

Characteristics of pastoralism in Karakul, Tajik Pamirs in the North-eastern part of Tajikistan

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This paper details the pastoralism practised in the Karakul area, northeast Tajikistan. The families in Karakul graze their livestock in *jailoo* (summer pastureland) far away from the Karakul village and move their livestock to *kyshtoo* (winter pastureland) around the village. In addition to *jailoo* and *kyshtoo*, they also use two other kinds of pasture: *küzdöö* (spring pasture) and *bäärlöö* (autumn pasture). The pastoralism in the study area is characterised by the dominance of vertical migration, and low water availability due to the topographical conditions.

Keywords: pastoralism, subsistence, vertical livestock migration, Tajikistan, The Pamirs

I Introduction

The Pamirs, one of the least economically developed regions in the world, has been regarded as marginal and for many years produced livestock meat and wool for the Soviet Union. The region has been greatly affected by the socio-political changes that have occurred since the beginning of the 1990s. As a result, the world's researchers have started to pay attention to the Pamirs and its surrounding regions, and studies on livestock grazing in the region are rapidly increasing. For example, Robinson et al. (2016) discussed the site selection of the pastureland among livestock owners in southern Kazakhstan. Dörre (2012) examined the challenges in pasture legislation in Kyrgyzstan, conducting a case study on the central part of the country. Pastoralism above the cultivation limit was described in the eastern Alai Valley of southern Kyrgyzstan (Shirasaka et al., 2013, 2016). Liu and

Watanabe (2013, 2016) examined the relationship between seasonal grazing activities and the degree of the degradation of the pastureland in the same area. Watanabe and Shirasaka (2016) described the diversified daily grazing systems in the Alai Valley as an adaptation strategy to the changing socio-economic conditions after independence in 1991.

The Tajik Pamirs is characterised by a complicated aggregate topography with mountain ranges, basins, and gorges ranging from 2,000 m to more than 7,500 m in altitude. There are some studies on the transforming pastoralism in the eastern Tajik Pamirs (e.g., Kreutzmann et al., 2011; Vanselow et al., 2012a, 2012b; Kreutzmann, 2015). Kraudzun (2012) studied the transformation of pastureland tenure from common resource to private property.

However, there are no descriptions of the current state of pastoralism in the north-eastern part of the Tajik Pamirs except Watanabe and Shirasaka (2018). This paper aims to first detail some impor-