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**Writing the History of Collectivization in Uzbekistan: Oral Narratives**

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**Abstract**

How do rural Uzbeks who directly experienced Stalinist collectivization judge the process today in light of their memories, and what conclusions may we draw as scholars who compare a variety of texts with oral narration? Collectivization studies form a substantial body of literature within postwar Sovietology. However, collectivization in post-Soviet Central Asia has not been scrutinized to the degree found in Russia and Ukraine. This study is the first oral history project that engages actual witnesses to and participants in collectivization in Uzbekistan; this oral history research, combined with research in archives and scholarly studies published in Uzbekistan, provides the basis for the first extensive Western scholarly account of collectivization in Central Asia. It expands understanding of a particular program of forced modernization, and the gaps between structural and socio-cultural change. In a period when policy makers recommend changes to independent Uzbekistan's land laws, this study may provide a deeper sense of cultural attitudes about land and livelihood in rural Uzbekistan, with implications for changes in land tenure system.