

In memory of my father
And in dedication to my mother

BILKENT UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

THE NATIONAL POLICY OF THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC
TOWARDS THE RUSSIAN MINORITY AFTER 1991

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses the National Policy of the Kyrgyz Republic towards the Russian minority after 1991. In the first chapter, the Soviet Nationality Policy and History of Settlement of the Russians into Kyrgystan were examined. The central part of the study is the second chapter, which focuses on the National Policy of the new independent state, and Social Organizations of Kyrgyzstan People's Assembly, including Slavic Foundation. Hereby, according to local sources, Kyrgyzstan People's Assembly's function, structure, Congresses; and Slavic Foundation's role and works were analyzed. The last chapter deals with the main problems of the Russians in the Republic such as bilingualism, dual citizenship, and migration.

As a result, this study shows that the national policy of the Kyrgyz Republic towards the Russian minority is rationally positive since the Russians living in Kyrgyzstan have a full right for developing their history, culture, and customs; the status of Russian is an official language in the Republic; and social organizations and Slavonic-Kyrgyz university are established to support the Russian minority in Kyrgyzstan.

Key words: The National Policy of the Kyrgyz Republic, The Russian minority in Kyrgyzstan, Kyrgyzstan People's Assembly.

ÖZET

Bu tezde, 1991 yılından günümüze Kırgız Cumhuriyetinin kendi sınırları içindeki Rus azınlığına dair Ulusal Politikasından söz etmektedir. Birinci bölümde, Sovyetler Birliği dönemindeki bütün uluslara uygulanan Ulusal Politika ve Rusların Kırgızistana yerleşme tarihçeleri incelenmiştir. Tezin ana bölümü olan ikinci bölümde ise yeni bağımsızlığını alan devletin Ulusal Politikası, Kırgız Halk Meclisin Sosyal Örgütleri ve bunlara dahil Slav Vakfına odaklanılmıştır. Bu bölümde, yerli kaynaklara göre Kırgız Halk Meclisin görevi, yapısı, kongreleri ve Slav Vakfının rolü ve çalışmaları da analiz edilmektedir. Son bölümde ise Kırgızistandaki Rusların ana dillerini kullanım hakları, çifte vatandaşlık ve göç gibi temel olgular ele alınmaktadır.

Kırgızistanda yaşayan Ruslar'ın kendi tarihini, kültürünü ve geleneklerini geliştirme haklarına sahip olmaları, Rusça'nın resmi dil olarak ilan edilmesi ve Kırgızistan'da Rus azınlığı desteklemek amacıyla Sosyal Örgütler ve Slav-Kırgız Üniversitesi'nin kurulması aşamalarını gösteren bu çalışma, Kırgız Cumhuriyetinin Rus azınlığına olan Ulusal Politikası'nın destekleyici olduğunu savunmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Kırgız Cumhuriyeti Ulusal Politikası, Kırgızistan'deki Rus azınlık, Kırgız Halk Meclisi

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INTRODUCTION

On August 31, 1991 the Kyrgyz Republic declared its independence. It was the fall of the Soviet Union that presented this chance¹. However, independence meant not only to be sovereign in political, economic, social, and cultural development but also brought various problems for the new independent state. One of the problems that Kyrgyzstan met was the national question. At the end of the 1980s, Kyrgyzstan unlike many other ex-Soviet republics appeared as a multinational republic where the percentage of indigenous people was approximately equal to the percentage of other nationalities. That is, the Kyrgyzs consisted of 52,3% of the population.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, the percentages of non-Kyrgyz nationalities have started to decrease and the titular nationality has grown. In other words, most of the Russians, the other Slavs, Germans, Jews, Tatars, and other nationalities left Kyrgyzstan to move to Russia, Germany, Israel, and other countries. Most of these migrants were motivated by the belief that the national policy of the new independent Kyrgyzstan would be unfriendly, accepting Kyrgyz as the basis of nationality. However, the most important reason of migration was economic situation in the Republic rather than ethnic.

¹ Kyrgyzstan did not want to leave the USSR and today agrees that life was much more better during the Soviet times than today because there was certainty, security, and jobs. See in L.Handrahan, "Gender and Ethnicity in the 'Transitional Democracy of Kyrgyzstan'", *Central Asian Survey*, 2001,20(4), p. 468

Since the beginning of its independence, the Kyrgyz Government, taking into consideration the multiethnic structure of population, did not prefer the policy that the Kyrgyzs could be a leading nationality.

The Republic established all national attributes after 1991, but declared Kyrgyz language as the state language before independence in 1989. In spite of these alterations, Kyrgyzstan stayed away from the policy that the titular nationality could be a dominant one. This means that the Kyrgyz Government has chosen “internationalism” for solving the national question.

In this thesis, “internationalism” is used as a term determining the policy of solving the national question by considering all nationalities in the Kyrgyz Republic as equal nationalities, which can fully enjoy the right to develop their language, traditions, history, and culture. From my point of view, the Kyrgyz National policy is somewhat pursuing ex-Soviet nationality policy, at least theoretically, namely “internationalism” towards all nationalities in the Republic. However, I also argue that the current Kyrgyz National Policy brings some improvement to the ex-Soviet Nationality policy, in that sense that it brings a full right of development of other nationalities’ values such as language, traditions, and culture.

Concretely, in this thesis, I examine Soviet Nationality policy according to eras, Kyrgyz Nationality policy after 1991, the Russians’ position in the Republic, and their problems.

In order to study the subject, this work is divided into three chapters.

The first chapter focuses on the Soviet Nationality policy since the former Kyrgyz Soviet Socialist Republic experienced the Soviet Nationality policy. This chapter

mainly deals with policies such as “Russification” and “Internationalism” in the frame of the Soviet Nationality Policy. The Soviet Nationality policy is considered according to the historical periods of the different Soviet leaders. Moreover, it examines the settlement of the Russians in Kyrgyzstan from a historical perspective.

The second chapter of this thesis is the main part of the research. It concentrates on the National Policy of the Kyrgyz Republic after 1991. Since Kyrgyzstan People’s Assembly (KPA) mainly reflects the national policy of the new independent state, the assembly’s foundation, structure, and congresses are considered. Furthermore, “Slavic Foundation in Kyrgyzstan”, one of the social organizations at the assembly that represents interests of the Russians and the Russian-speaking, is examined in the second chapter.

The last chapter deals with main issues of the Russian minority in Kyrgyzstan, the status of Russian language, dual citizenship, and migration of the Russians from Kyrgyzstan to the Russian Federation are studied.

The thesis examines the national policy in Kyrgyz Republic through an analytical perspective. Therefore, surveys carried out at Congresses of Kyrgyzstan People’s Assembly are provided as appendixes at the end of the thesis. Surveys give additional information about political, economic, social situation of the nationalities in the Republic; opinions and estimations of different nationalities, including the Russians, about the National Policy of the Kyrgyz Government; and also about policy’s problems that are essential.

This research is descriptive and case study research. I have chosen this topic because it is attention grabbing to make out the National Policy of the new independent state

after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. In other words, the question that stands in my mind was: *Which kind of policy has Kyrgyzstan chosen towards nationalities living in the Republic after 1991?*

Why the Russian minority? There are two key reasons for studying the Kyrgyz Nationality policy towards the Russian minority after 1991. The first one is that the Russians were the second largest nationality in the Republic until the beginning of the 1990s; second, the Russians still have kept their role as an important nationality in the Republic similar to the Soviet times.

As the Soviet Nationality Policy has been repeatedly revised in the history of the Soviet Union, this research does not aim to discuss it in detail. Since 1991, Western, local, and Russian scholars from different perspectives have examined the Kyrgyz National Policy. Most of the Western scholars' research shows that Kyrgyzstan has not identified its national policy, as it had never had a national history². Whereas, some local scholars claim that Kyrgyzstan has identified its national policy choosing a democratic way of solving the national problems. For instance, A. Elebaeva and N. Omuraliev assert that as Kyrgystan is a multinational state, it has preferred "state-community" form for establishing the national policy³. To put it clear, Kyrgyzstan People's Assembly, an extra-parliamentary body comprised all social organizations and national-cultural centers is considered as a community form for instituting the national policy. Yet, the Kyrgyz Government is a state form for setting up the

² L., Handrahan, p. 470; Eugene Huskey, "Kyrgyzstan: the politics of Demographic and Economic frustration", in Ian Bremmer and Ray Taras ed., *New States, New Politics: Building the Post-Soviet Nations*, p. 656

³ Ainura Elebayeva, Nurbek Omuraliev, Rafis Abazov, "The shifting Identities and Loyalties in Kyrgyzstan: the Evidence from the Field", *Nationalities Paper*, Vol.28, No2, 2000, p. 170

national policy. Thus, Kyrgyzstan People's Assembly and the Kyrgyz Government together form 'state-community' form for establishing the Kyrgyz National Policy. While various scholars have been analyzing the Soviet Nationality Policy extensively, the Kyrgyz National Policy has been rarely examined by few scholars such as A. Elebaeva, N. Omuraliev, N. Kosmarskaya, V. Bogatyrev. There is no book written about the Kyrgyz National Policy, all publications related to this issue are articles. Consequently, the issue of the Kyrgyz National Policy towards the Russian Minority has not been studied with the exception of N. Kosmarskaya. In her article, "Russkie v Suverennom Kyrgyzstane: Dinamika Mneniy I Povedeniya (1992-98)", she analyzes the situation and perspectives of the Russians in Kyrgyzstan after 1991, the status of Russian language, the dual citizenship, and Kyrgyz nationalism towards the Russians. Her research is also mostly based on the implementation of surveys in the Republic. According to Kosmarskaya, the Russians in Kyrgyzstan feel psychologically comfortable⁴. If the Russians leave Kyrgyzstan it is only because of the economic reasons, states Kosmarskaya. For her, the most significant problem for the Russian minority in the Republic is the "policy of cadres". Kosmarskaya concludes that the position and perspectives of the Russian minority depends not only on the Kyrgyz Government but also on the Russian Government. In other words, Kosmarskaya thinks that political and economic stability is the most significant aspect for the Russian minority, they may prefer to live in Kyrgyzstan if the Kyrgyz

⁴ Natalia Kosmarskaya, "Russkie v suverennom Kyrgyzstane: Dinamika Mneniy I Povedeniya 1992-1998", in *Kyrgyzstan : Nekotorye Aspekty Sotsial'noy Situatsii*, Institute of Regional Studies, Bishkek, 2000, p. 19

Government provides with these conditions, the Russians may leave Kyrgyzstan if the Russian Government provides with economic and political stability in Russia⁵.

In general, there are many books and articles related to the Russians in the post-Soviet Republics and their situation after the dissolution of the USSR. However, most of them deal with migration, language issues rather than the political situation of the Russians as minority.

The sources and secondary literature used in the research come primarily from the following fields: Russian, English, and Kyrgyz newspapers, magazines; and books from Bilkent and the Kyrgyz National Libraries. Numerous materials about Kyrgyzstan People's Assembly, its Congresses, including surveys were taken and used from the documents and brochures issued and published by Informative-Research Center of the assembly, and the Kyrgyz National Academy of Sciences.

The status of Russian language, the dual citizenship, and migration of Russians were studied mostly by using periodical materials. Most useful materials regarding the Russian language in the present study were articles of N. Kosmoraskaya, N. Portnova, S. Zhigitov, and N. Megoran's. However, there are few materials that deal with dual citizenship. It seems this is because of the lack of the progress in this issue.

About migration of the Russians, there are a lot of materials. Accordingly, the most valuable materials used in this thesis were: A. Kokorin's and A. Gorenko's, "State and Its Ethnic Policy: New Decrees of the Kyrgyz Republic – Step to the Stabilization of Migratory Processes"; A. Elevaeva's, N. Omuraliev's, and R. Abazov's, "The Shifting Identities and Loyalties in Kyrgyzstan: The Evidence from

⁵ Ibid., p.23

the Field”; Jivoglyadov’s, “Migratsiya – eto kogda liudyam hochetsya ne tol’ko uehat’, no I vernutsya”; N. Kosmarskaya’s, “Ethnic Russians in Central Asia – A Sensitive Issue? Who is Most Affected? (A Study Case of the Kyrgyz Republic)”; N. Omarov’s, *Migratsionnye protsessy v Kyrgyzskoy Respublike v gody nezavisimosti: Itogi Desyatiletiya*.

Furthermore, interviews were taken with the chairman of the Institute of Ethnic Policies, Valentin Bogatyrev on September 2000, and the responsible secretary of Kyrgyzstan People’s Assembly, Alexei Fukalov on August 2003.

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1.1 The Soviet Nationality policy

The Soviet Nationality policy has been extensively discussed both during and in the aftermath of the dissolution of the USSR. However, controversies about the Soviet Nationality policy still occupy the academic agenda. In this chapter, I will discuss the Soviet Nationality policy examining the questions such as what the Soviet Nationality policy was and how it was represented during the USSR period.

In order to discuss these questions, I will consider the issues such as “Russification” and “Internationalization” as they are keys to examine the Soviet Nationality policy. I will elaborate these issues by examining the politics of the Soviet leaders such as Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev and the others. It is known that the Soviet Nationality ideology was invariable and grounded within the Marxist tradition⁶. Theoretically, the Soviet Nationality policy aimed to create the “Soviet People”, whereas in practice it diverted from building the ideals of Soviet society. It was also mixed and complicated with policies such as “Russification”, “Indigenization”, “Industrialization” and other policies. To put it clear, the Soviet Nationality policy had periodically been represented by the so-called “Russification”, “Indigenization”, “Industrialization” and

⁶ Gerhard Simon, tr. Foster K., Foster O., *Nationalism and Policy Toward the Nationalities in the Soviet Union*, Westview Special Studies on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, Boulder, Oxford, 1991; Helene Carrere d’Encausse, “Determinants and Parameters of Soviet Nationality Policy”, in Azrael Jeremy R., ed., *Soviet Nationality Policies and Practices*, PRAEGER Publishers, Praeger Special Studies, New York, London, Sydney, Toronto, 1978; Robert Conquest ed., *Soviet Nationalities Policy in Practice*, The Bodley Head, London, 1967, pp. 15-20.

other policies, and had also been diverted from the basis of the Leninist nationality policy.

Some historians such as Robert Kaiser, Ivan Dzyuba claim that the Soviet Nationality policy aimed to “russify” all nationalities and the Russians dominated over other nationalities. Whereas other historians, such as Lee Schwartz, Geoffrey Hosking, Viktor Kozlov, Gerhard Simon assert that “all nationalities had the same type of social structure and the principle of equal rights and equality of nationalities had been established in all areas of society”⁷. In other words, the Soviet nationality policy had the aim of denationalizing, centralizing, homogenizing, and amalgamating the nationalities, but not ‘Russifying’ all Soviet culture and history⁸.

According to Kaiser, Dzyuba, the Soviet Nationality policy proclaimed in one and practiced in other. To put it clearly, the Soviet Nationality policy was supposed to build ‘international equalization’ in theory, while in practice the Soviet Nationality policy was kept up by “Russification”⁹.

For instance, Robert Kaiser argued that the Soviet Nationality policy was generally based on “Russification” policy. For Kaiser, much of the “Russification” occurred during the interwar period, and after the 1950s, the Russian language and culture maintained their primacy throughout the Union¹⁰.

Lee Schwartz’s view on the Soviet Nationality policy is different from Kaiser’s argument. Emphasizing that the former Soviet Union, as it emerged in 1922, was

⁷ Allworth Edward, ed., *Soviet Nationality Problems*, Columbia University Press, New York, London, 1971, p.30.

⁸ Ibid, p.43

⁹ Robert J. Kaiser, *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, p. 393-4, details in pp.250-324; Robert J. Kaiser in Robert Lewis, *Geographic Perspectives on Soviet Central Asia*, London, New York, pp170-1, p. 177, pp.295-6.

viewed as a compromise between doctrine and reality, Schwartz argues that the force of nationalism among the non-Russian people proved itself to be more powerful than it was foreseen, leading to the eventual implementation of the federal compromise¹¹. In addition, Schwartz contends that the Soviet ideology hypothesized that the state proceeded towards pure Communism, where nationality distinctiveness would go down, ethnic conflict would diminish, and eventually, a new “Soviet man” would be originated. Schwartz also confirms that this ideology was strengthened by factors such as “equalizing levels of education, increasing numbers of intermarriage, increasing use of the Russian language, and gradual diminishing of popular expressions of nationality such as religion, literature, and folklore¹². Consequently, for Schwartz, the Soviet Nationality policy was sought to build ‘international equalization’. Paul Golbe moves Schwartz’ argument a step further by claiming that Soviet Nationality approach was nihilistic to all cultures, including the Russian, which was “national in form, and socialist in content”¹³.

Unlike Schwartz’s and Golbe’s statements on the nationality policy, Ivan Dzyuba points out that the Soviet nationality policy kept changing in content, illustrating shifts till Brezhnev¹⁴. Dzyuba lists these shifts as; Leninist nation-building in the 1920s; Stalin’s revision of the nationality policy in the early 1930s; Stalin’s liquidation of national Party cadres in the 1930s; Stalin’s notorious repression of

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Lee Schwartz, “Regional Redistribution and National Homelands in the USSR”, Henry R. Huttenbach, ed., *Soviet Nationality Policies: Ruling Ethnic Groups in the USSR*, Mansell Publishing Limited, London, New York, 1990, p. 125

¹² Ibid, p. 126

¹³ Paul A. Goble, in Rachel Denber ed., *The Soviet Nationality Reader: The Disintegration in Context*, Westview Press, Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford, 1992, p. 98

entire nationalities during and after the war; the restoration after the XX Party Congress of the rights of the nationalities liquidated under Stalin; the extension of the rights of Soviet Republics, accompanied, however, by a number of subjectivist chauvinist measures taken by Khrushchev, especially in the field of education.

While Dzyuba contends that the nationality policy was shifted to “Russification”, Geoffrey Hosking states that the policy was not really “Russification” but rather “Sovietization” or “Communization”¹⁵. According to him, the Soviet Nationality Policy concerned “subjecting all nationalities, including the Russians to the centralized political control of the party and to the economic domination of the centralized planning apparatus”¹⁶.

Among these opinions, I agree with Schwartz’s’, but my approach about the Soviet Nationality Policy is also that, in practice, it was somewhat diverted from its ideology, that is, mixed with “Russification”, in particular, under Stalin’s rule. Consequently, my opinion does not mean that the Soviet Nationality Policy was aimed to “russify” all nationalities or it continued for the duration of the whole Soviet time.

1.2 Assumptions on the Collapse of the Multinational Empire

About two hundred nationalities and cultures existed in the former Soviet Union. According to the Third All Union Soviet Congress (May 20, 1925), the population of the USSR at that time included between 146 and 188 different nationalities and ethnic

¹⁴ Ivan Dzyuba, *Internationalism or Russification: A Study in the Soviet Nationalities Problem*, New York, Monad Press, 1974 p.

¹⁵ Geoffrey Hosking, *A History of the Soviet Union 1917-1991*, Fontana Press, 1992, p. 259.

groups, with 104 to 200 distinguishable languages spoken¹⁷. Also, the first Soviet census, carried out in 1926, listed 188 different nationalities with significant racial, cultural, geographic and linguistic differences¹⁸.

When the multinational union was proclaimed some historians as unrealistic considered it because the multinational empires such as Habsburg and Ottoman collapsed. This showed that growth of nationalism could lead to the fall of empires. Richard Pipes argued that before the collapse of the Union, the multinational empire might fall apart roughly along the lines of the fifteen republics, which are now new independent states¹⁹.

In relation to the problem of nationalism in the Soviet Union as a factor, Kaiser argues that nationalization process was still underway in the North Caucasus, Central Asia, Siberia, and Far East although it was stated that the process of national consolidation had been basically completed²⁰.

Thus, from the beginning of the establishment of the Union, there were suppositions on the collapse of the multinational empire. Although the Soviet Union aimed to create a homogenous nation called “Soviet people”, it failed.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Lee Schwartz, p.126

¹⁸ Ibid., p.127

¹⁹ Gail Warshofsky Lapidus, “Ethnonationalism and Political Stability: The Soviet Case”, in Rachel Denber ed., *The Soviet Nationality Reader: The Disintegration in Context*, Westview Press, Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford, 1992, p. 421

1.3 “Russification” or “Internationalization”? : Politics of the Soviet leaders

1.3.1 Lenin’s theory of the nationalities

Lenin’s nationality policy was grounded on Marxist theory. He wanted to build a ‘proletarian universal state’. People’s Commissariat of Nationalities, “whose mission was to develop a policy of cultural advancement as proof that the Russian majority was no longer to attempt Russifying” was founded under Lenin²¹. Lenin used the Marxist slogan, “no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations”²². He wrote that a socialist revolution alone was not enough to guarantee international integration, and he supposed that actual equalization in the socio-cultural, economic, and political spheres would take a longer time, possibly a generation or more, since a socialist victory only provided nations with legal equality²³. Lenin saw actual equalization as a key component to solve the national problem inherited from the tsarist Russia. Moreover, the leader viewed proceeding to ‘international equalization’ as the significant factor in his nationality policy. For Lenin, ‘international equalization’ was a necessary precondition for the assimilation of nations into one ‘Communist people’, which was the ultimate goal of Marxists. This equality was necessary not only in the socio-economic sphere but also in the cultural and political spheres. Marxist slogan used by Lenin was implied characteristics of Russian dominance as an ‘oppressor nation’ in the multinational empire. Dzyuba argues that Lenin’s whole struggle was

²⁰ Robert J. Kaiser, p. 11

²¹ Cited from Edward Allworth, p.50

²² Cited from Robert J. Kaiser, p. 97

²³ Robert J. Kaiser, p.97

directed against Russification, Great Russian Chauvinism, and Great Power ideology²⁴.

The most important part of Lenin's nationality policy was his preference to the right of nations to rule their own "homelands". According to Pipes, Lenin supported self-determination because of his belief in implementing all prerequisites of a good socialist solution of the nationality question²⁵. Lenin was for the right of nations to self-determination, arguing that it does not mean an actual separation, and declaring, "separation is altogether not our scheme, we do not predict separation at all"²⁶. Nevertheless, shortly before his death Lenin realized that "the right of nations to self-determination" far from benefiting a 'proletarian universal state' and it would lead to threats.

As a result, Lenin and the Bolsheviks had two principles:

- 1) The Socialist state should be a unitary state;
- 2) Proletarian internationalism could allow no room for national differences and aspirations.²⁷

Pipes, however, emphasizes that Lenin's approach to the nationality question was insufficient as the situation in the country and the nationalities were not ready, and even they did want neither assimilation nor independence.

In relation to Lenin's nationality policy, I agree with Helene d'Encausse who states that Lenin's "policy towards national groups was motivated both by the ideology of

²⁴ Ivan Dzyuba, p. 43

²⁵ Richard Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union: Communism and Nationalism 1917-1923*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1964, p.43

²⁶ Richard Pipes, p. 45

²⁷ Jeremy R. Azrael, ed., *Soviet Nationality Policies and Practices*, PRAEGER Publishers, Praeger Special Studies, New York, London, 1978, p. 39

egalitarianism and by the goal of national unification”, and his policy had to attain “two contradictory ends: to maintain equality among the nations and to strengthen the Soviet state, that is, Soviet control over the nations”²⁸. Accordingly, in theory, there had to be a balance between “two contradictory ends”; however, in practice “Soviet control over the nations” prevailed “equality among the nations” and broke down the balance. Therefore, my viewpoint on Lenin’s Nationality policy is that it only lingered as a Leninist theory.

1.3.2 Leninist Theory and the Soviet Leaders’ politics on the Nationality Question

Even before the death of Lenin, Joseph Stalin replaced him. Stalin was in favor of “Sovietization” but he did some changes in the Leninist policy²⁹. In order to achieve “friendship of nations” (*druzhiba narodov*), Stalin initially put “Indigenization” (*korenizatsiya*) in the Leninist policy. For Stalin, the primary means of achieving “Sovietization’ in the non-Russian periphery were “Indigenization” of cadres in socio-cultural, economic, and political institutions in each national territory in an effort to create ‘indigenous elites’ who would be loyal to the center³⁰.

Stalin arranged a hierarchy of recognition among the Soviet nationalities by a separate flag, a republic anthem, a written constitution, and an encyclopedia in its

²⁸ Helene d’Encausse, *The Nationality Question in the Soviet Union and Russia*, Scandinavian University Press, 1995, p. 17

²⁹ According to Stalin, “Sovietization” was giving superiority to the Russians in the USSR. George Liber, *Soviet Nationality Policy, Urban Growth, and Identity Change in the Ukrainian SSR 1923-1934*, Cambridge University Press, 2001; <http://books.cambridge.org/0521522439.htm>

³⁰ Robert J. Kiser, p. 105; *Korenizatsiya* means something like “taking root”, from the Russian *koren*, “root”, see Gerhard Simon, tr. Foster K., Foster O., *Nationalism and Policy Toward the Nationalities*

own native language³¹. He defined the nation as “historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture”, which meant that if any of these characteristics were absent then the nation would cease to be a nation³².

Stalin’s view on administrative division was different from Lenin’s vision. According to Stalin, administrative division rather than national-cultural division was the only Marxist way of solving the nationality problem in the Union. For him, administrative division instead of national-cultural would serve to break down national barriers and encourage international integration. Though, administrative division supported by Stalin was not equal to national sovereignty and Stalin strongly opposed to the right of nations to self-determination.

Practically, there was a division of views, between Lenin and Stalin over the formation of the Soviet Nationality policy. As it was mentioned before, in order to overcome confrontation with nationalities such as Ukrainians, the Central Asian peoples, and the Caucasians, Lenin was against Russian dominated and Russian centered union. On the contrary, Stalin was in favor of the state essentially composed of one large unit, Russian centered, with the intention of avoiding nationality problems. Stalin’s nationality policy “raised the Russian nation to the first rank, exalting its traditions and culture”³³. For example, on the celebration victory of World War II, Stalin declared that “Russia is the leading nation of the Soviet Union...in this

in the Soviet Union, p.5; *Korenizatsiya* – putting down of roots, see in Geoffrey Hosking, *A History of the Soviet Union 1917-1991*, Fontana Press, 1992, p.244.

³¹ Edward Allworth, p. 32

³² Robert J. Kaiser, p. 8

³³ Helene Carrere d’Encausse, p. 28

war, she had won the right to be recognized as the guide for the whole Union”³⁴. Therefore, Carrere d’Encausse asserts that equalization policy diminished and an “elder brother”, the Russian people to guide all nations, emerged³⁵. Stalin’s death did lead to soft changes in the Soviet Nationality policy. The next leader, Khrushchev renewed Stalin’s *korenizatsiya* policy and somewhat reconstructed Stalin’s nationality policy. For example, when Stalin had deported many nationalities to the East, immediately after the end of World War II³⁶, Khrushchev rehabilitated the Kalmyks, Chechens, Ingushi, Karachai and Balkars, omitting the two deported nationalities: the Germans and the Crimean Tatars. The Germans were released in 1955 and the Crimean Tatars in 1956³⁷. Thompson states that Khrushchev softened the assimilation tone of the Communist Party Program³⁸. Khrushchev allowed Soviet citizens to use their own languages, thinking that this would also lead to the voluntary practice of Russian in the growth of nationality relations. Concerning the concept ‘Soviet nation’, he declared:

In the USSR, a new historic community of people of various nationalities having common characteristic traits has been formed – the Soviet nation. Soviet people have: a common motherland – the USSR; a common economic base – the socialist economy; a common socio – class structure; a common worldview – Marxism – Leninism; a common goal – construction of communism; and many common spiritual and [psychological](#) traits³⁹

³⁴ Ibid., p. 29

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Terry L. Thompson, *Ideology and Policy: The Political Uses of Doctrine in the Soviet Union*, Westview Press, Boulder, San Francisco, London, 1989, p. 48

³⁷ Martin Mc Cauley, *The Khrushchev Era 1953-1964*, LONGMAN, London, New York, 1995, p. 48

³⁸ Terry L. Thompson, p. 71

Nevertheless, some historians like Martin McCauley, Edward Allworth state that Lenin's nationality policy, that is, 'proletarian internationalism' had not been implemented in practice. In other words, historians claim that the Soviet Nationality policy remained Russian centered policy. McCauley affirms that Khrushchev's nationality policy was not liberal. According to him, Khrushchev wanted Russian to be the key for the renewal of the Soviet Union; that Khrushchev was angry when Azerbaijan and Latvia rejected Russian language for their children and feared that their own language would overwhelm Russian language⁴⁰. More to this point, Edward Allworth emphasizes that after 1956, the times seemed less unsafe for the nationalities, compared with the 1917-1956 period, which was characterized as unstable, drastic actions in nationality policies. For Allworth, there was still political pressure to use the Russian language over every group, and the period 1956-1964 was a time of hesitation for the survival of nationalities and religious denominations in the Soviet Union⁴¹. Therefore, Helene d'Encausse claims "Khrushchev quickly discovered that de-Stalinization was encouraging the demands of local nationalists rather than fostering internationalist consciousness, this discovery prompted him to return to the idea of an internationalist utopia"⁴².

The replacement of Khrushchev by Brezhnev brought no considerable changes in the Soviet Nationality policy. According to Allworth, during the period of Brezhnev (1965-1982) there were not essential changes in the nationality policy because Brezhnev believed that there were no problems in the nationality policy, and he

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Martin Mc Cauley, pp. 48-49

⁴¹ Edward Allworth, p.42

declared ‘old nationality problems stemming from legal discrimination and economic inequality had been removed forever’⁴³.

Thompson, however, argues that Brezhnev was anxious about the policy of assimilation and thought that the basis for the assimilation was economic policy⁴⁴. On the word of Thompson, policy of “Sovietization” means homogenization of society through economy and culture. Consequently, concerning cultural policy, Thompson states that Brezhnev’s cultural policy between 1965-1968 was supporting neither the favoritism shown to Russian nor the free development of nationality languages alluded by Khrushchev⁴⁵. He asserts that between 1969-1972 Brezhnev’s nationality policy had become stronger, in particular regarding the Ukraine and Georgia, with an extra focus on the Russian language:

.....
The rapid growth of internationality ties and cooperation has led to a heightened significance of the Russian language, which has become the language of mutual communication of all nations and nationalities of the Soviet Union. And, comrades, the fact that Russian has become one of the generally recognized world languages has pleased us all⁴⁶.
.....

During this period, some republican secretaries had also supported the use of Russian language as a vehicle of communication and preservation of integrity. Kirgiz Communist Party’s First Secretary Usabaliev described the knowledge of Russian as

⁴² Helene d’Encausse, p.31-2
⁴³ Ibid., p. 32
⁴⁴ Terry L. Thompson, p. 76
⁴⁵ Ibid., p.75
⁴⁶ Cited from Terry L. Thompson, p. 80

‘powerful weapon’ of communication and a source of unity, asserting that learning Russian was ‘an objective requirement’ for all Soviet people⁴⁷.

Thus, Brezhnev’s nationality policy showed no significant changes from the previous leaders’ nationality policy. Brezhnev’s policy remained as a national unification and the assimilation factor that could promote Russian language.

Dzyuba, in *Internationalism or Russification*, although emphasizes that a number of difficulties and ambiguities in the nationality policy remained unclarified and some principles, undefined, “and most important of all, that all too often practice does not conform to theory”⁴⁸.

After Brezhnev, Andropov was the next leader of the Soviet Union, in whose era; the national problems were considered as not yet solved⁴⁹. Andropov unlike the previous leaders mainly focused on Lenin’s theory on nationality question. In his speeches he supported Lenin’s view on the self-determination right of nations and opposed to the “Russification” policy⁵⁰. On the other hand, it should be marked that Andropov had been the leader of the Union for a short time. Therefore, it is difficult to determine how much his speeches were truthful⁵¹.

In addition, Maxwell claims that Andropov was the first leader who appeared as a reformist in the Soviet Nationality policy. Maxwell’s argument depends on explicit declarations of Andropov such as “there existed problems and outstanding tasks” in

⁴⁷ Thompson, p. 81

⁴⁸ Ivan Dzyuba, p. 27

⁴⁹ Robert Maxwell, ed., *Leaders of the World, Andropov, Y.V., Speeches and Writings*, PERGAMON Press, Oxford, New York, 1983, p. 105

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 99,101

the Soviet nationality policy, which must be solved; “life shows that the economic and cultural progress of all nations and nationalities is accompanied by an inevitable growth in their national self-awareness”⁵².

Rachel Denber also explains that Andropov appeared to be calling for the formulation of an explicit, coherent, and comprehensive strategy in which the nationality question stood at the very center⁵³. Similarly, Henry Huttenbach pointed out that Andropov called, for the first time, for the formulation of a “well-thought-out, scientifically substantiated nationality policy”⁵⁴.

During the last years of the Soviet Union, before its dissolution, Gorbachev came into power as a reformist, not only of the Soviet Nationality policy but also whole system of the Union. Gorbachev’s nationality policy was considered liberal compared to the other Soviet leaders’ nationality policy.

The reformist from the beginning refused the thesis that the nationality question had been ‘solved’ in the Soviet Union. This can be seen from Gorbachev’s speeches as well. Although Gorbachev considered the Soviet nation as “a qualitatively new social and international community united by their economic interests, ideology and political goals”, he identified that there existed problems in the nationality development⁵⁵.

Gorbachev’s language policy favored double language policy. He was for both learning native language and Russian language. He asserted in his writings that

⁵¹ Sergei Podbolotov’s opinion, International Relations Department, Bilkent University, September 28, 2003

⁵² Robert Maxwell, p 29; and Gail Warshofsky Lapidus, p. 425

⁵³ Rachel Denber ed., *The Soviet Nationality Reader: The Disintegration in Context*, p 418

⁵⁴ Henry R. Huttenbach ed., *Soviet Nationality Policies: Ruling Ethnic Groups in the USSR*, Mansell Publishing Limited, London, New York, 1990, p.30; and in Rachel Denber, p. 418

‘everybody needs Russian language, and history itself has determined that the objective process of communication develops on the basis of the language of the biggest nation⁵⁶. His insistence to learn the native language was based on his belief that even the smallest ethnicity could not be denied the right to its native language⁵⁷. Thompson argues that Gorbachev’s nationality policy was moderated. According to Thompson, the national unrests occurred in the Baltic republics, Central Asian republics, and the Caucasus region had influence on the reforms of Gorbachev. Indeed, those national disorders have started at the time of Gorbachev’s regime and showed that the nationality question had never been solved.

As a result, examining the Soviet Nationality policy shows that the nationality policy from the beginning had controversies between “Russification” and “Internationalization”. The Soviet Nationality policy was grounded on Marxist doctrine but it was only in theory and it was never practically based on the Marxist tradition. In fact, all Soviet leaders were convinced that by achieving the “Sovietization” they would avoid the nationality problems or the nationality question could be ‘solved’ by itself during the process of building Communism. Any of the leaders did not seriously take the nationality question into consideration. However, Andropov was marked as a first leader who emphasized that there were troubles in the nationality question. Gorbachev, of course, appeared as a reformist, claiming that there were empty beliefs in attaining the ‘imagined system’. Therefore, many historians consider the aim of establishing the ‘Soviet people’ as an unrealistic policy.

⁵⁵ Terry L. Thompson, p. 174

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 177

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 176

1.4 Settlement of the Russians in Kyrgyzstan⁵⁸

Settlement of the Russians in lands, which are now Kyrgyzstan, had started since the expansion of the Russian Empire in the 1850s and 1860s. The first Russian presence in the region was military in essence. Paul Kolstoe argues that the military attendance of the Russian army greatly influenced the creation of the future Russian diaspora⁵⁹.

In a while, the Tsarist Russia established political control over the present Central Asia⁶⁰. Moreover, the Russian colonial authorities embarked on a major effort to reorganize agriculture in the region, especially to promote the growth of cotton. Consequently, first settlers were peasants as they were dispersed in the Central Asian region by the tsar's order. Initially, most of the Russian peasants first migrated to northern Central Asia, and then they moved in the South of the region. Kolstoe asserts that in the agricultural regions further south, the Russian presence before the turn of the century was very limited in the Ferghana Valley (the South part of the region), that it was making only 0.5% of the population, and that this changed incredibly through time: while only 50.000 Russians lived in Central Asia in 1858, forty years later the number had increased tenfold⁶¹.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, from 1902 to 1913, Gene Huskey emphasizes, in northern Kyrgyz Valleys, what is now the Chu and Issyk-Kul regions,

⁵⁸ The present Kyrgyzstan or Kyrgyz Republic had been called Kirgiziya or Kirgiz Republic during the Soviet Union. Still, some former Soviet republics call Kirgiziya.

⁵⁹ Paul Kolstoe, *Russians in the Former Soviet Republics*, HURST and COMPANY, London, 1995, p.19

⁶⁰ During the Tsarist Russia, Central Asia was called Turkestan that was land of the Kyrgyzs, Kazakhs, Uzbeks and the other Turkic nations who were not territorially separated but separated by tribes and clans.

the indigenous population declined by almost 9 per cent, while Russian settlers increased by 10 per cent⁶². Also, the most of the Russians settled in the cities where Kokand forts had once stood, among these was Pishpek, which had 14.000 residents by 1916, 8.000 of them were Russians⁶³. In Kyrgyz lands the settlement of the Russians reached its peak during the years of 1907-1912, and by 1916 it had reached 1.5 million, or 14.3% of the population⁶⁴.

Period	Voluntary	Involuntary	Total (Numbers in thousands)
1801-1850	125	250	375
1851-1860	91	100	191
1861-1870	114	140	254
1871-1880	68	180	248
1881-1890	279	140	419
1891-1900	1,078	130	1,208
1901-1910	2,257	25	2,282
1911-1914	696	27	723

Table 1. Number of Voluntary and Involuntary Migrants into Asiatic Russia (Siberia, Turkestan, and Asiatic steppe region (North Kazakhstan)) 1801-1914⁶⁵

⁶¹ Paul Kolstoe, *Russians in the Former Soviet Republics*, Hurst & Company, London, 1995, p.23

⁶² Gene Huskey, "Kyrgyzstan: the Politics of Demographic and Economic Frustration", in Ian Bremmer and Ray Taras ed., *Nations, Politics in the Soviet Successor States*, Cambridge University Press, 1993, p.399

⁶³ Ibid.; Pishpek, later was changed into Frunze, most recently changed into Bishkek, the present capital of Kyrgyz Republic.

⁶⁴ Paul Kolstoe, p.23

Thus, the migration of Russians, the majority of whom were peasants, reached its peak during the first decade of the twentieth century. Kaiser argues that deliberate migration between 1901 and 1910 surpassed the total eastward migration for the entire nineteenth century, even though it was restricted by the famine of 1901-1902 and by the legal controls between 1904 and 1905⁶⁶. According to Kaiser, in 1910 with a good harvest in the west, migration reached 41 per cent, while in 1911 with a particularly bad harvest in the east it reached 44.5 per cent⁶⁷.

Moreover, with the development of transportation facilities obstacles to migration were reduced. Construction on the Trans-Siberian railroad began in 1891, and thirty-three hundred kilometers of road were constructed by 1900. A railroad from Russia to Tashkent was opened during the 1890s⁶⁸. By 1916, about sixteen thousand kilometers of roadway had been constructed in Siberia and Central Asia⁶⁹.

Based on the fact that there was a substantial increase of Russians migrated into non-Russian nationality areas, in particular, urban areas, Kaiser outlines that the Russians had been becoming more geographically dispersed throughout the country between 1926 and 1939 years⁷⁰. Consequently, migration of the Russians had contributed even after the falling down of the tsarist regime. Schwartz contends that many of the Russian population had been moving into the peripheral and internal non-Russian territories over a century. For Schwartz, since Stalin's time the Soviet Union had

⁶⁵ Robert Kaiser, p.56

⁶⁶ Robert J. Kaiser, *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1994, p.54

⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 56

⁶⁸ Tashkent is today's capital of the Uzbek Republic.

⁶⁹ Robert J. Kaiser, p. 55

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 117

administratively organized migration on the basis of the national distribution of the population⁷¹.

The migration policy had led to a mixture of different nationalities in the Soviet republics, in particular, in the Central Asian republics. In fact, the policy of mixing of the nationalities in the Soviet Union was characterized by “urbanization” and “industrialization”. In other words, “urbanization” and “industrialization” of the non-Russian republics were the major causes of mixing of the nationalities, which proved the implementation of the “Sovietization” policy. It is uttered that in the 1960s the greatest “urbanization” and “industrialization” had occurred in non-Russian areas, particularly Central Asia, Belorussia, and Moldavia⁷². This can be seen at the population figures of those years, that the population of Central Asia increased 44 per cent between 1959 and 1970⁷³.

However, Russians embraced the most numerous group living in the cities and there was very little local migration from countryside to town. Therefore, job opportunities in urban areas were being pre-empted by Russians⁷⁴. “Industrialization” was implemented only in the cities populated by the migrated Russians, whereas countryside and villages remained populated by indigenous people who continued their “traditional life style”⁷⁵.

There was correlation between “industrialization” and migration of the Slavs into non-Slavonic areas. The large influx of Russians was identified as a reason of the

⁷¹ Lee Schwartz, p. 125

⁷² Robert J. Kaiser, p.160

⁷³ Ibid, p.162

⁷⁴ Ibid, p.161

⁷⁵ Here, “traditional life style” means being engaged with cattle and agriculture.

lack of the qualified local labor force to fill the new urban jobs. By 1970, the Russians comprised the greater part of the total urban population in both Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan⁷⁶.

In the Soviet history, the approaches such as the socio-economic and the ethno-political were classified as the causes of migration of the Russians into non-Russian areas. The socio-economic approach was supported, as it was believed that migration of the Russians into non-Russians republics would lead to social and economic progress that also would help to avoid the national problems. Similarly, the ethno-cultural approach was promoted because of the acceptance that the diffusion of the nationalities throughout all Soviet territory would solve the national problems.

Walter Kolarz has a different view on migration policy of the Soviet Union. According to Kolarz, the Soviet migration policy was “a planned colonization policy”. Supporting the socio-economic approach, Kolarz concludes that the primary approach of the Soviet regime towards colonization was for economic and strategic purposes, but it was not a national Russian one⁷⁷.

Nevertheless, a large number of the Russians settled into Central Asia, including Kyrgyzstan. As it was mentioned before, the Russian migration started in 1850s and continued almost to the end of the 1970s.

⁷⁶ Paul Kolstoe, pp. 49,57; Gerhard Simon, p. 385

⁷⁷ Paul Kolstoe, p. 61

CHAPTER II

THE NATIONAL POLICY OF THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

AFTER 1991

2.1 Principles of the National Policy of the Kyrgyz Government

Today more than eighty nationalities live in Kyrgyzstan. In the beginning of its independence it was different from other Central Asian republics with its small percentage of indigenous population that was, approximately, the same with the percentage of different nationalities; relatively the ratio of indigenous people is 53% and 47%. As it was elaborated in the historical chapter, in Kyrgyzstan European nationalities as well as Asian nationalities are settled for more than a century. Different policies and different powers have mixed all nationalities in Kyrgyz lands, additionally Soviet officials artificially created the present territory of the Republic.

After attaining its independence in 1991, Kyrgyzstan as all former Soviet republics has met difficulties during its political, economic, and social development. One of the most important difficulties Kyrgyzstan met was the nationality question. Not only dissolution of the Soviet Union has exacerbated the importance of the nationality question, but also transition to democracy has raised challenges to the national issue. In other words, emergence of plural societies leading to political struggle and polarization of nationalities has led to challenges to the interethnic affairs⁷⁸. The significance of this was also observed with the dramatic events in Osh, tension

⁷⁸ Robert J. Kaiser, "Nations and Homelands in Soviet Central Asia", in Robert A. Lewis, *Geographic Perspectives on Soviet Central Asia*, London. New York, 1992, p.281

between the Uzbeks and the Kyrgyzs, which was seen as the beginning of ethnic clashes. Kyrgyz researchers suggest solving interethnic disagreements at the state level, since states are able to comprehend interests of different societies and ethnic groups; regulate interethnic co-relations; and serve people civil peace and consensus. With regards to the national policy of the Kyrgyz Republic, studies carried out so far state that it should be based on new socio-political realities emerging in the Republic, and it should create real conditions and reliable guaranties for the free development of all nationalities in the state.

However, according to Kosmarskaya, the national problems in Kyrgyzstan show positively dynamics on the day-to-day level⁷⁹. On the other hand, even if the Kyrgyz Government has declared that the nationality question has democratically been solved, the Kyrgyz National policy can be somewhat interpreted as continuation of the Soviet Nationality policy.

Today, tentatively, the basis of the national policy of the Kyrgyz Government is a concept of international accord⁸⁰. The main goal of this policy is a consolidation of all nationalities living on the Kyrgyz territory. According to Elebaeva, Omuraliev, and Abazov, this goal has been established for several reasons. The first reason is that Kyrgyzstan is a heterogeneous state (in 1991 the Kyrgyzs composed of approximately 52% of the population, the Russians - 22%, the Uzbeks - 13%, and another nationalities about 13% of the population). Second, at the beginning of the

⁷⁹ Natalia Kosmarskaya, "Ethnic Russians in Central Asia – A Sensitive Issue? Who is most Affected?" (a Study of Kyrgyz Republic), *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, September 2000, p.8; http://www.ca-c.org/journal/eng01_2000/09.kosmarskaia.shtml

⁸⁰ Ainura Elebayeva, Nurbek Omuraliev, Rafis Abazov, "The shifting Identities and Loyalties in Kyrgyzstan: the Evidence from the Field", *Nationalities Paper*, Vol.28, No2, 2000, p.343

1990s interethnic clashes occurred in the southern region of the Republic. Third, the Kyrgyzs themselves were short of national cohesiveness and customarily characterized themselves “as members of different tribes or tribal groups with district dialects, dress, and political affiliations”⁸¹.

Nationalities	1926	1959	1970	1989	1998
	%	%	%	%	%
Kyrgyzs	66,7	40,5	43,8	52,3	61,2
Russians	11,7	30,1	29,2	21,5	14,9
Ukrainians	6,4	6,6	4,1	2,5	1,5
Uzbeks	11,1	10,5	11,3	12,9	14,4
Kazakhs	0,2	0,9	0,7	0,9	0,92
Tatars	0,5	2,7	2,3	1,6	1,3
Germans	0,4	1,9	3,0	2,3	0,3
Others	3,0	6,8	5,6	6,0	5,7

Table 2. Ethnic Trends in Kyrgyzstan in the following years⁸²

Moreover, Elebayeva, Omuraliev and Abazov argue that the national policy of Kyrgyzstan is founded on the development of a Kyrgyzstani identity where all citizens would be loyal to the newly independent state; unified within the territory of the nation state in the Kyrgyzstani nation, and the multicultural nature of the society

⁸¹ Ibid.; Details on Kyrgyz Identity, in Robert J. Kaiser in Robert Lewis, *Geographic Perspectives on Soviet Central Asia*, p. 289

⁸² Ibid., p. 344

would be maintained⁸³. However, this does not mean that the national policy of Kyrgyzstan seeks to develop Kyrgyzstani nation, as the Kyrgyz republic has never experienced to establish Kyrgyzstani identity. Moreover, it had been more than seventy years under the Soviet Union, where the national policy was also unclear, in the sense that it aimed “Internalization” but was mixed with “Russification”, and generally was labeled “Sovietization”. Therefore, Kyrgyzstan, being a part of the Soviet people, has faced difficulties in founding its national policy. It seems that today the national policy of the Kyrgyz Government is much more towards mature “Kyrgyzstan people”, with the aim of sustaining multiethnic and multicultural society. Consequently, it may be claimed that the idea of the Soviet nationality policy is somewhat preserved in the new independent Republic since the national policy of Kyrgyzstan based on the maturity of “Kyrgyzstan People” and loyalty of all nationalities to the republic are very similar to the aim of establishing the “Soviet People” and loyalty of all nationalities to Soviet Union.

Lori Handrahan states that this similarity, in other words, continuation of the Soviet nationality policy is natural since unlike other former Soviet republics, Kyrgyzstan did not have a national history⁸⁴. Moreover, after attaining its independence, development of nationalistic parties and movements were prohibited by the Kyrgyz Government. Even the President of the republic characterized making law on Kyrgyz language as just one state language, as mistakenness⁸⁵. In his words:

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Lori. M Handrahan, “Gender and Ethnicity in the ‘Transitional Democracy; of Kyrgyzstan”, *Central Asian Survey*, 2001,20(4), p. 470

⁸⁵ Askar Akaev, “Kyrgyzstan: Partnership Potential”, *International Affairs: A Russian Journal of World Politics, Diplomacy and International Relations*, 2002, Vol.48, Is. 2, p.66

In the early years of independence, among a rapid rise in national awareness, its role was if not ignored, at any rate, pushed to the background...the erroneousness of the positions of those who advocated the promotion of just one state language: Kyrgyz.

2.2 Endeavors of the Kyrgyz Government to found Peaceful Multinational Society

Since 1993, the national policy of the Kyrgyz government has been reflected by Kyrgyzstan People's Assembly (*Assembleya Naroda Kyrgyzstana*). It is declared that formation and development of the Kyrgyzstan People's Assembly (KPA) represents a "state-public" form of the Kyrgyz nationality policy. In other words, state presents its power to social organizations of KPA, and they take responsibilities for supporting and strengthening interethnic accord⁸⁶. Elebaeva argues that actual support of political structures, namely, the President; the Government to the Assembly is the National policy of the Kyrgyz Republic⁸⁷.

Officials' claim also show that the policy of the Kyrgyz Government concerning the ethnic groups is implemented to create a Kyrgyzstan that is a 'homeland' of its entire citizen. Therefore, there is no restraint in the country on development of culture, arts, education or media in the languages of all ethnic groups. Similarly, there is no oppression over different religious communities that Islamic mosques and Orthodox

⁸⁶ Ainura Elebaeva, Nurbek Omuraliev, "Problemy upravleniya mezhetnicheskimi otnosheniyami v Kyrgyzskoy Republike", p. 170

⁸⁷ Ibid.

and Protestant churches exist side by side and even the number of Orthodox and Protestant churches is growing⁸⁸.

Kyrgyz Government is sensitive to the language problems. Indeed, it can be argued that Kyrgyz Government pays too much attention to the problems of the Russian-speaking population, in particular, the Russians. Decree on the Measures for Regulation of the Migration Processes in the Republic was issued to decrease migration of Russian-speaking population. Moreover, Russian language was proclaimed as an official language of the Kyrgyz Republic⁸⁹. As it was mentioned above, one of the reasons to preserve international harmony in the Republic were ethnic tensions occurring in the southern region of Kyrgyzstan. Here, it should also be noted that in the early 1990s, ethnic clashes occurred between locals rather than anti-Russians or Slavs⁹⁰. Nevertheless, Kyrgyzstan has generally endeavored to avoid ethnic tensions. Megoran contends that Kyrgyzstan has avoided ethnic conflicts that existed around its borders in Eastern Turkestan, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan over the last decade because it was able to tread a careful path asserting the repressed ethnic identity of the Kyrgyz while seeking to develop a state with a strong and inclusive civic identity⁹¹. Consequently, this argument also shows that the Kyrgyz Government has ignored the Kyrgyz identity and chosen to develop a civic identity; that Kyrgyz Government tried to establish peaceful multinational society. However, although the Kyrgyz national policy aims to avoid clashes between ethnic groups and tries to

⁸⁸ "Participation and representation of ethnic minorities in local self-government", <http://www.osi.hu/lgi/ethnic/csdb/html>

⁸⁹ *Ethnic World*, May 2000, p.3

⁹⁰ Geoffrey J.Jukes, Kirill Nourzhanov, Mikhail Alexandrov, "Race, Religion, Ethnicity and Economics in Central Asia", *The Slavic Research Center*, <http://src-h.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/sywpo/97summer/jukes.html>, p.4

develop civic society, this is not observed in practice. A clear example of this can be the ethnic clashes that could not be avoided in Kyrgyzstan in the Batken incident of August-November 1999, which was based on clear ethnic lines of Tajik, Kyrgyz, and Uzbek. As a result of this Batken incident, Max van der Stoep, High Commissioner for National Minorities with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), even gave a serious warning that Central Asia might soon become the “new Kosovo”⁹².

2.3 Kyrgyzstan People’s Assembly

Taking interests of the nationalities and ethnic groups into consideration, Socio-political Council by the President aimed to protect interests and requirements of all nationalities living in Kyrgyzstan, and also to create harmony between all nationalities since first years of the state’s independence. The President of the Republic called all social associations, namely national-cultural centers, national associations to establish a kind of an extra-parliamentary body, Kyrgyzstan People’s Assembly (KPA). Accordingly, the call of the President to establish KPA was supported by social organizations and realized in 1993⁹³. Moreover, the slogan “Kyrgyzstan is Our Common Home” (*Kyrgyzstan – Nash Obshchiy Dom*) was initiated by the President of the Republic, and has gained popularity to represent the National Policy of the Kyrgyz Republic (KR).

⁹¹ Ibid., p.3

⁹² Cited from Lori M. Handrahan, “Gender and Ethnicity in the ‘Transitional Democracy’ of Kyrgyzstan”, *Central Asian Survey*, 2001, 20 (4), p. 470

⁹³ Fukalov, A. I., ed., *Kyrgyzstan Nash Obshchiy Dom*, Bishkek, 2000, p.5

According to the Declaration of KPA, the assembly is, first of all, a social organization, which aims to express interests of all nationalities living in Kyrgyzstan. Next, KPA seeks to consolidate nationalities, to unite all citizens of the KR, to strengthen international friendship, to maintain civil peace and interethnic accord, to help people in spiritual and cultural reviving, and to develop languages, traditions, and customs of all nationalities in the Republic. Additionally, the main tasks of the KPA are stated in the following way⁹⁴:

- Strengthen international accord;
- Keep civil peace in the Republic;
- Realize interests of all nationalities;
- Reproach all nationalities in Kyrgyzstan;
- Call all nationalities to human values;
- Prevent conflict situations, confrontations, and extremism in interethnic relations.

Also, it is declared that the assembly's activities are carried out according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Pact on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights and the Declaration of Rights for People belonging to National, Ethnic, Religious or Linguistic minorities. To put it clearly, in the Republic, the basic rights and freedom of human being are theoretically recognized and guaranteed in

⁹⁴ Begaliev S., Omuraliev, A., Fukalov A., ed., *XXI Vek – Vek Protsetaniya, Druzhy, i Konsolidatsii Naroda Kyrgyzstana*, Social Research Center under Department of Social and Economic Sciences of the Kyrgyz National Academy of Sciences, Bishkek, 2000, p135.

accordance with the generally recognized principles and norms of international law, international treaties and agreements, and ratified by the Kyrgyz Government.

2.4 Social Organizations of Kyrgyzstan People's Assembly and the Assembly's Structure

In 1994, there were 16 social organizations in KPA, while today there are about thirty organizations. According to the report of the third congress of KPA, social associations in Kyrgyzstan were:

1. Community of the Uighurs of the KR "Ittipak"
2. Community of Jewish culture "Menora"
3. Association of the Turks of the KR "Asturk"
4. Common-cultural center of the Tataro-Bashkirs "Tugan-Tel"
5. Slavic Foundation in Kyrgyzstan
6. International community "Tugel'bay Ata"
7. Republic association of the Tajiks by Rudaki
8. Council of the Germans "Folksrat"
9. National-cultural center of Chechen and Ingush citizens of the KR "Vaynakh"
10. Association of the Karachays "Ata-Jurt"
11. Association of the Kurds "Midiya"
12. Ukrainian Association in the KR "Bereginya"
13. Belo Russian Community "Svitanok"
14. Association of the Azerbaijanis "Azeri"

15. Association of Dungans in Kyrgyzstan
16. Association of the Dagestan people in the KR “Sadaga”
17. Community “Turk-Ata”
18. Center of the Kazakh culture “Oman”
19. Community of the Greeks in KR “Filiya”
20. Association of the Armenians “Karavan”
21. Communal Unity of the Georgians “Mziuri”
22. The Uzbek Natio-cultural Center in the KR
23. Communal Unity of the Koreans
24. Fond “Mnogodetnaya sem’ya”
25. The Polish cultural-educational unity “Odrodzenie”
26. Chechens’ Cultural Center “Bart”

In addition, KPA has gradually extended its significance within the Republic. Four branches of the assembly were opened in different regions of Kyrgyzstan, namely, in Issyk-Kul, Osh, Jalal-Abad, and Talass region.

The executive body of KPA is the Council; the labor body of the Council is the Presidium that consists of 11 members⁹⁵. On the top of the assembly is the chairman. From the foundation of the assembly to 2002, the chairman of the assembly was Sopubek Begaliev; since November 2002 the chairman is Tokoev Isa.

Consideration of questions at the assembly are carried out by the following five stages:

⁹⁵ Fukalov, A., ed., *Kyrgyzstan Nash Obshiy Dom*, Bishkek, 2000, p. 37

- Consideration of questions inside the ethnic groups, diasporas;
- Consideration of questions among the ethnic groups, diasporas;
- Consideration of questions at the Presidium of the assembly;
- Consideration of questions with administrative and executive structures such as the Kyrgyz Government, Ministries, Administration of the President;
- Consideration of questions with the President of the republic.

At the end of these stages, results of examined questions are concluded at *Jogorku Kenesh* and the Government of the Republic⁹⁶.

It is asserted that the assembly has also much influence on decision-making process in the Kyrgyz Government⁹⁷. Furthermore, the assembly plays an active role in the policy of cadres, which is one of the significant problems in the national policy of Kyrgyzstan. For this reason, the assembly has endeavored to solve this problem by promoting deputies from different nationalities at the Parliament and local governmental bodies of the Republic. Today, there are several representatives of ethnic groups and diasporas, such as the Uzbeks, Russians, Karachais, Germans, Ukrainians, and Kazakhs were elected as deputies to *Jogorku Kenesh*, who work at Ministries and different departments of the Government⁹⁸.

As it was emphasized before, every ethnic group is free in developing its values, namely, traditions, customs, language, and culture. This is the main difference of the Kyrgyz national policy from the Soviet nationality policy. In addition to this, the

⁹⁶ *Jogorku Kenesh* – the Parliament of the KR – is the legislative organ of the KR.

⁹⁷ Elebaeva, A., Omuraliev, N., “Problemy upravleniya mezhetnicheskimi otnosheniyami v Kyrgyzskoy Respublike”, *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, Vol(19), 2002, p. 170

⁹⁸ Begaliev, Omuraliev, Fukalov, ed., *XXI Vek-Vek Protsvetaniya, Druzhy I Konsolidatsii Naroda Kyrgyzstan*, pp. 21,25

activities of KPA are based on the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic where basic principles of the national policy are fixed by principles of equality for all citizens of the Republic⁹⁹. Consequently, it is possible to find every kind of information related to activities and life of social organizations, ethnic groups, and diasporas in the newspaper “South Courier”, (*Iujniy Kur'er*)¹⁰⁰. Moreover, Informative-Research Center was established in January 1996, and it publishes all works of the Assembly in the bulletin “Ethnic World” (*Etnicheskiy Mir*). Since October 1997, the bulletin is published in three languages (Kyrgyz, Russian, and English). On January 2003, Informative Research reestablished into Institute of Ethnic Policies. Moreover, all information about the assembly and current events are opened in the web page of the assembly¹⁰¹.

All national-cultural centers celebrate their national holidays, festivals, and cultural programs. Apart from these programs, the assembly has started informative activities such as publishing researches, brochures, and books regarding ethnic groups and diasporas. For example, 100 copies of the book, “Tatars in Kyrgyzstan”, (*Tatary v Kyrgyzstane*); “From History of Correlations between Belorussia and Kyrgyzstan”, (*Iz Istorii Vzaimootnosheniy Belarusii I Kyrgyzstana*); and 300 copies of the book, “Greeks” (*Greki*), “Russian Language in Kyrgyzstan” (*Russkiy yazik v Kyrgyzstane*), “Dungans” (*Dungane*), “Jews in Kyrgyzstan” (*Evrei v Kyrgyzstane*), “From History of the Germans in Kyrgyzstan 1917-1999” (*Iz Istorii Nemtsev v Kyrgyzstane 1917-*

⁹⁹ Fukalov A., ed., *Sbornik otchetov o deyatel'nosti Soveta Assamblei Naroda Kyrgyzstana, Natsional'no-Kul'turnyh tsestrov I obshestvennyh ob'edineniy v sostav Assamblei Naroda Kyrgyzstana 1996-2000gg*, Bishkek, 2000, p.6

¹⁰⁰ Fukalov. A., ed., *Kyrgyzstan Nash Obshiy Dom*, Bishkek, 2000, p.43

¹⁰¹ <http://assambleia.kg>

1999), “Ethno-culture of Uygurs in Kyrgyzstan” (*Etno-cultura Uygurov v Kyrgyzstane*), “The Koreans in Kyrgyzstan”, (*Koreytsi v Kyrgyzstane*) were published¹⁰².

In June 1994, an international conference on problems in migration and ethnic issues (*Problemy Migratsii i Etnicheskie Voprosy*) was held by the assistance of the National Academy of Sciences of the KR. Moreover, several conferences, seminars were organized by the assistance of the assembly and other organizations such as “Democracy and Economic Development in Central Asia” and “Interethnic relations and regional co-operation”. On May 2002, the conference “Multinational Kyrgyzstan: tendencies and perspectives of development” was organized by foundation of Soros in Kyrgyzstan. On April 2002, there was held Forum “*Mir i Soglashenie – Osnova Razvitiya Obshestva*”. Additionally, on September 2002 the seminar “*Zakonodatel'stvo I zashita natsional'nyh men'shstv: mezhdunarodnye normyi I praktika*” was organized by High Commission for National Minorities¹⁰³.

In September 1994, “House of Friendship” (*Dom Druzhby*) was opened as the main administrative center of the assembly in the capital, Bishkek. All social organizations and Informative-Research Center of the assembly settled their offices at this house. Today, it is the main building of all national centers.

It should also be marked that KPA has become a model for other former Soviet republics such as Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, and Uzbekistan¹⁰⁴. Each of these states formed a different form of the assembly. For instance, Uzbekistan

¹⁰² Information taken from interview with Fukalov A., August 2003.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Fukalov, A., ed., *Kyrgyzstan Nash Obshiy Dom*, p. 135

People's Assembly partly belongs to the state; Kazakhstan People's Assembly fully belongs to the state, while Kyrgyzstan People's Assembly and the Russian Federation People's Assembly are not officially connected to the state.

Nonetheless, for Elebaeva, Kyrgyzstan People's Assembly is the unique leverage of conducting interethnic relations as Kyrgyzstan in the beginning of the formation of legal basis to develop interethnic relations.

Although Kyrgyzstan aims to build multiethnic society, labeling "Kyrgyzstan People", there are people who do not want to be ignored as the titular nationality in the Republic and they do not support the President's idea "Kyrgyzstan is our common home". The deputy of the legislative assembly of *Jogorku Kenesh*, Adahan Madumarov claimed that "Kyrgyzstan is home of the Kyrgyzs, we may let other nationalities in as renters of home, if they respect our history, language, and spirituality"¹⁰⁵. Such disagreements with the idea were easily quieted down since they were few.

2. 5 The Congresses of Kyrgyzstan People's Assembly

On December 10, 1993, there was Akaev's decree to hold the first congress of the assembly¹⁰⁶. The aim of the congress was not only to strengthen friendship and consensus among the nationalities but also to consider questions related to the national affairs in the Republic. Consequently, the first congress of the assembly was

¹⁰⁵ Majenov A., Yasinov, R., Musaev, U., "Postoyalets' ot politiki", *Slovo Kyrgyzstana*, No 9 (21062), February 1 2000

¹⁰⁶ Fukalov, A., ed., *Kyrgyzstan Nash Obshiy Dom*, p.5, see details in Kaptagaev E., ed., *Perviy Kurultay Asamblei Naroda Kyrgyzstana*), Social Research Center under Department of Social and Economic Sciences of the Kyrgyz National Academy of Sciences, Bishkek, 1996.

held on January 21, 1994. President Akaev made the first speech, calling “People of the Republic” but not “Peoples of the Republic”¹⁰⁷. President outlined that all nationalities have to be united since they share a “common historical destiny, common anxieties, and common interests and aims”, indicating the past Soviet experience¹⁰⁸. Akaev gave a rough idea that there should not be division into “elder” and “younger” brother, even though the Kyrgyzs are main “ethnos”, their language is a state language, and the republic is called “the Kyrgyz Republic”¹⁰⁹. Additionally, the President stated that the Kyrgyzs tended to synthesize different cultures, which was actually investigated by academician Bartold¹¹⁰. Akaev expressed his belief that this character of Kyrgyz people would allow to establish maximum favorable climate to all nationalities in the Republic. Likewise, he claimed that notwithstanding his/ her nationality every citizen of the Republic has to know that he/ she is part of Kyrgyzstan people.

President also mentioned about the status of Russian language, claiming that Russian was the second language and will remain as the second forever¹¹¹. He added that Kyrgyzstan people have to learn English also as an international language. Additionally, migration of nationalities such as Russians, Ukrainians, Germans, and Jews, most of whom composed of engineers, technicians, employers of art were emphasized. Akaev delineated that this problem is one of the significant problems in

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 7

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p.8

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p.10

Kyrgyzstan and it is only because of economic crisis. In order to slow down the migratory process, Akaev proposed to consider a dual citizenship.

Apart from the speech of Akaev, there were speeches of other participants of the congress such as chairmen of social associations, academicians, employers of art, and veterans. All speeches touched upon the same questions, namely, consolidation of people in the Republic, official languages, dual citizenship, and migration.

On January 22, 1994, at the end of the congress, Declaration of Unity, Peace, and Consensus was proclaimed. In the declaration there were principles such as:

- We are for co-building, consolidating, and flourishing our common home-Kyrgyzstan;
- We are for mutual respecting of spiritual values, traditions of every “ethnos”, every nationality in the republic;
- We are for equality on realization and development of national-cultures of every nation and nationality;
- We are for equality and for a equal responsibility of all citizens for the Constitution-the laws of the Kyrgyz Republic;
- We are for a national consensus for determining approaches of our state;
- We are for co-efforts that lead to flourishing and remaining Kyrgyz lands as our motherland;
- We are for a mutual tolerance, a mutual aid, and an interaction for the sake of our common future.

As a result, according to these principles, the Kyrgyzstan People’s Assembly was set up.

The second congress was not very different from the first. It followed the same steps as the first congress, like the congresses of the former Soviet Union.

On December 1, 1995, there was Akaev’s decree to hold the second congress of the assembly. On February 17, 1996, the second congress was held and President made the first speech where he put his emphasis to works done by the assembly for three years, in particular, to KPA’s recognition and success amid the New Independent

States (NIS)¹¹². Moreover, Akaev maintained that for the last years, migration process from Kyrgyzstan into other countries was decreasing, which he interpreted as people were more sure about their future. In fact, at that period there was decline in the number of migrants, while after 1995, migratory process accelerated again.

President also pointed out that the main principle of the national policy of the Kyrgyz Republic is to care about social-cultural and spiritual development of the ethnic groups. For that reason, he noted that universities like Kyrgyz-Slavic University, Kyrgyz-Uzbek Technological College, Kyrgyz-Turkish University “Manas”, and International University of Kyrgyzstan were opened in the Republic.

Nevertheless, President said that at the congress they have to agree on the main question - economy - as because economy is the root of all other problems emerging among different nationalities¹¹³.

Chairman of the Assembly, Begaliev also drew attention to economic problems that should be first of all to be solved in order to strengthen friendship, and keep peace in the state. He stated that manufacturing spheres should be revived; people should be involved in their works, and earn their wages in order gain their normal life standards. Finally, Begaliev also referred to the assembly’s works for three years, and its success in instituting good relations with international organizations.

Similar to the first congress, after the chairman’s speech, representatives of different social associations addressed the assembly. At the end, the Declaration of Consensus, Work, and Progress was proclaimed¹¹⁴.

¹¹² Fukalov, A., *Kyrgyzstan Nash Obshiy Dom*, p. 30; see details in Omuraliev, N., ed., *Vtoroy Kurultay Asamblei Naroda Kyrgyzstana*, Social Research Center under Department of Social and Economic Sciences of the Kyrgyz National Academy of Sciences, Bishkek, 1998.

Similar to the practices under the Soviet Union, on March 26, 1999, the assembly celebrated its five-year anniversary in order to consider the assembly's success for five years. At the anniversary, KPA's contribution to the Kyrgyz Government at working out language, migration issues, and solving disagreements in society were emphasized¹¹⁵. The assembly was also considered as a good model for strengthening interethnic relations, and keeping civil stability in the state. During the anniversary, Kyrgyzstan's leadership in establishing the assembly among all former Soviet republics was also noted. President Akaev made the first speech. Emphasizing about successes achieved by the assembly, he pointed out "we should not follow mistakes of the Soviet ideologists"¹¹⁶. According to him, the Soviet ideologists forced people to cast aside their national cultures, erased national differences, and put people in an artificial society. Akaev put this as while joining to own culture; cultures of different nationalities make people richer, patient and assured, and feel people could still feel as a part of united people and citizen of state. Here it should be mentioned that indeed, in the present national policy of Kyrgyzstan there is no oppression to develop various ethnics' language, culture, traditions, and religion. In fact, this is the only distinctive factor that was not existent in the Soviet period.

Furthermore, at the anniversary, Akaev emphasized his belief that Kyrgyzstan people strengthened their values, namely, civil peace, stability and interethnic consensus in the state; have formed principles of nation-state and premises for building nation; have worked to strengthen democratization in political, economic, and social process

¹¹³ Ibid., p.56

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 65

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 39

in the republic for last years with the assistance of the Assembly¹¹⁷. However, his emphasis on civil peace is remarkable in the sense that it was not preserved for last years as ethnic and civic clashes occurred in southern region of the state; and demonstrations of people to protest non-democratic regime in the republic have continued.¹¹⁸ Consequently, it shows that speeches at the congresses and the anniversary are different from the real life in the republic. The much more realistic speech about languages and religions Akaev did at the end of his speech, claiming that many ethnic groups now have opportunity to study secondary programs in own languages such as Uzbek, Turk, Korean, Uigur, German, and Dungan¹¹⁹. Then, remarking Central Asian region, including Kyrgyzstan as a mixture of various cultures and religions, such as Buddhism, Shamanism, Christianity, Islam and so on, President emphasized his willingness to revive the “Silk Road”, where different cultures and religions had existed.

At the anniversary, chairman of the assembly, Begaliev detected that the Assembly has been recognized as the successful organization by other former Soviet republics. Begaliev indicated this as officials of the Ministry on Interethnic questions of the Russian Federation several times visited KPA and showed interest in the assembly’s works. Consequently, as a result of the visit, protocol of cooperation between KPA and the Russian Federation People’s Assembly (RFPA) was signed in Moscow in 1998¹²⁰.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 72

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p. 76

¹¹⁸ Lori. M.Handrahan, pp. 468,470

¹¹⁹ Fukalov A., ed., *Kyrgyzstan Nash Obshiy Dom*, p. 77

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 81

The third congress of the assembly was held in 2000 in Bishkek. In the congress, President of the Republic re-pointed out that the Kyrgyz Republic has chosen the right way of solving interethnic relations, with real mechanisms to lead interethnic relations. The only thing that has made displeased Akaev was emigration of the Russians and Slavs from Kyrgyzstan. Akaev mentioned that the Russians as well as indigenous people - the Kyrgyzs - tie and unite all of people of Kyrgyzstan through their language and culture¹²¹.

Accordingly, in 1999, President signed Decree on the Measures for Regulation of the Migration Processes, which aimed to solve mature problems of the Russian-speaking citizens. In addition, law on the status of Russian language in the Kyrgyz Republic as an official language was declared¹²².

During his speech, Chairman Begaliev outlined that citizenship agreements between Kyrgyzstan and Russia, Belorussia and Kazakhstan; and intergovernmental treaty about the status of citizens temporarily living in Russia and the Russian-speaking citizens in Kyrgyzstan were ratified. Additionally, it was outlined that in 1999, KPA made the agreement of experience exchanges with the Russian Federation People's Assembly, and Department of Public Relations was opened at the Ministry of Internal Affairs of KR.

After Begaliev, Chairman of the Russian Federation People's Assembly (RFPA), Ramazan Abdulatipov explained the works of RFPA since its establishment in July 1998. Abdulatipov noted that RFPA works without active support of federal body

¹²¹ Begaliev, Omuraliev, Fukalov, ed., *XXI Vek- Vek Protsevetaniya, Druzhy I Konsolidatsii Naroda Kyrgyzstana*, p.17

¹²² Ibid., p.18

powers but with understandable support of President V. Putin, and many leaders in the Russian Federation¹²³. He underlined that RFPA is one of the elaborators of the conception of the Russian Federation's national policy. Chairman of RFPA asserted that warm relations between Kyrgyzstan and the Russian Federation are going on despite the disintegration of the Soviet Union. At the end, he bestowed the gold medal *Edinstvo Rossii* on Akaev for his contribution to the Friendship of People and Unity of Russia¹²⁴.

Proclaimed declaration of the third congress was called "XXI century –Century for Flourishing, Friendship, and Consolidation of Kyrgyzstan People" (30 June 2000).

2. 6 Social Organization "Slavonic Foundation in Kyrgyzstan"

One of the considerable associations in the KPA is Slavic Foundation in Kyrgyzstan (SFinK), which was established for supporting the Russians and Russian-speaking in Kyrgyzstan in September 1990. Dhekshenkulov indicates that SFinK has taken a leading place in Kyrgyzstan People's Assembly¹²⁵, while Kosmarskaya claims "Russian-speaking are very badly informed about the performance of the Slavic Foundation or other local organizations"¹²⁶.

The main office of the foundation is situated in House of Friendship. In addition, despite the dense population of Slavs in the northern part of the Republic, Slavic Foundation has opened its offices in five regions of Kyrgyzstan, which are:

¹²³ Ibid., p. 31

¹²⁴ Ibid., p.35

¹²⁵ Dhekshenkulov, "Kyrgyzstan – Rossia strategicheskie partnery na XXI vek", *Slovo Kyrgyzstana*, January 21 2000, p.4

¹²⁶ Natalia Kosmarskaya, "Ethnic Russians in Central Asia-A Sensitive Issue? Who is Most Affected? (A Study Case of Kyrgyz Republic)", *Central Asia and Caucasus*, 2000, p. 3

- 1) Issyk-Kul region;
- 2) Naryn region;
- 3) Osh region;
- 4) Talass region;
- 5) Chu region.

SFinK is also considered as an active association in different activities and spheres.

In Cultural Sphere:

Every year SFinK organizes and celebrates Slavic holidays such as *Christmas*, *Rojdestvo*, *Maslennitsa*, *Paskha* and so on. Moreover, the foundation organizes educational holiday “Slavonic cultures and writings”. In 1999, the holiday “Slavonic cultures and writings” was dedicated to 200 years of anniversary of the great poet A.S. Pushkin¹²⁷. Additionally, at the Kyrgyz-Slavic University there are organized tests, Olympiads for students and pupils for developing and supporting Russian language, literature, and culture.

Legal Sphere:

One of the primary aims of SFinK is to protect the rights of the Russians. The Russians, who have problems related to their national status in the republic, may address the SFinK, where lawyers of the foundation process complaints and applications. Accordingly, in case of need, lawyers send applications to legislative

¹²⁷ Fukalov A., ed., *Sbornik otchetov o deyatel'nosti Soveta Assamblei Naroda Kyrgyzstana, Natsional'no-Kul'turnyh tsentrov I obshchestvennyh ob'edineniy v sostav Assamblei Naroda Kyrgyzstana 1996-2000gg*, Bishkek, 2000, p.116

bodies of the Republic¹²⁸. As a result, forming Kyrgyz-Russian commission regarding human right issue was suggested. However, Bogatyrev argues that Kyrgyzstan does not have norms, mechanisms and procedures guaranteeing realization of human rights inside the Republic, even though it has ratified related international conventions¹²⁹.

President of the SFinK, V. Vishnevskii is the vice-chairman of KPA, and also member of the Council of Compatriots under the *Duma* of the Russian Federation¹³⁰. Through the Council of Compatriots, the SFinK keeps contact with Ministries and Government of the Russian Federation, in order to consider the problems of the Russian compatriots in the Kyrgyz Republic¹³¹.

Furthermore, the Russians living in Kyrgyzstan are still supplied with various and many Russian newspapers and magazines, TV and radio channels. For example, since June 2002, *Rossiyskaya gazeta* is in promulgation in Bishkek, which is the largest state edition of Russia. More than 1 million 800 thousand copies are printed in 31 counties, and latest news from Moscow is brought to the public¹³².

Employment sphere

One of the central problems of the national policy of the Kyrgyz Government is policy of cadres. Concerning this issue, there are two contradictory arguments. First,

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 118

¹²⁹ Valentin Bogatyrev, "Nine Statements on Ethnic Policy", *Ethnic World*, No19, 2002, p.2; see http://www.assambleia.kg/em19-2_2.htm

¹³⁰ Fukalov A., ed., *Sbornik otchetov o deyatel'nosti Soveta Assamblei Naroda Kyrgyzstana, Natsional'no-Kul'turnyh tsestrov I obshchestvennykh ob'edineniy v sostav Assamblei Naroda Kyrgyzstana 1996-2000gg*, Bishkek, p.120

¹³¹ Ibid.

those in the line of Kosmorskaya argue that there is inequity towards the Russians living in Kyrgyzstan, in particular, forcing them to leave leading state positions (state bodies, banks, tax offices, custom services, legislative structures, education and health spheres)¹³³. The second is that the Russians who left their positions were eager to emigrate since they did not see a future in their positions and careers¹³⁴. Consequently, these claims have different explanations. Many respondents of surveys organized at the congresses of KPA responded to the question “which problem’s solution would provide with stabilization and harmonization in political interethnic relations?” as *delegating equal number of specialists from ethnic groups at the state bodies* would provide stabilization and harmony in political interethnic relations¹³⁵. On one hand, surveys’ results showed that not only the Russians but also other nationalities also want to have representatives at the state bodies as in a multinational society. On the other hand, as mentioned before, Kyrgyz officials affirm that there are representatives from different ethnics at the state and local bodies. Indeed, at present, the prime minister of the Kyrgyz Republic is Russian of origin¹³⁶. Apart from SFinK, there was opened “Russian House in Kyrgyzstan” on February 2003. Its aim is to unite all Russians in Kyrgyzstan; propagandize Russian culture, great and powerful language of Pushkin, Tolstoy, Bunin, and Esenin, and piously respect and strength brotherly relations of Alatoo people¹³⁷. Russian House unlike

¹³² Roman Safin, “Russia and Kyrgyzstan are more than friends”, *Vecherny Bishkek*, No 96, Wednesday, May 22, 2002, p.

¹³³ Natalia Kosmarskaya, “Ethnic Russians in Central Asia-A Sensitive Issue? Who is Most Affected? (A Study Case of Kyrgyz Republic)”, *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, 2000, p. 17

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Kaptagaev E., ed., *Pervy Kurultay Asamblei Naroda Kyrgyzstana*, p.101

¹³⁶ Information about the Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan in http://eng.gateway.kg/gov_prim

¹³⁷ Alatoo is native name for Kyrgyz lands, which means mountains with shows on top.

Slavonic Foundation is house for the Russians and for those who spiritually thinks that he or she is the Russian¹³⁸. Whereas, Slavonic Foundation is representation of all the Russian-Speaking population in the Republic.

CHPATER III

MAIN ISSUES OF THE RUSSIAN MINORITY IN KYRGYZSTAN

3.1 Status of Russian Language in the Kyrgyz Republic

During the Soviet times, only a half of the population mostly living in countryside of the republic spoke Kyrgyz. Nelli Portnova argues that the reason of it was “Russification” in cultural sphere, repression against national intelligentsia¹³⁹. Accepting that the language and culture of Sovietization were Russian, however, Hosking believes that it was not “Russification”¹⁴⁰. He argues that in practice local languages had been used in primary schools and some publications were in local languages. In fact, the Soviet Kyrgyzstan had a bilingual language policy, one of them was Kyrgyz language used in communication and education; the second was Russian used in education, documentation, and in official and international representations. Both of these languages had been used in education, however, it should be clarified that education in Kyrgyz, in national language was given habitually in village schools, while education in Russian was given in city schools and it was much more privileged rather than education in Kyrgyz. People graduated from Kyrgyz schools were considered as backward people¹⁴¹. Moreover, pupils and students who studied in Kyrgyz were obliged to study Russian, whereas Kyrgyz

¹³⁸ “Russian House”, *Slovo Kyrgyzstana*, February 28 2003, p.8

¹³⁹ Nelli Portnova, “Language Policy in Kyrgyzstan”, *Central Asia and Caucasus*, No 6 (24), 2002, p.91

¹⁴⁰ Geoffrey Hosking, p.259-60

¹⁴¹ People graduated from Kyrgyz schools could not enter at the institution or university with prestigious specializations as most of them had had exam of Russian language. Only few specializations where education had been in Kyrgyz language had not requested exam of Russian.

language was not studied at Russian educated spheres. Indeed, knowledge of Russian had been the key to social advancement, and also education in Russian had much priority in development planning. Nonetheless, the privilege of Russian did not influence publication of magazines and books in Kyrgyz, which were, however, published in few copies.

Reforms in language policy have been started in the Republic at the end of the 1980s. Consequently, in 1989, the official language of the republic was declared Kyrgyz language. There was insignificant reaction of the non-Kyrgyz nationalities; Kyrgyz history, literature, and languages have become obligatory subjects in both Russian and Kyrgyz schools.

However, there have been considerable difficulties in adapting national language in documentation, and administrative works, which led to the correction of the Kyrgyz Government in the state language policy, permitting to use Russian for documenting in dense lived places of the Russian speaking population.

In June 1994, the Decree of President Akaev declared Russian as an official language in the territories, areas, and collectives such as education and health services, where the Russian-speaking people are dominant in population¹⁴². On May 29, 2000 Russian was proclaimed as an official language. Furthermore, the Kyrgyz Government postponed compulsory learning of the Kyrgyz language¹⁴³. Many policy-makers of the Republic state that Russian was proclaimed as a language of

Consequently, people graduated from Kyrgyz schools had gone to work in order to have work experience as advantage before entering at the institution or could enter after several trials.

¹⁴² Natalia Kosmarskaya, "Russkie v Suverennom Kyrgyzstane: Dinamika Mneniy I Povedeniya 1992-1998", in *Kyrgyzstan : Nekotorye Aspekty Sotsial'noy Situatsii*, Institute of Regional Studies, Bishkek, 2000, p. 16

communication. For instance, the chairman of Council of National Security, Kalik Imankulov asserts “Russian proclaimed as official language not because of living of many Russian-speakers but because of communication of all nationalities in this language”¹⁴⁴. Dhekshenkulov also notices that Russian not only an official language in the republic but also language of international communication¹⁴⁵. In addition, decree about Russian as an official language in Kyrgyzstan was officially marked in the Russian Parliament, *Duma* (June 28 2000)¹⁴⁶.

After taking Russian as official language, all decrees and laws of President of KP, legal documents have started to be published in Russian and Kyrgyz (state and official languages). All meetings of the Kyrgyz Parliament, *Jogorku Kenesh* and Legislative assembly and the Government are held in both languages. Russian became a must course for all schools and universities as during the Soviet times¹⁴⁷.

Moreover, in the beginning of independence and proclaiming Kyrgyz as a state language had led to migration of the Russians, Germans, Jews, Ukrainians, Tatars, and other nationalities. After the adaptation of a law making Russian an official language of the republic gave more or less certainty to live in Kyrgyzstan for the rest non-Kyrgyz nationalities. Nick Megoran contends that the adaptation of law affirmed President Akaev’s slogan: “Kyrgyzstan is our common home”¹⁴⁸.

Concerning the weakness of the state language policy, Kosmarskaya states that there are still difficulties in using Kyrgyz language as the official language as it is not easy

¹⁴³ Ainura Elebayeva, Nurbek Omuraliev, Rafis Abazov, “The Shifting Identities and Loyalties in Kyrgyzstan: the Evidence from the Field”, *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 28, No 2, 2000, p. 344

¹⁴⁴ Cited from Portnova, p. 95.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.

¹⁴⁶ Portnova, p. 95.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.34

to conduct meetings of the parliament and government in state language; teaching nuclear physics or comparative anatomy in Kyrgyz language. According to Kosmarskaya, Kyrgyzstan was not immediately ready to use state language in all spheres since there was the need to translate Russian into Kyrgyz in finance and institutional levels. In other words, not only publication of new books, training aids were needed in finance but also there was the need for linguists and teachers who could teach Kyrgyz language. Consequently, for Kosmarskaya, Russian is still the widely used language by the population¹⁴⁹. On the other hand, there are claims that there were not attempts to develop national language despite the difficulties, as they are natural in the beginning of transition. For example, Aali Moldokanov explains how transformed state funding for regulating an official language was spent not according to fixing and not effective, that is, for worse. He claims that funding was spent for teaching Kyrgyz in organizations that was without result; for setting expensive apparatuses for simultaneous translations at meeting halls, expecting to organize all meetings in the state language; and the rest of funding was stolen¹⁵⁰. Apart from this, there is discrepancy at the rural and urban level: The Kyrgyzs who live in cities, in particular, Bishkek do not speak Kyrgyz very well, or do not speak Kyrgyz language at all, whereas in countryside, people speak mostly Kyrgyz¹⁵¹. Therefore, it seems that there are difficulties in transition from Russian into Kyrgyz, in particular, for city population where density of Russian-speaking is higher and for

¹⁴⁸ *RFE/RL NEWSLINE* Vol.4, No 108, Part 1, 5 June 2000, p. 1

¹⁴⁹ Between Southern and Northern population of Kyrgyzstan there is difference in speaking languages, Russian is mostly spoken in the North and in the cities of the republic, while Southern population speaks Kyrgyz with Uzbek accent.

¹⁵⁰ Cited from Portnova, p.93.

all state bodies, universities, institutions that are used to conduct their work in Russian. Nevertheless, transition process should be considered as a long-term process, and that it could not be concluded for five-ten years. Furthermore, people have to have desire to use and speak their native language apart from time and finance required for this process.

Salimjan Zhigitov, in “Yazikovoy Problemy u Nas Net, a Est’ ee Neponimanie”, claims that Russian language fulfils the function of the official language¹⁵². The proof is that all documentation (laws, resolutions) are carried out and written in Russian and then they are translated in Kyrgyz. What is interesting to note is that even translations of those documents and publications are not good. Zhigitov claims that every great nation, more or less, is interested in spreading its language, and through this the nation spreads its influence. In this case, Russia is not an exception. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia did not continue its efforts to keep Russian as an international language despite its presence in the former republics as a second language¹⁵³. On the contrary, the Kyrgyz Government have proclaimed Russian as an official language and endeavored to keep Russian as an international language in the Republic. Indeed, Russian language is still powerful in Kyrgyzstan. Although, nobody knows how much this situation will continue since English is quickly spreading in the world¹⁵⁴. However, the former ambassador of the Russian Federation in the Kyrgyz Republic, Rudov puts forward that language of the country where

¹⁵¹ Natalia Kosmorsakya, “Russkie v Suverennom Kyrgyzstane: Dinamika Mneniy I Povedeniya 1992-1998”, p.17

¹⁵² Salimjan Zhigitov, *Slovo Kyrgyzstana*, No 52 (21104), 19 May 2000, p. 4

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

somebody lives is essential to know¹⁵⁵. By these words, he means that for nationalities living in Kyrgyzstan to learn and speak Kyrgyz is a necessity.

Looking at language issue from another point, Kyrgyz is a rich and ancient language; during the Soviet period it had been taken at the second place and Russian was dominant. Only attaining independence has given an opportunity to facilitate the adaptation of law making Kyrgyz as the state language. However, today Kyrgyz despite being the state language is still behind Russian. Giving Russian the status of an official language has weakened strengthening and using Kyrgyz. Several years ago, Nick Megoran analyzed giving Russian the status of “an official language” in two reasons: garnering support from the Russian-speaking population in the run-up to the presidential vote in the fall 2000, and winning Moscow’s support for Bishkek¹⁵⁶. Megoran also emphasized that it could be that President Akaev’s intention was to win support from urban Kyrgyz communities and the non-Kyrgyz population as well as to present himself as a liberal, intelligent leader who alone blocks the nationalist hordes¹⁵⁷.

The outcome of law on Russian language was twofold: It has really won plaudits from the Russian speaking population, and at the same time it has given rise to a strong reaction from Kyrgyz nationalists who concern about the fate of their language. In this manner, Bishkek is still perceived as a pro-Russian republic.

¹⁵⁵ Interview of Z., Sorokina with the former Ambassador of the RF in KR Georgiy Rudov, “Gde eto Ray? Smotri, ne Progoday”, *Vecherny Bishkek*, May 11, 2001, p. 6

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2

3.2 Status of Dual Citizenship

The idea of “dual citizenship” was quite pretty for the Russians; however, it was not agreed and progressed in the reality. On January 8, 1997, an agreement between the Russian Federation and the Kyrgyz Republic about a simplified order of receiving citizenship for citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic, who would live temporarily in the Russian Federation, and citizens of the Russian Federation coming to live for temporarily time into the Kyrgyz Republic”, was accepted¹⁵⁸.

Until today, although President Akaev favors it, the Kyrgyz Parliament did not approve dual citizenship. Turkmenistan granted dual citizenship to its Russian population in December 1993, and Tajikistan followed in September 1995, and the latest country that approved dual citizenship is Kazakhstan. Only Uzbekistan has declared itself opposed to the very principle of dual citizenship.

3.3 Migration of the Russians from Kyrgyz Republic to the Russian Federation

Problem of migration has been on the agenda since the beginning of 1990s. Generally, increase in the social-economic problems, national feeling and interethnic tensions have motivated migration¹⁵⁹.

After attaining its independence, Kyrgyzstan held the first national population census in 1999. According to the results of that census, there were 4,822,938 people, which shows an increase of 13,3% compared to the population census in 1989. The 1999

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p.21

¹⁵⁹ Kokorin A., Gorenko A., “State and its Ethnic Policy: New Decrees of the Kyrgyz Republic – Step to the Stabilization of Migratory Processes”, p 32; Robert J. Kaiser in Robert Lewis, *Geographic Perspectives on Soviet Central Asia*, pp. 289-90.

census showed that quantity of the Asian nationalities such as the Kyrgyzs, the Uzbeks, the Dungans, the Uygurs, the Turks, the Tadjiks grew up from 52,4% to 64,9% in the last ten years; whereas number of European nationalities such as the Russians, the Ukrainians, the Germans, the Greeks, the Jews decreased to a great extend. In 1989, the number of the Russians comprised of 21,5% of population, whereas in 1999 they comprised of only 12,5%¹⁶⁰.

Jivoglyadov considers questions dealing with migration of the nationalities from Kyrgyzstan to the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Germany, Israel, Uzbekistan, and the United States and argues that within 1992, more than 102,000 people left Kyrgyzstan as almost the same number of people (106,000) who left Tajikistan during the civil war¹⁶¹. According to Jivoglyadov, there were two main reasons for this migration: 1) Current economic difficulties; 2) Threat of political explosions and interethnic conflicts. Jivoglyadov also states that according to the report of UN on human development problems in the first half of 1993, Kyrgyzstan was on 83rd place, while Russia was on 37th place. It means that people migrate to Russia in order to see guarantees for their future, to get jobs, wages, and to live in a politically and economically stable state. The outcome of this migration was “brain drain” (*utechka mozgov*). Since Jivoglyadov sees economic deterioration as the main reason of migration, he points out that as ‘brain drain’ gets higher, economy in the state worsens. Consequently, as a solution to revert the migration process, Jivoglyadov suggests keeping and inviting specialists to develop economy and advance level of

¹⁶⁰ Elebaeva A., Omuraliev N., Abazov R., p. 344; and Tretyakova T., “Diaspory Kyrgyzskoy Respubliki: Prichiny I Perspektivy Formirovaniya”, *Ethnic World*, October 2000, p.35

life in the Republic, also proposes to omit column “nationality” and leave column “citizenship” in new passports of the Kyrgyz Republic and in other documents.

Valeriy Uleev, President of the Association “Slavic diaspora” (*Slavyanskaya diaspora*) in the Jalal-Abad region, is pessimistic about the future of the Russians in Kyrgyzstan. Uleev claims that the Russians have gradually lost their jobs, and perceived that they will be only on second or third positions; which meant they did not have career prospects. Additionally, Uleev points out that many parents complain about the sharp decrease of the level of education at schools because of leaving Russian teachers¹⁶². Consequently, Uleev proposes social organizations to recommend own candidates to public deputy, in order to overcome such problems.

However, according to V. Saenko, member of the Ukrainian society “Bereginya”, there existed two main problems in the nationality question: first, a state language, and second, dual citizenship. He believes that solution for these problems would diminish migration of the Russian speakers.

Nonetheless, the fact that migration of the Russians and Russian speaking population still continue, even if the number of migrants have changed from time to time. Between 1990 and 1991, 33,600 Russian-speaking people migrated from Kyrgyzstan, while in 1992, the number of the Russian migrants reached 65,400. In 1993, migration reached its peak and the number of migrants reached a figure more than 120,000, including 81,000 of the Russians. In 1994, there was a slow down in the migration process, which it decreased as much as to the figure of 49,400. In the

¹⁶¹ Jivogladov, “Migratsiya eto ne tol’ko Jelanie liudey uehat’ no I vozvratitsya”, *Slovo Kyrgyzstana*, December 11 1993, or see in Kaptagaev E., ed., *Pervy Kurultay Asamblei Naroda Kyrgyzstana*, p.47

¹⁶² Fukalov A.I, ed., *Kyrgyzstan Nash Obshiy Dom*, p. 60

following years, 1995, 1996, 1997, the migration comprised 20,100; 15,000; and 11,400 respectively¹⁶³. According to the official data, in 1998, 879,900 Russian-speaking people remained in Kyrgyzstan, including only 690,900 as the Russian origin people.

In the 1996 survey, Kosmarskaya concludes that 42,4% of the Russians voted for not to leave; whereas 47,4% said they want to leave but have hesitations (in this case, reasons were declared as difficulties in leaving and settling; and new difficulties waiting in Russia); 5,3% said they already decided to leave and took necessary measures; and 4,9% said they were leaving to abroad but not to Russia. Whereas, in the survey of 1998, the ratio of Russian who said they do not want to leave was 57,6%; whereas 32,4% said they would like to leave; 2,6% said they had plans to leave; and 7,5% said they were leaving to abroad but not to Russia¹⁶⁴. Comparing the results of 1998 with 1996 survey, the decline in leaving Kyrgyzstan can be seen.

It should be outlined that according to statistics and answers of respondents for the surveys, there are migrants who returned back to Kyrgyzstan. Main reasons for returning back were difficulties in settling and socio-psychological adaptation in Russia¹⁶⁵. In accordance with 1996 survey, 87% of respondents “heard” about coming back of migrants to Kyrgyzstan, while 58% of respondents personally knew them¹⁶⁶. The 1998 survey showed that another reason of returning back was social and psychological barrier between “locals” and “outsiders”.

¹⁶³ Natalia Kosmarskaya, “Russkie v Suverennom Kyrgyzstane: Dinamika Mneniy I Povedeniya 1992-1998”, p.11

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p.13

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 15

¹⁶⁶ Natalia Kosmarskaya, “Ethnic Russians in Central Asia: A sensitive issue? Who is most affected? (A study case of Kyrgyz Republic)”, p. 6

Kosmorskaya says that the reasons of migration to the RF were having children and relatives in Russia, feeling comfortable in the motherland, and the availability of opportunities in education, work, career in Russia ¹⁶⁷:

Moreover, Kosmorskaya determinates the reasons of the Russians who do not want to leave Kyrgyzstan as having relatives and friends in the KR, considering KR as the motherland, and the feeling as “outsider” and fear of being isolated when they go back to Russia.

Concerning migration, Zhigitov contends that before the collapse of the Soviet Union about 45,000 the Kyrgyzs had lived in Russia, whereas today more than 400.000 the Kyrgyzs live in Russia. According to Zhigitov, the reason of migration of the Russians is for economic reasons since majority of the Russians have also left Russia in the last couple of years. Stating that the reason of migration is economic, Valentin Bogatyrev also argues that even language policy has not helped to stop migration to the RF¹⁶⁸. That is why for Bogatyrev, migration to Russia is not only composed of the Russians but also of the Kyrgyzs. Bogatyrev says that between 400,000 and 700,000 of the Kyrgyzs live in the Russian territories, in particular Ural and Siberia, which were the ‘homelands’ of the Kyrgyzs¹⁶⁹. Additionally to this claim, Smirnov, from the newspaper *Independent Newspaper*, states that the reason of migration the Russians is economic rather than ethnic as for ten years, about 450,000 the Kyrgyzs left Kyrgyzstan and went to Russia¹⁷⁰. Thus, it follows that the reason of migration of

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Valentin Bogatyrev, “Ethnic Policy of Kyrgyzstan –Step of Developing”, *Ethnic World*, March 2001, p.20

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Smirnov V., “Mezhdunarodnaya Rozn’-ne Dlya Nas: Prichiny migratsii iz Kyrgyzstana skoree ekonomicheskoe, nejeli Etnicheskoe” *Slovo Kyrgystana*, No 81 (21233), 27 July 2000, p.4

the nationalities, including Russians depends on economic factors rather than ethnic differences nor the national policy.

Omarov, who carried out a research on the migration processes from Kyrgyzstan between the years of 1991 and 2000, gives the number of the Russian migrants as 300,037 that makes 56%¹⁷¹. Omarov in his research divides migration processes into two periods: the first one, from 1991 to the first half of 1994 years; and the second, from the second half of 1994 to the end of 2000. During the first period, the migration was because of weak policy of the Kyrgyz Government towards migrants that led to large growth in the migration processes. Whereas, during the second period the stabilization of migration in the Republic started as a result of some measures taken, such as elaboration of priority directions of migration policy and formation of agencies.

However, as indicated by the researches, in 1998, migration processes decreased to 5,500 migrants, and during the second half of 1999, migration started to increase again. In 1999, migration to Russia consisted of 6,123 people; while in 2000 it increased three times, reaching a figure of 18,435 people, which is indeed a great number of people.

As an outcome of all this migration process, half of million of the Kyrgyz permanently migrated to Russia for earning money, in particular, to Ural and Siberia. Therefore, to protect the right of those Kyrgyz and Russian emigrants, Department of Migration Services by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic and Representation of the Federal Migration Services by the Embassy of the Russian

Federation in Kyrgyzstan follow all migration processes and settlement of Kyrgyz citizens into the Russian Federation.

According to survey, generally, the reasons of migration of the Russians were¹⁷²:

- 1) Caring about the future of children - 59%;
- 2) Instability in economy – 58%;
- 3) Low wages – 41%;
- 4) Unemployment – 39%;
- 5) Dissatisfaction in legislature – 38%;
- 6) Discrimination at works – 12%;
- 7) Discrimination in normal life – 10%;
- 8) Environment - 9%.

As a matter of fact, the Kyrgyz Government provides the Russians with several measures, including the liberalization of their language in order to avoid the large-scale emigration and the ‘brain drain’.

Indeed, through this period, people who had opportunity to leave Kyrgyzstan already left and there remained only those who were not able to leave. In other words, the mass migration has already acclimatized. Ostashuk says that in order to preserve interethnic accord in Kyrgyzstan, one of the best legal bases in the former Soviet Union Republics was created. Ostashuk outlines that there are many problems for emigrants in Russia too that migrants should not anticipate Russia as a “paradise” country, and they must leave Kyrgyzstan in the last resort¹⁷³. Moreover, the former ambassador of the Russian Federation in the Kyrgyz Republic, G.A. Rudov also

¹⁷¹ N.M. Omarov, *Migratsionnye protsessy v Kyrgyzskoy Respublike v gody Nezavisimosti I itogi Desyatiletiya*, Bishkek, 2001, p 73

¹⁷² Tugunbaev T., “...I chemodannoe nastroyenie pust’ pokinet vas”, *Slovo Kyrgyzstana*, May 18 2001, p.3

¹⁷³ Ostapchuk, V., “Gde on , Bereg Nadejd?”, Interview with the chairman of the Representative of Migratory Services of the Russian Federation at the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Kyrgyzstan, *Slovo Kyrgyzstana*, June 29 2001, p.6

notices that Russia is ready to accept all compatriots, however, does not promise them “paradise” life¹⁷⁴.

Most of the researches, and surveys show that a high ration of migration caused an economic crisis in the Republic. Consequently, there are some attempts to decrease migration in the Republic. For instance, the Ministry of Social Defense and Labor opened the Migration Department *Kyrgyzvneshtud* (Kyrgyz External Labor). Moreover, the Kyrgyz Government has made Intergovernmental Agreements relating to workers with not only NIS but also with Near East, Malaysia, Korea. For instance, during an official visit in Moscow, Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs in Kyrgyzstan Lydia Imanalieva met with officials of Russian Federation and discussed “the question of creating of law, social and economic conditions of working activity for Kyrgyz people in Russia and for the Russians in Kyrgyzstan”¹⁷⁵.

¹⁷⁴ Skorodumova E., “Leaving ...Coming back”, *Vecherny Bishkek*, 11 May 2001, p.6

¹⁷⁵ Vladin E., “Common Care”, *Vecherny Bishkek*, No 204, Tuesday, October 22, 2002, p.

CONCLUSION

From an analysis of the Soviet Nationality Policy, it can be seen that ex-Soviet Kyrgyzstan had appeared at the end of the XX century as a multinational state. The present thesis analyzed in what level the Soviet Nationality policy developed a mixture of Kyrgyz nationality with the Russians, and the Russian speaking population; and cultivated Russian as an international language for realizing ‘Sovietization’. Nevertheless, the first part of the research indicated that the nationality question was never “solved” during the Soviet times. It can be observed that the Soviet leaders were convinced that under communism, distinct nationalities would ultimately fade away. As Gregory Gleason also asserts “the Soviet Union had attempted to go beyond nationalism to communism, with the collapse of communism, nationalism was back again”¹⁷⁶. That is, beliefs of the Soviet leaders failed since the national problems in the Union had still been “there”. Moreover, this thesis shows that Lenin’s National policy aimed to build ‘proletarian internationalism’ had remained in theory. Being loyal to Lenin’s National policy, the Soviet leaders had used different policies such as “Russification”, “Indigenization”, “Industrialization”, so as to attain “Sovietization”, generate the “Soviet People”, and avoid the national problems. In the historical part, we see that Stalin supposed that through “Indigenization” the Union would achieve “Sovietization”. Moreover, he was in favor

¹⁷⁶ Gregory Gleason, “The National Factor and the Logic of Sovietology” in Motyl Axender J., *The Post-Soviet Nations: Perspectives on the Demise of the USSR*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1992, p. 5

of ultra-centralized, Russo centric, and bureaucratic party-state¹⁷⁷. Khrushchev's national policy is examined as a limited cultural renaissance among the nationalities after Stalin's severe policy but still he had gone behind Stalin's policy. This thesis additionally shows that no considerable changes in the Soviet Nationality policy existed during Brezhnev's era. However, Andropov is considered as the first reformist in the Soviet Nationality policy, despite his short leadership in the Union and his loyalty to communist ideals. Furthermore, this research reveals that under Gorbachev's rule, the Soviet Nationality Policy appeared as "unsolved" policy. His political and economic reforms led to the revival of national problems, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

In Kyrgyzstan, the attainment of independence has brought different problems, including national problems. Non-Kyrgyz nationalities started to suspect being humiliated by the titular nationality, and migrate out of the Republic. This study of the national policy of the Kyrgyz republic after 1991, however, shows that the Kyrgyz National Policy did not formulate a totally new national policy towards non-Kyrgyz nationalities. It has followed the Soviet nationality policy, in particular, the policy of "Internationalism" with some differences such as declaration of certain national attributes after 1991, and Kyrgyz as the state language in 1989. Apart from these, as it indicated in the second chapter, there are differences between Soviet and Kyrgyz national policy as well. Such a difference is a full right for developing the nationalities values such as, history, language, culture, and traditions is attributed to

¹⁷⁷ Kurt Nesby Hansen, "Continuity within Soviet Nationality Policy: Prospects for Change in the Post

different nationality people living in the Kyrgyz territory. Furthermore, the elaborated study of Kyrgyz National policy illustrates that there is a considerable similarity with Soviet Nationality policy in theorization and implementation of “internationalism”, in particular, using the slogan “Kyrgyzstan is our Common Home” and establishing Kyrgyzstan People’s Assembly (KPA). Another reason to claim that the Kyrgyz National Policy is pro-Soviet policy or follower of “internationalization” policy is the declaration of Russian as an official and international language.

In addition, this thesis is an attempt to demonstrate that despite the declaration of Kyrgyz as the state language, Kyrgyz is not as commonly used and needed as Russian, and has only a formal status in the Republic.

This research, in addition, marks that migration of the Russians and the Russian-speaking from Kyrgyzstan is still the main issue in the national policy and taken into consideration by both governments. Furthermore, this research as well as many researches on the migration of the Russians from Kyrgyzstan explains that the most significant reason of migration is economic rather than ethnic.

As a result of the study, it may be outlined that the National Policy of the Kyrgyz Republic towards the Russian Minority after 1991 is rationally positive but still has problems in economic, political, and social spheres such as unemployment, migration, and dual citizenship. Nonetheless, it should be delineated that all nationalities in the Republic have these problems and share these problems with the Russians. Still, declaration of Russian as an official language; foundation of Social Organizations and Slavonic-Kyrgyz University that provides both Kyrgyz and Russian diploma; and arrangement for developing the Russians’ history, culture,

Soviet Era” in Rezun Miron, *Nationalism and the Break Up of An Empire: Russia and Its Periphery*, PRAEGER, 1992, p. 13

language, and traditions are reasons to state that the National Policy of the Kyrgyz Republic towards the Russian Minority is practically positive.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: The Survey of the First Congress

December 21, 1994

The purpose of the survey was to reveal opinions of different ethnic groups over actual problems in the Republic. Also, it aimed to work out suggestions and recommendations for stabilizing and coming to interethnic accord.

451 participants of the first congress took part in the survey conducted by local researches Omuraliev, Elebaeva, Buhnyak, and Karybaeva.

1. The Kyrgyzs	26.8%	11. The Turks	2.4%
2. Russians	16,0%	12. The Kurds	2.4%
3. Ukranians	3.3%	13. The Bashkirs	0.4%
4. The Uygurs	4.2%	14. The Chechens	0.4%
5. The Dungans	2.4%	15. The Kalmyks	0.2%
6. The Jews	3.3%	16. The Avars	0.7%
7. The Germans	4.0%	17. The Lezgins	0.4%

8.The Tadjiks	1.6%	18.The Armenians	0.4%
9.The Azerbaijanis	1.6%	19.The Gypsies	0.2%
10.The Belorussians	1.6%	20.Other nationalities	7.5%

List of ratios of participants in Omuraliev, Elebaeva, Buhnyak, and Karybaeva survey

Among 451 respondents there were 64,5% - male; 32,4% - female; 20,0% - 18-29 years old; 37,5% - 30-45 years old; 29,3% - 46-60 years old; and 9,3% - more than 60 years old.

Questions in the first part of the survey were as follows:

1) How do you estimate a political situation in the republic?

Alternatives:

- a) Stable situation, fully controlled;
- b) Stable situation, however, it may be out of control;
- c) Unstable situation and it is going out of control;
- d) Unstable situation and it characterizes critical struggle of political powers;
- e) Your alternative

Percentages of the answer were:

- a) 14,6%
- b) 60,3%
- c) 12,9%
- d) 7,3%
- e) –

Practically, 61,1% of the Russians responded that situation in the republic is stable, but it may be out of control, whereas the Kyrgyzs comprised of 52,9%.

2) According to you, who determines political life in the republic and how much?

	Totally %	Mostly %	Partly %	In no way %	Difficult to ans. %
The President	22,4	45,5	16,6	1,1	2,0
<i>Jogorku Kenesh</i>	6,0	26,2	25,1	2,2	4,7
Cabinet of Ministers	3,3	10,2	25,1	4,2	6,0
Party of Communists	1,3	3,1	16,4	9,1	10,4
Democratic Party <i>Erkin Kyrgyzstan</i>	0,4	2,0	14,2	8,6	12,4
Party of Democratic Movement in Kyrgyzstan	0,4	2,7	14,2	7,8	13,7
Party <i>Asaba</i>	0,0	3,5	15,3	8,2	12,4
Party <i>Ata-Meken</i>	0,0	1,1	8,0	9,8	16,9
Republic Public Party in Kyrgyzstan	0,0	0,2	6,0	9,3	18,2
Social Democrats	1,1	0,4	8,6	10,6	15,7
Party of Agrarians	0,0	0,9	7,1	11,8	14,2

According to results, the President mostly influences political life in the Republic. Moreover, amid the parties, the party *Asaba* was the most supported party, as 33,3 % of the Russians voted for it.

3) If situation was unstable then which political power's counter struggle would be?

Alternatives:

- a) Between the President and *Jogorku Kenesh*;
- b) Between the President and different executive structures such as Ministries, regional executive powers *Akimiyat*;
- c) Between the President and political parties;
- d) Between executive powers and legislative powers;
- e) Between rightist and leftist parties;
- f) Your alternative.

Respondents' answer was in the following way: the most counter struggle would be between the president and different executive structures. However, the rest of the alternatives scored approximately the same percentages. Nevertheless, it should be outlined that analysis showed that different ethnic groups differently perceive counter struggle between political powers. For example, while the Kyrgyzs consider that counter struggle might be between the president and political parties, the Russians assume that counter struggle might be between the president and *Jogorku Kenesh*.

The first question of the second part focused on the perspective of democratic reforms in Kyrgyzstan.

Question 1): How do you think, how much is Kyrgyzstan democratic today?

Alternatives:

- a) Democracy in plenty;
- b) Enough democratic;
- c) A little bit democratic;
- d) There is no democracy;
- e) Your alternative.

Answers:

- a) 26,6%
- b) 19,1%
- c) 19,5%
- d) 22,8%
- e) –

Indeed, it was interesting to see that the most pointed out alternative “democracy in the republic in plenty”. However, in this case 33,9% of the Kyrgyzs, 63,2 of the Koreans, 66,7% of the Avars, 75,0% of the Balkars considered that “democracy in the republic in plenty”, whereas 36,1% of the Russians, 33,3% of the Ukrainians, 50,0% of Uzbeks believed that “there is no democracy” in the republic.

Question: 2) What level of democratic development in Kyrgyzstan will be in the future?

Alternatives:

- a) Democracy will be extended and strengthen in all spheres;
- b) The present level of democratic development will be preserved;
- c) It will be decreased;
- d) Your alternative.

According to the answers, more than half of the respondents (52,1%) thought that democratic development would extend and strengthen; whereas 8,2% of respondents were convinced that the level of democracy in the state would decrease.

Question 3) According to your opinion, what system can likely promote the democratic development in the Republic?

Alternatives:

- a) System without parties;
- b) One-party system;
- c) Multi-party system;
- d) Difficult to answer;
- e) Your alternative.

In this case, more than half of respondents (56,5%) answered that multi-party system can promote democratic development in the republic.

Question 4) If one-party system is not then which party you would prefer?

The most preferable party was party of communists in Kyrgyzstan; of course, those respondents who were for one-party system preferred this party. Majority of supporters one party system among the nationalities were the Balkars (25,0%), the Tatars (19,0%), the Russians (15,3%), and the Kyrgyzs (14,9%).

Third part of the survey concentrated on evaluation of the present interethnic situation in the republic. Questions of this section were as follows:

1) Will strained political struggles reflect interethnic position in the Republic?

Alternatives:

- a) Will not reflect;
- b) Possible but in an insignificant measure;
- c) Will lead to polarization of the nationalities;
- d) Will provoke into interethnic resistance;
- e) Will lead to interethnic conflicts;
- f) Your alternative.

Majority of respondents considered that political struggles might reflect interethnic position in the state but to a insignificant level. In particular, the Russians (80,6%) thought that political struggles might lead to polarization of the nationalities (47,2%), interethnic resistance (18,1%), and interethnic conflicts (15,3%); the Ukrainians (93,3%) accordingly 33,3%, 43,3%, and 16,7%, the Germans (77,7%), 33,3%, 33,3%, and 11,1%, and the Jews (66,7%), 40,0%, 20,0%, and 6,7%.

2) How do you characterize the present interethnic relations?

Alternatives:

- a) Quiet, friendly;
- b) Mostly quiet but insignificantly confronted;
- c) Uneven, hostile;
- d) Hostile-conflicting;
- e) Confronted;
- f) Your alternative.

Results showed that majority thinks that the present interethnic relations are quiet but insignificantly confronted. Mainly, the Russians (47,2%), the Koreans (36,9%), and the Belorussians (28,6%) characterized this question as uneven and confronted.

The fourth part of the survey focused on determination of main problems and factors to stabilize interethnic relations (in political, socio-economic, culture-lingual, legal, administrative spheres).

First question of this section: According to you, which problem's solution will provide with stabilization and harmonization of interethnic relations in the republic?

Alternatives and results:

1) In political sphere

- a) Delegating equal number of specialists from ethnic groups at the state structures – 46,1%;
- b) Strengthening bilateral economic and political relations between Kyrgyzstan and another states – 36,6%;
- c) Increasing responsibility of political parties and social organizations for the nationalities problems – 27,7%;
- d) Providing with double citizenship – 23,9%;
- e) Delegating the state to organizations, unions such as CIS – 6,9%.

As it is seen from the percentages, people mostly considered that delegating equal number of specialists from ethnic groups at state structures and political sphere would help to stabilize and harmonize interethnic relations in the state.

Among all nationalities, the Russians (55,6%), the Ukrainians (60,0%), the Uzbeks (60,0%), the Uygyrs (68,4%), the Belorussians (85,7%), the Turks (81,8%), and the Tatars (71,4%) have thought that “policy of cadres” (*kadrovaya politika*) is significant. Besides “policy of cadres”, “double citizenship” issue was pointed out by the Russians (50,0%), the Ukrainians (33,3%), the Belorussians (57,1%), and the Germans (60,7%).

2) In Socio-Economic sphere:

- a) Increasing social security – 39,0%;
- b) Providing youth people with jobs – 32,4%;
- c) Solutions for increasing prices and decreasing level of life – 29,3%;
- d) Introducing the national currency in CIS – 21,1%;
- e) Ceasing mass migration – 20,2%.

3) In Cultural-Lingual sphere:

- a) Status of Russian as an international language – 51,4%;
- b) Absence of press, art literature, and teaching aids in mother tongues – 21,3%;
- c) Absence of possibility to get education in mother tongues (at universities, schools) – 10,4%;
- d) Sharp transition to state Kyrgyz language – 10,4%;
- e) Absence of theaters, art groups of different nationalities and etc. – 5,2%.

According to results, status of Russian was the most important factor in cultural-lingual sphere for stabilizing and harmonizing interethnic relations. To put clear, the status of Russian was significant for nationalities such as the Ukrainians (93,3%), the Tatars (90,0%), the Russians (86,1%), and the Germans (72,2%).

4) In Legal sphere:

- a) Advance criminal and administrative responsibility for developing nationalism and giving offence on national dignity – 74,0%;
- b) Absence of legal guaranties and mechanisms to protect minority rights - 28,4%;
- c) Provide all nationalities with equal education – 27,7%;
- d) Absence of legal guarantees to promote careers for non-Kyrgyz nationalities 17,3%.

5) In administrative sphere:

- a) Establishment of persistent organization (like KPA) coordinating all social associations and having co-relations with government –36,4%;
- b) Formation of a separate department dealing with the nationalities question – 19,3%;
- c) National-cultural centers based on self-administration and self-finance – 18,6%;
- d) National-cultural centers as socio-state organizations –13,5%;
- e) Solutions for supporting national holidays by state structures – 12,0%.

Next question was: Will formation of national ideology progress interethnic relations in the republic?

- a) No, will not – 6.9%;
- b) Yes, only partly – 32,8%;
- c) Yes, in an insignificant level – 40,8%;
- d) Difficult to answer – 14.9%;
- e) Your alternative.

The most respondents outlined that the formation of national ideology will significantly improve interethnic relations. Although the Russians (54,2%), and the Belorussians (71,4%) supported answer (c).

Moreover, the same question was asked in following way: How much the idea of the formation of united people in Kyrgyzstan will develop international relations, economy, political situation, rallying social groups, and other spheres.

Answers were:

	Positively %	Negative ly %	In no way %
International Relations	9,1	0,0	7,1
Economy	52,5	2,7	7,3
Political situation	43,0	5,8	6,9
Rallying social groups	41,5	3,8	7,1
Other spheres	2,4	0,9	1,8

Next part of the survey focused on the development of traditions, cultures, customs, and language of different nationalities. Questions of this section were:

1) Do you have possibility to learn history, culture, language, customs, and traditions of your nationality?

a) No, I do not have – The Koreans (63,2%), The Turks (72,7%), The Azerbaijanis (50,0%), The Kurds (54,5%);

b) In significant level – 40,4%;

c) Yes, I have possibility – The Kyrgyzs 59,5%, The Russians (50,2%),

The Uzbeks (60,5 %);

d) Difficult to answer;

e) Your alternative.

To the question “Do you have willing to learn traditions and customs more deeply?” 88,9% of respondents answered “yes”. To the question, “Who should take responsibility for developing traditions and cultures?” 53,8% of respondents indicated national-cultural

centers, 45,2% pointed out institutions of education, and only small number of respondents considered that families should take responsibility for developing traditions and customs.

Next question related to traditions and customs was: Do you hold on your nationality's traditions and customs?

- a) Always –20,4%;
- b) As much as possible – 56,5%;
- c) Dependent on condition – 19,3%;
- d) No, I do not hold on – 2,2%;
- e) Your alternative.

Question: Where do you often use your traditions and customs of your nationality?

- a) At work;
- b) In family celebrations (wedding, burial ceremonies, anniversaries) – 76,5%;
- c) In normal life –13,1%;
- d) Anywhere;
- e) Your alternative.

As it is seen the nationalities' traditions and customs are much more celebrated in family celebrations rather than at works, and normal life. Apart from above given questions there were several questions related to traditions and customs.

Next question was focused on languages, which showed that Russian was more useful rather than Kyrgyz, although it was an official language in the Republic. The results showed that 68,5% of people speak in Russian at work; 65,2% during public transformation, 61,9% in shopping places; 55,2% at theater and clubs; 60,1% at state bodies. According to the results of the survey, people use their native language mostly in their family circles.

Question: What language do you mostly speak in the following cases?

	In Native language %	In Kyrgyz %	In Russian %
Working places/ institutions	2,0	18,6	68,5
In Families	26,4	24,4	38,4
Public transportation	2,0	14,2	65,2
Shopping places	1,3	16,4	61,9
Theaters / clubs	1,3	14,2	55,2
State bodies	1,8	12,2	60,1
National-cultural centers	28,2	14,6	28,4

Next question was related to migration:

According to your opinion, what are real reasons of migration abroad?

Alternatives and results:

- a) Increasing prices and low wages compared with another states – 60,8%;
- b) Unfavorable condition in the interethnic sphere – 36,4%;
- c) Unstable political situation in the republic –20,0%;
- d) Conditions of life and social life are not good – 7,8%;
- e) Forcing of domestic circumstances – 4,9%.

As this survey showed, there were three main reasons of migration:

- 1) Increasing prices and low wages compared to other states;
- 2) Unfavorable conditions in the interethnic sphere;
- 3) Unstable political situation in the Republic.

The final part of survey was about the perspectives for development of Kyrgyzstan as a multinational state.

Question: Under what conditions may Kyrgyzstan achieve development?

Alternatives and percentages of answers:

- a) Remaining multinational – 85,1%;
- b) Becoming mono-national – 6,4%;
- c) Difficult to answer – 4%;
- d) Your alternative.

It should be outlined that 7,4% of the Kyrgyzs, 20.0% of the Jews, 14,3% of the Tajiks, 9,1% of the Dungans, 5,9% of the Kazakhs, 5,3% of the Koreans, 5,3% of the Uygurs pointed out that remaining multinational state Kyrgyzstan may achieve development.

Question: According to you, who might be warrant for solving actual problems in interethnic relations in the republic?

- a) The President - 67,4%;
- b) *Jogorku Kenesh* – 22,4%;
- c) Political parties – 12%;
- d) Constitutional court – 7,5%;
- e) Cabinet of Ministers – 6,9%.

APPENDIX B: The Survey of the Second Congress

February 17, 1996

As in the first congress in the second congress there was done survey. It is aimed to research political, religious, and interethnic problems in the republic. 389 respondents participated in this survey.

The first part of the survey was about political problems influencing the interethnic atmosphere.

Question: Who, on the whole, determines political life in the republic and how much?

	Complete ly %	Mostly %	Partly %	In no way %	Difficult to answer %
The President	33,8	46,9	7,2	0,7	3,6
<i>Jogorku Kenesh</i>	3,6	14,8	40,3	5,6	5,9
The Parliament	4,3	16,4	31,1	7,5	8,2
State Administrati ons	8,5	16,1	27,5	10,2	7,5
Legal Power	2,3	4,6	22,3	20,7	11,1

Political Parties	1,3	3,0	21,3	22,3	12,5
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Question: What political party's activity is dominant in the republic and in the region?

Parties	Active in the republic %	Active in the region %	Not Active %
Agrarian party	1,3	5,9	17,7
Democratic Party <i>Erkin Kyrgyzstan</i>	11,1	10,5	12,8
Party <i>Asaba</i>	11,5	4,3	14,4
Party <i>Ata Meken</i>	3,6	8,5	13,4
Party of democratic movement of Kyrgyzstan	8,5	5,9	16,4
Party of unity of Kyrgyzstan	3,9	4,9	18,0
Party of Communists of Kyrgyzstan	26,6	16,4	8,5
Republic Public Party of Kyrgyzstan	1,6	3,6	19,7
Social-Democratic party of Kyrgyzstan	10,2	3,9	14,1
Women Democratic party	6,2	8,2	14,8
Party <i>Beybechera</i>	4,9	8,9	12,5

Agrarian Labor party	1,0	5,6	16,7
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Question: According to your opinion, what are relations between state bodies and opposed political parties?

Relations	In the republic, %	In the region, %
Confronted	23,0	6,9
Unfriendly	25,9	13,4
Neutral	14,4	12,8
Cooperated	14,1	7,9

Question: How do you characterize current interethnic relations in the republic and in the regions?

	In the republic, %	In the region, %
Stable	38,0	16,1
Stable but insignificantly confronted	43,6	29,5
Uneven, hostile	6,2	6,9
Hostile, conflicted	2,0	2,0
Confronted	1,0	1,3

Second part of survey was concentrated on religious problems in the multinational republic.

Question: How do you estimate activities of religious organizations in the republic?

	Islam, %	Christianity, %	Different religions, %
Positively	63,9	36,7	7,9
Negatively	12,5	13,4	35,1
In on way	6,6	10,2	5,2
Difficult to answer	3,9	3,6	8,5

Question: Which religious organization is active in the Republic and in the regions?

	Active in the region, %	Active in the republic, %	Not active, %	Difficult to answer, %
Muslims	45,6	43,3	5,9	5,9
Christians- Orthodox	23,9	25,2	5,2	13,4
Christians- Protestants	8,2	7,5	6,9	26,6
Baptists	15,7	13,1	3,9	21,3
Bahaists	8,5	7,5	3,3	26,2

<i>Svideteli Yegovy</i>	14,4	12,8	2,3	21,6
Krishnaists	9,5	10,2	2,6	24,9

Question: Is there any possibility of confrontation based on religion differences in the future?

	Yes, %	No, %	Difficult to answer, %
Between peoples	41,3	11,5	11,5
Between groups	18,0	19,0	13,4
Between ethnic groups	15,1	23,6	13,1
Between states (NIS)	10,2	17,0	18,0

Question: Is there any possibility of confrontation of the nationalities?

There is no possibility of interethnic conflicts	13,8%
There is possibility of individual conflicts	51,8%
There is possibility of interethnic conflicts between groups	21,0%
There is possibility of interethnic groups between masses	8,5%
Difficult to answer	3,9%

Question: Which problems' solution will provide stability in the multinational republic?

Equal number of cadres from ethnic groups at state bodies	47,2%
Advanced responsibility of political parties for appearing interethnic tensions and distrusts	31,5%
Solving “dual citizenship”	19,0%
Strengthening bilateral and multilateral economic and political ties between Kyrgyzstan and other states	48,9%

APPENDIX C: The Survey of the Third Congress

June 30, 2000

In the third congress participated more than 2000 people, only 10% of the participants were asked to complete the survey, that is, 208 people participated in the survey. Questions of this survey were as follows:

i. Estimation of the current interethnic relations

	In the republic, %	In the region, %
Stable	24,0	18,3
Stable but insignificantly confronted	48,1	26,9
Uneven, hostile	16,1	9,6
Hostile and conflicting	4,3	8,7
Confronted	0,5	1,0

ii. Determination of the main factors (political, socio-economic, legal, and lingual-cultural) for stabilizing interethnic relations¹.

Political Sphere:

- To represent equal number of ethnic cadres at all state bodies –45,7% (the Russians-57,9%; the Uzbeks-83,3%);

- To Strength bilateral and multilateral economic and political relations between Kyrgyzstan and NIS – 35,6%;

¹ In each factors, there were suggestions for stabilizing interethnic relations and percentages of the nationalities or people who supported those suggestions.

- To enhance legislative measures of all subjects in political spheres for their lighting interethnic divisions and distrusts up – 35,1%;
- To represent double citizenship – 15,4% (the Russians – 28,9%).

In Socio-Economic Sphere:

- 1) Solutions for unemployment – 52,9%;
- 2) To increase social defense of the population (pensions, bursaries, and etc.) – 36,1%;
- 3) Solutions for increasing prices and decreasing level of life in the republic – 33,7% (the Russians – 39,5%);
- 4) Solutions for decreasing migration from Kyrgyzstan – 11,1%.

In Legal Sphere;

- 5) To advance criminal and administrative responsibility for displaying nationalism and giving offence to national minorities;
- 6) To provide all nationalities with equal possibilities in taking high education – 21,6%;
- 7) To provide all nationalities with legal guaranties and mechanisms for protecting minority rights – 17,8% (the Russians – 23,7%);
- 8) To provide state, and governmental bodies with legal guaranties – 16,3%.

In Lingual-Cultural Sphere:

- 1) Solutions for absence of press, literature, and teaching aids in mother tongues – 34,6;
- 2) Transition of administrative works into the official language – 25,0%, (the Kyrgyzs) – 19,2%;
- 3) Restricted education in mother tongues, in particular, for minorities – 18,8%;
- 4) Absence of national theaters, art groups and etc. – 8,2%;

iii. Determination of religious situation and level of activities of religious organizations.

Religions	Active in the republic %	Active in the region %	Not active %	Difficult to answer %
Islam	55,3	44,2	4,8	5,8
Christianity, Orthodox	19,7	19,7	4,3	2,9
Christianity, Catholics	15,9	18,8	7,0	3,4
<i>Svideteli Yegovy</i>	8,2	11,5	1,9	6,3
Bahatism	1,9	3,8	3,8	11,9
Krishna	2,4	4,8	4,8	7,7
Baptism	1,0	2,4	5,3	10,1

Apart from these religious groups, there is an officially non-registered religious group, called Vahhabism.

The next question was focused on Vahhabism:

How much Vahhabism is spread in the Republic and in the regions?

- 1) Active in the republic – 6,3%;
- 2) Active in the regions – 4,3%.

Among different groups, mainly Russians consider that Vahhabists are active in the Republic – 10,5%.

Moreover, respondents told that estimated activity Vahhabism increased from 20 % to 25% of Osh and Jalal-Abad regions.

Question: under what conditions Kyrgyzstan quickly achieves development?

- a) Remaining multinational - 86,5%;
- b) Becoming mononational - 8,7%;
- c) Difficult to answer - 2,9%;
- d) Other variants – 0,5%.

Question: How much is there possibility of interethnic conflicts in the future?

- a) Possibility of individual interethnic conflicts – 41,8%;
- b) Possibility of conflicts between ethnic groups – 30,8% (most of the respondents who supported this variant were the Russians - 36,8%, and the Uzbeks – 66,7%);
- c) There is no possibility of interethnic conflicts – 12,5%;
- d) May be mass interethnic conflicts – 10,5% (mostly the Russians).

Question: who may be a warrant for stability in Kyrgyzstan?

- a) The President of the KR – 76,4%;
- b) *Jogorku Kenesh* – 12,0%;

- c) Political Parties – 8,7%;
- d) Constitutional Court – 4,9%;
- e) Cabinet of Ministers – 1,4%;
- f) Others – 1,9%.

Question: According to you, who is able to solve ethnic conflicts?

- a) Local power bodies – 11,6%;
- b) State administration – 11,0%;
- c) KPA – 6,9%;
- d) Leaders of local regions, (*Aksakaly*) – 6,9%.