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A HISTORY OF KYRGYZSTAN

(FROM STONE AGE TO THE PRESENT)

SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY TEXTBOOK

The textbook is prepared on the basis of textbooks approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic

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The history of Kyrgyzstan is a mandatory course taught in universities and schools of Kyrgyzstan. The textbook is written and prepared in accordance with the requirements of state policy and standards of teaching the subject in educational institutions of Kyrgyzstan. It covers three main historical periods, and includes the secondary and primary sources. The textbook is recommended to teachers and instructors of the history of Kyrgyzstan, as well as to the wider audience of readers with an interest in the historical past of Kyrgyzstan and the Kyrgyz people.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The history of Kyrgyzstan is one of the most complex and unique histories in the world. Its greatness is evidenced in various historical events, including the mention of the Kyrgyz people in Chinese sources, the existence of the Kyrgyz chieftaincy as early as the 3rd century B.C.E., the creation of Kyrgyz statehood in the 7th-10th centuries, and its military and cultural success throughout the Eurasian continent. The richness of the history of Kyrgyzstan is further testified by material and spiritual examples of art, philosophy, and literature, which are now exhibited in the museums and galleries in Kyrgyzstan, as well as in other countries. However, the history of Kyrgyzstan, especially during its ancient period, is not well known and many historical events are still terra incognita to English-speaking readers. The history of country is mandatory for all students in Kyrgyzstan; passing the state exam is one of the requirements of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic. Many international students in Kyrgyzstan have difficulty finding a reliable English-language textbook of Kyrgyz History. This present edition of the History of Kyrgyzstan promises to be an important contribution to their study of the history of our motherland in accordance with the aforementioned requirements.

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Introduction: What is History?

For many centuries, historians, scientists, and travelers have wondered: “What is history?” “How do events turn into historical facts?” “Who makes history and, after the fact, how can it be proven?” From ancient times and on, many figures have offered their own answers to such questions.

The word “history” comes from Greek ἱστορία, historia, meaning “inquiry and knowledge acquired by investigation.” This term was first coined by Herodotus, the “father of history,” and his great contemporary, Thucydides, in the 5th century B.C.E.¹

In Europe, during the Middle Ages, history was understood and defined primarily from the religious perspective. The will of God was thought to be the impetus behind historical events. However in the late 16th century, an English philosopher Francis Bacon used the term “history” to refer to “the knowledge of objects determined by space and time.”² Thus, with the end of the Middle Ages, thinkers and intellectuals began to redefine the term “history.”

Thanks to the intellectual developments during the Enlightenment, history began to be perceived as one of the branches of scientific study. With the rapid development of capitalism in the early 19th century, history played an essential role in the development of nationalism and formation of national identities. Because history had become recognized as a science, debates regarding the different interpretations of the nature and purpose of history began to arise. These debates have evolved over time and continue to dominate the historical discourse to this day.

Generally speaking, history consists of the discovery, collection, organization, and presentation of information regarding past events. To quote a British historian, David Carr: “History is a process of data processing.”³ It is a field of research which uses primary sources to examine and analyze the sequence of events. Historians debate the nature of history, its usefulness, and whether it can provide insights in relation to the present. The main task of history as a science, then, is to study the chronological and dialectic interrelations of the past, present and future as inseparable, cohesive elements. Changes have occurred in the course of humanity; documenting these changes constitutes the very essence of history. This makes it possible to explore and learn from the past,
connect the past to the present and future, explore the key individuals, groups, and institutions in the development of historical phenomena, and to gain a better understanding of economic, social, and political conditions of a given region in a given period.

World History is the study of major civilizations over the last 3000 years. Because of the scope of this field, historians have developed numerous theories of history in an attempt to explain historical developments. For example, historians such as Samuel Huntington and Arnold J. Toynbee have been involved in controversial debates concerning the issue of the Western civilization. World History has increasingly become an integral part of the university curriculum in the U.S, replacing the courses that had focused primarily on Europe and the U.S. while ignoring the history of the regions of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Courses in World History offer the chance to gain a basic historical understanding of different regions of the world. The history of a certain continent or region can allow readers to explore history from the appearance of the first human beings and up to the events that have contributed to the social, political, and economic realities of today. In connection with this, the history of Kyrgyzstan is a regionally focused on the study of the development of Kyrgyzstan and the people living within it.

The complexity of the historical process has led to the creation of such historical sub-disciplines as archaeology, numismatics, chronology and others. As a sub-discipline, archaeology investigates material objects such as tools, life subjects, jewelries, dwellings, burial places, and treasure. Ethnography studies the material and spiritual culture of people and different aspects of their mutual cultural and historical relationships. Chronology studies the era or epoch. Paleography studies written sources and history of handwriting. Numismatics studies the history of stamping money (coins, bank notes and medal art). Epigraphy studies ancient inscriptions on stones, metals, woods, and bones. Genealogy studies the origin of nations, genders, and surnames. Heraldry studies the national emblems of states, cities, and historic figures. Sphragistics studies stamps. Toponymy studies geo-
graphical names. The classification of sources and their origin, character, reliability, and actual value falls under the rubric of Source Studies. Historiography studies the history of history in conjunction with scientific and societal development; in essence, it seeks to explain the methodology and thought process behind historical research.

History is one of the most ancient and fascinating areas of human knowledge and culture. It has close connections and often overlaps with the other fields of the humanities, including philosophy, sociology, political science, psychology, law, economics, and art. Likewise, history has ties to natural sciences, such as physics, astronomy, and biology. However, the study of history is principally concerned with various aspects of social development and societal life: economy, politics, spiritual and material culture.

Because of the broad definition of history, historians incorporate many other fields of study in order to gain a better understanding of historical developments. Science and art help historians to understand the social and historical development of a given nation and people. Historical anthropology, historical geography, and historical geology assist historians in conducting their research scientifically (using scientific methods) in order to better understand the past.

History performs a variety of functions to the benefit of societies at large. One such example is the educational function, for learning and becoming interested in the history of a nation can lead to the active formation of civil consciousness and development of feelings of patriotism, internationalism, and social responsibility. By filling the educational gap, the study of history helps groups and individuals to define the role of a nation in the world. It also allows them to identify historical figures through which one can track of humanity’s evolution of morals and ideals. History is often used in order to distinguish good from evil, as well as to offer suggestions about right and wrong approaches to life. It might be argued that in the absence of history—or a sense of the past—all aspirations and achievements are rendered meaningless. In other words, successes and failures of the past allow us to define progress in the present.

Additionally, history serves as a key political and practical function for modern states. Politicians and states use historical facts in order to
shape the key political agendas, state priorities, and governmental decisions. By defining the past, states can pose their current initiatives as either a break or, vice versa, a bond with the past.

History serves the additional function of broadening the outlook of individuals who engage in its study. The objective investigation of historical documents is important for developing a social understanding of the past. However, this often involves attaching historical value to facts, which is not an easy task for any historian. In this role, the historian must carefully select, analyze, generalize, arrange, and interpret the data. Only by the practice of proper research, aided by the collaboration of the community of academic historians, can we begin to gain a clearer understanding the past.

The ancient Chinese philosopher Confucius explained that the study of the past is one way to define the future. With such understanding, historians and the study of history can be defined as an investigation into the possibilities of a given society. By comparing the past with the present, societies can work together to prepare for the future.

In order to complete their work, historians rely on use of historical methods (methodology). Historical methodology refers to the techniques and guidelines which historians use when working with primary, secondary, or tertiary sources. Historians use methodology to apply a clear and defined approach in their research.

Thucydides (ca. 460–400 B.C.E.) is credited as the first who approached history using a well-developed historical method in his study of the Peloponnesian War. Unlike Herodotus, Thucydides regarded history as the product of the choices and actions of human beings. He rejected the idea that divine intervention played a key role in historical development, instead highlighting the forces of cause and effect in his historical method; he also emphasized the importance of maintaining an impartial point of view. In contrast with others, he paid close attention to the use of chronology in his work. He subscribed the Greek concept of history as cyclical force; he believed that history developed in stages, which repeated themselves throughout time.

Much like Greece, Ancient and Medieval China developed traditions in the study of history, accompanied by sophisticated uses of historical
methods. The groundwork for professional historiography in East Asia was established by the court historian of the Han Dynasty, Sima Qian (145–90 B.C.E.), the author of the *Shiji*, or *Records of the Grand Historian*. Due to the quality of his research, Sima Qian became known as the father of Chinese historiography. Chinese historians of subsequent dynastic periods used *Shiji* and Sima Qian’s methods as the basis for working with historical texts and biographical literature.

A rich tradition of historical study can also be found in the Arab world. Muqaddimah Ibn Khaldun (born 1377), an Arab historian and proto-sociologist, wrote about the seven common mistakes he believed historians typically made. Ibn Khaldun claimed that the cultural difference of another age must govern the evaluation of relevant historical material. He believed that it is necessary to define a set of principles when evaluating past societies and cultures. Furthermore, he stressed that one must develop experience studying history in order to become a better historian. Khaldun often criticized “…idle superstition and uncritical acceptance of historical data.” Consequently, he introduced a scientific method to the study of history and referred to it as his “new science.” His historical method laid the groundwork for the observation of the state’s role in communication, propaganda, and systematic bias throughout history. His contributions have earned him the title of the “father of the philosophy of history.”

Saint Augustine, (354–430 B.C.E.) the Christian Neo-Platonist and philosopher, exerted a deep influence on Christian and Western thought. During the Medieval and Renaissance periods, history was often studied with particular focus on religion; during this time, religion played a great role in the historical methods used by thinkers. However, in the 17th and 19th centuries, Western historians, particularly in France and Germany, began to develop modern methods of historiography. In the early 19th century, German philosopher and historian Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel introduced philosophy into the study of history, which fostered a more secular approach to history in the West. Leopold von Ranke (1795–1886), a German historian and logical positivist, had perhaps the most significant influence on the modern historical methodology. In his work, he stressed the importance of an exhaustive examination of primary sources in the search for objective truth and understanding of past events and personalities.
In the 20th century, academic historians shifted their focus away from epic-nationalistic narratives, which tended to glorify nations or individuals, instead focusing on complex social and intellectual forces in societies. Historical methods in the 20th century treated history more as a social science. Some of the leading advocates of history as a social science were Fernand Braudel, E. H. Carr, Fritz Fischer, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Hans-Ulrich Wehler, Bruce Trigger, Marc Bloch, Karl Dietrich Bracher, Peter Gay, Robert Fogel, Lucien Febvre, and Lawrence Stone. They advocated history as a social science, while also promoting a multi-disciplinary approach to their work. Braudel combined history with geography, while Bracher researched the use of history and political science in his writings. Fogel, on the other hand, synthesized history with economics. Gay stressed the importance of psychology as an important element in his historical work. Trigger employed both history and archaeology in order to draw his conclusions. Wehler, Bloch, Fischer, Stone, Febvre, and Le Roy Ladurie, true believers in multi-disciplinary studies, combined the study of history with sociology, geography, anthropology, and economics. However, in the academic community, many historians continued to consider history as purely a social science.

Throughout the 20th century, new approaches to historical study emerged. Historians such as Hugh Trevor-Roper, John Lukacs, Donald Creighton, Gertrude Himmelfarb, and Gerhard Ritter argued that the key to the historians’ work is imagination, making history more of an art than a science. French historians associated with the Annales School are known for the quantitative approach to history, using raw data to track the lives of individuals. Intellectual historians such as Herbert Butterfield, Ernst Nolte, and George Mosse have argued for the significance of ideas in history. American historians, motivated by the civil rights movement, focused on marginalized ethnic, racial, and socio-economic groups. Another genre of social history to emerge in the post-WWII era was Alltagsgeschichte (History of Everyday Life). The Alltagsgeschichte scholars, including Martin Broszat, Ian Kershaw, and Detlev Peukert, sought to examine the everyday life of ordinary people living in 20th-century Germany, especially during the Nazi period.
Not surprisingly, political ideology had an impact on historians’ interpretations of history. Marxist historians Eric Hobsbawm, E.P. Thompson, Rodney Hilton, Georges Lefebvre, Eugene D. Genovese, Isaac Deutscher, C. L. R. James, Timothy Mason, Herbert Aptheker, Arno J.Mayer, and Christopher Hill attempted to validate Karl Marx’s theories by analyzing history from the Marxist perspective. In response to the Marxist interpretation of history, historians François Furet, Richard Pipes, J. C. D. Clark, Roland Mousnier, Henry Ashby Turner, and Robert Conquest offered their own anti-Marxist interpretations of history. The feminist historians, including Joan Wallach Scott, Claudia Koonz, Natalie Zemon Davis, Sheila Rowbotham, Gisela Bock, Gerda Lerner, Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, and Lynn Hunt, have argued for the importance of studying the historical experiences of women.

The development of post-modernism has also had an impact on the work of historians. In recent years, postmodernists have challenged the validity and history altogether, claiming that it is based on personal interpretations of the sources and shaped by author’s bias. In his 1997 book, *In Defense of History*, Richard J. Evans, professor of Modern History at Cambridge University, defended the value of history against the postmodernists, following in the footsteps of another such defense, *The Killing of History*, a 1994 book published by Australian historian Keith Windschuttle. As a science and an art, history has its own methods of research and interpretative strengths and weaknesses; it is the study of historical facts, events, and phenomena, but through a variety of interpretative and objective methods.

All of these new approaches in history reflect the difficult tasks that historians must overcome. How can it be proven that a particular piece of data is reliable? How do we know that a particular event happened exactly at a certain time or place? How can we explain causation of historical events? Can ancient sources and informants be trusted? These questions have brought about two basic approaches: the idealistic and materialistic.

The followers of the idealistic approach emphasize the role of ideas in studying history and historical processes, whereas the followers of the materialistic approach emphasize such factors as economics as driving history and how people behave or respond. The former is a top-down
approach to history and prone to creation of hagiographies (stories of the great men or fathers of history). The latter a bottom-up approach where the masses, women, and non-Europeans, play a more profound role in the shaping of history.

The defenders of idealism, such as Plato, Hegel, Leibnitz, and Hume, do not deny the material as a factor. But they contend that substance, nature, and physical life are derived from and dependent upon the world of ideas or consciousness. The mind is the conduit through which the Deity communicates with humankind, or what might be termed the world consciousness. That particular understanding of history would monopolize the discourse until recently.

In opposition to idealism, materialism asserts that ideas are a mere corollary of material forces; followers of this approach believe that the social being determines the course of history. Social life is an objective public reality and thus reflected in--rather than a reflection of--the ideas of public consciousness. The study of regularity and social beings is the key to understanding political, legal, philosophical, aesthetic, and religious theorizing, which are all types or expressions of public consciousness.

These two approaches have struggled to prove the superiority, validity, correctness, and logic of their respective vantage points. The idealistic understanding of history dominated the field until the middle of the 19th century. After this, the materialistic idea took hold amongst academic historians and this debate continues actively amongst them. For example, a Canadian historian and critic of Marxist interpretations of the Peasants War of 1525, James M. Stayer advocates the concept about the “location of ideas on a material horizon.”

Materialistic theories of history and socio-historical processes are mainly connected with the Marxism-Leninism doctrine, which was the official ideology of public thought and science during the Soviet period. It was the driving force in all areas of academia in the Soviet Union and it was used by scholars practically and on the mandatory base. These dominant policies of the Communist Party and its principles monopolized the socio-historical discussion, prohibiting the development of objective scientific research. As a result, a very one-sided, materialistic, and reductionist point of view dominated various disciplines. The dis-
integration of the Soviet Empire into independent national republics, as well as the end of party loyalty and ideological constraint made it possible to overcome a crisis in the sciences and humanities. It is a well-known fact that during the Soviet period the Marxist-Leninist agenda had forced scholars to produce highly subjective and revisionist histories.

In many post-Soviet republics such as Kyrgyzstan, materialism is still the dominant approach; however, the study of history has become much more objective.

Historicism refers to the study of all historical facts and events in close connection with their true historical circumstances. Historicism holds historians accountable: they must consider historians’ facts as sequential developments; they must understand and explain the connection between people and their concrete circumstances. This, consequently, makes the field of history largely reliant upon revisionism.

The principle of scientific objectivity is rooted in the validity of the quality of the historical sources themselves. Historians must use objective, authentic, truly valuable materials and thus avoid prejudice in the collection of their data. The study of history also demands that equal weight is given to the positive and negative sides of any issue. Objectivity depends on the theoretical background of the historian and his level of training. This is especially true when dealing with Soviet histories and historians.

The social approach (Class or Party Principle) demands the observance and protection of the interests of various social groups in any historical processes. According to this principle, special interests, classes, or separate groups take the role of leader in aims of universal human interests (interests of the “individual,” “party,” etc.). They typically declare their own special place in history. The alternative to this allows for individual states and some famous historical people to play a prominent role.

One thing is clear: no single principle or approach is sufficient. Only the preservation, observance, and complex application of a variety of methods, or principles, are likely to produce a complete, objective, and scientific comprehension of the past.
Historical study often focuses on events and developments that happen at a particular point in time. In order to organize ideas and generalize, historians must assign names to historical periods. The names given to certain periods of time, the beginning and end of a particular epoch can depend on their geographical locations and territories.

Periodization of history is one of the most important problems of historical science. A variety of dividing lines have been proposed. In general, it is possible to divide the whole of world history into four periods:

Antiquity, lasting from the appearance of human beings about two million years ago to the fall of the Roman Empire in 476 C.E.

The Middle Ages, lasting from the fall of the Roman Empire to the Renaissance in the 16th century.

From the Renaissance to the end of the First World War (1918).

From the Modern Era (c. 1500 to around c. 1800) to the present.

The ancient Greek poet, Hesiod (VIII - VII centuries B.C.E.) identified four stages in the history of the world and nation building as Golden, Silver, Copper, and Iron Ages. The idea was that life did not improve with each successive development. Another ancient Greek philosopher and thinker, Pythagoras (VI century B.C.E.), proposed the circular theory of history in which development was a never-ending cycle of rise and decline.

The German scientist A. Hildebrand (1847-1921) divided human history into three economic periods: subsistence, monetary, and credit economies. He rejected Marxism and denied the idea of capitalism as exploitative. Hildebrand also contended that socialism, or equality, was detrimental to freedom.

The Russian geographer Mechnikov (1845-1916) tried to prove that human history and geography were inextricably connected, and that civilization and social development were the consequence of the same physical-geographical forces and of communication lines such as rivers, lakes, and oceans in the process of socio-economic and technological advance. According to him, three periods existed in human history, each connected to the use of a type of geographic feature: rivers, coinciding with ancient civilizations like Egypt and Babylonia; the Mediterranean,
coinciding with the Islamic and Christian civilizations of the Middle Ages; and oceans, coinciding with the navigation of the Atlantic, discovery of the Americas, and emergence of the modern age.

The methodology of dialectical materialism, adopted into historical study in the mid-19th century by German philosopher and father of Socialism Karl Marx, turned Hegel’s theory of history on its head. It explained that economic forces and class warfare were the basis for the natural and evolutionary change from capitalism to socialism and to full communism in the industrialized West; this methodology bases its conclusions on changes in the modes of production. Accordingly, Marx divided history into five social and economic periods: primitive-communal, slave, feudal, capitalist, and communistic.

Unlike Marx, many Western historians were on the side of idealism, preferring the theory of history in which the pattern of revival and decline is repeated *ad infinitum*. Related to this is the principle of circulation of local civilizations. Change is thus a vicious cycle of returning back to some initial starting point from which subsequent cycles of revival and decline begin, in the pattern of the classical Roman model.

The most famous defender of this, also known as the “civilizational approach” was the English historian and sociologist Arnold Toynbee (1889 –1975) who argued that history of the world merely consists of a set of separate and original histories of what he called “closed civilizations.” Toynbee identified twenty-one such civilizations, but later reduced the number to thirteen. According to his model, every “civilization” passes through the following stages: appearance, growth, decline, and fall. After this, another arises to take its place. For Toynbee, the modern world consisted of eight civilizations in various stages of growth and decomposition.

The American sociologist, economist, and historian Walt Rostow (1916–2003) put forward his own economic division of history as an alternative to Marx’s. For Rostow, human history can be divided into the following five periods: traditional societies, characterized by undeveloped technologies, restricted production, as well as a fatalistic cultural and political worldview; transitional societies, characterized by concentration of new ideas, new economic sectors, and professions; a take-off stage in which rapid changes from a traditional to a market economy
take place; a drive to maturity in which investment comprises from ten
to twenty percent of GDP and trade is international as well as national
in nature; and finally, mass consumption, constituting a very high level
of consumption and production of durable goods. The crucial questions
at this final stage are social safety and the well-being of the citizenry.
Moreover, the transition to stages three and five (market economy and
mass consumption) are only possible, according to Rostow, if enough
capital and foreign investment can be found in order to push forward
economic growth.\footnote{7}

It is important to note that the historical approach which this text-
book will use is based on the five social stages of development: Prehis-
tory, Antiquity, the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Modernity.

The authors’ hope is that the aforementioned discussion of history
will give students a better understanding of the relationship of history
to science and its place among the social sciences. Moreover, the im-
portance of history is emphasized in the initiative of state authorities
that proclaimed 2012 as the year of better learning and research of the
history of Kyrgyzstan. Hopefully, this book will give students a solid
basis for perceiving Kyrgyzstan as an integral part of Central Asian and
world history.
Part I.
KYRGYZSTAN FROM ANCIENT TIMES TO THE MID-19TH CENTURY

Prehistory on the territory of Kyrgyzstan

The Stone Age is a historical and cultural epoch of human society associated with using stone for making tools and objects needed for production of food and defense against nature and one’s enemies. Although some archaeological investigations point to its beginning as more than five million years ago, scholars generally agree that it started with the separation of human beings from the animal world around two and a half million years ago.

Modern scientists explain that human beings descended from an ape-like ancestor that lived a few million years ago. The theory of evolution states that Homo sapiens, through a combination of environmental and genetic factors, emerged as a species to produce the variety of ethnicities seen today. Because there was a divergence in the evolution of different species, the ape family evolved along a separate evolutionary pathway. The most famous proponent of evolutionary theory was Charles Darwin (1809-82) with his book, *On the Origin of Species* (1859). Since then, human origins have generally been explained from the evolutionary perspective. Moreover, the theory of human evolution has been and continues to be modified as new findings are discovered, revisions to the theory are adopted, and earlier concepts are proven incorrect and discarded.

The first indications of human presence on the territory of Kyrgyzstan dates back to about four thousand years ago, during the early Paleolithic Age (also known as the Stone Age or Ashels Epoch). The monuments from that time were found at the On-Archa River in Central, Tian-Shan, and Khodja-Bakyrgan Sai on the border of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

During the Middle Stone Age or Mustier Epoch (one hundred thousand years ago) many important technological innovations occurred. In this period, Homo sapiens became the main inhabitants of this area. They created different stone tools, expanded the use of fire, and invented the bow and arrow. Monuments from this sub-period have been found in Tosor Valley in Issyk-Kul, Georgievka Village on the border of Chui Province, near the Chil-Ustun Mountains in Osh Province, and Kazakh-
stan. In the Dangirel-Dere Cave in the Alai Mountains, archaeologists found evidence of tools made from silicon of different colors; this location likely served as a workshop where ancient people experimented with various types of silicon to create new tools. In 1938, in the Te-shik-Tash Cave of Uzbekistan, the archaeological expedition headed by A.P. Okladnikov discovered a grave of a Neanderthal girl. The fact that her grave was decorated with the horns of wild goats suggests that her society held some kind of a primitive religious belief. Based on the evidence, these religious beliefs included a belief in protection of the religious entity in life and death. Additionally, the evidence shows us that ritualization of death was already being practiced at this time.

The Upper Paleolithic Period, which began forty-thousand years ago and lasted almost for thirty thousand years, saw the formation of different racial groups throughout the diverse climatic zones in Central Asia and throughout the world. According to DNA and early migratory patterns in Central Asia ca. 60,000 B.C.E., huge groups of people migrated out of Africa into southern Arabia, then moving on along the southern route to India, Southeast Asia, and Australia. These people were to become the progenitors of Australian aborigines, New Guineans, and South Indians. It is assumed that they possessed boat-building skills because they had to have crossed the Red Sea and the gulf between Bali and Australia. In 50,000 B.C.E., the second migration took place along the northern route into Central Asia. Over time, these people developed lighter skin (as a consequence of limited sun and the need for vitamin D absorption) and distinct physical characteristics. The challenges of an environment harsher than that of their native Africa may have naturally selected many with lower IQs. As the Ice Age began to wane, 30,000 B.C.E. gave impetus to migration from Central Asia into Europe and northeast Asia. They become the Cro-Magnon and Mongolian races.

The Metholithic Age, which began twelve thousand years ago, saw such changes as climate warming, the appearance of modern plants and animals, microlithic stone tools, and refinements to the bow and arrow. During this period, the mammoth, the woolly rhinoceros, and larger animals disappeared; smaller animals became the main focus of hunting societies.

The typical Paleolithic human was part of a society and economy of hunter-gatherers. Humans hunted wild animals for meat and gathered
firewood and other raw materials for their tools, clothes, and shelter. Human population density at this time has been estimated as low as one person per square mile.

The New Stone Age, or Neolithic Period, began around the seventh to third millennia BCE. As a historian D. Christian points out, unlike hunter-gatherer lifeways, those of neolithic encouraged population growth, so they introduced a new dynamism into human history. While foraging lifeways could support population densities of approximately one person to every ten square kilometers, even the earliest forms of farming could support as many as 50 people from a similar area.\(^8\)

Monuments from this era can be found in many locations in Kyrgyzstan and dated back to five-thousand years ago.

The most interesting of these are caves containing evidence of ancient habitation. On the walls of Ak-Chunkur Cave on the Sary-Jaz River in Issyk-Kul, there are countless petroglyphs of people, bulls, goats, and snakes; they are typically painted in red pastels. Ak-Chunkur Cave
is at altitude of about four or five thousand meters about sea level. The
cave itself is about forty to fifty meters in area, including a main area
which is approximately two meters in width and three to four meters in
height. The images depicted on the cavern walls were made with the red
mineral ocher. The drawing was done using the little finger. These strip-
like wall paintings appear on the dome walls throughout the cave. The
lack of ceramics and crude nature of the stone tools are consistent with
the archaeological record to show that the creators of these paintings
date back to the early Neolithic period.

Other archaeological sites and ancient settlements, such as Te-
ke-Sekirik near Naryn, the Alamudun river, and the settlement adjacent
Cholpon-Ata in Issyk-Kul offer evidence to two great changes that oc-
curred in the history of the people of this region: the domestication of
animals and agriculture (primarily through the development and use of
seeds). Known as the Neolithic Revolution, this marks the transition
from foraging communities to nomadic and sedentary societies. Consis-
tent with this explanation, the archaeological record shows the appear-
ance of pottery, weaving, and simple handicrafts.

In the early periods of the Stone Age people
typically lived in small groups. A single cave
dwelling or settlement would have included from
twenty to fifty individuals. The number of individ-
uals in the group affected the level of social interaction and collaboration
in a given community. These groups typically consisted of several fami-
lies. Sometimes, several groups joined together to form larger groups for
organized social activities (such as acquiring mates or, if resources were
plentiful, celebrations). In these societies, hunting and gathering were
the prerogative for both men and women, making this time and place one
of the most gender-equal moments in human history. Indeed, the archeo-
logical evidence (art and funeral rituals) indicates that women enjoyed a
slightly higher status than men. Matriarchy, not patriarchy, was the pre-
ferred system of social organization and power structure. One explanation
is the stressed importance on reproduction within these societies. Addition-
ally, the knowledge of food preservation, performed by women, made
them much more vital to the survival of the tribe.

However, the status of women declined with the economic and so-
cial changes that occurred during the Neolithic Period. The physical
demands of farming and of cattle-breeding awarded males more prominence within these social groups. The gradual switch to organizing people along kinship lines and tribalism based on patriarchal blood ties played a significant role in the elevation of men over women as the natural leaders and defenders of the community.

As Jared Diamond, the evolutionary biologist and bio-geographer suggests controversially in his Pulitzer prize winning *Guns, Germs, and Steel* (1997), the status of women diminished with the adoption of agriculture, because women in farming societies were likely to become pregnant more often than in hunting and gathering societies.9

As advancement in technology developed, the Neolithic Period, or New Stone Age, eventually gave development to the various metal ages. The first metal to be smelted was copper. The Copper Age is also known as the Eneolithic Age (from the Latin word for copper, *aeneus*, and Greek word for stone, *lithos*) or Halkolith Age (from the Greek words for copper and stone, *chalkos* and *lithos* respectively). The Copper Age in Central Asia dates back to five thousand years ago. It is thought that copper was carried from various locations in western Asian to the Balkans, and then carried up the Dnieper River and into Europe. Cold and hot methods of copper refinement were used during this period. The flexibility and softness of copper allowed for the shaping of raw copper nuggets into a number of forms and shapes with the help of stone hammers.

Eventually, other, more sophisticated methods of refinement quickly followed. Melting copper and putting it into molds to fashion the needed shape soon became a more efficient way to transform the material. This method became a common, long-lasting method because it was more efficient as a method of refinement and production.

In order to find copper ore, it was necessary to travel far from home. This phenomenon broadened the geographical outlook and developed the mining and refining skills of Copper Age people. On their expeditions, they invariably met others who shared their own skills and experiences with them. The various hardships of the road also led to the discovery of better and better methods of travel, such as the wheel, perhaps the greatest achievement of the Copper Age.
That is interesting but until the 19th century, copper was considered to be bronze by many archaeologists, which caused them to blur the line between the Stone and Bronze Ages. They wrongly assumed that the Stone Age was followed by the Bronze Era. In the 20th century, advancements in the field of chemical research allowed archaeologists to define properly these respective periods in history.

The Copper Age can be characterized by the following:

- The use of the hoe in farming.
- The use of both stone and copper tools.
- The construction of clay (adobe) domiciles where they lived as extended families.
- The creation of ceramic dishware.
- The symbolism of women as matriarchal and fertility figures.
- The decoration of pottery and other artifacts using natural paints.

During the Bronze Age (3000-1000BCE), the use of metal tools increased effectiveness of labor, pushed forward development of farming and cattle-breeding and increased trade of food and tools between families and tribes. In the early third millennium, the cattle-breeding transited to the pastoral nomadism and according to D. Christian, there is no doubt that Central Asian pastoralists played an important role in the evolution of pastoralism in the eastern steppes.\(^\text{10}\)

However, the copper tools were very fragile; to increase reliability and durability, people started mixing copper with tin and charcoal in an attempt to create a slightly more resilient hybrid. About 3,000 years ago, the invention of bronze was a technological achievement that quickly spread and dramatically changed the economic, social, and cultural life of human beings. This achievement granted men more power in relation to the rest of their communities. Increasingly, male physical strength was synonymous with sustenance and the best defense against foreign invasion. Matriarchy gave a way to patriarchy; the extended, communal family (in which every man and woman was father and mother to every child) was replaced by the nuclear family model – husbands and wives with their children. This reorganization of social units led to the accumulation of food surpluses, property inequalities, and the preconditions for stratification based on class.
The Bronze Age settlements in both Chui Valley (Sadovoe, Sokuluk, and Shamshi) and Osh (which was excavated in 1976 by Zadneprovskiy, a famous Soviet archaeologist) contained many bronze agricultural tools, pottery, and ceramics. Based on the more than six-hundred ceramic shards unearthed by Zadneprovskiy, it is possible to differentiate various communities and several stages of development of the Bronze Age on the territory of present Kyrgyzstan. The Andronovo and Chust settlements are two cases in point.

The name “Andronovo” comes from the name of a village in southern Siberia. In 1814, several burial grounds containing skeletons in crouched positions and richly ornamented pottery were found there. The name of village was then used by archaeologists to name this distinctive Bronze Age community going back to the second millennium B.C.E. The Andronovo community occupied the vast territory of western Asia. Its western edge was a contact point for the Srubnaya (Timber Grave Culture) in the Volga-Ural region which stretches eastward to the Minusin Valley. Settlements have been found as far south as the foothills of Koppet Dag, and the Pamir and Tian Shan Mountains. The extent of their northern reach is difficult to ascertain; archaeologists believe that they probably reached as far as the Taiga. However, a chain of Andronovo-type settlements have been found in the forest-steppe zone of western Siberia, as well.

Evidence of the Andronovo has also been found in the settlements and burial ground sites of Petrovka-Sintashta (2000-1600 B.C.E.), Alakul’ and Fyedorovo (1500-1300 B.C.E.), and Sargary-Alexeevka (1200-1000 B.C.E.). These sites differ somewhat with respect to features in pottery design, tools, and funeral rituals. For example, the Alakul’ people buried their tribes and people in a “bent position” at the bottom of a pit. The Fyedorovo, on the other hand, recreated their dead, spreading the ashes of the deceased in a pit and together with a “doll figure,” placing a stone or earthen marker next to the burial site.
The Andronovo were expansive, spreading out and as far as the Urals in the west, the steppes of Kazakhstan and southern Siberia to the Enisey River in the east, the Taiga to the north and Tian-Shan and Pamir and Afghanistan to the south. As E. Kuzmina explains, “the most brilliant
complex of Andronovo culture on the territory of Kyrgyzstan is burial Arpa in Naryn region. The kurgans made from clay and peddle stone, with stone square and circle fence are seen and they are located 3000 meters above sea.”

Beginning in the 18th century B.C.E., a group of Andronovo people migrated from Siberia to the steppes and mountainous zones of Central Asia. Two important factors made this migration and people more resilient and dynamic than many of their sedentary contemporaries. Firstly, around the same time (2,000 B.C.E.) the climate had become drier than in Siberia region. It became necessary to find other pasture land in order to feed one’s flocks, which took a measure of extraordinary courage and determination. Secondly, a sudden population growth occurred, leading to the growth and spread of the Andronovo, but also the inter-tribal conflicts and a competition for resources. This likely forced many of this group to migrate south towards Central Asia. Proof of this migration from Siberia to Kyrgyzstan of an Andronovo splinter group can be seen in the treasure trove of Andronovo artifacts unearthed in Toktogul, Kochkorka, Ak-Sai, Arpa, Aleksandrovka, Kainda and other early settlements throughout Kyrgyzstan. One example is the row of settlements, graves, and petroglyphs near Belovodskoe Village in Chui Valley, which date back to the second millennium B.C.E.

Archeological findings prove that the Andronovo had a complex and diversified economy which consisted of cattle-breading and agriculture. Horses, cattle, sheep, and two-hump camels were the most common animals used for domestication and herding. Evidence shows that the Andronovo may have been the first to homogenize kumys, or fermented horse milk. By the end of the Bronze Age, the domestication of horses took precedence, a natural response given the pattern of continued migration, search for pasture land, and inter-tribal conflicts. As time passed, a “pastoral nomadism” dependent on livestock became the dominant mode of life for these societies.
The largest of these early Andronovo archaeological sites is in Tok-togul in southern Kyrgyzstan. The biggest room of this settlement has an area of seventy square meters and is one meter deep. It is possible that as many as twenty-five people may have lived together at this site. In addition to cattle-breeding and agriculture, their economy included such handicrafts as pottery and weaving. Their tools, found mostly in grave sites, reflect that they were active during the Bronze Age.

According to specialists, the Andronovo were Europoids or Caucasians who spoke a language of eastern-Iranian (or Persian) origin. In 2,500 B.C.E. groups of Andronovo migrated to northern India and were mistaken by locals for Arians (which in Sanskrit means, “master” or “noble.”).

The Andronovo observed two types of funeral rituals, burial and the cremation of the deceased. Their custom of burying the dead with food, tools, and jewels reveals that they had some recognition or belief in an afterlife. Such items are found in burial sites in Karakul and Aleksandrovka village; at these locations, archaeologists have discovered as many as thirty crescents alongside the burial sites.

Extended and patriarchal families were the fabric of Andronovo social life and tribal identity. The abundance of images reveals that this
culture held belief in a cult of ancestors, animism, fetishism, totemism, and shamanism. The petroglyphs at the sites of Saimaluu-Tash and Cholpon-Ata reveal that social inequality was justified by religious beliefs instilled in their culture.

Earthen houses served as a dwelling with a great number of economic extensions and enclosures for livestock.

The most well-known discoveries of the Andronovo culture are the Saimaluu-Tash petroglyphs on the Kugart River in the Toguz-Toro district of Jalal-Abad oblast. These petroglyphs sit at three thousand meters above sea level; the area of the where they are located is about one hundred seventy five square kilometers in size. In 1940, N.A. Bernshtam led an expedition in which his crew was able to document more than forty-two thousand images of the site.

According to M. Frachetti, an American archeologist, petroglyphs can be divided into three basic types: images that reflect the nomadic household and pastoral life; agriculture and settled households; amphibious species such as snakes and frogs, and pictorial representations of the erotic. The findings at Saimaluu-Tash are consistent with this observation.\(^{13}\)

Specifically, the Andronovo Culture is a general term that describes a widely distributed set of archaeologically documented materials including: 1) open form ceramic jars with incised geometric decorations; 2) stone-lined burials located under round mounds of earth or within rectangular stone structures; and 3) specific bronze objects such as axes, weapons, and jewelry. These are the main elements used in the general classification of the Andronovo Culture, and there are “cultural” sub-groups that are based on variations in the decoration and attributes of this material package. Furthermore, the sub-cultures of the Andronovo are associated with different regions of the steppe zone as well as different time periods in the culture history of the region.\(^{14}\)
In northern Kyrgyzstan, the Andronovo dominated and flourished. However, in the southern regions of present-day Osh and Jalal-Abad, the Chust people were the dominant culture. In contrast to the Andronovo, the Chust were sedentary and agricultural, with a more highly developed culture of arts and crafts. The name Chust comes from a village in the Namangan province of Uzbekistan. The Chust, much like the Andronovo, were also Europoids who spoke an eastern-Iranian language. The settlements at Osh, Uzgen, and Nookat were originally Chust settlements.

Saimaluu Tash Petroglyphs
The richest and most investigated of these Chust settlements are located on the slopes of Sulaiman Mountain in Osh. It is one of the most ancient and unique archaeological testaments to the Bronze Age in Kyrgyzstan and the greater part of Central Asia. During the construction of a road on the slopes of the Sulaiman Mountains, a curator of the Osh Museum found fragments of ceramic dishes. In 1976, a Ferghana expedition funded by the Institute of Archaeology of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR in Leningrad (present-day St. Petersburg) excavated the settlement. Led by Yurii Zadneprovskii, the excavation revealed that the settlement turned out to be six hundred meters in size and its architecture and design turned out to be very unique – it included terraced agriculture of fields and housing for its inhabitants.

For three years, Zadneprovskii and his team excavated the site and amazing and sizeable collection of cultural and economic artifacts was found for the future study. Their housing designs, ceramic dishes, bronze and stone tools were carefully studied with the greatest diligence and interest. The team was intrigued by the agricultural practices of this society; the discovery of large holes in the ground fascinated the team.
The inhabitants used these areas to store wheat, barley, and other cereals and vegetables—more than seventy such underground silos were found.

The Chust people had a more hierarchical society. A larger portion of the harvest, military spoils, and other material bounties were the rightful property of the families of social elites and religious chieftains, giving impetus to social tensions and class differences.

Scholars have assembled and restored the majority of all broken artifacts discovered at these sites. Most of these are now on display at the Sulaiman Osh Museum-Complex. In all, the museum houses more than ten thousand fragments of clay dishes, bronze tools, jewelry, and other artifacts from the Bronze Age settlement. In accordance with the results of radiocarbon dating tests of coal deposits found in one of the Osh underground silos, the city of Osh dates back to at least three thousand years ago.

The Chust people created dishes using a very specific technique. They were typically created manually and covered with red clay. Semi-spherical bowls, as well as conic and spherical pots with flat bottoms were decorated with geometrical ornamentation or with images of vegetables. The images on the pottery were drawn in black to contrast the red
clay. The image of a goat appears on one fragment and is the first image depicting an animal to be found after nearly thirty years of research into early Chust material culture.

After the Dalversin Tepe collection in southern Uzbekistan, the dishes from the Osh settlement constitute the richest collection of archaeological artifacts from Central Asia. Naturally, this is clear indication of the wide reach of Chust culture in the region, which includes the vast territory of present-day Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. The pottery’s ornamentation and its significant indication of the religious-magical beliefs of these cultures are truly striking. In addition to the dishes, archeologists found three hundred stone artifacts: stone sickles, hand-mills, and tools used in grinding of flour and making of bread.

Findings from the ancient Osh settlement

Osh was a cultural and ideological center of the Chust culture in the Fergana Valley. The slopes of mountains protected the artifacts from the destructive harms of nature and time. The soil that covered the settlement preserved artifacts in good condition until they were excavated.
The discoveries at these sites reveal the antiquity of the city of Osh, which has been more or less inhabited since the Bronze Age.

The Bronze Age is an important cultural and historical starting point in the history of Kyrgyzstan. It marks the creation of two distinct economic households and styles of living—nomadic pastoralism and that of agricultural, sedentary lifestyle; it also consists of the development of bronze technologies and the creation of a unique form of petroglyphic artistic expression. The fascinating archaeology and rich history of Osh has patiently waited thorough scholarly investigation. The sites indeed have helped in revealing important information about the past.

**Great Civilizations: Saka Tribal Unions and the Dayuan State**

From the eighth to the third century B.C.E. the vast territory of Central Asia was inhabited by numerous nomadic tribes known in ancient Persian cuneiform texts as the Sakas—“free men, noble men (warriors).” They have been known by several names. Ancient writers called them Scythians; in ancient Indian sources they are referred to as the Tur; the Chinese called them the Se People. Individual groups who entered this tribal confederacy had their own names – the term “Saka” was used to refer to all members of this union. “Herodotus, “The Father of History”, wrote about the origins of the Scythians.

According to the account which the Scythians themselves give, they are the youngest of all nations. Their tradition is as follows. A certain Targitaus was the first man who ever lived in their country, which was a desert without inhabitants before. According to a legend he was a child-of Jove and a daughter of Borysthenes. Targitaus begot three sons, Leipoxais, Arpoxais, and Colaxais. While they were ruling over the land, four implements, all of gold, dropped to the ground from the clouds— a plough, a yoke, a battle-axe, and a drinking-cup. The eldest of the brothers found
them first, and approached to pick them up. When he came nearer, the gold took fire, and blazed. He tried again but the same happened to him. The gold rejected both the eldest and the second brother. When the youngest brother approached the flames were extinguished immediately, so he picked up the gold, and carried it to his home. Then the two elder agreed together, and made the whole kingdom over to the youngest born. From Leipoxais sprang the Scythians of the race called Auchatae; from Arpoxais, the middle brother, those known as the Catari and Trasprians; from Colaxais, the youngest, the Royal Scythians, or Paralatae. All together they are named Scoloti, after one of their kings: the Greeks, however, call them Scythians.

Such is the account which the Scythians gave of their origin. They added that from the time of Targitaus, their first king, to the invasion of their country by Darius, is a period of one thousand years, neither less nor more. The Royal Scythians guard the sacred gold with most especial care, and year by year offer great sacrifices in its honor. At this feast, if the man who has the custody of the gold should fall asleep in the open air, he is sure (the Scythians say) not to outlive the year. His pay therefore is as much land as he can ride round on horseback in a day. As the extent of Scythia is very great, Colaxais gave each of his three sons a separate kingdom, one of which was of ampler size than the other two: in this the gold was preserved. Above, to the northward of the farthest dwellers in Scythia, the country is said to be concealed from sight and made impassable by reason of the feathers which are shed abroad abundantly. The earth and air are alike full of them, and this is what prevents the eye from obtaining any view of the region.¹⁶

From the sixth to the fifth centuries B.C.E., the Sakas of Central Asia were organized into two large tribal confederations. The first confed-
eration consisted of the Massagetae, Abii, Apa-siaks, Debec, and the Dacians. In ancient Persian sources, this union was referred to as the Saka-Tigrakhauda. In ancient Greek writings, it was called the Saka-Ortokoribants, which means “Sakas in the pointed hats.” The Saka alliance controlled a vast territory, from the Caspian Sea and the Uzboy River to the Tian-Shan Mountains and the floodplain of the Ili River. The Tigrakhauda Sakas inhabited the northern region of present-day Kyrgyzstan.

The territory of the Second Saka Union stretched from northern India to Pamir-Alai and the Fergana Valley. In Persian sources, this portion of the Sakas was called the Haomavarga, which translates to “Sakas who honor the drink, haoma.” (Haoma is a stimulant derived from the sap of ephedra and was used for religious purposes.) This half of the Sakas were prominent in the southern regions of contemporary Kyrgyzstan.

Multiple sources suggest that the Sakas were a Euro-Asian people. For example, traces of Mongolian features are found in some Tigrakhauda Sakas. A Soviet archaeologist A.N. Bernstam believed that the Saka tribes of Central Asia consisted of a variety of ethnic types (Turkic being the most dominant of these ethnicities).\textsuperscript{17} Soviet scholars were the first who claimed that the Sakas were Iranian-speaking peoples.

However, the work of T. Ryskulov a Kyrgyz historian, argues that the Sakas language was Turkic. His work shows that the Sakas were the predecessors of all Turkic-speaking peoples.\textsuperscript{18} The academic community, however, is not convinced by Ryskulov’s research. Local and regional historians who work with the history of the Sakas refute his claims.

The Sakas were nomadic and their social system based largely on familial and kinship ties. The gradual appearance of wealth and social inequality eventually undermined the communal and familial order, giving way to the emergence of tribalized nobilities. As the authority and power of military commanders increased, their wealth also increased, albeit disproportionately. The contents of Sakas graves and other archaeological findings clearly demonstrate a high degree of social stratification by the fifth century B.C.E.

In honor of its ruling elites, the Sakas erected huge burial mounds, some of these more than a hundred meters wide and as many as fifteen meters deep. Graves of the Sakas aristocracy were smaller by compar-
ison, forty meters wide and six meters high on average. The graves of Sakas soldiers were smaller still, whereas the graves of commoners, and of the slaves who were also a part of Sakas society, were barely detectable. The other important difference was the contents of the aforementioned Sakas graves. Archaeologists recovered up to four thousand gold artifacts from the largest graves, the rest a treasure trove of clay articles.

The natural conditions under which the Sakas lived largely determined the community’s economic activities. The Sakas of northern Kyrgyzstan were mainly engaged in livestock breeding; their southern counterparts living in the Fergana Valley engaged in agriculture and herding. Pastoralists bred coarse-wool sheep and Bactrian camels, whereas horses and cattle were the lifeblood of those living in the Kyrgyz highlands. In regions where the climate was more moderate, the Sakas there developed irrigation farming techniques of various kinds, growing wheat, barley, and millet. The main food sources of the Sakas, however, were meat and milk. The fabric for clothing was made from wool and plant fibers, as well as animal skins. Archaeological evidence suggests that the “pointed hats” of the Sakas were made of felt. The manufacture of various leather items—harnesses, pots, and various arts and crafts was highly developed.

Objects and devices of Sakas’ appliances
A vast array of uniquely Sakas artifacts has been found in such places as Chuy Valley, Issyk-Kul Basin, and Tianshan. This includes altars, lamps, cone-shaped pots, and other articles associated with a high level of applied arts and crafts. The depiction of various animals is a conspicuous element in this collection--running goats and predators of all kinds—which suggest an animistic predilection in their art. Jewelry made from gold and bronze, and varieties of ceramics conform to this pattern and thus reflect the attitudes and philosophical views of the Sakas.

In the sixth century B.C.E., the Tigrakhauda Sakas had a fierce struggle for independence with Cyrus II, the Persian king. In 550 B.C.E. he defeated the kingdom of Midia founded by the powerful Achaemenids, which stretched from the Mediterranean Sea to the Indus Valley. The works of Herodotus, the famous Greek historian, suggest that, following the decisive victory, Cyrus II considered himself to be a god.
In 530 B.C.E., Cyrus II led a huge army of some 200,000 men against the Tigrakhauda Sakas who were led by Queen Tomyris. Despite the superior strength of the Persian army, it was ultimately defeated by the opposing forces and Cyrus II, who dreamt of the world domination, was taken as prisoner and beheaded.

In contrast, however, the military campaigns of successive Achaemenids, such as Darius I, would prove successful. During a campaign between 519-518 B.C.E., Darius I conquered the Sakas, forcing them to pay tribute to his kingdom. Nonetheless, he failed to extend his monarchical authority to the northern side of the Syr Darya River. The Sakas of northern Kyrgyzstan managed to maintain a degree of independence, despite the later Persian invasion and presence in the south.

Later, the Sakas—northern and southern—would make peace with their Persian occupiers and enter into a military alliance, fighting alongside the Achaemenids in the Greco-Persian conflict (500-449 B.C.E.). In the Battle of Marathon (490 B.C.E.), the present-day Greece, great bravery and courage were shown by the Sakas warrior-horsemen, despite losing to the Greeks. Well-trained in military affairs, the Sakas played an important role in the Persian-led offensive armies against Greece and Egypt.

\[
\text{Sakas weapons:} \\
1-3 – iron swords; \\
4-6 – iron spears; \\
7-10 – bronze arrow-heads; \\
11 – iron helmet
\]
The imperial conquests of Alexander the Great, who, after defeating the Achaemenids undertook a campaign to bring all of Central Asia under the Greek rule, testify the resilient nature of the Sakas tribes. After decimating a combined force of Persian and Sakas soldiers in 331 B.C.E., Alexander marched his army straightway to the shores of the Syr Darya River in 329 B.C.E. It was here where he met the fierce resistance of the combined Sakas tribes. Their rigid military discipline, extensive experience on the battlefield, and highly sophisticated condition made them a considerable foe against the forces of Alexander. However, the Sakas Confederacy was ultimately defeated on the banks of the Syr Darya River in 329 B.C.E. During the conflict, they inflicted such heavy casualties that the Greeks would never fully succeed in occupying the territory held by the Sakas. The Greek forces only reached as far as the side of modern-day Osh and the Kojo-Bakyrgan-Sai River in Leylek. The stubborn resistance to Greek expansion that Alexander met in Central Asia put a hinder for his plans to conquer India. Alexander soon died, in 323 B.C.E., on the way from India.
In 312 B.C.E., one of Alexander’s generals, Seleucus, founded the Greco-Bactrian State (312-64 B.C.E.). According to some scholars, the city of Antioch, located on the eastern outskirts of the Empire, was in the vicinity of modern-day Uzgen in Kyrgyzstan. This may explain the warm relations between the people of Fergana Valley with the Greeks. The close relations eventually formed the foundation for the Silk Road, which stretched from China in the east to Rome in the west.

There is little information on the latest periods of the history of the Sakas states. The lack of unity and intensifying strife for power between the tribes created favorable conditions for their conquest by more powerful nomadic tribes from the east.

In the 2nd century B.C.E., the Sakas’ possessions across the Syr-Darya River were captured by the Yuezhi (Tocharians), who had been driven out of eastern Turkestan by the Huns. However, the Yuezhi failed to find a long-term foothold in the Tianshan and Ferghana Valley. Only after entering into an alliance with the Sakas they were they able to defeat the Greco-Bactrian kingdom in Central Asia.

In the middle of the 2nd century B.C.E., the Sakas tribes of the Central Tianshan were invaded again by the Wusuns that moved from eastern Turkestan. The Wusuns grew much stronger during the period of potency and prosperity of the Hun Empire, and aspired to independence.
This forced the Sakas of Semirechye to seek shelter and migrate deeper to the west of Central Asia, into inaccessible mountainous areas. The rest of the Sakas assimilated with the Wusuns who occupied their lands. According to common Central Asian tradition, the Sakas lost their popular name and adopted the name of the victors instead and, as a result, left the historical scene.

The origin of the term “Wusun” is debated among scholars. One suggestion is that the term “Wusun” went down in the history of the Chinese dynastic chronicles as the “people of ten clans” (wus - clan, un - ten) from the ancient Turkic language. According to another version, the term came from the river Uspa (Uzun), which flows through eastern Turkestan. The analysis of numerous genealogical materials and Turkic genealogical legends suggests that Wusuns were a branch of the Turkic peoples, although their anthropological type was not typical for the indigenous population of Turkestan. They were red-bearded and blue-eyed people.

N. Aristov, a Russian scholar and former tsarist official in Turkestan, came to the following conclusion in his work, “The Wusuns and the Kara-Kyrgyz or Kirghiz: Essays on the history and life of the population of the West Tien Shan and research on historical geography” (1893):

The Wusuns were the direct ancestors of the Kara-Kyrgyz, who occupied the western Tien Shan, and originally formed part of the Kyrgyz people who dwelt on the Yenisei.... The presence of people with the same name, language, appearance, and customs as the Tien Shan Kyrgyz at Yenisei River from ancient times until the 18th century proves the theory that the Yenisei and Tien Shan Kyrgyz formerly was one people. Divided into two parts before 3 B.C.E., one part of the people stayed at the Yenisei till the 18th century and the other, named Wusuns in Chinese sources, went to the south of the Tannu Ridge and occupied the present-day Tszasaktuhana province until they were forced to move to the western Tianshan by the Huns.19
There is a reference to the work of the Chinese Commission, entitled “Hsi-yu-chih-tu” (Dzungaria, 1756) and Aristov’s research, which led to the conclusion that the Wusuns were the ancestors of the Buruts (Kyrgyz or Kara-Kyrgyz), the latter inhabiting the same area which was occupied by Wusuns and who led the same nomadic way of life.

From historical sources it is known that, originally, the Wusuns lived next to the Huns and Yuezhi--on the western territories of the Great Wall of China. Chinese rulers, following an imperial strategy (to exterminate barbarians by the hands of barbarians) encouraged competition between these various groups. As a result, the Wusuns frequently engaged in conflict with the Huns. Later the Wusuns were defeated. In 160 B.C.E., after being subordinated by the Sakas and Yuezhi, groups of Wusuns migrated to the areas around the Tien Shan Mountains and Semirechye. As a result, a new state union (which bordered with the Huns in the east) was formed with the Kanguyami (who settled in valley of Talas) and with the people of Ferghana and Eastern Turkestan in the south.

Southern possessions of the Wusuns extended to Balkhash Lake. The capital of the state was the Chigu or Chiguchen city (meaning “the City of the Red Valley”). Recent archaeological research has proposed that the city was in the southern part of Tup Bay (on the eastern shore of Issyk-Kul Lake). In another version, the city was on the south shore of Lake Issyk-Kul (modern-day Kyzylsuu village, the center of Jeti-Oguz district). The remains of city walls and other ruins found there under the water indicate that the inhabitants were engaged in agriculture and various crafts. According to scientists, the water of the lake rose because of tectonic processes and flooded the city at the beginning of the modern era.

The Wusun state was a nomadic state under the control of a monarch who held the title of Kyunbag (kyunby). The Wusun monarch received this supreme title of power from the representative of the Hun Dynasty, Mode-Chanyu. Having received first the title Kyunbag, the Wusun rulers became the reliable guards of the western borders of the Hun state. Zhang Qian, one of the closest figures to the imperial court of the Kyunbag, described the Wusuns as the “right hand of the Huns.”

Even after separation and getting independence from the Huns, the title of Kyunbag remained.
The language played an important role in power politics of this society (It is not accidental that in medieval legends about Oguz-Kagan one of his descendants was called Kun-Han.) . The power of the monarch was limited; before making a final decision on important public issues, the Council of Elders had to consider and discuss them. In addition, there was an organized system of governance. The state apparatus consisted of no fewer than 16,000 officers. The Wusuns had a strong army and the number of soldiers sometimes exceeded 630,000. Therefore, the Han Empire and even the Huns, who predominated in Central Asia, had to take them seriously.

The Wusun State consisted of two tribal groups who were ruled by a centralized governing power which connected them. The separation of medieval Kyrgyz tribal communities into right and left wings find their roots in the ancient Huns.

Social processes in the Wusun state developed in the same way as in the neighboring Hun Empire. Early class relations slowly developed, but vestiges of the patriarchal-clan system always remained.
Over time, the signs of social inequality became increasingly evident. The power was concentrated in the hands of the nobility and wealth was gained and multiplied by the work of all members of the community, and primarily by pastoralists, semi-settled nomads, farmers, and artisans, all of whom belonged to one family. Wealthy Wusuns owned four or five thousand horses and had priority in the use of land for pasture. Development of production required an increase in the labor force. For this, they used the labor of chattel slaves (primarily captured soldiers); however, the main productive force was the poor. Thus, the gradual accumulation of wealth within this society, coupled with the development of technology, brought about the stratification of this society into different classes.

Patriarchal traditions and tribal customs were the basis of marriage and family relations in Wusun society. The major figure in the family was the husband and father of a given household. Polygamy was a common occurrence in Wusun society. The levirate (the obligation of a brother of a deceased man to marry his brother’s widow), a common characteristic of patriarchal and tribal ties, was also observed. This tradition is best explained in material terms. The family or clan rightly retained ownership of the widow’s dowry, which sometimes was of significant value. However, materialism was not the only motivation for maintaining strict familial ties. In such circumstances, it was important that children continue to live among their blood relatives. This was particularly important in relation to reigning families – public interest dictated that such traditions maintain the order of such families in time of the death of leading family members.

From the second half of the 2nd century B.C.E., the Wusuns were involved in the sphere of political interests of the Han’s Empire. During this time, this Chinese Empire faced two major problems—the first was the threat of it’s by the Huns. The second was to keep the Central Asian part of the Great Silk Road under its control. Given these circumstances, the Chinese rulers were well aware of that these goals were impossible to reach without an alliance with the Wusuns, whose territories constituted the largest part of the trade route.

With the aim of building such an alliance, the Emperor began to seek ways to establish close relationships with the Wusuns. In 109 B.C.E.,
Emperor Wu-Di sent a large diplomatic mission with gifts to the Wusuns in order to strengthen his alliance with the Kyunbag. The Chinese Emperor even included offers of matrimonial bonds. Under the guidance of the emissary and ambassador of the imperial court, high official Zhahng Jian led the embassy to Wusuns. In 115 B.C.E. in Chigu, an alliance with the Wusuns was officially agreed upon.

At the beginning of the first century B.C.E., the Kyunbag Unguymi (also known by his royal name, Feyvan) ascended to the throne of the Wusun State. Married to a Chinese princess, he also obligated by the contract with the Han Empire to join in war against the Huns. In 71 B.C.E., the combined forces of the allies, comprising 50,000 Wusun soldiers and one hundred sixty thousand Chinese soldiers, inflicted a crushing blow on the Huns. In all, about 40,000 Hun soldiers were captured. The combined forces gained a huge bounty of 700,000 cattle. Without giving respite, the Chinese waged a few more campaigns against the Huns during the same year, completely undermining their strength. The huge and once powerful force of the Huns was crushed.

Nevertheless, strengthening the Wusun state did not stop the Han Empire’s own aspiration of expanding the empire’s reach. The governors were well aware of the potential threat in their allies following the destruction of Huns. To eliminate this potential military rival, the Chinese court began a secret, systematic, and deliberate policy of intrigue and interference in Wusun internal affairs.

Shortly before his death in 64 B.C.E., Kyunbag Feyvan declared his son Yuanguyam, born to the Chinese Princess Gyay, as heir to the throne. The governor of the Wusuns in turn made a request to the Chinese emperor that his heir marry one of the princesses. For the Chinese, this marriage was an opportune moment, guaranteeing confrontations between the Wusuns and Huns, as well as the Chinese, who pinned great hopes upon it. The Chinese emperor added a thousand horses and a thousand mules to the dowry to ensure the marriage. One hundred people were called to serve the bride, and the future Chinese queen diligently learned the Wusun language. She was accompanied by four important dignitaries on her way to the groom and the Emperor gave a farewell tribute to the princess.

However, doubts about the reliability of such a union with the Wusuns were expressed, even more as it was thought to be a risky and
reckless bargain with the Wusuns. Time confirmed their worst fears. No sooner had the wedding procession reached the western borders of China than news of the death of old Kyunbag Unguymi-Feyvana sounded the death knell of the new treaty. The Wusun Council of Elders, although against the will of their king, had failed to coronate the heir born by the Chinese princess. Instead, a nephew whose mother was a princess of the Huns became the heir to the throne. The new Kyunbag adopted the name Kuanvan as he ascended the throne. This did not bode well for China and the Chinese princess was ordered to return to her native home.\textsuperscript{21}

Chinese historical records cite Wusun blame for the end of an area of “peace and kinship” relationships with the Wusuns: “the Wusuns continue to occupy a dual position, so it is difficult to speak of a stable alliance with them.” Although the Wusun queens (Chinese from birth) shared their grief and joy with the people of China for over forty years, the boundaries of the Celestial Empire did not manage to achieve true peace.

Kyunbag Nimi-Kuanvan was distrusted and disliked by his people. Having received power by virtue of intrigues and by force, he focused on noblemen. Increased oppression caused outrage among ordinary people. The Kyunbag’s wife, a Chinese woman, did not hesitate to inform the Emperor, who decided to take advantage of the favorable situation and organized a conspiracy against the Kyunbag. To fulfill the plan, the Queen made a great feast in the palace of Chigu city, during the feast, one of her loyal soldiers made an attempt on Kuanvan, but he did not succeed.

The Imperial entourage regretted this deeply and to allay suspicion, the Chinese government punished the accomplices. All suspects were hanged. The Imperial Court sent all the necessary medications for the Kyunbag’s treatment as well as twenty gold and engraved coins and bales of silk as an expression of concern.

The fate of Kyunbag Kuanvan was sealed; his enemies kept their plans in mind. One of the conspirators, a representative of the Wusun Dynasty who had managed to hide in the mountains, waited for an opportune moment to attack Kuanvan and eventually killed him. From that moment (from 60 until 45B.C.E.), a struggle for power raged between the Han and Hun Wusun governors. China continued to indirectly influence the struggle for power amongst these regional players.
“Great” Kyunbag Tsylimi (the representative of the Han Dynasty) hoped to benefit from the internal strife of “small” Kyunbags controlled by the “Hun” branch of the Dynasty. From 45-14 B.C.E., Tsylimi had great power and authority. According to the chronicles of that time, Tsylimi managed to subjugate the Wusun princess. Just as in the days of Kyunbag Un-guymi, hopes for peace were dependent upon his own initiatives. Tsylimi declared that “no one dares to graze their cattle in my pastures.” Moreover, the Kyunbag took the best pastures and, with the state’s protection, made them into national reserves. Tsylimi sought to unite the Wusuns and revive the former state. However, he was never able to achieve this ambition; despite being one of the most influential Wusun rulers, the betrayal of his confidants allowed his opponents to assassinate him.

After the murder of Tsylimi, the Wusun state began to collapse. The Kyunbags were replacing one another in rapid succession; the supporters of the disgraced governors were forced to seek refuge outside the country. Kang City alone received over eighty thousand people. The last known report on the fate of the Wusuns is that of Wusun ambassador Dun Zhin, dating back to 435 C.E. During that period, the Wusuns faced pressure from the Juan-Juan (Avars). However, by this time, they had already allied themselves with the Turkic-speaking tribes.

The main economic activity of the Wusuns was cattle breeding. They bred horses, cows, sheep, and goats. Chinese sources report: “The Wusuns engaged in farming and gardening. They enjoy a nomadic life moving from one place to another in search of rich grass pasture for livestock, as well as easy-to-use waterways.” However, there were other, smaller tribes within the boundaries of the Wusun state who continued to be engaged in agriculture. This could not fail to influence the Wusuns.
As the Common Era approached, some Wusun tribes engaged in nomadic pastoralism, whereas other tribes were farmers and lived a sedentary life. The remains of residential settlements of the Wusuns discovered by archaeologists in Chuy (the region of the modern-day town of Karabalta) and the Issyk-Kul valleys (Tyup Bay) are vivid examples of agricultural settlements with an extensive network of irrigation.

Hunting played an important role for the Wusun nomads and was an additional source of food. For Chinese princesses, whose national food was a diverse composition of cereals, rice, fruits, and vegetables, meat was unusual and created considerable difficulty and discomfort.

In the wintering areas, the Wusuns constructed low huts from mud. The remains of these buildings have been found near the town of Karabalta. In addition, stone buildings (the Daroot-Kurgan Fortress) and cottages (the Jerges Fortress) were constructed.

The Wusuns, together with representatives of the Sakas and other ethnic groups who lived among them, developed a high level of craftsmanship. Different types of ceramic dishes, ceramic spindles, and products made from bones, bronze, stone graters, metal (golden, bronze, and copper) jewelry, iron arrowheads, and other archaeological findings confirm this. A mirror frame (from the Chelpek burial site in the Karakol district) and its handle, made in the shape of a fanciful bird’s head, are wonderful examples of the craftsmanship achieved by this society.
In the scholarly literature, Wusun culture is closely associated with that of the Sakas. Wusun burial mounds differ very little from those of Sakas, which is why scholars refer to these as one phenomenon, the “Sakas-Wusun” mounds. Such mounds are found in the Issyk-Kul region and in the Chuy Valley. While investigating the monuments of the Wusun, researchers noted that they share a resemblance to those found in Hun burial culture.

In the first millennium B.C.E., a state, the Kingdom of Davan (Ferghana), with a well-developed sedentary agricultural culture developed in area stretching from the Ferghana Valley to the foothills in the eastern part of modern day Kyrgyzstan. This state lasted for more than a thousand years. A proof of its existence can only be found in written sources that date as far back as the second century B.C.E. In Chinese chronicles, the Ferghana State was called the Kingdom of Davan. In translation from the ancient Turkic language, the words “Fergana” and “Davan” both refer to a “very beautiful, picturesque place.” Persians called this “Sog” (Sōgd), while the Chinese referred to it as “Polono.”

In the 2nd century B.C.E., Ferghana was a strong country with a developed economy, the basis of which was irrigated farming. The capital city of Ferghana was Ershi. According to scholars, at least half a million people lived in eastern Ferghana. However, according to Chinese sources, it is said not to have exceeded more than three-hundred-thousand people. Anthropological studies have shown that its inhabitants were Caucasian, they probably had deep eye orbits and heavy beards. Davan lies southwest of the territory of the Xiongnu, some 10,000 li [4,158 km] directly west of China. The people are also settled on the land, plowing the fields and growing rice and wheat. They also make wine out of grapes. The region has many fine horses which sweat blood;[apparently due to skin parasites which caused sores] their forebears are supposed to have been foaled from heavenly horses. The people live in houses in fortified cities, there being some seventy or more cities of various sizes in the region. The population numbers several hundred thousand. The people fight with bows and spears and can shoot from horseback. Dayuan is bordered on the north by Kangju, on the west by the kingdom of the Great Yuezhi, on the southwest by Daxia (Bactria), on the northeast by the land of the Wusun, and on the east by Yumi (Keriya) and Yutian (Khotan).
The emergence of the Davan state was the result of the unification of both small city-states located on the banks of rivers and oasis settlements in the valleys. Public administration was carried out by the local ruling dynasty and the rulers of small city-states were under the rule of a central supreme authority. As a political system, the Davan state was a form of limited monarchy. The emperors had two advisers who were chosen from among his close relatives. The emperor submitted important issues to the Council of Elders, a group which exercised considerable influence on the political life of the country. The Council of Elders, holding more executive power than the emperors, made the most important decisions, even holding the power to remove a governor from power or to sentence him to death. With the direct participation of the Council of Elders, wars were declared, peace treaties were concluded, and international ties were established.

Social stratification in Ferghana is typical for early feudal societies. The appearance of feudal relations and the formation of feudal classes can be seen in new types of buildings, palaces, and other infrastructure appropriate to the needs and tastes of a new ruling class. Monuments which celebrated the production of great amounts of wine by the upper echelons of the Davan society are one such example. Wine served as a commodity of commerce and was crucial to the accruement of wealth by Davan elites.

The main producers of wine were free members of the community, namely farmers and artisans. Additionally, slave labor played a crucial role in the wine production industry. Regardless of whether free or enslaved members of society produced the wine, it was the local elite who primarily benefited from its production.

Patriarchal attitudes appear to have dominated in marital relationships. However, that is not to say that women did not play a significant role in society—some written sources suggest that most men respected women and followed their lead. It is possible that such treatment of women was typical for semi-nomadic tribes in the mountain areas of eastern Ferghana.

Strong policies of defense were the basis of foreign policy. According to Chinese chronicles, the Davan army numbered about 60,000. War-
riors were distinguished by their discipline and skills. They were accurate marksmen when riding a horse and were generally revered for their equestrian skills. To increase the effectiveness of their main weapon, the bow, warriors trimmed them up with bones and made their arrowheads from bronze or iron. (Triangular arrowheads were used as well).

Despite peaceful relations with other states, by the end of the 2nd century B.C.E. the Davan had come into conflict with the Han Empire, which carried out an aggressive policy, especially under Emperor Wu Di (140-87 B.C.E.). The Empire sought to bring neighboring areas into its own territory. Invasion undermined the strength of the nomadic Huns, and the Han army captured the vast territories of eastern Turkestan. Thus, the Empire eventually came to dominate significant portions of the Great Silk Road.

After making an alliance with the Wusun in 105 B.C.E., Emperor Wu-Di dreamed of conquering Davan which, by virtue of its geographical location, was an important link on the Silk Road. He understood that it might not only become a major stumbling block, but also a major contender in the dream to control the entire trade route. Wu-Di outfitted a special embassy to Davan to purchase Ferghana horses, (known as Argamaks). The Council of Elders, however, flatly refused to sell the horses offered by the local traders.

The envoy was soon executed in the frontier city of Yu (present-day Shoro-Bashat, near Uzgen) for its excessive impudence and arrogance. The envoy execution and further affront of the Davanese made the Emperor declare war on Ferghana. A huge force of 6000 cavalry and several thousand foot soldiers led by the commander Li Guangli were sent against Davan. In 103 B.C.E. the troops from the Chinese district of Dunhuang mobilized westward. After heavy fighting, troops stormed the city of Yu. However, fierce resistance from the local population stopped the invasion. Li Guangli was forced to retreat after the Han army suffered heavy losses. Approximately twenty percent of his troops returned from battle.

The war in Ferghana undermined the authority of the Han Empire. Wu-Di set himself the goal of punishing recalcitrant states, while attempting to conquer other states that applauded his failure. He quickly prepared Li Guangli for a new campaign. Now the army consisted of one hundred thousand soldiers, accompanied by a caravan of 140,000 pack animals.
In 101 B.C. the troops reached the capital city of Ershi and besieged it. After forty days of siege, the invaders diverted the course of the river into the city, and then, after destroying the city walls, broke into the city and captured the members of the Council of Elders. The troops of the Dayuan king (known as Mugua) were forced to retreat into the inner city. With sufficient stores of food, these brave defenders of their city dug a well and continued to repel the Han attack.

Despite their superiority in numbers, the Chinese army in Ershi city was vulnerable. At the same time, the neighboring Kang State openly expressed its discontent with the policy of the Chinese government. A two thousand strong Wusun detachment sent to assist Li Guangli chose not to participate in the conflict. Moreover, the Wusun were even ready to defend Ferghana against the Chinese. However, the city of Yu did not open its gates.

Finally, the stubborn defense of the city Ershi was broken because of the intrigues among people close to the court. The pro-Chinese dignitary, Motsai, who dreamed of power, treacherously opened the doors to the city. King Mugua was killed and his head was presented to Lee Guangli by the Council of Elders in hopes that it would bring about peace. After evaluating the situation, the commander accepted the proposals of the
Council of Elders. Part of the treaty included dozens of thoroughbred Argamaks and another three thousand horses. The throne was occupied by Motsai which forced the Chinese invading force to withdraw. Ershi. Moreover, only one sixth of the Chinese troops sent to conquer Ershi returned to China, and just one thousand out of three of the promised Ferghana horses would end up in Chinese hands.

With the departure of Li Guangli’s army, the political and military influence of the Han Empire stopped. Following the war, the Council of Elders accused Motsai of treason and condemned him to death. Chang-fin, the brother of Mugua, became the next king. Thus, the four-year battle for ancient Ferghana came to an end. Ferghana had defended its independence with the support of other nations of Central Asia and eastern Turkestan.

Ferghana occupied a noteworthy place in the settled agricultural civilizations of the East. Chinese sources would often report that the “Sedentary farmers cultivate the land, grow rice and wheat, produce wine from grapes.” Development of civilization was facilitated by the use of artificial irrigation techniques. For example, the construction of such artificial irrigation canals as Jon-Aryk increased the agricultural efficiency of ancient Ferghana.

During the fourth to the first centuries B.C.E., Ferghana witnessed the advancement of flour preparation techniques unseen in other parts of Central Asia. The remains of millstones are proof to this phenomenon, although during that time stone grinders were also commonly used.

The most important sector of the economy was the breeding of thoroughbred horses, which had become known far and wide. Legends attribute the fame of Ferghana horses to their descent from celestial horses. The Ferghana people were proud of their thoroughbred Argamaks in particular and passed the secrets of care and preservation of this special breed from generation to generation. In addition to horses, they bred cows, sheep, goats, and camels. Archaeological excavations of the Shoro-Bashat sites (from the 4th to the 1st centuries B.C.E.) indicate that households had fewer livestock than other domestic animals.
Different kinds of crafts, including pottery, weaving, and jeweler’s art, were widespread throughout Ferghana at this time. During excavations of the ancient settlement of Monchok Tepe near Begabad, a mold for jewelry was discovered. The potter’s wheel and the use of bellows (found at the archaeological site of Markhamat, dating from the 1st to the 4th century C.E.), for the firing of clay, facilitated the manufacture of ceramic tableware. There were even craftsmen skilled in manufacturing products from bones. The excavation of minerals and refinement of gold, iron, and mercury (at the Ken-Gut Cave, Kasan-Sai) led to the development of better weapons and tools.

The geographical location of Davan occupied an important junction along the trade routes linking western Asia and eastern Turkestan even before the appearance of the Silk Road. The people of Davan leveraged this and produced a considerable quantity of goods for sale. “The people of Davan use gold and silver imported from China not for minting coins, but for manufacturing jewelry,” one Chinese source writes.

Roads, caravanserais, and craft workshops were built to enhance trade relations and the creation of favorable conditions for foreign traders. The remnants of a stone caravanserai can still be seen in Daroot-Kurgan (the Alai Valley).

The geographical range of Davan’s trade contacts was widespread, reaching as far as northern Africa and Rome, western Asia and India, eastern Turkestan, and China.

Ancient Ferghana made significant progress in its construction of settlements. Evidence of this can be found at the monuments of the Shoro-Bashat period (4th to the 1st centuries B.C.E.).

Traces of both “great and small” Davan settlements, as they were called in Chinese annals (according to their territorial size), have survived to this day. Scholars identify the ruins of the Markhamat Settlement in the valley of the Aravan River with the Ershi city—the capital of Davan in the 2nd century B.C. Distinct outlines of this settlement are
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quadrangular in shape and 750x500 meters in size. The ruins of walls and towers occupying an area of forty hectares make it the remains of one of the largest sedentary settlements in the Ferghana valley.

Several ancient cities have been discovered in Ferghana, allowing scholars to better understand the culture of the societies that inhabited such settlements. At a distance of thirty-five kilometers from Markhamat, one can find the remains of the ‘small’ Bilavur Tepe Fort (eight kilometers to the west from modern-day Osh), as well as “Big” Guyshuan City (often mentioned in Chinese chronicles) is comparable to Kasan (modern-day Uzbekistan). Another famous Davan city is known as Yu (or Yunchen) in Chinese sources. Kyrgyz historians identify this ancient city with the ruins of Shoro-Bashat on the banks of the Jazy River; it was located just ten kilometers from modern-day Uzgen. The settlement occupied an area of over seventy hectares and was among the largest settlements of the time.

Scholars theorize that in the first century B.C.E. the capital city of Davan was Ershi, which located in the same place as present-day Osh, in southern Kyrgyzstan. Most Davan settlements were securely fortified, surrounded by powerful defensive walls where guard towers were constructed and archers received special training. Residential settlements in Davan, or kyshtaks, were numerous and expansive. One will find an oasis eight square meters in size at the confluence of the Tar and Kara-Kulja rivers. Approximately seventy residential buildings from the Shoro-Bashat epoch were constructed at this location. At the center of this oasis there was the Kara-Darya settlement. Based on the placement of this settlements, we can reasonably assume that the Davan people were among the first to settle the territory of present Kyrgyzstan.

Like all ancient peoples of Central Asia, the people of Ferghana worshiped the Sun and the forces of nature. Some archaeological findings suggest that they may have also deified fire. Fergana horses were also in particular demand. Argamak horses were the most famous. This breed was an object of desire in neighboring countries. The Chinese especially dreamed of these “blood-sweated” horses. They considered them as “heavenly horses”, which could reach the “country of immortality”. In China, people devoted poetic odes to argamaks. It came to that in 104
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BC the huge Chinese army attacked Ershi to expand their territory as well as to get heavenly horses. Many petroglyphs of Ferghana (such as the rocks of Ayirmach-Too near Osh) depict horses. Scholars that have examined such depictions have reasoned that people likely associated horses with magic. (This religious and totemic representation would be later preserved among the Kyrgyz people; it became common to appeal to the image of Kambar-Ata, the patron saint of horses.) Ancient residents of the Ferghana valley believed in the hereafter revered the souls of their dead ancestors, and organized festive gatherings of young people before the start of the spring planting.

In the 5th century C.E., the territory of Ferghana became a part of the extensive but diverse state of Hephthalites. By the middle of the 6th century C.E., the state of Hephthalites fell under the control of the Turks. The ancient peoples who inhabited the territory of present Kyrgyzstan were in the thick of historical events of their time. Closely associated with other peoples and cultures, they had their own political, economic, cultural, and social peculiarities and a unique place in the world of antiquity.

The Ancient Empire of the Xiongnu

One of the brightest pages in the history of Central Asian peoples is closely linked with the history of the Xiongnu (the Huns), who created a great nomadic empire in the 2nd century B.C. on the vast area of Central Asia and vast steppes adjacent to it. The strength of this Empire is evident by the fact that, in the 2nd century B.C.E., the Chinese Han Dynasty was dependent upon it for nearly sixty years. At the height of Xiongnu power, other tribal unions such as Kyrgyz, Dinlin, and Wusun were incorporated into the Xiongnu state. This, in turn, contributed to the experience and proficiency of Xiongnu leaders in political and public matters.

Sources testify to the fact that the Xiongnu (known as “Huns” in the 4th-5th centuries B.C.E.) were the common ancestors of Turkic peoples. It was the Xiongnu who founded the first united historical state of Turkic peoples. Therefore, to consider the Xiongnu as the ancestors of only some contemporary Turkic peoples (as some scholars do) would be wrong, the culture, customs, traditions, and political experiences of the Xiongnu had a tremendous impact on all Turkic tribes.
Starting from the 6th century B.C., the Xiongnu inhabited the territory northwest of the states in the valley of the ancient Chinese river, Huang He (the Yellow River). The ancestors of the ancient Kyrgyz and related Turkic tribes lived northwest of the Xiongnu. In the middle of the 1st millennium B.C., relationships typical for primitive tribal societies were prevalent in all of these ethnic groups.

Territories east of the Xiongnu were occupied by the Dōnghú. Scholars consider them to be the ancient ancestors of Mongolian-speaking peoples. Xiongnu’s neighbors to the west were the Yuezhi. The Yuezhi are considered to be the most eastern of those tribes belonging to the Indo-European group of languages. The Yuezhi language is closely related to modern languages of Tajik, Iranian, and Hindi. In the first half of the 1st millennium B.C.E., other nomadic tribes existed between the Xiongnu and ancient Chinese. Chinese written memorials generally mention the closest living tribes. For example, it is known that the Zhuns in the 9th and 10th centuries B.C.E. conducted military campaigns, which greatly weakened the Chinese. Many Chinese sources from this era associate the Xiongnu with frequent military assaults.

Starting from the 4th century B.C.E., the territory of the Xiongnu bordered China and created favorable conditions for the Xiongnu to raid the territories of the Chinese. Such raids became much more frequent in the second half of the 3rd century B.C. Only the Chinese governor, Zhao (in the Shanxi Province) managed to put an end to the invasion of the Xiongnu. By taking advantage of his numerical superiority, his army, led by the Captain Li Mu, defeated the army of the Xiongnu. However, in 226 B.C.E., Zhao’s territory was invaded by another neighbor, the people of Qin, who occupied northwest China in the middle course of the Huang He River.

Reforms undertaken by the Qin, from the middle of the 4th century B.C.E. (359) contributed to their considerable economic and social development. In 246 B.C.E., 13-year-old Ying Zheng took the throne. Starting from 228-221 B.C.E., he conquered all scattered Chinese princedoms and declared himself Qin Shi Huang--the first emperor of the Qin Dynasty (d. 210 B.C.E.). During the reign of Qin Shi Huang, moderate reforms further strengthened the central government. Newly introduced reforms (such as a single script, monetary system, tax assessment, citizenship requirements, and legislative and military regulations)
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strengthened the public administration and allowed Qin Shi Huang to launch a war against his enemies in the northwest, the Xiongnu. In 215 B.C.E., a three-hundred-thousand-strong Chinese army defeated the Xiongnu in Ordos and seized the northern bank of the Yellow River the following year.

In order to create a powerful defense against the raids of the Xiongnu, Qin Shi Huang began the building of the Great Wall. To provide constant oversight of this fortification, a great number of people were sent from inland areas in China. The Great Wall was effective at stopping the movements Xiongnu troops, as well as other northern nomadic groups. It stretched four thousand kilometers wide and had a height of ten meter; the wall was fortified with watchtowers at every sixty to one hundred meters.

Despite its impressive magnitude, The Great Wall was not enough to save the Qin state. The tax burden of the project, coupled with the reallocation of field workers from the fields to the Great Wall’s construction, caused widespread dissatisfaction throughout Chinese society. After the death of Qin Shi Huang, this dissatisfaction culminated in a rebellion in the provinces, causing the disintegration of the state. In 207 B.C., one of the popular rebels, Liu Bang, conquered the capital city of Xianyang, later proclaiming him Emperor Gaouzu. In 202 B.C., Liu Bang had officially founded the Han Dynasty.

Despite many changes in political rule, the Great Wall served as a strong northern border during the 3rd to 1st centuries, defending China from the incursions of the Xiongnu and Dōng-hú. In addition to its military significance, it also played an important role in trade, economic and cultural relations between the Chinese and their northern neighbors.33

The names of the founders of the Xiongnu tribal confederation are largely unknown to historians. Touman (in Kyrgyz, Tumen) is the first and earliest name of the Xiongnu rulers mentioned in Chinese sources. He held the title of Chanyu. According to written records, during the reign of Chanyu Touman, the Xiongnu inhabited the territories between two powerful Donghu and Yuezhi tribes.
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(during the last quarter of the 3rd B.C.E.). In 215 B.C.E., the Xiongnu were defeated by the Chinese. Having learnt about the defeat of the Xiongnu, the Yuezhi ruler required Touman Chanyu to leave him a hostage (according to unwritten rules, a stronger ruler could keep one of the children of the dependent ruler as a “guest-hostage”). To soothe the vigilance of his hostile neighbor in the west, Touman Chanyu had to leave one of his sons (of an older wife), Modu (or Maodun), with the Yuezhi. In the event of Modu’s death, the son of a younger wife would become the successor to Touman Chanyu. Given this arrangement, nobody could have expected that the captive Modu would eventually become the ruler of the independent state of the Xiongnu.

After a while, Chanyu Touman gathered his forces and turned against the Yuezhi. Upon hearing of this, Modu gathered the courage to escape from his captivity. Upon his return, his father commended his bravery and put him in charge of his own military detachment.

Having armed his men with whistling arrows, Modu played an important role in the military training of his men. Because of his skill as a military leader, Modu’s detachment became a formidable force, following his orders without question.

In 209 B.C., his father, Chanyu Touman, the emperor of the Xiongnu, was killed by the command of his son, Modu. Several scholars have suggested the reconstructed Middle Chinese pronunciation of Mòdùn (冒頓 is /mək-twən/. His name is also written as Motun in some sources. Ultimately, the Old Chinese pronunciation might have represented the pronunciation of the foreign word baytur, a relative of the later attested Central Eurasian culture word bayatur ‘hero’. In addition to ordering the death of his father, Modu had the immediate family and surrounding advisors of the Chanyu killed. Modu became the emperor of the Xiongnu, but his struggle for power threatened the political functioning of the state. Taking advantage of the situation, the eastern neighbors of the Xiongnu, the Donghu, demanded that the young Chanyu Modu give them the eastern land of the Xiongnu, which bordered their territory. According to established practice, the Chanyu gathered the Council of Elders to inform them of the territorial demands of the Donghu. Con-
cerned with the threat of attack, the Council of Elders decided to give the disputed land to the Donghu.

This decision, however, enraged Chanyu. As the Chinese historian Sima Qian wrote, Modu cried out in rage: “Land is the basis of the state -- how can you give it away!” In response to the decision, he ordered the beheading of the entire Council of Elders. Having destroyed the political power of this institution, he surrounded himself with loyal governors and administrators, amassing the power to rule the state effectively.

Having solidified his place as the Emperor, Chanyu formed an army which met his requirements: undaunted by any threat and distinguished for its discipline. With such an army, he quickly set his plans into motion. First, Modu successfully attacked his old enemies, the Donghu, who occupied the territory of south Manchuria and the ridges of Amba Hinggan. The Donghu forces were defeated and their ruler was captured and executed. The Xiongnu benefited materially as well having captured many prisoners and countless livestock.

With heightened morale after a decisive victory, Modu quickly planned new military campaigns. The writings of Chinese historians are extensively focused on the military campaigns of Modu, likely due to his quick success and spreading influence. Having eliminated all the enemies in the east, Modu redrew his attention westward. He was able to expel the Yuezhi further west, causing them to resettle in the Alashan Desert of northern China.

After his triumph over the Leu-fan and Bayan (the ancestors of the Tanguts) in Ordos in 205-204 B.C.E., Modu made his the first attempt to seize Chinese lands. In 203-201 B.C.E., the Xiongnu continued their march northeast. Chinese annals report that several Turkic tribes participated in the campaigns amongst Modu’s forces. These included the peoples of northwestern Mongolia, the Sayan-Altai region, as well as the Hunyuy, Kyush, the Dingling, as the Kyrgyz of Tien Shan and Jungaria. Thus, based on these Chinese sources, it is evident that Chanyu Modu had incorporated many Central Asian Turkic tribes in order to expand his empire.

The Xiongnu were nomadic cattle-breeders and the vast steppes of Central Asia created favorable conditions for this lifestyle. The Xiongnu pastoralists move horizontally from place to place. One may compare this to those Kyrgyz who inhabited the mountain areas for a long time,
grazed their cattle on alpine pastures during the summer, drove them to the lowlands in late autumn, that is, an economy based on movement up and down, or a vertical line of progression.

The culture of Xiongnu placed a special emphasis on horses. Horses were regarded not only as a means of transporting goods, but also had a special role and importance during time of war and hunting. In addition, horses were valued because they provided meat and milk. Camels were an invaluable means of transport, especially in such difficult terrain as the Gobi and Alashan Deserts, occupying an important place in the economy of the Xiongnu. Like other nomadic groups, the Xiongnu bred sheep, goats, yaks, and cows.

Handicrafts were an integral part of the economic life of the nomadic Xiongnu. Tanning, manufacturing of footwear from animals skins, as well as the carving of stone, wood, and animals bones were all common and well developed skills in Xiongnu culture. The Xiongnu harvested the wool of sheep, camels, and goats for weaving.

Expedition lead by P.K. Kozlov in the Noin-Ula area of Mongolia, in 1924, led to the discovery of the burial site of a noble of Xiongnu. Among the objects uncovered were ala kiyiz and shyrdaks, [embroi-
Oskon Osmonov and Cholpon Turdalieva

dered pieces of felt], decorated with ornaments and stylized with animal imagery. Similar motifs of ornamentation were subsequently borrowed by other Turkic peoples (including the Kyrgyz) and were used in carpet weaving, embroidery, and the production of shyrdaks and ala kiyiz.

The yurt was the most common type of dwelling used by the Xiongnu, likely because of their nomadic lifestyle. The collapsible construction of the yurt allowed people to quickly assemble and disassemble and, therefore, transport it from place to place very easily. The housing of the Xiongnu, however, was not limited to the yurt; traditional housing, dugouts, and wooden–beam construction was also popular. The existence of settled Xiongnu villages and a tradition of fort building were also noted.

Pottery was also highly developed among the ancient Xiongnu. This is evident by ceramic ware used for the storage of grain, milk, and water, as well as various dishes, and pitchers. Production of pottery was achieved both by hand and by use of technology (such as the potter’s wheel). Fine jewelry was highly valued among the Xiongnu. Master craftsmen created sophisticated ornaments from gold and silver, using different techniques: decoration using precious stones, inlays of filigree, granulation, and plotting on a silver surface.

The ancient Xiongnu knew how to process and manufacture metal products. After heating the metal, they hammered it into arrowheads, pike heads, and other weapons. These techniques were not limited to the production of weapons—they were also utilized in the creation of household items. Bronze casting was another popular way to create tools and weapons.

Hunting played a significant role in the economy of the Xiongnu. As before, hunting (group and individual) remained one of traditional methods of obtaining food. The use of falcons (falconry) was a common technique among the most-skilled hunters. Additionally, hunting was a source of training for war and the preparation of warriors. With the constant threat of war and raids by external foes, hunting required that men possess courage, skill, ingenuity, keenness, and endurance.

Over time, the living conditions of Central Asian nomads slowly changed. Due to the influence of neighboring sedentary peoples, new agriculture techniques (such as tilling of soil) developed. For agricultural work, the Xiongnu used prisoners captured during their raids, as
well as foreigners who had made their way to local tribes. That is not to say that all Xiongnu adapted a sedentary lifestyle—many continued to lead semi-nomadic lives. This helped to cultivate the lowlands suitable for agriculture. The existence of such practices is confirmed by the discovery of stone graters, receptacles for storing grain, ploughs, and other archaeological findings consistent with a farming or agricultural society. Thus, the Xiongnu Era was marked by a mixture of sedentary farming and pastoral nomadism (much like the case with the Kyrgyz people), disproving the belief that their economy was limited only to cattle breeding.

Written sources about the Xiongnu are dated no earlier than the end of the 3rd century B.C.E. A careful study of episodic information described in them allows scholars to distinguish the period from the 9th century B.C.E. until the accession to power by Chanyu Touman (Tumen in Kyrgyz) as a complex transitionary period which observed the disintegration of the clan system. During the reign of Touman Chanyu, the social structure of the Xiongnu was that of an early feudal nomadic state.

Many external features of the clan system were preserved. Other features were transformed to respond to new societal challenges. New social features, conditioned by the changes in the level of social development, were internal in nature. For example, the Xiongnu were divided into several clans; three of these in particular were noted for their noble status and participation in the political structure. Chinese sources refer to them as Huyan, Lan, and Suibu (during the government of Modu Chanyu). Chinese historians Sima Qian and Bian Gu point out that the Chanyu himself came from the Luandi clan.39

Chinese sources report that the Xiongnu were divided into two separate political factions, the right wing and the left wing. All chiefs and captains of the right wing lived in the western Shang Jun lowlands (Inner Mongolia), which bordered the Yuezhi, Di, and Qian tribes. On the other hand, the chiefs and captains of the left wing resided in the eastern territories of the Zhang lowland (Hebei Province and Youzhou District) and cohabited with the Hueyhe and Chaosyan. Ultimately, this dual system of government was passed on to many medieval Turkic peoples (including the Kyrgyz).
In addition to the split political system, the Xiongnu administration was made up of twenty-four representatives of the executive branch. These representatives were known as *akims*, and were typically leaders of their respective clans or territories. In accordance with established rules, they occupied various hierarchical levels or positions of power. Akims held the rank of Tumen Bashy and thus had the right to select their successors from their own clan or tribe. The right of Tumen Bashy to pass down power by inheritance confirmed his place among the clan of rulers. Despite the title of Commander of Ten Thousand Warriors, only a few thousand soldiers ever fell under the authority of a Tumen Bashy, whereas most commanded more than ten thousand mounted warriors.

Chinese historian Fan-E points out that four of the most respected and authoritative Akims were called the “Four Horns” and had the following titles: Xiāngwáng of the right wing, Luli-wang of the right wing, Xiang-wang of the left wing, and Luli-wang of the Left Wing. (The Chinese word, “wang,” corresponds to the Kyrgyz word, “bek”.) This shows that the political influence of the left wing that controlled the eastern territories was more significant than that of their right wing counterparts.

Like many rulers, Chanyu appointed many of his younger brothers and sisters as chiefs, ensuring that his inner circle remained loyal to him. In turn, Tumen Bashy independently appointed commanders; each of his men was considered to be a warrior.

The military-feudal governance of the Xiongnu continued and developed under the succeeding nomadic Central Asian states. During the Middle Ages, the Oghuz preserved the tradition of collective governance.

The Chanyu was the monarch (or, more accurately, the supreme ruler) of the nomadic tribes in the region. According to Sima Qian, the word “Chanyu” literally means “as boundless as the sky.” During Modu’s rule, this title was given not only to the lifelong leaders of various tribal communities, but also to those monarchs who inherited their rule. To strengthen the special status of his sovereign power, the ruler of these early feudal states added such epithets to the “Chanyu” title as: “Grace of the Divine Tengir,” “Deity Tengir,” and “Grace Sent Down from Heaven.” For example, in the letters of Modu Chanyu (176 B.C.E.)
and his son, Laoshang Chine (166 B.C.E.) to the Chinese emperor the following epithets were also used: “Messenger of Heaven,” “Great Chanyu of the Xiongnu,” “Born of Heaven and Earth,” “Messenger of the Sun and the Moon,” and “Grand Chanyu of the Xiongnu.”

The reign of Modu brought in a new era of strong Chanyu rulers who exercised almost absolute power. They often disregarded the decisions and advice of the Council of Elders.

As time progressed, however, the power of the Chanyu weakened, bringing about a stronger collective government, which included Tu-men Bashy and other members of the nobility. Thus the formation of a limited monarchy (in which there was contest between the monarch and the nobles) dominated the political arena of the Chanyu-ruled Xiongnu. This political tradition would eventually be passed down to the subsequent Kyrgyz.

The main structural units of Xiongnu society were clans. Each clan was divided into several Yurts (small nomadic communities that lived together and were based upon familial ties). In the Chinese sources, such groups are called bulo—similar to the Kyrgyz word bülö, or üy-bülö, meaning “family.” In addition to genealogical roots, clans shared traditions, religious beliefs, customs, and language.

The subjugation of more people via the occupation of new lands allowed the Xiongnu state to expand across a vast territory that stretched
from northern China to the central part of Tian Shan. This state was primarily based on large communities established upon local territorial ties. Although Tumen Bashy came from the nobility, he had numerous representatives from other clans and tribes gathered together in his nomad community; he was able to successfully assimilate into the political system of the Xiongnu. This allowed the leaders of thousands of soldiers to be more powerful in the future. Of course, the rulers and simple nomads, as keepers of old traditions, aspired to preserve the outward signs of unity of their tribe.

Historical sources suggest that that average Xiongnu “possessed a certain territory and could move freely within it, from one location to another, if there was a need for a change in pasture land.” However, this does not mean that a system of land ownership existed among the Xiongnu or subsequent Turko-Mongolian nomadic states. Previously existing forms of collective (clan and tribal) land ownership persisted. Under Modu Chanyu’s rule, profound changes occurred; all land became the property of the state. The motto of Modu Chanyu, “land is the foundation of the state,” was the territorial axiom of both the Xiongnu and their historical descendants, the Turkic peoples of Central Asia.

Chanyu, as supreme ruler, assigned land to his sons and other close relatives, as well as to the nobility. These, in turn, distributed land among their subordinates, primarily local rulers. The distribution of the land was based on prestige—Nomads lacking particular distinction were the last to receive land. The necessity to effectively manage pastures caused the rulers to organize a system of collective pastoralism, which still exists to this day.

Based on national custom and tradition, the rules and the norms of social life in ancient Xiongnu were passed from generation to generation, becoming immutable canons. The Chinese believed that the laws of the Xiongnu had been enforced effectively and rather easily. Serious crimes were punished by death, whereas those who committed minor crimes were marked by a brand on their faces. Thievery was punished by the deprivation of their land holdings and persecution of family members. As a rule, such persecution was not to last more than ten days. Such laws emphasized the responsibility for crimes against the public interest and served as the brainchild of the Chanyu in their quest for order and disci-
pline. People who evaded military service, violated military discipline, or committed crimes against the state were also sentenced to death.

The Xiongnu, like other Turkic peoples, worshiped the sky deity, Tengir. “Tengir” has been traced to the Xiongnu period; although the ancient Sumerians, who lived in Mesopotamia from the 4th to the 3rd millennium B.C., referred to the sky as “tengir.” The term “Tengir” could be both referred to the sky and the celestial god. According to ancient Kyrgyz tradition, the deity Tengir predetermined the fate not only of one person, but of the whole nation or state. It was also believed that one suffered some type of punishment according to one’s misdeeds. Echoes of this can be found in the modern Kyrgyz custom of asking Tengir for support in times of difficulty.

Originally, the Kyrgyz worshiped the sun, moon, stars, and earth, as well as the spirits of their ancestors. To please their deities, they offered rich sacrifices at important general meetings.

Family organization among the Xiongnu was patriarchal. The man was the head of the family, his actions and words were to be strictly obeyed by his wives and their children. Among the nobility, a man could have two or more wives. Rules of secession were paternally based—the eldest son of the Chanyu was heir to the throne. In the event of the death of a husband, the widow had to marry one of his brothers. If someone committed a crime, the responsibility was borne equally by all family members.

Tradition and beliefs surrounding family and marital practices of the Xiongnu would leave an indelible mark on the social history of Turkic peoples for centuries to come.

Having conquered the neighboring nomadic peoples in the east, west, and north, and having forced them to leave their lands, the founder of the Xiongnu Empire, Modu Chanyu, again started to make plans. He shifted his aims north towards the wealth of the Chinese emperors. The wondrous promises of silk, grain, and jewelry were too attractive for him.

Modu Chanyu plans did bode well with Liu Bang (his imperial title, Gaozu), the founder of the Han Dynasty. He had just defeated his
rivals in a struggle for power (202 B.C.E.) and achieved national unity. Therefore, the invasion of the Xiongnu put him in a very difficult and undesirable position.

During their invasion, the Xiongnu effortlessly conquered the Man fortress. Its commander Han Xin surrendered to the conquerors. This military success inspired the Xiongnu in the winter of 200 B.C. to go deeper into the province of Shanxi until they reached an important strategic point--the city of Jingxing. Modu decided to defeat the enemy by advanced strategy and wit. Pretending that the Xiongnu could not stand the onslaught of the Chinese forces, he lured the elite troops of the enemy into an ambush in the Baideng Mountains, near the town of Pinchen (Shanxi Governorate). For seven days the Emperor and his soldiers were cut off from their troops and left stranded without supplies.

To avoid highlighting the incident, chroniclers of the Chinese court created a legend. According to the legend; Emperor Gauze secretly sent a valuable gift and a portrait of a beautiful Chinese girl to the wife of Modu Chanyu. Fearing that Chanyu would marry this beautiful Chinese woman, the Modu Chanya’s wife persuaded her husband to end the ambush of Pinchen. Of course this legend does not correspond with the truth, the cruel ruler of the Xiongnu who had killed his father to gain political power was forced to end the ambush because of reinforcements sent to rescue the troops of the Chinese emperor.

Gaozu, freed from a disgraceful captivity, was forced to accede to the demands made by the Xiongnu. After repeated negotiations, an “agreement based on peace and kinship” was finally signed between the two states in 198 B.C. The peace lasted for sixty years- during this time, the rulers of the Han Dynasty were dependent on the rulers of Xiongnu. According to the signed agreement, the Chinese princess became the wife of Modu Chanyu, and the Empire was obliged to pay annual tribute (fabrics, wine, rice, etc.) to the Xiongnu.

Councilor Liu Jin, a member of the Gaozu court, was the first to suggest that the Emperor concede to the demands of the Xiongnu. In his view, the marriage of the Xiongnu ruler to the Chinese princess would benefit the Empire because it would force an alliance between the Chinese and the Xiongnu. The Chinese rulers hoped use familial affairs in order to turn Modu Chanyu into a puppet of the Chinese state.
Nevertheless Gaozu soon failed to fulfill his end of the bargain. Instead of the Chinese princess, a girl from an ordinary family was sent to marry the Xiongnu ruler. The Chinese believed that the nomads of the steppe did not deserve the Chinese princess. They also believed that the upcoming annual tribute to the Xiongnu was a burden for the Empire.

Three years after the death of Gaozu, in 192 B.C.E., Modu Chanyu, rather sarcastically, sent a message to the widow proposing that she would become his wife. Anticipating the consequences, the Empress responded with a great skill to the tactless marriage proposal. She honorably declined, referring to her commitment to her previous husband. Her reply she accompanied with two expensive carriages and eight thoroughbred horses, as a sign of her “special gratitude” to Chanyu. Thus, “the agreement based on peace and kinship” (to be broken in 166-162 B.C.E. by the Xiongnu) forced the Chinese Empire to kneel before the nomads—although the peace agreement was very important to both sides.

During his reign, Modu Chanyu dreamt about conquering his western neighbors, the Yuezhi. Prior to his campaign against the Yuezhi, Xiongnu conquered the territories of the Wusun and killed their leader. The people of the occupied Wusun territories were never subjects to ruthless violence, destruction, or ruin. Their conquerors hoped to attract the Wusun to their side and employ them in their campaign against the Yuezhi. With similar aims, Modu Chanyu took the son of the murdered Wusun governor to his camp as a foster child. Giving him the title of Gunmo (Kyunbag, Kyunbii) to the young prince, Chanyu installed him as governor of the Wusun. This was a wise move of Modu. The Wusun became the loyal vassals of the Xiongnu and thus allies in their struggle against the Yuezhi.

After the successful submission of the Han Dynasty in the north, Modu launched a four-year campaign against the Yuezhi. In 174 B.C., however, Modu died without succeeding in his plan to conquer the Yuezhi.

The son of Modu, Jizhu, was enthroned and ruled from 174 to 161 B.C.E. under the name of Laoshang Chanyu. His main goal was to continue his father’s efforts to complete the military campaign against the western Yuezhi. By that time, the Yuezhi had already been split into two
groups: the Lesser Yuezhi (of the Nan Shan region, in the ridge between the Tsaidam Valley and Alashan desert) and the Greater Yuezhi (which continued its military action against the Xiongnu).

Laoshang Chanyu, like his father, was a courageous and talented military leader and ruler. He managed to conquer the Yuezhi. In a decisive battle (sometime between 175 and 165 B.C.) he defeated their ruler, Kidola. According to historical sources Laoshang ordered a wine cup made from the skull of his murdered foe.43

The remaining members of the Greater Yuezhi first fled to eastern Turkestan. However, upon meeting the Wusun, they were forced to travel even further west.

In the middle of the 2nd century B.C., the Yuezhi, led by the Coddle’s Heir, crossed the Syr-Darya River and reached the Valley of Amu Darya. In 129 B.C. they defeated the Greco-Bactrian state and founded the Kushan Empire. This empire initially included the territory of Bactria (present-day Afghanistan and adjacent to Uzbekistan and southern Turkmenistan). Later, its borders would extend to the regions of northern India. The Yuezhi, is a Chinese name, whereas the people called themselves as Tocharians. They spoke a variety of Indo-European languages. Today, the Yuezhi are called Sogdians. From the end of the 2nd century B.C., the historical territory of Bactria was called Tokharistan.

In the middle of the 2nd century B.C.E., significant changes in the Han Empire—which had been dependent on the Xiongnu for more than fifty years—took place. The dynasty managed to overcome the resistance of separatist forces within the country and initiated reforms aimed at restoring the former power of the state. To this end, the Emperor, Jing Di (157-141 B.C.E.) expanded the area of pastures and developed horse breeding. Measures were also taken to reform the military system. The formation of heavily armed troops and cavalry were a priority of such reforms. These reforms faced many problems, however—the Xiongnu forbade the rulers of smaller provinces to have their own troops.

The period of the greatest power of the Han Empire in 140 - 87 B.C.E. coincided with the reign of the talented reformer and visionary politician, Emperor Wu (Wu Di). The result of his active work was the revival of a strong central government. Earlier, the teachings of Confucius had been proclaimed as the official state ideology. Confucianism,
however, banned the conquest of foreign lands and, therefore, did not satisfy Wu. After forming horse units designed for rapid movement in battles (a strategy taken from the Xiongnu), Emperor Wu aspired to gain (at the very least) partial independence.

Believing that the “barbarians have to be destroyed by the hands of barbarians”, Emperor Wu did everything to find the Yuezhi, who were old enemies of the Xiongnu, to establish close contact with them and create a joint military coalition to fight the Xiongnu. Prior to that, Chinese were practically unaware of the land to the west of Eastern Turkestan. Therefore, the important task of making contact with the Yuezhi was entrusted to Zhang Qian, who was accompanied by a detachment of 100 soldiers. A Xiongnu guide by the name of Tang was sent as along in order to translate and accompany Zhang Qian and his soldiers.

In 138 B.C., the detachment of Zhang Qian left the Chinese capital, traveling northwest. Having come to the northern part of Nan Shan Mountains, the detachment was ambushed by the Xiongnu. The Xiongnu ruler Gunchen Chanyu (161-126 B.C.) showed mercy and spared the lives of the prisoners. For approximately 10 years, Zhang Qian was held in Xiongnu captivity. During this time, reestablished a new life—he married a daughter of a Xiongnu aristocrat and had a son.
During his time amongst the Xiongnu, Zhang Qian scrupulously fulfilled his mission - he had been collecting and studying varieties of information about the Xiongnu, their neighboring domains and natural environment, as well as their way of life and experiences. In 128 B.C.E., Zhang Qian fled with his family and a close friend to the territory of the Wusuns. He visited the Wusun capital of Chigu at Issyk-Kul. He then traveled by Naryn and moved to eastern Fergana towards the Davan State. After that, he moved on to Kangju state located in the middle of the Syr Darya. Finally, he came to the valley near the Zarafshan River, the territory of the Yuezhi (Tocharians). By this time the Tocharians had established an independent state on the territories of conquered Bactria and the regions to the north of Afghanistan. Because he had not previously considered such a course of action, the Yuezhi leader declined the proposal to enter an alliance with the Chinese.

In 127 B.C.E., while traveling back to China through Pamir, Alay, and the Tarim valley, Zhang Qian was recaptured by the Xiongnu again. He was held captive for another year; only in 127 B.C.E. he finally returned home.

In political terms, the purpose of Zhang Qian’s diplomatic mission was not achieved; however, the scientific, commercial and economic benefits were an incredible boost to the Chinese Empire. He opened the way to eastern Turkestan, Central Asia and even India. He discovered a much shorter route to India. His travels Zhang Qian totaled up to 15,000 kilometers; his travels laid the foundation for the Silk Road, the great economic, cultural, and political bridge that would connect the East and the West for many centuries.45

The contract of “kinship and peace” concluded between the Xiongnu and the Han Empire was often violated by Modu, Laoshang, and Gunchen Chanyus throughout the first half of the 2nd century B.C. During the first years of his reign, Emperor Wu did not dare violate the peace. But in 133 B.C., by means of agents, the Chinese had begun to provoke the Xiongnu into attacking the city of Man, where three-hundred-thousand men were ready to oppose the hundred-thousand strong army of the Xiongnu. After capturing the military leader of the Chinese army, the Xiongnu discovered their enemy’s real intentions.
Despite the fact that the Xiongnu had learned of his military plans, Emperor Wu did not hurry to launch his campaign. The flooding of the Yellow River put an immediate halt on his plans to attack the Xiongnu. In 129 B.C.E., Wu banned Chinese merchants from exporting goods to the Xiongnu, and sent four tumens (units of ten thousand soldiers) to lead the attack against the Xiongnu. However, only one tumen, led by Wei Qin, survived the campaign. From then on, the language of military dominated the negotiations between the Chinese and the Xiongnu.

During the life of Gunchen Chanyu (who died in the winter of 126 B.C.E.) the Xiongnu were able to defend themselves against the Chinese raids. In 128 B.C.E., they even reached the Yaymin (west of Beijing) and held three-thousand locals under the control. When the Chinese warlord Wei Qing conquered Ordos, the Xiongnu were able to seize the western part of the Great Wall of China.

A great struggle for power flared up in the Xiongnu camp after the death of Modu’s grandson, Gunchen Chanyu. The winner of that struggle was Ichise, who proclaimed himself the ruler of the Luli-Wang (Western Xiongnu). The son of Gunchen Chanyu, Yuibi, sought asylum in China and died in exile. Ichise quickly restored unity and order and, in 126 B.C.E., even moved into the north-eastern part of China. As a result of western attacks by the Xiongnu, the Chinese stronghold Shofan was destroyed in the Ordos area. During the reign of Ichise, the centralized political power of the Xiongnu waned to the benefit of the Han Empire.

The return of Zhang Qian, the agent of the Han Empire, caused Emperor Wu Di to rethink his foreign policy, strictly defining his options in terms of realistic possibilities. He understood that China needed to rely on its strength in numbers. Therefore, he increased the number of its fast-moving light troops and cavalry. In 124 B.C., the Chinese detachment led by Wei Qing, consisting of one-hundred-thousand soldiers, came out of the Ordos and invaded the western possessions of the Xiongnu. In 123-124 B.C., the war that erupted between the Xiongnu and the Chinese moved to the territory of the Xiongnu (in the present-day steppes of Mongolia).

In 119 B.C., Wu Di sent two detachments of troops numbering one hundred thousand men and one hundred forty thousand horses to the territory of the Xiongnu. The forces led by Wei Qin reached the north-
ern outskirts of the Gobi Desert, where they met the troops of Iche
tese Chanyu. Prior to the battle, Ichese had managed to move his camp fur-
ther north; not burdened by the excess weight, he quickly launched into
battle with the Chinese troops. Despite his tactical advantage, Ichese
suffered a loss of nineteen thousand soldiers. The Chinese technically
won the battle; however, the loss of one hundred thousand horses was
a huge blow to their campaign. With the added movements of a second
Chinese detachment, the Xiongnu were driven from Inpan to Khalkha
in northern Mongolia.

China, having extended its boundaries to the Gobi Desert, now
turned its troops against other bordering states, including the areas
of northern Vietnam (113 B.C.E.), the Tibetan tribes in the southwest
(111-107 B.C.E.), and the Korean state of Chosan in the northeast (109-
108 B.C.E.). This mobilization gave the Xiongnu time to re-gather and
reorganize their forces. Nevertheless, the vastness of their territories,
weakening relations with their former allies, constant warfare, and the
constant struggle for power between the nobility created considerable
difficulties for the Xiongnu Empire. Shortly after, the Xiongnu experi-
enced the adversity of political division and the threat of political decay.

The power of the Xiongnu fell into serious turmoil by the 1st cen-
tury B.C. Part of the Xiongnu began to gradually move westward and
started to conquer other nomadic tribes in the region. Historians call
this movement of nomads, “the great migration of peoples.” By the
4th century C.E., the Xiongnu (known in Europe as Huns) reached the
Danube River where they formed a strong state, the borders of which
extended from the Volga to the Rhine. By the 5th century C.E., the Hun
state was headed by a powerful leader, Attila who reigned from 434-453
C.E., collecting tribute from the Romans. After
the death of Attila, his state collapsed.

**Attila, Attila, or Adil Khan** (died in 453,
his birth year unknown) was the great leader of
the Huns from 433-453 C.E. During his rule, the
power of the Huns, centered in Pannonia (lo-
cated in the middle reaches of the Danube Riv-
er), reached its zenith. After a successful attack
against the eastern reaches of the Roman Empire
and Iran, the Huns exacted a huge annual tribute
of 2100 pounds of gold. Attila then turned to the west and conquered a number of cities in northern Gaul. In 451 C.E., in the battle of the Plains of Catalaunum (Northern France), Attila was defeated by a joint force of Romans, Franks, Visigoths, and Burgundians and eventually driven out of Gaul. That battle has been called “the battle of the nations.” During his last campaign in 452 C.E., Attila came close to Rome, but decided not to attack the city; he instead preferred to collect tribute from the Romans. After Attila’s death, his Empire collapsed.

The figure of Attila has been glorified in history and art. In present Hungary and Turkey, the name Attila is a most popular male name and several public places and streets in Hungary are also named after Attila.

The Emergence and Flourishment of the Turkic Qaghanate

The second half of the 1st millennium was characterized by the formation and development of feudal Turkic states in a vast area of southern Siberia, Kazakhstan, and Central Asia. This allowed scholars to call this period the **Old Turkic Period**.

In the middle of the 6th century, the first Turkic state, The **Turkic Qaghanate**, was formed in Central Asia and was of great importance
to the history of Kyrgyzstan. This Turkic Empire lasted for almost two centuries, from 552 to 744.

The “Turk” or “Turkut” ethnonyms (“Tujue” in a Chinese transcription) were first mentioned in the Chinese chronicles in 546 and Sogdians, Persians, and Byzantines called new conquerors of vast steppes by these names. The original name of the Turkic Qaghanate, according to the runic texts, implied the concepts of “strong,” “stable,” and “unshakeable.” On the other hand, the term had more social significance because it was originally associated only with the military aristocracy. Over time its meaning referred not only to a clan headed by a military aristocracy, but also to the peoples subjugated by them.

Chinese sources record at least three different legends concerning the origin of the Türks. The first of these, which we may call that of ‘The Abandoned Child Brought up by a Wolf’, is related with slight variations by both the Chou shu and the Pei-shih. It tells the story of a young boy mutilated by the enemy and thrown into a marsh where he has intercourse with a she-wolf. The wolf and the boy subsequently take refuge in a cavern, where the wolf gives birth to ten boys. Several generations later the Türks emerge from the cavern and become the blacksmiths of the Juan-juan. There is another legend, also related in the Chou shu, which, in the words of this source, ‘differs from the other [legend], nevertheless it shows that [the Türks] descended from a wolf’. A third legend is preserved only in a collection of anecdotes, curious and miraculous histories probably compiled in 860 and entitled the Yu-yang tsa-tsu. According to this legend, which we may call that of ‘The Spirit of the Lake’, the ancestor of the Türks, who is called Shê-mo-shê-li and lives in a cavern, has a liaison with the daughter of the lake spirit. One day, as the Türks are preparing for a great hunt, the girl says to Shê-mo: ‘Tomorrow during the hunt a white deer with golden horns will come out from the cavern where your ancestors were born [author’s emphasis]. If your arrow hits the deer we will keep in touch as long as you live, but if you miss it our relationship will end.’ In the course of the hunt, a follower of Shê-mo kills the deer. Shê-mo angrily decapitates the culprit and orders that a human sacrifice be established in which a man of that follower’s tribe be beheaded. According to the Yu-yang tsa-tsu, the sacrifice remained in practice ‘to this day’. There is no reason to impugn the authenticity of these legendary traditions, which clearly reveal the
composite ethnic character of the Türks. The three legends differ in so many essential points (which cannot be examined here in detail) that they cannot possibly represent a single tradition.\textsuperscript{50}

The Turkic tribe was formed in the 4th and 5th centuries among the Xiongnu, who believed that Ashina, the son of a mythical she-wolf, was their ancestor. The word \textit{ashina} itself has an Iranian etymology and means “blue” or “dark blue.” In the middle of the 5th century, Turks were under the Juan Juan (Avar) Qaghanate which ruled over the whole of Central Asia, while their main place of settlement was Altai. Here, Turks exploited rich ore deposits and smelted iron.

Because of the abundance of iron, it was the exchange they used when they paid taxes to the Juan-Juan. However, the far-sighted leaders of the Turks (Asan-Shad, Tuu, and Bumi) tried to use available natural resources as effectively as possible. Workshops were widespread and were devoted to the construction of weapons, iron armor, and equipment for military horses. Having formed a well-trained and equipped army,
the Turks subjugated all the Altaic tribes in less than one hundred years. In 546, Bumin subdued the great Tiele (Tegreg) nation, occupying the territory of Djungaria and eventually seizing their land. As a result, the Turks not only ceased to pay tribute to the Juan-Juan, but also became their rivals in the battle for supremacy over Central Asia.

Seeking a pretext for the clash, Bumin demanded Anagui (520-552), the Juan-Juan Qaghan, to marry his daughter. Basking in glory and power, Anagui insultingly declined Bumin’s demands, allowing Bumin to declare war. The Turks attacked the Juan Juan in 552, effectively diminishing the influence of the enemy forces in Central Asia; shortly after the defeated ruler took his own life.

The triumphal Bumin took the supreme Juan-Juan title of Illig Qaghan (Great Qaghan) and the Great Turkic Qaghanate (552-603) was officially established in Central Asia. The camp of the Qaghan was located along the Orkhon River (northern Mongolia) and over time became the administrative and political center of the new state. Bumin Qaghan, the founder of the great Turkic dynasty Ashina, died in 553.

According to nomadic tradition, the power passed to his brother, Istemi Qaghan, who had conquered the “ten arrows tribe,” who inhabited the valleys of Semirechye and the foothills of the central and western Tian Shan. After that, Istemi received the title of Qaghan of the ten tribes; in reality, however, he ruled only the western region of the coun-
try. Bumin’s counterparts, who ran the eastern part of the state, were formally under the authority of Qaghan, but pursued a foreign policy of their own, according to their interests. While Illig-Qaghan (553-572) was busy conquering southern Siberia and northern China, Istemi Qaghan of the ten arrows tribes was more attracted by the prospect of occupying the fertile lands of Central Asia and the steppes of Kazakhstan than anything else. During that time the Hephthalites ruled Central Asia.

In the second half of the 5th century, Iran had been paying tribute to the Hephthalites as well. Naturally, the Iranian rulers hoped to get into close contact with the Istemi, in order to get rid of the Hephthalites’ oppressive oversight. In 555, an alliance against the Hephthalites was agreed upon and sealed by the marriage of Khosrau Anushirvan (531-579), the Shah of Iran, to the daughter of Istemi Qaghan.

The allies actively prepared for war with the Hephthalites. To ensure the safety of their rear guard, the western Turks attacked the Varkunits (“pseudo-Avars”), their constant foes who roamed the shores of the Aral Sea. Eventually, they were able to drive them to the other bank of the Volga.

In both 563 and 567, the possessions of the Hephthalites were attacked by Iran in the west and the Turkic cavalry in the north. The Hephthalites were defeated; the Amu Darya River became the boundary between the victors. Istemi, having conquered the lands of Central Asia, received the title, the Conqueror-King of Hephthalites. The temporary capital of the Qaghan became Tian Shan, likely because of the geographical location was convenient for the development of trade and dispatching caravans and embassies.

After defeating the Hephthalites, the relationship between the Turkic Empire and Iran became complicated. According to custom, Shah Khosrau Anushirvan (much to his dissatisfaction) had to recognize himself as a younger relative of the Qaghan and obey his orders. Additionally, Istemi insisted that the tribute formerly paid by Iran to the Hephthalites, be paid to the Qaghanate. Naturally, the Shah refused to such an agreement.

The political confrontation between the Shah and the Qaghan was not solely based on the disagreements over the tribute and the customary declaration of allegiance. The desire to gain control of the Silk Road and to profit from its trade (which had become abundant) was fundamental to the political disagreements between the two rulers.
It was necessary to quickly resolve the conflict. The Turks sent two embassies to Iran, one after another, but Khosrau Anushirvan refused to respond to the demands of ambassadors. The death of several members of the second Turkic embassy in Iran further complicated the situation. According to the Iranian officials, the high temperatures caused the death of several members of the second embassy. This, however, did not convince Istemi, the alliance was officially broken. Iran began to prepare for the war against the western Turks.

Sogdian merchants expressed their interest in an Iranian defeat. The ruler of Sogdiana, King Maniakh, offered to collaborate with Istemi in order to build an alliance with a long standing rival and enemy of Iran, the Byzantine Empire. Having convinced Istemi to partake in the plan, Maniakh led a Turkic embassy on a long journey towards Constantinople. Passing around Iran along the Caspian Sea and through the Caucasus, the ambassadors arrived in Constantinople in 568. Emperor Justinian II received the envoys with great honor and agreed to join in an alliance with Istemi Qaghan against Iran. He sent the Byzantine embassy with the commander Zemarkhos to Talas and the Chui Valley, already known as the land of the Sogdians. From there, Zemarkhos was escorted to the Qaghan headquarters located at the foot of Aktag (Ak-Too) mountain in Tian Shan.

Having secured an agreement of mutual support, the Turks invaded Iran. Subsequent events described in historical sources are very contradictory. Turks occupied the Jurjan Province, but their actions were not supported west of the Byzantine Empire. In turn, Shah Khosrau, fearing a war on two fronts, hastened to conclude an alliance with Istemi. Under that agreement, in 571, Iran agreed to pay the tribute to the Qaghanate. The issue of a silk trade, which had been the cause of contention, was resolved in the peace agreements. The peace treaty with the Turks allowed Iran to deliver a series of crushing blows to the Byzantine Empire and Mesopotamia. Having defeated Iran, the western Turks finally lost interest in the Byzantine Empire. Repeated attempts in Constantinople to restore the alliance with the Turks were in vain. In 576, the ruler of the Turks, Turxath, took the necessary forces and attacked the Byzantine Empire along the Black Sea and took possession of the Bosporus.

In 580, Turks invaded Crimea and surrounded the Chersonese. The Turkic Empire and its headquarters located in Tian Shan turned into a mighty Eurasian power. Considerable success in foreign policy was achieved under Istemi’s rule.
However, this success was stopped short in 575 when Istemi Qaghan, who had built up great influence and prestige among his people and military leaders, died. His death immediately caused political strife in the Qaghanate and a long struggle for power followed.

After the death of Istemi, Taspar Qaghan came to the rule. He was the third son of Bumin Qaghan and the fourth ruler of the Turkic Khaganate. During his rule many Sogdians started to settle in and his rigid rule saved a great, multi-tribal state from decay. After the death of Taspar in 581, his four brothers became contenders for the imperial throne. Only the death of three brothers stopped the intense political fighting.

In 587, Istemi’s heir, Tardu Boke Qaghan, ascended to the throne. His rule, however, was far from being solidified.

Tribal feuds undermined the forces of the Turkic Qaghanate, which dramatically changed its foreign policy. During this period, a fragmented China, which paid exorbitant tribute to the Turks, managed to unite under the aegis of the Sui Dynasty (581-618). Another of its vassals, Iran, inflicted a heavy blow on the Turks in 588 in a battle near Herat. In 590, Constantinople liberated the Bosporus from the Turks.

After the death of Tardu Boke Qaghan in 603, the Turkic state divided into two Qaghanates, eastern and western. The subsequent stage of Kyrgyzstan’s history is inextricably linked to the western Turkic Qaghanate.

Massive mixing tribes and peoples in the Eurasian Turkic state played an important role in the process of turkisization in Kyrgyzstan as well. Foreigners often assimilated into local tribes. Mongolian features started to become more prevalent in the physical appearance of these groups. Among those inhabitants who spoke the Sogdian language (an Iranian language), the Turkic dialect began to solidify.

Ancient Turks
In the 7th century, the western Turkic Qaghanate was known as “the people of ten arrows.” Officially, the rulers of the state were from the Turkic dynasty of Ashina and held the “Yabghu-Qaghan” title, translated as “Qaghan of the people of ten arrows.” The name of the state and the official title of its rulers demonstrated the dominant position of “the people of ten arrows.” They were not native Turks from Central Asia, but were rather native Turks from the areas surrounding Tian Shan.

The Nushibi confederation included five tribes who occupied the territory from the shores of Syr Darya to the Chu River. Another five tribes united under the common name of Dulu and occupied the territory between the Chu River and Altai and Jungaria. The western Turkic Qaghanate included eastern Turkestan, the agricultural regions of Central Asia, vast steppe spaces of Aral Sea, and northern Caucasus. The administrative and political center of the state was Ming-Bulak in Talas valley and Suyab from 618 (adjacent the ruins of Ak-Beshim settlement near modern Tokmok).

Tong Yabghu Qaghan (618-630) was able to put an end to the tribal infighting among western Turks, even as it weakened the state. According to the estimates of his contemporaries, Tong Yabgu Qaghan was extraordinary, characterized as a talented politician and military leader. Chinese chroniclers note:

The khan wore a green satin robe; his hair, which was ten feet long, was free. A band of white silk wound round his forehead and hung down behind. The ministers of the presence,[10] numbering two hundred in number, all wearing embroidered robes, stood on his right and left. The rest of his military retinue [was] clothed in fur, serge and fine wool, the spears and standards and bows in order, and the riders of camels and horses stretched far out of [sight].

Tong Yabghu Qaghan, rather self-righteously, conducted an active anti-Iranian policy. Several military campaigns ended with his victory and, as a result, he wrested Tokharistan from Iran and occupied Afghanistan and northern India. Having concluded an alliance with the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius, Tong Yabghu Qaghan attacked Iranian possessions in Transcaucasia and conquered the cities of Derbent, Tbilisi, and Partav.
Although Tong Yabghu Qaghan understood the possible consequences of major political changes, he nonetheless implemented important administrative and political reforms, while balancing the rights of the nomadic and sedentary feudal aristocracies of Central Asia and eastern Turkestan. Tong Yabghu Qaghan introduced a special status for governors, known as Tutuq, who supervised the vassal rulers and the collection of taxes. However, he could not finish his reforms because he was treacherously and suddenly killed by one of the lords of the steppe.

The murder of Tong Yabghu Qaghan Zibil, his uncle and a partisan of Dulu clan, finally undermined the authority of the Ashina dynasty among the people of the “Ten Arrows” and all tribes of this confederacy were subordinated to him.

The power won by the efforts of Qaghan Tong gradually waned. Quarrels among the tribes in a struggle for power resumed and, one after another, the rulers were replaced. Tribal leaders of “the people of ten arrows” made Ishbara Qaghan (634-639) implement reforms and reinstate the right of autonomy and independence from central authority to *dulu* and *mushibi* tribal confederations. Despite the threat of external aggression, separation and tribal confrontation intensified.

By the end of the 7th century, the Tang Dynasty (618-907), headed by Emperor Taizong, increased its power in China and pursued far-reaching aggressive goals in their foreign policy. Thus, the ruling dynasty worked out its plans to establish domination over the Silk Road. In 630, Chinese troops, in alliance with the nomadic tribe of Toguz Oguz, invaded the eastern Turkic Qaghanate, completely subduing it.

Discord between Turkic leaders allowed the Taizong Emperor to use his troops to capture the Gaochang state located in the Turfan oasis. The convenient geographical location of the state helped to turn it into a sort of springboard for preparations of future campaigns against the western Turkic Empire.

Over the years, western Turks, in conjunction with the peoples of eastern Turkestan, repulsed the enemy’s aggression. Military success went back and forth. In 656, the Chinese general, Su Dinfan, won a decisive victory over Ishbara Qaghan’s troops in a battle on the Ili River. Turkic troops retreated to the Chu Valley but were defeated by the superior forces of the enemy. After the final defeat, Ishbara was captured and two years later, he was executed.
The Emperor could not manage to control the conquered lands of Tenir-Too and appointed a representative from the western branch of the Ashina Dynasty as the head of the people of the “Ten Arrows.” The governors did not have support or respect among the general population and each year the Qaghanate lost political strength. In 704, Turgeshes killed the last Qaghan of the Ashina Dynasty in the town of Kulan (near the modern station of Lugovaya). The era of the western Turkic Qaghanate ended.

At the beginning of the 8th century, the Turgesh Qaghanate emerged on the ruins of the western Turkic Qaghanate.

The Turgesh were included in the Dulu confederation of tribal association, or “Ten Arrows,” and lived in the valley between the Ili and Chu Rivers. The Turgesh were divided into two groups, the “yellow Turgesh” and the “black Turgesh.” The leaders of these separate groups were constantly at odds with each other.

The founder of the ruling dynasty was Ushyly Qaghan (704-706), the head of the “yellow” Turgesh. His camp settled in the captured city of Suyab. The territory from the middle of the Syr-Darya River to the upper Irtysch was under the rule of Turgesh. Qaghan divided his lands into twenty districts, each of which had to present an army of seven thousand people to the supreme ruler in cases of emergency. The power of Turgesh spread all over eastern Turkistan.

After the death of Ushyly Qaghan, his successor, Sakal Qaghan (706-711), was enthroned. The position of the state during this period was very difficult. In the south, the greatest threat was represented by the armed forces of the Tang Empire. In the east, the Turks managed to restore their Qaghanate, while from Arabia invaders raided the southwest. In order to preserve their independence, Sakal Qaghan had to make extraordinary efforts. After attacking Anxi in 709 (the Chinese protectorate or governorship) in eastern Turkestan, he inflicted heavy losses on the Chinese troops and executed the governor. Then the Turgesh sent their forces to Central Asia where, together with Sogdians in Bukhara, they surrounded the army of Arab general Kuteib ibn Muslim. Kuteib, skillfully using the disagreements between their allies, got out of a hopeless situation. The main danger for the Turgesh, however, was still to come from the eastern Turkic Empire.
Eastern Turks, led by a representative of the Ashina Dynasty, rebelled and freed themselves from the dictates of the Tang Empire in 679. Born a new eastern Turkic Empire reached the peak of its power during the rule of Qapaghan Qaghan (691-716). While relying on a large and powerful army, Turkic warlords attempted to restore the borders of the state of their famous predecessors, Bumin and Istei Qaghans.

A serious impediment to the implementation of these plans was a tripartite coalition founded in 710 and which consisted of Tang China, the Kyrgyz Qaghanate on the Yenisei and the Turgesh Qaghanate in Ténir-Too. Such a strong antiturkic coalition was created as a result of the active diplomatic work of Barsbek. A joint campaign of allies against the eastern Turks was scheduled for 711. Qapaghan Qaghan, however, decided to pre-empt these events and carry out a cunning maneuver. Having signed a contract with Tang China, Qapaghan Qaghan eliminated it from the coalition by securing its neutrality.

Then the eastern Turks, despite severe winter conditions, crossed the Sayan and suddenly entered the domain of the Yenisei Kyrgyz and defeated them. Reacting quickly to the changing situation, Qapaghan Qaghan sent troops to another bank of the Irtysh River via a secret Altai route. At one of the fords near the tract of Boluchu, the eastern Turks defeated a large army of the Turgesh. Sakal Qaghan was captured and hung while Turgesh lands became part of the second Turkic Empire. In 712, the Chinese army was defeated in Manchuria by the decisive actions of the Turks. It was the apex of Turkic military power.

The grave of Turks
In 716, Qapaghan Qaghan was killed and his nephew, Bilge-Qaghan (716-734), was enthroned. The twenty-year period of his reign was distinguished by permanent conquests that stretched from the shores of the Yenisei River to Central Asia. Influenced by Chinese architectural design, a large temple was erected by Bilge-Qaghan with an alley in front of it and stone sculptures with images-portraits of foreign ambassadors.

By that time the Turgesh gained full independence, their ruler was Chabyshchor Suluk (716-738), a Qaghan from the “black” Turgesh. New Qaghan was a skillful diplomat. In 717, he made a trip to China where he was given a warm welcome. Then Suluk solemnized a number of very successful marriages with the royal houses by picking from among potential threats to him: he married the daughter of a descendant of the western branch of the Ashina Dynasty; his second wife was the daughter of Bilge Qaghan; and his third marriage was to the daughter of the king of Tibet. When Suluk married his daughter to Bilge’s son, diplomatic success in the east allowed the Turgesh to intensify military operations in the western districts.

Arab governors of the Baghdad Caliphate in Khorasan used the defeat of the Turgesh to conquer Sogdiana, Khorezm, and parts of Toharstan. Qaghan Chabyshchor Suluk, starting from 720, took the offensive to the Arabs. During the struggle, an anti-Arab coalition was set up and consisted of Ferghana, Chach (the Tashkent oasis), and the Turgesh Qaghanate. The success of the allies was reinforced by frequent rebellions of the Sogdiana population against the Arabs. Having suffered several defeats, the Arabs were forced to leave Sogd in 728, but they did not accept any failures and declared “jihad” against the infidels. In 729, Arab armies crossed the Amu-Darya River and invaded Bukhara where Sogdian King Gurek and his army joined them. The Arab aggression was resisted by a combined force of the Turgesh, Fergana, and Chacha, led by Qaghan Chabyshchor Suluk. Several battles near Bukhara did not end in victory for anyone. During the battle, a Sogdian detachment unexpectedly defected to the Qaghan. As a result of the Allies’ efforts, and with the support of Central Asian peoples, the Arabs were driven out of the town after a long siege.

On captured lands, the Arab conquerors forcefully propagated the religious doctrine of Islam. Chabyshchor Suluk advocated the adoption of Islam as well, but the Turgesh rejected this proposal.
Being distressed by the failure, the Caliph of Baghdad sent a new
governor and large military reinforcements to Central Asia. At first, the
new governor of the Caliph was accompanied by good luck, but in 721
he suffered a major defeat. Until 734-735, the Arabs did not renew any
tries to take possession of the Sogdiana.

In 734, a well-known Arab warlord, al-Harith ibn Surayj, dissatisfied with the rule of the Umayyad Dynasty, defected to Central Asia.
Al-Harith ibn Surayj took a serious political step: he requested asylum
from Qaghan Chabyshchor Suluk. Qaghan made al-Harith his vassal
and gave him the right to collect the “feeding” tax from the city of Faryab. Together with the forces of the Huttala governor (in southern Tajikistan) and the Karluks in Toharistan, al-Harith attacked the Arabs but was
defeated. To punish the people of Huttala for supporting al-Harith, the
Arabs raided the town. Huttala’s people asked for help from the Qaghan.

Under the leadership of Chabyshchor Suluk, the Turgesh left the Chui Valley. After seventeen days they reached Huttala. In a long, drawn-out battle, the Turgesh succeeded against the Arabs and captured all their wagons. The Arabs retreated into Khorasan. Believing that, this fragmented and impoverished group of Arabs was not a serious threat, the Qaghan, with a small army, chased after them in the winter of 737. However, in the face of a serious threat, the Arabs were able to prove
themselves, quickly regrouped, and attacked the Turgesh. Nearly captured, the Qaghan, returned to the Chu valley with only remnants of his former troops. Influential Turgesh dignitaries blamed the Qaghan for the
defeat. Later the Qaghan was paralyzed and died in 738.

Qaghan’s death marked the beginning of a long struggle for the
throne. Great contest between “yellow” and “black” Turgesh severely
weakened the state. Their rivals took advantage of it and by the middle
of the 8th century the Qaghanate was replaced by the Karluks.

The Turgesh Qaghanate was replaced by the Karluk state. The name “Karluk bodun” (the Karluk people)
or “the Uch Karluk” (the three tribes of Karlukhs) was spread among a strong alliance of ancient nomadic tribes. Their boundaries stretched from the Mongolian Altai Mountains to the coast of Lake Balkhash, and also to the north and south of the Tarbagatai Ridge. The Karluk maintained a close and friendly relationship with the Yenisei Kyrgyz for a long time.

The Karluk consisted of three large Turkic tribes: the Bulak, Chigil (or Sebek), and Tashlyk. According to the historical sources, from the beginning the Karluk Union was characterized by territorial and political disunity. At the end of the 6th and beginning of the 7th century, one faction of the Karluks controlled Toharstan. Their ruler held the title of Yabgu and at different periods was subordinate to the western Turkic and Turkic Qaghans. The Karluks of Toharstan played a significant role in the struggle against the Arab invaders.

The Karluks of Tarbagatay (another group of Karluks that occupied the east in the Mongolian Steppes) had a strong army and occupied the territory between the eastern and western Turkic Qaghanate. They consolidated their strength by forming subsequent alliances with the other Qaghanate. This nation’s history was blighted political turmoil; historical sources reveal that, in the first quarter of the 8th century alone, the Karluks revolted against the Eastern Qaghanate three times. The Karlukhs actively participated in major political events that led to the fall of the second Turkic and Turgesh Empire. In 744, a combined force of Basmyls, Uyghurs, and Karluks defeated the second Turkic Empire and a new steppe government was formed, the Uyghur Qaghanate (744-840) headed by Eletmish Bilge Qaghan.

The name “Uyghur” is translated from the ancient Turkic language as “organized,” and “welded.” This ethnic group included nineteen tribal associations; the Yaglagar clan held one of the most prominent positions in this association of tribes.

After the victory over the eastern Turks, the Uyghurs, with the aid of a strong alliance with the Toquz-Oghuz tribes, extended their territory from the Altai Mountains to Manchuria.

The leader of the Karluks received the title of Yabgu and was subordinated amongst the ranks of his former allies. This caused a measure of discontent among the Karluks who were striving for independence and gave rise to a new conflict. In 746, the Karluk state, oppressed by the
Uyghurs, was forced to migrate to Jetysu, where the political situation remained difficult for the Karluks.

Due to ongoing strife between the nobility within the Turgesh Qaghanate, the state was left ineffective at carrying out political decisions. The governors of the Chinese Tang Dynasty in eastern Turkestan took advantage of the situation and, in 748, a Chinese army invaded the Chu valley, seized the city of Suyab, and destroyed it. Continuing the campaign, they captured and executed the mayor of Chach (Tashkent) in the following year. The Karluks assisted the Chinese in their efforts.

Having a great interest in the region, the Arabs could not accept such cavalier interference by rival competition in Central Asia. Under the command of Ziyad ibn Salih, the Arabs condemned the assaults of the Chinese. Having received the news, the Chinese military leader Gao Xianzhi set out from Suyab with an army of one hundred thousand soldiers to confront the Arabs.

The two armies met in July 751 in the Talas Valley near the town of Atlah (now ruins in the northern part of the Pokrovka village of Manas district in Talas oblast). Four days passed and neither army crossed the river separating them. On the fifth day, the cavalry of the Karluks betrayed the Chinese and suddenly attacked them from the rear. The Arabs attacked the front. The Chinese army could not stand the squeeze from two sides and fled to one of the narrow gorges of the Talas River. According to the medieval historian Ibn al-Asir, the Chinese army suffered huge losses in the Battle of Atlah. Fifty thousand soldiers died and another twenty thousand were taken as prisoners.

The importance of this victory for the Turkic people was enormous. The Chinese were driven from the borders of Central Asia. After their defeat, for about a thousand years, imperial Chinese troops did not venture into Central Asia. The defeat of the Chinese army and the victory of the Arab-Turkic coalition, created the perfect conditions for the unimpeded development of Islamic culture in the region. V. Bartold, a Russian Turkology specialist, has stressed the importance of the political alliance of Semirechye and Yenisei Kyrgyz with the Karluk state and their relationship to the Arab Caliphate.53

Having played an important role in the defeat of the Chinese invaders, the Karluks consolidated their hold on the Semirechye. To establish their political leadership, however, the leaders of the Karluk state had to
Oskon Osmonov and Cholpon Turdalieva

carry on a struggle for many years. The Karluk s considered the Uyghur Qaghanate to be the main obstacle in their plan to control the territories of the steppe. In 751, they even managed to form an anti-Uyghur coalition which, besides the Karluk s themselves, included the Turks, Kyrgyz, and Chiks.

Their allies, however, had not yet developed a specific plan for joint action. Having learned from defectors about the hostile intentions of the coalition, Uyghur Qaghan Eletmish Bilge, known for his outstanding skills as a military strategist, outran the enemy and broke them apart one by one. The Karluk s, just like the Turgesh state some forty years ago, were defeated on the banks of the Irtysh River in Boluchu.

A year later, the Karluk s gathered forces and, in an alliance with the Turgeshes and Basmyls, marched deep into the steppes again, reaching the capital of the Uyghur Qaghanate, Ötüken City (in modern Mongolia). It was there, however, that the Uyghurs again defeated them. Refusing to give up, the Karluk s attacked the Uyghurs several times afterwards, ultimately retreating with heavy losses.

At the same time, the rulers of the Karluk state participated in a struggle for political leadership in Semirechye. Their main rivals were the Oghuz, who belonged to the confederation of the people of the “Ten Arrows.” According to legend, the lands near Issyk-Kul Lake and Talas valley were the indigenous sites of the Oghuz. This struggle continued for twenty years, ending with the victory of the Karluk in 766 and the capture of the cities of Suyab and Taraz. A large part of the Oghuz left Semirechye and migrated to the shores of the Aral Sea where they formed their own state.

Having secured the settlements at Semirechye and Tenir-Too, the Karluk s, in alliance with the Tibetans, continued to struggle against the Uyghurs in eastern Turkestan and Jungaria. Initially, success accompanied the allies, but in 791, and then again in 812, the Uyghurs were able to defeat them. As a result, the Yagbu of the Karluk s were forced to acknowledge the authority of the Uyghur Qaghan. Taking advantage of the difficult plight of the Karluk state, in 812, the Arabs launched a war against them. Not far from Otrar, the Karluk s were imprisoned as Yagbu himself fled for refuge among the Kimak people living near the Irtysh River.

In the middle of the 9th century, Central Asia became the arena of a number of major political events that would influence the destiny of the
Karluk state. The result of an ongoing struggle between Central Asian peoples and their Arab invaders created favorable conditions for the seizure of power by the Samanid Dynasty which had descended from local feudal lords.

After twenty years of the relentless war in Central Asia, the Yenisei Kyrgyz defeated the Uyghur Qaghanate in 840. Only a small fraction of Uyghurs were able to create two small independent states in Turfan and the Ganzhou area. The defeat of the Uyghurs was opportunely used by Bilge Kul Qadir Khan, the Yagbu of the Karluks, to raise the prestige of his state.

By this time, the Kyrgyz Qaghan had maintained their capital of Otuken for nearly 1000 years (it dated back to the Hun Empire); it was considered to be the capital of the supreme rulers of the nomads. Consequently, the Qaghan did not claim to be the highest authority in the steppe. In 840, Bilge Kul Khan assumed the title of “Qaghan,” which helped him to stake his claim in the region and win the respect of the nomadic peoples in the region. Such an act, of course, does not prove that all the Turkic tribes of Central Asia suddenly came under the rule of the Karluks. At that time, real strength, and hence real power, was on the side of the Yenisei Kyrgyz.

In the same year (840), the Samanid governor of Samarkand, Nuh ibn Asad, declared a “religious war” against the “infidel” Turks. He occupied the city of Isfidzhab (near to modern-day Shymkent), where he made his residence. In 893, Samanid Ismail Ibn Ahmad undertook a military campaign against the Karluk state and took the city of Taraz. Qaghan Ogulchak Qadir Khan withstood a long siege, but was forced to surrender the city in the end.

As a result, the whole of Talas, as well as the area from the Chu Valley to the town of Merke fell under the rule of the Ismaili. They allowed the Samanids to achieve two important goals. Firstly it helped to turn the region into a center of Islam (which it would use to spread Islam). It also improved the state’s economy, because the new territory included the rich silver mines in the Sheldzhi area and the upper reaches of the Talas River. Ogul-chak Qadir Khan consequently moved his headquarters to Kashgar in order to prevent the further military advances of the Samanids in the east.

For a century the Karluks of Tenir-Too, Semirechye, and eastern Turkestan unified around the Karakhanids, a force that would help to
sweep away the Samanids and conquer the whole of Central Asia. There is a theory that the Kyrgyz tribe of Saruu is a splinter group of a once powerful tribe of Karluks.

The Karakhanid state was created by a Turkic dynasty and it ruled over Central Asia from the 10th to the 12th centuries. The name of the royal clan is not actually known and the term Karakhanid is artificial—it was derived from Qara Khan or Qara Khaqan (the word “Kara” means “black” and also “great” and “courageous”), which was the foremost title of the rulers of the dynasty.\(^5\)

For the first time the term ‘Karakhanids’ as a powerful dynasty was invented by the 19th century. Since then European scholars and orientalists have applied the name to all Turks of the state.\(^5\)

In the 9th century such regions as Semirechye, Western Tian Shan (modern Kyrgyzstan), and Western Xinjiang (Kashgaria) were settled in by the Turkic tribes, in which the Karluks, Yaghmas, Chigils and Bulaks unified in one tribal confederation. The noble and core rulers of these tribes bore the specific titles related to their totemic animals. For instance, the rulers from the Chigil bore the title Arslan Qara Khâqan meant the “lion” and chiefs of the Yaghma tribes acquired the title Bughra Qara Khaqan meant Bughra or a “male camel”. The titles of the members of the dynasty changed with their changing position, normally upwards, in the dynastic hierarchy.\(^5\)

By the mid-10th century, the Karakhanid rulers took over the large territories in eastern Turkestan, Fergana, and Semirechye. The Karakhanid state was positioned as a state with highly developed urban life in the cities and settlements and its capitals were located in present-day China, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Four main cities Balasagun in Semirechye, (the area of Burana tower) Uzgen (present Osh oblast in Fergana valley), Kashgar in Sinkiang and Samarkand in Transoxania (the territory between Amudarya and Syrdarya Rivers) were the urban centers full by the bazars and craft workshops.

In the mid of the 10th century the Karakhanids converted to Islam and it became the tool of their state integrity. With the conversion to
Islam, the Karakhanids also adopted such Muslim names and titles as sultan or ān al-salātīn (sultan of sultans) however with the reservation of some Turkic regional titles such as Khan, Khagan, Ilek (Ilig) and Tegin.\(^{57}\)

The adaptation of Islam made a certain push to the more expansionist politics towards the conquest of the Samanids who ruled in Transoxania area. The Karakhanids took over the main commercial cities and centers Isfijab, Ferghana, Ilaq, Samarkand, and the Samanid capital Bukhara. However, with the death of Hasan Bughra Khan, a Karakhanid ruler, in 992, the Samanids returned to Bukhara. But their victory did not last long time and in 996 Hasan’s cousin Ali b. Musa, who had a title Kara Khan or Arslan Khan, started the campaign against the Samanids. The Samanid army was led by Sabuk tegin, who was from the Barskan tribe settled in Issyk Kul area. Sabuk tegin did not fight against his tribesmen. Moreover, he initiated the plan to separate the territory of the Samanids between the Karakhanids and his tribe. According to the mutual agreement, the Karakhanids took over the northern part of Katvanskaya steppe (Uzbekistan) and Sabuk tegin conquered Khorasan and northern Afghanistan, which soon became a territory of a new dynasty called the Gaznavids. Although the dynasty was of Central Asian Turkic origin, it was thoroughly Persianized in terms of language, culture, literature, and habits.\(^{58}\) Twice in 1006 and 1008 the Karakhanids attempted to conquer the Ghaznavedis, but their attempts were not successful.

In the beginning of the 11th century the Karakhanid dynasty was split up into two appanages. The eastern part developed on the territory of present northern Kyrgyzstan and Sinqiang and the western Karakhanids ruled in Transoxiana with its two urban centers Bukhara and Samarkand. The division of the Karakhanids is eventually accompanied by the rapid change of rulers. The most prominent among them was Ibrahim Tabghach Khan. He was considered by Muslim historians as a great ruler, and he brought some stability to Western Karakhanid Khanate by limiting the appanage system which caused much of the internal strife in the Karakhanid Khanate.\(^{59}\)
Culturally, the Karakhanids can be considered as a light of Islamic civilization in the mediaeval history of Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia. During their reign theological schools – madrasas, minarets, hospitals and mosques were built throughout the region. In the beginning of the 11th century three mausoleums were built in Usgen, the Burana Tower in Balasagyn, the main mosque in Bikhara and two hospitals in Samarkand.

In 1040, the Seljuk Turks came up to the mediaeval political arena of Central Asia. They defeated the Ghaznavids at the Battle of Dandanaqan and entered Iran. The Karakhanids were able to withstand the Seljuks initially, and briefly took control of Seljuk towns in Khurasan. The Karakhanids, however, developed serious conflicts with the religious classes (the ulama). In 1089, during the reign of Ibrahim’s grandson Ahmad b. Khidr, at the request of the ulama of Transoxiana, the Seljuks entered and took control of Samarkand, together with the domains belonging to the Western Khanate. The Western Karakhanids Khanate became a vassal of the Seljuks for half a century, and the rulers of the Western Khanate were largely whomever the Seljuks chose to place on the throne. Ahmad b. Khidr was returned to power by the Seljuks, but in 1095, the ulama accused Ahmad of heresy and managed to secure his execution.

In the mid of the 12th century, the power of the Karakhanids was weakened because of the constant wars with Seljuks and they were easily dominated by the other dynasty called the Qara Khitais.

The written sources called this new tribal federation differently. In the Chinese sources the Qara Khitai tribes were called as ‘Kidan’ and in the Arabic inscriptions as ‘Qara Khitai’. They came to Semirechye from present Mongolia and north-eastern China, where they unified in the state of Liao meant in Chinese language the Iron dynasty. The Liao state existed more than a hundred years and it largely adapted the Chinese mode of life and culture. The Mongol language and local shamanic beliefs were prohibited, while the Buddhism became the state and main religion. The person who did not worship Buddhism was considered as a second ranked citizen.

Politically the Qara-khitais always fought against the rulers of southern China and the nomadic population of Steppes. In the mid of the 11th
century the Liao state again attempted to capture the Steppe nomads and make control upon them. The nomadic leader of the resistance khan Marguz was punished on the wooden donkey. The cruel punishment reached his successor khan Mogusu, who was captured by Qara-Khitai-dans and publicly was cut off on the city plaza. However, the population of the Steppe did not become the subject of the Liao dynasty.

In 1119 the Liao dynasty was invaded by another northern people, the Jurchen. They began to assert their power and, in an alliance with the Chinese, overthrew the Liao. They then went on to invade and conquer much of northern China, which they ruled under the Jin dynasty until the Mongols defeated them in 1234.

After the invasion of Liao, the Qara-Khitais were split out into several parts. Some tribes, integrating into the confederation, created the Naiman Khanate, the second part of Khitais became the subject of Jurchens, and the third ones under the supervision of the prince Elui Dashi went on the Enisey Kyrgyz in South Siberia. However, the Enisey Kyrgyz did not host Elui Dashi and the Qara-Khitais had to migrate towards Semirechye. Retreating to the west, Elui Dashi and his followers settled in the area of the Emil River (the border of China and Kazakhstan) and organized the Qara-Khitai state. Without any grand attempt Qara-Khitais conquered the Eastern Karakhanids in Semirechye and captured the vast territory from the shores of Enisey River to the Syrdarya River. The name of Balasagun was changed to Khosun Ordo and it became the capital of the new state of Qara-Khitais Si Liao translated from Chinese as the Western state.

The western Karakhanids also had some political troubles with the local Qarluks who with the support of QaraKhitaies attempted to capture the supreme power. The western Karakhanid ruler Makhmud ibn Mukhammed in his turn appealed for support to the Seljuk khan Sanjar. In 1141 two armies met in Katvanskaya steppe in north-east of Samar-kand and Qara-Khitais routed the army of Karakhanids and Seljuks. The khan of Qara-Khitais called Gurkhan did not make the devastating invasion of Western Karakhanid’s territory in Xinjiang, he took revenge and got returned back to Chui valley. In 1158 Khoresm, one of the flourished cities in Central Asia became a vassal of Qara-khitais and payed annually 30,000 golden dinars to them.
It is necessary to say, that the taxation policy of Qara-Khitais was strong and systematic enough. According to census there were 84 500 nomadic families who had to provide the army warriors. Every household had to pay a golden dinar and taxes form the urban population was higher. For instance, the inhabitants of Balasagyn paid a tenth of the entire treasury of the Western Liao state.

But nevertheless, the interstate and dynastic conflicts were very constant and they became the source of their political and military disintegration and weakness. In 1208 to the territory of Qara-Khitais in Semirechye run the Mongolian tribes Naimans and Merkits, who escaped from the devastations of Chinghiz khan’s army. The son of the Naiman khan Kuchluk collected his tribes in one confederation and settled in Semirechye. He made agreement with Qara-Khitais. However, very soon he betrayed the ruler of Qara-Khitais and captured the treasury of gurkhan in Usgen. In two years the gurkan was captured by Kuchluk. Kuchluk banned Islam and persecuted Muslims of Semirechye. However, simple people saw Kuchluk as an usurper of power and did not want to be his subjects. The rebels in Eastern Turkestan lasted until 1214 and even some rulers of Qara-Khitais attempted to restore the previous power and status. For instance, in Ferghana Horezm-shakh Muhammed considering himself as a successor of gurkhan increased his power. In the east Chinghiz Khan and his army became the great threat to the less or more integrity of mixed Turkic and Mongolian tribes in Central Asia. Existing more than 90 years the state of Qara Khitais and Naimans was swept by the hordes of Chinghiz Khan.

The Kara-Khanids is arguably the most enduring cultural heritage among coexisting cultures in Central Asia from the 9th to the 13th centuries. The Karluk-Uyghur dialect spoken by the nomadic tribes and turkisized sedentary populations under Kara-Khanid rule formed two major branches of the Turkic language family, the Chagatay and the Kypchak. The Kara-Khanid cultural model that combined nomadic Turkic culture with Islamic, sedentary institutions spread east into former Kara-Khoja and Tangut territories and west and south into the subcontinent, Khorasan (Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, and Northern Iran), Golden Horde territories (Tatarstan), and Turkey. The Chagatay, Timurid, and Uzbek states and societies inherited most of the cultures of the Kara-Khanids and the Khwarezmians without much interruption.
The Turkic peoples are now a collection of ethnic groups that live in Northern, Eastern, Central, and Western Asia, North-Western China, and parts of Eastern Europe. They speak languages belonging to the Turkic language family. They share, to varying degrees, certain cultural traits and historical backgrounds. The term Turkic represents a broad ethno-linguistic group of peoples including existing societies such as the Turkish people, Azerbaijanis, Chuvashes, Kazakhs, Tatars, Kyrgyz, Turkmens, Uyghurs, Uzbeks, Bashkirs, Qashqai, Gagauz, Altai, Khakas, Tuvans, Yakuts, Crimean Karaites, Krymchaks, Karakalpaks, Karachays, Balkars, Nogais, and as well as past civilizations such as Yenisei Kirghiz, Dingling, Tiele, Chuban, Pannonian Avars, Göktürks, Bulgars, Kumans, Kipchaks, Turgeshes, Khazars, Seljuk Turks, Ottoman Turks, Mamluks, Timurids, Khiljis, and possibly Huns, Xiongnu, Wusun, Tauri and the Tuoba.63

The Struggle for Supremacy in Central Asia.
The Kyrgyz Great Power

The political history of the Kyrgyz from the 3rd - 6th centuries is filled with constant struggle and a quest for independence. The Kyrgyz
Qaghanate was inferior compared to larger tribal associations in Central Asia in terms of population, troops, organizational savvy, and the material security that force brings. In 554-555, the Kyrgyz were under the power of Mukhan--brother and successor of Bumin, the founder of the Turkic Qaghanate. Resistance proved unsuccessful and, as a tribute to the Turkic Qaghanate, the Kyrgyz supplied it with high-quality weapons. The Minusinsk Basin region thus became the source of weapons and metal production for the Turkic Qaghanate.

At the same time, incessant internal strife in the Turkic Qaghanate gradually destroyed the unity of the state and in 581 it divided into two Qaghanates – East and West. After the collapse of the eastern Turkic Qaghanate in 630, the Yenisei Kyrgyz gained their independence for a time. During this period, the ancestors of the Kypchaks, a tribal union, Si (seyanto), headed by the Bilge Qaghan, conquered the land of the eastern Turks (Altai, Gobi, Kerulen, and Yenisei). In 646, however, the Uyghurs defeated the Si tribes. To strengthen their own position, the Kyrgyz needed a strong patron and endeavored to establish direct relations with a very powerful China. In 648, a Kyrgyz embassy was sent to the Tang Empire.

The Chinese emperor welcomed Shibotsuyu Achjan, the head of the embassy, and awarded him with the highest military rank of General, declaring him to be the Governor General of the Mzyan-kun District.

Although the Kyrgyz people were formally dependent upon China, officials of the Tang Empire held no real power over them or their lands. Later, the Kyrgyz sent other embassies to China, establishing trade links, trading their herds for a variety of goods (mainly silk and other fabrics). The patronage of the Chinese Empire allowed the rulers of the Kyrgyz to enhance their influence among the nomads and protect themselves against the intrusion of foreign enemies. At the same time, military units were formed by the Qaghanate. Ownership was divided into six districts and a system of government was implemented to
rule over their territory. Gradual development and an increase in the socio-economic status of the country are noticeable during this period.

The end of the 7th century and the beginning of the 8th century marks a unique moment in the historical development of Kyrgyzstan. During this period, the Kyrgyz state gained considerable political strength, effectively forcing neighboring states to consider it as a powerful contender.

At that time, the Kyrgyz state was headed by Barsbek Ajo. The time of his rule is one of the brightest and most important pages in the history of the Kyrgyz people. The complete absence of names of any real historical figures and folk heroes is one of the main difficulties that historians face when studying the ancient history of the Kyrgyz people. Similar patterns were observed in well-known ancient and medieval sources. This lack of sources persisted the historical record up until the time when Turkic peoples (including the Kyrgyz people) developed their own writing.

It was not until the second half of the 19th century that Russian scientists were able to decipher monuments with runic writings in the Yenisei. The writings, left by Turks in the 8th century, contained some information about Barsbek.64

Barsbek was from an ancient Kyrgyz ruling dynasty. He was one of four brothers and was fond of hunting with hounds. The tribe of Barsbek was under special patronage of the Umai-Ene deity. This is evidenced by the fact that relatives of Barsbek had the rare and prestigious title of “Umai-beg.” He was able to lead the Kyrgyz government under difficult international conditions, thanks to his own outstanding personal qualities.

Barsbek’s rule coincided with an abrupt change in the political situation in Central Asia and Mongolia. In 679 the Orkhon Turks who settled in present-day Mongolia fought against the oppression of the Chinese
Tang Empire. They managed to inflict a severe blow to the troops and allies of the Chinese.

At the same time, the Turks, led by Kuchlug Khan, a descendant of the Ashina dynasty, formed the Second Turk Empire. It was quite disadvantageous for the Kyrgyzs, who, like other steppe peoples, came under the continuous dictates of a hostile state instead of formal Chinese custody. Therefore, the Kyrgyz, together with the Toquz-Oghuz of Baz Qaghan, Quriqan, Chinese, and Tatars, supported the Tang Empire.

In 688, the eastern Turks defeated the coalition of Baz Qaghan and became the owners of the steppes. The Kyrgyz people were not involved in that battle and were able to save their troops, which enabled Barsbek to lead his forces against the Turkic Qaghanate on the northern borders. Shortly later, having decided to test the strength of the Kyrgyz, Barsbek declared himself Qaghan, as well as the royal name of Alp Bilge. This was an open challenge of the Kyrgyz Qaghan and Turkic Qaghanate—only one of these powers could rule over Central Asia.

To eliminate the impending threat of the Kyrgyz people, the Turkic Qapaghan Qaghan (691-716) sent an army, led by Bilge Prince, to Yenisei. The campaign proved unsuccessful: the army was stopped on their way to the borders of the Kyrgyz people. Their opponents had to settle for a peace treaty. Qapaghan Qaghan accepted Barsbek’s title of Qaghan and returned his captured niece to him. In response, the Kyrgyz apparently promised to support the Turkic Empire. Thus, the contract fixed the status of the Barsbek as the Alp Bilge Qaghan, enhancing his reputation. However, his personal ambitions and dreams were far from being realized.

At the beginning of the 8th century, Barsbek returned to his foreign policy to undermine the supremacy of the eastern Turkic Empire in Mongolia and Central Asia. In 707-709, Barsbek sent two embassies to China, which fought at that time with the eastern Turks, in order to create an anti-Turkic coalition and develop closer relations with the Turgesh Qaghanate. The embassy, headed by Ezgene, was sent to the Turgeshes of the Chu Valley. By 709, as a result of successful diplomatic activities, Ezgene managed to organize a powerful anti-Turkic coalition, comprised of the Tang Empire and Turkic Qaghanate. One of the most prominent political and military leaders of the Turkic Qaghan-
ate, **Ton Yokuk**, characterized the existing political situation in Central Asia as follows: “The Tabgach (Chinese) Qaghan was our enemy. Qaghan of «Ten Arrows» (Turgish) was our enemy. But the biggest enemy was the mighty Kyrgyz Qaghan. Enemies, like birds of prey, were everywhere; we were carrion to them.…”.

The Turkic state did not wait for their opponents’ joint action against them. They decided to be the first to strike and destroy their enemies one by one. The Turks began by attacking the Kyrgyz, who posed as the greatest threat to Turkic power. In 709, having crossed the headwaters of the Yenisei, Turkic troops defeated the Chiq and Az tribes, which were in an alliance with the Kyrgyz, and occupied Tuva, turning it into a springboard for subsequent attacks against the Kyrgyz.

The Kyrgyz tribes, in turn, blocked the main road from Tuva to the Yenisei River with high stone rubble, which they quarried in a narrow gorge; the remains of this road block still exist today. No army could overcome it. Having occupied other strategically important passes in the Sayan, Barsbek thought that his position was secure and quietly waited for allied support. However, neither the Chinese nor the Turgesh supported him. They were primarily interested in securing their own borders. Barsbek, who was left alone in the fight against the formidable forces of the Turkic Qaghanate, had to change his course and search for another way out of this situation. In anticipation of the autumn of 710, he sent an embassy to Tibet, the Turgesh Empire, and the Tang Empire. Eren Ulug, the respected representative of a strong Kyrgyz clan, *Bolshar*, was appointed to head the embassy. He was a wise and experienced diplomat, having served several prior diplomatic missions. Barsbek did not officially notify China of his approaching embassy but rumors of its intention circulated among the nomads. The Qaghan’s plan was not intended to intimidate the Turks, but to strengthen Chinese and Turgesh military activity. For unknown reasons, Eren Ulug died along the journey and the embassy never reached Tibet; thus, the Kyrgyz never made an alliance with these forces.
Although the Chinese and Turgesh did not join forces with Barsbek, the Turks accelerated their actions. In a desperate maneuver, they decided to get around the blocked passage in the Sayan Mountains. This passage was defended by the Kyrgyz. Turk Qaghan Bilge and his brother, Kultegin, participated in this campaign. However, Ton Yokuk, a very old and wise commander, led the charge. The Turkic troops found a local who (by way of betrayal) offered to guide the troops along an unknown high-altitude trail to the Minusinsk Valley.

The march in the middle of winter through the Sayan required great courage from all the troops and commanders involved. Ultimately, the Turks succeeded. In the winter of 710–711, their forces suddenly attacked the Kyrgyz camp. One runic inscription tells the story of the attack: “We attacked the sleeping Kyrgyz ... we paved our way with spears.”

The main forces of the Kyrgyz state were defeated. Having gathered the surviving warriors in the Sung forest, Barsbek put up a fierce resistance. Despite his efforts, the Kyrgyz were defeated by Kul-tegin. Barsbek himself was killed in a duel. The warriors could not even bury him with the appropriate honors as established by custom. The details are documented in the Altyn-Kul epitaph. The only monument to their brave king was a flat rock installed by the tribe to express sorrow over his death. The defeat of the Kyrgyz in the Battle of Sung left severe consequences for the Kyrgyz people. For the next forty years, the Kyrgyz would not take part in any military events in Central Asia.
The first mention of “the Kyrgyz great power” amongst scholars appeared in V.V. Barthold’s 1927 “The Kyrgyz People. A Historical Review.” Stressing the effect of the Kyrgyz state in the 9th century, Barthold doubted the concept of a “the Kyrgyz great power.” Written sources and archaeological records, however, indicate that the Kyrgyz played a major role in the history of the region.

In the 8th century, the leading role in Central Asia belonged to the Uyghurs. They had already inhabited the steppes of Central Asia for a long time and spoke the ancient Turkic language. The weakening of the Second Turkic Qaghanate allowed the combined forces of the Uyghurs, Karluqs, and Basmyls to finally defeat it and establish a new nomadic state on the steppes, the Uyghur Qaghanate (745-840). The power of the Qaghanate was so great that even China paid them annual tribute.

The foreign policy of the Kyrgyz state was characterized by several attempts to attract Karluqs, Chiqs, and scattered remnants of the Turkic tribes of Semirechye to fight against Uyghur Qaghan Elet-Misha Bilge (747-759). Some Turkic beks warned the Uyghurs about plans of a coalition. Without giving their opponents any time to regroup, the Uyghur Qaghanate defeated each of their allies separately in decisive military actions. In 758, the Uyghurs managed to conquer the Kyrgyz people in the middle of the Yenisei. A Kyrgyz uprising in 795 was also suppressed. It took the Kyrgyz governors, or Ajo, twenty-five years to gather their forces in order to once again form an independent Kyrgyz state.

The Uyghur Qaghanate, however, lost significant power by the 9th century. Unity was undermined by increased internal strife. The Kyrgyz people did not delay in taking advantage of this situation. According to Chinese sources, “Ajo proclaimed himself to be Qaghan and announced that his wife, Gell-sheh (daughter of Karluq Yabgu), would be Qaghan’s wife.” This important event in the history of the Kyrgyz people occurred in 820. Gaining the support of the Karluq state, the Kyrgyz declared their independence from the Uyghur Qaghanate and began the struggle for supremacy in Central Asia. This time their bid for supremacy had real possibilities.
After being defeated in 795, the Kyrgyz Qaghanate formed a military-administrative state system to prolong the fighting. A series of aggressive campaigns undertaken against the peoples of Siberia allowed the Kyrgyz to significantly expand the boundaries of their state and receive rich material and human resources. Ajo remained at the head of administrative affairs and armed the forces of the state. Lower positions were held by the Biis (there were three of them) and other officials at different levels. There were six levels in all. The state had a regular horse guard. Vassal tribes, dependent upon the Kyrgyz, (Kyshtym, etc.), delivered their warriors to the army of Ajo on a regular basis and especially during times of crisis, also known as the squads. In the 9th century, the Kyrgyz army was 100,000 warriors strong.

Having experienced the vicissitudes of life, the Yenisei Kyrgyz established an exemplary military structure made up of individual clans and tribes, as well as guard units which required the direct supervision of tribal leaders. Cavalry was the main force and required swift and sturdy horses. The Calvary developed a warfare tactic of their own, using flexible attacks, the phased attacks alternating between light and heavy weapons, alternating attacks and retreats which were designed to encircle their enemies, and, finally, strikes aimed at the enemy’s rear flank.

As a result of his policy, the Kyrgyz Ajo managed to establish diplomatic relations with the enemies of Uyghurs, including the Arabs, Tibetans, and Karluqs of Tian-Shan. In 820, the Kyrgyz Ajo proclaimed himself to be the Qaghan, a tantamount to declaration of war against the Uygur Empire.

In response to a defiant statement by the Kyrgyz Ajo, the Uyghurs sent their troops to Yenisei where the faced defeat at the hands of the Kyrgyz troop. The war dragged on for twenty more years; the advantage was on the side of the Kyrgyz.
Military failures exacerbated the struggle within the Uyghur Empire. An abundance of snow in the winter of 840 led to the death of livestock and an epidemic. At such a difficult time, the leader of the Uyghur, Yaglahar, appealed to the Kyrgyz for help. The Kyrgyz Ajo immediately sent one hundred thousand soldiers to Ordo-Balik (the capital of the Uyghur Qaghanate on the banks of the river Orkhon), defeated the rival army, and razed the city. The Qaghan of the Uyghurs was killed. The survived Uyghurs went to China in search of refuge, settling on Baikal Lake in eastern Turkestan, leaving their land and property for the Kyrgyz to take.

In 843, the Yenisei Kyrgyz, as they persecuted the Uyghurs and led by Pan-Tegin, invaded eastern Turkestan, captured the city of Anxi and Besh-Balik, and then proceeded to the borders of Tenir-Too and Semirechie. The Kyrgyz troops also conducted successful military campaigns in eastern Mongolia, Jungaria, and beyond the lake of Baikal.

By the middle of the 9th century, the Uyghur Qaghanate ceased to exist. Consequently, a new and expansive Kyrgyz state was established. The Chinese sources provide a fairly comprehensive description of its boundaries: “The Hyagas (the Kyrgyz) had a strong country equal to the largest holdings of the Turks (meaning the Second Turkic Qaghanate). In the east, the Kyrgyz state bordered Guligan (Baikal) Lake, Tibet (eastern Turkestan) in the south, and Gelollu (Semirechie) in the southwest. Its northern boundary reached as far as the modern cities of Tomsk and Krasnoyarsk.”

V.V. Barthold rightly called the “Kyrgyz Great Power” the period when the Kyrgyz controlled most of Central Asia. During the height of their power, the Yenisei Kyrgyz reached as far as the spurs of Tenir-Too. It is likely that some of them settled that region, too. According to the ancient traditions of the steppe, those people who possessed Kangui were considered formal rulers of the nomads. At various times in their respective histories, such power was also possessed by the Huns, Juan Juans (avars), Turks, Kypchaks (senyato), Uyghurs, and later, by the Mongolians.

The number of Yenisei Kyrgyz during that period sharply increased. If one considers that in 840 they fielded an army of one hundred thousand strong against the Uyghur Qaghanate, and that, under the rule of the Turkic tribes, one soldier was taken from every three to five people,
then the estimated number of Kyrgyz ranged from three hundred to five hundred thousand. From a variety of Central Asian tribes, the Kyrgyz occupied the second place by population after the Uyghurs.

It should be noted that when the Kyrgyz defeated the Uyghurs, the Chinese emperor called on the Kyrgyz Ajo many times to uproot the Uyghurs and destroy their cities. The Kyrgyz Ajo, however, replied indignantly and rejected such demands by the Emperor. As a result, in the steppe of the Kyrgyz, the Uyghurs returned to civilian life.

The fall of the Uyghur Qaghanate, along with the emergence and strengthening of the Kyrgyz Qaghanate on the Yenisei, played an important role in the history of the development of neighboring tribes. First off all, long protracted civil wars and infighting within the Uyghur Qaghanate created favorable conditions for rise of the Kyrgyz into a great power. Secondly, Kyrgyz great power became a reliable barrier on the northern and western borders of the Tang Empire. Local tribes were spared from the constant raids of the Uyghurs. Finally, new conditions contributed to the development, consolidation, and strengthening of the Kyrgyz as an ethnic group, and a number of smaller tribes joining them. For instance, one part of the Sarts, living in the Jungarian region of Turkistan, was assimilated by the Kyrgyz and formed a Sart tribe. Some Tatars, Mangyts, and Nogays and bound to the Mongolians by a common ancestry, also became members of the Kyrgyz “Sixty Clans.” Thus, the rise of the Kyrgyz Qaghanate in Yenisei constitutes an era of feudal relations and the foundation of modern Kyrgyzstan.

Politically the Kyrgyz formed a single administrative apparatus after the victory over the Uyghur Qaghanate. Some scholars suggest that the Kyrgyz ruler was called by the symbolic name of Manas he defeated the Uyghur Qaghan. In the Middle Ages, the title of Qaghan was adopted by the heads of many Turkic states. All political, executive, and military power was concentrated in his hands. The Qaghan’s power was passed on to his son (tegin, ( the tile of prince). If the Qaghan had no sons, the power was transmitted to his wife, younger brothers, or Inal, that is, the grandson through the daughters of the Qaghan. Thus, the manners, customs, and dynastic traditions of the Kyrgyz people were similar to those of other Turkic peoples.
An extensive bureaucracy ran the office of the state. The second officer was the Bui-ruk (adviser); his mandate consisted of the management of the Qaghanate. Next in the hierarchy were, respectively, Boyla and Yargan. The Boyla (judge) sentenced criminals and the Yargan executed them. In making decisions on military and legal issues, the Sanguns (zhanzhuns) helped the Qaghan. The Qaghan, Tegin, Inal, Tarkans, Boyla, Yargan, and Sanguns were all members of the Supreme Headquarters of the Qaghan.

The Tutuqs, Tarkans, Biis (beks), and Tyutyuns ran the local management. The Tutuqs implemented the political leadership in districts or in various tribal unions. They usually were the heirs (hanzaada) or relatives of the Qaghan. The Tarkans, as Tutuqs, were appointed by the Qaghan and commanded the military forces in regions or among tribes. The Tarkans and Tutuqs reported directly to the Qaghan about state affairs (including administrative tasks, such as collecting taxes, as well as military affairs) in nearby regions. The Biis (beks) administered over several small clans. The Tyutyuns, who were under the Biis, supervised the smaller familial groups.
The Kyrgyz had their own written language (and script). In the 10th century, a number of Kyrgyz youth were trained in Northern China. The most capable of these were invited to courtly service in other countries. One of the Chinese chronicles, for example, describing the Buddhist religion in Tibet, points out that there was “a Kyrgyz Man” in their service.

The Kyrgyz great power, however, did not last long. Having left the steppe, most Kyrgyz returned to the territory of the Sayan Mountains in the first quarter of the 10th century. Although the experience of long, arduous battles influenced their decision to leave the steppe, this was not the decisive factor. The Kyrgyz had become scattered over a large area; some were in Tenir-Too (Tian-Shan); others wound up in Tibet. Many had returned to the land of their ancestors, Yenisei. A majority were farmers who could not adapt to the semi-arid mountainous terrain of Central Asia. Despite being spread throughout such a large territory, the Kyrgyz were able to hold on to the territories of the Altai and Jingaria for almost the whole of the 10th century. Thus they were able to retain control of eastern Turkestan.

There is little information about the Kyrgyz in the 11th or 12th centuries. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the Mongol tribes, which gained strength during this time, stood on the way of the feudal lords and raided the plantations of weaker neighbors to the south. After losing several opportunities for their own enrichment, Kyrgyz rulers intensified efforts to exploit their own people. This, in turn, led to a souring of feudal relations, civil war, and, eventually, the separation of military and civil powers. Written sources from this time mention only three to five small Kyrgyz estates. Prior to the establishment of Mongol rule, the Kyrgyz had but two possessions, the Yenisei River and northern Altai, where the rulers held the title of “Inal.” The Kyrgyz people at large were not a match for the devastating invasions of approaching Mongols.

The economy in the Kyrgyz state was represented by such industries as animal husbandry, agriculture, mining, ore processing, hunting, and fishing. Farmers grew wheat, millet, barley, and hemp. To irrigate the crops, they used a network of irrigation ditches. Grains were grounded with hand graters.
Members of the Kyrgyz state bred horses, camels, cows, and sheep. The wealthy members of society owned several thousand heads of cattle, some of which were contained in the paddock. Numerous braids used for collecting hay have found after various archaeological investigations, is evidence for such a system. Residents of the mountain woodlands even succeeded in domesticating deer, roe deer, and ibex. They were expert fishermen and hunted fur-bearing animals, wild ducks, and geese.

The Yenisei Kyrgyz maintained active trade relations with other nations by utilizing a branch of the Great Silk Road which crossed the land of the Qaghanate. Known as the Kyrgyz Way, it began in the Turfan oasis, extending further north to the Tuva along the Yenisei River, until it reached the heart of the Kyrgyz state. There, merchants bought horses, furs, musk (spices), tusks, the bones of mammoth, precious woods, pottery, silver, and other tradable goods. According to A. Mokeev, squirrel skins were the form that money took and on pair with gold and silver coins. This may explain why the word for “money” (tyiyn) in the Kyrgyz language has been associated with the word for “squirrel” (tyiynchychkan). Caravans from China, Eastern Turkestan, Sogdiana, and Chu also delivered silk, wine, jewelry, and other luxury items to the Yenisei Kyrgyz.
The Kyrgyz economy was also involved in mining, manufacturing, and the processing of iron. These processes took place from the Sayan Mountains to Kuznetsk and even in the Minusinsk Basin. In addition, iron was smelted on the sandy banks of the Yenisei and its tributaries, the Abakan and Tuva. These areas were also abundant in trees suitable for the production of charcoal. Multiple tracks from the smelting furnaces and forges discovered by archaeologists confirm this. Analysis of the residue left by the parched alloy of the furnaces and left-over slag suggest that the ore was delivered from remote areas from hundreds of kilometers away. The Kyrgyz were masters at producing heavy daggers, battle-axes, maces, arrowheads, spears, and harness parts from smelted iron. A variety of arrowheads were the most marketable commodity and the Kyrgyz supplied the whole of southern Siberia with such iron necessities.

Russian scholar Yuri Khudyakov devoted a special study to the subject of the military affairs and arms of the Yenisei Kyrgyz. According to his work, the Art of War (Sun Tzu, ca. 6th century B.C.E.) was used as a model for training of soldiers during this time. The excellent training of soldiers and the utilization of complex weaponry reveal a high level of sophistication for this period. The best of these weapons were
compound bows, three-shoveled arrows, drums spears, and a variety of daggers. To have military weapons produced by Kyrgyz craftsman was considered as a matter of pride in Asia. There were many orders for such Kyrgyz-made weapons across the Central Asian steppe.

Kyrgyz blacksmiths produced a wide range of household utensils and tools—plowshares from bones, harrows, axes, sickles, hoes, various devices for shaping wood, iron, and nonferrous metals. Scholars note that the Blue Turks and other tribes living in the surrounding areas learned to smelt metal and manufacture a variety of guns because of the expertise of the Yenisei Kyrgyz artisans.

Engravers and jewelers stood out among those metalworkers and who produced artistic products from silver, gold, and bronze such as dishes, belt buckles, horse harnesses, military equipment, weapons, and jewelry. Interestingly, complex patterns and stylized images of animals were a common aspect of such products.

The Kyrgyz reached the great perfection in ceramic art. A form of pottery known as the Kyrgyz vase was especially popular.

Various fabrics, skins, and furs were used in the manufacture of clothing. The clothing of nobility was known for its pomp and expensive decoration. Eminent Kyrgyz individuals wore white felt caps; the felt was typically bent outwards, and their garments were decorated with rich embroidery.

The Kyrgyz also lived in large patriarchal families where polygamy was common. The groom usually paid a dowry to the bride, usually in the form of cattle. The main type of housing was an eight-sided structure built of logs and semi-dugouts.

Scholars theorize that, since the beginning of the 5th century, the Yenisei Kyrgyz used one of the writing systems based on the Aramaic alphabet of the Arsacid Empire. This writing emerged long before our era, more precisely 2800 years ago, and by the new millennium had spread from Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Egypt (Misisir), to the region of Central Asia. The modern alphabets of Arabia and Judaica are based on the Aramaic alphabet, but, over time, have been changed and adapted to suit the linguistic needs of these peoples.
In the 5th century, the Aramaic alphabet was widely spread among the Yenisei Kyrgyz. Yenisei written memorials contain thirty-nine letters (five of which are vowels). Later, the populations of the Blue Turkic Qaghanate, Uyghurs, and Basmyls adopted the Kyrgyz alphabet. A revised and expanded version of the Kyrgyz script was called the “Yenisei version.”

This script became widely known in science after the discovery of the so-called “Orkhon-Yenisei” stone inscriptions (1896-1961). Analogous inscriptions were also found in Talas. Together, these writings illuminate the events of the period of the Turkic Qaghanate. Since then, over two hundred stone inscriptions have been uncovered. Some scholars (such as F. Stralenberg and D. Messerschmidt) have noted great similarities between the marks of ancient Kyrgyz writing and the alphabetic characters used by the peoples of the North Epitaph in Europe.72

The Yenisey writings were read and written from right to left. Scholars have expressed competing opinions over the question of which of the Turkic dialects were used in Orkhon and Yenisei texts. The inscriptions have been attributed to the Turkic Qaghans, Kyrgyz, Uyghurs, and Kymaks. The discovered texts in Yenisey and Talas largely consist of laconic inscriptions and laments for the dead; scholars haven’t been able to provide a precise date of these texts. The Orkhon inscriptions are bigger and contain more information about past events. For example, an epitaph in honor of Prince Kultegin is in the form of a poem. Similar memorials were erected for the deceased by their relatives, friends, and, in some cases, even with the help of Qaghanate money.
The Kyrgyz used such a writing system from the 5th until the 12th century. Symbols of the Orkhon-Yenisey writing were suitable for carving on solid objects, such as stones, bricks, wood, and metals. More than one hundred twenty Orkhon-Yenisei texts, carved on rocks, have survived to the present day. Although many of the recovered texts are preserved as small portions of larger works (which were likely destroyed over time).

The Yenisei Kyrgyz professed the religion of *But-paras*, meaning they worshipped of idols. Like other Turks of that time, they recognized Tenir ata and Umai Ene as their principal deities. N.Y. Bichurin, in his description of funeral rites of the Kyrgyz, notes that: “They did not scratch their own faces during the funeral, but wail loudly. A dead body was wrapped in three layers of cloth, placed on an open stretcher, and burnt. Then they collected the bones and bury them one year later.”

The burials of known leaders were in high earthen mounds fenced with stonework. The place of burial was called “Chaa-tas” (stone of the battle, sogush tashy in the Kyrgyz language).

The major traditional holidays of the Yenisei Kyrgyz were celebrations associated with the seasons of the year—Spring Feast, Fall Feast, and Nooruz. The Qaghan himself, in addition to the leaders of tribes and clans, participated in each of these festivals. People gathered at certain places and made a solemn rite of worship to Heaven and to the spirits of their ancestors. They would sacrifice sheep, horses, and oxen to Tenir. They would also visit places of worship and ancestral graves. At these locations, they decorated wooden poles decorated with colorful blue, red, white, and yellow patches. The contemporary Kyrgyz tradition of tying colored patches to the branches of trees at places of worship comes from this ancient tradition.

According to established tradition, the chiefs of clans and tribes, during such celebrations, reported to the governor about the state of affairs in their provinces. They shared the number of people, livestock, crops, and food supplies. Additionally, various games and competitions were held, typically lasting for three days and three nights.

The Kyrgyz celebrated Nooruz cheerfully and noisily. The word “nooruz” itself means the “new day” in ancient Iranian language. Ac-
Oskon Osmonov and Cholpon Turdalieva

cording to the chronology of Shamsi (a solar calendar), this celebra-
tion took place on the twenty-first day of the third month. The Kyrgyz, however, celebrated it on the second day after the appearance of the constellation of Aries in the sky (the twenty-second day of the month). The celebration of Nooruz included ritual games and treats. Prayers of gratitude and wishes of good luck and mutual prosperity were also performed, along with a festive meal (köjö) made from sprouted wheat. This cooking ceremony has survived to the present day.

Ancient Chinese written sources (including “The New Record of the Tang Empire” and “Genealogy of the Kyrgyz People”) indicate that the Yenisei Kyrgyz were first among the Turkic tribes to have a fixed calendar. The Kyrgyz called the beginning of the year, “bash ai.” They divided the year into four periods—spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Each year was called by the name of one of twelve animals: the mouse (kusku), cow (ui), tiger (bars), rabbit (tashkan), dragon (elü), snake (jylan), horse (kont), sheep (koi) monkey (bichin), chicken (tagynku), dog (it), and wild boar (lagzyn). The names of year were attributable to the life experiences of the people over a long period of time. According-
ly, the year of a boar was connected to the harvest. In contrast, the year of the horse and the year of the snake were associated with severe trials and tribulations. Twelve years was said to be one cycle of life, muchöl, and a person’s age was determined by the number of these twelve-year life cycles.

Ancient Chinese written sources suggest that the Kyrgyz, like other Turkic peoples, had developed music to a high art. Such musical instru-
ments as the sybyzgy (flute), doolbas (drum), shyngyroo (bells) have survived to the present. The folk instrument of choice, however, was the komuz. Ancient masters of the Yenisei made the komuz from pinewood, using a high level of artistry in their craft. During this era, the komuz had a refined form and was decorated with beads and ornaments.
The Chaatas – borrows in a cutaway: a framework of logs inside the burial vault of the hill, Khakassia

Epitaph on the stone stele in honor of Barsbek
The excerpt about Bars Bek from the Kul Tegin Inscription of the 8th century
(E17) When my uncle, the Kayan, succeeded to the throne, I was Šad over the Tarduš people. Together with my uncle, the Kayan, we went on campaigns eastwards to the Green River (Yellow River, Huanhe) and the Shantung plain, and we went on campaigns westwards as far as the Iron Gate (Derbent Pass). (We went on campaigns up to the land of the Kirgiz) beyond the Kögmän (mountains).
(E18) In all we went on campaigns twenty five times and we fought thirteen times. We took the realm of those who had had a realm, and we captured the Kayan of those who had a Kayan; we made the powerful enemies kneel and the proud ones bow. The Türgis Kayan (and his people) were our Türks and (our people. On account of their foolishness) (E 19) and their being traitorous to us, their Kayan was killed; his Buyruqs and Bägs, too, were killed. The On-Ok people suffered (a great deal). In order that the earth and water (land), which was ruled by our ancestors, would not be without ruler, we organized the Azbodun (Az people) and put them in order....
(E20) was Bars Bäg. It was we who had given him the title of Kayan. We had also given him my younger sister, the princess, in marriage. But he betrayed (us). (As a result) the Kayan was killed and the people became slaves and servants. In order that the Kögmän land would not remain without ruler, we organized the Az and Qırqız peoples, and then we came (back) and fought.
(E21) We gave (them) back.... Eastwards as far as beyond the Khingan mountains we thus settled and organized the people westwards as far as Kânü Tarman we thus settled and organized the Turkish people. At that time slaves themselves had slaves (and servants themselves had servants. Younger brothers did not acknowledge their elder brothers, and sons did not acknowledge their fathers).
We had such a well acquired and well-organized state and institutions. You, Türkish and Oyuz Bägs and peoples, hear this, if the sky above did not collapse, and if the earth below did not give way, O Türkish people, who would be able to destroy your state and institutions? O Türkish people, regret and repent!

Because of your unruliness, you yourselves betrayed your wise Kaγan who had (always) nourished you, and you yourselves betrayed your good realm which was free and independent, and you (yourselves) caused discord. From where did the armed come and put you to flight? From where did the lancer come and drive you away? You, people of the sacred Ötükän mountains, it was you who went away.

(Of you) those who meant to go to the east went away, and those who meant to go to the west went away. In the places you went, your (only) profit was the following: your blood ran like a river, and your bones were heaped up like a mountain; your sons worthy of becoming Bägs became slaves, and your daughters worthy of becoming ladies became servants. Because of your unawareness and because of your mischievousness, my uncle, the Kaγan, met his death. First I erected the Qïrqïz Kaγan as a balbal (for him). In order that the name and fame of the Türkish people would not perish, Täηri, who raised my father, the Kaγan, and my mother, the Katun, and who gave them the state, in order that the name and fame of the Türkish people would not perish, (Täηri) enthroned (me). I did not become ruler over a wealthy and prosperous people at all, (on the contrary,) I became ruler over poor and miserable people who were foodless in the inside and clothless on the outside. I and Kül Tigin, my younger brother, consulted together. In order that the name and fame of the people, which our father and uncle had won, would not perish, and
(E27) for the sake of the Turkish people, I did not sleep by night and I did not relax by day. Together with my younger brother, Kül Tigin, and together with two Šads, I worked to death and I won. Having won and gathered in that way, I did not let the people split into two (opposite) parts like fire and water. (When) I (succeeded to the throne) the people who had gone (in almost all directions,) (E28) came back utterly exhausted, without horses and without clothes. In order to nourish the people, I, with great armies, went on campaigns twelve times, northwards against the Oyuz people, eastwards against the Qitań and Tatabi peoples, southwards against the Tabyač, (and I fought... times) (E29) After (that), since I had fortune and since I had good luck - may Täŋri be gracious! - I brought the people to life who were going to perish, and nourished them. I furnished the naked people with clothes and I made the poor people rich and the few people numerous. I made them superior to the peoples who have great states and (esteemed rulers). 75

The Mongol Empire in the History of Kyrgyzstan

Orkhon-Yenisey ancient stone inscriptions, and Chinese sources, document the arrival of Mongolians, Tatars, and other tribes in Central Asia before the 9th and 10th centuries. With the addition of other clans, such as the the Onguts, Merkits, and Ogos, a large tribal alliance of Tatars was formed. At the beginning of the 12th century, however, this alliance began to disintegrate, due to disagreements between Mongolians and Tatars. The appearance of breakaway tribes such as the Kerei, Kongurat, Oirat, and Naiman were the first signs of trouble.

Having united with the Kerei tribe and several other tribal entities, the leader of a Mongol tribe, Esugey Batyr, periodically raided the Tatar tribes. In 1155 (according to some reports in 1162), Temujin, Esugey’s son, was born. In 1164, Tartars killed Esugey and, an orphan, Temujin learned of his father’s fate.
According to legend, Temujin’s great grandmother from a ninth tribe, Alan-Goa (Beauty Maral), bore five children to a Mongol husband, but another three sons from a “white man who came down at night in a ray of moonlight after the death of her Mongol husband.” That is why it is believed that Temujin and his descendants had red hair and blue eyes. Such physical appearance on that time in Mongolia and South Siberia area was met only among Yenisei Kyrgyz.

In the 19th century Igor Berezin, a famous Russian scholar, in his book, Sheybaniada. The History of the Mongol-Turkic People in the Jag-Thai Dialect with Translation, Notes and Applications” (1849), argued that Alan-Goa’s three youngest sons were fathered by a Kyrgyz military commander who reigned over the Mongolian tribes during the Kyrgyz Great Power (end of the 9th century). A German scholar P. Rachnevsky corroborates this, contending that the Kareits (since they had lived on the Irtysh River in Altai) were one of the branches of the Kyrgyz people. Later, the Kareits assimilated into the Mongolian tribes. The Naimans also lived in the lands of the Kyrgyz, later moving to Altai, Irtysh, and the Upper Ob. A Chinese historian Khan Zhulin believed that the Naimans were related to the Kyrgyz. P. Rachnevsky also considered the Naimans to be a Turkic people rather than Mongolian, contending that the Mongolian name of “Naiman” is from the Turkic name of “segiz oguz.” The ambitious Temujin demonstrated outstanding abilities in the struggle for power and subdued every Tatar, Naiman, Ongut, and Turkic tribe that stood in his path. At the Congress of Mongolian Feudal Lords in 1206, the state was declared an empire and Temujin took the title of “Chengis Khan” (Genghis, Chinggis). Most scholars agree that “Chengis” has the connotation of “oceanic”, “the ruler of universe” and thus “world embracing”. A fifty-one-year-old Chengis Khan, clever and cunning, brutal and purposeful, as a native of the Mongolian clan of Borjigin, stood at the head of the state. Unquestioning obedience of his associates allowed Chinggis Khan to create a powerful and disciplined army and, with their help, he conquered all the neighboring nations in a short period of time. Chengis Khan was known all over the world for his strength and brutality.
In 1207, the Yenisei Kyrgyz presented expensive gifts to Chengis Khan and expressed their desire to serve and obey him. In 1218, however, they supported the rebel Merkits and revolted. Chengis Khan sent his son, Jochi, to quell the rebellion and bring the region once again under his control. At the same time, in 1218, western Kyrgyz who had fought in Tenir-Too with their Naiman ruler, Kiichliig, decided to surrender amidst the threat of a Mongol purge. During the reign of Ceingis Khan and his successors, large numbers of Kyrgyz migrated from Sayan-Altai to Tenir-Too.

By the order of Chengis Khan, all Mongolians, Tatars, Turks, and other tribes under his rule had to participate in his military campaigns. The Mongolian army had a clear structural organization and was divided into tens, hundreds, thousands, and tens of thousands (tumens). At the head of each was a chief endowed with unlimited power. Ten men were executed for one soldier’s cowardice, and a hundred for a misdemeanor by ten.
Campaigns by Chinggis Khan differed from others; his troops were notorious for their brutal subjugation of the enemy. The use of horror and panic were common tactics. Mass executions of the innocent, arson, and looting were commonplace. Muslim medieval sources chronicle the bloodlust of the period and some thirty cases when a hundred thousand people perished in battles and executions. In fact, there were many more acts of barbarism than this, spanning the vast territory conquered by Chinggis Khan and stretching from the steppes of Central Asia to Eastern Europe. Accordingly, Chengis Khan’s military campaigns can be seen as one of the most tragic and dark pages in the history of the Middle Ages.

In 1207, Chengis Khan decided to conquer the peoples of southern Siberia. The Kyrgyz, fragmented into small territories, had to save their forces and, like the Uighurs and Karluks, voluntarily gave themselves over to Chinggis Khan. The “Secret History of the Mongols” describes these events:

In the year of the hare (1207), Jochi was sent, with the right wing of his army, against the forest people. He chose Buhu as his guide. First, Huduha-bey, with his tumen of Oirats, obeyed them. Then, Jochi got closer to the Kyrgyz. Then the Kyrgyz noyons, Urus-Inal (Edi-Inal), Aldier, and Olebek-tegin, expressed resignation and presented falcons, tulpars, and black otters to the Khan. Jochi forced all the forest people to submit to the Mongolians.... He brought with him the Kyrgyz commanders of thousands, noyons of forest people, put them in front of Chinggis Khan, and ordered them to present their gifts to the Khan. Chinggis Khan was pleased with his son, and said: “Let all of them obey you....”

Furthermore, the chronicle says that Chengis Khan sent two of his representatives to respond to the Kyrgyz. Thus, it is clear that the initiative to establish official relations with the Mongolians came from the Kyrgyz people.

At the beginning of the 13th century, small Kyrgyz Qaghanates, like Edi-Orun (Middle Yenisei), which bordered that of the Mongolians on the Yenisei River (in Tuva and Altai), were obeisant to the Khan.
In 1217, Turkic-speaking Tumats, who were part of a small Tuva-Kyrgyz possession, revolted against the ruthless violence and oppression of the Mongolians. To suppress the rebellion, Chengis Khan sent a large army, led by the experienced commander, Baragul Noyon. The Tumats fiercely resisted, but the superiority of the Mongol force did its job: the uprising was drowned in blood. Although, the enforced peace, built on such a violent Mongol reaction, would not last.

In 1218, Mongol builders, besides fixing taxes, demanded one hundred Tumat girls for their feudal lords. Offended by such an insolent and abusive demand, the Tumats rebelled again. Chengis Khan ordered the Kyrgyz army to quell the rebellion, but the Kyrgyz people did not comply, refusing to send their warriors and, in addition to this, they joined the Kyshtyms (Tumats), seeing them as eternal, natural allies.

The leader of the Kyrgyz united force was Kurlun. Chengis Khan decided to send a large army under the command of his eldest son, Jochi, to bring the Kyrgyz and Kyshtums army to its knees. The Mongolians severely punished the rebels. Many sources confirm that the military operations against the Kyrgyz people lasted for a month. Jochi had to pass through the whole of Tuva, Minusinsk Basin, and Altai to restore the peace. A number of Kyrgyz soldiers were killed or imprisoned, whereas a resourceful few divided into small groups and made camp in the Taiga forests. Still others migrated to inaccessible places in search of a safe haven. Despite everything that happened, the Kyrgyz people continued to inhabit their native land, although they were regarded as vassals of the Mongolians. The whole of Sayan-Altai, together with the Kyrgyz territory, were given to Jochi Khan, becoming the northwestern outskirts of the Mongolian Empire. In 1226, Ögedei, the third son of Chinggis Khan, ascended the throne and decided to consolidate his power among the local populations under his control. To accomplish this, he married the daughters of noble Merkit and Kyrgyz leaders and thus established close relationships with local feudal lords and nobility. The fourth wife of Ögedei, for example, was a Kyrgyz woman.

The warriors of Chengis Khan called themselves Mughals (Mongolians). In the countries they conquered, however, they were called Tatars. Indeed, it was common for the Chinese to refer to all steppe tribes at Tatars. In other regions, the Mughals were called Tatars because Tatar detachments were usually at the forefront of the Mongol expeditionary
force. Importantly, Tatars resisted Chengis Khan longer than any other steppe people, therefore, they were given the unenviable job of forming the “penal battalions.” Tartars were always at the front of military formations and were usually sent into the most dangerous places. They were the first Mongol faces that the people of Europe and Minor Asia saw on the battlefield. That is why the name “Tartar” became synonymous with glory and terror among the populations that the Mughals conquered. In other sources, they were also called by a double name, the “Tatar-Mongols.”

Regiments of Turks, Chzhurchzhens, Tibetans, Chinese, and Slavs made up the armies of the “Great Horde,” the army of Chinggis Khan. The army was exclusively made of volunteers. Multi-confessional and multilingual, these soldiers were united because of the nature of Chinggis Khan’s rule; enemies were punished, but supporters were rewarded. After the death of Chinggis Khan, the Mongol conquest did not stop. In fact, the assaults continued, becoming even more grandiose. In the 1230s, the Khan’s steppe armies completed its conquest of northern China, Persia, Armenia, Georgia, Russia, Poland, and Hungary. At this time, the power of the Chinggisids and their Great Horde could now rightfully claim to be a world empire.

Under the yoke of the Mongol rule, the Kyrgyz were divided into two groups. This processed occurred due in part to natural conditions and the type of farming that each respective population employed. The first group was the steppe Kyrgyz who practiced cattle breeding and agriculture. The second group was the forest Kyrgyz who were herdsmen and hunters, inhabiting the mountainous areas of the Yenisei.

The neighbors of the Kyrgyz were the Oirats who lived in the upper Yenisei. The Kyrgyz and other Turkic tribes had a noticeable influence on the language of the Oirats. Even the name of the place where Oirats lived comes from a Turkic word, “seki” (“murek” in Mongolian). The place where the Kemchik River flows into the Yenisei was called “Kemchik Boruk.” The word “kemchik” means “river” and the word “boruk” means “wolf” in the Oirat language. The association of the Kyrgyz, in parts, with the word “burut” may be a factor of their belief in wolf ancestor worship. Later, the Oirats called all Kyrgyz, Buruts. In Chinese
written sources from the 17-19th centuries, the Kyrgyz are also called “Burut.”

Another clash between the Kyrgyz and Mongolians occurred in 1273. The Kyrgyz rebels surrounded the residence of the Mongol governor, forcing him to flee. Controversy and discord allowed the Kyrgyz to restore their independence. Between the years 1273-1293, the Kyrgyz dominated the coastal plain of the Yenisei River. The Mongol ruler of Central Asia, Qaidu, had his headquarters in the Chui Valley and provided the Kyrgyz with protection and patronage. The war which began between Qaidu and Kublai, however, proved disastrous for the Kyrgyz. In search of a safe haven, yet again, many left their native land and were deprived of their independence as a consequence. From 1275 to 1276, some Kyrgyz chose to rebel against Kublai Khan. After the conflict subsided, Kublai Khan relocated a large group of the Kyrgyz to Zhaozhou city, a new administrative center of the district, based in Manchuria. They gradually lost their ethnic identity and assimilated with the Chinese. At the insistence of Kublai Khan, nine-thousand Kyrgyz yurts in the mountains of Altai-Hangu were relocated to the interior of Mongolia. In 1290, Kublai Khan sent the Kipchak captain, Tutuq, serving the Mongolians, to Altai, to relocate the Qaidu as well. As a result, another three-thousand Kyrgyz people were driven from their lands. When Tutuq defeated the Kyrgyz who lived in the Upper Yenisei, he carried a large group of them (according to contemporary sources, seven hundred families) to the southeast of Manchuria (Hesyhe). In 1295, another Kyrgyz community was forcibly relocated to the province of Shandong.

By the second half of the 13th century, the Mongol Khans defeated the Altai and Yenisei Kyrgyz, most of them forcibly relocated to different parts of Central Asia. The only constant in all of this was a policy of division and relocation of the various tribes, as well as the rigid supervision of all the territories which they occupied. Such tactics continued after the death of Kublai Khan. Some among the Kyrgyz, who had escaped the severe violence of their Mongol lords, migrated to their ancestral home of Qaidu located in Tenir-Too. Uniting with relatives who had lived there since ancient times, they succeeded in maintaining their identity as an ethnic group, becoming the predecessor to the modern Kyrgyz people.

That was the most difficult period in the history of the Kyrgyz people. Their numbers had decreased significantly. They had lost their ancestral
territory. Many Kyrgyz who were forcibly relocated to other places assimilated into the populations of the Mongolians and Chinese.

Forced displacement of Kyrgyz tribes from the Yenisei River and Altai mountains to other regions continued until the fall of the Yuan Dynasty in 1389.

The conquest of the eastern provinces of Tenir-Too was an attractive target to the imperial dreams of Chengis Khan. In 1218, his commander, Chepe Noyon, led twenty-thousand strong and easily defeated the forces of the Naimans--with the help of the Uighurs and Karluks in Semirechie. The Naimans were not prepared to meet such an army. After conquering the Muslims of Semirechie, the Naiman Khan, Kuchlug, had forced them to convert to Buddhism and Christianity. Therefore, the peoples of east Turkestan and Semirechye hated Kuchlug and saw the Mongolians as liberators rather than oppressors. After being defeated, Kuchlug fled to the Pamir Mountains where he was caught and beheaded. The people of Kyrgyzstan, in fact, contributed to the success of the Mongolians. The devastation associated with the reign of the Naiman was the cause of even greater decline in their economy and culture.

In 1218, Semirechye and Central Tenir-Too were completely under the control of the Mongolians. Tumens of Chinggis Khan conquered the peoples of Turkestan with sword. In 1219, Mongolians easily defeated the separated armies of Khorezm-Shah Mohammed. Without encountering any resistance, Chinggis Khan continued the conquest westward expanding the vastness of his empire. Hundreds of towns and villages in Turkestan were burned and destroyed. Flourishing agriculture and the urban handicraft of Issyk-Kul, Chui, and Talas was also destroyed, to be replaced by nomadic herding. Only Osh, Ferghana, and Uzgen managed to avoid complete destruction.

One of the first Kyrgyz historians, Belek Soltonoev, recorded such information about the consequences of the Mongol invasion in his “Essay on the History of Kyrgyz People”:
in Balik City and others, seven million). In 1223, having passed through the Caucasus, he destroyed a seventy-thousand-strong Russian army led by a number of princes, defeated the Khaganate of Kipchaks and returned via Edil (Volga). In 1220-1226, rivers of blood filled the space from Korea in the east to the Azov Sea in the west and to Hindustan in the south, plundering and eradicating entire populations, burning everything in his path.⁸⁰

Before dying, Chengis Khan divided his inheritance among his sons. Chagatai got Uyguria, Semirechie, and Maveran-Nahr. Ōgedei received the territories of Western Mongolia and Zhungariya. Toluy inherited his father’s yurt and Mongolia. The children of the dead Djuchi were not forgotten, receiving lands from the Khorezm, as far as the hooves of Mongol horses could take them. The grandchildren of Chengis Khan also received some minor parts of the Empire. The whole Empire was intended to be united by the power of the Great Khan.

Great Khans were chosen and approved by Mongolian congresses, or Kurultais, where military leaders were ceremoniously raised on felt and presented to the people. In spite of the appearance of something democratic, no one thought to chosen anyone but the lawful heir. The Mongol law of succession was according to the minorat system, or rule by the younger. The first to break this law was Chengis Khan himself, who did not want his younger son, Tolui, to succeed him. Instead, he preferred Ōgedei, who seemed to be a more capable ruler. Furthermore, the violation of minorat led to the competition of Ōgedei and Tolui, giving impetus to Mongolian civil strife which eventually split the Empire.

Considering themselves as independent rulers, no one wanted to be under the authority of the Great Khan of Mongolia. The lack of clear boundaries between Ulus led to strife and border clashes and eventually escalated into war. Already, by the first half of the 13th century, an independent state—The Golden Horde (Altyń Ordo)—was forming in the western empire. Its ruler, Batu Khan, refused to recognize the authority of the Great Khan of Mongolia. Soon, the rulers of Iraq and Central Asia followed his lead. Gradually, the Khanates seceded from the Uluses. Opposition to the cruelty of Mongolian potentates intensified with each passing year.
A new spirit of separation among Mongolians and other nomadic tribes from Altai appeared on the horizon, beginning in Tenir Too during the reign of Mongke (the grandson of Chinggis Khan) (1251-1259). His younger brother, Hulagu, undertook a military campaign against Iran, led his troops across Northern Kyrgyzstan, yet again subjecting the local population to terror and oppression. Some warriors and nomads who fought in the campaign appropriated for themselves fertile and cultivated land along the way. Thus, local populations were completely devastated. Gradually, the centers of trade, handicrafts, farming, and gardening were destroyed. The devastation of the Mongol invaders would last for nearly four hundred years.

The separatist politics of Mongol feudal lords, craving independence in Central Asia, yielded desirable results for those involved. In 1269, on the banks of the Talas River, a joint Kurultai (congress) of Ögedei’s and Chagatai’s Ulus was convened and a new state completely independent from the Karakorum (the capital of the Great Khan) was created. Qaidu Khan, the grandson of Ögedei (1269-1301), became the head of this new state. The boundaries of the state stretched from Altai to Amu Darya, present-day Kyrgyzstan and eastern Turkestan. The capital was Tarsakent, located in the Chui Valley and the present-day village of Karajigach (near Bishkek).

Hajdu was well aware that the strength and stability of the state was directly related to its economic development. Accordingly, he took a number of significant measures to improve the economy, trade within the country, as well as trade relations with neighboring states. Works to restore the towns and villages that had been destroyed by the Mongol invaders, such as Tarsakent and Balassagyn, were also undertaken. Various crafts and areas of manufacturing were revived. Monetary reforms were also part of his initiatives. Silver coinage was introduced and widely circulated. The owners of silver mines contributed their silver to assist with the production of a centralized mint. The solution to most of the region’s economic problems was a new tax policy, coupled with strict enforcement. Violators of laws and decrees were severely punished. For example, it was categorically forbidden to graze livestock on arable land; heavy fines were exacted in cases of violation of the law.
To ensure continued economic progress, Qaidu tried to avoid wars of conquest. Instead, he preferred diplomatic methods to resolve conflicts, prudently taking advantage of separatist movements in the camps of his opponents. For example, Qaidu Khan repeatedly supported the Altai and Yenisei Kyrgyz who rebelled against the oppressive Mongolian Empire. In 1293, while trying to rescue the Kyrgyz, he was again defeated in battle. After that, nothing could prevent the collapse of the Kyrgyz state. Qaidu, however, still managed to protect the Kyrgyz of Altai and eastern Tenir-Too from the persecution and oppression of the Mongolians by resettling of a large group of Kyrgyz in Tenir-Too.

A long war with the Chengisids followed the death of Qaidu (1301), giving a way to fragmentation amongst the Kyrgyz population. By the 14th century, Mongolian feudal lords turned a once flourishing agricultural landscape into land for grazing cattle only.

By the middle of the 14th century, the once powerful territory of Central Asia created by Qaidu was split into two independent states: Chagatai ulus (Maveran-Nahr), where people continued to call themselves by the name of Chaghatays, and Mogulistan which encompassed Semirechie, Tien Shan, eastern Turkestan, and Jungaria.

By the end of the 14th century and beginning of the 15th century, the Yenisey and Sayan-Altai Kyrgyz actively participated in the Oirot-Mongol wars and Mongolian feudal struggle for power, taking the side of the Oirots. By the end of the 14th century, many of the Oirots and Mongolians came under the authority of the Kyrgyz ruler, Ugechi-Kashka (his Mongolian name, Möngke Temür Khan) who took steps to strengthen the state and its internal order. By his royal decree, the Yuan Dynasty was changed to the Dadan (Tatar) Dynasty. During his reign, Möngke-Temür (1403-1408) repeatedly fought his former allies, Oirots, who took issue with Kyrgyz hegemony in the region at this time.

In 1399-1425, the rulers of the Oirots and Mongolians were ethnic Kyrgyz. In combination with the Oirots, the Kyrgyz often took part in Central Asian raids that reached as far as Issyk-Kul and western Tenir-Too. By the 15th century, the Kyrgyz were a force to be reckoned with in many parts of the Mongolian Empire. Contemporary sources
report that a Kyrgyz general by the name of Ababartsy, one among several Mongolian generals, as well as a Kyrgyz tumen, fought in a campaign against Beijing (1449-1450); the troops were reportedly made up of Mongolians and Oirots. Regardless, it should be noted that attempts by the Yenisei and Altai Kyrgyz to establish an atonymous state in 13-14th centuries proved unsuccessful.

**Mogulistan and the State of Amir Temir**

In 1345, conspirators killed Kazan Khan, the latest Chengisid to rule the Chagatai ulus. This was the end of the Mongolian period in the history of this region. In the middle of the 14th century, a new state in Eastern Central Asia was established, Mogulistan, or “country of the Moguls.” (Turkic people called Mongolians, “Moguls.”) The largest Mogul tribal associations used both Mongolian and Turkic names. They included Duglats (duulats), Kangyls, Argynuts, Baarins, Barlases, among many others. They spoke Turkic languages for a long time, kept Turkic traditions, considered Tenir-Too, rather than Mongolia, to be their homeland, and converted to Islam. Later, many of these tribes aligned themselves with the Kyrgyz people.  

The territory of the Moguls stretched from Bar-Kul Lake in the east to Syr Darya in the west. The Northern boundary of the state was Balkhash Lake, whereas the southern boundary was eastern Turkestan. The Kyrgyz lived along their eastern borders.

The leading role in political life was played by the feudal lords of the Duglat tribe. They ruled the vast and fertile region of Mangalay-Sube—which included eastern Turkestan, part of the Ferghana, Alai, Tenir-Too, and Issyk-Kul. The headquarters was Ak-Suu City in the Ili Valley of eastern Turkestan. The most powerful, famous, and influential leader of the tribe was Puladchi.

The younger brother of Puladchi, Qamar al-Din, ruled the Talas and Chui valleys, Issyk-Kul, Balkhash Lake in the north, and Irtysh River in the east. Because he was unable to link his descent from Chinggis Khan, Puladchi could not technically sit upon the throne. In 1348, formal power was given to one of the Chengisids, the eighteen year old Togluk-Temir. He was a direct descendant of Chagatai and the grandson of Jochi Khan. Togluk-Temir had lived among the Kalmaks in Ak-Suu until this time. Puladchi, who adopted the title of ulusbek (a title just above that of Khan) actually ruled the state on behalf of the legitimate
heir to the throne, Togluk-Temir. Moreover, the title was hereditary. Eventually, the first Khan of Mogulistan, Togluk-Temir, showed great aptitude for government service and established a common language with the nomadic peoples. In 1354, he accepted Islam and declared it the state religion. Mohammed Haidar writes that, in just one day, one hundred sixty thousand people accepted Islam as the true religion. After becoming a Muslim, Togluk-Temir used this to justify his rule over the whole of Central Asia.

Between the years of 1360-1361, Togluk-Temir undertook a military campaign to Maverannahr—which, in Arabic, refers to “the land beyond the river;” this included everything between the Syr Darya and Amu-Darya rivers. The Mongol army crossed the Syr Darya and reached Kunduz without any major problems. Leaving his son, Iliyas Kojo, as his deputy in charge of Samarkand, Togluk-Temir returned to Mogulistan with a vast amount of spoils from the campaign.

The Moguls ruthlessly plundered and oppressed the people of Maverannahr. Driven by despair, the people of Maverannahr had little recourse but rebellion. Local feudal lords often supported such uprisings. During one such uprising, Iliyas-Kojo (a governor) was captured. Over time, his position of had power came under threat. Temir, one of the Emirs who headed the troops of Maverannahr, came to the assistance of Iliyas-Kojo. A patron of Togluk-Temir, Temir relieved Iliyas-Kojo of his post and dispatched him to Mogulistan as the new Khan of that region.

After becoming the Khan of Mogulistan, Iliyas-Kojo continued the foreign policy of his father, who died in 1364, and seized Mawarannahr. In 1365, the Mogul army and expeditionary force made up of troops from Maverannahr (led by Temir) engaged in battle in the Tashkent region. During the hostilities, a severe storm and heavy rain commenced. Because of the howling wind, warriors on both sides could not hear the orders of their commanders. In the end, the Temir’s army fled from battle. In their haste to retreat from the battlefield, many were trampled to death in the mud. About ten thousand people were killed in the massacre that ensued, which later came to be called the “Battle in Mud.”

Following the battle, the Moguls surrounded Samarqand. The leaders of the Maverannahr troops, Temir and Hussein, left the city. However, many of the city’s residents refused to yield, defending Samarqand with their lives. With the exception of the main gate, all gates of the city were
closed when the Moguls approached the city. When the Mogul cavalry attacked through such a narrow entry, they were greeted with arrows, rocks, and other improvised weaponry. Having lost most of his soldiers as a consequence of this brilliant defensive manoeuvre, Iliyas-Kojo was forced to withdraw his army and return to Mogulistan. Temir and Hussein returned to Samarqand after the defeat of the Mogul army only to order that those who had led the defense of the city be put to death.

The return of Iliyas-Kojo was a cause for great concern and dissatisfaction on the part of the feudal nobility of Mogulistan. By order of the Emir Ka-mar ad-Din, Iliyas-Kojo and his family were executed. This was the beginning of a prolonged civil war in Mogulistan and protracted weakening of the state.

Tired of the continuous raids of the Moguls and dissatisfaction of the people, the feudal lords and merchants of Maverannahr wanted to see a strong ruler who was able to resist external enemies and restore order within the country. As a result, Temir came to power as its Amir (“master” in Arabic). This famous native son of Turkic ancestry ruled for more than thirty years, from 1370 to 1405. The capital city of Temir’s rule was that of Samarqand and has become known as the “Power of Temir-lan.”

In one of his campaigns, Temir was wounded in the leg, leaving him partially crippled and thus he got his nickname, Temir-lan. It can translated as “Temir the Lame” (Tamerlan in European pronunciation), which may explain why another of his nicknames was the English equivalent of “Iron Lame.” Other names for him included Amir Temir, Timur Barlas, and Timur Taragai.

Temir was born in 1336, in Kojo Village near the town of Shakhrisabz (“Green City” in Farsi). His father, Taragaybek, belonged to an assimilated Mongolian tribe of Barlas. From a young age, Temir was distinguished for his courage, iron will, managerial leadership qualities, and martial arts. When Maverannahr was captured by Togluk-Temir, Temir served the Moguls. In 1361, he formed an alliance with the grand-
son of Kazagan, Hussein. But, in 1370, he beheaded Hussein, and became the sole ruler, or Amir, of the country. One of his names was Amir Temir Guragan (from the Mongolian word, turagan, which in Kyrgyz is körögön, and means “son-in-law.” The marriage to the widow of his former ally, Hussein, allowed him to become a full-fledged member of the Chengisid Dynasty and rule the country in their stead.

In 1371, Temir led a campaign in Mogulistan near Issyk-Kul Lake. However, by this time, the majority of inhabitants had been relocated to another side of the Ili River and was inaccessible because of the mountains there. In 1375, Temir invaded Mogulistan via Sairam and Talas, but again found only a deserted village. Despite their long-standing contempt for each other and hostile military confrontations, the rulers of the two uluses in Mogulistan, Qamar al-Din and Kadjy-bek, joined forces, hoping to overcome Temir’s invading army. However, Temir, more cunning and farsighted, attacked them one at a time, chasing al-Din into the valley of the Ili River, seizing many resources and soldiers (including Kyrgyz soldiers), which he sent back to Samarkand. Still, Temir failed to completely destroy the army of Qamar al-Din; eventually, he retreated.

Turjan, 1336-1405. Timur’s Rise to Power
Qamar al-Din had inflicted a powerful blow to Temir’s pride. That same year, an enraged Temir, having crossed the Irtysh River, arrived in Kochkor with plans to destroy the army of Qamar al-Din. In 1377-1379, Temir continued his aggressive campaign, defeating the bulk of the Mogul army, although a remnant took refuge on the other side of the Ili River in the mountains of Tarbagatay. After the defeat, Temir took away an unprecedented stockpile of treasure and thousands of prisoners who were subsequently sold into slavery.

Exhausted from incessant warfare with their enemies, the Moguls started looking for allies in the war of attrition against Temir. In 1380, they formed a coalition, which included the Khan of the Golden Horde of Toktomush, the governor of Mogulistan, Qamar al-Din, and a number of uluses in Tenir-Too, the Inner Tian Shan.

In 1389, having gathered a great army, Temir led another expeditionary force towards Mogulistan. Twenty-five years of struggle with the nomads there had convinced him that he might never conquer the region and its people, and so he determined to wreak havoc. He sought to destroy their possessions and capture as many prisoners as possible. To achieve this, he forcibly relocated as many locals as he could to the vicinity of Maverannahr. Without facing any serious resistance, Temir and his army won quick, successive victories in the valleys of Talas, Chu, and Ili, before heading on to Altai. Temir’s troops massacred Moguls along the way, but a decisive victory continued to elude them.

In 1390, Temir sent two more armies into the region. One went north, through Tashkent, Talas, and Chui; the other went south by way of Andijan along the Yassy River and Arpa Valley. In Issyk-Kul, Temir’s two armies chased Qamar al-Din and his troops as far as Irtysh. The nomads of Tenir-Too fled the destruction, abandoning their homes and finding refuge in the mountains.

Following the campaign, Temir’s jurisdiction and power extended as far as the Chu valley. Mogulistan had been defeated by a great conqueror. Ulugh Beg, the grandson of Temir, became his deputy — who is most famous as a philosopher.

The memory of Temir and his conquests were eventually added to the folklore of the Kyrgyz people. Popular rumor still associates two stone mounds that overlook the mountain pass of San-Tash (the eastern part of Issyk-Kul) with the name of Temir. According to another Kyrgyz
legend, on its way to China, Temir’s army stopped briefly just across
the San-Tash (It was likely the campaign meant to crush Qamar al-Din
and his army in Altai.) Before its march through the pass, Temir ordered
all his warriors to take a stone each and deposit them at some specific
location of his choosing, creating a huge stone mound. When returning
from that same campaign and following the same path home, it is said
that Temir again ordered his soldiers to take stones and create a second
mound, which, because so many had died, was significantly smaller than
the first. Over time, people would call this place San-Tash, or “the ac-
count of stones.”

During the last years of his rule, Temir formed a great empire that
stretched from the Mediterranean Sea to eastern Turkestan. In 1391 and
1395, he twice crushed the armies of Toktomush and the Khan the Gold-
en Horde. In 1393, Temir was victorious in Baghdad. In 1398-1399, his
military successes included parts of northern India and, in 1401, most of
Syria.

Temir died on February 18, 1405 in Otrar (near present-day Turke-
stan) while on a military campaign in China. Temir’s body was laid in a
mausoleum in Samarqand.

The Kyrgyz nomads from eastern Mogulistan, Altai, and Dzungaria gradually moved to the abandoned lands that had been conquered by
Temir, only to be assimilated by remnants of the Mogul tribes who had managed to survive the various military campaigns that had savaged
the region. At that time, Kyrgyz soldiers led by Baimurat-Cherik were distinguished for their courage and endurance. In his book, Tarikh-i
Rashidi (History of Rashid), consisting of two daftar (notebooks), Mir-
za Muhammad Haidar called the Kyrgyz “the lions of the Mogulistan
forests.”\textsuperscript{85} This epithet has been of great interest to specialists of Kyrgyz history.

Internecine quarrels and intrigues defined Mogulistan in the late 14th
and early 15th centuries. The choice of a puppet ruler was the principal
task of the feudal lords of the Mangalay-Sube ulus (eastern Turkestan).
Although he did not openly advertise it, Temir (during his reign) did not
really trust Mogul rulers. In 1399, Temir had sent his grandson Iskender
to Mangalay-Sube to subject its citizenry to a merciless and humiliating
defeat. The Kyrgyz in the region expressed their discontent to Iskender.
As a rule, the Kyrgyz did not recognize either Temir’s power in Sa-
markand or that of the Moguls. In 1425, Ulugh Beg’s troops entered
northern Tenir-Too, attacking the Kyrgyz and Mongolian tribes living in the Talas Valley. With the onslaught of another invading force, both Kyrgyz and Mongolian nomads sought the assistance of Jakan-Shah, the son of the implacable Qamar al-Din. Jakan-Shah decided to join forces with the local Kyrgyz and wage a valiant, albeit defensive war against the invaders. They lost, however, in a decisive battle in the Chu Valley. Despite defeat, the Kyrgyz of Tenir-Too refused to surrender. Ulugh Beg never achieved his goal of conquering Mogulistan.

The subsequent history of Mogulistan is characterized by a struggle for supremacy between two of the most powerful feudal groups in the region. This feudal groups were led by two brothers, Esen-Buka and Zhunus—the sons of Vais Khan. Esen-Buka would prevail but never achieve absolute power. Meanwhile, leaders of the Kyrgyz tribes did not recognize the power of either of these warring brothers, holding firm to a position of independent leadership and private ownership.

A large conglomerate of Kazakh nomads, led by Zhanybek and Giray sultans, moved from Dasht-i-Kypchak to Tenir Too in the 1450s and 60s. The number of Kazakhs to settle in the Chu and Talas valleys was more than two hundred thousand people. Esen-Buka was unable to stop such large scale migration, attempting to use Kazakh immigrants in the war with the enemies of Mogulistan on the western and eastern borders. As for the Kyrgyz, they welcomed the Kazakh newcomers to their territory; there were no conflicts between these two groups.

As the 15th century came to an end, the peace enjoyed in Mogulistan was temporarily interrupted by internal strife. The invasion of three hundred thousand Oirot-Mongolian soldiers from Dzungaria put added stress on the situation. Mongolian lords had chosen Zhunus as their representative and leader; his first military campaign started with an attack against the troops of Oirot (Kalmak) Prince Amasanchy-Taisha. In a bloody battle on the banks of the Ili River, the Moguls were defeated. Zhunus withdraw his troops, along with other tribes, to the Ferghana Valley. After some time, the Oirot-Mongolian army returned to whence they came.

After the death of Zhunus Khan in 1487, his sons divided Mogulistan into two parts. The eldest son, Mahmud Khan, received the western part and the capital of Tashkent, whereas the eastern half was given to the younger son, Ahmed Khan, As-Suu City (in China) as his headquarters.
As a result of the policies of Ahmed Khan, a new tribal unit of Kyrgyz was formed in the 1480s. Later, the governor of the region was the son of Ahmed Khan, Khalil Sultan, also known as the “Khan of the Kyrgyz” by historians. Ahmed Khan, who was supported by the chiefs of the Kyrgyz tribes, managed to elevate the state to a high level. As a result, the Kalmyk invasion was stopped and raids on Kashgar were undertaken. However, the aggressive tactics and political ambitions of the Uzbek leader, Muhammad Shaibani Khan proved a strong defense against such attacks. Domestic and foreign policy conducted by Ahmed Khan dramatically increased the political role of the Kyrgyz people in Turkestan, resulting in the consolidation of the power and influence of the Kyrgyz in the region. It was in this era that the formation of the modern “Kyrgyz people” began.

Ulugh Beg’s real name was Muhammad Taraghay, born on March 22, 1394 in Samarkand. His father was Shahrukh, the third son of Temir. In 1409, Ulugh Beg became the head of the Kyrgyz state. But he, unlike his famous grandfather, had no real interest in conquest. His life was devoted to strengthening the state by improving the standard of living of his people. He was interested in their social welfare, science, and the level of culture among his people. During his reign, the cities of Samarkand, Bukhara, Gizhduan, and Merv experienced rapid economic development and cultural sophistication. Magnificent constructions and monuments of incalculable historical worth were erected, including the construction of many schools and other public facilities.

Ulugh Beg was a famous scholar and actively engaged in the medieval study of astronomy and physics. From an early age, he studied the works of Plato, Aristotle, Ptolemy, and other Greek writers, which were accessible in his grandfather’s library. The famous medieval Uzbek poet, Alisher Navoi, spoke of Ulugh Beg: “Having put his hand to science, Ulugh Beg revealed many hidden secrets of life and
the universe. During his life, the sky came lower and the stars came closer. The rules and laws derived by him will always serve the needs of people....”  

The observatory built by Ulugh Beg in Samarkand became one of the major centers of early scientific inquiry in the medieval Middle East. Here, the most scientific work of Ulugh Beg, Gurkhani Zij, was written. The book included the thoughts and participation of a variety of eminent Islamic scholars of that period. Ulugh Beg’s Gurkhani Zij contains valuable astronomical calculations, gathered by the use of the calendar, measurement of time, planetary motion, as well as geographical information.

At that time, the full length of a solar year was still unknown. Calculations by modern scientists of the twentieth suggest that Ulugh Beg’s estimations regarding the length of solar year were only off by minutes. This is just one of many examples of the level of scholarship and knowledge that he achieved in his lifetime.

Ulugh Beg gathered scientists of Central Asia, entrusting them to focus on scientific research. At the same time, he worked to solve social affairs, as well as religious and philosophical issues, which put him in bad terms with the clergy. Rumors that Ulugh Beg had fallen into heresy and turned away from the faith of Islam began to spread. Conservatives in the religious community, fearful that he might bring down the religion with his radical ideas, persuaded the fanatical son of Ulugh Beg to kill him.

The same religious fanatics, who had spread the rumors of his loss of faith, played a decisive role in the destruction of his observatory and library. Some of his books and manuscripts were rescued by burying them in the sand dunes near Samarkand. A friend of Ulugh Beg, Ali Kushchu, later published some of his collection in Istanbul. The works of Ulugh Beg were subsequently translated into several western languages. Today, the name of Ulugh Beg stands alongside such titans of classical and medieval astronomy as Ptolemy, Copernicus, Nasyriddin Al-Tusi, and Bruno. 

The Formation of Kyrgyz People and their Relationships with the Neighboring Peoples

In everyday life, the concepts of “ethnicity,” “nation,” “tribe” appear in conversation. However, people often do not understand their meaning, distort them, or employ one concept instead of another.
**Ethnicity** refers to a community of people, which was historically constituted and formed on specific historical territory, characterized by common features and at the same time possessing, in contrast to other groups, unique characteristics in culture, language, character, behavior, and attitudes. It is expressed in such categories as race and nation.

The terms tribe, people, and nationality refer to a community of people who went through certain stages of development in accordance with different forms of historical processes. In many cases, the term “Kyrgyz people” is used without a proper correlation with the historical period in which it was formed. In Kyrgyz language the word “people” refers to “tribe” and “nation”. It also embodies the idea of ancient ethnic groups. Because of this, many publications can be confusing as the use the words interchangeably.

The term **nation** is a historical community of people characterized by a single territory and formed from the tribes connected by the commonality of economics, language, and culture. The formation of the people is a long process that took place in different historical periods: it began in the era of slavery and continues today. It is natural that each ethnic group is formed by inherent characteristics and should be considered separately. From this point of view, the historical process of the emergence, formation, and development of the Kyrgyz people also has its own characteristics and peculiarities.88

However, the development of any nation is a historical complex. A nation formed in a particular multi-ethnic environment, in conditions of continuous renewal and interaction with external forces. Every ethnic group should be viewed as a broad concept or a system which is in a constant dynamic development. Today ethnologists face such complex tasks as research of the issues of social hierarchy, typology, the role of culture, and psyche. At the same time the study of previously mentioned issues should not be unilateral, as the formation and development of any ethnic group is closely related to the formation of a linguistic, territorial, economic, and cultural identity, mandated by the priorities of a given culture and state.

Historically, the process of the formation of the Kyrgyz nation is inseparable from the ethnic processes that took place in the early Middle Ages in Sayan-Altai, eastern Turkestan, and Tenir Too. It lasted at least five centuries and ended in the 16th century. The similar process
occurred simultaneously among related Turkic peoples of Central Asia—Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Turkmens, Karakalpakks, etc. In many cases, certain tribes were ethnic components of Central Asian nations.

Often, several tribes went out from the tribal union and created an independent state, which existed for a short time (three to four generations) and then divided again. Thus, ethnic groups were subjected to continuous change.

As it is known today, the ethnonym “Kyrgyz” is the oldest of the Turkic-speaking ethnonyms. A lack of written historical facts and data makes it difficult to study the problem of formation [ethnogenesis] of the Kyrgyz people. The study of the Kyrgyz people, therefore, has been based mainly on archaeological, anthropological, and ethnographic materials, such as Kyrgyz epics and the history of the Kyrgyz language. Certainly, the lack of written history and date complicates such research. Nevertheless, scholars seek to answer the question, “When and how did the formation of the Kyrgyz people occur?”

Today there are several explanations that attempt to answer this question. For the purposes of this textbook, it is necessary to divide them into three distinct groups.

The theory that the Kyrgyz people migrated to Tenir Too from the upper Yenisei River (Minusinsk basin) was first advocated by Russian academician G.F. Miller (1705-1783) in his History of Siberia. Today, many scholars continue to support and develop this hypothesis. They believe that, having appeared in the second half of the first millennium B.C.E., the ethnonym “Kyrgyz” was widely used across Central Asia, from the Yenisei River to the Baikal Lake and reached Altai in the 9th and 10th centuries. Later, according to the theory, the Kyrgyz immigrated to Tenir Too, where they formed a nation in the 16th century. A.N. Bernstam hypothesizes that the Kyrgyz did not migrate instantly to Tenir Too; rather, he suggests that they gradually migrated over the course of thirteen or fourteen hundred years. Their first migration was associated with the pressure coming from the Huns and their movement to the east. The second phase of their immigration
to Ala-Too was associated with the mass mixing of nations during the formation and development of the Turkic khanates. The third phase of Kyrgyz resettlement, according to A. Bernshtam, occurred during the Mongolian invasions.\textsuperscript{91}

In the 19th century, Ch.Ch. Valikhanov, N.Y. Bichurin, and N.A. Aristov independently expressed their opinions about Kyrgyz formation from the ancient tribes living in Tenir Too. They argued that there had never been any migration of the Kyrgyz. This view holds that the Kyrgyz were indigenous to the regions of Central Asia. This view was consistently stated in several editions of the “History of the Kyrgyz Soviet Socialist Republic and in publications of national authors”.\textsuperscript{92}

This refers to hypotheses that have been widely used in modern scholarship. It is based on the outcome of a special joint scientific session of the USSR Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Soviet Socialist Republic and dedicated to the ethnogenesis of the Kyrgyz people (1956, Frunze). An exchange of views between leading and eminent scholars of the USSR Academy of Sciences, the Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Soviet Socialist Republic, as well as scholars of various Soviet Republics, led to the following conclusion:

The Kyrgyz people and their culture developed ... as a result of interaction of at least two ethnic elements: migratory and local Middle Asian. One of the most important ‘nodal’ points of the ethnogenesis of the Kyrgyz people is related to the events of the first half of the 2nd millennium B.C.E. During this era, the vast majority of the ancestors of the Kyrgyz people, who already spoke a formed Kyrgyz language, entered the territory of Kyrgyzstan from the east.\textsuperscript{93}

An essential point of this theory was the recognition of the Central Asian population as one of the main components or major ethnic components in the ethnogenesis of the Kyrgyz people. This problem has been studied by many eminent scholars, including L.N. Potapov, K.I. Petrov, O.K. Karaev, Y.S. Khudyakov, A.M. Mokeev, S.T. Klyashtorny,
M.B. Jamgyrchinov, and V.P. Mokrynin. The question of the origin of the Kyrgyz ethnic group from Central Asia, however, is still debated and requires additional attention and research.

Some theories link the origin of the Kyrgyz people with the Sumerians, who created their own state five thousand years ago in Mesopotamia, modern-day southern Iraq. These arguments are based on the similarity between some words and sentences in the ancient Sumerians language and Kyrgyz vocabulary. There are grammatical similarities, too. For example, in both languages, ending or derivational particles are added to a word without being changed. Comparisons between the two languages are abundant. Scholars note the similarity between the words and letters of ancient Sumerian cuneiform signs and the Orkhon-Yenisei writing of ancient Kyrgyz.

Historical evidence, too, points in favor of the hypothesis that the Sumerians and Kyrgyz might have lived during the same time. For example, the Sumerians and Kyrgyz developed the art of verbal improvisation and verbal competition. The Sumerians also created epics. One of their epics, “Gilgamesh” contains information concerning the habitation of Sumerians in Tenir Too—in the north of modern Kyrgyzstan, especially around Issyk-Kul Lake before they moved to Mesopotamia. It is interesting that Sumerians also mourned the dead and, as mentioned in historical sources there women wailed loudly and tore their faces. During holidays Sumerians allegedly went from one house to another and sang songs with different wishes of happiness and well-being which, in content, are similar to Kyrgyz songs, or jaramazan.

Another point of commonality is the connection between the Sumerians and Akkadians with ancient Turks in terms of language. According to some scholars, Arabic words appeared in the Kyrgyz language only after the adoption of Islam in the region. This, however, may not be entirely true. The science has proven that Arabic and Hebrew languages came in contact with Turkic languages as early as the 3rd millennium B.C.E. However, it is obvious fact, that the further research of historians, archaeologists, ethnographers, and linguists is needed to explore the relationship between these two ancient societies in order to form a more complete understanding of their connection.

According to historical writings and archaeological materials of later times, Jian-kun tribes (the transcription of Kyrgyz name in the Chinese
form) served as pastoralists and inhabited the middle and upper Yenisei. These sources show that they were natives of the region.\textsuperscript{97}

It appears that Kyrgyz tribes appeared in the third century B.C.E. However, the study of this issue takes us back to ancient times, where historical records explaining the ranching economy on the Yenisei are first found. The oldest traces of cattle on the Yenisei River date back to the 2nd millennium B.C.E.\textsuperscript{98}

Archaeologists discovered the remnants of Afansievo culture along the Yenisei River (named so after the Afanasievo Mountain near the Minusinsk). The Afanasievo culture, dated back as far as 2500-2000 B.C.E. by archeologists, is unique in the archaeological record; similar sites are found only in the Altai Mountains. In recent times, other analogous cultures (similar to Afanasiev type) have been discovered; although they only date back to 1500-1000 B.C.E. The latter is attributed to the stage of economic development and social structure of ancient Minusin, the so-called Andronovo culture.

The Androvnovo culture derives its name from the village Andronovo, Achinsk District of Minusinsk region, where the first discoveries were made. Andronovo burial grounds are very similar in appearance to earlier burial grounds found in the same area. For example, both the Andronovo burial grounds and earlier burial grounds contain a fence of stones in a form of a ring or rectangle around the grave. In some places the grave resembles a little mound.

From the beginning of the 1st millennium B.C.E., the culture and system of development of the Minusinsk steppes changed dramatically. The culture of the Androvo of the Minusinsk region had a direct influence on the subsequent culture of the Karasuks (named after the Karasuk River near the Baten village of Minusinsk region). The bridge between the two is clearly seen in the construction of a mound and coats of burials, which resembles similar constructions dating back to the Androvo period.

During the time of the Karasuk’s, the strengthening of the role individual patriarchal families and their property caused the appearance of tamga (an emblem or seal which denoted ownership). This feature of the Karasuk culture is one interesting feature of the Minusinsk region; this Minusinsk mound culture (also known as Tagar culture) represented the end of the Bronze Age in this region.
Archaeologists on burials, which dated back to the 8th century B.C.E. and represented a small burial enclosure of stone slabs set on edge, recorded continuity with the earlier Karasuk burial mounds. As they point out: his process can be traced in details based on the monuments of material culture, in particular on the materials of the so-called Tashtyk cultural phase, which represents the continued development of Minusinsk mound (Tagar) culture, which dated from 2nd century B.C.E. – 2nd century [C.E.]. It is obvious that these monuments should characterize the culture of Kyrgyz people of this time. Here is the burial structure, tools, pottery - everything has a direct genetic connection with the Tagar culture.99

The history of the Kyrgyz people can be understood as a complex process. What kind of ethnic processes occurred on the Yenisei River in ancient times? Judging by the self-designation, the Kyrgyz in the 3rd century B.C.E., while being a Turkic tribe, consisted of other tribes from Central Asia and south Siberian Turkic ethnic groups. At first, they lived in eastern Turkestan, presumably in the Basin of the Manas River, and then migrated to the Minusinsk Basin on the Yenisey River. There, the Kyrgyz subdued the Dinlin-Caucasians and mixed with them. The evidence of the ethno-cultural processes that took place in the Minusinsk Basin is found in the archaeological record.

At the last stage of development of the Tashtyk culture (3rd to 5th century) elements of a Central Asian component were preserved due to the resettlement of the Kyrgyz people. In the 3rd to 5th centuries, local and newly arrived ethnic people united together into one Yenisei Kyrgyz culture.

Thus, according to written and archaeological sources, the tribe that bore the ethnonym “Kyrgyz” was part of a complex ethno-cultural amalgamation at the initial stage of the history of its development and can be explained by the union of Kyrgyz and Dinlin-Caucasians. Some other tribes that

Astragalus with signs of Tashtyk crypts. (1st-5th century), Khakassia
originated from the Huns also resettled near the Yenisei after the Kyrgyz. Written sources lack any information on the ethnic history of the Yenisei Kyrgyz from the 6th to 7th centuries.

The Kyrgyz State was a complicated ethno-cultural community which included several other independent tribes. The Kyrgyz people of that period were distinguished by peculiar external characteristics--they were red-haired, blue-eyed, and fair-faced. Kyshtym tribes, dependent on the Kyrgyz, differed by language and culture. Archaeological materials from the 6th to 7th centuries suggest that the Kyrgyz culture developed along the same lines as the Tashtyk culture; in other words, in those days the Kyrgyz were able to preserve their culture despite living among other Turkic peoples.

In the 7th century, the situation changed: the culture of the Altai Turks began to dominate. This can be seen in burial rites, rituals, and sacrifices. Part of the Turkic khanate firmly settled among the Yenisei Kyrgyz. The evidence of such changes is preserved in written sources reflecting different relationships between the Turks, Turgeshes, Karluks, Chiks and other ancient Turkic nations. For example, the nobility of the Yenisei Kyrgyz had dynastic marriages with Turks and Turgeshes. Therefore, Turkic-Kyrgyz ethnic associations were common until the submission of the Kyrgyz (711-730) by the Second Turkic Qaghanate. Later, the Minusinsk Turks assimilated with the Kyrgyz.

Ethnic ties of Kyrgyz intensified and reached their highest level during the era of the great Kyrgyz power (9th to 11th century), when they defeated the Uyghurs and captured the whole of Central Asia. In order to consolidate their positions, the Kyrgyz government conducted numerous military campaigns across a vast area. Part of the Kyrgyz people settled in the conquered lands and thus there was a mixture of local ethnic groups.

In Semirechye, Karluks, Chigils, and Yagms forced local tribes to subjugate them and took their best pastures. In the 10th and 11th centuries, some Karluk tribal associations were also starting a sedentary way of life. This is evidenced by the history of Yagma, Zhikil, and Karluk cities.

During the reign of Karakhanids, Semirechye and Tenir Too were influenced by the (more than five hundred year old) culture of Central Asia and eastern Turkestan. Islam entered the life of the people of these
regions, turning them towards the Muslim world. As Mahmud Kashgari writes in the middle of the 11th century, the main representatives of the sedentary culture were the Turks.

In the 12th century, the territory of modern Kyrgyzstan was invaded by Kara-kytaïs (from the east) and also by the Naimans. Thus, until the 13th century there was a local Turkic presence in the territory of modern Kyrgyzstan.

The analysis of ethnographic, linguistic, and anthropological data accumulated by scholars reveals about the closeness of the modern Kyrgyz to Altaians, Khakassians, Tuva, Kazakhs, and Karakalpaks. This closeness includes material traditions and customs, culture, family, language, and other anthropological categories.

Many scholars, however, consider ethnic Kyrgyz and the Altai people to be very close in their cultural and spiritual traditions, ethnic components, and language. Ancient ethnic affinity of the Kyrgyz and Altai peoples is supported by the presence of the same ethnic groups like Munduz, Doolos, Kushchu, Toro, Kochkor-Munduz, Kara Tumak, Beru, Saruu, Kuba, Kubat, Kumach, Alchy, Elchigen, and the Alakchyn in their kin-tribal systems.

The research of famous Kyrgyz linguists, such as B.M. Yunusaliev, I.A. Batmanov, and B.O. Oroubaeva has confirmed the close proximity of the Altai language with the modern Kyrgyz language. According to E.R. Tenishev, who devoted his research to the history of the Kyrgyz language, the Altaic era was a turning point in the development of Kyrgyzstan. The Kyrgyz, Kazakh, and Altai languages are Turkic languages. These facts are reason to believe that many of the Kyrgyz who moved to Tenir Too in the 15th century were Altai people who lived with them in the same area for a long time.

Analyzing the direction and nature of ethnic processes that influenced the formation of the Kyrgyz people, a renowned expert in the ethnic history of the Kyrgyz people, S.M. Abramson, concluded the following in his book, *The Kyrgyz People and their Ethnogenetic, Historical and Cultural Ties*:

1) The process of the formation of the tribes, from which the Kyrgyz nation appeared, occurred mainly in the east of Tenir-Too, Inner Tenir, Pamir-Alai, and the surrounding
Oskon Osmonov and Cholpon Turdalieva

Mountain areas of Altai, Irtys, and eastern Turkestan.

2) The basis of the Kyrgyz nation from the 14th to 17th centuries were: a) local Turkic tribes who lived there; b) outsiders, mostly Turkic-speaking nations of Central Asian origin; c) tribes of Mongolian and Kazakh-Nogoi origin.\(^{101}\)

Most scholars do not deny the Yenisei origins of the modern Kyrgyz people. Indeed, the Yenisei Kyrgyz were involved in the formation of the Kyrgyz nation in Tenir Too. It is important, however, not to simplify this complex process. It is important to keep in mind that the original homeland of the Kyrgyz people was Tenir Too, not Yenisei. This was a very long and complex process; accordingly, the review and study of it is possible only with the collaboration of scholars from multiple disciplines, such as archaeology, history, oriental studies, anthropology, ethnology, linguistics, and folklore.

S.M. Abramson and many of the authors of Volume I of *The History of the Kirgiz SSR* (1984) (written by M.B. Zhamgyrchinov, O.K. Karaev, A.M. Mokeev, K.I. Petrov, B.O. Oruzbaev, and E.R. Tenishev) express a similar view. For example, O. Karaev wrote: “Ancient Turkic and Turkicized Mongolian tribes were included in Uzbek, Kyrgyz, and Kazakh nations that were formed at the same time and led to ethnic resemblance of three main Turkic peoples of Central Asia.”\(^{102}\)

The international scientific conference, “The Kyrgyz and Ethno-genetic and Ethno-Cultural Processes in Ancient and Medieval Times of Central Asia,” which took place on September 23-24, 1994, in Bishkek, was an important step in the study of the problem of ethnic history and ethno-genesis of the Kyrgyz people. This conference was held almost forty years after the scientific sessions of the Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz SSR and the Academy of Sciences of the USSR in 1956.

The need to organize another conference was due to the fact that a lot of materials on the ethno-genesis of the Kyrgyz, and other Central Asian nations, as well as materials related to ethnic history, archaeology, anthropology, and folklore, were collected by historians, ethnographers, linguists, archaeologists, and art historians in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. Their conclusions were summarized in dissertations, scientific conferences, symposia, and published collective works and monographs.
Many of these differed in their approach, advancing fundamentally new thoughts and ideas. A fourth edition of *History of the Kirgiz SSR* (Frunze, 1984) and a collection, entitled “Problems of Ethnic History of the Kyrgyz people” (Frunze, 1989) were important to the study of the ethno-genesis and ethnic history of the Kyrgyz.

The most interesting discussions at the conference were those confirming the genetic affinity (kinship) of the Tenir Too Kyrgyz to Turkic peoples of Central Asia, southern Siberia, and Yenisei Kyrgyz. It became obvious that the leading role at the next stage of the development was a period of wide dispersal of the Kyrgyz in Altai and Central Asia, despite the fact that the debate concerning the cause and time of resettlement of the Kyrgyz from Yenisei to Altai and Tenir Too continues. Additional information and research are needed.

The studies of different scholars have shown that the process of formation of the local ethnos of the ancient Kyrgyz in the eastern part of Tenir Too took place during the period from the 3rd to the 12th centuries. It included the late appearance of Central Asian tribes, mass migration of ancient Turkic tribes, formation of the ancient Turkic state, and a new wave of Central Asian tribes during the period of the Karakhanid Kaganate. According to written sources and archaeological findings, the general migration patterns of Central Asian nomadic Turkic tribes involved the relocation of some groups of Yenisei Kyrgyz to eastern Tenir Too. However, the overall rhythm of the ethnic process in Tenir Too and in Semirechye was interrupted by the invasion of the Mongolians.

According to some scholars, the revival of ethnic processes and the creation of favorable conditions for the formation of the Kyrgyz people took place during the 13th and 14th centuries. Geographically, this is associated with the northern part of Mogulistan and Altai. Even in the 10th and 11th centuries, when the Great Kyrgyz Power was revived, an ethno-political group, which included Kimaki-Kipchak and Kyrgyz tribes, emigrated from the Yenisei River. In the 15th century, these Altai Kyrgyz migrated to Tenir Too.

Other historians suggest that the Kyrgyz people came from the Yenisei River to Tenir Too in the 9th and 10th centuries via Mongolia and eastern Turkestan. Initially, they concentrated in the mountains of eastern Turkestan, but later occupied a part of the Tarim Valley before moving to the territory of modern Kyrgyzstan. From the 2nd millennium B.C.E., there was a process of separation, the Yenisei Kyrgyz and Tenir Too Kyrgyz becoming two independent ethnic groups.
The participants of the 1994 conference unanimously agreed that the last stage of formation of the Kyrgyz people was Central Tenir Too in the 15th to 16th centuries, the completion of a process of long-term mutual influence of two main components—ancient and medieval tribal associations of eastern Tenir Too and Kyrgyz tribes from southern Siberia.

According to the historical record, there was a revival of traditional, dual-structure ethnic and political Kyrgyz-tribal associations, “right” and “left” wings, which led to the formation of the Kyrgyz people per se at the end of the 15th century.

Researchers of the greatest Kyrgyz epic monument, The Epos Manas, pointed out that the epic contains a lot of information about the ancient settlement areas of the Kyrgyz people, as well as their names and geographical boundaries. Thus, according to Manas, the story of the Kyrgyz began in the Altai Mountains of eastern Central Asia. In the first edition of the epic (that of Sagynbay Orozbakov) “Altai” is mentioned fifty-four times. The territory of modern Kyrgyzstan became a new home for Manas and his people after their resettlement from Altai. Hence, the formation of the Kyrgyz people in geographical areas such as Altai, Yenisei, Irtys, Central Tenir Too, Issyk-Kul, Chui, Talas, Badakhshan, Karategin, and Ferghana.

The formation of the Kyrgyz language, as well as its peculiarities and dialects, were important to the development of the Kyrgyz nation from the 9th to 14th centuries. This is confirmed by the research of B.M. Yunusaliev. Thus, from this point of view, this would mark the complete formation of the Kyrgyz people. The Epic Manas first appeared in the Kyrgyz language at this time.

In addition to this, the above mentioned conference noted the lack of a single viewpoint on the problem of the ethno-genesis of the Kyrgyz people. There are substantial differences of opinion concerning the roles of South Siberians and Central Asians, their migration paths, the time of their various migrations, as well as the role of local Central Asians in the ethno-genesis of the Kyrgyz people. It requires a more thorough study of the language, folklore, and ethnographic relations of the Kyrgyz in relation to southern Siberian and Central Asian Turkic peoples; the simple usage of anthropological materials in various controversial works is not enough. The absence of published biographical and historical works by Oriental writers, and the reasons mentioned above, limit opportunities and create certain difficulties in further studies of the issue.
There are serious studies related to the ethno-genesis of the Kyrgyz people. One, for example, was conducted by Professor E. Maanaev, in his book, *Ethnic History of Kyrgyz People*, published in 2008. In his work, he describes and compares ethno-components of the Kyrgyz people in relation to other peoples of Central Asian and neighboring countries. He divides the process of Kyrgyz national formation into three stages:

1) 3rd century B.C.E. to 10th century C.E. (ancient period).
2) 11th to 16th centuries (medieval period).
3) 17th to 19th centuries (late period), or final stage in the formation of the ethnic Kyrgyz.\(^{105}\)

Continuing the same line of research, Umetaliyeva-Bayalieva, in her book, *Kyrgyz Ethnogenesis: Musicological Perspective: Historical and Cultural Studies*” (2008), discusses the origins of the Kyrgyz people using non-traditional methods. Although her book is a musicological perspective, a wide range of issues related to the history and ethno-genesis of the Kyrgyz are considered. The author boldly argues that the Kyrgyz people are related to the Sumerians who created an advanced civilization five thousand years ago. Her book provides a number of arguments in favor of a direct relationship between ancient Kyrgyz tribes and the creation of Afanasievo culture but, as the author also claims, there is abundant evidence that contradicts the argument for a linkage between the Sumerians and the Kyrgyz.

Thus, the adoption of a single concept and variety of evidentiary arguments for the ethnic history and ethno-genesis of the Kyrgyz people, as well as a solution to a number of related issues, clearly requires additional research, compilation, and analysis.

The relationships of the Kyrgyz with the neighboring peoples in the 15th to 19th centuries

In the 15th to 18th centuries, the Kyrgyz continued to struggle to save their independence. During this period, important political events took place in Central Asia, Kazakhstan, and Mogulistan. Uzbek tribes, who roamed the western regions of Kazakhstan,
took advantage of the weakening state of Amir Temir, attacked it, and then completely dominated the country. Nomadic tribes from the eastern part of the Golden Horde were called “Uzbeks” after the Uzbek Khan. Nomadic Uzbeks, who formed the basis of the troops of Sheibani Khan, exercised power over Amir Temir’s descendants.

One of Amir Temir’s fifth generation descendants, Zahir al-Din Muhammad Babur (1483-1530) built up a resistance against the power of the Uzbek nomads. Babur was the last scion of the Chagatai Dynasty and the nephew of Ahmed Khan, known as the “King of the Kyrgyz people.” At the age of twelve, he inherited the reign of Fergana from his father. He was multilateral in his disposition, highly educated, and possessed an outstanding personality. He was a famous philosopher, historian, and gifted poet; on the battlefield, he was a courageous soldier and a talented military leader. Under his command, a small house was erected on the slopes of the Sulaiman Mountains in the vicinity of Osh city, where he liked to rest and study poetry. This building is still a place of pilgrimage.

In his battles against the nomadic Uzbeks, Babur repeatedly inflicted defeat upon them. However, the Uzbeks completely destroyed most of Babur’s forces. After crossing the Hissar Mountains, Babur left for Afghanistan (Kabul). Anyone who did not want to serve their Uzbek-Shaybanid rulers, followed Babur. Gathering a large force, Babur made a campaign from Kabul to West India (ca. 1510). He was victorious and founded one of the most brilliant Muslim kingdoms, the Mughal Empire (1526-1858), which included northern India and Afghanistan. In his book, The Babur-Nama, which covers the period from 1493 to 1529, he presented detailed autobiographical information and extensive historical information about Central Asia, Afghanistan, and northern India. The book includes important information related to the political history of Kyrgyzstan and the Kyrgyz tribes in the mountainous regions of southern Kyrgyzstan. Babur died at the age of forty-eight in Agra, the capital of his empire. His remains are buried in Kabul (Afghanistan).

Great changes took place in Mogulistan. At the beginning of the 16th century, northern regions of the country were seized by the Kyrgyz. According to one chronicler in 1510, “because of the Kyrgyz, no Moguls remained in Mogulistan.” In 1514, the Mughal Khan, Sultan Said, captured Kashgar and removed Abu Bakr from the throne. Muhammad
Kyrgyz (Tagai-biy) was of great assistance in this *coup d’etat*. Eventually, however, Sultan Said exacted his revenge upon the Kyrgyz (1517).

Muhammad Kyrgyz united the Kyrgyz tribes in the face of an irreversible collapse of Mogulistan and used by disagreements between lords and the constant threat of external attack to his advantage. Consolidation of the Kyrgyz tribes led to the strengthening of their forces and the development of an ethnic identity and national self-conception. Attempts by the Moghul Khans to occupy northern Kyrgyzstan were unsuccessful, as the Kyrgyz people, together with Kazakhs, bravely fought for their independence. The heir of Sultan Said, Abd al-Rashid (1533-1560), in alliance with the Shaybanids, repeatedly attacked the Kyrgyz and Kazakhs. Haqq Nazar (son of Kasim, the younger brother of Tahir) led an allied militia of Kazakhs and Kyrgyz against the alliance; later on, Kazakh troops were led by another brother of Tahir, Buydash Khan (ca. 1560).

English explorer Alexander Jenkinson, who visited Central Asia in 1558, wrote that he heard rumors about a Kazakh attack against the Tashkent Kyrgyz, or Kashgar. Indeed, during the reign of Abd al-Karim Khan (1560-1591), the successor of Abd al-Rashid, Mughal rulers repelled the Kyrgyz advance. Nevertheless, the Kyrgyz were actively involved in the campaigns of Kazakh Khan Tahir against Tashkent, Andijan, Sairam, Turkestan, and other cities. There is evidence that a two hundred man army from Tahir marched on Tashkent and Fergana (against Shaybani Sultan Muhammad Khan) consisted of a number of Kyrgyz soldiers. However, as the leaders of the northern Kyrgyz tribes strengthened their alliance with the Kazakh khans, the Kyrgyz
leaders in the south preferred to maintain good relations with the Shaybanids.

By the end of the 16th and beginning of the 17th century, the Shaybanids power collapsed in Bukhara and the Ashtarkhanids took over from them. The history of the Ashtarkhanid Dynasty (1599-1767) is closely linked to the political struggle of the Uzbek tribes, Karakalpaks, Kazakhs, Kalmaks, and representatives of the ruling elites of the Kyrgyz tribes.

The new rulers of Bukhara, the Ashtarkhanids, had difficulty stopping the onslaught of Kyrgyz-Kazakh troops. Raids by Ashtarkhani Baki Mohammed Khan (1603) and Wali Muhammad (1606-1610) did not bring the desired results. Their successor, Imankul Khan (1611-1641), was forced to acknowledge the authority of the Kyrgyz and Kazakh lords in Tashkent and Turkestan. In 1635, however, after thorough training, Imankul Khan seized control of the right bank of Syr Darya.

At the beginning of the 17th century, southern tribes of the “left” wing of the Kyrgyz people living in Karategin (on the southern ridge of Hissar Mountains in Tajikistan) and Alay began to move westward to Hissar and Kulob. From ancient times, the people of Pamir-Alai, Fergana, and northern Afghanistan had used this mountainous region and maintained close relations. The Kyrgyz people could come here in the 13th century. In 1636, twelve-thousand families, or about sixty-thousand people moved to Hissar. Most likely, this large group of Kyrgyz came from the Altai Mountains and Irtysh. In the 15th century, most of the Kyrgyz tribes moved to Ala-Too. The new Kyrgyz arrivals adopted Islam and were in frequent contact with local Uzbeks.

The Altai and Karategin Kyrgyz were a constant threat to the Ashtarkhanids. In 1642-1643, the leaders of the “left” wing, Kutlug Said, Tilek-biy, and Karakytay-myrza, defeated Andijan which, in turned, meant that local rulers had to bow to whims of the Nadir Mukambet Khan and Ashtarkhanid Dynasty.

During the 17th to 18th centuries, Oirot-Kalmak invaders made continuous forays into Kyrgyzstan. Since ancient times, Turkic peoples referred to the “left” wing of the Mongolians as Kalmaks, Jungars, and Oirots (the latter occupied vast areas in the western part of Mongolia).
In the 15th century, the independent Oirot Khanate was formed. Gradually becoming stronger, the Oirots (by the 16th century) allied with the “Derben Oirot” (“Four Oirots”), which included the Tyrgoot, Derbeth, Hoshut, and Choros tribes. The Kalmaks then moved west, creating a real threat to the Kazakhs and Kyrgyz. According to the historical record, the Kyrgyz clans (at that time) were headed by Doolos Batyr and had rebuffed the aggressive claims of the Kalmaks.

The Oirot Khanate posed a serious threat against the united forces of the Kyrgyz and Kazakhs, who rendered mutual support to each other. This union was especially strong during the first quarter of the 17th century and during the reign of Kyrgyz-Kazakh Khan Eshim. He was known for his fierce resistance against outside invaders. Although the exact year of his birth unknown, sources indicate that he died in 1628. His success can also be attributed to the support of local Kyrgyz rulers. Other great leaders, including Manap-bii, his son, Jarban Baatyr, Tursun Khan Kokum-biy, Tugel-biy, and Chaa, strengthened the Kyrgyz-Kazakh coalition and effectively resisted Jungar invaders.

In 1627, internal strife within the Oirot ranks led to the collapse of the Kalmak union: the Tyrgoot (later called Kalmaks) moved west to the Volga. The Hoshut moved to Tibet, while the Choros stayed in Jungaria. In 1635, the united states of the Oirot-Kalmaks and Jungar Khanate was established; at this time, their scattered tribes came under the leadership of Khun Tayishi Erdene-Batur (who reigned from 1635 to 1653). In 1643, an Oirot army of fifty strong invaded the land of the Kyrgyz and Kazakhs. Destroying and pillaging, the forces made it to the heart of Central Asia. Opposition forces fought valiantly for an entire year. The Kyrgyz, together with Kazakhs, courageously deflected the attack, and finally, the combined forces of the Kazakh Sultan, Jangir, and the governor of Samarkand, Jalantosh, struck a decisive blow, forcing Oirot to retreat.

The next battle of Kyrgyz and Kazakhs against the Jungars occurred in 1652. During this battle, perhaps one of the bloodiest encounters between these forces, both sides suffered incalculable losses. After the death of the Khun Tayishi Batur in 1653, a struggle for power ensued.
between various Oirot-Kalmak marshals. The rulers of Central Asia decided to take advantage of this and, in 1658, an Uzbek army of some thirty eight thousand soldiers, led by Abdy-shukur, marched into Talas Valley and engaged the Kalmaks at the Kulan-Jylan Hollow. In that battle, the Kyrgyz and Kazakhs fought on the side of the Uzbeks. Abdy-Shukur was killed, leaving them without a leader; accordingly, his soldiers retreated. The Kalmaks, thoroughly beaten, lacked the forces to pursue the enemy.

The Kalmak lords continued their campaigns against the Kazakhs and Kyrgyz during the reign of the Khun Tayishi, Galdan Boshoktu (1670-1697). In 1678, he made an attempt to take over Central Asia and eastern Turkestan, capturing Jarkent in 1680. From 1681 to 1683, he surrounded Sairam (near modern-day Chymkent), but failed to take the city. Stung with defeat, Galdan Boshoktu moved his troops to Andijan. On the way, the Kalmak army attacked Osh. The Uzbek and Kyrgyz living there courageously defended the city. Unable to take the city, the Kalmak army returned to Sairam and, after a fierce battle, managed to storm the city and take it. Thousands of the city inhabitants were taken captive and sold into slavery. Despite great effort and some success, the Kalmaks failed to establish their authority over the Kyrgyz. The need to defend themselves against the encroachments of the Manchus who ruled China complicated matters; the conflict between the Manchus and the Kalmaks continued until 1697.

The Kyrgyz and Kazakh relations with the Jungars deteriorated sharply during the reigns of Tsevan Rabdan (1697-1727) and Galdan Tseren (1727-1745).

At the beginning of the 18th century, sensing the weakening of the Jungar Khanate in their war against the Manchus, the Kazaks and Kyrgyz attempted to regain lost territory. In 1727, however, they were de-
feated by an army of sixty Jungar invaders and were forced to retreat. The Tenir Too Kyrgyz headed by Kudayar Khan promptly migrated to the Ferghana, while the majority of Kazakhs took refuge in Bukhara, Khujand, and Samarkand. The capital of the Kazakh Khan, Turkestan, remained under the control of the enemy. Prior to this, in 1723, Tsevan Rabdan had occupied the eastern part of Issyk-Kul.

The aggressive policies of the Kalmak lords made the Kyrgyz attack. Passive defense was not an option. In 1747, a Kyrgyz detachment of ten thousand soldiers, led by Akmat-biy, successfully attacked the Kalmak camp.

In 1748-1749, clashes arose between the Kalmaks and the Kyrgyz. These raids were led by the Kashgar Kyrgyz. Jungar forces led first by Zaisan Dorji and then by Dorji Lama, were soundly defeated. In 1749, the Kalmaks sent an army of twenty seven thousand soldiers to subdue the Kyrgyz. However, after fighting for three months, they proved to be unsuccessful. Such warfare was crucial to Kyrgyz-Kalmak relations, as well as liberation of the Kyrgyz from under Kalmak rule. Nevertheless, the Jungar Khanate represented a severe threat to the independence of fragmented Kyrgyz and Kazakh tribes at this time. Moreover, those tribes defeated by the Jungars would pay a hefty tribute which lasted from the latter half of the 17th century to the early part of the 18th century.

Political discord within the Khanate, in conjunction with a relentless struggle for independence by the natives of Central Asia and eastern Turkestan (including the Kyrgyz, Kazakhs, and Uzbeks) undermined the former power of the Jungar Khanate. Such leaders as Mamatkul, Tynai, Janbolot, Kachyke, Koshoy, Nysbaa,
Berdike, Chong Mambet, Bazyl, Tuubiy, and Karaboto seemed to encourage revolt on the part of the Kyrgyz in particular.

In 1757-1758, the Jungars came under attack by the Chinese. As a result, the Khanate ceased to exist as a ruling body. About one million people and thus seventy percent of the population (according to other sources only fifty percent) were brutally killed. Those who survived fled to Russia and Central Asia. Some took refuge among the Kyrgyz people and later became the Sart-Kalmak tribe. After capturing eastern Turkestan, the Qin Dynasty renamed the region Xinjiang—which translates from Chinese as “new edge” or “new ownership.” The former ruler of the Kashgar, Kojo, hid in the Ferghana to keep from being killed.

Having destroyed the Jungar Khanate, the rulers of the Qin Dynasty chose eastern Turkestan and Central Asia as the next logical step in their imperial quest for power. Once again, the peoples of Central Asia came under the threat of a foreign, occupying power.

Since the late 1750s, the Kyrgyz represented a significant force and provided substantial support to the peoples of eastern Turkestan in their fight against the Chinese. The Qin Dynasty rulers were particularly cautious in their relations with the Kyrgyz, hoping to bring them to their side, or at least pacify them.

The campaign of the northern Kyrgyz tribes against their Kalmak invaders, led by Atake-Baatyr, Er-Soltonoy, and Berdike-Baatyr, had united the Kyrgyz people after the attempted invasions of their enemies—a successful mobilization of the people in their struggle for independence.

There were no regular troops, military forts, or residential buildings in Kyrgyzstan. Regardless, the Kyrgyz managed to repel the brutal Chi-
nese. The first confrontation between the Kyrgyz and Chinese was in 1758.

Under the pretense of pursuing the Kalmaks, the Qin Dynasty General, Zhaohui, made his way through the valley of the Ili River and Santash pass on to the Issyk-Kul basin. However, the Kyrgyz in the region met the Chinese army on the battle field and forced them to retreat. Realizing that open intervention with the Kyrgyz would cost too much, the Chinese chose the path of negotiation. By the initiative of General Zhaohui, in 1758, the northern Kyrgyz sent a delegation to Beijing. The delegation included Nyshaa-Baatyr from the clan of Solto, Cherikchi Temir-uulu from Bugu-Sarybagysh, Toroke from Chekir-Sayak, and Shukur from Kushchu. The costs of organizing and equipping the delegation were covered by Mamatkul-biy, the ruler of northern Kyrgyz.

Qianlong, the Emperor of China, welcomed the Kyrgyz delegation and pledged to consider returning Kyrgyz pastures and camps captured by the Jungars. The Kyrgyz who occupied these lands neither expected the return of the delegates nor an answer from the Emperor. With the establishment of Chinese rule in eastern Turkestan, part of the Kyrgyz people immigrated to what is now Kyrgyzstan. Staying in eastern Turkestan, the Kyrgyz, together with Uighurs, Kazakhs, Uzbeks, and Dungans, continued to participate actively in the struggle against the imperial claims of their Qin Dynasty rulers.

Andijan, Aksy, and Alai Kyrgyz, worked together with Uzbeks. In 1759, their combined forces dealt a crushing blow to Manchu troops in Fergana. In the course of this skirmish, as many as seven thousand Chinese soldiers were killed. The unity of Kyrgyz, Kazakh, and Uzbek people against a common enemy worked well to prevent the subjugation of Central Asians. The memory of this struggle is preserved in the national memo-
ry of these people; additionally many battles that occurred between the Kyrgyz and the Manchus in the *Epic of Manas*.

After the fall of the Jungar Khanate, the alliance of Kyrgyz and Kazakhs (who opposed the Oirot-Kalmak in the 17th and 18th centuries) was severely tested. A dispute between Kyrgyz and Kazakh feudalists over the ownership of pasture land and camps liberated from the Kalmaks increased the tension between these two forces. Qin Dynasty officials sought means to exacerbate the situation, in order to break down unity amongst these allies.

In the early 1760s, the Kazakh Middle Juz invaded Kyrgyzstan, seizing resources and treasure. In response, the Kyrgyz feudal lords attacked (a total of three times) the Juzes who inhabited the valley of the Ili River. In the same year (1764), the Middle Juz raided the Kyrgyz settlements in Chu and Talas, but was stopped by Karaboto-biy, the leader of the Talas Kyrgyz.

In 1770s, Kazakh Khan Ablai finally asserted his authority over the Middle Juz and attempted to subdue the Senior Juz. His successful raids against the Kyrgyz lent him credibility and a greater sense of importance among his people.

In 1770, Ablai Khan led an expeditionary force of three thousand soldiers and attacked the Talas and Chui Kyrgyz. All the Kyrgyz tribes under attack, including the Solto, Sarybagysh, Sayak, Bugu, Chon Bagysh, and Azyk defended their lands. Er Sadyr, the leader of the Sayak tribe, and Kebek of the Solto tribe, led their troops. Jaiyl-Baatyr (1705-1770), was distinguished for his participation in this series of conflicts. Later on, the fighting between the Kyrgyz and Kazakhs came to be called the “Battle of Jaiyl.” Starting from Talas, Ablai reached Kara-Balta and Sokuluk, robbing people in villages along the way. A decisive battle took place where the valleys of Ak-Suu and Kiz-Tuugan meet the Chu River.
In the bloody battle that ensued, Jaiyl-Baatyr and his sons Usen and Teke, fought and died heroically. In the campaign, Ablai Khan defeated the Kyrgyz tribes of the Chu and Kemin valleys, taking part of Issyk-Kul, the Kochkor Valley, and Son-Kul. Esengul-Baatyr, Burgo-Baatyr, Jamanak-Baatyr, Atake-Baatyr, and Bishkek-Baatyr were actively engaged in the battles with the troops of Ablai. Although the confrontation between the Kazakh and Kyrgyz ended in the defeat of the Kyrgyz, the latter did not consider themselves to be a conquered people.

Between the end of the 18th and the middle of the 19th centuries, the relations between the Kyrgyz and Kazakhs became much calmer. The leaders of the Younger and Middle Juzs were trying to create a unified Kazakh government, and in 1841, they put their protégé, Kenensary, on the throne. In 1846, Kenensary sent ambassadors to Ormon, the Khan of the northern Kyrgyz, with a proposal to unite in a fight against the impending expansion of the Russian tsarist regime. Ormon refused after consulting with the elders of the clans. In the spring of 1846, a dissatisfied Kenensary, together with Noruzbai, Erzhan, and Agybai leaders, brutally raided Solto and Sarybagysh.

In 1847, Kenensary undertook a new campaign against the Chu Kyrgyz with the army of twenty thousand soldiers and having reached the village Mai Tube (near the modern city of Tokmok), set up camp to prepare for a decisive attack against the enemy.

Having gathered their troops, the Kyrgyz leaders decided to fight back. Ormon Khan, Jantay,
Jangarach, Zhamangara-baatyr and Ajybek-Baatyr led the fight. Ormon Khan showed himself to be a talented, resourceful, military strategist, who quickly and efficiently responded to the situation. He suggested tricking the Kazakh army. After dividing soldiers into groups of ten or fifteen, he ordered them to go quietly into the mountain gorges of Shamshy and Onbir-Jylga, chopping down shrubs and tree branches and dragging them to a specified location; he ordered raising as much dust as possible in the process. In addition, with the onset of darkness each soldier had to put out his individual fire. Having accomplished his plan, Ormon Khan managed to give his enemy the false impression that reinforcements had marched through the mountain passes and so now they had a significant military advantage.

Kazakh military leaders were dismayed and confused by such a turn of events. In a fierce battle, the Kyrgyz were able to push the enemy to Kara-Suu, a quagmire near Mykan where many of the Kazakh soldiers involved met their doom. The Kazakh leaders Kenensary and Noruzbai were captured and killed. Thirty two Kazakh sultans died in this battle.

The Russian government was satisfied with getting rid of Kenensary, who was a serious threat in the region, and even generously rewarded those Kyrgyz leaders who participated in the defeat of the Kenensary’s troops. Ormon Khan and Jantay were awarded with gold medals and gold embroidered robes. Gold medals were also given to thirteen soldiers, including Dayyrbek (from the clan of Tynai), as well as Kalcha and Aksakal (from the clan of Jarban).

Six months after the end of the war, on August 22, 1847, the Kyrgyz and Kazakhs signed a peace treaty with the Russians in Kopal (now Taldy-Korgon). The “Treaty of Friendship between the Kazakhs of Senior Juz and Kyrgyz, 1847” reads:
A) “August 22, 1847, we, biys, attached below tamgas of Kyrgyz people, sent by the proxy of our nation to the border chief, Major-General Wisniewski, and give these things under the condition that:
1st. We, together with Kyrgyz (ie, Kazakh - auth.) of the Great and Middle Hordes, as subjects of the Russian Emperor, pledge to live in peace, not to do barants (cattle theft - auth.), robbery, and murder; mutually meet minor critiques arising between us according to the resolve of our steppe law;
2nd. Not to make any harassment to caravans and traders passing through our nomadic camps but rather protect and provide them with possible benefits.
We pledge to comply with this condition sacredly and not to break it, and in case of default, we expose ourselves to the retribution of God’s wrath.
The original seals were put by: Umetaaly Urmanov, Jantay Atekin,
Tamgas: Jalantush (probably a slip, rather Jangarach - auth.), Ishozhin and Toktor Karachunurov.
Right: Secretary Ivan Yatsenko.
B) August 22, 1847, we, sultans and biys of the Great Horde, attach below our seals and tamgas in the presence of the Border Chief of the Siberian Kyrgyz, Major General Vishnevsky with manaps, and the honorable Kyrgyz people and have concluded the following conditions between us:
1st. We pledge to live in peace with the Kyrgyz people, not to do barants, looting and murder; to mutually consider different claims between us according to the resolve of our steppe laws.
2nd. If we violate our mutual peace with baranta (cattle theft - auth.), looting, or murder, we subject ourselves to the wrath of God and the penalty of Russian law.
The cruelties of war led to the realization for the urgent need of peaceful coexistence and practical efforts to achieve it. As a result, peaceful and friendly relations between the two nations continued unabated until the 19th century and establishment of the Soviet Union. Several Kyrgyz leaders, such as Shabdan-Baatyr, Sooronbai uulu Dur (of Sarybagysh) Baytik-Baatyr, Boshkoi uulu Ozubek (of Solto), the leader of the Talas Kushchu clan, Kyrgyz Bolokbay-biy, and the ruler of the Bagysh clan, Shatman Bolush Sartbiy uul played an important role in the keeping of the peace. For example, the diplomatic efforts of Bolokbay-biy solved the Kyrgyz-Kazakh border problem peacefully, returning Kyrgyz the land that was previously occupied by Kazakhs.

In the 1750s, after the defeat of the Jungar Khanate, Chinese rulers of the Qin Dynasty initiated plans to conquer eastern Turkestan and its peoples (Kyrgyz, Kazakhs, Uzbeks, and Uighurs). The Kyrgyz tribes of the Kipchak, Jaman Teit, and Cherik inhabited the northwestern part of Kashgar. Meanwhile the Adigine, Teits, Sayak, Cherik, and Monoldor tribes lived in the neighboring regions of eastern Turkestan—Alai, Alaykuu, Ak-Tala, At-Bashy, and Naryn. These tribes and peoples maintained close relationships and had unbreakable economic and political ties.

The first anti-Chinese movement was a revolt led by Zia-ad-Din in 1814-1816. The Kyrgyz of eastern Turkestan were actively involved in this uprising along with the Uighurs. Turdumambet, biy of the Kypchak tribe, led the Kyrgyz troop. Other participants included the Jaman Teit and Chon Bagysh tribe. Well trained and well-armed, the Chinese Army outnumbered these forces and had little trouble suppressing the revolt; the leaders of the opposition were quickly put to death.

A new spirit of insurrection against the hegemonic aspirations of the Qin Dynasty erupted in Eastern Turkestan during the first half of the 19th century. Janger Kojo, one of the descendants of the Kashgar Dynasty, headed the struggle and was supported by Kyrgyz biys Jangarach, Tailak, Atake-Baatyr, relatives of Kypchak Turdumambet, the leader of the Chon Bagysh Suranchy, and others. The Monoldor tribe, headed by Mamatkul, soon joined the rebels. A squad of Suranchy-biy was especially famous for its courage in 1820. Although Janger Kojo was eventually defeated, the fighting continues until 1828. His resistance
was common for this era in relations with the Chinese – similar uprising would continue until 1840.

The establishment of Kyrgyz-Russians relations goes back to the second half of the 18th century. In Russia, the first real knowledge about the Kyrgyz, including a schematic map of Issyk-Kul, was a consequence of the work of Ivan Unkovsky (1722-1724), the ambassador of Peter I. In 1749, P. Rychkov collected information about the Kyrgyz from traders who had visited the region. Both the ambassador and merchants described the Kyrgyz as courageous in their relentless fight against the Jungar invaders. F. Efremov, a traveler who visited the Alay-Fergana region in 1780 and wandered about the steppes of Central Asia for some ten years published memoirs describing his travels when he returned to St. Petersburg in 1786. During his time in Central Asia, he dedicated himself to studying the language and customs of the local population. The first Kyrgyz attempts at establishing political relations with the Russian Empire occurred by the initiatives of Tynai-iy uulu Attake Baatyr of the Chu Valley.

**Kyrgyzstan during the Rule of the Kokand (Qoqon) Khanate**

In 1709, Shahrukh-biy, one of the descendants of the legendary Babur (who died in 1721), supported by powerful landowners, was proclaimed the governor of the central part of Ferghana Valley (with its center in Kokand City). Thus, Shahrukh-biy became the founder of the Khanate of Qoqon (Kokand).

A cursory reading of the historical sources suggests that Shahrukh-biy came to power as a consequence of substantial assistance from Kyrgyz chieftains. The ruler of Khujand was Akboto-biy, Kuljigach-biy, Koshkor-biy, a native Kyrgyz and the son-in-law of Shahrukh. According to the traditions of the nomads, only someone equal in status and position could marry a noble and sovereign person; therefore, Akboto-byi played an important role in Shahrukh’s ascension to the throne.
From the beginning of the 16th century, the Qoqon Khans were referred to as hereditary biys of the Ming tribe (“a thousand tribes”). In Soviet sources, they were seen as biys of Uzbek nomadic origin. In fact, the heads of the Qoqon Khanate, from 1709 to 1803, were paternal descendants of Tamerlane and maternal descendants of the Ming tribe.

The nearly two-hundred-year-old history (1709-1876) of the Kokand Khanate can be divided into three eras:

1) The formation of the Kokand government (1709-1800). During this period, the administrative and political systems were formed, and social and economic foundations of the state were strengthened. Definitive unification and consolidation of separate sovereign territories of the Ferghana valley, culminating in the Kokhand government, took place during this period.

2) The development and flourishing of the Kokand Khanate (1800-1840). This stage is characterized by further development and strengthening of the political-administrative system of the state and domestic and foreign policy. Economic status was strengthened and ownership boundaries of the Kokand Khanate expanded.

3) The socio-political crisis and the fall of the Kokand Khanate (1842-1876). Contradictions between social groups, feudal strife, weakening of state control, and strengthening of feudal oppression led to political crisis and the rise of a national movement. Popular uprisings from 1873 to 1876 and the eventual collapse of the Kokand government created favorable conditions for the Russian colonization of the Ferghana Valley.

From 1741 to 1750, the Kalmaks repeatedly invaded the territory of the Khanate. A real threat of external aggression forced the rulers of Kokand to seek support and thus, the Kokand-Kyrgyz Union was created. With the support of the Kyrgyz and Qypchaqs, Kokand biy Abdukarim...
and the ruler of Oro-Tube (present-day Tajikistan), Fazil-biy, ousted the Kalmaks from the Ferghana. Particularly intense fighting occurred in Aqsy when Kyrgyz soldiers of the Kuttuk Seyit tribe resisted the Kokand.

The final liberation of Ferghana from the Bukhara Khanate was directly related to the activities of Irdan-biy (1751-1770). In 1754, the Emir of Bukhara, Mohammed Rahim, together with the ruler of Kokand, Irdana-biy, and the head of the Kyrgyz tribe of Kushchu, Kubat-biy, organized a joint campaign against Oro-Tube. Hissarbek Mohammed Eminbay (Madamin), however, managed to split this alliance before they were able to realize their ambitions.

One of the most respected leaders of the Kyrgyz tribes of the second half of the 18th century was Kubat-biy. After the end of relations with Irdana-biy, Kubat-biy, who owned vast territories in the vicinity of Andijan, participated in political intrigues in Kashgar, siding with Khojas from Ak-Too (east Tenir-Too). He was a wise politician who enjoyed the great respect of his countrymen, as well as nearby Kyrgyz tribes. Kubat-biy showed considerable concern for the Kyrgyz tribes that inhabited the areas of Andijan and Aqsy. In an effort to improve the life of the Kyrgyz people and ensure their independence, he ran an independent policy which did not allow the rulers of Kokand, Bukhara, and Kashgar to interfere in his affairs or manipulate his decisions. In recognition of his authority, independence of thought, and courage, the rulers of neighboring lands respectfully called him “Bahadur biy.”

Another prominent leader of the Kyrgyz, who led the struggle against oppression and the claims of the Kokand Khanate in the second half of the 18th century, was Ajy-biy, the head of the Kyrgyz tribe of Adigine. According to Chinese geographers in the 18th century, two hundred thousand Kyrgyz people inhabited the vast territories to the east of Bukhara—the Alay and Osh regions. The same regions were subjugated by Ajy-biy.
In 1758, Irdana-biy built a formal alliance with Ajy-biy. In 1759, when the Chinese (who were attempting to capture Kashgarian rebels) invaded the eastern foothills of the Ferghana, they were rebuffed by the combined forces of the Kyrgyz and Kokand people; only two thousand out of the original nine thousand Chinese soldiers survived.

According to Chinese geographers, in 1760 the Valley of Ferghana was divided into the following independent vilayes (an independent administrative region): Andijan, Margelan, Namangan, and Kokand. In Oro- Tube and Khujand, power periodically changed hands; both the Bukhara emirs and Kokand khans ruled there for some time. Diplomatic relations were established between China and Kokand after the Qing Empire conquered eastern Turkestan in 1755-1758.

The economic situation of the Ferghana Valley noticeably improved during the reign of Irdana-biy, a result of the ordering of a system of taxes and duties. In 1760, Kokand became a major center, serving as the home for more than twenty thousand families, as well as four madrasas and a caravanserai.

As a result of successful military campaigns and aggressive foreign policies of Irdana-biy, the Kokand Khanate expanded significantly in the 1860s. At the same time, the territorial possessions of the Kyrgyz strengthened. The ruler of Kokand broke relations with his former Kyrgyz allies and started military campaigns aimed at seizing their lands.

In 1760, citing accusations directed against the leader of the Kyrgyz-Qypchaqs Aman-biy, the Kokand ruler Irdana-biy captured and held Aman-biy in captivity. Despite the superiority of the enemy’s forces, the brother of Aman-biy, Emir-biy, repeatedly went into battle against Kokand in hopes of freeing Aman-biy.

Each year the relationships between the Kyrgyz and Kokand worsened. In 1762, the ruler of the Sarybagysh tribe, Mamatkul, asked his tribesmen, Cherikchi and Temirjan, to unite against Kokand, but his plans were never realized. The same year, Irdana-biy organized raids on the Kyrgyz cities of Osh and Uzgen. Ajy-biy led the Adigine and Monol clans of the Ichkilik tribe in a stubborn resistance movement against Kokand but their efforts were in vain. After several defeats, he retreated into the mountains, having suffering great losses. The people of Kokand returned, the Kyrgyz were defeated, and Ajy-biy was captured (Later, however, he would manage to escape, returning to Osh.)
To capture other Kyrgyz lands, the Kokand rulers often used trickery, giving local Kyrgyz honorary positions and court titles, granting tax concessions, and promising them good pasture land. Some Kyrgyz tribes were bought off with such gifts and voluntarily joined the Kokand Khanate.

Most of the southern regions of Kyrgyzstan, however, were conquered by force. Those Kyrgyz clans who did not want to accept Kokand protection, but did not have the means to resist the invaders, moved to the northern part of the country. The Sarybagysh tribe moved from Andijan to the Chu Valley in the 1760s and 1770s.

By the 1780s, the Kokand Khanate controlled most of the Ferghana Kyrgyz and the Kyrgyz tribes who inhabited the right bank of the Chyrchyk River. Those who resided in the foothills of Fergana and Alay remained independent. Only at the end of the 18th century was the Kokand Khanate able to conquer them. Once Osh was occupied, Kyrgyz lands were assigned to the Andijan province. Later, Osh was transformed into an independent vilayet.

During the reign of Narboto-biy (1770-1800) and Alim Khan (1800-1809), the Kokand Khanate made several attempts to capture the Ketmen-Tube Valley. At first, such attempts were largely unsuccessful because of the desperate resistance of the local populations. In the winter of 1821, during a particularly difficult time for the nomads, Omor Khan sent his army, headed by a well-known ruler of Namangan Seyitkulbek, to Ketmen-Tube. Seyitkulbek had participated in several campaigns against the Kyrgyz people and, therefore, knew how to defeat the nomads. Victory was both sudden and decisive.

The internecine strife of the Kyrgyz feudal lords and lack of unity among the tribes contributed to their downfall. The Kokands skillfully pitted Kyrgyz lords against each other, using all the means available to them. At the beginning of the fall of 1821, Omor Khan persuaded Beknazar-Biy, the head of the Kuttuk-Seyit Kyrgyz clan, and the governor of a Kokand city, to wage war against the Sarybagysh nomads residing between Osh and Kashgar.

The Kokand khans played with the ambitions and poor judgments of the Kyrgyz feudal lords and gradually seized Kyrgyz lands, establishing their rule over the local populations. During the first quarter of the 19th century, the capture of southern Kyrgyzstan was largely completed.
The Kokand Khanate began to conquer northern Kyrgyzstan as it raided the villages of the Chui Valley. After the conquest of Tashkent, which took ten years (1799-1809), the Kokands erected the Oluya-Ata Fort (modern-day Taraz in Kazakhstan) in 1822 and prepared to attack the residents of Chu and Talas valleys.

In 1825, a Kokand army led by Lash-ker Kushbegi (Kooshun-begi means “warlord”) invaded the Chu Valley, quickly scattering the local Kyrgyz tribes. After several unsuccessful attempts to resist the invaders, some of the Solto and Sarybagysh chose to recognize the authority of the Khan. Other Sarybagysh, unwilling to submit to the invaders, followed the sons of Atake-biy to Issyk-Kul. Desiring fertile lands, the Kokand conquerors settled in the Chu valley and built the Bishkek Fortress on the Alamudun River the same year their military unit was stationed there.

The Kokands then demanded that the Issyk-Kul Kyrgyz submit to them, but their terms for surrender were soundly rejected. And so, the Kokands organized another military campaign to Issyk-Kul and Naryn in 1831. The army was led by Lashker Kushbegi and travelled to Issyk-Kul via Tashkent, Chymkent, Oluya-Ata, and the Chu valley. The second army led by Hakkula started at Ferghana, passing through the Kogart Pass and then Ak-Tala, At-Bashi, Naryn, Jumgal, and Kochkor, plundering along the way.

The fragmentation of the Kyrgyz people, due in part to intertribal conflict, facilitated the Kokand’s invasion of Tenir-Too. Some leaders, blinded by selfishness and self-indulgence, assisted the Kokands in order to remove certain unwanted relatives in their lives. To consolidate and seize Kyrgyz lands, the Kokands built fortresses with military garrisons on the trade routes of Bishkek, Tokmak, Ak-Suu, Chaldovar, Kara-Balta, Merka, At-Bashi, Kurtka, Toguz Toro, Kochkor, Jumgal, Suusamyr, Ton, Jargylchak, Tamga, Barskoon, and Karakol.
Types of Kokand fortresses on the territory of Kyrgyzstan
In 1825, the **Bishkek Fortress** was built on the ancient trade route linking Central Asia and China, near the intersection of the Vernensk Tract, making it the foundation of the future capital of Kyrgyzstan. Shortly after its construction, bazaars, *caravanserai*, small artisan workshops, and residential quarters were all constructed next to the fortress. The ashes of legendary Kyrgyz leader Bishkek baatyr (a descendant of the famous Joochalysh) were kept in the fortress and a tomb was erected in his memory. Over time, the fortress became synonymous with the name of Bishkek baatyr. Later, after the Chui Valley came under Russian domination, officials called the fortress and settlement around it by the name of Pishpek (the Russian pronunciation of Bishkek).

Year by year, oppression was amplified, new taxes and duties were introduced, their rates constantly rose, and the penalties for nonpayment became stricter. All these hardships gave impetus to justifiable outrage and hatred by the people. Mass demonstrations against the Kokand Khanate began. In the 1830s and 40s, another attempt to liberate the Kyrgyz from under the Kokand Khanate began.

Ruthless plunder and countless Kokand atrocities in 1831 only worsened the situation. The Sayak tribes of Upper Naryn (the Ak-Tala, Toguz Toro, Naryn and At-Bashi) furiously opposed the Kokand Khanate. Sayak warriors had gained extensive experience in the art of organizing military campaigns and weaponry, playing an important role in the liberation of eastern Turkestan against Manchuria and in the campaigns of Janger Kojo in Kashgar.

Tailak and his older brother, Atantay (the leaders of the Sayak in Ak-Talaa) led the revolt against the Kokand Khanate. Their father, of the Choro clan, enjoyed a lot of credibility and respect from the right and the left wings of the Kyrgyz people. There is evidence that in the 18th century he was a prominent commander in the conflicts with China during the reign of Janbolot-biy.

Tailak and his jigits, the military personal guard, were considered to be brave warriors. For example, when a rebellion, headed by Janger Kojo against China in the 1820s was suppressed, he took shelter with Tailak-batyr. A Chinese detachment of four-hundred soldiers under the command of Bayan-Batu, took advantage of Tailak’s absence. Together with his jigits, Tailak pinned down the enemy in the Oynok-Jar canyon in Orto-Syrt (modern-day At-Bashy), decimating Bayan-Batu’s army.
campaigned there. At the time of this feat, Tailak was only twenty-six-years old.

In 1831, a Kokand army some seven hundred strong, commanded by Haq Kula, suddenly invaded the Ak-Tala, defeating the Sayaks and capturing Atantay and Tailak. Liberating themselves, however, they were immediately able to gather a militia and besiege the fortress of Kurtka.

After defeating the Kokands, the warriors of Tailak released all the prisoners languishing in the dungeons of the fortress, returned the cattle taken, and ended the collection of taxes. When the Khan sent five hundred armed Sarbaz led by Arap-baatyr to suppress the uprising, Tailak’s horsemen met them at Jailoo Bychan in Toguz Toro and won. The enemy lost about four hundred soldiers; not expecting fierce resistance proved to be an erroneous mistake. Tailak-Baatyr took Arap captive as he attempted to flee with a group of soldiers and then killed him in a duel with a spear. The place of this famous duel has been preserved in folk memory and is called the “Pass of Arap.”

For a long time Tailak-Baatyr and his soldiers resisted the Kokand Khanate, successfully repelling their attacks. In 1838, however, a Kokand spy entered their headquarters posing as a healer and poisoned Tailak-Baatyr; he was only forty-two years old at the time of his death.

In the 1840s the struggle against the Kokand intensified, covering a larger and larger territory. In 1843, the Kyrgyz of Issyk-Kul expelled the Kokand garrisons in Karakol, Barskoon, and Konur-Olen. A populist resistance movement in Naryn led by Alyke uulu Tabyldy-Baatyr inflicted serious damage to the Kokand invaders there. Headed by Turduke, the At-Bashy Kyrgyz from the Cherik clan refused to pay tribute to the Kokand Bek.
In 1845, the Ferghana and Alai Kyrgyz of Osh opposed the Kokands. This opposition created a serious threat to the Khan’s central command center. A large army, led by the warlord Musulmankul, was sent to Osh to put down the Kyrgyz resistance movement. Outnumbered, but well equipped and experienced, the Kyrgyz liberation army was nonetheless defeated and, consequently, the rebellion brought to an end. Musulmankul settled in Osh and ruthlessly executed anyone for the slightest infraction or disturbance of the peace.

Ormon Khan and Torogeldi-Baatyr played a huge role in the weakening of the Kokand Khanate’s influence in the north of Kyrgyzstan. In 1847, a squad headed by Torogeldi defeated the Kokand Sarbaz in Ashpara (modern-day Chaldovar), who had occupied this territory after the victory of the Kyrgyz over Kenensary.

The struggle of Kyrgyz people against the Kokand Khanate during the first half of the 19th century was of great historical importance as wave after wave of popular acts of civil disobedience weakened the effective authority of the Kokand Khanate over the people. The rule of appointed governors failed to completely subordinate of the Kyrgyz people.

Oppression was motivated by strong local ambition for independence. In the wake of fragmentation, tribal leaders came to appreciate the importance of unification to the survival of the Kyrgyz people.

_Gumbez (cemetery) of Taylak baatyr in Ak-Taala district, Naryn oblast_
Despite the fact that the Kokand Khanate was a unified state, feudal disunity and civil strife were recurring problems for them. In the ongoing struggle for supremacy and power, the bigger clans and feudal lords removed the objectionable khans, replacing them with khans who better served their needs.

Power struggles over the control of Kokand politics became especially strong in the 1840s; the Kyrgyz and Qypchaq feudal lords were the most active participants. In 1842, the Madali-Khan was executed because of a conspiracy and, eventually, Nasrullah, the Emir of Bukhara, captured the Kokand. Three months later, however, the Emir lost the throne and a power struggle ensued. The Kyrgyz and Qypchaq lords decided to enthrone their protégé, Sheraly (1792-1845), who was the stepbrother of Alim Khan by his father. A significant role in Sheraly’s ascension to the throne was played by the Kyrgyz feudal lords, Nuzup minbashy, Narboto manap, Ajybek Datka, and Asperdi-Datka. In 1842, accompanied by a joint committee of Kypchaks, as well as the Talas and Chat-Kal Kyrgyz, Sheraly took power.

At first, Sheraly followed the advice given him by the Kyrgyz and Qypchaq feudal lords. The subsequent withdrawal of Kyrgyz troops from the capital dramatically changed the situation, undermining the influence and position of the Kyrgyz feudal lords. The killing of Minbashy Nuzup, which was organized by the Qypchaq leader Musulmankul (1794-1852) only made matters worse.

The leader of the Qypchaq aristocracy, Musulmankul, remained one of the most influential leaders at the time. In 1844, his well-organized and well-armed troops defeated the forces of the Kokand and took the capital. By the laws of war, Musulmankul received the title of Minbashy and Sheraly Khan became his puppet, dutifully carrying out even his most capricious orders.
In 1845, Uzbek and Kyrgyz leaders replaced Sheraly with Murat, one of the sons of Alim Khan. Having returned to Kokand, an enraged Musulmankul immediately executed Murat, who ruled for only eleven days. He then declared Kudayar, the thirteen-year-old scion of Sheraly, as the new Khan. Musulmankul performed the duties of Atalyk (regent) as ruler of the state.

In order to keep Kudayar Khan under his influence, Musulmankul arranged a marriage between Kudayar and his daughter. The mother of Kudayar Khan, Zharkyn Aiym, a native of the Talas Kyrgyz, maintained warm relations with the Kyrgyz feudal lords. Over time, the dissatisfaction of the young Khan became more evident and problematic. In 1850, Kudayar Khan appealed to the bek of Tashkent, Nurmagambet, to help him overthrow his father-in-law. The bek of Tashkent immediately sent his army to Kokand, but the army of Musulmankul proved too powerful. Tashkent was defeated and Kudayar Khan was captured, although he would ultimately be pardoned for his deeds.

In 1852, Kudayar Khan again tried to unseat Musulmankul. On the 8th of October, Sarbazy khan met the army of Kypchaks which he defeated at the Battle of Bylkyldama. Following the victory, Sarbazy marched through various Qypchaq villages, carrying death and destruction at every turn. Musulmankul was eventually captured near Nangan, in the village of Uychi and brought back to Kokand, where he was executed.

A debilitating war of attrition brought to an end the rule of the Qypchaq feudal lords of the Kokand Khanate. Political power fell to Uzbek dignitaries, although Hanzada (prince) Mala-bek, who enjoyed the support of the Kyrgyz and Qypchaq lords, soon joined in the struggle for power. Having lost the battle against Mala-bek, Kudayar Khan sought the assistance of the Emir of Bukhara as the Kyrgyz-Kypchak coalition declared Mala-Bek their Khan.

In the middle of the 19th century, during the rule of the Kokand Khanate, the Kyrgyz were still living on their ancestral lands. Kyrgyzstan had a population of more than eight hundred thousand people. According to the estimates of V. Radlov, there were eighty thousand yurts spread over the Kyrgyz population. A charac-
In the first half of the 19th century, patriarchal-feudal relations prevailed in Kyrgyzstan. Despite the fact that their society was based on a feudal system of production, the society still maintained traditional patriarchal and tribal ways of life.

The membership of the Kyrgyz in the Kokand Khanate led to the emergence of new forms of land tenure, such as, Ashlyak (public lands) and Mulk (private property). They also had borrowed institutions in place that they borrowed from Islam, including the Vakyp or Waqf (tenured Muslim clergy), madrassas, and mosques. It is important to note, however, that Kyrgyz concepts and practice of land ownership was distinct from the system established in Kokand.

Although the Kokand Khan technically owned the land, it remained in the possession of the indigenous population. Kyrgyz feudal lords, biys, and manaps, supervised the grazing and wintering of cattle.

Land provided the Kyrgyz with their principle means of sustenance. Cattle served the as the principal source of wealth and socio-economic status for both nomadic and semi-nomadic peoples that made up the Kyrgyz economy. Keeping livestock was another form of production which was common amongst nomadic and semi-nomadic peoples.

The issues of land and water resources were much more complicated in southern Kyrgyzstan and the Ferghana than in the northern regions. The Khan’s dignitaries constantly interfered in the use of arable land and pasture. There were times when the Khan simply confiscated the best land from the Kyrgyz people and sold it.

In accordance with established ancient traditions of the nomads, the land was owned by the community, clan, or tribe. However, the distribution of pasture land, control of its use, and regulation of the summer and winter migrations were carried by feudal lords (manaps), who resolved
disputes and claims at meetings, especially concerning the use of pasture land.

It is known that wealthy, influential Kyrgyz manaps, or tribal chiefs had slaves, known as kul (male slave) and kutz (female slave), who were mainly the captives of war. Manaps often used their slaves, along with their cattle, to pay dowry; they also used it as a means of rewarding victors of organized competitions. They also reserved the right to grant their slaves freedom on occasion. The institution of slavery, however, was never a crucial component to the economy of the Kyrgyz people.

“Division into classes: Manaps and their significance. According to status, people are divided into two castes: the lords (Manaps) and the people (Kara-Bukhars). As direct descendants of the ancient forerunner of a Horde, Manaps originally honored the patriarchal law of the father, but gradually this power increased, becoming a despotic “ruler–slave” relationship. Now the power of the Manaps was not limited to their clan: he was the owner of black people and could sell or kill them.... Urman (Ormon-aut.), the manap of the Sarbagysh tribe had gallows on the Kaskalen River and where a thief was hung not cut down for an entire year to instill fear.... The respect of ordinary people for the manap was infinite (although based on a fear): one dare not pass by the yurt of a manap on horseback without maintaining a facial expression of the utmost respect, especially in the presence of the Manap.... Urman was particularly famous for being a aanap ... and his son, Umbet Ali (Umetaly-aut.), who inherited such power over the clan....”

The most basic form of oppression by the Kokand Khanate was exorbitant taxation to be paid by a form of tenant farming. The worst of these taxes was the zeket, a tax on livestock. At first, the Kyrgyz paid the Kokand Khanate one lamb as tunduk zeket (a zeket for a yurt) and one cow as adal zeket (a zeket for a cow)—one for every forty sheep and goats, and horses, but one for every thirty horned cattle, that is, cows or yaks. If the owner had more than forty horses, he had to pay an additional forty coins (the price of a lamb) for each additional head of livestock.
The owner paid one lamb for every five camels. The amount to be paid by the tax, however, frequently changed. Sometimes, the ratio was 1/20, making no distinction for the different types of livestock.

Farmers paid a land tax, too, the *kharaj*; the tax equaled to one tenth of the harvest. Those who were engaged in horticulture paid taxes in cash money. From time to time, each yurt, or family, paid a war tax of one gold coin or three sheep.

In addition to the above mentioned taxes, many other taxes existed. The famous orientalist, A. Kuhn, explained that, during the last years of the Kokand Khanate the taxes left a huge burden on the local population. During the reign of Kudayar Khan, there were more than twenty taxes in all. Akims, or local governors of the Kokand Khanate, were allowed to raise funds for their own “food supplies” and, as a result, they increased tax rates at the expense of the people. These taxes included a percentage of the wood used to heat yurts. Through the *ashar* (collective work), the people were also expected to build the forts, roads, etc., with little or no pecuniary remuneration.

From the earliest years of the Kokand Khanate, feudal lords, as well as generals, ministers of the clergy, and their henchmen, seized the lands and territories suitable for farming in southern Kyrgyz. For example, without any warning, Omor Khan sold Kyrgyz irrigated lands in the Namangan lowlands to Uzbek feudal lords. Driven from their ancestral homeland, thousands of Kyrgyz people were forced to resettle in the arid foothills and begin anew. Such mass deportation and deprivation reduced the Ferghana Kyrgyz to poverty, exacerbating their hatred of the ruling Khan.

Another form of oppression local Kyrgyz suffered was at the hands of Kokand merchants, who bought goods at low prices, only to sell at much higher prices. Having no opportunity to purchase such necessary commodities elsewhere, many (especially those living in the mountain...
areas) were forced to trade their fattened cattle for substandard goods and services. The poor purchased domestic goods on credit, which increased their financial dependence on the biys and beks. To pay off their debts, the poor might sell their children into slavery or as indentured servants to the manaps. Despite the suffering of the Kyrgyz people under his care, the Kudayar Khan spent three hundred thousand rubles a year to support his thirty six wives.

The main occupation of the Kyrgyz was cattle breeding. However, this varied according to historical conditions. During the rule of the Kokand Khanate, feudal warfare was common, which, in turn, made horse breeding an important and lucrative business.

In such a harsh, mountain-steppe environment, the horse was indispensable. Warriors relied on horses in their military campaigns. The horse was a universal form of transportation, essential to overcoming near impassable mountain trails, steppes, and the deserts. They also played an important role in the transportation of goods. Horse meat and mare’s milk were common staples in the nomadic diet. Kyrgyz horses were of the Mongolian breed, famous for their endurance, as well as their tolerance of sudden changes in the weather.

In comparison to horses, camels and sheep were less valuable to the Kyrgyz. The people nevertheless bred such animals. Local breeds of dairy cattle were known for producing poor (if any) milk. Kyrgyz sheep had coarse wool and were accustomed to surviving the harsh winters.

As life in southern Kyrgyz gravitated towards agriculture, horses, cows, goats, and horned cattle occupied a special place on farms. Donkeys and mules became the principal means of transportation and were also used in farming practice. The Kyrgyz of Eastern Pamir, the mountainous regions of Osh, and the central regions of Tenir Too were known to breed yaks.

Each clan roamed the countryside in keeping with the theory of “vertical movement” and thus repeatedly moved from the valley to alpine pastures. During the spring time, cattle were driven from their winter quarters in the valleys to nearby spring pastures—the hills, meadows, and foothills from which the snow had receded. At the same time, the
sheep were left to propagate. To escape the heat and flies, the cattle were gradually driven upwards to high alpine pastures, many of them close to the glaciers. In the cool, mountain air, the cattle tended to gain weight. Going back to ancient times, the Kyrgyz people have known the life-giving powers of the melting water of their mountainous terrain and climate, as well as the medicinal qualities of alpine herbs which can be found in abundance. In late summer, the cattle were then driven to the water meadows and even lower down the mountain ridge to autumn pastures in the foothills at the first sign of cold weather. In late autumn, after gathering the harvest, the cattle-breeders returned from their winter huts with their cattle, who had gained weight and a solid layer of fat which would make them impermeable to the coming winter frost.

In winter, the Kyrgyz tended to feed their livestock with the grass they harvested in canyons and gorges. In the case of a heavy snowfall, they let their horses lead the way and shovel a path through the snow with their hooves, followed by their cattle and sheep. Often, the shepherds purposely caused avalanches to clear away the snow, allowing their sheep to graze.

After long winter, migrations from the winter huts to their spring jai-loo were cause for a particularly festive and a long-awaited holiday. This included special ritual ceremonies. Participants would pack all of their belongings to pack horses. Everyone would dress in their best clothes; atop their luggage they packed carpets, strap sacks, and samovars. Even the horses themselves were decorated with elegant harnesses and carpentry. The heads and necks of their camels were also decorated. Cattle-breeders often traveled different distances and to different regions--tens of miles in some cases, hundreds of miles in other. Wealthy pastoralists lived in summer huts, leaving the job of grazing their cattle to local herdsmen under their control. The poor and middling herdsmen grazed their cattle together. Those without cattle stayed in the valley and engaged in farming.

Of the smaller livestock, the Kyrgyz preferred to breed sheep. In winter, they grazed them on sunny pastures. During severe winters, livestock were kept in fenced paddocks with sheds. At the edge of the paddock was the yurt, which was insulated with bundles of reeds. Poorer pastoralists built round, dirt-floor huts (alachyk) instead of yurts and covered the tops with felted cloth.
To prevent the death of livestock, cattle (showing signs of weakness or illness) were fed the hay collected from the previous autumn. It was mowed with sickles and scythes, gathered, knotted, and then transported to the winter camp by horse and camel. The hay was stored in specially constructed sheds.

Spring was the most critical period in sheep farming because of the birth of lambs. This was a labor-intensive process for all involved; accordingly, relatives and neighbors provided much needed mutual support to ensure that as many of the new-born livestock as possible survived.

During this period of life, sheep grazed at low slopes close to camp. In cold weather, newborn lambs could be taken inside the yurt to get warm. But, as Kyrgyz sheep are used to their harsh climate, most newborn lambs quickly adapted. During the freezing nights, they were placed in holes in the ground; young lambs were typically separated from the rest of the sheep. Only in the morning and evening were they allowed to be with the ewes in order to feed. After ten to fifteen days, they were weened and expected to graze. As May approached, the sheep began to be milked.

After twenty to thirty days, the lambs were castrated. To do this, specifically designed knives (called nashtar in the south) with wooden handles were manufactured by craftsman. The Kyrgyz people living in the vicinity of Issyk-Kul Lake were known to invite experts to castrate their sheep.

Closer to November, the mating of the sheep took place. This was, of course, of great importance to the financial well-being of the cattle-breeder. Thus, in the south, for example, a practice that involved juniper twigs was performed on the sheep to increase the likelihood of breeding.

The sheep were sheared twice a year—in the spring and in the autumn. Special scissors used for this were called zhuushan. Wool that was sheared in the autumn was distinguished from wool sheared in the spring. Wool sheared in the spring was called daaky, and, wool sheared in the autumn was referred to as kuz. The autumn wool was especially valued because of the high-quality felt and yarn that it was used to produce.

A cattle breeding was often dependent on the forces of nature. Harsh, late winters caused massive loss of livestock from starvation (in local
lahguage *djut*). Animal diseases also had negative effects on the numbers of the herd. Traditional methods passed on from nomadic herdsmen generation by generation assisted in the maintenance and care of animals.

Because of the varying landscape in different parts of Kyrgyzstan, agricultural development varied greatly. For example, the Ferghana and Chu Valleys were known as centers of developed agriculture in ancient times. However, after the Mongolian invasion, many of the farming traditions and practices in Kyrgyzstan were lost.

Conventional Russian wisdom held that agriculture in the Chui Valley and Issyk-Kul only began after the resettlement of Russian peasantry to Kyrgyzstan. However, as the archaeological evidence clearly shows, agriculture played an important role in the economy of the Kyrgyz people much earlier. From historical sources it is clear that local farmers of the Fergana Valley and Tenir Too employed a variety of sophisticated irrigation systems in their agricultural endeavors. According to the testimony of modern historians, agriculture was well developed in Chui, Talas, Issyk-Kul, Ketmen-Tyube, and even in alpine At-Bashi.

At its core, Kyrgyzstan was an agricultural society that had much in common with that of neighboring Uzbeks, Tajiks, Uighurs in Xinjiang, and Dungans. Favorable conditions meant that southern agriculture was much more developed. Southern farmers grew cotton, wheat, corn, rice, as well as a variety of fruits and vegetables. Northern farmers mainly grew wheat, barley, and oats.

Irrigation canals, *aryks*, were built in the mountainous areas, as well as in the lowlands. If the course of rivers ran through a rocky ledge or crevice, then the rocky ground beneath was hollowed out. Special spruce trenches, called *noo*, were installed, which then brought water to fields nearby. The main instrument for the construction of irrigation ditches were the ketmen (hoe), balka, (*chukulduk*) (hammer), and the iron shovel. To remove huge boulders in the way of the irrigation ditch, canals were dug out and then the boulders were rolled aside using long wooden levers (known as *keltek*). In places where a lot of water would flow, two trenches were built. These trenches were held together with iron clamps, (*changek*) and were secured at the bottom with props. The construction of irrigation canals was a very delicate operation and thus
supervised by the elders of the clan and craftsmen experienced in canal construction techniques. Before opening the canal, a ceremony was performed; the ceremony sought to summon the protection of earth spirits.

The main instrument of land tillage was a wooden plow with a fixed iron tooth at the tip (called *buurusun* in the south and *omoch* in the north). Archaeological findings indicate that, during the 8th century, this “tooth” was made of juniper and was seasoned with oil. Another common tool of immense value to the farmer was the ketmen, a type of hoe which is used till today.

Sewing was performed by hand. Caps, clothing, leather sacks were used to carry seeds during planting. In some places, people sowed their fields while sitting on a horse. The fields were tilled and harrowed using bundled spruce branches, known as *mala*, or *shak mala*. In the latter part of the 19th century iron, plows and harrows were used.

During harvesting the Kyrgyz used different types of sickles (known as *orok* and *mangel*). Compressed bundles were linked and brought to the threshing-floor with the help of scrapers (*chiyne, Jer oguz*). The Kyrgyz people threshed the grain with the help of animals, including horses, donkeys, and oxen. In the middle of the threshing-floor, a pole with a wooden ring (or flexible rods) was constructed. Several animals were tied to it and driven around on spread sheaves. This was called *temin*. Straw was removed by wooden pitchforks and the rumps winnowed in the wind by means of wide shovels. The Kyrgyz also used a stone roller (*molo tash*) hewed out of stone by hand. Water mills, as well as hand-held stone grinders (*jargylchak*) were also used to grind wheat and other grains. At the end of the harvest, farmers typically offered a sacrifice in honor of the patron of agriculture, Baba Dyikan.

Since ancient times, the Kyrgyz people have been skilled hunters (*mergenchi*). In addition to cattle breeding and farming, hunting was practiced up until the 20th century. Different traps, snares, and flintlock rifles (*myltyk*) were widely used. Trained birds and dogs frequently accompanied hunters. The Kyrgyz often hunted in groups. The most experienced hunter, knowledgeable of the local terrain, usually led the hunt. He would set shooters (*tozot*) for the ambush and manage special beaters (*aydakchyi*). The animals were divided among the participants in the hunting party, but seniority played a role in this process. The one to take the beast down received the head, breastbone, and hide.
Long-term collective hunting involved the groups of ten or more. Such hunts were called salbyryn or salbuurun. Those without guns were the “beaters” (salbyrynoch). If a hunting party was quite small, then there might be “assistant-beaters,” (karasanchy). It was customary to give the karasanchy the leg of the animal, hence the popular saying, “A back part for the beater.”

The Kyrgyz people developed a variety of traditions, rites, and rituals because they believed it affected the success of a hunt. For example, any person meeting a mergen returning from the hunt could ask for a share of the kill (shyralga). To share was a way to elevate one’s status and prestige in the community. It was believed that refusing to share ensured failure on subsequent hunts. It was not uncommon for a hunter to return home with nothing, having shared his entire booty with friends and strangers who he encountered.

Another tradition commonly practiced by hunters is related to the Kyrgyz cult of Kayber-en, the saint patron of all mountain ungulates. They believed that names of the month correspond to the so-called life of animals—Jalgan Kuran (February), Chyn Kuran (March), Bugu (April), Kulja (May), Teke (June). Perhapes, they hunt these specific animals during these months.

In the hunt, the Kyrgyz used a special breed of hound (taigan). Raising such hounds was a complex task. From birth, puppies were kept on a special diet; they were fed raw meat because it was thought to support the development of dexterity, courage, and a strong devotion to the master. The fastest taigans were called jolbors, while the best of these were called kumayik. The Kyrgyz had a myth explaining the origin of the taigan. They believed that taigan were hatched from the egg of a blue gryphon. If they saw a man within three days of
their birth, they would turn into a *kumayik*; if, however, they did not, they became vultures. It should be noted that hounds were not the only animals used in hunting; eagles and falcons, which were trained by educated people, *munushker*, were also highly esteemed.

The nomadic and semi-nomadic way of life of the Kyrgyz people, and the development of cattle-breeding as their principal way of farming, determined the type of handicrafts they created. Domestic handicraft production associated with the care of livestock was most important. Yarn, cloth, felt mats, rugs, and felt to cover the yurt were made from sheep and camel wool. Leather and animal skins were used for clothing, shoes, hats, and kitchen utensils. Craftsmen used different types of wood to manufacture the frame for the yurts, as well as saddles, household utensils, and other homewares. Masters of iron and metal works made tools and weapons; copper, silver, and gold were also used in the manufacture of jewelry and other ornaments.

Although most of the Kyrgyz economy was a subsistence economy, there is some evidence of trade relations among people. Trade in Kyrgyzstan involved a variety of simple exchanges. The mountain tribes usually exchanged livestock for necessary household goods. Traders from Ferghana, Kashgar, and Kuldja brought tea, rice, tobacco, dried fruit, matches, and paper tissue to trade with the local populations. Russian merchants brought with them cloth, calico, leather, and iron goods, which they traded for livestock, leather, felt, wool, fur, and animal hides.
The economic, political and cultural life of Kyrgyz people in the body of Kokhand state can be thus characterized by the two features. First, on one hand, the Kokands imposed the tax policy to Kyrgyz population and military control through the built fortresses in the valleys of present day Kyrgyzstan, but on the other hand, Kyrgyz chiefs led the comparatively independent politics and even some of them were awarded by the administrative ranks of Kokand state.

**Kyrgyz Culture**

The ancient Turkic nomads who lived in Kyrgyzstan left unique monuments, including many stone sculptures depicting the spiritual nature of the country, the stories of foreign invasion, the awareness of their own identity and strength, the role of humanity in history, and the meaning of life.

The meaning of many of these stone sculptures still remains a mystery. Social scientists believe that they are related to burial rituals since they are found near burial mounds in the intermountain valleys and plains. The sculptures were carved from specifically suitable granite, colored gray stone, and limestone. Most often, the stones were oval or flat in shape. In some cases, they were carefully polished, but often the images were carved on an unprepared surface.

Typically, these ancient stone monuments celebrate male characters. Fearsome warriors holding a vessel in one or both hands with a sword or dagger on their belts were common. Some statues depicted only the head of a given figure; statues of women were very rare. Stone statues were a product of the individual craftsman’s imagination. Artists clearly attempted to depict a particular Turkic ethnic type: fused eyebrows, prominent cheekbones, narrow al-
Oskon Osmonov and Cholpon Turdalieva

mond-shaped eyes, and wedge-shaped beard and mustache. Such distinctive details as headwear, clothing, and other items conform to scholarly conceptions of the people of that time. The statues accurately reflect their customs and traditions.

Researchers divide stone sculptures into two main groups: The first group consists of round sculptures with clear contours, body parts, clothing, jewelry, or weapons. The second classification consists of flat sculptures that convey the contours of the head, face, and, sometimes, the entire body. Stone sculptures of the second type are more frequent, but much simpler in shape and design.

Stone monuments first appeared in late 6th to 10th centuries and continued until the 12th century. After the 13th century, such artistry was brought to a halt, due to the spread of Islam in Kyrgyzstan, which forbids the illustration of human beings, animals, and birds. The boundary of the Turkic nomadic tribes can be distinguished by the appearance of these statues—Naryn and Issyk-Kul on one side and Kemin, Chui, and Talas on the other. In addition to Kyrgyzstan, many of these stone sculptures can be found in Altai, Tuva, Khakassia, and Mongolia. Two hundred have been unearthed in China and more than forty in India. Such findings suggest that Turkic-speaking nomadic tribes inhabited all of the above mentioned regions.

The stone sculptures of these nomads are a valuable source for the study of the early medieval history and culture of the region. Such a small number of these monuments have been recovered because many of the ancient graves in Kyrgyzstan have been looted throughout history.

Social scientists have tendered a number of hypotheses regarding the appearance of the stone balbals. Some argue that the statues represent nomads who died. Others believe that the images carved on stones represent their dead enemies. On both sides of the Kultegin (for two kilometers) many of these statues were erected; the number of statues seems to discredit the theory that they were dedicated to vanquished enemies. Consequently, scholars have suggested that ancient Turks carved the silhouettes of their enemies as a gift to the deceased.

The stone balbals of Kyrgyzstan became known to the Russian Scientific Society in the middle of the 19th century. Since then, many studies of these ancient monuments have been conducted by Russian researchers. An increase in land usage for agriculture interfered with
such study, as many statues were dumped into ditches by local farmers. During Soviet rule, some monuments were removed by locals, while others were moved to schools or collections. The preservation and study of these statues is one of the important issues still considered in present-day Kyrgyzstan.

Not many architectural monuments from the Middle Ages remain in Kyrgyzstan. Evidence of religious buildings in the cities (minarets, mosques, and mausoleums) can be found in historical sources, proof of the architectural achievements of the societies that lived during that time.

Endless destructive wars, natural disasters, and general passage of time saw the destruction of such buildings. Burana Tower, the Uzgen architectural complex, the mausoleum of Shah-Fazil, and the Gumbez Manas are among a select few historical monuments and architectural wonders of Kyrgyzstan that continue to attract considerable attention and interest.

The introduction of Islam as the state religion played a significant role in the development of medieval monumental architecture in the region. Buildings and places of worship were widely constructed after Islam came to the regions. The tall towers attached to mosques, or minarets (from which Muslims are called to prayer), often served as the center of architecture in a city.

According to medieval historian Nershahi, minarets were initially built out of adobe and had hardwood floors. Remains of ancient minarets excavated by archaeologists in Central Asia prove that, beginning in the 10th century, they were constructed using stone and fired brick. In contrast to the majority of minarets built in the Middle East, Central Asian minarets were constructed with the iconic spiral staircase located inside the structure.

The Burana Tower and the Uzgen Minaret are considered to be two of the most striking examples of medieval minarets in Kyrgyzstan. The Burana Tower and Uzgen Minaret were built during the reign of the Karakhanid Dynasty (10th to 12th centuries). The construction of the Burana Tower and other structures made of brick seem to have influenced the construction of the Uzgen Minaret. It is clear that the Uzgen Minaret, which appears to have been built after the Bura-
The Burana Tower, suggests a flourishing of architecture during the reign of the Karakhanids.

According to some reports, the height of these minarets was not a distinguishing feature prior to the 10th century. However, both the Burana Tower and the Uzgen Minaret were the exceptions to the rule, towering some forty and forty-five meters respectively. Unfortunately, both minarets were partially destroyed in an earthquake, the upper stories of both now missing. Today, the height of the Burana Tower is about twenty four meters. The Uzgen Minaret stands at about twenty seven meters.

The Burana Tower is a minaret from the 11th century and one of the first religious towers in Central Asia. It is located fifteen kilometers south of modern Tokmok in the ancient fort of Burana. Its name, “Burana,” is apparently a misreading of the Arabic word, “monara” (from which minaret comes). The tower was built entirely of bricks and consists of a podium, octagonal base, and trunk. All these parts stand on a foundation some six meters deep, with a multi-level podium—the first 12.3 meters x 12.3 meters and 1.2 meters high, and the second elevation 9.4 meters x 9.4 meters and 24 centimeters high. On its northern and eastern sides are marble blocks, giving it a ceremonial appearance and sense of solemnity, whereas its southern and western sides are faced with ordinary stones. The masonry from top to bottom is brick, but set on edge in a herringbone design and thus highly ornamental.

Its second story has a lined podium in the center and the base of the tower is inscribed. The base an octagon and each of its faces is framed using brickwork and inscribed arched niches. At one time, each niche was filled with ornamental stonework.

From the base, the minaret tapers upwards. Alternating smooth and textured surfaces give it a a certain delicacy in appearance. On the southern side, at the height of 6.45 meters, is the entrance to the minaret which, at one time, included a stone step. From the entrance to the top of the tower, a spiral staircase must be used, with steps made of baked brick and wooden planks to protect the brick. At a height of fourteen meters is a window.
There are many aspects in the ornamental decoration of the tower which make it similar to the Uzgen minaret. For example, figures of the third protrusion of the tower are similar to the figures of the lower ornamented ledge of the Uzgen minaret. The fragments of ornaments of the second protrusion of Burana resemble the thin relief ledge at the top of the Uzgen minaret. Relief brick ornaments of the Uzgen minaret are mixed with the ornaments made according to masonry technique of figured bricks lying on the same plane. It should be noted, however, that the decor of the Burana tower does not match the level to the décor of the Uzgen minaret.

The Uzgen Tower is part of the Uzgen architectural complex and has captured the attention of scholars worldwide. The minaret, which was built in the 11th century, has been preserved in its original form. Like the Burana Tower, it consists of a square podium 8.7 meters. An octagonal base stands 5.1 meters in height, 6.2 meters wide at the top, and 8.4 meters wide at the bottom. The height of the tower is about 27.5 m.

The Uzgen Tower amazes spectators with its wealth of ornamental patterns and varied artistic techniques and applications. Its base is faced with ornamental stonework and decorated using shallow rectangular niches framed with block and stucco accents. The trunk of the minaret is ornamented with stucco accents that alternate using wide belts of smooth brick.

The entrance is at the southern edge of the base and is designed as an arched lancet doorway. There is a spiral brick staircase from the doorway to the lantern.

In 1923, following an earthquake, a five-meter lantern was added. A major restoration and renovation was undertaken in order to preserve the tower’s original artistic imagery. The reconstruction of the base, for example, used the same type of bricks that were used by medieval artisans.

There are about thirty monuments of sedentary farming culture in Central Tenir Too. Archaeological traces of sedentary settlements can be seen in Suusamyr, the Djumgal, the Kochkor valleys, and
near the Naryn River and its tributaries. The Koshoy Korgon settlement is located some eight kilometers from modern-day At-Bashy. The sheer size of such monumental ruins suggests that it was once an impregnable fortress.

Kyrgyz tradition associates this settlement with the name of Koshoy, the namesake of the mentor and associate of the legendary Baatyr Manas. According to one story, the city of Koshoy is where the legendary Koshoy buried his wealth, whereas another legend holds that he ordered the construction of a fortress to repel the attacks of foreign invaders. In reality, however, the history of the Koshoy Korgon settlement does not corroborate either of these stories.

In 1894, the eminent Russian Orientalist, V. Barthold, researched the settlement in the excavation to At-Bashi Valley. He then compared it to medieval written sources, which enabled him to identify the architecture as that of the ancient capital of Tenir Too and city-fortress of At-Bash.

Similar studies continued during Soviet rule. In 1937, the fort’s remains were studied by the archaeological division of the Kyrgyz State Pedagogical Institute, headed by B.M. Zima. In 1944, the Tien-Shan-Alai archaeological expedition led by A. Bernshtam was the first bona fide historical and topographical study of the settlement. The study provided the first professional renders of a planned settlement. The materials collected in previous archaeological excavations made it possible to accurately date the settlement (to the 8th and 14th centuries), as well as the location and nature of other architectural monuments in Tenir Too. According to A.N. Bernshtam, the Koshoy Korgon served not only as a
trade center in the region. Its principal role was to stand as a fortress and camp for the Turkic Khans. Behind its walls were tents where the people and their cattle took shelter.

Given the historical and archaeological importance of the Ko-shoy-Korgon settlement, the Department of Archeology and Ethnography of the Kyrgyz State University conducted its own study in 1980:

A fortified town Koshoy-Korgon was located in the heart of the At-Bashy Valley on strategically important and convenient trade and embassy pathways used by the Timurids on the way to China and allowed Turkic Khans to keep the trade routes under their control, as well as to collect tribute from the caravans. The Settlement Plan is a rectangle 245 x 250 meters. The height of the preserved walls is 4-8 meters. The walls around the perimeter are reinforced with 60 towers designed to repel the attacks of the enemy: 19 towers on the northern side, 13 on the southern, 17 on the eastern, and 11 on the western. The walls and towers are made of large blocks (creased clay) and long clay bricks. The thickness of the walls at the base is 7-9 meters, while narrowed at the top and reaching a height of 8 meters. In some parts, the walls and towers have visible signs of construction works that have been done at a later time and the remains of thick logs used as building material. Powerful fortification provided a reliable defense of the population during the attacks of their enemies. At a distance of 12 meters, the fortified town was surrounded by a moat which was formed, most likely, after building the walls of the fortress. Each of the four sides of the fortress had its own gate. It is suggested that the first settlement had only one entrance, while others were built later. According to A.N. Bernshtam, entrances on the east and west sides appeared in 1375 when Emir Timur captured the city; at the same time the fortress was strengthened with additional walls on its eastern and western sides. However, the walls have been completely destroyed due to agricultural work in the region.
During the archaeological excavations, the remains of construction works and traces of fire were discovered in the city. Fragments of a pattern painted in blue, red, and yellow were found at the doorways of buildings, as well as on varieties of objects, such as graters, ceramic, stone, and bone spindles (some of them were decorated with different ornaments), and metal objects, such as arrowheads and fragments of knives. Copper plaques used for the decoration of the kurdzhun (a woven shoulder bag) and horse harnesses were of considerable interest as these were typical of Turkic nomadic tribes of the 6th to 10th centuries. Of particular interest was a copper ring with the picture of two ducks looking at each other (because it is the only of its kind to have been discovered on the territory of Kyrgyzstan).

Subsequent research on Koshoy-Korgon confirmed that the artifacts date from the 10th to 12th centuries, the height of the activity at At-Bash. Proof of its existence after the 13th century was not found and perhaps for the following reasons: the name, “city of At-Bashi,” is not found in the histories of the 13th and 14th centuries, but “At-Bash” is frequently mentioned. It can be assumed that, like many ancient cities of the Middle Ages, it was deserted after the invasion of the Tatar-Mongolians. Further studies of Koshoy-Korgon may open new and unexplored pages in the history of this ancient settlement.

The Fortress of Shirdakbek is an architectural monument from the 10th to 12th centuries. It was built on the banks of the Alabuga River in the southern part of the Cholok-Kaiyn village in the Ak-Tala district. The fortress had a rectangular shape and was oriented according to the cardinal points of the compass—north, east, west, and south. Its southern walls were one hundred seventeen meters long and were built of clay blocks (of which only six meters remain). Powerful towers reinforced the walls at the corners of the fortress. At each corner there were arrow slits built in for archers. Entrance porches were built in the towers on the southern and western sides. The fortress was surrounded by a moat which was twenty meters from the castle.
The Shah-Fazil Mausoleum is one of the most remarkable monuments in Central Asia. The complex dates back to the 11th-14th centuries and is located at the ancient Muslim cemetery in Gulistan Village (the medieval town of Safed-Bulan), fifteen kilometers from Ala-Buka. The monument has a dome design and its base is square in shape. The walls and dome are constructed out of brick tile. The walls are about 165 centimeters thick and 15.37 meters high. The mausoleum had a small door on the west side, three doors on the north side, and contains no windows. Based on Central Asian studies of the architecture, the Shah-Fazil Mausoleum seems to conform to a typical pattern. It contains a central opening and lancet arch. The dome itself is divided into two parts, with a skylight and an arched fenestration.

The unusual décor of the building and interior of the mausoleum is impressive. The variety, elegance of drawing and composition are done with an optimal sense of location and impeccable attention to workmanship, making the mausoleum one of the architectural treasures of Central Asia. Many inscriptions in Arabic and Farsi are added to the elaborate beauty of the interior. For centuries, the Shah-Fazil Mausoleum has been wonderfully maintained; as a result, it has not lost much of its original beauty and magnificence.

The Tash Rabat Caravanserai stands out among the architectural monuments discussed thus far, mainly because it is located far from other developed centers of medieval Central Asia. It is the largest architectural stone building of the 15th century in Central Asia and is distinguished with complex architectural buildings. It was first mentioned in the second half of the 16th century by Islamic historian Mohammed Haidar in his book, *History of Rashid Khan*. Haidar compared the Tash Rabat with similar monuments in Kashmir and believed that it was built by Mughal Khan Mohammad who ruled from 1408 to 1416. The exact location of the monument was not provided in his work.

In 1859, when coming back from Kashgar, the Kazakh scholar, Ch. Valikhanov, visited the monument and wrote the following: “The con-
struction was built from flat slabs of stone-slate, 12 yards in length and 7 yards wide. A long corridor extends to the central domed hall (a radius of 5 yards). From the hallway, a low narrow door led to small square and rectangular rooms. Construction was once plastered inside and outside as well.”¹¹⁰ In addition, he noted that Arabic inscriptions could be found on the walls of the inner rooms. According to local residents, there were about forty rooms and the building served as a place of worship and sacrifice.

In 1867, a prominent Russian scholar Nikolai Severtsev also visited Tash-Rabat. That same year, a Russian architectural historian F. Osten Sacken took up the task of sketching and measuring the structure. He also wrote about the lay-out and the materials used in the monument’s construction.

In 1878, the caravanserai was studied by A. Fetisov. After his study, he published an article in which he argued that Tash-Rabat was a free “road hotel” for passing caravans and travelers. He also noted the similarity of the monument to rabats located along the Shymkent-Tashkent road.

In 1886, Dr. N.L. Zealand examined Tash-Rabat and made sketches which were later donated to the Society of Turkestan Department of Archaeology in Tashkent. Contrary to earlier studies of the site, Zeland assumed that Tash-Rabat was probably not a caravanserai, but a religious cult temple.

The prominent Russian Orientalist V.V. Barthold, who visited the valley of At-Bashi in 1894, was greatly interested in the monument. Although he had not seen it, there were two pictures of Tash-Rabat in his “Report on a Trip to Central Asia with a Scientific Purpose” which was published in 1897. In his “Sketches of Semirechye,” Barthold agreed with Haidar that Mohammed Khan, an ardent missionary of Islam, built Tash-Rabat in 1416.

The connoisseur of the Oriental architecture, N.N. Pantusov, also conducted extensive studies of his own on the monument. In 1902, he published a detailed description of Tash-Rabat, along with drawings, in sections, and the general form of its architecture. According to Pantusov, Tash-Rabat was a monastery where the destitute might find shelter.

Studies of the monument were also conducted during Soviet times. In 1937, for example, an expedition led by B.M. Zima investigated the ancient monuments of Tenir Too, including Tash-Rabat.
In 1944, the Tien-Shan-Alai archaeological expedition led by A. Bernshtam studied the monument. This resulted in the publication of an entire chapter on the subject in the 1950 book, *Archaeological Sites in Kyrgyzstan*. According to Bernshtam, Tash-Rabat was a *caravanserai* and its architectural features were influenced by the culture of the nomads themselves. “Looking at the dome of Tash-Rabat,” he wrote, “you imagine a camp with a richly furnished yurt in the middle of it and nomads who have turned into stone idols.”

In 1952, an article published by P.A. Pugachenkova on the same topic (which is now considered one of the most in-depth and unique studies in the field), also concluded that Tash-Rabat was a *caravanserai*. The work argues that it was had a mosque erected in the 1420s and 30s. B.N. Zasypkin devoted an entire chapter to Tash-Rabat in his book, *Monuments of Kyrgyzstan* (1955), contending that Tash-Rabat was a 15th century *caravanserai*.

In hopes of reconstructing this Central Asian architectural wonder, the Ministry of Culture of the Kyrgyz Soviet Socialist Republic carried out an extensive architectural and archaeological study from 1978 to 1980. Their conclusion can be found below:

“The Fortress-caravanserai Tash-Rabat (11th to 14th centuries) is located 70 km from the historic fortress of Koshoy Korgon (the medieval town of At-Bash) in the picturesque canyon of Kara-Koyun on the Tash Rabat River at 3,000 meters above sea level. Tash Rabat is a square, 34.8 x 32.4 meters. It was built on an artificial platform cleared out of a hillside. The main facade of this fortress is effectively separated and oriented to the east; its walls are flanked at the corners with minaret-shaped columns with an entrance,
which acted as a monumental portal with two rectangular pillars and arched niche in the center. There is a long hallway that runs from the main entrance to the central hall, with the places to congregate on both sides: on the right side of the corridor, two doors lead to these premises with three doors on the left side. The central corridor ends with an arched opening leading into the main hall. The latter, being the center of the entire complex and around which a group of buildings is assembled, is square in shape. Its northern wall is 9.32 meters and its southern wall is 8.95 meters, containing three niches. The southern and northern niches are blind, whereas the western niche has two openings that lead to another room. The hall is covered with a giant dome that rests on an octagon. In ancient times, apparently, the dome had a skylight. In addition, windows were oriented to the cardinal points and used to light the dome. In total, there are thirty-one rooms (along with the niches in the central hall). The rooms are dome shaped and plastered. Skylights were the chief source of light for the domed rooms and corridors. Deep pits filled with clay were found under the central hall in rooms №23 and 27”.

Despite the small number of such monuments in Kyrgyzstan, their importance to understanding and the study of Kyrgyz history is immense. They evidently show, the richness and talent of masters and builders of that period.

Nomadic and patriarchal tribal life left an indelible mark on the material culture of the Kyrgyz people. Their lives, including housing, utensils, clothes, food, and guns, were consequence of their nomadic lifestyle. The necessities that came with a life of migration and season farming influenced many decisions of their lives.

Many archaeological studies of southern Siberia, Altai, Tenir Too, Semirechye, and the Pamirs confirm that the Kyrgyz people were the direct successors of the nomadic traditions of the Saks, Usuns, Huns, and Mongolians. Similarities between the transportable yurts of the Usuns
and Kyrgyz are striking. The closeness between the ancient Turks depicted in ancient stone monuments to the samples of clothing and footwear found in the burial mounds of the Kenkol also suggests a close ethnic tie of the Kyrgyz people with other nations of this region.

Kyrgyz yurts

The Kyrgyz lived in both portable and stationary dwellings. The main dwelling of the nomadic and semi-nomadic Kyrgyz was the portable yurt. The Kyrgyz yurt was meant to be quickly and easily disassembled, in order to suit the needs of a migratory society. The wooden structure of the yurt, its felt mat, and other necessary parts fit easily on the backs of horses, camels, or yaks.

Yurts were made of wood and felt and were circular in shape. The skeletons of yurts were made of wicker grown especially for this purpose. The wooden frame of the yurt consisted of folding lattice walls, kerege, and was designed with circular shape.

A small yurt contained five or six walls; for a larger yurt, the number was eight to twelve kerege, which were tied together at each end. Poles (which were two to three meters in length and two to five centimeters wide) were connected with rawhide leather straps of one centimeter which then passed through a special hole. The doorframe (bosogo) was made from several components and designed to support double doors. The diameter of a middle yurt was five meters and three to three-and-a-half meters in height. A massive wooden hoop known as the tyunduk served as the chimney, as well as the principal source of light for the yurt.
Once the kerege and tyunduk were secured, wooden poles (called uuk) (200-350 centimeters long and three centimeters in diameter) supported the tyunduk. The uuk were attached to the lattice of the kerege, thus forming a dome. Outside, the lattice undercarriage was covered with mats and a special felt coating. The dome of was covered with several layers of the same felt matting. At night, or during rain or snow, the tyunduk was covered with felt matting. Although the Kyrgyz yurt is similar in construction to that of Kazakhs and other Central Asian nomads, the design and decoration, with fur curtains, woven carpets, and rugs, make them unique.

Various home accessories, bags, a kurjun for clothes, could be hung on the lattice work of the kerege. In the middle of the yurt was a fireplace, kolomto, for heating, cooking, and lighting.

Functionally, yurts were divided into several parts. The right side is a female quarters, epchi jak. Here the dishes were kept and the food was prepared. The left side, er jak, was intended for the men and stored all kinds of weapons, the supplies for the cattle and for hunting, as well as the harnesses for horses. Self-made oil lamps from ceramic or metal, with a wick made of cotton, were used to illuminate the yurt. Kerosene
lamps appeared in Kyrgyzstan only at the beginning of the 20th century.

Opposite the entrance to the yurt was the töyr, the place reserved for honorable guests. Rugs, blankets, pillows, and baggage with clothing were laid neatly on chests, benches, and stones. The töyr also served to showcase anything that might indicate wealth. Exterior and interior decoration of yurts always clearly reflected the social status of the owner. The yurts of feudal lords were notable for their size and rich ornamentation. From the outside, their yurts were girded with several rows of wide braid, woven with various colorful designs and covered in dense white felt. The inside was decorated with lavish carpets, embroideries, furs, woven patterns, and expensive equestrian and military accoutrements. The Bais were renowned for having several yurts, which were intended for family members, guests, newlyweds, for cooking, and even a servant quarters.

Size and decor depended on the owner’s social status. Bais and manaps lived in large white yurts, whereas the overwhelming majority of nomads lived with their families in a small yurt. Research has shown that many in Kyrgyz society lived in poverty, either living in yurts or a small hut (alachyk).

The Kyrgyz people settled in tribal communities, known as ayils. For the winter, they lived in sheltered foothill ravines near to water and suitable pasture land. Corrals were made of stone, clay, or braided fencing. Gradually, more permanent housing were erected, forming permanent settlements for inhabitants and their livestock; some of these areas became settlements and villages over time. It is important to note, however, that many inhabitants of such settlements still used yurts throughout certain parts of the year.

A vast array of settlements and dwellings in Kyrgyzstan were a consequence of geographical and historical factors, local traditions, as well as scattered instances of sedentary ways of living. Permanent settlements in the south and southwest appeared in the first half of the 19th century, whereas in other regions they did not appear until the beginning of the 20th century. Feudal nobility erected large estates, with large houses and many outhouses. Servants of the nobility often lived in yurts or earthen huts nearby.

Sedentary life was also increasingly common in mountainous regions during the 19th century. Various tribes constructed housing without any
major planning. Construction of streets, for example, was still rare at this point. In the south, many villages were relocated to the foothills, usually stretched along roads or river banks.

The style and décor of Kyrgyz dwellings from this period show that the Kyrgyz learned the art of house construction from Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Uighurs. The exact level of technology and methods of construction, however, vary by region. In the north, the Kyrgyz built earthen houses using the tamping system known as sokmo. In Issyk-Kul, both earthen buildings and log houses were common. In the south, clay lumps (gualyak) or battered clay (paksa) were the main material used to build dwellings; frame construction was commonly used.

Later, in the 18th century people began to build houses out of mud bricks in all parts of Kyrgyzstan, and used fired bricks when possible. The first residential buildings were small. They consisted of one or two rooms with no basement, dirt floors, and rough plastered walls. The fireplace, just like in yurts, was arranged in the middle of the room with a hole for a chimney in the ceiling. Window openings were small and usually closed with wooden shutters.

Changes in lifestyle led to changes in the style and cut of clothing. Traditional methods of fabrication underwent radical changes, some of them disappearing entirely. Neighboring sedentary peoples, such as the Tatars, Uzbeks, Tajiks, and Kazakhs, influenced the diversity in dress. In those areas where a cattle breeding was the prevailing occupation, clothing tended to be more conservative and was manufactured from homemade materials. Hand-processed skins of domestic and wild animals, felt finely knitted from sheep and camel wool, as well as fabrics produced at home were all commonly used materials. As time passed, of course, imported goods, such as silk, velvet, and broadcloth, were increasingly.

Factory cloth gradually replaced the homemade variety. Poor people wore clothes made of the cheapest fabrics (mat), while rich people bought produced clothing. In remote areas, such clothing was very expensive. A wedding brocaded chapan (robe), for example, was the price of a camel, whereas a silk gown might cost as much as two sheep.

At the beginning of the 19th century, men’s underwear was a swing shirt and trousers, known as dambal. Shirts were made of coarse calico or mat. The sleeves often covered the fingertips. The neckband was turned down or open (if there was a neckband at all).
Men’s trousers were made of different materials, including colored or striped homespun fabric, soft tanned sheepskin, skins of wild animals, handicraft factory fabrics, and coarse cloth. Pants of soft tanned leather, embroidered with silk designs, were called *kandagay shym* and were worn only by the rich on holidays, revels, or during the grand hunt.

Outdoor clothing was very important to the Kyrgyz tribes. The *ton* was a large dressing gown with a big neckband and made of lambskin or fur. The edges of the *ton* were trimmed with black satin, velvet, or lambskin. The ceremonial winter coat, *ichik*, was sewn out of the skins of wolf, lynx, or otter; the exterior was covered with fabric. In the northern and northeastern part of Kyrgyzstan, people wore *kementai* (a kind of outer clothing) made of white or gray felt. White *kementay* was a sign of prosperity; it was velvet trimmed with fringes and patterns. *Chepken* was another example of commonly worn outerwear. It was spacious with long sleeves and a cloak-like neckband, typically worn on top in order to protect cattle breeders, hunters, and hikers from the rain and snow. During the warmer seasons, the Kyrgyz wore *beshmant* (a close fitting coat) made of thick fabric.

Men girdled their outerwear with a belt (*kur*). The ancient traditional belts were later replaced by factory cloth straps or leather belts. From the beginning of the 19th century, the southern Kyrgyz girdled themselves with folded diagonal handkerchiefs just like the Uzbeks and Tajiks. Wealthy Kyrgyz had wide leather belts with silver studs and buckles (*kemer*). The belt was worn with a knife and other accessories.
The Kyrgyz had a large variety of hats. In the 19th century, most men wore the national headdress of white felt, known as *ak kalpak*. During the summer time, or inside the house, older men wore a headdress that resembled a skullcap. In the south, the *topu* skullcap, *tiubeteika*, was so popular that it was mass produced. Different names for the *topu* existed: *margilan*, *kokand*, *andijan*, and *chust*. The most popular headwear of the Kyrgyz was the *tebetey*. The upper part was in the form of wedges and the lower part was made from fox or lambskin. Furs from martens or otters were also used to decorate the *tebetey* to commemorate special occasions.

The most common footwear used Kyrgyz were soft boots made of rawhide or shoes made of animal skins. Shoes with solid soles whipped in the stocks were also commonly worn. Later on, the Kyrgyz were known to buy manufactured shoes. Leather overshoes with heels (*kaiysh kepich*) were often purchased and were made of fine soft leather, (*ichigi* or *maasy*). Ready-made shoes, often boots of red or green color on the heel, were usually bought for women.

Women’s underwear was similar to men’s—a straight dress shirt and trousers. Girls and young women wore dresses of bright colors. According to tradition, dresses had a tunic shape with seams on each side. In the 19th century, girls in the south began wearing dresses with a horizontal slit on the neckband. Later, the basic style of women’s clothing was a dress with a vertical cut on the neckband, which was tied using handmade laces and covered in special velvet embroidery, known as *ongur*. In the second half of the 19th century, dresses had a small neckband fastened with a button in the Tatar style. Over time, northern Kyrgyz women switched to dresses cut through the waist, but with the same neckband. The cut of their outer clothing did not differ from the men’s.

The dress of a Kyrgyz married women was a swing skirt with a wide belt (*beldemchi*). It was specially designed for the nomadic lifestyle; it was comfortable whether sitting in a saddle or working in the house. Usually, it was made from black velvet and then decorated with silk embroidery and lambskin. Of course, the *beldemchi* varied in their cuts, fabrics, and embroidery.

The hats that Kyrgyz women wore were unique, in terms of their originality and complexity. Traditionally, girls wore the *tebetey*, a cap
with a high top. The top of the *tebetey* was made of velvet of different colors; the bottom was decorated with otter fur. The headpiece of the bridesmaid, *shokülo*, was a conical tall hat adorned with silver, coral, and pearl beads with pendant coins that hung on either side of the head. Sometimes the *shokülo* was a helmet.

The main Kyrgyz headdress of a married woman was the *elechek* (*ileki, kelek*) which was a turban. A round hat, called *takyya*, was wrapped with a light white cloth layer by layer. The *elechek* was worn in winter and summer, and even when doing the housework. Over time, the *elechek* was replaced by a handkerchief, which was tied much like the *elechek*. Peculiarities in design varied based on the region in which it originated.

National decorations complemented women’s’ dresses, giving them ethnic character. Earrings, rings, bracelets, and pendants for braids were commonplace. By the end of the 19th century, different coins were used as decoration. They were usually attached to the headgear and braids or sewn onto clothing.

Since ancient times, Kyrgyz applied arts have been highly developed. The processing of animal products, wood, and metals served as the basis for the applied arts. Every member of the family was involved, regardless of age.

The emergence and development of various crafts was due to the practical needs of the nomadic way of life. A significant role was also played by spiritual needs, people’s need for beauty, perfection, aesthetic requirements, and opportunities for improvement and decoration in everyday life. The nomadic way of life naturally gravitated against the development of crafts. Regardless, many items used by the Kyrgyz (including utensils, jewelry, harnesses, yurt decorations, and clothing) exemplified a high level of artistic creativity.

Useful items were usually created in the home and were tailored to the needs of everyday life. In the minds of many people, the applied arts were an integral part of life. Often, the artistry and originality shown in many artifacts were, logistically speaking, impractical. Therefore, Kyrgyz folk art can be seen as more cultural than practical and, perhaps, an expression of the people’s spiritual life. Folk art was connected to poetry and music, evident in the profound relationship between its natural style and high artistic value, as well as its rich imagery and mastery.
The secret to the creation of such artworks was passed down from generation to generation and contributed to continuous development, reaching its height of creativity and perfection in the 19th century.

*Shirdaks*

The main forms that artistic expression took were creations that underscored the spiritual potential and talents of the common people. Centuries of practice gave impetus to a color culture and a set of ornamental graphics. As a result, colorful *shirdaks, ala kiyiz*, various woven goods, pile carpets, embroidery, and ornamented mats were unique in their simplicity and beauty. Predominant colors were red and blue; paints used
for decoration were usually made from plant extracts. Ornamentation found in cultural artifacts testifies to the imagination and creativity of the Kyrgyz people. It should be noted that Kyrgyz artistry shows influence and interaction with the art style of the peoples of Central Asia, Kazakhstan, the Volga, and the Caucasus.

The motives and stylistic patterns of these ornaments were diverse. Their simplicity can be seen in the art made by nomadic people, vividly reflecting the colors of nature, flora, and fauna. They used elements and colors of ancient ornaments which are still used today.

The arts of Kyrgyzstan have always been heavily reliant on the use of wool and felt. As one of the artistic staples of a nomadic, cattle-breeding people, wool and felt were central to the people’s lives. It was used in the production of stackable carpets, national felt rugs (shirdaks and ala kiyiz), various household items, bags for storing and transporting products, housewares, horse equipment, the interior décor of the yurt, and clothing.

The most common type of decoration was ornamented felt with a rolled pattern, the ala kiyiz. Pieces of colored wool were put into a felt base of black, gray, and white. After rolling and tamping the materials, the felt was pressed very tightly in order to imprint a design. Usually, ala kiyiz were made from muted colors.

Another type of felt carpets was the shirdak. It was made using a mosaic technique and cut out from paired pieces of felt of equal size and contrasting colors. The pieces were sewn in such a way that the ornamentation and background were not the same color. In contrast to the ala kiyiz, the shirdak was of two contrasting colors, usually blue and red or white and brown.

Felt ornamentation has been practiced as an art by the Kyrgyz people for a long time. Overtime, new elements were introduced, ultimately improving the creativity expressed in such products. Despite the fact that many Kyrgyz decorative ornaments are similar to that of other Central Asian peoples, a degree of independence and originality can be seen—indicative of a national character.

The most popular type of needlework was embroidery. One of the most distinctive examples of Kyrgyz embroidery is the wall carpet, tush kiyiz. It was rectangular shape and the central was made of velvet or silk, the top and sides framed by a wide border ornately embroidered. The
tush kiyiz was made of woolen or silk threads on woolen cloth, black and cherry velvet, silk, or some other fabric. As a consequence of the skillful hands of Kyrgyz embroiders, saymachi, a number of patterns were developed, including cells (chymyn kanat), wave-like stalks with leaves (kyial), three-toed bird’s footprint (karga tyrmak, zigzag–iyrek), and horn-shaped tendrils and outgrowths (kochkor muyuz/muyuz).

In addition to the decorative tush kiyiz, household goods (sacks, bags, and other household items) were also embroidered. Embroidery occupied an important place in the design of clothing.

The Kyrgyz also made ornamented mats from the stalks of canes. They were laid under the felt carpets to guard against moisture, but also served to insulate the yurts.

Because of their nomadic way of life, the Kyrgyz people also used leather goods in their homes. Dishes, pouches, harnesses, trunks, and chests were all made from leather and were distinguished for their originality and decoration. Different methods were used to decorate leather, such as hot stamping and adding metal components of gold, silver, and copper.

Jewelry and metal handicrafts were also common amongst the Kyrgyz. Folk artisans used various techniques of metalwork, including silver inlay, stamping, forging, and delicate carving. People especially valued ornamentation made of silver. Silver was used for rings, earrings, bracelets, pendants for braids, buttons, and buckles.

In addition to the manipulation of metal for artistic purposes, woodcarving was commonly practiced by the Kyrgyz. Decorative carvings adorned yurts, chests, wooden utensils, musical instruments, and equestrian accessories. Sometimes, carvings were combined with the painting.

Thus, the decorative arts of the Kyrgyz people are an inseparable part of their national culture, reflecting their material and spiritual world, artistic vision, and historical and ethnic ties to other nations.
Upon the arrival of Islam in Central Asia, pre-Islamic religious beliefs coexisted with Islam in the life of the Kyrgyz. Prior to Islam, however, religious consciousness was fairly developed amongst the Kyrgyz. The custom of worshiping animals, totemism, was the earliest form of religious consciousness. Totemic representations were based on an understanding of kinship groups, each tribe having a certain animal totem. Hence, there are traditions and customs of fetishism. Some animal body parts (head, skin, feathers, claws, etc.) were venerated as sacred amulets.

Many Kyrgyz tribes took their namesakes after certain animals. For example, one of the clans of northern Kyrgyzstan was called the “Sary-bagysh” (elk); another was called the “Bugu” (deer). The ancestors of these families have preserved the legends and stories, customs and traditions associated with the worship of beautiful and noble animals. There was a myth that the ancestors of the Kyrgyz people were a combination of the deity and (elk or deer). Some of the better known totems were the golden eagle, the wolf, and the mountain goat.

The Kyrgyz veneration of animals comes from the religious beliefs of Zoroastrianism. According to this ancient belief system, many animals are to be considered sacred. Such animals include the white camel, snow leopard, bear, owl, and snake.

Pre-Islamic beliefs were developed beyond a religious reverence for animals; the Kyrgyz also had developed certain cultic beliefs centered on various forces of nature. One such example was the sky cult of Tenir. In difficult situations, the Kyrgyz asked the spirit of the sky god to support them. In a blessing to the young, the elders would say: “may Tenir bless you.” In addition to deifying the force of the sky, the Kyrgyz placed special importance on

Gumbez (Cemetery) of Manas
the moon, stars, water, and earth. Therefore, making a sacrifice, people asked earth and water for mercy and benevolence. The Kyrgyz revered the mountain peaks, lakes, springs, and trees because, as nomads, they were at the mercy of nature and its unpredictable elements.

They also deified fire and the forces of the hearth, which they associated with the preservation and strengthening of families, understanding, happiness, health, and welfare of children. The Kyrgyz people venerated the ancient Turkic god of Umai-Ene, the patron of the hearth and children. In the *Epos Manas*, Umai-ene helped to father the legendary Manas.

Echoes of Umai-Ene worship can still be heard today. Many mothers, while praying for their children, or putting them to sleep, will say: “Let your sleep be strong! Let the hands of Umai-Ene save you.” Shamanism is still part of the spiritual lives of the Kyrgyz people and often associated with the practice of folk healing. The *bakshi* (healer) and *hyubyu* (female healer) heal the sick. Shamans treated diseases of the nervous system through divination. It was believed that these abilities were inherited. Kyrgyz shamanism resembles shamanism practiced in to that of southern Siberia, not to mention the mystical form of Islam, Sufism.

The ancient beliefs of the Kyrgyz people were closely intertwined with the everyday life of the people and firmly entrenched. In comparison to Islam, such beliefs were firmly linked to tribal custom and a long-developed system of patriarchy. The elemental forces of nature were often a factor in the welfare of livestock and bringing in the harvest, giving rise to various religious and mystical concepts related to mother earth.

A cult of ancestors and spirits developed, particularly in pre-Islamic times, evidenced by numerous archaeological discoveries and ethnographic studies of the folklore. There are many episodes in the *Epic Manas* that talk about how the people, and their heroes, turned to ancestral spirits for assistance in difficult. For example, in one episode, Jakyp, the father of baatyr Manas, learns in a dream that his son will be under the patronage of dead spirits, known as *arbak*.

Traditionally, the Kyrgyz remembered the dead by offering up kind words in their memory on occasion. Cemeteries, individual graves, and Gumbez were always considered sacred; sacrifices were made in memory of the dead. This was due to the belief in an afterlife, as well as confidence that the disembodied spirits of the dead wandered among
them in order to keep watch over the tribes and clans in difficult times. Such beliefs and the worship of the dead were characteristic of a tribal way of life. For example, many folk epics include the following lines: “This sacrifice is devoted to ancestral spirits. May they support us!” Ch. Valikhanov has written extensively on the worship of ancestral spirits among the Kyrgyz people and their belief in an afterlife.

The Kyrgyz cemeteries of the 19th century

Proof of this is the custom of the “Tul” (a clay doll) which is made after one dies. The Tul was worn on the chapan (outerwear) or placed under a hat. According to K.K. Yudakhin, it was also placed next to a grieving widow. This practice, like many beliefs in magic and supernatural forces was common among Turkic peoples, including the Kyrgyz. People often perceive natural phenomena as a consequence of magical forces rather than natural phenomena, attributing them to spiritual forces known as jaychy. In the epic of Er Tabyldy, special magical powers are attributed to the main character who sends snow to the enemy’s camp on a clear day using a magical stone.

Mahmud Kashgar (in the 11th century.) wrote extensively about the supernatural qualities and abilities of the Kyrgyz magic. Historian Rashid al-Din also dedicated a fair amount effort to such studies. In the folklore of most Turkic-speaking tribes, supernatural qualities are attributed to certain animals in constant contact with humans.

In Kyrgyz, Altaic, Yakut, and Khakass legend, animals play an important advisory role. For example, in the Kyrgyz poem, entitled “Kurmanbek,” a horse by the name of Teltoru bestows Baatyr with the gift of great courage and good fortune. Kurmanbek is full of strength and courage until he loses his horse and is seriously injured as a consequence.
Not surprisingly, for nomads who lived in a state of constant warfare, a horse cult makes sense—surely, it is difficult to imagine the life of the Kyrgyz people without a highly developed reverence for the horse.

In the patriarchal-feudal social system of the Kyrgyz, religion played an important role in lives of the Kyrgyz. Islam may have been their official religion, but their religious beliefs was not limited by Islamic norms. The leftovers of the traditional animistic beliefs existed along with Islam.

Islam first came to Kyrgyzstan in the 9th century and quickly spread thereafter. Information about the adoption of the Muslim faith by the Kyrgyz can be found in the writings of such 16th Islamic writers as Tarikh-i Rashidi, Majmoo al-Tawarikh, Dzhalis i Mushtadin, and Ziya al Kulub. The 16th century Ottoman historian, Turk Seyfi, wrote that the Kyrgyz were both “Muslims and kafirs” (unbelievers). Thus, as already mentioned, the Kyrgyz took on the tenets of Islam without sacrificing their previous held notions developed in their pre-Islamic history. It is telling that the 17th century Islamic historian Mahmud ibn Vali contended that “the Kyrgyz accepted Islam only with the advent of the Uzbek.”

In the 17th century, the Jungars forced the Tenir Too Kyrgyz to move to the Ferghana Valley and its surrounding area. This migration helped the rapid spread of Islam. The subsequent fall of the Jungar Khanate was met with a mass exodus by many of these Kyrgyz, who returned to their homes and to many of their native, animistic ways.

The spread of Islam among the Kyrgyz people was simultaneous with the Kokand Khanate’s expansion. The clergy was a powerful vehicle of social control; the feudal lords used the clergy to exploit the people. Their preaching emphasized the virtues of strict obedience to elites. Huge fortresses were erected with mosques to house the new religious authorities and the imams. However, because the mosques were largely placed in sedentary towns, many Kyrgyz (nomads who largely resided in pastures and mountains) did not place special importance on them. Most of the time, the Kyrgyz would only become generally acquainted with the basics of the religion and its rituals.

The influence of Islam was more meaningful in the southern regions and in scattered parts of the Chui Valley. The imams compelled the people to pray and observe the other five pillars of the religion. On
the other hand, *Eshens*, or the practitioners of Sufism in the region, were particularly zealous. They exacted religious taxes on livestock and property, which was collected by their followers known as *murids*. The first to embrace Islam were the *bais, manaps*, and other members of the feudal ruling classes. Conversion by ordinary people was a subsequent trend.

Islamization was a slow and complicated phenomenon. The canons and postulates of Islam were incomprehensible (and therefore inaccessible) to most people. Poor farmers and townspeople alike did not take to the religion’s pious emissaries, often responding with fear and resentment. Tatar missionaries came to Kyrgyzstan around this time with a similar message of Allah and His prophet, Muhammad. But theirs was a more tolerant version of Islam. Because it lacked the zealous or offensive tone of the Arabs, the Tatars were more successful in spreading Islam in the region.

The majority of the Kyrgyz did not take all the commandments of Islam as seriously as the emissaries of the religion had hoped; what developed was a very unorthodox version of Islam in which they only followed certain tenets. The syncretistic nature of Kyrgyz Islam was observed by such 19th century scholars and travelers as M.I. Venyukov, G.E. Grumm-Grzhimailo, N.I. Grodekov, and Ch. Valikhanov.

The Kyrgyz did not observe the customary Five Pillars: the strict profession of faith (*shahada*), prayer (*salah*), fasting (*saum*), almsgiving (*zakat*), and the pilgrimage (*hajj*). Kyrgyz elites were known to pray five times each day, as required, but fasting was rare. During Ramadan, many only observed the fast for a few days, rather than the entire month. Moreover, the pilgrimage was too expensive for any but the wealthiest of the Kyrgyz to perform. Even then, the travel expenses to the Holy City of Mecca was often achieved with the help of donations from common people.

“*The Kyrgyz profess the Muslim religion, or better to say, call themselves Muslims without truly knowing the requirements or essence of its doctrine. All the rituals and beliefs of shamanism still remain, which is justly considered the first religion of Central Asia ... neither imam, nor hodja and other Muslim teachers have been yet among these people.... *Bakhshi*, the shaman priests, have great honor in this horde, and the *manaps* are proud of this title....*”\(^{115}\)
Other provisions of Islam took strong root amongst the Kyrgyz. For example, after Orozo Ait, (a month of fasting), the Kyrgyz commemorated their sacred dead, reciting prayers and lighting candles. They also were known to give alms to the poor. For Kurman Ait, they sacrificed to the gods, asking for health and happiness.

In the development of the philosophical thought of medieval Turkic peoples, and the Kyrgyz people in particular, Mahmud al-Kashgari and Zhusup Balasaghyn (eminent Turkic scholars of the 11th century) played an important role. Mahmud al-Kashgari’s *Dīwānu l-Luġat al-Turk* (Dictionary of Turkic Dialects) is important to the intellectual development of Central Asia. The exact dates of al-Kashgari’s birth and death are not known; it is only known that he lived sometime during the 11th century. He was from Issyk-Kul (Barsgan). But he moved from Barsgan to Kashgar and wrote under the name of Mahmud al-Kashgari. He received an excellent education in Arabic philology at recognized centers of science and culture in Kashgar, Bukhara, Samarkand, Nishapur, and Baghdad. He spoke fluent Arabic and studied the history of the lives of Turkic peoples. He wrote in *Dīwānu l-Luġat al-Turk*:

> While I am descended from Turks, who speak the purest language, who by birth and family occupy the first place ... I proceeded inch by inch ... all villages, steppes of the Turks. I totally imprinted in my mind the alive, rhymed speech of the Turks, Turkmens, Oguz, Chigil, Yagma, and Kyrgyz.... And after such long study and searching, I wrote a book in the most elegant way, in the clearest language.  

His dictionary is a medieval encyclopedia on the lives of Turkic peoples in the fullest sense of the word. According to A.N. Kononov, *Dīwānu l-Luğaṭ al-Turk* is one of the “the only source[s] of information on the life of the Turks in the 11th century.” It is an important source for studying the history of early medieval Turkic peoples.
in Central Asia. Thanks to al-Kashgari, we know about the material culture, the realities of everyday life, ethnonyms and toponyms, tribal divisions, kinship terms, titles and the names of various officials, food and drink, domestic and wild animals, birds, plants, astronomy, the necessities of the folk calendar, names of diseases and of the drugs that cured them, heroes, children’s games, and the variety of amusements which were popular at the time. Al-Kashgari is also a source of information on the social structures of 11th century Turkic peoples, their primary and secondary economic sectors, and the broad cultural achievements of the Turks, but also the Kyrgyz, Kazakhs, Uighurs, Karakalpaks, Turkmens, Uzbeks, and Altai.

Of course, the dictionary itself is hugely important as a primary philological and historical source, documenting the social and philosophical thinking of Turkic peoples generally. The work reveals beliefs surrounding ethical standards of conduct and provides the reader with a comprehensive world view from a contemporary of the 11th century. Studying the vocabulary of medieval Turkic peoples, al-Kashgari’s writing is indicative of the level of thinking at that time.

Some of the ethical principles that al-Kashgari elucidates and defends include work, friendship, and the primacy of reason as the foundation of moral perfection. A significant place in the dictionary is dedicated to the author’s reflections on physical work. In his view, morality is a corollary of environment. Work is a necessary and essential aspect of human existence. The value and meaning of life are inextricably linked to work. People should be evaluated by their practical usefulness rather than social status and wealth. For example, in Dīwānu l-Luğat al-Turk, al-Kashgari explains that “[w]ork is never wasted…[He w]ho is working in the summer eats joy in winter.”

As mentioned, friendship was a concept which is discussed in detail in al-Kashgari’s work. He expresses his belief that friendship is a moral precept of vast importance. Al-Kashgari’s ingenious analysis of medieval Turkic aphorisms suggests that friendship for the author is one of the most trustworthy spiritual qualities a person can possess. It is clear that he finds importance as much as it involves a great deal of personal sympathy and affection for others.

The dignity and nobility of being human, according to al-Kashgari, is to aspire to be virtuous and thus find happiness, or the “good.” He considered spiritual improvement to be a prerequisite to happiness. A
man acquires perfection only with the help of science and an in-depth knowledge of the world. Knowledge empowers a man and makes him kind and reasonable. Stressing the importance of knowledge in becoming a moral person, he writes: “A sign of happiness is knowledge…. My son, take good advice, get dignity and excellence, be a true scientist among the people, spread your knowledge.”

He believed that the basic personal qualities of any man of reason were humanity, generosity, and goodness. He also believed that science must be studied for its own sake and not to satisfy mere desire or personal benefit; he also believed that it could be used to help others. For al-Kashgari, the principle aim of science, and the education of the people, was to instill in one and all such moral virtues as benevolence, generosity, courage, and respect. Thus, it is clear that al-Kashgari was as much a student of Islam as he was a student of Plato, Aristotle, and the Kalam.

**Jusup Balasaghyn Kutadgu Bilig (Beneficial Knowledge)** can also be seen as a watershed in the intellectual history of medieval Central Asia. The historical record is remarkably absent of information about the life of Balasaghyn, the author of one of the greatest Central Asian poems of all time, “Kutadgu Bilig” (Beneficial Knowledge). He is thought to have been born sometime between 1010 and 1018 in the capital of the medieval Karakhanid state of Balasaghyn on the outskirts of modern-day Tokmok. He stood out as highly educated for his times, possessing a profound knowledge of astronomy, mathematics, medicine, literature, history, philosophy, aesthetics, ethics, Arab and Iranian-Tajik poetry, Turkic folklore, and the Persian language.

According to R. Arat, Balasaghyn was fifty four when he produced his famous poem. He worked on it for eighteen months and donated it to Tavgach Buura Karahan Abu Ali Hassan, the ruler of Kshagar. An enlightened man himself, Ali Hassan appreciated its depth and poetic craftsmanship. As a consequence, Balasaghyn was awarded the title of Ulugh Hass-Hajib (a respected man of the court), which was reserved for only the most famous, influential, prized members of the Khan’s royal attaché.

The poem “Beneficial Knowledge” is about the formation of the interrelated nomadic and sedentary modes of life.
During the 10th century, Islam spread not only among the sedentary, but the nomadic populations of the Karakhanid State. As a result, the Arabic language was used and why “Beneficial Knowledge,” by Zhusup Balasaghyn, and the Dictionary of Turkic Dialects, by Mahmud al-Kashgari, are preserved in Arabic transcription.

Currently, there are three preserved copies of Balasaghyn’s’s manuscript. The first is stored in Vienna. The library director of Hidiv City, German scholar B. Morin, discovered a second copy in 1986, in Cairo. Because the manuscript was poorly preserved, V.V. Radloff made a photocopy for the Museum of Asia in the St. Petersburg Academy. This manuscript copy can be found at the Institute of Oriental Studies in the St. Petersburg Branch of Russian Academy of Sciences.

The most complete version of the manuscript is a copy found in Namangan. Initially, it was found by A.Z. Validov in 1913 in the private library of Mohammed Khoja Eshen Lolyarshit. It was lost until 1925, when Uzbek scholar Fitrat managed to locate its whereabouts and published it. In 1928-1929, fragments were published as “Samples of Uzbek Literature” and stored at the Institute of Oriental Studies in the Uzbek Academy of Sciences. The Namangan and Cairo copies are in Arabic and contain all the root words of the modern Kyrgyz and Uyghur languages. They differ only in certain phonetic constructions. The original was written in perfect Turkish. Consequently, it can be argued that the linguistic material is based on the spoken languages of the Turkic tribal associations of Karluk, Chigil, Yagma, Tuhsi, Kyrgyz, and Kipchak, which constituted the Kara-Khanid Khanate.

The poem is written with rhymed couplets, beits, which suggests that the author had knowledge of “Shahnameh” written by Firdausi. The names of the main protagonists of the “Shahnameh”—Anushirvan, Afrasiab, and Rustam—appear in “Beneficial Knowledge” and represent universal virtues such as justice, wisdom, and kindness. Balasaghyzn knew the works of Al-Farabi and Ibn Sina, evident by his philosophical and ethical bent. “Beneficial Knowledge” reflects the personal outlook of a poet-philosopher for whom rationality and a supreme reverence for knowledge was paramount.

“Beneficial Knowledge” is ethical and didactic, which educated themselves and others, tracing its origins to the written and oral traditions of ancient literature of Egypt, India, and Iran, In Europe, this was
synonymous with a literary genre known as the “Mirror” and was adjacent with trends of the Renaissance.

Balasaghyn’s poetry can be seen as a gift to literature, as well as a spiritual, moral, and ethical encyclopedia which reflects the history, culture, and religious views of the society that gave it birth. A.N. Kononov, an expert on “Beneficial Knowledge,” contends that the poem is an epic in which such questions as the meaning of life and social and personal relationships are viewed through a philosophical prism.120

The ethical and moral principles of the author are extremely pronounced, especially when it comes to his discussion of justice, reason, happiness, and humility. In the story, the governor Kuntuudu symbolizes justice, while the vizier Aytoldu represents the forces of happiness. The son of the vizier, Akdilmish, is the living embodiment of reason; on the other hand, the brother of the vizier, Otkurmush (Etkurmush), is analogous with modesty.

Balasagunhi believed in the power of individual improvement and social progress through education. As he saw it, nature had endowed man with reason, but man could not reach a higher level of prosperity without constant acquisition of knowledge, positive character traits, and the skilful use of experience from generation to generations. He believed that enlightenment and wisdom were corollaries of honor and respect. Reason and knowledge, in his understanding, are inextricably linked to dignity, which is beyond the reach of the uninformed man.

One of the main ideas in Balasaghyn’s moral philosophy is the concept of happiness. Like many thinkers, he sees happiness as a morally ideal. Considering such moral quandaries as morality versus immorality, good manners versus bad, he concludes that only the man who is virtuous can be happy.

“Beneficial Knowledge” contains valuable information about the social structures of the time, including the places and roles of various social groups and the nature of their social norms and rules. It discusses a wide range of dialectic concepts, such as
good and evil, truth and lies, greed and generosity, as well as prudence and inconsistency. The author’s ethical views are closely related to epistemological and social concepts. He advocated the idea that the main criterion of good governance was the human nature of those in power.

Balasaghyn reflects on the meaning of life, its essence and purpose, concluding that everyone, regardless of social position, must live a dignified life and strive to bring joy to others. Only in this way, will he be remembered and venerated by his people.

Balasaghyn also considered human beings to be most fragile and yet the greatest of the deity’s creations. In his view, reason and knowledge, and high moral and ethical ideals, are able to change the world. Of course, he understood that everyone was different—the world is a mixture of intelligence and good manners, but also ignorance and a lack of decorum. Both could be seen in the speech of the individual. Intelligent, kind words elevate a speaker, adding to his prestige and fame. Conversely, language that was simply bad, envious, and insincere led inexorably to suffering and grief.

In his work, Balasaghyn discusses the problem of matching words with deeds and the harmony of the internal and external worlds of man. If his words are confirmed by his deeds, such a man deserves respect, praise, and honor. In this vein, he cites the traditional Kyrgyz proverb: “Let me die, but not my word.”

Balasaghun appreciated human qualities as humility and politeness. He stressed that these character traits should be common to all, regardless of a man’s place in the social hierarchy, the degree of his power, status, position, and material wealth, as everything is transient in this world. So, there is nothing better than to be good, for respecting the human dignity of others is the very essence of goodness and happiness; the returns of such behavior, as he argued, are incalculable. By the same token, arrogance, conceit, boastfulness, greed, and envy are character flaws that promise no such rewards.

Balasaghun considered many timeless individual and social issues. His writing was full of unease regarding the fate of society and problems of a ‘modern world.’ As a pious Muslim, it is not surprising that he blamed alcohol for the moral failings of man, impoverishment of moral values in society at large, and often the cause of evil and suffering. As far as a man is clever and educated, alcohol slowly, step-by-step, de-
Oskon Osmonov and Cholpon Turdalieva

stroys him as a rational and moral being. With deep regret, he admits that alcohol does not spare anyone and dooms children and families to a life of poverty. He also condemned the consumption of magical potions as unwise and a threat to individual and social well-being.

Much attention is paid to human behavior in society. One must know and abide by certain standards of conduct and morality. Children must be taught from the childhood to respect their elders, paying attention to their attire and table manners. He observed that reverence for elders dated back through the centuries and should continue be an integral part of day-to-day contact, especially because the older generations were, in his opinion, a brilliant source of practical life experience and knowledge.

Balasaghyn emphasizes the responsibility of parents to bring up their children properly. The home should be built on a foundation of moral values, practical skills, and self-reliance. Having a family should include taking full responsibility for the welfare of those under one’s care. Parents should set an example for their children and demand that rules of conduct be respected at all times.

Work is essential to all of this. Only hard work, in the opinion of Balasaghyn, can lead to happiness, whereas idlers and slackers are to be ashamed. He was convinced that only a creative work ethic will result in an educated and highly moral person.

During its long history, the Kyrgyz can be seen as a high epic culture. The most unique of these creations is the Epic Manas, a monument to the spiritual culture and poetic creativity of the Kyrgyz people. It tells the story of the battle of Kyrgyz people against foreign invaders and celebrates the legendary baatyr, Manas, who united disparate tribes thus smoothing the way for Kyrgyz independence. The epic recounts military campaigns conducted by Manas against the enemy in fine artistic form, underscoring the link between the poetic and heroic in Kyrgyz history. It tells of a relentless struggle, full of courage and heroism that ultimately rescued them from slavery, if not genocide. The Epic Manas also chronicles the millennial histories of various Kyrgyz tribes and clans in both political and military terms.

This national poem has become a kind of encyclopedia of the life of the Kyrgyz people, documenting their economic way of life, traditions, cultural and trade relations, language and customs, as well as their phil-
osophical and religious beliefs. Some of the ethnographical information contained within it includes the geography, medicine, architecture, and astronomy of the Kyrgyz people, as well as such issues as love, welfare, and ethics. All this and more are discussed using a range of literary genre, from the simplest satire and humor to deep psychological analysis. Real life is expressed side by side with fictional themes of fantasy or fairytales.

The *Epic Manas* contains some five-hundred-thousand rhyming lines. Other Central Asian nations also have such large-scale epic and national poems, but they are the works of several peoples. Examples include the *Alpamys* and the poetic heritage of Uzbeks and Turkmens. Kazakhs, Uzbeks; Tajiks consider the *Kor-Uulu’* to be their national epic. The *Epic Manas* lends itself to the Kyrgyz identity and is invaluable to the Kyrgyz national self-understanding.

The original version differs from the one that has been popularized today. Passed by word of mouth from generation to generation, the lyrical virtuosi of the Kyrgyz nation was both preserved and modified over many centuries. As a result, the folk bards (*manaschy*) who maintained the story also added to the story lines, making it more complex with new sets of protagonists and antagonists. A unique fusion, involving many talented *manaschy*, helped to make the *Epic Manas* what it is today, truly an immortal work of Central Asian popular imagination. With their breadth of epic narration, versatility of subjects and resplendence of phrasal forms, the versions of Sagymbai Orozbak Uulu (1867-1930) and Sayakbai Karala Uulu (1894-1971) are considered today as unsurpassed patterns of artistic performance.

The main plot and its characters are all connected to Manas, who embodies the idea of a united and strong Kyrgyzstan. The trilogy begins with the birth of Manas, the grand *baatyr*. It tells of his childhood and youth, how he came to lead the Kyrgyz, and his campaigns against their enemies. It ends with the defeat of Manas, the death of his faithful companions, Almambet, Chubak, Syrgak, and the mighty Kokcho, and the death of the protagonist himself. As Manas lies dying, he instructs his people to cease all tribal strife because it will only weaken
the state and their chances of victory. The ending of the first book in the trilogy leaves the reader with anticipation for a continuation of the story. The birth of Semetey, the son of Manas, and his vow to avenge the death of his father serves as a bridge between the first and the second parts of the trilogy.

The second book tells the story of Semetey, the son of Manas. Semetey follows in his father’s footsteps, performing a number of great military feats as he fights for independence and attempts to defeat his enemies. All of it takes place on the vast steppes of Central Asia during the 16th to 17th centuries, when Jungar invaders swarmed the regions of the Kyrgyz. Again, the hero dies, but this is meant to underscore the original thesis, that internal strife is the enemy (and not the Jungar invaders). Resistance against internal enemies and internal political battles is the central theme of the “Epic Seit Bek.” Semetey embodies the ideal Kyrgyz hero, whereas Manas, in the popular mind, is synonymous with the spirit of independence and the unity of the Kyrgyz people in the face of impossible odds.

The protection and love of country, glorification of heroism in the name of freedom and defense of the Motherland, and human values such as friendship, loyalty, generosity, honesty, and fairness, are threads than run through the Epic Manas. It has also been an invaluable linguistic resource, playing a key role in the preservation of the Kyrgyz language, including its dialects and vocabulary. For centuries, it has led the way in the formation, and reformation, of the Kyrgyz national character, its moral and ethical ideals, and standards of public conduct. For contemporary Kyrgyz society, it is a timeless national shrine, giving impetus to regeneration, unity, and development in the modern and post-modern era.

In terms of its basic structure, the Epic Manas is divided into a series of mini-epics that are either heroic or social in nature. The heroic epics, such as the story of Manas, are historical and focus on the lives of the people concerned, their exploits and their courage on the field of battle. For example, the heroic tales of Kurmanbek, Janysh-Baiysh,
Er-Tabylky, Janyl Myrza, and Er-Eshim are reflections of real people and events. They attempt to comment on the struggle of the Kyrgyz against the aggressions of the Mongolians and Kalmak feudal lords, as well as the deep social contradictions in Kyrgyz society which had weakened the nation.

A certain number of these mini-epics belong to the genre of social and domestic commentary. The main theme is love and the struggle of young men and women to find true love in a feudal society, despite its conservative, patriarchal, and tribal predilections. The stories of Oljobay and Kishimjan, and Sarinji-Bokoy stress the tragic confrontation between man and nature, inevitability of retribution for predation, and the human need for social justice. Many of the poems are presented as mythological fairy tales. Even if they contain elements of fantasy, they document the essential characteristics of life during this period and the worldview of a nomadic and tribal people at an early stage of national self-realization and development.

The philosophic worldviews of the Kyrgyz, in concert with these epic poems, owe a great debt to such legendary thinkers as Asan Kaigy, Tolubai-Synchy, and Sanchy-Synchy. Although their original thinking was changed over time, these historical figures, as well as their ideas and legacies, remain somewhat mythical to this day.

The excerpt from Manas epic about the birth of Manas

...Until Manas reaches the age of twelve,
Until he grows into manhood,
Achieves the stature of a brave man,
And takes a spear in his hand
And thrusts it at someone,
Until he can ride his horse faster than a bullet,
Until he puts his bullet-proof mail on,
Until Manas becomes real Manas,
Until he mounts his horse
And freely travels among the people,
Until he establishes an ordo
Among the noble Kyrgyz people,
Until he reaches the age of twelve,
Don’t tell anyone,
Don’t tell any Kalmyk
That your son’s name is Manas!
If you tell someone boastingly
That your son’s name is Manas,
Manas’ name will be known
And seven years ahead of time
He will surely be inscribed in the record book
of the Kakan.
Your famous son Manas will indeed be he,
On the hearing of whose name
The khan of Beijing became furious
And caused mayhem among the people.”

A great place in Kyrgyz national culture is occupied by its oral and poetic traditions, reflecting its originality, daily life, hopes, and dreams. The artistic life of the Kyrgyz people, in the form of national poems, have been subject to special rules that have been passed down from generation to generation. Such compositions were originally the product of a small group of people. As they passed through centuries of poetic distillation, a select few of these works became folk works in the truest sense of the word – their origins and owners were lost in time and collaboration.

Kyrgyz lyrical songs were divided into several groups. The first group contained songs of the didactic type (kalys or yrlar) which contained sermons or instruction set to music (nasyiat, sanat), as well as a moral and ethical message. The second group included compositions that reflected the events of everyday life (kara yrlar), as well as songs for contests, songs of praise or ridicule, songs about complaints, and labor songs. The final group were ritual songs (salt yrlar) sung for traditional ceremonies, which might include songs about the will, laments, and lullabies.

Labor and domestic songs stand because of their thematic content. They are also the most ancient of the oral hymns. They owe their origin to those times when the people would herd cattle, grind grain, and hunt animals. In these songs, the people expressed their hopes for a good harvest and annual increase in the size of their herds. Nomadic pastoralists, for example, gave us the bekbekey and shyryldan, which are idyllic songs. The bekbekey was performed by shepherdesses, young women who usually guarded the sheep at dusk and night. The singing was accompanied by cries which were intended to scare away predators and
was used to warn each other of danger. These songs document the plight of Kyrgyz women, how they tended their flocks, and how they passed the time without falling asleep. The *shyryldan* was sung by shepherds from distant pastures, travelling to villages for supplies. Many of these ancient Kyrgyz labor songs were influenced by animistic beliefs and practices.

Among the labor songs which are still sung today, the *op-maida*, or the threshing song, is one of the most popular. While chasing their animals, farmers repeat the *op-maida* at regular intervals. It is both a rhymed poem and a shout, which is designed to herd animals.

Musical incantations and spells set to music are based on natural phenomena, living conditions, and a desire to influence persons and events. They were performed prior to battle and the hunt, at the beginning of spring planting, when caring for animals, and in the event of some disaster.

Because the main economic activity of Kyrgyz was cattle breeding, many of these songs were intended to ensure the safety of livestock and prevent disease. For example, they could be used to help a lamb left without a mother to take to a new mother.

Songs accompanied rituals associated with the natural cycles of the seasons. Accordingly, before the spring planting, a sacrifice to the gods was performed to insure a good harvest. During the *Nooruz* (New Year) celebration, special ritual feasts were held. They were known as *asköjö* (in the north) and *sümölök* (in the south). When old people fumigated homes, corrals, and barns with the smoke of the juniper, songs, spells, and rituals were performed in the hopes of continued health and happiness. Thus, song was a part of every sphere of life.

During the long and difficult process of social development, the Kyrgyz people have managed to preserve many of their ceremonial songs. Their hymns are a composition of their troubles, cultures, worldview, social relationships, tribal attitudes, and economics. These ritual songs include the *koshoki* (sung at weddings and funerals), *seketbay, kyuygen* (love songs), *arman*, (songs that offer a chance to complain), *koshtoshuu* (farewell songs), *aitysh* (contest songs), *maktoo/kordoo* (songs of praise and ridicule), *akyi/akyinek* (songs for girls), *joktoo* (another funeral hymnody) and songs that celebrate the seasons, *jaramazan*. 
The koshok is a domestic song that expresses grief, sadness, and the bitterness of parting. They are among the oldest of the Kyrgyz hymnody and recorded in the Orkhon-Yenisey script. Some are funeral laments. Mourners usually performed them. Like akyns, they were improvised and recounted the life of the deceased. Koshoks were performed sitting in a yurt. They were prolonged and expressed deep anguish. As one of the women wailed, the other silently listened. Their cries were intended to be heard by all people nearby. These koshoks often had an important social context and message: they described the social status of the deceased, his or her credibility, and material accomplishments.

Another type of koshok consisted of melancholic lyrics and melodies dedicated to a young woman about to marry. The uncertainties of nomadic life, harsh realities of patriarchal despotism, and the powerlessness of Kyrgyz women not only frightened the bride, but her mother and friends as well. The koshok was a way of giving advice to the young wife-to-be on how to adapt to her new conditions and, most important of all, how best to follow the rules in her new environment.

Jaramazan is a type of oral poetry that arose from Islamic thought. Children, adults, and sometimes akyns sang these ceremonial songs during the fast and usually in the evening. Moving from one house to another, the jaramazan would extend to their neighbors wishes of good health, prosperity, a good harvest, and large progeny of cattle. Their neighbors, in turn, would express their gratitude with gifts.

The aitysh is a very old and popular song contest between akyns. A poetic duel in essence, it was performed on a big stage where Kyrgyz singer-poets demonstrated their expertise in the use of figurative speech, biting satire, wit, and comedy. Improvised aitysh compositions were accompanied by the national instrument, komuz. The aitysh contributed to the growth of a poetic tradition and the musical virtuosity of the competitors, many going on to become well-known akyn, or master improvisers.

The Kyrgyz also have a musical tradition for that time when a dying man gathers his family to express his last wishes, known askerez. Relatives and friends were determined to carry out a man’s dying hopes for his family. The kerez itself was highly social in nature and contained many references to clan or tribe members. It contained the teachings of tribal
leaders and others of notable character. Most of the hymns were poetic and usually performed by well-known akyns. The kerez of Kanykey, Manas, Koketay, Bokmurun Ormon Khan, and Balbai-baatyr occupy a special place in the hearts of the Kyrgyz people. However, kerez were also satirical and humorous as in the case of Togolok Moldo.

In everyday life, the Kyrgyz people had many other songs. Each piece of oral improvisation was a literary masterwork that also served an important social function. It gave impetus to a certainty of purpose and a variety of musical styles, themes, images, and a good deal of poetic license. Historical events, the appearance and disappearance of certain aesthetic notions, customs, and ceremonies can all be connected to the Kyrgyz love of poetry and music.

Kyrgyz music is a priceless art form, which reflects the outlook, culture, history, daily life, aesthetics, and ethnic self-understanding of the Kyrgyz people.

The origins of the Kyrgyz folk music date back to antiquity. The Chinese religious leader and politician, Xuan Zang, visited Kyrgyzstan in 630 and wrote the following: “Celebrations on the occasion of my visit began with the performance of a very enjoyable, lyrical melody deeply exhilarating to the heart.” Unfortunately, folk music is largely absent from the historical record, making it difficult to connect it to exact historical periods and thus chart the course of the country’s artistic and musical evolution.

Music in Kyrgyz culture is close to that of other Turkic-speaking peoples, especially Kazakh, Khakas, and Turkmen. Unlike the case of Uzbeks and Tajiks, Kyrgyz folk music was somewhat fabricated, likely because of the lack of cultural centers and developed tradition in musical training, as found elsewhere in Central Asia.

Performances were primarily by individuals, rarely accompanied or polyphonic, and a tradition of musical collaboration was slow at developing. A strong predilection for improvisation and competition meant that with each new performer a new musical variation was created.

Folk songs are the very heart and soul of the Kyrgyz musical tradition. Indeed, 19th century Russian scholars Ch.Ch. Valikhanov, V.Radlov, N. Przewalski, G. Almashi, and N. Severtsov were unanimous in their praise of Kyrgyz composers and musicians. Russian scientist and geographer Alexander Levshin had this to say: “The Kyrgyz sing songs

Kyrgyz Folk Music
about what they see around them. Each of them is a singer-improviser.”

The creativity of the akyns (folk-singer improvisers) was a special feature of Kyrgyz vocal music. Famous akyns enjoyed tremendous popularity among the people. Their art was an organic fusion of vocal, poetic, and artistic skills. Unlike manaschy, akyns performed songs accompanied with komuz and music.

Great contribution to the development of culture of music was made by such talented artists and melodists as Muzooke, Arstanbek, Burulcha, Belek, Kurenkey, Baldystan etc. Such musical pieces as “Kambarkan,” “Ket buka”, “Botoi”, “Kerbez”, and “Shyngyrama” include not only the treasury of the folk music culture, but also continue to appear in repertoire of musical groups.

The traditional musical instruments of Kyrgyzstan are closely related to everyday activities, ceremonies, and the nomadic way of life. Any musical instrument--its design, construction materials, and acoustics--is important to understanding the history and culture of a people.

The first written account of Kyrgyz instruments are from the Tang Era and describe, in detail, the musical instruments of the Yenisei Kyrgyz, living in the 7th to 10th centuries. Information about musical culture of the Kyrgyz has also been preserved in the memoirs and scientific papers of such historical geographers and ethnographers as P.P. Semenov-Tian-Shansky, N.A. Severtsov, Ch. Ch. Valikhanov, F.V. Poyarkov, G.S. Zagryazhskyi, and S.E. Dmitriev. The musician A. Eichhorn, and French ethno-musicologist G. Kapyu came to Kyrgyzstan in 1870 to conduct a thirteen-year study of local musical instruments and make sample recordings of select national melodies.

The most common musical instruments of the Kyrgyz are the komuz and kyl-kyiak. The komuz is a three-stringed instrument. Among other Turkic peoples, there are also stringed instruments that are similar to the komuz, such as the kobus/hobus, the komys, and the kumyz. These likenesses are proof of the legacy and connection of these instruments among the Turkic peoples.
These instruments were usually constructed from the wood of apricot, pear, elm, spruce and other trees; the strings were typically made from the gut of sheep.

Kyrgyz musical instruments:

The entire construction process is long and arduous. Famous masters of the komuz paid special attention to the manufacture of the strings and sometimes the gut of an entire sheep might have been required to produce one string of the necessary quality and craftsmanship.

The kyl-kyiak was also a stringed instrument, but played with a bow rather than strummed as in the case of the komuz. It was made of wood and was pear-shaped with an elongated neck. The lower half was covered with camel skin and served as the sounding board. Its two strings and bow were made of horsehair. The music played on a kyl-kyiak called for the protection of Kyrgyz lands from foreign invaders. It is a prominent feature in the works of Uraan and Ker Ozon. The kayak usually included a performance of one of the mini-epics, legends, or fairy tales and was accompanied by a musician playing the kyl-kyiak, the komuz, or the temir-komuz. These improvised group performances became the prototype of future musical collaborations and performances.

Along with the national instruments mentioned above, the Kyrgyz were also proficient on the choor (flute), ooz komuz (harp), sybyzgy (flute), dobulbas (drum), and kernei and surnai (types of wind instruments). Many of these are still in use today.
Part II.

KYRGYZSTAN AS A PART OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE
AND THE USSR

The Annexation of the Territory of Kyrgyzstan by Russia

The beginning of Russian expansion into Central Asia was triggered by a wide array of political and economic problems facing the Russian Empire in the middle of the 19th century. The attempts of neighboring eastern countries, as well as the British Empire, to seize Turkestan effectively pushed the Russian Empire into a race to colonize the region. Realizing the political potential of Turkestan, Russia sought to gain a foothold in the region to ward off the attempts of other nations, especially the British Empire. Until the end of the 19th century, the regions of Turkestan could not export enough to benefit the Russian economy in any meaningful way. Consequently, Turkestan represented secondary interest as a market and as a source of raw materials for Russia.

Beginning its quest for expansion during the Middle Ages, Russia began to build up its fortresses and expand its borders. By the end of the 18th century, the Orenburg and Siberian ranges were formed as part of the eastern expansion campaign. Russified settlements formed in the Kazakh steppes were surrounded by chains of fortresses.

To seize the areas of the Syr-Darya and Chu, the Russian government of the 1830s developed a preliminary plan to annex the areas of Jeti-Suu (Semirechye). Officials carefully considered strategic importance of the area, noting its potential usefulness in a Russian penetration in Asia and India. However, the Russian government cautiously expanded into Central Asia. The overlapping interests of the empires of Russia and Great Britain became the point of fervent debate; government officials and scholars have come to refer to this as the “Eastern Question”.125 Steady southern advance of Russia through the Siberian and Kazakh steppes seriously troubled Britain. The Russians, aiming to control Afghanistan and Central Asia, sent massive waves of agents in order to speculate the territory. At the same time, the Empire began to export goods from the Southern Caucasus to Turkestan. As British goods started to flow into Turkestan, however, the British and Russian governments were in fierce economic competition over the markets of Central Asia.
In order to successfully confront the British trade, Russia developed two main strategies. Firstly, they sought to continue to expand the boundaries of the Empire. Secondly, they sought to develop political relations with the Khans of Central Asia. The Russian government used its expansive array of agents and ambassadors to develop contact with these political rulers. Of course, this was not unnoticed by England; across Europe and the world, public attention was increasingly focused on the “Russian threat to India.” Under the pretext of “protecting their interests,” the British invaded Afghanistan in the spring of 1839. The invasion prompted an anticolonialist uprising in the autumn of 1840, which led to the expulsion of the British from the country. At the same time, the Russians had begun its plunge into Central Asia. With the permission of Nicholas I, the Governor of Orenburg, V.A. Perovskiy led five thousand soldiers to Khiva in the winter 1839. However, the rapidly organized expedition, having lost more than half of its soldiers in the cold of winter, was forced to return before it had reached its destination. After the failure of military operations in Central Asia, England switched to active deepening of trade relations, thus striving to consolidate its influence in the region.

In 1846, Russia achieved the recognition of its protectorate on the Kazakh Uluu zhuz. By 1847, three fortresses were built in the lower reaches of the Syr-Darya River and the Kopal fortress (the modern city of Taldykorgon) was erected near Jeti-Suu. This exacerbated Russian-Kokand relations; Kokand Musulmankul’s intensified harassment of Kazakh villages led to the breakdown of ties between Russia and the Kokand state.

At the same time, Russian authorities set out to gradually move to the areas of Northern Kyrgyzstan, which were located on a trade route between Russia and Kashgar. As a result of actions against Kokand in 1853, the fortress Ak-Mechit (Ak-Mosque), located on the lower reaches of the Syr Darya, was occupied. In 1854, the Russians established the Vernyi fort (now Almaty) on the banks of the Almatinka River. A garrison and an inspector, overseeing Uluu zhuz, were put in charge at the fort.

Following defeat in the Crimean War, Russia stopped halted its attempts to expand into Europe. Accordingly, the Empire refocused its attempts to politically and economically control the regions of Central
Asia. Starting from the second half of 1850s, the Russian government started to change its strategy in the region. Instead of a direct military intervention it broadly started to study the political-economic situation in Turkestan.

To find the ways to neutralize the influence of England in Central Asia, the Russian Empire sent three missions to the region in 1858, including a scientific expedition of N.V. Hanykov to Herat and eastern Iran, a diplomatic delegation of N.P. Ignatiev to Khiva and Bukhara, and reconnaissance trip of Ch.Ch. Valikhanov to Kashgar. These expeditions provided the Russian government with extensive material on the states and peoples of Central Asia, their history, culture, manners, and customs. The results of the expeditions served as a source of valuable information in the coming years of Russian colonization.

These missions, rather surprisingly, helped to improve relations between the Tsarist state and the Central Asian Khans. Russian merchants started to arrive in Bukhara. At the same time, Bukharians visited Orenburg and Nizhny Novgorod exhibitions and markets; mutual trade between these regions thrived. However, economic and political relations between Russian and Kokand continued to struggle.

In the early 1860s, Russian military leaders, industrialists, and entrepreneurs advocated for a more proactive policy in Central Asia. In December 1863, Alexander II addressed these concerns, adopting a more active Russian role in the region. In 1864, Turkestan was formally introduced into the Russian Empire, increasing the military role of Russia on its border regions.

Political and strategic motives aimed at combating British power in the region continued to be the driving force in Central Asian policy. Although serfdom in Russia was legally abolished as early as 1861, the country only began to develop modern capital relations in the 1890s. Therefore, in the 1860s, Russian interests in Central Asia did not expand into the sphere of economy. As time passed (and modern production developed in Russia), Turkestan would become much more economically important to the Russian Empire.

Before further analyzing the development of colonialism in Central Asia, it is important to note the following. Turkestan became a Russian colonial aspiration largely due to political motivations – economy was a second thought. In the colonial confrontations between the British
and Russians, these interests took different forms and messages without changing its basic character.

Even though Russia had a clear goal of conquering Central Asia, there was never a specific long-term plan for implementation of such rule. This represents a degree of disorganization and ineffectiveness on the part of the Russian Empire.

The abolition of serfdom in Russia played an important role and contributed to the transformation of Turkestan into an aspiration of colonial goals. A sharp increase of dissatisfaction among peasants left without the land after the 1861 reform allowed the Tsarist government to encourage migration of Russian peasants. During this time, many of these peasants from central provinces of Russia migrated to Turkestan.

The Russians ultimately ended up using Turkestan to suit its economic interests. Subjugation of Turkestan to Russia stopped blood feuds among nomadic tribes and opened a direct trade route to Afghanistan, India and China through the territories of present Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Thus, Turkestan, as a focus of political and economic interests, became one of the main objects of Russian colonization in 1830-60s.

The political situation in Kyrgyzstan and Kyrgyz-Russian relations in the second half of the 18th-mid-19th centuries

In early years of Kyrgyzstan’s accession to Russia, the dominant factor in Kyrgyz social relations was a patriarchal feudal construction. Taking into account certain historical conditions prevailing from the end of the 18th century until the middle of the 19th century, it is clear that this period essentially “prepared” the regions of Kyrgyzstan for colonial possession.

In the second half of the 18th century, the Kyrgyz community lived under a complex arrangement of political alliances. Due to the constant clashes and warfare of the Middle Ages, the Kyrgyz people had not yet developed a single state. During this period Kyrgyz tribes lived under the influence of several political associations.

The Southern tribes of Kyrgyz (a group of internal Adigine, Munduz, Basyz, Kushchu, Saruu, Bagysh, Jediger, Sayak, etc.) along with the native neighbors in the Ferghana Valley - Uzbeks, Kipchaks, and Tajiks - were actively involved in the creation of the Kokand Khanate (1709) and in its management (Akbotobi, Kubatbi, Ajy-biy, etc.). The final unification with the peoples of the Ferghana valley (the Pamirs, Bada-
khshan, Oro-Tube, Khujand, and Jizak living under the Kokand State) caused the Kyrgyz tribes residing there to become an integral part of its population.

At that time the northern part of Kyrgyzstan was under the authority of sovereign manaps - tribal leaders, who traditionally wielded authority. In 1770, as the result of the invasion of Khan Ablai in Talas, Chu and Issyk-Kul, the northern Kyrgyz tribes became the vassals of the Kazakh sultan until 1781 (death of Ablai Khan). From 1780-1830 they existed as individual feudal groups, free of loyalty to any specific ruler.

This era was marked by collections of tribes in various regions. In Talas, the tribes included the Kushchu, Saruu, Kytai, and the Munduz; in Chu and Suusamyr, the tribes were the Solto and the Sayak; in the upper parts of Chu, Kochkor and Jumgal, the Sarybagysh and Sayak coexisted. On the western and northwestern coasts of Issyk-Kul and its foothills lived the Bugu and the Sayak. In Naryn, one would have found many tribes, including the Sarybagysh, Sayak, Cherik, and the Karabagsh. Eastern Turkestan saw many Kyrgyz tribes, such as the tribes of the Sayak, Chonbagysh, Doolos, Solto, Sart, Teyit, Naiman, Kipchak, Bugu, Cherik, and the Noygut.

Historians including Doolotbek Saparaliev believe that until the mid-19th century the Kyrgyz had autonomous states consisting of a single tribe or their associations (like small city-states of ancient Greece).
The population of Northern areas of Kyrgyzstan, though politically independent, was, to some degree, influenced by its neighbors and, thus, participated in their political life. Tashkent beks and those of the lower reaches of Syr Darya played a role in the affairs of the Talas Kyrgyz. Orto Juz Kazakhs were active in the lives of the Chu Kyrgyz. East Turkestan could not separate itself from the affairs in Issyk-Kul and Naryn. At the same time, the northern and southern Kyrgyz tribes were spiritually and ethno-politically united by common customs, language, and ethnogenesis.

Political disunity of Kyrgyz tribes at the end of the 18th century did not allow them to exercise one common foreign policy. Threat from external enemies was constantly hanging over the northern Kyrgyz. Chinese invaders tried to establish power over the Kyrgyz tribes after the defeat of Qing Empire by the Oirot State in 1758-1760. They often attempted to turn Kazakh sultans against the northern Kyrgyz clans (1760). They supported the campaign of Ablai Khan against the Kyrgyz in 1770. At the end of the 18th century, the Kokand Khanate also began to put pressure on the northern Kyrgyz.

This situation prompted some Kyrgyz biys to consider working with the Russian Empire. Kyrgyz biys understood that they would be able to retain their power and political independence only by establishing relations with Russia and enlisting its support. Initially, Atake-Baatyr from the Sarybagysh clan, who occupied the foothills of the Chu, attempted to establish political relations with Russia. Atake-Baatyr was an extraordinary person of his time. He was a wise, far-sighted, and experienced man and had a great authority among the people. He was convinced that only strong ties with Russia could help his people to maintain independence. On behalf of the Kyrgyz, Atake-Baatyr sent an embassy to the Russian capital of St. Petersburg.

Abdyrahman Kuchakov and Shergazy were selected as ambassadors. Abdyrahman was born with the name Karyganbay in 1739 to the family of the Aksuu Kyrgyz Alkuchak Buinakov. Abdyrahman
was the descendant of those Kyrgyz who lived in the vicinity of Namangan in the first half of the 18th century. About 200 Kyrgyz families together with Oirots fled to Siberia and accepted Russian citizenship after the defeat of Jungaria by the Qing Empire; later they lived in Astrakhan province. In 1770, A. Kuchakov (a descendant of those who fled after defeat), together with the Kyrgyz who were subservient to him, returned to his former home Ak-Suu and began to serve Atake-Baatyr. He settled with his people in the vicinity of the Chu and Kemin in 1780. Atake-Baatyr appointed Abdyrahman to the first Kyrgyz embassy to Russia because of his familiarity with Russia, its customs, and its people.

The Kyrgyz embassy arrived to Omsk and handed official letters (one of them addressed to Catherine II) to the governor-general of Siberia on August 23, 1785. The Empress was given a slave, three leopard skins and five lynx; the Governor-General was given two horses.

The embassy was instructed to enlist the support of Russia. They were also ordered to develop new trade routes between Turkestan and Russia (so that they would pass through the areas of Kyrgyzstan). The delegation arrived to St. Petersburg on December 29, 1785 but was received by Catherine II only on March 15, 1786. The embassy finally gained an audience with Catherine II, but prepared for return on September 14, 1788 because of the illness of one of the heads of the embassy.

Atake-Baatyr was summoned to the reception of the Empress from Omsk in October 1787. Without waiting for the return of his first em-
bassy, Atake-Baatyr sent the second mission to Omsk, which was led by Abdyrahman uulu Satymbai in summer 1788. Soon Kyrgyz envoys heard a rumor that the sons of Atake-baatyr, Soltonoi and Baishugur, allegedly looted a Russian caravan. By this time Abdyrahman had already reached Omsk. The members of the embassy were held captive while the investigation took place. Abdyrahman Kuchakov died in Omsk in 1789. The investigation had determined that the raiders were Kazakhs and ended in 1793. Only then Satymbay Abdyrahman uulu was able to return to Chu. Thus, the credibility of tsarist authorities to Atake-Baatyr was restored and the first embassies of Kyrgyz to Russia, overcoming significant challenges, successfully completed their tasks. Although permanent connections were not established, the first step in the formation of subsequent diplomatic relations was already made.

There is no information in historical sources about the relationship of Kyrgyz with Russia from 1790 to 1813. The reason for the growth of Kyrgyz-Russian relations was the growing aggression from the Kokand Khanate. Russian authorities also began to show interest in establishing closer contacts with the Kyrgyz. Several Russian convoys were sent (on missions of intelligence) to the area of Issyk-Kul Lake in 1811, 1812, 1813. The byis of the Bugu clan took obligations to ensure the safety of caravans on the way to the borders of China.

In late autumn 1813, the embassy from the Issyk-Kul Kyrgyz headed by Kachybek, son of Sheraly-byi, and Jakypbek, son of Niyazbek-byi, traveled to Semipalatinsk. The Governor-General of Western Siberia G.I. Glazenap received them, assured the loyalty of the Russian government to the Kyrgyz, and promised full support. Kyrgyz ambassadors were granted the ranks of captains of the Russian Army, awarded nominal sabers and other valuable gifts, and received an official letter from Russian authorities to Kyrgyz biys. Since then, political and economic relations between the Kyrgyz and the Russians began to develop steadily. In autumn 1825, byis of Bugu tribe gathered on the Jyrgalan River for kurultai to discuss the question of whose allegiance to accept: Russia’s or Kokand’s. Since the supporters of Russian orientation at the Congress were the vast majority in comparison with the Kokand supporters, it was decided to accede to Russia.

As a result of established relations between 1813 and 1825 between Russia and the Issyk-Kul Kyrgyz, the latter promised to provide Russian
merchants with open and duty-free trade in the Issyk-Kul basin, to accompany them on the path from Kazakhs of Orto Juz and Uluu Juz to the cities of Eastern Turkestan, to protect convoys from armed robberies, and, if the situation arose, to inform the Authority of the West Siberian governor-general who committed such robberies. Thus, a desire of large feudal nobility of the Issyk-Kul region to be under the protection of Russians led to initial diplomatic relations of Kyrgyz with the Russian Government.

**Joining of Northern Kyrgyz tribes with Russia**

In the 1840s, the political goals in Northern Kyrgyzstan were set on consolidating the tribes of the region. Of course, the leaders who sought to unite the tribes faced several challenges; many of the local tribes were against such a unity. For instance, while the leader of Sarybagysh tribe manap Ormon Niyazbek uulu made attempts to consolidate northern tribes in one union, the chiefs of kins of the same tribes led the policy of disintegration and separatism.

Confrontation between nobilities of Sarybagysh and Bugu tribes influenced the relations with Russia. Bugu manaps did not support the aspirations of Ormon-Khan to national consolidation and as a result, Russian administration pursued closer relations with the Bugu Kyrgyz and incorporated them into its protectorate.

Perpetual opposition of biy-manaps of Sarybagysh and Bugu tribes led to an open clash in the 1850s. Ormon-Khan, leading military action against the Bugu people, wanted to rule over the Kyrgyz of Issyk-Kul. In addition, Ormon did not like unsolicited rapprochement of the Issyk-Kul Kyrgyz with Russia. In 1854, Ormon was captured and killed in one of the battles. Revenging the death of the Khan, Sarybagysh under the leadership of the governor Torokeldy-baaty and Umetaaly (the son of Ormon) organized raids on Bugu. Fleeing persecution, several ailys of the Bugu tribes led by Borombai, were forced to retreat towards Karkyra and Tekes.
In order to avoid destruction in such troubled times, Boronbai (the main manap of Bugu) came to the decision to take join Russia. On September 26, 1854 the embassy of the Bugu people headed by manap Kachybek Sheralin was sent to Omsk, the center of West-Siberian General - Governorship. On January 17, 1855, Kachybek Sheralin, as a trusted and plenipotentiary ambassador of his people, made a vow on the Koran to move under the Russian protectorate.

Official accession of the Issyk-Kul Kyrgyz to Russia is an important stage in the history of Kyrgyz. After this event, the confrontations between Sarybagysh and Bugu tribes began to decline. However, clashes between two clans continued to flare up until the full accession of Northern Kyrgyzstan to Russia in 1868.

Unlike the southern Kyrgyz, the northern Kyrgyz were passive observers of the political life of the Kokand Khanate. From 1860 to 1862, manaps of the Tynai, a branch of Sarybagysh tribe, attempted to actively participate in the politics of the Khanate. However, because they had no sense of direction in the political processes, the initiative ended shortly thereafter. The proxies to the throne, who were continually changing, did not inspire much confidence.

In early 1860s, the Russian Government decided to confirm the annexation of Kyrgyz clans from the Chu foothills if Russian troops conquered the Kokand fortress in the valley. The Kokand Khan knew about those intentions and took counter-measures by attracting troops of Sarbaz to Chu. During the standoff of the Kokandians with Russians, the Chu Kyrgyz took a neutral stance and many of them moved to the mountains and to nearby pastures. On August 23, 1860 Russian troops under the command of Zimmerman traveled to Vernyi. On August 26, they captured the Tokmok fortress, and, on August 28, completely destroyed it. One hundred Sarbaz were captured. A detachment of Cossacks led by the chief of Alatavskii district
and the Kyrgyz of the Elder Horde G.A. Kolpakovsky arrived the same day. The next day, a combined army came towards Pishpek and, on August 31, the fortress was taken. Most of it was destroyed; 627 Sarbaz headed by Atabek-Datka and Alisher-Datka surrendered. A year later, Mala Khan sent his army led by Kanaat-Sha and Alymbek-Datka to restore his authority in Pishpek and Tokmok.

Clashes between Russian troops and Kokandians ended with the battle on October 20, 1861 at the Uzun Agach battle in Kara Kastek. Well-known Alymbek-Datka and his unit were not involved in this battle. During the war, the Russian army, under the command of A.G. Kolpakovsky, inflicted the Kokandians with heavy losses and forced them to retreat. A detachment of Kyrgyz jigits under the command of Shabdan Jantay uulu fought heroically against Russians in the battle. Shortly after the battle at Uzun-Agach in 1862, a prominent Ty-nai manap Jantay Karabek uulu visited Vernyi and proposed the unification of Kemin Kyrgyz of the Chu valley to the protectorate of Russia. Jantay and his son Shabdan then began to work for Russian authorities. After the death of Ormon Khan, Jantay became the acknowledged head of Sarybagysh manaps. In 1867, he was awarded the rank of colonel and received a gold medal.

In the summer of 1862, Baytik Kanai uulu, a prominent manap of Solto, inhabited the Chu valley from Pishpek to Talas and started the struggle against Rahmatulla, the Kokand akim. Baytik-Baatyr lured Rahmatullo to a feast and killed him. After that, the Kyrgyz unsuccessfully besieged the Pishpek fortress for a few days. Seeing the futility of his attempts, Baytik sent his younger brother Satylgan to Vernyi to A.G Kolpakovsky to ask for help. Preparing for the final accession of Northern Kyrgyzstan to Russia, the commander of Russian troops immediately ordered the intervention and arrived to the Pishpek fortress with troops on October 13. As a result of joint actions of Russian troops
and a detachment of Kyrgyz led by Baytik, the fortress was taken on October 24 and was destroyed in two days. Later Baytik-Baatyr with his 200 jigits together with the Russian troops took part in the capture of the Kokand fortresses of Merke, Aulie-Ata, and Shymkent, among others.

The Kyrgyz who had settled in Talas obeyed Russia only in 1865. Following them, native Talas clans of Saruu and Kushchuu acknowledged Russian authorities as well. Thus, the accession of the Chui and Talas Kyrgyz to Russia was a result of both voluntary motion, as well as force.

Prior to the joining to Russia, one part of the Tenir Too Kyrgyz was under the rule of the Kokand Khanate, which periodically levied tribute from them. Another part of the Tenir Too Kyrgyz was in contact with Kashgar, which was under the influence of the Manchu-Qing rule of China. The Russian government attached great importance to extend its influence in those two regions of Kyrgyzstan, as Russian merchants traded with Kashgar through the Kokand Khanate and across the Kuldja from Vernyi. The Russians understood the importance of these regions—annexation of Tenir Too by the Russians would open a direct trade route to Eastern Turkestan and Kashgar.

In the spring of 1863, a so-called “Kashgar detachment” formed and was sent to Central Tenir Too. They arrived in the Jumgal valley on May 3rd. Guarding a small fortification, fifty six Kokand Sarbaz quickly fled without any attempts of resistance. Protsenko’s (the leader of the Kashgar detachment) squad approached the Kurtka fortress through the jailoo Son-Kul. There, they met the Kokandians who retreated without any fight.

The annexation of the Tenir Too Kyrgyz, as well as of other regions of Northern Kyrgyzstan, took place during a time of controversial and complex social and political conditions. Many of the Kyrgyz either stayed neutral or refused to join the protectorate. For example, in July 1863 manap Osmon Tailak uulu went to the open armed struggle against Russian troops. With his jigits, Osmon surrounded a small unit of Major G. Zryazhskyi. Only the intervention of Shabdan Jantay uulu, who had the rank of a captain at that time, rescued the Russian squad from being killed. Osmon took refuge in Eastern Turkestan. In 1868 he returned to his homeland and decided that his people (which numbered around three thousand) would join the protectorate.
Sarybagysh manap Umetaaly Ormon uulu openly fought against Russian domination. On June 19, 1863, he attacked the unit of Lieutenant Zubarev, which consisted of 40 soldiers near the Kurtka fortress in the Eki-Chat tract. The only help came in two days and prevented the jigits of Umetaaly from being beaten by Russian soldiers. After a bad collision in the Ak-Talaa, Umetaaly Ormon uulu moved to Eastern Turkestan to get the assistance from Kashgar. However, the local ruler Jakyp-bek refused to protect Umetaaly.

The recognition of the Russian protectorate by the Kyrgyz clan Cherik (which occupied the territory from the Naryn River to the Kuyko-Turpan Mountains in the south) was crucial to the Russians’ goals of controlling the region. The Cherik clan paid tribute to the Kokand Khanate, the Qing-Manchu rulers, and to the governor of Kashgar Jakyp-Bek. Understanding that working with the Russian protectorate would rid the problem of paying tribute to these three forces, the heads of the Cherik clan decided to take action. In the spring of 1863, hys of Cherik clan (which consisted of six thousand tents) sent a letter to the “White Tsar”, the governor of Ala-tau district Kolpakovsky, requesting to join the Protectorate. The request of the Cherik clan was granted shortly thereafter.

In the autumn of 1863, Cherik ambassadors arrived in Omsk and swore allegiance to the Russian authorities. At the time of inception of the Naryn fortress in 1868, most Cheriks belonged to the district of Ala-Too. The rest were under the patronage of the Kashgar governor Jakyp-bek. After the elimination of his state in 1877, his part of the Cherik passed to the authority of the Emperor of China. A vast territory occupied by the Cheriks eventually became part of Kyrgyzstan.

During 1864 and 1865, Russia included the Bugu and the Tynymseit tribes (who lived in the upper reaches of Naryn and Sayaks and occupied the regions of Kochkor, Jumgal, and Ketmen-Tube). However, the Sarybagysh, ruled by Umetaaly, continued to resist Russian authorities up until 1867 when Umetaaly obeyed, having realized the futility of his struggle. After the construction of Russian fortresses in Naryn and Karakol in 1868 and the subsequent establishment of permanent garri-
sons, the power of Russia in northern regions of Kyrgyzstan was finally established.

The Turkestan General-Governorship consisting of the Syr-Darya and Semirechie (Jeti-Suu) regions was established in July 11, 1867. Taking into account the strategic importance of a new administrative-territorial unit, the Russians referred to as the Military Ministry. Thus, the foundations of the colonial apparatus for the military and civil administration were laid in Turkestan. Together with the organization of administration, the Russian government began to pursue its policies to create a new domain of military, political, and social support for Tsarist policies. By sending Russian immigrants to newly annexed areas they were able to keep their interests in check. In 1867, resettlement locations were organized in Karakol (Issyk-Kul) and Tokmok (Chuy); Russian peasants began to arrive very shortly after their organization.

Unlike the initial phase of the penetration of Russia into Central Asia (1855-1863), its actual power in Kyrgyzstan was established only during the years of 1863-1868. Annexation of the northern Kyrgyz to Russia during 1863-1868 was completed with the final establishment of the Russian government there.

Russia increased its attention towards Kyrgyzstan as an object of colonization in the first quarter of the 19th century and started to implement the plans to develop its presence in the region during the 1860-1870s. During the first phase, from 1853-1855, the phase of colonialism was realized in commercial relations and oral agreements. On January 17, 1855 and October 13, 1863, it was documented by the oath of some Kyrgyz clans on their inclusion to Russian protectorate. From 1860-1863, the regions of Chu and Tenir Too were subordinated by a military-political process. Annexation of the North of Kyrgyzstan to the Russian Empire was completed in 1868.

The complexities of the international situation and internal political situations forced some Kyrgyz manaps to turn to Russia. In accordance with their relation to Russia, the northern Kyrgyz manaps can be divided into three groups: a) those willing to agree to Russian patronage, b) publically claiming to support pro-Russian direction (but offering some resistance to their mandates), and c) not accepting Russian expansion and directly resisting. In sum, the annexation of the northern Kyrgyz

Conclusion
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to Russia was carried out mainly through contracts, agreements, and direct-armed suppression.

**Revolt in 1873-1876. Russian conquest of Southern Kyrgyzstan**

At the beginning of the 1850s, the political situation in the Kokand Khanate reached critical proportions because of internal strife of the horde, frequent uprisings and coups, and incessant change of rulers. As a result, it allowed Russia to capture the Fergana Valley and southern Kyrgyzstan.

During these years, the Kyrgyz people continued to be an active force in the political life of the Kokand Khanate. All possible candidates for the Khan’s throne, as a rule, looked for the support from Kyrgyz and Kypchak lords. For example, to take away the power from Kudayar Khan, Hanzaada (the successor of Khan) Mala-bek asked for help from influential Kyrgyz Datka Alymbek, de facto ruler of Alai. Having won the confrontation with the army of Kudayar Khan, Mala-bek took power into his own hands (1858-1862) and appointed Alymbek-Datka as a Governor (akim) of Andijan to express gratitude for his support.

Alymbek was a prominent figure in the political life of the Kokand Khanate even during the time of Madali Khan. In 1831, he received the title of the Elder of the Alai Kyrgyz and the title of Datka from the Khan. Alymbek-Datka, the representative of the Bargy clan (one of the main branches of Adigine union) enjoyed the respect of the people. He stood out among others for his wisdom, honesty, fairness, and courage. He repeatedly led popular movements against the tyranny of the Kokand. With characteristic foresight, Alymbek maintained permanent relationships with famous manaps among the Northern Kyrgyz, including Ormon Khan, Jantay, Jangarach, Umetaaly, and Osmon. After the Russian capture of the fortresses at Pishpek and Tokmok, Alymbek-Datka and his jigits joined the Kokand Governor Kanaat Sha to restore the situation.

In 1861, the Kokandian khan believed the rumors spread by enemies of Alymbek and sentenced him to death. Datka fled to Alai and organized a rebellion against the Kokand Khanate, but was defeated and
forced to hide in the mountains of Tenir Too. A punitive detachment of Kokandians was sent after him, but was defeated by the local Kyrgyz.

As a result of the next plot in the Khan’s palace in 1862, Mala Khan was killed and the grandson of Sheraly Khan, Shah Murad, was erected to the throne instead of him. As an active participant of this revolution, Alymbek-Datka became a vizier (atalyk). Eventually, however, this key position was taken over by his rival – a protégé of Kipchaks by the name of Alymkul.

Meanwhile, Kudayar Khan fled to Bukhara with the help of Emir of Bukhara, Muzaffar. While he was away, the Kokand Governor, Kanaat Sha, again seized the throne in March 1862. It is clear that Kudayar Khan held his power only with the direct support of the Emirate. In 1863, seeing the impossibility of holding the reins of government, Kudayar Khan was forced to return to Bukhara. The power of the Kokand Khanate then passed to the Kyrgyz and Kypchak feudal lords. The 12-year-old son of the killed Mala Khan (1863-1864) was enthroned and Alymkul, an experienced politician and chief adviser to the Khan, was appointed as a regent ruler.

In 1865, the Russian government felt that the conditions were right to annex Tashkent; the largest city of Kokand. The city had a strategic importance as the war started between the Bukhara Emirate and the Kokand Khanate. Understanding the rarity of such a chance, Gen. M.G. Chernyaev with his great army moved towards Tashkent in May 1865. Treacherous bullets killed Alymkul, who commanded the Kokand army in the battle for the city. After three days of fierce battle, Tashkent was captured by Russian troops on May 17.

Following these events, the power of the Kokand Khanate was limited to the Ferghana Valley. Kyrgyz villages spread across the Pamirs and Alai. Russian conquest of Tashkent was a step towards the collapse of the Kokand Khanate. Nevertheless, at this stage Russian authorities decided not to continue its expansion and total elimination of the Kokand Khanate.

After the death of Alymkul, Kyrgyz-Kypchak nobility, headed by Bekmamat and Atabek, announced 16-year-old Kudaykul-Bek (the peo-
people called him Belbakchy because he traded lap shawls) as their Khan. After some time the Emir of Bukhara, Muzaphar, attempting to return the power to Kudayar, entered Kokand on July 15, and Kudayar Khan sat on the throne for the third time.

In spring of 1867, two years after the acquisition of Tashkent, the Tsarist government transformed the region into Turkestan General-Government and Tashkent was chosen to be its administrative center. Tsar Alexander II appointed K.P. von Kaufman to be the first Governor-General of Turkestan and gave him broad powers to independently carry out diplomatic relations with the Khans and byis of Central Asia (until the declaration of war and conclusion of peace treaties).

After the events of 1865, the Kyrgyz and Kypchak tribes constantly struggled against the domination and tyranny of Kudayar Khan. An example of their struggle is many rebellions in Alay (1868-1870) and Sokh (1871).

A People’s Uprising 1873-1876

In contrast to disparate rebellions, a truly popular uprising took place in the spring of 1873. This uprising of the residents of the Ferghana valley during 1873-1876 is known in history by many names, including the “People’s Movement”, the “Rebellion of Polot Khan”, and the “Kokand Rebellion”. It was headed by the Ish-aq Hasan uulu, who was known as Polot Khan.

The people’s uprising in 1873-1876 can be divided into two time phases. The first phase, from 1873-1874 was fairly progressive in its aims. Although this phase was characterized by mild, unorganized flares of violence, it was anti-feudal movement against the
A History of Kyrgyzstan

The Alai Rebellion

The main reason for the uprising of Kyrgyz villages was the Khan’s policy of taxation. Kudayar Khan sent a great punitive expedition to Alai. In the mountains, the Kyrgyz militia inflicted them with a crushing defeat. To end persistent unrest, the Khan sent the second unit of 100 Sarbaz led by his faithful satrap Abdyrahman-abtabachi (one of the most important court positions) in May of 1873. Pretending that he came to fulfill the needs and conditions of the rebels, Abdyrahman invited 40 biys of Kyrgyz and Kypchak clans headed by Sher-Datka to the horde to talk to the Khan. However, the envoys that arrived there were brutally executed. In response, thousands of outraged Kyrgyz and Kypchak rebels flocked to the Fergana Valley in July 1873 and destroyed the Sokh fortress. The bek of Margalan, Sultan Murad (who was sent to deal with the rebellion) fled; the rebels occupied Osh, Uzgen, Aravan, Uch-Kurgan, Andijan, and Bulak-Bashi. In the autumn of 1873, however, the rebels were forced to gradually retreat to the mountains.

The Aksy Rebellion

The beginning of the uprising in this region is associated with the name of Ishaq Asan uulu. In early spring of 1873, Ishaq took Aqsy with the help of 200 Kyrgyz jigits and the assistance of Sher-Datka, Musulmankul, Musabek, Sulaiman-udaychy, and Abdymomun-atalyk. Under the pressure of Ishaq, the people agreed to oppose to Kudayar Khan. In spring of 1873, in presence of thousands of people, a 29-year-old Ishaq was raised on a white felt carpet as “Polot Khan” and was declared the Khan in the village of Safid-Bulan. Under the onslaught of an army commanded by Abdyrahman-aptabachi, Aksy rebels retreated to Ala-Buka and went further to Chatkal. Having learnt about the execution of 40 biys in Kokand, the rebels recaptured the Ala-Buka. The army of Ishaq, however, did not withstand the onslaught of punitive expeditions and again retreated to the mountains.

The uprising began in spring 1873 on the left bank of the Naryn River in the tract called the Aqsy interfluve. The rebellion was headed by Mamyr Mergen uulu, who came from a simple family of a
Munduz clan of the left wing of the Kyrgyz. Rebels occupied the valley of Kok-Art and captured the villages of Jalal-Abad and Khanabad and the city of Uzgen was taken in July. After a fierce resistance, big forces crushed the uprising.

Leilek rebellion is one of the clearest manifestations of a general uprising in 1873. Mamyrbay headed this movement in the southwest of Kyrgyzstan. Having returned from Chatkal, Abdyrahman-aptabachi was sent to suppress the rebels. During the ruthless suppression of the rebellion, around 400 people were captured and driven to Kokand, where they were hanged. By autumn, the rebellion had subsided. None of the Kyrgyz or Kypchak clans stayed aloof from the uprising in 1873-1874, which lasted for year and a half. Historical sources indicate the representatives of 42 clans and 132 thousand yurts participated. Despite class distinctions, the uprising involved all segments of the population, mainly Kyrgyz and Kypchak nomads. The sedentary populations - Sarts, Uzbeks, and Tajiks - did not join the uprising during its first stages, although they identified with the frustrations of those involved.

The second phase of the movement started in the spring of 1875 and lasted until 1876. Kudayar Khan increased the size of taxes by three times and it served as a new impetus for the development of this national movement. The second stage of the uprising differed from the preceding one by its purpose, nature, and scale as well as by the ethnic composition of the participants.

In 1875, Polot Khan moved to Leilek from Chatkal. There he continued to lead the uprising, which grew into a nationwide movement in Uzgen by July. It included the representatives of other nations - Kipchaks, Uzbeks, Turks, and Tajiks. Under such conditions, Abdyrahman-aptabachi asserted his power in the Khanate of Kokand by taking the side of Polot Khan. With Polot Khan’s consent, he began to prepare for the proclamation of Kudayar’s son, Nasirdin-bek, to be the Khan. With the transition of Abdyrahman-aptabachi and a large group of his followers to the side of the rebels, Kudayar had nothing to do but finally quit the horde and join with the Russian authorities to seek for refuge on July 22.

On July 24, 1875, Nasirdin-Bek was proclaimed the khan in the village of Sary-Talap near Kokand. Feudal-conspirators led by Abdyrahman-aptabachi arrested Polot Khan and threw him into prison. Later,
Polot managed to escape and go to Chatkal. After the proclamation of Nasirdin Khan, Abdyrahman-aptabachi decided to strengthen the independence of the Khanate by sending the rebelled forces against Russians and declaring a “jihad”, “a holy war against infidels.” The rebels managed to seize some Russian territory during this offensive.

In response to these actions, K.P. Kaufman with 5000-well-armed soldiers struck a crushing blow to the rebels near Kokand. On August 26, Nasirdin Khan was forced to sign a treaty dictated by the Russian side. Under the agreement which came into force on September 23, Russia gained the territory of Namangan, Kasan, Aqsy, and Ala-Buka; the territory would now be called the Namangan branch. M.D. Skobelev, who just received the rank of a general, was appointed as its Governor. Justifying the confidence placed in him, Skobelev did his best to drown the rebellion in blood.

Polot Khan and Abdyrahman-aptabachi met in the vicinity of Jalal-abad again and decided to conduct a joint struggle against the Russian invaders. On September 27, 1875 under the name of Polot Khan, Ishaq was proclaimed the khan for the second time. Now, the rebellion was aimed against Russian colonizers and Nasirdin Khan.

On October 9, Polot Khan seized Kokand while Nasirdin Khan fled to Khujand. In October, the rebels moved their anti-Russian forces and bloody clashes continued until January 5, 1876. In that massacre provoked by K.P. Kaufman and M.D. Skobelev, Russian forces were particularly cruel. Skobelev’s own words are a clear illustration of their mentality: “... peace and order in Asia is directly related to the number of massacred people and the cut off heads.”

Russian troops took Andijan during a raid on January 8-10. About twenty thousand people were killed during this assault. The place Asake was fully occupied on January 18. Forces of the rebels had been undermined. Seeing the impossibility of further resistance to the Russian army, Abdyrahman-aptabachi surrendered to M.D. Skobelev on January 24 while Polot Khan was forced to flee to Chon-Alai. Deciding to remain the conqueror of the Kokand Khanate, the ambitious M.D. Skobelev hurried to seize Kokand. As a result, Russian troops finally took the possessions of the Kokand horde under their command on February 8, 1876. On February 19, Tsar Alexander II signed a decree on the liquidation of the Kokand Khanate.
Ishaq-Polot Khan was captured on that day and was hanged by the order of K.P. Kaufman on March 1 at central bazaar of Margilan. The Fergana region was formed on the same place of former possessions of the Kokand Khanate and General Mikhail Skobelev was appointed its governor “for outstanding service”.

The Kokand Khanate fell, but the mountain-ous areas of Southern Kyrgyz - Alai and others - were captured by Russia. The newly appoint-ed military governor of the Ferghana region, Skobelev, set out to destroy the remnants of rebellion and steadily continue the aggressive policy of Tsarism.

To achieve his goals, Skobelev organized the so-called “Scientific Alai Military Expedition” which, in addition to military forces, included a large group of scientists. Although their official task was to conduct various barometric observa-tions, collect zoological and statistical data, and prepare topographic maps, the essence of it was a colonialist military expedition aimed to finally conquer the Alai Kyrgyz. The Governor-general commanded the expedition.

The struggle of the Alai Kyrgyz was led by the sons of Alymbek Datka and Kurmanjan Datka - Abdyldabek, Omorbek, Mamatbek, and Asanbek. Due to harsh conditions of warfare in the Alai Mountains, the complexity of the expedition, as well as its political and strategic impor-tance was equivalent to the battles throughout the Ferghana Valley in 1875-1876. In fights with regular Russian troops, rebels showed a stubborn and self-sacrificing resistance. The invaders did not spare any-one; children, women, old men were all brutally punished. Jantay uulu Shabdan-Baatyr with his brother Baibosun, nuker Bayake, and 40 jigits were involved in this expedition. As a mediator between the Russians and the Alai Kyrgyz, Shabdan tried to guide the expedition in a peaceful course as long as possible. Because of his efforts, bloodshed in many places was prevented.
Not wishing to submit to Russians, Kurmanjan-Datka with all her ayl carried over to Kashgar at the beginning of June 1876. Local governor Jakypbek met this news with great displeasure and Kurmanjan-Datka was forced to go back to Alai. Datka then attempted to migrate to the Afghan Pamir. However, her caravan was overtaken and captured by Russian troops on the road from Kashgar to Afghanistan on July 29. Kurmanjan-Datka was brought to the Chon-Alai camp of M.D. Skobelev. He was impressed by her intelligence and insight, for what he called her “the queen of Alai.” At that meeting Kurmanjan expressed her surrender to Russian authorities and was forced to facilitate the transfer of her sons to Russian overlordship. The Alai scientific military expedition of 1875-1876 was a step of great political and military importance in the campaign of joining the Fergana Valley to Russia. As a result, 17.4 thousand families were introduced to Russian citizenship; volosts (the administrative units) were established in Alay and included to Osh district. Four sons of Kurmanjan-Datka were appointed volost elders. Thus, the annexation of southern Kyrgyzstan by the Russian Empire was completed.

From the letter of Kurmanjan Datka to the military governor M. Ionov

“When the Muslim state in Ferghana [the Khokhand Khanate] was not subordinated to Russia, I resisted and argued with you ... At this time, a general [M.D. Skobelev] arrived in Alay. The general expressed me the courtesy and hospitality. ... I was pleased with it ...

... Now, at this quiet time, I want to say: all my people and I myself, and my family never plan to speak against you. There is no harm from my side. If my people do bad or do treason, I will punish guilty people in a most rigorous way, and I will suffer pangs of torment for the rest of my days...

Mamatbay kyzy Kurmanjan-Datka.”

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Documentary Materials
Conclusion

In summary, it should be noted that the conquest of the Fergana Valley was due to both internal (the oppression of the Kokand Khanate) and external (Russian-Chinese, Russian-Kashgarian Agreement in 1868-1873) pressures. The annexation of the southern regions of contemporary Kyrgyzstan by Russia differed with its bloody character and was accompanied by popular uprisings in 1873-1876. The uprisings were first held against the Kokand Khanate and then expanded the social scope and gained status as a fight for national liberation. In this movement, Ishaq Hasan ulu-Polot Khan gained fame as a folk hero and statesman.

The annexation of the southern part of Kyrgyzstan by Russia was accomplished by a direct invasion. With the suppression of people’s movements in 1873-1876 and the recognition of Russian citizenship by the Alai Kyrgyz, the South of Kyrgyzstan was finally annexed to Russia by the end of 1876.

Russian annexation of Kyrgyzstan has historic importance for the following reasons:

- The introduction of Russian administrative and political management led to the weakening of secular dictatorship of nobility; a barrier for bloody inter-generic clashes was raised.
It provided sustainable preconditions for economic development and the formation of capitalist relations and social differentiation in mountain regions appeared.

- The growth of sedentary population in towns and cities accelerated.
- Natural economy began to adapt to the market economy.

**Tsarist Colonial Policy.**

The National Liberation Struggle in Kyrgyzstan

Russia systematically propagated their political system of governance in the newly annexed territories. In northern Kyrgyzstan, this reform was initiated immediately after the accession to Russia (i.e. already in the 1860s). The Kyrgyz clans who recognized the protectorates of Russia were identified in Ala-Too Semipalatinsk region and were placed under the authority of the West-Siberian General Governorship. In February 1865, *Turkestans Oblast*, a vast territory, which included the land from the Aral Sea to Lake Issyk-Kul, was established. It also included the valleys of Talas, Ketmen Tube, Chu, Issyk-Kul, and the Central Tenir Too later. The first military governor of Turkestan running the military and civil authority was General M.G. Chernyaev.

In 1867, the area was transformed into the Turkestan general-governorship and was divided into two areas, the Syrdar’inskaya (an administrative center in Tashkent) and the Semirechenskaya (an administrative center in Vernyi). Areas within the governorship were divided into counties. In turn, the counties were divided into *volosts*, to which aiyls were subordinated. *Volosts* consisted of two to three thousand households; aiyls contained about one or two hundred households. The heads of *volosts* were elected at township congresses and the heads of aiyils (called *starshyny*) were chosen at aiyl gatherings.

Starting from 1886, the Regulation “On the Control of Turkestan Boundary” came into action and the Turkestan General-governorship was renamed the “*Turkestanskyi krai,*” which included the regions of Samarkand, Syrdarya, and Fergana. The Semirechenskaya *Oblast* was included in the Steppe General Government in 1882, but was reorganized under Turkestan in 1899. As a result of the administrative-territorial reforms, which were carried out by the imperial government, Kyrgyz lands were distributed among different counties; Tokmok, Issyk-Kul,
Aulie-Ata, Namangan, Margalan (Skobelev), Kokand, and Khojent were included in the Syr Darya, Semirechye, Samarkand, and Ferghana regions. The population of Kyrgyzstan occupied the territories of 73 volosts and was directly ruled by the volostnoy and starshina (elders), who were elected for three years. Management was of semi-military character. Tsar’s officers and district police officers were at the head of provinces and districts. Under their supervision, local bais and manaps were elected to the starshinas and volostnoys. Over the time, military governors were given the discretion to hold an election or individually appoint Volostnoys and elders. Volost managers monitored strict execution of orders of tsarist officials and timely collection of taxes and duties. Elders obeyed and complied with the instructions of volost managers. Aksakals, bais, and kazy (the Islamic judge) were involved in the implementation of local governing. While district and military courts considered significant crimes, bais and kazy considered the minor criminal cases according to Kyrgyz customs and Sharia.

The administrative-territorial division of the territory of Kyrgyzstan, of course, pursued the goal of strengthening the tsarist colonial power though at the same time it brought several innovations to the lives of Kyrgyz people. For example, ancient tradition of tribal relations and the consequential dependence of the population on their tribal leadership gradually began to lose its force. With the introduction of election management, the institution was destroyed by hereditary succession of power formerly exercised exclusively by bais-manap. Management conducted by Russian law stopped the tyranny both of the upper echelons of traditional and local authorities.

Colonialist policy of the tsarist government was especially pronounced in solving the land question in Kyrgyzstan. As soon as Kyrgyzstan was annexed by Russia and continuous migration of Russian peasants to its territory began, a special land management system was created for the settlers. Tsarist authorities resettled Russians and Ukrainians in the best locations (with access to farming and water sources in mind). The interests of Kyrgyz people were completely ignored during the land allotment. For example, 36 Russian-Ukrainian settlements consisting of 2.5 thousand households were mainly located along the Golden Valley of Chu (Sary Özön) and around the Issyk-Kul Lake in Semirechenskaya Oblast.
The Tsarist government deliberately sought to affirm the support of rich peasants. Initially, thirty acres of land were allocated for every peasant-settler. They were exempt from taxes and military service for fifteen years. In addition, immigrants were provided with a “loan,” which they were not required to pay back to the state. Peasant migration saw its highest influx in the 1890s when famine broke out in the central regions of Russia.

Twenty six Russian villages were built in Pishpek and Przhevalsk in 1896 and the number of immigrants in comparison with the 1880s increased by two. By the end of the 19th century, Russian peasants appeared in the regions of southern Kyrgyzstan. The first Russian settlements were established in Osh and Pokrovskiyi counties in 1893. In addition to Russian peasants, a huge number of Uighurs, Dungans, and Sart-Kalmaks, who fled from the oppression of Chinese feudal lords, moved to Kyrgyzstan from 1877-1884. Many were resettled in the areas suitable for farming in the Fergana, Issyk-Kul, and Chui valleys.

Afraid of growing discontent of the Kyrgyz population due to the lack of irrigated land, the Tsarist government imposed a ban on migration of Russian peasants to Turkestan from 1896-1906. Nevertheless, by the beginning of the 20th century spontaneous migration of peasants from the central provinces to Semirechye (which included northern Kyrgyzstan) persisted. For example, early as in 1902, 2.7 thousand families came to the area and 1.2 thousand of them settled in Pishpek County. At the beginning of the first Russian revolution in 1905-1907, the Tsarist government again allowed the relocation of Turkestan in order to distract the peasants of central provinces from the ongoing class struggle in the country. To accommodate new arrived peasants, special resettlement procedures in Semirechenskaya and Syr-Dariinskaya regions were formed. In 1906, Semirechenskaya had forty thousand settlers; Syr-Dariinskaya had reached twenty thousand new settlers, while the Fergana Oblast saw around four thousand new peasants.

Exclusion of lands from Kyrgyz people reached new levels as a result of Stolypin’s agrarian reform. In 1906, there were seventy seven thousand peasant settlers in the Turkestan region, forty thousands of which have settled in Semirechenskaya Oblast. The remaining twenty seven thousand settled in Fergana. Thus, 83% of migrants were rooted in Kazakhs and Kyrgyz lands. For example, 289 thousand acres of fer-
tile land were allocated for peasant settlers in 1907 in Semirechenskaya Oblast. As early as 1914, the local population there lost more than 4 million acres in this area. In addition, the Tsarist system planned to take away another seven hundred sixty two thousand acres of arable areas from Kyrgyz people in the Fergana Valley.\textsuperscript{131}

In order to legitimize the annexation of land from the local population, the Tsarist government approved a so-called “Steppe Regulation (ulozhenie)” in 1891. Under the authority of the regulation all lands where Kyrgyz lived and roamed were reclassified as state lands. Moreover, the law, which set this provision, provided a right to confiscate not only the arable land but also the pastures at the same time. As a result, local poor people who lived by the means of agriculture suffered the most. Kyrgyz-\textit{jatakchis} or farmers were removed from their lands and lost not only the roof over their heads but also the wintering grounds.

With the accession of Kyrgyzstan to Russia, it was planned to increase the number of its inhabitants. According to the national census in 1897, six hundred sixty thousand people lived in the new administrative boundaries set in modern-day Kyrgyzstan. This number is one hundred sixteen thousand more people in comparison with 1865 (an increase of 21.2\%). In addition to the arrival of Russian and Ukrainian peasants, some Uighur and Dungan rebels from Eastern Turkestan, previously under China, fled from persecution to Kyrgyzstan. The number of Dungans numbered close to eight thousand people. In 1913, the number of residents of Kyrgyzstan reached eight hundred sixty four thousand. This was a 30\% increase from 1897.\textsuperscript{132}

\textbf{Economy}

Livestock was the basis of Kyrgyzstan’s economy after its accession to Russia - 84.9\% of local population in Pishpek County and 80.7\% in Karakol were engaged in nomadic pastoralism. In southern Kyrgyzstan, the number of population engaged in nomadic pastoralism was somewhat lower. In Osh and Kokand counties, for example, only 65\% of local Kyrgyz population had nomadic and semi-nomadic lives.

Kyrgyz people had sheep, goats, horses, cows, yaks, and camels. The number of \textit{bais}, who had more than a thousand animals, was approximately 5-10\% of the local population. Due to the lack of productive forces and imperfect tools, hay for the winter was often not gathered;
during prolonged winters, great numbers of cattle died from starvation (jut).

Colonial policy of Tsarist Russia turned Kyrgyzstan into the Russian market of industrial goods and a source of cheap raw production materials. The livestock sector actively became engaged in trade relations. For example, 91.6% of the cattle in Pishpek and Przhevalsk were produced at Kyrgyz farms. In general, the commodity cattle in these two districts were 54.8%. If in the second half of the 19th century the sale of the livestock in the markets of northern Kyrgyzstan prevailed. At the beginning of the 20th century emphasis was placed on the leather and wool supplies.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the number of horses at Kyrgyz farms ceased to occupy the dominant position, as sheep and goats were moved to the first place. At the beginning of 1916, there were 2.5 million of sheep and goats, seven hundred thousand horses, five hundred nineteen thousand large-horned cattle, and twenty seven thousand pigs in Kyrgyzstan. Feudal lords owned the vast majority of the cattle. For example, in 1913 in Pishpek and Przhevalsk counties the poor owned only 11% of all the cattle, middle peasants owned 55.5 %, and bai-manaps owned 33.5 %. Paddock animal housing, hay for the winter, veterinary treatment, and the improvement of breeds appeared as a result of the influence of foreign farmers. In 1913, eight veterinary stations staffed by six paramedics and six nurses were built in Kyrgyzstan.

After joining the bureaucratic system of the Russian state, the Kyrgyz paid the same taxes as the Kokand Khanate to the Tsarist authorities. Later, in accordance with local conditions, new mechanisms of taxation were developed. According to the accepted norms, those Kyrgyz dealing with nomadic pastoralism paid the tax of 2 rubles and 75 kopeks for each yurt. Since the land was considered a public domain, Kyrgyz had to pay the tax of three kopeks for each sheep, 30 kopeks for each horse, and 50 kopeks for each camel. The tax rate increased steadily beginning in 1882 and reached 15 rubles during the World War I.133

The settled population was imposed to two types of taxes. They had to pay kharaj for the grain areas and tanap (a measure of area) for garden and vegetable fields. Kharaj was one-tenth of the harvest. In 1886, the procedure for levying the tanap was a little bit changed. This new tax
which replaced it was called *obrok* (quit-rent) and was paid for all the arable lands whether they were cultivated or not. This method of taxation brought great benefit to the Tsarist Government, aggravated the plight of ordinary people, and intensified the process of impoverishment.

Apart from the imperial government taxes, local bai-*manaps* relied on traditional patriarchal and feudal laws and charged common people with more taxes and levies. For grazing they paid the *chöp ooz*. They were forced to pay the *chygym* to honor the manaps. Additionally, they had to pay the *jurtchuluk* for livestock and grain, the *soyush* for sustenance, the *tuyak pul* for cattle walking through their territories, and the *koschumcha* for weddings and funerals. The servants of religion had their own system of taxation. Because of the array of taxes, bribery of local officials became commonplace. The colonial policy of Tsarism and the unbearable yoke of local *bais* and *manaps* caused discontent and anger.

Under the influence of agricultural practices, Russians, Ukrainians, Uighurs, Dungans, and representatives of other nations who moved to Kyrgyzstan changed the traditional methods of cultivation of Kyrgyz people. New segments of the population engaged in farming appeared among the Kyrgyz. They were mostly poor *jatakchi*. Kyrgyz farmers (*dehkans*) cultivated wheat, barley, millet, oats, and other cereals. In the south of Kyrgyzstan, farmers preferred cotton, tobacco, rice, fruits, and vegetables.

With the introduction of capitalist market relations in some areas of Kyrgyzstan, farmers began to grow crops not only for their own needs, but also to sell in markets. They also began to develop beekeeping. Commercial production of agricultural products and its implementation were better developed among Russian, Ukrainian, and Dungan peasants.

In the south of Kyrgyzstan, peasants started to produce such important commodity as cotton. In Noygut-Kipchak, Naiman, Bagysh, Bayastan, Ak-Buura, Nookat *volosts* people began to grow grains specifically for sale.

Since the second half of the 19th century, the Kyrgyz gradually became more sedentary. This trend was especially manifested in the Ferghana Valley where, by 1917, two hundred six thousands of the three hundred sixty two thousand had developed a sedentary or semi-sedentary lifestyle. At the beginning of the 20th century, there were only seventy Kyrgyz villages in the northern part of Kyrgyzstan and more than
one hundred Russian and Ukrainian villages in addition to five German and three Dungan settlements. The villages in southern Kyrgyzstan had about five hundred people; some large villages reached one to two thousand residents. In northern Kyrgyzstan, the number of residents of Kyrgyz settlements was less than two hundred.\textsuperscript{134}

Resettled peasants took over specific methods of irrigated agriculture, irrigation ditches, canals, and mountain pastures from the local population. In households of the \textit{bais}, iron plows, harrows, and steel spits became commonplace. In 1913, there were nearly twenty four thousand horse-drawn plows in Kyrgyzstan, one hundred seventy-two thousand wooden plows, eighty-nine thousand of iron and wooden harrows, sixteen planters, one hundred eighty-nine mowers, and four thousand four hundred seventy-nine grain threshers. However, despite the advent of technology, its amount was insufficient and farming was carried out mainly by hand. Cropland fertilizers were poorly used. Fields were not treated thoroughly and were overgrown with weeds. Lack of crop rotation led to the depletion of the soil.

In 1913, crops were collected from five hundred fifty-five thousand hectares, 86.8\% of total cultivated area. However, the harvest comprised only 7.8 centimeters per hectare. On 29.2\% of the whole area fodder crops were grown. Approximately 5\% were taken up by industrial crops. In all, four hundred thirty-six tons of cereals, nineteen thousand tons of potatoes, and twenty-eight tons of cotton were annually collected on the territory of Kyrgyzstan. The increased demand in cotton caused a corresponding expansion of the areas where it was grown. For example, cotton fields in Osh district increased by ten times from 1889-1913.

In 1914, there were four hundred thirty-four thousand hectares of irrigated lands in Kyrgyzstan, which were fragmented into small plots and processed manually. Crops and clover were cultivated on these allotments in the most primitive way. Cotton was grown on twenty-two hectares, whereas potatoes and vegetables were grown on 14 hectares. There were no engineering structures in the irrigation system and agriculture was more or less small-scale production (because it relied mainly on manual labor).

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, industry began to develop in Kyrgyzstan. People widely used domestic processing of cattle-breeding and agricul-
ture. If the initial focus was targeted on the needs of own producers, over time the emphasis shifted to commodity production. The end of the 19th century was marked by the growth of small individual capitalist processors along with small-scale home-based businesses in small towns. The majority of these belonged to Russian, Ukrainian, and Uzbek merchants. In some cases, the Kyrgyz owned small mills and creameries.

An intensive period of research and development of the coal and oil industries began in early 1890s in the south of Kyrgyzstan. Starting in 1898, the coal industry was developed in Kyzyl-Kiya, the home of the mining industry in Kyrgyzstan. Coal and oil had been discovered in other regions where its gradual development was organized. However, the absence of significant productive forces, poor working conditions, and scarce payment prevented an extensive development of this industry.

On the territory of modern Kyrgyzstan, there were more than thirty of these factory enterprises by 1913. By researchers’ calculations, in the thirty years between 1883 and 1913, the number of enterprises (including small businesses) increased from one hundred sixty-five to five hundred sixty-nine. The share of industrial output was about 5% of all produced public goods and only 0.3% of the population was occupied in industrial production. The development of industry was colonial in nature and primarily aimed at agricultural processing and the procurement of raw materials.

Military and administrative centers based in the vicinity or in former Kokand fortresses eventually grew into real cities like Tokmok, Pishpek, and Karakol. These cities were in the regions and acted as political, cultural, industrial, and commercial centers. Such cities as Osh, Uzgen, and Jalalabad rapidly evolved in southern Kyrgyzstan. Pishpek, the largest city in the Chu Valley, had a population of 6.6 thousand people by the end of the 19th century.

Thus, rapid development of capitalism in Russia in the late 19th century turned Kyrgyzstan into a staging area for the resettlement of the surplus of peasant population and became the source of cheap raw materials for the Russian industry and the market for industrial goods. In accordance with production relations, the Kyrgyz gradually began to adapt to the commodity-money system perpetuated by capitalism. All these created the conditions for the loosening of age-old foundations of a subsistence economy. However, innovations in industrial production
and commodity-money relations at that time still could not reach all segments of the Kyrgyz people.

Economic changes associated with the joining of Kyrgyzstan to Russia introduced changes in the social structure of Kyrgyz people. The Kyrgyz were initially divided into two unequal social groups. One social group contained the feudal lords (bais and manaps). The rest of the population made up the bukara, working part of the population.

Major bais and manaps, as the supporters of colonial authorities, were involved in the Russian administration and were appointed to the posts of township managers, and elders. Byis served as military and some sort of juridical officials and received various awards for the services to the Tsarist government.

Economic development was expanded by the discovery and implementation of mail, the telephone, and the telegraph. The increase in variety and number of vehicles, together with the expansion of road construction, favored the development of linkages between Kyrgyzstan and other regions and, thus, increased trade.

At the beginning of the 20th century, three kinds of trade relations existed: exchange, trade fairs, and permanent sale. The layer of the commercial bourgeoisie began gradually to stand out among the local population and immigrant entrepreneurs. Before the World War I, 36.3% of the traders in Pishpek and Przhevalsk (not counting the “shuttle” traders) were Kyrgyz.

With the development of industry in Kyrgyzstan, a working class (albeit in small numbers) was formed. Its ranks were constantly filled with the settlers and bankrupted local artisans. The most skilled workers were those who came from central Russia. Since the production had mainly an artisanal and semi-artisan character, the workers were divided and poorly organized. Many companies had only one to five workers while few larger enterprises employed from sixteen to forty people. In 1913, the handicraft industry employed 12.6 thousand workers, while the enterprises of factory-type were around 1.9 thousand people strong. In subsequent years, the number of workers in large enterprises markedly increased. For example, in 1917 the coalfields of Kyzyl-Kiya employed 1.2 thousand professional workers. About 20 thousand of workers were
employed in agriculture. For the most part they were from the impoverished local population. Thus, in 1917 there were about thirty thousand members of the working class in Kyrgyzstan.

The basis of the working population was the so-called *kara-bukara* (commoners). The poorer layer of the population had only one or two sheep, a cow, or a horse. The poor were divided into a number of social groups, including *jakyry* (the poor), *jalchy* (laborers), *jatakchy* (horseless), *malai* (wage workers), *mar-dyker* (day laborers), and *chayryker* (sharecroppers). In the south of Kyrgyzstan, in the areas with developed agriculture, smallholder or landless farmers became *chayrykers*. They took the land, seeds, working cattle, agricultural implements for rent and had to pay a large portion of the crop in the fall. Farmers hired *mardykers* in the growing season. Part of the population engaged in the cattle breeding was divided into wealthy, rich, and middle peasants; they were the backbone of the Kyrgyz people. In general, in 1917 65% of peasants and livestock farms were poor, 26% were average, and 9% were rich.\(^{135}\)

Thus, one result of the Tsarist policy in Kyrgyzstan was the beginning of the formation of capitalist relations which deepened the social stratification of Kyrgyzstan’s population. Elements of progressive changes began to take shape along with the costs of the colonial regime in the socio-economic life of the mountainous regions.

**National-liberation struggle in Kyrgyzstan**

The Andijan Uprising went down to history as the largest popular movement in Central Asia in the late 19th century. The main causes of the revolt were the colonial policy of Tsarism, strengthening of social and national oppression, and tyranny inculcated by the Russian administration in respect to the local population.

Representatives of Kyrgyz, Uzbek, and Tajik ethnic groups and different social strata attended the uprising; ministers of religion headed the uprising with conformist slogans and appeals. Most of the population of the region professed Islam for centuries; indeed, the religion was deeply entrenched in people’s minds. The rebellion was aimed at protecting interests and aspirations of general population and was of a nationalist character.

The Andijan Uprising broke out in May 1898. About 200 Uzbeks and Kyrgyz gathered together in the evening on May 17 in the Tajik village (Min-Dube); the *ishan* of that village, Madali Dukchi (*iyikchi* – spindle...
man), headed them while the ideological leader of the rebellion was Ziyadin Maksym uulu (Ziyautdin Magzumi).

The rebels marched to Andijan, cutting the telegraph wires which connected the city with districts. Villagers of Kutchu, Kara-Korgon, and other villages joined them. Soon the number of rebels reached two thousand. At three o’clock in the morning, the rebels came to Andijan and attacked the camp of the 20th Turkestan Line Battalion. The forces were unequal and a crowd armed with sticks and sickles was dispersed by the well-trained and armed Russian troops. Over twenty soldiers and officers of the Tsarist army had been killed in a fierce battle; the rebels also suffered heavy losses. Crossing the Kara-Darya River, they moved to Hakim-Abad. In the Charbak village located ninety kilometers from Andijan, the leader of the rebels, Madali, was captured and hanged on June 12, 1898.

However, the rebellion did not subside and spread to the Fergana Valley. The population of Andijan, Margilan, Osh, and Namangan counties took active participation in it. About three hundred people from Karakol-Say, Tamchy-Bulak, and Japalak aiylys of Osh district gathered in the Ak-Terek village of Noo-kat county on the day when unrest broke out in Ming-Dube. Armed only with sticks and knives, they intended to attack a military garrison in Osh. Omorbek-Datka Alymov headed them. However, the former volost manager Karabek informed the head of Osh County about it and Omorbek Alymov and his assistant Satybay Rakymbaev were arrested together with fifty three people.

Headed by Shadybek Shergazy uulu, people also began to gather in Ketmen-­Tube of Suusamyr volost to join the rebels in Andijan. A punitive squad with more than a hundred bayonets was sent to act against the conspirators and about fifty people headed by Shadybek were captured and driven to Namangan. Shadybek Shergazy uulu
was sentenced to death penalty but then it was replaced by the penal servitude for life. His assistants Umetaly Bagyshbek uulu and Tulebai Beshkempir uulu were sentenced to twenty years in prison. In addition, fifty-four people were deported to Siberia for seven years. Among them was a well-known akyn by the name of Toktogul Satylganov.

Thus, the rebellion was not headed by a strong leader. It was disorganized and included a number of small groups; therefore, it was quickly extinguished.

Numerous special units of the Turkestan Military District were used to defeat the rebellion. Seven hundred seventy people were arrested, four hundred fifteen were prosecuted, and eighteen people were hanged. The death penalty of three hundred sixty people was replaced by long terms of penal servitude.

Despite the defeat, the uprising was the first manifestation of people’s struggle against colonial and nationalist policies implanted by the Tsarist government in Turkestan. It was a struggle for people’s independence and their defeat could not extinguish the movements for freedom.

The russification of Turkestan, as the basis of colonial and nationalist policies, was increasingly intensified at the beginning of the 20th century. A good example is an excerpt of a published circulation of the Governor-General of 31 October 1911, in which all the provincial governors were instructed that

“... [W]e are interested in local people as a material for future works of Russian peasants, so you need to soak them in a blood to honor all Russians; and if someone does not wish to comply, he will be deprived of land and will eke out a miserable existence, or Russia will say goodbye to them.”

"The Andizhan Uprising by R.Isakov"
One of the main causes of the uprising of 1916 was the massive migration of peasants from Russia and the strengthening of arbitrariness during their resettlement. Around two hundred thirty seven million rubles were spent for the resettlement campaign of Russian peasants from central regions only for the period of 1896-1916. In 1916, Russians, comprising 6% of the population of Kyrgyzstan, received 57.7% of all arable lands while 94% of local people were possessed only 42.3% of the land. Peasant settlers scornfully referred to the Kyrgyz, seized their water sources, and blocked water flows (effectively forcing locals to leave their land and migrate). During the Russian trade transactions, using the poverty of Kyrgyz, they bought lambs for only eighty kopeks; calves were sold for 1-1.5 rubles. Often, cattle was just taken away under various pretexts.

Anticipating expressed frustrations by the local population, the Russian Government decided to arm Russian peasants (on top of the already present Russia in military in the region). On November 29, 1891, the Tsarist government approved a document on the arming of peasant settlers. Only the Syr-Darya region received 1500 rifles for distribution among the peasants. After the Andijan uprising, the armament of Russian peasants was even more intensified. During the same year, in 1898, 300 rifles with ammunition were distributed to the settlers in Jeti-Suu area. According to historical data, 18.7 thousand rifles with ammunition were in the hands of peasant settlers in Turkestan in 1901. Before the uprising in 1916, 43% of peasant settlers were armed. This means that every immigrant capable of bearing arms had a rifle.137

World War I began in 1914 and a heavy burden was imposed on all impoverished people already oppressed by the colonialist regime. The difficulties, which had fallen upon all nations, did not spare the Kyrgyz either. Money, clothes, and horses for the cavalry were sent to the front. The decree of a Tsar on June 25, 1916 claimed to enlist men of Turkestan (from 19 to 43 years old) to military defensive works and triggered a wave of outrage from the people who could hardly tolerate the persecution and humiliation of the decree. By the order of Tsar, thousands of people were mobilized in the regions of Turkestan: In the Syr Darya - sixty thousand; in Samarkand - 32.5 thousand; in Ferghana - 51.3 thousand; and in Jeti-Suu - 43 thousand. Driven to despair by colonial oppression, the people of Turkestan were compelled to rise to an open struggle for liberation.138
The uprising, which began on July 4, 1916 in Khujand of Samar-kand Oblast, quickly spread to the Syr Darya and Ferghana Oblasts. The Kyrgyz actively participated in the July uprising in the Fergana Oblast. Residents of the Andijan district openly refused to carry out the Tsarist decree, destroyed special mobilization lists, and attacked government officials. The mountain Kyrgyz of Kokand and Namangan counties also took an active part in the uprising as Talasbay Alybaev led the revolt in Namangan district.

The liberation movement spread to the valleys of Ketmen Tube, Chatkal, and Toguz Toro. The uprising in Osh district began in early July with the gathering of ten thousand disgruntled people at the foot of the Sulaiman Mountains. By the beginning of August most of the southern part of Kyrgyzstan was up in arms.

The uprising in the north of Kyrgyzstan was particularly acute and dynamic. The armies they fought against were well prepared and were equipped with modern imperial weapons. Representatives of other ethnic groups, including Kazakhs, Uighurs, and Dungans took part in the rebellion together with the Kyrgyz people.

The initial gathering attended by the representatives of various nationalities living in the Jeti-Suu area was held on July 10 in the area of Kaman-Karagaj near Karkyra fair. At that meeting it was decided: not to send people to the army; if necessary, to stand up to fight against the imperial authority by the force of arms.

The uprising, which began in July, gained momentum in August. The Kemin Kyrgyz were one of the first in Northern Kyrgyzstan, who stood on the path of armed struggle. The Khan and the leader of the uprising were proclaimed the manap Mokush Shabdan uulu; this was associated with the deep-rooted tradition in the minds of people when they had to choose their leader or Khan from the feudal lords. Most of the wealthy people who had experienced the oppression of colonial policy were on the side of common people.

On August 8, the population of nearby aiyls of Tokmok joined the movement; on August 9, a small detachment of rebels led by Ybraim Tülö uulu ambushed the Russians in the Issyk-Kul tract and seized a train with one hundred seventy-eight rifles and more than thirty thousand patrons.

At the same time, the rebels from Sarybagysh and Atake volosts besieged the Novorossiysk village and Cossack village Samsonovka. By
mid-August, the uprising spread to 12 volosts of Pishpek County, as well as the Issyk-Kul and Talas regions.

The Tenir Too Kyrgyz also played an important role in the uprising. The Kochkor valley became the center of the uprising of that region. The rebels raised bolush Kanat Ubuke uulu (Kanat Ubukin) on a white felt mat, and proclaimed him their Khan, giving him an oath of obedience. The Khan, together with three thousand soldiers armed with rifles and 30-40 wick guns, moved to the Chu valley through Shamshy pass in early August.

There were no military professionals or experienced politicians in the army of Kanat-Khan. His advisers were chauvinist-minded manaps and mullahs, who promised the eternal paradise for the destruction of the infidels. Kanat’s army spread out the Chu valley and exposed the massacre nearby Russian villages. At the beginning, the rebels captured the old Tokmok and from the 13th to 22nd of August they besieged the city of Tokmok itself. However, after suffering heavy losses from one thousand six hundred Russian soldiers who came from Vernyi (Almaty) and Tashkent, the rebels could not resist and had to retreat.

The uprising in the Issyk-Kul basin was also distinguished by great acuteness and intensity. Starting on August 5, it spread throughout the valley and reached Karkyra in only five days. The Kyrgyz, Kazakhs, Uighurs, and Dungans participating in the events in Karkyra took over more than 500 stores and shops. Combined forces of Kyrgyz and Dungans stormed Karakol on August 11; Sart-Kalmaks inhabiting the aiyls of Chelpek and Borubash actively participated with the rebels on August 13th and 14th.

The tsarist government, fearing the spread of the rebellion throughout Turkestan, withdrew General A.N. Kuropatkin from the army and appointed him as a governor-general of Turkestan. On July 17, 1916, the state of martial law was imposed in Turkestan, by the order of the Minister of War, eleven battalions, three thousand three hundred Cossacks, forty two cannons, and sixty nine machine guns were sent there.
By the end of June, the Tsarist government was able to suppress the main agitations in the Syr-Darya, Samarkand, and Ferghana regions. In the Jeti-Suu area, the situation was more difficult because many more immigrants resided on its territory, making the rebels much more hostile in the region. Even as the unrest subsided in other regions, the Tsarist government had a particularly difficult time calming the uprising there.

A total of six thousand five hundred thirty well-armed troops of the Turkestan Military District participated in the suppression of the uprising in Jeti-Suu. Later, by the order of the Minister of War, two additional Cossack regiments and two hundred forty cavalry scouts armed with forty machine guns came from the front lines of the “Western” front of World War I. Prior to deployment events, 43 percent of peasant settlers were armed. On August 15, 1916, the Military Governor of Jeti-Suu, M.A. Filbaum, was instructed to suppress the uprising by the means of horse and foot guards of Russian peasants. To improve the efficiency of punitive measures against the rebels, the Governor-General of Turkestan, A.N. Kuropatkin, ordered to establish temporary military field courts on August 12, 1916.

Russian troops did not make much effort to suppress spontaneously rebellious people, armed with pitchforks, scythes, clubs, and swords. Well-armed and trained in military tactics, Russian Cossack troops brutally destroyed the hotbeds of insurrection. In late August, the last major battle between the rebels and chasteners took place near Karakol. On August 21, about four thousand rebels attacked the enemy with two wings, left and right, several times. More than seven thousand rebels took part in the battle in Tüp on August 28. By September, except for minor clashes with punitive squads, the uprising was largely suppressed.

The Tsarist government gave direct instructions to ruthlessly suppress the rebels, punish and destroy local communities, and loot and
burn their villages. Settlers were allowed to recover the losses incurred as a result of the uprising at the expense of cattle and property of the rebels. Military courts sentenced participants in the uprising to be shot; punitive forces and peasants-settlers helped to punish not only the rebels, but also those who did not participate in the uprising, including the elderly, women, and children. For example, over five hundred people of the Kyrgyz village Belovodskoye had been locked in a shed and brutally murdered the next day. The same thing happened in Issyk-Kul in the Teploklyuchenka village - about five hundred people were killed and more than 100 human corpses were thrown into the Ak-Suu River. In Przhevalsk, only six out of the seven hundred local Dungans survived. Fleeing from the cruel violence and indiscriminate destruction, the Kyrgyz began to migrate to China in late September, leaving behind their native land, livestock, and property. As winter approached, many froze to death, fell into the abyss, or starved.

The population of the Chu and Issyk-Kul valleys was particularly affected by the excesses of the punitive expeditions. In such a difficult time, folk heroes tried to save their people from extermination by all means. Among them were Dur Sooronbai uulu – the Volost manager from the Chu Valley, Kydyr ake – a well-known figure of the Issyk-Kul region, and Turkmon - the volost manager from Suusamyr. Each of them were able to arrange talks with the representatives of the Tsarist power to prevent flight of their neighbors and relatives to China and thus saved 400-500 families from certain death. However, most of the Kyrgyz could not escape death. Those who miraculously survived found their refuge in China. According to Chinese sources, three hundred thirty-two thousand people (130 thousand of whom were Kyrgyz) fled to China from Jeti-Suu. The population of Northern Kyrgyzstan decreased by 41.4% and two hundred thousand Kyrgyz were killed in the uprising in 1916.139

Thus, the national liberation struggle of the Kyrgyz people was defeated and brutally suppressed. However, despite the failure, the rebellion was of great historical importance. The Tsarist Government met the resistance from the local population. People of different nationalities realized that only by joint efforts they could fight against oppression.
The uprising of 1916 was not only a great national liberation movement in Kyrgyzstan, but also became one of the most significant events in the political life of Kyrgyz people. Other representatives of local populations took part in the uprising along with the Kyrgyz. Despite the defeat and brutal suppression, the rebellion largely shattered and weakened the colonial regime in the Turkestan region.\(^{140}\) The masses gained unprecedented experience in the fight for freedom. This struggle of the Kyrgyz people for their native land, justice, and independence became one of the most tragic pages in the history of Kyrgyzstan.

In summary it should be noted that the national liberation struggle was caused by the dissatisfaction of the colonial-nationalist policy of tsarism, increased oppression, extortion, and various crippling taxes. The first and the largest display of discontent of the peoples of Turkestan in the beginning of the 20th century was the Andijan uprising, which was populist and of a national liberation character. Regardless of the outcomes, the 1916 rebellion gave a powerful impetus to the awakening of national consciousness and further struggle for the liberation.

The Culture of Kyrgyzstan in the middle of the 19th – early 20th centuries

Russian and Ukrainian villages appeared all over Chu and Issyk-Kul and differed from poor peasants Kyrgyz villages by the quality and the appearance of buildings, streets, and the landscape of yards. New way of life did not pass unnoticed; the Kyrgyz learned to build tall buildings with hipped roofs, windows to the streets, porches, and steps. Estates were fenced and all the necessary household buildings were erected. For example, in Kyrgyz villages, such as Tash Dobo of Chui and Darkhan of the Issyk-Kul valley, Kyrgyz houses were built along the streets lined with trees, evidence of the first instances of larger scale urban planning.
Since the beginning of the transition of Kyrgyz to the sedentary way of life in the 18th century, traditional dress had witnessed some changes. Uzbek, Tajik, Tatar, Russian, and Ukrainian style, of course, influenced the change. Indigenous people started to use a more European style of clothing. However, in areas with nomadic and semi-nomadic way of life, clothes were still handmade from skins of domestic and wild animals, thinly rolled felt, and sackcloth woven from the wool.

In the 19th century, consumption of cereals and other agricultural products increased; the range, quality, and forms of household utensils changed. For example, cooking utensils that were previously adapted to nomadic life were much lighter and were usually made of leather or wood. Ceramics were widely used in all areas of Kyrgyzstan, but especially in the south among the sedentary population. Even after the accession of the regions of Kyrgyzstan to Russia, however, material culture, arts, and crafts of the Kyrgyz were still changing fairly slowly.

Since ancient times, such features as respect for elders, reverence for ancestors, mutual assistance, hospitality, and respect for customs and rituals were an integral part of the material and spiritual life of the Kyrgyz. Every significant event of the Kyrgyz was traditionally accompanied by a variety of folk games, such as er-saiysh, jamby atysh, at-chabysh, ulak-tartysh, oodarysh, kuresh, arkan-tartysh, tyiyn-enish, ordo, kyz kuumay, akcholmok, jooluk tashtamai, jashynmak, dumpuldok, or toguz-korgool.

To the extent that they could (according to their income and opportunities), all social strata of the population tried to follow the customs and rituals associated with birth, naming, circumcision, cutting the bonds, payment of bride price, dowry, and gift giving.

Traditions and rituals of folk and religious festivals seem to be very peculiar to the modern observer. The Kyrgyz celebrated the eastern New Year (Oruzdama) solemnly and pompously. On this holiday (March 22), people wished each other all the best, happiness, and prosperity. They reconciled with each other and forgave each others’ offenses. People gathered in groups and cooked holiday barley porridge (köyö) or soups from wheat germ (sümölök). They also cooked delicacies from dried sausages and invited honorable guests.

Like all Muslim nations, the Kyrgyz followed the rites of Orozo Ait and Kurman Ait - religious holidays of abstinence and self-purification.
Great importance was attached to the observance of rituals associated with the last journey of the deceased, including the sacrifice of animals, *janaza, dooron, jyrtysh,* and funerals for the dead. The number of cattle killed at funeral and memorial service depended on the financial and social status of the deceased. Usually, dozens, and in some cases, hundreds of cattle were killed.

According to the Russian scholar V.V. Radlov, the Kyrgyz in the 19th century were in the prime era of their epic art. This is confirmed by the creative work of *manaschy,* storytellers of the epic “Manas,” which reached its climax because of relentless dedication. Performance of the epic was particularly honorable and popular among the Kyrgyz.

The most prominent performers of this genre, Balyk, Keldibekov, Nazar, Chonbash, Teltay, Kalmyrza, Suranchy, Choodan, Jandake, were called “great manaschy” and enjoyed great respect. These talented people improved the imperishable legacy of previous narrators. Each manaschy felt obliged to pass his skill and art to other talented performers. For example, students of *manaschy* Japyi uulu Tynybek (1846-1902) were storytellers Sagymbay, Kalygul, Togolok Moldo, Baybagysh, Donguzbay, among others. The fascinating skills of these storytellers is proved by the fact that once well-known *manaps* Shabdan, Baytik, Ozbek, and Sooronbai listened to the epic “Manas” by storyteller Tynybek for 30 days in the garden named after Sooronbai near Tokmok.

During the performance of “Manas”, great storytellers got the feel of their characters and epic situation as if they themselves became complicit in the events. One of such *manaschy* was Sagymbay Orozbak uulu (1867-1930). Sagymbay-manaschy was from Kabyrga aiy of Issyk-Kul region. He learnt about the epic from contemporary storytelling masters. Highly artistic content, complete songs and patriotic directions characterized his versions of the performance of the epic “Manas.” The version of Orozbak was distinguished from others with its rich factual saturation and colorful folk setting.

During this period, small epics were finally formed and artistically polished. The need to preserve the balance of nature, respect for animal life, and the development of environmental culture is reflected in *dastan* “Kajojash”, a tale about daring and foolish hunter.141

The epic “Er Töshtük” embodied the most ancient ideas of the Kyrgyz about the structure of the Earth and Universe. It was a poetic guide,
where human relations and concepts of good and evil were discussed and which, at that time, served for the development of social consciousness.

The political situation in Central Asia and the selfless struggle of the Kyrgyz against the Oirot invaders were narrated in small heroic epics “Janysh-Baiysh”, “Kurmanbek”, “Er Tabyludy”; they were widely spread throughout the region in the 17th – 18th centuries. The dastan “Janyl Myrza” glorified the struggle of women for freedom and equality during the ancient martial era.

The creative nature of the people was instilled in the works of akyns and national thinkers. Akyns and singers proved their word skills at match-improvisations. One of them, Jenijok (Ote Koke uulu, 1859-1918), gained particular people’s respect for his highly artistic works and philosophical understanding of life.

The great bard of the Kyrgyz people (1864-1933) earned wide recognition for his songs about the plight of people and ideas of justice. He exposed the existing class structure and social contradictions, as well as denounced powerful people. Toktogul became a mentor and a wise counselor of many well-known akyns of his time. For the passionate song in defense of common people against the arbitrariness of bais and manaps, the Tsarist authority on a false denunciation of enemies sent him to Siberia as a member of the Andijan uprising. Toktogul was not only a perfect improviser, but also a vivid epos storyteller and a folk thinker.

The famous poet-improviser Barpy Alykulov (1884-1949) was born in the village of Achy (territory of modern Suzak region). His songs were characterized by deep philosophical reflection. In addition to acute social works, he created a number of epics which told about the nature of the world, human life, the vicissitudes of the epoch, and contained many lyrical songs.
One of Toktogul’s students was a poet-improviser Eshmambet Bayseit uulu (1867-1926). His songs always featured imagery, philosophical substance, and sharp polemic. Great poetry and improvisation skills were clearly expressed during competition with such well-known akyns as Kalmyrza Sarpek uulu, Jenizjok, Janybay, Kuran, Naymanbay, Barpy, and Kalyk.

Lyrical, labor, household, and heroic songs were very popular among the population. People conducted group poetry competitions (sarmerden) and comical song gatherings (yr kese), where individuals could show off their talent and wit.

Skills of playing musical instruments were developed and transferred from generation to generation. The komuz stood out as the most honorific of these instruments. Rich spiritual culture of the nation found its expression not only in the epics, oral folklore, and songs of the akyn, or improvisers, but also in the legacy of popular thinkers.

A significant mark in oratory and philosophical thought of the Kyrgyz of the 19th century was left by Kalygul Bai uulu (1785-1855). He gained great reverence of the people due to the depth, significance, and wisdom of his thought, not to mention his ability to anticipate events. He was named Kalygul-oluya (Kalygul-seer). Before Kalygul, such people as oluya Asan Kaigy, Sanchy-synchy, Tolubai-synchy, Jeerenche-chechena, and many others were known for their artistic expression. Known manaschy Sagymbay talked about Kalygul: “Kalygul-akyn is the father of Kyrgyz akyns. His didactic works, such as “The Word of Kalygul”, “End-age”, “Instructions”, and “Praising Issyk-Kul” were perceived as wise advice and therefore had enormous popularity among the people.

One of the followers of this form of east poetic eloquence was Arstanbek Buylash (Boylosh) uulu (1824-1878). In popular memory, he
was the author of the *komuz* tunes and song melodies. His main work "*Tar Zaman*" ("downtrodden world") told (with poetic reasoning) about society and politics. Reflecting on the contemporary political life of the Kyrgyz, Arstanbek largely condemned the accession of Kyrgyzstan to Russia. According to him, it was expedient to accede to Jeti-Shaar, a state established by Jakypbek in Eastern Turkestan. Such thoughts of *akyns* were actually the reflection of conflicting attitudes which largely existed in Kyrgyz society during that time.

The deep essence of everyday occurrences is very vividly and clearly expressed in the poetic works of Kalygul and Arstanbek. Each line of their songs is characterized by high artistic quality, concise sound, and informative pithiness. This is evident in the fact that people still use many sayings, proverbs, and phraseologies of these bright thinkers.

One of the first *akyns* to write his works in native Kyrgyz language (earlier Chaghatai was typically used), was the prominent Moldo Niaz (1823 -1896). He was born in Kyzyl-Bulak *aiyl* near Osh. He was educated at a local *madrasah* and then in another at the city of Kashgar. His works were known to southern Kyrgyz as well as northern Kyrgyz. The author’s own performance was highly appreciated. In his fine works from the philosophical position of Sufism, Moldo Niyaz wrote about people, good and evil, life and death, and the essence of being. The content of his work was borrowed from the influences of Oriental poetry. The works of Moldo Niyaz reflected the philosophical views of various social strata and their moral and ethical standards. We have heard only three out of seven of his manuscripts, "*Sanatyrlary*" ("Poetic instruction"), unique (like much Kyrgyz poetry) for its artistic value.

After the accession to Russia, other masters of word, who could read and write, continued the tradition of Kyrgyz written poetry started by Moldo Niyaz. One of them was Baiymbet Abdyrakmanov (Togolok Moldo 1860-1942). He was born in the countryside of Kurtka in Naryn. His uncle from the paternal side, song-writer Muzooke, introduced him to poetry, while a local *mullah* taught him to read and write. Accompanying the famous *manaschy* Tynybek, the young poet memorized the entire fragments of the epic "*Manas*". *Manasch* Tynybek praised his literacy and gave him a creative name *Togolok Moldo*. As a teacher, he strongly promoted the development of his
student’s talent. Togolok Moldo composed melodious songs of different genres and creatively reworked folk ritual songs, legends, and stories. In addition, he left us with the number of his own-recorded scenes from the epic “Manas”.

The most famous akyn of the Kyrgyz people was Moldo Kylych Shamyrgan uulu (1868-1917). Having started his education with the mullahs, he further studied on his own. He was interested in Eastern poetry, as well as the history of literature and philosophy. In 1911, he published a collection of gazelles titled “Zilzala” (“Element”, literally - “Earthquake”) in Kazan. It was the first printed work of Kyrgyz poetry. In his works, Moldo Kylych, like other Kyrgyz thinkers, sought to highlight the most pressing questions of social life. It is clear that his philosophical and ideological positions were largely determined in terms of the feudal-patriarchal ideology and social inequality existing in the society. With the accession of Kyrgyzstan to the Kokand Khanate, the influence of Islam on the local population increased. In this regard, the work of Moldo Kylych quite clearly manifested religious motifs. During the years of religious ideology domination, the development of spiritual culture in the mainstream of religion was a natural phenomenon. He even tried to explain such philosophical concepts as “good” and “evil” by using the basis of religious rules.

Moldo Kylych preached that human happiness was not in material wealth but in the spiritual world and the breadth of one’s heart. He emphasized that the evil, lazy, mean, and vengeful man could never be happy. Moldo Kylych called for goodness, temperance, modesty, and justice and to avoid vanity, conceit, and immoral intentions. Moldo Kylych considered the family welfare to be the foundation of good and happiness. He said that a good wife was the light in the house and the source of support in life; on the other hand, he held that a bad wife was a forerunner of misfortune and sorrow in the family. The basis of Moldo Kylych works was, first of all, his great desire to cultivate spiritual and moral qualities, to push the boundaries of human vision and the relation to the society.
Musical art continued to develop. Folk musicians reached the highest skills of playing the *komuz, kay-ak, temir-komuz, choor, kerney-surnay, sybyzgy*, and other musical instruments. They created highly artistic works. Some musicians stood out with their striking skills and professionalism. They included Kurenkey Belek uulu (1826-1960), Nyyazaaly uulu Borosh (1860-1949), Karamoldo Oroz uulu (1863-1960), Boogachy Jakypbek uulu (1866-1935), Ybray Tuman uulu (1885-1967), and others. They made an imperishable contribution to the spiritual culture of the Kyrgyz people with their songs of various genres. They had songs which were solemn and joyful, sorrowful and sad, deeply philosophic and emotional. Many works were later recorded and their music entered the treasury of the Kyrgyz art.

With the accession of Kyrgyzstan to Russia, the relations of the Kyrgyz with other Turkic and Muslim peoples who resided on the territory of Russia were intensified, especially with Tatars and Bashkirs. These ethnic groups played a significant role in the development of Kyrgyz culture. They served as a catalyst for the beginning of its research, supported talented representatives of Kyrgyz people, and contributed to the print edition of their works. One of these gifted people was the first Kyrgyz historian Osmonaaly Sydyk uulu.

A prominent scholar and a chronicler of Kyrgyz history was Belek Soltonkeldi uulu Soltonoev. Preserved in a manuscript the work of B. Soltonoev “Kyrgyz-Kazak taryhy” (“Kyzyl-Kyrgyz taryhy”) is an important source of the history of Kyrgyzstan. For his time, B. Soltonoev was a highly educated man. He wrote several works of poetry and was well acquainted with the historical, philosophical, and ethnographic works of prominent Russian and world cultures. In describing the history of the Kyrgyz people, B. Soltonoev made significant strides in understanding...
its development. His division of society into social groups, manipulation of the concepts of classes, and class struggle showed great familiarity with the Marxist-Leninist literature.

His works give information about the epic “Manas,” prominent manaschy, the famous Mahmud of Kashgar, legendary thinkers of the Kyrgyz people (like Tolubai-synchy and Asan-Kaigy), and well-known bards such as Kalygul, Arstanbek, and Moldo Kylych. In his manuscript, Soltonoev paid special attention to the evolution of Kyrgyz world-views on astronomy, mathematics, society, and nature.

After the joining of Kyrgyzstan to Russia, the educational movement in Kyrgyz society quickened. Prominent educators of that time, including Ishenaaly Arabaev, Ybrayym Abdyrahmanov, Dur Sooronbai uulu, and Umet moldo Tugelbay uulu made a great contribution to the educational and cultural development of Kyrgyz people.

**Education and Public Health**

Having joined Russia, Kyrgyz society began to witness radical changes in education. The number of schools was growing, the level of education became better, and its content changed as well. If previously, the Kyrgyz, like other Muslim nations, taught their children in religious schools – (madrasahs), from the beginning of 1886, the so-called Russian-native schools were organized along with the madrasahs. In Russian-native schools, in addition to traditional Islamic disciplines, students studied the Russian language, literature, and the bases of secular culture. The program also included such subjects as arithmetic, geography, history, and the natural sciences. In 1883, three hundred ninety-one students attended forty-one Russian-native schools in the Osh district. In 1914, the number of schools increased to two hundred twenty nine and the number of students reached three thousand two hundred (only thirty of them were girls). Fifty-nine schools with one thousand three hundred students operated in Pishpek County. One hundred twenty-eight schools with two thousand three hundred students operated in Karakol County. Since the beginning of the 20th century, new-method schools with sound study of literacy became widely spread throughout Kyrgyzstan.

During this period, the increase of the number of madrasahs was also observable. For example, if in 1892 there were only 7 madrasahs throughout the southern part of Kyrgyzstan, by 1914, already 88 madrasahs operated only in Osh district. Graduates of these schools became muftis, kazi, and school teachers, among other professions.
As the initial link of a specific training, agricultural schools were opened in Karakol and Pishpek where Kyrgyz youth studied Russian, the basics of arithmetic, history, physics, botany, zoology, and other subjects, along with new methods of management.

From 1870, secular and church primary schools for children of Russian immigrants were opened. In 1889, the educator Dur Sooronbai uulu opened a school after the Russian-native model in the Saylyk Village of Tokmok County; the school was for Kyrgyz children. The initial progymnasium was founded in Pishpek in 1897. Men’s Gymnasium was founded in 1910 while the first progymnasium for girls was opened in Karakol in 1911 where, though in small numbers, Kyrgyz boys and girls were educated.

Despite the limitations imposed by the colonial policy, there were some temporary benefits. Centers of education and libraries where people could read the periodical literature, magazines, and newspapers were opened all over the territory of Kyrgyzstan. New books in Russian, Tatar, Kazakh, and Uzbek languages were also available. From 1911, the works of such Kyrgyz poets and educators as Moldo Kylych, Ishenaaly Arabaev, and Osmonaaly Sydyk uulu began to be published in hard copies; Kyrgyz readers read them with great warmth and interest. In 1914, the first “Edison” cinema began working in Pishpek.

Big changes occurred in health care services during this period as well. Stationary garrison hospitals started to operate. Centers for the civilian population appeared later in the cities. The first municipal hospital was opened in Osh in 1900. By 1913, 4 urban and 2 rural hospitals operated in Kyrgyzstan and its patients were provided with professional medical care and received vaccinations against the smallpox and typhoid fever. Some representatives of the Kyrgyz population were involved in health institutions; this was their first introduction to the fundamentals of certain areas of scientific medicine.
The period of the second half of the 19th – early 20th centuries is known not only for technical and scientific inventions, but also for the discoveries of new lands and peoples which were mainly carried out within the framework of international colonial project. In this regard, Central Asia was not an exception. Major Powers, particularly Britain and Russia, considered it as an important geopolitical and strategic resource for broad and deep capital accumulation and dissemination. To implement imperial projects, military and diplomatic affairs of these countries used the help of travelers, scientists, military people, and missionaries. We believe that the travelers and explorers of the second half of the 19th – early 20th centuries were also the developers and key figures in global network of communication and networking. They connected distant worlds and continents, different peoples and cultures, and new and old ideas and concepts. During this period, scientific discovery flourished in Kyrgyzstan too.

The “Great Game” is not a new phrase for anyone today. It has a long lineage of almost two centuries; its field of play under the name of Central Asia comprises of 5.8 million km., and includes Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan; it has own players and on their economical and political positions and interests the future of our region is dependant.

Contemporary geopolitics of the countries participating in the New Great Game, of course, differs from those stated at the beginning of the 19th century. Tens of professionals are engaged into their comprehen-
tion today while here we will emphasize the main points only. First of all, the team has expanded and main players have been “reshuffled”. The main forces are the USA and Russia; their geopolitical interests are distributed not only to our region, but also to the Balkans and the Caucasus. Japan, the European Union, and Turkey are also the players who have come to the region after the collapse of the Soviet Union and claimed international and regional dominance.

China’s interest in the region was motivated, particularly by Great Britain in the 19th century. Today, though, the need for new energy sources, the need for economic growth, and a desire to achieve a position of the regional and international leader keep China in Central Asia. Few years ago, a well-known American political scientist Z. Brzezinski distinguished Central Asia as a possible area for regional dominance of China; today this dominance is manifested in the activities of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the leading role of China in it.

Returning back to the 19th century Great Game, we have to indicate its importance in the process of globalization; it is the period when countries entered an uncompromising struggle for the allocation of capital and the search for markets, continuous source of raw materials and cheap labor, and the ability to implement own cultural values in a different space and time. The most severe struggle ensued between the two axes of international politics - Great Britain and Russia, and was largely manifested in military and scientific expeditions to the regions of Central Tien Shan, Pamir-Alai and the Hindu Kush. Their main aim was to investigate economic, geopolitical, and cultural perspectives for further imperial colonization.

Who were those people who fearlessly took these distant voyages and deprived themselves of comfort and composure? Well-known scientists, such as Petr Semenov-Tyan-Shanskii, a Russian ethnographer, Chokan Valikhanov, a Kazakh ethnographer and an officer of the Russian army, the American geographer Ellsworth Huntington and British archaeologist Aurel Stein. There were also British military agents – like Francis Younghusband and Thomas Gordon, and missionaries like Lansdell and Lord Charles Dunmore. Here we should not neglect some female travelers like Olga Fedchenko, Ella Sykes and Lady McCartney who traveled in Central Asia along with anonymous pundits (“a teacher” in Hindi). These Pundits, mostly Hindus Muslims, carried out reconnaissance ac-
tivities in the region on behalf of British Empire. However, there is one thing they all have in common and this thing is that they left for us written and visual information about peoples of Central Asia, including the Kyrgyz. Their expeditions, first of all, sought to accomplish the military and intelligence purposes; on the other hand, researchers gathered the information and materials in their own field of studies necessary for their own research.  

One of the most prominent researchers in Central Asia was Chokan Chingizovich Valikhanov, who made invaluable contributions to the initiation of previously ignored areas of research. Data collected by him is of great importance for the study of geography, history, and Kyrgyz folklore.  

P.P. Semenov-Tyan-Shansky (1827-1914) made big contributions to the study of Tenir Too and Issyk-Kul and composed the orographic scheme of the region in 1856-1857. During his expeditions, Semenov-Tyan-Shansky collected a vast scientific and reliable material, proving the falsity of the information of European scientists about the volcanic origin of Tenir Too Mountains and the river flows from Issyk-Kul Lake. His research served as an important source for the study of the Tenir Too mountain system and several research expeditions to study the region were later initiated by Semenov-Tian-Shansky.  

Subsequently, Nikolai Mikhailovich Przhevalsky (1839-1888) played an invaluable role in a comprehensive study of Central Asia from 1870-1888. During his fifth expedition, he died of typhoid
fever and was buried in Karakol near Issyk-Kul where his monument was erected. Karakol town was renamed to Przhevalsk from 1889 to 1920 and once again from 1939 to 1991.

Special attention of Russian scientists in the research of this poorly studied region was attracted by a monumental creation of the Kyrgyz folklore, the epic “Manas”. For example, famous Russian scholar, V.V. Radloff and Kazakh orientalist Ch.Ch. Valikhanov even founded a separate branch of the study of Kyrgyz epic. They opened the first page of Kyrgyz folklore in their preliminary researches of texts of the epic and its historical content. A fragment of the “Koketeydin ashy” (“Commemoration on Koketey”) epic recorded by Ch.Valikhanov in 1856 was first published in Russian in 1901 in his posthumous work “Jungarian essays.”

In 1862, V.V. Radloff wrote another great episode of the epic “Manas” while listening to the narrator of the Bugu clan and then over the period of 1864-1869 he kept a record of all three parts retold by the manaschy of the Sarybagysh clan. Fragments of the “Manas” consisting of fourteen thousand lines recorded by him were published in Russian transcription (though originally in Kyrgyz language) in St. Petersburg and in German in 1885 in Leipzig. That was a particularly significant event in the history of the Kyrgyz culture.

The region was also explored by Western scholars. Ellsworth Huntington probably was the most prominent among them. He grew up in the United States, in a religious family where the achievements of modern science were highly respected. After graduating from college in 1901, he started his studies at Harvard University and soon became a disciple of William Davis, a famous geography professor. A combined field work in the south-eastern part of America gave Huntington an impetus to study the causes of aridity. The relationship between environment and social events, introduced by Raphael Pumpelly, famous for his geological and geographical research in East Asia, influenced him as well. In 1903, Raphael Pumpelly received financial support from Andrew Carnegie, a famous American patron, and arranged an expedition to Central Asia.

The rapid growth of scientific, technological, cultural and territorial discoveries in the 19th cultures intensified debates in the West about human civilization and the aspects of its development. Proposed theories...
were being extrapolated from evolutionism to development of human society, while anthropologists and historians supported the idea of unity of the human race and, therefore, uniformity of cultural development of tribes and peoples. Another theory, called geographical determinism, reflects the social history of dependence on the environment.

According to the theory, the most basic and main determiner of economic, socio-political, and cultural development of human civilization, as well as the rise and decline of nations and peoples, is nature and its local geographical features. In this sense the idea of Huntington to examine various systems of environment and their impact on the development of human history and culture was right-on and in the manner of scientific environment. But he made it more specific. Huntington proposed a theory on the impact of climate change and adaptation of human society to such a change.145

He argues “…the importance of climate and its change in history and other related sciences is never fully reflected. It is the climate that induces wide difference between the Innuits and Eastern Indians; it is the climate that tempts the Arabs be nomads and simultaneously rob; it allows Italians to easily cultivate the land”.146 To prove the theory he went to the region of Central Asia and visited Kyrgyz nomads in their pasture lands in Issyk-Kul, Son-Kol and Pamir.

The information about the epic “Manas” was published in Russian and European literature as early as 1861. Those were the works of academician V.V. Barthold, Hungarian researcher G. Almashi, and Russian traveler P.P. Semenov-Tyan-Shansky. In their works, they gave general characteristics of the masterpiece of the Kyrgyz folk art. For example, Russian scholar P. Melioransky wrote about historical layers of the epic; F.E. Korsch expressed his view about the identity of the poetics and genre features of the epic.

In 1903, an artist by the name of B.V. Smirnov came to Kyrgyzstan together with the scientific expedition organized by the Russian Geographic Society and wrote down an excerpt from “Semetey” (second part of the epic “Manas”) heard from a famous storyteller and kyyakchy (the player on the accordion) Kenje Kara. He translated it into Russian and
included it in his book “In the steppes of Turkestan” published in 1914. In addition, Smirnov made a record of the performance of Kenje Kara and drew several sketches about the life of the Kyrgyz.147

Scholars V.V. Bartold, N.A. Aristov, and S. Malov made invaluable contribution to the historical systematization of Kyrgyz people. The works of such Russian researchers as A.N. Severtsov, A.V. Kaulbars, A.P. Fedchenko, and I. Mushketov, as well as western scholars M. Friedrichsen, G. Kapyu, Bonvalout, B. Davis, E. Huntington, A. Vambery and others served as the foundation for understanding Kyrgyzstan as a scientific phenomenon. Thus, namely after the annexation of Kyrgyzstan by Russia, its systematic and comprehensive research began.

As part of the Russian Empire, the Kyrgyz received an opportunity to acquaint with scientific and cultural achievements of Europe. Accordingly, Kyrgyz national writings began to develop at a new level. Despite the well-known chauvinistic attitude of the colonial authorities, the reforms of education and public health were accomplished. A network of secular and religious educational and cultural institutions also began to develop; books and the first works of science and fiction were published in Kyrgyz language.

During the unification of Kyrgyzstan to Russia in the late 19th and early 20th century, an extensive scientific study of society, history, culture, and nature of Kyrgyzstan was accomplished. Scholars from Russia and elsewhere began to study the geography, ethnography, folklore, and history of this region through various military and scientific expeditions. They laid the foundations for further development of Kyrgyzstan. 

Aside other costs of colonial policy, it was a progressive side of the annexation of Kyrgyzstan by the Russian Empire.

V. Bartold

Migration of Kyrgyz
by V. Vereshagin (1869)
The Fall of Tsarism.  
The Establishment of the Soviet Power

The February bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1917 became an important event in the history of the peoples living in Russia as it overthrew the Tsarist regime and granted political freedoms to a greater number of people. Political parties ‘revived’ from the underground and the first Kyrgyz Bolshevik-revolutionary Taabaldy Zhukeyev was released from prison along with other political prisoners. General democratic reforms, such as the proclamation of the principles of a democratic republic, the idea of the nationalization of land, the introduction of an eight-hour workday, and others largely met the anticipations and expectations of the Kyrgyz people.

News about the victory of the February Revolution reached Kyrgyzstan only by the beginning of March. Mass rallies and demonstrations, in which protestors demanded the elimination of the Tsarist power, the introduction of an eight-hour working day, the end of the war, and the liberation of political prisoners were held in Pishpek, Osh, and other county centers with a high concentration of industrial proletariat. On March 11, one hundred thirty political prisoners were freed after a rally gathered near the prison building in Pishpek. Three hundred people were released in Osh after a gathering held on March 10. Thirty-four people were released in Karakol around the same time. On March 6, 1917, Kyzyl-Kiya miners formed the Soviet of Workers’ Deputies; similarly, miners in Sulukta organized another Soviet on March 16. Along with the workers’ Soviets, Soviets of Soldiers’ Deputies were set up in the cities and military units of Kyrgyzstan. Soviets of Soldiers’ Deputies were formed on March 6-7 in Pishpek and then on March 14 in Osh; shortly after, similar Soviets appeared in Tokmok, Naryn, and Przhevalsk.

Bourgeoisie and feudal manaps, supporting the Provisional Government, in parallel with the Soviets started to establish their governments, the so-called executive committees and public security committees. On behalf of the Provisional Government, they intended to exercise the policy of the former Tsarist administration.

T. Zhukeyev
On March 7, the Executive Committee was formed in Pishpek and the majority of the seats were occupied by the representatives of the bourgeoisie, Tsarist officials, Mensheviks, and Social Revolutionaries. These committees were created in the Ferghana Valley, Osh, and in other volosts and village administrations.

Though the February revolution played an important role in Russia’s history as it provided political freedoms and led the path away from the Tsarist system, it did not solve the fundamental questions and concerns of workers and peasants.

The system of colonial oppression in Central Asia, as in other national regions, was not eliminated. Moreover, the last head of the Provisional Government, Kerensky, ordered to treat Turkestan only as a colony. The same Governor-General of Turkestan, Kuropatkin, who performed the duties of a Commissioner of the Provisional Government, as well as former military governors, the heads of the counties, and their administrative apparatus, remained in power.

Shebolin, the former manager of Przhevalsk County, was the head of the office for immigrants and was appointed as a commissioner in the Jeti-Suu Oblast and northern Kyrgyzstan. Lieutenant Zanemovsky, who distinguished himself in suppressing the rebellion in 1916, became a county Commissioner in Pishpek. As expected, he, along with his contemporaries, continued the policy of nationalism and great power chauvinism, frequently attempting to incite the people against each other.

Local people created their own organizations and united the force to advocate for national liberation, equality, and the elimination of colonial oppression. For example, a Kyrgyz public committee was created in Pishpek in April 1917. Such committees were formed in other cities of northern Kyrgyzstan. As a rule, they were led by bais and manaps who earlier served under the Tsars. In August, the Soviet of Deputies of Muslim Workers and Farm Laborers were formed in Osh. Nationalist in character, these committees, however, were largely disorganized.

Thus, in contrast to the central regions of Russia, Kyrgyzstan had formed three institutions: the Soviets of Workers and Soldiers’ Deputies, the Committee of the Provisional Government, and the nationalist force of the public committees. However, any efforts of the parties to establish and consolidate constructive relationships for the joint management brought no effective outcomes. The real power remained in the hands of the Provisional Government.
In Russia, despite the triumphant accomplishment of bourgeois democratic revolution, most social and economic problems remained unresolved. The ongoing World War I and isolating policies of the Provisional Government worsened the plight of the population. The February Revolution did not decide national and agrarian questions, which were very important for the Kyrgyz.

Economic ruin and impoverishment of the people of Kyrgyzstan followed by the 1916 uprising exacerbated the food crisis. The resulting decline in the production of industry dramatically worsened the situation of the workers. The growing dissatisfaction with the policy pursued by the Provisional Government strengthened the calls for sabotage and mobilization of the population.

As a result of those grievances, four hundred ninety Kyrgyz from Osh (who worked at the Moscow factories “Provodnik” and “Tushino”), together with a large group of workers from the logging camps of the Minsk province and many people mobilized by the enterprises in Siberia and Turkestan returned home from the war front, ignoring the prohibitions of the Provisional Government. By the fall of 1917, about thirty thousand people had abandoned their posts. People engaged in the Chu irrigation system were part of this mass movement. Moreover, many workers refused to continue their work in construction.¹⁴⁸

To sabotage of the policies of the Provisional Government, eight hundred service workers held a great meeting in Tashkent on June 2, 1917, creating an organizational office to achieve their goals. The military Governor of Jeti-Suu Oblast was forced to admit that a new wave of confrontation was approaching in a report from June of 1917.

Receiving the news about the dissolution of the Tsars, Kyrgyz refugees began to return home from China. Having experienced great suffering in exile, they were subjected to new tests on the way back, many of them dying along the way. By May 1917, about sixty-four thousand people had returned home. They hoped that the new government would return their lands and protect their rights, but only the Soviets of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies spoke in favor of the returned refugees. The Turkestan Committee of the Provisional Government issued a special decree prohibiting refugees to return to their lands. The interim government, in terms of their treatment of the Kyrgyz (and other peoples of Central Asia) followed policies which were continuation of the former Tsars.
In the spring and summer of 1917, the entire population of Kyrgyzstan became actively involved in politics. Different groups of social democratic direction were formed in Sulukta in March, and then in Pishpek, Osh, and Kyzyl-Kiya in April, May, and June. Members of these groups were not fully aware of the political views of their leaders, who usually were the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries.

In the summer of 1917, the local branch of the national party “Alash,” under the leadership of Abdykerim Sydykov, was organized in Pishpek. This bourgeois-democratic party was found in Kazakhstan and headed by Kazakh intelligentsia representatives, such as Alikhan Bukeikhanov and Ahmed Bektursynov. The party also consisted of representatives of the Kazakh and Kyrgyz intelligentsia, as well as democratically-minded petty bourgeoisie, bais, workers, farmers, and ministers of religion.

The main purpose of the national party “Alash” was the creation of an independent state of the Kazakh and Kyrgyz people. Kyrgyz intellectuals including I.Arabaev, K.Tynystanov, N. Tulin, D. Soronbaev, S. Chukin, and others took an active part in the organization of local branches of the party which were mainly founded in northern Kyrgyzstan. In 1918, “Alash” was eliminated although its progressive representatives conscientiously served for the Soviet regime.

In southern Kyrgyzstan, the local branch of “Shuro-i-Islam” (Islamic Kenesh) was created and brought together the Uzbek and Kyrgyz bais, the servants of the Muslim religion, and intellectuals. The party was founded in March 1917 in Tashkent and was meant to form Turkestan Islamic national autonomy within the Russian Empire. Their ideas had some influence among the population. Tash Kudaibergenov led the local branch of the party in Kyrgyzstan. After the defeat of the “Kokand Autonomy” in 1918, the branch was liquidated.

Several attempts were made to organize a local party “Social-Turan” on the territory of Kyrgyzstan. Its members were supposed to be the representatives of the commercial bourgeoisie, teachers, students, and translators who supported the party line on the establishment of a sovereign united Turkic state. However, even before the final formation of the party, it was banned for being too reactionary.

The party of the Left Socialist Revolutionaries had significant influence on many Russian rural immigrants, as well as some Kyrgyz farm-
ers. It proposed the idea of equal division of the land. Upon accession to power (if it ever happened), the party promised to allocate thirty acres of land to each farmer. It was under this slogan that all local branches of the Party performed their activities.

All these parties were fairly populistic in their approach – they tried to advertise policies which would attract the widest possible audience so they could use their support in their struggle for political power. They were mainly supported by the clergy and rich nationalist segments of the population. Many individuals had membership in more than one of these parties.

Alliances to protect vital interests of workers and ordinary people were formed as well. One of these democratic organizations, a”Bukara” union, was organized in May 1917 by Imash Kobekov and Bakretdin Saipbaev. The party brought together the poor and middle peasants of Pishpek County. Its members, besides Kyrgyz, were the poor representatives of other ethnic groups, including Kazakhs, and Tatars. The program of the union included the protection of the interests of working people, the raising of political consciousness of Kyrgyz people, and the establishment of democratic principles in all spheres of the Kyrgyz society. The founding congress of the “Bukara” union was held in Pishpek on September 9-10 in 1917 and K. Sarykulakov was elected its chairman of the board; J. Kobekov was elected as its Deputy. The congress adopted a charter and established co-operative consumer societies that operated within the union. In the fall of 1917, the union’s members reached about seven thousand inhabitants of the Pishpek County. In May 1918, the “Bukara” union was transformed into the “Soviet of the Kyrgyz Proletarians”.

Other unions uniting the workers of different professions and social strata were established in Kyrgyzstan. In the spring of 1917, “The Alliance of Workers and Artisans” was created in Pishpek and brought together the construction workers of the Chu irrigation system. Accordingly, “The Union of Mine Workers” and the biggest union of the poor, “The Alliance of Workers and Laborers”, were formed in Kyzyl-Kiya and Sulukta.

Under the leadership of political organizations, the masses demanded to free the captive nations, to stop the imperialist war, to return land to the peasants, to take actions against the hunger and devastation, and to shorten the length of the working day.
As we have already mentioned, the Provisional Government lacked the coordination to solve these problems. The Bolsheviks were able to take the initiatives in leading the masses by the use of the complex political situation (in the period from February to October 1917).

At the beginning of autumn, all Soviets were active in preparing for the second All-Russian Congress of Soviets. D. Dehkanov from the workers and A. Frolov from the soldiers were elected to be the delegates at Samarkand Regional Conference from the Soviet of Sulukta. Voters instructed them to present their mandates to the Congress; these mandates included: to give all power to the proletariat, to confiscate the landlords and private land, to establish workers’ control over the production, and to democratize the social and political life.

Thus, the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia was an important event in the history of all the former citizens of the Empire. Overthrow of the imperial autocracy via revolution opened the way for the constitutional system. However, the February Revolution failed to meet such goals. Issues of peace, land, and national issues remained unresolved. Dual power was established in central Russia; in Kyrgyzstan, a triple power was shared among various institutions. As a natural consequence, various bourgeois, social democratic, and nationalist-patriotic parties and organizations began to emerge in Kyrgyzstan and took over the leadership of the national revolutionary movement. At the same time, influence of the Bolsheviks increased.

The Establishment of Soviet Power and the “Dictatorship of the Proletariat”

By the fall of 1917, the role of the Bolshevik Party in Russia had increased. The growth of its influence was particularly reflected in the work of the Soviets. The defeat of Kornilov’s campaign, which attempted to establish a military dictatorship, raised the prestige of the Bolsheviks and weakened the counter-revolutionary forces. In such a situation, V.I. Lenin put forward the slogan “All Power to the Soviets,” which was a call for armed uprising of the masses, overthrow of the Provisional Government, and the establishment of the so-called “Dictatorship of the Proletariat.” On October 24 (6 November according to new calendar) 1917, an armed revolt broke in Petrograd. The next day, on October 25 (November 7), the workers, soldiers, and sailors seized all the important sites of the capital, and the Military Revolutionary Committee announced the fall of the Provisional Government.
Oskon Osmonov and Cholpon Turdalieva

The All-Russian Second Congress of Soviets elected the first workers’ and peasants’ government (the Soviet of People’s Commissars), which was headed by V.I. Lenin. At that historical moment, the Bolshevik Party became the ruling party. The congress discussed the issues of peace and land and made the first decrees of Soviet power. In accordance with the aspirations of millions of people in Russia, the ownership of land was eliminated; land that was previously state property was distributed amongst the people. Additionally, the Bolsheviks took a preemptive course, declaring universal peace.

The establishment of Soviet power in Kyrgyzstan was implemented with great difficulty. Weak development of productive forces, small size of an industrial proletariat, lack of the influence of the Bolshevik Party, and hostile relations between Russians and the Kyrgyz were already active forces. Many of these problems stemmed from the colonial relationship between the Tsars and the people of Kyrgyzstan. This undoubtedly hindered the state-building efforts of the new government.

The establishment of Soviet power in Tashkent on 31 October (13 November) in 1917 accelerated this process for the whole of Central Asia, including Kyrgyzstan. The Third Congress of the deputies of workers, soldiers and peasants on November 28 announced the transfer of state power in Turkestan to the Soviet of People’s Commissars, which approved the transfer of the power to the field workers, soldiers, and peasants’ deputies.

In Kyrgyzstan, the first Soviet government was announced in Sulukta and Kyzyl-Kiya. The Fergana Region VI Congress of the Soviets greatly influenced the acceleration of the formation of Soviet power in the south of Kyrgyzstan. At the Congress held on December 6th and 7th, the Bolsheviks had the numerical advantage. As a result, they adopted a resolution to transfer power to the Soviets. After that, Soviet power was established in all regions of the Ferghana Valley. In December 1917, Soviet power was victorious in Jalal-Abad; in January of 1918 power was established in Osh.

In northern Kyrgyzstan, the Soviet government was first established in Talas in early
December in 1917. This was made possible because of the active assistance of the workers of the Tashkent-Alma-Ata railway and the garrison of Aulie-Ata. Pishpek likewise played a significant role in the establishment of the Soviet power in northern part of Kyrgyzstan. However, in October 1917, the Bolsheviks of Pishpek did not represent a single organization and continued to cooperate with the Left SRs. Growing discontent of the workers, artisans, poor Kyrgyz people and the victims of the 1916 uprising led to the sharp increase of revolutionary activity in November-December in Pishpek and contributed to the growing influence of the Bolsheviks.

In the fall, several underground Bolshevik groups were created in Pishpek County. For the construction of the Chu irrigation network, a group was led by the worker A.I. Ivanitsyn. Pishpek enterprises were led by a mechanic M.S. Merkun. The garrison in Pishpek headed by G. Shvets-Bazarnyi. At the same time the first National Bolshevik Party of Kyrgyzstan was organized in Pishpek under the leadership of K. Khasanov. The first members of that Party were K. Sarykulakov, I. Khudai-bergenov, R. Soltonbekov, S. Baubekov, and J. Bapanov. The main pillar of support of the Bolsheviks was a “Bukara” union which had great influence among the villagers of the county.

The establishment of the Soviet power in Pishpek County met fierce resistance among the counterrevolutionary forces. A turning point in the course of revolutionary events was a meeting of 1,000 people held on December 31 in Oak Park in Pishpek. The meeting brought together all the revolutionary forces led by the Bolshevik party. At the meeting, they organized their forces and decided to create the Red Guards. On January 1, 1918 the Bolsheviks achieved another important victory; they replaced the military leadership of the Pishpek Soviet and G.I. Shvets-Bazarnyi was appointed its chairman. On January 5, 1918 the Congress of the Soviets of Pishpek County officially announced the establishment of Soviet power in the region.

In February, the Soviet power was declared in Tokmok; at the same time, a Red Guard force consisting of three hundred people was established there. The organization of the Soviet government in the Pishpek County contributed to the overthrow of the bourgeois government in the regional center of Jeti-Suu Vernyi on March 3, 1918. This helped to create the conditions for rapid establishment of Soviet power throughout the entire region.
The establishment of Soviet power in Przhevalsk and Naryn took place under amidst complex circumstances. The residents of these regions who sympathized to the Soviet government appealed for help to the Jeti-Suu regional and Pishpek county Soviets. In response to the Kyrgyz of Naryn, a detachment of Red Guards from Tokmok defeated local counter-revolutionary forces and the remnants of an armed detachment of Kokand Autonomous Government under the command of F. Dubovitskii. The Congress of Soviets of Naryn Oblast announced the establishment of Soviet power on their territory on April 8, 1918. In the Issyk-Kul basin, especially in Przhevalsk, Tyup, Teploklyuchenka, and other villages with large Russian-Cossack populations, the reactionary forces exerted fierce resistance to Soviet power and the fight against the counter-revolutionary forces lasted until the summer of 1918. The Red Guard detachment which arrived from Vurnyi at the end of June in 1918 liquidated the Przhevalsk authority of the Provisional Government and facilitated the convening of the district Congress of Soviets on June 26. Old members were dissolved and new members were elected. Thus Soviet power in Przhevalsk was finally established. By the mid-summer of 1918, Soviet power had been established throughout every region of Kyrgyzstan.

The establishment of Soviet power at central and local levels led to armed resistance of the overthrown exploiting classes, resulting in Civil War which was waged throughout the territories of the former Russian Empire. Accordingly, it is difficult to distinguish the Russian Revolution from the Civil War; many historians argue that the Civil War was a mere continuation of the Revolution.

Bloody relentless war began in the second half of 1918 and lasted until the end of 1920. In Turkestan, and therefore Kyrgyzstan, the war was characterized by particular ferocity, distinct from the fighting that took place in other regions.

In the summer of 1918, the Civil War became quickly spread due to purposeful activities of imperialist powers. Having united with the Whites (White Guards), the interventionists of England, France, USA, and Japan began open military actions to overthrow the Soviet regime. Their main strike force was a force of Czechs and Slovaks that had fought in World War I. The number of fighters in the rebel corps reached
forty thousand. The capture of Orenburg by the Ataman Dutov on July 3, 1918 cut communications between Turkestan and Central Russia.

Aimed at defeating the counterrevolutionary forces, the Aktube (Aktube), and trans-Caspian Semirechensky (Jeti-Suu) fronts were formed in Turkestan in July, 1918. The Turkestan headquarters of defense led military actions while the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic of Turkestan led the fronts. Particular focus was given to the formation of new units of the Red Army. In southern Kyrgyzstan, the Civil War was aimed primarily at fighting the Basmachis, a national liberation group who, over time, turned into a reactionary force.

The sedentary populations of southern Kyrgyzstan were located very closely to each other. These societies, however, were fairly stratified (in part because of the difference in allocated wealth within these sedentary locations). Local authorities, bourgeoisie, and top Muslim clerics were the main driving force behind the Basmachi movement. The anti-religious stance of the Bolsheviks and the persecution of the clergy irritated the masses; the counter-revolutionary forces skillfully took advantage of people’s desire for national independence and played upon their defense of sensitivity towards the protection of religious beliefs.

The armed forces of Basmachi consisted mainly of deceived or intimidated farmers. The Basmachis actively embraced Sharia and promoted counter-revolutionary ideas, often taking advantage of the ignorance of the population at large. The policies of “War Communism”, which sought to seize surplus grain and livestock, was introduced by the Soviet government amidst the chaos of the Civil War. Much to the chagrin of the Bolsheviks, these policies served as the impetus for some farmers to move to the side of Basmachis.

The Basmachis should not be considered just as the nationalist movement led by reactionary feudal lords and the bourgeoisie. The counter-revolution carried out because the Basmachis were supported by the imperialist countries, especially England. Widely spread in Southern Kyrgyzstan, the Basmachi movement was coordinated by such kurbashi as Ergesh, Kalkojo, Madaminbek, Moydunbek, Shermuham-med (Körshermat), Aman-Palvan, and Janybek-kazi, who were actually subordinated to the White Guard officers and foreign interventionists.

The ideologues of Basmachis gave a political color to the anti-populist movement and used appeals and slogans of pan-Turkism and pan-Is-
lamism. Basmachi terror was expressed in the robbery of working people, the wanton destruction of thousands of innocent people, the burning down of entire aïyls and kishlaks, the destruction of small enterprises, and the executions of workers; such destruction does not logically equate with a liberation movement. On the contrary, the movement was actively supported by those loyal to the Tsar, as well as foreign imperialists. Basmachis were a special form of a class struggle of local counter-revolutionary forces against the Soviets.

To protect Soviet power in Turkestan, the Central Executive Committee of the Turkestan ASSR adopted a resolution and organized its defense headquarters on July 10, 1918. The Committee sought to employ the help of the local population; thus, expansive enlistment campaigns for the Red Army began. In Kyrgyzstan, Kyrgyz jïgïts, such as U. Abdrakhmanov, K. Baiälinov, S. Karalayev, J. Saadaev, and I. Tokbaev joined the ranks in defense of Soviet hegemony. Some of the first Kyrgyz soldiers to join the ranks of the Red Army were J. N. Logvinenko, A. Osmonbekov. J. Saadaev, S. Kuchukov, N. Orozaliev, M. Masanchin, K. Kamchybekov, and J. Karabekov.

The first armed clashes of the Red Army in Kyrgyzstan occurred against the internal counter-revolutionary forces in Vernyi in the summer of 1918. Called to arms, the Red Army detachment of Kyrgyzstan showed a high sense of determination and training in the suppression of the Russian-Cossack counter-revolution.

In the summer of 1918, the Red Army attacked the White Cossacks on their way from Xinjiang to Przhevalsk County. Active struggle for the elimination of the Soviet power was carried out between kulaks of the White Guards and foreign interventionists. The rebellion of rich kulaks occurred in August in the village of Dmitrievka (in the Aule-Ata District); many peasants of the Talas valley joined them. The rebels attempted to attract farmers from Merke, Chaldyvar to their side and create new units but were destroyed by the detachment of the Red Army from Shymkent.

In September 1918, a detachment of the Red Army consisting of two hundred fifty soldiers was created in Pishpek and was sent to the Semire-
chensky front (later that detachment was transformed into the first Pishpek Soviet regiment commanded by the Bolshevik J. N. Logvinenko). Strong detachments were also formed in Tokmok, Przhevalsk, Naryn, Osh, Jalal-Abad, and Kyzyl-Kiya.

Basmachi gangs continued their counterrevolution in southern Kyrgyzstan despite the overwhelming forces that were pitted against them. They plundered and burned several Russian villages. To fight with the groups of bandits, the so-called “Peasant Army of Dekhans” was formed in Andijan and Osh. However, the White Guard officer K. Monstrov and former Tsarist General A. Mukhanov succeeded in opposing the Soviet regime by subversive activities and propaganda in the summer of 1919.

Under the guidance of the Left SR, the counterrevolutionaries mutinied in Belovodskoye village on December 7, 1918. The Soviet government established in the village was overthrown and its representatives were hanged. On December 14, joined by the immigrants from peasant villages of Sokuluk, Kara-Balta, Sadovoe, and Aleksandrovka, the rebels attacked and captured the western part of Pishpek. In order to suppress the rebellion, the units of Red Army gathered from all areas of northern Kyrgyzstan and the famous First Pishpek Regiment was recalled from the Semirechensk front. Marching over six hundred kilometers in only nine days, the regiment arrived in Pishpek on December 22. The combined forces of the Red Army inflicted a crushing blow to the rebels and seized Belovodskoye village on December 23. By December 29, the county was cleared of counter-revolutionaries. Red Army Soldiers that died in battle were buried in Oak Park in Bishkek.

In July 1919, a regiment of the White Guard moved into Przhevalsk County and took over Tup Village. The forces were immediately joined by rich peasants and migrants from the villages of Nikolaevka, Pokrovka, Mikhailovka, and

The Monument of Military Glory in Oak Park in Bishkek
Semenovka. On July 20, the Whites, with the support of rebellious peasants, launched an attack on Przhevalsk. Prior to the arrival of Red Army detachments from Vernyi and Tokmok, the inhabitants of the city steadfastly defended it. On July 26-27, the forces of the Red Army inflicted a crushing blow to the invaders; the remnants of the defeated forces retreated to China.

To strengthen Soviet power in Turkestan, the Soviet government organized the Turkestan front on August 14, 1919. Mikhail Frunze was appointed its commander and all military forces of the Turkestan Republic now were under his direction. After fierce battles with the White Guard forces, the Red Army joined the troops of Turkestan in September 1919. Communications between Tashkent and Russia were restored.

In February 1920, by the order of M. Frunze a special brigade of the Kyrgyz and Kazakhs of Jeti-Suu was formed. Osmonbekov A. and N. Orozaliev organized the teams of Kyrgyz volunteers in Namangan district. The formation of national units in the Civil War had a special function of gathering support for the Soviet government.

In September 1919, the commander of the peasant army, K. Monstrov, along with the kurbashi Madaminbek, formed an alliance to create an “Autonomous Government.” On September 8, their combined forces seized the city of Osh and on September 17 besieged Andijan. The troops of the Red Army, who came to help the citizens in late September, struck a crushing blow to the armed forces of K. Monstrov and Madaminbek. The remnants of their forces retreated to Gulcha, where they established the temporary government of Ferghana. In October 1919, Madaminbek convened a group of kurbashes to the meeting, at which he was declared a new Khan. After several armed clashes, K. Monstrov was captured on January 17, 1920. Sensing the inevitability of defeat, Madaminbek agreed to negotiate and, on March 6, 1920, accepted the Soviet power.
In early 1920, the Entente organized another campaign against the Soviet regime. Polish troops joined the forces and attacked Ukraine in May. At that time, a campaign targeted at Turkestan had already been planned.

On May 7, 1920, the Commander of the Turkestan troops, M. Frunze, ordered that thirty thousand people from the local population (aged between 19 and 35 years) to join the Red Army. This was the first large-scale mobilization of the peoples of Central Asia that succeeded.

The remains of the counterrevolutionary forces quickly recovered from defeat and gathered their forces on the outskirts of the country in a last attempt to destabilize the new government. A counterrevolutionary uprising, headed by D. Kiryanov, a former tsarist officer, and Bondarev, a merchant, took place in November 1920, in the valley of At-Bashi. With the support of local bais and manaps, they carried a counter-revolutionary coup in Naryn and captured the commanders of the 23rd Regiment stationed there. Several Soviet leaders were killed, while forty-seven party and government officials were arrested. Royal orders were restored and a new campaign was prepared to march to Tokmok and Pishpek to seize the power throughout the Jeti-Suu area.

The units of Red Army met the rebels on the outskirts of Kochkor. After a fierce battle on November 16, the enemy was outflanked and D. Kiryanov was captured. The remnants of the counterrevolutionaries fled to China. By late November, the Naryn district was completely cleared from anti-revolutionary groups and Soviet power was restored. Thus, the civil war was completed in Kyrgyzstan by late 1920. However, the Basmachi movement in the south of Kyrgyzstan continued until 1924, when it had finally lost popular support of the local population.
Socio-economic construction during the development of the soviet socialist system (1917-1940)

With the establishment of the “Dictatorship of the Proletariat,” the Communists led by V.I. Lenin quickly started to solve one of the most pressing problems – the land question. In accordance with the needs of the vast majority of peasants, who formed the basis of Russia’s population, mass socialization of land was adopted. According to the decree “On the land” adopted by the Soviet government, all the lands were declared the state property. The decree outline the following mandates in regard to the reorganization of land elimination of the private ownership of land and the confiscation of land from large landowners; division of land between the farms in equal installments, thus adhering to the principle “land to those who cultivate it;” secure land rights for business executives; cancellation of all the debts of peasants to creditors and landlords; the elimination of natural and money taxes; provision of logistical and financial assistance to farmers; and, finally, organization of primary agricultural co-operatives for the joint cultivation of the land.

These provisions of agrarian reform were implemented on the outskirts of Russia. From the first days of the Soviet power in Kyrgyzstan, agrarian relations began to undergo fundamental changes. Poor peasants and middle peasants were freed from the natural and money taxes and their debts to credit institutions and moneylenders were nullified.

Land, which was not in individual use, was declared state property and passed to the supervision of local authorities. As a result, three hundred twenty-six thousand acres of land in Kyrgyzstan were confiscated by the new government. The Soviet government rendered special assistance to peasants in the restoration and construction of irrigation systems. A decree, “On the Organization of Irrigation Works in Turkestan,” was initiated by V.I. Lenin and was adopted on May 17, 1918. According to the decree, ninety-four thousand acres of land in the Chu Valley were set aside for the irrigation system. The government allocated fifty million rubles for the development of irrigation systems of Turkestan, 3 million of which were planned for the development of water resources of the Chu River in Pishpek County. All facilities, equipment, and
machinery of the Chu hydraulic system were transferred to state ownership. Local Soviet government, committees of the poor, and water-land commissions played an important role in the agrarian reform. Altogether they distributed the land to resolve the disputed issues.

The Soviet of People’s Economy of Przhevalsk County decided to confiscate the property of the Issyk-Kul monastery on September 17, 1918. As a result, one thousand seven hundred seven acres of monastery lands were redistributed amongst landless peasants; Forty acres were given for the organization of a children’s home and nine hundred thirty three acres were given to the Przhevalsk Agricultural School.

The Water and Land Committee of Pishpek County confiscated land from former Tsarist officials and large landowners. This included five hundred acres from the chief of land management Archangelskyi, one hundred eighty acres from the former head of the county of Rymshhevich, one hundred acres from the county police officer Grubanovskyi, seven hundred acres from the capitalist Ivanov, three hundred acres from Fetisov, eight hundred acres from Pankov, six hundred acres from Almazbekov, and six hundred acres from the Laptevs brothers. In total, six hundred seven landless families were relocated on confiscated areas.¹⁴⁹

Two hundred thousand Kyrgyz refugees returned from China and were placed on one hundred thousand acres of land confiscated from kulaks in Przhevalsk County. The rest of the land was passed to landless peasants. Similar occurrences were common in Tokmok County.

Due to strict national control over the distribution of land, special attention was paid to fair and equitable land allotments for Kyrgyz and Russian peasants. This measure contributed to the smoothing of already-strained relations between the Russians and Kyrgyz in the region. In Russian villages, people began to voluntarily accept Kyrgyz farmers to their communities.

Land allotments were distributed on the basis of equal rights. Land reforms, however, were conducted until the 1920s and affected only a small part of large landowners, such as the kulaks, manaps, and bais. Most of the land remained in private ownership. The variety of land issues in Kyrgyzstan and strong influence of implications of Tsarist colonial policy complicated the solution of this problem. During the period of 1917-1920, many kulaks, bais, and manaps intensified the occupation of peasant lands, to the further aggravation of the peasantry.
At the 1st Congress of the Kazakh and Kyrgyz Poor Folk of the Turkestan ASSR held in January 1921, participants emphasized that “... without the return of the land occupied by migrated settlers, the position of Kyrgyz people cannot be restored.” To reinstate the order and justice in reference to the land question, the Revolutionary Committee of Jeti-Suu Oblast signed a decree which put the land and water reforms of 1921 into motion.

The land and water reforms conducted in the early 1920s were set out to correct the conditions of inequality inherited from the Tsarist period. Several measures were taken to withdraw the surplus land from Russian peasants; to displace Russian villages settled in watersheds and on the intersections cattle ranges, and to give the pastureland of local bais to the poor and landless refugees. In addition to pastures, nomadic demanded more cropland, cash assistance, and to be provided with the necessary tools of agriculture.

The land and water reforms were implemented in 1921 and 1922 and were carried out in the regions which were most affected by the policies in place under the colonial era. These included Vernyi, Pishpek, the Karakol counties of the Jeti-Suu Oblast, Aulie-Ata (Talas Valley), Chimkent, the Tashkent counties of the Syr-Darya Oblast, Jalal-Abad, and the Marhamat counties of the Ferghana Oblast.

In the beginning of November in 1920, experienced Communists were sent to rural areas to conduct reforms and explanatory work. They led special courses to train the specialists of land and water cultivation. The reforms were accomplished alongside fierce class struggle. Bais and kulaks were spreading the rumors that the Soviet regime sought to destroy Kyrgyz villages under the pretext of reform. Other rumors spread stating that all Russian villages would be eliminated, to be followed by the eviction of all residents from the region. Local nationalists perceived all Russians as colonists and demanded their return to Russia. Chauvinistic attitudes of Russian peasants meant that they refused to return the occupied territories and fought for the preservation of the existing provisions.

Special commissions consisting of three authority representatives (Troika) and two hundred eighty five county and aiyl land committees, who included the representatives of all public associations, were engaged in the implementation of reforms. They conducted the inventory
of land, agricultural implements, seeds, and animals. They also carried out most of the work to empower the poor soil. By the beginning of the spring of 1921, the first phase of the land and water reforms was completed.

In the course of reform, however, serious flaws and excesses started to show themselves. Because of tight deadlines and hasty reform, not all land was completely inventoried. In addition, there was no comprehensive data on the number of landless peasants. In many cases, Russian settlements were completely removed and Kyrgyz villages were built in their places. In these circumstances, the interests of individual farmers were totally ignored; many farms of middle peasant were destroyed because they were mistaken as farms of kulaks or bais.

As a result of land and water reforms in 1921 and 1922, as well as the socialist policies of land distribution, land areas occupied by Russian and Kyrgyz peasants were divided equally while the number of Kyrgyz sedentary farms increased. All this led to the expansion of arable areas and the improvement of their cultivation. Not only political problems were solved during these reforms, but also some positive changes in the economy were made. Equal distribution of land to the peasants accelerated their integration into the collective farms. The new policies also improved the conditions for producing large scale agricultural. The reform was accompanied by a determined struggle against bai-manap and kulak elements.

In the spring of 1923, the second stage of reform and implementation of public land management began in the Jeti-Suu region. The reforms of 1923-1926 were socialist in nature and sought to reorient farmers into the collective. By decision of the Soviet government, every farmer was free in selecting individual or collective forms of land use. In addition, farmers were granted the right to use a hired labor. Population that had become a settled household was provided with agricultural tools, animals, and seeds for a period of ten years and with building materials free of charge to build houses and barns. Settled farmers were exempt from any state and local taxes for five years and were also given the rendered agrotechnical assistance.

In Kyrgyzstan, the People’s Commissar of Agriculture of the Turkestan ASSR led the activities on land management in 1923-1924. After the demarcation of Central Asia into nation-states, the further land management in Kyrgyz Autonomous Oblast and the Kazakh ASSR demanded
a unified coordination and supervision. In connection to this, a special commission on settled land management of nomadic and seminomadic farms of the Kyrgyz ASSR was organized under the All-Russian Executive Committee of the USSR in October 1924 and successfully existed until October 1926. In Kyrgyzstan, for the transfer of agriculture to socialist principles, the conversion of nomadic and semi-nomadic economy to the sedentary was important.

Most peasants met land policy of Soviet power with approval and enthusiasm. Kulaks, bais, and manaps accustomed to hosting the best lands rendered desperate resistance. In 1923-1924, Kyrgyzstan had 91.9 thousand households, which merged in five hundred ninety agricultural associations. In the course of agrarian reform, four hundred ninety four landlord possessions and three thousand four hundred forty-seven households of various exploiters were liquidated. However many excesses were carried out during the implementation of these measures; some middle peasants were persecuted.

The Central Executive Committee and the Soviet of People’s Commissars of the Kyrgyz ASSR issued a decree “On Holding the Land and Water Reforms in the South of Kyrgyzstan” on November 12, 1927. As a result of this reform, the land fund in the region was increased to forty six thousand hectares of irrigated land and 2.3 million hectares of dry-farming land; 18.6 thousand of peasants were provided with the land. All chayrykers (sharecroppers) and 75% of the poor peasants received the land as well as agricultural implements and tax incentives. Because of the reforms, feudal landlord possessions, which profoundly undermined the patriarchal-feudal relations, were abolished. In the course of the reforms, sixty collective farms were organized.

The land reform impacted on the settlement of the nomadic people. Even before complete collectivization, forty thousand Kyrgyz nomadic livestock keepers adapted to a sedentary lifestyle. As a result, workers of natural cattle-breeding increasingly shifted to work within the commodity economy.

Competing opinions about the organization of cooperatives of nomadic people were proposed during the years of the reforms. Some offered to organize them on a “clan” or “relative” basis, whereas others proposed the “class” construct. In areas with settled
populations, cooperative societies were formed on the cooperative model from the central regions of the USSR.

Intensive cooperation was held together with the agrarian reform. Kyrgyz peasants, who had not passed the pre-revolutionary school of bourgeois co-operatives, began to organize in different forms of socialist cooperation. Even during the Civil War the simplest forms of cooperative societies already existed. Livestock associations such as “Cholpon” (1924) and “Aksai” (1925) were organized in Kyrgyzstan. The number of cooperatives increased after the formation of the Kyrgyz Autonomous Oblast. By October 1925, two hundred thirty two agricultural cooperatives with 21.8 thousand members existed in Kyrgyzstan. In early 1926, the cooperative movement in Kyrgyzstan was headed by the Soviet of Cooperatives of the Kyrgyz ASSR, which played a major role in its development, building relations with government authorities and fighting against individualistic tendencies.

Livestock credit unions were popular among the nomadic population as they supplied cattle breeders with food, clothing, thoroughbred livestock, fodder, and hay and organized specialized farms enterprises such as sheep and horse breeding).

The state paid due attention to the credit cooperatives. 35% of poor peasant households were completely exempted from agricultural tax. Starting in 1929, all households of the poor were tax-free. In 1926-1928 the number of cooperatives increased from 29.2 to 34.9 thousand. In 1926, 23% of farms in the country were collective; by 1928 this figure rose to 42.2%. Based on natural conditions of Kyrgyzstan, the party and the government paid more attention to the creation and development of livestock cooperatives.

According to the decree on the establishment of specialized cooperatives, “Kyrgyzhlopok”, “Kyrgyzskot”, and “Kyrgyzkolhoz” associations were formed in Kyrgyzstan in 1929 and became the connecting bodies between industry and farmers. These specialized associations played a major role in the formation of the primary forms of cooperation, including partnerships of joint land cultivation. This process was facilitated and gained the strength as many collective farms were created during the seizure of land from bais and kulaks.

In 1925, sixty four collective farms and six Soviet farms operated in Kyrgyzstan with the full support of the Soviet government. In the Chu valley and in Karakol County, the “Alamedin” and “Toktoyan” farms
were organized in 1924 and showed high economic results. They became the model for all farms in Kyrgyzstan as farms for cattle and dairy were developed. By the end of 1928, five communes, one hundred three partnerships for the joint land cultivation, and one hundred agricultural cooperatives operated in the Kyrgyz ASSR. However, these associations comprised only 1.7% of all farms (5.7 thousand in all) and only 2.9% were organized into collective farms.

The Organizational Congress held in January 1928 in Frunze was crucial to the growth of the collective farm movement. Thirty-six delegates from thirty-four agricultural collectives attended it and discussed the state of collectivization in the region.

To implement this important task, special attention was paid to the strengthening of the material-technical base of agriculture in the field, familiarizing farmers with technology, and improving their educational level. For this purpose, special courses, seminars, and exhibitions were organized. Established in 1925, “Kyrgyzselsklad” regularly supplied peasants with farming equipment and already 55% of households had agricultural equipment and machinery in 1926-1927. Over the period of 1924-1929, Kyrgyz peasants received 32.4 thousand plows, 16.6 thousand harrows, 6.3 thousand threshing machines, 1.4 thousand seeders, two thousand of cultivators, and 3.6 thousand mowers from the industrial regions of the USSR.

In 1924, the first three tractors arrived to Kyrgyzstan. By 1928, there were forty-eight tractors in the Chu Valley, four in the Issyk-Kul Basin, eight in Talas, and forty in the south of Kyrgyzstan. Nearly six hectares were cultivated with the use of tractors. The new machinery, however, was not enough to supply all of Kyrgyzstan and farmers had to unite in cooperatives to fully and efficiently use the existing machinery, tractors, water, and land.
Water and land reform, as well as collective and cooperative construction carried out in Kyrgyzstan created favorable conditions for the development and recovery of the agriculture sector. In 1925, the arable land of the republic comprised three hundred twenty-five thousand acres, or 58.3% of the cultivated area before the war. In 1925-1926, gross volumes of agricultural products comprised 50.3% of all products produced in 1914. The growth of agricultural output was associated with the wider cultivation of industrial crops and through the intensification of sheep farming.

In 1924 and 1925, there were about two billion seven hundred ninety-four thousand cattle in Kyrgyzstan, i.e. 58.7% if compared with 1914, though in 1925-1926 the number of cattle reached four billion two hundred one thousand heads, or 90.3% of growth if compared with 1914.

Thus, two sectors of agriculture reached the prewar level in 1928. As a result of the reforms in agricultural sector, the share of the exploiting classes dropped from 12.7% to 3.5%. However, overall agricultural production of Kyrgyzstan was still low; much effort was needed to raise overall levels of production.

Under the New Economic Policy (NEP), the share of middle peasants in the structure of farms increased. A slow decline of the number of poor peasant households appeared. Nevertheless, the unemployment rate in villages and aiyls during this period was still high. Despite receiving the land, many farmers were unable to cultivate it, as they had no seeds and agricultural equipment.

In the formative years of Soviet power, Kyrgyzstan, unlike most autonomous entities of the country, was perceived as an agrarian, stock-raising region. At the initial stage of industrialization, only a few low-power enterprises of light and food industries, as well as several small cotton plants operated in Kyrgyzstan.

In April 1925, the international co-operative partnership “Intergelpo” was organized in Pishpek by the initiatives of Czechoslovakian Communist workers. For this purpose, forty-three hectares of land were allocated near the Pishpek station by Kyrgyz authorities. The workers of ‘Intergelpo’ (Intergelpovtsy) promptly built and commissioned brick, timber, and factories as well as a cloth factory, several shops, and a pow-
er station. This group of workers consisted of 14 nationalities and contributed to the development of industry and training of workers.

NEP provided home enterprises with the freedom of production. Great benefits and the lack of competition from the state-owned enterprises created favorable conditions for the development of a handicraft industry. If in 1922-1923 there were just two thousand handicraft enterprises in Kyrgyzstan, in 1925-1926 their number reached just over four thousand five hundred. At the same time, albeit more slowly, the process of developing cooperatives took off; in 1925, thirty industrial cooperatives, which consisted of 11% of all artisans in Kyrgyzstan, were organized. From 1920 to 1924, total outputs of small producers in the Kyrgyz Republic rose by 41%. Goods produced by artisanal enterprises in 1925 comprised 55% of total output in 1914.

In general, however, Kyrgyzstan maintained its role as an agricultural country. In 1926, the share of industrial production was only 2.3% while the remaining 97.7% of products were from agriculture or cattle-breeding. To carry out the tasks of socialist construction, it was necessary to shift the economy to large-scale machine industry as soon as possible.

The 14th Congress of the Communist Party of Soviet Union (CPSU), held in December 1925, did not put a special issue of Soviet industry on the agenda; nevertheless it determined the course of industrialization of the country. In accordance with the All-Union Plan, the transformation of the Kyrgyz Republic into an agrarian-industrial region started. The measures taken sought to eliminate the technical and economic backwardness of the Republic, increase the growth of the workforce of local nationalities, and create a community of scientific and technical intellectuals.

On December 10, 1929 the second session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kyrgyz Autonomous Republic adopted the first Five-Year Plan, developed on the basis of the All-Union Plan. In February 1930, the Soviet of People’s Commissars of the USSR approved the plan. The first Five-Year Plan was based on the principles of the New Economic Policy.

However, the realization of industrialization in Kyrgyzstan, a country which had not developed any capitalist industries, was fraught with difficulty. The nomadic way of life of the Kyrgyz people, the dominance of entrenched patriarchal attitudes, the backwardness of social order, the total illiteracy of the population, and the activities of class enemies
hindered the pace of industrialization. By the beginning of the first Five-Year Plan, the base of industry in Kyrgyzstan became the processing of agricultural products, leather, cotton, and food.

In 1926, about twenty state-owned enterprises functioned in the country. In addition, many small private enterprises and handicraft organizations in urban and rural areas were formed. The Soviet Government granted three million rubles for the development of industry of Kyrgyzstan in 1926-1927 and provided long-term loans from the State Bank which made it possible to build and put into operation a number of important industrial projects of the national economy. By 1928, the country had thirty-three new enterprises; fourteen of them were big factories or mills. The construction of the Turkestan-Siberian railway in 1930 was an important contributor to the economic development of Kyrgyzstan. This railway directly linked Central Asia and Kazakhstan with the Urals and Siberia.

As a result of the continuous support of workers and the Soviet government in 1928, the Kyrgyz ASSR reached the prewar level of production in all sectors of the economy. The ranks of the working class increased respectively with the development of industry. According to the Soviet census, there were 16.4 thousand workers in Kyrgyzstan in 1926, only 4 thousand of them were Kyrgyz. This is most easily explained by the fact that most Kyrgyz workers were employed in home-based businesses in rural areas. Most of the workers of Kyrgyzstan (61%) worked at coalmines. Out of 8.5 thousand employees in all industrial establishments in 1926, only 0.8 thousand were ethnically Kyrgyz. In addition an acute shortage of professional workers and technical personnel was noticed in all sectors of the economy.\(^{152}\)

As early as 1930, the principles of new economic policies were radically revised as the Stalinist command system began to gain momentum. Bureaucracy, imposition of subjective plans, and strict requirement for their implementation increased. All these destroyed economic accounting and commodity-exchange relations.

Despite the difficulties in Kyrgyzstan, forty-one industrial enterprises were implemented over the first few years of the 1930s. A metal factory, a meat factory, a flour mill, a rise processing factory in Frunze, a sugar factory in Kant, a mechanical-repair factory in Kara-Suu, and a tile factory in Talas were part of this wave of construction. Five brick
factories started commercial production; construction of sugar factories began in Novo-Troitsk and Kara-Balta. Eleven large and small power stations started to operate in Kyrgyzstan during the first phase of a Five-Year Plan (1929-1932) and became the basis of the development of industrialization. In 1932, the country already had 1.5 thousand enterprises. Over the years of the Five-Year Plan (1929-1932), the gross industrial output grew 3.5 times and the share of industry in national economy rose by 23.5%.

In January 1935, the 4th Congress of Soviets of the Kyrgyz ASSR, in accordance with the All-Union Plan adopted the second Five-Year Plan of economic development. Under that plan, major investments were made to the industry of the Republic, especially to the coal mining industry. During the second Five-Year Plan, special attention was focused on the commissioning of new factories with the use of advanced technologies.

In 1935, the renovation of the Tash-Kumyr coal deposit began; mines were renovated and equipped with new mechanisms. This caused a large increase of coal production in the country. Production of oil became the new focus of the Soviet state in Kyrgyzstan. A stable increase in light and food industries was noticed and thus the industry in Kyrgyzstan rose to new heights during the first and second Five-Year Plans.

Industrial development in Kyrgyzstan scheduled during the third Five-Year Plan (1938-1942) also accomplished many aspirations. Forty new industrial enterprises were commissioned. In 1940, the volumes of manufactured industrial products were 1.5 times higher than in 1937. The share of industry was 50.3% of the gross national product of the Republic. The main concern of the development was given to machine building, power engineering, development of deposits of non-ferrous metal and coal, and production of building materials.

NEP, declared in 1920s, was considered as a long-term development strategy of the USSR. Industrialization of the country, cooperation of farms, as well as an increase in material and cultural standards were to be met, according to the principles of the New Economic Policy.

The focus on industrialization resulted in direct and indirect expropriation of the peasants. Methods of requisitioning were again revived. The peasants were deprived of the freedom to sell surplus grain; instead, they were made to sell it to the state at low prices. Those who resisted...
were declared *kulaks* and were prosecuted; their grain was almost always confiscated.

Along with the liquidation of the exploiting classes, the policy of suppressing any independent farmers was conducted as all the means of production were removed and transferred to the jurisdiction of the state. In order to achieve this objective, Stalin proclaimed the policy of “total collectivization” of agriculture in the summer of 1929. On January 5, 1930 the Central Committee of All-Union Communist Party (CC VCP) passed a resolution “On the Rate of Collectivization and Government Measures to Support the Collective Farms,” which set a detailed schedule for the collectivization process.

The collectivization process was carried out under the direct supervision of the Stalinist administrative-command system. Local Party and government organs of the Republic tried to surpass each other on the scale of collectivization in the field and made every effort to complete it ahead of time. This led to rapid collectivization of the Republic; in January and February 1930, the Republic saw a particularly strong push towards modernization. In 1929 only 6.6% of peasants were involved in collective farming; by March 1930, this figure had reached 37.2%. There were reports from areas with the nomadic population explaining that the livestock farms had been overtaken by collective farms. However, many of these reports were untrue. Collective farms were often hastily organized and, as a result, quickly fell apart.

Citizens, particularly from the working-class, were sent to the villages to implement the policy of collectivization. Individual cities, factories, and mills took nearby villages under their patronage. In addition to the people previously sent for harvesting the grain, there were an additional twenty-five thousand workers, who were the so-called “*dvadtsatipyatitysyachnikи*” (literally, the twenty-five thousand-ers). They were very active in the collectivization of peasant regions. Sixty-nine of these *dvadtsatipyatitysyachniks* from Ivanovo in Russia arrived to Kyrgyzstan on February 8, 1930. They were later joined by some two hundred workers, who were divided between northern and southern Kyrgyzstan. Most of these activists were elected as chairmen of collective farms or members of boards and made a definite contribution to the collective construction of the Republic. Some, though, were unable to work under local conditions and returned a year later.
In the course of socialist construction, abuses and excesses were noticed in the villages of Kyrgyzstan. Many peasants were forced to work on the collective farms. Those who refused to join collective farms were declared *kulaks* and left without electoral rights. The fact that Kyrgyz farmers and cattle-breeders were not yet ready to join the collective farms was not taken into consideration.

Strengthening of the tyranny and violence during the collectivization led to the ruin of agriculture, as well as collapse of mass amounts of livestock. As a result, the number of cattle in 1930 decreased by 24.4%. The amount of horses decreased by 18.5%. The number of sheep and goats fell by 15.5%. Because of the total forfeiture of grain, no seeds were left for the spring sowing.

In March 1930, Joseph Stalin criticized the excesses that occurred throughout the process of collectivization in his article “Dizzy with Success”. However, there was no revision of the principles of collectivization and the same mistakes were made the next year. By the decision of the Regional Committee of the Kyrgyz VKP in 1931, collectivization was *not* carried out in Alamedin, Rybachinsk, Karakol, Kara-Balta, Kirov, Stalin, and the Chui regions, as the majority of farmers in Kyrgyzstan had already moved to the Collective Farm Development. The same injustices practiced since the beginning of the campaign of “total collectivization” were repeated in 1932-1933. In 1932, there were around one thousand five hundred collective farms, but only fifty-three associations for joint cultivation of land in Kyrgyzstan.

Meanwhile, the experience showed that a simplified form of associations for joint cultivation of land was the most affordable for nomadic and seminomadic households. Taking this into account, more attention was given to such organizations in 1933-1934. In 1934, seven hundred thirty-eight joint associations and one thousand sixty-seven agricultural cooperatives comprised 68.5% of farms in Kyrgyzstan.

However, in 1937 all associations of joint cultivation of land were transferred to agricultural cooperatives. In the same year, 89.1% of farms were united with the collective farms; additionally, 97% of the arable lands belonged to collective and state farms and were served by fifty-three MTSs (Machine and Tractor Stations) with four thousand tractors and five hundred harvesters. In 1940, collective and state farms comprised 98.9% of peasant farms. After the enlargement of farms, each
of them had about one hundred six households. Thus, the process of collectivization of agriculture in Kyrgyzstan provided by the third Five-Year Plan was completed before the start of the Great Patriotic War.

The collectivization of agriculture in Kyrgyzstan was carried out in conjunction with the transfer of nomadic and semi-nomadic households to a settled way of life. The process of resettlement of the nomads to permanent places of residence began with the provisions of the Land and Water Reforms. By the end of the 1920s, forty-two thousand households were transmitted to sedentary ways of life. To successfully complete collectivization, it was necessary to force the settlement of many nomads. To guide the campaign of settling nomadic and semi-nomadic households, the Committee on Settlement under the Soviet of People’s Commissars of the Kyrgyz ASSR was organized.

The 2nd Plenum of the Regional Party Committee held in February of 1931 planned a phased settlement of nomadic and semi-nomadic households. In 1931, as they decided, ten thousand households would be resettled; in the following year, thirty thousand more would be tied to land. The process would continue with twenty-two thousand in 1933 and twenty-three thousand in 1934. It was very difficult to settle Kyrgyz nomads, but long-term loans from the budgets of the Union and Russia were given to implement this task. Large amounts of building materials, as well as agricultural and household resources were sent to the area.

In 1931, the campaign was conducted in four districts. Another massive settlement of nomadic households in twelve districts of the republic was implemented in 1932. Houses, schools, hospitals, libraries and corrals for livestock were built quickly. By the decision of the Kyrgyz Government, nomadic farms were transferred to settlements and were provided with significant benefits. In 1933, 43.4 thousand households were settled and one hundred forty-eight villages were formed. 2.5 million hectares of arable land and meadows were used as places for pasture; 34 million rubles were spent for these measures during the course of four years.

The active phase of relocating nomads into settlement lasted until 1937. From 1931-1937, seventy-eight thousand nomadic and seminomadic households were settled and eight hundred forty-two collective
farms were merged. A total of one hundred forty-two thousand households and six hundred thirty thousand people were settled over a 20-year period (1918-1937). The population was provided with the housing and necessary conditions for the growth of agriculture.

As a result of these initiatives, Kyrgyzstan had acquired permanent villages, stationary economic centers with their own infrastructure, various educational institutions, schools, as well as public and domestic enterprises. Feudal and patriarchal consciousness of the population started to be replaced by a new social ideology.

However, the process of transfer of the population to a sedentary life was also conducted with errors. The leaders were instructed to focus on building standard *kishtaks* (villages) similar to Russian settlements. Typically, new kishtaks were located away from pastures, making it difficult for grazing livestock. This forced Kyrgyz people to change the traditions and habits of cattle breeding.

Forced settlement and collectivization of nomads caused popular discontent. At the same time, those nomads who refused to settle or join collective farms were persecuted. In some regions, European-style dwellings were constructed. Despite the excesses and failures, however, the transition of the Kyrgyz people to sedentary way of life created the preconditions for further development of their social, economic, and cultural consciousness.

**The formation of the Kyrgyz statehood. Totalitarian regime**

Long before gaining power, the Bolshevik Party declared the elimination of social and national oppression as its main goal. One of the first decrees of the Soviet government was the “Declaration of the Rights of Peoples of Russia” on November 2, 1917, which stated the bases of a
new system of national policy.

Before the October Revolution, the Tsarist colonial policy, regional divisions, and the dictates of the feudal-patriarchal ideology were a hindrance to the establishment and strengthening of sustainable national relations among the peoples of Central Asia. In order to strengthen its influence in the region, the Soviet Government issued an appeal “To All Working Muslims of Russia and the East,” on November 22, 1917 which announced the full equality of Muslim peoples of Russia.

However, some distrust existed between the peoples of Turkestan and the Soviet State in the first stages of Soviet power because of the nationalist or chauvinistic attitudes expressed by both Russians and Central Asians.

One such example occurred during November of 1917. From the 15-22 of November, at the 3\textsuperscript{rd} Congress of the Soviets of Turkestan, the supreme governing body of the region (the Soviet of People’s Commissars of Turkestan) (SPC) was officially formed with a membership of fifteen. The Chairman of the SPC was elected Bolshevik F.I. Kolesov; there were no representatives of local nationalities present in the Soviet. The proposal of the Regional Congress of Muslims to establish a coalition government in Turkestan on a multiparty basis was rejected and thus the Congress was accused of bourgeois nationalism.

In response to the call for a regional committee of the “\textit{Shura-e-Islam}” party, which was headed by Mustafa Chokaev, the 4\textsuperscript{th} Extraordinary Congress of the Muslims in Kokand was held on November 26-29 in 1917. It proclaimed the “Kokand Autonomy” as a part of Russia and elected the government headed by M. Chokaev and M. Tynyshpayev. The meeting consisted of the representatives of local ethnic groups, including Russian and other immigrants from central Russia. The new government set to create a national government in the form of the bourgeois-democratic republic within the former Kokand Khanate.

Thus, dual power in Turkestan was established. One power was represented by the Soviet Government formed by the Bolshevik party in Tashkent; the second was represented by the government of the “Kokand Autonomy” and consisted of the representatives of different ethnic groups and political parties (such as “\textit{Shura-e-Islam}” and “\textit{Alash}”). The Kokand government and its many supporters conducted extensive cam-
campaign against the Soviets. Armed forces were created under the leadership of Colonel Chanyshev. The strengthening of the “Kokand Autonomy” alarmed the Bolsheviks of Tashkent and the 4\(^{th}\) local Congress of Soviets held on January 19-26, 1918 declared the “Kokand Autonomy” illegal; its leaders were arrested shortly after.

On February 19-22, 1918, the Red Army in fierce fighting entered the Kokand. Armed forces of the “Kokand Autonomy” were defeated and the government was disbanded. The remains of the followers of autonomy fled to the mountains; part of autonomists opposed the Soviet regime during the Civil War in Kyrgyzstan. Thus, the attempts of local intelligentsia to reach national and state independence were suppressed. Part of the local community condemned the actions of the Bolsheviks against the “Kokand Autonomy”.

In 1918, the “Declaration of the Rights of Workers and Exploited Peoples,” which contained a plan of building a socialist multi-ethnic state on the principles of the federation, was adopted at the 3\(^{rd}\) All-Russian Congress of Soviets. Based on these decisions, the peoples of Central Asia merged into the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic in 1918 and Turkestan became a member of the Russian Federation.

The Commission of Turkestan was formed by the Soviet Government on October 8, 1919 and played a big role in strengthening of Soviet power in the region. It consisted of Mikhail Frunze, V.V. Kuibyshev, J. E. Rudzutak, G.I. Bokyi, and F.I. Goloshchekin and Sh. Z. Eliava led the Commission. The Commission was tasked to correct the mistakes made by the leaders of Party and governmental organs, especially in reference to the national question, streamline the government’s activities in the field, and increase people’s trust to the Soviet government.

The Commission suspended the work of any Party and governmental personnel who conducted the chauvinistic line in relation to the local population. They also attempted to include the local population in the management of the regions. In order to stop the looting of the peasants and farmers of the Red Army, the Commission began to strictly handle anyone engaged in such activities. The support of a national policy carried out by the Bolsheviks played a crucial role in the defeat of the counterrevolutionary forces and the approval of the Soviet government by the population of Kyrgyzstan.
The Kyrgyz began to return to their native lands after the February Revolution of 1917. However, as a result of the policy of the Provisional Government, repressions and persecutions of returnees only intensified. In the end, weary and exhausted refugees were beaten and subjected to a new violence and a massive wave of oppression.

Prosecution and punishment of the participants of the 1916 uprising were stopped with the establishment of Soviet power in Kyrgyzstan. Purposeful policy of Soviet power led to the gradual decline of inter-ethnic mistrust and confrontation. The executive committee of the Jeti-Suu Oblast established the Regional Commissariat for Nationalities, which had a special committee to regulate Russian-Kyrgyz relations on July 5, 1918. The committee carried out an extensive propaganda campaign among the local Russian and Kyrgyz population.

Despite the difficult situation facing the Republic, the Soviet government paid special attention to assisting the starving population. Committees to support famished peasants were opened all over Kyrgyzstan. On October 29, 1918, the Jeti-Suu Regional Executive Committee granted one thousand rubles to the Tokmok Food Committee for organizing meals for the hungry population.

The Soviet government sent a special commission to western China to assist the remainder of the returning Kyrgyz refugees. This commission was approved by a special resolution of the Central Executive Committee of Communist Party of Turkestan on February 2, 1920 and was entrusted with the return of refugees to their homes, restoration of their land rights, prevention of harassment, rescue of enslaved, and the establishment of equality between Russians and the Kyrgyz. After the fall of Tsarism and the establishment of Soviet power, an overwhelming majority of Kyrgyz who fled to China in 1916 returned home. To provide grant assistance to the returnees, the Soviet government allocated one hundred million rubles to purchase cattle, agricultural implements, tents, and building materials for the refugees. In 1920, forty-six thousand acres of arable land and eighty thousand acres of dry-farming land were given to Kyrgyz returnees. All refugees were exempt from state taxes for five years.
The Kyrgyz who were part of the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic were assigned to Jeti-Suu, Syrdarya, Ferghana, and Samarkand Oblasts and did not have their own government. In those areas, the Kyrgyz were a minority and therefore appropriate attention was not paid to their interests.

In this regard, the issue on the establishment of the Mountain Kyrgyz Oblast in the Turkestan ASSR was raised at Alma-Ata meeting in 1921. However, the issue was not resolved because the Jeti-Suu and Syr-Darya regions were supposed to pass to the Kazakh ASSR. Such a decision complicated the political situation of the Kyrgyz people - if before they were part of one of autonomy, now they had to be divided into two republics. Kyrgyz intellectuals such as J. Abdrahmanov, I. Arabaev, and A. Sadykov disagreed with the state of affairs and again put forward a proposal on the allocation of all the counties and its population into the Mountain Kyrgyz Oblast in March 1922.

On March 25, 1922 the Secretariat of the Communist Party of Turkestan decided to form the Mountain Kyrgyz Oblast as part of Turkestan and on March 26 the low-CEC Presidium of Turkestan approved a decree on the establishment of the Mountain Kara-Kyrgyz Oblast which included Pishpek, Karakol, Naryn and the mountain districts of Aulie-Ata. In other words, this Oblast included only the northern part of Kyrgyzstan. The fate of the Kyrgyz of Southern Kyrgyzstan was temporarily unresolved. Nevertheless, the acquired status gave Kyrgyz people a real opportunity to unite in one area and build their own national autonomous statehood.

However, at the very beginning of the creation of the Mountain Kyrgyz Oblast, the issue quickly divided the population along tribal and factional lines. One faction, headed by A. Sydykov, actively advocated for the Mountain Kyrgyz Oblast. Another one, headed by R. Kudaykulov, was against it. Leaders of the Kazakhs in Tashkent and Alma-Ata supported R. Kudaykulov.

On June 4, 1922, the Jeti-Suu Regional Party Committee convened a congress with the participation of four hundred twenty five delegates in Pishpek. Even before
it started, however, the Congress was dissolved by the direct order of Stalin. In December 1922, the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Committee of Communist Party of Soviet Union declared illegal all previously adopted documents on the creation of the Mountain Kyrgyz Oblast and the initiators of the Congress were accused of bourgeois nationalism and anti-revolutionary activity. Thus, the first attempts of Kyrgyz people to form their own regional governmental association were not implemented.

**Formation and Development of the Kyrgyz State**

With the elimination of counter-revolutionary forces, especially of basmachi movements, conditions for the people’s demarcation for national states were created in Central Asia. To establish the boundaries of future republics, the government of Turkestan ASSR widely employed Uzbek, Turkmen, and Kyrgyz departments that did a lot of work to refine the ethnographic composition of the population, the definition, economic, and geographical characteristics of the region. Representatives from all major peoples living in Central Asia were involved in the work of regional and district committees of nationalities. On December 30, 1922 the 1st All-Russian Congress of Soviets announced the establishment of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) consisting of Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, (RSFSR), Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR), Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic (BSSR), and Caucasian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (CSFSR). This provided the legal basis for the approval of a new form of cooperation between the national republics. On January 31, 1924, the 2nd Congress of Soviets adopted and approved the first Constitution of the USSR. The formation of a single union state on the principles of federation accelerated the formation of national public associations.

The Kyrgyz, who participated in the delegation of the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic during the 2nd Congress of Soviets, requested that the Soviet government give Kyrgyzstan the status of a separate autonomous unit. However, the issue of the formation of Kyrgyz autonomy could be solved only with giving the same status to Uzbeks, Turkmens, and Tajiks living on the territories of the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, the Bukhara, and Khorezm republics.

By September 1924 it was found that eight hundred sixty thousand Kyrgyz people resided on the territories of Fergana, Syr-Darya, Jeti-Suu
Oblasts of the Turkestan ASSR, and in Samarkand Oblast. In addition, about two hundred ten thousand Kyrgyz lived in the Pamir, Bukhara, and Western China.

On October 14, 1924, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the RSFSR adopted a resolution on partition of the peoples of Central Asia into nation-states in accordance with the will of the population of the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, Bukhara, and Khiva Republics. Thus, the territories shattered before the revolution and inhabited by the Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, Tajiks, Turkmens, Kazakhs, and Kara-kalpaks were re-united according to ethnicities of the population.

As a result of voluntary redistribution of the boundaries, the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic, the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, the Tajik Autonomous Oblast, the Kara-Kyrgyz Autonomous Oblast within the RSFSR, and the Kara-Kalpak Autonomous Oblast within the Kazakh SSR were established. While determining the boundaries of capital facilities, the factories, land, water, and agricultural resources, which previously were subordinated to the Turkestan ASSR, as well as the Bukhara and Khorezm republics, were distributed between the newly formed republics and autonomous regions. With the acquisition of statehood, the peoples of Central Asian gained greater control over the questions of policy that pertained to them.

The Kara-Kyrgyz Autonomous Oblast of the former Turkestan ASSR included the Jeti-Suu Oblast, 10 volosts of Namangan County, 2 volosts of Kokand County, and 14 volosts of Aulie-Ata county (Talas region) in the Syrdarya Oblast.

According to the Regional Bureau of Statistics, the population of the Kara-Kyrgyz AO was 828.3 thousand people - 63.5% were Kyrgyz, 15.4% were Uzbeks, 16.8% were Russians, and 4.3% were made up of other nationalities. The territory of the Kara-Kyrgyz AO occupied approximately two hundred thousand square kilometers. It had six cities, three hundred twenty-one villages, and five farms (khutor). Thus, the Kyrgyz people who had been fragmented throughout the centuries, united into a consistent state, albeit an autonomous Oblast. Nonetheless, it became the most important event in the modern history of the Kyrgyz people.

After the formation of the Kara-Kyrgyz Autonomous Region, party organizations and bodies of the Soviet power were established on the territory of present-day Kyrgyzstan. On October 18, 1924 the Politbu-
ro of the RCP approved the temporary party offices and Revolutionary Committee of the Kara-Kyrgyz Autonomous Oblast. Michael Kamensky was appointed First Secretary of the Regional Committee of the Communist Party. The Second Secretary was Yusuf Abdrakhmanov. The Chairman of the Revolutionary Committee was Aidarbek Imanaliev.

The commission formed by the Revolutionary Committee (later named the State Planning Commission), which was in charge of geographic, economic, and financial issues, began to record geographic and statistical area, its ethnic composition, crop areas, livestock numbers, timber, and other resources.

Because of the lack of an appropriate regional administrative center, the Revolutionary Committee was originally held in Tashkent. Insufficiency of local management staff, as well as a shortage of business executives during the early years of statehood gave rise to great difficulties. In December 1924, the government was transmitted to Pishpek (and has remained the capital of Kyrgyzstan ever since). To encourage more effective management of Kyrgyzstan, the Oblrevkom ( Oblast Revolutionary Committee) was formed in the regions of Pishpek, Karakol, Naryn, Osh, and Jalal-Abad. The regional revolutionary committee had a special commission for the development of personnel for state and economic bodies. On December 22, the Oblrevkom appointed Turdaly Toktobaev as a representative of the Kyrgyz Autonomous Oblast in the All-Russian Central Executive Committee in Moscow. This office was designed to protect the interests of the Kara-Kyrgyz Oblast in political, economic, and other issues at the Headquarters of the USSR and the RSFSR.

On January 15, 1925 the oblrevkom adopted a declaration on the formation of the Kara-Kyrgyz Autonomous Oblast and solemnly pro-
claimed its statehood in Kyrgyzstan. The day of Declaration - January 16 – became a widely-celebrated holiday.

During the next stage of statehood formation, it was necessary to create the state apparatus, conduct elections to the founding congress of the Soviets, and solve certain economic and social issues. Elections to local Soviets were successfully carried out. The founding Congress of the Autonomous Oblast began its work in Pishpek on March 27, 1925. One hundred thirty-five delegates including eighteen workers, twenty-five farmers, eight employees, and eight students attended the Congress. The Congress was also attended by the representatives of all nationalities residing on the territory of Kyrgyzstan. The founding Congress elected the executive body of the Kyrgyz Autonomy, the so-called Oblast Executive Committee of the Soviets. The organization was made up of fifty-one people. The permanent presidium of the Oblast Executive Committee was composed of eleven members who were elected at the First Plenary Session of the Oblast Executive Committee on March 31, 1925. Its chairman was the former worker and activist of Soviet power Abdykadyr Orozbekov.

The founding congress of the Soviets was a milestone for subsequent development and affirmation of the statehood of Kyrgyz people. This organization further united the territory, economy, and culture of the Kyrgyz and set the stage for subsequent national revival. Destroyed under the blows of the Mongolians in 1207, the statehood of the Kyrgyz people was restored after seven centuries. This event generated great expectations for the future and inspired to build a new life.

M. Kamensky, the first Secretary of the Oblast Committee of Kyrgyzstan appointed by the Central Committee of the CPSU, was largely ineffective in the management of the region. Kamensky’s main aspiration was to establish personal rule by the same methods used by Stalin. Kamensky was known for manipulating competing factions for his own political gain. Having supported semi-literate R. Kudaykulov and his followers, the First Secretary of the Oblast aggravated an already tense situation. With the help of Kudaykulov groups, Kamensky sought to defeat the
supporters of A. Sadykov, who had great influence in Kyrgyzstan. At the regional party conference held in March 1925, Kamensky dismissed the Second Secretary of the Oblast Committee Yu. Abdrakhmanov, a close associate of A. Sadykov. Then, Kamensky and Kudaykulov accused Aydarbekov, the Chairman of the Revolutionary Committee of involvement in criminal relationships with bays and manaps, corruption, and bribery. As a result, I. Aydarbekov was not elected Chairman of the Oblast Executive Committee.

These charges, of course, alarmed honest party members. To correct the distortions in the policy of the Oblast Committee, thirty Soviet and party officials sent a letter to the Central Committee of RCP and the Central Asian Party Bureau in June 1925 and criticized the style, methods, and recruitment policies of the Kyrgyzstan Oblast Party Committee. This document was referred to as “tridtsadka” (“thirty”) in accordance with the number of signatories.

The appeal to the Asian Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPSU (b) was treated by as an attempt of bai-manap elements to break down the cohesiveness of the party. The signatories were fired from their posts while some were even expelled from Kyrgyzstan. A. Sadykov and I. Arabaev, as the organizers of the “thirty”, were excluded from the party. R. Kudaykulov, who led the second group of the struggle for power, was left alone with a warning about his political activities. Shortly after (in 1926), he was excluded from the party and sent to trial for political crimes. Other active participants were fired from the Oblast Party Committee in the district committees of Osh, Karakol, Naryn, and Frunze. Graduates of the Communist University of the Workers of the East and other educational institutions, including T. Aitmatov, Kh. Shorukov, E.Esenamanov, Kh. Jeenbaev, K. Kambarov, S.Kulmatov, and A. Aliyev were appointed as their replacements. Newly appointed First Secretary of the Regional Committee of the CPSU N.A. Uzyukov began to carry out consistent work to consolidate the party and Soviet activists of the region; active confrontations subsided.

The struggle for the unity, conducted by the Party in mid-1920s, ended with the prohibition of any associations, publications, opinions or
statements that were inconsistent with the party line and its policies. All these measures helped to strengthen the authority and the influence of the party.

At the founding Congress when the Kara-Kyrgyz Autonomous Oblast was proclaimed (March 1925), Kyrgyz delegates already appealed to the Federal Government with the request to change the name of the Kara-Kyrgyz Autonomous Oblast into the Kyrgyz Autonomous Oblast. The region was named the Kyrgyz Autonomous Oblast by the Resolution of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on May 25, 1925. At the same Congress, some delegates proposed the reformation of the autonomous oblast to the Kyrgyz Autonomous Republic.

On February 1, 1926 the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, taking into account the adequacy of the territory of the Kyrgyz Autonomous Oblast, its contiguity with foreign countries, own economy, language, and culture, passed a resolution on the transformation of the Kara-Kyrgyz Autonomous Oblast into the Kyrgyz Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. The resolution was legitimized at the 1st Congress of Soviets of the Kyrgyz ASSR on March 7-12, 1927. This declaration determined the right of the Kyrgyz people to self-determination and approved the basic principles of mutual consent of the peoples living in Kyrgyzstan. In addition, the declaration outlined the main activities of the Government of Kyrgyzstan - to raise the agricultural, industrial, political, and cultural levels of the Republic. The formation of the Kyrgyz ASSR was enthusiastically accepted throughout the country and in neighboring states.

On March 12, 1927 the Presidium of CEC of the Kyrgyz ASSR and its seventeen members were elected. The Chairman of the Presidium was Abdykadyr Orozbekov. The Kyrgyz Government, the Soviet of People’s Commissars, was formed at the same session; Yusup Abdrahmanov became its Chairman. The Soviet of People’s Commissars consisted of the Commissioners of Land, Finance, Education, Labor, and Peasants’ Inspection. Public policy and statistical control departments were also established.

The supreme organ of state power of the Kyrgyz ASSR and the symbol of the sovereignty became the All-Kyrgyz Congress of Soviets. It
elected the Central Executive Committee and checked its reports. The supreme authority was accountable to the government of the Republic. In addition, the Congress elected the representatives to the Soviet of Nationalities of the USSR Central Executive Committee and delegates to the Congress of Soviets. In accordance with the Constitution of the RSFSR, the All–Kyrgyz Congress of Soviets performed lawmaking functions and was granted the right to develop and approve the Constitution of the Kyrgyz ASSR. Elected by the Congress, CEC convened its session every three months. The permanent Presidium of the Central Election Commission issued decrees and regulations.

The CEC appointed a Board of People’s Commissars, determined the directions of its activities, and developed the plans of economic development. As the executive branch, the Congress of People’s Commissars of Kyrgyzstan regulated the activities of central and local authorities. Soviet power was regulated by district and volost congresses and their committees, as well as city and aïyl Soviets. The First Congress of Soviets is a monumental event in the history of the Kyrgyz people. It proclaimed the Kyrgyz Autonomous Republic, summed up the achievements of the Kyrgyz people throughout the first years of Soviet rule, and set new objectives for the future.

The process of drafting of the Constitution of the Republic began with the formation of the Kyrgyz ASSR. The 2nd Congress of Soviets of the Kyrgyz ASSR was convened on April 25-30, 1929 after the elections to local Soviets. Two hundred twenty delegates listened to the officials reports of the government and, after extensive discussions; they adopted the Constitution of the Kyrgyz ASSR.

The Constitution set the course for continued development of the Republic. Thus, the Kyrgyz ASSR became the authority on all questions of public and political rights. Equal rights of all peoples and freedom of language of instruction were proclaimed in Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyz and Russian languages were chosen as the state languages of the Kyrgyz ASSR. Civil servants were obliged to know both languages. As a result, the Kyrgyz language was provided with the necessary conditions for its popularization and development.

In accordance with the Constitution, the Congress received the authority to approve the constitution and amend it, to demarcate (specify)
the boundaries of the republic, approve the budget, hold governmental elections, choose delegates to the congresses of the USSR, and address the issues of national importance. Public authorities in Kyrgyzstan were subordinated to the central authorities of the Republic (the highest authorities of the RSFSR and the USSR). State symbols such as the flag and the national emblem of the Kyrgyz ASSR were approved by the Constitution. Pishpek became the capital of the Kyrgyz ASSR.

It was necessary to reflect the social and economic changes taken place in the country during the Soviet era in the various constitutions of the USSR. The first Soviet Constitution adopted in 1924 and the Constitution of the Kyrgyz ASSR in 1929 was largely outdated and no longer met the demands of the present situation. After the necessary preparations, the 8th Congress of Soviets held on December 5, 1936 adopted the second Constitution of the USSR. From that day, Kyrgyzstan was converted to the Kyrgyz SSR and became a member of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. This event was a great achievement in the history of the Kyrgyz people. Many individuals, including CEC Chairman A. Orozbekov and Chairmen of People’s Commissars of the Kyrgyz ASSR Y. Abdrakhmanov made great contributions to the formation of the Kyrgyz SSR.

The Totalitarian Regime and the Formation of the Administrative-Command System

Archaic autocratic traditions and the fragility of the underdevelopment of democratic foundations of the regions of Soviet Union led to the formation of a rigid administrative-command system. According to Marxist doctrine, socialist revolution was to win in several advanced capitalist countries, but the revolution occurred in economically underdeveloped Russia. It did not receive further spread in the world, contrary to the Marxist doctrine of world revolution. Even many Bolsheviks (earlier
on), had anticipated that the revolution in Russia would cause a spread of revolution across Europe. By the time Stalin had risen to power; he understood that the Soviet state was surrounded by many hostile countries, leading to a sort of capitalist encirclement. Because the Bolshevik Revolution triumphed in an economically backward country, it had an actual task to build industry, a necessary task on the path to socialism and communism. This task, of course, required efficiency and direction; a well-disciplined command system seemed to be the ideal aspiration for the Bolshevik leaders.

Prior to the shift to a direct command economy, a mixed economy was spread throughout Russia and, therefore, inequality amongst the population was commonplace. Irreconcilable terms of this conflict led to the Civil War and the Communists faced a tough dilemma: either to abandon any plans to build socialism, or plant the principles of the socialist system in a backward state through the establishment of a totalitarian regime.

The Bolshevik party led by V.I. Lenin from the earliest years of Soviet power chose a one-party system to disengage the enemies and strengthen their positions. As a result, all other parties were outlawed and, under various pretexts, their activities were banned. For the rigid control of industry, strict accounting was imposed and profit distribution was centralized. The agricultural sector was tightly restrained with the system of the food tax.

The political regime and the administrative-command system of economic management were designed to promote the political stability in the country. Direct funds were spent on production without the overwhelming hindrance of bureaucracy. The accelerated growth of heavy industry and transport through the centralized distribution of funds in highly profitable industry was one of the main aims of the Soviet government.

The Soviet state abolished foreign private property and refused to pay the debts of Tsarist Russia to western countries. As a result, European states declared the blockade of Soviet Russia; foreign investment was discontinued. The whole weight of the industrial development of the young state laid on the agrarian sector.

Under the conditions of the one-party system and the lack of an opposition, corruption and bureaucracy widely developed in governmental bodies. Lack of control created the conditions for abuse of power by
some party and governmental officials. To prevent these phenomena, V.I. Lenin put forward concrete proposals to expand the party’s Central Committee through the involvement of its workers and specialists, as well as reorganization of the Workers and Peasants Inspection and the strengthening of control over the work of the party-state apparatus.

Lenin gave a principled characterization of his intentions to his close associates. He made suggestions to move Stalin from the post of Secretary-General of the Party Central Committee and to establish collective leadership of the Party and State. In order to preserve the unity of the party, intraparty groups and factions were banned. As a result, the way for mass purge of party ranks of random elements and opportunists was opened. Stalin and his associates refused Lenin’s proposal on collective leadership of the country; after his death, the “legacy” of Lenin became an effective tool of the Stalinist leadership; by overplaying the continuity between Leninism and Stalinism, Stalin was able to build up his own legitimacy.

New Economic Policy began to falter during this period and the contradictions between social interests of the society and the authoritarian system of the government of the Bolsheviks was intensified. As a result, intra-party factional movements and the power struggle between Stalin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, and other members of the party increased.

The discontinuation of foreign capital and failures of the New Economic Policy led to the slowdown of economic development in all sectors of industry. The internal struggle of the Party regarding the issue of economic development intensified. As a result, there was an intentional tightening of the administrative-command system via repressive policies of the centralized state.

To avoid deepening the economic crisis, the Bolsheviks rejected the continuation of NEP (based on market relations) and decided to move forward with a truly planned economy; thus began the era of the Five-Year Plans. Economic crisis and financial difficulties accelerated the transition to the administrative methods of management in industrialization of the country. In accordance with the decision of the CPSU of March 1930, a campaign to nominate the representatives of proletarian social stratum for the executive positions in the Soviet, cooperative, business, and civil organizations was launched.

In Kyrgyzstan, only one thousand representatives of this social class were put forward to the management positions in 1931 and 1932. Seven
hundred ten of them were from poor peasant families. The social activity and general educational level of the population prospered. Though, at the same time, many newly-appointed managers lacked the necessary skills to effectively manage. As a result, all the mandates expressed by the administration were excessive and could not be carried out by the work force.

Recognizing the demands of the industrial drive, the Stalin-Bukharin bloc defeated the Trotsky-Zinoviev group, the so-called “left opposition”. What followed was an extensive campaign to clean up the party from “Trotskyists”. Once Stalin and Bukharin rid themselves of the Trotskyist faction, the “Right Opposition” was attacked by Stalin; it was defeated and its members were persecuted.

At that time, the Soviet government pursued an active policy of disengagement from the kulaks. On December 27, 1929, Stalin proclaimed “the liquidation of the kulaks as a class,” effectively starting a wave of mass repressions against the peasantry. Many local administrative officials distorted the statistics regarding the number of local kulaks. As a result, many middle peasants, and in some cases the poor, were subjected to dispossessions. Many kulaks were exiled and resettled. All of them were deprived of property and voting rights. Many suffered from starvation or even died.

The decree of the prohibition of kulaks in collective farms worsened their situation. Peasant discontent, as well as theft and violence of the Issyk-Kul, Naryn, At-Bashy, and Balykchi districts ended up in armed conflicts; the situation was similar in the southern regions of the Kyrgyz SSR.

In response to the violence and tyranny committed during collectivization, peasants destroyed the livestock and ownerships, made arsons, escaped to China, and organized other disruptions. In turn, the Soviet authorities intensified repression in the villages. In the autumn of 1931, six thousand families were deported to Ukraine and the North Caucasus. In 1933, over two thousand households were arrested. Thus, the fight with kulaks and bais during collectivization resulted in their elimination as a class; at the same time, much of the rural population innocently suffered from massive repression.

All this did not simply pass by Kyrgyzstan where the “search” and “revelations” of “ideological renegades” were intensified. In accordance
with the policy of the center, governmental officials began the hunt for the “Trotskyists” and other political deviants among the leaders and intellectuals of the Soviet party. Innocent people were “discovered” and punished as a result. For example, the Secretary of the City Committee of Kyzyl-Kiya was expelled from the party and subjected to persecution for the correspondence with the chief of political department of the “Dry Ridge” farm. Many agricultural leaders were prosecuted under the pretext that they sympathized with the kulaks; they were charged as “right opportunists-Bukharinists”. A well-known scholar and linguist, E. Polivanov was “unmasked” as a Trotskyist.\footnote{155}

The Soviet party-apparatus demanded the search for opportunists not only among the lower-level employees, but also among the policy-makers. As a result of such searches, the first “right opportunist”, who was “unmasked” in Kyrgyzstan, was the Head of Agricultural Department of Oblast Party Committee, O. Tynaev.

In the midst of the “competition” of Party committees of Kyrgyzstan with other regions of the country for identifying left and right opportunists organs of the GPU (Main Political Administration), direct work to eliminate the “counterrevolutionary” and “sabotage” groups was conducted. In 1932, five “counter-revolutionary sabotage” organizations were “exposed” in the State Planning Commission of the Republic.

The political situation was worsened by the economic condition caused by the mass famine. In 1932, Kazakhstan faced the famine; entire auls were dying. To prevent the confusion in the emerging bud, Stalin gave direct instruction to the Kazakh Regional Committee of the CPSU (b) to strengthen “an uncompromising struggle against the Kazakh nationalists”.\footnote{156} Thus, the wave of “revelations” and “cleansing” appeared in national regions.

On September 4, 1937, the Executive Bureau of the Central Committee of Communist Party of Bolsheviks of Kyrgyz SSR claimed the work of a prominent scholar K. Tyynystanov as one which was “bourgeois-kulak-nationalistic” and subjected him to harsh criticism, declaring him an “enemy of the people”. In June, a nationalistic, counter-revolutionary, insurgent, and anti-Soviet organization of communist leader A. Sadykov was unmasked. In September 1933, Y. Abdralkhamanov was accused of nationalism and fired from his job. In fact, he was punished for critical remarks about Stalin in his “Diary”.\footnote{157}
Prior to 1934, the Soviet government punished the “enemies of the people” with expulsion from the Party and the removal from office. After the 17th Party Congress, Stalin went on to the direct destruction of his opponents, following the assassination of Sergei Kirov on December 1, 1934. The Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR examined the case of the “anti-Soviet Trotskyi-Zinoviev united center” in August 1936 and sentenced sixteen people including Zinoviev, Kamenev, Evdokimov, and Bakayev to death. (It should be noted that most of these men were Stalin’s former associates).

Many people in Kyrgyzstan were eliminated as the opponents of the Stalinist line. To show their activity, security offices again opened the case of “Social Turan Party,” which was considered and closed in 1933. Innocent people associated with the party and sentenced to death. Such wonderful representatives of the Kyrgyz people as Yu. Abdrakhmanov, I. Aidarbekov, T. Aitmatov, M. Ammosov, B. Isakeev, E. Esenamanov, T. Joldoshov, A. Orozbekov, J. Saadaev, K. Tynystanov, A. Moldogaziev, O. Aliev, A. Jeenbaev, S. Chonbashev, and O. Tynaev were among those who were shot in 1938.

More than forty thousand people were repressed in the Kyrgyz Republic as a result of the excesses of Stalinism. Because of total cleansing and mass repressions, the Kyrgyz party organization fell from fourteen thousand to six thousand in the spring of 1934 alone. The administrative-command system and mass repressions likewise inflicted heavy blows to goals of socialist construction. However, neither mass terror nor the cult of personality were able to irreversibly distort the essence of the Soviet society and stop the massive labor upsurge brought about by the progressive policies of the Soviet state.
Kyrgyzstan during the Great Patriotic War and the World War II

During World War II in 1939, Nazi Germany captured a number of European countries, including Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Yugoslavia, and Greece. As a result, the economic situation and the military power of Germany continued to increase. In a quest for the world domination, Nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941.

Having launched “Operation Barbarossa,” the Germans intended to defeat the Soviet Union in just a few short weeks and to fully capture the European part of the USSR by the winter of 1941. A huge well-equipped army of one hundred ninety divisions numbering 5.5 million people invaded the Soviet Union. Finland, Italy, Romania, Hungary, and Spain fought together with Germany against the USSR. Treacherous attacks of fascist aggressors had violated the peaceful life of Soviet people and plunged it into innumerable troubles and trials. Thus began the Great Patriotic War, the Soviet Union’s defense (and later, offensive rallies) against Hitler’s Germany.

The news about the outbreak of war was met with a deep sense of indignation among the people of multi-national Soviet Union. In Kyrgyzstan, for instance, thousands of meetings and rallies were held in towns and villages where workers, collective farmers, and intellectuals expressed their willingness to protect their homeland.

Regardless of age, nationality, or profession, people volunteered to be sent to the front. In the two days following the surprise attack by Germany forces, the City Military Commissariat in Frunze received two hundred seventy applications. Two hundred fifty miners (volunteers of Kyzyl-Kiya mines) went to the front. Another one hundred forty patriots of the Tien Shan Oblast arrived to military commissariat, demanding to be sent to the front.

From the earliest days of the war, the warriors of Kyrgyzstan fought heroically against the Nazi invaders. The frontier defense of Brest Fortress was one of the most important events of Kyrgyz involvement in the Great Patriotic War. Soviet soldiers were defending the fortress more than a month without passing it to the enemy. V.I. Furtsev, who grew up in Przhevalsk and graduated from the Lenin School there, was among them. In the defense of the Belarussian city of Borisovo, July 10, 1941, N.M. Dmitriev, who worked before the war in Frunze, knocked out two enemy tanks. He was the first soldier from Kyrgyzstan to be
awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union on August 31, 1941.

Since the first days of the war the government of Kyrgyzstan worked to quickly train the population for participation in the war; organization of military units became a priority. By the decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of June 22, 1941 the country began a general mobilization. During this campaign, the 385th Infantry Division was formed in Kyrgyzstan. The 40th and 153rd Infantry Brigades, as well as two national cavalry divisions were later formed and outfitted by enterprises and collective farms of the republic.

Under the command of the military commissar of Kyrgyzstan, Major-General I.V. Panfilov, the 316th Infantry Division was the first among new units joined the battle. The new division was formed by the governments of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan; it consisted mostly of farmers and workers of the two republics. During the battle for Moscow in November 1941, the soldiers of this division opposed enemy forces, even though they were outnumbered by four to one. Within one month, the division broke the 2nd Armored, 29th Motorized, and 11th and 110th Infantry Divisions of the Germans, killing a total of nine thousand German officers and soldiers; the division also managed to destroy eighty enemy tanks.

For the exemplary fulfillment of the command, the 316th Infantry Division was named the 8th Guards Army, and awarded the Order of Red Star. I.V. Panfilov was killed in a Guskovo village of Volokolamsk district on November 18, 1941. He was posthumously awarded the title of the Hero of the Soviet Union and the division was named after him. In addition, the title of Hero of the Soviet Union was given to 28 soldiers of Panfilov’s division. Among them are Kyrgyzstan nationals Duyshenkul Shopokov, Nikolay Ananiev, Gregory Shemyakin, Gregory Konkin, Ivan Moskalenko, Grigory Petrenko, and Ivan Dobrobabin. In March 1942, Panfilov’s division pursued the retreating enemy and was awarded the Order of Lenin.
Pilot Lieutenant Timur Frunze (M.V. Frunze’s son) died heroically while serving on the North-Western Front. He was later awarded the title of the Hero of the Soviet Union. Former secretary of the Communist of Kyrgyzstan, Asankul Rysmendiev, was distinguished for his courage and organizational abilities in the battle for Moscow. He served as commissioner of a cavalry regiment. On February 8, 1942 Asankul died in a bloody battle for the Pastiha village of the Smolensk Oblast.

In the winter of 1941-1942, the Red Army began to pressure the Nazi forces along the front. The regions of Moscow, Tula, (some of) Leningrad, Kalinin, and Smolensk were finally freed from the control of the Nazis.

Hitler’s army suffered the first major defeat at Moscow. The so-called “blitzkrieg” plan was finally disrupted. From November 16 to December 5, 1941 the enemy lost fifty-five thousand soldiers and officers; one hundred thousand were wounded. Additionally eight hundred tanks, one thousand five hundred aircrafts, and three hundred guns of the enemy were destroyed. The Soviet troops also suffered heavy losses. After the Battle of Moscow, neither Turkey nor Japan dared to join in an attack against the Soviet Union. The Soviet people strengthened their own confidence and were reassured in their ability to defeat the fascist invaders.

In 1942, the Germans reinitiated with a new attack on the USSR in an attempt to seize the strategic initiative. By May 1942, the Nazis and their allies refocused two hundred thirty-seven divisions and brigades to the Soviet-German Front, a substantial increase from the previous year. The en-
emy’s army numbered 6.2 million soldiers and officers and was armed with more than fifty-six thousand guns and mortars, more than three thousand tanks and assault units, more than three thousand aircrafts, and sixty-three ships. The number of soldiers in the Red Army, as well as artillery, and combat aircraft did not compare to the numbers seen in the German forces.

In 1942, the German High Command aimed to reach the banks of Volga, capture the city of Stalingrad, as well as the North Caucasus, Transcaucasia, and Leningrad. They hoped to victoriously end the war against the USSR with a final blow on Moscow. In July 1942, the German army crossed the Don River and seized several cultivated regions of the USSR. On July 28, Stalin issued the infamous Order No. 227, which proclaimed a new rule for all military personnel, “Not one step back.” The Red Army, with immeasurable courage, bravely defended the Caucasus, as well as every quarter, street, and house in Stalingrad. The dedication of the Red Army allowed them to keep both of these regions from being captured.

The Red Army developed a plan for strategic counter-offensive, which became known as “Uranus.” The South-Western on Don Fronts (on November 19, 1942), together with Stalingrad Front on November 20 launched the counter-attack after a powerful artillery barrage; On November 23, they were able to surround German forces of 330,000 soldiers.  

On February 2, 1943, the Don Front succeeded in another great victory. Twenty-four generals, two thousand five hundred officers, and ninety-one thousand soldiers were captured. The Battle of Stalingrad was the turning point in both the Great Patriotic War and the broader conflict of World War II. The victory in this battle raised the international prestige of the Soviet Union and the Red Army, helped to strengthen the anti-Hitler coalition, and reinforced the national-liberation struggle of the peoples of Europe against fascism. Turkey and Japan were forced to change their military plans against the USSR.

The Red Army, emboldened by the victory near Stalingrad, proceeded to advance on the broad front. In the attack, which lasted for four and
a half months, Soviet troops advanced to the west for about 600-700 km, released Leningrad from the blockade, and increased the losses of enemy forces.

They delay of Soviet allies in opening a second front, meant that Germany pulled over two hundred divisions (about 5.2 million soldiers) armed with the newest strategies to the Soviet-German front. In accordance with the plans of the “Citadel” and “Panther” operations, the forces were scheduled to strike a new blow to Soviet forces in the Kursk area and breakthrough to the east. On July 5, 1943, the German army started the attack. The largest tank battles took place in the areas of Kursk, Orel, and Belgorod. On July 12, after a bloody week-long battle, the Red Army finally received the necessary artillery and aviation support to launch a counter-attack. On August 5, Soviet troops released Orel and Belgorod. An artillery salute was made for the first time in Moscow in commemoration of the victory at Kursk (such military salutes would later become a Soviet tradition). As a result of the continued campaign during the summer and autumn, the enemy continued to be driven westward. It should be noted that the Kyrgyz people played a significant role in the contribution to these victories.

The Don River to the south of Voronezh was also a place which testified to the incredible bravery exemplified by Kyrgyz soldiers in the Great Patriotic War. On August 6, 1942 Cholponbay Tuleberdiev performed a feat. He destroyed an entire bunker of enemies by closing it by his own chest. On February 4, 1943 he was awarded the title of the Hero of the Soviet Union.
Such instances were commonplace. For example, on May 16, 1942, the Kyrgyzstani G.I. Vyglazov and the warriors of his headquarters stopped the attack of eight enemy tanks on the North-Caucasian Front. The squad leader personally knocked out three tanks and killed twenty-Germans. On February 22, 1943 he was awarded the title of the Hero of the Soviet Union. On the Western Front, this title was awarded to the Kyrgyz native, A.I. Volkovenko.

Artillery gunner Dayyr Asanov heroically fought at the Stalingrad front. In January 1943, he was the first who knocked out a tank. He then took out an entire mortar battery, before moving on to a group of Germans. In the battle for the Pyatnickoe village near Kharkov, D. Asanov’s squad successfully attacked eight tanks with the support of gunmen. In the battle, Asanov knocked out three tanks, forcing the rest to retreat. After a twenty-five minute air strike and shelling, the enemies once again tried to attack. By this time, Asanov was left alone but knocked out two more tanks. During the four hour battle, Asanov personally destroyed eight tanks, six armored vehicles, and killed forty Nazi soldiers. On October 26, 1943 he was awarded the title of the Hero of the Soviet Union.

Political instructor Kubat Jumatayev showed heroism on the Transcaucasian Front. On September 16, 1942, Jumatayev led fighters to attack the Fascist fortification, after his own commander had been wounded. Under his command, the squad released some of civilians. Unexpectedly, fifteen enemy tanks attacked the squad, which had been largely depleted by that time. Although the forces were outnumbered, the Red Army soldiers managed to destroy two enemy tanks and eighty soldiers. Jumatayev, surrounded, tied himself with grenades, threw himself under a tank, effectively demobilizing the tank. After the fact, the young Kyrgyz Communist was awarded the Red Star.

In December 1942, squad commander Akun Sadyrbaev caught and threw back sixteen grenades flying from the enemy in a battle for the
Caucasus. Sadyrbaev was killed by the seventeenth grenade, which exploded in his hand. His comrades held the position for twenty-four hours before the reinforcement came and killed sixty Nazis. For this feat, A. Sadyrbaev was awarded the Order of the Red Banner. The squad’s political instructor Jundubaev Sulaiman, senior lieutenant Temirkul Umetaliyev, and riflemen Kyrbakbaev Kerim, Tynybay Beyshebaev, and Abdykalyk Jumakeev showed courage while defending the Caucasus. In the battles in 1942-1943, the multinational 8th Guards Division named after Panfilov made a worthy contribution to the defeat of the enemy (18.5 percent of its soldiers were the Kyrgyz). Divisional snipers Toktogul Shabekov, Alymkul Abybuldaev, and Bozjigit Turdubaev killed up to one hundred fifty Nazi soldiers.

When crossing the Dnieper River, the soldiers of Kyrgyzstan showed miracles of heroism; the detachment of sergeant Anvarbek Chortekov particularly distinguished. Having crossed over the river, his division repelled four enemy attacks, resulting in thirty enemy casualties. Chortekov was awarded the title of the Hero of the Soviet Union for his courage and heroism. In one battle for the Dnieper, rifleman Sadiq Alinazarov killed twenty one soldiers and two enemy officers. He was also awarded the title of the Hero of the Soviet Union. This high award was given to many Kyrgyz natives, including W. Krikun, V. Belyandr, M. Sapozhnikov, E. Mazkov, G. Tikhonov, and M. Teshebaev.

Many soldiers from Kyrgyzstan fought in partisan groups. For example, the partisan group of Kovpak, Ukraine, contained 17 Kyrgyz people. Ishenkul Beysheenaliev, who participated in six confrontations as a partisan is remembered for his great deeds. Other Kyrgyz natives, including M. Murzakulov, S. Sarybaev, B. Uzbekov, and A. Adashev fought against the German enemy in the squads of Belarusian partisans. Many Kyrgyz were courageous and resilient, fighting behind enemy lines in Crimea, Leningrad, Smolensk, Pskov, Orel, and other areas temporarily occupied by the Nazis.
Beginning in 1944, the Soviet armed forces had increased personnel by 1.3 times as much, 1.7 times as much in artillery, and 2.7 times in aircraft. As a result of a total mobilization, Germany’s forces continued to remain strong, despite repeated defeats. Since the second front had not yet been opened by Great Britain or the United States, Germany held 63.2 percent of its troops at the Soviet-German front. During January and February of 1944, Soviet troops took the strategic initiative and destroyed large enemy groupings near Leningrad, Novgorod, and the Left-Bank of Ukraine. They also penetrated the border of Romania and Czechoslovakia. In the spring of 1944, they relieved the Crimea. Finland, stunned by the blows of the Soviet Army, left the war. Belarus and Poland were freed from the German control.

In a battle near the Estonian town of Narva on March 18, 1944, a Kyrgyz bomber, Ismailbek Taranchiev, flew into the midst of enemy’s tanks at a filling station. The explosion destroyed six tanks, several motor vehicles, and dozens of invaders. Taranchiev was not immediately recognized for his contribution; only in 1991 was he awarded the title of the Hero of the Soviet Union.

Victory of the Soviet Army and the strengthening of the national liberation struggle of those enslaved in Europe forced the United States and Great Britain to open the second front on June 6, 1944. However, the main forces of the fascist army continued to fight on the Soviet-German front. In August 1944, Soviet troops liberated Moldavia and Romania; on October 20 Belgrade, the capital of Yugoslavia, came under Soviet control. The Nazi invaders were driven out of Baltic countries. Thus, in 1944, all military operations were eventually confined to Germany.

The soldiers of all nations of the USSR fought valiantly in the final military operations in 1944 and 1945. In the fighting near Leningrad in 1944, O. Zhetikashkaev, J. Rustamov, M. Yunusaliev, and others were distinguished among the soldiers. In April 1944, the rifleman K. Jarkymbaev destroyed two enemy vehicles with guns and twenty-five enemy soldiers in Moldova around the town of Dubossary. For his bravery, he was awarded the title of the Hero of the Soviet Union.
In the battles for Belorussia in June 1944, corporals A. Yakubov, Jhumash. Asanaliev, Lieutenant D. Pichugin, Major N. Kalashnikov, Sergeant E. Kurochkin, Lieutenant L. Tsarensko, the rifleman R. Azimov, Lieutenant S. Sukhin, and the soldier A. Khimenko honored the glory of Kyrgyzstan when they were awarded the titles of the Hero of the Soviet Union for courage and valor.

The Kyrgyz 660th and 664th air regiments of night bombers actively participated during the liberation of cities such as Leningrad, Rzhev, Velikie Luki, Novgorod, Pskov, and Narva. The member of this regiment, the Kyrgyzstani pilot E. Pasko dropped 93 tons of bombs to the positions of Nazis for 780 night raids. Well-aimed blows to important objects of the enemy caused over one hundred fires. The Hero of the Soviet Union, E. Pasko and her students repeatedly inflicted heavy losses to the enemy.

On October 13-15, 1944, Soviet troops liberated Riga. During this operation, Panfilov’s division was awarded the 2nd class Order of Suvorov for special military merit. During the war, thirty-four soldiers of the 8th Guard of the Panfilov Division became the Heroes of the Soviet Union. Eighteen thousand eight hundred six men were awarded orders and medals. In addition, the flag of that division adorned the Order of Lenin and the Order of the Red Flag. These honors are testament that the soldiers from the lands of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan that made up Panfilov’s division showed great courage and heroism during the war.

At the final stage of the war - the battle for Poland – the rifleman A. Otorbaev was awarded the title of the Hero of the Soviet Union.
Crossing the Oder River, he fought off five enemy attacks and killed twenty-five Nazi soldiers. When the battalion reached the coast, the German self-propelled gun opened a withering fire. Realizing the importance and seriousness of the situation, Otorbaev ran under the tracks of the self-propelled gun and blew the enemy with two anti-tank grenades.

The victories of the Soviet Army immeasurably raised the international prestige of the Soviet Union. Nazi Germany was defeated and all its allies were driven from the war. On April 16, 1945 the Red Army started the attack on Berlin. The Politruk (political leader) of the battalion, Kalyinur Usenbekov, participated in this battle. On February 14, Usenbekov killed seven enemy soldiers and captured two. For his valor K. Usenbekov was awarded the title of the Hero of the Soviet Union. The Battalion of Usenbekov was one of the first who came to Berlin and took part in the storming of Berlin’s town hall. For this battle Usenbekov K. was awarded the Red Flag.

Thus, during the Great Patriotic War the Soviet people selflessly fought not only for their freedom and independence, but also for the liberation of other countries that had fallen to the Germans. More than three hundred eighty thousand citizens of Kyrgyzstan showed courage and adequately fulfilled their duty of defending the Fatherland. More than ninety thousand Kyrgyz citizens died on the battlefields. More than one hundred fifty thousand Kyrgyz soldiers were awarded the orders and medals for their military exploits. Seventy-three of them were awarded the title of the Hero of the Soviet Union, while thirty-four became the holders of the Order of Glory. The majority of Kyrgyzstan soldiers did not return from the battlefields and sacrificed their lives for the freedom of the people and their country.
Because Germany seized the most economically developed regions of the USSR at the beginning of the war, the situation, from the start, was quite difficult for the Soviet Government and its people. To meet the demands of the front, the Soviet government set a target to turn the communal republics into an incredible force of military-industrial production in the shortest possible time. A strategic framework had been developed whereby the Urals, Western Siberia, Kazakhstan, and Central Asia became the rear units of machinery, equipment, industrial products, and food production; they also would serve as an evacuation zone once the Germans had pushed into Soviet territory.

From the very beginning of the war, the industry in Kyrgyzstan was organized to execute military orders. Already in June 1941, the Frunze mechanical factory was redirected to meet the special orders that came from the front. The production rate of factory workers was between 200 and 400%. Nearly 65% of factory workers became Stakhanovites (Stakhanovtsy), shock-workers who sought to break industrial production records. The former spheres of the light and textile industry in Kyrgyzstan became refocused to address the demand for creating military uniforms.

Organization of industrial enterprises evacuated from the central regions of Russia became the most important economic task during the war. Two thousand five hundred ninety-three industrial enterprises were relocated to the eastern regions of the USSR from July to December 1941; three hundred eight of them were moved to Central Asia and Kazakhstan and twenty eight large factories were transferred to Kyrgyzstan. These included the Berdyansk Machinery Factory from the Zaporozhye region, a Mercury factory from the Donetsk region, leather and glue factories from Odessa, a sewing factory from Kharkov, textile factories from Kursk and Kharkov, five shoe factories, several sugar factories, a mechanical repair factory from Kursk, and a shoe factory from Kiev. Thus, it is clear that Kyrgyzstan, as well as other regions of Central Asia, was crucial to the continued operation of many of these relocated industries.

As a result of the German attack during the summer of 1942, another thirty large industrial enterprises were evacuated to Kyrgyzstan. Huge
initiatives were undertaken which allowed for the reconstruction of the factories, preparation of new workers to run the factories. The local authorities also made sure that supplies of raw materials, energy, and transport were available. Ninety percent of the evacuated enterprises were located in the Chui valley; the rest were placed in the regions of Osh, Jalalabad, and Issyk-Kul.

Much like the process of relocating industry to Central Asia, the process of evacuating and resettling citizens in Kyrgyzstan from the areas captured by the Germans was a huge undertaking, only made possible by the dedication of many citizens. From July 1941 to January 1942 more than 61.8 thousand people arrived in Kyrgyzstan. By December 1942, 138.9 thousand people had been evacuated. Most of them were from the regions of Moscow, Leningrad, Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, the Karelo-Finnish SSR, Kursk, Orel, Tula, Rostov, Voronezh, Stalingrad, Crimea, Stavropol, and Krasnodar. In addition to Soviet citizens, 12.9 thousand Polish citizens were also evacuated to Kyrgyzstan.

Provincial and district committees were established and provided practical assistance to the arriving refugees. The people of Kyrgyzstan did everything possible for receiving evacuees and, together with the newcomers, they did their best to support the front.

From the first days of the war, the industry in Kyrgyzstan suffered from the lack of electricity. To solve the problem, it was decided to restart the unfinished construction of the Lebedinovskaya Hydro Power plant at the Big Chu Canal. Work started on June 6, 1942 and finished by the end of the year; from that point on the Lebedinovskaya HPP provided the necessary electricity. As Nazi Germany seized the coalfields and coalmines near the front, the extraction of coal was also reassigned to eastern regions. Thus, the coalmines of Kyzyl-Kiya, Sulukta, Kok-Jangak, and Tash-Kumyr were united in the so-called “Kirgizugol” trust. The miners of Kyrgyzstan worked faithfully by the slogan ‘not less than 1.5 rates for the shift’. Most miners fulfilled 2-3 rates for one shift. In 1942, twenty four miners were awarded with prestigious honors for their valiant work.

Throughout the war, workers on the home front did not spare any efforts and worked selflessly towards victory. Young people helped to organize “front line teams”. The ‘home front like the war front’ movement had a countrywide scale. Individuals often took to breaking work
records in their respective fields. For example, M. Chernyshov, the locksmith of the Frunze Engineering Factory, overreached the standard rate by 1171%. Soon, J. Mambetov achieved a new rate record - 1197%.

In May 1942, the construction of the Big Chu Canal, which was suspended at the beginning of the war, was started once again. The builders were able to lay eight km of the canal and dug four hundred fifty thousand cubic meters of earth during the war. In 1943, sugar factories started to operate in Tokmok, Novo-Troitsk, and Belovodskoye village; the country began to produce fifty-five tons of sugar by the day. New factories, including the Kara-Balta distillery factory, the Tokmok cannery factory, a new bakery, two creamery factories, the Voroshilovskaya Hydro Power plant in Frunze, and a cement factory in Kant were commissioned. From 1941 to 1943, the production of mercury increased by 10 times; the production of antimony saw a two hundred percent increase in the same period. For 1943-1944, the Khaidarkan mercury factory won the Republican Transferable Red Flag four times. In 1945, the Frunze Instrument Factory was awarded the Order of Red Flag.

During the Great Patriotic War, thirty-six large industrial companies in Kyrgyzstan went into operation and new branches were formed. The number of employees increased by ten thousand. The share of industry in the economy of Kyrgyzstan rose from 50.2% in 1940 to 67.5% in 1945.

During the war, not only the industry but also the USSR’s agriculture suffered huge losses as the enemy captured 38% of the crops land; nearly 84% of land for sugar beet was lost. Tractors and horses previously used in agriculture were sent to the front.
A History of Kyrgyzstan

A number of men employed in agriculture decreased by 51%. The burden of agricultural work was put to the shoulders of women, children, and elderly. Day and night they worked for the front; non-stop harvesting of grain in the procurement centers of the Republic was performed under the slogan “Every ton of grain is a shell to the camp of the Nazis!” In 1941, 203.6 tons of grains were collected in Kyrgyzstan, a dramatic increase in comparison with the previous year.

In 1942, the condition of the agricultural industry was still problematic. The Soviet Union was cut off from the rich with grain and livestock Ukraine, Don, Crimea, and Kuban. The main tasks of providing the food to the front were assigned to the regions of Central Asia and Kazakhstan. To enhance the management of agriculture, political departments were established in all MTS (Machine and Tractor Stations) and state farms. Agricultural workers showed unprecedented prowess and over fulfillment of standard rates became commonplace. Due to the lack of technology, many works were carried out manually.

Headed by Kerimbubu Shopokova, the “Kyzyl-Asker” farm in Sokuluk district achieved remarkable success in the cultivation of industrial crops. They obtained six hundred eighty four of quintal of sugar beets per hectare, surpassing the amounts expected, which were about 210 quintal. Under the leadership of A. Joldoshbaeva, the “Kayyrma” farm in the Chuy region grew 565 quintal per hectare. The Narimanov farm in Osh collected 23.3 centners of cotton per hectare. Headed by I. Ismailova, the Stalin farm in Suzak district of Jalal-Abad Oblast achieved a high yield of cotton - 35 quintal per hectare.

During the war, much attention was paid to the development of livestock. A marked increase in this sector was achieved in 1941-1942. The number of cattle in 1942 was 20.6% greater in 1940. As a result of such increase, the Republic managed to exceed the state expectations of the amount of meat sent to the front. Central authorities of the USSR positively assessed the achievements of the Kyrgyz SSR in the development of livestock in 1942.

In summary, the Great Patriotic War took a significant loss on the agriculture of Kyrgyzstan. For example, if in January 1941 the republic
Oskon Osmonov and Cholpon Turdalieva

had 555.4 thousand heads of cattle, on January 1, 1946 their amount was only 440.3 thousand - i.e. the number was decreased by 18%. The ratio of pigs during this period decreased from 87.2 thousand to 19.4 thousand (by 70%). The number of goats and sheep dropped from 2529.1 thousand to 2272.3 thousand (by 12%). The amount of horses in the country dropped significantly, from 407.7 thousand to 209.2 thousand (by 29%).

Gross agricultural output over the period of 1940-1945 decreased by 76%, animal products - by 71%. Crop supplies suffered too; delivery of grains to the State decreased from 207.7 to 24.5 thousand tons. Tobacco and potatoes saw similarly catastrophic decline. Despite the difficulties, the workers of Kyrgyzstan selflessly provided the front and the industry with food and raw materials.

During the war, the people of Kyrgyzstan provided the Soviet Army with the industrial and agricultural products and also helped the front with personal resources and savings. Despite the difficult economic situation, ordinary Soviet people gave the front their savings, parts of the wages, gold and silver ornaments, and food. Even during the early days of the war, the Kyrgyz workers transferred their 1-2-day salary to the nationwide defense fund and developed the system of transfer of funds earned overtime, during the weekends and holidays to protect the homeland.

Collective farmers actively participated in the support of the defense fund. For example, the member of the agricultural cooperative T. Satybaldiev gave fifty sheep from his own farm to the fund.

To support such national initiatives, a special account (№ 14) was opened in Frunze State Bank of the USSR and received two million rubles from the population in August 1941, one million six hundred thousand rubles in September, and one million five hundred seventy thousand rubles in August 1941, one million six hundred thousand rubles in September, and one million five hundred seventy

Conclusion: National Contributions to the Front

“A Letter from the front”
by G.Aitiev, 1943
thousand rubles in October. By the end of 1941, this special account received nine million rubles, 38.9 kg of gold and silver jewelry as well as an additional sixteen million rubles from the government. During the winter time, the country began to send warm clothes to the front.

This movement continued until the end of the World War II. For the construction of tanks, B. Begalieva, a 75 year-old mother of 20 children, contributed fifty-five thousand rubles. Thousands of Kyrgyz people gave all their savings for the victory of the Soviet Union. For the construction of tank column, youth of Kyrgyzstan collected 15 million rubles, 3 million rubles of which were given by high school students. During the war, in addition to the assistance with food, clothing, and other provisions, the Kyrgyz people raised money for the construction of 93 tanks or 186 military aircrafts. The tank column “Soviet Kyrgyzstan” created for these deposits struck the enemy as early as November 1942.

During the Great Patriotic War, people of Kyrgyzstan collected and transferred 189 million rubles to the defense fund, purchased government bonds for a total of 57.3 million rubles. They sent nearly two hundred cars with food, five hundred fifty thousand pieces of warm clothing, and more than thirty-eight thousand individual packages were sent to the front.

In 1942-1943, Kyrgyzstan sent more than one hundred wagons of food to the surrounded by blockade Leningrad. Collective and state farms of the republic passed 4.5 million pounds of grain and five hundred thousand tons of meat to the defense fund and donated one hundred thirty thousand heads of cattle, goats and sheep to the regions freed from the Nazis.

Kyrgyzstan during 1946-1953

In contrast to western regions of the Soviet Union, the weakened economy of Kyrgyzstan was not completely destroyed. On the contrary, at the expense
of enterprises evacuated from the war zone, the industrial base of the Republic significantly strengthened. Now, the Republic was given the complex task of shifting from military production to production which focused on the needs of a population now at peace.

Starting in 1946, the industry of the Kyrgyz SSR began to manufacture civilian products, which were necessary for national economy. Eight-hour workday, weekends, and paid leaves were restored at mills and factories; overtime compulsory labor was abolished.

In August 1946, the XI session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kyrgyz SSR, in accordance with the All-Union plan, adopted a new Five-Year Plan for 1946-1950 to restore the national economy. In 1950, the Five-Year Plan Industry of the Republic had to produce products equal to 360 million rubles, 94% more than in 1940.

During this first post-war Five-Year plan, particular attention was paid to the development of heavy industry. Industry of electric power, machine tools, silk, leather shoes, and canned food grew at a rapid rate; new mines in Kyzyl-Kiya and Sulukta as well as oil wells in Maili-Suu were opened. Mechanical-repair and asphalt-concrete factories started to operate in Frunze. The second phase of the Lebedinovskaya Hydro Power Plant was completed. Such similar plants as Alamedinskaya, Przhevalskaya and Jalal-Abadskaya were constructed. The Kadamjay metal factory, “Ak-Tuz” and “Kok-Jangak” mines also started to produce the needed goods. The construction industry was further developed when the Kyzyl-Kiya and Kurmenty brick factories and the Talas tile factory began to work.

Food and light industries were also expanded. The Jalal-Abad cotton factory, the Frunze shoe factory, and a hat factory in Sosnovka village were opened in the post-war years. Over ten mechanized and seventeen semi-mechanized butter and cheese factories, as well as three meat factories were opened in the Republic. The Belovodsk sugar factory, the Jalal-Abad and Tokmok dairies, the Novo-Troitsk grain mills, and the Rybachinsky meat factory also started to operate at the same time.

During the years of the fourth Five-Year plan much work was done to repair and build roads. Capital restoration of the highways of Frunze-Rybachie, Frunze-Lugovaya, Frunze-Georgiyevka, and Osh-Khorog roads was completed. During the plan, the total length of roads in Kyrgyzstan increased by two thousand seven hundred km. One thousand
two hundred forty bridges were built. The rail line between Kant – Rybache, which was very important for the economy of Kyrgyzstan, was put into operation during this time. The length of all railways in the Republic reached 368 km in 1950. Water transport on Issyk-Kul Lake was improved too. Two streamers, two motor ships, and four barges regularly carried freight shipments. In November 1945, a separate Kyrgyz Squadron was founded; it was later transformed into the Department of Civil Aviation. It offered regular flights to Moscow. Significant progress was made in the field of communications and broadcasting: Oblast centers were connected by telephone lines with 60 regional centers. Additionally, 152 offices of rural soviets, 69 MTS, all state farms, and most collective farms acquired telephones.

Of course, the new progress in industry was not without fault. Enterprises and transport were often inactive and worked without proper efficiency. Some local companies failed to comply with the Five-Year Plan for oil and coal extraction. Due to the slow labor productivity, certain branches were even unable to reach the prewar level. Industry grew by increasing the number of enterprises and working personnel. The number of people employed in industry grew from thirty-six thousand in 1940 to just over sixty-six thousand in 1950. At the same time, the pace of industrial development of the republic required a constant replenishment of the industry’s professional staff. The bulk of the Kyrgyz population, however, lived in rural areas which reduced their chances to break into a professional field. As a result, workers from the industrial areas of the Soviet Union migrated to Kyrgyzstan.

Following the war, as briefly mentioned above, the state of agriculture in Kyrgyzstan had suffered huge losses. Out of one hundred eighty-six thousand men employed in agriculture before the war, only sixty thousand made it through the war alive. Technical equipment of collective farms dropped the mid-1930 levels. Many fertile lands were not cultivated and crop yields reduced because of insufficient manpower and lack of technology. Mineral fertilizers were almost not received by the Republic. The agricultural base was weak; organic fertilizer was accumulated at livestock farms and state farms were used inefficiently. Lack of preventive maintenance led to a rapid destruction of irrigation and water control structures.
The plight of agriculture was due to some miscalculations of the agrarian policy conducted at that time. *Kolkhoz* statutes were grossly violated everywhere. Board Chairmen were not chosen by farmers, but directly appointed by the higher organs of power. This inevitably supported the development of an inefficient bureaucracy slowing the proper functioning of the agricultural industry.

Salaries to farmers were paid out during the workdays. However, this order of payment was only true on paper. Every year the number of farmers who did not receive any payment for work their increased. As a result, this led to the indifference of farmers and their own labor discipline waned. Specific steps to remedy the plight of agriculture and its recovery were taken in 1949.

First of all, planners sought to bring the arable lands to previous production level and to increase total number of livestock. They hoped to increase the number of horses to four hundred ninety thousand and the number of large-horned cattle to five hundred sixty thousand. They also declared that the number of goats and sheep should reach 4.3 million. Pigs were to increase to six hundred thousand by 1950.

During the postwar years, much attention was paid development of collective farms. Government decisions sought to secure of the property of the collective farms, increase their productivity, and ensure that collective farmers were paid. In September 1946, the Soviet of Ministers adopted the decree, “On Measures to Eliminate the Violations of the Charter in Agricultural Cooperatives.” In February 1947, the Plenum of the CPSU (b) examined the question of the increase of the agriculture in the postwar period and, in 1948, the Soviet of Ministers of the USSR adopted a decree “On Measures to Organize and Increase of Productivity in the Farms and the Order of Payment in Collective Farmers.” In accordance with these and other decrees, the Kyrgyz Republic distributed tractors, combines, farm machinery, necessary spare parts, and fertilizers. The government also provided collective farms of the Republic with financial assistance.

All farmers of Kyrgyzstan were actively involved in the movement of competition. The government proclaimed a competition among collective farmers and pastoralists in order to increase labor, harvest, and livestock productivity. In the course of the competition, workers
were shown the samples of a valiant work. The brigade Zuurakan Kainazarova, the Hero of Socialist Labor and Deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, delivered over five hundred centners of sugar beet per one hectare. During these years, forty-seven experts of agriculture were awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labor in Kyrgyzstan for their success in production; over five hundred rural workers were awarded with other orders and medals.

Implementation of a monetary reform, weakening of prohibition on state and cooperative trade, and abolition of the rationing system by the end of 1947 contributed to the improvement of living standards. If during the war the level of general prices increased by three times, in 1946-1950, the prices for goods of broad consumption were brought back to the pre-war levels. Pensioners, labor veterans, mothers of large families, and single mothers were provided with constant material aid. Much attention was paid to housing construction and the improvement of urban and rural areas.

In 1950, fifty-three percent of the national budgets were spent for social and cultural needs of workers. As a result of such measures, real incomes of population increased. One hundred seventy-seven out of one thousand thirty-five collective farms in Kyrgyzstan received an income totaling 3-5 million rubles. Additional 16 million rubles were paid to collective farmers of Kyrgyz Republic for the over-fulfillment of production plans. Besides, farmers received grain and cattle. Many farms, however, were unable to pay wages to its members in time because of very low purchase prices for agricultural products. In addition, the average wage of farmers was more than 3 times lower in comparison with the workers and employees of other industries. Farmers did not have pensions; they were not paid benefits for temporary disability.
During the postwar years, more attention was paid to the health of the population. Such resorts as “Jalal-Abad,” “Jeti-Oguz”, “Koi-Sary”, “Issyk-Ata”, and “Ak-Suu” were improved. “Issyk-Kul” and “Cholpon-Ata” sanatoriums were built for the treatment of tuberculosis patients. Every year, thousands of workers and children improved their own health there.

In 1950, Kyrgyzstan had one hundred thirty-six hospitals, ninety-eight of which were located in rural areas. More than one thousand six hundred physicians, as well as 4.7 thousand specialists with secondary medical education were employed in medical institutions of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Gradually, housing and living conditions of the population began to improve. In five years, two hundred thousand square meters of housing were built. Power systems in Frunze, Przhevalsk, and Jalal-Abad were reconstructed. Extensive plumbing and trolleybus lines were put into operation in the capital.

Kyrgyzstan during the Voluntarist Reforms (1953-1964)

In March 1953, I.V. Stalin died and “the Stalin era of socialist development” ended; steps were taken to revive the principles of socialist democracy. In this regard, an important role was played by the exposure
of a political adventurer, L.P. Beria. Using the confidence of Stalin, Beria carried out large-scale repression eliminating state, party, and Kom- somol cadres who were objectionable to him. He frequently used false charges to achieve political ends. The July Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee branded the criminal activity of Beria and his supporters. The participants at the Plenum took steps to strengthen the leadership of the party at all levels of government.

In September 1953, N.S. Khrushchev was elected as the First Secretary of the CPSU. Under his leadership, the CPSU launched a campaign to overcome the negative effects of the Stalin cult, as well as to reform economic, political, and cultural spheres of social life.

Iskhaq Razzakov, who led the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan in 1950s, made a huge contribution to the implementation of democratic principles of the party leadership in the country.

At the same time, Ministries managing road transport and highways, farms, water, as well as meat and dairy industries were formed in the country. An important prerequisite for further development of independent Kyrgyzstan was the decision made by the Soviet of Ministers May 4, 1955, “On Amendment of the State Planning and Financing the Economy of the Union Republics.” In accordance with this resolution, the Soviet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz SSR received the right to plan and allocate industry production; certain rights on budget usage were also extended.

On February 11, 1957 the Supreme Soviet of the USSR adopted a law expanding the rights of republics in lawmaking which created favorable conditions for the rapid solution of topical issues in local regions. During the same year, according to the decision of the Soviet of Ministers, the governments of the Soviet Republics were granted the right to solve the issues of economy and culture, which further expanded the powers of national and local government.

Following Stalin’s death, special commissions began to review cases of innocent citizens repressed during the years of the Stalin personality cult. Thousands of unjustly convicted people were released from prisons. About thirteen thousand people, who were executed on false
charges of the “enemies of the people”, were rehabilitated. Among them were A. Orozbekov, I. Aidarbekov, B. Isakeev, J. Saadaev, M. Belotsky, M. Ammosov, M. Salikhov, T. Aitmatov, O. Aliev, and many others. As the result of the reforms conducted in 1950s, it became possible to coordinate efficiently, while observing democratic principles. The rights of the individual republics to solve the questions of management of their socio-economic and cultural spheres were significantly expanded.

Reforms conducted in 1950s left a positive impact on the economy of Kyrgyzstan. In the period from 1951 to 1955, 3.6 billion rubles of capital investment were spent for the economic development of the republic. During the fifth Five-Year Plan (1951-1955), Kyrgyzstan’s priorities were the development of mining, metal processing, power generation, and light and food industries. 2.5 billion rubles of capital investments were appropriated for the development of industry in the country. As a result, forty-eight new industrial enterprises were commissioned. These included enterprises such as the Frunze weaving-spinning mill, the third and fourth branches of the Alamedin hydroelectric station, brick factories in Osh and Kyzyl-Kiya, the Kyrgyz mining factory, and a cream factory in Kara-Suu. One thousand four hundred eighty-three state and eight hundred eighteen public cooperative enterprises worked in Kyrgyzstan in 1955. The Five-Year Plan for industry development during the mid-1950s surpassed set expectations. Even amidst such successes, one hundred eighty-eight companies in 1954 and one hundred seventy companies in 1955 were unable to accomplish their manufacturing tasks.

During the sixth Five-Year Plan (1956-1960), more attention was paid to the construction of large industrial enterprises in Kyrgyzstan. National economy received 7 billion rubles of capital investments. The Soviet of National Economy of the Kyrgyz SSR was established in June 1957 to improve the management of construction industries. It ran the management of two hundred twenty-five companies producing 74% of industrial output in the country. This management improved the inter-industry specialization and cooperation within the Soviet Union.

However, a purely territorial isolation seriously hampered production links with other economic enterprises of the country. In this regard, the Soviet of Economy was disbanded in 1965 and its functions were
transferred to the newly formed ministries. The sixth Five-Year Plan witnessed a widespread movement of integrated operational teams and the *udarnik* of communist labor (shock-workers who broke records in productivity). In 1960, one hundred forty-nine teams of the republic, or 1.7 thousand people, were awarded the title of “*Udarnik* of Communist Labour”.

In the 1950s, Kyrgyzstan commissioned fifty-nine industrial enterprises and forty-six shops and departments. In 1959, by the initiative of N.S. Khrushchev, the government decided to change the Five-Year Plan of 1956-1960 to a seven-year plan of development, extending it until 1965. In 1961, six hundred sixteen republic enterprises from different branches of industry, construction, and communications participated in socialist competition to fulfill the production plan. As a result of the competition, in early 1960s already Kyrgyzstan had a good pace of development in mechanical engineering and light industry; industrial products were exported to thirty countries.

In April 1952, the Soviet of Ministers adopted a decree “On Measures to Assist the Kyrgyz SSR in the Development of Cattle-breeding” and “On Measures to Assist the Kyrgyz SSR in Agriculture”. These regulations identified specific necessary activities to raise agriculture in Kyrgyzstan. To implement identified tasks, a large number of agricultural machinery was sent to the republic; thirteen new machine and tractor stations (MTS) were founded.

In the early 1950s, the Soviet Union initiated a campaign for the enlargement of farms. As a result, from 1951-1953 the number of farms in the country decreased from over one thousand six hundred to just seven hundred twenty five. This policy of consolidation of the collective farms played an important role in raising their economy.

Significant boost for intensive development of agriculture in the USSR, including Kyrgyzstan, was promoted by the decisions of the September Plenum of the CPSU (1953). According to these regulations, state purchase prices for agricultural products were increased, collective farms were exempted from the existing debts to the state, taxes were greatly reduced, and the restrictions on the conduct of private subsidiary farms. Compulsory delivery of the agricultural products surplus to the State was abolished. Farmers were free to sell the products of their labor in the markets.
The successes of agriculture in Kyrgyzstan were of immense value and were recognized by the Soviet government. In 1957, the Kyrgyz SSR was awarded the Order of Lenin, titles of Hero of Socialist Labor were given to fifty-two of the best workers in agriculture and almost three thousand people were awarded many orders and medals. Z. Kanyzarova and Kh. Tashirov were named Heroes of Socialist Labor. In accordance with the decree of the CPSU Central Committee, the Machine Technical Stations (MTS) in collective farms were converted into Repair and Technical Stations (RTS) in 1958.

Despite achieved success, in the early 1960s, Kyrgyz agriculture could not keep in pace with overall economic growth of the Union. The administrative-command system of consolidation of collective farms, forced relocation of “unpromising” villages, ill-conceived restriction of private farms, policy imposition without consideration of local conditions, compulsory cultivation of maize in all farms, the system of postscripts, and fraud at all levels led to the stagnation of agriculture in general.

Nevertheless, contradictions began to appear in the administrative-command system between central authorities and national governments. In 1959, the Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee severely criticized the leaders of Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Latvia for the “abuse of rights” and for ignoring national interests for the sake of “separatism” and “parochialism”. In May 1961, Kyrgyzstan leaders of party and government, I. Razzakov and K. Dyikanbaev, were removed from their posts because of their attitudes towards the enhancement of the independence by the republic.

The Soviet of National Economy of Central Asia was formed in 1963 and was entrusted with the task of economic management of the region. With the formation of the Soviet of National Economy, the rights obtained by the national republics in the course of reforms in the 1950s were canceled.
Reforms initiated by N.S. Khrushchev during the 1950s began to lose their relevance over time. Signs of economic recession in the country became more and more evident. The “broad construction of communism” slogan proposed by the Soviet leadership in 1964 became insolvent. N.S. Khrushchev was dismissed from the post of the First Secretary of the CPSU and the Chairman of the Soviet of Ministers; He was succeeded by Leonid Brezhnev as the First Secretary of the CPSU. A.N. Kosygin was appointed to the post of the Chairman of the Soviet of Ministers. The new appointments brought about a new era in the leadership of the Soviet Union.

Leaders of local parties became autocratic governors who obediently implemented instructions from the center. In the Kyrgyz SSR, party and government reigns moved to Turdakun Usubaliev in 1961. I. Razzakov, his predecessor, was dismissed under various pretexts and allegations; he was excluded from active participation in the social life, as well as strengthening the independence of Kyrgyzstan and the protection of national interests of the local population.

During the period of “developed socialism”, bureaucracies of the CPSU were finally formed and then concentrated power in their own hands. Since the bureaucracy in Soviet republics was strongly controlled by central power in Moscow the Party and Soviet leaders, the First Secretaries of Regional Committees and the directors of large enterprises were appointed only by Moscow.

With the spread of “developed socialism” the problems that previously plagued the party-government supervision in the administrative command system penetrated public organizations. During the early Brezhnev years, the initiatives of the Komsomol bodies became a mere formality as all the activities were carried out under the guidance of the Party. Signaling a clear tightening of the state’s political apparatus, the bureaucracy had expanded in comparison to the conditions in place under Khrushchev.
Similar problems appeared in the trade unions, despite many attempts to raise their central role in the society. Unions were available in all sectors of the economy and, since the mid-1960s, trade union organizations were found in all of the Republics of the Soviet Union (including Kyrgyzstan). For the preparation of trade-union staff, the KyrgyzSovProf organized special courses. Profaktiv (professional activists) schools with regular seminars were opened in cities, districts, and large enterprises. Trade union leadership sought to improve labor discipline, family living conditions, and productivity. However, the adoption of unrealistic plans and false registration in trade unions hindered such efforts.

In the 1960s, a number of measures to enhance the role of the Soviets as the public authorities were taken throughout the entire Soviet Union. The Supreme Soviet of the Kyrgyz SSR devoted considerable attention to this matter; specific attention was given to improving the functioning of the local Soviets. The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Kyrgyz SSR, T. Kulatov, was known for his dedication to this very important matter.

A new version of the “Constitution of the USSR” was adopted on October 7, 1977 to consolidate the role of the Communist Party in the political system of the USSR and to distinguish the essence of “developed socialism”. Accordingly, a new version of the “Constitution of the Kyrgyz SSR” was developed and adopted on April 20, 1978. Most notably, the new laws stated that the Communist Party was the “leading and guiding force of Soviet society, the core of the state and public organizations.” Thus, the absolute power of the CPSU was legalized through the adoption of the new Constitution in the various republics.

The use of the legal system to maintain the new system of government that had been created continued throughout the Brezhnev era. On June of 1979, the Law “On Elections to Local Soviets” was adopted; the law effectively fixed the previous order of elections. As before, candidates were determined from the top. The citizenry “chose” the candidates as a formality; everything was predetermined internally. This resulted in a barrier for creative discussion of topical issues and rid the higher authorities of accountability to the populations which it controlled.
Starting in the 1960s, the Soviet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz SSR, which held status as the supreme executive and supervisory authority of the Republic, began to pay more attention to the socio-economic development of Kyrgyzstan. It took active steps to implement national economic plans, to execute planned state and local budgets, and advocate the country. In this direction, a great contribution was made by such state leaders as A. Suyerkulov, B. Mambetov, A. Suyunbaev, S. Ibraimov, and A. Duisheev.

Starting from the 1980s, there was a significant decline in the activity of the Soviet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz SSR. They began to deal primarily with relatively small, everyday issues. When they did take on problems of larger scale, they were not able to effectively carry out the solutions that they had decided upon. Thus, inefficiency on part of the Soviet of Ministers took a huge toll on the progress of the Kyrgyz Republic.

In 1965, the Soviet Union began to reform its economy. This reform, named after its initiator, the Chairman of the Soviet of Ministers A.N. Kosygin, was called the “Kosygin Reform.” The initial stage of the reform started with the abolishment of the Soviet of National Economy (which had been formed and initiated by the insistence of Khrushchev). It was also met with the restoration of branch ministries. In accordance with the settings of the reform, a barrier for unwarranted interference in the production activities of enterprises implemented. The reforms formally declared that authoritative planning “from above” was to be eliminated; measures were taken to increase the material interest and the financing of enterprises by providing loans (as opposed to grants which would not be returned).
At first glance, it seemed that the reforms were improving the economy of the Soviet state. Soviet-wide state industry, including that of Kyrgyzstan, was accelerated. During the years of the eighth Five-Year Plan (1966 – 1970), the economy of the country experienced an unprecedented level of recovery. Because the government officials under Kosygin were unwilling to continue with more radical reforms, the reform movement gradually lost its productivity and failed to address the problems which were facing the USSR’s economy.

During the years of “developed socialism”, sixty percent of gross output, more than half of the Republic’s GDP, came from large scale industry. One hundred fifty new industrial enterprises were built during this era. The main industries which were built up in the Kyrgyz SSR during this period were energy, metallurgy, machine building, electronics, and construction. Other industries, including that of light, food, meat, and dairy were either reorganized or rebuilt.

In early 1980s, forty percent of coal produced in Central Asia was from the Kyrgyz SSR. This level of production was only made possible by the extensive investments in the industry which took place during the 1970s. The growth of energy in Kyrgyzstan was provided by the Naryn cascade construction in Uch-Korgon and the Toktogulskaya Hydro Power Plants. By the mid-1980s, hydro-electric power stations of the republic produced 11 billion kilowatts per hour of electricity every year. Hydropower, which would continue to play an important role in the economy of Kyrgyzstan, found its origins in this shifting of industrialization which occurred during the mid-1980s.

Kyrgyzstan was also known throughout the Soviet Union for its production of precious metals. Antimony generated by the Kadamjay factory was recognized as a standard of quality by the international market. Production of the Khaidarkan mercury factory was also a major compet-
itor on the global market. These products were exported to about forty different countries. In addition, new deposits of gold, copper, mercury, and other metals were discovered; the construction of mining companies became an important asset to Kyrgyzstan.

During the period of “developed communism” mechanical industry rapidly developed in both the entire Soviet Union and the Kyrgyz SSR. Kyrgyzstan produced agricultural machinery, trucks, machine tools, electrical machinery, and powerful electric motors, as well as physical, and test equipment, pumps, washing machines, light bulbs, and other products. The Frunze Machine-Building factory and “Tyazhelektromash” were completed during this time. Because of the modern technical equipment, the quality of measuring and control devices produced at Frunze factory reached new heights. The “Ala-Too” device designed by the team of the Frunze factory was awarded the gold medal at the International Leipzig Fair.

While heavy industry boomed, the lag of light industry was ever more apparent. As a result of insufficient attention to reconstruction, expansion of light industry was of poor quality; the products had low demand and were often left unsold in warehouses. Similar situations were often found in the food industry. The development of industry came to a halt by the 1980s and stagnation had taken hold of the Kyrgyz (and Soviet) economy.

With the development of industry in the USSR, the working class grew accordingly. Three hundred ten thousand workers were employed in all sectors of the economy of Kyrgyzstan in 1960; by 1985 their number exceeded by eight hundred sixty-six thousand. Thirty one percent were employed in industry; the rest worked in agriculture, construction, transport, communications, and service.

The number of workers grew at the expense of the local population. In 1970, the work force was made up of one hundred seventy-two thousand Kyrgyz workers; this was about 2.4 times greater than in 1959. If in 1963-1985 the number of workers and employees in industry increased by 2 times, the number of Kyrgyz among them grew by 4 times. Government programs, however, were not focused enough to provide opportunities to Kyrgyz workers to become professionals or specialists. Industrial sectors were mostly occupied by workers from the central regions of the USSR. Instead of preparing skilled workers from the
representatives of indigenous people, during those years the professionals from other republics were attracted and then provided with a higher standard of living. This situation prevented the social and professional development of the local population of the Kyrgyz SSR.

The decision of the Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee in March 1965 “On Urgent Measures for the Further Advancement of Agriculture in the USSR” revealed the main barriers to the development of industry and set targets for a long-term comprehensive program to improve the scope of agriculture across the Soviet Union. Decisions of the Plenary were subsequently developed and supplemented by the provisions of congresses of the Communist Party, the Soviet government, and the Soviet Republics.

To implement a comprehensive program of improvement of agriculture, the government of the republic allocated funds from national income, which was increased from the previous years. Financing of the agricultural sector of Kyrgyzstan received increased attention throughout the country. For example, from 1966-1975, two billion five hundred eighty-six million rubles of capital investments were allocated to agriculture of the Kyrgyz Republic from the public and collective farms funds, and in the next decade, (1976-1985), the number increased to four billion thirty-three million rubles. These funds were used to strengthen the material-technical base of agricultural production.

These new allocations, however, did not compare to the funds allocated in other Republics; as a result, the agriculture of the Kyrgyz SSR suffered. Available technology of the Republic was not used at full capacity and efficiency. Due to the negligence of farm managers and indifference of professionals, the rules of storage and preventive measures, as well
as the timing and methods of repair, use were routinely flouted. There were, however, some successes which should be noted as a result of the allocations at the All-Union level.

As a result of the proper use of allocated funds, new irrigation systems were constructed and commissioned. Additionally, large hydraulic structures were adapted to store and manage water resources. The irrigation system included two hundred twenty-four thousand hectares of arable land and one thousand seven hundred eighty-nine hectares of pastures. The area of irrigated land exceeded one million hectares. For the first time, the automated system of water distribution for the irrigation of land was used in Kyrgyzstan.

Capital investments in agricultural production and other measures to develop the relations of production ultimately increased the gross domestic product of the Kyrgyz SSR. At the same time, however, the lack of interest in the development of agriculture by workers resulted (on top of the bureaucratic problems which negatively impacted efficiency) led to a steady decline in agricultural production. The price of agricultural products, in turn, steadily rose. Under the command economy, and especially during the eleventh phase of a Five-Year Plan, agricultural production fell into a deep crisis. By 1985, 60.6% of state and collective farms were unprofitable.

During these years, several progressive reforms to raise the real income of rural residents were carried out. For example, the eighth Five-Year Plan introduced a guaranteed payment of monthly salaries to collective farmers; the payment was taken in hope that they productivity of the collective farmers would increase. Because of such measures, monthly salaries of collective farmers in Kyrgyzstan increased from sixty-six to one hundred sixty rubles; the salaries of state farmers increased from sixty to one hundred forty rubles. Regardless of the actual effects on productivity, the pay raises helped to improve the living standards of the collective
farmers of rural Kyrgyzstan. Effective measures taken in 1966-1985 to improve the social welfare of residents of rural areas provided workers with the substantial extra profit at the expense of the consumer public funds. For example, as part of the eighth Five-Year Plan, collective farmers began receiving pensions and benefits.

With the improvement of the individual living conditions of the rural farmers, the level of services in the areas of trade, welfare, food service, transportation, and communications similarly improved. Of course, many unresolved problems remained. In 1985, two hundred sixty-nine villages and towns of Kyrgyzstan had no grocery stores and four hundred twenty-four villages had no access to industrial goods. Residents of these settlements were forced to buy products in the stores located 3–10 kilometers from their homes.

Certain changes took place in the sphere of consumer services of the rural population. In 1985, two thousand five hundred institutions of consumer services operated in the villages. This number was remarkably low—Kyrgyzstan was ranked thirteenth of fifteen in terms of maintenance provided to the rural populations.

As supplies provided to rural populations remained low, some positive changes took place in the sphere of communications. The material and technical base were improved; the mail system improved and telephones became more widespread. Still, there were no communication centers in about one thousand villages in 1985. The biggest concentration of these villages was in the Osh region; the others were spread about the northeastern part of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Undoubtedly, one of the major social problems was the housing arrangement of the population. During the period of 1964-1985, the Kyrgyz leadership paid appropriate attention to rural housing and improved the infrastructure in rural communities. Housing construction and landscaping initiatives were carried out on a massive level.

In accordance with the administrative-command management policy, consolidation of settlements was intensively conducted. As a result, the number of villages in Kyrgyzstan dropped from approximately three thousand five hundred to about one thousand seven hundred during the twenty years between 1965 and 1985. According to the results of “special measures” taken to consolidate villages across the USSR, Kyrgyzstan ranked third after Moldova and Armenia in terms of improvement.
During the period of “developed socialism,” huge achievements in the health of the rural populations were reached. Significant efforts were taken to strengthen the material-technical base of health facilities and ensure that professional staff was equipped with specialized secondary education. Of course, many problems remained. For example, in 1985, the residents of almost five hundred fifty villages of the Republic had to travel more than 10 kilometers for medical treatment. A study of mortality among rural residents was found that most deaths occurred from respiratory diseases and problems with the circulatory system; it was found that men were at much higher risk to suffer from such diseases. According to the average annual figures, 1.5 thousand of people died from cancer in rural areas. Eighty percent of rural women and children suffered from anemia; infants frequently faced many problems, including malnutrition and rickets.

In accordance with the state of affairs to strengthen the material-technical base of culture the training of educational personnel for rural areas was carried out. Totally inadequate funding of educational institutions, meager wages of rural workers of culture, and the absence of any moral incentives did not help to attract young people and professionals to this area of social life. Thus, the progress of Kyrgyzstan suffered for a number of reasons during the Brezhnev era; the period, however, was not without successes in medicine, housing, and industry.

Kyrgyzstan during the ‘Perestroika’ (1985-1990)

Yuri Andropov, who made an attempt to revise the corrupted party-state apparatus and introduced strict measures to improve the situation in the country, came to power after the death of Leonid Brezhnev in November 1982. However, Andropov’s reign was short-lived. Upon his death, he was replaced by Konstantin Chernenko, who came to power in February of 1984. With Chernenko, a tightening of the political apparatus brought a return to the so-called “Brezhnev era.” During his rule, however, no major political decisions were taken; his rule was largely a continuation of the policies of Brezhnev.

Forces of change, however, were soon to follow on. Smaller factions of the party and state understood that the installed system in the Soviet Union had exhausted its possibilities. This group believed that minor
changes to a flawed system would no longer suffice. It was in this environment that Mikhail Gorbachev was elected as the Secretary-General of the CPSU Central Committee on March 11, 1985. Understanding political, economical and social problems in the USSR, Mikhail Gorbachev suggested several reforms at the Plenum of the Party in April 1985.

Under Gorbachev, the Plenum proclaimed a new strategy for socio-economic development.

In order to eradicate corruption in the party and government, a number of apologists of Brezhnev’s policy were removed from the power; they were quickly replaced by outsiders (those who had no previous ties to the Brezhnev administration). The replacement of the party leaders quickly took place throughout the entirety of the Soviet Union. Turdakun Usbuliev, who headed the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan for about a quarter of a century, was deposed in 1985; he was promptly replaced by Absamat Masaliev.

In the ensuing campaign of redeployment, a number of secretaries of provincial and district committees were also replaced. The main party and state positions in Kyrgyzstan were “strengthened” by the candidate sent from Moscow. Kiselev was appointed the Second Secretary of the Kyrgyz Communist Party. Mikhail Gorbachev’s compatriots, Semenov and Vasilenko, became the heads of the Secretariat of Industry and Department of Personnel Selection and Placement, respectively. N. Chepelev was appointed as the Chairman of the Executive Committee in the Osh Oblast.

The supporters of Mikhail Gorbachev’s policies, mainly of Russian nationality, also replaced managers of the party-state apparatus in other republics and autonomous regions. This policy of placing pro-Moscow (and often ethnically Russian) candidates in key positions caused widespread resentment amongst the local populations of these regions. For example, the replacement of the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan (D. Kunayev) by G. Kolbin aroused violent protests and demonstrations of the Kazakh people. This expression of discontent was severely suppressed and was denounced as a “recurrence of nationalism”.

A. Masaliev
The XXVIII Congress of the CPSU adopted a policy-document titled “The Guidelines for Economic and Social Development of the USSR in 1986 – 1990 and the period before 2000”. Encouraged by Mikhail Gorbachev, the Congress identified the main objectives of the strategy of acceleration. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan fully endorsed the fundamental decisions of the Congress of the CPSU and specified them in accordance of each portion of the Soviet Union.

At the Central Committee Plenum in January 1987, Gorbachev announced a new policy of glasnost, a policy which called for greater transparency of the political-state apparatus. The mass media began to report the glaring disadvantages in all spheres of social life. However, it was widely believed that all the failures and shortcomings of socialist construction were associated with the removal of the Leninist norms. The propaganda of the age explained that Stalin had deviated from Lenin, causing a betrayal of the revolution; thus, to improve the condition of the Soviet Union, the society needed to “return” to its Leninist beginnings. Celebration of the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution was just the sort of anti-Stalinism that Gorbachev was aiming for; intensified calls for the construction of the ideal socialism were expressed everywhere.

At the same time, Boris Yeltsin, who led the Moscow City Party Committee, made a strong demand to expand the policy of glasnost. The rehabilitation of victims of Stalinist repression was gaining momentum across the country. Marked changes in the ideology of the party were made. The role of the Secretariat of the CPSU began to decline. At the XIX Party Conference of the CPSU in June 1988, Mikhail Gorbachev took steps to reform the political system and approve the model of “humane, democratic socialism”. The Party conference also adopted a resolution on a new reform of the electoral system - an important step in the implementation of democratic principles. As a result, NGOs were able to vote on an alternative basis.

Political youth clubs, whose members hotly debated on current issues of social life and openly expressed their opinions, appeared in Kyrgyzstan. The first of such clubs in the Republic were opened in the office of the “Komsomolets Kirgizii” newspaper (the so-called “Demos” club) and at the factory of electronic computers (the “Zamandash” club).
that time, however, they did not make any direct opposition to the forces in power.

By 1988, however, the debate movement in the country started to intensify. Discussion clubs, including “Zamandash” at Kyrgyz State University, “Koz Karash” at the Institute of Economics of the State Planning Committee, “The Association of Active Youth” at the factory of office equipment in Naryn Oblast, and the “Union of the Kyrgyz Youth-Akyikat” in Moscow were especially active.

With the beginning of the election campaign in 1989, these organizations moved from theoretical political discussions to practical actions and were actively involved in the process of campaigning and elections. During that period, independent associations and national unions were established in Kyrgyzstan.

In the spring of 1989, the national movement in Kyrgyzstan intensified; in June the youth from the different oblasts of country illegally began to occupy the land in the southeastern outskirts of Frunze. In order to solve the problems together, they decided to form the informal organization “Ashar”. In Osh, Kyrgyz youth created a public association called “Osh Aimagy;” at the same time, Uzbek youth united under “Adolat” organization. They were also active in land allocation and protecting the interests of new owners.

In March and April 1989, national-democratic associations “Asaba” and “Uluttuk Demilge” were formed in a coalition with the politicized branch “Ashar.” This united group formed the core of the republican democratic movement “Kyrgyzstan” (KDK) in May 1990. This organization became one of the most popular inspirations of the multinational political movement in the country. Most political parties which were later formed were organized on the basis of KDK. Later on, several progressive parties would splinter from the KDK party to form their own respective parties.

During the reign of the Communist Party, such movements were looked down upon and were referred to as “informal associations.” Their leaders were labeled as “troublemakers of the people” and were subjected to various persecutions. Such situation continued until the dissolution of the CPSU and the collapse of the USSR.

Amidst the increased political activity among the population of Kyrgyzstan and the revival of national consciousness, the Supreme Soviet
of the Kyrgyz SSR, which was still under the full control of the Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan, adopted the Law “On State Language of the Kyrgyz SSR” on September 23, 1989. According to the adopted law, the Kyrgyz language was declared the official language, and the Russian language was defined as a language of international communication; free development of languages of other nationalities living in the country was guaranteed.

The Laws “On Changes and Amendments to the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the USSR” and “On Elections of People’s Deputies” adopted on December 12, 1989 at the XXII extra session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR created conditions for the fundamental restructuring of the state system. Based on these documents, the supreme power organ was approved by the Congress of People’s Deputies for the first time in the USSR.

In accordance with the law, any citizen of the republic could nominate himself for parliamentary elections. The elections were judged to be valid if more than half of registered voters participated. A given candidate to be officially elected as a deputy if more than half of the participating voters voted for him. Elections to the Supreme Court and local soviets of the Kyrgyz SSR were held in February 1990 and were the first competitive elections in the history of the Kyrgyz Republic.

After the democratic elections, the Supreme Soviet of the Republic underwent significant changes. The democratic elections brought about a greater competence among officials who served in the government. Because of these changes, the role and activity of the Soviets greatly increased. Although ninety percent of deputies elected to the Supreme Soviet were communists, the Party leadership could no longer impose their views on the Soviets.

At the first session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kyrgyz SSR in April 1990, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan, Absamat Masaliyev, was elected as the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Kyrgyz SSR and thus became the head of the state. Session proposals were made to determine specific terms of the rights of state powers, as well as to introduce a presidential republic.

In accordance with these higher-level decisions, the session of Supreme Soviet of the Kyrgyz SSR adopted a resolution on elimination of Article 6 of the Constitution of the Kyrgyz SSR, which granted the
Communist Party the power to rule over Soviet society. Thus, this session sought to democratize Soviet Kyrgyzstan, vowing for political pluralism, a necessary component of democracy.

Reconstruction of the economy was marked by the transition to economic methods of management. As a result, the independence of enterprises and agricultural production was broadened; the transfer began to complete individual accountability on the basis of independent management, financing, and profitability. In 1986, one hundred twenty-five businesses and organizations that produced seventy percent of industrial output of the country came under this new type of management. They employed more than half of the workers throughout Kyrgyzstan. Starting in 1987, similar reorganization swept all sectors of the economy.

To stop recession and stabilize financial relations in the Soviet Union, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR made the decision to transition towards a market economy. This decision immediately became the source of heated controversy; the question of how to implement a market economy into the Soviet Union could not be agreed upon. Some suggested a quick transition to the market economy, while others argued that such a transition should come in stages. Many variations and forms of content essence were suggested, ranging from a socialist market model to the classical, western capitalist model.

In Western countries, the market economy evolved naturally over the centuries and had many different stages before reaching its contemporary form. This development came about as the government was increasingly disable from maintaining too much of a presence in market relations. Despite its inevitable imperfections, nations with a market economy have traditionally developed their economies to encourage innovation and incredible wealth.

On August 7, 1991 the Supreme Soviet of the Kyrgyz Republic adopted a law “On General Principles of Denationalization, Privatization, and Entrepreneurship in the Kyrgyz Republic” for legislative approval of transitioning to a market economy. As a result of the changes in management and economy, local party authorities gradually played a lesser role in the management of the economy. As managers had to be elected on an alternative basis by their own workers, local party authorities were increasingly losing their ability to intervene in economic life.
In 1989, the Government of Kyrgyzstan approved the concept of transition to the principles of self-government and self-financing. These changes were scheduled to take place in 1991. By 1990, the construction of the Tash-Kumyr Hydro Power plant was completed, the Shamaldy-Sai and Kambar-Ata hydroelectric stations had been rapidly completed, and the Tash Kumyr semi-conductors factory began to work at a full power. In the same period, the gold-production complex “Makmal” started to operate and the development of gold deposits in Sary-Zhaz and Talas was accelerated. In the course of economic reform, almost all industrial enterprises of the Republic became independently managed and financed (without state assistance). They increased transparency in management and reduced private meetings and conferences of responsible workers. These changes in management style noticeably increased the productivity and the industrial production of the Republic (17.5% during the era of *perestroika*).

Enterprises which were part of the Soviet-wide economy had sustainable profitability in industrial production. They employed roughly two hundred thousand workers who produced 40% of whole production. However, only 3.7% of extracted profits reached the budget of the Kyrgyz SSR. Under the new changes, it was planned to redirect 70% of profits to the national budget of the Kyrgyz Republic. However, the pace of industry’s development sharply declined in 1990, bringing about an economic depression. The major problem with the Kyrgyz economy was that it was simply meant to provide other parts of the Soviet Union with either raw or partly-finished products (usually parts for other type of production). As the Soviet Union’s structure began to fall apart the necessity of entrepreneurial cooperation became evident. The cooperation also was considered as a means for backing the system of production.

It was necessary to establish a legal basis to conduct coordinated reforms in important sectors of economy. With this purpose, relevant laws on land, lease, land ownership, and land use were issued in the years of *perestroika*, 1986-1990. New methods of farming were introduced on a massive scale. Self-sufficiency and self-financing become the basis of the farms run throughout the Kyrgyz SSR. Free competition in the process of production and its implementation were established.
To improve the efficiency of agricultural management of the republic, seven former ministries, including agriculture, meat and dairy, food processing, and construction, were transformed into the State Agro-industrial Committee of the Kyrgyz SSR. In 1987, the Office of the Committee oversaw one hundred seventy-eight collective farms and almost three hundred state farms. In addition, six companies were assigned to the processing of agricultural products. Similar decisions were made in other sectors of the agricultural economy—the new Committee decided which firms would be involved in production. Thus, even as market relations opened up, the planning, financing, and management of agriculture became more streamlined and centralized. The former managerial staff was reduced by half.

During this era, more than five hundred specialized commercial farms, state breeding centers, as well as seed and off-farm establishments were formed in the villages. For the development of agriculture, nearly one billion rubles of capital investments were granted to the republic in 1990 and significantly strengthened the material base of agriculture. Irrigation works were tremendously expanded.

To improve agriculture, in 1986-1990, the state bought manufactured products for 50-100% higher than the initial price. In addition, the state began to offer contracts to individual (family) and collective farms; this was intended to increase production and support innovation. In 1989, 90% of all farms in the Republic worked according to rental contracts. Such measures contributed to the substantial rise in the agricultural sector of the economy.

In 1988, the law “On Cooperation” was adopted. According to this new legislation, freedom to operate independent farms was legalized. Pilot cooperatives and new farm prototypes were quickly established throughout the country. In 1990-1991, only a small number of individuals ventured to rent land and equipment, take long-term loans, and form independent farms. At the beginning of January, the number of farms that had taken an independent route numbered at about four thousand five hundred. The socialist economy, however, still continued to hinder the efforts of farms which were independent of the state.
The Rise of Social Problems and the Osh Events

Social Harm and Alcoholism

The propaganda of the former totalitarian system firmly implemented the belief in peoples’ minds that personal shortcomings were uncharacteristic of a socialist society. Such propaganda explained that any social ills and problems were only temporary and, in the future, would disappear from society. However, reality showed that these many of these problems occurred in the depths of “infallibility” of socialist construction, as a result of miscalculations and mistakes, unresolved urgent problems of distorted principles of socialist management, distribution of goods, and connivance relation to the violation of laws. If we analyze the main negative social problems that faced Soviet society, drunkenness and alcoholism was perhaps the most noticeable, making its appearance in society during the periods of “developed socialism” and “perestroika.”

The level of alcoholism, which undoubtedly brought rise to other social problems, had reached new heights by the time of perestroika; rampant drunkenness interfered in the work and social lives of many citizens (mostly men). Attempting to address the issue, the Gorbachev government launched a campaign to fight drinking and alcoholism. At first, certain regions were declared “zones of sobriety.” This quickly became a Soviet-wide phenomenon; alcohol could not be found stores for some time. The policy, however, failed to deal with the issue of alcoholism and also carried out a significant toll on the nation’s economy.

The problem of alcoholism was present in Kyrgyz society as well. Taking into account only the patients registered in health care institutions, for every one hundred thousand people there were more than eight hundred patients with alcohol addiction in 1985. This figure in Kyrgyzstan was two times higher than in other Central Asian republics.

The Spread of Substance Abuse and Drug Addiction

As a result of the shortcomings and failures in the “sobriety” policy, substance abuse and drug addiction increased in our country. Kyrgyzstan was at the second place in the USSR by the number of drug-addicted people registered during the period of glasnost.

The analysis of medical service records shows that the number of patients began to increase at the beginning of the 1980s and the number of drug addicts increased with the unprecedented speed.
In 1980, it was found that the cannabis served as a raw material for drugs and grew in different regions of Kyrgyzstan on four thousand hectares. To eliminate the growth of wild hemp, every part of the land where cannabis grew was certified; the terms and procedures for its destruction were defined, and people had to receive special permits to maintain its production.

Due to the lack of proper control over the use and possession of narcotics for the treatment of patients in health care, drugs became more easily accessible to drug users. Such incidents took place in medical institutions of the Issyk-Kul and Talas Oblasts, as well as the Panfilov and Kalinin districts. One of the causes of the spread of drug addiction was the lack of competent authorities with certain experience and skills in this area. Lack of medical facilities and necessary apparatus for analysis of the first signs of the disease also contributed to the spread of drug addiction in the Republic.

Information on the extent of crime in the country and information about drug addiction were concealed and restricted until the late 1980s. The government thought (mistakenly) that providing such information would serve as a form of propaganda advocating drug use or crime. Only in 1987, was it legal to publish statistical data on some types of crime; by 1989, many of these sweeping restrictions had been removed.

In the 1980s, Kyrgyzstan was one of the four most “criminal” republics along with Moldova, Lithuania, and Uzbekistan. Throughout the Soviet Union, crime generally increased during the perestroika. The most common crimes included theft of state, public, or private property. For example, more than one thousand cases of theft of state and public property and more than two thousand cases of theft of private property were registered in 1985. By 1989, these figures had increased to almost three thousand and more than nine thousand cases, respectively.

Insufficient and untimely responses to the accumulated social problems in the country affected other spheres of social life. The growth of crime and the weakness of the government in fighting against it quickly brought on more serious problems, including violence and bloodshed.

Movements to obtain the land for private housing, which culminated in the confrontations between Kyrgyz and Uzbek residents, gained mo-
mentum near the city of Osh in the summer of 1990. Instead of properly assessing the situation and finding an appropriate way of resolve the tension, the party-state leadership showed carelessness and bureaucratic indifference to the issues at hand.

Open conflict broke out when the political inexperience and unstable worldview of the “Osh Aimagy” and “Adolat” organizations (who united the Kyrgyz and Uzbek youth) became realized in political actions. The fighting and bloodshed allegedly began with the incitement of a group of retired labor and war veterans.

This was confirmed by the letter of twenty-three veterans from the Oblasts of Jalal-Abad and Osh, which was sent to federal and republican authorities on March 2, 1990. The letter consisted of fabricated facts that the majority of the population in the Oblast was Uzbeks subjected to inconceivable oppression; it was proposed to form the Osh autonomous region in the Kyrgyz SSR to protect national equality in the region. The text of the letter was multiplied and specially selected people distributed it among the population. Such shortsighted actions of the group of veterans served as an impetus to the excitation of separatist sentiment of Uzbek youth and increased the confrontation between two nations.

The fact that seven hundred families renting apartments in Uzbek neighborhoods were driven to the street worsened the situation. On June 4, two hostile crowds gathered at a nearby field, facing each other. As a result, irreconcilable conflict escalated into a massacre and local authorities were unable to pacify the embittered youth. Kyrgyz from one end of the city and Uzbeks from another initiated a bloody march in Osh. One hundred fifty-five people were brutally killed and eight hundred forty-five were injured in clashes in urban areas. Two hundred sixty-two houses, twenty-four shops, and sixty-seven vehicles were crushed and burned. On June 5, Osh was completely blocked off; military units were introduced to the city. On June 6, the situation in the city was taken under control.

Unrests in Uzgen on June 5 were of massive character and bloodshed and arsons of homes took place. With the introduction of troops on June 6, the clash subsided. On June 7, the situation in Osh, the capital, and elsewhere remained tense.

As a result, a state of emergency was announced in Frunze on June 7. After that, fighting, looting and plundering of the inhabitants of the Uz-
Oskon Osmonov and Cholpon Turdalieva

zbek communities took place throughout the country. According to some information, rural Uzbeks in Myrza-Aki village were particularly targeted because most of the inhabitants of this village were Kyrgyz. Reports indicate that many murders, gang rapes, and robberies took place. Such attacks were organized at the headquarters of the State Farm Office.

Because of massive brawls which took place at the bazaars, the situation in the city rapidly deteriorated. The police did not have the power to stop the conflicts which took place. On June 8, the religious officials of both nationalities were brought together by residents and the military; the hope was that this would calm the tensions of the conflicts. During subsequent interviews with the population of some villages, people expressed their discontent with district leaders, the lack of outreach, and distorted interpretation of events by the media. The Osh events were not analyzed by party-state leadership with due diligence. This gave rise to the discontent of people with their power structures and lack of confidence to the leaders of the Republic.

Development of Culture in Kyrgyzstan during the Soviet Era (1917-1940)

An important part of the socialist construction was the cultural development of the people. Combating massive illiteracy and old traditions became the strategies used by the Soviet state to modernize the regions of Central Asia. Thus, public education became the cornerstone of Soviet society. In April 1918, the Commissioner of Education, under the Soviet of People’s Commissars of Turkestan, was formed and the offices of education began working. In Kyrgyzstan, the Board of Education was formed with the participation of public representatives; they effectively undertook the organization of the school systems. In 1918, Pishpek County had sixty-nine schools and eight thousand students. Przhevalsk County had fifty-six schools and there were thirteen schools with thirty-six teachers in Osh County. About half of these schools were opened after the revolution.

With the advent of the Soviet power, all cultural and educational institutions were taken over by the state. The Pishpek printing house, the cinema “Edison”, and all libraries of the city were nationalized. New libraries, red yurts, and agitkruzhki (agitation centers) were organized.
everywhere. The first newspaper “Pishpekskyi Listok” (Pishpek Sheet) was published in Kyrgyzstan on March 9, 1918. The second county newspaper “Golos proletariata” (Voice of the proletariat) was published in Przhevalsk at the end of 1918.

Songs and poems of such educators as Toktogul Satylganov, Togolok Moldo, Barpy Alykulov, Kalyk Akiyev, and Isak Shaibekov played a large role in shaping a new social consciousness of the Kyrgyz people. In the years of New Economic Policy (NEP), all schools of the Turkestan ASSR were transferred to the local budgets. This, however, severely restricted the quality of the schools—materials could not be obtained and teachers (if paid at all) were paid very poorly.

Regardless, four hundred sixty-five primary schools, as well as several boarding schools and secondary schools already operated in Kyrgyzstan in during the 1924-1925 academic year. More than thirty-two thousand children were gaining all types of practical knowledge. The number of girls among the students was still relatively small. Because of the lack literature in the native language, Kyrgyz children studied by Kazakh, Tatar and Uzbek textbooks. I. Arabaev and K. Tynystanov made particular contribution to creation of textbooks in Kyrgyz language. In 1924, a textbook by I. Arabaev “Kyrgyz alippesi” (The Kyrgyz Primer) was published in Tashkent and was the first textbook in the Kyrgyz language. Another twelve books with the circulation of twenty-eight thousand copies were published in the same year; a textbook in Kyrgyz language by K. Tynystanov was among them. Talented young men and women were sent to educational institutions in Tashkent, Alma-Ata, and Moscow.

The pioneers of local teachers in Kyrgyzstan, noted for their status as devotees to education included I. Arabaev, M. Baizakov, A. Isaev, E.Syuticherov, Z. Kydyrbaev, and A. Koygeldiev. Russian teachers like N. Ivanovskiy, A. Lobanov, I. Lektionov, A. Sapozhnikov, and others made a great contribution to the organization of schools and improvement of education. A wonderful portrayal of the crucial role played by the early educators of Kyrgyzstan was brilliantly and accurately written in the book, First Teacher by the well-known Chingiz Aitmatov.
The Pedagogical College win Osh was opened in 1925 and operated on six month training courses. In the same year, nine-year schools in Pishpek and Karakol were converted to agricultural colleges. The first Kyrgyz Institute of Education was opened in Pishpek in 1925. In the 1925-1926 academic year women’s vocational schools were organized in Pishpek, Karakol, and Jalal-Abad. In addition, Soviet party schools began working and trained the future cadres.

In 1929, one hundred alumni graduated from the secondary special educational institutions of Kyrgyzstan. Many of the graduates, including A. Maldybaev, G. Aitiev, K. Zhantoshev, M. Elebaev, W. Abdymomunov, K. Malikov, J. Bokonbayev, A. Osmonov, and M. Alybaev. Particular emphasis was placed on the training of rural residents, especially cattle-breeders and farmers. One hundred fifty-six schools called likbez (schools established during the campaign of eradication of illiteracy in the Soviet Union in 1920s and 1930s were opened in the first half of 1925. Eight thousand people learned to read and write in these schools. In the 1925-1926 academic year, the number of these schools reached two hundred forty-six.

Manuals for the eradication of illiteracy were composed by Kh. Karasayev, A. Shabdanov, and S. Naamatov in the Latin alphabet. A real struggle for the eradication of illiteracy in Kyrgyzstan was started under the slogan “The literature will teach the illiterate”. Particular attention was paid to the issue of illiteracy among the female population.

In 1936, the Kyrgyz Government opened the Department for challenging illiteracy. Before 1940, the campaign for combating illiteracy had made quite some progress; however, the problem of illiteracy still remained, especially in rural regions. In the prewar years in Kyrgyzstan, attention was not only focused on quantitative growth of education, but on its qualitative improvement as well. For example, the country had
one thousand three hundred primary schools, over three hundred seven-year schools, and sixty-two secondary schools in the 1937-1938 academic year. Although the number of teachers doubled, most of them had no pedagogical training; the low quality of the teachers impacted the overall quality of the educational system.

In the 1932-1933 academic year, the first institution of higher education in the history of Kyrgyzstan, the Kyrgyz State Pedagogical Institute, opened its doors. Scientists and educators that arrived from Moscow, Leningrad, and other cities helped to raise the quality of the teachers that were trained at the Institute. In 1936, the Institute had forty-six new graduates. Thirteen of them were girls.

The Kyrgyz State Medical Institute in Frunze and several universities in other cities began operating in the 1938-1939 academic year. Institutions of higher education began the training of scientific personnel of the Republic. In 1937, the Kyrgyz government formed the Committee of Science, which became the scientific center of the Republic. Before the war, thirteen research institutions operated in Kyrgyzstan and employed three hundred twenty-three scientists, including thirteen doctors and forty-five candidates.

The foundation of national writing and printing was a special event in the cultural life of the people. In 1924, Kyrgyz writing based on the Arabic alphabet was developed and the first newspaper “Erkin Too” was published in Kyrgyz language on November 7. The newspaper “Batratskaya Pravda” (Farmhand Truth) in the Russian language began to be published on March 12, 1925. In November 1926, the “Leninchil Jash” (the Lenin Youth) newspaper and a “Communist” magazine were founded. Other periodicals, such as the “Jany Madaniyat Jolunda” (On the New Cultural Way) and “Dyykan” (Peasant) magazines began to be published in 1928.
Writers like K. Tynystanov, K. Baialinov, M. Elebaev, J. Turusbekov, T. Umetaliev, J. Bokombaev, K. Jantoshev, S. Karachev, M. Tokobayev, A. Tokombaev, T. Sydykbekov and akyns T. Satylganov, Togolok Moldovan, B. Alykulov, I. Shaybekov, A. Zhutakeev, K. Akiyev, and O. lead the rise of the Kyrgyz literature movement and made great contributions to its development. The First Congress of Writers, held in Kyrgyzstan in April 1934, summarized the previous years and outlined new opportunities and challenges. The Congress approved the Writers’ Union of Kyrgyzstan. A Tokombaev was elected as Chairman of the institution; he was later succeeded by T. Umetaliev, who served from 1937-1941. On his initiative, folk compositions, especially the epic “Manas”, were collected and recorded.

Other areas of national professional arts, such as theater, music, and painting, grew and developed along with the literature. The Music and Drama Studio for professional actors was opened in 1926. Such known performers as A. Kuttubaev, A. Botaliev, and K. Eshimbekov were among its first graduates. The state-sponsored theater crew involved prominent members of folk art, such as komuzists Kurenkeev M. and K. Orozov, akyns Akiyev K. and O. Bolebalaev, manaschy Musulmankulov M., and the humorist S. Termechikov.

In 1930, the republic’s Music and Drama Studio was transformed into the State Drama Theatre, which had an orchestra of folk instruments. The Russian Drama Theatre was opened in Frunze in 1935. In the following year, the Kyrgyz State Theatre was transformed into the Kyrgyz Music and Drama Theater. In the same year, the Kyrgyz State Philharmonic Society began working. Such performances as “Altyn Kyz”, “Ajal orduna”, and “Aichurek” were presented on the stage of the Kyrgyz State Drama Theater during the years of 1937-1939.
Another celebrated step in the development of national music education was the formation of the Union of Composers in 1939 under the leadership of Maldybaev. A.V. Zataevich did a lot of work in researching and recording of Kyrgyz folk music under the guidance of this institution.

The Union of Artists of Kyrgyzstan, headed by S. Chuikov, was formed in 1933. By his initiative the Kyrgyz State Art Gallery was opened in 1935. Works of such talented artists as S. Chuikov, G. Aitiev, and S. Akylbekov were presented during the opening of the gallery. The first art educational institution was opened in 1939. Sculptor O. Manuilova and other masters of art came to the Republic during this period.

The Decade Celebration of the Kyrgyz Art and Literature was held in Moscow from May 26 to June 4, 1939 and was a particularly significant event in the cultural life of Kyrgyzstan. More than five hundred masters of folk art attended it. Thus, the Soviet Culture of Kyrgyzstan, despite the short time of formation, reached great creative and organizational success in the 1920 and 1930s.

Cultural Construction during the War and the Postwar Period (1941-1964)

Science and Culture during the World War II

During the Second World War, Kyrgyzstan sent more than fifteen thousand intellectuals to fight valiantly on the battlefields. Those scientists who stayed at the home front, worked tirelessly on the military-economic issues attributed to the defense of the homeland. By the beginning of the war, the Kyrgyz SSR had thirteen research institutions employing over three hundred research staff, thirteen doctors, and forty-five candidates of science.
The scientific potential of the country grew stronger due to the scientists and scholars that were evacuated to Kyrgyzstan. With the arrival of academicians such as A. Bach and A. Borisyak, M. Keldysh, A. Bernshtam and K. Yudakhin, the level of scientific and applied research in the republic was dramatically improved.

Geologists in Kyrgyzstan tirelessly searched for minerals of military value. During 1941-1944, they organized three hundred twenty-one expeditions, during which they identified one hundred ten deposits of nonferrous metals and eight deposits of ferrous metals. They also uncovered seventy-one deposits of coal and oil. The production of a number of Kyrgyz mines containing materials such as mercury, antimony, tungsten, and other rare earth elements were of strategic importance during and after the war.

Evacuated to Frunze, the Biological Division of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, together with the branches of the Kyrgyz Academy ran important military and economic research. On January 5, 1943 the Soviet of National Commissars founded the Kyrgyz branch of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, which became a huge source for the enhancement of research in Kyrgyzstan. On August 13, 1943 the new organization began working; its first chairman was academic, K.I. Skryabin; J. Shukurov and B. Masenko were the Chairman Deputies. P. Vlasenko was the Scientific Secretary. The branch employed one hundred fifty-eight scientists including one leading academic of the USSR, a member-corrrespondent, twelve doctors, and twenty-two candidates of sciences.
Literature and art was an important ideological weapon in the struggle against the fascist invaders. Many members of the Writers’ Union of Kyrgyzstan (M. Elebaev, J. Ashubaev, N. Chekmenev, J. Shivaza, J. Turusbekov, U. Abdukaimov, and others) were sent to the front. Some of them became political officers of military units, while others worked in the front press, conducting propaganda and educational work. J. Turusbekov, M. Elebaev, and K. Esenkozhoev heroically died on the battlefield. Soviet patriotism, defense of the Motherland, military valor, and selfless work at home were the main themes of creativity of the Kyrgyz writers during those years. A. Tokombaev, K. Jantoshev, A. Osmonov, K. Malikov, T. Umetaliev, T. Sydykbekov, J. Bokonbayev, and others urged their readers to resist the enemy; they also helped to inspire them and strengthen their faith in eventual victory over the enemy.

From the first months of the war, artists and singers of Kyrgyzstan devoted their talents and energy to the approaching victory. For example, a brigade of republican singers held over seven hundred concerts at the front, in hospitals, and mobilization centers from July 1941 to April 1, 1942. In November 1941, the premiere of the Kyrgyz “Patriots” opera was dedicated to the heroes of the Great Patriotic War. On August 17, 1942 the Musical Theatre was transformed into the Kyrgyz State Opera and Ballet Theater.

The works of S. Chuikov – “For the Motherland”, “Portrait of Cholponbay”, “Farewell to the front” and of A. Ignatov (“Meeting with the mother,” “Guest from the front”, “Letter from the Front” of G. Aitiev”).
The development of culture in the postwar period was run under the ideological wing of the Stalin administrative-command system. As a result, a number of intellectuals were again subjected to persecution.

Other works, like those of the famous bars of the late 19th and early 20th century, Moldo Kylych, were considered too “bourgeois-nationalist,” which led to the repressions of researchers of his works (including T. Samanchin, T. Baydzhiev, and Z. Bektenov). Scholars J. Shukurov, K. Sooronbai, and K. Karasayev were removed from their positions for their so called ‘nationalist writing’. The Kanduu jyldar book by A. Tokombaev and the Balbai poem by K. Malikov were criticized and banned. In 1951, the government and party leaders launched a campaign of criticism of national folk epics. The highest achievement of spiritual creativity of the Kyrgyz people, epic “Manas”, was banned as a product of “religious and anti-national content, which preached the exploitative interests of the war.” (Moldobaev, 1995).

Kyrgyz intellectuals, however, did not accept such interpretation of the national epic and a fundamental debate was raised by the mass media. After numerous discussions, as well as the conference on the national epic of “Manas” held in June 1952, the folklore masterpiece was protected from any reprisals. Great patriotic contribution to the protection of the epic was made by M. Auezov, A. Tokombaev, K. Malikov, T. Sydykbekov, A. Bernstam, B. Yunusaliev, and B. Kerimzhanova.

During the immediate post-war years, substantial improvements were made to public education. The Kyrgyz SSR continued the publication of textbooks and teaching manuals suspended during the war. Eighty-nine new textbooks for schools were published in 1950. The Kyrgyz-Women Pedagogical Institute was opened around the same time. Two-year educational institutions in Przhevalsk, Osh, and Jalal-Abad began the trainings of specialists in 1950-60s; industrial, veterinary, food technical schools, cultural-educational, music, dance, and art schools intensified their operations.

The post-war years also witnessed a growth in the research of the Kyrgyz SSR. The Kyrgyz branch of the USSR Academy of Science successfully employed five hundred researchers, including thirteen doctors and eighty-three candidates of science. Forty-six professors and doctors of sciences, together with three hundred fifty associate professors and candidates of sciences worked in higher education institutions and research institutes. In 1950, several medical and agricultural institutions,
as well as four educational training institutions operated in the Kyrgyz Republic; 19.2 thousand students studied in 29 post-secondary educational institutions (Osmonov, Asankanov 2002).

Five national, ten regional, and seventy district and municipal newspapers with the circulation of one hundred sixty thousand copies were published in Kyrgyzstan. In addition, the “Communist” and “Bloknaya agitatora i propagandista” (The Notebook of the agitator and the propagandist) magazines were published in Russian and Kyrgyz languages.

In the 1950s and early 1960s the culture of the Republic continued to evolve in a new way. Kyrgyz literature received a new impetus to the development. The novel of T. Sydykbekov “Bizdin zamandyn kishileri” (“People of our Day”) was awarded the USSR State Prize. Such talented writers and poets as Ch. Aytmatov, U. Abdukaimov, S. Eraliev, C. Kaimov, A. Tokтомushev, and T. Umetaliev enriched the literature during those years. The collection of stories by Chingiz Aitmatov, Tales of the Mountains and Steppes, was awarded the Lenin Prize in 1963.

Art workers of Kyrgyzstan demonstrated their achievements at the second Decade Celebration of Art and Literature in Moscow in 1958. Six art workers of the republic - S. Kiyizbaeva, B. Beishenalieva, M. Ryskulov, B. Kadykeeva, A. Myrzabaeva, and D. Kuyukova - were awarded the title of People’s Artist of USSR. Three hundred artistic people were awarded other orders and medals; nine of them received the Order of Lenin. S. Chuikov and G. Aitiev portrayed the labor of their contemporaries and the beauty of their native land in Daughter of Soviet Kyrgyzstan and Noon. Kyrgyz art was replenished by young artists such as A. Usbulaliev, K. Kerimbekov, and J. Kojohmatov, who were the graduates of art colleges in Moscow, Leningrad, and Tashkent.
Positive developments in the national education system continued throughout the 1950s. In the 1953-1954 academic year, compulsory secondary education was introduced throughout the country (schools were usually in cities or towns). However in 1955, more than twenty thousand children were not brought to school, especially in rural areas. Starting in 1958, compulsory eight-year education replaced seven years of education. In secondary schools the training period was extended to 11 years.

Prior to the 1950s, central universities of the USSR prepared specialists with higher economic education. The opening of the Kyrgyz State University on the basis of the state teacher’s college in 1951 was an important event for the Kyrgyz state. The Frunze Polytechnic Institute was opened on the basis of geological and technical faculties in 1954. The Kyrgyz Institute of Physical Culture began the recruitment of students in 1955. Colleges of light industry and Soviet trade were opened in Frunze in 1954 and the agricultural college began the training in Naryn since 1956. Thus, whether in the realm of primary or secondary education, the immediate post-war era witnessed significant progress in the life of the people of Kyrgyzstan (Beyshembiev, 1995).

**Cultural Development from 1964-1990**

Deeply understanding the role of public school education in raising the cultural level of the population, the party-state leadership set a target to add compulsory secondary education to the eighth Five-Year Plan (1966-1970) and finally complete the reform during the ninth Five-Year Plan (1971-1975). To fulfill these tasks, large-scale activities were undertaken to strengthen the material-technical base of schools launched in Kyrgyzstan: Eight hundred fifty-nine schools for more than seven hundred thousand students were built in the Kyrgyz Republic from 1966-1985.
A decisive role in the improvement of education belonged to school teachers. In the 1984-1985 academic year, fifty-eight thousand teachers and tutors worked in the Republic; forty-one thousand of them worked in rural schools. From 1966-1967, the schools of Kyrgyzstan set new plans and programs. In 1980, all students were fully provided with textbooks and teaching manuals.

During this period, the management of the school system focused its efforts on providing secondary school students with the preparation for future careers. Schools set up proper training and production complexes and trained more than thirty professions, such as welders, mechanics, electricians, tractor drivers, builders, and tailors.

In May 1966, the General Department of Vocational Education at the Soviet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz SSR was transformed into the State Committee of the Soviet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz SSR. As a result of fruitful work of the committee, vocational education in the country was brought to new levels. Particular attention was paid to training in the agricultural sphere as it was the mainstay of the economy of the country. In 1965, seventeen rural vocational and technical schools with an enrollment of 5.2 thousand students operated in Kyrgyzstan. By 1990, the number of vocational school reached one hundred eighteen; whereas fifty-seven thousand students studied fifty-six professions. One problem was the attitude expressed towards the vocational schools; society generally viewed the vocational school as an option for students who did not excel in their studies – as a result, the jobs found from the vocational schools lacked in prestige and compensation.

During this era, the Frunze Polytechnic Institute became a major center for training engineers. Nearly one thousand teachers worked there and trained twelve professions to 11.2 thousand students. Similarly, the Kyrgyz-Women Pedagogical Institute, the Institute of Russian Language and Literature, Przhevalsk Pedagogical Institute, and the Osh State Pedagogical Institute served as the basis for training teachers in the region. In 1985, one hundred nine thousand students gained knowledge at higher and secondary special educational institutions. Each year 9.5 thousand specialists graduated from higher educational institutions, while 13.6 thousand of students graduated from technical schools and colleges.

Emphasis on science and research intensified from 1964-1990. The study and application of the technical, physical, mathematical, mining,
chemical, biological, and social sciences increased throughout the country. The main efforts of scientists involved the economy of natural and social resources of the Kyrgyz SSR, as well as rational and efficient use of them in the interests of nation and state. On December 20, 1979, the Academy celebrated its 25th anniversary. At that time it had three offices bringing together seventeen research institutions which employed 1.2 thousand scientists; among them were twenty-six academics, thirty-two member-correspondents, seventy-five doctors, and five hundred twelve candidates of science.

From 1971-1975, scholars of the Academy made sixty major scientific discoveries, which brought the profit of 130.5 million rubles to the national economy of the Kyrgyz SSR and the USSR. In the period of 1976-1980, researchers made a number of valuable scientific and practical recommendations for the development of mining and processing of nonferrous and rare metals, mining, and automated irrigation systems. Successful research on productivity of livestock and crop farming, were conducted in the late 1970s. The Academy of Sciences of the Republic won fifty-two medals and one hundred eighty diplomas at the All-Union Exhibition of Economic Achievements. The Scholars of the Academy were twice awarded as many as forty of the State Prizes of the USSR and the State Prizes of the Kyrgyz SSR.

In the 1980s, a revitalization of research in higher education was implemented. In 1987, higher educational institutions participated in the development of nineteen integrated scientific and technical programs; these programs participated within Kyrgyzstan, but also in collaboration with other regions of the Soviet Union. In 1988, these programs involved one hundred sixty-six doctors and more than one thousand seven hundred candidates of science working in 10 higher education institutions in Kyrgyzstan.

The relationship of the educational process with the direct production was of great importance for the institutions of the Kyrgyz SSR in late 1980s. For this purpose, industrial associations opened their branches in institu-
tions of higher education and organized industrial and scientific centers. For example, in 1988, the Frunze Polytechnic Institute formed its own branches in nine industrial enterprises. Such initiatives were supported by the majority of the institutions of higher education.

In the mid-1960s, more than thirty masters of artistic expression joined the Writers’ Union of Kyrgyzstan. Works by artists such as M. Abylkasymova, M. Bularkieva, O. Danikeev, T. Kojomberdiev, M. Baydzhiev, and B. Sarnogoev, gained great popularity. In accordance with the party ideology, literature and art were focused on the portraying cultural and economic achievements, education of workers, the command-administrative system, and its leaders. Much attention was paid to the translation of works of writers of other nationalities into the Kyrgyz language. Kyrgyz readers had ample opportunity to get acquainted with the works of Soviet writers and other peoples of the world. By 1984, almost five hundred works of Kyrgyz literature were translated into many languages of the USSR and other foreign countries. The number of members of the Writers’ Union of Kyrgyzstan was growing: in 1966 there were one hundred fifteen. By 1981 the number had reached one hundred seventy, and then two hundred fifty-four by 1985.

During this period, works of the Soviet writer Chingiz Aitmatov reached the climax and were published in more than fifty languages with a circulation of eight million copies. Literary studies and literary critics flourished during this period. Literary studies of Asanaliev K., K. Artykbaev, Bobulov K., B. Malenov, E. Ozmitel, A. Sadykov, and J. Tashtemirov made great contributions to the study and theory of Kyrgyz literature.

In 1980s, eight specialized theaters (including the Opera House), six drama and music theatres, and a Republican puppet theater worked in Kyrgyzstan. Talented players set world-famous performances such as “Othello,” “Julius Caesar,” “Hamlet,” “Twelfth Night” by William Shakespeare, “The Inspector General” by Gogol, and “The Optimistic Tragedy” by Vishnevsky. Theaters presented pieces of historical, social, and other lyrical themes, which were based on the works of writers reflecting the life, ideological values, customs, and spirit of the Kyrgyz people. Different performances of the Kyrgyz authors were presented at about 100 theaters of the USSR between 1970 and 1980.

Musical compositions of the Kyrgyz composers became widely known in the 1970s and 1980s. Along with the extensive development of song genre, much attention was paid to operas, ballets, theater performances, and movies. During this period, the Composers’ Union of Kyrgyzstan involved a number of talented musicians, such as J. Maldybaev, S. Osmonov, T. Salamatov, A.Jeenbaev, and M. Begaliev. In 1984, M. Begaliev won the first place at a show of the All-Union Young Composers and was the first Soviet composer who won the UNESCO Fellowship in 1991. Thus, in a variety of spheres, the culture of the Kyrgyz SSR witnessed a great flourishing from the 1960s to the 1980s.
Part III.
THE SOVEREIGN KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

Collapse of the Soviet Union.
Formation of the Sovereign Kyrgyz Republic

In March 1990, the Congress of People’s Deputies of the USSR introduced the presidency for the first time. The establishment of the new form of government was brought about with a series of radical, democratic reforms, including an objective evolution of international relations, the introduction of a multi-party system, and the development of pluralism in the society. With the elimination of the command-party system, the CPSU was removed from the power and all its supremacies were transferred to the Soviets. However, for many reasons - financial, ethnic, political, and organizational – the Soviets were unable to function at an adequate level of coordination of government powers formerly belonging to the Communist Party.

Presidential power was designed to determine and control the government and all its branches. The powers of President also included the right to oversee the implementation of laws, the legislative and judicial control of economy, the fiscal system, pricing, and matters concerning state payments. With the introduction of presidential power in the Soviet Union, this institution was adopted in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and other republics.

Askar Akayev was elected as the first President of Kyrgyzstan on an alternative basis at the session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kyrgyz SSR on October 27, 1990. He was left with the burden of many critical problems from the previous government. National relations in the summer of 1990 were very tense after the bloody Uzbek-Kyrgyz ethnic clashes that took place in Osh.

On December 15, 1990, the Supreme Soviet of the Kyrgyz SSR adopted the “Declaration of State Independence of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan.” A number of proposals for the restructuring and strengthening of state power were expressed during the numerous discussions of the future of state power in Kyrgyzstan. As a result, the state was split into three administrative branches – the legislative, the executive, and the judicial.

After the removal of the Communist Party, the Soviets, perceived as the new expression of state power, completely failed in the new envi-
ronment. The strengthening of state power became vital for the country. Deeply aware of the fundamental situation at hand, Askar Akayev sent the appeal “On Urgent Measures to Reorganize the System of State Power” to the Supreme Soviet and introduced a bill “On Improving the Regional Division of the Kyrgyz SSR and the Formation of new Oblasts” to the parliament. In accordance with these documents, the Chu and Jalal-Abad Oblasts were established on December 14, 1990; at the same time, the Naryn and Talas Oblasts were restored.

On January 22, 1991, the President announced the program for further development of state power at the session of the Supreme Soviet. In accordance with this program, the law “On the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan” was adopted and the posts of Prime Minister and Vice Prime Minister were introduced. The legal framework and responsibilities of local authorities were concretely established. In contrast to its predecessor, the Soviet of Ministers of the new government was subordinated to the President and operated all activities under his leadership. Instead of eight Chairman Deputies of the Soviet of Ministers, five posts of state secretaries were approved. The session approved Isanov N. as the first Prime Minister of the Republic; Koychuev T., Jordan A., Dyusheev E., Fisher J., and Muraliev A. were approved as state secretaries. Candidates for ministers and chairmen of state committees were also approved.

As a result of the reformation of the political system of the USSR, the principles of democracy began to develop and various democratic organizations were formed. Inter-ethnic relations, however, continued to worsen. Struggles for sovereignty broke out in all of the republics; some representatives of the republics openly spoke about their intention to withdraw from the Union. Contradictions between federal and republican laws appeared and economic difficulties increased.

By decision of the IV Congress of People’s Deputies of the USSR and in accordance with the decision of the Supreme Soviet on January 16, 1991, the issue of the preservation of the USSR as a renewed federation of equal sovereign republics was nominated for national referendum. It was held on March 17, 1991 under confrontations between the forces fighting for the preservation of the Union and those seeking its destruction.

Following the referendum of March 21, 1991, the USSR Supreme Soviet passed a special resolution. It was noted that the referendum was attended by one hundred forty-seven million people, of whom 112 million, or 76%, voted for the preservation of the Union. Nine of the republics (those of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Azer-
baijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan) confirmed their desire to remain in the Soviet Union, while in the other six republics (those of Georgia, Lithuania, Moldova, Latvia, Armenia, and Estonia), only 25 percent of the population voted for the preservation of the USSR.

The results of the referendum led to the need of a new treaty of the Soviet Union. In March 1991, draft of an agreement was developed. The new treaty made it so the central government provided the various republics with a much great autonomy. In 1991, the Supreme Soviet of the Kyrgyz SSR adopted a number of important pieces of legislation. On February 5, the session of the Supreme Council decided to restore a historical name of the capital: its historical name, Bishkek, was returned to the city of Frunze. By the end of 1990, a constitutional commission for the development of a new constitution was established. It was led by the President Askar Akayev.

In order to ensure equitable development of all forms of ownership to transition to a mixed economy, the Supreme Soviet of the Kyrgyz SSR adopted the Law “On Land Reform” on April 19, 1991. On June 26, 1991, the Supreme Soviet of the Kyrgyz SSR approved the draft treaty of the alliance of sovereign states. At the same time, conservative forces in Moscow regarded the Union Treaty as a betrayal and made numerous efforts to restore the old order. The State Emergency Committee of the USSR, which was established on August 21, 1991, attempted to launch a revolution. This event completely undermined state power and, thus, stirred controversy in the USSR. President Akaev condemned the action of the Emergency Committee and made a statement that the Kyrgyz Republic did not support its policy. Other Soviet republics also perceived the activities of the Emergency Committee as an attempted military coup and openly expressed their intention to separate from the USSR.

On August 31, 1991, a session of the Supreme Soviet of Kyrgyzstan adopted the “Declaration on State Independence of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan”, which solemnly declared the Kyrgyz Republic as an independent state. Thus, a new independent sovereign state, the Kyrgyz Republic, emerged on the world map. In a situation of civil and patriotic enthusiasm, Akaev was elected President by a public vote on October 12, 1991.

The declaration of independence meant that Kyrgyzstan was freed from the tutelage of the institutional bodies of the Soviet Union; all powers were
transferred to the new government. The Decree of the President of the State Security Committee was disbanded on October 20, 1991. In its place, the State Committee on National Security was formed and the National Guard and troops of the Interior of the Republic were formed in December.

On December 8, 1991, Belarus Republic, the Russian Federation, and Ukraine signed an agreement on the Establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in Bialowieza Forest (Belovezhskaya Pushcha) near Minsk. This event marked the beginning of the USSR disintegration process. On December 21, 1991, an agreement on the formation of the CIS was signed in Almaty by the Republic of Belarus, the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. On December 25, 1991, the Soviet Union was formally dissolved when M.S. Gorbachev announced the resignation of the President’s power.

For a joint and equitable solution of the CIS issues, the Council of Heads of States and the Council of Government Heads were established. Russia was assigned to protect the interests of the CIS at the Security Committee of the United Nations (UN). Even when meeting in Almaty, leaders of the various republics applied to the UN to adopt the CIS states as UN members. This ascertained that all external and internal borders of the CIS were inviolable and indivisible. All this opened new opportunities for equitable cooperation of the CIS countries.

**Social and Political Transformation**

The formation of a sovereign Kyrgyz Republic was the greatest event in the history of Kyrgyz people and was the result of major reforms of social and political systems of the USSR.
Having gained its own sovereignty, the Kyrgyz Government found it necessary to define the principles of its state structure, as well its foreign and domestic policy. For this purpose, it was essential to develop and adopt the Constitution of the Republic.

In May 1991, the Supreme Soviet approved the composition of a commission for drafting a new constitution. In a year and a half, the project was developed and then presented to public discussion.

On May 5, 1993, the XII session of Jogorku Kenesh, (the Parliament) approved the new Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic after a thorough discussion. This day is still celebrated as a national holiday in Kyrgyzstan.

The new constitution defined the Kyrgyz Republic (Kyrgyzstan) as a sovereign unitary democratic republic built on a basis of legal secular state; the sovereignty of the Kyrgyz Republic extends throughout its territory and the people of Kyrgyzstan are the bearer of sovereignty. People exercise their power directly and through government in accordance with the Constitution and the law of the KR. The parliament and the president are elected by people have a right to speak on behalf of them.

Within the authority of a Constitution, the state power in the Kyrgyz Republic is exercised by the President and the Parliament consists of two chambers - the Legislative Assembly and Assembly of People’s Representatives, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic and local state administrations, the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court, the Supreme Arbitration court, and the courts and judges of the justice system. Legislative, executive, and judicial authorities perform their functions both independently and cooperatively. The president, as head of the state, guarantees the unity of all branches of government and ensures that the Constitution is upheld and that human rights and freedoms of citizens are protected.

The President of the Kyrgyz Republic is elected for a five-year term. The same person can be elected for not more than two consecutive terms. The President of the Kyrgyz Republic should be a citizen of Kyrgyzstan, not younger than 35 years old, but not older than 65 years; he must know the state language and must have been living in the country for at least 15 years before his or her nomination for office. The president now may not be a member of Parliament (Jogorku Kenesh) or hold any other public office, he also may not be engaged in entrepreneurial activity.
According to Constitution, the structure of government is determined by the President; he/she is granted the right to appoint the Prime Minister with the consent of the Jogorku Kenesh. Due to the changes occurring in the country, the Supreme Soviet of the Kyrgyz Republic adopted the Law “On the Government of KR” on February 26, 1992; as a result, on February 28, the VIII session of the Supreme Soviet approved T. Chyngyshev to be Prime Minister. Vice-prime ministers were introduced instead of the Secretaries of State. Such known statesmen as G. Kuznetsov, A. Erkebaev, and R. Otunbayeva were appointed as vice-prime ministers. Some ministries were liquidated under the new law; in their place, fourteen new and seven state committees, six state agencies, and five state inspections were formed. In 1992, the country reformed local executive bodies: akimiats were created on the basis of the executive committees of local soviets.

Legislative power in Kyrgyzstan was delegated to the Jogorku Kenesh, which was elected for a term of five years and consisted of three hundred fifty deputies. The parliament adopted a number of important documents that were required for the approval of the sovereignty of the republic, had fundamental political importance, and included the “Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan” (December 15, 1990) and the “Declaration on State Independence of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan” (August 31, 1991). A significant role in the development and adoption of the new Constitution of Kyrgyzstan was played by the Parliament which approved the National Flag (March 3, 1992), the National Anthem (December 18, 1992), and the National Emblem (January 14, 1994) of Kyrgyzstan. During the transitional period, the Parliament developed laws governing the stabilization of the socio-economic life of Kyrgyzstan.

The dynamics of social life during the transitional period required rapid establishment of an appropriate legal framework. The construction of vari-
ous laws, however, did not lead to the stabilization of the state. Some of the laws adopted by the Jogorku Kenesh were inactive or unenforced. As a result, it lost legitimacy and authority amongst the population, promoting the development of an already seemingly imminent crisis.

First of all, the representatives of the new government did not work out a definite strategy or set of legislation. Many laws were poorly planned. This partially stems from the fact that the effects of the transition to a new government and economy had not yet been fully internalized by the population. Legal rules did not anticipate the problems which arose in the social life of the country.

Second, the majority of deputies had no legal training and experienced great difficulties in the design and interpretation of new laws. Professional deputies made up a small portion of the Parliament. Finally, people were unable to perceive and realize haphazard and unregulated flow of laws; executive branch often irresponsibly in the execution and implementation of these laws.

After the adoption of the new constitution, various political intrigues began in the upper echelons of power and led to a crisis in all branches of government, especially within the law-making body. In September 1994, the Parliament was divided into two parts. The majority of deputies were officials who had previously worked in executive or judicial branches of government. They were afraid of losing their parliamentary immunity and opposed the elections to all branches of power in 1993, roughly violating the provisions of newly adopted Constitution. On September 13, 1994, they refused to take part in the Jogorku Kenesh session, attempting to paralyze the parliament from the inside. As a result, Kyrgyzstan was left without a Parliament; the government during this period was legally retired and only formally fulfilled its duties. Reform of the judiciary had not yet been completed and the President exercised all powers in the country. Under such circumstances, the President is-
sued a decree on the formation of the Central Election Commission and held a referendum on the creation of a bicameral parliament to ensure political stability in the country. During the referendum on October 22, 1994, the Kyrgyz population voted in favor of a bicameral parliament. Elections to the Parliament were held in February 1995 and both houses of a newly elected Jogorku Kenesh, the Legislature and the People’s Congress, began to work on March 28.

The crisis of state power, the dissolution of the previous parliament, and the formation of a bicameral Jogorku Kenesh led to the need of constitutional amendments. In this regard, on February 10, 1996, another republic referendum was held and the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic was amended accordingly. Presidential rule was introduced instead of parliamentary form. The president was provided with sweeping powers. He came to define the structure of government; he also appointed the Prime Minister, the Attorney General, and the Chairman of the Board of National bank of the Kyrgyz Republic (with the consent of the Assembly of People’s Representatives).

The parliament had a two chamber: the Legislative Assembly with thirty-five deputies, permanent and elected by the population, and the People’s Congress of seventy deputies working by sessions and elected on the basis of territorial interests. However, in February 2005, elections to the unicameral Parliament were held and led to a serious aggravation of political situation in the country.

**The State Power in 2005-2010**

During the first years of independence, the Kyrgyzstan population faced many difficulties. There were huge shortages in bread and other food, but the people endured them, firmly believing in their own path. The predecessor to the new government worked considerably to establish an independent state, to enhance its international prestige, and improve living standards. However, its inefficiency in recent years gave rise to legitimate grievances in the society. To appease the interests of the country’s leaders the Constitution was amended several times. The government used weapons against demonstrators of Aqsy, who arrived, demanding improved living conditions. As a result, on March 17-18, 2002 six people were killed and more than a dozen were injured. Popular discontent of the government (which used weapons against its own peo-
ple) was growing by the day. Improper use of administrative resources, manipulation, and distortion of votes during the elections to the Jogorku Kenesh further aggravated the situation. Their unbridled pursuits of profits were endless, while more than 70 percent of the population lived below the poverty line.

In March 2005, residents of Jalal-Abad, Osh, Talas, and Issyk-Kul rose up against the government. Their protests swiftly overtook the center of Bishkek. On March 10, the “National Unity” movement was created to establish justice and reforms in all spheres of society.

It was headed by ex-prime-minister of Kyrgyz government Kurmanbek Bakiev. On March 24, the “National Unity” organized a peaceful demonstration on the streets of Bishkek.

On the “Ala-Too” square the participants of the “National Unity” movement met with the supporters of the previous government and the standoff may have turned into a bloodbath. President Askar Akayev resigned and left Kyrgyzstan so did Prime Minister N. Tanayev r. Thus, the conflict at the “Ala-Too” square resulted in a victory for the participants of “National Unity”. The movement called the Tulip revolution was the culmination of the end of the corrupted and authoritative regime of Akayev. During the Revolution, Akayev fled to Kazakhstan and then Russia and on April 4 he signed his resignation statement in the presence of a Kyrgyz parliamentary delegation. At that time, the principal issue was to determine the head of Kyrgyzstan. It was clear that Akaev’s return was impossible and people asked K.S. Bakiyev to serve as the head of the state and the government; parliament deputies also supported him. On July 10, 2005, elections of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic were held and K.S. Bakiev won. The inauguration of the elected president was held on August 14, when he officially took the office.

On July 10, 2005 a new presidential election was held. At that time, K. Bakiyev announced that he supported a “mixed” form of parliamentary and presidential powers. However his attempt to change the Constitution showed his real aim to increase his own presidential power. In late April 2005, at one of the largest demonstrations in Bishkek since the change of government, protestors made constitutional reform a central
demand. Within a few days, President Bakiyev called for the creation of a draft constitution (to be completed by August 2006) that would be submitted to parliament by September. Prime Minister Kulov confirmed the necessity of carrying out the constitutional reform. In an interview with the Kyrgyz News, he reported that, “It is essential to create a system of checks and balances that will not allow for the dictatorship of one person.”

In September 2007 the draft of new Constitution was taken to the people in a referendum. On 21 October 2007 the new constitution was approved. The new constitution allotted for many new changes, including an expanded parliament size from 75 members to 90, and the right of the parliament’s ruling party to select members for the Kyrgyz Government.

On 22 October 2007, by the order of Bakyev, the Kyrgyz parliament elected in 2005 was dismissed before they had finished their term. On 16 December 2007 there was an election to the fourth convocation of the Kyrgyz parliament. The election was based on party-list voting. Twenty-two parties filed to run in the election; some, however, reconsidered. Another six of the parties were rejected by the authorities (one of these was the Taza Koom or “Clean Society”). As a result, the following parties contested the election:

- Ata-Meken Socialist Party (“Fatherland Socialist Party”)
- Party of Communists of Kyrgyzstan
- Ar-Namys (“Dignity”)
- Aalam (“Universe”, party of independent people)
- Erkindik (“Freedom”)
- Asaba (“Flag”)
- Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan
- Jangy Kuech (“New Force”, a party of women and youth of Kyrgyzstan)
- Ak-Zhol or Ak-Zhol Eldik Partiyasy (“Bright Path Popular Party”)
- Erkin Kyrgyzstan (“Free Kyrgyzstan”)
- El Dobushu (“People’s Voice”)
- Turan

According to first results, voter turnout was over 60%, but no party apart from Ak-Zhol had managed to pass both thresholds (an election threshold is a rule that requires that a party must receive a specified minimum percentage of votes (e.g. 5%). Ak-Zhol Party apparently received 47.8% of
the vote. Ata-Meken received 9.3% of the vote nationwide, but failed the regional thresholds in three regions. International observers from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe seriously criticized the election. Experts from Commonwealth of Independent States, however, declared that the election met a fair amount of democratic standards. Later, results showed that two other parties, the Social Democratic Party and the Communist Party, barely passed the national threshold.

Finally, the Central Electoral Commission announced the results. Ak-Zhol received seventy-one seats, the Social Democratic Party received eleven seats, and the Communist Party received eight seats. It was uncertain whether the CEC was ignoring or reinterpreting the Supreme Court ruling which would have given the Ata-Meken party seats despite failing to win at least 0.5% of the vote in the various regions of the country. According to officials, Ata-Meken failed to gain the necessary votes in Osh. This became a source of controversy as party activists claimed to have proof that they had achieved enough votes to be seated in the Parliament. The newly elected parliament made its first assembly on 21 December 2007.

Even amidst the controversy surrounding the elections, the effectiveness of the Supreme Council did not suffer. Roza Otunbaeva, leader of Social Democratic Party, in a statement, declared that the “Kyrgyz parliament was weakened by the absence of party polemics and discussions. The initiatives of the parliamentary minority, among which there were SDPK and Communist Party, were swept aside by the parliamentary majority represented by Ak-Jol Party. This situation was observed in deciding very serious and important questions in the Supreme Counsel; for instance, there was no compromise between factions regarding the determination of state borders in Karkyra place.” (Osmonov, 2015, p. 271).

The majority of deputies from the Ak-Jol Party did not support democratic principles in the parliament and sought to increase the authori-
tative power of Bakiyev’s regime. K. Bakiyev had consolidated power not only through the Parliament, but also through the appointment of his family to high positions within the government. His sons and brothers were deeply involved in diplomatic, economic, and military affairs. Increasing prices for utilities and corruption led to deteriorating socio-economic conditions, increased regionalization and criminalization, and encouraged an exodus of the Russian-speaking population, as well as labour migration of local Kyrgyz to Kazakhstan and Russia. Bakiev’s support of clanship and nepotism increased the authoritative ruling and in a practice all branches of state power were in the hand of Bakiev’s direct and non-direct relatives. Moreover, his regime put control over economic enterprises, political organizations and it had connections with the organized crime groups.

Besides the economic and political violations in the domestic sphere, Bakiyev provoked some serious tensions with the US in regards to the Manas Airbase and Russia according to the Dastan Armament Facility, as well as training facilities in Batken. All these and other violations of constitutional rights had provoked the peaceful protests in March and April of 2010. In lieu of hearing problems of the protestors and attempting to find a solution, the Bakiev’s government fired shots on protesters, resulting in the death of eighty-seven people; among them were minors, more than five hundred people were wounded. Bakiev resigned from the Presidency and fled to Belarus.

Comparing two events of 2005 and 2010, it is necessary to indicate some common and particular characters and signs. Both of them are obviously similar in the increase of the unconstitutional violations of the rights of people, pressure of the oppositional forces and individuals, and mass corruption in all spheres of life. The familial power of Akayev was changed by deeper clanship and tribal networking and politics of Bakyev. Life of more than 70% of all population worsened. According to statistics, the unemployment rate increased around 2005 and stayed relatively constant during the following years.

People got lost trust and believe in any positive change.

According to the particularities, it is need to
say that the level and dynamics of mass mobilization in two events were different. In the 2010 Kyrgyz Revolution, mass mobilization, was socially more diverse and radical than in the so-called Tulip Revolution of 2005 and this fact obviously indicated the deterioration of the economic and political situation in five years.

Following the events of 2010, the Interim Government took a decision to conduct constitutional reform in country. The reform was supposed to form the lawful base for development of a parliamentary republic. On 27 June 2010, a referendum confirmed the adoption of a new constitution. It clarified the question of the parliamentary nature of the Republic. At the referendum, Roza Otunbaeva was appointed President of the country in the transitional period.

The economic and social situation was deteriorated by the interethnic conflict between the Kyrgyz and Uzbeks in the Osh and Jalal-Abad provinces. According to several experts and commissions, which investigated and analyzed the event, the conflict was a sequence of local illegal and informal fights and competition over resources and power in the respective regions. The events brought about the significant loss of life and injury. In total more than 470 people died, about 1,900 people received medical assistance at hospitals and many thousands of people were displaced. About 111,000 people were displaced to Uzbekistan and a further 300,000 were internally displaced. In total about 2,800 properties were damaged.

Following the events of 2010, there have been several forces working to increase the harmony between the ethnic groups of the southern regions. These initiatives and projects have been created by several governmental and international organizations and agencies. The international organization IREX, for instance, has an ongoing project called the “Facilitating Inter-ethnic Tolerance and Harmony (FAITH)” program, which partners with religious leaders to promote inter-ethnic understanding, dialogue, and interaction in southern Kyrgyzstan.

Along with the reconciliation of the inter-ethnic conflict in the South, the Interim government worked on the Presidential election, which took part on October 30, 2011. Among 16 candidates was Almazbek Atambaev, who, during the 2010 Revolution, was one of the leaders of the oppo-
sition; he became Prime-Minister of the Interim Government. He received 62% of the vote and, on 1 December 2011, officially became President of Kyrgyz Republic.

Widespread poverty and unemployment are still the main problems facing Kyrgyzstan. Since 2010, the poverty rate has increased. Roughly 38% of the population lives below the poverty line. 65.9% of these people are villagers. People who live below the poverty line typically spend about 72 som per day, the lowest among any of the CIS countries. The unemployment rate in Kyrgyzstan is 8.6%. This is comparatively high in contrast to the other countries of Central Asia. For instance, the rate in Tajikistan was 2.4% and 4.8% in Uzbekistan. Turkmenistan had a rate of 2.6% and Kazakhstan was slightly higher at 5.3%.

The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic is the supreme body of executive power in the country. The Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic determines the main activities of the government. The Government consists of the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Ministers, Ministers, and Chairmen of State Committees. The President determines the composition of the Government in part with the Prime Minister and then the Jogorku Kenesh approves it. As the supreme executive authority, the Government organizes, supervises, and provides solutions of all social, economic, financial and other issues.

In late 2007, Jogorku Kenesh adopted the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic “On the Structure of the Government of the KR,” according to which it confers the functions to fourteen ministries, five state committees, and twelve administrative departments. The governors in each oblast, local state administrations, and akimiats in regions and cities, and aïyl okmotu in villages were approved under this law. In addition, in regions, districts, cities, and villages operate local keneshes or parliaments.

The aïyl okmotu, as an executive local administration, implements programs on socio-economic development of its territories, approves the budget and arranges its execution. It also controls the economy of the village, carries out the social welfare of the population, as well as activities related to environmental protection. The approval for the elections to local governments of the Kyrgyz Republic was introduced in 2001. As a result, voters have an opportunity to choose the most worthy leader who is able to carry out mandated tasks from several candidates.

Since the Independence, the Kyrgyz government has been unreasonable and frequently reformed and changed. As a result, it changed 13
times during 1991-2010 and such an political and administrative instability did not give much potential to the socio-economic development of country.

Prime-Ministers of Kyrgyz Republic in 1991-2010

In the years of independence, the Kyrgyz Republic has formed socio-political organizations which, in accordance with the Constitution, have a right to freedom of actions. New political parties, trade unions, and associations have appeared in Kyrgyzstan. Their rights, political freedoms, and legal activities, as outlined in the Constitution, are respected by the state. However, political parties can participate in public affairs only in the form of nominating candidates for the elections to the House of Jogorku Kenesh, public office, and local governments; they can also act as formation of factions in representative bodies.

The latest Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic, which was adopted in 2010 by the results of a national debate and referendum, cemented the new principle of the formation of the Jogorku Kenesh; according to the provisions of the Constitution, it should be formed according to the list of political parties.

On October, 10, 2010, an election was held. There were fifty-seven political parties, and only candidates from 29 political parties were registered. The gained results showed that one hundred and twenty Parliament seats were spread among a number of political parties. The political parties that occupied several seats could now form factions within the parliament. In December 2010, the parliamentary coalition was formed by the leaders of SDPK, Republica, and Ata-Jurt. Seventy-seven new deputies became members of the coalition. The leader of the coalition was Kanatbek Isaev, who, at that time, was a member of the party Republica. The leaders of Ata-Meken Party (O. Tekebayev) and the Ar-Namys Party (F. Kulov) were in the opposition. By the decision of coalition Akhmatbek Keldibekov became a speaker of Jogorku Kenesh.
Due to some political changes in the coalition in 2011, a new alliance was formed. The new alliance included parties such as *SDPK*, *Republica*, *Ata Meken*, and *Ar-Namys*. Ata-Jurt was in the opposition. Ninety-two deputies out of one hundred and nineteen were in the new coalition of the majority. Asylbek Jeenbekov became the new speaker. Since then, special attention has been given to the renovation of principles of formation and mechanisms of effective work of the *Jogorku Kenesh* as a supreme legislative and representative power in country. On 4 October 2015 Kyrgyzstan witnessed the parliamentary election with a new technological innovation. For the first time in Central Asian region, in Kyrgyzstan the election was conducted with the biometric registration system. It was used in order to prevent voter fraud. The voters who did not registered biometrically, prevented from taking part in the poll. Fourteen parties competed for seats in the 120-member parliament and according to the preliminary report of OSCE, the election was “competitive and provided voters with a wide range of choice.” Six parties-Social Democratic Party (SDPK) (38 seats), Respublika-Ata-Jurt (28 seats) Kyrgyzstan (18 seats), Onuguu-Progress (13 seats), Bir Bol (12 seats), and Ata-Meken (11 seats) – cleared the threshold to gain entrance into the parliament but which candidates specifically would take seats has been in flux. On 5th November 2015 A. Jeenbekov was re-elected as a speaker of Gogorku Kenesh of Kyrgyz Republic.
The emergence of civil society in Kyrgyzstan led to the activities of hundreds of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Some of them have become very influential social forces in Kyrgyz society. Proclamation of the protection of human rights in the Republic was the impetus for the establishment of many human rights organizations.

Among these organizations there are some that represent the interests of disabled citizens. This has been a long-time initiative in Kyrgyzstan; in order to provide disabled citizens with state support, the Council for the Disabled was formed by the President in 1998. To support people with disabilities, the National Program was adopted in 1999. Since 1991, the Kyrgyz Blind and Deaf Society has been headed by K.B. Mambetakunov. In 2009 three nine-story housing structures were built and one hundred thirty-five apartments were given to disabled citizens.

**Socio-economic and Spiritual Life of Sovereign Kyrgyzstan**

Despite the acquisition of political independence, Kyrgyzstan has remained largely economically dependent upon other states. This largely stems from the fact that the industry and economy of the country was mainly specialized in supplying the raw materials and semi-finished products; since it no longer operated in the Soviet-wide system, its specialized economy was no longer useful. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, economic ties were broken and Kyrgyzstan found itself in a dire material and financial situation.

By the end of 1991, the average growth of industrial production fell sharply, funds invested in construction and agricultural complexes were not paid off. Investment and construction in the energy, coal, machinery, food, and light industries remained unfulfilled.

In January 1992, the Russian Federation led a radical liberalization of prices, setting the course for free products of fuel and energy complex, metallurgy, and engineering industries. As a result, all CIS countries, including Kyrgyzstan, burst a new stage of economic crisis. In 1992, production in Kyrgyzstan decreased by 27%. Economic relations deteriorated and the national economy fell into depression.
By July 1992, the Supreme Soviet of the Kyrgyz Republic had discussed and adopted a program of economic reforms for the rest of 1992 and the following two years, initially developed by the Government at the IX session. It provided the continuation of economic reforms begun in 1990 in line with the overall strategic direction of the country and continued on a path towards specific steps to privatization, land reform, social protection, and public investment.

As a primary task, it was necessary to resolve the macroeconomic situation and create conditions for the stabilization of production. This required a closer look at many objectives, including reforming the industrial sector, increasing the role of market prices, creating conditions for free competition by the gradual elimination of the monopoly system, and limiting the scope of state intervention in economic enterprise. It was decided to develop the privatization of the industrial sector by 50% in construction; by 25-30% in agriculture; by 70% in housing; and, by 100% in service. This wave of privatization was scheduled to be completed by the end of 1993.

To develop a strong and flexible market system, the Kyrgyz Government provided industries with the opportunity to establish free commercial relations with the countries of the CIS and elsewhere. On January 1, 1993 the practice of governmental orders in industry was terminated. Kyrgyzstan refused to continue with a planned economy and finally chose the path of an accelerated transition to the market economy through radical reforms.

The legislative basis for privatization in Kyrgyzstan was the law “On General Principles of Denationalization, Privatization, and Entrepreneurship of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan” adopted on December 20, 1991. The Fund of the State Committee for the State Property Management and Support of Entrepreneurs (SPC – Goskomimushchestvo) was established to oversee the process of privatization. However, as it was defined in the Constitution, land, soil, air, water resources, forest, flora, fauna, and other natural resources continued to be under the special state protection and were not subject to privatization.

According to the new law, privatization should have taken into account the interest and rights of the citizens of Kyrgyzstan. The preparedness of the population, labor groups, and individual actors was to be an operating force during the process of privatization; of course, these
principles were largely ignored throughout the process. Government officials and heads of enterprises and farms began to sell property, which were subject to privatization.

A variety of stock companies and firms (which were either just created or altogether fictitious) openly deceived the population and grew rich very quickly. Certain groups of people who had the power or certain access to large funds managed to purchase or sell the most significant state property in a short period of time. Because of the inability to organize relevant work, the State Property Committee caused irreparable damage to the country and people. Basic civil rights of workers were violated. In the process of privatization, concern for the preservation of jobs or production itself was overlooked. Thousands of people instantly became unemployed, a result of the closing of some industry or factory. Companies, which had been converted into joint stock companies, lost profit with each day; production levels fell by 40-55%. Despite this, the leaders of newly appointed organizations assigned the highest salaries for themselves, pocketed most of the shares, and, sometimes, actually owned the companies.

To alleviate the situation and fix some of the failures of the process of privatization, the President instructed the Attorney General’s Office, the Committee of National Security, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the State Financial Inspections Department (Gosfininspektii) to thoroughly check the violations of laws during privatization. The inspection confirmed serious miscalculations of facts and gross violations of laws during the procedure of denationalization and privatization of the Fund of the State Property Committee. The documents accompanying the privatization were often altered or rewritten after some transaction or transition had taken place. Some fund managers of the SPC took bribery, ignoring the recommendations or approval of their commissions.

During the first stage of privatization (1991-1993), 32.6% of public facilities and 17.5% of enterprises transformed into privatized joint stock companies. Denationalization of 39% of industrial properties, 67.5% of construction, 98.7% of consumer services, and 80.7% of trade and public catering was completed by the end of 1993. To avoid a repeat of the early stages of privatization, the presidential decree “On Urgent Measures to Strengthen the State and Financial Discipline” approved the Regulation “On Sale of State and Public Companies at Auctions”.

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The new program of privatization of state property was developed for 1994-1995. This program was discussed and adopted at the January session of the Jogorku Kenesh in 1994. Thus began the second stages of the privatization process.

The main goals of the new stage included fundamental restructuring of the economy and education. The reformers sought to develop a stable layer of private owners and a market by the principle of capitalist market relations. The pace and scale of privatization were somewhat limited. In accordance with the program of privatization, state property began to move into joint stock, private ownership, mixed ownership, and other forms of ownership. As a result, more than 50% of the economic potential of the Kyrgyz Republic was composed of non-state enterprises.

Under the terms of the program, medium and large enterprises began to be sold to private individuals or organizations on the basis of alternative privatization. This meant that potential buyers were now required to report their plans and projects for future development of privatized enterprises.

The new privatization program determined the order of the coupon and cash auctions. However, most ordinary people did not realize that the coupon was a security backed by a guarantee of the fund of SPC, and that the price of coupons would go up. Not knowing how to use the coupons, people sold them for very low prices; at the same time investment funds took advantage of the situation.

Starting in mid-1994, massive privatization began in Kyrgyzstan. The program of “people’s” privatization was jointly developed by the Government of Kyrgyzstan, the Republic Fund of State Property Committee, and with the participation of American professionals. Even before 1994, the country privatized 378 businesses. Mass privatization lasted until 1996; many people became the owners of various properties through coupon auctions during this period. As a result, the non-state sector began to produce more than 50% of all industrial output.

Without the development of agriculture, which is the foundation of the economy of Kyrgyzstan, our sovereign republic would never have been able to develop effectively. If we consider that the scale of the rural population of the CIS does not exceed 30% of the total population and, in Kyrgyzstan today, more than 60% of the population lives in rural
areas, it becomes clear how important the question of agriculture is to the management of the Kyrgyz economy. In order to turn the agriculture into a market economy, the government of Kyrgyzstan launched land and agrarian reforms in 1991.

At the time of the reforms, the government sought to run the simultaneous and equal functioning of collective farms, state farms, and cooperative agricultural associations, preserve the state’s monopoly in the production of tobacco, cotton, meat, wool, fruits, and vegetables during the transition period, and to develop and expand small businesses, both urban and rural.

One of the basic principles of agricultural reform was gradual progress in the local context; the government sought to serve the interests of residents, and to keep in mind their degree of preparedness. During the first phase, the economically untenable collective and state farms were supposed to be disbanded, while their land would be passed to the farmers with the right of inheritance. Thus, a broad network of independent farms was planned to be established.

However, these plans were never realized due to the miscalculations of some local leaders and their gross violations of the Land Code, the law “On Land Reform”, and “On the Farm”. The material-technical base of farms was destroyed. The interests of farmers were often not taken into account while their rights were infringed. As a result, agricultural production fell sharply and difficulties started in ensuring the production of food.

To streamline the agricultural relations, the President issued a special decree on November 1 by which it was planned to allocate land to rural and urban residents of all regions before December 1, 1992. It was also proposed to convert all farms with the profitability of 15-25% to agricultural cooperatives by the February 1, 1993. In November 1991, the control and direction of the reform was entrusted to the State Commission on Land Reform of the Kyrgyz Republic, which was headed by the Prime Minister. By the end of 1993, one hundred seventy-two collective and state farms were dissolved and 17.5 thousand of farms, one hundred ninety-seven cooperatives, one hundred twenty small businesses, one hundred nineteen associations, and nine corporations were formed instead of them. Newly formed structures produced 52% of all agricultural products. In July of the same year, the state began buying farm products
by market prices. In 1995, the number of farmer facilities in the country reached 21.1 thousand farms.

Some farms managed to adapt to market conditions for a short period of time and began earning a profit, despite the hard economic conditions. The farmers who had received land usually had no machinery, seeds, or necessary skills for the land processing and, consequently, did not produce to the potential of the farms they had received. As inflation increased, the farmers who had received credits were in a hopeless situation. Many of them turned to subsistence farming and, only with great difficulty, were able to extract the means of subsistence. At the same time, the peasant associations strengthened cooperative ownership and managed to achieve high performance and high profits.

Severe recession in cattle-breeding, which was the basis of agriculture of Kyrgyzstan, also developed into a huge problem in the early 1990s. Until 1992, sheep breeding brought 35% of agricultural income of the Republic. In some highland areas, the income from breeding of sheep and goats was 95%. Despite the low procurement prices for the products of this industry, the country still received about half a billion rubles of profit annually.

During the reforms, the number of sheep in Kyrgyzstan sharply declined. By January 1994 all farms of the republic altogether had 7.5 million sheep while by January 1995 their number decreased to 4.5 million. Sheep turned into a living product. Sheep began to serve as a medium in direct bartering; thus, they were traded on a daily basis.

Even five years after the start of the reforms, the agricultural sector remained in a very difficult position. Grain and forage crops decreased by about 23%. Compared with 1993, the gross grain harvest in 1994 fell by 35% and the total yield of crops as a whole fell by 20%. The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic developed a new program to deepen the economic reforms in 1994-1995. In order to implement the Program, the President issued a decree “On Measures for Deepening the Land and Agrarian Reform in the Kyrgyz Republic” on February 22, 1994, which determined the strategic direction of the reforming of the agricultural sector. Farmers were given complete freedom in choosing the forms of management; principles of openness and transparency in the implementation of reforms were approved.
The prerequisite for farmers was that they use their land exclusively for agricultural purposes. In January 1995, a single tax was introduced instead of the previously practiced system of multiple payments. During the same year, the government developed a comprehensive program for the improvement of agriculture for the years of 1996 – 1999; the program was immediately brought into action.

Large-scale agriculture was impossible without major credit and financial investment. Since the beginning of the reforms, the state started to distribute loans through *Dyikan Ordo* and *Dyikan bank* societies. However, the intermediate courts generally plundered the multi-million dollar loans and only a small part of them reached the farmers.

From 1992-1998, $234 million in overseas investments was invested into the agrarian economy of Kyrgyzstan. Totally, the World Bank has introduced $45 million for the privatization and development of agriculture in Kyrgyzstan. The Asian Development Bank invested $40 million for agricultural reforms; in addition, the World Bank provided $11.65 million for the development of sheep breeding.

In 1988, 15.5 thousand hectares of arable land turned into rain-fed due to the poor state of irrigation networks; this was a clear indication of the need to improve the irrigation system in the country. In 1998, the World Bank invested $35 million for the reconstruction of the irrigation system in the Kyrgyzstan. Reconstructive and protective measures of thirteen dams are held for these funds; about 40 irrigation systems are reconstructed on the *Ortho-Tokoi, Papan, Kirov, Kara Buura*, and other reservoirs. In 1999, the land area requiring urgent drainage works reached more than 90 thousand hectares.

The Kyrgyz government is taking effective measures for the development of the agricultural industry of the country. Since 1998, land and agrarian reform in Kyrgyzstan...
gyzstan have reached new levels. In this regard, a number of laws on agriculture were revised and the Land Code, as well as the new laws “On Cooperation in the Kyrgyz Republic” and “On Peasant Farms of the Kyrgyz Republic” were developed and adopted by the parliament in May 1999. These laws became an important legal basis in ordering the industrial relations in agriculture and the problems that plague the agricultural sector. On December 13, 2000, President of the Kyrgyz Republic introduced a proposal to amend the laws relating to land reform to the parliament. After extensive discussions, the Legislature decided to withdraw the article from the Land Code; the article established a five-year moratorium on the sale of land. In August 2001, the regulations on the sale of agricultural land were approved by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. This was another decisive step to accelerate the transition of agriculture of the Republic to the free market relations.

Today, being a member of Eurasian Economic Union, The Kyrgyz Government meets new challenges in the development of agricultural industry and promotion of closer agricultural cooperation with EEC partners.

**Social Life and Social Structure of the Population**

The highest population growth in the country was experienced during the last thirty years of Soviet rule. According to the Soviet census of 1959, the population of the Kyrgyz SSR was 2.1 million people; in 1991 the population reached 4.4 million, meaning that it had doubled since 1959. Demographically speaking, Kyrgyzstan stands out among the former Soviet republics in the rate of natural increase (difference between the born and died in one year).

Even during the first half of 1990s, an era of high rates of emigration from the country, the overall population increased. According to the census of 1999, the population of Kyrgyzstan was 4.7 million. This occurred mostly due to a natural increase. For example in 1990, about twenty-nine children were born per one thousand people; in 1993, the figure stood at about twenty-six children. By 1998, the figured had dropped to twenty-two children. In general, the number of births in the country has declined due to the economic and social difficulties of the 1990s.

The demographic situation in late 1990s was characterized by a decrease in infant and mother mortality. At the same time, the levels of em-
igration out of the country had fallen. In 1998, 101.7 thousand children were born in Kyrgyzstan. Decline in birthrates in Osh and Chui Oblasts and an increase in Bishkek and Talas were observed near the turn of the century. The natural increase was sixty eight thousand people. Sixteen thousand people emigrated, but more than ten thousand people moved back. As a result of the change in birthrates and migration practices, the population had increased by sixty-two thousand.

Another feature of the demographic development in Kyrgyzstan in comparison with other CIS countries is the prevalence of the rural population. In most CIS countries, about 60% of the population lives in urban areas and 40% – in rural areas. In Kyrgyzstan in 1999, 64% of the population lived in villages. Percentage of rural population in regions was as follows: In Issyk-Kul Oblast 69%; in Osh Oblast – 70%; in Talas Oblast – 76%; and, in Naryn –82%.

In the mountain regions, the percentage of rural population was above 80% and was made up largely of indigenous people. Distribution of the population of Kyrgyzstan tends to be very heterogeneous. The population is concentrated in the lowlands and mountain valleys of the rivers that make up 15% of the country. The population density in these areas was 30-80 people per one square kilometer.

Another feature of the socio-demographic structure of the population of Kyrgyzstan is the large number of elderly citizens. Thus, children under the working age make up 39.7% of the total population. About 10.1% are residents of the post-employment (retirement) age. The working-age population is about 50.2% of the population. Compared with the average performance of other CIS countries, the percentage of the elderly and children in Kyrgyzstan is much higher than employed people. In Kyrgyzstan, the number of able-bodied people, or labor reserves, comprises more than 2.2 million people. In 1990s, their number increased by three hundred thousand.

In the 1990s, the workforce of the country was largely employed in state and collective enterprises; many workers were also involved in private enterprises. During this time, the number of employees in the public sector decreased. In 1992, the workforce in the national economy was as follows: 21.4% in industry and construction; 39% in agriculture and forestry; 5% in transport and communications; 5.6% in trade, catering and services; and 20.2% - education, health, culture, art and science.
13% of the working age population, basically women with many children, were employed in the household.

One of the main responsibilities of the state is the efficient use of labor resources and to provide the working population with gainful employment. However, the effectiveness of labor resources in Kyrgyzstan varies by region. For example, the Naryn Oblast is specialized in cattle-breeding; the bulk of the population is employed in this industry. Due to the sharp reduction in the number of livestock in this region, providing people with work became a difficult task for the federal government. The economic crisis closed most of the businesses and workers, even in large cities.

Since independence, unemployment in Kyrgyzstan has increased from year to year. In 1991, ninety-four unemployed people were officially registered in the Republic; in 1992, the number reached one hundred thirty six. The number continued to increase and, by 1998, the number of unemployed exceeded sixty-three thousand. This, however, did not include all unemployed workers, just those who had officially filed as unemployed. In reality, by this time more than one hundred fifty thousand people were unemployed in the country. 70% of them were young people under the age of 30; 48.7% of the total working-age population was women.

According to the National Statistics Committee, more than 60% of Kyrgyzstan’s population was considered to be low-income in 1996 (715.77 soms per person per month). This means that in comparison with 1989 the poverty rate had doubled. 18.2% of the population (220.61 soms of income per person per month) was below the poverty line.

People spend more than 70% of their income for food. The main causes of loss of purchasing power of the rural population were the decline in livestock numbers and crop areas, increasing of unemployment and inflation, rising prices, delayed payment of pensions, and the lack of wage indexation. The level of real income decreased year by year. The elimination of poverty has, accordingly, became one of the main tasks of Kyrgyzstan.

In Bishkek, the poverty rate was 26.1%; in Chui Oblast it was about 46.3% (the lowest figures in comparison with other regions of the republic). In the south of Kyrgyzstan, 38% of the population was under the poverty line due to high population density, acute shortage of arable
land, and many large families. The standard of living is significantly influenced by the condition of natural resources, the development of industry, agriculture, and trade. It follows that the remote villages in mountainous or foothill areas with underdeveloped economies were the poorest.

With the transition from public ownership to the mixed economy, Kyrgyz society began to stratify to a deeper extent than was realized during the Soviet era. The owners of factories, banks, corporations, trusts, corporations, joint stock companies, associations, and farms emerged from privatization as a separate class. Another stratum of society was made up of small private enterprises in the system of trade, service, industry, and agriculture.

Skilled or educated workers, who largely worked “white collar” jobs, made up another part of society. The number of such specialists in the country was growing and they worked in all sectors of the economy. In 1999, Kyrgyzstan had more than two hundred thousand employees. Of those, ninety thousand were teachers and cultural workers, fifty thousand were engineers, nineteen thousand were veterinarians, livestock specialists, and agronomists, 4.5 thousand were commodity experts, and 2.5 thousand were lawyers or represented in similar professions.

There were notable differences in the social-class structure of the population of the regions of the Kyrgyz Republic. Large cities with a developed industry in Chui, Osh, and Jalal-Abad complicated the construction of a class structure. The processes of differentiation there were taking place at accelerated pace. In the mountainous Naryn region, Alai, Suusamyr, Ton, Chatkal, and other remote areas the population was rather homogeneous and consisted mainly of peasant farmers and rural intelligentsia.

More than eighty nationalities and ethnic groups live in the Kyrgyz Republic. Uzbeks and Kazakhs are included in the people of Kyrgyzstan. Another part of the republic is Russians and Ukrainians who resettled to Kyrgyzstan after its annexation to Russia. Dungans and Uighurs who fled from the persecution of the pre-revolutionary Chinese authorities also make up a large minority. In addition, the population consists of Germans who were persecuted in Ukraine and settled mainly in the Chu and Talas Valleys. Another part of the population is Dargins and other small ethnic groups that
resettled to Kyrgyzstan in the 1920s from the North Caucasus, as well as the Chechens, Ingush, Karachai, Balkar, and Crimean Tatars deported during the World War II.

The European regions of the USSR suffered from the Nazi occupation (Belarussians, Ukrainians, residents of Leningrad, those injured during the war, and the elderly), arrived to Kyrgyzstan during the war years and immediately following the war. A significant number of highly qualified professionals of different nationalities came to Kyrgyzstan with their families. Thirty large enterprises were evacuated to our country. After the end of the war, most settlers returned to their homes but some settled in Kyrgyzstan.

In addition to extensive development of industry, during the last thirty years of Soviet power many professionals from Russia were invited and provided with apartments and other preferential treatment. At the same time, many voluntary migrants from Siberia, the Far East, and northern Russia came to Kyrgyzstan in search of better living conditions. With the socio-political changes in the USSR in 1980s, the stream of people began to subside. With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 (and maybe a little earlier) there was a huge emigration out of Kyrgyzstan, mainly by the Russian-speaking population. For example, the Russian population in Kyrgyzstan reached nine hundred eighteen thousand in 1990 (21.2% of the population). This was the period when the largest number of Russians lived in Kyrgyzstan. Between 1991 and 1994, one hundred seventy thousand Russians emigrated from Kyrgyzstan. The stream of emigration was especially high in 1993 – while twenty three thousand of people entered Kyrgyzstan, more than one hundred forty thousand emigrated (80.8 thousand of Russians, 10.5 thousand Germans, 10.6 thousand Ukrainians, 8.7 thousand Tatars, 6 thousand Uzbeks, among others). The Russian population, which once comprised the second largest nationality in the country, decreased to 17% in after 1994.

Due to the outflow of the population, the ethnic composition of Kyrgyzstan changed significantly. The census of 2009 accounted that Kyrgyz comprised 70.9% of the total population, Uzbeks - 14.3%, Russian - 7.8%, Ukrainians and Germans - 1.5%. Additionally, tens of thousands of Tatars (1.6%), Kazakhs, Uighurs, and Dungan (0.9%), Tajiks (0.8%), Turks (0.5%), Azeri and Koreans (0.4%), thousands of Belarusians, Jews, Kalmaks, Armenians, Georgians, Moldavians, Poles, Gypsies,
and people of other nations continued to live in the country. The number of the representatives of Asian peoples in Kyrgyzstan - Uzbeks, Tajiks, Uighurs, Kazakhs, and Koreans - increased. The number of Russians, Germans, Ukrainians, Tatars, and Jews decreased significantly.

Emigration of Europeans from Kyrgyzstan was due to the severe economic crisis, the shutdown of many enterprises, difficulties of transition to market relations, among other personal reasons. Therefore, the major and urgent task of the government was the need to halt the flow of leaving population from the Republic and ensure the stability of international relations. Having proclaimed the principle of ethnic cooperation under the slogan “Kyrgyzstan is our Common Home”, the Kyrgyz government did everything possible for the citizens of the republic to feel it as their homeland. President of the Kyrgyz Republic A. Akaev showed an initiative in strengthening and stabilizing international relations. The first Kurultai (meeting) of people of Kyrgyzstan was held on his initiative on January 21, 1994 and brought together the representatives of all nations, nationalities, and social strata of the country.

The People’s Assembly of Kyrgyzstan was established at the Kurultai. The participants adopted its charter and elected its governing body - the Council of People’s Assembly of Kyrgyzstan. They adopted the “Appeal of the First Kurultai of the People of Kyrgyzstan” and “Declaration of Unity, Peace, and Mutual Consent.” Currently, the People’s Assembly of Kyrgyzstan, while managing around 30 national-cultural centers, is an influential forum and the basis of international and mutual consent.

National-cultural centers play a special role in the preservation and development of inter-ethnic relations. S. Begaliev, A. Ismailov, A. Raiymzhanov, R.A. Shin, and many others were and are active agents in shaping important social structure in the country. The state strongly supports and promotes their peacekeeping activities. The Friendship House was opened in Bishkek on September 24, 1996 to combine and coordinate the work of centers. Currently, the main purpose of the multinational people of Kyrgyzstan is the strengthening the country’s economy, developing market relations and international friendship, and the constructing a sovereign and democratic state. However, the revenge-seekers and outside forces managed to ignite the flames of interethnic conflict on June 2010. Violence had been curbed in four days. Unfortunately, more than 400 people were killed during the events.
With the achievement of sovereignty, the many social problems of Kyrgyzstan inherited from the Soviet era became more acute and complex. Due to the economic crisis, the standard of living declined year by year. By the end of 1990s, most social groups were below the poverty line. As a result of socio-economic transformation in the country, 50% of cash income was concentrated in the hands of 20% of the population. The bottom 20% of the country only received about 3.9% of all cash income. Thus, differences between rich and poor have increased during the transition to market relations. The position of the elderly and the disabled has worsened.

To improve the security of these segments of population with pensions and grants, the government of the Kyrgyz republic transformed a number of government bodies dealing with social issues into a single Social Fund in December 1993. According to the government decree “On Urgent Measures to Address Social Protection” a rise in pensions, benefits, scholarships, and payments was introduced. To organize and address the issues in this area, the parliament adopted the Law “On Pension Provision of Citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic” on April 14, 1994. However, as early as 1993 the pensions and allowances were not paid on time. In 1995, the debt on this kind of payments amounted to 17.5 million soms.

In the mid-1990s, some measures were taken to address the provision of housing. Large amounts of land were allocated for people wishing to have individual housing in rural and urban areas. Property developers were provided with concessional loans. In this regard, the total area of the housing stock in the country was increased. To date, only 81% of the
housing stock is owned by the private sector and 2% is owned by co-operatives. Public housing has gradually been privatized.

Communal services provide the foundation of urban housing with 93% of water network, 88% of sewage, 89% of central heating, 91% of gas, and 72% of hot water. However, due to the effects of fuel and energy problems, the population systematically experienced shortages in natural gas and electricity. In rural areas, communal services remain at a very low level. Many villages have not been supplied with running water yet. At the present time, a lot of measures are taken to improve the communal maintenance of the population. Foreign investments and local resources are widely involved; and work on providing one thousand villages with drinking tap water has been accomplished.

The Kyrgyztelekom Company was found in Kyrgyzstan in 1993 in order to improve telecommunication infrastructure. In a short time it has become a national center that provides public international, intercity, and local telecommunications. As a result of purposeful activity of Kyrgyztelekom, plan for the development of telecommunication systems of the Kyrgyz Republic was worked out and successfully implemented. As a result, the work was established to ensure the population with public telephone, telegraph, fax communications, and internet.

With the introduction of new satellite stations in 1996, Kyrgyzstan connected with Russia, Japan, China, India, Germany, England, and other countries. The first president of Kyrgyztelekom S.A. Alymkulov and his staff made a big contribution to the establishment and development of modern telecommunications in the country.

Health welfare is another important aspect of the social policy. During the Soviet era, Kyrgyzstan reached a relatively great success in the field of medi-
cine and public health. Currently, health care is provided to the residents of our republic by the phased system. The first step is the rural medical assistant and midwife posts. Medical care is provided in special clinics and rural hospitals. The second step of providing health care is implemented in district hospitals, specialty (infectious diseases, tuberculosis, etc.) hospitals, clinics, and ambulance stations. The main centers for the provision of medical services are central districts and city hospitals. Some of them can treat 300-600 patients at one time. More than twenty kinds of professional assistance are provided in these hospitals. The next step is medical facilities of Oblast and national centers, maternity hospitals, specialized hospitals and clinics, and pharmacies. All levels of health assessment are functionally connected.

Negative effects of the economic crisis have left a painful impact on the system of health care. Free medical care was reduced; some forms of medical treatment were transmitted to a fee basis as a system of co-payment for inpatient treatment was introduced. The price of medication has increased. The main parts of population have experienced great difficulties in obtaining medical care. Recently, the activities of sanitary-epidemiological institutions have decreased at an alarming rate. In this regard, incidence of such diseases as tuberculosis and brucellosis has increased. The spread of infectious diseases indicates a weak state of medicine in the country. Investigations of causes of death showed that 38.4% were due to circulatory system diseases, 16.6% to respiratory diseases, 11.6% to homicide, suicide, and traffic accidents, 11.2% to cancer, 42% to digestive tract diseases, and 3.8% to infectious and parasitic diseases. In the second half of 1990s, the epidemiological situation in the country was characterized by the rapid spread of measles, typhoid, tuberculosis, and sexually transmitted diseases.

1999 was declared the Year of Health in Kyrgyzstan. In its framework, the government carried out a reform of the health care system. More attention was paid to expanding the network of hospitals, clinics, and medical examinations of the population. The system of family doctors was introduced and has produced many positive results.

With the proclamation of independence of Kyrgyzstan and the transition to market relations, the reform of education was introduced as the former ceased to meet new economic, technical, and cultural requirements and lost its effectiveness. In
this regard, in December 1992, the Jogorku Kenesh adopted the Law “On Education”, which found that the primacy in education belongs to the interests of the individual and that the purpose of education is a comprehensive assistance to people’s desire for knowledge. 1996 was declared the Year of Education; the national program “Bilim” was approved in its framework. Special attention was paid to democracy, humanism, and differentiation of education of the Republic, not to mention the strengthening of the material-technical base of schools.

As a result of educational reforms introduced in 1993, new types of schools, including gymnasiums, lyceums, and school complexes appeared in Kyrgyzstan. By 1995, seventy lyceums and gymnasiums, three hundred two schools with specialized subjects, and more than twenty private and public-private high schools operated in the country. Schools widely introduced new teaching methods, such as non-standard training classes, systematic rating of students’ knowledge, testing, introduction of new subjects, and computerization.

In recent years, the support of education in the republic increased with the help of international organizations. That support was in the form of grants and loans. The “TACIS” (European Technical assistance to CIS countries) and “Tempus” (European Higher Education Support Program) programs actively assisted the educational institutions in Kyrgyzstan. In accordance with these programs, the focus was made on strengthening of the material-technical base of schools. The Asian Development Bank worked out a special program “The General Plan of Education and Training” for the country and gave a loan of $37.7 million to Kyrgyzstan for forty years. The plan provided schools, colleges, and universities with textbooks and study materials, constructed educational laboratories, created the informative system of management, and developed the methods of teachers’ training through distant learning.
To stabilize the socio-economic situation in the country, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic took several measures to improve education and science. The National Programme “Human Resources of the XXI Century” (1995) aimed at further development of senior secondary and higher education. On December 26, 2000 the Legislative Assembly of the Jogorku Kenesh adopted a law “On the Status of Teachers”, which assigned the task to create a legal framework for improving the socio-economic status of teachers. That document provided school-teachers with moral and material support, which were supposed to serve as an incentive to improve the education of younger generation.

In accordance with the law “On Education”, the rights of institutions of higher education were greatly expanded; new system of training and a demand for specific occupations were introduced. The law gave universities the right of economic independence, allowed private educational institutions, opened the way to paid education, eliminated barriers for the use of foreign investment, and changed the status of some schools.

To strengthen scientific potential, some institutions of higher education were converted into academies. Thus, the Kyrgyz Medical Academy was opened on the basis of the Kyrgyz Medical Institute. Almost all old institutions of the republic were transformed into universities.

Such universities as the Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University, American University of Central Asia, and the Kyrgyz-Turkish Manas University successfully operate in Kyrgyzstan.

State universities were opened in Naryn and Jalal-Abad; a new Kyrgyz-Uzbek University in Osh was also opened.

Despite the difficulties, there are ample opportunities for the development of science in Kyrgyzstan. The government attaches great importance to the development of research institutes and institutions of higher education, strengthen their material and technical bases, and expand the relationship of science and industry. For example, by the Presidential Decree of
April 1, 1996, the Kyrgyz Agricultural Institute was transformed into the Kyrgyz Agrarian Academy. On October 31, 2001, the Center of Agricultural Science and consulting services under the Ministry of Agriculture and the Skryabin Kyrgyz Agricultural University were established on the base of the Academy.

The newly established Kyrgyz Agricultural University has the important task of training specialists for agriculture as the foundation of the republic’s economy. In 1992, a Presidential Decree formed the National Certification Commission (NAC) of the Kyrgyz Republic for the first time in the history of Kyrgyzstan and was entrusted with all matters of conferring academic degrees and academic titles (professor, associate professor, senior researcher).

Today, the development of any country is largely determined by the results of scientific and technological progress. The role of the Research Center of Kyrgyzstan - National Academy of Science has been further increased. One of the first acts issued by the President of the Kyrgyz Republic was the decree of December 7, 1990 “On the Status of the Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz SSR,” which reflected a fundamentally new democratic approach to scientific and organizational problems in the new academy. A Presidential Decree of 1993 on the transformation of the academy into the National Academy of Sciences allowed the rising of its status and role in the political and economic life.

The National Academy of Sciences became a full member of several international associations and academies of sciences, including the International Association of Academies of Sciences of the CIS countries, the Association of Academies of Sciences of the Asian countries, the Association of Academies of Sciences of the Turkic States, and the World Council of Academies of Sciences.

The First Congress of Scientists of Kyrgyzstan was held at the end of the 20th century for the first time in the history of Kyrgyz science. A forum of this magnitude has once again confirmed the great importance attached to national science and scientists in our state. The congress summed up the
developmental framework of science in the 20th century. The President of the republic, stressing the importance of basic research, charged scientists with the task of creating technologies that would completely cover the real costs and would ensure maximum profit with access to international markets.

Programs associated with the propaganda of the masterpiece of the Kyrgyz folklore - the epic “Manas” have a great value for the spiritual revival of our society, revival of the best national traditions and customs, education of younger generations, and general achievements of mankind, in the spirit of patriotism, good neighborliness, and cooperation. These are the programs of “Muras,” “Children of the World about Manas,” and “Manas mektebi.” In order to acquaint children of various countries with the epic “Manas”, colorful albums with illustrations of the epic adapted children, and excerpts from the epic in prose in Kyrgyz, English, Turkish, Russian, and other languages have been issued. In line with this initiative, country-wide contests of children’s creativity are held.

M. Asylbashev, a talented choreographer, and National Artist of the Kyrgyz Republic, has headed the State Dance Ensemble “Ak-Maral” for fifteen years. During these years, he formed the original repertoire of the ensemble, educated talented dancers, developed a common style, and has made an enormous contribution to the treasury of folk Kyrgyz dance. His dance group has received international recognition of audience and experts during foreign tours to Mongolia, Portugal, Pakistan, Germany, India, France, Malaysia, the United States, and other countries.

The press, radio, and television make a major contribution to rising of cultural level of the population of the Kyrgyz Republic. These forms of media pay much attention to social and economic problems of sovereign
Kyrgyzstan and the spiritual culture of the people.

In recent years, the State TV Radio Corporation (Gosteleradiokorporatsiya) of the Kyrgyz Republic has managed to achieve a significant increase in the quality and diversity of television and radio broadcasting. A number of new directions appeared in the activity of Gosteleradiokorporatsiya. The corporation reorganized the management of state television and radio, underwent major improvements in the preparation of radio and television programs, strengthened their material base, and significantly increased the daily volume and quality of television programming. At present, the corporation actively operates the programs, which enhance the people’s unity, stability, ethnic harmony, civil peace, and order in Kyrgyzstan.

Spiritual life of the country between 1990 and 2005 was associated not only with positive changes. Many theaters, museums, libraries, and other cultural and educational institutions have significantly changed the content of their activities due to financial difficulties. Some, fortunately, have managed to find their place in a market economy and continued their creative life.

Lack of spiritual life in the transitional period caused a number of adverse events in all spheres of social relations. Customs of feudalism from the time of bai-manaps’ began to revive instead of native traditions from the long history of the Kyrgyz people. Particularly these dark forces were introduced into family traditions and rituals of everyday life. For example, the funeral rite of the Kyrgyz people has its own idiosyncrasies, which are a manifestation of compassion, a sense of kinship, and help to the family of deceased.

Community courts of aksakals formed in accordance with the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic play a huge role in dealing with problems of alcoholism, domestic crime, and the distortion of the customs and traditions. Currently, more than about one thousand two hundred community courts of aksakals, which consist of about six thousand people, successfully operate throughout the country. They have done a great job of preventing and fighting the crime, educating the younger generation in the spirit of the progressive tradition, and reviving the national spirit of the people of Kyrgyzstan.

Considering the 1000th anniversary of the epic “Manas” as an important social and political event in modern history of independent and sovereign Kyrgyzstan, the President of the Kyrgyz Republic issued a decree “On Preparation and Holding of the 1000th Anniversary of the Epic” Manas”,

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which declared 1995 as the year of a nationwide celebration of the 1000\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of the heroic epic of the Kyrgyz people. In accordance with the decree, a national organizing committee headed by the Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic was founded. The State Directorate for the preparation and conduct of the anniversary was established as a working member of the National Organizing Committee, which was endowed with appropriate powers and authority. Organization of the anniversary was one of the forms and methods of self-affirmation of Kyrgyz people within the international community. The 49\textsuperscript{th} session of the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution “On Celebrating the 1000\textsuperscript{th} Anniversary of the Kyrgyz National Epic “Manas”. In fact, it was the recognition of the importance of the epic to the world of spiritual culture and international community.

The conference “The Kyrgyz: Ethno-genetic and Ethnocultural Processes in Ancient and Medieval times in Central Asia” (September 22-24, 1994, Bishkek), where questions of ethnogenesis and the ethnic history of the Kyrgyz were raised, was a great success. An international conference dedicated to the 100\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of “Homer of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century”, the greatest contemporary manaschy Sayakbai Karalaev was held in October 1994. The conference participants had an interesting conversation about the so-called phenomenon of “manaschy”, raised issues of narrative skills and the role of storytellers in preservation of the epic, as well as the characteristics of spiritual culture of the Kyrgyz people.

With the direct involvement of the business project “Muras”, the society “Sanzhyrachy” was created to organize expeditions to collect sanzhyra - oral traditions of the Kyrgyz. The project sought to record, classify, and study them, as well as conduct various competitions among connoisseurs of sanzhyra.

Following independence, questions of Kyrgyz statehood began to intrigue many scholars and intellectuals, especially historians. In May 2002, the Kyrgyz National
University held the International conference on “Stages of Development of Kyrgyz Statehood.” The papers at this conference covered the origins and stages of historical statehood in Central Asia and Southern Siberia. Well-known modern historical scholars from Russia, China, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan considered the problem at a round table discussion.

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

\[on\ the\ report\ of\ the\ Second\ Committee\ (A/57/331/Add.3)\]

57/248. Year of Kyrgyz Statehood

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 53/22 of 4 November 1998 on the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations,

Recalling also its resolution 49/129 of 19 December 1994 on the commemorating of the millennium of the Kyrgyz national epic, Manas,


Stressing the importance of promoting education and raising public awareness in order to foster respect for national cultures, the cultural heritage of the world and civilizational diversity, which is essential for strengthening global peace and implementing international cooperation,

Noting the richness of Kyrgyz culture and its national, regional and international significance,

1. Welcomes the efforts undertaken by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic to declare 2003 as the Year of Kyrgyz Statehood and to organize activities in celebration of the Year;

2. Invites Member States, the United Nations, the specialized agencies and other international and intergovernmental organizations, as well as regional and non-governmental organizations and foundations, to take part in the events being organized by the Kyrgyz Republic to celebrate the year 2003.

Resolution of 57 Assembly of UN on the celebration of the Kyrgyz statehood

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The International Scientific Conference recommended to declare 2003 the Year of the Kyrgyz statehood. President KR Askar Akayev agreed with the recommendation and sent a formal request to the United Nations. The UN General Assembly, noting the wealth of Kyrgyz culture, as well as its national, regional, and international significance, adopted a special resolution, recognizing the Year of Kyrgyz Statehood in December 2002; the 2,200th anniversary of statehood was marked as an event of worldwide significance. The Decision of the UN General Assembly to hold the Year of the Kyrgyz statehood in 2003 had a positive impact on socio-political situation in the republic. Varieties of activities dedicated to our history were held throughout the country in 2003.

**Foreign Policy and International Relations of Sovereign Kyrgyz Republic**

The foreign policy of Kyrgyzstan is based on the following principles: the preservation of peace, the inviolability of the nation’s borders, strengthening of multilateral relations with the CIS nations and the world, ending ethnic conflicts in the CIS, preventing of their occurrence in the country, attraction of foreign investment to the national economy, export of domestic production to international markets, active involvement in UN and other international organizations, denial of entering military blocs and alliances and full neutrality.

In accordance with the principles and objectives of foreign policy, Kyrgyzstan received recognition and support on the international scene following 1991. The U.S. Embassy was opened in Bishkek in February of 1992. After that, People’s Republic of China, Russia, Turkey, Germany, and other states formed their diplomatic missions in Kyrgyzstan. On March 2, 1992, Kyrgyzstan became a member of the United Nations. As early as 1993, one hundred twenty-eight countries had formally recognized the independence of the Kyrgyz Republic; diplomatic relations with more than eighty countries were established. By 1998, the sovereignty of Kyrgyzstan was recognized by one hundred thirty-five countries. Diplomatic relations with more than ninety-one countries were established. Eleven embassies and representative offices were opened in Bishkek. Seventeen diplomatic missions abroad protect the interests of the country. As an independent state, Kyrgyzstan became a member
of several international organizations, including the UN, OSCE, IMF, UNESCO, etc.).

Special place in the foreign policy of Kyrgyzstan is given to the relationships with Russia, a legacy of the historical, economic, and social factors. The relationship between Kyrgyzstan and Russia after the collapse of the Soviet was developed on the basis of friendship, cooperation, mutual assistance, as well as the principles of interstate relations between two countries. It was necessary to strengthen relations between Kyrgyzstan and Russia to keep the military-strategic situation of the country stable and to ensure the inviolability of state borders. A number of agreements between two states were adopted to resolve these issues.

The Kyrgyz Republic concluded Treaties of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance with Ukraine, Belarus, and other former Soviet countries. Many relationships established during the Soviet era were renewed and further developed in the conditions of a new market.

In economic and social relationships the Kyrgyz Republic focuses on CIS countries, especially those of Central Asia. In the first half of the 1990s, in export-import relationships of Kyrgyzstan the first place was given to Russia, then, respectively, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Belarus. Kyrgyzstan exports leather, wool, cotton, silk, carpets, cotton yarn, precious and rare metals, granite, marble, and ceramics. In return, Kyrgyzstan receives fuels and lubricating oils, coal, automobiles, agricultural equipment, ferrous metals, and natural gas. In 1990, imports exceeded exports. As a result the main aim of economic reform conducted in the republic was the creation of favorable conditions for the expansion of exports.

The focus of the reform was directed to the creation of core enterprises producing qualitative products competitive in the global market, as well as prioritized development of industrial and economic sectors to replace imported production. Funding from foreign investments is sought after as the main sources in such projects. The World Bank, the International Development Association and other international financial institutions have consistently supported the rehabilitation of the economy, the establishment of enterprises for the production of exportable goods made from local raw materials. In this respect, the Asian Development Bank, the International Finance Corporation, and the Islamic Development Bank provided a recent active assistance.
The number of companies and businesses established jointly with foreign countries have increased and successfully operated in Kyrgyzstan in the post-Soviet era. The Kyrgyz-Canadian Corporation “Cameco” started stable development of gold deposits in the “Kumtor” region of Issyk-Kul. An oil refinery was built in Jalal-Abad together with the U.S. firms. Similar operations were built with the assistance of England and Russia in the regions of Kant. Internationally based corporations have concentrated on leather processing, lines for bottling mineral water, and the production of baby food on Kyrgyz soil.

International economic relations are important for Kyrgyzstan in implementing agrarian reforms and in transformation of agriculture into a profitable industry. Kyrgyzstan has yet to reach a sustainable level of food production. However, research proved that Kyrgyzstan can produce agricultural products for export only if the resources are used rationally. In this regard, the World Bank provided $60 million for crop production under local conditions.

Kyrgyzstan hopes to receive help from the international economic community for the rehabilitation of sheep industry, which for centuries has been the basis of life of indigenous people. Specific measures to develop sheep were made together with the World Bank. However, $16 million allocated to restore the industry during the first stage were used without a clear focus and often inappropriately. In 1995, the external debt of the republic was $600 million; by 2000 it approached $21 billion. This once again reiterates the need to use the aid strictly according to the purpose to achieve a long-term impact and cost effectiveness. Kyrgyzstan has all the necessary features to become a reliable exporter of wool, fermented tobacco leaves, cotton, perennial seeds, sugar beets, corn hybrid, and garden crops to the international market in the near future.

International relations have expanded in post-Soviet Kyrgyzstan and this, first of all, is reflected in education system. Today, more than three thousand Kyrgyz citizens study abroad. More than one thousand foreign students currently study in Kyrgyzstan (Jenish, 2012).

Formed in 1993, the Soros Foundation-Kyrgyzstan is currently working on 45 programs aimed at reforming education, improving the printing industry, providing material support to undergraduate and graduate students in a form of scholarships, etc. From 1994-1998 the Soros Foundation invested $16 million to the cultural development of the country.
Huge strides in the development of international relations of the republic are achieved thanks to the National Library of Kyrgyzstan. Today, the library has more than six billion books in seventy languages. The International Book Exchange Service works well to supplement the library fund. Thanks to the book exchange, Kyrgyz readers have the opportunity to get acquainted with the achievements of science, literature, and art from all over the world. In turn, National Library gives a splendid opportunity to foreign readers and researchers to learn about the achievements of the Kyrgyz Republic. Political, economic, and social relationships with other countries of Kyrgyzstan show true promise for further development.

As one of the main objectives of its foreign policy, the Kyrgyz Republic emphasizes the further development and strengthening of ties with the CIS states, particularly with the countries of Central Asia. With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the heads of the central Asian states put forward issues of intra-regional cooperation and mutual assistance. In this regard, Kyrgyzstan signed an agreement with Kazakhstan on February 18, 1991, with Uzbekistan on February 18, 1991, and with Turkmenistan on July 16, 1991.

Issues of friendship, cooperation, economic, scientific-technological, and cultural mutual assistance received in-depth discussion at the meeting of leaders of the five central Asian republics in Tashkent in 1991. Long-term documents were adopted at this meeting. An agreement was concluded on the establishment of the Inter-Republican Advisory Board of Central Asia and Kazakhstan. As a result, the integration processes in this region were widely developed. In 1994, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan signed an agreement on the formation of a Single Economic Area. The idea of establishing a single central Asian economic space (OAES) was launched after the meeting of the leaders of three republics in Almaty in 1994. At that meeting was a decision on the formation of the Interstate Council headed by the presidents and heads of governments of three states was approved. The Council of Ministers, Council of Foreign Ministers, and the Defense Ministers’ Council was founded for the purpose of carrying the activities of the new organization. The Executive Committee with headquarters in Almaty was elected as a permanent working body.
The regular meetings of the leaders of these three States approved the Statute on the Interstate Council and its institutions on February 12, 1995. This alliance has an important mission to strengthen comprehensive relationships of the three republics and the development of integration processes in Central Asia.

Multifaceted cooperation with the Republic of Kazakhstan is an indisputable priority of Kyrgyzstan’s foreign policy and can be explained by the geographical proximity, deep historical related roots, as well as a common language, culture, traditions, and historical fate. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan have signed the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, which laid the foundation of bilateral relations. The main emphasis in the relationships between two countries is made on the comprehensive deepening of trade and economic cooperation.

An important factor in the development of bilateral relations is cooperation between the two countries within the CIS, CAEC, EurAsEC, and in the format of the “Shanghai Forum” that allows to agree on practical steps in the areas of global and regional diplomacy, collective security, and threats to stability and security in Central Asia as a whole. The two states tend to occupy similar positions on many issues of international policy initiatives, support each other on the international arena. For example, Kyrgyzstan is among the first who supported the initiative of the President of Kazakhstan on convening the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and became its active participant. In turn, Kazakhstan also supported international initiatives of Kyrgyzstan in realizing the International Conference on Afghanistan and in declaring Central Asia a zone free of nuclear weapons. Priorities for trade and economic integration of the two countries are determined by their strategic interests, goals, effective use of aggregate economic potential, and accelerated socio-economic development.

The main export items between the two nations were electricity, mercury, antimony, electric motors, light bulbs, tobacco, sugar, and slate. Introduction of temporary protective duties between Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan in February 2000 significantly affected the supply of slate, which decreased in comparison to 1999 by 2.9 times. The chief imports from Kazakhstan were wheat, coal, petrol, diesel, fuel, oil, and ferrous and nonferrous metals.
In contrast to the trade and economic relations, cultural relations are developing actively and successfully. Both republics regularly host exhibitions, concerts, artists, international scientific symposia, and seminars with the participation of intellectuals and the public. Kyrgyzstan widely celebrated the 100th anniversary of great Kazakh writer Mukhtar Auezov, the 175th anniversary of Kurmangazy, the 150th anniversary of Abai and Zhambyl. In turn, Kazakhstan celebrated the 1000th anniversary of the epic “Manas” and the 70th anniversary of the outstanding Kyrgyz writer Chingiz Aitmatov. An international meeting of activists of science, art and culture was held in Astana in September 1999 and confirmed the future potential of cooperation between the peoples of Central Asia.

Cooperation with the Republic of Uzbekistan, which evolves gradually over the entire spectrum of bilateral relations, is a priority of the Kyrgyz Republic’s foreign policy. At present, there are more than sixty agreements between the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Uzbekistan. The most basic document governing the relationships between the two states is the Treaty of Eternal Friendship between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, which was signed on December 24, 1996 during the official visit of President of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Republic of Uzbekistan. Bilateral visits of President of Uzbekistan to Kyrgyzstan in January and September 2000, as well as the President of Kyrgyzstan to Uzbekistan in December 1996 and November 1998 are important as they have given considerable impetus to the Kyrgyz-Uzbek relations. Another official visit of President of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the Kyrgyz Republic in September 2000 was a landmark event in the development of mutually beneficial and good-neighborly cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

In observance of the security threats on the southern regions of the states of the CIS, relations with Tajikistan have become a crucial component to the Kyrgyz foreign policy. Relations between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan were established on January 14, 1993 and have held great significance in the development of the Kyrgyz Republic. Over the past decade Kyrgyzstan has consistently maintained and continues to adhere to the policy of expanding bilateral cooperation, as well as the promotion of peace in Tajikistan. The development of trade and economic relations between the two countries is of particular focus of the ministers of Kyrgyzstan.
The international community highly appreciated the efforts of the Kyrgyz Republic, which made it possible to achieve a positive result at the meeting of the President of Tajikistan Emomali Rakhmonov and the leader of the former United Tajik Opposition S. Nuri in Bishkek in May 15-18, 1997. Bishkek agreement greatly contributed to the signing of a General Agreement on Peace in Moscow in June 1997. Another milestone in the strengthening of bilateral relations was the opening of the Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic in Tajikistan in accordance with the Presidential Decree from January 13, 1997.

Kyrgyzstan seeks to develop close cooperation with Turkmenistan. Diplomatic relationships with this country were established on October 9, 1992. Today, however, bilateral relations between Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan, unlike other three states in the region, have not yet truly developed; and all official political contacts are usually at the level of multilateral activities of the CIS, the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), and the Turkic Summit.

The end of the 20th century turned out to be troublesome for the international community in the sense that international terrorism had strengthened its forces throughout the world. The attempt of religious extremist organizations to extend their expansion in the regions of Central Asia (including Kyrgyzstan) continues to be a concern of the international community.

A group of armed religious extremists under the guise of holy canons for believers of Islam invaded the southern parts of Kyrgyzstan in August 1999. Setting their camp in the vicinity of Batken, terrorists attempted to gain a foothold in the region. They held employees of the district’s administration, police, four Japanese geologists, and local resident’s hostage for some time. They even managed to seize a few villages. Using popular rhetoric against the Uzbek state, these groups tried to gain popular support among the local population.

Manipulating local youth, these terrorist groups tried to recruit them into their ranks. The Kyrgyz government timely and properly evaluated the actions of terrorists as an attack at the integrity of the sovereign nation and decided to defeat these groups and expel them from the territory of Kyrgyz Republic.
To fight with terrorism on a regional scale, Kyrgyzstan was provided with military and technical aid from Uzbekistan, Russia, Kazakhstan, and Armenia as part of the agreement signed by the members of the so-called “Shanghai Five”. Soldiers, volunteers, and contractors showed great courage during the liquidation of these groups. Fifty-five officers and soldiers heroically died in their efforts. Armed clashes in southern Kyrgyzstan became a test of national unity. During those years, large numbers of young people expressed a desire to defend their homeland. The people of Kyrgyzstan played an important part in helping soldiers and residents of the regions in question.

These events in southern Kyrgyzstan became a great lesson in raising the defense of the Kyrgyz Republic. Weaknesses in the armed forces were showed themselves in the struggle against these forces. Correctly assessing the shortcomings, the government of Kyrgyzstan took a number of necessary measures to eliminate them. Taking into account the strategic and socio-economic importance of the region subjected to the invasion, the President signed a law on the formation of the Batken Oblast on October 13, 1999. The new Oblast included Batken, Kadamzhay, the Leylek regions, and Kyzyl-Kiya. Batken was identified as the administrative center of the Batken Oblast.

To strengthen the southern borders of the republic, a southern group of the armed forces, were placed near the southern border. Border guards were reinforced and the training of officers became more intensive. As a result of taken measures, an attempted resurgence of the terrorist forces was suppressed in 2000. Activities to promote and protect the borders of the Kyrgyz Republic became one of the main objectives of increased defense.

An international conference on “Enhancing Security and Stability in Central Asia: Strengthening of Comprehensive Efforts to Counter Terror-
“ism” was held in Bishkek on December 13-14, 2001 under the guidance of the OSCE and the UN. Almost three hundred delegates and representatives of more than sixty countries and twenty international organizations participated in conference which adopted a final document entitled “The Bishkek Declaration”, where concrete measures to ensure security in the region were outlined. In order to eliminate the threat of international terrorism and, above all, to ensure national security of the country, Kyrgyzstan joined an international anti-terrorist coalition along with the United States, Russia, China, France, Korea, Canada, and Italy in early 2002.

To eliminate the threat of further spread of terrorism and to stabilize the situation in Afghanistan as well as to provide necessary guarantees of stability and security in Central Asia, the Kyrgyz government decided to temporarily allocate the territory of Kyrgyzstan to the forces of the anti-terrorist coalition. Thus, the strengthening of national security and provision of the necessary guarantees of stability in Central Asia were solidified as the most important tasks for the Kyrgyz Republic.

Independent Kyrgyzstan works hard to address the issues related to the refinement of its frontiers. As a result, an initiative to settle border disputes with China was taken (these borders have been in question since the 19th century). Research of historical sources suggests that in the middle of the 19th century, China and Russia divided the lands of Central Asia as a result of their colonial policies. The Beijing agreement in 1860 and the Chuguchak Protocol in 1864 were supposed to clarify the boundaries between the two empires.

Determination of the boundaries between China and Russia on the territory of Kyrgyzstan was provided by the St. Petersburg (1881), Kashgar (1882) and Novomargelansk (1884) regulations. It should be noted that these negotiations were held without the participation of Kyrgyz representatives, as during the refinement of borders both empires pursued only their own goals and objectives; the interests of Kyrgyz people were not taken into account. As a result, the territory and people of Kyrgyzstan were divided between two Empires, one part moved to Russia, while the other moved to China. During Soviet times, especially in the 1960s, China claimed new borders, but without much success.

With the acquisition of independence, Kyrgyzstan received an opportunity to address the issue of borders again. A number of bilateral negotiations have been held since the mid 1990’s; documents on the
Russian-Chinese borders were carefully studied. On June 4, 1996, the delegations of the People’s Republic of China and the Kyrgyz Republic signed a document stating that the solution of cross-border issues would be defined on equitable terms. As a result of a meticulous work on both sides, seventy percent of the four thousand square meters of disputed territories were given to Kyrgyzstan and the other thirty percent was given to China. This agreement was ratified by the legislatures of both states. The recognition of the boundaries between the Kyrgyz Republic and China is a fact of enormous historical importance. It was done with regard to the interests of both parties, and most importantly, ensured peace and harmony of the Kyrgyz-Chinese border. On August 16, 2007, Bishkek hosted the Summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Participation of the heads of 10 countries and representatives of many international organizations was the evidence the respected status of the forum and of its political and economic importance. More than 500 journalists who visited that summit were able to witness the changes that have taken place in Kyrgyzstan. These all even further enhanced the image of Kyrgyzstan in the world community.

**From the History of the Kyrgyz abroad**

The Kyrgyz people is one of the oldest peoples ever occupied Central Asia in the reviewed period of history. The Kyrgyz that are mentioned in historical sources in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} century B.C. wandered in the vast expanses of Asia for more than two thousand years. In the last millennium, Kyrgyz people finally settled on the territory of modern Kyrgyzstan, which became their historical homeland. Along with the fact that most Kyrgyz are concentrated in the area of the Ala-Too, a number of ethnic Kyrgyz live abroad.

Representatives of Kyrgyz Diasporas from China, Uzbekistan, Russia, Turkey, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Europe, and even from faraway Australia met at the World Kurultai held in Bishkek in August of 1992. Each of them with a great sense of pride took part in a joyous event – Kyrgyzstan’s acquisition of sovereign statehood. Until that time, relations with foreign Kyrgyz were limited due to a number of political and social reasons. People of Kyrgyzstan had a rather superficial view about their history, culture, and social life. Positive conditions for the development and strengthening of relations of the Kyrgyz living abroad with their native homeland appeared recently.

Since ancient times, the Kyrgyz have lived in Eastern Turkestan.
Extensive research proves the fact that this region was the ancestral homeland of the Kyrgyz people. Another indication of this is Kyrgyz names of localities and reservoirs, such as Manas city, Lake Manas. Written sources have shown that, in the first half of the 18th century, the Kyrgyz controlled Eastern Turkestan and northern part of the Fergana Valley. In 1638, the Khan’s power over Mogolistan passed to the hands of Abdullah Khan, who organized the campaign against the Kyrgyz living in the area of Eastern Turkestan. In response, the Southern, Fergana, and Kashgar Kyrgyz tribes built a strong coalition and inflicted several substantial blows to invaders. In subsequent years of the rule of Abdullah Khan (1658-1670), Kyrgyz biys ruled in such major cities of Eastern Turkestan as Kashgar, Jarkent, Jangi-Gisar, and Khotan. For example, the Kyrgyz biy Satym was the governor of Jangi-Gisar, Koysary-biy – Kashgar.

Historical evidence suggests that Jarkent emirs were disgruntled with the Kyrgyz byis and turned to the Kalmak kontaishi Tsevan Rabtan for help. When Kalmak troops approached Jarkent, the Kyrgyz retreated towards Kashgar, but immediately after the departure of Kalmaks they returned back to Jarkent as if nothing had happened. After these events, the influence of the Kyrgyz became even stronger and lasted until the conquest of Eastern Turkestan by the Junggar Khanate. Later, according to Kyrgyz genealogical legends, the Chonbagysh and Cherik tribes moved to China through Uzgen, Tenir Too, Ak-Talaa, and At-Bashy, under the pressure of Kalmaks in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Currently, the Chonbagysh, Cherik, and Kyrgyz-Kipchak tribes represent the Kyrgyz of Kyzyl-Suu in the Kyrgyz autonomous region of China. For example, 80% of Kyrgyz residing in Akchiy district are representatives of the Cherik tribe. The Chonbagysh and Kushchu tribes also reside there.

Most Kyrgyz who were forcibly moved by Kalmaks to Jungaria returned to Tenir Too after the defeat of the Kalmak Khanate. The descendants of these Kyrgyz people are named Kyrgyz-Kalmak and these days live in Dyurbeldzhin, Mongolian Autonomous County, in China (they total about two thousand people). They are the representatives of such tribes and clans as Sarybagysh, Baaryn, Munduz, Naiman, and Sart.

In the 18th century, the Kyrgyz influenced the political situation of Eastern Turkestan. In 1754, the governor of Eastern Turkestan Jusup-Kojo, with the assistance of Kyrgyz tribes, refused to obey to the Jungar Khanate.
and Kubat-biy from Kushchu supported him.

Starting in 1757, the Empire of the Qin began to dominate in Eastern Turkestan and Kyrgyz tribes took the most active part in the struggle of peoples of Eastern Turkestan against Chinese invaders. Constant struggle of the peoples of this region continued even after the approval of Chinese hegemony and Turkic people of Eastern Turkestan (Kyrgyz, Uighurs, Kazakhs, Uzbeks, and others) acted together in this struggle.

Kyrgyz and Uyghur tribes were the main driving force of the uprisings in Kashgar in 1814 and 1816 and Turdumambet-biy was the one who led Kyrgyz in this movement. Five hundred Kyrgyz warriors, who were involved in a campaign of Janger-Kojo to Eastern Turkestan, were led by Suranchy-biy. This raid is known in history as a revolt of *Suranchy-burut* (Kyrgyz) but Janger-Kojo himself was defeated in this campaign and had to retreat.

Kyrgyz tribes also actively supported the rebellion of Janger-Kojo in 1820. In the end, the rebellion of 1825 was again led by Janger-Kojo and finally reached success, Eastern Turkestan was temporarily relieved from the occupation of the Qin Empire and Janger Kojo was proclaimed the ruler. Atantay and Tailak played a large role in this. The government of Qin sent a 70,000-strong army to Kashgar to defeat Janger Kojo and the revolt was suppressed. Janger-Kojo fled to Kyrgyzstan. He was later imprisoned and executed in Beijing.

In 1830, a brother of Janger-Kojo, Jusup-Kojo, led another revolt against Chinese infidels. *Baatyrs* Tailak and Atantay from the Sayak tribe joined him, as well as the representatives of Kypchak, Basyz, and Chon-Bagyshe tribes and clans. With the support of the Kokand Khanate, the rebels even besieged the city of Kashgar. In 1864, the uprising broke out simultaneously in the cities of Urumqi, Kuchar, Kashgar, and Khotan where the power was transmitted to the local feudal lords. The ruler of Kashgar became Sadykbek, the head of the Kyrgyz. From 1865-1867, Jakyp Beg (Yakup Bek) seized the power in a number of cities in Eastern Turkestan (Kashgar, Jarkent, Jangi-Gisar, and Khotan) and established the state of “Seven Cities”. Kyrgyz warriors were the most efficient part of Jakyp Beg’s cavalry.

In 1871, Russia expanded its presence in Eastern Turkestan and captured the Kulja, Bayanday, Khorgos-Kucho, Suyduk, and Telgi settle-
ments. Series of meetings were held to determine the boundaries between Russia and China in 1880. In 1884, the boundary between two Empires was determined and, as a result, most of the Kyrgyz lands became a Russian protectorate and the rest was made part of China. Since that time those Kyrgyz who stayed in China were called the Chinese Kyrgyz.

In China, Kyrgyz people settled by groups in the regions of Ak-Chyi, Uluu Chat, Ak-Too, Artys, Tekes, Lop, Ak-Suu, and Ghulja. Communities of Chinese Kyrgyz were formed from the tribes of both the right and left wings. Noyguts and Kipchaks represented Ichkiliks. Historical legends about Janyl Mirza, a heroic daughter of the Noygut tribe from Kakshaal, are still presented in poetry of Chinese Kyrgyz.

The Kyrgyz were subjected to genocide after the defeat of a national liberation uprising in 1916 and were forced to flee to China. Some Kyrgyz tribes from Kemin, Issyk-Kul, and Tenir Too overcame the snow-covered mountain passes and glaciers and settled in Uch Turpan and Ak-Suu in Eastern Turkestan. Kyrgyz tribes from At-Bashy moved to Kakshaal; Kyrgyz tribes from Issyk-Kul moved to Ghulja through Karkyra. About 500 families moved to Tekes. According to Chinese sources, in 1916 more than three hundred thirty-two thousand Kyrgyz and Kazakhs moved from Jeti-Suu region to China; after the establishment of Soviet rule in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan almost three hundred thousand refugees returned back home.

The Chinese Kyrgyz always participated in the liberation struggle of the peoples of Eastern Turkestan. The Kyrgyz Ysakbek Moniev, while leading the movement for the liberation of the Turkic peoples of Eastern Turkestan in 1935, organized the regiment of Kyrgyz riders which included 2.5 thousand of Kyrgyz jigits.

On November 12, 1944, the Independent Eastern Turkestan Republic was proclaimed and its government was formed. On April 8, 1945, the national army of the Eastern Turkestan Republic was created and the Major General Ysakbek Moniev commanded it. In 1946, the governments of the Eastern Turkestan Republic and the Kuomintang signed an agreement. In August 1949, however, all heads of the Eastern Turkestan Republic (including Lt. Gen. Ysakbek) died in a plane crash during their flight from Moscow to Beijing.
In October 1949, the People’s Republic of China was formed. The resolution of a new government on July 14, 1954 allocated northwestern part of Xinjiang region (largely inhabited by Chinese Kyrgyz) as the Kyrgyz Autonomous Region of Kyzyl-Suu. In February 1955, it was given the status of Oblast and included the districts of Ak-Chyi, Ak-Too, and Uluu Chat. Artysh city became an administrative and cultural center of Chinese Kyrgyz.

The Chinese Kyrgyz, manaschy Jusup Mamay, recorded “Manas” and published it in seven volumes. Prominent historian Anvar Baytur studied the history of the Chinese Kyrgyz and published several monographs on this subject. His two-volume work “Lectures of a Kyrgyz history” was published in Bishkek in 1992.

While speaking about Chinese Kyrgyz, we should note those Kyrgyz who live in a Fu-Yu county (Manchuria). There is historical evidence that these Kyrgyz were forced to migrate from Irtsh and Yenisei by the end of the 13th century by Mongol emperor Kublai Khan. It is believed that during Kublai Khan’s rule Kyrgyz soldiers were obliged to protect northern borders of the Empire. The Fu-Yu Kyrgyz still call themselves as “Kyrgyz” though anthropologically they are closer to Europoids as they are light-skinned and red-haired. The Fu-Yu Kyrgyz practice idolatry. Dairy products are the bases of their food. They consider the Yenisei to be their homeland.

The Fu-Yu Kyrgyz are divided into six clans. Anvar Baytur, who studied their language, found many archaic elements preserved from the ancient language of Yenisei Kyrgyz. Of particular interest is the fact that despite the alien language environment, the influence of other cultures, and the impact of social and political aspects, the Fu-Yu Kyrgyz managed to preserve their language and identity for centuries.

According to recent reports, China is home for about one hundred seventy thousand Kyrgyz. Approximately one hundred twenty thousand of them live in the Kyrgyz Autonomous Region of Kyzyl-Suu, while the rest in other regions of Eastern Turkestan. More than one thousand Kyrgyz live in Fu-Yu.
With the closing of the borders of the Soviet Union in the first half of the 20th century, interaction between the main part of Kyrgyz and their relatives, who remained in the territories of the Afghan Pamir, was broken off. Having become part of the Afghan Pamir population, these Kyrgyz had a traditional economy and were headed by Rakhmankul Khan, who was subordinated to the administration of Kabul until the coup in April 1978. Afghanistan’s Khan Muhammad Zakir Shah trusted Rakhmankul Khan and, in 1964, he included Rakhmankul to the Loya Jirga (Grand Assembly) and granted the honorary title Kadiyar (the ruler of a district). As a result of Rakhmankul Khan’s activity, the Afghan Kyrgyz received extensive rights of autonomy, freedom from taxes, and military conscription. At the same time, however, they had to protect the borders against the Soviet Union and China. Rakhmankul Khan made considerable effort to conduct the electricity and build railroads to the Pamirs but works started in this direction were discontinued after the so-called “Afghan Revolution.”

The civil war in 1979 in Afghanistan violated the established way of public relations of Afghan Kyrgyz and sharply worsened their living conditions. As a result, one thousand three hundred Kyrgyz were forced to move to the Pamirs in Pakistan. Refugees lost much of their property and livestock on the way to Pakistan. Settling in an abandoned mountain village, these Kyrgyz struggled to survive by selling off the remnants of their cattle. To worsen matters, they suffered from numerous illnesses; the mortality rate threateningly increased. Unable to adapt to new conditions, many returned back to their homes.

Referencing the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, a large group of Afghan Kyrgyz refugees received permission to move to Turkey in 1982. In August 1982, more than one thousand Kyrgyz were moved to Turkey on three planes and placed in Kara-Kunduz, 35 km far from the city of Van, where Kyrgyz diaspora had lived compactly for centuries. With the arrival of Afghan Kyrgyz, the social conditions in Kara-Kunduz village were improved because of the diverse activities...
of Rakhmankul Khan. Water pipe, electricity, telephone, and transport links were conducted; a mosque was built. Thus, those nomadic Afghan Kyrgyz who moved from the Pamirs to Turkey changed their lifestyle to a sedentary one. As a result, public and interclan relationships, customs and traditions, as well as the culture of migrants, underwent significant changes. At present, there are about 4 thousand Kyrgyz in Turkey, in addition to the undergraduate and graduate students, entrepreneurs and employees of various offices who come to study and work Turkey from Kyrgyzstan. Kyrgyz diaspora has its own small newspaper “Bulak” spotlighting the life of Turkish Kyrgyz. The complex fate and history of the Pamir Kyrgyz is covered in the work of French anthropologist Rémy Dor “The Kyrgyz of the Afghan Pamir”, which was published as a book in the Kyrgyz language in Bishkek in 1993.

It is known that from the ancient times the Kyrgyz roamed the Ferghana Valley and its surroundings and lived side by side with Uzbeks, Kipchaks, Tajiks, and members of other nationalities. At the beginning of the 18th century, the Ferghana region gained independence and Shahrurkh-biy came to power in 1709. He became the founder of the Kokand Khanate and from that time until its accession to Russia, the Kokand Khans ruled the Ferghana Valley and its foothills.

First the Ferghana Kyrgyz, and then the Mountain Kyrgyz became permanent subjects to the Khanate of Kokand and took an active part in its social and political life. Since the 19th century, the Ferghana Kyrgyz have tried to influence the Khan’s environment to achieve their goals. Clear illustration of this is the accession of the throne by Sheraly Khan who was supported by Kypchaks, Kyrgyz, and their leader Nusup (Nuzup-biy). Interestingly, Sheraly Khan was raised in Talas under the influence of the Kyrgyz. Sheraly Khan’s sons, Kudayar Khan especially, were also under the constant tutelage of Kyrgyz-Kypchak lords.

In this regard, the Ferghana Kyrgyz were never oppressed or pushed back in the history of the Kokand Khanate but, on the contrary, their leaders took an active part in domestic and foreign politics. They were equal with Uzbek and Kypchak leaders and they fought for the reign of a Khan and considered themselves as an integral part of a government. This confirms the tendency of Kokand khans and biys
to get closer and to have kin ties with Kyrgyz nobility by the means of marriage. For example, Erdene-biy, Narboto-biy, and Azhy-biy were married to daughters of major Kyrgyz lords. Azhy-biy had a son Sheraly Khan from his Kyrgyz wife; Sheraly Khan had a son Kudayar Khan from his Kyrgyz wife Jarkyn and a son Mala Khan from the other Kyrgyz wife Sono. When in power, they were greatly influenced by their Kyrgyz relatives.

According to some statistics of 1897, about 424 thousand Kyrgyz, 30% of the total population, lived in Fergana region. Most part of those Kyrgyz considered themselves as indigenous inhabitants of Fergana as their ancestors settled in this land in ancient times. Another part moved to the Ferghana Valley from Eastern Turkestan, Tenir Too, and Talas. Kyrgyz of the Fergana Valley and its foothills were engaged in agriculture, while the inhabitants of mountains were cattle breeders.

In accordance with the national policy of Soviet rule, Central Asia was separated into independent states in 1924. During this important campaign, a number of voluntarist, subjective, and formal decisions were made without taking into account the interests of local ethnic groups and their areas of settlement. As a result, much of the Samar-kand, Andijan, Namangan, and Fergana areas, which were inhabited by Kyrgyz people for a long time, came under the borders of Uzbekistan. Soviet rule did not pay attention to the appeals of Kyrgyz to rightly determine the boundaries and transfer land, which was inhabited by the Kyrgyz, to the new nation under the name of the Kyrgyz.

Thus, part of Kyrgyz people fell under the jurisdiction of the new Republic of Uzbekistan. Currently, Kyrgyz people live in many regions of Uzbekistan. There are large concentrations of Kyrgyz in Andijan, Namangan, Ferghana, Jizzakh, Kokand, Tashkent, Samarkand, and Syrdarya regions. As a rule, Kyrgyz villages are located in mountainous terrain and have Kyrgyz names.

According to recent reports, Uzbekistan is home for about one hundred seventy-five thousand Kyrgyz people. More than 40 Kyrgyz schools operate there and textbooks for them are issued in Kyrgyz. After the proclamation of independence, the two neighboring nations signed a treaty of eternal friendship and have close relationships today. Kyrgyz people of Uzbekistan are known for their industriousness. They contribute to the culture and economy of a country in which they live.
Kyrgyz have long inhabited the canyons and valleys of the sky-high Pamirs Mountains and today the southern borders of Kyrgyzstan pass through them. There are different versions of legends about the appearance of Kyrgyz in the Pamirs. According to one of them, the Kyrgyz moved to the Pamirs from Ala-Too and coexisted with Tajiks and had a leader Kyrgyz byi Tegin-Ata. Subsequently the area inhabited by Kyrgyz settlers became known as Kara-Tegin.

According to another legend, byi Kara brought the Kyrgyz to the Pamirs and the land became known as Kara-Tegin on behalf of the byi and his wife Tegin. Historical sources mention that in 1635-1636, about twelve thousand Kyrgyz families, who lived in the vicinity of Kara-Ko-rum and Kerulen, moved to Hissar through Kara-Tegin.

The next stage of resettlement of Kyrgyz people to the Pamirs was associated with the Oirot expansion. Under the pressure of Oirot, about one hundred thousand Kyrgyz families migrated first to Kara-Tegin and then to the areas subordinated to Bukhara Khanate -Hissar, Kulyab, and Pamir, and up to northern India and Kashgar. After the defeat of Kal-maks, many refugees returned to Kyrgyz Tenir Too, but some groups apparently stayed in these regions. In the 19th century, the Kokand Khanate, the Emir of Bukhara, and the akim (mayor) of the Afghan Pamirs region divided the Pamirs among themselves; its population was formally divided into three parts.

To consolidate his power in the Pamirs, the ruler of the Kokand Khanate, Madali Khan, ordered to build Boston-Terek and Tash-Korgon fortresses in 1832. Later they became administrative and commercial centers of this part of holdings. To neutralize the nobility of the Kyrgyz, Kokand rulers granted them different ranks and titles, such as Kushbek, Lashker, Bek, Datka, and Elder. Influential Kyrgyz leaders were appointed to manage the regions. Pamir Kyrgyz, however, did not recognize the authority of the Kokand Khanate. The same thing happened in other domains, which were in the protectorate of Kashgar and Afghanistan.

For years, Sahip Nazar led Pamir Kyrgyz in the struggle for independence. To attract him to his side, the Khan of Kokand gave him the title of Datka. At the same time the Emir of Afghanistan appealed to Sahip Nazar for help. Independent Datka spent summer in the jailoo among inaccessible mountains; with the onset of cold weather he went down to
a remote winter cabin on one of the tributaries of Kuzari. In some years he spent summer in the jailoo of Alai. The witnesses described him as a heroic man who had a very lush beard and as an indomitable fighter for the freedom and people’s interests. All oppressors of the peoples of the Pamirs were afraid of him. After the conquest of this region by Russia, Sahip Nasar was captured and shot as a “thief” in 1890. In fact, he was one of the most outstanding people of his time fighting for the independence.

Thus, at the end of the 19th century the Pamir Kyrgyz were deprived of independence and separated into different states. Clenched by “closed” borders without being able to roam along their traditional routes, the Pamir Kyrgyz suffered great economic and social losses. Periodically escalating the situation in the region exposed them to new troubles and trials.

After the establishment of Soviet rule in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, the Pamir Kyrgyz were divided into Tajik, Afghan, and Alai Kyrgyz. In determining the boundaries between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, some part of the Pamir inhabited by Kyrgyz became part of a Tajik Republic and they became known as the Tajik Kyrgyz. They belonged mainly to the Ichkilik group and consisted of four tribal entities - Teyit, Kesek, Naiman, and Kypchak.

The bases of the economy of Pamir Kyrgyz were yak and sheep breeding. Their horses were bred a little as they poorly tolerated extreme alpine conditions. The meat and milk of yaks were a useful food source, high in caloric value. The Pamir Kyrgyz lived in flat yurts that were wind-resistant. They traded grain and flour for livestock products. Their clothes were mostly made of skin and felt. They had commodity-money relations.

During the Soviet times, the Kyrgyz remaining on the territory of Tajikistan lived in four districts - Jergetal, Murghab, Shaartuz, and Yaal. The Tajik Kyrgyz came from the same clans as native Kyrgyz who lived in Leilek, Chon-Alai, Kadamjay, and Batken regions. According to recent reports, there are more than one hundred six thousand Kyrgyz people in Tajikistan. Their children go to schools where the instruction is in Kyrgyz language and books for them are published in Kyrgyzstan. Some of the graduates of those schools continue education in Universities of the Kyrgyz Republic. In Soviet times, many teachers from Kyrgyzstan worked in Tajikistan.
The civil war which began in Tajikistan in 1990 brought many difficulties to the Kyrgyz living there. Part of the war-affected population was forced to move to Kyrgyzstan. After the cessation of hostilities, some refugees returned back to Tajikistan.

The origin of the majority of Kyrgyz living in Russian Federation goes back to the Yenisei Kyrgyz. The Kyrgyz of the Upper Yenisei who were conquered by Russia in the early 18th century were direct descendants of ancient and medieval Yenisei Kyrgyz. Information about Kyrgyz tribes living there is reflected in Russian historical sources dated back to 1567 and 1583. These sources, in particular, noted that the Yenisei River flowed in the middle of the Kyrgyz possessions, the princes ruled them, and the nearest neighbors of them were the Kalmak (Kalmyk).

According to historical records, about seven thousand Kyrgyz families lived in the region of the Yenisei River in the 17th century. Their main occupation was nomadic livestock. Hunting was an additional activity. The Kyrgyz did not have a centralized state during that period and their union was composed of several clans and divided into two ulus - Altysar and Isar. Later, another ulus - Altyr was formed there and later accumulated the greatest influence over neighboring ethnic groups.

These Kyrgyz conquered several neighboring ethnic groups who paid them the tribute in form of valuable furs (Kyshtym). Later the tributaries were called by the same name (Kyshtym). Power was transmitted by heredity. Over time, uluses were fragmented into small tribal ownerships; their rulers were also considered to be princes. The main authority of Yenisei Kyrgyz was the Kenesh (council), which included all the princes and representatives of Kyshtyms.

At the end of the 17th century, Russia stepped up the policy of conquest of Siberia. Thus, Russian fortresses appeared in places of the future cities Tomsk and Krasnoyarsk, and those Kyrgyz who lived there were driven to the south. Despite these losses, the Kyrgyz still considered the land annexed by Russians as their land and were making sudden raids plundering peasants and burning homes and crops.
The wise and resolute prince Erenek led the struggle of Yenisei Kyrgyz against Russian invaders. In 1678, Erenek raided Krasnoyarsk. Having burnt more than twenty Russian villages, the Kyrgyz captured a large detachment of Tsarist troops. In 1680, a Russian brigade of 1,600 warriors, marched to the Kyrgyz, and were defeated, in a battle led by Erenek. Erenek formally recognized Russian authority. However, gathering troops during the truce; the Kyrgyz inflicted a crushing blow to the Russian army in 1686.

Erenek died in a decisive battle against Mongolians, which took place in 1687. His son Korchun, who also organized several successful raids against the invaders, continued the struggle for independence.

The forces, however, were unequal. The last battle of the Kyrgyz princes with Russians took place in 1700. This time, the Kyrgyz made a foray to Kuznetsk city together with Kara-Kalmaks, but were forced to retreat. In 1701, Russian troops, which were reinforced by the troops of the Cossacks, opposed the Kyrgyz near Krasnoyarsk. In a fierce battle the forces of the Kyrgyz tribes were finally defeated. After the defeat of the Yenisei Kyrgyz, the Tsarist government relocated most of them to the Altai in order to prevent new attacks.

After centuries of cruel warfare against Russian colonization, the Yenisei Kyrgyz left the place where they lived for more than a millennium. While Russian Cossacks occupied Siberia and came to Alaska, for 100 years they were forced to bypass the lands of the Yenisei Kyrgyz and, moreover, perceived them a constant source of threat to Russian rule in Siberia. During the fight with the Russian state, the Yenisei Kyrgyz lost more people than any other Siberian peoples.

Tsarism pursued a tough policy of colonization against the Kyrgyz, they were forced to adopt Christianity and give their children Russian names. As a result, people who for centuries preserved their identity and “Kyrgyz” self-designation gradually assimilated with other oppressed ethnic groups. The isolation of their language and culture led to the decline in people who self-identified as Kyrgyz.

According to some statistics from the last decade, about forty thousand Kyrgyz people lived in Russian Federation. Currently, there are more than five hundred thousand of the Kyrgyz in Russia who are engaged in small and medium-sized enterprises. Some of them live there permanently.
According to the same data, a number of Kyrgyz lived in all former Soviet republics. For example, fifteen thousand lived in Kazakhstan and three thousand in Ukraine (mostly children and grandchildren of the so-called “kulaks” who were forcibly deported from Kyrgyzstan in the 1930s). Another six hundred lived in Belarus; six hundred thirty-four lived in Turkmenistan; and, 200 resided in each of the following states: Moldova, Armenia, Georgia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

The Kyrgyz Republic, having gained independence, gave an opportunity to its citizens, regardless of ethnicity, to immigrate to any country and obtain citizenship. Kyrgyzstan, however, is the support and hope for its sons and daughters living in all parts of the world. The Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic contains a provision that the state consistently defends the interests of its citizens, even those overseas.
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