

Central Asians
under Russian Rule
A Study in Culture Change

4A-7639

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Cornell University Press

ITHACA, NEW YORK



67-2282

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CORNELL UNIVERSITY PRESS

First published 1966

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 66-16739

PRINTED AND BOUND IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BY VAIL-BALLOU PRESS, INC.

To the Memory of that Learned and Gracious Scholar
ACADEMICIAN A. N. SAMOILOVICH

Preface

DURING the academic year 1933–1934, the author had the rare opportunity of residing in the Soviet Union and traveling in Kazakstan under the joint auspices of Yale University and the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences. Because of the long friendship and professional collaboration between Franz Boas of Columbia University and Waldemar Bogoras, dean of Russian anthropologists, a letter from Boas' great student, Edward Sapir of Yale University, opened doors usually closed to foreign social scientists. The author received a welcome far beyond the due of a beginning graduate student. During the winter spent in Leningrad, an office was provided in the domed edifice on the Neva where the Academy of Sciences was born. There, in the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, she had the opportunity to associate daily with Russian anthropologists. The great Turkologist, Academician A. N. Samoilovich, then Director of the Orientological Institute and President of the Kazakstan Branch of the Academy of Sciences, most graciously made available the resources of the library of the Orientological Institute, which contained the most extensive Central Asian collection in the world. Even more, he arranged for the writer to join a complex expedition in Kazakstan during the summer of 1934.