

# Nomads Negotiating the Establishment of Russian Central Asia: Focusing on the Activities of the Kyrgyz Tribal Chieftains

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## Introduction

From the eighteenth century onwards, Central Asia became increasingly positioned at the imperial borderlands of Russia and China as these two empires expanded. It is well known that their expansion processes were based on the territorial principle. In fact, the strategy of the Russian Empire was to create lines of fortifications [*ukreplennaya liniya*] along the border with the nomads. From the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, these fortified lines advanced southward across the steppe, and swallowed up local nomads including the Kazakhs and Kyrgyz (HORI 1995: 308).<sup>1)</sup>

In these absorbed areas, the Russian government reorganized the nomads according to the territorial principle. In 1867, the Governor-Generalship of Turkestan was established, thus marking the starting point of Russian rule in Central Asia. Based on the Temporary Statute for the Administration of the *oblasts* of Semirech'e [*Zheti-su*] and Sir-Darya, which was instituted in the same year, the Russian government established administrative divisions in Turkestan consisting of *oblasts*, *uyezds*, and *volosts*, the same administrative divisions used in Russia proper. *Volosts* were comprised of a number of *aul*, the name given to a group of nomadic dwelling units, individually called *kibitka*. The aim behind this division was to dissolve the "tribal principle" [*rodovoe nachalo*]. In place of traditional tribal chieftains, *volost* administrators [*volostnoi upravitel'*], chosen by public elections, would administer as local civil servants at the grass-roots level of colonial rule (PROEKT... 1867: 129).

Although a large number of studies have been made on the Russian military expansion process and the establishment of the Russian rule itself (DZHAMGERCHINOV 1959; PIERCE 1960; MACKENZIE 1967; BROWER

2003), little attention has been given to the movements and activities of the nomads during the period. With a particular focus on Kyrgyz tribal chieftains, known as *manap*, this thesis aims to shed light on the activity of nomads during the military expansion of Russia, as well as on the process of establishing a Russian rule in the region.

The Kyrgyz nomads' response to the advance of the Russian Empire has been evaluated by the concepts of resistance and subordination. In 1867, on the night before the establishment of the Governor-Generalship, a newspaper circulating in central Russia, called *The Voice* [*Golos*], introduced the Kyrgyz nomads as “belligerent [*voinstvennyi*], freedom-loving barbarians, who stubbornly resist the introduction of a new order” (GOLOS 1867). On the other hand, the role of the *manaps* throughout this series of processes has been evaluated negatively in preceding studies, which have emphasized the effectiveness of the Temporary Statute of 1867 (ISTORIYA... 1986; SAPARALIEV 2004). Such evaluation continued in the Soviet era, during which the *manaps* were condemned as “class enemies.” However, a reappraisal of the *manaps* began following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Particularly striking are the hero-centered historic accounts praising individual *manaps* as great men of the nation and the state (ÖMÜRBEKOV 2003; OSMONOV 2003). However, such accounts are still problematic, as these “great men” end up being mixed into the framework of nationalism, and there has never been any proper investigation of the role they played in the context of Russian rule. The accounts only go so far as to honor them, in a rather naive fashion, as great men of the nation and the state.

However, in recent years, this kind of research trend has been re-examined. Based on careful examinations of archival documents, a new type of research has been shedding light on the mutual negotiation between the Russian Empire and the local forces on the imperial borderlands (BROWER and LAZZERINI 1997; MARTIN 2001). In the light of this trend, this thesis conducts a careful examination of official documents stored in the archives of Central Asia (TsGA RK, TsGA RUz) in order to examine the activity of the *manaps* during the establishment of Russian rule.

## 1. Kyrgyz Move Eastward Following the Collapse of the Junghar Empire

The period in the history of Kyrgyz nomads leading up to their mid-nineteenth century annexation by the Russian Empire is referred to as

the “fighting period” [*jookerchilik zaman*] (TALIP MOLDO 1993: 525). An individual called Sh.V. wrote an article about this period entitled *On the Kyrgyz* [*Qirghizlar tūghrūsında*], which appeared in 1911 in the Tatar journal *Shūrā*. The following is an extract:

The Kyrgyz people were unable to lead peaceful lives and could not be with women and children in their homes. The *manaqs* herded the people about like sheep. Sometimes the Kyrgyz fought the Qalmaqs [or Junghar], sometimes they fought the Kazakhs, and at other times they fought among themselves. The victors would seize all property from the defeated and would take the wives and children of the defeated with them. The defeated would then waste no time in visiting retribution on their enemies. Thus, there was perpetual “fighting” (Sh.V. 1911: 104).

The Kyrgyz were often in a bellicose state of affairs, thus warranting the “fighting” description, and indeed were famous for their “belligerence” [*voinstvennost*]. However, it must be noted that this “belligerence” is not so much their natural character, as a reflection of the situation following the collapse of the Junghar Empire. The situation of the Kyrgyz from the mid-eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century can be summarized as follows (see **Map 1**).



The Junghar, who from the seventeenth century to the eighteenth century built a nomadic empire centered on the Ili region, were destroyed as a result of the Qing Dynasty's conquest of Eastern Turkestan. The Kazakhs and Kyrgyz, who had fled to the periphery of the Ferghana Valley to escape the Junghar forces, then migrated to Semirech'e, including the Ili basin, in search of pastureland (BARTOL'D 1963: 527; SAGUCHI 1986: 375–382). This transition is described by Chokan Valikhanov, a Kazakh who was enlisted in the Russian army, who says: "When Galdan Tsering died [in 1745], the Kyrgyz took advantage of the discord within the Khong Tayiji regime and began migrating from Andijan towards their present pastures in Chu and Issiq-köl. The Kyrgyz penetrated into the Ili basin from the south, and the Kazakhs penetrated there from the north" (VALIKHANOV 1985: 77).

Much has recently come to light about the friction between the Kazakhs and the Kyrgyz during this eastward migration, as both peoples sought to secure pastureland. In the fighting that broke out in 1770, the Kyrgyz suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the Kazakhs, who were led by the khan of the Middle Horde, Abilay. After the fighting was over, both sides agreed upon a peace accord. Under this agreement, the Kyrgyz ceded the Ili basin to Abilay, the Kazakhs were given rule over the lands from the Ili river to "the mountain range [of Künggöy Ala-too]," and the Kyrgyz were given rule over the lands from "the lake [Issiq-köl]" to Chu River (ANDREEV 1998: 51–52; VALIKHANOV 1985: 77–79).

In addition to the Kazakhs, the Kyrgyz also had relations with the Qing Dynasty during this period. Taking advantage of the collapse of the Junghar regime, the Kazakh leader Abilay pledged his allegiance to the Qing Dynasty. The Qianlong Emperor then issued an imperial edict urging the Kyrgyz to follow suit. Upon receiving the imperial edict, the tribal leaders of the Kyrgyz also pledged their allegiance. However, at the end of the eighteenth century, the Qing Dynasty's influence in the region was waning, and it gradually withdrew from the periphery of Tian Shan during the early to mid-nineteenth century (KUZNETSOV 1983: 46; ONUMA 2001: 67–68).

In place of the Qing Dynasty, the Khanate of Kokand expanded its territory across the Kazakh Steppe and Semirhech'e. From the late eighteenth to early nineteenth century, the Khanate gained control over Kyrgyz and Kazakhs who roamed the land area from Ferghana to Semirhech'e (PLOSIKH 1977: 88–97, 102). In 1825, it built fortresses in Pishpek and Tokmak, and in 1832, it built a fortress in Kurtka (BEISEMBIEV 1987: 20).

The ideal nomadic chieftain during the “fighting period” was a courageous military leader. As *On the Kyrgyz* points out, “those who displayed heroic qualities during the ‘fighting’ and who could spur the people on were given the title *baatir*” (SH.V. 1911: 104). Indeed many of the *manaps* who were active in this period held this honorary title of *baatir*.<sup>2)</sup>

As a proof of courage, an act called *barimta* was considered to be important (MARTIN 2001: 140–155). In Kyrgyz and Kazakh society, *barimta* referred to a retributive act. Specifically, it meant raiding and pillaging the enemy. A great many insights into this practice can be found in the autobiography of Shabdan Jantay Uulu (1840–1912), a Kyrgyz who later became a *manap* of the Saribaghish tribe. In 1885, this autobiography was dictated by Shabdan and written down by N.A. Aristov, a military official who served in the government of Semirech’e *oblast*. In this extract, Shabdan recollects the conditions before the arrival of Russian rule.

In those times, the main matter of interest to the Kyrgyz and Kazakhs was raiding and pillaging. This is what all the men did in order to achieve renown, even if they were men of influence or wealth. In order to create a name for myself among the Kyrgyz, I started participating in raids. In the beginning, I experienced many failures, but I did not give up. In the end, I was not only influential among the Tinay [a branch of the Saribaghish tribe], who chose me to be their raid leader, but I also gained influence among other tribes of the Kyrgyz and Kazakhs (ARISTOV 2001: 512).

The “raiding and pillaging” mentioned here by Shabdan refers to *barimta*, and this extract reveals that *barimta* was the key to whether or not a chieftain could wield influence in nomadic society. Even if one was from a family of high standing, this would by no means be enough to wield influence—whichever one was, one had to prove one’s bravery.

In addition, the presence of the *baatirs* had a considerable influence upon the formation of Kyrgyz society. According to a Russian colonial official, who interviewed Kyrgyz elders [*kariya*] at the beginning of the twentieth century, the elders said, “The *baatirs*, who excelled over and above those around them through their own talents, would be surrounded by life-guards [*yigits*<sup>3)</sup>]. The *baatirs* fought together with the *yigits* when waging *barimta* and defending their fellow tribesmen, and thereby achieved renown” (SOKOLOV 1910). It should thus be noted that the *yigit* units, which were centered on *baatirs*, provided the driving force in Kyrgyz soci-

ety. It was the Kyrgyz *baatırs*, surrounded with the *yigit* units and moving eastward for new pasturelands, that the Russian army encountered in the imperial borderlands of southern Semirech'e, or on the north side of the Tian Shan Mountains.

## 2. Activities of the *Manaps* in the Face of the Military Advances of Russia

In the Kazakh steppe, the Russian government strengthened its control over the Kazakhs. In 1822, the Russian government abandoned the khan system and dissolved the Kazakh Khanate. Consequently, a Kazakh leader named Kenesari sparked a revolt, intent on restoring the khan system. In the late 1840s, Kenesari launched attacks against the Kazakhs of the Senior Horde [*Uli Zhuz*] as well as against the Kyrgyz. The Revolt of Kenesari, which engulfed the Kazakh steppe and the surrounding regions, provided the catalyst for direct negotiations between the Kyrgyz and the Russian government. Faced with the task of subjugating the revolt, in October 1846 the Russian government in Western Siberia set up partnerships with the Kyrgyz *manaps-baatırs*: Borombay of the Bugu tribe, Ormon and Jantay [father of Shabdan] of the Saribaghish tribe, and Janggarach of the Solto tribe, and these alliances led to negotiations (NATSIONAL'NO... 1996: 456–457). In 1847, Kenesari was assassinated by a Kyrgyz under the leadership of Jantay of the Saribaghish tribe, and the revolt was thereafter put down.

The subjugation of the Kenesari Revolt made it clear that the Russian Empire and the Khanates of Central Asia were in a state of direct confrontation. It also became apparent around this time that the advance of Russia into Central Asia was taking place along two strategic routes (DZHAMGERCHINOV 1959: 132). The first route was the “Sir-Darya line of fortifications,” which ran from the Aral Sea along the Sir-Darya River. The second route was the “Siberian line of fortifications,” which ran southward from western Siberia through Semirech'e all the way to the Khanate of Kokand. The foremost section of the Siberian line was located in the region running from the Chu River to the Tian Shan mountain range. This was also the area where the Kyrgyz nomads roamed.

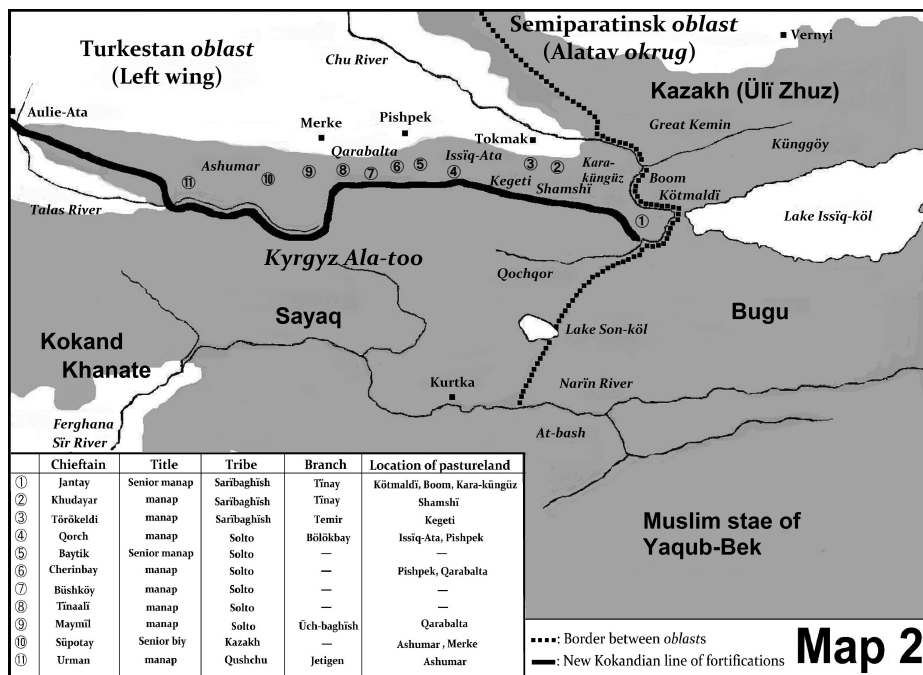
In 1864, the Siberian line of fortifications and the Sir-Darya line of fortifications were reorganized into the “New Kokandian line of fortifications” [*Novaya Kokandskaya liniya*] (DZHAMGERCHINOV 1959: 294). In 1865, the conquered lands to the north of the line were incorporated into

the Turkestan *oblast* under the command of the Governor-Generalship of Orenburg. The region lying across the Chu River, where the Kyrgyz nomads roamed, was incorporated into the “left wing” [*levyi flang*] of the Turkestan *oblast*, under the command of Commandant Medinskii.

A major reason for this rapid administrative reorganization was the sudden rise to power of Yaqub Beg in Chinese controlled Eastern Turkestan, which was far away from the Tian Shan mountain range. Because of the growing tension on the imperial borderlands, the establishment of a military defense network became a matter of great urgency. For this reason, the Russian government first amalgamated the *manaps*, together with the tribes and their subdivisions they ruled, under the command of the Commandant Medinskii based on Article 31 of the “Temporary Statute for the Administration of the *oblast* of Turkestan” (POLNOE... 1867: 880). The Russian government also appointed one senior *manap* [*starshii manap*; *agha manap*] from among the *manaps* of each tribe: Jantay was appointed senior *manap* of the Saribaghish tribe, Baytik was appointed senior *manap* of the Solto tribe, and Sergozī was appointed senior *manap* of the Qushchu tribe. Valikhanov claims that the *manaps* originally “wielded influence in equal measure and could act independently of each other” (VALIKHANOV 1985: 83). If this is an accurate portrayal, then the Russian government must have instituted hegemonic ruler over all the tribes in an attempt to create a centralized authority that could command them. For this reason, there were cases where *manaps* who threatened to disrupt such a hierarchy were discharged and exterminated. In fact, a *manap* named Maymīl of the Üch-baghish branch of the Solto tribe attempted to flee into Chinese territory, but was captured by Baytik acting under Medinskii’s orders, and then executed (SOLTONOEV 2003: 381–382).

The cardinal issue in the strengthening of the military defense network was, as demonstrated in the Maymīl affair, the matter of preventing Kyrgyz from fleeing. The Russian government therefore allocated pastureland to each *manap*. **Map 2** presents a summary of the locations of the allocated pastureland, based on a report sent from Medinskii to the *oblast* Military Governor in March 1865 (TsGA RUz. f.I-336.op.1. d.19.l.1-3ob., 8–10ob.). It reveals that the *manaps* were officially allocated pastureland along the Kyrgyz Ala-too mountain range running east to west from Köt-maldī, on the western tip of Lake Issiq-köl, all the way to Ashumar in the Talas River basin.

At the end of the nineteenth century, a Russian military official claimed that this policy was a ratification of the existing *manap* pasture-



lands (TALYZIN 1898: 38). However, the redeployments that took place around the new Kokandian line of fortifications were carried out in a strategic manner. This was because the area was located close to the Russian foothold of Vernyi, or Almatı, and thus was critical to military defense. Specifically, Jantay baatır, the “most trustworthy” [*samyi nadezhnyi*] senior *manap*, was deployed in the area from Kötmaldı and Boom Ravine to Kara-küngüz, and his subordinate Khudayar baatır was deployed in the area around Shamshı. Thus, a system was put in place in which “Jantay, by keeping watch over both the Boom and Shamshı roads, prevents the Sarıbaghish tribe from fleeing, and reports immediately on any military advances by the Kokand” (TsGA RUz. f.I-336.op.1. d.19.1.2–3.). Measures were taken to prevent the escape of Törökeldi baatır, a *manap* of the Temir branch of the Sarıbaghish tribe. The Russian government had assessed him as “not being all that trustworthy [compared to Jantay]” [*me-nee blagonadezhnyi*]. Törökeldi was deployed in Kegeti in the western part of Shamshı to be kept under the watch of Jantay and Khudayar (Ibid. 1.2ob.). Thus, in order to strengthen the military defense network, the *manaps* were incorporated into the military command structure at a grass-



roots level, and were reorganized according to the territorial principle to some extent.

So how did the *manaps* respond when Russia's military expansion reached this region? As we noted, the subjugation of the Kenesari Revolt brought about a more direct confrontation between the Khanate of Kokand and the Russian Empire, whose territories included the north-east part of the Semirech'e *oblast* where the Kazakhs of the Senior Horde lived. The Kyrgyz then found themselves sandwiched between these two powers. Faced with such conditions, the *manaps*, seeking to expand their pastureland, quickly advanced their eastward migration. In 1851, Ormon, Jantay, and Janggharach sent their subordinates to the Ili basin to reconnoiter the area (TsGA RK. f.3.op.1. d.3.l.19–20). The following year, Ormon sent a letter to Tsar Nicholas I requesting permission to migrate to the left bank of the Ili River (KYRGYZSTAN... 1998: 151–153; ARISTOV 2001: 489). In his letter, while emphasizing his meritorious conduct in the subjugation of the Kenesari Revolt, Ormon requested permission to migrate to the left bank of the Ili River, which had become vacant because both the Alban and Dulat Kazakh tribes of the Senior Horde had “fled to the Qïpchaqs.” “The Qïpchaqs” represented the power of the Khanate of Kokand, so the reference here is highly significant. Although Ormon did not end up receiving permission for migration (KAZAKHSKO... 1964: 388–390), his letter does show how he attempted to get his request accepted by exploiting the threat posed by the Khanate of Kokand, which lay behind the Kyrgyz.<sup>4)</sup>

This kind of “bargaining” strategy also can be seen in the attitude of Jantay baatir. On the one hand, and as mentioned above, Jantay baatir collaborated with Russia's advance. Indeed, he cooperated fully in the construction of the Russian fortifications saying, “As a step towards a closer relationship with you, I humbly present my son Manapbay to the Russian officers” (KAMAL 1947: 6ob.). Furthermore, in January 1864, when Jantay received a letter from Alimqul, the general of the Khanate of Kokand, requesting that he pledge his allegiance to the khanate, Jantay handed the letter over to the Russian military commander Kolpakovskii (SEREBRENNIKOV 1914: 61–63). As a result, the Russian side praised Jantay for being “more loyal.” However, on the other hand, the following letter addressed to Kolpakovskii on December 1863 suggests that Jantay may have had an ulterior motive.

I have received intelligence that the Qïpchaqs came to [the fort of] Kurtka, carried out repairs, and left 100 men in the area. (...) In Aulie-Ata, the Qïpchaqs came to repair the fort of Merke, (...) and they left 40 men in the area to maintain the fort. Wishing to show their loyalty, the *manap*, Janggharach, went to the Qïpchaqs. (...) The *manap* named Maymïl and the *manap* named Tinali left for the Khanate of Kokand. (...) Therefore, the Solto tribe, who roam on this side of the Chu River (the right bank), harbor malice and are trying to deceive you. The Qïpchaqs have extended their invitation to the Kyrgyz of the Sarïbaghïsh tribe, but fearing trouble, I decided to migrate to Kïnggöy. If you were to grant me ownership of Kemin, I will not roam in Kïnggöy at all (TsGA RK. f.3.op.1. d.167.l.100–100ob.).

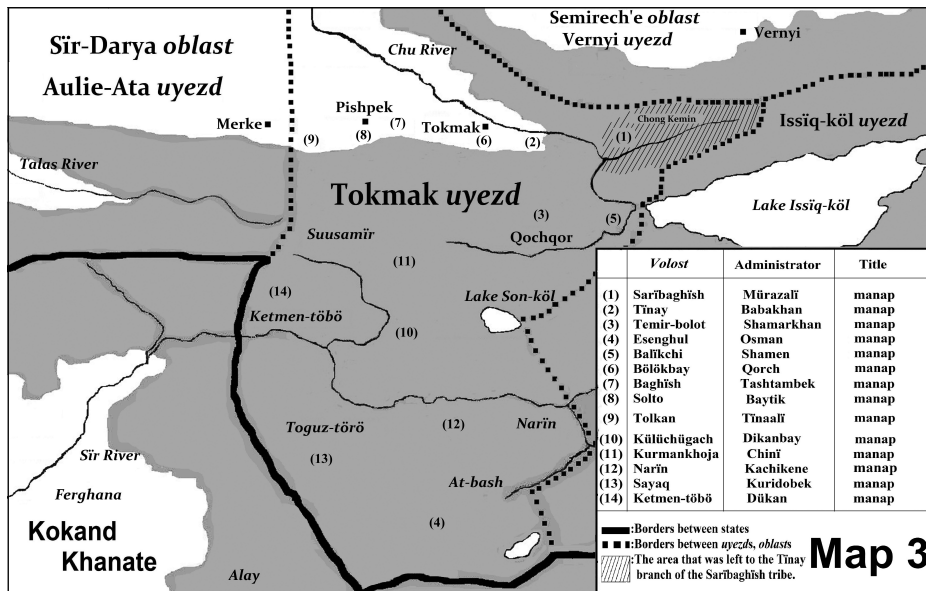
What this passage makes clear is that Jantay baatïr attempted to secure pastureland in Kemin by dangling the presence of the surrounding powers including not only the Khanate of Kokand, but also the Bugu tribe, who roamed around Kïnggöy. Migration to Kïnggöy would inevitably cause a large dispute between the Bugu and Sarïbaghïsh tribes, which would consequently lead to the destabilization of the regional order.

### 3. Activities of the *Manaps* in Relation to the Establishment of the Governor-Generalship of Turkestan

#### (1) *Manaps* avoid taking up the position of *volost* administrator

On October 27, 1867, the first Governor-General of Turkestan, Konstantin von Kaufman issued a command to the first *oblast* Military Governor [*Voennyi Gubernator*], General Kolpakovskii, to set up a committee for reorganization in each *uyezd* (TsGA RK. f.44.op.1. d.28959.l.86–88.) In the winter seasons, the committee members were assigned to go to the various areas of the *uyezd*, reorganize the nomads into *volosts* according to the deployment of winter quarters, and elect *volost* administrators.

Under the leadership of the first commander of Tokmak *uyezd*, Major Zagryazhskii, the Tokmak Committee for Reorganization established *volosts* from January to July 1868. They began with the western part of the Chu plains, followed by Qochqor, and then the inner part of the Tian Shan mountain range. **Map 3** summarizes of the general results of this undertaking in maps and charts, which the author has drawn up based on reports sent by committee members to the Military Governor.



In fourteen of the *volosts* established in Tokmak *uyezd*, every single one of the *volost* administrators elected was a *manap*. In relation to this, it is also worth noting that with the exception of two of the fourteen *volosts* (Narın and Ketmen-töbö), the *volosts* were not named after the place they were located in, but were named after the tribal group that the *manaps* headed. Some years later, a Russian colonial officer argued that, “the autocratic rule of the powerful class [, or the *manaps*] was eradicated in one fell swoop by the introduction of an electoral system and the non-approval of privileged status” (TALYZIN 1898: 39). However, the actual situation was apparently very different. Rather than eliminating the *manaps*, the Russian government actively tried to incorporate them into the *volost* system. In other words, the Russian government managed to “bureaucratize” the traditional chieftains. The *uyezd* commander aptly described the situation as follows: “The Kara-Kirgiz [Kyrgyz] are entirely under the thumb of their chieftains. Therefore, to control the populace, you must control the chieftains” (ZAGRYAZHSHKII 1874).

So how did the *manaps* respond to being incorporated into the *volost* system? The *manaps* generally responded in two ways. First, there were *manaps* who eagerly took up the position of *volost* administrator. With regards to these *manaps*, the *uyezd* commander some years later remarked that “those chieftains who did not wield all that much influence but had

a strong desire for fame appointed themselves as *volost* administrators” (Ibid). Such a tendency was particularly noticeable in the case of Baytik of the Solto tribe. The *uyezd* commander has the following to say about the circumstances of Baytik’s election as *volost* administrator: “There was the fear that if the *baatir* [, or Baytik], well known for his brigandage, had not been elected as *volost* administrator (...) he may have attacked the voters. It was for this reason that he was elected as *volost* administrator” (TsGA RK. f.44.op.1. d.29253.1.11.).

As for the other type of *manap*, the *uyezd* commander had the following to say: “The powerful chieftains did not become *volost* administrator themselves, but bade second-rate men take the post. They preferred to work behind the scenes” (ZAGRYAZHSKII 1871). Such a stance was shown by Shabdan and other *manaps* of the Tinay branch of the Saribaghish tribe, and also by Törökeldi of the Temir branch. Within the Tinay branch, Tinay *volost* and Saribaghish *volost* were set up. The *manap* elected as *volost* administrator of Tinay *volost* was Babakhan. He was appraised by the *uyezd* commander as being “a man of outstanding moral scruples, but little in the way of brains.” The *manap* elected as *volost* administrator of Saribaghish *volost* was Mürazali. He was a son of Jantay, but according to the *uyezd* commander: “He is not a very smart man, and he does not have the favor of the people.” The *uyezd* commander points out the influence of Mürazali’s younger brother Shabdan in his election as *volost* administrator.

Shabdan (...) has considerable influence over the people. The people wanted to elect Shabdan as *volost* administrator, but Shabdan withdrew and ceded the office to his older brother [, or Mürazali] (TsGA RK. f.44.op.1. d.28959. 1.517.).

This kind of phenomenon can be seen in the Temir branch led by Törökeldi, in which Temir-bolot *volost* was set up; it was Törökeldi’s son Sharmkhan who was elected as *volost* administrator. Törökeldi is said to have told the *uyezd* commander that “he would sit on Jantay’s seat of power (...) In other words, he would rule over the entire Saribaghish tribe (...) That was why he gave up the position of *volost* administrator” (Ibid. 1.517ob.). It can be argued that behind Törökeldi’s apparently willful resignation from the position of *volost* administrator was the recognition that taking up the post of *volost* administrator—that is serving as a local civil servant at the grass-roots level of Russia’s colonial administration—would entail the loss

of the authority and freedom of action that he had maintained in the past as a traditional tribal chieftain, all the more because a *volost* administrator must prevent the emergence of *barimta*, according to Article 109 of the Temporary Statute of 1867 (MATERIALY... 1960: 291).

## (2) *Barimta* or “military service”

Indeed, *barimta* was a matter of great concern to the *manaps*. On the one hand, the Temporary Statute of 1867 classed *barimta* as ultimately a tribal custom, and stated that it should be dealt with not by the magistrates’ courts of the Russian Empire, but rather by the *Bii* courts, which were based on nomadic customary law (Ibid). On the other hand, in the actual sites of colonial rule, the practice of *barimta* did become suppressed on the basis that it would aggravate the relationship between different Kyrgyz tribes and the relationship between the Kyrgyz and the Kazakhs, and that it may threaten the stability of order in the region. In his autobiography, Shabdan had the following to say with regards to this.

I led forty *yigits* (...) and launched a raid on the Qalmaqs living in (...) Tekes Valley. The raid was a success, and we stole a great many horses, but the age of such exploits was already a thing of the past. Following Kolpakovskii’s orders, we had to return the livestock to the Qalmaqs (ARISTOV 2001: 513).

This extract reveals that Kolpakovskii took steps to suppress *barimta*. The *uyezd* commander also took a hard line against the practice. For example, he requested the Military Governor to exile Baytik on the basis that “It is not possible to correct the habits of thirty long years of violence and brigandage learnt during his life as *manap* of the tribe” (TsGA RK. f.44.op.1. d.29253.1.11.). A *manap* of the Sayaq tribe called Medet was exiled to Siberia after his arrest, for the reason that “He steals and engages in *barimta*. There is no hope of rehabilitation for such an immoral man” (Ibid. d.44657.1.1, 1ob., 18, 20).

As pointed out in Section 1, because *barimta* was the source of a *manap*’s authority, it should be no surprise that there were *manap* who resented Russia’s suppression of this practice. An example of one such *manap* was Törökeldi. He was a *baatir* who had won a name for himself as an expert in *barimta*. According to ‘Uthmān ‘Alī Sīdikov, “Many of the courageous deeds [*baatirliq*] of Törökeldi were of a superhuman nature”

(SĪDĪKOV 1914: 44). Törökeldi's fame was also known by the Russians, as suggested by the special mention of Törökeldi's "adventurous spirit and courage" [*predprimchivost', khrabrost'*] in a survey carried out among the Kyrgyz in the 1850s (SEMENOV-TYAN-SHANSKII 1958: 185). However, Törökeldi became resentful of the Russian authorities when they started suppressing *barimta*. The *uyezd* commander had the following to say about him in an 1868 report.

The Russian government cracked down on *barimta*. It was the very source of Törökeldi's wealth and influence. It is for this reason that Törökeldi refused to obey us and soon started harboring ill feeling toward us (TsGA RK. f.44.op.1. d.28959.1.517ob.-518.).

The *uyezd* commander goes on to state that Törökeldi, together with Baytik, was considering launching an attack on Tokmak, which was a foothold for Russia's advance (Ibid). According to Belek Soltonoev, who at the beginning of the twentieth century wrote the historical work *The History of Red Kyrgyz* [*Kizil Kirgiz Tarikhī*] based on ethnographic documents that he gathered himself, Törökeldi apparently died in 1868 "saying that he was destroyed by Russia" (SOLTONOEV 1993: 93). As the example of Törökeldi shows, for *baatirs*, the curbing of *barimta* was a matter of life and death, as it called into question their very existence.

Whereas Törökeldi was destroyed after clashing directly with Russia's crackdown on *barimta*, Shabdan dealt with the situation in a flexible and tactful manner. With regard to Shabdan's conflict with the Kazakhs over pastureland, the *uyezd* commander said the following: "Being already well-versed in Russian law, Shabdan knew better than to rally his tribesman to engage in *barimta* in the hope of destroying his Kazakh enemies. Instead, he allowed himself to take the blows from his enemies and, knowing that Russian law was on his side, did not call out to anyone for aid" (TsGA RK. f.44.op.1. d.31764.1.1-1ob.).

While Shabdan took great care to avoid committing *barimta*, he collaborated with Russia's conquest activities. In 1868, he pursued and captured Osman Tayryak, a *manap* who resented Russian rule and had started a revolt, and in 1876, when Russia conquered the Khanate of Kokand, Shabdan took part in the expedition to the Ferghana region. During the expedition, it is said that Shabdan joined the forces of General Skobelev, proclaiming, "I have not come to commit *barimta*, but to offer my service [*prishel sluzhit', a ne barantobat'*]" (SHABDAN... 1999: 54).

However, it would be rash to assume, based purely on the above example, that Shabdan completely abandoned *barimta*. Indeed the “military service” [*voennyie uslugi*] that Shabdan refers to involved the same kinds of activities as *barimta*. Shabdan was still pursuing the same belligerent activity he had incessantly pursued as a chieftain, but he had merely changed its name from “*barimta*” to “military service.” In fact, until the late 1870s, Shabdan was participating as a regular member of the military expedition of the Russian Empire by leading a *yigit* unit. This is stated in Shabdan’s aforementioned autobiography as follows: “Without the assistance of the *yigits*, the conquest of the Kokand region would not have been possible” (ARISTOV 2001: 514). In other words, it can be claimed that Shabdan was carrying out Russian-sanctioned “*barimta*” for the cause of “military service.”

It can thus be argued that Shabdan fulfilled the role of a military commander who was acceptable to both the Russian Empire and the Kyrgyz. Accordingly, in 1883 Shabdan attended the coronation of Alexander III as the indigenous representative of Semirech’e *oblast*, and was conferred the rank of “military officer” [*voiskovoi starshina*] (SHABDAN... 1999: 61) all the while keeping his appearance among Kyrgyz society as a *baatir* in command of a *yigit* unit.

### **(3) The *manaps* of the Tinay branch, whose activities transcend the *volost* framework**

As discussed in the previous section, the Russian government actively appointed the *manaps* of the Tinay branch, such as Shabdan. Other *manaps* appointed to the position of “Junior assistant [*Mladshii pomoshnik*] for *uyezd* commander” included Sooronbay, the son of Khudayar, and Manapbay, the older brother of Shabdan (TsGA RK. f.44.op.1. d.28959.1.517). Bayake, who had waited upon Shabdan as a *yigit* since a young age, served concurrently as the *uyezd* commander’s *yigit*. Thus, the *uyezd* commander continued throughout the left wing period to promote the *manaps* of the Tinay branch, whom he appraised as “quick-witted” [*lovkii*] and “loyal and prudent when it comes to Russia’s interests” (Ibid. d.29172.1.38ob.). These *manaps* not only fought as volunteer soldiers, but also took on the role of mediators as the Russian government attempted to establish lines of communication with the Kyrgyz inside and outside the Tokmak *uyezd*. The following presents an outline of these efforts.

The *manaps* of the Tinay branch served as intermediaries during ne-

negotiations between Ümötaali [son and successor of Ormon] and the Russian government. In the early 1860's, Ümötaali resented Russia's advance and migrated deep into the mountains of Tian Shan. He is known to have continued to resist the Russian military until the late 1860s by, for example, attacking an expeditionary force dispatched to the region (TALYZIN 1898: 35–36). Finally, he gave up these resistance and was permitted to render service to Russia in 1867. He was solely incorporated into Issiq-köl *uyezd*, without being allocated to a specific *volost*. The Russian government placed him under the guardianship of the *manaps* of the Tinay branch, who were deemed trustworthy. Jantay's sons, Manapbay and Shabdan, played a substantial role in the negotiations between Ümötaali and the Russian government as well as in the procurement and payment of compensation. In 1871, there was heightened tension between Russia and the Yaqub Beg regime due to events such as the occupation of the Ili region by the Russian Army led by Kolpakovskii. During this time, there was a rumor that Ümötaali was trying to flee to Kashghar. However, based on the pretext that the Tinay were trustworthy, the *uyezd* commander dismissed the rumor saying “Ümötaali has applied to roam the land of Kemin with Manapbay, so it is inconceivable that he would flee” (TsGA RUz. f.I-1.op.1. d.4144.1.5–5ob.).

In addition, Osman Tayryak's younger brother Törökhan was arrested on suspicion of participating in a raid and detained in Tokmak. However, in 1869, it was judged that he was not involved in the raid, the Russian government organized for Törökhan's family to migrate from the mountains of Tian Shan to the Chu plain and to be incorporated, together with Törökhan, into Saribaghish *volost* (TsGA RK. f.44.op.1. d.43575.1.30). Similarly, Kurmankhoja, a *manap* of the Sayaq tribe who had also been arrested on suspicion of taking part in the same raid, was welcomed into Saribaghish *volost* upon his release (Ibid. d.31884.1.27).

The *manaps* of the Tinay branch also played an important role in the negotiations with the Khanate of Kokand, an undertaking that transcended the framework of the *uyezd*. During the Russian conquest of the Ferghana Valley in 1875, which had previously been ruled by the Khanate of Kokand, Shabdan was dispatched to persuade the Kyrgyz in the area to surrender (Ibid. d.30185.1.300). Kurmanjan Datka, the Kyrgyz leader who served the Khanate of Kokand and who roamed the mountainous Alay Region in the southeastern part of the Ferghana Valley, was persuaded to surrender as a result of Shabdan's efforts (KAMAL 1947: 10).

In this way, while the Russian government managed to “bureaucra-



tize” the traditional chieftains by incorporating the *manaps* into the *volost* system, there was a need for some of the *manaps* to be appointed to positions that transcended the *volost* framework, as it would have been difficult to rule the region only through the *volost* system. Thus, Shabdan and other *manaps* of the Tīnay branch were given a special intermediary role.

At the same time, we must not forget that the *manaps* of the Tīnay branch did not simply and doggedly follow every directive from the Russian government. Rather they used their cooperative relationship with Russia to secure pastureland to their advantage. Specifically, they were granted formal ownership of a tract of Kemin, which was the same stretch of land that Jantay had asked the Russian government for during the previous regime. On November 30, 1867, as part of a directive combining clarifications of instructions from the Governor-General and supplements to the same, the Military Governor gave notice of the amendment along the Issīq-köl-Tokmak *uyezd* border, stating that “The Great [*Bol’shoi*; *Chong*] Kemin Valley is to be left to the Tīnay branch of the Sarībaghīsh tribe” (TsGA RK. f.44.op.1. d.28959.1.39–41) (See **Map 3**). If we take into account the fact that in Kemin area not only the Kyrgyz of Tīnay branch but also the Kyrgyz of other tribes and Kazakhs had roamed traditionally, the *manaps* of the Tīnay branch succeeded in keeping the area for themselves, which is expressed in *The History of Red Kyrgyz*: “Establishing the close tie with Russia, the Kyrgyz of Tīnay branch drove the Esenghul branch of the Sarībaghīsh tribe out of Small Kemin, Great Kemin, and Chu valley” (SOLTNOEV 1993: 92). Here, we must remember that during the previous regime, the Russian government had a policy of allocating the Solto and Sarībaghīsh tribes only the left bank of the Chu River without allowing them to roam grounds on the right bank. In light of this condition, the amendment was the only exception where Russia allowed a tribe ownership of the right bank. For other *manaps*, the establishment of the Governor-Generalship tended to entail a fragmentation of their spheres of influence, but the Tīnay branch successfully used it as an opportunity to expand their pasturelands and consolidate the ownership.

### Conclusion

It is clear that during the establishment of Russian Central Asia, the Russian Empire proceeded to incorporate the local nomads based upon a territorial principle. However, as this thesis reveals, in order for the Russian Empire to absorb Central Asia and subsume the region under its rule,

it required the absolute cooperation of the nomads, including the Kyrgyz. In fact, the Russian Empire did not dissolve the “belligerence” of the Kyrgyz, which was brought into full play through the leadership of the tribal chieftains, in other words, the Kyrgyz’ mobility, networks, and ability to amass information. Rather, the Russian Empire preserved them and utilized them. The Kyrgyz nomads’ response to the advance of the Russian Empire cannot be fully grasped merely by the concepts of subordination and resistance. This thesis has depicted an image of the *manap* proactively “negotiating” with the advance of the Russian Empire. Of course, it was not the case that they “passively collaborated” the Russian Empire all the time. In this context, the *manaps* plotted to secure and expand their pastureland by offering their mobility to the Russian Empire. In conclusion, the incorporation of the Kyrgyz nomads into the Russian Empire was a dynamic process in which the Russian Empire’s military expansion, and the eastward migration of the Kyrgyz nomads, who sought to secure and expand their territories in the land that had become available after the collapse of the Jungghar Empire, were intertwined against a backdrop of the threats posed by surrounding forces.

### Notes

- 1) According to their autonyms they called themselves *Qazaq* and *Qirghiz*. But in this thesis I use *Kazakh* and *Kyrgyz* in accordance with customary practice.
- 2) *Baatir* [*baghatur* (Mongolian); *bahadur* (Turkish, Persian); *batyr* (Kazakh)] is a historical Turco-Mongol honorific title, in origin a term for “hero” or “valiant warrior.” According to a British orientalist Gerard Clauson, *baghatur* was by origin almost certainly a Hunnish proper name. It is probable that the transition from name to noun took place in the period of Mongol Empire (CLAUSON 1972: 313).
- 3) Originally, *yigit* is a Turkic word, which means “a young man, strong or vigorous” (CLAUSON 1972: 911).
- 4) In 1847, when Ormon *baatir* sent a letter to the Russian government in Siberia to press to give a reward for the subjugation of the Kenesari Revolt, he emphasized his relationship with the “Seven *qojas*,” who led the revolt against the Qing government in Eastern Turkestan (TsGA RK. f.374.op.1. d.2920.l.46-46ob.).

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