

Contents

Acknowledgements	11
Introduction	15
People, Geography, and Agriculture	25
Concepts, Approaches, and Questions	33
Sources, Languages, and Transliteration	47
I. Russian Colonial Rule in Turkestan, 1860–1917	49
The Motivation for the Conquest	51
The “Blossoming Oases”	56
A Cotton Fever	60
Local “Customs” and Local Knowledge	65
Engineers’ Fantasies	76
The Ancient Riverbed of the Amu Darya	81
The Opening Up of the Hungry Steppe	85
The “Obituary List” of Failures and Moral Superiority	89
The Striving for “Cotton Autonomy”	96
The Legal Framework and Scepticism about “Capitalism”	103
The Ministry of Agriculture and the Turkestan Agricultural Society .	115
The Taming of Nature through Infrastructure, 1910–1914	121
The First World War	130
Conclusion	132
II. Soviet Nation-Building and Stalinism, 1917–1944	139
The Advent of the Bolsheviks	140
Georgii K. Rizenkampf and his Cotton and Irrigation Program .	147
“National Delimitation” and the “Land-Water Reform”	156
The Collectivization of Agriculture and the First Five-Year Plan .	163
The Attack on “Bourgeois Specialists”	171
Haste, Coercion, and Incentives: Cotton Growing in the 1930s .	178

Progressive Methods in Agriculture and the Experience of the Peasants	188
Terror	197
Stagnation in Irrigation Construction and Management	201
Scientific Institutes and the Training of (Indigenous) Specialists	206
“People’s Construction”	213
The All-Union Agricultural Exhibition of 1939 and the Republics’ National Designs	222
The Second World War	230
Conclusion	236
 III. High Modernism in Central Asia, 1945–1969	245
Stalinism and Cotton Growing after the War	248
Agricultural Politics after Stalin	252
The Educational Boom and the Training of Indigenous Experts	264
The Hungry Steppe: a Microstudy	273
The New Zone	280
The Memoirs of the “Hungrysteppers”	286
Akop Sarkisov and the Recruitment of Cadres	289
Leadership Styles in the “Hungry Steppe Construction Trust”	301
Personal Networks: from Yangier to Tashkent to Moscow	304
Central Asians and the <i>Druzhba narodov</i>	314
“Teachers and Educators”	319
The “River of Happiness” – the Karakum Canal	321
The Drainage Problem	329
The Backwardness of the Others	334
“Engineerization”, “Chemicalization”, and “Mechanization”	339
Local Knowledge	356
“Irrational” Water Usage: the 1960s	359
Conclusion	366
 IV. A Time of Crisis, 1970–1991	371
The Water Crisis	374
The Diversion of Siberian Rivers as a Solution to the Problem	382
The Cotton Crisis	387
The Individual Experience	390
Nature Protection and De-Stalinization	392
The Society for the Protection of Nature	397
An Ecocritique Emerges	400
The Cotton Scandal	410
Politics and Opposition during Perestroika	417

Debates in the Press and Environmental Scandals: Health	426
The Diversion Debate	428
The Vodniki under Fire	433
The Reaction of the Authorities	442
The Growth of Ethnic Conflict	446
Chemicals in Agriculture	447
Cotton and National Pride	450
A Feeling of Loss and Despair	454
Conclusion	457
 Conclusion	463
High Modernism	463
Continuities between the Tsarist and Soviet Periods	470
Indigenization and the Cotton Contract	473
The Crisis of Soviet Modernity and Environmental Aspects	478
Central Asia Post-Soviet	482
 Glossary	491
 List of Maps and Illustrations	495
 Bibliography	499
 Index	527