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BAB'I BUNTY IN SEMIRECH'E: GENDER, CLASS, AND ETHNICITY IN CENTRAL ASIA DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Bab'i buntý – women's riots – were a form of collective action in which women responded to crisis by making conscious and explicit use of their sex to achieve clear political goals. Owing to rapidly rising prices of food and manufactured goods from 1916 onwards the First World War saw widespread bab'i buntý across the Russian empire. In Semirech'e – the only region of Russian Central Asia with a substantial settler population – the class politics of these protests were complicated by questions of ethnicity and religion. This article explores a series of bab'i buntý which erupted in the towns of Lepsinsk and Vernyi and their surrounding districts, in which Slavic soldiers' wives (soldatki) targeted Muslim-owned businesses, but also those owned by their fellow settlers. In between these outbreaks in the summer of 1916 Semirech'e would become the centre of a violent uprising by Kazakhs and Kyrgyz against the Tsarist regime.

Introduction

One of the arrested [women], the soldier's wife (*soldatka*) Kobzeva, who had participated more energetically than the others in the *pogrom*, a courageous woman, full of strength and energy, bore herself more coolly than the others under my interrogation. She did not cry like the others, but with only a slight change of expression and a somewhat hysterically raised voice asked me: 'why are you only throwing us into prison? What about the others? Why not those men, who stood at our backs and pushed us to riot? What were those men thinking, who wrote to many of us in their letters – riot, women (*gromite, bab'i*), nothing will happen to you'.¹

Political and economic protest by lower-class women before, during, and after the Russian Empire's 'continuum of crisis' from 1914 to 1921 is a well-known and much-studied phenomenon. As Sarah Badcock and Mark Baker have argued, protests

by soldiers' wives (*soldatki*) are a key example of subaltern agency across the empire during the wartime years.² The state – whether tsarist or Soviet – found women's protests particularly difficult to deal with. Women rioters made deliberate use of their sex – their bodily femininity – to embarrass and disarm the authorities, while simultaneously undermining existing gender norms by threatening violence. As Lynne Viola has shown, when the peasant protests against collectivization in the 1930s were led by women, even the Stalinist terror reflex sometimes broke down.³

The term used for the protest in the opening quotation above – *pogrom* – has of course acquired a wider notoriety in English, where it denotes specifically anti-Semitic violence, but in late imperial and revolutionary Russia it also carried a more general meaning of violent urban rioting, often with economic roots, which is what is intended here. The other label attached specifically to *female* protests in both the tsarist and the Soviet periods – *bab'i bunt*y – carried strong overtones of contempt for the violent and outrageous behaviour of these women, characterized as uneducated, superstitious, and ignorant. Their lack of political organization or 'class conscious' sloganizing meant that they were not taken seriously in Marxist and Soviet historiography.⁴ However the importance of *bab'i bunt*y for understanding the history of the revolutions of 1917 has long been recognized by other historians, not least because of the crucial role played by women in the protests in Petrograd that triggered the February Revolution, which may have begun in the bread queue but showed considerable evidence of planning, organization, and political sophistication.⁵

Beyond their political importance at the time, as the opening quotation suggests, the records of interrogation *bab'i bunt*y produced also offer the historian a rare opportunity to hear non-elite female voices in the archive – not unmediated of course, but nevertheless present in a way that is unusual in documents produced by and for the state. Ilya Gerasimov has argued that while subaltern individuals such as Kobzeva were defined by their exclusion from the literate, record-keeping, documentary epistemology of the public sphere, those records can nevertheless capture something of their 'body language' – their actions and bearing – something we do indeed see in the description of Kobzeva above.⁶ This can also apply to their words. Siobhán Hearne and Catherine Gibson have successfully extended techniques of analysis of subaltern testimony that were originally developed by medievalists and historians of European colonialism to nineteenth- and early twentieth-century European Russia. Their work shows that, *contra* Gayatri Spivak's pessimistic assertion that the use of 'archives of repression' to reconstruct the subaltern experience merely leads to new forms of elite representation, it is in fact possible to use interrogation and police records to at least partially recreate the world view of lower-class inhabitants of the Russian empire, and restore their agency in the historical record.⁷ Some of the issues raised by translation from Turkic or Persian when working with similar interrogation records or petitions from elsewhere in Central Asia do not apply here, as all these women were Russian-speaking. In any case if we want to write 'history from below' at all there is often no alternative to using such material: it is unlikely that Zinov'ia Kobzeva left behind any ego-documents comparable, for instance, to Zinaida Gippius's remarkable 1917 Petrograd diaries – but in this brief description by Kobzeva's interrogator we do get a flash of her personality and voice.⁸

It is tempting to see protests by *soldatki* or *bab'i bunt*y as the powerless finding a voice, however in Central Asia, where the local Muslim population were not liable

for conscription, and hence *soldatki* were overwhelmingly Slavic Europeans, the relationships of power were different. As Jeff Sahadeo has shown for the serious food riots that shook Tashkent in February 1916, here class conflict was sometimes heavily overlaid with ethnic and religious tensions, as lower-class Russian women smashed and looted shops and stalls that overwhelmingly belonged to local Muslim traders.⁹ Following hard on the heels of the Tashkent riots, March and April 1916 saw a series of women's protests in the neighbouring province of Semirech'e, the only significant settler colony in southern Central Asia, with 290,000 Europeans out of a total population of 1.3 million, the remainder being mostly Kazakhs and Kyrgyz.¹⁰ These Europeans were largely Russian-speaking, though some were of Ukrainian or German origin. They were made up of the Semirech'e Cossack host, the so-called 'old settlers' (*starozhil'tsy*) who had arrived in the region in the 1880s and 1890s, and then a much larger mass of recent settlers (*pereselentsy*), most of whom had come after the establishment of a Semirech'e division of the Resettlement Administration (*Pereselencheskoe upravlenie*) in 1905, and the opening of the Orenburg-Tashkent railway the following year. Relations between the latter and the 'natives' (*tuzemtsy*) were often poor, particularly in areas such as the Chu Valley and the region around Issyk-Kul, where the formerly nomadic Kyrgyz had turned to arable farming and competed directly with the settlers for land and water.¹¹

The Semirech'e women's riots are mentioned in the standard Soviet history of the revolutionary period as an early manifestation of revolutionary feeling among the lower classes, but with no acknowledgement that the 'lower classes' in this instance consisted purely of Russian settlers.¹² Aminat Chokobaeva refers briefly to the riots in Pishpek and Przheval'sk districts as an instance of escalating ethnic tension in the build-up to the 1916 revolt, but they have yet to be fully explored in English-language scholarship, where the importance of having multiple regional perspectives on the unfolding of the Great War and Revolution across the Russian empire has recently been strongly reaffirmed.¹³ As we shall see, the *bab'i bunt* in Semirech'e in 1916-17 had a good deal in common with similar outbreaks elsewhere in the Empire, as well as with those that preceded them in Tashkent, but there were also some local peculiarities which stemmed partly from the fact that it was a settler colony, and partly from the nature of its agrarian economy and transport links. Referring to the Tashkent *bab'i bunt* and those in neighbouring parts of Syr-Darya province, Chokobaeva has written that 'these riots reveal an emerging pattern of ethnic stratification and conflict'.¹⁴ This article argues that while ethnicity and religion did play a role in determining patterns of threatened and actual violence in the Semirech'e riots, they were less decisive than might have been expected, and noticeably less so than in the preceding urban riots in Tashkent.¹⁵ Instead it was questions of class, sex, and gender that came to the fore.

The economic effects of the war in Central Asia

As the First World War progressed, Russia was hit by economic dislocation and a food supply crisis earlier and to a greater degree than any of the other Entente powers. As Peter Holquist has argued, this was in part because of the institutional hostility of the tsarist government to the mechanisms of private trade and its ham-fisted attempts to replace these with state-controlled networks of supply.¹⁶ On the Eastern Front,

hostility to 'speculation' was fuelled by anti-Semitism, spawning the anti-capitalist prejudice which Joshua Sanborn has christened 'Stavkaism', but in one form or another it was part of the bureaucratic mentality across the empire.¹⁷ Official attempts to control prices through a series of official tariffs (*taksa*) generally depressed production and worsened supply problems, leading to a thriving black market and still greater price inflation, exacerbated by an enormous increase in the supply of paper money. Even a brief survey of the local press shows that these effects were felt equally strongly in Central Asia, but there were also some specific local variations.¹⁸ The outbreak of war saw an immediate doubling of the tax burden on the local population, who had been used to paying relatively low rates of land and agricultural tax.¹⁹ While 1915 had seen the largest cotton harvest on record, most of it was purchased by the state for the manufacture of uniforms and munitions at fixed prices, while the reduction in the grain supply from European Russia left cotton farmers facing higher prices for staples.²⁰

In Semirech'e – which was not a cotton-growing region and had a substantial grain surplus of over 17 million *puds* in 1913 – the problems were different again.²¹ The official 1892 administrative review of the province noted that 'the processing of agricultural products and livestock for industrial purposes, despite their abundance and cheapness, is at the lowest stage of development, which is mainly due to the remoteness of the region, in the absence of cheap and convenient communications'.²² This also applied to grain, meaning that farmers sometimes deliberately sowed less to keep the price up. While Vernyi did possess flour mills, the prohibitive cost of shipping it to Tashkent (1 rouble per *pud*) meant their capacity remained limited.²³ The obvious (if expensive) solution was the construction of a railway: in 1897 one advocate argued that 'Semirech'e with its abundant ... grain yields, the surplus of which is now not marketed, is a natural granary for neighbouring Turkestan'.²⁴ A railway would allow Semirech'e to supply this grain to cotton-growing, grain-deficit regions such as Ferghana – the same economic logic that after a long hiatus would lead to the construction of the *Turksib* line during the first Soviet five-year plan.²⁵ However, the tsarist authorities instead prioritized the direct line between Orenburg and Tashkent that would allow exports of raw cotton to the Russian textile industry. The continued absence of a rail connection meant that in 1912 grain sold in Semirech'e for just one fifth of its price in Tashkent.²⁶ The Semirech'e railway to Pishpek and Vernyi was finally begun only in 1913, and by 1915 reached no further than Chimkent.²⁷ This meant that the province remained insulated from surging wartime grain prices, but manufactured goods and imported staples such as kerosene and sugar saw steeper price rises compared to those parts of Turkestan with a railway connection. In June 1916, when the Governor of Semirech'e, M. A. Fol'baum, convened a committee to draw up a revised list of standard tariffs at which staple goods could be sold, the price of sugar was set at 11 roubles 36 kopecks per *pud*, almost twice what it cost in Tashkent, while a barrel of kerosene cost 28 roubles, over half the cost of which was transport from the railhead.²⁸ The proximity of the Chinese border to Semirech'e also caused complications, as Russian manufactured goods exported before the outbreak of war were re-imported with a substantial mark-up, while there were repeated attempts to prevent further exports of both agricultural and industrial products to Ghulja in the upper Ili valley.²⁹

February-March 1916 saw a spike in the prices of manufactured goods. Fol'baum noted that while the price of grain and meat had only risen slightly (he attributed this to

the official tariffs he had set preventing speculation, but it was almost certainly because the local supply was still abundant), the prices 'of all manufactures – footwear, cloth, metalware, iron, sugar, kerosene, candles, matches – in January and especially in February rose by 50–300%'. This was partly because of the particularly bad state of the roads linking Semirech'e to the railhead in the winter months, but he also blamed speculation by local merchants.³⁰ In particular Fol'baum accused Kuddus Gabduvaliev, the Tatar owner of a prominent shop near the Little Bazaar in Vernyi, of sending his agents out into smaller towns and villages to buy up all available stocks of cloth so that he could re-sell them with a 25% mark-up. He would subsequently place Gabduvaliev's agents under surveillance in an attempt to secure proof of their speculative activities.³¹

Fol'baum's suspicion of the merchant class was characteristic of the tsarist bureaucracy during the war years, fuelled by Okhrana reports of the circulating rumours and complaints, as well as letters from disgruntled consumers accusing individual merchants of speculation.³² A characteristic example of the latter came from a retired Cossack lieutenant called Gorinov from the *stanitsa* of Sergiopol (Ayaguz) in the far north of the province, in which most of the merchants he accused of sharp practice were Muslims:

The local merchants, taking advantage of complete impunity, sell their goods at whatever prices they want. The population are beginning to express their dissatisfaction with the behaviour of these merchants who have no limits to their greed. Having stocks of various goods acquired either before the war or in the early period of not particularly high prices, they have begun to arrange complete bacchanalia. Those who are particularly distinguished in this regard include Nasyrov, who has three shops, and the Brothers Maksiutov and Mukhametov ... The traders who are exposed in this fraudulent trick respond as, for example, Nasyrov: 'This is commerce – everyone does it', or like the trader Mukhametov: 'There is no fraud here, others are making tens and hundreds of thousands of roubles on it, why shouldn't we make a few hundreds of roubles?' Or, for example, the wealthy merchant Abduvaliev, ... who became a postilion to avoid military service, who directly answers: 'We need to take the opportunity, we cannot expect such a war a second time!'³³

Fol'baum would insist repeatedly in his correspondence that only the threat of 'severe repression' could be expected to keep the merchants in line and prevent speculation, and consistently blamed Muslim merchants for being particularly untrustworthy. The language and logic bore a clear resemblance to that applied to Jews and other *inorodtsy* by the Stavka on the Eastern front, another region where, as in Turkestan, the military authorities were now all-powerful.³⁴ It remains to be seen how far this official discourse was a reflection or product of attitudes among the settlers in Semirech'e itself.

Bab'i Bunty in *Lepsinsk* and *Przheval'sk* districts, March 1916

Whilst the February 1916 riots in Tashkent were mainly directed at securing foodstuffs (above all potatoes), those which erupted in Semirech'e the following month targeted

manufactured goods exclusively. The first minor outbreak came on 20 March in the village of Arkhangel'skoe in Pishpek district in the southern part of the province, where there were large numbers of recently-arrived settlers and a predominantly Kyrgyz 'native' population.³⁵ A more substantial wave came on or shortly after in the Vernyi and Lepsinsk districts in the northern part of the province, where peasant settlers lived alongside a majority Kazakh population and there were fewer new arrivals.

According to the testimony of the canton administrator (*volostnoi upravitel'*) of the settlement of Mikhailovskoe in the Vernyi district, the whole village had gathered to clean the irrigation canal (*ariq*). This included ninety women, mostly soldiers' wives, who instead of proceeding to work had advanced, brandishing their *ketmens*,³⁶ on a group of trading stalls in the centre of the village, stealing scarves, shoes, and other items from several Muslim traders. Two of these – Aglametdina Khisametdinova and Alima Abdullova – were also female. Aglametdina Khisametdinova testified that Anna Grebennikova had stolen two scarves, valued at 1 rouble, 30 kopecks, and that she and the other women had threatened to destroy her stall altogether if she complained or resisted. Another stallholder, Bulkiyar Mamet Kurbanov, testified that they had taken goods worth 155 roubles, including bolts of satin, three pairs of boots, a number of cooking pots, and twenty-four Chinese tea cups.³⁷ The local priest of the Church of St Michael the Archangel, Father Polivet Isashkov, testified that he believed the looting had been prompted by the uncensored letters from soldiers stationed in Aulie-Ata, Tashkent, Baku and Kushka (on the Russian-Afghan frontier in Transcaspia), with the local participation of a certain Ivan Boldyrev 'who always and among everyone sows various types of disorder (*neporiadki*) in society. The character of the disorders can be more than anything attributed to the stupid performances of a few women of simply hooligan-like tendencies (*khuliganskogo napravleniia*).'³⁸ As Tsuyoshi Hasegawa has suggested for wartime Petrograd, what was classified by the authorities as hooliganism (*khuliganstvo*) was a sign of social breakdown and unrest with significant political implications. In this case it was also a very characteristic attribution of ultimate agency in the disorders to men, with women's role reduced to one of irrational 'hooliganism'.³⁹

As the level of damages suggests, this was a relatively minor incident, but meanwhile much more serious disorder broke out in the settlements of Novo-Andreevskoe and Stepanovskoe in Lepsinsk district, which saw rioting in their bazaars and the destruction of stalls by women between 28 and 30 March.⁴⁰ In both these cases the rioters focused on the prices of manufactured goods, and the reports noted particular hostility directed against 'Sart' (that is, local Muslim) traders, though as we shall see it is not clear this was actually the case.⁴¹ Shtabs-Rotmistr Maslov's full report into the disorders in Lepsinsk estimated that the bulk of the damage – 32,000 roubles worth – had been done to a *lavka* owned by the Aigistov brothers, who judging by the name were Tatar or Russian:

The destruction (*razgrom*) was begun by the women, they broke in the door of the Aigistov's shop. The leader was the *soldatka* from the settlement of Andreevskoe, Zinov'ia Kobzeva ... some goods were recovered, but most were carried off to neighbouring settlements. The *starshina*, when he heard the first noise, threw himself into trying to stop the disorders, but the *soldatki* drove him off with stones and the threat to kill him. The police and *starshina* were powerless. People only came forward reluctantly to help them, as the furious crowd of

women, reinforced by the arrival of peasants, used sticks and stones to lash out with rage at those who tried to put obstacles in their way. The most energetic in trying to put down the disorder was the local priest Father Georgii Stepaniuk, but he would also have been beaten up, had not the head of the party *soldatka* Kobzeva placed herself in front of him ... Kobzeva, the leader of the party, asserts that they did not need any help from men, but took up staves and used them to beat down the door ... the mass of women first threw themselves on Razybaev's *lavka*, but the priest intervened, and the crowd listened to him and quietened down – but when he went to the administration they then threw themselves on the Aigistov brothers' shop.⁴²

Maslov's attempts at interrogating the culprits to establish the reasons for the riot yielded a confusing set of responses: some women said that it was because the traders sold goods for high prices: 'in general everything is expensive, the traders are skinning us'. Others (the majority) said that 'I do not know myself why and for what I did this. All the *soldatki* were at the pogrom, and I was there, they beat, and I also beat'. Maslov checked the cost of goods and found that in accordance with the official tariff, the mark-up was no more than 25% of the wholesale purchase price the traders had given for them. The women objected that the traders sold old stock for the same price as new, and protested about their arbitrariness (*proizvol*'), although they could not give examples of them.

The only one who gave a clear account of what had provoked the riot was Kobzeva, in the statement which opened this article, in which she referred to letters from their menfolk which had prompted them to riot.⁴³ When Maslov pressed her, however, she said, 'if we had known that they would put us in prison, then we would have held back, but they told us nothing would happen to us'. Seeing that she had retracted her statement about male 'instigators', and that it was growing dark, Maslov decided to accompany her home together with the *starosta* and his clerk to see what property she had concealed there and to allow her to collect her children who could not be left alone. As they approached her house, however, 'from the hut (*izba*) ran the eldest of her three children, a four-year old boy, who said "Mama". At this Kobzeva, crying out hysterically, fainted and up to this time has not recovered consciousness'.⁴⁴ That evening an investigator arrived and ordered the release of all the women from custody, leaving just one male peasant, Ilarion Kolomytsin, in prison. This apparently reaffirmed the *soldatki* in their conviction that they would not be punished for anything they did: 'look, they set the *soldatki* free. That means that they cannot be arrested and the investigator will only be hunting down men'.⁴⁵ While not all these statements are easy to interpret, there was a clear unwillingness on the part of the authorities to attribute either agency or legitimate grievance to Kobzeva and the other women interrogated – and there are also indications that the latter had anticipated that their sex would exempt them from severe punishment for rioting, and that they were well aware of the gender roles their interrogators expected them to fulfil.⁴⁶

This cut both ways. Not only did the women rioters make use of their femininity, but the men who should have controlled them were found to be lacking in masculine qualities. The pogrom would not have happened on such a scale, Maslov wrote, if the men on the spot had been braver and more prepared to take decisive action. He cited the role of Father Stepaniuk in saving Razybaev's shop by standing in the doorway and

implored the women to calm down – although he was not able to save that of the Aigistov brothers, despite once again trying to block the doorway – this time the crowd became menacing, and some of them shouted ‘kill the priest’ (*ubit' popa*). The canton administrator, Shcherbakov, also initially managed to deter the crowd from looting Sharipov's shop by mounting a horse and cracking a whip in front of them. They retreated to the bazaar, but when he followed them, they threw stones and shouted: ‘kill him’, whereupon he retreated to the chancellery saying ‘I won't go out there for anything – those lunatics will kill me (*a to ub' iut eti dury*)’.⁴⁷

In the village of Stepanovskoe the *starshina*, who bore the evocative name of Vereshchagin, was similarly ineffective. Despite being warned by the local teacher, Sikorskii, and the bazaar merchants that a pogrom was brewing, he took himself off to the other side of the village to put down a dog that had at some point scared the village schoolmistress. Failing to find the dog, or any men who could help him to carry out what Maslov, his pen dripping with sarcasm, called ‘this urgent disposition of the authorities (*speshnoe rasporiazhenie nachal'stva*)’, on his return route Vereshchagin encountered Sikorskii, who once again told him to act. Vereshchagin came to the bazaar, where a large group of women had gathered. He asked them to disperse, and when they ignored him went into the stall of the local credit organization, where he found he had a ‘strong pain in his heart’. As Maslov put it: ‘on carrying out a search at the house of this “man with heart pain”, we found many goods stolen at the time of the pogrom’, which included 54 *arshins* (120 feet) of chintz. Instead, here once again it was the local priest, father Ioann Lebedinskii, together with the schoolteacher Sikorskii, who did their best to protect the merchants' stalls, but were forced to retreat as the crowd, led by Luker'ia Toporkova and Fekla Kushtalova advanced crying ‘come on *baby*, break open the stalls, make things cheap!’.

The men then took full advantage of the opening created by the women to loot – when the trader Zhiliakov tried to remove some of his goods for safety to the priest's house, the ex-soldier Ivan Konovalov (released from the army because of wounds) accused him of pushing the women and grabbed the goods from him to take off to his house. Afanasii Murygin, a private of the 70th Riga Infantry Regiment home on sick leave, seeing that Zhiliakov's son was trying to drag away one of the women looting the shop, grabbed him saying, ‘You are beating our women’. In an appeal to the ‘moral economy’ of the crowd Vereshchagin then got the Tatar merchants to agree to sell cloth, tea, sugar and tobacco at fixed prices the following day, but this did not calm the *soldatki* for long.⁴⁸ While at first they were willing to pay what they saw as a ‘fair’ price—typically twenty kopecks for goods usually priced at fifty – as the day progressed a crowd of peasants appeared and began taking goods without paying for them at all. The most valued goods were then taken to the house of *soldatka* Irina Toshchenkova to be divided up, which led to a quarrel in which women grabbed each other's hair and struck each other with fists and staves.⁴⁹ The list of items taken which were subsequently recovered included 72 *arshins* (170 feet) of calico, over 1,100 *arshins* (2,500 feet) of chintz, two tablecloths, some enamelled tongs, teapots, a cast iron cooking pot, china fruit dishes, a tin bucket, and several chests. Most of these came from the Aigistov brothers' shop (*lavka*), though some were also taken from that of merchant called Rizabakiev (a ‘Sart’ or Taranchi/Uyghur name). Of the 31 named culprits seven were men, while 250 *arshins* (580 foot) of chintz, some dresses, teacups, and ten dozen buttons were found to have been looted by ‘the

women of the Kirgiz Tumarbai Zhanuzak', showing that the rioting had spread beyond the European population, albeit to a limited extent.⁵⁰

While investigating in Andreevskoe, Maslov heard that another pogrom had taken place in the settlement of Glinkovskoe. There too the women told him that '*soldatki* will not be sent to prison, because their husbands are shedding blood in the war and there is nowhere to put their children'. In Glinkovskoe, Maslov considered that Daniil Velichko, the local agent for the merchant Bogachev, was largely to blame. According to the testimony of Anastasia Korliukova, Natalia Koshenkova, Daria Dikaia, Maria Blinkovskaia, Praskov'ia Sinel'nikovaia, and Matrena Lebedinskaia, he would offer to lower prices for those who would agree to enter into 'intimate relations' with him, and when they confronted him with the official schedule of fixed tariffs for goods, which decreed that they could not be sold for more than 25% of the purchase price, he drove them from the shop saying 'Here's where you'll get your tariff (*Vot gde vam taksa*)'.⁵¹ Finally in the village of Vishniakovskoe, the women acted differently, presenting a petition to the authorities demanding the strict regulation of prices on manufactured goods, but not acting violently.⁵² In these two cases female protest met with a measure of official approval and sanction, perhaps because it was cast in what were seen as more appropriate feminine forms.

It seems probable that rumours of the disturbances in Lepsinsk would have reached other parts of Semirech'e in fairly short order. Whether or not there was a direct connection, a week later, on 27–28 March, there would be a riot of over 300 peasant women in the large settlement of Preobrazhenskoe (modern Tiup, near Karakol) in Przheval'sk district, which specifically targeted the 'Sart' traders Sadiq Talipov, Murzataev, Yarmuhammadov and Islambaev, both because of the high prices they charged, and, significantly, out of resentment at the exemption of the Muslim population from military service.⁵³ One participant, sixteen-year old Mariia Tormasheva, admitted to participating in the '*razgrom*' (affray) in which merchant Asanali Asylbekov was struck twice on the head, while when the doors of Murzataev's stall were burst in she stole twelve balls of yarn – she was one of two minors found guilty of participating, along with fifteen-year old Nadezhda Petrova.⁵⁴ In all, 27 women and their 41 children were briefly imprisoned in Przheval'sk gaol, from which they submitted a petition which focused on their grievances against the *starosta* of Preobrazhenskoe, Mikhail Surkov, who they claimed had refused to force the merchants to open their stalls, and did not understand the hardships they were suffering in the absence of their husbands at war.⁵⁵ On 21 April they were all released, although seven of them were fined 150 roubles.⁵⁶ Although the women did not mention ethnic or religious resentment towards the traders in their own statements (this language was found only in the official reports on their actions), as Chokobaeva has argued, the riots in Southern Semirech'e demonstrated a serious escalation of settler hostility towards the 'native' population, and ominously foreshadowed the inter-ethnic violence that would explode in the same region in August 1916.⁵⁷ In Przheval'sk district over 2,000 settlers would be killed, followed by horrendous reprisals against the Kyrgyz population.⁵⁸ However, it stands in contrast to the rioting in Lepsinsk district where the number of settlers was smaller and competition for land and water resources with the Kazakh population less intense. This also helps to explain why northern Semirech'e did not see serious rebellion in the summer of 1916.

The conclusions the Russian authorities drew from the riots in Andreevskoe and elsewhere were that even more regulation of trade and prices was needed. The head

of the Okhrana in Vernyi, who was particularly convinced of the iniquity of the Muslim mercantile elite, inadvertently highlighted the distortions these regulations caused, but did not allow it to affect his verdict, which began by explaining the very real economic grievances of the settler population, but then suggested a particular feminine propensity to 'excesses' was to blame:

'The population of the region reacts very sharply to such speculative activity of traders. Every day I receive information that the population of all strata is outraged by the outrageous behaviour of the speculators and the inaction of the authorities in relation to these speculators. The peasants reason as follows: a rate has been established for basic necessities, these items are products of the peasants' labour, and prices for other items, namely items of peasant consumption, have been inflated to the point of impossibility. Thus, the peasants have to sell the products of their labour at cheap prices and buy themselves what they need at very expensive prices. The women, both in Semirech'e and in general throughout Turkestan, are very nervous and capable of all kinds of excesses.'⁵⁹

The District Commandant of Lepsinsk, Colonel S. N. Avrov, noted in his report on the incidents to Fol'baum that he considered the Muslim merchants – especially the Sarts – had concentrated their speculative operations on seizing cattle from the nomadic population in payment for debts. Russian merchants were no less greedy, and it was necessary to enforce strictly the profit margin allowed on manufactured goods. He also mentioned the widespread belief that soldiers' families were entitled to free rations and fuel from the government, and that they could take it for themselves if they did not receive it. Finally, he noted the rise in food prices – grain had risen from 25–40 kopecks per *pud* to 71 kopecks. The price of cattle had risen from 15–25 roubles per head to 45–60 roubles, while the price of a chicken had more than doubled from 15 to 50 kopecks. He noted however the danger that price controls on these would depress agricultural production in the district (indeed by all-Imperial standards, these were relatively modest increases). Suppressing the disturbances was difficult, Colonel Avrov added, because the local militia members were mostly soldiers returned from the front themselves, and could not be expected to take up arms against their own relatives and acquaintances. The petty traders and hucksters were greedy, and no less capable than the landless settlers of stirring up a crowd. Given their greater cunning they might possibly be even more dangerous during periods of disorder. The only solution he could see was the establishment of local consumer associations, but in the villages, there were too few literate and socially active people to make this possible.⁶⁰

In response to the riots, Governor Fol'baum sent a circular to all District Commandants telling them to pay close attention to the 'speculative operation of traders, and most of all Muslims, and especially Sarts', whose activities needed to be carefully monitored for signs of price-hiking or hoarding.⁶¹ He focused above all on the activities of these speculators as the root of the disturbances, though he also noted that: 'There is a rumour that after the disorders in Baku and Tashkent many local *soldatki* received instructions from their menfolk to smash up (*gromit'*) the trading stalls in their villages'.⁶² When Governor-General von Martson reported the riots to the Main Staff, he also emphasized that 'of the injured merchants the majority are Muslims whose predatory practices are especially irritating to the mob because of

their freedom from military service'.⁶³ Overall the interpretation placed on the *bunty* by the authorities was that they were provoked by specifically *Muslim* forms of chicanery, and that the women had been manipulated by their menfolk rather than taking the initiative themselves. Both of these conclusions were very much open to question.

Rioting in Vernyi, January 1917

Over the summer and autumn of 1916 both the authorities and the Russian settlers of Semirech'e were fully occupied with the major rebellion that erupted in July and August and its bloody aftermath, in which the settlers were armed and embarked on an extensive land-grab at the expense of the Kazakhs and Kyrgyz.⁶⁴ Because of its timing, the revolt damaged the harvest; 3,000 Russian settlers had been killed in Semirech'e, many more had fled to the larger urban settlements, and most devastatingly of all at least 150,000 Kyrgyz and several thousand Kazakhs had fled across the border to China from the Pishpek, Przheval'sk, and Zharkent districts to escape Russian punitive expeditions, leaving grain to stand and rot in the fields. Already in August there were clear signs of a grain shortage in Turkestan and a consequent increase in the price of bread in Tashkent.⁶⁵ The effects of this on the grain harvest in Semirech'e were clear to see. Przheval'sk district, where the violence had been greatest, usually produced a harvest of four million *puds*, but in September 1916 this had fallen to a million.⁶⁶ This still left Semirech'e with a surplus overall thanks to good harvests in Pishpek and Vernyi districts, but the priority now was to get it to the core regions of Turkestan, and especially to Ferghana where, in response to the drop in supply and rising grain prices, many agriculturalists were beginning to sow grain on land previously under cotton, a tendency Kuropatkin was anxious to arrest.⁶⁷ While even after the 1916 revolt Semirech'e had an overall surplus of 2 million *puds*, moving it all to the railhead would require 100,000 cart or camel loads, almost four times the available transport.⁶⁸ It meant that even this district, which had been the breadbasket of Turkestan, began to see increased food prices as the harvest fell and the state requisitioned grain. By January 1917 the price of flour had risen by 218% and meat by 225% compared to July 1914.⁶⁹

It was in this context that January 1917 saw a resumption of urban rioting by *soldatki*, this time in the provincial capital, Vernyi. However, their anger was directed as much against the authorities as against local traders and centred on a demand for the increase of their allowance (*paika*) from the state. Emily Pyle has suggested that when petitioning the authorities for this allowance in European Russia, *soldatki* and other family members were more inclined to make moral arguments and present themselves as poverty-stricken beggars rather than claiming it as a legal right.⁷⁰ This echoed the older folkloric and literary tropes of the *soldatka*'s lament explored by Beatrice Farnsworth, but as she notes the reality was that such women were often well aware of their legal rights and willing to assert them in court.⁷¹ In the case of the women of Vernyi, their resort to direct action made very deliberate use of their sex as a means of embarrassing the authorities and evading punishment. At around 11am on 23 January, a crowd of about 200 women descended on the municipal administration and demanded an increase in their allowances to take account of the rise in the price of staples. The mayor explained that he was not responsible for this, but the head of the local military administration, Lt-Col Karnaukhov, whereupon the women made their way in a mass

to his office, with some apparently saying 'if he doesn't give us our allowance then let's go and trash the bazaar (*gromit' bazar*)'.⁷² Karnaukhov, in turn, said that it was not his responsibility and that they should address themselves to the Military Governor himself. According to one of the policemen present:

The crowd of women, around two hundred people, shouted and joked and in this noise it was impossible to tell which of the women was saying what. The military commandant Col. Karnaukhov stood in front of the women and said something to them, but what exactly was very difficult to understand, as the *soldatki* did not listen to Colonel Karnaukhov, shouting and gesticulating with their arms. Among the different cries I heard the following phrase 'let's go to the Governor!'.⁷³

According to a report from the chief of police this confrontation was prompted by Karnaukhov's arrest of a soldier called Antonov, who had been loitering near the crowd, whereupon the latter's mother 'threatened to forcibly break into Karnaukhov's apartment, but when members of the police whom I had despatched there arrived they dispersed'.⁷⁴ The women took themselves off to the building of the Provincial administration, now escorted by police. Here they were told that the *paika* would be increased for February, but they were still not satisfied. 'The *soldatki* ... continued to stand there, and when I asked what they still needed, from the crowd some voices were heard: "give us an increase for January as well".' When he explained that this was impossible as those allowances had already been disbursed, the crowd refused to move, and then decided to make their way to the Little Bazaar, where they stood outside the shop of the Tatar merchant Gabduvaliev, the object of Fol'baum's suspicions in 1916.⁷⁵ When the policemen asked what they were doing, some replied that they were 'just looking' (*poglazet*).⁷⁶ When asked to disperse, they instead responded with insults and mockery (*grubost'iu i nasmeshlami*) of the police, the fire brigade and the force of Cossacks which had all been sent to maintain order. According to the testimony of Fedor Kolesnikov, 'when the crowd of *bab'i* were near Gabduvaliev's shop and the police asked them to disperse, the Vernyi *meshchanka* (townsperson) Elena Mishchenkova began to shout "Don't disperse and don't be afraid, the police won't do anything to us"'.⁷⁷ Dmitrii Abdeev, another witness, confirmed Mishchenkova's words, and added that when the fire brigade arrived another woman, Anna Porotnikova, taunted them with a very explicit reminder of their female sex, shouting 'that's right, soak us, as our husbands have been away for three years and we are all dried up!'.⁷⁸ The crowd eventually dispersed only after 5pm, and at least one witness, a peasant called Makar Lepikov, stated that the goal of the gathering had never been to attack shops, but simply to put pressure on the authorities to increase allowances, although he did also claim (without evidence) that they were in cahoots with soldiers and Cossacks of the local garrison.⁷⁹ The Police Chief characteristically blamed Antonov, the soldier arrested by Karnaukhov, for instigating the disturbance, once again refusing to believe the women themselves could have been the sole instigators.⁸⁰ Alongside him five women identified as ringleaders – Elena Andreevna Mishchenkova, Mariia Ivanovna Mostovshchikov, Anna Ivanovna Porotnikova, Olga Vasil'evna Strelkova and Praskov'ia Vasil'evna Golovanova were arrested and interrogated. All five denied any intention to riot, and stated that they had simply gone to

the bazaar to do some shopping, and been puzzled to find the shops were closed, though Mishchenkova did state that she had joined the crowd outside the Mayor's office and shouted 'if you can't give us means, then return our husbands to us'.⁸¹ The first three were all listed as *meshchanki* (town-dwellers) while the latter two were peasants. The three urban women all had husbands in the army, serving in Aulie-Ata and on the German and Caucasian Fronts.⁸² On Governor Alekseev's orders, Anna Porotnikova would be sentenced to two weeks in gaol and the other four women to seven days apiece.⁸³

Two days after these protests, on 25 January, the women gathered once again outside the municipal administration to demand an increase to their allowance, and also to demand the release of Golovanova.⁸⁴ This time Mariia Iakovlevna Prikashchikova was identified as the ringleader, and reported to have both instigated the demonstration and to be stirring up trouble in her local neighbourhood, where she had been overhead making seditious statements in the public *banya*.⁸⁵ Alekseev ordered that she be sentenced to three months in prison, prompting a petition from Mariia's eldest daughter, Pelagiia, who wrote that both her husband and her father, a 46-year old veteran of the Russo-Japanese war, were at the front.⁸⁶ On 2 February there were further disturbances in Vernyi, but this time it was sugar which provided the spark, when a group of fifteen women were turned away from the municipality's stall where they were refused supplies. They instead made their way to the shop of a merchant called Shakhov, who received them in a surly manner (*ochen' grubo*) and told them the sugar was not yet weighed, and that they should come back tomorrow. At this point a *soldatka* called Anna Gladkova shouted that 'you need to be crushed, then you will know how to trade (*Vas nado razgromit', togda budete znat' kak torgovat'*)'. They returned to the municipal stall but were told that the sugar there was only for industrial use and that domestic supplies could only be bought from private traders, whereupon they dispersed, muttering that they would show Shakhov how to trade the following day. Rotmistr Meshcheriakov, the *pristav* who wrote this report, added that one of the ringleaders, Vera Leont'eva, brewed beer and sold it to both Russians and 'Sarts'. He also noted an incident a few days earlier when a group of *soldatki* had eaten dumplings (*pel'meni*) at a dumplings shop (*pel'mennitsa*), but had refused to pay for the meal, telling the owner that they would do so only when their state allowance was raised.⁸⁷ With this the archival record of the Semirech'e *bab'i bunty* ends in February 1917, on the eve of the Revolution which supposedly promised to fulfil their demands for economic justice, but in Semirech'e saw a continuation of patterns of settler violence which they had helped to initiate.⁸⁸

Conclusion

What, if anything, do these examples from a remote corner of Central Asia add to our understanding of the role of *soldatki* and the nature of *bab'i bunty* in the prelude to the revolutions of 1917? As in the cases of urban subsistence riots studied by Engel, the objects of the rioters' desire and wrath were generally not essential food staples, but manufactured goods, or in some cases sugar, a luxury that had only recently established itself as a key part of the peasant diet.⁸⁹ As in Tashkent, whose riots preceded and clearly influenced those in the smaller urban

settlements of Semirech'e, the rioters were all Russian women, and the businesses they targeted often (but not always) were owned and run by Muslims, either Tatars or 'Sarts', while the settlers themselves were a privileged minority. This potentially lent an ethnic and religious dimension to the rioting that differed from that in European Russia, where Jews and Germans were the principal targets of such pogroms by the majority population.⁹⁰ However, the hostility towards Muslims as 'sly speculators' is more visible in the reports of Russian officials – notably M. A. Fol'baum, the Governor of Semirech'e until his death in October 1916 – than it is in the testimony of the women themselves. Indeed, in Lepsinsk District in March–April 1916, where the worst rioting occurred, the merchant to whom they showed the greatest personal hostility was Daniil Velichko of the settlement of Glinkovskoe, who was probably of Ukrainian origin, while the bulk of the thefts came from a shop owned by the Aigistov brothers, who may have been Russian and were certainly not Central Asian. We also see the curious spectacle in no fewer than three cases of the local Orthodox priest placing himself bodily between the angry female crowd and the premises of Muslim traders, and being roundly abused and threatened for his pains. Muslims – Tatars and 'Sarts' – were certainly the principal victims of the violence, theft, and redistribution undertaken by the *bab'i*, but with the exception of the riots in Przheval'sk district this seems to have been primarily because they were merchants rather than because they were Muslim. Economic and class resentment were more important than ethnic hostility. The anger of the *soldatki* was directed equally at the colonial authorities, particularly in the Vernyi riots of January 1917, which focused on increasing their allowances (something also seen in the examples studied by Badcock).⁹¹ The majority Kazakh population of the Lepsinsk and Vernyi districts did not figure at all as an object of their wrath, and it is perhaps significant that these regions saw less serious violence and disturbances than those of southern Semirech'e – Pishpek, Przheval'sk and Dzharkent – during the more serious 'native' revolt which broke out in the summer of 1916.

Compared to Tashkent then, and perhaps counter-intuitively given the appalling inter-ethnic violence that scarred southern Semirech'e during the 1916 revolt and its aftermath, economic stress and class divisions seem to have been more important than ethnic conflict in provoking the Semirech'e *bab'i bunt* and determining their nature.⁹² What of sex and gender? As elsewhere in the empire, the authorities responded to the rioting with a mixture of ineptitude and embarrassment and, with the partial exception of Mariia Prikashchikova's three-month sentence, they dealt with the *soldatki* quite leniently. They clung to the notion that male agency lay behind the disturbances, focusing on the letters written by soldiers encouraging their wives to riot, a view that many *soldatki* were happy to reinforce when interrogated. Such letters are known to have played a role elsewhere, and probably did so here as well. However, official reports focused disproportionately on the few men involved – discharged soldiers or those on furlough – stirring up trouble on the ground, when it seems more likely that they simply took advantage of the chaos created by the women themselves, following rather than leading. As with the Kharkiv *bab'i bunt* studied by Baker, there is instead a consistent picture of male impotence in the face of militant crowds of women. Neither the religious authority of the priesthood, nor the bureaucratic authority of the official hierarchy – from the village *starshina* all the way up to the Military Governor – could keep them in check.⁹³ The

women themselves made self-conscious use of their sex in their confrontations with male authority during the riots, playing on male fears of humiliation by female violence, and the expectation that as women they would be immune from arrest, while also inflicting loud sexual mockery on male figures of authority, such as Anna Porotnikova's salty reference to being 'all dried up!' after the three-year absence of their husbands. When questioned they often sought to conform more closely to the expectations their male interrogators had of suitable female behaviour as a means of evading punishment, or attributed their actions to male instigation, something the authorities were only too happy to believe.

Finally, it is worth emphasizing the incidental details of character, culture, and domestic life, which were recorded in the testimony of these women and of the men who observed their actions – from *soldatka* Kobzeva's proud defiance of the authorities, to her emotional collapse when reunited with her children after arrest; the small commercial enterprises which some of them ran themselves, like Vera Leont'eva's beer-brewing; or the nature of the manufactured goods that were valued in these rural communities in wartime (principally cloth). As settlers, the *soldatki* of Semirech'e were in some ways more privileged than their counterparts in European Russia, but they still belonged to a class and a group whose voice is rarely found in the archive. What we do not find in any of their testimony or reports of their behaviour is any trace of political ideology or the programme of any of the revolutionary parties, though we might guess that the Bolshevik demand for an immediate end to the 'imperialist' war would have appealed to them. This is unsurprising. The February Revolution when it came to Turkestan came 'via the telegraph', to use Marco Buttino's phrase,⁹⁴ and only in Tashkent and Vernyi was there some semblance of the same political divisions and categories as in European Russia. The Vernyi Soviet was nominally dominated by the SRs and Mensheviks,⁹⁵ but in reality both there and in the Bolshevik-dominated Tashkent Soviet the priority was to maintain the Russian monopoly on political power against the claims of the much larger 'native' population of the region.⁹⁶ As food shortages became more acute in Turkestan throughout 1917-18, securing a larger proportion of what grain was available became the key goal of settler politics, in which revolutionary ideology played a minor role.⁹⁷ Meanwhile the patterns of settler violence towards the local populations had already been established during the reprisals which followed the 1916 revolt, and did not alter significantly after either the February or the October Revolutions.⁹⁸ The lack of clearly-expressed ideological or political goals and beliefs in the 1916-17 *bab'i bunt*y was certainly not peculiar to women.

Notes

1. Shtabs-Rotmistr Maslov, Assistant to the District Commandant of Lepsinsk, to M. A. Fol'baum, Governor of Semirech'e 12/04/1916 TsGARKaz (Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv respubliki Kazakhstan), f. 44, op. 1, d. 20058 'Massovye besporiadki v oblasti na pochnye dorogovizny' l. 38.
2. Badcock, *Politics and the People*, 164-78; Badcock 'Women, Protest, and Revolution'; Baker, "Rampaging *Soldatki*," 143.
3. Viola, "Bab'i Bunt'y".

4. Indeed, Maria Grafova has suggested that the Soviet understanding was that *bab'i bunt* could only have a truly 'progressive' political outcome when mobilised by the Party for the purposes of agitation. Grafova, "Bab'i bunt".
5. Engel, "Not by Bread Alone"; Lih, *Bread and Authority*, 67-82; Retish, *Russia's Peasants*, 49-51; Smith, *Russia in Revolution*, 97-8, 101-2; Steinberg, *The Russian Revolution*, 192-4; Engelstein, *Russia in Flames*, 105-6; Melancon, *Rethinking Russia's February Revolution*, 14-17.
6. Gerasimov, *Plebeian Modernity*, 2-8.
7. Hearne, "Policing Procurement"; Gibson, "Experiencing Enumeration"; Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?".
8. Gippius, *Peterburgskie dnevniki*.
9. Sahadeo, *Russian Colonial Society*, 170-6; Buttino, *Revoliutsiia naoborot*, 59-62.
10. *Obzor Semirechenskoi oblasti za 1913g.*, 37-8.
11. Buttino, "Central Asia (1916-20)", 112-13; Morrison, "Sowing the Seed", 9-24; Morrison, "Peasant Settlers", 390-6.
12. Pokrovskii, *Pobeda sovetskoi vlasti v Semirech'e*, 53-4. Pokrovskii cites here several archival documents from fonds 44 and 76 of the Central State Archive of what was then the Kazakh SSR, but on investigation only one of these *dela* had anything to do with *bab'i bunt* or other forms of economic protest.
13. Chokobaeva, "When the nomads went to war", 152; Retish, Badcock, and Novikova, "Introduction: A Kaleidoscope of Revolutions".
14. Chokobaeva, "Frontiers of Violence", 45.
15. Sahadeo, *Russian Colonial Society*, 171-4.
16. Holquist, *Making War, Forging Revolution*, 26-46.
17. Sanborn, *Imperial Apocalypse*, 76-87, 245-6.
18. "Voina, dengi i Dorogovizna" *Turkestanskii Vedomosti* 09/06/1915; "Vopros o dorogovizne pered predstaviteli gorodov" *Turkestanskii Vedomosti* 28/06/1915.
19. "Voennyi Nalog" *Turkestanskii Vedomosti* 14/07/1915; see further Pokrovskii, *Pobeda sovetskoi vlasti*, 46-47, Chokobaeva, "Frontiers of Violence", 43-5.
20. Buttino, *Revoliutsiia naoborot*, 45-8, 85-90.
21. Vasil'ev, *Semirechenskaia oblast'*, 19.
22. *Obzor Semirechenskoi oblasti za 1892g.*, 27.
23. Putolov, *Kak mozhnet razvit'sia*, 1, 4.
24. Baum, *Soedinenie velikago Sibirskago puti*, 3.
25. Payne, *Stalin's Railroad*, 17-18.
26. Peterson, *Pipe Dreams*, 174.
27. Vasil'ev, *Semirechenskaia oblast'*, 19-23; Peterson, *Pipe Dreams*, 172-7; Buttino, "Central Asia (1916-1920)", 113-4.
28. 'Zhurnal oblastnogo soveshchanie po prodovol'stvennomu delu' 27/06/1916; Gorbunov to Kuropatkin 18/10/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op.1, d. 20063, 'O merakh bor'by s dorogoviznoi' ll. 98, 100, 165-6.
29. Head of the inspection point for the town of Vernyi to M. A. Fol'baum, governor of Semirech'e ?/02/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op. 1, d. 20063, l. 2ob.
30. Fol'baum to the Department of Police 07/03/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op. 1, d. 20063, l.1 3.
31. Fol'baum to the Department of Police 07/03/1916; Head of the inspection point for the town of Vernyi to Fol'baum 02/04/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op. 1, d. 20063, ll. 14, 36-7.

32. *Raport* 26/02/1916; *Raport* 08/03/1916; *Raport* 10/03/1916; Tolmachev to Fol'baum 15/03/1916; TsGARKaz, f. 44, op. 1, d.2 0063, ll. 15-21.
33. Gorinov to Fol'baum 08/03/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op. 1, d. 20063, ll. 22-23ob.
34. Sanborn, *Imperial Apocalypse*, 81-2, 254-6; Lohr, "The Russian Army and the Jews", 405-6.
35. Fol'baum to the Police Department 26/04/1916, TsGARKaz, f. 44, op. 1, d. 20063, l. 44.
36. The heavy hoe or mattock used for agricultural work in Central Asia.
37. *Volostnoi upravitel'* of Mikhailovskoe to the *uezdnyi nachal'nik*, Vernyi, 22/03/1916; *Protokol Doznaniya* 24/03/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op. 1, d. 20058, ll. 3-7.
38. *Protokol Doznaniya* 24/03/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op. 1, d. 20058, l.12.
39. Hasegawa, *Crime and Punishment*, 34-5.
40. Fol'baum to the Police Department 26/04/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op. 1, d. 20063, l. 44.
41. Maslov to Sokolov 01/04/1916; Ivanov to Sokolov 06/04/1916; Sikorskii to Sokolov 06/04/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op. 1, d. 20058, ll. 16, 17, 23; Shcherbakov to Sokolov 18/03/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 76 op.1, d. 496, l. 12.
42. *Raport* (Maslov, Lepsinsk) 29/03/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op. 1, d. 20058, ll. 31-31ob; also available in f. 76, op. 1, d. 496, ll. 9-10.
43. A rumour which circulated widely elsewhere: Engel "Not by Bread Alone", 712.
44. Maslov to Fol'baum 12/04/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op.1, d. 20058, ll.37-8.
45. Maslov to Fol'baum 12/04/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44 op.1, d. 20058, l. 38.
46. For parallels see Baker, "Rampaging *Soldatki*", 144-5; Hearne, "Prosecuting Procurement", 196-9.
47. Maslov to Fol'baum 12/04/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44 op.1, d. 20058, l. 38.
48. This concept comes from E. P. Thompson "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd", and has often been applied to Russian peasant unrest; see for instance Smith, "Moral economy and Peasant Revolution" and Baker "Rampaging *Soldatki*", 148-9.
49. Maslov to Fol'baum 12/04/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44 op.1, d. 20058, ll. 39-40.
50. 'Spisok lits vozvrativshikh ograblennoe v sel. Andreevskom 28 marta 1916 goda tovarov iz magazinov Sapy Rizabakieva i Br. Aigistovykh, a takzhe lits u kotorykh Tovar otobran pri ograblenii ili obyske' TsGARKaz, f. 76 op.1, d. 496, ll. 40-1.
51. Maslov to Fol'baum 12/04/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op.1, d. 20058, l. 40; Odashkin to the Prosecutor of the Vernyi Regional Court 28/04/1916 TsGARKaz, f.76, op.1, d.505, ll.8-9.
52. Fol'baum to the Police Department 07/05/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op.1, d.20063, l.50.
53. A. P. Plotnikov to the Prosecutor of the Vernyi Regional Court (n.d., after 28/03/1916); Rotmistr Zhelezniakov to the Prosecutor of the Vernyi Regional Court 30/03/1916, TsGARKaz, f. 76 op. 1, d. 521, ll. 9-10.
54. *Protokol doprosa obviniaemogo* 04/04/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 76, op. 1, d. 521, ll. 34-ob.
55. 'Proshenie' to the Prosecutor, Vernyi Regional Court 09/04/1916 TsGARKaz, f.76, op.1, d.521, ll. 19-21.
56. Note to the Prosecutor, Vernyi Regional Court 21/04/1916, TsGARKaz, f.76, op.1, d.521, ll. 21-21ob.
57. Chokobaeva, "When the nomads", 152.
58. Pianciola, 'Scales of Violence', 179-83.
59. Head of the inspection point for the town of Vernyi to Fol'baum 02/04/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op. 1, d.20063, l. 37.

60. Avrov to Fol'baum 16/05/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op.1, d. 20058, ll.54-6.
61. Circular from Gen M. A. Fol'baum 09/04/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op.1, d. 20058, ll.25-6.
62. Fol'baum to von Martson 02/04/1916 TsGARKaz, f.44, op.1, d.20063, l.32; on the importance of rumour in generating unrest in Semirech'e see Happel, "Fears, Rumours".
63. Telegram von Martson to the War Minister 04/04/1916 RGVIA (Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi voenno-istoricheskii arkhiv), f. 400 op. 1, d. 4540, 11.13-ob.
64. The origins and spread of the revolt are beyond the scope of this paper, but see the essays in Chokobaeva, Drieu and Morrison (eds.), *The Central Asian Revolt of 1916*.
65. "Khlebnyi vopros", *Turkestanskii Kur'er* 10/08/1916.
66. Fol'baum to Kuropatkin 22/09/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op. 1, d. 20063, l. 112.
67. Zhurnal No.6 Turkestanskogo Kraevogo Prodovol'stvennogo Soveshchaniia 18/11/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op. 1, d. 20063, ll.191-3.
68. Alekseev to Kuropatkin 10/12/1916 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op. 1 d. 20063, ll.180-1.
69. Pokrovskii, *Pobeda sovetской vlasti*, 47.
70. Pyle, "Peasant Strategies", 41-4.
71. Farnsworth, "The *Soldatka*"; see also Badcock, "Women, Protest and Revolution".
72. Acting Police-Chief, Vernyi to Governor Alekseev 30/01/1917 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op.1, d.21280, 'Ob ulichnykh besporiadkakh, uchinnennykh v g. Vernom soldatkami' l.8
73. *Protokol* 23/01/1917 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op.1, d.21280, l.10
74. Acting Police Chief, Vernyi to the Prosecutor of the Vernyi regional court 27/01/1917 TsGARKaz, f. 76, op.1, d. 634, l. 16.
75. The building is a well-known local landmark which still survives in Almaty today near what is now called the *Zelenyi Bazar*.
76. Acting Police-Chief, Vernyi to Governor Alekseev 30/01/1917 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op.1, d.21280, l.8
77. *Protokol* 23/01/1917 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op.1, d.21280, ll.10ob-11.
78. *Protokol* 23/01/1917 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op.1, d.21280, ll.11.
79. *Protokol* 23/01/1917 TsGARKaz, f. 76, op.1, d. 634, l. 34.
80. Acting Police-Chief, Vernyi to Governor Alekseev 30/01/1917 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op. 1, d.21280, ll. 8-8ob.
81. *Protokol* 23/01/1917 TsGARKaz, f. 76, op.1, d. 634, ll. 18ob-19.
82. *Protokoly* 23/01/1917 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op.1, d. 21280, ll.11ob-13.
83. Postanovlenie Voennogo Gubernatora Semirechenskoi Oblasti 06/02/1917 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op.1, d. 21280, l.14.
84. Acting Police-Chief, Vernyi to Governor Alekseev 30/01/1917 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op.1, d. 21280, l.8ob.
85. Raport Nachal'nika Vernenskogo Sysknogo otdeleniia 06/02/1917 TsGARKaz, f. 76, op. 1, d. 634, l. 44.
86. Rotmistr Mescheriakov to Alekseev 01/02/1917; Police Chief, Vernyi to Alekseev 07/02/1917; Postanovlenie Voennogo Gubernatora Semirechenskoi Oblasti 08/02/1917; Letter from Pelagii Korotenkova 26/02/1917 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op. 1, d.21280, ll.1, 20-22, 40-40ob.
87. Shtabs-Rotmistr Meshcheriakov to Alekseev 01/02/1917 TsGARKaz, f. 44, op.1, d.21280, ll.2, 5; f. 76, op. 1, d. 634, l.31.
88. Chokobaeva, "A Colonial Revolution".

89. Engel, "Not by Bread alone", 719-20.
90. Lohr, *Nationalizing the Russian Empire*, 31-54.
91. Badcock, "Women, Protest, and Revolution", 51-2.
92. Sahadeo, *Russian Colonial Society*, 170-6.
93. Baker, "Rampaging *Soldatki*", 144-7.
94. Buttino, *Revoliutsiia naoborot*, 10.
95. Pokrovskii, *Pobeda sovetskoi vlasti*, 57.
96. Khalid, 'Tashkent 1917'; Yaroshevski 'Russian Regionalism in Turkestan'; Chokobaeva, "A Colonial Revolution".
97. Buttino, "Economic Relations"; Sahadeo *Russian Colonial Society*, 193-207.
98. Morrison, "Refugees, Resettlement".

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