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MANIAS



Dedicated to the
1000th Anniversary
of the Kirghiz epos
"MANAS"

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21/3(257Kv)-P11
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MANAS

VOLUME 2

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY
WALTER MAY

Moscow & Bishkek

1995

Presentation of this Edition by
Tologon Kozubekov
and
Rustan Rakhmanaliev
Under the general editorship
of

Rustan Rakhmanaliev
Editors:
Andrew Wiget (U.S.A.)
Aleksandr Vashchenko (Russia)
Natalia Musina (Kirghizia)

VERSION BY SAGYMBAI OROZBAKOV

National Academy of Sciences
of the Kirghiz Republic
Institute of Literature and Arts
The Publishing House thanks N.Kidash-
Pokrovskaya, A.Mirbadaleva, S.Musaev
for a word-for-word translation
of the text into Russian

Published to order of
the National commission
of the Kirghiz Republic for UNESCO,
the State General Direction
"MANAS-1000"
and the Business Project
"MURAS"

Manas. Kirghiz heroic epos: Vol.2. M.-B., 1995.- 512 p.

ISBN 5-7261-0035-2

- © Kirghiz Branch of International Centre "Traditional
Cultures and Environments", 1995.
- © Publishing House "Door" of AIP, 1995.

НАЦИОНАЛЬНАЯ
БИБЛИОТЕКА

797 1000
Киргизской Республики

Part II (continuation)

8000 Lost my senses; and lost my luck!
 How another chance I've struck —
 Choice now rests in my daughter's hands —
 Alikai, who waiting stands!
 Other gifts I bring from my lands!"
 What bogatir Manas will do —
 Nobody knows, and neither do you!
 Never laughing, doesn't rejoice.
 Never smiling — not his choice.

8010 Only speaks with a hollow voice
 None in the world so famed as he,
 Sabre-toothed, like a tiger, see.
 Teeth not like other people's quite.
 Naked fangs, all flashing white.
 Then he turned to old Bakai,
 His chief adviser, standing by,
 Glanced at him, and then he said:
 "What do you say, my old white-head?"
 Then he laughed, as gay as could be:

8020 "Don't get cross with him!" said he.
 "Khan Sho-oruk has come with a bow,
 Asking for pardon before us now —
 Let us do as he begs, say I!"
 So said Manas to old Bakai.
 "Let it be so!" Bakai replied.
 Most of the others agreed beside.
 "Right he is!" the people said.
 "Into my chamber, straight ahead!"
 Thus Manas turned to his friends and said.

8030 First Sho-oruk inside they led,
 Took him into the palace ahead.
 News of him soon to everyone spread.
 Then the servants the maidens led in,
 Talking in voices, sweet and thin,
 "Whoever chooses one of these —
 Let them get married, if you please!"
 So said the people standing round.
 "Let them as willing wives be found!"
 All the maidens stood blushing then,

8040 Looked upon by so many men.
 Thirty maidens, surrounded then,
 Also began to look at the men,
 Casting here and there a glance,
 Quietly choosing one, perchance?
 Then they said to each other: "You choose!"
 "No! No!" the other would then refuse...
 So the Kirghiz began to call:
 "Choose yourselves, then, one and all!
 Open your eyes, dear maidens, do!"

8050 Here are youngsters and elder men too!
 Those who desire you are Kara-Kirghiz —
 You may marry the one you wish!"
 In a circle the maidens stood,
 While the men made themselves look good,
 Thinking: "She will choose me, perhaps!"
 Straightened their coats, and cocked their caps.
 Tidied themselves for the maidens' sake,
 Hoping to be the one they'd take,
 Hoping to out-do the rest,

8060 All now looking their very best.
 There the youngsters and older ones stood,
 Twisted moustaches, and beards made good,
 And on the maidens cast their glance.
 Playful words they spoke, perchance,
 Never thinking of anything bad,
 Whether an elder, or just a lad.
 Some began to put on airs,
 Thinking: "Maybe they'll make me theirs!"
 Thus, not knowing just what to say,

8070 There the maidens chattered away.
 Some of them grumbled, cross as could be:
 "You are standing in front of me!"
 Some got angry, and even frowned
 At other maidens, pressing around.
 Each one thinking: "I hope he'll take me!"
 Hoping that each a good husband would be.
 "Most are youngsters, elders, a few,
 Poorer peasants, and rich beys too,

8080 Some more serious, some more gay,
 So, it seems, all Kirghiz are they!"
 Their bold leader is lion Manas.
 Freedom of choice they have given us.
 We must really make up our mind.
 Each must quickly her chosen one find.
 Long they thus, indecisive, stood.
 Many were scared, in a worried mood.
 Some went pale, no longer fired,
 Like young camels, with eyes grown tired,
 While their plaits, like steel, shone through.
 8090 "Choose the one who gazes at you!"
 Quietly still they whispered away,
 Younger ones to elders would say:
 "He is so tall, compared with the rest,
 I am so small, I scarce reach his breast!
 Devil take him — a tree, not a man!"
 Elders advising those younger began:
 "Take the one whom you think looks nice,
 Choose who looks kindest, that's our advice!"
 Still they stand in confusion now.
 8100 Many are seen with sweat on their brow.
 Then Ayadil, their leader, thus spoke:
 "We're but the collar — main thing's the coat!
 We must be patient, and choose by and by —
 First choice must go to our Akilai!
 Sho-oruk's daughter comes first, you see.
 Stately she struts, like a pea-hen goes she,
 Swan-necked she floats, white as snow, you see,
 So majestic, serene goes she.
 Eyes like currants, so black you see,
 8110 Shameless hussy, so fearless goes she!
 Akilai said: "He showed mercy on us!
 Therefore as husband I'll choose Manas!"
 Leaving the maidens behind her then,
 Stately stepping between the men,
 Swaying, lovely, without the least fuss,
 Like a breeze-blown willow-wand does,
 She went up to the brave lion thus,

Just as if she had long known Manas,
 Just as if she had long held him dear,
 8120 She approached Manas-bogatir.
 Though Akilai was still a maid,
 Happiness did her soul invade...
 Thinking: "She's found her equal now,
 She has done what's right, we vow,
 She has been first to make her choice,
 Now we too shall find our voice!"
 Thirty maidens standing round
 Chose, each one, the best she'd found.
 Most of the men so chosen there
 8130 Laughed out loudly, I declare.
 From their mirth their heads grew hot:
 "You," they said, "choose the best of the lot.
 But, though most powerful, that's quite plain,
 You without a maiden remain!"
 So between themselves they joked.
 Then Manas, his pride evoked,
 Took for himself, there standing by,
 Matchless in beauty — Akilai.
 Thirty Kirghiz, the boldest of them,
 8140 Thirty maidens accepted then.
 Then Manas six riders sent —
 To all previous fighters they went:
 "Let them all come to the palace here,
 Let them join in the feast's good cheer!"
 From one Friday, till next one through,
 They had a feast, a grand one too!
 Races for horses three years old,
 Jousting, wrestling, butting bold,
 Every kind of game man plays —
 8150 They made merry for thirty days!
 Taking Alikai as his wife,
 Making peace with the foe for life,
 When some forty days had passed,
 All Kirghiz dispersed at last.
 Lion Manas, their bogatir-khan,
 Then rode off towards Andizhan,

Came there safe and sound, what's more.
 When Manas had begun that war,
 All famous families had stayed, it's clear,
 8160 In Andizhan there, safe in the rear.
 Out on the pastures flocks remained,
 Bent-backed aged men had stayed.
 Widows and old women were there...
 Having thought of a change of air,
 Still bold Alo-oke was seen
 In Andizhan, which his had been.
 There Kongurbai, his son, was found.
 He as a boy had roamed around,
 And Kitais saw he had no fear...
 8170 When he reached his thirteenth year,
 Then a near relative in Beidzhin
 For five years had taken him in.
 By Kitais educated he'd been,
 Till he reached the age of eighteen.
 Those Kitais in Anderzhan
 Moved away slowly, man after man,
 Thinking; "Kirghiz on us will fall!"
 Off on their ox-carts went they all.
 In a long line they moved away,
 8180 Argy-bargy, cursing the day...
 "Now Altai is free!" they began --
 "But the Kirghiz seized Naaman!
 Curses on them, they took Andizhan!"
 Alo-oke allowed them to leave,
 Better do so, than stay and grieve.
 Those who wished permission received.
 Most of them said "We'll go, and all!"
 Gathered together with cry and call,
 In a long file they passed Kēēryuk* --
 8190 Two-and-half months the whole trek took.
 So they dragged on, and left their folk,
 So they were scattered, and sadly spoke.
 So they went off there, one by one,
 Ako-oke knew all that was done.
 Kongurbai was now eighteen.

Some lord, Dungsha, who lived in Beidzhin,
 He had a son whom he called Kur.
 Kongurbai served Dungsha, what's more,
 Ever since he came to Beidzhin,
 8200 He'd been a faithful servant to him.
 Kong -- first part, that was his name.
 Bai -- or bey -- he thought up -- his fame!
 Well, he took Kur along all the same,
 To Andizhan, which father just left.
 Alo-oke made a ten-mile shift,
 Seeing off people of homes bereft.
 There, on the road, he put up for the night.
 When Andizhan at last came in sight,
 Kong-bai and Kur saw the people's flight,
 8210 Refugees on the road -- a sad sight.
 Then Kongurbai was much distressed.
 When he arrived, he got there no rest.
 By what he saw he was deeply pained --
 In Andizhan but a few remained.
 Most of them already had fled.
 Now the town was three parts dead.
 Left behind were chambers of gold,
 Left behind rich treasures they hold.
 Left behind the gardens and trees,
 8220 Left behind the gold throne, if you please!
 Left behind many fine stone-built homes,
 Left behind palaces, spires and domes!
 Most of the inmates had been in a stew --
 Most Kitais, and the Manguls too...
 Five years already the town he'd not seen,
 While away in Beidzhin he'd been...
 Alo-oke returned with his wife,
 Greeted his son, the joy of his life.
 Both went forward to give him a kiss,
 8230 But Kongurbai took this all amiss,
 Waved them both away with his hand.
 Father and mother both dumb-struck stand.
 Scorning his father, Kong-bai then said:
 "I'd have respect for you, were you dead!"

- Now you're despicable, as a man!
 Where's what your father took — Fergan?
 Hosts of Kitais — now where are they?
 And Naamans, once under their sway?
 Where are Kitais of the Tungush tribe?
- 8240 Where are our Suns* — are they still alive?
 Those Turgoots and Mandzhurs -- where are they?
 Where are all those you have driven away?
 Where are the Kara-Kalmaks, then, say?
 You still don't value them, till today!
 From Fergan you made your folk stray!
 You have scattered them everywhere!
 "Gainst Kirghiz to fight did not dare!
 You let them come against us Kitais!
 All done stupid, and nought done wise!
- 8250 No Kazakh 'neath your onslaught flies!
 Why do you drive our folk to Kakan?
 Better to die, if you can't be a man!
 You did not fight, but made people leave.
 How from you son, than, respect receive?
 Andizhan, the place where you dwelt,
 What you did there I've seen, and felt!
 And I must say, I still stand dazed!
 In Beidzhin they will be amazed!
 In Andizhan, though, I'd like to know,
- 8260 What is it there that has scared you so?
 Why have all Kitais run away?
 If you return to Beidzhin, I'd say,
 Are you sure that you will not die?
 So, all your folk have gone to Altai?
 When they reach it, and settle there,
 Won't you feel ruined, and die of despair?
 Surely, you hear these words I tell?
 Surely, they all fit you as well?
 Surely, you cannot throw all to the wind?
- 8270 Surely, some better solution you'll find?
 Surely, all the Kitais have not quit?
 Surely, the devil will down you for it!
 Surely, your folk did not grieve so before?

- I went to study, but now suffer sore!
 You, it seems, have renounced your folk!
 Had I but chance to strike one stroke!
 Had I but met those braggarts as well,
 I would not suffer these pangs of hell!
 I would have battled until I dropped!
- 8280 They, it seems, swallowed what they found soft!
 And what was hard they did not bite!
 Surely, to stay without folk isn't right?"
 Thus complained young Kongurbai.
 Many looked on, with wondering eye.
 Then of his sire again he enquired:
 "What kind of trouble has transpired?
 What misfortune fell on your head?
 What made you move, not stand instead?
 Why all your splendour did you doff?
- 8290 What disaster finished you off?
 Such were the questions of Kongurbai.
 Alo-oke stood thoughtfully by.
 Reckoning up things, this way and that.
 "If you want all Kirghiz to knock flat —
 There's no simple solution to that!..
 You, my son, proclaim your own strength,
 But you would fall to Manas, at length.
 He does not let offenders survive.
 He's no weak fool, who can't contrive!
- 8300 Naaman once was Kirghiz land,--
 That's no deceit — on the truth I stand!
 Saying: "Give back our forebears' land!"
 From Altai came Kirghiz to us.
 Great confusion they caused us thus.
 Very insistent, demanding it back,
 Suddenly came Manas, alack!
 I have seen him, and him I know!
 Too conceited you're speaking so,
 Clearly, you play too proud a game!
- 8310 Then Kirghiz in their thousands came!
 Clearly, you count a Kirghiz a weak man!
 Land of Naamans — that is Turkestan.

- That's a Mussulman's land, no doubt!
 If Manas lives to see it out,
 Then the Bang tribe rom out Beidzhin,
 Soon no more will taste feasts therein!
 I shall see if you stand and win!
 Mid the millions of our Kitais,
 Not one you'll find who his stroke survives,
 8320 On the land where Beidzhin now lies!
 If they were folk who won't fall on Baidzhin,
 Why should I leave the place I stand in?
 If they were folk who won't fall on Kakan,
 Why should I roam like a nomad man?
 There is no foe whom Manas won't fight.
 There is for him no unclimbable height!
 You, my dear son, don't show off in vain.
 Even Beidzhin couldn't stand his strain!
 He has no foe who won't sustain loss!
 8330 There are no passes which he can't cross!
 Don't show off before him in vain!
 Don't aim at taking Kakan again!
 I shall certainly leave from here —
 You are too fond of boasting, I fear!
 Senseless, too, are the words you say!
 While Manas sees the light of day,
 Many ravages will be seen
 In our capital city Beidzhin!
 Wherever that crude Mussulman goes
 8340 He will create for you many woes!
 Even in your beloved Beidzhin!
 Don't speak empty, meaningless din!
 When, as Khan, you later appear,
 Don't think Manas will stop just here!
 Meet him in that Beidzhin of yours!
 Plait your steeds' manes, prepare for wars!⁶⁵
 Whatever hollow words you may say,
 If you think to fight him one day,
 Than in Beidzhin you will meet him there!
 8350 I am the one who makes things clear!
 You are the one whom I pity so.

- If from Maaman to Beidzhin you go,
 Six months your cart you have to drive.
 If with Manas you wish to strive,
 Then you must early strengthen your stand.
 Not for us is Turkestan land —
 For Manas our hordes are no folk.
 If on this land we strike our stroke,
 Over our bones will the ravens croak.
 8360 Better measure your strength, not joke!
 Better stretch your mind, it would seem,
 If you yourself his equal deem.
 How then escape inglorious death?
 How then not rob your father of breath?
 Now that I'm just an old white beard,
 How then not bring on me woes I've feared?
 If you are wise, joke only with those
 Whom you know you can safely oppose.
 He is so fierce, so furious he —
 8370 I can't imagine that you do not see!
 He is a monster, and savage, say I.
 Just because I was not destined to die,
 Now not beneath this earth do I lie!
 May this frail world to the devil fly!
 Therefore I thought how I could escape,
 Therefore sent him at our dragon to gape.
 Of those who went to that monster before,
 Not one of them returned any more!
 He just swallowed each one that he saw.
 8380 I did not then sit idle at all
 Hoping that dragon would swallow him too,
 I told him: "Go, see my little zoo!"
 Not only I in submission came —
 That very dragon also turned tame!
 I saw the tricks which Manas played then:
 He drew that dragon out of his den,
 Dragged him along to the crowd by the tail,
 Threw him among them — they turned pale.
 Many people and fighting-men
 8390 Hid themselves in the fortress then!

Therefore speak with more care, my son!
 Don't count Manas the weaker one!
 Leopards, wolves, and lions too —
 Those who would fall upon me and you —
 May they never in that succeed —
 All those beasts of prey, indeed,
 They didn't touch Manas, I swear —
 They just cowered before him there,
 Licked his boots, and grovelled flat.
 8400 When I, your father, saw all that,
 I did not think I'd remain alive,
 So I decided: "If I survive,
 Then I must go from Andizhan!"
 So I thought, as defeated Khan.
 If I stay here I'll grieve and die.
 But I must live — life is heaven, say I!
 I must leave here, without regret,
 I still have kinsmen living yet.
 If I go to them, to stay free,
 8410 With empty words don't criticise me!
 Don't start to quarrel with Muslim Kitais!
 Take me with you to Beidzhin, likewise!
 If to that city Manas should come,
 Then I shall see the strength of my son!"
 Those were the words of Alo-oke.
 Ninety packed camels took him away,
 And, still serving their old Khan then
 There were twenty-five thousand men.
 Hearing his father, his forward son
 8420 Wanted to bite the tip off his tongue!
 All those folk who still served their Khan,
 Preparations for travel began.
 They collected, ten to a tent,
 Fearing Manas as well, off they went.
 They made the trip white Manas was not there.
 Alo-oke, who had got in a scare,
 And the rest of his people with him,
 Started the road to far Beidzhin.
 Faced with hot fury of lion Manas,

8430 Alo-oke Andizhan left thus.
 After the last refugees had gone,
 Four-and-half months they wandered on...
 Then Manas came, with his Kirghiz,
 And, so it seemed, the free land was his!
 This was the city of Andizhan,
 By the banks where the Kosho ran.
 With the Naimans and Kara-Teits,*
 They began to share common fates.
 Neighbours of Kipchaks they became,
 8440 Shared the winter months the same.
 There, in the camps on Kara-Otëk,*
 We must leave Manas to his work...⁶⁶
 To the fortress where steel gates lurk,
 In then head-quarters of Karabëk,
 With a pillow beneath his head,
 There Manas sleeps on like dead...
 Hi has a very special dream,
 Doubly sweet does his sleep seem...
 As he slept he had visions bright,
 8450 Much that was lovely met his sight...
 Not in bare desert, not on the plain,
 Not on the sea, nor a lake again,
 But on the road mid foothills seen,
 With their many hollows between,
 As he travels, what does unfold?...
 Lo! a sword — with tip of gold.
 Three yards long, if truth be told,
 Handle of bronze thereby to hold.
 Sharp is the blade upon one side,
 8460 While the back edge is finger-wide.
 Straight near the haft, and curved at the end,
 What a great sword this is, my friend!
 Lion Manas took it up from the ground,
 Thinking: "How sharp would its blade be found?"
 There's a rock, like a cow in size,
 Black and white, — as a cow, likewise.
 That Manas strikes — and what a surprise!
 Like it were liver, it's sliced in two,

Falls in halves, quite sundered through!
 8470 That blade through the rock-dust flew,
 And its tip got stuck in the earth:
 Pleased was he to see its worth...
 With that sword in his belt he rode,
 On his way his steed then strode.
 Then that sword of a sudden changed —
 As a tiger free it ranged,
 Following on behind Manas,
 His fellow-traveller, flying thus.
 Then Manas rode up a high mound,
 8480 Glanced in four directions all round.
 Tiger-sword growled, prepared to leap —
 All the beasts began to weep,
 Every one was terribly scared,
 They came up, their necks all bared,
 Stretched them out there in the air,
 Showing their submissiveness there.
 Suddenly, they all ran away...
 When Manas looked, he nought could say,
 For that sword had become a hawk,
 8490 Silver-winged his prey did stalk...
 In the air he looked round and screeched,
 Screamed, as wide his wings he stretched.
 How many feathered creatures then,
 Lost their heads, like a cock-chased hen,
 And before Manas, and his sword,
 Bowed and acknowledged him their lord.
 When he squawked 'twas a sound unheard,
 Unlike that of ought other bird.
 He was shining from head to tail,
 8500 Whiter than swans, as pale as pale.
 If you pay close attention here,
 He is Alpkarakash,* bogatir.
 When he swoops like a hawk as well,
 One's head splits from his jingling bell.
 All these wonders in dreame he wist;
 When the hawk settled on his right wrist,
 Then, at once, Manas awoke.

Penetrating his thoughts he spoke.
 He decided: "No simple dream —
 8510 Things are never what they seem!
 On Aziret summer camp-site he chose.
 Still it was spring, when green the grass grows.
 He set old Bai to pasture the mares,
 Then Manas to his heralds declared:
 "Go through wide bounds of Kirghizian land,
 Tell all the folk there, on every hand,
 Whether on hill-top, or down in the dale,
 Everywhere go, with news do not fail.
 "Forty days on, let them come to me,
 8520 For a great feast there is going to be!
 Sixty-one heralds he sent afar,
 Riding to places where kinsmen are:
 "Don't delay more than forty days!"
 So his messengers went their ways.
 Everywhere then they were sent,
 Everywhere the news was spent.
 "Come on your steeds, if they're restless indeed,
 Come on your camels, in case of need!
 Come and gather together with me!"
 8530 Kara-Kirghiz were surprised, you see.
 All the folk were wondering thus:
 "She's born no son, the wife of Manas!
 What kind of feast is it going to be?
 What's he preparing for us to see?"
 Summer pastures were then at their height.
 So they made ready for games all right,
 So they made ready for racing too,
 So they made ready for the stew,
 So they made ready for skins of kumis —
 8540 All the best of what there is!
 This they arranged in parcels and packs,
 Borne to the meadows on horses' backs.
 Time came round for folk to meet.
 Some came over the passes to greet,
 With their turbans twisted like pots
 Came the most respectable toffs,

Khans and beys, and simple folk,
 They all came with a laugh and a joke.
 Strong-men came with clubs as well,
 8550 Leaders and chiefs their numbers swell.
 War-commanders were there at the feast,
 All the folk, from greatest to least.
 So Manas started actions then,
 With displays by artisan men.
 Three hundred steeds, and one thousand sheep
 All as prizes for winners to keep.
 All the horses to run in the race
 Went to Kokand, the starting-place.
 Then the steed of Bagish — Suriyik,
 8560 Touching the flag came galloping back.⁶⁷
 All other racers o'ertook, so they say,
 Finishing flag knocked down on his way.
 All the chosen steeds he out-paced,
 And sheaf of all others he raced.
 So the Kirghiz took the prize that day.
 Still, the honours were shared, anyway,
 For Bagish divided the prize —
 Kirghiz. Kazakhs, Kipchaks likewise.
 Then they had the feast of their lives,
 8570 Then on fat they blunted their knives!
 More time passed, and more they fed.
 At its height the feast went ahead.
 They gave sugar, and honey fresh,
 They gave neck-fat and belly-flesh,
 They gave sausages, all kinds of fat,
 Then black tea to follow all that.
 Then, when the other folk had passed,
 Only Kirghiz were left at last.
 Forty bogatirs stood by,
 8580 And the elders Kirgil and Bakai.
 Then Manas called them, a few words said,
 Elders all, with Jakib at their head,
 Entered together the large marquee —
 Twelve whole sections, head-quarters, you see!⁶⁸
 With its open wheel in the roof,

Elsewhere covered in flannel smooth,
 Wheel-spokes sharpened one end, like a tooth,
 With all side-sheets around this booth
 Fine white felt and flannel the same,
 8590 Covered in silk of fabulous fame,
 And the wheel-spokes and lattice-work too,
 They were painted in every hue.
 In this great white tent Karabek
 And all near kinsmen set to work.
 Elders in places of honour he sat,
 Forming a circle there on the mat,
 Brought forty horse-skins, full of kumiss,
 Every man there got his fill of this.
 One yellow bowl-ful for each was found,
 8600 Sugar and honey then went around.
 And more fillets of fine neck-fat,
 Each one too got his fill of that.
 So their conversation began —
 Khan, or bey, or family head-man,
 They, in turn, all had their say,
 What was on their minds, anyway.
 Then Manas, in his robe, arose —
 Such a robe on the market goes
 Only for five or six thousand dilde!^{*}
 8610 Even at that hard to find, they say.
 If you bought one from some rich man,
 You'd have to give him four thousand rams.
 Even if you bargained a bit,
 No cheap price would you pay for it!
 If some one such a robe should display,
 You would think him a very rich bey,
 Lord of six thousand yurtas, maybe.
 Well, on Manas, such a robe you see!
 On his sword, which brought pain to the foe,
 8620 Which hewed iron like poplar-wood though,
 Which in the battle longer grew,
 Which flamed red on its sharp edge too,
 On that naked sword he leant,
 Ready to fulfil his intent,

And his duty, as famed bogatir,
 Standing upon one knee-cap there,
 With the haft of that sword in his hand,
 Started to speak, as Khan of the land.
 "Get to the bottom to this!" he said,
 8630 "You, my lions, each use his wise head.
 You, my brave ones, distinguished by deeds,
 Here is a matter which solving needs!
 I've had a dream, which you must make clear:
 There, near the foothills, a road lay bare.
 Many fruits lay there on the ground.
 On Akkula I was riding around,
 Dressed in a tunic no arrow could tear,
 Calmly I rode the pathway there.
 Then I came to a hollow place —
 8640 Lying there, right before my face,
 On the road a sword I found,
 And a sharp one, I'll be bound!
 All in a flash I saw it quick!
 One thin edge, and one more thick.
 Haft of bronze and golden tip,
 Curved at the end, and straight where you grip.
 So, in order to test that blade,
 One great blow on a rock I made.
 As though butter, it clove right through,
 8650 So I thought: "'Tis good! 'Twill do!
 Gladly I put it in its sheath,
 From my belt it hung beneath.
 When I started to ride again,
 Then that sword more heavy became,
 Dragged itself right down to the ground,
 Stretched itself till the earth it found.
 There a kind of furrow it made.
 Then it turned to a yellowy shade,
 Took on a very different look,
 8660 Suddenly thus a new form took —
 This is no lie I'm telling you —
 Here was a tiger beside me too!
 He my fellow-companion became,

Muzzle all in a golden frame!
 Soon as another beast he spied,
 Off he sped away from my side!
 Listen further then, old friends,
 How this dreamed-up story ends!
 On the steppe a tree was found —
 8670 I rode up to the top of a mound,
 With my tiger beside me, released.
 Then he started to look to the east,
 Then he started to look to the west,
 Then he growled, as a tiger knows best!
 Then he started to look to the south,
 Then he growled, with snarling mouth!
 Then he started to look to the north,
 Then he roared for all he was worth!
 Then the beasts from all around
 8680 Came and gathered upon the ground!
 Near my mound, then to me they bowed.
 All of them submission showed.
 I then dismissed them, they went away,
 Each in his own place to stay...
 Then a second change I saw plain —
 That same tiger changed again!
 This time he became a white hawk,
 In his own voice began to squawk,
 Different from any other bird
 8690 Was the cry which from him I heard.
 Head to tail he simply shone,
 Whiter his feathers than any swan!
 He was like Alpkarakush* in form,
 Yellow legs, steel claws, like a thorn.
 Those whom he caught, he held them tight.
 Deep-set eyes, and cries full of spite.
 None of his victims did he set free.
 Legs eight paces long had he.
 On his tail was a talisman,
 8700 Yellow gold, and spread like a fan.
 Solid gold were his feathered thighs.
 With beating wings ashine did he rise,

All around resounded his cries,
 Echoing underneath the skies.
 Alpkarakush* before you stood! —
 One whose fame had long been good.
 Covering heaven with their smooth flight,
 All feathered creatures came in sight.
 All, respectfully bowed to him,
 8710 Cowered before that hawk so grim.
 "All the birds and beasts bow to me —
 I have conquered them all, I see!"
 So I thought, with that hawk on my wrist.
 Then from my sleep I woke, with a twist:
 "Now," said Manas, "explain my dream --
 What do tiger, hawk, and sword mean?"
 After he his tale had told,
 They found it hard its sense to unfold.
 All the wise men, pondering there,
 8720 Found their thoughts all mixed, not clear.
 Then the eyes of Abdilda
 Shone like glass, like the morning star.
 Seemingly, he had heard before,
 What was known to many more --
 How Almambet had come to Këkchë.
 Many had said of him, as it were,
 That he once had been Khan of Kakan.
 Many of those who knew this man
 Said there was no God's slave you might meet,
 8730 Whom this man from Kitai could not beat.
 First Adzhibai then came to the fore.
 All those there, bogatirs, what's more,
 Started at one another to glance,
 All undecided to take their chance
 To explain what the dream might mean.
 But Adzhibai appeared on the scene.
 "I understand your dream!" said he.
 "Very successful your life will be!
 There comes one who for long you has sought,
 8740 One good man who is in your thoughts.
 He's lost no honour before Kitais,

He's undefeatedly brave in their eyes.
 Strongest of all against him came,
 Struggled till death, then gave up the game.
 He's a Kitai, of whom they say,
 Black-bobbed Kalmaks, on the battle-day,
 Fought till the last, then ran away.
 From all the human tribes, they say,
 Very few brave as he there are —
 8750 His distant forbear was Chilaba.
 Not having mended lost honour, though,
 His near kinsman was Solobo.
 Never defeated by hook or by crook,
 His own father was So-oronduk.
 Chief-commander, and ruler was he,
 Served by Beidzhin warriors, see.
 So-oronduk's son, Almambet,
 Started against Kitais to fret.
 Battled against them, it would seem,
 8760 When he was only just eighteen!
 With the others he shared his light.
 He gave aid to Këkchë in his fight,
 Gave him praise, in time of need,
 Served him faithfully, indeed.
 He carried on, where Këkchë ceased,
 As Kizir* he served, at least.
 He got mixed up with evil men,
 Bold Khazakhs didn't value then.
 Thus he offended his friend Këkchë,
 8770 And Became estranged, as it were.
 Bold Almambet was like a sword.
 When he spoke, he kept his word.
 Your wild tiger was seen in a dream —
 If that tiger your comrade became,
 That means Almambet will come,
 And will help so that all is done.
 As for that bird, the hawk of white,
 That is a blow at the enemy's might.
 All those birds who bowed to you —
 8780 That means foes submissive too.

All those birds will come to you,
 And will make submission too.
 Like wild beasts you saw in dreams,
 They'll become tame for you, it seems...
 In this world, your comrade true,
 In that world, your helper too,
 He whom you dreamed of is coming yet —
 Tiger and lion — Almambet!
 He is seeking you, low and high!"
 8790 Thus said eloquent Adzhibai.
 All of them, raising hands to their face,
 Said a short prayer for Allah's grace.
 Then Manas, Jakib's first son,
 He, like a tiger and lion in one,
 Plucked up spirit, became more gay,
 Grew more quiet and easy straightway,
 And his heart beat steadier yet,
 Seeming already with Almambet!
 Smiled again, no more looked grim,
 8800 Just as if he were joined with him.
 Smiled very wide, incisors between.
 Teeth not like others there were seen.
 When Manas smiled, they all showed white.
 Then, to Adzhibai's delight,
 He hung round him a precious scarf:
 "Adzhibai — you make me laugh —
 You're like a Khan's bright crown of gold,
 Which I might wear, if truth be told.
 While you live, and speak as you do,
 8810 None can get the better of you!
 Not by words, and not by guile,
 While your soul is sound meanwhile,
 None will touch good deeds you do.
 You have earned the robe of a Biy!*
 Such are you from now on, Adzhi!"
 Don this robe I give to you!
 So he did, and was happy, too!
 Now you must be called Adzhibiy.*
 8820 Those that say 'Adzhibai' you see,

Not knowing why, will go all wrong!"
 Bey Jakib laughed loud and long.
 Afterwards, joined by all the throng,
 When Adzhibiy put his new robe on,
 He shone out just like polished gold.
 Blessings on lion Manas he told.
 Everyone felt happy, 'twas clear.
 Summer had passed, and autumn was here.
 They enjoyed those meadowy days,
 8830 Finally parted, and went their ways.
 Lion Manas, the brave bogatir,
 One Thursday morning, bright and clear,
 Finally triggered off Akkelte...
 Thunderous echoes rumbled away.
 To bogatirs in settlements near
 Then Manas cried: "Come to me here!
 On that day the bold bogatir
 Thundered again for all to hear.
 All forty knights he called amain.
 8840 "Come to me here! he thundered again!
 To his comrades, far off men,
 He sent off six guardsmen then.
 All the forty knights appeared,
 Worthy men, whom foemen feared.
 They rode in from everywhere —
 Forty closest comrades came there.
 With Kirgil, and old Bakai,
 All the strongest standing by,
 Asking "Have we some duty to do?
 8850 What have you called us for to you?"
 Lion Manas replied to them:
 "My fine fellows, the best of men!
 Five long months you nothing have done.
 Where did you find five pence, each one?
 Saving your food, you found nothing beside —
 Do you not wish anywhere to ride?
 We didn't move from these camps of ours,
 Didn't engage in manly affairs,
 Only gossip and slanderous stuff

8860 Came to our ears, and we've had enough!
 Six years in all we've been settled here --
 Moved not a step away, that's clear.
 Musket barrels are covered in rust.
 Ramping like asses, and raising the dust,
 Rear our horses, grown over-fat.
 So are we too, if it comes to that!
 Let us get out on the steppe, I say,
 Let our banners go floating away!
 Let our hoof-beats ring out indeed.

8870 Let every leader bestride his steed!
 Let us go on a great hunt, I mean.
 Let us see things we have not seen.
 We shall track deer, and shoot, I declare!
 On those great mountains, no foot falls there.
 We shall ride those slopes and heights,
 We shall find game, and other delights.
 We shall enjoy ourselves to the full,
 We shall taste mountain goat's meat as well.
 We shall look round, wherever we wish,

8880 We shall find mountain sheep for shashliks!
 God will give us plentiful prey,
 Mountain rams will come our way,
 Then we'll be happy and satisfied men.
 If we see reindeer, we'll shoot at them,
 Those with antlers like branching trees,
 Sixty branches or more, if you please!
 Those we shall shoot, and skin at our ease.
 Venison then will hunger appease.
 Not undressing, we'll lay down to sleep,

8890 Stars over us their watch will keep!
 We're wild-headed, we're used to roam,
 Sleep in our boots in our overnight home.
 We are tired of cooked hash from the pot,
 Some are tired of the wives they've got,
 Those who don't seem to know their place.
 Too long we've spoiled them, that's a disgrace!
 Land between Andizhan and Ala
 We shall travel, both near and far --

Virgin forest, and wild ravine,
 8900 Where bears, and tigers, and leopards are seen.
 You brave fellows will work once more,
 From your faces the sweat will pour.
 Let us feel the breeze on our brow!
 Let us feel the sun's warm glow!
 Ride the crests, and feel fresh air,
 Then look down on the vistas there!"
 Thus to all his friends spoke he.
 Then Kirgil and old Bai both agree --
 All are agreed on a hunting campaign.

8910 Finish routine -- 'let's be free again!
 Some had wanted to climb -- but no peaks.
 Some had been bored, for weeks and weeks.
 Some wished to fight -- but where are foes?
 Some longed for dawn after night's long throes.
 So they prepared now, brave bogatirs.
 All are ready -- departing time nears.
 Chosen horses are saddled, all so,
 And, in case of attack by a foe,
 There are war-steeds, selected and tried,

8920 On which these bogatirs will ride.
 Each had a nose-bag of flannel sewn.
 Each had a food-supply of his own
 Salt they were given, and sheep-tail fat,
 Then they were ridden round after that,
 Till they grew warm upon their tracks.
 Silken horse-cloths were placed on their backs.
 Then around their necks, each one,
 Golden amulets were hung.
 Sheets of tanned leather protected them,

8930 All their bodies were covered then
 From their heads and down to their hooves,
 Silver buckles their look improves.
 If foes take aim and shoot at them,
 Arrows won't pierce that leather then.
 If they pass by sharp, rocky crags,
 None of them will be torn to rags.
 Bogatirs wore chain-mail and plates,

Though going hunting, who knew their fates?
 Still, they looked like robbers, indeed.
 8940 Powder and shot which he would need,
 Lion Manas took along not a few --
 Four hundred friends went with him too.
 Off they set without hasting then,
 Over the heights of Badan and Tegin.
 Noisily chattering, clattering went...
 Two days on hunting there they spent.
 Some shot reindeer with twelve-branched horns,
 Mountain goats too, mid bushes and thorns.
 In those two days they caught on their way
 8950 Roughly five hundred or so, I would say.
 They made leather reins of their hide.
 Then they moved to the southern side.
 In between Andizhan and Kashgar,
 Where the Ala-Too crests are,
 There were many reindeer as well.
 Two days more of hunting we'll tell.
 Mountain rams, as black as black,
 From the chase they then brought back.
 Stage and does they shot as well --
 8960 Seven she-bears -- the truth to tell
 Having charged and loaded their guns,
 Then eight tigers they killed at once.
 Meaty deer they shot down too,
 Panthers and jackals wounded a few.
 Camels with crooked necks they shot,
 Altogether much game they got.
 That place then they named Black Ram --
 That is how "Kara-Kuldzhar" began.
 In Uch-Tash* and Ala-Dyuuku,
 8970 Black rams there were famous too.
 So they skirted Andizhan,
 And on another track began.
 Skins of various beasts they'd shot
 They prepared -- and that was a lot!
 With the meat of black rams and goats,
 They were fed to the top of their throats.

They ate too hind-quarters of deer,
 Altogether enjoyed good cheer.
 After they'd seen such wonders around,
 8980 How could they calm and quiet be found?
 Panthers, unfrightened, tame, they shot.
 Where the carcasses lay -- they would rot.
 Where the apricots lay -- they made mould.
 Where the hooped besats were -- numbers untold.
 Where the cherries lay rotting in mounds,
 Where the apples lay all around --
 Sayang Dzhalak* and Ara-Käl -- *
 There they hunted, all in a whirl,
 Raising their noisy shouts and cries,
 8990 Then they came down, shaking earth and skies.
 There they raced round on their horses each day,
 There the young deer and does did they slay,
 There they made merry in every way,
 There fifteen days on that spot did they stay.
 Over the pass by Chanach* did they fare.
 Look -- to the south -- what did they see there?
 Look at the hollows, and look at the mead,
 Look at the flying geese there indeed,
 Look at the gorges, and look at the mead,
 9000 Look at the honking geese there indeed!
 Look at this land, and look at the mead.
 Look at the geese and ducks indeed!
 There no horses the feather-grass tread,
 There it waves light, as the breezes spread.
 There are flowing the springs and the streams.
 Look to the north, and there, as in dreams,
 On the horizon the mountains are ranged.
 This pleasant spot Kētēlĕk was named.
 When they saw it they said just so:
 9010 "That name Kalmaks gave this land long ago!"
 Lion Manas then laughed off his head:
 "Let's change the name they gave, and instead
 Let's give a new one I now propose!
 In this great valley a wide river flows,
 Here there is free and luxurious land,

Mountains and valleys and pastures at hand!"
 Then old Bakai spoke up, and said thus:
 "Let this fine land be known as Talas!"
 Let the new owner be one of us —
 9020 Let it belong to lion Manas!
 All were agreed with the words he said,
 Everyone smiled, and nodded their head,
 All burst out laughing with greatest glee,
 All were as merry as they could be.
 There, where to bold Koshoi, bogatir,
 Lion Manas gave his banner to rear,
 There, where a dappled mare they slew,
 There, where doughnuts they tasted too,
 There, where Manas resettled his flock,
 9030 There is the mountain field Boto-Moinok.*
 There, where Manas resettled his tent,
 All the next six days they spent.
 Then Manas began to say:
 "Well, tomorrow we leave, anyway!"
 Though he wanted longer to stay,
 Thinking he must no more delay,
 Thus he slowly went on his way,
 Looking back now, and not so gay,
 At the green bed of the river Su,
 9040 At the distant horizon too...
 There was a faint and misty sky,
 Almost not visible to the eye.
 If a wild bird came down from on high,
 Thinking his wings were burnt, off he'd fly.
 If a bold man came, bold, just for fun,
 Thinking his pate was burnt, off he'd run.
 If a blue-tit came, not knowing why,
 Thinking his tail was burnt, off he's fly,
 If a wild ass came, lost having come,
 9050 Thinking his hooves were burnt, off he'd run!
 There were no mountains, none, even small.
 There was no snow, not a spoonful withal.
 There was no town, no not even one.
 Just empty steppe, where a river can run.

On that valley he looked, amazed,
 Where the wild asses, like sheep, just grazed.
 He was delighted, yes, sad to go,
 but for a while we must leave him so...
 We must now tell of his knight Almambet.
 9060 Here is a tale you have not heard yet!..
 He had left the Kazakhs, feeling low,
 With their esteemed Kēkchē, you know.
 Disagreement had parted them so.
 On his lone road he was set to go.
 So he went off towards to west.
 Hunger and thirst his soul oppressed.
 Could not lie down, and could not sleep.
 Memory of what had passed went deep.
 He could not see out of his eyes,
 9070 This careless world did he despise.
 He remembered his loneliness,
 His good steed grazed less and less,
 And his master stood on the brink --
 Almambet had nothing to drink.
 He seemed scarcely to be alive,
 Didn't know whether he would survive.
 Didn't undo his belt on the way,
 Lips were cracking, itching all day.
 And with hunger his stomach rolled,
 9080 Eyes grew dim, their light was dulled.
 And at last all hope grew sere.
 Thinking; "I to Kazakha drew near,
 But they only worked me woe!"
 Now this head is falling low.
 Now I know not which road to take,
 I ask God, for pity's sake,
 Send me death upon this road.
 Destitute, I can't bear this load.
 None takes pity on my dire plight,
 9090 None takes steps to put things right!
 If exhausted I here should fall,
 None would come to aid me at all.
 None would ask me: 'How do you feel?'

- None would seek my wounds to heal.
 I've no elder brother who'd aid.
 I've no son, who heir could be made.
 None to ask from whence I come.
 Younger brother -- I have none.
 If, then, like a dog I die --
- 9100 No slave of God is going to cry!
 I've no uncles on whom to call.
 Oh, my God, creator of all,
 If I die, on this steppe I'll lie,
 Saving you, there is no one nigh!
 Only the greatest Padishah
 Knows of what value my jewels are!
 Now, poor wretch, I am all alone!
 Now I weep every day, and groan.
 Having left kinsmen, I feel weak.
- 9110 To my nearest, as foe I speak!
 Bogatir Almambet is alone,
 Breast full of tears, with many a moan.
 Where should he go -- he has no land.
 Where should he stay -- no folk at hand.
 Plaintive wanders Almambet.
 Mountains finish -- the steppe comes yet.
 Roads are finished, the plain lies here.
 Water is finished, the desert's near.
 To the south he gazed anew --
- 9120 Hills grew lower, the pass comes in view.
 Then the road split into three --
 Almambet, quite lost was he.
 Tears to his eyes began to come --
 Of the road to ask -- there's none.
 Of the folk to ask -- not one.
 Of the pass to ask -- not a soul.
 Of the village to ask -- not a pole!
 There he stood on the road apart.
 For the south he longed in his heart.
- 9130 To the south he made a start...
 God had led him on that track.
 To the right? No -- he held back!

- To the left went Almambet --
 South, where the mountain snow gleamed yet.
 There he saw hollows, and mountain streams,
 Such pleasant sights one sees in dreams.
 He was excited by what he'd seen --
 Little bushes, and crystal stream.
 All alone he gazed around --
- 9140 Such a fine spot at last he'd found!
 Winding, shining, the mountain stream,
 Little bushes in Ilebin --
 Lucid water went flowing by,
 Deeper than a long spear, if you try.
 Whirlpools, where the waters wind,
 White storks there, and herons you find.
 Pelicans with pouched beaks there are,
 Fabulous four-winged Chalagar -- *
 Almambet all this perceives --
- 9150 All these water-side birds he sees.
 They pervade this marshy spot.
 Peewits wade here, and squeal a lot.
 All kinds of water-fowl appear.
 Almambet meets a lapwing here,
 Black and white are marked its wings,
 Only it squeaks, and never sings.
 Swiftly, with whistling wings it flies,
 If it sees a man -- it dives,
 Swoops on him, and swings and swerves --
- 9160 As is the custom of such birds.
 Having forded the stream on his steed,
 Almambet could not be freed
 From that lapwing with piercing screams --
 He became his companion, it seems...
 Then Almambet began to moan,
 His lonely soul began to groan,
 Sad he was, without his folk,
 None to support him, with none he spoke.
 Then he grew cross, and began to frown,
- 9170 Then he grew bitter, brows bent down.
 Took on a threatening look, like a hawk,

When the lapwing began to squawk,
 He with her began to talk:
 "Lapwing, dear friend, don't scream!" said he —
 Truth to tell, such a bird is she —
 "Lapwing, dear friend, don't squeal like this!" —
 Truth to tell, such a bird she is —
 "Mid all these fowls, you seem alone.
 Clearly, in some dry desert you've grown!
 9180 I too, among my own folk, I must own
 Fell so alone, though much good I've done,
 But my work did not please anyone.
 Mid these tail-bearers, alone you seem,
 In the grey desert you clearly have been.
 Mid those tale-bearers, I've been alone,
 Mid those round-headed ones, pain I've known.
 I just drooped then my lonely head,
 Gladness deserted me there!" he said.
 "I do not threaten your nest at all —
 9190 There is none here to make you call —
 Should I die here, there's none to aid,
 By nobody my grave will be made.
 I have no dog, over me to howl.
 I do not threaten your chicks, dear fowl!
 There is none to whom I might go.
 If I die, a dog will not know!
 There remains to me, just my horse.
 I make complaint to Allah, of course!
 In this wide world I wander alone,
 9200 Not among people, all on my own!
 Therefore such bitter words I cry —
 Make complaint, with tears in my eye.
 Round my head you go, flip-flap —
 Lapwing, why do you do that?
 Illness won't seize me, I am sound,
 But I'm lost here on this strange ground.
 Lapwing, stop to scream and screech,
 Don't reproach me with squealing speech,
 Don't waste your time, and bar my way,
 9210 Like Këkchë did, that fatal day!

Don't reproach me, that I'm alone!
 Lost in himself he began to groan.
 He from hunger was now quite weak,
 Knees were giving way, with a creak.
 When he uttered these words to the bird,
 She grew angry at what she heard.
 And again she swooped on him so...
 When Almambet lived at home, long ago,
 Very wide his powers then were.
 9220 Of his own will he came to Këkchë.
 Friend and servant he became.
 When he lived in his own Tungshe,
 For a long while he there held sway.
 Then he wished to go to Këkchë,
 And became his batman, as 'twere...
 Now his thoughts became bemused,
 Now his breath came short, confused,
 And from hunger Almambet
 Head to foot was covered in sweat,
 9230 So he rode on sadly yet...
 He was skilled at bending the bow.
 Now he felt in his quiver so,
 Chose an arrow, and then took aim,
 When the lapwing swooping came,
 Almambet released the string,
 And his arrow pierced her wing.
 That could flip and flap no more,
 For the lapwing was wounded sore.
 Wiped from the sky, she fell to the ground,
 9240 There she lay stretched upon the mound.
 Straight towards her rode Almambet,
 Wanting to see, was she living yet?
 Straight towards her he spurred his steed,
 Then leant down, picked her up, indeed.
 Then he saw it was just one wing,
 Pierced by his shaft, no serious thing.
 Though the bird was powerless now,
 Limp, and lifeless, anyhow,
 Just, as it were, a little quail,

9250 Now its eyes were swollen and frail.
 Then Almambet to the lapwing said:
 "Allah feathered your wings and head,
 But, not knowing your power, you see,
 Why did you make attack on me?
 All in vain you swooped on me so,
 Your small strength you did not know.
 When you circled above my head,
 'Do not touch me, lapwing!' I said.
 'Neither, then, shall I touch you!'

9260 But you would not let me through.
 Now you are weak, and did not succeed!
 I said; Don't touch me! — you paid no heed,
 Flapping, lapwing, you barred my way,
 Pecked at me — now what do you say?
 Thirsty one in the desert — that's you.
 Lion, who's lost his power, that's me.
 Cursed one in the desert — that's you.
 Lion who waits to devour — that's me.
 Why did you strike, not knowing your power?

9270 I am more spiteful than you in this hour!
 Not having measured out your breath,
 You have donned the robe of death.
 Not having measured out your beak,
 You have pecked at me, though weak.
 I, like you, at Kazakhs have pecked,
 Donned death's robe, my chances wrecked.
 If God sends me down the power,
 I will doff death's robe this hour.
 I will take death's robe from you,

9280 Heal your wing, and free you too!
 Healing herbs I have with me,
 And they will cure your wing, you see.
 So he smeared the wing with that —
 Various herbs and a little fat.
 Then the wounded wing set right,
 So that it would be good for flight.
 Then a small red ribbon he found,
 And the wing he carefully bound,

Tied it with silken thread he had —
 9290 All he did, like a real kind lad.
 Then he stroked her, gave her a shake,
 Tried to make he come awake...
 From the marshy isle he came,
 Entered on the dry steppe again.
 That dry steppe today is famed —
 Ak-Ermyen* that's how it's named.
 There he spoke to the bird again,
 By the Ashmara's* shore and plain:
 "Lapwing, dear, go seek your nest,
 9300 Find your fledglings, and take a rest!
 Then the lapwing he set free.
 Straight up in the sky rose she,
 But she looked back at Almambet,
 Found him gazing at her yet...
 In that land where Manas took stock,
 On the pass of Boto-Moinok,
 There on Akkula he pranced.
 Riding onto the crest he glanced
 Where he had been gazing before,
 9310 Taking everything in, what's more.
 There stood bogatir Manas,
 Viewing, reviewing the scenery thus.
 Save for wild sheep, no other beast,
 No other flocks he saw at least.
 Nought, save a wolf with hungry maw,
 Nought, save a stag or two — that's all.
 Not a single soul to be seen.
 Only tracks where wild goats had been.
 Springs were burbling here and there.
 9320 Not a soul — just open air...
 Almambet loomed large on his steed.
 Having left the marshy mead,
 Crossed the crest to the Ek-Ermen,*
 With his gold trappings all shining then,
 On he rode, that great man, afar,
 Through the lowlands of Ashmar.
 Lion Manas spied the bogatir —

Thought: "What kind of man have we here?
 Clothes and horse not like others possess!
 9330 Glimpsing him thus, he could only guess!
 Lion Manas was surprised, indeed!
 Two arms long was the neck of his steed.
 Deadly bow was hung at his back,
 Looks were severe, and brows were black.
 Quiver as big as a bullock had he,
 Stern, and cold as ice seemed to be.
 Clearly, he would slay any foes,
 If he chanced to come upon those.
 On his war-horse, and armed to kill,
 9340 There he rode, as huge as a hill...
 Clearly, offenders he would slay,
 If they stopped him, or stood in his way.
 Clearly, he'd swallow them all like flies!
 Solid gold his sword-handle lies.
 Over the houndless steppe he went,
 On a track to the foothills bent.
 There he rode, and quite alone,
 Cut off from comrades, all on his own.
 Almambet, like a wolf, and gruff,
 9350 There he rode, and was seen far off.
 All in ribbons his body was bound,
 Buckled and buttoned all around,
 From pure gold was his basinet,
 On the tip gleamed an emerald yet.
 Skies reflected the rays from that.
 Tall was his helm, like a tower and fat,
 And, as padishah, suited him pat!
 This strong giant knocked everyone flat.
 None could resist him, all would flee.
 9360 He some excellent Khan must be?
 Then Manas gazed on from afar.
 Almambet's brows like a Khan's really are!
 Thoughtful he rides, but shows no fears.
 He had reached just twenty-eight years.
 What did Manas, then, think of him?
 "Why is he riding, looking so grim?"

Really, an angry lion is he!
 Allah has sent him down to me.
 Hunting, we have met on the line —
 9370 If you perceive — that's a very high sign!
 In my dream I found a sword —
 Now that I've met that sword, good Lord,
 That is Thy doing, All-highest, yet!
 In my dreams a tiger I met —
 Here is that tiger -- Almambet!
 He is my comrade, closest set.
 Who is he, if not Almambet?..
 He then glanced at Manas, bogatir,
 Knew him at once, no doubt, no fear.
 9380 Turned round his steed, and so drew near.
 As Manas to the hollow came,
 Almambet did just the same.
 Having set the lapwing free,
 Up to the pass on high glanced he —
 As when a wolf goes sneaking by,
 As when a fox wags his tail, so sly,
 Something he saw, at first not clear,
 And in wonderment froze right there.
 When Manas, as huntsmen do, peered
 9390 From a projection, the picture cleared.
 Though Manas peered cautiously out,
 Almambet saw him, there was no doubt.
 He too was lost in surprise just then —
 Like a tower reared his steed Kildzheiren...
 Then Manas thought: "What a mighty steed!
 Red woolly elephant there indeed!
 He must be a skilled bogatir.
 He has got such a look severe,
 Thinking of deeds he has to do.
 9400 He is wise, and a strong-man too!
 None can face such a furious man.
 Wide is his chest, and his shoulders' span.
 He whom he seizes, to bits he tears.
 He is a strong-man whom everyone fears.
 Those who joust with him soon will drop,

He is the one who comes out on top.
 Steely fangs and poisoned claws,
 Like a lion, his prey he mauls.
 He is one who overthrows
 9410 All the world with looks like those!
 Fearlessly he goes in to attack,
 Even wild boars from him fall back.
 He does not quake before a foe,
 Even a tiger he'll tackle so!
 If we meet, and he is my friend,
 Then my dream will be real, in the end!"
 So said Manas, the bold bogatir.
 Having eyed him as he drew near,
 Then he trotted back to his friends...
 9420 On Akkula his way he wends...
 Quite at ease, now he moves ahead,
 Skirts of his robes a-fluttering spread.
 To his other companions he said:
 "My dear lions, whom all foes dread!
 God has sent a new comrade to me!
 My dear friend, good luck, suyunchi*
 He brings good news and good fortune I see!
 Listen now, to what I must tell,
 My dear lions, and mark me well!
 9430 If he leads — then success will swell!
 He'll live with you, and he'll be your shield.
 He'll be the joy on your face — never yield!
 He'll be your prop, and he'll be your stay.
 He'll live among you, and he'll lead the way.
 He'll be the axle, supporting the wheel,
 He'll be your road-mate, as strong as steel.
 If you get lost he'll find you once more.
 If you attack, he'll go on before.
 Just like a tiger, your saviour he'll be.
 9440 Skilful, and careful, and helpful is he!
 Into your lives he's coming yet,
 That young bogatir, Almambet.
 With his habits, his fury severe,
 Just like a lion — I've seen him here!

Clearly, at heart he just suits me!
 This young man highly valued must be.
 He who can have such a man beside him,
 Finds a great ocean of gladness therein.
 His intentions one clearly can see —
 9450 He who is clever enough to agree,
 He will find rivers of happiness too,
 If Allah wills, he will bathe anew,
 There he will find what he desires —
 Joy and gladness — all he requires.
 How shall we stop him, and hold him back?
 Say, bogatirs, how bar his track?
 How shall we keep him, and hold him fast?
 Think, bogatirs, and think to the last!
 If we let him go, like Këkchë,
 9460 We shall regret it, if that should occur!
 If he lives with you, give no offence.
 If he does something at your expense,
 Do not reproach him, and show no spite.
 Tell me about it, we'll put things right!
 Please be patient, if temper he shows,
 If he gets stubborn, don't come to blows!
 If he annoys you, forgive him then,
 If he needs something, provide it then.
 If he fights someone, then take his part!
 9470 Let us get ready, let's make a start!
 If he grieves you, then don't get cross,
 Be prepared to tolerate loss.
 If he gives orders, see that they're done,
 Carry them out, to the very last one.
 Beat down those who stand in his way,
 Don't give opponents a word to say.
 Don't forget — Almambet must stay!
 Be prepared to keep him, I pray!
 If he goes forward to fight a foe,
 9480 Then with Almambet you must go!
 Then the unvanquished enemy so
 We shall destroy, believe me, I know!
 Almambet will not yield to death,

He will fight till his latest breath.
 With simple people — he's simple too...
 He will find the right thing to do.
 If he grows angry, don't face him then —
 For he shows the firmness of ten.
 Now he goes the road he has sought,
 9490 Deep distressed, and deep in thought.
 There, in the lowland of Ashmara,
 Where the banks of the Ak-Ermen are,
 Gilded quiver he holds in his hand.
 There five knights of mine must stand.
 When on the foothills there he'll stray,
 Be prepared to stand in his way —
 Kyuldyura's brave son, Chalibai,
 And our great joker, Adzhibai,
 Fearless Kutumai and Sirgak,
 9500 And Akbalta's bold son, Chubak,
 You, my five knights, will be my stay.
 You must go, and bar his way.
 Now it's time your valour to show.
 By the green vale you must go below,
 Get you there unseen, and hide,
 Then when nearer he starts to ride,
 Raise a cry, and look quite grim,
 And, like robbers, dash out on him.
 Strike at him with sword and spear,
 9510 And like thieves before him appear.
 Then unhorse him, and throw him below,
 Take his bridle, and give him a blow.
 Drive him along the road and say:
 'Step out quicker along the way!'
 Go across the pass Boto,
 Rob him, and take his clothes also,
 Seize his horse, and take that too,
 Take him to your squadron with you.
 Drive him so that cowed he'll go —
 9520 Take him back to your warriors so.
 Tell him 'We're going to kill you there!'
 Try to give him a terrible scare.

Push him along the road, severe,
 Get to know him, and see him clear,
 And at last just lead him here.
 Get to know what a mind has he,
 Then lay down on the green grass free.
 You are four hundred and eighty men,
 Let him see what folk you are when
 9530 Some two hundred play knuckle-bones then!
 Then let fifty or so step aside,
 And to pasture your horses ride,
 Then let forty or so, no less,
 Start to play their games of chess,
 Then let thirty or so have a go,
 Wrestling and tussling, to and fro,
 Then let twenty or so throw back
 Pebbles, to play "top-tash-chakmak"*
 Then let ten or so start to play
 9540 "One in the hole with balls, anyway.
 Then let others take his horse,
 Lead it off somewhere, of course,
 Put on a face, as stern as can be,
 Let him your importance see.
 In your bluye tents, with cupolas four,
 Counting yourselves strong men, therefore,
 Do not let him enter, what's more.
 Show him severity, sharp and sore.
 He who is lying, don't let him stand,
 9550 Don't make way for him on your land,
 Don't jump up, just to let him pass.
 He will guess your thoughts on the grass.
 If he's reserved, don't give any sign.
 If he's quick-minded, he'll catch the line.
 He'll find a spot, and there he'll squat,
 Don't start to babble and gabble a lot —
 No empty words — he'll know what's what.
 He will not speak, but will choose his spot.
 Don't start to chatter — no useless word.
 9560 Don't ask him anything — that's absurd!
 Be merely courteous, nothing more.

No matter then if he feels sore.
 You must listen only to me!
 From your brave lion take lessons, see!
 Learn to show courtesy, not to give way,
 Whatever matters hold you in sway.
 To Kazakhs, from Kitais did he stray —
 He by Kazakhs was tormented each day.
 But if Kirghiz, too, lead him astray,
 9570 How then avoid condemnation, say?
 Don't say ought to him out of place,
 No matter if he knows not your face.
 Don't be distressed, nor take it to heart.
 Close conversations with him do not start...
 Just because your ways he won't know,
 Don't be offended, and cross do not grow,
 Lest you make me offended that way —
 That's what your lion to you would say!
 He too's a lion, or seems to be.
 9580 When you finally bring him to me,
 Don't let him greet me astride his horse,
 Let him walk up to me, in due course,
 Say his "Salaam!" to me, with a bow.
 Then I shall learn his where, why, and how!
 When Almambet is brought to me here,
 Don't haste towards him, don't raise a cheer.
 All together don't hasten to speak.
 Don't let him think that we are weak,
 Don't show any such signs of disgrace.
 9590 Listen to me, remember your place!
 Do just that which I tell you to do,
 Then we shall see this matter through.
 Much in him is hidden, and dim.
 If you look — there's foresight in him.
 May he your very essence not know!
 He is one who can't be scared so.
 May he not leave us as once before!
 People see him as a wolf, what's more,
 One who will fight the foe, might and main —
 9600 May he never depart again!

From the Kitais to us he came,
 But Kazakhs drove him out, all the same.
 If, like bold Këkchë, so grim,
 You begin to persecute him,
 He, be certain, will wipe out your name.
 That bogatir who from Kangais came,
 Those Kazakhs just ignored his worth,
 Rights revoked, and drove him forth!
 If you too should act like that,
 9610 With one blow I should knock you flat!
 Thus Manas prepared five men.
 Down to the dale he sent them then.
 He, their leader remained, as due.
 Two hundred men a circle drew,
 Started to play at knuckle-bones too.
 That which Manas had ordered the few,
 They began to do, as he'd said:
 Through the green vale they rode ahead.
 Then they concealed themselves, all set,
 9620 Right in the path of Almambet!
 There, with tears still in his eyes,
 What he's seen from the pass, likewise,
 He began to see from below..
 All the five lay waiting so.
 Then from their hiding-place they burst,
 Shot a volley in warning first,
 Stuck their flag in a neer-by mound,
 Then with a war-cry, rode around.
 In their vicinity — there was he —
 9630 Almambet at once they see.
 All together towards his then
 Rode those five impetuous men.
 Almambet rode quiet, alone,
 Just as if some small quails had flown,
 Did not tremble, nor look their way.
 Heart of lead, steel legs asplay,
 Almambet was not easily scared.
 Like a hungry tiger he stared.
 Manly his chest, and wide his brow,

9640 Firm his mouth, eyes blazing now!
 He was not one to be eadily floored;
 Like a hungry lion he roared.
 Stately, with his spear in his hand,
 There he stood, majestic and grand,
 With his ringing sword at his waist,
 Like a tiger, who's just been chased.
 No slave of God before him could stand —
 Threateningly, the five at hand
 All rode up, could not restrain —
 9650 When they saw him, they marvelled again.
 When those five drew near at length,
 They were surprised to see his strength.
 They did not dare to make an attack —
 Pinned their spears, though, and held him back.
 And, unmoving, sultan Almambet,
 Just you look now, alone stood yet!
 Deep eyes flashing, and face severe,
 Like a sacrificed leopard there.
 Those self-conceited five bold men
 9660 Were amazed by his valour then.
 If he attacked, much harm he'd wreak,
 Like a wolf on lambkins weak.
 Clearly, the weaker ones would die,
 Though they had galloped up with a cry.
 Then they gathered their manly strength —
 But how manly is one, at length?
 They cooled down, and made no attack.
 Who could do so, and then come back?
 Though they had galloped up so fast,
 9670 There, undecided, they stood at last!
 In hesitation they waited there.
 Meanwhile Almambet took the air.
 Slowly forward rode he again,
 Straightened up on Kildzheiren.
 With a cry, the five joined him too,
 Slowly pacing — what would he do?
 Then to him their heads they bowed,
 Greeted him, as custom allowed.

He their greetings did not hear,
 9680 Still rode slowly, holding his spear!
 Take a look at his menacing glance!
 No worse than that of Manas, by chance?
 Thinking: "By Allah he has been sent!"
 Then Sirgak slightly forward went,
 Slightly ahead he spurred his steed,
 Thus Moinok* pass they crossed, indeed.
 Those five bogatirs who had come.
 Once they'd seen Almambet, went dumb.
 How deprived of all their pride,
 9690 Not a word they say as they ride.
 Almambet not a word did hear,
 Therefore he had nothing to fear.
 Those five knights who'd come to him then,
 He could scarcely regard as men.
 He didn't wonder "Who are they, by chance?"
 He didn't even give them a glance.
 They, on seeing his threatening mask,
 Did not dare any questions to ask...
 On the hills forty tents were arrayed —
 9700 Two hundred men at knuckle-bones played.
 Merry they played, with long, loud laughs.
 Others started playing at draughts,
 Forty or so were engaged at "kishte"*
 Some took small stones at "chakmak"* to play
 Fifty men played "one-in-the-hole."
 None of those lying one glance stole
 At Almambet, as he rode by,
 None took a look at his menacing eye.
 No one stirred, nor raised a hat.
 9710 No one asked; "What fellow is that?"
 Not one soul took notice of him,
 With his features, menacing, grim.
 In the four-cupola grand marquee,
 With Manas there sat alway,
 Old Kirgil and bold Bakai.
 Other elders, too, stood by.
 Everything there was of the best.

They arranged to meet their guest.
 There between Manas and Bakai
 9720 One smallish open space did lie.
 To the shining opening there,
 To the door in the open air,
 So as, sitting upon his steed,
 Greetings to give, and to receive,
 Lion Almambet rode on,
 Urging Kildzheiren along,
 Thinking this was his journey's end,
 Thinking here he would meet a friend —
 When he approached the tent-door slow,
 9730 When he had fifty steps to go —
 Then Manas' order rang clear,
 And the five knights heard it there.
 "If you let him greet from his horse —
 Life for you will and its course!"
 Then their hearts yet faster beat,
 No way out they seemed to meet...
 They were scared, in deep dismay,
 Still Almambet rode on his way...
 Not holding back, bold Adzhike
 9740 Then stepped forward, and had his say:
 To Almambet he went at last,
 Took his bridle, and held it fast:
 "You," he said, "when I look in your face,
 There yellow traces of gold I trace.
 You," he said, "when I look at your style,
 Are like some sprite or demon meanwhile.
 You," he said "bring us joy with each step.
 You came of your own will, Almambet!
 You will bring happiness, that we know,
 9750 If great Allah will have it so!
 For our Kirghiz folk, without end,
 You will be a real helper and friend.
 You like a precious jewel will gleam,
 Bluebird of happiness, so you seem,
 Which has spread its wings in blue sky.
 Clearly, you came with a tear in your eye,

Caused by Kazakhs in days gone by.
 By the will of Allah, the great,
 Now you have met a bold lion mate.
 9760 Now you have found your own true fate.
 Listen, my lord, I beg of you,
 To my words — though sad, they're true.
 Though you're a ruler,, just this time.
 Be our young subject, fall into line.
 Khan Manas will get mad, of course,
 If you greet him from your horse.
 Then he'll slay us, as he has said.
 Soon we five should all be dead!
 Maybe his word you have not heard,
 9770 But we have, so it's not absurd.
 On what he said, he won't go back.
 We must do as he says, alack.
 If he has ordered us "Do so!"
 He won't forget, nor repeat them — no!
 Those with whom he is angry die,
 In this he's helped by Allah on high.
 If we dare to disobey.
 If we act in our own way,
 Then we should all be covered in shame.
 9780 We obey orders, all the same!
 He who offends him, comes to no good.
 He's a bold lion — that's understood!
 Terrible in his fury is he —
 If you show stubbornness — woe there'll be!
 He's not the kind to overlook —
 All offenders he brings to book!
 For our part in your act we should die.
 How to escape death? Aye-aye-aye!
 Do not count on our getting away —
 9790 We shouldn't live another day!
 He is one of those lions bold,
 Burning the grass beneath him, behold!
 He is one of those pitiless braves —
 Nought of himself in battle he saves.
 He is one of those merciless knights —

Woe to those who ignore his rights!
 He is a blood-letting bogatir —
 Blood flows round him in water clear.
 He is one of those oath-breaking men,
 9800 Causing alarm among people then!
 He is one who listens to nought —
 Only what he himself has sought.
 He is one of the generous kind —
 Who knows what he has in his mind?
 He is one of those desperate knights —
 Misses his foes if he has no fights!
 He is one of eloquent speech —
 Colourful words are within his reach!
 He is one who has numerous foes —
 9810 Five sides attack — he'll deal with all those!
 There is great firmness in him too —
 What he says, he will carry through!
 Facing one whose spite is strong,
 Facing one who'll do right or wrong
 Don't make a stupid bad mistake
 At his word this bogatir take.
 Don't try to swim against the flood,
 Don't be guilty of spilling our blood!
 Let's get down from our horses now —
 9820 Let's show proper respect somehow!
 That is, of course, if you agree!?"
 So said eloquent, clever Adzhi.
 Then held the rein of Almambet's horse.
 He said nothing against that, of course.
 But old memories came flooding in,
 And he wept, recalling his kin...
 "I have appeared among you here,
 And have left my stubbornness there.
 I have survived, I have not died,
 9830 All this world's changes have borne beside.
 What other way — except to endure?
 Bear what Allah for us has in store?
 Seeing myself dispossessed of my land,
 Seeing my Khanate fall from my hand,

I, it seemed, that fate could not stand.
 But, when misfortune fell on my head,
 When I was lost, and three parts dead,
 I had to bear it, submissive instead.
 Once I was Khan, now homeless became.
 9840 Once I was gold, now bronze, all the same.
 Once a gay soul — now drowned in despair!
 Once a great leader — a follower here!
 Long since my fortune has fallen flat.
 Who, then, can I accuse of that?"
 Those who looked then on Almambet,
 They were surprised by his face, firm-set.
 Slowly he walked, and undistressed,
 Clearly his greeting "Salaam!" expressed.
 Lion Manas, and old Bakai,
 9850 Loudly exclaimed "Salaam!" in reply.
 At any others he did not glance,
 None to extend a hand a chance.
 None dared step up to him and try.
 Then stepped forth old father Bakai.
 Slowly then he held out his hand —
 Almambet took it, shook it, so grand!
 Then he stepped with serious face,
 And he took up his appointed place,
 One of great honour, to all it was clear.
 9860 Then to Manas, the bold bogatir,
 He extended his hand at last...
 Seeing this serious look held fast,
 Lion Manas at once understood,
 That was a sign of nothing good.
 His own thoughts were mixed up, as yet.
 Handsome, stately, Almambet
 Took his place, and now he sits...
 Badly cracked were both his lips...
 Then Manas recalled what had passed,
 9870 Saw he was hungry, after his fast!..
 Straightway he ordered: "Bring some food here!"
 And the cook soon prepared good cheer —
 Honey-sweetened fresh kumiss,

Young Madzhik was sent to serve this.
 Then two servants went for a bowl —
 Solid gold"it gleamed there whole!
 Worth thirty camels, so they say —
 It was filled to the brim, anyway.
 Then, just listen, and you will hear —
 9880 What happened then will all be clear.
 Madzhik then bore it to Almambek:
 "Take it to father Bakai!" he said.
 Old Bakai just wets his lips,
 Then, with a bow, to Jakib he slips.
 So Jakib his lips just wet,
 Handed the bowl to Almambet.
 Then he graciously took the bowl,
 Thinking "Don't show you're hungry, poor soul!"
 Took a few sips, and wet his throat —
 9890 Down in his belly it started to float...
 Suddenly Almambet went weak,
 Bending forward, he could not speak.
 Breathing stopped, he closed his eyes,
 Something went wheezy in his inside.
 For a few moments, he looked like dead,
 Then he revived, and raised his head.
 Then he sat up, and looked around —
 Started to eat the food he'd found.
 Slightly sweating, there he sat,
 9900 Came quite to himself after that.
 Meanwhile Manas sat watching nearby,
 Kept on him a friendly eye.
 "Oy! Fine fellow!" at last cried he,
 Trying to calm him down, you see.
 "Where are you from, and who are your folk?
 Where is that land of which you spoke?
 Tell to us all your story now —
 When did you come here, why, and how?
 Say, where are your people found?
 9910 Like a traveller you roam around!
 Give us your answer, plain as can be!
 Your good steed, for instance, we see

Carried no arms nor accoutrement —
 Like a steed from Kitai it went.
 All your clothes and shoes also,
 They are sewn, as Kitais would sew!
 Is there some city where you could go?
 You seem cross, and are troubled, I know,
 But you have explained it all —
 9920 Tell us about what chanced to befall!
 Here we have met, as by chance, today!
 Where were you born — is that far away?
 Here we are set, as by chance, it seems,
 What's your land like then — a land of dreams?
 You seem to be from a tribe of Kitai —
 There's such a look in your deep-set eye.
 I am surprised that you wander alone.
 I am amazed that you have no home.
 Who is your father? What is your name?
 9930 Tell your whole story, simple and plain!
 Brave Almambet — a wolf for the foe —
 Started to answer in phrases slow.
 Bold Manas listened closely indeed,
 To every word he paid good heed.
 "Don't ask about my family line —
 I am cut off — no kinsmen are mine.
 I am alone — and my people renounce.
 I am ready, should death on me pounce.
 Where shall I find the strength to reply?
 9940 Oh, what a miserable wretch am I!
 What use to ask me 'Where from, where to?'
 I have no power to tell all to you.
 Good-for-nought, wandering the world around —
 What use to ask 'Where will home be found?'
 I have no land to which I might go.
 I am some kind of outcast, you know.
 I have no folk, with whom I might camp.
 I am some kind of wandering tramp.
 I seek those ends which no minds can see —
 9950 I seek a comrade who'll favour me!
 I am some kind of man who might fall,

I seek a road, where none ride at all.
 I am some kind of lost man on the way.
 What has gone wrong with me, none can say.
 I am some kind of prodigal son.
 I dug the slope, where no mattock could run.
 "Shall we find water?" I hopelessly say,
 Digging a ditch of an earlier day.⁷⁰
 I am some kind of man hanger-on,
 9960 Did not perceive that my power had gone.
 I did not take folk's advice which they gave.
 Here, in deep forests, still as the grave,
 I am some kind of ex-convict so,
 I am some kind of man full of woe.
 I am some kind of man who will go
 Head on the block, 'neath the axe's blow.
 No matter how much praise I have earned,
 I shall still by my folk be spurned.
 I am some kind of ne'er-do-well,
 9970 Knowing the heights, and the depths of hell!
 I am someone who hides in black hills,
 Where the dawn my presence reveals.
 Like a bird, I flew from my nest,
 Now I don't see where I can rest.
 I am tired, and have closed my wings,
 I am a lark, who no longer sings.
 Though I may look, no joy yet for me.
 Where could it come from? How could it be?
 I am some kind of man, where roads cross,
 9980 I am some falconer — hawks at a loss!⁷¹
 I am a Pegasus, broke from my rein,
 There in the trough my oats remain.
 I cannot find my way there again.
 I have not now a sufficient brain.
 I went wandering, came here from far,
 From Andzhi-Mandzhi, and my Tangsha,
 From the cities Kentun,* Kiriche.
 'Tell me your forebears, then!' you say.
 Chilaba was my great-grand-sire,
 9990 Solobo — son of his desire.

Solobo's son was So-oronduk,
 That was the line my forbears took.
 Son of So-oronduk — that is I —
 Poor Almambet, and you know why!
 I have not added a single lie.
 Strange to my people, with kinsmen none!"
 Thus Almambet said to everyone.
 Thus he spoke, and then fell dumb.
 When all was said, and all was done,
 10000 He thought the end of the world had come!
 Having seen Manas' great fame,
 Having heard his glorious name,
 He had thought "Are his deeds so great?
 So opportune for his people's fate?
 Clearly, he's an unusual man!"
 And again the tears began...
 Listen friends, turn ears this way,
 What Manas then had to say:
 "High are the crests of Ala-Too —
 10010 Chasing white stags, who can't pass through?
 Level the steppe, and long the track,
 Lose your way, and who can get back?
 Not from China* the Khan here came,
 When I called him to my domain,
 Not from Kakanchi, when desired,
 But to me here and now, and I'm fired
 With such heavenly happiness!
 Allah has sent him down, I guess!
 You, my cocky forty knights,
 10020 Don't know customs, and others' rights.
 No Khan, lacking gifts, leaves his steed!
 Quickly prepare some, as you need.
 Then, when we have paid due respect,
 His own course he can select.
 He can live with our folk, should he wish,
 Or he can leave — the choice is his.
 If with my folk he will not stay,
 Let him decide his further way.
 Bring him silk gowns, and bring him a steed,

10030 Bring him the finest war-horse, indeed!
 Calm the heart of this bogatir.
 When he goes out on the road from here,
 Take Akkelte* and load it full,
 Let him when needed the trigger pull!
 Sirnaiza,* my spear, let him take,
 And a gift of my gown then make.
 As due respect for an honoured guest,
 Hand him Achalbars* with the rest.
 With its gold handle, firm at his waist

10040 Buckle it on him, properly placed.
 If with Kirghiz he can't feel at home,
 Let him take his gifts; and then roam,
 To Kakanchin, and to Beidzhin,
 If he so wishes,— it's up to him.
 Though we're unjust, we're still a great folk —
 Let him go back to Kitai's hard yoke!
 Bold Manas looked at each famed knight —
 Each of them answered "Agreed! All right!"
 At Manas' just given word

10050 Every one of them was stirred.
 Off they dashed, as quick as could be,
 Leaders, advisers, and chiefs, you see.
 Like a hungry lion, head bent,
 Khan Manas his word scarcely sent,
 Ere he had hardly closed his lips,
 Ere he had scarcely told his chips,
 Ere he could barely blink his eyes,
 There his lean steed, Akkula, he spies,
 Ready for Almambet he runs;

10060 And to him each one of them comes,
 As to his father, to help him there.
 Saying: "Your wishes now declare!"
 Akkula they then brought to him —
 Chief of all horses, brown and slim.
 Happiness was his rider's fate.
 Both ears stood, like candles, straight,
 And his steed of a whirlwing made,
 Stalked like a lovely stag in the glade.

His brown croup rose up like a hill,
 10070 And his fine head rose higher still!
 Golden his saddle, with coloured bow.
 Jewels gleamed there, in a double row.
 Emeralds and turquoise all aglow...
 Gun, dead-shot, both far and near,
 Striking anything standing there,
 Barrel of steel, and muzzle blue,
 In Isphahan it was fashioned new,
 Smoke arising in blue clouds too.
 Sight was a terror, and shot was death.

10080 Bore all burnished, blazing beneath.
 Mortal souls it sought all round,
 Akkelte before him was found.
 To the golden saddle made fast,
 There the spear shone smooth, first to last,
 With its fluttering pennant placed.
 Gold-handled sword was hung at his waist.
 Listen, my sons of our Kirghiz:
 As Manas ordered — so it is.
 Battle-axe, almost as wide as a door,

10090 On his saddle-peak hung before.
 Knights were ordered: "Stand at ease!"
 Finally bow and quiver to please,
 Both were hung on the saddle-peak too.
 Almambet, before all in view,
 Stood as a bold and brilliant Bey!
 Nine more steeds he received that day,
 All to honour his visit there.
 People questioned, began to stare.
 What will Manas do now, with no steed?

10100 With no weapons, in case of need?
 They were concerned for their bogatir!..
 On Akkula some armour placed there,
 Known by the name of Akkyube.
 Then behind Akkula made their way,
 Ziskara and Maral-toru,
 Both most excellent racers, too.
 Then behind them came Achkula.

And bey Badaga's swift Torucha —
 All their most famous racers there,
 10110 Best of the best, I must declare!
 With its thick mane, and wide-spread croup,
 With decorations, lattice and loop,
 War-horse of Kokandtsi — Koshchadbar,
 War-steed of Koichuman — Karasur,
 Two more, it seems, whose names weren't traced,
 Nine, when with Akkulta they're placed.
 Then, behind those, Manas set aside
 Others which Almambet might ride.
 Our Manas, our great bogatir,
 10120 Doesn't go back on his word, that's clear!
 From all good horses which gladness give,
 Those with thick manes and straight ears, that is,
 Those whose broad breasts are like to rams',
 Those whose beauty before you stands,
 Like a memorial-stone design,
 Those whose tails like sceptres shine,
 Those whose jaws are a marten-trap,
 Waiting ready to snarl and snap,
 Comes Sarala, a well-trained horse,
 10130 Haunches like mountain rams', full of force.
 With his curved trunk, like a rifle-stock,
 With his bowed spine, secure from shock,
 With his two ears which stand up straight,
 Comes Sarala, and another eight.
 With Akkula eighteen, all told.
 All, like the group of war-steeds, bold,
 Taken from the best of the best,
 As Manas made sure to insist.
 Almambet's glory he yet increased.
 10140 Then he ordered a red goat be seized —
 Slain for a sacrifice was he...
 That cunning clerk from his treasury,
 Lion Manas, without looking back,
 Told him to open the leather sack,
 Then, from the pure gold coins there set,
 Ordered, as sacrifice for Almambet,

Four thousand pieces on that day,
 Then let his soldiers snatch them away.
 Then six buckets of fat melted-down,
 10150 Told them to stir above Almambet's crown.⁷²
 Sixty dogs of the Borzoi breed
 Then they allowed to lick what they need.
 Meat from sheep, and meat from deer,
 Equal to three fat bullocks, that's clear,
 While Almambet like an orphan sat,
 Fatherless, motherless, just like that,
 Over his head in pots they stirred round.
 Birds came and spots of fat they found.
 So, on the sacrifice made like that,
 10160 Both the dogs and the birds got fat.
 Brought from an Andizhan bazaar,
 Silky yellow-black woollens there are,
 And from the market at Bukhara,
 Precious black-mottled silks there are.
 They dressed him out in new robes, what's more,
 Gave his old clothes to the ragged poor.
 Suitable clothes for travelling in,
 They prepared for the road to Beidzhin.
 Fine new robe gave the bogatir,
 10170 And his old one he left there.
 Now he is dressed all fresh and fine,
 In a new satin gown ashine,
 And the old one, ruffled and creased,
 Gave to the servant, and he was pleased.
 Curved-toed boots, with heels that high,
 Then he donned, and ceased to sigh.
 Almambet, the lion bogatir,
 Now felt his soul had grown more clear.
 Now at last he felt more assured,
 10180 Now he felt like a real fine lord.
 Sat at table, stately, and blessed,
 Head and shoulders above the rest.
 Then Manas had fat steeds slain,
 Belly-fat, and fat 'neath the mane,
 He had put in a pot and cooked.

They began chatting, at each other looked.
 With nothing else was Manas concerned,
 All other matters that day he spurned.
 Hear what one clever bogatir said,
 10190 When the words came into his head!
 He was like a shade-giving tree.
 If Manas met difficulty,
 Straightway his carefree Serek stepped forth,
 Showed what his merry quips were worth.
 Sack-cloth rough became smooth calico.
 Broken speech got mended, you know,
 He cemented the words again,
 Then peace and harmony would reign.
 If in blind alleys the discourse flies,
 10200 Then Serek at once would rise.
 Brilliant words now shoot from his head:
 "Once Kirghiz had a saying!" he said,
 'He who o'erprizes his herd is lost!' ⁷³
 My dear Khan, what shame it would cost
 If we gave no feast when you came,
 If we did not honour your name!
 That was the saying Serek had in mind.
 "Oh, what wonderful words you find!"
 Cried Manas, and slapped his thigh,
 10210 "Truly you speak, Serek, say!"
 And, at any event, it seems
 You are needed to nourish my dreams!
 Not to run races, when Khans come to stay —
 That's to act in an improper way!
 Now a Khan, as you see, has come!
 Let's have some races, properly run.
 Don't stand there gaping, get on your way!"
 So Manas to Serek cried gay.
 What did Almambet think this is?
 10220 Well, he looked round, and he thought this:
 "Akkula is Manas' steed,
 And predestined for him, indeed!
 But his pure-blooded horse he gave,
 Generously, for me to have...

Akkuba is his armour blue,
 And with pleasure he gave that too.
 Akkelte is Manas' own gun...
 When I see how Sarala can run,
 Then that for me is sheer ecstasy,
 10230 Then I thank him for kindness to me!
 To my steed he then made haste,
 Placed his gold-handled sword at my waist,
 Spear and battle-axe then gave he
 Horse and armour gave up for me!
 Will he not be in an awkward spot
 When he needs them, like as not?
 Only a bad man seeks his own ends,
 To the disadvantage of friends..."
 So meditated Almambet...
 10240 All the racers were ready and set.
 Thirty or forty out were led.
 Meanwhile Manas to Almambet said:
 "Maybe you wonder why favours I throw,
 Why do I do it, you'd like to know?
 Why give his steed, his gown, his gun?
 Maybe he thinks I may stay on?
 If you don't stay, but go on your way,
 Will he take back his presents, say?
 If I don't stay, but go on my way,
 10250 Will he take horse and gun that day?
 If I do stay, and don't go away,
 He will show deepest respect, I should say,
 If I don't stay, but go far away,
 Maybe he'll be offended that day?..
 Don't keep any such thoughts in your mind,
 Nowhere with me such thoughts you'll find.
 I'll not deflect you, whatever you do.
 I'll not demand any answer from you.
 I'll not anywhere stand in your way —
 10260 Sit on my steed and travel, I say!
 That is a gift to a brave young man!
 Shoot from Akkelte, if you can!
 That's what a mortal spirit needs!

Take Akkula, Sarala, my steeds,
 Eighteen other good horses too.
 They are well trained, and will see you through.
 Calm my heart, and travel, I say,
 This, or that, or the other way.
 There where yourself you choose your road,
 10270 There where they'll bear your gifts as their load!
 Take my armour and weapons too —
 Whatever road you have in view.
 Do not hesitate, go as you can.
 What am I then, a dog, or a man?
 This is what I say, bogatir,
 Go, remember, I'm rich, never fear!
 I have fixed a white flag to your spear,
 Take it, shake it, and ride from here!
 Travel east, and you'll find Beidzhin —
 10280 Hosts of kinsmen Kitais live therein!
 Which direction will suit you best?
 If you wish, you can travel west!
 There you will find Këkchë, your friend.
 Maybe relations with him you'll mend?
 If you travel on further west,
 There you'll find Arabs, by Allah blest.
 If you go south, you'll find Isphahan,
 Further still you'll find Hindustan.
 If you would travel, then travel you may.
 10290 If you need something, you've only to say!
 Just discuss with us — your own way.
 Think things over, then go or stay.
 Find out what there is to be found,
 Bold young leader, on unknown ground.
 Now to honour your coming here,
 All our pure-bred racers stand near.
 Ready to run, for your delight,
 Touching the finishing flag on sight!
 Understand me, Manas, aright —
 10300 Stay with us — you can if you like!
 Or if you wish, ignore what's said.
 If you don't wish, then leave instead!

Don't be troubled concerning us,
 I want to do you justice thus!"
 With these words fell silent Manas.
 "I shall stay!" or "I shall go!" —
 Almambet did not say so —
 Told them instead "Start the races, though!"
 Then the lads who were going to ride,
 10310 Scarves, criss-cross round their shoulders tied.
 Then the horses' forelocks they tied,
 Their yes were glowing, open wide,
 Tails were knotted low behind.
 Jockeys wore sleeveless vests, satin-lined.
 One lad had straddled Akkula,
 But he didn't get very far.
 Almambet said: "He's not to run!
 I'll give you Sarala, my son!"
 Off to catch up with the rest,
 10320 That young jockey flew with zest!
 All impetuous ones pushed ahead,
 Beating their steeds, they onward sped.
 Those who were lost, and left behind,
 In their travelling tents you'd find.
 "We won't let them pull us along!
 What good's that, if your steed's not strong?
 What good, even, if you win through?
 Only the last prize comes to you.
 Then they heard, with wondering eyes;
 10330 "Our Manas hasn't named a prize!"
 Where they raced was flattish ground.
 Seven hundred stood all round,
 All were murmuring, muttering too:
 "Where, in God's name, have prizes got to?"
 With this question they came to Manas,
 And his answer ran somewhat thus:
 Seemingly, talking with Almambet,
 Khan Manas had time to forget!
 "Where will you find some prizes, then?"
 10340 Asked Adzhibai, with some other men.
 Then Manas looked at Adzhibai —

Found him distinguished from other knights high.
 Then Manas looked at horse-owners there,
 Thinking: "Well, one of them, to be fair,
 When his horse comes home in first place,
 Then will demand his prize for the race.
 'My horse came first!' he'll start to say,
 And he'll demand his prize, anyway!"
 So Manas of that soon thought —
 10350 Saw that in a trap he was caught.
 Prizes prepared did not exist!
 What's to do? No time to be missed!
 In a blind alley Manas was stuck.
 Then he saw Serek, by luck.
 He spoke up with great resource:
 "Forty knights each lent his horse
 Just to make folk happy today.
 You have given your horses away,
 You have no superfluous gold —
 10360 Where can we get prizes, all told?
 Each in the race was a chosen steed.
 If you took them to serve your need,
 Were it a good thing, or bad instead,
 All would fall on the bogatir's head!
 You are in a difficult spot:
 No more horses to give you've got.
 All those good horses that you had
 Now may make Almambet feel glad.
 Akkula alone holds his place —
 10370 Since he didn't take part in the race.
 Well, you saw with your own eyes —
 Akkula is his greatest prize!
 Here now, on open steppe as yet,
 Where such prizes could we get?
 All that we'd do to help bogatirs
 Would be useless, so it appears!
 Would it not be better, then,
 Taking as prizes twenty young men?
 You yourself in races take part —
 10380 You would agree with me, from the start!

Could one take a strange horse as prize?
 Forty bogatirs' steeds, likewise,
 Could one as prizes give away?
 "People took part in the races!" we'll say.
 That will make Almambet feel gay.
 Let's take the only sensible course —
 Everyone will receive his own horse!"
 Lion Manas had heard Serek's word —
 Nothing there he found absurd.
 10390 Quarrels o'er prizes will not be heard!
 Like hungry wolves they must not fight —
 None will be given such a right.
 We will not permit such a stew!
 Yes, the words of Serek rang true!
 Some young riders we'll separate,
 And as prizes grant — that's great!
 He who did not ever smile,
 He who laughed but once in a while,
 He who spoke with a hollow voice —
 10400 Lion Manas — could almost rejoice.
 Loudly he laughed out once more —
 White incisors, wide as a door!
 Teeth not like the others had he,
 Glittering, gleaming suddenly,
 When he laughed, and nodded his head:
 "We'll do as you, Serek, have said!
 Someone may win you as a prize,
 Carry you off before our eyes!
 That is very good advice:
 10410 Be a prize, then, and prized likewise!"
 Jokingly thus spoke Manas.
 Bozuul, he ordered thus:
 "Gather what youths you can straightway,
 Round about twenty, I should say!"
 Seventeen youngsters he finally found,
 Seven for the first man, homeward bound.
 Three for the second, the prize would run,
 Two for the third, for all others — one.
 Of the nine who were still on course,

10420 One prize was missing -- for the last horse!
 Then young Madzhik stepped out ahead:
 "I'll be a prize for the last!" he said.
 While this business was all begun,
 While they were seeking the very last one,
 While they were getting the grouping done,
 Nine fine horses, left on the run,
 Galloped nearer the finishing flag.
 Never one of them started to drag.
 Sarala, who all others led,
 10430 Kicked up clods twice the size of your head!
 All together they raised the dust,
 Spreading round like the morning mist.
 Almambet's horse, bold Sarala,
 Burrowed its bit in the earth so far,
 That the youngster riding him there
 Had no power to control the mare.
 Tugging the bridle with both his hands,
 As in the stirrups now he stands,
 Comes home first! All the bogatirs cry:
 10440 "Almambet!" -- the echoes rose high!
 Old Kirgil, and wise Bakai
 Also raised a joyful cry.
 Better then was Almambet's mood,
 All bogatirs at once understood.
 Salkizil came in second place --
 For Bakai, that was no disgrace.
 Shaltoru, he took third place --
 For Kirgil, his steed seemed an ace.
 Then Aksur, he took fourth place --
 10450 For Adzhibai, a pleasant chase.
 Këkkazik, he took fifth place --
 For Sirgak -- a happy face.
 Arkharboz, he took sixth place --
 Kutumai was pleased with the race.
 Chubaka took seventh place --
 Këktëkë accepted with grace.
 Then Toru, he took eighth place --
 Tokotai felt small disgrace.

Tëesur, he took ninth place --
 10460 For Madzhik -- a difficult case!
 Forty bogatirs nearby,
 Old Kirgil, and wise Bakai,
 To Madzhik the bold then said:
 "Do you speak horse-language, my lad?
 Straightway, after the race was done,
 Your Tëesur up to you made a run!"
 Then they laughed, as gay as could be,
 "Ha!-ha!-ha!" and "He!-he!-he!"
 Then more quiet grew voices yet --
 10470 "He will probably leave -- Almambet!"
 Weighing things up in his own mind,
 Almambet no straight answer could find.
 His inner thoughts he did not give away.
 "Clearly, like Khans, severe!" you'd say.
 If you judge by his general mood,
 Then he's a worthy man, and good.
 He came to us, not losing his way --
 What kind of aim pursued, would you say?"
 Having said those few words, not bad,
 10480 Then a few of the men felt sad.
 Seven, selected as principle prize,
 Then to Almambet turned their eyes.
 Bozuul was the senior one,
 Dzho-oronchu was next to come.
 To-oroichu was the third of them,
 And Kerben was the fourth one then.
 Saying "Our master's Almambet!"
 There they came, stood waiting yet.
 Then Bëgël was the fifth to come,
 10490 Alikë came sixth, on the run.
 Tazbaimat was seventh, and last.
 Not even glancing at Manas,
 Not finding time to pay heed, at least,
 Not to man or bird or beast,
 Not even giving each other an eye,
 Nor recalling forbears gone by --
 See now their deep respect was shown:

"Almambet's our master alone!"
 If another's horse had come first,
 10500 With disappointment we all should have burst!
 We have become your neighbours now,
 You are our only master, we vow!
 We're your servants, and comrades-in-arms.
 Find a spot free from all alarms,
 Take us with you to serve you there!"
 Throwing all other thoughts in the air,
 Heartily they attended him now:
 "Almambet! Where? When? And how?"
 If he stood — then his gaiters put straight.
 10510 If he made haste — the steed's at the gate!
 If he sat down — his place they'd prepare,
 Stuck like limpets then to him there.
 Seven selected comrades then
 All became first-rate serving-men.
 None of their master's words let slip,
 No contradictions on any lip,
 Listened for orders, carried them out,
 Here and there went whizzing about,
 Bowed before him, no sign of pride,
 10520 All other bogatirs beside,
 Bowed, paid respect with deep restraint.
 Not a word then for or against —
 But they asked Almambet to speak —
 Will they stay, or a new place seek?
 Right from the start his orders they did.
 Others, with Khan Manas at their head,
 With old Kirgil, and wise Bakai,
 Counted him worthy, held him high.
 After he'd at their camp arrived,
 10530 Out on the steppe, where yellow grass waved,
 For two days he's remained behind.
 Go or stay — couldn't make up his mind.
 Then together the people came,
 And they all said much the same:
 "If you're agreed, great bogatir,
 We are thinking of leaving here.

Now you have a new sire, bey Jakib.
 What if we let all other plans slip,
 And decide now to go back home?
 10540 If you are willing, will you not come?
 With us then you can happily live!
 If you wish to, the word just give!
 If you say 'Stay!' then still we'll stay.
 Each on the block his neck will lay!
 Kirghiz folk are all our folk.
 If you wish to — destroy our yoke!
 If you wish to go — there's your road.
 All our deepest respects we've showed.
 Here we make our final bow --
 10550 Here we're waiting your answer now.
 If you wish your road to scout,
 Off you go, and we'll help you out.
 Taking your seven brave bogatirs,
 Go where you wish, without any fears.
 You a great prize did here receive,
 In both worlds, so we believe,
 Knights should win riches and great respect,
 So all your gifts and knights collect.
 Not to take bogatirs with you,
 10560 That would mean shame for our people too!
 You are a falcon who flies after prey,
 You are a steel-footed steed in the fray,
 You are of iron, your spurs of steel,
 You are a sword, whose edge foes feel!
 Say — who are you? What kind of man, say?
 If you are worthy, we ask you to stay.
 We shall not boast of what we don't have,
 But what we have we shall readily give.
 Kirghiz and Kazakhs are kinsmen, by rights.
 10570 Bold Këkchë has many famed knights.
 Each one has his own pot to stew.
 Clearly, they envied and pestered you!
 Don't think that we would do such a thing.
 We would take you under our wing!
 Bold Manas' trust we have earned,

His great leonine soul have learned.
 We wish to hear your answer straight,
 Your reply is all we wait.
 If you go — for ever we'll part.
 10580 If you stay — you'll gladden each heart!
 So said the eminent bogatirs.
 Almambet looks on and hears.
 Sparks appear in that lion's eyes.
 Words of Adzhike the wise,
 Various words does Almambet hear,
 Making him think, till all grows clear.
 "Deeply offended I left Këkchë,
 Seeing how ill his intentions were.
 What beast would roam the open plain
 10590 Seeking deceitful prey in vain?
 Jewels are stones, and pebbles are too!
 Many such thoughts my mind run through.
 Can a stone with a jewel compare?
 If all the thoughts I have I declare,
 Shan't I by bogatirs sitting round
 Rather flattering then be found?
 Gold is yellow, and brass is too.
 Bronze is yellow, and copper, when new.
 Look, then, how mixed-up things can be.
 10600 Look at them carefully, then you'll see!
 All of them similar features bear.
 That is gold gleaming yellow there!"
 So I thought — but brass it proved!
 So, in ignorance, pained I moved.
 I thought: "Here's gold!" but it was not.
 From Këkchë small mercy I got!
 Having roamed the world alone,
 Thinking that such would be my home,
 Found a domed palace, white and grey —
 10610 But it turned out — a heap of clay!
 Just a mound, raised over the dead!
 Three days and nights in torments sped,
 No kind of honour was paid to me,
 When, half-starved, I left, you see;

Then of Manas' evil fame
 Many stories I heard -- all the same.
 After, to this wild steppe I came.
 Meeting you all, I'm surprised so far.
 What other sides to his character are?
 10620 Judging by what I hear -- he's a Shah!
 Something else he seems to be!
 Everyone says: "A lion is he!"
 In all places he makes his quest,
 Seeking for bold bogatirs -- the best!"
 Since he is one of that kind of men,
 How can I help loving him, then?
 Almambet -- a young lion too,
 Round I roamed, half the world went through.
 Having the woes of life in mind,
 10630 Somewhere to live I did not find,
 Those who'd value me -- did not find.
 Those who'd hallow me -- did not find.
 Those who'd bury me -- did not find.
 Those who'd remember me -- did not find.
 Those who'd appraise my art -- did not find.
 Those who'd test my heart -- did not find.
 Those who'd not leave my bones here behind,
 Those at last I managed to find!
 Those who'd bear me on stretchers I found,
 10640 Those who would stand in tears all around.
 No other brothers remain for me,
 None who my dying day would see.
 If I perished, and none could save,
 Not one kinsman would pray o'er my grave.
 None who'd follow the customs due.
 Now, forty knights, my brothers are you!
 All said and done, I came to you thus.
 If you truly say: "Live with us!"
 I ask from each consent, my head bowed.
 10650 If this by God above is allowed,
 Even if you should drive me around,
 Still my happiness here would be found.
 Let me stay in accord with you,

Give me your blessing, and I'll be true!"
 So, at last said Almambet...
 Forty knights, assembled there yet
 Said, united, "We praise your mind!"
 Raised their hands to their faces blind.⁷⁴
 Gave him their blessing, in Allah's name —
 10660 Thus they all real brothers became!
 Almambet decided to stay,
 And Manas' heart that day
 With great joy overflowed, like a lake...
 All the best leaders, for everyone's sake,
 Were so happy at what had occurred,
 Laughter rang out, with resounding word.
 They decided to take the road.
 All were merry, their steeds bestrode —
 Lion Manas, attending all needs,
 10670 Almambet, who went with them indeed,
 Old Kirgil, and wise Bakai,
 Lively chatting, wiping an eye,
 They sent off four riders ahead
 Saying: "Your son has come — Almambet!
 Allah has fulfilled your wish!"
 Ride to Jakib; and tell him of this.
 Don't forget to tell Chiyirdi:
 "For your son's sake, generous be!
 Then receive your good news fee!
 10680 Say: "Your son's found a comrade, see!"
 In this world as his helper he'll go.
 If Manas goes to attack a foe,
 Then, before him, as tiger he'll go.
 In this world he will love him well,
 And will care for him, even in hell!
 If your son wants to fly — he'll be wings,
 If he wishes to sit — he'll be swings;
 This great meeting of lions here —
 It is Allah's will — that's clear!
 10690 In single combat, he'll be his spear,
 If there's a quarrel — his snare he'll be.
 If there's sword-play — his blade is he!

He came to us, not long ago —
 Happiness for Kirghiz — just so.
 If Manas wants to gallop somewhere,
 He'll be his war-horse, never fear.
 He'll be a comrade, dear to his heart.
 He'll be one, from whom he'll not part.
 Of his own will Almambet came, see,
 10700 Nearer than sire — a brother will be!
 He arrived to be his sharp eyes,
 He arrived to be in his breast — wise!"⁷⁵
 He arrived to be words of surmise,
 He arrived to be ours likewise,
 He arrived to join forty tribes!⁷⁶
 Bozuul and Dzho-oronchu,
 With a couple of others too,
 All four set off, when told what to do...
 With Samarkand quite near, it appears,
 10710 On Bel-Saz, a-keeping foaled mares,
 There Jakib had settled, it seems,
 Sits watching mares, and quietly dreams.
 Four riders found him, near Kichin:
 "Good news, father Jakib!" greeted him.
 "To us has come your son, Almambet.
 Tears like a tiger, with steel teeth set!
 We make no mistake if we say
 All his enemies just give way,
 And any foe who fought him somehow,
 10720 Clearly, would not be living now!
 Your son Manas best wishes sends —
 Greetings to you Jakib, and your friends!"
 So the four riders the news passed than...
 Hearing outside the voices of men,
 Out came Jakib's wife Chiyirdi.
 "When Manas was fifteen," said she,
 "One Friday night I had a dream —
 There Almambet with him was seen,
 Just as they're seen together now —
 10730 Sixteen years ago — that I'll trow!
 When shall I see my son Almambet?

Since that day I've been thinking yet...
 Thrice nine steeds, with a camel at head,
 Take and divide, you four!" she said.
 "Where is my horse, my Bozdzorgo?
 Off to saddle him, straightway, so,
 I want to ride and to greet my son.
 I'll go to meet that awaited one!
 Load me off, please, along the way!
 10740 So on the road departed they...
 Five days passed since off they set.
 "Maybe, soon, we'll meet Almambet?"
 So thought Jakib and Chiyirdi.
 Their old herdsman, Iyman, you see,
 Galloped collecting steeds around,
 For the elders Jakib had found.
 From the white-bearded elders he knew,
 Those who lived fairly near him too,
 Bey Jakib had gathered then,
 10750 Round about sixty respected men.
 "Almambet, it seems, will come!"
 So said Kirghiz to everyone.
 Chiyirdi twelve old ladies took,
 She at their head was sitting, look!
 Over their trotting horses they bent,
 Gowns of silk a-fluttering sent.
 Chiyirdi on Bozdzorgo —
 So all along the lane they go.
 Sixty old men, ahead on the way,
 10760 Led by Jakib, the white-beard bey...
 "See, your father is drawing nigh!"
 So said observant Adzhibai.
 Almambet from his saddle slid,
 Then went walking on ahead,
 Found the one who was his goal...
 "I'll give my life for my fine camel-foal!"
 So prayed Jakib, with warmth of soul.
 "Now you have come, my hope to be,
 Allah has sent you here to me!"
 10770 Through his tears he could not see.

Down his white beard they fell again,
 Glittering, just like drops of rain.
 Having seen him, Almambet thought:
 "He is my father, the soul I sought!
 I'm a poor sinner, my fate's been grim.
 I must not show myself careless of him!"
 Tears from Jakib flow, falling away,
 Never-ending his cry "Eh!-Eh!-Eh!"
 With a groan he embraced Almambet,
 10780 Onto his breast he pressed his head.
 Yearning and burning, his tears flowed yet,
 They washed his collar, and made it wet.
 Suddenly, from some place behind,
 Came a cry of a woman, refined,
 Grey-haired granny, Chiyirdi.
 Almambet heard it, and wanted to see,
 Said to himself: "My dear mother comes —
 I'm now one of God's blessed ones!" --
 Clutched at his collar upon his course...
 10790 Bozdzorgo, Chiyirdi's fine horse,
 Then came galloping swiftly along,
 Burst through the sixty elders' throng.
 Into the steed Tuuchuk he bumped,
 And its rider he soundly thumped!
 Chiyirdi's breast, like a mother's-to-be,
 Swelled in his sight, as on came she.
 Almambet trembled with hidden joy,
 As he had when a little boy...
 From Chiyirdi's beswollen breast
 10800 Sprang a stream of milk heaven-blest!
 All the glands, her breast within,
 Swollen with milk began to swim.
 Chiyirdi called: "Manas, come here,
 As you did in your childhood, dear,
 Suck my swollen breast again,
 Ease a little the bursting strain!"
 Hearing this Almambet drew near,
 Praying "Mother, feed me, my dear!
 I and Manas will milk-brothers rest!"

- 10810 So Manas held her right breast,
Gently took the tip in his lips.
From the left one Almambet sips!
Very sweet was this mother's milk,
Warm and welcoming, soft as silk!
Straightway they both were full of delight!⁷⁷
"Thirty years old is your babe, if I'm right —
Huge great fellow — still takes the breast!"
So joked Jakib, and with laughter burst.
"Now our mother has two of us!"
- 10820 So in reply then joked Manas.
"Now our father has four of us!"⁷⁸
Now I'm a stream, overflowing thus!"
Laughingly then so added Manas.
There was none who did not rejoice.
There was none who "Well done!" did not voice.
There was none who was not content,
There was none who evil then meant.
Then Jakib to his village returned,
With the others the road he churned...
- 10830 Bakdēlēt the news later learned.
Surely she'd go — not stay behind?
One dozen ladies she soon did find.
Off they went Almambet to view...
Abike and Kēbēsh, those two,
Gaily they galloped with hawks away,
Seeking their luck with birds of prey.
Herdsman they ordered to bring in
Camels two-humped, and plump, not thin,
Best of the light-grey foaling mares,
- 10840 Fine fat cows, especially prepared,
Plenty of sheep — four kinds of beast.
Forty-one they brought at least.
In thanksgiving for Almambet,
To the poor and unfortunate yet,
Gave them out to the very last one,
Honouring thus Jakib's new son.
"Almambet has found Manas!"
Everybody was talking thus...

- Saying "My feast's a welcoming-in!"
- 10850 Slaying eighty mares — a lavine —
Then Manas, the truth to tell,
Gathered Muslims and heathens as well,
Called in guests from eight main tribes,
Honouring Almambet, divides
Five hundred cows, a thousand sheep,
For eight Khans and their people to keep.
And a fantactic feast he spread.
Bey Jakib than sat at their head,
And beside him sat wise Bakai,
- 10860 Forty brave bogatirs nearby.
Old Kirgil at their head sat he.
Chiyirdi had a large white marquee,
Spaceful and graceful for all to see,
There they entered and all made good.
There, not sparing the finest food,
Low-legged tables loaded stood.
More than their stomachs could contain,
Till they washed it down again!
All the best Leaders sat around —
- 10870 Everything to their taste they found.
Then they quenched their thirst with tea.
As they sat sipping, Almambet, see,
Rose and slowly began to speak,
Firmly, determined, voice not weak:
"For your joy God sent from afar
Such a steed as your Akkula,
Who in the heat which melts one's brain,
In a ravine, with tight sides twain,
Gallops six months, and doesn't grow tired —
- 10880 Such a steed must indeed be admired!
If Akkula should leave your hand,
No other beast in his place could stand.
Your whole form speaks power and might,
Your whole body speaks strength not slight.
You are huge, and heavy as lead,
Fame about you afar has sped.
On whatever steed you may ride,

Dreams of Akkula will betide.
 You showed great generosity
 10890 When you presented your steed to me.
 Then to test your bounteousness,
 I accepted your steed, no less.
 Into my father's home I came,
 And in blessing my mother's name,
 I return Akkula to you!
 May you, my brother, be happy too!
 May Sarala bring joy to me,
 May Kirghiz all contented be.
 May they multiply plentifully!
 10900 May Akkula her real master see!
 Such were the words of Almambet.
 Then he blessed his new father's head,
 And made glad the old man's heart.
 Now they were waiting for racing to start.
 All the forty bogatirs
 With Kirgil and Bakai, the old dears,
 And the younger ones there, to a man,
 Rode to where the races began.
 Guests, who'd prepared the steeds, no doubt,
 10910 Then were told they could bring them out.
 Five hundred steeds and a thousand sheep
 Race-organizers now would keep,
 Waiting as prizes when winners came in,
 First fifteen horses finishing then.
 Two hundred steeds, and three hundred sheep,
 As the main prize, the winner would reep
 Nine of the steeds, and thirty sheep,
 As his prize the last man would keep.
 Twenty-four score more steeds were yet
 10920 Given in honour of Almambet.
 Many Kirghiz came out to share these.
 Racing starts, and each rider speeds...
 On the Samarkand steppeland freed
 Sweep the racers, and in the lead
 Maaniker, who takes first place —
 Këkëtë's pacer — full of grace.

In as much time as food takes to cook,
 Second came Akkula — just look!
 Third came Malkara, and see —
 10930 Baidzhigit as pleased as can be!
 Fourth came Sarala, in a sweat,
 None more happy then Almambet!
 Fifth came Këkcholak, and Bakai
 Like an arrow had seen him fly.
 Sixth came Arala, tail high,
 Welcomed home by Adzhibai.
 Seventh then came Torbuchak —
 Keikubat gave him a pat!
 Eighth horse home was Akborchuk.
 10940 Old Kirgil's contented, just look!
 Arms wide, mane and tail takes too!
 Ninth came Tokotai's Toru,
 Feet scarce touching the ground swept through,
 Seemingly on wings he flew!
 Tenth came Karasur plunging by,
 Pleasing his master, Oshpurbai.
 Mainly selected steeds were these —
 Well, just watch then, if you please!
 In eleventh place came Kara,
 10950 Kelkaman's racer — there you are!
 Following close confined, poor wretch,
 Seemingly his wings couldn't stretch.
 Twelfth came Dzharkazil, and Dzhanai.
 Saw him swiftly go sweeping by.
 Thirteenth came Narkizil, and he
 Pleased his mistress, Torum, you see.
 Fourteenth came Kaktelki on his way,
 Owned by sixty-year-old Abike,
 Though himself but a three-year-old!
 10960 Abike was his rider bold!
 Crying "Bey Jakib! Ha! Ha!"
 Crying "Lion Manas! Hoorah!"
 Abike rode home from afar.
 Fifteenth came the horse Kula —
 That was the steed of bey Kutu,

Last of the prize-winners, he passed through.
 So our lion, Almambet,
 Had attained what he wished to get —
 Family home, and a comrade, at least...
 10970 People began to leave the feast.
 Those who prizes had won that day,
 Horses on leather reins led away.
 Calling each other "Hey! Where are you?"
 Turning and churning, with sheep came too.
 Some on their saddle-bows did take,
 And for their homes nearby did make.
 Evening was near, and some lived afar.
 Guests for the night? Well there you are!
 Then Manas thought "If a maid I could find,
 10980 One nobly born, and of upright mind,
 I should like to see Almambet wed!
 So among his comrades he said:
 Is there among you noblemen here
 Some young daughter, gentle and fair,
 Whom you would give to Almambet?
 He went everywhere, searching yet...
 Into the yurta of bey Jakib,
 Almambet once or twice did slip,
 But Manas he did not find there,
 10990 So he asked Karabërk, fair and square:
 "Can you say where Manas would hide?"
 Wife of Manas, Karabërk, replied:
 "I don't know where at present he is.
 Look in the yurta of his kanish,*
 There you will find him most probably!"
 "What's a 'kanish?'" enquired he —
 Her sharp jibe he did not see.
 Then she answered spitefully:
 With his tender one now he lies,
 11000 Your fine comrade, so I surmise!"
 He did not understand again...
 "Who is that 'tender one' you name?"
 Karabërk once more replied,
 Laughed aloud, then sharply cried:

"Did you not see, then, his dzhene?*"
 That little ne'er-do-well, I say,
 Sho-oruk's daughter, Akilai,
 That good-for-nothing, swathed in silk,
 She whom they call all honey and milk —
 11010 He's in her yurta, most likely, the bilk!"
 How many words said Karabërk!
 "That was her fury and spite at work!
 With what malice she speaks to me yet!"
 Such were the thoughts of Almambet.
 "Clearly, when she was but a maid,
 Many bold things she did and said,
 But such force and spiteful wit
 For a young woman aren't really fit.
 When mature a sharp one was she —
 11020 Hasty, hot-tempered she's grown to be!"
 To the yurta of Akilai,
 Almambet then rode on by,
 Called out straight to her, from the flap:
 "Is there anyone here, mayhap?"
 Sitting in place of honour there,⁷⁹
 And not leaving her cushion bare,
 She replied: "You call from your horse!
 What's your name, and where's your course?
 Bogatir Almambet replied:
 11030 "I'm Almambet!" and peered inside.
 "Is bogatir Manas not here?
 Where has he gone? Did he not appear?"
 Almambet put the question clear.
 So in silence she went out there,
 Then to him she bowed her head:
 "He doesn't leave his first wife!" she said.
 "You will most probably find him there.
 Not to take note of her, he won't dare,
 So to leave her and come to me —
 11040 That is difficult, as you see!
 Earlier it was otherwise —
 This year, though, I don't meet his eyes!"
 Such was the answer of Akilai:

Almambet made a guess, on the sly:
 "Now Manas is a bachelor, it seems —
 Has no wife to disrupt his dreams!"
 So, like a wounded tiger then,
 Almambet slunk off again.
 To his adopted father went,
 11050 Wanted to speak to him in his tent.
 Servants came and took his steed —
 He'd not entered the tent, indeed,
 When Manas riding in was seen....
 "Son of mine! Where have you been?"
 "Seeking a wife for your new son,
 Trying to find a worthy one.
 Are there noble maids 'mid Kirghiz?
 Truly worthy maids, that is?
 Can they among Kazakhs be found?
 11060 Seems there are very few around!
 I have heard that among Kipchaks
 There's a maiden who nothing lacks.
 Forty bogatirs I sent round,
 Seeking, trying to sound the ground.
 If Almambet lives lacking a wife,
 How shall I find any joy in life?
 Dreaming "A bride with a dowry I'll find!
 I didn't snooze, I sought the right kind!
 Having this all quite clearly pronounced,
 11070 Pulled at his hair, his moustache-ends flounced,
 Laughed down in his whiskers too.
 Then Almambet began anew:
 "Comrade! Act in a thoughtful way!
 I'm a mere wanderer, let me say.
 Now it seems that you, as they tell,
 At this time are unwed as well!
 Karabërk and Akilai
 You count as wives — but the well's run dry.
 Thanks to your kindness, they stay unknown!
 11080 Thanks to your valour, you've left them alone!
 Both Karabërk and Akalai
 As your wives you count, forby.

Yet, if you I truly see,
 Surely a bachelor you must be?"
 "Almambet, your worlds are true!"
 So said Manas, and off he flew.
 Aibanboz, upon whom he sat,
 Beat with his whip, on the neck, at that.
 Various thoughts were on his mind
 11090 As he left his comrades behind.
 So he rode, and thought things o'er —
 "Bother my father Jakib once more?
 Make him find a wife for me?
 Get me married legally?"
 Such were the thoughts with which he played.
 Ten days in one place he stayed,
 Then he returned to Jakib and said:
 "Father, I shielded your aging head,
 Your protector I'm used to be,
 11100 But you seem to know nothing of me!
 Father Jakib! What's happened to you?
 Find me a wife and marry me too —
 That's your duty, my dear man!
 Karabërk, daughter of Kayip-dang,
 Now in my embraces lies.
 Then, beneath Himalayan skies
 She blocked my road, against me did rise
 In a dark hollow of Kangur,*
 Three hundred braves she had, what's more,
 11110 And she battled against me sore.
 But she fell in my hands at last!
 Until now, though all that's past,
 I'm not feeling myself again,
 As if with that maid I'd not lain.
 After we left behind Altai,
 After we came then to Alai,
 We were again engaged in strife,
 Fighting, striving for our life.
 Then Kalcha,* from Kara-Tegin,
 11120 And the Kara-Tadzhiks did begin
 To attack us, and felt my ire,

- On the Tash-Koton steppe under fire...
 In Tagisma, the city nearby,
 Sho-oruk's daughter, Alikai,
 That poor girl, in rustling silk,
 Full of fear, as white as milk,
 I beseiged, and he gave me as prize.
 Kara-Tadzhiks, before our eyes,
 All from despoliation fled.
- 11130 As if with that one I'd not wed,
 And had not felt the joy of life,
 Now it is difficult with such a wife.
 You do not do any match-making now.⁸⁰
 You've not done duty by me, as your son.
 No matter what with your riches I've done,
 No matter what a mess I have made,
 Failure of duty to me you've displayed.
 Here I find myself, thirty years old,
- 11140 Yet you don't feel these things I've told.
 Having declined to marry me off,
 Don't by chance cause me to scoff.
 If my soul, God's gift, does not die,
 Disregarding expenses high,
 I will take them on my own head!
 Choose for me none whom folk spoil!" he said.
 "None who all kinds of speeches will make,
 Winking at people, early or late.
 None who will hide her lover away,
- 11150 Though she be daughter to a Bey!
 None who shows you her learning high,
 But conceals what she does from your eye,
 Though she be daughter to some grand peer.
 None who is shaggy, with brows severe,
 Who, on arising at mid-day —
 "That's the lady I am!" will say.
 None who ought knowing, takes revenge,
 None who does ill, without amends,
 When her ends she does not attain,
- 11160 Though she be daughter to a Khan.
 None who's untidy, with threads in her plaits,

- Who in dark yurtas, cream slyly laps,
 Thinking: "While father's slave, you see,
 Thanks to his herds, they'll come to woo me,
 So that my husband will be a Lord! —
 Though she be daughter to Knight of the Sword!
 You, who are greedy after great herds,
 May not refuse such a woman's words!
 She, who with cracking soles, and fat cheeks,
- 11170 Biting her tongue, a rich husband seeks,
 May she not be a daughter to you!
 Father of mine, you know that it's true,
 Such a woman, with such a line,
 Never could be a wife of mine!
 None who's grown up in comfort and bliss,
 None lacking brothers and sisters, that is.
 Though she may be the one single child,
 None without father and mother, gone wild,
 Having a suite of her own, all told;
- 11180 Having grown up so wilful and bold,
 Though she be daughter to a Shah!
 None who's accustomed to power so far!
 None with the sacred Koran on her tongue,
 Though of Kadi* the daughter young!
 Even now, when you're already old,
 Seemingly, none like you is so bold.
 Seemingly, you would not fall in a snare.
 When you speak now, there's truth in the air!
 You have your worthy features beside —
- 11190 Only keep both your eyes open wide!
 Keep close track on the words I say.
 Hold to them fast, by night and day.
 One whose form is a drawn-out braid,
 Sways like a willow-wand, there in the shade.
 One from whose temples her locks hang down,
 One who thinks, with the slightest frown,
 One who like a pure white lynx,
 Quietly, calmly, smoothly slinks.
 One who's far-sighted, and understands,
- 11200 Where each deed will lead in our hands.

One, wide-browed, with eyes like gems,
 Teeth like pearls, where the sweet word wends.
 One who knows how herself to restrain,
 One who causes no others pain,
 One who speaks quietly, not in vain.
 One who controls the whole of her brain,
 So that folk should trust her word.
 One by whom the future is heard.
 One who foresees what is coming first,
 11210 One who acts wisely, avoids the worst.
 One who counts ignorance sheerest shame,
 One, resourceful, rich mind aflame.
 One who pronounces blessings on all.
 One polite, and liberal withal.
 One who is gifted in everything,
 One pleasant-tongued, with words which sing.
 One pale-faced, with languid eyes,
 One slim-necked, fine-headed likewise.
 One with character firm, and deep mind,
 11220 One with fine brow, long plaits behind —
 Such a young maiden, in such a guise!
 Father, don't spare yourself, use your eyes!
 Let her look out for a man with a mind.
 Let her gay words for the people find.
 Know the herd's value, of that take care,
 Calling for help from Allah up, there.
 Let her be adept, like none other seen.
 Let her be wise, a maidenly queen.
 Let her be such, that when she is shown,
 11230 All who see her would wish her their own!
 Thus she'd be pleasing to everyone,
 Mistress of all, when all's said and done!
 She'd be a wall, on foundations of stone,
 Such as none other has dreamed of or known.
 Then, at the least, it would take six years
 Getting to know her, and all her ideas,
 So that her wide hospitality
 Even spiteful people might see.
 Even taking no bread and no salt,

11240 Evil people would not find fault.
 Let her strict accounts always keep.
 Let her be careful, look after lost sheep.
 Let her word be honeyed, and sweet,
 Think of this all when choosing indeed!
 Seeking a simple maid like that,
 All the same, don't fall in a trap!
 Father — match-making for his son —
 That was a custom by forebears done!
 Maybe he's a bad one, Manas!
 11250 Still, he has grown famous thus!
 Don't be mingy with your herds!
 Just remember all my words!
 Then there'll be no tilts between us!
 So spoke out the bold Manas!
 So his father prepared for the way,
 Took Alibek's son, Dzho-oke,
 Took Bo-oke, the son of Atai,
 Took Akinbek's son, Mendibai,
 As his companions, with him to ride,
 11260 Set off then to seek a bride.
 Loaded up with their tents two steeds,
 Lashed with lassoes, to serve their needs.
 "Should I suddenly find a bride,
 I shan't be miserly on my side.
 If I don't offer a copper or two,
 How will the match-making then go through?
 So, with silver — six-hundred dzhambi,*
 Servants and slaves in his company,⁸¹
 Having called upon Allah's name,
 11270 Set off on the road o'er the plain.
 Then they searched all round Samarkand,
 Rich and poor, on every hand.
 Ora-Tëbë* and Dzhizak as well,
 Travelled around, by hill and dell.
 Finding no bride, they rummaged round,
 Through the Surdar their way they found,
 To the yurtas of famous beys,
 On the crest of Chiyirchik's* ways.

But, though not short-sighted, nor blind,
 11280 Not a maid to his taste did he find.
 But Jakib didn't sit in his tent —
 Off he went on the road to Tashkent.
 Early at morn, on warm summer days,
 Round he went to various beys.
 In how many villages there
 Asked: "Have you here a maiden fair?"
 On the heads of tribes he pressed,
 But in Tashkent no maid passed the test.
 So Jakib all connections broke,
 11290 Seeking a bride among other folk.
 To the west there lies Kiyba.*
 Many famous people there are.
 So Jakib went to take a look,
 Bukhara as his centre took.
 "Many wise men may here be found,
 Rulers and leaders all around.
 I shall seek among good folk too,
 All prospective brides I'll view!"
 So he went, first here, then there,
 11300 Still did not find a maiden fair.
 All of them he travelled round,
 One to please Manas was not found.
 On he went to Tadzhihs in Kiyba,
 Seeking nothing else, travelled far.
 There they said: "This old man owns much!
 What kind of wandering bey is such?
 Do not spare your daughters!" they said,
 "Rich or poor, go right ahead!
 Show him all!" their elders replied,
 11310 "Show him the one to take as bride!"
 Tadzhih beys of the city Kiyba
 Gave their permission, near and far,
 For Jakib to view their best.
 There were six-hundred of them, at least.
 Maids of that city then he viewed —
 There no success again ensued.
 "None in Bukhara he found —

Though he came here and poked around!
 How many maidens he's been shown —
 11320 None of them he took as his own!
 What kind of ignoramus is he?"
 Saw him off, as quick as could be,
 Chattering, tattling all around...
 Having no bride for Manas yet found,
 Further yet went old Jakib,
 Passed the river, and reached Keyip.*
 Now, when Jakib was eighty or more,
 Lion Manas had troubled him sore,
 Making him find his bride, you see.
 11330 Having given two silver dzhambi,*
 For the chief of the people he asked,
 And for a maid he asked at last.
 When he came his answer was this:
 "Bey Jakib -- a maiden there is!"
 Thus he was told by Alim-Mirza,
 So the matter got that far.
 "I should like to see such a maid!"
 Bey Jakib, all excited, said.
 Alim-Mirza to him replied:
 11340 "Bey Jakib -- she's her father's pride --
 He himself is named Artemir.
 Thirty years he's been a Khan here.
 That maiden's called Sanirabiyga.
 How many servants she has so far,
 That is only for her to know,
 May be a suite of some forty or so,
 Maiden friends and advisers, and such.
 Clearly, she will be hard to touch,
 Hard for her to be bogatir's spouse.
 11350 Two girls sit with her in the house.
 Two good sprites, one fairy withal.
 Men aren't allowed to see them at all.
 That's the difficult point, you see.
 None other such on this earth there could be!
 You have been searching the world around;
 If you like this maiden you've found,

How, then, will you take her away?
 Of all her suitors none dare say:
 "I will take her with me as wife —"
 11360 They'd be condemned to torment for life!"
 Those who had fallen beneath her power,
 Those who had dared to think for one hour:
 "I will take her to wife!" — they had died.
 How many thus their last words had cried?
 Even strange shans and padishahs too
 Wooed her, then didn't know what to do!
 None dared say: "I will take her as wife!"
 Some were scared right out of their life.
 Bey Jakib was scared too, you see,
 11370 But he had paid his two dzhambi!
 "I will show you this maiden now!"
 Said Alim-Mirza, with a bow.
 Leaving, he gathered about ten men,
 One by one Jakib they met then.
 They did not look on silver amiss.
 "We'll show you several maids for this!"
 Khan's body-guards, and chieftains came,
 Who'd had their share of silver the same —
 Ask no questions, you'll hear no lies —
 11380 They divided the spoil likewise.
 So they took bey Jakib with them,
 And to a garden they came then.
 All other people were left outside;
 But Jakib was allowed to abide.
 On grassy banks of a river there,
 Bloomed a garden and orchard fair.
 There, in a hollow, had formed a lake,
 And nearby was a bushy brake.
 In the long grass Jakib stood free,
 11390 Looking round on all he could see.
 There were fruit-trees of many a kind,
 Dense reeds and rushes grew behind.
 At the edge of the lake arrayed.
 There it was the maidens played.
 Breezes blew skirts and sleeves about.

From his hiding Jakib peeped out.
 He was amazed, and even dazed,
 When they sang, at them he gazed.
 Then they came right out of the glade,
 11400 And at various games they played,
 Strolled along the riverside banks,
 And got up to all kinds of pranks.
 Then they came to Jakib quite near,
 To the fruit-trees growing there...
 There were walnuts, right in the lake,
 Apples, almonds, peaches to take,
 Quinces and grapes, they all grew there,
 Waiting their turn to serve the fair.
 Then the maidens reached overhead,
 11410 Stretched their hands, and each other fed.
 Very near to Jakib they came,
 Failed to see him, all the same.
 Never a one caught sight of him,
 Hidden well in the bushes within.
 When they returned to the lake again,
 He saw clearly their every game.
 He crept up 'mid rushes and reeds,
 Lay in long grass, saw their misdeeds...
 Aruuke and Sanirabiya —
 11420 Kanikei — "Khan's wife" — there you are!
 Then they came to a coconut tree,
 Stretched up their arms, as far as could be,
 But the high nuts they could not reach,
 Still they stood, and laughed, each to each.
 All the maidens in silk gowns dressed,
 Wavered, as if they were all distressed.
 There, set apart by her golden hat,
 And beneath it her long, thick plait,
 There stood the maid Sanirubiya —
 11430 One of the loveliest maidens there are!
 Ringingly, singingly, so she speaks.
 In her mind for truth she seeks.
 Now she's sixteen-and-a-half years old,
 Long, thick plaits, 'neath a hat of gold.

Like a button-hole-loop, arched back
 Are her beautiful brows of black.
 Simple the dress which here is worn.
 Like a camel-foal curves her form:
 Lashes long, and sweepingly set,
 11440 Forehead wide, and eyes of jet.
 Courteous speech, sweet words of the best,
 Supple spine, and wild sheep's breast.
 Moon-like face, soft camel's eyes,
 Features radiant, rosy likewise.
 Daintily curves her slender form...
 Here's one coconut, taken by storm.
 Lifting it happily from the ground,
 First they cracked it, then shared it round.
 As they wander to and fro,
 11450 Bey Jakib watches how they go.
 Maidens in red silk are dressed,
 Out of forty, she's the best.
 Specially kindly-looking is she,
 If I propose her, my son will agree.
 I have endless cares, through my son.
 Clearly, nothing much good will come.
 If she gives birth, but once 'twill be.
 Then this mortal soul in me
 God will divide with him alone...
 11460 She, in truth, is not full-grown.
 Thighs are narrow — they won't give birth.
 No new successor will they bring forth.
 If they do, it will soon meet death.
 Soon be drawing its latest breath.
 Truly, he will not say she's bad.
 She will keep the esteem she's had.
 If she loses the one she'll wed,
 With long lashes, and bowed-down head,
 She will weep for him without end.
 11470 She'll find reply to what fate may send.
 She thinks deeply before she decides.
 She looks carefully, nothing slides.
 She leaves no dirt on one small hair.

She combs and smooths rough places there.
 She looks after herself as well,
 No bad traces their story will tell.
 Really, her kindness knows no end.
 She will soften the soul of her friend.
 She is blessed with a large warm heart,
 11480 Broken ends will unite from the start.
 If God's slave, on whom she may glance,
 Makes some kind of complaint, by chance,
 Saying: "I haven't enough to live!"
 Her own sleeve she'll cut off and give.
 She is generous as can be.
 With wide brow, and wide-eyed goes she.
 What she thinks, there's none can tell,
 There is depth in her as well.
 Neck like a swan, fine plaits you see,
 11490 And a good character too has she.
 Firmness there lies within her too.
 All she will tell, and know what to do.
 She, it seems, has an eloquent tongue,
 Seeks no support from an ignorant one.
 What she says simply satisfies.
 To every soul she can raise her eyes.
 Always she'll help the unfortunate one,
 Stauchness in her is never done.
 If a young man comes to ask her hand,
 11500 She will listen, and understand.
 Mutuality she shares,
 With keen wit runs all her affairs.
 She is careful in everything.
 What is missing, that she will bring.
 She is thrifty, not mean, they say.
 She doesn't show her maidenly way.
 She shows signs of a young married wife,
 Though she has had a very rich life,
 She is more humble than all the rest,
 11510 And is not stuck up in the least!
 She draws no line between good and bad,
 Treats them the same, and makes all glad.

- Madmen she'll treat like some wise priest,
 Priest she will treat like a lord, at least.
 Lord she will treat like a padishah here.
 Youngster she'll treat like a bold bogatir,
 She treats the brave with respect, that's clear.
 All, young or old, who show no fear,
 Treats like a newly-wed daughter dear.
- 11520 She is equal to ten women here.
 May this mortal world be cursed!
 Only with childbirth will life grow worse!
 Thus thought old Jakib at last,
 As he lay there, lost in the grass.
 If that's not penetration, what then?
 At those maidens he looked again,
 Stepping lightly, careless, and free,
 Off they went to the palace for tea.
 With the maid Sanirabiyga,
- 11530 Let us leave them there, where they are...
 Let us turn to Jakib once more.
 People, just look, just think, I implore!
 To the Shah's head-quarters went he,
 To the very centre, you see.
 There he took his place and sat
 On a long raised mound, at that.
 Sat him down, and looked around,
 Took on a look of importance proud.
 "You look like an Arkalik* —
- 11540 Where are you from, then, tell us quick!
 You are a bent-backed aged man.
 You have outlived your senses' span.
 What do you think you are doing here?
 Why is your speech to us not clear?
 Yes, you look like some Arkalik,
 With your white beard, and old man's stick,
 But to the Shah's head-quarters you come,
 With no permission from anyone!
 Horses or cattle, it seems, you've none,
- 11550 Riches or precious gifts — not one!
 Your words don't hang together, old man.

- Here you have taken the place of the Khan!
 Clearly, our customs you do not know —
 Signs of an education low —
 Go and join the dervishes so!
 If you're a guest, then join them too!
 They will show you what to do!
 Join them all, take your place as due —
 This high seat is not meant for you!"
- 11560 So they sent him right down the queue.
 Two executioners, and one bey —
 Rudely, crudely, they turned him away.
 Bey Jakib was stung to pain,
 And he replied: "I don't come in vain.
 Who do you think you are, where you're sat?
 Noble people don't speak like that!
 I'm not a wanderer, begging for bread!
 'Go to the dervishes, then!' you said.
 People do not speak so, if well-bread.
- 11570 Open you eyes, be polite instead!
 Always think before you speak!
 Though you may beat a man who's weak,
 Yet I'll condemn you to torment due,
 You, who think yourselves rulers too.
 Wipe your eyes, and see more clear,
 Think what you are saying here.
 You may hack me in pieces ten,
 All the same, I'll destroy you then!
 All your hauteur will then be lost,
- 11580 And you call me 'old man' to your cost!
 If on that place the Khan will be sat,
 Tell me, what will come out of that?
 Too severe were your words to me;
 I am come as match-maker, see.
 Forty-one maidens in silk gowns dressed,
 I went to see, and was much impressed.
 One wore a dress from red silk shorn,
 Like a camel-foal, curved was her form.
 As with a brush were her eyebrows lined,
- 11590 And like a falcon she swept, refined.

She had been spared rough work, I see.
 Maybe, your Khan's daughter is she?
 I looked at her, and could not decide —
 Maybe a chieftain's daughter, wide-eyed?
 I looked again, and it seemed to me —
 Some simple peasant's daughter was she!
 Better than all Khans' daughters could be,
 Like a silver mounting was she,
 Better than all the others, I see,
 11600 Even if from simple folk came she!
 Better than chieftains' daughters was she!
 When I sat in the Khan's place, you see,
 You were rude, did not honour me there.
 What kind of man is Khan Atemir?
 If I may not as guest step within,
 Then I say: "To the devil with him!"
 I have come as match-maker to you.
 Tell your people about that too!
 I have come as father-in-law —
 11610 Tell your people about it all!
 Go and tell Khan Atemir:
 "If as match-maker I come here,
 And he wants to kill me, 'twould seem,
 If you touch me, I'll do as I mean.
 Do not say that you've not been warned,
 When your city and palace are stormed!"
 Bey Jakib with loud words assailed,
 Getting angry he raved and railed!
 Then the guardsman threw up his head,
 11620 Growing incited, he sharply said:
 "Giving a maid to a stranger, like you,
 That's a most stupid thing to do!
 You, it seems, wish to live no more!
 If Atemir hears you raving sore,
 Not a drop left of your blood there'll be!
 Such a maiden, as no man should see.
 Where, then, did you catch sight of say?
 If you go raving and raging away,
 Do you think the young maid you'll receive?

11630 You speak the Tyurkish tongue, I believe,
 Say, form what tribe, then, have you come?
 Say what you will, your time is done!"
 Thus that guard, the night-guard also
 Brought on his head a load of woe.
 Much too hasty and wild spoke he.
 Now, still angry as he could be,
 He at last to them replied:
 "I'm a Kara-Kirghiz!" he cried.
 "If you ask me where I dwell —
 11640 Kara-Too. I'm a bey as well!
 There my revenge on many took I.
 That place I came from was named Altai.
 Cursing me and my kind to hell,
 You'd swallow me and my herds as well!
 But my blood I will not spare.
 Like Albastri,* I'll spatter it here!⁸²
 Then many more like me will rise,
 And will spill your blood likewise!
 Sired by Nogoi — Jakib am I.
 11650 By your reservior-lake did I lie,
 There, before prayer, I washed my face,
 And caught sight of your maids in that place.
 When I said: "To make match I come!"
 You lost your breath, and all fell dumb,
 Just as though long ago, let's say,
 You'd been ordered match-makers to slay!
 If they came to take brides away —
 They would not live a further day.
 So, it was me you set upon,
 11660 So, it was you, who egged yourselves on:
 Then you said: "We shall murder you!"
 If I die — an old man — I do!
 Then what will happen to folk in Kiyba?
 You haven't thought of that so far!
 One old man will give up the ghost,
 But all Tadzhiks will be dead — or most!
 Don't sir here talking — get on ahead,
 Find me a place of honour instead.

Go and tell your Khan, and don't lie!
 11670 If I am destined to die — I'll die!
 But, even dying, I'll give you no peace.
 From the elders, whose spite does not cease,
 From the leaders, and powerful ones,
 From the chiefs, with commanding tones,
 From the scoundrel big-heads, you see,
 Two or three I shall take with me!"
 Such then was bey Jakib's reply.
 Then they thought: "This old man won't die!
 Firmly he sticks up for his right —
 11680 He won't give up without a fight!
 Yes, on us his spite will be spent.
 So with their chief the guards both went.
 They had been stung by his reply.
 Suddenly, from the mosque nearby,
 Sounded the call of the muezzin.
 All the Muslims came crowding in.
 There, before evening prayer began,
 Washed their faces, each Muslim man.
 Then the Khan came into the court,
 11690 And with him his visitors brought.
 Round about thirty of them appeared.
 Akilbais was their chief, much-feared.
 He was the one, who with headsmen two,
 Started cursing Jakib anew.
 He told the Khan "There was one old man,
 Ignorant, judging by how he began,
 Came in search of a bride, he said.
 Saw the folk of Kiyba, he said.
 Seeminly seeks a bride for his son.
 11700 He himself is an awkward one.
 "I have come from Altai," he said
 "Live now on Kara-Too," he said.
 "Andizhan is my land!" said he.
 "I am seeking a bride!" said he.
 "Daughter of a leader!" he said,
 "I come from my son!" he said.
 In the place where the Khan should be,

There, as if it were his, sat he.
 "This is no place for you, where you've sat —
 11710 Go away!" we said, and he spat...
 "I have come as match-maker!" he said,
 Speaking as none dare speak, went ahead.
 Then Mirshab cursed him openly —
 "I have Khan's orders to kill!" said he.
 "Kill me then!" he said, "Here I am!"
 Seems a most obstinate hot-tempered man.
 Full of spite he turned on us then,
 Called us all kinds of rescally men.
 Hearing this old man we thought thus:
 11720 "He'll receive his death from us!"
 But, not having permission obtained,
 There we left him, there he remained!"
 Such were the words Akilbayis said.
 Atemir just nodded his head.
 He was greatly angered, and how!
 As if some devil sat on him now!
 Then of various things he thought thus:
 "Alo-oke ran away from Manas!"
 That he remembered, and wanted to curse.
 11730 "Now he comes here, and makes matters worse!
 Comes in my courtyard, and kicks up a fuss.
 Clearly no simpleton!" he reasoned thus.
 Then he questioned Akilbayis:
 "Did you find out about kinsmen of his?
 Has he champions here, by the way?
 If so how many — can you not say?
 What kind of horse, then, does he ride?
 Not having known all the rest beside,
 Who he is, and what's his son's name,
 11740 You've grown ill-tempered, all in vain!
 Now go back and find out for me,
 Who were his forebears, from what family?
 Not knowing this, and very much more,
 You've shown your ignorance. Get to know more!
 He who has come, and boasts of his strength —
 Is he a sprite, then, or djinn, at length?

Try to discover his family line:
 Who is he? What is he? Where? At what time?
 Quite imposing are things he has said,
 11750 Tell me, is he right in the head?
 If he's white-beard, as you say.
 Wishing to take a maiden away;
 Where has he seen this maiden, then?
 He must be the most cunning of men!
 Or for a younger brother comes he?
 Or does he seek to raise mutiny?
 Or does he come for a wife for his son?
 He demands my daughter, that one!
 And he presses the folk of Kiya.
 11760 Having known Tadzihks, as they are,
 War-like words he utters here,
 One who's able to rouse up fear,
 One who's able to cause us loss.
 Ask, and find out, at any cost.
 If irresponsible things he's said,
 Then just take him and hack off his head!
 Bring his corpse to the cemetery here!"
 These commands of Atemir
 Clearly they heard, and stood in fear.
 11770 Taking a torch, they sought him there.
 There went two headsmen, and three war-chiefs.
 "He seeks his own death, we believe!
 Roaming round, while-bearded and old,
 Dreaming about his powers untold...
 So at last Jakib they found —
 There he sat sorrowing on the mound,
 Left behind in the gloomy dark
 Now descending upon the park...
 With no greeting, with haughty pose,
 11780 Up to Jakib the trio goes —
 Akilbayis, and Abdikalik,
 And the third of them, Tyulëëbek.
 To bey Jakib, that poor old man,
 They did not say even one "Salaam!"
 But bey Jakib, whom they counted nought,

Still sat there, engrossed in thought.
 "He has some signs of authority!"
 In amazement, so thought the three.
 "You're a white-bearded old man!" said they,
 11790 "But like a vagrant you make your way!
 Where have you come from, where do you go?
 What is your business, we want to know?
 Have you servants to manage affairs?
 Have you come here to sell your wares?
 You behave in a very bad way.
 Since the third prayer-time, still you stay!
 Soon the city night-watchman will come.
 When he questions you, you will be dumb.
 Will he not then escort you away?
 11800 He will not listen, if "Wait!" you say.
 Then that watchman is Shah for the night!
 Won't he use force to put you right?
 To the dervishes' hut you won't go...
 Why do you want to spill your blood so?
 From what people, say, do you come?
 So asked Abdikalik, not in fun!
 But Jakib, he still did not rise —
 Just sat and looked them straight in the eyes!
 But at last he replied to them, see —
 11810 "You are fine young fellows!" said he.
 When it gets dark, your garden you quit,
 In your high houses at home you sit.
 Atemir is your Khan, it seems.
 On your streets I saw people in streams,
 But they had no guests, it's true!
 Terrible poverty's fallen on you!
 Lacking a host I have here remained!
 Let those strong ones, who swords retained,
 11820 Take me with them into their home!
 Then let thirty or forty, say, come!
 Let some be older, and some be young.
 If there's a place where they sell food,
 Buy some for all, and I'll make it good!
 So, then, you think me an Arkelik —

One who takes lives of others quick?
 Really, can you not share your food?
 Would you take money, to make the loss good?
 At the door don't you hang up your whip?⁸³
 11830 With all your folk into hell may you slip —
 You who don't know how to get on with folk!
 So, a guest comes — and you think it a joke,
 Sending your servants to quarrel with me,
 Ask me to tell you my family-tree,
 Just to sort out a high or low strain!
 You ask that question again and again!
 Ask it once more, and I shall be sick —
 Out of my way, or I'll spew on you quick!
 Do you think I'm a man of low birth?
 11840 Listen, I'll tell you what I am worth!
 Had I forebears — you doubt me here!
 First and foremost came Khan Babir.
 From great Kirghiz I take my name.
 After Babir, Khan Buura came,
 Sowing confusion among his foes.
 Long ago heaps of heads arose!
 Khan Buura had a son — Tyubei —
 'Gainst Beidzhin's chief he led the fray.
 Allah to him and his brother gave aid --
 11850 Tyubei and Këgëy the victors made!
 Soil where they roamed with blood would cloy.
 That Tyubei had a son named Nogoi.
 Right from the start he had great success.
 Son of Nogoi am I, may I stress!
 Suffering humiliation severe,
 I, bey Jakib, am standing here.
 As I think of you all, I see —
 Strangers as guests unwelcome will be.
 May your forefathers' spirits blame you!
 11860 Now for a bride is suffering too
 My own son — Manas is his name!
 So Jakib to his story's end came.
 What was at stake they then understood,
 They'd heard already, for bad or good,

Of the famous feats of Manas.
 Many odd words Jakib added thus,
 And the chieftain, Abdikalik,
 He was touched at once to the quick —
 Sire of Manas they had treated uncouth —
 11870 Then his heart came up in his mouth.⁸⁴
 Then it fell, beating against false ribs,
 Liver and lungs had trembling tips.
 Out of its shroud it leapt again —
 Arms went limp, and legs felt pain...
 "You four stay here!" he ordered them.
 Off he flew from Jakib, from his men,
 Straightway to Khan Atemir he flew,
 Quickly told him all that he knew.
 "I have seen that old man!" he said,
 11880 Great misfortune falls on our head!
 I've been scared out of my wits, you see!
 'Mid Kirghiz, some great giant is he!
 I don't know how he got here at all.
 Now he's on foot, and no steed I saw.
 He arrived after last evening prayers,
 So he said, and as wanderer fares.
 "I found not one to ask me in,
 There was none who would help me then.
 I was your guest," to me he said,
 11890 "But, on seeing me, each shook his head!
 Having met me, you gave me a scare,
 Left me sitting on empty air.
 What kind of folk treat a guest like that?"
 He sits alone on the mound, no mat,
 And he's as angry as he can be.
 Think up something, my Khan!" said he.
 "I have hastened to tell you all!"
 When Atemir received this call,
 Then he began at once to speak,
 11900 Seeing Abdikalik look so weak:
 "Such a man in this world you can't beat!
 We're in a fix now, facing defeat.
 We can't hold up our heads again,

Being covered in such deep shame.
 Now, because of our guest, you see,
 We just laughing-stocks seem to be!
 In my palace the guest-room stands —
 We're used to serve them with both hands.
 Into the chamber reserved for a Khan
 11910 We should have taken such a good man!
 Thinking that he was not one of the great,
 We should do nought to humiliate.
 Thanks to this Kirghiz from Beidzhin,
 How can we fail such pains to be in?
 We did not notice, when we began,
 What we should suffer because of this man!
 Thinking; "An ignoramus is he!"
 Fools we have made of ourselves, you see!
 Match-maker he, in search of a bride —
 11920 Goes round the people on every side!
 With no companions, not even a steed,
 Well, just look, he met you indeed.
 Having questioned him, heard his reply,
 This Kirghiz, who comes from Altai,
 He, it seems, found one maid to his taste.
 Well, don't sit there — no time to waste!
 That young maiden whom he has seen,
 Did he know her name, in between?
 Go and find out, then come back to me,
 11930 Tell what he heard, and what did he see.
 Learn as much as you can of him then!"
 Thus Atemir addressed his men,
 Those chiefs then to Jakib returned,
 Spoke with him, and again much learned.
 All about his earlier life,
 How he had come to meet his first wife,
 Of his family, and their affairs,
 Of his brothers, and deeds of theirs,
 And of lion Manas, his son —
 11940 Fought Khakan, and victory won!
 Then they asked, beginning to end,
 How he took Andizhan in hand.

Also how he his old father asked:
 'Find a good wife for me at last!'

How they had argued about the affair,
 How in Fergan he found no bride there.
 How in Kayip he saw maidens fair,
 First to last told them all, and to spare.
 Fed them freely upon his word...

11950 Having heard all as it occurred,
 Chiefs, as wise men, were all amazed.
 Doubting, waiting, upon him gazed.
 "Dressed in red silk, it seems, you saw,
 Many maidens, one and all.
 One your heart-strings seemed to reach!
 Having heard her living speech,
 Then you saw what a beauty was she,
 So you told us, generously.
 But of her many maids who came,
 11960 Tell us, did you know her name?
 So, to gain their own ends, they said,
 So, to muddle Jakib's old head.
 So Jakib replied to them:
 "I will tell you about that then!
 My companions, and my horse
 I sent off on another course.
 At the Khan's palace went to appear,
 Thought awhile, then came in here.
 Looked round the garden carefully,
 11970 But your faces did not then see.
 Only later to me you were sent.
 Meanwhile I through the garden went.
 Saw a path which I might take,
 Just above the reservoir-lake.
 There grew rushes and reeds and grass,
 Where unnoticed I could pass.
 There on that spot I took my place,
 There I saw, before my face,
 Quietly talking together, see,
 11980 Maidens coming quite near to me.
 "Will they not spy me?" I thought in fear.

Deep in the rushes I hid me there.
 I observed among them a pair.
 Two fair maidens — a real beauty one.
 Second said "Sanirabiyga, come!"
 Held out a coconut to her there,
 Which she took in her fingers fair.
 Clearly, Sanirabiyga's her name.
 She would please my son, that was plain.
 11990 Then I thought things over again.
 Were she the daughter of simple folk here,
 Were she the daughter of Khan Atemir,
 Were she the daughter of come great chief,
 Were she the daughter of someone beneath,
 Were she the daughter of some great bey,
 Were she the daughter of nobody, say,
 Still they might give her to my son?
 If they would not give up such a one,
 Then what torment would fill my brain!
 12000 Do not torture me so again!
 Take me, and make me your guest today.
 My son for all the food will pay!
 Having made this caustic remark,
 He thought; "Now they'll see reason's spark."
 True enough; they thought: "He's sincere!"
 Went to the Khan to make things clear.
 Many kinds of food they prepared.
 Talked it over, their views declared.
 Took him into the palace then,
 12010 Having counted him equal with them.
 Yesterday they offended him, though.
 Through their ignorance things went so.
 When next morning Jakib arose,
 By his door, which he did not close,
 Once more he saw Sanirabiyga —
 Still a child — well; there you are!
 And he asked a chieftain nearby,
 Straight out, never batting an eye,
 "Whose child is that, can you tell me, pray?"
 12020 So, in quite an informal way.

"That's the daughter of Khan Atemir,
 Richly-minded, and skilful, that's clear!"
 So the chieftain to him replied.
 When he heard "The Khan's daughter," he cried:
 "That's the happiest news for me —
 Better news there just could not be!"
 Though his inquisitiveness was curbed,
 All the same, he felt disturbed:
 "She's the Khan's daughter — it knocks me flat,
 12030 And she's his only child, at that!
 If he will give her, all will be well.
 If he will not — then who can tell?
 Chieftains! Discuss it and make reply.
 Tell me your answer, truth don't deny.
 Either tell me: 'Go on your way!'
 Or, 'We'll give her as bride!' please say.
 Then will be given into your hand
 What is known as 'kulduk'" in our land —
 "Payment for agreement receive!"
 12040 Thus bey Jakib addressed each chief.
 Five of the chiefs went to Atemir.
 What Jakib had said, they made clear.
 They in turn then asked their Khan,
 All feeling troubled, to the last man:
 "How shall we get rid of him now?
 He lay in the rushes, somehow,
 There he saw all the maids that day —
 There that good-for-nothing lay —
 Now your daughter, Sanirabiyga,
 12050 Wants to take, as a bride, afar.
 If we say 'No!' and drive him away,
 How then escape our Judgement Day?
 Not another — your daughter he begs,
 That old man, on his shaky legs,
 He says: 'If you'll give — then say 'Yes!'
 Though we must wait a year, I guess.
 If you won't give — then answer 'No!'"
 That's how he presses on us so!
 Having met him now, face to face,

12060 We've lost boldness, and found disgrace!
 What are we going to do with him?
 Speaking to him, your chance grows slim.
 Then you feel your spirits sink,
 Then you know, you stand on the brink!"
 Thus Atemir to them made reply:
 "Gather our wise men, living nearby,
 Seven night-watchmen call withal,
 Governors of the city call.
 Don't delay, go straight away.
 12070 Don't let any at home there stay.
 Chief officials, and envoys besides,
 All the heads of family tribes,
 Let them mount at once and ride here!"
 Such were the words of Atemir.
 Seven night-watchmen galloped around,
 Kadi's and muftis too they found,
 People whose word the folk believes,
 Khans asvisers, and war-time chiefs,
 All were rounded up, and brought in.
 12080 At the Khan's palace they raised a din.
 Then the Khan spoke out quite clear:
 "Many years we've been living here,
 In Bukhara, Keyip, on the plain.
 From the river's high reaches then came
 Some kind of horror named Manas,
 From the Kara-Kirghiz came to us.
 Several years ago he arrived,
 From the Altai, where once he thrived.
 Now comes his sire, a white-bearded man,
 12090 And a brawl he nearly began.
 He said straightway: 'My son Manas
 All kinds of highest business has!'
 Not with evil intentions came he.
 My one remaining daughter, Saani,*
 He wants to take with him beside,
 Back to his son Manas, as his bride.
 He told his father 'Find me a wife,
 One who will comfort me through life!'

That old man came and looked around,
 12100 And my only daughter he found.
 Then he said: 'Give to Manas your child!'
 That imposing old devil went wild.
 He disturbed my innermost soul.
 What do you say to this question whole?
 If we don't give this maiden to him,
 Raise our banner with faces grim,
 Saddle our steeds, and go to fight,
 Shall we defeat these Kitghiz by might?
 Shall we overthrow them so?
 12110 People who've seen them ought to know.
 What do they say about them, then?
 They say that one beats a thousand men!
 They say that they never yield to a foe.
 They say that they'll not retreat, oh no!
 They say such custom they do not know.
 Well, if that is so, be it so!
 Are there such warriors gathered here
 Who such foemen would not fear,
 Who would against such devils race,
 12120 Who would fight them, face to face?
 Who would have courage to strike his blow,
 Who would then to the battle-field go,
 Who would heatedly hack off heads,
 Who would their vengeance never dread,
 Who would hew their arms to shreds,
 Who would leave them on stumps of legs,
 Who would make cowards' eyes pop out,
 Who would turn their muskets about,
 Who would, falling, embrace the earth,
 12130 Who would, calling, his steed send forth.
 Who would lay everything down, and life,
 Who would eagerly spur to the strife,
 Who would willingly go to his death,
 Who would fight on till his last breath,
 Who would never give up our maid,
 Who would never then sheathe his blade,
 Who would into the thick then fly

Who would care little if he should die,
 Who would clatter and batter and slay,
 12140 Who would scatter the foe away,
 Who would go with blood-stained clothes,
 Who would in battle hold high his nose,
 Who would fly against Kara-Kirghiz,
 Who would rise like a dragon for this?
 Are there such fighters among you here?
 Are there those who the maid would spare,
 Make a truce, embrace, and live,
 Who would way then to Kirghiz give?
 Who, interrupting my summons clear,
 12150 Starts to argue — are such men here?
 To you all I have made my call,
 You brave fellows who fill my hall,
 Listen, and think of the words I've said!"
 And with that, Atemir stopped dead.
 Who would answer him, where he stood?
 What slave of God would risk his blood?
 None would step forth and go ahead.
 But the wisest among them said:
 "What kind of call have you uttered thus —
 12160 What kind of words have you said to us?"
 Thus the wise ones reasoned away:
 Our great forbears used to say
 Many commanding words in their day.
 "To the unfortunate plaintiffs go!"
 Clearly, these words are just also.
 For a few whom good fortune has missed,
 When a match-maker comes as guest,
 They at once will drive him away.
 Now your daughter's grown up today,
 12170 If you reckon the years, let's say
 She's sixteen-and-a-half years old
 This year already, so we're told.
 Meanwhile life goes on, doesn't stay,
 Days and months and years pass away,
 And a maid who goes as a bride,
 She must leave her people beside.

Husband takes her with him, you see,
 Who can tell what her fate will be?
 Will she find what to her is dear?
 12180 Tales of Manas, the bogatir,
 Going round among us are severe —
 Khan of Kara-Kirghiz, that's clear.
 If you believe what people say,
 Not a bad leader, anyway.
 So his sire is no poor old man —
 Father of a flourishing Khan.
 And Manas is no longer a youth,
 But a grown-up man, in truth.
 One who's already shown his worth.
 12190 Beard and moustaches he's put forth.
 How many lands has he brought low?
 How many years has he lived now?
 How do the people accept his word?
 We should know just what has occurred!
 We have his father with us here —
 He would certainly make things clear!"
 Tyulëebek and Akilbayis
 In conclusion said all this.
 Then Abdilkalik had his word:
 12200 "What you said is quite absurd,
 If he were a man, as you said,
 Would we not have given the maid?
 If you see him off with a "No!"
 You'll condemn us to suffering so!
 Eh, good people, listen! said he;
 "From this stranger, as bride-price, see,
 We must demand rich stores and herds,
 We must not dither over words —
 Ask for more cattle, ask for gold,
 12210 Let the numbers of each be told!
 Having considered, number them then,
 Number the cattle, the serving-men,
 Number the slaves that he must pay!
 "I'll take the bride!" he'll faltering say.
 In the palace guest-room he sits,

- Having already lost half his wits.
 See him off, the bride-price name,
 Number the cattle and goods the same.
 When you ask such a heavy price
- 12220 He will be lost then, in a trice!
 So said the chieftain Abdikalik.
 Khan Atemir agreed, and quick.
 With him others agreed in this.
 Tyulëebek, and Akilbayis,
 With all those that were seated there,
 Abdilkasim, and Shaatemir,
 All were glad that they'd reached consent.
 Then Atemir, away he went,
 Saying, "I'll see the match-maker now!"
- 12230 He set off in haste, anyhow.
 Atemir had six hundred chiefs,
 Each a family-leader, at least.
 Suddenly now Jakib's men came,
 Found their way back to him again.
 Akimbek's son, young Mandibai,
 He had good brains, and a very sharp eye.
 Then Atai's bold son — Bëkë,
 Then Akilbek's brave son — Dzhëkë,
 These provided Jakib's deepest needs.
- 12240 Two young slaves looked after the steeds.
 Listen to what their story's about.
 Just as if on a smart look-out,
 All the five of them appeared,
 "Comrades of the old white-beard,
 Five of them have shown up now!"
 Someone informed the Khan, I vow.
 "Clearly, the old one planned it so,
 When he sat all alone, you know!"
 Then they began to judge him thus,
- 12250 Kicking up an awful fuss.
 Just as if their souls felt gay,
 Without stopping they gossiped away.
 "Interesting, if we gave the bride
 To the Kirghiz old man beside!

- How much cattle could we ask then?
 You are officials, and leading men,
 Khan's selected chiefs are you,
 Must be over a thousand, it's true!
 Beys and so on, five hundred or more,
- 12260 What are you sitting and hoping for?
 Have you not got some thing to say?
 Let's take the camels, anyway.
 How many could we rightfully claim?
 How many horses should be our aim?
 Let us demand a larger herd!
 Then horned cattle? What's your word?
 Let's demand much more of them too!
 What about sheep? How many would do?
 Let's demand more of them as well —
- 12270 Abdikalik, your opinion tell!
 Akilbayis — and what do you say? —
 You too are a well-born bey!
 Here you sit, so tell us at last!"
 Then they said: "Three camels we'll ask.
 Horses, well, a hundred, you know!
 Sheep — we'll ask five hundred or so!
 There's no need to ask more than due —
 We have got a conscience too!
 Ask six hundred sheep at least,
- 12280 Also thirty or so horned beasts.
 What about slaves, have you thought of them?
 One male, one female, or both strong men?
 He's a devilish cunning old man,
 He'll twist our minds as much as he can!
 But let him see that his day is done.
 Let him be scared, when for cattle we come!
 So the wise ones discussed the bride-price.
 They decided, and they thought twice.
 Let us ask for some ingots too —
- 12290 Only ingots of gold will do!
 Then we'll ask for gold pieces as well.
 Red gold dilde our coffers will swell.
 Let's ask a thousand pieces, at least!"

One said: "Where will he find them, poor beast?
 Those Kirghiz go wandering so,
 Such gold pieces they would not know!"
 Many were heated words then said.
 "Five hundred pieces, at least!" they pled.
 "You'll be lucky if you get two —
 12300 Others then explained their view.
 "He won't be able, too old and weak!"
 Then Atemir arose to speak:
 "Brothers, my people, true as I live,
 I do not wish my daughter to give!
 You have set the price far too low.
 I could never agree to it so!
 Beys and leaders, I thought you strong!
 Where are your brains, I've looked for them long!
 If with cattle Jakib you'd scare,
 12310 Asking for such, y' 'll make him beware!
 Those Kirghiz many cattle possess.
 He could pay easily, so I guess.
 He could say: "Give us the bride now!"
 No matter what you ask, nor how!
 Do you think he is ready to pay?
 When: "Take the bride!" to him we say,
 To that Kirghiz son-in-law-to-be
 We'll show the value of cattle, and see
 Whether he then will still hang on,
 12320 Whether he'll see where he's gone wrong!
 Sixty camels demand from him.
 You are all leaders, all in the swim,
 Just inform him, and find peace of mind.
 May Allah slay me, if them he'll find!
 Him and his like you can leave behind.
 Don't stand idle, think everything out.
 Of those sixty camels, all stout,
 Let there be thirty females light,
 Heads all black, and bodies all white!
 12330 Leaders, stretch your minds out tight!
 Let the thirty male camels then
 Have black hair all over them,

Only let their heads be white!⁸⁵
 That sly Kirghiz won't get them right!
 He'll be a laughing-stock, indeed.
 From the old man ask five hundred steeds.
 When he cannot find the right sort,
 You can say: "No cattle you brought!"
 Then on one side you him can cast,
 12340 And find peace of mind at last.
 Then for two hundred cows you can ask.
 Even there you can set him a task:
 Say what colour their coats must be,
 So with the horses too, you see:
 On their foreheads white stars there must be,
 On their nose-ridge, — a polished line bare.
 From the handsome black horses, I'd say,
 You claim a hundred, and lead them away.
 If he objects, you can make reply:
 12350 "That's the Khan's order! Now you know why!"
 You can demand black tails for the steeds,
 While the rest is pure white, indeed.
 He'll say: "Where can I find such a breed?"
 "Go and look, till you find what we need!"
 Let all pairs be alike, every way.
 Not a scratch anywhere — dapple-grey.
 Ask the unlucky Kara-Kirghiz
 For every kind of steed there is,
 Many he'll not be able to find —
 12360 That will drive him out of his mind!
 Chestnuts ask, all red, not browned.
 When by Kirghiz they can't be found —
 Let them remain without their bride!
 Black-maned duns, with lightish hide,
 Let them seek for them as well,
 Let them have a taste of hell!
 Ask for fifty, at least, of those,
 Greys and bays, in separate rows.
 Ask for twenty-five each of such —
 12370 That will trouble the old man much!
 Six and seven-year cows then ask,

Fifty whites, from first to last,
 But their bulls must all be black,
 Head to tail, no going back!
 Fifty black cows next, that's right!
 But their bulls must all be white.
 Not a speck of black on them!
 That will puzzle those Kirghiz men!
 If you want him to run away —
 12380 These you must demand that he pay!
 Next the oxen — the same with them.
 Twenty-five skewbalds — black-clotted then,
 Twenty-five skewbalds — red-spotted those,
 Others — well, you know how it goes!
 Altogether two hundred beasts —
 That, I must say, is the very least!
 Count them over, mark them well.
 Then for sheep you must ring the bell!
 Thousand black, and a thousand while.
 12390 Then with cattle we'll fare all right!
 Next — gold pieces, pure gold dilde,*
 Riches which they don't know, you say.
 Ask, then, for forty thousand in gold,
 Ask, then, one thousand in silver, all told.
 If they have none of these at hand,
 If they seek in another land,
 Try to borrow them from Kitais —
 You can expose these rogues likewise!
 Having finished, the Khan sat down,
 12400 Placed on his head his golden crown,
 On Jakib he would pay a call,
 Make his acquaintance, his men and all.
 Five companions were with him there.
 Bey Jakib was a tiger rare.
 Feeling quite mighty, Atemir
 Then caught sight of Jakib quite clear;
 Then, at once, he felt scared, dismayed,
 Caught himself in the trap he'd laid.
 Troubled he saw Jakib's huge form,
 12410 Lost his peace in approaching storm.

Seeing his boldness, he felt fits,
 Feeling his coldness, fell to bits.
 Clearly, here was Manas' sire,
 Showing part of his son's bold fire.
 Atemir, that majestic man,
 With great awkwardness, said "Salaam!"
 Bey Jakib his greeting received,
 And, replying, felt much relieved.
 Showing respect, Atemir said: "Come!"
 12420 Took Jakib inside his home.
 There he sat him at his right side,
 With a Shah's worthiness at him pried,
 Looked him over, and understood —
 And appraised there all that was good.
 Then, at last, such words he expressed:
 "May your folk with good luck be blessed!
 May those hostile towards you die!
 You have come without telling us why.
 Kara-Kirghiz are your folk, they say.
 12430 What did you come for, anyway?"
 Having seen his inquisitive eye,
 Bey Jakib then began his reply"
 "My appearance before you today —
 That is Allah's will, I must say.
 Out of the summer heat, I came here,
 Seeking a cooler spot, that's clear.
 Also seeking a bride for my son,
 Suitable maidens — I found none.
 But I liked your daughter's look,
 12440 And a great fancy to her I took.
 If by Allah it's so decreed,
 If we have your consent, indeed,
 Then your daughter would suit my son.
 Let us take her — she's just the right one!"
 So said Jakib to the Khan, and was done.
 "But my daughter is still too young!"
 Such were the words on Atemir's tongue.
 "That just doesn't ring true, somehow,
 Why don't you make her happy now?

12450 We'd be delighted too, I vow!
 Those under ten 'too young' you may call,
 But she's over sixteen, not small!
 My son a head on his shoulders has got —
 Chief of the people now, is he not?"
 White-beard Jakib then made reply.
 Atemir again met his eye —
 "This Jakib is a wise old bird,
 One of the wisest I have heard!"
 People whispered among themselves low...

12460 "If you say 'Well, agreed, let her go!'
 If it's by Allah predestined to be,
 If you'll but name the bride-price, see,
 Then, as match-maker I'd be so glad,
 So too, I'm certain, would be my lad!
 If they like one another, all's well —
 Then for the wedding we'll ring the bell!
 Please don't think we have ill intent!
 On mutual happiness we are bent!
 Don't tear your soul to bits in doubt —

12470 Let's calmly sort the whole thing out!
 How many daughter have you, by the way?
 How many sons I'd ask, if I may?
 If our two meet, as young ones do,
 Then I'm sure the match will go through!
 Any doubts they have will grow cold,
 Once they see each other, all told!"
 So said Jakib to Khan Atemir.
 Then he started to make things clear:
 I have two daughters, and I have three sons —

12480 Five in all, and my only ones!
 Since you ask, such children are mine.
 Allah has sent me them in his time!
 See how barriers now break down,
 Where before had hostility grown!
 Bold Jakib again broke through:
 "Do both your daughters live with you?
 Then Atemir quite openly spoke,
 Treating the matter half as a joke:

"My other daughter, Adirabiyga,
 12490 Went to her husband's home afar,
 Where, by custom, she lives — there you are!
 My second daughter, Sanirabiyga,
 She is living here still with me.
 That is the one whom you wish, I see.
 Her you saw when first you came!"
 Atemir, his grey beard a frame,
 Those straight words to Jakib then said.
 Akimbek's son, Mendibai, stepped ahead,
 Looked at Jakib, who must then decide:

12500 "Give here the ingots we set aside!"
 So said Jakib to Mendibai.
 He had a leather bag, hung high,
 And from it one ingot he took:
 "Don't be stingy, more! Just look,
 How much to give I already know.
 Hand me the bag, I'll show you, so!
 Why the delay, then, why do you lag?
 Hand it down here, that's my leather bag!"
 Then he plunged his arm inside:

12510 "We must give presents to gain a bride!"
 Then some big gold ingots he chose,
 Counted out just ten of those.
 "Maybe," he thought, "I'll give them all?"
 They were stunned, those chiefs, when they saw.
 Then he took out ten silver bars —
 Those who watched him just saw stars,
 Gazed at Jakib in amazement deep.
 Ten silver "horse-shoes" he placed in a heap.
 Each of the chiefs one gold ingot he gave,

12520 All the silver the rest might have.
 Many people were simply amazed
 When upon the gold ingots they gazed.
 Others came crowding forward to see,
 Such unknown generosity!
 "This old man is clever!" they thought,
 "That which he unnoticed brought —
 Countless riches turned out to be!

Just a poor tramp we thought him, see!
 But he's all sugar and sherbet and mead!"
 12530 So spoke the chiefs, surprised indeed!
 Then in groups of four of five,
 Chattered together, much alive.
 "Silver horse-shoes, see, they bring,
 Gifts for agreement on everything.
 Sire to Manas! What a man is he!
 What must Manas himself then be?
 See, his father agreement can find!
 See, that maiden, she has a rich mind!
 He whom she takes will be such a man!.."

12540 So again conversations began.
 Then they asked: "Will the suitor suit?
 Whoever wins her, wins ripe fruit.
 She'll be always his guiding star,
 Stay, unfailing — Sanirabiya!
 Great good fortune that man will crown.
 If he ever should let her down,
 Then avenged she will surely be!
 Saying such words in privacy,
 All the family leaders near

12550 Came to the house of Atemir,
 Turned about, and entered too.
 "Shall we get gifts, or just 'Peace to you!'"
 To the Khan they addressed their pleas,
 And Atemir replied to these:
 "Everyone has their customs, see —
 Let not the people censure me!
 Let the gold ingots be my property —
 You share the silver horse-shoes free!
 With this suggestion did chiefs agree,

12560 Then they left, as pleased as could be.
 How they shared them we shall see.
 Thirty silver ingots gave he.
 All the chiefs who were with them then,
 Shared them out among their men,
 Not only warriors, folk as well,
 And how they did so, who can tell?

All who came, whether rich or poor,
 Got their share of the gifts, what's more.
 What the Khan had said — they did,
 12570 All above board, and nothing hid.
 So Jakib's gifts of silver and gold
 Went all round the city, I'm told.
 Everyone found them most useful too.
 "Kirghiz customs we never knew!
 Though unknown, let him put on this gown,
 One of ours which have won reknown,
 Made by our village people are they.
 Let him wear it when he rides away!"
 Made of red silk, a precious array,

12580 Three more robes they gave that day.
 Silken scarves, and dresses too,
 Nine more robes of satin all through,
 Having made peace, they gave the bey.
 So Jakib set off on his way...
 Three days travelling he was found,
 In the desert and plains all round.
 Then to Kara-Too he came,
 And at last reached home again.
 All his people greeted him there.

12590 All lived well, without any care.
 "Bey Jakib back home has come,
 Brought fine gowns, and robes, more than one!"
 So news came to the folk's eager ear...
 Khan Almambet, and Manas, bogatir,
 They were out hunting on Ala-Too.
 They'd set off there a week ago.
 They were hunting deer as yet,
 On the foothills of Aziret.
 Came to hunt, and lay there at night.

12600 Almambet had a vision bright...
 Full round moon with a chip off the rand,
 Came right down, and lay on his hand.
 Settled down there to sleep by him.
 When he awoke — the dream grew dim...
 Never before such a dream he's seen.

Rising he thought: "But what does it mean?
 I must tell Manas about this...
 Stood there thinking, lost in a mist...
 Dawn was breaking, Manas too dreamed,
 12610 And to him it also seemed —
 Full round moon, with chip off the rim,
 Came right down, and slept by him.
 Then all those forty bogatirs,
 Kirgil and Bakai as well, it appears,
 Each saw a full round moon descend,
 Looked and took it into his hand,
 And felt quiter then at heart...
 Almambet made an early start —
 Told Manas all about his dream —
 12620 He had dreamed the same, 'twould seem!
 He replied: "Let's ask wise Bakai!"
 So they told him, sith sleepy eye...
 He made answer, near to tears:
 "That round moon in your hand, it appears,
 Was you beloved one, whom you'll take,
 But no child for you will she make...
 Though she has a round full mind,
 Dent in the edge — no child you'll find!
 Others who saw full moons, no chips,
 12630 All will have babes with breasts to their lips.
 They will live, and be happy yet,
 But Manas and Almambet,
 Neither having their own sons,
 They will both be miserable ones!"
 Then Manas told more to him.
 Full round moon, with a chip on the brim —
 That at first I found in my hand,
 But it still grew fuller and grand,
 And at last no chip was seen,
 12640 Just as though one had never been!"
 Ripe and round it was, you see!
 "Since it came that way to be,
 With no signs of a chip," he said,
 While Almambet, too, nodded his head,

"Since you both saw a round full moon —
 Then your wives will be pregnant soon.
 You'll become masters of family folk!"
 Thus the wise Bakai then spoke...
 Back to their hunting went the men,
 12650 Shot some deer from a buttress then.
 Also they shot wild mountain sheep,
 Then with joy began to leap.
 Then some mountain rams they shot —
 Very good for the cooking-pot!
 Then they shot some Siberian stags,
 Standing upon the mountain crags.
 Then they rested after that,
 Sat around and began to chat!
 Rested their steeds the eleventh day,
 12660 Lastly back home they made their way.
 "Time," they said, "to go back home!"
 So they returned the way they'd come.
 Scattered then in their hills and dales,
 Helped in their homes, and told their tales.
 Almambet and Manas as well,
 Both returned to their own dell.
 News went round that they's returned,
 And Jakib to see them burned...
 Sent Abike as messenger then,
 12670 Saying he wished to speak with them.
 So he came and told those two:
 Father waits in his yurta for you.
 He has much that he wants to tell,
 Many questions for you as well!"
 "Tell me, has he found me a bride?
 That's the first question to decide!"
 So said Manas, with sharpest wit.
 Khan Almambet agreed with it.
 "Let us see what he has found,
 12680 Let us agree, if the bride is sound!"
 Having said this, Manas, bogatir,
 Took his sword and axe and spear,
 Than had a word with Almambet.

Soon upon his steed he was set.
 Off to bey Jakib they rode,
 Side by side their horses strode.
 Bey Jakib, five days before,
 Had sent messengers, door to door,
 Told them to be prepared to go —
 12690 As the bridegroom's companions so.
 All the bravest ones he called —
 In his yurta they were installed.
 Albalta and Berdike
 Both came hurrying on their way.
 Elders from their villages came,
 All who bore an honoured name.
 Akimber and Oshpur came too,
 Very soon they appeared in view.
 Këkëtë and bold Dzhanai,
 12700 Many others were standing by.
 Those to whom the meseengers went,
 All those seen, to Jakib were sent.
 Here was Chago, with greying beard,
 Not to be left out, it appeared.
 Son of Oroz, young Chagatai,
 Azamat and Bardibai,
 They both came when they heard why,
 For the present standing by.
 And, at last, awaited yet,
 12710 Came Manas and Almambet.
 "Call Kirgil and wise Bakail!"
 Said Jakib to ones nearby.
 "And the forty bogatirs —
 Those we need now, it appears!"
 Then Jakib began his speech,
 Patiently heard by all and each.
 "Heated by summer, winter I sought —
 Young Almambet provoked the thought —
 Off I went, a bride to find
 12720 For Manas — that was on my mind!
 In Chardzhou and Bukhara
 None I found, no lucky star!

Through Samarkand and old Tashkent,
 Looking 'mid various folk I went.
 Then I crossed the pass Dzhanar*
 Seeking a bride, both near and far.
 Through the river I had to slip,
 Going on my way to Keyip.
 When I got there,-- then soon I found
 12730 Crowds of Tadzhiks all settled round.
 Long before us, through many years,
 They became Mussulmen, it appears.
 There, it seems, an old custom they have —
 Women near men-folk cannot live.
 There, it seems, they are ruled by the Khan.
 Of all the folk seen in my life-span,
 This was the noblest — Khan Atemir.
 He was a bold one, who knew no fear.
 He ruled the lands of Keyip and Arsu.*
 12740 People paid him the honour due.
 He was the eldest — Khan Atemir,
 Youngest brother was Shaatimir,
 Middle brother was Abilkasim —
 Thus, two younger ones under him.
 There with him I met success,
 Thanks to Allah's will, I guess!
 Three sons lived with their father still:
 Dzhanadil, Kabil, and Abdil,
 But most handsome of all, by far,
 12750 Was his daughter — Sanirabiyya!
 His elder daughter, Adirabiyya,
 Lives with her husband -- there you are!
 If Sanirabiyya suits my son —
 Then she would really be the right one!
 Forty maidens she has at her call,
 Clever and sensible are they all.
 I saw this maiden with my own eyes,
 I saw there a treasure likewise.
 I started talks with Atemir there,
 12760 And many others, about this affair.
 Then I gave presents to honour the bride,

Took a look round on every side,
 There saw another good maiden too,
 Thought: "She for Almambet would do!"
 She took my fancy — just the maid!
 Silver and gold as well I gave,
 And in return for gifts of mine,
 Brought home twelve gowns of satin fine.
 Round my shoulders they hung them there.
 12770 Finally I returned back here.
 Gowns and robes of silk, you see,
 Atemir had presented me.
 Let the tribe leaders come, take free,
 Share them out in equality!"
 Then Akimbek's young son, Mendibai,
 Brought in the robes, and held them high.
 Three of them specially caught their eye,
 And the leaders there standing by,
 Took them as presents for their folk.
 12780 Thanks for their precious gifts they spoke.
 Then those leaders also said,
 Glancing at silken and satin thread:
 "We should go and thank them too.
 Let us ride along with you!"
 Almambet and Manas agreed.
 Old Kirghil, and Bakai, indeed,
 Heartily welcomed that idea.
 Then Manas said: "Father dear,
 You seem to know their customs well,
 12790 Much you've said, but there's more to tell.
 You have told of them, praised what they said,
 Told of the power of the Khan at their head.
 Tell us now, when they give a bride,
 Do they demand a bride-price beside?
 Do they ask for cattle as well?
 If they do — then about that tell!"
 Then Jakib said: "In their ways,
 Pushful are their shahs and beys.
 But, long since, if I make no mistake,
 12800 Price for the bride they do not take.

When I asked: "Give your daughter as bride!"
 They were all confused deep inside,
 Thinking: "That's Kirghiz custom, we know!"
 Then they demanded cattle also.
 When I asked: "Give your child as bride!"
 They seemed to count it as woe, beside.
 Then, on seeing that we weren't poor,
 Asked for cattle from us, more and more.
 Saying: "The father parts from his child —
 12810 Feels a woe which drives him wild!"
 Half of the cattle which we'll give them,
 They'll give back to the daughter then.
 Then, for the coming wedding feast,
 They'll slay half of what's left, at least.
 Thy said; "If you take her too,
 Do this service we ask of you:
 Sixty camels give to us —
 Thirty males there must be thus,
 Thirty females must be as well,
 12820 Sixty together, their number you'll tell.
 Heads all black, and bodies all white —
 You Kirghiz, imagine the sight —
 Camels like that, say where will you find?
 Since the females will be like that,
 Then, just think, the males must be fat,
 Bodies all black, and heads all white —
 Camels like that, say, where will you find?
 If you can't find them, the rarest kind,
 Then, old man, leave my daughter behind,
 12830 And your offer must be declined!
 So, old man, you will come to shame,
 Not being able to find the same!"
 Thus said her father, Atemir,
 And by his words it became quite clear —
 He would not give his daughter away!"
 That's what Jakib then had to say,
 Bold Manas gave his whiskers a twist,
 Then gave a knowing smile, as he list.
 "How many horses did he require?"

- 12840 Then he asked of Jakib, his sire.
Then Jakib to that question replied,
Fairly, squarely, and open-eyed:
"Devil take him — that way indeed
He demanded five hundred steeds!
Different colours of coats and tails,
On the nose-bridge — polished bare weals,
On their foreheads — a bold white star,
Bodies as black and shiny as tar,
Legs as strong as on mountain sheep,
- 12850 Level spines as well they must keep.
Some of them white, with tails jet-black —
Such rare horses don't hold back.
Give at least a hundred of them;
Dappled steeds — just fifty asked then.
Further, he asked a great amount —
Horses which you can hardly count —
Pomegranate-red they must be —
Fifty of such demanded he.
Bays, and duns, and darkish greys,
- 12860 Twenty-five each of them we must raise.
As for cows, six or seven years old,
Fifty quite white ones he asked, so bold,
But their bulls with them must be black,
Head to tail, and no going back!
Fifty black cows then he asked,
Who their full six years hadn't passed,
Let them be the best in sight,
But their bulls must all be white!
We have heard that Manas is strong,
- 12870 Well he leads the Kirghiz along.
If he really decides to wed —
Will he not do all this?" they said.
All must with equal big horns be seen,
They must be fat ones, and never lean,
They must be striped, or spotted with black,
Otherwise you can take them back!
Devil take him to hell at last!
Still for fifty more oxen he asked,

- Saying: "We need them for the plough!"
- 12880 Still he asked for more, I vow!
Twenty-five skewbalds, red-spotted those,
Twenty-five skewbalds, black-dotted those,
Fifty in all he demanded then —
Afterwards sheep — he spoke of them:
Thousand black, and a thousand white —
That's what he asks for, as his right.
You've been blustering, my Manas!
Where will you find such cattle with us?
Forty thousand gold dilde,*
- 12890 And two slaves he demanded that day!
Your dear father-in-law-to-be,
Atemir, spoke such words to me.
Look, my son, will you do all?
Now my powers begin to fall.
After I sought and found you a bride,
You have troubled me deep inside.
Go, seek cattle, according to plan!
If Allah blesses a tired old man,
You will then have a beautiful bride,
- 12900 One beloved, and close by your side!"
So Jakib then addressed his son.
Lion manas looked round at each one —
Kara-Kirghiz of every tribe.
When any kinsman takes a bride,
During the courting, when matches are made,
There's an old custom of mutual aid,
And this custom is still in force.
Everyone sitting round, of course,
Offered white camels with black heads then,
- 12910 More than a hundred-and-twenty of them!
"I've a black camel with white head!" then
So said six-hundred-and-fourteen men!
Black steeds with white stars on their brow —
He found around six thousand, somehow!
Every one said: "Take what you need!"
Many gave up their favourite steed.
Then black horses, white-tailed there came,

- Almost five thousand, all the same!
 "We'll give you all you need!" came their cries,
 12920 From all the twelve Kirghizian tribes.
 All around rose shouting and cheers.
 All his forty friends, bogatirs,
 Always, when things went hard with him,
 Did their best to make him grin!
 "Don't leave a single beast behind!
 We shall show them what we can find!
 When Manas goes to take a bride,
 Can anybody just stand on one side?
 Whatever beast you care to ask —
 12930 Take them all — to the very last!"
 Then Manas spoke and thanked them all,
 On his respected folk did he call,
 On his brothers of body and mind,
 Then he looked, and saw every kind.
 Elders in places of honour sat,
 Youngsters, by the door on the mat —
 Everyone laughing, fit to die!..
 Who'll join the match-makers? Aye-aye-aye!
 They prepared all the cattle then —
 12940 Three times more than were asked of them!
 With short beards and whiskers trim,
 Twelve thousand warriors went with him.
 With long beards, and whiskers grey,
 Nine thousand went with Jakib the bey.
 All of them, from the first to last,
 They provided with six day's repast.
 Lady match-maker was Shakan,
 Best of the women, proud as a Khan.
 Her companions numbered nine,
 12950 All very clever, all very fine.
 Well, we'll leave her there with them...
 Nine hundred elders, wisest of men,
 Those he took as a brain-power source,
 And his forty chieftains, of course,
 And Kirgil, and wise Bakai,
 All great kinsmen, and then small-fry,

- Groups of one thousand for each bogatir —
 Forty thousand, to get things clear...
 From dried apricot wood, for komuz,*
 12960 He gave orders the covers to choose,
 Gouge out the bodies, round and deep,
 Low on them the bridges keep,
 Stretch on their necks the tight-girt strings,
 Strumming and thrumming, each one sings.
 One hundred players on the komuz,
 Making fine melodies, fingers use.
 Three brass trumpets the warriors took,
 Each with long twin horns, just look!
 Then from hewn-down barberry trees,
 12970 Dried in the sun, no pith if you please,
 Masters made lengthy flutes and pipes,
 Finger-holes of various types!
 Thirty-seven young riders then
 Took them up and played on them.
 While Manas still led them on,
 Marvellous things by Kirghiz were done.
 Sixty-four trumpets, with flared brass horn,
 Stood there waiting, newly-born.
 Simple whistles, made out of reed,
 12980 Couls be heard miles away, indeed.
 Fifty skilled pipers led the band.
 Banners, rolled, lay ready at hand.
 On strong horses they loaded huge tents,
 Noise and bustle was just immense!
 Some looked up with an angry frown:
 "Hey, you pipers there — just pipe down!"
 Then the young pipers put pipes away,
 Helped their elders prepare for the way.
 Sensible ones understood in a trice,
 12990 Listened, and took their good advice.
 On this mass of Kirghiz just look!
 Forty tents each one slain sheep took,
 Thirty thousand others they drove.
 One hundred one-humped camels strode,
 With two-hundred, two-humped, on the road.

Heads of tribes the cattle led —
 On the road-sides they went ahead,
 Took their muskets for shooting deer.
 Three thousand horses brought up the rear.
 13000 Straight on ahead their road lay clear.
 On they went, a seething array,
 Ninety mares for food on the way,
 And nine more would be slain at the feast
 On the day of the wedding, at least.
 Khan Këkëtë's young bogatirs
 Joined up with bey Jakib's quite near.
 "We'll look after the cattle," said they
 To Baimirza and Dzhanaï on the way.
 All the famed warrior-knights were here.
 13010 Out on the road to Khan Atemir,
 On the long trumpets they gave a loud blast,
 When they neared the Khan's city at last.
 Then on the tambourines they beat,
 And the horns they blew to greet.
 All the mass of them made their way,
 To and fro did they swing and sway.
 First and last ones you could not see —
 Eyes could not span that company!
 And the question on every lip:
 13020 "Where, then, is the Khan's city Keyip?
 Are we near it now? asked they.
 Brazen trumpets began to play,
 Tender sounds of the flutes broke through,
 Songsters began with komuzes too,
 Melodies played, and music grew.
 Bogatirs gave their shoulders a shake,
 Strong-men began their powers to awake,
 Sheep were baa-ing, and cows mooed too,
 Horses were neighing, and snorted anew.
 13030 People were merry, their goal in view.
 What a happy end to their load!
 Twelve nights they'd rested on the road,
 Ridden the plain, and desert bare —
 On the thirteenth, towards eve, got there.

Outside the walls their tents they set —
 Not quite all had arrived there yet...
 Just outside the city's bound
 One of the Khan's own guards was found.
 Seeing this horde, he spurred his horse,
 13040 Straight back to the Khan's palace, of course!
 "Seething hordes of soldiers have come!
 Our position looks very glum.
 They have raised the dust to the skies —
 This I have seen with my own eyes.
 I looked on in greatest amaze —
 What a spectacle met my gaze!
 This seemed to be an entire folk —
 Thousands on thousands!" so he spoke,
 Told his tale to Khan Atemir.
 13050 All the details he set clear.
 "From the first to the last you can't see —
 Half-s-day's journey it was for me!
 That's the mass of the army that's come!"
 Khan Atemir just listened, struck dumb.
 When he found a tongue in his head
 "Where is our army? Collect them!" he said.
 "If these attack us, what can we do now?
 Let's pray to Allah to aid us somehow!"
 Then Atemir made haste, it's clear —
 13060 Sent him to gather his forces there.
 Forty thousand fighters had he,
 Quickly they gathered their company.
 "Very numerous are the foe,
 And our people they'll slay also!"
 They were clearly very disturbed,
 And the cowards could not be curbed.
 There they stood, indecisive, weak.
 Not one bold word did anyone speak!
 Thus Adzhibai, Chalibai, Kutunai
 13070 To the Khan's palace then drew nigh.
 When they appeared upon the scene
 Atemir saw what a fool he'd been!
 "We thought them heathens, dangerous foes —

But they are Kara-Kirghiz, goodness knows!
 We sent that old man Jakib back home,
 Thinking that never again he'd come.
 We asked impossible kinds of beasts —
 "He'll never find them!" we thought at least.
 Having said this, Atemir felt calm —
 13080 No further dread, and no more alarm.
 Then Adzhibai said his "Salaam!"
 Smiling in greeting, he thought no harm.
 Then Kutunai said his greetings too,
 And Chalibai said "Salaam" anew.
 Then with the quietened-down Atemir
 They made the whole position clear:
 "We have come as match-makers here!
 Happy man you! So be of good cheer!
 We bring a bridegroom with ways of his own,
 13090 So let your daughter prepare to be shown!"
 Those were the words of Adzhibai.
 He had no time to blink an eye,
 When they began to drive in the sheep.
 Bleating and baa-ing they came through the street.
 Thirty thousand of them came.
 "Where are your shepherds, all the same?
 Let them led these sheep out to graze,
 On the pastures to make their ways."
 So said the sheep-chief Kongurat.
 13100 "Take your sheep, and be glad of that!"
 Then he began to curse everyone...
 "Whose are these sheep, and whence have they come?
 They are just seething in heaps, like worms —
 Each at the other squints and squirms!"
 So Tadzhik shepherds began to swear,
 Driving them off from the city square...
 "Still these flocks are fat, not ill-fed!
 Who is their owner?" then they said.
 "Does he wish to sell all these sheep?
 13110 People would like to buy them cheap!"
 Some came with money, and eager eye,
 They were waiting impatient to buy.

Others who saw them, no money at hand,
 Disappointed around did stand.
 Some said "Sell us a sheep today!"
 Others said "Take your money away!"
 Some said "Take your sheep off the street!"
 Others said "All the same, they're good meat!"
 So the confusion there grew and grew.
 13120 "Who is their owner?" Nobody knew!
 While all that was going on there,
 Old Kirgil and Bakai, our pair,
 And Madzhik, from the Kara-Toko,
 And Kambar's son Chali, also,
 And another — five in all came.
 Guards took their horses, asked their names.
 Those who had driven the herds so well,
 Eight of them, the truth to tell,
 While they were meeting and greeting there,
 13130 Other herdsmen came on the square.
 Driving three thousand horses ahead:
 "Where's the Khan's herdsmen? then they said,
 "He who'll take charge of every steed?
 Let him come and receive them, indeed!"
 "Padishah, where's your herdsmen — the head?"
 So Salamat, our chief herdsmen said.
 And behind him, many others came —
 Umët, Dzhaisan, and Chubak I'll name,
 Then Serek, Sirgak, Kalkaman --
 13140 Six of them their questions began...
 Atemir their greetings took,
 Wondering at their black-browed look.
 From their long duties they sought release,
 Waiting only a little ease!
 Driving nine-hundred cows, no less,
 Then stepped forward their head, Deldesh,
 Raising a fuss he began to cry:
 "Where are the herdsmen? Why no reply?"
 Meanwhile in the yard, somehow,
 13150 Oxen's horns sweep forward now!
 Bulls are roaring, nostrils a-steam...

At the numbers of cattle he'd seen,
Atemir was confused indeed —
"Really -- so many to ask was no need!"
Bulls began to butt about.
There was no one to turn them out.
Everyone feared such beasts to touch,
And of their butting had seen too much.
Following them came Salaman.

- 13160 And Tokotai, who with camels ran.
From the Kazakhs came Dzho-oronchu,
Kaigil, Bëgël, and To-orulchu,
Bey Shinga's young son, Kerben,
Then most energetic Dërbën —
Three hundred camels did they drive —
All had reached their goal alive.
Twin-humped camels a-swaying came,
Humps a-wobbling, all the same,
And behind them the one-humped too,
13170 Angrily spitting at all in view.
"Where are those who Khan's camels feed?
Take these beasts, attention they need!"
So Ofor, their chief driver cried,
Raising a fuss there, far and wide.
"Where is the Khan himself, beside?"
If you count up his people, why then
You'll find some sixty thousand of them,
But with these cattle they cannot cope —
No place for them, no food, no hope —
13180 For some way out, in the dark they grope.
Torment has fallen on them today.
All the people feel the same way:
"There's no place for the cattle you brought!
All the Khan's plans have come to nought!"
Through the city of Keyip-Badang*
All the local inhabitants ran,
Driving off cattle where they could,
But in deepest distress they stood,
Paid no attention to lion Manas,
13190 By his red tent they left him thus...

There only cattle for slaughter stay.
Inside his servants in red array,
Silken caps and trousers they go,
Just as if back at home, you know.
Guests they accept at the open door,
Food they enjoy as they did before.
Here, as at home, or on the plain,
They keep old customs, all the same.
Only before Manas, bogatir,

- 13200 Atemir did not dare to appear.
So the first nightfall passed away.
Of all the cattle and treasure next day,
Seemingly Atemir had forgot.
On the second night, on the same spot,
What did bold Manas do, let's see.
"He said; "What kind of Khan is he,
Who just thinks us unworthy of note?
Devil take hold of him by the throat!
Adzhibai, bagatir, quick-brained,
13210 Go and find out how things are arranged.
Of that spoiled daughter of his get news.
Find out precisely, your own means choose,
What she is like, and where does she stay,
Where does she sleep at the end of the day.
That young beauty my father describes,
News of her maidens find out besides.
To those who guard her by night and day
Give silver ingots, and servants pay.
Find out the way I can get to them.
13220 Make full agreement, and call me then!
Make your own estimate of her worth,
That young daughter, praised since birth.
Don't belittle yourself, anyway,
Only lead me back there, I say.
Open the door, and let me in.
First acquaintance I then shall win.
Though she may be spoiled thus far,
I shall see what her good points are!
If she begs, her life I may spare —

- 13230 If she seems bad, I shall slay her there!
Get to see her, measure her mind.
If she has little brains, you find,
Then her black liver I shall hack out,
By the court on a gate-post stout,
There by her eye-lids I'll hang her then.⁸⁶
On the city of Atemir's men
We'll make attack, and then break through.
Then we shall see what they will do.
If her father and folk are strong —
- 13240 I shall find all that out are long!"
So spoke Manas, in anger indeed.
Adzhibai, the quick-witted, agreed.
He did not dare to say him nay.
He did not care to stand in his way.
Adzhibai bestraddled his steed,
Thus to fulfil the ordered deed...
Take a careful look how they are:
Lion Manas besat Akkula.
Proudly he sat, and brave to boot,
- 13250 In his special bridegroom's suit!
Handsome in armour-plate was he,
Lion Manas, as bold as could be.
Like a bird of prey he sped,
Fired with a passion, because of a maid.
Cattle he'd given, prayers he'd said,
With all his heart he wished to be wed.
He could not stop himself, nor stay.
Adzhibai came, they went on their way.
Handsome upon Akkula his steed,
- 13260 He set off on the road, in the lead.
It was at evening, before last prayers,
Twilight coming to soothe one's cares.
Taking ten silver bars he rides —
All had been cleaned and polished besides.
Guarding the palace till end of day
Stood Mamatbek, with beard of grey.
He met them both upon their way,
And had a word or two to say —

- Then he simply let them pass,
13270 Stepping aside upon the grass.
Having seen lion Manas, he said:
"He will be a support when wed
For the maiden Sanirabiya.
That is her suitor, her guiding star!..
Tightening daggers at their waist,
By the lake-reservoir they chased.
Further they rode, and skirted round
Lakeside rushes, where ducks are found.
Water is low there, an empty place,
- 13280 No geese honking they had to face,
No splish-splashing of marshy ponds,
No swish-swashing of stately swans,
Quietly there they forded the stream,
Pure crystal water, and rushes green.
Here are the Khan's own gates nearby.
Mamatbek and Adzhibai
Prayed "May Allah send us his aid!"
Bold Adzhibai then up and said:
"In the middle room I'll stay.
- 13290 To that beauty, further away,
I will guide our leader bold
She has seven maids, all told.
That fair maiden Sanirabiya
Wishes no meeting with him so far.
I shouldn't wish that she scolds each maid,
Telling them: 'Dont let him invade!'
Nor that, if someone speaks out of place,
Angry Manas should himself disgrace,
Putting us to shame, what's more,
- 13300 Spilling a maiden's blood therefore.
I shall take those seven in hand,
Find out there just how things stand!"
So said Adzhibai, bogatir.
"If you're going, then go — that's clear!"
Answered Manas, impatiently.
Carrying seven silver dzhambi
To the seven young maiden guards,

Adzhibai went with his silver bars.
 At the door, with dagger in hand,
 13310 One maid said "Halt!" and made him stand.
 "Not a step further!" But he was no fool.
 One young woman named Naarkyul
 Was more clever than all the rest,
 Of them all she was the best —
 Her too bold Adzhibai then woke,
 And convincingly he spoke.
 Then she opened wide her eyes,
 When she saw the silver prize.
 "How many guards protect her here?"
 13320 Tell me her secrets, all declare!
 Only do not exaggerate!"
 Bold Adzhibai then told her straight.
 Naarkyul replied "Very well!"
 Off she went the maidens to tell.
 There she found them, dagger held fast,
 Lying asleep near the door at last.
 Quickly she woke the two of them,
 And began to speak with them then.
 And Adzhibai, who'd followed thus far,
 13330 Gave to each one a silver bar.
 Clearly, no simple maids were they —
 Follow now what we have to say —
 Adzhibai went back to Manas:
 "Your way is open!" he told him thus.
 Then Manas no moment did waste.
 Joy from that maiden he wished to taste.
 If in the outer chamber, let's say,
 One would put thirty lamps anyway,
 Then the dark would no longer stay,
 13340 Then the night would be bright as day,
 Like midday on the steppeland wide...
 Near the edge, from the forward side,
 With a golden veil on her face,
 On her gilded divan's warm space,
 Sixty white blankets and sheets, there you are,
 Lies spread out Sanirabiyga.

On her bosom his hand he laid.
 Trembling, quivering, woke the maid.
 Not turning over, her voice she raised,
 13350 On the lantern a cover she laid.
 Then she spoke with sharp tone and sharp look,
 From the lantern the cover she took,
 Saw the face of Manas, bogatir,
 Eyes which were simply eating her there.
 Certainly not like the other men,
 Taller was he than any of them,
 Menacing, speaking straight out each thought,
 She enquired, as if she knew nought:
 "Who are you, who have crossed the lake?"
 13360 Who are you, who such liberty take?
 Geese and ducks, they multiply there,
 Swans goes swaying, stately and fair.
 Simply people are there not allowed.
 Who are you, who break through, so proud?
 Wrecking the rushes and slender reeds,
 Just to satisfy your own needs?
 Who are you, who in father's white home,
 Just as it pleases you, think you may roam?
 Who are you, to come with such pride,
 13370 Pushing my seven maidens aside?
 Who are you, who have thrust your way,
 Late at night, avoiding the day,
 Brushing aside those on watch and guard,
 Entering thus our palace yard?
 Who are you, who take as your own,
 My bed-chamber, which no man has known?
 Who are you, who commits such a crime,
 Thinking, it seems, "All this is mine!"
 Who are you, who has drawn aside
 13380 Golden curtains and blankets wide?
 Who are you, then tell me pray,
 Daring your hand on my bosom to lay?
 Who are you who comes seeking death,
 Longing, it seems, to take your last breath?
 Who are you, uninvited who's come,

Standing before me, in my own home?
 Take away your hand from my breast,
 While I do not wound you, at least,
 While your final hour draws not near.
 13390 Who are you, now answer, d'you hear?"
 So, without pause, and sharply spoke she.
 Showing herself a Khan's daughter to be.
 Thinking "The guard did not catch him, then!
 He is one of those Kirghiz men,
 Who have laid waste the land around,
 Better that he not here were found!"
 So she turned and asked once more:
 "Well, and what are you waiting for?!"
 "I am Manas, and cattle I've paid
 13400 To your father for you, dear maid!
 I have brought camels and many a steed,
 I have brought gold and silver, indeed!
 I have named you, Sanirabiyga —
 To be my bride, so there you are!
 I am Manas. If I say one word
 Not in its place, may my knell be heard!
 I am Manas, and gifts I have sown,
 Just like seeds, gold and silver alone.
 I am Manas, and I came at eve,
 13410 Not in the night, as you believe!
 I am Manas. I brought ingots of gold
 Which your father and chiefs now hold.
 I am Manas. I woke up no geese,
 Broke down no rushes, nor slender reeds.
 I am Manas. I forded the stream,
 Where no horses before had stream,
 Where no horses before had been!
 I am Manas. No swans did I scare,
 But went carefully round them there!
 I am Manas. I secretly came,
 13420 Sanirabiyga my bride to name.
 I am Manas. For Rabiya's sake,
 Every risk on my head did I take.
 I am Manas, and your golden gate,

Your father's fortress, my entry did wait.
 I am Manas. Your servants I scared,
 And, stepping forward my presence declared.
 I am Manas. Cows and sheep I brought,
 And an agreement insistently sought.
 I am Manas. I thought "She'll be mine —
 13430 Then life together for us will be fine!
 I am Manas. From your face I took
 Your scented veil, on your beauty to look.
 I am Manas. From your body took too
 Your cambric gown, your figure to view!"
 Sanirabiyga then answered again:
 "Don't breathe so hot! No need to explain!
 Listen and think, what I have to say:
 When I'm your wife, then have your own way!
 Why, at the moment, do you not agree?
 13440 Why do you wish to dishonour me?
 You simply come, and here you stand!
 Who are you, that you act so grand?
 What is your lineage, that I would know?
 Where do you come from, and why do so?
 Who, and what are you, be pleased to say?
 Why such fiery eyes, anyway?"
 "My name's Manas, and I'm a Kirghiz.
 Allah has made my life what it is!
 I am a happy and fortunate man —
 13450 If you dismiss me, all goes out of hand!
 If you're self-willed — I'll give it to you!
 Then without doubt, I'll murder you too!"
 Thus, in a fury, he turned on her.
 Anger and spite on his face there were.
 He seemed to think that she'd worked him woe.
 That's what made him excited so.
 This made her stiffen, and answer then:
 "If you are one of these Kirghiz men,
 Then I am also a Tadzhik maid,
 13460 And of nothing am I afraid!
 If you threaten, then you will be slain,
 And you will shed your blood in vain.

Do you think your so special thus,
 Just because you are named Manas?
 How, then, can I agree with that?
 Why, that's a name one might give a cat!
 My chief servant is named Manas.
 My close comrade is named Manas.
 My chief shepherd is named Manas.
 13470 My store-keeper is named Manas.
 My chief herdsman is named Manas.
 My young errand-boy's named Manas.
 Why do you try to humiliate me,
 Just because Manas you must be?
 How, then, can I agree with such?
 Really, you know, you ask too much!
 Leave me now! Get you gone, I say!
 I've had enough of you, anyway.
 If you take one more step again,
 13480 Verily you may well be slain!
 Having said this, the maid Rabiya,
 Daughter of Atemir, went so far —
 Snatched up a dagger in her hand...
 Then Manas, in a fury grand,
 Stood prepared, and drew his breath,
 Ready for anything — even death.
 He was just preparing to strike,
 When she noticed this, belike,
 She turned slightly away on one side,
 13490 And his fist went a little wide.
 Thinking to give the girl a blow,
 He brushed against her dagger so,
 And it penetrated his arm,
 Where it did a great deal of harm.
 For the point of the dagger fell
 Just on an artery there as well.
 From his left wrist the blood poured free.
 Thus he suffered misfortune, you see.
 Then that maiden, with courage blest,
 13500 With his right fist he struck in the breast.
 Then that beauty Sanirabiyga

Fell face down on the floor, there you are!
 If your forbears, Manas, were brave,
 Then that blow approval they gave!
 Thus it was he left the court.
 That Khan's daughter, against whom he fought,
 In her own home received a great blow.
 On her chamber-floor she lay low.
 He had been ready to hew off her head,
 13510 But he had taken pity instead.
 Beauty and elegance of her face,
 Stately manner, and all her grace,
 Lion Manas spared generously.
 Five bruised ribs already had she.
 With her hands she covered her face,
 While Manas left his bloody trace.
 Putting on an important air,
 Striding from the palace went there,
 With a sour look, his passion spent,
 13520 Lion manas returned to his tent,
 There before his men to appear.
 There he stepped forward, their bogatir,
 Raised all round him a buzz and a hum.
 Elders stood there, scared and dumb,
 Heads a-spinning, and brains gone numb.
 Some were found who thirsted for war,
 And had beaten the drums before,
 And began today once more.
 Many warriors loving bold deeds,
 13530 Went to saddle, bestraddle their steeds.
 Everywhere there were horsemen and cries.
 If one rides, one swiftly rides!
 And the city they went to attack,
 Loaded muskets swung at their back.
 Fuses smoking, first shot rings.
 Archers fit arrows to their strings.
 City now besieged on all sides.
 Thousands waiting — what betides?
 Këkëti and Jakib the bey,
 13540 Loudly shouting and screaming away:

"Halt, you good-for-nothings! Stay!"
 What an alarm they raised that day!
 So the hot-heads dared not disobey,
 Not start to plunder the city away,
 They selected some guardsmen instead —
 They soon took over, and looked ahead:
 Atemir had appeared again —
 Sixty horsemen, all on tight rein!
 Not allowing them to pass,
 13550 Not allowing attacks to last,
 Not permitting beseigers to stand,
 Guards made order on every hand.
 Atemir went to counsel then,
 With his closest sixty men,
 And decided his daughter to give.
 Times were difficult — they must live!
 Then in order his guests, to take,
 Many arrangements he had to make.
 All the forty bogatirs,
 13560 All the elders too, it appears,
 Old Kirgil and Bakai as well
 His own beys did greetings tell,
 And invited them all to stay.
 Atemir led Manas away,
 Took him back to his own court.
 Quarrels arose of every sort,
 Where the bogatirs should stay,
 But in the end they went away,
 Each bey taking a guest back home.
 13570 Then Manas was settled alone.
 All departed, one by one,
 None of them knew where the others had gone.
 Padded coverings on the floor,
 Downy blankets silk-lined what's more,
 Fluffy pillows of feathers white,
 Many they brought forth for the night!
 In the Khan's courtyard, wide as could be,
 Kirghiz yurtas found place, you see.
 And in the nearby garden too —

13580 Twenty yurtas sprang in view.
 Then Atemir sent messengers round;
 Carpenters who made troughs were found.
 Sixty of them began straightway
 Making troughs for oats and hay.
 Then more yurtas too they made,
 Under two master-craftsmen beys.
 Seventy guardsmen were sent around
 To rich beys where equipment was found.
 Then many others too were sent,
 13590 Ordered to find four hundred small tents.
 Then the round tunduks* to make,
 Then the door-posts too to shape.
 On the doors to carve designs,
 Decorations with flowing lines —
 With all this Atemir was concerned.
 Thoughts about Manas he spurned.
 Thinking: "Let women take care of him —
 What he needs they will soon bring in.
 They will take care of the chosen groom,
 13600 And will attend him in his room!"
 Thinking of thousands of other things thus,
 Atemir quite forgot Manas.
 "He has got my wife Akmama* —
 She will serve him, and there you are!"
 But, because Manas aroused fear,
 Many women and maids won't go near.
 Atemir knows nothing of this,
 Being too busy already, that is.
 So he goes hasting, here and there —
 13610 For Manas has never a care,
 So there was none who took care of him.
 Soon, of course, his looks grew grim!
 Early autumn — a sultry day —
 See what amusement is on its way!
 In the fortress, in his own room,
 In the fine palace there sits the groom.
 All alone on the bed sits he,
 Thinking: "My bride will come to me!"

There lay stretched out, with feelings aflame,
 13620 Long he waited — but nobody came!
 Not one woman, and not one maid!
 Not one servant — all too afraid!
 None of his forty friends came there,
 None on the two-stringed viol played an air.
 None looked in — no time had they...
 Lion Manas just fumed away:
 "What humiliation for me!
 What a lack of civility!
 Over the brim his spleen poured there
 13630 At this insult of Atemir
 "Cursed be that Khan Atemir,
 And his dangerous daughter there!
 I shall slaughter the pair of them!
 If they have not slain my men,
 I'll destroy everybody that's here —
 First of all that swine Atemir!"
 Like a caged lion he raged to and fro,
 Reason left him, and maddened so,
 Spleen and spite showed clear on his face.
 13640 How could he tolerate such disgrace?
 There he sat with no delights,
 Two whole days, and two whole nights.
 Nothing he ate, and nobody saw.
 Nobody came to him, no one at all!
 None of his forty bogatirs,
 Not even Almambet appears!
 They were thinking; "He's with his bride —
 He won't need anyone else beside!
 They did not know that he suffered so,
 13650 Therefore to him they did not go.
 All the other Kirghiz were fed —
 Like a Khan's the life they led.
 But Manas' wild look of hate
 No woman servant could tolerate.
 Forty-five of them gathered round.
 Kapiya at their head was found.
 Then she said "I must feed our guest!

How can he live, not fed like the rest?
 Others told her: "No, do not go!"
 13660 But she found enough courage though!
 So, to have a look at the groom,
 She took one woman with her to his room.
 She wished to know how he was, indeed.
 So the door-handle she slightly freed —
 Just one peer at him she took,
 Then fell flat on the floor, poor cook!
 Then the second ran back to the rest,
 Told them she'd died when she glimpsed their guest.
 What a fuss the others displayed!
 13670 How they pitied the other poor maid!
 "He's a real monster!" so she said.
 How could a maid to him get wed?
 I'd rather marry the devil instead!
 Kapiya saw him, and fell down dead!
 Straightway, of course, from fright she died,
 Right by his door, her arms spread wide!"
 So said the woman when she came back,
 Hurrying with bad news, alack!
 "So, she's dead!" thought every maid.
 13680 Oh, what mournful looks they displayed!
 They were all scared, their faces pale:
 "What are you saying?" they started to wail.
 Two or three of them off then went,
 Terribly troubled, their heads all bent.
 When they came to the bridegroom's door,
 Saw Kapiya there, on the floor.
 Clearly they saw — of fright she'd died.
 All stood weeping by her side.
 All of them thought "Yes, she is dead!"
 13690 Then one bent and raised her head.
 Then they lifted her body too —
 As they did so, the light broke through!
 Kapiya slightly opened her eyes,
 And they all looked with great surprise!
 Well, you've heard such stories before,
 So I don't need to say much more.

Six of them led her to Rabyga —
 With great bother they got that far.
 She understood — she'd been scared by Manas,
 13700 Therefore she'd lost her senses thus,
 And she'd lost her consciousness too.
 Rabyga then laughed anew —
 "So it was not a man she saw,
 But a monster's ravaging jaw!"
 Let us leave Rabyga to smile...
 What about lion Manas, meanwhile?
 Well, what words can describe aright
 Such a furious angry plight?
 Frowning brow, and eyes aglare,
 13710 Lion Manas was still sitting there.
 Then Bakai thought he'd visit him,
 Knowing not what a state he was in.
 Called Kirgil and the elders too,
 Said: "Let's visit Manas — what say you?
 He's making merry with maids and young men.
 Let's go and call from the courtyard, then.
 Let's try and see how he's getting along.
 If we can speak, then nothing is wrong.
 We shall agree to do as he's said,
 13720 Always remembering — he's our head!
 If he's resting, we'll just call "Hallo!"
 Then off back to our homes we'll go!"
 Such were the words of wise Bakai.
 Quite a few elders went, by-the-by.
 On their steeds they trotted away,
 Entered the gates, all cheerful and gay.
 When they reached the palace, indeed,
 There each one hitched up his steed.
 Then they stood in the palace yard,
 13730 And they called out one young guard.
 "In which house does our bridegroom stay?
 Can you show us, by the way?"
 So enquired the bold Bakai...
 That young guard did not bat an eye,
 He just stood, his mouth gaping wide...

Then to bold Bakai he replied:
 "I know nought of your birdegroom!" he said.
 "I've seen none!" and he shook his head.
 "I've heard nobody mention his name!"
 13740 Then to one lovely mansion they came.
 It was luxurious, through and through —
 So they decided to call there too.
 Bold Bakai went into the yard —
 Seemingly no one there on guard.
 Forty bogatirs walked in then,
 With Bakai and Kirgil leading them.
 There they cried "Salaam!" aloud.
 Bursting the door, Manas rushed out,
 Pushed straight into old Bakai —
 13750 Head over heels he made him fly.
 Next behind stood old Kirgil --
 Seized him, like a cap, as well
 Hurlled him then at Almambet.
 Next behind Sirgak stood yet.
 Him he seized, and raised on high,
 Hurlled him then at Adzhibai.
 Next behind there stood Serek,
 Him he seized around the neck,
 Hurlled him then at Kutubiy...
 13760 Then Serek himself dragged free,
 Crept up, seized Manas from behind:
 "Uncontrolled such rage we find!
 Have you not a perceptive mind —
 Pouring forth spite of every kind?
 Am I a loved one, whom you may seize?
 Kindly moderate anger, please!
 Are these people whom low you've laid,
 Really the bride for whom you've paid?
 You want to seize that bride, we see.
 13770 How can you, if she won't agree,
 Beat your own Kirghiz for her sin?
 Thus a wife do you think you'll win?
 Just because to you no bride came
 Can you strike comrades, all the same?

How do you think we look on you then?
 Open your eyes — we are your own men!
 Listen, what I'm saying to you!
 I, Serek, I accuse you too!
 Am I worse, then than Atemir?
 13780 Did I hold back my daughter dear?
 Just because nobody brings you your bride,
 Do you think you are justified,
 And can beat your own folk thus far?
 Though the maid Sanirabiyga
 Shook your pride, and shed your blood,
 Why let your fury rage like a flood?
 Am I he, who your suit refused?
 Am I he, who the match misused?
 Vent your fury in the right place.
 13790 Do not strike a friend in the face!
 Better destroy the whole of your folk
 Than impose on them anger's yoke!"
 Bold Serek so accused Manas.
 But down by his eloquence thus,
 Not the slightest smile on his face,
 Suffering deeply from such disgrace,
 He had frightened himself, indeed!
 There he stood motionless, paying good heed.
 Now, defeated, he hung his head
 13800 At the words which Serek had said.
 Then his right moustache gave a flick,
 Then a tremor moved his right cheek.
 Then he called a life-guard near:
 "Bring Akkula my steed to me here!"
 Then into the house went he,
 Donned his armour and weaponry.
 While he thus was occupied,
 To the forty knights outside,
 Bold Bakai gave some orders too;
 13810 Saying "Keep my words in view.
 Though this folk aren't Kirghiz by far,
 Many Tadzhiks among them there are.
 When you make an attack on the town,

Save the Tadzhiks, as though your own!"
 Quietly these words were said,
 Just before Manas went ahead.
 He came out all full of noise —
 Called together his bogatir-boys:
 "Straddle your steeds!" and away they flew.
 13820 "If you ride, ride swiftly too!"
 Having turned everything upside down,
 On all sides around the town,
 Forty knights besieged it all.
 Those, who "match-makers" one may call,
 Just went wild, and ravaged fast,
 Every one, from first to last,
 Round about sixty thousand men,
 Every single one of them,
 Those who had been warned by Bakai,
 13830 Raised a cloud of dust in the sky.
 Unresisting ones from the town,
 Innocent ones, were beaten down.
 Many who saw the foes' fierce face
 Died from fear in that same place.
 Atemir of this knew nought.
 In a snare he had been caught.
 "Suitor Manas and knights of reknown,
 They've turned everything upside down.
 Innocent folk they have beaten sore!"
 13840 So cried the messengers at his door.
 When he heard this he gasped, amazed:
 "Hey, commanders!" he called, enraged,
 "Gather your forces, hold foes back!"
 But it was late for that, alack!
 Arrows flew like flakes of snow,
 Foes were filling the courtyard below.
 No way out now for Atemir.
 Abdilkalik and Tyulëbek there
 Said "People suffer, as all can see!"
 13850 What a cursed bridegroom is he!
 Clearly our guest is dissatisfied!
 Maybe someone his rights denied?

Akilbayis then had his say:
 "Who looked after the suitor that day?
 All our folk he has beaten down,
 Wrecked and ransacked all the town!
 Why did he get so furious, then?
 Maybe the servants offended this man?
 Maybe they did not serve him well,
 13860 Weren't polite to him — who can tell?"
 Get his word for it, ask him now —
 Fly to him — learn what happened somehow!
 Otherwise our lives he won't spare!
 Women mean something in this affair!
 None of them wanted to serve this man,
 Seemingly, that's where the trouble began.
 Let's ask the maids, and hear what they say,
 Get to the bottom of this, anyway!
 Women were called, and questions began —
 13870 "Which of you went to serve this man?
 Which of you brought him bread and meat?
 For the maids there was no retreat.
 None, it seemed, had served this guest,
 Each was as frightened as the rest.
 "Well, we thought that servants would serve,
 But, so it seems, they lost their nerve!
 We must admit that we are to blame,
 We've made all people suffer the same!"
 Thus they concluded, esch hung his head,
 13880 Eyes went glassy. Tears were shed.
 Suddenly forty knights, it transpired,
 Roaring like thunder, their muskets fired,
 Shooting at geese, as they tried to fly,
 And what fury shone in their eye!
 Shooting at swans who soared on high,
 Then came crashing to earth nearby.
 Shooting at dogs who barked at them,
 Leaving their corpses behind them then.
 Smashing the stoves of bakers and cooks,
 13890 Bashing the bits with angry looks.
 Arrows from bows went whizzing by,

Shots from muskets went whistling high,
 Dust went whirling up in the sky.
 Forty knights round the town did fly,
 Ravaging, wrecking, one and all...
 Akmama, who all this saw,
 Said to her daughter Rabiyya:
 "Did I not tell you? Here they are!
 Now that they've broken down the gates,
 13900 Shall we escape unhappy fates?
 You have tormented your father dear!
 All our people to death draw near!
 You have led them deep into dread,
 With Atemir, Padishah, at their head.
 May your soul grow quiet, I pray —
 I've nought but scorn for you today!"
 So said Akmama, angry-eyed.
 Turning her lovely face, she replied:
 "How shall I let him beat our folk?"
 13910 Those were the very words she spoke.
 "I shall go, and shall meet Manas.
 Maybe I'll stop this ravaging thus.
 Do not be troubled, my mother dear,
 I shall make my wedding-day clear!"
 What she would do, she'd already thought,
 All her best dresses her maids had brought,
 She had chosen the best of all,
 Silk and satin and lace for the ball!
 Sixty serving maids, all of the best,
 13920 She had also prepared, well-dressed.
 She is sixteen-and-a-half years old.
 High-pointed hat, with crown of gold,
 Springy as feathers of bronze in a bunch,
 Brushing her leg against a rush,
 In bright caftan, with golden lace,
 So she went, with her moon-like face,
 With her maids in their gowns and drapes,
 Thus the road to Manas she takes.
 Wearing their veils of voile they go,
 13930 Swaying like fairies, to and fro.

Brows were trembling over their eyes,
 Arms outside their long sleeves rise.
 Those who stood on the windward side
 Of those maidens, and blooming bride,
 Caught a whiff of their incense then,
 Specially pleasing to the men.
 Gowns of satin and silk ashine,
 Gowns with adornments rich and fine,
 Voices like cuckoos in the spring,
 13940 Ringing, singing, along they swing.
 Melting like butter on warm stove fried,
 Like a brazen komuz* she cried:
 "So that Tadzhiks and Kayips may live,
 I my maidenhood shall give!
 In this world I have not seen
 Any man of such noble mien!
 Thought I was cruel, and wounded him,
 Lion Manas did not give in.
 Thought five beys came a-courting me,
 13950 In the end his bride I'll be.
 If I disobey his word,
 He's not one who'll leave me uncurbed!"
 Clearly the wisdom of Rabiyya
 Would be helpful to all, near and far,
 And to lion Manas, bogatir.
 So she stopped, having made this clear.
 Then she selected forty maids,
 Putting aside all plain-faced jades,
 Only those with swan-like grace
 13960 In her company then found place.
 Finally ten of the best she chose,
 Slenderest, tenderest ones of those.
 Akilbayis then went ahead,
 Six of his cleverest beys he led.
 With a white scarf as flag they went,
 Signs of a truce ahead he sent.
 Having poured some sherbet out,
 This golden bowl he took about,
 Going towards the approaching men.

13970 All the beys then bowed to them.
 Leading them came Bakai and Kirgil.
 Those who went on revaging still
 They commanded "Don't touch these men,
 They have a flag of truce with them!
 Guns were charged, and ready to shoot,
 Fuses were smoking and burning to boot.
 But on hearing this word of command,
 All the warriors came to a stand,
 Thinking "We've broken the palace gate —
 13980 Why, in Allah's name, should we wait?"
 Then from behind spurred forth Manas,
 In golden gown came galloping thus.
 Rabiyya stepped forth with care:
 "I have offended you, Khan-bogatir.
 Far too much I demanded of you,
 But these folk aren't to blame, it's true!
 I to test your character tried,
 That was the trick of your fated bride.
 These Tadzhiks are innocent quite —
 13990 No need to vent on them your spite.
 Counting myself your equal there,
 I gave you an unwelcome scare.
 So the quarrel between us grew great.
 Over-bold, you showed lack of restraint.
 So between us this discord arose.
 So a bad punitive course you chose.
 So you began your offensive affrays,
 All because of your obstinate ways.
 I joined up my faith with yours,
 14000 But you mated with wild furores.
 So I should understand your ways,
 Your left hand with my dagger I grazed.
 So I should see what would happen then,
 And get to know the noblest of men!
 Truly, I submit to you now!
 Master, make up your mind somehow!
 Let your hot anger now cool down,
 Cease to look on me with a frown.

Just be calm, and from fury refrain.
 14010 Do not punish my folk! I'm to blame!
 Now attain that for which you come!
 Well, you're offended, and what have you done?
 This great town of your father-in-law,
 You have despoiled and wrecked it all.
 Having attacked it, our folk you robbed,
 But you've not got what you wanted!" she sobbed.
 Then she drew herself up again,
 And in a ringing voice did complain:
 "Do not punish my people for nought!"
 14020 Thus to see justice done she sought!
 Like a mirror then shone her face.
 Pearl-white teeth she showed, even-spaced.
 Like a cuckoo her voice did ring,
 Like a komuz with taut gut-string.
 In her silk gown she slowly swayed,
 In her gold hat, with jewels arrayed,
 So, before him she went to stand,
 Took his horse's bridle in hand.
 He could not say "Destroy her now!"
 14030 Thus she stopped bold Manas, I vow!
 Abilkasim to Manas then said:
 "You brought us cattle, hundreds of head,
 These were for kinsmen of our bride.
 But what has happened to them beside?
 We stand guilty before you here.
 We come to offer our daughter dear.
 Here stands the maid Sanirabiyga,
 We all agree with her speech thus far.
 Take our Khan's daughter, there by your side,
 14040 Take her and make her your lawful bride!
 Even then, on the Judgement Day,
 We shall stand witness to what we say!
 Then to Tadzhiks from Kiyba, said he
 "Witnesses all of you must be,
 Also you Kara-Kirghiz in view,
 That today we marry these two!"
 Abilkasim thus made things clear:

"All must be honest witnesses here!"
 Father Bakai, and old Kirgil
 14050 Said "We are witnesses as well!"
 So they all said, who'd seen and heard.
 Kara-Kirghiz and Tadzhiks gave their word.
 Those whom hostile struggle had met,
 Now on a peaceful course were set.
 With Manas — Sanirabiyga,
 She whom he courted — man and wife are!
 Abilkasim then mounted his horse,
 Called to the people with all his force:
 "Atemir's daughter, Sanirabiyga
 14060 Now is Manas' bride — there you are!"
 All the Kirghiz, both near and far,
 Knew not the name "Sanirabiyga"
 Such a difficult name could not say,
 And already called her "Kanikei"
 Stretching his neck like a gander, Manas
 Was united with Kanikei thus.
 Then the dust settled. Fighting had ceased.
 And all the tension now was released.
 Then Artemir, who was greatly surprised,
 14070 Once more widely opened his eyes.
 His tight fists he let loose, to say:
 "Where's my treasurer, anyway?
 To his treasurer then he bent —
 One hundred thousand dilde* he spent,
 Thrown on the path where the couple went,
 That which Kirghiz had brought with them
 On three hundred camels then,
 Red-gold coins for all his men,
 Where they walked as groom and bride,
 14080 Scattered them everywhere beside!
 Thinking "Take them in Allah's name!"
 Then his treasures he opened again...
 From the cattle, and pieces of gold,
 People's heads went spinning, I'm told!
 Agile-minded Manas-bogatir,
 Many counted most worthy and dear.

Having planned it long ago,
 Atemir ordered a yurta also.
 Not red-leaded, they paited it so,
 14090 Said "Let the breezes through it blow!"
 In the heat then cool it will be!"
 So they made the grand yurta, you see!
 From pure wool the top-cover, forsooth.
 Pointed were the laths for the roof.
 Lattice-work, which stretched all round,
 Velvet-covered then was found.
 And the wheel-shaped hole overhead
 Was all gilded, let it be said.
 Lashings were wire, or leather instead.
 14100 Forty-one tents then, for newly-weds.
 Kanikei's fate was decided for her.
 In a hollow in Kasha-Dëbë,
 On the banks of a stream, not too wide,
 There the yurtas were set for the bride.
 Chiefs of local tribes chose the site --
 Saw the spots were levelled all right.
 Now take a special look this way --
 Wonderful things does Kanikei!
 Treasures from old Meshked she's found,⁸⁷
 14110 Persian carpets are spread around.
 Velvet, satin, and silk she spread
 Round the walls, and overhead,
 Feather cushions she ordered to bring,
 Covered in silk and crepe-de-chine!
 Six hundred blankets she called for too,
 Red and yellow, and green and blue.
 Sheets of finest linen, or lawn,
 Cambric, cotton, of thread fine-drawn.
 Where, then, had she kept this all?
 14120 Even her father could not recall.
 Golden teapots and samovars,
 Silver tea-dishes, vases and jars,
 Like a woman of forty years old,
 She had collected such things, all told.
 On a long, low bench she'd had made,

All the bedding material was laid.
 She was the first to arrange things so,
 We take after her, you must know.
 Now all Kara-Kirghiz have them too,
 14130 But Kanikei was first of the few!
 Young and old the bride did thank.
 Forty-odd yurtas stood in one rank,
 Stretching along the river bank.
 Forty-odd chiefs had these in their care.
 Forty-odd maids from her suite would live there.
 How they sorted them out, let's see.
 Eighteen the eldest one would be,
 Youngest would be just over sixteen,
 So, in each tent one maid was seen.
 14140 Law and order, you see what I mean!
 In the next yurta to Kanikei's,
 Naarkyul then found her place.
 In the yurta which next to hers stood,
 Aruuke did just what she would.
 In the next yurta, near Aruuke --
 Listen what wonders happen, I say --
 Siyagyul went and sat on the mat.
 Next to her yurta went Ulugat,
 Next to her went in Kiyapat,
 14150 Batmasam went in next to that.
 Into the next one went Burunas,
 Seyilsam in the next one thus.
 Into the next one then there ran
 Chief Otor's daughter, Seyilkan.
 Bowing her head, like rushes do,
 Into the next one went Tasbyubyu.
 Then, quite otherwise, head not bent,
 Sanakan went into her tent.
 Next went the daughter of Abdilkasim,
 14160 Called Azelkan, both tall and slim.
 Reasoning all things out in her head,
 "My sire's no worse than theirs!" she said,
 Entered her yurta, and there you are!
 Maarambyubyu and Balkiya,

- Each into her own yurta sped.
 Everyone well understood, be it said,
 That each of them would win a man.
 Kuzabyubyu and Tizekan
 Looked like a couple of threaded pearls,
 14170 Beaming, gleaming, two bright girls!
 Mametbek's daughter, Maaramkan,
 Albyubyu, as wise as a man,
 Karabek's daughter, Kalbyubyu,
 Bukarlik's daughter, Manuskan too,
 Sonunbyubyu and Burmadzhan,
 Talapbyubyu and Arushkan —
 Full of desire these maidens burn,
 Tileke's daughter, Këguchkën —
 Just to get a glance of these,
 14180 Any man's ready for all you please.
 Udaichi's daughter, Chiayatkan,
 Urkërbyubyu and Dzhanimdzhan,
 Akchabak, the child of Mingbai,
 Keyip's young daughter, Sersabai,
 Slender as willow-twigs, Telmaaram,
 Sanarbyubyu and Ayimdzhan,
 Nacharbyubyu and Kalemkash,
 Both their fathers respected much,
 Dildeburush and Sulaika,
 14190 Tyulëbiy's daughter Okyumkan,
 Akila's daughter, Ayunidzhan,
 Tursunai, with crane's neck has come,
 Batmabyubyu and Shinganai,
 Each one quiet as they went by
 To their yurtas where each now lives...
 Of the many tribes of Kirghiz,
 Eldests of all is Khan Bakai —
 Thirty-five years he's seen go by.
 In a row they stood gazing still,
 14200 With thirty-four-year-old Kirgil.
 Conqueror of Oirots, it appears,
 All the forty-odd bogatirs,
 Elders Kirgil, and wise Bakai,

- Son of Kyuldur, young Chalibai,
 And their joker — Adzhibai,
 And sagacious Kutunai.
 From the Kara-Toko's — Madzhik,
 And Kambar's bold son, Chalik.
 On his light bay steed — Satai,
 14210 From the Alchins, the brave Atai,
 From Uishyuns — Umët, swift man,
 From the Uch-Tamgars — Dzhaيسان.
 From the Argins — bold Karakodzho,
 Comrade of lion-bogatirs, you know.
 Bo-obek, Shaabek, Shukyur,
 From the Albans — Altai, what's more,
 From the Dërbëns — Tërtai, no quirk,
 Fortune-teller-man — black Tëlek,
 With his guessing he oft gets by,
 14220 Like ram-shoulder-blade-man, Agidai,
 Telling just what will be, by and by.
 Toast-master at the feasts, Tokotai,
 People's leader, Kalkaman,
 People's chieftain, Elyeman,
 Brave Serek, and bold Sirgak,
 All the foemen hurling back,
 Kongur's son, young Koshabish,
 Order-making leader, Ibish.
 From the Aimans* — young Alaken,
 14230 Lion Ma hik, it seems, with them.
 From Noiguts, Chubak is here,
 And alone one bogatir
 From the Kazakhs — Ozho-oronchu,
 Kailgil, Bëgël, and To-orulchu.
 Son of old Shinga — Kerben,
 And the excellent Dërbën.
 Then Bëgël, who blocks the wolf's way.
 From Karatyuls* comes Kabike,
 Son of Dzhanger, the young Dzhabike,
 14240 Son of Alo-oke — Bo-oke!
 Irchiuul and sharp Bozuul,
 Strong Tazbaimat, and surely no fool.

From the Kadirzhainaks — Shuutu.
 Cunning Tyumēn and Dzhainak there too,
 Forty-odd bogatirs in a row,
 From the Tadzhiks they'll take brides, and so
 All the Kirghiz are contented men.
 Atemir on the wedding-drums then
 Ordered them to beat might and main.
 14250 Then the white-bearded wise men came
 You must see what they were for —
 Sixty of them there were, or more —
 For the weddings the prayers they'd read.
 For each one he ordered a steed,
 But a quieter place they'd need,
 So bride and groom would soon be wed,
 One the pillow, the other the head,
 "Whom you fancy, take to your bed.
 If you don't fancy, leave them instead,
 14260 Let those suited together be led!
 Let those who wish — submit to a man,
 Let those who don't — stand by if they can.
 They can just watch the others at play.
 Let the maidens choose one day,
 Let them not hurry, but wait one night.
 Let the men choose one day, at sight.
 Let them not hurry, wait one night too.
 Let the maidens choose first among you.
 So, you bold riders, listen today —
 14270 Hear what your forbears used to say!
 When they asked the men to choose,
 They were inclined at first to refuse.
 "Let the maidens choose first!" they said,
 "And if they wish, let them get wed!"
 What amusing words one hears!
 All those forty-odd bogatirs,
 Elders Kirgil, and wise Bakai,
 In confusion are standing by!
 Has anybody among our folk
 14280 Ever seen such a funny joke?!
 Then Manas stepped forward, see.

"Hey, bogatirs, of mine!" cried he,
 "Why let the maidens have first choice?
 Listen to what a joke I'll voice!
 Let's first of all ride out on the plain,
 Then come, as racers, back here again —
 First man home then takes first prize —
 Just what he wishes, before his eyes!
 So all riders choose their own fates.
 14290 How do you like the idea, my mates?"
 So the Kirghiz and Tadzhik folk too
 Said "Very well, that's just what we'll do!"
 Most of them with that were agreed.
 Forty-odd bogatirs took their steeds,
 Off they rode, away on the plain —
 Quite a long way their course was lain.
 Then they all lined up in a row —
 Only waiting the magic word "Go!"
 Like young lads they came galloping by —
 14300 Clouds of dust they raised in the sky.
 Forty-odd bogatirs raced from afar.
 Almambet's swift steed, Sarala,
 First in the race came chasing by.
 Hot on his heels there galloped Bakai.
 After them came the brave Sirgak,
 All the others came in their track.
 But, for some reason, Akkula,
 Out of sorts, lagged behind afar,
 And the best idea he'd had yet,
 14310 Then Manas began to regret!
 Forty-odd bogatirs raced yet —
 Thinking "What kind of maid shall I get?"
 Galloped full stretch the course from afar.
 Swiftly galloped the steed Sarala.
 Then the valorous Almambet
 Rode to the place where the yurtas were set,
 Right to the yurta of Aruuke
 Quickly Almambet made his way,
 Thinking "What kind of maid will greet me?"
 14320 Almambet entered the yurta, you see.

Inside the yurta, carpets all round,
 Swart-faced Aruuke he found.
 She looked up and caught his eye,
 Saw at once that he's a Kitai,
 As from the other girls she'd heard.
 Then she spoke some magic word,
 Prayed to strange spirits to keep her from harm.
 Frowning then, she uttered a charm.
 Such as no one would twice look at,
 14330 In her yurta, dark-faced she sat...
 Meanwhile Bakai came galloping by,
 To the post Kërkcholak tried to tie.
 There he bumped into the maid Naakyul,
 Felt himself somewhat a youngish fool,
 Though he was over thirty-five,
 Found a maiden with beauty alive!
 Who came next I'll tell, take heed —
 Seated on Këkkazik, his steed,
 Raising the dust behind him too,
 14340 Bold Sirgak came into view!
 Rising, the beauty Sayagul,
 Like a swift bird, with wings spread full,
 Said "You rode swiftly and safely so,
 Long since has Allah decreed, I know,
 That you'll be mine, and yours I'll be!
 Then she knew of his valour, you see.
 Then she brushed the dust from his cap,
 Served him as needed, fortunate chap!..
 Fourth to arrive was Adzhibai —
 14350 Karala, his steed, swept by.
 What did Khan Adzhibai then do?
 Called the maiden "Where are you?"
 Went in the yurta to Ulugat.
 Though no long lineage had she got,
 Still, she suited bold Adzhibai...
 Kutanai's bay steed Akbakai,
 Frisky and sportive as could be,
 Into fifth place then galloped he.
 Like a fairy's child, Kiyapat

14360 Said "God sent you, well I know that!"
 To Kutunai, who was a bey,
 Swiftly, nifty, she made her way...
 Sixth, and raising a hullabaloo,
 With a white star on his forehead too,
 Came the steed of Madzhik — Kerkasha,
 Different from all others by far.
 Brave Madzhik, who quick had come
 Entered the yurta of Batmasam.
 She said "Allah unites us so!"
 14370 Took his steed, and to him bowed low...
 Seventh came sweeping and drawing near,
 All in curves, like a little deer,
 Tokotoi's scouting steed, Toru.
 He, it seemed, on wings just flew.
 Tokotoi, thought "What maid shall I meet?"
 Entered the yurta, and on her feet
 Rose the elegant maid Burunas.
 Tokotoi just glimpsed her thus —
 He was so happy when she neared,
 14380 All his worries just disappeared...
 Eighth in place came sweeping nigh,
 Smiling, beguiling Chalibai —
 Steed Chaara, all covered in sweat,
 Came to a halt, and hung his head.
 What a long race his master rode!
 Chalibai into the yurta strode,
 Saw there the maiden, Seyilsam...
 Ninth the Noigut Chubak has come.
 Thinking "What kind of a maid comes now?"
 14390 He arrived with sweat on his brow.
 Having met with Seyilkan,
 Straightway he felt a new-made man...
 Tenth to come — Kalkaman on his steed,
 Black all over his horse, indeed.
 Kalkaman met with Tashbyubyu —
 He was a happy man all through...
 Eleventh, Chalik arrived at speed,
 Grey, with dappled apples, his steed,

He himself, like a wood-sprite's son,
 14400 Madly, gladly, came spurring on.
 - Chalik galloped, a happy man,
 To the yurta of Sanamkan...
 Saddled, bestraddled on bold Borkar,
 Straining forward, jig-a-jog far,
 Next came cantering Bo-obek,
 Leaning over his horse's neck,
 Urging with whip and spur ahead,
 Thinking of one maiden instead,
 Twelfth on the list, with head a-spin,
 14410 To that maid Azelkan went in...
 Next came Atai's string steed, Karaboz,
 Galloping like a wild ram he was!
 In her tent Maarambyubyu
 Sat, like the wisest young woman you knew!
 She straightway Atai's fancy took...
 Fourteenth in order came, just look —
 Shaabek's race-horse, Shalpangkëk.
 He was frisky, as all could see.
 Straightway against Balkiya bumped he,
 14420 As from her yurta out came she.
 Here was a very beautiful girl,
 Lovely features, and hair a-curl...
 Fifteenth on the list to go —
 Dzheltaman, the steed of 'Kodzho.
 He came to greet Kuzabyubyu,
 And the rest I can leave to you...
 Bo-oke has a steed, Alager —
 Just at this moment, he's arrived there.
 You Kirghiz, don't stand and stare,
 14430 Choose then a maiden, fine and fair!
 Do not delay, Bo-oke, you're a man —
 Go in and choose your Tizekan...⁸⁸
 Seventeenth came to a yurta door
 Alayak, the steed of Skukyur.
 Do not spare your life, dear man,
 Go in and greet your Maaramkan!..
 Eighteenth to come was bold Dzhaisan,

Bending over Achbuudan.
 To the maid Albyubyu he went,
 14440 Greeted her inside her tent...
 Nineteenth was one from Alban stock,
 Riding his racing steed, Alamoinkok,
 That was Altai, a bogatir too.
 Straight to the maiden Kalbyubyu
 In her yurta then he flew...
 Twentieth then came Dzho-orunchu.
 Bukarlik's daughter, Munuskan,
 She was fit bride for such a man.
 Salkyurëng to her yurta came,
 14450 There Dzho-orunchu pulled rein.
 Into the yurta there he went,
 Happily there the time they spent...
 Twenty-first home there came Tërtai.
 Many pairs were now standing by.
 All were equals, and all well-bred,
 Each had a court, and a yurta o'erhead.
 Salkyurëng was Tertai's steed,
 And he was very tired indeed.
 So the maiden Sonungbyubyu
 11460 Took him off and watered him too.
 All Kirghiz with Tërtai were so pleased,
 Dreams were fulfilled, and worries eased.
 Sonungbyubyu was mistress of work...
 Twenty-second there came Tëlkëk.
 To-okara was the steed he rode.
 Into Burmadzhan's tent he strode,
 So majestic he made his track...
 Twenty-third returned Selek.
 Narkizil was his steed, good and true.
 14470 To the tent of Talapbyubyu
 Went Selek, unperturbed, on his way...
 Twenty-fourth arrived Adigai.
 Alakëk was the name of his steed —
 Much remains to be told indeed,
 Of those Kirghiz there, man by man —
 He met a maiden named Arishkan,

And was glad in his heart, of course!..
 Chalangkĕk was Dzhanak's fine horse.
 Like an arrow, space did he spurn.
 14480 To the maiden named Kĕguchkĕn,
 Straight from the flight Dzhanak still flew
 To that maid in her yurta too...
 Trusty Tyumĕn had a steed, Narkizil.
 Speedily he came galloping still.
 Into the yurta of Chinayatkan
 Hastened Tyumĕn, a most happy man...
 Twenty-seventh arriving there
 Was bold Kirgil on his Karager.
 To the beauty Ukĕrbyubyu,
 14490 In her yurta stepped bravely too...
 Bĕryukĕk is Bĕgĕl's swift steed,
 He has a special galloping speed.
 He went flying, like smoke-clouds can,
 To the yurta of Dzhanindzhan,
 Hastily then he entered in...
 Twenty-ninth came after him,
 Chabdarat, the steed of Irchi,
 Galloping, galloping, prancingly.
 Having seen the maid Achabak,
 14500 Nothing more for joy does he lack,
 He just stands and looks at her there,
 Swathed in satin, curves everywhere!..
 Thirtieth came bogatir Kerben,
 Oktoru was his horse called then.
 Straight to the maiden Sersabai,
 Right to her yurta door did he fly...
 Thirty-first was Dĕrbĕn the bold,
 Dangkara was his steed, I'm told.
 Then Dĕrbĕn met Talmaaram,
 14510 Found himself a fortunate man...
 Thirty-second that was Bĕgĕl —
 Thirty-third is coming awlirl —
 Bozuul's swift steed appears,
 Bĕrtkula pricks up his ears.
 He has run to Sanarbyubyu,

So Bĕgĕl is a lucky man too...
 After him arrives Bosuul
 On his steed named Narbuurul.
 To that maiden called Ayimdzhan
 14520 Goes Bozuul, a happy man...
 Thirty-fourth was Tazbaimat,
 Askara was his steed at that.
 To the beauty, Nacharbyubyu,
 Came Tazbaimat, and liked her too...
 Thirty-fifth was rider Tyulĕ.
 He was one of those, it occurs,
 Whom Manas, the bogatir,
 Held erect, when he staggered near.
 To the maiden Kalamkash,
 14530 Came Tyulĕ in a ready rush.
 Do any dreams stay unfulfilled?
 All of these are leaders, strong-willed.
 Tyulĕ's horse was called Karager,
 And the maid Kalemkash was fair...
 Dildeburush was a beauty rare,
 Dzhabike's steed, Kildzheiren stopped there.
 Having sped like an arrow — swish!..
 Having galloped at master's wish,
 Telkurĕng, the steed of Abish,
 14540 To Sulaika stretched that neck of his,
 So Abish met his maid, for sure!..
 There was a horse they called Aksur,
 Thirty-eighth came he, anyway,
 Ridden home by young Alake.
 There the maid Okumkan he met
 On her his bogatir's heart was set...
 So all these riders counted are.
 From the Agins next came Kaldar,
 On his steed Aksar he sped,
 14550 Ayundzhan just turned his head...
 Fortieth, from the tribe Kizai,
 Came Kiyask's horse galloping by.
 From her yurta stepped Tursunai,
 With her eyebrows arching high.

Her small head just took his eye...
 Forty-first, with a joyful "Wo!"
 Came Këkkoën on his steed Këkdzhorgo.
 Calmly he rode to the yurta so,
 Where there waited Batmabybyu.
 14560 He went with her in her yurta too...
 Forty-second there came Akpai,
 Whipping his horse, with urgent cry,
 So that his coat-tails flew in the sky,
 He at last came galloping by,
 To the maid with a pom-poméd plait,
 With a tassel on her high hat,
 To sweet-tongued Shinginai he went...
 Breathing heavily, somewhat spent,
 On Akkula riding, heavily bent,
 14570 Awkwardly came Manas to his tent.
 From the white yurta, bending came she,
 Slender as some white deer might be,
 Stepping smoothly in white cambric gown,
 Most imposing maiden in town...
 Such a brilliance none can show!
 She is not overbearing, though —
 Out came Sanirabiyga,
 Stepping sweetly, swaying, ah! ah!
 Hoof-beats of Akkula, his horse
 14580 She had heard while still on his course.
 Then she joked; "You have a swift steed!"
 Almost unnoticed, she smiled, indeed.
 "By my dagger your wrist was struck —
 Let the Khan's daughter bring you luck!
 Don't be angry, be calm, mt dear.
 'She is fierce!' they all say here —
 Don't have such ideas, I pray!
 I have seen you, and waited today.
 Though I trembled, when all others passed,
 14590 You have appeared — I'm happy at last!
 My dear lion, come ride in here!
 Come down from your steed, my dear!"
 She did not give him time to think,

Took his bridle, ere he could blink,
 Stepping forward, said "Come in, do!
 Long since, a place I prepared for you!..
 Into sixty skins of arak,*
 So that no strength it then should lack,
 Into those skins, by Naimans given free,
 14600 She had ordered to crush kucheli.*
 That arak spirit she ordered to bring —
 See how she fixes everything!
 Into a bronze tub poured it then,
 Seven full wine-skins for the men!
 That she'd prepared while still a girl!
 Look at her foresight — makes your hair curl!
 Then she set sherbet, honey and sweets,
 Chunks of neck-fat, all kinds of meats.
 Bread — eighty different sorts it appears.
 14610 Then those forty-odd bogatirs,
 With their chosen maids she invites.
 Look how Kanikei spreads delights!
 Food on low tables she places around,
 Not at dawn, nor late evening found,
 But as the sun began to set,
 All the brides and bridegrooms met.
 At the tables they squatted upright:
 "Take things easy, and don't get tight!
 But look after each other your best,
 14620 Be clean and honest, make no false steps!
 Let there be no maiden regret —
 'My own choice I did not get!'
 Bogatirs, now stand in a row,
 Let the maidens be blindfolded so.
 Then let the men all hide away,
 So maids can seek them, as in play.
 When you take one, make it so,
 That it is just the one you know.
 Don't take another's fated mate —
 14630 Just pretend, turn aside, and wait!
 Forty-odd bogatirs stepped aside,
 Maidens waited till eyes were tied,

Then they went seeking for their men,
 Hands stretched out before them then.
 Grooms, whose horses went to them —
 Just the same maids came seeking then.
 Though Almambet ran to and fro,
 Swarthy-faced Arruke caught him so.
 Atemir's daughter, now called Kanikei,
 14640 Caught her Manas, and led him away.
 When the maidens untied their eyes,
 Then they got a great surprise —
 Those whose horses had come to them,
 They had caught, each one, again!
 What did Almambet think though?
 'Shameless dark-faced maid, you know,
 Just persisted in finding me!
 All in a row you others I see,
 Stand with your chosen brides-to-be.
 14650 Why did this dark one pick on me?"
 Such were the words of Almambet.
 Kanikei said "In beauty yet,
 And in all that's stored in her mind,
 Insufficiency you won't find!
 She is one of the great Kayips —
 In such a maid there are no slips,
 No kind of Fault in her there hides!"
 And she added much more besides.
 All the other maids, forty-one —
 14660 Said "Where's Arruke, then, gone?"
 Looked for an answer to Kiyapat:
 "Where did she come from, tell us that?
 Shameless, a cunning one is she!"
 Glancing each at the other, see.
 "We don't know her properly thus!
 Who allowed her to come with us?
 Such a pusher, sly, you may say!"
 So they laughed and giggled away,
 So did the women in servant ranks.
 14670 Kanikei, who knew her pranks,
 Went to her tent and found her abed.

Going up quietly, then she said:
 "Don't be offended, Arruke —
 He is nobly-born, anyway!
 Even a Mussulman he is now!
 Put on your usual smile somehow!
 Why go about with a dark-faced frown?
 Why make others turn you down?"
 Thus spoke kindly our Kanikei —
 14680 Did not part from Arruke.
 She stayed silent, no word said she.
 "From the Kakans -- the best is he!
 Leader of a host of Kitais —
 He's no simpleton, anyway!
 He's bold, brave bogatir!
 Like a sheat-fish in water clear,
 He is also a creature of fame!
 If you don't like my words, all the same,
 Then let lion Manas marry you!
 14690 Then let lion Manas take what's due!
 Then let Almambet take me!
 Forty-one maids have come, you see.
 Let them stand in a group at the start,
 Let the men stand further apart,
 Let them all then bind their eyes,
 Let them go quite blind likewise,
 Let them catch one maiden sought,
 Let them stay with the one they've caught,
 Let them marry the chosen one —
 14700 Let them not regret what they've done!
 Greater justice where will you find?
 Does not this appeal to your mind?"
 So went the questions of Kanikei.
 All around were agreed, anyway,
 Nothing against it found to say.
 Back to the men they went straightway:
 "Let us make of this world the best,
 Let our lives be of interest,
 That we shall do ourselves, indeed!"
 14710 Wiser ones with this were agreed.

So the maidens divided then,
 Stood apart from the forty-odd men.
 Then the bogatirs' eyes were bound,
 While the maidens made not a sound.
 Never a single word they said.
 In a row, with Manas at their head,
 Blind Kirgil and Bakai then came,
 Just like children, playing a game.
 Maids all stood stock still, you know,
 14720 Never moved a finger or toe!
 All of them stood silent so,
 Maidens stretched out there in a row.
 Forty-odd men sought out their own.
 As if feeling it, deep in the bone,
 Every man groped to his chosen maid,
 Each one found her, and none delayed.
 That young maid whom his steed had found,
 Soon he had his arms around!
 When Almambet stretched out his arms,
 14730 Soon he was filled with deep alarms!
 Aruuke, even more than before,
 Changed her mien, and a dark face wore.
 Almambet had more woes, and how!
 Aruuke became tongue-tied now!
 Bit the tip if she tried to speak.
 Almambet, open-eyed, felt weak.
 More distasteful the maid now seemed,
 Nothing like to what he'd dreamed!
 Follow closely now, I say —
 14740 Hear the words of Aruuke!
 First she spoke to Kanikei:
 "Listen, sister, to what I say!
 We Kirghiz from the Tyurks arise.
 Those Kitais know no Tyurks' ties.⁸⁹
 Why, then, does it happen to me,
 That repeatedly him I see?
 Other maidens choose their Kirghiz.
 I am bound now, as it is,
 Whether I will, or whether no,

14750 As a bride to him I go!"
 Such were the words of Aruuke.
 Hearing them, angry grew Kanikei:
 "Do not say such things!" said she.
 "Open your eyes, and you will see!
 Gold and copper in mines there are,
 But two arms and legs so far,
 They are found on man alone —
 Just one body -- more there's none!
 Almambet, he thinks, you see,
 14760 That quite ignorant you must be!
 Take a look at copper and gold —
 Both are yellow to behold,
 But, in essence, what are they?
 Gold's more precious, any day!
 "Thinking: "He a Kitai that's lost!"
 Don't turn your heart away from your host!
 Take a look at silver, then tin —
 Can you compare it with silver then?
 No, that is too far to go!
 14770 There are beautiful mansions, you know,
 But they are only made of clay —
 Don't compare them with marble, I say!
 No, that is too far to go!
 Take another example also:
 Break a living pistachio, but
 Inside the shell, you find the nut!
 As distinct from common clay,
 He's a tasty nut, I'd say.
 He has left his shell at home,
 14780 And to you here his core has come!⁹⁰
 In his fist he held Kitai.
 He is a ruler, respected, high,
 With his art can all others exceed —
 He is a Khan of Khans, indeed!"
 "All my folk will criticise me:
 'Ran to a foreign man, you see!
 Shamelessly she Kayips ignored,
 Married a stranger from abroad!

Some young Kitai who just stepped in!
 14790 Saving my honour, I won't wed him!
 I won't be his, and come to shame!"
 Aruuke then silent became.
 Kanikei left her, shaking her head.
 To Almambet she went, and said:
 "She is no fairy — she's a Kayip.
 She is faultless, without a slip.
 She has no human failings, see,
 She is as wise as a maid can be!
 She is lovely, most precious of them,
 14800 She is tender, a bright-faced gem!
 Leave her in peace a little while,
 After that you will see her smile.
 Friend of mine, my words recall —
 Persuasion, caresses, will win her all!
 If you don't do so, she will go.
 Give her no chance, she'll grow better so.
 She is wiser than I, for my part.
 Maybe at last she'll give you her heart.
 She is most lovely of all, make no slip —
 14810 She is just a head-strong Kayip!
 She has a body without defect,
 Pure as a spring, no flaw you'll detect.
 Eyes like black-currants, and full of grace,
 Brows of black, and a moon-like face.
 She does not count herself equal with you;
 Knows you're a Khan, and your father too.
 She has tormented all of us,
 She has spoiled her own features thus,
 She has spoiled her own chances too,
 14820 Saying she will not be wed to you!
 She was eleven when we became friends.
 Six years already we seek the same ends.
 She has always remained by my side,
 Rich in mind, and an expert wide.
 In this world you'll find none such as she.
 If you think "She's distasteful to me!"
 Then you'll refuse your good fortune, see!

She's the best of us — we all agree!
 To such a maiden lovingly go,
 14830 If you don't wish to see her frown so.
 Say "She suits me!" and take her with grace.
 Only once she showed her real face.
 When we saw it we all went white —
 What a beauty, and what a delight!"
 Much more about her said Kanikei.
 Others were listening too, by the way.
 Having seen looks sincere in her eye,
 Almambet then agreed to try,
 Made his way to Aruuke,
 14840 Quietly entered her yurtia that way.
 What he expected — all in reverse!
 Face like a trivet, or even worse,
 Black were her features, black as soot —
 Such for him she put on a look,
 Just as hard as on old dry corn.
 Face like a hearth-stone, black and worn.
 Body just like a sagging sack,
 Hair in disorder hung down her back.
 Brows a-frown, and darkly knit,
 14850 Head on her shoulders barely could sit.
 Well over twenty, it seemed, was she.
 Just like a camel's her feet seemed to be.
 Some aroma from her arose,
 That was offensive to his nose.
 So Almambet just left her tent,
 And to Manas himself he went.
 "Though a heavenly angel she —
 That's not the kind of maid for me!
 True, my steed to her yurtia ran,
 14860 But if to live with her I began,
 There'd be no end to suffering then!
 She has scorned me, among other men.
 I will not wed her, my bogatir.
 She's just a cunning vixen, it's clear
 Though she might a real fairy be,
 Still she'd seem obnoxious to me.

So my suffering would have no end!"
 Those were the words he said to his friend.
 Thanks to him, and to Aruuke,
 14870 Thanks to their quarrelsome affray,
 None of the bridegrooms or their brides
 Went to sleep that night besides.
 They remained hungry. Dawn arose.
 Aruuke tormented all those —
 Then Manas grew far from mild,
 Then Manas he just went wild,
 And he began to curse and swear.
 What kind of tricks plays Atemir?
 He has vexed me beyond all words —
 14880 See what here has just occurred!
 Gathered sly ones — daughters so-called,
 Gathered witches — women so-called,
 Gathered Kayips — supporters so-called,
 Just to trick us — what then is that?
 Just to prick us — what then is that?
 Just to stick us — what then is that?
 Let's throw over every maid,
 Such a load on my head they've laid!
 I shall seek for a bride elsewhere —
 14890 What ideas in my head are there!
 What is serious — what is fun?
 She with whom Almambet has done,
 Such unapproachable ones I know.
 If I refuse my own partner so,
 What use then is Kiyba to me?
 I shall destroy it, and off I'll be!
 Chuck it all up, and away I'll go.
 Since Almambet is dissatisfied so,
 Why then should I get married withal?
 14900 So he grew angry with one and all.
 All these maidens of crude Kiyba —
 Say, in what way better they are
 Than my wives who at home still lie —
 Karabek and Akulai?
 So he grew furious, our bogatir...

Then old Jakib and his men drew near —
 Albalta and Berdike,
 Wise men all, and many a bey.
 Silver-bearded Oshpurbai,
 14910 Baidzhigit, Akimbek drew nigh.
 Elders of the Kirghiz rode ahead:
 "Something's wrong with Manas!" they said.
 Then on the drum it remained for him
 Only to beat -- and things would grow grim.
 If he did so — just once, it appears,
 Then, of course, forty-odd bogatirs,
 They would create a Judgement Day...
 Having heard this there came straightway
 Many Tadzhiks from old Kiyba,
 14920 Saying: "What tricksters our daughters are!"
 Then they began to scold them again.
 Aruuke thought "All was in vain!
 He from a padishah's family came,
 I did not love a Kayip, all the same.
 I was predestined for some other man.
 This is where the trouble began.
 From a marriage predestined on high,
 Where in this wide world should I fly?
 If I run off — I'm Kayip all the same.
 14930 Where, then, roaming, success should I gain?
 So she sat thinking and thinking yet.
 Then at last — "I'll wed Almambet!"
 That decision she finally took.
 From her magic spell's seven parts, look,
 One really lovely Aruuke, see,
 Then emerged most amazingly.
 How many people who saw her then,
 Gasp'd at her beauty, and not only men!
 Then they all lost their heads somehow!
 14940 "Say, Manas, what shall we do now?"
 Elder kirghiz who still stood there,
 And all the others too, I swear,
 Came to Manas, their plans to discuss.
 Having raised festive banners thus,

Then they arranged the wedding feast.
 Kanikei was perfectly pleased.
 "Go to our treasury!" then she said.
 Four hundred women sent on ahead,
 How many precious silks they brought,
 14950 Satins and stuffs of every sort!
 Fine batiste, and crepe-de-Chine too,
 Purest veils and voiles on view.
 All the most precious materials there.
 Where did she find them all, say where?
 Rolls of this, and scrolls of that,
 Thin as paper, or thick as a mat.
 When she still was very young
 Her collection she had begun,
 Starting at the age of ten,
 14960 Much she had gathered together then.
 Then there was precious silk brocade,
 Other textiles from silk all made —
 Many whose names I do not know,
 Velvet and corduroy also.
 Rolls of lawn and cambric too,
 Every colour and tint and hue.
 Finest linens of every sort,
 All in heaps the stuffs they brought.
 Then five hundred silk pieces free,
 14970 None like the next piece could you see,
 All as expensive as could be.
 Then there were blankets, all billowy,
 These the folk all came to see,
 With those forty-two bridal pairs,
 Kanikei those treasures shares.
 Her great efforts by all were seen.
 For those forty-two yurtas, I mean,
 Ten quilted blankets to each she sent.
 There they were, stacked up in each tent.
 14980 Thus Kanikei her energy spent.
 Lovely ornaments, nine or ten,
 She sent to each yurtas then...
 Parents of the maids to be wed

Started preparing for times on ahead,
 And with good intent, be it said,
 Far as able provided a bed.
 Thus the yurtas all were filled
 By the brides' parents' gifts good-willed.
 Altogether to every tent
 14990 Thirty quilted blankets were sent.
 Yurtas numbered forty-three,
 Counting Manas and Kanikei, see.
 Then Kirghiz and Tadzhiks they knew,
 Came to serve them, as was their due.
 Then they decorated each tent,
 Thrice their blessing on them they spent.
 Wedding feasts lasted just forty days,
 All the folk entertained always,
 Finally they arranged a race
 15000 In which the three-year-olds took place.
 All which they wished they then received.
 Special dishes their hunger relieved.
 To the folk did messengers ride,
 To the wedding from every side
 Folk from six large towns arrived.
 Wisest ones they invited in.
 Two thousand camels they ordered to bring.
 Those who brought them shared everything.
 Every one there was content, I'm told.
 15010 Finally, they gave gifts to the old,
 Saw them off upon their way.
 Led by Shakan, Jakib's baibiche,*
 Nine-hundred women departed, they say.
 All bogatirs, who honour had kept,
 Taking their brides with whom they had slept,
 Taking those maidens off from Kiyba,
 Set off then to their homes afar.

Kēkētēi was sick — what's more,¹
 Death was waiting at his door.
 In his lungs he'd caught a cold,
 Death drew nearer, be it told.
 Of his senses he was drained,
 Then his brain became inflamed,
 Nothing of his strength remained.
 Death stepped forth, and him he claimed.
 Ere he was of life bereft,
 10 When this transient life he left,
 When he found the real world on high,²
 He had a relative known as Bai.
 Living with him since times afar,
 Bai had a son called Baimirza.
 Kēkētēi called him to his bed,
 And adjuring him, he said:
 "Clearly death draws nearer yet —
 Wants to claim my soul — God's debt!
 I shall leave a young son, you see,
 20 And my herds without keeper will be!
 There remain barns — with gold they're full,
 There remains my wife, Ayimkyul.
 Kirghiz folk, they too remain.
 I do not wish my son to name.³
 Thinking: "What's waiting on ahead?"
 My soul's tormented — God's own debt.
 My son's nose always ran with snot.
 Blow it away — he just could not.
 People spoiled him, and I did too,
 30 Let him do what he wanted to do.
 "Snotty" was the nick-name I gave —
 Guilty of that I go to my grave.
 No proper name did I bequeath.
 Not informing the folk of my death,

Not slaying cattle at my last breath,
 Just as though a feast for a bride,
 Let them bury me, after I've died.
 Just as though a child's game beside,
 Just as an old woman's feast might be,⁴
 40 Or some poor peasant's remember me.
 Let them not notice me, dead or alive.
 So, with no upset, let folk survive.
 Two or three beasts having slain and bared,
 Forty or fifty gowns having shared,
 Let them bury me somewhere — who knows!
 In river valley an aspen grows.⁵
 And a dead man needs cattle again.
 Why then drive them here in vain?
 Aspens grow when they're planted anew,⁶
 50 And live men need cattle too.
 Steeds are called stout when fat's 'neath their mane.
 For the lad with no father, again,
 Whatever else — but cattle he'll need.
 Almost ten thousand steeds, indeed,
 And ninety thousand sheep I own,
 So, perchance, such cattle alone
 Snotty, my one and only son
 Can drive off, when the time has come.
 Twenty-three hundred camels I have.
 60 Daughters, eleven, as brides I gave.
 Son-in-laws from eleven tribes —
 Cows — sixty-thousand, eight hundred besides.
 Son-in-laws take care of them now.
 Such a way, our forbears knew how.
 Nine thousand yaks I keep myself.
 All the people know of my wealth.
 In my barn my gold is preserved.
 By six tribes of Kirghiz I'm served.
 "Kēkētēi is rich!" they say.
 70 Such is my fame in the world, anyway!
 For my silver — two houses I need.
 Sixty sheds, overflowing indeed,
 Stand full of purest rice refined.

Jewels I have of every kind.
 Thousands of brilliants and emeralds, see.
 Rubies and amber, and pearls heaped free.
 Take a look at this luxury!
 Two whole rooms-full rest with me.
 What you may hear, and see with your eyes –
 80 Beautiful things I have likewise.
 Chinese silks of many a kind,
 Eighty thousand rolls you'll find.
 Many sorts of fine brocade
 With gold ornaments arrayed.
 Bokmurun, my snotty-nosed son,
 Long I've called a mischievous one.
 He still has not got much of a mind,
 Though he's fifteen years old, you'll find.
 He asks no counsel of me or you.
 90 In Oogan live Ogun and Tyulkyu.
 So folk say, they are rich ones too.
 And the Khan's daughter, young Tyulkyu,
 Has no worries and feels no woes,
 Only amusement and laughter she knows.
 There, to them, my son's gone, it seems,
 And, before he fulfils his dreams,
 Death, be he cursed, approaches fast.
 Ere he returns, I Shall breathe my last.
 Not having seen my son, I'll die,
 100 Therefore my heart just wants to cry!
 Allah above, whose power is great,
 Would he but ease an old man's fate!
 Willows, once sown, are soon well-grown.
 On the pastures cattle still roam.
 Riches collected still I own.
 Wife, as widow, still will groan.
 God gave me herds, successors few.
 Bokmurun, my only son too,
 110 Drunk with wealth, knows not what to do!
 Let him think more deeply of this:
 All my property soon will be his.
 Let him not waste it upon the wind,

Let not my treasury thus be thinned.
 To believers and heathen men,
 Let him not cast gold pieces then.
 To crude strangers, right to the last,
 Let him not silver pieces cast.
 Let no maid, in my satin girt,
 120 Trail her lengthy robes in the dirt!
 Let no maid in red velvet attired,
 Or in robes of brocade, as desired,
 Just go dancing and prancing about,
 Wearing the hems of her garments out.
 Don't let them switch my steeds around,
 Let them remain where they are found.
 Having slain ninety beasts for the feast,
 Having dug suitable trenches, at least,
 Making a hole on one of its sides,⁷
 130 Three hundred camels, as sacrifice,
 Bring to pay for my earthly sin.
 Then nine hundred dry mares bring in,
 Three thousand cows, and bulls with huge horns,
 Six hundred head of them, all forms,
 Wanting the whole wide world to feed,
 Let them not slay helpless sheep indeed.
 Let them not work in a wasteful way.
 With no protectors my treasures now stay,
 With no preserver my son goes, you see...
 140 Counting out slowly a thousand dzhambi,*
 Say "Këkëtëi ouk Khan has died!"
 Let the folk know it, far and wide.
 Counting out slowly a thousand dilde,*
 Say "Këkëtëi has passed away!"
 Let the whole people about it know.
 Call the folk from the seven tribes so.
 Shrouding the land in clouds of dust
 Mussulmen, heathens, will come at last.
 Call them all, to the last one you know.
 150 Having squandered my riches so,
 Having built my gold vault all round,
 Order that I in white muslin be bound,

- Properly dressed, with respect lay me down.
 On my account, having gone to that land,
 Spending much effort and treasures grand,
 Order first that my sabre be shone,
 Order kumiss, that the washing be done,
 From my head, and down to my feet.
 Order to lay me on golden silk sheet.
- 160 This some brave bogatir will complete.
 Having spread my gifts around,
 Order that I in white muslin be bound.
 Order to dash me with drops of Zamzam,*
 Order to dress me in bronze, like a man,
 Order to cover with muslin my face,
 Order that bards should then sing my praise,
 Order that in fresh air I be laid.⁸
 Having to God my last debts paid,
 Do not bury me straight away.
- 170 On my Maaniker, don't delay,
 Send a herald, in armour bound,
 To all the transient world around,
 To all the people, far and wide,
 Tell them "Khan Këkëti has died!
 From this passing world he has gone,
 And the real world he has looked upon."
 Then throw a handful of soil on me.
 Don't let too many folk there be,
 Don't let too many warriors come.
- 180 Bokmurun, my only young son,
 Let him follow the words of my mouth.
 Let him not travel further south,
 Let him not send Kyubei his news.
 Let him not speak of his deeds and views,
 Let him not make out more than he's worth,
 Let him not travel further north.
 Let him not send his news to Abai,
 Let not too many folk draw nigh.
 Let not all to my funeral come,
- 190 Let him not trouble Kirghiz, every one.
 Let him not start tormenting them!

- Let him count his own powers then!
 On Maaniker, straight away,
 Send a messenger round, I say,
 Tell the other folk about me,
 And inform them, wherever they be.
 Having in Kakan* looked around,
 Having Kaz-Moyul* then found,
 To Dzhetigen* let him not ride.
- 200 There the Dzhetimuruks abide.
 Like old wizards and witches are they,
 One ear overgrown in some way.
 Just cry "Foes!" they're up in arms —
 Second huge ears hears all alarms.
 They are extremely fierce to see,
 Eyes up in their foreheads maybe.
 Just like trotting beasts they go.
 Worse than idiots, nothing they know.
 Looking at them you cannot tell
- 210 What they are gabbling about as well.
 Each of them with a horn appears,
 Ready to pierce you, just like spears.
 Allah, almighty creator, then,
 What kind of form gave these half-men?
 They have a leader named Kyushëndyu —
 Comes from djinns and pixies too,
 And his tribe he heads, at that,
 Where they live, near Keikap.*
 Let my son no news send them,
- 220 To those curséd half-human men!
 To such swine no news let him give!
 To the west ginger giants live —
 They ride no beasts, but go afoot yet.
 They have legs like a minaret.
 They have arms like a plane-tree, or beech.
 When they stride — a furlong they reach.
 For their food they eat just dust.
 Rising or striding they smash earth's crust.
 Let my son send no news to them,
- 230 Let him be more responsible then,

Standing before Kirghiz besides.
 Four-legged steed with six wings he rides!
 Where its hooves beat in the earth,
 There a fiery-red flame bursts forth.
 'Neath the clouds, and high in the sky,
 Over the waving grass nearby,
 So he gallops, and so he flies,
 What he does, you scarce recognize.
 Stones from his hooves go flying wide,
 240 Half-a-mile on either side!
 Touch such a rider none will dare!
 That's my war-steed, Maaniker.
 Bai's young son, my friend Baimirza —
 Many behests for my son there are:
 After I am dead and done,
 Bokmurun, my only son,
 Maybe he will come back here.
 All his friends are knights, that's clear.
 Bey Jakib's first son, Manas,
 250 Is their tiger, and leads them thus.
 He is a lion among other men.⁹
 Fierce is he, and famous with them.
 'Father has died — to us please come!' —
 Let no such news be sent by my son!
 To those forty-tribed sons of Kirghis,¹⁰
 None of them howling around I wish!
 He who comes to my funeral feast,
 Let him hear my words, at least.
 Show him he's near and dear to me —
 260 Gown of silk for him let there be.
 If for my dead father he cries,
 If he stands there, and wipes his eyes,
 If he sayd for him a good prayer,
 If his voice rings resounding there,
 So that all feel tight at heart —
 Such a man I'll respect from the start.
 What there is to give, I'll give,
 Bless him, and wish that rich may he live!"
 Let Bokmurun such things not say!

270 Let him not heatedly have his way!
 Let his news to Kumul* be not sent.
 From Auliye-Ata* and Tashkent,
 Then gather people, as far as you can.
 From Kokand* and from Margelan,*
 From Samarkand, lying low beyond,
 From Oro-Tölē* and Kodzhont,*
 From Koton,* found in a ravine,
 Full of the local people seen,
 From the seventy towns of Dzherkent,*
 280 From Bagdadm where news must be sent,
 Not to Badakhshan* nor Balik,*
 Nor to Kirim* his way need he pick.
 Going past, let him give no news,
 Nor to Kitais* nor the people Oruz.*
 Thinking 'I'll honour my father's remains,
 And reap respect in other domains!'

Let him not go with his message there,
 Nor where it's dark, nor light and fair.
 There is a place named Dzhelpinish* —
 290 Land of seventy tribes it is,
 In the desert the Arabs roam,
 By lake Ayat folk make their home.
 Dwarfs and Itaali* live there —
 Women — humans, men — dogs, I declare!
 I have heard this time and again —
 There he would send his news in vain.
 Let him no more his folk torment.
 Kara-Kirghiz* will be tired and spent.
 Katagans,* Kazakhs and Kirghiz,
 300 For us all — one source there is!
 Dzhediger,* Noigut,* or Dumar,*
 We come from one great forbear afar.
 Many Kalmaks* on earth there are,
 Then the Mangul* and related Tatar.
 None on earth his life can extend —
 All living beings come to their end!
 Karakalpak* and Uishun* here,
 Teyit,* Bagish* and Kangai* are here.

How many tribes will hear the news,
 310 And to meet Kara-Kirghiz won't refuse!
 From Kalmaks — Tirkoots* and Shibe* —
 Frogs and snakes for food have they.
 Let him no more his folk torment.
 To Kitais let no news be sent,
 Do not invite them to the feast.
 By the Lop* sea, and Shor* lake, at least,
 Various people are found, it's said —
 Fish's tail, and human head!
 Some are called Kuturuks, one hears —
 320 Each one lives a thousand years!
 Sheat-fish, thirty arm-spans long,
 They swallow whole, they are so strong!
 Human legs, what more do you wish? —
 But they have a head like a fish!
 There are others called Bayandas,
 Other beings, sea-dwellers thus.
 Spiteful spirits, some are named.
 In the sea sit birds untamed,
 Twenty pairs of wings have they —
 330 Most astounding creatures, I'd say!
 Then there are eighty-headed ones —
 For their food they eat emerald stones.
 Furthermore, each one, I'm told,
 Is some five or six thousand years old!
 Let him not send news to them,
 So before Kirghizians then
 He would not responsible be.
 After I'm from this world set free,
 After I go to that better land,
 340 After the torch falls from my hand,
 Seven vales full of cattle remain,
 Spread for thirty-five miles remain.
 Seventy kinds of fruit-trees remain.
 Seven rooms — silver and gold remain,
 Seven thousand-odd camels remain.
 Three thousand two-humped ones remain.
 Giant neighbour Koshoi will remain,

All the goods I have will remain,
 Peaches and pears from orchards remain,
 350 Apples and nuts and raisins remain.
 Let the Kirghiz not imitate him,
 What he may do not follow him in.
 No good example — till Judgement Day,
 Driving the yellow-head sheep to slay,
 Thinking "For father's memorial feast!
 So that his fame spreads far, at least!
 Let's drive eleven thousand steeds,
 So that the news goes round at speed!
 Let's drive four thousand camels, too —
 360 As racing prizes they will do!
 With the camels put herdsmen there,
 Four hundred men as guards let's prepare.
 Let's send herdsmen to horses too,
 Others to keep the cows in view!"
 "Listen to worthwhile words I say!
 Let them drive two thousand beasts away!
 Fifty people's enough for them —
 Thirty women and twenty men,
 Not four hundred — what need of them?
 370 Don't let them act as masters then.
 Private goods in my palace here
 For all to see — don't let them appear!
 Don't let an exhibition be made —
 Emeralds, diamonds, and silk brocade,
 Rubies, and sapphires, as well as jade,
 Don't let him spread on a frame for parade.
 If my own son will think things out,
 Don't let him scatter my goods about.
 Pearls, and coral necklets of mine,
 380 Don't let him speak of at any time.
 Don't let him act so before my folk.
 Don't display treasures, that's no joke!
 Don't let him hand them on show around,
 So that before all eyes they're found —
 All these riches, as I have said.
 Dear Gyulkanish, who as wife I wed,

Don't let her sit by my corpse and mourn!
 All in satin, velvet and lawn —
 All this old world, so false and faint,
 390 Morning and evening, voicing her plaint.
 Don't let the women here, I say,
 Weep and bewail me every day!
 Daughters of mine, who tears will shed,
 Mourning "Our Padishah is dead!"
 Praising me high before all men —
 They will number my riches then.
 Others, who knew me not, will say:
 "That's only false praise, anyway!"
 Cursing, they'll shake their heads and leave.
 400 Bidding to weep at morn and eve,
 Bidding to wail three hours full power,
 Bidding to weep for me each hour,
 Bidding to cry again and again,
 Thus to bring the deceased great fame,
 Letting instead foul gossip play,
 Bidding for supper a mare to slay,
 Bidding for dinner to slay a foal;
 Bidding for breakfast — a lambkin whole,
 Never sparing herds of mine —
 410 He will ignore what I've left behind.
 I was a Khan among the Kirghiz.
 Thirty yards long my coffer is,
 Nine notched keys, with a hundred slits.
 Knowing its secret, don't break it to bits.
 Red-gold coins and silver bers
 To all the people do not cast.
 Order just ninety steeds to slay,
 One hundred kill on my funeral day.
 Order to entertain guests with respect,
 420 Let them feed, pour arak down their necks!
 Order a stony grave to be made,
 Order that I in a hollow be laid.
 Let the diggers what's due then take.
 Entry to the hollowed side make.
 From the right side let it be,

So that I look towards Mecca, see.
 Order my son to listen still —
 Tell Bokmurun my latest will.
 Order him bind my corpse in brocade,
 430 Let nine men wash me, ere I am laid.
 Order to dash me with drops from Zamzam.*
 Order to dress me in bronze, like a man.
 Order that I in white satin be bound,
 Head to foot, around and around.
 Order that washed in kumiss I be found.
 Order to cover with muslim my face,
 Order that bards shall then sing my praise
 Order that I in fresh air should be laid.
 Then, on this roan steed, spotted grey,
 440 Like a Pegasus, fly while you may,
 Bring trained readers of this world near,
 Let them read the Koran to me here.
 Order a pious mullah to come,
 Let him speak of things left undone.
 With the water from holy Zamzam,
 Let him sprinkle me, keep me from harm.
 Let them, in payment for my sin,
 Greys, unriden and fat bring in.
 Let them say "Këkëtei is dead!"
 450 Let the guests all bless my old head.
 Let them all be grateful then.
 Let my riches grow rather thin,
 Let the people know my last day.
 Let them weep o'er my end, anyway.
 Let whoever may come awhile,
 Shout my praise a couple of miles.
 Let them respect my forebears aright.
 Let women's head-scarves gleam all white.
 Let them weep their plaint over me,
 460 Let them be full of sincerity.
 Thus set example for everyone.
 Bokmurun, my only son,
 Seemingly fell in love with a maid.
 While no word of marriage is said,

Don't have a service for the dead!
 While he throws no soil on my head!
 Eighty-four years for me are past,
 Death has come for me at last!
 Thus my last testament was denied —
 470 Bokmurun stood not by my side!
 For one year, four seasons through,
 Twelve whole months, by custom due,
 My dear wife, Gyulayim, yet true,
 Mourning weeds for me having worn,
 Black brocade for me having borne,
 With designs of purest gold,
 Black head-scarf, with fold on fold,
 Money in coffers having placed,
 Of my very best gear always,
 480 My wooden manikin tul* having raised,
 Having to me all honour shown,
 Not having ceased to weep and moan,
 Let her not without ending sit.
 Let the people know nought of it.
 Then Aidar, having straddles his steed,
 Arming himself, in case of need,
 In this passing transient world,
 Rode with his herald's flag unfurled,
 Taking the news to every land —
 490 What would come of such efforts grand?
 With his red-tasselled hat, Naskare, I I
 One of Kitai's great Khans of the day,
 To him don't say "Prepare your steed,
 Red or brown, for the race, indeed!
 Where will you find such a generous prize?
 Where the Kara-Kirghiz reside,
 One khan called Kēkētēi has died!
 Steed Tootor make ready beside!"
 Knowing seventy different tongues,
 500 Left an orphan when very young,
 He to whom his daily bread
 Allah sends down, and thus he's fed,
 Let not Aidar go so far ahead.

To the black-maned Bo-oroncha
 Let him not travel with news thus far.
 Saying "Where will you find such a course?
 Go, prepare Kilkyurung, your horse.
 Choose a young rider to suit your book!
 Don't let Aidar go so far, just look!
 510 To those living along the Oyuk,*
 Never defeated by any foe,
 To Orunga do not let him go!
 Orunga is a godless witch,
 Unpleasant looks make your eyebroes twitch.
 Twenty steps is the length of her face.
 Overgrown burdock, her body lacks grace —
 Let him not go and say "Your grey —
 Make him ready to race away!
 Kēkētēi has died — a great Khan,
 520 In the land of Turkestan.*"
 In the east live a people — Siykin,
 They have a giant who's named Sukan.
 They have never in life seen a horse,
 They go about on foot, of course.
 Also some folk Siykilik they call --
 They are five-hundred arm-spans tall!
 They're nor concerned with human affairs.
 How many giants the land there bears!
 From the rivers they sheat-fish take,
 530 And of them their food they make.
 Saying "Prepare your steed Salkashka,
 Make him ready to race afar!
 Choose a young rider for him then!"
 Let not Aidar take news to them.
 To the Kalmak they call Ushang
 Let him not go, the news to bring,
 Saying "Prepare Salkulang, your steed!
 Where will you find such a race, indeed?
 Where they give such cattle as prize?"
 540 Making the news known far and wide,
 All about Khan Kēkētēi the great,
 Let him not there the news relate.

He'll have no blessing, then, from me —
 My words are true, as you will see!
 Let him not go to Dzholoi-bogatir —
 Mother of his not married, I fear —
 There's no other strong-man like that one!
 Let him not say "Where's Achbuudan?
 Choose a young rider to suit him there!"
 550 To Bozkertik of the tribe Tokshuker,
 He who in Choyung-Chang does reside,
 Let him there with the news not ride.
 He has a steed called Bozchanggil —
 Croup of him rises up like a hill,
 Yes, and even higher still!
 Let him not say "Prepare your steed,
 Find a young rider on him to speed.
 Let him win in the race, indeed!
 Këkëtëi has died, our great Khan,
 560 In the land called Turkestan."
 Let him with news to such not run!
 So-orönduk — that's Solobo's son —
 Bogatir living in great Beidzhin,*
 No foe lives who fights with him —
 One of the greatest leaders there,
 Go to him and say "Prepare
 Telkyurëng, your steed, for the race.
 Get a young jockey to take his place.
 Do not let such a chance slip by!
 570 In Emil* two rivers flow nigh.
 Such a wonderful place it is —
 To what we've said, we must add this:
 There's an old Khan, respected much —
 Alo-oke — his name is such.
 To his son, who leads many men,
 To Kongurbai let Aidar then go,
 Alo-oke's bold son, you know,
 To his son, who's worth more than ten,
 To Kongurbai let him go, Aidar.
 580 Let him prepare his steed Algar.
 That bold man whose steed wins the race,

From such a prize will gain much face.
 All, to whom Aidar will go,
 To the young, or the old, just so,
 To all those, who like camels, loads bear,¹²
 Let him talk, and explain things there.
 How all those, having shown the desire,
 Not delaying, nor lingering there,
 Must to defend their honour appear.
 590 From those Kitais we've invited here,
 Having left their land, Aidar,
 All those that dwarfs and pixies are,
 Let him to them not speak beside
 That our Khan Këkëtëi has died.
 To their leader, Chakchaish,
 Let him say no word of this.
 Let him not go riding there,
 Let him not one moment spare.
 Let him not then go to the west,
 600 Nor to the ends of the earth at least.
 Wind goes whirling, swirling there.
 For the soul, God's gift, it's scare.
 If such a wind begins to rise,
 It is hard for the brave and wise.
 Though their hearts might be made of stone,
 Still their useful day would be done.
 To Medina and Mecca besides,
 To the Arabs of five great tribes,
 To the Prophet's descendants then,
 610 He who's named Mazabil among men,
 Let him not to that leader ride,
 Saying "Khan Këkëtëi has died!
 Come and see what respect he's paid!"
 Let his call there not be made!
 Let him not go near, I have said.
 In Orol* vale a settlement's found.
 There Orus* of twelve tribes abound.
 Brave they are, and strong men too,
 Skilful in everything they do,
 620 Fall on foes, and soon break through!

Smashing them to dust and ash.
 Don't go there, that would be rash.
 For the whole folk of our Kirghiz
 Don't make more trouble than there is.
 Let him not go with spurs a-prick
 To Badakhshan and to Balik,
 To those inhabitant Tadzhih,
 Where they have other forebears then we.
 Khan Abdilkadir he'll see —

630 A hundred thousand men has he.
 Telling them "Khan Kēkētēi had died!"
 Calm your hearts and ride beside.
 If your horse comes first in the race,
 You'll get a prize to light up your face!"
 Let him bring no news such as that!
 Let our Kirghiz be not Knocked flat!
 Your Aidar who takes the news,
 Feels my heart, and knows my views.
 If he travels on further yet,

640 He'll tell all, and none will forget!
 That side stands sacred Bukhara,*
 This side Chambil's* old ruins are,
 In Orto-Chatkal* they're found,
 Not submissive to any around.
 With his arrow-proof armour on
 Stands Muzburchak — Buudayik's bold son.
 Saying "Prepare Muzkara, your steed —
 Khan Kēkētēi is dead, indeed!
 Do not heitate, join the race!"

650 Let him there not show his face!
 Let him away from the south then keep.
 Food is dear there, but salt is cheap.
 Summer is cloudy, and winter clear,
 There the Kipchaks* have a bogatir —
 Not deserting his country's span,
 There lives their bey named Elemian.
 There lies invincible Koton,*
 There what robes the women don!
 All of silk, or satin, or so.

660 To bold Tēshtyuk let him not go!
 Let him not be informed of this, look,
 Not make ready his Chalkuiruk.
 Not let him graze on Kerme-Too.*
 Nor hear about Kēkētēi's death so,
 Not send his son to collect cattle won,
 After his steed first one home has come.
 Those who suitable steeds couldn't find,
 They would be grieved when left behind.
 Let him not bring the news to such —

670 That would not trouble anyone much.
 In Samarkand Khan Sandzhi is found.
 Let him not go there, talking around!
 Having settled on specious Talas,*
 There is found the leader Manas —
 One who is known as a bold bogatir,
 One undefeated by enemies there.
 Tell him not then "Kēkētēi is dead!"
 He before Allah has bowed his head,
 He has submitted to highest will.

680 We have interred him, respecting him still!
 Tell him not then about the deceased,
 Make him not head of the funeral feast.
 Bring him not here, in tears to soak,
 Thus to trouble our good little folk,
 Causing them all to moan and groan.
 Take care of the feast on your own.
 Let your own soul be full of care...
 Many possessions Manas has there,
 Many cattle get out of hand —

690 There's no room for them all on the land.
 She whom he wed has brought him no son,
 He will not leave behind anyone.
 Cattle will stay uncared for there —
 He has no children, his herds to share.
 Those whom none to touch would dare,
 Distant kin on his father's side,
 They'll come to rob them, far and wide,
 Call them spoil, and off they'll drive.

So this unfortunate man who's dead,
 700 Not having gained a single head,
 He'll remain as he is, lying thus —
 But to speak of this all to Manas,
 And to ask for a sacrifice beast —
 That would be out of place, at least.
 And to gallop on Maaniker,
 Thus to speak to the bogatir,
 And to offend him would not be fair —
 Far better not go riding there.
 Brave Manas was dear to me,
 710 Him distressed I don't wish to see!
 Eloquent, known to all around,
 Khan Urbyu, the Kipchak, is found.
 So to Taz, Urbyu's young son,
 With sad news don't let him run,
 So that they start preparing black steeds,
 So that folk see the finish indeed,
 So that they say "At Këkëti's feast
 It was interesting — we're pleased!"
 So that heathens, and Mussulmen,
 720 All should enjoy the memorial then,
 So that showing their strength and skill
 Strong men wrestle, and have their will.
 So that speakers a contest stage,
 So that various foods they arrange,
 So that strong men bestrode their steeds,
 So that they wrestled while riding, indeed,
 So that at targets they shot, at least,
 So that folk whisper "Oh, what a feast!"
 So that those who know play their game,
 730 So that sympathy sharing they came.
 So that the recers receive their prize,
 So that the folk get presents likewise,
 So that at untying camels they play, 13
 So that at loading them skill they display,
 So that they heave in a tug-o'-war,
 So that they show their muscles what's more,
 So that before them all they compete,

So that they knock each one off their feet,
 So that they know a Khan's life is done,
 740 So that they call the people to come.
 Of all at Këkëti's feast they'll see,
 Let your herald quite silent be!
 Let him not stop upon his course,
 Let him not gallop there on his horse!
 Having settled on Sari-Arka,*
 There a Kazakh with his hordes rides far,
 Not retreating before his foes,
 On his steed Këgala there goes,
 In his gold shoes with bronze heels on,
 750 Brave Këkchë, son of Aidarkan.
 If Aidar says "Come to our feast!"
 I, for one, shall not be pleased!
 Leader of those Kazakhs, Këkchë,
 With his warriors, making a stir,
 He'll bring trouble for people here,
 Pillaging — that is what I fear —
 Numerous hordes of those Kirghiz.
 Near me, Baimirza, like this,
 You have understood my word.
 760 While my soul I've not given to God,
 I shan't hasten much more to say.
 Who can live ever on earth, anyway?
 Let my life an example be,
 For the ones who come after me!
 All which I to you have said,
 Hammer it into my young son's head!
 Don't milk sheep, let them grow fat.
 Castrate rams — they grow fat like that!
 Castrate stallions — geldings you'll see!
 770 For my son this advice will be!
 Let him respect and care for his folk.
 Let no promise of his be broke.
 Our kith and kin, both far and near,
 Having lived before us, spoke clear:
 "Portions predestined for a Khan
 Breng no joy to a beggar man!"

Those who lived before us said:
 "Riches bestowed on one man's head
 Will not be riches for others to hold.
 780 I still have treasures, silver and gold,
 Thinking nought else, I gathered that rot.
 One and two-humped camels I've got,
 Endless herds to me remain,
 Wives Aiganish and Kyuldzhar, the same.
 In my youth much torment I knew,
 Then the mighty Creator broke through, 14
 Happiness down from heaven he sent,
 All of a sudden a son he lent.
 Will my testament reach him now?
 790 Will he listen to my last vow?"
 Këkëti, these words having said,
 Breathed his last, and bowed his head.
 Out of his body his soul then flew.
 Those who were standing around him too,
 All at once began to lament.
 Praise for his soul to heaven was sent.
 Weeping for him who'd left life behind,
 They lamented, with heads inclined.
 With their tears they bemoaned him then.
 800 All Kirghiz who came after them,
 They have wept for their lost one so.
 They on the floor had just laid him low 15
 When, as though by a stroke of doom,
 Came his son, the young Bokmurun.
 Tyulkyu's daughter, Kanishai,
 Near her father-in-law stood by.
 Weeping deeply, she made lament,
 Tears above his cold corpse she spent.
 "Are her steps light on the road she'll tread?
 810 What kind of crook has her shepherd lad? 16
 That folk saying since then's been known.
 Bokmurun, with groan on groan,
 Feeling that father without him had died,
 Went to bits, broke down, and cried.
 "Having swaddled me soft on fluff,

Having upheld me, when roads were rough,
 Having stilled my tears when I cried,
 Having bound me in linen beside,
 Having fed me with honey and milk,
 820 Having dressed me in finest silk,
 Having given me neck-fat to feed,
 Having set me upon a clipped steed,
 Having clothed me in satin, indeed,
 Having laughed, when my laughter he heard,
 Having wept, by my weeping stirred,
 Having sacrificed yellow-head sheep,
 Having known me, awake and asleep,
 Having spoiled me with fruit of all kinds,
 Having let me throw care to the winds,
 830 Having left me your treasure behind,
 Father, what have you really done —
 Leaving for heaven, not seeing your son?
 Did you depart with desires unfulfilled?
 Your wise words about what you willed,
 While I was travelling here from afar,
 Death stole away — and there you are,
 And all alone now — here do I sigh.
 Your last testament heard not I.
 While you, my father, had still to die,
 840 We did not meet, and speak eye to eye.
 Sighing, crying, and weeping such words,
 Shouting aloud to the Universe,
 Paling, wailing, wept Bokmurun.
 Wavering, like a reed 'neath the moon.
 Trembling, resembling a leaf, he shook,
 Disturbed, perturbed, young and old, just look!
 In the whole city of Tashkent,
 Not a man whose head was not bent.
 So said Kirghiz, and all their sons,
 850 "Steed he was for all horseless ones!
 For all oppressors, he was a foe.
 For all the hungry was food also.
 Much he cared, dear folk, about you,
 Real head he was for everyone too.

Out of deep sorrow for him we weep.
 Where is the Khan who could us so keep?
 For the frozen, a fur-coat he formed.
 In this cold world our spirits he warmed.
 Many riches he had, as you see.
 860 For the hunter, a falcon was he.
 If Kirghiz were confused, or aflame,
 Then a black falcon he became.
 If he swooped, no prey he missed.
 Of our leaders — he was the best!"
 Loudly groaning, and moaning these words,
 Simple people, like frightened birds,
 Cried aloud, and screamed for release.
 There was none who would murmur; "Cease!"
 Only when midnight stars filled the skies
 870 Did the folk start to wipe their eyes.
 Slowly the sighing and crying ceased,
 From their suffering they were released.
 Moaning and groaning died away.
 Then Bokmurun must have his say —
 Taking the weeping lad by the arm,
 Looking to see there was nought to harm,
 Then he led him gently outside.
 Looking round, nobody he spied.
 When his weeping at last was done,
 880 Then Bokmurun he slowly sat down...
 Then he said what he thought inside:
 "Make a feast, as it were for a bride.
 Or for some old woman!" said he.
 Those were your fathers words, you see.
 So he spoke when discussing with me.
 Then he said "My Kirghiz folk dear,
 Let nobody displease you, thats clear!"
 Now he is gone and cannot speak here.
 "Let not my son throw dust in your eyes!"
 Though you do so, he cannot arise.
 890 "Let him without much show bury me,
 No special honours and fuss let there be.
 Let those tin-plated doors none approach,

Let none upon my treasure encroach.
 Let nobody have access to keys,
 Where I keep gold and silver, please!
 Let him not waste my riches away!"
 That's what your father told me to say.
 But after all, from this world, it's clear,
 900 Hosts of folk he invited here!
 Those of whom we'd not heard before.
 Any who names of humans bore.
 No kind of tribe did he leave out,
 Ere his end came, there is no doubt.
 Then he thought what counsels to give.
 Then he felt pain, it was hard to live.
 Then he went raving, I didn't catch on.
 When I did — too late — he was gone!
 I asked questions — who, where, and why,
 910 But, ere his death received no reply.
 He was disturbed — I didn't catch on.
 Two or three days he went babbling along.
 He was exhausted — I didn't catch on.
 No place on earth he missed — not one!
 When he was lying there, near his end,
 Much he thought over — strength did expend.
 When he was so tormented then,
 When he felt death approaching again,
 I didn't know — I didn't catch on.
 920 Joking or serious — now he's gone!
 Joking or serious — nobody knows!
 That is often the way life goes.
 "If I go from this world," he said,
 "If you suddenly find me dead,
 Maaniker, my steed, you must take,
 Send a herald around for my sake.
 From the east, and on to the west —
 All you must invite with the rest.
 I'll be no burden to anyone —
 930 Let him invite them all, my son!
 From the whole world invite them to come.
 Kara-Kirghiz, both father and son.

Do not lay a tax on them, see,
 No matter what the cost may be.
 All the same my riches won't shrink,
 They will not fade away, I think.
 Many various people he named —
 Many I knew not, I'm so ashamed!
 "Those that are of the human race,
 940 Don't leave them out, but find them a place!"
 Not only those on this side of earth,
 Give the news, and bring them forth,
 But to those on the other side —
 Spirits and pixies — let him ride,
 Entertainment provide for all,
 Even for mermen, if they call!"
 That was the testament given to you
 By your father — what you should do.
 There are more creatures live in the sea,
 950 Than as upon the dry land, as do we.
 I have more riches than other men.
 All in my memory ask in, then.
 Till twelve months have passed, I say,
 From this place do not go away.
 One whole year you must be here.
 When twelve months have passed by clear,
 When that year is fully spent,
 Then from the little town Tashkent,
 With no one from another tribe,
 960 Let my villagers here to me ride.
 Of my feast, may God bless it still —
 Let all the folk have news, as they will,
 Those who live in the Chimkent* hills,
 Where I have countless numbers of steeds.
 No one save those with none, indeed,
 Leave outside, but give them a call.
 My own folk, who come first of all,
 Settle for summer on Sara-Arka,*
 Koza-Bashi* and Kopo* that far,
 970 Pasture their sheep where spring grasses are.
 On the foothills of Altibai

Let them feed their horses nearby,
 Let them travel in festive style,
 On dark horses riding meanwhile,
 Let their hooves tread the hillside slope,
 Let my daughters don velvet, I hope,
 Let them ride steeds of darkest grey,
 Let their hooves brush the bushes away,
 Let their daughters wear red gowns gay,
 980 Let the youths fire muskets, I say.
 Let my folk feel respect, to boot.
 Let their sons charge their guns, and shoot.
 Saying "Our dear father is dead!"
 Let all Kirghiz then bless my head.
 Not letting camels be pierced in the nose,
 Not letting folk idly roam, or doze,
 Having bridles on bullock or cow,
 Having tied calves, and milked cows somehow,
 Not having tired the cattle too quick,
 990 Not having tied on rams the beldik,*
 Not having driven lambs from the lea,
 Having told shepherds about it, see,
 Not stopping twice in one same place,
 Ordering shepherds to slow their pace,
 Do all you can to get the sheep fat.
 Thus your father spoke much of that.
 Then he repeated it all thus far.
 Let them settle in Uch-Karika.*
 Maaniker see my son prepares,
 1000 For the space of a full three years
 Let them prepare my memorial feasts.
 All along Uch-Karkira, at least,
 In the valley of Uch-Bulak.*
 Let them set yurtas along the track.
 Having given them all a turn,
 Of my death let everyone learn!"
 That's what your father said to me.
 I thought how wise he seemed to be.
 Spirits of forebears punished him so —
 1010 'Feasts prepare — your riches let go!'

"Then arrange for them untold games,
 Choosing the steeds, a race arrange."
 Much he said which I could not face,
 His blue banner kept its blue place.¹⁷
 Though your father is already dead,
 Still, he wanted to hold up his head.
 'More memorial feasts let there be.
 Let all my folk remember who dies.
 1020 Let the first horse home win the prize!
 Let the winner make use of it then.
 But that won't be enough for them —
 Let them arrange a tourney on view,
 Heathen and Mussulman jousting too.
 Let the one who survives take the prize,
 Let there be wrestling matches likewise
 Let him with greatest strenght ring the bell,
 Let there be grappling on horseback as well.¹⁸
 Let all the boldest, most skilful men
 1030 Come and show their prowess again.
 Let our folk amuse themselves all.
 Let them many together then call.
 Let my folk die of laughter!" said he.
 'Let them merry and cheerful be!
 So he spoke, as no other, by far.
 'Let them swim the river Rainar.*
 Let a man and a woman then try
 One restless camel, bound, to untie!¹⁹
 Was he joking, or serious then?
 1040 Khan Kēkētēi was a man among men."
 Baimirza made a pause, it appears.
 Bokmurun again was in tears:
 "From this passing wonderful world,
 Father has gone where another's unfurled.
 And he spoke his will at the end.
 You, Baimirza, were his nearest friend.
 I am his only suffering son.
 Shall we do what ought to be done?
 You are his friend, till Judgement Day —
 1050 Give me your answer, anyway!"

Such were the words which Bokmurun said.
 Baimirza slowly shook his head:
 Saying "I think it better not so...
 From these old fat horses, you know,
 From the ones with dried-out brains,
 From some thin clipped steed which remains,
 Having collected old cattle as well
 From some beys who near us dwell
 As for some old woman who's died,
 1060 As for some newly-wedded bride,
 Let's make a feast, as he said at the last,
 Let us so bury him, now all is past!"
 So said elderly Baimirza.
 Bokmurun listened. There you are!
 With surprise he looked, not relief:
 "You are a man in whom I believe,
 I am the lad who must obey,
 And must take note of what you say!"
 Then he struck his fist on his palm,²⁰
 1070 "How do otherwise without harm?"
 Baimirza, still standing near,
 Started to look confused, unclear.
 "You are enhausted, tired and old.
 I'm not a lad any more, be it told.
 But I'm not on my last legs yet,
 And my father's will can't forget.
 He said "Don't do so and so!..
 Then to that other world did he go.
 But if he could tell his wish,
 1080 He would say "Do this, do this!..
 So he went to the land of the dead.
 But to those left behind he said:
 'Make a memorial feast for me!
 We are bound to do so, you see!
 That was my father's last request!
 And for those who remain, at least,
 As an example to those who live,
 He desired a great feast to give.
 Now, as far as I can see,

1090 Wonderful things he ordered me!
 'You must go to Manas!' said he.
 When Manas left Altai, you see,
 When my folk first heard his name,
 Not to our Khan, but to him they came.
 And my father met with Manas!
 How can I fail to invite him thus?
 How can I sit and twiddle my thumbs?
 No — to Talas no other man comes,
 To those orchards with fruit-trees tall!

1100 To the one who makes braves of all,
 He who makes all enemies quake,
 Who dare any attack on him make;
 To Manas I must go ahead,
 To Manas, as my father said.
 I must inform him first of all!
 For his agreement I must call.
 If he replies 'What's that you say?'
 If he gets angry in any way,
 I shall see, but should he agree,

1110 Prize for father's service 'twould be.
 Both my father and lion Manas,
 Blessed sons of Kirghiz are thus!"
 Having decided that he would ride,
 Not in the morn, nor at eventide,
 When the sun was beginning to set,
 On huge Maaniker did he get,
 With his youthful fifteen years,
 With his courage which knew no fears,
 Bokmurun set off on the road,

1120 Maaniker his steed he bestrode.
 Off he rode to meet Manas.
 T'wards the evening he set off thus.
 Only Allah knows on high
 Whether that's the truth or a lie!
 For a rider of today
 That would be a very long way.
 He rode there after twilight prayer,
 Maaniker, well — he simply flew there.

1130 Earth went flying, high and low,
 Like an arrow loosed from a bow.
 Leaping along from crest to crest,
 Tearing away at the earth's fair breast.
 Stretched forth, like an arrow he flew,
 From one peak to another too.
 Raised his ears like candles tall,
 Lowered his tail, to earth let fall.
 From his breast the sweat-stream flowed,
 From his nostrils — steam arose.
 Sweat-drops fell, like drops of rain,

1140 And his breath in short bursts came.
 Stones which from his hooves did fly,
 Broken in pieces, went soaring high...
 Handsomely sitting astride his steed,
 In smooth chain-mail dressed indeed,
 Bokmurun soon reined in his horse,
 On a hill concluded his course.
 There Manas was returning home.
 Then the messenger who had come —
 Bokmurun, he greeted the knight.

1150 When he, poor devil, came in sight,
 To the youth, whose father was dead:
 "What's wrong with you, lad?" Manas then said.
 "Why are you wearing such a deep frown?
 Clearly, some sorrow has got you down!
 Clearly, some trouble has left its mark!"
 Thus, in the very late evening dark,
 He enquired what was on his heart.
 Then the grey-maned brave gave a start,²¹
 Tears then filled the young man's eyes.

1160 Bokmurun then quietly cried.
 Then he said to Manas — bogatir:
 "I am named a Kirghiz round here.
 After my father recently died,
 By great sorrows have I been tried.
 After my father left this earth,
 I rode to you, for all I'm worth,
 Bringing bad news to you I come:

1170 "Këkëti, bold Džhanadil's son,
 From this world has gone on his way!
 With him has gone the light of my day!
 Bokmurun is just my nick-name.
 When to my father death's hour then came,
 I was gone on a three-month's stay
 To O-ogon — a land far away.
 There I had found myself a bride.
 When I returned, with her by my side,
 To my own village, at home to stay,
 I arrived on a mournful day —
 Father no more in this world lingered on.
 1180 He to that other world had gone.
 On that sad day when I came home,
 Father had gone, and left us alone,
 Travelled hence, whence none returns.
 Now no longer my lantern burns!
 There he was borne on the road with tears.
 While I returned back home to my dears,
 He went there, where there's no turning back,
 So I missed him, alas and alack!
 But to Baimirza, our dear friend,
 1190 He told all, ere he met his end.
 He had asked that you be informed
 How heavy burdens on us had stormed,
 And ere he left for that other land,
 Father had sent me his last command:
 'Go and speak with Manas-bogatir!
 If you find my words unclear —
 Well, my father's not buried yet —
 I am young, shall not soon forget,
 I would ask you for your advice,
 1200 Then I'll return back home in a trice!
 There remain long-maned, pure-bred steeds,
 So much treasure and herds for our needs.
 How many willows and birches remain,
 Which father fostered, and not in vain.
 Apple-trees, fruit-trees, and nut-trees galore —
 People all counted them out by the score.

He was a Khan among the Kirghiz!
 And yet another request there is:
 Give your permission to make lament.
 1210 From bitter weeping our women are a-pent!
 For the memorial feast of our sire
 We have not all that we require.
 Not only we — the Kirghiz, I mean, —
 But all others, Kitais in between.
 Even Manguls enough could not find.
 When our father left us behind,
 He gave orders; 'Tell folk all round —
 Sprites and pixies — all who are found —
 He gave orders — 'Tell mermen as well —
 1220 Those who in eastern and western seas dwell' —
 All he included, so it would seem,
 Those who were real, and those but a dream!
 Ordered 'Preserve my honour and name!
 Take all our beasts who from six valleys came,
 Make a memorial feast without stint,
 So that none at meanness should hint.
 Let my slain herds be no grievance to me,
 Let my lost treasures no hindrance be.
 Ere they will place my corpse in its grave,
 1230 Sacrifice for my sins must be paid!²²
 All four kinds of cattle I hold,²³
 All my treasures of silver and gold,
 Emeralds and other brilliant stones,
 Let the young see, and feel art in their bones!
 Let my feast all others out-do!
 Of such things he was speaking too,
 Which, as yet, no others had done!
 So he went, left behind his son,
 Speaking of things which he had in mind —
 1240 I thought that you a way out would find!
 I think that I am still rather young,
 Some times careless with thought or tongue.
 Therefore I come to seek your aid!"
 No more tearful faces he made...
 Lion Manas, he than gave a roar —

Anger consumed him, more and more:

"If I suddenly buried should be,

If I left for that world we can't see,

If I met sudden death, that is,

1250 For our folk, the Kara-Kirghiz,

For all the simple people here,

I thought you'd be a support, that's clear!

I thought you'd call a gathering then,

I thought you'd speak with the other men.

I thought better of you, I must say.

I thought you'd be a great man, anyway!

But you've not justified my thought.

All my ideas have come to nought!

Make it appear you are ruler now!

1260 To Urgun vale, and Tashkent somehow,

To those folk who live far away,

Say 'My sire Këkëti's had his day.

He has been overtaken by death!

Hold your hearts, draw saddened breath!

When you receive this news of his end!

Such a message by herald send,

Not revealing your inner guise,

Speaking stately, and lordly-wise!

This whole matter concerns us too —

1270 Much for me did your father do!

Këkëti, well-blessed by Kizir,*

He was more than a father dear.

Këkëti's banner too you must take,

And must fix it upon its stake.

Not before forty days have passed

Give his corpse to be buried at last.

Tell all: 'The Khan, my father, has died!'

Send your messengers far and wide.

Firmly announce your father's end,

1280 Then invite me as well, my friend!"

'Who does not come, I'll hew off his head,

Finish him off at once, be it said!'

Act firmly so, with curse and threat,

Order your herald to be firm-set,

Thus knock all the stuffing from them,

And return again only then!

He is your messenger — no soft word!

Këkëti's corpse must be interred.

All who white linen head-scarves have borne,²⁴

1290 Order that they for your father mourn!

Let it be so after us, at least.

Let those who see it, speak of his feast!

Bury your father's body withal.

Bokmurun, don't spare your gall,

Let your word for them be law.

Do it so, let no conscience gnaw you,

Then I'll be ready to serve you too!

Do not delay, and don't grow slack —

1300 This very night go galloping back!

Feel yourself, what a giant you are!

Let weak-willed ones fear you afar.

Feel yourself a real leader, at least!

Having shown your powers at the feast,

Then contentedly, quietly live.

While my soul to none I give,

I shall be a helper for you.

Don't think of cattle and riches too —

We shall have means to help you out.

1310 Your sire helped me, beyond a doubt!

He gave much of his power to me,

Këkëti, your dear father!" said he.

Having eased his confusion of soul,

Having helped to make him feel whole,

Having quenched his youthful thirst,

Having calmed him with his words,

Then he saw him off on his way...

Bokmurun then felt more gay,

Having heard Manas' word.

1320 Maaniker just flew like a bird...

That same night he arrived home too!

Of his journey nobody knew —

Of his meeting with Manas,

Of advice received from him thus,

Of the things which he had learned,
Of the new spirit which in him burned.
"Let them all obey me still,
Let them not go against my will,
Let them observe my work again!..."

- 1330 On his grey steed, with waving mane,
On his enormous horse indeed,
Sat the herald, as decreed,
Having in golden robe been clothed,
Off on his six-month's trip then rode.
Bokmurun sent him on his way,
So that all heard what he had to say.
Isar,* Kēlēp,* — one end of the track,
Dzhazik, Dzhēlēk -- the other end back:
There to all with news did he fly,
1340 But unbelievers, he passed them by,
And Badakhshan and Balik as well.
In Bagdad simple folk did he tell.
To Auliye-Ata and Tashkent,
Calling to come to the funeral went.
Those who were not Mussulmen
In Kashgar* he invited then.
People gathered -- no end to them yet --
With the grey-beard Koshoi at their head,
From Talas, where Manas' folk stay.
1350 "Let Manas come, his last debt to pay!
Let him come quickly!" said Bokmurun.
"Aidarkan's son, Kēkchē, must come soon!
Get together, good folk!" said he,
With such honours the funeral led --
None had seen such a feast before.
He sent his summons to many more.
Not alone to Kazakh Kēkchē --
Others, like Kerkēkyul, there were,
Bey Kēchpēs' son, Dzhanayin --
1360 All together he called them in.
Kēkētēi was buried... Then he
Called together his family.
Showing its majesty up to the hilt,

- There a gold mausoleum he built.
Many swift-footed steeds on the line
Then set to race, after funeral time.
All who came, and were named his own,
Made them weep, and moan and groan,
Made them say their prayers, through and through,
1370 Made them envy his treasures too.
At full voice then started to shout:
"Now bring my silver pieces out!"
Open up my treasury now,
Twist and turn the keys somehow,
And to all the Kara-Kirghiz
Give them everything there is!
Homeless, penniless, pitiful poor,
Made them confused by giving them more.
Unridden steeds he shared out then,
1380 Swore he would never ask ought for them.
One who a bridle for him could not find
Got confused, and went out of his mind.
Threw his belt then round his neck,
But he bucked, and bolted quick,
Leaving him clutching his pants; thus freed!
Then he thought "What a stupid steed!
From the bey I got him, indeed,
But without bridle I could not go,
So round his neck my belt did I throw,
1390 But he broke it, and made off so!
Here I am now with empty hands,"
Helpless and hopeless there he stands.
Others on foot chased after a steed,
Caught it, and rode it off at speed.
Others thought "We could catch one too!
Ride it unsaddled -- what could you do?"
Having captured one, thought, of course,
"He seems to be a sensible horse!"
They stood waiting, bundled up so.
1400 One wished to ride, but the horse wouldn't go,
Rearing up, his rider he threw
Down on the ground, and neighed at him too!

Others were treated the same way as well,
Horses bucked, and flat they fell.
Then they cried: "Catch that damned horse!"
And went after him full force.
Others cried "Why give steeds to us,
Knowing they're going to throw us thus?"
Others knew how to handle them then,
1410 How to bridle and saddle them,
How to calm them, and sit astride,
How to prepare a saddle-cloth wide.
At the feast there were brave ones too,
Raising a hell of a hullabaloo.
They complained of others who stayed
Back at home, heads on pillows laid,
Not aspiring their knobs to lift,
Not desiring to get a gift.
"Why don't they come and join with us?"
1420 There were many who grumbled thus.
Many there were who took a horse,
Brought him to order at once, of course.
Others found camels of interest more,
With their bared brows brought to the fore,
With their lower lips a-pout,
With their humps which sway about,
With their necks, like ducks, stretched out,
With their split snouts high, no doubt,
With loose wool, when a strong breeze blows.
1430 Castrated camels then they chose.
Saying "I'm grateful to our dead Khan!
Këkëtëi's death has made me a man —
See, what a splendid camel have I!"
One took its bridle, and led it by.
Some said "Where are the other old men —
Go and fetch them, they'll get gifts then —
Some are herdless and very poor —
Bring them quickly here to the door!"
Bokmurun sent some messengers then,
1440 To the nearest old village men.
Loudly there they began to shout:

"Hey, get up, come quickly out.
Otherwise you'll lose your share
Which is waiting for you there!"
Sat them behind them on their steed,
Took them back with them, indeed.
Some were glad to receive their share,
Others went searching old homes left bare.
Some there were went nosing around
1450 In old ruins, and something found.
Others went scouring meadows too,
Made the cows and sucklings moo.
At their teats they began to pull,
Milking those with udders full.
Having taken some calves and cows,
Poor men have become rich, one vows!
After the feast for the deceased,
Some took half-a-score of beasts:
"We shall watch over them!" they said,
1460 Thinking of the cares ahead.
Some said "I didn't get any sheep —
Still — some goats are good to keep,
So for themselves they took some then,
Sometimes five, and sometimes ten.
Others made quiet their hearts beside.
Having said "Këkëtëi has died!"
People shared his cattle too,
Camels remained, and not a few.
Gold remained 'neath the coffer lids.
1470 His own people, Uzbeks, Kirghiz,
They began thinking "What's to be?"
They were disturbed when others made free.
"Won't it die out, the aspen-tree,
If it cannot keep growing, you see?
Both the dead and those alive
Need such cattle, if they're to survive!"
On a Friday night the Khan died!²⁵
Këkëtëi passed, and since that day
Thirty-six others have passed away!
1480 If one thinks of the dead, let's say,

Who among us was liberal as he?
 For all those at his funeral, see,
 For the young and the old the same,
 For their dinner were horses slain,
 For their supper they'd mares' meat too,
 Many servants fresh tea did brew.
 And they gave each one a dish,
 And they gave them all they could wish.
 Plenty of milk, and raisins as well,
 1490 And they gave them what none can tell,
 Not missing out a single poor man.
 So, with attention, feasting began.
 Këkëti, who dead now lies,
 Was a great Khan, world-famous likewise.
 He had cattle in various lands,
 One hundred thousand sheep and lambs
 On Alai* — and not one to retrieve —
 So thought Bokmurun, I believe.
 Kara-Kuldzha's packed tight, 'twould seem,
 1500 One hundred thousand sheep there teem.
 He who had gathered all these beasts,
 Khan Këkëti, is now deceased.
 He had cattle of every kind,
 Only children few did he find.
 Round Tashkent are mountains there,
 Craggy cliffs, no mansions fair.
 And between Namangan* and Tashkent
 Yellow steppes of Aikin lie spent.
 One hundred thousand beasts has he there.
 1510 Bokmurun had earned his share.
 If he expends such wealth as that,
 All his people will then grow fat!
 One hundred thousand camels, see,
 Well — then famous he will be.
 If, for his perished father's sake,
 He of all them does sacrifice make,
 Where in the world would you find such a gent?
 In Auliye-Ata and Chimkent,
 In Orol and Sairam* nearby,

1520 In that direction towards Aksai,*
 There could his camels in plenty be found.
 There did his earthly treasure abound.
 On the banks of the river Sir*
 Cows could be seen, both far and near.
 If you wish to know the amount —
 Two hundred thousand you'd have to count!
 Yaks of his on the mountains roam,
 Clearly, he has enough of his own!
 Seven times one hundred thousand steeds —
 1530 Seven times one thousand herdsmen he needs!
 Stallions and geldings were separate kept:
 Sometimes to those distant parts he swept,
 Counting and checking them grazing nearby.
 Two hundred thousand were on the Alai.
 These great riches of his were well-known,
 Word about him far away had flown.
 Two hundred thousand horses were found
 On Aksi,* near Kashgar's* old ground.
 Three hundred thousand steeds drank afar,
 1540 By lake Son-Kël* and by the Arpa.*
 Thus Këkëti was very well-known
 By many folk, not only his own.
 Small and thin his herds had been
 In the Ketman-Tëbë ravine.*
 All the Kirghiz who to mourn had come,
 At the meetings as well made fun.
 They enjoyed themselves, at least,
 At Këkëti's memorial feast.
 Not to leave one beast behind —
 1550 That Bokmurun still kept in mind.
 Gowns which gleamed when you turned them o'er,
 All sewn with golden thread, what's more,
 Robes whose value nobody could say,
 Who, when asked, lost their heads anyway,
 Garments for which three thousand dilde*
 At the bazaar one would quickly pay,
 Eighty thousand dressing-gowns fine,
 Këkëti, in his long life-time,

1560 Years ago gathered for days like these --
 But how much can one give, if you please?
 Who ever did the like before?
 Red brocade, and more and more.
 No such riches you'll find elsewhere,
 Silks and satins, wondrous fair,
 Cambrics, lawns and linens too,
 What fine materials here on view!
 Six hige chambers, all packed tight,
 Velvet shining, corduroy bright!
 Five more chambers with ribbons rare.
 1570 If you count up what riches there,
 They are beyond any mortal man.
 There are laces -- look, if you can!
 All this guarded, have no fear,
 Ninety-six watchmen on duty here!
 Many other things as well --
 Silver ingots, making a hill!
 And one chamber, ten strides all told,
 Packed to the ceiling with solid gold!
 That's to say nought of precious coins
 1580 In a side-chamber which adjoins!
 Of the Kirghiz Khans is his line,
 Highly esteemed by the folk, and fine.
 Son of that giant Dzhana dil,
 Whose own son was Bakatil.
 Këkëti, whom we esteemed,
 Was a bogatir's son, it seems.
 "Këkëti this world has left!"
 So said they, of his presence bereft.
 Knowing ones to them replied:
 1590 "From the Kazakh and Kirghiz side
 Came the custom of sharing herds --
 It's the result of Këkëti's words!
 When the thirty-six days had passed,
 On the scene arrived Manas.
 On all sides, leaving no one out,
 Messengers went around and about,
 Making a hullabaloo about that,

Beating on drums -- rat-a-tat, rat-a-tat!
 Raised a cloud of dust in the sky,
 1600 Banner on banner they raised on high.
 From the pipes notes rang in their ears.
 From the horns the bass note rears.
 From the brass flutes the high notes rang,
 From the tambourines bang-bang-bang!
 Banners floated out and flowed,
 Crescent moons on blue flags glowed.
 Forty famous wolk-bogatirs -- ²⁶
 Let's try to count them as each appears!
 Here were Manas' men, all the best,
 1610 Here old Bakai, among the rest.
 Here was bold bogatir Almambet,
 Here -- Manas' best comrade yet.
 Here was Kyuldyur's son, Chalibai,
 Here was the joker, Adzhibai,
 Here was the brave Kirghiz, Kutumai,
 Here from Kara-Toko, Madzhik,
 Here was Kambarbek's son, Chalik,
 Here was Sargil's young son, Satai,
 Here was Ardalik's son, Atai,
 1620 Here was Uishun -- Umët stood by,
 Here his son Dzhaisang also,
 Here from Argins came Karakodzho,
 Here was Manas' best ally, for sure,
 Here Bo-obek, Shaabek and Shyukyur.
 Here from Arbans there came Altai,
 Here from Dërbëns there came Tërtai,
 Here the soothsayer, swarthy Tëlek,
 Here fortune-telling was rarest work,
 Here with ram's shoulder-blade came Adigai, ²⁷
 1630 Here their advice was rated high,
 Here keen words knocked you down, it's true.
 Here was group-leader Tokotoi too,
 Here was Kirgil, the chief bogatir,
 Here Eleman, a head-man, it's clear
 Here Kalkaman, a perceptive one who
 Here led his people, protected them too,

Here like a steed quickly finding its feet,
 Here giving three-score advices discreet,
 Here like a golden-leaved aspen-tree,
 1640 Here brave handsome Serek had we.
 If he were not so capable then,
 He'd not be named so by other men...
 Not defeated when struck by a spear,
 Not retreating from foes in fear,
 He who stands by Manas, Khan Surgak,
 Look, what a mighty knight is that!
 Both Serek and Surgak were so,
 Both enduring in face of the foe.
 Kongoro-olu's Koshabish,
 1650 And squadron-leader, the brave Ibish,
 With Alim's Alaken were here,
 One of our prophets, he was here,
 Lion Madzhik as well, just hark —
 Those who can go ahead in the dark,
 When the Kirghiz go off on campaign,
 Those who don't lose the track again —
 Shuutu, Dzhainak, Kadir,
 Comrades-in-arms of Manas were here.
 When the Kirghiz move off at night,
 1660 When in their thousands they go to fight,
 Those who don't lose the fox's track,
 Those who in trouble turn not back —
 Shuutu, Tyumën, and Dzhainak —
 People who know them say they won't crack.
 From the Kazakhs came Dzho-oronchu,
 Kaigil, Bëgël, and To-orulchu,
 Son of Shinga, the bold Kerben,
 And the outstanding one Dërbën.
 That successful Bëgël, they say,
 1670 Sees the enemy miles away.
 Skilled Boz-uul, and Irchi were here,
 Best of them all, Tazbaimat was here,
 Who goes out with his banner there,
 If the warriors ride anywhere,
 With a wood wheel for the yurta roof,

With tent-doors, and posts aloof,
 With their various-patterned designs,
 With their red-leaded laths in lines,
 With their loops and lattices too,
 1680 Coloured in every tint and hue.
 With their silk-sewn grass-stem mats,²⁸
 With their rush-work all in plaits,
 When white yurtas they erect,
 With their ornaments bedecked,
 Then among those gathered to weep,
 In between the yurtas he'd sweep
 With the red banner of Këkëtëi,²⁹
 He would go and his powers employ,
 Making the family flag there fly,
 1690 Crescent moon in the heavens high,
 There its silken streamers flow,
 In the wind it flutters so.
 If you looked where the breezes blew,
 Then the staff on which it flew
 Seemed to be thirty arm-spans long!
 Having seen it, through the throng,
 Then Manas started shouting aloud,
 Rode ahead, right through the crowd,
 Crying "I'm here, you bogatir!³⁰
 1700 Your blood-thirsty one enemies fear!"
 Just before his journey began
 He's sent his herald, Alaman,
 Round the Kirghiz to forty tribes,
 And to related folk likewise.
 Six thousand people then, at least,
 He collected to join the feast,
 Told them "Mourn for Këkëtëi!
 Aging man, and budding boy,
 Praying 'Allah's will be done!"
 1710 Then Bokmurun, his faithful son,
 Having headed the mourning men,
 Bowing, weeping, lamented then:
 "Not having saddled yet my steed,
 Not having earned your respect, indeed,

Not having thought life's purpose through,
 I stand here, not esteemed by you!
 I was spoiled when I was young —
 Nothing worthwhile have I really done,
 Nothing worthwhile did I understand.
 1720 Father left for that better land...
 Clearly, carelessly then lived I!
 Now the tears bedim my eye,
 And in misery I remain.
 In my youth I did not train.
 Let no lads at an early time,
 Lose their sire, as I lost mine!
 How, dear father, this world you've left,
 Now, still young, of you I'm bereft!
 Such is the fate that Allah decreed,
 1730 Worse than the fate of others, indeed!
 I am now just fifteen years old —
 You have gone to a land untold,
 You have gone, my master, my lord!
 What else now can fate afford?
 How can I, Bokmurun, not weep?
 Not having taught me steeds to keep,
 Not having seen me earn esteem,
 You, my sire, disappeared like a dream.
 Now, because I am left alone,
 1740 All through the night I moan and groan!
 Seeing I have no friend, nor support —
 That to me much sorrow has brought!"
 So, he moaned and made his plaint,
 Over his father, without restraint,
 Bokmurun then wept aloud.
 With deep voices bewailing thus,
 Groaning aloud arrived Manas,
 Loudly chanting their mournful cries,
 1750 Raising a cloud of dust to the skies.
 All the crowd made plaint likewise.
 Then Manas rode up, full of sighs,
 And again the crowd all wept...
 So is this old custom kept...

Now among Kazakhs and Kirghiz,
 And a well-rooted one it is.
 Servants took the visitors' steeds,
 Bokmurun fulfilled people's needs.
 All of them he found a place,
 1760 And for their steeds a stabling space.
 All newcomers he tried to please,
 Told them to rest, and take their ease.
 No sooner had they settled down,
 Other visitors came to town.
 Aidarkhan's son, Këkchë the brave,
 Following him, his father grave.
 Thirty thousand men with them —
 Brave Këkchë — a man amongst men.
 They had scarcely settled been,
 1770 When Elyeman arrived on the scene
 With two thousand fighting men,
 On two roads they travelled then.
 Hearing the others wail and weep,
 They thought "Such custom we must keep!"
 As they came to the village then
 They began like the other men
 Shouting out, and moaning subdued.
 Having a mind both clear and shrewd,
 Elyeman, Eshteks* leader, enquired:
 1780 "What kind of ceremony is desired?
 What kind of people have we here?
 We shall not just stand dumb, that's clear.
 We shall do as the others do —
 If they shout — then we'll shout too!"
 Bending o'er the dead, they wept,
 Mournful wailings up they kept,
 All those Kirghiz, to the very last man.
 Then Dzhambirchi his plaint began.
 Loudly he moaned, his teeth he ground.
 1790 Meanwhile others the village found...
 For their guests red carpets were spread.
 They had just paid respects to the dead.
 They had only their prayers just said,

When with three thousand men came Urbyu.
 Having seen what the others do,
 They began weeping and wailing too...
 Far away, by the river's banks,
 Not letting strangers through their ranks,
 Not surrendering honour, of course,
 1800 From Kēmēk, by Balik's high source,
 From the happiest tribe there is,
 Who are also sons of Kirghiz,
 Dzhedigers* leader came — Bagish.
 No better leader need they wish.
 Coming from the Dzhediger tribe,
 Two-and-half thousand by his side,
 Having crossed the Sarkol pass,
 Then they reached the village at last.
 They had come to bemoan the dead.
 1810 They were welcomed, and off were led.
 Living near to Ulu-Chatka,*
 Pasturing horses, near and far,
 Came the brave bogatir, Shigai,
 With a loud and ear-splitting cry —
 Crowds of people seething around —
 Soon a place for them was found...
 On the eve of the following day,
 Just before the sun's dying ray,
 From whence came silk and bootees grand,
 1820 From busy Margelan* and Kokand,*
 From Oro-Tëbë, Samarkand,
 From Asa, and Dzhelek, that same land,
 From Isar and Kelep, on that track,
 Saalai chief, and Sandzhibek,
 Also Sarts, ninety thousand had come.
 Though the world's greatest Shah lay dumb,
 Who would know there, and come to mourn?
 Though the Shah's herald may have sworn
 That they must come and make their moan,
 1830 Who would have gone to add their groan?
 Këkētëi's funeral feast called all.
 Wide steppes round Tashkent were full,

If not in yurtas, in open air,
 Some found place in the city there!
 What of the treasure that melted away?
 What of Bokmurun today?
 What more now could anyone say?
 For their breakfast — sheep he shares,
 For their dinner — stallions spares,
 1840 For their supper — he kills young mares.
 Having prepared this memorial feast,
 Yellow cups of honey, the best,
 Cut-up smoked sausage, with horse-rib fat,
 Boiled and roasted beef with that,
 Having satisfied every guest,
 Having invited each wise priest,
 Keeping to ancient custom, at least,
 Bokmurun shared large and small beasts.
 Generously his helpers he paid,
 1850 Twenty thousand sheep he gave.
 Tethered ninety thousand calves,
 Saddled his father's horse — nought by halves,
 Ordered the prayer for the dead to be read,
 Ordered to lay on a stretcher the dead.
 Priests began to chant evening prayer.
 In endless rows the folk stood there.
 If you looked round, not all could you see —
 Turbans bobbing, as far as could be.
 If you shouted, your voice would just fade —
 1860 So the last prayers for the dead were made.
 Then prayers in praise of Allah were read,
 They were pronounced with unbowed head.
 To the interment his horse was led.
 Këkētëi lay on his earthly bed.
 Thus they buried their father-Khan.
 Handfuls of soil they cast on him then.
 Slowly there rose an enormous mound,
 Which could be seen by all around.
 Since that day many years have passed —
 1870 Këkētëi's mausoleum stands fast.
 Firm it stands until this day,

Kēkētēi's fame does not pass away.
 Mullahs began to take their share;
 Straightway started to quarrel there.
 Very soon they came to blows...
 "Where there are steeds, there's dust!" one knows!
 Some of the mullahs loved horses, indeed,
 Others were prompted just by greed.
 Nine thousand head of cattle, likewise,
 1880 They set aside as the racing prize.
 Tethered steeds in their masses gleamed,
 Fifteen thousand camels, it seemed,
 They were prizes — and giants, it's true!
 Twenty-five thousand horses too.
 'Mid the sons of Kirghiz to date,
 Very highly these creatures they rate.
 Cows, thirty thousand, they set aside,
 Yaks as well, you could drive or ride.
 Ordered five thousand head of them —
 1890 These were all the main prizes then.
 Smaller prizes for others were passed —
 Those who came home late or last.
 For such horses and riders then
 They divided off cattle to them.
 Nine head of cows and ninety sheep —
 That was the prize which they could keep!
 Kēkētēi had been laid to rest,
 Folk had fed at his funeral feast.
 Now there'll be prizes for thirty steeds —
 1900 Just as much as anyone needs.
 Thinking "Let them have hope, each one!"
 Keep aside prizes for those who run.
 Let the folk who come to the feast
 See the end of the race, at least.
 Let them start from Kokand, that's clear.
 Let the racers each owner prepares
 Gallop full speed, and fly like hares!
 Then Bokmurun sent all to the start.
 1910 All the folk were excited at heart.
 While the horses were on their way,

At other games they began to play.
 Iraman's son, young Irchi-uul,
 He whose trousers with tassels were full,
 Eloquently began his speech,
 And Manas' ears did it reach.
 Mourning Kēkētēi's loss, he said:
 "He was blessed, as his people's head.
 Countless cattle around him stood.
 1920 He was hospitable, generous, good!
 With the people of Kara-Kirghiz
 Much esteemed were all words of his.
 Daughters all in red silk were dressed,
 Sons rode steeds of the very best!"
 After him six banners they bore,
 Raising a deafening awful roar.
 Hearing all he had to tell,
 Bokmurun was satisfied well,
 Gave him nine good steeds as a prize,
 1930 Ninety silken gowns likewise,
 Some of brocade, worth untold gold,
 Nine he cast on him, fold on fold.
 So this poet, who sang without end,
 He made happy — his grateful friend.
 Thus he did, that he shone among folk,
 Thus he prized the words which he spoke...
 Through that place where the race would begin,
 He gave orders "Drive cattle in!"
 Thus the Kazakh received his prize.
 1940 Since then he shines in his people's eyes.
 That night the racers set off from the start.
 People were pleased and glad at heart.
 Many impatiently waited the day,
 Specially owners, who'd sent them away.
 Looking forward towards the west,
 Row upon row, the people still guessed,
 Wondering will the winners be long?
 Then they knew nought of tugging them on.³¹
 No others galloped in orderless mess,
 1950 Waiting to help them along more or less.

Thus, when some appeared more strong,
 Riders to tug the weak ones along
 First were allowed at that funeral race!
 After Akkula, in first place,
 Catching him up, came Achbuudan.
 Then Manas cried out in alarm:
 "My forty riders, where have you gone?
 Go and help tug Akkula along!"
 Loudly he shouted, and so on that day
 1960 Rights to help a tired horse on his way
 First were given to push and pull!
 So, since then, it became the rule,
 But before that none helped them out,
 No matter who, or how loud they shout!
 There were foothills and mounds nearby,
 Crowded with watchers standing on high,
 Trying to catch a glimpse of the race,
 Specially seeking the one in first place.
 Over the steppe, where the course was set
 1970 They were gazing and gazing yet.
 Yes terday eve they whisked on their way,
 But just now, after prayers at mid-day,
 On that side where Kokand stands high,
 There are clouds of dust in the sky.
 Having reached Kendi-Badang,
 Into view a few steeds ran.
 On the south slopes of Andizhan,*
 Some to forge ahead began.
 There was Bagish's steed, Surkiyik —
 1980 Rarely the ground did his flying feet kick,
 Then, behind him, the dust clouds rise;
 Dzhediger folk give vent to cries,
 So that the whole earth shakes again.
 Young Bagish there tugged on the reins,
 At the steel bit Surkiyik still strains,
 Stretching his neck till his hooves it gains.
 There where his feet made a groove between,
 Earth went flying, and left a ravine.
 Dzhedigers, and each Kirghiz son,

1990 All of them, to the very last one,
 Raised a cry of thunderous force.
 Seemingly out of them all, one horse
 Forging to take next place began —
 That was the steed of Elyeman —
 Teltoru was that horse's name.
 Then the valorous Këkchë came.
 His swift steed was one of the best.
 Kergala's steed was his brother blessed.
 Riding black-headed Dzharmandai,
 2000 Graceful, and slender, like a borzoi.
 Fourth was Elyeman's steed Teltoru.
 Fifth Me-enyetkëk came through,
 And his owner was Sandzhibek.
 Sixth there came the steed Argimak,
 That which belonged to Muzburchak.
 Seventh came the steed Dzhelkayish,
 Horse of Akbai — or Mambet if you wish.
 He too was a swift-footed steed.
 Next to gallop by at speed,
 2010 Eighth to pass the flag indeed,
 That was Bakai's steed, Maltoru.
 Ninth steed to appear in view,
 Kicking up dust behind it afar,
 That was Seyita's steed, Dzhelkara.
 Tenth horse home was Orkizil's —
 Dzhugëryus in the running still.
 By that time, my people dear,
 All other horses crowded near.
 How can I manage to name each one?
 2020 At such times it needn't be done.
 There were prizes for thirty of them.
 Where else would you find them, then?
 Start them off with a cry of "Go!"
 That's the rule in the hills, you know.
 People who had such racers too,
 Then received what was their due.
 Fighters who there the way had made
 To my father their last debt paid!

2030 Let nobody be deceived —
 Don't take more, once you've received!
 May great Allah bless my dead sire!"
 Bokmurun's voice rose a little higher.
 "All you good people gathered here,
 When he left me, my father dear,
 Down on my head fell many woes.
 Since his youth he'd been used to those.
 He had gathered a great many herds —
 Listen carefully to my words —
 Just consider, and don't go wrong,
 2040 For in the next world punishment's strong!"
 "Will some good come of this?" he thought,
 Rode home quickly, and quietude sought.
 Six rooms were full of silver and gold.
 Some he left with their stores untold,
 Two he opened, and went inside,
 From those two, no pains denied,
 Took all the coins, and left not one.
 Bokmurun then, when he'd done,
 Ordered them all the silver to take,
 2050 And one heap of it to make.
 Six ox-waggon's of silver they took
 At his orders, and bore them, look,
 Opened the gates of the palace then,
 Scattered them round for simple men.
 Peasants in the hems of their coats
 Took them like wheat seeds, barley or oats,
 They'd not strength to give all by hand —
 Simpler to scatter them on the land.
 Even the doubters took some then.
 2060 If there are some who say "Why take them?"
 Let them with not one coin remain.
 Let the old folk and children then gain?
 If there are those who show disdain,
 Let them with not one piece remain!
 Scattering coins, both far and wide,
 Bokmurun not one denied.
 To ninety men, who his father laved,

Ten gowns, each of silk, he gave.
 Every man he heaped them on.
 2070 Bokmurun, Kēkētēi's young son,
 Showed his generosity then.
 "Let the Muslims hear the Koran!
 On my father's head, if you can,
 Bring down a blessing, every man!"
 Forty thousand mullahs he found,
 Ready the sacred Koran to propound...
 Forty racers he gathered, or more —
 Those who always ran to the fore,
 Making a feast on the fortieth day,
 2080 Gathered Kirghiz from the hills far away.
 Chiefs among their people then:
 He who ruled all Katagan* men —
 Their old chieftain, Koshoi, that is.
 From the Dzhedigers* came Bagish,
 Then the son of Dzhеткиr — Agish,
 Many came at Bokmurun's wish.
 Kēkētēi's funeral feast won fame,
 Many years lasting 'mid those who came.
 They said: "There'll be racing again —
 2090 Time for swift feet and flying mane!"
 Time again for the racing steed.
 That bold master, whose horse shows speed,
 He will never find happiness strange.
 Such horse-races to arrange,
 This is the special way of Kirghiz.
 On the lowlands the Tarsa* live.
 Near to them the Persi* are,
 At their side are found the Kalcha,*
 And endowing them all like this,
 2100 Come so many sons of Kirghiz!
 Hence came Dērgyush, and brave Ketelik,
 Hence came people, the best you could pick.
 Here come Kirghiz and Kazakh beside,
 Sweeping on, like a real land-slide.
 From O-ogan came Khan Akun,
 Others followed him very soon.

Steeds with high croup and flying mane,
 With straight ears, like a hare's they came,
 Sticking upright, out of their head,
 2110 Off to the starting point were led.
 Beautiful steeds, which stride with a swing,
 Necks as straight as a taut bow-string.
 Look at this one — a devil — some way...
 People see him, and then they say:
 "There's not another as fine as he --
 Nowhere else such steeds will you see,
 Those whose ribs are wide as Chatkal,*
 'Neath them could stand a bullock as well.
 Those whose hooves are shod with steel,
 2120 Those whose muscles bulge like a hill!
 From all quarters these race-horses come.
 They simply fly, they don't just run.
 Like a black raven's is their flight,
 As they sweep from the mountain height,
 When they find their own prey in sight.
 Hooves are strong, and shining bright —
 They can smash a standing stone...
 Such he gathered, and those alone.
 Such he gathered, and tribes came soon —
 2130 Such a man was Bokmurun!
 Këkëti's to a better world's gone!
 Sorrowing, people linger on.
 Thus they come, the Dzheet,* the Tarsa,*
 Karagetins* and these Kalcha.*
 Thus they come, the news having heard.
 Khan Manas had received the word.
 From Katagans came Khan Koshoi.
 From the Kazakhs there came Këkchë.
 From the Kipchaks came Elyeman --
 2140 Riders and steeds together ran.
 From Eshteks appeared Dzhamgirchi,
 Khan of a smallish tribe was he.
 Eloquent speaker, bold Ubryu,
 Cousin as well to Khan Dzhyugëryu.
 Then Kegyush's son — Kërkëkyul.

Bey Këchpës' Dzhanai — no fool!
 For the memorial's fortieth day,
 Many visitors gathered that way.
 From Andizhan came Sandzhibek,
 2150 Muzburchak, with grey-bearded neck.
 Here they gathered then every one,
 To the memorial they all had come.
 Këkëti again they bemoaned,
 Three whole days together they swarmed.
 From the ones with red-tasselled hats,
 From those Kitais — none sat on the mats.
 Bokmurun ordered "Dig fire-pits straightway!"
 Seven hundred mares gave orders to slay.
 All his kinsmen around he sat,
 2160 Then he fed them on white mare's fat.
 With generosity all he out-passed.
 Six days he ordered the feast to last.
 Prizes for racing he then set aside.
 More and more of his store he supplied.
 Bokmurun his stock released.
 One hundred head of each kind of beast
 Then he ordered them to prepare,
 Plus one hundred gold ingots there,
 Which were known then as "shanguur"*
 2170 Bokmurun of all this made sure.
 Then ten thousand silver "dilce"*
 He had counted, ready to pay.
 First prize was determined so much.
 Second prize reckoned at half of such,
 That means half of the cattle set,
 Which the first horse home would get.
 All the folk would benefit so —
 Forty steeds get awards you know.
 Starting such a big thing as this,
 2180 He just shattered all the Kirghiz!
 So, 'twas decided, prizes were set.
 Owners and riders felt easier yet.
 From the racing steeds who'd arrived,
 Seven hundred they started to drive.

Down to the lowlands, there they were sent,
 Down to the steppe around Tashkent.³²
 Unencompassed by human eyes,
 There the waterless steppeland lies.
 One hundred men drove the steeds alone...
 2190 Of such advisers as Khans might own,
 Of such just, and unlying men,
 Three, as impartial judges came then.
 Jockeys for each competing steed —
 They were carefree lads indeed —
 Now were worried, but all in vain,
 That their steeds needed water again.
 Then the men drove them to Kara-Kël*
 Doubt me? Then come and look as well!
 They stripped their bridles, and let them drink,
 2200 All those steeds, by the great lake's brink.
 Soon as they came, they watered them,
 Put their bridles back on again then.
 That was a land of rush and reed,
 Some as fat as a yurta, indeed.
 That was the place where the race would begin,
 Soon as the morning rays peeped in,
 Soon as the sun arose in the sky.
 Many young lads were waiting by.
 They were ordered to stand in a row.
 2210 Those who were chosen as jockeys, you know,
 Going on favourite nags to ride.
 Baimirza went by their side.
 "Ride, and Allah be with you!" he said,
 As he blessed each youthful head.
 So each jockey set off on his horse.
 Some went straight ahead, of course,
 And were quickly lost to sight.
 Like a breeze they wafted light,
 Whistling just as arrows do,
 2220 Loosed straight out of the bow, they flew.
 Now just look! Not to be out-done,
 Others whizz, like a shot from a gun.
 All four legs go whirring away,

Where they strike the dried out clay,
 There grow crannies and lengthy cracks.
 Specially so in "tulpari's"* tracks.
 Those who had for long been tied,
 Ankle-deep in the soil they dived,
 Breast like a young stag's bursting forth.
 2230 Crying "Allah, give aid on earth!"
 Many young lads went streaming ahead,
 Galloping over the earth's hilly bed,
 Shrivelling up, like a pole-cat cold,
 Galloping over flat plains untold,
 Shivering like some hungry sheep,
 Scattering earth and dust in a heap,
 Galloping swiftly the horses sweep,
 Battering, balancing, jockey's leap,
 Cry out, and fly, and swoop and sweep.
 2240 Not in the morn, but towards the eve,
 In twilight cool, before evening prayer,
 Most were thinking "It's time they were here!"
 Steadily they were gazing afar,
 Out to the banks of Kosh-Aral,*
 On the crest of the hill Zakim,*
 There all is growing dusty and dim.
 On the crest of the Ak-Dëbë,*
 There sweeping down the racers were.
 Saying "What will Allah send now?"
 2250 They watched for riders and steeds somehow.
 If you looked out to see who led,
 Then, well-known to all, out ahead,
 Ridden by eloquent Kipchak, Urbyu,
 Dressed in embroidered tunic too,
 You'd see the steed named Egizkara,
 Forging ahead of the rest by far.
 After him comes Kerkasha,
 Different from all the others there are.
 He, it seems, is Kërkëkyul's steed —
 2260 Very outstanding is he, indeed!
 Racing on the fortieth day,
 One last training he'd missed, I'd say.

- Didn't quite make it, that's the worst —
 Came home hot on the heels of the first!
 Third, Kartkyurēng came in from afar,
 That's the racing steed of Adzha.
 Fourth horse home was Tarkizil,
 Owned by Seyit, he sped with a will.
 Fifth horse home was Akborchuk,
 2270 That's Kirgil's fine steed, just look!
 Sixth one home came the steed Kalchi,
 Whose he was is unknown to me...
 And the seventh I could not see,
 Hidden by shouting folk from me.
 Eighth horse home was Dzhelkizil,
 And Teyish is proud of him still.
 Ninth horse home was To-orotu,
 Tokotoi's swift steed slipped through.
 Tenth horse home was Orkizil,
 2280 Sandibck brought him, paid the Sarts' bill.
 One, then another, galloping by,
 Youngster jockeys raised their cry.
 Most of them the crowd did not know,
 Questioned each other about them so.
 Last of the forty steeds slipped by —
 Others were strictly forbidden to try.
 Stragglers were considered small fry...
 So, in memory of Kēkētēi,
 Then a great meeting they organised thus,
 2290 And at their head stood brave Manas.
 And, alongside, Koshoi there stood.
 So the awards they gave as they should,
 Saying "This prize goes to such and such horse,
 And to such and such owner, of course!
 Many fine cattle were settled then,
 Here and there, for the winning men.
 To the very last horse who came,
 They gave just nine sheep, all the same.³³
 That's how the fortieth day they kept,
 2300 Happy they went, and nobody wept.
 They all started to separate lands,

- They all parted with waving of hands,
 Strangers left, your own remained,
 And of those who then were named,
 Such were the tales which then were told.
 Bokmurun, to both young and old,
 To his remaining people said:
 "Let there be milk for years ahead!
 Let our cows now multiply.
 2310 After two more years have passed by,
 If we arrange memorial feasts,
 Think, young and old ones here, of your beasts.
 Take care of rams, that fat they grow,
 Take care of lambs and sheep also.
 Take care of camel-foals, that they grow,
 Take care of mares, or on foot you'll go!
 May our herdsmen attend calving cows,
 May they enrich us, as Allah knows how!
 May you, my kinsmen, think of each beast,
 2320 May the goods in your homes increase!
 If great Allah keeps me likewise,
 I shall do so, that all get a prize.
 Let's make memorial feasts and fun,
 Which they'll remember when Judgement Day's done!
 May our foals become stallions bold,
 May our herds then uncrease untold,
 May our lambs then turn into rams,
 Or into sheep with fat bulging hams!
 Let all the peoples then be called,
 2330 Listen to me, both young and old!
 Kēkētēi was your Khan, your Bey.
 He had great riches in his day.
 Not only herds on the pastures there,
 But other treasures, rich and rare.
 Let us expend them upon a feast.
 Let us extend a welcome at least.
 If in his honour our goodness we show,
 Then how jealous will grow each foe!
 Who in this passing world lives for aye?
 2340 Let folk do likewise, when their sires die.

You who support me, kinsmen dear,
 How many rooms filled with riches are here!
 Let us expend what they hold fast!
 You are all sons of Kirghiz, to the last.
 Near to you, in vales unspent,
 Lie the towns Andizhan and Tashkent.
 Don't sell even one goat for cash!
 Here we have satin and silken sash,
 What rich textiles are lying near!
 2350 He who has ears to hear, let him hear!
 Here we have Chinese silk — Kanaus,
 Here we have lawn, with designs of komuz,*
 All kinds of fabrics here have we,
 Here are cambrics and corduroy, see!
 Here we have every kind of brocade,
 Here we have velvet, and lace hand-made.
 All rare linens and crepes have we,
 All hand-woven most dexterously.
 All kinds of lace and embroidery,
 2360 Even fine voile, through which you can see!
 If your shirt to shreds is worn,
 Take one here, avoid all scorn.
 Let your foals grow fat, and increase,
 Here you can have a new gown, if you please.
 Let your herd grow fat where it feeds.
 Take a tunic to suit your needs.
 Various treasures have we here.
 If the boots are worn out, which you wear,
 Here we have leather, ready in store.
 2370 Don't sell a single sheep, what's more!
 Here we've felt hats for summer-time wear,
 Here are lambskins, in winter to don,
 Here are black camels to load things on.
 Këkëtëi has left lots behind.
 In our store-houses much you'll find.
 Here we have fox-fur — trim hats about.
 Count up your cattle — and check them out.
 Don't sell even one lamb alone!
 2380 One hundred and fifty thousand homes!

If you don't sell, your flock will stay whole --
 That's what I wanted to tell you all!
 Let us the three-year feast prepare!
 If we do so, they all will be there.
 Earth is round, like a wheel, or sphere --
 Those who get news will drag themselves here.
 There are many brave men on this earth,
 Various people have given them birth.
 Of many others, too, one could tell --
 2390 There are sprites and pixies as well,
 There are giants — in caves they dwell,
 There are dwarfs, and fairies as well,
 There are sylphs, and little gnomes;
 There are spirits who have no homes,
 There are griffons, with beaks of brass,
 There are demons, who let none pass,
 There are mermen and maidens too,
 There are wild men, with skins all blue,
 There are Muslim and heathen powers,
 2400 Here in this transient world of ours.
 There are Këyëks,* a numerous tribe,
 And they spread both far and wide.
 They eat only coarsest grass --
 So, for a while, we'll let them pass...
 If on the planned memorial feast
 We don't spend all, then at the least,
 That will lessen our Kirghiz fame!"
 Many who stood there thought the same.
 Each began smiling, nodding his head.
 2410 They all agreed with what he'd said.
 Not having sold a single goat,
 Not for one cup of grain gained a groat,
 From the stores Këkëtëi left behind
 Many new shirts for old did find.
 If their clothes or shoes were worn,
 Then to the stores they began to swarm.
 There were many watchmen about,
 There were many assessors out.
 They gave leather to those in need.

2420 Bokmurun helped them on indeed.
 They did not sell a goat nor sheep.
 Three years through full herds did keep.
 Wandering here and there quite free,
 Flocks increased amazingly.
 Having been kept from wolves' attacks,
 Not one sheep its lambkin lacks.
 Roaming round for miles and miles,
 They raised children with loving smiles.
 Horses fed well, and that was a boon.
 2430 Then they thought "Will the feast be soon?"
 All the folk began to burn;
 Fat bogatirs began to yearn,
 Saying "We'd like to see them again!"
 Maidens and youths all felt the same.
 Winter -- male camels began to roar,
 Kirghiz tribes seethed more and more.
 Spring -- the bulls began to roar.
 All those living on earth as before
 Started to say "Will the feast be long?"
 2440 Stallions were neighing, stout and strong.
 Bleating aloud, the goats were in rut,
 Rams each other began to butt,
 All the lambkins grew very fat,
 Hardly could stand on their legs, at that!
 Bulls could barely bend their necks,
 All the ravines were full of yaks.
 News of the coming memorial feast
 Spread at last, to the nearest at least.
 This time a new attraction there'd be --
 2450 Këkëtëi's old menagerie...
 Kept at his own expense, at length,
 And delighting all with their strength,
 With thick skins, and ears like a hood,
 Six enormous elephants stood --
 Two rhinoceroses were there.
 Long since they'd been kept with care,
 By Këkëtëi, with three tigers too,
 Also one lion, of reddish hue.

Each of those tigers kept there then
 2460 Were as strong as forty men.
 Six slim panthers there were seen,
 Playing together on the green.
 They were only concerned with their game.
 Six big bears, all trained the same,
 With two spotted leopards were seen,
 Which both trained by hand had been.
 There was a giant who could do harm --
 One leg lacking, but one extra arm!
 And among others not named you see,
 2470 There was a monkey called Tikti,
 Who could dance in many a style.
 Nine kinds of parrots were there meanwhile,
 Who could speak in the human way...
 Other peoples don't know today --
 In the city of Tashkent then
 Këkëtëi was the ruling Khan.
 Herds not like those of other men --
 Since his youth he'd collected them.
 Two thousand mules he counted his.
 2480 "Mid the tribes of the Kara-Kirghiz,
 Was there one like him -- one at least?
 Since they decided on the feast,
 And like a god to treat each guest,
 And took counsel with all the rest,
 Three years already had rolled around.
 All their houses and barns were found
 Overflowing -- with rich stores packed.
 Like wild asses, their horses kicked.
 Take a look -- fresh foals you see --
 2490 Just like three-year-olds seemed to be.
 Take a look at their mares, new-bred,
 Tall as a wall -- ten feet high their head,
 All excited and proud each gyrates,
 Just like beauties, wooing their mates.
 Women well-dressed, in sable that is --
 In the tribes of Kara-Kirghiz,
 Long since had achieved great feats --

Now fat neck-meat each man eats.
 Every one of them, as I've said,
 2500 Various cattle and steeds has bred.
 On the Altai and Suusamir,*
 Folk to their summer camps came here,
 To Arpa,* Son-Kël and Aksai,*
 To those spots where they settled nearby.
 On Ak-Dëbë* their cows they feed --
 They are real masters now, indeed!
 On Isar* and Këlëp* are their sheep,
 On Arsi* and Dzhëlëk steeds they keep.
 Camels lie here, on the banks of the Sir,*
 2510 In Chimkent, and Sairam* quite near,
 They kept dromedaries as well...
 When there had passed a three years' spell,
 When the interval faded away,
 When they reached the appointed day,
 Then the great yurtla again they raised,
 In the Khan's fort their banner displayed,
 Honouring Këkëtëi's good name.
 From Katagans Koshoi then came,
 From the Kazakhs Këkchë also,
 2520 Then Agish and Karakodzho.
 Then Akpai, Umët, Almambet,
 And sultan Këkkoën, don't forget,
 Bokmurun invited each one
 To the memorial feast to come.
 From O-ogan Akun beside,
 And their near ones from many a tribe.
 Then Bokmurun began to say:
 "Brothers of mine, we've met today,
 And in my mind fresh memories stay,
 2530 How my dear father passed away,
 From this transient world of men.
 To my bride's relations just then
 I had gone, so I did not hear
 From his own lips his testament clear.
 Deeply grieved by that was I.
 While my father was standing by,

I was spoiled in every way,
 I was lazy, and slept all day.
 Now in my father's honour, at least,
 2540 I have prepared much goods for the feast.
 That which I set aside from our store,
 Unknowing people will use up more.
 After all -- these words do not lie:
 'End of the world will come by and by.'
 Let folk say 'The Kirghiz started this!'
 Let our people say 'So it is!'
 Let such fame until Judgement Day
 Stay with our name, and not fade away!
 In arranging memorial feasts,
 2550 I shall sacrifice many good beasts.
 Leader of them, bold Manas will be.
 Then to open my gold-chests, you see,
 I intend, and will give you a share --
 Many treasures are waiting you there.
 Let there be something worth speaking about!
 If all that father saved I give out,
 Thus to honour our dead one's name,
 As he has ordered, then all the same,
 I shall be fulfilling his will.
 2560 All that he said I remember still!
 From Baimirza I learned it all.
 Listen, and I'll tell all I recall!"
 So Bokmurun began to explain:
 "Oh, my people, you're with me again!
 You are excellent wise men all.
 That for which my father did call,
 How can I manage at all without you?
 Let's make it custom, and we'll go through.
 Let's fulfil father's wish, that is,
 2570 Let's make it so among Kara-Kirghiz!
 Këkëtëi, my father, is dead,
 But a long, useful life he led.
 I shan't begrudge my father's store,
 But shall help our villagers more.
 We shall try out our steeds with swift feet,

We shall find out the fleetest of fleet!
 We shall have races which all enjoy!
 What do you think of that, Koshoi?
 And all you other Kirghiz, my kin?
 2580 Let's test them out, and see who'll win!
 You're all like fathers' relations to me.
 Let us have then some jousting to see.
 Bright steel spear in an iron hand!
 Who is the man thet's going to stand?
 Let him a heathen or Muslim be,
 Let's have some jousting, and then we'll see!
 I thought: 'Let's have an exciting event!'
 I thought: This is what faither meant!
 We will match our wrestlers with yours,
 2590 Let people watch, and tot up the scores!
 Let all the folk see how the match goes,
 Who's the thrown one, and strong one who throws?
 Let them see mounted wrestlers, indced,
 Tugging the other man right off his steed.
 So that the real man comes out on top,
 So that the shouting should never stop!
 Let such contests be food for thought then,
 Setting examples for all other men.
 Such were the thoughts which came in my head
 2600 So I don't dry up from riches instead!
 Then I decided 'Let's have some fun too.
 Let's see chat the old bald ones can do,
 Butting the other with naked, head,³⁴
 Or maybe running away instead!
 What is left in my father's store.
 Let them find out, whether less, or more?
 Having dug a small hole, waist-deep,
 Stick in a stake, and bound camel there keep,
 Then say 'Strip naked, down to the bone,
 2610 Now unbind that camel alone!'

Saying: 'Good marksmen, strike the gold!'
 Make them take aim and shoot, be bold,
 Let them squint with one closed eye,
 Let the arrow or musket-ball fly...
 So that he who has the best aim
 2620 Then the coin can rightfully claim.
 Such were the ideas in my head —
 I won't begrudge rewards!" he said,
 "At my father's memorial feast,
 And I hope you will all be pleased!
 Now I feel that news I must send,
 And to others welcome lend.
 On many things I must think twice,
 You give your counsel and advice.
 Maybe you will help me soon?"
 2630 So to Koshoi said Bokmurun.
 Laughing aloud, Koshoi nearly burst:
 "What you've been thinking could be worse!
 And, in fact, if you ask me,
 Your dear father must happy be!
 Khans have to leave their golden throne.
 Allah favours you, though alone.
 Since you have expressed so much,
 Since your thoughts and ideas are such,
 So then these games you must arrange!
 2640 'Where the water is poured, it remains!'

In this changing world of ours,
 Who for ever constantly flowers?
 There where they wash, the dirt remains,
 All said and done, our world must change.
 If death comes to us, what is left?
 Where's the warp, and where's the weft?
 If you do all which you plan to do.
 Generations who come after you
 Will have much good about you to say.
 2650 When God's slave dies, the others pray!
 Then they say 'Death found him at last!'

Where they will shoot, that mast fix fast.
 Since you say so, then see things through.

Generations who come after you,
 They will remember all that was best
 Let them do so — forget the rest.
 Këkëitëi's feast those people will know,
 Jealous of you will be your foe.
 Generations who come after you,
 2660 They will find much interesting too!
 If you've decided so — do so!
 I'm an old man, and I ought to know!
 Your good friend Koshoi am I,
 And to help you shall certainly try.
 All the bogatirs who were there
 They agreed: "Do so, that's fair!"
 There was a hustle and bustle about.
 Bokmurun, who'd been somewhat put out,
 Felt his soul grow eased of pain.
 2670 Soon he came to himself again.
 Peace descended upon his mind.
 "News of us other folk will find.
 To the small township of Tashkent
 I have been wishing that it went.
 How can I this memorial hold?
 Much has changed there since days of old.
 There are many good homes, to boot,
 Many good trees with nuts and fruit,
 Apricots and pears they give.
 2680 O-ogans with Kirghiz there live.
 In one region — many Tatars,
 And beside them live Kalchas,*
 And behind them — various foes.
 If unexpected there one goes,
 One may find there peasants too.
 On the western side in view
 There are Tarsa* and Kisilbashi.*
 If so many with us there be,
 If the memorial feast goes to plan,
 2690 Then in little Andizhan
 How shall we find a place for them?
 Say, Koshoi, what shall we do then?

Name a place, where to hold the feast!"
 Bokmurun was worried, at least.
 There are white-beards, grey-beards too.
 This tale comes from those who knew.
 If I tell, you'll learn much from it.
 Old Koshoi, he sat for a bit,
 Then he felt a little dismayed.
 2700 Once more the youngster's words he weighed.
 Then he began to shake his head:
 "In the west there are lakes" he said,
 Many riverless deserts, at that!"
 One, yellow-breeched, with embroidered hat,
 Silken sash, where a aabre sat,
 Golden shoes, with copper heels on —
 Brave Këkchë, Aidarkan's young son,
 Answered Koshoi, when he had done:
 "Father Koshoi, well, here you are —
 2710 I've seen a land called Sari-Arka,*
 That stands opposite to Altai,
 Very majestic beneath the sky,
 Gentle hills, and wide bounds there,
 Only one draw-back — water is rare!"
 So he said, and held his peace,
 But Akun barely let him cease:
 "What, then, from here do you wish to go?
 Travel northwards then, is that so?
 Numerous folk who live in the west,
 2720 They'd have to ride seven months, at best!
 What does our tiger Këkchë say?
 Quite impossible, anyway!"
 He with the shining, lamp-like eye,
 Dzhaidar's son, the bold Abai,
 Said: "There's a very spacious place
 Where the Karategins* have their base,
 On the warm pastures of Alai.
 There are clear water and grasses high.
 Many such spots you'll find there yet!"
 2730 Then up and spoke brave Almambet:
 "That's not a very suitable spot.

Hosts of people we have got,
 And for them it's a wasted shot —
 There are no trees to heat the pot!
 We shall find no logs up there —
 That would bring shame on us, I declare!"
 Bokmurun then raised his head:
 "Have you not thought of this?" he said —
 "To the east lies Suusamir* —
 2740 What if we hold the memorial there?
 What do you say to that, Koshoi?"
 Bokmurun made a further ploy,
 But the strong-man, Karakodzho,
 Said: "You can leave that out, you know —
 There the mountains are high, no space —
 Fir-trees there, all over the place!"
 So each made a suggestion, at least,
 Trying to find a place for the feast.
 Then old Koshoi, he shook his head,
 2750 And to the others "Wait!" he said,
 "Maybe you'll all agree with me,
 And with what I have to say — let's see!
 To the west there lies Issik-Kul,
 Beautiful land, and lake brim-full!
 If your steeds by Ili* you chase,
 There you'll find a place for the race.
 All is convenient for us there —
 Rivers and pastures everywhere,
 Trees on every side there are —
 2760 That wide space is called Karkira.
 There is salt to evaporate,
 And no sediment will it make.
 Firs and birches and poplars are there,
 You'd have your logs, and some to spare,
 If you cut down some of those trees.
 Places for races you'd find with ease.
 That's a good place to hold the feast.
 That's my own opinion, at least!"
 2770 All the tribe-leaders gathered there
 Eager agreement began to declare.

They decided this matter first,
 They thanked everyone, then dispersed.
 Time for the feast was decided too —
 When summer's hottest days were through,
 When the cattle well-fed were found,
 When the autumn gold falls around,
 When the peasants winnow again,
 When they pour out and take early grain.
 To Samarkand and Kokand, not far —
 2780 Then they'd migrate to Karkira,
 With old white-beard Koshoi at their head.
 Now, just see, it is as we said:
 All the bogatirs who had met
 Went off home, all ready and set.
 When the sultry heat declined,
 When the autumn days were more kind,
 They decided their people to call.
 In Karkira they would gather all.
 Then Bokmurun the last words spoke:
 2790 "Let us number up all our folk!"
 From Dzhizak* and from Andizhan,
 From Aziret-Ayip's sacred land,
 From the crest Kēk-Art, by the pass,
 Where the yurtas appear en masse,
 Come our own folk, the Kara-Kirghiz.
 From Sairam and Chimkent, that is,
 From Kazakhs, where news was sent,
 From the Uzbeks, where messengers went,
 Bokmurun their numbers did call —
 2800 Three hundred thousand families in all.
 For all these, for even the poor,
 Crimson carpets he spread on the floor,
 Maidens over ten years old
 Told two tambourines to hold,
 Young brides he clothed in satin and silk,
 Maidens he dressed, as white as milk,
 For his folk he did what he could,
 Like their protector, Kizir he stood,
 And the duties which he owed,

2810 To his whole people then he showed.
 Let the old chew lambs-tail fat,
 Give them a thousand sheep, at that,
 Ordered Kirghiz from flat Tashkent,
 That their summers in mountains be spent.
 For their women, velvet he found,
 Gladdened the hearts of those around.
 To the simple folk made a gift —
 One fine camel each, strong and swift,
 So poor beggars without a beast
 2820 Now had one on a lead, at least.
 To the ones with no steeds of theirs,
 He presented five or ten mares,
 Cows as well to others he gave,
 Everybody he tried to save.
 Sheep were bleating, lambs cried "Ba-a!"
 People from other tribes afar
 They were just amazed, anyway.
 Horses everywhere started to neigh.
 Ignorant folk of other tribes
 2830 Said "These Kirghiz all live rich lives!"
 Wiser ones just shook their head:
 "That's all thanks to Manas!" they said.
 All the camels rendingly cried.
 Then he ordered equipment beside,
 Ordered fighters to sharpen their spears,
 Armed the youngsters up to the ears,
 Camels with adams-apples like cups,
 On whose backs the loads were heaped up,
 Great black beasts with bells, moved again.
 2840 This migration was like a campaign.
 These Kirghiz who in yurtas dwelt,
 Oh, just look, what joy they felt!
 "We resolved to keep our good name,
 So that people approve us again,
 To prepare our feast-days there,
 Where Këkëti's blue banner flies clear.
 So the dromedary must sit,
 And a saddle be thrown on it.

Later, in order, they mounted them,
 2850 Tassles dangled, bells jingled then.
 So Këkëti's blue banner flew,
 Making its flag-staff tremble too.
 With its golden crescent fine,
 As if lit up by the moon, ashine.
 Brave young riders pranced on so,
 All their finery proud to show.
 One just can't find words to say,
 Eye can't see it all, anyway.
 Start to finish, three days they rise
 2860 In Indian file -- then a hundred beside!
 Driving their horses from place to place,
 Training their powers for the race,
 Feeding on horses' ribs they ride,
 Setting up yurtas, side ny side,
 All enjoying themselves on the way,
 Four days on the road they stay.
 Most of them good fellows are.
 To Chimkent and Auli-Ata,
 To Sairam, by the river-side,
 2870 In an endless stream they ride.
 So this countless horde still moves,
 Drive their steeds with clattering hooves.
 Tethering their young foals to a stake,
 There a seven-day stay they make.
 Then once more on the road they sway,
 Chattering, laughing, on their way,
 To Kozu-Bashi and Kopo,*
 Having stooped one night they go.
 Then at last came the end of that...
 2880 Thinking "Let our sheep grow fat,
 So that when our guests so wish
 They should make a tasty dish!"
 Slowly then they roamed their ways,
 Staying there some twenty days.
 Then to Alma-Ata moved on,
 There remained till six days had gone.
 Gave their steeds a rest in turn,

In Eshik and in Tyurgēn.
 That's where grain was sown and mown.
 2890 From there earlier folk had flown.
 Raising the dust, Chabdar* they stormed.
 People around them they informed:
 "Kēkētēi's memory-feast we'll keep!"
 Uch-Karkira's* wild waters sweep
 In the Uch-Bulak valley there.
 All the Kirghiz began to prepare
 For the coming memorial feast.
 Everywhere their numbers increased,
 And they filled Karkira's wide shore.
 2900 Ninety thousand young riders, or more
 Bokmurun ordered: "Hew down trees —
 Juniper, birch and fir, if you please,
 Save the green saplings for their own sake,
 Dry logs then he gave orders to make.
 And to a wide deep hollow to take.
 Crimson banner, with crescent of gold,
 Fixed to its staff they must then unfold.
 This is the feast-day we've foretold.
 To young orphans and widows said so:
 2910 "What you must do, do yourselves you know!"
 Then he sent them the meat to guard.
 Tribes of Kara-Kirghiz worked hard.
 Every day in their thousands or so,
 Greeting each other, they rode to and fro.
 Everywhere yurtas and tents were seen.
 In the Karkira valley green,
 There the heather one's stirrups graced,
 There the feather-grass reached one's waist!
 There lie stretched the roe and the doe.
 2920 'Mid the bushes the horned stags go.
 Then the Uzbeks, who had just arrived,
 Questioned "What kind of land do we find?"
 Asking each other, they got no reply --
 All was so obvious, that was why!
 "For a feast this is just the place!"
 Said Bokmurun, a smile on his face.

"I have also one other thought here:
 On his tether Maaniker
 Who is a war-horse, as you're aware,
 2930 Long since has had no exercise there.
 So that the folk should get to know
 Of our memorial feast also,
 Let us now make some use of him!"
 Bokmurun then said, with a grin.
 Then he called old Kashinbek,
 And some others he hadn't asked yet,
 Daguluk and Abdilkadir,
 All of them just now were here.
 When Bokmurun called out aloud
 2940 All his folk came round in a crowd.
 Nurkabil, Bayiz, Mirza,
 All high folk from near and far.
 Bokmurun told everyone —
 Baimirza — Kashim's young son,
 All he called, and then he said:
 "There'll be a feast to honour our dead!"
 Many people to them fared.
 Everything was well-prepared.
 Horses fattened, as desired.
 2950 All the folk were feeling tired...
 "Since my father's final day,
 Just three years have passed away.
 How shall we let everyone know?
 How many then will join us so?
 Let the best of us head the feast!
 Let the wise ones speak, at least!"
 Bokmurun begged this of them.
 Baimirza started speaking then.
 Everyone present gave him a hand:
 2960 "From Andizhan and from Kokand,
 So he turned the discussion's tracks —
 "Let us call the Kara-Kalmaks,*
 To the memorial ceremony.
 Let's count up how many there'll be.
 If we invite, let it be the wise,

With a Shah's knowledge in their eyes.
 That means we'll surely call Manas!
 Then Kazakhs, Kirghiz, Kalmaks —
 Forebears' spirits we thus shall please!
 2970 Let's call those who'll add to the feast!
 Let us call just a few of the Sarts
 When your father's memorial starts.
 With many tribes of the Kara-Kirghiz,
 We shall leave the affair as it is!"
 So Baimirza began to speak.
 When Bokmurun heard his words, so weak,
 Where they were leading seemed absurd.
 Even tears in his eyes were stirred.
 "You brew very black tea, Baimirza!
 2980 You won't find a steed to go far
 With such news as you now propose.
 Who could agree with such words as those?
 I shared my powers with you, old man,
 See to the measures which you began.
 I it was rescued your village, you know,
 When Sargil set upon it so.
 As it should be when the feast we must run,
 When your own father's days are done,
 Think, and remember, and get to the roots.
 2990 I will give everything that suits.
 From the whole world which lies around,
 All I shall call, and my trumpet sound,
 Heathens and Mussulmen as well,
 All them together then I'll tell.
 If God so wishes that it should be.
 One thing alone bewidens me:
 Who taught you, then, to be so mean?
 Not only people — I'll call those between —
 Angels and devils from every side,
 3000 Mermen and mermaids call from the tide.
 Sprites and pixies, hobgoblins I'll call.
 You seem to want to eat and drink all;
 Recently you have shown such greed,
 Showing a lower person, indeed.

You are concerned your position to keep,
 Only meanness robs you of sleep.
 If you repeat selfish words again,
 You, one day soon, will find yourself slain!
 Very few people support you in this —
 3010 Most look for somethink nobler, that is!
 You only seek your meanness to share.
 Let there be sables to spread everywhere!
 For far successors who come after us,
 Let us set now an example thus!
 Earlier there has been no such feast,
 Nothing to honour a father deceased.
 Nobody willing to call in their guests,
 Willing to share everything which rests,
 Calling them on, whatever betides,
 3020 Setting successors a pattern besides!
 I have tride an example to be:
 Now let the others imitate me.
 You are a man whom I thought wide.
 Këkëti, long before he died,
 Gathered great treasure to fill his store.
 Though he grew rich, owning more and more,
 When he drew his last mortal breath,
 Did it all help him to ward off death?
 Riches and power were worth nought that day —
 3030 Over his breast a grey mist lay...
 So his spirit went soaring away...
 See, even trees as well have their day.
 Some are broken when saplings' still,
 Others, according to Allah's will,
 Into plane-trees and sycamores grow.
 Others there are who lack fathers too.
 Death is inevitable — no mistake.
 Sometimes, just look -- no father he'll take,
 Only his camel-foal meets with his doom.³⁵
 3040 This black earth has a deep dark womb.
 No bones exist which here aren't found.
 Others, just take a look around:
 Mothers are gone, but daughters remain.

What is not found in this world again?
 Others, just take a look again,
 Mother's alive, but no children remain.
 Since the Creator made it thus,
 Nothing really depends on us.
 If on a long, long journey you go —
 3050 Do not gallop, but just go slow!
 Every mortal has his day.
 When yours comes, do all you may.
 Here there are tribes from every land,
 Here is old Kashim at hand,
 Abdilkadir, and Daguluk.
 When Bokmurun called you to this nook,
 All together you came from afar,
 Nurkabil, Bayiz, Mirza,
 To participate in the feast.
 3060 You're determined folk, at least.
 Keep on saying "He'll ruin us now!"
 So you slander me somehow.
 All my herds I'll not begrudge,
 I'll call all, may God be my judge!
 Don't be offended, all the same,
 At what we eat in my father's name!
 In his honour — I do it so.
 He gathered riches, as you know.
 If you look carefully, anyway,
 3070 You'll see them multiply each day!
 You too, as boys, have had success.
 No beggars now your children, no less!
 Off they go on their chosen steeds,
 Each one taking just what he needs.
 Daughters of yours, each waiting bride,
 Dressed in flowery silk beside.
 All that comes from my father's goodwill.
 And it extends to successors still.
 Let people talk about this affair.
 3080 I have ideas — no stopping them there!
 Noble people, don't judge too severe!
 Look at this active youngster here —

Knows sixty languages, like his own,
 He's a translator, a poet well-known!
 For all that's good a welcome prepares,
 Bothers about our petty affairs.
 He shows his skill in every guise.
 Here among our Kirghiz tribes
 He can become an excellent lad.
 3090 If the talking is good, or bad,
 He can give a worthy reply.
 He has an ear, and he has an eye.
 If he joins up with the masters here,
 He will show all his skill, that's clear.
 Often lengthy speeches he's made,
 He is a bard of a very good grade!"
 And with that he called the young man
 To his side, and up he ran.
 Young Aidar, all fresh, all aglow,
 3100 And Bokmurun addressed him so.
 "Listen, young Aidar!" said he,
 "People from Balik,* you see,
 Could not pay in full the price,
 And they therefore fell in disgrace.
 Masters for their hauberks had asked,
 Counting all, from first to last —
 If the price you wish to hear —
 One thousand horses — very dear!
 Forged of gold was the chain-mail there.
 3110 Now you must mount Maaniker,
 He is a special racing steed.
 Take a gallop, and test his speed.
 Karabair — that's a pure-blood breed.
 Lungs — enormous, bronze-winged, indeed.
 Graceful limbs, like reeds his ears.
 On the free rein, he never rears.
 In the unbearable summer heat,
 In the battle, 'mid blood and sweat,
 If you ride forty days — doesn't drink.
 3120 On the wide steppe, or desert's brink.
 If you ride forty days — doesn't stop,

Even in desert sands — doesn't flop.
 Drinks not a drop of water, not he!
 Lean and sinewy as can be.
 And his close-grown skin beside
 Firmly sits on his shoulders wide.
 If you gallop him many days,
 His great energy with him stays.
 Forty wings on the right has he.
 3130 Forty wings on the left you see,
 They are made of thick coarse hair.
 Friday to Friday, ride him there.
 One whole week — such strength he's got,
 Only then does he grow hot,
 That's his habit, believe it or not.
 Mother was a wild mountain beast,
 Father a Pegasus, at least!
 If he gallops for eighty days,
 If you dig him up when he dies,
 3140 He will go galloping on likewise!
 With greater strength that beast will stride,
 Even if round the world you ride.
 He will not go all thin and weak —
 Of all his qualities one can't speak.
 That beast will gallop over the waves,
 Over the hills for ninety days,
 Over the cliffs, where no wild goat strays,
 Still that steed will gallop around —
 3150 All the best traits in him are found.
 If some foes in hostility rise,
 If they don't take you by surprise,
 If you fall subject to deceit,
 If they don't bring about your defeat,
 Then your horse won't be touched by fire,
 When they shoot, he will rise still higher,
 Shots from a musket won't touch him then,
 Even point-blank he won't suffer from them!
 On Maaniker sake your seat —
 3160 Hear the words, which you must repeat:
 To the west do not look away —

On your chosen road then stay.
 Having come closest to your folk,
 Catch the sense of the words I spoke.
 In the direction of Bukhara,
 Where Chambil's old ruins are —
 In Orto-Chatkal — still alive,
 Ceding to none, however they strive,
 Wearing steel armour, front and back,
 3170 Find Budaik's bold son, Muzburchak.
 Still on your steed, give news of our feast,
 Ask of his health, then still on your beast,
 "Many arrangements are made," you must say,
 "Këkëti's memory lives today!
 On the borders of Chengelda,
 Where Karkira's wide steppe-lands are,
 There Kirghiz have settled!" say.
 "End to end — a month ride away.
 Full of people it is!" to them say:
 3180 "Let there be none who comes not to stay!
 There will be prizes for racing there too,
 And for games well-known to you —
 Contests of every kind!" you must say.
 If they ask "What prizes are they?"
 "Nine thousand red-headed camels!" then say.
 "Counting horses and cows, by-the-way,
 Ninety thousand beasts!" then say,
 "One hundred thousand sheep too!" say.
 "All in honour of Khan Këkëti
 3190 We shall arrange this grand feast!" you must say.
 "For the last in the race we shall keep
 Nine head of cattle, and ninety sheep.
 Think that over, and see how fine!
 Prizes for sixty steeds in the line!
 Runners will richly rewarded be!" say,
 "In this transient world, anyway,
 Where will you find something better?" then say.
 "Bring your fighters and wrestlers!" say,
 "Train Kelkuryën for the race, by the way!
 3200 Come to our feast, and be welcome!" say.

If you don't come to our festive day,
 Things will go ill with you then!" you must say.
 "Come, there is nought to lose -- all to gain!
 We've come to call you, so why remain?
 If you don't come to our feast," then say
 "You will be broken in two, anyway.
 Telkyurën, who won't be in the race,
 I give you notice, in any case,
 I shall take then, and him I shall ride!
 3210 He'll graze our pastures, near by our side.
 Down to the hollows him I'll drive.
 Armour-plates, which balls can survive,
 I shall take, and my own shall make,
 Gate and door and frame I shall break,
 Make the master and youths shout away,
 Make the mares and foals kick and neigh,
 Break his yurta lattice away,
 Make the mares with no foals kick and neigh,
 Make his daughters and brides-to-be weep,
 3220 Break his fortress and castle-keep.
 Sandstone walls bring crumbling down,
 Lords, like tamed birds, all overthrown,
 I shall trample beneath my feet.
 Maidens, like withies, slender and sweet,
 I shall make into humble slaves,
 I shall kill bleating sheep, and knaves,
 Turn all his folk into beggars again,
 Rob him of herds and herdsmen then,
 I shall take all his cows on a lead,
 3230 And the rest of his riches indeed,
 For a share-out I'll put on show.
 Camels will roar, and sway to and fro,
 Swift-footed steeds with shining hides,
 I'll yoke to carts with loads besides.
 I shall do just as I wish!" then say
 "I'll destroy all that stands in my way!"
 If you travel on, and ride quick,
 You'll reach Badakhshan and Balik.
 There live many a tribe and clan,

3240 There lives Khan Maamit-sultan,
 And he has beneath his care
 How many people living there,
 Making up his army then?
 Six hundred thousand warrior men.
 Say "Këkëtei has died! We mourn.
 In that world whence none return,
 He has seen the darkest shades.
 So that memorial feasts take place,
 His young son, named Bokmurun,
 3250 Found a place to hold them soon.
 To the green vale Karkira he went,
 There has gathered the whole of Tashkent.
 To his feast, pleasing Allah best,
 We invite you as our guest.
 Come, and bring your racers with you.
 Come, and bring your strong-men too.
 Come, and win yourself a prize!
 Come -- you won't believe your own eyes!
 Thus you must welcome every one.
 3260 If to the feast the Khan does not come
 Then misfortune will fall on his head,
 Let me not see his face, or he's dead!
 Let him not be offended by me.
 I shall give cause for alarm, he'll see!
 Though a mountain, he'll be overthrown.
 Like an apple, I'll pluck him down,
 And his daughter with five plaits too,
 I shall condemn to suffer much woe.
 I shall put all their eyes out!" then say.
 3270 'Let him remember my words, anyway!
 What am I then, a light-minded brat?
 Let him not think of me like that!
 I shall smash his castle, his home.
 Not a single son of his own
 Will he then be able to save,
 Nor to protect him from the grave.
 I shall his fortress walls destroy,
 Unknown methods of war I'll employ!

3280 And his daughter, all dressed in red,
 I shall take as my slave instead.
 Tell all the folk, I'll take their Khans's life.
 In full blossom his beautiful wife,
 I shall turn to a mincing slave.
 His torn-off skin into hide will be made.
 Those he has bowed, I'll put them straight.
 I shall do all I wish, and not wait.
 All I shall slaughter!" you must then say.
 If you go further upon your way
 You'll find Kopo,* and you'll find Misir,*
 3290 Thousands and thousands of streets are there!
 Governing all the folk of Mesir,
 One who never retreats, that's clear,
 That is Seyita's son, Kemel.
 You must stop and invite him as well.
 He never lets a foe get away.
 'Këkëti had died!' you must say.
 'He went off to that other world,
 When the All-highest Allah called.
 Come to his memorial, at least!'
 3300 He who does not come to my feast
 Will unfailingly die!' you must say.
 Kara-Kirghiz make this feast their own way:
 Ninety thousand beasts they keep,
 And one hundred thousand sheep,
 As main prizes for the race.
 Furthermore they found a place
 For nine thousand red camels too,
 Which will be given as prizes due,
 To all those who finish the course.
 3310 If some weak-kneed, backward horse
 Does not finish — no prize for them!' say.
 Where will you find the like today?
 He who wins will be rich indeed!
 First prize consists of sixty steeds,
 Nine head of cattle, and ninety sheep
 For the last prize they will keep,
 So the one who comes first will get much —

Everyone knows the rules as such,
 Which the Kirghiz themselves have made.
 3320 Come to the feast, and don't be afraid!
 If he won't come when I invite,
 I'll show no pity — we shall fight!
 On his head will misfortune fall,
 I'll drive his mules from the hollows and all.
 I'll make his wife and daughters weep,
 I'll break his doors, and through all will sweep.
 I'll shake his home to dust and ash,
 All that's exposed to pieces I'll smash.
 Not a tree I'll leave standing still —
 3330 All his city shall I work ill!
 Into widows I'll make all wives,
 And any man who then survives
 Into blackest of slaves I'll flay!
 All this to the folk you must say
 'Lords, well-cared-for, clothing neat,
 I shall trample beneath my feet.
 I shall make a slave of each wife,
 I shall violate villages then,
 3340 I shall order my Kirghiz men
 To seek out where his treasure lies.
 Any brave warrior who survives,
 I shall sell then, in distant parts.
 I shall break all his people's hearts.
 I shall ruin his lands!' then say.
 Then go further on your way.
 To the west you then must go,
 There's Kubayis, the desert, you know.
 Take a look then, from that side,
 3350 Over Shor's lake vistas wide.
 In the desert of Kubayis
 Many strange people still exist:
 Some have hair three-arm-spans long,
 Others a hundred yards long, and strong.
 If they see someone with longer hair,
 They choose him as their leader there.
 They respect the hairs on one's head.

There's no wind in that land, 'tis said.
 Even eighty-year-olds, if you please;
 3360 Have not witnessed the waft of a breeze.
 There, it seems, hair rules alone.
 Deeply respected, if it's your own!
 All go round with an uncovered head,
 They walk about naked-headed it's said.
 All their lords you must inform,
 All their leaders must tell, and warn.
 Where you pass, then waves you'll see,
 Lake like an ocean, rolling free.
 3370 There live a wonderful tribe — Tayip.
 Angels live there, and wings they flip!
 Those Tayips have a bek* — Kēnēk,
 So the older folk all assert.
 If their leader should chance to appear,
 Tell him that we invite him here,
 To Kēkētēi's memorial feast.
 Then ride further on your fine beast.
 That's the end of the world — Dzhelpinish,*
 Better return, if to live you wish.
 There live evil spirits with wings,
 3380 And many other marvellous things.
 There live alaphants — they're so strong,
 Only such monsters there get along.
 Ride on further, to left side keep,
 Ride on further, to right side sweep —
 There you'll come to the shore of the sea.
 On the strand Dangits* there'll be.
 They have a giant named Choyun.
 Many more wonders you'll see soon.
 Ocean fish those people keep,
 3390 Just like other people keep sheep!
 Thinking 'There's none on earth like I!'
 That good-for-nought holds his nose up high
 At the present, that giant Choun
 Takes each other man just as a loon.
 Tell him persistently what I say:
 Kēkētē's feast we keep as we may.

Many great leaders will come to our land.
 He was a Khan from Tashkent strand.
 For his memorial feast, you see,
 3400 In Karkira we've arranged to be!
 Come and join us, assess its worth.
 If you ignore us, and don't step forth,
 Woe on your folk will fall about.
 If you hide, we shall seek you out.
 You will be smashed, and you will die,
 News of your death around will fly.
 Sweet and slender, tender maids,
 Gracefully swaying, like grassy blades,
 I shall make into dirty slaves;
 3410 That's the fate which you awaits!
 All your swaggering leading men
 I'll sell as slaves, for four cows then.
 Then their wives poor widows will stay —
 That's the fate which awaits you!' say.
 Then ride further upon your way,
 Ride on swiftly, and don't delay,
 Till you come to Barang* then ride,
 Find Baltamat, and don't let him hide.
 Tell him, so that his heart gives way;
 3420 'Khan Kēkētēi has died!' then say.
 'He has gone hence, and won't return.
 Washed in the water of Zamzam* burn,
 Bound in his shroud, left this world of men.
 With all due honour we buried him then.
 We his memorial feast shall make.
 If you don't come, and no part will take,
 Know that death waits on your way,
 Bokmurun will wreak revenge!' say.
 'Then your daughters he'll take as spoil.
 3430 All the world hearing of this will boil!
 'There will be something to talk off!' say.
 'It will be gossiped for many a day.
 He will seize long-maned steeds!' then say.
 'He will seize long-tailed cows!' then say.
 'He will ravage and pillage all round,

He will rob every casket that's found.
 He will take all your treasure, leave none.
 All your laughter and joy will be done.
 All your maidens he'll violate!' say.
 3440 'All your women despoil and slay!
 He will prick out your eyes!' then say.
 All that stand before him will flay.
 In King Solomon's time, they say,
 If a people were losing a fray,
 All their cattle in hollows they'd hide.
 Many who ran from the Chinese side
 Grew in time entirely wild.
 They found places fair and mild,
 They began to name them Dzhapan.*
 3450 Kētēryush is their bold strong-man.
 Isles called Siymun are 'neath his sway.
 Ride to them, to their leader say
 All that you have told on your way:
 All your master o'erwhelms, and soon.
 Tell them the words of Bokmurun.
 'Death is our unavoidable doom.
 From this world his father has gone.
 Kēkētēi's name we honour now on.
 Let him prepare his steed Kazkula,
 3460 Let him bring fighters from afar,
 To our memorial feast then come.
 If you don't — the end will be one —
 You will probably die!' then say.
 'All your orchards he'll wipe away.
 Broken will be your golden throne,
 Trees to splinters be hacked and mown,
 In your heart will sorrow fare far.
 Like a land-slide I'll sweep your bazaar,
 You'll not be left on your feet to stand.
 3470 I'll choke your soul, by God's command
 I'll leave no cattle for you to drive,
 In your barns, no grain will survive.
 I will not leave one soul alive,
 Wise men of their heads I'll deprive.

Not a speck of dust on the wind —
 Your grand palace wiped out you'll find.
 All your chambers and halls I'll destroy,
 Nothing I'll leave to bring you joy.
 I'll not let one soul there abide!
 3480 Having told him, then further ride!
 To the Kara-Kālmak bogatirs —
 Now they're quite wide-spread, it appears,
 Masters of thousands of folk they are.
 Ride to Dzholoi and Ushanga,
 Straightway invite them to our feast,
 To the memorial races, not least.
 If to the feast they do not come
 They will be wiped out, every one.
 I won't leave even one soul alive,
 3490 I won't leave even one sheep to survive.
 I won't leave fat on their horses' bones,
 I won't leave brushwood for fires — only stones,
 I won't leave furs to keep anyone warm,
 I won't leave roads, on which they can swarm,
 I won't leave houses, wherein they can hide,
 I won't leave strength just to take one stride,
 I won't leave breath, for them to complain,
 I won't leave any to rise up again,
 I won't leave even a stick from their homes,
 3500 I won't leave even foundations stones!
 There'll be no bachelors, to take a wife,
 There'll be a vast, unheard of strife.
 Daughters I'll take, as though a gift,
 Brides I'll take, leaving grooms bereft.
 Terrible sorrows I'll bring in their lives,
 Even those braves who hide with wives,
 From the earth where they left their tracks,
 From the tribes of Kara-Kalmaks,
 Simple folk, and Khans, though bold,
 3510 All to the last, both young and old,
 Let them not hope to save their lives!
 Yurtas I'll take, with door-posts besides,
 And to the precipice edge I shall heave,

Then one push, and grey ruins I'll leave.
 Those huge yurtas with lattice-work round,
 Over the edge I shall hurl them down.
 So my own sorrow I then shall suppress,
 I'll make one heap of them all, no less.
 Let him prepare his Achuudan,
 3520 Let him then choose his jockey to run,
 If he does not come to the feast
 Say I'll not pity him, not in the least.
 Then ride further, and do not stay,
 To Andzhilik* then make your way.
 There live Krimus' son -- Muradil,
 And Neskara, red-tasselled as well.
 They both think themselves very brave.
 On arrival my firm word give:
 Tell them both what I have decreed,
 3530 Tell each one to prepare his steed.
 If they don't come, I'll make things hot --
 I shall destroy that big fort they've got.
 I shall smash it to smithereens,
 And their gold court, by the crudest means.
 If they do not appear at our feast,
 Let them know the result, at least --
 They will be trampled into the ground.
 If they hide, they will soon be found.
 They will be shattered to dust and ash,
 3540 They will come to an unforeseen crash.
 I will batter them to bits,
 With my blows will scatter their wits.
 I shall blind their big black eyes,
 I shall take their daughters as prize.
 Tell them the truth, what awaits them then,
 They'll be just pulp, no longer men.
 Both those Khans, their peoples as well,
 I shall give a real taste of hell.
 They will be made into utter wrecks,
 3550 They'll feel my sword upon their necks.
 From their bellies the blood will race...
 I invite them 'Come to the chase

Which at Këkëtei's feast will take place.
 I invite each to come as my guest.
 If they don't come, I'll give them no rest.
 Then I shall send my fighters -- the best.
 Woe betide them if they refuse!
 Let them not try to make an excuse.
 Let them their suitable jockeys choose,
 3560 Let their fighters lie in the ooze.
 If to memorial feasts they don't come,
 No one can save them then, no none!
 Then ride further upon your way,
 Ride and seek for old Alo-oke.
 In the city of Chin he'll be found,
 With the hills of Kangar* all around.
 Ask him to come to memorial feasts then.
 Ride through Kara-Too,* in Kaspan,*
 Which from the gates of Beidzhin are not far,
 3570 To the chief living in Chok-Tabilga,
 He who has such a big black steed,
 To Kongurbai, and call him, indeed.
 Furthermore say to old Alo-oke,
 Though he were horseless, and knew not the way,
 Though no mere knight, but a giant were he,
 Let him come to our feast, say we.
 If he does not arrive to stay,
 Let him know that woe comes that way!
 All his gardens laid waste about,
 3580 All his fruit-trees there rooted out.
 Këkëtei's young son Bokmurun
 Takes revenge in his father's name soon.
 Spring will be changed to autumn then,
 Sheaves of corn will burn in the glen.
 Then his cattle will fall in flame,
 All he holds sacred be put to shame.
 All, to the very last, be destroyed,
 All his chiefs as slaves be employed.
 All will be turned upside down, indeed.
 3590 Let him prepare Algara, his steed,
 Let him select a jockey to ride,

Let him prepare his young men beside.
 If to the feast he doed not come,
 I shall teach him a lesson, that one!
 I shall share among Kara-Kirghiz
 All the riches that he counts his.
 I shall not let one large house stand,
 I shall not leave one steed in his land.
 Of the tribes round Kaspan living now,
 3600 I shall not leave one single old cow.
 I shall teach their old men to lament,
 All the young ones to hell will be sent.
 Pass on to them these words of mine,
 Then ride further along your line.
 There lives black-bearded Boro-onchu,
 In Kangai there lives Orongu.
 No mistakes — let them come to the feast,
 Let them honour our dear deceased.
 Kilkurën and Kulabe
 3610 Let them get ready for racing, say.
 Let them come here to the hills of Kizil,
 Choose their jockeys, just as they will.
 If they don't come to this feast of mine,
 Then they'll be in for a difficult time!
 All the goods on their stalls I'll burn,
 All their servants will serve me a turn.
 Herds on their pastures I shall seize,
 Let them know my strength, if you please.
 Of the woe I'll bring, none can tell,
 3620 To the old men and women as well,
 All who stay away I shall slay,
 I shall drink their blood that day.
 I shall put out their big black eyes,
 I shall destroy their houses likewise,
 And their sandstone fortresses too,
 And their trees to tatters shall hew.
 All who refuse, I shall deal with them,
 Down will come thrones and palaces then!
 All the old ones and young ones will groan,
 3630 All refusers down will be mown.

Këkëtëi's banner of blue will fly
 O'er their heads, they'll see it on high.
 Then their brows will grow black indeed.
 Better let them prepare their steeds,
 Choose their jockeys to suit their needs.
 If they're not at the memorial feast,
 Then evil forces will be released.
 Let them keep well out of sight, at least.
 If they don't come, after warning them,
 3640 Let them not try to blame me then.
 Then ride further from where you were,
 To the east is the land of Kyubë.
 There you will find the folk Dugul —
 They're mixed with demons, as a rule.
 Angelic creatures live in Suyu.
 Near them live the Dzhadzhuzh-Madzhuzh.*
 If I tell of them, and their games,
 Then I must also tell their names.
 There lives a giant who's named Kienkes,
 3650 There lives a foot-knight Kishidash.
 If you ask 'What is Kishidash like —
 Well — you can't pierce him with your pike!
 If you place hope in the weapons you've made,
 Well — you can't break his flashing blade.
 You will never o'ercome him thus.
 By his side there are others such —
 All kinds of evil devils there are,
 Half-a-man, half-s-devil, thus far.
 All kinds of filth and poisonous things,
 3660 Wizards and lizards, with quivering wings.
 There are abortions, half-demons in kind,
 Mixtures of humans and devils you'll find —
 Giant Dzho-on, with a griffon's tail,
 Giant Kaman, scissor-cared as well.
 Giant Kutan, with a fat sheep's tail,
 Giant Kiten, with a navel of steel.
 Creatures with iron beaks and nails,
 Creatures with long, kangaroo-like tails.
 'Welcome to our feast!' then say,

3670 'But 'twill be ill if you stay away!
 Then ride further, and down you go
 To the dwarfs and goblins so,
 To those pixies who live below.
 'Come, and watch our races with joy,
 At the feast of dead Kēkētēi.
 Any not honouring Kēkētēi
 They will lose their heads, what's more!
 Akdēc, Kēkdēc, Kizildēc,
 They are foolmen, have seen no steeds,
 3680 Near to Shor, there are isles 'mid the reeds.
 Having passed them, further ride
 To the Barangs, who have nine tribes.
 They have a Khan called Chatangaish.
 Let him prepare his steed, as we wish,
 Let him think of winning a prize,
 Let him choose his jockey besides.
 If he does not come to our feast,
 I shall slay both him and his beast!
 Tell him 'Your blood like water will flow,
 3690 To that other world you will go!
 Days of honour for you will be done,
 If to our feast you do not come!
 Then ride further, your rein don't pull,
 Find the Dēbēts, and their leader Dēmyul.
 Tell him all that you have to say,
 And invite him with us to stay.
 If he won't come, then be it said:
 Many woes God will load on his head.
 Let him start to train his steed,
 3700 Ready to join in the race, indeed!
 'Come to our feast!' to him then say.
 'Woe to those who stay away!
 Some have Khan Atala at their back,
 Others have their Khan Undyuchak.
 Let them come to our festival thus,
 Let them honour my father with us.
 If before us they do not appear,
 If they don't show their faces here,

I shall make slaves of surviving men,
 3710 Others' wives will be widows then!
 Then ride back again from there,
 And give news to Khan Akun here.
 Here, tell your old friend Koshoi:
 'Come to us, and the feast enjoy!
 Here are many Mussulman folk —
 Here is Elyeman's son, Teshtyuk.
 Here from Eshteks is Dzhamgirchi.
 Here is Urbyu, so eloquent he!
 Here are Khans Dzhugēryu and Chegish —
 3720 All of them from tribes of Kirghiz.
 Here is magnanimous leader Manas.
 If you should chance to meet him thus,
 If he should chance to greet you thus,
 If you are not prepared to die,
 If in the ground don't wish to lie,
 If you don't wish to leave this world,
 If you don't wish into hell to be hurled,
 If you don't wish to be slain like a beast,
 Say then; "We welcome you to our feast!"
 3730 I shan't start swanking with you, in the least,
 Knowing that would not suit you so!
 Tell him we wish to see him, though,
 But beyond that you should make no threat —
 Don't bring sudden death on your head!
 Then seek one who's in Ala-Too —
 That side of Andizhan, you know,
 Which from Mirgap lies furthest away,
 On the crests Dzhēt-Kait, Dzhazire.
 His farthest forebear was Dzhediger,
 3740 His nearest forbear is Dzhadiger.
 To Uyk's son, Bagish, then say:
 'Surkiyika get ready today
 To take part in the festive race.
 Bring your folk, we'll find them a place,
 Let them join our memorial feast!
 If they don't honour our deceased,
 Then my axe will come down on their head,

All of them soon will be lying dead.
 All their old men will begin to groan.
 3750 Tell them "These are his words — his own!"
 Let him come, and see what I do.
 If he won't do as I ask him to,
 Let him know he'll be burned alive.
 Never a one of his folk will survive.
 They will suffer, in fire will burn!
 Only then will my men return.
 Tell him these are the words I say,
 Warn him — and then ride on your way!"
 Then Aidar on Maaniker sat,
 3760 Chain-mail he had donned, at that!
 Then he received permission to leave.
 When you believe your mission, believe!
 So he set off on his long road there,
 On his untireable Maaniker,
 Who got covered in sweat, faring fast,
 Who flew over the feathery grass,
 Even over the heavenly clouds,
 Galloped and flew, as Allah allowed.
 Awkward, but none the less he flew,
 3770 Kicked up the stones behind him too,
 Galloped along with out-stretched head,
 Just where Bokmurun had said.
 To the various peoples and sprites,
 Round all the world he made his flights.
 For nine months he galloped away,
 Forty weeks he flew, to a day...
 When the flocks put on fat, you see,
 In the place where the feast would be,
 When they had settled, prepared as due,
 3780 Then their banner of brightest blue
 They stuck up on its staff on high,
 So that if seen by foes passing by,
 They would feel pain in their hearts as yet.
 Three hundred thousand yurtas were set.
 From three main tribes three beys were there,
 All were robed in silk, I declare!

Yurtas all covered in felt, pure white,
 Lattice and laths and roof-wheels tight,
 All were bound with satin, what's more,
 3790 Like the posts beside the door.
 When they travelled they pasked them all
 On the backs of their camels tall.
 Those to whom yurtas weren't know till then,
 They just gazed and gazed at them.
 They were amazed at the feast prepared,
 They just gazed, and gaped, and stared.
 When the time for the feast drew near,
 They all thought: "Soon guests will be here!"
 Then they made ready for extra loads,
 3800 Sent their look-outs on all the roads.
 Then they thought: "When will they arrive?"
 All were tormented, and anxious-eyed.
 Nearly four years of quiet had passed —
 Folk had grown prosperous, rich at last...
 When Bokmurun grew anxious too,
 Then his fathe's relation, who knew,
 Thought: "He long since invited me.
 He is impatient, obviously!"
 This was the bold bogatir Bagish,
 3810 He who owned the steed Suriyik.
 He was a sultan — there you are!
 He thought: "My town is Chirashya.
 My consolation, and my support,
 My son Toltoi I'll take, as I ought.
 Straight away now to the feast we'll go.
 If we did not, 'twould be shameful so!
 This is a special time, just now,
 Famous people gather, and how!
 Let my son see them, and with them strive,
 3820 Let him meet them, while father's alive.
 Let him take a good look at them then,
 Let him see this world of brave men.
 Let him ride this earth around,
 Let me take him, my comforter sound,
 Let him see that land and its folk!"

They set off then, as soon as he spoke.
 Not nearby, but distant their ways,
 There they rode on for thirty days,
 Through the Uch-Bulak vale afar,
 3830 Onto the shores of Uch-Karkira.
 There were the yurtas spread around.
 To the great feast their way they found.
 Not at morn, but at evening time,
 When the sun had begun to decline,
 With four thousand men they came,
 This Bagish, and Toltoi, the same.
 They arrived, and began to dismount.
 Cattle for them were counted out.
 They were set aside for Bagish.
 3840 After them, red banners a-swish,
 Crimson pennants waving on high,
 Comes the Kitai chief Kongurbai,
 With a rattle and clash he came,
 Good-for-nought, with a bogatir's name.
 "He was shooting with muskets!" they said,
 "Sons and their brides attacked him!" they said,
 "Traitors deserted his army!" they said,
 "Terrible look he has!" they said,
 "Devil ran off with his wife!" they said,
 3850 "Shot at him with his gun!" they said,
 "Enemy fell on his village!" they said,
 "War-tents loads on rhinos!" they said,
 "Blowing his trumpets and horns!" they said,
 "Scared everyone all round!" they said.
 In a trumpet with mouthpiece of brass
 He placed a tinder -- a fiery blast.
 So with a clatter he rattled in then,
 With his hundred thousand men!
 Then came Kirmus' son, Muradil --
 3860 That Kitai came with a clash as well!
 He arrived with ten thousand men.
 Red-tasselled Neskara came then,
 With him he brought seven thousand men.
 Bold Ushang, the Kalmak, came then,

With him there were two thousand men.
 Alo-oke, from Solons, came then,
 With him were fifty thousand men.
 Giant Dzholoi, the swank, came then,
 With him were thirty thousand man.
 3870 Bozkertik, Tokshuker, came then
 With him were thirty thousand men.
 So-oronduk, Solobon, came then,
 With him were thirty thousand men.
 Boro-onchu, the black-beard, came then,
 With him were thirty thousand men,
 Orongu, from Kangai, came then,
 With him were ninety thousand men.
 Katkalang's daughter, Saikal, came then,
 With her were thirty thousand men.
 3880 Then, not lagging behind the rest,
 Nephew of Khan Dzhyugëru we see,
 On the road to Dzhiyranti,*
 With him were twenty thousand men,
 All these came in one day then,
 And to sleep then down they lay.
 In the morn, at first sun-ray,
 Këkmëk's son, Kerkëkyul, came then,
 With him he brought two thousand men.
 Kechpes' son, bold Dzhanai, came then,
 3890 With him were seven thousand men.
 Following after them there came,
 Answering Bokmurun's wish, the same
 Giant Koshoi, the son of a bey,
 Riding his grey steed on the way,
 Smoothly along the road he steered,
 With his waving long white beard,
 Cackling, like migrating geese,
 Came your uncle, if you please,
 Making the sods and stones all fly,
 3900 Raising a cloud of dust to the sky,
 Trumpets blazing, with deafening cry,
 Banners beating on banners high,
 With him came thirty thousand men,

Covering all the countryside then.
 Since Tështyuk went underground,³⁶
 Seven years had rolled around.
 Since he returned to earthly ways,
 There had passed just seven days.
 Thinking: "If one is well-bred, at least,
 3910 One can't refuse a memorial feast!"
 Thus Tështyuk himself came then,
 With him there came four thousand men.
 While they all made a fuss and din,
 While they all were settling in,
 He who dwells on Sara-Arke,
 He who leads hordes of Kazakhs away,
 He who behind his stable-doors kept
 Këtëbëlyä, his steed well-fed,
 He who any threatening foe
 3920 Would behead, and be quit of him so,
 He with black-patterned white felt hat,
 Pantaloon yellow, silk belt at that!
 Shoes gold-soled, and brazen-heeled were,
 Aidarkan's son, the bold Këkchë,
 By the road from Opol he came then,
 With him were thirty thousand men.
 Following after, hot on his heels,
 He who no pity for any foe feels,
 He who raises the dust all round,
 3930 Hurls his opponent down on the ground,
 Covers the contest square with blood,
 He, who with fury in full flood
 Frightens to death his enemy, see --
 Son of Eshtek, brave Dzhamgirchi,
 Came with his seven thousand men.
 Following in his tracks came then
 He, who has pastures on Eki-Kemin,*
 He with a pair of black steeds with him,
 He, who in arguing sticks to what's true,
 3940 Knows no defeat -- strong-minded Urbyu,
 First as dervish and teacher he's famed,
 First in conversation he's named,

First in eloquence, bold and clear,
 First of Kipchaks -- their brave bogatir,
 Twelve thousand warriors with him here
 Came to the games, and festive cheer.
 He is a man of special respect.
 After him others began to collect --
 He who through sacred Bukhara came,
 3950 Through the old ruins, Chambil by name,
 He who in Orto-Chatkal abides,
 He who is subject to none besides,
 He whom none did ever defeat,
 Round whose waist the weapons meet,
 Son of Buudayik, Muzburchak,
 With nine thousand men of pluck,
 All along the road to Chadbar
 Came to honour the dead from afar.
 For all those who would know our ways,
 3960 These were very special days.
 After the first of the guests had come,
 After they'd made themselves at home,
 After they'd been here eleven days,
 After the twelfth day's first sun-rays,
 From Sakalat came the giant Sari,
 With six thousand men came he.
 After that Keikubat came then,
 With him were seven thousand men.
 Khan Debyul, from Dëbëts, came then,
 3970 Heading three thousand warrior men.
 Giant Choyan, self-named bogatir,
 Giant Dzho-on, with griffon-tail clear,
 Giant Kaman, with sharp scissor-ears,
 Giant Kiten, with steel navel appears.
 All from the tribes of Dzhez-Tumshuk,*
 They filled a place in the bill, just look!
 Their padishahs with three thousand came then,
 Others brought one hundred thousand men.
 On the roads from borders afar,
 3980 With the boldest young men there are,
 With two hundred warrior men,

Maamit-sultan came then.
 Khan Kemel came with a hundred men,
 Aikodzho came with three men then.
 On the road they take to Chadbar
 Iybankup with his men from afar —
 All in all — just a hundred men,
 Bakyuryush with a thousand of them.
 Not one man came aimless though,
 3990 On the road lading through Ala-Too.
 From Oogan Khan Akim came then,
 With him six thousand-odd warrior men.
 When they saw such numberless folk,
 Many fell dumb, no words they spoke.
 In one month of thirty days
 Many folk met with great amaze.
 They came as guests all the summer through,
 Meeting and talking, so much to do,
 While all these guests had not yet met.
 4000 While the month had not ended yet,
 Still Manas bogatir was not there.
 All the Mussulmen started to swear.
 Just what to think they did not know...
 Back to young Aidar let us go...
 When to Manas he had travelled then,
 With that Khan were warrior men —
 Bold Serek, and fearless Sirgak,
 Also the hard one who heads would hack,
 Bey Akbaita's young son, Chubak.
 4010 Just at that time his brow was black.
 What Aidar to all others did tell,
 He had repeated to them as well,
 Taking them as some of his own,
 Not much politeness to them had shown.
 Straightway Serek, all patience past,
 Seized his bridle, and held it fast.
 He would have skinned him on the spot,
 Sliced him in pices, like as not!
 "Don't put me to shame!" Aidar said.
 4020 "Better for you to hew off my head!"

Then in a pitiful state was he.
 When they were ready to slay him, see,
 Bold Manas, who'd been at the chase,
 Came before them, at that very place,
 Stood between them, and bade them "Stay!"
 Young Aidar turned to him straightway,
 Weeping and wailing, to him complained,
 And the matter he further explained:
 "Bokmurun said 'Andizhan is small —
 4030 How can we find place for all?
 Here are grain-fields; rich is the soil.
 How bring thousands, and them not spoil?
 In Tashkent there's no room for them,
 How shall I make amusements then?
 There on the steppe many homes are found,
 Cattle are grazing all around.
 Much there's prepared for everyday need,
 How can we go and wreck it, indeed?
 There many ruined fortresses lie,
 4040 How could our racers go galloping by?
 To arrange this memorial best,
 I shall ask Manas, as our guest!*"

So he said, and I came to you,
 But first I spoke with your warriors too.
 Your Sirgak, Serek, and Chubak,
 They all wanted to slay me for that --
 When I spoke Bokmurun's threatening line;
 Happily then, I saw you in time.
 They were quite ready to kill me, your men!
 4050 Young Aidar told how he'd spoken to them.
 Then his breath came in gasps, from fear.
 How many other strange words did he hear?
 Seeing all this, the bold Manas
 Understood why he had spoken thus.
 Loudly then he began to laugh —
 That he really did rarely enough,
 With all his serious things to do!
 His teeth were wide as a front-door too!
 Not small narrow ones, like other folk,

4060 They flashed white, whenever he spoke.
 "What's all this, then, my bogatirs?"
 And he laughed with a smile to both ears.
 "I taught young Bokmurun to speak so.
 Don't blame Aidar for that, you know!
 These words you hear are really mine!"
 Thus he explained the threatening line.
 On young Aidar who'd invited them thus,
 He cast a gown then of crimson plush,
 Sat him upon his steed, when he'd done,
 4070 Then he said: "In a few days we'll come!
 Give our greetings to all as you may!"
 Then he set Aidar on his way.
 After that, the bold Manas
 Started to gather his warriors thus,
 From one end -- Arsa and Dzhëlk,
 From the other -- Isar and Këlëp,
 Taking none who were not Kirghiz
 In that warrior horde of his.
 Let them travel, Manas, and his men,
 4080 Beating their drums and tambourines then...
 Passing on through Ala-Too,
 Moving where mountain waters flow,
 There, in cool air, they made their way
 Through Susamir, and did not stay.
 Out on the windy road to Kochkor,*
 With hordes of warriors, more and more,
 To the vale of Cholpon-Ata,*
 To the banks of the river Chongka.
 In the evening then they came --
 4090 Started to play their knuckle-bone game.
 Spread out by the lake for the night,
 With the mountains behind in sight,
 Covered the grassy pastures there,
 With their tents and warfare gear.
 Next day, after morning grace,
 They rode on at a steady pace,
 Passing Kizil-Kiya's* high crest,
 Then, with his men in chain-mail dressed,

Not having given them much rest,
 4100 They arrived to attend the feast.
 When the news of this went round,
 Soon the ears of Aidar it found.
 He said: "Blood-thirsty Manas is here!
 If he gets angry -- all must fear.
 There's no doubt he'll slay at least
 Half the people here at our feast!"
 So he went off to see his chief
 Bokmurun, with the news in brief.
 Having heard the words he spoke,
 4110 He gave orders then to his folk:
 On the Kizil-Kiys'a high pass,
 Ninety huge yurtas set up on the grass.
 Some ninety beys stood waiting then,
 And nine thousand men with them,
 For to meet and greet Manas,
 And to get to know his thus,
 As a leader of greatest fame.
 And among all the folk who came,
 Having heard of these dangerous men,
 4120 Numberless people were seething then.
 They all wanted to see Manas,
 Mounted their steeds and rode to the pass.
 Nine hundred families waited for him,
 Ninety beys there awaited him.
 In ninety places, mares they had killed,
 People everywhere roadsides filled...
 Taking note of no others then,
 With his counsel of elderly men,
 How they came riding and crowding then,
 4130 No attention then wasting on them.
 Not accounting them as his own,
 Bokmurun had quitted down,
 But he is quite excited today!
 These Kirghiz are respected, let's say,
 And today their worthiness shows.
 This is a blood-thirsty man, God knows.
 Wise ones perceive that he may work woe --

All who offend him he'll overthrow!
 There before him twenty knights ride.
 4140 From their blades nobody can hide.
 These sharp-shooters are deadly too,
 And their muskets are pointing at you,
 And their fuses are ready at hand,
 For those with eyes as a threat they stand,
 Musket-butts at their shoulders beside!
 There behind him, twenty knights ride.
 Bows as thick as the trunk of a tree.
 If they aim, they don't miss, you see.
 Arrow-heads all are sharpened well,
 4150 And are poisoned, so people tell.
 And they hold them ready for flight.
 At his right side, twenty knights ride,
 Rough and tough, destructive, belike,
 Just as though they're ready to strike,
 Swords already drawn from their sheaths,
 Each his track on the roadway leaves.
 At his left side, twenty knights ride,
 Wild as wolves, from them foes hide.
 With white armoured plates they're dressed,
 4160 Covering backs and shoulders and breasts.
 Menacing everyone in sight,
 Knights who on his left side ride,
 Battle-axes as broad as a door
 Raised as if to strike, what's more,
 After the archers there appear
 Others with smoothly-shafted spears —
 Holding them tightly to their side,
 Over the roadway steadily ride.
 Speeding on, as though after a foe,
 4170 Leading on, Manas rode so.
 After him came riding then
 Ninety thousand warrior men.
 On low notes the great horns blew,
 Brazen flutes were whistling too,
 Drums were drubbing, rumbling round,
 Just like a mountain tumbling down.

Trumpets were roaring, raving away,
 When to the feast Manas came that day.
 With his stern looks all the rest he led,
 4180 With his fury all others out-did.
 Not a man there dare cry "Salaam!"
 Each one fearing to come to harm.
 After him the long horns blew,
 Banners with golden crescent flew.
 Thirty bold riders, comrades of his,
 Roared aloud, like tigers, that is!
 Take a look in front of him there —
 Six commanders strode, I declare.
 In their centre the huge horse Kula,
 4190 With no rider, but one dozen guards.
 Seven marshals went on ahead
 Clearing the road: "Make way!" they said.
 This respected great racer there
 Was bedecked with owls' plumes rare,
 And 'neath his blanket looked like a doll.
 In sandy places they let him roll.
 When there were wells they let him drink,
 He had a mane like a wild ass I think.
 Croup was sound, and round as a drum,
 4200 And for him happy hours had come.
 Ears like candles, standing straight,
 Chestnut-brow, with swinging gait,
 Stance and style above others found,
 Then Manas Akkula sent round.
 All his bogatir fighting-men
 He gave coats of white chain-mail then,
 Fitting close and smooth about.
 Forty-odd bogatirs raised a shout.
 Old Kirgil them rumbled outright.
 4210 Peaks of their pikes were shining bright.
 Forward flashed forty bogatirs,
 Eighty chain-mailed knights raised cheers.
 Where they cast their glance, fires blazed.
 All the rest looked on amazed.
 All the rest saw around red flame.

When to the feast of honour they came,
 Bokmurun, Këkëti's young son,
 His own horse, his hawk-winged one,
 Swift in flight as falcons are,
 4220 Gave to Manas his Archatora.
 Ordered his men to present it to him,
 Ordered a red-haired goat to skin,
 Ordered such sacrifice to be found,
 Ordered to cast red-gold coins around.
 While we looked forty bogatirs,
 Kept in step, in time, it appears.
 Thus poor people received their share.
 Then to Manas, whose fury might flare,
 Came to say the welcoming word,
 4230 And to greet him, with his white beard,
 Old Koshoi, on his light-grey mare.
 Wearing his bright white armour there,
 With white beard blown out by the wind,
 Saying: "Allah to us is kind —
 He has sent our great Khan here!"
 With this sly one, known everywhere,
 With this fierce, blood-thirsty Manas,
 Let us meet, and greet him thus.
 Let a warm welcome to him be said,
 4240 So that we bring no wrath on our head!
 We shan't lie here, and him ignore.
 Come, my children, and wait no more!
 Don't think that with Manas you can joke,
 Or that he would forgive such folk.
 Since we arrived thirty days have flown,
 And, as yet, no feast we've known.
 Though we count him as one of our own,
 That blood-thirster so deep has grown,
 Allah has blessed him, though worthless he,
 4250 But we are his relations, you see!
 Though we are all close to him thus,
 He, in knowledge, outstrips all of us.
 Come, let us go and meet him, then!"
 Taking leaders of five hundred men,

Off to tiger Manas they went.
 From Katagans, Koshoi then went,
 From the Kazakhs, Këkchë then went,
 Elyeman's son, Tështyuk then went;
 From Eshteks, Dzhamgirchi then went,
 4260 From Dzhedigers, Bagish then went,
 Dzhethkir's son, Agish then went,
 Eloquent-tongued Urbyu then went,
 Karashak's son, Dzhugëryu then went,
 Off to meet him they all were bent.
 Each was a leader, each son of a Khan,
 Eight of them went to meet one man.
 Eight great banners here in sight,
 Eight crescent moons, all shining bright,
 To Manas they all were led,
 4270 By old giant Koshoi at their head.
 All these leaders hastened amain,
 Hurried towards him, then drew rein.
 Then the famous lion Manas,
 Seeing them coming to greet him thus,
 Seeing Koshoi, with his beard so white,
 Greeted him first with great delight.
 Bold Koshoi — his uncle was he —
 Greeted him back, as loud as could be.
 Having met, he began to speak,
 4280 And reproachfully gave him a tweak.
 "Well then, old blood-thirsty, you've arrived?
 Come to see how we've survived?
 You have caused us sufferings great —
 What delayed you — why so late?
 Since you replied that you would come,
 Thirty days away have run!
 One whole month we've had to wait —
 You are more than four weeks late!
 Others were worried, blamed us, it's clear,
 Asking: "Will he soon be here?"
 4290 Chiefs were worried, tore at us thus —
 "Maybe tomorrow he'll come to us?"
 "Maybe he'll come the day after that?"

Meanwhile we fed them on mare's meat fat.
 Men and horses we fed, what's more.
 See, these heathens ate all our store!
 And your people got tired, my boy!"
 So then spoke old white-beard Koshoi.
 "What, then, my blood-thirsty mate,
 4300 What then made you come so late?"
 All the tribe leaders agreed with him then,
 And the same question worried these men,
 And they told Manas of it so...
 Then Manas, a wolf for the foe,
 Started to answer their question in turn:
 "Lacking logs, a fire will not burn,
 Lacking balls, musket won't shoot,
 If you don't work, and work well, to boot —
 Then no store of riches grows high!
 4310 Uncle, where is bey Karinbai,
 That he did not give cattle to you?
 I had so many things to do,
 Gathering people from all around,
 So that with honour my name should sound,
 I will tell you what I had to do.
 Now a great task awaits me here too!
 Don't get worried for lost stores so --
 Can an axe, with a single blow,
 Cut through a slab of granite there?³⁷
 4320 What does a leader not have to bear,
 If he's a bold bogatir, you see?
 My young comrades, those near to me,
 Don't try so hard to put me off!
 Of your complaints I've had enough!
 Kēkētēi's feast I'll arrange all right.
 Don't lose your reason, your loss is slight!"
 He had not quite finished his speech —
 With nine black steeds, and harness for each,
 Bokmurun, the Khan's son; came then,
 4330 As his own gift he presented them.
 Then the white yurta of maiden Torum,
 With hand-sewn patterns, like flowers in bloom,

With its lattice and laths coloured too,
 With its silk-covered pillars in view,
 With its coloured cables all tight,
 With its soft covering, fluffy and white,
 With its wheel in the domed roof high —
 Entered Manas, as pleased as pie.
 Those who had settled there, near and far,
 4340 From other peoples, so many, no bar,
 Waiting so long, had all grown bored.
 One whole month -- and no reward.
 Many who suffered much like that
 Sought fresh air, on their steeds they sat,
 Rode off to catch a glimpse of Manas,
 To relieve their deep boredom thus,
 Went to his tent, and stood all round,
 To take stock of this hero, new-found,
 They all crowded round him, indeed.
 4350 Six of his life-guards, each on his steed,
 Took in hand their sword, or their lash,
 Beat on some heads, and made blood splash,
 Tugged on some arms, and twisted some thighs,
 Guarded Manas, drove them off with cries.
 Take a look at those others, though!
 Losing their reason, they pushed forth so,
 Many got struck on the head with a staff,
 Or on the shoulder, and that was enough.
 Others, still pushing, cried "Let me see!"
 4360 Many crammed forward, inquisitively.
 Many of them got struck by a club,
 More and more the guards had to drub.
 Some cried "All morning you've looked at him,
 Now it's my turn, so let me in!"
 Then each other by collars they took,
 Soon they were fighting each other, look!
 Each one started the other to grip,
 Some got a second slash with the whip.
 Some cried "Out of my way, you trash!"
 4370 Notwithstanding the club and the lash.
 Those who wanted Manas to see

Still pressed forward, hard as could be.
 Some of them got a club on the crown,
 Slid from their steed, and so fell down.
 When his body-guard lost all strength,
 Then they said, at meat-cooking length:³⁸
 "Right! Push on, if you've lost your wits --
 Our Manas will tear you to bits!"
 So they at last let them through, of course.
 4380 Someone at last said "God! my poor horse!"
 None of them gave their nags a thought --
 Just pushed on, and thrust, and fought.
 Round the white yurta of maiden Torum
 Mounting fighters were soaring up soon,
 See how the crowd now squiggles and squirms,
 Just like a mass of black earth-worms.
 Many who came to just have a look,
 Lifted the flaps, and seams they shook,³⁹
 Many swarmed round the yurts like bees,
 4390 Many made slits, through which one sees.
 Many found peep-holes, thus to spy,
 And to them they pressed one eye.
 When they started acting that way,
 Chagirai, who served Alo-oke,
 Good-for-nought fortune-teller, they say,
 Then decided to take a look too:
 "I'll go and get that Kirghiz in view --
 He who tormented us one month through;
 I shall assess what he is worth,
 4400 From what folk such fury bursts forth.
 What kind of character meets one's eye!"
 So, at the start, thought Chagirai,
 Good-for-nought, who assessed himself high.
 So he came on Manas to spy...
 Many who wanted to hear his view,
 What this assessor would tell them too,
 Joined with them, and they got through.
 Well, many folk who'd come to the feast
 Sought such amusement, not the least.
 4410 So, at once they were all quite pleased.

Then Chagirai, the heathen Kitai,
 Went to the tent his skill to try.
 Through a slit in the side he spied --
 There saw Manas, so piercing-eyed,
 Who, as it chanced, just looked that way,
 And as soon as he did -- hey-hey!
 Chagirai clapped both hands to his eyes,
 Then staggered back in great surprise.
 When their glances chanced to meet,
 4420 Then his heart at once ceased to beat,
 Then he cried "Oh, my God -- my eye!"⁴⁰
 Thus the assessor Chagirai,
 Fell to the ground, and there he died.
 "Our assessor is dead!" they cried.
 And with those words they all fell dumb...
 In the evening Manas had come,
 When nobody had plans for the feast,
 When no word had been heard, at least.
 At third prayer-time, the following day,
 4430 When noon already had passed away,
 They made a camel kneel on the ground,
 Loaded a cauldron on him, upsidc-downed;
 If you watched them it seemed to be
 Just golden gowns at work you see --
 All of them were noblemen beys!
 On such huge camels great loads they raised.
 In countless hordes came Kara-Kirghiz,
 With the red banner of bey Jakib.
 Such a banner, on long staff found,
 4440 Raised on high, and stuck in the ground.
 With its streamers flying on high,
 Flapping and fluttering in the sky.
 Pure white flags by others were borne.
 After them, to the roar of the horn,
 Came forty thousand Kirghiz troops then,
 Covering every dale and glen,
 Led by far-sighted bold Bakai.
 If to compare them with others you try,
 They in numbers more high were found.

4450 Having made Maaniker prance around,
 Skilfully sleeking his armour-plate,
 Khan Bokmurun rode up in state.
 Said to Manas: "What now shall we do?
 How shall we see this festival through?
 Various cattle and goods are in store —
 I have prepared them, oh, long before.
 You may wipe out undesirables here,
 You may just please yourself, bogatir!
 So they sat down there to have a chat,
 4460 And to discuss first this, then that.
 Bold Bokmurun began to speak:
 "My dear Khan, a solution I seek.
 People who've come to honour the dead,
 They are most varied, it must be said.
 Many of them, as I look around,
 Down to the west there may be found.
 At Ukabas' end they stand --
 Heights there are full on every hand,
 Those that are opposite Kizil-Kiya.
 4470 If to the north then I look afar,
 Into the vale of the river Char,
 Many who honour my father's name are.
 If then I take a look to the east,
 There on the Ketman heights, at least,
 They are swarming like heaps of worms,
 Heathen and Mussulman, on even terms.
 They have come here, and live in hordes!"
 Having considered these opening words,
 Both then agreed one more to employ —
 4480 "Let him decide this — bold Koshoi!"
 Both came to that conclusion soon.
 Lion Manas then left Bokmurun.
 All who had travelled there with him,
 All the others who'd also come in,
 With the wise Bakai at their head,
 With his own herds Bokmurun then fed.
 He asked none their own herds to slay,
 Not a word of that kind did he say.

Each was allotted his proper share --
 4490 He asked nought of anyone there.
 So they dispersed to their places then,
 Settled down with their warrior-men.
 Then, of a sudden, it happened so:
 Feeling the pangs of hunger grow,
 Giant Dzholoi, Kalmak strong-man,
 Six big loaves at once ate then.
 Giant Dzholoi, still smelling of bread,
 Smote sixty warriors — all lay dead!
 Giant Dzholoi, now smelling of blood,
 4500 Chewed seven kilos of corn as his cud.
 Giant Dzholoi, still smelling of corn --
 Seventy warriors fell 'neath his storm.
 Giant Dzholoi, now smelling of blood,
 Feet as wide as a door -- thud, thud,
 Trampled them down upon the ground,
 Threatening all bogatirs around.
 Giant Dzholoi, the Kalmaks' wild boar,
 Challenged them all to fight, what's more.
 Having supplied little meat for them,
 4510 Bokmurun was half-guilty then.
 Giant Dzholoi was a huge bogatir,
 Father unmarried, that much is clear.
 No priest raised a hand to bless --
 Mother, without a wedding-dress.
 Such another you will not see.
 Shoulders as wide, as wide can be.
 In his gown of blue silk dressed,
 Muscular stature, enormous chest,
 Fat round cheeks of yellowish hue,
 4520 Monstrous unbeliever too!
 On his head a fur cap he wore,
 Six war-captains with him, what's more,
 As companions he took along then,
 Six 'dzhang-dzhung' as they called such men.
 Dzhabai's herdsman's staff he took,
 And he made a spike from that crook.
 Then the fellow who shared out the meat

Gave a lesson he won't soon forget.
 In the evening Manas had come,
 4530 And next day, 'neath the mid-day sun,
 When grey-bearded Bakai appeared,
 Gold-bordered banners then he reared.
 Then they began to slay beasts for the feast,
 To provide meat for their guests, at least.
 And they led off a well-fed herd.
 Bokmurun said "Slay a hundred head!"
 Ordered a hundred fire-pits to dig,
 Where they could set their cauldrons big,
 And to look after preparing the meat,
 4540 Two hundred bold young fellows he set.
 On the next day, ere the noon-day break,
 One thousand pits he told them to make,
 And at each pit a young fellow he placed,
 One thousand youngsters around he spaced.
 Having a thousand war-tents then raised,
 There he ordered the meat to be placed.
 Guarding each stood an elderly man,
 Keeping the meat in each pot and pan,
 Thus the meat was cooked each day,
 4550 Thus any thieves were kept away.
 "Let there not be any under-done meat!
 Let there not be one lean beast to eat!
 If the rice remains still half-raw,
 If the meat is not soft at all,
 If you then mix the lean and the fat,
 Don't step before me with stuff like that!"
 So spoke the wild-maned lion Manas.
 "Then on the Day of Judgement thus,
 Don't make complaint of me!" said he.
 4560 "Or a feast over your corpse there'll be!
 I'll send your feast and your village to hell,
 And I'll destroy your people as well!"
 Such was the threat Manas then made,
 Such was the menace he displayed.
 Giant Dzholoi, the huge Kalmak,
 Held in his hand the sharpened stick.

Two arm-spans long, and more belike,
 Was that staff with its whittled spike,
 Made from the branch of a slim birch-tree.
 4570 Leaving his settlement, thus spoke he:
 "I'm not saying we've not been fed,
 But the meat shared out per head
 Does not suffice for us, be it said,
 Some of us are already half-dead!"
 'Meat is cooked for you!' they say,
 'And is brought to you each day!'
 You sent your herald to us far away,
 Asked us to come to you and stay —
 Now you keep us hungry here,
 4580 So, we've come to get meat, is that clear?"
 Thus, with his fur cap on his head,
 His six 'dzang-dzhung' he forward led,
 So to obtain some meat, at least,
 At Kēkētēi's memorial feast.
 To the tents where they kept the meat
 They went to find some more to eat.
 Then the old man who guarded the door
 Would not let them in. What for?
 Stood in front, and prevented them so.
 4590 Giant Dzholoi then walked on slow,
 And to the fire-pits then he came.
 There stood a lad, Sukumbek by name...
 He took a glance in the pot o'er the flame —
 Slabs of neck-meat, a whole span thick,
 And fat rib-steaks he noticed quick,
 And his lips he began to lick.
 Then that one whom you daren't glance at,
 Giant Dzholoi, on his haunches sat,
 By the cauldron, before his men,
 4600 And, in Kalmak, he murmured then:
 "Is your meat cooked, my clever lad?
 Is it ready now to be had?"
 But, not knowing the Kalmak tongue,
 He just gaped at him, still quite young.
 Giant Dzholoi took his pointed stick,

Pushed it into the cauldron quick.
 Still the youth just gazed wide-eyed.
 Giant Dzholoi then once more tried,
 One meat lump, as big as a dish,
 4610 Then he pierced with that spike of his,
 Which he grasped so tight in his hand.
 This the youth could no longer stand:
 "Stop, don't steal the meat!" he said,
 Tried to seize the spike instead.
 Giant Dzholoi gave an angry glare.
 All the meat remaining there
 He had planned to seize, to the last,
 All which the cauldron still held fast,
 For himself and his men as well.
 4620 Then his eyes began to swell,
 Hair on his breast stood out like a mane,
 And his beard like a hedgehog became.
 Hair on his head began to curl,
 And he swore, with an angry swirl.⁴¹
 Jumped upon the poor youth too,
 Crying "Go to the devil with you!"⁴²
 Caught hold of him and darkly frowned,
 With his left arm swung him round,
 Then he hurled him onto the ground,
 4630 None to say "Nay!" to him was found.
 So that meat-cook youth he knocked flat,
 Then went and sat on him, at that!
 Giant Dzholoi gave a steady stare
 At the meat in the cauldron there,
 Then he went down upon one knee,
 And the meat, still uncooked, spiked he,
 Chunk after chunk after chunk, just see!
 Then he cried "Hooray! Good for me!"
 Then like shashliks, straight off the spit,
 4640 Munched and crunched them, bit by bit.
 Still on the fallen youth he pressed —
 May forbear spirits grant him no rest!
 He devoured one whole cauldron of meat,
 Every bit to the last did he eat.

Still his great greed was not satisfied,
 So the second cauldron he tried.
 Each chunk there he chewed amain.
 Giant Dzholoi caused him much pain,
 As he bumped him again and again.
 4650 Second cauldron — nothing remained.
 When he finished at last he stood.
 That at once did the youth some good.
 He was released from the giant's great weight,
 But he was in a sorry state,
 And he began aloud to cry:
 "Come here chief, I'm going to die!"
 Bokmurun then heard his call,
 Maaniker pricked his ears and all.
 When he heard the second youth shout,
 4660 He came to see what that was about.
 When he arrived there, what did he see?
 Both the youths disturbed as could be.
 Well, both cauldrons quite empty stood —
 Not the least sign of any cooked food...
 Giant Dzholoi had scared them both,
 And to oppose him they both were loth,
 With his neck as fat as a bull,
 Breath from his nostrils bursting full,
 Like the wind from the mountain free,
 4670 Eyes like kettles, big as could be,
 Breast heaved up like some huge hill,
 Hair and beard like burnt grass still,
 Just like some most spiteful foe,
 There he stood glaring at them so.
 To the young Khan Bokmurun
 He displayed his hostility soon.
 Only that majestic steed
 Served to ease that spite, indeed.
 Bokmurun, the son of a bey,
 4680 Like a hawk came swooping his way.
 Right up to giant Dzholoi he sped:
 "Get out of here, you swine!" he said.
 In angry tones he sternly spoke:

"You are not fit to rule a folk.
 You are not fit for a bogatir.
 You can't break law and order here!
 May you choke, you son-of-a-bitch!
 Straight from the cauldron meat you filch.
 May you drop down to the ground, you dog —
 4690 You are no Khan — you are just a hog!
 Better for you had you stayed in your tent,
 Had you just asked, I'd know what you meant.
 If you are hungry, just let me know,
 Come to see me, and tell me so.
 Then I could find you a further store,
 Then could provide you with slightly more.
 All could be done in an orderly way,
 But not by thieving by light of day!
 You can't do that among honest men.
 4700 What are you — just an animal, then?
 Bokmurun chided thus giant Dzholoi.
 Excellent chief, no more a boy.
 Giant Dzholoi took no notice of him,
 Scarcely noticed the mood he was in,
 Scarcely considered him as a man,
 Did not even his features scan.
 All the time that same pompous air.
 Now, just take a look at him there —
 Not on a horse, but feet on the land.
 4710 Bokmurun he does not understand.
 For Dzholoi's reproach-maddened ears,
 Bokmurun's words meant nought, it appears.
 Their deep meaning he could not perceive...
 Seated on Maaniker, his great steed,
 Bokmurun remained calm, indeed.
 But the quarrelsome giant Dzholoi,
 Kara-Kalmak, who likes to destroy,
 Looked upon Maaniker with joy.
 Then that great giant shook his head,
 4720 And to Bokmurun he then said:
 "For the small-numbered folk Kirghiz,
 For their five or six families,

Is there need for such a fine steed —
 Surely Mussulmen such don't need?
 Cast in iron the hooves he bears,
 All the proud looks of a war-horse he wears.
 Mane and tail — like black tassels here,
 Waving at the end of a spear.
 If you look at his muzzle yet —
 4730 It's like a trap, for a marten set.
 And his croup is just like a wall.
 If you look at his two ears tall,
 They're like candles on coffins set.
 Having heard his hooves on the steppe,
 Creatures fly from the crests in a wink.
 Forty day's travel — he does not drink.
 You can't hold him on bridle or bit,
 You can't hobble him — off he'll skip.
 If at the races him you ride,
 4740 Even a ghost won't catch up beside.
 Ankle-deep in the soil he'll thrust.
 Like a reindeer's — his bulging breast.
 Long the line of his thighs 'neath his tail,
 Eyes as bright as wild rams' as well.
 Legs long and strong with whittled ends,
 Hooves go flying when knees he bends,
 Clods go flying up to the heights...
 If for forty days and nights
 He is ridden by bogatir bold,
 4750 He is content, and as good as gold...
 They take a spear, smooth shaft, no noose,
 Catch no wild horses a-running loose.
 For the small-numbered folk Kirghiz
 There are no threatening enemies.
 For those five or six families,
 There is no need for a steed such as this!
 Why did nobody take it, ere now?
 God gave no brains to our leaders, some how!"
 That was the last which from him they heard,
 4760 Then, having mumbled some strange foreign word,
 Off he went, not saying goodbye,

With a revengeful look in his eye...
 'Mid the red-tasselled folk of Kitai,
 Strongest of all was Kongurbai.
 'Mid the black-tasselled folk nearby,⁴³
 Bravest of all was Kongurbai.
 Even the old, bold Alo-oke,
 Head of all the Kitais, by the way,
 Was not so brave as Kongurbai.
 4770 So to him and his men standing nigh
 Giant Dzholoi on his steed then rode,
 Straightway to Kongurbai he strode:
 "Listen, Kongur," to him said he,
 "Not knowing just how things would be,
 Separately we have ridden here.
 They have fed us -- not well, I fear --
 We have been lying with nothing to do,
 Waiting the feast, no purpose in view.
 Those who fed well were quite satisfied,
 4780 Even grew fat, and lay on their side,
 Showing that they, at least, were content.
 Day before yesterday, ere eve was spent,
 Up rode the bogatir -- lion Manas.
 Bokmurun, toady, then greeted him thus:
 Ordered his wise men to sing his praise,
 And he was welcomed by eight great beys.
 One goat was slain as a sacrifice,
 And his own steed, without thinking twice,
 Archatora, as a present he made,
 4790 Ordered for him a proper parade,
 Magnified his name and fame,
 Said: "You're the wisest, all the same!
 You are the Khan of all your folk!"
 Much more in the same vein he spoke,
 But he said no word of you,
 Nothing of me, your countryman, too.
 So we were treated just like scum!
 Was it for this that we have come,
 So that Manas should shine in our eye?
 4800 If your honour you prize, Kongurbai,

Listen carefully, not in vain:
 This day to the feast I came,
 And I went to the cooking-place.
 There it was I came face to face
 With Bokmurun on his Maaniker.
 That's a great steed, I must declare!
 If along with the racers here,
 Algara and Toraigir,
 You don't get him, you'll grieve, I swear!
 4810 Placed alongside Maaniker
 Algara simply would not count.
 His arched neck makes one's eyes pop out!
 In the whole world, wherever I've been,
 Nothing like him I've ever seen!
 He has a most unusual mind,
 Almost human in fact, I find.
 When you look closely at him, indeed,
 Then you will find a unique steed.
 You're a bold one, if him you could break,
 4820 There is a steed you should certainly take!
 Well, I'll tell you what kind is he.
 When I've told you, then off I'll be:
 With his armoured skirting fount,
 Having ridden five cities around,
 Then you could ride him into Beidzhin,
 With your armoured gauntlets, on him
 Round all Kra-Shaar having gone,
 As supreme chief, you could ride such a one.
 Well, Bokmurun has a horse like that:
 4830 Maaniker knocks all others flat!
 Maaniker, if you ask me,
 For your prestige would suitable be.
 Take no rest while he stands not nigh.
 For his sake, my dear Kongurbai --
 These Kirghiz, who arrange this feast,
 Overthrow, and beseege them fast!"
 Having told all for which he came,
 Having set the second aflame,
 Giant Dzholoi returned to his men.

4840 No less than Kongurbai did then,
 Giant Dzholoi nursed an evil thought...
 If that's so — then seize him I ought!
 Where's the one who arranges this feast?
 My Dzholoi talks business, at least!
 I shall get hold of that Maaniker,
 Even if I make enemies there!
 Debegi and Shelkim he told then:
 "Call that slave who serves us and our men.
 Say Kongurbai for him has sent!"

4850 To Bokmurun straightway they went.
 With Debegi and Shelkim at their head,
 Six war-chiefs to his yurta sped.
 There they said "Kongurbai calls for you!"
 Leaving his hearth then Bokmurun
 Set off to Kongurbai's tent soon.
 There he came, in no special haste,
 There saw his guards around him placed.
 Entering — what a scene he faced!
 With a gold crown on his head he sat,
 4860 Near his hearth on a velvet mat.
 Like a mound he loomed in his place.
 Like boiled lungs was he hue of his face.
 Beard was rough, like a horse's tail,
 Try to thrust through it, and you would fail.
 Eyes were like steel, and sharp at that,
 Nose of that rogue was fat and flat,
 Like a crest where a landslide has been.
 Brows like gulls' wings, when carp are seen.
 Head like a boar, as big as a bull,
 4870 Like a scorched log, with ashes full.
 Lips were fat, 'neath his flattened nose,
 Eye-sockets there, as if made by blows,
 Deep as pits, where his eye-balls clung.
 On his lashes green pus there hung,
 Like bits of clay in gun-powder or dung.
 In blue armour his body was clipped,
 Just like a lion, he forward leapt,
 Snarling, when Bokmurun there stepped,

Straightway at him he growled and cursed:
 "You stinking turd, you mouldy curd,
 You said to us, you good-for-nought cur:
 'Come to the feast of dead Këkëti!'"
 Told us of numberless herds in this place,
 First prize in this great memorial race.
 You said 'Come, and we'll make you our guests!'
 But added threats to your requests:
 'If you don't come, we'll descend on you!'
 Was that a courteous thing to do?
 Thus you succeeded in getting us here.
 4890 Thus you tormented us all, it's clear!
 Now our men, and commanders-in-chief,
 They're all enraged, and will bring you grief,
 All our warriors, leaders too —
 How can I curb them? What can I do?
 If you understand what I say,
 If you wish me to smooth things away,
 Well, I'm ready to help if I can,
 To continue the feast you began.
 Here there's a horse called Maaniker.
 4900 Since it's now yours, as your father's heir,
 I ask you this, since you lead this game —
 If you honour your father's name,
 Just present Maaniker to me!
 When Manas came, you took notice, I see,
 Listened to him, and showed respect,
 Then you made him a present direct —
 Gave him your war-horse, Archatora!
 Counting him higher than us, by far.
 Well, if I get enraged like the rest,
 4910 Then I shall put my sword to the test!
 Mussulmen's leader, this Manas,
 You place higher than me, it seems thus.
 If you don't spare me this offence,
 Then my sword will send you hence!
 Make me a present of Maaniker,
 And I shall feel you've treated me fair!
 If this present you do not make,

Terrible measures I shall take.
 On such an armoured horse, like him,
 4920 Let me ride home at last to Beidzhin!
 Having put armoured gauntlets on,
 Round Kara-Shaar having gone,
 In this already started spring
 To Esen-Khan such a horse I shall bring.
 One as proud as a herd-leading goat,
 With such a beautiful shining coat!
 Such a horse you have here, I know —
 Seated on such to him I'll go.
 If you wish to appease me, play fair —
 4930 Make me a present of Maaniker!
 If you do not agree to do so,
 Then on your head I'll bring down woe!
 I shall not count you a man any more,
 I shall not eat your meat any more,
 I shall upset your memorial feast,
 I shall my anger on you release,
 I shall make hell of everything here,
 I shall your tribes of Kirghiz sweep clear!"
 So Kongurbai made his meaning plain,
 4940 So he spoke up for Kitais again.
 Worthless was he, a menacing threat,
 Therefore such threatening words he said.
 Having heard him thus complain,
 Bokmurun thought things over again:
 "You wish to take my horse from me!
 First my elders I'll have to see.
 I shall have to take counsel with them,
 And my relations, I'll tell them then.
 I shall see just how the land lies,
 4950 I shall hear what my folk replies.
 If they agree with your request,
 Maaniker I'll give you — our best!"
 Having made this reasoned reply
 To the sly bogatir Kongurbai,
 Then the bey's son, Bokmurun,
 Backed away, and left him soon.

There he sat on his dear horse —
 Very much saddened at heart, of course,
 And, not knowing what plan to employ,
 4960 Off he rode to see old Koshoi.
 From the Katagan tribe came he,
 And was wise, and most fatherly.
 So to him his horse he led,
 Told him all Kongurbai had said.
 When old Koshoi then heard this news,
 He was surprised at this sly ruse.
 From Beidzhin came huge Kongurbai,
 Worthless fellow, exceedingly sly,
 Spiteful, frightful, one of the worst.
 4970 By forbear spirits may he be cursed!
 Since Manas a horse had received,
 He too should have one, he believed.
 Therefore offended and angry was he,
 Therefore pacified must be,
 How could one his demand refuse?
 Of injustice he'd them accuse!
 'Mid the tribe whom "red tassels" they call,
 He was the strongest rogue of all.
 He had seen Maaniker prance by,
 4980 And that horse had taken his eye.
 That greedy swine had seen this steed,
 And he thought: "He'll be mine, indeed!"
 And upon that he'd stood out firm,
 Otherwise threatening all with harm.
 Well then, Maaniker we must give,
 Or that great war-chief won't let us live!
 If he demands Maaniker yet,
 Shall we over one war-horse fret?
 We must give it, we must give in.
 4990 He has thousands of men with him!
 Will he not do then as he has said,
 That great rogue, the Kitais' great head?
 We must think of our people here,
 Let them not suffer from him, it's clear.
 Maaniker — let the devil then take!

Must they die for one horse's sake?
 Otherwise lower your head in shame,
 Otherwise lower your eyes to blame:
 If you free one hawk — let it fly,
 5000 Don't stand staring all day at the sky!
 Maaniker? Well, let him be lost!
 Otherwise, see, too high is the cost.
 That rough rogue, with his spiteful eyes,
 Like a wild tiger, in wait for us lies!
 If we don't give this desired toy,
 Our memorial feast he'll destroy!"
 Such were the words of old Koshoi.
 Still, they brought Bokmurun no joy.
 Nonetheless, he had to decide:
 5010 "I shall send it for him to ride!
 If things stand thus, we must look ahead.
 True, wise words, dear uncle, you've said!"
 Then he called a comrade nearby,
 And he said, with watery eye:
 "Go and fetch me my priceless steed.
 I've been deprived of him, indeed!
 He, whom like a father I love!"
 But before he had time to move,
 Old Koshoi had another idea,
 5020 And he began to make that clear.
 "To that dishonest rogue out there,
 To Kongurbai, the Khan-bogatir,
 We must, it's true, as our guest, pay heed,
 But, for the moment, don't bring that steed,
 Otherwise bold Manas might say
 That without him, we've given way.
 Don't let his anger descend on our head —
 Let's go and talk to our lion instead.
 Then, when we have discussed the affair,
 5030 If we meet his approval there,
 If he agrees with me, and with you,
 Then we can see this matter through —
 To Kongurbai give Maaniker.
 Let's meet Manas, and discuss it there!

We'll not waste time, and twiddle our thumbs,
 We can act, when the moment comes.
 If, Bokmurun, we agree eye to eye,
 Only later we'll tell Kongurbai!"
 So said Koshoi to Bokmurun.
 5040 Then he gathered some elders soon:
 From the Kazakhs Këkchë there came,
 Eloquent-tongued Urbyu, the same,
 Elyeman's son, Tështyuk, there came,
 From Eshteks, Dzhamgirchi there came,
 From the Dzhedigers came Bagish,
 Bey Dzhetskir's bold son, Agish,
 Nephew of Khan Dzhugëryu,
 All in their saddles swaying came too,
 With old Koshoi they all rode then,
 5050 Each one bringing a hundred men.
 To Manas the party drew near,
 Leaders all, with their men were here,
 All respected elders were here,
 All drew near to Manas-bogatir.
 When they came, they could not pass —
 Lion Manas lay stretched on the grass,
 And before him some forty-odd men --
 They'd all come to the feast-day then,
 All from their tents had just come out,
 5060 And they stood by a ring marked about;⁴⁴
 How they enjoyed themselves! Pitch and toss!
 One great ring, ninety steps across!
 All drawn out with the proper care.
 Four hundred knuckle-bones were there,
 Right in the centre, placed in a heap.
 There forty knights the game-rules keep.
 Under the eye of their judge, old Kirgil,
 Noisily they played knuckle-bones still.
 Old Kirgil, the chief of them all,
 5070 Now and then remarks would call.
 Having told all his knights to play,
 Lion Manas lay not far away,
 Watching the game with interest deep.

So Urbyu, well-dresse, and famed,
 Thus he both reproached and shamed.
 Having put him in his place,
 Still with a frown upon his face,
 Then he turned and looked at Manas:
 "Eh! my foal!" he addressed him thus,
 "Take a look here, my bold bogatir --
 5160 From Beidzhin, Kongurbai's come here.
 He's a great war-chief, with evil spite,
 Known in Beidzhin as a man of might.
 Cursed by his forbears' spirits, looks grim,
 And he has thousands of men with him!
 Now, it seems, he's shown discontent,
 On Bokmurun his spleen has spent.
 Having come to attend our feast,
 Brought misfortune to him, poor beast!
 'Only Manas you have welcomed and fed,
 5170 Paid him attention, whatever he said;
 Your best beast which flies like a star,
 Your best war-horse, Archatora,
 As a present to him you led,
 Many flattering words you said!
 Give me your war-horse, Maaniker!
 If you don't do so, I declare,
 Though you may take offence at me,
 I shall make trouble here, you see.
 I'll bring misfortune on you!' he swore,
 5180 'I shan't count you a man any more.
 I shall no longer eat your meat,
 I shall bring your folk to defeat.
 Straighway now, this very day,
 I shall sweep your feast away!
 Thus spoke the haughty Khan Kongurbai
 To Bokmurun, with spiteful eye.
 Deeply grieved, he returned, you see,
 And after that he came to me.
 And he asked me "What shall I do?"
 5190 So I answered, 'Well, if it suits you,
 This is what I should recommend:

He's a Kitai -- his folk has no end.
 With his sharp words we should agree,
 Though he's a heathen, he's powerful, see!
 They are greedy and quarrelsome there --
 What if we give them Maaniker?
 So we came to you to say,
 What do you think of the matter, eh?
 Shall we give him, or shall we refuse?
 5200 Say, bogatir, which way shall we choose?"
 So spoke old Koshoi, the bold.
 When he heard what he had told,
 Lion Manas grew full of ire,
 From his right eye sprang sparks of fire,
 From his left eye hot embers fell,
 Musket-shots poured from his mouth as well.
 Looking like a wild beast at a sheep,
 Any moment ready to leap,
 Taking on traits of a leopard bold,
 5210 He whose tail is ringed black and gold,
 Taking on looks of a tiger too,
 He whose claws no live man came through,
 Losing entirely his human look,
 Also the form of a lion he took.
 Then Manas, having made no reply
 To old Koshoi, who sat waiting by,
 Seized the stick which on drums they beat --
 Rat-a-tat-tat, and then repeat,
 This he took with its tasselled loop,
 5220 Then on the drum with its golden hoop,
 Like the lightning and thunder he struck.
 Loudly rumbled the drum -- bad luck!
 That was the signal of alarm.
 Forty-odd knights then rushed in a swarm.
 Just take a look how prompt were they --
 In the tent they donned armour straightway,
 Covered themselves from head to foot,
 In the work of one master they stood;
 Steel, which never a spear runs through,
 5230 Chain-mail, plates, and armour suits too!

Look at these forty-odd bogatirs!
 None could withstand them, it appears.
 Helmets of steel, and armoured parts,
 Striking fear into enemy hearts.
 Where could a spear or ball break through?
 There was no place for that, it's true.
 Those who stand face to face with such men,
 Soon are chopped into mince-meat then.
 They all cover themselves with shields,
 5240 None to any onslaught yields.
 Barely had time to wink an eye,
 Drum-echoes barely had rolled by,
 Each was seated on his steed,
 If you saddle — bestraddle indeed!
 Horses' spines sagged 'neath their weight.
 Such a sight as they rode in state!
 All those forty-odd warrior-braves,
 All in steel, with spears and staves,
 All their muskets charged with shot,
 5250 All their fuses smoking hot!
 Those who shoot guns, or draw the bow —
 All the best — went scouting so.
 Then, with eyes like glass ashine,
 Akkula, from the racing line,
 Striding stately, on bridle led,
 Dzho-oronchu, who watered and fed
 All the other war-horses thus,
 Brought in haste, to lion Manas.
 This huge steed like an arrow flew,
 5260 Warming up quickly, as horses do,
 He was led to the lion bogatir.
 Still enraged, he was waiting there.
 Forward in a short run he swept,
 Straight up in the saddle he leapt.
 Into his gold stirrups there
 Put no foot, so I declare!
 Then he settled firm in his seat.
 Akkula, like a reindeer fleet,
 In one moment flew o'er the ground.

5270 Then he turned his steed around,
 And his huge and menacing spear,
 From its place, standing waiting there,
 Pulled it forth, and held it high.
 Akkula, pawing impatiently,
 Like a hungry borzoi, he set free.
 To old Koshoi immediately,
 Up he galloped, straight ahead:
 "Eh, old uncle of mine!" he said:
 "Where are your wits then, tell me do?"
 5280 If someone else had spoken like you,
 If some other had dared to speak so,
 I would have slain him long ago.
 I would have hewed him clean in two!
 Since my youth, I've respected you,
 Since my youth, never wished you ill,
 That's why you're whole and living still,
 That's why none's raised a hand 'gainst you,
 And you remain untouched as you do.
 Nevertheless — ah woe! oh woe! —
 5290 Why did you speak so humble and low?
 Where, then, have your cattle lain,
 Which without a master remain?
 When, you bold bogatir, I die,
 When I see that land there on high,
 Then, only then, bring him that horse,
 But while I live, and my word's in force,
 Be content with your luck, old man.
 You'll be offended, but I'll say again —
 It would be better for you to die,
 5300 Not to live like a slave, forby!
 When, you bold bogatir, I go,
 When I see that land there below,
 When that rogue there rules your earth,
 When, suppressed, no sound you let forth,
 When he rides and does not pull rein,
 When, my Koshoi, not a horse with a mane,
 But your daughter you'll give away —
 Then, when comes the great Judgement Day,

5310 When that rogue makes your life a hell,
 Then give your maidens to him as well!
 But while I'm living and breathing thus,
 You should say: "I can count on Manas!"
 But today that dishonest lag,
 That heathen rogue who's raised his flag,
 Does he not guess your weaker spot?
 Will he not press you, and make things hot?
 When he rides Maaniker, benign,
 Will he not say: "It's friendship's sign!"
 Will he tomorrow not seize Akkula,
 5320 Having caught a glimpse from afar?
 Then the day after that, the swine,
 Will he not further pursue that line?
 Chalkuirul, the steed of Tēshtyuk,
 Finding a means, that one not hook?
 If all your riders and bold young men
 Are deprived of their horses then,
 Will they not feel like a king with no crown?
 Will not castrated camels lie down?⁴⁶
 If each one is robbed of his steed,
 5330 Will they not be unhappy indeed?
 If they say: 'You saved not one steed!'
 Won't that be torment for you indeed?
 On the last Judgement Day as well,
 Would not I, Manas, go to hell?
 Better not say 'I'll give Maaniker!'
 Till you are sure that I'm not there!
 Then you may say 'Manas is dead!'
 But till then — just keep your head!
 Better to pray to Allah on high,
 5340 Better than speaking so — to die!"
 That was what Manas had to say.
 Then he asked: "Where is he pray,
 That wild boar, who wants to fight?
 While I live, like the sunshine bright,
 How can I give Akkula away?
 This boar's a braggart, let me say.
 'Just let us come to grips!' says he.

"Well, if Allah gives strength to me,
 Then a laughing stock for our folk
 5350 I shall make of him!" so he spoke.
 While, like the moon, I still shine bright,
 While forbear spirits my soul don't smite,
 How can I give Akkula away?
 That wild boar is a braggart, I say!
 Just let me test my strenght with him!
 Great-great-grandsons will hear and grin!
 Can one quarrel with one's own fate?
 Death comes to all men, soon or late.
 If it comes to me — I'll die!"
 5360 So said Manas, with head held high.
 Then on the drums they beat away,
 He fired a shot from his Akkelte.
 Forty eager warrior-men
 All went galloping forward then.
 More in armour — eighty four —
 Everywhere their muskets roar.
 Everywhere spit tongues of flame.
 Drums were thundering as they came.
 Shots went whistling from each gun --
 5370 Everywhere loud echoes run...
 Forty eager bogatirs
 Swept against Kongurbai -- no fears!
 Crying, screaming a loud "Hoo-rah!"
 Foes already mounted are,
 And the spears begin to clash,
 As head-on the front lines crash.
 Those who saw them coming feared,
 Like an avalanche they appeared.
 Heathens into confusion were thrown,
 5380 And by shot and sword were mown.
 Then they lost their senses too --
 Screaming "Zhabu! Zhabu! Zhabu!"⁴⁷
 Many of them were seized by fright,
 And like cowards they took to flight.
 All those forty bogatirs
 Then pursued them, pierced them with spears,

Brought them disorder on every side
 "Mendyu! Mendyu! Mendyu! they cried.⁴⁸
 But those Kalmaks who cried "Mendyu!"
 5390 They deserted, and ran off too —
 Hither and thither, and whither you please!
 Fearless bogatirs chased these,
 And, like wolves attacking sheep,
 Scattered them everywhere, heap on heap.
 Fewer and fewer remained of them,
 Crying, and lying, and dying then.
 Others, feeling condemned to woe,
 Made their peace, and yielded so.
 That which never before they'd seen,
 5400 Now revealed to them had been.
 In a mass these armoured men,
 They had fallen upon them then.
 Battle-axes beat on heads,
 Broke their crowns, and left them dead.
 Everywhere, here four, then five,
 Mowed them down, left few alive.
 In the dark red blood of their foe
 They were soaked as they battled so.
 Thus, in the very thick of the fight,
 5410 Those unbelievers they put to flight.
 Opposite Kosh-Dëbë's high mound,
 There bogatir Kongurbai was found.
 Having seen how the fighting went,
 How his forces' powers were spent,
 His whole face grew clouded o'er.
 Thinking: "What may Manas do more?!"
 Kongurbai lost his head, and swore.
 Thinking: "While we plan further war
 He will break us to bits, that's clear!"
 5420 No — I won't take Maaniker!
 Since his youth, I've heard it said,
 This Manas was a mischievous lad.
 Better for me not to ride that steed,
 And to tell him, so I'm agreed.
 I shall say that I need no horse,

Then I'll present him one, of course!
 Give him our war-steed, Kilkara,
 Younger brother of Algara.
 Kilkara is a handsome steed,
 5430 So, to beat us he'll have no need!
 To be of service to him I'll try!"
 So spoke the cunning Kongurbai.
 He was inclined thus confused to be —
 Say what you like — a coward was he!
 All his warriors, they had hid —
 Neskara, with his tassel of red,
 He had been scared to bits, poor goose!
 And Muradil, the son of Kirmus,
 And Kalmak Ushang had too,
 5440 And black-bearded Bo-oronchu,
 And Kangai Orongu, I believe.
 Alo-oke, their commander-in-chief,
 Having heard horses' hooves a-beat,
 Then decided Manas to meet.
 Ordered his men to prepare Kilkara,
 Go to Manas, with white flag, seen afar...
 Muskets all were charged with shot,
 Fuses all ready, smoking hot,
 But when with the steed they came,
 5450 Fighting came to an end, all the same.
 So, with Alo-oke at their head,
 Sixty chiefs Kilkara then led,
 As a present to lion Manas.
 Those who would take, had to give up thus!
 They had lost their respected name,
 Lost the honour with which they came.
 But the dust all died away —
 Finished was the furious fray.
 Each returned to his own war-tent,
 5460 Scared Kalmaks and Kitais then went,
 Sagging shoulders, bowed heads bent,
 And two nights on the steppe they spent...
 On that day things started so —
 In the morning's early glow,

Kēkētēi's blue banner they took,
 Raised it high in the sky, just look!
 How it flitters and flutters there!
 People on horses everywhere!
 All as noisy as they can be —
 5470 From beginning to end, you can't see!
 One finds no words to tell how it goes!
 Warriors there, in sixty long rows,
 And between them streets, so it seemed,
 And the people like worms there streamed.
 Kēkētēi's death memorial, say,
 Turned into a real feasting day!
 For first prize in the coming race,
 Eighty thousand horses they place.
 One thousand camels, castrated, they keep,
 5480 Further, a hundred thousand sheep,
 Nine thousand cows completed the list.
 Difficult, even to count each beast.
 Herdsmen were thrown in confusion sore.
 Ninety yurtas they had, what's more,
 With their fastenings, satin-bound,
 In each yurta there were found
 One serving-man who would not shirk,
 Two slave-girls, both quick at their work.
 For the second prize in the race —
 5490 Riches which all the riders chase —
 Five hundred camels, castrated they place.
 Organizer of this great race,
 That's your grandad Koshoi, as I live!
 Forty thousand horses they give,
 And four thousand cows withal.
 Many folk couldn't count them all,
 For they gave fifty thousand sheep —
 Many folk their heads could not keep.
 One young bachelor lad as slave,
 5500 And one woman as well they gave.
 This is what they gave all to hear:
 For the third prize they made clear —
 Two-and-half hundred camels they gave,

In the yurta — a servant-slave.
 Then twenty thousand fat-tailed sheep,
 And ten thousand horses to keep,
 And two thousand cows as well.
 For fourth place in the race I'll tell —
 Your great tribes of Kirghiz wish you joy,
 5510 All in honour of dead Kēkētēi
 They have arranged a colossal feast!
 Camels — one hundred and twenty five beasts,
 They have prepared and hobbled their knees.⁴⁹
 One hundred cows, and five hundred steeds
 Wait on a level space they've prepared.
 Prize for the last place I'll now declare:
 And I shall finish the list with that —
 Nine cows, and ninety sheep, all fat,
 One old man, and one woman slave —
 5520 That's the final prize they gave.
 That's the reward for the sixty-first horse —
 Very last one to finish the course!
 For the whole Kirghizian race
 They have sworn to arrange this chase.
 And if their word we may believe,
 Sixty-one steeds a prize will receive!
 Here are Dēēts, and here are Tars —
 How many differing folk there are!
 Kizilbashei, who come from Kiyba —
 5530 So many folk in this world there are!
 Orusi,* Nenisi* are here,
 All the peoples on view are here,
 Tribes of Kitais* are racing here,
 Many Kalmaks are chasing here,
 All kinds of Mussulmen are here,
 Aikidzho, from the Arabs is here,
 Whole long streets of people are here,
 Both the strong and the feeble are here,
 Many fermenting bubbles are here,
 5540 Many tormenting troubles are here.
 Having seen all this with joy,
 Your grandfather, old bold Koshoi,

To Manas began to shout:

"We must bring all the horses out!"

Then he counted ten gold bars o'er,

Thirteen silver ones counted once more.

So that his word the folk should learn,

So that the herald should ride and return,

So that each should receive his due,

5550 He took six nines of steeds with him too.

Irchi-uul, that's Iraman's son,

With his waist-band with pom-poms on,

With his hat with its tassels too,

Free with his tongue, and all he knew,

Went and sat astride his steed.

With him then, in case of need,

Went Aidar, with a tuft on his brow.

Then Irchi first kicked up a row,

Then he called to everyone:

5560 "Cover your steeds with blankets and come!

Gallop here, around and about,

Come, young fellows, and work them out!

If you have horses, get them hot,

Find out if they're well-bred or not,

Maybe it's only a jade you've got!

He whose horse comes first in the race,

Then will shew a most happy face.

This is the eve to test their pace.

You tomorrow will ride, no doubt,

5570 Time has come to sweat them out!

So the heralds went everywhere,

And the people began to prepare.

Both young jockeys, and owners old,

Feeble-crested steeds, and the bold

Many good steeds held their heads up higher,

Those who on high slopes did not tire —

Galloped, unsagging, for ninety days,

War-horses, race-horses, on their ways.

Mountain horses, of wilder breed,

5580 Were more used to the heights, indeed.

On the hilly slopes they don't tire,

Gallop, and gallop, don't lose their fire.

All kinds of steeds, from far and near,

Well-bred, ill-bred, were gathered here.

Sturdy norses, swift-footed and fine,

Ears like reeds, and hooves a-shine.

Real war-horses were everywhere,

And peaceful horses too were there.

Real race-horses, many of them,

5590 With their silk blankets, they came then.

With nine amulets round them sewn,

War-horses took a place of their own.

With their velvet blankets of blue,

Decorated with amulets too.

People all excited stood round,

Where all the sweating steeds were found.

Many young jockeys and trainers were there,

Riders, explainers, everywhere.

All had many a varied care —

5600 Steeds like swallows, swept through the air...

Some like mice do, ran in line.

When they led out those racers fine,

When they started to count them then —

Lo and behold — two thousand of them!

Having watched this the bold Manas

Then addressed the people thus:

"You simple people will overwhelm us,

With your jades and fat nags thus.

They couldn't catch a foal at least!

5610 At my father's memorial feast

You are all set to seize a prize —

That's just where the danger lies.

You will bar the way to those

Riding real horses, and them oppose.

Clearly, you couldn't compete with them,

Clearly, the jockeys you'll pull down then.

Having for better steeds barred the way,

Clearly, you'll ruin them all that day!

So the bold sultan, Almambet,

5620 Then he called to his side and said:

"You are one of those capable men --
 Listen to my order then:
 Yoy have power of widest range,
 And the weather can even change --
 Well then, don't begrudge that power,
 Almambet, in this difficult hour --
 Chestnut-coated Akkula,
 Oatmeal-bloated Akkula,
 My great war-horse Akkula,
 5630 My enomous Akkula,
 Neck and withers, Akkula,
 Flying arrow Akkula,
 Maybe he'll be first when raced --
 Old Kirgil has hopes in him placed,
 But, you see, he's far too fat,
 One day's needed to rid him of that,
 Try to change the weather, at least,
 Hold back the racing day of the feast.
 On the high slopes of Karkara
 5640 Change the weather for Akkula.
 Let him grow slimmer, lose his fat.
 Others are ready to race now like that.
 Let those lean ones grow more lean --
 Well, you see just what I mean!"
 To Almambet thus spoke Manas,
 Then Almambet began work thus:
 He was a very clever Kitai --
 He had learned spells in days gone by.
 First, all evil spirits he stayed,
 5650 Then, in Kalmak, he quickly prayed.
 Swiftly the barayiz* he read,
 Swiftly the Mussulman's prayer he said,
 Start to finish, then backward again,
 Then in Chinese he did the same.
 Then his face took a menacing look,
 Then a poisonous stone he took,
 Let it down in some water there.
 Then, before you could blink, I declare,
 Ere they had time to cover each steed,

5660 Down poured the rain on the slopes beneath.
 Then the rain turned into hail,
 Over all foothills it did not fail.
 Then on one side a mist came down,
 Then in the west the sun lost its crown
 All it left was a faint red glow,
 Suddenly cold it started to grow.
 Horses and people to tremble began,
 All the hollows with water ran,
 Ditches and dales were flooded too,
 5670 Wind and rain and hail-stones blew.
 Stronger then the hurricane grew.
 People didn't know what to do.
 Everywhere cold hail lay thick,
 People and beasts it froze to the quick.
 All grew exhausted, that was plaun --
 Rain and hail, and hail and rain.
 Saturated beasts and steeds,
 All then shivered, with quivering knees,
 All drew in their soaking sides --
 5680 Here and there, half-frozen, some died.
 Next day all was quiet again.
 All the steeds were selected then.
 They had visibly grown more thin.
 But those nags who no covering had,
 They had certainly come off bad.
 No hopes of racing now they had.
 War-horses all had lost much fat.
 Ears stuck up like torches somehow,
 5690 They became quite different now.
 Swiftly now they could race ahead,
 Where their hooves beat on earth's bed,
 There the soil went flying far,
 There stood the bogatir's steed, Akkula,
 Chestnut-coated, bold Akkula,
 Ready for racing, rolling his eye.
 Like a deer, with his head held high,
 Ready each moment to leap and fly.
 It was hard now to hold him in.

5700 Half-a-day's fat gone, now grown thin.
 Soon as he'd shivered that fat away,
 He'd become normal as the day,
 That great chestnut steed Akkula,
 Ready to race, however far.
 When that day had passed on its way,
 With its cold and frost, let's say,
 Then, on the morrow, when dawn had come,
 Flies began buzzing about in the sun.
 Birds began twittering, flittering high,
 5710 And a slight breeze began blowing by.
 Then the steam arose from the soil,
 In mid-morn, with the sun aboil
 Kēkētēi's blue banner flew high.
 "Lead out your steeds, and in file walk by!"
 Loudly announced the young Aidar.
 Flags and pennants were flying far
 Riding Kuuchabar at a trot,
 Through the ranks of the men he got,
 And all the people he went to tell:
 5720 "Races today, and all is well!"
 Yesterday, thanks to Almambet,
 All were cold, and all were wet.
 This was done because we'd seen
 Many old jades prepared had been
 To take part in the festive race,
 And for such, there was just no place!
 Many of them have suffered from frost,
 Many owners such nags have lost,
 Now they complain, and say with spite:
 5730 "What was done, was not all right!"
 Many of them are saying as well:
 "With your memorial feast,— go to hell!
 We don't need your prizes today!"
 Now for them there was no other way —
 Bridle and saddle from jades they take,
 And away with their nags they make.
 When people heard how troubled they'd been,
 When they saw their jades leave the scene,

Then they began to create a fuss.
 5740 In their own tongue they started thus.
 In their own tongue — the folk from Kitai,
 In their own tongue — Kirghiz nearby,
 In their own tongue — the folk from Kirim,
 In their own tongue — the Orus joined in,
 In their own tongue — the folk Oogan,
 In their own tongue — in groups they began
 Shouting and filling the air with sound,
 Shaking heads wagged all around.
 Spear-heads all began to shine —
 5750 Warriors all formed up in line.
 "Do you allow such things, Buruts?"*
 Each horse waits to see if it suits.
 Thus the inspector selects them then.
 At the alert stand young jockey-men.
 They give place to dame Oronga
 From the Kangais — the wife of their Shah,
 With her mare of that same name
 To the inspection post she came.
 After her, let the tale be told,
 5760 With its talisman all of gold,
 Bringing good luck, and fortune grand.
 Ears just like two candles stand.
 This beast was of a whirlwind made,
 With a white spot on his head dis played,
 Left to him by a mother untamed.
 This fine steed was in chestnut framed,
 With a birth-mark on his right thigh.
 Like an arrow this steed could fly —
 This was Manas' Akkula
 5770 Following him, still others ther are.
 With his crutch like a crevice so,
 'Neath his hind legs a man can go.
 'Neath his hooves the sods will fly.
 Tossing his talisman up in the sky,
 Akkula went trotting ahead.
 After him another was led —
 Achbuudan, Dzholoi's fine horse,

He too went for inspection, of course...
 Then because Manas had gone wild,
 5780 And in fury his name had defiled,
 When he asked for Maaniker,
 Kongurbai had retreated there,
 And when Manas a-thundering came,
 He, to save his cowardly name,
 Kilkara had presented him then,
 And had run off, without any men,
 To Tete, and over the pass.
 What had become of his folk, alas.
 No one to him of that brought word.
 5790 No going back — he'd look absurd!
 So off into the wilds he made,
 Two days and nights alone he stayed,
 Thinking "I'll die of hunger at last!"
 Over six hundred roots of rough grass
 He tore out if the steppe and ate.
 Algara in the heat did sweat.
 Chief Alo-oke sent some men
 Out about to find him then,
 And they found him at last, what's more,
 5800 On the sloping heights of Dëyгур,
 In Kara-Saz, near Tëtë's crest...
 Now let us return to the rest...
 Thus Algara in the race won't be seen.
 After Achbuudan had been,
 Boskertika, that's Boitoru's horse,
 Was led out for inspection of course.
 Following on, and quite unprepared,
 Dark, ill-kempt and tousle-haired,
 Who, quite lost, it now appears,
 5810 Had been below the ground seven years,
 Having come out seven days before,
 Chalkuiruk, who seven lives bore,⁵⁰
 Having already lost six of them,
 Bowed and bent, with hanging head then,
 Came before the inspector still.
 Following him, from bey Muradil,

Came his steed named Kildzheiren.
 Following him came Telkyurën,
 Who belonged to Muzburchak,
 5820 From the inspector they led him back.
 Following him came huge Sari,
 From brave Koshoi, as big as could be,
 And a pair of black ones too,
 Both belonging to bold Urbyu.
 Following them came Kergala,
 That was the steed of brave Këkchë.
 Place of inspection packed remained...
 If a thousand on end we named,
 That would be tormenting for you,
 5830 But two thousand at last got through!
 People all took care of their steeds.
 When Almambet changed the weather indeed,
 Some were unable to keep them dry,
 Some caught cold — couldn't race, that's why.
 People tried to find other steeds,
 Some went grey with worries and needs.
 Those who trained horses to win a place,
 Those who made ready steeds for the race,
 They were busily working yet —
 5840 Many troubles they made Almambet.
 When the steeds went for check-up then,
 When they'd examined a thousand of them,
 "To whatever place they may come —
 From that place they must gallop home!"
 So said Manas to all of them —
 To unbelievers, and Mussulmen.
 Old Koshoi, of Katagan fame,
 And Manas then judges became.
 Bogatir, name the distance now —
 5850 You yourself decide somehow!"
 So the other knights gathered round,
 Those who of equal strength were found,
 And they all surrounded Manas.
 He began posing, making a fuss.
 While an answer to them he sought,

While he collected every thought,
 That Urbyu, from Eki-Kemin,*
 Who had two steeds, and hoped to win,
 Who was very pushful and sly,
 5860 Whose own steeds were short-distance small-fry,
 He, who had not been able to speak,
 After "Hey, Manas!" went all weak,
 He who Koshoi's reproach had heard,
 Ho who had suffered an angry word,
 He who had muttered vexation thus,
 He then had something to say to Manas.
 Now, with cunning, was trying to win
 Such a decision as favoured him,
 So these remarks at Manas he fired:
 5870 "People and steeds from the road are tired,
 They have entered their beasts in the race,
 But long distances they won't face --
 Let them ride out two days from here,
 Then gallop back in one -- that's clear!
 This day I've counted up all I've heard.
 Let the others go back on their word!"
 So said Urbyu, sharp tongue in his head.
 Having listened to what he said,
 5880 Lion Manas grew angry again,
 In his right eye flashed a flame,
 In his left, red embers glowed.
 Shots flew out of his mouth aloud:
 "Ah, you cursed, sore-eyed slave!
 Thoughts for yourself alone you have,
 But you have me to contend with here --
 Me, Manas the lion, do you hear?
 Ah, you cursed shaven-head slave!
 Stupid slave, how senseless you rave!
 Now shut up, pipe down, at least!
 5890 Is it you who is running this feast?
 With his whip with its tassel-bob,
 With a lead-shot fixed fast in its knob,
 With its plaited leather strap,
 First he turned to the right, then rap! --

Leaning forward a blow he sped,
 Struck Urbyu on the side of his head.
 Dust went flying out of his cap,
 On one cheek showed a bloody gap...
 'Mid the people gathered around,
 5900 Many self-satisfied beys were found.
 Nasty noises arose from thence,
 People went mad and lost all sense,
 Went quite wild, their minds went numb,
 And Urbyu was struck quite dumb...
 Bold Koshoi rushed up to Manas,
 Hurled himself upon him thus:
 "Hey, my young puppy, my bold young lad,
 Hey, my young foal, that's just too bad!
 What kind of trick then, what kind of joke?
 5910 Don't you count, then, with famous folk?
 This is surely no simple affair?
 Whom do you think you have knocked down there?
 That's bey Urbyu you've struck on the head!
 Are you satisfied? Is he dead?
 If I let such misconduct pass by,
 Then you may strike me too -- aye-aye!
 Though a protector you may have,
 After such an onslaught, my lad,
 Soon misfortune may knock at your door --
 5920 If you anger Koshoi -- all the more!
 Then, by chance, you soon may die!
 Don't be high-handed again, say I.
 Don't show off bad ways like that!
 When people cry "Manas! Manas!
 You get all puffed up with pride,
 Like a wine-skin, blown-up inside!"
 Loudly Koshoi then shouted at him,
 White beard a-shining on his chin,
 Whiskers bristling out likewise,
 5930 Sparks of rage in his old eyes.
 Thinking what would become of Koshoi
 If Manas attacked the old boy,
 Thinking to start up a hullabaloo,

Finding support in Koshoi's words too,
 For the things he wanted to do,
 Then the wordy and sly Urbyu,
 So self-confident and assured,
 Though by Manas his cheek was scored,
 He began to speak up thus:

5940 "Hey, you Samarkand Sart,* Manas!
 I'll be a plague on you, Manas!
 Dog, with one red ear, Manas!
 May you sink in the ground, Manas!
 From that collar of yours, Manas
 Fleas hop everywhere, Manas!
 Master of the world, Manas!
 Backed by forty-odd bogatirs,
 You think you're lord of all, it appears!
 So you go slashing with sword or whip —

5950 One day, however, you'll make a slip,
 And you'll die from my battle-axe blow!"
 Bold Urbyu, enraged, spoke so!
 Then Manas, when these words he heard,
 Took on the look of a lion, a lord,
 Took on the look of a leopard wild,
 Howling, growling, far from mild,
 Took on the look of a tiger too,
 Roaring and rearing in full view,
 Ready to leap in every joint,

5960 And his anger was to the point.
 With striped coat, ringed tail held high,
 If he leapt on you, where would you fly?
 Where would you run from this tiger, say?
 No longer human, in any known way,
 Getting ready to make a spring —
 More like a lion than any known thing.
 He had only to drub his gold drum,
 Forty-odd bogatirs would then come,
 Straightway would jump upon Urbyu,

5970 Let him know who was master of who!
 They would tear him to little bits...
 Old Koshoi near lost his wits,

Did not know what to do, anyway.
 "Such mad words you must not say —
 He will slay you in his ire,
 His forty knights will not retire.
 People who hear of it later on
 Will all gossip when we are gone!
 Unbelievers alone vengeance plan —

5980 What are you doing, you stupid young man?
 Hold your tongue, then, you mad wild boar —
 Forty knights will slay you, for sure!"
 Knowing not what further to say,
 He just led bold Urbyu away —
 From the warriors, off they went.
 Then Manas, his wrath unspent,
 Still unable to raise his hand,
 Still unable 'gainst him to stand,
 When old Koshoi reacted so, —

5990 Who in confusion would that not throw?
 Still with the urgent desire to kill,
 With both eyes a-blazing still,
 Burning with fury, heart and head,
 Thinking of what Urbyu had said,
 He was ready to strike him on sight,
 Like a tiger in autumn might.
 Like a camel in winter, he spat.
 No one dared come near him, at that!
 Gnashing his teeth in angry fuss,

6000 Not knowing what to do, stood Manas.
 Could not control his anger, went numb.
 Who could stand like that, struck dumb?
 Long he stood, not moving thus.
 Only at length spoke up Manas:
 "My beloved and numerous folk —
 Thus it was your forebears spoke:
 'Let sixty riders drive the steeds.
 If they drive, then drive quick indeed!'
 Ride across the Chadbar crest,
 Ride to the banks of Ili, don't rest,
 Follow the river, riding full force,

Over the slopes of Ulan, of course,
 Drive the steeds then along their ways,
 Galloping on for six whole days,
 And from thence let them all race back.
 Keeping to the flag-marked track,
 Send six thousand men to stand,
 Holding a white flag in their hand.
 Keep to them, by night and day,
 6020 Don't let anyone lose their way.
 Two whole days, and one whole night
 Let them race back, for winning-place fight.
 Let their owners receive their prize.
 When their steed past the last flag flies!.."
 Sixty men, who the steeds must drive,
 Taking their sharpened staves beside,
 Started with a cry on their way.
 Only experienced cattle-men, say,
 Known and trusted by everyone.
 6030 Kirghiz leaders with them have gone.
 After them went six thousand men,
 Flag-bearers, helping the judges then.
 Early autumn, the nights still short,
 And just now the time for sport.
 So they don't lose their way in the dark,
 Those six thousand the course would mark.
 Therefore those who sent off a steed
 For anxieties had no need.
 All was in order, all well-planned —
 6040 Only excitement throughout the land!
 Having sent them all on their way,
 People everywhere on that day
 Sat themselves down, prepared to eat.
 They already had cooked the meat,
 Called in all to dismount and come,
 Elders and youngsters, everyone.
 They in their yurtas then found place,
 Sat them down, and said their grace,
 Then among those feasting there,
 6050 Those who had only light clothes to wear,

Some began to quiver and quake,
 Others to give their shoulders a shake.
 Then meanwhile, among the folk,
 They brought wash-jugs, hands to soak,
 Dishes too of pure gold were there,
 Servants were bowing everywhere.
 So they passed from tent to tent,
 Washed their hands, if as guests they went.
 So that everyone saw that day
 6060 Këkëitëi's treasure not hidden away.
 Hand-embroidered silk cloths were there,
 Spread in the yurtas everywhere.
 People had not seen their like before,
 Each one had their own, what's more.
 Those nearby, and those afar,
 All provided equally are,
 So when they sat down to eat
 Laps were covered, tidy and neat.
 Everyone who came to the feast
 6070 They had one silken cloth, at least.
 Nothing less than silk would do,
 All were embroidered, beautifully too.
 For the old folk who were there
 They provided tit-bits rare.
 Fed them on stoneless raisins too,
 Carefully washed, and sifted through.
 Tarts were baked and tastily sliced,
 Këkëitëi's riches for that sufficed.
 There was nothing like that, no doubt,
 6080 Which for them Bokmurun set out!
 Having put raisins in the kumiss,
 So it was they fermented this.
 Everybody then got to know,
 How Kirghiz forbears had done so.
 Meats of all kinds they gave to them,
 Things they'd never seen before then.
 They provided for every guest —
 Sliced yellow fat from horses' necks.
 Look at his generosity here!

6090 Two tasty dishes, each heart to cheer!
 Elderly people, too old to chew --
 Left the meat and fat-lumps too.
 Others, who couldn't eat all then,
 Wrapped it up, and took it with them.
 Those on foot, no steed to ride,
 Tucked it in their pockets inside.
 Old Koshoi, with his beard so white,
 Made sure then that all was alright...
 On his beast, like a bird of prey,
 6100 Lion Manas then made his way,
 On his war-steed Archatora,
 All around, both near and far,
 Met and asked the feasters there
 If ought was lacking, how did they fare?
 Then gave orders more dishes to bring,
 If they were short of anything.
 In his hat with block knob on top,
 Spurred his steed, not letting him stop.
 Two whole days, and two nights through,
 6110 Saw that everyone got their due.
 Everyone got enough to eat.
 Mussulmen did their prayers repeat.
 Then the mullah a service began,
 Reading chapters from the Koran...
 Then Manas thought "The folk are bored --
 Eight days yet ere victory's scored!
 People get tired doing nothing, to boot.
 Let them at golden ingots shoot!"⁵¹
 From Karkira take fir-trees tall,
 6120 Only high ones, nothing small!
 Tallest ones you must hew down,
 Strip one thousand, root to crown,
 Then six hundred upright lie,
 One, end to end, on the other tie...
 There they lay, in a line stretched out --
 People asked "What are they about?"
 Those who had never seen such a sight.
 Then to join them, and hold them tight,

As they lay upon the ground,
 6130 They with strong steel cables were bound.
 Këkëtei's treasure then he took --
 Golden ingots -- look, just look --
 Each one a ransom for one hundred men!
 On fine wires they hung them then,
 So their value increased o'er their head,
 High in the sky on a fine wire thread.
 Look how he teased them, bold Manas --
 Forty fine wires round each ingot thus!
 Gallop by quickly, shoot as you go,
 6140 Bring the gold ingots tumbling below!
 If you shoot so, astride your steed,
 Then you're a very fine marksman indeed!
 Others are left with nothing then,
 Whether herdsmen, or warrior-men.
 Let the marksmen shoot them down,
 Let them gain a golden crown!
 Some there are who shoot with a word.
 Some there are, whose shots are absurd.
 Some are skilful with guns, some not.
 6150 Let us see, then, what skill you've got!
 Those who wish, let them shoot, gain the prize,
 Hanging up there, before their eyes!
 Those who have no guns, let them lie!"
 All about this did the heralds cry.
 Marksmen came, and hunting men,
 On their horses they galloped then,
 Charged their muskets, the target to hit,
 Then their fuses they quickly lit.
 Gathered in fifties, and hundreds there,
 6160 And at those ingots started to stare.
 People all came crowding around,
 Scarcely room to move riders found.
 Those behind pressed those before,
 Masses of people, more and more.
 So some riders got down from their steeds,
 And where the fir-poles stood, take heed,
 With their supports all standing there,

Further efforts they did not spare.
 Resting their muskets on them, as a prop,
 6170 Still their shooting they did not stop.
 Those sharp-shooters had many cares —
 Oiled and greased those guns of theirs,
 Cocked their triggers, ready to fire,
 Raised their sights, then higher, and higher.
 Many sorts of guns were here,
 Flint-lock, match-lock, and fusilier.
 And their shots re-echoed around —
 Crack! Crack! Crack! How sharp their sound!
 Blue-grey lead sped up on high,
 6180 Shots came raining down from the sky!
 Thus Manas all the folk surprised.
 Lead hail fell, and made dust rise.
 Who was the one who did things thus?
 Why, our bogatir, Khan Manas!
 Shots from muskets thundered round,
 People amazed, half-dazed were found.
 Accidents, surely, cannot fail,
 With these musket-balls, like hail!
 So Koshoi, who controlled this pack,
 6190 Gave them warning, and pushed them back.
 "We can even be killed, by chance!"
 Thought the people, alarmed at once.
 But among those shooting still,
 Lead shot finished, no more to fill.
 Others there were whose powder ran short.
 They weren't used to such difficult sport.
 So they fired and fired all day,
 Then threw empty bags away.
 Nothing more now could they do.
 6200 Not one ingot fell to their due...
 Others stretched their necks like geese,
 Scores of shots at once released.
 They sat below, took careful aim,
 But the result was just the same —
 No shots reached the ingots there,
 Flint-lock or musket — the same affair!

They only reached half-way to the top,
 So, in the end, they had to stop.
 Even percussion guns couldn't touch
 6210 Those gold ingots they wanted so much!
 They were still hung upon their wire!
 When there was no more powder to fire,
 Then those marksmen felt so sad,
 At the disappointment they'd had.
 In a mad mob they rushed to the trees,
 And, most like, would have torn down these,
 Had not Koshoi at once barred their course:
 "Each go back, and sit on his horse!"
 Soon the people heard heralds say:
 6220 "If you are tired, then please go away!
 Then Manas gave another surprise:
 Herald Madzhik goes round and cries:
 "Mussulmen, unbelievers too.
 Leaders and people pass on through,
 Those who like to see what's new —
 Come and see what Manas can do!"
 Then their chatter began to swell,
 Beys and simple folk as well,
 They all came like a swarm of bees,
 6230 To the hill with shady fir-trees.
 Then all the people began to climb,
 If they had enough strength at that time,
 All their efforts they did not spare,
 Went and sat around everywhere.
 Now what were they going to see?
 Many bogatirs there, riding free.
 Then, if you looked towards the east,
 Karkara's crest you saw, at least.
 There sat leopard Manas, of course,
 6240 On Archara, his fine war-horse.
 All bogatirs rode steeds of the best.
 When Manas stood facing west,
 Then he leant forward from his seat,
 Then with a rumbling roar he beat
 On his golden-rimmed great drum.

In their war-gear eighty-four come.
 Everywhere you cast your eye,
 There the blood-red banners fly.
 Forty comrades stand with Manas —
 6250 Death will never defeat them thus!
 All of them, having charged their guns,
 All lit up their fuses at once,
 All of them were powerful men,
 Half on each side of Manas stood then,
 In the middle — their leading one,
 And again he drubbed on his drum.
 From gun-muzzles poured smoke and flame,
 All eighty-four of them the same,
 All of them fired when they heard the drum,
 6260 Bluish clouds surrounded each one.
 All the companions of lion Manas,
 Loudly calling on Allah they trust,
 Each one of them then fell from his steed,
 There they lay, like slain indeed!
 All eighty-four of them suddenly found
 Lying like dead on the ground around!
 Only Manas on his steed remained,
 Only him no shot had attained.
 He alone stood there on his steed,
 6270 While he did so, companions, pay heed —
 All forty knights lay stretched out flat —
 Like dead men they lay — look at that!
 Then Manas again beat his drum —
 All to life again had come!
 Most of the knights still lying flat,
 In a single moment, at that,
 Straightway up on their horses leapt!
 People with wonderment were swept.
 Famous knights each other faced —
 6280 Not one foot in a stirrup they placed,
 Jumped straight up on the back of his steed,
 Then rode round again at speed...
 People had scarcely seen them come,
 Scarcely seen it was all in fun,

Scarcely stopped "Ohs" and "Ahs" each one,
 When Manas beat again on his drum.
 Then old Kirgil who stood nearby,
 Stout old fellow, and sharp of eye,
 Took off his hat, some half-a-yard high,
 6290 And at once threw it up in the sky.
 Off it went flying, like a black crow,
 Then began falling back below.
 Straightway then old Khan Bakai
 Who was sure of his steady eye,
 Fired a shot at the falling hat —
 Made it fly up again, at thet!
 Only then did it start to fall,
 Slowly floating down withal,
 Slowly turning round and round,
 6300 Till it finally reached the ground.
 Having seen Bakai make it fly,
 Then Kirgil thought he'd have a try —
 Threw his hat once more in the sky,
 And before it had time to fall,
 Through its crown he shot his ball.
 Up it flew, scarcely sank at all.
 Then Almambet, he too let fly —
 Who can shoot like him, by-the-by?
 Up it flew on high besides!
 6310 Forty knights from Kirghiz tribes,
 All without missing shot the hat.
 From Almambesh then shot Almambet,
 And his ball sent the hat flying high,
 Higher than others, however they try.
 One whole spear's length higher then,
 And, as it fluttered down again
 Kolchyura's bold son, Chalibai,
 Then took aim, sent it flying high —
 That hat hardly came down from the sky.
 6320 Just take a look, how sharp is their eye!
 After him Adzhibai took a shot,
 Not in haste, and cool, not hot,
 So that it never came to the ground,

Just went flying up, round and round.
 Those bogatirs were famous, to boot,
 Not for nothing did they shoot,
 Load their muskets, and light their fuse,
 Shoot as often as they choose,
 Kept that hat up, high in the air,
 6330 Two or three hours, a-flying there!
 Never letting it fall to the ground...
 Lion Manas then looked around,
 Watching the shots, and all were good.
 When the people in wonderment stood,
 When some two or three hours had passed by,
 Then he beat on his drum, aye, aye!
 Then that hat fell flat on the ground,
 Full of holes, like a sieve, all round.
 Thus the leader pleased everyone.
 6340 Once again he drubbed on his drum!
 Eighty-four knights who stood around
 With their flying banners were found.
 They separated themselves into four —
 Twenty-one knights in each group, no more.
 In four corners, divided, they stood,
 All of them in a fighting mood.
 When Manas then beat on his drum,
 First two groups into conflict come.
 With his white armour, by foes much feared,
 6350 With his long and flowing grey beard,
 With twenty comrades along with him,
 Just like tigers, snarling and grim,
 Old Bakai then attacked Kirgil,
 That old glutton, who liked his swill.
 Twenty tigers with him, of great skill.
 Those who looked on were paralysed still:
 Of such affrays could not get their fill —
 Seeing such contests gave them a thrill.
 Old Kirgil, he thundered out,
 6360 Full of fury, with snarling snout,
 Hurled himself straight upon Khan Bakai,
 Tilted his spear, at him let fly.

But Bakai's long spear struck him first,
 Straight in his breast, and he came off worst.
 Old Kirgil, who thought himself tough,
 Soon discovered that he'd had enough.
 Head-over-heels he slid from his steed,
 Then his companions went down indeed...
 All the people were so surprised
 6370 That Manas such sport had dvised.
 Kirgil's companions unseated then
 All were accounted defeated men.
 But Bakai's companions remained.
 They, with him, had victory gained.
 Then Manas waited — see what's in store!
 Now he beats on his drum once more!
 Having whipped up his steed Sarala,
 Having spurred him along so far,
 Up rode bogatir Almambet,
 6380 And Kirgil's unsaddled ones yet,
 Picked them up, as if each were a cat,
 And once more on their horses sat.
 So they soon came to themselves again,
 And at once they took the rein.
 All was done so quickly, so swift —
 All the twenty were given a lift.
 And again the folk showed surprise
 At Almambet's great skill likewise.
 Further he went galloping on
 6390 In the direction Bakai had gone
 After unseating Khan Kirgil,
 And overtook him, riding still.
 He had not even stopped his steed.
 He had not even turned round, indeed.
 When Almambet caught up where he'd gone,
 When he turned they met head on.
 Almambet thrust with his trusty spear,
 Sent Bakai head over heels in the air.
 Almambet's men had joined the fray —
 6400 Tigers for their foes were they.
 Whole and unharmed they went away.

After them came Adzhibai,
 Flew into attack, straight ahead,
 First of all againts Alamambet.
 All of them he then laid low,
 Flying off their steeds they go;
 Head-over-heels, knocked down they lie.
 After him came again Bakai.
 Like a young goat he took Almambet,
 6410 Lifted him up, and him then set
 Firmly upon his steed once more.
 With Bakai at their head that score
 Lifted then all the fallen men,
 Set them upon their steeds again.
 Everyone who saw this was glad.
 Then, from behind, there galloped like mad
 That old grey-beard Kirgil again,
 Knocked down Bakai, as if he were skin,
 Not only him but his twenty men there —
 6420 All went whirling through the air!
 Poor old Bakai fell down and crashed,
 But he was lucky, for up their dashed
 Bold Adzhibai and all his men,
 Showed his skill, re-sat him again.
 Then Manas to the fore did come,
 Once again he beat on his drum.
 All the knights then stood in two rows,
 With their painted arrows and bows.
 Deadly weapons all aimed, quite clear —
 6430 Just take a look — what a wonder here!
 Then their bows they swiftly bent,
 Whizzing away their arrows they sent.
 All the warriors seemed to be slain —
 To that other world they came...
 Then they lay stretched out, each one.
 Then Manas once more beat the drum.
 Those unbelievers can't trust their eyes —
 See, where each deadly arrow flies!
 Straight in the pom-poms on their caps!
 6440 That is some miracle now, perhaps?

Each painted arrow stuck in a cap,
 Sent it whirling away at that!
 All the people watching likewise,
 Still could scarcely believe their eyes.
 But these doubts were soon relieved,
 Each fallen warrior then retrieved
 His own cap, and stood unharmed,
 No need for folk to be so alarmed —
 Then nobody, not one did they kill —
 6450 Only displayed remarkable skill!
 When Manas beat his drum beneath,
 Then each drew his sword from its sheath,
 Ready each man to give priceless life,
 They rode headlong into the strife.
 People again were amazed at this game,
 As with a clash together they came.
 When they hewed and slashed without check,
 Never let sword-blades fall on their neck.
 Sword went sweeping again on sword,
 6460 Red sparks flew, and sweat drops poured.
 At this sword-play, forty times,
 Shouting, there clashed together two lines.
 So they gave there a great display,
 People began to cheer "Hooray!"
 With such skill Manas ran the show,
 No one was wounded, blow after blow,
 No one, parrying hard as could be,
 Ever let one blade touch him you see!
 Face to face, now see them stand,
 6470 Fighting with bared blades in hand!
 So it went on for two or three hours,
 Slashing and hewing and proving their powers.
 People who watched it were simply amazed,
 By the skill of these knights were dazed.
 Then those eighty-four warriors said —
 If just a scratch appears on your head,
 Leaders won't let you fight any more,
 No matter how you beg or implore.
 This is the test of your skill, you know...

6480 One small scratch — and out you go!
 Some felt "I'd like to knock him down!"
 But to the knight no spite was shown.
 That was kept hidden from his somehow.
 Some thought "May he drop dead, right now!
 I should kill him, had I the chance,
 On his corpse I then should dance!"
 When they thought "I'll strike him down!"
 Then the bogatirs skill was shown —
 Foes did not touch a hair of his head!

6490 'Mid that eighty were many who said:
 "There were some who threatened so!
 'That boastful braggart I'll send below!
 I'll see him off to, that other land!"
 Thanks to the skill of the bogatir's hand,
 He could not strike home one good blow.
 He could not send him down below.
 When the folk had seen all this,
 After two or three hours, that is,
 When Manas gave his drum a drub,

6500 Taking their battle-axe, halberd, or club,
 Shouting at each other a threat,
 With their weapons began to beat.
 But, whoever they thus assailed,
 He had only to raise his shield,
 And the attack was turned aside.
 Those who were watching loudly cried.
 Dark-red sparks began to fly,
 Skittering, scattering low and high.
 Mussulmen, unbelievers as well,

6510 Rather troubled began to yell:
 "What kind of people then are those —
 They stand hours and ward off blows!
 Some are tired, and bow their head...
 Let them stop now!" people said.
 "Many games they have shown us too!
 What is Manas now going to do?
 He, who whatever foe he may meet,
 Hurls in the dust beneath his feet?

After the midday prayers were told,
 6520 Then they remembered ingots of gold...
 To all other shooters it's plain —
 Neither powder nor shot remain.
 Judging for themselves they said:
 "There a gold ingot hangs o'erhead.
 What can Manas do there alone?
 If he shoots, it won't fall down!
 High it's hanging up in the air!"
 So the folk stood wondering there,
 Keeping bold Manas in view,
 6530 Mussulmen, unbelievers too,
 Waiting to see just what could be?
 Here come his bogatirs, you see!
 Each can shoot like no other one!
 With their crimson banners they come,
 With their most fearless head — Manas,
 He who acts as none other does!
 They bear spears with tassels of blue —
 Forty-odd wolves — and fierce ones too!
 All companions of bold Manas,
 6540 Standing in line without any fuss.
 Then Manas with wondrous force
 Beat on his rumbling drum, of course.
 First of them all stood old Bakai,
 He whose courage was always high,
 He beat Bordzhorgo with his whip,
 Long white beard in his belt did slip.
 Aimed his musket, Këkchibik,
 And as his steed went galloping quick,
 All the forty-odd bogatirs,
 6550 Straightway started raising cheers.
 From his fuse there flashed a blue flame.
 From Këkchibik, as he took aim,
 Came a roar as the shot flew up —
 One wire thread in two it cut.
 Having struck it, Bakai rode back.
 Following him and hot on his track,
 White-beard Kirgil rode forth with a cry,

Aimed his musket up in the sky.
 As it roared, and the shot flew true,
 6560 One more wire was cut in two.
 Not holding back one moment yet,
 Galloped up bogatir Almambet.
 With white flame his fuse flashed too,
 From Almambash the shot then flew,
 Cut still another wire in two.
 Following on rode uo Adzhibai,
 And the sharp-shooter Chalibai,
 From Tara-Toko came Medzhik,
 Then Kambar's brave son, Chalik,
 6570 All rode up, and all fired quick.
 Then on Sirgil rode up Satai,
 Then bey Shigil's young son, Atai.
 From Uishuns Umët came then,
 And his famous son, Dzhaisan.
 All of them came galloping up,
 And each one another wire cut.
 There the gold ingot hung on high,
 Forty-two fine wire threads, forby,
 All of them, and one by one,
 6580 With each shot were further undone,
 One less thread still weakened the tie.
 Following them then others rode by:
 From the Argins came Karabodzho,
 Whose good advice they value so.
 Bo-obek, Shaabek and Shyukyur,
 Very close friends of Manas, what's more.
 From the Arbans there came Altai,
 And Dërbën's brave son, Tërtai,
 And the dark fortune-teller Tëlēk —
 6590 Each took part in this delicate work.
 One thread snapped, they rode on by.
 Following them came others to try —
 Reading ram's shoulder-blades, Agidai,
 Telling the future thus rode by.
 Tokotoi, who a whole tribe ran,
 People's leader, Kalkaman,

Elyeman, a folk-leader true,
 And Manas' adviser too.
 Fearless both — Serek and Sirgak —
 6600 Specially helpful when things looked black,
 Konguru's young son, Koshabish,
 Head of a war-tent, young Ibish,
 Alimsha's sharp son, Alaken,
 Strikes the bull's-eye again and again,
 And our lion Manas, strong and stark.
 When the warriors move in the dark,
 When they go on distant campaign,
 Those who never lose track in the rain,
 Those who finally find the way through —
 6610 Scouts Kadir, Dzhainak, Shuutu,
 Those three excellent marksmen shone bright,
 When the warriors moved at night.
 When the hordes of Kirghiz made a move,
 Those who first-rate pathfinders prove —
 Don't lose a fox's tracks when they turn —
 Shuutu, Dzhainak, Tyumën,
 Those born marksmen were shooting too.
 From the Kazakhs came Dzhö-orongu,
 And the scouts Bëgël and Kaigil,
 6620 They were marksmen of accurate skill.
 Then the son of Shinga — Kerben,
 And the slyest of sly — Dërbën —
 Forty-odd bogatirs had a try.
 Thus the elders Kirgil and Bakai
 Saw that each had his turn, just once,
 Then they laft, with no further chance.
 Following all came lion Manas,
 For the last thread he prepared himself thus:
 Hitched up the end of his belt of gold,
 6630 And of himself took very firm hold.
 First he called on Allah above,
 Then Akkelte he began to move,
 That fine musket which ne'er missed the mark,
 Near or far, by daylight or dark.
 Barrel of steel, and muzzle of blue,

Smoke like mist, a-drifting too.
 Made by masters in Asphahan there,⁵²
 This he took and raised in the air.
 Aimed it straight at the last fine thread,
 6640 Holding the ingot of gold overhead.
 Archatore was a restless steed,
 Hard to control at times, indeed.
 Now he gave him a slash of the whip,
 Back in the saddle he then did slip,
 As his steed to the tall trees sped.
 Lifting his musket-sights o'erhead —
 Bang! went the shot, the blue smoke flew,
 And the last wire was cut clean through!
 Thus the ingot began to fall —
 6650 And how happy that made them all!
 That fine thread which held it fast,
 Hawk-eyed Manas cut through at last.
 All those hostile to him went mad.
 All his kinsmen, though, were glad.
 Then, as the ingot began to fall,
 Came the biggest surprise of all —
 Lion Manas, of great reknown,
 As the ingot came plummeting down,
 Sped on his steed, like a hunting hound,
 6660 And, as it tumbled towards the ground,
 Ere its resting-place it found,
 As it came plunging down and down,
 He was able to catch it just right,
 Like a hawk takes a lark in flight,
 Thus he saized it, and bore it away.
 What was that, if not skill, then, say?
 When at the last ingot-wire he fired,
 All had seen just what they desired,
 His own folk, and others as well,
 6670 Of this wonder they all could tell.
 From Katagans, old Koshoi was there,
 From the Kazakhs, Këkchë was there,
 Elyeman's son, Tështyuk, we see,
 From the Eshteks comes Dzhamgirchi.

From Dzhedigers was bold Bagish,
 And Dzhеткиr's young son, Agish.
 And the black-bearded brave Urbyu,
 Nephew of the Khan Dzhugëryu,
 And they all showed themselves well-pleased,
 6680 At Këkëti's memorial feast.
 So to see the games when set,
 Many various folk had met —
 Kerkëkyul's young son, Këkmëk,
 And Dzhanaï, son of bey Këchpës,
 Both thought "This is Këkëti's feast —
 And we'll help to serve guests, at least —
 There are so many of them here!
 And among those who enjoyed good cheer,
 Who at the ingot had shots let fly,
 6690 From the Kitais came Kongurbai.
 Muradil, son of Kirmus-shah,
 With his red tassel, chief Neskara,
 And black-bearded Boro-onchu,
 And from Kangais here's dame Orongu,
 Katkalang's daughter, beauty Saikal,
 Really, can I now name them all?
 From the Solons came Alo-oke.
 Bold Dzholoi, a wild boar I'd say.
 Son of Tokshukar — Bozkertik,
 6700 Solobo's son — So-oronduk.
 From the Kitais, Tungsha, Orongu —
 Mortal beings don't know what she'll do!
 That knows Allah above, alone!
 What is it then, when all's said and done?
 With a coarse cry comes Orongu.
 From the hair on her nape, peeping through
 There start creeping seventy mice!..
 Meanwhile we'll leave them — that's more wise!
 Now we'll return to Manas, bogatir...
 6710 There's something else you ought to hear...
 Listen, then, to the tale I tell!
 God raised his fame and glory as well.
 Did you not see with your own eyes

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 Now we'll return to Manas, bogatir...
 6710 There's something else you ought to hear...
 Listen, then, to the tale I tell!
 God raised his fame and glory as well.
 Did you not see with your own eyes

How he caught gold which fell from the skies?
 Let us give praise, then, where it's due!
 Further, let's see what he will do!
 Kieghiz folk old ways don't forget —
 So he calls "Baabedin, aid us yet!"
 Then he gives his own war-cry "Manas!"
 6720 And that gold ingot he carries thus,
 Shows it to all his warriors round;
 Famous among them all is found
 Old Koshoi, with his long white beard,
 Old Koshoi, elder brother, he neared,
 Offered the ingot then as a gift,
 Saying: "Take it, if you can lift!
 You are a wise elder brother to us,
 With deep respect the folk chose you thus.
 They all feel you've a noble soul --
 6730 So, take the ingot, take it whole!
 Give us your blessing too!" he cried.
 When Koshoi heard these words he replied,
 Grateful for the respect to him shown:
 "Keep it, my lad — it's for you alone!
 This old man standing with you here,
 Having lived a long life, it's clear,
 Do not deem higher than yourself!
 With your mastery you won this wealth.
 That is your prize, when all's said and done,
 6740 Take that reward then which you've won!
 If you fire your musket — then fire!"
 So said Koshoi, and praised Manas higher.
 When others heard what Koshoi had said,
 Just one thought came into their head:
 "Learn to shoot like lion Manas!"
 So that day's shooting ended thus...
 On the following day at morn,
 Then were heard the pipe and the horn.
 First the horn's low note rang clear,
 6750 Then the pipes high note you hear,
 Tambourines and kettle-drums drub,
 In your ears they echo and throb.

Këkëti's blue banner now flies,
 Raised on high in the morning skies.
 Masses of warriors flatten the land.
 Mussulmen right — left, heathens stand...
 ... Këkëti's blue banner now flies,
 Raised on high in the morning skies.
 Iraman's son, the young irchi,
 6760 Calls to all, as loud as can be:
 All the people gathered around.
 Here is the place where heralds are found.
 Masses of people who came at his call
 Didn't have chance to talk at all,
 Didn't have chance to think, likewise,
 Didn't have chance to blink their eyes,
 When they saw young Irchi make haste,
 With fifty tassels round his waist,
 With a huge pom-pom upon his hat,
 6770 Half-a-yard high it was, at that,
 This young herald, who speaks well there,
 Sat upon his horse on the square,
 And beside him Aidar sat there,
 And together they both declare,
 Shouting aloud to far and near:
 "Muslims and unbelievers here!
 Thousand of you have come to our feast,
 Honouring Këkëti, you're pleased.
 Now remember the words of Manas —
 6780 From small tribes he does not ask
 That each should send a strong-men out.
 So many various folk are about,
 He does not wish to bother you all,
 So for hundreds he does not call,
 From unbelievers send one strong-man!
 Choose the very best that you can.
 'Let him test his strength against us,
 Let him win if he can!' says Manas.
 Choose the best and put him to test.
 6790 As for opponents — we'll do the rest!
 Thus our leaders have sent us here,

Saying to all the folk, far and near:
 'Let nobody there feel depressed,
 Let them choose their strongest and best,
 Let them send no weakling along —
 Like rocks on mountains, let them be strong!
 Let others grind our man into dust —
 If they can — why then, they must!
 That's the sort of man we need,
 6800 Choose your strongest one for the deed!
 He who breaks iron, as if a reed,
 He who lifts elephants up indeed!
 He who can trample foes in the dust,
 He whom his own people can trust,
 He whom giants can not subdue,
 He who alone can fight like two,
 He who serves as a stay to his folk,
 He who never has known the yoke —
 Unbeliever, 'gainst Muslim true!
 6810 We shall then oppose these two.
 Let all people hear this news!
 Let him who wins no prize refuse!
 Let him who loses not think of such —
 Six hundred horses — if that's not much,
 One hundred camels with them set,
 And if that seems little yet —
 Two hundred cows he'll get beside,
 And to make sure he's satisfied,
 Five hundred sheep he'll get also —
 6820 Call the people, let all folk know.
 Let them wrestle there on the square,
 Let the loser gain nothing there!
 Let the winner be satisfied,
 Let him receive the prize with pride!
 So the heralds went around.
 Nowhere such festive games can be found.
 Unbelievers from, east and west,
 Gathered together, and chose the best,
 All unanimous, at the last,
 6830 To one choice they all held fast

They decided on one strong-man,
 And to encourage him they began.
 All were gathered together tight,
 Round this monstrous man of might,
 They had formed a cheering ring,
 Dust all round, you can't see a thing.
 Then at last they moved aside,
 And, what fun! — there we espied
 That great rogue and rascal Dzholoi,
 6840 In the centre, his face full of joy!
 There we saw him, and we thought:
 "Scoundrel Dzholoi, the good-for-nought!"
 All the heathens esteem his though,
 Strongest of all they deemed him so.
 Look at his nails, for instance, there —
 Like tiger's talons, ready to tear.
 Look at his whiskers, how they are sprayed,
 Broad and sharp, the edge like a blade,
 Just like spokes sticking out of a hub.
 6850 Fatter is he than the largest tub!
 Like big cups his eye sockets are.
 Father unwedded, unblessed so far.
 Mother was bedded, unwedded, no doubt.
 No marriage service they carried out.
 No such wrestler you've seen about,
 Broad in the shoulders, short and stout.
 Yellow his face, with fat cheeks is found,
 Each black brow like a leaping hound,
 He your powers to the last will prove,
 6860 He is a giant whom none can move!
 Like a huge cauldron is his head,
 Long plaits of hair round his shoulders spread,
 Like the reins on a horse's mane.
 Forty-odd years he won't see again.
 Low-down fellow, not tall at all,
 Like the base of a minaret wall...
 Thinks that more than others he's worth,
 And will beat all strong-men on earth.
 This is the wrestler whom they chose —

6870 He's a Kalmak, as everyone knows.
 Out he goes now, and sits on the square.
 Ears stick out like round shields through his hair.
 If you look at his eye-lashes there,
 They are like nettles, in hollows bare.
 Any foe in his grapple found
 Down to oatmeal he'll straightway pound.
 If you look at this hefty strong-man,
 You see shoulders near two arms-span.
 Three, perhaps, when he stretches them clear.

6880 For Khan Kongurbai-bogatir,
 He's the nearest and dearest friend.
 Where do those shoulder-muscles end?
 Two men, surely, could sit there pat?
 Then just look at his cheeks, so fat!
 Two hungry dogs on them could feed!
 Then what eye-sockets there, indeed!
 Just like pits, dug out to keep grain.
 Pus on his lashes like clay remains,
 Which then crumbles to powdery dust,

6890 When the hunters boil it in cups.
 Calves he had, like the thighs of a bull.
 Breath from his nostrils, flat and full,
 Like the wind on a mountain pass.
 Take a look, now, at his arms —
 Like a forty-year old plane-tree.
 Take a look at his brow, and see —
 That's like a menacing bird of prey,
 From whose threat you can't get away.
 And the width of his monstrous breast,

6900 That's like the slopes of a mountain crest!
 If you look at the way he walks —
 There like a hungry wolf he stalks.
 If you look at his back and spine —
 That's a course for a horse-racing line!
 If, by chance, his nipples you've seen,
 They're like a maiden's — just fifteen!
 Having decided to go out and fight,
 And to give all opponents a fright,

That accursed one, with menacing stare,
 Having undressed, went out on the square...
 On a green poplar no axe-marks are seen.
 'Mid the people what seers have not been?
 Even if you whisper, let's say,
 There are hearers who hear far away.
 'Mid the people what seers have not been?
 They are those who see the unseen.
 They are guessers, who signs can guess —
 They believed in Dzholoi's success.
 Heathen fortune-tellers declared:

6920 "In the world a brave has appeared,
 "He's a courageous one!" said they,
 "Beating his chest, he brags away.
 There is a certain haughteur in him.
 Sword is sharp, spear strong, though slim.
 There is a certain bravado also —
 He will not retreat from a foe.
 There is a certain firmness there too —
 Giant Dzholoi as wrestler they knew.
 All the heathens his powers prize.

6930 He has muscles like camels thighs.
 There is certainly strenght to be found.
 Once Muzburchak he hurled to the ground.
 During a furious wrestling bout,
 He thinks that death will not lay him out.
 There a certain brute force meets one's eyes.
 There Kalmaks, Dzhuutis and Kitais,
 Most of the folk, they looked on awhile,
 Said their prayers in their own style.
 Turning their face to the east they prayed:

6940 "God in heaven, now send us your aid!"
 Thus they bowed and prayed, and were blessed.
 When folk saw his enormous chest,
 They all inwardly trembled at that.
 Going out on the square, there he sat,
 Trumpeted like a tired elephant there.
 He had a pipe, like a jug, I declare,
 Round about did blue smoke float,

In his gullet, and in his throat,
 All was gurgling, like water inside.
 6950 Happily heathens all noisily cried.
 Loudly the echoes rang in folk's ears.
 When he looked angrily, it appears,
 Flames came hissing out of his eyes.
 There he sat, of colossal size.
 None other visible, low or high.
 Then old Koshoi began to cry:
 "Hey, you fellows, come out, one of you —
 Don't let him boast, but tear him in two!
 Knock all the stuffing out of that cur!"
 6960 None of the warriors there would stir.
 Nobody wanted to fight such a bear.
 Having seen what a monster sat there,
 Having seen his spite, his fat,
 Who would go near a boar like that?
 "That's a poor slave, whose luck was brief.
 That's a poor scoundrel, without belief,
 That's a poor devil whom Satan misled,
 That's a poor swine, with a swollen head.
 Only to serve his people more,
 6970 Being a Khan, that great wild boar,
 Look you here, has come out to fight!"
 To any leader of tribes by right,
 To any strong-man, with fighting power,
 So as to speak to all in that hour,
 So as to hear all their replies,
 Old Koshoi, as his white beard flies,
 On his pale-grey steed smoothly rode:
 "Spiller of blood on meeting a foe,
 Dzhoo-odara's brave son, Chegish,
 6980 You bold fellow, step forth, if you wish!
 You brave lad, above others by far,
 Khan of the Dzhazire and Dzhemsa,
 What if you now go out and fight?
 What if you now show Dzholoi your might?
 What if you now go out on the square?"
 He'd scarcely asked those questions there,

When he received a reply, quickly so:
 "Near that Dzholoi I will not go,
 To that accursed heathen boar!"
 6990 And, with that, he said no more!
 So Koshoi to another said this:
 "You are from the tribe Karabish,
 You are your father's only one,
 Son of Sayat, our Abdiraman!
 Now the time for us all has come,
 When we Mussulmen, each one,
 All our valour and strength must employ
 To defeat that heathen Dzholoi.
 'Our Dzholoi's the best wrestler today!'

7000 So all those unbelievers say.
 "Near to Dzholoi I will not go!
 I can't wrestle with him so!"
 Thus to old Koshoi he replied.
 He, with beard all shining white,
 On his pale-grey steed spurred ahead,
 Came to Kerkëkyul instead.
 When he asked him "What about you?"
 "Near to Dzholoi I will not go!
 I won't start to tease him!" said he.
 7010 So old Koshoi rode further see,
 On his pale-grey steed again.
 This time to Dzhamgirchi he came,
 Dzhamgirchi, the bold bogatir.
 Questioned him when he drew near.
 When he asked him "What about you?"
 "Near to Dzholoi I will not go!"
 Straight away he made reply,
 So Koshoi just passed him by,
 Rode up to Taz's son, Urbyu,
 7020 Who was bold, and quarrelsome too.
 "What about you, will you take him on?
 There's a rich prize which must be won!
 When he rode up and spoke to him so,
 Young Urbyu, a wrestler, you know,
 And a very sharp-tongued boy,

Answered him "My dear old Koshoi!
 Where have all your brains gone today?
 That Dzholoi who goes bragging away,
 That cunning rogue who sits on the square,
 7030 He's got muscles like mounds, I declare!
 Therefore on the square he still sits.
 Just take a look, and stir your wits!
 Who is there with him can compare?
 Calves like swaddled babes, I declare.
 If I go against him, Koshoi,
 He will play with me like a toy!
 Muscles he has, like a camel's thigh,
 Whiskers he has which could pierce your eye.
 If by chance in his hands I came,
 7040 That would be the end of my game!
 Nothing of me would remain to arise!
 Muscles like wine-skins on his thighs.
 Like leather buckets his biceps grow,
 Like a barrel protrudes his brow.
 Look at his lengthy arms, just see,
 Like an old oak, or sycamore tree.
 Take a look at his genitals too —
 Like wooden cups they hang, it's true!
 Look at his sinews, like cables, see!
 7050 What would he do with a pup like me?
 Don't waste words — I'm no more than a boy!"
 Hearing his answer, old Koshoi
 Said "What a wayward fellow is he —
 Doesn't take any notice of me!
 Doesn't show any signs of shame!"
 And with that, he rode on again,
 And to Këkchë he made his way.
 "You live in Sari-Arka, they say,
 And most tribes of Kazakhs you lead
 7060 On Kertëbël, you famous steed.
 Galloping on against a foe,
 Hewing his head off, you slay him so!
 You, Këkchë, are Kazakhs' great pride,
 Always head held high you ride.

This Dzholoi has come out to fight,
 To defend their honour and might.
 Heathens are all preparing now —
 If their champion lays ours low,
 Then they are ready to fall on us!"
 7070 Old Koshoi addressed him thus.
 But Këkchë tried to put him aside,
 Though he had appealed to his pride.
 He said "Oh, I just brag and boast,
 But I'm no stronger here than most.
 You tried to flatter me, 'You're so strong!'
 But, Koshoi, that's where you're wrong!
 After they'll say 'Këkchë came out,
 But our Dzholoi just turned him about,
 Took him and hurled him down on the ground!'

7080 But thus shamed I will not be found.
 Near to Dzholoi I will not go!
 For I know he will work me woe!
 He gulps a hundred kilos of bread,
 Still he's not satisfied, so 'tis said.
 If he fights with someone, that swine,
 He leaves them lying dead, that swine,
 If he eats twenty kilos more,
 He'll leave them torn to bits, that boar.
 If he meets wrestlers, one at a time,
 7090 He'll lay them dead as dogs, that swine!
 Seven sacks of corn once he ate.
 Giant Dzholoi still smelt of bread.
 Seven giants once hurled in the mud.
 Giant Dzholoi still smelt of blood.
 Six more sacks of corn then he ate.
 Giant Dzholoi still smelt of bread.
 Sixty bogatirs having slain,
 Giant Dzholoi smelt of blood again!"
 So said Këkchë to old Koshoi.
 7100 No other words could he employ...
 Then Koshoi he cursed that cur:
 "May you go to hell, Këkchë!
 May you fall beneath the earth!

Less now than nothing are you worth!
 Less than nothing is worth your word —
 All you say is so absurd!
 All the Mussulmen, young and old,
 Have they not heard what you have told?
 Do they not listen, and observe?
 7110 From their decision do they not swerve?
 If some brave one there heard you shout,
 Will he not feel his heart torn out?
 If some strong-man your words has heard,
 Will he not, scared by them, be deterred?
 If some opponent should wish to fight,
 Will he not, scared, then lose his might?
 Evil were those words you said!
 If you don't wish — then don't go ahead!
 You have shamed yourself on earth —
 7120 But if you yourself don't step forth,
 Why deter others, who wish to fight?"
 Thus he reproached Këkchë alright!
 Then he left him, turned round his steed,
 And to find Tështyuk did he speed.³⁶
 Old Koshoi spurred on his horse,
 And discovered him in due course.
 Crowds were standing all around,
 When the brave Kipchak he found —
 "Elyeman's famous youngest son,
 7130 And your father's favourite one!
 This Dzholoi from the Manguls here,
 All his opponents have cause to fear.
 How he's appeared on the wrestling square,
 And all those who have seen him there
 Have lost hope to defeat him now.
 Versus this honourless heathen somehow;
 Versus this conscienceless demon, look
 Will you step forth to fight, my Tështyuk?
 Do not refuse, and your honour thus lose,
 7140 Throw out this cursed Dzholoi as you choose!"
 All these Mussulmen standing here
 Don't disappoint — they trust you, it's clear!"

Such were the words Koshoi had to say.
 When he thus asked him, could he say nay?
 "No I won't fight!" he just could not say
 To his old uncle Koshoi, anyway!
 "Often on foot, without any horse,
 How many giants I fought in due course!
 Only those with whom I had fights,
 7150 They were goblins, demons or sprites!
 Therefore I, who defeated them then
 Can't be thrown down by mortal men.
 Can the moon from stars be confined?
 Having left my Kirghiz behind,
 Those who lived on the heights of Këikap,
 Then with giants I started to scrap.
 Then with goblins and sprites as well,
 Then with demons, straight out of hell,
 Then with hobgoblins of evil intent —
 7160 Seven years fighting them I spent.
 Much I saw never seen before.
 Not overcome by my foes, what's more,
 Now, tired out, I've come back here,
 And returned to those held dear.
 And I've met you again, as before.
 Dear Koshoi, what could I ask more?
 I have heard what you had to say.
 After I'd been so long away,
 I see you're in good health, that's clear,
 7170 And I'm glad to have met you here!
 From Dzholoi, that arrogant brat,
 I shall not turn away, that's that!
 And to stand before you all whole —
 That is the yearning of my soul.
 Let me fulfil this wish of yours,
 Now you are already old, of course,
 I can be of use to you, look!"
 Such was the answer of Tështyuk.
 "In this world my dreams come true!"
 7180 Having heard what he planned to do,
 Having seen his decisive eye,

Old Koshoi began to think why.
 Gave him a more attentive look,
 Then his old white head he shook:
 "Listen now, Tështyuk, my lad —
 What you said has made me glad,
 But you have been to that world below.
 Not after seventy years, you know,
 But while young, from your folk you went.
 7190 Seven years there alone you spent.
 Many things you have suffered there,
 Now you'll fight Dzholoi, you declare!
 Don't do that, Tështyuk, my lad,
 Having protected you from bad,
 Having shielded you with his breast,
 Flying swifter than all the rest —
 In one day what takes a year,
 Zimirik* has helped you, that's clear.
 You have returned, but barely alive.
 7200 You must rest, gain strength, and thrive!
 Then against the Kalmak you may fight!"
 Having thus set the matter right,
 Bold Koshoi rode off on his way.
 Rogue Dzholoi still waited the fray.
 On the square, as before he sat.
 How can I be silent on that?
 One bogatir, it seems, appeared.
 Këkbëryui's son, Këkkoën, nought feared.
 So Koshoi rode up, made a gest,
 7210 Bowed, and placed both hands on his breast.
 Thus Koshoi made him welcome there,
 And received a welcoming stare!
 "Hey there, Këkkoën, my lad,
 With your red tassel on your hat,
 You are from the Kitais," said he,
 "Others put forward a wresler, see,
 But an idiot rogue is he,
 From the Kalmaks he comes, Dzholoi,
 And all his cunning he'll employ.
 7220 Going to fight him? I wish you joy!"

So said Koshoi. Këkkoën began:
 "If you think a moment, old man,
 Who will give me firmness and strength?
 If I'm beaten by him at length,
 Aliens then will gloat with joy!"
 So Këkkoën replied to Koshoi.
 "If my strength, like a wine-skin, is full,
 Then his strength is more like a bull,
 More like horse-hide saba* with kumiss,
 7230 Specially when fermented that is!"
 He replied: "You're light-headed, my lad!"
 And off he rode again at that,
 Left him there, and found Akbai.
 There was a youngster who pleased his eye.
 Like a young goat on the precipice brink,
 Such was his boldness, it made you think,
 He was so frisky, it made you blink.
 Just like a lantern shone each eye,
 Just like a spring bursting forth nearby,
 7240 And imposing was young Akbai!
 Dark brows over dark eyes we see,
 Seventeen years old was he.
 Head like a cauldron, if you please,
 Long black hair which blew in the breeze.
 Up to him then rode Koshoi,
 Asked him "How are you, my boy?"
 Quite quick-witted and ardent was he,
 And he replied to him instantly.
 "I am not one who runs away.
 7250 I am ready to fight him today!
 If the people here so choose,
 I am not one who would refuse.
 If they want me to go, I'll go.
 If I am needed, I'll do so.
 I'm not scared of that heathen man!"
 Thus replied young Akbai-dzhan.*
 Old Koshoi was sharp-eyed, no doubt,
 So he took a good look about —
 His new wife of fifteen stood there,

7260 With thin fingers, and long dark hair,
 With her slim neck, round head, and her sash —
 Daughter of Taanikhan, Ziyandash.
 "You have chosen a beautiful wife,
 Often join with her, on my life!
 In so doing you have grown weak,
 Scarcely a spoonful of blood in your cheek.
 • You have grown thin, my Akbai-dzhan,
 You have not strength enough, young man,
 With that Dzholoi to fight for long!

7270 Still your calves have not grown strong.
 You aren't prepared for such a feat,
 Such a giant you must not meet,
 Or your heart will not stand the strain,
 Don't push forward so again!
 On your crown just feathery fluff,
 On your lips, mother's milk — enough!
 You've not long left the cradle behind,
 And your manhood you've yet to find.
 You are still far from being mature,

7280 Valour and strength you need — still more.
 You have not lost your childhood's fluff.
 Till you find you have strength enough
 To tear off a big branch from a tree,
 Keep away from Dzholoi, you see.
 Or he'll tear an arm from you,
 Or, it may be, even two!
 Then all Muslims will haste to your aid,
 They'll start brawling, hot blood won't be stayed.
 How will you stop dissention anew

7290 If he tears off a leg from you?
 How many Muslims standing here
 Would not do something to get you clear?
 That Dzholoi is a dangerous chap.
 Many an enemy he's knocked flat.
 Don't think he's a fool, anyway!
 With such a scoundrel do not play!
 If, my lad, you should fight with him,
 Chance of survival would be quite slim.

Don't seek to win the prize — that's in vain!"

7300 Then, with that, he rode on again.
 He went toward Buudaika's son —
 Muzburchak, his only one.
 And when he came up to them,
 He asked "What about it, then?"
 Muzburchak replied: "Not I! —
 I am much too young to try!
 Near to Dzholoi I will not go —
 All about that sly swine I know!
 Can a young fellow go out there
 'Gainst Dzholoi, who sits on the square?

7310 So Koshoi rode on again —
 In his heart — vexatious pain.
 To Manas he galloped then,
 To that brilliant leader of men,
 He like none else can thrust with a spear,
 With his forty bogatirs near,
 With his red banner fluttering clear —
 To Manas, who knew no fear,
 He, with his special style indeed.

7320 Trotting along on his pale-grey steed,
 White beard waving in the breeze,
 Old Koshoi rode up, if you please,
 And the brilliant, bold Manas,
 Greeted him, and made a fuss.
 Then Koshoi replied, to him,
 Told him of the fix he was in.
 "There's this giant rogue Dzholoi,
 Up to every trick and ploy,
 Full of fury all the time,

7330 Son of Keder, illegitimate line.
 He's come out on foot to fight,
 But finds no opponent in sight!
 Famous wrestlers all are lost —
 Seeing their weakness, can't stand the cost.
 So against this monster grim
 None has come to grapple with him!
 You were always stern, but bold,

And your valour was untold —
 Well — that good-for-nought sits there,
 7340 Waiting still on the wrestling square.
 All the other wrestlers here
 He has simply filled with fear.
 Though I'm old and awkward now,
 Like a long-tied camel, somehow,
 If you don't step forward to fight,
 Then, who else — it seems I might!
 You were always stern, but bold,
 And your valour was untold —
 But if you don't take up the fight,
 7350 Tell me, then, d'you know who might?"
 So Koshoi the question then framed.
 When Manas heard him, he felt ashamed.
 In confusion then he said:
 "Rightly you came to me as head!
 But they're just words, though well you played.
 If I show signs of being afraid,
 Then, indeed, you may swear at me,
 If a coward I seem to be.
 But I'll answer you right now,
 7360 Tell you the truth, and that I vow!
 When I am galloping on my steed
 I'm a gun-shot — sure death, indeed!
 But when afoot, I then feel weak,
 From my folk then strength must seek.
 Though I'm quick-tempered and haughty too,
 There are things which I must not do.
 If I o'erthrow him, I shan't survive.
 Fearless Koshoi, that's truth, as I live!
 If I o'erthrow him, and leave him dead,
 7370 Then certain shame will fall on my head!
 If in the name of my forbears I go,
 If this wild boar I overthrow,
 Then mount my steed again in pride,
 If all around I proudly ride,
 Like a huge giant, on every side,
 Showing myself to every tribe,

How shall I then find further strength
 To take part in the jousting at length?
 If the Creator restores my power
 7380 For the needed spear-thrusting hour,
 If in the jousting and wrestling too
 I am victor, in both win through,
 Others will say that I leave them nought,
 Such a judgment I have not sought
 If I wrestle, and win that huge prize,
 They'll say I'm greedy — how otherwise?
 Such a slander I'll bring on my head.
 Better not wrestle, but joust instead!"
 Such a reply to Koshoi he gave,
 7390 And old Koshoi then looked very grave.
 He was grieved, and at last said this:
 "From the tribes of Kara-Kirghiz,
 From her famous, brave bogatirs,
 From her menacing knights with spears,
 From her cunning ones, full of spite,
 Not one strong-man comes forth to fight!
 Some sheered away, and weakness showed,
 Did not throw down that despicable rogue,
 No matter how for boldness I bawled,
 7400 No matter how for courage I called!
 Yet not one of you listened to me,
 Nor came to grips with our enemy!
 You just poured curses on me, instead:
 'May your tongue just rot in your head!
 May you not a happy road tread!
 May your mouth become full of sand!
 May you meet trouble on every hand!
 Since no Mussulmen knights with you stand,
 Only of simple folk are you head,
 7410 Though you're old, and a giant!' you said.
 "You did not pull me out of the mud,
 You did not spill that wild boar's blood!"
 So he spoke out what was on his mind,
 To all those knights who stayed behind.
 Still full of resignation to go —

Loudly he struck on his saddle-bow.⁵³
 Having said so, he then fell dumb.
 Feeling decisive moments come,
 Bold Manas his decision guessed —
 7420 Gave the old man no time to rest.
 Like a hawk he swooped on him once more,
 Like a peopard, lusting for gore,
 Suddenly, taken by one idea —
 To old Koshoi he then drew near:
 "Don't go spreading nets for the crows!
 Do not lower yourself before those.
 Though you are old, you're powerful still,
 You step out like a camel at will.
 You are still healthy, and looking fine!
 7430 If you don't fight that heathen swine,
 If I too, as your nearest friend,
 If I don't fight that swine to the end,
 Who, then, will dare to face that boar?
 No one will grapple with him, for sure!
 If they did, would they survive?
 Not one of them would stay alive!
 'I won't go near Dzholoi!' they say,
 'I'm not his equal in any way!
 They think one thing — that dead they'll fall!
 7440 I see through them, one and all!
 Just like drunkards do, speak they
 At this feast where wrestlers play.
 Khans in a special position are found:
 'Rogue Dzholoi's besieging us round!
 They will say if no fighter's found,
 If before him you still give ground,
 If against him you don't go to fight,
 They will say 'The prize is his right!
 So agree, then, to grapple with him.
 7450 If you can't — all the same he'll win!
 For you will have to give him the prize!"
 Lion Manas spoke thus, with sharp eyes,
 Seeing just how the land really lies,
 And Koshoi made answer likewise:

"Ah, you life, how swift run your hours!
 How one's strength ebbs away, and one's powers!
 How one weakens, from day to day!
 How like a flower one fades away!
 Këkëtëi's feast for me may end grim!"
 7460 All at last became clear to him!
 "Here are more Khans than simple folk!"
 Such were the words which then he spoke.
 "Here are more leaders than those they lead!
 One can't just number them all, indeed.
 Now that I too, like them, grow old,
 Now that I've passed through autumn's gold,
 Now you have thus disquietened me,
 Now your meaning I clearly see.
 When my beard, all white, flies out,
 7470 Much I regret and grieve about...
 That contemptible thing called death,
 That which robs us of our last breath,
 That is a closed-up iron cage.
 Now I feel the weight of my age.
 If I, Koshoi, were a padishah,
 If in life I had got so far,
 And was still only twenty-five,
 And could plan these games and survive,
 If my path was barred by that one,
 7480 If he had even a head of stone,
 Still he would not have escaped alive.
 If I had met him at thirty-five,
 Would I not, as a bogatir then,
 Have destroyed him, like other men?
 If he had started to fight with the spear,
 Leg to leg, and there and here,
 Would I not have o'erthrown him then?
 Would I not give for one blow — ten?
 Would that belching boar have survived?
 7490 If I had met him at forty-five,
 If I had grappled with him then,
 Would I not have crippled him then?
 If he had slashed at me with a sword,

If, in a fury, my blade ignored,
 Would I not have hewn off his head?
 Would I not then have left him dead?
 Would I have let that swine survive?
 If I had net him at fifty-five,
 Would I not then have knocked him flat?
 7500 If in dealing with him like that,
 Would I not then have dug his grave?
 Would I not then have buried that slave?
 When my power diminished then,
 When eighty years were finished then,
 When thirty years have passed on by,
 When all quiet and useless I lie,
 Then came my dear friend, Manas,
 Made the suggestion: "Fight for us!"
 Then I looked around to see
 7510 Just how deceptive this world could be!
 Don't let that swine begin to shout!
 Don't let Manas have any doubt!
 I shan't be shamed before my folk,
 My own decision I shan't revoke.
 If the time comes to die, I'll die!
 Cold winds blow when clouds are high.
 Since that swine his challenge has thrown,
 Though I am old, yet let it be known,
 I am prepared the risk to take,
 7520 And of that boar I shall mince-meat make!
 Only one thing there is, I must say;
 Allah alone knows on this day
 Shall I return with honour or not.
 I shall strive with what strength I've got.
 I am sorry for one thing more,
 And my sorrow pains me sore.
 This is really an endless woe,
 My black beard has gone white through it so,
 And I really look quite old,
 7530 Through an unskilful wife, be it told.
 Trousers rustle on my backside —
 That's her fault — when tanning the hide —

Skin off a miserable half-starved goat —
 Devil may take her by the throat! —
 When she laid it with bark to soak,
 Then she let it get dry as oak,
 Over-tanned it, too stiff, the wretch —
 Now it crackles, and will not stretch!
 If that cursed giant Dzholoi
 7540 Starts his monstrous strength to employ,
 And grabs hold of me by the crutch,
 Trousers will split, and reveal too much!
 And at once, your Koshoi, all the same,
 Will be laughed at, and put to shame.
 This single combat I don't refuse,
 But I don't wish my honour to lose.
 I will get to grips with this bear,
 When I've got decent trousers to wear!
 My dear bogatir, Manas,
 7550 Go and speak to your people thus,
 Go and see if you can find
 Kid-leather trousers for my behind!
 Call your khans, and ask them too,
 See what they, perhaps, can do!
 You must find me some kandagai*
 Which won't split, and to pieces fly!
 Those which fit well, easily stretch,
 Those which can't be split by that wretch,
 Those which shrink when you take them off,
 7560 Those which stretch when you want to cough!
 If they are made from several strips,
 They fit snugly round one's hips.
 Can you find such among your folk?"
 Such were the words Koshoi then spoke.
 Then he stoof there, looking round.
 Bold Manas soon someone found —
 He espied Sandzhibek standing by,
 From Kokand he came, and, oh my!
 Wore yellow trousers of kid-leather fine!
 7570 "Come here, useless, and fall in line!"
 So Manas ordered him then to slay.

Sandzhibek turned his steed straightway,
 And he rode towards Manas...
 "Hey, Koshoi, what trousers he has!
 Would they suit you, my dear old chap?
 Would they be what you need, mayhap?"
 "Dear Manas!" old Koshoi replied,
 "You saw they're leather, but nothing beside!
 'Would they suit you?' you then asked me.
 7580 Well, I just look, and what do I see?
 Do you think my heels would pass through?
 If I pulled them, they'd split in two!
 Even though of kid-leather they're made!
 Dear Manas, just think what you said --
 Obviously, they're much too small,
 But you did not notice at all!
 So said Koshoi, and again looked round,
 And, on the right, another knight found --
 Bold Këkchë, the brave bogatir,
 7590 And he took a close look at him there!
 "You've a sewn hat, and gold trousers too,
 Silken waist-band, weapons not few,⁵⁴
 Gold-soled shoes, and brazen heels,
 Aidarkan's son is well-dressed, one feels.
 Brave Këkchë, you have a good wife,
 One who knows how to sew, on my life!
 From the caravan-men I hear
 Akerkech is a seamstress rare!
 Skilled with the needle, they call her.
 7600 Come, then, my cousin-in-law Këkchë,⁵⁵
 Take off your trousers, and change with me!"
 So said Koshoi, as bold as could be,
 To Këkchë, the chief of Kazakhs,
 Who at once then slipped off his slacks:
 "Here you are, uncle!" then said he.
 Old Koshoi kicked his trousers free,
 Gave them straight to Këkchë to wear,
 So, it seemed, the exchange was fair.
 Then Koshoi, of the Kara-Kirghiz,
 7610 Still a strong giant old man, that is,

Down the leg tried to put his right foot,
 But it got stuck on his calf, like a hook.
 Further than that it would not go,
 So the left foot he tried also.
 That only got as far as his heel,
 Further -- no good to try -- he could feel.
 So he pulled them off instead,
 Took them in his hands and said:
 "She who sewed them should be killed,
 7620 She was so awkward and unskilled.
 She should have her right cheek in weals,
 She should be hung up by her heels,
 She should have her right plait cut short,
 She should be beaten, and brought to court.
 Having sat her on a black steed,
 With a felt tunic on, indeed,⁵⁶
 Straight into father's hands again
 She should be brought, and with him remain.
 Better that you should take a new wife,
 7630 Than be cursed with her all your life!
 Off at night you could quickly go,
 And by day pay visits also.
 You could secretly look about,
 Off to the maidens, to seek them out.
 You are now no longer young,
 And to wear tight slacks, as you've done,
 Is no longer befitting for you.
 If you fight with a foe-man too,
 If you grapple with him on the square,
 7640 If you start jousting with lengthy spear,
 And are suddenly hurled to the ground,
 There, by chance, unseated are found,
 When you wish to mount once again,
 And to leap up with might and main,
 Trousers will catch on the saddle-bow,
 Then you will have to fear the foe.
 You are not one for spear-fights, like me,
 I cannot have such trousers, not free.
 Though a little lean I might be,

7650 Still my legs are quite sturdy, you see!"
 Then the old man, having said his say,
 Still felt offended on that day.
 "May your trousers and you go to hell!
 May your horse go with you as well!"
 As he started to ride ahead,
 He beat the trousers on him instead.
 Those who saw this all fell dumb.
 But Këkchë to shame had come...
 So Koshoi could no trousers find.

7660 That still worried him, troubled his mind.
 There were no trousers to suit his taste,
 So he lingered, and time did waste.
 This lying world will pass away.
 So he lingered — no more to say.
 Suddenly then an effort he made.
 Spirits of ancestors came to his aid.
 What, then, was it that happened thus?
 To Koshoi again came Manas!
 He rode up, and again did say:

7670 "She's a skilled scamstress is my Kanikei!"
 Semingly she, thought to me unknown,
 One pair of trousers has already sewn.
 She had prepared them for me, for campaign.
 Hidden in her trunk they have lain.
 Adzhibai, and Chalibai,
 So having seen them, praised them high.
 Lion Manas gave orders to them:
 "Bring them here, let him try them then!
 They, it seems, should suit very well!"

7680 So said Manas, and there's more to tell!
 Then without stopping, Manas gave praise
 To his young wife and all her ways.
 He just could not silent stand
 Till he had spoken all he planned.
 "Adzhibai and Chalibai,"
 Then said quietly old Koshoi,
 "Go and bring those trousers here,
 Let me see them, get things clear.

I shall assess them, on my life,
 And the skill of Manas' wife!"

7690 When they heard these words of Koshoi,
 Adzhibai and Chalibai,
 Having received this quiet request,
 Having obeyed Koshoi's behest,
 Having turned one horse about,
 From 'neath the blanket they drew out,
 From 'neath the saddle, the trousers there,
 Brought them out — a new-made pair,
 Placed them in the old man's hands.

7700 He no longer inactive stands —
 He jumped up to try them out,
 His right foot he poked about,
 But the leather stuck to his calf —
 Then the left leg — but only half,
 Even his heel would not go through,
 So those trousers he tugged and drew
 Nearer to him, but all in vain —
 He could not get them on again.
 To Adzhibai and Chalibai

7710 Then he slowly winked an eye:
 "Sit down here, my slaves," said he,⁵⁷
 "Try to get these trousers on me.
 If we cannot arrange them so —
 Lion Manas must never know!
 Never suspect they do not fit!
 Let him not plague his wife with it!
 Let him not cause her any harm,
 Let him not scratch her, spoil her charm!
 Let him not beat her good and hard,

7720 Let him not turn her out on the yard!
 Let him not cut her right plait short,
 Let him do nothing of that sort!
 Let him not sit her on a black steed,
 With a tunic of felt, indeed!
 Let him not send her all around,
 Wherever Kara-Kirghiz are found.
 Let him not send her to father again.

Let her not with Kara-Khan remain!
 So that Kanikei does not say:
 7730 'Go to the devil, Kirghiz, today!'

On her palate a seal is impressed —
 Magical powers in her speeches rest.
 In whatever she starts to do,
 Our great Allah helps her through!
 Yes, her curses all come true!
 Women serve her, heart and soul,
 Praise her wisdom and self-control.
 No, my Kara-Kirghiz, be true —
 7740 Let not sorrowful days come to you!
 "Sit down here, my slaves," said he,
 Try to get these trousers on me.
 What will come of this, after all?"
 So said Koshoi, to ease his gall.
 Nonetheless, he let them try.
 Adzhibai and Chalibai,
 One stood left, and one stood right,
 Both were ready to pull them tight,
 Both prepared, none more, none less,
 7750 Both of them wishing to have success.
 If these trousers they can't slip on,
 Lion Manas may come along,
 He'll be fierce, and force will employ!
 We'll do all, as said by Koshoi!
 When they pulled again and again,
 When poor Koshoi gave groans of pain,
 When they just could not manage it,
 When the first seams began to split —
 People began to gather round.
 7760 Raging Manas among them was found!
 With keen eyes, as sharp as a spear,
 He looked on old Koshoi-bogator,
 Came to him with brows all knit:
 "Is it true that the trousers don't fit,
 Those which I gave to you? asked he.
 Those two swine so praised them, you see,
 That they deceived both you and me.

Kara-Khan's daughter, Kanikei,
 I have taken to wife in vain —
 7770 As my destined one she can't remain.
 To her trough I can't tie my horse,
 To her tent I can't go, of course.
 I can no longer see Kanikei —
 May I be slain by my own Akkelte!*
 May its blue fuse be lit for me!
 There you sit holding those trousers, I see.
 Why do you look so hopeless at them?
 If they don't fit, give them back to me, then!"
 So said Manas, and his face looked grim,
 7780 So he snatched back the trousers from him,
 Those which Koshoi still could not pull on,
 Those which by force he still could not don,
 Bold Manas seized, and pulled from his feet,
 Then he began to make his retreat,
 Only he turned, and started to cry
 At Adzhibai and at Chalibai,
 Looking at both of them, angry-eyed:
 "Right from the start those trousers you prized,
 Praised them to him, as well as to me,
 7790 That's what you did, you slaves, I see,
 And on purpose you acted that way!
 I shall not beat my poor Kanikei!
 Sometimes I'm called 'blood-thirsty' Manas!
 Well, and if so, then let it be thus —
 It is your blood that I shall drink —
 You won't be left alive, I think!"
 Those were the words he said to them,
 Turned round his horse, and made off then.
 Having heard this, then Adzhibai
 7800 Jumped to his feet, and began to cry:
 May your haughtiness be accursed!
 Go to hell, then, and do your worst!
 Had I your power, I would throw you down,
 You great leader, with your reknown!
 In this passing world of ours here,
 May there less of you soon appear.

May you die before ten years old,
 May your tale in short soon be told!
 Why is it always sorrow and shame
 7810 Which you bring to us, all the same?"
 Poor Koshoi on his legs couldn't rise,
 Could not open his poor tired eyes.
 In confusion he sat there slack,
 And with Manas could not argue back,
 Could not tell him: "That is enough!"
 Though he felt his treatment was rough,
 Both Adzhibai and Chalibai
 Also were looking sad in the eye,
 Of the death-threat, made by Manas,
 7820 They both began to make a fuss.
 In their heads their eyes grew dark,
 In this sad world saw no bright spark.
 When they were feeling both half-dead,
 Suddenly Chalibai up and said:
 "Eh! Adzhibai! I've been thinking so —
 They are no simple trousers, you know.
 Not so simply sewed Kanikei!
 I've just remembered, by the way,
 This is a world of a passing word —
 7830 I've just recalled what once occurred:
 It must have been, I remember so,
 Almost exactly six years ago,
 When all the folk around got to know —
 That Kanikei had started to sew
 Those ill-starred trousers which don't fit...
 But, twelve years ago — that was it —
 From Andizhan, from the other side,
 From Ayim-Myunsék, on this side,
 Hunting wild goats on Dangdung-Bash,*
 7840 Where there are dunes with waving grass,
 Where no man had been hunting before,
 Where inaccessible cliffs there soar,
 Came, with Abike at their head,
 Sixty sharp-shooters, so it was said.
 He ordered; "Shoot them all in the eye!

So that the skins weren't spoilt when dry.
 And they must not be laid in the sun,
 And there must be no mouldy one!"
 Then they must in a trunk be laid.
 7850 Meanwhile the tanning-brew was made.
 This Kanikei did most masterfully —
 "In a copper bucket," said she,
 "You must lay the apple-tree bark.
 Tan all the skins six months, please mark!
 Bring the Sart dyer-woman, Shagil,
 From Andizgan — let her try her skill!
 Women cut out, and maidens sewed,
 Skilful young wives their nastery showed,
 Fashioned those trousers a special way.
 7860 Kayip-bey's daughter, young Aruuke,
 Ninety maidens then showed the ways,
 Making teeth-ornaments, nine whole days.⁵⁸
 How they bit patterns into the hide,
 All alike, none narrow, none wide,
 That is most hard to understand.
 If you inspect them on either hand,
 There in the trousers no seams you'll see.
 All was done so artistically.
 They were all sewn with a double thread,
 7870 Bitten patterns in two runnels led.⁵⁹
 Inside, the trousers with satin were lined.
 Kanikei thought 'If a spear-head thrusts blind,
 I must do something, whatever the cost,
 Or all my work will simply be lost!"
 So she sewed slivers of steel into them,⁶⁰
 Then ordered seventy strong wrestling men:
 "Take the trousers, and knead them soft!"
 Then the Khan's daughter hung them aloft
 After they had been thoroughly dyed,
 7880 Then they blew in the breeze and dried.
 Thus the trousers were weapon-proof made.
 Embers and sparks no marks on them laid.
 If you looked at them, every side,
 All was straight, not too narrow nor wide.

Skilled women seeing them felt full of joy.
 Kanikei thought: "My dear uncle Koshoi,
 Knowing how much I desire a child,
 Straightway will bless me, meek and mild.
 So those trousers were made for Koshoi --
 7890 But she told none how she longed for a boy!
 So those trousers were special, then...
 When she heard how he needed them,
 That's no secret, then said she:
 'Give them to old Koshoi for me!'
 Those were her very words, you see.
 So she measured them on Manas.
 Here and there made a little fuss.
 Then she left them, till they were dry...
 You are held in respect, Adzhibai,
 7900 You wear your hat like a crown on high,
 Go once again to Manas-bogatir,
 Ask him to give those trousers back here!"
 So said excited Chalibai,
 And he surprised his friend Adzhibai,
 For he had been in great disgrace,
 Couldn't look Manas in the face,
 And Chalibai had known that too,
 All the same he sent him anew,
 But he agreed to go ahead,
 7910 And to Chalibai he then said:
 "Whatever happens, I'll go, you see,
 If you will come along with me!
 Then together we'll ask for them.
 If he gets in a temper then,
 We shall both of us be slain --
 Still, let us try to get them again!
 If he considers our request,
 You, Chalibai must speak your best.
 Only with what he says just agree,
 7920 But without tricks, and openly.
 Don't bring trouble upon my head.
 Still, don't go back on what we've said.
 I can get deeper in trouble, you see,

So, just be a good comrade to me!"
 So Adzhibai and Chalibai,
 Bowing, with hands on breasts crossed high,
 Like two hares, bright eyes in their head,
 Came to Manas, and Adzhibai said:
 "Those leather trousers which you have there,
 7930 Please give them back to us, bogatir!
 If great Allah predestines it so,
 All kinds of things can happen, you know.
 Please give those trousers back to us!
 I am still not quite satisfied thus.
 They were sewn by a skilled young bride,
 Young Kanikei, your joy and pride!
 And I have heard that long ago,
 Kanikei once decided so:
 'These leather trousers,' then said she,
 7940 'Will be worn by Koshoi, you see.
 If with my work he is satisfied,
 I shall receive a reward beside!'

So of his size to get an idea,
 She asked people there and here --
 Anyone whom she met, that is,
 Thinking: "He's father to all Kirghiz!
 If he accepts what I have done,
 He'll say: 'May she soon bear a son!'
 Maybe he'll pour such a blessing on me!"
 7950 Therefor she sewed those trousers, you see!
 Please give them back to us, bogatir!
 Poor old Koshoi's distressed, we fear,
 That he could not get those trousers on!"
 Said Adzhibai, and so had done.
 Then Manas, having heard his plea,
 Twisted the trousers rough as could be,
 Threw them at him, and angrily cried:
 "Go to the devil with them beside!
 Take them, and clear off out of my sight --
 7960 I am ashamed that they're not all right!
 So the foe will be glad at heart.
 Though you still praise them, on your part!"

Then he went off, with blazing eye...

Then Adzhibai and Chalibai

Took the trousers and held them high,

Looked at the crutch, and then at the thigh,

Legs and all to the bottom were tight.

If you looked carefully, all seemed alright,

Only the legs looked not too wide,

970 Only the waist seemed tight beside.

So they looked closer yet between.

Adzhibai said: "Look, here is the seam!"

Chalibai said: "Look, here is the wedge!"

Karatoko said: "Look, here's the edge!"

All in order, it seems to me!"

"They have been made most carefully!"

All the people began to say.

"What fine trousers she sewed, Kanikei!

Here is art and skill you can see --

980 Let those be buried who don't agree!"

Then Adzhibai, who'd not angered Manas,

He came forward, and he spoke thus:

"Let us stretch them, what though they split!

Come, sit here Chalibai, that's it!

Hold them tight, while the legs I stretch!"

Then he began with his instep to wedge --

Deeper and deeper he plunged in them,

All his strength he exerted then.

Something went crack! -- the trousers grew wide --

990 That was the wonderful thing they spied!

There had been folds all along the seams,

Which had been stuck, or so one deems.

But this had never come to light.

So the trousers had seemed over-tight.

When they stretched them, they grew wide,

One whole span each leg, each side.

Adzhibai grew quiet once more,

And they went back to Koshoi's tent-door.

Back to Koshoi, their eldest old man,

20 Father of all the Kirghizian clan

So they gave the trousers to him

Saying "Put them on -- get in!

We're disturbed that you're ill at ease.

Father! Try them on, if you please!"

Gave them into Koshoi's old hands,

Like a real bogatir he stands.

In went his right leg -- like a boy,

There stood the people's choice, Koshoi,

Just as if father's trousers he wore,

8010 Dangling down easily, what's more!

In went his left leg -- there you are,

Pull them up -- all's right so far!

Pleased with himself was he anyway,

Just as if elder brother's were they,

Just like a lad, he pulled them on.

All the earlier trouble was gone.

They just suited him down to the ground,

Free and easy they were found.

Old Koshoi pulled new slacks up then --

8020 Shining was the waist-belt on them.

Truly they suited him very well --

All his joy he could not tell.

Right thigh then he gave a twitch,

Came up nicely, not a hitch.

Put his right hand in, gave a pull,

Up they came, round his waist sat full.

So he turned over the waist-band then,

All was in order once again.

Smoothed them out, and all held fast,

8030 So the right side was settled at last.

They held fast and did not slip,

Sitting firmly on his hip,

That also pleased him very much --

Priceless -- he considered them such.

Left thigh then he gave a twitch,

Came up nicely, not a hitch,

Put his left hand in, gave a pull,

Up they came, round his waist sat full.

So he turned over the waist-band then,

8040 All was in order once again.

They held fast, and did not slip,
 Sitting firmly upon his hip.
 How many squeaks and creaks they gave!
 He understood their value grave.
 So he gave his moustache a tweak,
 And, with a smile, Manas went to seek:
 Very happy, and very content,
 Old Koshoi then towards him went.
 Massive, he moved to Manas and his men,
 And he went straight up to him then.
 8050 And he said, hends stuck in his waist,
 "You, Manas, whose anger is vast,
 You who with cunning your own folk control,
 Say, in this world of ours, as a whole,
 How many kinds of skin are there?
 Looking at these new trousers rare,
 I understood their uniqueness then,
 Kanakei rightly so valued them!
 She it was who from start to end,
 8060 Planned these trousers for me, my friend!
 From special skin they're made, anyway,
 Who was it tanned and prepared it, say?
 Who was it sewed the seams, please declare?
 Who was it put those tooth-patterns there?
 Just what kind of trousers are they?
 Everything all in order, please say!"
 Those were the questions he put to Manas,
 And he answered them straightway thus:
 "If you seek your answers from me,
 8070 If you seek who has sewn them, see,
 If you seek who their patterns put in,
 I must answer your questions then.
 Childless goes your friend Kanikei.
 When will that shame quit her, say?
 Eighteen months she sewed those seams,
 All the while she nursed her dreams,
 Kayip's daughter, Aruuke,
 Eighteen months bit those patterns, they say.
 Both of them grew thin, went pale,

8080 And till now they are not quite well!
 Cannot find themselves till this day.
 Kayip's daughter — Aruuke
 Has some teeth half-poisoned so,
 And their yellow colour won't go.
 You are the worthiest elder of all —
 What if on them a blessing you call?
 Kanikei suffers from having no child.
 Several years she waits, half-wild.
 She thinks 'My aba* — he will see,
 8090 If he does, he'll send blessings on me!'

Even had you not come to the feast,
 She would have sent them to you, at least.
 By another they'd come to you —
 That's what she had made plans to do!"
 Having heard all Manas had said,
 Old Koshoi then nodded his head:
 Where is this dear young child of mine,
 Kanikei, who sews so fine?
 Then she came, bowed her knee, with joy
 8100 Humbly went up to father Koshoi.
 Father Koshoi, esteemed so high,
 Turned on her an attentive eye.
 "Here she is then, my brave Manas,
 My dear Kanikei comes thus,
 Like a burning ember is she,
 'Mid white-scarves no better you'll see.
 Fluff on the nape of her neck still soft.
 You may go to a world up aloft —
 She is destined to see much woe.
 8110 Let all the elders come round so!
 Loudly he cried this last request,
 Round them were gathered all the best,
 For a counsel of wisest men.
 Old Koshoi, their leader, then
 Wound a white turban round his head,
 To his Creator humbly said,
 Tears in his eyes, hands crossed on his breast:
 "Allah, creator, may she be blessed!"

All the elders, aloud and plain,
 8120 Then pronounced the blessing again, 61
 Then Koshoi to all said this:
 "If mighty Allah fulfils her wish,
 If she should bear a little one,
 Let it be no girl, but a son.
 Let it no bear, but a lion be,
 No half-man, but a hero he!
 With whoever he fights, let him win,
 With whoever he grips, conquer him!
 Let him burn down the brushwood and sedge,
 8130 Let him rise to the highest ledge!
 Let him set fire to the feather-grass,
 Let no mortal his power surpass.
 Let the blood in brooklets flow,
 Let him scare all his enemies so.
 Let him grind to pieces his foes,
 Let him make mince-meat out of those.
 Let him file them away, like rust,
 Let their filings fall like dust.
 Give him the name of Semetei!
 8140 If a son's born to Aruuke,
 Let him be chief adviser to him.
 Let him support him in struggles grim!
 Let him be called then Kyuldchoro.
 Let the willows around them grow!
 Let the two of them climb the height,
 Let Allah help them both to do right!
 May red blood besmear his sharp sword,
 May Semetei become a great lord.
 If others Khans annoy him then,
 8150 Let him teach a lesson to them.
 Let their red blood stain his blue sword,
 Let them hear his burning word.
 Let him then besiege forty knights,
 Let him sharpen his blade ere he fights,
 Let him in anger raise it high.
 Let him then hew down Kongurbai!"
 Thus Koshoi gave his blessing then,

And all heathens and Mussulmen
 They blessed Kanikei as well.
 8160 Earth with rumbling joined the swell!
 Having given his blessing so,
 Brought his hands down his face below.
 Well, just look, he's ready to go!
 Having blessed his bogatir there,
 Made his way to the wrestling square.
 Giant Dzholoi then gave him a glare,
 As he came walking towards him then,
 Where he sat looming, puffed up again.
 He just ignored the giant, it seemed,
 8170 And his eyes, like a tiger's gleamed.
 Six or seven paces he took,
 Then he paused for one last look.
 Just stood there and gazed around
 On the waiting wrestling-ground.
 Then to himself began to say:
 Long ago I fought this way!
 And before none then did I bow,
 Neither shall I do so now!
 With Akdëë and Këkdëë,
 8180 Many a time I caused a stir.
 Even 'gainst giants like them I could shine,
 Even though they tore at my spine.
 How many blows of fists, and of steel,
 On my poor limbs I've had to feel!
 But I could not see Kirghiz folk weep!
 Faith with them I must always keep!
 Now just look at my puffed-out eyes,
 Look at my poor bent back besides.
 I can't turn this stiff neck of mine,
 8190 Yellow water collects in my spine.
 'Twixt my ribs and vertebrae too,
 There's a space where water runs through.
 Down my spine, from crown to tail,
 Sulphurous water runs as well!
 But my folk all wish, alack!
 That I should this Kalmak attack,

And should wrestle with him on foot,
 And an end to his boasting put.
 Here I stand, all said and done,
 8200 Placing my hope in Allah alone!
 Stiff is this old spine of mine,
 Under the burden of passing time.
 Come along here, young lads, to me!
 Five or six of you there must be,
 Come and give my old back a rub,
 Come and drum on it rub-a-dub-dub.
 Make my muscles supple somehow.
 Make me a massage, I need one now!
 Having said this the giant Koshoi
 8210 Lay down and wriggled, just like a boy.
 Stretched out there he lay face down.
 Up came some body-guards of reknown.
 When others tried on his back to tread,
 They drove them off, and tried instead.
 So they beat with their feet on his back,
 But he felt nothing of that, alack!
 "Who is that? Dwarfs are you, or what?
 More of you trample on my weak spot!
 So he called them, and cursed them too.
 8220 Told them again what they must do.
 So they rushed again on him then,
 Altogether some eight or nine men.
 Mercilessly they trampled him down,
 From his tail right up to his crown.
 Still he called for more of them then,
 Altogether some sixteen men,
 And he held out against their weight.
 Only he cried out again, irate:
 "Tread down harder, have no fear!"
 8230 Someone asked: "What's going on here?"
 They were Mussulmen by the way.
 "What are you doing with him?" said they.
 Ramanbek, Dzhyuzgen's young son,
 Came to see what was going on.
 He was a young Kalmak, folk said,

And he had a sharp, tongue in his head:
 "Such a chattering folk as Kirghiz,
 Such an unscrupulous lot as this,
 On my life, I've never seen then!
 8240 Look, they are trampling on one old man!
 They are torturing their old chief,
 Trampling him down, it's past belief!
 Obviously, they'll kill him so —
 How then will he be able to go
 And against giant Dzholoi to fight?"
 That Kamanbek was puzzled alright!
 "That's enough, lads!" Koshoi then said,
 Lifting up his old white head.
 He had heard Kamanbek's remarks,
 8250 And his eyes were full of sparks.
 Up he jumped, of a sudden then,
 Scattering all those sixteen men,
 Who'd been dancing on him like that,
 Just like children, they all fell flat,
 Here, and there, and everywhere,
 Arms and legs flew up in the air.
 Then Koshoi, still a man to be feared,
 With his waving long white beard,
 Swaying like a great camel went,
 8260 And upon contest was clearly bent.
 Slowly, stately, strode the old boy,
 And went up to giant Dzholoi.
 So, on foot, they were going to fight...
 Fire from his mouth, eyes blazing bright —
 Where he grasped, blood spurted out,
 Where he wrenched, a joint flew out,
 He stood up with a mighty roar,
 And a mighty curse he swore.
 People who saw and heard him so
 8270 Simply trembled, swayed to and fro.
 Cursing Koshoi, he angrily said:
 "Don't be so proud, with your old white head,
 When your beard that was black turned grey,
 Then you lost some strength that day.

When your beard that was grey turned white,
 Then you lost your power and might,
 When the hour of death feels near,
 When you are trembling, full of fear,
 Then you will perish all the same —
 8280 Then you will lose your good old name.
 How can you dare against me to rise?
 How can your end be otherwise?
 They could not find a young man to fight,
 All their strongest refused in fright!
 Now you are old, you already have lost,
 That you will learn to your own great cost!
 Now an old man has been sent instead.
 Now a curse hangs over your head.
 Can you face your death, Koshoi?
 8290 Can you dare stand up there to Dzholoi?
 Though a man has a thousand lives,
 No one who fights with me survives!
 I shall drink your blood after all.
 You will not be the first thus to fall!"
 Having heard those words he said,
 Old Koshoi, he then saw red,
 And in fury he replied:
 "Devil take you, your threats beside!
 That's where your stupidity leads you to!
 8300 In the hollow of Ukyurchyu,
 Where Uch-Kapkak's long dale runs by,
 At the feast of Uishunbai,
 Till this day I remember still,
 Having thrown you, I did not kill!
 In your own home you did not die.
 On the crest of Balkachai,
 Counting upon your numerous folk,
 When in the eloquence test you spoke,
 I defeated your efforts then, 62
 8310 After that, as horse-wrestling-men,
 Just like two hungry wolves we fought,
 All your grappling came to nought.
 I just pulled you off your steed,

Hurled you into the river mud,
 Pulled you out, and saved your skin!
 Why do you go on threatening then,
 Just as if you'd forgotten all that,
 And are ready to knock me flat?
 Each time down you went — a flop!
 8320 I was the one who came out on top!
 Therefore think before speaking, do!
 In the hollow of Kuldzha-Too,
 At the feast of bey Kutman,
 Where Kaldar was Kazakh leader then,
 Your defeat was known to them all:
 'It was Koshoi brought about his fall!'

But you yourself were choked with blood...
 What, then, produced your present meed?
 What made you think, with mind deranged,
 8330 That successful Koshoi had changed?
 No matter where I met with you,
 It was always I who came through.
 But you have proved yourself a fool!
 Where did you gain your strength, you mule?
 Stupid words to me you have said.
 What will you do with me — let's go ahead!
 Saying this then Koshoi stretched a hand...
 All the Muslims, as if by command,
 Started to pray "May God hold him fast!"
 8340 As Dzholoi on his hand took a grasp.
 Then Koshoi snatched back his hand,
 Noble Koshoi, with spirit grand,
 Swiftly withdrew his hand again
 From Dzholoi, with might and main,
 Tearing off a strip of skin
 Which Dzholoi still held with him.
 Then your bold Koshoi grabbed back,
 Swiftly went on the giant's track,
 And, before the Kalmak man wist,
 8350 Suddenly seized his great fat wrist.
 Tugging back twice, strong-man Dzholoi
 Special tactics had to employ,

And the skin from his wrist in a strip
 Still was left in Koshoi's fierce grip,
 And the giant then made a retreat,
 And some prayer in Kalmak did repeat.
 They had some idol of purest gold,
 And before that, so I am told,
 Giant Dzholoi was used to bow,
 8360 So he did, and returns to us now.
 Bold Koshoi, your great strong-man,
 All prepared towards him ran,
 And, remembering bouts before,
 They seized hold of each other once more.
 Then the Kalmak strong-man Dzholoi
 Lifted your chosen chief Koshoi,
 Thinking to hurl him to the ground,
 But Koshoi quickly twisted round,
 And grabbed hold of the giant fast,
 8370 Did not let him go from his grasp.
 But he stretched his legs, might and main,
 Felt the ground 'neath his feet again,
 Jabbed them down for all he was worth,
 Making a long crack there in the earth,
 Long as a stretched-out horse's hide.
 And he did something else beside —
 Feeling his strength return once more,
 Lifting Dzholoi, he gave a roar,
 Hurling him then up into the air,
 8380 Left him a moment hanging there,
 But the strong-man of Kalmaks and Kitais,
 Managed a head-over-heels, likewise,
 And thus landed upon his legs,
 And they stuck into the earth like pegs,
 Sent the soil flying, high in the sky,
 Clods came raining down by and by.
 So they went on with further falls,
 So they threw each other like balls,
 Bouncing up, and down again then —
 8390 There were no equals to these two men.
 Nobody else of the human race,

Equal to them could find a place.
 Those who watched were deeply surprised,
 As the dust flew up in their eyes.
 Many heathens and Mussulmen
 Couldn't see any longer then.
 Dust-clouds hid them from their eyes.
 Suddenly they had another surprise:
 With a start, up jumped Almambet:
 8400 "We cannot see the games!" he said.
 Many agreed, each nodded his head.
 So the most famous Almambet
 Into some water his secret stone dropped.
 All the talking straightway stopped.
 One dark cloud, like a yurta-top,
 Rose overhead, and did not stop,
 Spread all round about on high,
 Over people's heads, in the sky.
 Heavy rain and hail it released,
 8410 Suddenly poured, and suddenly ceased.
 That made all the people amazed.
 Then again at the games they gazed.
 Wind dropped down, no dust flew about,
 Once again the sun came out.
 So did Koshoi and Dzholoi on the square,
 And took up their wrestling there,
 Throwing each other up in the air,
 Making the people jump and stare.
 But on one beat the other yet,
 8420 So they suffered, and poured with sweat.
 Neither of them had thoughts of death,
 Though they both were gasping for breath.
 Like the spokes of a miller's wheel,
 Whirling each other round, they reel,
 Each one doing his very best,
 Belly to belly, and breast to breast...
 They grew angrier, each with each,
 Pulled at buttocks and all they could reach,
 Pressed and tugged like a well-fed bull,
 8430 At each other continued to pull.

On their limbs there were stains of blood,
 On their brows the sweat-drops stood.
 People watching thought: "How will it end?"
 How much more strength have they to spend?"
 People lost patience, began to get bored,
 Wanted to see one giant floored.
 Still they fought in fits and starts,
 Still they struggled with beating hearts.
 Still they began to raise more dust,
 8440 Still they fought to the end, as they must!
 Still they staggered to and fro,
 Still would not let each other go.
 Still they kicked up the ground in clods,
 Still they stamped the soil to sods.
 Still they gripped and grappled like mad,
 Still exerted what strength they had.
 Both these giants, who could not be floored,
 Snarled at each other, like lions roared,
 Cursed each other, with furious frown...
 8450 Twilight came, the sun went down.
 Then what came to Koshoi, your chief?
 Stars in the sky — still wrestling beneath.
 Midnight moon — still struggling below.
 Then Dzholoi gave a cry of woe,
 Every one who heard him whine,
 Felt a tingle run down their spine.
 They thought: "Morning will soon be here —
 Old, exhausted Koshoi-bogatir
 Giant Dzholoi will then defeat,
 8460 Into the dust Koshoi will beat!"
 People had no further hopes for him —
 For Koshoi the morn would be grim.
 Why had he given no answering cry?
 Did he not feel that he'd have to die?
 "Old Koshoi has losty all his strength!"
 People began to murmur at length.
 Then Manas, astride his steed,
 He gave orders for lanterns they need.
 Thousands of lanterns he ordered to light,

8470 Thousands of torches, all burning bright.
 Look — all his warriors, wriggling like worms,
 Over the steppe-land they sweep in swarms,
 Mixing with the people there,
 Bringing their banners, and lanterns a-flare.
 In sixty places the banners they stood.
 People, seeing this thought "This is good —
 Now we shall know which people are where!"
 Still, those giants squirmed on the square.
 If no banners were set up around,
 8480 If no lanterns ablaze were found,
 People would all have gone astray,
 Everyone would have lost their way.
 That would not have been a surprise
 At such a feast, with people like flies!
 See now the poisonous hands of Dzholoi!
 See how he suffers, poor old Koshoi!
 In his spine yellow water lies,
 'Neath Dzholoi's heavy hand it flies.
 When he presses with powerful arm,
 8490 Out it pours, and can do Koshoi harm.
 Into his body then it goes,
 Into his breast sulphur-water flows.
 But Dzholoi squeezes him everywhere,
 So the yellow water gets there.
 But that eases the pain in his spine:
 "Well, you lousy old dog, that's fine!
 Now I can bend my back with ease,
 Now I can bring you down to your knees!"
 Still they battle, man to man.
 8500 Yesterday, at noon they began!
 People are amazed how they fight;
 Still they struggle at dead of night!
 Half-a-day in conflict passed,
 All night long did their struggle last.
 Still nobody has come out on top,
 Still the grappling does not stop!
 Now the sun has risen high,
 Now the noon-day again draws nigh.

8510 Take a look at how things go,
 At our chief, who has struggled so!
 Take a look at his courage anew!
 He is tired, his eyes are too.
 He can barely open them now,
 Only wishes to sleep somehow.
 Now and then he murmurs to them:
 "Come and massage my spine again,
 Knead the muscles upon my back,
 They're all growing somewhat slack!"
 This was noticed by cunning Dzholoi —
 8520 He already had thought up a ploy...
 He'd invented a dirty trick,
 Thus to end the wrestling quick.
 There was a stone, half as big as a tent,
 Really for testing strength it was meant,
 But Dzholoi had another idea,
 And his intention was very clear:
 Any man who fell on that stone,
 He could never stand up alone.
 So to take him, and break him there —
 8530 Thus thought Dzholoi -- a dirty affair!
 He had caught hold of him, set his snare,
 When Manas caught sight of him there.
 Loudly he shouted: "Hey there, Koshoi!
 Hey, wake up, you are blind, old boy!
 Can't you see what he's trying to do?
 Going to make an end of you!
 Going to smash you on that stone!
 You will be broken, your honour all gone —
 No more dozing — arise, arise!"
 8540 Old Koshoi then opened his eyes...
 "What kind of devil is he, anyhow?
 Will you let that swine beat you now?
 Shame on you, before heathen eyes,
 And before Mussulmen likewise!
 Thus rang the voice of lion Mans,
 He who acts as none other does,
 Ho who lies hid, like a tiger thus,

He who springs like a leopard does,
 Ho who is fierce, no enemy fears —
 8550 Thus came the voice of Manas to his ears.
 So his call re-echoed around,
 So his cry to all did resound,
 Full of anger and fiercest rage,
 And was heard by Koshoi, the sage.
 "Where does that voice come from?" thought he,
 "Sounds like Manas, it seems to me!"
 Don't think a simpleton he must be —
 No — your Koshoi is clever, you see.
 Though he was taken by surprise,
 8560 Swiftly then he opened his eyes.
 When he did — to himself he came,
 Saw at once Dzholoi's dirty game.
 Going to crash him down on that stone,
 And his arms around him had thrown,
 And was just prepared to do so,
 When Koshoi had got to know.
 Then he just blinked, made a sudden stretch,
 Leapt away from that cunning wretch,
 Felt his powers themselves restore,
 8570 Then what did he do, what's more?
 Old Koshoi, whose powers were great,
 Felt the firm ground beneath his feet.
 Giant Koshoi, your leader, it's plain,
 Grew exceedingly angry again.
 At memorial feasts, before this,
 There'd been no wrestling for Kirghiz,
 There'd been no kicking with naked feet —
 Such moves then one did not meet.
 So Koshoi Dzholoi's arm gripped,
 8580 Quickly behind him his arm he slipped,
 And from behind his waist-band seized.
 Then Dzholoi gave him an upward heave,
 But with his right foot then Koshoi
 Cut 'neath the instep of Dzholoi.
 All the people watched that well,
 When Dzholoi, just like a great hill,

Like a great crag from earth torn free,
 Rose in the air, then crashed, you see.
 Like an avalanche he fell.
 8590 All the people watched that well.
 Thus Dzholoi was covered in shame.
 When, stepping o'er his head, Koshoi came,
 He would have left the square, no doubt,
 But Dzholoi had begun to shout:
 "You undercut my instep from me —
 That is not allowed!" cried he.
 "You made me take an unwanted step,
 So you could get me in your grip!"
 He tried to seize Koshoi's trouser'leg,
 8600 And would have pulled him down a peg,
 Rolling over, would drag him down,
 And, in turn, bring him to the ground.
 But Manas forestalled this trick;
 With his whip he slipped in quick,
 With his black pom-pom hat on his head:
 "Be you accursed, you rogue!" he said,
 "Cunning and underhanded swine!
 You have been beaten here this time,
 So why to the winner, you wretch,
 8610 Now again your hand do you stretch"
 Then with his plaited riding whip,
 With a lead-shot in its tasselled grip
 Firmly grasped in his heavy hand,
 On the left of Dzholoi took his stand,
 Brought it down with a slash on his back!
 Two or three ribs gave way with a crack,
 From the long red wound then so
 Blood in a line began to flow,
 Trickled down to the ground then thus.
 8620 And the boldness of lion Manas
 To all the folk became quite plain.
 From the loosed grip of Dzholoi again
 Then he freed old father Koshoi,
 Raised his hand above fallen Dzholoi!
 All the Mussulmen cheered with glee,

They were as merry as they could be.
 "Lift up our hero, then, good men!"
 So they raised him shoulder-high then.
 Everyone praised that brave old man,
 8630 Tears of joy from his eyelids ran...
 Others on seeing this were surprised.
 What a great triumph they devised!
 Warriors ran from every side.
 Then the famous Akbai arrived.
 Bold as a mountain goat on the height,
 With his eyes like lanterns alight.
 He then went to his friend Koshoi,
 Put his head through his legs, like a boy,
 Raised him up on his shoulders high,
 8640 And in his honour gave a great cry!
 So the victorious giant they raised,
 So the bold old Koshoi they praised.
 So the people all gathered round,
 So their victory cheers did sound.
 All the people could see him so,
 With his white head, and beard a-blow.
 Lifted up, like a six-year-old boy,
 Their new champion, giant Koshoi.
 Since he'd defended their honour then,
 8650 Nothing did they deny him, those men.
 First they gave him a golden crown,
 Then a throne, and sat him down,
 This old man, who'd fought so true,
 Gave him the right to be ruler too.
 They then drove all the cattle, his prize,
 There before the old fighter's eyes.
 And again the folk flooded round,
 Nothing but praise for him they found.
 Having counted the cattle then,
 8660 He shared them round with poorer men.
 Every beast he counted out,
 And distributed them about,
 Did not leave one sheep behind,
 Gave to the poorest he could find.

To the rich — how the poor to save —
 He an excellent lesson gave...⁶³
 Just a few days had passed away,
 Now was nearing the jousting-day.
 People were getting excited too,
 8670 Where Kēkētēi's blue banner flew.
 Up aloft it streamed and flapped,
 Many people fluttered like that!
 Got on their horses and rode away,
 Thinking "They'll choose best horses today,
 And on them armoured knights will sway.
 Then in the jousting they'll thrust away.
 Let the predestined victor ride high,
 Let the predestined conquered lie.
 Let them take their spears in their hand,
 8680 Let the jousters before us stand.
 Knights who in such contests are skilled,
 Those who foes have o'erthrown and killed,
 Those who have a strong spear and arm,
 Those who thus will not come to harm,
 Those whose honour remains unstained,
 Those who in the saddle remained,
 Those who will thrust on through and win,
 Let such as these the contest begin.
 Then a hundred war-horses they tied,
 8690 And of the lesser breed beside,
 Nine hundred riding horses more —
 Were there ever such prizes before?
 Altogether one thousand steeds.
 Kēkētēi's feast grew famous indeed!
 Then the elders, Koshoi at their head,
 Told all heralds the news to spread
 To all peoples and khans and beys,
 To the Kitais they made their ways,
 To all those who'd come to the feast,
 8700 To their own Kirghiz, not least!
 Jogging and pushing, the peoples met:
 "Let us choose best equipment yet —
 Armoured knights who don't quake with fear,

Let us call, and select them here.
 Skilled in the art of jousting with spears,
 Young ones are best for that, it appears.
 Choose those best, and no others pick —
 Hard as granite, not soft as a brick.
 Let us choose the most valorous men.
 8710 They will receive the horses then,
 If in the jousts they win their way!"
 Those who were led by old Alo-oke
 Then gathered round and counsel took.
 Up then stood Bozkertik, and said: "Look!
 'Mid all those we might choose for Kitai,
 Not one stands out like Kongurbai!
 He is known to the world all round,
 None more skilful with spear is found!
 Then, with his ruby-crowned helm as well,
 8720 Shan Kirmus's son — Muradil,
 Very young, but none braver, by far!
 With his red tassel comes Neskara.
 Earlier powers of his have declined,
 Traces of grey in his beard we find.
 Grey hair shows on his head and brow,
 Grey days are coming for him now!
 But take a look at Kalmak Uzhang —
 He is used to the spear's loud clang,
 And just now, at the present time,
 8730 He has matured, feels strong and fine!
 If we face difficulties, you know,
 Why not choose him to meet our foe?"
 Then up stood old Kalmak Surkan,
 And with hesitation began:
 Let us choose one Kalmak, just so,
 But for us all choose another to go.
 From the Kitais then he must be!
 We chose Dzholoi for the wrestling, see,
 But the Kirghiz have a bully — Manas,
 8740 And our Dzholoi was outwitted thus.
 He was out of luck, poor goon.
 Here is the brave Chanak-Choyun,

Son of Dzhangshai's, a real Kitai!"
 So said Surkan, and heard a cry:
 "What kind of knight is young Choyun?"
 "Listen, and I will tell you soon —
 He has a big, brave black war-steed,
 He outstrides any others indeed.
 He has ears, like umbrellas they stand,
 From his nose drips a waterfall grand.
 8750 Fat and stodgy is his steed,
 He himself is the strong-man we need.
 But, it seems, he shows cowardice too,
 And I doubt if he would pull through.
 I think Kirghiz will send Manas,
 And he plans to overthrow us
 With some trick on the jousting square!
 He wants to kill his opponent there,
 Alo-oke's son — Kongurbai —
 8760 That is precisely what he'll try.
 That is precisely what he would wish!
 Take his spear, with tassel a-swish,
 And engage him upon his horse,
 Thinking there's none like himself, of course!
 Only Kongurbai, it may be
 Would dare to meet him — so you will see.
 But let us not take part in this game.
 Let us not go to the joust, all the same.
 Let us not go to meet his men,
 8770 Let us say "Go to the devil with them!"
 All the heathens discussed this then,
 Both the younger and elder men.
 "Save the one who's ready to die,
 No one will raise his spear on high.
 Save the one who to death will come,
 No one with spear against shield will run.
 None will go out against such a man!"
 So the arguments then began.
 When he heard their noisy words fly,
 8780 Alo-oke's son, Kongurbai,
 Rose with great fury in his eye:

"Live to two thousand, and never die —
 Are there such people here today —
 Hide from Kirghiz, and run away?
 Live and live, and not know death —
 Do such people still draw breath?
 Does God punish Kitai folk so —
 Age and age, and peace never know?
 From the foe run off in fear?
 8790 If my mortal hour is here,
 I shall die, and lie 'neath the ground!
 'Bloody Manas will come spearing round!' —
 Who talks like that — only idiots could!
 From early morn with you I have stood,
 Greatly grieved, I've been standing here,
 Waiting Manas, their wolf-bogatur.
 Will he come out and test his spear,
 If so, why does he not appear?
 Will he come out, or will he not —
 8800 Only God above knows, that's what!
 Only He knows who will survive!
 If with his spear Manas does arrive,
 I shall meet him, though me you may tie!
 If he comes with his spear held high,
 I shall meet him, thought me you may hide,
 You self-deceivers, where is your pride?
 Where is your honour? How do you know
 That Kirghiz will Kitai beat so?"
 Then his high enormous black steed
 8810 He began to prepare for need...
 Numerous tribes of Kitais looked on,
 Countless numbers of faces shone.
 They were all led by Alo-oke.
 To their Kaldai* they came that day.
 Those with gods of another name,
 Sakalats and Shibes too came.
 Those idol-worshippers crowded nigh,
 Round their most famous Kongurbai.
 At his fighting equipment they peered,
 8830 That which the enemy always feared.

He had a spear with a head a yard long,
 Set on a ten-yard shaft, smooth and strong.
 Where it struck it would twist and tear.
 If in anger he thrust this spear,
 It would surely burst a great stone.
 Pointed sides he would sharpen and hone,
 Furthermore he had poisoned its tip,
 Like a wolf-tongue, with blood it would drip.
 At its end was a tassel of hair —
 8830 Various colours were shining there,
 Yellow and blue, shot with crimson through.
 This spiteful rogue had a musket too,
 With a black barrel and muzzle of blue.
 Once it was aimed, then death was due.
 It had a smooth and cunning-carved butt.
 One not used to it stuck in a rut.
 Shots for miles and miles would fly,
 Those struck down by them surely die,
 Fall to the earth, their last breath take,
 8840 When it thunders, the mountains quake!
 It has a ram-rod made of brass.
 Well-aimed shots through their victims pass.
 It has a trigger made of gold.
 Barrel grows hot, but victim grows cold.
 Such a monstrous musket he's got.
 When he'd charged it with powder and shot,
 When it was ready then to be fired,
 He had almost all he desired,
 Saving only his shield and his sword —
 8850 Thick as his finger, his palm as broad.
 All made out of hard black steel,
 With a curving point at its heel.
 Buckled and belted, ready was he,
 With his equipment at hand, you see.
 Twin-headed battle-axe he hung
 On his stout belt, and there it swung.
 On each side was a pattern engraved,
 Round each end of the curving blade,
 Held by a haft of toughest wood.

8860 Those it struck, again never stood,
 Head sliced in two, they toppled down,
 Blood came pouring out of their crown.
 Chain-mail and plates of armour bright,
 All were ready now for the fight.
 Tucking his shirt into pantaloons high,
 Then the magnificent Kongurbai,
 For the contest with spears was prepared...
 That he should suddenly weaken there,
 Letting the foe slay more of his men,
 8870 That he against his will should run then,
 That the hosts who asked guests to the feasts,
 Then should later slay them like beasts,
 He in his mind could not conceive...
 Yesterday he'd been forced to leave,
 Having no weapons with him there.
 That had vexed him, and made him swear.
 That accursed Manas he'll defy,
 Him, with the furious flaming eye.
 He'd decided to cross spears with him.
 8880 Saving his honour, he looks quite grim.
 Deepest anger enveloped him,
 And to fight with heart and limb,
 'Gainst that lion Manas, it's true,
 His determination grew.
 Fury enveloped all his frame.
 His chain-mail of gold again
 He, with difficulty pulled on.
 Laanat's* idol before him shone.
 Girded, belted and buckled tight,
 8890 He was a furious-frowning knight!
 Breast-plates round his chest stood high.
 Thus emboldened Kongurbai
 All in steel himself concealed;
 Only his breeding was revealed.
 Over his steel cuirass were thrown,
 Studded jacket, and padded gown.
 Fearless bogatir Kongurbai
 Leapt like a tiger, with flaming eye.

8900 Sent up a prayer his gods to please,
 Pulled his blue gown around his knees.
 This padded gown let no spear-point past.
 With nine loops was it made fast,
 With nine buckles, behind and before.
 Full of strength was this bulging boar.
 Dressed in armour from head to heel.
 Everywhere stand buckles of steel.
 For those knowing many such men,
 And their peculiarities then,
 He had a face of pale yellow hue,
 8910 Like boiled lungs, when seen in a stew.
 Then so coarse was his tough-stubbed beard,
 It could stick in wood, it appeared.
 Like cold iron, the glance in his eyes,
 Nose like a mountain crag did rise,
 Narrow and straight, between reddish eyes.
 He had a chest of enormous size.
 His adroitness was very well-known,
 'Mid many folk, not only his own.
 Dark-brown was his smooth-haired horse,
 8920 Saddle and harness — Chinese — of course!
 Angrily still he sat his horse,
 Now look how he prepared his course!
 Algara, who was not as he,
 He spurred forward heatedly.
 Hung his musket over his back,
 Took in his hand his spear, blue-black,
 And, amazing folk near and far,
 Proudly strutted on Algara,
 With a menacing look on his face,
 8930 With a huge club which hung at his waist.
 Threateningly he loomed on his steed,
 Spear pointed forward, keen for the deed,
 Golden shoe-soles, and coppery heels,
 Clad in these, real handsome he feels.
 At his belt his sword shines clear.
 When he raises his blue-black spear,
 See all his weapons and war-like gear,

See his dagger a-gleaming here.
 Giving forth a roar, rousing fear,
 8940 With his blue flag at the tip of his spear,
 Forth he rode then, against any foe.
 Those who saw him gaped at him so.
 Thus he prepared from head to feet,
 Lion Manas in the jousts to meet.
 This was what he really desired,
 With such a thought his soul was fired.
 Earlier he had careless been,
 And humiliation had seen.
 Now, resenting that offence,
 8950 He was prepared, and had more sense.
 "He is a spiteful knight, Kongurbai!"
 So one man said as he caught his eye,
 To old Koshoi among them there see,
 "Saddled on Algara goes he,
 Armoured from head to foot goes he,
 Prays to his Laanat, you see.
 Blown-up braggart, it seems to me,
 So at the jousting he wishes to be!"
 All prepared to do or to die,
 8960 With his spear rides forth Kongurbai!
 Even should Rustam-Dastan* appear,
 He would slay him straightway with his spear!
 Saving his shirt and trousers," said he,
 "He's wrapped in steel, in entirety!"
 This he remarked with his own two eyes,
 "Even if not at the tourney he tries,
 He is prepared to slay, if he can,
 Lion Manas, our great Mussulman.
 See, he has a musket there too,
 8970 Hung at his back with its muzzle of blue!
 See that spear too, ten yards long —
 With its Kitai blue pennant on.
 He is so set up to go
 That his boldness pours from him, though!"
 By Kirghiz Alashbek this was said,
 To Koshoi, with his old white head.

"Take a careful look at him then —
 He is commander of all Kitai men.
 Furthermore, he's a strong-man too.
 8980 There's no knowing what he may do!
 He's in a temper, as you can see,
 This Kitai khan, as fierce as can be!"
 Thinking this over, Koshoi trotted by
 On his grey pacer, with pensive eye,
 With his white beard a-blow in the breeze,
 Bold Koshoi felt ill at ease...
 There among the Kitais he rode,
 Like a great camel, majestic and proud,
 To defend his honour, head high,
 8990 There on his steed sat Kongurbai.
 To the planned jousting he there had sped.
 He had a pipe — golden stem, brass head,
 Which he grasped in one huge hand.
 With one fore-finger tobacco he rammed,
 Filled the pipe, his tinder-box took,
 Knocked up a spark, lit the pipe, and look —
 Sucked at it noisily, so and so —
 From his lips did the smoke-clouds blow,
 And the fire in his eyes then showed.
 9000 Bold Koshoi straight up to him rode.
 "Say, can you tell me, how do things go?
 Who'll go jousting, I'd like to know?"
 Thus Koshoi put the question to them.
 He was answered by one of their men,
 Big black-bearded Boro-onchu;
 "Can an unskilled one hope to win through?
 Will not a timid one first give in?
 Only the skilled and bold can win.
 Kongurbai is like a marquee,
 9010 Raised for a festival, you see!
 Big and firm and strong is he!
 He is prepared, whoe'er it might be,
 To test spears with them in the lists —
 Those who firmly hold spears in their fists!"
 Off went Koshoi, and raised the dust —

Seek among the Kirghiz he must!
 But on none with the slightest chance,
 Not on one fell his cautious glance,
 No matter where to them did he haste —
 9020 No one suited Koshoi's stern taste.
 None he found to fill the bill.
 None among knights and warriors still.
 So he left them all to one side,
 And to Manas decided to ride.
 When he arrived there, he could not wait.
 He was concerned with his people's fate,
 So straightway he cried to him:
 "Eh! Manas, the times look grim —
 Something bad has happened, you see,
 9030 Listen, my dear young foal, to me!
 From Beidzhin has come Kongurbai —
 Curses on him, from Allah on high! —
 Curses on him from his forebears too!
 He is vexed, and spiteful all through,
 He is seething with anger now.
 To his god he has given a vow.
 Now he is seated on his dark steed,
 And is prepared for battle, indeed.
 Not just for jousting with his spear,
 9040 No, a great threat now is here!
 There he sits in his helm of gold,
 Burning to joust with spears, fierce and bold,
 Anger is written all over his face.
 'If with a giant this bout takes place,
 Even if he on an elephant came,
 Or just a dwarf — then all the same,
 I shall do with them what I will —
 Even a thousand such I shall kill.
 Whoever rides with a spear thrust ahead,
 9050 I shall destroy him, and leave him dead!
 Even if on a rhino he came,
 That as well I shall pierce the same!
 He is burning for vengeance, you see,
 That's why he threatens menacingly.

in the earlier squabble, it's clear,
 When he asked for Maaniker,
 That great blunder which he made then,
 Still has vexed him, again and again.
 He with whom he jousts will kill,
 On his opponent his spite will spill.
 What he wants is discord to sow:
 If I get my way, then I know
 I shall start a great quarrel with them,
 I can take revenge on them then!
 That is what he said he would do —
 In his eyes you can read it too!
 They are just burning with vengeful hate!
 We must act ere it gets too late!
 My dear bully, my brave Manas,
 You who lead and guard folk thus,
 I am old, and heavily move,
 Like an old camel, I clumsy prove.
 If against this rogue I don't go,
 You, my bloodthirsty one must do so.
 You are known for your courage and skill.
 If you don't try this devil to kill,
 Will there be any other men
 Who'd be prepared to confront him, then?
 With his padded gown, and fierce eye,
 Who would go out and fight Kongurbai?
 I have seen him with my own eyes,
 He is all wrapped in steel likewise,
 Like a dark cloud before the rain,
 So the spleen on his face shows plain.
 He is puffed up with his own pride,
 Holds a mighty club by his side.
 All human traits from his face have fled,
 Now he roars like a lion, instead.
 How he stands waiting on his steed,
 This cursed villain of heathen breed!
 See, in a fury he's found thus!
 What do you say to that, Manas?"
 So old Koshoi then questioned him.

When Manas heard words so grim,
 Then the flames shot out from his eyes,
 And he felt his temper rise.
 He considered Koshoi's report,
 Found it to be of a serious sort.
 He too felt all set on edge.
 9100 Wide was his brow, and head like a wedge.
 In all his body strength was seen.
 Roman nose, and looks so keen
 From sharp eyes, with lashes long.
 Largish mouth, lips full and strong.
 Jutting chin, in determined style,
 Thrusting forward all the while.
 All denoted a valorous heart,
 Breast expanded and carriage smart.
 Shoulders wide over narrow waist,
 9110 Powerful muscles everywhere placed.
 All was set in a menacing tone.
 Fear of death was to him unknown.
 He had an elephantine might,
 Tiger's neck, and arms set tight.
 Sturdy legs, and muscular calves,
 Brows smooth-lined, and eyes like stars.⁶⁴
 When of resolution he's full
 He scarce hears ought else at all.
 Ears of a wolf, and a lion's scan,
 9120 Looks majestic, like no known man.
 Full of manliness is he.
 Still he stood there silently.
 Fire burned in his eyes so deep,
 Like a tiger, prepared to leap.
 "If someone had earlier said
 That where contests with spears are led,
 Out would come that same Kongurbai,
 That great rogue and heathen Kitai,
 I'd not be keen the prize to gain,
 9130 And some new horse I would not train.
 If for the race I'd not sent afar
 My own war-steed, bold Akkula,

If I had here my gun Akkelte,
 If my best war-gear were not far away,
 If I had known of this before,
 If to the jousts I must go once more,
 Then I should be more eager to fight,
 Then I should put all foes to flight,
 Then I should never come to woe,
 9140 But since things are otherwise so,
 Now we must think, and this problem face:
 All the best horses are in the race,
 But you must find a good one for me,
 Saddle and harness prepare, you see!"
 So said brave Manas-bogatir.
 Khan Koshoi went searching there,
 Looking around both far and near,
 Thinking: "How shall I find one here?"
 Some folk came to him with a horse,
 9150 Whipping him quickly along by force,
 Others followed them in a line —
 Some of them, indeed, looked fine!
 Seeing one brought by Kalkaman,
 All the people towards him ran.
 But old Koshoi paid little heed:
 "You don't know how to choose a steed!"
 Then he shook his old white head:
 "He's too old to joust!" he said.
 "If the folk too loud start to cheer,
 9160 He will run from them in fear!
 That is not just a simple horse,
 There's some Kayip* in him, of course!
 But I've taken good stock, you know —
 Such a steed might bring us woe!
 In the jousting he'd tire, I fear,
 Not stand up to the shock of the spear.
 Not sufficient reserves of strength,
 So he would let us down at length.
 To what troubles then would it lead,
 9170 If Manas bestrode such a steed?
 He'd be defeated by Kongurbail!

Take him away, another we'll try!
 So they brought him another one too,
 That belonged to bold Urbyu,
 Son of Taz, and he looked at him,
 But his face remained rather grim.
 This was one of a black-coated pair,
 But the best one was racing there.
 He remembered, and shook his head.
 9180 "How do you like him?" Urbyu then said.
 This was a horse which looked really fine,
 Of good breeding he showed every sign.
 Such a steed could make a man glad,
 But few successes in racing he'd had.
 He had not enough staying powers,
 And grew weak in one or two hours.
 "Though he be swift, and full of speed,
 I can't offer Manas such a steed!"
 So said Koshoi to him with a frown.
 9190 Everyone saw that he was turned down.
 There is a tribe, Dunars by name,
 From them Altinkëkyul then came.
 He led a bay with a star on its brow,
 Full of furious energy now.
 He also had a similar grey,
 Very distinguished in every way.
 That grey was chosen to join the race,
 So the bay then took second place.
 Him they brought, with a star on his brow:
 9200 "Say, Koshoi, does he suit you now?"
 Altinkëkyul stepped up to him,
 Though he still was looking grim:
 "Well, there are signs of a war-horse here,
 But he has lost some strength, that's clear.
 If Manas rides him in the joust,
 I'm afraid he will soon be lost,
 If he spurs fiercely, four or five runs,
 Such a steed won't recover at once.
 When a foal, his legs weren't tied,⁶⁵
 9210 Mother's milk he was not denied.

In his stomach the fat-layer grew —
 Thick as your fist, the whole way through.
 If that fat begins to melt,
 In his legs it will soon be felt.
 He won't be able then to stride.
 If Manas upon him should ride,
 Then Kongurbai, who's a powerful foe,
 Soon would see, and Manas overthrow.
 He's like a tiger, kept in a cage,
 9220 We surely cannot risk his rage!
 So the horse was dismissed with that.
 Almambet came on swift Saralat.
 Like a whirlwind he flew, that steed,
 Tail held high in the air, indeed!⁶⁶
 Then a few who stood on one side
 Said: "Let Manas on Saralat ride!"
 He at once to them replied:
 "That is not for you to decide!
 Listen now, for the good of your souls!
 9230 In that herd where all young foals
 Were predestined to serve in war,
 In that herd where each young mare
 Was predestined for sacrifice,
 When there were losses and woes likewise,
 When there were quarrels and tribal strife —
 In that herd of Kambarboz
 That young horse an exception was.
 He was not caught, their attempts he foiled.
 Later he grew completely spoiled,
 9240 Grew over-fat, and never toiled.
 Now that he so huge has grown,
 He could easily let us down,
 If the joust becomes long and hard.
 Furthermore, what about his pard?
 Must he now walk everywhere?
 No, I won't have him, I declare!
 That would certainly not be fair,
 So let us leave the matter there!
 After him, and following quick,

9250 Up there galloped Alimsarik,
 On a black-headed horse, Dzgharmangdai,
 Which belonged to Këkchë, dy the by,
 Ridden now by Alimsarik,
 Brought for old Koshoi to pick.
 When the folk saw Dzgharmangdai,
 Then they gave a welcoming cry!
 Old Koshoi said: "Ride up here,
 Let us get the picture clear!
 Alimsarik, dismount!" said he,
 9260 "Leave this wonderful steed with me!
 This dark-chestnut Dzgharmangdai
 For the jousting-match we'll try!
 He's just like an enormous borzoi!"
 Cried the fascinated Koshoi.
 "Firm in the unbearable heat,
 When face to face contestants meet!
 Six month's journey — the road to Beidzhin --
 Forty days he would do it in!
 You'll have no riding sores, don't wail!
 9270 High in the head, and low in the tail,
 If he passes through fire — won't burn,
 Once set free, he will soon return.
 Even a sprite he could catch, I think,
 And in the desert could go without drink.
 He can bring Manas great success,
 All his powers no man can guess!
 He is full of inward power —
 Ride him full stretch for hour after hour!
 Ears stick up, like candles, straight.
 9280 Sound of battle he cannot await.
 Other war elements rest in him!"
 So said Koshoi, his face no more grim.
 Then he asked them the steed to prepare —
 Saddle and harness, and other gear there.
 Akkula's blanket they then brought out,
 Tried it this way and that way about —
 It was too big for Dzgharmangda:
 It was tried out to no avail,

9290 Up to his neck, and down to his tail,
 And the part that was left behind,
 In a roll you soon would find.
 Well, they tucked the corners in,
 Made it all look neat and trim.
 Then a Mongolian saddle they brought,
 Girded and buckled it as they ought.
 Bridle and bit they fitted too,
 And a breast-girdle passed on through.
 Then the tail-loop they shortened a bit,
 9300 And at last made all things fit.
 That was surely no easy task,
 But they accomplished it at last.
 Dzharmandga had a mane so high,
 Born of the wind, he seemed to fly.
 Then came Manas and straddled this steed,
 And he looked very pleased indeed!
 Tucked his shirt in his trousers then,
 And to secure his armour began.
 This let not through the wind and the cold,
 9310 Chain-mail with tiny pellets of gold.
 This let not through the falling rain,
 With its gold pellets in endless chain,
 Round and small as a skylark's eye,
 Blinking and twinkling like stars in the sky.
 They wouldn't let pass the nose of a gnat,
 Nor a mosquito's proboscis at that!
 If you looked through them at high noon-tide,
 Not a finger-nail could be spied!
 White steel chain-mail, and pellets of gold —
 9320 Very beautiful to behold!
 With a collar of yellow gold,
 All the buckles too, unfold.
 If you think -- a shield against all —
 Spear and aword and musket-ball.
 To the elbows the sleeves descend.
 Gauntlets protect the further end.
 "Strength and power send me in aid!"
 So Manas to Allah prayed.

Brazen helm, by Dëegër made,
 9330 All four seams with bosses arrayed,
 Decorating all four seams,
 Brazed on there in fancy schemes.
 Ear-shields too of yellow gold,
 Where the flowery patterns unfold,
 With a border of steel all round,
 Right to the very ear-tips found.
 Such a helmet he put on his head.
 So Kongurbai and Manas then sped
 At the feast of Këkëtei...
 9340 First in the lists came Kongurbai,
 From the Tungshas, in old Beidzhin.
 Forefather Pang -- his earliest kin.
 Earlier foes just fell in bits,
 All of them had lost their wits.
 Then, like a tiger, came Manas,
 One who chased camels in winter thus.
 He took no notice of anyone else,
 Hanging his weapons round his belt.
 To Maimorden* he called for aid,
 9350 As he spurred on his steed ahead.
 When his way to the lists he found,
 Round his head a white cloth was bound.
 Brave Tështyuk and lion Bakai,
 They escorted him, standing by.
 That Kongurbai, he was a great Khan,
 Very successful in all he'd done,
 Leading the people of Kalan.*
 Seated on his steed Algara,
 Was distinguished, and known afar.
 9360 Now that Kongurbai, here you are.
 He is dressed in a coat of steel,
 He is like Rustam* one might feel.
 Kongurbai on his Algara,
 Differs from all others by far.
 That great rogue, who in mail sits up,
 He is like the great mountain Kap.*
 Deepest fury distorts his face.

When on his steed he took his place,
 When into the lists he streamed,
 9370 Then all Kitais had loudly screamed.
 Their own war-cry aloud they cried.
 In his golden helm did he ride.
 Algara swept on to the fore,
 With that unworthy enormous boar,
 Tassel a-waving on his spear,
 And beside him, like cockerels there,
 Necks stretched out, their crowing rang --
 Bozkertik and Budangchang
 Cried: "May you not know defeat!"
 9380 All like sheep did their people bleat.
 Out came the bogatirs on the square.
 When they saw each other there,
 Each of them spurred on his steed.
 Allah above knows the truth, indeed,
 Where among these words it flies,
 Where among them lurk the lies.
 Both these giants plucked up strength,
 Facing each other they stood at length,
 Set their spears, and ahead they swept.
 9390 Tassels upon their spear-heads leapt.
 Then their lances both were set
 On the spot where their eyebrows met,
 Thus to slay the foe on the spot,
 Right through the eye, as like as not.
 They took aim to left or right,
 Horses' haunches were all bunched tight...
 People thought: "One of them must die --
 They were afraid to look, forby.
 Coming together, a spear's length to go,
 9400 Both prepared for the mighty blow!
 They were aiming straight at the eyes.
 On the helmet boss the spear flies.
 Both get scratches upon their cheeks.
 Kongurbai with fury shrieks,
 As beyond Manas he rides,
 And Manas infuriate flies,

Passes Kongurbai besides,
 Turns around on his steed likewise,
 And again towards his foe
 9410 Our bogatir begins to go...
 On Shaimerden he calls once more
 In a mad fury then Kongur.
 From the side of the Mussulman,
 Turned his steed around again.
 In his finery, head to feet,
 Spurred again his big black steed,
 And went sweeping on once more
 To Manas, as he did before.
 And, to raise his spirits high,
 9420 He let forth a vicious cry.
 On Dzarmangdai Manas streamed forth,
 Clouds of dust flew up from the earth.
 Aiming with his tasselled spear,
 Fighting for honour, he knew no fear.
 He never thought even once in the strife
 Of the briefness of human life.
 He only thought: "There's his saddle-bow,
 And as now he bends forward low,
 That's where his beating heart now lies,
 9430 Just above where its arches rise.
 That's where his sword-like breast-bone stands,
 That's where my spear-head soon will land!..
 And that powerful, fearless boar
 Kongurbai, he aimed once more,
 Thinking: "By his saddle-bow,
 That's where his heart is beating now,
 That's where I'll aim my lengthy spear,
 And he'll die from my blow, that's clear!"
 So those twain, with might and main,
 9440 Fell upon each other again.
 Mercilessly they thrust with force,
 Each sitting heavily on his horse,
 And their steeds, when they clashed like that,
 Just like begging dogs then sat.
 Riders dropped spears, and took their clubs,

Each one now a foe's helmet drubs,
 Holding onto his horse's mane,
 Beats the other again and again.
 Steel on steel the sparklets fly,
 9450 As the furious fighters cry.
 Those who were watching stood aghast —
 How long, then, could such conflict last?
 Seizing the moment, both then sped,
 Raising their swords above their head,
 Slashing away with might and main,
 Sending sparks flying once again.
 Long with smiting swords they stand,
 Then took battle-axes in hand,
 Thinking: "I'll crack him on his crown,
 9460 Then, maybe, he'll crumple down!"
 They retreated, then forward soed,
 Each beat the other hard on the head.
 On their helmets bold blows fell,
 Sparks flew glittering there as well.
 People saw this with their own eyes.
 Even quarrels began to arise.
 Some said "This is no mere game!
 This is a battle, and one will be slain!"
 Hearing what folk began to cry,
 9470 Brave Tështyuk and bold Bakai,
 They went forward to lion Manas,
 Took his steed by the bridle thus.
 Then Budanchang and Bozkertik
 They seized Kongurbai's bridle quick,
 And they led him upon one side.
 Those around their agreement cried.
 To the appointed distance then
 They led those two furious men.
 "Only with spears you fight!" they said.
 9480 Then they let them both go ahead.
 With his beak-nosed face and red eyes,
 All the world knows him likewise,
 Then the monstrous Kongurbai
 Once more gave a deafening cry.

Once more in full fury he burned,
 As Algara again he turned.
 Lion Manas too, turned Dzharmandai,
 And towards the foe let him fly.
 And his hooves in the earth made splits,
 9490 Talisman on his brow flaps and flips.
 Leaving a cloud of dust behind,
 And once more with fury blind,
 Lion Manas then spurred his horse on,
 Set his spear, as before he'd done,
 Straight at Kongurbai's wide chest.
 He, too, gave his spear no rest —
 Set it again at Manas' heart,
 Gave him a blow which made him start.
 Straight at his breast with all his might —
 9500 Lifting him out of the saddle quite.
 Feet slipped out of their stirrups too,
 Barely then did Manas pull through.
 Knocked out of his stride, Dzharmandai
 Leapt straight forward, and so got by,
 And Manas was seated once more.
 As Kongurbai went passing before,
 Locks of his hair flew above his ears.
 Then Manas thought: "Just there, it appears,
 Is the edge of his helmet now —
 9510 That's quite high -- leave's a gap, I vow!
 Over his collar, behind his ears,
 There the nape of his neck now rears.
 There's a space not covered by steel,
 That's the place to strike, I feel!"
 Swiftly he turned and set his spear —
 Over his collar, behind his ear —
 Like a hawk's beak, so sharp and fierce,
 Lion Manas' spear then pierced.
 He who thought himself skilled, Kongurbai,
 9520 From Algara went flying high!
 Kongurbai fell flat on the ground,
 Stuck in the dust his head was found.
 Straight in the nape -- the blow was fierce,

Slid to his brow, but did not pierce.
 Blue tunic hems were flapping high,
 Like the wings of a butterfly.
 Arms stretched out, he lay on the ground,
 Streams of blood were trickling round.
 All the strength which once he'd known
 9530 Now had deserted his flesh and bone.
 Kongurbai lay there wide-stretched.
 From his hand the bridle was snatched.
 Grey-maned steed no master knew,
 None to rein him in where due...
 Joyful that he had conquered yet,
 Then Manas breathed: "Aziret!"*
 Then he cried "Khan Nogoi, Nogoi!"
 Shouted his war-cry aloud with joy,
 And, triumphant, to laugh began.
 9540 Then Tështyuk, son of Elyeman,
 And, from the Eshteks, Dzhamgirchi,
 One on each side, in victory,
 Took Manas before all the folk.
 Then of the jousting prize they spoke.
 Nine thousand head of horses and cows,
 Nine hundred camels therein allowed...
 As a giant Manas became known.
 "Count four thousand of them your own,
 And the remaining five thousand head,
 9550 Share among poor people!" he said.
 Heathens everywhere were shamed,
 And for that Kongurbai may be blamed.
 He had been beaten by Manas,
 All the Kirghiz rejoiced, with a fuss.
 These memorial wakes and feasts,
 'Mid the Kirghiz and Kazakhs, at least,
 Were the custom since ancient days.
 Këkëti's blue flag they raised.
 Soon it was floating out on high.
 9560 Loudly Irchi began to cry:
 "Now let the Mussulmen take a rest!
 Let other heathens from the west

Come out and face Kitai's best man,
 Let them try wreatling on horseback then,
 Let them pull a Kitai from his steed,
 Let them butt, like goats indeed.
 Let the folk watch the tussles thus —
 Let the winners get prizes from us —
 Ninety cattle, and fifty sheep,
 9570 If they win them, they can keep!"
 Many men from the west stepped forth,
 Eager then to show their worth.
 From the Kitais came Shangdëögër,
 From the Beidzhin tribe Tungsha.
 He rode out on his prancing steed —
 Very fine creature was he indeed!
 Younger brother of Achbuudan,
 Hot-headed horse named Kuuchabdar.
 When this prancing pair came out,
 9580 All the Kitais then raised a shout.
 From the faiths in the west, just look,
 From the Dëbëts came Chino-onchuk.
 He had been chosen by his kind,
 And was distinguished by a sharp mind.
 Thick upper lip was straight and stout,
 Large lower lip was pouted out.
 Wide heavy shoulders seemed like a shield,
 Which to man's blows would never yield.
 Pointed ears sticking uo afar,
 9590 He rode a steed named Koitora.
 Seeing how huge and strong was he,
 All the westerners cried with glee.
 Ears, like umbrellas, were sticking up,
 Eyes, about the size of a cup.
 Slightly mad was the look on his face.
 Chain-mail vest did his chest embrace.
 Having bowed to Laailama,
 Worshipped by Kalmaks near and far,
 Just erupting fire from his eyes,
 9600 Out onto the square he rides.
 Out before the watchers went they,

Thousands and thousands of them, anyway.
 Spurring his steed before the crowd,
 Raising up the dust in a cloud,
 Shangdëögër rode from the Kitais.
 Chino-onchuk rode forward likewise.
 He was the first to come to grips —
 Puffing through his pouting lips.
 Tussling, tugging to and fro,
 9610 Neither could the other man throw.
 When they had wrestled some sixty times,
 There rose a cry from the western lines.
 All the earth round began to shake,
 Such a commotion did they make.
 "See how to save our honour he tries!"
 Cries as well from Kitais arise.
 Both Kalmaks and Kitais there stand
 Like a locust-swarm on the land.
 When they tore and tugged without rest,
 9620 Hearts beat faster in each watcher's breast.
 Twilight came, and the sun went down —
 Neither strong-man could win the crown.
 Where they tore at each other so,
 Dark-red blood had begun to flow.
 So, to separate these two men
 Came old Kyushëng on his pony then.
 Also there came Kirghiz Akbai,
 Wanting to know the reason why.
 "That's enough Shangdëögër, my lad!"
 9630 So old Kushëng to his wrestler said.
 And he wanted to lead him away.
 Then Akbai had something to say —
 "Don't let him go, hold fast!" he said.
 Shangdëögër then lost his head.
 That strong-man who came from Beidzhin
 Thought time was up, if they came for him.
 Just as he was prepared to depart,
 Chino-onchuk made one swift dart,
 From his horse he dragged him down,
 9640 So the Kitais then lost the crown!

"Evening has come, be our guests, come inside!"
 So the heralds cried then, far and wide.
 So Kitais and Kirghiz hid their spite,
 Each from the others as well as they might.
 In the valley of Karkira,
 Where the Kara-Suu flows afar,
 To Kainar-Kashai,* Uch-Bashat,*
 And to Ketmen on one side, at that,
 And on the other to Kizil-Kiya —
 9650 Tents full of people stretched near and far.
 Straight ahead lies Agayiz pass.
 If to the north your gaze you cast,
 In the vale of Chabdar men rest.
 One end lies on Tëtës' high crest.
 Other tribes, as guests that is,
 There remain among Kara-Kirghiz.
 There the rage of Kitais still waxed high,
 'Gainst the words said by old Bakai,
 Where the Mussulmen then were found,
 9660 Sucking-foals' meat they sent around.
 To the Kitais of Kakanchin,
 Cows' and rams' meat they brought in,
 Boiled with chunks of pure white fat,
 Then made beds for them after that.
 For Torguns, Tubars and Shais,
 People from the western tribes,
 They brewed excellent strong tea,
 And for meat prepared, you see,
 Horseflesh boiled with ribs and fat.
 9670 All received mutton too, where they sat.
 Leaders of Kirghiz folk then said:
 "This is in memory of the dead —
 For Këkëtëi this feast is kept!"
 Then all the feasters soundly alept...
 Meanwile the racers had run six days
 And on the seventh still galloped their ways.
 All the folk impatience showed...
 Those who galloped, and racing steeds rode,
 Yet must hold out another two days.

680 People prepared in various ways.
 Some were excited, impatient, wild,
 Others were angry, far from mild.
 Into various groups they formed,
 Called: "Mount your horses, you have been warned!"
 Soon they covered the face of the earth.
 Then again Kongurbai stepped forth.
 Having recovered from the blow,
 Said to his red-tasselled people now:
 "When the racers draw more near,
 690 Show all your spite, and do not fear!
 Do not spare yourselves!" said he,
 "Young or old, whatever you be.
 If a Mussulman's horse wins through,
 On no account let him get by you!
 Don't let him pass, but bar the way.
 You are a fearless folk,-- so they say.
 Do not our villages stand nearby?
 Why, then, Kirghiz can you not defy?
 If you are beaten by just a few,
 700 Will not your forbears' ghosts punish you?
 If a Kirghiz on a horse draws near,
 Then remember yesterday here!
 Gallop towards him with all your might,
 Cut him down in revengeful spite!
 Listen to what I tell you now!
 These Kirghiz are to blame, anyhow,
 For the way they've treated us here!
 Listen to me, and have no fear!
 Now this folk, having raised its head,
 710 Wants to honour the name of their dead.
 They have prepared this memorial feast,
 Feeling themselves independent, at least,
 Feeling themselves as though in full power.
 This seems to be Manas' great hour!
 And along with him -- Tështyuk.
 From the first few steps we took
 'Gainst that Katagan Koshoi,
 From him we've nought but woe and annoy,

Since we first set foot on this land,
 9720 And behind him the young ones stand.
 They too have all become very wise.
 Turkestan has grown wise besides.
 With the hosts of Kitais in our land,
 Mountain Kirghiz now equal stand,
 Even have overtaken us thus,
 And the heath-fires started by us,
 Every day grow less and less.
 Strong-men die out too, I guess,
 Seek a place in that other land,
 9730 Go from us, on every hand...
 Turning all upside down as we go,
 Let's stop their steeds, and shame them so!
 There are quarrels between us now,
 We must not fail to beat them somehow,
 We must not fail to burn their homes,
 Smash down their tents and yurta domes,
 We must not fail to make them groan,
 Old ones and young ones, make them moan!
 We must not fail their ardour to cool --
 9740 All the Kirghiz we'll finally rule!
 We must not fail their orchards to burn,
 All trees and fruit to ashes to turn.
 We must not fail, when they raise a proud head,
 Straightway to hew it off instead!
 In Kumul, Chegan, Agilik,
 In Emil, Bëkën, Tagilik,*
 In Siyabush, the Kalmaks dwell.
 There lives Ushang, Karamar as well.
 How can we further Kirghiz annoy?
 9750 Think it over, what plans to employ!
 There are two rivers -- Urkun* and Ertish,*
 That is a place where Kalmaks exist.
 There is a desert, called Erime,
 And to its southern side, let's say;
 There is a lake called It-Ichpes,*
 And Kalmaks live there, no less.
 Four Kirghiz tribes, who come from the vale, 67

To do us ill will surely not fail.
 Let us break this feast up, somehow,
 9760 Let us make it a laughing-stock now!
 Let us turn their feast into hell,
 Let us consign them to torment as well!
 Let us destroy them, root and stem,
 Let us squash those boastful men!
 Let us kill them, and quiet be,
 Let us smash them entirely!
 Let us slay them, while not too late,
 Let their daughters find no mate!
 One live soul increases to three,
 9770 Three live souls to a hundred, you see!
 'Mid the numerous tribes of Kakan,
 To these Kara-Kirghiz, man to man,
 Who can stand up, and them defy?
 Only when rooted out they'll die.
 Then the tribes of Kakan will rise high!"
 Such were the words of Kongurbai.
 Neskara, with his tassel of red,
 Bold Ushang, the Kalmak head,
 Black-maned Boro-onchu as well,
 9780 Katalang's lovely daughter Saikal,
 From the Solons — Alo-oke,
 Bold Dzholoi, with his boarish way,
 Tokshuker's son, young Boskertik,
 From the Solobons — So-oronguk,
 From the Chirasha — Bedēn,
 From the Dagirs — the bold Kēdēn,
 All these leaders of the Kitais
 Straddled their steeds for the fray likewise,
 In their mail and armour and all,
 9790 How to catch the Kirghiz on the raw,
 They decided a counsel to call.
 Kongurbai, who menaces all,
 There unfolded his plans to them,
 With Kalmak Sukal and his men,
 To Orongu and Dzholoi in their tent,
 Led by Bozkertik they went.

From the Kalmaks old Ushang then came.
 All took counsel once again.
 "If their racer first comes in view,
 9800 If we bar the road to him too,
 Then out of that a quarrel will rise.
 Drawing their swords and taking their knives,
 Then Kirghiz and Kalmaks, as they are,
 How could they not start fights near and far?
 How could the fires of woe not flame thus?
 Those Kitais who are hostile to us,
 How could they not then start to gloat?
 Now Kitais have plans afloat,
 To inflict slaughter on all Kirghiz.
 9810 If the swords o'er their heads start to whizz,
 Then on Kalmaks woe as well will fall.
 Better not to take part in it all!
 If Kalmaks start to aid Kitais,
 Then the Kara-Kirghiz will rise,
 And will turn all their spite on us,
 And till the day of Judgement thus,
 They will not stop to attack us then,
 And will finally cripple our men!..
 Thus Ushang began his speech...
 9820 Not letting him conclusion reach,
 Bold Dzholoi started to rage and sneer:
 "All those brutes of Kirghiz who are here,
 Who to their feast have invited us,
 Since we have come have argued thus,
 And offended us, led us astray.
 How can we call them friends, anyway?
 You speak in hinting tones somehow,
 With the Kirghiz you are flirting now,
 But with Kitais I firmly stand —
 9830 We go together, hand in hand!
 We go together on campaign,
 Suffer together, if someone's slain,
 And together rejoice and survive,
 Glad to find each other alive!
 If someone finds it hard to live,

Then our support to him we give.
 How, then, can I leave Kakans?
 Why should I join up with Kazakhs?
 Since Kongurbai has spoken so,
 9840 I am prepared to my death to go!
 I am prepared to fight to the end!"
 All the others embarrassed stand.
 They do not know what words to employ.
 That fine pair, Orongu and Dzholoi,
 Stand on their own, and with neither agree.
 Kongurbai was wounded, you see,
 When he fought that lion Manas.
 By that old giant Koshoi, alas,
 Giant Dzholoi was overthrown too.
 9850 Deep humiliation he knew!
 By Manas he was lashed on his beck,
 Down came the lash, his back went crack!
 That is why so stubborn stands he,
 And is as furious as can be!
 He has gone crazy, that Kalmak...
 So the Kitais sway off on their track,
 Teeming on the crest of Chadbar,
 Rode with their allies, and there you are!
 Like a stream they flowed ahead,
 9860 Many tribes by Kitais were led.
 To the appointed place they came --
 Tarsas, Dzhēets, Sakalats, the same,
 And this matter will come to an end
 Only when racers arrive, my friend...
 Starting place, where the race began,
 Distant side of Turkestan,
 Marshy isles of Kee-Dzhekend,
 Holding horses fast to the end,
 Sixty men gave the judges aid,
 9870 And a long straight line they made.
 Set their steeds in their places then,
 Gave their blessing to jockey-men.
 That was the lowland of Kuu,
 End to end, full of horses too.

Near the river were marshes there,
 Reeds and rushes grew everywhere.
 On the marshland flocked wild geese.
 When you ride upon your steeds,
 They are your riches which you whip!
 9880 You may think that is just a quip,
 You may even start laughing, indeed!
 Off went the jockeys on their steeds.
 What is that but the essence of speed?
 Each one was trying to gain the lead.
 There are cranes and geese all round,
 On the Dzhekend marshes found.
 Many cranes and many geese
 Fell beneath the horses' feet.
 They did not get a chance to fly,
 9890 As the swift horses swept on by.
 Those sixty men who had made the start,
 They followed after, for their part,
 And they loaded their horses then --
 Many dead birds they took with them.
 Other wounded ones they slew,
 And took those along with them too.
 Sixty men found many crushed wings,
 Broken legs, and other things,
 So they put the birds out of pain,
 9900 And rode off with them again.
 Whether it's true, or just a joke,
 That story's told amid Kirghiz folk.
 Like winged birds race-horses flew.
 All of them followed the leader too.
 Jockeys then, releasing the rein,
 Whipped them and spurred them on again.
 Horses, freed in the morn, still surge,
 To Kara-Kum, on the Ulaan's verge.
 And towards evening they arrived:
 9910 Six thousand route-men watched wide-eyed.
 Watched unceasingly, to boot,
 And kept all the steeds on route,
 Did not let them stray left or right,

Till the whole thousand had passed from sight.
 When all were checked and passed on by,
 Only then could the route-men fly!
 And as earlier in the tale,
 Followed after, up-hill, down-dale.
 Having seen with their own eyes
 9920 How each racing steed still flies.
 Thus they saw that none got lost
 As each stage of the route they crossed.
 Where the Ili still swirls and swills,
 On that side stand Kapal's* high hills.
 All the horses passed them by,
 Came out on the roadway high,
 Lying along the river-side.
 When to Chadbar they all arrived
 And began to ascend the hill,
 9930 One horse led all the others still.
 That was huge high Akkula,
 No other like him, near on far.
 Akkula, with his mighty spine,
 Akkula, with his well-bred line,
 Akkula, both lean and clean,
 Akkula, who battle has seen.
 Perspiration -- and that alone,
 He's wet through now, down to the bone.
 From his nostrils comes steam which gleams,
 9940 From his muscles sweat still streams.
 Winged ribs beating on his sides,
 Rise and fall as the jockey rides.
 Where his hooves beat on the ground,
 There great deep ravines are found.
 Four steel bits on the bridle set,
 Hang down low, foam-covered yet.
 Huge Kula, like Dzhelmayan,*
 Flies like the wind, with great elan.
 All the people who've seen him race,
 9950 Hope no longer to gain first place.
 At the start there were seven ahead,
 He has not passed them all as yet.

Snorting, like an arrow he flies.
 On his back, the jockey who rides
 Has a tunic without any sleeves,
 And it flutters about in the breeze.
 Any moment, it seems, it will tear.
 Clods of earth fly up in the air,
 Just as though shot of a gun,
 9960 Whistling overhead they run.
 There, just look, before him ran
 Dzholoi's horse, named Achbuudan.
 "I'd like to catch him, if I can!"
 Many others he'd passed, but look,
 Here was Tështyuk's Chalkuiruk,
 Whom he never overtook,
 Who the land of Keikap* had seen,
 And through many torments had been,
 Sent by goblins and sprites, that is.
 9970 He was sad, not succeeding in this.
 That poor beast, who'd returned from below,
 Lost his six-fold strength doing so.
 Chalkuiruk, who had seven lives,
 Who like a wilful wind just flies,
 Lost six out of seven, that is...
 He was sad not succeeding in this.
 No self-pity, though, did he feel,
 But his strength away did wheel,
 How he could count on one life alone.
 9980 He thought: "Let me be number one!
 Let me Achbuudan overtake,
 Quickly my way to the finish make.
 I must get by these chosen steeds
 And receive that first prize, indeed!
 Thinking thus, Chalkuiruk ran.
 Dzholoi's steed, named Achbuudan,
 He then managed to leave behind.
 Achbuudan flew on like the wind,
 But from his mouth came foam and blood.
 9990 Stones on which he trod, and mud,
 They went whistling up in the sky.

One more day remained — he must fly!
 But Dzholoi, that ignorant brat,
 Hadn't trained off superfluous fat.
 Tail went streaming, yards behind.
 Sweat both sides of his body lined,
 Ears he lowered, just like a hare,
 Clods went raining everywhere.
 He was set on first prize, and look —
 10000 Chalkuirak he overtook!
 Following him, as close as could be,
 Came Koshoi's steed, Chongsari,
 Racing like a hungry deer,
 Chasing like a pole-cat there.
 Brow-tuft blowing up in the sky,
 Dust had got in his jockey's eye.
 Sleeveless tunic was covered indeed,
 As he went galloping on full speed.
 And behind him, and not very far,
 10010 Budanchang's racer Salkara,
 And he too on the field arrived.
 After him another one dived —
 Telkyurēng, all hot on his track.
 He belonged to Muzburchak.
 Put in the race when still too fat,
 And not sparing his life at that!
 Then after him, again not far,
 Kerkēkyul's steed, Kerkashka.
 He had an individual style —
 10020 Hind legs wide as a mountain vale.
 When he runs, between them so,
 There a loaded camel could go.
 Now here comes — take a look if you will —
 Karacha's racer, Dzharkizil,
 And behind him, and nearer still,
 Alo-oke's steed — Narkizil.
 Then comes Kēkchēs steed Kēgala —
 Tears in his big eyes there are.
 On his back rides a jockey-cheat,
 10030 One who'd set up as trainer complete,

For the racing steeds, at the feast,
 And had over-trained him, poor beast.
 Made him thin, and weight below par.
 He was a clever rogue — there you are!
 "I over-drove him, not once or twice,
 Having taken Kēkchēs's advice.
 Now I'm responsible for this horse!"
 Right beside him, on the course,
 Neck to neck with him, indeed,
 10040 Ran Kazgara, that's Kalkaman's steed.
 And behind them, but not too far,
 Sultakan's racer — Tazgara.
 Chegisha's racer — Savala,
 Agisha's racer, — Karala,
 Kēchpēsa's racing steed — Chabdar,
 And behind them, but not very far,
 Came the steed of old Bakail —
 Dzharkizil, Umēt's fine steed,
 Galloped behind, but not far indeed.
 10050 He himself came from the Kitais.
 Bey Bakcha's steed — Barkizil,
 Sandzhibek's steed — Sarkizil,
 And Shigai's steed — Akmoyun,
 All of these were coming soon.
 Kēkētēi's memorial feast
 Ran great games, and all were pleased.
 Atalabek's steed — Akdzhambash,
 Chino-onchuk's Chiyala, still fresh,
 So many steeds — if we name every one
 10060 For the generations to come,
 That would be more than anyone needs!
 There were awards for sixty steeds,
 Which would enrich the man who won.
 Kulabee was the last one to come,
 Poor young mare, but how she could run!
 Saddle-blanket fell from her croup,
 Caught a cold which made her whoop.
 Sixtieth place she took with a swoop!
 Now let's leave that tale aside,

10070 Of the racers, and all who ride...
 How we'll return to those wild Kitais...
 Listen, I'll tell you more besides!
 Having crossed the pass of Chadbar,
 Kongurbai led his men afar,
 To the banks of the wide Ili,*
 To Korogot and Kosh-Kël* went he,
 To the Sari-Dzhaz lowlands there,
 Then he looked around with care.
 O'er Korogot and Kosh-Kël high,
 10080 Kongurbai looked up in the sky.
 Gathering clouds of dust there were.
 In the lowlands of Suuk-Dëbë,
 Jockeys riding their steeds could be seen,
 Horses were covered with sweat and steam.
 There loud cries and much noise began.
 On ahead came Achbuudan.
 After him came Chalkuiruk
 Like a wild deer he goes speeding, look!
 On the descent he overtook then;
 10090 On the ascent, though, Achbuudan,
 Curses upon his flying mane!
 Overtook Chalkuiruk again.
 After this first successful pair,
 Swimming in sweat, I must declare,
 Akkula had caught up with them both.
 Up to the ankles he sinks in the earth.
 Chest thrust forward, just like a deer.
 Then Manas, who chanced to be near,
 Having seen his steed in the lead,
 10100 Thanked great Allah above indeed!
 Praying, he did not notice when
 Forty-four Kitai fighting-men,
 With bold Kongurbai at their head,
 He who led the Mahdzhî* be it said,
 Came to overthrow Akkula,
 And they prepared his way to bar.
 Kongurbai two war-chiefs sent
 Blocking the road where Akkula went.

He was heated, but in the lead,
 10110 Flying forward then at full speed,
 Over those two Sung-dung* he leapt,
 And still onwards his way he kept...
 Sitting astride Algara on high,
 On to meet him rode Kongurbai.
 "I must gallop on Algara,
 Quickly, quickly to Akkula,
 And must beat his breast head-on —
 Such will be the end of that one!
 Kongurbai sped towards Akkula...
 10120 Seeing this, on his Achatora,
 Kicking up clods as he forward thrust,
 Galloping almost unseen in the dust,
 Sweeping towards him rode Manas.
 When Kongurbai almost reached Akkula,
 When he prepared Algara for the clash,
 When he was making the final dash,
 Then Manas, with his tasselled lash,
 Which was plaited of leather straps,
 With a pom-pom with lead in its end,
 10130 Suddenly galloped up to defend.
 He made a turn to the right at speed.
 Crying "You rogue, keep your hands off my steed!"
 Beat him severely upon the head —
 Dust-clouds from his head-gear spread.
 On one cheek was a long red weal.
 Swaying unbalanced, head to heel,
 Kongurbai, who thought himself brave,
 Grabbed his steed's mane, himself to save.
 Long hot slash from chin to crown —
 10140 From his cheek the blood trickled down,
 In a slanting line, dark-red...
 Akkula sped on ahead.
 In his tracks, with a raucous cry,
 Bogatir Almambet rode by:
 "If you want to cripple a steed,
 Don't act like that, but like this!" he said.
 Dzholoi's steed with his whip he beat.

On his head did the blow repeat.
 Achbuudan, he stumbled likewise,
 10150 Barely on his feet could he rise...
 Chalkuiruk at once overtook,
 Achbuudan still swayed and shook,
 Finally took to the race with a cry,
 After three others who's galloped by.
 With a curse Dzholoi pushed ahead,
 Up to Almambet he sped,
 And in angry tones he cried:
 "Kongurbai it was who tried
 Akkula to stop, or kill —
 10160 Why, then, try to work my horse ill?"
 Almambet replied with a blow:
 "Well, you rogue, you earned it, you know!"
 And with that he rode away.
 Not another word did he say.
 But Dzholoi then flew in a rage,
 Like a tiger, caught in a cage.
 Feeling the blow's unpleasant sting,
 Placed a deadly shaft on its string,
 And was ready to let it go,
 10170 But, as he was bending his bow,
 Young Chubak, son of Albalta,
 Caught a glimpse, ere he'd gone too far,
 And his battle-axe, wide as a door,
 He wrenched out of his belt, what's more,
 Over Dzholoi he raised it so,
 And on his head gave a crashing blow,
 Sending him reeling down below.
 There he lost consciousness also.
 For a while he nought did know —
 10180 From his hand dropped the empty bow.
 So the spiteful Dzholoi then fell.
 When he came to himself as well,
 Then he felt he had little chance,
 As he backward gave a glance.
 There all the forty bogatirs,
 With Kirghiz at their head, it appears,

Now they will come against him alone.
 Were his head even made of stone,
 Clearly they soon would come to slay.
 10190 So to Kalmaks he then made away,
 Spoke with Ushang, but could not agree.
 That was the start of his misery...
 Having seen sixty racing steeds through,
 Then the race was over, they knew,
 All the others, as well as Manas.
 Then white-bearded Koshoi thought thus:
 "First prize clearly to us falls due!"
 Others he placed in order too.
 So he took care of all prizes indeed,
 10200 And to meet the incoming steeds,
 There were sixty-one men all told,
 Led by lion Manas, the bold.
 Their affair was as judges to act,
 And to count the riders, in fact.
 He told all; "Be on your guard —
 You must take care of every award!"
 Then another sixty men
 Ordered to stand at the winning-place then.
 They would keep order as each gets his prize,
 10210 Stand as example to all likewise.
 Each a prize, according to place;
 So Manas arranged the race.
 He had herds prepared everywhere,
 And went running about here and there.
 In Chelek* and in Charin*
 Cattle were ready for those who win.
 Oh the shore of Uch Almati,*
 In the Uch-Bukak vale, you see,
 They were kept ready, both near and far,
 10220 Spread round the slopes of Kizil-Kiya.
 All the Tologoi* hill-slopes steep
 Are packed tight with rams and sheep.
 Future successors will employ
 Its new name of Sari-Tologoi,*
 As their generations pass.

Owners of racers called on Manas,
 Gave him no time to take a rest,
 Made him troubles, even the best —
 Occupied by these who came,
 10250 Still he held out all the same.
 Prizes for the winning steeds
 Having counted out for their needs,
 Having checked them twice, I believe,
 Not in the morning, but at eve,
 When the sun began to decline,
 Then Manas came back in time.
 To Kara-Su, in Uch-Balak,
 In that place on every track,
 He had settled the major prize.
 10240 When he arrived, a sight met his eyes!
 Sixty warriors he'd left there —
 All were slain, lay everywhere,
 With their heads all beaten flat,
 And the first prize had been seized, at that!
 Those Kalmaks had made this rout,
 And the Kitais had helped them out.
 Kongurbai and Muradil,
 Son of Mirmus, had done their will.
 Neskara, of the red-tassel gang,
 10250 And that Kalmak, the bold Ushang,
 Black-maned Budangchang as well,
 Katkalang's daughter, brave Saikal,
 From the Solons — old Alo-oke,
 Bold Dzholoi, like a boar, anyway,
 Tokshuker's Bozkertik, they say,
 War-chief So-onruk, what's more,
 Drove off the camels, and made them roar,
 Drove off the cows, and made them moo,
 Drove off the horses, they snorted too.
 10260 Look at the people — what hullabaloo!
 All the mares and yearling neighed,
 Oh, what dust o'er the steppe they raised!
 Drove off the bulls, and made them roar,
 Drove off the sheep, made them bleat much more.

Saying: "Our horses too won a prize!"
 Kongurbai at their head there rides.
 Shepherds, found on the steppe about,
 Then were ordered to spread them out.
 "Akkula the first prize took,
 10270 After him came Kalchuiruk,
 Third came the racer Achbuudan,
 Then three steeds of mine there ran.
 One, then another, they came in a wave.
 Then Kongurbai strict instructions gave:
 "Take three prizes for those three steeds!"
 Shrieking, Kitais drove off those beasts,
 Then the Kirghiz were greatly surprised,
 To the feast-founders raised their cries.
 Youngest of Elyeman's nine sons,
 10280 To their call Tështyuk then comes,
 Forty thousand comrades with him.
 Clouded by dust, the sky grew dim.
 Tiger Tështyuk and his men sped fleet,
 Cut off their road — they could not retreat.
 Forty thousand stood facing them,
 Tribes of Kitais and neighbouring men.
 Giant Kongurbai at their head,
 Trampled down all before them and led
 To the road to Ters-Maço,
 10290 That is a river, as you must know.
 Up until the birth of Manas,
 Thereabouts lived Khan Tekës.
 Openly Kitais sent their men
 At Këkëti's memorial then,
 And they seized rewards for their own.
 Bold Tështyuk to battle had flown,
 Barred their path, and caused alarm.
 Tribes of Kitais, who feared more harm,
 Then began like ants to seethe,
 10300 Tribes of Kalmaks began to bleat:
 "Why must we give up our prize?
 Here with us the cattle now lies.
 Let us go back to our own place.

It's not right to give prizes away!
 If Kongurbai and Dzholoi so say,
 We shall beat those Kirghiz on the head,
 We shall leave them all lying dead.
 From that cursed Kirghiz crew,
 10310 We shall take daughters as prizes too!
 If those leaders of ours agree,
 We shall aquash them destructively.
 From that cursed Kirghiz crew,
 We shall take sons as prizes too!
 We shall smash their doors and jambs,
 How they'll weep, those fatherless lambs!
 We shall drive off foalless mares,
 We shall smash yurta lattice of theirs,
 We shall make lads and lasses weep,
 10320 All their steeds from the slopes we'll sweep!
 Herdsmen's crooks we'll splinter to bits,
 We shall drive them out of their wits,
 Satin from yurta walls we'll take,
 Out of that we'll saddle-pads make.
 We'll deatroy all, and not let them think.
 We'll the red blood of the blood-thirsty drink!
 We'll drink and drink, till he bacomes thin,
 All the ribs sticking out of him!
 From all kith and kin of Kirghiz
 10330 We'll separate ourselves like this!
 Our third prize of Achbuudan
 We'll not give back to any man's son.
 With our warriors all we shall share,
 Then that blood-thirsty one, with proud air,
 Will have to struggle for life, just see!
 Not too easy for him will things be!
 While we still do not leave their land,
 We shall fight right here where we stand.
 While we don't pass Ters-Maëo,
 10340 To Echkilik, where two vales meet so,
 While we still have not reached that spot,
 Let's drive all the cattle we've got!

If we meet any one of those curs,
 Then let it be for them the worse!
 After we've passed Ters-Maëo,
 All their men whom we've captured so,
 Let us bind them, and slay them like lambs!"
 So spoke Kalmaks on every hand.
 Those who survive, let them clear out quick,
 10350 In the direction of Bakalik.
 So to make war on Kirghiz and their kind,
 All the Kitais and Kalmaks had in mind...
 Having given to each their prize,
 In the evening Manas arrived.
 Saw the herdsmen's crooks smashed to bits,
 Nearly went clean out of his wits —
 Wounded to death in the bitter fights,
 There lay sixty of his best knights.
 Trying to save their lives, no choice,
 10360 There a few of the tribe Nogois,
 Having climbed into birches hid,
 As some Karkirs in fir-trees did.
 Of the others they did not think —
 Their own life stood on the brink.
 With the numerous wild Kitais
 They could could not cope in any wise.
 When the sun was due to set soon,
 Up rode the valorous Bokmurun.
 Those who on their feet could stand
 10370 He gave into Manas' hand.
 And Këkëtei's blue banner he raised.
 Then to Almalu-Su he chased,
 And towards him came Tështyuk.
 One hundred thousand warriors, look,
 Bokmurun, who enjoyed great fame —
 Like the mountains stood his name —
 And when Ushang caught sight of them,
 Then he said to all his men:
 "'Gainst such numbers I shall not fight —
 10380 They would o'erwhelm us all by might!"
 All his thirty-five thousand then

He led out from Kitai fighting men.
 Then that cursed great boar, Dzholoi,
 Showed his crudest kind of ploy —
 Taking forty-thousand Kitais,
 Boasting and swelling himself to the skies,
 With his own fifty-thousand men,
 Also making much fuss over them,
 With their banners a-blowing bright,
 10390 Off he swept to Ushang in full flight.
 Clouds of dust behind them did rise,
 On they swept with screams, those Kitais,
 On they swept with screams, those Kalmaks,
 With their flags, on their horses' backs,
 Pennants a-streaming from their spears.
 They spiked ninety-five men, it appears —
 Then Ushang and Budangchang
 Straightway to the retreat-route sprang.
 Those Kitais and those Kalmaks
 10400 Seized their spoil on the foemen's tracks.
 When this trouble started then,
 When the Kalmaks this strife began,
 Then the night already drew on.
 Kara-Kalmaks still squabbled, ding-dong,
 Fought away 'mong themselves till morn,
 Till the sun's first rays at dawn...
 Morning came, a bright new day.
 Having sent all his guests away,
 Seen them off upon their track,
 10410 Then towards eve, Manas came back.
 People then, both young and old,
 Were amazed at what they were told:
 "Though but Kitais, they're a numerous folk,
 With such a mass one just cannot joke!
 They all squirm like a heap of worms!
 Though but Kalmaks, like worms they squirm!
 They are a folk with their Khan at one.
 They in time our kith will become!"
 With that idea I'd begun to toy —
 10420 When that cursed cur Dzholoi

Then decided on conflict again.
 Well, he will not wish in vain!
 If our Creator aids me then,
 We shall avenge ourselves on them.
 How can we let them steal our prize?
 He who permits such injustice dies!
 If you hear "His prize he disowned!"
 Then you will know — I lie 'neath the ground!
 Then you may pray for my weak soul!"
 10430 Having said this, Manas said all.
 That untiring leader of men,
 Brave Tështyuk; at once called then.
 But Tështyuk had already attacked
 Kongurbai and Dzholoi in their tracks.
 Only just then the prize he wished
 Had been allotted to leader Bagish.
 From the Dzhedigers' village he came.
 Only just then, his award to claim.
 Having heard that they'd stolen the prize,
 10440 Sixty Kirghiz had slain likewise,
 That already they'd made off then,
 Bold Bagish, along with his men,
 Thinking: "What humiliation for us!"
 Like a hurled stone after flew them thus,
 With loud cries of anger then,
 With seven thousand warrior men,
 With the red banner with gold half-moon.
 With two thousand, arriving soon,
 Then the brave Agish went forth,
 10450 And Akbai and his men showed their worth,
 Chased the Kitais on the road to Tekes.
 Then Katagan Koshoi joined the rest,
 Having heard from the others then,
 With his eleven thousand men,
 Joined the ranks of the bogatirs.
 During the night they came, it appears,
 Endless the numbers of warriors grew.
 Budangshang and Ushang, those two,
 In the vale of Kenderger

10460 Struck the Kitais, their enemies, there.
 Then stood separate from them all.
 When the arriving Kirghiz they saw,
 They came out to the very last man.
 From the right-hand side they ran;
 "That Dzholoi has worked us woe!"
 Then Ushang complained to them so.
 That same day Koshoi the bold,
 With his white beard, and belt of gold,
 On his grey steed then smoothly rode,
 10470 Out before all their troops he strode.
 Lion Tështyuk and Bokmurun
 Both went and joined Koshoi quite soon.
 When the sun its appearance made,
 While the mountains lay in the shade,
 What a mass of fighters arose!
 When Manas came he saw all those.
 Having thrown blankets over some steeds,
 Now Akkula by the bridle he leads.
 Words of cheer for the young does not lack.
 10480 Almambet, Sirgak and Chubak,
 Lions who'd seen the world, I trow,
 And had survived unharmed till now.
 Adzhibai and Chalibai,
 Fearless bogatir Kutantai,
 All allied to lion Manas,
 Calmly rode up and joined him thus.
 Points upon their spears shone bright,
 Heads were bobbing in morning light.
 With their leader Manas at their head,
 10490 Furrowing up the earth they tread,
 So those knights rode off to fight.
 Overtaking them on the right,
 Coming up to them on the side,
 Budangchang and Ushang now ride:
 "We come from Syumbē!" they cried.
 "We want to fight with you beside.
 Now that you ride to attack Kitais,
 That is a good thing in our eyes!"

Having said this to lion Manas,
 10500 To the heavens raising the dust,
 They moved forward after the foe.
 Then Kitais and Kalmaks did so:
 They rode up quite near Keldzha.
 Mountains from the north afar
 Stretch straight out to the Aktai.
 Here's a tale for you by-the-by:
 Mountains on the south fall short,
 They become steppeland of a sort.
 There the river Tekes flows,
 10510 Winding and twining, on it goes.
 Mountains stop, there's a vale instead,
 Stretching out with the river's bed,
 Lie the lands of Kyurkē and Kyuiyuk.
 Having moved by the stream Kundak,
 Which goes whisking and frisking along,
 When the noisy Kalmaks, feeling strong,
 Thinking already that they were safe,
 Then, just when they reached that place,
 With their banners black-lined on top,
 10520 With a noise, as when cliff-tops drop,
 Filling the space came the Kirghiz then.
 Noisy rogues of heathens then
 Felt how fear cropt into their souls.
 Having sent cattle to their goals,
 "Land of Kalmaks I've attained with joy!"
 To Dzhumabek then said Dzholoi.
 "Don't stand doing nought like that —
 Ride to my villagers in Chanak,*
 Tell them to come down from the height,
 10530 And from their steeds on the road to alight.
 Let my wife, the beauty Kiyash,
 Go out and meet her guests on the march.
 Entertain Kongurbai-bogatir,
 Let her welcome him with good cheer.
 Let them stick for them plenty of pigs,
 Rice with marrow from bones then mix,
 Let them cook it and spice not lack.

Let them prepare much strong arak.
 On two castrated camels' backs,
 10540 Let them load this gin in packs."
 After they'd seized the awards for the race,
 With Kongurbai in commanding place,
 They moved off by the shortest track.
 Then Dzholoi sent Dzhumabek,
 Son of Askar, to travel all night,
 Till his village came in sight.
 Long he rode, his steed did not spare,
 All through the dark, and at dawn reached there.
 From Chanak he made them descend,
 10550 To Ubang, near Kuldzha in the end.
 On the shore of the river Kerdum,*
 There they spread out, took up much room.
 Then they said; "They have beat the Kirghiz!
 For kith and kin send good news as it is!"
 All forty tribes of Kalmaks were there,
 Many old men, with white beards and hair.
 All the wise ones began to say:
 "All in vain they have moved us today!
 If Manas still lives, things look grim --
 10560 He won't let us crow over him!"
 Thus excitedly spoke they.
 Then, on Dzhumabek's same way,
 Giant Dzholoi too laid his track.
 Countless fighters agreed with that,
 Following on where he led through,
 Kalmak men, Kitai men too,
 Drove their flocks, fed by the way.
 "We took our prizes!" so did say,
 Proud of themselves, with heads held high.
 10570 In their war-tents were Kongurbai,
 And Neskara-bogatur as well,
 Khan Kirmu's son, Muradil.
 From the Kangais was Orongu,
 Katalang's lass, Saikal, was there too.
 In the south, on the right-hand side,
 Loomed huge mountains, high and wide.

When they reached the open plain
 There the foe caught them up again.
 Trumpets roared aloud through the sky,
 10580 Fife's went whistling, piercing high,
 Flags were fluttering in the air,
 Banners gleamed with gold everywhere.
 Shots from muskets sounded out,
 Forty tribes of kirghiz raised a shout,
 Went into battle, forward pressed,
 Set their spears at the enemy's breast.
 With their battle-axes they crashed,
 Helmets of foes they crushed and smashed,
 Slashed deep in their necks with swords,
 10590 And those heathens who thought themselves lords,
 Soon were screaming "Oh woe! Oh, woe!"
 Spearmen pierced the wavering foe,
 Swordsmen hacked and hewed them down,
 Strong halberdiers sliced many a crown.
 Wading up to their knees in blood,
 Hurling their enemies in the mud,
 Those determined Kirghiz beat them low,
 Bashed the boastful beys of the foe.
 Smashed their crowns in with their clubs,
 10600 Broke their backs, left only stubs...
 Many chieftains they overthrew,
 Who'd been careless, and reckless too.
 Then, not knowing where to hide,
 Most were trapped, and snapped, and died.
 With their daggers themselves they slew,
 Went to pieces, pierced through and through,
 More than those who fought and died.
 Others tried far and wide to hide,
 But no place of refuge could find --
 10610 Open plains before and behind...
 Many on horseback galloped away,
 There was none who would longer stay,
 None who'd attend another's groan,
 Having troubles enough of their own.
 Those who fled got stuck quite soon

In the mouth of the river Kurdun.
 Beaten to bits, not wanting to die,
 Beaten to pieces, not wanting to lie,
 Beaten to pulp, not wanting to end,
 10620 Beaten to dust, not wanting to bend.
 Ire of Kazakhs not wanting to know,
 Fire of Kirghiz not wanting to blow,
 They ran off to the river nearby,
 Plunged head-first into waters high,
 Understanding they couldn't be saved,
 In the river they found their grave.
 Drowned outnumbered those who swam,
 Lifeless ended many a man,
 Floated away on the water then...
 10630 With his fifteen thousand men,
 Alo-oke was forced to give in.
 Took the road to a nearby ravine,
 On his steed Algara he raced,
 Girded his sword about his waist,
 With him Kongurbai, Muradil,
 Neskara, red-tasselled still —
 One-and-half hundred thousand men,
 With Kongurbai as their leader then,
 Joining this trio with Alo-oke,
 10640 Raising the dust all along her way,
 Orongu rode up raging, I'd say,
 With the tail of her Kulabee
 Sticking up, as high as it may.
 Orongu had hair streaked with grey.
 Fifty or sixty years old was she,
 Still as active as she could be.
 In her hand was a murderous bow,
 Thick as the trunk of a tree, you know.
 Her brown steed, Kulabee,
 10650 Like the plateau wind swept away.
 When she heard about the foe,
 Straightway angered towards him would go.
 In her hand she then took a spear,
 Ninety feet long, or so 'twould appear,

So there were four war-leaders now.
 Kongurbai, with furious brow,
 And with fire a-blaze in his eye,
 Full of decision did forward fly.
 For this quarrelsome rascal now
 10660 Time had come to show firmness somehow.
 With a loud shout did he forward fare:
 "Chilaba! Chilaba!"* he cried out there.
 Let his war-cry resound o'er the land.
 Firmly grasping his spear in hand
 Then called for Algara his steed,
 Like a tiger he leapt indeed!
 Clothed in his weapon-proof robe of blue,
 With his helm on his head buckled too,
 Taking with him bold Neskara,
 10670 Raised his spear, and there you are!
 Out on the battlefield he went,
 Kongurbai, on victory bent,
 Cried aloud "Laanat! Laanat!"*
 Called in prayer on Laailamal.*
 Kongurbai roared aloud, forsooth,
 With his round shield, like a yurta roof,
 Like a lion he sprang on the prey.
 Then, as he rode forth that day,
 Nineteen-year-old Bokmurun
 10680 Saw and heard it all very soon.
 Then he said: "I expected likewise!
 In the tribes of Kara-Kitais,
 He behaved in a scandalous way,
 Stole the first prize on that racing day,
 Stormed round about, and worked us woe!
 I shall take certain risk and go,
 And shall skirmish with such a foe.
 If I let him defy us so,
 Will forbear spirits not punish me then?
 10690 If I grow weak I can leave again —
 Do I not ride a racing steed,
 Maaniker, like an arrow, indeed?
 Now against this insulting foe,

My good comrades, let me go!"
 Having said thus, his blood grew hot,
 Face was shining, eyes like a dot.
 He'd decided to fight Kongurbai.
 But bold Koshoi, when he caught his eye,
 Said to him: "Give up this idea —
 10700 You aren't yet strong enough, I fear!
 And your bogatir's powers are small,
 Heart will give out, and so you'll fall!
 Time for such feats has not yet come.
 Don't be grieved about this, my son,
 Don't before such a spiteful swine
 Lose your honour—just wait your time!
 You have widows and orphaned sons,
 Round your kin deep sorrow runs,
 Weakened villages now you see,
 10710 They have been robbed of their property.
 At the feast we arranged for the dead,
 None of their cattle were left, not one head!
 Don't go out on the field today,
 He is a dangerous giant, I'd say.
 Like a lion locked up in a cage,
 He is seething over with rage.
 One word "Fight!" and he's off like a shot.
 Heated is he, no balance has got.
 Even Manas couldn't cope with him —
 10720 Don't go out — the danger is grim!
 I can't let you go, my boy!"
 So to him spoke old Koshoi.
 When Bokmurun then heard his words
 He just tore Koshoi to shreds.
 How could he do otherwise?
 Anger was burning in his eyes:
 "Eh-eh-eh! you wisest of men!
 Where's your reason got to, then?
 If no death's predestined for me,
 10730 Then my end I shall not see.
 Khans upon their thrones don't die —
 Death comes once, not each month, that's why!

Death a man can not escape.
 At a deathless man you'd gape!
 That which Allah ordains on high,
 Can any mortal man deny?
 Now you've grown old, your beard all white,
 Say, are your senses still all right?
 Dear Koshoi, see life as it is —
 10740 All the sons of tribes of Kirghiz
 To Këkëtei's memorial feast
 You have compelled to come, at least,
 But that accursed Kongurbai,
 Since Manas speared him down from on high,
 Full of spite and hatred raves here.
 He thinks: "My land and people are near,
 All around here Kalmak tribes live,
 Many Kitais too help will give!"
 He will insult us, that's what he'll do.
 10750 Surely you can see that too?
 How with his numbers he presses us so!
 You are a Katagan, as I know,
 Though you have aged, still their bogatir,
 So don't begrudge the efforts here
 Of Këkëtei's one and only son,
 So don't begrudge what I have done!
 In the name of honour too
 That heathen rogue I'll run right through!
 Dear Koshoi, for your blessing I cry —
 10760 And if I must die — then I'll die!"
 Those were the words of this young boy,
 And the wise and still bold Koshoi
 Then his requested blessing gave...
 Meanwhile Manas sat thinking grave:
 "My first prize he stole from us,
 Hosts of Kitais he has gathered thus,
 That Kongurbai, who drove off our steeds,
 He brought woe on his own head indeed!
 Still none challenge him till this time,
 10770 And against that accursed swine,
 To bring to justice that erring one,

Only sprites and goblins had gone.
 Would any mortal among us go,
 If their Manas does not do so?..
 Such were the thoughts of lion Manas.
 He knew not what had come to pass,
 That Koshoi had refused, then agreed —
 That meant nothing to him, indeed.
 What Bokmurun had decided to do,
 10780 Not a soul save Koshoi yet knew!
 Then he ordered; "Unbuckle my steed,
 He who swift as an arrow can speed,
 Take him down to the brooklet's brink,
 Let him have a refreshing drink!"
 Meanwhile he donned leather trousers then,
 Fire could not scorch, nor arrow pierce them.
 Then he put on his armour, of course,
 Took a soft blanket for his horse,
 Ordered Mongolian saddle to bring —
 10790 Lion Manas saw to everything.
 Eyes were shining and full of light,
 Shirt in trousers he tucked in tight,
 Gathered his weapons and gear with him,
 Now he looked a real warrior grim.
 Now he again was full of power,
 Now he felt the victory hour!
 When he was seated, and waiting too,
 From the Kazakhs came Dzho-orongchu.
 Galloped up to Manas, and said:
 10800 "Bokmurun has gone ahead!
 When Koshoi said to him 'Don't go!'
 He was distressed, disappointed so,
 Këkëti's sole son, Bokmurun,
 That Koshoi soon changed his tune.
 Armoured, on Maaniker rode he,
 Out on the battlefield, you see!"
 Hearing this from Dzho-orongchu,
 Lion Manas was shaken all through.
 "What kind of fool is that?" said he,
 10810 And became restless as he could be.

"He was touched on the raw, all right!
 He who treated his honour so light,
 Clearly most deeply offended him!"
 So said Manas, and looked quite grim.
 "Bring my steed Akkula to me!
 Then my weapons as well!" said he,
 And his tones were angry too,
 Eyes were flashing, and furious grew.
 Louder his command then soared,
 10820 Just like thunder then he roared,
 And his brow grew dark as well,
 Black as night, and hot as hell.
 Fluff on his face stood up all round,
 'Nough for five pairs of socks was found.
 Forty fine bogatirs stood by,
 Elders Kirgil, and brave Bakai.
 At his looks they were all amazed,
 Wonderingly at him they gazed...
 Raising clouds of dust afar,
 10830 Warming up his steed Algara,
 Dashing forward as he drew nigh
 Came the great giant Kongurbai...
 Youthful in his coat of mail,
 Face stern set, and slightly pale,
 On his prancing steed, quite soon,
 Straight towards him rode Bokmurun.
 "Do you in single combat delight?
 Is it true that you've come to fight?"
 Thundered out Khan Kongurbai,
 10840 With his banner a-flying high.
 He dashed forward and took his place
 Opposite Bokmurun, face to face.
 Bokmurun to himself said: "Beast!
 I had done him no harm at least
 Till all the cattle prizes he seized!"
 Then against him his anger grew:
 "If only Allah will see me through,
 That crude swine will meet his duel!"
 His long spear with its silk flag, look,

10850 In his right hand the orphan took.
 Maaniker, like an arrow sped forth,
 Showing the world what he was worth.
 Bokmurun, sight sharp and clear,
 Struck Kongurbai in the heart with his spear.
 Maaniker no equal had met...
 Holding his spear on his target set,
 Kongurbai hopes to pierce him yet,
 But he proved a little too slow,
 And it was he who received the blow.
 10860 Such swift attack he never did know.
 Having his spear already set,
 While Kongurbai was not ready yet,
 Thus Bokmurun had struck his blow,
 His long spear, well-directed so,
 Struck straight onto his armour-plate,
 Ringing, and dinging with greatest weight.
 Kongurbai, a self-styled bogatir,
 Suddenly found his sight not clear —
 Sparks were flying in front of his eyes.
 10870 Taken aback, he blinked in surprise!
 'Mid his folk, with his tasselled helm,
 He thought none could him overwhelm,
 But he slipped back, from saddle to croup.
 Giving a furious whining whoop,
 He squirmed back in the saddle again.
 Bokmurun came on, might and main.
 None of the buckles, it seemed, had burst,
 And the spear the steel had not pierced.
 Thinking: "Now I shall strike my blow!"
 10880 Kongurbai sat straighter so.
 But he'd straightened up in vain —
 Ere he could turn, Bokmurun came again,
 Seeing a weaker spot in his back,
 With his lance he lunged at that.
 This time, though, the spear burst through...
 Dark trousers, cut as all Kitais do,
 Soon were soaking in Kongurbai's gore.
 Torment then he suffered sore.

Clumsy, crumbling, huge Kongurbai
 10890 Lost his honour, and had to fly.
 So he turned his black horse around,
 And rode back where Kitais were found.
 But Bokmurun, he turned like a hare,
 Seeking a final thrust somewhere.
 He went chasing hard after him,
 Full of determination grim.
 Seeing his collar's upper edge,
 That's where he tried his spear to wedge:
 "There's his nose-shield, there's his brow,
 10900 At his throat I'm aiming now" —
 But his spear in a hollow got stuck...
 Hanging onto his horse's neck,
 Leaving behind him a bloody track,
 Kongurbai went riding back.
 Neskara, who with him came out,
 Flew at Bokmurun with a shout,
 Drawing his lengthy straight-edged sword,
 Thus to avenge his injured lord.
 But Bokmurun he could not get near,
 10910 Only cut off the head of his spear.
 That was done so that he, be sure,
 Could not strike Kongurbai once more.
 Neskara saved his master thus...
 Having seen this, the lion Manas
 Was aggrieved by this shameless attack,
 And decided at once to strike back.
 "Where are my forty knights?" cried he,
 "Such a thing I just can't see!"
 So he spurred Akkula ahead.
 10920 Like a gust of wind he sped.
 Raising the dust behind him too,
 With a cry of "Allah!" he flew.
 Forty knights who stood by his side,
 All together to battle did ride,
 Kicking up clods behind their back,
 Over the steppeland of Chatalak.
 Those Kitais who violence did,

From retribution can't be hid!
 Old Koshoi on his pale-grey steed
 10930 Rode through the dust, and took the lead.
 Into battle went old Koshoi,
 Warriors standing round, with joy
 Also into the battle flew...
 Giving the spur to Chalkuiruk,
 Into battle went bold Tështyuk.
 Now, at the end of the feast came woe.
 People around understood it so,
 And the stolen cattle let go.
 Having had a foretaste of hell,
 10940 Then Kitais and Kalmaks as well,
 Never daring to glance behind,
 Left seized cattle for foes to find!
 Well, what good did they do them now?
 They were near to death, anyhow!
 Kongurbai had shamelessly fled,
 Neskara was captured, or dead;
 From the ones who'd planned that attack,
 From the ones who's manned it, alack,
 From those dishonest ones, on that day,
 10950 All success had faded away.
 Yes, their star had decidedly set.
 When they turned their steeds and fled,
 When those heathens gave up, and ran,
 Battle-axes banged on each man.
 Spears went piercing into their spines,
 Swords hewed them down, and broke their lines.
 Others just drooped and fell that day,
 Others just dripped with blood, all the way,
 Others then simply died of fright,
 10960 Others had souls which took to flight.
 When they were wounded, deadly deep,
 Then they lay like sleeping sheep.
 How many souls departed from men?
 Few there were who saved their lives then.
 Only horses alive were left --
 Masters of their lives were bereft.

Blood trickled down from them to the ground,
 Many trampled to death were found.
 All their numberless cattle then
 10970 Fell to the lot of the Kirghiz men.
 Horses went roaming, dragging their reins,
 Others died in agonized pains.
 Those who had started this quarrel knew,
 But they knew not what they could do!
 Wounded was giant Kongurbai,
 To Kaspan he'd been forced to fly,
 He who had seized those prizes thus,
 He who had said: "There are many of us!"
 He who was wounded, might not survive,
 10980 And the Kara-Kalmak's whole tribe,
 They had wished to destroy the Kirghiz.
 Though Koshoi had told his men this:
 "Spare those heathens, they're men like us!"
 They had replied: "We can't do thus!"
 They have insulted and injured us so,
 We are bent on vengeance, you know!"
 So with old Bakai at their head
 All forty knights swept on instead.
 It was now their turn to strike back --
 10990 Find Dzholoi, who was in Chatalak.
 Lion Manas warned all: "Move with care!
 You know what rogues are hiding there!
 Take up your arms, and follow me!"
 Spurring along Akkula, his steed,
 Lion Manas rode forth to the deed....
 But Dzholoi was in Ulu-Ozëk* --
 He had gone to do cunning work --
 To join forces with Kongurbai's men,
 And to bring him some herds again.
 11000 There he stopped and spread out then.
 He made everybody fly.
 Thinking: "At dawn I'll meet Kongurbai!"
 Spoke to his men of the coming strife.
 Sitting side by side with his wife,
 By the hearth where the warm fire blazed,

Much he boasted, himself he praised:
 "What could I do with such evil tribes?
 How they exhausted us besides!
 Oh! how I gave it to that Manas —
 11010 Brute of a man who tormented us!
 Oh! how I tricked him, led him astray!
 Oh! how I took all their herds away!
 Those he had won with his Akkula!
 How I seized them, and drove them afar!
 How I broke up his forty knights,
 Herdsmen's blood I spilt on sight,
 How many moan for daughters and wives!
 How many parted with their lives!
 Oh! I gave it to him all right,
 11020 That blood-thirsty Kirghizian knight!
 Oh! those young riders of his I dispersed!
 Oh! how they moaned and groaned and cursed!
 Oh! how I smashed each yurta door!
 Oh! how the children wept on the floor!
 Those who devised that memorial feast,
 They will remember Dzholoi, at least!
 They will remember how my men
 Ramped and raged and ravaged them!
 Only after I'd started this game,
 11030 Came the Kitais, and did the same!
 Robbed them of everything they had,
 Drove their owners completely mad.
 Ordered them to tie up their dogs,
 Hewed their herdsmen down like logs,
 Drove off the cows, and made them moo,
 Drove off the horses, all neighing too.
 By sheer numbers this was done —
 No need to fire from bow or gun.
 Drove off sheep, and made them bleat,
 11040 Drove off all with cloven feet.
 All they seized, as their own to keep.
 All to the very last marked sheep.
 All to the very last mare and foal,
 We drove off their cattle whole!"

So, by the fire, all careless of life,
 Boasting and bragging before his wife,
 He consoled himself with this tale.
 People came from the village as well,
 Hearing that he had just returned,
 11050 Round his home a whole crowd churned.
 Simply everyone had come —
 All the elders, all the young.
 Then his clever, perceptive wife,
 Aiganish, with beauty rife,⁶⁹
 Said: "You clearly have ruined us,
 My dear, clumsy fellow thus!
 You stand guilty before Manas!
 As I said — you have ruined us!
 You don't know just where things stand —
 11060 Where is Beidzhin, and where is our land!
 You on Kitais place all your hope!
 Where are Kitais, and where are our folk?
 You look on the Kirghiz as your foes,
 And on Kitais as brothers. Who knows?
 What if Kitais take no notice of you —
 Then, my careless one, what will you do?
 You must then face Manas alone!
 Then it won't suit you to speak on your own!
 Though you're known as a bold Kalmak,
 11070 To Manguls* your line goes back!
 Still you don't cease to quarrel with them!
 So she said to her husband then.
 "May you be cursed, foul woman!" cried he.
 "Dishonest wretch, with your oratory!
 Now see what it leads to!" he said,
 Raising his whip above his head,
 Down he beat with it on her spine —
 "Out with you — you're no wife of mine!"⁷⁰
 She was startled, and started to sway —
 11080 From the yurta she ran away...
 Then Manas, who had stopped his men,
 So as to speak with Dzholoi once again,
 And, face to face, his intention to know,

Stepped straight outside his war-tent so.
 Hearing the shouted curse Dzholoi cried,
 Seeing his wife come running outside —
 Knew at once what it was about,
 And when Dzholoi came chasing her out,
 With his battle-axe gave him one blow...
 11090 Down he fell on the ground below.
 He lay unconscious, limbs stretched out...
 Then manas gave one loud shout:
 "Forward!" to his men he cried.
 They no longer tried to hide.
 To their steeds they set their spurs,
 Not a single man demurs.
 Now they beat on the drum — Bash! Bash!
 Now they shoot with their guns — Flash! Flash!
 Now they strike with their swords — Slash! Slash!
 11100 Now foes' armour gives way — Crash! Crash!
 Six hundred thousand warrior-men,
 All surged forward with war-cries then.
 But old Koshoi began to shout:
 "Lads of mine, don't wipe them out!"
 Loudly he cried again and again,
 But, it seems, his cries were in vain.
 "Lads!" he cried, "Though they've worked us woe,
 Spare their lives, don't lay them low!"
 Though they may have caused us alarm,
 11110 There is no need to do them harm!"
 Only a few are guilty men!
 If we wipe out the innocent then,
 Can we really be satisfied?
 Far too many already have died!
 Take their cattle, then let them survive!
 Let the guiltless ones stay alive!
 Prick out the eyes of that swine Dzholoi —
 After that, show no further annoy.
 Lion Manas, like a thief, I own,
 11120 Then stole up to Dzholoi alone.
 By those boastful words he'd heard
 Lion Manas was deeply disturbed.

He was fed up to the teeth by them,
 He had struck once — once more, and then --
 Here was Dzholoi, half-conscious still.
 Why such a swine should he not kill?
 Then Koshoi's voice rang in his ear:
 "Spare him Manas — his end is near!"
 Those few words saved his life-for him!
 11130 Manas dropped his axe, but still looked grim.
 Croaking hoarsely, Dzholoi barely moved.
 From his wound the blood still oozed.
 Other Kalmaks, who came from Dzhardak,
 Also had head — wounds, blood caked black.
 Once again came Koshoi's same cry:
 With him also appeared Bakai:
 "Do not cause them further harm!"
 Then said he, and took the knight's arm
 And away from Dzholoi he led.
 11140 Then to Manas he further said:
 "Their forefathers to ours were near.
 They still find it far from clear
 Why you should slay them on the spot --
 Oh, you fat-heads! No sense you've got!"
 So they let them go, killed no more.
 All Dzholoi's cattle, and goods in store
 Then they took, made a two-day feast...
 Well, they earned it then, at least!
 And to surviving Kalmaks they said:
 11150 "You brought this sorrow on your own head!"
 Thus was Kongurbai then shamed.
 With a red wound his brow was framed.
 On the back of Dzholoi's great head,
 Still a battle-axe wound showed red.
 Then the Katagan Khan Koshoi,
 And the Kazakhs and Khan Këkchë,
 Elyeman's son, the bold Tështyuk,
 Dzhamgirchi, the brave Eshtek,
 These four knights who the feast had led,
 11160 With padishah Manas at their head,
 With his forty brave bogatirs,

With old Koshoi in happy tears,
All returned to their tents with joy.
Those who cunning wiles did employ,
These Kirghizian tribes to attack --
Well -- their future still looked black!
They were covered in shame and fuss
If they but heard the name "Manas!"
Those Kalmaks and Kitais as well
11170 Had a look on their face like hell!

COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY PART I

1. The names Kara-Khan, Oguz-Khan and Alancha-Khan are known in Oguz epic traditions giving geneologies, among the Turkish-tongued tribes of the Oguz group. In such legends a common ancestor is named — Oguz-Khan, the son of Kara-Khan. This name is also found among Altai folk stories and legends.

Among Kirghiz and Kazakhs as well, kinship is counted through seven generations, and every member of the tribe must know and remember them. Therefore Manas is traced in direct line so: Alancha-Khan, Baigur, Babir-Khan, Tyubet, Kegel, Nogol and Jakib.

2. In patriarchal times among the Kirghiz there existed the custom known as levirate, where a widow could marry some close relative of her deceased husband, thus keeping up the geneological line of the tribe. When Shakai, a widow, married Jakib, she received the name Chiyirdi, which reflected the name of her previous husband Chiyira. This was another means of keeping in mind the names of predecessors.

3. In the epic "Manas," the theme of polygamy is not in any way specially developed. As among other Muslim peoples, husbands are permitted more than one wife. Very rich pashas may have a whole harem, ordinary cattle-owners, two or three, while the poor man must make do with one.

4. Childlessness of elderly couples among the richest bogatirs is a traditional motif in heroic and romantic poems, found among many Asiatic peoples. The birth of a son meant in fact, not only the appearance of a prolongator of the family, but also of its protector. This is a Kirghizian folk-plaint.

5. Among wandering Turkish-tongued tribes of Central and Eastern Asia and Kazakhstan, the custom of likening a son to a horse-shoe was common. If a horse has no shoes, he cannot travel — and so it is with a family which has no sons.

6. Though it may sound a little strange to western ears, the term "camel-foal" was used as a caressing name for young sons, carrying with it the idea of a beautiful, frail and tender, helpless young creature.

7. This kind of weeping means "making a loud roaring" — and is often used in reference to the noise made by camels.

8. This expression, involving the sacrifice of a young camel, as a plea for posterity, was a relic of the days of Shamanism, and was usually conducted at the graveside of an old predecessor. Sometimes the offering was a horse or a sheep, even a young elephant, in certain areas.

9. This expression means "conceding to fate," "submission," "trusting in God's will," or even "to go on pilgrimage."

10. This includes horned cattle, camels, sheep and goats, and horses, of course. Taken together, they signify a man of wealth and standing. Among Kirghiz and other migratory tribes, they were considered the only real treasure.

11. This idea is used here and elsewhere as having no prop.

12. A typical metaphor, denoting a man without a son.

13. Jakib is spoke of as a forty-eight-year-old, but elsewhere as being fifty. Likewise Manas is spoken of as an eleven-year-old, and elsewhere as only nine, due to a reciter's error.

14. The word "slave" is applied to some of the servants of Central Asian and Kirghizian wandering cattle-breeders, in its direct sense, under patriarchal rule. Indirectly — a servant. It also applied to captives taken during cattle-raiding bouts, to those being punished for crimes, especially theft, by loss of liberty, and to those who had left their own tribe to join another. Patriarchs had the right to buy and sell such people, to beat them, and even kill them, to give them as prizes in a horse-racing contest, or to award them for faithful service.

15. This refers to Kizir, a legendary prophet of pre-Muslim days. He was the helper and patron of the poor. See Vocabulary.

16. This name Bakdēlēt means "fortunate, successful" and is often attributed to women who had born children.

17. This name Boz-Dēbē, used by the reciter slightly out of place, means a spot for two warriors' single combat, usually a mound, or small plateau. Topographers place it in the basin of the river Karkara, where in the epic, Manas fights against Kalmaks. It also means "below the earth" or "a refuge from death".

18. This means the yurta of Jakib's first wife, Chiyirdi. Patriarchs, if well-to-do were polygamists, and each of his wives had their own separate yurta, servants, and so on.

19. This is a reference to Azrail, the angel of death. To look like the angel of death, meant, of course, to terrify folk.

20. A folk-belief, often met in legends, that a woman can become pregnant by eating fruit, especially a white apple.

21. Hired helpers were of two types, coming either from another tribe, or one's own. Those from one's own tribe were usually rewarded slightly more generously than those from other tribes. They were usually poorer, and exploited more deeply. They served as domestics, workmen, shepherds and herdsmen.

22. To travel with the bey meant to place oneself under his protection. Poorer relatives were usually voluntary servants of the bey, receiving the right to milk cattle for their own use.

23. "My young foal" or "my young hoof" a caressing expression for a young child, especially for a young son.

24. Speaking of herself, Chiyirdi mentions the white headdress, the symbol of the married woman, which only they had the right to wear. Sometimes they took on the look of a turban.

25. This mention of a steel-beaked hawk, or falcon, or more precisely still of a white gerfalcon, is used in the figurative sense about a warrior — bold, handsome, resourceful, fierce.

26. According to popular belief, good dreams should be told only to closest kin, and friends, and they offer explanations.

27. Such metaphorical expressions are common in mid-Asiatic folk-lore, meaning that sorrow will be turned into happiness.

28. This is a reference to the voice of Manas, yet unborn.

29. This may refer to the old ritual custom of anointing one's head with oil, or may be taken as indication of a very rich feast with much fat meat, highly appreciated by Asiatics.

30. In the original text such weapons as flintlocks and muskets are often characterised as white, black or blue, for reasons not fully understood. Maybe it was a reference to the metal barrel, tempered, polished, etc. or maybe to the stock.

31. Among peoples of Central Asia and Kazakhstan, there was a patriarchal custom, also found among Muslims, which prohibited women from using the name of elder male relatives, even their husband's. (Translator's note.) Cockney women refer to the master of the household in this way, never naming their husband. "My old man," they say, or even just "My pot and pan!" nothing more!

32. In the original the term "foal" is used (see note 23 above). Being utterly dependent for transport on horses and camels, the Kirghiz often loved these creatures more than their wives, and named their children after them, much as we might name our little ones "ducky" or "Chickey" or "puppy."

33. In many Turkish-tongued epics, as among Central Asians and Kirghizians, the liver is held to be the centre of suffering pain. It may be red or black, or burnt, or slashed to pieces, and even salted, but it is always the centre of affliction and torment.

34. Here — the close ancient ties uniting Kazakhs and Kirghiz. Throughout the epic this tribe always stand as close neighbours and collaborators with the Kirghiz. They were known historically to have wandered together, and pastured their flocks side by side with the Kirghiz on the river Ili, in South Kazakhstan, and on the Irtysh. They claim as common ancestors related tribes — Kipchaks, Naimans.

35. This quatrain is loosely linked with the subject matter, and is an obvious improvisation of the bard, as often found in epics.

36. The point here is that Jakib would be obliged by ancient custom to pay a redemption fee for the loss of the boy. Murderers or attackers wounding or killing a victim, had to pay the "bloodprice." This was the origin of blood-feuds between tribes. They paid extremely large numbers of cattle to relatives, to end them.

37. Here the name of Manas, yet unborn, is used already as a battle-cry, thus foretelling the coming of a great champion.

38. A further reference to the forthcoming birth of Manas. One of the lads met by Mendibal is taken as the incarnation of Manas.

39. This refers to old habit of cattle-raiding, a common custom among wandering tribesmen, who simply stole each other's cattle, or seized them as payment for blood-feuds. Sometimes such raids grew to great proportions, amounting to wars between the tribes.

40. Here we have a reference to the old custom of making gifts to beggars, orphans, victims of catastrophes, to please Allah.

41. For purposes of sacrifice, to allay anger, or merit Allah's blessing, special cattle set aside for such purposes and nothing else were used. White-coated camels, were especially highly prized.

42. In the nomadic life of Kirghizians, Kazakhs, Karakalpaks, Turkmen, and others when settling awhile in one spot a largish community was formed, to which others, distant relatives, joined.

43. The name Ishtek coincides with that of a tribal group, the Eshteks. One man, as it were, personifies the whole tribe. This feature often appears in epic poems of this nature.

44. These formed a belt, as it were to support pantaloons.

45. Meaty thigh-bones, and ram's heads were usually reserved for honoured guests at feasts. Children were not allowed to sit with grown-ups. Orphans might be served apart, the women also, but they only received the remnants left from the feast.

46. The expression "as long as it takes to prepare food" was often used to signify a short space of time, say 1 1/2—2 hours.

47. In accordance with old traditions, magical powers were attributed to the hearts of beasts, which when eaten gave their consumers typical qualities, such as strength, boldness, cunning, etc. Chiyirdi wanted to eat a tiger's heart to give her son boldness.

48. As mentioned in note 41, the selection of a white-coated beast for sacrifice was highly prized by old Kirghizian tribes. Light-coloured dapple greys were thus counted as holy sacrifices.

49. This refers to a pole stuck in the ground inside the yurt to which a woman might cling while in the throes of childbirth.

50. Usually those assisting at childbirth stood behind the pregnant woman, who sat on her haunches, clutching the staff mentioned in note 49. Helpers massaged her belly from top downwards.

51. All four kinds of beasts mentioned were only used in rich families, and usually beasts of one kind only were then slain.

52. According to popular belief Thursday was the best day of the week. In the epic Thursday is often mentioned as a fortunate day for important events, sacrifices to forebears, and so on, but Saturday was counted the best day to begin a long journey.

53. The picture of the very old father, childless till now, who goes away from the family to some isolated spot just before birth is due, is often met in ancient epics. The meeting of a mare and her foal in the desert enrichingly foretells the birth.

54. This picture emphasizes the point, that the lot of man is predestined by Allah while the child is still in the womb.

55. Butter was usually kept in special clay pots. These were stood on a stout wooden chest, having iron bands for strength.

56. The folk believed that if an infant were given butter, fat, or honey when born it would ensure a prosperous future. The hyperbole used here as Manas consumes three whole pots of butter is a typical exaggeration, used to increase the impact on listeners.

57. The idea of self-sacrifice expressed here by the fluttering agitation of a moth before a candle is typical in Turkish epics.

58. The original speaks hyperbolically of the distance as that of a horse-racing course, at a minimum, over two kilometres.

59. The bold, fearless and noble character is the real side of this picture, expressed by the other side -- the bloodthirsty and bloodspilling fierce attacker. The word used in the original is of borrowed Mongolian origin, and accentuates the positive side.

60. In the original "3 ael." The first "ael" is counted up to maturity (about 5 years) to which subsequent single years are added. The age of all domestic cattle is so counted by Kirghizian tribes.

61. Among Kirghiz and Kazakhs and other Central Asiatic tribes the bride-price, or the blood-price was usually paid in units of nine cattle, whether mixed or of one type. The number nine was also used in making gifts -- nine horses, nine gowns, nine ingots of silver. Prizes for racing were also counted out in units of nine.

62. Traditional blessing on a new-born child -- long healthy life.

63. Here follows a description of the new-born son, Manas, in typical epic style. Hyperbole and metaphor take their place in the epithets based on other creatures, known for strength, boldness, and agility -- lion, tiger, wolf, etc., thus portraying the hero.

64. A description of Asiatic brows and lashes, flat, not deep-set.

65. The Chinese are referred to as "red tasselled," while Kalmaks are known as "black-tasselled," from the coloured tassels on hats.

66. Here are enumerated the larger cultural and trading centres of Middle Asia, known since time immemorial to the nomadic Kirghiz. Ancient Samarkand and Bukhara caravans, Kokand, Margelan, Tashkent.

67. These good comrades would include not only champion wrestlers, riders, and bowmen, but also cultural champions -- bards, eloquent speakers, diviners, wise-men and so on, even including jokers.

68. Symbolically -- to raise one's banner meant to announce the presence of a tribe, or noted leader. Each had their own heraldic device, coming from ancient fetishes or totems -- birds and beasts. Such banners were raised at the start of any significant event.

69. Those who like bey Jakib arranged receptions for honoured guests not only gave meat for their feasts, but cattle to be slain for daily food, also yurtas were placed at their disposal, with servants.

70. This red banner was the family flag of Manas' forebear Nogol.

71. See note 43. Eshtek belonged to a Tatar tribe. Other Tatars from Western Siberia included Togus, Kurdaks, Turals, Yaskalbs, etc.

72. Bagish, as in the previous note, came from a group of that same name, belonging to the tribe of Dzhedigers, on the right wing of the Kirghiz, who migrated with them to Southern Kirghizia in the Tien Shan region, and Chuisk vale, with Sari-Bagish tribes.

73. This was a special feature of racing in olden times, where it was permitted for relatives, pre-agreed, to ride out to help flagging horses along to the finish, by taking the bridle and tugging them towards their flag. Sometimes this was prohibited.

74. Another way of expressing both the old and the young ones.

75. There is an ancient tradition in the giving of names among the Sayano-Altal tribes. First the name was chosen by a gathering of the tribe, second, when chosen it could not be changed, since it already held power over the fate of its owner, thirdly, it was then pronounced by a white-bearded elder. Here an effort is made to justify the choice of Manas for the new-born, tying the name with those of great reknown and power. M stands for Mahomet himself, N for Nabi the prophet, and S for the swinging tail of a lion. The honour paid to Manas was so great, that none gave this name to their sons, though they might name them after Mahomet of Islam.

76. The upbringing of the young lad by a shepherd, and his close contact with the rearing and moving of cattle to new pastures, is a motif often met in epics of Turkish-tongued tribes. The democratic tendency of the epic is emphasized here. It also emphasizes an act found in real life, since care of cattle passed from father to son.

77. The word "baba" meaning "old father" is used here in patriarchal fashion, as a term showing respect on the part of the young.

78. A curse connected with the exposure of the male sexual organ.

79. The appearance of uncontrollable anger in a very young child is often met in Turkish-tongued epic poems, and shows cockiness, mischievousness, and crude action, symptoms of future valour.

80. Chiyirdi, in naming Manas as the shepherd's son, and not as her own, shows great respect in this way to the old shepherd.

81. This rendering of "my dear son" signifies the willingness of the father to sacrifice himself entirely for the son's sake.

82. A curse similar to that referred to in note 78 above.

83. This crude behaviour of Manas is another reflection of future strength, as explained in note 79 above. It foretells valour.

84. Literally — while your heart muscles are not fully developed.

85. This concerns the belief that forebear spirits continued to influence the lives of their successors. The curse "May your forebears punish you!" is frequently met in this epic poem.

86. In the ancient Kirghiz tongue the term "million" did not exist. Their highest figure was 100.000. Therefore 5 million was expressed as "fifty-hundred-thousand" (multiples of 100.000).

87. The red banner referred to is clearly the Nogol banner of Manas' ancestors. It is borne by forty spirits ("Chiltens") of his forebears, in the form of young men, his helpers and protectors.

88. The breast was, in the conception of the ancient Kirghiz, the seat of the soul, and therefore in one's breast memory and reason also abide. The bowels were deemed the seat of compassion.

89. This refers to pastures which the Kalmaks considered theirs. In those days of cattle breeders and feeders, each tribe had its own place, agreed upon among themselves. No others might intrude.

90. "Heaven punished us" is another way of saying God did so. See Vocab. Tengir. The cult of the sky, the land, the sea, was commonly met among primitive Turkish-tongued and Mongolian tribes.

91. These would be banners of tribes taking part in the campaign.

92. This means the redemption of crime committed against others by payment of a fine in the form of cattle. Sometimes hunting falcons would be used, or even slaves would be offered for this.

93. The Mandzhi tribe seek recompense for the death of their slain comrade, from their enemies — the Kalmaks and the Altai.

94. The staves mentioned would be those supporting the central ventilating wheel in the roof, and the weatherproof yurta covering.

95. Literally "touched" by Kizir. That was the patron saint of warriors and travellers. On being touched by five fingers, they became invulnerable, and received all kinds of heavenly blessings.

96. Literally "Fell sticking their heads into the earth, so that the flaps of their tunics covered their heads and concealed them."

97. This means foals who suck the last milk from dried-up udders.

98. This is in preparation for the game "ordo" equivalent to our "knuckle-bones" or "pitch and toss." The soil was tramped flat and a ring was then cut round, some 10—12 metres in diameter. The sheep or cow knuckle-bones had to be driven out of the ring by casting bones or stones at them. Those who drove most out won.

99. Actually Manas, given as 6 years old, was now aged almost 11, and this error corresponds to the one when Jakib was called 48 years old whereas in fact he was well over fifty (see note 13).

100. These are defined in the text as "marakh," single-hump camels.

101. This signifies a well organized tribe with a chosen leader, as compared with a smaller group, with none to guide them.

102. Literally "diamonds" and "lanterns" which shine — brilliants.

103. Elder relatives interfered in the son's right to the herds.

104. If members of one tribe intermarried with others, or left their own for some reason, they were compelled by custom to stay in direct contact or nearby their own tribe as it migrated.

105. These were not idols, but rather statues of Buddha, placed usually in small shrines, or larger temples. They were cast in various metals, including bronze, and even silver and gold.

106. To grow black-eared must be taken to mean matured beasts.

107. The Kirghiz nomads organized separate summer and winter pastures for their cattle, since they must be brought down from the crests to the lower slopes when temperature dropped to freezing.

108. This was a turn of speech which meant that both played an equally important part in supporting each other in time of distress.

109. Typical metaphors showing protective roles played by others.

110. A typical metaphor emphasizing loving care and mutual help of highly-esteemed kinsmen. The amulet warded off sickness as well.

111. The reason for breathlessness was two-fold — over-feeding on lush pastures, and the rarity of high mountain atmosphere.

112. Grass on the heights, though sparse, is extremely nutritive.

113. "Lion" Manas, an epithet used throughout the epic, with others of similar nature, emphasize the strength, and boldness of the hero.

114. Typical epithets to describe jousting spears were "smooth," or "polished." The term "white," when used, stands for "excellence."

116. See note 115. "Polished" refers to the shaft of the spear.

117. An expression of submission, similar to our "hands up!"

118. These three named are Mongols, who had become their allies.

119. Such expressions of unity and mutual aid are found among folk of Central Asia and Kazakhstan. The bard varies them slightly.

120. The distance is given as the length of a race-course for mature steeds, say 2-10 kilometres. In the epic we find a distance only covered by galloping ceaselessly two days and nights.

121. This signifies torture by binding a wet skin round the head of a bound captive. As it dried it contracted causing awful pain.

122. These few lines portray mutilation met with in many Turkishtongued tribes, in their epics, when a bogatir took revenge on foes.

123. This was customary in feudal days: not only were enemies mutilated, but their steeds as well, to signify complete humiliation.

124. The real meaning here is that they gave their recognized war-cry in battle, each according to his own tribal traditions.

125. This is an ancient custom observed when a leader was chosen. In return for the favour of the folk, he gave a feast, at which his own steed was slain and served up to his sworn warriors.

126. In ancient epics of migrant Turkish-tongued tribes, their chosen leader was sat on a white blanket, as a symbol of honour. He was carried shoulder high by his electors. Elsewhere we read of Jakib and Manas being tossed in such a blanket. (see note 140)

127. Literally "I lost my name" i.e. I changed to another tribe.

128. See note 126. Literally "They raised him up" on white felt.

129. Literally "tied with head high" a way of cooling steeds.

130. Literally "rafts which don't twist," which means that they had a stabilizing oar- rudder, to keep them thus on their course.

131. Here are meant not only Altai Kirghiz, but allied tribes too.

132. This means that the Khan not only had the right to fight, but to insist that his opponent be of equal status -- a leader.

133. This may be a reference to some old custom of raising a barrage mound to scare the foe, or it may be a mound covering those slain in battle, or even the destroyed ruins of enemy dwellings.

135. Here this repetition, showing a contrast and a negation in each line raises the emotional charge in them, and makes a climax.

136. In relation to the Kazakhs whose three main tribes reflect the migratory manner of sheep-breeding, they count three main sections of the community -- the old, the middle-aged and the young.

137. Here the number 40 in relation to Kirghiz tribes is a throwback to the ancient conception of such a number of related groups spoken of in old legends as being "branches of one great tree." There too they named them "ancestors" both "old" and "new." These last were the Kirghiz tribes living on Tien Shan. The "old" were found among other tribes of Central Asian migratory peoples.

138. This means that the chosen Khan must provide all, for the common good. He must help his people in every way, especially those in distress. He must provide weapons and equipment and also food-supplies when they set out on some distant travel or campaign.

139. Though it sounds strange to westerners, elderly respected folk are given the esteemed name of castrated one-humped camels, renowned for their patience and load-bearing capabilities.

140. Here we have the customary tossing in a blanket. Jakib can not stand it, and is set down upon the ground. Manas is tossed up again and cheered. This custom is not unknown among western folk.

COMMENTARY PART II

1. In the original this epithet as given as "blood-thirsty" in the same sense as indicated in note 59 to Volume I, namely hearty, strong, bold. The word used is of Mongolian origin.
2. This marriage to Karaberk, daughter of Kayip-dang, after defeating her in single combat, is not included in present text.
3. This calling of a counsel of wise men before any of Manas' campaigns or migratory changes of dwelling-places is traditional in this epic. As usual there is disagreement between them, but Manas, in view of enemy attacks of their existing location, and of the need for further pastures, and of his desire to regain the lands previously inhabited by his forefathers, decides to move.
4. This refers to traders, sent as spies by Esen-khan, with instructions to attack Manas while he is still immature, and has not yet attained full bogatir's strength and experience.
5. Another reference to Esen-khan's orders to kill Manas.
6. Allah the Planner, one of his many epithets, including the Almighty, the Creator, the All-knowing, the All-forgiving etc.
7. This refers back to the attack made by Manas against the Kalmaks and Manguls who tried to steal his father's herds, and of his combat with Nezkara (see Volume I for further details.)
8. A folk-saying implying that maturity brings wisdom with it.
9. This epithet frequently used for bogatir Manas, is tied up with the totemistic grey wolf, and signifies fierce fearlessness.
10. These characteristic names of lion, tiger, and leopard, portraying strength and boldness, run through the whole epic.
11. This kind of threat, made before battle is traditional for Turkish-tongued epics, and is of a highly exaggerated nature.
12. This is an expression of readiness to face death in battle.
13. This signifies the knowledge that he will be slain.
14. This expresses readiness to face all risks, even slavery.
15. Here agreement is expressed with the proposition made.
16. A mention of the old red tribal banner of Jakib's forbears.
17. Allegorical reference to Jakib's well-being, now he has a son.

18. Symbolically expressing resignations or submissions.
19. As note 18, an expression of yielding to circumstances.
20. A reference to the horses set aside specially for sacrifice.
21. The Kirghiz previously held Shamanistic beliefs, and these medicine men were thought capable of influencing good and evil.
22. Signifies unpreparedness to go on campaign or to battle.
23. Wandering Turkish-tongued tribes, when choosing a Khan to be leader, fulfilled this ritual. The chosen one was sat on a white felt blanket, and was carried round the collected people several times by a group of men bearing him shoulder-high.
24. This refers to a special custom of pulling weak horses along during the races. If so previously agreed, riders could take the bridles of backward steeds and tug them along towards the finishing flag, thus gaining one of the given prizes.
25. Among Kirghiz, Kazakhs and some other Turkish-tongued folk, nine ("toguz") was the traditional number for counting racing prizes.
26. The word "slave-girl" is used figuratively, in contempt.
27. Kalmak leaders, typified as wearing black tassels on hats.
28. Bey Jakib's name is used as a standardized war-cry here.
29. This refers to a non-traditional sporting contest between riders who try to tug each other out of their saddles, instead of thrusting his opponent to the ground using apars -- jousting.
30. Compare with note 14. -- signifies readiness to take risks.
31. The mediator (aracha) smoothed away any differences between the parties during match-making, also between quarrelling tribes.
32. A fugurative expression meaning to hasten on campaign.
33. This hyperbolic threat indicates the Bogatir's power only.
34. These lines give a traditional picture of the field of battle after conflict. In the epic such scenes vary, but the type of the scene is always the same. From one point of view they typify the power of the victor, and from the other give a fairly realistic description of the fray and its disastrous consequences.
35. This describes the method used to extract shots and balls from the wounded. Swallowing such a metal shot would make the wounded man reach and spew, and contract the muscles of his stomach, and during this internal motion the ball would fall out.
36. A typical Kirghiz felt hat, with black designs and pom-pom.
37. In the epic and other folk poems, curses and spells of wizards are often given the name of the area round the Indus -- Kashmir.

38. Percussion muskets and other weapons are given characteristic colours such as black, blue, white, referring to barrels, in the main, but maybe also to the stocks in some cases.

39. In this episode concerning Manas' campaign against Khan Akunbeshim, his warriors are divided into four groups, led by himself, his comrades-in-arms Kėkchė, Urbyu, and his father-in-law, Kayip-khan. Only Manas' own group is included in this text. The others fare successfully, and finally join up with him again.

40. This signifies a standardized Kalmak curse, in frequent use.

41. This describes a spear specially treated for durability.

42. Following this are some short episodes not included in the text here, including the capture of Tashkent and Kitals' defeat.

43. A typical description follows, given in traditional style, to emphasize the fierceness of the character of the bogatir.

44. Here is the beginning of a description of the council of Kirghiz tribes, called by Manas, before deciding to move away from the Altai region on the direction of Ala-Too. This is in accordance with his desire to claim back land where their forbears once lived. This brings them into conflict with Khan Alo-oke, who now occupies that land, and denies them access to it. This motivation must be understood, or the ensuing wide-spread conflicts will appear out of place, and rather inexplicable to the reader.

45. Among the Kirghiz were fortune-tellers of various types. Some told personal fortunes with the aid of burnt ram's shoulder-blades, others told of the outcome of campaigns, and others told of weather changes, according to the sun's movements. Some of these diviners were consulted by chiefs before important events.

46. Here begins a description of a meeting of all Kirghiz, before a migration. (See also note 44.) They hear Manas declare his intention of going on campaign to recover lost lands, and thus find new pastures for their ever-expanding herds of cattle.

47. A folk-saying, though not clear in context, which seems to indicate a call to Kirghiz to be as hard as stone in their efforts to recover lost lands which once belonged to their forbears.

48. The typical epithet given to Kitals, whose leaders used to wear red tassels on their hats, and sometimes on their gowns also.

49. Four kinds of cattle included horses, horned cattle, sheep and goats counted as one, camels. Sometimes one meets the expression "five kinds of cattle," where goats were counted apart from sheep. Ownership of cattle was the mark of all rich people.

50. This seems to be an improvisation on the part of the reciter not having any direct connection with the given text.

51. The mentioned tit-bits were reserved for honoured guests.

52. This custom, started by Manas, of giving a parting gift to follow a glass of arak or kumiss, became obligatory for all.

53. The fame of Isphahan rugs was wide-spread among all the Kirghiz and Central Asian tribes, and so were Isphahan weapons.

54. Here an episode concerning Manas' victory over Khan Alakun of Kashgara, is omitted from the present text.

55. This concerns not only Andezhan, but the Fergan valley also.

56. Here begins a physical description of Manas, with his quick-changing moods, varying from furious fierceness to laughter.

57. This means a banner with heraldic device showing its owner.

58. A typical description of Manas, in epic style, and includes his use of magical helpers -- here the bird Alpkarakush (See Vocab.)

59. An epithet here implying firmness, fearlessness, decisiveness.

60. A typical expression of a period of time -- about two hours.

61. Kirghiz and Kazakhs often migrated together, and were constant companions. Frequently they fought a common enemy together.

62. A typical and traditional means of conveying the elegance and tenderness of the slim and supple beautiful young maidens.

64. This is a motion or gesture denoting obedience, servility.

65. Preparing steeds so that manes do not obstruct fighting.

66. Incidents involving Almambet take place here, not included in the text: his birth and upbringing, his protest against human sacrifice, imprisonment by his own folk-leaders, his father's opposition to his acceptance of the Muslim religion, and so on.

67. At the finishing line the heraldic flags of all competing tribes were stuck on staffs in the ground. The finisher had only to touch it on arrival, and could then claim his rightful prize.

68. This was an enormous yurtia, consisting of some twelve sections, whereas the normal one would have not more than four or five.

69. That means that he served as protector and patron, bringing Kėkchė success, and defending him from his enemies (See Vocab.)

70. This means he is uselessly employed -- no hope for the future.

71. A metaphorical expression meaning one whose falcon flies off leaving only its hood behind. i.e. one who is a failure in life.

72. This maybe symbolically means a cleansing of past evils.

73. The sense of this is rather obscure, but seems to indicate that those who prize possessions too highly are lost in life.

74. The usual Muslim action preceding a prayer of blessing.

75. The old Kirghiz conception of man's spirit being found in his breast, and there must reason and memory also surely rest.

76. This refers back to the ancient conception of numerous Kirghizian tribes uniting into one. Among many Asiatic people the term "forty" was used as a synonym for "many" or "much."

77. In accordance with the conception of epic times, these two bogatirs, partaking of the milk of Chiyrirdi thus became a pair of milk-brothers, inseparables, sons of one mother. This idea is found in legends of many Turkish-tongued peoples.

78. This number includes Manas' two younger brothers, born to Jakib's second wife Bakdēlēt, namely Abike, and Kēbēsh.

79. This means the seat opposite the door-opening of the yurtia through which the honoured guest can see outside as well.

80. The usual custom in match-making among Kirghizian is for the father to approach the parents of the desired bride with a bow, and to ask for their consent to the marriage. Only after this has been given, and the bride-price agreed upon, and paid, can the wedding take place, the maid being taken to her new home.

81. Servants could be hired, or may be a poor member of their own tribe would accept service. A slave might be a prisoner of war, or could even be purchased on the slave market. As earlier noted, the term "slave" was generally used in a contemptuous way.

82. These were evil female spirits, according to most ancient legends. They were especially dangerous to women during childbirth it was believed. From a spot of blood dropped by one of them, new spirits of the same nature could arise. See vocab. Albastri.

83. Migratory tribal folk on entering their yurtras would hang up their whip on the left of the door. If a guest had a grudge against his host, he would keep his whip beside him on entry.

84. An idiomatic expression used the same way as in English.

85. Such camels were a rarity, and were kept with care and were highly treasured. They might be used for special sacrifices.

86. A usual form of boasting, meant to impress or terrify the listeners. It indicated the bogatir's physical powers, and was not necessarily connected with his cruelty or vindictiveness in battle.

87. This concerns carpets made in Meshked, a town in N.E. Iran famous in ancient days for the beauty of its treasured products.

88. The line comes from the bard's own lips, as though a partaker.

89. The sharp-tongued maiden makes it clear that Kirghiz come from Turkish origins, while the Chinese have their own geneology.

90. A very figurative way of expressing Almambet's excellence.

COMMENTARY PART III

1. There is a break in the text between the end of Volume II and the beginning of Volume III. It covers various campaigns where Manas was engaged, supported by Almambet; various single bouts; the defeat of the Oogans, and the subsequent truce; Manas' aid in managing the payment of the bride-price when Bokmurun weds Kansha, daughter of the defeated khan Tyulkyu; the marriage of Almambet to Dilara; Manas' marriage to Altinal, daughter of the defeated Khan Algan; the wounding of Manas in battle, reports of his death, this later recovery thanks to the Chiltan protecting spirits; his reunion with his knights and Almambet, etc.

2. Mussulmen counted this world as illusory, temporary, and only the land beyond the grave as real and permanent.

3. Such was the custom among Kirghiz, to protect children from hostile spirits, and envious enemies. Without a name they could not be located. They remained nameless till maturity, nick-named.

4. This indicated a feast of smaller measure, as usually given for brides and elder women, especially poorer, undistinguished ones.

5. This line, improvised by the bard, has no direct reference.

6. This indirect reference to re-planted tress, and sacrificed cattle only indicates the vanity and temporary nature of this world.

7. In accordance with Muslim custom, a hollow was made in the grave or vault, where the head of the deceased was laid towards the north, with his eyes towards Mecca, the holy city of Muslims.

8. To prevent swift decay, the corpse before burial was laid in a well-ventilated place, usually a mound of some kind.

9. In the epic the typical attributes of heroes, seen as lions, tigers, leopards etc. personify courage, fearlessness, agility.

10. This is a typical reference to the Kirghiz tree of lineage, grouping together early and late tribes of many places and times.

11. This is a typical epithet for the Chinese in this epic -- just as the black tassel is used to typify the Kalmaks.

12. The reference here is to those who bear the burden of governing. The single-hump camel was noted for its endurance.

13. One of the typical games played at meetings and on festive occasions, mentioned several times. This was a dangerous game, camels being notably ill-tempered after being tied up some time.
14. One of the typical epithets for the Muslim god Allah.
15. This was the typical ritual with corpses. Men were laid on the left side of the entrance to the yurt, women right.
16. The folk saying referred to is coupled with traditional customs, where the Kirghiz bride goes round the village which she comes to on foot, to show humility. The groom must be a good herdsman, and this will ensure family happiness.
17. Blue is accepted as the traditional colour for funerals. It was also the heraldic colour of the deceased Kēkētēi. (line 9557)
18. Wrestling matches referred to two lines earlier usually were fought afoot, but wrestling on horseback was also popular.
19. See also reference to this in note 13.
20. Traditional gesture of annoyance and disappointment.
21. This epithet is often met with in the epic, portraying bold bogatirs, connected with totemism — grey wolf, fierceness.
22. The traditional sacrifice for the dead, and for presentation at funerals, as part of the religious service before burial.
23. The four kinds of cattle referred to are horses, horned cattle, and sheep and goats taken as one, and camels. Among the migratory folk of Central Asia taken as a symbol of wealth.
24. Among Kirghizians, only women who were married were allowed to wear white head-scarves or turbans, covering half the brow.
25. Friday is counted as a specially sacred day by Muslims.
26. The forty-odd bogatirs, companions of Manas, again endowed with the wolf epithet, as mentioned in note 21 above.
27. The Kirghizian fortune-teller had various functions and methods. The fate of a man was guessed by stones, or by burnt shoulder-blades of rams. Thus was the outcome of a campaign foretold. Others studying the rising and setting of the sun, foretold the weather, success of crops, etc. Leaders often consulted them before making important decision affecting the whole tribe.
28. These plaited mats were used around the walls of the yurt, and overhead, to keep out rain, heat and cold. They were made of reeds and rushes, and lashed to the lattice-work underneath.
29. This is the tribal banner. Red colouring in ornamental designs are witness to ancient customs and derivations.

30. As explained with reference to Manas, elsewhere, "Blood-thirsty" had several meanings, beside the obvious one. It meant "bold, audacious, heroic" as well as "severe, cruel, harsh". In the given text its positive meaning of bravery is emphasized.
31. In horse-racing it was permitted, if agreed on by all the competitors, that relatives of the horse-owners could at certain places towards the finish, ride alongside the failing horses, and by taking their bridles tug them along to the winning flag. This might be repeated by several helpers.
32. In ancient times direction was taken from the flow of rivers, or the position of the sun. So places were named "low" or "high" on rivers, and "up" or "down" i.e. east or west, by the sun.
33. Among Kirghiz and Kazakhs and other Turkish-tongued tribes, the number of cattle kept as prizes in contests was counted in nines, not tens. It could be nine of a kind, or various ones. Usually several nines of horses, gowns, pieces of silver, and so on, were given. Bride-prices and blood-feuds were paid in nines.
34. This was a humorous game undertaken by old bald men, who butted each other like goats. Those who ran off were the losers.
35. "Camel-foal" as explained elsewhere, is a caressing term.
36. This refers to the hero of the Kirghizian tale of bogatir Tēshtyuk, who spent seven years in the underworld, among all kinds of spirits and magic charms. Many tribes know this theme.
37. This likens a bogatir to a man with a head of granite.
38. No watches, so time is told by meat-cooking, about 2 hours.
39. Refers to seams on the external walls of the yurt.
40. An exclamation used by Kalmaks expressing wonder or perhaps exasperation. Roughly equivalent to our saying "Oh, my God!"
41. This expresses a very hot curse made by the Kalmaks.
42. A further expression of Kalmak heated curses.
43. This expression indicates Kalmaks, especially leaders.
44. When playing knucklebones or pitch-and-toss, a large ring is marked out on the ground, about 10--12 metres in diameter.
45. See note 38. A period of time, about one or two hours.
46. A parallelism indicated that just as a castrated camel will lie in pain, exhausted, so will a man who has lost his horse.
47. A military war-cry used by Kalmak in attacking the foe.
48. Another war-cry to encourage Kalmaks and scare the enemy.

49. Usually, when a camel had sat itself down, they tied its lowers legs to its thighs above its knees, to stop it rising.

50. Here they attribute to the steed Chalkuiruk, the same seven lives as were attributed to its master Tēshtyuk. (note 36)

51. Here an ancient sporting custom of the Kirghiz is described, where archers, and later musketeers, shot at a precious ingot, hung by a thread on a tall pole, either afoot or riding.

52. Asphahan, famous among ancient Asiatics as an Iranian city where excellent carpets, weapons, and other wares were made.

53. On the front of the saddle was a ring or bow by which it could be hung up in the yurt, on the men's side, when not in use.

54. A special band or belt round the waist, where knives, daggers, or purses and bags, could be hung while walking or riding.

55. A term used by men to address all relatives of their wives.

56. A sign of shame, where folk could spit, dishonouring wives.

57. The word "slave" is used indirectly, simply meaning servant.

58. This is an old Kirghizian custom of decorating leather-work by making teeth-marks on it, used on raw sheepskin coats, kid-leather trousers, etc. especially along seam-lines.

59. See note 58. Used also to decorate seams on yurt walls.

60. This probably alludes to the making of protective clothing, sewing in small kid-leather bags filled with metal slivers.

61. This signifies a parting blessing, made by holding the hands together, like a half-opened book, raising them to one's brow, and slowly drawing them down one's face till the chin is reached.

62. This speaks of traditional contests of eloquence, common among many people of Central Asia and Kazakhstan in olden times.

63. Here is a short break in the text, concerning the butting by old bald men, and camel untying contests. See notes 34 and 13.

64. This refers to the typical Asiatic face, where the line of the brow does not jut forward, leaving a deep orifice for the eyes.

65. Foals were out at pasture with their mothers, but so that they did not drink all her milk, their legs were hobbled, and thus their movements were restricted, limiting their thirst.

66. This is a characterization of some horses with high-standing tails, but with not very long hair, as in other breeds.

67. Here the term "four" is used to indicate a small number.

68. This remark signifies a powerful folk, united in their efforts round their leader, in comparison with leaderless people.

69. Earlier Dzholoi's wife has been named as Klyash.

70. Under patriarchal rule, many Asiatic tribes, and those who practiced the Muslim religion, accepted the complete submission of a wife to her husband. If she disobeyed or displeased him, he had the right to beat her, disfigure her cheek, turn her out onto the street, and drive her back to her relatives in shame.

ALPHABETICAL VOCABULARY

ABAKS -- the name of a tribe or group of tribes. Such a grouping was known among Kazakhs and Kirghiz who repulsed the Dzhungar attacks in the late XVII and early XVIII centuries.

ACHALBARS -- literally "very sharp," the name of Manas' sword.

ADIR -- name of a locality and river. Found in the Tien Shan.

AIMANS -- name of a tribe, possibly Naimans. See under N.

AIRISH -- literally "a divide" name of mountains, maybe imaginary.

AKBAKAI -- literally "white old woman," name of Akilik's horse, with its white woolly hair on its ankles above its hooves.

AKBESHIM -- shortened form of Akunbeshim, the Shah.

AKE -- literally "father, elder brother" polite way of addressing an elder man or relative, showing due respect.

AK-ERMYEN -- name of a hollow and river, met in Central Asia, etc.

AKKELTE -- literally "white gun," the name of Manas' musket.

AK -- white -- is always used for bogatirs' weapons and horses. This term can be traced back to Turkish and Mongolian peoples. White is a magic colour, signifying good, excellent in quality.

AK-KIYA -- literally "white hill-side." Name of mountains, widely used in mountain areas, uplands, and inhabited parts of Asia.

AKKULA -- literally "cream-coloured," the name of Manas' horse.

AKMAMA -- name of mother of Manas' bride Sanirabiya.

AK-OTĖK -- literally "white hollow," name of an island between two branches of a river. Such hollowed-out level place in the mountains was useful as winter pasture, protected from cold winds. This name is found in many small settlements in Kirghizia.

AKSARGIL -- literally "white bay steed" -- one of Manas' horses.

AKSI -- name of a river, or town met with in Central Asia. In the Middle ages, the capital of the Fergan government.

AK-SU -- literally "white river," geographical name, Central Asia.

AK-TYUZ -- literally "white plain," place-name found in Kirghizia.

ALA-BEL -- name of mountain pass, found in Tien Shan mountains.

ALACHI -- name of a tribe. Sometimes union of Kazakhs and Kirghiz, known as Kirghiz tribe in Talas, in north western Kirghizia.

ALAI -- geographical name for a hollow among mountain crests.

ALA-KĖL -- name of a lake, found in Kazakhstan (Alakol).

ALBANI -- name of a tribe. One of the "Old Hundred" amalgamation of Usuni, Kangli, Dulati and Albani, XVI cent. in Seven Rivers area.

ALBASTRI -- demonic spirits in woman's form, dangerous to other woman, especially in the time of childbirth.

ALCHINS -- name of a tribe, known among eastern Kazakhs. According to legend, the father of all north-western Kazakhs was Alach. Alchins also joined the Kirghiz group known as Saruu.

ALMABASH -- name of the musket belonging to Manas' comrade Bakai.

ALMALI -- literally "apple-tree," widely-spread place-name, and name of mountains in Central Asia and Kazakhstan. In Kirghizia the name of a settlement found in the Keminsk region.

ALPKARAKUSH -- a gigantic mythical bird, which in the epic helps bogatirs in difficult moments. To liken a knight to this bird is indicative of his strength, agility and menacing manner.

ALTAIS -- separate tribes and families living on the Altai mountains. Sometimes attributed to Kalmaks living there. Foes named Kirghiz living there Altaitsi, or people from the Altai.

ALTINBAI -- literally "rich in gold." Name of unlocated area.

ALTI-SHAAR -- literally "six towns." In the XVIII cent. a group of towns in Kashgaria-Yarkend, Koton, Yangi, Kissar, Aksu, Kucha.

ALTI-SU -- literally "six streams," also known as Altı-Ozën.

ANDIZHAN -- an old town with developed artisan trading-centre, in contact with the whole Fergan Valley. It was also a centre for small feudal lords, and along with the Namangan and Kokand areas made up the Kokand Khanate. In the epic Great Andizhan constitutes an area round the Fergan basin, including the Alai mountains and their off-shoots, where the Kirghiz had their pastures.

ANDZHI-MANDZHI -- a region where Manas' foes, the Chinese, lived.

ANDZHU -- another form of the previous name. A Chinese region.

ANGIR -- a mountain pass. A locality with a main mountain road.

ANGIRTI -- name of mountain pass on the Altai. This name is also found in the Tien Shan mountains, a pass to the Dzhair crest.

ARABANTI — name of a mountain located in great Andizhan area.

ARAK — a strong inebriating brew of spirits, like vodka.

ARAL — literally "island." Name of a river, found in many places in Central Asia and Kazakhstan. Also the name of many settlement in Kirghizia, and of a town on the river Ak-Su, and of the Aral Sea, in Kazakhstan.

ARA-TALAA — literally "wide steppe," a steppeland region.

ARA-TOO — literally "between mountains." Such a place in the epic.

ARA-TYUZ — literally "wide plain." Such a region in the epic.

ARGINS — name of a Turkish-tongued tribe in the epic. Gradually it became used for tribes connected with Kazakhs and Kirghiz.

ARKALIK — literally "at one's back." So the dwellers in the Fergan valley named those who lived behind them in the mountains.

ARPA — place-name in the epic. Such a place is found in a river valley in the Tien Shan range, at the foot of the Fergan crest.

ARSU — name of a land. Investigators have found a place of this name, Arsu-baniket, an old town on the river Sirdarya.

ASHMARA — in the epic a place name for rivers, passes and valleys. In reality this name is found in the Chu valley, in north Kirghizia.

AYAGĖZ — name of place or river. Such a river exists in the Taldı-Kurgan region of Kazakhstan.

AYDIN-KĖL — obviously a lake of some kind, but unidentified.

AZAT — name of an expensive silken or satin material.

AZEMIL — place-name in the epic, for used mountains or rivers.

AZIRET — literally "highness" honorable title for caliphs, saints, prophets sultans pashas, and so on. Maybe here a personal name.

AZOO-BEL — literally "untrod pass." Not identified, maybe mythical.

AZRAIL — in epics, legends and folk-tales of Central Asia, the near and far east -- the angel of Death. In the Koran, "the angel who receives your spirit when you die." According to legend, when the day appointed by Allah arrives, Azrail appears with two companions, and with a poisonous spear he pricks the predestined one in the breast, then separates the soul from the body, and carries it either to Heaven or to Hell. A giant, whose head reaches the sky.

BAABEDDIN — a saint and general protector of the folk, met among many Turkish-tongued tribes. The hero of the epic appeals to him for aid. There was such a saint belonging to the holy Sufis order in the XIV century, whose grave can be seen in Bukhara.

BADALDU — literally "bushy" a place-name widely spread in Kirghizia.

BAI — Well-to-do cattle breeder. See under Bey, further on.

BAKBURCHUN — name of the land, or chief city where Manas' foes live.

BALBAL — a roughly-hewn stone figure of a man, standing on old grave.

BAR-KĖL — name of a lake. Coincides with the large lake BarkĖl, which lies not far from the Mongolian Altai mountains.

BARSKAN — a place-name coinciding with Barskaun, the ravine, and the river which flows from the crest of the Tersk Alatau into the lake Issil-Kul, where a settlement of that name is found, in the south.

BEIDZHIN — a highly-populated city or land where Manas' Chinese enemies lived. Kirghizian specialists suggest that this is Beltin, the ancient capital of Ulguria. Others suggest that this is one of the chief towns of the Betszin dynasty, Kirghiz tribes who lived there fell under his rule in the XVIII century.

Translator's note: I recently met Chinese poet Liu Wei, living in the capital, who told me that the Chinese name their capital city in their own tongue — Beidzhin! This fits in with the epic picture.

BESH-BUGU — literally "five reindeer." A locality where such fine deer may be found, in all probability a wooded or mountainous spot.

BEY (OR BAI) A rich cattle-breeder, with huge herds, specially of horses. Local leader of the people. Title of respect for such.

BODONG — name of locality in the epic. This is very near to Bodo, the name which Tibet bore in ancient times.

BOTO-MOINOK — literally "camel-saddle," name of mountain hollow.

BOZ-DĖBĖ — place-name in the epic. Locality unidentified.

BUGULUK — literally "place of many deer." Name of mountain passes.

BULAGASIN — a city where Chinese live. This name sounds very much like Balasagun, an ancient town so named by Arabs, found on the territory between the Amudar and the Sirda rivers. From the XI to XIII cent. the capital of Turkish feudal government of Karakhanids. In modern times — an economic and cultural centre near Tokmak.

BURUTS — synonym for Kirghiz. In the past Kalmaks so named them.

CHADBAR — literally "reddish," name of locality, unidentified.

CHAMAK-TOP TASH — name of folk game, where they throw and catch stones thrown up into the air. Played by Kirghizians.

CHALAGAR — a fantastic bird in folk stories and legends.

CHANACH — literally "a wine-skin." Name of mountains and passes.

CHANTU — literally "wearing a turban." Muslim Chinese and Kalmaks.

CHARIN — a river and its banks. This is the name of a tributary to the river Ili, flowing on Kazakhstan Territory.

CHATIR-KĖL — name of a lake, found without tributaries in Tien Shan.

CHELEK — a place-name often found in Central Asia.

CHENER-DZHAR — literally "ledge or cliff with thorn-bushes." Place-name for a settlement, unidentified.

CHET-KAKIRA — literally "edge of Kakira." A hollow in the hillside.

CHILAN — name of a river. It is also known as a small settlement on the caravan route near the river Chilansu, located on the road between the Kashgara mountains and the town Aksu.

CHINARA — name of the place-tree, or sometimes of beech, often used to express something beautiful and with charming powers. In modern Kirghizia used as a name for girls.

CHILTENS — in this epic and stories and legends of Turkish-tongued tribes, the patron and protecting spirits of knights. At difficult moments they appear before them in various forms, human and otherwise, and give advice, help them in the fighting, grant them recovery from wounds, and ensure them a long life.

CHIN-MACHIN — in Iranian and Turkish legends a fabulous land. Chins live with Chinese there, Machins with others, found to the south of China, or with Manchurians.

CHIYRCHIK — the name of a mountain crest. Found as the name of a range of mountains, with a pass, in southern Kirghizia.

CHU — a river in Kirghizia and Kazakhstan, formed by the uniting of the rivers Dzhuvanarik and Kochkor, taking their sources from glaciers on the peaks of Tersk-Alatau, and others mountains in Kirghizia. It flows near lake Issik-Kul, along the Chu valley. This was for centuries the place for the settlement of Kirghiz migrant cattle-breeding tribes.

DALBA — name of one of the tribes hostile towards the Kirghizians.

DANG-DOONG — name of mountains and lands where Chinese and Kalmaks live. Much like Dangdung — literally "wild goats," place-name.

DANGITS — name of a tribe. Ethnologically Tanguts, from whom this name comes, were a Tibetan-Burmese group who formed their tribe and its government in northern China in the X cent. The Kirghiz lived very close beside them in eastern Turkestan in the XIII cent.

DEELESİ — name of Kirghiz tribe who formed a union with the Ichkiliks; they also joined up with Salios Munduz and Sari-bagish.

DERBEN — Kirghizian tribe who joined up with the Oirats. See O.

DERVISH — poor wandering Muslim monk-fanatics.

DILDE — name of a golden coin, used by cattle-breeders as presents.

DITARS — unidentified tribe in the epic. Dutar — a two stringed musical instrument, something like the komuz. See under K.

DOLON — wide-spread place-name in Kirghiz geography, in Tien Shan.

DULATS — name of tribe of Kazakh origin, friendly to Kirghiz.

DZHAI-DEBĖ — literally "useful hill." Place-name in the epic.

DZHAI-KĖL — literally "place of a lake," so used in the epic.

DZHAMBI — ingot of silver of certain shape and weight, used as a unit of money. Sometimes small ingots made of pure gold, as well.

Dzhambil — place-name, probably imaginary. Unidentified.

DZHANAR — literally "volcanic," here used as name of mountain pass.

DZHALGIL-KIR — literally "lonely peak" — name of locality.

DZHARGAK — leather made from the skin of young goats. Sometimes it is used as a place-name, not identified in the epic.

DZHAYIK — the ancient name of the river Ural, then called Yaik.

DZHENE — the name used for a man's wife by all his relations.

DZHERKENT — name of a land synonymous with Yarkent. Name for a range of mountains. Yarkent, a city in Sintasay, trading centre.

DZHETI-SU — literally "seven rivers." Name of settlement on the bank of a river, i.e. the Ili, Karatal, Blen, Aksu, Baskan, Sarkand.

DZHILDIS — name-place of river, mountain pass, peak in Tien Shan.

DZHLGINDU — name of spacious steppeland. Central Asia, Kazakhstan.

DZHILI-SU — name of river and valley, met in Sentral Asia, Altai.

DZHIRANTI — place-name frequently met in Central Asia.

DZHIRGALAN — name of river, also found in Central Asia, Kazakhstan.

ECHKI-OLBĖS — literally "goats don't die here." Place-name unknown.

EDIL — old name of river Volga, used by Turkish-tongued tribes, where the word "edil" simply meant "river."

EKI-ARAL — literally "two islands," place-name for fertile pasture.

EKI-BASH — literally "two heads" place-name, or mountain-peak name.

ESHTEK — name of tribe. So were called Togus, Kurdaks, and Turals by western Siberian Tatars mainly, used as a general term.

ESIL — name-place, probably imaginative. Otherwise unidentified.

FERGANTS — people living in the Fergan valley. These may be considered to be Uzbeks, the root-stock people of this valley, otherwise Kirghiz migrants who came there for winter pastures, migrating from their summer pastures in the Alai mountains.

GUBU-SHAMU — otherwise Gobi and Shamo. Gobi is a Mongolian word meaning "stony desert." "Shamo" is the Chinese equivalent. This Shamu was located in Inner Mongolia, and the north-west of China.

HINDUSTAN — In the folk epics of Central Asia and Kazakstan, the land of India is so called. A land of fabulous people, and beasts.

ILEPSI — place-name for land where Kazakhs live. This was near the river Lepsa with its settlements on the north end of lake Balkhash.

ILI — a river on the territory of Kazakhstan and western China. It falls eventually into lake Balkhash.

IMALAYA — the great range of the Himalayas, specially the north.

IRTISH — great river flowing from Kazakhstan Alai region to the north, past the Omsk province to the Arctic Kara Sea.

ISPARA — a town and river of that name. From the XVI cent, famous for its Middle Age fortress and mausoleum of Khazeta Baba, found today on Tadzhikistan territory.

ISPHAHAN — one of the biggest towns in Iran, famous since early times for its carpets and its steel weapons. In the epics of the folk of Central Asia and Kazakhstan this name is used to convey weapons and armour for knights, of particularly high quality.

ISAR — In the epic also named Gissar, a locality in Gissar-Alai, a mountainous area to the south of Central Asia.

ITAALI — in the epic a fabulous people or tribe, mythical beings. Translator's note. "Women — humans, men — dogs, I declare! I have heard this time and again," so runs the text in the original. I wonder is this not a reference to Italia, to Romulus and Remus, brought up by a she-wolf, and when found behaved like wolf-hounds too, running on all fours? The legend of the founding of Rome by Romulus was known everywhere the Romans went, all round the shores of the Black Sea and yet further east. So Kēkētēi, who also speaks about Arabs in the preceding lines, would surely know this myth, prevalent everywhere in the old world?

KABAK-ART — a place-name in the epic. Unidentified.

KABANDAR — literally "wild boars" place-name, also mountain road.

KADI — In Muslim lands a judge, administering Muslim law "shariat".

KADZHIRTI — place-name in the epic. Unidentified.

KAINAR — name of a river, met with frequently in Kirghizia.

KAKANCHIN — the land where the Chinese live. Kakan and Chin are both identified in folk-lore of Turkish-tongued tribes as China.

KAKSHAAL — name of mountain range, identified as Kakshaal-Tau, a range of mountains located south-east of the Tien Shan mountains. A river of this name is found there as well.

KALCHA — the name of a tribe. Ethnographically the name Galcha is identified as a tribe of mountain Tadzhiks, living in eastern Bukhara Khanate, though they do not so name themselves.

KALKAN — name of a mountain of place-name. One mountain Kalkan, is located in the Ili valley.

KALMAKS — used in a wide sense as the enemies of the Kirghiz. The image of epic foes is closely connected historically with the invasion of the Kirghiz, Uzbeks, and Karakalpaks by Mongolian tribes from the XV up to the XVIII cent. when tribes known as Oirots (see under O) along with Kalmaks — literally "separated ones," joined forces and founded a new state in XVII cent. Destructive raids were made by Kalmaks up the Seven Rivers, and the region round Issik-Kul, and in the Tien Shan mountains. This was the result of the break-up of the Chingis Khan empire, from which they broke away. Sometimes the Kirghiz were defeated, but in the main they kept their independence, by cooperating with Kazakhs and Karakalpaks, and first began to feel themselves a nation — an epic time indeed.

KAMBARBOZ — literally "light-grey Kambar" the progenitor of all light-grey steeds, best among the Kirghizian horses. They were looked upon by their owners as sacred beasts, bringing happiness and prosperity. Kambar-ata, was the name given to the protector and patron of all horses, shielding them from disease, especially from glanders. Kambar-ata was known as the multiplier of the species.

KAMBIL — place-name, or name of mountain range. Unidentified.

KAMPAS — name of unknown town, but connected with Chinese, and Kalmaks.

KANGAI — name of the land where Kalmaks lived. It was also used as a battle-cry, so the Kirghiz gave the ones who used it this name, and it became the title of that tribe as well.

KANGUR — name of a mountain hollow, found in the Kashgar massif.

KANGUSH — name of a town, so far unidentified.

KANIKEI — literally "married to a khan." Manas' wife, Sanirabiyga. She was better known so after their marriage, since Kirghiz folk could not pronounce her difficult name, though shortened to Rabiyga.

KANISH — wife of a khan. A further shortening of Kanikel's name.

KANKOO — name of a mountain range, unidentified, maybe imaginary.

KAN-TOO -- literally "Khans's mountain." Name of locality Kantau, and of a mountain in the valley of the river Chu in Kirghizia.

KARA-BEL -- literally "black waist" the name of a mountain pass.

KARADZHOI -- probably an invented place-name, connected with China.

KARA-EMIL -- literally "black fir," place-name found in the Tien Shan range, and also in south Kirghizia.

KARA-KALMAK -- name of a tribe of Kalmaks (Oirots) found among the western Mongolians. Sometimes called Sart-Kalmaks. Occasionally they were allied to the Kirghizians.

KARA-KALPAKS -- literally "black monks' head-dress." Turkish-tongued tribe which made a union with Turkish-speaking Pecheneg tribe, in the XV--XVI cent. Now settled in the Karakalpak Autonomous Area.

KARA-KIRGHIZ -- identical in the epic with the Kirghiz folk. The term was used to distinguish Kirghiz from Kazakhs, because of the close relations existing between them.

KARA-KISH -- literally "black winter." Unidentified place-name.

KARA-KITAIS -- a synonym for unknown Chinese tribes.

KARA-KULDZHA -- place-name for settlement, a river or a ravine. Such a river is found in the Tien Shan range flowing from the Fergan peak.

KARA-RUM -- literally "black desert" place-name connected with the presence of Kazakhs. Kara Kum desert is found near the Aral Sea.

KARA-KURUM -- name of epic steppeland. Also name of a mountain ridge in Asia, and to the south-east side of the Pamirs. A mountain pass. Kara-Korum was the name of the ancient capital of Mongolia, founded near the source of the Orkhon (or Orkun) in 1220 AD.

KARA-OTĖK -- literally "black hollow." A mountain flat on a sloping hill-side, shielded from the wind, suitable for winter pasture.

KARA-OTKĖL -- literally "big pass." Also the name of a large lake.

KARA-SAZ -- place-name for marshy area in Central Asia and Kazakhstan.

KARA-SHAR -- place-name, found as a town Karshar, in Sintszyan.

KARA-SU -- literally "black river." Name of such rivers feeding underground waters. Found in territories of Central Asia, the Altai and Kazakhstan. It means a spring or a small stream.

KARA-TEGIN -- name of a tribe and a locality. Thus are named Pamir-Iranian groups, after the territory where living, in N.Tadzhikistan.

KARA-TEITS -- name of a tribe, possibly Kirghiz, who joined Ichkiliks.

KARA-TOKO -- name of a tribe, Kirghiz who hoined up with Mundus.

KARA-TOO -- place-name in the mountains. Also given to lowlands in Central Asia, partly desert, partly steppeland, which in summer are not left with a covering of snow, like Ala-Too.

KARA-TYUL -- name of a tribe, maybe from the Tulu. In Chinese chronicles one of the Ulgur tribes, Dulat, may be connected with this name.

KARKIRA -- a river. One so-named is found as a tributary of the Charin, which itself flows into the Ili, finally to Karkara valley.

KEBEZ -- name of locality and mountains, Kebez-Too, in Kashgaria.

KĖGART -- a river. One named like this, Kugart, flows in S.Kirghizia.

KĖK-OTĖK -- literally "blue hollow," place-name found in Kirghizia.

KEIKAR -- ancient legendary hills supposed to surround the edge of the world. Beyond them dwell djins and other spirits, some hostile, some beneficent to humanity. Found frequently in folk epics of the near and far East. Figuratively speaking, the end of the world.

KĖKE-NAAR -- literally "blue lake." May be a large lake in northern China, known as Kukunor.

KEN-ARAL -- literally "wide island," name-place in the epic. In the Talas valley where many migrant Kirghiz are spread this name is found.

KENDZHUT -- name of a land. Specialists suggest a principedom of that name in north Kashmir. Historically the city of a Kirghiz Khan. IX cent.

KENTUN -- in the epic the name of a Chinese city. Unidentified.

KER-KĖL -- literally "grey lake." In the epic found as a river.

KERME -- literally "long slope." In the epic, a mountainous region.

KERME-SAZ -- literally "long marsh." Location not identified.

KERME-TOO -- literally "long mountain chain" Such a range is found in the Tien Shan mountains.

KETMALDI -- place-name. Found in Kirghizia in the Tien Shan range.

KEYIP -- place-name of town, also of river. Old city on river Sirdar.

KEYIP-BADANG -- name of town; see preceding note above:

Khan -- the leader of a tribal union, chosen by the people as their chief and war-commander. A figure always held in deep respect.

KINGIR -- place-name, probably imaginary. Unidentified.

KIPCHAKS -- big group of tribes, near relatives of Manas. Known to Turkish-tongued tribes previously and up to the XI century as Kimaki, and to have inhabited the area between the Ili and the Irtysh rivers, and later on to have spread as far as Tien Shan and the Urals, and the Aral Sea, also from the river Sirdar to the Black Sea. They

were genetically tied to many peoples including Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Karakalpaks, Azerbaijanis, Bashkirs and Kirghiz.

KIShte -- a popular folk-game. Literally "a sewn pattern."

KITAIS -- the Chinese enemies and opponents of the Kirghiz, of Manas and his bogatirs. Not one whole people, but many tribes, including, it has been suggested, Kidanya Khitayas, Kara-Kitais, of mixed Mongul-Tungus origins, who occupied northern China, and founded a wide empire there in X to XI centuries. The Chinese in the epic have also been connected with the Tsin dynasty, during which northern China was taken over and ruled from the XVII to XX century. It was against these that some Kirghizian tribes fought and were defeated and so fell beneath their power, but made a desperate effort to regain their freedom. Kitais in the epic are to be taken as those who lived in the northern region of China and in Beldzhin. (Pekin)

KITAI-SUN -- one of the Chinese tribes, the Sun, i.e. those who lived in the Sun dynasty (960--1279) which fell as a result of the Mongolian onslaught of the Golden Horde.

KIYBA -- place-name in the epic, possibly Khiva.

KIZAI -- a small tribe among Kazakhs, friendly towards the Kirghiz.

KIZIL -- place-name, found frequently in Central Asia and Kazakhstan. Literally "red" usually characterising rocky cliffs.

KIZIL-BEL -- a mountain pass. Often met with on Kirghiz territory.

KIZIL-KIYA -- place-name, met in Central Asia, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia.

KIZIL-OMPOL -- name of a mount, located in central Tien Shan.

KIZIL-SU -- literally "red river," met in Asia and Kazakhstan.

KIZIR -- the prophet, one of the legendary figures of pre-Muslim stories and folk-tales among Turkish and Iranian peoples. He is often pictured in a green cloak, riding on a white horse. He sought immortality, and at last found it in a spring of life-giving water. Among Central Asians he is pictured as an eternal wanderer, and he comes to the aid of lost travellers, poor folk, cripples and beggars, sometimes in the form of a person known to them. He could be identified, it was said, by his right thumb, which had a bone missing. He was also known among Turkish-speaking tribes as a venerable elder, protector of heroes and lovers. He appears and suddenly disappears.

KOICHAGIR -- the name of an old-fashioned flintlock musket.

KOMUZ -- three-stringed plucked instrument with wooden pear-shaped body, and long neck without frets. In the neck a few holes are incised for resonance. Used as a solo instrument, and for singing accompaniment. One of the most commonly-used instruments among the Kirghizians, especially the migratory tribes. Usually made from an apricot tree. Bards often accompanied the epic manas on the komuz.

KONGRAT -- name of one of the Kirghiz tribes, also found as Kungrat among peoples of Central Asia and Kazakhstan -- Uzbeks, Karakalpaks, Kazakhs. Ethnographers place this tribe among the Turko-Mongol group.

KONGU -- place-name in the epic, supposedly where the Chinese lived.

KOTON -- place-name, found as river and town in Sintszyan, China.

KULAN-DZHAILOO -- literally "Kulans' pasture," a high pasture up in the mountains, located in Talas. Also steppeland in western part of Kirghizia. Mentioned in Arab chronicles as rich summer pasture.

KULDZHA -- literally "wild mountain ram." Large town in Sintszyan.

KULUSUN -- place-name, found in K    -Kulusun, on the east of Issik-Kul.

KUMISS -- a fermented drink, made of raisins soaked in mares' milk. A favourite beverage among migrating cattle-breeders with horse-herds.

KUMDU-SU -- place-name or river. Met in Central Asia and Kazakhstan.

KUMUL -- place-name, found in modern Khami, Kumul, Sintszyan, China.

KUNAR -- place-name. A mountain pass to Kambil territory.

KUNDUZ -- name of country. A town of this name is found in Afghanistan.

KURBUKUM -- literally "sandy spur." Probably an imaginary name.

KUU-TEZ -- place-name, a settlement, with pasture for flocks.

KYURMENTYU -- place-name, found on the banks of lake Issik-Kul, also the name of a river to the north of Kunga-Alatau mountain crest.

LAAILAMA -- a Kalmak god. Calling on him Kalmaks cried "Laailamalu!"

LAANAT -- in the epic given as a god acknowledged by Buddhists.

LOKISH -- name of a tribe, attributed to the Kirghiz-Kipchaks.

MAIMUN -- name of hostile tribe with Khan Sho-oruk as their leader. Historic and ethnographic sources speak of Maimuns as occupying a territory to the south of the Altai mountains, along with Talas.

MANDZHU -- name of a tribe of Kalmaks, or of their settlement.

MANDZHURIA -- land named in the epic, historic name of Manchuria.

MAMIR -- literally "quiet, noble," place-name, maybe imaginary.

MANGULS -- a people hostile to the Kirghiz. In all probability these were Mongols. Sometimes named as a Kalmak tribe or group.

MARAL-BASHI -- literally "reindeer's head," place-name. This was the name of an old trading-post on the cross-roads from Kashgar and Yakend to Aksu, serving as an important supply source for Kashgaria.

MARAL-KECHYU -- literally "deer ford," place-name, river or ford.

MARGELAN — place-name of town, valley and mountain slopes. Found in the Fergan valley, part of Kokand Khanate, of great trade importance.

MĚNDYU — word of Kalmak welcome. Also used by them as a battle-cry.

MING-BUGU — literally "thousand reindeer," a place-name in the epic.

MOINOK — dried river-bed, stony strip of land. Maybe mountain pass found in Central Asia and Kazakhstan in especially rocky regions.

MUFTI — one of the highest Muslim priests, a counsellor with full right to decide difficult religious questions and legal matters.

MUMIE — a herb of great curative qualities, curing many diseases.

MURGAB — place-name. Geographically found as a river flowing through Afghanistan and Turkmenia. A village on the river Murgab delta.

MUZ-BEL — name of mountain pass, found in the Tien Shan mountains.

NAAMAN — name of tribes living in Turkestan or other Asiatic lands.

NABATI — unidentified tribe in the epic. Literally means "sugar-plum."

NOGOI — name of tribe or group of tribes of Kipchak derivation, at whose head stood a Mongolian group of tribes, the Mangits. In the second half of the XV cent. Mangits began to be named Nogois. They played an important part in the activities of the Golden Horde, and were also known to have joined with Kazakhs. Name of Jakib's father.

NOIGUTS — one of the Kirghiz tribes deriving from the Ichkilik. In accordance with legends, Noiguts had in their group nine tribal lines, and always acted in full accord with Kirghiz Kipchaks.

NURA — name of a river, found both in Central Asia and Kazakhstan.

OGĚREK — a fantastic bird in the epic, also known as Kazilik.

OGUZ-KECHYU — literally "bull ford" probably imaginary place-name.

OPOL — in the epic, name of a mountain range and region. Geographically Opol-Too, mountain ridge on the border — Kirghizia-Sintszyan.

ORA-TĚBĚ — place-name and town. One of this name is found in the Fergan valley, dating back to the XVIII cent. part of the Kokand Khanate. Now named Ura-Tyube, in the Leninabad region of Tadzhikistan.

ORA-TYUBE — place-name, and name of a mountain in the epic, clearly connected with the previously mentioned town of Ora-TĚbĚ.

ORDO — a folk-game among Kirghiz, somewhat similar to our Knucklebones.

ORDZHEMIL — a herb, relieving pain, and encouraging flow of blood.

OIROTS — One of the tribes among the Kalmaks, or Kalmaks generally.

ORKUN — name of a river, found as a tributary of the river Selenga.

OROL — a mountain range, most probably identified as the Urals.

ORTTĚN — literally "place of a fire," an unidentified locality.

OTUZ-ADIR — name of a river, found in the Osh region, S. Kirghizia.

OTUZ-SU — literally "thirty rivers," place-name in epic, unidentified.

PAIYNA — a war-cry uttered by the Kalmaks in battle.

RUSTUM — son of Zal, hero of legend and folk-lore among peoples settled on the territory of modern Central Asia, Iran, and also Afghanistan. Many motifs very clearly connected with this hero-warrior Russian, are worked out in later literature of Central Asia in the Middle Ages. His name is found in Tadzhik and Iranian folk-lore, and in Firdausi's epic poem "Shakh-Name" X-XI century. For the Turkish-tongued tribes in Central Asia, and Iran, Rustum was the incarnation of noble knighthood, strength, boldness and victory.

SALKINDUU — literally "cool," place-name found in Central Asia.

SARI-ARKA — literally "yellow spine," name of Kazakh steppeland, stretching from Balkash to the Aral Sea, surrounded by low mountains.

SARI-CHĚL — literally "yellow desert," place-name, maybe imaginary.

SARI-KOL — literally "yellow arm," name for ravine frequently met in Central Asia, Kazakhstan, South Siberia and Sintszyan, China.

SARI-UCHUK — literally "yellow mountain crag" place-name unidentified.

SARKAN — place located on one side of Barskan. See under B.

SARTI — in the epic a tribe of people, or merchants travelling on caravan routes. In the beginning of the XVIII cent Sarts were named as coming from Kashgara (see under K) mainly inhabited by Ulgurs. This may account for the name in the epic — Ulgur Sarts. A precise definition cannot be given. Some consider them to be Tadzhiks, but only town-dwellers, others suggest that they are Uzbeks who left their native groups, and joined up with neighbouring Ulgurs. Migratory Turkish-tongued tribes, Seldzhuk and others living in the XI cent. used the term Sart for town-dwellers and tradesmen, and this meaning took hold and lasted. In any case, it was a settled, not a wandering tribe, in the main found in the Fergan valley and other areas of Uzbekistan, irrespective of whether they spoke Uzbek or not. In the XX cent Sarts were known as a group related to the Uzbeks tribe of Kongrats. Europeans sometimes call Uzbeks "Sarts."

SAYANG — pasture-lands found in Sayang mountains, south of Siberia.

SHAH — in the direct sense — a chosen ruler and war-commander of the people, holding supreme power over a given area as supreme ruler.

SHAIMERDEN — Shah Mardan, in the folk-lore of tribes of the near and middle East -- the patron and protector of epic heroes. Historians connect him with Ali Ibn Abu

Talibu, the fourth Caliph after Mahomet, ruling in Mecca 656—661 AD, — the son-in-law of the prophet.

SHAYA — name of a river. One such has been located in Sintszyan.

SHIBEN — place-name unidentified, maybe fictitious.

SHIBERTSI — the name of a tribe mentioned in the epic. Unidentified.

SHIKYU — place-name, unidentified, maybe fictitious.

SIRNAIZA — literally "spear with smooth or painted staff." This name is sometimes given for a bogatir's personal weapon.

SIRGAK — a type of golden eagle, distinguished for its strength and boldness. This name is sometimes applied to Manas' comrades-in-arms.

SOK — literally "to beat." In the epic — a range of high mountains.

SOOSHANG — place-name, unidentified, maybe fictitious.

SUN — see under letter K — Kital-Sun.

SURNAR — folk wind instrument of the flute type, with a brazen flared mouth at the far end. These instruments were used to play traditional melodies, and in relation to special events — calling-up of the warriors to battle, their safe return, victory feasts, and so on. Rich Kirghiz had such instruments on which they made merry.

SUUSHANG — see Sooshang above.

SUUNAR — place-name. "Su" is the Turkish word for "river" and "nur" in the Kalmak, Buryat and Mongolian tongue means "lake."

SUYUNCHI — literally "good news," "happy news," a gift presented to the one who brought good news. Traditionally Turkish-tongued tribes, on hearing happy news cried out "Suyunchi!" and rewarded the bringer.

TAL — place-name frequently met in Central Asia and Kazakhstan.

TALAS — name of a ravine. The river Talas flows on Kirghizian and Kazakhstan territory. In the Talas valley to the north-west of Kirghizia, stands a town there, famous since the VI cent. with that name.

TALDI-SU — name of river and valley often met in Kirghizia.

TALKAN — literally "roasted swollen grain." Unidentified country.

TANG-SHANG — in the epic, the land where Manas' foes live, i.e. China.

TANGSHU — in the epic the name of a Chinese town and lake.

TARAGAI — place-name of some forestless area in Kirghizia.

TARAKS — name of tribal union with Kirghiz, Kazakhs and Naimans.

TARBAGATAI — place-name, met in Kirghizia, Central Asia, Kazakhstan, also name of mountains separating Zaisan basin and Balkhash-Alakol.

TARMAL-SAZ — literally "colourful marsh." Tarmal-Saz is situated in between the Talas and Chuisk valleys in Kirghizia.

TASH-KOTON — name of a town. Such a place is met in Sintszyan, China.

TASKIL — name of steppe area. Frequently met in the Altai, in Sayan, Kuznets Alatau as name for mountains, ranges and river valleys.

TASMA — name of steppe. Met in Kirghizia to the east of Lake Issik-Kul.

TATALA — name given in the epic to the tribe of Khan Sho-oruk. This name is traced among Tatars and Malmuns occupying the southern slopes of the Altai mountains.

TEITS — name of tribe formed by union of Kirghiz with Ichkiliks.

TEMIRDIK — literally "place where iron is found." Unidentified area.

TENGIZ-NAAR — literally "Tengiz Lake." Such a lake is found in the Kyrgaldzhin basin, in Central Kazakhstan.

TER-KËL — name of a lake found in the Altai mountains.

TERS-SU — name of place on a river, found in Kirghizia and Kazakhstan.

TEKSHI-ARISH — literally "level step," empty desert steppelands.

TESKEI — literally "shady side of northern slopes." Unidentified.

TËTË — literally "nearby," name of mountain pass. Unidentified.

TIRGOOTS — name of tribe, same as Torguts, western Oirats, speaking the Turkish tongue. In the past Torguts joined a powerful union of Mongolian tribes, settled on the territory between the Balkash, the Tien Shan, and Altai mountain ranges.

TOP-TASH CHAKMAK — game of tossing and catching stones. See Chakmak.

TOPURAK-BEL — literally "clayey pass." Unidentified place-name.

TOGUZ-KORGOL — literally "nine sheep-turds." Like "Toguz-Kukalak," the name of a Kirghizian folk-game.

TOTU — the name of a separated Kirghiz tribe.

TULANG — literally "feather-grass," name-place or river. Unidentified.

TURKESTAN — In the XIX—XX cent. the name of a wide-spread region in Central Asia, with a population of Turkish-speaking tribes. It is also the name of an old city that goes back to the XIV century.

TUUSHANG — place-name in the epic. Unidentified.

TYUP — name of a river, found in Kirghizia, Kazakhstan and the Altai.

TYURFAN — place-name in the epic. Unidentified.

TYURKS or **Turks** — In the epic an independent people of many tribes, differing from Kirghiz, though employing the same language, as did the Kazakhs. This name goes

back as far as V--VIII cent. Modern Turks live in Turkmenistan, in Central Asia. See Turkistan above.

UCH-ARAL -- literally "three islands," place-name in Central Asia. Unidentified.

UCH-ART -- literally "three passes," place-name. Unidentified.

UCH-SU -- literally "three rivers," names or place unidentified.

UCH-TASH -- literally "three stones," place-name. Unidentified.

UCH-TURFAN -- name of town, met in Sintszyan, China, by river Kokshaal.

UIGURS -- one of the Turkish-tongued tribes. In the VIII-XI centuries they founded a strong government in Kashgaria. Depending in whether they settled in the mountains or on the plains, these peoples adopted either a migratory or a non-migratory way of life. The settled ones right up to the XIX cent. bore that general name in the towns of eastern Turlistan. Migratory tribes travelled round Central Asia to the Seven Rivers and the Ill valley. In the middle of the XVIII cent. as a result of the conquest of Kashgaria by the Manchurian government, during the Tsin dynasty, the Uigurs scattered into the territory of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kirghizia, also to Sintszyan.

UIHURS -- a gathering of tribes from the II--V cent. on the territory of present northern Kirghizia. In the first quarter of the V cent. they settled in Central Tien Shan, where they lived right up to the VIII cent. Uihurs are to found among Kirghiz, Kazakhs, Uzbeks.

ULU-BEL -- literally "great pass," place-name, mountain range. Unknown.

URGUN -- name of place or river, maybe the Orkun. See under O.

USHAGAR -- place-name, or name of river. Unidentified.

ZUBUN -- in the epic, a military group among the Kalmaks. This name was the battle-cry of the woman warrior knight-Kalmak Saikal.

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MANAS

Volume 2

Translated into English by

Walter May

Format 84x108¹/32. Number of copies printed: 2000. Order N 6051.

**Avenue Chui, 180. Bishkek, 720000. Kirghiz Branch of
International Centre "Traditional Cultures and Enviroments".**

Str. Navoi, 30. Tashkent, 700129. Tashkent Printing Corporation.

797

