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KYRGYZSTAN SPECIAL

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Editor's Page

The picturesque country of Kyrgyzstan is famous for its Tien Shan (celestial) mountains, Issyk Kul lake, lush green meadows, flowing streams, rich and variegated flora and fauna. Notwithstanding its sparse population of 5.5 million people covering an area of about 200,000 sq. kms., Kyrgyzstan is strategically located in the northeast of Central Asia with its borders touching Kazakhstan in the north, Uzbekistan in the west, Tajikistan to the southwest and China to the east. Whereas USA maintains an airbase at Manas, Russia has its base at Kant, thus indicating the geopolitical importance of Kyrgyzstan. Though both Russia and USA kept aloof from the internal disturbances in Kyrgyzstan treating it as its internal affairs, the country remains vulnerable to big power politics.

For over a decade after its independence, Kyrgyzstan was described as an island of democracy and stability in Central Asia. It was credited with carrying out deeper economic reforms. But the reforms carried out according to IMF and World Bank dictats spelt doom for Kyrgyzstan's economy plunging the country into poverty. The problem was accentuated by prevailing corruption, nepotism, regional and ethnic divides. During the past few years, rising prices, stagnant wages and growing unemployment have spurred civil unrest in the country. The continuing inter-ethnic and regional rivalries, increasing crime, drugs trafficking and the growing threat of Taliban and Islamist extremists from Afghanistan, are looming large over the fragile state. However, the people of Kyrgyzstan who are quite advanced in educational and professional services and have a strong instinct for survival taking pride in their independence and sovereignty and hope to weather the socio-economic problems being faced by them.

Kyrgyzstan's ancient Silk Route connections with India have been established on the basis of archeological sites existent in Naviket, Suyab, Ak Beshim, Balasaghun etc. in Kyrgyzstan. That Naviket resembles the finds in Ajna Tepe, Fayaz Tepe, Kara Tepe and Merv in other Central Asian Republics, offers the conclusive evidence of close historico-cultural links between India and Central Asia.

Ever since the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Kyrgyzstan in 1992, important and constructive developments have taken place in the political, economic, cultural and humanitarian spheres.

Both the countries have exchanged several visits at the ministerial and other high levels. Kyrgyzstan and India have shown their commitment to secularism, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, territorial integrity and peaceful resolution of all problems. They have also been expressing their determination to increase the level of trade and economic cooperation and to devise new spheres of mutually beneficial cooperation in sectors such as information technology, mining, engineering and food processing.

Given the proximity of Kyrgyzstan to India and close historico-cultural ties dating back to ancient times, India and Kyrgyzstan need to concretise their programmes of socio-economic and cultural cooperation. That there is enough goodwill at the popular level in both the countries and there is perfect political understanding between the two governments on issues of common concern, provides a sound basis for forging ahead India-Kyrgyzstan ties in the twenty first century.

K. Warikoo

MONUMENTS OF THE BRONZE AGE OF KYRGYZSTAN

TABALDYEV KUBATBEK

In ancient history of Kyrgyzstan the period from second half of third millennium till beginning of first millennium B.C. is considered to be the epoch of domination of bronze foundry technology when the people of mountains and valleys of Tien Shan, Altai and Pamirs learnt to make tools, arms, decorations and household items of non-ferrous metal alloys. This period is characterized by key changes in the economic activity, lifestyle, material and spiritual culture of ancient people of Kyrgyzstan which determined the cultural development for many centuries ahead. At the end of the Bronze Age, tribes of hunters from mountains and steppe became familiar with the nomadic cattle-breeding economy. The nomadic cattle-breeders developed bronze foundry technology and they had wheeled vehicles and metal weapons. Social relations became more complicated and reached higher stage of development. Military aristocracy and priests became distinguished and well developed religious ideas and cults were formed. During the Bronze Age river valleys and mountain ranges of Tien Shan, Altai and Pamirs became the arena of migration and settling of the nomadic tribes which had European racial appearance.

Till present, monuments of the most ancient period of the Bronze Age, Eneolit and early Bronze Age [which are characterized by the production of first metal weapons of native copper (cold foundry technology) and beginning of mastering of copper foundry technology] have not been found in the territory of Kyrgyzstan. However, mountains and valleys of Tien Shan were not uninhabited at that time. The fact that they were inhabited by ancient nomadic tribes which drove herds of domestic cattle along the mountain paths is proved by the petroglyphs found at the sides of rocks high in the mountains. Some petroglyphic

monuments studied in Kyrgyzstan according to their stylistic features and topics may belong to the periods of Eneolit and early Bronze Ages.¹ Such petroglyphs were found in the mountain sanctuary Saimaly-Tash at the Fergansky mountain range (3,700 metres above sea level) and in the valley of the Tosor river.

Petroglyphs of early Bronze Age are characterized by anthropomorphic figures with head which looks like sun disc with rays. The researchers of the Bronze Age petroglyphs relate such figures with solar cults of ancient nomadic tribes and interpret them as description of solar divinity which had a human body and sun-like head. Ancient artists who made such petroglyphs tried to emphasize the radiation of divinity which emits light and heat blooming everything alive on earth. Such solar cults appeared and prevailed among the tribes which practised productive types of economy, including early nomadic cattle-breeders, for which seasonal economic cycle was typical. Beginning of spring after long and scanty winter, appearance of new green grass at the pastures and calves was related by the ancient cattle-breeders to the activity of the almighty solar divinity, to honor which they created sanctuaries with the petroglyphs, made sacrifices and carried out religious devotions. Similar depiction of sun-like headed anthropomorphic figures is known to be found in other petroglyphic monuments in the adjacent regions of Central Asia, mountains of Kazakhstan, Sayano-Altai and Mongolia. Researches of the petroglyphic art of South Siberia relate these petroglyphs to *okunevskaya* and *kararolskaya* cultures of the early Bronze Age.²

In Kyrgyzstan such petroglyphs belong to the ancient nomadic population, whose settlements and burial complexes have not been found yet. The images of bulls at the petroglyphs found at the Valley of the Tosor river most likely date back to the Eneolit and early Bronze Age periods. Cattle were the main species of domestic animals which constituted the herds of ancient cattle-breeders of the Tien Shan. Life and prosperity of the ancient nomadic communities depended on it. This is why the images of domestic cattle were portrayed on the rocks at the places of the sanctuaries of the nomads together with images of sun-like headed divinities. Ethnicity of the nomadic people of Kyrgyzstan during Eneolit and early Bronze Age can only be surmised.

Nomadic tribes of mountain and steppe regions were likely related to European ethnic groups which inhabited steppes of South Siberia, Mongolia and East Turkestan, whose culture belonged to Afanasiev's cultural community. According to a number of researchers these ancient

Europeans migrated from East Europe to Central Asia in late Eneolit and early Bronze Age. They spoke Tokharsky languages belonging to the most ancient branch of Indo-European or Indo-German language family.³ In some oases of East Turkestan the descendants of ancient Tokhars retained their language till the middle ages.

In second century B.C. mountains and valleys of Tien Shan became the arena of settling of the nomadic cattle-breeding tribes which came with their herds from Kazakhstan steppes. They were cattle-breeders - nomads, who had well developed metal foundry technology, horsed wheeled vehicles, they were armed with lances, battle axes, daggers and bows with arrows. In scientific literature monuments of culture of these ancient tribes (found in the vast steppe territories of west zone of steppe belt of Eurasia, from the Urals, West and South Siberia to Semirechie, Tien Shan, southern regions of Central Asia, Afghanistan and East Turkistan) are traditionally considered to be belonging to Andronovskaya cultural community.⁴

People of this culture had European appearance: wide face, prominent nose, strong constitution. The tribes of the Andronovskaya culture bred cattle, sheep, goats and horses. In north forest-steppe regions Andronovskaya culture population was involved in hoe-mattock farming. In steppe and mountain regions Andronovskaya culture cattle-breeders mostly practiced cattle breeding with seasonal change of pastures. In spring the herds were driven to rich mountain pastures. In Tien-Shan and in Semirechie some of the burial grounds of Andronovskaya culture are situated high in the mountains. The highest burial ground Arpa is situated at 3,000 meters above sea level.⁵

Burial complexes of Andronovskaya culture tribes at Tien Shan had square fences made of stones and the graves were inside the fences. The deceased were buried in accordance with various rites - inhumation and cremation. Ceramic dishes with funeral food were placed in the grave. Both types of burial rites were typical for the same tribes of Andronovskaya culture at Tien Shan. The burials (both inhumation and cremation) were found in the course of excavations of the burial grounds in Kochkorskaya and Talasskaya valleys and Ketmen-Tube. According to E.E. Kuzmina, such bi-rituality is typical of Fedorovskaya cultural tradition in the framework of Andronovskaya culture, to which the monuments studied in the territory of Kyrgyzstan belong.⁶ Monuments of Fedorovskaya culture type at Tien-Shan are in line with the developed Bronze Age and date back to 14th – 15th centuries B.C. The researches attribute monuments

studied at Ketmen-Tube, valleys of Talas and Naryn and Issyk Kul basin to the period of late Bronze. Due to presence of fillets on ceramics, these complexes are attributed to the group of fillet ceramics culture, which was widely spread in Eurasia steppes in late Bronze Age from the Carpathians to Altai and Tien Shan.⁷ It is likely that during late Bronze Age Tien Shan was invaded by separate groups of tribes of Kherersurs culture from Mongolia and East Turkestan.⁸ The invasion of the bearers of this cultural tradition to the Kyrgyzstan territory is proved by several olenn stones found and existence of ring fences around kurgan mounds, which remained in the monuments of *saks* period.⁹

Bronze foundry played enormous role in the life of tribes of developed and late Bronze Age. Besides some bronze items found at the burial grounds at Tien Shan and Semirechie, there were found 12 treasures, containing over one hundred bronze items. These treasures belonged to the bronze-founders, who could use metal items for re-melting. According to specific features of the technology of manufacturing of the bronze items A.D. Degtyareva singled out Semirechensky as the center of metal-working, which was characterized by high quality of foundry in divided stone and clay moulds and forging of bronze decorations of metal billets.¹⁰

Within this center it is possible to single out three manufacturing centers: Chuisky, Talassky and Issyk Kulsy, which had their own manufacturing canons. They were based on the developed over centuries steady, peculiar technological skills and traditions of manufacturing of metal items. Founders who lived in Chuiskaya valley preferred to use forging post-treatment of hot cast in the mould items. Talassky center specialized in hobbing (cold forging) after which the items were subjected to additional heat treatment under low temperature.

Founders of bronze age made various metal items, including arms, tools and decorations. Among metal arms found in archeological monuments at the territory of Kyrgyzstan and in adjacent regions of Kazakhstan there were found axes, lances with and daggers with zoomorphic tops. Tools included chisels, adzes, sickles and knives. Among the decorations the most popular were bracelets and ear-rings with flare. Metal used for founding of the items in Semirechinsky center was mostly imported. According to the types of admixtures it was divided into four groups and was, most likely, brought from various deposits. Among the founds there were items made of tin bronze, tin-lead bronze, arsenic bronze and copper.¹¹

According to E.E.Kuzmina, in Kyrgyzstan ancient mines were found in the valleys of the following rivers: Chu, Talas and Ketmen-Tube and at

Issyk Kul.¹² Some of them were used for mining silver and lead in addition to copper ore. Highly developed metallurgy and metal-working promoted wide distribution of the Andronov type bronze items beyond the area of settlement of the tribes of this cultural community.

Typical element of culture of the developed Bronze Age in Tien Shan is the ceramic vessels of Fedorovsky type. Among them it is possible to single out well smoothed pots with glossed and ornamented with notched stamp surface. As for the elements of the ornament triangles, meanders, swastika and scallops prevailed.¹³

Andronovskye tribes were able to settle and develop vast steppe territories and mountain valleys due to wheeled vehicles, two-wheeled and four-wheeled carts and chariots which they used for military purposes.

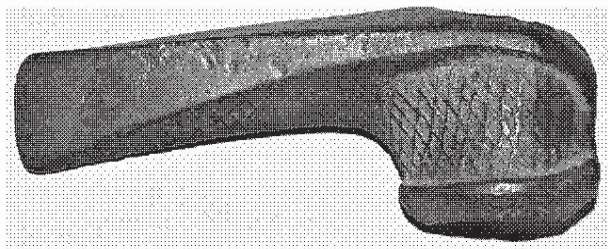
Significant level of development and wide use of the chariots by the nomads of the Bronze Age at Tien Shan are proved by numerous images at the petroglyphs of Saimaly-Tash, Teke-Tash, which shows carts pulled by oxen or horses.¹⁴ According to P.M. Kozhin images of the chariots at the petroglyphs, separate rocks and stone steles could be used as road signs which indicated long roads where chariots could be used.¹⁵

The places of accumulation of petroglyphs were used by the Bronze Age nomads as the sanctuaries where they conducted rites and made sacrifices. The monuments of Tergen-Tash and Tuura-bel at Altai mountain range, Besh-Tash-Koroo, Kyrgyzbai-Bulun in Kochkor valley, Tosor and Cholpon-Ata have images of people in the pose of adoration with their hands raised up to the sky, carts and chariots, serows and mountain goats. Monuments of Andronovskaya culture had bronze decorations which added to dress and were talismans. Among them were bracelets, temporal rings, ear-rings and beads.¹⁶

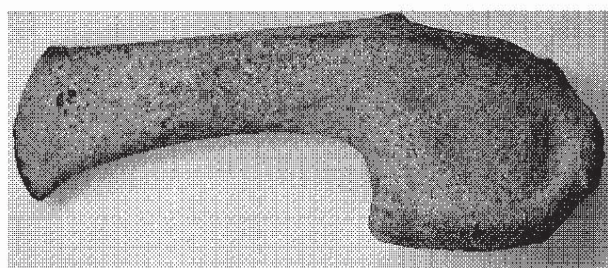
Judging by the finds in the territory of East Turkestan it is possible to think that Tien Shan nomads of the developed bronze age wore felt caps and leather boots typical for ancient nomads of Eurasia steppe belt.¹⁷

During late Bronze period Tien Shan region was invaded by separate groups of ancient nomads, who used military chariots and to honor their chariot-riders built *khereksury* (kurgans with stone mound and ring fence) and built in memory of their perished heroes monumental stone steles with images of arms and decorations which are called in scientific literature "olenn stones".¹⁸ A few such monuments have been found in Kyrgyzstan.¹⁹ Probably these were small groups of nomads who migrated from Eastern Turkestan and western regions to Mongolia. Beyond their main area of residence in mountains and valleys of Tien Shan they

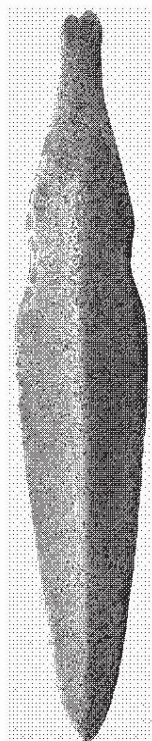
gradually assimilated among the local nomads, descendants of Andronovskaya culture. Descendants of the nomads became the main ethnic substratum of the *saks* tribes, who settled in the territory of Kyrgyzstan during early Iron age.



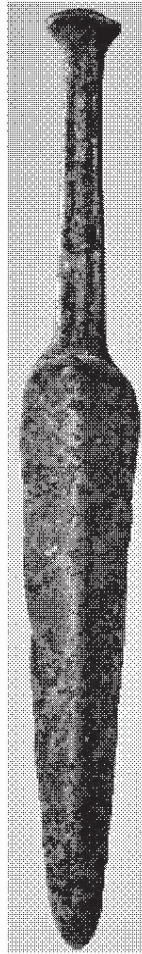
Bronze Axe



Bronze Axe



Bronze Dagger



Bronze Dagger



Ceramic ware of the Bronze epoch



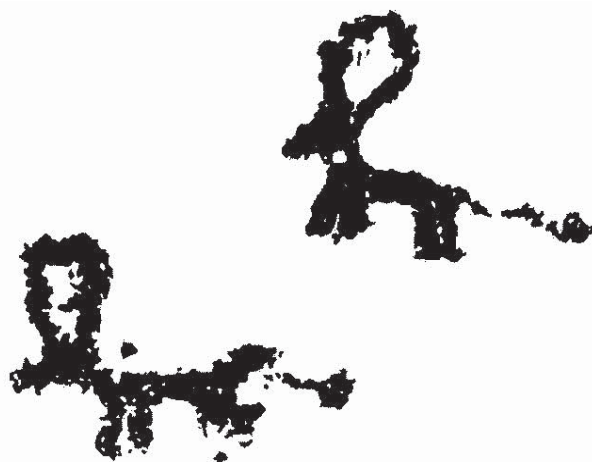
Ceramic ware of Bronze epoch



Petroglyph of Bronze epoch



Petroglyph of Bronze epoch



Petroglyph of Bronze epoch



Kurgan Bronze epoch

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COMMON TRAITS IN THE CULTURE OF KYRGYZ AND INDIAN PEOPLES

ABYKEYEVA-SULTANALIEVA TALAIGUL BAKAEVNA
and INDIRA MUSAEVA

The comparative analysis of the epic *Manas* of Kyrgyzstan and Indian mythology reveals evidence of their common origin. This statement can be considered as a result of our research. It is almost certain that the myth of the ancestors of the modern day Kyrgyz people had similar origins with Indian myths and names of myth heroes. The epic *Manas* is based on the ancient Indian myth about, first man (*Mana* in Sanskrit - *Manu*). The analysis of the epic's characters shows that the *Manas* epic tells not only of the structure of ethnic or tribal organisations and of the formation of the ancient sovereignty of the Kyrgyz, but also of the structure of universe in general. It has a cosmological character. According to scientists J. Gamkrelidze and Y. Ivanov's theory on the birthplaces of early Asian civilizations of Indo-Europeans, the *Manas* and its mythological sources originated around the 3rd millennium BC. In this period the first waves of Aryans, including some ancient Aryan tribes, of which the Kyrgyz ancestors were part, moved to the East, to Central Asia. An analysis of the *Manas* shows its ancient Indian mythological heritage. More detailed comparative analysis of the *Manas* and Indian mythology is the task of the future, as two ancient peoples have similar traditions.

Kyrgyzstan's ancient Silk Route connections with India have been established on the basis of archaeological sites existent in Naviket, Sujab, Ak Beshim, Balasaghun etc. in Kyrgyzstan, by archeologists Voropoeva and Goryacheva. Few Buddhist images (7th-8th century A.D.) found in Naviket town 35 kms away from Bishkek, are preserved and displayed in the archaeological museum of Kyrgyz Slavic University and historical

museum in Bishkek. Naviket which resembles the finds in Ajna Tepe, Fayaz Tepe, Kara Tepe and Merv in other Central Asian Republics, offers the conclusive evidence of close historical-cultural links between India and Central Asia. Great Silk Route was not only means of transferring goods but also exchange of ideas between the two countries through ages. It played the role of a connecting bridge between cultures and civilizations.

That *Manas* has been translated into Hindi by an Indian scholar, is a matter of gratification, particularly so because the Kyrgyz academics and literatures greatly admire Indian heroes of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* comparing these epics to *Manas*. The Kyrgyz specialists trace the origin of word *Manas* to India. In fact Academician Mursev showed a copy of *Ramcharit Manas* to score his point. The Kyrgyz academics and literatures cherish deep consciousness and admiration for the Indian heroes from the epic of *Ramayana*. India's great epics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* are comparable to great epic *Manas*.

The world became acquainted with the ideas and work of the greatest philosophers, scholars and statesmen. Intensive mutual enrichment of cultures took place, and there was an active exchange of knowledge and of spiritual and philosophical concepts and views. Thanks to the Silk Route, outstanding epics *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana*, *Manas* and legends became the property of all mankind. It was through the great Silk Route, that synergetic and monotheistic religious ideals were disseminated. Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam and Christianity all found their adherents along the Great Silk Route.

On the historical-cultural plane the territory of contemporary Kyrgyzstan formed in ancient times a common territory with Eastern Turkestan where Buddhism took deep root as far back as 2nd – 4th centuries and continues to retain influence in several regions. It is known from numerous sources that the earliest bearers of Buddhism along the route to the East were a large group of natives of Central Asia - Sogdians, Parthians, Khanguis. Of great historical and cultural significance was the activity of the Ak Shigao, a Parthian from Marghilan and crown prince of his country (who rejected the throne like Shakyamuni). He settled in Lohan in 148 AD and till 170 AD was working on the translation of Buddhist texts into Chinese. He was undoubtedly the first historical apostle of Central Asian Buddhism. After him there followed a whole galaxy of interpreters of Indian holy texts and authors of new literary and historical works on Buddhist themes, who were known through works of Sanskrit, Khotan - Saka, Tibetan, Chinese, Sogdian and Tokhar literature.¹

Buddhism prevailed and the most outstanding monuments that were considerably distinctive and different from their Indian prototypes were created. Existence of famous icon painters of Buddhist paintings with Sogdian names and surnames, indicating their Central Asian origin testifies to this assumption.²

Different researchers have drawn attention to the leading role of representatives of ancient Central Asian people who were the first to transfer Indian culture to the East. This is also true of Kyrgyzstan, where Buddhist monuments were discovered by A.N. Bernshtam during the archaeological exploration of the whole territory of the Republic during the period 1933-1954. In the western gallery of the Ak Beshim shrine a sculpture of Sleeping Buddha was excavated in 1961 and in the southern one fragments of paintings were found on the wall.

After 8th century, Buddhism in Kyrgyzstan did not revive as it did in Tibet, Eastern Turkestan and Far East countries where this religion entered a new phase in its development from early 10th to 11th centuries, undergoing local transformations. Ancient Yenesei Kyrgyzs did not stand aside from the influence of Indian Buddhist culture in folklore, geographical names, moral ethical code and other spheres of everyday life and rituals. It is safe to speak about the common roots of ancient Indian *Ramayana* and Kyrgyz epic *Manas*, but this issue needs further serious studies.

The Kyrgyz nation is multi-ethnic and the resultant character is a good mixture, enriched through centuries of neighbourly contact, shared culture, common experience and traditions. The character of the people of the Kyrgyz Republic is distinguished by their tremendous respect for education. Families make great sacrifices in order to provide education to all members. Another strong characteristic is profound respect for the elderly, irrespective of their position or nationality. Families are responsible for the care of their elder members; a family member living in poor conditions is a source of great shame for the entire family. Public opinion, respect for one's neighbors, is very important to the people of the Kyrgyz Republic. The people of Kyrgyzstan are very tolerant and altruistic. They respond to economic difficulties with generosity, providing whenever possible.

On the other hand, the mentality of the population of the Kyrgyz Republic includes some characteristics inherited from the communist regime and backward traditions. The first of these is lack of initiative and decisiveness. There is a tendency for people to wait for orders from above. In many of the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union, the

communist history has resulted in disrespect for traders and those involved in commercial ventures. Partly because of this lack of respect, there is no tradition of business ethics and violations of trade obligations are common complaints. Another potential obstacle to the improvement of human development in the country is the lack of respect for health; people tend to consider their health only when it is deteriorating. Perhaps the strongest characteristic, which is a remnant of the former way of life of the Kyrgyz people, is the tribalism that was somehow preserved despite the official collective ideology and the centralized distribution of financial and material benefits. Currently, the Kyrgyz version of tribalism, manifest in the selection of personnel for key ruling positions and the establishment of local allegiance, has become an obstacle to national consolidation. In addition to tribalism, there is certain alertness between ethnic groups that has been accentuated since the disintegration of USSR.

These aspects of the character of the people, both positive and negative, must guide the human development priorities established in the country and must move beyond the psychological impediments to improve life in the Republic and navigate skilfully through the difficulties of the economic reform process. It is necessary to realize the commonality of interest of all ethnic groups, social strata and regions within the republic, to strengthen the feelings of unity and patriotism. The Kyrgyz Republic hosts intellectual, creative, accumulated production of potential, culture of education and strength. The task remains to apply that potential to address the challenge of building a new country.

Geographical factors, especially the climate of the country, have given to Indians their general outlook and temperament and helped to mould their thought and action. The intellect, whose function is to create unity in our perceptions, thinking of all creation as one, and imagination, which is free from the fetters of sense and perception, visualizes this unity. Such is the atmosphere in which the Indian mind has grown and developed. Thought has always had a high place in the scale of values in India. Such thinking is more religious than philosophical. That is why religious philosophy has always occupied a central place in India's cultural life. Likewise, on account of the second characteristic mentioned above, the Indian mind in its interpretation of the universe and in the formulation of its thought has tried to reduce the diversity of its manifestations to a unity.

Characteristics of the Indian mind have also considerably influenced the moral values of the people. Emotion and sensitivity are essential characteristics of the Indian, but as these tendencies are opposed to the

speculative trend, there is always a strong effort to suppress them. The most important effect has been the feeling that the operation of the moral law is just as regular and continuous as that of the law of nature. Indian mind which also originates from the influence of the regularity and continuity with which the laws of nature operate in this part of the world, namely, that the changes which occur in its habits of thought and action are gradual, not abrupt. In other words, the law of its being is not revolution but evolution. The Indian mind is spared such violent jolts because its reaction to new ideas and movements is conscious and gradual.

Agriculture started in India as soon as the crudest implements for filling the soil were available. As a rule communities which took very early to agriculture are matriarchal and have a deep and strong feeling for family and social life. All those constructive qualities which are necessary for cultural development are more prominent in them than in communities which were originally nomadic. They are more peace loving and humane. That is why in certain parts, for example in the Indus Valley, culture had passed out of the primitive into the secondary stage of its development a couple of thousand years before the advent of the Aryans. Later, many nomadic and war-like people came to the country and their admixture modified the national temperament considerably. But qualities like the depth of feeling for family life, love of peace and kindness have always been, and will continue to be, important incredulity of the Indian character.

Agricultural life and the general geographical conditions have also played a great part in shaping the political structure and development of the country. Obviously, in an agricultural country population is not concentrated in a few cities but is scattered over the villages, which are, in many parts, wide apart from one another. Towards the end of the ancient period, the population of the country did not, according to historians, exceed 100,000,000 and, therefore, it must have been more scattered with the villages being situated at greater distances. So the institution of democracy in a nascent state was always present in India though it could not grow to its full stature.

Another noteworthy fact is that, although generally the country was divided into many small states, and even when some extensive empire was established, it functioned as a rather loose federation. The idea of political unity has always had a powerful appeal for the Indian mind. So there is one common idea running through the theories of the state developed by such political thinkers of different views as Kautilya, Manu,

Vishnu, Jainavalkya and others, namely that it is necessary for an ideal ruler to conquer other states within the country and bring them under one sway. At the same time the conquering king is advised to entrust the government of the conquered territory to some member of the ruling family and to preserve its ancient social laws and customs. Thus from the point of view of political organization also we find the same idea of unity in diversity dominating the Indian mind. But the influence of the physical-social environment is only one of the elements, the realistic element, in the formation of culture. The other important element is the ideational, i.e. ideas, beliefs, principles which have their own origin in the consciousness of the higher values. This latter element, is not rooted in a particular locality but it can and does find its way from one country or people to another. If one looks at the history of the world one will find numerous examples how a religion or a system of philosophy or a political or economic theory originates in one part of the world and in course of time, spreading over others.

When one considers the ideational aspect of the Indian mind, one has to remember that in the first place the ideas which have gone into the making of this mind are not all the products of this soil but some have come from outside. Secondly, they have influenced various groups and classes of people in the country in different degrees, with the result that one finds different religions and cultures in India. There is a certain part, which has been assimilated by the common mind and has become the greatest common measure of the various sections of the people.

VALUES OF INDIAN CULTURE

1. *Belief in Dharma*: Every Indian irrespective of caste and creed believes in the law of *Dharma*. *Dharma* does not mean cult but a way of life, which conforms with the principles of decent cultural behavior. The principle of *Dharma* is woven in the basic thought current of the Indian culture.
2. *Belief in one God*: Indians believe in one God who is all-powerful, infinite and all pervading.
3. *Nirvana* or redemption from the cycle of death and birth. Every Indian considers that birth is just a stepping stone for final redemption from the cycle of death and birth because actions of the present birth have definite impact and bearing on the future. Gita says that one can attain *moksha* even by doing his own *karma*.

It further explains that if a *Brahmin* can attain salvation by following the path of righteousness, a *Kshatriya* can attain by laying his life for the defence of the country.

4. *Varnashramadharmā*: Every Indian believes that every mental and physical flow by which fire is struck from it and which in its own power and knowledge is discovered, is *karma*. This word is being used in its widest sense thus we all are doing *karma* at the same time. *Karma* is that action which is just, equitable, universal and for the good of all, anything not conforming with it is non-*karma* or ignoble action.
5. *Aryabhava*: The Vedic sages pointed out that a true yogi is one who sees like soul in all human beings. All Indians are equal irrespective of their birth.
6. *Four-fold Discipline*: The word is considered the *karma ksyatra* where every human being performs one or the other action every moment, keeping in mind the principles of *dharma*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha* which call for the observance of righteous path, honest living, balanced sex and redemption from the cycle of death and birth. This system has been described by B.C. Tilaka as best in spiritual science, in actual action, and in unselfish meditative life.
7. *System of Tour*: Indian literature and philosophy has followed the four fold system, that seems so well planned.
8. *Unity in Diversity*: No other country of the world has witnessed growth and functioning of so many castes, creeds and faiths at one and the same time in history and what is more interesting is the fact that in spite of so many diversities there is the underlying current of unity. There are numerous other values of culture, which form the backbone of Indian culture and civilization but today some Indians are decrying them and threatening to shake them off since a wind of change is sweeping past the world.

COMMON TRAITS OF INDIAN AND KYRGYZSTAN CULTURES

1. Sources like *Manas* and ancient Indian mythological heritages are evidence of their common origin.
2. Kyrgyzs had similar origins with Indian myths and names of mythical heroes- *Manas* and *Manu*.
3. Epics *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana* and *Manas* are outstanding monuments of world culture.

4. Kyrgyzstan like India is multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual.

Ethnic Kyrgyz make up 60% of the population, followed by Russians at 17%. Uzbeks constitute 14% of the population, while there are smaller numbers of Germans, Koreans, Tatars, Chechens and Ukrainians, Kazakhs, Dungans etc. Sunni Islam and orthodox Christianity are the main religions. There are Kyrgyz and Turkish languages. The State language in Kyrgyzstan is Kyrgyz; Russian is the official language of communication.

India is an ethnological museum. Majority of the people of India are descendants of immigrants from across the Himalayas. Dr. B.S. Guha identifies the population of India into six main ethnic groups, namely: 1) The Negrito, 2) Proto-Asutaloids, 3) Mongoloids, 4) Mediterranean or Dravidian, 5) Western Brachyaphals, 6) Nordic Aryans. The 8th Schedule of the constitution recognizes 15 major languages. But three of these languages namely Sanskrit, Kashmiri and Sindhi are not official languages in any state of the Indian Union. Hindi in Devanagiri script is recognized as the official language of the Indian Union by the constitution. The second largest language, Telugu, is spoken by about 60 million people, mostly in Andhra Pradesh. Most of the languages spoken in North India belong to the Indo-Aryan family, while the languages of South India namely, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam and Kannada belong to Dravidian family.

The major religions of India are Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. Besides, there are the followers of Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism and Zoroastrianism (Parsis). Nearly 83 per cent of the population professes Hinduism.

5. *Ancient civilization has existed in India and Kyrgyzstan*: In ancient times Kyrgyz people were one of the most powerful nomadic tribes that repeatedly violated the Chinese border and stimulated China to start building the Great Chinese Wall. The first written evidence of the Kyrgyz people as a nation was found in Chinese chronicles dated 2000 B.C. From 2nd to 1st century B.C., some of the Kyrgyz tribes set themselves free from the Hen (Hunny) domination and moved to the Enisei (Ene-sai-mother river, and Baikal Bai-Kol-arich lake) regions. There they formed their first state known as the Kyrgyz Kaganat, which existed from 6 to 13 A.D. This was also the time when the Kyrgyz culture and the

first written Kyrgyz language started to form, which is confirmed by the runic unique inscriptions on stone monuments. The Kyrgyz Kaganat collapsed as a result of foreign invasion and the Kyrgyz people consequently lost their written language. Ancient Kyrgyz people had their civilization.

One can talk about the existence of Harappa civilization in India before the coming of Aryans. Hence the civilization was at first called the Indus valley civilization. But later it was described as the Harappan civilization. These facts are testified by the archaeological excavation of 1922. The Harappan civilization spread over a large area from Balushistan to Gujarat. Some historians like Prof. D.B. Lal estimated that it covered the eastern valley of the river Indus, spreading over an area measuring 1,600 kilometres east to west and 1,100 km. north to south. In other words their civilization was much greater than its contemporary civilizations in Egypt and Sumeria.

6. The people in both Kyrgyzstan and India have been and are tolerant. Indian tolerance developed during Indian renaissance (Ram Mohan Roy - Gandhi - Nehru) has become the key idea among various culture groups in India.

Kyrgyzstan has always been in the centre of various powers and civilizations. It has experienced the consequences of numerous wars and conflicts. But despite this, the Kyrgyz peoples kept and multiplied the examples of high culture. Openness and tolerance are very typical of their mentality.

7. Common traits of Kyrgyz and Indian peoples are great sacrifices, respect for the elderly, the respect of one's neighbours, unity of nation, fortitude, benevolence, and activeness of women.

SPECIFIC TRAITS OF INDIAN PEOPLE

1. Existence of caste system where every human knows his place in this world in accordance with *karma*.
2. Indian people are very traditional and observe all traditions and customs.
3. Almost all population of India believes and observes religion.
4. Concept of authority is important in India. It is a product of two major forces - the social system with its rigid positioning in the family, caste, language and religion and the political system with

its promise of a sovereign socialist secular democratic republic based on liberty, equality, fraternity, justice, dignity of individual and integrity of nation. Indian people are also distinguished by their simplicity and benevolence. They have confidence, are emotional; are able to listen criticism.

5. One of the main peculiarity of Indian culture is that India is the country rich in philosophy.

Buddhism, in contrast to material world moves away from it, toward *Nirvana*. This idea is the beginning of humanity. Buddhism first proclaims dignity of man. The main value of ancient Indian philosophy is its treatment to immanent, innate world of man.

SPECIFIC TRAITS OF KYRGYZ PEOPLE

1. One of the specific traits is tremendous respect for education. Almost 99% of people are literate.
2. Hospitality. It is more often than not that the host of the *yurta* may sacrifice the last of his sheep in honor of a casual guest.
3. Kyrgyz people are distinguished by altruistic and responsibility to work.
4. Kyrgyz family developed the philosophy of life together with nature, inferring ecology of balance. Kyrgyz ancestors showed concern for water, air, vegetables and living nature.
5. Existence of tribalism in Kyrgyzstan is continuing. It has 6 regions and each of them has its traditions and dialect in languages. This is collective principle to help stabilize the society.

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MANAS AND MAHABHARATA
Genetic community and
Differences of two Epics

SHERIEV ABDYGANY, YPYSHEVA NURGUL and
TOITUKOVA CHINARA

The two great ancient epics– the *Mahabharata* and *Manas* – probably took shape in the course of several hundred years? And even subsequently, additions were made to them. They deal with the early days of Indian and Kyrgyz people, their conquests and wars. They were expanding and consolidating themselves, but the epics were composed and compiled later. They represent the typical Indian and Kyrgyz background of heroic traditions and ethical living.

The task of defining the time of composition of these two epics is rather difficult. In some ways it is not right at all to date the epics to any time, century and even years. The reason is that the epics were composed and developed further. It is possible to talk about the genesis of the epics. And if one looks at the epics from the point of view of a historian and ethnographer, it is possible to pay attention to historical events, which are described in the verses of *Manas* and *Mahabharata*. Of course, these facts are not sufficient to define the time of composition of the epics. Detailed researches are necessary, but historical events in the epics can help us greatly in defining the time.

On 26 May 1856 famous Kazakh scientist Chokan Valikhanov met a Kyrgyz singer and heard *Manas* in his performance. And he is considered to be the first not only to write the extract from *Manas*, but also to learn it. Valikhanov described *Manas* and other poems of the Kyrgyz people as “the most ancient”, though it does not clearly emphasize his opinion about the time. But in his “Notes on Kyrgyz people”, he writes that, that epics of Kyrgyz people belong to the time of Golden Ordo, which means that they

belong to the 8th-14th centuries. In fact, the events of Golden Ordo are described in *Manas*.

Mahabharata deals with the remote period when the Aryans were still in the process of settling down and consolidating themselves in India. The *Mahabharata* is a vast and miscellaneous collection of ancient lore. It must have taken shape in the pre-Buddhist period, though additions were no doubt made later. Probably this was the period when foreign elements were coming into India and bringing their customs with them. Many of these customs were unlike those of the Aryans, and so a curious mixture of opposing ideas and customs is observable. The great civil war, which occurred later and is described in the *Mahabharata*, is vaguely supposed to have taken place around 14th century B.C. Stripped of episodes and interpolation, the poem tells of the great civil war in the Kingdom of the Kauravas, in the region about modern Delhi, then known as Kurukshetra.

The word *Mahabharata*, meaning the great Bharata, reminds us of Bharata, the son of Shakuntala, the founder of a dynasty of Indian in this great drama *Shakuntala*, the masterpiece of Indian poetry. Traditionally the author of the poem was the sage Vyasa, who is said to have taught it to his pupil Vaimpayana. The *Mahabharata* is the great epic of India, a compendium of over 100,000 verses (ten times as long as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* combined). Usually of thirty-two syllables, it is probably the longest single poem in the world literature.

The *Mahabharata*, in combination with its sister epic the *Ramayana*, embodies the quintessence of Indian national consciousness, unity and great cultural heritage. These two great works together constitute the biggest single source of Indian poetry, philosophy, drama, fiction, music, sculpture, painting, folklore and other form of creative expression. A work of great genius, the *Mahabharata* belongs to the entire humanity and not only to India and her people. It transcends all sectarian, institutional, religious, regional and other boundaries. A follower of any religion or country would not find anything wrong in reading, reciting, listening to enjoying and learning from this great ancient literary and philosophical creation.

The *Mahabharata* is an all inclusive epic, which deals with all possible human situations. It has been rightly claimed that what is there in the *Mahabharata* may be found elsewhere, what is not there, is nowhere. It is an excellent book of destiny, boom and drama, all rolled together in one. It has profound philosophical and moral meaning, truth and wisdom.

Manas means the essence, flesh, and body of the first man. *Manas* – a

unique literary monument of the culture of the Kyrgyz people, in its originality embodies a freedom-loving spirit and the patriotic idea. Every important change in political, ideological, economic life of the people during its long historical development left a definite mark in this epic. *Manas* is unique in its size, it has no match even among world-known epics. Only in one variant, written down by a famous narrator Sayakbay Karalayaev, there are over half-million (500,553) poetic lines. At present there are 65 variants of three parts in *Manas* and recording of variants unknown before is still being made.

Great popularity of *Manas* and the place that it takes in the cultural life of the Kyrgyz, attracted attention to the epic. The first notes about it in a written form refer to the end of 15th and the beginning of 16th centuries. This is a manuscript in Tajik by Saif-ad-dini. Its heading is "A collection of stories" (*Majmu-at-Tawarikh*). This manuscript tells not about the epic-*Manas* but about Manas himself and events of the epic are not distinguished from historical one. Epic heroes act as real persons. Recording *Manas* with a scientific purpose began in the second half of the 19th century.

The main story of the *Mahabharata* centers on forces of good and evil. There is no doubt that the war described in the *Mahabharata* was not symbolic and that it may even be based on historical facts. The *Mahabharata* is a rich storehouse in which we can discover all sorts of precious things. It is full of varied, abundant and bubbling life, something removed from other aspects of Indian thought which emphasized asceticism and negation. It is not merely a book of moral precepts though there is plenty of ethics and morality in it.

There is in the *Mahabharata* the polytheism of the Vedas, the monism of the *Upanishads*, and dualism an monotheism. The author is still creative more or less rationalistic and the feeling of exclusiveness is yet limited. Caste is not rigid. There was still a feeling of confidence but as external forces invaded and challenged the security of the old order, that confidence lessened somewhat and a demand for greater uniformity arose in order to produce internal unity and strength. New taboos grew up. The eating of beef, previously countenanced, is later absolutely prohibited. In the *Mahabharata* there are references to beef or veal being offered to honored guests. I don't know of any books anywhere which have exercised such continuous influence on the mass mind as this epic.

Parallel to religious and secular legends, the epic *Manas* gives accounts of events which took place from the 9th to 16th centuries. This work also mentions Kyrgyz clan and tribal names, and relates information about

their leaders. In addition, the manuscript recounts tales about Manas and his allies fighting the *Kalmukh* conquerors. In *Majmu-at-Tawarikh*, many incidents about Manas are narrated in short poetic lines. For example (the arrival) "first Joloy pierced the finger of Manas but Manas hurled him back".

In this writing, other historical events are also depicted in a prosaic form. For example, the arrival of the Gurkhan of Kara-Khitay at Atbashi from Machin, and the dispatch of their retainers together with the Kalmuks to Issyk-Kul and Kamul. It would be erroneous to say that these facts confirm the existence of the epic in a poetic form long before the 15th century. The mention by *Majmu-at-Tawarikh* of such epic motifs as the forty comrades-in-arms of Manas, the lands of Karkyra, and his warriors as *manaschi* is of great scientific value. There is also historical importance in the allusion to the town of Manas, named in Manas' honor. Ch. Valikhanov noted that the Kyrgyz related the Manas town and the Manas valley in the Upper Irtysh area to the name of the legendary hero. We can derive from the contents of *Majmu-at-Tawarikh* that Manas hero was a real figure and had become a legend long before the 15th century.

Collecting and studying of *Manas* on a large scale became possible only during the Soviet period. Many scientists of different nationalities took part in the investigation of its various problems. As a result, the science about *Manas* was not amateur subject of some persons, but became the science of all the people. Up to now there have appeared more than 3,000 articles concerning *Manas*. Extremely broad are scientific interests of investigators of this epic; among them are folklorists, historians, writers, philosophers, ethnographers, linguists, geographers, teachers etc. From the mid-1930's when special scientific institutions were organized in the Kyrgyz Republic, great attention has been paid to recording the texts of *Manas*. As a result, many variants of the epic were written down in the performance of well-known and notable narrators such as S. Karalayaev, B. Abdyrachmanov (T. Moldo), B. Satarov, Sh. Irismendiev, A. Tinibekov and others. Recording variants, not fixed earlier, stopped during the first years of the Great Patriotic War and was resumed only in 1943.

The *Mahabharata* and *Manas* are heroic in conceptions and both teach adherence to truth and pledged word, whatever the consequences, faithfulness unto death and even beyond, courage, good works and sacrifice for the common good. Sometimes the story is pure myth or else it is a mixture of fact and myth. Whether fact or fiction, it has a living element in their lives, ever pulling them up from the drudgery and ugliness of

their everyday existence to higher realities, ever pointing towards the path of endeavour and right living even though the ideal might be far off and difficult to reach.

Thus this imagined history, mixture of fact and fiction or sometimes only fiction, becomes symbolically true and tells us of the minds and hearts and purposes of the people of that particular epoch. It is true also in the sense that it becomes the basis for thought and action for future history. Little importance is attached to the writing of a chronicle or the compilation of a bare record of events. What those people were more concerned was the effect and influence of human events and actions on human conduct. They were strongly imaginative and artistic and they gave expression to this artistry and imagination in dealing with past events, intent as they were on drawing some moral and lesson for future behaviour.

BUDDHIST PILGRIM SUAN CZYAN AND THE FLOODED MONUMENTS OF ISSYK-KUL

VASILII V. PLOSKIKH

When contemplating the geographical map of Asia, unintentionally one looks at such names as Indochina or Indonesia on the south-east of the continent. The Chinese province of Xinjiang, located right in the heart of Asia, and often referred to as “Serindia”, has adjoining borders with the modern day Kyrgyzstan. Indian culture has exercised huge influence on the development of local cultures in these vast lands. Indeed, these regions have practically become a part of the Indian cultural legacy. In the north, the Kushan empire had facilitated the expansion of Indian culture in Central Asia, and from there all over the Silk Road – in China, Korea and Japan. Central Asia with all its river oases, was destined to become the channel of cultural influences coming from India, Iran and China.

Through the Buddhist channels, such Indian secular sciences as astrology, medicine, dramatic arts, poetry and grammar became widely known. In the seventh century, and particularly in the later centuries, Buddhism successfully crossed the Himalayan and Tian Shan mountain ranges and reached Issyk-Kul, where Buddhist archeological monuments (sculptures and petroglyphs) can still be found. Buddhism became the national religion of Tibet, from where, in the second half of 16th century, it spread its influence to Mongolia and Siberia. Spreading around the Asian continent, Buddhism was distinguished for a twofold attraction – the influence of its philosophical thought and human values was incredible. It led to a literary renaissance of the 17th-18th centuries and having an incredible similarity with the modern thinking. During that classical period the Mongolian literary language adopted many qualities of Sanskrit and Tibetan languages.

It will not be an exaggeration to say that during the first millennia of

our era, Buddhism created cultural unity, and it was this vision that led the famous Buddhist pilgrim-monk, scientist and traveler, Suan Czyan of China to cross Issyk-Kul and visit India in the 7th century A.D. And no matter where Suan Czyan was at a certain moment of his trip - whether he was crossing the Central Asian deserts or he was inside the tents of Central Asian Turk chiefs - everywhere he found understanding and the willingness to help him in his voyage.

In 629 A.D. Suan Czyan began his trip from China to India through Western Turkestan, Middle Asia and Afghanistan. He described cities, among them such big cities on the territory of modern Kyrgyzstan as Suyab (modern Ak-Beshim) and Talas, as well as their surroundings, customs and occupations of the population.

“...After crossing over 400 li through the mountains, we arrived to a big Transparent (or Blue) lake. Its circumference is over 1000 li; it is wide when going from east towards west, and narrow when you go from south towards north. It is surrounded by mountains from all sides, and different streams get together before falling into the lake. The water is of a light blue-blue color, and the taste is bitter-salty. There are countless big and violent waves on the lake, they furiously run and fall [on the shores]. Dragons and fish live together inside. [Sometimes] the spirits of the fallen and werewolves come out to the surface when travelers passing by make prayers of happiness. [That is why] although the marine life is rich, nobody dares to practice fishing.

After crossing over 500 li towards north-west from the Transparent Lake we arrived at a city on the Suyab river. This city is 6-7 li big in circumference. Merchants from different countries live there together with Huscians (Sogdians). The lands are good for cultivation of red pros and grapes. Forests are rare here, and the climate is windy and cold. People get clad into wefted wool clothes. Several dozens of single cities are located to the west of Suyab, and in each of them there is an elder leader. Although they do not depend on each other, all of them obey Tunzcou [Kagan]”.

According to the testimony of Suan Czyan, who read the sermon kaganu of the western Turks, position of Buddhism in the Semirechye in the first half of the 7th century was still insignificant. However, there were Buddhist preachers before and after him.

Sculptures, figurines, steles and jars with different Buddhist characters, scenes and texts were found in the Chui valley. Most of these date back to the 7th-10th centuries, but some of them are dated older, that is, before the formation of Buddhist colony in the second half of 7th-8th

century. The history and culture of Buddhism in Central Asia has been scrutinized. Russian scientists have made great contribution to the study of the history of Buddhism on the territory of Kyrgyzstan.

The discovery of Buddhist monuments in Kyrgyzstan was made by A.N. Bernshtam, who in the pre-war years explored Ak-Beshim (Suyab), Krasnorechensk (Navekat) and other sites (in the Chui valley). In the 1950's, L.R. Kyzlasov and L.P. Zyablin conducted archaeological excavations of two Buddhist temples at the Ak-Beshim site. The exploration of two Buddhist temples at the Krasnorechensk site was continued by P.N. Kozhemyako in the 1960's, and V.D. Goryacheva and S.Y. Peregudova in the 1980's and 1990's.

Ak-Beshim and Krasnorechensk sites are very representative of Buddhist architecture and monumental art. Ak-Beshim site is located 8 km to the south-west of the city of Tokmok. Scientists relate it to the historical city Suyab, which was an important trading, crafting and cultural center in the Chui valley between the 6th and 10th centuries and was the capital city of Turk governmental alliances. The first Buddhist objects at this site were the ruins of a monastery and a chapel forming part of the latter one, which was excavated in 1938-39 by A.N. Bernshtam. The "first" Buddhist temple, discovered by L.R. Kyzlasov in 1953-55, dates back to the 7th-8th centuries. It was built with clay bricks and raw housing. The sacral part of the ensemble consisted of a closed square shaped sanctuary and a by-pass gallery. Polychromic monumental sculptures were placed upon stands in the hall and along the gallery.

P.N. Kozhemyako led the excavations of two Buddhist temples at the Krasnorechensk site in 1961-63. The Krasnorechensk Buddhist temple is dated back to the middle of the 8th century. It had a square sanctuary, a by-pass gallery and a hall. Also, a corridor-like premises was found, where a 12 meter long monumental clay statue of the Buddha on a stand was located. A group of experts from the Hermitage of Leningrad was invited for the restoration of the sculpture in 1962. The sculpture was cleaned, packed up and separated into several parts for being sent to Leningrad for further restoration, where it is still located.

The development of Buddhism in Central Asia, together with the Buddhist architecture and art, stopped the spread of Islam. Nowadays, a series of temples stand completely destroyed, and others are in a deplorable condition due to the lack of means and experienced restorers. A bronze ritual object is stored in the National Historical Museum of Kyrgyzstan. It is an emblem that was believed to be Buddhist. But after a closer inspection

it was found to be Hindu, belonging to the Shiva cult. This finding not only amplifies the museum's collection of Indian art, but it also amplifies the list of religions that were practiced in the medieval Kyrgyzstan. Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, Christianity, Buddhism, Islam and Hinduism were spread widely in a relatively short historical period between the 7th and 11th centuries, coinciding with the activity of intercontinental Silk Road highways and with not less active city building and formation of an urban culture.

Moreover, in the big cities of medieval Kyrgyzstan, temples were grouped in a close vicinity to the caravansarai. In this urban concentration of merchants, preachers and monks of different religions and beliefs, the processes were anything but single-sided.

The cult of Shiva (probably named Tarsy-Vaala – god of vegetation and fire, who was honored by burning the last year's "tree of the year") found good possibilities to spread in medieval Kyrgyzstan, where the cults of water, fire and vegetation were actively practiced. That is why, the time of appearance of the medal can be dated to 8th-9th centuries, coming before the arrival of Islam, which officially set aside all of the previous cults and religions, though they existed in the local folklore.

Still it is very tempting to return to the Issyk-Kul lake, so colorfully described by Suan Czyan. Starting from the Stone Age, people have always lived around the lake. Fertile land, good climate and a good location on the crossroads of trade routes have made the lands surrounding Issyk-Kul very attractive in all historic periods. The Great Silk Road from China to Europe followed the shore of the lake, enriching local people with new cultures, and in modern days, attracting a great deal of interest towards cultural and historical memorials, undiscovered mysteries, legends and unexpected archeological artifacts. One of the mysteries of this extraordinary lake is the presence of underwater ruins, whose origins have aroused great interest among all kinds of people, including us.

In 2010, divers of the expedition found fallen walls, perhaps of a Buddhist temple, at the bottom of Issyk-Kul. In the same place, a gold plated little statue from the Buddhist arsenal was found. Every year a complex archeological submarine expedition, unique in the Central Asian region, takes care of the research on the Issyk-Kul. A number of monuments have been discovered. These monuments represent great interest for science since the studied material unravels new historical and cultural aspects of peoples living on this territory. The submarine excavations were led with the participation of Russian divers, but in recent years

international interest has been shown by Austria and Turkey. Japanese film-makers, impressed by the memoirs of Suan Czyan about Issyk-Kul, have filmed a documentary called "In search of a dragon. Suan Czyan's trip to India". The National Geographic Society of the USA was a participant of the expedition in the last summer season. Also, on the basis of the expedition, an international archeological summer clinic was conducted for young archeologists. It is also noteworthy that the expedition is used as a graduation practice/internship for the students of the Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University. On the basis of expeditionary research, four books have been edited, a map with the locations of the main submerged historical and cultural monuments has been composed; a project of a sub-aquatic archeological museum at the Issyk-Kul has been created. In the museum of Kyrgyz Russian Slavic University, all archeological findings of our expedition are collected, including the ones of the last trip: a small Buddhist stone stele, palm of a clay sculpture of Buddha, clay hair curl of Buddha. Among the last findings at the Issyk-Kul are: a bronze plaque with elements of gold-plating and a terracotta Buddhist sculpture (although only the torso was found). It is also worth mentioning that in 2011 another clay statue of Buddha was found at the Krasnorechensk site by the scientists from the Hermitage of Saint-Petersburg and the National Academy of Sciences (A. Torgoev, V. Kolchenko). It needs to be conserved, and therefore the excavations have been temporarily closed.

HISTORIOGRAPHIC STUDY OF THE RUSSIAN CONQUEST OF CENTRAL ASIA

ALYMBAEV B. JEENBEK

After the independence of Central Asian countries, there have been cardinal changes in the life of people in political, social, economic and spiritual spheres. As one of the priority tasks of national revival, reference to the rich historical heritage of Central Asia helps in the revival of historical memory. After independence, due to the efforts of Central Asian scientists, many pages of national history were opened baring layers of the historical past of Central Asian people. At the same time many complicated issues call for reconsideration. Among them the issue of Turkestan's conquest by imperial Russia and in particular, its reflection in the Russian historiography in early 19th and 20th centuries, assumes urgency for the sovereign states of Central Asia. The public need of historiographic study of historical literature is defined by the following factors:

- firstly, in the Soviet historiography, in the conditions of the then existent political circumstances the tendency of concealing military-expansionist, extortionist, colonizing policy of Tsarism was distinctly observed in Turkestan;
- secondly, within the totalitarian past number of historical works which have been written devoted exclusively to historiographic analysis of researches of the Soviet epoch, have class-tendentious character. As the historiographic situation has changed after independence, new researches began to follow the principle of objectivity and the truth of history.

The mid-19th century is the main historical stage in the history of Central Asia as imperial Russia conquered Central Asia. It established the colonial authority and transformed the region into a commodity market

of industrial goods and a raw-material base for the industrial enterprises of the central areas. Due to the aggressive policy of Tsarist Russia against the Khanates of Bukhara and Khiva, the protectorate was established and they ceased to conduct their independent foreign policy. Kokand Khan was also liquidated.

The Russian researches of the period from early 19th to 20th centuries, have extensive historical and source materials devoted to this problem. The analysis of works of the Russian authors studying the problem of Turkestan's conquest by Russia, leads us to allocate the following three periods in the Russian historiography: (a) the end of 1840s to the beginning of 1880s. This period is characterized first of all by an abundance of historical publications on the problem, published mainly in Russian periodicals. (b) 1880-1890s. This period is characterized by pluralism, scientific polemic between different historians and diverse currents in the historiography of Russian empire's conquest of Central Asia. (c) 1900-1917. This period differs with the occurrence of large monographs by the Russian authors which affirm the Russian sovereignty in Central Asia. During this period extensive historical literature with rich source materials was published. The authors of the publications were direct participants of the aggressive process: officers of imperial army, ordinary soldiers, members of so-called "scientific expedition", travelers, foreign representatives and others. Study of the Russian literature devoted to the problem of Turkestan's conquest by Russia helps us in classifying the Russian literature of the specified period, by the purpose and by the social and political view of the authors.

To the first group of historiographic sources, belong the works of representatives of imperial army, mostly the works of officers such as M. A. Terentev, K. K. Abaza, A. I. Maksheev, D. I. Romanovsky, L. F. Kostenko, F. Lobysevich, N. I. Grodekov, A. G. Serebrennikov¹ and others. Their works are voluminous and substantial, as the authors were the direct guides of foreign policy of Tsarist Russia, which is why they praised the successes of government policy. At the same time the authors were officers of high rank of imperial army and played main role in the theaters of military operations. In their works, they provide concrete facts about the military operations. Besides, the authors give detailed statistical information about the quantity and military-technical resources of Russian army.

For example, the three-volume work of Lieutenant-General M. A. Terentev is devoted to the gains of the colonial period of Central Asia. As the participant of most military operations, M. A. Terentev expounds the

character of main historical stages of Tsarist advancement and motion of military operations in the Central Asian Khanates. His work seeks to convince the public about the Tsarist civilizational role in Central Asia.

To the second group belong memoirs, diaries of ordinary participants of military operations in Turkestan, such as U. D. Ujakov, A. P. Horoshkin, D. G. Kolokolsev, A. N. Maslov, M. Zinovev, M. Mihaylov.² The works of these ordinary participants are devoted to concrete events, like the seizure of Ak-Mechet, Tashkent, Ura-Tube, Samarkand, Jizak, Chimkent, Kokand, Khiva and other fortresses and cities of Central Asia. In contrast to other literature, memoirs and diaries of participants have some peculiarities. Firstly, there is absence of praiseworthy materials about "Turkestan's campaign", "Turkestan's reception" of Russian neighbors. Secondly, the authors of numerous memoirs have tried to give an objective picture of military campaigns. For example, the memoirs of U. D. Ujakov, D. G. Kolokolseva, A. N. Maslov, M. Zinovev and others mention that while conquering Ak-Mechet, Tashkent, Geok-Tepe, Russians faced strong resistance of the local people. That's why these fortresses were taken by Russian soldiers only after repeated assaults.

In the third group one may mention memoirs, diaries, letters, reports of high officials like D. A. Milutina, D. M. Skobeleva N. Ignateva³ which are of deep interest from the military point of view. These works present original facts. For example, colonel N. Ignatev was not only a member of military expedition, but he was also a creator of government's plan of activities in Central Asia. After his return in 1858 from military expedition, he proposed to the director of Asian department program: "It's necessary to build a fortification in the outfall of river Amu and Yana with Siberia, to weaken Kokand Khanate and subject to Tashkent's influence."⁴

The fourth group concerns the works of Russian adventurers and orientalists such as P. P. Semenova, N. A. Severtsova, A. P. Fedchenko, I. V. Mushketova, A. L. Kuna, V. V. Vereshagina, A. F. Middendorfa and others.⁵ Russian adventurers collected rich material about geographical, economic position, population and natural resources of Turkestan area. That's why these materials had great political meaning for Tsarist Russia and most adventurers who went for a trip in the name of "scientific expeditions", executed the government policy. Some of them implemented military-reconnaissance missions. They were interested in strategically inhabited areas, fortresses, internal politic position, excitement of publicity. Though most of these adventurers performed official missions, at the same time they did separate research work on the Turkestan area.

To the fifth group of historiographic sources on the conquest of Turkestan area should be concerned the works of foreign adventurers, private persons and journalists, such as Mc Gahan, A. Vamberi, G-de Lokost, M. Vartenburga, G. Lejana⁶ and other authors. Foreign authors took neutral position on the description of Tsarist policy, which provides opportunity to understand the character of Tsarist policy in Turkestan. These authors were often critical of existing disagreements between the Tsarist army officials, having been eye-witnesses to political events.

The above mentioned classification of the Russian authors' works gives an opportunity to determine the positions and views of authors belonging to different layers of Russian society, in order to have a comparative analysis of conceptions. It also provides insight into the foreign policy of Tsarist Russia.

The pre-revolutionary authors collected enormous material, of original character, since they were the direct participants of events. At the same time, most of these researches had baseless theoretical basis lacking a definite method of collection and treatment of facts.

During the Soviet period, in the 1920s-30s, the historians undertook first attempts of scientific comprehension of real facts and difficult events of Turkestan's history in the conditions of new Soviet regime. During this period were published the works of P. G. Galuzo, M. N. Pokrovsky, V. Lavrenteva, S. D. Asfendiyarova, T. Ryskulova⁷ and others. These works were written during the time of particular criticism of autocracy in Russian politics and national regions, without any polemics and emotionalism. They paid attention to the motives of conquest and colonial aspirations of Tsarism. In their conceptual approach, they reflected it as "absolute evil".

From the second half of 1930s till the end of 1950s there was a total politicisation of historical sciences. On the basis of "common Marxist-Lenin's conception of Soviet historical⁸ formula of "absolute evil"⁹ was changed to "least evil", "joining". Research of the historical consequences of colonial period, was being changed to learning the "progressive consequences of joining Russia".¹⁰ The common theme in the historical geography was that "inspite of colonial politics of Czarism, joining of non-Russian peoples to Russia was the progressive factor".

The number of works devoted to the issue of conquest of Turkestan by Russia considerably increased in 1960s-80s. During this period the works of Soviet historians such as N. A. Halfin, Dj. Davletov, A Ilyasov, K. Usenbaev, M. N. Tihomirov, C. Radjabov, F. Azadaev, A.M. Aminov, A.X. Babahadjaev, X. Ziyaev¹¹ and others, who elucidated the process of

conquest in the Turkestan region, were published. The essential position taken by these authors was the substantive “volunteer” character and significance of friendship of peoples and progressive consequences of this historical event. The concept of “voluntary joining” and its progressive significance coincided with the decree of Kirgizia “About 100th anniversary of the voluntary joining of Kirgizia in Russia (1963) and with the celebration of 250th anniversary of the voluntary joining of Kazakhstan to Russia (1981). The works written during this period are characterized by rebuttal of the negative consequences of colonial politics and the development of progressive character of Russian imperialism. These positions were also reflected in the works of B. P. Djamgirchinova, B. A. Tulepbaeva, T. G. Shainbaeva¹² etc.

Historical and geographical aspects of the process of Russian conquest were covered in the works of N. Mullajanova, L.G. Lefteeva, V. N. Alekseenka N. A. Halfin, G.A. Hidayatov.¹³ Mullajanova enlarged the space of historical and geographical research, as she attempted at the historical and geographical classification of the historical literature of 19th and early 20th century. The brief historical and geographical review of pre-revolutionary literature was made by N.A. Halfin. He described the main problem of revolutionary history and geography as being wrong methodology and absence of deep economic and political analysis. In his opinion this problem devalued even those works which collected the factual material.¹⁴ N.A. Halfin affirms, “noble – bourgeoisie history and geography of pre-revolutionary Russia evaluated the historical events happening in Middle Asia from its class positions. It cleared the rapacious action of capitalistic powers in the East and justified the politics of robbery and capture”.¹⁵

The author in our opinion comes to right conclusion. The historical aspects of the problem of joining of Central Asia to Russia are based on the memoirs of the participants in the process of Tzarist conquest of Central Asia. The memoirs are grouped independent of their content, as the famous memoirs and notes of travellers were devoted only to separate historical events. That’s why Levteeva couldn’t reflect upon the whole period of the process of conquest, as he confirmed himself to memoirs only.¹⁶

V.I. Alekseenko’s work is devoted to the consecration of Russian pre-revolutionary magazines, Tzarist politics in Central Asia and Kazakhstan and the results of their joining Russia. The author used the magazines *Vestnik of Europe*, *Russian idea*, *Russian messenger* which reflected upon the problem of joining of Central Asia. It is necessary to remark that V.N.

Alekseenko while devoting his research to second half of 19th and early 20th century made definite contribution to historical science. As the author affirms in his dissertation, his attempt was to study the attitude of two big social groups- conservative and liberal bourgeoisie to the events, that happened in Kazakhstan and in Middle Asia through the analysis of their big and authoritative magazines.¹⁷

Therefore, keeping in view the state of historical and geographical perspectives of the problem, one can say that thanks to these research works of scientists in the Soviet period, definite successes in learning of historical literature pertaining to 19th and early 20th century, were achieved. However, there were great changes in the character and methodology of scientific perception after gaining independence (state sovereignty) by the Central Asian states. With the acquisition of independence, artificial barriers in the way of learning native history were broken. Having been free from ideological pressure of the Soviet regime, the researchers got freedom of creativity. As a result the dynamic processes of clear historical consciousness happened and the objective restoration of colonial past was initiated. In the epoch of independence a few interesting scientific works, written on the basis of new historical thinking were published. Historiographic study of pre-revolutionary¹⁸ and Soviet literature as well as some monographs, were now published.¹⁹

O.B. Bokiev's doctorate dissertation which is dedicated to the study of Russian scientific works about Tajikistan, highlights the problems of joining of Northern Tajikistan, Pamirs and Mountainous Badakhshan to Russia.²⁰ As the author claims, "for the objective investigation of the problem he made full historiographical study and analysis of most works, articles, traveller's diaries and memoirs of pre-revolutionary researchers".²¹ From our point of view, the dissertation makes a critique of the Russian researchers' concepts. The author points out that there were no common opinions among the researchers concerning the motivation and the causes of Russian conquest of Central Asia. The Russian researchers of the last century thought that geographical and ethnographic factors led to this problem. He cites the works of A.I. Maksheev, L.F.Kostenko, I.I.Geer as examples. However, O.B. Bokiev does not make full historical analysis of the Russian literature, which reflected upon the conquest of Turkestan region. The author's main attention is mostly devoted to the study of those historical works which deal with the problem of joining of Tajikistan to Russia.

The problems of the conquest and inclusion of Central Asia into the

Russian empire (the period of 1850s-80s) is examined in the work of G.A.Ahmedjanov. Central Asian historiography on issue of the Tsarist conquest of Turkestan region and the Anglo-Russian rivalry are also researched in this work. Different aspects of aggressive process and the nature of Tsarist colonial policy are covered in the monographic researches of H. Ziyaev, T. Kenensariiev, F. Isakov, N.Abdurahimova.

For the first time in the history of Central Asian historiography, on the basis of Uzbek and Russian resources, H. Ziyaev unraveled the main moments of the Russian conquest of Central Asia and the problems of national liberation movement of Turkestan peoples until 1916,²² which were earlier suppressed.

The nature, characteristic features and peculiarities of colonial power in Turkestan during the second half of the 19th century and in the first quarter of the 20th century are analyzed in the monograph of N. A. Abdurahimova and G. Rustamova, on the basis of new documents and resources. Particular attention is given to such important components of the system as institutions of power and bureaucracy,²³ interaction between the system and the society. F. Isakov in his work has revealed the content of the Tsarist national policy and its negative influences on the lives of dependent Turkestani peoples.²⁴

In the epoch of independence, the trend of re-appraisal of the existing concept about joining of Central Asia in the Soviet historiography, has appeared. In some publications, scientists use the term "conquest". Among them are the researches of H. Ziyaev, T. Kenensariiev, M. K. Kozybaev.²⁵ For instance, academic M. K. Kozybaev, the Kazakh scientist, advanced the point of view that Kazakhstan formed a part of Russia under annexation. The other scientist M J. Abdirov has the same opinion.²⁶ On the whole in the historiography of the independence period there existed the term "joining" and the terms "entry", "under the authority", "conquest" once again have come into scientific usage. At the same time the progressive consequences of the Tsarist colonial policy have been called into question. Therefore, on the basis of historiographic analyses of Russian (pre-revolution), Soviet and post-Soviet researches one can conclude:

- a. In the historiography of pre-revolution period, the concept of more advanced civilization and development of Russian people was prevalent in most researches. The conquest of Turkestan by Tsarist Russia was ascribed to the willingness of Russia to have civilizing mission in Central Asia addressing barbarian peoples.

- b. In the Soviet historiography, various formulas as “an absolute evil”, “least evil”, “voluntary joining” and progressive consequences of joining in social, economic and cultural spheres, were used at different stages of historical development. At the same time in Soviet historiography, huge material was collected and most scientific works were created on the basis of archival data.
- c. In modern historiography while estimating the policy of Russia in Central Asia some scientists use the term “conquest”, at the same time disclaiming the concept of voluntary joining. Other authors stand by the usage of the notion “joining”, as far as it includes the meaning of both: voluntary joining to the Russian state and military annexation of others.²⁷

From our point of view, the policy of Russia in Turkestan should be analyzed in the context of investigation of general historical development of that epoch determining both the advantages and disadvantages of the colonial policy.

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INDIA-KYRGYZSTAN RELATIONS IN CONTEMPORARY TIMES

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India and Kyrgyzstan have maintained historical-cultural contacts through the overland Silk Route since ancient times. Numerous archeological excavations in Kyrgyzstan carried out by eminent archeologists like A.N. Bernshtan, L.R. Kyzlasov, L.P. Zyablin, P.N. Kozhemyako, Valentina Goryacheva, S.Y. Peregudova and M.I. Voropoyeva have unearthed several Buddhist monasteries and artefacts in Chui valley including Ak Beshim, Krasnaya Rechka, Karadjigach, Novopavlovka, Sokuluk and Naviket. A number of bronze and stone objects, statues and ceramics with figures of Buddha alongwith some inscriptions in Sanskrit were found at these sites. Findings of such Indian imprint as monasteries, temples, images and inscriptions in numerous sites testify to the wide settlement of Buddhists along the ancient Silk Route in Kyrgyzstan. That several birch barch manuscripts in Brahmi script were discovered in the Krasnorechensk temple, provides ample evidence of Indian linkage with Kyrgyzstan in ancient times. The movement of Indian traders, craftsmen, artists and monks through the ancient Silk Route led to the establishment of numerous towns and Buddhist settlements along this trade route, which is borne out by the finding of bronze art and stone artefacts, ceramic bowls with Bodddhisattvas etc. in these excavations.

Kyrgyzstan is known for its Tien Shan (heavenly mountains), Issyk Kul lake, flowing streams, lush green meadows, rich flora and fauna and high mountains which cover more than 93 per cent of its territory. The Kyrgyz people regard nature manifested in the beautiful mountains, springs, lakes, rivers, trees as sacred. Khan Tengri, the highest mountain peak of Tian Shan range is regarded as sacred¹ in the same ways as the Himalayas are considered to be the 'Abode of Gods' in India. Tengri is

often linked to two important divinities – Tengri and his divine consort and Mother Goddess Umay. Both Tengri and Umay are imbued with mystical powers and sanctity, which in India are associated with Lord Shiva and his consort Uma.² Similarly, belief in the existence of spirits, practice of local shamanism is also prevalent. These beliefs have been passed on from generation to generation in the form of legends, epic poems and stories. Buddhism has been prevalent in Kyrgyzstan mainly in urban centres and towns located along the Silk Route till 12th to 13th century. That the symbol of sun occupies a central place in the national flag of Kyrgyzstan, only reinforces the view that Kyrgyzs continue to rever nature and its elements. Manas the celebrated epic of Kyrgyz people having several hundred thousand verses, has survived over a millennium in oral form. Manas has become the symbol of national identity, history and common cultural heritage and is seen as a means of the nationalist and spiritual resurgence in Kyrgyzstan.

Kyrgyz academics and literateurs greatly admire Indian heroes of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* comparing these epics to *Manas*. Whereas an Indian scholar Prof. Variyam Singh has translated *Manas* into Hindi, Indian epic Mahabharata has been translated into Kyrgyz language by A. Kemelbaev thus making these epics accessible to large audience in India and Kyrgyzstan respectively. The mingling and co-existence of several beliefs and faiths- Shamanism, Tengrism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Islam, Marxism and now democracy created a spirit of tolerance in Kyrgyzstan, and the Kyrgyzs retain their original indigenous culture based on mountain philosophy.

POLITICAL TIES

During the Soviet period, India maintained limited political, economic and cultural contacts with Kyrgyzstan as part of the overall Indo-Soviet relations. During the Soviet period, former Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi visited Bishkek and Issyk Kul lake in 1985. Soon after the independence of Kyrgyzstan on 31 August 1991, India was one of the first countries to establish diplomatic relations on 18 March 1992.

With its pronounced democratic and liberal orientation, Kyrgyzstan and its people have evinced considerable interest in deepening their ties with a secular and democratic India. Both countries have convergence of views and interests on important issues such as commitment to secularism, non-interference in internal affairs, opposition to extremism, terrorism,

separatism and drug trafficking, territorial integrity and peaceful resolution of conflicts. Whereas the Kyrgyz Republic opened its resident mission in New Delhi in 1993, India opened its Embassy in Bishkek in 1994. The two countries have been exchanging high level visits at governmental levels.

President Askar Akaev of Kyrgyzstan visited India in March 1992, April 1999, August 2002 and November 2003. Other important visits from Kyrgyzstan to India included those of Apas Jumagulov, the then Prime Minister (May 1997), Ms. Mira Jangavacheva, Vice-Prime Minister (March 1997), I.A. Abdurezakovi State Secretary (April 1997), Devence Minister (1999, 2005 and 2011), Minister of Health (1999), Head, Foreign Policy Department of the Administration of the President of Kyrgyz Republic (2000), Turatobek Djunushaliev, Minister of Emergency Situation of the Kyrgyz Republic (November 2007). Ednan Karbaev, Foreign Minister in February 2008, Kapar Kurmanabev, Minister of Natural Resources in March 2010 and Nurlan Aitmurzaev, Deputy Foreign Minister in August 2011.

A parliamentary delegation led by Usup Mukambaev, the then Chairman of the Legislative Assembly of the Kyrgyz Parliament visited India from 25 July to 1 August 1997. It was followed by the visit of 4 member group of the Kyrgyz Parliamentarians to India in February 1999 to study the Indian experiences in infrastructure and agricultural sectors.

From the Indian side, former Prime Minister Narasimha Rao visited Kyrgyzstan in September 1995. Other dignitaries who visited Kyrgyzstan included Salman Khurshid, Minister of State for External Affairs (1994), Vice Presidents K.R. Narayanan (September 1996) and Krishna Kant (August 1999), Minister of Culture and Tourism (2001), Foreign Minister Yashwant Sinha (January 2003), Defence Minister George Fernandes (November 2003), Murli S. Deora, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas (August 2007), Defence Minister A.K. Antony (July 2011) and E. Ahmad, Minister of State for External Affairs (June 2012).

All these high level visits helped in strengthening friendly relations between the two countries, which have signed several agreements for cooperation in the political, economic, trade and cultural spheres. The important agreements are on cooperation in the spheres of Culture, Arts, Education, Science, Mass media and Sports, Trade and Economic Cooperation, Investment Promotion and Protection, Avoidance of Double Taxation, Consular Convention etc.

At the institutional level, Foreign Office Consultations have provided a useful forum for exchange of views on bilateral and international issues,

thereby facilitating greater understanding. An Indo-Kyrgyz Joint Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation which was set up in 1992, has held five sessions so far. In the last meeting which was held in New Delhi on 4-5 March 2010, both sides identified mining, hydropower, participation of India in infrastructure development projects such as construction of dams, reservoirs, small hydroelectric stations, transport and communication, science and technology, agriculture, chemical industry etc.

ECONOMIC AND TRADE RELATIONS

In 1995, India extended a 5 million US dollars line of credit to Kyrgyzstan for purchase of equipment and machinery from India for executing several projects such as plants for manufacture of toothbrushes, polythene bags, toothpaste and pharmaceuticals. During the visit of former Kyrgyz President Akayev to India in August 2002, India offered to set up IT development centre and a potato processing plant in Kyrgyzstan. In November 2003, when Akayev visited India again, India offered a grant of 2 million US dollars for setting up a mini-hydel plant in Kyrgyzstan. The India-Kyrgyz Centre for Information Technology was formally inaugurated in Bishkek in August 2007. This centre has been imparting short term IT courses and has trained several hundred Kyrgyz professionals so far. The milk processing plant has been set up and the potato processing plant in Talas was formally inaugurated in June 2012. The Kyrgyz-Indian Mountainous Biomedical Research Centre at Too Ashu Pass was formally opened by the former Kyrgyz President Roza Otunbayeva and Indian Defence Minister A.K. Antony at Bishkek on 5 July 2011.

In 2008, India provided humanitarian assistance of 100,000 US dollars in aid of the victims of earthquake in Osh region of Kyrgyzstan. And after the April 2010 disturbances in Kyrgyzstan, India supplied 60 tons of humanitarian aid in the form of medicines, food and other essential items. Indian allotment of 60 slots for Kyrgyzstan on an annual basis for training of Kyrgyzs under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Program, is a key component of Indian assistance for capacity building and human resource development in Kyrgyzstan.

Economic and trade relations between the two countries have remained modest ever since the Kyrgyz Republic got its independence. Due to lack of direct overland transit corridor, trade has not gained momentum. However, the balance of trade has remained in favour of

India. India has been importing from Kyrgyzstan leather, silk, wool, cotton, instruments and optical apparatus etc. Kyrgyzstan imports from India tea, confectioneries, medicines, cosmetics, rubber products, leather goods, textiles, footwear, woolen clothes, electronic and communications equipment and appliances etc. Indian businessmen have shown interest in obtaining raw materials like antimony, mercury, rare earths, wool, hides and skins, etc. and in supplying consumer items, tea, food stuffs, etc. India has also offered technical assistance in providing economic expertise and technology in areas like food processing, mining, hydrocarbons, pharmaceuticals, electronics, telecommunications, textiles, dry cement, tannery, etc. Yet another area of possible co-operation is tourism and tourism infrastructure investment. Indian expertise in areas such as banking, agriculture, fiscal reforms, biotechnology, etc. has also been offered. In 2008, the Kyrgyz-Indian company "Ferro-Alloys" started construction of a factory for the production of ferrosilicon in Tashkumyr town in south Kyrgyzstan. Indo-Kyrgyz trade totaled over 30 million US dollars in the year 2011-2012, out of which Indian exports constituted little over 31 million US dollars and imports from Kyrgyzstan amounted to only 0.67 million US dollars. India's total trade with Kyrgyzstan is only 0.5 per cent of the global trade in Kyrgyzstan. The bitter truth is that Indian economic presence in Kyrgyzstan does not correspond with the economic power of India and bilateral trade and economic cooperation are far behind the actual potential. Earlier most of the trade was carried out by the shuttle traders who constituted the bulk of passengers in the direct Delhi-Bishkek flights operated by Kyrgyzstan Airways. Now this airline too stopped its operations since a few years ago.

Main obstacles in bilateral trade are:

- a) Lack of direct overland access;
- b) Economic instability in Kyrgyzstan;
- c) Inadequate banking facilities;
- d) Lack of trade dynamism and entrepreneurship among Indian businessmen;
- e) Lack of direct air connections , customs barriers.

Yet there is enough scope for India to raise its level of exports of tea, pharmaceuticals, consumer goods, appliances etc. to Kyrgyzstan. India also needs to focus on investment opportunities in the service sector including banking, insurance, healthcare, IT software, tourism, education, traditional Indian medicine, food processing etc.

TRADE WITH KYRGYZSTAN (VALUE IN US\$ MILLION)			
<i>Year</i>	<i>Exports</i>	<i>Imports</i>	<i>Total Trade</i>
1996-97	0.98	-	0.98
1997-98	10.79	0.01	10.80
1998-1999	8.70	0.10	8.80
1999-2000	13.80	1.82	15.62
2000-2001	17.59	4.43	22.02
2001-2002	10.97	0.56	11.52
2002-2003	14.67	0.47	15.13
2003-2004	38.20	0.54	38.74
2004-2005	49.57	0.63	50.19
2005-2006	28.09	1.47	29.57
2006-2007	37.08	0.76	37.84
2007-2008	31.52	0.91	32.43
2008-2009	22.92	1.03	23.95
2009-2010	26.84	0.64	27.48
2010-2011	25.79	1.20	26.99
2011-2012	30.55	0.67	31.22

Source: Export Import Data Bank, Department of Commerce, Govt. of India, Accessed at <http://commerce.nic.in/eidb/default.asp>

COOPERATION IN EDUCATION AND CULTURE

An agreement on Cooperation in the spheres of Culture, Arts, Education, Science, Mass-media and Sports was signed between the two countries on 18 March 1992. In October 1992, a Cultural Exchange Program, valid for 1992-94 was signed, which was subsequently extended. Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) set up the Centre for Indian Studies in Osh State University in 1997 which has been providing an exposure to Indian culture and civilization to academics and intelligentsia in Kyrgyzstan. About 800 Indian students are studying medicine in various medical institutions in Kyrgyzstan. The Kyrgyz epic *Manas* was translated by Prof. Varyam Singh into Hindi. During the visit of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao to Kyrgyzstan a main road in Bishkek was renamed after Mahatma Gandhi. A Kyrgyz University, Bishkek Humanities University set up a Centre of Gandhian Studies, which was inaugurated in September 1996. Several Kyrgyz students from the International University of Kyrgyzstan have been undergoing training in the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL), Hyderabad. The Chui University in Bishkek set up Tagore Club in the University in order to promote the ideas of Tagore. Days of Indian Culture were celebrated in Kyrgyzstan from 18-

24 October 1997. During which Indian films and exhibition of handicrafts and textiles in Kyrgyz State Fine Arts Museum as well as cultural performances of Indian troupes in Bishkek, Osh and Jalalabad were organized. Besides, Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) has been organizing visits of Kyrgyz academics, media persons, students etc. to India at regular intervals. The ICCR has also allotted about 30 scholarships annually for Kyrgyz students to study or undergo training in various disciplines in Indian institutions and universities. India is also planning to set up a Central Asian University in Bishkek as a centre of excellence to impart world class education in IT, management , philosophy and languages.

Ever since the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Kyrgyzstan in 1992, important and constructive developments have taken place in the political, economic, cultural and humanitarian spheres. Both the countries have exchanged several visits at the ministerial and other high levels. Kyrgyzstan and India have shown their commitment to secularism, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, territorial integrity and peaceful resolution of all problems. They have also been expressing their determination to increase the level of trade and economic cooperation and to devise new spheres of mutually beneficial cooperation in sectors such as information technology, mining, engineering and food processing.

Given the proximity of Kyrgyzstan to India and close historico-cultural ties dating back to ancient times, India and Kyrgyzstan need to concretise their programmes of socio-economic and cultural cooperation. That there is enough goodwill at the popular level in both the countries and there is perfect political understanding between the two governments on issues of common concern, provides a sound basis for forging ahead India-Kyrgyzstan ties in the twenty first century. That India chose Bishkek, the capital city of Kyrgyzstan as the venue of first India-Central Asia Dialogue held on 12-13 June 2012, signifies Indian recognition of the importance of this Central Asian Republic as close political partner in its 'extended neighbourhood'. India's Minister of State for External Affairs, E.Ahmad in his keynote address at the Bishkek dialogue on 12 June 2012 inaugurated India's Look Central Asia Policy. He explained that "Our policy has been marked by deepening relationship based on political, economic and technical cooperation as a partner, rather than a mere contender for the region's vast oil and gas resources. We have shared our experiences and expertise, built capacity and focused on training through

our ITEC and other assistance programmes”.

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CRISIS IN KYRGYZSTAN OF 2010

MURAT LAUMULIN

In April 2010, the political crisis that was simmering in Kyrgyzstan over the past few years developed into an armed confrontation between the government and the people, as well as among various clans and regional groups at the very top of the republic's political pyramid.¹ President Bakiev, deprived of his power (at first in part), legitimacy, and control over the country, tried to regain what he had lost by tapping the political resource of the country's South. The events that occurred in May 2010 made it abundantly clear that a large-scale political conflict, a civil war, and a split in the republic were only a step away.

The 2005 events, which toppled Akaev's regime, demonstrated that for its continued political development, the republic must acquire a strong vertical of power and move toward a strong presidential government, which alone could pull the country out of the crisis and set it on the path of sustainable development.² The compromise reached (which, albeit, proved incomplete) gave rise to the hope that the new president would be able to cope with this historic mission.³

The objective factors and subjective circumstances, however, complicated the republic's political, social, and economic context still more. Most of the political actors (the main parties, the parliament, the business community, and the regional leaders) were dead set against any real reforms of the country's political system.

President Bakiev's political and economic blunders (legitimized corruption and the never-ending property redistribution in favor of his close relatives and supporters) added a subjective dimension to the objective factor. More than that: some of the regional, mainly northern, clans refused to accept Kurmanbek Bakiev as the head of state (the position he gained and fortified in 2005-2006); this and widespread disaffection with his economic policies impaired his legitimacy. Disagreements among

the main political forces made the crisis a permanent feature of the republic's political landscape exacerbated by a crisis in the social and economic spheres.

Bakiev's downfall was brought about by his political rivals who disagreed with his policies; the discontent of the wide masses; the acute social and economic crisis; the president's failed attempt to strengthen his power; corruption and nepotism; regionalism and the clan nature of power; the low level of political culture of the ruling elite and the ruled masses; criminalization of political life; and the acute shortage of economic resources. Some of the external players, into the bargain, did not like Bakiev's foreign policies.

KYRGYZSTAN'S ECONOMY (2005-2010)

The regime change in 2005 triggered property redistribution; a new political elite arrived from the republic's South to install itself in the republic, while the new government busied itself with looking for more resources.

In 2008, the republic hit another stretch of protracted economic and social crisis, the first signs of which were discernable in 2007; its social and economic future looked uncertain. The negative developments stemmed from property redistribution, which acquired gigantic dimensions, and the inconsistent economic policies of the rotating governments. In the last few years, customs duties and taxes (which increased three-to-four-fold) remained the only source of economic growth.

Between 2005 and 2007, the nominal GDP demonstrated relative growth, while its dynamics in comparable prices was much more modest. The inflation component of its growth was fairly large: annual inflation increased from 5 percent in 2006 to 20 percent in December 2007 and to 25 percent in March 2008. The fast economic growth of Russia and Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan's main economic partners, had a positive effect at that time. About 37 percent of the assets of the republic's banking sector belong to Kazakhstan banks; they account for 50 percent of all loans.

Money which labor migrants (there are 330,000 of them according to the official figures) send home is very important for the Kyrgyz economy. The EBRD has assessed the volume of these remittances at 25 percent of GDP, or over USD 1 billion a year.⁴ This money is badly needed: nearly 11 percent of the economically active population (over 270,000) is unemployed.⁵

Gold prices can be described as another favorable factor: between

October 2006 and March 2008, the world price of one Troy ounce climbed from USD 420 to USD 1,030. Gold accounts for 8 percent of the republic's GDP (nearly 40 percent of its exports), however the future looks less optimistic. In 2010, the Kumtor goldmine, which produced the bulk of exported gold, was being closed, while the smaller mines will hardly fill in the gap.

The structure of the republic's GDP has registered the fact that Kyrgyzstan is no longer an agrarian industrial country; it sells services (which account for 44 percent of its GDP). Its trade volume is much larger than that of its production. In the past, agriculture accounted for 25.8 percent of its nominal GDP; industry for 14 percent; construction for 3.1 percent; transport and communication for 8.4 percent; trade and maintenance for 18.6 percent; and hotels and public catering for 8.4 percent. The growth of the trade sector increased the share of services by 1 percent.

Up to 88 percent of industrial products are supplied by five branches: metallurgy (42 percent); food processing (13 percent); textile and tailoring (7 percent); production of construction materials (10 percent); and electric power production (16 percent). Over 35 percent of taxes come from industry, while export accounts for up to 85 percent. Depleted basic assets and shortage of skilled manpower and specialists at the medium level coupled with the shortage of working capital are responsible for the industrial decline (with the exception of Kumtor's production volumes).

Under Bakiev, the people in power made skillful use of the shaky integration processes within the CIS. In 2009, Russia supplied Kyrgyzstan with a package of financial aid totaling nearly 40 percent of the republic's GDP, which consisted of a soft loan of USD 300 million (Bakiev used the money to promote his political interests) and USD 1.7 billion to be spent on the construction of the Kambarata Hydropower Station.

The still very high share of the shadow sector (engaged, among other things, in drug trafficking) in the country's economy is one of the worst problems. According to the World Bank, the republic has developed into one of the places where Afghan heroin is stored and from which it is moved further to Russian territory. Today, Kyrgyzstan is Asia's second largest country in terms of trafficking and use of opiates (2.3 percent of the population over the age of 15 are drug users).

Bakiev's closest circle preferred to point to certain positive shifts in the country's economy: the budget increased four-fold, which made it possible to lower the republic's external debt (it remained high at the level

of 50 percent of GDP). Large sums were moved from the shadow to the official sector. In 2009, the amended agreement with the company working at the Kumtor goldmine increased Kyrgyzstan's income several times over. Corruption, however, destroyed the positive effects of the same.

The country is plagued by a shortage of agricultural land (acutely felt in the South) and the lowered efficiency and culture of local agriculture. The acute economic crisis is accompanied by an energy crisis: the republic obtains electric power from hydropower stations, which accounted for about 76 percent of electric power in 1993 and for nearly 92 percent in 2007.⁶

In 2005, the Toktogul water reservoir contained 19 billion cubic meter of water to be used by its hydropower station, which generates 60 percent of the electricity used by the republic; in the fall of 2008, the available volume dropped to 6.5 billion cubic meter.⁷ The expert community points to the possible causes: ineffective management and the high corruption level and lack of transparency in the branch coupled with smuggling of electric power and even water during the irrigation season to neighboring countries.

The government, employing its favorite tactics of overtaxing the republic's population, raised the tariffs on electricity and heating. A social outburst became inevitable. The cost of life in Kyrgyzstan directly depends on the interrelated prices for three basic products—bread, fuel and lubricants, and electricity—therefore, an increase in price for any one of them may detonate a social explosion.

In 1995-2009, the volume of the shadow economy in the republic increased almost twenty times, which is explained by the greater role of the household economy sector (which accounted for 12 percent of GDP) and the shadow economy (including agriculture), which accounted for 30 percent of GDP. The shadow economy is mainly concentrated in trade and the maintenance of domestic appliances, cars, and personal appliances with an annual turnover of about 60 billion soms.

MOUNTING CRISIS IN DOMESTIC POLITICS

Kyrgyzstan has demonstrated to the world that Western style democracy (both as an ideology and a political practice), if planted in conditions very different from those in the democratic countries, does more harm than good. "Indirect democracy" might have produced a much better effect; I have in mind the civil rights and human rights standards common for all

countries, irrespective of their forms of democracy.

Since 2008, the country's political situation was exposed to a confrontation of two mutually exclusive and even antagonistic trends. On the one hand, the country obviously depends on its economy, which convinced the people that the republican form of government was unimportant. On the other, the piling up social and economic problems were the best confirmation of the acute disagreements between the government and the opposition over the country's political model. This was largely responsible for the dynamics of domestic politics.⁸

The North and the South are two different sociopolitical entities; the Kyrgyz as former nomads are divided into two large "wings" (*Ong* and *Sol*); there are about 40 tribes and clans at the lower level with the ties much stronger than among the Kazakhs. This adds instability to the highly variegated political scene.

In 2007-2008, several quasi-elite groups close to the president clashed in their attempts to have an even greater influence on the head of state. They can be described as

- (a) the president's family;
- (b) the so-called group of Southerners which brought Bakiev to power; and
- (c) the "Akaev" bureaucrats resolved to keep their posts.

The family group was far from united: the older and younger generations relied on supporters from the other two groups to monopolize the president. In the course of time, the conflict became even fiercer; the shuffling at the top gradually pushed the Southerners to the political outskirts, although the regional and clan factor did not lose its importance.

There is a more or less accepted opinion that the Southern clans, the richest in the republic (they have grown rich on drug trafficking supervised by Tashkent organized crime), demonstrate no mean skills in posing as impoverished outcasts. The Southern protest was promoted, to a great extent, by an alliance of criminal groups in the country's South and the Uzbek part of the Ferghana valley which joined forces to squeeze the local criminal groups and those of Kazakhstan (based primarily in (Shymkent) out of the economic expanse of northern Kyrgyzstan. The southern clans are more religious than the others, which explain why *Hizb ut-Tahrir* showed up first in the South and later in Bishkek.

The way the government responded to the opposition and its activities stirred up political tension even more. While formally acting within the

law, the people at the top tried to scare the opposition and set up a police state. Their relentless persecution of individual members of the opposition was combined with a half-hearted struggle against the opposition as a whole. From time to time, the leaders, who, on the whole, tended to disregard the opposition's numerous actions, surprised the country with their violent responses.

The president's health did not add stability to state governance and consolidated the opposition. It was no secret that Bakiev spent much time in German hospitals. His absence added fire to the rivalry in the corridors of power and in the opposition. Unlike the president, the opposition remained active all year round: the contradictions were shelved for the sake of a consolidated stand on the situation in the country.

The domestic policy at that time can be described as contradictory and highly ambiguous. On the one hand, the government's attempts to preserve the authoritarian family-and-clan system of the first president gave rise to political stagnation. While on the other, the opposition and the civil sector were determined to rock the boat. Their highly divergent views about the country's future added a cutting edge to their contradictions.

The court cases against the most prominent opposition figures allowed Bakiev to carry the 2009 elections. Ismail Isakov, former Defense Minister, who had been active in the Tulip Revolution, and former Foreign Affairs Minister Jekshenkulov were brought to court on criminal charges and effectively removed from the political scene. The united opposition began crumbling once Jekshenkulov, its coordinator and "brains" who for many years kept the rivalry and squabbles under the lid, was pushed aside. Some believe that he alone could have tamed the highly wild political movement and channeled it in the right direction.

The parliament dominated by Bakiev's *Ak Zhol Party* set 23 July, 2009 as the date of the presidential elections. The Social-Democrats and the opposition miscalculated, while Bakiev and his team moved ahead towards victory ensured by several factors: the administrative resource, money, and the domestic political and economic situation. The other candidates either could not or did not tap their own resources.⁹

The post-Akaev political landscape has been highly patchy; there are 2.6 million voters in the republic with a total population of 5.8 million. The fairly small electorate had to choose from among 58 registered political parties and an equal number of movements and alliances; 30 structures out of the total 58 of these parties have been in opposition to the government

and in disagreement among themselves. The largest and most influential of them are *The Party of Communists of Kyrgyzstan* and the rival *Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan*; there are three Social-Democratic parties, the most influential of them being Almaz Atambaev's party; there are three large parties—*Ata-Meken*, *Erkin*, and Felix Kulov's *Ar-Namys*.

During the same period, the republic acquired new religious organizations which moved into domestic politics: the Alliance of Muslims of Kyrgyzstan headed by former ombudsman T. Bakiruluu and N. Motuev being one of them. This means that a centralized religious opposition is taking shape in the country.

In the north, Islamic fundamentalism is not very popular; the Islamic parties cannot move across ethnic boundaries because of the ethnic minorities. The high level of literacy, fairly widespread Slavic and Western cultures, and the market economy keep the local Kyrgyzs away from fundamentalist movements.

Some of the radical Islamist groups managed to register with the Ministry of Justice in the country's south, mainly in the cities (Osh, Dzhalal-Abad, and Batken). According to official information, there are over 1,000 mosques in Osh and around it; fundamentalist ideology supported by the local Uzbeks and spread by agitators from Tajikistan has a strong position in the area.

Hizb ut-Tahrir, an illegal religious and political movement, has moved away from ideological propaganda and agitation among the local people to practical action. Its polemics with the government have assumed new forms (audio and video materials, leaflets, and books intended for the bureaucracy and statesmen of the medium and top levels) and become even more consistent. Its members have stepped up their activities in the capital and its environs; they look far beyond Central Asia. Its leaflets condemn what the United States, Israel, and some of the Western countries are doing in Iraq and Afghanistan. *Hizb ut-Tahrir* has already tested its powers by mobilizing people for political actions under its banners. *Tablighi Jamaat* is another unofficial religious organization which has obviously come to stay.

The uncontrolled political squabbles the nation has been watching for a long time have convinced the people that democracy means impunity and permissiveness (which of course has nothing to do with classical democracy and is better described as "ochlocracy"). Disregard for the law coupled with the low political culture of the political class and society at large have fuelled a painful response to the use of force by the state. In

these conditions, ideas and trends spread like wildfire far and wide.¹⁰

BAKIEV'S REGIME

The family and the clans as the cornerstones of Kurmanbek Bakiev's presidency were the most typical feature of his regime. The opposition which came to power in April 2010 alleged that all his numerous brothers were involved in politics. One of them headed the security service of the Administration and the government, which placed him in command of the National Guard; his elder son controlled state security; his second son had the executive structures under his control, while his younger son headed the newly formed Agency for Development, the de facto executive power in the republic. One of his brothers represented the country in Germany; another, appointed special envoy of the president, was a de facto deputy foreign minister. Business, trade, and the economy were brimming with the president's numerous relatives. It is commonly believed that in 2007 Bakiev set about expanding his power and strengthening the vertical of power. Political technologists from Kazakhstan invited at the suggestion of Medet Sadyrkulov,¹¹ the then head of the presidential Administration, helped Bakiev set up the *Ak Zhol People's Party*.

Bakiev was presented to the nation as a "staunch etatist." The team of political technologists suggested that the Constitution of 1993-2003, the most logical and balanced one in the republic's history, should be restored, albeit with wider presidential powers. They suggested that the ineffective *Zhogorku Kenesh* should be disbanded by the Constitutional Court followed by parliamentary elections. A nationwide referendum on presidential elections was deemed necessary. The old tradition of widespread nepotism should be buried, while professionals should be invited to the civil service in large numbers. The regions and the local administrations, which should be regularly reminded that the center is in control, were expected to concentrate on the social services; and rabid nationalism and religious extremism should be stemmed.

Political discontent was spurred on by the president's widely publicized intention to radically reorganize state management. He shared his ideas about the country's future with the Kurultai of Consent convened in Bishkek on the eve of the fifth anniversary of the 2005 revolution¹² and announced that Western democracy was ill suited to Kyrgyzstan and that its traditions and reality were much better suited to "consultative democracy".¹³

Under Bakiev, the Fundamental Law was amended three times: some of the versions limited presidential powers, others expanded them. The 2007 national referendum approved a version with much wider presidential prerogatives, which remained in effect until December 2009 when the president came forward with new amendments.

They were expected to register what had already been accomplished: the articles on the Presidential Administration, the secretary of state, and the Security Council should be removed; ranks for civil servants were abolished, while the president acquired the power to set up consultative structures, including one called the Presidential Conference.

Bakiev's most important amendment: "any other person" appointed by the Presidential Conference by a simple majority of those present changed the previous constitutional provision which named the Speaker or the Prime Minister as possible acting presidents in the event of the president's disability. The Constitutional Court accepted the amendment, albeit with a recommendation that it be further revised.

The opposition was convinced that this was devised to pass power on to Maxim, Bakiev's younger son and a recent political heavyweight, which would have started a dynasty. Bakiev's powers would have expired in 2013 with no third term (banned by the Constitution) in sight. The constitutional reform launched early in 2010 transferred the right of the parliament to name a successor, in the event the president could or would not serve out his term, to the Presidential Conference, a gathering of the local elites which replaced the presidential administration.

Maxim Bakiev, the key figure in the republic's most profitable economic projects, headed the Central Agency for Development, Investments, and Innovations (TsARII), a de facto shadow government. He controlled a vast financial and industrial empire of sorts ruled through fake offshore firms set up to win privatization tenders of almost all the republic's energy enterprises and Kirgiztelecom, a TV and Telecommunication Company that supervised the Kyrgyzstan Development Foundation intended to "distribute" the USD 1.7 billion Russia had loaned for building the Kambarata Hydropower Station.

As the head of the newly created Foundation, Maxim Bakiev hastened to China to discuss bilateral relations and invite China to participate in the republic's most lucrative economic projects, which Moscow had already been invited to join: the Kambarata Hydropower Station-2 and modernization of industrial polycrystalline silicon facilities used for solar energy production; this infringed on Russia's interests. The president's

youngest son also spoke of deliveries of Chinese drones, electricity meters and turbines to Kyrgyzstan, as well as China's involvement in a big railway project.

The suggested amendments gave the Presidential Conference—top bureaucrats and members of the president's administration—the right to elect an interim president (if the head of state should be unable to perform his duties). The Constitutional Court, however, declined the amendment and pointed out that this prerogative belonged to the republic's State Council (the members of which include the Prime Minister, Speaker, chairmen of the Constitutional and Supreme courts, Secretary of State, Head of the President's Administration, Public Prosecutor, Defense Minister, Chairman of the National Security Service, and Mayor of Bishkek). It is headed by the president, while his administration functions as the Council's working structure.

According to the expert community, the reform devised by Bakiev's secretariat was discussed at length with the elites. On the eve of the *Kurultai*, the president traveled to Osh and Dzhahal-Abad, his strongholds, to speak to the local elders. He promised to open TsARII branches in the region and move the Defense Ministry to Osh to bring more money to the south in the hope of winning the southern elite's favor of his son, who was not entirely accepted by the traditionalist circles since he is half-Russian and does not speak Kyrgyz.

The opposition feared that the president was setting up a dynasty to bring one of his relatives to power if the worst came to the worst, as opposed to the previous alternative that would make either the Speaker or the Prime Minister acting president. This meant that Bakiev was consistently following his election promises to strengthen presidential power. The constitutional reform would have radically changed the vertical of power. Some time later he might even remove the Prime Minister to combine the functions of head of government and head of state.¹⁴

Obviously absolutely indifferent to what the nation and the opposition thought about his fairly inadequate policies, he continued pursuing his personal interests on the domestic and foreign scenes. By 2009, the Bakiev clan had tightened its grip on the country and its finances; corruption had escalated out of control.

Foreign policy blunders aggravated the relations between Bishkek and Moscow; the Kremlin chose to "forget" about the previously promised loans. By violating its obligations, Bishkek deprived the budget of Russian money: Moscow hinted that it was refusing to deal with the Bakiev regime on principle.

THE CRISIS ESCALATES

After the 2005 Tulip Revolution, Bakiev won the election mainly because former vice-president Felix Kulov, his potential and much more popular rival, dropped out of the race to ally with Bakiev. The tandem died soon thereafter, leaving Bakiev the only ruler. In 2009, Bakiev spent the larger part of Russia's multimillion grant to win the next election.

Between the fall of 2006 and spring of 2010, the country was growing more and more anti-Bakiev and, to a lesser extent, pro-Akaev, the natural outcome of the course pursued by Bakiev and his cronies. By the spring of 2006, people whom the country knew as criminals had become part of the political landscape; the public was indignant, while those members of the Kyrgyz political proto-elite had been left out in the cold while others snatched lucrative posts stepped up their political activities. At this time, two protest rallies a day were customary. In April 2007, when Felix Kulov headed the opposition for a short time, the protests became even more frequent.

There is a common opinion that the situation was not very much different from the last months of the Akaev regime: corruption in the government had become absolute; the family had appropriated all the resources; the elite was split into warring groups; incomes were pocketed by the chosen few; people lived in dire poverty; tariffs were rising together with public discontent; the media operated under pressure, etc. De facto censorship was nothing out of the ordinary, while journalists were beaten up or even murdered.

The expert community points out that maneuvering and even a retreat, albeit with political sacrifices, was still possible: Bakiev could close the structures set up to feed Maxim's financial and, later, political ambitions; he could abandon the latest reform of state management and the constitutional amendments that reduced the revolutionary gains of 2005 to naught and which, to all intents and purposes, transformed power into autocratic and inherited, etc.

He probably realized that the activity Maxim and his circle were engaged in was rousing increasing discontent inside the country and doing nothing for his personal image. It was said that Maxim was strongly influenced by American Ambassador to Bishkek Tatiana Gfoeller, who was also his patron and advised him to stand firm when talking to Russia. It is rumored that the influential and most respected heads of the Kyrgyz clans demanded, in a letter to the president, that he should remove his

son and his “foreign advisors” from power. The opposition used privatization of strategic economic facilities conducive to even higher tariffs in the social sphere to start another political crisis.

Rosa Otunbaeva, leader of the parliamentary Social-Democratic faction, demanded the resignation of Prime Minister Daniar Usenov; she sent an official inquiry to the government, in which she insisted that the privatization of Severelektro and Kirgiztelecom, two strategic giants, “contradicted the interests of the nation, undermined the very foundations of its wellbeing” and was, therefore, “plundering and criminal”.¹⁵ She pointed to legal violations and to the fact that offshore groups had no legal right to participate in the tenders. On 17 March 2010, the People’s *Kurultai* formulated its seven demands of the government and set up the Central Executive Committee to implement the *Kurultai*’s decisions with Rosa Otunbaeva as its head.¹⁶ The newly established structure included: Otunbaeva, Sariev, Kaptagaev, Atambaev, Tekebaev, Sherniazov, Ibraimova, Chotonov, Erkebaev, Diushebaev, Beknazarov, Omurkulov, and Zheenbekov.

The opposition, however, miscalculated: the president’s clan turned out to be much closer knit than that of his predecessor; it was resolved to retain power. On 6-7 April 2010, the events that began in Talas and Naryn (two impoverished regions which the new government disregarded to an even greater extent than its predecessors) reached their peak. The seeds of discontent fell on fertile soil: in Talas, the people resented the fact that the most popular figures had been removed from the local power structures.

In the small hours of 7 April 2010, opposition members and civil activists were arrested to prevent them from appearing at the protest rallies scheduled for 7 April. In Talas, the arrest of one of the local opposition leaders ignited the crowd and developed further when the Minister of Internal Affairs arrived to try and pacify the insurgents. However, he was captured and beaten up. The country’s leaders, who arrested Tekebaev, Atambaev, and others to extinguish the fiery protests, badly miscalculated. Left to its own devices, with no one to channel the protest sentiments (which could have been done by moderate opposition leaders), the crowd became unruly. The government was left to deal with a boiling mass of indignant and misguided people.

The events in Talas developed into a drama: once the people recovered from the onslaught of the riot police (they simply lulled them into a sense of false security by their feeble resistance), they reassembled on the square in even greater numbers. Armed with stones, bludgeons, and Molotov

cocktails, they attacked the police ranks, which they outnumbered by the dozen.

The riots reached the capital, where the rallies attended mainly by young radicals tried to capture government offices. This made the use of force inevitable, although no one knows who provoked the shooting that claimed 80 lives and left several hundreds wounded.¹⁷ Snipers killed dozens of attackers, while the crowd used Molotov cocktails to disperse the police ranks; fallen policemen were killed by the mob.

Enraged and unruly crowds captured the president's palace; they plundered the parliament, the public prosecutor's office, and the Museum of Arts; the building of the State National Security Service was partly destroyed by fire. Later, the country learned that the president and his brother Zhanysh had flown to Osh in the country's south. The opposition announced that they had four out of the seven regions behind them.

With the opposition leaders either behind bars or out of the capital, the mob acted on its own; eyewitnesses described it as ungovernable. People stormed official buildings in ad hoc assault groups; in some places, however, enterprising people formed small groups for more organized action. The anti-Semitic slogans that sounded in front of the House of Government (which suggested close ties between Maxim and Jewish businessmen, especially notorious Evgeni Gurevich wanted in Italy for his contacts with the Italian mafia) added an ethnic dimension to the social turbulence. Alex Katz of Sohnut arrived to prevent Jewish pogroms. An ethnic conflict in the town of Tokmak, 60 km from the capital, began as a conflict between Kyrgyz, on the one hand, and Koreans, Uighurs and Dungans, on the other; there were attempts to fan a similar conflict between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in the Jalal-Abad region.

Meanwhile, an Interim Government headed by Rosa Otunbaeva appeared in the capital. On 8 April 2010, she announced that the new electricity and heat tariffs would be annulled and promised that new presidential elections would be held in six months, until which time the Interim Government would fulfill the functions of the parliament, the president, and the government. The people in power pledged to use the six months at their disposal to write a new constitution and a new code of election laws and organize presidential and parliamentary elections.

As head of the Interim Government, Ms. Otunbaeva had five deputies: Almaz Atambaev headed the economic bloc;¹⁸ Timur Sariev,¹⁹ leader of the *Ak-Shumkar Party*, looked after finances; former Speaker Omurbek Tekebaev²⁰ would be responsible for constitutional reform; Ismail

Isakov was responsible for the defense and security structures and acted as Defense Minister; while the Public Prosecutor's Office and judicial reform were entrusted to Azimbek Beknazarov.²¹

As soon as Prime Minister Usenov resigned, his deputies were dismissed by a decree of the Interim Government. The Ministry of Internal Affairs went to leader of the Talas protests Bolotbek Sherniazov; the National Security Service was entrusted to General of the Militia Keneshbek Duyshebaev; "people's governors" elected by the regional kurultais appeared in Bishkek and the northern regions (which went over to the side of the former opposition). People's Governor Karamat Orazova ruled in Batken, in the south.

The Interim Government closed five banks, probably to prevent an outflow of the Bakiev family's capital, and promised to nationalize, as promptly as possible, Kirgiztelecom and Severelectro sold for a song. The new rulers went even further: they promised to nationalize two of the four mobile communication operators.

The events of March 2005 and April 2010 are very different. In 2005, the opposition wanted stabilization as quickly as possible to be able to present the regime change as another velvet revolution. In 2010 first, the opposition was different; second, on 6-7 April 2010 the discontented people rather than the opposition were in charge. The opposition joined the spontaneous developments at the eleventh hour.

THE RUSSIAN FACTOR

Both regime changes were accompanied by speculations about the external factors behind them. Here is one of the explanations of the 2005 events. Some experts believe that Kurmanbek Bakiev, a figurehead of the southern clans, played the main role in the regime change. Removed from active politics by the Northerners, the Southerners nursed grudges against the regime. The Americans were even more interested in removing Akaev, generally regarded as a pro-Russian politician. Later, he said in so many words that he had lost his post because he refused to let the U.S. deploy AWACS-vectored weapons (allegedly needed for the Enduring Freedom operation) in his country, since they were absolutely useless against the Taliban, but very useful when it came to monitoring flights over Chinese and Russian territory. The opposition riots began two weeks later. There are numerous facts pointing to the direct and active involvement not only of American NGOs (the Soros Foundation and the International Institute

for Democracy), but also of American diplomats stationed in Bishkek. At the technical level, it was the Southern criminal community that toppled Akaev and his regime. The opposition used Western money to come to terms with criminal "bands;" the law-enforcement structures proved unable to stand up to the concerted actions of the organized crime and Western-backed opposition that poured out into the streets.

Russia is suspected, with good reason, of being instrumental in removing Bakiev from power, as its grievances against Bishkek were rapidly piling up.²² In June 2009, President Bakiev decided that the American airbase in Manas (which the Kremlin was trying to remove from the country) would remain as the Transit Center in Manas. The Kremlin was infuriated: earlier in Moscow, the Kyrgyz president had publicly promised to remove the base and Russia reciprocated with a grant of \$150 million, a soft loan of \$300 million, and wrote off the republic's debt of \$180 million.

It should be said that inside the country those who objected to America's military presence moved into action; the *Aksakal Council*, a public organization, demanded that the airbase should be pulled out on the strength, according to its member Academician O. Narbekov, of a statement earlier issued by Abdolmalek Rigi, leader of the Iranian terrorist structure Jundallah, who claimed that the Transit Center was being used as a training camp for those who would be launched into action to depose the Iranian regime.²³ Bishkek went even further: in 2010, it became known that the U.S. would open another military facility in the republic, a training center in the Batken region.²⁴

The irritants were piling up: construction of a military training center in the republic's south (on which the presidents of Russia and Kyrgyzstan had agreed at the CSTO summit in Cholpon-Ata in July 2009) was stalling. It was expected to become Russia's second military facility in the republic and, according to the expert community, a compensation for the eviction of the Americans. Under the Cholpon-Ata memorandum, the two sides were to sign an agreement on the conditions and status of this future military facility before 1 November, 2009; no agreement, although all the documents had been drafted in advance, was signed.

Bakiev also promised Moscow other things: he said he would transfer the Dastan Joint Stock Company to Russia. The two presidents discussed the fate of the republic's only military-industrial facility for manufacturing BA-111 Shkval naval torpedoes in February 2009. It was decided that Moscow would write off Kyrgyzstan's debt of \$180 million if Bishkek gave it the controlling share in the enterprise and its testing ground at Issyk

Kul Lake. Moscow kept its word, while the Kyrgyz leaders announced that the state owned only 37 percent of the shares, while the rest were privately owned. Later it turned out that Maxim Bakiev had been hastily buying up the shares, which infuriated Moscow still more.

The Kyrgyz authorities launched an offensive against Russian-language websites, access to which was either limited or blocked altogether. In March 2010, the Russian embassy voiced its "concern" without much effect. Russian businessmen with interests in the republic realized that someone was infringing on their business activity. According to the opposition, this was done by Maxim Bakiev's anti-Russian friends. In 2009, for example, Russian investors lost the controlling share in MegaCom, a mobile telephone operator.

On 27 February, Daniar Usenov, still at the head of the Kyrgyz Cabinet, took part in the 11th sitting of the Intergovernmental Russian-Kyrgyz Commission for Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technical, and Humanitarian Cooperation. It signed an agreement on economic cooperation for 2010-2013, which included about 60 points in the relevant spheres. The two countries agreed to develop their cooperation in the oil and gas sphere in the form of a joint venture set up by selling some of the shares of Kirgizgaz Joint Stock Company to Gazprom and to revive, before the end of 2011, a geological exploration program of the Kuhart and Vostochnoe Maylisu IV areas. The meeting, however, failed to agree on the main point: a loan for building Kambarata Hydropower Station-1. Russia was prepared to fund the project on the strength of feasibility studies and an expert assessment carried out by the World Bank. This was the first time Russia made its funding of any large-scale hydropower projects in Kyrgyzstan or Tajikistan dependent on an international expert assessment.

Bishkek, which took Usenov's mission as a failure, intended (according to certain sources) to ask the Kremlin to pull out of Kant. On 1 March, however, the intention boiled down to changing the way the base was staffed: members of the officers' families had to leave, while the military were invited to rotate on an annual basis.

No matter how resolutely Russian officials (President Medvedev, Prime Minister Putin, and Secretary of the Russian Federation Security Council Patrushev) denied Russia's involvement in the Kyrgyz developments, the Russian leaders were obviously satisfied. Nor can we exclude secret contacts between Russia and the Kyrgyz opposition, at least in the months that predated the regime change. Russia was the only

country to openly support the Interim Government—a fact that speaks for itself.

Whatever the case, Moscow will never let Bakiev return to his post. That the two paratrooper contingents hastily moved to the Kant airbase, speak volumes about Russia's intentions.

The Kremlin was probably prepared to work with the new people in power in Kyrgyzstan. On the one hand, Putin was the first to whom Rosa Otunbaeva turned for support. On the other, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton promised Washington's support in exchange for the Manas base. Rosa Otunbaeva assured the U.S. State Secretary that her Interim Government would adhere to the earlier agreements reached with the United States.

CONCLUSION

Kazakhstan as Kyrgyzstan's closest neighbor and one that shares many of its cultural, historical and mental traits cannot remain indifferent to the current and future developments in this country. By early 2010, Kyrgyzstan found itself in an economic, social, and political trap, created, among other things, by the traditional North-South confrontation. A social upsurge was natural and inevitable. The opposition convened the People's Kurultai as a lever of political struggle, while President Bakiev, who arrested three of its leaders, shifted it to the non-constitutional field. The drug barons (who appeared in the country when it became part of the route for moving drugs from Afghanistan to Russia) added fuel to the flames. This new clan possesses enormous amounts of money and vast organizational potential and has absolutely no need for a strong central government.

An analysis of Kyrgyzstan's previous developments and the current trends in the political transformations suggest that Kazakhstan should be guided by the following: close coordination with Russia, which badly needs stability in Kyrgyzstan. Astana should employ all the foreign policy instruments at its disposal: it should probably rely on the OSCE and diplomatic and political channels to inform all those involved in the political struggle that Astana will not tolerate the use of force and repeated bloodshed in Kyrgyzstan.

Kazakhstan should support all the progressive and moderate forces in Kyrgyzstan to achieve prompt stabilization and normalization of the situation in the republic. It may be necessary to restrict border crossings between the two countries for the citizens of Kyrgyzstan and labor

migrants for an indefinite length of time.

Coordination between Kazakh and international law-enforcers should be treated as a priority for neutralizing the Kyrgyz criminal community and its impact on the country's political developments. Kurmanbek Bakiev should be gradually removed from politics; his personal immunity should be exchanged for his promise to refrain from political actions. Astana should insist on acquiring firm guarantees from the new Kyrgyz government for Kazakh businesses and for ensuring Kazakhstan's economic interests in exchange for economic aid.

At the regional level Kazakhstan should, together with Russia and other CSTO members, strengthen regional security, which has been temporarily weakened by the gap left by Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyzstan's water and energy sphere should be monitored to avoid an infrastructural collapse.

At the height of the crisis, Kazakhstan, as the OSCE chairman, did a lot to normalize the situation in the neighboring country. These efforts relied on another important resource—the personal prestige of the president of Kazakhstan. He discussed the problem in detail with President Medvedev and President Obama during the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington.

The OSCE chaired by Kazakhstan looked for a way out of the crisis. Astana insisted that the OSCE allocate 200,000 Euros from its reserve fund to help Kyrgyzstan maintain law and order, security, and the rule of law. Kazakhstan used its own funds to extend humanitarian and economic aid to the republic in distress. Due to Kazakhstan's diplomatic efforts, the U.N. Secretary General, the leaders of the European Union, and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly dispatched their representatives to the republic, which helped normalize, to some extent, the situation there.

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 4. The republic's Ministry for Economic Development and the State Committee for Migration quotes the figure of about \$1.2 billion of annual remittances and the share of the migrants' money in the republic's GDP at over 30 percent.
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 6. See: L. Baum, "The Energy Industry in the Kyrgyz Republic: Current State, Problems, and Reforms." *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 6 (54), 2008, pp. 101-112.
 7. A volume of 5.5 billion cu m is the critical point at which the turbines will grind to a standstill.
 8. See: B. Torogeldieva, "The Formation and Nature of Political Culture in Present-Day Kyrgyzstan." *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 1 (55), 2009. pp. 126-134.
 9. It was a weekday, something which the Social-Democrats had not expected. They would have preferred the fall when, they believed, public indignation would have become even fiercer. The opposition expected the world crisis to hit the guest workers from Kyrgyzstan who might have voted against Bakiev. Choosing a weekday as election day caused heated debates: the president's administrative resource allowed him to manipulate voters who work in the government service (doctors, teachers, bureaucrats) and students. They needed permission from their superiors to go to the polls. Permission followed.
 10. Social anthropologists describe the Kyrgyz' political culture as the command and-obey tradition; people are indifferent to the country's political culture, they never respond to what the political institutions do; they are not interested in central power and concentrate on local developments. A widespread disregard for law and order is one of the hallmarks of the nation's political culture: people know next to nothing about the laws and government mechanisms; they mistake the person who executes state power for the institutions of state power.
 11. In March 2009, Sadyrkulov and Director of the International Institute of Strategic

Studies of Kyrgyzstan S. Slepchenko met their deaths under mysterious circumstances. A top bureaucrat of the Akaev regime, Sadyrkulov kept his post after the 2005 revolution and remained friendly with A. Toyganbaev, Akaev's son-in-law.

12. It was expected that this nationwide consultative structure would have 750 members: the local *Kurultais* were to elect one deputy from 441 *ayyl* districts and 18 settlement administrations; each of 23 district and regional towns and cities were to send 3 delegates; the capital had to elect 10 deputies, the city of Osh, seven. Labor migrants were granted the right to elect 35 members, while religious confessions received 20 seats. One-fifth (150) of the seats were to be appointed according to a quota at a national forum.
13. The project promoted the idea that "consultative democracy" (Russia between the February and October revolutions of 1917 is one of the pertinent examples) was the best instrument to be applied at the transition stage. Indeed, it is much better than no democracy at all: consultations, that is, discussions, are the first step toward political pluralism.
14. See: E. Kabulov, "On the Results of the Presidential Election in Kyrgyzstan." *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 4-5 (58-59), 2009; A. Doolotkeldieva, "Presidential Elections in Kyrgyzstan: strategies, Context, and Implications". *The China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 2009, pp. 5-9.
15. Kirgiztelecom was sold for \$40 million, then, according to Otunbaeva, resold to Fintur, an international company, for \$400 million. Severelektro, evaluated eighteen months previously by an independent structure at \$137 million, was sold for \$3 million.
16. Rosa Otunbaeva filled the post of Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Kirghiz S.S.R.; she was Soviet Ambassador and member of the Collegium of the U.S.S.R. Foreign Ministry. She was twice appointed as Foreign Minister of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan; U.N. Special Representative to Georgia; and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Kyrgyzstan to the United States and the U.K. In 2005, she was among the leaders of the March revolution. In December 2007, elected to the parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic, she joined the opposition Social Democratic faction. In October 2009, she became a leader of this faction. At the Kurultai in March 2010, she was elected leader of the opposition. In Europe, she is generally regarded as a good diplomat. Rosa Otunbaeva, a graduate of the Philosophy Department, Moscow State University, is fluent in four foreign languages.
17. The opposition blames the president's brother Zhanysh Bakiev, who headed the Protection of the State Service. According to unconfirmed information he ordered to open fire at those who, on 7 April 2010, stormed the government building, thus making him responsible for the casualties among the opposition's supporters.
18. A. Atambaev, one of the republic's first cooperators, was minister of industry and trade. After parting ways with Bakiev, he joined the opposition.
19. T. Sariiev was head of the Ak-Shumkar Party with the largest parliamentary faction and an experienced financier and successful stock broker who made it rich as a Komsomol functionary during perestroika.
20. O. Tekebaev was deputy for the new Constitution platform (read: ideology), a former school teacher who was repeatedly elected to the parliament, and leader of several opposition parties.
21. A. Beknazarov was deputy for the defense and security structures (with the

exception of the army), a lawyer, former prosecutor general, a popular orator, and leader of the Talas rioters.

22. See: A. Jekshenkulov, "Rossia-Kyrgyzstan: etapy razvitiia mezhdunarodnykh otnosheniy i ikh perspektivy," in: *Tsentral'naia Azia: vneshniy vzgliad. Mezhdunarodnaia politika s tsentral'noaziatskoy tochki zrenia*. Berlin, F. Ebert Foundation, 2008, pp. 277-293; N.M. Omarov, "Vneshniaia politika Kirgizstana posle 24 marta 2005 goda: osnovnye tendentsii i perspektivy," in: *Vneshnepoliticheskaia orientatsia stran Tsentral'noy Azii v svete global'noy transformatsii mirovoy sistemy mezhdunarodnykh otnosheniy*, ed. by A.A. Kniazev, A.A. Migranian. Bishkek, OFAK, 2009. pp. 155- 161; N.T. Muratalieva, "Voennoe prisutstvie SShA i Rossii kak factor vliania v otnosheniakh mezhdou Kitaem i Kirgizstanom," in: *Vneshnepoliticheskaia orientatsia stran Tsentral'noy Azii v svete global'noy transformatsii mirovoy sistemy mezhdunarodnykh otnosheniy*, pp. 179-186; V. Sokolov, A. Sarygulov, "Sovremennai Kirgizia: mnogovektornost ili bezvektornost razvitiia?" *Voprosy ekonomiki*, No. 2, 2010, pp. 139-149; E. Huskey, "Foreign Policy in a Vulnerable State: Kyrgyzstan as Military Entrepot between the Great Powers." *The China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 6, No. 4, 2008, pp. 5-8.
23. Tehran, in turn, stated that the arrested terrorist admitted that he had been doubling as an American, British and Israeli agent and that he had been sent to the Transit Center to meet a high American official.
24. Its cost was quoted as \$5.5 million; earlier, Americans had allocated several millions to be spent on a training center for the Kyrgyz Special Forces.

THE PROCESS OF DEMOCRATIZATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF KYRGYZSTAN

ARAD DAVAR and SABINA CHUKAEVA

An important part of the transition process of shifting from traditional to modern society is political modernization which constitutes qualitative change of the political system, the emergence of new institutions of power and adaptation to the changed conditions. The rise of new political institutions has always been a long and painful process. In different regions of the world there are multiple processes of political transformation associated with the transition of non-democratic forms of government to a democratic one. Political changes take place in countries with different conditions.

The researchers note that the current transitions in most cases do not suggest the creation of their final consolidated democracies - they are often slowed or even lead to a revival of an authoritarian regime, refurbished pseudo-rhetoric (as it happens in the former Soviet Union). Transitions from non-democratic to democratic forms of government in post-communist countries are very diverse and cannot be reduced to a model. In addition, the democratic transition does not mean a guaranteed transition to democracy and its consolidation.

Considering the main stages of the evolution in the format of government and political regime of Kyrgyz Republic, the period of post-Soviet political modernization is an object of study by several researchers in Central Asia. Erica Marat, an expert on Central Asia and author of the study on the situation in Kyrgyzstan for Freedom House international organization claims that the biggest difference in the consequences of regime change in 2005 and 2010 is the degree of confidence between people and the new government. Marat states that Kurmanbek Bakiyev enjoyed

widespread, almost unanimous confidence of his political supporters in government and society. And this public trust lasted for some time, before the presidential election in July 2009. Five years ago, Kyrgyzstan was considered the third country in the former Soviet Union, which had passed through a democratic change of power. It became the third country after Ukraine and Georgia, where similar changes took place after the elections.¹

The first phase of democratization in Kyrgyzstan (1991-1993) is characterized by carrying out of constitutional reforms and restructuring of state institutions. This phase ended with the adoption in 1993 of a new Constitution. The collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in the independence of Kyrgyzstan and the "Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan" on 15 December 1990. On 24 October 1990 a meeting of the Supreme Soviet of the Kyrgyz SSR adopted the Law "On establishment of the post of President of the Kyrgyz SSR and the amendments to the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Kyrgyz SSR. From that time began the transition to a democratic state and a new system of government. The transition from non-democratic to democratic form of government in Kyrgyzstan is the first stage - the stage of liberalization, which resulted in the so-called "custodial democracy" - a mode of formal democratic institutions.

The next stage of democratization - "Covenant" (an agreement between various political forces) is possible under certain conditions. First of all, it is consistent implementation of the principle of separation of powers, adherence to the rule of law, democratic procedures, competition of political elites, and the guarantee of the realization of political rights and freedoms. An indicator of the degree of progress towards democracy is the role and place of the legislative branch of government- parliament, which should ensure representation of all population groups.

Since 1990, the period of the introduction of the post of President and the election for the post of President, Akaev's powers were limited to the Parliament, and, therefore, one can conclude that Kyrgyzstan had a sort of parliamentary-presidential system. The period 1991-1993, was a period of confrontation between the executive and legislative branches of government, the neutralization of the Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan, which, despite the restrictions on its activities after the August coup was the most serious opposition force.

By 1993, Kyrgyzstan had developed conditions for constitutional reform, restructuring of state institutions, the formation of a democratic system. On 5 May 1993 the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan

adopted a new constitution. The Constitution of 1993 was based on the principles of:

- a) The separation of powers into legislative, executive and judicial branches;
- b) the popularly elected head of state - president;
- c) The separation of state and local authorities.

The principle of separation of powers meant that the legislative, executive and judicial authorities “act independently and interact with each other”.²

The Constitution of 1993 provided the President of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan very wide powers: being the head of state, guarantor of the inviolability of the Constitution and the unity of state power. The Constitution contains a number of articles which granted the President the right to: a) appoint the Prime Minister and members of the government with the consent of the *Jogorku Kenesh* (Parliament); b) make a decision on its own initiative for the early resignation of the government with the consent of the *Jogorku Kenesh*, the President could bring issues of public life to a referendum, the President had the right to dissolve parliament on the result of a popular referendum.

Some domestic political analysts believe that the Constitution of 1993 contained more principles of parliamentary system. It was more democratic than the Constitution of 2010. President of the Kyrgyz Republic had the right to dismiss Cabinet members and heads of administrative agencies (Article 46, paragraph 1, item 4).³ The President alone was empowered to decide the issue of displacement of Ministers. The existence of such rights is contrary to one of the main criteria for prime-presidential system - depending on the cabinet from the parliament. The President was endowed with legislative powers. He was granted the following rights:

- a) on its own initiative to make the bills to the parliament;
- b) sign laws adopted by the Parliament, or return them to Parliament for reconsideration (the right to “veto”),
- c) to issue decrees that are binding throughout the country, as well as decisions and orders.

These features suggest that the Constitution of 1993, along with a parliamentary form created the preconditions for the formation of a presidential republic in Kyrgyzstan. The Constitution of 1993 created the legal preconditions for the functioning of the President relatively

independent of the legislative and executive powers and to achieve the balance between them. However, the President of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan would be unable to govern alone without the support of the Parliament. In support of this position, there are a number of articles of the Constitution of 1993, which provide for the jurisdiction of the *Jogorku Kenesh* on the following matters:

- 1) Amendments and additions to the Constitution;
- 2) The adoption of laws, introducing amendments and additions, as well as control over their execution;
- 3) Identification of the main directions of domestic and foreign policy;
- 4) Approval of the national budget and report on its implementation;
- 5) The appointment of presidential elections;
- 6) To take matters of public life to a referendum;
- 7) Election on the proposal of President of the Kyrgyz Republic President of the Constitutional Court, Supreme Court, Supreme Arbitration Court, and their deputies;
- 8) Approval of the structure of government; approval of the appointment of the Prime Minister and the composition of the government, giving consent to an early abdication of the Government.⁴

The parliament with a majority not less than two thirds of the total number of deputies on the basis of the Constitutional Court of the Kyrgyz Republic could impeach the President for treason and other crimes.

A short list of powers of the *Jogorku Kenesh* included the following: Without its consent, the President could not appoint a prime minister and the government. Parliament, as the President, had the right of taking issues of public life to a referendum. Control over the work carried out by the Government of President and parliament. According to Art.72, the annual report of the Government presented to the parliament by the would be Prime Minister. Government control over the work carried out by the parliament to approve the budget and report on its implementation. If the President for one reason or another could not perform his duties, his powers are passed to the Speaker of the Parliament. If, however, the Speaker could not perform the powers of the presidency, only then they moved to the Prime Minister until a new president.⁵ Thus, the construction of presidential power in Kyrgyz Republic (Constitution of 1993) combines the features of various models of the presidency: first, the signs of a “pure”

presidential republic, and, secondly, some features of the semi-presidential system. The Constitution of 1993 laid the legal preconditions for the formation of Kyrgyzstan's democratic political regime. The Parliament has played a significant role in determining the structure of government, the main directions of domestic and foreign policy.

From 1994 began a tendency to increase presidential power and the weakening of the power of Parliament. The policy of strengthening presidential power led to a confrontation between the President and the Parliament, which ended with the dissolution of the *Jogorku Kenesh* in October 1994 and the holding of early elections. A majoritarian electoral system was introduced and on 24 October 1995, the first alternative elections were held in which President Askar Akayev was elected after securing 73% votes.

The period of 1995-1996 was the development of the authoritarian regime. Its distinctive features were - the dominance of the executive (or rather the president), low development of democratic institutions, civil society, which is typical of a "formal," "limited democracy". After the presidential election of 1995 a referendum on 10 February 1996 was held and the powers of President of the Kyrgyz Republic were greatly expanded with limited power to the Parliament.

Under the Constitution of 1996, the President is not directly named chief executive (as in the U.S. model), but it is closely associated with it. The President determines the main directions of domestic and foreign policy and manages foreign policy. He was given broad powers in the field of personnel policy, appointing (with the consent of the Assembly of People's Representatives) the Prime Minister, Cabinet members, heads of administrative departments, as well as relieve them from office. From this it follows that the President actually created the executive branch. On the close relationship with the executive power of the President, the Constitution of 1996 provided that when the President can not perform his duties, he shall be entitled to transfer powers to the Prime Minister.⁶ However, the Prime Minister being the Acting President, was not entitled to dissolve the Legislative Assembly or the Assembly of People's Representatives, to hold a referendum to terminate the powers of government and propose amendments and additions to the Constitution.

As regards the first revolution in Kyrgyzstan, the dramatic events that took place in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, at the end of March 2005, were not a spontaneous popular uprising, but a result of the coup, hastily organized by a small group of politicians with the support of drug lords

from the southern region of the country. But for the constant U.S. interference in the internal affairs of Kyrgyzstan and the political process in this country, the opposition would have failed to organize a coup and Akayev's administration would have remained in power.

In 2005, when the country had free and transparent parliamentary elections, Washington realized that it must act quickly so as not to miss the chance. Bishkek authorities knew that the majority of the population supported the basic policies of the President's economic development, job creation, strengthening of political stability. Moreover, in 2004, Kyrgyzstan had managed to achieve impressive economic growth and significant improvement of living standards of ordinary citizens. Immediately after the elections in the south, there was an explosion of "popular discontent" following the defeat of some opposition candidates, especially self-proclaimed opposition leader Kurmanbek Bakiyev. However, the fact of unrest coupled with sanctimonious statements of Bakiyev and other "opposition leaders" regarding the need to protect democracy, Western diplomats got the desired pretext for intervention. American and German ambassadors, together with the OSCE Representative immediately intervened in the course of events, giving performances of "democratic opposition" legitimacy and visibility of the national character, while speaking of threats to "Akaev's" government in the event it tried to crush the rebellion. The opposition, emboldened by the unconditional support from the United States and the OSCE decided to expand the scale of the fighting and start a confrontation in Bishkek. After some time, Askar Akayev, negotiating with the opposition representatives announced his resignation from the presidency. As a result of early elections the opposition leader Kurmanbek Bakiyev was elected the President. This, however, did not lead to normalization of life in the country, and among the opposition leaders (primarily Kurmanbek Bakiyev and Felix Kulov) continued the struggle for power, or rather for leadership in tandem, which resulted in the victory of President Bakiev.

The Constitution of 1996 laid a complicated procedure for removal of the President from office. Assembly of People's Representatives may remove him from office only on the basis put forward by the Legislative Assembly of the charges of treason or other grave crime. This was confirmed by the Constitutional Court of the Kyrgyz Republic. The decision of the Legislative Assembly to bring an accusation against the President should have not less than two-thirds vote of all deputies. However, in the case of a negative opinion of the Constitutional Court, the indicted President shall

dissolve the Legislative Assembly.

The Constitution of 1996 extended the legislative powers of the President, who not only contributes to the parliament bills, issues orders, may reject laws passed by Parliament, but the Chamber of *Jogorku Kenesh* may delegate its legislative authority for a period not exceeding one year. Legislative powers are transferred to the President in case of dissolution of the Chambers of the *Jogorku Kenesh*.⁷

Analysis of the Constitution (1996) suggests that legal prerequisites for the establishment of the presidential form of government were created in Kyrgyzstan. The dominant trend has been a tendency to approve an authoritarian regime with elements of democracy. There have been several stages of political modernization in Kyrgyzstan in the post-Soviet period. First, the period after the so-called "Tulip Revolution" of 24 March 2005, is characterized by political uncertainty and the hopes of reforming the political system and the balance of power. However, the real modernization of the political system in this period did not happen. Furthermore there have been changes in the direction of strengthening the presidential form of government, strengthening the political cronyism and the concentration of power in the hands of Bakiev and his entourage. Many of the democratic achievements in the political system of Kyrgyzstan had been lost. As a result, in 2010 Kyrgyzskoy Republic was formed, "the super" form of government and quasi-democratic system of political institutions with elements of a totalitarian, command-administrative system.

But then something happened in Kyrgyzstan, which was like the previous revolution, also referred to as the "Tulip". Many politicians, including Russia's Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, believe that Kurmanbek Bakiyev repeated the mistake of his predecessor, retaining tribalism in politics and economic management. He actually had usurped power in the interests of his family, appointing all relatives to the highest public office. The head of the Russian government declared that "Bakiyev comes on the same rake as the critic of his predecessor, Askar Akayev".⁸ In addition, the opposition accused Bakiyev rewriting the Constitution unnecessarily as in the past five years, the basic law was edited seven times. Bakiyev was also accused that he carried out privatization of large state facilities such as "Kyrgyzenergo" (a gas company) or "Severelectro" (electric networks) in the interests of his own family.

When Bakiyev continued the impoverishment of masses, the number of Kyrgyz migrants to Russia and CIS countries increased. In addition,

Bakiyev's government raised the prices for utilities. The country had no money to upgrade utilities. As a result, the modernization of housing areas did not happen, prices rose, which hit the lowest strata of society. The people took to the streets. The opposition formed a provisional government headed by former Foreign Minister Roza Otunbayeva. Provisional People's Government was in power for six months, and then the country held presidential and parliamentary elections.

There has been a significant impoverishment of the population in Kyrgyzstan. The level of poverty overtook Tajikistan - 80% of population live below the poverty line. About 50 senior positions in government agencies engaged in by representatives of the clan of President Kurmanbek Bakiyev. Besides, there was a continuous redistribution of property in order to increase the welfare of the clan of the President. Kyrgyzstan provided a transit point for drugs. 30% of the heroin transported from Afghanistan crossed Kyrgyzstan. Drug lords would benefit from an unstable government in this country. Kyrgyzstan become an important point for the global players - Russia and the United States with increasing competition between them for influence in this country.

The events of 7 April 2010, which followed the two constitutional reforms created opportunities for the dismantling of the authoritarian system, the establishment of competitive democratic regime and the future prospects of political modernization. The new Constitution provides for the establishment of the state parliamentary-presidential form of government. As O. Tekebayev puts it: "it is set by the following formula: strong parliament - the president-arbitrator - a strong government - a strong independent judiciary - a strong civil society and effective public control over the activities of the branches of power". For this purpose, the provisions of the Constitution that were added to it by the constitutional reforms of 1996-2007 period and which have been criticized both domestically and from international organizations have been excluded.

The main provisions of the new Constitution provide for such checks and balances that prevent the concentration of power in one hand. Powers of Heads of States are dramatically reduced. The most important function of the President as Head of State is to ensure coordinated functioning of the branches of government. It acts as an arbitrator, who in most cases will remain outside of the current situation and the relationship between the Government and Parliament. The President represents the unity of the people and state power (Article 60), and the president can be elected only for a six-year term (Article 61).⁹

History has given Kyrgyzstan a unique opportunity to reform the political system of the state and to create a new political environment that could create real prerequisites for the approval of the country's parliamentary system.

Officially the United States remains committed to the people of Kyrgyzstan in their hard work, based on the democratic gains of the past year and a half, and the realization of a democratic, prosperous and just future for all its citizens. Although the election is only the beginning, Kyrgyzstan needs to strengthen governance, combat corruption and efforts at reconciliation (after the ethnic conflict in the south of Kyrgyzstan). The United States has expressed its readiness to be a friend and partner in helping the people of Kyrgyzstan on the path to a stable and prosperous future.¹⁰

At the same time, the opinion of Western experts is diametrically opposite to the official line in Washington. The industrial sector, is mostly idle for various reasons: the high price of raw materials, small domestic markets, lack of specialists. But the main reason appears inappropriate and inefficient use of business: their privatization (through connections, through bribery) was aimed primarily at further profitable resale. As a result, the pressing problems of Kyrgyzstan are high unemployment, and related transformations in the social stratification of society and the emergence of a large number of people living below the poverty line. A high percentage of the same marginalized populations leads to increased social tensions, and is a catalyst for unconstitutional protest movements.

Thus, the absence of the resource base is one of the obstacles to the successful democratization of Kyrgyzstan. The importance of the economic base to build a democratic society is explained by a well-known American political scientist Seymour Martin Lipset: "The wealthier the state, the greater the chance that he will preserve democracy: capitalist economic development leads to social differentiation, which is the basis for the creation of civil society, and, consequently, pluralistic competition".¹¹

However, besides the high level of economic development, a prerequisite for the establishment of a democratic regime, according to Rastou is a politico-legal approach to the concept of "nation" to "... a significant number of citizens of the potential of democracy was no doubt as to the society to which they belong." In Kyrgyzstan, the "nation" - the category of biological, that is the source, on the one hand, inter-ethnic conflicts (events in the South in 2010), on the other - the struggle of various regional and tribal groups for power and property. Tribal relations, which helped the Kyrgyz people over the centuries to survive in the most difficult

times and entrenched in the traditions and customs that continue to influence the economy and politics in Kyrgyzstan, but in a negative aspect, “specific feature” of Kyrgyz “democracy, as well as the state, the turn of the century was the inclusion of outdated tribal structures in the reformed system of government instead of a consistent and absolute dismantling”.¹² Tribalism and cronyism impede registration of civil society, based upon the political culture of participation, involving the active involvement of citizens in political life through the institution of elections, political parties, non-governmental organizations. In Kyrgyzstan, the mobilization of the population is through family and clan structures, “Political and social mobilization of most of the indigenous population Kyrgyz going through the channels of sub-ethnic and regional-tribal solidarity, based on patronage based “bottom” of their “elite”.¹³

However, when considering the “revolutions”, which shook the society twice, one must consider not only internal factors but also external - the geopolitical interests of other countries, particularly the United States. This is indicated by statements of prominent American political scientists. To quote R. Kagan, “In 2003-2005, Western democracies and NGOs provided pro-Western and pro-democracy parties and organizations with funding and organizational help that allowed them to topple autocrats in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine and Lebanon.”¹⁴ Thus, many parties and NGOs in Kyrgyzstan are engaged because of their financial dependence on foreign grants. Consequently, they cannot be regarded as a well-functioning institution of civil society: their organization is not a result of an initiative of the citizens.

If we apply a systematic method for describing the state of political life in Kyrgyzstan, the most appropriate model is a “black box”. Society (environment) affects the political system (black box) in the form of protest actions and demands (for example, July rallies against the board for the selection of judges), the political system translates these requirements into actions and decisions, but the process of development and decision-making remains hidden to the public (the absence of clear and concise information on the criteria in the selection of candidates to the Board for the selection of judges).

However, the task of building democracy cannot be solved overnight, it requires a gradual transformation of existing state and social institutions, they are filled by content that is embedded with modern advanced Western democracies, while maintaining their national circumstances in the civil sense.

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