

Pre-Tsarist and Tsarist Central Asia

Communal commitment and political order in change

Paul Georg Geiss

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PRE-TSARIST AND TSARIST CENTRAL ASIA

This study, written from the perspective of political sociology, represents the first comparative examination of Central Asian communal and political organisation before and after the tsarist conquest of the region. It covers Turkman, Kyrgyz, Kazakh and other tribal societies, analyses the patrimonial state structures of the Emirate of Bukhara and the Khanates of Khiva and Khokand, and discusses the impact of the established tsarist civil military administration on the communal and political orientations of the Muslim population.

Changing concepts of collective identity are described in reference to acknowledged or refuted claims of political authority by various population groups. The study also provides some evidence which helps us to understand the region's resistance to democratisation and the continuity of patrimonial politics in newly independent states.

Paul Georg Geiss is a Research Fellow at the German Institute for Middle East Studies, Hamburg. He specialises in the social history and comparative politics of Central Asia

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FOR CHRISTINA

Dynasties, kingdoms, and cities may at any time be dependent upon one man, and when
that man is removed from his place, the dynasty crumbles, or the city is destroyed, or the
country is thrown into confusion.¹

And listen to me now and mark my words: a commander is not elected. He is
appointed by a superior.²

For where there is nothing in common between ruler and ruled, there is no friendship
either, just as there is no justice.³

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AQ</i>	Anthropological Quarterly
<i>BIOST</i>	Bundesinstitut für ostwissenschaftliche und Internationale Studien
<i>BSOAS</i>	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies
<i>CAJ</i>	Central Asiatic Journal
<i>CAM</i>	Central Asian Monitor
<i>CAR</i>	Central Asian Review
<i>CAS</i>	Central Asian Survey
<i>CdMRS</i>	Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique
<i>ÈO</i>	Ètnograficheskoe obozrenie
<i>IRGO</i>	Imperatorskoe Russkoe geograficheskoe obshchestvo
<i>JoCS</i>	Journal of Communist Studies
<i>JRAI</i>	Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute
<i>IV</i>	Istoricheskii vestnik
<i>PrCom</i>	Problems of Communism
<i>PV</i>	Pravitel'stvennyi vestnik
<i>PVS</i>	Politikwissenschaftliche Vierteljahresschrift
<i>ReMMM</i>	Revue du monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée
<i>RGO</i>	Russkoe geograficheskoe obshchestvo
<i>RV</i>	Russkii vestnik
<i>SÈ</i>	Sovetskaia ètnografiia
<i>SWJoA</i>	South-Western Journal of Anthropology
<i>TF</i>	Turkmenenforschung
<i>TU</i>	Turkmenovedenie
<i>TV</i>	Turkestanские vsdomosti
<i>VE</i>	Vestnik Evrazii—Acta Eurasica
<i>VS</i>	Voennyi sbornik
<i>VK</i>	Voprosy kolonizatsii
<i>VRGO</i>	Vestnik Russkogo geograficheskogo obshchestva
<i>ZIVAN</i>	Zapiski instituta vostokovedeniia Akademii Nauk SSSR
<i>ZRGO</i>	Zapiski Russkogo geograficheskogo obshchestva
<i>ZHS</i>	Zhivaia Starina

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Transliterations

The use of Russian and local terms is based on transliterations from the Cyrillic alphabets of the respective languages. For reasons of convenience, the system used here aims at avoiding diacritical marks and attempts to be unequivocal. Thus every Cyrillic graph is transliterated by one or two specific Latin letters on the basis of a modified transliteration of the Russian employed by the Library of Congress, which is also used by scholars such as Bregel.⁴ In order to be able to transliterate certain special

Table 1: Transliterations

<i>Cyrillic letter</i>	<i>Russian</i>	<i>Kyrgyz</i>	<i>Kazakh</i>	<i>KaraKalpak</i>	<i>Turkman</i>	<i>Uzbek</i>	<i>Tajik</i>
А а	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Ә ә			ä	ä	ä		
Б б	b	b	b	b	b	b	b
В в	v	v	v	v	v	v	v

Г г	g	g	g	g	g	g	g
Ғ ғ			gh	gh		gh	gh
Д д	d	d	d	d	d	d	d
Е е	e	e	e	e	e	e	e
Ё ё	io						
Ж ж	zh	j	zh	zh	zh	j	zh
Жж					j		
Э э	z	z	z	z	z	z	z
И и	i	i	i	i	i	i	i
Й й							ee
Й й	ĩ	ĩ	ĩ	ĩ	ĩ	ĩ	ĩ
І і			ĩ				
К к	k	k	k	k	k	k	k
Қ қ			q	q		q	q
Л л	l	l	l	l	l	l	l
М м	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Н н	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
Ң ң		ng	ng	ng	ng		
О о	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
Ө ө		ö	ö	ö	ö		
П п	p	p	p	p	p	p	p
Р р	r	r	r	r	r	r	r
С с	s	s	s	s	s	s	s

<i>Cyrillic letter</i>	<i>Russian</i>	<i>Kyrgyz</i>	<i>Kazakh</i>	<i>Kara-Kalpak</i>	<i>Turkman</i>	<i>Uzbek</i>	<i>Tajik</i>
Т т	t	t	t	t	t	t	t
У у	u	u	u	u	u	u	u
Ў ў				w		ū	ū
Ү ү		ü	ü	ü	ü		
Үү			ū				
Ф ф	f	f	f	f	f	f	f
Х х	kh	kh	kh	kh	kh	kh	kh
Ҳ ҳ				h		h	h

Һ һ				h			
Ц ц	ts	ts	ts	ts	ts	ts	ts
Ч ч	ch	ch	ch	ch	ch	ch	ch
Ң ң							j
Ш ш	sh	sh	sh	sh	sh	sh	sh
Щ щ	shch	shch	shch	shch	shch		shch
Ъ	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
Ы ы	y	y	y	y	y		y
Ь	'	'	'	'	'	'	'
Э э	è	è	è	è	è	è	è
Ю ю	iu	iu	iu	iu	iu	iu	iu
Я я	ia	ia	ia	ia	ia	ia	ia
	33	36	42	41	38	35	39

Cyrillic letters of the local languages, we use some diacritical marks where no suitable Latin letters are available in English. Three of these are used: double dots (e.g. *ï*) one dot (e.g. *è*) and the extenuation mark (e.g. *ũ*).

Basically, we italicise all local terms which are transliterated. Names of persons and places are normally not italicised but reproduced according to their use in English. If we could not find a standardised English version of any Arab or Persian term, we preferred to use its local form. Nevertheless, some spellings of names may have remained imprecise, towards which we ask our readers to be indulgent.⁵

Notes

- 1 Royal Councillor about a Samanid ruler in 1086, from Nizam al-Mulk, *The Book of Government or Rules for Kings*, trans. Hubert Darke, Routledge and Kegan Paul: London 1960, pp. 120–1. Quoted in E.Allworth, *The Modern Uzbeks*, Durham NC and London 1994, p. 59.
- 2 Tsch. Aitmatow, *Frühe Kraniche*, Munich 1980, p. 55 (Russian: ‘Chingiz Aitmatov, Rannie zhuravli’, *Novii Mir*, 1975/9, Moscow).
- 3 Aristotle, *Politics*, VIII, xi, 1161a30.
- 4 Cf. Y.Bregel (ed.) *Bibliography of Islamic Central Asia*, 3 vols, Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies: Bloomington 1995; cf. R.K.Barry (ed.) *American Library Association Library of Congress Romanization Tables. Transliteration Schemes for Non-Roman Scripts, 1997 Edition*, Washington 1997, pp. 138–53.
- 5 The best available dictionaries are: N.A.Baskakov, *Qaraqalpaqsha-Russha sözlik* (30,000 words) Moscow 1958; K.K.Iudakhin, *Kirgizko-Russkii slovar* (40,000 words) Moscow 1965; M.V.Rahimee and L.V.Uspenskaia, *Lughati Tojikee-Rusee* (40,000 words) Moscow 1954; S.F.Akabirov, Z.M.Magrufov and A.T. Khodzhakhanov, *Uzbeksko-Russkii slovar* (40,000 words) Moscow 1959. See also: Kh.Makhmudov and G.Musabaev, *Qazaqsha-oryssha sözdiik*, Almaty, 1954; N.A. Baskakov and M.Ia.Khamzaev, *Russko-turkmenskii slovar*, Moscow 1956.

INTRODUCTION

In his description of the Kazakh hordes, tsarist Privy Councillor A. Levshin poses the question how order will be possible within a nomadic society, if none of its members seems to be committed to a public weal. He states that Kazakhs do not only opportunistically escape Russian authority by moving across the Russian-Chinese border, but show a similar attitude towards their own 'superiors':

They deal with their own chiefs in the same way and change their obedience according to the circumstances. If a chief who has secured homage and loyalty calls someone to account for an assault, the latter will leave the former and join someone else. If that one refuses to hide him, he will go to a third or fourth person.... What kind of order can be found by a commander, if his subjects will submit only when circumstances afford it, if they will not be prepared to sacrifice themselves for the general public good, if they will only aim at satisfying their own predatory inclinations and if each of them wants to command, when there is the slightest opportunity to do so?¹

Levshin's assessment of tribalism accentuates some of the problems of political order: how is order possible within a society whose members seem to be not really committed to shared values and action orientations? If commitment is temporarily limited and depends on fluctuating circumstances, how is enduring political order to be established? Levshin's statement indicates that political order refers to a code of authority, which regulates the commitment of a 'superior' in the righteous use of power (i.e. to give commands) and in that of a follower to be obedient. When tribesmen only obey when circumstances afford it and rather like to command others at the first opportunity than being responsive to orders, they do not seem to share such a code of authority and to participate in a common political order. This is at least Levshin's view, which holds moral and intellectual deficiencies to be responsible for this serious lack.²

Levshin certainly is not correct when he emphasises the lack of authority structures among the Kazakhs, and it is obvious that he does not fully take into consideration that mobility and flexibility are important to the survival of nomadic tribesmen. Being an official of a patrimonial government, he primarily perceives Kazakh political order from the standpoint of a settled civilisation, and of a representative of the tsarist empire which was constantly threatened by invasions of nomads from its borderlands. Subsequently he perceived the tribal political order as disorder in the steppe. However, the shifting of tribal loyalties does not exclude *a priori* the existence of political order within these societies, as scholars like Becker erroneously claimed with regard to the Turkmen.³ Political order of tribal and non-tribal societies might be of a different kind. What seems

to be chaos and anarchy from the perspective of centralised state power, might have referred to quite ordered patterns of tribal authority relations.

This conflated outside perception of political order did not merely result from ignorance and lack of information, as Levshin was one of the best Russian experts on the Kazakh hordes at that time. Neither did it remain limited to tribal societies. Seventy years later, after the tsarist conquest of Central Asia and the establishment of tsarist protectorates, Logofet published a monograph on the Emirate of Bukhara with the title *Country without Law*. In this book he attempts to present evidence for the unjust and despotic nature of politics in the emirate.⁴ These historical outside perceptions of political order do not differ from contemporary Western accounts on political order in Central Asia: Edward Allworth, for example, perceived 'intolerant communist dictatorship' in Tajikistan, and talks of 'Stalinist authoritarian mentality and police-state methods to suppress dissent' in Uzbekistan.⁵ Other scholars regard the Uzbek president Islam Karimov as a 'dictator'⁶ and point out the 'failure of the regime of President Islam Karimov to create official institutions through which ordinary citizens can effectively participate in the political process'.⁷ In the same way, President Niyazov's Turkmenistan is described as 'dictatorship', and he is attested to have managed to 'build a cult of personality to rival or even exceed that of dictator J.Stalin'.⁸

What historical and contemporary accounts of politics in Central Asia have in common is that they regard Central Asian political order as being unstable and fragile due to unjust rule, and consider that the political order must be improved by outside intervention or influence: Logofet argued that Russia should conquer the emirate to improve the political order and to establish more legitimate forms of government. Similarly, contemporary Western politicians and scholars press for democratisation in Central Asia to make politics more responsive to the needs of the local population and to establish enduring political order in the area.

In both cases scholars evaluate Central Asian politics from the perspective of their own political values, and use the experiences of their own political socialisation as blueprints for their analyses. There exist some doubts, however, as to whether these external points of evaluation deliver reliable indicators for political stability and the endurance of political order, if they do not take the impact of prevailing community structures into consideration.

In this study, Central Asian political order should be considered in its own terms, by analysing its perseverance and discontinuities with regard to their embedment in Central Asian community structures. How the use of political power is authorised in a society or not, depends on the type of political community structures established there. In nineteenth-century Central Asia these community structures were of various types, and shaped politics in different ways. They varied not only with regard to tribal and non-tribal settled populations: in addition to this, tribal communal commitment was established in Central Asia in dissimilar ways. This study aims at analysing these structures in Central Asia and seeks to elaborate their continuities and disruptions from pre-tsarist to tsarist times. As a political community emerges from the interpenetration of communal and political action orientations, we will have to deal with both changing communal commitment structures and political order in the region.

Previous research

The relation between communal commitment structures and the political order in Central Asia has never been analysed in a systematic and comparative way. The latest more comprehensive Anglo-American studies on communal commitment structures, which are often referred to as 'traditional social structures' or 'social organisations', were written several decades ago. A.E. Hudson wrote a monograph on Kazakh social structures in the 1930s, and was one of the few Western scholars who were able to do some field research in the area, although he depended on local interpreters.⁹ L.Krader published interesting comparative studies on social structures of the Mongol-Turkic Nomads, which also included the Kazakhs. In this study he tried to apply the anthropological models of tribal societies in Africa and the Middle East to Inner Asia.¹⁰ E.Bacon completed a comparative study on the social structures of Asian and European societies, in the 1950s.¹¹ All these monographs dealt with the Kazakhs, but neglected to analyse Turkman and Kyrgyz tribalism.¹² In addition, they often held a static view on tribalism and did not sufficiently consider tribal relations with the neighbouring patrimonial states and the impact of tsarist administration. More recent work on Central Asian tribalism was done by T.J.Barfield and A.M.Khazanov. In his work, Barfield opposes the Inner Asian model of the 'conical clan' to that of more egalitarian Arabian tribalism.¹³ Khazanov wrote the best synopsis on Asian and African nomadism in a historical perspective, which is based on a profound knowledge of both Western and Soviet ethnography. It is because of the enormous scope of this work that Central Asian tribalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth century is treated very briefly.¹⁴ Both anthropologists are more interested in tribalism and less in patrimonial states, although both analyse the impacts of states on tribal structures.

Soviet studies analysed tribal structures from the perspective of class conflict. This was not a very suitable concept for the analysis of kinshipbased societies. Nevertheless, it considerably shaped the conceptual imagination of Soviet scholars, for example in the idea of the 'patriarchalfeudal' nature of tribalism.¹⁵

The most authoritative scholarship on Turkman tribalism was demonstrated by W.König and W.Irons. The East German ethnologist König presented an analytically and empirically very sound study of the *Akhal Teke*, which is almost free from ideological interpretations. It is not only based on access to Soviet archives but also on field work in the area.¹⁶ Irons' study of the *Iomut* Turkmen is founded on field work in the 1960s in Northern Iran, and gives a very carefully reconstructed insight into Turkman acephalous tribal structures.¹⁷ Wood dealt with the *Sariqs* of Merv and their relations to the Khanate of Khiva in the early nineteenth century.¹⁸ Smaller studies were published more recently by Lorenz and Meserve.¹⁹

Further Western research on Kazakh tribalism was done by Janabel, who analysed Mongol and Kazakh steppe politics.²⁰ Bodger examined features of political competition among rivalling Kazakh sultans in the eighteenth century.²¹ In their books on the Kazakhs, both Akiner and Olcott paid little attention to tribal structures, however.²² More elaborated Western scholarship on Kyrgyz and Uzbek tribalism before the revolution does not exist.²³ Uzbek and Kyrgyz community structures were rather studied in northern Afghanistan, where anthropological fieldwork was possible up to the 1980s.²⁴

Soviet scholarship was much more developed with regard to Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Kara-Kalpak and Turkman tribalism, and literature on the subject is abundant. This is not the

place to give even a rough overview of Soviet scholarship in this field, but much careful research was done by ethnographers such as Tolstov,²⁵ Zhdanko,²⁶ Tostova,²⁷ Karmysheva,²⁸ Abramzon,²⁹ Tolybekov,³⁰ Markov,³¹ Kisliakov³² and Poliakov.³³ Nevertheless, ideological prejudices did not always enable theoretically sound conclusions and empirically precise descriptions.

With regard to the patrimonial states of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, independent Western historical research based on Persian and Chaghatay sources is little developed: there exist some general histories of Central Asia which also deal with the Emirate of Bukhara and the Khanates of Khokand and Khiva of that period.³⁴ These studies often are only compiled from a selective choice of sources and mostly older literature, so that they no longer reach the international standards of the critical study of historical sources. Monographs like M. Holdsworth's *Turkestan in the Nineteenth Century* rather reviewed existing Soviet literature than presented new results of historical research.³⁵ Other scholars like Bacqué-Grammont limited their historical research interests to the analysis of single documents.³⁶

The most authoritative studies on the Emirate of Bukhara and the Khanate of Khiva are still those of Yuri Bregel,³⁷ who has also compiled the best bibliography on pre-modern Central Asia, consisting of three volumes.³⁸ McChesney wrote interesting studies on *vaqf* estates and on political traditions of legitimacy in Central Asia.³⁹ Anke von Kügelgen recently finished a study on the legitimation of Manghit dynasty by local historiographers.⁴⁰ We do not have similar studies on the Khanate of Khokand. Due to this scarcity, Soviet studies on Central Asian history have remained important in the field. As only few later historians had the same access to literature and sources in Oriental and Western languages, Barthold's *oeuvre* continues to represent a starting- and reference point for historical research.⁴¹ The work of Soviet orientalist like A.A. Semenov,⁴² P.P. Ivanov or V.M. Ploskikh⁴³ will continue to influence historical research on the Central Asian patrimonial states of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Nevertheless, the existing literature is often silent about community structures, and it is difficult to find research on the relation between local solidarity groups and the patrimonial state administration.⁴⁴ Studies like Jürgen Paul's analysis of the interrelations between state structures and local communities in pre-mongol Eastern Iran and Transoxiana are still to be written about the patrimonial states in pre-tsarist Central Asia.⁴⁴

Although research on tsarist Central Asia could be based on abundant Russian sources and materials, it too has attracted few Western researchers. Since the 1960s Pierce's *Russian Central Asia* has remained the only general study on the tsarist civil-military administration, although it is written from a more Russian perspective and is less interested in communal and political commitment structures of the local population.⁴⁵ There only exist a few more specialised studies in this field: Raëff dealt with the Speransky reform of the Middle Horde, which was the first tsarist attempt to establish independent administrative structures among Kazakh tribesmen.⁴⁶ Demko's treatment of the European colonisation of the Kazakh Steppe is still the single Western monograph on this topic.⁴⁷ Virginia Martin recently published a differentiated account on customary law and civil military administration among the former Middle Horde.⁴⁸ Sabol wrote a thesis on the European colonisation of Central Asia and its impacts on rethinking collective identity among Kazakhs.⁴⁹

With regard to the settled population of the river oases, Western research is even more rare: in the 1960s Carrère d'Encausse published a study on Jadid reformers in Central Asia, which tried to present these various independent and isolated Central Asian reformers as members of a national reform movement.⁵⁰ A more reliable monograph on Central Asian Jadidism is Khalid's *Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform*, which represents the most systematic study of Jadid reformist thinking in Central Asia.⁵¹ Omnibus volumes like Allworth's *Central Asia: 130 Years of Russian Dominance* rather contain useful compilations of Soviet research than new genuine historical studies.⁵²

The tsarist protectorates of Khiva and Bukhara did not get more scholarly attention: Becker's *Russia's Protectorates*⁵³ is still the best and most comprehensive study on this topic. More recently, Chatterjee completed an enquiry on social and political change in the emirate and the impacts of tsarist influence in the area.⁵⁴ Bacon wrote a cultural history of Central Asia which covers the pre-tsarist, tsarist and Soviet periods. Due to its sensibility to the local populace and its focus both on tribal and oasis culture, it is probably the best general study on social and cultural change in Central Asia.⁵⁵

This brief overview of previous scholarship cannot be complete. It only lists the existing, mostly Western research which is relevant to the proposed study. Due to the enormous scope of the relevant Soviet literature, we have only been able to make few remarks in order to sketch the state of the art of historical research on Central Asia.

This study is not dedicated to idiographic historical research, however. It also does not aim at summarising and compiling previous research work to write another history of Central Asia. This study pursues its own ends from the perspective of political sociology. Consequently, we do not primarily aim at giving a balanced overview of historical events, as historians are used to doing, but we refer to events only if they help clarify action orientations and structural change in Central Asia.

Comparative sociological research is not possible without specifying one's analytical tools. What a 'state', a 'tribe' or 'authority' is, is not a question of political dispute or scholarly argument, but a matter of analytic convenience. It is the internal consistency and the empirical relevance which enable us to judge the soundness of the terminology used.⁵⁶ Consequently, we neither use Soviet political attributes like 'reactionary', 'bourgeois-nationalistic' or 'feudalistic' on the one hand, nor do we employ terms like 'dictator', 'personality-cult' or 'totalitarianism' which are—as negative concepts—more rooted in Western political discourse than in analytic academic scholarship, on the other hand. In the same way, concepts like 'despotism', 'fanaticism' or 'fundamentalism' are avoided for their ethnocentric connotations.

As nomothetic sociological research is done from a theoretical perspective and based on hypotheses, we will first have to develop our theoretical framework and specify the analytical tools used in this study.

Political community and normative order

Our theoretical approach starts from the basic sociological fact that a common normative order is a basic precondition of every society. This is not only an argument linked to the integrative pole of the AGIL-scheme of action theorists,⁵⁷ but also a theoretical insight which is as old as the academic field of sociology itself. In the classic study *De la*

division du travail social, Durkheim emphasised the normative character of both segmented and stratified societies. The normative structure of social order appears in the mechanical solidarity of highly segmented primitive societies, and in the organic solidarity of industrialising societies based on division of labour and complex role differentiation.⁵⁸ Utilitarian theorems exclude this normative aspect from their explanations. They assume a social contract which is implicitly or explicitly agreed to, because it guarantees the maximal happiness of the greatest number of people or a maximum of utility. However, Durkheim already shows that social relations which arise from the contractual agreement of individuals can never lay a foundation for a sustainable social order. If a society depends only on privately entered contracts based on interests, it can never be stable.⁵⁹

Similarly, power relations which are not integrated in an order of authority enable only *factual orders*. The binding decisions produced by such orders are as contingent as the changing power relations in societies.⁶⁰ Regulation by a *normative order*⁶¹ will be needed to prevent it from becoming an object of forceful confrontation and struggle.⁶² Thus the answer to the question of whether political order is stable and sustainable or not, depends highly on its specification as a normative order and the establishment of *political community* structures.⁶³

The basic hypothesis of this study is that enduring political order in Central Asia emerges from the successful *interpenetration* of opposing communal and political action orientations. Enduring political order will emerge, if societies are able to establish political community structures which ensure its members' commitment to the common political order. If social and political change do not lead to factual orders, opposing political and communal action orientations will have to interpenetrate to enable a new normative order.⁶⁴ It is the successful interpenetration of political and communal orientations which strengthen the political community structures of societies. This implies that the problem of political integration is linked to the fact of how prevailing community structures are referred to in the political sphere.⁶⁵

A political community arising from the interpenetration of communal and political action orientations can be acephalous or cephalous. An acephalous political community does not have regular leaders and subsequently lacks political *authority* relations.⁶⁶ A cephalous political community is based on a commitment to authority relations. This commitment is based on a belief in the righteousness of the authoritative use of *power*,⁶⁷ which roots the obligation of the ruler to rule and which informs the motivation of the ruled to obey. The use of negative sanctions (force) to enforce collective goals only represent an ultimate case. *Legitimate authority* relations are consequently not based on every motivation of obedience, as one might read Max Weber.⁶⁸ Legitimate authority is rooted in a normative order and based on political community which regulates political obedience. Thus legitimate authority informs the obligation of the ruler to rule and his or her expectation of obedience of the ruled.⁶⁹ If authority is not at all based on political community and lacks political legitimacy, it is called *domination*.⁷⁰

Four types of political community

According to the lack of authority relations and the different kinds of legitimacy, there are four main types of political communities:⁷¹

The acephalous political community lacks both leaders and staff of authority. It is politically decentralised and based on a community of law. Order is maintained and enforced by all able-bodied members of the community who pursue rightful force, feud and resistance to restore the communal order whose rights and claims are perceived as having been harmed. In many tribal societies, feud and strife are often widespread, since every tribesman sues for his claims and does not hesitate to enforce them. Thus frequent raids were not undertaken arbitrarily, but were linked to rightful claims. Every able-bodied man's rightful claim is based on customary law which shapes legal community structures.⁷² *Political representation* does not exist in acephalous political communities, since political decisions need the consent of its members and cannot be ascribed.⁷³ Medieval lordship over land and segmented tribal societies is based on acephalous political community structures.

Political communities based on patriarchal authority can inform more centralised or decentralised cephalous political orders. In both cases political order is based on personal authority relations and lacks an administrative staff. In these types of political order, authority relations do not rely on bureaucrats, priests or other officials, but only on the obedience of followers to a leader. These authority relations are informed by community of law which restrains the arbitrariness of ruling and which informs the obligations of the leader and the duties of his followers.⁷⁴ The monopoly of command and the authorised use of coercive power are not fully appropriated by the leader, who remains dependent on followers. Authority relations are relations of piety⁷⁵ and protection between the leader and his followers on the one hand and/or relations of piety towards the divine order of life (*Lebensordnung*) on the other. Chieftainships, tribal confederacies and hordes are based on this type of political community.⁷⁶

A political community based on patrimonial authority informs political orders which rely on a staff of authority and relations of loyalty and piety between ruler and ruled.⁷⁷ In this type of personalised political community structure, political power is centralised and enables the establishment of *states*. These are political organisations whose regulations are enforced by an administrative staff within a defined territory and which successfully monopolise the levying of taxes and use of legitimate coercive power. *State* authority refers to the materiality that the ruler can dispose of an administrative staff in order to enforce his commands without being fully dependant on the cooperation of followers. As the ruler, he is able to give orders to officials and to command subjects.⁷⁸

Patrimonial authority can inform quite different political orders. It is most purely developed when the administrative staff is the personal staff of the ruler and supplied by him. In estate-type patrimonialism, members of the staff appropriate powers and means of administration, and the ruler's disposition of the staff is limited with regard to these estates. This is often the case in *agricultural states*.⁷⁹ In *mercantile states* the ruler's staff is not only involved in fiscal, judicial and military sovereign acts, but also maintains monopolies in trade and the exploitation of natural resources. In patrimonial *industrialised states*, personalised state authority promotes the industrialisation of economy and society. This process can be based rather on state property and central planning, or rather on private property and free entrepreneurship. All these different types of state can be rooted in political communities structures which enable patrimonial authority relations.

Patrimonial authority is not based on kinship ties, but on established relations of piety and protection between ruler and ruled. Since piety can be more directed towards an authorised leader or towards a divine order of life, patrimonial authority can be built more on a divine order (e.g. within an Islamic state) or more on personal devotion to leaders or rulers (e.g. in a presidential republic). Patrimonial authority is maintained with the help of an administrative staff which is recruited primarily with regard to loyalty to the ruler. Professional qualification is often of secondary importance for recruitment.

A political community which is informed by legal authority is based on political consent about the rule of law in civil and public affairs. Effective monopolisation of the legitimate use of physical force and the state's monopoly of taxation secure this type of political order. Administrative staff are only recruited with reference to competence and qualification, and officials are paid by the state.

Collective goal attainment depends on communally defined legitimate claims of interest towards politics, and influences itself the shared borders and values of the community system. Since there is a communal consensus about what is a matter of political disposition and what is not, and about procedures to form a political will, the ruled are committed to the results of collective goal attainment, whereas the rulers are accountable and committed to political responsibility.

The analysis of social and political change basically deals with changing communal and political orientations of social agents. From the applied theoretical perspective we have to analyse these changes and examine what promotes and prevents the establishment of new normative political orders. Not every change of political and economic action orientations destroys or transforms established normative orders. Such change might establish a new form of political regime or leadership, without changing the underlying feature of political community structures.

As a result we have differentiated four main types of political communities which shape different types of normative orders. These four types of political communities correspond to the four basic types of political commitment: (tribal) commitment to political equality; (tribal) commitment to patriarchal authority; commitment to patrimonial authority; and commitment to legal authority. Figure 1 represents these different types of political commitment and order. From this perspective, the institutional logic of political regimes does not basically depend on formal institutional arrangements like those of presidential republics or monarchies, but on the type of political community structure which is implied.

This analytical systematisation of political orders is not complete, and its implied criteria are not all exclusive. For example, agricultural states can be more or less centralised and can be monetised to some extent. However, the elaboration of the different types of political community with similar political commitment structures should make it clear that similar commitment structures might inform quite different political regimes. As previous systematisations of political order did not sufficiently pay attention to these different forms of political commitment, their typologies are less helpful for systematising political regimes in European and non-European countries, and for explaining political change.⁸⁰

In any case, the problem of normative order will emerge, if a new political order based on a different type of political commitment is promoted. It will also occur if political regimes try to integrate political orders which rely on a different type of commitment.

Political integration will be also problematic between political elites, which share a similar type of political commitment, but interpret their political commitment in a different way by linking it to distinct legal and cultural traditions. According to the proposed perspective, political elites will be only able to solve the problem of political order if they find a way to influence communal commitment structures, or if they succeed in integrating prevailing communal commitments in a new normative order. If communal commitment changes, it will take a long time and will be linked to processes of acculturation, like those, for example, of the full conversion of animistic pastoral tribesmen to literary religions like Islam or Christianity.

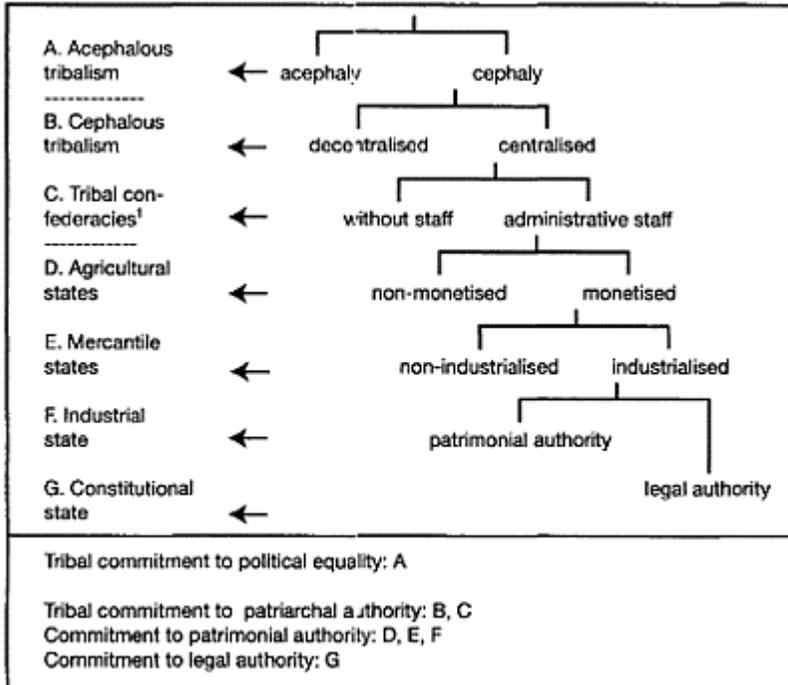


Figure 1: Political commitment and types of political order

Note: ¹Nomadic empires are more similar to tribal confederacies than states. They differ from states in their minor significance of an interchangeable administrative staff. They often consisted of an administrative hierarchy of the imperial leaders and their courts, their

governors appointed to oversee tribes, and the tribal leaders. In these confederacies, politics was based on personal oaths of allegiance of the free man to the imperial leader, on the subservience of slaves, and on the tribal following of allied tribesmen. Conquered tribesmen and non-tribal settled populations often became tributaries of the conqueror (cf. Barfield 1992, 5–8).

From this theoretical perspective, the elaborated analytical framework is used to analyse the changing political order and communal commitment in Central Asia. As the focus of our study is directed to pre-Soviet Central Asia, not all aspects of the analytical scheme will be applied in this study. Nevertheless, we have not omitted these other aspects for systematic and comparative reasons. Thus the analytical framework is also designed to be applied and further developed for the study of political change in other contemporary and historical societies. Economic and cultural issues are only picked up if they are necessary to understand political and solidarity action orientations. Thus the zones of interpenetration between communal commitment and the economic and cultural sphere are not within the scope of this study.

Methodological problems

This study is committed to nomothetic sociological research which aims at gaining more generalised knowledge about causal relations in the field of community structures and politics in Central Asia. It represents a preliminary study to the problems of political reform in contemporary Central Asia, which strive to design policy strategies to make contemporary political orders more sustainable in the area. For this reason the study's overall goal is to discover those factors which promoted or prohibited enduring political order in pre-Soviet times, and to describe how the establishment of the tsarist administration changed communal commitment and patterns of political integration in the area. As contemporary political elites act in a historical context and there exists political and communal continuity in the area, the prevailing conditions for reforms can only be estimated, if their historical context is reconstructed.

Theoretically inspired nomothetic research, consequently, formulates theoretically deduced hypotheses which are modified by and tested against the available empirical evidence in the research process. The quality of such a research approach is highly dependant on the relevance of the applied theoretical perspective and the quality of available literature and scholarship on the issues involved. Due to the low international standards of Central Asian historical research,⁸¹ this study is written in a difficult research environment and is challenged by many insufficiencies in the related research fields.

The choice of topic and scope of this study has been determined by theoretical considerations and the availability of related literature. For this reason it embraces a thematically, geographically and chronologically wide subject area, of the kind which historians have traditionally avoided due to the methodological constraints of critical and systematic study of sources and the practical considerations of workability and availability of these. In the course of the systematic reconstruction of pre-Soviet political and communal commitment structures, it turned out that some of the topics involved had not been studied at all, while others were only partly mentioned in the literature or conflated by the theoretical constraints of Soviet scholarship. In order to give some indicative descriptions of these 'blank spots', we had to consider source materials and contemporary studies to a certain extent. This auxiliary study of sources was done in a very selective way, and only in part. The choice of sources was limited to travel literature in Western languages, Russian and Kyrgyz materials, and was highly regulated by the degree of accessibility of materials. Thus we only used published source editions and official reports whose reliability was sometimes difficult to estimate.

The structural analysis of social and political change faces further methodological problems. When an analyst describes specific social structures, he or she often tends to assume that these structures are uniform, that they do not change and that they can be attributed to particular societies. This assumption is problematic, since, for example, the customary law of a tribal society might differ considerably from locality to locality. Even if it is true that the Islamisation of societies via the teaching of Islam in schools led to an increased homogenisation of those societies, many local particularities survived. The focus on general structures does not deny these local differences. However, being beyond the scope of this study, the latter cannot be described sufficiently.

The problem of generalisation is closely linked to the first-mentioned problem. If we generalise from specific sources due to the lack of reliable historical scholarship, we can never be sure not to have generalised specific aspects of general structures. On the other hand, it is impossible to quote a representative number of sources for each descriptive statement, even if such sources exist. However, these sources often do not exist or have only survived sporadically. Thus deductive descriptions sometimes cannot be avoided. According to the density of quoted literature and source evidence, readers can judge for themselves which issues need further research. We give more cautious formulations in those cases where descriptions are based more on conclusions than on direct empirical evidence. Consequently, this study should not be regarded as a completed research work, but must be read as a work in progress.

As sources cannot speak for themselves, they always have to be interpreted from a theoretical perspective. In this sense there exists a primacy of theory, as historians like R. Koselleck have argued.⁸² The theoretical perspective, however, cannot be detached from the source evidence. Whereas sources cannot tell us what we have to say, they can show us what we cannot say. Thus reference to primary sources represents an important means of controlling and improving our descriptions and hypotheses.

Sources used and contemporary literature

In order to undertake this study, we examined various source materials and contemporary reports. These materials were of varying reliability and included relevant information for our research to varying extents. As materials were only accessible in Russian and in Western languages, and only a few Persian and Chaghatay materials could be dealt with in translations, the auxiliary use of sources and their quality varied from topic to topic.

For the work as a whole we used several Soviet source editions compiled for the study of the pre-Soviet history of the Central Asian republics.⁸³ These compilations include translated extracts from local historiographies, documents from the patrimonial rulers' archives, tsarist legislative acts, reports of tsarist officials on local affairs, and internal administrative correspondence and other documents. With regard to the Kazakhs, we mainly used Levshin's description of the Kazakh hordes, which is based on the evaluation of documents from the archive of the Asiatic Department of the tsarist foreign office, the Orenburg border commission and Levshin's personal experiences as tsarist envoy to the Kazakh Steppe.⁸⁴ Some useful remarks on Turkman tribalism could be found in travel reports, of which those of Murav'ev,⁸⁵ Burnes⁸⁶ and Vámbéry⁸⁷ were the most interesting. Valuable observations on Kyrgyz tribalism were discovered in Radloff's *Tagebuch*.⁸⁸ Further valuable materials on the Kyrgyz and Kazakhs could be found in the scholarly work of Valikhanov, who was the son of the former Khan of the Middle Horde. Having received Russian education, he was the first Kazakh ethnographer who was able to describe the history and customs of the steppe nomads from an internal perspective.⁸⁹

With regard to the patrimonial states, we used Khanykov's account on the Emirate of Bukhara, which is one of the best descriptions of the emirate before the tsarist conquest.⁹⁰ The same is true for Danilevsky's description of Khiva.⁹¹ Most contemporary travel reports, however, provide little information on our topic, or are merely compilations of inaccurate or distorted information from hearsay about the rulers and their administration.⁹² Translated Persian and Chaghatay sources often turned out to be of greater value.⁹³

The tsarist conquest of Central Asia is also mirrored in the different types of sources which it left: as tsarist authorities were able to guarantee their security, Western missionaries, officers and other travellers started to discover this previously inaccessible area and published their narratives.⁹⁴ Some travellers, like the American ambassador Schuyler, did not merely describe their route and encounters, but published quite balanced descriptions about the economic, political and social situation of the populations in various parts of the river oases and in the steppe and desert areas.⁹⁵ Tsarist control of the area also facilitated various scientific expeditions by geographers, geologists, ethnographers and other academics, who subsequently published scholarly treatments.⁹⁶

Some reports were compiled by military officers who took part in the conquest campaigns and gathered information about the defeated population.⁹⁷ Another type of source that we consulted were those accounts written by tsarist officials who were on duty in various oblasts. In the Kazakh Steppe these officials were most interested in studying local customs and customary law, in order to better administer the local population.⁹⁸ Such collections of customary law also exist for the Turkmen.⁹⁹ Maev delivered some useful information about the *guberniya* of Turkestan and its capital

Tashkent.¹⁰⁰ Girshfel'd and Galkin give basic geographic and ethnographic information about the protectorate of Khiva.¹⁰¹

Valuable systematised information about tsarist Central Asia was written by imperial commissions like those headed by Girs¹⁰² and by Count Palen,¹⁰³ who tried to collect information for the reform of the tsarist administration. Palen's revision report is especially precious, as he evaluated and analysed all aspects of the civil-military administration, including its impact on local community structures and native courts in a report of eighteen volumes. Legal statutes and regulations represented further important sources of information.¹⁰⁴

The introduction of administrative structures also promoted the research of tsarist ethnographers who collected materials about the local population.¹⁰⁵ Because they tried to systematise the population in terms of culturally defined language groups, their ethnographic accounts differ considerably regarding the names, boundaries and peculiarities of the Central Asian 'peoples' who were organised along different lines. Ostroumov's endeavours to describe a *Sart* people and language was such an attempt.¹⁰⁶

The tsarist conquest also focused the interest of Western scholars on the area. After the publication of his travel account, Vámbéry published a history of Bukhara¹⁰⁷ and a study on the Turkic people.¹⁰⁸ The British orientalist Skrine and Ross wrote a history of Russian Turkestan,¹⁰⁹ and the Danish explorer Olufsen published a study on the Emirate of Bukhara after he had visited the area in the 1890s.¹¹⁰ Collett and Trotter compiled from various Russian and Western sources comprehensive descriptions of the Emirate of Bukhara and the Khanate of Khiva.¹¹¹ These studies were often compiled exclusively from Russian sources, however, and did not emerge from a genuine study of both Chaghatay and Persian sources. For this reason they did not encourage further Western historical research on the area. Western ethnographic research based on field work in the area is more reliable in this respect.¹¹²

Last but not least, there emerged also an abundant number of studies written by Russian orientalist and other scholars: studies like Nalivkin's history of Khokand are unique, but of low value for historians, as he did not specify the local sources which he used.¹¹³ Other research, like Logofet's study on the Emirate of Bukhara as Russian protectorate,¹¹⁴ specifies its sources, but is often based solely on Russian materials and is therefore inclined to describe administrative structures rather from a Russian perspective. Russian publications on the tsarist colonies and the civil-military administration are often little interested in describing local community structures and the impacts of the administration on them.¹¹⁵

This brief overview of sources and contemporary literature represents only a selective sample of historical materials. There exist many other important sources which could not be used within the framework of this study. Because the systematic analysis of historians' sources is neither intended nor possible within this framework of this study, and Western historical research is anyway very limited in scope and content, we often were forced to critically appeal to Soviet historiography and to use those research results which we considered to be the most reliable.¹¹⁶

Structure of the book

Chapter 1 begins the empirical analysis on pre-tsarist Central Asia and deals with tribal communal commitment. First the tribal units are defined with reference to our understanding of tribe as community of peace and law. From this basis we try to identify tribal units among Kyrgyz, Kazakh, Kara-Kalpak, Uzbek, *Qipchoq* and Turkman tribespeople. The second part of this chapter works out the different tribal descent and residence groups, and analyses the relation between both types of grouping. It is shown that the affiliation of strangers rendered tribalism complex.

In Chapter 2, residential communal commitment is analysed as the second basic form of communal commitment which existed in rural and urban mahallahs. The change from tribal to residential commitment is perceived as a process of acculturation in which tribal customary law is replaced by the Islamic *sharia*. It is shown that groups which share residential communal commitments are not politically autonomous but depend on some kind of government which ensures their political integration. This is not the case among tribesmen who remain politically self-reliant.

Chapter 3 is focused on the political integration of Central Asian tribesmen who formed acephalous and cephalous political orders. First, Turkman acephalous tribalism is described and the checkerboard order and the order of segmentary opposition are analysed as two instances of Turkman political integration which resulted from the interpenetration of political action orientations and communal commitment to equality. The Kazakh hordes, and the Kyrgyz and Kara-Kalpak confederacies are analysed as cephalous tribal political orders. It is shown that they are based on the interpenetration of political orientations and the communal commitment to patriarchy.

In Chapter 4, we deal with the strained relations between tribalism and patrimonialism in the Emirate of Bukhara and the Khanates of Khiva and Khokand before the tsarist conquest. In each case we give a brief overview of the political history to be able to analyse the changing political foundations of these more or less patrimonial states. The analysis of the patrimonial administration concentrates on the political integration of the local population, and illustrates the problematic nature of patrimonial state structures in the area. The inquiry about the impacts on communal commitment deals with the effects of patrimonial rule on both settled *Sart* and neighbouring tribal populations.

Chapter 5 investigates the tsarist civil-military administration in Central Asia. As some Kazakh tribes already made alliance with Russia in the second half of the eighteenth century, the chapter starts with the analysis of Kazakh tribal confederacies along the Russian borderline, and continues with the sultan and *prikaz* administration in the first half of the nineteenth century. Subsequently the civil-military administration after 1868 is discussed. The impact of the tsarist administration on the Kazakhs is described with regard to the loss of indigenous political orientations, migration and settlement patterns, the territorial reorientation of leadership and the changing judicial orientations. The establishment of civil-military administration in Transcaspia is more briefly described, and the impact on Turkman communal commitment is treated. In the third part of this chapter the civil-military administration of the Governor-generalship of Turkestan is analysed, and it is shown that the tsarist administrative order had to politically integrate five different groups of native and European populations. Thus we describe the local administration of tribesmen, *Sart* dwellers, Russian peasants, Cossacks

and European urban settlers, and outline the tsarist land and tax reform in the Governor-generalship. Tsarist efforts at the *sblizhenie* (rapprochement) of Central Asians to Russia are sketched as well. The impact of the tsarist administration on political orientations is discussed with regard to the loss of indigenous political orientations, the impact on communal commitment with reference to the rise of Islam, and the change from tribal to residential communal commitment.

In Chapter 6, we outline the political implications of the establishment of the Emirate of Bukhara and the Khanate of Khiva as tsarist protectorates, and briefly sketch its impact on communal and political commitment structures.

The concluding chapter sketches out the implication of our theoretical approach on Soviet and independent Central Asia. It promotes the view that despite the regime change after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the type and the weakness of political community structures have not changed in the area. Politics continues to not be rooted in a legal culture and follows the logics of patrimonialism, which sets the limits for democratisation and political reforms.

Notes

- 1 A. Levshin, *Opisanie kirgiz-kazach'ikh ili kirgiz-kaitsatskikh ord i stepei*, St Petersburg 1832, quoted by, W. Radloff, *Aus Sibirien. Lose Blätter aus dem Tagebuch eines reisenden Linguisten*, vol. 1, Leipzig 1884 (I), pp. 407–8. Cf. A. de Levchine, *Description des Hordes et des Steppes des Kirghiz-Kazaks ou KirghizKaissaks*, Paris 1840, pp. 392–3.
- 2 Cf. G. Meyendorf, *Voyage d'Orenburg à Boukhara*, Paris 1826, pp. 48–9.
- 3 S. Becker, *Russia's Protectorates in Central Asia. Bukhara and Khiva, 1865–1924*, Cambridge MA 1968, p. 99.
- 4 D. I. Logofet, *Strana bez praviva. Bukharskoe khanstvo i ego sovremennoe sostoianie*, St Petersburg 1909.
- 5 E. Allworth, 'The Hunger for Modern Leadership', in E. Allworth (ed.) *Central Asia. 130 Years of Russian Dominance, A Historical Overview*, Durham and London 1994, p. 595.
- 6 Sh. Akbarzadeh, 'Nation-building in Uzbekistan', *CAS*, 1996/1, p. 26.
- 7 J. Critchlow, 'Uzbekistan's Prospects', *CAM*, 1998/4, p. 1.
- 8 A. Bohr, 'Turkmenistan and the Turkmen', in G. Smith, *The Nationalities Question in the Post-Soviet States*, 2nd edn, London and New York 1996, pp. 356–7.
- 9 A. E. Hudson, *Kazak Social Structure*, London 1938.
- 10 L. Krader, 'Principles and Structures in the Organization of the Asiatic Steppe Pastoralists', *SWJoA*, 1955, vol. 12/2, pp. 67–92; L. Krader, *Social Organization of the Mongol-Turkic Nomads*, The Hague 1963.
- 11 E. Bacon, *Obok. A Study of Social Structure in Eurasia*, New York 1958.
- 12 On the concept of tribalism used in this study, see Chapter 1.
- 13 Thomas J. Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier. Nomadic Empires and China, 221 BC to AD 1757*, Cambridge MA and Oxford 1992 (1989).
- 14 A. M. Khazanov, *Nomads and the Outside World*, Cambridge 1984.
- 15 L. P. Potapov, 'O sushchnosti patriarkhal'no-feodarnykh otnosheniĭ u kochevykh narodov Sredneĭ Azii i Kazakhstana', in Akademiia Nauk SSSR, a.o. (ed.) *Materialy ob " edinnoi nauchnoi sessii, posviashchenoi istorii Sredneĭ Azii i Kazakhstana v dooktiabr'skiĭ period*, Tashkent 1955, pp. 17–2; B. F. Shakhmatov, 'O sushchnosti patriarkhal'no-feodal'nykh otnosheniĭ u kochevykh narodov Kazakhstana', in Akademiia nauk SSSR 1955; V. F. Shakhmatov, *Kazakhskaiia pastbishchno-kochevaia obshchina (voprosy obrazovaniia, evoliutsii i razlozheniia)*, Alma-Ata 1964; D. Kshibekov, *Kochevoe obshchestvo: genezis, razvitie, upadok*, Alma-Ata 1984.

- 16 W.König, 'Zur Gesellschaftsorganisation der Turkmenen. Die Stammesstruktur der Teke', in Museum für Völkerkunde Leipzig (ed.) *Beiträge zur Völkerforschung. Hans Damm zum 65. Geburtstag, Veröffentlichungen des Museums für Völkerkunde zu Leipzig*, Heft 11, Berlin 1961, pp. 342–51; W. König, *Die Achal-Teke. Zur Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft einer Turkmenen-Gruppe im XIX. Jahrhundert*, Berlin 1962.
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