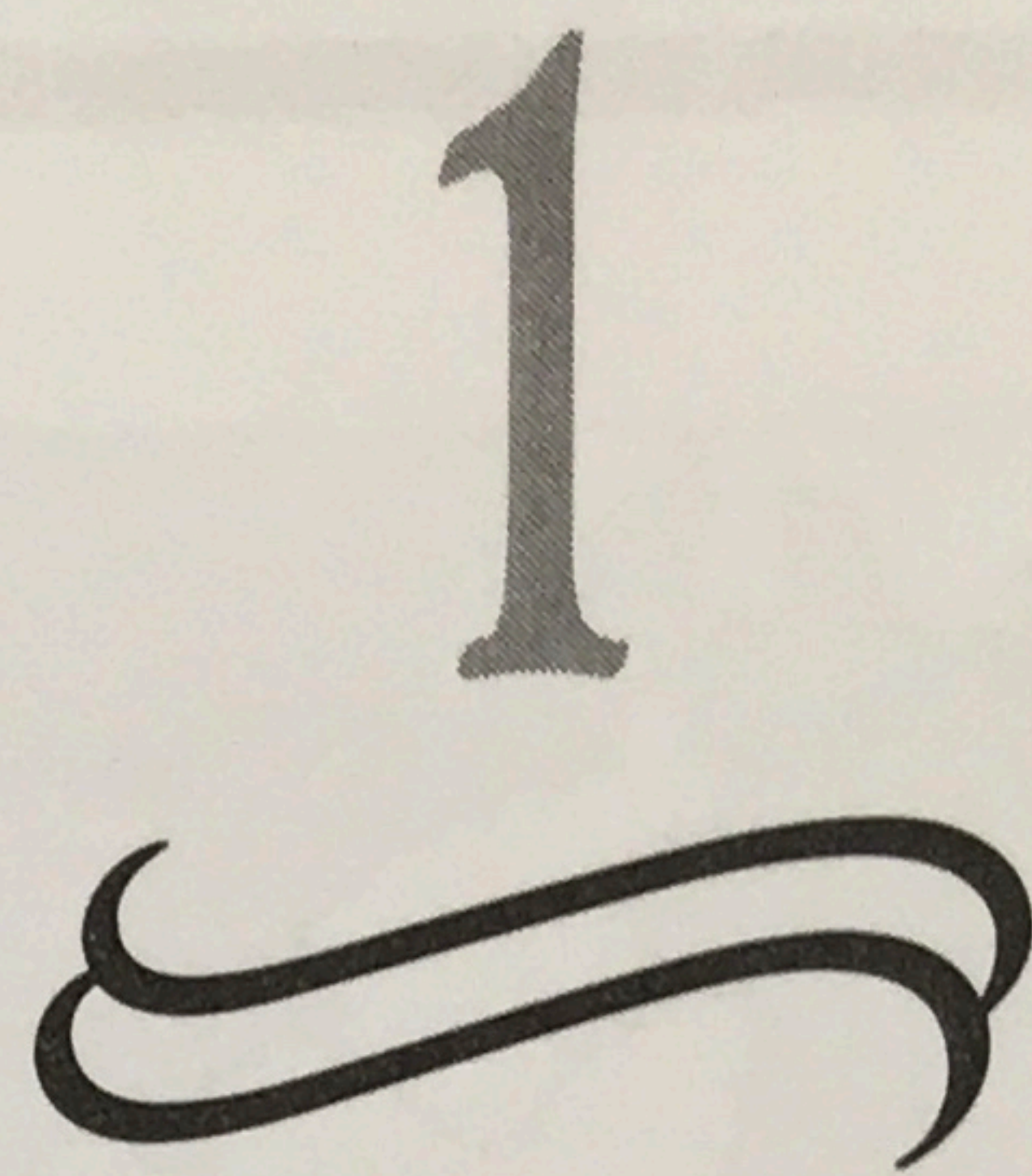


Imperial Russia by 1855



INTRODUCTION

By the middle of the nineteenth century Russia embraced a vast Empire that covered almost one-sixth of the earth's land area with around 200 different nationalities. In February 1836 Lord Dudley Stuart speaking in the House of Commons said of Russia, '(it) is often mentioned as being great, but let the House consider for a moment what Russia is. The emperor of Russia rules over an extent of territory in Europe greater than all the rest of Europe put together, and this was joined by a tract of country by dominions in Asia, three times as great as the possessions of Russia in Europe'. It had the strength of being continuous and compact but it was in the words of the Russian writer, Gogol, a 'hard land, whose overpowering landscape reduced men and their works to insignificance. Towns and villages were like little dots'. Its frontiers extended 6000 miles from Vladivostok on the Pacific coast to the Russo-German frontier in the west and nearly 3000 miles from the Arctic Sea to the Persian frontier in the south. Apart from the high mountain ranges along the southern frontiers and the chain of low hills of the Ural Mountains that separate European Russia from Siberia, the country was one large open plain that occupied two-thirds of the country. The North was mainly forest-land with open steppes where the climate ranged from extreme cold in winter to brief, hot, mosquito-laden summers. Parts of south and central Russia were very fertile but in other areas the soil was barren. It had rich natural resources of iron ore in the Urals, coal, oil and other minerals but it lagged far behind the rest of Europe in making use of its great resources. Its people, who in the main lived in the European provinces of Russia, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Poland and the Caucasus, were backward and suffered at the hands of their rulers.

1 THE NATURE OF RUSSIAN SOCIETY

A Population size and distribution

Russia in the mid-nineteenth century was a country of long-established traditions and was backward by European standards. It was sparsely populated; with 94% of its people living in small isolated villages and engaged in farming. In 1840 the ratio of villagers to townspeople was 11 to 1 whereas in England it was 2 to 1 and in France 5 to 1. During the

DIAGRAM 1
Growth in Russia's population
1851–1901

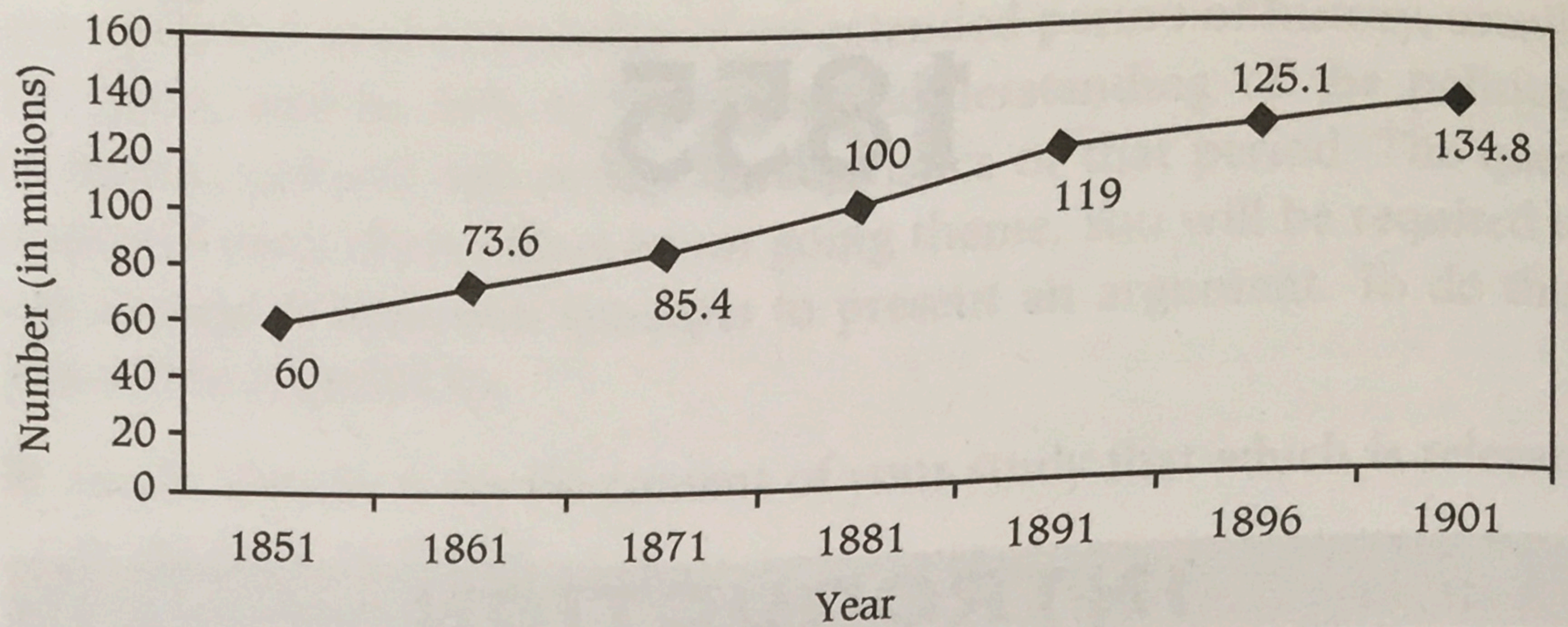
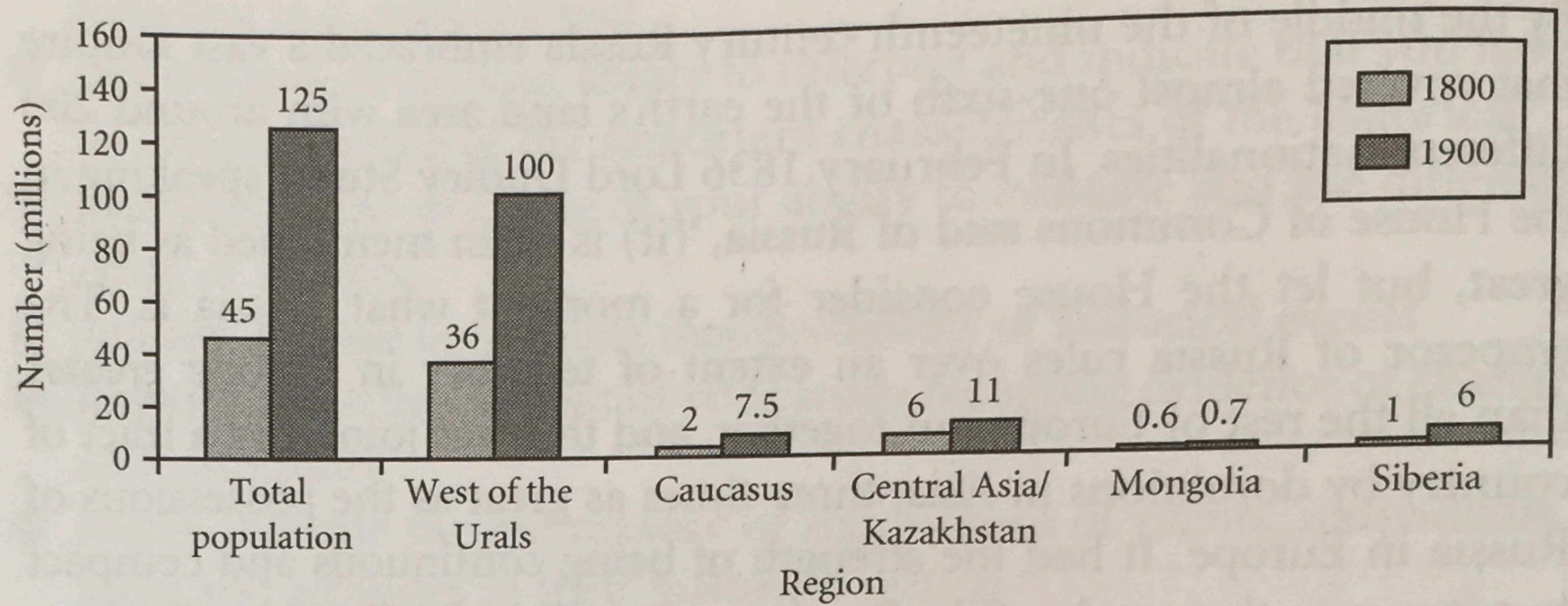


DIAGRAM 2
Regional population
of the Russian Empire in 1800
and in 1900



Nationality	Number (in millions)
Great Russians	44.3
Ukrainians	17.8
Polish	6.3
Jews	4.0
Turkic	10.8
Finns	2.8
Germans	1.4
Latvians and Lithuanians	2.5
Estonians	1.0
Armenians	0.9
Georgians	1.0

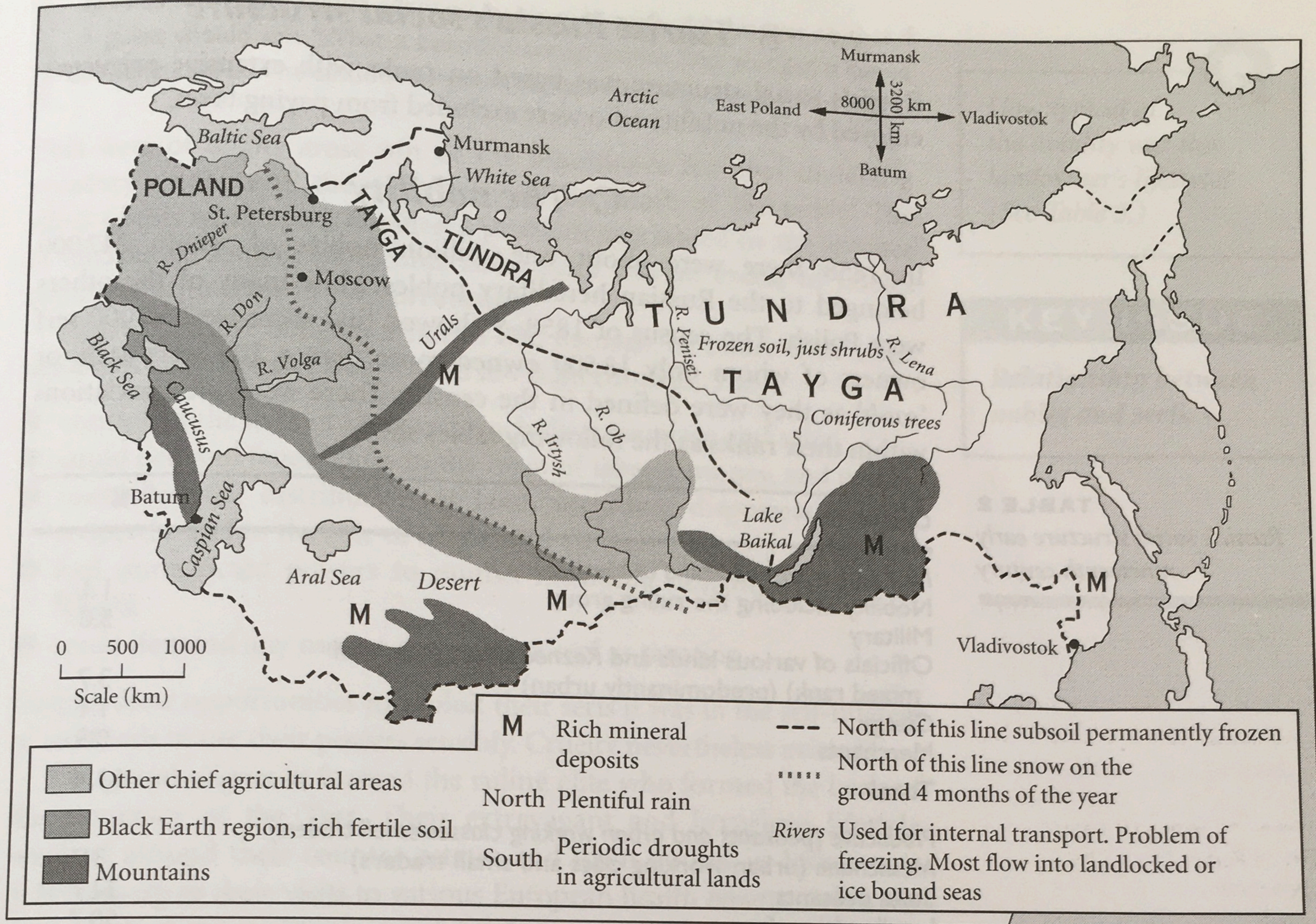
TABLE 1
Major nationalities of the
Russian Empire according to
the 1895 census (in millions)

course of the nineteenth century the population grew from 45.6 million in 1800 to 69 million in 1851 and 125 million by 1900. The greatest areas of growth were the central agrarian regions, New Russia, and the Lower Volga to the south and the northern and southern Urals to the east. The percentage of those who lived in towns was small, at 6% in 1861 rising very slowly to 15% by 1896. St Petersburg, the capital of the tsars, was the largest town with 500 000 closely followed by Moscow, while the other towns of Riga, Warsaw, Odessa, Kishinev, and Saratov were much smaller. Towns functioned as administrative and marketing centres rather than for industrial purposes.

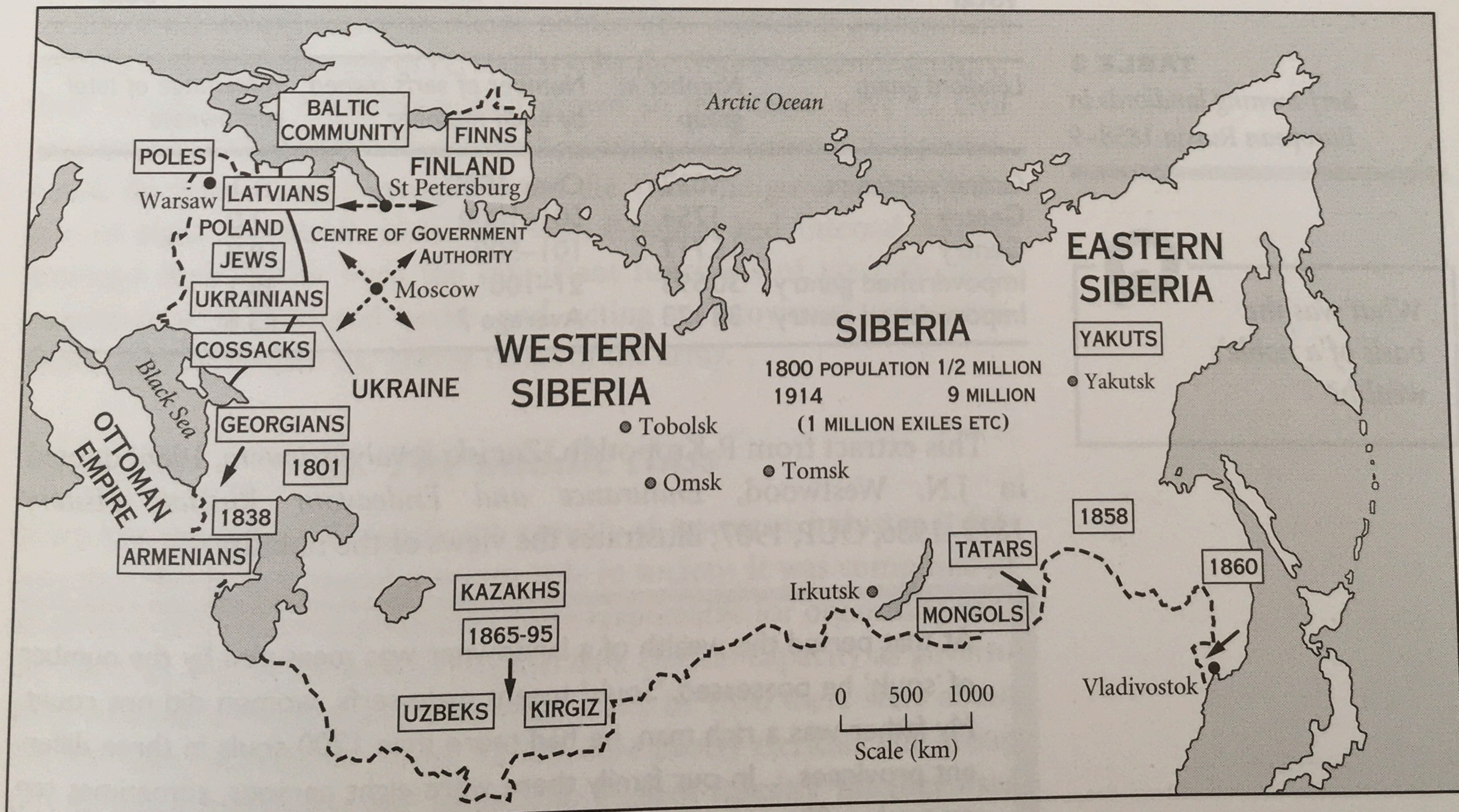
The Empire was composed of different nationalities, cultures, and religions. Some of its people were primitive tribesmen living in small and remote villages, over 50% were not ethnic Russian while about 20–25 million were Muslim, with another 5 million Jews. Jews suffered from discrimination. They were confined to the 15 provinces of Pale, were not allowed to own or work the land, and were subjected to anti-Jewish riots from 1881 onwards. The most loyal and ruthless supporters of the empire were the Cossacks, who lived on the steppes of the Ukraine. They were a free and originally democratic military brotherhood, called the *Host*, composed mostly of runaway serfs, who lived on the borderlands of the Russian Empire. They had lived from pillage but as the Empire became more settled they turned to farming. They had the reputation of being excellent fighters and had been given special privileges in return for military service. By the nineteenth century they had been absorbed into the Tsarist army. Nationalism became an increasingly important issue amongst Russia's national groups, particularly in the frontier provinces, and in Poland where attempts at *Russification* provoked rebellion and suppression in 1831 and again in 1863.

Q
Identify the predominant national group of Tsarist Russia (see Table 1).

See Map 1 on page 3.



MAP 1 Soil and climate of Russia



MAP 2 Regional divisions of Tsarist Russia

B Tsarist Russia's social structure

Russia's social structure was based on ranks with extensive privileges enjoyed by the nobility who were excluded from paying taxes.

C The nobility

In 1858 there were about one million nobles of whom 247 000 belonged to the Russian hereditary nobles while many of the others were Polish. The census of 1858–9 showed that there were 90 000 serf owners of whom only 18 500 owned more than a 100 serfs each, or 'souls' as they were defined in the census. There were wide variations within their ranks as the following tables show.

TABLE 2
Russia's social structure early nineteenth century

Classes	%
Non-productive (educated classes)	
Nobility including the ruling group	1.1
Military	5.0
Officials of various kinds and <i>Raznochintsy</i> (people of mixed rank) (predominantly urban)	3.7
Clergy	1.1
Merchants	0.5
Total	11.4
Productive (peasants and urban working classes/small traders)	
<i>Meshchane</i> (urban working class and small traders)	3.7
State peasants	32.7
Landlords' serfs	50.7
Free people (mainly Cossacks)	0.6
Other categories of peasants	0.9
Total	88.6

TABLE 3
Serf-owning landlords in European Russia 1858–9

Landlord group	Number in group	Number of serfs owned by each member	Percentage of total serf owners
Grand seigneurs	1032	Over 1000	1.1
Gentry	1754	501–1000	2.0
Gentry	15 717	101–500	18.0
Impoverished gentry	30 593	21–100	35.1
Impoverished gentry	38 173	Average 7	43.8

Q
What was the basis of a noble's wealth?

This extract from P. Kropotkin, *Zapiski revolyutsionera*, 1966, quoted in J.N. Westwood, *Endurance and Endeavour Russian History 1812–1986*, OUP, 1987, illustrates the views of the nobility.

At that period the wealth of a landowner was measured by the number of 'souls' he possessed. 'Souls' meant male serfs, women did not count. My father was a rich man, he had more than 1200 souls in three different provinces ... In our family there were eight persons, sometimes ten or twelve; fifty servants in Moscow and sixty or so in the country did not seem too many ... The dearest wish of every landowner was to

have all his requirements supplied by his own serfs. All this was so that if a guest should ask, 'What a beautiful-tuned piano! Did you get it tuned at Schimmel's?' The landowner could reply, 'I have my own piano-tuner'.

This state of affairs arose out of the inheritance law that divided a property amongst all the male heirs on the death of the noble. The effect of this was to ruin families; a problem aggravated by the absence of alternative sources of income since there was an excess of nobles compared with posts in the bureaucracy.

Apart from the obligation not to kill, damage, or injure their serfs, landlords had extensive powers and few legal controls. They:

- controlled the lives of their serfs including marriage and sale
- could demand feudal dues in the form of labour, money, and goods
- controlled the distribution of land, including dispossession that reduced a serf to the role of household servant
- had unrestricted powers to punish including flogging or exile to Siberia
- could demand any money earned by a serf as taxation.

Despite these opportunities to exploit their serfs it was in the self-interest of landlords to use their powers sensibly. Cruelty nevertheless existed.

The grand seigneurs formed the ruling elite who formed the basis of the autocracy of the Tsar. Their extravagant and luxurious lifestyle revolved around their country estates and town houses in Moscow or St Petersburg or their visits to various European health resorts. Politically they involved themselves in court intrigues and schemed for positions in foreign affairs. They dominated the army, controlled the guard regiments at the palace and the top positions in the bureaucracy.

Below the ruling elite were those nobles who worked as government officials and were dependent on a salary. By the mid-nineteenth century, their number and importance had grown so that there were 12 civil servants per 1000 people. They were beginning to develop into a professional, disciplined inner group around the Tsar who governed with the help of eight ministries, including War, Finance, and Internal Affairs. Amongst their duties were the important functions of tax collection, maintenance of law and order and acting as provincial governors. Nobles also controlled the officer ranks of the army.

D *The middle class*

Given the absence of a significant growth of towns or industry it follows that this group played a minor role in society. It was composed of small shopkeepers, entrepreneurs (those responsible for organising production), as well as those who worked in a clerical capacity as government officials at central and provincial level. In 1850 there were about 114 000 such officials, of whom 32 000 were purely clerical. The group also included merchants and those who formed Russia's 'intelligentsia' (those who were learned). Some were very wealthy though they had no political power, nor could they own serfs. They resented the economic

Q
How typical of the nobility was this landowner's lifestyle? (See Table 3.)

KEY ISSUE

Relationship between nobles and serfs.

Years of Russia 1851-1991

privileges of the nobility. They were little affected by European influences, but the government sought their advice on financial, taxation, and economic issues. Their numbers and influence increased in the second half of the century with the growth of industry and towns.

More difficult to define was the intelligentsia, a small and underprivileged group in a society where 90–95% of the population were illiterate in 1850. Many were the children of priests. They filled the ranks of teachers, doctors, government statisticians, and experts. They were paid a salary, often small, and enjoyed some privileges depending on their wealth, status, and power. They became increasingly critical of the Tsarist regime, its restrictions on free speech and press, and its emphasis on birth and wealth. Some joined revolutionary groups that plotted to overthrow the system.

E Peasants

The vast majority of Russia's productive population were peasants. Few were free and their status depended on region, type of serfdom and master:

- 1 State serfs – were those who lived on private estates owned by the State, Church or Tsar. Those who paid a fixed cash sum to state officials were called *Obrok*. They were to be found in the less fertile northern regions where it was more profitable to demand money rather than labour. In 1858 the number of state serfs was estimated at 19 379 631.
- 2 Privately owned serfs or *Barshchina* were those serfs who had to pay the landlord's feudal dues with their labour, usually for 3 days a week or more at harvest time. This was demanded by right and tended to occur in areas where farming was profitable, such as the Black soil regions. In other areas where the land was not so fertile, peasants might be required to make payments in cash or goods. Since serfs had to pay whatever the landlord demanded they could find themselves having to make all three-type payments. They were worse off than state serfs were since they had less control over their lives.
- 3 Household serfs worked as maids, butlers, cooks, coach-drivers or gardeners. In 1858 they numbered 724 314 and were the most exposed to landlord control. They had no land and were not paid a money wage but were given board and lodge.

Soviet historians have estimated that feudal dues by the nineteenth century could account for between one-third to two-thirds of the labour and income of a peasant family. The latter also had to pay state taxes that could take the form of a direct tax affecting 1 in 25 males. This was army recruitment and it was particularly harsh. Prior to 1830 recruits had to serve for 25 years but this was then reduced to 15. At the end of service a serf was given his freedom but this was not as generous as it sounded. Mortality was high and those who survived were separated from home and village. Wives of serfs called up for service were legally declared widows and allowed to remarry. Peasants also paid indirect taxes through their purchase of vodka.

Serfs were free to farm the land given to them for their own use and they controlled village life. The village community was known as the *Mir*, more than a half had between 50 and 300 people.

The following is from a description of the Russian commune by a German traveller Haxthausen, 1843, quoted in G. Vernadsky (ed.), *A Source Book for Russian History from Early Times to 1917*, Yale University Press, 1972.

The facts here described constitute the basis of the Russian communal system one of the most remarkable and interesting political institutions in existence and one that undeniably possesses great advantages for the social condition of the country. The Russian communes show an organic coherence and compact social strength that can be found nowhere else and yield the incalculable advantage that no proletariat can be formed so long as they exist with their present structure. A man may lose or squander all he possesses but his children do not inherit poverty. They still retain their claim upon the land by a right derived not from him but from their birth as members of the commune. On the other hand it must be admitted that this fundamental basis of the communal system the equal division of the land is not favourable to the progress of agriculture which ... under this system could for a long time remain at a low level.

Its economy was based on agriculture, particularly the growing of grain and rye, though there were also rural crafts. It was self-sufficient for, apart from growing their own food, villagers made their own clothes, tools, and furniture and built their houses. Any surpluses were sold to pay taxes and feudal dues. Families had their own remedies for illness – often vodka-based – though each village also had a healer, a *znakharka*, whose herbs were paid for in kind – bread, eggs or cloth. There were local markets where peasants bought their vodka, salt for curing, and metal goods such as ploughshares.

Land was worked as a whole to take account of periods when peasants had to provide feudal dues of labour service. It was organised on an open field basis – the arable fields were divided into strips and each family was allotted their share across the three fields though this could be altered to take account of changing circumstances. Given the absence of artificial fertilisers, they allowed one field to lay fallow every year.

An insight in to working the land from S.L. Hoch, *Serfdom and Social Control in Russia: Petrovskoe, a Village in Tambov*, University of Chicago Press, 1986.

As a consequence of the extremely short growing season – five and a half to six months instead of the eight to nine months in Western Europe – under the three-field system the harvesting of winter and spring cereals and the ploughing and sowing of the winter field all came in quick succession within the span of six weeks. From mid-July to the end of August was the harvest season ... an agonising period of activity demanding that numerous tasks be accomplished simultaneously. A work team, or *tiaglo*, of husband and wife together proved

KEY ISSUE

The Mir.

Q
To what extent did peasants benefit from the commune?

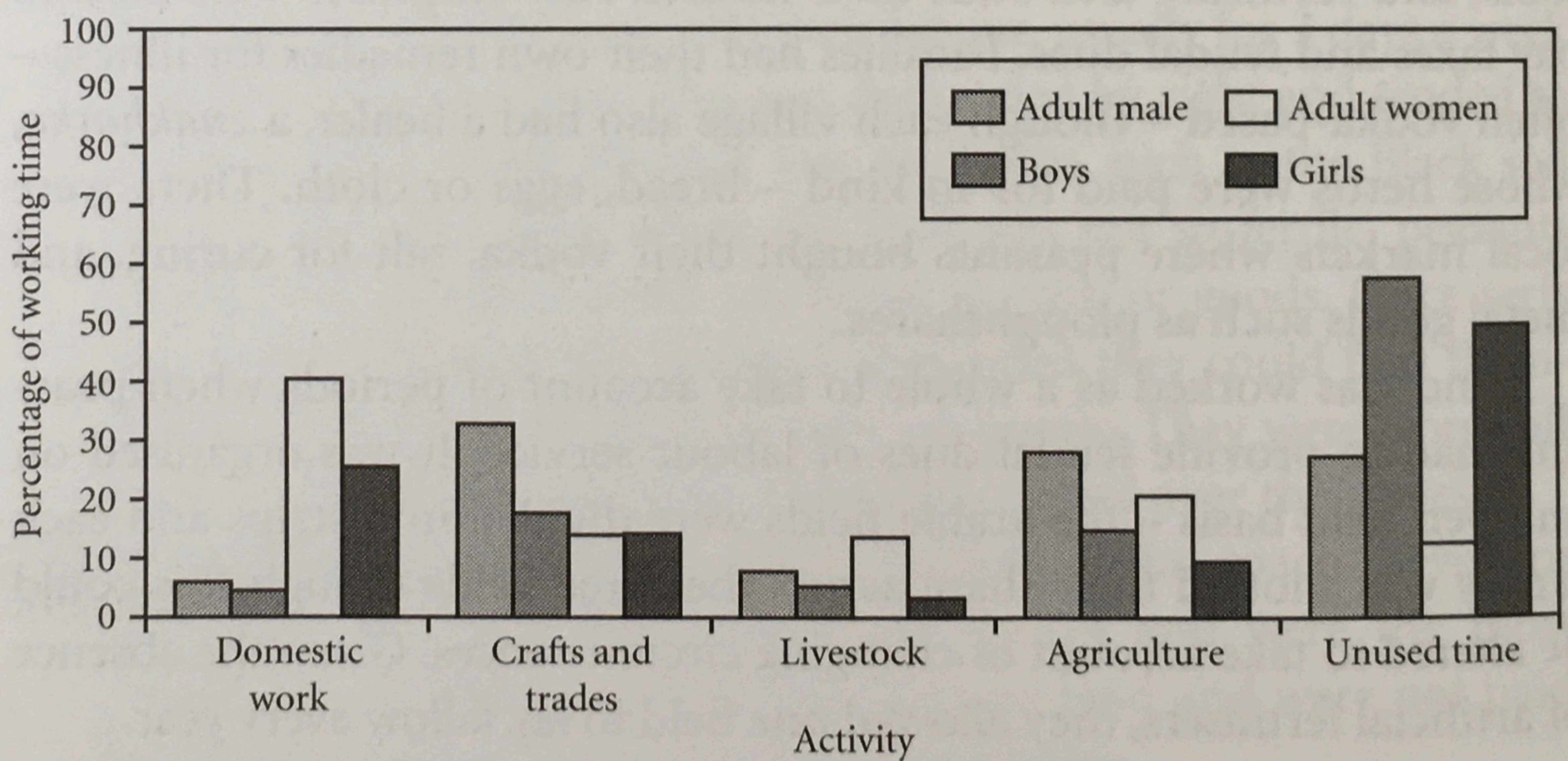
Q
 How did the method of farming affect the division of labour between men and women in the Tambov province?

TABLE 4
 Distribution of work activities

Work activities	Adult male	Boys	Adult women	Girls
Domestic work	5.7	4.5	40.2	25
Crafts/trades	32.5	17.6	13.7	14
Livestock	7.5	5.1	13.4	2.8
Agriculture	27.5	14.7	20.4	8.8
Unused time	26.8	58.1	12.3	49.4

Q
 To what extent did age and sex influence the distribution of work activities within the family?

DIAGRAM 3
 Distribution of work activities



the best allocation of labour resources. A single male simply could not complete all the necessary field work if he were to allow the cereals to mature fully yet avoid the danger of an early frost.

There thus emerged in Russia a clear differentiation of field labor by sex. During the harvest season, women used sickles to cut rye, winter wheat, if any, and sometimes oats, while the men reaped the other spring cereals with scythes. Winter crops could not be cut with a scythe because it knocked too many seeds off the stock, but this was not a problem with less ripe spring cereals. The women then tied the grain into sheaves for drying, and the men began ploughing the winter field. While they sowed the next year's rye crop, the women started to cart the sheaves from the fields assisted by their husbands if time permitted. In general, ploughing, harrowing, cutting hay, and harvesting with a scythe were men's field work; tending the kitchen garden and hemp field, raking hay, cutting stalks with a sickle, tying them, and transporting them to the threshing floor were women's field work. A partnership was essential.

Members of the village had a strong sense of community. They elected their village officials though the latter were responsible to the landlord. These officials administered the common lands, supervised the collection of state taxes, made provision for the aged, sick and orphaned and provided for education. Decisions at the *Mir* assembly were arrived at by common agreement though they were often controlled by the priest or a rich peasant **kulak**.

Life was very hard. Conditions in peasant homes were primitive, and crowded as highlighted in the following description of the interior of peasant huts in the village of Petrovskoe in the early nineteenth century. This extract is by S. L. Hoch from his book *Serfdom and Social*

kulak Russian for 'fist'
 named from their
 apparently greedy
 make up.

Inside the huts the air was fetid from animal and fowl excreta. The walls and ceiling were covered with soot and ash. Smoke especially in the morning when the stove was lit filled the top half of the *izba*. In the evening soot from the *luchinas* stung the eyes. The dirt floor was always damp and in the spring and autumn it was muddy. It was impossible to keep cockroaches out of the food; they even became a symbol of abundance and material wealth and a sign of good luck. In fact when moving to a new home the head of the household would bring a few roaches with him and let them loose. These were the conditions under which all the serfs lived for at least a third of the year.

In contrast the warm months brought considerable relief from the squalor of the hut and the psychological effect must have been substantial. Livestock of course was moved outside. The stove was heated less often and in summer was used only for cooking. More hours of sunlight reduced the need for *luchinas*. Animal dung were removed from the hut though with warm weather came the stench of decomposing manure piled in the yard.

By the middle of the nineteenth century the family was declining in size as sons started to set up their own homes. Children were seen as economic assets. Not only was more land allotted to large families, but also there was a larger labour force. Children who were not needed to work on the land could be sent to work in factories to earn extra cash. Children also represented security against old age since they took care of the aged members of the family. The importance of children in peasant economy led to a high level of marriage, for girls, usually at the age of 24. Infant mortality was high with 50% of children dying before the age of five and 45% before their fifth birthday. Those who reached their fifth birthday could expect to live to 40 years and those who survived to 20 could expect to live to their fifties.

Peasants were exposed to unpredictable rises and falls in harvests and famine, which occurred in 1820, 1833, 1839, 1845, 1855 and 1859. In almost every year in one part of the empire there was an outbreak of peasant violence due to shortages. Estimates of the numbers of such disturbances vary but one source claims that there were at least 400 during each 5-year period following 1826, and from 1844 to 1849 the number rose to 605. Although not large they were followed by a large flight of peasants to the frontier, and by passive resistance by those who remained.

F *Industrial workers*

This was not a clear-cut group. It included town labourers but some of these were strictly speaking peasants sent to work in factories, driven off the land by the shortage of agricultural land, particularly in central Russia. Growth in population led to increased demand for goods as well

Q
How does this source challenge the idealisation of rural life that was so common in writing about rural Russia?

KEY ISSUE

Peasant disturbances.

KEY ISSUE

Workers' grievances.

as a bigger labour force, but industry suffered from lack of capital and technical skills, mainly in the textile and metallurgic areas. Labourers were employed in the gold, silver, copper, and coal mines of Siberia and in the growing iron industry in the Urals. By the beginning of the nineteenth century Russia had become the world leader in iron production, and the European leader in silver. Industrial workers were under the control of the Tsar, and his officials since most of the heavy industries were in governmental hands. Private industrialists were generally members of the nobility who had acquired their factories as a reward for good service.

Workmen were ill-treated and overworked. They were paid low, and sometimes irregular, wages and expected to work long hours. Complaints to St Petersburg led to some attempts to improve workers' conditions by trying to restrict the night work of minors, regulating wages by state officials or an infrequent confiscation and transfer of ownership of whole factories. These rarely met with success, in some cases the worker had died before his complaint was addressed. Thousands escaped to Siberia or along the southern frontiers. Those who remained resisted by mass refusal to work, go-slow, disobedience, violence and heavy vodka consumption.

2 THE NATURE OF TSARDOM

For four centuries the central state power in Russia was personified in one man, the Tsar, who claimed unrestricted power. The strength of his character and his personality were fundamental to the successful running of the state as highlighted when the weak Nicholas II became Tsar in 1894. Tsardom was based on the three principles of 'Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality', which were promoted by journalists, courtiers, and priests.

A *Orthodoxy*

By Orthodoxy was meant faith in God, the divine will of the Tsar, and with it the Russian Orthodox Church. This led to a ruthless suppression of rival Catholic and **Uniate Churches** in the countries controlled by Russia, such as Poland and the western borderlands. The Church was the defender of the Tsar and once a year, until the reign of Tsar Alexander II (1855–81), priests declared a curse on all those who did not acknowledge that the tsars of Russia were divinely appointed.

B *Autocracy*

Fear of challenges to the empire, both from peasant rebellions within, and hostile neighbours outside, had led the ruling class to unite around an autocratic ruler who enjoyed total power. Nobles recognised that their privileged position depended on the Tsar.

The following is from a memorandum on autocratic government by Prince Bezborodko, 1799, quoted in M. Raeff (ed.), *Plans for Political Reform*, Prentice-Hall Inc., 1966.

The **Uniate Church** was founded in 1596 to attract the Slavic and Orthodox peoples of the Ukraine and Byelorussia to Poland and Roman Catholicism. It recognised the authority of the Pope but services were carried on in the Slavic languages.

customs and many other considerations make this the only natural form of government for Russia. All arguments to the contrary are futile and the least weakening of autocratic power would result in the loss of many provinces, the weakening of the state, and countless misfortunes for the people. An autocratic sovereign if he possesses the qualities befitting his rank must feel that he has been given unlimited power not to rule according to his whim but to respect and implement the laws established by his ancestors and by himself; in short having spoken his law he is himself the first to respect and obey it so that others may not even dare to think of evading or escaping it.

Q
What were the duties and responsibilities of an autocratic state and its ruler?

The Tsar was not controlled by any institutional or legal checks, a Parliament or elections. Everyone in the state was expected to provide service in various forms based on land except the nobility. Each province and village was expected to provide conscripts for the army, which was used to police the empire. A personality cult developed around the Tsar who was seen as a 'father' protecting his subjects.

C Nationality

Nationality was interpreted in several ways:

- 1 A union of the Russian Orthodox Church with autocracy to make the Russian nation. The Russian Church became a national church in 1453 when Byzantium (or Constantinople as it was called, and now modern-day Istanbul) fell to the Muslim Turkish Empire. In 1721 it came under the control of the Tsar's government represented by the Most Holy Directing Synod and was then a symbol of Russia's nationality.
- 2 *Russianism* based on the belief that Russia's history and geography gave it its individual character, different beliefs, ambitions, and outlook signified by serfdom. Tsars who felt strong links with Germany opposed supporters of Russianism who argued that the German dominated Baltic provinces should be Russianised. These divisions gave rise to the Slavophiles and Westernisers, who debated Russia's future direction in the 1840s (see Section 4).

3 THE NATURE OF TSARIST GOVERNMENT

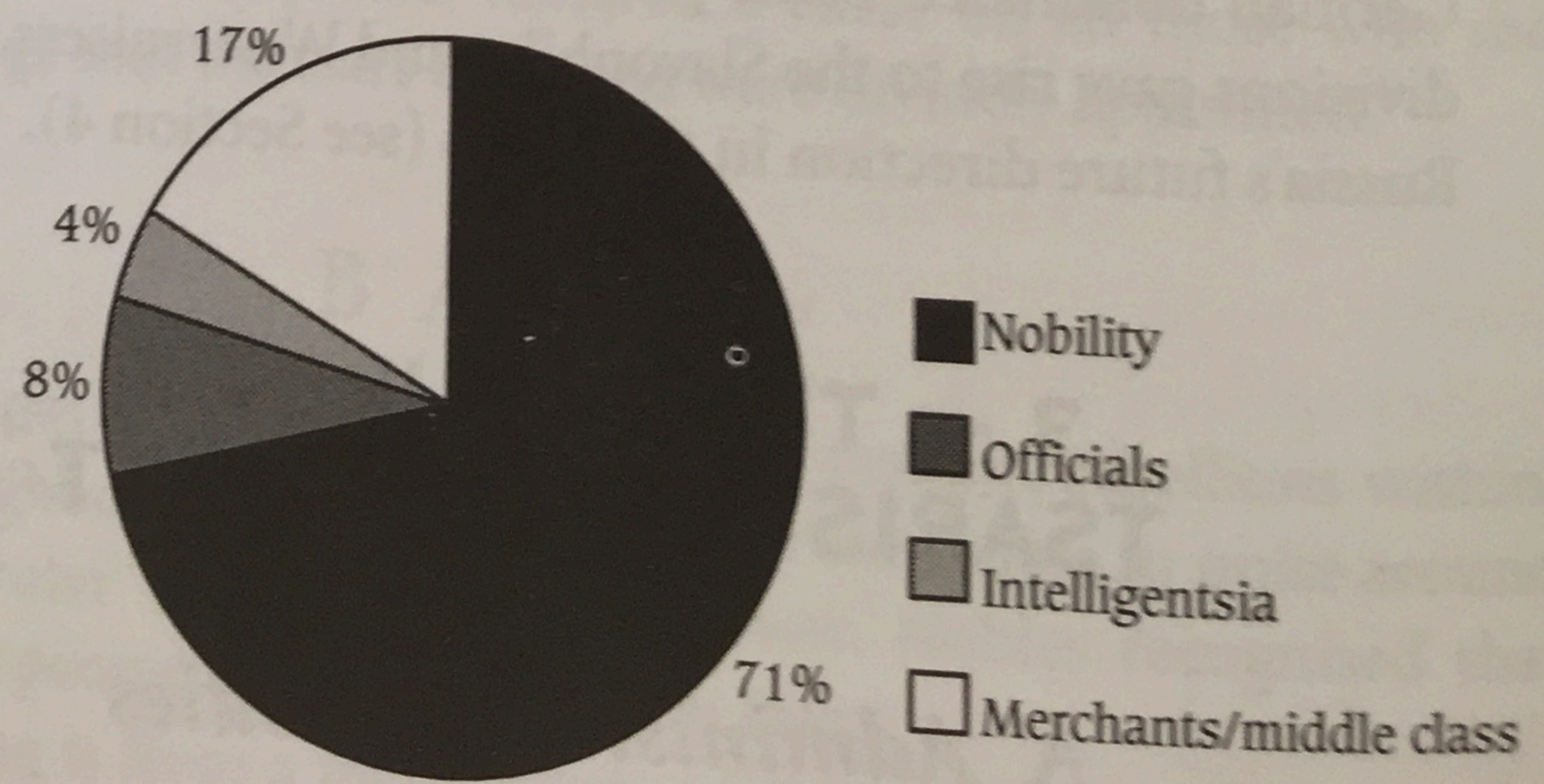
A Administrative bodies

Although he was an autocratic ruler with no legal or constitutional restraints on his power, the Tsar had three main bodies who advised:

- 1 An *Imperial Council of Ministers* chosen from the rich landowners; who had the responsibility of preparing, but not initiating, legislation. Its number varied from 35 to 60 nobles with a large subordinate staff. Tsars did not have to follow its recommendations and often issued decrees without reference to it. Nevertheless, the council survived until the 1905 Revolution, when it then became the second chamber of the new parliament or *Duma*.
- 2 A *Committee of Ministers* that grew from 8 to 14 by 1900. It was a collection of individual heads of department who combined an advisory with a supervisory function. Each minister also ran his own department – finance, interior, army, education, and war. They were appointed by, and held office at the Tsar's pleasure and could be dismissed by him at a minute's notice. They had the power to issue ministerial decrees that were approved by the Tsar and had the force of law. The committee was not a ministry with collective responsibility and its members often held contrary views. It did not exercise a co-ordinating role over the other bodies but survived until 1906 when it was reorganised as the council of ministers.
- 3 The *Senate*, founded in 1711, supervised the activities of these two bodies, though the practice of tsars taking control meant that it did not play a leading political role. Alexander II eventually reformed it into the Supreme Court of the Empire in 1864.

Tsars made use of the 'Third Section' responsible for the political police. Its agents controlled the regular bureaucracy and every aspect of society. It acted independently of the law, and became virtually a state within a state. Its presence not only encouraged rivalry with other government agencies, but also espionage, and the use of agent provocateurs within the groups of revolutionaries. Tsars also made use of specially composed committees for specific purposes, or trusted individuals who were given special powers – to report, negotiate or make decisions, who were outside the ordinary machinery of government.

Ruling group	Size (000s)	Percentage
Nobility	1000	71
Officials	114	8
Intelligentsia	50	4
Merchants/ middle class	246	17
Total	1410	100



The bureaucracy manned central and provincial government. It encouraged the development of a professional educated civil servant, mostly drawn from noble ranks or from the junior ranks of the army or priests' sons.

C Censorship

By the middle of the nineteenth century Russia had vigorously suppressed free speech. Secret police had always existed but by the start of Alexander II's reign in 1855 the Third Section of the Imperial Chancellery had turned Russia into a police state. The law was applied in all its severity to control the people and full use was made of executions, imprisonment, exile, and flogging as well as restricting foreign travel. Strict censorship was introduced to fight the growth of nationalist and liberal ideas. A variety of agencies – ecclesiastical, security police, any department of state administered it. There was also a committee responsible for the censorship of censors. People were exposed by informers, and arrested on suspicion. In some cases the censorship ban was ludicrous and unfair – newspaper articles could not include the word 'serf', a cookery book could not refer to 'free air' because this sounded too revolutionary. Individual writers were closely watched, and held in custody for days or weeks. Under such conditions writers, such as Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, used fiction to discuss social issues as well as to inform public opinion of what was going on.

D Financing of Tsarist Government

Financing of Tsarist Government came from two sources, feudal dues and taxation, both direct and indirect. Peasants bore the burden since the nobility and clergy were exempt from the payment of the direct money tax, the poll tax. In the main 88.6% of peasants and urban working classes and small traders provided 90% of the revenue to finance not only the costs of government but also the privileged and luxurious life-style of the Tsar, his royal court, and his nobles.

	(percentage)
Direct tax (poll tax and obrok)	25
Tax on vodka	30
Tax on salt	5
Custom duties	18
Other	22

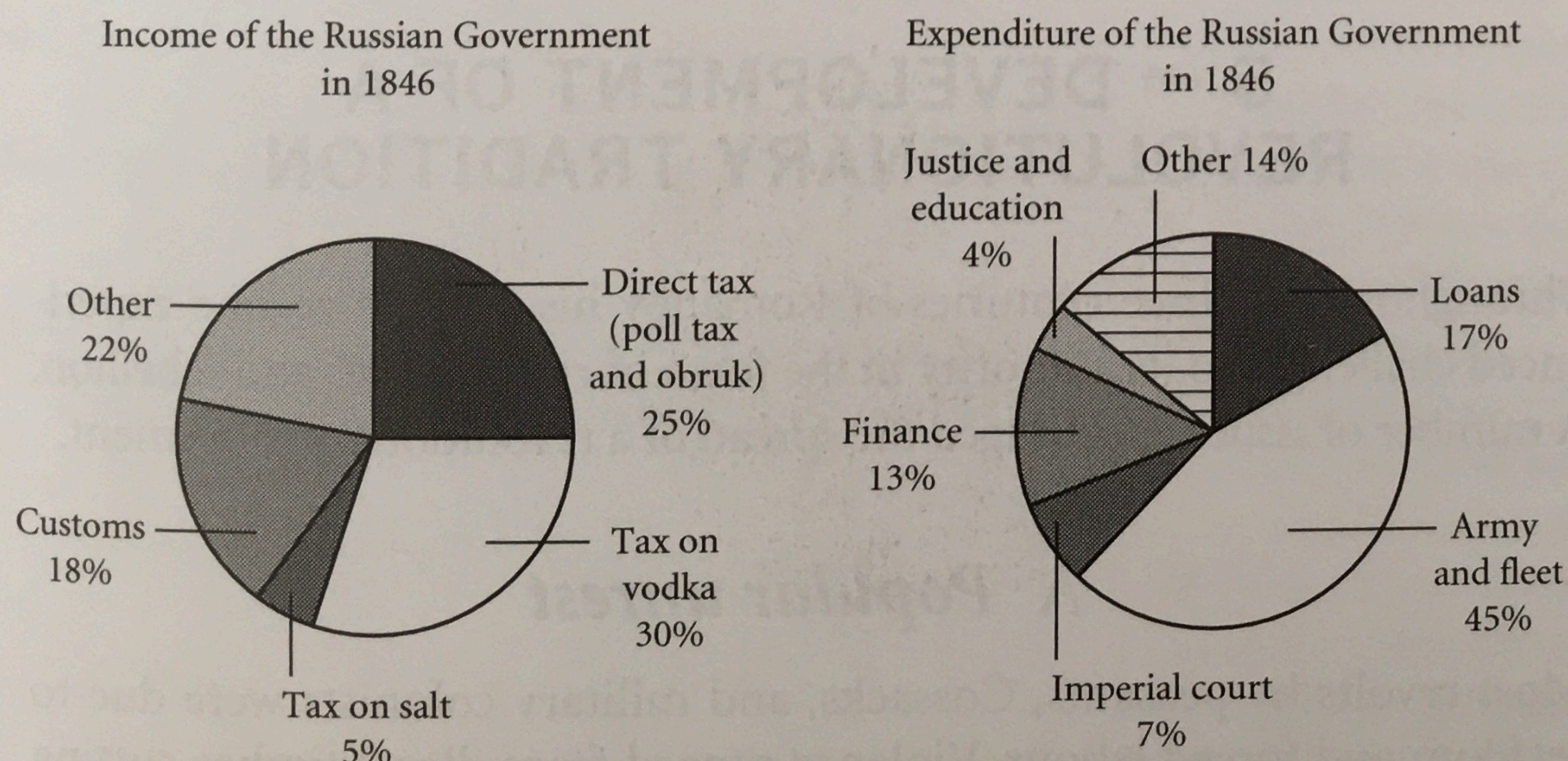
TABLE 5
Income of the Russian Government in 1846

Q

What were the most important sources of government revenue (see Table 5)?

Different areas of spending	Expenditure (%)
Loans	17
Army and Fleet	45
Imperial Court	7
Ministry of Finance	13
Ministries of Justice and Education	4
Other	14

TABLE 6
Expenditure of the Russian Government in 1846



Q

What appeared to be exceptional in terms of the different areas of spending by the Russian state?

DIAGRAM 5
Income and expenditure of the Russian Government in 1846

to the destruction of crops and the murder of landowners and bailiffs. These disturbances were typical of the food riots that characterised eighteenth century society in other parts of Western Europe. They were spontaneous, short-lived, leader-less and often confined to the locality. They were rebellions of the belly motivated by hunger and resentment rather than a politically inspired campaign to change society. They posed more of a threat to individual noble families than to the Tsar. It would be incorrect to see these peasant protests as the beginnings of the revolutionary movement that occurred in the second half of the nineteenth century. Intellectuals did not yet appeal to the illiterate peasantry.

B *The challenge of intellectuals*

By the middle of the nineteenth century three main issues had emerged in Russian society that were fiercely debated by its small group of intellectuals:

- 1 The relationship between the individual and the autocracy.
- 2 The relationship of Russia to Europe.
- 3 The gulf between the upper and lower classes centring on the question where did Russia's future lie?

By the 1840s issues surrounding the future development of Russia were beginning to merge in the debates between two broad groups of intellectuals who were termed Slavophiles and Westernisers.

KEY ISSUE

Debates on Russia's future.

COMPARISON OF SLAVOPHILES AND WESTERNISERS

Similarities

- Both groups:
- were influenced by European philosophers
 - shared a love of Russia
 - feared the incompetence of the existing Russian government and agreed it was unsatisfactory,
 - idealised the peasant and wanted their emancipation
 - defended the *Mir* and the commune as a specifically Russian institution that could be used as the basis for future development
 - pressed for reform especially social but also some form of consultative representative institution.

Differences

- Slavophiles regarded themselves as non-political and were conservative in outlook in contrast with the Westernisers who believed that future development would be based on a class struggle within a capitalist system.
- Slavophiles emphasised 'Slavic' values of togetherness (*sobornost*), the unity of the Tsar and people that had been broken by Peter the Great whereas the Westernisers valued western ways including industrialisation and urbanisation.
- Slavophiles were devout Christians and believed in Orthodoxy; Westernisers were non-believers who were opposed to the idea of a state religion.
- Slavophiles opposed individualism because it was associated with freedom; Westernisers valued the rights of the individual including democracy.

By mid-nineteenth century Russia's educational system was based on a Ministry of Education that divided the country into six regions, that subsequently grew to 15 by 1914. Each was under the control of a curator, who was in close touch with the Ministry of Education, and who was a member of the Central School Board. A comprehensive state system of education existed based on four types of schools that were headed by the universities:

- 1 Universities, located at Moscow, St Petersburg, Dorpat (that taught in German and served the Baltic provinces), Vilna (that catered for the Poles of Lithuania), Kazan and Kharkov. The curriculum was controlled and based on Theology, Church History and Church Law while Russian and Slavic History were introduced at Moscow and St Petersburg.
- 2 *Gimnazii*, renamed in 1849 as *realschulen* or *Realgimnazi*, were higher 7-year secondary schools serving the towns.
- 3 County schools provided 3 years of schooling at district, *uezd* level.
- 4 Parish schools formed the base of the educational pyramid providing a 1-year elementary course. They relied on the charity of landowners and the church for their money so that there were many parishes that had no schools.
- 5 Church and military schools, private boarding schools for nobles at Moscow, Nizhnii, Novgorod, and Penza existed alongside state schools.

The regime feared that education would lead to the dangerous spread of ideas and so kept its masses ignorant. Few of the 21.7 million serfs or even the 3.4 million town people who formed a large part of the 60 million population in 1851 were educated.