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## **Cotton, control, and continuity in disguise: The political economy of agrarian transformation in lowland Tajikistan**

Hofman, I.

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# **Cotton, control, and continuity in disguise**

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**Irna Hofman**



Cover image: Photographed painting on a wall of a former *sovkhos* in the district of Konibodom, Sughd region, Tajikistan. Artist unknown.

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# **Cotton, control, and continuity in disguise**

**The political economy of agrarian transformation in lowland Tajikistan**

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Irna Hofman

geboren te Groningen  
in 1983

|                   |                                                                                                                                                             |
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## Glossary of terms

Note on transliteration: This thesis is written in English (U.K.) spelling. Russian and Tajik terms are transliterated following the BGN/PCGN romanisation system. Places and names are not always transliterated; I have decided to use the most common English terms (e.g. Tajikistan and Gorno Badakhshan instead of Tojikiston and Gorno Badakhshon).

|                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Agroprom</i>                                       | Agricultural department (of the district authorities)                                                                                                                                         |
| <i>Amliak</i>                                         | Form of land tenure in pre-Soviet times                                                                                                                                                       |
| <i>Bek</i>                                            | Native noble, wealthy landlord (in pre-Soviet Central Asia)                                                                                                                                   |
| <i>Bey</i>                                            | Native noble, wealthy landlord (in pre-Soviet Central Asia)                                                                                                                                   |
| <i>Bobo</i>                                           | Grandfather                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <i>Brigade</i>                                        | A production unit within the <i>kolkhoz</i> or <i>sovkhos</i> ; today the term is still used to refer to production units within large (cotton) producing farms                               |
| <i>Brigadier</i>                                      | Manager of a brigade                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <i>Dastarkhon</i>                                     | Table cloth                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <i>Dehqon farm</i> (in full: <i>khojagi dehqoni</i> ) | Commercial farm established on former <i>kolkhoz/sovkhos</i> farmland after restructuring of the former Soviet farms. A <i>dehqon</i> farm can be a collective, private, or individual entity |
| <i>Gorno Badakhshan (Autonomous Oblast) (GBAO)</i>    | Autonomous region in (north)east Tajikistan                                                                                                                                                   |
| <i>Hukumat</i>                                        | District/city authorities/administration                                                                                                                                                      |

|                                           |                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Iftar</i>                              | The (shared) meal eaten by Muslims after sunset during Ramadan                                                                           |
| <i>Jaloliddini Balkhi</i>                 | District in southwest Tajikistan (the Khatlon region); one of the case study sites (earlier called “Kolkhozobod” and “Jaloliddini Rumi”) |
| <i>Jamoat</i>                             | Lowest-level administrative unit of the state (municipality)                                                                             |
| <i>Kelin</i>                              | Daughter-in-law                                                                                                                          |
| <i>Khatlon</i>                            | Region in southwest Tajikistan                                                                                                           |
| <i>Kolkhoz (kolkhozes, also kolkhozy)</i> | Collective farm enterprise (in the Soviet Union)                                                                                         |
| <i>Kolkhozobod</i>                        | Town in southwest Tajikistan (the Khatlon region); centre of the district of Jaloliddini Balkhi                                          |
| <i>Konibodom</i>                          | District in northern Tajikistan (the Sughd region)                                                                                       |
| <i>Mahalla</i>                            | Self-governed local institution; a neighbourhood                                                                                         |
| <i>Mulk</i>                               | Form of land tenure in pre-Soviet times                                                                                                  |
| <i>Nohiya</i>                             | District (in Tajik language)                                                                                                             |
| <i>Oblast</i>                             | Region/province (in Russian language)                                                                                                    |
| <i>Pripiski</i>                           | On paper figures, “add-ons”                                                                                                              |
| <i>Qarz</i>                               | Debt                                                                                                                                     |
| <i>Qarzi zamin</i>                        | Land debt (indebted farmland)                                                                                                            |
| <i>Raion</i>                              | District (in Russian language)                                                                                                           |

|                                                 |                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Raions of Republican Subordination (RRS)</i> | Districts under direct central rule, surrounding the capital city (Dushanbe)                                                         |
| <i>Rais</i>                                     | Chief, director                                                                                                                      |
| <i>Raisi</i>                                    | Chief, director of ....                                                                                                              |
| <i>Ramadan</i>                                  | The ninth month of the Islamic calendar; Muslims observing <i>Ramadan</i> abstain from drinking and eating during the day that month |
| <i>Semechki</i>                                 | Sunflower seeds                                                                                                                      |
| <i>Shahritys</i>                                | District in southwest Tajikistan (the Khatlon region)                                                                                |
| <i>Sharia</i>                                   | Islamic canonical law                                                                                                                |
| <i>Sovkhoz (sovkhozes, also sovkhozy)</i>       | State-owned farm enterprise (in the Soviet Union)                                                                                    |
| <i>Sughd</i>                                    | Region in northwest Tajikistan                                                                                                       |
| <i>Tinji</i>                                    | Peace, quietness                                                                                                                     |
| <i>Tovarnii kredit</i>                          | Commodity credit                                                                                                                     |
| <i>Vakhshstroi</i>                              | The Vakhsh (river) Valley project                                                                                                    |
| <i>Vanj</i>                                     | District in northeast Tajikistan, in Gorno Badakhshan                                                                                |
| <i>Wacf</i>                                     | Form of land tenure in pre-Soviet times                                                                                              |
| <i>Yanga</i>                                    | Sister-in-law                                                                                                                        |
| <i>Yovon</i>                                    | District in southwest Tajikistan (the Khatlon region); one of the case study sites                                                   |
| <i>Zamin</i>                                    | Land                                                                                                                                 |

*Zamini presidenti*

Presidential land

## Acronyms

|       |                                                                                                                  |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ADB   | Asian Development Bank                                                                                           |
| AKF   | Aga Khan Foundation                                                                                              |
| BICAS | BRICS Initiatives in Critical Agrarian Studies                                                                   |
| BRICS | Brazil Russia India China South Africa                                                                           |
| CIA   | Central Intelligence Agency                                                                                      |
| CIS   | Commonwealth of Independent States                                                                               |
| DfID  | (British) Department for International Development                                                               |
| FAO   | Food and Agriculture Organisation (of the United Nations)                                                        |
| FPSP  | Farm Privatisation Support Project                                                                               |
| FSU   | Former Soviet Union                                                                                              |
| GAO   | Gross Agricultural Output                                                                                        |
| GBAO  | Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast                                                                               |
| GDP   | Gross Domestic Product                                                                                           |
| GIZ   | Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ GmbH);<br>German Society for International Cooperation, Ltd. |
| GNI   | Gross National Income                                                                                            |
| ICG   | International Crisis Group                                                                                       |
| IFAD  | International Fund for Agricultural Development                                                                  |
| IFI   | International Financial Institution                                                                              |
| IMF   | International Monetary Fund                                                                                      |
| JICA  | Japan International Cooperation Agency                                                                           |

|       |                                                    |
|-------|----------------------------------------------------|
| LDPI  | Land Deal Politics Initiative                      |
| LFE   | Large Farm Enterprise                              |
| NBT   | National Bank of Tajikistan                        |
| NGO   | Non-Governmental Organisation                      |
| OBOR  | One Belt One Road                                  |
| ODA   | Official Development Assistance                    |
| RRS   | Raions of Republican Subordination                 |
| SOE   | State Owned Enterprise                             |
| UNDP  | United Nations Development Programme               |
| UNWFP | United Nations World Food Programme                |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| USSR  | Union of Soviet Socialist Republics                |
| WTO   | World Trade Organisation                           |

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