Pyotr Kuz’mich Kozlov

1863–1935

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Pyotr Kuz’mich Kozlov was a Russian pioneer explorer of Inner Asia (Mongolia, Western China and Tibet). He took part in six expeditions mounted by the Imperial Russian Geographical Society (RGS), with some assistance given by the General Staff of the War Ministry, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Three of these he organized and led. The exploration of Inner Asia was started in 1870 by the famous Nikolai Mikhailovich Przhevalskii with the purpose of preliminary
‘scientific reconnaissance’ of this vast and largely uncharted area of the Asian Heartland. Przhevalskii was followed by other Russian explorers, both military and civilian, one of whom was Pyotr Kozlov, his talented pupil and companion. Russia’s extensive ‘reconnoitering’ of the region continued for several decades and was a most successful enterprise, having made an extremely valuable contribution to our knowledge of the geography of Inner Asia, as well as natural sciences, ethnography and partly archaeology.

According to British historian and archaeologist Evart Barger, both Przhevalskii and Kozlov rank among the most outstanding Western travellers of the ‘period of Asienforscher’, a ‘gold age of discovery’, along with other great explorers from Western Europe and America, such as Sven Hedin, Paul Pelliot, Edouard Chavannes, Ferdinand von Richthofen (Geographers Vol. 7), Aurel Stein, Albert Grünwedel, Albert von Le Coq, Raphael Pumpelly and Ellsworth Huntington (Barger 1944, 1).

Early life and education

In his short autobiographical sketch written in the late 1920s Petr Kozlov stated that his whole life was spent ‘under the badge of exploration of nature and man of Inner Asia’. He had just one desire – to wander around in the wide expanses of deserts and mountains of the great Asiatic continent (Kozlov 1927).

Kozlov was born on 3 October 1863 into a poor, semi-literate family in Dukhovshchina, a little town in Smolensk Province, west of Moscow. His father Kuz’ma Egorovich was a herdsman who drove cattle from Ukraine to central Russia. The boy occasionally accompanied his father on these trips and that was how he took to the life of a wayfarer, seeing scenes and constantly moving from one place to another. His mother, Praskovia Nikitichna, was, in his own words, an ‘embodiment of meek temper and kindness’. When the boy was nine, his father sent him to the local parish school which was turned, in 1875, into a six-year town school, with a new teaching staff which included some talented pedagogues of new formation. One of them was Vasilii Porfirievich Vakhterov, a Darwinist and the founder of the theory of ‘evolutionary pedagogics’. He strongly influenced young Pyotr, arousing in him keen interest in geography and natural sciences and acquainting him with Przhevalskii’s books Puteshestvie v Ussuriskom krae, 1867–1869 (1870) and Mongolia i strana Tangutov (1875), describing his journeys in the Far East and Inner Asia.

Pyotr left school in 1878 and immediately started to make preparations for entering the pedagogical institute at Vilno. However, his parents could not sponsor his further education, so he had to take the job of a clerk at the distillery in the village Sloboda in the same Smolensk Province. Coincidentally, it was there, on the shores of Lake Sapsho, that Przhevalskii had settled, after the completion of his third expedition to Inner Asia
(1879–80), having purchased an estate there. Kozlov met the traveller by chance in Sloboda and this meeting settled his destiny. Przhevalsky sensed a kindred soul, a ‘nomadic spirit’ in the youth and invited him to take part in his next expedition. Moreover, he offered to prepare him for the journey. As Kozlov would recall in his memoirs, Przhevalskii became his second father, who ‘educated’ him and taught many things needed by a field-surveyor; he shaped him as an explorer. Under Przhevalskii’s tutelage, Kozlov learnt how to conduct field survey of many kinds, such as route sketching, taking instrumental measurements, shooting animals, collecting plants and minerals.

In January 1883 Kozlov passed the examinations, as an external pupil, at the secondary school in Smolensk, and shortly after joined the 2nd Sofiskii infantry regiment in Moscow. Knowing that Przhevalsky recruited his expedition staff from military men alone, he had to undergo a three months’ training as a volunteer of the regiment. In his later years Kozlov would continue his education trying to acquire knowledge of the things which might be useful to him in his travels. He associated with the leading scientists in St. Petersburg, then the capital of Russia, and often visited the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, the Pulkovo Astronomical Observatory, the Zoological Museum and the Botanical Gardens: ‘The years of my settled life at home, he wrote in one of his autobiographical essays, I spent in perfecting my knowledge of the natural sciences, ethnography and astronomy’ (Kozlov 1927, 4).

With Przhevalkii on his final expeditions (1883–5, 1888)

Przhevalskii’s fourth journey to Inner Asia, also known as his second Tibet expedition (1883–5), had as its principal objective the exploration of Northern Tibetan plateau. His final destination was Lhasa, the residence of the Dalai Lamas of Tibet, which he had failed to reach on his previous journey (1879), being halted by a Tibetan frontier cordon, some 165 miles north of the holy city. Kozlov joined the party as the leader’s junior assistant, along with sub-lieutenants Vsevolod Roborovskii and Feodor Eklon. Other members, forming the escort, were grenadier-soldiers and Cossacks from Transbaikalia. The expedition trekked from Urga (today’s Ulan Bator) south across the Gobi Desert towards the Nan Shan Mountains and Eastern Tibet (Kham). There Kozlov was spell-bound by the majestic grandeur of the place, especially by the swift and winding Tetung River, of which he had read in Przhevalskii’s books. He immediately fell in love with Tetung and would later express his admiration in the words: ‘At Tetung my soul woke up consciously for the first time – I learnt to apprehend the beauties of Alpine nature’ (Kozlov 1947, 107). From Nan Shan the party travelled
to Lake Kukunor (Kokonor), thence to the Tsaidam (Qaidam) marshland and finally ascended the Tibetan Highlands, having crossed the Burhan Budda range. There the expedition explored the upper reaches of Asia’s two greatest rivers, the Hwang Ho and the Yangtze. However the travellers soon found themselves in trouble when their base camp was attacked by militant Ngolok nomads. Kozlov had to engage in fighting, for the first time in his life. Later, when the party camped out at Lake Orin Nor (Hnora mTrsho, Lake Russian, Ngoring Hu), he fought against another band of Ngoloks. Przhevalskii admired his courage and fearlessness and personally awarded him the Order of St George Cross 4th class for bravery. After these two clashes Przhvalskii had to give up on his original plans and moved no further into the inhospitable no-man’s land. He returned to Tsaidam and proceeded to Lake Lobnor (Lop Nor) to observe the springtime migration of birds. From Lobnor his expedition went to the Takla Makan Desert and visited several oases on its outer rim (Cherchen, Niya, Keria and Chira), on the final leg of their journey.

The scientific results of Przhevalskii’s fourth expedition were many. The travellers explored the north-western fringe of Tibet, mapped the source of the Hwang Ho (Huang He) river and the upper Yangtze, located the hitherto unknown Tsaidam and several mountain ranges. They also found a pathway leading from Tsaidam to Takla Makan and crossed the ‘burning’ desert. Kozlov’s own contribution was mainly meteorological and he collected zoological specimens. His field work under Przhevalskii, who taught him how to discern birds by their voices and plumage, was especially important for him as a novice naturalist and zoologist. After the expedition Kozlov would record that ‘Inner Asia has become my life’s goal. Nature in general and that of Inner Asia in particular captivated me completely’ (Kozlov 1913a, 91). Upon his return from the journey, Kozlov entered the infantry military college in St. Petersburg, his tuition being paid for by Przhevalskii. Having graduated with the rank of sub-lieutenant in 1887, Kozlov was attached to the 1st Ekaterinoslav grenadier of the life-guards regiment at Moscow and, a year later, was again placed under Major-General Przhevalskii to take part in his new expedition.

The journey was again Tibet-bound with Lhasa as its destination. This was accidental since Tibet and Chinese Turkestan (especially Kashgaria) had become one of the playgrounds of the ‘Great Game’, the Anglo-Russian rivalry for hegemony in Asia, ‘a Cold War’ for the Victorian Age. As a Russian patriot and a senior officer attached to the General Staff, Przhevalskii anxiously watched developments in Inner Asia and gathered political and military-statistical intelligence in addition to his scientific work. Przhevalskii’s fifth expedition was, however, a fiasco. At its start he caught typhoid fever and died suddenly on 19 October 1888 at Karakol, close to Lake Issyk-Kul. Przhevalskii was buried at the lake, according to his will, and a year later the town was renamed into Przhevalsk in commemoration of Przhevalskii’s great merits. The death of my teacher and friend, Nikolai
Mikhailovich Przhevalskii’, Kozlov would say later, ‘was a great shock to me. This pain though did not kill my will to live, but furthered my spiritual growth, as I understood at once that I remain, from now on, all by myself and must hold sacred the precepts of my teacher’ (Kozlov 1927).

Kozlov’s new mentors and patrons, after Przhevalskii’s death, were Pyotr Petrovich Semionov (Tian-Shanskii), the explorer of Tian-Shan and the vice president of the Russian Geographical Society, Aleksandr Vasilievich Grigoriev, the Society’s secretary, Mikhail Vasilievich Pevtsov, an explorer, and the zoologists Valentin L’vovich Biancki and Evgenii Aleksandrovich Bühner who described and studied his collections.

**After Przhevalskii: travelling with Pevtsov and Roborovskii**

In 1889 the Russian Geographical Society placed Mikhail Vasilievich Pevtsov, Colonel in the General Staff and a member of the Society, in charge of Przhevalskii’s ‘orphaned’ expedition. Pevtsov had previously led two expeditions to Dzungaria, Mongolia and Eastern China. He was also known as the author of ‘The Basic Foundations of Mathematical and Physical Geography’ [*Nachal’nye osnovania matematicheskoi i fizicheskoi geografii*] (St. Petersburg, 1881) and for his own definition of geographical latitude by the appropriate heights of two constellations. Pevtsov had three assistants on the journey: the junior officers Roborovskii and Kozlov, and the geologist Karl Bogdanovich.

Pevtsov radically altered Przhevalskii’s expedition programme. Instead of exploring the south-eastern corner of Tibet (Kham) and heading to Lhasa he focused on Tibet’s north-western fringe and aimed to cross in several directions the hitherto unexplored area between the Russian border and the Kuen Lun range. On this trip Kozlov had an opportunity to work individually, being put in charge of the zoological collection by Pevtsov, while Roborovskii was collecting plants and Bogdanovich minerals. Quite often they were sent out on separate ‘lateral excursions’, off the main caravan route, to undertake topographic surveys and collect specimens. Kozlov made four such excursions. The Tibet expedition under Pevtsov lasted from May 1889 to January 1891. Despite its reduced programme, it was fairly productive of scientific results. Kozlov’s personal contribution was his zoological collection and the mapping of the 270 km long Konchedarya riverbed along with the northern shore of Lake Bagrashkol. He also collected ethnographic material, including legends he had heard from the local settlers at Bagrashkol, the Kalmyks. Kozlov’s report of his journey consisted of two separate narratives: *Vverkh po reke Kon’che-darie* (Upstream along the river Konchen Darya) and *Po beregu ozera Bagram-Kul’* (Along the bank of Lake Bagram-Kul); both are included in the third volume of the Works of the
Tibet Expedition (Kozlov 1896). These were the traveller’s first published works. This journey shaped Kozlov as an explorer – as field surveyor, geographer and naturalist. For his achievements he was awarded in 1891 the Przhevalskii silver medal recently instituted by the Russian Geographical Society, and in October 1891 was elected a full member of the Society.

Kozlov married Nadezhda Stepanovna Kamynina on 29 April 1891. She was a Muscovite, a close friend of Elena Przhevalskii, Nikolai Przhevalskii’s niece, who lived in Moscow. Nadezhda Kamynina came from a noble family of modest means, was well-educated, played piano and, importantly to Kozlov, was sympathetic to his semi-nomadic way of living. The couple settled in Moscow in Nadezhda’s apartment. Two children were born to the Kozlovs, Vladimir (in 1897) and Olga (in 1903).

Kozlov’s next journey to Inner Asia took place in 1893–5 when he joined the expedition under Vsevolod Ivanovich Roborovskii (1856–1910). This journey came to be known as ‘The Expedition of Przhevalskii’s Companions’ in the records of the Geographical Society. Its programme envisaged the exploration of the eastern part of the Kuen Lun range, the Lukchun depression south of Turfan and the north-eastern Tibet, especially the basin of the Yangtze River, visited previously by Przhevalskii. On this journey Kozlov had a chance to work independently, making 14 separate excursions of about 1,000 km in total. He altogether surveyed about 8,000 versts (5,280 miles), nearly half of the entire expedition sketching work. The most remarkable was his two and half month trek from Lukchun (where the travellers established a meteorological station) southwards, across Lobnor, and further to Sa-chow. On this trip alone Kozlov surveyed 1,750 versts (1,155 miles), which, in the opinion of contemporary geographers, was an expedition in itself (Otchet IRGO za 1902 god, (1903), Part I, IRGO, St. Petersburg, 10–12). Much attention, as before, was given by Kozlov to collecting zoological specimens. The results of his own work were published in 1899 in a volume of the Works of V. I. Roborovskii’s expedition, entitled Otchet pomoshnika nachalnika ekspeditsii P.K. Kozlova (The report of the assistant of the expedition leader P. K. Kozlov) (Kozlov 1899). The expedition worked in very unfavourable conditions. The hurricane winds at the Tsaidam (Qaidam) Basin knocked down the travellers and pack animals (horses and yaks), and they all suffered in the high altitude of the Tibetan Highlands. When the caravan reached the source of Hwang Ho, Roborovskii collapsed with a stroke and Kozlov had to take command and bring the expedition to an end, which he did in November 1895. Overall the Roborovskii–Kozlov expedition was successful. The zoological collection alone consisted of 250 skins of mammals, 1,200 birds, 450 reptiles and fishes and about 30,000 insects. What made it particularly valuable were some rare specimens of wild camel (Camelus bactrianus ferus), wild horse (Equus Przewalskii) and snow-cock. The latter was obtained by Koslov in Nan-Shan and subsequently named Tetraogallus himalayensis koslowi by zoologist V. L. Bianki.
Leading the Tibet Expedition (1899–1901)

In 1898 Kozlov initiated his own project for the further exploration of Inner Asia. This was largely based upon Przhevalskii’s programme roughly sketched in his account of the fourth expedition in a chapter entitled ‘How to travel in Inner Asia’ (Przhevalskii 1888, 1–66). According to this programme, the territories which needed to be first explored were the northern, north-eastern and southern fringes of the Tibetan plateau, with its alpine provinces of Amdo and Kham, the three most ‘tasty morsels’ for a ‘genuine explorer’, in Przhevalskii’s words. Lhasa also figured prominently on this agenda, yet it still remained ‘the forbidden city’, inaccessible to Western travellers. Other areas included the south-eastern tract of Mongolia, with the Alasha Mountains, and the mountainous northern Mongolia, bordering on Russian Siberia. Accordingly, Kozlov’s priorities on this journey were three: Eastern Tibet (Kham), Mongolian Altai and the Central Gobi. He had two assistants (‘travelling companions’), Aleksandr Nikolaevich Kaznakov, entrusted with the task of collecting insects and molluscs, and Veniamin Feodorovich Ladygin, in charge of plants and butterflies. At the same time, the latter, owing to his excellent knowledge of the Chinese and Mongolian languages and of the Turkish dialects spoken in Eastern Turkestan, was to collect various ethnographic and historical materials, and to act as interpreter in dealings with the local Chinese authorities. Both Kaznakov and Ladygin were also to make ‘lateral excursions’ on their own, as Kozlov had under Pevtsov and Roborovskii. Kozlov took upon himself the important tasks of keeping the geographical, meteorological and natural history diaries, surveying of the expedition main route and taking the astronomical measurements. The escort of the expedition consisted of sixteen soldiers from different parts of Russia, placed under the command of Sergeant Ivanov, an experienced veteran who had taken part in three previous journeys of Przhevalskii, Pevtsov and Roborovskii.

The expedition began in the Altaiskaya village in July 1899, passed through Mongolian Altai, Central Gobi, the province of Han-Su (Gansu), Tsaidam (Qaidam) and Eastern Tibet (Kham). The return journey was made along the already well-known routes through the Alasha (Alashan) and via Urga to Kiakhta on the Russian–Mongolian border. The results of Kozlov’s Tibet expedition were impressive. The party thoroughly explored the Mongolian Altai, the Central Gobi and the portion of eastern or inner Tibet, known as Kham. The Altai was explored all along its northern and southern foot, and several times crossed, while the Gobi was traversed along four different routes. In eastern Tsaidam, at the northern foot of Tibet, a depot of the collections and the provisions was organized, and the camels were left there as the journey across Tibet was only possible with oxen. A meteorological station was established there, upon the recommendation of one of the leading Russian geodesists and cartographers, Aleksei A. Tillo.
Four men, under Sergeant Ivanov, were left at the station, and the conduct of meteorological observations was left to Muraviov, who had received the necessary preliminary training. The Tsaidam meteorological station worked for 15 months without interruption, the records of the instruments being taken thrice a day, and once every three months every hour for twenty-four hours in succession. This was the first time that such work was done in Inner Asia, and the observations of the Tsaidam station provided a solid basis for calculating the altitudes in Tibet (Tachalov 1907, 1–3).

The expedition lasted for two and half years. It brought back to St. Petersburg in 1901 about 8,000 miles of route survey; the positions of forty localities determined astronomically; geographical, historical, ethnographical and commercial information about the regions visited; more than 400 photographs; meteorological observations; and rich natural history collections: about 1,200 geological specimens; nearly 1,400 species of plants (over 30,000 specimens); 300 skins of mammals, ten skeletons, 1,500 birds, 500 fishes and reptiles and 30,000 insects. All these collections were arranged and placed in the hands of specialists and different scientific bodies (Kozlov 1902, 597–8).

The only setback of the journey was Kozlov's failure to reach Lhasa. He was stopped, on the very border of Lhasa district, by Tibetans who implored him not to proceed further towards the holy city. Later, officials from Lhasa arrived in the expedition camp, allegedly from the Dalai Lama, to ascertain whether the travellers were either Russian or British, informing Kozlov that all Western visitors were unwelcome to Lhasa. Nevertheless, Kozlov was able to explore thoroughly the territory of Kham where he made important geographical discoveries. He mapped the hitherto uncharted upper reaches of the Hwang Ho and Yangtze rivers as well as a number of ranges to which he gave names – those of the Russian Geographical Society (between Yangtze and Mekong), of the Water Parting (between Hwang Ho and Yangtze), of Tibet’s first explorers (Pundit A-k, Dutrei de Rhins, Woodwill Rockhill) and several others. (These place names were subsequently discarded and replaced by indigenous toponyms on most maps). His pioneer limnological explorations were important. Kozlov carried a small canvas boat, dredges, thermometers and other hydrological instruments for this work. Kaznakov and Ladygin made soundings on the two Kobdo lakes in Mongolian Altai, as well as on the Tibetan plateau (Alyk-nor).

The many achievements of Kozlov’s Tibet expedition were highly praised by the Russian Geographical Society which presented the traveller with the Konstantin gold medal, their highest award. The results of the expedition were published in several volumes between 1905 and 1908. These included Kozlov’s account of the journey (vol. I), accounts of his assistants Kaznakov and Ladygin (vol. II), the contributions by specialists who assessed the astronomic and meteorological observations (Nikolai A. Tachalov, Anton A. Kaminskii, vol. III) and described the ornithological and entomological collections (Valentin L. Bianki, Theodor Becker et al., vol. V, VII), and that of
the Tibetan algae (Konstantin S. Merezhkovskii, vol. VIII). Volumes IV and VI, dealing with the specimens of mammals and reptiles were not published. Kozlov’s expedition to Mongolia and Kham also aroused considerable interest among Western geographers. The Petermanns Geographische Mitteilungen carried a series of his ‘bivouac reports’ reprinted from the Russian Izvestia IRG (Kozlov 1901, 90–4, 160–3, 182–7, 205–8, 237–9). The Geographical journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London published in 1902 Kozlov’s account of his travels which he had sent to this body; he was also in correspondence with members (see Archive of the Russian Geographical Society, f. 18, op. 3, d. 160, l. 1–23 (13 letters, 1902–31); Royal Geographical Society (with the IBG), Archives, P. K. Kozloff’s Correspondence Block, 1881–1910, 1911–20, 1921–30). The scientific results of the expedition were also presented at the 8th International Geographical Congress in Washington in 1904 (Kozlov 1905).

Meeting the Dalai Lama

While organizing his Tibet expedition, Kozlov made the acquaintance of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama’s emissary, a Buryat lama Agwan Dorzhiev. He came to St. Petersburg in 1898 to establish contacts with the Russian government and the Tsar, Nicholas II, seeking their support to counter British encroachments in Tibet. Dorzhiev was an influential figure in Lhasa, the chief political advisor to Tibet’s ruler, and it was largely owing to him that the latter adopted a pro-Russian orientation in the late 1890s (Andreyev 2003). Having learnt about Kozlov’s plans, Dorzhiev expressed his willingness to help the traveller obtain permission to visit Lhasa; however, he was unable to do so, as he was away from Tibet at the time of Kozlov’s journey.

Dorzhiev’s shuttle diplomacy on his several visits to Russia was fairly successful, bringing about a Russo-Tibetan rapprochement, albeit short-lived. What Dorzhiev and the Dalai Lama primarily sought was a protectorate treaty with the Russian government or a formal agreement that would safeguard Tibet against any potential aggressor (Andreyev 2003, 167–8; Andreyev 2003a). Dorzhiev’s activities, however, seriously alarmed the viceroy of India, Lord Curzon, who, in 1903, sent a British mission to Lhasa under Francis Younghusband, ostensibly to ‘frustrate’ Russian intrigue in Tibet. As a result, the Dalai Lama, together with Dorzhiev and some of his ministers, fled to Urga in Outer Mongolia, close to the Russian border. As soon as Kozlov learnt from Russian newspapers about the British mission, he immediately submitted a memorandum to the General Staff in which he proposed to send a similar Russian mission (‘expeditionary force’) to counter the British Indian authorities. The mission, consisting of Buryat Cossacks, was to incline the Tibetan government, following the British example, to open their country to Russian Buddhist pilgrims and commercial goods, by resorting to either diplomatic negotiations, or, if need be, to ‘appropriate’
military action. In February 1904, however, the Russo-Japanese war broke out; Kozlov’s proposal was shelved by the Russian military until a more opportune moment.

In the spring of 1905, despite continued hostilities in the Far East, the Foreign Ministry jointly with the General Staff sent Captain Kozlov, as their spokesman, to the Dalai Lama, ‘under the banner of the RGS’ [Russian Geographical Society]. He was commissioned to meet with Tibet’s pontiff and to discuss the possibility of Russian assistance to Tibet. By that time Kozlov had come up with a rather dashing project of his own – that of helping the Dalai Lama return to Lhasa by providing him a Russian cossack escort to be led by Kozlov himself. The Foreign Ministry turned down his project, while he was still in Urga, from apprehension that such a mission might seriously damage Anglo-Russian relations. Nonetheless the two-month stay in Urga, from May to July, allowed Kozlov to enter into friendly relations with the Dalai Lama who welcomed the idea of the Russian escort and invited Kozlov to come to Lhasa with a scientific expedition. The Lama was impressed by Kozlov’s recently published travelogue ‘Mongolia and Kham’ and he particularly admired the map of Tibet that he had never seen before. ‘Now Lhasa is open to you’, he told the Russian traveller, when parting. In his travel diary Kozlov recorded: ‘The Dalai Lama, whom I see quite often, treats me amiably and friendly, and I am positively happy that one of my long-cherished dreams, to see the ruler of Lhasa and Tibet, is realized, yet it pains me and makes me feel bitter to know that the fulfilment of my second best dream, that of visiting Lhasa, is being opposed by our own diplomats’ (Zhitomirskii 1989, 121; Kozlov 2004, 98–127). In subsequent years, when the Dalai Lama moved from Urga to inland China, Kozlov, together with Dorzhiev, continued to press the authorities to send a Russian expedition with scientific and diplomatic goals to Lhasa. Basically this was his revived project for a Russian escort to bring back the Dalai Lama to his homeland.

As a pupil and ardent admirer of Przhevalskii, Kozlov inherited much of his mentor’s ‘imperial vision’ of Asia and his views of Russia’s ‘civilizing mission’ on the continent. He certainly shared Przhevalskii’s obsession with Tibet, the high prize of the Great Game, trying hard to enter Lhasa at the head of a Russian scientific expedition. In his 1905 Urga diaries Kozlov spoke harshly about Russia’s expansion in the Far East which led to the dramatic clash with Japan. As a ‘Great Gamer’, he opted for a more advantageous ‘object-region’, the neighbouring Mongolia and Eastern (Chinese) Turkestan, and advocated Russia’s ‘peaceful conquest’ of these countries by means of commerce and culture. He particularly emphasized the importance of an alliance with the Dalai Lama that would help Russia ‘assert her rights’ against those enjoyed by Britain in that part of Asia. In the same diaries he spelled out his political credo: ‘We (i.e., Russians – A.A., T.Y.) must commit ourselves to Mongolia and East[ern] Turkestan and walk hand in hand with the Dalai Lama’ (Kozlov 2004, 116). Yet, when Kozlov was writing these words, the Great Game was already on the wane, and, in
1907, it effectively ended after Russia and Britain signed an agreement that carved out their spheres of influence in Central Asia (Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet). Thereafter, Kozlov adopted a more conciliatory stance towards the British and even talked of a need to cooperate with London on the Tibetan issue.

He was a politically minded person, a pragmatist ready to serve the interests of his country in the best way he could, yet he can hardly be seen as a proponent of ‘conquistador imperialism’ the way Przhevalskii was (Schimmelpenninck van der Oye 2001, 41). At the same time Kozlov had a strong romantic streak in his character as demonstrated by his emotive descriptions of the beauties of ‘wild’ nature unspoiled by man, especially of Eastern Tibet, that one finds in his travel diaries and books. Yet, above all, he was a military man, which certainly colored his personality and views. (In 1906 he was assigned on detached service at the Chief Directorate of the General Staff (GUGSh) and put at the disposal of the Chief of the General Staff Lieutenant General F.F. Palitsyn.)

The Mongolia–Sichuan Expedition (1907–9) and the discovery of Khara-Khoto

In the spring of 1907 Kozlov submitted his new expedition project to the Russian Geographical Society. His primary objectives were Middle and Southern Mongolia, those parts not yet visited by Europeans; the Kukunor area with the Alpine Lake Kukunor, and the north-western corner of Sichuan known for its rich fauna and flora. Lhasa was not on his agenda, because the Dalai Lama was not returned and because British and Russian expeditions to Tibet were prohibited for a period of three years by the 1907 Anglo-Russian agreement. Kozlov’s programme was approved by the Society and by the Tsar himself. The expedition had some additional undeclared tasks, namely the collection of economic information, the military reconnaissance of the route between Kiakhta and Tsaidam, that is, between Russia and Tibet, but, first and foremost, the search for the ruins of the ‘dead city’ of Khara-Khoto (Black City) in southern Gobi, believed to be the capital of the Tangut kingdom Xi-Xia (Western Xia). This was a major medieval Tangut settlement known to Europeans since the days of Marco Polo. All searches hitherto for Khara-Khoto by Russian travellers in the late nineteenth century had proven unsuccessful, with the Torgout Mongols who inhabited the lower Edzin-gol where the ruins lay hidden even denying their existence.

Surprisingly, when Kozlov’s expedition had been already mounted, he received a letter (in mid-May 1907) with sensational information from a young Buryat trader Tsokto Badmazhapov, who had participated previously in his Tibet journey. Badmazhapov wrote to Kozlov that while passing with his caravan through the Edzin-gol area he had stumbled over the ruins
of Khara-Khoto during a sandstorm, apparently by sheer luck. He also forwarded a detailed account of his passage across the desert along with a description of Khara-Khoto and several photographs, the first ever taken of the legendary ‘dead city’, to the RGS (Badmazhapov, *Tridzatiipiidnevaia poezdka ot reidentsii kniazia Alasha Vana do stavki Torgoud-Beile* (1907), Archive of the Russian Geographical Society, St. Petersburg, Razriad 97, op. 1, d. 30, and see Andreeyev 1997, 61–86; Yusupova 2008, 112–29). This stunning news immediately gave a strong additional impetus to Kozlov’s journey. In his travel diary Kozlov would confess that he was thinking of Khara-Khoto all the way from St. Petersburg to Mongolia.

The staff of the Mongolia–Sichuan expedition included, apart from Kozlov, his three assistants – geologist Aleksandr A. Chernov, topographer of the General Staff Captain Pyotr Napalkov and collector of plants and insects Sergei S. Chetyrkin – and a ten-man escort headed by Gavriil Ivanov (Figure 5.1). At the start of the journey the party traversed Mongolia across the Gobi, from north to south-east, heading towards the oasis Den-yuan-in where Badmazhapov owned a house. On his way Kozlov stopped at the *hoshun* (encampment) of the Mongol prince Torgout-Beile which

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**FIGURE 5.1** Pyotr Kozlov with members of the Mongolia and Sichuan Expedition, 1908, in Dyn-yuan-in (China). Seated, from left to right, are P. Napalkov, A. Chernov, P. Kozlov and Ts. Badmazhapov; standing are Sergeant Gavriil Ivanov (fifth from the left) and Arya Madaev (final dark-clothed figure to the right rear).
was a short distance from Khara-Khoto. Kozlov was eager to discover the mysterious ruins and he succeeded in securing cooperation of the prince who provided him with pack animals, diggers and a guide to take his party right to Khara-Khoto. Kozlov’s dream came true on 19 March (new style: 1 April) 1908 when, together with several companions (Chernov, Napalkov, Ivanov and Madaev), he reached the remains of the ‘dead city’. From afar they saw its cob walls with odd-looking Buddhist memorials, *suburgans* mounted on them, silhouetted against the dazzling blue sky. This is how Kozlov described his first encounter with Khara-Khoto:

At last we have seen the City itself, spread out on a low terrace made of the rough Han-Hai gritstone. Above the north-western corner of the fortress rose the main spire-like *suburgan*, one in a row of smaller size neighboring structures, also mounted on the wall, as well as those outside the fortress. As we approached the city we came across a great number of pieces of broken pottery; the sight of the fortress-city became obscured by the high-rising sand mounds. Finally we came upon the terrace and lo, here Khara-Khoto revealed to us all its outer charms. (Kozlov 1923, 103–4)

Kozlov stayed with his party in Khara-Khoto for a few days in order to conduct a preliminary excavation of the city. His early findings included fragments of porcelain, various household items and articles of trade, the copper *choh*-coins, Chinese paper money (the earliest known) and numerous religious objects. It turned out that the wall *suburgans* were filled at their base with a large number of small clay figures of various Buddhist divinities, so-called *tsatsa*. During this first trip to Khara-Khoto, Kozlov determined its geographic coordinates (41°45′40″ N and 101°5′15″E), as well as its absolute altitude (810 m). Napalkov drew the plan of the ruins (Ovchinnikova 1964, 123). After the excavation Kozlov immediately wrote to the Russian Geographical Society, in which he gave a description of the locality, briefly sketched its historical past and enclosed a list of his finds and a few photographs. From Khara-Khoto the expedition moved to Den-yuan-in where the party spent about two and half months exploring the Alasha range and oasis. Kozlov also established a meteorological station with a depot in Den-yuan-in. Then the travellers split into three groups. Kozlov and Chetyrkin with the main caravan headed in the south-east direction, over ridges and gorges of Nan-Shan, towards Sinin (Xinjing), the residence of the important Manchu official (*tsin-tsia*), who ruled the nomads of Kukunor and East Tibet (Amdo). Napalkov with three others travelled along the right bank of Hwang Ho via Lanchow to Sinin. This party undertook topographical survey, conducted ethnographic studies and collected insects. A third party under Chernov conducted geological surveys along the route leading across the Gobi to Lanchow and further to Lake Kukunor, where it was to join Kozlov’s caravan, in August 1908. The exploration of Lake
Kukunor (Ch. Qīnghai Hú, Tib. mTsho sugon po, Mong. Heh nuur) was the expedition’s second major object. Kozlov took several soundings of the ‘Blue Sea-Lake’, the largest in Asia, surveyed its shores and sent Chernov and Chetyrkin across the lake, on a folding cork-and-tarpaulin boat, to explore the island Kuisu. Kozlov was completely charmed by the lake: ‘Calm or agitated, Koko-nor is always exceedingly beautiful. I sat for hours on its shore, or walked at a distance up and down from our encampment, never tired of gazing at the boundless expanse of water, nor wearied of the monotonous splash of its breakers, which reminded me of the southern shore of the Crimea’ (Kozlov 1909, 400).

Kozlov’s third task, the exploration of Sichuan, however, was not fulfilled. He had to abandon his original plan for the sake of Khara-Khoto, which he intended to return to make further excavations. Instead, he chose to explore more thoroughly the Amdo highlands, bordering on Sichuan; the area was originally visited by Przhevalskii, yet its central part, inhabited by militant nomads, remained a ‘white spot’. A trip to Amdo also provided Kozlov with an opportunity of visiting the famous Buddhist monasteries of Labrang and Kumbum, in early 1909. As a traveller in Inner Asia, he occasionally visited Mongolian and Tibetan monasteries en route, and that was how he began gradually to take interest in Buddhism, its traditions, rituals and monuments, and this interest only grew with time, especially after he had met the Dalai Lama.

In general Kozlov was a good mixer, easily making friends with people wherever he travelled, especially with men of influence – the Buddhist abbots and incarnate lamas, such as Choibzen Khutuktu, as well as representatives of local Qing authorities, to whom he always gave presents by underscoring his affiliation with the Russian Geographical Society. This simple tactic proved effective as it allowed him access to places otherwise inaccessible to other Russian or Western travellers and collect some interesting religious and ethnographic artefacts. While visiting Kumbum (in February 1909), Kozlov had a chance to meet the Dalai Lama for the second time. The latter treated him as an old friend and invited him to Lhasa again: ‘I hope you will visit me in Lhasa . . . I’ll wait for you in Lhasa, and then you will make not just one but several excursions in the environs, along the radii from Tibet’s capital, where you will find some unexplored corners, in terms of nature and population’ (Kozlov 1923, 499). Thus Kozlov became the only Western traveller to whom the Dalai Lama opened his ‘forbidden city’.

The rest of Kozlov’s journey was spent in Khara-Khoto, which he excavated for the second time, more thoroughly, in May and June 1909. The work was carried out by two teams of diggers, one Mongolian, one Russian. The Mongolians under Arya Madaev focused on the ruins of houses (fanzas) while the Russian team guided by Kozlov did all the general excavation inside and outside the city fortress. The most valuable findings were made in one of the suburgans dubbed the ‘Great Suburgan’ located outside the
western city wall on the right bank of the dried-up Edzin-gol river-bed. The structure, after it was totally dismantled, yielded a whole library of books, scrolls and manuscripts numbering about 6,000 pieces altogether (in Chinese, Mongolian, Tibetan and Tangut languages) (Men’shikov 1984; Kychanov 2008), three hundred Buddhist icons or tangkas, that is, paintings on canvas, silk and paper (Samosiuk 2006). The same suburgan also revealed metal and wooden statues, the so-called burkhans, printing blocks, models of suburgans as well as a beautiful piece of tapestry, a sample of traditional Tangut weaving. Some of the Buddhist statues were too big and could not be transported safely to Russia. Before leaving Khara-Khoto, Kozlov buried these earthen colossi in the sand by one of the walls of the city, hoping he would return to pick them up in the future. (When he returned, in 1926, he was unable to locate these treasures.)

With this final excavation of Khara-Khoto, the expedition ended. The results were most productive and numerous but also sensational so far as Khara-Khoto was concerned. These included a traverse survey of more than 6,700 miles of route, the heights of inhabited points, of passes, valleys and places where the expedition stayed, each determined barometrically. There were also meteorological readings taken both in the main caravan and on lateral excursions and, besides these, data provided by the meteorological station in Ten-yuang-in during the year-long period. The island in Kukunor, Kuisu, was explored and the depth and composition of the bottom and of the water of this Alpine basin were ascertained. Abundant collections were acquired, including geological, botanical and zoological specimens as well as ethnographic objects, comprising Mongolian and Tangut garments, and many religious articles including some hundreds of painted representations of the deities of the Buddhist pantheon, and a collection of Tibetan religious books, Chinese works of art and Chinese antiquities in the form of vases of original design, images and perfuming pans. Numerous photographs were also taken (personally by Kozlov) of views and types in the places the expedition passed through.

In the autumn of 1909, the findings were delivered to St. Petersburg to the newly built premises of the Russian Geographical Society. There, in early 1910, they were displayed to the public, along with other naturalist and ethnographic collections gathered by Kozlov. After the closure of the exhibition the bulk of Khara-Khoto’s collection was transferred to the ethnographic department of the Russian Museum, and, in 1934, to the Hermitage Museum, while its remaining part which included mainly the xylograph-books and manuscripts went to the Asiatic Museum of the Russian Academy. The samples of Buddhist painting from Khara-Khoto were then subjected to a most thorough examination by the eminent Russian Orientalist Sergei Feodorovich Oldenburg, who published a volume devoted to Khara-Khoto’s iconography (Oldenburg 1914; Samosiuk 2006). At present the collection of Tangut painting from Khara-Khoto is preserved in the State Hermitage and the Oriental book collection belongs to the Institute
of Oriental Manuscripts, Russian Academy of Sciences. The latter alone is of paramount importance: the deciphering of the Tangut written language undertaken in the 1920s by the Soviet Sinologist Nikolai Aleksandrovich Nevskii laid the foundations of a new Oriental discipline, Tangutica. Overall, the Khara-Khoto findings provided an extraordinarily valuable historical and cultural resource which has considerably expanded knowledge of the history and culture of the peoples of Inner Asia.

**Kozlov’s later activities**

The great success of the Mongolia–Sichuan expedition won Kozlov the acclaim of the scientific world and the Russian public. He was welcomed enthusiastically as a heroic explorer the way Przhevalskii had been. In September 1910, Kozlov went to England, at the invitation of the Royal Geographical Society of London, where he gave a talk on his expedition illustrated by lantern-slides. The Society awarded him their Founder’s Medal in 1911 for ‘explorations in the Gobi desert, Northern Tibet and Mongolia’. In his speech at the presentation ceremony on 22 May 1911, the President, Major Leonard Darwin, hailed Kozlov as the explorer who had brought back from his journeys ‘a harvest of results, geographical, geological, and archeological’. ‘In fact there can be no doubt’, continued Darwin, that ‘this is the name well worthy of an award from any geographical society in the world’ (Darwin 1911, 17). Kozlov, however, could not attend the event, and his medal was accepted by the Military Attaché of the Russian Embassy, General Ermolov. In 1911, Kozlov also received the gold medal from the Italian Geographical Society, and the Hungarian GS made him an honorary member. Two years later, on the initiative of Prince Roland Napoleon Bonaparte, the traveller was awarded the Pyotr Chikhachev Prize (‘le prix Tchihatchef’) of 3,000 francs by the Academy of Sciences of France for his studies and publications on Inner Asia (Yusupova 2010b).

Kozlov’s own account of his Mongolia–Sichuan Expedition, however, was published after considerable delay, in 1923, under the title *Mongolia i Amdo i mertviy gorod Khara-Khoto* [Mongolia and Amdo and the dead city of Khara-Khoto] (Kozlov 1923). It would be his most successful book, an absorbing story of his discovery of the lost Tangut city buried in the Gobi sands. In the meantime, the Royal Geographical Society in London brought out his narrative in their *Geographical Journal*, in 1909–10, as did the Italians (Kozlov 1909–10, 1911b). The travelogue would also be translated in several other European and Asian languages in subsequent years: German (1925 and 1955), Czech (1929), Slovak (1951), Japanese and Chinese (2000s).

The period after Kozlov’s return from his expedition was a turbulent one in Asian history. The Xinhai revolution in China (1911) overthrew the Qing dynasty, and the country became a republic. The event significantly affected
the Manchu vassal territories of Mongolia and Tibet with both declaring their independence. Kozlov hailed these developments in a short essay, by emphasizing Russia’s close commercial and political ties with neighbouring Mongolia; as for Tibet, he pointed out that the country had ‘turned its gaze in the hour of need to Russia only’ and that the Geographical Society believed in the sincerity of Tibet’s invitation made to its members to visit Lhasa ‘for scientific research’ (Kozlov 1913b). The same years also saw changes in Kozlov’s life. In the summer of 1910, while staying with his wife and children at Berck-Plage in Normandy, he met an 18-year old Elizabeth (Elizaveta Vladimirovna) Pushkariova, daughter of a physician, Vladimir I. Pushkariov from St. Petersburg, and fell in love with her. He would later say that he perceived in Elizabeth Przhevalskii’s ‘nomadic spirit’ which he valued so much, and Elizabeth, on her part, was strongly impressed by the personality of the world-renowned traveller. As a result Kozlov divorced his wife Nadezhda and, in 1912, married the young woman who reminded him so much of his lamented master. He moved to Petersburg, the couple settling in Smolny Prospect 6, which would become their permanent residence.

In the summer of 1913 the couple made a trip to Ascania-Nova, a nature reserve in the Kherson steppes in Taurida Province (today a part of Ukraine). Ascania-Nova was founded in 1828 as a private estate by Prince Ferdinand von Anhalt-Köthen and, in 1875, was turned into an acclimatizing zoological garden by Friedrich von Falz-Fein. It was inhabited by a great variety of animals from all over the world: Elizabeth would later call it ‘an earthly paradise’. In 1899, largely owing to Kozlov’s mediation, Falz-Fein obtained from Mongolia (Dzungaria) some wild horses (stallions and mares) of a rare species Equus ferus Przewalskii, and they bred well at Ascania, the only place they did so outside their natural habitat. The couple would visit Ascania again in 1914. Kozlov wrote several essays about the nature reserve in popular Russian magazines. In one, he raised the vital question of nature preservation, by expressing his wish that the government should issue a law that would make Ascania-Nova a state-protected territory (Kozlov 1914, 35). Also in 1913, the Kozlovs travelled to Lake Issyk-kul in connection with the 25th anniversary of Przhevalskii’s death celebrated by the Russian Geographical Society. Kozlov was commissioned by the Society to lay a silver wreath on the pedestal of the imposing monument erected to the traveller on the shore of Lake Issyk-Kul, facing the majestic Tien Shan Range. The result of this trip was some biographical essays devoted by Kozlov to his great teacher. While staying at Issyk-kul, Kozlov taught his wife how to shoot a rifle and collect and prepare birds as he was already contemplating his next journey and wanted her to accompany him. The expedition was due to start in July 1914 and had the aim of proceeding across Mongolia to Khara-Khoto for further study of the ruins of the ‘dead city’ and exploration of the upper basins of the Yangtse, Mekong and Salween rivers on the Tibetan Highlands. The Russian Geographical Society approved his programme and
allocated the necessary funds. But Kozlov’s plans were overtaken by the outbreak of the World War I in August 1914.

Kozlov, as a senior army officer, was sent to the war theatre but did not see action. He was posted as the military commandant of Tyrnov (Tarnov) and, in 1915, of Yassy and Ternopol, while his wife worked as a nurse on a hospital train. In 1915 Kozlov was recalled from the front and sent to northern Mongolia as head of the expedition for the procurement of meat cattle for the acting army. This allowed Elizabeth to make several trips across Eastern Siberia and Mongolia and thus to acquaint herself with these regions. As a student of ornithology she had an opportunity to observe and describe the migration of birds and make her first ornithological collection (Figure 5.2). In early 1917 Kozlov and his wife returned to Petrograd (renamed St. Petersburg in 1914). They witnessed the downfall of the monarchical rule in Russia after the abdication of Nicholas II which was followed by the Bolshevik

‘October Revolution’ later that year and the civil strife between 1918 and 1922. To the Kozlovs, these dramatic developments, which brought devastation and chaos to the country, were a severe trial. Yet they survived.

Kozlov easily found common ground with the new rulers of Russia, though he never publicly declared his allegiance to their proletarian ideology. Soon enough he acquired an influential patron amidst the Bolshevik elite, Nikolai Petrovich Gorbunov, the secretary of Vladimir Lenin, who was Elizabeth’s childhood friend and best man at the wedding. His activities were also

FIGURE 5.2 Pyotr Kozlov with his wife Elizabeth as a nurse, shortly after the outbreak of World War I.
patronized by the once-powerful Academy of Sciences, whose leaders began actively to collaborate with the Bolshevik government, the only means to survive for the Academy. Soviet science in this period was organized according to the principle of ‘personal patronage’ when scientists in need of some financial, material or political support turned for help to their patron agency. In this way Narkompros (People’s Commissariat of Enlightenment) subsidized museums, university research laboratories and scientific societies, such as the Russian Geographical Society (Krementsov 1997, 20–3). At the end of 1917, Kozlov was sent by the Academy to Ascania-Nova in the capacity of ‘commissar’ to look after the protection of the nature reserve, with V. Lenin’s approval of his commission forwarded to him by Gorbunov. He then moved with his wife to Ascania where they stayed for about two years. Upon their return to Petrograd, Kozlov published an article Sovremennoe polozenie zooparka Askania-Nova [The current situation in the Ascania-Nova zoological garden] (Kozlov 1919) and his wife penned a whole book entitled Askania-Nova, zoopark v iuzhno-russkich stepakh (Ascania-Nova, a zoological garden in the South Russian steppes) (Kozlova 1923). In 1920, Kozlov went to Siberia to inspect the local branches of the Geographical Society, on the commission of Narkompros. In the same year, his book Tibet and the Dalai Lama was published to be followed three years later by his Mongolia and Amdo and the dead city of Khara-Khoto, in the writing of which he was assisted by his wife. As life in Russia gradually returned to normal, Kozlov began to make plans for a new expedition to Inner Asia.

The final expedition to Mongolia (1923–6)

In mid-1922, Kozlov submitted a proposal for a new expedition to Tibet to the new President of the Russian Geographical Society, Yulii Mikhailovich Shokalskii. In fact, this was a revival of his abandoned 1914 project. In his proposal, Kozlov underscored his three main objectives: further excavation of Khara-Khoto; establishing a meteorological station with a depot at Tsaidam, at the encampment of his old friend Tzun-Tzasak; and more thorough exploration of the basins of the Yangtze, Mekong and Salween. He said nothing about a projected trip to Lhasa, though Lhasa was on his mind as his final destination. The Society approved Kozlov’s project and the Soviet government allocated the lavish sum of 100,000 gold roubles for the journey and additional 4,000 for presents to the Dalai Lama, which allowed the traveller to equip his party well. This generous level of support for a scientific expedition was well justified. Soviet Russia, from its early days, pursued an active Eastern policy, with special attention to Tibet, which was seen as a springboard for the ideological penetration of British India: this was to usher in a new round of the Great Game. The Bolshevik leaders, well aware of Kozlov’s friendly relations with the Dalai Lama and the Lama’s long-standing pro-Russian feelings, attached political importance to his
new journey. They needed Kozlov, and hoped that his visit to Lhasa would further that incipient Soviet–Tibetan dialogue which had begun in 1922 in the course of a secret mission to Lhasa of one of their diplomatic emissaries, Vasili Khomutnikov (Andreyev 2003).

The expedition staff, apart from Kozlov, included his five senior assistants: Sergei A. Glagolev (geographer), Nikolai V. Pavlov (botanist), Elizaveta Kozlova (ornithologist), Sergei A. Kondratiev (naturalist and student of musical folklore) and Elena P. Gorbunova (physician); four junior ones: Andrei D. Simukov (topographer), Konstantin K. Danilenko (entomologist), Vasili A. Gusev and Vasili M. Kanaev (both collectors); the caravan leader Pantelei P. Teleshov, who had participated previously in Przhevalskii’s last two expeditions; five men of escort and three interpreters. The party arrived in Urga in September 1923 and started to make preparations for the journey to Tibet, yet these were soon halted upon the demand of the authorities in Moscow. The reason was a denunciation of the expedition leader and some of his companions of anti-revolutionary sentiments spelled out in a letter to the OGPU (the precursor of the KGB) by one Martynov. According to him, Kozlov, being a former ‘tsarist general’, might spend the funds allocated to him on anti-Soviet agitation, while working ‘in the areas within the British sphere of influence’. Consequently, the Politburo established a special commission which purged Kozlov’s expedition staff, attached a political commissar to his party (Daniil M. Ubugunov) and eventually rescinded their journey to Tibet on the pretext of the ‘unfavourable political situation’ in the region and the difficulty of obtaining visas from the Chinese authorities (Andreyev and Yusupova 2001, 51–74).

As a result Kozlov remained in Urga with his ‘reorganized’ party and had considerably to curtail his original plans. In the spring of 1924, having learnt about some old burial mounds at the Sudzukte gorge in the Noin-Ula Mountains, north of the Mongolian capital, he started the excavation there, which eventually led to some sensational findings later that year. Thus, quite unexpectedly, Kozlov got bogged down in Mongolia: ‘Every cloud has a silver lining’, he wrote to the botanist Vladimir L. Komarov in Petrograd, ‘and perhaps this forced halt, the delay of the expedition, will bring the RGS and the science in general much more use than the one we counted upon’ (Zhitomirskii 1989, 158). The travellers discovered about two hundred mounds at Sudzukte and started to unearth some of them with the help of Chinese diggers. The work was begun at the end of March when the soil was still frozen so the diggers had to build fires to thaw out the icy crust. Since the burial chambers lay beneath the level of the subsoil waters, the latter had to be pumped out by manual pumps. All excavation work at this early stage was directed by one of Kozlov’s senior assistants, Kondratiev, who was not a professional archaeologist. As news of Kozlov’s discoveries reached Moscow, the Russian Academy dispatched two archaeologists to Mongolia, Sergei A. Teploukhov and Grigorii I. Borovko, from the Hermitage and the Russian Museum in Leningrad accordingly, along with two more specialists,
mineralogist Vladimir I. Kryzhanovskii and the soil scientist Boris B. Polynov. And in early 1925 Kozlov returned briefly to the USSR, together with his new assistants, to report of the Noin-Ula excavations to his sponsors at the Academy and the Geographical Society in Leningrad. There he presented his discoveries to academic audience and the general public and was hailed as a Soviet hero (Figure 5.3).

The objects unearthed from the mounds were fragments of decorative silk and woollen tissues, carpets, wooden items, some fine Chinese lacquer cups dating from the first century AD belonging to the Hun (xiongnu) high nobility. The finds were numerous and mostly in good condition, despite the fact that they had been buried for nearly 2,000 years. The finds caused a sensation in scholarly circles worldwide, particularly the carpets with the masterly embroidered images in the so-called animal style. The Noin-Ula archaeological excavation in 1924–5 added to Kozlov’s fame, as the artefacts he unearthed shed light on the history of the peoples of Inner Asia, their artistic tradition, as well as the history of ancient handicraft (Trever 1932; Umechara 1960; Rudenko 1962; Yusupova 2010a, 2011). The excavation of the Hun ‘royal’ mounds was continued in subsequent years: in 1926–7 by A.D. Simukov, who had stayed in Mongolia after the expedition, being taken

FIGURE 5.3 Pyotr Kozlov giving a lecture to the Academy of Sciences, Leningrad, March 1925.
on the staff of the Mongolian Scientific Committee (MSC; *Uchkom*), then in the mid-1950s and in 1961–4 by the Mongolian archaeologist Dorjsuren, and in 2006 by Russian archaeologists led by Natalia Polos’mak from the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography (Siberian Branch, Russian Academy of Sciences) (Yusupova 2010a, Polos’miak et al. 2011).

In addition to the Noin-Ula excavations, Kozlov’s expedition conducted other geographical, paleontological and exploratory work in Mongolia. It eventually split into two groups, one headed by Glagolev which trekked south in the direction of the Mongolian Altai, and then westwards to Khara-Khoto. Other members of the group were Simukov and youthful Nikolai Przhevalski, grand-nephew of the famous traveller. The other party, headed by Kozlov and which included his wife and several junior assistants, travelled southwest down the Tola River valley which they surveyed en route. At the end of August the travellers left the river valley and moved onto the upper Ongin-Gol in the Khangai Range. There Kozlov pitched a camp, close to the Sain-noion-kure (monastery), and wintered for five months, until mid-March 1926. This period was most productive for Kozlov’s party. In the Olunsu-me gorge on the Ongin-Gol they discovered the ruins of a monastery and undertook preliminary excavations. They visited the tombs of the thirteen generations of the Khans, the owners of the Sain-noion khoshun. The party also made many excursions from their base camp. During one of these, they came across a large waterfall in the basin of the Orkhon river, the only one in Mongolia, which Kozlov named Expedition Waterfall, its original name known to local dwellers being Ulantsetu. On the final leg of the expedition, in the spring and summer of 1926, Kozlov, together with his assistant Gusev and a Mongolian interpreter, made a paleontological excavation at the Holt River which yielded material relating to the Hipparion fauna of the Tertiary age. The collection they gathered there included the bones of rhinoceroses, giraffes, goats, and rodents, as well as of the extinct tridactyl (three-toed) horse, hipparion, the most typical representative of the ancient fauna. Elizabeth Kozlova stayed at Lake Orok-nor watching the spring migration of birds and surveying the shores of the lake, while Glagolev undertook further excavations at Khara-Khoto.

The expedition ended in September 1926 in Ulan Bator, where all its parties, upon the completion of their special fieldwork, assembled. Its scientific findings were many and important. Apart from the archaeological finds at Noin-Ula and elsewhere, the travellers traversed some 3,500 km. They explored several lakes whose soundings were taken and samples of their fauna and flora collected. Meteorological measurements were taken at the points where the travellers stayed for any time – in the Noin-Ula and Khangai Mountains, in the Gobi and the Edzin-gol River. Plant and animal collections were gathered: 750 specimens of plants, sixty species of mammals, 350 species of birds, numerous reptiles and over 2,000 insects. Kozlov’s Mongolian journey in 1923–6 was the first Soviet expedition to Mongolia (Mongolian People’s Republic, since 1924). Kozlov’s close working
contacts with the MSC and members of the Mongolian government laid the foundations for later Soviet–Mongolian scientific cooperation. Already in 1925, the Soviet government (Sovnarkom) established a special Mongolian Commission to promote ‘a systematic and all-round scientific study of Mongolia’ (Yusupova 2006). The Commission, two years later, would be placed under the authority of the Academy of Sciences and would send several expeditions to Mongolia in subsequent years. Two of these, in 1929 and 1930, under Elizabeth Kozlova, explored the Alpine zone of Khangai, Eastern Kentei and the source of the Kerulen River.

Because of his good relations with the new Mongolian leaders, Kozlov had no problems in taking his numerous finds out of the country although he deemed it expedient to hand over some of his finds and samples to the newly established Mongolian national museum in Ulan Bator. Throughout his expedition he cooperated closely with the MSC, and was elected an honorary member of the institution (in 1924) and of the Mongolian society of naturalists (1926). The Mongolian expedition, being the centre of public attention, helped Kozlov restore his contacts with Western friends and colleagues which had been disrupted by the First World War and the Russian Revolution. In November 1923, while in Urga, he renewed acquaintance with the famous Swedish explorer Sven Hedin, then returning home from a lecture tour in America. Kozlov and Hedin knew each other quite well for many years as the latter was often a visitor to Petersburg where he presented news of his journeys to the Russian Geographical Society. Hedin maintained warm relations with several Russian explorers and scientists, recognizing their fundamental contribution to exploration of Inner Asia. (For the Hedin–Kozlov correspondence, see A. I. Andreyev, Russkie pis’ma iz archiva Svenz Gedina v Stokkol’me [Russian letters from the Sven Hedin Collection in Stockholm], Aryavarta Journal, St. Petersburg, 1997, 47–8; Kozlov’s letters to Hedin (1903–23) are in the Sven Hedin Collection at the National Archives, Stockholm.) The work of Kozlov became especially important to Hedin and his archaeologist Folke Bergman during the Sino-Swedish expedition (1927–35) which conducted further excavations in the Edzin-Gol area and Khara-Khoto (Figure 5.4).

Kozlov’s other friend was the German explorer Wilhelm Filchner, who arranged with the publishing house of Neufeld & Henius in Berlin, for the publication in 1925 of Kozlov’s two latest works in a single volume, Mongolie, Amdo und die tote stadt Chara-Choto, prefaced by S. Hedin and himself (Archive of the Russian Geographical Society, f. 18, op.3, d. 724, Filchner to Kozlov, 23 December 1924). Both Hedin and Filchner spoke highly of Kozlov: the former praised him as ‘a genuine explorer, very accurate and fully reliable’, the latter pointing out his remarkable abilities as an organizer who ‘knows the prerequisites of success of his expeditions – harmony among expedition members and timely elimination of obstacles’ (Kozlov 1925, vii, viii, xi; Yusupova 2014).
While in Mongolia, Kozlov made friends with the American palaeontologist Roy Chapman Andrews, the leader of several fossil-hunting expeditions to Mongolia and China in 1922–30. Andrews visited the excavation site at Noin-Ula, on Kozlov’s invitation, in 1924, and was honoured by the opportunity to meet ‘this great explorer of the old school’ whom he had long admired (Andrews 1932, 235) (Figure 5.5). The excavations also provided an occasion for Kozlov to contact the eminent French Orientalist Paul Pelliot. In early 1926 he sent Pelliot an imprint of an ancient Chinese seal found in one of the mounds at Noin-Ula, asking him to translate the inscription (Kozlov 2003, 703, 712, 814). Kozlov also particularly valued his contacts with the Royal Geographical Society in London. These were re-established in 1923, despite the fact that Great Britain was regarded by the Soviets as a ‘stronghold of imperialism’. On 3 July, shortly before he set out from Petrograd, Kozlov sent a letter to the Secretary of that Society, Arthur Robert Hinks, in which he briefly outlined the programme of his explorations in Mongolia and Tibet: ‘As a naturalist, I am infinitely attracted by the South-Eastern Tibet, allured by its rich vegetation and animal life’, Kozlov wrote [in English]. He promised to inform the London body of the progress of his work and to send the Society copies of his reports to the Russian Geographical Society and the Academy of Sciences, as he had done for his two previous journeys.

FIGURE 5.4 Pyotr Kozlov and Sven Hedin in Urga, Mongolia, 21 November 1923.
Final years

Kozlov’s expedition to Mongolia was his last. That journey seriously affected his health. Back in Leningrad, Kozlov failed to produce the promised detailed account of it and published only a short report (Kozlov 1928). Nonetheless, despite his age and failing condition, he made plans for another, seventh, trip to Inner Asia. On 15 November 1927 Kozlov presented his project to the Academy of Sciences and to the Russian Geographical Society in which he spelled out the principal task of the mission as an extensive exploration of the Yangtze (Mur-usu) river-head, ‘the last white spot on the maps of Asia’. The project was approved by both institutions, but the Soviet Foreign Ministry (Narkomindel) and the OGPU strongly objected to it, for political
reasons (Yusupova 2003, 52–6). This, however, did not discourage Kozlov. A year later he would turn for help to Gorbunov asking him to organize the expedition to the ‘sacred land’ in order to fulfil Przhevalskii’s ‘last behest’. This time Kozlov wanted to travel to Tibet by air, on a dirigible, the way Amundsen did during his 1926 polar expedition, in the company of Gorbunov (who explored the Pamirs with the Soviet–German expedition in the same year) and Tibet’s representative in the USSR, Agvan Dorzhiev. It was for this reason that he, together with his wife and two other members of the Mongolian expedition, undertook a test flight on a Junkers aircraft over Ulan-Bator, in September 1926, after which he noted in his diary: ‘I wish I could fly like this towards the far-off South-West, to Tibet and Lhasa! And this is not just a dream, thousand times no’ (Kozlov 2003, 945) (Figure 5.6). In 1928 Kozlov was elected an acting member of the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. And in 1933, when he was already 70, the Russian Academy requested him to lead an expedition to Lake Issyk-Kul and the Nan Shan Mountains; his failing health prevented him from accepting the offer.

**FIGURE 5.6** Kozlov and his wife Elizabeth with a group of Russian pilots before making a flight over Ulan-Bator, 14 September 1926. It was following this test flight that Kozlov began making plans for a further expedition to Tibet, using aircraft, from Ulan-Bator.
Kozlov’s final years were spent between Leningrad and Strechno, a village near Novgorod, where, following Przhevalskii’s example, he built a hut to become his refuge. There he would make long promenades in the woods, hunt and write essays, being occasionally visited by his wife and children. Kozlov died on 26 September 1935 of cardiac asthma in a sanatorium at Petrodvoretz. He was buried at the Smolenskoe Lutheran cemetery in Leningrad. After Kozlov’s death, his wife handed the most valuable items remaining in their apartment to various museums in Leningrad (the State Hermitage, the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography), Smolensk and Kiakhta. The traveller’s archive, including his travel diaries and voluminous correspondence, she donated to the Russian Geographical Society, the main sponsor of his expeditions. Having made a career as an ornithologist, under the tutelage of her husband and the zoologist Pyotr Petrovich Sushkin, she worked for several decades at the Zoological Museum of the Russian Academy. Her most important publications were *Avifauna Tibetskogo nagoria, ee rodstvennye sviazi i istoria* [The avifauna of the Tibetan Highlands, its genetic connections and history] (Trudy Zoologicheskogo institute AN SSSR, 1952, IX, 964–1028) and a monograph *Ptitsy zonalnykh stepei i pustyn’ Tsentralnoi Azii* [Birds of the zonal steppes and deserts of Central Asia] (Kozlova 1975). She died in 1975. The Kozlov’s apartment, by decree of the Leningrad municipal authorities of 5 December 1988, was turned into a memorial museum which, shortly after, was affiliated with the Institute for the History of Science and Technology (St. Petersburg Branch, Russian Academy of Sciences). Formally inaugurated in 2002, the Kozlov Museum tells the story of the Russian exploration in Inner Asia; it holds Kozlov’s book, photographic and documentary collections, as well as other valuable memorabilia.

**Kozlov as field surveyor, geographer and naturalist**

Kozlov was a versatile explorer who made a considerable and lasting contribution to many branches of science, including geography, cartography, zoology, botany, geology, ethnography, archaeology and Oriental studies. This versatility can be explained by the fact that the exploration of ‘unknown’ Inner Asia was, in its earliest stages, largely descriptive and unspecialized as travellers observed, recorded and collected whatever came their way; it was regarded by Przhevalskii and his sponsors at the Russian Geographical Society and the General Staff as the ‘preliminary scientific reconnaissance of uncharted territories’. The primary task of this reconnaissance was to erase the numerous unknown ‘white spots’ from the map of Asia. Kozlov’s interests lay mainly in geography and the study of wildlife although, in later years, he also devoted much attention to ethnographic studies.
in seeking to produce an overall picture of the Asian heartland as the unity of nature and man (Andreyev 2013, 20, 155). He was not properly speaking a cartographer, despite his valuable route sketches, neither was he an archaeologist, his finds at Khara-Khoto and Noin-Ula being largely serendipitous. Yet his fame as the ‘discoverer of Khara-Khoto’ and the first to excavate the site as well as the Hunn burial mounds was well deserved by someone who spent many years in the field and was always searching for the unknown (Trever 1932; Yusupova 2010a, 2011). Shaped as he was by Przhevalskii, Kozlov adopted his mentor’s methods of field work, the system of expedition staffing and equipping, as well as Przhevalskii’s programme of what he called the ‘fleeting (bystroletnye) route reconnaissance’. The latter included: the survey by eye and sketching of the entire caravan route (sketch survey); astronomical determination of the latitude and longitude of points; barometrical determination of altitude; meteorological measurements; undertaking natural collections (zoological, botanical, mineralogical, ethnographic) (Dubrovin 1890, 584). Kozlov sought to gather as much additional information (political, economic, military, environmental) as possible, by means of questioning local inhabitants – Mongols, Kalmyks, Tibetans and people from passing caravans. This strategy worked well, allowing him and his assistants to obtain much new data, such as, for example, on the administrative and political system in Tibet, the country’s south-eastern province (Kham), the ‘forbidden’ Lhasa, the Dalai Lama and so on which he included in the account of his Mongolia and Kham expedition (1899–1901).

In the course of his travels, Kozlov considerably modified and improved Przhevalskii’s well-tested system of ‘route reconnaissance’. He sent out assistants on lateral excursions from the main caravan, thus broadening the area of exploration and increasing the scientific ‘harvest’ of his expeditions. He thus combined Przhevalskii’s original ‘linear’ route reconnaissance with the ‘areal’ surveying of terrain, the method employed by Pevtsov, Roborovskii and himself. As a result of this latter ‘system of journeying’, he wrote in Mongolia and Kham, ‘one gets to know better the physical phenomena of nature, as well as inhabitants of a given country’ (Kozlov V., 1948, 44; Ovchinnikova 1964, 17). Kozlov introduced the practice of ‘stationary observations’ in the areas which interested him the most. For this purpose he established meteorological stations, with dépôts attached, in the Turfan depression, Tsaidam, Alashan, Kham and the Nan-Shan Mountains. The systematic meteorological observations and hypsometrical measurements at these stations were usually carried out for one or two years. As a result Kozlov collected a great amount of important data needed for the study of climate in Inner Asia, while his astronomical determination of coordinates at these bases was of value in topographical surveying (Ovchinnikova 1964, 181, 182).

In the course of discussion over the preliminary results of his Mongolian expedition at the Academy of Sciences in Leningrad in 1925, Kozlov agreed
with his critics concerning his method of extensive ‘route reconnaissance’ – the method of journeying from Przhevalskii to Kozlov’, in the words of Sergei F. Oldenburg – and admitted, too, that the great epoch of exploration of Inner Asia by this method was over. Henceforth that region, Mongolia in particular, would be explored by parties, specializing in one type of fieldwork and acting from a single permanent base. Kozlov was well aware of the tendency towards increasing specialization which required new systems of fieldwork by specialists. His Mongolia and Kham expedition (1899–1901) anyway pioneered limnological and hydrological field investigations in his use of specialist equipment. Kozlov also initiated archaeological and paleontological excavations, which were not on the formally approved expedition agendas. His use of photography was an important addition to visual observations and was particularly helpful in ethnographic research.

This transition from superficial and hasty (‘fleeting’) route reconnaissance to more sophisticated ‘stationary’ work had been foreseen by Przhevalskii in his 1888 travelogue ‘How to travel in Central Asia’. There, in a section entitled ‘The tasks of future explorers’, he presciently outlined two types of forthcoming explorations in Central Asia – ‘the scientific reconnaissance of the remaining uncharted areas’ and the ‘detailed study of more accessible countries, already reconnoitred by means of fleeting journeys’. He especially recommended the use of ‘special stations in the most advantageous points’, where several scientific parties could engage in their individual work. Those branches of science which should be given more attention by explorers, according to Przhevalskii, were geology and anthropology, as well as meteorology and entomology (Przhevalskii 1888, 64, 65). Kozlov, as Przhevalskii’s true heir, focused precisely on these disciplines in the subsequent years. Kozlov’s major contribution as a land surveyor was his route sketches, which were very detailed and accurate and covered about 40,000 miles as well as his many astronomical and hypsometric measurements (more than 2,000 of the latter) needed for mapmaking (Ovchnnikova 1964, 183). The final result of this major topographical endeavour begun by Kozlov and other Russian land surveyors were the new physical maps of Inner Asia based on the latest orographic and hydrographic data produced by cartographers (Shchukina 1955, 196–225).

Kozlov was a restless soul and had a natural predilection for travelling – what he called a ‘nomadic spirit’ – and which constantly put him on the move towards Asia. His major accomplishments as a geographer were his many discoveries made on the Tibetan plateau, in Amdo and Kham, Mongolia (northern, central and southern) and in Eastern Turkestan (Xinkiang). These included the mountain ranges he discovered, named and sketched (in the Mongol and Gobi Altai and the Kuen Lun), the lakes he surveyed and sounded (Kukunor, Edzin-gol, Bagrashkol etc.) and the upper reaches of the Hwang Ho, Yangtze and Mekong rivers. Finally, he obtained a great deal of new data on the relief of Central Gobi and defined the borders of the extreme west of the Gobi desert known as Dzungarian
Gobi (Shchukina 1955, 222). He also helped solve the enduring Lobnor problem – that of the alternating shape and location of the ‘Wandering Lake’ in Western China. He visited Lobnor several times and in 1897 discussed the issue with Sven Hedin, then visiting St. Petersburg, which revived the old Richthofen–Przhevalskii controversy. Kozlov accounted for Lobnor’s changing location by the periodic and alternating migration of Tarim and Konchedarya, the rivers feeding the lake. In 1898, he published an article devoted to the hydrography of Lobnor (Kozlov 1898, 60–116) in which he juxtaposed Richthofen’s and Hedin’s arguments, Przhevalskii’s first-hand evidence and his own observations. Kozlov dwelt upon the subject again in his last publication, a short paper *Kochuustchie reki Tsentral’noi Azii* [The Wandering rivers of Central Asia] (Kozlov 1935, 599–601). Its writing was occasioned by Col. R.C.F. Schomberg’s visit to the lake in 1928, by which time Konchedarya had migrated back to its old dry bed (Ovchinnikova 1964, 73–5; Murzaev 1947, 3–23).

Finally, Kozlov was a first-rate naturalist, a keen observer of natural phenomena as evidenced by his lively and detailed characterization of Asian landscapes and an excellent collector of fauna and flora. His first collections were made under Przhevalskii and Pevtsov, and his first publication dealt with the survey and faunal description of the upper Konche-darya, the tributary of Tarim, and of the northern shore of Lake Bagrashkol, and was included in the Works (*Trudy*) of the Tibet Expedition under Pevtsov (1895). In the expedition under Roborovskii, Kozlov was in charge of the zoological collection. In three subsequent expeditions, he was assisted in his naturalist studies by Ladygin, Kaznakov, Chetyrkin, Napalkov, Chernov, Pavlov and his wife Pushkariova-Kozlova. Kozlov explored and described the fauna of many parts of Inner Asia: the eastern Tan-Shan (1883, 1890, 1893); much of Chinese Turkestan (1884, 1890, 1893–5), mainly the oases of Khotan, Niia, Cherchen; the Lukchun depression, Lake Lobnor; the large tracts of Djungaria (1893, 1895); Mongolian Altai, the northern, central and southern Mongolia (in his last four journeys); the Alashan rage (1901, 1908); Lake Kukunor (1884, 1894–5, 1900); Tsaidam (1884, 1893–5, 1900–1); the north-western part of Kansu Province (1909); Amdo (1894, 1908–9); northeast and, partly, inner Tibet (1884, 1894, 1900–1); and south-eastern Tibet (Kham 1908–9).

The natural collections brought by Kozlov from his six journeys and transferred by the Geographical Society to the Zoological Museum of the Russian Academy and the Botanic Gardens are an important resource for zoologists and botanists. His zoological collection consists of over 1,400 samples of mammals, some of which are either rare or unique, such as those of the wild camel (*Camelus bactrianus ferus*), wild yak (*Poëphagus mutus*), Tibetan bear (*Ursus pruinosus*), Thorald’s deer (*Przewalskium albirostris*), Chinese rock deer (*Gervus affinis*), Chinese musk-deer (*Moschus sifanicus*), antelopes of the Gazella genus and the Tibetan monkey (*Macacus tibetanus*). His collection of wildcats includes
some new forms such as *Felix anastasiae* Satun, *Felix chutuchta* Birula, *Otocolobus manul mongolicus* Satun. Among the hoofed animals, Kozlov’s expeditions discovered a new sub-species of Manchurian deer (*Cervus canadensis alashanicus* Bobr. et Flerov), typical of the Alashan range, and the Persian gazelle (*Gazella subgutturosa reginae* Adlerberg), found in Western Tibet, as well as the Tibetan antelope (*Pantholops hodgsoni*). Among small mammals two new genera of jerboa (*Cardiocranius paradoxus* Satunin and *Salpingotus kozlowi* Vinogradov) are also noteworthy. The ornithological collections were more abundant (over 5,000 samples, including Himalayan griffons (*Gyps nivicola*), lammergeiers (*Gypaëtus barbatus*), golden eagles, falcons and other birds of prey). Kozlov also obtained several new species of birds, some of which bear his name (*Tetraogallus kozlowi* Bianchi, *Emberiza kozlowi* Bianchi, *Accentor kozlowi* Bianchi). Particularly remarkable were two birds of a new genera *Kozlowia roborowskii* (Przev.) and *Kaznakowia kozlowi* (Bianchi).

The reptiles and amphibians collected by Kozlov totalled about 750 samples, some of which were totally new forms; fishes made up only 300 of this total, a reflection of the paucity of Inner Asian basins. As for insects, the expeditions of Przhevalskii (his last one), Pevtsov, Roborovskii and Kozlov accumulated no fewer than 80,000 specimens, of which 200 were new species and over thirty new genera. Many were given Kozlov’s name (Semenov-Tian-Shanskii 1937, 131–7). Kozlov’s botanical collections totalled about 100,000 specimen, representing hundreds of new species and dozens of new genera. The results of the extensive floristic studies of Kozlov and other Russian travellers were summarized Fedchenko (Fedchenko 1940, 669–78). Although Kozlov was not a professional botanist, he had a good understanding of the geographical distribution of plants and of the important vegetation types of Inner Asia and he tried to determine the borders of the major floristic regions in the region (Ovchinnikova 1964).

Kozlov was also environmentally aware. As a lover of wildlife, he particularly admired the Bogdo Ula forest refuge in the environs of Ulan Bator, the first one in the world, which he called ‘the precious natural setting’ of the Mongolian capital. In 1924 Kozlov published an essay in which he described the Bogdo Ula’s fauna and flora and referred to a decree by one of the Grand Lamas of Mongolia, according to which the mountain was proclaimed a protected or sacred area in the eighteenth century. Hunting and woodcutting on its slopes was strictly prohibited under penalty of death and Bogdo Ula became accessible to Mongol ascetics only (Kozlov 1924). His major efforts as an environmentalist were directed towards preservation of the unique wildlife at the Ascania-Nova nature reserve. He visited the place several times between 1913 and 1927, and was seriously concerned about the damage caused during the civil war and tried to repair it. Kozlov’s activities urged the Soviet Ukrainian government to bestow the status of the ‘state-protected steppe reserve’ on Ascania in 1921. In 1927, Kozlov drew
up an inventory of the animal stock at Ascania and submitted a report to the Soviet authorities, calling them to ‘take the utmost measures’ to protect the few extant aurochs from complete extinction (Gnatiuk 2014, 32–44).

The name of Pyotr Kozlov, despite his many achievements, is still little known outside Russia. The publication in English of this biographical essay will, we hope, introduce him and his discoveries to Western audiences, particularly to those interested in the history of the exploration in Inner Asia.

Acknowledgements

The illustrations which accompany this essay are reproduced with permission from the Archive of the Pyotr Kozlov Memorial Museum, St. Petersburg.

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### Chronology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Born 15 October in Dukhovshchina, Smolensk Province</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875–8</td>
<td>Attends classes at the six-class town school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>Meets N. M. Przhevalskii who invites him to take part in his fourth expedition to Inner Asia; makes preparations for the journey under Przhevalskii’s tutelage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>Joins the second Sophia infantry regiment in Moscow as a volunteer and serves for three months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883–5</td>
<td>Takes part in Przhevalskii’s second Tibet expedition (his fourth journey to Inner Asia) as a junior assistant to the expedition leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886–7</td>
<td>Attends classes at the infantry military college in St. Petersburg</td>
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<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>Graduates from the college with the rank of sub-lieutenant; attached to the 1st Ekaterinoslav grenadier of the life-guards regiment in Moscow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td>Quits his regiment and joins the staff of Przhevalskii’s second Tibet expedition mounted by the Imperial Russian Geographical Society (RGS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889–90</td>
<td>Takes part in the Tibet expedition under M. V. Pevtsov as the leader’s senior assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>On 24 October joins the RGS as an active member; awarded the Przhevalskii silver medal by the RGS for his contribution to the exploration of Inner Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893–5</td>
<td>Takes part in the Tibet expedition under V. I. Roborovskii, as senior assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>Elected, on 25 April, an honorary member of the Dutch Geographical Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>Marries Nadezhda Kamynina and moves to Moscow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Publishes ‘The Report of the assistant of the expedition leader’ covering his activities in the V.I. Roborovskii expedition (1893–5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1899–1901  Leads an expedition to Mongolia and Tibet (Kham) with the purpose of exploring the Gobi Altai, the adjacent Central Gobi and Eastern Tibet

1902  Awarded the Konstantin gold medal by the Russian Geographical Society, their highest award

1905  Travels to Urga, on a commission from the Russian Geographical Society and the government, to meet with the 13th Dalai Lama to seek political alliance with Russia


1907–9  Leads the Mongolia–Sichuan Expedition designed to explore the middle and southern Mongolia, Lake Kukunor and south-western Sichuan

1908  Undertakes the first excavation of the ruins of Khara-Khoto in the south of Gobi

1909  Further excavations of Khara-Khoto; publishes The two-year journey across Mongolia and the Amdo Highlands

1910  Exhibition of the collections of the Mongolia–Sichuan Expedition at the Russian Geographical Society; elected, on 9 April, an honorary member of the Russian Geographical Society

1910  Comes to London and gives a talk on the results of his last expedition before the members of the Royal Geographical Society; Promoted to the rank of Colonel

1911  Receives, on 19 February, the Gold medal of the Italian Geographical Society; elected, on 30 March, an honorary member of the Hungarian Geographical Society; awarded, on 22 May, the Founder's Medal of the Royal Geographical Society of London

1912  Marries Elizaveta (Elizabeth) Puskariova, after divorcing Nadezhda Kamynina

1913  Publishes Three-year Journey (1899–1901) across Mongolia and Tibet; makes a trip, in June and July, to Ascania-Nova nature reserve; travels with his wife to Turkestan to lay a wreath, on 6 October, at the tombstone of N. Przhevalskii on the shore of Lake Issyk-Kul; publishes Nikolai Mikhailovich Przhevalskii, the first explorer of nature in Central Asia; awarded, on 19 November, the P. A. Chickachev Prize by the French Academy of Sciences

1914  His Tibet Expedition is cancelled on account of the Great War

1914–5  Goes to the front, being posted as the military commandant of the city of Tarnov and later of Yassy and Ternopol

1915  Sent to Mongolia as head of the expedition for the procurement of meat cattle for the acting army

1916  Promoted, in December, to the rank of General-Major
1917 Appointed as Commissar of Ascania-Nova
1920 Publishes *Tibet and the Dalai Lama*; travels to Siberia to inspect the local branches of the Russian Geographical Society
1921 Revisits Ascania-Nova as a member of the government commission
1923 Publication of *Mongolia and Amdo and the dead city of Khara-Khoto*
1923–6 Leads the Mongolia–Tibet expedition
1924–5 Conducts archaeological excavations of the Hunn burial mounds at the Noin-Ula Mountains, north of Ulan Bator
1924 Elected an honorary member of the Scientific Committee of the Mongolian People’s Republic
1925 Travels from Ulan Bator to Peking to obtain Chinese travel passports to conduct fieldwork at Khara-Khoto; reads a lecture at the Peking University
1927 Elected an acting member of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences; submits plans for his new Tibet Expedition to the RGO Council and the Soviet Government [plan rejected]
1935 Dies on 26 September in Petrodvoretz
1951 A commemorative postage stamp with Kozlov’s portrait is issued by the Soviet postal agency
1963 Publication of a volume of P. K. Kozlov’s selected works in connection with his centenary: *P. K. Kozlov. Russkii puteshestvennik v Tsentr’noi Azii: Izbrannye Trudy*
1975 Elizaveta Kozlova dies in Leningrad
1988 By a decree of the Leningrad municipal authorities, the Kozlovs’ apartment is turned into the P. K. Kozlov Memorial museum affiliated with the Institute for the History of Science and Technology, St. Petersburg branch, Russian Academy of Sciences. Subsequently a memorial plaque is put on the wall of the building and Kozlov’s bust is put up in the vestibule
2002 Inauguration of the museum; the materials displayed tell the story of Russian exploration in Inner Asia and its principal explorers, from Przhevalskii to Kozlov
2003 Publication of the full unexpurgated texts of the travel diaries of Kozlov’s Mongolia expedition (1923–6) by the ‘Nauka’ Academic publishers in their ‘Nauchnoe nasledstvo’ (Scientific Legacy) series (vol. 30)
2010 Launch of the Museum website www.kozlov-museum.ru
2013 International conference *Rossiiskoe izuchenie Tsentral’noi Azii: istoricheskie i sovremennye aspekty* (The Russian exploration of Central Asia in historical perspective and its contemporary aspects) is held in St. Petersburg, on 15–17 October, at the Russian Geographical Society in commemoration of Kozlov’s 150th anniversary