

# The Modernization Process Of Traditional Kyrgyz Society

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## Abstract

This article discusses the problem of the process of modernization of the Kyrgyz society, it also talks about the fact that the main role in the process of modernization of the Kyrgyz people was played by the fact that the Russian and Kyrgyz people were at different phases of socio-economic development, and at the same time the Russian side in The interaction of both peoples acted as an unconditionally dominant force that dictated the terms of the relationship. The accession of new territories to the Russian Empire meant, in fact, not only their inclusion in the new state, but also the elimination, elimination of any possibility of creating national statehood among the annexed peoples.

**Keywords:** modernization, civil society, value, landmark, meaning of life, civilization, politics, society, morality, degradation.

## 1. Introduction

As it is known, today in the Kyrgyz environment there are components of traditional and modernized society in an unstable, dynamic balance. Moreover, there is a steady growth trend of modernization and innovative culture components (Mosolova, 2008; Klocheva, 2015).

In connection with the traditional Kyrgyz society modernization process (Smutko et al., 2021), attention should be paid to the fact that this process occurred mainly due to external influence or even pressure. For a long historical period, the Kyrgyz have been able, mainly due to their nomadic lifestyle (Aalieva, 2017), to avoid external influence or to reduce it to a minimum. It is due to that Kyrgyz people, who have not been a numerous ethnic group in almost their entire history, managed to preserve their identity, language and a special spiritual and cultural image.

However, when relatively free spaces began to shrink sharply due to the population growth in nearby settled conditions, Kyrgyz began to fall under more intense and virtually permanent influence of the neighboring settled people. Thus, having fallen under the influence of the Kokand Khanate, the Muslimization process is significantly intensified among the Kyrgyz. This histori-

cal period can be conditionally defined as the eastern period associated with modernization of eastern type.

Mentioning about the Eastern modernization, we have in mind quite definite facts and trends. Firstly, in the Kyrgyz environment, the process of transition from polytheistic to monotheistic religion, from traditional beliefs to classical Islam, has noticeably intensified, which, in fact, can be equated to a revolution in the religious worldview and consciousness of the Kyrgyz. Secondly, the Kyrgyz, under the influence of settled part of khanate population, began to switch to a settled or semi-sedentary lifestyle.

Along with these processes, the assimilation process took place in parallel. However, Eastern modernization was, in fact, limited to this. The bottom line is that the settled population of the khanate, as well as its nomadic part, strictly and consistently adhered to traditionalism, which, on the one hand, made it easier for the Kyrgyz to adapt to new living conditions, and on the other hand, it limited the horizon of modernization, introduced it into a certain framework. Now it is difficult to say for sure how it would all end.

However, with the entry of first the northern and then the southern Kyrgyz lands into the Russian

Empire, which managed to annex and completely subjugate the Kokand Khanate, a fundamentally new stage began in the Kyrgyz people history. In fact, it was from that time, as a result of strong external pressure emanating from Russia, that the process of modern modernization of the Kyrgyz traditional society was launched, which continues to this day.

The purpose of this study is to reveal the essence of modernization process of traditional Kyrgyz society.

In fact, for the first time in their long and difficult history, the Kyrgyz people not only faced European civilization by the Russia (which at the time of Kyrgyz territories accession quickly developed its industries, made the transition to capitalism), but also fell into unconditional subordination.

The main role in the Kyrgyz people modernization process was played by the fact that the Russian and Kyrgyz people were at different phases of socio-economic development, and at the same time, the Russian side in the interaction of both peoples acted as an unconditionally dominant force dictating the relationship terms.

The accession of new territories to the Russian Empire meant, in fact, not only their inclusion in the new government, but also the elimination of any possibility in creating national statehood among the annexed peoples.

## 2. Research methods and materials

In this research work, systemic, historical, formal-logical, analogous and abstract methods were used. The migrants who arrived in Kyrgyzstan "offered" a new rhythm of life to the local population. If the entire previous life of Kyrgyz people was subject to natural rhythms, into which it was necessary to integrate, but nothing more, then with the establishment of a new order, time began to acquire a forced character, in the sense that external changes associated with human activity began to occur significantly faster than before.

## 3. Results and discussion

Rapid changes, in one way or another forcing to move away from traditions and the associated habitual lifestyle, were experienced by an individual who represented traditional culture, not only as the world collapse, he understood and was accustomed to, but also of values, guidelines, loss of the life meaning, etc. This is very clearly and convincingly evidenced, in particular, by the works of a whole galaxy of Zamanist poets, the most

prominent of which are usually attributed to Kalygul (1785–1855), Arstanbek (1824–1874) and Moldo Kylych (1866–1917). Some titles of their works as "Zar zaman" ("Age of suffering"), "Tar zaman" ("Age of impoverishment"), "Akyr zaman" ("Age of collapse") speak for themselves. Possessing a pronounced poetic gift and a sharp intuition often found among poets, the temptationists did not exaggerate the changes that were taking place and, in essence, accurately characterized the onset of a new time, which really was a change of eras, which at the level of the subject was perceived precisely as an era of collapse. As it was rightly pointed out by Y.M. Mukasov: "The destruction of the habitual way of life, the decline of the moral foundations of society, they interpreted as a clear sign of the "end of the world". Realizing that the new way of life is not compatible with patriarchal lifestyle, zamanists considered the tribal system to be a social ideal, they perceived decay of patriarchal morality as a sign of society degradation, and the time in which they lived was called as time of grief and sorrow" (Mukasov, 1999). The inclusion of Kyrgyzstan into Russian Empire involved Kyrgyz people in world history in the sense that isolation of Kyrgyz people was over once and for all and it began to develop in line with the main global trends. Thus, a new starting point was practically introduced into the history and future of Kyrgyz people, associated with modernization, transformation of traditional Kyrgyz society into a modern one as well as contradictions related to the transition of Kyrgyz traditional society to the governmental civil society (Bazarkulova et al., 2016). And this starting point was tied to a new coordinate system associated with a global change in the civilizational paradigm (Osmonov, 2008).

If before the Kyrgyz people history and destiny proceeded within or in contact exclusively with Eastern civilizations, which at that time were characterized by a relatively low modernization potential, then with the entry into the European government, its destiny and history began to take place in the new modernization canons system and requirements. The significant military-political and socio-economic superiority of the metropolis represented by Russia over the periphery represented by Kyrgyzstan provided Russia with an opportunity to pursue the policy it needed.

Since the entry of Kyrgyzstan into the Russian Empire, a fundamentally new stage in the Kyrgyz people history was began. In fact, it was from that time, as a result of strong external pressure emanating from Russia, the Kyrgyz traditional society

modernization process was launched, which continues to these days. The main role in the Kyrgyz people modernization process was played by Russian people, and Kyrgyz people were at different phases of socio-economic development, and at the same time, the Russian side in the interaction of both peoples acted as an unconditionally dominant force that dictated relationship terms.

The inclusion of Kyrgyzstan into the Russian Empire, in fact, involved the Kyrgyz people in world history in the sense that the isolation of the Kyrgyz people was over once and for all and it began to develop in line with the main global trends. A new starting point was practically introduced into the Kyrgyz people history and destiny, associated with modernization, the transformation of traditional Kyrgyz society into a modern one (Nurdinova & Dzhanibekova, 2020). And this starting point was tied to a new coordinate system associated with a global change in the civilizational paradigm.

If before that the history of the Kyrgyz people, its fate proceeded within or in contact exclusively with Eastern civilizations, which at that time were characterized by a relatively low modernization potential, then with the entry into the European government, its future and history began to take place in the system of new modernization canons and requirements.

Russia in the 19th century, as it was known, lagged behind in its political and socio-economic development from the leading European powers, where classical capitalism was rapidly transforming into monopoly. However, in Russia at that time there was a rapid growth of cities, capitalist relations developed. And by the end of the 19th century, many elements of civil society were already in place. Economic and other processes typical for the European part of an empire also affected the Kyrgyzstan territory, but in a somewhat specific way. The vast majority of the indigenous population, who continued to engage in cattle breeding, were not directly drawn into the new system of relations (Dzhanibekova, et al., 2021a). Moreover, as a result of the land policy pursued by tsarism in a completely colonial spirit, the indigenous population found itself in a difficult situation in economic and other respects. The uprising of 1916 was a direct consequence of agrarian policy of tsarism. We will not delve into its details, since they are presented in numerous documents and studies, and they are hardly worth repeating.

However, in spite of all the negative consequences of tsarist rule, some positive aspects should also be pointed out. Earlier we already mentioned that the first rather strong blow to the traditional system of relations was inflicted by the new government, which introduced a system of administrative-territorial division instead of the tribal one (Dzhanibekova et al., 2021b). As a result, population of the parish began to form from mixed clans. The management of the region began to be carried out by the local administration, which included only representatives of the newcomer population, with the help of the police and the courts. Organized counties were part of various regions. At the same time, military leadership was entirely entrusted to the colonial administration. All these measures led, in the end, to the fact that among the Kyrgyz clans of tribes, the number of attacks on each other and theft of other people's livestock, cases of blood feuds, seizure of land, etc., sharply decreased.

The February revolution in 1917 led to the king overthrow, stopped the process of eradication and expulsion of Kyrgyz from their ancestral lands. The October Revolution, which took place in the same year, marked the beginning of a completely new stage in the history and destiny of Kyrgyz people, as well as in the destiny of all the former Russian Empire peoples. One of the first legislative acts of the Soviet government was the Declaration of Russian People Rights published on November 2, 1917.

It proclaimed the right of nations to self-determination (Osmonov, 2008). In 1918, at the III All-Russian Congress of Soviets, there was the following fundamental legislative act "Declaration of working and exploited people rights." This document outlined a plan for building a socialist multinational government, which was based on the federalism principles. By decision taken at the congress, the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was created, which in May of the same year was included as an autonomy in the Russian Federation (Osmonov, 2008). The Soviet period in the history of Kyrgyzstan is permeated with many contradictions, including in matters related to the building of civil society.

In the post-Soviet scientific humanitarian thought, the opinion prevails that in the Soviet Union, where a totalitarian government-legal regime was established, there were no economic, political and legal conditions and prerequisites necessary for civil society. According to this opinion, the Soviet political, socio-economic and legal systems, in

principle, excluded any possibility of building a civil society in the country, since they were in direct opposition to the norms and principles of civil society.

Here is how, for example, U.K. Chinaliev, who writes: "In the USSR, initially there could not be a free owner, economically independent from the government" (Chinaliev, 2001). Let us recall in this regard that, in accordance with the classical concept of civil society, an owner independent of the government is a necessary condition for civil society existence, in fact, he is also the central figure in it. Almost all definitions of civil society emphasize independence of citizens from the government, which is possible if there is an appropriate class of average owners. U.K. Chinaliev also draws attention to the absence in the USSR of the necessary political conditions for building a civil society. He writes: "The political sphere was peculiar in the Soviet society, it completely made it impossible to form the political foundations of civil society. The socialist, and in the later formulation, the nationwide government was peculiar. The Soviet government was deprived of its autonomous logic, was completely subordinate to the party and was not divided within itself into separate branches of power. At the same time, the government had a total, all-encompassing character, it subjugated everything and everyone and acted as a kind of monster, separated from society" (Chinaliev, 2001).

In the Soviet Union, as it is known, there were many different public organizations and associations, but they did not have independence that is characteristic of a developed civil society. These organizations and associations, as U.K. Chinaliev, "closed on the sole ruling communist party. Being subordinated to the party and government-controlled, they acted as mechanisms directed against formation of civil society political conditions. They did not unleash the initiative, but, on the contrary, suppressed the political activity of citizens."

It is necessary to sum up to what has been said about conditions of dominance in the ideology imposed from above, there could be no question of pluralism of ideologies as one of the civil society formation conditions. The slightest deviations from the "only true" ideology were severely persecuted. Therefore, there is no need to talk about the emancipation of a person's consciousness, strengthening his self-esteem, etc." (Chinaliev, 2001). The October Revolution in 1917 marked the beginning of a completely new stage in the history and future of the Kyrgyz people, as well as in the

future of all the former Russian Empire peoples. The Soviet period in the Kyrgyzstan history is permeated with many contradictions, including in matters related to the building of civil society (Bazarkulova, 2017).

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## Conclusion

Summing up the above, it should be noted that in Kyrgyzstan during the Soviet period, the economy, science, education, culture, health care, etc. received accelerated development. In a word, everything that makes up the material and spiritual basis of civil society. And it was in this regard that a lot was done in Kyrgyzstan during the Soviet period of history. And at the same time, certain features of the Soviet political and economic system, which are usually considered as negative, played a positive role. The capitalist mode of production, aimed at obtaining maximum profit, would be completely unsuitable for the rapid development of Kyrgyzstan.

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