222-23.

222. Bakikhanov, 140, 191; Dorn, 413, 417-21.

223. Bakikhanov, 130.

224. Gmelin, III, 67-68.
were considered prosperous by the standards of the eastern Caucasus.²²⁵ Shirvān was inhabited by fewer than five thousand families, of whom almost eight hundred lived in New Shemākhi. About one hundred of the capital's families were Armenian. Twice that number of Armenian families lived in the khanate's other villages. There were also a small number of Jews among the village population.²²⁶ In addition to the sedentary inhabitants, there were more than eight hundred families belonging to nomadic Turkoman tribes.²²⁷ Little is known about the khans' own tribe, the Khān Chopān. According to an Iranian source they were "noted for their courage, prowess as cavalry warriors, highway robbery, and plunder raids."²²⁸

Conflicts between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims had been a recurring source of strife in Shirvān ever since it was made part of the Safavi Empire in the sixteenth century. By the end of the eighteenth century, the khanate was again under Sunni rule. Although Sunnis, including the nomads, were in the majority, a substantial number of Shi'as continued to live in the towns.²²⁹

New Shemākhi was an unimposing place, founded in 1734 by Nāder-

²²⁵ Skibinevskii to Knorrin, February 26, 1802, Akty, I, 640; Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, ibid., IV, 38.

²²⁶ Gmelin, III, 64; Butkov, "Svedeniia", 210; Dreniakin, 164-65; Serebrov, 179; Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 38.

²²⁷ Akhverdov, 224; Dreniakin, 165; Klaproth, Tableau, 152; Serebrov, 179; Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 38; Bronevskii, II, 434.

²²⁸ Hedāyat, IX, 272.

²²⁹ Serebrov, 179; Bronevskii, II, 434.
Shāh on the banks of the Āq Su, ten to fifteen miles west of Old Shemākhi, which he considered too vulnerable to Avar raids. The new town was looted by the Iranian garrison in the 1740's, destroyed thirty years later by Fath 'Ali Khān of Qobbeh, who forced the inhabitants to move back to the ruins of Old Shemākhi, and then re-established when he sent everyone back to the new capital a decade later. It suffered extensive damage along with the rest of the Shirvāni lowlands when sacked by the Qājār army in 1795. The town was laid out in a rectangle not quite half a mile in length and was defended by a dry moat and high walls of unbaked brick with towers set into them. Most of the town's buildings, even the three caravanserais in this commercial center, were modest adobe structures. Only the khan's residence and the large public baths were made of stone. The place was considered unhealthy because of its contaminated water supply.

Of greater strategic importance than the capital was the fortress of Fit Dāgh, located on a high cliff some thirty miles north of New Shemākhi. Khans and their subjects usually took shelter there when attacked.

Shirvān had once been a much larger and more powerful state than .

230. Dorn, 413; Forster, II, 232; Gmelin, III, 60; Klaproth, Tableau, 150; Spilman, 43; Lerch, "Nachricht", 414.

231. Bakikhanov, 132; Dorn, 417, 419, 421; "Shekirsche khany", 50; Bronevskii, II, 430; Ibragimbeili, 53.


234. Ibid., 414-15.

235. Hedāyat, IX, 271; Klaproth, Tableau, 151; Akhverdov, 225.
it was in the eighteenth century. The Shirvānshāhs, who broke away
from the 'Abbāsid Caliphate in the ninth century, also ruled Shakki,
Darband, Qobbeh, Bāku, and Sāleyān. They retained much of their local
power even though they were forced to pay tribute to the Seljuks, the
Il-Khāns, the Golden Horde, and the Safavis. Finally, in 1538, their
realm was made an integral part of the Safavi Empire.236 The Ottomans
ruled the khanate from 1590 to 1607 and again from 1724 until Nāder
Shāh reclaimed the khanate for Iran in 1734. No subsequent Iranian
ruler attempted to exercise more than nominal suzerainty over it until
Āqā Mohammad Khān's Caucasian campaign of 1795.237

The khans who ruled Shirvān from the second half of the eighteenth
century until its incorporation into the Russian empire in 1820 were
the descendants of Allāh Verdi Beg, the chief of the Khān Chopān tribe
and owner of many villages in the vicinity of Old Shemākhi. His son,
Mohammad Seyyed, the first khan of the line, seized power with the
backing of Karim Khān Zand in the early 1760's, overthrowing a supporter
of the dispossessed Afshār dynasty who had ruled there since 1748.238
Mohammad Seyyed Khān did not remain master of Shirvān for long. In
1181 AH (1767/68) Fath 'Ali Khān of Qobbeh, in alliance with the Khan
of Shakki, deposed Mohammad Seyyed and took control of Shirvān. From
that time until Fath 'Ali's death in 1789, Qobbeh controlled the
affairs of Shirvān, sometimes directly, sometimes through Mohammad
Seyyed or some other descendant of Allāh Verdi Beg. Efforts by members

238. Bakikhanov, 127, 131; Gmelin, III, 61; Dorn, 418.
of that family to take over the government led to fighting and the
division of the khanate into enclaves of power, but Fath 'Ali, by force
of arms and the murder or blinding of various members of the family,
kept the upper hand. Both Mohammad Seyyed and his ambitious brother
Aqäsi were eventually executed by Fath 'Ali but their sons fought
amongst themselves for control of the khanate once Fath 'Ali was dead.
The eventual winner of this struggle was Aqäsi's son, Mostafä. Even
when Shirvän began to recover under Mostafä's rule, it was only able
to raise an army of about four thousand men, as compared with Qobbeh's
army of more than ten thousand.

In various economic and geographic characteristics, Shakki was
a lesser version of Shirvän. Like the latter, its land was divided
into three zones, forest-covered mountains, fertile lowlands sloping
towards the Kur, and desert, which, in Shakki's case, was situated on
a plateau between the mountains and the river valley. The economic
activities of the inhabitants of Shakki were much the same as the
Shirvänis'. Silk was a leading product, much of it exported to Baku
or Shemäkhi. Herds were tended on the rich pasture lands and substanc-
tial amounts of fruits and grains were cultivated. Carpets and fabrics,
weapons and household utensils were made in the workshops of the

239. Bakikhanov, 132-33, 135-39; Javânshir, 59; Gmelin, III, 62; Dorn,
        419-21; Bronevskii, II, 429-30; genealogical table of the khans
        of Shirvän, Akty, V, 1109-11.

240. Bakikhanov, 139, 140-41; Javânshir, 129-30; Qaräbäghi, 75;
        Serebrov, 190; Dorn, 420-21.


242. Klaproth, Tableau, 152; Bronevskii, II, 437-38; Minorskii,
        "Shekki", 346.
khanate's artisans. However, the silk, the weapons, and the utensils were all inferior to what was produced in Shirvān. 243

Shakki was inhabited by between fifteen and twenty thousand families, of whom almost one-third lived in the capital Nukhā, the rest in some 260 villages. Most of the inhabitants were Sunni but about one-third were Armenian, some of whom had fled from other khanates to the mountainous and, therefore, relatively inaccessible, districts of Shakki. 244 Many of Shakki's Muslims differed from their Shirvāni neighbors in that they were Lesgis and spoke a language of the Avar family rather than Āzeri Turkish. 245 The rest of the khanate's Muslims were Turkoman nomads who spent their summers in Shakki and migrated south to Sāleyān for the winter. 246

Shakki had been a mehāll (district) of Shirvān until one of the intervals of Ottoman hegemony, when, in 1580, it was put under a separate administration. It remained a separate province after its recapture by Iran. 247

Hāji Chelebi, a wealthy and powerful Shakki noble who was chosen by the begs and kadkhodas as the representative of Sunni interests

243. Kovalenskii's observations on Georgia, August, 1800, Akty, I, 122; Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, ibid., IV, 38; Ivanov to Tormasov, June 25, 1809, ibid., IV, 82; Klaproth, Tableau, 152-53; Serebrov, 180; Steven, "Mémoire", III, 240; Bronevskii, II, 441.

244. Kovalenskii's observations, Akty, I, 122; Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, ibid., IV, 38; Serebrov, 180; Bronevskii, I, 59.

245. Klaproth, Tableau, 152; Serebrov, 180.

246. Klaproth, Tableau, 152, 153-54.

against their oppressive khan, a vassal of Nāder Shāh, seized power in
1156 AH (1743/44). Nāder attacked the khanate twice, plundering and
burning Nukhā in the process and keeping Ḥāji Chelebi and his supporters
under siege for three years, but still was not able to regain control
of Shakki. 248 Ḥāji Chelebi continued to rule Shakki until his death
in 1168 A.H. (1754/55). He was succeeded by his eldest surviving son,
Āqā Kishi, whose murder five years later began the many-sided
struggle for power which marked the khanate's politics for the rest
of the century. 249

The origins of the rulers of Shakki are unclear. Ḥāji Chelebi
claimed descent from Qarā Keshish, a ruler of Nukhā, whose son was
appointed malek of the mahall of Shakki by an unspecified Iranian
ruler. Qarā Keshish's grandson, who served as malek from 848 to 861
A.H. (1444/45 to 1456/57), converted to Islam, though it is not clear
whether he was the first of his family to do so. The Qarā Keshishoghli
lost control of Shakki during the reign of the second Safavi Shah,
Tahmāsb I (1524-76). From that time until Ḥāji Chelebi's coup, the
khanate was governed by members of other local noble families who were
appointed by the shahs of Iran. 250

In the last years of the eighteenth century, during an interval
in the dynastic wars, Ḥāji Chelebi's great grandson, Mohammad Hasan
Khān, tried to take over Fath 'Ali Khān's role in Shirvān. First, he

Bakikhanov, 127.

249. "Shekinskie khany", 48; Ḥāji Seyyed 'Abd ol-Hamid, 60;
Bakikhanov, 130.

helped the Shirvānis expel Qobbeh's troops after the death of Fath 'Ali Khān. Then he tried to divide Shirvān among the sons of Mohammad Seyyed and Aqāsi, while giving the capital to his puppet. However, the sons were not content with the plan. They killed the puppet governor of New Shemākhi and fought each other for control of the entire khanate. This drove Mohammad Hasan into an anti-Shirvān alliance with Sheikh 'Ali Khān of Qobbeh. However, the various battles between the two sides and Mohammad Hasan's attempt to turn Aqā Mohammad Khān against Mostafā of Shirvān all failed to produce the desired results.  

The other khanates Russia was eager to acquire, Qarābāgh, Ganjeh, Yerevan, and Nakajavān, formed an area sometimes known as Iranian Armenia.

Qarābāgh and Ganjeh, for all the political animosity between them, had much in common. Both were predominantly Muslim but had sizable Christian minorities. The khans and most of the Muslims were Shi'a but there were also some Sunnis in Qarābāgh. Qarābāgh's Muslim population included a number of Kurdish nomads, who supported the rise to power of the current ruling family. The most nearly reliable population statistics, gathered in 1810, indicate that the population of Qarābāgh at that time was twelve thousand families, of whom two thousand five hundred were Armenian.

251. Bakikhanov, 139-41.
252. Javānshīr, 72; Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 37, 38, 39; Keppel, 280; Bronevskii, I, 28; Mignan, I, 92.
254. Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 38. However, it is
Ganjeh in 1804, shortly after its conquest by Russia, was reckoned at about fifteen thousand people.\textsuperscript{255} Whatever the exact size of the population, the khanate appeared to be thinly populated.\textsuperscript{256}

Both Shushā (Shishā, Shushi), the capital of Qarābāgh, and the city of Ganjeh were comparatively new settlements.\textsuperscript{257} After Shāh 'Abbās I took Ganjeh from the Ottomans in 1606, he moved the inhabitants to a new site nearby on the banks of the Agri Chāi, a tributary of the Kur.\textsuperscript{258} At his orders, the new city was fortified with a deep dry moat and walls forty feet high but by the 1770's the city as a whole was in a poor state of repair.\textsuperscript{259}

\textsuperscript{255} About 4,600 of them were new immigrants who had come to live on Russian-ruled territory. An even larger number had emigrated, mostly to Shirvān and Shakki, to escape Russian rule. Tsitsianov to Alexander, May 29, 1804, Akty, II, 601.


\textsuperscript{257} After the Russian conquest of Ganjeh in 1806, the name was changed to Elizavetpol', although the old name survived in popular usage. The city is now known as Kirovabad.

\textsuperscript{258} Bartol'd, "Gandja", EI, II, 130.

\textsuperscript{259} Lerch, "Nachricht", 468; Gordon, f. 26; Zapiski Sergeiya Alekseevicha Tuchkova 1766-1808 (St. Petersburg, 1908), 215.
the time of Shāh 'Abbās I did survive into the twentieth century. Ganjeh could be an unpleasant place in which to live during the summer for those, like many Russians, who were not used to extreme heat. The unusually high mineral content of the town's water supply caused additional problems. Shushā was of still more recent origin than Ganjeh, having been founded in the early 1750's by Panāh Khān, who re-established the rule of the Javānshīr tribe in Qarābāgh. The city was officially known as Panāhābād in honor of its founder but in ordinary usage was called Shushā, the name of a nearby Armenian village. Shushā had a strategically advantageous location atop a fairly high hill which was difficult to ascend. In addition to its natural defenses, the city was surrounded by walls.

Qarābāgh and Ganjeh both had good pastures and farm land. Tilling the soil and raising animals were the primary occupations of the vast majority of the Muslims in both places. The Kur River valley offered excellent pasturage and a comparatively mild winter climate. In the summer, nomads took their flocks into the mountains in the south and west. Qarābāgh in particular was noted for especially fine horses. Both khanates' foremost product was grain. When

261. Major General Guliakov to Tsitsianov, April 5, 1803, Akty, II, 684.
265. Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 39.
Russia sent large numbers of troops to the Caucasus in the years following 1802 and fighting reduced Qarābāgh's harvests, Ganjeh served as the primary source of food for the Russian army. In earlier times, Qarābāgh had produced large quantities of silk but by the end of the eighteenth century that industry played a small role in the khanate's economy.

From the sixteenth century until the death of Nāder Shāh, Qarābāgh and Ganjeh formed a single administrative unit, sometimes under the rule of the Ziādāghlu Qājārs, sometimes under the rule of the Shams od-Dinlus. Within that framework, the Javānshirs had considerable power in Qarābāgh. Nāder Shāh attempted to break the power of the Ziādāghlu Qājārs and the Javānshirs, who were supporters of the Safavi dynasty, by removing some of the Qājārs and all of the Javānshirs to the eastern part of his empire. The Qājārs were left in control of Ganjeh but the area under the khan's jurisdiction was reduced to the borders which existed until 1804. Not until Nāder's death were the Javānshirs able to return to Qarābāgh.

Panāh Khān Javānshir managed to escape from Nāder Shāh's camp, where he had been held hostage, and made his way to the Lesgis in


267. J. Spilman, 43; Steven, "Mémoire", III, 240; Tormasov to Gur'ev, August 2, 1810, Akty, IV, 39.


270. Hedāyat, IX, 297; Javānshir, 69; Bakikhanov, 127, 142.
Jaruteleh. Profiting from the period of confusion following Nāder's death, he regathered the Javānshirs in Qarābāgh, where he made himself Khan. After defending his independence against Hāji Chelebi of Shakkī and Mohammad Hasan Khān Qājār (the father of Āqā Mohammad Khān), he was removed to Shirāz, along with his eldest son, Ebrāhim Khalil, as part of Karim Khān Zand's attempt to establish control over Iran's northwestern borderlands. Panāh died in captivity but Ebrāhim Khalil made his way back to Qarābāgh and took control of the khanate away from his younger brother, who fled to Qobbeh where he was killed by a member of the Shirvāni ruling family.

Ebrāhim Khalil increased his political authority to the extent that he was able to compete with Fath 'Ali Khān of Qobbeh for domination of the Caucasian khanates. He backed several anti-Qobbeh factions in Shirvān and claimed to be the overlord of that territory as well as of Shakkī, Ganjeh, Tabrīz, Khoī, and the Shāhsavan tribe. A test of strength between the khans of Qarābāgh and Qobbeh finally came about in the late 1780's sparked by their competing efforts to control Shirvān. Fath 'Ali succeeded in carrying out a particularly destructive attack on the lowlands of Qarābāgh but this did not determine the ultimate result of the rivalry between the two khanates since he died a few months after achieving that victory.

271. Hedāyat, IX, 297; Javānshir, 69-70, 73, 74; Bakīkhanov, 127-28, 130.
272. Javānshir, 74-75; Bakīkhanov, 136.
273. Javānshir, 75; Qarābāghi, 130.
According to one Iranian account, Ebrāhim Khalil would have tried to make himself master of all of Iran were it not for the fact that he would have had to fight Āqā Mohammad Khān to achieve that goal. To this frustration is ascribed the Khan of Qarābāgh's defiance of Qājār authority.275 This is corroborated in part by a Qarābāghi chronicle which states that many of Ebrāhim Khalil's supporters urged him to proclaim himself Shah but that he declined because he knew that Āqā Mohammad Khān had already become very powerful in Iran.276

An unusual aspect of Ebrāhim Khalil's reign was that he was the only one of the eastern Caucasian khans to ally himself with King Erekle of Georgia in cooperation against other Muslim rulers. In the early 1780's, the combined forces of these two states forced Ganjeh and Yerevan into submission. The conquerors occupied Ganjeh, deposed and blinded its khan and put the government of that khanate into the hands of their lieutenants. Ebrāhim Khalil then broke with Erekle over the latter's submission to Russia. This dispute provided the inhabitants of Ganjeh with an opportunity to revolt and put a brother of their deposed khan in power. In 1785, Ebrāhim Khalil and Erekle reconciled their differences and ousted the new khan. Finally, the allies agreed to recognize yet another brother, Javād, who had the support of Qobbeh, on condition that he pay tribute.277

One point of recurring conflict between Qarābāgh and Ganjeh on


276. Javānshir, 75.

277. Qarābāghi, 130; Brosset, II, part ii, 252; Dubrovin, II, 40-41, 51-52.
the one hand and Georgia (later Russia) on the other, was the com-
petition for control of the Qazzãq and Shams od-Dinlu tribes living
along the common border. The preferences of the Qazzãqa and Shams
od-Dinlus themselves are difficult to discern since accounts of
events preceding 1797 are partisan and incomplete.278 Whether by
choice or under duress, large numbers of Shams od-Dinlus and Qazzãqa
emigrated to Ganjeh and Qarãbãgh in the 1780's. Georgia and its
supporters among the Shams od-Dinlus had limited success in fighting
Ganjeh over this issue,279 but the matter remained unresolved until
Russia intervened in the early nineteenth century.

Like Qarãbãgh and Ganjeh, Yerevan and Nakhjavãn had much in
common. In the case of the latter pair, the resemblance extended to
political attitudes. Both khanates were of particular interest to
Russia because of the large number of Armenians living there and
because they occupied the territory between Georgia and the Aras, which
Russia considered the most strategically advantageous border with Iran.
About two-thirds of the eighteen thousand families living in Yerevan
were Armenians. The rest were Jews and Muslims: Iranians, Turkomans,
and Kurds.280 In general, the sedentary Muslims were more likely to-

278. There is evidence that after that date some of the tribesmen
sided with Qarãbãgh and Ganjeh but that may be a reaction to
the weakness and maladministration which characterized the
Georgian government after Erekle's death in 1798.

279. Bakikhanov, 139; Brosset, II, part ii, 253, 258.

280. Kovalenskii's observations on Georgia, August, 1800, Akty, I,
118; Klaproth, Tableau, 155; R. Strachey, "Diary of a Journey
from India through Persia and Georgia to Russia, Poland, Ger-
many to England 1817", vol. VIII (pages unnumbered), Somerset
Record Office, Taunton, Somerset, England; Domboli, 163.
be Shi'a, the nomads, Sunni. There is no specific information on what fraction of Nakhjavān's twelve thousand families were Armenian, only a general indication that the fraction was large.

By the end of the eighteenth century, Nakhjavān was a poor and unimpressive place. It had risen to prominence during the rule of the Il-Khāns in Iran, but centuries of warfare between Iran and the Ottoman Empire contributed to its sharp decline. Shah 'Abbās I (1585-1628) razed the khanate and other areas between Yerevan and Tabrīz as part of a scorched-earth policy to prevent Ottoman troops from living off the land in that bitterly contested border region. Recovery was limited. For the next two hundred years, Nakhjavān's most conspicuous feature was its devastation. Not surprisingly, the khanate's economic position was weak. It was of no consequence in commercial matters. A well-watered plain extended from the capital towards Mount Ararat but its agricultural potential was not fulfilled. The area between Nakhjavān and Yerevan was desert.

281. Klaproth, 155; C. Bélanger, II, 204.


285. Ibid., I, 36; Chardin, II, 297; R. Ker Porter, Travels in Georgia, Persia, Armenia, Ancient Babylonia, etc. during the years 1817, 1818, 1819, and 1820, 2 vols. (London, 1821), I, 211.


During the Safavi era, the khans of Nakhjavān were drawn from the Kangerlu tribe, and were subordinate to the Beglerbegi (Provincial Governor) of Chukur-e Sa'd (Yerevan).  

Although this administrative relationship did not persist into the late eighteenth century, the Kangerlus, who retained control of the khanate, continued to cooperate with the khans of Yerevan and looked to them for protection.

Although Yerevan, too, had suffered from the effects of repeated battles between Iran and the Ottoman Empire on its soil, it was able to recover and to retain much of its economic and political strength. It lay on the major communication routes to Iran from Tbilisi in the north and the cities of Anatolia to the west. Among Yerevan's functions as a commercial crossroads was its use as a slave market by merchants who sold to customers from many parts of Iran. Even more important to Yerevan's economic well-being was its agricultural productivity. Cotton, flax, tobacco, and cereals were all grown in substantial quantities; several hundred thousand buffaloes, beeves, sheep, goats, horses, and donkeys grazed on the khanate's rich pastures. These animals served as beasts of burden, sources of meat and dairy...

289. Minorsky, Tadhirat al-Mulūk, 100; Eskandar Monshi, II, 1085.

290. Minorsky, "Nakhcawan", ET, II, 840; Lazarev to Knorring, July 13, 1801, Akty, I, 617; Lazarev to Knorring, December 5, 1802, ibid., I, 622.

291. Tavernier, I, 30, 36.


products, and provided wool and hides for the local production of fabrics, carpets, and leather. 294

The city of Yerevan as it existed in the late eighteenth century had its origins in the Safaví era. After the old town was destroyed during Irano-Turkish fighting, a new one was established nearby, atop a rocky outcropping which overlooked the Zangeh River, a tributary of the Aras. 295 It was reported to be a large, unattractive city, lacking buildings of architectural distinction, although it had a high-domed mosque, located in the citadel. 296 The residential part of the city was on the northern side of the slope and was surrounded by a protecting wall, outside of which were extensive gardens. 297 The southern part of the city was occupied by the citadel, where the khan's residence, some shops, and about eight hundred other houses were located. 298 Despite the pressures put on Yerevan by Georgia, Iran, and Russia from the 1780's on, the city's defenses were in poor condition. On two sides, the city had the natural protection of the sixty-foot high cliff above the Zangeh, but the rest of the city relied on walls and towers of mud and stone. These structures could offer little protection against the kind of artillery then used by Russia. Moreover, the existing defense works were poorly maintained. 299


296. Chardin, II, 161; Bélanger, II, 197.


298. Price, f. 145; Bélanger, II, 197.

299. Bélanger, II, 196; Tavernier, I, 30; T. Lumsden, A Journey from
Under Safavi rule, Yerevan had been an important center of civilian and military administration. Its Beglerbegi also held the title of sardār, which means "general", a reflection of the khanate's importance to the security of Iran's northwestern border. Shāh 'Abbas I appointed Amir Kuneh Khān, a Ziādāghlu Qājār, to be Beglerbegi of Yerevan. This office was inherited by the heirs of that line down to the late eighteenth century. The last member of that family to rule Yerevan was Mohammad Khān, who came to power sometime before 1207 A.H. (1792/93) and was removed by Fath 'Ali Shāh in 1805.

The attack on Yerevan by a Georgian-Qarābāghi force in 1780 had a grave effect on the internal strength of the khanate and on its relations with those two neighboring powers. The attack, intended to force the Khan of Yerevan to pay tribute, was accompanied by many acts of vandalism. The Georgians, especially, burned many homes, took much booty, and carried off a large number of captives. Many of Yerevan's Armenians, who played a vital role in every aspect of the local economy, including the payment of much of the Khan's tax revenue, were forcibly resettled in Georgia. Tribute payments, which drained off more of the khanate's wealth, continued for several years, until the khan learned of Erekle's submission to Russia.

Merut in India to London (London, 1822), 146; Price, f. 145; Kovalenskii's observations on Georgia, Akty, I, 118.

300. Chardin, II, 196.
301. Eskandar Monshi, II, 652, 1085; Bakikhanov, 141.
302. Hedāyat, IX, 253, 271; Domboli, 127, 163.
303. Bagrationi, 168; Brosset, II, part ii, 224-25; Lang, 78.
304. Lang, 207.
There was one other Iranian khanate which Russia eventually, almost inadvertently, decided to acquire: Tālesh. Unlike the other khanates, it offered no apparent advantages, save that its Khan, Mir Mostafā, was a persistent opponent of the Qājārs. Tālesh lay south of the desired Khor-Aras border, had no Christian inhabitants, and no economic assets except for its possible usefulness as a stopover point in communications with Anzali, although, even for that purpose, Baku had far better facilities. Lankarān, the capital, lacked a harbor, so that any ship which came there had to anchor in the open seas. Moreover, Tālesh was difficult to reach, except by sea, from the other areas in which Russia was interested, while it could readily be attacked from areas under Qājār control. This strategically unattractive place had another natural disadvantage: the coastal zone was swampland and, as such, was rife with swamp-bred diseases. Lankarān, although it was the khanate's largest settlement, was little more than a village, consisting of a fort and some houses located among broad tracts of gardens. By the 1840's, its population had risen to about three thousand.

In earlier centuries, all of what became known as Tālesh had been part of Gilān. The Tālesh tribes, Turkomans who had moved into Iran with the Mongol army, were established no later than the sixteenth century in an area along the Caspian from the vicinity of Anzali to

305. Berezin, III, 114.
306. Dubrovin, IV, 14.
the Mughān plain. In the late eighteenth century, Mir Mostafā Khān controlled the territory from Mughān as far south as Karganrud, the district immediately south of the modern Russo-Iranian border. This last-named district was eventually taken away from Mir Mostafā by Fath 'Ali Shāh and, along with the four other southernmost districts of Tālesh, remained subject to Iran.

Although the Tālesh tribesmen were Turkoman nomads by origin, they assimilated many of the ways of their Gilānī neighbors. The Tāleshi living along the coast became sedentary farmers, although their brethren in the inland hills kept their nomadic ways, as did the Shāhsavans and Kurds who also lived there. Both the nomadic and sedentary Tāleshi were Shi'a and spoke an Iranian language resembling Gilaki.

Because of its ample, even excessive rainfall, Tālesh was able to produce a surplus of rice and a certain quantity of silk. These, along with lumber from its dense forests, were exported to Bāku in return for Russian metals, primarily iron, tin, and lead, as well as


310. Rabino, "Rulers of Gilan", Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (1920), 280; J. B. Fraser, Travels and Adventures in the Persian Provinces on the Southern Banks of the Caspian Sea (London, 1826), 145; in the future, unless otherwise specified, the name Tālesh will be used in reference to the northern districts.

311. Bartol'd, "Tālīš", 641-42; Fraser, Historical and Descriptive Account of Persia (Edinburgh and London, 1834), 72; Klaproth, Tableau, 154.

fabrics woven in various European countries.313

Mir Mostafā Khan of Tālesh refused to submit to Āqā Mohammad Khān during the Qājār campaigns in Azerbaijan (1791, 1795, 1797). (The first campaign was led by one of Āqā Mohammad's foremost supporters, Soleiman Khān Qājār, the Amir Kabīr.) These attacks on Tālesh generally took the form of raids in which the army looted the area and then left.314 According to an Iranian source, a contingent of Qājār troops conquered Tālesh in 1795.315 Nonetheless, the area cannot have been brought under Āqā Mohammad Khān's effective control since troops had to be sent back for the same purpose in 1797 when the campaign collapsed in the anarchy which followed the assassination of Āqā Mohammad Khān.316

There is no consistent pattern to the way the various Caucasian rulers reacted to Āqā Mohammad Khān's campaign of 1795. Sheikh 'Ali Khan of Qobbeh, whose position north of the High Caucasus gave him some degree of protection from the Iranian army, acknowledged Āqā Mohammad as his overlord without offering resistance, while Qobbeh's long-time enemy, Ebrāhim Khalīl Khān of Qarābāgh, whose realm was one of Āqā Mohammad's primary targets, refused to submit and withstood a siege of more than a month.317

However, the actions of these two powerful rulers did not determine the courses of action taken by their traditional allies. Javād

313. Dreniakin, 170, 171.
315. Ibid., IX, 262.
316. Ibid., IX, 294.
317. Ibid., IX, 262-68; Domboli, 23; Fasā'i, 65-66.
of Ganjeh, who became khan largely because of Qobbeh's support, and Hosein Qoli of Baku, who tried to rid himself of dependence on Qobbeh, both sent messages of good will to Aqā Mohammad, who stopped briefly in Ganjeh on his return from Georgia. Mohammad Hasan Khan of Shakhki also submitted, despite the fact that he owed his life and, to a considerable extent, his successful seizure of power, to Ebrāhim Khalil. In any event, his submission did not win him the favor of Aqā Mohammad, who ordered him captured and blinded after hearing accusations made by his brother Salim. This done, Salim finally took revenge on his brother, seizing the throne and killing his brother's seven young sons. He then sought recognition as khan by Aqā Mohammad. Shirvān, whose khans were sometimes allies, sometimes enemies of Qara-bāgh, and Mohammad of Yerevan, who had not forgiven the 1780 raid on his territory, both attempted to oppose the Qājār troops sent against them. After an initial defeat in open battle, Mohammad withdrew to the citadel of his capital, where he held out until he learned of Aqā Mohammad's occupation of Tbilisi, at which time he submitted and was confirmed as khan. Perhaps matters in Shirvān would have gone more smoothly had not the large number of Qājār troops which quickly took control of the khanate embarked on a policy of confiscating the property of the katkhodās (village chiefs). This provoked a violent reaction among the inhabitants. Khan Chopān cavalry attacked and

318. Hedāyat, IX, 268, 271; Bakikhanov, 143; Fasā'ī, 66, 67.
320. Hedāyat, IX, 271; Fasā'ī, 67; "O pokhode", I, 128-29, 131.
routed the Qājār troops as the latter were returning to Āqā Mohammad's camp, killing the commander and seizing all his baggage, which probably contained not a small amount of recently acquired booty. This development prompted Āqā Mohammad to send his brother, 'Ali Qoli, at the head of more troops to subdue the Shirvānis. After a siege of the stronghold of Fit Dāgh, Mostafā Khān finally agreed to submit.321

The 1795 campaign had a serious disruptive effect on various aspects of life in the Caucasian khanates. One result was the further depopulation of an already underpopulated region. In all the areas where there was fighting against the Qājārs -- Qarābāgh, Yerevan, Shirvān, Sāleyān, and Tālesh, as well as Shakkū, where Salim's drive to seize power coincided with the Qājār advance -- there must have been some loss of life. This would have had a disproportionately greater effect because of the sparseness of population. An Iranian account of the campaign speaks of wholesale massacres of anti-Qājār forces in Qarābāgh.322 The same source mentions five hundred women and boys from that khanate being carried off into slavery and the capture of those Qarābāghi soldiers who were not killed in battle.323 Presumably, Āqā Mohammad's troops took prisoners in other battles, particularly the one which preceded the siege of Yerevan. Khanates were further depopulated by the flight of inhabitants to remote areas in which they hoped to find shelter from the war. There is specific

321. Hedāyat, IX, 271, 272-73; Domboli, 24; Fasā'i, 67; Bakikhanov, 144; "O pokhode", I, 131.


323. Ibid., IX, 265, 267-68.
mention of the flight of sedentary farmers as well as nomads from Qarābāgh and Shirvān. Considering the practice of people throughout this region of seeking refuge from wars and famines through flight, it is likely that inhabitants of other khanates also abandoned their homes. In the wake of the destruction of property and crops which was also a part of the 1795 campaign, there must have been little incentive for the refugees to return to their villages.

Economic destruction must have been greatest in Qarābāgh and Shirvān, where looting and vandalism were part of the punitive measures used against the unco-operative khans. In addition to the taking of objects of value, large numbers of cattle were driven away (although the claim of one hundred thousand head from Qarābāgh alone is undoubtedly exaggerated). The city of New Shamākhi was virtually destroyed. In addition to whatever destruction to crops or pasturage may have resulted from these tactics or from the battles, the presence of contingents of soldiers living off the land, especially in Qarābāgh, where part of Āqā Mohammad's army spent more than sixty days, must have depleted the various khanates' supplies of food as well as causing additional property damage. Moreover, the presence of the Qājār army (and the internal dispute in Shakkī) carried over into the harvest season and must have interfered with the gathering of crops and seeds for the next planting. All these setbacks came on top of

324. Ibid., IX, 263; Bakikhanov, 143.
325. Hedāyat, IX, 264, 273; Bakikhanov, 143; "O pokhode", I, 164; Bronevskii, II, 430; Ibragimbei, 53.
326. Hedāyat, IX, 268.
an existing famine in Qarābāgh and Ganjeh and the other battles, raids, and epidemics which had caused so much suffering in the recent past. It seems unlikely that farmers, artisans, and merchants could have carried on their activities at a near normal level in the face of warfare, population shifts, and sieges.

The events of 1795 were not without their political repercussions as well. None of the khans of the eastern Caucasus came through the troubles of that year unscathed. After years of pursuing their own aggrandizement and endeavoring to throw off any master, they were subjected to considerable political pressure by Āqā Mohammad's demand that they acknowledge him as their suzerain. Those who resisted did so at considerable cost. Those who submitted incurred the additional expense of paying tribute of sufficient amount so as not to insult their new overlord. However, the khans' revenues, from which the cost of tribute might be recouped and the costs of governing met, were reduced. Subjects were not living in their usual homes and their means of livelihood had been, at least in part, stolen or destroyed. Although Mohammad Hasan of Shakki was the only khan to be ousted by Āqā Mohammad, all had been given disquieting examples of their own vulnerability. This was the weakened and frightened condition in which the khans found themselves in 1796, when Catherine sent troops to establish Russian control over the eastern Caucasus.
Chapter III

The Zubov Campaign of 1796

The culmination of the various plans and attitudes developed during Catherine's reign toward Iran and its northwestern marches was the campaign of 1796. Not only did the campaign mark the final stage in the evolution of Russian attitudes about the region in Catherine's reign, it anticipated many of the tactics and problems of the war Alexander fought for the control of the lands north of the Kur and Aras Rivers. For the first time, Catherine had the opportunity to achieve all the goals she had set for Russia in the area. She did not choose 1796 deliberately as the best occasion for the realization of these goals. Rather, the decision to act was forced upon her by the shock of the Iranian attack on Georgia the year before. In all likelihood, her sense of outrage was as much the result of Āqā Mohammad's refutation of her belief that no Iranian ruler was strong enough to oppose Russia's projects as by the destruction he wreaked on Georgia.¹

In October 1795, Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia, was surrendered to the Qājārs after the Georgian army had been shattered in battle. During the week-long occupation of the capital, the city and its environs were plundered, priests were killed, and, according to Iranian sources, fifteen thousand Georgian women and boys were enslaved. (A

¹. Ukaz, April 19, 1793, Butkov, Materialy, II, 287.
Russian source put the number enslaved at ten thousand.)\(^2\) Russia's response to the sack of Tbilisi brought to the fore several closely related problems which were to harass Russia for years: the effect on Russian policy of the personalities of its agents in the field; the gap between policy as it was formulated in St. Petersburg and executed in the Caucasus; Russia's ignorance of the region; its contempt for vassal and foe alike; and the sheer logistical difficulty of conducting military operations there.

Russia might have staved off the devastating Iranian attack had the official in charge of relations with Georgia been a man of different temperament from General I. V. Gudovich. King Erekle began to warn Gudovich of the danger of an Iranian attack in the spring of 1795 but the General dismissed the warnings as Georgian alarmism. He was confident that if Erekle followed his advice and made alliances with neighboring rulers, Āqā Mohammad Khān would not be able to fight his way across Āzerbāijān to Georgia.\(^3\) Gudovich did not perceive the flaws in his strategy. If the Iranian attack occurred in the fall, many peasants might desert to harvest their crops, as, in fact, many did.\(^4\) Georgia's allies might decide not to fight, as was the case with the west Georgian kingdom of Imereti.\(^5\) Lastly, Āqā Mohammad

\(^2\) Hedāyat, IX, 271; Fasā'i, 67; Knöring to Alexander, July 28, 1801, Akty, I, 426; Brosset, II, part ii, 262; Dubrovin, III, 39-42; Lang, 226-29.

\(^3\) Gudovich's reports to St. Petersburg, May 7 and September 13, 1795, Tsagareli, II, part ii, 89, 101-02.

\(^4\) Lang, 215.

\(^5\) Ibid., 216-17; Tsagareli, II, part ii, 108.
might find a way to outflank those of Georgia's allies which did offer resistance, as he did, by leaving part of his army behind in Qarābāgh and Yerevan while pressing on with his main force to Georgia.⁶

Gudovich's extreme reluctance to send Russian troops to aid Georgia even after the Iranian danger became unmistakable makes him appear to have been a person whose primary concern was to avoid taking any initiative which might compromise him in the eyes of his superiors. In this respect, he was the opposite of most officers who served in the Caucasus over the next twenty years. In general, they were eager to take the offensive against all foes even when St. Petersburg advised restraint. Gudovich, however, had already been ordered by Catherine in 1793 to use Russian troops to protect Georgia in the event of an Iranian attack.⁷ Yet, even after Āqā Mohammad had defeated the Georgian army, on September 11, 1795, Gudovich still reported to Catherine that he could not act to save Georgia without her specific instructions.⁸ Although Catherine kept a wary eye on developments in France and Poland, she and her officials in St. Petersburg continued to believe that Russia ought to send troops should Georgia be in danger.⁹

Gudovich's actions once Āqā Mohammad was in control of Tbilisi

⁶ Hedāyat, IX, 268; Domboli, 23.
⁷ Dubrovín, III, 9.
⁹ Session of the State Council, May 7, 1795, AGS, I, part ii, cols. 798-99; Catherine to Gudovich, September 4, 1795, Dubrovín, III, 22-23.
illustrate another characteristic of Russo-Iranian relations: Russia's desire to find a scapegoat for its own mistakes. This search took two paths: the attempt by individual officials to persuade St. Petersburg to accept an edited account of events, according to which someone else bore the responsibility for the setback, and the willingness of officials, both in St. Petersburg and the Caucasus, to employ vigorous and harsh methods of retribution, which, however cathartic, could not undo the misfortune which a wiser approach at an earlier stage might have prevented. Both these tactics can be found in Gudovich's letter to P. A. Zubov.

Blame for the calamity, said Gudovich, lay with the Georgians themselves and with the weather. The Georgians failed to put up an adequate defense of their country because members of the royal family and the gentry had avoided taking up arms against the Iranians, enabling the poorly armed invaders to move across undefended territory. Gudovich, coyly voicing doubts about its accuracy, nonetheless reported the rumor that Queen Daria really wanted the Iranians to win so that her favorite son, Yulon, would become the next king instead of her stepson, Giorgi, whom Russia recognized as the rightful successor. 10

There are several flaws in Gudovich's version of events. First, Gudovich omitted all mention of the fact that he had relied on Imereti and Qarabagh to come to Georgia's defense or that this reliance proved unwise through no fault of Georgia's. It was true that many Georgian princes and nobles were indifferent to their country's welfare. However, this situation was one of long duration and had been one of

10. October 8, 1795, Dubrovin, III, 54-55.
Erekle's reasons for seeking Russian protection in 1783. Whatever the failings of others, Erekle did his utmost to repel the Iranians. Despite his seventy-five years, he led his small contingent in a ferocious struggle against the far more numerous enemy at the decisive battle and was able to deflect the onslaught for a time. Not until the last hope of victory faded was the King forced to retreat. Gudovich further excused himself by saying that even if he had sent troops when Āqā Mohammad attacked, they could not have reached Georgia because snow had made the road across the Caucasus impassable. However, he did not mention that he had been receiving warnings from the Georgians of a forthcoming Iranian attack since early 1795, in time for him to have taken action, and that he had refused to heed them.

After Tbilisi had fallen to the Iranians, Gudovich began his attempts to obtain their withdrawal and, simultaneously, to convince St. Petersburg that he was master of the situation. One ploy called for moving about some of the troops stationed at the Caucasian Line in the hope that Āqā Mohammad would grow so fearful that troops were being sent against him that he would retreat into the interior of Iran. Gudovich quickly reported the success of this measure to Catherine. He did not mention other factors which influenced Āqā Mohammad's decision to withdraw from Georgia: the approach of winter (which usually was not a time for military activities in the Caucasus); the intention of Āqā Mohammad to complete the subjugation of the rest of Āzerbāijān; or the possibility that he might wish to return to the

11. Lang, 216-17.
interior of Iran for his coronation marking his success in re-uniting much of the Safavi Empire. Nor did Gudovich explain how Āqā Mohammad, for whom the Caucasus was not the unfamiliar world that it was for the Russians, could be made to fear the possibility of Russian troops being sent across the Caucasus Mountains at the onset of winter. Gudovich, in his letter to P. A. Zubov, had claimed that the mountain passes were blocked by snow in September.

However, the device of attempting to intimidate one's enemy with reports of preparations for an attack is not a novel military tactic, although in this case it was unquestionably a fatuous one. More enlightening about Gudovich and the methods by which he attempted to deal with Iran is his other plan for removing Āqā Mohammad from the Caucasus. The General sent word that if Āqā Mohammad were to withdraw from Georgia, Russia would bestow gifts of honor upon him. The offer was not accepted.13 Even apart from the feasibility of offering a bribe to someone who was in the process of taking everything he wanted from eastern Georgia, Gudovich's plan reveals a blind spot in his attitude toward Iranians which was common among his fellow countrymen and caused Russia much difficulty in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This blind spot was the conviction that all Iranians, and all Asians in general, were utterly amoral and infinitely corruptible. Even the most temperate of the Russians who would deal with Iran in the next twenty years accepted this notion. For example, General A. P. Tormasov, Commander-in-Chief in the Caucasus from 1809 to 1811, who was more restrained than most of his colleagues in his

13. Gudovich to P. A. Zubov, October 8, 1795, Dubrovin, III, 54.
dealings with Iranians and Āzerbāijānīs, referred to the "passionate character of the Asians and their machinations" in a letter to Emperor Alexander.\textsuperscript{14} In the case of Gudovich's plan to bribe Āqā Mohammad, the inappropriateness of the concept and its consequent failure could not alter the course of events. The sack of Tbilisi could not be undone and Āqā Mohammad would soon leave Georgia for reasons of his own. However, in the coming years, this low opinion of Asians proved harmful because it prevented the Russians from understanding why people in Āzerbāijān and Iran continued to oppose their expansionist policies.

Gudovich planned one other move after the 1795 disaster, a bold attack on Iran to punish Āqā Mohammad for the sack of Tbilisi, which Gudovich chose to characterize as the equivalent of an attack on Russia itself.\textsuperscript{15} Gudovich's plan called for the invasion of Iran, the overthrow of Āqā Mohammad, and the incorporation of part of the Iranian empire, particularly the khanates of Āzerbāijān, into the Russian realm. This was to be accomplished by an expedition to be sent out in the spring of 1796. A small part of the force would be assigned to the protection of Georgia, while the remainder, at least twelve battalions and many pieces of artillery, would be sent "to Gilān and from there further."\textsuperscript{16} It is characteristic of Russian plans for attacking Iran in this formative stage of relations between the two countries that the scope of the invasion should be left open, as it was in this case, partly because those who approved the plans

\textsuperscript{14} December 28, 1810, Akty, IV, 48.

\textsuperscript{15} Dubrovin, III, 56.

\textsuperscript{16} Gudovich to Catherine, October 8, 1795, \textit{ibid.}, III, 56.
wished to set no limit to the conquests of ambitious generals, partly because they did not know what to expect as they pressed on through unfamiliar territory.

Gudovich's actions evoked a rather favorable response in St. Petersburg. If Catherine did not accept his explanation of why he had been unable to prevent the Iranian victories in Georgia, she gave no outward indication of it. Instead, she left Gudovich in his post and agreed that he should lead the campaign he had proposed. Since it was already late in the year, Gudovich had to wait several months until the end of winter before he could put his plan into action. By that time, Catherine, encouraged by Platon Zubov, had revised her thoughts about an Iranian campaign and decided to make it a more far-reaching undertaking with Platon's younger brother, Valerian, in charge instead of Gudovich. The last-named, piqued by the change of command, asked to be removed from his command of the Caucasian Line on grounds of illness. Catherine granted his request in September 1796.

Despite the support for military action against Iran engendered by the sack of Tbilisi, there were some prominent officials who had qualms about the undertaking. General-in-Chief Suvorov, whose prestige had recently been enhanced by his suppression of the Polish uprising of 1794, turned down the command of the 1796 expedition when it was offered to him. V. P. Kochubei, ambassador to Constantinople

in 1796, deplored any direct Russian action in the Caucasus or Iran. He wrote to one of the Vorontsovs, "I hope however that we will be wise enough not to go to war for the princeling Erekle 20". Later, he referred to the Zubov expedition as "this ridiculous war" which he had tried to dissuade Catherine from fighting. However, the opponents of a war of expansion were unable to alter Russia's policy.

When Catherine finally decided to send an army to resolve matters in the Caucasus and Iran, she gave the mission her vigorous support. Her attempt to put the supremely able Suvorov in charge of the operation is one indication of her determination to provide everything necessary for its success. She also wanted to ensure that the expedition would be adequately financed. Three million rubles were put at V. A. Zubov's disposal, although the treasury was empty. The money was to come from a new import tariff on staples such as sugar. One observer predicted that it would cause the items on which it was imposed to double in cost. One of Catherine's last actions regarding the Zubov expedition was to allot an additional three hundred eighty-five thousand rubles for improvements on the fortifications of Baku and a few locations in Daghestan. When the expedition became bogged down because of a shortage of cavalry horses and pack animals, Catherine ordered large scale assistance. Three thousand oxen

20. Recipient unspecified, October 13, 1795, ibid., XIV, 59.
23. Catherine to V. A. Zubov, October 1, 1796, Dubrovin, III, 194.
and one thousand camels were to be provided by Saratov guberniia on the Volga as well as two thousand horses from the Caucasian Line. 24

The exact size of the army deployed in the campaign is not clear. Most sources put the number of soldiers at thirty thousand, although some knowledgeable writers prefer a figure closer to ten thousand. 25 Whatever the number of men V. A. Zubov really had at his disposal, he had far more than were accorded any subsequent ventures south of the Caucasus until the peace of Golestān in 1813. Even in 1807, when Russia's military strength was at a comparatively high level, when Russia was at war with Iran and the Porte and had hostile Caucasian tribes and unwilling Āzerbāijānī subjects to control, it was difficult to marshal six thousand men south of the Caucasian Line for a major campaign. 26

The objectives of the 1796 expedition were ambitious. V. A. Zubov was to overthrow Āqā Mohammad Khān and put Mortazā Qoli on the throne. 27 In St. Petersburg, before setting out for the Caucasus, Valerian Zubov predicted that he would reach Esfahān by September 1796. 28

Although Zubov did not succeed in reaching Esfahān by September


25. F. V. Rostopchin to S. R. Vorontsov, February 22 and February 24, 1796, AKV, VIII, 132, 137; Brosset, II, part ii, 263; Butkov, Materialy, II, 359; Dubrovin, III, 93.


27. Catherine to V. A. Zubov, February 10, 1796, Dubrovin, III, 84, 192.

28. F. V. Rostopchin to Vorontsov, February 1, 1796, AKV, VIII, 132.
or in destroying Āqā Mohammad, he was able to obtain the submission of most of the east Caucasian khanates. In so doing, he established the basis for Russia's official claim during the reign of Alexander that these territories were legally subject to Russia because of commitments made by local rulers in 1796.

Darband was the only khanate which Zubov took by conquest. The siege of Darband city was one of the many occasions on which Caucasian Christians co-operated with the Russians. During April and May, the siege dragged on inconclusively. Then Armenian residents were able to send Zubov information about the town's defenses, including how to cut off its water supply. With the water cut off and the town under bombardment, the Darbandis' morale collapsed and the town surrendered. Qobbeh was occupied by Russian troops soon after. The rulers of all the other khanates, except Yerevan, submitted by August. Mohammad Khān of Yerevan refused to submit to Russia and Zubov was unable to send troops against him before the termination of the campaign following Catherine's death on November 6, 1796.

Zubov did not attempt to transform the political systems of the newly acquired states. All khans who were willing to comply with his requirements were left in power. Only those who showed themselves irreconcilably hostile to Russia were removed. Thus, when a plot to


31. Dubrovin, III, 175, 179-80.
assassinate Zubov by the khans of Qarābāgh, Shakki, and Shirvān was discovered, the khans of the first two made gestures of submission and were not even reproved for their participation in the conspiracy. However, Mostafā Khān of Shirvān took refuge in his mountain stronghold, Fit Dāgh, and tried to hold out for better terms from Russia. Therefore, Zubov put a man of his own choosing, Mostafā's cousin Qāsem, in charge of the government of Shirvān.32 The other khan overthrown by Zubov was Sheikh 'Ali of Darband-Qobbeh, who was removed because of his armed resistance. As in the case of Shirvān, Zubov chose the new ruler from the local ruling family. He put a sister of Sheikh 'Ali and a local noble in charge of Darband and a younger brother in charge of Qobbeh.33

Although the Zubov expedition appeared to proceed from success to success until the demise of its benefactress, it was in fact beset by a host of difficulties. Russia could not rely on the loyalty of any of the khanates which had submitted. Even King Erekle, who had strong reasons to want Russia's protection against the Iranians, threatened to make an agreement with Āqā Mohammad Khān if Russia did not satisfy his demands for assistance.34 In addition to the problems caused by the people Russia was trying to subject, Zubov had to grapple with the natural obstacles of the eastern Caucasus and the disastrously bad planning of the Russians themselves.

33. Bakikhanov, 145-46; Bronevskii, II, 334, 380; Dubrovin, III, 120, 190-91; Serebrov, 194.
34. Dubrovin, III, 51, 52; Lang, 219.
Much of Russia's difficulty in its relations with the east Caucasian states stemmed from the fact that neither side understood the other's thinking. Zubov shared Catherine's vision of the lofty aims of the 1796 expedition -- the overthrow of Oriental tyranny and its replacement by enlightened Russian protection. Therefore, he expected the local rulers to welcome the Russians as their benefactors. The possibility that the khans might not want to be subject to Russia or Iran seems not to have crossed him mind. He summed up this attitude in a letter he wrote to Mostafā Khān of Shirvān and other Caucasian khans on September 30, 1796,

I would wish that all the distinguished local khans, for whose protection we have marched to Persia's borders, would unite with me against your common devastator. Your excellency, having before your eyes your city of Shemākhi, transformed into a desert by the hand of Aqā Mohammad Khān, and still not forgetting the places stained with the blood of your beloved subjects, killed in your service out of love for you and your fatherland by the lawless tormentor-swine; also, the expulsion suffered by you yourself and your neighbors at his hands having come to mind with an uneasy soul, I hope you will be moved to righteous vengeance for that and will join your means to mine, turning with me, in this our common concern, with heartfelt friendship, which I have the right to expect in my reciprocal friendship toward you. . . the well-being of all Iran obliges all its inhabitants to bring about the eradication of the perfidious and ferocious plunderer. Consequently, I cannot doubt that in this case your excellency will choose that path which leads you and your subjects to the unwavering bliss which exists under the protection of the world-exalted Monarch, who pours down streams of her mercy to all corners of the universe, and who now has honored me with the liberation of this region from slavery and with the establishment of the dispossessed and tormented innocent.35

Consequently, those who stood in the way of the great undertaking were moral reprobates, who, in Catherine's words, "expose themselves

to fearful judgment before Almighty God ... for all the woes which will be the inevitable consequence of such a crime."36

Although Zubov believed that his plans were so clearly beneficial to the Caucasians that no ruler could fail to see the advantages of full scale co-operation with Russia, the matter appeared in a very different light to the khans themselves. They all perceived their political position in the same way: they were small powers who wanted to maintain their autonomy in the face of pressure from bigger powers. Therefore, each khan looked for an alliance which would protect him from immediate dangers without requiring more than token submission in return. Russia was only one of the weights in this balance and not necessarily the first choice. Thus the Caucasian khans experimented with various alliances, looking for the one to protect them from their enemies and their allies alike, until they had exhausted all their options except submission to Russia or had lost their struggle for survival.

Some khans, like Sheikh 'Ali of Darband-Qobbeh and Salim of Shakki, tried unsuccessfully to obtain support from the tribes of Dāghestān. Sheikh 'Ali also sought the backing of the Ottoman Empire but his request went unheeded.37 There was no hope of aid from Āqā Mohammad Khān in 1796 because he was absorbed with a campaign to secure the province of Khorāsān in northeastern Iran.38 Several khans

36. Manifesto to the Caucasian and Iranian peoples, March 27, 1796, ibid., III, 128.

37. Ibid., III, 103-04, 144.

attempted to increase their ability to resist Russian pressure by co-operative action, such as the assassination conspiracy of the khans of Qarābāg, Shirvān and Shakki or the alliance between Shirvān and Bāku. In three instances, khans volunteered their submission to Russia because they believed that to be the only course which could save them from imminent conquest. One of those khans was Javād of Ganjeh. He could not rely on an alliance with Āqā Mohammad as he had done the year before nor could he look for support to his neighbors, Georgia and Qarābāg, as they were intent on conquering his realm and had asked Zubov to help them. The Khans of Nakhjavān and Tālesh also feared conquest but in their case, Iran was the source of the danger. A different kind of factor which influenced the decisions of rulers of territories along the Kur River valley was the devastating effect of several years of crop failures combined with the destruction wreaked by the Iranian army in 1795.

Fear was the dominant theme of the Caucasian khans' attitude toward Russia. This fear centered on three principal issues: that Russia, while feigning friendship, secretly intended to overthrow all the khans; that Russians, as Christians, would deliberately violate Muslim codes of behavior in any territory which submitted; and that Russian military protection would not be effective enough to save the khans, who, by seeking that protection, had made an enemy of Āqā Mohammad Khān.

40. Ibid., III, 175; Bagrationi, 168-69.
41. Dubrovin, III, 170-71, 175.
It is not surprising that the khans believed Russia intended to
oust them when they saw the first khan with whom the Russians came in
contact, Sheikh 'Ali of Darband-Qobbeh, deprived of his power and held
prisoner at Zubov's camp. At the same time, Archbishop Iosif Argutinskii-
Dolgorukov was making public statements that the Russians would free
the Armenians from Muslim rule. King Erekle gave the same warning
privately to his long-time ally, Ebrāhim Khalil Khān of Qarābāgh.42
Since there were Armenians living in every east Caucasian khanate, not
only those of Iranian Armenia, every khan had grounds for concern. A
further indication of what the Caucasians took to be Russia's true
intention was Zubov's requirement that the various khans admit Russian
garrisons into the citadels of the various capitals.43 These
citadels served as the residences of the khans and were vital to the
khanates' defenses. Ebrāhim Khalil expressed the feelings of all the
khans when he remarked that he feared the Russians as much as the
Iranians.44

In Argutinskii-Dolgorukov's strenuous efforts to insult the
Muslims of Darband, Muslims in various parts of the Caucasus thought
they had proof of Russia's intention to ride roughshod over their
beliefs.45 This attitude was reflected in a statement by Sheikh 'Ali
that he could not permit the establishment of a Russian garrison in
Darband city because the presence of infidels would cause problems

42. Ibid., III, 146, 148, 149.
43. Ibid., III, 97-98, 133-34, 180-81.
44. Ibid., III, 149.
45. Ibid., III, 146.
regarding the female inhabitants.\textsuperscript{46}

In addition to the khans' concerns over the effect of co-operation with Russia on the internal affairs of their states, they also had to consider whether Russian protection would be worth the risk of provoking an Iranian attack in reprisal. The efficacy of Russian protection had only been tested once, in 1795, when Russia failed to help Georgia turn back Āqā Mohammad's army. The khans' views on the matter of Russian protection were also influenced by the difference between Russian and Caucasian military technology and styles of warfare. Russia relied on tight squares of riflemen operating in co-ordination with artillery while the Caucasian khanates and Iran used a more loosely knit army made up largely of cavalry, whose firearms, though not necessarily their other weapons, were vastly inferior to those of the Russians. Therefore, disagreements about the number of men required to accomplish a task were common. After the fall of Tbilisi, Erekle insisted that Russia send seven or eight thousand soldiers to protect his kingdom. However, Gudovich was certain that two thousand men and some artillery would be sufficient.\textsuperscript{47} Whether Zubov had ten thousand or thirty thousand troops at his disposal, that contingent appeared to the Caucasians as a meager force to send against an Iranian army like the sixty thousand man force sent to the Caucasus in 1795.\textsuperscript{48}

Political developments in Shakki during 1795 and 1796 illustrate

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., III, 97-98.

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., III, 58.

\textsuperscript{48} Malcolm, II, 282; "O pokhode", I, 127.
another aspect of the khans' attitude toward their powerful neighbors which Russian authorities did not fully appreciate: the desire to find a powerful ally in order to gain the upper hand in a domestic power struggle. In the case of Shakki, the dispute was between the Khan, Mohammad Hasan, and his younger brother, Salim. Salim had spent about a decade among the Lesgi tribes of Jarutelehy, looking for the opportunity to overthrow his brother. He found that opportunity in 1795, when he was able to persuade Āqā Mohammad that Mohammad Hasan was anti-Qājār. With Mohammad Hasan blinded and held prisoner at the Qājār camp, Salim was able to take control of Shakki. Once he was in power, he resisted Āqā Mohammad's demands that he swear loyalty. Therefore, Āqā Mohammad tried, albeit unsuccessfully, to restore Mohammad Hasan to power. Although this initial attempt failed, the former Khan of Shakki was held at the Qājār court to be reinstated on some future occasion.49 Since Āqā Mohammad was now turned against him, Salim tried to strengthen his position by making an alliance with the Qadi of Tabasaran (in Dāghestān). That plan fell through so when Zubov demanded his submission, he complied.50

Proof of the thoroughly pragmatic motivation for the khans' decisions to co-operate with Russia can be seen in the way they behaved in 1797, after the recall of the Zubov expedition and the return of Āqā Mohammad. With the exception of Ebrāhim Khalil of Qarābāgh and Salim of Shakki, who had been deposed by Mohammad Hasan


50. Dubrovin, III, 144.
with the support of Áqā Mohammad, every khan, even the one Zubov chose to be a tractable replacement for Mostafā of Shirvān, recognized Áqā Mohammad as suzerain. In Qarābāgh, Ebrāhim Khalil fled to the mountains and the residents of Shushā opened the city's gates to the Iranian army.

In general, the inhabitants of the various khanates were not in a position to voice their true feelings about becoming a part of the Russian Empire. In all the states except Darband-Qobbeh, Shirvān, Ganjeh, and Bāku, submission to Russia brought no discernable changes because no Russian garrisons were established. In Ganjeh, the troops were there only briefly, having arrived shortly before Zubov's recall. In the places which were occupied by the Russians for a longer time, the inhabitants' ability to oppose the Russians was as important a factor as their desire to do so. Most of the non-nomadic peoples of the eastern Caucasus were ill-equipped and ill-trained for military activity. They lived in walled towns and villages, which might offer protection against the traditional style of siege but could become death traps when bombarded by Russian artillery. Therefore, combatting the Russians required some kind of shelter, be it the dense forests of Qobbeh or the higher elevations of the Caucasus Mountains, from which the anti-Russians could stage guerrilla raids on their enemy. Although the farmers of Qobbeh did participate in battles against the Russians, most of the opposition were cavalry from the nomadic tribes.

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52. Bakikhanov, 145-46, 147, 149; Qarābāghi, 134; Hedāyat, IX, 295; Javānshīr, 78; Baratoni, 169; Brosset, II, part ii, 265; Dubrovin, III, 21, 190.
living in the high mountains of Darband, Shirvān and Shakkī.

Another factor in attempts to oppose the Russians was the need for leaders. That role was filled by Sheikh 'Ali Khān. After his escape from Zubov's camp, he organized raids on the Russians. Although no major battles were fought, he was successful in tying down Russian troops until the last of them withdrew from the region in May 1797, at which time he regained control of his realm. 53 Zubov had to assign two generals to lead the fight against Sheikh 'Ali. An officer serving with one of those generals reported that his contingent was made up of one thousand fifty men. 54 Presumably the other general was given a similar number of soldiers.

The Russians themselves, not the khans whose territory they wanted to control, were their own worst enemies in 1796. The combination of ignorance of the region and terrible planning made it much harder for V. A. Zubov to accomplish his objectives. Only coincidence and luck saved him from any major calamities. The years of warfare, famine, and disease in the region, the miscarriage of several anti-Russian plans, the failure of the Turks to capitalize on the situation, and the preoccupation of Āqā Mohammad with affairs in Khorāsān made it possible for the Russians to have some success despite their mistakes. Like many of the campaigns of the Russo-Iranian war a decade later, Zubov's triumphs only narrowly escaped becoming disasters.

The Russians failed to appreciate the obstacles created by the


54. "O pokhode", II, 303, 309.
terrain with which they had to deal. G. R. Derzhavin's cliché-ridden ode, "On the Return of Count Zubov from Persia", depicted the Caucasus as a barely discernable exotic backdrop for the hero's great deeds. The Caucasus looked very different to Zubov himself. His activities were centered on the eastern edge of the High Caucasus, where the rugged terrain and swift-flowing mountain streams greatly impeded the movements of the expeditionary force. As a result, Zubov was forced to leave behind in Darband some of the supplies he had counted on taking with him to Baku. Once south of the mountainous zone, he entered the bleak coastal desert. If Hosein Qoli Khan of Baku had not chosen to submit to Russia, Zubov would have been unable to compel him to do so.

Later, instead of speeding onward from Baku to New Shemakh, a distance of about eighty miles, Zubov led his men along a narrow path across the high mountains at the rate of six miles a day. The difficulties of this route are confirmed by S. G. Gmelin, who visited the area about twenty years earlier. According to him, the path was too narrow to be used by wagons. Russian soldiers, even the skilled Cossack cavalry, found this terrain as uncongenial for warfare as for travel. Once people found shelter in the forests or mountains the Russian army was unable to control them.

Surprisingly, in the light of Catherine's enthusiasm for the

60. Dubrovin, III, 133, 185-86.
63. Dubrovin, III, 136, 137, 139, 140, 141, 165.
campaign and the amount of money she was willing to spend on it, preparations for the expedition seemed to indicate the government's utter indifference. About two months before Zubov's scheduled departure for the Caucasus, none of the St. Petersburg officials in charge of organizing supplies knew anything about the expedition or were doing anything to prepare for it. Supplies were supposed to have been waiting for Zubov in Astrakhan but as late as May, when Zubov was already at Darband, no grain had yet reached Astrakhan from the interior of Russia. Emergency supplies for three weeks had to be sent overland by a difficult route from Kizliar, at the eastern end of the Caucasian Line, to Darband at a pitifully slow rate. By the summer, streams swollen by melting snow made the route virtually impassable. By comparison, when Prince Potemkin contemplated an expedition to the Caucasus in 1784, supplies to feed six thousand men and one thousand five hundred horses for a year and a half were held in readiness at Astrakhan.

Zubov's own miscalculation in planning the delivery of supplies was a major cause of his troubles. In the same spirit of ambitious confidence that led him to predict that he would reach Esfahān by September, he also arranged to have the bulk of his supplies shipped directly from Astrakhan to Sara Island, off the Tālesh coast, in the expectation that he would sweep easily and speedily through the Caucasus to proceed with the main venture, the conquest of Iran.

64. F. V. Rostopchin to S. R. Vorontsov, February 1, 1796, AKV, VIII, 124.
65. Dubrovin, III, 118, 185.
66. Butkov, Materialy, II, 143.
Catherine's view of the undertaking was more temperate. She ordered Zubov to make Baku the supply center for his expedition.68 Zubov simply ignored her instructions. When the Caucasian phase of the campaign took longer than he had expected, he was too far from Sara to use the supplies awaiting him there.

A shortage of horses and pack animals made it difficult for Zubov to deliver such supplies as reached Baku to the places they were needed. This shortage also made his cavalry soldiers ineffective.69 The expedition encountered similar difficulties with sea transportation. Even when supplemented by merchant ships from Astrakhan and Baku, the Caspian fleet was hard pressed to deliver Zubov's supplies. The hoped for attack on Gilan was out of the question.70

As provisions became scarce, the Russians began to use local fruits to supplement their diet. This, coupled with the unfamiliar heat of a Caucasian summer, caused them to fall ill in large numbers.71 Zubov did not have the alternative of buying supplies locally to fill the deficiencies in what was sent from Russia since much of the Caucasus was experiencing its own food shortage as the result of crop failure and war damage. These conditions applied equally to Georgia, intended by the Russians to be the keystone of their Caucasian operations. Erekle told a Russian intermediary in Tbilisi that he could not provide supplies for the anticipated thirty thousand Russian

68. Catherine to V. A. Zubov, February 10, 1796, ibid., III, 80.
69. Ibid., III, 186-88.
70. Ibid., III, 171.
71. Ibid., III, 188.
soldiers. 72

In addition to all Zubov's other problems, he discovered that he had not brought enough soldiers with him. He had to spread his forces thin, establishing garrisons in Darband, Qobbeh, and Baku to secure his rear as he advanced inland. In addition, he had to deal with the anti-Russian disturbances by the villagers of Qobbeh and the attacks by Sheikh 'Ali. Zubov could not increase his strength by drawing men from the troops stationed in Georgia since they had other responsibilities, notably the protection of that kingdom and garrisoning of Ganjeh, through which Iranian troops had attacked Georgia the year before. Even if Zubov had failed to anticipate that he would have to deal with opposition, the establishment of garrisons at strategic points along the way (especially at Darband and Baku, which he had chosen as subsidiary supply centers) was standard procedure. Yet Zubov did not bring enough soldiers with him even for the early stages of his campaign. St. Petersburg had intended that some troops from the Caucasian Line, though not nearly as many as Zubov needed, should co-operate with the Zubov expedition. However, by the time Zubov had taken Darband, these troops had only just been assembled at the Line and were far from ready even to set out to join him. When Gudovich received reinforcements from Russia he did send some troops to Zubov at Darband but most of the reinforcements that were supposed to be sent to the Line never arrived. 73

72. Major Verderevskii's report of Erekle's message to V. A. Zubov, 1796, Tsagareli, II, part ii, 152.

In the end, all the miscalculations and difficulties left Zubov in a strategically weak position, with his forces strung out along the edge of the battle zone, from Darband to the Kur. He expected to fight Āqā Mohammad but was unable to advance beyond the northern edge of the Mughān plain. This meant that most of Georgia and the Muslim khanates of the eastern Caucasus would be vulnerable to attack. The second branch of the Russian forces was split between Georgia, which was too exhausted by the 1795 attack and too disunified by internal hostilities to be capable of defending itself, and Ganjeh, whose khan had guided Āqā Mohammad to Tbilisi. For want of ships and men, Zubov would not have been able to make a diversionary attack on Iran's Caspian coast as he had intended. He was also relying on the cooperation of the khans who had sworn allegiance to Russia but whose desire as well as their ability to fight Āqā Mohammad was questionable. Despite all these facts, except for a brief period of re-evaluation during the reign of Catherine's son Paul, the 1796 expedition was considered the model of how Russia ought to act in the eastern Caucasus.

The desirability of obtaining complete control, rather than indirect suzerainty, over Iranian Armenia, seemed proven by the experiences of 1796. The reluctance of khans to submit and their subsequent conspiracies and hostile actions confirmed the Russians in their conviction that the khans were constitutionally treacherous men who opposed enlightened government as represented by Russia.

74. Ibid., III, 191.
75. Session of the State Council, April 11, 1801, AGS, III, part ii, col. 1190; Alexander's manifesto announcing the incorporation of Georgia, September 12, 1801, Akty, I, 432.
The comparative looseness of St. Petersburg's control over those who executed its Caucasian policy continued to be a problem. In part, this lack of control was a deliberate choice by the central government so that a commander in a remote and unfamiliar area would have the leeway to deal with local conditions. However, important actions which contravened official policy were taken, like Zubov's selection of Sara Island instead of Baku as his supply headquarters, and many self-serving lies were told the distant authorities in St. Petersburg, like Zubov's report to Catherine, shortly after taking Baku, that he had secured all the Aras-Kur line and along the Caspian coast to Gilan.76

One final effect of Catherine's Iranian policy on later Russian attitudes was that the Zubov expedition lulled the Russians into underestimating the difficulties they would face in attempting another such undertaking. The local opposition and the logistical problems were overlooked but equally important was the fact that Aqa Mohammad and Zubov did not operate in the Caucasus at the same time. Neither side had the opportunity to measure the other's methods of warfare. Russian officers with a comparatively small number of infantrymen did not yet have to defend a long border against a much larger army made up primarily of cavalry nor maintain control over newly acquired khanates while Iran actively encouraged them to fight the Russians. The Iranians, for their part, had yet to encounter the tightly disciplined Russian troops that did not break ranks to plunder the

76. Dubrovin, III, 134-35.
enemy camp, nor had they experienced the effects of Russia's more advanced firepower, as devastating to morale as it was to human life.
Chapter IV

The Victory of the Russian Expansionists

As soon as Catherine was dead, Paul called a halt to the Zubov expedition and re-instated Gudovich as commander of the Caucasian Line. On November 7, 1796, the day after Catherine's death, Zubov was ordered to take no action until further instructions. On December 4, he received orders recalling him and all his forces to the Caucasian Line, where he would be relieved of his command.¹ Paul's actions toward Zubov have usually been taken as an indication that in this, as in other matters, he was determined to reverse his mother's policy. It is also generally believed that Paul did not become interested in Iran until 1800, when he decided to incorporate Georgia directly into the Empire and send an army to conquer India. In reality, Paul's ambitions in the Caucasus, Iran, and India, even at the start of his reign, were in essence extremely close to Catherine's. The most important difference between his policies and those of his mother was over how best to achieve those ambitions. In this, his judgment, at least until the time of the Indian campaign, showed a level-headed and practical approach to existing conditions, much more level-headed and practical than the Zubov expedition had been.

However much Paul might have wanted to reverse his mother's policies, he could not avoid being influenced by the opinions about Iran and the Caucasus which had developed during Catherine's reign.

¹. Dubrovin, III, 195.
That area was so remote from the traditional interests of most of the Russian elite and so few people understood, or claimed to understand, the region that Paul had to rely on some of the same sources of information as Catherine had done.

One man who served both Catherine and Paul on Iranian matters was the Consul Skibinevskii. He was originally appointed Consul by Catherine in 1793, although hostility to the Russians in Anzali forced him to look after Russian interests from other locations, including Baku. He continued to act as Consul on that basis until the summer of 1800, when Paul ordered him to return to Anzali.  

When the State Council in St. Petersburg deliberated on the matter of Russo-Iranian trade, its members relied heavily on a memorandum by Skibinevskii. One indication of the way attitudes were passed on from Catherine's reign to Paul's is the way Skibinevskii retold the story of Āqā Mohammad's seizure of Anzali in 1786. The two Russian officials who participated in those events, Tumanovskii and Skilichii, could not influence the Council directly. Tumanovskii died shortly after Hedāyatollāh and Skilichii's reputation was damaged by his ineffectiveness as consul after Āqā Mohammad took Anzali  but the account of what happened is the version they wanted their superiors to believe. Thus it passed into the records of the Council without challenge that Āqā Mohammad was to blame for all the difficulties the


Russians encountered in Anzali in 1786. According to this story, Hedāyatollāh died (how is not specified) while trying to escape to Russia by ship. Skilichii had custody of Hedāyatollāh's valuables, therefore, Āqā Mohammad tried to have him seized. The rest of Skibinevskii's memorandum embodies the attitudes of Catherine's reign toward trade with Iran: that great economic benefit could be derived by Russia from such trade and that Russia should establish its own "factory" for trade with Iran as other European countries had done in Asia. By doing this, Russia would be able to fulfill many of its needs without having to rely on Europe. The State Council agreed with these opinions, although they questioned certain specifics.

Another important personal connection between the reigns of Catherine and Paul was F. V. Rostopchin. Although Rostopchin did not rise to the highest levels of service during Catherine's reign, that was the period during which his opinions on western Asia developed. He fought in Catherine's second war against the Porte and assisted A. A. Bezborodko in negotiating an end to that war. Like Bezborodko, he was a firm believer in Russian expansion in the Caucasus and Iran. Rostopchin served as one of Paul's key foreign relations officials.

4. Ibid., II, col. 704.
5. Ibid., II, cols. 681-83.
6. Session of the State Council, October 25, 1798; ibid., II, cols. 684-86.
An advocate of increased Russian control over Georgia, he represented Paul in the negotiations with that country's representatives over its transformation into a province of Russia. He was also an ardent proponent of Russian trade with India via the Caspian coastal lands and favored a Russian campaign to conquer the Subcontinent.

Paul continued the policy of relying on Georgians for information about the Caucasus and viewed Caucasian political relations from the Georgian perspective. Thus, Paul's attitude toward the khanates of the eastern Caucasus was largely concerned with their relation to Georgia. This was reflected in Paul's wish that all the khans cooperate to protect Georgia from attack by Iran. Paul first expressed this idea at the outset of his reign, then again in 1800, when such an attack seemed likely.

This Georgian-centered perspective manifested itself in another important way. As in Catherine's reign, Russian officials continued to accept Georgia's claim to suzerainty over neighboring states, such as Yerevan and Qarabagh. When, in 1800, Rostopchin negotiated with King Giorgi's emissaries the terms by which Russia would take a more


10. Rostopchin to Vorontsov, June 30, 1801, AKV, VIII, 291; Rostopchin to Tsitsianov, September 21, 1804, "Pis'ma F. V. Rostopchina k Kniaziu P. D. Tsitsianovu (1803-1806)", Deviatnadtsatyi Vek, book II (1877), 62, hereafter referred to as "Pis'ma".


13. Erekle died on January 11, 1798 and was succeeded by Giorgi, the son of Erekle's first marriage.
active role in Georgia, the agreement called for the restoration by Russia to Georgia of all the Caucasian territory it had once ruled. To guide Russia in doing this, Georgia was to send word as to what its borders had been in earlier times. Paul agreed with this plan, although he eventually by-passed the agreement as a whole in favor of the establishment of direct Russian rule. The instructions given P. I. Kovalenskii, Paul's representative in Georgia, by the College of Foreign Affairs on Paul's behalf specify that several Caucasian khanates, though formerly subject to Iran, had been subject to Georgia for a long time and continued to be so at the time the instructions were given. The pervasiveness of this Russian conviction that Georgia had a just claim to neighboring Muslim khanates is also shown by a report from Kovalenskii stating that Ganjeh and Yerevan had virtually broken away from Georgian suzerainty and were making their own alliances with other local powers. Kovalenskii strongly opposed this development and wanted K. F. Knorring, the commander of the Caucasian Line, to send more troops to Georgia to strengthen its hold over the khanates.

As in Catherine's reign, the central authorities relied on information from officers in the field, who sometimes distorted facts in making their reports. The way the officials in the field dealt with the danger of an Iranian attack on Georgia in 1800 is a case in point. Late in August, Knorring asked I. P. Lazarev, the commander of Russian troops in Georgia, to tell him whether King Giorgi was

14. Nol'de, II, 381.

15. College of Foreign Affairs to Kovalenskii, April 16, 1799, Akty, I, 93-94.

16. Kovalenskii to Knorring, August 3, 1800, ibid., I, 111.
upset enough over the danger of an Iranian attack to warrant the sending of a large number of Russian troops from the Line to Georgia to restore confidence. Lazarev replied that there was no serious threat from Iran and that the fears of the Georgian government had been allayed by the retreat of the Iranian army south of the Aras.\textsuperscript{17} The King's disposition was really the opposite of what Lazarev had described. On August 14, Giorgi had warned Russian officials in Tbilisi that the Iranian retreat did not mean the danger had passed. If, said Giorgi, they retreated even a hundred verstes, they could still turn about and attack Georgia.\textsuperscript{18}

The deliberate misrepresentation of facts in official reports also played a role in Paul's decision to incorporate Georgia directly into the structure of the Empire. The College of Foreign affairs, under Rostopchin's control, reported to Paul that Georgia had 800,000 inhabitants and could raise an army of 25,000 to defend itself.\textsuperscript{19} The implication of Rostopchin's report was that Georgia was a fairly prosperous land capable of defending itself and, therefore, would not be a burden on Russia if it were annexed. At the same time as the College of Foreign Affairs submitted these figures, Knorring reported that Georgia had only 160,000 inhabitants.\textsuperscript{20} One of the arguments Count A. A. Musin-Pushkin, sent by Paul to investigate the mineral resources

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{17} Lazarev to Knorring, August 25, 1800, \textit{ibid.}, I, 142, 144.

\textsuperscript{18} Giorgi to Kovalenskii, August 14, 1800, \textit{ibid.}, I, 137.


\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Ibid.}, III, part ii, col. 1201.
\end{footnotesize}
of Georgia, used to convince the Emperor that Georgia must be annexed was that by doing so Russia would acquire the precious ores in Georgia's mines. In fact, Georgia's mines had been unprofitable for years and continued to be so for the next decade, under the direction of Musin-Pushkin and his successors.

The crucial difference between the approaches of Paul and Catherine was that Paul preferred to reach his goals in this area by conciliation rather than confrontation. Therefore, he considered the Zubov expedition a failure which had accomplished nothing of value. Regardless of the personal motives Paul had for disliking the Zubov brothers, his assessment of the 1796 expedition was sound, the campaign had indeed been a shambles. However, even when Paul expressed his low opinion of the expedition, he continued to show an interest in maintaining close relations with those Caucasian states which had submitted to Russia and in preventing Āqā Mohammad from asserting sovereignty in the area.

Although Paul preferred to attain these goals without the active participation of the Russian military, seeking instead to organize a defensive coalition among the rulers of the eastern Caucasus, he was not averse to threatening to use force. Therefore, he ordered Gudovich to warn Āqā Mohammad that the latter's position would never be secure


23. Paul to Gudovich, January 5, 1797, Dubrovin, III, 199.
so long as he persisted in claiming any territory north of the Kur-Aras line or refused to deal more amicably with Russia.\textsuperscript{24} Whether Paul would have carried out this threat by invading Iran was not put to the test. Āqā Mohammad launched another campaign in the Caucasus in the spring of 1797 but was assassinated on June 17, shortly after taking Shushā. The campaign came to an abrupt halt as the army dissolved and a struggle for the throne broke out. Iran made no further attempts to reassert its suzerainty north of the Kur-Aras line until 1800.

With the removal of Āqā Mohammad Khān, who was so personally loathsome to Russian officials and so defiant of attempts to intimidate him, it became possible for Paul to seek advantages for Russia by negotiation instead of coercion. In this policy, too, he acted consistently with the efforts made in Catherine's reign, from 1783 on, to negotiate concessions from a pretender to the Iranian throne. Conditions seemed promising for Paul's success in this attempt. Some time in 1798 or the beginning of 1799, the new Shah of Iran, Fath 'Ali, sent several notes to Paul,\textsuperscript{25} including one congratulating him on becoming Emperor.\textsuperscript{26} Since the reign of the previous Shah had ended on a note of hostility toward Russia, this message was an unmistakable indication of the new Shah's desire to find a modus vivendi with Russia.

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., III, 199-200.

\textsuperscript{25} The Iranian messenger had already reached Russia, fallen ill, and died by February 26, 1799. Akty, II, 1147.

\textsuperscript{26} Paul to Fath 'Ali [Bābā Khān], March 23, 1799, ibid., II, 1145.
Paul took advantage of Fath 'Ali's gesture of good will to try to establish conditions for the improvement of relations between their two countries. The points Paul raised in this message typify his method of dealing with Iran: to avoid antagonizing that country while yielding nothing which was essential to the well-being of Russia's main interests in the region, i.e., the security of the Caucasian vassals and the prosperity of Russo-Iranian trade.

Paul expressed a desire for friendly relations with Fath 'Ali and asserted that Russia was not the party responsible for the recent hostilities between the two countries. In offering friendship to the new Shah, Paul also required that he take no action hostile to Russia. It was characteristic of Paul's desire to improve Russo-Iranian relations by following what he considered a fair and reasonable policy that while instructing Fath 'Ali in the duties of a good neighbor, he also wanted to ensure that Russia followed the same guidelines. Therefore, he instructed his agent in Georgia, P. I. Kovalenskii, and King Giorgi that they should act in a friendly manner toward Iran.

In response to particular complaints raised by Fath 'Ali, Paul insisted that Iran had no right to interfere with the Russian consul's exercise of his duties in any part of Iran. At the same time, Paul reassured the Shah that Russian warships would not approach Anzali unless they needed to make use of a port. In that case, it would be Fath 'Ali's duty to allow the use of any Iranian port to any Russian

27. Ibid., II, 1145.

28. Paul to Kovalenskii, April 17, 1799, Ibid., I, 96.
ship in need. Paul did not take issue with the requirement that
Russian merchants pay customs duties when entering Iran but did
insist that, like the Iranian merchants in Russia, they should not be
forced to pay the tariff after the initial payment at entry. Paul
also insisted on the punishment of those Iranians who had encouraged
anti-Russian actions in the eastern Caucasus in 1796 and others who
had robbed and murdered a Russian merchant.²⁹

While taking a hard line on those issues, he made a number of
conciliatory gestures towards Iran on matters of trade. He ordered
the release of those merchants who had been caught trying to leave
Astrakhan with gold currency and certain metal wares and, in addition,
the restoration of their money and goods, even though Russian law
prohibited the export of these items to Asia.³⁰ Paul also agreed to
Fath 'Ali's request that Iranians be allowed to buy five thousand
puds of iron (about 90,000 tons) and one thousand puds of steel (about
18,000 tons) even though these were among the metals subject to the
export prohibition. Along with this message, Paul sent Fath 'Ali a
number of gifts. These included a jewel-studded clock, twenty arshins
of brocade (about 15 yards) and some sable pelts.³¹

A central characteristic of Paul's dealings with Iran was his
unwillingness to put great pressure on that country when there was hope
of procuring equal benefits with less. For example, Paul did not want

³⁰. Russian government's reply to two notes from Mirzā Seyyed Hasan
³¹. Ibid., II, 1147.
to continue Catherine's policy of barring any Iranian naval vessels from sailing on the Caspian. Instead, he ordered that Gudovich take no action against such vessels as long as they did not interfere with Russian shipping. Although Paul placed a high value on Russo-Iranian commerce and wanted Anzali to serve once again as the center of that commerce, he refused to accept the recommendation of his officials that the restored Russian establishment at Anzali include a fort. It was the building of a Russian fort at Anzali in the 1780's, an action interpreted as a demonstration of hostility, which helped embitter Russia's relations with Hedāyatollāh and Āqā Mohammad.

The most striking example of the moderation of Paul's Iranian policy was the way in which he reacted to the possibility of an attack by that country on Georgia in 1800. When rumors reached St. Petersburg in 1799 that Fath 'Ali was planning to move against Georgia, Paul's approach was to look for a way to reduce Iranian hostility instead of assuming that a clash was inevitable. For that reason, Paul tried twice to reassure Fath 'Ali that there was nothing to fear from Russia and that, on the contrary, he desired only good relations and increased trade. As the likelihood of an Iranian attack on Georgia increased during 1800, Paul still looked for some way to avoid a war. He asked Kovalenskii to find out whether the target of Iranian operations would really be Georgia, on the chance that Fath 'Ali might be aiming at

32. Reference to a letter from Paul to Gudovich, 1797, Knorring to Alexander, March 6, 1802, ibid., I, 688.
33. Session of the State Council, November 11, 1798, AGS, II, col. 726.
34. Paul to Kovalenskii, April 16, 1799, Akty, I, 96; ukaz of College of Foreign Affairs, July 19, 1799, ibid., II, 1149.
some other target, such as a truculent Āzerbāijāni khan. If that were the case, Paul thought Georgia and Iran might be able to co-operate against the khan in question. 35

Perhaps Paul was optimistic about the prospects for peaceful relations with Iran because he thought that Fath 'Ali, having made a gesture in that direction by his congratulatory message, would heed Paul's warning not to threaten Georgia. He may have been influenced in the belief that Iran, Russia, and Georgia could co-operate on military matters by the example of the Georgian-Qarābāghi campaigns against Yerevan and Ganjeh. This hope may represent no more than the wishful thinking of a man who wanted to obtain all his objectives in western Asia with the minimum of effort. However, it is also possible that Paul's thoughts on this subject indicate that he was trying to view Russia's relations with Iran in a more open-minded and dispassionate light than his mother had done. By 1796, Catherine's image of Āqā Mohammad was of a tyrannical barbarian who had violated all moral codes. There could be no reconciliation with him; only his destruction would suffice. Paul seemed willing to consider that Fath 'Ali need not be an implacable enemy. Paul knew that the new Shah was in the process of extending his authority over various local rulers. Therefore, it was conceivable that Fath 'Ali's intention in sending troops into the northwestern border zone was to bring into submission some Muslim rulers whose overlord he could legitimately claim to be, rather than carry out new atrocities in Georgia. In fact, that was part of the reason for the ill-fated Iranian campaign of 1800.

Paul had additional reasons not to consider Fath 'Ali a serious menace to Russian interests. First, Paul and his officials believed that Fath 'Ali's position within Iran was not strong. In the context of the eighty years of civil war, which Catherine, too, had noted, Paul, and those around him, did not expect Fath 'Ali, whose reign had begun with warfare against several claimants for the throne, to be secure in his position as Shah. (In reality, the fighting was one-sided and the issue resolved by August 1798.) Kovelanskiî reported that Fath 'Ali had been unable to extend his authority north of Khoi and Tabriz in Azerbâijân, i.e., south of the Aras.36 Russian officials knew that Fath 'Ali was in conflict with the Afghan ruler, Zamân Shâh Dorrâni, who claimed suzerainty over Khorâsân, and, therefore, might fight on the eastern edge of his realm instead of the northwestern in 1800.37 To Paul, Fath 'Ali was just one of several men who ruled some part of Iran, although he never specified who he thought the others were. Paul's 1799 reply to Fath 'Ali's letters was addressed to Sardâr Bâbâ Khân. 38 Bâbâ Khân was the name by which Fath 'Ali had been known until his coronation on March 21, 1798; sardâr means general. The use of the pre-coronation name and the non-royal title was an indication of Russia's assessment of Fath 'Ali's status in Iranian politics. Since Russian authorities tried to keep abreast of more recent developments, such as relations between the Iran and the Afghans, they could have known about the change of name one year after the

37. Knorning to Paul, April 11, 1800, ibid., I, 678.
38. Ibid., II, 1145.
coronation. There is no direct evidence to indicate whether Russian officials continued to use the old name out of ignorance or a desire to deny Fath 'Ali's imperial dignity. During the reign of Alexander, this practice was continued for the latter motive. In Paul's instructions to Kovalenskii on the promotion of better Russo-Iranian relations and to Skibinevskii on the resumption of his post as consul in Anzali, Paul directed these men to deal with Bābā Khān "and all other Persian rulers. . . ."39 Paul's image of Fath 'Ali as a man with a tenuous hold on the throne was encouraged by Kovalenskii's report that at the first sign of weakness, Fath 'Ali's authority would be challenged by his large and turbulent army.40

Not only did Fath 'Ali appear to the Russians as a ruler with serious political problems, reports from officials in the Caucasus convinced St. Petersburg that the new Shah bore little resemblance to his formidable uncle, being neither a strong character nor well suited to the throne. General Lazarev reported to Knorring that Fath 'Ali drank to excess.41 Kovelanskii gave a more detailed picture of weakness:

Bābā Khān, who now rules in Persia . . . lives a life of luxury, is not suited to great undertakings, /his/ rule is more gentle than harsh; affairs are handled by his entourage, among whom are able people. His mother and favorites also take part /in the government/. . . .42

Paul considered Iran's army as unintimidating as its Shah. The

40. Kovalenskii's observations on Georgia, ibid., I, 113.
41. August 25, 1800, ibid., I, 142.
42. Kovalenskii's observations on Georgia, ibid., I, 113.
officer carrying Paul's reply to Fath 'Ali in the spring of 1800 reported that he had seen the forces stationed by the Shah in the part of Azerbâijân then under Iranian control, a force of some four thousand men in all, and that they were of low military caliber. The messenger also reported the rumor that Fath 'Ali had sent an army of fifty thousand men to Khorâsân. According to rumor, only twenty thousand of those soldiers were reputed to have any martial ability, while the entire force was reported to be critically short of provisions. 43 This report and others led Paul to conclude that the Iranian army was no more than an undisciplined mob. Therefore, he was confident that the three thousand Russian troops already in Georgia by 1799, 44 supplemented by those at the Caucasian Line, would be able, with the assistance of Georgian auxiliaries, to cope with whatever the Iranians might attempt. 45

Even though Paul preferred non-violent tactics and had not yet decided to annex Georgia by the summer of 1800, he was willing to take whatever measures seemed necessary to protect it from Iran. Therefore, he had reinforcements sent to Tbilisi from the Line and authorized the sending of still more should they be needed. 46 In keeping with Paul's preference for doing no more than was necessary, he thought it possible that the rumor that Russia was preparing to send more troops to Georgia

43. Lieutenant Merabov to Kovalenskii, July 1800, ibid., II, 1161, 1168.
44. Knorning to King Giorgi, 1800, ibid., I, 147.
45. Paul to Kovalenskii, April 16, 1799, ibid., I, 95.
might suffice to deter an Iranian attack.\textsuperscript{47} As he had done in 1797, he urged the Khans of Yerevan, Ganjeh, and Qarābāgh to co-operate with Georgia against Iran.\textsuperscript{48} Paul expected the Georgians to participate in their own defense, rather than relying wholly on Russia.\textsuperscript{49} This was not a reflection of diminished interest in the Caucasus on Paul's part but a continuation of Catherine's policy. Even in 1796, after Georgia had suffered much destruction at the hands of Āqā Mohammad, V. A. Zubov expected the Georgian army to take the field in co-operation with the Russians, as in the case of the proposed attack on Yerevan.

As events developed, Paul's measures to protect Georgia were not put to a critical test in 1800. An Iranian force did approach the border of Georgia, where it was joined by Prince Alexander, a son of the late King Erekle's second marriage. However, the hoped for support from other dissident members of the Bagration family and the Muslims of Georgia failed to materialize. By the latter part of August, the Iranians had returned south of the Aras without having fought the Georgians. The sieges of Khoi and Yerevan were also raised.\textsuperscript{50}

In one aspect of Caucasian policy, the annexation of Georgia, Paul took a more assertively expansionist stance than Catherine had

\textsuperscript{47} Paul to Knorring, July 10, 1800, Akty, I, 106.

\textsuperscript{48} Paul to the Khans of Yerevan, Ganjeh, and Qarābāgh, August 1800, ibid., I, 108-09.

\textsuperscript{49} Paul to Kovalenskii, April 17, 1799, ibid., I, 95.

\textsuperscript{50} Kovalenskii to Knorring, August 3 and 14, 1800, ibid., I, 111, 115, 136; Knorring to Paul, August 10, 1800, ibid., I, 133; Lazarev to Knorring, August 20, 1800, ibid., I, 139; Lang, 236-37.
done. However, the significance of this difference of approach may be less than it appears. One of the principal reasons for the change of policy was not a change of attitude in St. Petersburg but of political conditions in Georgia itself. The reason for the change was the death of King Erekle on January 11, 1798. Without that once strong and respected ruler in command, the country seemed on the verge of anarchy and civil war. Giorgi, the new King, was in very poor health. Members of the royal family prepared for the struggle for the throne which was expected to follow his impending death. It was possible that one of the rivals for the throne might call upon Iran or the Ottoman Empire for support or that one of those states would move in to fill the power vacuum resulting from Georgia's collapse. Giorgi's representatives to St. Petersburg kept urging Paul to make Georgia a province of Russia with a Bagration prince as its governor. At the same time, these representatives and Paul's own appointees held forth the picture of increased Asian trade to be gained by Russia if it were to take over Georgia completely. 51 Paul also had to consider that while there was a Bagration at the head of the Georgian government Russia's policy in that region would be vulnerable to dispute by a spokesman for its inhabitants. Giorgi attempted to pressure Paul into establishing a large permanent garrison for Georgia's protection by threatening, as Erekle had done, to submit to Iran unless Russia satisfied his defense requirements. 52 If a 1798 letter purportedly from Giorgi to Fath 'Ali preserved in an Iranian chronicle is authentic, as a Georgian

source seems to confirm, Giorgi was quite serious about his threat. After lamenting the foolishness of Erekle's rebellion against Āqā Mohammad, Giorgi affirmed, "From the truth of ancient chronicles and the records of the Safavi state, I know that Teflis /Tbilisi/ is a part of Iran and a dependency of the nation-conquering Qezelbāsh Soltāns. I consider myself one of the servants and dependents of the state of the most exalted 'Alid Shah of Iran."\(^{53}\)

On December 18, 1800, Paul issued a manifesto decreeing the annexation of Georgia.\(^{54}\) Ten days later, Giorgi died. On Paul's order, no new king was enthroned. A triumvirate consisting of General Lazarev, commander of the Russian garrison, Giorgi's son, Prince Ioane, and a member of the Georgian bureaucracy assumed the rule of Georgia.\(^{55}\) This was the confused and highly unpopular state of affairs which existed in Georgia when Paul died. It remained for Alexander to resolve the issue of what was to be done about Georgia.

Paul sustained the interest of the preceding reign not only in Georgia but also in the other lands south of the Caucasus. Therefore, he, too, encouraged the Armenians, tried to strengthen his influence over the khans of the region, and looked for ways to improve commercial relations with Iran and its neighbors.

One of Paul's ambitions was to resettle the Armenians in Georgia. There they would be able to strengthen their fellow Christians' resistance to the pressures of neighboring Muslim states and help

\(^{53}\) Hedāyat, IX, 328; Brosset, II, part ii, 267.

\(^{54}\) Beliavskii and Potto, I, 121; Lang, 242.

\(^{55}\) Lang, 243-44.
protect the border. Any group of Armenians which moved to Georgia would be relocated on advantageous terms on vacant Georgian lands (of which there were many in that depopulated kingdom) and would continue to be ruled by their own maleks. The maleks, in turn, were to be under overall Georgian suzerainty. Paul rewarded one malek, who had come to Georgia from Qarābāgh in 1796, with an annual pension of 1,400 rubles and a pension of 600 rubles for the malek's son.

Underlying this interest in the Armenians was the habitual association made by Russian officials between Armenians and commerce. Paul wanted Georgia's role in trade with Asia to be expanded. He believed that the Armenians, once brought under Russian protection, would provide the crucial link to more distant markets. In reference to the Armenian community to be established in Russian Georgia, the College of Foreign Affairs, acting in Paul's name, voiced the hope that it would "flourish as much as possible." In fact, Paul's plan to resettle Armenians who had been under Muslim rule in a commercial crossroads under Russian suzerainty was close in spirit to Potemkin's plan to establish Armenian settlements at Darband and on the southern coast of the Caspian. Paul's approach was not as bold as Potemkin's 1783 plan to create a client Armenian state by overthrowing their Muslim rulers but Catherine, too, had avoided such extremes when she presided directly over her empire's Caucasian policy in 1795-96. Paul's Armenian policy does bear a certain resemblance to Potemkin's

56. Paul to Kovalenskii, April 16, 1799, Akty, I, 94-95.
57. Ukaz of April 22, 1799, ibid., II, 1149.
58. Instructions to Kovalenskii, April 16, 1799, ibid., I, 95.
method of dealing with the Crimea. By luring to nearby Russian
territory the Greeks, Armenians, and other Christians who formed an
essential part of the Crimean economy, that khanate was weakened to
the point of collapse and a Russian takeover was facilitated.59

Another link between the Asian policies of Catherine and Paul
was the concern they shared over the Ottoman Empire. Sometimes it was
the direct target of Russian expansion but even when it was not, it
remained a potential threat to Russian security. Thus, Paul believed
that once Knorring had cemented an alliance among the Caucasian states,
the frontier with Turkey could be secured in that region.60 One of
Paul's primary concerns in annexing Georgia was that if he did not do
so, the country might fall into the hands of the Turks.61 His foreign
policy advisor, F. V. Rostopchin, supported this view.62 The intensity
of Rostopchin's concern over the Turkish threat was shown by the
instructions he gave Consul Skibinevskii when the latter was sent to
Anzali in 1800. Even though the bulk of these detailed instructions
dealt with Russo-Iranian trade, Rostopchin wanted the Consul to be on
the alert for any news of Turkish involvement in Iranian affairs as
well as any activities occurring in the Turkish border pashaliks.63

59. M. Raeff, "The Style of Russia's Imperial Policy and Prince G. A.
    Potemkin", 11-12.
60. Paul to Knorring, January 23, 1801, Akty, I, 414.
61. Session of the State Council, December 17, 1800, AGS, II, cols.
    831-32.
63. Orders of the College of Foreign Affairs to Skibinevskii, July 27,
    1800, Akty, I, 680.
Although Paul's concept of the duties of an emperor differed greatly from his mother's, many of his basic convictions closely resembled hers. He, too, had a strong belief in the power and significance of enlightenment. In a statement closely resembling Catherine's assessment of the effect of enlightened Russian rule, Paul expressed the opinion that the mildness of that rule once extended to Georgia and the philanthropy of the Orthodox Church which that rule would bring with it, could attract people living in Iran and other Asian states who would compare the system of government in Russian Georgia with the ones under which they were living.\(^64\)

Despite the significance with which Paul invested Orthodoxy, from the early months of his reign he thought it crucial to win the favor of Muslims of the eastern Caucasus for immediate and practical reasons. Six months after his accession, he sent a message of good will to Ebrāhīm Khalīl Ḵān of Qarābāgh and paid him particular honor by granting an audience to his emissary, who had been sent to St. Petersburg before Catherine's death.\(^65\) Later, as the danger of an attack by Iran increased, Paul was very eager to have the various khanates of the eastern Caucasus co-operate with Georgia in fighting the attackers. He believed that his goals in the region could best be achieved not by the threats Zubov and Potemkin had used but by fairness and encouragement. Paul was certain that Russia would gain nothing by compelling an unwilling khan to submit and then having to deal with his attempts to cast off the unwelcome association. Paul

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64. College of Foreign Affairs to Kovalenskii, April 16, 1799, ibid., I, 95.
65. Paul to Ebrāhīm Khalīl, May 2, 1797, ibid., II, 1143.
had before him the example of V. A. Zubov's experiences with Qobbeh, Qarabagh, Shirvan, and Shakki to demonstrate the hazards of the coercive approach. Late in his reign, when many of his actions were considered manifestations of his detachment from reality, he warned Kovelanskii, "Do not seek to make acquisitions other than those who will willingly seek my protection. It is better to have allies who are interested in the alliance than untrustworthy subjects." When Paul, through the College of Foreign Affairs, told Kovalenskii that several khans were rightfully vassals of Georgia, he also insisted that Kovalenskii make sure that the King of Georgia dealt with those khans in an amicable manner.  

Paul's conciliatory policy toward the khans of the eastern Caucasus was carried out without the kinds of distortions by officers in the field which had occurred during his predecessor's reign. This approach met with some success. Whether these policies could have continued to succeed for a longer period cannot be judged since Russia's tactics were changed after Paul died and different officials were sent to the Caucasus. Paul's officials appear to have made themselves unpleasant in matters of corruption and tactless treatment of the Georgians but they acted with restraint toward the neighboring khans.  

When Kalb 'Ali Khan of Nakhjavân and Mohammad Hasan Khan of Shakki asked once more to be taken under Russian protection, Paul's

67. April 16, 1799, ibid., I, 94.
68. Sokolov to A. R. Vorontsov, 1802, ibid., II, 5-6; Dubrovin, III, 261-62, 263.
officials encouraged them and assured them that Paul would be likely to agree to their requests. This situation brings to light another unusual aspect of Paul's conciliatory policy towards the Caucasian khans, his willingness to be accessible to the local rulers. Mohammad Hasan was told to send his request directly to Paul, who had already granted an audience to the representative of the Khan of Qarābāgh. This accessibility contrasts sharply with Catherine's deliberate aloofness. For example, on her orders, Mortazā Qoli Khān was kept at various locations on the Caspian coast rather than being allowed to live in St. Petersburg as he wished during all the years he was held in readiness to be made Shah of Iran.

In addition to the efforts made to encourage Caucasians to be well disposed towards Russia, Paul's officials also tried to reconcile various difficulties with the khans. When Javād Khān of Ganjeh pressed his claim to suzerainty over the Shams od-Dinlu tribe, over whom Georgia also claimed authority, Knorring's message to Javād emphasized the importance of peace in the area and his desire to remain on good terms with Javād. Knorring did demand an end to Ganjeh's raids in Shams od-Dinlu territory but he couched the demand in face-saving language, portraying the raids as the acts of some of Javād's subjects, not as the policy of Javād himself. However, this


70. Knorring to Lazarev, December 15, 1800, ibid., I, 630.

71. Dubrovin, III, 5.

course of action did not solve the underlying problem, i.e. Javād's
insistance that the Shams od-Dinlu were his subjects, not King Giorgi's.

Although the long-standing rivalry between Russia and the Porte
played an important role in Paul's interest in the Caucasus, that
region's potential usefulness in the expansion of commerce with Iran
and India also captured his attention. He ordered Gudovich to en-
courage commerce among Russia's allies in the Caucasus and considered
establishing silk and cotton mills in Bāku.73 Even in his first
message to Fath 'Ali, in which rapprochement was a prominent theme,
he warned the Shah that protecting Russian merchants in Iran and
preventing multiple impositions of import duties on their wares was
incumbent upon the Shah if he were a true friend.74 The President of
the College of Commerce during Paul's reign, P. Soimonov, believed
that trade between Russia and Iran was of great value to Russia and
ought to be encouraged.75 Just how valuable Soimonov believed this
trade could become was revealed by an analogy he made in his comments
on Asian trade to the State Council in 1798. He was of the opinion
that if Russia were to build a fort and a stone caravanserai at Anzali,
it would be able to trade with Iran the way Western European states
traded with India.76 This observation was in the same spirit as the

73. Paul to Gudovich, January 5, 1797, Dubrovin, III, 200; A. V.
Fadeev, Rossiia i Kavkaz, pervoi treti XIX v. (Moscow, 1960), 70.

74. Akty, II, 1145.

75. Session of the State Council, October 25, 1798, AGS, II, col.
726.

76. Ibid., II, col. 722.
desire of Catherine, Prince Potemkin, and the Zubovs to use a Russian base on the Caspian coast to make Russia a rival of the East India Companies.

Paul's government took several steps to encourage trade with Iran. The prohibition on the export of precious metals to Asia, a law deemed harmful to trade with Iran, was repealed.77 After years of attempting to look after Russo-Iranian trade from places outside contemporary Iranian borders, a Russian consul was again sent to Anzali, in July 1800. Paul's intention was to promote what Catherine and Peter had tried unsuccessfully to achieve, the freedom of Russian merchants to carry on their business in safety throughout Iran.78

Characteristically, Paul favored the improvement of Russo-Iranian trade by inducement rather than coercion, as his opposition to the construction of fortifications for the Russian compound at Anzali showed. Rostopchin's instructions to Skibnievskii further developed the theme that Russia must not antagonize the Iranians. Rostopchin warned the Consul to make sure that he and his entourage behaved impeccably while in Iran. They were to do nothing which might be offensive to the Iranians but were instead to win their "trust and love".79 To facilitate winning the Iranians' love, Skibinevskii was allotted four hundred rubles for presents to any

77. Sessions of the State Council, October 1798 and November 11, 1798, ibid., II, cols. 683, 726-27.
officials in Anzali or elsewhere who were well disposed toward Russia. (By comparison, he was allotted six hundred rubles for the journey to Anzali.) If local officials in Anzali or Rasht impeded Russian commerce, Skibinevskii was authorized to deal with the problems without resorting to threats. If the need arose, he was to appeal to higher officials in the Iranian government or, in extreme emergency, to choose a different site for his headquarters. In the event that it was unsafe for Skibinevskii or the Russian merchants to remain in the country, they were all to go directly to Astrakhan. Since Paul was confident that no such turn of events would take place there is no way to determine whether there were any circumstances under which he would have considered military intervention in Iran for the sake of trade.

There was another aspect of Paul's interest in trade on the Caspian which continued a theme of Catherine's reign: his fascination with India. One of the duties assigned Skibinevskii when he was sent to Anzali was to make sure that any Russian merchants who wished to travel from Iran to India be given passports by the Iranian government. When, after Paul's death, Rostopchin reflected on the services he had done the late Emperor, he considered arranging for the establishment of Russian sovereignty over Georgia as one of his finest achievements, partly because that kingdom was strategically valuable in dealing with the Porte but also because in taking Georgia, Russia took control over

80. Ibid., I, 679.
81. Ibid., I, 681-82.
82. Ibid., I, 681.
83. Ibid., I, 679.
the Caspian ports which would enable Russia to dominate trade with India. 84 Towards the end of Paul's reign, when he ordered the Don Cossacks to conquer India, primarily because he wished to strike at England, he still had not forgotten the lure of India's riches. He wrote to V. P. Orlov-Denisov, the general in charge of the expedition, that:

The English have their commercial establishments \(\text{in India}\) which were obtained either by money or by arms; the goal is to destroy all this and liberate the oppressed rulers \(\text{of India}\) and to win \(\text{them}\) over to the same dependence on Russia as they have on England, and turn their commerce toward us . . . 85

The whole subject of a campaign to expel the English from India during Paul's reign had been surrounded by controversy from the start. The controversy was intensified by the connection which many British officials of a later era believed they saw between Russian designs on India and its increasing involvement in Iranian affairs. Two questions regarding Paul's Indian ambitions have never been fully clarified. Was there really an agreement between Paul and Bonaparte for a Franco-Russian invasion of India? Was the invasion which Paul ordered shortly before his death so absurd that he must have been mad to have contemplated it?

A document purporting to be the proposal submitted by Napoleon to Paul for the invasion of India was published in several versions during the nineteenth century. The document first appeared in 1840 in an appendix to the pamphlet "Mémoire de Leibnitz à Louis XIV, sur la conquête de l'Egypt, publié, avec une project d'expédition dans

84. Rostopchin to Vorontsov, June 30, 1801, AKV, VIII, 291.
85. N. K. Shil'der, Imperator Pavel Pervyi (St. Petersburg, 1901), 418.
1'Inde, par terre concert entre le premier consul et l'empereur
Paul Ier au commencement de ce siècle86 and soon after in the
published papers of Swedish Field Marshall K. B. L. C. Stedingk.87
The former version was republished in French and Russian.88 There
does not seem to be any copy of the plan in the Russian or French
diplomatic archives. According to the plan, a Russian army composed
of thirty-five thousand men was to go to Astarābād where it would
await an equal number of French troops who would sail down the Danube,
across the Black Sea, up the Don and down the Volga to Astrakhan.
From there, the French would sail to Astarābād and the united armies
would march to India via He āt and Qandahā. According to the Stedingk
text, the two armies were to meet at Astrakhan.89

Although the authenticity of this document is generally accepted,90
it has been labeled a forgery by General D. A. Miliutin91 and by the

86. Edited by a Monsieur Hoffmann (Paris, 1840).
87. Mémoires posthumes du feld-maréchal Comte de Stedingk, General
88. A. P. Dubois de Jancigny and X. Raymond, Inde (Paris, 1845); P. P.
Karatygin, Proekt Russko-frantsuzskoi edspeditsii v Indiiu 1800 g.",
Russkaia Starina, VIII (1973), 401-08.
89. Karatygin, 401-04.
90. For example Shil'der mentioned it briefly without challenging its
reliability, Imperator Pavel Pervyi, 417; D. Hopkins, who for a
time was the British East India Company's resident at Bhagulpore,
writing long before the text of the invasion plan was published,
was convinced that such a plan existed and had, in fact, been put
into operation. According to Hopkins, the campaign was suspended
after Paul's death. The Danger to British India from French In-
vansion and Missionary Establishments (London, 1808), 52-54.
91. Istoriiia voiny 1799 goda, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1857),
There are strong reasons for doubting the authenticity of the published versions of the plan, although such a project was not out of harmony with the thinking of either Paul or Napoleon in 1800.

The plan was supposedly delivered to Paul by Napoleon's adjutant, Duroc. In the published version, the text carried marginal comments purportedly by Napoleon and Paul. However, Miliutin scrutinized Duroc's schedule and discovered that Duroc was delayed so long on business in Berlin that he did not reach St. Petersburg until after Paul had been deposed and killed.  

The other problem is the wording of the proposal. The internal evidence of published versions of the plan raises several questions. First, the plan called for transporting at least thirty-five thousand men, seventy thousand according to the Stedingk version, enough horses for twenty thousand regular Russian cavalry and Cossacks, and the artillery of both armies by sea from Astrakhan to Astarābād. Russia's military vessels were so few, it had been necessary to supplement them with merchant ships to handle inadequately the needs of V. A. Zubov's thirty thousand troops. A few months after the supposed Franco-Russian invasion was to have occurred, Paul had to send his own expeditionary force to India via Central Asia rather than by boat across the Caspian. If Paul had seriously considered the supposed Napoleonic plan, there

92. "The Proposed Invasion of India by Russia and France in 1801", Journal of Indian History, XXXV (1957); although Shneidman revives this intriguing puzzle, he fails to make use of certain important sources and badly misinterprets others.

93. Miliutin, II, 538, n.
ought to be some comment in Russian documents showing efforts to overcome the transportation problem. Yet there is no such point raised in Paul's supposed comments on the campaign proposal or in any other known source. In contrast, the unquestionably genuine plan Napoleon submitted to Alexander in 1807 took into account the possibility that Russia would not be able to transport its contingent across the Caspian. Therefore, Napoleon suggested that the Russian troops go across the Caucasus and then join the French contingent, which was to travel across the Ottoman Empire. The combined forces would then proceed to India by an overland route across Iran.

Moreover, the report of a conversation between Napoleon and G. M. Sprengporten, Paul's emissary to France, on March 16 (28), 1801, just at the time Napoleon was supposed to have been looking forward to launching the joint invasion of India, shows that he had no such plans in mind. In the course of explaining to Sprengporten the reasons Egypt was too valuable for France to surrender it, he emphasized its importance as a means to undo England's connection with India. All the ways he described for accomplishing this goal focused on the eastern Mediterranean, which he wanted to turn into a Franco-Russian lake. The desirability of severing Anglo-Indian ties by seizing India or interfering with shipping in the Indian Ocean was not discussed at

94. Karatygin, 407-08.

95. Ambassador Caulaincourt to Napoleon, January 21, 1808, Grandduke Nikolai Mikhailovich, Les Relations diplomatiques de la Russie et de la France d'après les rapports des ambassadeurs d'Alexandre et de Napoléon 1808-1812, 7 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1905-1914), I, 73; hereafter referred to as Relations diplomatiques.
There is such a close resemblance between certain documents relating to Napoleon's attempt to convince Alexander to join in an attack on the East India Company and the purported proposal to Paul that the former may have provided the model for the latter. The fact that such a proposal really was made to Alexander may in itself have stimulated the imagination of the author of the 1800 document. One particularly striking resemblance is the series of questions and answers about the feasibility of such a campaign. A letter from Caulaincourt, the French ambassador to St. Petersburg in 1808, also contained a series of questions in which the obstacles to a Franco-Russian campaign to India were raised by Alexander and replied to optimistically by Caulaincourt. Alexander, like the questioner in the 1800 document, was concerned over the great distance to be covered. Caulaincourt replied, as did his 1800 counterpart, that the distance would not be an insurmountable obstacle. In 1808, Alexander was concerned about the foes a Franco-Russian expedition would have to fight on the way to India. Caulaincourt replied that a well planned Franco-Russian force would be superior to any foe it might encounter in Asia.

96. Sprengporten's report to St. Petersburg, March 16 (28), 1801, A. Trachevskii, Diplomaticheskiia snosheniiia Rossii s Frantsiiei v epokhu Napoleona I, 4 vols. (Sbornik Imperatorskago Russkago Istoricheskago Obshchestva, vols. LXX, LXXVII, LXXXII, LXXXVIII), I, 94.

97. Caulaincourt to Napoleon, January 21, 1808, Nikolai Mikhailovich, Relations diplomatiques, I, 72; Karatygin, 407-08.

98. Nikolai Mikhailovich, Relations diplomatiques, I, 73.
Franco-Russian army could do anything the Iranian conqueror of India in the eighteenth century Ḡolāmreẕā Nāder Shāh had done.\(^99\) Alexander and the 1800 interlocutor both expressed concern about the deserts which lay along the route to India. The replies made by Caulaincourt and the proponent of the 1800 expedition were virtually identical; the land in question was not desolate; on the contrary, it was well watered by rivers, with food and forage to be found in abundance.\(^100\)

Hopkins' description of the supposed Franco-Russian venture may offer some insight into the origins of the written form of Napoleon's proposal to Paul. Since Hopkins could not have been influenced by the still unpublished versions of the plan, it is noteworthy that his notion of the terms of the Franco-Russian agreement matched most of the published texts (except the Steindl version) on a rather strange detail. Like the published texts, Hopkins gave no details of Russian troop movements before the meeting with the French supposedly to take place at Astarābād.\(^101\) (In contrast, Alexander and Ambassador Caulaincourt discussed Russian as well as French routes.)\(^102\) This curious situation might be the result of an attempt to connect the movements of the Cossacks Paul really did send to India in 1801 on a route north and east of the Caspian with the presumed intention to join forces with France at some point along the route. Paul's letters to the

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99. Karatygin, 408.


102. Caulaincourt to Napoleon, January 21, 1808, Nikolai Mikhailovich, *Relations diplomatiques*, I, 73.
Cossack commander have since been published and show that no such intention existed, but those who believed an attack by France and Russia against their British enemy's lucrative interests in India would be a plausible strategy may have found confirmation of their suspicions in the Cossack expedition.

If the 1800 plan is indeed a forgery the question of who was its real author also arises. One possibility is Count Stedingk, among whose papers was found a document which was supposedly a copy of the one carried by Duroc to Paul. One author has offered the theory that Stedingk, as a supporter of the Holy Alliance and fervent enemy of Napoleon, may have written the proposal himself. Whoever wrote the document, its publication certainly came at an opportune time for Francophobes or Russophobes. The first half of the 1840's was a period when France's relations with Russia and England verged on outright hostility, primarily over conflicting interests in the Ottoman Empire.

There is a document, a memorandum drawn up by Rostopchin for Paul, which expressed all the attitudes which could have led Paul to want to attack India and to do so in co-operation with France, even though no attack is specifically mentioned. In his memorandum,

103. Karatygin, 409-410; Shil'der, 417-18.

104. A. Delrieu, "Une Ambassade franque à la cour de la Perse sous l'Empire 1808", Revue Britannique, XX (March-April 1854), 181.

105. This document was published in two versions: Duc de Broglie, "La Politique de la Russie en 1800 d'après un document inédit", Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique (1880), 2-11; and a more complete version, "Zapiska grafa F. V. Rostochchina", Russkii Arkhiv (1878 number 1), 103-110, hereafter referred to as "Zapiska". An example of Shneidman's poor handling of sources is his use of only the de Broglie
Rostopchin portrayed England as the enemy of France and Russia and predicted an English attack on Russia's Baltic holdings in the near future.\textsuperscript{106} He believed that territorial expansion in Asia could be used by France to put pressure on England and pointed to the desirability of dividing the Ottoman Empire among France, Russia, Austria, and Prussia to further that end.\textsuperscript{107} England's control of the seas and its efforts to dominate international trade in general were decried while Rostopchin singled out the importance and the vulnerability of England's connection with India.\textsuperscript{108} Finally, Rostopchin depicted Russia as the mightiest nation on earth because of its natural resources.\textsuperscript{109} Paul made notes in the margin approving Rostopchin's ideas and ordered him to act in accordance with them.\textsuperscript{110} It was a logical step for someone who agreed with this memorandum to advocate an attack on the British in India.

Whatever the truth about the plans for the conquest of India by Russia and France, there is no doubt that Paul did order an exclusively Russian campaign at the beginning of 1801. In doing so, he brought together for the first time two very different themes in Russian foreign

\textsuperscript{106} "Zapiska", 105-07; de Broglie, 6.
\textsuperscript{107} "Zapiska", 109; de Broglie, 11.
\textsuperscript{108} "Zapiska", 105, 107; de Broglie, 6.
\textsuperscript{109} de Broglie, 6.
\textsuperscript{110} "Zapiska", 106, 107, 110.
relations, the recondite interest of a few members of government in Iran and its northwestern marches and the far more widespread concern about Russia's relations with Western Europe. As England prepared to attack Paul's Danish and Swedish allies, he decided "it is necessary to attack [the English] where the blow will be felt by them and where they least expect it. Their establishments in India are the best for this."\textsuperscript{111} He went on to explain that this attack would also enable Russia to fill the commercial role which England had occupied on the subcontinent.\textsuperscript{112} At the end of February 1801, fewer than 23,000 Cossacks, Kalmyks, and artillery soldiers set out for India. They met with considerable difficulties. First there were terrible winter storms, then an early thaw, which broke up the ice on the rivers and forced the troops to alter their route several times. Their changed course of march took them through unfamiliar territory where food for the men and their horses was scarce.\textsuperscript{113} On March 11, 1801, Paul was overthrown and killed by a palace conspiracy. The next day, Alexander recalled the Cossacks from their journey.\textsuperscript{114}

There are many peculiarities to this plan which make it seem extremely ill considered, perhaps the product of a disordered mind. Yet there are alternative explanations for all these peculiarities which do not depend on Paul's having been insane.

\textsuperscript{111} Paul to General Orlov-Denisov, January 12, 1801, Shil'der, 417.
\textsuperscript{112} Ibid., 418.
\textsuperscript{113} Ibid., 419.
\textsuperscript{114} Alexander to Orlov-Denisov, March 12, 1801, VPR, IV, 11.
The first point is the feasibility of such a campaign at all. The hazards were unquestionably great but a number of Paul's contemporaries had similar ambitions. Napoleon's dream of conquering India is generally treated as a manifestation of the man's magnificent daring. In Paul's case, it is treated as dementia. In Russia, the Zubovs and Rostopchin also favored the conquest of India. In fact, Rostopchin continued to favor it several years after the debacle of 1801.115

Paul's decision to send the Cossacks to India via Central Asia differed from the accepted concept of Catherine's reign of establishing a route via Astarābād and Khorāsān. In 1797, the State Council received information that the route from Bokhārā to India was rendered exceedingly perilous by marauding bands of robbers and other dangers which could not even be foreseen. According to this information, Russia would need a dozen years just to subdue Khivā.116 Paul was not able to provide the Cossacks with maps for the area from the Āmu Dariā to the Indus.117 However, invasions of India from Iran or Central Asia through what is now Afghanistan have been successful on other occasions. Alexander the Great, Mahmud of Ghazneh, Mongol raiding parties, Tamerlane, and, in the eighteenth century, Nāder Shāh had all done so.118 Apart from the precedent of the successful invasions of India from Central Asia, Paul may also have been induced

115. Rostopchin to Tsitsianov, April 21, 1804, "Pis'ma", 62.
116. Session of April 16, 1797, AGS, II, cols. 646-47.
117. Shīl'der, 418.
to choose the Central Asian route as a practical matter because he believed he could not use the route across the Caspian for lack of ships. Although Russia's lack of maps for the area from the Āmu Dariā to the Indus was a critical deficiency, that situation was not unusual for a major power in 1800. Even a few years later, the English authorities, who were already in control of much of India and who were concerned with its defense, did not have any maps for the northwest frontier region. 119 Moreover, most of England's leading Indian experts considered the possibility of an overland invasion of India from the northwest an entirely plausible threat for most of the nineteenth century, as the treaties made with Iran in 1801, 1809, and 1812 reveal. 120

Although Paul's reign was brief and unpopular, it marked an important stage in the development of Russia's policy toward the lands south of the Caucasus Mountains. Because the goals established by Catherine and her advisors were accepted and perpetuated by Paul's government, they continued their development from opinions to unshakable axioms. The continuation and intensification of Russian involvement in the Caucasus and Iran, especially the decision to annex Georgia, increased Russia's stake in the region to the point where disengagement would have appeared a shameful retreat. In that sense, Iran and its


border territories had become more familiar to Russia. In another sense, that world remained as distant as it had been during Catherine's reign. Communication between the two countries was still limited and subject to misinterpretation. Russian officials continued to be guided in their judgments by the attitudes developed in the previous reign instead of making a fresh appraisal of current conditions.

When Alexander succeeded his father as Emperor of Russia, he was at first unsure of what policy to follow in the Caucasus. Before Alexander had been on the throne many months, he, too, accepted the axioms of his predecessors and decided to use methods similar to Catherine's to implement them.

One of the reasons for the resemblance between the policies of Alexander and Catherine both in theory and in practice was that Alexander relied on many of the men who had served Catherine in this matter. This was due, in part, to the continuing scarcity of Russian officials who could claim to have some knowledge of the Caucasus or Iran and, in part, to the continued use of the same kinds of Caucasian Christian sources to supplement the Russians' first-hand information. The area east of the Ottoman Empire was still so unfamiliar to most officials in St. Petersburg that it was difficult to find a basis on which to challenge the advocates of expansion. If such a challenge were made, Alexander might not be willing to consider it. Even the Russians who favored greater involvement in the Caucasus were often hampered by their ignorance. In the early years of Alexander's reign, his officers in the Caucasus had considerable difficulty simply communicating with the Muslim khans, let alone trying to comprehend
differing points of view on delicate political issues. In 1805, Prince P. D. Tsitsianov, then Governor-General of the Caucasus, initiated a search to find people in Astrakhan who spoke Azerbaijani Turkish and, if possible, Persian as well, so that the generals in charge of the border would be able to communicate with the khans of the area and Iranian officials.121

Among those who returned to favor when Paul was overthrown were the Zubov brothers. Valerian and Platon Zubov championed the argument for strong Russian involvement in the Caucasus and Iran to Alexander and the State Council.122 One of Valerian Zubov's themes was the moral obligation placed upon Alexander to incorporate Georgia into the Empire.123 He also repeated an argument formulated during Catherine's reign and destined to have great importance in Russia's relations with Iran for the next thirty years: the necessity, for the sake of Georgian security, of establishing the Kur and the Aras as the border with Iran.124 Valerian Zubov's other primary concern was trade with Asia. In this context, he recapitulated all his beliefs about the desirability of encouraging trade with Iran and India and the significance of Baku and

121. Tsitsianov to Prince Teneshev (Governor of Astrakhan), August 29, 1805, Akty, II, 57.

122. V. A. Zubov, "Obshchee obozrenie torgovli s Azieiu", 879-94, hereafter referred to as "Obshchee obozrenie"; Beliavskii and Potto, I, 32; Grandduke Nikolai Mikhailovich, Graf Pavel Aleksandrovich Stroganov, 3 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1903), II, 90; hereafter referred to as Stroganov; Session of the State Council, April 15, 1801, VPR, I, 26; Lang, 250.

123. Meeting of Secret Committee, August 13, 1801, Nikolai Mikhailovich, Stroganov, II, 90.

124. V. A. Zubov, "Obshchee obozrenie", 888.
Astarābād in that connection. 125 Like most of his contemporaries who shared his interest in Asia, Valerian Zubov was blithely overoptimistic about the ease with which such ties could be established. For example, Zubov informed Alexander that an excellent and safe road had been built by Shāh 'Abbās the Great linking Bāku with Tabrīz, Tehran, Esfahān, Fārs, and the Persian Gulf. 126 Apart from the fact that a host of public works were spuriously attributed to Shāh 'Abbās by later generations of Iranians, the road which linked the Caucasus and the commercial centers of Iran were beset with difficulties, especially rough terrain, exposure to extremes of weather, and risk of attack by tribal cavalry. 127 V. A. Zubov believed that Bāku offered yet another advantage as a center for Russo-Indian trade. He observed that the khanate was already a pilgrimage center for Indian Parsees, who revered the fires caused by naphtha escaping through the soil in the vicinity of the capitol. Since, according to Zubov, the Parsees were one of the most important religious groups in India, Bāku could be used as a means of contact with the Parsee homeland. 128

Alexander was impressed with V. A. Zubov's opinions. In addition to agreeing on the matter of the annexation of Georgia, Alexander informed Prince P. D. Tsitsianov, whom he had just appointed Commander-in-Chief in the Caucasus, that the realization of Zubov's recommendations

125. Ibid., 885-87, 888, 892.
126. Ibid., 886.
128. Memoir on trade with Asia, Akty, VI, part ii, 860.
was "highly desirable", even though he did not expect that to be accomplished immediately.\textsuperscript{129} Years later, Alexander again singled out Zubov's recommendations on Russo-Iranian trade as something his new ambassador to Iran, General A. P. Ermolov, should try to attain in his forthcoming negotiations.\textsuperscript{130} V. A. Zubov remained in Alexander's favor until his death in 1804.\textsuperscript{131}

Platon Zubov was also an influential proponent of Russian expansion in western Asia during Alexander's reign. Alexander put great trust in him regarding Caucasian affairs. It was Platon Zubov who wrote the manifesto, issued in Alexander's name, announcing the incorporation of Georgia into the Russian empire.\textsuperscript{132} He also helped to devise a new administrative system for that new part of the Empire.\textsuperscript{133} Platon Zubov continued to argue in favor of Russian expansion in the Caucasus and the encouragement of Russian commerce with that region, Iran, and India until his death in 1822. He wrote a number of books on those themes, all published posthumously.\textsuperscript{134}

Two other men who were particularly influential in determining

\textsuperscript{129} Alexander to Tsitsianov, September 26, 1802, \textit{Akty}, II, 8.

\textsuperscript{130} Alexander to Ermolov, July 29, 1816, \textit{Akty}, VI, part ii, 124.

\textsuperscript{131} Rostopchin to Tsitsianov, July 7, 1803 and July 9, 1804, "Pis'ma", 20, 53.

\textsuperscript{132} Beliavskii and Potto, I, 36, n. 1.

\textsuperscript{133} Land, 251.

\textsuperscript{134} These include \textit{Shest' pism o Gruzii i Kavkaze} (Moscow, 1834); \textit{Podvigi Russkikh voinov v stranakh Kavkazskikh s 1800 po 1834 g.} (St. Petersburg, 1835); \textit{Kartina Kavkazskago kraia}, 4 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1834-35).
Alexander to continue an expansionist policy in the Caucasus had become advocates of that point of view during their service in Paul's administration. They were General K. F. Knorring, whom Paul had made commander of the Caucasian Line and supervisor of Georgian affairs, and Count A. A. Musin-Pushkin, sent by Paul to investigate the mineral resources of Georgia. Both men sent reports to Alexander urging him to annex Georgia. They argued that unless that were done, Georgia would collapse but that annexation could bring Russia considerable economic advantages.135 When the optimistic picture of the benefits of annexation was challenged by the Secret Committee, Knorring admitted he had deliberately slanted his reports to favor the pro-annexation point of view because he believed that that was what Alexander wanted to hear.136 Knorring's personal interests were also involved since he hoped Alexander would make him governor of the new Russian province of Georgia.137 Personal ambition also colored Musin-Pushkin's reports, in which particular emphasis was placed on the rich mines Russia would acquire if Georgia were annexed.138 When the annexation took place, Musin-Pushkin was rewarded by being made head of the mining operations,139 which he proceeded to run with a disastrous lack of success until his

135. Knorring to Alexander, July 28, 1801, Akty, I, 426; Sessions of the State Council, April 11 and August 8, 1801, AGS, III, part ii, cols. 1189-90, 1196-97; Butkov, part II, 475-79; Lang, 249.

136. Meeting of the Secret Committee, August 13, 1801, Nikolai Mikhailovich, Stroganov, II, 93.

137. Lang, 247.

138. Session of the State Council, April 11, 1801, AGS, III, part ii, col. 1189.

death in 1805. However, the information provided by Musin-Pushkin was unreliable not only because of his ambition but because he was a singularly unobservant man. He was capable of believing that his mining operations were prospering when he was surrounded by disorganization, warfare, and starvation. He assured General Tsitsianov that if the latter provided more workers, fuel, and artillery (for protection from raiding parties) the mines could produce one hundred twenty thousand rubles-worth of copper in 1804. In fact, the mines produced far less and ran at a loss for many years.

The group of men who handled Russia's Caucasian interests in the field were a fairly inbred group as well, especially in the early years of Alexander's reign. Knorrning's successor as chief in the Caucasus, Prince Tsitsianov, was the descendant of a Georgian prince of the Tsitsishvili family who had entered Russian service during the reign of Peter the Great. Tsitsianov served in the 1796 expedition and was made Commandant of Baku by V. A. Zubov, whom he admired greatly. The head of Tsitsianov's chancery in Georgia until 1803, P. G. Butkov, had filled the same position under Knorrning and, before that, had served under V. A. Zubov in 1796. He aided Platon Zubov in drafting the new plan for the administration of Georgia in 1801. Like Valerian Zubov, he was a proponent of the development of Russo-Indian trade using the

140. Tormasov to Gur'ev, May 10, 1811, Akty, IV, 69.
141. Musin-Pushkin to Tsitsianov, February 22, 1804, Akty, II, 204.
142. Tormasov to Gur'ev, May 10, 1811, Akty, IV, 69.
143. Believskii and Pott, I, 44; Rostopchin to Tsitsianov, July 9, 1804, "Pis'ma", 53.
After Tsitsianov's death in 1806, Gudovich returned to take charge of Caucasian affairs for the third time. Another veteran of the 1796 campaign, A. P. Ermolov, became commander in the Caucasus in 1816 and was responsible for Russia's refusal to make any territorial concessions to Iran in the final version of the treaty which ended the first Russo-Iranian war. Other veterans of the Zubov campaign returned to the Caucasus after 1801 in subordinate posts, while officers who began their service in the Caucasus at a later date filled various posts there before rising to leading positions. In this category are included two commanders, A. P. Tormasov and F. O. Paulucci, and the general who led Russia's troops in the two decisive battles of the war, P. S. Kotliarevskii.

Armenians and Georgians, especially those who had relatives in Iran or did business there, continued to be valuable sources of intelligence for Russian officials and so had an effect on Russia's political and tactical decisions. Daniel, the Russian-backed candidate for Catholicos of the Armenian Church (after Argutinskii-Dolgorukov's death), provided the Russians with information.

144. Beliavskii and Potto, I, 23; Kosven and Khashaev, 208; Butkov, Materialy, II, 419.

145. Ermolov to Alexander, January 9, 1817, Akty, V, 142.

146. Kosven and Khashaev, 156, 172, 228-29.


148. Lazarev to Knorring, December 5, 1801, Akty, I, 684; Karapet to Armenian protopope, January 19, 1802, ibid., I, 685; Skibinevskii to Knorring, May 5, 1802, ibid., I, 689; A Georgian in Tehran to his family in Tbilisi, 1802, ibid., I, 692; Yuzbashi Gabriel to
instructed Tsitsianov to seek out Catholicos Daniel and his followers for information and to rely on Daniel's advice.\textsuperscript{149} In 1808, Alexander rewarded Daniel with the Order of St. Anne, First Class, for his services in providing the Russians with information.\textsuperscript{150} Over the next few years, as Russia fought to extend its frontier to the Kur and the Aras, Armenians continued to send Russian officials messages encouraging them to conquer Muslim-ruled khanates and save the Armenians from Muslim oppression.\textsuperscript{151}

The way Alexander dealt with the information he received about Georgia helps cast some light on Alexander's personality as well as his policy toward the lands south of the Caucasus Mountains. The debate over the future of Georgia was really over the whole of Russia's policy toward the Caucasus and Iran, so intimately connected had these themes become. Even the opponents of annexation used arguments against Russian policy towards the whole region when discussing the Georgian question. This debate marked the final stage in the crystallization of Russian attitudes toward Iran and the Caucasus. Once Georgia had been made an integral part of the Empire, there could no more be a

\textsuperscript{149} Ibid., II, 626; Hovannes Yuzbäši to Pogos Atunov, April 17, 1804, \textit{Ibid.}, II, 807; Tsitsianov to Czartoryski, December 13, 1804, \textit{Ibid.}, II, 814; Knorrin to A. B. Kurakin, March 26, 1802, \textit{VPR}, I, 191.

\textsuperscript{150} Ioannisian, \textit{Prisoedinenie Zakavkaz'ia k Rossii i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia v nachale XIX stoletiia} (Yerevan, 1958), 173.

\textsuperscript{151} \textit{Ibid.}, 172; Lazarev to Tsitsianov, January 9, 1803, \textit{Akty}, II, 587; Melik Abram and Yuzbäši Gabriel to Tsitsianov, n.d., \textit{Ibid.}, II, 604; Portniagin to Tsitsianov, June 23, 1805, \textit{Ibid.}, II, 625; Armenians of Yerevan to Yuzbäši Gabriel and Malek Abram, August 21, 1805, \textit{Ibid.}, II, 627.
retreat from the beliefs which led to annexation than there could be from the annexation itself.

At the start of his reign, Alexander was unsure whether to continue the expansionist Caucasian policy of his two predecessors. He asked his State Council to consider whether the annexation of Georgia would be an offense against the heirs to the Georgian throne.\textsuperscript{152} The "experts", the Zubovs, Knorring, and Musin-Pushkin, favored annexation, as did most of the members of the Council.\textsuperscript{153} However, for the first time since the resumption of Russian interest in the Caucasus and Iran in the 1780's, there were close advisors of the Emperor who challenged all the standard assumptions about what Russia might gain if it established a foothold in the Caucasus. Paul had disputed Catherine's reliance on military intimidation but he had shared completely the motives for which force had been used.

On June 24, 1801, V. P. Kochubei and A. R. Vorontsov, whom Alexander trusted enough to have them scrutinize all the records of Paul's involvement in Georgia, presented Alexander with a report which deftly undermined the expansionist arguments.\textsuperscript{154} They denied that extensive Russian involvement in Georgia was necessary to maintain the security of Russia's southeastern border and pointed to the existing Caucasian Line, north of the mountain range, as being far better suited

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{152} Session of April 15, 1801, \textit{AGS}, III, part ii, col. 1191.
\item \textsuperscript{153} \textit{Ibid.}, III, part ii, cols. 1191-94; Session of April 11, 1801, \textit{ibid.}, III, part ii, cols. 1189-90; Session of August 8, 1801, \textit{ibid.}, III, part ii, cols. 1197-98.
\item \textsuperscript{154} Meeting of Secret Committee, August 13, 1801, Nikolai Mikhailovich, \textit{Stroganov}, II, 92.
\end{itemize}
Kochubei and Vorontsov were not opposed to Russia's protecting Georgia altogether but believed that annexing it would only serve to provoke the Porte or Iran, while leaving Georgia under the rule of the Bagration dynasty with a modest garrison of Russian troops would be sufficient to deter attacks and stabilize conditions within the country. The authors of the report also showed how claims of the economic and military strength of Georgia as well as that country's eagerness to be made an integral part of Russia were distorted and unreliable. Since the topics of Georgia and Asian commerce were inseparable, the two critics attacked the dream that immense profits would accrue to Russia from trade with Iran and India. They pointed out that the Caspian coast was an inhospitable place for Russians and referred to the terribly high cost in men and money of Peter the Great's attempt to establish a foothold there. In addition, they reminded the Emperor that Russia's Caspian trade had been declining steadily, which they interpreted as a discouraging omen.

The underlying theme of the Kochubei-Vorontsov attack on Russia's expansionist Caucasian policy was that Russia's greatest need at that time was for internal reform. Therefore, increased involvement in ambitious Asian schemes, of dubious value in any event, was particularly undesirable at that time because it would distract the government from

155. AGS, III, part ii, col. 1200.
156. Ibid., III, part ii, cols. 1203, 1204-06.
158. Ibid., III, part ii, cols. 1202-03.
its proper tasks. This point of view was shared by the rest of Alexander's closest advisors, Kochubei's colleagues on the Secret Committee, P. A. Stroganov, N. N. Novosil'tsev, and A. Czartoryski.

Alexander's reaction to the advice of his most trusted counselors was extraordinary. Knorring had accidentally hit on the truth when he stated that he thought Alexander would prefer to hear arguments in favor of the annexation of Georgia rather than against it. Instead of heeding the advice of the opponents of expansion, whose arguments were well reasoned and supported by convincing evidence, Alexander preferred to accept the opinions of Knorring, Musin-Pushkin, and the Zubovs, even though these men presented arguments with obvious weaknesses. Knorring admitted lying to the Emperor on the matter of Georgis'a strength. As for V. A. Zubov's report, one avowed critic, P. A. Stroganov, observed that "the Count Zubov says: a thing is like this but he does not support it with any proof; it is necessary to take his word on it." However, Alexander, for all his initial reluctance to annex Georgia, seems, by August 1801, to have become determined not only to go ahead with the annexation but to ensure that he would not be deterred in this by any criticism of the pro-annexation point of view. In August, Alexander made it known that he believed the incorporation of Georgia into the Russian Empire to be necessary as it represented the wish of the suffering Georgian people and because the failure to take this step

159. Ibid., III, part ii, cols. 1200, 1203.

160. Meeting of the Secret Committee, August 13, 1808, Nikolai Mikhailovich, Stroganov, II, 90-91, 93; Dubrovin, III, 416-17; Lang, 250.

would lead to Georgia's collapse from internecine warfare and outside attacks. Moreover, Alexander deliberately tried to conceal the contents of V. A. Zubov's pro-annexation memorandum from Kochubei and Vorontsov. When Alexander entrusted Knorring with the task of winning over the Armenians and the khans of the eastern Caucasus, he also gave Knorring complete charge over all foreign relations in the Caucasus, rather than make Knorring responsible to the College of Foreign Affairs. Alexander's decision may reflect a desire that Knorring be free to take advantage of any opportunities which might arise without being delayed by having to report to St. Petersburg and await an answer. However, in light of Alexander's concealment of the Zubov memorandum, it is also possible that he intended to make certain that Kochubei, who was about to become the head of the College of Foreign Affairs, would be prevented from raising objections to Alexander's Caucasian policy.

The debate over the future of Georgia, with its broader ramifications about the nature of Russian policy in Iran, was the first occasion in Alexander's dealing with that region on which he allowed men who believed in policies more aggressive than his own to win him over to their side. There were a number of other occasions during the war with Iran when this pattern was repeated. Two of the most important of these took place at the beginning and end of the war, when General

162. Ibid., II, 92; Dubrovin, III, 418-19.

163. Meeting of Secret Committee, August 12, 1801, Nikolai Mikhailovich Stroganov, Stroganov, II, 92.

164. Alexander to Knorring, September 12, 1801, Butkov, Materialy, part II, 503-04, 507.
Tsitsianov embarked on a series of confrontations and conquests in the eastern Caucasus which contributed to the outbreak of war with Iran, and when General Ermolov convinced Alexander, who had at first been willing to make at least token territorial restorations to Iran, that none should be made.

Once the annexation of Georgia had become a fait accompli, even Kochubei and Vorontsov became vigorous supporters of the policies and actions of the expansionists. Even though they did not shut their eyes to all abuses, as their sharp criticism of the Knorning-Kovalenskii administration indicates, they fawned over the leaders as well as the plans of the expansionist camp. Kochubei explained that since Russia had taken over Georgia, he believed Russia ought to make the most of it. This led him to accept V. A. Zubov's proposals for acquiring the territory between Georgia and the Caspian and increasing Russo-Iranian trade. He also praised Zubov personally as a man of sound and perceptive opinions who knew how to deal with Asians. In a strange demonstration of humility, the former debunker of Zubov's confident assumptions claimed that he was not competent to judge Zubov's memorandum on trade and could only admire its quality.

165. Zapiski Sergeia Alekseevicha Tuchkova 1766-1808, K. A. Voenskii, ed. (St. Petersburg, 1908), 197, 208, 210; Tsitsianov to Mirzâ Shafi', May 27, 1804, Akty, II, 808-09.

166. Meeting of the Secret Committee, March 31, 1802, Nikolai Mikhailovich, Stroganov, II, 205; Lang, 254, 258.

167. Meeting of the Secret Committee, March 31, 1802, Nikolai Mikhailovich, Stroganov, II, 205.

168. Kochubei to Alexander, August 13, 1802, AKV, XIV, 176-78.

169. Meeting of the Secret Committee, March 31, 1802, Nikolai Mikhailovich, Stroganov, II, 205.
A Soviet historian, A. V. Fadeev, has raised the point that Kochubei, Novosil'tsev, and Vorontsov all opposed the annexation of Georgia because they feared that such action would jeopardize Russia's amicable relations with Great Britain.\textsuperscript{170} It would be reasonable to expect some connection between Russian foreign policy in Europe and in the Caucasus. Nonetheless, it is striking how little the major foreign policy concerns of the Napoleonic era affected Russia's actions in the Caucasus at any time from 1801 until the end of the fighting with Iran in 1813. Those who criticized increased Russian involvement in the Caucasus before the annexation of Georgia minced no words in pointing out all the arguments against expansion, yet they never once mentioned the possibility of damaging Anglo-Russian relations. Moreover, Vorontsov and Kochubei continued to favor amicable relations with Great Britain in the early years of Alexander's reign even though they reversed their stand on the Caucasus.\textsuperscript{171} Alexander himself did not turn against Great Britain until 1807. In 1801, neither Russia nor Great Britain perceived Iran as the field of conflict between their interests. In fact, British authorities determinedly refused to share Iran's concern over the growth of Russian power in the Caucasus until comparatively late in the Russo-Iranian war. Even then, Britain was drawn into the conflict to prevent Iran from relying on France for aid against Russia.\textsuperscript{172} Since Britain's own involvement in Iran was

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{170} Rossiia i Kavkaz, pervoi treti XIX v., 102.
\item \textsuperscript{171} P. K. Grimsted, The Foreign Ministers of Alexander I (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969), 85, 94.
\item \textsuperscript{172} Governor General of India, et al. meeting in council, January 30, 1808, Great Britain, India Office, Persia and Persian Gulf Factory Records, XXVIII, 39; N. B. Edmonstone to Fath 'Ali Shāh, January
\end{itemize}
slight in 1801, there was no reason for Russia to be on guard for a confrontation with Britain over the annexation of Georgia. Even when Paul and officials of his administration expressed hostility toward England or sought to threaten its position in Asia, it was the Ottoman Empire or India, not Iran, which was the expected setting for the confrontation.

Alexander signed the manifesto making Georgia a province of the Russian Empire on September 12, 1801. During the course of the next twelve months, he set forth his policy toward the Caucasus. That policy was virtually identical to the one developed by Catherine and continued by Paul. Even though there proved to be some practical difficulties in achieving some of the goals, the policy itself remained unchanged through the end of the war with Iran. This policy, consistent with the traditions of the previous twenty years, was a policy of expansion justified by the need to ensure the security of Georgia and the hope of developing a flourishing Asian trade.

The keystone of Alexander's policy was the necessity of acquiring all the lands up to the Kur and Aras Rivers. He was convinced that a border with Iran which followed the course of those rivers would be the only one Russia could defend. Pointing to a map, he told the Secret Committee that if Russia did not fill in the gaps in its Caucasian holdings to the Aras and the Kur, its border would be too long and irregular for Russian troops to prevent incursions. On the same day

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10, 1807, Great Britain, Public Record Office, Foreign Office 60/1, pages unnumbered.

173. Manifesto, Akty, 432.

174. Meeting of Secret Committee, March 31, 1802, Nikolai Mikhailovich, Stroganov, II, 205-06.
as Alexander issued his manifesto on Georgia, he ordered Knorring to make certain that all the khanates between Georgia, the Kur-Aras line, and the Caspian followed a pro-Russian policy. As Catherine had done with Zubov in 1796, Alexander gave Knorring carte blanche to make arrangements with any other khanates not yet under Fath 'Ali Shāh's control.175

Alexander justified his determination to extend Russian suzerainty over Shaki, Shirvān, and Baku on the grounds that establishing a corridor between Georgia and the Caspian would spare Russia the burden of having to supply Georgia "by the difficult route across the Caucasus Mountains..."176 He considered Yerevan and Ganjeh important because he believed that Georgia had no natural defences to shield it from an invasion via either khanate. Therefore, he wanted Knorring to convince the rulers of both to become Russian vassals and accept Russian garrisons in the citadels of their capitals. In this way, he hoped to guarantee that any future Iranian attack on Georgia would be stopped well short of its target. In any event, Knorring was to make sure that Yerevan did not fall into Iranian hands, if necessary by conquering it himself.177 Although Ganjeh had been the attack route into Georgia in 1795, the main focus of Alexander's attention was Yerevan, which is separated from Georgia by the mountains and fifty miles of desert of the sparsely populated border district of Fambak.178

175. Alexander to Knorring, September 12, 1801, Akty, I, 436.
176. Ibid., I, 436.
177. Alexander to Knorring, April 23, 1802, Akty, I, 688-89.
Whenever Russian generals attempted to conquer Yerevan during the next decade of warfare and failed, they pointed to the difficulty thrown in their way by the mountains separating Georgia and Yerevan.\(^{179}\)

Alexander, like Catherine and Paul, viewed Russian expansion in the Caucasus as necessarily appealing to the inhabitants of the region. He was convinced that the local khans would welcome the Russian presence because it would be in the interest of their own security to do so.\(^{180}\) For example, he expected the khans of Yerevan and Ganjeh would see that they needed to have Russian garrisons established in the citadels of their capital cities and, therefore, would readily agree to it.\(^{181}\) Alexander, too, believed in the irresistible attractiveness of enlightened Russian rule. He predicted that the example of strong and just rule which he wanted Tsitsianov to establish in Georgia would draw to it the people of the neighboring khanates who had known only Oriental despotism:

> Among the obligations placed upon you [Tsitsianov] by your new office, the foremost, according to the present situation in Georgia, must naturally be to clarify the confused system of affairs there and by mild and just but still quite firm behavior endeavor to gain for the Russian government the trust, not only of Georgia but of various neighboring states where they are accustomed to see only the cruelty of Persian power. They will regard every act of a strong state founded on justice and strength as so to speak supernatural. /In doing this you/ ought to win their favor to it /the Russian government in Georgia/ quickly.\(^{182}\)

\(^{179}\) Tsitsianov to Alexander, December 30, 1804, \textit{ibid.}, II, 621; Gudovich to Alexander, December 11, 1808, \textit{ibid.}, III, 253.

\(^{180}\) Alexander to Knorring, September 12, 1801, \textit{ibid.}, I, 436.

\(^{181}\) Alexander to Knorring, April 23, 1802, \textit{ibid.}, I, 689.

\(^{182}\) Alexander to Tsitsianov, September 26, 1802, \textit{ibid.}, II, 7-8.
Alexander's desire to spread enlightenment did not make him indifferent to the possibility of spreading Russian commerce, as the statements he made during the first year of his reign show. In December 1801, Alexander ordered Knorring to try to convince the khans of Darband, Bāku, and Tālesh, as well as two Dāghestāni tribal chiefs, all of whom had sent messages congratulating Alexander on his accession to the throne, that they should place themselves under Russian protection in order to further Russia's Asian trade and secure Russia's border. It was his hope that these territories, coupled with others along the Caspian coast, could be turned into that entity which haunted Russia's imperial dreams, a commercial center for East-West trade.183 With the same goal in mind, he ordered Tsitsianov to find out what had caused the sharp decline in Russia's Caspian trade and ordered the State Council to establish a committee to study the subject. Its members included V. A. Zubov, V. P. Kochubei, N. P. Rumiantsev (Minister of Commerce and future Chancellor), and Admiral Mordvinov (who dealt with relations with Georgia during Catherine's reign).184

Like his predecessors, Alexander valued the Armenians for their links to the markets of Iran. Therefore, he wanted Tsitsianov to give them special protection and encouragement so that they would come to live under Russian rule in Georgia.185

183. Ibid., II, 8; Alexander to Knorring, September 12, 1801, ibid., I, 436; Session of the Secret Committee, March 31, 1802, Nikolai Mikhailovich, Stroganov, II, 205.

184. Alexander to Tsitsianov, September 26, 1802, Akty, II, 9.

185. Ibid., II, 9.
Another important theme of Alexander's Caucasian policy, as of Catherine's, was the necessity of upholding Russian honor in that region. Any opposition to Russia's wishes might be interpreted as an affront to the national honor. The sack of Tbilisi in 1795 was viewed in that light by Catherine. One of the arguments used by Knorring in favor of the annexation of Georgia was that a withdrawal from there (which the State Council considered the only alternative to annexation) would dishonor Russia in the eyes of Europe and Asia. The 1801 manifesto announcing the annexation of Georgia echoed this theme. Even though the words themselves were P. A. Zubov's, the sentiments had Alexander's approval. According to the manifesto, Catherine had provided the protection which was Georgia's "just expectation" by sending troops to subjugate all the territory to the Kur and the Aras. When Paul recalled those troops, he exposed the Georgians to terrible danger and suffering. Alexander, motivated solely by "dignity, honor, and humanity" accepted the "sacred duty" to establish security and justice in Georgia. Alexander emphasized honor again when insisting that Russia's candidate for the hotly contested position of Catholicos of the Armenian Church be supported as a matter of respect for Russian authority.

Although Alexander took measures to protect Georgia against an

186. Session of the State Council, April 12, 1801, AGS, III, part ii, col. 1192.

187. Session of the State Council, August 8, 1801, ibid., III, part ii, col. 1197.

188. Manifesto, September 12, 1801, Akty, I, 432-33.

189. Alexander to Tsitsianov, September 26, 1802, ibid., II, 8.
Iranian attack in the first year of his reign, he did not really expect Fath 'Ali to pose a serious threat to Russia's Caucasian ambitions. In this matter, too, he was influenced by the axioms established over the preceding twenty years. He saw Iran as the victim of recurring civil wars from which one contestant, be it Āqā Mohammad or Fath 'Ali, emerged briefly as the strongest among the rivals. Accordingly, Fath 'Ali was considered no more than one of the khans who ruled some part of Iran. Alexander directed Knorring to establish amicable relations with the other khans as well. In the event Fath 'Ali did attack Georgia, Alexander hoped to use the other khans against him.

Like Paul, Alexander persisted in addressing Fath 'Ali as Bābā Khān. This policy was continued until the treaty of Golestān (October 12, 1813) in which Russia recognized Fath 'Ali as Shah of Iran. Until that time, Alexander insisted that Fath 'Ali's correct name and title not be used except as a concession to be granted in the event that the Shah agreed to all Russia's negotiating demands.

In the choice of means by which to attain his goals in the Caucasus, Alexander's approach showed a hostility toward Iran reminiscent of Catherine's attitude. There was no indication of a willingness like

190. Ibid., II, 8; Alexander to Knorring, September 12, 1801, ibid., I, 436.

191. Alexander to Tsitsianov, September 26, 1802, ibid., II, 8.


193. Minister of Foreign Affairs Baron A. Ia. Budberg to Gudovich, March 8, 1807, Akty, III, 432; Chancellor N. P. Rumiantsev to General F. N. Rtishchev, April 7, 1812, ibid., V, 649.
Paul's to consider explanations for Fath 'Ali's actions which were not contingent on malevolence toward Russia. Alexander's approach was to regard Fath 'Ali as a trouble maker who would certainly pursue an anti-Russian policy if not kept in his place. Therefore, Alexander wanted Knorring to take Yerevan at the first indication that Fath 'Ali would attack it, even if there were no indication that Georgia would be the next target. In this way, Alexander hoped to ensure that Fath 'Ali had no victories to make him audacious.\textsuperscript{194} Alexander also refused to continue Paul's policy of tolerating the navigation of the Caspian by Iranian ships which were armed but took no hostile action. He looked forward to the time Russia's merchant fleet would be large enough to handle all the Caspian trade, so that Iranian merchant shipping could be banned as well.\textsuperscript{195}

One area in which Alexander showed much less interest than Paul or Catherine was India. There was talk of a Franco-Russian campaign to conquer it but that was an idea which evoked little enthusiasm in Alexander. In 1807, Napoleon proposed that France, Russia and Iran attack the British in India.\textsuperscript{196} It is quite possible that he made this suggestion as much to distract Alexander from potential clashes of interest in Prussia as to harass the British.\textsuperscript{197} In any event, Alexander foresaw a host of difficulties: great distance, inhospitable

\textsuperscript{194.} Alexander to Knorring, April 23, 1802, \textit{ibid.}, I, 688.

\textsuperscript{195.} Alexander to Knorring, April 16, 1802, \textit{ibid.}, I, 688.

\textsuperscript{196.} P. A. Tolstoi to N. P. Rumiantsev, October 26, 1807, \textit{VPR}, IV, 104-05.

deserts, disease, and the necessity of fighting all the peoples living along the invasion route. This led him to the conclusion that the expedition would be defeated by the difficulties of the journey before reaching its target. To avoid giving a conclusive answer to the French ambassador, Alexander promised to continue pondering the merits of such an ambitious undertaking. In this way, Alexander tried to trade his participation in an Indian campaign for concessions he wanted from Napoleon in the Ottoman Empire. The project broke down immediately over the inability of Russia and France to agree on the terms of the division of the Ottoman provinces and the Indian campaign became a dead issue.

There was some interest during Alexander's reign in establishing communications with India for purposes of commerce. The main force behind this was N. P. Rumiantsev, both in his capacity as Minister of Commerce (1802-1811) and Chancellor (1807-1814). Rumiantsev's intention was to find a route to India via the Özbeg khanates of Turkestan. In any case, that route was so little known (for example, Rumiantsev thought Bohärä was not far from Käbol, Lahore, and India) that Russian efforts were limited to seeking information about the feasibility of using that route for trade.

198. Caulaincourt to Napoleon, January 21, 1808, Nikolai Mikhailovich, Relations diplomatiques, I, 72-73.

199. Caulaincourt to Napoleon, March 1, 1808, VPR, IV, 177-78; Vandal, I, 247-48, 282, 292ff.

200. N. P. Rumiantsev's comments to the State Council on trade with Asia, May 1802, AGS, III, part i, cols. 293-98; Rumiantsev to P. Ia. Gaverdovskil, /1802/, VPR, I, 332-36; G. I. Glazenap to Rumiantsev, August 22, 1811, ibid., VI, 160; Rumiantsev's letters of 1811 and March 1812, ibid., VI, 311, 714, n. 214.
When Alexander committed the Russian Empire to permanent and active participation in Caucasian affairs, he was confident of easy success. He expected the inhabitants of the territories to be acquired to welcome Russia as their benefactor. He was confident that the Iranians would be unable to challenge Russia's disciplined modern army which would control a strategically advantageous border. Under secure and just rule, Russia's new territories and its trade with Asia would flourish. What he found instead was widespread opposition throughout the area he wished to control and a decade of war on four fronts which exacted a high toll in men and money. These events proved even more traumatic for Russia's adversaries than they did for Russia.
Chapter V

Russia's Conquest of the East Caucasian Khanates

Russian historians of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have tended to characterize their country's acquisition of the khanates of the eastern Caucasus as a step towards a higher level of civilization which was welcomed as such by the inhabitants of the region.¹ In reality, Russia's attempt to extend its border to the Kur and the Aras met with considerable opposition. Eventually, Russian control of most of the territories north of that line was recognized by Iran in the Treaty of Golestān at the end of the first Russo-Iranian War (1813). Another fifteen years elapsed before the conquest of Yerevan and Nakhjavān were made official by the Treaty of Torkmānchāy. Russia was able to take permanent control of most of the east Caucasian khanates in the years between 1804 and 1806 for much the same reasons which enabled it to take temporary control of the area in 1796. The threat of force and outright conquest were still the most important elements. Other factors, too, were much as they had been in the earlier period: the weakening of a khanate's means of subsistence; doubts about the efficacy of Russian protection; and the nature of a khan's relations with domestic rivals, neighbors, and the Qājār dynasty. For all the similarities between the two periods, there were also some significant

¹. This attitude permeated the writings of P. A. Zubov, Dubrovin, Beljavskii, and Potto. The Soviet view is represented by the essays "Azerbaidzhan" and "Formy i metody natsional'no-kolonial-noi politiki tsarizma", B. A. Rybakov, et al. eds., Istoriiia USSR, 12 vols. (Moscow, 1966-71), III, 669, IV, 380.
differences: there was no sudden disengagement of Russian forces as there had been in 1796; under the direction of P. D. Tsitsianov, more force, and in more extreme forms, was employed; and the Qājār government of Iran was in a position to contest Russia's claims.

The years between Paul's decision in 1800 to annex Georgia and the beginning in 1803 of Tsitsianov's strenuous efforts to take control of all the khanates up to the Kur and the Aras were important in shaping relations between Russia and the Caucasian khans. Events of that period belie the truism that greater contact between alien cultures leads to greater understanding and good will. Russia's unsuccessful effort to negotiate the submission of the khans of Iranian Armenia led to indignation on the part of the Russians, who were so influenced by the axioms developed over the previous twenty years that they could not perceive the reasons for the khans' uncooperativeness, and deepening mistrust of Russia on the part of the khans. The result of this stalemate was doubly negative. Specific points of contention remained unresolved and the general climate for future negotiations was made more hostile.

The crux of the problem was a familiar one: the requirement that any khan who might become a Russian subject make many concessions on pain of dire punishment while being offered no positive inducements. Characteristically, Russian authorities drew their information from sources hostile to incumbent khans without considering the merits of the latter's arguments. Thus, the khans' defense of their own interests was interpreted not for what it was but as proof of irreconcilable enmity toward Russia.
In the opening years of the nineteenth century, two of the khans of Iranian Armenia, Javād of Ganjeh and Mohammad of Yerevan, displayed a certain degree of willingness to co-operate with Russia. Mohammad negotiated with the Russians for several years in the hope of reaching some mutually satisfactory agreement. In return, Lieutenant-General K. F. Knorring promised him precedence over all other khans in recognition of his zeal in serving Russia. Javād fought off an attempt by Prince Alexander Batonishvili, one of the late King Erekle's sons, and his Avar allies to restore the rule of the Bagrations in Georgia and later offered to hold the Prince captive if the Russians so desired. Such co-operation held considerable danger for both khans. Javād informed the Russians that he expected to pay with his life if he ever fell into the Shah's hands. Mohammad's wives were held hostage by the Shah.

The two khans became acutely aware of the one-sidedness of their relations with Russia as a result of a dispute over control of two largely Muslim districts on Georgia's southern border. Javād claimed the Shams od-Dinlu district on the grounds that it had been subject to his family for centuries prior to the establishment of Georgian sovereignty in the latter decades of the eighteenth century. Mohammad claimed Fambak on the basis of a proclamation from Āqā Mohammad Khān and the unacceptability of Christian rule over the district's Muslim

2. Knorring to Mohammad, April 18, 1802, Akty, I, 619.


4. Javād to Knorring, n.d. 1802, Akty, I, 611-12; Lazarev to Knorring, August 5, 1801, ibid., I, 603.
inhabitants. Russia, as represented by Knorring, refused to yield. He insisted that Georgia's boundaries had to remain as they had been at the time of King Giorgi's death (December 28, 1800). Any opposition would be interpreted as an act of hostility toward Russia. Therefore, if the Khans continued raiding the disputed territories, they would be attacked and destroyed by the Russian army.

Knorring clung to this intransigent position even though he had received information that the two Khans had evidence in support of their claims and were not acting purely out of malice. P. I. Kovalenskii, head of the civilian administration of Georgia, wrote that Pambak was traditionally part of Yerevan. The Qazzāqs, generally pro-Georgian tribesmen who lived between the contested districts, acknowledged that Georgian rule in the area was only a few decades old. Disregarding this information, at least in evaluating the Khans' motives, Knorring chose to believe only sources hostile to the Khans: King Giorgi; Armenian leaders who sought an end to Muslim rule over their people; and Nasib Beg, the Georgian-appointed governor of Shams od-Dinlu.

5. Lazarev to Knorring, July 13 and 28, 1801, ibid., I, 617, 600; Javād to Knorring, n.d. /1802/, ibid., I, 608, 612.
6. Knorring to Alexander, August 15, 1801, ibid., I, 604; Knorring to Javād, March 12, 1801, May 6 and May 29, 1802, ibid., I, 606, 610, 612; Knorring to Mohammad, May 17, 1802, ibid., I, 619; Knorring to Lazarev, May 5, 1801, ibid., I, 608; Lazarev to Mohammad, June 11, 1801, ibid., I, 617; Lazarev to Knorring, August 5, 1801, ibid., I, 603.
7. Kovalenskii's observations on Georgia, August 1800, ibid., I, 119; Plea of the Qazzāqs to Knorring, 1802, ibid., I, 593.
8. Knorring to Alexander, August 15, 1801, ibid., I, 604; Knorring to Javād, May 20, 1802, ibid., I, 612; Lazarev to Knorring, July 13, 1801 and March 22, 1802, ibid., I, 618, 609; Colonel Kariagin to Knorring, May 9, 1802, ibid., I, 624.
Moreover, in the early stages of the dispute, Knorringer had a personal
stake in portraying the controversy to St. Petersburg in a light
unfriendly to the Khans. His ambition was to become the governor of
the Russian province of Georgia and, therefore, he urged Alexander to
uphold Paul's decision to annex that kingdom. He used the dispute over
Pambak and Shams od-Dinlu to persuade his superiors that St. Peters-
burg's indecision over the fate of Georgia had created a perilous
situation. He made a special point of reminding Alexander of Georgia's
vulnerability to Iranian attack via Ganjeh, thus conjuring up the memory
of Javād's participation in the devastating campaign of 1795.9

Both Khans interpreted Knorringer's position on the border disputes
as proof of bias against them. Mohammad chided the Russians for their
unwillingness to pay so small a price as Pambak if their professed
desire for his friendship were sincere.10 Javād voiced his dissatis-
faction even more strongly. He complained that V. A. Zubov had
promised him rewards for becoming a Russian subject in 1796 but that
none were ever received. Instead, Knorringer listened only to the
Georgian side in the border dispute and took it upon himself to give
away Ganjevi territory.11

As it became clear that Russia would not compromise on the
territorial issue, further points of conflict developed, which led
each side to find justification for its increasing hostility toward

9. Knorringer to Alexander, August 15 and 28, 1801 and May 25, 1802,
ibid., I, 604, 427, 475.

10. Lazarev to Knorringer, July 13, 1801, ibid., I, 618.

11. Javād to Knorringer, n.d. /1802/, ibid., I, 611-12; Javād to
Kovalenskii, n.d. /1802/, ibid., I, 607.
the other. In this atmosphere of growing mistrust, Russia's attempt to install its candidate as Armenian Catholics at Echmiadzin in Yerevan, replacing the incumbent, who was backed by Iran, part of the Armenian community, and, for a time, the Porte, must have appeared as an attempt to undermine Mohammad Khan's authority. Equally displeasing, from the Khan's point of view, was Russia's unwillingness to take his side in a dispute with the Pasha of Qars. Mohammad and his ally, Kalb 'Ali Khan of Nakhjavān, complained to Russian authorities of the Pasha's various hostile acts, including raids on their territories and conspiracies with their enemies. Whatever the merits of their argument, the phrasing of Russia's response was hardly such as to encourage closer relations with the Khans. They were forbidden to attack Qars on the grounds that the Pasha was Russia's friend. The reply of Mohammad's messenger, that his master, too, was Russia's friend, failed to produce any softening in Russian policy. When Kalb 'Ali attacked Qars despite the warning, Russian troops defended the Pasha and, with their superior fire arms, killed five hundred Nakhjavāni soldiers, according

12. The status of Shams od-Dinlu and Pambak was resolved, at least temporarily, by the stationing of Russian garrisons in those places in 1801 and the emigration of a substantial number of the Armenian as well as Muslim inhabitants of the districts to Yerevan and Ganjeh. Plea of the Qazzāqs to Knorring, 1802, ibid., I, 593; Lazarev to Knorring, April 26, July 13, 15, and 28, and August 5, 1801, ibid., I, 598-600, 602; Anonymous information on Shamshadīlo /Shams od-Dinlu/, n.d., ibid., I, 594; Lieutenant Colonel Liakhov to Lazarev, November 3, 1802, ibid., I, 597; Knorring to Alexander, August 15, 1801, ibid., I, 604; Kovalenskii to Lazarev, December 17, 1802, ibid., I, 597.

13. Titular Counselor Gentsaurov to Knorring, October 1, 1802, ibid., I, 622.

14. Lazarev to Knorring, December 5, 1802, ibid., I, 622.
to a Russian estimate. Kalb 'Ali's actions were subsequently characterized as an offense against Russia.\textsuperscript{15}

As the khans of Iranian Armenia grew increasingly disenchanted with their treatment at Russian hands, they began to look for other alliances which might better serve their interests. Prince David, who had hoped to succeed his father, King Giorgi, until Russia thwarted his plans by abolishing the Georgian monarchy, offered Mohammad an alliance according to which David would cede Pambak to Yerevan and pay tribute equal to the amount formerly paid by that khanate to Georgia in return for Mohammad's help in securing the Georgian throne. However, the plan came to nothing. David reconciled himself to the loss of his throne and went to live in exile in Russia, where he died in 1819.\textsuperscript{16} Russia's intransigence drove Javād to switch from fighting Prince Alexander to supporting him. As a result, Javād paid the Prince a monthly stipend and carried out joint raids on Shams od-Dinlu.\textsuperscript{17}

The most ominous reversal in Caucasian politics, from the point of view of Russian interests, occurred in Qarābāgh. No khanate had done more to oppose Qājār claims of suzerainty or had suffered more in consequence. It is a gauge of the misdirection of Russia's tactics in dealing with Caucasian Muslims that Ebrāhīm Khalīl Khān felt compelled to reconcile his differences with the Qājār dynasty. Although Ebrāhīm

\textsuperscript{15} Kariagin to Knorring, May 28, 1802, \textit{ibid.}, I, 626; Lazarev to Knorring, December 5, 1802, \textit{ibid.}, I, 622.

\textsuperscript{16} Lazarev to Knorring, July 13, 1801, \textit{ibid.}, I, 618; Brosset, II, part ii, 275, 310.

\textsuperscript{17} Kovalenskii to Knorring, October 4, 1802, \textit{Akty}, I, 613; Captain Taganov to Lazarev, October 18, 1802, \textit{ibid.}, I, 613; Kovalenskii to Tsitsianov, December 17, 1802, \textit{ibid.}, II, 586-87.
Khalil had managed to regain control of Qarābāgh after the death of Āqā Mohammad Khān, his realm was too weak to allow him to oppose the Iranian government, especially since there was no immediate hope of Russian protection following Zubov's recall. The Khan may also have been concerned, as he had been in 1783 and 1796, about attempts by his Armenian subjects to co-operate with authorities in Georgia to undermine his position either by a direct attack or mass emigration. This concern was intensified when Paul gave permission for the Qarābāghi Armenians to resettle in the Qazzāq district. Therefore, Ebrāhīm Khalil complied with Fath 'Ali Shāh's demands: the return of Āqā Mohammad's body, the sending of a son, Abu'l-Fath, to serve as a hostage, and a daughter, Āqā Begum Āqā, to be the Shah's wife. (This woman eventually became an influential figure at the Iranian court.) Ebrāhīm Khalil also began minting silver coins bearing Fath 'Ali's name. In return, Fath 'Ali gave Ebrāhīm Khalil the kinds of rewards Russia was unwilling to give. The marriage of the Khan's daughter to the Shah, apart from being considered an honor, was the symbol of an alliance between Qarābāgh and Iran. This alliance might provide the protection which Ebrāhīm Khalil had sought at times from Georgia, at times from Russia. Moreover, Fath 'Ali gave the financially pressed Khan the revenues of Qarājedāgh (across the Aras from Qarābāgh) and

19. Hedāyat, IX, 314-15; Javānshir, 93; Qarābāghi, 136; Captain Mac-Donald to the Chairman and Other Members of the Secret Committee and the Court of Directors of the East India Company, September 6, 1826, Great Britain, India Office, Political and Secret, XXXIX, 550.
valuable gifts. By 1802, Fath 'Ali had also decided to back the return to power of Salim, Ebrāhim Khalil's son-in-law and ally, who had ruled Shakki in 1796 and 1797.20

Ebrāhim Khalil not only made peace with Iran, he embarked on a course of active hostility toward Georgia and Russia. In addition to co-operating with Dāghestāni soldiers in the 1800 attempt to make Prince Alexander king of Georgia, he gave that Prince his protection after the attack failed. The following years, he raided the Muslim border districts of Georgia and, in 1802, participated in Iran's Caucasian campaign, the objectives of which included the installation of Prince Alexander and Salim Khān.21

Perhaps Russia counted on fear of Iranian conquest to make the khans of Iranian Armenia so desperate that they would agree to any and all Russian demands as the price of that country's protection. If that is so, the assumption was mistaken. Mohammad and Kalb 'Ali participated in the Iranian campaigns in the Caucasus in 1802 and 1804.22 Both were later ousted by Iranian troops and replaced with officials chosen by the Tehran government. Javād ad Ebrāhim Khalil reacted to conflicting Russian and Iranian threats by siding with the latter, for which they

20. Qarābāghi, 136; Bakikhanov, 148; "Shekinskîe khany", 51; Hāji Seyyed 'Abd ol-Hamid, 61; Knorring to Alexander, August 9, 1802, Akty, I, 376.

21. Bagrationi, 170; Brosset, II, part ii, 270-71; Lazarev to Knorring October 6, 1800 and February 20, 1801, Akty, I, 159, 593; Gentsauer to Knorring, October 1, 1802, ibid., I, 622; Knorring to P. D. Tsitsianov, December 4, 1802, ibid., I, 410.

22. Hedāyat, IX, 393; Domboli, 114, 120; Kariagin to Lazarev, July 29, 1802, Akty, I, 621; Gudovich to Count Saltykov, February 10, 1809, ibid., III, 267.
were attacked and killed by Russian troops. (see below)

One of the reasons Russia continued to have difficulty winning the allegiance of Caucasian rulers was that the permanence of Russian involvement in the region was doubted by many Christians as well as Muslims. Despite the threats issued to the khans of Iranian Armenia, there was no attempt to compel them to submit by military means. Moreover, the precedent of engagement and disengagement established during Catherine's reign led, in the opening years of the nineteenth century, to expectations that the pattern would be continued. Even though Paul decreed the incorporation of Georgia into the Russian empire, many Georgians expected Alexander to reverse that decision.\textsuperscript{23} Kalb 'Ali Khān of Nakhjavān must have been voicing a widespread concern when he stated that the possibility of Russia's departure from Georgia made him reluctant to become a Russian subject.\textsuperscript{24} Such doubts were ended when Prince P. D. Tsitsianov arrived in Tbilisi on February 6, 1803.

Tsitsianov did not found the policy he executed nor did he invent the Machiavellian tactics or the fondness for self-aggrandizement of officers in the field, but his manner of operation under existing circumstances was so assertive and so well received in government circles that it became the standard to which his successors aspired. His distinctive style also had serious repercussions on the way the Caucasian khans and the Qājār government reacted to Russia's latest, most determined effort to take control of Caucasian lands.

In his personal attributes, Tsitsianov contrasts sharply with the

\textsuperscript{23} Tuchkov, 190.

\textsuperscript{24} Kalb 'Ali to Archbishop Hovannes, n.d., Akty, II, 634.
model of the heroic world conqueror, the Chingiz Khān, Temur, or Napoleon, who, by the audacity of his daring and the force of his will, builds an empire and inspires awe. Tsitsianov did not lack the ferocious drive to sweep all obstacles from his path, but his career shows us the other side of the conquering hero: the obstacles which cannot be overcome by the will to victory; the arrogant bumbler's of the self-enamored; and the sordidness, which, on closer inspection, can be found underlying the triumph.

In appointing Tsitsianov to the Caucasus on September 8, 1802, Alexander made him Commander-in-Chief, Civilian Governor of Georgia, Inspector of the Caucasian Line, and Military Governor of Astrakhan, thus uniting the powers which formerly had been divided among Knorring, Kovalenskii, and Lazarev.\textsuperscript{25} Tsitsianov held those offices three and a half years, during which time he reorganized the government of Georgia, fought the tribesmen of the High Caucasus, endeavored to bring western Georgia under Russian control, signed treaties for the submission of the khans of Bāku, Shaki, Shirvān, and Qarābāgh, attempted to conquer Yerevan, and succeeded in conquering Ganjeh. In the process, he also contributed directly to the outbreak of war with Iran. Alexander was well pleased with his accomplishments and gave him the order of St. Alexander Nevskii and, later, the same order set with diamonds as well as the order of St. Vladimir, First Class, and eight thousand rubles. He was promoted from Lieutenant General, the third highest grade in the Table of Ranks, to General of the Infantry, the next to the highest.\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{25} Imperial Rescript, September 8, 1802, \textit{ibid.}, II, 3.

\textsuperscript{26} Alexander to Tsitsianov, March 7, 1803 and July 7, 1805, \textit{ibid.}, II, 26, 56; A. R. Vorontsov to Tsitsianov, February 5, 1804, \textit{ibid.}, II, 1016; Beliaevskii and Potto, I, 157.
In 1805, he was recalled so he could be given a command in the war against France but he stayed on in the Caucasus until a successor could be appointed. On February 8, 1806, his career came to an abrupt end when he was shot after walking into a trap set for him by Hosein Qoli Khān of Bākū.

Tsitsianov's apparent success and his "martyrdom" at Bākū caused him to be remembered admiringly by later generations of Russian imperial historians. N. N. Beliavskii and V. A. Potto wrote of his breadth of vision, determination, nobility of character, eloquence, energy, and enormous devotion to the service of Russia's interests. Such admiration was not limited to proponents of Russian expansion in Asia. The standard English work on Russia's Caucasian empire, J. F. Baddeley's The Russian Conquest of the Caucasus also praised the General in glowing terms:

He was a man of indomitable courage and extreme energy... He was also endowed with administrative ability of a high order, coupled with an aggressive, over-bearing spirit, that served him admirably in his dealings with the native rulers, Christian as well as Mussulman though probably enough it contributed both to his own tragic fate and to that of one of his most valued subordinates... His wit made him powerful enemies, yet taken with his soldierly qualities and care for those who served him well, secured him the love, the adoration almost of the army.

To the Muslims of the Caucasus, he appeared in a very different

27. Czartoryski to Tsitsianov, March 22, 1805, Akty, II, 56; Rostopchin to Tsitsianov, February 14, 1805, "Pis'ma", 85.


29. Beliavskii and Potto, I, 44.

30. 61-62.
light. One of his titles, "Inspector" (of the Caucasian Line), was pronounced by Azeri-speaking Caucasians as "Ishpokhdor", which was given a Turkish etymology meaning "his work is dirt." He was given another name by the Iranian chronicler Rezā Qoli Khān Hedāyat, "the shredder of blood". Beliavkii and Potto were mistaken. What they saw as Tsitsianov's devotion to Russia's interests was really overweening personal ambition; his eloquence was marred by bluster, just as his nobility of character was marred by deceit; the energy he spent was largely other people's; and his determination manifested itself in slaughter.

Like many officers who rose to prominence during Catherine's reign, Tsitsianov spent the years between 1797 and 1801 in retirement. When Alexander gave him the Caucasian command, he was 48 and determined to make up for lost time in advancing his career. Apparently he had aged prematurely, for his associate, Major-General S. A. Tuchkov, assumed he was about 60, although unusually energetic for a man of that age. A lithograph portrait of him at the beginning of volume II of the published archives of the Viceroyalty of the Caucasus shows a slim man whose thinning hair had turned completely white. Tuchkov believed that Tsitsianov deliberately provoked confrontations with Muslim rulers because he wanted the opportunity to impress Alexander.

32. Hedāyat, IX, 389.
33. Tuchkov, 197.
34. Akty, II, frontispiece.
35. Tuchkov, 197, 208, 210, 215.
The accuracy of Tuchkov's comments about Tsitsianov might be questioned on the grounds that the former believed he was denied the honors due him because of Tsitsianov's spite. Although Tuchkov's memoirs contain some errors, the credibility of his judgments on his commander is strengthened by information derived from a variety of contemporary sources, including Tsitsianov's own letters.

The Commander-in-Chief capitalized on any opportunity to magnify his own importance. All his successors referred to their position as the office conferred on them by His Imperial Majesty. Tsitsianov spoke of his territory.\(^{36}\) Uncontent with the official goal of establishing the Aras and the Kur as the border with Iran, he argued that he should be allowed to take control of Khoi and Tabriz as well.\(^{37}\) He also investigated sites for fort construction on the eastern coast of the Caspian.\(^{38}\) Sometimes his self-aggrandizement had overtones of derangement. In 1804, St. Petersburg approved Tsitsianov's plan to force Fath 'Ali Shāh to make peace on Russia's terms by attacking Gilān. When Tsitsianov gave Major-General Zavalištin his orders for the expedition, he referred to the plan as being determined by secret instructions known only to the Emperor and himself. This was patently untrue. The Gilān campaign was treated by St. Petersburg like any

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37. Tsitsianov to Ja'far Qoli Khān Domboli, June 24, 1804, *ibid.*, II, 855; Czartoryski to Tsitsianov, April 28, 1805, *ibid.*, II, 827.

other policy decision regarding that region. There was no special secrecy. Czartoryski and Tsitsianov discussed it in correspondence and, no doubt, other officials knew of it as well. 39

Tsitsianov, the descendant of a Georgian prince of the Tsitsishvili family who had emigrated to Russia in the time of Peter the Great, could speak as the leader of a Georgian national revival when the occasion warranted. 40 He was eager to reunify his ancestral homeland by extending Russian sovereignty over the western as well as eastern Georgian principalities (which Alexander also favored) and over Ganjeh, which he claimed had been subject to Georgia since the reign of Queen Tamar (ruled 1184-1213). 41 In a letter to Fath 'Ali Shāh, the General announced his intention to restore Georgia to its ancient greatness, with borders extending from Abkhazia, on the Black Sea, to Darband. 42

More frequently, Tsitsianov represented himself as the spokesman for European civilization in a world of Asian depravity. In fact, he reverted to this theme with such conspicuous regularity that it seems to have been an integral part of his obsession with having his way in all matters. Anyone who interfered with his wishes was contemptible,


40. Beliavskii and Potto, I, 44.


42. Tsitsianov to Fath 'Ali Shāh, March 29, 1805, *ibid.*, II, 826.
uncivilized, and, therefore, to be swept aside. His concept of European standards varied erratically. He offered Javād Khān of Ganjah the opportunity to surrender and avoid bloodshed saying he was acting "according to European custom and the Faith I profess" but when Javād suggested that Tsitsianov lift the siege to avoid bloodshed, the General refused further discussion on the grounds that to pursue the subject was "unacceptable in any well mannered European writing."43 Half a year later, he urged Mohammad Khān of Yerevan to surrender in order to be spared conquest, explaining that he was making that offer "according to European custom".44

As these examples show, Tsitsianov's militant Europeanism was closely associated with his loathing for all things "Asian" or "Persian" (which he often used synonymously). His numerous fulminations against Asian ways were often used to convince his superiors and all others that his tactic of intimidating, humiliating and crushing anyone who opposed his will was the only suitable course of action. His letters abound in phrases like "Persian scum" and "Asian treachery".45

Tsitsianov's notion of "Asian treachery" makes clear the extent to which he followed a double standard in judging morality. On one occasion, he devised a strategy for the overthrow of Sheikh 'Ali Khān of Qobbeh-Darband. The plan called for lulling the Khan's suspicions by co-operating with him in a plan for the removal of his old rival,

43. Tsitsianov to Javād, December 29, 1803, ibid., II, 591.
44. Tsitsianov to Mohammad, June 26, 1804, ibid., II, 616.
45. Tsitsianov to Ja'far Qolī Khān Domboli, June 24, 1804, ibid., II, 855; Tsitsianov to Alexander, July 14, 1804, ibid., II, 858.
Mostafā Khān of Shirvān and by having a Russian official negotiate with Sheikh 'Ali's representative to St. Petersburg. In recommending this strategy to the Emperor, Tsitsianov observed that "Persian" khans could never be trusted because "not a single nation exceeds the Persian in cunning and their inherent faithlessness."

Alexander's confidence in the irresistible superiority of Russian civilization to "Persian" led him to suggest that new vassals from the Caucasus deliver their tribute payments to St. Petersburg in person so that exposure to life in the capital could win them over to Russian values. Tsitsianov opposed the plan on the grounds that such exposure would be pointless because of the profound gap between Muslim and Russian mores. This argument served a double purpose. First, it strengthened the image of the "Persian" as an immoral being and, consequently, justified the General's harsh methods. Second, he did not want local rulers to meet people in St. Petersburg to whom they could complain about him. Some members of the Georgian royal family were already doing that, much to Tsitsianov's distress. Therefore, he attempted to convince the Emperor that "Persians" were hopelessly uncivilized:

Mores and customs are not assimilated and changed so easily. A Persian's six month stay in St. Petersburg is not sufficient to change in him the inclination to the unlawful theft of possessions, cannot instill in him love for one's neighbor, and eradicate from him egotism, to which he sacrifices not only the common good or the neighbor's good but, not infrequently, even the latter's life, if he be weaker, caring about nothing except his own advantage and profit . . .

46. Tsitsianov to Alexander, April 27, 1803, ibid., II, 290.
47. Tsitsianov to Czartoryski, May 22, 1805, ibid., II, 706.
48. Tsitsianov to Czartoryski, September 26, 1805, ibid., II, 1036.
According to Tsitsianov, the only reason Caucasian Muslims submitted to Russia was that demonstrations of its military might led them to seek its protection against the threats to property and physical safety of Asian rule. Therefore, for the next thirty years (by which time Russian values would begin to be absorbed) the only way to deal with new Muslim subjects was by a policy of stern force because "among the Asians, nothing works like fear as the natural consequence of force." 49

One of the reasons Tsitsianov resorted so frequently to insults in his dealings with subordinates and Caucasians was that his extraordinary ambition was not matched by his achievements. Any officer in his position would have had to grapple with imposing obstacles but the General's own miscalculations multiplied his difficulties. His greatest weakness was his inability to anticipate factors which might stand in his way. When confronted with the resulting failures, he found scapegoats whom he punished severely. These characteristics can be seen in two closely related events of the summer of 1804: the attempt to conquer Yerevan and the anti-Russian uprising in Georgia.

In 1803 and 1804, Tsitsianov sent a series of letters employing increasingly severe language to Mohammad Khān of Yerevan. The letters contained non-negotiable demands rather than proposals intended to serve as the basis for an eventual compromise. The demands were familiar ones: that Mohammad recognize Daniel, the Russian candidate for Catholicos of Echmiadzin; that he submit to Russia, send hostages, and pay a tribute of 80,000 rubles annually (the figure was soon raised to

49. Ibid., II, 1037; Tsitsianov stressed the same point on other occasions: Tsitsianov to Alexander, April 27, 1803, Ibid., II, 290; Beliavskii and Potto, I, 44.
100,000); and that he turn over the citadel of his capital and all the military supplies it contained to a Russian garrison. In return, Tsitsianov promised Russian protection and the recognition of Mohammad and his heirs as rulers of Yerevan. Mohammad's position was extremely delicate. While Tsitsianov was pressing him to submit to Russia, he also had to worry about Fath 'Ali Shāh's displeasure over his insufficient loyalty to Iran. In 1804, the Shah sent his son, 'Abbās Mirzā, the Na'īyb-ūs-Saltāneh (Viceroy, Crown Prince), into Yerevan at the head of a sizable army to ensure that the khanate did not fall into Russian hands.

Mohammad tried to avoid committing himself to either side. He protested his loyalty to Russia but balked on the issues of surrendering his citadel to Tsitsianov. He was concerned about the safety of his family, who were held hostage by the Shah and whose execution might be ordered in reprisal for the Khan's defection to the Russian side. Tsitsianov's reaction was to accuse Mohammad of treason and offer the choice of submission or conquest. His only acknowledgement of Mohammad's concerns was to pledge that once he had driven the Iranian army south of the Aras, Mohammad's family would be set free. How the General proposed to keep his promise when he did not have enough horses


51. Domboli, 97-98; 110-111.

52. Mohammad to Tsitsianov, July 2 and 4 and September 2, 1804, Akty, II, 616, 619.

53. Tsitsianov to Mohammad, June 14, 22, and 26, 1804, ibid., II, 615-16.
for his soldiers to ride in pursuit of the Iranian cavalry was not explained. On July 14, 1804, Tsitsianov gave Mohammad the ultimatum "now is not the time for Persian politics and evasiveness: either ask for mercy and pardon or await the fate of Javād Khan killed in the Russian attack on Ganjeh, January 3, 1804." More letters containing predictable demands by the General and protests of good will by the Khan were exchanged until September but the General had already made preparations to decide the issue by force.

The Russians were confident that the cowardly Iranians could pose no obstacles to the conquest of Yerevan. Tsitsianov was fond of belittling Iranian military abilities, boasting that three hundred Russians could crush five thousand Iranians.

His optimism was soon proven ill-founded. An Iranian contingent was waiting for Tsitsianov at his first objective, Echmiadzin. They diverted the water supply and decimated the Russian advance guard before he could reach the scene. On June 30, 1804, the General arrived with his main force of fewer than 3,000 men, most of them infantry, with a lesser number of dragoons, Cossacks, and Georgian and Armenian militia. Next morning, 'Abbās Mirza's army of about 18,000 attacked, beginning a three day battle for control of the Armenian

54. Tsitsianov to Alexander, December 30, 1804, ibid., II, 621; M. S. Vorontsov to S. R. Vorontsov, October 12, 1804, AKV, XXXVI, 102; Tuchkov, 224.

55. Tsitsianov to Mohammad, July 14, 1804, Akty, II, 615.

56. Tsitsianov to Prince Teneshev, July 7, 1804, Akty, II, 810.

57. Tuchkov, 226.

58. Ibid., 221, 223; M. S. Vorontsov to S. R. Vorontsov, October 12, 1804, AKV, XXXVI, 99; Dubrovin, IV, 287-88.
monastery. This was the first encounter between Russian troops and those of the Qajar dynasty and marked the start of a war which lasted nine years. The Iranians fought with a skill and courage which surprised the Russians but suffered from the devastating effects of Russia's superior artillery.\(^59\)

Both sides claimed victory although there are indications that 'Abbās Mirzā had at least a qualified success in that he prevented the Russians from taking control of the monastery and forced them to withdraw. He failed to pursue the Russians and win a decisive victory, choosing instead to move his troops to other locations. This permitted the Russians to return to Echmiadzin and obtain vital food supplies there.\(^60\) Nonetheless, the Iranian performance was impressive enough to cause Mohammad Khān to send a pledge of loyalty, a son (as hostage) and some gifts to the Shah.\(^61\) This salutary result, from the Iranian point of view, was nearly undone a few days later when part of 'Abbās Mirzā's army was caught off guard and routed by the Russian troops advancing toward Yerevan.\(^62\) What followed demonstrated the unexpected recuperative powers of the Iranian forces, a characteristic which became a frequent source of dismay for the Russians in the next few years. Although the Iranians had been driven from the field in disorder, they soon reassembled at 'Abbās Mirzā's camp near Yerevan and, soon after

\(^{59}\) Domboli, 112-14; Tuchkov, 228-29, 234; Tsitsianov to Prince Teneshev, July 7, 1804, Akty, II, 809.

\(^{60}\) Tuchkov, 234.

\(^{61}\) Domboli, 114, 120.

\(^{62}\) Ibid., 199-200; Tsitsianov to Teneshev, July 7, 1800, Akty, II, 810.
that, fought ferociously in repeated encounters with the Russians.

The siege of Yerevan was, in reality, a double siege. Mohammad Khān, some inhabitants of the city, and six to seven thousand troops, including reinforcements from 'Abbās Mīrzā's army, held out in the citadel. The Russians controlled the rest of the city and its immediate environs but 'Abbās Mīrzā, with thousands of reinforcements, had Tsitsianov surrounded. The Shah joined in the fighting at first, then made camp a few miles away, ready to provide additional reinforcements if needed.

Part of the reason for Tsitsianov's failure at Yerevan lay in his enemy's military vigor. As at Echmiadzin, the Iranians fought with courage and determination but were hampered by the Russian artillery. Even though they preferred to keep out of range of the Russians, they were still able to inflict heavy casualties and prevent a Russian advance. Moreover, they succeeded in cutting off the Russians' food supply by burning the wheat fields around Yerevan and Echmiadzin and prevented all communications between Tsitsianov's army and Georgia. The party of about two hundred men sent by the General to fetch supplies

63. M. S. Vorontsov to S. R. Vorontsov, October 12, 1804, AKV, XXXVI, 99.

64. Tsitsianov claimed there were 27,000 troops with 'Abbās Mīrzā. A subordinate, M. S. Vorontsov, thought there were 40,000. Tsitsianov to Teneshev, July 7, Akty, II, 810; M. S. Vorontsov to S. R. Vorontsov, October 12, 1804, AKV, XXXVI, 99.

65. Domboli, 115-17; M. S. Vorontsov to S. R. Vorontsov, October 12, 1804, AKV, XXXVI, 99; Tsitsianov to Teneshev, July 7, 1804, Akty, II, 810.

from Georgia was surrounded by six thousand Iranians under the command of Pir Qoli Khan, a leading Qajar general, and Prince Alexander of Georgia. Nearly all the Russians were killed. Of the few survivors, most were enslaved; only a small number escaped. 67

One of the reasons Prince Alexander and Pir Qoli Khan were able to operate so effectively was that Georgia was in revolt against Russian rule. Internal factors, particularly the conflicting ambitions of members of the royal family and the nobility, influenced this turn of events but much of the responsibility for the conflict lay with the policy of Russia, especially Tsitsianov, toward Georgia. The abolition of the thousand year old Bagration monarchy and the forcible removal of the surviving members of the royal family to Russia were extremely unpopular in Georgia. 68 Russian authorities further antagonized the Georgians by their contemptuous treatment of the latter and their flagrant corruption. Georgia's leading nobles were made to take the loyalty oath to Russia in a guarded room. Those who objected were arrested. The most conspicuous transgressor was the civilian governor, P. I. Kovalenskii. Instead of appointing Georgian nobles to important administrative positions, as Lieutenant-General Knorring directed, he appointed his relatives and friends. He was also believed to be involved in a variety of speculative operations which were having an

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67. Tsitsianov to Prince Chavchavadze, August 4, 1804, Akty, II, 810; Tsitsianov to Alexander, August 15, 1804, ibid., II, 811; Tsitsianov to Czartoryski, September 14, 1804, ibid., II, 619; Loitsskii to Alexander, April 30, 1806, ibid., III, 5; M. S. Vorontsov to S. R. Vorontsov, October 12, 1804, AKV, XXXVI, 99-101, 103; Tuchkov, 242; Brosset, II, part ii, 281; Domboli, 117-20.

68. Tuchkov, 206; Lang, 252-55.
adverse effect on the Georgian economy. Perhaps the most brazen insult to Georgian pride after the abolition of Bagration rule was the construction of a large textile mill in Tbilisi from the remains of the royal palace, which had been badly damaged in 1795. Service in Georgia was not attractive to Russian officials and the morale of those assigned there was poor. Inflation had driven up the prices of essentials and non-essentials since the Russian take over, causing hardships for most inhabitants of Georgia, including the Russian officials. Members of the civilian administration had not been paid as of February 1803, a year and a half after annexation. To make matters worse, St. Petersburg used service in Georgia as punishment for officers who had broken the law, as in the case of a former gentleman of the Chamber who was sent to Georgia after fighting a duel. Tsitsianov's attempt to clean up the corruption of the Kovalenskii administration completed the humiliation and demoralization of the Russian officials. Not only did he remove those who had been guilty of abuses, including Kovalenskii and his relatives, he also dismissed men who were innocent, in some cases ruining their careers. Those who survived the purge were bitter.70

Tsitsianov's arbitrary rule earned him the enmity of many Georgians but his most grievous offense against them was his failure

69. Collegiate Counselor Sokolov to A. R. Vorontsov, September 1, 1802, a second letter, 1802, Akty, II, 11-15; Lofitsskii to Alexander, April 30, 1806, ibid., III, 4; Lang, 252, 254.

70. M. S. Vorontsov to S. R. Vorontsov, October 12, 1804, AKV, XXXVI, 98; Sokolov to A. R. Vorontsov, 1802, Akty, II, 14; Tsitsianov to Alexander, February 12, 1803, ibid., II, 18; Lofitsskii to Alexander, April 30, 1806, ibid., III, 4-5.
to provide security from raids by their Muslim neighbors. Protection from such attacks was one of the primary benefits Georgians of all classes hoped to derive from Russian rule. The General made one attempt in 1803 to punish the Lesgis of Jaruteleh, on Georgia's northeastern border but the four hundred man force he assigned to that task acted with such brutality that the Lesgis counterattacked and massacred them. Thereafter, Tsitsianov turned to a more promising field -- the khanates to Georgia's south. As a result, the small number of soldiers left behind to protect Georgia was unable to prevent continued Lesgi raids.

Finally, the Georgians' smoldering discontent burst into open rebellion under circumstances which demonstrated the short sightedness of the coercive measures adopted by the Tsitsianov administration. One of Tsitsianov's concerns was to improve communications with Russia. Therefore, he asked for 200,000 rubles for widening and strengthening the road across the Caucasus from Mozdok, on the Caucasian Line, to Tbilisi. Among those drafted to work on the road were the peasants of Georgia's Ananuri district, which lay along the route on the southern slopes of the High Caucasus. Their assignment was to clear snow from a section of the road which was snow covered about eight months of the year and was particularly prone to avalanches. The peasants suffered

72. Lofitsskii to Alexander, April 30, 1806, Akty, III, 5; Klaproth, Travels, 221; Beliavskii and Potto, I, 73-75, 96-102; Dubrovin, IV, 78.
73. Lofitsskii to Alexander, April 30, 1806, Akty, III, 6.
74. Tsitsianov to Alexander, February 26, 1803, ibid., II, 223.
not only from the dangers of the work itself but also from their inability to continue farming and from the beatings meted out when they objected to their assignments. Some peasants died from the beatings, others from accidents on the road. With the encouragement of some of the Bagrations, the peasants of Ananuri rose in rebellion in June of 1804. The Chechens, Ossetes, Lesgis, and other mountain peoples joined in the fight against the Russians. By the time Tsitsianov set out to conquer Yerevan, the road across the Caucasus had been cut. He was notified of the developments but preferred to continue his march, taking with him the vast majority of the troops assigned to Georgia. As a result, the anti-Russian forces were able to make further advances without significant opposition. Prince Alexander and Pir Qoli Khan entered the Muslim districts on Georgia's southern border, where they received enthusiastic support, even from the Qazzalgs, who had previously been pro-Russian and on whom Tsitsianov had counted for food while in Yerevan. At the same time, a party of Lesgis approached Tbilisi, where the Russian garrison was undermanned and many of the city's inhabitants looked forward to a Lesgi victory.  

By the beginning of September, most of the Russian generals at Yerevan realized that their position had become untenable. Tsitsianov favored storming the citadel, even though more than one thousand of his soldiers were ill and the rest weak from living and fighting for five weeks on reduced rations. Five of the six other generals opposed

75. Lofitsskii to Alexander, April 30, 1806, ibid., III, 5; Tsitsianov to Czartoryski, September 14, 1804, ibid., II, 620; Bagrationi, 172-73; Brosset, II, part II, 282; Lang, 258.
any further aggressive action and wanted to return to Georgia. Thus, on the one occasion during his command in the Caucasus when Tsitsianov solicited his colleagues' advice, he was forced to act more cautiously than he would have wished. The departure of the Russians from Yerevan did not end their problems. They were still weak from illness, injury, and hunger. Food was in desperately short supply and there were days when they had no water. So many of their horses died that the beleaguered soldiers had to haul their own baggage. Iranian soldiers harried the retreating column and inflicted additional losses.

Upon his return to Tbilisi, Tsitsianov turned his attention to the pacification of Georgia. Since the campaigning season was nearing its end with the approach of winter and the Russian army had returned to Georgia, the Iranians and Lesgis withdrew and many Georgians stopped fighting. Therefore, Tsitsianov concentrated on punishing the Ossetes for their part in the hostilities. His troops swept through southern Ossetia, burning villages and taking prisoners as they went. Whole families were rounded up but those who led the fight escaped. Tsitsianov imprisoned his captives in a fortress in the city of Gori, where most of them died of hunger and cold.

Tsitsianov's other concern on returning from Yerevan was to convince St. Petersburg that he was not to blame for the failure of

76. M. S. Vorontsov to S. R. Vorontsov, October 12, 1804, AKV, XXXVI, 100; Tuchkov, 243-44; Tsitsianov to Czartoryski, September 14, 1804, Akty, II, 619.

77. M. S. Vorontsov to S. R. Vorontsov, October 12, 1804, AKV, XXXVI, 102-03; Tuchkov, 249; Tsitsianov to Alexander, December 30, 1804, Akty, II, 621.

78. Lofitsskii to Alexander, April 30, 1806, Akty, III, 5.
the campaign. He informed Alexander that the overcautious generals who participated in the campaign bore the responsibility for the failure to storm Yerevan. Mohammad Khan also shared the guilt and would, therefore, have to suffer dire punishment. According to Tsitsianov, "the annihilation of this treacherous Khan" was crucial for Russia's glory and strategic position in the Caucasus. However, the man whom Tsitsianov blamed more than any other for the Yerevan disaster was Lieutenant-General Prince Volkonskii, the civilian governor of Georgia. Tsitsianov urged Czartoryski "to present His Imperial Majesty in its true light the guilt of Prince Volkonskii in delaying the delivery of supplies, which justified me in retreating and not being a part of the disgrace inflicted on the arms of His Imperial Majesty." These explanations were well received in St. Petersburg. Alexander praised Tsitsianov for his zeal in the Imperial service and exonerated him from blame. To console him for his disappointment, the Emperor gave him the Order of St. Vladimir, First Class, and eight thousand rubles. Prince Volkonskii was recalled. In contrast, when General Gudovich failed in his attempt to conquer Yerevan in 1808, Alexander called the campaign "stupid" (though not to Gudovich's face) and sent him into retirement without a word of consolation.

79. Tsitsianov to Alexander, August 15, 1804, ibid., II, 811; Tsitsianov to Czartoryski, September 14, 1804, ibid., II, 619; Beliavskii and Potto, I, 156.


81. Ibid., II, 620; Ruchkov, 251.

82. Alexander to Tsitsianov, November 8, 1804, Akty, II, 620-21; Czartoryski to Tsitsianov, November 15, 1804, ibid., II, 1021; Beliavskii and Potto, I, 157.

83. Caulaincourt to Napoleon, February 22, 1809, Nikolai Mikhailovich, Relations diplomatiques, III, 100.
No matter now effectively Tsitsianov shifted the blame for the setbacks of 1804 onto the shoulders of others, in retrospect it can be seen that the damage done to Russia's interests by his mistakes was extremely high. Except for a few references to Christian merchants killed on the roads, there is no record of the number of civilians killed or the damage to property and crops caused by the fighting. Records of military casualties are also scarce. There are no figures at all for Iranian losses. According to a Russian source, 145 of Tsitsianov's men died during the retreat from Yerevan. In a letter to the Bagration prince, P'arnaoz, then in the west Georgian principality of Imereti, Fath 'Ali Shāh claimed that one thousand Russians had been killed at Yerevan. That figure is undoubtedly exaggerated because at that time Iranian officials always overestimated calculations in the expectation that hearers of the information would automatically reduce the number. In this particular case, the Shah was also trying to convince P'arnaoz to join in fighting the Russians. By the end of 1804, war-related deaths as well as those caused by diseases contracted in the unfamiliar climate of the Caucasus left the Russian force 2,554 men below strength. The issues over which the summer's battles had been fought remained unresolved. Twenty-four years passed before Russia finally conquered Yerevan. Georgia and the tribes of

84. Brosset, II, part ii, 282; Lofitskii to Alexander, April 30, 1806, Akty, III, 5.
87. Tsitsianov to Alexander, December 30, 1804, ibid., II, 621-22; Tsitsianov to Czartoryski, April 16, 1805, ibid., II, 1027.
the High Caucasus were only temporarily pacified. This, in turn, hindered Russia's efforts to take control of the khanates south and east of Georgia because it provided new grounds for the existing doubts about Russia's ability to enforce its demands or to oppose the Iranian army. At the same time, the harshness of Tsitsianov's methods made new enemies for Russia. The enduring conflicts burst into new violence in the massive uprising against the Russians in 1812 and eventually in the thirty year long "Murid" war (1829-1859) in the High Caucasus. 88

Tsitsianov's success in convincing St. Petersburg to praise him for his failures is characteristic of one of the most curious aspects of his career in the Caucasus, namely, his influence over Alexander. The Emperor's benign exterior was often taken as a reflection of a malleable nature. However, his apparent vacillation was used at times as a deceptive ploy to create the appearance of a favorable atmosphere in which to elicit the opinions of those around him without revealing his true thoughts. In the end, Alexander made his own decisions, as can be seen by his handling of the annexation of Georgia and Napoleon's proposal for a joint campaign to India. One of the few officials whom Alexander permitted to guide him was Tsitsianov. Alexander did not give the General his way in all matters but, to a considerable extent, he did allow the latter to persuade him to follow a certain policy. For his part, Tsitsianov evaded inconvenient orders, afterwards presenting his superiors with a fait accompli and a carefully edited account of events designed to justify his actions.

88. Lang, 267-68.
Alexander deliberately created a framework within which Tsitsianov had unusual authority. Faced with a manifestly corrupt and ineffective administration in a remote corner of his empire, Alexander authorized Tsitsianov to take whatever actions were necessary without requesting prior approval from St. Petersburg. Instead, the General had only to send reports of what had been done.\textsuperscript{89} His restructuring of the military and civilian administration in Georgia and his purge of the Kovalenskii faction illustrate the use to which he was intended to put his authority. During the summer of 1804, when it was clear that many Georgians had no affection for Russian rule, Alexander suggested that a limited restoration of Bagration authority might increase Russia's acceptance in the province. As was characteristic of his relation to Tsitsianov, he left the final decision up to the General, deferring to the latter's greater knowledge of the region.\textsuperscript{90} (Tsitsianov, of course, opposed the plan.) This approach could have led to a situation in which the Emperor transferred the responsibility for any unsuccessful actions from himself to Tsitsianov yet the latter was never held accountable for his mistakes. He was not criticized after the disasters of 1804 and continued to have the Emperor's support until his death.\textsuperscript{91}

As a rule, Tsitsianov was able to get what he wanted from St. Petersburg, even though it might take repeated efforts to do so. This

\textsuperscript{89} Alexander to Tsitsianov, January 30, 1803, \textit{Akty}, II, 16; Kochubei to Tsitsianov, February 2, 1803, \textit{ibid.}, II, 16-17.

\textsuperscript{90} Kochubei to Tsitsianov, July 8, 1804, \textit{ibid.}, II, 51.

\textsuperscript{91} Czartoryski to Tsitsianov, February 14, 1806, \textit{ibid.}, II, 63.
pattern can be seen clearly in disputes over how many troops could be spared for duty in the Caucasus. Early in 1803, Tsitsianov began asking for more soldiers. Alexander turned down his request but gave him control of the Caspian fleet and its land forces instead.\textsuperscript{92} The General continued to press his case to Alexander and Chancellor A. R. Vorontsov, arguing that with additional men and money he could secure the Aras and Kur as Russia's border.\textsuperscript{93} Finally, in March of 1804, two thousand recruits were ordered to the Caucasus.\textsuperscript{94} In the wake of the summer's fighting, Tsitsianov asked for one thousand more soldiers but by that time, N. N. Novosil'tsev was negotiating with Pitt to organize a joint campaign against Napoleon and Alexander refused to divert more troops.\textsuperscript{95}

One of the areas in which Tsitsianov enjoyed his greatest successes was the thwarting of St. Petersburg's policy directives. In 1803 and 1805, he was ordered to limit his activities, in the first case, so that he could concentrate on making Georgia secure, in the second, so that Russia could devote its maximum energies to the war against Napoleon.\textsuperscript{96} The General used several tactics to circumvent these limitations. He argued that it was imperative that he punish

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{92} Alexander to Tsitsianov, March 20, 1803, \textit{ibid.}, II, 782.
\item \textsuperscript{93} Tsitsianov to Alexander, March 12, 1803, \textit{ibid.}, II, 610; Tsitsianov to A. R. Vorontsov, April 27, 1803, \textit{ibid.}, II, 291.
\item \textsuperscript{94} Alexander to Tsitsianov, March 14, 1804, \textit{ibid.}, II, 292.
\item \textsuperscript{95} Tsitsianov to Kochubei, September 30, 1804, \textit{ibid.}, II, 813; Alexander to Tsitsianov, November 14, 1804, \textit{ibid.}, II, 297.
\item \textsuperscript{96} Alexander to Tsitsianov, March 22, 1805, \textit{ibid.}, II, 1024; Czartoryski to Tsitsianov, April 28, 1805, \textit{ibid.}, 827.
\end{itemize}
Mohammad Khān of Yerevan (for seizing the Russian candidate for Catholicos of Echmiadzin) and take Ganjeh (to eliminate the dangers it posed to Georgia). The other east Caucasian khanates would also have to be taken to provide a link to the Caspian and ensure the security of Georgia. At first, Alexander disagreed but then left the decision up to Tsitsianov out of respect for the latter's knowledge of the region. The General also tried to convince St. Petersburg that his planned expeditions were assured easy victory since the khans, he said, welcomed Russia as an alternative to Iranian tyranny and the Iranian army was cowardly and inept. The reverses of 1804 did not cause him to modify these claims. Such arguments coincided with ideas which had already been established in St. Petersburg for some years. In 1805, once the war with Iran was a year old, Tsitsianov argued that it was not possible for Russia to limit itself to defensive actions, as his superiors wished, because the only alternative to continuing the war in earnest was to negotiate a settlement. However, that was unacceptable since the Shah, according to Tsitsianov's prediction, would never agree to Russia's territorial demands unless compelled to do so by force of arms.

97. Tsitsianov to Alexander, March 12 and April 27, 1803, ibid., II, 610, 289; Dubrovin, IV, 143.

98. Alexander to Tsitsianov, March 19 and 20, 1803 and February 5, 1804, Akty, I, 782-83, 594.

99. Tsitsianov to Alexander, March 12 and April 27, 1803 and June 17, 1805, ibid., II, 610, 290-91, 829; Tsitsianov to Czartoryski, April 7 and 16, June 17, and August 13, 1805, ibid., II, 826, 1027, 831, 847.

100. Tsitsianov to Alexander, n.d. [June 1805?], ibid., II, 830; Tsitsianov to Czartoryski, June 17, 1805, ibid., II, 831.
argument as well, even though the directive that Tsitsianov act only within the scope permitted by his available resources remained in effect. 101

When necessary, Tsitsianov evaded St. Petersburg's restrictions by proceeding with his plans regardless of orders. There is no indication that he ever changed his plans in response to St. Peters-

butg's wishes but the most striking example of this technique was the expedition to Gilân and Bâku. The undertaking was a complete failure but not for want of boldness. 102 While Tsitsianov was obtaining the submission of Qarābāgh, Shakki, and Shirvān, Major-General Zavalishin, with 1,345 officers and men of the Caspian fleet, was to set sail from Astrakhan to Gilân. These troops were to occupy Anzali and Rasht until the Shah agreed to the harsh and insulting terms contained in a letter from Tsitsianov. If the Shah refused the terms, Zavalishin was to make Rasht break away from Iran and become a Russian vassal. Once this was accomplished, Zavalishin would take Bâku. 103 Instead of reducing or postponing this expedition once he received the Emperor's instructions regarding the curtailment of activities in 1805, Tsit-
sianov enlarged the scope of the expedition. Not only was Zavalishin to take Rasht, he was also to march across the Alburz Mountains to Qazvin (one hundred miles northwest of Tehran on the main route to to Āzerbāijān) in order to frighten the Shah into compliance. In

101. Czartoryski to Tsitsianov, July 26, 1805, ibid., II, 841.
102. Tsitsianov to Alexander, October 9, 1803, ibid., II, 741; Domboli, 158-59; Fasā'ī, 110.
103. Tsitsianov to Zavalishin, March 29, 1805, Akty, II, 824-26; Tsitsianov to Fath 'Ali Shāh, March 29, 1805, ibid., II, 826.
addition, Zavalishin was to establish a garrison at Lankarān in Tāleš. 104

Tsitsianov was more successful than any predecessor or successor in the Caucasus in winning the Emperor's approval. His explanations were accepted, his faits accomplis admired. No question of the soundness of his judgment was permitted during his "reign" or after his death. There were only two attempts to offer St. Petersburg a different evaluation of his actions. One was a report by Prince Roman Bagration, brother of the general killed at Borodino. Alexander sent this scion of the Georgian royal family to Georgia to promote that country's well-being under Russian rule. Prince Roman was appalled by conditions in Georgia and denounced Tsitsianov to the Emperor as a tyrant. After the General's death, Prince Roman was recalled. 105

The other critical report was submitted to Alexander in 1806 by Collegiate Assessor Lofitsskii, secretary of the Executive Expedition Administration of the civilian government of Georgia. 106 General Gudovich, who was appointed to succeed Tsitsianov on June 2, 1806, informed St. Petersburg that the Lofitsskii report was highly inaccurate and that its author was a conceited troublemaker. 107 Lofitsskii's reliability might be challenged on the grounds that Tsitsianov reprimanded him for supposedly keeping sloppy and deliberately

104. Tsitsianov to Zavalishin, June 17 and August 17, 1805, ibid., II, 832, 848.


106. Lofitsskii to Alexander, April 30, 1806, Akty, III, 3-7.

falsified records to cover up for Kovalenskii's transgressions. However, the General did not think Lofitsskii guilty enough to be dismissed along with others who had served under Kovalenskii. As in the case of Tuchkov's memoirs, there is enough evidence from other sources to lend credence to Lofitsskii's remarks. Despite the attempts by Prince Roman and Lofitsskii to bring about a re-evaluation of Tsitsianov's career, there were no official inquiries as there were in the cases of the Kovalenskii-Knoring administration or the conquest of Qarābāgh in 1806.

The ferocity of Tsitsianov's demeanor in dealing with various khans reflected not only his desire to humble them into submission but also the weakness of his own position. Even if he had felt inclined to compromise, he could not have afforded to do so without abandoning many of his goals. In the three sieges he initiated, at Ganjeh, Yerevan, and Baku, the Russian position was at least as perilous as the defenders'. On each occasion, the Russians' food supplies and ammunition were virtually exhausted while illnesses incapacitated a large proportion of the force. Thus, Tsitsianov was compelled either to attack immediately or retreat, which would be injurious to his reputation in St. Petersburg as well as humiliating to Russian self-esteem. At Ganjeh, he chose to attack; at Yerevan, his


109. Reports of Collegiate Counselor Sokolov to A. R. Vorontsov, 1802, ibid., II, 5-6, 9-11, 12-15; Tsitsianov to Kochubei, February 10, 1803, ibid., II, 20; Gudovich to Nesvetaev, August 20, 1806, ibid., III, 331; Gudovich to Minister of Land War Forces Viazmitinov, August 21, 1806, ibid., III, 331-32.

subordinates forced him to withdraw; at Baku, he was saved this bitter choice by the apparent last minute submission of Hosein Qoli Khan. (see below)

Tribute was another issue on which Tsitsianov refused to allow the khans any leeway. Whenever a khan tried to negotiate for more favorable terms of submission instead of complying unquestioningly with Tsitsianov's demands, the latter replied by increasing substantially the amount of tribute demanded. 111 If tribute were important only as a symbol of subjection to Russia and were scaled to each khanate's resources, as Alexander intended, then the size of the payments would have been less important than a khan's willingness to make them. However, for Tsitsianov, the issue was far more than symbolic. The cost of occupying Georgia and of taking the offensive against various Caucasian rulers and the Shah of Iran exhausted the General's finances. Before the annexation of Georgia, advocates of annexation had portrayed that kingdom as a country whose mineral resources and other riches would support the Russian presence in the Caucasus. After annexation, it became clear that regardless of the country's potential, it was a depopulated, devastated land on the verge of anarchy. In 1802, Georgia's cash revenue was more than thirty thousand rubles in arrears. Its grain taxes had not been collected at all. 112 Especially after the resumption of the war against France

111. Tsitsianov to Mohammad Khan of Yerevan, May 10 and September 1, 1804, Akty, II, 613, 617; Tsitsianov to Javadj Khan of Ganjeh, December 29, 1803, ibid., II, 591; Tsitsianov to Mostafä Khan of Shirvän, March 7 and August 15, 1805, ibid., II, 622, 664.

112. Tsitsianov to Alexander, February 10, 1803, ibid., II, 18.
in 1805, St. Petersburg was unwilling to make supplementary allocations to maintain its Caucasian forces. Therefore, Tsitsianov believed that he had to exact the maximum in tribute from each khanate in order to provide the funds to continue his ambitious projects.\textsuperscript{113} With his characteristic inability to appreciate other points of view, he failed to anticipate the degree of anti-Russian feeling his exorbitant tribute demands would create.

One of the khanates in which tribute became an important issue was Ganjeh, the conquest of which was triply significant. The failure to reach a mutually satisfactory agreement by negotiation and the subsequent resort to force were traits which were found to some degree in the dealings between Russia and all the Caucasian khans. In addition, the conquest of Ganjeh was Tsitsianov's first major achievement in the Muslim-ruled Caucasus. Therefore, his victory encouraged him to continue using the same tactics while it confirmed the Muslims' worst fears about Russia's true intentions toward them.

Negotiations began with Tsitsianov's demand that Ganjeh submit on the grounds that it had traditionally been subject to Georgia, that Javād Khān had submitted to Russia in 1796, and, finally, that Javād had failed to compensate Georgian merchants for losses incurred as the result of Ganjevi raids. Tsitsianov offered Javād Russian recognition as governor of Ganjeh but to obtain that recognition the Khan would have to comply with stringent demands. Not only would he and all his subjects have to swear loyalty to Russia, he would have to permit the establishment of a permanent Russian garrison in his capital, send his

\textsuperscript{113} Tsitsianov to Alexander, April 7, 1805 and January 10, 1806, \textit{ibid.}, II, 701, 1041.
son to Tbilisi as a permanent hostage, and pay an annual tribute of twenty thousand rubles beginning in 1804. 114

Instead of yielding, Javād defiantly put forth his own claim for more favorable treatment by Russia. He denied any Georgian authority over his realm and pointed out that his father, Shāh Verdi Khān (ruled 1740-1756) and Erekle had made an agreement fixing the border between their two realms. Javād accepted Tsitsianov's point that it was wrong for Ganjevis to plunder Georgian merchants but reminded the General that Russian authorities had given Ganjeh no satisfaction in the matter of raids on the khanate by Nasib Beg, the Georgian and Russian-backed ruler of Shams od-Dinlu. Clearly, Javād was concerned over the problem of Russian favoritism for Georgia, as he had been for several years. Underlying this state of mind was Javād's suspicion that Russia's real intention was to overthrow him. The presence of Russian troops in the citadel of his capital could easily make them the arbiters of the khanate's politics. The precedent of Georgia's ouster of Ganjevi khans in the 1780's was probably on his mind as well. The way in which he compared his position in 1796 and 1803 brought out that concern. He explained that in 1796 he had been encouraged to submit by the receipt of a patent of office from the Empress. He pointed out that there had been no comparable recognition of his authority in 1803 and refused to submit unless he were given such a guarantee. In any event, he belittled the significance of the 1796 precedent on the grounds that his submission at that time had been

114. Tsitsianov to Javād, November 29 and December 29, 1803, ibid., II, 588, 591.
obtained under duress. In 1796, the Shah's army had been in Khorāsān but, in 1803, it was close at hand, "thank God!" Javād proclaimed his confidence in the Iranian army's ability to protect him from Russia and refused to comply with Tsitsianov's demands. The latter would accept no compromise. The only alternative left was war.

Late in 1803, Tsitsianov invaded Ganjeh. He marched unopposed to the immediate vicinity of the capital, where Javād attempted unsuccessfully to block his advance. The Khan then withdrew to his citadel and a month long siege began. The Ganjevis were cut off from their supplies of water and firewood; the Russians ran short of food and fell ill in large numbers from drinking the local water. As the siege wore on, an Iranian army under the command of 'Abbās Mīrzā marched to Javād's aid. Unable to continue the siege but unwilling to retreat, Tsitsianov ordered the storming of the citadel at dawn on January 3, 1804. At first, the defenders were able to repel the onslaught but in the end, the Russians broke through. Javād, his son, Hosein Qoli, and several other relatives were killed in battle and with them many other Ganjevis. Tsitsianov put the number of inhabitants killed at 1,500; other Russian authors put the figure at 1,750; Ganjevi and Iranian sources referred to more than twice that number of casualties. Ganjeh was made a district of Georgia and renamed Elizavetpol' in honor of Alexander's wife.  


Some of Tsitsianov's contemporaries believed that the violent resolution of Ganjeh's status was exactly what the General had intended. Tuchkov thought that Tsitsianov deliberately offered unacceptably harsh terms in order to provoke a confrontation through which he could capture the Emperor's favor. Platon Zubov thought the attack was intended to make an example of Javād for having turned against Russia after having submitted in 1796. According to Julius von Klaproth, who visited the Caucasus in 1807 and 1808 on behalf of the Academy of Sciences, Tsitsianov ordered that Javād be killed to save the expense of a pension for the Khan.\footnote{117} At the very least, events developed in a manner which was agreeable to Tsitsianov. There is also some evidence to support the allegation that he preferred the most extreme course of action.

There are several reasons for concluding that Tsitsianov deliberately made his demands on Javād intolerably harsh. The amount of tribute assessed was 20,000 rubles. By Tsitsianov's own reckoning, all of Javād's regular revenue except the share of the harvests and herds came to only 16,430 rubles in the last year of the Khan's reign.\footnote{118} Tsitsianov refused to discuss the merits of the Khan's counter arguments, offering only the choice between compliance with the original terms or bloodshed.\footnote{119} In one of his last letters to the

\footnote{117. Tuchkov, 215; Zubov, {	extit{Podvigi russikh voïnov v stranakh Kavkazskikh s 1800 po 1834 god}, I, part i, 43; Klaproth, {	extit{Travels}}, 222.}

\footnote{118. Tsitsianov to Alexander, May 29, 1804, {	extit{Akty}}, II, 601.}

\footnote{119. Tsitsianov to Javād, December 9 and 28, 1803, {	extit{Ibid.}}, II, 590-91.}
Khan, he intensified his demands by specifying for the first time the exact amount of tribute and kept up the pressure on another sore point by insisting that Javād waive all claims to Shams od-Dinlu.120

Moreover, at the end of November 1803, while Tsitsianov was still urging Javād to submit peacefully in return for Russian recognition, he issued a proclamation to the Armenians of Ganjeh which could easily have been interpreted as an attempt to undermine the Khan's authority. The proclamation promised Russian protection for the Armenians from all Muslim coercion and robbery. Since Caucasian Armenians of that era frequently described Muslim rule as Muslim oppression, the protection the General offered was likely to be applied broadly. In addition, the General gave Ganjevi Armenians permission to settle in any part of Georgia and to do so as state peasants, rather than as serfs of a landlord.121 Ganjeh was already sparsely populated and its Armenian community was an important source of the Khan's revenue both through its payment of the jiziya and their involvement in a variety of economic activities. Thus, Russian suzerainty would mean not only a substantial drain on the Khan's revenues in the form of tribute payments but also the simultaneous diminution of that revenue as the result of Armenian emigration.

After the conquest of Ganjeh, Tsitsianov portrayed his actions in the affair as necessary for the maintenance of Russian prestige. He wrote to Chancellor Vorontsov that if he had lifted the siege

120. Tsitsianov to Javād, December 18, 1803, ibid., II, 591.
121. Tsitsianov to the Armenians of Ganjeh, November 30, 1803, ibid., II, 590.
without taking the citadel, that "would have been, in my opinion, improper and the might of Russian arms would fall in the eyes of neighbors, who base their conduct solely on fear of the strong."\textsuperscript{122} The fact that he took the citadel by storm rather than by non-violent means gave him particular satisfaction since the structure had been considered impregnable. "The fortunate storming of Ganjeh is an example of the moral supremacy of the Russians over the Persians and of that spirit of confidence in victory which I consider my primary goal to nurture and ignite among the soldiers."\textsuperscript{123}

He was not afraid lest someone think the destruction of the old order in Ganjeh was deliberate. On the contrary, he did his best to convince the khans of Yerevan, Qarābāgh, Bāku, and Shakkī that he would destroy them as he had Javād unless they complied immediately with his demands. When Mohammad Hasan Khān of Shakkī informed Tsitsianov of his distress over the killing of Javād, who was married to Mohammad Hasan’s sister, the General replied by lauding Russia's generosity in giving Javād's widow a pension and added threateningly "Can the fly fight the eagle or the rabbit the lion? Be certain that I need only give the order and the Khanate of Nughā Shakkī will cease to be, like the Khanate of Ganjeh."\textsuperscript{124}

\textsuperscript{122.} Tsitsianov to A. R. Vorontsov, January 13, 1804, \textit{ibid.}, II, 592.

\textsuperscript{123.} Dubrovkin, IV, 143.

\textsuperscript{124.} Beliavskii and Potto, I, 94-95; Similar threats were made to other khans. Tsitsianov to Mohammad Khān of Yerevan, June 14, 1804, \textit{Akty}, II, 615; Tsitsianov to Ebrāhim Khalil Khān of Qarābāgh, January 8 and February 4, 1804, \textit{ibid.}, II, 696; Tsitsianov to Zavališhin, March 29, 1805, \textit{ibid.}, II, 825.
This desire to prove Russia's (and Tsitsianov's own) superiority had a natural corollary: the desire to humble the "Persians". Various actions taken during the capture of Ganjeh and soon thereafter have strong overtones of vengeance and a desire to destroy Ganjevi society. According to a Georgian chronicle, auxiliaries from that country who accompanied the Russians to Ganjeh slaughtered and plundered the Ganjevis in revenge for the latter's participation in the 1795 sack of Tbilisi. 125 If Russian authorities had any desire to stop the carnage, they made no effort to do so. There is virtually no information on the actions of the Russians themselves once they entered the citadel. Platon Zubov reported one instance of a massacre conducted by the Russians which has added credibility because it was based on a report of his admired colleague Tsitsianov. According to the story, some five hundred Muslim Ganjevis took shelter from the fighting in a mosque where they were set upon by Russian troops. Zubov wrote that this was a deliberate act of vengeance but that the Russians had been told by an Armenian that the people in the mosque were Lesgis, whom the Russians wished to punish for raids on Georgia. 126 Some indication of the destruction wrought during the attack on Ganjeh can be derived from the amount of money Russia later spent to repair the citadel. Although some damage had been done in earlier years, the total damage required 70,946 rubles' worth of repairs. 127 The economic life of the

125. Brosset, II, part ii, 279.

126. P. A. Zubov, Podvigi russkich voinov v stranakh Kavkazskikh s 1800 po 1834 god, I, part i, 50-51.

127. State Treasurer Golubtsev to Tsitsianov, July 21, 1804, Akty, II, 600-01.
khanate was so disrupted that the same taxes which had produced more than sixteen thousand rubles in revenue in 1803 produced only 9,200 rubles in the first year of Russian rule. Tsitsianov himself acknowledged that thousands of Ganjevis had been ruined by the battle for control of the khanate.\textsuperscript{128}

Not only was Ganjeh eliminated as a political entity, there was a wholesale assault on the khanate's social and cultural life. It became a crime punishable by a fine of one ruble even to refer to the place as Ganjeh rather than Elizavetpol'.\textsuperscript{129} According to Iranian sources, Muslims were expelled from their homes within the citadel.\textsuperscript{130} The main mosque of the capital was turned into a church.\textsuperscript{131} Russian law replaced the shari'a (religious law) and 'urf (common law). The Muslim clergy was forbidden to act in any cases involving theft or violence and could only assist in other cases (without compensation) if invited to do so by the Muslims involved. Within a year, the Muslim religious leaders were destitute. Some of the most important among them were given salaries by the Russian government, which also agreed to maintain five mosques. In return for the salaries, the religious leaders were expected to serve as functionaries of the Russian government. They were obliged to preach loyalty to Russia and to report any hostile plans on pain of exile to Siberia. The \textit{akhund}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{128} Tsitsianov to Alexander, May 29, 1804, \textit{ibid.}, II, 601.
\item \textsuperscript{129} Tsitsianov to the Executive Expedition, March 3, 1804, \textit{ibid.}, II, 597.
\item \textsuperscript{130} Domboli, 110; Hedāyat, IX, 390.
\item \textsuperscript{131} Beliaevskii and Potto, I, 94; Dubrovin, IV, 143.
\end{itemize}
(a high ranking theologian) of Ganjeh was given the authority to remove unsatisfactory mullahs but the replacements had to have the approval of the Russian governor of the Elizavetpol' district. Since the Russian government undertook the financial support of a number of mosques, it would appear that the traditional waqf system for maintaining pious institutions had either been abolished following the conquest of the khanate or could no longer function because of the collapse of the local economy which occurred at that time.

Javād Khān's wives and other relatives who survived the battle but had not escaped to Iran (as had most of his sons) were arrested. They were held prisoner in the citadel until 1812, when Tsitsianov's successor, Lieutenant-General F. O. Paulucci allowed them to depart. Most went to Iran. One of the wives went to Qarābāgh, where her grandson ruled.

The conquest of Ganjeh and the changing of its name to honor the Empress brought Tsitsianov the recognition he had sought from St. Petersburg. He was promoted to general of the infantry and eight of his officers were decorated. All the other soldiers who participated in the undertaking were given a silver ruble each and the Emperor's praise. The clement Emperor praised Tsitsianov's use of harsh methods, which were necessary because of Javād's obstinance. The

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133. Paulucci to 'Abbās Mīrzā, February 20, 1812, ibid., V, 119; Paulucci to Rumiantsev, April 7, 1812, ibid., V, 119-20.

134. Beliavskii and Potto, I, 95.
casualties, however regrettable, were the Khan's own fault. In any event, only the guilty suffered. Most of all, Alexander was pleased that Tsitsianov had avoided backing down, which would have encouraged "Asiatic arrogance". 135

However welcome the conquest of Ganjeh may have been to Russian authorities, it was most unwelcome to the Ganjevis. The assertion of a Soviet author that only the Caucasus' reactionary feudal elements, who supposedly lost their privileges under Russian rule, sided with Iran does violence to the historical evidence. 136 As in 1796, the majority of the inhabitants of the various khanates lacked the means to oppose Russia militarily. Therefore, they took the only available alternative and voted with their feet. The exodus of Muslims from Ganjeh began shortly after the Russian conquest and continued for years. By Tsitsianov's own account, about five thousand people, perhaps more, fled the khanate in the first five months of Russian rule. 137 For all Tsitsianov's care to present St. Petersburg with a narrative of events which would enhance his prestige, he did not raise any possibility of the Ganjevis' departure being involuntary. Only later, with the thousands of defections to 'Abbās Mirzā or Ughurlu Āqā (a son of Javād who had Iranian support) did Russian officials attempt to portray the mass migrations as kidnappings. 138 Not surprisingly, an Iranian

135. Alexander to Tsitsianov, February 5, 1804, Akty, II, 593.
137. Tsitsianov to Alexander, May 29, 1804, Akty, II, 600-01.
138. Tsitsianov to Major-General P. D. Nesvetaev, August 10, 1805, ibid., II, 1032.
chronicle described the population shifts as voluntary. Although a court chronicle could hardly be expected to do otherwise, there is reason to believe that its account is at least partially accurate. Even Tsitsianov admitted that many Muslim Ganjevis welcomed 'Abbās Mirzā when the latter besieged Elizavetpol' in 1805. In describing the Nā'īyeb os-Saltaneh's removal of Ganjevis as kidnapping, Tsitsianov nonetheless conceded that those people had been persuaded to turn against Russia, which implied something more than the abduction of people who were reconciled to the conditions under which they lived. It was not difficult to portray voluntary migrations as kidnapping since a military escort was advisable for protection against Russian efforts to block the move. In a comparable situation, Tsitsianov sent troops to safeguard the passage to Russian territory of the anti-Qājār rebel, Ja'far Qoli Khān Domboli, and a band of his supporters. The General did not characterize that action as kidnapping. Some of those who fled Ganjeh later returned, although there is no evidence to indicate whether they had not wished to leave in the first place or later hoped to find security in their original homes. Whatever their motives, a significant number of others never returned. The Ganjevis' reaction

139. Domboli, 154-56.
140. Tsitsianov to Nesvetaev, August 10, 1805, ibid., II, 1032
141. Nesvetaev to Tsitsianov, October 5 and November 30, 1805, Akty, II, 867-68.
142. Lieutenant-General F. N. Rūšchev to Prince Gorchakov, January 10, 1813, Akty, V, 543-44; General of the Cavalry A. P. Tormasov to Ughurlu Aqa, January 1, 1811, ibid., IV, 493; Kh. M. Ibra-gimbelli, Rossiia i Azerbaidzhan v pervoi treti XIX veka (Moscow, 1969), 110-12, 122.
was not exceptional. Inhabitants of the other khanates also migrated in large numbers or resorted to armed resistance as Russian authority spread through the eastern Caucasus. 143

The degraded position of Islam in Elizavetpol' casts some light on the religious aspect of relations between Russia and the east Caucasian Muslims, a subject which has generally been underestimated by Christian observers. When Consul Skibinevskii described the preaching of Muslim religious leaders in Shirvān and Bāku against submission to Russia, he treated their arguments as scare stories told by fanatics. 144 Although Russia did not attempt to abolish Islam in the khanates, its policies in Ganjeh and elsewhere gave the Muslims genuine cause for alarm. After the annexation of Georgia, Russia exerted social pressure to force Christian women in the new province to cease wearing the veil, a long established custom which had developed as the result of Georgia's ties to the Muslim world. The change was not welcomed but the wearing of this symbol of what was assumed to be a woman's correct status and demeanor gradually ended. 145 The practice of billeting soldiers in the homes of less affluent Georgians also led to some problems involving Russian soldiers and Georgian

143. Bakikhanov, 156-59; Brosset, II, part ii, 301; Beliavskii and Potto, II, 209-11; Gudovich to Rumiantsiev, April 3, 1809, Akty, III, 293-94; Col. Aseev to Tormasov, October 24, 1809, ibid., IV, 549; Lieutenant-General Repin to Tormasov, August 16, 1810, ibid., IV, 655-56; Tormasov to Alexander, December 28, 1810, ibid., IV, 49; Major-General P. S. Kotliarevskii to Rtishchev, September 30, 1812, ibid., V, 579; Paulucci to Major-General Khatuntsev, December 7, 1811, ibid., V, 168.

144. Skibinevskii to Knorring, February 26, 1802, Akty, I, 640.

women. If Russians treated their fellow Christians so contumeliously, Muslims must have been worried about the treatment they would receive. In fact, the small Muslim community in Tbilisi suffered under Russian rule. They were allowed one mosque but others were confiscated as were the vaqf grants. When these actions were followed by the conquest of Ganjeh, it is not surprising that Caucasian Muslims feared persecution by the Russians.

Russian rule also carried with it the threat of disrupting the traditional relationships between Muslim and Christian inhabitants of the khanates by using Armenians to undermine Muslim rulers. Russia's attempt to replace the Catholicos of Echmiadzin and the offer to resettle Ganjevi Armenians in Georgia could be interpreted in that light as could the removal of two hundred fifty Armenian families from Qarābāgh by a Russian detachment shortly after the fall of Ganjeh. Equally ominous was Tsitsianov's letter to the Armenians of Qarābāgh demanding that they send some cavalry to join the Russians in fighting Iran. This demand was made in 1805, when the Muslims of Qarābāgh doubted Russia's ability to protect them from an Iranian attack.

Therefore, the proclamation carried a triple threat. First, Tsitsianov was calling upon some of Ebrāhim Khalil's subjects to prepare for war without discussing the matter with the Khan, thus belittling the

146. Porter, I, 120.
149. Proclamation by Tsitsianov to the Armenians of Qarābāgh, n.d. /1805/, ibid., II, 833.
latter's authority even though he was negotiating the terms of his submission to Russia at the time. Second, many Muslim Qarābāghis were concerned that nothing be done to provoke another Iranian attack on their khanate. Finally, the Armenians of Qarābāgh had a tradition of urging Russia to overthrow Ebrāhim Khalil and the Armenians of Ganjeh were believed to have aided the Russians in the conquest of that khanate. Therefore, the possibility existed that the Qarābāghi Armenians, once mobilized to fight under the Russian aegis, might play an active role in the forced abolition of Muslim rule in the khanate.

The deep impression which the conquest of Ganjeh and, later, Qarābāgh made on the east Caucasian Muslims can be seen by the readiness of Muslims in various khanates to believe that Russia planned to inflict a similar fate upon them. For example, when Major-General Zavalishin attempted to force Hosein Qoli Khān of Bāku to submit in the summer of 1805, there was a mass exodus of terrified Muslims from the city. They fled again in September 1806, when General of the Infantry S. A. Bulgakov marched on the city. In Qarābāgh, rumors that the Russians planned to exterminate the Muslim inhabitants found wide acceptance in 1806 and 1810. By Tsitsianov's own admission, the reason Salim Khān of Shakki refused to send five hundred cavalry

151. Hedāyat, IX, 390; Domboli, 109.
152. Dubrovin, IV, 469, V, 75-76.
153. Tsitsianov to Ebrāhim Khalil, July 20, 1805, Akty, II, 715; Aseev to Tormasov, July 20, 1810, ibid., IV, 560-61.
soldiers to assist the Russians was not disloyalty but fear of a Russian attack (although none was contemplated at that time). 154 The General did not pursue this line of thought to question whether his tactic of intimidation, which inspired such mistrust, made it more difficult to obtain the khan's co-operation.

All the other khanates which Russia was accorded by the Treaty of Golestan were brought into the empire by conquest or the threat of conquest. Shirvan was taken in 1805, Qarabagh, Shakki, Baku, Qobbeh, and Darband in 1806, and Talesh in 1813. However, other factors influenced the stages of the annexation process preceding the violent resolution. One of the most important of these factors was the traditional pattern of domestic and external power rivalries. Thus, even when rulers volunteered to become Russian vassals, they were not motivated by the admiration for Russian civilization which Russian authorities ascribed to them. The Khans of Baku, Shirvan, and Qobbeh-Darband all offered to submit to Russia in return for Russian support for their territorial ambitions and their struggles with rivals for power. Hosein Qoli Khan of Baku sought Russian backing against the revived strength of Qobbeh. Mostafa Khan of Shirvan hoped Russia would recognize his authority over a Shirvan enlarged to the dimensions of the bygone domain of the Shirkhan. Sheikh 'Ali Khan of Darband-Qobbeh wanted an ally to defeat the coalition between his younger brother and Dagestani opponents, which almost succeeded in overthrowing him, and also wanted Russia to support his reconquest of Saileyan, then under Shirvan control. No arrangements along these lines were

154. Tsitsianov to Major Rebinder, January 20, 1806, ibid., II, 659.
concluded between Russia and Mostafā or Sheîkh 'Ali. Hoseîn Qoli repudiated the treaty signed by his emissary, most probably because the stationing of a thousand man Russian garrison in the khanate and the assignment of a share of the khanate's naft and tariff revenues to Russia seemed to impinge too much on the Khan's authority. 155

Shakki was the only khanate in which a long standing struggle for power worked to Russia's advantage, if only briefly. In 1795, Salîm used Āqā Mohammad Khān to overthrow his eldest brother and then made himself Khan of Shakki. The brother, Mohammad Hasan, was restored to power by Mostafā of Shirvān after Āqā Mohammad's death. 156 Therefore, Salîm tried to use the Russians in 1804 as he had used the Iranians in 1796. In letters to the Russians, he accused Mohammad Hasan of anti-Russian actions, offered to pay thirty thousand rubles in tribute if Russia would restore him to power, and promised to exert his influence on Mostafā Khān to procure the latter's submission. 157 Tsitsianov's initial reaction was to insult Salîm, disparaging the value of the ex-Khan's intelligence reports and warning him to express himself in a more humble tone when addressing the Russian Commander in chief. 158 This attitude changed when Salîm became Khan without Russian assistance.

155. Bakîkhanov, 149; Tsitsianov to A. R. Vorontsov, December 28, 1802, Akty, II, 780-81; Tsitsianov to Alexander, January 8, March 31, April 27, and July 19, 1803, ibid., II, 781, 729-31, 73; Mostafā to Tsitsianov, n.d., ibid., II, 660; Dubrovin, IV, 472.


157. Salîm to Tsitsianov, April 2, 1804, Akty, II, 637; Salîm to Kariagin, April 1804, ibid., II, 637-38.

158. Tsitsianov to Salîm, May 26, 1804, ibid., II, 641; Kariagin to Salîm, n.d. /1804/, ibid., II, 637.
In 1805, a dispute arose between Mohammad Hasan and Mostafā. The latter occupied Nukhā, the capital of Shakkī, and imprisoned Mohammad Hasan but a rebellion broke out soon after in reaction to his attempt to annex the khanate. Salim profited from these developments by seizing power. 159 Tsitsianov then congratulated Salim and had a treaty of submission drawn up setting tribute at the amount Salim had offered the previous year. In return, a Russian garrison would protect the khanate, although, atypical of such arrangements, there was no requirement that the troops be lodged in the citadel of the capital. Tsitsianov later made that demand separately; Salim was too dependent on Russian protection from his powerful enemies to risk withdrawal of the garrison, which was threatened if he did not comply. 160

This symbiotic relationship might have continued had it not been for the harshness of Russia's treatment of Caucasian Muslim rulers, specifically, the murder in 1806 of Ebrāhīm Khalil Khān of Qarābāgh and several members of his family, including a wife, who was Salim's sister. This needless act of violence was doubly horrifying to Salim. If one khan who had submitted to Russia could be killed in a surprise nighttime attack, no vassal khan was safe. Whether Salim, who did not flinch from killing his eldest brother's seven children after seizing power in 1795, felt any sorrow over his sister's fate


160. Tsitsianov to Salim, February 13, March 7 and 22, and July 2, 1805, Akty, II, 642-43, 644-45; Salim to Tsitsianov, two letters, n.d. [1805], ibid., II, 650, 655; Tsitsianov to Alexander, May 22, 1805, ibid., II, 646.
for her sake cannot be proven. However, his complaint that the Russians killed her even though they knew she was his sister showed that he interpreted her murder as a sign of contempt for him. As he explained to the Russians:

After this occurrence where will your trustworthiness be accepted? I dishonored and sullied myself in all Moham-
medan places by submitting to Russia.../Salim described his battles against Russia's enemies/ but finally, in reward for my services, they /the Russians/ captured my sister alive and killed her even though they recognized her, from which I saw your trustworthiness and learned.161

Having become disenchanted with the Russians, Salim expelled the garrison from Shakki in the summer of 1806.162 In October of that year, Major-General Nebol'sin invaded the khanate. Most of the khanate's inhabitants took shelter in the mountains but Salim's army held out in Nukhā. The issue was eventually decided by the storming of that place on October 23. Nebol'sin took the city and killed about five hundred of the defenders at the cost of twenty-three of his own men. Salim escaped to the mountains but the inhabitants of the conquered city were brought back to their homes by Russian troops.163 Salim soon regretted his clash with Russia and asked for an imperial pardon but Gudovich, once more in charge of Caucasian affairs, was determined that neither Salim nor any member of his family should ever rule Shakki again. On December 10, 1806, Alexander proclaimed Ja'far Qoli Khān Domboli, the anti-Qājār rebel and former governor of Khoi,

161. Salim to Commandant of Elizavetpol', 1806, ibid., III, 272.


163. Dubrovin, V, 84-87.
to be the new Khan of Shakki. 164

Just as Salim tried to use Russia to further his political ambitions, so Tsitsianov tried to gain support for Russia by intervening in existing political rivalries. With that in mind, he tried to convince Mostafā Khān to become a Russian vassal by offering a guarantee of Shirvān's territorial integrity, a matter of some importance to the Khan, who was then competing with Sheikh 'Ali of Qobbeh-Darband for control of Sāleyān. 165 When that approach bore no fruit, Tsitsianov offered a deal to Hāshem, Mostafā's brother. If Hāshem supported Russia, the General would make him Khan of Shirvān. (Once Mostafā signed a treaty with Russia, Tsitsianov reproved Hāshem scornfully for suggesting that he replace Mostafā.) 166

Nowhere did this kind of intervention play a more important role than in Qarābāgh. By 1804, when Tsitsianov opened negotiations with Ebrāhim Khalil Khān, the latter was in his eighties. Therefore, it was vital to win over the expected successor, Mohammad Hasan, the Khan's eldest son. The Russo-Qarābāghi treaty of 1805 specified succession through the eldest son and made Mohammad Hasan a signatory to the agreement. Tsitsianov further encouraged the heir presumptive to rely on Russian support for his succession. 167 Russian backing was

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165. Tsitsianov to Salim, January 16, 1805, ibid., II, 641-42.

166. Tsitsianov to Hāshem Beg, December 16, 1805 and January 6, 1806, ibid., II, 673, 679.

167. Tsitsianov to Alexander, December 30, 1804, ibid., II, 623; Tsitsianov to Major D. T. Lisanevich, January 16, 1805, ibid., II, 699; Tsitsianov to Mohammad Hasan, January 16, 1805, ibid., II,
particularly important to Mohammad Hasan because his younger brother, Mehdi Qoli, was suspected of conspiring with Iran to seize control of Qarabagh. Events turned out quite differently than expected. Mohammad Hasan died of tuberculosis on November 19, 1805, leaving his young son, Ja'far Qoli, as well as Mehdi Qoli to contest the succession. The issue was resolved in a haphazardly improvised way in the summer of 1806. At that time, it seemed that the khanate would return to its affiliation with Iran so Major D. T. Lisanevich, commander of the Russian garrison in Shusha, attacked and killed Ebrāhim Khalil and a small party of courtiers. Ja'far Qoli and Mehdi Qoli both encouraged Lisanevich to believe that the Khan was disloyal to Russia while they were reliable. Russian authorities decided to pass over the nineteen year old Ja'far Qoli and made Mehdi Qoli, who was in his thirties, the new Khan.

Russia offered other inducements to tie Caucasian rulers to the empire. When Qarabagh submitted to Russia, Ebrāhim Khalil was given the rank of lieutenant-general and a stipend appropriate to that rank. He also received a ceremonial sword and other symbols of office. Mohammad Hasan and Mehdi Qoli were made major-generals and paid

700; Qarabagh's treaty of submission, May 14, 1805, ibid., II, 705.

168. Tsitsianov to Lisanevich, November 23, 1805, ibid., II, 723; Nesvetaev to Gudovich, July 18, 1806, ibid., III, 330; Kotliarevskii to Baron Rozen, October 6, 1806, ibid., III, 330.

169. Tsitsianov to Alexander, November 28, 1805, ibid., II, 725.

170. Lisanevich to Gudovich, September 4, 1806, ibid., III, 334; Gudovich to Budberg, August 21 and November 14, 1806, ibid., III, 332, 338; Gudovich to Mehdi Qoli, September 4, 1806, ibid., III, 332.
salaries.171

One of the most serious obstacles to closer relations between Russia and the Caucasian khans was Russia's weak strategic position in the area. This limited its ability to protect its Caucasian subjects. Moreover, the combination of Russia's chosen tactic of confrontation and its military difficulties put it in the worst possible position -- it was unpredictable. It threatened its enemies with destruction and, on occasion, as at Ganjeh, carried out that threat but on many other occasions was manifestly incapable of wreaking the promised havoc. Thus Tsitsianov's blood curdling warnings often appeared as ludicrous bluster. His boasts of routing cowardly Iranian troops might have convinced his superiors in distant St. Petersburg but not the people in the theater of war. In 1805, he tried to assure a worried Ebrāhim Khalil that he could provide Qarābāgh with complete protection against any Iranian attack and pointed to his splendid triumphs of the previous year.172 Of course, 1804 had really been a time of disaster for the Russians. At the height of the fighting in 1805, he had only 1,994 soldiers at his disposal, many of them raw recruits who did not know how to fire a gun.173 With these meager forces, he had to protect Georgia against domestic uprising, mountaineers' raids, and Iranian invasion, garrison the newly subjected Shakkī, protect Qarābāgh, and force Shirvān, Qobbeh-Darband, and Bāku into submission. Not only

171. Tsitsianov to Alexander, May 22, 1805, ibid., II, 703; Tsitsianov to Ebrāhim Khalil, October 1, 1805, ibid., II, 722.

172. Tsitsianov to Ebrāhim Khalil, June 28, 1805, ibid., II, 711.

173. Tsitsianov to Czartoryski, July 10, 1805, ibid., II, 1030; Tsitsianov to Alexander, July 1, 1805, ibid., II, 835.
were his forces few in number and ill-trained, they were predominantly infantry, lacking the maneuverability to keep pace with the Iranian or Dāghestānī cavalry.

The course of the war in 1805 was hardly such as to inspire greater confidence in Russia. A contingent of three hundred Russian infantry and two hundred Qarābāghi cavalry under Major Lisanevich was sent to prevent the Iranians from using the Khodā Āfarīn bridge to cross the Aras into Qarābāgh but by June the river was low enough to be forded in many places. In this way, two Iranian armies, one of thirty thousand led by the Shah, the other, also large, under 'Abbās Mirzā, evaded Lisanevich and entered Qarābāgh unopposed. Lisanevich returned to Shushā lest there be an uprising in favor of the Iranians.174 The ability of the Iranian cavalry to outmaneuver the Russian infantry continued to be a factor in the season's campaign as the Iranians repeatedly chose when to besiege the opposition, when to conduct hit and run raids, and when to avoid pitched battles.175 Tsitsianov was frustrated by his inability to find the Iranians and tried to reassure himself that they fled in terror at his approach.176

Tsitsianov was looking for the Iranians in Qarābāgh at that time because he had to rescue a Russian force of four hundred light infantry (jūgers) under Colonel Kariagin from total annihilation. The battle

174. Tsitsianov to Alexander, July 1, 1805, ibid., II, 835; Tsitsianov to Czartoryski, July 10, 1805, ibid., II, 1030; Tsitsianov to Portniagin, July 23, 1805, ibid., II, 840.

175. Tsitsianov to Alexander, July 23 and August 5, 1805, ibid., II, 838-39, 842, 844; Tsitsianov to Czartoryski, July 22, 1805, ibid., II, 715.

176. Tsitsianov to Salim, August 5, 1805, ibid., II, 654.
between Kariagin and 'Abbās Mirzā covered several days in late June and early July. Fighting began when the Iranian advance guard under Pir Qoli Khān attacked Kariagin's camp twelve miles from Shushā. Kariagin retreated, first to a cemetery, then to a fort. In the meantime, 'Abbās Mirzā and the main force had joined the fray along with reinforcements from the Shah. The jägers suffered heavy casualties and were at an additional disadvantage when their supplies of food and ammunition became critically low. Fifty-seven Russians surrendered at various stages of the fighting; finally Kariagin agreed to do the same. By that time, he had only 150 battleworthy soldiers left. In the hope of escaping surrender, he requested a three day delay on the pretext of needing to ask Tsitsianov's permission. 'Abbās Mirzā consented and partially reduced the blockade. Instead of asking permission to surrender, Kariagin asked for assistance so he could continue to fight. On the last night before the deadline, he led the remnants of his force through the thinned Iranian guard into the comparatively inaccessible mountains of Qarābāgh, where he obtained desperately needed food from local Armenians. At the same time, Tsitsianov marched toward the Shah's camp. However, the Shah eluded him and returned south of the Aras to turn his attention to Gilān, which had been attacked by Major-General Zavalishin. 'Abbās Mirzā took the remainder of the army to Elizabetpol' (Ganjeh) and besieged

177. Kariagin to Tsitsianov, June 27, 1805, ibid., II, 833-34; Bakikhanov, 154; Domboli, 149-52; Dubrovín, IV, 446-47; Beliavskii and Potto, I, 211.

178. Fasā'i, 110.
its capital. 179

The approach of Russian troops and poor organization in the
Iranian camp caused 'Abbās Mirzā to lift the siege of Elizavetpol'. 180
He led his troops and Ganjevi refugees south to Yerevan via the Georgia
border districts of Shams od-Dinlu and Qazzāq where he met with support
in the former but encountered fierce opposition in the latter. He
was also attacked by Kariagin, who forced him to retreat although at
considerable cost to the Russian troops. Despite the obstacles, the
Iranian army managed to return south of the Aras to Yerevan. 181 With
'Abbās Mirzā's departure from Georgia, the most intense phase of the
1805 fighting season came to an end. Late in the year, a smaller
Iranian force was assembled on the Mughān plain to prevent Tsitsianov
from taking Bāku. 182

Operations involving Russia's Caspian fleet were no more
successful than those of its land based forces. After his failure in
Gilān, Zavalishin attempted to bombard Bāku into submission. Hosein
Qoli refused and, having reached a modus vivendi with Sheikh 'Ali Khān
of Darband-Qobbeh, relied on the army the latter was leading to
relieve Bāku. Faced with the opposition of both khans, Zavalishin
withdrew on September 3, 1805. 183

179. Bakikhanov, 154; Domboli, 153-54; Tsitsianov to Nesvetaev, August
10, Akty, II, 1032.
180. Domboli, 154; Pakravan, I, 104; Beliavskii and Potto, I, 216.
181. Tsitsianov to Alexander, July 1, August 5 and 7, 1805, Akty, II,
838, 844, 847; Brosset, II, part ii, 285; Pakravan, I, 104-05.
183. Brosset, II, part ii, 287, n. 1; Dubrovin, IV, 469, 472-74.
The opening months of 1806 saw Russia's Caucasian forces under attack on all fronts. Following Tsitsianov's death, on February 8, the troops he had brought to Baku were forced to withdraw by a shortage of food and materiel, widespread illness, and attacks by the Iranian army which had been stationed at Mughan. The Lesgis of Jaruteleh and their Dagestani allies began to raid Georgia. Within that province, there were outbreaks of rebellion. The west Georgian kingdom of Imereti threw off Russian authority completely. Moreover, there was an outbreak of plague in the eastern Caucasus and food was scarce. 'Abbas Mirza returned to Qarabagh and advanced to about a mile from Shusha. Another branch of the Iranian forces, commanded by Prince Alexander of Georgia and a Qajar general, invaded the southern border districts of Georgia, where they were favorably received not only by the Shams od-Dinlus but also by the Qazzas, who had sided with Russia until then. Abu'l-Fath Aqa, the son Ebrahim Khalil had sent to Iran as a hostage in 1798, raided Qarabagh and caused considerable disruption for a time. Eventually, the Russians were able to force the Iranians and their allies to withdraw but did not follow this by attacks on the retreating armies.184

For all Tsitsianov's use of political means to gain control of the Caucasian khanates, the one method he was unwilling to use was the one which might have gained him the khans' support, namely, the

184. Bakikhanov, 156; Domboli, 161-62; Brosset, II, part ii, 287; Dubrovin, IV, 489-90, V, 3-9, 13, 37-38, 44-48, 50-51, 69; Gudovich to Rozhen, October 11, 1806, Akty, III, 93; Major Kochnev to Nesvetaev, June 17, 1806, ibid., 414; Prince Iosif Bebutov to Gudovich, June 27, 1806, ibid., III, 416; Caucasian Vice Governor Rozhnov to Gudovich, July 25, 1806, ibid., III, 52.
moderation of the terms of submission. Javād Khān of Ganjeh had been reluctant to side with Russia but other khans were more willing to consider the possibility only to be alienated by the severity of Russia's demands. By 1805, Mostafā Khān of Shirvān had come to see some advantages to co-operation with Russia but Tsitsianov's insistence that the Khan send back to Qarābāgh the inhabitants of that place who had fled to Shirvān over the past few years and his assessment of thirty thousand rubles in tribute stiffened Mostafā's resistance. The latter argued that he lacked the resources to pay the sum demanded and wanted to pay the same amount as Salim Khan of Shakki. As for the Qarābāghis, he argued that many of them had either been purchased or financed by him and had intermarried with his own subjects. Nonetheless, Tsitsianov would not relent. Instead, he reacted as he usually did when a khan tried to negotiate for more favorable terms by increasing his demands, including the size of the tribute, and hurling insults, accusing Mostafā of "treachery" and "feeblemindedness".185 Mostafā submitted only after Tsitsianov invaded Shirvān, set up camp less than one mile from the Khan's stronghold at Fit Dāgh, and threatened to storm it. With the fate of Ganjeh as an example of Russian conquest, Mostafā signed a treaty of submission at the end of December 1805.186

185. Tsitsianov to Mostafā, August 15, 1805, Aktry, II, 664; Mostafā to Tsitsianov, n.d. /1805/, ibid., 662, 664, 666, 669; Tsitsianov to Major Tarasov, March 7, 1805, ibid., II, 661-62; Tsitsianov to Ebrāhim Khalil Khān, September 2, 1805, ibid., II, 665.

186. Tsitsianov to Mostafā, April 3, September 24, October 8, November 9, 12, 14, and 15, 1805, ibid., II, 663, 667, 229-70, 673; Tsitsianov to Ebrāhim Khalil, November 9, 1805, ibid., II, 671; Tsitsianov to Alexander, December 22, 1805, ibid., II, 675-66.
Tsitsianov succeeded in overcoming the negative effects of his
demands on Shirvān by the threat of force but when he tried the same
approach in Bāku, he met with disaster. Hosein Qoli Khān had shown
some eagerness for an accommodation with Russia in 1803, until he learned
of the extent of the concessions he was expected to make. Since that
time, he had seen Russia's treatment of Ganjeh and its military
failures. When Tsitsianov again turned his attention to Bāku in 1805,
his behavior was such as to encourage the Khan's worst fears. The
terms offered at that time carried the interference with the Khan's
authority much further than the proposed treaty of 1803. The Khan
would be allowed to remain in office but only as a figurehead. All
political power, all revenues were to be put in Russian hands. 187
Moreover, the provision that the Khan would continue in office for life
contingent upon loyalty to Russia could hardly have been reassuring
after the killing of Javād Khān of Ganjeh and the attack on Yerevan.

Apparently, Tsitsianov was not determined to force a battle to
the death with Hosein Qoli since the terms he offered would have given
Russia almost as much control over Bāku as the complete take over of
the khanate. His approach was to intimidate the militarily weak Khan
into submission by accusing him of treason for violating the 1803
treaty (omitting to mention that Hosein Qoli never ratified it) and
castigating him for firing on Zavalishin's troops in the summer of
1805 and on Tsitsianov's own men when they invaded Bāku in January
1806. 188  Faced with the choice between submission and imminent

187. Tsitsianov to Zavalishin, September 24, 1805, ibid., II, 738.

188. Tsitsianov to Hosein Qoli, January 31 and February 1 and 2, 1806,
ibid., II, 745-46; Dubrovin, IV, 469.
destruction, Hosein Qoli agreed to submit, asking only that he be spared the humiliation of the public ceremony of surrender demanded by the General. The latter refused to allow Hosein Qoli an honorable defeat. Therefore, on February 8, 1806, Tsitsianov and a few aides, all wearing dress uniforms, met Hosein Qoli and a small entourage outside the walls of Baku. Instead of receiving the keys to the city, Tsitsianov was shot by Ebrāhim Beg, the Khan's cousin, whom 'Abbās Mirzā had sent to assist the defenders of Baku. In Iran, Tsitsianov's death was treated as proof of divine favor for the war against the Russians.189

Baku did not become part of Russia until the second half of 1806, when it was conquered along with Qobbeh and Darband. Four months after Tsitsianov's death, while Russian troops in the Caucasus were still leaderless and disorganized, Major-General G. I. Glazenap, commander of the Caucasian Line, marched south along the Caspian coast to Darband. As he drew near, the Darbandis submitted and Sheikh 'Ali fled to Qobbeh. One Caucasian chronicler explained the Darbandis' action as a rebellion against an unpopular khan.190 This is possible, especially in light of the burden put upon them by the civil war between the Khan and his brother a few years earlier. However, it is also possible that the inhabitants' primary concern was to prevent the storming of the capital. Agents of a Russian ally, the ruler of Tarqu, in Dاغhestan, were sent into the capital in advance of Glazenap to

189. Bakikhanov, 155; Brosset, II, part ii, 286-87; Baliaevskii and Potto, I, 230-32; Dubrovin, V, 1-3; Fasā'i, 111-13.
190. Bakikhanov, 156.
to convince the inhabitants that the city would be destroyed unless they surrendered.\(^{191}\) Even a Russian source acknowledged that fear of destruction lay behind the surrender of Baku soon after.\(^{192}\) Hosein Qoli saw no hope of withstanding a Russian attack made more determined by the desire for revenge on Tsitsianov's murderers. General of the Infantry S. A. Bulgakov, who replaced Glazensap after the occupation of Darband, demanded Baku's surrender on September 28, 1806. Hosein Qoli fled to Qobbeh, thence to Talesh, thence to Iran, and his frightened subjects fled the khanate en masse. Finally, a group of leading inhabitants formally surrendered to the Russians on October 2, 1806.\(^{193}\)

From Baku, Bulgakov marched north to Qobbeh. He found the place totally deserted, all its inhabitants having set out for Dagestan along with Sheikh 'Ali. Russian troops forced them all to return, except for the Khan, who made good his escape.\(^{194}\) Baku and Qobbeh were incorporated directly into the Russian empire.\(^{195}\) Darband was put under the nominal governance of the ruler of Tarqu but the capital's revenue was assigned to Russia. This, together with the presence of a Russian garrison, gave Russia effective control of the khanate.\(^{196}\)

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191. Dubrovin, V, 64.
192. Ibid., V, 75.
193. Bakikhanov, 156; Dubrovin, V, 74-78; Kariagin to Major-General P. F. Nebol'sin, October 17, 1806, Akty, III, 359.
194. Dubrovin, V, 80-82.
195. Bakikhanov, 157; Gudovich to Bulgakov, October 11 and December 16, 1806, Akty, III, 392, 394.
196. Bakikhanov, 156; Bronevskii, II, 325; Imperial patent to Mehdi, the Shamkhal of Tarqu, September 1806, Akty, III, 385.
Of all the khans in the eastern Caucasus, only two were killed by Russia, Javād of Ganjeh and Ebrāhīm Khalīl of Qarābāgh. Tsitsianov threatened most khans with destruction but could only carry out the threat in the case of Javād. A few years later, one of Tsitsianov's successors tried unsuccessfully to procure the assassination of Sheikh 'Ali, who continued to fight the Russians after the conquest of his realm. Russian authorities might also have revenged themselves on Hosein Qoli for Tsitsianov's murder, considering the torture they inflicted on a member of his entourage but they never captured the former Khan of Bāku. The reasons Ebrāhīm Khalīl was killed, even though Russia did not intend to supplant rule by khan in Qarābāgh and the vitriolic Tsitsianov was no longer at the helm, epitomized the unresolved conflicts of Russo-Caucasian relations and also cast some light on a one hundred seventy year old murder mystery.

The crux of the problem was Russia's inability to protect Qarābāgh from Iranian attempts to reassert sovereignty over the khanate by military means. All the weight of Ebrāhīm Khalīl's alliance with Georgia and his bitter memories of Āqā Mohammad Khān's siege of Shushā in 1795 could not equal the significance of Russia's present failure.

197. Tormasov to Repin, May 25, 1809, Akty, IV, 639.

198. A man whom the Russians called Amramze Haji Abet Beg was sentenced to death by a court martial for his part in the murder. Chancellor Rumiantssev objected on the grounds that the prisoner ought not to be treated like a common criminal and that his execution might provoke Iranian reprisals against Russian prisoners of war. Therefore, Gudovich commuted the sentence to flogging by one thousand men twelve times to be witnessed by the leading inhabitants of Bāku and exile to hard labor at Neschinsk, in Mongolia on the upper Amur River. AGS, III, part II, cols. 1111-1116.
The consequence of that failure was great fear among the Russians as well as the Qarābāghis. The latter dreaded a repetition of the horrors of 1795. Especially after the Iranian success in the summer of 1805, when Qarābāgh's crops were destroyed, causing a famine, most of the officials and inhabitants of Shushā believed that their only hope was to submit to Iran. When Colonel Kariagin was on the verge of surrender to 'Abbās Mirzā, Major Lisanevich did not dare remove his garrison from Shushā to aid the Colonel because he expected an anti-Russian rebellion as soon as his troops departed. This fear was shared by Ebrāhim Khalil. With Russian protection discredited and his subjects ready to rebel, Ebrāhim Khalil offered his submission to Fath 'Ali Shāh as he had done in 1798. The Shah pardoned Ebrāhim Khalil for having sided with Russia and sent 'Abbās Mirzā to help the Khan expel the Russians from Qarābāgh. Having committed himself to the Iranian cause, Ebrāhim Khalil left Shushā, with its Russian garrison, and established an unfortified camp on a nearby hill where he awaited the arrival of 'Abbās Mirzā.

The Russian officer corps suffered from a different kind of fear, the fear of failure. The Russians had been so confident of their superiority in matters military and political that the enormous difficulties they encountered exasperated them. Instead of sweeping

199. Qarābāghi, 138; Dubrovin, IV, 423-24, 447-48, 460; Report of the elders and inhabitants of Shushā, 1806, Akty, III, 341; Tsitsianov to Ebrāhim Khalil, July 20, 1805, Akty, II, 715; Tsitsianov to Alexander, August 5, 1805, Ibid., II, 842.


in triumph to the Aras, by the end of 1805, Russia could only be moderately sure of its control of Ganjeh, Shakki, and Shirvān. The Iranians had such a superiority of numbers that no matter how many were killed in battle or how many times they maneuvered away from the Russians, they were still able to return and fight again. Tsitsianov seemed on the verge of frenzy in 1805 as he blamed Ebrāhim Khalil for the Russian losses in Qarābāgh and heaped abuse upon the Khan. He blamed Ebrāhim Khalil for providing only one hundred cavalry soldiers to assist the Russians, when the latter's army was at a strategic disadvantage because it was predominantly infantry. He lamented that the three hundred Russians killed in battle in Qarābāgh were worth thirty thousand Qarābāghis. His personal insults were particularly vicious. "With you, God and Mohammad consist of greed and money... your rule is so weak because of your age that no one respects you and no one obeys you." In a cruel twist, the day Tsitsianov learned of the death of Ebrāhim Khalil's eldest son, the General, who had insignantly refused the Khan's request for medical aid, wrote a letter criticizing the Khan for ill-treating his admirable son. Tsitsianov's last message to Ebrāhim Khalil was a warning that he had no more patience with the "traitors" in Qarābāgh. Thus, part of the

202. Tsitsianov to Ebrāhim Khalil, July 19 and 20, 1805, ibid., II, 709, 715.
203. Tsitsianov to Ebrāhim Khalil, August 17, 1805, ibid., II, 717.
204. Tsitsianov to Ebrāhim Khalil, August 23 and November 23, 1805, ibid., II, 718, 724.
205. Tsitsianov to Ebrāhim Khalil, January 9, 1806, ibid., II, 727.
General's legacy to his officers was an attitude of intense loathing and mistrust of the Khan of Qarābāgh.

Russian morale sank even lower after Tsitsianov's death. The General was not even allowed a heroic death in battle but was tricked, worse still, outsmarted by a "Persian". By the beginning of June 1806, Hosein Qoli Khan of Baku had yet to be punished. At the same time, Russia's position throughout the Caucasus was in grave danger from the Turks as well as the Iranians and rebellious new subjects. Qarābāgh was one of the places where the danger was greatest since Abu'l-Fath Ḍaqā, one of the Khan's younger sons, led a pro-Iranian rebellion and Iranian troops entered the khanate.

The resentment and bitterness which must have been widespread among the Russian officers were felt with particular keenness by Major D. T. Lisanevich, the commander of the Russian garrison in Shushā. In addition to the burdens he shared with his brother officers, he was under pressure because Tsitsianov had used him as a scapegoat for Russia's setbacks in 1805. When, in that year, Lisanevich suppressed a rebellion by some Qarābāghis in support of Abu'l-Fath Ḍaqā, Tsitsianov dismissed the Major's victory as worthless because Abu'l-Fath had been allowed to escape. He accused Lisanevich of being too cowardly to pursue the rebel leader into the mountains but omitted any mention of the difficulties of fighting cavalry with infantry. Using the language he more frequently hurled at Muslim rulers, he threatened Lisanevich with severe punishment if the latter did not keep him satisfactorily informed of the activities of Ebrāhim Khalil's presumably

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206. Tsitsianov to Lisanevich, August 27, 1805, *ibid.*, II, 718.
traitorous sons and blamed the Major for the hardships encountered by Colonel Kariagin during the fighting in Qarabāgh. His last message to Lisanevich, as to Ebrāhim Khalī, dripped scorn. He accused Lisanevich of frittering his time away in Shushā playing politics while knowing for two weeks that the General was about to attack Shirvān and needed 150 infantry from the Shushā garrison.

Lisanevich was not the sort of man to suffer in silence. He was proud to the point of arrogance and had a temper almost as volatile as Tsitsianov’s. Despite the accusations of weakness, he played such an assertive role in Qarabāghi politics that many inhabitants resented what they considered his meddling in their internal affairs. Before Tsitsianov decided to use Lisanevich as a scapegoat, he described the Major as a man of noteworthy courage and recommended him for a decoration. The Major had the remarkable distinction among Russian officers in the Caucasus of knowing Azeri. At the very least, this shows that he had the initiative and determination to acquire a tool which would help him do his job better. Perhaps he was also looking for something to give him a competitive

207. Tsitsianov to Lisanevich, June 28, October 28, and November 23, 1805, ibid., II, 834, 722, 723.
208. Tsitsianov to Lisanevich, December 1, 1805, ibid., II, 726.
211. Tsitsianov to Alexander, May 22, 1805, ibid., II, 704.
212. Ibid., II, 704; W. Monteith, Kars and Erzerum (London, 1856), 49.
advantage over his brother officers. Eventually, his temper, his knowledge of Azerbaijani, and his contempt for Muslims combined to undo him. He had the habit of swearing in Azerbaijani. One day in June 1825, he began cursing so violently at an Azerbaijani-speaking Caucasian that the latter killed him on the spot. 213

The decision to attack Ebrāhim Khalil's camp rested ultimately with Lisanevich but the people who provided him with the information all had a personal interest in the Khan's downfall. One of those who accused Ebrāhim Khalil of treason was the Armenian malek, Jamshid, the Khan's long time enemy. For years, his ambition had been to have Russia overthrow the Khan and make Qarabag an Armenian protectorate of Russia. Perhaps he also looked forward to becoming the territory's governor under such an arrangement. In 1796, he emigrated to Georgia and was given an annual pension of 1,400 rubles by Paul; later he returned to Qarabag. 214

The most conspicuous denouncer of the Khan of Qarabag was his grandson, Ja'far Qoli Aqā. In accordance with the primogeniture clause of the Russo-Qarabaghi treaty, he expected to become the next Khan as the eldest son of the incumbent's dead eldest son. The strength of his determination to use Russia to enhance his position can be judged by his actions after the murder of his grandfather. First, he went to Tbilisi to await the arrival of Tsitsianov's successor and ask for rewards for his services to Russia. When his uncle, Mehdi Qoli, was

213. Monteith, 49.

made Khan instead, he tried to use Iran as he had used Russia. For
the next several years, he fought with Iranian support against Russia
and Mehdi Qoli, attracting a substantial following and creating enclaves
of power outside Shushā's control. Not until 1815, when the war was
over and Iran defeated did he reconcile himself to the existing state
of affairs in Qarābāgh.215 In the last months of his grandfather's
reign, he was certain that his interests could best be served by the
continuation of Russian suzerainty over Qarābāgh and, conversely, that
he might lose everything if the khanate reverted to Iranian control.
Therefore, he joined with the Russians in fighting Iran in 1805.216
When he learned of Ebrāhim Khalil's resubmission to the Shah, he informed
Lisanevich, or, as another officer explained subsequently, he did not
conceal the Khan's treason.217 The night of the attack on his grand-
father's camp, his house was used as the assembly point for Lisanevich's
troops.218

Once Lisanevich was aware of Ebrāhim Khalil's plans, he sent
Ja'far Qoli and Mehdi Qoli to tell the Khan to break with Iran and
return to Shushā.219 Since both the emissaries were themselves eager

215. Gudovich to Budberg, November 23, 1806, ibid., III, 339; 'Abbās
Mirzā to Ja'far Qoli Āqā, Zu'l-Qa'da, 1226 A.H. /1811/, ibid., V,
132; Ja'far Qoli to Paulucci, n.d. /1812/, ibid., V, 134;
Rtishchev to Privy Counselor Veidermeier, May 16, 1815, ibid.,
V, 585-86.


217. P. S. Kotliarevskii to Newvetaev, August 22, 1806, ibid., III,
333; Lisanevich to Gudovich, September 4, 1806, ibid., III, 334;
Mostafā Khān to Rozen, 1806, ibid., III, 301.

218. Domboli, 170.

to become Khan, there is reason to suspect their reliability in delivering Lisanevich's message or Ebrāhim Khalil's reply. According to their report, Ebrāhim Khalil refused to change his mind and expected the arrival of 'Abbās Mirzā the same night. When Lisanevich learned of this, he decided to attack first. 220

The last of the dramatis personae involved in Ebrāhim Khalil's death was Ninia Jorashvili, about whom less is known. He was born into the Georgian gentry and for a time was equerry to King Erekle's son Alexander. He also lived in Qarābāgh for many years and then entered Russian service, Russianized his name to Dzhoraev, and became a major in the Russian army. Tsitsianov valued him as a negotiator with Caucasian rulers, particularly Ebrāhim Khalil, and rewarded him with a grant of land in Elizavetpol' and money. After the conquest of Qarābāgh, he was made governor of the Qazzāq district but was removed in 1811 for corruption. 221 In 1805, he was Lisanevich's second in command and was intensely disliked by the Qarābāghis for treating them in a manner they considered oppressive. 222 A Georgian source credited him with instigating the attack on Ebrāhim Khalil but did not discuss Dzhoraev's motives. 223

220. Ibid., III, 334.

221. Brosset, II, part ii, 287; Tsitsianov to Dzhoraev, October 13, 1804, ibid., II, 698; Tsitsianov to Lisanevich, January 16, 1805, ibid., II, 698; Tsitsianov to Alexander, May 22, 1805, ibid., II, 704; Tsitsianov to Salim Khān, January 16, 1804, ibid., II, 641; Major-General Stal' to Paulucci, September 29, 1811, ibid., V, 109.


On the night of June 2, 1806, Russian troops overran Ebrāhīm Khalil's camp. The Khan, a wife, a daughter, his youngest son (aged 11), and thirty of the thirty-five others in his camp were killed. The Khan's belongings were seized as booty. 224 'Abbās Mirzā's army was attacked by Major-General P. D. Nesvetaev, commander of the garrison in Georgia, and forced to withdraw from Qarābāgh.

Protests against the Khan's murder came from several quarters. Salīm Khan denounced Russian faithlessness and drove the Russian garrison out of Shakki. Mehdi Qoli claimed the right of vengeance for his father's murder, although the moral basis of his argument was weakened not only by the role he had played in convincing the Russians of his father's disloyalty but also by his emphasis on the illegality of Lisanevich's confiscation of the dead Khan's belongings, raising the suspicion that his real concern was to acquire the booty. 225 Shushtā's inhabitants stressed a different theme by focusing on the injustice of the Khan's murder in a report to Russian officials later in 1806. They pointed to Ebrāhīm Khalil's years of co-operation with Russia, including the last year of his life, during which he participated in the war against Iran. If Russian authorities believed he had committed some offense, said the Qarābāghis, they should have held him prisoner in Shushā until the Emperor could pass judgment. That course

224. Plea of Javānshīr Khānom to Alexander, January 16, 1807, Akty, III, 343; Report of the elders and inhabitants of Shushā, 1806, ibid., III, 341; Gudovich to Viazmitinov, August 21, 1806, ibid., III, 331; Domboli, 171.

225. Lisanevich to Gudovich, September 4, 1806, Akty, III, 335; Dubrovin, V, 56.
of action would have been irreproachably just in the Qarābāghis' opinion. Even Gudovich, who returned to the Caucasus for the third time as Tsitsianov's successor, was genuinely shocked by the killing of Ebrāhim Khalil and for much the same reason as the Qarābāghis. One Russian history of those events alleged that Gudovich ordered an inquiry into Lisanevich's actions solely to placate the Qarābāghis. However, Gudovich's letters show that his contempt for Asians and his ruthlessness were not utterly without limits. To him, the attack was "without motive" and, even if justified, "does not correspond in the slightest with the duty or rank of the officers Lisanevich and Dzhoraev..." His intention in ordering an inquiry was to prove to Russia's Caucasian subjects "that the strength of the laws and justice of His Imperial Majesty leave no place for crimes and always provide just protection."

Lisanevich's reply to the accusations against him emphasized two themes: that Ebrāhim Khalil was guilty of treason, as proven by information received from Ja'far Qoli, Mehdi Qoli and Jamshid; and that responsibility for the loss of life rested entirely with the Khan's entourage. Even if Lisanevich was telling the truth when he claimed that the attack was staged for the purpose of capturing the Khan alive, the manner in which that attack was carried out and the contemptuous double standard which he applied to Russo-Qarābāghī

227. Dubrovin, V, 56.
228. Gudovich to Nesvetaev, August 20, 1806, Akty, III, 331; Gudovich to Viazmitinov, August 21, 1806, ibid., III, 331.
relations were such as to make a violent confrontation virtually inevitable. 229

According to Lisanevich, the attack force sneaked to within firing range of the Khan's thinly guarded encampment before their presence was discovered. When that happened, the Khan's entourage raised an alarm and began firing on the attackers, wounding one of them. To punish Ebrāhim Khalil and his supporters for their "impudence", Lisanevich ordered that the camp be overrun. 230 According to the version of events accepted by Gudovich, Ebrāhim Khalil's party offered no resistance and the Khan himself went forward to greet the Russians. 231 Even if there really was resistance, Lisanevich did not explain why he considered it improper for people who suddenly found an army marching on their camp to assume hostile intent and defend themselves. Nor did he explain why he employed such extreme measures when he had three hundred men and the Khan's party, besides relatives, numbered only thirty-five, some of whom were women servants. 232 Except for the accusation that the Khan was guilty of treason, Lisanevich gave no specific justification for killing Ebrāhim Khalil. However, he did offer a curious explanation for the deaths of the Khan's wife and children. He claimed that in the darkness they could not be identified among the others who were fleeing. 233 This justification hardly

229. Lisanevich to Gudovich, September 4, 1806, ibid., III, 334.
230. Ibid., III, 335.
231. Gudovich to Viazmitinov, August 21, 1806, ibid., III, 331.
232. Ibid., III, 331.
233. Lisanevich to Gudovich, September 4, 1806, ibid., III, 335.
exonerates him. It reveals that the only problem he acknowledged in the killing of unarmed women and children was that these particular victims happened to be prominent individuals. It also shows that he had no objection to firing on groups of people who were fleeing a battle.

Gudovich's inquiry did not lead to punitive measures against Lisanevich or Dzhoraev. Major-General P. F. Nebol'sin, commander of the Troitskii Musketeers on duty in the Caucasus, came to the defense of the two officers, saying that they had been correct to kill Ebrāhim Khalil.234 In order to soothe tensions in Qarābāgh, both officers were given new assignments elsewhere in the Caucasus.235 Lisanevich kept the rank of lieutenant colonel, to which he had recently been promoted, and took over the command of the Russian troops in Tālesh from the ailing Colonel Kariagin. In 1808, he participated in Gudovich's unsuccessful attack on Yerevan and was praised for his valor.236 The unofficial view of events in Qarābāgh was less gentle to Lisanevich. Julius von Klaproth, who visited the Caucasus soon afterward, summarized what was presumably the prevailing opinion in a laconic comment, "Ebrāhim Khalil was killed in 1806 by Lisanevich, Russian lieutenant colonel, who seized his treasures."237

In addition to the khanates north of the Aras and the Kur, the

234. Gudovich to Nesvetaev, August 20, 1806, ibid., III, 331.
235. Dubrovin, V, 56.
236. Rozen to Gudovich, October 14, 1806, Akty, III, 42; Gudovich to Alexander, December 11, 1808, ibid., III, 252.
Treaty of Golestan also brought Russia Tâlesh, a place which had been of scant interest until the end of the war with Iran. At that time, Lankaran, the capital, became the site of the last major confrontation between the warring armies. It is one of the grim ironies of an era abounding in grim ironies that Russia's victory in this peripheral area was one of the bloodiest of the entire war and marked the final, crushing blow to the Iranian war effort.

There was no formal treaty between Russia and Tâlesh but Mir Mostafâ Khan sent Russia a number of letters expressing his goodwill and his urgent need for Russia's military protection. Russia refused to establish a permanent garrison in Tâlesh, relying instead on ships of the Caspian fleet or the temporary deployment of a small number of infantry to handle a particularly serious threat. Sometimes it sent no help at all. In light of Mir Mostafâ's strategic vulnerability and Russia's reluctance to protect him, the Khan found it necessary to co-operate with Iran against the Russians in 1804 and to offer his submission to the Shah after Tsitsianov's death but he

238. Mir Mostafâ to Tsitsianov, n.d. /1802, 1804/ and December 5, 1803, Akty, II, 747, 750, 751; Lieutenant Cheleev to Lieutenant-General Repin, November 24, 1804, ibid., IV, 590.

239. Tsitsianov to Mirzâ Mohammad Beg, December 7, 1802, ibid., II, 748; Tsitsianov to Mir Mostafâ, June 9, 1804, ibid., II, 751; Gudovich to Mir Mostafâ, March 27, 1809, ibid., III, 363; Mir Mostafâ to Tormasov, n.d. /1809/, ibid., IV, 577-78; Tormasov to Repin, June 23 and September 26, 1809 and February 5, 1810, ibid., IV, 579, 587, 591-92; Repin to Tormasov, July 8, 1809, ibid., IV, 579; Tormasov to Mir Mostafâ, September 14 and December 2, 1809, ibid., 582-83, 291; Tormasov to Rumiantsev, September 14, 1809, ibid., IV, 585-86; Tormasov to Cheleev, November 20, 1809 and March 18, 1810, ibid., IV, 589-90, 593.
continued to seek Russian assistance as well.240

Some of the Iranian attacks in the later years of the war did considerable damage. Lankaran was destroyed by Iranian artillery in 1809 and the khanate overrun.241 An ever increasing number of Mir Mostafā's subjects refused to acknowledge his authority and sided with Iran. Finally, in August 1812, the khanate was conquered by an elite corps of British-trained, European-style infantry (sarbāz) commanded by the Qājār general Sādeq Khān and two British artillery officers, Lieutenant Henry Lindesay and Major Elliott D'Arcy. Mir Mostafā, some followers, and some Russian soldiers took refuge on a peninsula near the capital but were unable to offer any military opposition.242 The British officers were subsequently recalled to 'Abbās Mirzā's camp and later withdrawn altogether in consideration of the Russo-British alliance against Napoleon.243

240. Bakikhanov, 155, Tsitsianov to Mir Mostafā, April 23 and June 9, 1805, Akty, II, 751, 752; Tikhanovskii to Gudovich, April 20, 1807, ibid., III, 305; Gur'ev to Gudovich, March 31, 1807, ibid., III, 354; Lieutenant Captain Stepanov to Gudovich, October 9, 1808, ibid., III, 362; Mir Mostafā to Repin, n.d. /1809/, ibid., IV, 577; Mir Mostafā to Tormasov, n.d. /1809/ and November 13, 1811, ibid., IV, 577-78, V, 141; Tormasov to Mir Mostafā, July 4, 1810, ibid., IV, 595-96; Paulucci to Rumiantsev, November 18, 1811, ibid., V, 140.

241. Cheleev to Tormasov, September 10 and 19, 1809 and March 7, 1810, Akty, IV, 582, 584-85, 592-93; Fleet Lieutenant Nekliudov to Cheleev, March 30 and July 1, 1810, ibid., IV, 593, 594; Captain Veselago to Paulucci, December 16, 1811, ibid., V, 141.


243. Only Lindesay and Major Charles Christie remained with 'Abbās Mirzā and became involved in the Aslanduz disaster. Morier, "Diary",
In December 1812, Major-General P. S. Kotliarevskii invaded Tālesh after inflicting a demoralizing defeat on 'Abbās Mirzā's army at Aslanduz (across the Aras from Qarābāgh) on October 19-20. He encountered no serious opposition until he reached Lankarān, where the sarbāz withstood five days of bombarding by Russian artillery. On January 1, 1813, Kotliarevskii led his men in storming the fort and, after considerable difficulty, gained entry. Sādeq Khān and the ten generals with him, as well as most of the 2,500 sarbāz, fought valiantly to the death. Several hundred Iranians tried to flee but were killed by the Russians or died of exposure in the nearby forests. No prisoners were taken "because on account of the obstinance of the Persians in defending that fort and the arrogance with which the proposal to surrender was rejected no one was shown mercy by the soldiers." This was an example, on a much larger scale, of the Russian double standard which was used to justify massacres of defeated foes at Ebrāhim Khalil's camp and other Caucasian battle sites. If the "Persians" used guerrilla tactics or otherwise avoided pitched battles, they were contemptible cowards. If they fought pitched battles and held their ground, they still were not worthy of respect but only of

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244. The Iranians lost about two thousand men and almost all their artillery. Cambell, 230; Rtishchev to Alexander, November 21, 1812, Akty, V, 692-94.

245. Active State Counselor Malinskii to Major-General Portniagin, January 26, 1813, Akty, V, 700; Rtishchev to Gorchakov, January 6 and 9, and April 9, 1813, Ibid., V, 697, 698, 710-11; Rtishchev to Alexander, January 28, 1813, Ibid., V, 702-03; Beliavskii and Potto, II, 479-83, 487-98.
punishment for their temerity. The Russians paid dearly for their victory at Lankan. Of the 1,500 infantry and Cossacks, 341 were killed and 609 wounded. Kotliarevskii suffered multiple wounds, including head injuries, which forced him to resign from the military and left him an invalid for the remaining thirty-eight years of his life.246

In the opening years of the nineteenth century, Russia fulfilled most of its territorial objectives in the eastern Caucasus but at great cost to all concerned. Russia's officials never learned the lessons of 1796. They underestimated the natural obstacles -- difficulty of communication, unfamiliar climate and diet, food shortages -- but more importantly, they failed to learn that a khan might pursue his legitimate interests along lines other than those intended by Russia. To the khans, Russia was, at best, a potentially useful ally in traditional rivalries, as long as it did not attempt to exert too great a control over a khanate's affairs. At worst, it was the archenemy of the existing order, intent on destroying every aspect of Muslim civilization. Russia's heavy-handed tactics of intimidation, especially in the form practiced by Tsitsianov, encouraged those fears. The Russians, for their part, were dismayed by a situation they were unwilling to understand and, therefore, reacted with indignation at the apparently outrageous behavior of the Muslim Caucasians. Outrageous behavior deserved stern punishment, so the spiral of mutual suspicion and conflict continued until sheer force gave the victory to Russia.

246. Rtishchev to Alexander, January 28, 1813, Akty, V, 702; Rtishchev to Gorchakov, April 9, 1813, ibid., V, 710; ibid., V, iii.
Chapter VI

The Origins of the Russo-Iranian War

The war between Russia and Iran was not caused by Iran's sending twenty thousand men to attack Tsitsianov in 1804, as Prince Adam Czartoryski directed Russia's ambassador to Constantinople, A. Ia. Italinskii, to tell the Turks.\footnote{Czartoryski to A. Ia. Italinskii, August 18, 1804, VPR, I, 126.} Still less was it the result of English pressure on Iran to demand Russia's withdrawal from the Caucasus, Russia's need to prevent English and French imperialist expansion in the region, or its need to prevent the Iranian "feudal elite" from seizing control of the region, as some Soviet writers have alleged.\footnote{I. A. Guseinov, et al., eds., Istoriia Azerbaidzhana, 3 vols. (Baku, 1958-1963), II, 5; Ioannisian, Prisoedinenie Zakavkaz'ia k Rossii i mezhdunarodnye ot noshenii v nachale XIX stoletiiia (Yerevan, 1958), xxv, 68-60.} The first explanation reflects the characteristic inability of Russian officials to consider the existence of compelling arguments for opposing Russian ambitions. The other explanations have more to do with cold war propaganda than with history. One Soviet author went so far as to fabricate evidence to support his charge that English economic imperialism provoked Russia. He claimed that consul Skibinevskii reported to his superiors that an 1801 treaty between Iran and England gave the latter permission to build ships in Lankaran and monopolize the purchase of Gilani silk.\footnote{Ioannisian, Prisoedinenie Zakavkaz'ia k Rossii i mezhdunarodnye ot noshenii v nachale XIX stoletiiia, 51.} Neither the commercial nor
the political treaty of 1801 contained such provisions⁴ nor did
Skibinevskii's report on Anglo-Iranian relations mention those non-
existent details.⁵

The real causes of the first Russo-Iranian war lay in Russia's
military threat to Iran and the need of the newly established Qājār
dynasty to assert its sovereignty over the northwestern territories as
a symbol of the legitimacy of its claim to rule all of Iran. These
reasons were not entirely the same as the ones for which the war was
continued for nine years. Once the fighting began, both sides had to
reconsider their attitudes in light of the unexpected difficulties
they encountered. At the same time, the conviction that it was
necessary to uphold the national honor by achieving the respective
countries' thwarted goals made the existence of war a reason unto
itself for the continuation of the conflict. The Napoleonic wars
also affected the fighting in the Caucasus since Russia participated
directly in those massive conflicts while France and then England
tried to manipulate Iran, at times to keep the Caucasian diversion
alive, at times to end it as speedily as possible. However, none of
these concerns applied to the start of the war.

The symbolic importance to the Qājār dynasty of the eastern
Caucasus becomes clear when viewed in the context of the political
instability from which Iran suffered for the eighty years following
the Afghan conquest of Esfahān in 1722. Shāh Tahmāsb Safavi tried to
regather the ancestral domains and by the 1730's had made progress

⁴ Political and Commercial treaties between Iran and Great Britain,
January 1801, Aitchison, XII, 41-45.
⁵ Skibinevskii to Knorring, May 1, 1801, Akty, I, 683-84.
toward that goal, largely because of the skilled military leadership of his general, Tāhmāsib Qoli Khān Afšār, the future Nāder Shāh. The circumstances under which Shāh Tāhmāsib lost power set a precedent which became extremely important during the reigns of the first two Qājār shahs. In 1730, Tāhmāsib Qoli Khān conquered much of southern Āzerbāijān but had to stop his campaign before reaching Yerevan in order to fight the Afghans. Therefore, Shāh Tāhmāsib tried to complete the task but, instead, failed disastrously. He was defeated by the Turks and forced to surrender the territory his general had so recently regained. The latter issued a proclamation denouncing the treaty as "contrary to the will of Heaven", overthrew Shāh Tāhmāsib, and, after ruling for a few years as the regent for Shāh Tāhmāsib's infant son, ended the fiction of Safavi rule by taking the throne for himself in 1736. As Nāder Shāh, he forced the Caucasian khanates and the rest of the Safavi provinces to recognize his authority but his empire fell apart after his assassination in 1747.

From the death of Nāder Shāh until the reign of Fath 'Alī Shāh, the provinces which formerly comprised the Safavi empire were governed by a variety of local rulers. The Bagrations became virtually independent in Georgia and dominated neighboring areas while leaders of Kurdish, Turkoman, Afghan, and other tribes competed for power in northern and southern Āzerbāijān, the Caspian provinces, Khorāsān, and western Iran. Karim Khān Zand, a Lur whose power was based on the southern province of Fārs, gained control of most of the Iranian plateau, except for Khorāsān, and for a time was overlord of southern Āzerbāijān

and the Caspian coast. In the process of extending his hegemony, one of his lieutenants defeated and killed Mohammad Hasan Khan Qājār, Karim's most formidable rival. The defeated Khan's son, Āqā Mohammad, spent most of his young adulthood at Karim's court, where, though nominally a prisoner, he was frequently called upon to advise Karim, who married his sister. This situation gave the astute young Qājār an education in the political conflicts of areas beyond his native Astarābād. When Karim died in 1779, political authority was again fragmented as various Zands and other local rulers sought to increase their power. Among those was Āqā Mohammad, who returned to Māzandarān and began to build up the territory under his control. After a long, fierce struggle, he defeated his rivals and established at least nominal suzerainty over most of the former Safavi domains, although his hold on the northwestern and northeastern provinces was far from secure. Even though Qājār authority did not collapse after his death, as had happened after the deaths of all the other temporarily successful Iranian rulers since the fall of the Safavids, his heir, Fath 'Ali Shāh, still had to put down rebellions by a brother, Hosein Qoli, on the western Iranian plateau, a scion of the Zand dynasty in the vicinity of Esfahān, the Shāqaqi and Domboli Kurds and Afshār Turkomans in Āzerbāijān, and secure the fragile Qājār claim to Khorāsān. All these tasks were accomplished without great difficulty by 1803. The struggle for control of the lands north of the Aras was another matter. 7

In light of the heated political rivalries of the period between the fall of the Safavis and the solidification of Qājār authority, aspiring rulers needed to use every available means to strengthen their position. Physical force was critical but was not the only method. Also important was the attempt to appropriate the legitimacy of the Safavis. The most extraordinary example of this was Nāder Shāh's overthrow of his Safavi master with the rallying cry of re-establishing the Safavi state but many pretenders in the second half of the eighteenth century employed some variation on this approach.8

The first two Qājār shahs were in a particularly advantageous position to profit from the aura of ties to the Safavis since the Qājārs were one of the tribes of the Qezelbāsh confederation, on which Safavi authority was founded. Therefore, the main ideological justification for their conquest of the various provinces of Iran was the revival of the Safavi empire by the Safavis' loyal defenders and the simultaneous restoration of the full power of Shi'a Islam, the Safavi state religion (which the Sunni Nāder Shāh opposed).9 Thus, when Āqā Mohammad was crowned shah on No ruz 1210 A.H. (March 21 or 22, 1796) he put on the sacred sword from the shrine at Ardebil of Sheikh Safi od-Din, the ancestor of the Safavi shahs.10

Professions of devotion to the Safavi-Shi'a cause and the wearing of a Safavi relic were of only limited significance for a self-proclaimed heir to the fallen dynasty. The most potent symbol of political

10. Fasā'i, 68; Hedāyat, IX 247; Malcolm, II, 287-88.
authority was the conquest of the territories which had formerly been ruled by the Safavi shahs. As the fate of Shāh Tahmāsb demonstrated, even a genuine member of the dynasty could provide his rivals with an ideological weapon if he lost control of an important part of the empire. In that context, it should be noted that Āqā Mohammad did not take the imperial title until after his 1795 campaign in the Caucasus. At that time, a group of Iranian notables are supposed to have said to him "When you refused the title of 'Shah', it was your intention to remove the enemies and rebels from the provinces of Persia. Thank heavens all the rebels have submitted." The need of the first Qājārs to re-establish Iran in its Safavi dimensions applied as much to the northeastern as the northwestern border. That is why Āqā Mohammad voiced his determination to conquer Khorāsān when he accepted the crown and in fact campaigned there in 1796. He specifically justified his claim to the city of Herāt, which by that time was under Afghan control, on the grounds that it had been part of Safavi Iran. The need to return to the northwest to counter the Zubov expedition forced him to cut short his Khorāsān campaign before reaching Herāt but he did occupy the great pilgrimage center of Mashhad. Even though Qājār control of Khorāsān was not secured until 1803, the anti-Qājār forces were much weaker after 1800 than those in the Caucasus and Fath 'Alī's three campaigns there (1799, 1800, 1802) all enjoyed a

11. Fasā'ī, 68.
measure of success. Therefore, the struggle for control of Georgia and the rest of the eastern Caucasus assumed even greater significance. Aqa Mohammad's summons to Erekle to acknowledge Qajar suzerainty states the issue quite clearly:

The late Shah Esma'il Safavi, may his grave be fragrant, in the period of conquering the kingdoms of Iran had sovereignty over Georgia... By the grace of God, we have solidified our claim to the throne. That realm [Georgia] ought to be an appendage of the kingdom of Iran once more, in accordance with ancient law.

Fath 'Ali Shah shared his predecessor's opinion on the status of Georgia. When, in 1800, P. I. Kovalenskii wrote the Shah demanding that the latter drop all claims to Georgia, return the people captured during the 1795 attack, and pay reparations for the damage done at that time, the enraged Shah had his chief vizier, Haji Ebrāhim, explain the basis for the Qajar government's claim to the eastern Caucasus. The tone of the letter, although forceful in setting forth the Shah's argument, was not insulting in tone, as was the Kovalenskii message. In fact, Haji Ebrāhim referred flatteringly to Paul and expressed the desire for cordial relations with Russia. As for the Russian claim to Georgia, Haji Ebrāhim minced no words. Georgia had always been part of Iran, he wrote. Erekle's treaty with Catherine was illegal and treasonous:

15. The founder of the Safavi dynasty. He ruled from 1501-1524.
17. Summary of intelligence given by a Georgian native of Tbilisi, October 26, 1800, India Office, Persia and Persian Gulf Factory Records, XXII (pages unnumbered); Lang, 233.
Since the time when the globe divided into four parts, Georgia, Kakheti [a Georgian province] and Tbilisi [Tbilisi] were included in the Iranian state and in the time of previous Iranian shahs the inhabitants always adhered by service and obedience to their [the shah's] decrees but was never part of the Russian realm, except on that occasion when King Erekle... contemporary of... Aqā Mohammad Khān, had the notion to cast off the rule of his customary sovereign [and] embark upon a path of hostility against Iran... What trust do the agreements of King Erekle deserve? What value can his signature have? For example, if one of the peoples located on Russia's borders gave itself over utterly capriciously to Iranian sovereignty [and] initiated a treaty and other agreements with it [the Iranian government] would such a deal have force? In no way could it place itself under Iranian suzerainty... Now, thank God, the authority of the Iranian throne is fully affirmed, for all khans, rulers, and commanders bow their necks before it...  

The letter closed with an announcement of the Shah's intention to send sixty thousand soldiers to the eastern Caucasus. According to Háji Ebrāhim, this was intended not for the conquest of foreign territory but for the establishment of law and order within a part of the empire and the maintenance of the Russo-Iranian border (as it stood before the recent Russian expansion).  

This theme of re-establishing Iranian control over the country's northwestern borderlands was echoed in a number of proclamations from Fath 'Ali Shāh to various Christian and Muslim Caucasians. Another point raised in several such proclamations illustrates the way in which Russia's self-centered treatment of Georgia strengthened the Qājār's

19. Ibid., I, 97.
20. Ibid., I, 97.
argument. When Russia abolished the rule of the Bagrations, it enabled Fath 'Ali Shāh to style himself the defender of Bagration legitimacy by recognizing the Princes Alexander (Erekle's son) and T'eimuraz (Giorgi's son) as the vālis of Georgia and sending troops to restore their kingdom to them.²² The Shah also tried to win over Prince P'arnaoz, Prince Alexander's younger brother.²³

For all the importance to the Qājārs of re-establishing Iranian hegemony over the eastern Caucasus, that was not the specific cause of the war with Russia, even though it increased the ill will between the prospective combatants. Although Fath 'Ali Shāh threatened to drive the Russians from the Caucasus, the war did not begin in earnest until there was a direct Russian military threat to the Qājār government. The military threat to Iran had two facets. The first was Fath 'Ali Shāh's perception of Russia's involvement in the Caucasus as being directed against his authority. The other was the way Russia deliberately took the offensive against Iran and tried to intimidate the latter with threats of all out war.

Although Russia's official policy was to extend its border only to the Aras and Kur rivers, there was little reason for Fath 'Ali Shāh to feel secure about the Russian threat to the territory already under his control, especially since Russian authorities themselves did not take the Aras-Kur line too seriously. St. Petersburg readily agreed to

²². Fath 'Ali Shāh to the elders of the Samukh district, 1803, ibid., II, 802-03; Fath 'Ali Shāh to the inhabitants of Kakheti, Zo'il-Hejjeh, 1218, ibid., II, 804.

Tsitsianov's proposals to take control of Tabriz, the capital of Azerbâijân, and Khoi, located on the Turkish border, even though both were south of the proposed border, and, once the war had begun, accepted his plan to invade Gilân as well.

Even if the Russians had not advocated such measures, there would have been good reason for Fath 'Ali Shâh to suspect Russia of hostile intent. Catherine made several attempts, albeit unsuccessful, to establish Mortczā Qoli Āqā, Āqā Mohammad's rebel brother, as the ruler of Gilân, Mâzandarân, and Astarâbâd and her 1796 proclamation to the Iranians and Caucasians announced her intention to liberate Iran from Āqā Mohammad's tyranny. Fath 'Ali Shâh's government was aware of this and concluded that Catherine had wished to conquer Iran.24 In that light, Russia's annexation of Georgia and the establishment of a Russian garrison there would certainly appear ominous to the Qâjâr court. Most alarming were Tsitsianov's attacks on neighboring Muslim-rulled areas. As one chronicle expressed it, having taken Georgia, the Russians decided to take the surrounding territory.25 In other words, Russia was encroaching on Iran. The process began with the General's ill-fated attempt to crush the Lesgis of Jaruteleh. To officials in Tehran, this was an attack on Iranian territory.26 The officials' alarm increased greatly when they learned


of the conquest of Ganjeh. Javād Khān recognized Fath 'Ali Shāh as his suzerain, was expected to fight for the Shah against the Russians, and was considered under the Shah's military protection.\footnote{Fath 'Ali Shāh to the beqs and elders of Zagam and Shams od-Dinlu, Rajab 1218 /October/November 1803/, Akty, II, 804; Javād to Tsitsianov, n.d. /1803/, \textit{ibid.}, 589-90; Hedayat, IX, 390; Domboli, 109.} An Iranian chronicle put particular emphasis on the fact that the conquest of this vassal was not preceded by any explanation or declaration from Tsitsianov to the Shah.\footnote{Hedayat, IX, 389.} Presumably, the silence made such a great impression on the Tehran court because it implied contempt for the Shah and set a precedent for attacks without warning on other parts of his realm.

If 'Abbās Mirzā's army had reached Ganjeh before the storming of its citadel on January 3, 1804, the Russo-Iranian war would have begun there, rather than at Echmiadzin. As it was, the Iranian army arrived too late and winter was not usually a time for campaigning in the area so the army returned south of the Aras. It is highly probable that the Shah would have preferred to avoid war. Therefore, instead of ordering a counter attack immediately, he had his new chief vizier, Mirzā Shafī',\footnote{Hāji Ebrāhim and many of his relatives were executed in 1801. Domboli, 71-74.} send Tsitsianov a stern warning, giving the latter a chance to back down and avoid war. The tone of the letter was self-assertive to the point of offensiveness. No doubt the desire to appear resolute and intimidating was a contributing factor in the choice of wording but so too was the outrage over Russian harshness in Jarutuleh.
and Ganjeh and the feeling that those actions were directed against Iran. These themes emerged in Shafi'ı's references to "the destruction by you \( \overline{Tsitsianov} \) of promises of friendship" and his charge that "prolonging your stay in Tbilisi on the pretext of conducting trade, you now extend the hand of oppression to the borders of Ganjeh and Dāghestān." The letter closed with a warning to Tsitsianov to leave Iranian territory immediately in order to avoid war.  

Tsitsianov enjoyed using such language in addressing others but could not stand to be insulted in the same way. Therefore, Mirzā Shafi'ı's letter, instead of producing the desired result, played into the General's hands by encouraging his eagerness for war with Iran. The General's reply was a virtual declaration of war. He characterized Shafi'ı's reference to him as a merchant as a gross insult to the Russian empire, requiring punishment by the sword. The only way to avoid war was for Iran to turn over the Bagration princes Alexander and T'eimuraz, which would have diminished greatly the Shah's ability to enforce his own suzerainty or restore Bagration rule in Georgia. The letter carried a direct threat to Iranian security:

> If you, desiring the good fortune of Persia, will come to your senses and reflect that neither the empty, grandiose threat nor the Persian army numerous as the sands of the sea and who fight with feathers, not swords, are not frightening to those who are accustomed to conquer in all parts of the world . . ."  

In fact, Russian authorities were rather eager for war with Iran.

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31. Tsitsianov to Mirzā Shafi'ı, May 27, 1804, Akty, II, 808-09.
The most eager was Tsitsianov but as in the case of his dealings with Caucasian khans, his extreme measures were warmly received by his superiors. All the partisans of war greatly underestimated the difficulties and saw it as a way to achieve expansionist goals speedily, asserting Russian superiority to the "Persian". Tsitsianov viewed his command of the war against Iran as he viewed all aspects of his Caucasian service, namely, as the opportunity to create dramatic confrontations and, in winning, impress the Emperor. Tuchkov noted that the General was extremely pleased when David, whom Iran recognized as Catholicos of Echmiadzin, imprisoned Daniel, his Russian-backed rival, because that act provided grounds for war with Iran. In any event, the General had virtually guaranteed the outbreak of war by his efforts to conquer various khanates and his letter to Mirzā Shafi'. He also did his best to belittle the Shah in St. Petersburg's eyes, as can be seen from his letter to Alexander of April 27, 1803, in which he wrote that Javād Khan had received a proclamation "from the Iranian sovereign -- a name which is sometimes given to Bābā Khan in Persia." Similarly, once the war began, he proclaimed the triumph of Russian arms over the cowardly Iranians. Contempt for Iranian military prowess seems to have been widespread among the officers serving in the Caucasus and, through their influence, among St. Petersburg officials as well. Even after the setbacks suffered by Russian arms in

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33. Akty, II, 289.

34. Tsitsianov to Kochubei, September 30, 1804, ibid., II, 812-13; Tsitsianov to Czartoryski, August 13, 1805, ibid., II, 847.
the summer of 1804, a young officer, M. S. Vorontsov, son of the
ambassador to London and nephew of the Chancellor of the empire, wrote
to his father that Fath 'Ali Shāh was known to be an ineffectual
coward who dared not spend much time away from Tehran for fear of
rebellion. 35

One of the clearest indications of Tsitsianov's determination
to fight Iran was his vigorous effort to make certain that St. Peters-
burg did not negotiate a settlement with the Shah in 1805. Authorities
in the capital were willing to consider negotiation, provided the
terms were highly favorable to Russia, once they learned of rumors
that the Shah had been intimidated by the putative Russian victories
of 1804 and, therefore, hoped to end the fighting. 36 Tsitsianov's
reaction to St. Petersburg's attitude, which was soon intensified by
the desire to concentrate all of Russia's energies on the war against
Napoleon, was to convince his superiors that the war against Iran
could not be stopped without undermining completely Russia's position
in the Caucasus and, by inference, Russia's honor. At first he argued
that it was necessary to inflict "painful punishment" on Iran for all
the trouble it had caused in 1804. Later, he emphasized that the Shah
would never accept the loss of the Caucasus to Russia and would again
send troops to the area, necessitating Russian countermeasures. 37

35. M. S. Vorontsov returned to the Caucasus as Viceroy and Commander in
Chief, 1844-53. M. S. Vorontsov to S. R. Vorontsov, October 12,
1804, AKV, XXXVI, 93.

36. Czaroryski to Tsitsianov, September 27 and November 15, 1804,
Akty, II, 812, 813.

37. Tsitsianov to Kochubei, September 30, 1804, ibid., II, 812-13;
Tsitsianov to Alexander, n.d. /1805/, ibid., II, 830; Tsitsianov to
Czartoryski, June 17 and August 13, 1805, ibid., II, 831, 847.
The second half of his plan to continue the war was to make it virtually impossible for Iran to make peace on any but the most humiliating terms. This plan included the attack on Gilān, with its foray to Qazvin, and also the sending of a number of extreme demands, threats, and insults to the Shah. The letter which Zavalishin was to send to Tehran after the conquest of Rasht opened with an ornate list of the Emperor's titles but contained none of the Shah's. Tsitsianov went on to list his peace terms, the most important of which were the recognition of Russian sovereignty over all of the eastern and western Caucasus as far south as the Aras and the payment of a million ruble indemnity to Russia since the Shah was to blame, according to the letter, for the fighting in 1804. If the Shah complied with all the demands, Iran would be safe and Tehran would not be reduced to ashes. In a closing insult, Tsitsianov offered the Shah the opportunity to use his offices to ask for the Emperor's protection. 38 As matters developed, Rasht was not conquered and the letter never sent but many of the terms, including the threat to Tehran, had already been communicated to the Khān of Qarābāgh for relay to the Shah. 39 Not surprisingly, Fath 'Alī Shāh did not negotiate peace with the Russians in 1805.

Despite its preoccupation with other matters, St. Petersburg approved the conduct of the Iranian war and anticipated speedy victory. 40 As Czartoryski observed after the first battles, the victories which he

38. Tsitsianov to Fath 'Alī Shāh, March 29, 1805, ibid., II, 826.
39. Tsitsianov to Ebrāhim Khalil Khān, April 25, 1805, ibid., II, 702.
40. Czartoryski to Italinskii, August 18, 1804, VPR, I, 127.
believed Tsitsianov to have won demonstrated the superiority of the
courage and leadership of the Russian military.\footnote{Czartoryski to
Tsitsianov, September 27, 1804, Akty, II, 1020.}

The Shah's efforts to enforce his claim to the Caucasus in 1800
and 1802 were comparatively small scale and ineffective. There were
no major battles; the Iranians did not carry out their plans to attack
Georgia nor did they seek a confrontation with Russian troops.\footnote{Kovalenskii to Knorning, August 3 and 14, 1800, ibid., I, 111, 115,
136; Lazarev to Knorning, August 20, 1800, ibid., I, 139; Knorning to
Paul, August 12, 1800, ibid., I, 133; Kariagin to Lazarev, July 29,
1802, ibid., I, 621; Lazarev to Knorning, June 27, 1802, ibid., I,
689-90; Knorning to Alexander, September 2, 1802, ibid., I, 692;
Lang, 236-37.}

On both occasions, the Shah's primary objective was the subjugation of
Khorāsān, part of the same process of regathering the former Safavi
domains as the expeditions to the Caucasus. In 1800, the situation on
the northeastern frontier might well have seemed at least as urgent as
that on the northwestern since the Afghan ruler, Zamān Shāh Dorrānī,
tried to enforce his own claim to Khorāsān while the English encouraged
Fath 'Ali to oppose Afghan pretentions in the hope of distracting Zamān
from an attack on India.\footnote{Fasā’ī, 92-95; Hedāyat, IX 359-60, 365-66; Malcolm, II, 315-16;
Anglo-Iranian treaty, January 1801, Aitchison, XII, 39-40.}

By 1802, the matter remained important to
Tehran but had lost much of its urgency following the death of Zamān Shāh
in the latter part of 1800. Therefore, Fath 'Ali was not prevented by
military concerns from staging a large scale campaign in the Caucasus
in 1802 but chose not to do so. Only in 1804, after the attack on
Ganjeh, and the receipt of Tsitsianov's threatening letter and
intelligence that other vassals, the Khans of Yerevan, Nakhjavān, and Khoi, were conducting treasonous negotiations with the Russians did Fath 'Alī Shāh make a greater commitment to war in the Caucasus. 44 Not until that time did he lead an army to the region, although he had taken the field personally in the Khorāsān campaign of 1799, 1800, and 1802, nor did he send as many tens of thousands of soldiers on the occasions prior to 1804. 45 Whatever the potential for conflict over the competing Iranian and Russian claims to the Caucasus, the immediate cause of the war was Russian aggression against Iran.

44. Hedāyat, IX, 390; Domboli, 95-96, 110.

45. The exact size of the army was not recorded. Russian sources put 'Abbās Mirzā's contingent at between 27,000 and 40,000 men. The main force of the army was with Fath 'Alī Shāh. Tsitsianov to Teneshev, July 7, 1804, Akty, II, 810; M. S. Vorontsov to S. R. Vorontsov, AKV, XXXVI, 99.
Conclusions

Russia's permanent involvement in Iran, for all its momentous international consequences, was the product of vague ambitions based on scant, often inaccurate information and hurried responses to unforeseen developments. Russia was drawn to the northwestern borderlands of Iran in the 1770's and 1780's by the desire for a base from which to launch diversionary attacks on Ottoman Anatolia but abandoned the idea when such attempts failed. The establishment of Russian protection over Georgia was a by-product of that era. In 1783, when the Treaty of Georgievsk was signed, the obligation to defend Georgia seemed to require very little of Russia. King Erekle was at the height of his power. His domestic position was secure while he played a dominant role in the affairs of the neighboring khanates. None of the rulers of disunited Iran threatened Erekle's position. The Ottoman empire was a potential source of danger but Erekle's army had fared better against the Turks than had Russia's. In any event, Catherine left Erekle to fend for himself after the outbreak of her second Turkish war in 1787. Georgia remained an area of peripheral importance to Russia until 1795 when Āqā Mohammad Khān's sack of Tbilisi forced Catherine to strike back or accept the humiliating loss of a part of her realm, albeit a small, remote vassal state.

As Russia's Georgian policy evolved, it was extended to cover all the Muslim-ruled khanates of the eastern Caucasus as well. By the opening year of Alexander's reign, when the annexation of Georgia was hotly debated, attitudes toward Georgia and the neighboring khanates had fused
so completely that opponents as well as proponents of annexation assumed that involvement in Georgia necessitated involvement in the eastern Caucasus as a whole. Old dreams of using Caspian ports to improve Russia's trade with Asia were subsumed into the more pressing concern to establish a supply route from Astrakhan to Tbilisi. Similarly, the khanates located between the coast and Georgia had to be made to submit in order to form the final link in the communications network. The khanates bordering Georgia to the east and south had to be acquired not only because of their large proportion of Christian inhabitants but also to provide a buffer around Georgia. As a result, the annexation of Georgia committed Russia to the acquisition of all the territory as far south as the Aras and Kur rivers, an area of more than twice the size and population of Georgia.

Economic ambitions helped shape the growth of Russia's interest in Iran and its borderlands but were not the determining factor. Catherine, Paul, and Alexander all hoped to increase their empire's trade with western Asia and India by establishing commercial centers on the Caspian coast and inland in the eastern Caucasus. Yet, when Voinovich's party was expelled from its settlement on the southeastern Caspian coast in 1782, Catherine did not consider the matter important enough to warrant a reprisal. Potemkin's plan to use the Armenians to create an extensive commercial network in Asia was one of many elaborate schemes conjured up by his fertile imagination and then pushed aside by a new project. Instead of using force to improve Russia's commercial position in Iran, Paul was determined to separate trade from any implied military threat and achieve his goals by gradual conciliation.
Although he hoped to derive economic benefits from the conquest of India, the motive for the campaign was his desire to strike at England in anticipation of that country's attack on his Baltic provinces. In any event, the attempted invasion was one of the most unpopular acts of an extremely unpopular reign and hastened his downfall. Alexander, who strongly opposed any undertaking to seize India, hoped that commercial gains would be an eventual result of his acquisition of the eastern Caucasus. However, more immediate strategic and ideological reasons underlay his wish to control all the territory between Georgia, the Aras, and the Caspian.

Although the theme of Russia as protector of the Christians living under Muslim rule was developed by Catherine and continued by her successors, its influence was moderated by pragmatic concerns. When Catherine sent V. A. Zubov to subdue the eastern Caucasus and Iran, she forbade him to send troops into predominantly Armenian Yerevan to allay any Turkish fears of a Russian attack on Anatolia. Elsewhere in the region, Zubov sought voluntary agreements with Muslim rulers instead of launching a crusade to liberate the Christians, a plan which lay far beyond his means. Paul carried the policy of seeking the co-operation of Muslim rulers still further, preferring voluntary co-operation to forced obedience. In keeping with that attitude, he made several conciliatory gestures toward Fath 'Ali Shāh for the purpose of overcoming the animosity which had characterized the relations between his mother and the previous shah. Only Alexander, who at times championed lofty ideals like the Holy Alliance, took the idea of his special obligation to the Caucasian Christians more
seriously, especially in connection with the moral duty to protect Georgia. Even he did not press the issue of liberating the Armenians of Yerevan once the difficulty of such an undertaking became clear. He also saw himself as the benefactor of the Muslims who would bring them enlightenment and civilization. The greatest significance of Russia's special relationship with the Caucasian Christians was the former's insistence on siding with their co-religionists in all disputes with Muslims regardless of the complexities of the matter at hand.

Russian policy in the Caucasus owed more to reaction and rigidity than to the determined pursuit of clearly defined goals. Two of Russia's crucial decisions were made in reaction to developments in which it had played a passive role. The first such move came in 1795 in response to the Iranian attack on Georgia, which Russia had done nothing to prevent. The other was the need to find some way to stabilize Georgia in 1800 and 1801 when it seemed on the verge of civil war over the succession to the throne. Thus, the annexation of that kingdom, a decision which committed Russia to an active and permanent role in Caucasian and Iranian affairs, was not the fulfillment of a deep-seated ambition but rather the simplest solution to an unwelcome complication. That Paul and Alexander could accept no other solution is an indication of the way in which official thinking had sharply limited the range of Russia's options. The sheer weight of precedent, combined with an altruistic rationale, made an initial commitment a powerful argument for its continuation and extension. To admit a mistake or accept more limited territorial objectives was an intolerable
insult to the imperial dignity and an obstacle to the ambitions of officers in the field. Moreover, Russia knew so little about the Caucasus or Iran that its opinions about those areas was shaped by a small, inbred group of officials in the field and Caucasian Christians, whose reports were distorted by ignorance or personal interests. As a result, Russian officials in the capital and the field were unable to anticipate any situation which contradicted their misinformed ideas.

One particularly serious effect of Russia's fixed misconceptions was the contempt of its officials for the Muslims of Iran and the Caucasus. At best, Russia regarded these people as uncivilized primitives who could be redeemed by the adoption of Russian values. More often, they were seen as incorrigible barbarians who would always oppose enlightenment and decency. This hostility was noted by many Muslims, thus reducing whatever willingness they might have had to co-operate with Russia and contributing to the outbreak of war with Iran. Russia in turn reacted with harsh punitive measures which confirmed the Muslims' fears and stiffened their opposition. Instead of being welcomed by the Caucasian Muslims, Russia had to use force to take control of the khanates and poured large sums of money and thousands of soldiers into the area at a time when it needed all its resources to play its chosen role in the Napoleonic wars. Thousands of the reluctant beneficiaries of Russian enlightenment lost their lives. Many of the survivors had to endure economic hardships and the alteration of their traditional political and social systems.

Contempt for the "Persians" led Russia to underestimate the difficulty of war against the Caucasians and Iranians. Therefore, it
attempted unrealistically ambitious conquests and embarked overconfidently on a war with Iran. Its reaction when confronted with unforeseen setbacks was to increase the severity of its methods. Even though the absence of Iranian troops from the Caucasus at the time of the 1796 expedition deprived Russia of the opportunity to test the mettle of its future adversary, it still could have used Zubov's experiences to develop a more accurate picture of the problems of waging war in the Caucasus. That it did not do so is a reflection both of the rigidity of its thinking and the military ineptitude which co-existed with the brilliance of some of its battles against Napoleon. All the mistakes of the earlier campaign with regards to difficulty of communications, food shortages, and tactics appropriate to a small number of infantry opposing a larger number of cavalry were repeated in the years following 1802. Another common feature of Russia's actions in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was the frequency with which officers in the field ignored St. Petersburg's instructions and deliberately misinformed their superiors as they pursued their own advancement. Russian disdain for Asians and, especially in Alexander's reign, the unwillingness to show any sign of weakness prompted the central government to champion the reckless actions it had initially wished to prevent.

If Russia had followed a more temperate course of action, it might possibly have succeeded in playing off traditional Caucasian rivalries to win the co-operation of some of the local khans but even moderation could not have prevented a clash with Iran. The mere fact of Russia's presence in Georgia was a threat to the stability of the
Qājār dynasty. After eighty years of political turmoil, the early Qājārs concluded that the best way to secure their power was by styling themselves as the legitimate heirs of the Safavis. To do that, it was necessary to take control of all the provinces which had once been part of the Safavi empire. Once the reunification of the Iranian plateau was largely completed, Georgia became the symbolic proving ground for the Qājārs' ambitions. Since Russian conduct in Georgia was anything but moderate, entailing as it did the forcible subjugation of the rest of the eastern Caucasus and the threat of an attack on Iran if the latter did not acquiesce to the loss of its northwestern borderlands, the struggle for control of the eastern Caucasus became important not only as an ideological buttress to Qājār legitimacy but also as a defensive measure to prevent the imminent overthrow of the dynasty by Russia.
Bibliography

The most important sources for the study of Russo-Iranian relations and Caucasian history in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries fall into three basic categories: Russian, British, and French military and diplomatic records; descriptions of travels and personal memoirs by European officials and private visitors to the area; and the chronicles of Iran and various Caucasian khanates. The great majority of these documents are highly partisan, often propagandistic in tone. Nonetheless, they contain such a wealth of information that it is possible to reconstruct a more balanced picture of the past through them.

Although Russian archival materials on this subject are difficult of access, the deficiency has been made up to a substantial degree by publications during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries of documents from a variety of collections. The most valuable of these, the single most important work on this subject, is the massive folio series of documents from the archives of the Viceroyalty of the Caucasus published by the Caucasian Archeographic Commission of the Russian government under the title Akty sobrannye kavkazskoiu arkheograficheskoiu kommissieiu. (12 vols., Tiflis, 1866-1904, I-VIII) These volumes contain the letters, reports, and other papers of Russian officers who served in the Caucasus including their correspondence with officials in St. Petersburg, Caucasian principalities and khanates, the Ottoman empire, and Iran, as well as British and French emissaries in the latter country. Therefore, the collection is a source of information not only on Russian attitudes (and quarrels among Russians whose attitudes
differed) but also for those of Caucasians and Iranians, whose papers have not been preserved to the same degree elsewhere. There is no indication of editorial tampering with the documents at the time of their publication. Even the pro-expansionist writings of many Russian officials contain information which is useful in supporting differing points of view. Moreover, the editors did not suppress inconsistencies or dissenting, sometimes highly critical documents. The collection is arranged in chronological order, with occasional exceptions, beginning with Paul's reign. The first five volumes cover the period up to the end of the first Russo-Iranian War and the years immediately following but there are also some relevant documents printed out of chronological order in the next three volumes.

There are two other collections of Russian official documents which are useful in illuminating the process by which that country became committed to acquiring territory in the eastern Caucasus. A. A. Taragoreli's edition of letters between Georgian and Russian officials as found in the archives of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs includes material on Erekle's reign and the period up to the abolition of the Georgian monarchy in 1801. (Gramoty i drugie istoricheskie dokumenty XVIII stoletiia otnosiashchiesia do Gruzii, 3 vols., St. Petersburg, 1891-1902, II, part ii) Volumes one through three of Arkhiv Gosudarstvennego Soveta (5 vols., St. Petersburg, 1869-1904) include reports, debates, and expressions of the monarch's opinions on Russia's relations with Iran and its borderlands as presented to the Council of State in St. Petersburg. Both these collections contain information on the years before 1801, on which Akty is less helpful.
Several collections of diplomatic papers as well as individual documents dealing primarily with Russia's relations with European nations have been published by Tsarist historians and the Soviet government. Of these, the least useful is the most recent, a publication of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs entitled *Vneshniaia Politika Rossii* (series I, 1801-1815, 7 vols., Moscow, 1970). Its greatest asset is a facsimile reproduction of the Treaty of Golestān which ended the Russo-Iranian war in 1813 (VII, following p. 403). There are a number of documents dealing with Russian attitudes toward Iran and other European interests in that quarter but they are less informative than documents available elsewhere. The series' most distressing flaw with regard to this topic is the omission of any documents which would show that the extension of Russia's borders to the Aras and its war against Iran were not part of a continuous and victorious advance but were challenged on several occasions. Documents exist to prove these points but they are to be found elsewhere, especially in *Akty*.

The pre-revolutionary publications, which have not been subjected to the same kind of politically motivated editing, are far more helpful, even though relations with Iran and the Caucasus were treated only as minor appendages to Russia's relations with Europe. Therefore, the documents in these collections serve mostly to place Russia's expansion in Asia into the context of the diplomacy of the late eighteenth century and the Napoleonic era: the possibility of using Georgia to contain the Ottoman empire; Paul's break with England and rapprochement with Bonaparte; and French and British intervention in the Russo-Iranian War in the years between 1805 and 1813:
Broglie (Duc de), "La Politique de la Russie en 1800 d'après un document inédit", Revue d'histoire diplomatique, 1889, 1-12.

"Diplomaticheskiia snosheniia Rossiia s Frantsiei v epokhu Napoleona I", A. S. Trachevskii, ed., Sbornik Imperatorskago Russkago Istoricheskago Obshchestva, LXX (1890), LXXXII (1892), LXXXVIII (1893).


Karatygin, P.P., ed., "Proekt russko-frantsuzskoi ekspeditsii v Indiiu 1800 g.", Russkaia starina, VIII (1873), 401-410.


"Pis'ma k grafu P. S. Potemkinu", Russkiy arkhiv, 1879, book VIII, 429-41.


There have also been a number of relevant documents published in English and French. Two collections contain most of Iran's treaties with European nations, including England, France, and Russia, in the first two decades of the nineteenth century. Although the texts have been drawn from Western diplomatic sources there do not appear to be any inaccuracies resulting from the use of those intermediaries. These multivolume works are:


Some of the documents written by members of French and British missions to Iran at the time of the war with Russia have been published. Those of the Gardane mission (1807-1809) especially give some indication
of the political rivalries within Iran at the time of the war and the way in which the war was used as an issue to promote one factio or another.

Dehérain, H., "Lettres inédites de membres de la mission Gardane en Perse (1807-9)", Revue de l'histoire des colonies françaises, XVI (1923), 249-82.


Unpublished materials in British and French archives provide additional useful information of Russo-Iranian relations. British involvement began with the efforts of East India Company officials to achieve closer relations with Iran in 1799 when a French attack on India seemed possible. In 1809, the Shah chose an alliance with Britain over one with France. However, both Western countries entered Iran for the purpose of using it as a diversion against Russia and a key to the security of India and then reversed their stance on the anti-Russian aspect of their involvement as the pattern of European alliances changed. British and French visitors to Iran in those years were generally contemptuous of Iran, especially its government but the British were more successful in transcending the differences between themselves and the Iranians. Their involvement in Iran was also more extensive and of longer duration so that the volume and sometimes the quality of information in the British archives is greater. The diplomatic correspondence as well as the personal travel memoirs contain information about the economy, social structure, and geography of Iran and the Caucasus which people from a different civilization (or century) would want to learn about while such information was familiar to natives of the area and therefore was
rarely discussed in chronicles. Since the British and French emissaries came in contact with Fath 'Ali Shāh, several of his sons, and members of the central and provincial bureaucracies, these people are portrayed in some detail and from a different point of view than the court chronicles. (The Europeans' opinions of an Iranian were usually directly related to the extent of that person's co-operation with the Europeans.) In trying to study a subject which has hitherto received little attention and for which direct evidence is often incomplete or totally lacking, it has been necessary to sift through a large volume of European material on somewhat related matters in order to find the occasional tesserae to add to the mosaic -- the passing reference to the influence of a person at court, the description of the fortifications of a city briefly visited, and so on. Among the most informative British documents are those contained in the Foreign Office 60 and 248 series (Iran and consular records for Iran, respectively) and the various private and official papers of the East India company classified in the India Office as the Home Miscellaneous Series, the Persian Gulf Territories, and the Persia and Persian Gulf Factory Records. The most interesting aspect of the Foreign Office Russian records (65 series) is the sympathy rather than alarm with which British representatives in St. Petersburg viewed Russian expansion in the Caucasus on the rare occasions when they took note of it. The British and French archives containing materials relevant to Russo-Iranian relations are:

France

Archives Nationals, Paris

AF IV 1686 dossiers 1, 2, 3, 4
AF IV 1697 dossier 5
AF IV 1698 dossier 3
AF IV 1699 dossier 3
AF IV 1705 dossier 1

Ministere des Affaires Étrangères, Archives, Paris

Correspondence Politique — Perse vols. VIII—XV
Mémoires et Documents — Perse vols. I, III, IV, VI, VII
Mémoires et Documents — Russie vol. XXXV

Great Britain

British Museum, London

Aberdeen Papers vol. CLXXIX, Add. Mss. 43, 217
Jones (Brydges), H., "Letters and Papers", vol. II,
   Add. Mss. 41,768
Layard Papers, vol. CCXI, Add. Mss. 39,141
Morier, J.J., "Journals of Travels", Add. Mss. 33,839—
   33,844
Porter, R.I., "Travels in the Caucasus, Georgia, Persia,
   Armenia", 2 vols., Add. Mss. 14,758
   19,270
   37,283—37,285

India Office, London

Correspondence with Robert Dundas, Microfilm reel 647
Frederick, E., "Persian Journal 1801" (sic., 1810) Mss.
   Eur D, vols. 110, 111
Home Miscellaneous Series, vols. 470—72, 474, 477—79, 504
   591, 733, 736, 737
Monteith, W., "Routes in Azerbaijan, Kurdistan, and
   Armenia, 1811—1829", Mss. Eur B 24
Oriental History and Antiquities, Miscellaneous European
   Mss. C9
Persian Gulf Territories R/15/1/0 vols. 4—15
Persia and Persian Gulf Factory Records, G/29 vols. 20—31

National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh

Melville Papers, Mss. 59, 1071

National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth

Kentchurch Court Papers

Public Record Office, London
Foreign Office

FO/60, vols. 1-10
FO/65, vols. 46, 54, 55, 57-59, 62-64, 66-69, 71-72,
76-80, 84
FO/78, vol. 5
FO/95/8, vol. 6
FO/181, vols. 6, 8
FO 248, vols. 2, 3, 5-9, 11-14, 16, 18, 19, 21-25, 27-34

War Office

WO/1 vol. 623

Somerset Record Office, Taunton

Papers of Richard Charles Strachey, vols. VI-VIII

Much the same can be said about published travel accounts and personal memoirs as about Western archival documents with regard to the authors' prejudices, the kinds of gaps they help fill, and the need to search for occasional pieces of relevant information in works of authors who were primarily concerned with other matters.

Several people who were intimately connected with important aspects of Russian expansion kept records of their observations which have subsequently been published. The papers of Catherine's Chancellor, Prince A. A. Bezborodko, contain a few references to his thoughts about the desirability of negotiations with 'Ali Morād Khān Zand and the usefulness of Georgia as a bulwark against the Ottoman Empire. ("Kantsler Kniaz' Aleksandr Andreevich Bezborodko", N. Grigorovich, ed., vol. I, Sbornik Imperatorskago Russkago Istoricheskago Obshchestva, XXVI, 1879)

The Vorontsov archives include the letters of S. R. Vorontsov, the ambassador to London (1785-1800, 1801-1806), his brother A. R. Vorontsov, President of the College of Commerce (1773-1794) and Chancellor of the empire (1802-1805), and the former's son, M. S. Vorontsov, who served in
the Caucasus under General Tsitsianov and later became viceroy of that region (1844-1853). The two brothers' letters contain information about attitudes in the highest circles of government toward expansion in the Caucasus and Asian trade while the son left eyewitness accounts of some of Tsitsianov's major campaigns and mirrored the thoughts of the officers who served in the Caucasus. (Vorontsov, M. S., Arkhiv Kniazia Vorontsova, P. Bartenev, ed., 40 vols., Moscow, 1870-1895, VIII, IX, XIII, XIV, XVIII, XXIV, XXXVI) P. A. Stroganov's reports of the meetings of Alexander's Secret Committee casts light on the way Alexander made up his mind to continue Russia's expansionist policy in the Caucasus. (Nikolai Mikailovich (Grandduke), ed., Graf Pavel Alexandrovich Stroganov, 3 vols., St. Petersburg, 1903, II, III) In contrast to M. S. Vorontsov's laudatory view of Tsitsianov's "reign", a higher ranking officer, Major-General S. A. Tuchkov, left a stingingly hostile account of his superior. Although Tuchkov held a personal grudge against Tsitsianov and was as ignorant of the Caucasian people as most of his brother officers, there is still a substantial amount of material in his memoirs which can be corroborated directly or at least is plausible and offers a refreshing antidote to the standard hagiographies of the martyred hero. ( Zapiski Sergeia Alekseevicha Tuchkova 1766-1808, St. Petersburg, 1908)  

The memoirs of the Swedish field-marshall, K. B. L. C. Stedingk, belong to another category. Stedingk, an admirer of the Holy Alliance and fervent enemy of Napoleon, left in his papers a document which purported to be the French Emperor's plan for an invasion of India to be carried out in co-operation with Paul. The publication of his memoirs marked one of the earliest appearances of the supposed plan and helped
establish the assumption that such a plan had been entertained seriously. There is reason to suspect that Stedingk himself wrote the document in an excess of anti-Napoleonic zeal. (Mémoires posthumes du feldmaréchal Comte de Stedingk, General Björnstjerna, ed., 3 vols. Paris, 1845, II)


Russia's role in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as the intermediary between Western Europe and the markets of Iran and India led a number of Westerners to travel that trade route themselves. One of the best known of these was Adam Olearius, who was a member of Holstein's embassy to Moscow and Esfahān and whose book is a particularly valuable source of information about both countries, and the Caspian sea routes as well. (A. Olearius, The Voyages and Travels of the Ambassadors from the Duke of Holstein, to the Great Duke of Muscovy, and the King of Persia, J. Davies, trans., London, 1672) A century later, the Englishman Jonas
Hanway gave a description of the status of the Caspian trade before the revival of Russian interest during the reign of Catherine the Great. (Hanway, J., An Historical Account of the British Trade over the Caspian Sea, 2 vols., London, 1753), I, II) Some helpful information on the state of the Caspian trade in the 1780's is to be found in George Forster's A Journey from Bengal to England, 2 vols. (London 1798).

As regards the eastern Caucasus, there are several works distinguished by their authors' lack of bias and desire to record thoroughly everything which might be of interest. One of the best of these is the naturalist S. G. Gmelin's Reise durch Russland (3 vols., St. Petersburg, 1774) of which the third volume deals with the region's easternmost khanates. A similar route was followed by the Orientalist I. Berezin, whose Puteshestvie po Dagestanu i Zakavkas'iu (Kazan, 1850) is unusual for its sympathetic interest in the past achievements of east Caucasian civilization. J. J. Lerch was a German doctor serving with the Russian military at Astrakhan whose travel accounts are unusual for the detailed comments on health conditions as well as the more usual observations on urban architecture. ("Auszug aus dem Tagebuch von eine Reise, welche D. Lerch von 1733 bis 1735 aus Moscau nach Astrachan und in die auf Westseite des Caspischen Sees belegene Länder, gethan hat", Magazin für die neue Historie und Geographie, III (1769), 1-44; "Nachricht von der zweiten Reise nach Persien", Magazin für die neue Historie und Geographie, X (1776), 365-476) Julius von Klaproth also aspired to high standards of scholarly objectivity in recording his observations in the Caucasus in the early nineteenth century. This did not prevent him from making a number of errors, particularly in ethnography, but his books as a whole make an important contribution to our knowledge of the region.
(Tableau historique, géographique et ethnographique du Caucase et des provinces limitrophes entre la Russie et la Perse, Paris, 1827; Travels in the Caucasus and Georgia performed in the years 1807 and 1808, London, 1814)

Some of the people who went to the Caucasus for political rather than scientific reasons left descriptions of the region which are useful despite the occasional tendentious distortions and errors resulting from the authors' unfamiliarity with the region or Muslim civilization. For example, they often failed to appreciate the distinctions between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, Persian or Azeri speakers, and members of various ethnic groups. The best source of this kind is a published collection of manuscripts in Russian archives relating to the easternmost part of the Caucasus. (M. O. Kosven and Kh. M. Khashaev, eds., Istoriia, geografiia, i etnografiia Dagestana XVIII-XIX vv., Moscow, 1958) The authors of the documents served with the Russian army in the Caucasus from the 1796 campaign on. Their essays contain population estimates, descriptions of cities and economic data of a kind available in few other sources. Since some of the documents refer to the late eighteenth century and others to the period after the Russian takeover, they cast light both on traditional society and the changes brought about by Russian rule.

Russian travel accounts are of little help on Yerevan (which Russia did not conquer until 1827) or Iran south of the Aras River. The best traveler's description of Yerevan, despite the author's unconcealed Eurocentrism, is C. Bélanger's Voyage aux Indes-Orientals par le nord de l'Europe, les provinces du Caucase, la Géorgie, l'Arménie et la Perse pendant les années 1825-1829. (3 vols., Paris, 1834)
European, especially English travelers' descriptions of Qājār Iran are some of the most widely used sources of information about conditions in that country in the nineteenth century. Most of the works are based on observations made in 1810 and subsequent decades and therefore are more useful for general background information than for insight into events leading up to the outbreak of war between Russia and Iran. One of the authors who gave particular attention to the personalities and attitudes of Fath 'Ali Shāh, his heir, 'Abbās Mirzā, and various key ministers was Sir Harford Jones Brydges. (Account of the Transactions of His Majesty's Mission to the Court of Persia in the Years 1807-1811, London, 1834) Underlying the narrative of the book is Jones' justification of his actions in his heated dispute with Lord Minto, the Governor-General of the East India Company's territories in the Subcontinent. This dispute, which Jones won but only at the price of his career, centered on whether the Court of St. James or the Governor-General would control relations with Iran. The Governor-General and his supporters believed in putting the despised Iranians in their place and using force when Iranians upheld a different point of view. Jones' book is unusual among Western sources in that it portrays some Iranians as people who could be admirable and reasonable.

Other memoirs and travelers' accounts which have some bearing on the Caucasus and Iran in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are:

Alcock, T., Travels in Russia, Persia, Turkey, and Greece in 1828-29 (London, 1831)

Alexander, J.E., Travels from India to England (London, 1827)
A. M., "Slovenost' Shakh Gusein", Severnaia Pchela, 1830 numbers 112, 113 (pages unnumbered)


Aucher-Eloy, P. M. R., Relations de voyages en Orient de 1830 à 1838, P. A. Jaubert, ed. (Paris, 1843)

Bell, J., Travels from St. Petersburg in Russia to Various Parts of Asia, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1788)

Buckingham, J. S., Travels in Assyria, Media, and Persia (London, 1829)


Caulaincourt, A. A. L., Memoires, 3 vols. (Paris, 1933), I

Danibegov, R., Puteshestvie v Indiiu (Moscow, 1815)

Derzhavin, G. R., Stikhotvorenije (Leningrad, 1957)


Fowler, G., Three Years in Persia, 2 vols. (London, 1841)

Fraser, J. B., Narrative of a Journey into Khorassan (London, 1825)

_________________, Travels and Adventures in the Persian Provinces on the Southern Banks of the Caspian Sea (London, 1826)

_________________, Travels in Koordistan, Mesopotamia (London, 1826)

_________________, A Winter's Journey from Constantinople to Tehran (London, 1838)

Freygang, W., and Freygang, F. K., Letters from the Caucasus and Georgia (London, 1823)


Gardané, P. A. L., Journal d'un voyage dans la Turquie d'Asia et la Perse 1807 et 1808 (Paris, 1809)

Haxthausen, A., Transcaucasia (London, 1854)
Hollingberry, W., *A Journal of Observations Made during the British Embassy to the Court of Persia, in the years 1799, 1800, and 1801* (Calcutta, 1805)


Johnson, J., *A Journey from India to England through Persia* (London, 1818)

Keppel, G. T., *Personal Narrative of a Journey from India to England* (London, 1827)


_________., *Journey through Asia Minor, Armenia, and Koordistan in the Years 1813 and 1814* (London, 1818)


Kotzebue, M., *Narrative of a Journey into Persia in the Suite of the Imperial Russian Embassy in the Year 1817* (London, 1819)

Lumsden, T., *A Journey from Merut in India to London through Arabia, Persia, etc.* (London, 1822)

Lyall, R., *Travels in Russia, the Krimea, the Caucasus and Georgia*, 2 vols. (London, 1825)


Marschall von Bieberstein, F., *Tableau des provinces situees sur la cote occidentale de la mer Caspienne entre les fleuves Terek et Kour* (St. Petersburg, 1798)

Mignan, R., *A Winter Journey through Russia, the Caucasian Alps, and Georgia thence into Koordistan*, 2 vols. (London, 1839)


_________, *Kars and Erzeroum* (London, 1856)


_________, *A Second Journey through Persia, Armenia and Asia Minor to Constantinople* (London, 1818)
Some Account of the Iliyats or Wandering Tribes of Persia obtained in the Years 1814 and 1815", *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, VIII (1937), 230-42

Neopotras, Kh., "Oh!lasnenie", *Russkii Arkhiv*, 1873, book 1, cols. 863-76


"O Pokhode Rossijskikh voisk v 1796 godu v Dagestan i Persi v pod komandiui Grafa Valeriana Aleksandrova Zubova", *Otechestvenie Zapiski*, 1827, 127-68, 266-314

"O pokhode sukhim putem v Ost-Indii", *Vestnik Evropy*, June 1808, 174-78


"Overland Route through Persia", *Asiatic Journal*, 1823, 6-8

Porter, R. K., *Travels in Georgia, Persia, Armenia, Ancient Babylonia, etc. during the years 1817, 1818, 1819, and 1820*, 2 vols. (London, 1821)

R. C. M. /R. C. Money/, *Journal of a Tour in Persia during the years 1824 and 1825* (London, 1828)

Rottiers, B. E. A., *Itinéraire de Tiflis à Constantinople* (Brussels, 1829)

Rousseau, J. B. L. J., *Extrait de l'itinéraire d'un voyage en Perse par la voie de Bagdad* (Paris, 1813)

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The same kinds of abundant diplomatic records and personal memoirs are not to be found in Iranian or Caucasian Muslim sources for the early years of the Qājār dynasty up to the treaty of Golestān in 1813. Wars, earthquakes, and other human and natural obstacles to the preservation of manuscripts have resulted in the absence of diplomatic records of this period from Iranian archives. (I am indebted to Dr. Fereydoun Adamiyat for this information.) However, there are published chronicles which cover at least some of the subjects of central importance in the study of Russo-Iranian relations. These chronicles can be subdivided into three categories: pre-Qājār works with information on the Caucasus; Qājār political histories; and Caucasian local histories.

Since there was little impetus to describe the familiar, and the Caucasus was usually an area of peripheral interest, there are few sources which describe the politics, economy, or sociology of the region from the seventeenth century on. The most information on the political aspect of this topic is to be found in the anonymous eighteenth century description of the late Safavi state, Tadhkīrat al-Mulūk published with the original text, English translation, and extensive notes and comments by Vladimir Minorsky (E. J. W. Gibb Memorial, New Series, XVI, London, 1943). This work includes information on which tribes controlled Caucasian khanates, which khanates were ruled by officials of the central government, and the dimensions of provincial and district boundaries during the Safavi era. Infrequent references to the political authority of Caucasian tribes in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are also to be found in Eskandar Monshi's

One of the foremost difficulties in using Qājār chronicles as a source of information on the struggle for control of the eastern Caucasus is that the chronicles were official court histories. This meant that the authors were concerned with presenting the ruling dynasty in a flattering light and that Caucasian affairs were touched on only when they impinged on the cares of the monarch. As a result, the internal politics of the khanates were rarely discussed and the support for Iranian claims of sovereignty over the entire region was put in its most optimistic light. Like Russian officials, the chroniclers distorted accounts of battles to claim non-existent victories or conceal the causes of the few defeats which were acknowledged. Despite the omissions and distortions, the chronicles are essential for the analysis of Russo-Iranian relations precisely because they express official attitudes toward the problems of the period and present occasional pieces of information about pro-Iranian sentiment in the Caucasus, a subject which receives only hostile treatment in Russian sources. The early nineteenth century chronicle, Ma'āser Soltāniyeh, written by 'Abd or-Razzāq Domboli (Tehran, 1392 Qomri/1972-73) covers the period up to 1826 and emphasizes military engagements. The part of the chronicle dealing with events up to 1811 was translated, with occasional errors (such as a misunderstanding of references to the Shāhsavan tribe) by Sir Harford Jones Brydes. (The Dynasty of the Kajars, London, 1833) Rezā Qoli Khān Hedāyat's addition to the chronicle
of Mir Khānd, Rouzat os-Safā-ye Nāseri (10 vols., Tehran, 1960, IV) covers events up to the mid-nineteenth century. It does not exclude mention of the battles but contains much more information on the politics and ideology of the Qājār dynasty. A summary account of the struggle for the eastern Caucasian as well as a general narrative of Qājār rule up to 1883 is available in History of Persia under Qājār Rule, H. Busse's translation of the first volume of Hasan-e Fasā'i's Fārsnāmeh-ye Nāseri (New York and London, 1972). The sections dealing with Iran's interests in the eastern Caucasus is largely a condensation of material from earlier chronicles.

There are several chronicles by Caucasian Muslims which give details of local history not found in the imperial court chronicles. Although political history receives the main emphasis, there is also some discussion of economic and social factors as well. All the chroniclers were alive at the time of the Russo-Iranian rivalry over the eastern Caucasus or were born shortly thereafter. Three of the authors, 'Abbās Qoli Āqā Bakikhanov, Ahmedbeg Javānshir, and Karim Āqā Fath, were members of local ruling families. The other two were also of high status; Mirzā Jamāl Javānshir Qarābāghi's father was a leader of the Javānshir tribe, to which the rulers of Qarābāgh belonged; Hājī Seyyed 'Abd ol-Hamid was a member of the 'ulamā. All except Karim Āqā Fath entered Russian service after the takeover of their respective khanates and had successful careers. As a result, their chronicles have two distinctive biases, one stemming from the rivalries among various factions of the ruling families, the other from the desire to justify Russia's actions. Nonetheless, the chronicles are not simply
pro-Russian propaganda. While Javād Khān of Ganjeh is treated critically, Ebrāhīm Khalil Khān of Qarābāgh is treated sympathetically, even though he ultimately turned against Russia. Although all the chronicles have a geographic focus, be it Qarābāgh, Shakki, or Bāku, all have some information on the affairs in the other khanates as well. The best source of information for the region as a whole is the Bakikhanov chronicle, Giulistan-Iram (Golestān-Iram) (Baku, 1926) which also carries the narrative down to 1813, unlike the others which have virtually no information on events after 1805 or 1806. The other Caucasian Muslim chronicles are:

(Seyyed) 'Abd ol-Hamid, "Rodoslovnaia Shekinskikh khanov iikh potomkov", F. Babaev, ed., Iz istorii Shekinskogo khanstva (Baku, 1958), 55-63;

Javānshīr, Ahmedbeg, "O politicheskom sushchestvovanii Karabakhskogo khanstva (s 1747 po 1805 god)", E. B. Shukiurzade, trans., Istorii Karabakhskogo khanstva (Baku, 1961);

(Karim Āqā Fath, probable author), "Kratkaia istoriia Shekinskikh khanov", Iz istorii Shekinskogo khanstva, 41-53;

Qarābāghi, Mīrzā Jamāl Javānshīr, Istorii Karabaga (Baku, 1959);

There are also a few Georgian histories available in translation which contain references to political affairs in the neighboring khanates as seen from the Georgian perspective. The most detailed information is to be found in the edition compiled, edited and annotated by the Georgian scholar, M. F. Brosset, Histoire de la Géorgie depuis l'antiquité jusqu'au XIXe siècle (4 parts, St. Petersburg, 1849, II, part ii). A few comments which reflect the Georgian government's attitudes toward its Muslim neighbors are also to be found in two histories by members of the Georgian royal family, David Bagrationi's Istorii Gruzii (A. A. Rogav, ed., Tbilisi, 1971) and
Vakhtang Batonishvili's *Obozrenie istorii Gruzinskago naroda* (St. Petersburg, 1814).

Some secondary sources could almost be classified as primary sources. The information on the politics, economics, and social history of early Qājār Iran contained in John Malcolm's *A History of Persia* (2 vols., London, 1815, II) is based not only on European writings and Iranian chronicles but on the author's own observations during his visits there in 1800-01, 1808, and 1810 and his discussions with leading figures in the Qājār government, particularly Hāji Ebrāhīm, Āqā Mohammad Khān's chief vizier. Two Russian historians of their country's interests in the Caucasus, P. G. Butkov and S. Bronevskii, also visited the area they described. Butkov's work also contains the texts of a number of important official documents. (P. G. Butkov, *Materialy dlja novoi istorii Kavkaza s 1722 po 1803*, 3 vols., St. Petersburg, 1869); S. Bronevskii, *Noveishiia geograficheskiiia i istoricheskiiia izvestiiia o Kavkaze*, 2 parts (Moscow, 1823). This last named virtue is the chief attraction of N. F. Dubrovin's *Istoriiia voiny i vladychestva Russkikh na Kavkaze* (6 vols., St. Petersburg, 1871-88). Dubrovin's contribution is of dubious merit, being thoroughly one-sided pro-Russian propaganda. However, he reprints so many documents that one can draw one's own conclusions. The documents in these volumes are particularly important because they cover the years before 1801 and the opinions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in St. Petersburg, which are incompletely represented in *Akty*. Much the same point of view is represented in N. N. Beliavskii and V. A. Potto's *Utverzhdenie Russkogo vladychestva na Kavkaze* (12 vols., Tiflis, 1901-02, I, II).
except that it relies heavily on the documents directly available in *Akty*. An English work which could almost be classed in the same school is the best known Western work on the subject, J. N. Baddeley's *The Russian Conquest of the Caucasus* (New York, 1969, first published in 1908). Although the author has the rare distinction among English writers of the "Great Game" era of knowing Russian and using Russian documents, he has not used this extra information to overcome the cliches about Iran and the Caucasus, merely adding Russian cliches to English ones.

A work of an entirely different order is B. Dorn's "Geschichte Schirwans unter den Statthaltern und Chanen von 1558-1820" (Mémoires de l'Académie Imperiale des Sciences de St-Pétersburg, VIème série: sciences politiques, histoire, philologie, V (1845), 317-434). This is a scholarly effort by an Orientalist to reconstruct the political history of one of the most powerful Caucasian khanates by using chronicles and traveler's reports. Like the Caucasian chronicles, this work is particularly helpful in covering events which the main dynastic chronicles pass over.

Although some Soviet books and articles contain useful facts, they are generally unsatisfying and at times offensive to concepts of historical honesty. The problem has two closely related aspects. On the one hand, Soviet writers feel obliged to apply Marxist concepts of periodization and progress in history and with that, rigid ideas of social division into classes along European lines. On the other hand, these authors are also determined to show that while Western imperialism is evil (including British imperialism in nineteenth century Iran),
Tsarist imperialism was really a good thing because it liberated the peoples of the Caucasus from feudalism and oriental despotism and set them on the road to socialism. This leads the writers to allege that the Russian takeover of the Caucasus was welcomed by the oppressed masses and opposed only by the "feudal" elite whose privileges were at stake. Neither assertion is historically sound. There were popular risings against the Russians. While some khans did lose their thrones and property to the Russians, others remained in power until the 1820's; other members of the elite, like the chroniclers Bakikhanov, Qarabaghi, Javanshir, and Haji Seyyed 'Abd ol-Hamid, enjoyed rewards in the Russian civil and military services. In order to prove hypotheses which are not supported by the evidence, Soviet writers have resorted most frequently to the omission of unwelcome facts or the intonation of Marxist-Leninist dogma, which is beyond criticism. In at least one incident an author invented the facts to support his case and attributed them to an 1801 consular report which, in fact, discusses other matters. (A. R. Ioannisian, Prisoedinenie Zakavkas'ia k Rossii i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia v nachale XIX stoletiiia (Yerevan, 1958, 51).

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