

8

M 24

# MANAS

THE GREAT CAMPAIGN





# MANAS

**The Great Campaign**  
**Kirghiz heroic epos**



**Translated by**  
**WALTER MAY**



1164  
PROJECT MANAGER IS MR. RUSTAN RAKHMANALIEV, PUBLISHER

**Editors:**

*Andrew Wiget (U.S.A.)  
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

**SPONSORS ARE:**

**PRESIDENT OF THE UIGUR  
ASSOCIATION, I.GABBASOV**

**"SAKR": FIRM PRESIDENT, A.AMANKULOV**

**ACADEMICIAN R.RAKHMANALIEV**

**MANAS: The Great Campaign: Kirghiz heroic epos / Translated  
by Walter May. M.-B., 1999. - 368 p.**

ISBN 5-7261-0058-1



**"MANAS" - OUR SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION**

The ending of the 20th century and the approaching beginning of the 21st has appeared for the epic poem "Manas" as a new landmark in the process of its thousand years of existence; an epoch, if one might express it so, of informational renaissance, a significant period in history, in fate, in the comprehension of that grandiose epic creation, a renaissance dating from the industrial phase of the development of modern society, and what must specially underlined, a rebirth in conditions of democratic, post-Soviet rule. Also, the fact that this "Manas" renaissance attained its present apogee in the illumination of Russian culture, which we closely and fruitfully got used to, from the end of the 19th cent. onwards, with its first steps in the science of Turkology, with its first written fragments of the epic, in the Russian tongue, which undoubtedly played a decisive role. The resurrection of Manas today flows on in direct cooperation with the Russian language, making possible the translation of the great epic into other world languages.

Europe and Asia have always been an arena of possible components in the history and culture of Russian and Turkish-tongued peoples, through the sweep of many centuries. Finding itself between the Mediterranean and Far Eastern hearths of world civilization, Euroasia held in itself the springs of East and West. Here, in the foundations of Euroasian spiritual civilization goes Manas, showing itself as a grandiose story of past times and events, all of them engraved in monumental forms, in clumps of mythological thinking-transformed in one's inner world into boiling expressions of feelings and of passions in aral-poetical recitative form. Manas is a concentration of will, ideas and thoughts in time, and in the geographical space of a whole nation. The triumph of victory, and the bitterness of defeat, the reflection of the dialectics of existence in the actions of heroic personalities, embodying eternal, unquenchable dreams of the folk about freedom and independence, accompanying an amazing account of human fates, activities, characters, tragic conflicts, meditations about the meaning and purpose of mans life earth, ponderings leading to eternal universal findings of the spirit, to searches for moral truths



leading to humane understanding, to problems of human parameters as well.

In this sense Manas is meaningful, actual, and factual today, though scarcely the most archaic story of epic poetry.

Here the hopes of the Kirghizian folk have come true Manas is at the zenith of popular fame, but fate did not by any means always smile on him, on his lengthy road through the centuries. At various times there have been moments of sharpest ethno-political struggle around Manas, in order to hurt this work of genius into the abyss of history, to remain there for ever silent. So reactionary forces acted, and still act everywhere, genetically hating the spirit of nobility and truth, the spirit of the people's love and unity. So it was in the past, in the period of the Oirat yoke, in the 15th-17th centuries, when Manas-reciters were put to tormenting death, lashed between the tails of wild horses, and torn asunder. There were other means, but with the same purpose later – to kill this still unforgotten epic in the well-remembered Stalin years. Manas was declared to be anti-popular, feudal in nature, and anti-working-class, and its defenders were hurled beneath the wheels of the petiless ideological machine of those days. I would remark, in passing, that besides this at all times, in the middle ages, and later, even quite recently, nationalistic collaborators have been found who have betrayed Manas for the sake of avaricious aims, bowing and scraping before governmental powers. Well then, that was the history of some, that was their very nature.

Today on our earth there is another epoch, more democratic, open to the path of national rebirth, open to the way to a new universal civilization. How far are we able to act in this new spiral of development, practice will show. We stand before the face of a merciless testing by history. As always in such circumstances the spirit of the nation mobilizes its past experience, gains a second breath, consolidates itself before the face of a menacingly complicated historical situation, unites, gets nearer to its inner self, also in the process of integration with the surrounding world. In our century, smitten by dangerous warriors in ethno-social shake-ups, unity and mutual patience is the most important factor in the fate of all peoples, of any land, on any continent, for nobody must suppose that they will remain untouched if world disorder comes to threaten their very existence.

Along with that, such a phenomena as Manas serves the inflowing energy of the development and accumulation of culture, yes, namely that culture in the widest sense of the word, for culture is the

highest goal, the highest sense of existence and progress among mankind. Other goals, other missions do not exist, they cannot be attained. All that goes on are discoveries in technology, or as they say now "know-how" – in the final analysis that one same highest ideal – the endless perfection of man as a thinking individual in the Universe, the endless multiplication of intellect, and the potential of all doers of good. Every nation brings to this its contribution. Upon that this world depends.

Manas is our spiritual foundation. Not only Manas. There is a whole list of epics running alongside. We are the possessors of the richest epic in heritage, which by the will of history bears within itself signs of eternity, signs of humanism, and nobility of spirit. Speaking of this, I should like, in conclusion, to recite one unique poem, which, by the way, is for Kirghizians an almost daily song. Along with great epics there exists a laconic genre of good wishes and oaths, or promises. There are many such, mere short moments, where they are compared to Manas. But everyone has its own sense. Here is one of them – the Oath of the Sower. Grain, rain, and fresh air again! All bearing some sings of eternity. First elements in our life. The Sower – the grower of bread, but that grain means bread for you and me, for contemporary folk. Who knows just where the tractor ploughs the field – who knows just where the combine machine collects the harvest, who knows where it bears that grain afterwards? You go into a shop, or to the bazaar, and buy your prepared loaf – that is the usual way among people. But it was earlier still when some peasant person saw the sowing and growing of grain as his calling in life. It used to be considered a sacred action. So imagine yourself in those earlier days, peasants ploughing by hand and preparing the soil for sowing. See here what he thought at that most responsible time in his toil. I offer you this Oath of the Sower.

... I stride along the furrows in the field.  
With outstretched hand the grain to the soil I yield,  
To left; to right, all round. In waiting ground  
The seeds sunk into sun-warmed soil are found.  
Here is a handful for the orphaned child  
Here is a handful for cripples, aged, sick and mild.  
Here's for the hungry, lost in dry wastes nearby  
Here's for the merchant, the bard, the beggar's eye  
Here's for the little field mouse, a few at least.  
Here's for the ant, the bird, the passing beast.



Here's for you, and for him, and maybe for me.  
Here's for the family, and for the babies three...  
May our highly respected protector, Diykan,  
Help me to finish this foil which began.  
Pitches deep I will dig across the field,  
I won't let my grain without water yield.  
I won't let my grain be choked by the weed,  
I won't let any rascal steal it, indeed,  
I myself will guard it, safe and sound.  
From each grain let a hundred, a thousand be found!  
Yes, may respected Diykan help me in my toil.  
Yes, may he still be protector of the soil!

This is a manifesto from our forefathers: with it we stand before  
ourselves, and before the world.

*Chingiz Aitmatov.*

# MANAS

## The Great Campaign



Këkëtei's death feast passed off thus:<sup>1</sup>  
 Most distinguished was grey-maned Manas.<sup>2</sup>  
 Chief of the feast was old Koshoi,  
 All the folk were in his employ.  
 Bogatir Manas, no doubt,  
 All those present ordered about –  
 Whether 'twere heathens, or Mussulmen,  
 All the same he swore at them.  
 Made no difference – old or young,  
 10 Stung them all with his sharp tongue.  
 Scolded them, with rough reproach.  
 'Gainst the snobs did he encroach,<sup>3</sup>  
 Many snubs served all around.  
 Humbled were the proud ones found.  
 Heavy verbal drubbing they knew –  
 Hurling Manas their curses too!  
 How could they get even, then?  
 How destroy him, and his forty men?  
 How could they gain sufficient power?  
 20 How hot they got in that death-feast hour!  
 Angrily they discussed plans then,  
 Those Kirghizian noblemen.  
 Squabbles and wrangles soon broke out,  
 'Gainst each other they started to shout.  
 With them Koshoi, of the Katagan crew,  
 And the Kipchak, the bold Urbyu,  
 With hoarse cries went dashing about,  
 Saying the death-feast had faded out,  
 And instead had led to a fray –  
 30 That your uncle Koshoi<sup>4</sup> saw straightway.  
 He went in, and thus said he:  
 "Oh, my children, dear to me,  
 Just remember, people of mine,  
 That we come from a Turkish line!  
 Just take care you don't start to fight.  
 These memorial feasts, by right,  
 Let Manas arrange as he will –  
 With Manas we can easily deal.  
 If you agree, and by me are led,  
 40 If I step forth, with our banner o'erhead,  
 You will lose nothing, so don't lose hope.  
 Let Manas at the feasts find scope –  
 With Manas we can easily deal,  
 But if from every side we reel,

Plunging our folk into deep distress,  
 We shall bring joy to the strangers, I guess –  
 Give them control over us!" he said,  
 "So let their maids be our women instead,  
 So let their women be dust, every one,  
 50 So let their skull-caps kalpaks\* become.  
 Let their survivors make peace with us then!"  
 So spoke Koshoi to his listening men.  
 Thus the memorial feasts went well –  
 Guests returned to the homes where they dwell.<sup>5</sup>  
 Beaten was he who had struck at Manas.  
 Plotting revenge he went home thus,  
 Cursed was the one who had cursed him too.  
 Those who heard curses kept silent, not few.  
 Those who heard Koshoi's words, as they passed,  
 60 Thought: "It were better to fight to the last!"  
 They were full of vexation amiss.  
 Some of them groaned, but others felt bliss.  
 Some of them songs began to sing,  
 Listened to chatter of those on the wing...  
 So the memorial feast passed in peace,  
 Each did his best to be at his ease.  
 So a whole year then passed away,  
 Twelve whole months, to the very day  
 When the geese came flying in,  
 70 When the spring was due to begin...  
 Noblemen, and leaders of folk,  
 Those whose minds were clear when they spoke,  
 Once more to Koshoi then came.  
 Conversations began again.  
 All Kirghizians, not a few,  
 To their promises stay true –  
 In the battle do not retreat,  
 Till they're dead stay on their feet.  
 All Kirghiz stand up for their right,  
 80 Will not let by a single slight.  
 Bide with them who side with them,  
 Scorn all proud and haughty men.  
 We all hold our honour high,  
 For its sake we gladly die.  
 Into battle, armed we go,  
 Forty tribes against the foe.<sup>6</sup>  
 Feed our sheep on the mountain crest,  
 All in harmony with the rest.  
 We to many do service thus.



90 Now nine tribes are left of us.  
 Having decided on Kēkētēi's feast,  
 Hustle and bustle has not ceased.  
 There were Kazakhs among us too –  
 They were tormented by feasts anew.  
 Sons of Oguz were scorned by Manas.  
 If they had known his powers thus,  
 They would have slain him at last year's feast,  
 Or have found their own death, at least.  
 You have told us: "All will be well!"  
 100 We believed what you had to tell.  
 You have said that blood-feuds would end,<sup>7</sup>  
 So, will you keep your promise, dear friend?"  
 Fourteen Beys from Kirghizia there  
 Said all this for Koshoi to hear.  
 Our good father Koshoi replied:  
 "Now enough, my children!" he cried,  
 "For behind you have left Altai.  
 Many their cattle drive here, by the by,  
 Curse me for making bad feasts, and why?"  
 110 "Where is your word – let bygones fly!"  
 "Hey, you old ones, don't sadden me thus.  
 God, the only One, made Manas;  
 He made him as he is, not I!  
 Grumbling, rumbling, won't get you by!  
 With old Koshoi don't joke, like a clown.  
 Listen to me, and then calm down.  
 If you won't listen, well, gather strength,  
 Go into conflict with him at length.  
 Challenge him, phalange him, cut off his head –  
 120 Why the devil blame me instead?  
 If you join together to fight,  
 If you manage the matter all right,  
 Then go back from whence you came –  
 But you won't do it, all the same,  
 Thoughtlessly you will risk your neck –  
 All in vain – your plans he will wreck!  
 If I tell you 'Leave him alone!'  
 Then you suddenly go on your own –  
 He will o'erthrow you, and all will die.  
 130 Lost all round your defenders will lie!  
 Don't run on so into so much woe!"  
 When they heard Koshoi speaking so,  
 Then the thirteen Beys went their way.  
 Only others decided to stay.

Akbai, Mambet, decided to stay.  
 Agish, Kodzhosh decided to stay.  
 Sultan, Kokkoën decided to stay,  
 Gzhediger\*, Chegish decided to stay,  
 Those seven Beys decided to stay.  
 140 Thirteen arrived in the land of Tēshtyuk,  
 Came to Dēgēn-Kipchaks,\* just look –  
 Paths to Balik's\* high crest they took,  
 And to the foothills of Alai,\*  
 And Angir's\* water-meadows nearby,  
 And to the shores of the river Keiyu,  
 Sari-Kol's\* deep valley too.  
 There Tēshtyuk laid out a feast.  
 Many knights came, to say the least,  
 And gave over to all kinds of play,  
 150 And they said 'mid themselves that day:  
 "At Kēkētēi's memorial feast,  
 We were shamed, and far from pleased.  
 What a torment that day we deemed!  
 Old Koshoi had been bribed, it seemed.  
 He deceived us, made us his toy –  
 From that Manas and old Koshoi,  
 Clearly we can expect nothing good –  
 So 'gainst Manas we must be stood.  
 We shall meet him, face to face,  
 160 We shall capture his meeting-place.  
 With gathered strength we'll trample them down,  
 Or shall he make of each a clown?  
 With gathered strength we'll cast them aside.  
 He will not like to be defied.  
 He will not give us a chance of flight,  
 When we all come into his sight;  
 Let us all go together grim,  
 Let us all at once fall on him!  
 Our fathers trod where his father trod:  
 170 Are we not all of us slaves of God?\*"   
 Having suffered his sneers and his scorn,  
 Shall we depart, and not sound our horn?  
 No, 'twould not do, should we turn back!  
 Here, from the elders, comes Muzburchak.  
 We, the offended, together have come,  
 You, Tēshtyuk, are Eleman's son.  
 From the Eshteks\* comes Dzhamgirchi,  
 From the Kazakhs, Kēkchē we see.  
 You don't forgive offence, anyway!"



180 Everyone said what he had to say.  
 None was silent, every one cried...  
 So a joint plan did they decide.  
 Stood around, no solution found.  
 Only Urbyu, the Kipchak,\* made no sound.  
 Not a word did he answer back.  
 Then Muzburchak, and Kekchē, the Kazakh,  
 Turned on Urbyu, and both of them teased:  
 "At Keketei's memorial feast,  
 You got a whip-lash on your head –  
 190 We were ashamed of you, blushing red!  
 You scarce held back, like a bad-tempered boy.  
 For the sake of old white-beard Koshoi,  
 When all the people began to shout,  
 You not a single word let out.  
 Why did you keep so silent, in vain?  
 If we all 'gainst Manas go again,  
 If we decide to get our own back,  
 If we suddenly make an attack,  
 If we suddenly urge on our men,  
 200 Will you be for, or against us then?  
 "Answer us!" each one of them cries.  
 "Let our leader be one who is wise!  
 Not his own family rule, indeed,  
 But over all the Khans take the lead!  
 That Manas – a terror is he –  
 If you act worthily, glad we shall be.  
 Make your reply now, that is your task –  
 Answer our question – 'tis all we ask.  
 If you act badly, we'll curse you thus!  
 210 That Manas is related to us.  
 Noble Urbyu, now say what you'll do,  
 Everyone here now depends upon you!"  
 One said: "Urbyu is from Kara-Kirghiz,\*  
 Head of the feast among Kipchaks he is.  
 Taz is his father's name, you see,  
 From Urumchi\*, and a rich man is he.  
 Frankly, Urbyu is friends with Manas –  
 Met him last spring, they agreed on it thus."  
 Keeping the Beys and their question in sight,  
 220 He did not dare to say "I'll not fight!"  
 Keeping the Beys and their question in sight,  
 He did not dare to say "I'll rake flight!"  
 So he thought: "Let the cowards fly –  
 Let him who stays hold his honour high.

Let the unworthy ones break their word,  
 Let the noble ones' oaths be heard.  
 Let them show courage, who won't turn back.  
 Let him who wishes Manas attack!  
 Let him who's scared stand by, and wait,  
 230 If it is so predestined by fate.  
 Let them wreck Manas, if they can!"  
 Bold Urbyu to speak began:  
 "Do not count on my aid in the lists –  
 They will conquer, whom God assists.  
 Seeking revenge, don't run from your host.  
 Seeking revenge, then don't brag nor boast.  
 Don't say that you will hew off his head,  
 Don't say you'll spill his blood – you'll be dead!  
 I am bare-headed, my village is poor,  
 240 And my relations all hate me, what's more!"  
 So said that sharp-worded one, Urbyu,  
 Known for his excellent eloquence too,  
 By Manas, the hawk and knight,<sup>8</sup>  
 Who did great deeds for the people's right;  
 He is the most blood-thirsty of men.  
 He is protected by forty chiltēn.\*  
 Allah gives him all the help he needs.  
 Allah brings success to his deeds.  
 Sixty thousand soldiers has he,  
 250 Generous to them all seems to be!  
 Fortress walls he built, high and wide,  
 Hawk Manas<sup>9</sup> has his nest inside.  
 Four tower walls rise high in the air.  
 He is lord of the fortress there!  
 Every day his head grows higher,  
 And he verily blazes like fire.  
 Seeing that he grows strong in this wise,  
 All the Khans hide their hate from his eyes.  
 Trying to scatter the soil 'neath his feet,  
 260 None of us Beys can with him compete!  
 We meet in counsel, and wonder all –  
 Why is he so appalling and tall?  
 Why so helpless are we 'fore such force?  
 We should set him upon his horse,  
 Send him to fight our distant foes.  
 We should be famous then, God knows!  
 We should see how Manas strikes his blow,  
 We should see how he shoots from his bow.  
 We should die, if death came our way,



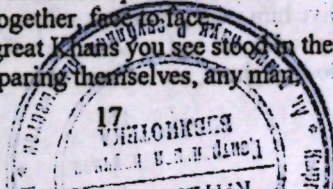
270 Or should share glory with him that day!  
 We should see his battle-axe blow,  
 When he boldly beats down the foe.  
 We should die, if our time had come,  
 Or should soon know how all was done!  
 We shall know nought if we don't do thus.  
 There is no Bey who dare snub Manas!  
 There is no knight who 'gainst him would stand.  
 There is no Khan who would dare lift a hand!  
 In this harsh world, what can you expect –  
 280 There is no man who'd dare to object!  
 In Tēshtyuk Khan's head, it seems,  
 There were many such treasured dreams,  
 How to come to grips with Manas.  
 But six khans, who kept clear of the fuss,  
 Could not find the strength any more:  
 "All you bold Khans held counsel before –  
 Long since have shown your hatred for him,  
 Talked 'mong yourselves, with faces grim.  
 Not having seen him striking in war,  
 290 All you Khans talked it over before.  
 Khan Manas from yourselves you hurled,  
 Spoke of attacking, with banners unfurled.  
 Why in vain hide your forces, then?  
 Has that good-for-nought more village men  
 Called to fight from their homes – is it true?  
 Does he have people who're bolder than you?  
 Does he have more men than you, or less?  
 Does he excel you in manliness?  
 Does someone higher give him support?  
 300 Really, is he of a nobler sort?  
 Since that Manas is so blood-thirsty bold,  
 Skilful, a master, when all is told,  
 If great Allah decides so on high,  
 Can we survive the hour we shall die?  
 How you threatened: 'Come, fight by us here!  
 If you are no true soldier, then fear!  
 If you're a knight, step forth, show your kind!  
 If you're a coward – then stay behind!  
 Hand him a letter, there at his gate –  
 310 Send a herald, and challenge him straight!  
 Let's try to call our warriors here.  
 If he gets scared, he will not appear.  
 If we shame him, revenge he won't take.  
 But if Manas a sally should make,

Out on the road from Kosh-Artish,\*  
 Do us much mischief, more than we wish,  
 If, without hesitation there,  
 Not caring why, or when, or where,  
 That mighty knight 'fore us should appear –  
 320 We'd count him one in a thousand, that's clear!  
 So that his men have no time to unite,  
 Let us divide them, their ranks make light!  
 Hopeless positions they'd then be in,  
 Facing the hordes of Kakanchin.\*  
 Then of his khans we'll mince-meat make,  
 Then from his chiefs their weapons we'll take,  
 Then all his beys we'll grind down to flour,  
 Bind them, blind them, and grind them that hour!  
 Then let Manas such deep shame know,  
 330 Such as he never has dreamed of so!  
 Let us do so, and make him feel  
 Shocked and shaken, from head to heel.  
 Let him remember his shame, and sink!  
 Then that Manas will begin to think:  
 Clearly Kirghiz are angry with me!  
 So let him measure his strength, and see.  
 If by God's will, he should do otherwise,  
 If by God's will, he melts 'fore our eyes,  
 If that Manas should then lose his head,  
 340 And would allow himself to be led –  
 Then we could go with our men to him,  
 And as his guests let him take us in.  
 With all his numerous folk beside,  
 Which are just like an on-flowing tide.  
 With his warriors, swarming like flies,  
 With his elders, and marshals besides.  
 With his people from near and far,  
 With all his khans – well, there you are!  
 Let us go with our hosts of men,  
 350 Let him fall 'neath the weight of them then!  
 Let's descend on all that riff-raff,  
 Cast down his banners, torn from their staff.  
 Let us fill his fort with our men,  
 Bringing him shame, in front of them.  
 Go as guests, but woe to the rest.<sup>10</sup>  
 If seven Khans then do their best,  
 If with their hordes they cover the earth,  
 Left alone, Manas can't step forth.  
 No matter how much land he owns,



360 That blood-sucker will groan in his bones!  
 He'll not be able to feed us all,  
 Then upon his flocks we shall fall.  
 From his yurt a fire we shall make,  
 And, as guests, our own feast thall take.  
 That's the way we shall bring him shame –  
 Taking his horses – that's why we came!  
 Then we shall jeer at him, sneer at him so:  
 "You are to blame for all this, you should know!"  
 Thus we shall lay all the burden on him –  
 370 Once, like an elephant, now growing slim!  
 Oh, that great cunning one, much does he know,  
 But we'll work silent revenge on him so!  
 If he begins to explain things away,  
 If he begins his excuses that day,  
 We shall not listen, his heralds we'll beat,  
 We then shall rob him, and force his retreat.  
 We then that rogue to his garden will drive,  
 Rob that the one who thought himself great,  
 So, that the one who thought himself great,  
 380 Now must experience his bitter fate:  
 We'll dig out wells on the mountain mead,  
 On the hill-side hang cauldrons, indeed.  
 We his four kinds of cattle shall steal,<sup>11</sup>  
 Thus from this madman shall we take our meal!  
 We shall spit at him, sit on his head,  
 We'll get even, and leave him half-dead.  
 If he survives than, all covered in blood,  
 Frowning, and drowning beneath the red flood.  
 With that murderous man of might  
 390 Let's have a merciless, pitiless fight!  
 As foes do, foal-bridles we'll make,  
 From those dispersed their lives we'll take.  
 We shall catch, and seize their herds.  
 If someone comes then, with angry words,  
 We shall knock his brains from his head,  
 Like all the rest, we shall leave him dead!  
 We'll knock the arrogance right out of them,  
 Let their relations mourn for them then.  
 Let us foes rejoice in this way  
 400 Over that blood-loving Lord, we say!  
 We shall show them what we can do.  
 We shall make warriors whimper too.  
 We shall make wives and daughters wail,  
 We shall make mares give a flick to their tail!

We shall unbind what is highly bound,  
 We shall hurl doors and posts to the ground.  
 We shall drive off their herds from the hills,  
 We shall make youngsters bemoan their ills.  
 We shall turn treasures to dust and ash –  
 410 But, first of all, Manas we must smash!  
 So that when we return from there  
 All this his elders must learn to bear.  
 We shall at first Koshoi select –  
 We'll show his old white head respect.  
 But, not having shown us esteem,  
 That one muddle-head, fuddled, I mean,  
 Old Akun, the Afghan Khan,  
 Did not join in when call-up began,  
 Thinking: "Manas is a leopard bold,<sup>12</sup>  
 420 Who, then, at bay such a beast can hold?"  
 All our numberless peasant folk  
 He just treats as though a joke.  
 Doesn't treat them as humans at all.  
 He, who our agreement let fall,  
 He, who his promise does not keep,  
 He who forgets it, and goes to sleep,  
 He who says: 'I did not join with you!'  
 May he be punished 'neath heaven's deep blue.  
 May he 'neath mossy soil lie dead.<sup>13</sup>  
 430 May he be struck by a ball in the head!  
 May he be blasted by fused musket-shot!  
 If your promise you have not forgot,  
 Khans, raise your hands to heaven on high,  
 All of you, sitting with me nearby."  
 So said Urbyu, and a murmur rose thus;  
 All padishahs\* made a frightful fuss.  
 Blessings they all began to pronounce,  
 Brought in a light-grey mare, with a flounce.  
 One with crescent-shaped hooves they brought,<sup>14</sup>  
 440 Saying: "If you don't keep vows, as you ought,  
 You, like this mare, will not go unscathed!"  
 Up to their elbows in mare's blood they bathed,  
 Plunging their arms deep into her blood –  
 Thus sacred vows unforgotten then stood,  
 Thus all those Khans found many a care  
 As they swore sacred promises there.  
 Standing together, face to face  
 All those great Khans you see stood in their place.  
 And, not sparing themselves, any man





450 Big as a horse's head, raised the Koran.  
 Which to sanctify oaths they brought in.  
 Down on their knees, they swore not to sin.  
 All were agreed: "Send word to Manas,  
 See what he does, and how answers us.  
 If he says come, we shall go to him there.  
 If he says nothing, has nought to declare,  
 Then say that we all invite him back here,  
 Also his knights, so he'll have nought to fear!"  
 Thus 'twas decided to bring plans about;  
 460 True, the Khans found no other way out.  
 There remained nothing else suiting their book.  
 Eleman's son, the bold Teshtyuk,  
 As a herald one warrior chose,  
 And Dzhamgirchi of the Eshteks arose,  
 And then another herald chose he -  
 From the Kazakhs, Kekchē, you see.  
 Chose another as herald too.  
 Then one you know, your smooth-tongued Urbyu,  
 He chose another suitable man,  
 470 Then Sandzhibek, from Andizhan,\*  
 He chose a herald to join the pack -  
 Buudayik's son, Muzburchak.  
 And he himself chose one other yet,  
 And, if you looked at this whole set,  
 You found them fearless, fighting men.  
 Serious speakers, all of them.  
 Most clearly-minded, and steady-eyed -  
 Such stuck to truth, and never lied,  
 Some strong, and ready to move straightway.  
 480 Some bold and brave, whom no foe could slay.  
 Some mighty-muscled as you could find,  
 Some sharp of tongue, and quick of mind.  
 Such were those messengers chosen then,  
 Such were those envoys, the best of men.  
 "If straight from here you travel thus,  
 You pass through timeless lands of Talas\*.  
 There lives Manas, who calls himself Khan,  
 But if you meet this mighty man,  
 Don't show him special respect, like some lord,  
 490 Don't be afraid, as if lions had roared -  
 Just go straight up to him on your course,  
 Give him your greetings, still on your horse.  
 If you arrive, and at home he's found,  
 Go straight in, wave your whips around.<sup>15</sup>

Do not hesitate, show no fear,  
 Speak out boldly, brave and clear.  
 If he replies in a haughty way,  
 Leave that lion, ride home that day.  
 We are sending you to Manas -  
 500 Meet him, greet him, speak with him thus.  
 If by chance he should raise a hand,  
 Beat it down, and don't let him stand.  
 Beat down two, for each one of you,  
 So that his tribe is halved all through.  
 So rip his bowels, his spleen tear out,  
 If you need help, just give a loud shout.  
 If before him you do not quail,  
 Then conversation with him will not fail.  
 Tell him: 'Manas, you've become a Lord -  
 510 Like a full lake is your treasury stored -  
 You have become a big rich knight,  
 Round your head the bluebird's in flight!<sup>16</sup>  
 We invite you to visit us now,  
 Or we could come to you, anyhow,  
 Take us as guests, make us welcome here!  
 See a tribe who another God fear.  
 Come, give your consent to this, do!  
 If the Chinese are opposed to you,  
 If there are certain things to be done,  
 520 We Kalmaks are behind you as one!  
 Many foes await - we'll give aid!  
 Speak with him so, and don't be afraid.  
 Otherwise, you must make a retreat."  
 So six Khans then rose to their feet,  
 Brought out the steeds, their saddles raised higher,  
 Robed their riders in golden attire,  
 Said goodbye to their heralds so,  
 Off on their road all ready to go.  
 Six bold youngsters besat their steeds  
 530 Satisfied, they rode off on their deeds.  
 They, indeed, were begirded with dreams,  
 Rode by Kiysha-Too\*, and its streams,  
 Skirted the mountain on one side,  
 Then through the river Keiyya they ride.  
 On they reared on their risky route,  
 Dared the desert of wild Namut,  
 Then they travelled along Kitmir.\*  
 And when seven days passed clear,  
 Came to a night resting-place, Dzherken.\*



540 In the morning, those bold young men  
 To Kashgar\* descended then.  
 Horses were tired, if not the men.  
 There the steeds were soon re-shod –  
 Leaner now in the road they trod.  
 They had lost a lot of their fat,  
 But they were better off for that!  
 When their shoes had been renewed,  
 On the next day new roads they viewed.  
 They crossed the pass Chakmak\* as well,  
 550 Then they skirted the Chatir-Kel.  
 Crossed the river Narin\* at the ford,  
 Passed through Dzhumgal\*, and never a word,  
 Through Susamir\* they had to fare –  
 But we shall leave those envoys there...  
 And about that Leopard Manas  
 Much must be said, so listen thus –  
 You'll be surprised, maybe, when you hear:  
 He, in his fortress, with gold gates sheer,  
 Sat in the courtyard with Kanikei.  
 560 On the right of Manas that day  
 Thirty-two Khans were seated thus,  
 On the left, by the side of Manas,  
 Sat all his forty Knights, that's that!  
 On his golden throne, there he sat.  
 Bluebird of happiness perched on his hat.  
 He was disturbed, in spite of that.  
 He was just counting up his powers  
 All around him – it took him hours.  
 With their steel swords held in their hands,  
 570 There his host unblinking stands.  
 Six thousand warriors standing still.  
 See, the fort's like a brazen hill.  
 Ditches like iron troughs besides.  
 Mightily does the Khan's fort rise.  
 Forged from metal frown its gates,  
 Rich in ornamented plates,  
 And behind them, in the yard,  
 Twelve good, servants stand on guard.  
 Five young sons of Beys there stand,  
 580 Seven with headsmen's axes in hand.  
 People who saw their threatening look  
 Lost their sense, to their heels they took.  
 Hacked off noses, and hewed off ears  
 Hung round their necks, like beads, it appears.

Fierce and furious was their mien,  
 Chain-mail shirts on them were seen.  
 Take a look – no pity you see –  
 Merciless, icy as can be.  
 Seven such headsmen are standing there.  
 590 God thus punished their parents, it's clear.  
 Five sons of Beys all stood on guard,  
 When the heralds came into the yard.  
 God made them fear such fury, you see,  
 That was no place for a mortal to be!  
 That was no grave from which they could rise!  
 Having looked such men in the eyes,  
 That was no stream cross which you could swim,  
 Even if you had a boat to sit in.  
 Heralds look on, with sagging jaw –  
 600 That's what those envoys before them saw.  
 They did not dare to enter the yard.  
 Not knowing what to do, they breathed hard.  
 To Manas then, how could they go?  
 How to approach him, they did not know!  
 How could they come and deliver their speech?  
 How, in confusion, their goal could they reach?  
 Nostrils were tense, and brows a-frown,  
 Soon the sweat came running down.  
 They just stood outside and gazed –  
 610 Facing them dumb, dark walls were raised.  
 They did not dare to enter those gates,  
 Where, inside, a fine garden waits.  
 They had no power to speak, so look,  
 They stood there long as meat takes to cook.<sup>17</sup>  
 Then the head-guard, a fierce one too,  
 From the Kazakhs, named Dzhoorunchu,  
 Caught a glimpse of those six by the way,  
 Guessed at once that envoys were they.  
 Turned and ran to inform Manas,  
 620 Dzhoorunchu went swiftly thus,  
 And soon came to the threshold so.  
 Sultan Manas – a wolf for the foe –<sup>18</sup>  
 Cast upon him a look or two,  
 And then said: "Well, Dzhoorunchu,  
 What can I do, my good fellow, for you?  
 What is your wish?" he asked him too.  
 Silent, he waited his reply.  
 Of all those present, standing by,  
 None dared to speak to Manas but he,



630 So he persisted quite openly:  
 "O, my master Sultan!" said he,  
 Leopard Manas, as fierce as can be,  
 If upon us you chance to frown,  
 Then it seems a blizzard comes down.  
 If you speak but one angry word  
 We faint with fear, no more is heard...  
 You bring great joy, O master, for us,  
 If you but smile, and gladden us thus.  
 Then it would seem the sun is seen.

640 If you but mutter one word of spleen,  
 Then in fear we all fall dead.  
 Well, at the gates I saw people," he said,  
 "I did not know them - I was amazed,  
 And at their horses, first I gazed.  
 Muscles like bulls, like camels' their thighs,  
 Slender legs, and long manes likewise.  
 Stout in the groin, and withers wide,  
 War-horses from Kashgar, undenied!  
 I saw their horses, and I was perplexed -

650 Shins like wild rams, and like camels' their necks!  
 Then of those brave young men I took note -  
 Thick-lipped, and eyes behind slits remote.<sup>19</sup>  
 They are not those one could easily fight,  
 They are not like some known mountain height,  
 Which one could soon overcome, you see.  
 My dear Sultan, it seems to me,  
 They are not of the tribes I know,  
 But they are heralds, I take it so!  
 Tired-out horses. They may be spies..."

660 Bold Manas then screwed up his eyes,  
 And his rough whiskers he gave a toss thus,  
 And he laughed aloud, our Manas:  
 "If you think so, dear Dzhoorunchu,  
 I've heard the chatter from caravans too.  
 I've heard the talk of our guests from afar,  
 Telling of who these young giants are -  
 Noblemen they, who in counsel sat,  
 Wanted to squash me - I heard that!  
 Clearly these are their spies who've arrived,

670 Cunning plans for my downfall devised...  
 If that is so, dear Dzhoorunchu,  
 Show them your boldness and manliness too -  
 Go and invite them to kindly come in,  
 Let them see the proud status you win:

No evil words, no quarrels, no curse...  
 So that they find no grave here, or worse...  
 Let them feel troubled a little at heart...  
 But if they think they are bold men apart -  
 Let them as heralds before the Lord stand,  
 Sent to that heavenly far-distant land!."

680 Such were the words to his servant he said:  
 "Lord, be it so!" he replied. Off he sped!  
 Leaving Manas, fulfilling his word,  
 Bowed, stepping backward, away from his lord.  
 Loudly upon his great war-drum he beat.  
 Those whom he summoned all rose to their feet.  
 Twelve thousand warriors, then swiftly teemed,  
 Stepped forth together, one moment it seemed.  
 One thousand fighters were all dressed in red.

690 If you but knew of the foes they left dead!  
 One thousand fighters were all dressed in blue.  
 On they came seething, like rain-worms in dew!<sup>20</sup>  
 Ants in an ant-heap, they out numbered them.  
 One thousand fighters in yellow dressed then,  
 All in their ranks and their rows standing tight.  
 One thousand fighters were all dressed in white,  
 Bearing their weapons, a spear, or an axe,  
 Bows hung behind them, upon their broad backs.  
 Thousands of fighters there came, more and more.

700 All then stepped forth, with a thunderous roar,  
 Raising around them a great cloud of dust,  
 There, in the gloom, with their guns forward thrust.  
 Gates of the fortress were opened for them:  
 Forward they came, those twelve thousand men.  
 Muskets they bore were all polished and bright,  
 Steel swords were swinging, in belts hanging tight.  
 Then those six heralds, with nowhere to hide,  
 Soon were surrounded on every side.  
 Warriors swiftly encircled them round,

710 Fear on their faces was finally found.  
 They were enveloped at once on the square,  
 All the six spies, sent as messengers there.  
 Just take a look at a few fighters more,  
 Blue steel blades in their bold hands they bore.  
 Clubs, fringed with horse-hair, raised to the skies,  
 Ready to pierce now, the spear-heads all rise.  
 Some bearing ribbons of red, white, or blue,  
 So they encircle the envoys anew.  
 Nearer and nearer they ride up to them,



- 720 Banners a-waving from staff-head to hem.  
 Slanting their spear-heads, prepared for a tiff,  
 Still coming nearer, they scare the spies stiff.  
 Just take a look at a few of them more –  
 Loading their muskets are they, and what for?  
 Lighting their fuses, all ready to fire,<sup>21</sup>  
 Butts to their shoulders, and muzzles raised higher.  
 Just take a look at a few of them more –  
 Swords from the sheaths they swept, and what for?  
 Well, to be ready to hack the spies down,
- 730 Eyes sternly fixed, on their foreheads a frown.  
 Just take a look at a few of them more –  
 Halberds are raised, and you know what that's for!  
 Ready to thrust in the breast, or the side,  
 Nearer and nearer towards them they ride!  
 All in bright armour, those warriors then,  
 Finally came up alongside of them.  
 Then they were sorry, those envoys caught there,  
 Now that misfortune hung round on the air.  
 They could not look anywhere, anywise,
- 740 They did not dare then to open their eyes.  
 God surely punished those messenger men,  
 Standing stock still, not daring to breathe,  
 Thinking that now this old earth they would leave.  
 Still with closed eyes they were standing there then,  
 Muttering prayers, with Amen! and Amen!  
 To the knights greeting "Salam!" none replied.  
 To their "Good health!", "God be thanked!" none cried.<sup>22</sup>  
 So then they pointed their muzzles at them,
- 750 Fuses all ready to finish those men!  
 Stirring no finger, those messengers stood.  
 Drum at the gates drubbed as long as it could.  
 Slowly they opened the gates on ahead,  
 Then on the roadway the flowers were spread.  
 Then by each bridle, two body-guards stood,  
 So the six envoys should meet only good.  
 They were no elders, but younger brave men,  
 They were the chieftains of whole armies then,  
 Leaders of twelve thousand warriors true:
- 760 From the Kazakhs came Dzhö-orunchu,  
 To-orulchu, Kiygil and Bëgël,  
 Then Kerben, Shingi's son, as well,  
 Then Dërbën, push-pusher was he,  
 Then Bëgël, like a wolf he could be.<sup>23</sup>

- Skilful Irchiuul, Bezuul,  
 Then Tazbaimak, no coward, no fool.  
 Swiftly their horses bore them along,  
 At their waists their swords, long and strong.  
 Helmets on heads were gleaming bright,
- 770 War-horses willingly surged on with might.  
 Body-guards, holding each messenger's rein,  
 Tugged them tight, again and again.  
 Twelve great chieftains came forward thus –  
 Thinking that one of them must be Manas,  
 Those six heralds, those messenger-men,  
 First of all gave their greetings then,  
 But to their words received no reply.  
 Did you see how the knights rode high?  
 Then the Khan's drum started beating nearby.
- 780 From musket-muzzles did sparks then fly.  
 Twelve thousand muskets were fired that day.  
 All together they thundered away.  
 Clouds of smoke rose, dull and dense,  
 All around were deafened, lost sense.  
 Walls of houses fell down nearby.  
 Balls went flying high in the sky.  
 Taken with fright, the messengers there,  
 Trembling on their steeds sat in fear.  
 Then, like hail, those balls fell back,
- 790 On their heads came down with a crack!  
 Down came those bullets of bluish lead:  
 Those who saw them felt half-dead.  
 There, between the earth and the skies,  
 Gathered the dust, which closed all eyes.  
 Four thousand warriors on the right,  
 Four thousand there on the left in sight,  
 Four thousand warriors standing behind,  
 Moved from their places, the Court to find.  
 Through the gates they went galloping on,
- 800 Everyone galloped, till all were gone.  
 Still encircled on every side,  
 Forward too did the messengers ride.  
 Inside the walls they drove them on,  
 So that they galloped, every one.  
 They could not enter the Castle all,  
 Those twelve thousand within the wall.  
 When through the gates the messengers passed,  
 What a long road they saw at last,  
 And, on either side of the way,



810 Just as if ready them all to slay,  
 With their naked swords in their hand,  
 Waving them fiercely, there they stand.  
 Six Beys who saw the envoys then  
 Started to welcome the messenger-men.  
 To their welcome they got no reply –  
 None look on them approving nearby.  
 Fifteen men, who noticed all this,  
 Earlier having agreed, that is,  
 Fifteen men, all used to such deeds,  
 820 Having prepared, galloped up on their steeds  
 Circled the messengers, round and about.  
 They had not even time to shout,  
 Ere from their steeds they dragged them down,  
 And in such torment they started to drown –  
 One took the right arm, and tugged on that,  
 One took the left arm, and lugged on that,  
 One from behind began to pull,  
 Each of them with energy full.  
 Each one dragged them, here and there...  
 830 Those poor fellows were lost, I declare!  
 Murmured: "Help us, Allah, now!"  
 Making them yet run faster, somehow,  
 Giving no hope that their souls they might save,  
 Each one a further prod then gave,  
 Driving them faster along the road...  
 Those poor heralds, beneath such a load,  
 Were scared stiff completely at last,  
 And in confusion, all limits passed,  
 Lost their senses and reason at that,  
 840 And, exhausted, they just fell flat...<sup>24</sup>  
 To the head-quarters of lion Manas  
 Those same warriors dragged them thus,  
 And with threats made them enter there,  
 Pushed them all forward, gave them a glare,  
 Pressed their heads right down to the ground,  
 Threatened them: "You in hell will be found,  
 If your prayers you soon do not say!"  
 Left them, lying face-down that way.  
 So, in torment they lay at their feet.  
 850 "Bet them welcome the Khans they meet,  
 Then let the Devil work them all grief!  
 Let them meet and greet our chief,  
 Only after, if they still stand,  
 Let them pass to the heavenly land!"

Thus Kirgil cried to all around.  
 Then the envoys, face to the ground,  
 They compelled to raise each head,  
 Made them turn over then instead.  
 When again they opened their eyes,  
 860 Three-sided daggers they saw with surprise,  
 Held in six executioners' grasp,  
 Standing behind them. They gave a gasp,  
 When such a fearful sight they saw.  
 Then the envoys were touched on the raw:  
 "Better say 'Salaam!' to our Khan!"  
 Angrily they demanded each man.  
 Those poor envoys were now half-dead,  
 Eyes were popping out of each head,  
 All were trembling, deep in their veins,  
 870 And they all had beclouded brains.  
 They just could not utter "Salaam!" –  
 Tongues would not work, they couldn't keep calm.  
 Prayers on their lips, they looked all around,  
 And in the Khan's head-quarters were found.  
 Khans there were standing, in golden robes clad:  
 If you looked close, this impression you had:  
 Each was a giant, worth thousands, it's true.  
 To their "Salaam!" no reply: "Peace to you!"  
 With those newcomers, wherever you seek,  
 880 No single Khan would be ready to speak.  
 For in reply then, no answer he'd hear,  
 No one would speak to such swine, that was clear!  
 If someone asked: "From whence do you come?"  
 They would just stand tongue-tied, as though dumb,  
 Looking half-dead, and hanging their head,  
 Or, now half-frozen, would sit there instead.  
 Quick-witted ones, having seen them be-numbed,  
 Losing their judgement, were utterly stunned,  
 And at the last they fell silent also.  
 890 With his long beard, as white as the snow,  
 One ancient elder, a healthy one too –  
 Old bold Bakai, told them: "Peace be with you!"  
 Having said "Peace!" he said nought more aloud,  
 And, saving him, not one man in that crowd  
 There could be found, who one word would say,  
 So those poor messengers waited all day,  
 Or, at least, a whole hour or two...<sup>25</sup>  
 Then – take a look – someone else came in view,  
 Wearing a golden wreath on his head



900 With sixty servants and guards whom he led.  
 He who unites those divided in twain,  
 He who uplifts the fallen again,  
 He who makes peace where quarrels have been,  
 He who brings concord, where chaos was seen,  
 He who's successful in gaining his ends,<sup>26</sup>  
 He who is open in dealing with friends,  
 He who is wiser than many a knight,  
 He who none equal in reason can sight,  
 He who Kirghiz, in hats of white felt,  
 910 With his great powers of mind seems to melt,  
 He who's rob sheep of no grassy blades high –  
 Eloquent-tongued, pleasant-voiced Adzhibai –  
 He whose sweet words still caress every ear,  
 He who has features which no-one would fear,  
 He who's resourceful, and rich in his mind,  
 Our Adzhibai, who is usually kind,  
 Said in a voice full of anger and scorn:  
 "Say, from what hiding-place have you been drawn?  
 Or from what graveyard did you come in view –  
 920 What strange behaviour do we see in you?  
 What kind of men are you, then say?  
 Can't you open your eyes, anyway?  
 All in vain you have travelled here!  
 Open your eyes, there's nought to fear.  
 Pull yourselves together again,  
 Tell us from whence, and why you came.  
 Have you no words, to make reply?"  
 Having heard that, they opened an eye –  
 How could they not feel ashamed, poor things?  
 930 "We have come here for many things!"  
 Straight away to speak out so,  
 How could they make reply? Oh, no!  
 They were in a difficult spot –  
 Didn't know would they pull through, or not!  
 Those poor devils were still confused,  
 Poked in the messengers' bags they used,  
 Found the letters the Khans had sent –  
 Awkwardly their heads they bent,  
 Placed each one upon their palm,  
 940 Then, as if they still feared harm,  
 Stretched the letters out to them.  
 But nobody would take them then,  
 And again they stood on their feet  
 Long as it takes to cook the meat.

Suddenly then appears someone now,  
 With a golden wreath round his brow,  
 With eighty servants there comes in haste  
 He who had a gold belt round his waist,  
 He who was just to all his men,  
 950 Handsome and bold, Sirgak came then.  
 Stately then from his seat he rose,  
 And drawing near to the envoys, from those  
 Took the letters they held out thus,  
 Brought them straight before Khan Manas,  
 Spread them out before him there.  
 Your great Sultan, I now declare,  
 Read them through, while they stood in a scare,  
 Smiled, and gave his whiskers a flare:  
 "Seems these Beys of mine feel teased –  
 960 God has answered my prayers. I'm pleased,  
 Heaven has sent an answer to me,<sup>27</sup>  
 And it has come to earth, I see,  
 Allah is mighty. He sent a reply!"  
 Thus said Manas, with a light in his eye.  
 Seeing that he was pleased with those,  
 On his right four lads arose,  
 Quickly they jumped up to their feet,  
 And on the drum began to beat –  
 Big blue drum, like a camel's hump –  
 970 Pleasing Manas, they began to thump,  
 While his scribes wrote down his reply...  
 Then from Manas sixty riders fly,  
 To his people, living all round.  
 For Manas good reason had found  
 To arrange a feast for no few,  
 And he'd open his treasury too,  
 Coins of pure silver and high-carat gold  
 On the streets would be scattered untold,  
 Gathered, like seeds, by the poorest men.  
 980 Ordered good quarters for all envoys then,  
 Sent them sensible servants too,  
 Those who knew just the right thing to do.  
 Mountains of meat must be prepared,  
 Whole lakes of soup, so that everyone stared.  
 Most of the people would flock to this feast...  
 After six days they came, at least.  
 Soon their number began to swell,  
 And the white-headed ones came as well  
 All those wise ones, to the last man.



990 And to advise the youths they began:  
 "Children, children, and young lads too,  
 Do not shame yourselves, that won't do!  
 If you do not behave as you should,  
 Then this feast will do you no good!  
 For an ill-willed vexatious knight,  
 No wife will bear a son aright.  
 From the \*Kaimaks no herds Manas takes,  
 For no dead father this feast he makes,  
 If you do ill, and not good instead,  
 1000 Who knows what kind of times lie ahead?  
 If we wish only to stay alive,  
 If from his wild way would survive,  
 Then you youngsters must think of this --  
 You have gone too far as it is!"  
 So those wise ones the young Beys reproached,  
 So they spoke, and better ways coached.  
 But those green ones would not take advice,  
 Stubbornly thought such words were not nice:  
 "Elders, don't think of yourselves too much,  
 1010 You against Manas have no grudge.  
 While you just natter and chatter around,  
 Here in his head-quarters is found  
 That Khan Manas, alive and well,  
 And, while he lives, then who can tell  
 What he won't do to spoil our style?  
 Where have you been looking meanwhile?  
 While that lion goes roaring around,  
 Where can we find a high battle-ground,  
 Where we against him our spleen can release?  
 1020 So leave your empty words, and cease!  
 What use to do like you, and pretend?  
 After six days the feast will end,  
 Then we shall go to our homes again,  
 Then you will see your words are in vain!..  
 Thus the seventh day arrived,  
 And all the heralds still survived.  
 Others came to seek the six men,  
 And to Manas they took them then,  
 All together invited them in,  
 1030 And then led the heralds to him,  
 Ordered them at attention to stand,  
 And just look now, what is at hand!  
 Each one receives a robe and gold belt,  
 And sixty dressing-gowns, silken or felt.

Grey-maned, generous lion Manas  
 Showed them his sprightly spirit thus,  
 And what is more, he did not stop there --  
 Sat each of them on a galloping mare --  
 Six finest steeds that you'd anywhere meet --  
 1040 Gave them as presents, with harness complete.  
 Told them: "Return, my good envoys this e'en,  
 Tell them of all that you've heard, and have seen.  
 Give my regards to your masters and Khans!"  
 Then those six men, sent to spy out the lands,  
 Those who such wonderful steeds there had gained  
 Seeing that they had alive there remained,  
 Seeing that they robes of silk had received,  
 Started to show off, like merchants when pleased.  
 With satin dressing gowns bound on each steed,  
 1050 Then trotted slowly off home o'er the mead,  
 Bearing their silk and their satin with them,  
 Swarming away there like caravan men.  
 "We've got off light from Manas!" so they said,  
 "We can't believe each escaped with his head!  
 Fine Chinese silk, bright side down, we have brought,  
 Loaded on horses of excellent sort!"  
 So they discussed things: "From leopard Manas,  
 How can it be we return safely thus?"  
 Then, having ridden quite far on their route,  
 1060 Those six proud messengers rested, to boot.  
 There on the road they had been thirteen days,  
 Where food was dear, salt was cheap, anyways.  
 Summer was short there, but winter was mild.  
 Women were skilful, but maidens ran wild,  
 There at the foot of the Kerme-To-o,\*  
 There by the banks of the Keng-Koton so,  
 Then, at his feast, came to bold Teshtyuk,  
 Those six young messengers all their news took...  
 Soon news about them went buzzing around,  
 1070 And among all local folk it was found;  
 Seen at the feast by the young and the old,  
 Folk stood round waiting by them to be told.  
 "Wait awhile, youngsters!" they begged them thus,  
 You have just been to the land of Talas?  
 There you have met, so you said, with Manas!  
 What is it like, then, that land of Talas?  
 Much has been told of its glory to us!  
 What is he like, then, that bold Manas?  
 So they asked questions, looked straight in the eye.



1080 So then the envoys began to reply.  
 "Well-esteemed elders, and young brothers too,  
 Why do you ask of Manas, as you do?  
 If we should try to reply, as we may,  
 Then it would take us full many a day!  
 Not now, and tomorrow, but many days more,  
 That's what we'd need for our answer, be sure!  
 Well that Manas, he exists, it is true,  
 And he holds power o'er everyone too.  
 What else he does, and what else calls his own?  
 1090 What is it like then, his tall golden throne?  
 What does he do, that good-for nought, say?  
 Well, that is hard to explain, anyway!  
 We'll just say this, that wherever we've been,  
 He has no equal that we've ever seen!  
 Elders and youngsters! Did we get a scare,  
 Standing before him, a-trembling there?  
 Forty great devils, his comrades, stood by –  
 We couldn't look one of them in the eye!  
 When we were spoken to, we couldn't speak,  
 1100 We did not dare, for we had not the cheek!  
 We could not hold out one moment with them –  
 They just rode off to their own master then,  
 Galloped away, with so much ado...  
 Crowds gathered round, of simple folk too,  
 Raising a racket among themselves there,  
 Couldn't reply to our greeting, we swear.  
 They answered nothing, no single word said,  
 Wanted to speak with their master instead.  
 Those who ran after them, something had heard,  
 1110 When they came back, gave the others the word.  
 They listened hard, were inquisitive too,  
 And they just raised a whole hallabaloo,  
 Followed them round, wherever they went.  
 Elders and youths, who the feast days spent,  
 They came crowding around us as well.  
 What to their Khan would the messengers tell?  
 Ran to help them, and held each steed.  
 Quickly, quickly they spoke, indeed,  
 Waving their staffs with trembling hands,  
 1120 Bowed, and said "Salaam!" to their Khans.  
 Those same Khans, the great elite,  
 Sat bowed forward, each one on his seat.  
 When they had enough to eat,  
 Said their prayer of thanks on their feet,

Raised open palms to brows, as was meet.<sup>28</sup>  
 In a gold turban, where folds were neat,  
 There sat white-bearded Muzburchak,  
 And he answered the envoys back,  
 Gave them a question: "What said Manas?"  
 1130 So the messengers answered thus:  
 "Oh, dear master!" one started to cry,  
 "May he fall into a ditch and die! –  
 Not one servant of Allah on high  
 Could tell all that he did – why try?  
 Who could know what a fiend was he!  
 When we arrived – locked in were we,  
 All kinds of threats our reason tried –  
 Headsmen with daggers – we nearly died!  
 Drove us into some kind of court,  
 1140 Kept us locked up there, with evil thought.  
 For us all there was no way out.  
 Then Manas gave orders about.  
 Not a word of this came to us –  
 Six days more we were locked in thus.  
 With good food we then were fed,  
 Each of us forward then was led.  
 Then he presented us robes untold,  
 Satin, with belts of high-carat gold,  
 Sixty silken dressing-gowns then,  
 1150 And six steeds for us messenger-men.  
 Then he gave us letters for you.  
 Outside our steeds stood saddled too.  
 Here are the letters he gave us men,  
 You can take them and read them then.  
 With your good sense and your expert mind  
 There the meaning you soon will find.  
 To Khans Ege and Shigai they gave  
 Several letters, with faces grave.  
 Opening one at the adge likewise,  
 1160 Golding it up before his eyes,  
 Then the scribe began to read –  
 This is what it said, indeed:  
 "I am known as Brave Manas.  
 People who understand me thus,  
 Let them come, and hear my word.  
 If they don't follow what they've heard,  
 Bring an interpreter, of course.  
 When you receive this letter – take horse!"  
 Lower the brief was signed "Brave Manas"



- 1170 "When you receive it, then come to us.  
People who know me, or wish to know,  
Let them come, and honour me so.  
Those who've not heard of Brave Manas,  
Show them this letter, which I've signed thus.  
Let them come, they're invited too,  
Understand what I want to do.  
I will defend the appointed ways:  
Come to me here within forty days.  
Those who don't arrive before then,
- 1180 They will be destroyed by my men!  
Come with your banners, and horse-tailed staves,  
Come with a splash, like ocean waves.  
Come, like a river in flood – I'll be glad,  
Come, with your armour, in breast-plates clad.  
Come, like lions, with long black tails,  
Come, with your warriors, clad in mail.  
Come, bring your youngsters with you as well,  
Come, like a wind, blowing all to hell,  
Come, risking all, like I do too.
- 1190 Come, with my golden staff I wait you.  
Whatever happens, I shall not fail.  
Come, like a land-slide, or icy hail.  
Here in my hand is a pitchfork or hoe,  
With them I'll stop an avalanche so!  
I'm like a tall and sun-baked wall.  
Just try to climb over me – that's all!  
I'm like a plane-tree, in gold-leaved crown.  
Just take your axe, try to hack me down!  
Not one alone, but the lot of you,
- 1200 All seven Khans, and see what I'll do!..  
Even if seventy Khans should come –  
Just try to fell me – you'll fail, every one!"  
So the Khan's letter was read right through,  
Right to the end, and the signature too.  
For seven Khans, it was Judgement Day,  
For those who listened, hope faded away.  
And each one of those seven wise men  
Felt in his soul disappointed then.  
They were taken at heart by despair...
- 1210 Then all the common people there,  
Who the letter's contents had heard,  
Started to think: "What a strange wild word!"  
In twos and threes in their yurtas they sat,  
Heads bowed forward, and spoke of that.

- They all started discussing it then.  
But those you know – those seven bold men,  
Didn't tear off to fight Manas so.  
And those seven Khans, whom you know,  
Still didn't say that they would not fight,
- 1220 Though their faces were pale with fright.  
There they sat with heads held low,  
All those leaders who boasted so.  
Puffed up like eagles, or cocks at that,  
At one side of low tables they sat,  
Pallid-faced, in one long row,  
Still did not dare think not to go,  
Still not daring to say: "Let's ride!"  
All caught up, and scared inside,  
Faces faded, like autumn grass,
- 1230 Still would not say what must come to pass.  
But words spoken they could not deny.  
Fierce as falcons, they sat there farby.  
Some among them looked like lions too,  
Which might scare hunters through and through.  
And among them none would speak, nor try  
While some two or three hours passed by,  
Time in which meat could be cooked, for sure.  
But, at last one could hold back no more,  
And to those Khans, men of strength beside,
- 1240 And to those leaders, well-known far and wide,  
Old Tēshtyuk spoke out at last,  
For those Khans these words he cast:  
"Well, be you damned, the whole six of you,  
Not knowing what to say, nor do!  
Though in your hamlets you're heroes there,  
Still, be you damned, the whole six, I declare!  
Though in your quarters you're deemed heroes true,  
May you be damned, may the Lord punish you!  
With elder Muzburchak, at your head!"
- 1250 When brave Manas lived near you, 'tis said,  
He got no peace, for you made such a fuss.  
If he grows hot 'neath the collar, Manas,  
Then you will pay for the ill you do now!  
He's just a dragon, unwinding somehow.  
He has committed the wildest deeds.  
Tread on his tail – that is all he needs!  
Open-jawed then he'll swallow you whole,  
Scorch you inside his guts, on my soul!  
Do you think to escape, at least?



- 1260 One of you fell on him from the east,  
 One of you fell on him from the west,  
 You fell on him, as you thought best!  
 You are incited by your deep spite;  
 But if lion Manas, mighty knight,  
 Comes a – galloping on Akkula,  
 Will you survive? No, not by far!  
 None of us will alive remain.  
 Clearly Manas plays his tricks again!  
 One opponent he'll chop into three –
- 1270 Inside out will each of us be!  
 He'll change June heat into winter frost.  
 With no warning, all will be lost!  
 Lion Manas – not for nought that name –  
 Then will put all of us to shame!  
 Me, Teshtyuk, he'll call "My white bone!"  
 Muzburchak will get scorn alone.  
 He'll say: "All trouble begins with you!"  
 Dzhamgurchi he'll name bold one too.  
 Sandzhibek he'll humble, and damn,
- 1280 Call him a most unpleasant young man!  
 Then before many he'll speak, as he can:  
 He'll say: "Kėkchė is a stubborn man!"  
 Of Urbyu he say: "He's insanel!"  
 "Bad 'un!" he'll say of Kėkchė again!  
 One 'gainst another, he'll push you on,  
 You'll scarcely notice what he has done!  
 Don't break your oath, and stay away –  
 If so, you'll meet with trouble, I say.  
 There'll be none whose blood won't be shed.
- 1290 There'll be none who not soon will be dead!  
 If he lives, he must pay, that brave.  
 Let us risk it, our heads let's save!  
 Let us sweep on, like a rising wave.  
 We are scared by the "Welcome" he gave.  
 Let us now depart, no delay,  
 With all those we can take on our way,  
 With the bold ones, who people lead,  
 With host that lacks place, indeed,  
 With commanders, who know battle best,
- 1300 With our cattle, as food when we rest.  
 With our Khans and chieftains beside,  
 With our warrior hordes let's ride  
 To that severe one, who shows no mirth,  
 Let's go thundering, shaking the earth!

- Every one of us, not to be scared,  
 Every one of us, who once has dared,  
 So to avoid a sudden dire fate,  
 We must take risks, make our way to his gate!  
 Either we'll win, or he'll stand on high –
- 1310 Then it's better together to die!  
 We need not haste, but time must not waste,  
 We need not be like dogs, who are chased!  
 That Manas, like an elephant there,  
 Let us, for once, take fast in our snare!.."  
 Having decided thus, at least,  
 All the Khans left Tėshtyuk's fine feast.  
 When the appointed hour came around,  
 When the day and the place were found,  
 Eleman's son, Tėshtyuk the bold,
- 1320 Over his castle his banner did hold.  
 Having seen that, the warriors came,  
 Ready to fight the foe were aflame.  
 Many knights and strong-men abound,  
 Mighty giants, huge-muscled, were found.  
 Many chieftains, most skilful men,  
 Each ten thousand they numbered then.  
 Crying aloud, like camels they roar!  
 Raising a racket, Tėshtyuk rode before,  
 Made their way to Manas' far land,
- 1330 Climbing the mountain passes at hand.  
 With some sixty thousand men,  
 Dzhamgiri rode ahead of them then,  
 Then Tėshtyuk with his warriors too,  
 Third came the eloquent Urbyu.  
 Having gathered his men from Aksi,\*  
 Kara-Shaar,\* and Urumchi,\*  
 Thus bold Urbyu was then to be found –  
 Two hundred thousand men around.  
 Holding two black-maned steeds reined in,
- 1340 Taking the road to Eki-Kemin,\*  
 Living on slopes of Kara-Unkyur,\*  
 Pasturing cattle on Kara-Tokoi,\*  
 Bold Urbyu, with a cry, took the road,  
 Thundered on banks where Chu river flowed.\*  
 Having started from Sari-Arka,\*  
 Brave Kėkchė roused those near and far.  
 Having gathered his warrior-men,  
 Our Kėkchė to Manas moved then.  
 With loaded muskets, ready and free,



1350 To Talas,\* with his men moved he.  
 Clad in Khan's robes, with high bootees,  
 From Kokand,\* Margelan,\* if you please,  
 From Andizhan\* came Sandzhibek,  
 Seventy thousand men at his back.  
 He alone, with these fighting men,  
 Seven divisions, rode on then,  
 Surged ahead upon their way.  
 Oh, that world of wild disarray!  
 Buudayik's brave son, Muzburchak,  
 1360 From Bukhara\* moved on his track.  
 And he Thought: "Each must leave his den -  
 Two hundred thousand fighting men!"  
 Let Muzburchak then take to his track.  
 Guests of Manas, they did not look back...  
 So you have heard about what they did.  
 Now to Manas we must look ahead -  
 We shall leave those others there,  
 And of Manas we must now declare,  
 So hear what he was doing alone  
 1370- When he sat down upon his throne.  
 All the days he began to count -  
 Now it seemed the right amount.  
 Forty days agd passed away,  
 And tomorrow would be the day!  
 Thinking: "Guests tomorrow will come,  
 Khans, and soldiers, and everyone.  
 Though many servants we here employ,  
 Though it is famous, this land of Nogoi,\*  
 Will it be easy to house them all?"  
 1380 Leopard Manas thought: "The problem's not small!"  
 He felt sorry for his own folk,  
 Knew that the matter would be no joke,  
 And to Allah he prayed for aid.  
 No attempt to sleep he made.<sup>29</sup>  
 Still he thought, and thought, Manas,  
 Bowing his head like a willow-branch thus.  
 He never even looked at his bed,  
 No thoughts of dozing came in his head,  
 And when the stars besprinkled the sky,  
 1390 And when midnight was drawing nigh,  
 He pulled on his bullet-proof gown,  
 And, like a lion, he settled down,  
 And decided what action to take,  
 Ready last sacrifice to make.

Leaning upon his gun Akkulte,  
 Took a gold drum, in the usual way,<sup>30</sup>  
 Gave a deep sigh, and a deafening cough,  
 And outside to the courtyard went off:  
 And before the open door,  
 1400 Ordered to make some feeding-troughs more.  
 Kept and groomed with loving care,  
 Lying free on the sand-bad there,  
 Watered with fresh drink from the dell,  
 Covered with broidered blanket as well,  
 Prigged with owl-plumes there, indeed,<sup>31</sup>  
 Stood Akkula, his worthy steed.  
 Then Manas his bridle untied,  
 Walked with him through the village beside.  
 With Khan Manas, towards his goal,  
 1410 Went no other living soul.  
 Up on the Boz-Dëbë's\* sheer height,  
 There he climbed with great delight.  
 In his musket, which lay at hand,  
 Then a fistful of powder he crammed.  
 Then a ball of lead our brave  
 With a ram-rod a good prod gave.  
 Down the muzzle he made it slide,  
 Pointed the sights to the eastern side.  
 Grey-maned lion Manas, assured,  
 1420 Pressed the trigger, and thundered roared.  
 Following straight on what he'd done,  
 He began to drub the gold drum.  
 Ear-splitting was the shot from the gun,  
 And Manas, along with the drum,  
 Gave a most penetrating cry...  
 People heard it, both low and high,  
 Near and far, it roared in their ears -  
 Guardsmen, pikemen, connoneers,  
 All jumped up, and made such a fuss,  
 1430 To their cannon they ran with a rush,  
 To that great gun, in the Treasury kept,  
 Cast for campaigns, - straightway they leapt.  
 Pushing, pulling, and poking it through,  
 Seventy men all served it too.  
 That great cannon was named Abzel,\*  
 Long had been silent, truth to tell,  
 And was covered in layers of dust.  
 Inside and out - red streaks of rust.  
 What will they do? You need not ask!



1440 Twelve cannon-guardsmen began their task:  
 Started with scrapers to scratch and scour,  
 Then with sand they scrubbed for an hour,  
 carts of sand they poured down its throat,  
 Not withstanding the weight, please note,  
 Then a huge cast iron slug,  
 Like a small yurta, they started to lug.  
 Look what they did with it, what's more –  
 Started pushing it down the bore  
 With a fir-tree, torn from its roots,  
 1450 Straight or crooked, whatever suits,  
 That instead of a ram-rod they took,  
 Crammed and rammed that slug, just look!  
 Then the powder in they poured,  
 Didn't spare bagfuls, more they afford.  
 Sixty cables then they found;  
 Those to sixty plane-trees they bound –  
 Other end to the cannon they tied.  
 Night-guards retreated, far and wide.  
 Then the chief guard, with nought to fear,  
 1460 Pushed in the fuse with a long, long spear.  
 Boom! went the cannon, the whole world shook,  
 Hearts stopped beating all round, just look!  
 Thunder re-echoed, and rolled away,  
 Smoke choked all – what more to say?  
 Earth was ringing, then silence fell,  
 Clods of soil subsided as well.  
 Those who were sleeping at that hour  
 Woke wide-eyed, their looks were dour.  
 Then pretentious chiefs raised their heads,  
 1470 Simply leapt up out of their beds!  
 Old men, a-trembling, lay with a stare,  
 Children cried in the cradles there.  
 On the hearth, jugs to pieces fell.  
 Message from Allah? Or maybe from Hell?  
 Horses in stables all snorted away,  
 Camels all roared, and started to sway.  
 Dogs were howling, and growling at bay,  
 Donkeys, all wonky, began to bray.  
 Camel-foals tied, all cried that day!<sup>32</sup>  
 1480 First let them all be cursed, anyway!  
 Cocks all crowed in that dreadful hour,  
 Hens in their pens began to cower,  
 Everyone said "God's displeased with us,  
 Therefore he sends a warning thus!"

For skilful warriors, armed with spears,  
 Night came on, to increase their fears.  
 For the elite in the village square,  
 Came the day of reckoning there.  
 O, forty wolves, of outstanding fame,<sup>33</sup>  
 1490 Let us now tattle of you again!  
 Eldest of them was bold Bakai,  
 Then Kirgil, whose fame ran high.  
 Both those bold bogatirs stood nigh.  
 Kuldyur's son, young Chalibai,  
 Then Kirghizian Bey Kutunai,  
 Merriest one at heart, Adzhibai.  
 Then from Kara-Toko\* – Madzhik,  
 Then Kambar's young son, Chalik.  
 Red-head Sargil,\* from the folk Satai,<sup>34</sup>  
 1500 Bey Sabal's famous son, Atai.  
 Here's Umet, from the tribe Uishyun,  
 And his son, Dzhaisan, the coon.  
 From the Argins comes Karakedzho,  
 All take counsel with him, you know.  
 Bo-obek, Sha-abek, and Shyukur,  
 From the Arbans – Altai, what's more.  
 From the Dərbens there comes Tértai,  
 Karatélek, fortune-teller, stands by.  
 His predictions the whole folk owns,  
 1510 And Agidai, who reads from sheep's bones.<sup>35</sup>  
 Accurate forecasts does he employ.  
 Head of a tribe, here comes Tokotoi.  
 From a distant folk, Eleman,  
 Chief of his people, comes Kalkaman.  
 Here come Serk, and here comes Sirgak,  
 Nothing can either of them set back.  
 Kongo-orol's bold son, Koshabish,  
 Leading a camp, comes brave Ibish.  
 Son of Alim, Aleken, smart and quick,  
 1520 Here is seen also the lion Madzhik.  
 If at night they go on their way,  
 Many Kirghizian warriors, say,  
 They will not lose the fox's track.  
 Shu-utu, Tyumen, Dzhainak-  
 Cunningest of the cunning ones they.  
 If troops move out at the end of the day,  
 If the Kara-Kirghiz do not stay,  
 Even on mud-sracks they don't lose the way –  
 Shu-utu, Kadir, Dzhainak.



1530 Cunning ones, with the folk at their back,  
 Irchiu-ul, Bozu-ul, at that,  
 Bold bogatir, our knight Tazbaimat  
 Swiftly he's ready, charged, for the road,  
 First on the foe will his blows unload.  
 From the Kazakhs comes Dzho-oronchu,  
 To-orolchu, Bëgël, Kaigil too.  
 Son of Shinga, our friend Kerben,  
 Energetic leader, Dërbën,  
 And Bëgel, like a wolf, I'd say,  
 1540 Spotting the foe, yet far away.  
 All these knights are cleverly led  
 By their old chief Bakai, at their head.  
 Forty knights, all skilful in war,  
 Sat on their steeds, and looked to the fore.  
 If they sat – just a moment was that –  
 Off they rode to Manas, pit-a-pat.  
 All of them swiftly took to the road,  
 Later with them Akulla then strode,  
 With his neck stretched forth, like a swan –  
 1550 There, where the Ashmara\* flows on,  
 In the valley of Almalu,\*  
 There, where the river goes winding through,  
 Where they were led by Lion Manas,  
 With the blue-bird of happiness, thus,  
 With his comrade-in-arms, Almambet,  
 And bold Bakai, the eldest one yet,  
 Then, it seems, were others at hand:  
 All in a row before them they stand,  
 All forty knights, as proud as could be,  
 1560 With old Kirgil at their head, you see.  
 Forty comrades arrived nearby,  
 Met with quick-witted old Bakai.  
 Then they paid greetings to him, with a bow,  
 And old Bakai raised a hand to his brow.  
 Forty bold knights surrounded him then,  
 He was encircled by warrior-men.  
 Then these comrades each urged his steed,  
 And went forward together, agreed.  
 Early at morn, with the sun bursting in,  
 1570 Spurring their horses, and raising a din,  
 They all rode on towards Manas.  
 He had come out to meet them thus.  
 All alone, on a hill-top high,  
 There took a look at old Bakai.

Then did not look as he earlier had;  
 He was enraged, and his looks were bad.  
 Bristles, like dragon's, stuck up on his brow.  
 His lower lip was pouting, somehow.  
 His upper lip was protruding too,  
 1580 Features were dark, with sparks showing through.  
 Just take a look at him, black as night!  
 Seems that a stormy day was in sight;  
 Chin jutting out, and teeth clenched tight,  
 As on a sabre a sheath there might.  
 And just look at those whiskers there!  
 Sharp as a battle-axe, I must declare!  
 Spleen was seen burning in blazing eyes,  
 Like a flame which bellows make rise.  
 So enraged, in full fury was he,  
 1590 Spite filled his features with enmity,  
 Quite enough fluff for five pairs of socks.<sup>36</sup>  
 Like an old camel, when winter first knocks,  
 Gritting his teeth, and in a great fuss,  
 That's how he looked then, your Manas.  
 Seeing him look so rough, and tough,  
 His forty knights hitched their horses far off,  
 So they could come, and then greet him there.  
 Nobody, though, had the pluck, I swear!  
 None dared to ask: "How are things, master, now?"  
 1600 Nobody had enough guts, anyhow!...  
 Everyone thought: "God has punished so!  
 That's why our blood-thirsty one looks so low!  
 What can have raised his deep anger, then?"  
 There before him stood forty scared men,  
 Kicking the dust around their feet,  
 Nudging each other, when looks chanced to meet,  
 Giving each other a dig in the side,  
 Forty comrades their fears could not hide.  
 Then, when led by old Kirgil,  
 1610 He whom Kirghiz respected still,  
 They all went and sat in a row,  
 Numb and dumb, and remaining so,  
 With their weapons, swords and guns,  
 Tightly clenched, those frightened ones,  
 Went towards the frowning Manas,  
 Sat in half-circle around him thus...  
 Let us leave them there for a while...  
 Of those Khans who had ridden in style,  
 Of those six Khans, and their hosts of men,



1620 Let us listen, and learn something then.  
 In the vanguard the warriors rode.  
 First of all, and needing no goad,  
 Rode Dзамgирчи, the enormous knight.  
 Down the road, with Dзhelkek\* in sight,  
 With his seventy thousand men,  
 Crimson banners went flying then,<sup>37</sup>  
 On white staves, with a hullabaloo.  
 Crimson banners, on staves of blue.  
 They went flying to heaven also.

1630 Cries rang out by Dзhelkek below,  
 Numberless hosts of various men  
 Spread o'er the face of the country then.  
 As they appeared, they lustily cried.  
 Then Manas perceived them, sharp-eyed,  
 Jumped on his steed, and there they were!  
 He just was waiting to give the spur,  
 When they drubbed on the drum, with a whirr...  
 Eighty-four knights, in their armour astir,  
 Where they all go, the flames won't grow dim...<sup>38</sup>

1640 There rode Manas, Akkula beneath him...  
 With his dry muzzle went Akkula,<sup>39</sup>  
 Bearing his master's load afar.  
 He then called all his men after him.  
 Forty knights raised an awful din.  
 Then Kirgil gave a mighty cry,  
 Raised his spear, its point waved high.  
 Forty knights cried with one accord,  
 And with them went their lion Lord.  
 In four rows did they forward fly,

1650 And the first row was led by Bakai.  
 After him came war-tried Kirgil,  
 After him, Almambet as well,  
 And behind Sirgak followed on –  
 All those lions went forth as one.  
 Hosts of troops spread near and far...  
 Stretching himself on Akkula,  
 Sporting forth, just like a sprite,  
 Their Manas went rearing full height.  
 Coming towards him, Dзамgирчи

1660 Could not stand 'gainst his anger, see;  
 Who could blame him? He could not fight,  
 Having seen this most famous knight!  
 Down from his horse he leapt, depressed,  
 And, having crossed his hands on his breast,<sup>40</sup>

Said to Manas a welcome "Salaam!"  
 And Manas replied, with raised arm.  
 Then they asked how each other fared,  
 Hugged one another, with swords unbared.  
 "You're Uigurs, from Alti-Sha-ara –"

1670 You are their master, I know you are!  
 I thought you'd bring more troops with you –  
 I should have said that you needed them too,  
 If you wished to test strength with me!  
 But you've far too few men, I see,  
 Even to think of such a sport!  
 'That Manas,' you must have thought,  
 'Must be weaker now than me!'"  
 Nothing further then said he.  
 He did not make one further sound,

1680 He simply turned his steed around.  
 Led his guests on forward then,  
 Dзамgирчи, and all his men,  
 And they were welcomed there by Bakai.  
 All the tired warriors raised a cry:  
 "We have arrived at last!" they said.  
 Guests by Alti-Sha-ara were led,  
 By the old white-beard, to his court,  
 So behind Bakai, the old sport,  
 One-hundred-thousand Uigur men,

1690 To the last man, went forward then.  
 There Bakai's folk, and not in vain,  
 Many fat cattle already had slain.  
 Into a yurta, wide as could be,  
 There he led his guest, Dзамgирчи.  
 For his troops, in a host immense,  
 Then they erected hundreds of tents.  
 Every honour they showed those men,  
 Slew barren mares, as meat for them then.  
 Then enormous, as big as byres,

1700 Forty cauldrons hung over the fires.  
 Seething tea, with sugar stirred,  
 With their chess, they gave the word,  
 Did not take the low tables away,  
 Did not interfere with their play.  
 Not one person remained unfed.  
 To the share of Manas, as the head,  
 Not a single guest remained –  
 By Bakai they were all entertained.  
 More than enough he had for each.



1710 They had only just taken a seat,  
 They had only begun meat to try,  
 When, with his golden banners high,  
 And with shouts which shook sky and earth,  
 With their cries, which came ringing forth,  
 With their flags on staffs of white,  
 And on staffs of blue, in the height,  
 With a rattle, which deafens your ears,  
 Here a new mighty host appears,  
 Here comes Teshtyuk's great horde, with cheers,  
 1720 Grasping white handles of lengthy spears.<sup>41</sup>  
 On Akkula a-swanking then,  
 Lion Manas rode out to those men,  
 Having seen, with his first sharp look,  
 Their brave leader, the bold Teshtyuk;  
 Welcomed him, sitting his steed so free,  
 Youngest of nine brothers was he,  
 Favourite son of Eleman.  
 "Glad to see you!" Manas began,  
 "Give me you hand, and welcome indeed!"  
 1730 And, not dismounting from his steed,  
 Thus he met his friend, and his men,  
 And they greeted each other then...  
 Shaking his lengthy ginger beard,  
 On Sarala, Almambet appeared,  
 Showing off, in his robe of fur,  
 Waving his flag, creating a stir;  
 "Warriors of Tështyuk!" cried he,  
 "Every one of you, come, follow me!"  
 Then Almambet for the warriors sent,  
 1740 Led them after him into his tent.  
 Then for supper some mares were slain,  
 Foal's-meat on three-legged tables was lain,  
 And for lunch they slew some sheep,  
 Fine-cut neck-fat rose in a heap.  
 Loaves of bread of every kind,  
 Jugs of honey for all you'd find.  
 Almambet's servants waited on them,  
 They provided everything then.  
 They had scarcely started to feed,  
 1750 They had barely chewed bread, indeed,  
 When, having travelled by Eki-kemin,  
 Leading a pair of black steeds, came in  
 Son of Taz, the bold Urbyu,  
 With his Kumul\* warriors too.

Like a whirlwind; from Merki\* soon,  
 Flying his flag with a crescent moon,  
 That same Urbyu, with a thunderous cry,  
 Followed by all his troops Crew high.  
 Holding his Akulla on tight rein,  
 1760 Lion Manas went forth again.  
 Rode up to the visitors then.  
 Khan Urbyu, who was leading his men,  
 Then dismounted, and left the rest.  
 Having crossed his hands on his breast,  
 Greeted Manas, and stood by his side,  
 And to his greeting Manas replied:  
 With him Urbyu then chatted awhile –  
 At his words Manas had to smile,  
 When he heard all their eloquency:  
 1770 "Lion Manas, do not haste," said he,  
 "Stick your flag here, and let it wave,  
 And those Khans who think themselves brave,  
 Lead away there; where there's no way back,  
 To that high mountain land Kei-Kap,\*  
 Show them that land of mystery there!"  
 Thus spoke Urbyu to him, I swear!  
 Lion Manas then understood  
 That he wished those Khans no good.  
 But, as ever, no laughter he chose –  
 1780 Muttered, dissatisfied, 'neath his own nose.  
 Those who laughed he did not understand.  
 That quick-witted Manas, at hand,  
 Yet was forced to smile at last,  
 Turned round his steed, and away he passed...  
 "Now I see my plans go through!  
 That good-for-nothing, my bold Urbyu,  
 Suits me like one of my own age!"<sup>42</sup>  
 Said knight Serek, "He's clever and sage!"  
 And a part of his mass of men  
 1790 Took to himself, with Urbyu then.  
 How they served hot chunks of fat!<sup>43</sup>  
 Slaked thirst with honey after that!  
 Then more mare's-meat, selected too.  
 Bread of meat they had to chew,  
 Chops of meat they had to chew,  
 Served in delicious soupy stew!  
 Servants were at their beck and call.  
 More had barely time to sit,  
 They had barely time to sit,



- 1800 Only nibbled a little bit,  
Then he who dwelt on Sari-Arka,  
With Kazakh warriors from afar,  
He who knew how to tether a steed,  
Karakova fine mare, indeed,  
In yellow trousers, and patterned felt hat,  
Gold-buckle belt, leather pouch on that.  
In gold-soled boots, with copper heels high,  
Anderkhan's son, bold Kėkchė rode by,  
Out from the headland of Tek-Turbas,\*  
1810 Skirting it round in the foothills thus,  
Bold Kėkchė, with his warriors then  
Came into view – all dust-covered men,  
Seen by Manas, who stood on the height.  
Jingling and jangling, they rode into sight.  
Then knight Kirgil, he raised a great stir,  
Quick of wit, rode to meet Kėkchė.  
No place for all his men in the vale –  
Hordes of Kazakhs, stretched out in a tail.  
Singing they marched, and ringing they rode,  
1820 With bold Kėkchė they forward strode.  
Then Manas, jumping down from his steed,  
Welcomed them all, and warmly, indeed.  
Answered their greetings, as they came in.  
Then he gave an unusual grin,  
Turned round his steed, and led them back,  
And all Kėkchė's great warrior pack  
Came in the care of Sirgak, the knight.  
Slain were the fattest cattle in sight,  
Stripped all the fat which on ribs was found,  
1830 Set out the bread of all kinds around.  
All kinds of dishes did they prepare:  
Currants, all soaked in milk were there,  
Meats, and sweets, which I cannot name,  
Sausages, porridges, partridges, game –  
They raised the food to their hungry lips.  
Just look, to every knight there who sits,  
They brought two goblets, most rich and rare,  
What they contained, I cannot declare,  
Only Sirgak entertained them well.  
1840 All they could wish for – no more to tell!  
They had not managed to all find a place,  
They had just barely begun to taste,  
When in silk robes, and high-boots grand,<sup>44</sup>  
From Margelan\* and busy Kokand,\*

- Ora-Tyubė and Samarkand,\*  
Leading people from Andizhan,\*  
Came Mangul tribes, with Sandzhibek.  
Raising the dust o'er Chatkal's narrow neck,\*  
Gleaming with golden armour bright,  
1850 Stout Sandzhibek came into sight.  
Having glimpsed them yet far away,  
Grey-maned Manas behind did not stay.  
Sitting astride his steed Akkula,  
With his lion-cubs too, all there are,  
Grasping their spears, away they sped,  
With our Lion Manas at their head.  
Went off to meet them on their trek.  
Leaping down from his steed, Sandzhibek  
Greeted them as they drew nigh,  
1860 And he received a warm reply,  
From Manas, like a leopard that day –  
Then he turned round, and galloped away.  
Son of Kyuldyur, bold Chalibai  
And that great joker, Adzhibai,  
And with them the Kirghiz Kutunai,  
Shared between them the host standing by,  
Nine-hundred-thousand warriors then.  
Still Manas' forty bold men  
Thought "There should have been more, we believed!"  
1870 Gathered them in, though a little grieved.  
Having slain all fat mares they could find,  
Seating their guests with cushions behind,  
Not taking note who was servant, who lord,  
Gave them all that their stores could afford.  
All they served, and when this was done,  
And not offending a single one.  
Mounds of rice they gave, and with that,  
Set them a-chewing chunks of fat,  
And instead of water, just think,  
1880 Strong, heady honey gave them to drink!  
They had scarcely time to sit down,  
Barely time to look all around –  
From Bukharai-Sharip,\* to the east,  
From Chambul," in wrecks, to the west,  
Buudaik's bold son, Muzburchak,  
With a white staff, and a fluttering flag,  
With resounding and raucous cries,  
Banners be-ribboned, and spears likewise,  
With a roar, which deafened the earth,



1890 Raising dust to the skies, they burst forth.  
 Head held high, swan's neck stretched out,  
 Muzburchak raised a greeting shout.  
 Then Akbalta's bold son, Chubak,  
 With all the forty knights at his back,  
 With their elders, Kirgil and Bakai,  
 Took them all in, with a welcome reply.  
 Few of the knights found not enough men.  
 See, about half-a-dozen of them  
 Did not find any guests to suit...

1900 Travelling bags, crammed to bursting with fruit,  
 They laid out on low tables then,  
 Mounds without bounds, just mountains of them!  
 Then they made for them cosy beds,  
 Set the candles beside their heads.  
 Left them playing draughts or chess,  
 Went off to see to their steeds, I guess.  
 Ordered their servants to spread out hay.  
 How many guests thirty knights took away!  
 Left very few for all the rest!

1910 So, ten of them felt somewhat depressed.  
 "When will guests come for us, we don't know!"  
 And they strode restlessly, to and fro.  
 No one to meet them, and nothing to tell.  
 Then they said: "Well, let guests go to hell –  
 Chieftains and soldiers and steeds as well –  
 If we knew that so few come to dwell,  
 Then we should first have gone on their track,  
 We should not then have held ourselves back.  
 We should not then have waited so long,  
 We should have taken some too, right or wrong!  
 We thought that thousands more would appear –  
 Now we are left with nobody here!  
 In the morning, when sunlight breaks through,  
 All those knights who have guests with them too,  
 Van with pride then speak to those men,  
 In conversation can tell them all then:  
 'Lion Manas called us knights up to fight –  
 And, once he calls, it's with all his might –  
 Warriors worthy of us, he gave guests,  
 Those he chose, and with each a squad rests.  
 But some few knights he left on one side –  
 Those poorer knights of guests are deprived!  
 So 'mid our guests the word will go round,  
 And after that, where shall we then be found?

We shall blush, and be put to shame.  
 How shall we then defend our good name?"  
 Having that they'd be refused them yet,  
 Fearing that they'd be refused them yet,  
 They began dissensions to make,

1940 Steps towards troubles began to take.  
 Having made ready, each jumped on his horse,  
 Went round among the arrivals, of course,  
 Looking for guests, in camp after camp,  
 But having found none, continued to ramp:  
 "You've got too many guests here with you –  
 Thirty or forty, or so would do.  
 If you agree to that number, then  
 You could give each of us here about ten!"  
 But you might as well ask for a horse –

1950 They were refused, and felt shamed, of course.  
 So they went shouting, demanding their share...  
 Having seen them, some warriors there,  
 Those who had sat already as guest,  
 Old ones, who'd outlived all the rest,  
 To beardless youngsters, began to speak:  
 "O, esteemed young ones, no trouble wreak,  
 Sit you down now, and fold your hands –  
 We have enough good hosts as it stands –  
 Sons of Kirghiz, they have taken us thus,

1960 So has their chieftain, the leopard Manas.  
 See how they serve us here with good cheer,  
 See how they entertain us here!  
 Take a look, my laddies, now!  
 Take a look, and you'll see how!  
 You're skilful riders, though young and raw,  
 Chieftains too, and quick on the draw!"  
 "Be it so, O elders!" said they,  
 "We'll go around, and see anyway,  
 We'll take a look at every group!"

1970 So they went round them, troop by troop.  
 So, camp by camp, they rode around,  
 Took good note of what they found!  
 For each guest, with tired heavy head,  
 Satin blankets, and low gilded bed.  
 Well, if you invite in a guest –  
 See that he's fed, and that he gets rest!  
 Bright red blankets, and silvered bed,  
 White linen sheets for them were spread.  
 So it was in each camp, be it told –



1980 Couches of silver, or shining with gold!  
 Our young knights got tired, they found,  
 Row upon row of guests they went round.  
 When they had seen all this that we tell,  
 And that their horses were fed as well,  
 Then they returned, and as they were bid,  
 Then they told all, and nothing was hid.  
 To the guests, the young and the old,  
 Everything then without stopping, they told.  
 Having heard all recounted thus,

1990 All the soldiers began to fuss,  
 Bleated away, like sheep in a flock:  
 "Cursed six Khans, whom our forebears' ghosts mock!  
 Not holding back, such trash you have told,  
 In your own village you're counted as bold.  
 Seven such Khans, may you sink through the ground!  
 In your own land bold Khans you are found!  
 There, along with those women of yours,  
 By your own hearths, behind your own doors,  
 Where you have sat, you have spoken thus:

2000 'Let us go out, and rout Manas!  
 We'll get even with him, all told!  
 Devilish Khans, who call yourselves bold,  
 What things you say, when you start to ravel  
 Why do you think that you are so brave?  
 Why do you say that you'll catch Manas,  
 And bring about his destruction thus?  
 Having gathered us, under duress,  
 May this campaign not meet with success!  
 Here we shall die, never see our own door!

2010 May those forty comrades, what's more,  
 Slaves from all sides, to fulfil his needs,<sup>45</sup>  
 Do such bold and daring deeds!  
 Can such a thing be on earth, by rights?  
 Bold Manas, the bravest of knights,  
 If someone moans, will he take it well?  
 If all those forty knights, truth to tell,  
 Are merely slaves, from every side,  
 Some here on foot, and some who ride,  
 If they are slaves, barely making their way:

2020 Then just see what has happened today:  
 When hosts of warriors came to stay,  
 They did not raise their brows, anyway,  
 That means Manas a real tiger must be,  
 Ruling the whole of this land that you see!

Can there be such, in this world of ours,  
 Who could do show Manas equal powers,  
 Who could do evil to him, and succeed?  
 Shallow rubbish you gabble, indeed!  
 Why do you chitter-chatter thus?"

2030 Having said this, they went on with their fuss,  
 Loudly they cried together at them:  
 "Why fill the cauldrons with snow to the brim?  
 Why take down yurta, and with you your wives?  
 Why saddle steeds, and swank for your lives?  
 Why raise your spears above your heads then?  
 Why swagger forward and shout: "'We're real men!?'  
 Why count yourselves then, as if on a par  
 With bold Manas, whatever you are?..  
 All on vain, showing off are we -

2040 Why were we punished, sent here by Tengri?+  
 We were not careful enough, not we.  
 How could we know about this, you see?"  
 So they spoke, and fell silent thus,  
 Those who felt not, went on to fuss.  
 There those warriors spent the night,  
 And next morn, when dawn grew bright,  
 Lion Manas, as oft before,  
 Sat on Aibanboz, steed-of-war.  
 Showed the people all round his might,

2050 'Gainst the six Khans he went to fight.  
 Having drubbed his gold-rimmed drum,  
 Waited for his comrades to come.  
 Twelve young braves went before him then,  
 Sharp-eyed rascals, those archer-men!  
 All prepared to let arrows fly,  
 Others with loaded muskets raised high,  
 All with their fuses ready alight,  
 Stocks held up to their shoulders tight.  
 Twenty warriors rode behind,

2060 Bows all ready, smooth-arrowed kind,  
 Ready to shoot, and not to miss,  
 Ready to fly from taut strings with a hiss.  
 Ready, bent back were held their bows,  
 Ready to seek their targets were those.  
 Twenty men rode on Manas' right,  
 Rascal Kalmaks on a raiding flight,  
 Raising the dust behind to the skies,  
 Getting into everyone's eyes,  
 Scaring all who saw them there,



2070 Drawing blood-red blades which scare:  
 Waving o'er their heads at times,  
 On they rode in unbroken lines.  
 Twenty others rode on his left –  
 Wolves, who many of heads had bereft.  
 In their hands their halberds took,  
 Rode and scared all with their furious look.  
 Take a peep – behind Manas there,  
 Sharp points of spears, with long blue horse-hair.  
 Forty knights in front you'll spy,  
 2080 Deafening all with their battle-cry.  
 Take a look – in front of him here,  
 Six avant-guardsmen now draw near.  
 Akkula, his powerful steed,  
 By his bridle forward lead.  
 Twelve more guards, no rider astride,  
 Then seven body-guards loudly cried:  
 "Stand back, stand back, and clear the way!"  
 With golden robes packed tight that day,  
 All neatly strapped to their saddles behind.  
 2090 His golden throne, a spear's height, we find  
 Gleaming away in the midst of them,  
 Borne by sixty serving-men...  
 From high slopes, from Kalba\* hills too,  
 From the banks of the Kainarlu,\*  
 Driven in thousands, will asses were found.  
 All were kicking, and bucking around.  
 Also a dragon, a hundred yards long –  
 Such a wild beast, and enormously strong!  
 Fettered in seven chains, I declare,  
 2100 Hobbled in seventy places there.  
 On its stomach, thus it crawls;  
 Of wild creatures with sharpest claws,  
 There six tigers tied you'd see,  
 And by some magical mystery,  
 Over them soars an Alpkarakush.\*  
 Seeming to beat down tree and bush,  
 Seeming to beat down hills all about,  
 Thus the drums start thundering out.  
 Rumbles Manas, like a black avalanche,<sup>46</sup>  
 2110 Like a great lake, where wild waves dance;  
 When people saw his threatening face,  
 They, amazed, just froze in their place.  
 That great procession on guests rolled down.  
 They were helpless, no laugh, no frown.

Guests who had come but yesterday –  
 Now just look – like statues sat they!  
 "God has punished us in this wise.  
 Clever Manas pulled wool o'er our eyes.  
 Now we sit here, and must take the rap.  
 2120 Did they not tell us he'd gone to Kēi-Kap?  
 Now he swoops upon us here!"  
 They all swore, with words severe,  
 At sleeping comrades started to stare,  
 Then cried: "Wake up, you laggards there!"  
 Pulled at their collars, and slapped each face.  
 Losing their heads, they jumped from their place.  
 But there were others among them, and those,  
 Having gulped butter and bread, wished to doze,  
 Having swigged tea, had dreams aloft,  
 2130 Having chewed meat, had gone quite soft,  
 Thinking: "We've come to the pleasantest place.  
 Have we not laid here, and no disgrace?  
 Now they have suddenly jumped on us!"  
 Into the very midst of them thus  
 Rode Manas, with his men amain.  
 On his blue drum he beat again.  
 Loudly he beat, and raised a shout,  
 And as soon as the drum thundered out,  
 His gold throne, six arm-spans high,  
 2140 Stewards brought, and stood it nearby.  
 Then thought our Lion Manas, so bold:  
 "This great throne of mine, pure gold,  
 Let them wind that dragon around!"  
 And just look now, what they found!  
 At six corners, on every side,  
 Six great tigers there they tied.  
 Guards from his lion-heart comrades stood there,  
 Glassy-eyed, they started to stare.  
 All around him, ready for fights,  
 2150 In their armour stood eighty-four knights.  
 Look around you – there camp-fires blaze.  
 Bending the backs of their steeds always,  
 All surrounded by bluish steel,  
 Chain-mail and armour, head to heel,  
 Just like angry lions, half-mad,  
 In their helmets and war-gear clad,  
 With their breast-plates and shoulder-plates thus,  
 Then they turned their backs to Manas.  
 That was the trick which made him grin.



2160 With the croups of their steeds towards him,  
 There they stood, steel lions at large,  
 Then their muskets began to charge,  
 Then their fuses began to light,  
 Then their stocks to their cheeks held tight,  
 Then stood waiting, those armoured men:  
 And a mass of wild asses then,  
 Off in front of them they drove,  
 Just like sheep, which on pastures rove,  
 Scattered them round, to left and right.

2170 Then behind those armoured knights,  
 With their bows and arrows drawn tight,  
 There we see, in all their might,  
 Ten times a hundred thousand young men,  
 And it seemed that those eighty-four then,  
 They were preparing to shoot and kill!  
 All their arrows were aimed at will.  
 They encircled them, six rows thus,  
 And great-spirited Lion Manas  
 Stood in the centre of those men,

2180 Called Bakai to come to him then.  
 Thus he went and mounted his throne,  
 There he sat, majestic, alone,  
 On his threatening ruling seat,  
 Travelling crown on his head complete.  
 Gave his orders to warriors then.  
 Looked his folk in the eye, all of them,  
 To his people these words addressed:  
 "Where are those Khans who came with the rest?  
 Find them, and bind them, and bring them here.

2190 Bring them here, let them stand in fear!  
 If they do not wish to appear,  
 If they resist, then make this clear –  
 They will have heads hacked off by us!  
 So he gave orders, bold Manas.  
 And his night-guards he sent for them!  
 Those whose heads they would have hacked then,  
 Each jumped up with a curse on his steed –  
 "End of the world!" they cried indeed.  
 Full of fury, they cursed and swore,

2200 Those who had thought themselves rulers before.  
 Riding to catch them, Manas' men,  
 Still on their steeds, called after them,  
 Put them in panic, they wanted to weep.  
 Made them shiver with fright, like sheep.

Cowards, compelled to stumble and trudge,  
 Thus they brought them before their judge.  
 Inside six rings of archers rare,  
 Lion Manas sat encircled there.  
 Numberless ranks of his armoured men

2210 Made a free way for frightened Khans then.  
 Thus they received a sudden surprise –  
 Straightway saw before their eyes  
 Eighty-four knights, no doubt of it,  
 Muskets all ready, and fuses lit:  
 "Ow, ow!" they cried, "Will they shoot at us?"  
 Then looked behind, with escape hopes thus.  
 But once more they were forced to gape –  
 Arrows directed, straight at their nape!  
 Their entry path is closed now, alack!

2220 No way out for them, no way back!  
 They were in a real trap, it appeared.<sup>47</sup>  
 Glanced at Manas, but still they feared.  
 All humane looks had left his face –  
 Looks of a lion, had taken their place.  
 On the seat of his golden throne,  
 There he sat, majestic, alone.  
 Signs of anger clung to his lips,  
 Pouting out, with sharpened tips.  
 Like the curved blade of a sabre stout,

2230 And his whiskers like daggers stuck out.  
 Spite was burning deep in his eyes,  
 Like a bellows-blown flame likewise,  
 Like the night, his brow was dark,  
 Lashes flashing, with many a spark.  
 Stubble stuck out upon his face,  
 All around, and in every place,  
 Would have sufficed for six pairs of socks!  
 "What are you here for, Khans?" he mocks.  
 "Did I not tell you?" Don't put on airs!

2240 You did not listen, and none of you cares!  
 Khans, you only vex and annoy!  
 Beys, what plans do you employ?  
 I have told you: 'Just calm down!'  
 But you don't listen, and only frown.  
 All the time you are stinging me,  
 What do you think of bringing me?  
 What are you cooking up for me now?  
 If I grow angry, Khans, I vow  
 You will die, in the cold earth lie thus...



2250 Since that time I was named Manas,  
 Since that time when my fame grew great,  
 There was no foe whom I did not deflate!  
 In the lowlands spreads Bakburchun,\*  
 I'd kike to see Chinese capitals soon,  
 Like to see Chin-Manchin,\* and Kakan!  
 Since so many came here to harm,  
 Now dispel my sorrow and woe,  
 And, my Khans, now with me go!  
 Is it not truth I tell to you?

2260 If you'd only agree with me too -  
 If you'd listen, and serve me aright!  
 There in black hills, where Kaspang" comes in sight,  
 Near to Beidzhin\* which has many gates,  
 Chok-Tabilgi,\* where a large town waits,  
 Come to see one on a huge black horse,  
 Ready to charge at the foe, of course.  
 One who is brother to sixty guard knights,  
 Alo-oke's young son, by rights,  
 Son of a heathen official kaldai,\*

2270 Come to that mighty knight Kongurbai!  
 Would you go with me on campaign?  
 Have you gathered here all in vain?  
 Why not come with me, then, instead?  
 That's a more worthy way ahead!  
 Let us give those Chinese a good fight!  
 If upon them in hordes we alight  
 And defeat them, and take what they've got,  
 Will you come with me then, or not?  
 Come now, answer me quickly then!"

2280 Thus brave Manas spoke to all of them.  
 Khans then whispered, all in a scare,  
 Each one was frightened, just like a hare.  
 "Let's be brave, and not lose our head.  
 If we say 'No!' we'll soon be dead...  
 Here in front, and there behind,  
 Only musket-balls we'll find!..  
 If we say 'Yes!' and try to be brave,  
 All the smae we shall meet the grave!  
 We shall lose lives if we try.

2290 Not one step shall we make, aye, aye!  
 Arrows will then rain down from on high!"  
 Thus, confused, did the Khans' thoughts fly...  
 Lost again, they looked around -  
 Never a word to say they found.

They were all scared stiff, and so  
 Could not decide, and say "We'll go!"  
 Could not raise right hands in the air,  
 Could not oaths of loyalty swear,  
 Could not murmur a thankful prayer -

2300 Just stood dumb and defeated there!  
 Lion Manas roared out at them so!  
 "Well, we shall go wherever you go!"  
 Thus, at last, the Khans all cried:  
 Letting his anger then subside,  
 He then spoke with his features clear:  
 "If that's so," he said, "draw near,  
 Get your signet rings ready now!"  
 Ordered his scribes to write down their vow.  
 And, when all the Khans drew near -

2310 "Come and sigh these documents here!"  
 Thus he ordered, and when it was done,  
 He then spoke to every one:  
 "Oh, you Khans of mine," said he,  
 Don't go back on your oath to me!  
 Don't you dare such a thing to do,  
 Or it will be the worse for you!  
 Don't say "We'll go!" and then back out -  
 Promises given don't you flout,  
 Saying, "We've thought better of that!"

2320 If you've 'thought better', you'll be knocked flat!  
 You will arouse the devil in me!  
 But Beijin again I shall see!  
 If someone thinks of turning back,  
 I shall be straightway on his track.  
 I shall fight with him to the death,  
 I shall slay him with my last breath.  
 Head-on with him, I'll hear his last groan,  
 And, unfailingly, gain my own!"  
 Such a warning gave Manas,

2330 As he spoke to the Khans without fuss.  
 "We shall not think better!" they said,  
 And before him each bowed his head.  
 Then said Manas, "Choose your leader now,  
 Khan of your Khans, and true to your vow,  
 Weigh up his worthiness!" added he,  
 "One who can fight, and your chieftain be -  
 When you've chosen, say what you've done!"  
 Having said that, he sat down on his throne.  
 When he insisted that they make their choice,



2340 Not one Khan, hearing him, raised his voice.  
 There was no bravery left in them,  
 And not a sound did any make then.  
 Stupified, stunned, they just stood there...  
 Three times Manas called them to declare,  
 Stood up again among all the folk there –  
 Not one Khan one word would dare.  
 But they all stood there, breathing deep.  
 To the last man did their silence keep.  
 Not one slave of God said a word.

2350 People around stayed silent, unstirred.  
 Not a word said those Khans, I repeat,  
 Long as it takes to prepare and cook meat...  
 Finally one bold knight stepped forth,  
 One of experience showed his worth,  
 Having settled on Eki-Kemin,\*  
 Where two black horses on leads he brought in,  
 He who was master of eloquence too,  
 Son of old Taz, the bold Urbyu,  
 Then stood up in his place and spoke:  
 2360 "O, my Sultan!" – the silence he broke –  
 I shall tell you the whole truth now.  
 I'll tell a secret, which people don't know.  
 Plain and homely, no charmer am I,  
 Head all mangy, half-bald, my, my!  
 Few folk live in my village, you see,  
 And my people are hostile to me.  
 Just suppose that a Khan I am made,  
 Hold up my head in a higher grade,  
 Where then should I my warriors find?  
 2370 With my grey beard a-waving behind,  
 In what squad should gallop then?  
 If I'm made chief of thousands of men,  
 Where then should I my warriors find?  
 Only torment I'd bring to that kind.  
 To which warriors then should I go?"  
 Having heard that, the people said so:  
 "Now, at last, the truth we are told,  
 All that was hid is now spoken bold!"  
 And with that they fell silent too.

2380 Of those Khans, except for Urbyu,  
 Not one was found who a word would say.  
 People grew tired, and turned away.  
 When an hour or two had passed,  
 Long as it takes to cook meat, at last,

Lion Manas said "Now, listen here,  
 Don't stand all squeezed together in fear.  
 Not one has guts to become a chief, then,  
 Leader of thousands of warrior men!  
 Are you alive, say, or already dead?"

2390 Don't let offence come into your head.  
 If you're afraid the command to take,  
 Then I the choice shall have to make!  
 From the tribes of Kara-Kirghiz  
 I must find a chieftain, that is!  
 From the tribes of Kara-Nogoi  
 I'll have to choose, and name my choice!  
 Khans and Beys, if you agree,  
 If you approve whom I choose," said he,  
 "One who has known success on his steed,  
 2400 One who at war is worth dozens indeed,  
 One who successfully knows how to scout,  
 One who in battle knocks all others out,  
 One who trusts all his secrets with me,  
 One who shares all his sorrows quite free.  
 One who leads Koēnboz on the rein,  
 One who a litter for him makes again,  
 One who sleeps sound, though foes give him pain.<sup>51</sup>  
 One who serves God, fights the foe not in vain.  
 One who has hewn off the enemies' heads,

2410 One who can shoot silver ingots on threads.  
 Aksakal\* old Bakai, I respect –  
 He is the chieftain I would elect.  
 Elder, beloved by our people is he.  
 What if take him your chieftain to be?  
 Raise him, and praise him before your eyes,  
 What if you now agree likewise?  
 Let us take him and make him your chief!  
 He'd be a real Khan, in my belief!"  
 So said grey-maned Lion Manas.

2420 All the warriors cheered him thus!  
 Many coward's faces turned white.  
 "Lion Manas has chosen all right!  
 We esteem and approve of Bakai,  
 Worthy to be our Chieftain high!"  
 Most of the people agreed with this word,  
 Loud all about their shouts were heard.  
 They respected white-bearded Bakai,  
 Though his number of years was high,  
 They were all happy, and glad at heart,



- 2430 So they said: "Let Manas make a start!"  
 Since they had all agreed with him then,  
 Chieftain o'er all their warrior-men  
 Bold Bakai they willingly took.  
 If that is so, come here and look,  
 Place your seals upon each deed!"  
 What the scribes wrote, with that they agreed.  
 Then the Khans came before the rest,  
 And on the deeds their seals impressed.  
 Then Manas handed them to Bakai.
- 2440 Not the least envy dimmed any eye.  
 When he was finally Chieftain made,  
 Then Manas came out on parade:  
 "Oh, my people!" he said then,  
 "Those in the saddle, call Allah. Amen!  
 Spirits, O Forebears! Support us, be near!"<sup>52</sup>  
 Are there those who speak like that here?  
 Those in the saddle, who deem life dear,  
 And enjoy it – are such folk here?  
 Who through Kordoi\* as fighting men strode,
- 2450 Who to Kël-Kamish\* took the road  
 Over the pass – are such folk here?  
 Who to the waters of Ili\* clear  
 Then descended – are such folk here?  
 Those who sounded the start trumpet near,  
 And their brazen flutes made to wail  
 All through the wide and winding vale,  
 Over the waterless dale severe,  
 Where they strode – are such folk here?  
 Those who through Otkërmëlyu\* and Darkan\*,
- 2460 Over the Otguz-Kechyu\* and Kalkan\*  
 Made their way – are such folk here?  
 Those who held their wishes dear,  
 And attained them – are such folk here?  
 Those who through Dzhugyuryuk\*, Dzhugën-Tash\*,  
 Those who through Dzhugyurmë\*, Kara-Saz\*,  
 Passed on their way – are such folk here?  
 Those who on Sari-Kiya\*, Dzhuyulyun\*,  
 Thus to meet the foe face to face soon,  
 Hastened ahead – are such folk here?
- 2470 Those who the heights of Tarbagatai sheer  
 Then passed over – are such folk here?  
 Those who on Sharpildak's far side\*  
 Went ahead, with warriors tried,  
 Those who saw Ayaguz\*, Chuk-Terek\*,<sup>53</sup>

- Egiz-Kara\*,\* and Bilkildak\*,  
 Buurultun-Tyun\*,\* and Egizek\*,  
 Those who peaks of Ertish\* did not fear –  
 Those who have seen all that – are they here?  
 Having gone round where the Altai rear,
- 2480 Having passed by – are such folk here?  
 Those who for months their way did steer,  
 Wanderers they – are such folk here?  
 Those who across the wide Orkun\*,  
 Knowing the winter, in autumn came soon,  
 Crossing the ford – are such folk here?  
 Places where mountains in plains disappear,  
 Where no high-roads o'er lowlands chase,  
 Rivers run dry there, to deserts they race.  
 Mountains ranges by passes are crossed,
- 2490 Places where man, in confusion, is lost.  
 No mountain big as your knee-cap you see,  
 And if you do, then a pain it will be.  
 Where bronze-nosed giants and sprites can appear!  
 Say, have you seen them? Are such folk here?  
 One-winged birds of prey, very queer.  
 Say, have you seen them? Are such folk here?  
 Men there like camels, who wildly rear.  
 Say, have you seen them? Are such folk here?  
 Women who look like a big furry bear –
- 2500 Hair on their bodies, but everywhere!  
 Say, have you seen them? Are such folk here?  
 Blind, with a spoon of ice they fare,  
 Lost, have you seen them? Are such folk here?  
 Chasing the boats – have you seen clear?  
 Seen them swim lakes... Are such folk here?  
 Have you been with your warriors grim,  
 Keeping the road towards Beijin?  
 Have you been there? Are such folk here?  
 Chinese who came as spies from afar,
- 2510 In Tangshang\* and Kara Shaar\*?  
 Have you caught them? Are such folk here?  
 There are those working with magical gear!  
 In such structures they only control;  
 In one moment they swallow up whole  
 Those who dare to approach their door.  
 That is the land they call Talugur\*.  
 Rams gigantic they name Akkuldzha\*,  
 Butting, de-gutting goes near and far.  
 Which of you knows them – are such folk here?



2520 Kuuordek – swan and duck spirits queer,  
 'Gainst whom none raises an arrow or spear.  
 Have you hunted? Are such folk here?  
 Those who have been in the South on campaign,  
 On limestone hills, in a lengthy chain,  
 On the salt marshes, no place for a beast,  
 Those who have travelled towards the South-East,  
 Where Sharata's \* high roadways veer,  
 And passed o'er them – are such folk here?  
 Where from Kasparang the road leads in  
 2530 On the approaches to gated Beijin,  
 There lives a fierce Khan – Kongurbai!  
 All his people have horses high!  
 Those boldly stole them away,  
 Grey as hares, and good for the fray,  
 Stately dry mares, a-pasturing there,  
 Drove them off – are such folk here?  
 Those who attacked Beijin without fear,  
 And broke through – are such folk here?  
 Those who spent all their lives with a spear,  
 2540 And could use them – are such folk here?  
 Those who avengers did not spare,  
 Buried them deep – are such folk here?  
 Well, if so, in spirit be bold –  
 He who is brave, and knows all of old,  
 You who rule, and hold great sway,  
 Answer my question straight away!"  
 So spoke and challenged them Manas,  
 And be seemed stronger, bolder thus!  
 God showered anger on that folk –  
 2550 They lamented, and thus they spoke:  
 "Woe is us! So dark is the night!  
 Even our fathers heard nothing like!  
 None of us here such a land have seen,  
 No mother's tales about it we ween.  
 None has e'er seen such a distant land!..  
 Why should we follow him, under his hand?  
 Eh, you comrades, as young as we,  
 To that far land of which spoke he,  
 How many years shall we need to ride?  
 2560 Oh, you bold world – so far and wide!  
 So it seems, we shall all die in vain.  
 Oh, these cursed Khans' forebears again!  
 Oh, these boastful rulers we know!..  
 Cauldrons they cleaned, and filled them with snow,

Yurtas they packed, their wives with them took,  
 Straddled their steeds, a look around took,  
 Grasping their spears, they raised them high,  
 Chattered away: "We're fighting-men, ayel!"  
 But how compare ourselves now to Manas?  
 2570 Having decided to fight for him thus,  
 Driven by God, we came to his door...  
 How could we know about all this before?  
 Thinking ourselves so bold, we came.  
 Woe is us! We must suffer again!  
 We have brought curses upon our own head!  
 Into a trap we have fallen instead!  
 We drove ourselves to this bitter fate.  
 Oh! As orphans our children will wait!  
 Oh! We have taken our own poor lives!  
 2580 Oh! Into widows we'll turn our wives!  
 Oh! On our folk we've brought down woe!  
 Thinking to catch Manas, and so  
 Having agreed, we journeyed here.  
 Why did we do so? Our end draws near!  
 We shall not see our homes again!"  
 So they cried aloud, all in vain.  
 Thus an unceasing howl arose,  
 Everywhere round about it flows –  
 Unending murmur of discontent...  
 2590 None could say: "Yes! To that far land we went!"  
 All the people who'd gathered there,  
 Like a lake poured out stood bare.  
 Powers had left them empty so.  
 Only blinked their eyes, did not know...  
 Till midday they said no word,  
 Only the murmuring crowd was heard.  
 "If someone's seen that land, step forth!"  
 Grey-maned Manas said; "Show your worth!"  
 Thrice he called, and passed between –  
 2600 None was found who could say; "I have seen!"  
 And mid the crowd, with Khans in between,  
 Like a great lake that emptied has been,  
 None was found who could say: "I have seen"  
 Blinking their eyes they stood, not serene.  
 None there could boast or brag a word,  
 So they all stood there, looking absurd.  
 Suddenly then, unexpected yet,  
 That grey-maned brave wolf, Almambet,  
 Turned to Manas, on his golden chair,



2610 Came from his eighty-four guardsmen there,  
 Jumped from his steed, where Manas he could reach,  
 And, going up to him, started his speech.  
 There in counsel, he said loud and grave:  
 "If they won't say I'm a Kalmak slave,  
 Worth just a half of a Kalmak groat,  
 If they won't say, 'Keep mad words down your throat!'  
 If they won't say, 'He's a Chinese dote,  
 Worth just a half of a Chinese groat!'  
 If they won't say: 'His long tongue let him hold!'"

2620 If your eighty-four guardsmen bold,  
 Who wherever they go raise a blaze,  
 If seven Khans, who are with you these days,  
 If your commanders, whom round you I see,  
 Do not say hurtful words to me –  
 If they will not harmful phrases bray,  
 If most of them scornful things do not say,  
 If I'm not touched on the raw anyway –  
 Then I will tell them, Manas, if I may –  
 In that land of cursed Kitai,\*

2630 If someone's been there, it's certainly I!  
 I, who have suffered from their disdain,  
 Harassed by them I've been, might and main,  
 He who has been o'er their passes high,  
 Up up in their mountains – then that was I!  
 From those cursed Chinese I reaped woe,  
 From their warriors, row on row,  
 From the chieftain of their fighting-men,  
 Who stood direct in my pathway then,  
 But, wild-headed, my sword I let fly,

2640 Blood of those heathens, like water shed I.  
 Shedder of Chinese blood – that am I!  
 Heathens in black sleeveless robes forby.  
 They have no Beys, but their own Kadai.\*  
 Heathens in red sleeveless robes slew I,  
 Heathens, who know not what Beys and Khans are,  
 Those who mount horses, and travel afar,  
 He who defended them, both low and high,  
 Shed blood like water then – that was I!  
 That was I, really, and no perhaps!

2650 From those rogues with red pom-poms on caps,<sup>34</sup>  
 From cursed heathens, with cunning eye,  
 No one has suffered so much as I!  
 In robes of silk, and soft satin beside,  
 In their high-boots, so hollow and wide,

In their soft slippers, with curled-up toes,  
 In their red robes, with buttons in rows...  
 By their enormous knight, Kongurbai,  
 Overthrown in misfortune was I.  
 Fell from my steed, Algara, at that,

2660 Pierced by his spear, by him was laid flat...  
 Beaten in tourney by him was I,  
 Then I decided, wounded, to fly  
 From Beijin, with its gates wide and high.  
 I escaped, your knight, – that was I!"  
 So spoke Almambet, and then ceased.  
 'Mid the knights, save him, if you please,  
 There was none who said: "That I have seen!"  
 Lion Manas still stuck to his theme.  
 Questioned the Khans again, in stern mood.

2670 All of them in confusion stood...  
 Simple folk too stood in thought around.  
 So by Manas they thus were found.  
 Then he started to make his speech:  
 "Oh, my people!" he said to them each,  
 "If you agree with me, as it is,  
 If you consent with elders in this,  
 Let's remember what Almambet said,  
 Let's give him power to go right said,  
 Let us by him, Chief-Commander, be led!

2680 If he lies dead – let us all lie dead!  
 If he swims lakes – then we all must swim,  
 Come what may, we must follow him!  
 If he climbs mountains, we climb to the sky!  
 Let him lead us o'er passes high.  
 If wind sweeps him away, we'll fly too,  
 If he encircles black earth – we anew!  
 Let us all aid and support him thus,  
 What if we follow him, don't make a fuss?  
 Quarrel with him, after all we've been told?

2690 Where is the one who would be so bold?  
 Answer this question I put to you men!"  
 So bold Manas addressed them then,  
 Waited for the folk to decide.  
 "Old Bakai leads our soldiers, our pride,  
 Almambet, though, will lead Bakai, –  
 If you all agree, and say 'Aye!'"  
 Those were the words of Lion Manas,  
 And the warriors listened, no fuss.  
 All the people were listening too –



2700 "Our Manas knows just what we must do!  
 Here with him we are all agreed,  
 He speaks great common-sense, indeed!  
 Since he asks us of these two men,  
 Thousands of times we answer then:  
 "We are agreed! Agreed! Agreed!"  
 They suit everyone – we'll pay heed!"  
 Thus the warriors gave a great cry –  
 Almambet heard it, and old Bakai.  
 In salute, they both raised hands –

2710 Almambet Chief-Commander stands!  
 Warriors witnessed that chosen was he,  
 And old Bakai Army leader to be.  
 People witnessed the choice of these two,  
 And that Manas had put the scheme through.  
 To simple folk Manas then said:  
 "Don't make a fuss, stay here quiet instead!"  
 Drum after drum then rumbled around,  
 Like a great avalanche started to sound,  
 And Manas, on that same day,

2720 Went to his fortress, not far away.  
 To his head-quarters, to see Akilai,  
 Sat on his throne, and called Adzhibai  
 With Chalibai, for a mission, you see:  
 "Saddle your horses, and listen to me!  
 I shall instruct you just where to go,  
 Gird on your swords, and make ready so.  
 To all the warriors who came to stay,  
 Now must the two of you make your way.  
 To each one of their tents you must come,  
 Beating away on your gold-rimmed drum.

2730 Out of the warriors staying with us,  
 Out of the numerous ones who came thus,  
 Those who tell you: 'I have a bad steed!  
 I have great doubts about him, indeed!'  
 Those who did not want to come here before,  
 Order them then to go home once more.  
 Let them say 'I'll go back this morn!'  
 Those who tell you; 'My robe is all worn!  
 Those whose clothes are torn, in a mess,

2740 Those who came here under duress –  
 Tell them to return on their way –  
 Let them say: 'I'll go back today!'  
 If they stay until evening time,  
 When I start counting, line by line,

When I make notes then, squad by squad,  
 When I write down each man, and nod –  
 Those who have said 'I have a bad steed,  
 I have great doubts about him, indeed!'  
 Then slay all their steeds for food!

2750 For the firm ones, we'll make things good!  
 Those who tell you: 'My robe is all worn!'  
 Those whose clothes are tattered and torn,  
 Test and pester them, cut them down.  
 While I'm alive, with my God-given crown,  
 Firm, sturdy warriors I will support!  
 Tell every one of my words, as you ought!  
 Tell all those folk, then return, let them learn"  
 So Adzhibai, Chalibai, in their turn,  
 Straddled their horses, a lively pair,  
 Rode round among all the warriors there.  
 Then they beat on their gold-rimmed drum,  
 Went round to all the tribes, every one.  
 And informed them: "For you who came here,  
 There is much that we shall make clear,  
 Listen attentively to us now –  
 These are Manas' orders, we vow!  
 'Those who wish to do so, go back.  
 Let them say they'll return on their track!  
 Those who wish to do so, let them stay,

2770 Let them take that risk, anyway!"  
 Having said these words, Adzhibai  
 Then gave news to all, low and high.  
 Having thought awhile, all were glad,  
 Pleased at heart with the news they'd had.  
 And among them a blether grew,  
 Like the bleating of sheep-flocks too:  
 "Brothers, old and young, did you hear?  
 God has sent us a word of good cheer!  
 From the ruler, the brave Manas,

2780 Now has come his permission to us!  
 Come now, let us refuse our prey;  
 Brothers, let us go back today!  
 Why must we follow him in vain –  
 Let's go back to our folk again!  
 There we'll sow rye, and cattle we'll raise –  
 Let's go back to our people's ways!  
 We'll make a living at home somehow.  
 From the plunder we're promised now  
 Let's decline, the price is too dear –



2790 Brothers, let's go back from here!"  
 That is what the majority said,  
 Turning things over in their head.  
 Just like migrating birds they whirled,  
 Made a hubbub, everywhere heard.  
 Started to ask the ones who knew.  
 How to find the road back anew.  
 "Valley roads are best!" they were told –  
 "Mountain roads are stony and cold.  
 Rivers can be stormy, though,  
 2800 And too swift through them to go!...  
 So beware of valleys which wend,  
 They may come to a sudden dead end!  
 Forty or fifty prepared to go back,  
 And to seek out the homeward track,  
 But the others were worried, see;  
 From each tribe, though with difficulty,  
 And unwillingly they remained –  
 "May they be cursed, they nothing have gained!  
 All those others who said 'Come with us –  
 2810 Stick together, it's better thus!'  
 They were the tribes of Kara-Kirghiz\* –  
 One of the oldest tribes there is.  
 When those people made such a fuss,  
 They were visited by Manas.  
 From his forty body-guard men,  
 Bold Kirgil let out a cry then.  
 On Akkula, like a giant there rode  
 Bold Manas, in high-boots, curly-toed.  
 In his hand was his polished spear,  
 2820 Round his waist his sword hung near.  
 There his battle-axe swung at his side,  
 Double-headed, and blades sharp and wide,  
 Musket Akkelte, at his back,  
 Coloured banner blue staff did not lack.  
 There it was blowing, free in the breeze.  
 When he rode to the troops, some of these  
 Soon recognized him, and some did not.  
 Of these latter were quite a lot,  
 Who Manas before did not know,  
 2830 Therefore they questioned each other so:  
 "Who so severe and stern of face  
 On that steed Akkula takes place?  
 What is he then, and why so praised?"  
 Many of them such questions raised,

Many were puzzled when him they espied.  
 Those who knew Manas replied:  
 "Ask no questions, you'll hear no lies!  
 If he trembles on his right side,  
 If his right whisker begins to twitch,  
 2840 Then the Kalmaks with fear will itch!  
 That is Manas, an unusual knight.  
 If he trembles on his left side,  
 If his left whisker begins to twitch,  
 Then 'gainst the Solo-onis he will switch!  
 He who would think to battle with him  
 Comes to misfortune, and all ends grim.  
 That, indeed, is our leader Manas.  
 He attacks like a tiger does,  
 Hews down foes with his blue steel blade –  
 2850 See how stern his face he has made!  
 Bristles like on a dragon sprout.  
 Ha is hard-hearted, you need not doubt,  
 And his battle-cry, once begun,  
 None can match benesth the sun!  
 Like a hungry lion, he roars!  
 Threatening is he when his fury soars.  
 When they glance at a lion like him,  
 All are amazed, and the world grows dim.  
 People who've seen him, know him that way –  
 2860 Can you imagine then what they say?  
 "If Manas is such, as you say,  
 If he is God's one slave that way,  
 Then like a deep dreaming forest is he,  
 Who will protect, should a blizzard be.  
 He is ingenious, eloquent too.  
 He replies to complaints, if true.  
 He's like a fortress, with bastioned walls,  
 Which under cannon-fire never falls.  
 If Manas lives as most worthy of men,  
 2870 And we desert, won't God punish us then?  
 We have seen him, and understood –  
 He is wise, knows the road to good.  
 Let us follow Lion Manas.  
 Let us follow, and make no fuss.  
 Let us push all his foes aside!  
 See him in battle, sword flashing wide!  
 Let us die, if predestined to die,  
 Let us ride with him, hold heads high.  
 Let us oppose those opposing him,



2880 Let's see what panic his foes get in!  
 If he should die, let us die in his lines!  
 Let us go fighting, where his glory shines!  
 Let's press the enemies who him annoy.  
 Powerful foes we'll divide, and destroy!  
 We shall die fighting, if things turn out grim.  
 Strong ones placed all their hopes upon him.  
 Weak ones found great support by his side.  
 All then decided – with him they would ride.  
 All were agreed – no dissenters were known.  
 2890 Those who were frightened to go back alone,  
 But had not dared to say: "We'll go back!"  
 They, to the last one, raised loud cries "Alack!"  
 Loudly they pleaded: "Take us likewise!"  
 When all the people raised such loud cries,  
 Then brave Manas knew no further alarm,  
 And at last then his heart grew calm.  
 When he looked then upon all his men,  
 When in the end he had counted all them,  
 Each hundred thousand he saw on the lea,  
 2900 All earth around, which your eye then could see,  
 Simply was packed with masses of men,  
 Armed with their weapons of steel, each of them,  
 Counted again, with the greatest of care –  
 Thirty times one hundred thousand were there.<sup>55</sup>  
 Then he addressed all the warriors led:  
 "People of mine!" Manas proudly said,  
 See, half a month has passed by, it's clear,  
 Since I gave orders to drive horses here.  
 Fattest of steeds grew slim on their way –  
 2910 From the Altai they arrived today –  
 Steeds which I was pasturing there;  
 Of all there are, not one shall I spare.  
 I gave the order: "Bring all that are mine!"  
 Now all you warriors standing in line,  
 Listen, and hear the call that I give –  
 Straddle a steed, every one, while you live.  
 Then to the herds that are on the Aral,  
 Fly like a landslide, and take them as well.  
 For every tent, then take one colt,  
 2920 Pack on his back all your goods he must hold.  
 To each tent take a mare with no foals.  
 Slay her, and slay her, and lay her in rolls!  
 For your supper, take meat from that mare!  
 As for cooking, of that you take care.

Every man then may take a horse,  
 Lead it away on a cord, of course.<sup>56</sup>  
 If you wish for a steed, then go,  
 May God help you, if he decides so!  
 May all the tribes, of which I'm the head,  
 2930 Not forget these words I have said!  
 If the Creator won't help us here –  
 From those Chinese does death draw near.  
 If in Beijin we are destined to die,  
 For those horses there, not on a tie,<sup>57</sup>  
 Those which to you I willingly gave,  
 When we go there, beyond the grave,  
 Not one coin will I ask of you –  
 Take them as presents which are your due.  
 I give them freely, share them with us!"  
 2940 Such were the words of Lion Manas.  
 Thus the warriors did he assure.  
 Ordered the drummer to drub once more.  
 Having heard his speech, people then  
 Cried: "Long live Manas among men!  
 For your name means – live long, be wise.  
 May you survive in every guise,  
 May your tribe in numbers grow too –  
 Not for nought mighty knight are you!  
 Others like you can't be found anywhere!"  
 2950 Gladly rejoiced the elders there.  
 All who had once been much younger men,  
 They got up on their horses then,  
 And with nooses fixed, it appears,  
 They took with them their lengthy spears,  
 Thus to use them, as though lassoes.  
 To the herds the whole mass moves,  
 In one horde they rode, indeed.  
 Every warrior took one steed  
 With a cord, which they could hold.  
 2960 To every tent they led one colt.  
 There it was left to receive its load.  
 To every tent one mare did they goad,  
 There it was slain, the men to feed –  
 All in the tent fed well, indeed!  
 People filled all the vale, I declare,  
 Here and there, and everywhere.  
 Many said: "My horse showed his teeth,  
 And his broad deep chest beneath.  
 He goes boldly along the way –



2970 What a fine trotter I got today!"  
 Many were rejoicing so,  
 But a few did dissatisfied grow:  
 "Do you see that fellow there?  
 Take a look, you'll be jealous, I swear!  
 He has got a fine trotter, indeed.  
 He has saddled a well-cared-for steed!  
 What if Manas demands it back?  
 No need to be so greedy as that!  
 He may not keep his head for long.  
 2980 Just take a look, and later on  
 Maybe a witness you will be?  
 Many whispered so, secretly:  
 "When he runs, like the wind he goes!  
 Stately Koën-Bel's mane flows!"<sup>58</sup>  
 He strides majestic along the road;  
 What a fine steed nave I bestrode!"  
 Firmly holding the bridle in hand,  
 High and low, they rode the land.  
 Many there were who did the same -  
 2990 All the greediest of them came.  
 Having encircled the horse-herd there,  
 Having lassoed the desired mare,  
 Then they gabbled: "They're all so fat!"  
 And they pulled the lasso like that,  
 Catching thus an untrained steed.  
 But things ended badly, indeed -  
 With a crack the bridle gave way,  
 Breaking under the straining bay!..  
 Then they cursed Manas openly -  
 3000 What a white-washed oath-breaker he!  
 Clearly, by his forebears he's cursed,  
 'Mid his good horses a wild ass he nursed!  
 - One which has wandered into his herd  
 He has pastured. Is that not absurd?  
 Onagers does he feed, or steeds?  
 Are they the kind of beasts he needs?  
 Such wild asses can I catch?  
 Such wild donkeys can I match?  
 With deep disappointment spoke they:  
 3010 "We've not seen the like, ere this day!  
 Such cunning creatures they seem to be,  
 Let's find out about them, see,  
 Let us ask our wise old men  
 What they have to say about them!

Then those grey-beard elders, you know,  
 Those of great experience also,  
 They replied to their questions then:  
 "No, they're all horses, each one of them!"  
 So they decided to try them alone -  
 3020 Jumped on their backs, and at once were thrown!  
 Hundreds of them had falls as they went.  
 Those taking steeds from tent to tent,  
 Raised a roaring, rumbling cry.  
 While they were doing that, forby,  
 Our Manas had bestraddled his steed,  
 Rode out to see what was wrong, indeed.  
 Rode off to take a look around -  
 This is what Tiger Manas then found.<sup>59</sup>  
 With six comrades as helpers he came,  
 3030 Went to visit the troops again.  
 On inspection he rode all round.  
 First of all Tështyuk's troopers he found.  
 From Dzhambirchi's a few men he took,  
 Then at Muzburchak's took a look,  
 Went around Këkche's fighting men,  
 And Urbyu's divisions then.  
 When the last of them he'd passed through,  
 One more thing Manas had to do!  
 Of those forty comrades and friends,  
 3040 Each had erected colossal tents.  
 They were made with brocade long and wide,  
 One hundred thousand men inside!  
 Troopers could barely let him pass.  
 Having gone round, our Lion Manas  
 Found Kirgil, who led forty men,  
 And remained at his yurta then.  
 Ordered his drummer to drub his drum -  
 Hearing this, Kirgil had to come.  
 Gave a welcoming bow, hands on breast,  
 3050 Then stepped forth, at Manas' request.  
 Then Manas, to tease Kirgil, said:  
 "Hey, Kirgil, with your wise white-haired head,  
 Well, Kirgil, heading my forty men,  
 Having defeated the world with them,  
 Don't you hear ought, as you lie on your side?  
 Don't your banners fly high and wide?  
 Don't your men wait orders from you?  
 Don't you want to show roads anew?  
 With your commander, Bakai, then say,



3060 Don't you wish to consult today?  
 Time to bestride your seed – lucky hour,  
 Time to choose this day, full of power!<sup>60</sup>  
 Time to move off on promising ways,  
 On this Friday, most fitting of days!"  
 Thus said Manas, the knight-bogatur,  
 Thus he spoke, and left with things clear.  
 On that day the warriors slept,  
 Soon dawn rays through the bright sky swept.  
 When the light of day grew clear,  
 3070 When the world was begilded here,  
 What a pity that we could not see  
 All that knightly company!  
 Early rose the wise Bakai,  
 Many warriors standing by,  
 And his golden banner shone,  
 Floating flags, with their ribbons on.  
 Father Bakai then rode on his way.  
 After him, one-hundred-thousand, say,  
 Moved ahead, along with the rest,  
 3080 And in their tracks came men of the best.  
 With their golden banners high,  
 Waking the earth with their noise, riding by,  
 Dzhamgirchi, the Eshtek, rode there,  
 With him warriors too, rode there,  
 Followed by Tështyuk's horsemen there,  
 On their steeds went striding there.  
 After them your Urbyu rode there,  
 With the Kara-Kirghiz strode there,  
 Moving, not losing the others there,  
 3090 And in their tracks the dust rose there.  
 From the vale in a cloud it reared.  
 Many Kazakhs, and much to be feared,  
 Loudly were singing their favourite lays,  
 Then came Kekchë's brave men on their ways,  
 Those bold warriors, onward bound,  
 Left their tracks on that mountain ground,  
 Waist-bands, like turbans, round them bound,  
 With a riding-bag strapped around,  
 To the Almighty praying in need,  
 3100 Spurring their steeds along at speed,  
 With shields ringing, and swinging free,  
 Gold crescent moon on their banners, see,  
 Calling "Holy Father" by name,  
 With Sandzhibek, who from Andizhan came,

Rode in ranks his Mussulmen,  
 And behind them, believers then,  
 Each one playing his brazen fife,  
 Others blowing their horns, for their life,  
 Others blowing long trumpets too,  
 3110 All giving piercing sounds when they blew.  
 Waving raised banners, each on its stick,  
 With Muzburchak, son of Buudayik,  
 Came his warrior serving-men.  
 In order came by rights after them,  
 Warriors of the forty brave knights.  
 Such great numbers, betond all sights,  
 With their gleaming sharp-headed spears,  
 Smoothly rocking in time, it appears,  
 Beating the earth down flat on their way –  
 3120 That's how the fighting men rode that day...  
 Following on where warriors fare,  
 From the gold court in his fortress there  
 From the palace of Akilai,  
 Lion Manas, your knight so high,  
 Sat upon his steed at last,  
 Weapons about his waist made fast.  
 Having given to God a groan,  
 Having called on Allah alone,  
 Having promised a camel to slay,<sup>61</sup>  
 3130 Thus he started on his way.  
 Happy bluebirds round him made flights,  
 And along with his forty knights,  
 He was successful as could be.  
 After their warriors then rode he,  
 That man of fame, predestined, it seemed,  
 With his name by the folk esteemed,  
 With his red banner, his knights he leads,  
 Not like other folk in his deeds,  
 Leader Manas, perceptive of soul,  
 3140 He set off to his distant goal.  
 With gilt-hafted weapons in hand,  
 Lions born, forty warriors grand,  
 Calling on God, they rode off, indeed,  
 Where from the foothills the pass-roads lead,  
 Where they divide 'neath mountains high,  
 Where there's the pass across Kangai,  
 Where it turns, and leads up and down.  
 Soon as they reached it, Manas gave a frown.  
 Very angry your Lion you find –



3150 Fury again had captured his mind.  
 Heavily hung his lower lip,  
 Foam on his top one began to slip.  
 Not a single word he said,  
 From the anger which filled his head,  
 Nobody there would reap any good.  
 Flushed with fury, there he stood;  
 Fired with frenzy, he frowned again,  
 All his features filled with disdain.  
 Seeing this, his knights, I declare,  
 3160 Started to raise a hubbub there.  
 No going back, and no going ahead.  
 No one a word to the angry knight said.  
 No, to start questioning they did not dare!  
 All of his forty warriors there,  
 With Kirgil, their chieftain too,  
 Fell in confusion... What could they do?  
 Through tight nostrils their breath they blew.  
 As the sweat on their foreheads broke through,  
 They seemed to stand before Judgement Day:  
 3170 "Here he has started out on his way,  
 Thousands of warriors with him, at that,  
 Here he is frowning, now he has spat!  
 What a great torment it is for us –  
 He should be happy, should our Manas!  
 But he is angry at once!" they said.  
 "What if he goes like this on ahead?  
 May not Allah soon punish us then?"  
 Thus all Manas' forty tried men  
 Stood in amaze at his furious gaze,  
 3180 Hesitating, upon their ways:  
 "When our blood-thirsty one was calm,  
 He felt one wish, and no alarm.  
 Only one thing did wish to find;  
 Only one thing was on his mind:  
 Take thirty thousand of us with him,  
 Knock at the gates of crowded Beijin –  
 That's what he really desired to do!  
 Now what he wished has half come true.  
 Now all his steeds are on their way,  
 3190 Thirty thousand of us today,  
 All have gathered, Manas to please!  
 When to fight our foe, the Chinese,  
 On campaign to Bakburchun  
 Now we've set out, and all's in tune.

Suddenly he grows full of ire!  
 What's the reason for that? they enquire,  
 Whispering softly among themselves there.  
 Then to settle this sad affair,  
 Wise Almambet, to Manas, still as grim,  
 3200 Thus rode up alongside with him.  
 It was amusing to see him go,  
 And to hear him beginning so:  
 "You have with you your forty knights,  
 Comrades-in-arms, all Khans by rights,  
 Lion Manas one question I fire –  
 My Sultan, I'd like to enquire,  
 If you would like to know what it is,  
 Then I shall tell you straight, 'tis this,  
 And this affair can not be called small;  
 3210 To that one who is blessed with all,  
 To that one, so worthy of you,  
 Daughter of a mighty Khan too,  
 Most artistic in every way,  
 Daughter of Kara-Khan Kanikei,  
 We should go to her palace now,  
 And receive her blessing somehow.  
 Only then should we go on our way!"  
 That is what Almambet had to say.  
 Having listened to him awhile,  
 3220 Suddenly melting in one happy smile,  
 Knowing his character in a trice,  
 And that Alma gave the right advice,  
 Hearing his words, Manas then thought:  
 "He knows my soul – far more than he ought.  
 If not forbidden, he'll guess what has passed!"  
 So his anger so longer could lest,  
 And he gave a great laugh therefore,  
 With his incisors – a wide-open door.  
 Teeth like his nobody has seen;  
 3230 Bared, nor scared, but all agleam.  
 So he laughed, with mouth open wide,  
 Forty warriors by his side  
 Thought: "He's a feminist, at all events!  
 He's not laughing, he only pretends!"  
 So they all whispered together once more,  
 Started to judge him, just as before.  
 "If that's so, bold Lion," they said  
 "Let's go straight to your wife on ahead!"  
 She'll be waiting for you, by the way –



3240 On to the palace of Kanikei!"  
 So once again on their way they set,  
 Forty knights beside him yet,  
 And this time, as it was before,  
 They were arguing more and more.  
 Whispering here, and chattering there,  
 Laughing aloud sometimes, I declare,  
 So ahead on the road went they,  
 To the castle gates' golden array,  
 To the palace of Kanikei,  
 3250 They drew nearer on their way.  
 So let us leave them, travelling yet,  
 With the laughing Manas at their head,  
 Let those forty knights still ride –  
 We shall leave them on one side:  
 To Kanikei, with mind so rich,  
 To our Kanish we now shall switch,  
 And about her to tell I'll try:  
 Thinking "How can they pass me by?  
 Nought will go right, on whatever bent!"  
 3260 Round the village her envoys she sent –  
 Married women, in head-scarves of white.<sup>62</sup>  
 Many they summoned to stand in her sight,  
 Those sweet creatures, with courteous word,  
 Those wise women, who sought nought absurd,  
 Those who were gracious, and swarthy-faced,  
 Those with a supple and slender waist,  
 Those who bound them with girdles tight,  
 Forty maids stood in Kanikei's sight.  
 Dressed in satin, s-rustling light,  
 3270 Eyes which gleamed like a mirror bright.  
 Those who were fragrant as honey and musk.<sup>63</sup>  
 Meeting the bogatirs was their task,  
 Leading them all to sweet Kanikei.  
 Meeting her Lion Manas on his way,  
 Head held high on her neck so slim,  
 White hands in welcome she held out to him.  
 So your sweet lady invited them in,  
 So she began then to speak with him:  
 "Here are your forty fighting men –  
 3280 May all go well with you and them then!  
 Out on your road may you meet success,  
 May your Creator assist you, no less!  
 May he send strength to accomplish your aim,  
 May your foe fall, and not rise again!"

May all your knights who ride by your side,  
 Counting their booty find, with great pride,  
 One hundred horses for each man at least!  
 May they find spoil, whether silk, fur, or beast!  
 May they achieve what they set out to gain –  
 3290 Win for their people a century's fame!  
 Riding your steeds on a luck-bringing day,  
 Spurring them off on great Friday this way,  
 On this great Friday, in battle array,  
 On this great Friday, all set for the fray,  
 With a gold crescent upon your red flag,  
 High in the sky on its staff let it wag.  
 Numerous are the troops you lead –  
 Sons feel like orphans, wives – widows indeed!  
 Your relations left lonely are seen.  
 3300 On his crutch will the lame man lean!  
 Where then with warriors do you move?  
 Surely, the victors you will prove!  
 We're only women, but we'd like to know –  
 Where will commanders and warriors go?  
 Where will you meet the foe, forby?"  
 While Manas prepared his reply,  
 Ere he had said the how, where, and why,  
 Up like a hawk which soars in the sky,  
 Swift as a leopard leapt Almambet,  
 3310 And, with Manas' consent he said,  
 Taking one moment alone to decide:  
 "Oh, dear wives," said he, "we ride  
 On that road over Kaspang pass,  
 To Beijin, with its gates, gold and brass.  
 To him who in Chok-Tabil is found,  
 To him who rides a black steed around,  
 To him who's ready to call us his foe,  
 To him with sixty commanders also,  
 To him, the son of Alo-oke,  
 3320 To him, that heathen, who bars our way.  
 To that great giant, Khan Kongurbai.  
 "You won't escape your fate!" we'll cry.  
 We had moved off on our way, it's true,  
 But we turned back to meet with you,  
 And to bid you farewell awhile,  
 Thinking that you might help with a smile,  
 And might be of some service to us!"  
 To Kanikei, Almambet spoke thus.  
 He had not finished his speech, by rights,



3330 When all those forty comrade-knights,  
 With the elder Kirgil at their head,  
 Just as though they'd been struck deed,  
 Tumbled down, each man from his steed.  
 Forty serving maids ran to their need.  
 Each took a horse's bridle in hand;  
 And to the golden hitch-post they ran,  
 There hitched them up to bronze beams tall.  
 Lion Manas, along with them all,  
 From Akkula jumped clumsily then,  
 3340 Tumbled down, like the rest of his men.  
 Kanikei at once took his horse,  
 Hitched it up at the gold post, of course,  
 Back before all the rest did she speed,  
 Having quickly tied up his steed.  
 Showing her skill, and quick wits in her head,  
 Like a wild deer, to the door she sped,  
 Opened the way for all the knights,  
 With Manas at their head by rights.  
 Following him Almambet came then,  
 3350 And Kirgil with the other men.  
 There they entered, eldest ahead.  
 Slips for the floor in rows were spread.  
 Precious patterns adorned each mat,  
 And golden cushions on which they sat.  
 Kanikei ordered a mare to be slain:  
 "Till it is eaten, let them remain!"  
 Ordered: "Bring in the fine-chopped stew!"  
 Thus did she everything, just as was due.  
 Those forty comrades who came with them,  
 3360 In long rows sat together then.  
 Mare's milk, fermented, they drank like this,  
 Then grew hot, having drunk this kumiss.  
 Then the sweat broke out on each brow.  
 Strong arak\* makes them no cooler now!  
 So the mare's meat in chunks they ate.  
 Wine of all kinds before them was set.  
 In dishes patterned with mother-of-pearl,  
 Honey, with caraway seeds, made heads whirl.  
 And one's senses began to swim --  
 3370 This, on a dish, serving-maids brought in.  
 They stood drinking the toasts in rows.  
 Round and round the kumiss then goes,  
 Goblets clink, and eyelids close.  
 From their brows the sweat now flows.

They speak not of the present now,  
 They speak more of the past, somehow:  
 "Oh, I pierced that foe right through!"  
 "Oh, I cut mine in pieces, too!"  
 "Oh, I slashed off my opponent's head!"  
 3380 "Oh, I left my enemy dead!"  
 "Oh, I showed what I'm made of then!"  
 "Oh, I showed guts before all those men!"  
 Bragging, heads wagging, they bolder grew,  
 Toasting, and boasting like you never knew,  
 Bragging, not lagging, all sense they denied.  
 Then, overcome, someone there up and cried:  
 "Oh, no, you didn't -- you've simply lied!"  
 "You lie yourself!" the other replied.  
 "How you ran away from the foe --"  
 3390 My two eyes saw, so I should know!  
 I was there, and so I repeat --  
 Such a foe you could not defeat!  
 You were a coward, the truth is this --  
 You could not make a blow, and not miss!  
 You are awkward in speaking too --  
 You can't convince one of what you do!  
 Furthermore, you're stupid, I'd say!" --  
 So the arguments flew that day.  
 From the laughter, and from the wine,  
 3400 Loud amusement reigned all the time...  
 Then, all forms of restraint having died,  
 Words of offence were loudly cried.  
 Teeth were clenched, scorn laughed aloud,  
 'Mid those forty knights in a crowd,  
 Sitting as though on small thrones that day...  
 So the quick-witted Kanikei  
 Thus approached with something to say,  
 Words of wisdom to give away.  
 Clearly, sincerely she spoke, and slow.  
 3410 To Almambet she addressed herself so,  
 And she spoke most respectfully:  
 "My husband's friends, just listen," said she,  
 "Forty armed men sit here, in fact,  
 But 'men-at-arms' is not exact --  
 Not men-at arms, but friends are they.  
 'Comrades-in-arms' I would rather say,  
 Some full of worldly wisdom quite.  
 Forty close guards, who sit here tight,  
 Forty friends filling this chamber white.



3420 Here are a few, once my guards, by right.  
 Those whom I coldly commanded, severe.  
 With them are some who then were not here,  
 Who have just recently joined these rows,  
 Never defeated by oncoming foes.  
 That land is named "There's no going back!"  
 There those Chinese are a wild wolf-pack.  
 Take a look, and like ants they swarm.  
 Numberless hordes those Chinese form;  
 Even up until Judgement Day  
 3430 None will ever defeat them, they say!  
 You travel now to a dangerous foe,  
 Grappling with numberless ones you go.  
 Now before you the far road stands -  
 Maybe death waits in distant lands?  
 All that you need for your safety don,  
 Ere to the enemy you surge on!  
 All I shall find, and your needs suffice.  
 Every comrade of yours, in a trice,  
 I shall give armour, shining bright.  
 3440 Say, do you wish to stay the night?  
 Say, do you wish to stay till midday?  
 So that I know, and don't lose my way!  
 Shall I prepare more food for my friends?  
 So said Kanish - and there her speech ends.  
 Thus she questioned our Almambet,  
 And what answer then did she get?  
 "Listen, my leader's lady," said he -  
 "Khans the people's supporters must be,  
 And our campaign goes a long, long way!  
 3450 If our Khan sleeps with you here, please say,  
 Will the star of success on us shine?  
 Do not invite us to stay this time!  
 We can scarcely stay here, is it right -  
 If comrades sleep in the fields all night?  
 If we are parted from comrades and friends,  
 Do you not see how the matter thus ends?  
 We should find great misfortune then!"  
 He had barely ceased speaking when  
 Kanikei lightly left the room -  
 3460 Out she went, not returning soon.  
 To her guardsmen who stood outside,  
 To her two-score strong-men she hied,  
 To her protectors there, stern-lipped.  
 In her pocket her hand she slipped.

From a big bunch of golden keys,  
 From a jangling mass of these,  
 One she chose with the greatest ease.  
 - Ordered: "Open my treasury, please!"  
 This the strong-men made haste to do,  
 3470 Hauled out a monstrous saddle-bag too.  
 Not for a camel - an elephant that!  
 Greenish-azure, all round and fat.  
 Not for a dromedary would it do -  
 Those great strong-men could scarce lug it through.  
 Almambet got a great surprise,  
 Barely could he believe his eyes -  
 In the room centre a monster lies!  
 Then Kanikei began to speak:  
 "O, my husband's friend," said she  
 3480 "Pure gold is priceless, it seems to me -  
 In this great saddle-bag here I've got  
 All that is needed, and some that's not!  
 It is not in Beijin, so they say,  
 Very not on a summer say.  
 May the sunstroke not lay you low,  
 May you not lose strength and power so!  
 If you don't pay attention to that,  
 All your great plans will soon fall flat.  
 So fine fleeces from fat woolly sheep,  
 3490 In a clean place I ordered to keep.  
 "Nice and level crop them!" I said.  
 Ninety old women to them I led.  
 With their nails made them scratch the fleece.  
 Young wives made felt from that, if you please.  
 Maidens' deft fingers stitched many a hat.  
 After nine months: "Pull loose hairs, give a pat!"  
 Experts then skilfully picked out the best.  
 Now sword or spear, they'll stand any test.  
 They can't be cut, nor pierced right through,  
 3500 And they have golden tassels too!  
 What is it worth, one such kalpak?  
 One female camel, with humps on its back!  
 Here are forty, for your forty men -  
 On a hot day they'll be shaded then.  
 Boldly with them into battle you'll go!  
 That you might wear them in summer so,  
 I have prepared them for every one.  
 And I have kept them, since they were done,  
 In the depths of this saddle-bag here -



3510 Whole heaps of them, as summer gear.  
 Then I thought of the winter days:  
 "Gainst those Chinese you will make many frays.  
 If against one another you go,  
 Fighting in the freezing snow,  
 If your ears fall off on the ice,  
 If your noses turn blue in a trice,  
 Then indeed, I might be to blame!  
 Should I then maintain my good name?  
 So I ordered for each a fur hat –  
 3520 Long ago I prepared all that.  
 Ordered to line them with fleecy fur.  
 Outside covered in velvet they were.  
 From three pieces, flaps and crown,  
 Thinking: Check-flaps they will let down,  
 So on top their helmets they'll don,  
 Covering all with their armour on.  
 Tapes they can tie beneath their chin –  
 There, criss-cross, they can tie flaps in,  
 So that when the battle begins,  
 3530 Helmets won't fly, held tight 'neath their chins!  
 Forty such hats, for forty knights!  
 If you'd know their value by rights,  
 With their ornaments added too,  
 Then the price which to them falls due  
 Would be one camel of finest sort.  
 Then I thought: 'Beijin's strong fort,  
 And the Chinese are a numerous folk.  
 If you stay there a year – that's no joke –  
 Morning till eve, a-hammering away,  
 3540 Shooting at one another all day,  
 Arrows, and musket-shots too, let's say,  
 If the Chinese save their honour that way,  
 If their best fighters stand firmly at bay,  
 If worn clothing begins to fray,  
 If you feel dirty, as well you may,  
 If you should blame us for that, let's say –  
 Long since I ordered, for each of our knights,  
 Twelve shirts and ten pairs of pants, or tights.  
 Cambric shirts, and white calico wear,  
 3550 On long campaign just suiting them there.  
 Ten pairs for each, long since I've had sewn,  
 Wrapped them up for each man on his own.  
 Earlier I have arranged for them –  
 In that great bag I've laid them flat.

On the bottom I laid them bare,  
 Thinking, 'If to that other world there,  
 By the foe to their deaths they are thrown,  
 And in a hole, like a boat, all alone,  
 They in their bloody clothing are laid,  
 3560 Unprepared, and with no fuss made,  
 If not undressed they bury their friend,  
 If somebody thus meets their end,  
 Let his underclothes serve as a shroud.  
 Of his white linen let him be proud!  
 So you see what service I've done.  
 Listen awhile, there's more to come:  
 I have prepared for each knight a war-vest.  
 For those who're taller than the rest,  
 Lengthier ones have I made, just look,  
 3570 And your measures before I took!  
 For the short ones, war-vests short too,  
 Each one fitting as is his due.  
 Short for the short, and long for the tall,  
 Each one measured, the big and the small.  
 And for your leader Kirgil, as well.  
 What they cost me, no one can tell!  
 I sent round to many a part,  
 From Andzhi\* and Mandzhi\* for a start,  
 From Kambil\* and from Kara-Shaar,\*  
 3580 From Chin-Manchin\* and Kumul\*, near and far,  
 Precious red silk I have purchased, let's say,  
 One zolotnik\* worth a thousand dille.\*  
 They chose the best and brought it here.  
 When that was done, as I had made clear,  
 When I had enough silk at hand,  
 Then I chose from Kirghizian land,  
 From the best of the girls and boys,  
 From a thousand or so Nogois,  
 From a thousand or so Oirats,  
 3590 Forty maidens and sixty lads,  
 Told them the silk in layers to place,  
 Then they quilted them forty-one days.  
 If not done well, they restitched them round,  
 Then whole dishes of steel grains ground,  
 Mixed with diamonds which crushed had been,  
 Told them to spread in the layers between.  
 When they were sewn in many fine lines,  
 Even a tempered steel awl, one finds,  
 Breaks against them, in ten pieces spent!



3600 He who could don such a vest is content!  
 Such vests are made to defeat the foe –  
 Through them no arrow nor ball will go!  
 Magic between the layers is strown,  
 Magic bullets in place were sewn:  
 From the treasury of your Kanish,\*  
 Came as much as one could wish,  
 And made many such vests, I'd say,  
 Worn one over the other are they.  
 Inside of velvet, and outside of silk,  
 3610 Top made of satin, or cloth of some ilk.  
 Collar begilt, and brazen the sleeves,  
 Front to back, a yard thick, one believes:  
 If you're protected by one of these,  
 Never one foe, who foulest spite breathes,  
 He who gallops ahead, in a stew,  
 That one who wants to fall upon you,  
 His fatal wish will lead to his death!  
 If he should strike with his axe, hold your breath.  
 Straightway will sixty bullets fly out,  
 3620 And he will bring his own death about!  
 Then I thought, those quarrelsome knights,  
 Seeking such war-vests, may well begin fights.  
 Thus they will do each other great harm,  
 So I was quickly filled with alarm.  
 Into the collar of every vest  
 I sewed the name of him it suits best.  
 When the time comes, then don't get distressed,  
 Read out the name, and let him get dressed!  
 When 'gainst Chinese you go on campaign,  
 3630 Here's something else of good service again –  
 Leather trousers, for each bold knight,  
 Here are waiting, hid from their sight.  
 I had them made for their delight.  
 If with Chinese you are going to fight,  
 Then I shall bring my secret to light:  
 All for forty brave knights just right,  
 I have such fine leather trousers to wear.  
 'Mid the caravan traders out there,  
 Not only once, but often I've seen  
 3640 Excellent goat-skins – thick ones I mean.  
 Made from goats on Mount Dangdung-Bash,\*  
 Thick as your finger, yes, I'd heard of such!  
 From those rams on that same mount,  
 Black-spined hides, I'd heard good account.

So I went to chief Abike,  
 Asked him to send sixty archers that day,  
 Telling them: "Aim alone in the eye!"  
 Only true marksmen were willing to try.  
 But when the skins they brought had got dry,  
 3650 Not letting sunlight fall on them, forby,  
 Then they concealed them in a white chest.  
 When I just soaked them in kvass of the best,  
 Six whole months I kept them like that,  
 Tanning away there, in a brass vat.  
 Ordered them then to bring apple-bark,  
 Six months again till they were tanned stark.  
 Sart from Andizhan – Shagila,  
 Excellent dyer, I brought from afar.  
 Women to cut, and maidens to sew,  
 3660 Needle-women all worked in a row  
 Aruuke, from the heavens on high,  
 With ninety other maidens stood by,  
 Nine long months they bit patterns on hide,<sup>64</sup>  
 Others made linings, and sewed them inside.  
 All with fine stitches they worked skilfully,  
 Never a sigh of a stitch could you see.  
 No matter how you looked, I mean,  
 Nowhere you'd see a loose stitch, nor a seam.  
 Pair upon pair, they were laid out for me,  
 3670 And when they left for Maral-Bashi,\*  
 Finding no horse, who could bear the load,  
 They gave a one-humped camel the goad.  
 They were sewn so – no seam was seen,  
 Only the pattern where snake-scales had been!<sup>65</sup>  
 And not noticed was joint nor fold,  
 Everything in its place, all told.  
 So that a spear should not pass through,  
 They had been packed with steel shavings too.  
 So that the dressing of skins should be proved,  
 3680 Sixty-five strong-men the whole pack viewed.  
 And the weak ones they soon put by:  
 Strong ones were given to me to dye:  
 When the trousers were tested at last,  
 Not one musket-ball through them passed.  
 Ironed them hot, but not scorched, I vow,  
 But don't call me a boaster now!  
 All this I did, and all was well done,  
 Every pair of these trousers, each one,  
 Then one seven-year foal was worth!..



3690 Bejin, they say, stands on warmish earth.  
 Where people often faint from the heat,  
 And in surprise are swept off their feet.  
 There a brass trough, placed out on the sand,  
 Soon is sizzling, hot to the hand.  
 Of the water which steams away,  
 Not a spoonful is left, they say.  
 Then I thought: they must not suffer so.  
 If I'm not careful, 'twill be bad, I know;  
 If they burn their feet on the sand,  
 3700 Worthy Khans will like idiots stand.  
 They will lose their honour and fame.  
 Caravan traders have told me the same.  
 More than once I've heard them repeat  
 That prepared lamb-leather's good for the feet,  
 And it is valued there very high.  
 So with my gold I went out to buy.  
 Also some cattle for this I sold.  
 Then I gave orders the lamb-skins to hold,  
 And some pieces to cut out, indeed.  
 3710 Ordered, with Alimsak in the lead,  
 One hundred cobblers to come to me.  
 Then I decided: What rubbish I see!  
 Raw bits of leather, and scraps of hide; -  
 Look at my chamber now inside!  
 Other people will soon peep through,  
 And my own husband will see it too!  
 Then he will not be pleased at all!  
 So I found five rooms, though small,  
 There I concealed the masters I bid,  
 3720 In those rooms then the cobblers I hid.  
 In those rooms where the cobblers hid,  
 Told them to finish the work they did,  
 Then to lacquer the toes with gold,  
 Spangles with silver, many all told.  
 Kid-leather laces I told them to trim,  
 Then to fix double soles on them,  
 Hammer them on with pure gold nails,  
 Hollow out heels, with small jingling bells.<sup>66</sup>  
 These blue top-boots, with curled up toes,  
 3730 High hollow heels, tiny bells in those,  
 With their thick soles, and golden nails,  
 With jingle-jangle which never fails,  
 Pleasing the ones who wear them then,  
 Forty pairs for forty brave men,

All are prepared and waiting too -  
 See what a service I've done for you!  
 For the summer I've socks of brocade,  
 All with trimmings, and winningly made,  
 And I have foot-cloths, finely glossed,  
 3740 For the winter, to keep out the frost.  
 Also socks of fox-fur too,  
 Also of satin and velvet for you.  
 All that was needed I gathered in,  
 That's why the saddle-nag's fat, and not thin!  
 Armfuls and armfuls I packed in there!  
 Bejin's a fortress, so they declare.  
 Chinese are powerful fighting men.  
 When you go on campaign against them -  
 Mussulmen, striving with heathens there,  
 3750 Fighting opponents, pair after pair,  
 Shooting from bows and muskets too,  
 They will prove merciless foes to you.  
 When their arrows whizz through the air,  
 Whistling and bristling with sharp heads there,  
 They pierce anything in their way,  
 And your blood may flow that day...  
 For those merciless, murderous frays,  
 Here are some belts to wear always -  
 Upper edge will protect your loins,  
 3760 Lower edge will cover your groins.  
 Upper edge protects upper legs.  
 Lower edge protects upper legs.  
 They are soled with nails gleaming gold,  
 But no seams can your eyes behold.  
 When they are firmly fixed in place,  
 Emerald eyes from the middle gaze,  
 And inscribed on the upper verge  
 Are the great Prophet's sacred words.<sup>67</sup>  
 Such war-belts for forty knights too,  
 3770 Here I offer in service to you!  
 Bejin's a fortress, so they declare.  
 Multitudes of Chinese live there.  
 If through summer and winter you live,  
 Endless battle there you will give.  
 One year, say, or two years through,  
 You will fight, and need supplies too.  
 If you lose hope, and feel in need,  
 Say: 'Kanikei is prudent indeed!  
 She has not left us without supplies -



3780 Look in the saddle-bag, find what there lies!  
 I have not put the things there in vain.  
 I will not leave you in hunger or pain!  
 Eighty-four bags of powder there are,  
 Hundreds of musket-balls here there are,  
 Fuses, and flints a-glinting there are,  
 Knives and daggers, two-edged, there are,  
 Ready to stab arms and legs there are,  
 Ready to cut down the foe there are,  
 Ready to stab in the heart there are,  
 3790 Ready to play their part there are!  
 All these are ready to fight the foe,  
 Bandages ready, if blood should flow,  
 Oil, and ointment, and pills for each!"  
 Thus did Kanikei end her speech.  
 Then the forty knights who were there  
 Quietly whispered about this affair.  
 "Is she deceiving us, tricking our sight?  
 If we do not stay here for the night,  
 Nonsense seems all that we have heard,  
 3800 Like a mockery sounds each word!"  
 So spoke the bad ones among them there,  
 But the good ones their thoughts did not share.  
 They were most grateful to Kanikei -  
 Khans were contented in every way.  
 They all stood, and began to bow.  
 Leopard Manas thought: "Well, anyhow,  
 That wife of mine, that fine Kanikei,  
 She's an elegant witch, I would say!  
 If all is true that she has said,  
 3810 If before others she stands out ahead,  
 Then her parents I'll never offend,  
 And I'll not touch her with my whip-end.  
 I will not take any other wife,  
 Or may Akkelte take my life,  
 May I be shot down by its ball!"<sup>68</sup>  
 And this oath he swore before all.  
 With his wife he was quite satisfied.  
 "Why are we standing here?" he cried.  
 "Let us bestraddle our steeds and ride -  
 3820 They are waiting for us outside!"  
 Having heard his call, Tazbaimat  
 Flew to the door, and opened that.  
 All those forty knight-bogatirs  
 Went outside, and there it appears

Steeds were ready - but what a sight!  
 What a surprise awaits each knight!  
 Taken care of, all ready they stood,  
 Each one bore a blanket good,  
 Covered by a tiger's skin,  
 3830 And a gold bridle fixed on him!  
 Each had a special saddle to sit,  
 On each saddle a leathern strip,  
 Then a soft pillow on which to sit,  
 With a triple girth, bound to fit.  
 Horses were restless, and sprightly too,  
 Pawed with their hooves, and snorted anew,  
 Champed on their bits, and began to sway,  
 Like angry snakes, a-spitting away!  
 Eyes began to gleam like flames,  
 3840 Heads were tossed, with waving manes.  
 To the front of their saddles, a drum<sup>69</sup>  
 There was fastened on every one.  
 Strips of gold ran round the rim,  
 Gleaming, streaming, straight and thin.  
 Elephant skins, on drums were stretched tight,  
 Even the touch of a gnat, so light,  
 Made each kettle-drum start to hum,  
 But when a drum-stick drubbed the drum,  
 Deafening was the din they made!  
 3850 With gold rims, blue drums were displayed.  
 Fastened in front of each saddle they hung.  
 Fastened behind gold chain-mail swung.  
 That won't let through a blizzard, let's say,  
 That won't let through a cold winter day!  
 That won't let through the rain in a storm,  
 That will keep fighting knights quite warm.  
 Small links of mail, like a skylark's eye,  
 Skylark's eye, and no larger, forby,  
 Like a chick's eye, and they rustle away.  
 3860 Not to be pierced by mosquitoes, say,  
 Not to be pierced by any gnat.  
 If you'd see the moon through that,  
 Do not smooth it by hand, nor try -  
 Don't move its links like a skylark's eye.  
 With its colder of gold mail made,  
 With its buttons of half-precious jade,  
 It is strapped to the saddle's back.  
 Each pure-bred steed has one in its pack,  
 One coat of mail for a brave knight's need.



3870 Having ordered: "Unsaddle each steed!"  
 Having given their reins to them then,  
 Kanikei brought fresh steeds for them.  
 Just like hares, like each other were they.  
 Seeing this done by Kanikei,  
 Forty knights were simply amazed –  
 When behind those knights, half-dazed,  
 Those for whom Kanikei much had done,  
 Lion Manas strode forth quite alone  
 Taking seven steps or so,  
 3880 Treading majestic, stately and slow,  
 Kanikei said "Pray come in here –  
 Places are frayed in your outer gear!  
 All your clothes are tattered and torn!"  
 They slew a calf with a crumpled horn.<sup>70</sup>  
 His old black clothes she gave away,  
 To the Almighty began to pray.  
 Going out of her chamber again,  
 Ordered a yellow calf to be slain,  
 And to be offered as sacrifice.  
 3890 There were many grey-beards wise –  
 Seventy-two such elderly men,  
 And seven hundred orphans then,  
 They all stood around the fire.  
 Kanikei saw their faces dire.  
 Then to every poor child unkissed,  
 She gave an ingot, big as your fist.  
 Those who were wise knew that was good.  
 Ingots beneath their armpits they stood,  
 But just see what those simpletons did –  
 3900 To some street trader off they slid,  
 For just for seven or eight walnuts then,  
 Changed those ingots with merchant men,  
 Scattered their walnut shells on the street.  
 Other orphans and widows, discreet,  
 Kanikei ordered to come to her there.  
 Seeing Manas, they all, I declare,  
 Raised their hands to heaven on high.  
 Many a tear then filled each eye.  
 And the wise-men began to pray:  
 3910 "Allah! Protect Manas in the fray.  
 Don't let the heathens defeat him there!"  
 So those old grey-beards framed their prayer.  
 "Allah! hear how for him we plead –  
 Save our Khans from defeat indeed.

Don't give the heathens the upper hand!  
 Poor and humble, before you we stand!  
 Oh! Almighty one, hear our prayer!  
 ... Will it be easy to seize Beijin there?  
 Is it good that we leave this place?  
 3920 'Go – not come back' – is it that we face?  
 Those who attacked them before did not win!  
 Oh, it's a long, long road to Beijin!  
 Three-hundred-thousand seems many men,  
 But in the fight they will feel only ten!  
 O Creator! be our strength and stay!  
 Right flank and left, must we go on our way?"<sup>71</sup>  
 Having said this they wept amain,  
 And they raised hubbubs again and again.  
 Bleating like lambs their racket they keep.  
 3930 So they slew yet more yellow-head sheep.<sup>72</sup>  
 Then all the people began to groan,  
 Dire misfortune made them all moan.  
 Thus the Kirghiz in confusion stood fast.  
 Lion Manas looked on there aghast,  
 All were sorrowful, first to the last.  
 Having seen this, in horror was cast,  
 And on Allah for aid did he call.  
 Tears from his eyes began to fall...  
 Then his steed Akkula he bestrode,  
 3940 Feet in the stirrups, and ready to goad,  
 To God Almighty his prayers did rise,  
 Promising camels as sacrifice,  
 Sitting astride his Akkula still...  
 Salamat's son, the bold Kirgil,  
 Beat once again upon the drum,  
 And the echoes began to run.  
 Every one had tears in their eyes.  
 With bold Manas in tears likewise,  
 Out of the gate at last that day  
 3950 All the warriors rode on their way...  
 With her red scarf a-flying then,  
 After those forty fighting men,  
 Gleaming like mail in gold robes and all,  
 With voice resounding, a cuckoo-call,  
 Crying: "Wait a moment, I say!"  
 Strode, swiftly swinging her robes, Kanikei.  
 Not permitting her further to go,  
 But not daring to humble her so,  
 Up to her then rode Almambet.



3960 Not deciding to join him yet.  
 Not deciding to go on ahead,  
 Lion Manas just stopped there dead.  
 Glancing at him, the others stopped too.  
 None of them knowing just what to do:  
 None of them dared to go on then.  
 Tiger Manas, that master of men,  
 He rode round as best he could,  
 Where his forty men still stood.  
 Kanikei, with her eyes full of tears,  
 3970 Murmured soft words then into his ears:  
 "Summer's hottest time – forty days.  
 Winter's coldest time – forty days.  
 Twice times forty makes eighty days.  
 Who can't survive them dies, anyways.  
 Now it is hottest summer time,  
 And you're prepared, O master of mine,  
 Now, when sheep on the plains are well-fed,  
 Off to fare to a land far ahead.  
 You've taken gold to pay for your needs,  
 3980 Now, in the hottest time, sit your steeds.  
 Now I should like to ask Almambet:  
 Where lies the land of Beijin yet?  
 Tiger Manas on that journey is set.  
 How many days to his goal to get?  
 Khans and Beys, fellow-travellers too,  
 How many weeks to go on through?  
 And how many ere you return?  
 If you can't tell me, my heart will burn!  
 God only knows, will you victors be?  
 3990 Or in Tangshang, Andzhi, or Mandzhi,  
 There with mortal wounds will you lie?  
 Allah alone knows who will die.  
 All your forty comrades-in-arms  
 Now have set off to face all alarms.  
 All their souls lie in Allah's hand.  
 Who will return from that distant land?  
 Allah alone knows who will still stand!  
 Horses grow strong with the oats they ate.<sup>73</sup>  
 Men grow strong on the gains they get.  
 4000 Bees grow strong on the honey they get.  
 We wives grow strong with the Khans we get,  
 Clouds move on with the winds they get.  
 Horses grow strong with the sweat they get.<sup>74</sup>  
 Rulers grow strong with the people they get.

Farmers grow strong with the lands they get.  
 Streams grow strong with the rains they get.  
 Wives grow strong with the mates they get.  
 In you Manas, strength and stay I get!  
 Now you go 'gainst a dangerous foe –  
 4010 Shall I see you again – I don't know!  
 Or, having lost my Lion, shall I die?  
 Or, at least, deep in sorrow lie?  
 Having loved, I was not satisfied.  
 After my Lion, no cub will survive.  
 Not a paw in support I see.<sup>75</sup>  
 Few the caresses which came to me.  
 If you depart along with the rest,  
 I have no infant to take my breast.  
 I am encircled with sorrow, it's true,  
 4020 Losing my strength when I lose you!  
 Just because I had a great Khan,  
 I could sleep on a golden divan.  
 All these people of his I could rule.  
 But with one wish my soul was full,  
 Just to hear the loud cry of my child –  
 That was the dream which drove me wild!  
 But because my knight was not near,  
 In a cold bed I slept, I fear.  
 So your folk I ruled as you willed,  
 4030 And my one wish remained unfulfilled.  
 And the voice of a crying child  
 I have never with solace beguiled!  
 How many warriors ride on campaigns,  
 But my Manas unharmed yet remains.  
 Those Chinese in their millions stand –  
 Therefore I give your soul in God's hand.  
 If this numberless horde fall on you,  
 If they attack in ten-thousands too,  
 If the mountains are covered in snow,  
 4040 If through difficult times brave men go,  
 If raving rivers you have to cross,  
 If loud shouts arise at your loss,  
 If you unfurl your-banner then,  
 If you, Manas, are beset by ten men,  
 If you stand isolated, like stone,  
 If you see that you stand alone, –  
 Then I think my words you'll recall...  
 He who will risk arrow or ball,  
 That one indeed may avert your fall,



4050 Should you be set on by one and all,  
 I place my trust in you, Almambet!"  
 Here Almambet, who stood silent yet,  
 Also recalling the past likewise,  
 Wiped a tear or two from his eyes.  
 "Eh, my dear mistress!" he answered then  
 "You have taken good care of us men.  
 Lion Manas I'd name lonely thus.  
 What you have said about both of us  
 Touches me deeply, right to core.  
 4060 Moaning and groaning, in sorrow sore,  
 You have turned to me for aid,  
 With all your suffering soil displayed.  
 If God above did not help us all,  
 We should be powerless when we call.  
 You have made me a strict request,  
 But I've my sorrows, along with the rest;  
 Your Manas you name lonely, that is,  
 But the majority of the Kirghiz,  
 Are they not lonely too, I would say?  
 4070 How many step-sons from strange wives have they?  
 Seven relatives here have you -  
 Lion Manas, count them up, it's true!  
 Then you will understand this way.  
 You have young brothers - Kēbesh, Abike,  
 But for me, standing before you here,  
 Is there someone for me, near and dear?  
 None from Beijin are dear for me.  
 Some brave brother, attached to me,  
 From my native land there is not.  
 4080 No sworn Chinese friend have I got.  
 When to the past I turn my mind,  
 Thinking how badly I served my kind,  
 Then nothing good can I hope from them!  
 I myself nothing good did those men.  
 Too much I let bad temper show through,  
 Some of my own relations I slew!  
 Now I can't count on my kin, therefore.  
 My own master I slew, what's more.  
 Other relations I sent to hell;  
 4090 Drowned in misfortune, they died as well.  
 So I slew people at hand, you see...  
 Kēkchē then badly valued me,  
 Though I followed him, many a year,  
 If you ask of me those near and dear,

Not one nephew on me relied'  
 If of uncles on mother's side  
 You should ask me - I have none.  
 Step-brothers, step-sisters, never a one!  
 If I break down, I have no support.  
 4100 My own folk did not like my sort!  
 Honours which once I had are dead,  
 Though from the fray I never fled.  
 Flee from a heathen - that I can't do!  
 If that heathen shows vengeance too,  
 Then, not for nought, my end I'd feel;  
 If from such swine who revenge conceal,  
 Suddenly I my end should meet,  
 Who would me then as a good spirit greet? <sup>76</sup>  
 Who'd weep their soul out o'er such a one?  
 4110 Who would then call me a prodigal son?  
 Who, then, would feel so sorry for me?  
 Who can I lean on, with no family?  
 Nobody drove me away from them,  
 I was the one who left them then!  
 No elder-brother supporter have I.  
 None will stand by my side, when I die.  
 Saving great Allah, protector I've none.  
 No younger brother, and no grown-up son!  
 Kith and who might help me, I've none.  
 4120 When with this life on earth I have done,  
 One to mourn for me, there is none!"  
 So Almambet bewailed what he'd done.  
 From all the forty knights who stood by,  
 Not one was found with eyes quite dry.  
 'These forty braves who stand near by me,  
 Should I succeed, full of envy will be.  
 If I give orders, they won't obey.  
 If I should die on that fateful day,  
 These forty knights would not wash me, I ken,  
 4130 Breaking all customs, not bury me then.  
 They would say 'Serve him right, just so!'  
 For a Chink no pity they'd show.  
 'Let him lie in the ditch!' they'd say.  
 Not to my maker, Allah, they'd pray,  
 To forgive me on that fatal day.  
 But leave me shamed there, in every way! <sup>77</sup>  
 That is the fate of one such as I -  
 Not to be lifted from where I lie.  
 They would not avenge me, that day.



4140 No, they would leave me, and ride away!  
 If I should die in a peaceful way,  
 Maybe they'd bury me, maybe nay!  
 If they knew I'm completely alone,  
 Over some precipice I should be thrown.  
 There lie unburied, till I rot away!  
 So about much have I thought today.  
 Who would bewail me? No son have I,  
 None who'd respect me, standing nearby.  
 Near ones and dear ones I do not see –  
 4150 I am a homeless refugee!  
 Someone to cling to I do not know,  
 Some son to sing to I do not know.  
 In this world of sin and decay,  
 I can't hope to live long, anyway!  
 In widow's weeds will go my wife,  
 Someone with whom I was friends in life,  
 Then will think "That Kalmak's had his day!"  
 He, most likely, will feel quite gay!  
 I have no rights with my people now.<sup>78</sup>  
 4160 If I look round about, I vow,  
 Nearer to me than my wife there's none.  
 If she refrains from weeping, that one,  
 That would mean – my arrow struck stone!  
 I shall go to my grave all alone.  
 If I look around this dark earth,  
 She is my only woman of worth!  
 If no sorrow for me she should feel,  
 That would mean – my arrow struck steel!"  
 Speaking thus, sad-eyed Almambet  
 4170 Left forty knights with their eyes all wet.  
 Many a one he saddened beside,  
 Sniffing their noses, with arms thrown wide.  
 Blowing their noses, they made repartee:  
 "However great a man may be,  
 However brilliant may be his mind,  
 He is worth nothing alone, you'll find!  
 This poor brave tells of himself thus,  
 Weeps his tears while standing with us!"  
 So said these forty bravest of men,  
 4180 Suffered in sympathy with him then.  
 From their noses dripped snot pale-blue,  
 Pinched off, upon the ground it flew.  
 Trembling were their spears at their tips,  
 Wincing were sides, and flinching were lips,

As quick-minded Almambet  
 Told them more of his troubles yet.  
 Forty knights, and four hundred men  
 Grieved and groaned in his sight there and then.  
 From Andizhan some snuff they'd brought,  
 4190 Mixed with pine-as, of resinous sort,  
 Wit relieves depression, bad dreams:  
 Wit black peppers tobacco is steamed,  
 Wit red peppers made moist, it seems,  
 So one sweetens one's mood by this means.  
 Some of those forty brave warrior-men,  
 Pulling from pockets their pouches then,  
 Said: "Take a pinch of tobacco here –  
 You have still so much to make clear.  
 Lie it just underneath your tongue,  
 4200 It will make you feel bold and young!"  
 Taking some in 'neath the lower lip,  
 Standing together, hip to hip,  
 Thus a few of them, arms stretched yet,  
 Held out their pouches to Almambet,  
 Tried to persuade him, also Manas,  
 "Try it, and maybe your sorrows will pass!  
 What can you do then, our brave bogatir?  
 Thus these born lions, who knew no fear,  
 Stretching out their pouches again,  
 4210 Cried "just try it - 'twill soothe your pain!"  
 So those famed warriors, standing in rows,  
 Cheered Almambet, and softened his woes...  
 Then another came straight to him too,  
 She who knew his sad words were true.  
 Like icy hail, from wintry skies,  
 Bitter tear-drops feel from her eyes.  
 Aruuke, of angelic form,  
 Thinking "maybe his soul I can warm!"  
 Came to his side, and began to speak:  
 4220 "I was not sure until this week,  
 But now I know – in my womb fruit is kept!  
 For a son you have sorrowed and wept.  
 So I decided no longer to hide –  
 Since like a camel-foal groaning you cried."<sup>79</sup>  
 Now I know – there is fruit in my womb.  
 Son or daughter? We wait the ninth moon!"  
 So said Almambet's wife, and fell dumb...  
 To Almambet Kanikei had come,  
 Seeking answers to questions she's put:



4230 "Comrade!" she cried, "You take a far route.  
Surely Beijin, which lies far away,  
You cannot reach for many a day?  
Three-hundred-thousand are on the move -  
How many days then your steeds must you prove?  
You cannot reach Beijin so soon!  
Can you return by the next new moon?  
At what time do you think you'll come back -  
Tell me truly - that answer I lack!  
Name no period more than you think -

4240 Or in sorrow, still waiting, we'll sink!  
Name no period less than you think -  
We shall be suffering, on the brink.  
Think it all out, tell your answer to me.  
If you're victorious - happy we'll be!  
If you're defeated - and die like brave men,  
Boundless will be our misery then!  
If by chance you fall 'neath attack,  
If in a trance you come staggering back,  
Could it not be that starving, in pain,

4250 Wild, hungry men will come home again?  
Will you start robbing your own folk here,  
Seizing and slaying the cattle found near?  
If you retreat from those Chinese hooves,  
And on your horses, with broken shoes,  
Your starving men should arrive back home,  
Then we'll prepare the cattle, our own -  
We'll have low tables laid out, indeed,  
And the hungry straightway we'll feed.  
We shall have well-fed horses to slay -

4260 All will be ready on home-coming day!  
We'll be preparing a feast-day for you,  
When the time for your home-coming's due.  
Therefore I ask you - tell me the day!  
If Allah sends success on your way  
Why should you tremble before the foe?  
Ride on farther, yes, swiftly go!  
How many days, pray say, will it be?  
And your return, how long ere we see?  
With those accurs'ed heathens there,

4270 How long ere battle-drums war will declare?  
If mighty Allah allays all your fears,  
How many days then, or months, even years,  
Will have to pass, ere back home you appear?  
My heart will only be calm when I hear.

What do you say? Can you give me a date?  
We shall prepare everything, and then wait.  
Don't try to hide, but say something plain.  
May our great Allah support you again!  
Don't let accurs'ed heathens succeed,  
4280 Safe and sound return home indeed!"  
Thus she finished her speech, Kanikei.  
Then she waited - now what will he say?  
From Almambet that day, it was clear,  
All the people wanted to hear.  
So he began to speak to them then:  
"O great people!" he said to them,  
"Allah alone knows if we shall win,  
Allah alone knows if plans fall in!  
There amid good-for-nothing Chinese,  
4290 We may die, or lie ill-at-ease.  
But should success not desert us so,  
If there's no bar on the way we go,  
If the Almighty lightens our load,  
Then on completing our long, long road,  
Following to Beijin our ways,  
We'll ride three months, or ninety days.  
If mighty Allah grants us that boon,  
And we cross over the great Orkun,\*  
Then we shall pass unharmed that day,  
4300 O'er the dry steppe of Erime,\*  
Near the shore of some small lake,  
We shall stop for our winter break.  
Then the smoky sedge fires we'll begin.  
Having our tents and yurtas dug in,  
Six winter months we there shall stay,  
But we don't know until that day  
How great Allah will grant us his grace.  
We shall camp then around that place.  
Six months there, then further we'll go,  
4310 If it should be God's will so!  
When our steeds' tongues grow fat and dark,<sup>80</sup>  
When nine months have left their mark,  
Then we'll go to scout round Beijin.  
Whether we lose, or wether we win,  
Six months we'll raise the battle-din.  
If we return on our homeward way,  
If three months we ride, to a day,  
When a year-and-a-half have passed,  
When the nineteenth month nears at last,



4320 Then we'll be back – the die will have cast!  
 When Almambet had made that clear,  
 Of those ready to ride, I fear,  
 Many were agitated still.  
 Then white-bearded old Kirgil  
 Drubbed his drum, all started to rise.  
 Everyone fussed, and said their goodbyes.  
 Many were weeping, alas and alack!  
 On their numerous warriors' track,  
 Onward moved forty lions, so strong.

4330 On their war-horses cantered along...  
 Banners wave, and rustle in flight,  
 Gilded shields are gleaming bright,  
 Flags are fluttering, gold and red,  
 Helmets glitter on bobbing head.  
 Hooves of war-steeds, stamping forth,  
 Loudly re-echo, shaking the earth.  
 As they canter, line on line,  
 Hanging on waists the sabres shine,  
 Glittering chain-mail everywhere,

4340 Best of steeds are saddled here.  
 Trotters smoothly move at will,  
 At their head rides old Kirgil.  
 This is a tale set forth in lines,  
 Coming to us from ancient times –  
 Let us leave these lions awhile,  
 And of those on ahead let's tell.  
 Thousands on thousands! Listen now,  
 They are riding tight, I vow!  
 Warriors clatter, blade on blade,

4350 Spear against spear such rattling made.  
 Smoothly wave the warriors' heads,  
 Earth is furrowed where each steed treads.  
 Banners against each other beat,  
 Clouds of dust rise from horses' feet.  
 On one side, where the mountain range ends,  
 Where the dark peak of Chemyush extends,  
 To the banks of the Karasu,\*  
 To the vale of Kashik\* river too,  
 Like a landslide the warrior van

4360 On both banks of the river ran.  
 Stuck their spear-hafts into the earth,  
 Let the banners aloft fly forth,  
 Hobbled then their horses' knees,  
 Let them pasture on the leas.

As they bound their legs they said,  
 "Grass here's nearly as high as your head,  
 Leastways up to your horse's breast.  
 They won't starve here – let them rest!  
 Lads will look after them that way!"

4370 All the horses start munching may...  
 Troops disrobed then, nobody lazed –  
 Such enormous tents they raised!  
 Some then stretched out upon their backs,  
 Others changed their shirts and slacks,  
 Put up awnings overhead,  
 Lay down quiet 'neath them, half-dead.  
 But, like horses whom gad-flies stung,  
 They jumped up, both old and young,  
 Crying: "What an attack, you chaps!"

4380 Then beat off mosquitoes and gnats.  
 Many were lying idle about,  
 Few then took their choppers out,  
 Hacked out hollows for fires in the ground,  
 Then lit camp-fires all around.  
 Some go plop – in the river they flop,  
 Wallow a yard or two, then stop.  
 Many amused themselves that way.  
 Some asked: "What's this place called, can you say?  
 What hellish gnats they have here, though!"

4390 Many there were who mumbled so.  
 When the people took their ease,  
 When they all found something to please,  
 After them came Almambet –  
 Glanced to the right, and glanced to the left –  
 Cried, as though struck by a shot in flight,  
 Glanced to the left, and glanced to the right –  
 Flinched when he saw them so disarrayed.  
 He did not like the way they'd behaved.  
 But not saying a word to them yet,

4400 Further on went Almambet.  
 That was not what a chief would desire.  
 Obviously, it had roused his ire.  
 Earlier still Manas had passed through,  
 And had seen this merriment too.  
 There, where Chemyush\* flows down with a splash,  
 There, by Kash\* and by Kara-Tash,\*  
 In their tents with satin brocade,  
 All kinds of goodies they had made.  
 Tea brewed up, and scones laid by,



4410 Wooden goblets, with honey high,  
 Playing at draughts and dominoes, they  
 Ordered a mare with no foal to slay,  
 Cauldrons suited to field camp-fire,  
 Thirty or forty – what more to desire?  
 In his own tent, Manas rested free...  
 Thinking of many things was he:  
 Just then Almambet arrived.  
 Then our Lion Manas had revived,  
 In a calmer mood was he thus.

4420 Here you are, then, Leopard Manas?  
 Hear my complaint, for this is no joke!  
 I thought you were lord of your folk.  
 Now, it seems, you're unsuited thus –  
 Are you relaxing too, Manas?  
 Listen then, for I must complain:  
 You are chieftain, I say it again,  
 But you appear unsuited then.  
 Here you have three-hundred-thousand men.  
 To Beijin it's a long way yet.

4430 Your sharp-headed spears you have set,  
 And against the Chinese you will go.  
 They are a folk multitudinous so.  
 If you look – it's an ant-heap, I swear,  
 And among them are cunning ones there,  
 Many magicians, and not far to seek,  
 I would not say that such folk are weak.  
 But your people do not suit my soul –  
 Their mood and manners – not mine on the whole.  
 And they're light-hearted, and careless too.

4440 If they then are so carefree all through,  
 Only Allah above can surmise,  
 Will even one of them survive?  
 What is the use of taking them then,  
 If that's the character of your men?  
 I shall leave, if you give the word –  
 How can I lead such men – it's absurd!  
 If your warriors play so free,  
 I would rather go back, you see.  
 What use are lengthy arguments here?

4450 I must return, and that is quite clear!  
 Let your game of checkers fall through,  
 Let your sight, after sleep, sharpen too,  
 Let your domino game fall flat,  
 No good will come of such play like that!

On such things as you're doing here,  
 On such "warriors" – it's quite clear,  
 I cannot look with pleasure yet!"  
 Deeply disturbed spoke Almambet.  
 "All your men on amusement set!"

4460 Angry, uncurbed, spoke Almambet.  
 Warrior Khans to such talk were unused.  
 All the forty of them looked confused.  
 With old Kirgil, their chief, at their head,  
 They all stood dumb. Not a word was said.  
 Once or twice, having looked round thus,  
 Lastly spoke our Lion Manas:  
 "My brave fellows! It's my belief,  
 He who above seven others as chief,  
 By our forebears' will was raised high,  
 Clearly in vain as your leader reign!"

4470 Has not your chieftain grown too old?  
 What has occurred with Bakai the bold?  
 Why does he not ensure, at all cost,  
 That our great host should not get lost?  
 Those whom he leads are surely not few!  
 Has he not drunk somewhat more than his due?  
 Adzhibai, Serek, seek him out,  
 Tell him what all this concern is about.  
 Do not think what he'll say to you.

4480 Do not fear for your lives, you two!  
 To your chief-commander Bakai  
 Give my greetings, and tell him why  
 You have come to bid him retire,  
 Since another chief we require.  
 If he does not refuse my request,  
 If he does not get lost, like the rest,  
 If he does not censure me,  
 If he does not deny my decree,  
 If he does not dispute my word,

4490 If he does not say "That's absurd!"  
 Tell him to do as I gave said:  
 Tell him "Hand over to Almambet!"  
 And make him chief-commander, forby!"  
 So said Manas, with a gleam in his eye.  
 And when he said "Go and speak to Bakai",  
 All forty Knights, who were standing by  
 Looked around in confusion dire:  
 "He's a relation of our Lion's sire!  
 He's the commander the people chose –



4500 How can you then such a joke propose?  
 Give up all your authority?  
 Judging how such a thing could be,  
 Started to look, with saddened eye,  
 Both the Beys Serek, Adzhibai.  
 "Help us, Allah!" they cried to the skies...  
 Splashed with mud were their horses' thighs,  
 Dashed with mire were their pasterns too!  
 By the winding river they flew,  
 On the banks where the willow-switch grew.

4510 Sitting their steeds, they forged on through,  
 Further they gave their horses the spur,  
 On to the road where no barriers were.  
 Thinking: 'Where shall we find our graves,  
 Breaking our heads like this, poor slaves?'  
 Then Bakai's own men were surprised:  
 "From the tents which on the hills rise,  
 Galloping here towards us," they said,  
 Some two horsemen are riding ahead.  
 We don't recognize them, we'd say,

4520 But both are racing and chasing away!  
 Something dark there, black as a crow,  
 Maybe targets, we don't know.  
 What might that mean d'you think, Bakai?  
 Maybe racing with good news, forby?  
 Maybe their wives had twins, who knows?  
 They tear along, and their thunder grows!  
 Maybe they're thieving steeds from Kalmaks?  
 Racing along, till the very track cracks.  
 Both in long golden robes are dressed!"

4530 So said the youngsters, very impressed.  
 But Bakai, he gave them no rest -  
 Straightway the truth of the matter he guessed.  
 Old Bakai was a quick-witted man,  
 And to laugh cunningly he began:  
 "If that's so, it's a welcome each needs -  
 Go to invite them, take both their steeds!  
 Obviously, Adzhibai has arrived,  
 With his eloquent word has survived...  
 Son of the people, with head screwed on well,

4540 One of the best of leaders, I'll tell.  
 All goes well, with him and his dash,  
 With his gold hair, and tasselled sash.  
 Clearly, Almambet has arrived.  
 Having seen old customs survive,

Checking up on the fighting force,  
 Not knowing old traditions, of course,  
 Of our gay and free-willed folk,  
 Of our habits of laughter and joke,  
 He said: "No law and order here!"

4550 Just a light-minded mob, that's clear!"  
 So he would me of my post relieve -  
 That's his purpose, I believe.  
 "Why," he'd ask, "in my post should I stay?  
 I shall turn back, the other way!  
 "Why," he'd ask, "should I lead my men on?  
 No - it is time that I were gone!  
 Oh, my priceless Almambet,  
 You are very obstinate yet!  
 Lion Manas, your legal lord,

4560 Found no way to answer your word.  
 In a difficult spot, I believe,  
 He thought: "The power of commander-in-chief,  
 Old Bakai will surrender now...  
 In this passing world, somehow,  
 He was always a prop for me.  
 If Adzhibai goes to him, from me,  
 Old Bakai will give up in the end!"  
 So Adzhibai and Serek he's sent.  
 Clearly, that's how the matter must stand -

4570 Both his servants are now at hand!  
 So Adzhibai and Serek are here -  
 That's why they've come, the answer's clear!"  
 So he pondered, old Bakai.  
 "Laddies go, take from each his steed,  
 Ask them what it is they need!"  
 He had barely told his men,  
 They had barely left him then,  
 When the two servants knocked the door,

4580 And stood waiting there what's more.  
 Having arrived, Serek, Adzhibai,  
 Greeted two servants who drew nigh.  
 They then took from each his steed,  
 Opened the doors for them, indeed.  
 Saying "Salaam!" they both then bowed,  
 Entered, and took the hand held out.  
 Then they nodded, each brave young knight,  
 Took a seat, and sat on the right.  
 Sat, and trembled a little while,



4590 After, food was brought with a smile,  
 After they'd eaten, no time to speak,  
 After they'd raised their palms to their cheek,  
 After they'd murmured their prayers at last,  
 Then old Bakai began to ask:  
 "What is your business, young fellows?" said he,  
 "Why have you made this visit to me?  
 Have you something you'd like to say?  
 What has brought you here, anyway?  
 What has brought you so near to tears?"

4600 Be brave men, and show no fears!  
 Say, of what are you afraid?  
 You've no need to be dismayed!  
 What's all this alarm about?  
 Don't be distressed, but just speak out!"

So asked old Bakai again.  
 And Adzhibai began to explain:  
 "Banners were flying in the square,  
 Many Mussulmen standing there  
 Chose you then as commander-in-chief,

4610 Not so long ago, we believe.  
 We have come with a question here -  
 Lion Manas has sent us, that's clear.  
 You are the eldest one of us,  
 Difficulties befall us thus -  
 We, your young brothers, come to you,  
 Both expecting to die, it's true.  
 You yourself know how we should speak,  
 But we both feel confused and weak!"

Adzhibai then bowed his head,

4620 Looking down at the ground in dread.  
 Thus Adzhi stood silent by.  
 Having heard what he said, brave Bakai  
 Started laughing out amain.  
 Loud he laughed, split his head in twain:  
 "Ever since I've been called Bakai,  
 Ever since fame raised me on high,  
 Not one word of infamy  
 Not one soul ever heard of me.  
 I have been chief, both here and there,

4630 But, as you see, my younger pair,  
 I do not differ from others around!  
 Bey in many parts I was found.  
 But, since my soul was kind and fair,  
 Luck went with me everywhere!

Since those times, and till today  
 Your Bakai, your chief, I say,  
 Showed no envy, not one grain.  
 Who will doubt given orders plain  
 From brave Manas, my master there?

4640 Don't look so pleading at me, you pair!  
 So, off you go, and do not fret -  
 That Chinese lion Almambet,  
 Even more than Manas I admire,  
 And no matter how oft he'd enquire,  
 I'd give way thousands of times, I declare!  
 Almambet, that Sultan there,  
 Nearer than a son is to me.  
 Let him the chief of all warriors be.  
 So now quickly, off you go!

4650 If my Sultan has asked me so,  
 With his word I shall agree.  
 Take a letter to him from me -  
 From now on I shall heed his appeal.  
 I shall place on that letter my seal,  
 So don't think "What's happening here?"  
 Have no doubts, and have no fear.  
 Take my letter, let him and folk know -  
 I shall comply in all, and so  
 Let my scribe write, and I'll give my seal!"

4660 So brave Bakai made them easier feel,  
 His own seal to the scroll did apply,  
 And to Serek and Adzhibai  
 Gave his written message then.  
 Two shirts of mail he donned on them,  
 On their two trotters he sat them there.  
 For a black steed from Kasbayir,  
 Ordered a golden drum to prepare -  
 Chose such a steed for their new chief there.<sup>81</sup>  
 And to those who with nothing had come,

4670 Two other steeds he gave with that one.  
 Sent them, happy, off home to fly,  
 Taking the latter from brave Bakai,  
 Laughing loud, like a ringing bell,  
 Taking all three war-steeds as well,  
 Galloped off, raising the dust to the sky,  
 To the tent with gold staves raised high,  
 To the head-quarters of Lion Manas...  
 When they finally reached there thus,  
 All impatient the others came,



4680 Ran outside to see all the game.  
 Just a few then screwed up their eyes,  
 Peeped here and there through folds likewise;  
 "God has punished us!" came the cry,  
 "That old chief-commander Bakai,  
 He whom rumours raised to the sky,  
 That great Bey, whom we praised so high,  
 Clearly his high command would not cede!  
 To our Manas he presented a steed,  
 One to Almambet, the brave,  
 4690 One to Adzhibai he gave.  
 Really each of them gained a steed,  
 Clearly Serek then nothing received,  
 Though to and fro on his horse he strained,  
 For poor Serek then nothing remained!"  
 Thus they decided in arguments not,  
 Thus so far from the truth they got!  
 Old and young, some pleased, some not.  
 Suddenly then a surprise for the lot!  
 Take a look now what happened next –  
 4700 Up rode Adzhibai and Serek.  
 Servants took their steeds by the rein.  
 To their Lion they in again.  
 Entering there, they greeted him,  
 And he guessed all as they came in.  
 Thinking: "He agreed when they spoke!"  
 Smiled to himself, gave his whiskers a stroke.  
 "His high command he gave over then,  
 He consented, when questioned by them,  
 His high command he ceded at once,  
 4710 Out of respect for me – he's no dunce!  
 When they said 'Almambet chief will be!'  
 Then no complaints, but happy was he.  
 He gave up more than his chieftainship then,  
 And presented three war-steeds to them –  
 I have seen them standing out there!  
 "Here is his letter!" Adzhi did declare,  
 Took out the scroll, and smiling once mire,  
 To his war-like chief gave it o'er.  
 Taking the message, our brave Manas  
 4720 Laid it on the floor near him thus.  
 Then he sent a serving man  
 With a message to Almambet-Khan.  
 Meanwhile the scroll remained on the floor.  
 Then Bozuul, with the tea, what's more,

He who bent down to pour it out,  
 Half-illiterate, poking his snout,  
 Tried to make out what the letter's about,  
 Took it up from the floor, and in doubt,  
 Tried to find out its meaning indeed,  
 4730 But instead of "steed" he read "feed",  
 But instead of "feed" he read "steed",<sup>82</sup>  
 But in one place nought at all could he read.  
 So he asked Abdilda to try:  
 "What does this word mean here 'Adzhibai?'"  
 Adzhibai who heard, answered so:  
 "Son of mine, read that which you know!"<sup>83</sup>  
 Loudly laughed forty knights all round,  
 Merrily ridiculed what he'd not found.  
 Bozuul was thus deeply shamed,  
 4740 And offended he long remained.  
 Almambet meanwhile had arrived,  
 Straight into the main tent he dived.  
 As a sigh that all he now led,  
 He had a laurel wreath round his head.  
 That was placed there by Lion Manas,  
 Saying: "Commander-in-chief – you're crowned thus!  
 We ask those in this tent now found,  
 Go, spread the news of this all around.  
 Those who are present, listen to me,  
 4750 Listen, every man that I see.  
 Listen, you youngsters, and you who are old,  
 Listen, good people, to what you are told –  
 Power with Bakai no longer now stands,  
 It has passed on to another's hands:  
 Your Chief-commander is now Almambet.  
 Ponder these words, and remember them yet!  
 Those who this new law now should deny,  
 Shortly as unburied corpses will lie!  
 Make this quite clear now to everyone!  
 4760 Irchiul, Iraman's young son,  
 He whose tunic has tassels arrayed,  
 He whose cap has pom-poms displayed,  
 He, that one of the sharp-edged tongue,  
 Straddling a steed, both sturdy and young,  
 Rode around to tell all his folk.  
 Some, at first, thought this was some joke!  
 "My things go badly with that Manas!"  
 Many of them began to cuss –  
 Those who couldn't get things clear.



4770 "First he presented to all of us here,  
 As our commander-in-chief - Bakai.  
 Now a new commander draws nigh!  
 Such a tiger as that Almambet -  
 So a Kalmak commander we get.  
 He, who could find no place 'mid Kalmaks,  
 He, who could not agree with Kazakhis,  
 He, who came here when things grew grim -  
 Power o'er the people is given to him!  
 Who will give way to him, do you think,  
 4780 To that hard-hearted and cunning-eyed Chink?  
 On this long road which our people took,  
 He'll now drive and exhaust us, just look!"  
 Such were the words of many around -  
 Here, there, and everywhere, were they found.  
 Never ceasing, the grumbling went,  
 Raising a rumble, which not soon was spent.  
 When people started a hubbub and row,  
 When they all fell to pieces somehow;  
 Ninety Khan lifeguards rode on ahead,  
 4790 Sixty more bodyguards after him sped,  
 Kept close watch round Alma, with a frown.  
 Then they went to calm people down.  
 "Now I shall review all my men!"  
 Almambet reassured them then.  
 Those who do not join up with me,  
 Left quite lost on the road will be.  
 Though you beg me, I will not hear,  
 To your prayers I'll lend no ear.  
 Spiting all curses, despite every frown,  
 4800 I'll prick their eyes out, and cut them down!  
 People, listen to what I say!  
 Come to us to be counted today.  
 Let us number you over again!"  
 So said Almambet, not in vain.  
 But people muttered: "Stupid Kalmak -  
 What woes now will you load on our back?"  
 Still the folk were dissatisfied -  
 With Bakai they would rather ride.  
 "He was a man who let us live free."  
 4810 If we change horses, just jades we shall see!  
 What can that hapless Kalmak then do?  
 Won't it be something that we shall rue?  
 That Chinese rogue will lead us astray -  
 Very cunning he is in his way!

Well, we'll obey him, and we shall see!"  
 Others went pasturing horses free -  
 "Curse those madmen who've run away -  
 Bring them back to me here, I say!"  
 Others too were exhausted and spent,  
 4820 Others a-gathering fire-wood went.  
 "Such a chief - may he torment know!"  
 Some moaned and groaned, and sighed also.  
 Some were indifferent, some were asleep -  
 "Such a commander treats us like sheep!"  
 Angrily they complained away.  
 Many they had to wake up that day.  
 Others who went for water would say:  
 "May such a chieftain quickly die!"  
 "Call the people together here!"  
 4830 Many said so, and many appear,  
 And they gathered together again,  
 Sat in rows, and not in vain.  
 Almambet counted ... eight, nine, ten!  
 And out of every half-score of men,  
 One of the elders was chosen to lead.  
 Rows were formed of tens, indeed.  
 One responsible for every ten,  
 As their head was established then.  
 So Almambet the count began,  
 4840 Managed the whole affair like a man.  
 Then they counted the hundreds so.  
 From every hundred men also  
 One centurion then they chose.  
 Likewise with the thousands, of those,  
 From a thousand one man they took,  
 Made him responsible there, just look!  
 Then they said: "From ten thousand men,  
 One of our knights will be leader then!"  
 For ten thousand a Bey they named,  
 4850 Thus for those present were places claimed.  
 In that horde of fighting men  
 Some were grumbling: "Expect nothing then!"  
 Thirty Beys were created that day.  
 Then Almambet had something to say:  
 "Now decide, good warriors here!  
 Ten thousand men - one commander clear.  
 Who's ever seen such a thing before?  
 Banner for each Bey, what's more!  
 No matter where you go, noise is born -



4860 For each ten thousand I give a horn!"  
 In that multitudinous throng,  
 All he counted, and didn't go wrong.  
 Thirty banners he numbered then.  
 With their men, they covered the glen.  
 Three hundred horns gave out their roar,  
 Three thousand trumpets added their store.  
 Thirty thousand flags there flew -  
 Where would you find such a fine to-go?  
 Where would you find such a grand chief then?  
 4870 After he'd mustered all his men,  
 After order was then restored,  
 And each chieftain felt a real lord,  
 Here is what Almambet then said:  
 "Now, my warriors, we'll go ahead!  
 Listen, every one of you here!  
 Listen, attend, and get things clear,  
 Listen, both the young and the old,  
 Listen, all my fighting men bold!  
 Not to listen to orders I give -  
 4880 Don't you dare, as long as I live!  
 Don't try to joke with me, ere I've died!  
 Don't say 'His orders are not right!'  
 Don't do so, while I still see light!  
 Don't laugh at me, while I'm not out of sight!  
 From now on, when we ride, I say,  
 Don't let steeds nibble grass by the way,  
 Don't eat and drink yourself, on the road,  
 Don't hang behind, nor sleep, nor unload.  
 Don't start lazing and dreaming all day!  
 4890 How do you see this campaign, anyway?  
 Don't let your horses rest on the road,  
 Spur them, and curse them, and give them the goad!  
 Unknown water do not drink,  
 Don't undress, night or day, just think!  
 We are riding a long, long way,  
 We shall be on it three months, I'd say!  
 Ninety days that is, at the least.  
 All that time don't think of a feast!  
 On the banks of the Kyubelyuk,  
 4900 On the salt-marshes of Kyurpyuldek,  
 Six long months we shall winter there.  
 When our steeds' tongues grow black, I declare,<sup>84</sup>  
 We shall go scouting around Beijin.  
 But, until such a time sets in,

Don't think to live like at home!" he said,  
 "Don't think that meal-time has come!" he said,  
 "Don't think of sleeping in bed!" he said,  
 "Don't think of keeping well-fed!" he said,  
 "Don't think of that, but straightway forget!!  
 4910 Don't try joking with Almambet!"  
 With all our men, successful we'll stand,  
 When we come to that distant land.  
 Then I shall count you all once more.  
 Leaders of ten will then feel sore,  
 And will start weeping their eyes out then,  
 If they've lost just one of their men.  
 If he's been left on the road - that's bad,  
 If he's a Khan, or a peasant lad,  
 If he's fallen somewhere, and he's dead -  
 4920 Then this leader will part with his head!  
 Leaders of hundreds will also pine,  
 If they have lost one man from their line.  
 They will weep, with tears on their cheek,  
 If someone fell by the wayside, weak.  
 If his last spoonful of blood has gone -  
 Let that leader not hope to live on!  
 Leaders of thousands will pay to their cost,  
 If just one man of their regiment's lost.  
 If one is missing, and not counted here,  
 4930 That leader's hour will soon draw near!  
 He'll lose his life, and his honour as well.  
 Beys, who a whole ten thousand tell,  
 And find some missing, must know as well,  
 That their final hour rings its knell!  
 My word will still in force remain!  
 Think things over clearly again.  
 If you think to play lightly with me,  
 Then my Khan's power would a mockery be!  
 My word is final, that must be clear -  
 4940 Personally do I summon you here.  
 Those who go against my will,  
 I'll teach a lesson - them I'll kill!"  
 Almambet finished, and there was a hush.  
 Then he fired his gun Almabash,\*  
 Then north and south, east and west that day,  
 Six swift messengers sent on their way.  
 They went around 'mid the warriors there,  
 Almambet's orders did they declare,  
 Loudly they cried them out on the air,



4950 News to all warriors, everywhere.  
 Having heard the messengers' news,  
 What a commotion then ensues!  
 "From the dangerous ranks of Chinese  
 Many like Almambet one sees.  
 Once we've decided to enter Beijing,  
 Almambet will again look grim,  
 And most of us he will slay in his spite.  
 On all Kirghiz, whether peasant or knight,  
 He will bring down such misfortune on us.  
 4960 He whom you name your Lion Manas,  
 Thinks to himself: "Let him kill them then!"  
 He too is one of those merciless men!  
 If this Chinese is commander now,  
 How from dire fate can we escape - how?  
 Oh, we'll bring sorrow on each father's head,  
 Oh, we'll leave wives as our widows instead.  
 Oh, we'll leave children as orphans as well,  
 Oh, we'll condemn them to suffer in hell!  
 Not to let steeds nibble grass by the way,  
 4970 Not to let riders eat or drink, say -  
 What kind of man could conceive such a plan?  
 But that's just how Almambet began!  
 What kind of good shall we hope for from him?  
 So, we must not rest nor sleep? Well, that's grim!  
 So, we must not eat or drink on the way?  
 Who could hold out thus, for many a day?  
 Is it not he who will kill us off then?  
 Is it not he who who'll destroy all our men?  
 Clearly we've brought down woe on our head,  
 4980 But then what else could we do instead?  
 Having to that Kalmak given power,  
 We have brought forward our death's dark hour!"  
 Most of the warriors, wrapped in their woe,  
 On every side were crying "Oh! Oh!"  
 On every side they poured out their grief,  
 But in so doing found little relief.  
 Sad words they mumbled, and then heaved a sigh.  
 All of those warriors, both low and high,  
 Made their complaints, as dissatisfied men...  
 4990 But if you looked at the leaders then,  
 Knights, who commanded regiments well,  
 Braves, who cared little, the truth to tell,  
 Thought to themselves: "All together we'll be.  
 If our death-hour soon should we see,

We hope to die in our native land,  
 With our relations and friends at hand!"  
 Then they laid down, and went to sleep.  
 But some others continued to weep.  
 Those who were deeply, inwardly sore,  
 5000 All moaned and groaned, and silently swore.  
 Most of them sighed, and some shed a tear,  
 Taking their reins, their steeds sadly steer.  
 They soundly swore at their Khans, all those six,  
 Who, by their forebears, were cursed for their tricks,  
 Bringing the others distress and despair,  
 Bringing disaster upon their heads there.  
 "If Almambet all our people leaves dead,  
 Blame for this sin will lie hard on his head!"  
 So spoke these folk, who were tired, its clear,  
 5010 Blood-stained, although not yet pierced by a spear.  
 They missed their homes and their dear ones, these men.  
 Heavily breathing, they tossed all night then.  
 Little they slept ere the next day was born,  
 They saw no dreams before the next dawn.  
 They lay in sorrow, and wiped a wet eye,  
 While it grew light, and the dark left the sky.  
 When the dawn's rays were scattered around,  
 Soon as the morning sunlight was found,  
 Almambet's musket roared out once more:  
 5020 "Saddle your horses!" he roared, as before.  
 "Mount your steeds!" rang Almambet's cry.  
 All the people, prepared, stood by.  
 Everyone sprang upon his horse,  
 Spear-tips clinked together on course,  
 Helmets rattled, heads rolled about.  
 Leaders of ten began to shout:  
 "Ride more quickly, make your steed fly!"  
 Spears were raised, and cleft the sky.  
 Leaders of hundreds began to say:  
 5030 "If but one of you falls by the way,  
 I'm a dead man, so I suppose!"  
 Banners of each ten thousand rose,  
 Flags of each thousand along with those.  
 So the troops' ranks began to close.  
 Through Kordoi\* they rode that day,  
 To Kél-Kamish\* their path then lay,  
 To Ili,\* and on its further shore,  
 There the track descended once more.  
 Every warrior, each on his horse,



5040 Further cantered upon his course.  
 Brazen flutes began to scream...  
 Crossing the gravel bed of the stream,  
 Blowing their trumpets, raised on high,  
 O'er the wide floor of the river, now dry.  
 Far ahead as they could see,  
 "Twixt the earth, and clouds flying free,  
 There lay a distant indistinct view.  
 Past Darkan\* and Otkermelyu,\*  
 Past Kalkan\* and Ogyuz-Kechyu,\*  
 5050 On went the warriors riding through.  
 To Dzhyugyuryuk\* and Dzhyugen-Tash,\*  
 To Dzhyuyurmë and Kara-Saz,\*  
 Over the narrow Sari-Kiya,\*  
 Over the pass they travelled afar.  
 With the valour of fighting men,  
 So they rode on their journey then,  
 To the peak of Tarbagatai,\*  
 Crossed that pass, and rode on by,  
 On that far side to Sharpildak,\*  
 5060 Ayaguz river,\* and Chuk-Terek,  
 Egiz-Kara\* and Bilkildak,  
 To Egizek\* and Kara-Saz,\*  
 Rode round the foothills of high Altai,\*  
 Near those mountains went riding by.  
 All in an elevated state,  
 Rode the brave warriors, all elate.  
 Bolo-Kaying, and Do-ol and Cher,\*  
 Through them all they made their way there.  
 Thus this gigantic horde rode round,  
 5070 To the hills where sprites abound.  
 To a wide, yellow-gullied ravine,  
 Killing off gnats and serpents; when seen,  
 So this enormous horde rode ahead -  
 Any monsters it soon would leave dead.  
 Any rhinoceros, elephants too,  
 Any devils who came in view,  
 Any demons and dragons there.  
 But of fairies and nymphs they'd take care.  
 Deer, with sixty-six antlers high,  
 5080 Those they shot for food, passing by.  
 Many marvellous creatures they saw,  
 Djinns, and brazen-nosed men withal,  
 Dancers, half-women, half-bears, who knows?  
 Deer - for their sable fur they shot those!

Since they started out on their ways,  
 There have elapsed just forty days.  
 Old Kirgil, eldest of forty knights,  
 Now was found in the worst of plights -  
 One of Bozuul's ten men.  
 5090 When the forty-first day came then,  
 He was too weak, exhausted quite,  
 Couldn't sit up on his horse aright,  
 Hadn't the strength to hold the rein,  
 Hairs fell out of his beard again,  
 His white whiskers were thinning out too,  
 Feet in the stirrups would not go through.  
 Then, with the ten-leader, Bozuul,  
 That coarse-tongued and incredulous fool,  
 Old Kirgil began to speak:  
 5100 "I can't go on," he said, "I'm too weak!  
 My frisky foal, young Bozuul,  
 With friendly feeling my heart is full,  
 But your Kalmak, our high-chief now,  
 Is a bit of a swine, I vow!  
 Thanks to him, life's hard for us,  
 Thanks to him, we suffer thus.  
 I rode and rode, till tired right out,  
 Lagging behind all others, no doubt.  
 We're all Kirghizians, that's quite clear,  
 5110 But I don't know what Manas does here!  
 Why does he act so, double-faced?  
 All we Kirghiz 'neath Kalmak power placed!  
 They call Manas 'Blood-thirsty one' -  
 Does he want our blood, my son?  
 That cunning Chink - may he come to grief -  
 He now is made commander-in-chief.  
 He doesn't let us rest o'ernight,  
 He'll be the death of us, all right!  
 He will not let us rest on our course.  
 5120 Is that not violence - just sheer force?  
 For ten days now, we've had no sleep!  
 If account of these days I keep,  
 Why then, before my sleepless eye,  
 Forty-one days have now passed by,  
 Forty-one nights have passed by too.  
 If we put them together, look you!  
 We get, days plus nights - eighty-two -  
 That's what we simpletons have lived through!  
 Eighty-two days without a rest -



5130 That's why now – I must give it best!  
 What's the sense in hanging on so?  
 He can kill us all, you know!  
 And if many of us thus die,  
 Say, where will the blame then lie?  
 On whose head will fall the shame?  
 I, Kirgil, could tell his name!  
 You, Bozuul, are my leader now –  
 How can I go on, say how?  
 How can I keep myself in hand?  
 5140 How can I further torment stand?  
 How can I, unwillingly, die?  
 Better chop off my head, say I!  
 Go to Manas, and tell him so:  
 "Your Kirgil is dead, you must know!  
 He has seen the next world today!"  
 Go now, and tell him what I say!  
 Let him know just what I think,  
 That would be good for us all, on the brink!  
 How can I further meet such a fate?  
 5150 How, then, this torment tolerate?  
 Better had I never been born –  
 Understand – how in pieces I'm torn!  
 Understand me, my brave Bozuul –  
 Now my cup of suffering's full!  
 Better had I never seen day –  
 Never been named Kirgil, anyway!  
 Sixty-odd years I've lived till now –  
 Never before known such torment, I vow!  
 I should have died before, long since,  
 5160 Not know this torture which makes me wince!  
 I have lost my last strength, you know!  
 Thus, because he was worn out so,  
 Old Kirgil was complaining, Oh, Oh!  
 But Bozuul felt his anger grow,  
 And, like God, he condemned him then.  
 Did he not punish one of his ten?  
 On Kirgil's white-haired old head,  
 Did he not pour his anger instead?  
 'Why do you bring all the others in then?  
 5170 Why are you worried about other men?  
 If I look at you now, by heck! –  
 You are indeed a worn-out wreck!  
 Not knowing what for yourself to say,  
 You, poor nit-wit, go spouting away,

First you say 'Now cut off my head!'
 After that other nonsense you said,  
 Wanted me to speak with Manas,  
 Tell him of others, and kick up a fuss!  
 But if I did what you asked me to –  
 5180 Cut off your head, put an end to you –  
 Got on my steed, and went to Manas,  
 What would he say? 'You stupid ass –  
 You've been and killed my dear Kirgil!  
 Say, who gave you the right to kill?'  
 Then until the Judgement Day  
 He would be angry with me that way!  
 Such a confusion you'd bring about,  
 That I should never find a way out!  
 If you want to die, well, you may –  
 5190 But if you do, what will happen that day?  
 I shall not start to howl and rave.  
 I shall not bury you in your grave:  
 I shall just think; 'We've got rid of him,  
 Allah be thanked, and that's no sin!  
 I shall bend your cold waist on one side,  
 And on Akborchuka, whom you ride,  
 I shall tie your corpse up there.  
 When to Bull's Ford, and Foal's Ford we fare,  
 In that hollow, with high mountain stream,  
 5200 When we take up our counting scheme,  
 When we number off all our men,  
 When our riders we check up then,  
 I shall say: 'Now we are nine men,  
 But with this corpse, we once were ten –  
 Old Kirgil has died, the poor swine!  
 So I shall number this troop of mine.  
 If I did not act just so,  
 From Manas I'd get nothing but woe!  
 And who wants to arouse the ire,  
 5210 Of Almambet, our military sire?  
 Enough, Kirgil! Ride on – that's clear!  
 Don't go on grinding out nonsense here!  
 So said Bozuul to him,  
 Showed himself up, unfair and grim.  
 Then Kirgil began to speak too!  
 "Now enough, Bozuul, from you!"  
 Full of anger then answered he:  
 "In this difficult time for me  
 You should be a support for me here.



5220 He who thought up this ten-man idea –  
 Stupid Kalmak – may he come to ill!"  
 Having said this, then old Kirgil,  
 Weak as he was, still went on his way.  
 Checking his anger he managed to say:  
 "Though he may even behead me thus,  
 Still I am going to speak to Manas!  
 I shall ask: "Will you kill us all?"  
 I shall ask: 'Shall we not all fall?'  
 Let him remember how wisely I spoke,  
 5230 Openly, on behalf of the folk!  
 Let him cut off this grey head of mine!"  
 Having said this, he rode down the line.  
 Akborchuka, like a camel strong,  
 He then spurred and whipped along.  
 Tucking his beard in his waist again,  
 Bending forward above his black mane,  
 Old Kirgil plunged on past some men,  
 And Bozuul saw all this then.  
 But Kirgil was his senior too,  
 5240 So he didn't know quite what to do.  
 Stop him outright? He did not dare.  
 He had not enough gumption there.  
 So Bozuul, the ten-master, see,  
 Cried aloud at last "Woe is me!"  
 Thinking 'Kirgil is an awkward man,  
 Very headstrong, he makes his own plan,  
 He can destroy us all today –  
 Maybe he'll get lost on his way!"  
 Taking with him the rest of his men,  
 5250 So he went spurring after him then.  
 Seeing Kirgil could incite other men,  
 Bozuul, the master of ten,  
 With his warriors rode after him:  
 "If we lose sight of him, things will grow grim.  
 That old greybeard a nuisance has been.  
 He may by chance ride somewhere unseen.  
 If we don't find him, and ride by his side,  
 All will go wrong!" Bozuul then cried.  
 So he hastened his squad along,  
 5260 Though none of them were really strong.  
 Bozuul swept along the road.  
 Old Kirgil on his steed swiftly strode.  
 See, he has ridden far that day;  
 Let us leave nine men on their way...

All others suffered, and never slept.  
 Never-ceasing the woes they wept...  
 Only bold Manas felt no load,  
 Knowing no tiredness, galloped the road.  
 'Neath him a steed which needs no goad.  
 5270 With strong ribs Akkula still strode.  
 Famous all round was Manas' steed,  
 Firm were all legs, fore and aft, indeed.  
 Like a deer's was his billowing breast,  
 Tail flowing longer than all the rest.  
 Swiftly along the road he sped,  
 Like a mountain ram, eyes all red.  
 Slim and straight are all four hocks;  
 High as a camel his head he cocks.  
 Mane is dark, but skin all browned,  
 5280 And his hooves just dig in the ground.  
 Amulet there on his brow tosses high.<sup>83</sup>  
 Sinks to his pasterns, where sand is dry.  
 Such a steed is a wonderful sight,  
 And his step is swift and light.  
 First at a gallop he makes him go,  
 Then at a canter, then trot, then slow...  
 Our Manas is not one to get bored,  
 Seems that just now on his steed he has soared!  
 So that boredom should fly away,  
 5290 Thus rides brave Manas today...  
 Old Kirgil trails long on his track,  
 Asking the people who everywhere pack:  
 "Have you seen our lost Manas?"  
 Questioned them all, and made a fuss.  
 "Our unlucky one have you not seen?"  
 Thus he queried betwixt and between.  
 "Have you not noticed if he passed by?"  
 Those who made to him reply,  
 Here is what those tired ones said:  
 5300 "May heaven's fire fall on his head!  
 Yes, it was over a day ago  
 That Manas overtook us so!"  
 Those who had not seen him thought:  
 'That old fellow is searching for nought!  
 Isn't he one who has lost his ten?  
 Isn't he trying to find them again?  
 Isn't he one of a thousand, who's lost?  
 Isn't he one who'll pay the cost?  
 Isn't he one who his hundred can't find?



- 5310 Isn't he one who must be half-blind?  
 He's no simple one is this,  
 You can't guess what a fellow he is!  
 From his lips the coarse words flow,  
 As our Manas he curses so!  
 "He's an idiot!" others said,  
 Others wondered, and shook their head.  
 Many who met him along the way  
 Thought: "Will he meet Manas today?"  
 Meanwhile Kirgil just prodded like that
- 5320 Akberchuk, upon whom he sat.  
 He stuck hooves in the grooves, like a deer,  
 And Kirgil's white beard flew clear,  
 Spread itself all over his breast -  
 That's how he rode upon his quest...  
 On ahead of the troops sped Manas,  
 On Akkula, like a great camel thus.  
 He stuck his hooves in the grooves, like a deer,  
 And like a mountain ram, he leapt clear.  
 Like a banner his tail he waved...
- 5330 Andizhan 'baccy Manas had saved,  
 Which with ashes of pine was mixed well.  
 When he took it, he liked the smell.  
 Tasselled pouch from his pocket you see,  
 In his right hand stretched out held he.  
 Poured a little in his left palm,  
 Then with no more ado, nor alarm,  
 Raised his left hand to his stretched lower lip,  
 Let the powder upon it then slip -  
 This was the only pleasure he had;
- 5340 Riding alone, with tobacco he's glad...  
 Loudly shouted old Kirgil,  
 Waved his flag to and fro with a will:  
 "Dirty rascal, you've ruined me!"  
 Sparing no voice nor effort cried he.  
 When Manas then heard someone shout,  
 When again a harsh cry rang out,  
 Then he thought: "Just over that hill  
 Lie Kēmēsara\* and Chong-Bel\* -  
 On that side of the hill, not far,
- 5350 Live the numerous Naskara.  
 Maybe their warriors have come out -  
 That's what all the shouting's about!  
 Maybe they're shouting at our men!  
 Seeing Kirgil, he thought further then -

- Maybe he's come to warn me thus?!"  
 Thinking so, bogatir Manas  
 Reined in Akkula for a while.  
 White-beard Kirgil rode up, but no smile -  
 To Manas' "Salaam!" - no reply.
- 5360 On his greeting he turned a not eye.  
 To his welcome, he answered not,  
 In the grip of his anger hot.  
 Riding up to Manas there now,  
 He does not even bother to bow.  
 Straightway he falls on him with abuse -  
 Pleasant words Kirgil did not choose:  
 "Hey, Manas, this will be your shame -  
 For our deaths, you will be to blame!  
 That Chink of yours, who alone to us came,
- 5370 You raised to play chief-commander's game!  
 On our folk's heads, whether early or late,  
 You have brought down unavoidable fate.  
 That Chinese slave, who a-wandering came,  
 You have raised up with Commander's name.  
 You have thrown down your folk into woe -  
 May all your Beijin schemes suffer so!  
 May that devilish Chink just rot!  
 May he perish, and find hell hot!  
 We didn't know what would come to pass -
- 5380 He didn't let our steeds nibble grass!  
 He didn't let us feed on our way!  
 He didn't let us sleep, night or day!  
 He didn't let us relax, oh, no, no!  
 He didn't let us take grips with the foe!  
 He didn't let us take rest on the road!  
 He didn't lighten our terrible load!  
 He just tormented us all in his grasp,  
 He wished to torture us to the last gasp!  
 What evil thoughts in his head has he?
- 5390 What is all that, save hostility?  
 People already have lost their shine!  
 We merely asked to rest a short time!  
 Surely, if enemies fall on us now,  
 Warriors, tired, won't survive anyhow!  
 When we are beaten, and thousands have died,  
 That won't be time then to puff up with pride!  
 Those Chinese have a fortified wall,  
 And from its heights on us they may fall -  
 Who's going to take the blame for it then,



5400 When they destroy our Kirghizian men?  
 All this Kirgil shouted out to Manas,  
 Not hesitating to make such a fuss.  
 Many the words which he cast before him,  
 Old Kirgil, the body-guard grim,  
 One who had fought against younger men.  
 Comrade Manas felt his grievance then.  
 Suddenly whiskers bristled around,  
 Then Manas smirked, but made not a sound.  
 Finally, he decided to speak:

5410 "Dear Kirgil, you're crude, and you're weak.  
 Now it's time to give up being coarse.  
 Now it's time to get back on your horse!  
 Almambet is our warrior chief,  
 He faces problems beyond belief.  
 Do you think he feels easy so?  
 We have small strength left, that we know!  
 Coarseness and curses make things ill –  
 Calm yourself then, my dear Kirgil.  
 Now it's time to pipe down, anyhow!

5420 Go and return to your own ten now!"  
 Having said these few words, Manas  
 Spurred his steed, and rode off thus,  
 Urged him on then with his whip,  
 Gave the reins a decisive flip,  
 Rode ahead, still feeling vexed.  
 Now just look what Kirgil did next!  
 He turned round to the warriors then:  
 "May you fall, along with Beijin,  
 With that bad Manas, mark this,

5430 And with that Kalmak chief of his!  
 May they both sink beneath the ground;  
 May their corpses there be found!  
 May he stink, along with his Chink!  
 All my words ion vain! Just think!  
 Such a shameful thing, what's more,  
 I have never seen before!  
 Forty-one days I've ridden now,  
 I've had more then enough, I vow!  
 I've a terrible pain in my waist.

5440 Covered in dust, on the way I've chased!.."  
 There he stopped, like an obstinate bull,  
 Meanwhile that "tenner", Bozuul,  
 Raising a racket, sped to the full,  
 Striking and overtaking all.

Asking everyone on the way:  
 "Hey, good fellows, good-day, good-day!  
 Have you seen a lost old man  
 Roaming around here?" he began;  
 "Awkward old devil, with long grey beard –

5450 He's got lost somewhere, I'm afear'd!..  
 "Have you not seen one?" then said he.  
 So he went searching hastily,  
 Cursing Kirgil upon the way,  
 Questioned everyone "Yea" or "Nay!"  
 Those who had seen the old man replied:  
 "Was that a man of experience wide,  
 Seated upon a tallish steed,  
 With a long grey beard, indeed?  
 Well, he just passed us on our way,

5460 Cursing Almambet, I must say!  
 He rode past us on his steed,  
 Cursing Manas as well, indeed!  
 Ride ahead – you'll find him there!"  
 So Bozuul did further fare,  
 Taking with him his other eight men.  
 He urged all along with him then,  
 Galloping on, they forward sped...  
 Then he saw someone looming ahead,  
 Looking like Kirgil, indeed,

5470 When he saw him, reduced his speed.  
 Bozuul rode up to him then,  
 Counting up the whole as ten –  
 All in order, all at his will,  
 Started to move towards Kirgil:  
 "Elder knight Kirgil!" said he,  
 "Our Manas, then, did you see?  
 Did you speak with Almambet?  
 Did they pay heed to what you said?  
 Did they listen to you, in your plight?

5480 Is this where you've settled down for the night?  
 Are you an officer? Who gave you right?  
 Where are your men, then, why not in sight?  
 I gave you orders not to go –  
 But you have disobeyed me so!  
 For this disobedience, then,  
 Won't Allah punish you, like other men?  
 I'm your superior, don't forget –  
 If you scorn me, you'll meet trouble yet!  
 If you do not respect my worth,



5490 You will get just what you deserve!  
 If you disobey what I say,  
 I shall have you whipped that day!  
 I tried to show you, as elder, respect.  
 But when you went, and tried to defect,  
 I had to come and find you then,  
 Hunt you down, with my other men!  
 If you again should disobey,  
 I shall have you slain that day!  
 Bozuul was angry, no joke –  
 5500 As a mob looked on simple folk.  
 Old Kirgil glanced up in surprise,  
 Tears were flowing down from his eyes.  
 Old Kirgil all self-control lost,  
 Would not listen, nor count the cost.  
 Old Kirgil, full of anger then,  
 Having shattered the world of young men,  
 Old Kirgil to him then replied:  
 Eyes still streaming, with anger wide,  
 "That's enough, Bozuul, for this time,  
 5510 Overweening comrade of mine!  
 He who thought up this "Ten-man" idea,  
 May he find no peace on earth here!"  
 Having said that, he held his peace,  
 On Akberchuk let the reins release –  
 There we shall leave him on his way...  
 Something of Manas we'll now say.  
 Having left Kirgil behind,  
 He went riding off like the wind.  
 Since that day when to Allah they'd prayed,  
 5520 Since that day they'd set forth, war-arrayed,  
 Counting the days which now had passed,  
 He totalled up the time at last.  
 Counting the nights which too had fled,  
 This to a common total led –  
 They had ridden forty-one days,  
 Forty-one nights as well always –  
 Added together in equal phase,  
 This made a total of eighty-two days,  
 Which, without resting, they'd had to pass –  
 5530 Thus then reasoned Lion Manas;  
 On yellow foothills of Mount Sezil,  
 Spurring Akkula with his heel,  
 Took out his tube, with its glazed reddish eye,  
 Screwed round six times, he pulled it out high,

And so he sighted it on the scene,  
 Over a metre in length, I mean –  
 Which, when pointed, makes far things near,  
 Which, if Manas then looks at quite clear,  
 Things from sixty days' travel ahead,  
 5540 To the length of a lasso are led!  
 Such a spy-glass he put to his eye,  
 Standing on a cliff-edge high.  
 There he started gazing around,  
 And his warriors soon he found.  
 Then his lower lip pouted out,  
 And his anger began to spout:  
 Some had let go of the spare horses' rein,  
 Some had let them run off again,  
 Some were weeping, not wiping their eyes,  
 5550 Some were buzzing, and fussing like flies.  
 Some were flopping to and fro,  
 Some were flapped over the saddle-peak so,  
 Some were too weak to sit up straight,  
 Some were being held up by a mate,  
 Some were half-dead, quite out of control,  
 Some were suffering, sick in the soul,  
 Some were too faint to keep on course,  
 Some were even thrown from their horse,  
 Some were trying to help them along,  
 5560 Some were dying, and none with a song!  
 Thus, unwilling, were they dragged ahead.  
 Thus, just like tents, were they stacked up instead.  
 Thus, stretched out like logs were they laid,  
 Thus, a load for pack-horses were made.  
 Thus, two together, with straps they were bound,  
 Thus, two together, hauled up from the ground.  
 Onto pack-horses they heaved half-dead men,  
 Lashed round their waists, they were hoisted then,  
 Loaded down horses could scarce bear the strain,  
 5570 With burdens stumbled, again and again.  
 Some, still astride, were tied hand and foot,<sup>86</sup>  
 Just as though robbers and criminals stood.  
 Dumb and unnumbered rode tied up so...  
 When Manas gazed through his spy-glass, though,  
 He tried his best on the leaders to fall –  
 Chiefs of tens, hundreds and thousands, and all...  
 "Tenners" were many, they too were worn out.  
 Then the centurions – fewer about.  
 Chieftains of thousands were weary and worn,



5580 All were exhausted, clothes tattered and torn...  
 So this was Almambet's campaign -  
 Leading Kirghiz to such stress and strain!  
 At a few chieftains then looked he,  
 Leaders of thousands were lost, one could see.  
 Out of the thousand, nobody obeyed -  
 Those who knew not the plans that were laid,  
 Those who themselves to their graves could not go,  
 Those overwhelmed by their suffering so,  
 Those who had lost their comrades-in-arms,  
 5590 Those who were full of all kinds of alarms.  
 Seeing all this, then thought Manas:  
 "There is no sense in hurrying thus.  
 All our warriors we shall destroy,  
 If such tactics we still employ!  
 On whose head, then will fall the blame?"  
 Spurring Akkula on again,  
 Having decided to catch Almambet,  
 Lion Manas we'll leave riding yet...  
 On the faded yellow plain,  
 5600 Where the red soil crumbles again,  
 Almambet, the commander-in-chief,  
 Raises two banners, and rides beneath.  
 In his charge all the warriors are.  
 'Neath him strides his steed Sarala,  
 With his heavy, waving mane.  
 Like new velvet, his skin shines plain.  
 He goes prancing on, prim and proud,  
 Shoes on his four hooves beat aloud.  
 When they stamp on stone, there's a clash!  
 5610 Thus Almambet rides on, full of dash.  
 As if drunken, his bold steed sways.  
 As if just starting out on his ways,  
 As if only just taking his seat,  
 Almambet, who fears nought on two feet,  
 And is not one to grieve and fret,  
 Rides self-satisfied, confident yet.  
 You might think: "Padishah is he!"  
 Having seen his banners fly free,  
 Leopard Manas cried out aloud,  
 5620 And, on hearing that leopard proud,  
 Then commander-in-chief Almambet,  
 Seeing him still afar off yet,  
 Having heard his raucous shout,  
 Thought to himself: "What's this all about?

What's the meaning of all this fuss?  
 Why is Manas now summoning us?  
 We've just passed Kumsar and Ach-Bel,\*  
 Where the mountain pass runs as well.  
 There are found a people most grand -  
 5630 Giant Doloi's most populous land!  
 Have his warriors made an attack?  
 Have they tried to hold them back?  
 Have they, perhaps, encircled them?  
 Has he started a battle, then?  
 Maybe Manas has left things too late?  
 Maybe he wants that I should wait?  
 Well, then, let us slow down on our way,  
 And let us hear what he wants to say!  
 Let us hear who it is at fault!  
 5640 So Almambet commanded a halt...  
 Then Manas, coming up from behind.  
 Gave Almambet his greeting kind.  
 Since Almambet was commander-in-chief,  
 Lion Manas then spoke very brief -  
 One word of welcome, but that showed  
 That deep respect which to him he owed,  
 Recognizing the right in his hand,  
 And respecting his chief-command.  
 So Manas simply said: "Salaam!"  
 5650 Almambet said: "Alik! Fear no harm!  
 Why are you in such a hurry so?  
 What is the haste, I should like to know?"  
 Lion Manas replied to him thus:  
 "Listen, Almambet, to us!  
 Since we left Dzhalo\* and Chu,  
 And the lowland of Korogot too,  
 With Allah's help, each bestrode his steed,  
 And we have kept to the road, indeed!  
 Eighty-two days have passed away,  
 5660 And on our men, like a river, say,  
 As on earth sown with people, like seed,  
 Down came the darkest night, indeed.  
 Many of them were short of breath,  
 Many of them were near to death!  
 What if we make a short stop o'ernight?  
 What if we let them all sleep tight?  
 If like this one day more we go on,  
 All our strength will be utterly gone!  
 If they perish then, all the same,



- 5670 Who is going to take the blame?  
 Old Kirgil is exhausted and all,  
 But Bozuul is goading him still.  
 That poor devil, my oldest knight,  
 With his "tenner" still has to fight!  
 He gasped out: 'I'm dying here!'  
 Came to me, to make things clear.  
 I took no notice of his complaint,  
 Told him: 'Go and calm down, don't faint!'  
 Afterwards, when I looked around,  
 5680 Then what terrible sights I found!  
 All the men were quite done in,  
 Near to death, all bone and skin!  
 What if we let them rake a rest –  
 Almambet, would that not be best?"  
 So he spoke to Commander-in-chief.  
 Hearing this, past all belief,  
 Almambet grew as angry as ten:  
 "Comrade! What are you saying, then?  
 All on account of one old man?"  
 5690 Now I see, when your face I scan,  
 That you're really no stronger than he!  
 On my soul Manas, let things be!  
 Why be worried about one man?  
 Let him do the best he can!  
 You are the one who is tired out –  
 Of that now there can be no doubt.  
 If you don't like the decision you gave,  
 If you don't like the way I behave,  
 Free me from this power supreme,  
 5700 Free your shameful slave, I mean!  
 Free me now, I beg of you –  
 Free me, that's all I ask, it's true!  
 If you've some other scheme to fulfil,  
 Not merely helping dying Kirgil,  
 If you yourself something else regret,  
 Take the power – I am sick of it yet!  
 Give up fussing about at last,  
 Saying Kirgil is dying fast,  
 Give up now this lost complaint,  
 5710 Making him out to be a saint!  
 If I tell you the truth today –  
 Let Kirgil die – there's no other way!  
 If we stop now, then everything's lost –  
 Let Kirgil die – that must be the cost!

- Otherwise all the others must die!"  
 Further to speak he did not try.  
 He would not tolerate more delay,  
 Urged his steed forward on his way.  
 To Serala he spurs he set,  
 5720 Not holding back, off rode Almambet,  
 Urging all the others ahead...  
 Lion Manas to himself then said:  
 "Yes, we should be thankful to him –  
 Leading us on, when times are grim!  
 May God deal with old Kirgil,  
 That will swine, who has led me to ill!  
 Why did I listen to him, when he came?  
 See how he now has put me to shame!"  
 Lost in such thoughts, he besat Akkula –  
 5730 "Let things now remain as they are!"  
 Lion Manas gave his steed the rein,  
 Then rode slowly off again...  
 Not taking notice of any one,  
 Quick-witted Almambet rode on –  
 Never once did he look behind.  
 Long was the road, but he did not mind.  
 He rode on for another day,  
 Slowing stowing his anger away,  
 There where the peak of Sharap held sway,  
 5740 Speedily the he made his way.  
 Thinking things over and over yet,  
 Our most famous Almambet  
 Looked at the paper where days were set down.  
 Having read them, he gave a frown,  
 For, as Lion Manas had said,  
 Forty-one days already had sped.  
 Forty-one nights had passed as well.  
 If together their number you tell,  
 Eighty-two days have thus passed by –  
 5750 This at once caught Almambet's eye.  
 Listen now, what it's all about:  
 He at once drew his spy-glass out  
 From its case, made of leather light,  
 With its lid, which was screwed on tight,  
 With its amber-tipped long tube –  
 Six times round must it be unscrewed.  
 So that the glass not dusty should get,  
 It lay hid in white fabric yet.  
 Sixty masters, fine jewellers too,



5760 All had seen that the glass stood true,  
 Since it was meant to see afar.  
 Slender handle of steel, there you are!  
 Eye-piece cover, like some amulet,  
 This could bring everything nearer yet.  
 From his neck not removing the cord,  
 From the sash, which his waist adorned,  
 Up he drew the tube to his eye,  
 Sighted it accurately, forby,  
 On the numberless, seething horde.

5770 When Almambet, our great war-lord,  
 Looked around, it was like a bad dream:  
 Many no longer could move, 'twould seem.  
 Those in the saddle were goaded ahead,  
 Though they were clearly more than half-dead.  
 Then he thought: "Someone must answer for this —  
 Some of them leaving this life, that is!  
 But who will take on his head the blame?  
 He too will die, and be covered in shame!  
 Strongest ones, though not many about,

5780 Tried to help the weak ones out...  
 Firm-willed ones, though they were few,  
 Those whose courage was endless too,  
 Like the stronger ones, did their best,  
 Went around among all the rest,  
 Raising the fallen ones, in need,  
 Placing them firmly upon their steed,  
 Bound arms and legs to saddle and girth,  
 Tugged them tightly, for all they were worth...  
 Thus Almambet, with a stare, and a glare,

5790 Then understood: "They've lost all power there!"  
 He saw, amazed, all their powers were gone,  
 So he declared then: "We cannot go on!  
 Say, on whose head now falls the blame,  
 Which of us will be covered in shame?  
 Early tomorrow, at least by noon,  
 We should reach the river Orkun,  
 In the valley of Kobulduu.  
 There we must rest, and see stragglers through!...  
 When the first lines caught up with him,

5800 When they came, troop after troop, so grim,  
 Then he said: "We shall stop here tonight!"  
 Drubbed on his drum, all gold-rimmed bright.  
 Then said he: "God has blessed us now!  
 We shall stay here tonight, anyhow!"

God has consented to let us rest!"  
 So each got down from his horse's crest:  
 Those poor devils who left their seat,  
 Fell face down, couldn't stand on their feet!  
 But there are others, in greater need —

5810 They have no power to move from their steed,  
 But there is no one to help them there.  
 Still more sit, tied hand and foot, I declare.  
 Those who on pack-horses had been thrown,  
 Could not move, only give out a groan.  
 Horses stood without tethers there,  
 Horses stood with their saddles bare.  
 Many with hanging head there were found —  
 When steeds stopped, they just flopped on the ground.  
 Many weeping, with tears running free —

5820 Ah, if those wretches you just could see!  
 Just like fish, where shallows flow,  
 There they flop on each other so.  
 Just like rubbish, thrown in a ditch,  
 There they lie, and barely twitch...  
 "Tie up your horses!" Almambet cried,  
 And his voice rang far and wide.  
 But nobody responded there —  
 People caught no steeds anywhere,  
 As if in their graves lying deep,

5830 Lowered their lids, and fell asleep!  
 All the horses then ran away.  
 Almambet tried to make them stay:  
 Some with bridles round forelegs ran slow,  
 Some with saddles round bellies below,  
 Some with tail-strap, which round buttocks palls,  
 Some with harness, which round their legs falls.  
 Some were staggering, barely alive,  
 Some found a leaning-post, where to survive,  
 Some with saddles, which squeaked like hell,

5840 Some with blankets, which from them fell.  
 Roaming at liberty, warriors' steeds  
 On the dry steppe nibbled grass and weeds,  
 And there was something wonderful too —  
 Water somewhere! Those horses knew!  
 They drifted off towards the stream,  
 Each one followed, in one long team!  
 Off to the stream Tabandi went they,  
 Sniffing and shuffling along the way.  
 Almambet to the hollow rode,



5850 Watching the horses, there he strode.  
 On the high bank he already stood,  
 Scrambling up as best he could.  
 Seeing the stream, at once thought he:  
 "Very bad for these steeds this will be –  
 They are still heated, and ought not to drink,  
 Though some already stood on the brink.  
 If they've abrasions on their spine,  
 Then they should wait till a later time!"  
 So Almambet then drubbed his white drum,  
 5860 Fired from his musket, and that made them run!  
 "Bang" went his musket, Almabash.  
 Neighing, and swaying, the horses rush.  
 Almambet, with a raucous cry,  
 Drove them away, as they drew nigh.  
 Almambet – just look at him now –  
 Drives those horses alone somehow,  
 Giving a devilish Kalmak cry,  
 Drives off the steeds from the stream nearby:  
 "Hey, Kangai, Kangai, Kangai!"\*  
 5870 "Hey, Kaldai, Kaldai, Kaldai!"\*  
 "Hey, Mandzhu, Mandzhu, Mandzhu!"\*  
 He roared out these war-cries anew!  
 "Hey, Chiypuu, Chiypuu, Chiypuu!"  
 Horses were frightened, and people too,  
 So he raised those stumbling men,  
 Flocking like sheep, to their steeds again.  
 He rode into the midst of them all  
 And to others began to call,  
 Not doing any things by halves.  
 5880 Those who lay with their slacks round their calves,<sup>87</sup>  
 Hurriedly pulled up their trousers tight,  
 Buttoning up as best they might.  
 Some of them stumbled, some of them fell,  
 Some of their hearts gave out as well,  
 Belts were broken, aside were tossed,  
 Trousers fell down, in the mud were lost.  
 Bumping on others, heads went crack,  
 Some fell face-down, and some on their back.  
 Many were trampled, and loudly groaned:  
 5890 "May that Kalmak be cursed!" they moaned.  
 Those who cried out were not a few –  
 Legs the wrong way in trousers plunged through,  
 Gaps were torn in breeches as well.  
 Once more they cursed: "Kalmak – go to hell!"

Has he not gathered some Chinese men?  
 He seems ready to fight with us then!  
 Thus he will bring us to bitter shame,  
 All unprepared, tired out, and lame.  
 Is not that what he's planning to do?!"  
 5900 Those who cursed thus were surely not few!  
 In the dark some people anew,  
 After someone's horses chased too,  
 Caught so many, you just couldn't count.  
 When each one had got his own mount,  
 They were tired, but held steeds on the yoke.  
 Then Almambet with them thus spoke:  
 "Hey, you people!" to them he said,  
 "In the valley that lies on ahead,  
 In Dzhalo-o, Chulun\* and Chatkal,\*  
 5910 In Kokand\* and in Kashgar,\*  
 In Tashkent and Bukhara\*,  
 In Sarkoldo and Sari-Arka,\*  
 Everywhere are your people in view,  
 And by the rivers Ili\* and Chu,\*  
 There a home for themselves they find.  
 If the water's of acidy kind,  
 You'll give the girls no peace, I declare!  
 You'll just go boasting to them: 'I'll dare!'  
 If the water's of acidy kind,  
 5920 You'll give your horses no peace of mind!  
 In the village you'll raise a scare,  
 Bragging: "I'm bold, see what I did there!",  
 Making it seem you're one of the Beys.  
 But if on the road for two days,  
 Mind and reason quite fall through,  
 Now in what condition are you?  
 Where's Beijin, and where is that land?  
 Where are the Chinks, are they at hand?  
 Now you have rested here all night too,  
 5930 What's it about, all this hullabaloo?  
 One said: "His horse's back is all sore –  
 Can't bear his rider any more!"  
 He is worried about his steed.  
 Others said: "His horse is sweating indeed –  
 Barely stands up, but falls always.  
 One must understand these days –  
 Things all go bad, and not right here!"  
 "Let me hear nothing with my right ear.  
 If by chance though, I something make out,



5940 You know quite well, my brothers, no doubt,  
 He who says such won't stay alive here!  
 Let me hear nothing with my left ear.  
 If by chance though I something make out,  
 You know quite well, my brothers, no doubt,  
 He who says such will not survive here!  
 But Beijin is far off, that is clear.  
 Let the horses stand here till the morn,  
 Then you can sleep like babes new-born,  
 Flop on your backs, side by side, and sweat!"  
 5950 Having spoken these words, Almambet  
 Started to look around quite near.  
 Soberer ones then also spoke clear:  
 "We should be grateful to Almambet  
 For the rest which we now shall get!  
 That brave Chink works all alone,  
 And, it seems, has sly ways of his own.  
 And, it seems, he's a real bogatir,  
 Standing out high mid the others here,  
 For he does not seem to tire —  
 5960 Many the thoughts which his soul inspire!"  
 Such were the words of elder men,  
 Sturdiest warriors, all of them.  
 And they raised a cheer or two.  
 But of that Almambet little knew.  
 So as to save his men from attack,  
 He decided to make his track  
 Over the ford of the river Orkun.\*  
 On the lake swims Kuuordék\* soon.  
 Ram Akkuldzha is the mountain guard still.  
 5970 Kirmus-Shah lives there with Muradil.  
 For Chinese good-for-nothings, in their host,  
 There is a guarded border-post.  
 "I must go there, and scout it out,  
 And must find what it's all about!"  
 So Almambet, on his steed Sarala,  
 Real swift racer, galloping far,  
 Gave her a lash on her flanks with his whip,  
 Jangled the reins, held tight in his grip.  
 Raising the dust behind, he flew  
 5980 Over the crumbling limestone too.  
 Over the salt-marsh he drove his beast,  
 Over the road that leads to the East,  
 Galloping on, he whirls and wheels,  
 Clouds of dust behind his heels...

Almambet rode on till noon,  
 Till he came to the great Orkun,  
 And arrived at the time of prayer.  
 When he looked at the river there,  
 Saw that its upper reach was ice-free.  
 5990 From both sides there flowed, you see,  
 Sixty little streamlets therein.  
 Black it looked, and rather grim,  
 Giving off a smell of blood,  
 Fir and willow-sprigs float on the flood,  
 Silver-birches' branches too  
 All went whirling and churning through.  
 Thus the river was all a-foam,  
 Sludge-ice here and there splashed home.  
 Big as a yurta-wheel, stones abound,  
 6000 With a rumble like thunder roll round.  
 White flaky spume goes flying high,  
 Neither bank is then left dry.  
 This is a river now in spate,  
 Let's you feel its mighty weight.  
 This is the frightening river Orkun!  
 From the waves and flying spume,  
 On the banks the rushes sway,  
 And the reeds go writhing away,  
 There enormous fishes rear.  
 6010 If you look around, there and here,  
 Glittering, gleaming, they leap out yet!  
 Only a knight like Almambet,  
 But no other kind of man,  
 Could come near that flood, as it ran.  
 When that torrent he started to scan,  
 Bogatir Almambet, your Khan,  
 Did not seek a ford, high or low...  
 Cross it alive? He did not know!  
 But he gave his steed lash —  
 6020 Into the raging current they dash...  
 Cantered; crying "Allah on high!"  
 Plunged in the water, lost to the eye,  
 Disappeared, then rose again,  
 Horse strove on with might and main,  
 Bearing Almambet, like a cap,  
 Reached the middle, found a gap.  
 From his steed's left side he leapt  
 Into the flood, where waters swept,  
 Down into the depths once more,



6030 Turned his horse toward the shore.  
 Into the ring on his bridle there,  
 Dug his right hand therein, I swear;  
 Just as though his horse were a raft,  
 Dragged him along, like towing some craft,  
 Like a dog then did he swim.  
 Grey-beard Almambet, looking grim,  
 Finally reached the bank... He stood,  
 Wrung cut his clothes as best he could,  
 Likewise wrung his steed, there you are –

6040 Jumped on his dripping Sarala.  
 There he sat for a moment and thought:  
 That one whose wings of gold are wrought,  
 That one who has a silver tail,  
 Guardian of the lake without fail,  
 Maybe upon the lake I shall see.  
 Kuuerdek may beware of me!  
 If within bow-shot she should appear,  
 Then I shall shoot her down, that's clear!  
 So he spurred on his way, thinking yet.

6050 On he rode, our Almambet.  
 Now this duck was a prophetess,  
 Telling of future events, no less.  
 Soon as he saw her, still far away,  
 He made ready her spirit to slay.  
 But at once in the air she flew,  
 Gave a sign to Akkuldzha too.  
 He was a guardian wild mountain ram.  
 Straightway, head-down, to Almambet ran.  
 There, where Kirmus-Shah's young son

6060 On a forty-day visit had come.  
 Muradil left at the break of day.  
 Only at noon Almambet made his way  
 Onto that stony, deserted mound,  
 Where Muradil was not to be found,  
 Where he had eaten sheep-liver, and sat  
 Sunning himself on a small tent-mat.  
 There live embers were glowing yet,  
 Where that heathen, contented, you bet,  
 Left his pipe-ashes, knocked on a stone...

6070 Almambet looked round, all alone,  
 Bow and arrow in hand still gripped,  
 Thinking "It seems that heathen has slipped  
 Out of my hands, I have come too late –  
 Muradil for me would not wait!"

So thought our warrior Almambet.  
 "Gainst a wild ass his bow he set –  
 That's how he passed his time away,  
 Shooting deer as well, I must say.  
 On that spot forty days he spent..."

6080 "I didn't think things might take this bent!  
 What misfortune has happened to me!  
 Forty days – and no foe I see!  
 I've not been able his blood to spill,  
 Could not behead him, could not kill!  
 Everywhere, and every time now,  
 Things turn out bad for me somehow!  
 If I had beaten down that knight  
 I should have shown my manhood all bright.  
 From the right side no attack did I make,  
 And as my spoil his horse did not take!  
 With my firm and well-polished spear,  
 Struck no hard blow from the left side near.  
 Excellent, swift-running racing steeds  
 Did not drive off, so to suit my needs!  
 If my good men shared no spoil with me,  
 Then a poor man I should most clearly be,  
 And I should grieve that nought could I take.  
 Kuuordék flew away from the lake.  
 Akkuldzha, the ram, ran from war.

6100 Had I arrived here but one day before!  
 Must be the Devil, who mixed up my ways!  
 If in that direction you gaze,  
 There you see that none might go through.  
 Even a mountain pass – not in view,  
 Even a spoonful of snow – not in view,  
 Even a cliff with an owl – not in view,  
 Even a tree or a bush – not in view,  
 Even a mound rising round – not in view,  
 Even a gulley or two – not in view,

6110 Even the distance – invisible too!  
 Only the deep, indescribable dark,  
 Only the vale, and the steppe wide and stark.  
 Man in such deserts could not get by.  
 People who come here just would not try –  
 Take a look and see – I don't lie!  
 If a black griffon thither should fly,  
 Burning its mouth, 'twould swiftly pass by.  
 If a bald-headed man wandered there,  
 All his brains heated, he'd run, I declare!



6120 If a small bluebird should to fly there,  
 It would soon leave with its tail all aflame.  
 If some wild asses should wander in there,  
 Hooves all red-hot, they would soon get a scare –  
 Such is that desert, the steppe that he saw...  
 Grey-maned Alma, your knight, feeling raw,  
 Turned his horse around from that sight.  
 From the slopes of Kék-Argin  
 Travelled away along with him.  
 Lion Almambet, your knight,  
 6130 There and back rode swift as he might,  
 Spent six days and nights on the way,  
 And arrived on the seventh day,  
 Late at eve came back to his men,  
 Went straight into the war-tent then.  
 All the others were fast asleep,  
 His own soldiers were snoring deep.  
 He took his saddle, a blue cushion too,  
 Placed it under his head, as they do.  
 Having tethered his steed outside.  
 6140 To a poplar, he whispered; "Goodnight!"  
 All as needed did Almambet –  
 If you don't follow the laws as set,  
 Then no success will meet your eyes –  
 Under his head the cushion lies...  
 All was done, and down he lay;  
 Almambet slept well, come what may...  
 From one Friday, for one whole week,  
 Could not wake, and could not speak.  
 Like a dead corpse was he found –  
 6150 Could not lift his head from the ground.  
 Seemingly, nothing could he feel,  
 Stretched out there from head to heel.  
 Had he not breathed, you might think him dead –  
 But all comes to an end, be it said.  
 From his snores his head grew warm.  
 All his warriors came in a swarm.  
 They were troubled to see him so –  
 What to do for him, they didn't know.  
 From one Friday to the next,  
 6160 Thus our hero slept, unvexed!  
 There he lay, just eight days through!  
 Why should he die, such a good man too?  
 All his warriors were amazed –  
 Eight days, eight nights – that's sixteen days!

All the people heard of it too,  
 But at last Almambet broke through:  
 Up he jumped, and straight away  
 Washed his hands, and began to pray.  
 Then he likewise washed his feet –  
 6170 Everything must be complete.  
 Washed his feet, said another prayer –  
 Everything was in order there.  
 Nothing vital was missed out –  
 Life began anew, no doubt.  
 Open hands he raised to his face –  
 Thanks to Allah, for all his grace!  
 Lion Almambet thought of all,  
 So that no further woes should fall:  
 "Here are all my fighting men –  
 6180 That long road we must now take them!  
 My greatest foe, and none could be worse,  
 That's the great river Orkun, of course!  
 Only one thing rests in my mind –  
 Fording place for my men to find!  
 For this feat I must now prepare –  
 I must take them through safely there!  
 Arts of wizardry I know:  
 That's where I must use them so!  
 Therefore, e'er crossing the river Orkun,  
 6190 I must place in it my poison-stone.\*  
 Then to our Maker I must pray  
 That he will change the weather that day!  
 Our Almambet had thought of this way.  
 That magic story is not from these times –  
 It can be read of in most ancient rhymes...  
 Then he rode to speak to Manas,  
 Having first donned his coronet thus.  
 There all his forty knights stood by,  
 Old Kirgil, and bold Bakai.  
 6200 Then Almambet spoke out, eye to eye:  
 "O dear folk!" he addressed them then,  
 "Here are elders; and wisest of men –  
 Khans, Commanders, leaders not few!  
 Listen to what I would tell to you –  
 Right before us now lies the Orkun,  
 That great river, which we must ford soon.  
 Many wonderful spots lie around –  
 Steppeland, where never a hill is found!  
 Places where man no foot has set,



- 6210 Many dangers and woes waiting yet!  
Mountains, higher than others you know,  
Where the people in woolly hair go!  
There are women-bears, demons too!  
Think this out, what I'm telling you –  
Wildest men, wildest camels are there.  
People changed into sprites are not rare.  
Men with bronze noses, and bloodsuckers too!  
Evil djinns, metal-beaked monsters, not few.  
Thieving demons, the worst ones known,
- 6220 Giant Dzhado-ochu, on his own!  
Any man who goes near to him,  
Seizes and swallows him with a grin!  
People with horns on their heads are there;  
Many evils bad spirits prepare.  
There the magic bird, Arkalar,  
Flutters around you near and far,  
Then, quite suddenly, off she'll fly,  
Dropping her turds on you from the sky,  
Just like small-shot, out of a gun,
- 6230 And the man below has to run!  
For wherever those droppings fall,  
Everything's burnt in a smoky pall;  
All is turned to dust and ash!  
If she suddenly makes a dash,  
If she swiftly soars o'er your course –  
Whip your blanket from off your horse,  
Cast in the flames, and there let it burn,  
And your socks throw on in turn!  
Let the smoke fly up to her then –
- 6240 If she smells sweat of horses, or men,  
She cannot move, nor low, nor high,  
She no longer remains in the sky,  
Loses all her feeling and strength,  
Falls, like drunk, before you at length!  
Wings are one whole arm-span wide.  
Keep away from them, stand aside!  
All is poisonous, do not touch –  
One of man's enemies – she is such!  
Meanwhile we have a greater foe –
- 6250 River Orkun ahead, in full flow!  
To Almighty Allah I'll pray –  
Try to change the weather today.  
Poison-stone in the river I'll place.  
We can't move, while the waves still race –

- Not a man would remain alive!  
Make preparations to survive:  
Gather brushwood, and light your fires,  
Cook whatever your heart desires!  
Calm your hearts, and be at ease.
- 6260 Eat, my warriors, what you please!  
Find some fodder for horses too –  
They'll need strength, as well as you!  
Let them put on a little weight,  
Meanwhile, my warriors, get things straight:  
Some still think I have murdered them –  
Listen not to those idiots then!"  
So to them all spoke Almambet.  
Their commanders, and others yet,  
Were surprised to hear what he said,
- 6270 Nonetheless, they made ready their bread,  
Let out their steeds where grass was well-grown...  
Almambet took his poison-stone;  
There in the river he set it fast,  
Said his charms backwards, first to last.<sup>88</sup>  
From his magic books he read –  
"Go from end to beginning!" it said.  
Spells in Kalmak tongue too said he.  
Mussulmen's laws, he chanted free.  
Cunning and wise was Almambet's head –
- 6280 Even some Chinese charms he said.  
Slave, who saw before what would be,  
Slave, who saw their real enemy,  
Slave, who consulted with Allah on this,  
Slave, who fired, and did not miss,  
Slave, whose prophecies all came true,  
Slave, who had Allah's blessing too,  
To his black spirit he said his spell;  
In the valley the rain then fell,  
In the hills then down came the hail,
- 6290 Mist surrounded the river vale.  
Take a look from the western side –  
Crimson twilight flamed far and wide,  
Frost came down, and people froze,  
All of them trembled, fearing worse woes,  
Filled were the ditches then with ice,  
Gullies were full of hail in a trice,  
Down it came, from the leaden skies,  
Freezing the surface of earth likewise;  
All was covered, the blizzard blew,



6300 Whipping the hail along with it too.  
 In the mountains winter ruled,  
 In the valleys ice-floes cooled.  
 Warriors, when the blizzard whirls,  
 All begin to scream like girls.  
 Everyone grew cold and damp,  
 Unforgettable in the camp.  
 Not only warriors, Khans as well,  
 Many of them, who none could tell,  
 Had no hopes of remaining alive,  
 6310 Groaning: "How can we survive?"  
 Those who left tents were blinded by snow,  
 Those who stayed in felt freezing so.  
 They all thought their last day was there!  
 Look around – it's snow everywhere!  
 Saving snow, there was nothing seen.  
 Summer forgotten, with all its green.  
 Everything cold, and everything damp.  
 For the majority in the camp  
 Something had happened they'd ne'er forget.  
 6320 Friday to Friday and no better yet!  
 Not a break in the anywhere.  
 People were huddled up in despair.  
 Many of them had given up hope,  
 And in the darkness began to grope...  
 All that poor, unfortunate set –  
 Youngsters and elders, don't forget –  
 Almambet with great pity saw,  
 And his conscience began to gnaw –  
 So from the river he took his stone,  
 6330 And a long willow-switch alone,  
 Which from the water then he drew.  
 Many who thought themselves bold ones too,  
 Lost their senses, and nought could feel.  
 Then Almambet his own right heel  
 Placed in the river – and everything ceased!  
 All his eleven spells were released,  
 And, to everyone's surprise,  
 Leaden clouds all flew from the skies.  
 Of all storm-clouds skies were bereft –  
 6340 Not a sign of them then was left!  
 Powerful winds blew them all away,  
 No wisp of mist was left that day.  
 Breezes wafted round here and there,  
 Sun broke through, and warmed the air.

All the winds then died away,  
 Flies came buzzing out to play.  
 Little birds chattered for all they were worth,  
 Steam rose up from the melted earth.  
 Then with a cry: "To horse! To horse!"  
 6350 All the warriors rose, of course!  
 Pack-loads, with campaign goods they took,  
 Loaded them up on spare horses, look!  
 Heads of spears gleamed bright in the sun.  
 Heads of warriors, bobbing as one,  
 Banners with tassles waved overhead,  
 Willing war-horses fetlocks spread,  
 Gilded armour gleamed and glowed,  
 Earth could barely stand their load.  
 Youngsters took pack-horse bridles in hand –  
 6360 They too must soon forsake dry land...  
 So they must not be left behind –  
 Quickly ahead, and the others find!  
 Weapons and armour shining bright,  
 At their head Almambet sat tight.  
 On they went to the river Orkun,  
 And arrived at its borders soon.  
 People looked at it – what a sight!  
 It was a mighty river all right,  
 But its waters were shallow now,  
 6370 And in some places were missing somehow!  
 Tributary streams had dried out,  
 Here and there dry isles lay about,  
 Stones as well rose up from the bed.  
 Trunks of trees lay scattered there dead.  
 All in disorder, after the storm,  
 Stumps were sticking up, now grown warm.  
 Roots and branches were left behind,  
 Tattered remnants of many a kind.  
 Huge fish you'd seen, as big as calves,  
 6380 Now lay gasping, almost in halves!  
 Then Almambet the commanders called in.  
 Leaders of thousands, and hundreds, and ten.  
 Thus he arranged them, and orders gave,  
 Section by section he led to the waves.  
 Most experienced ones were amazed,  
 As upon the Orkun they gazed.  
 There they stood, began arguing then,  
 All about the ford, and their men.  
 "How did people cross it before?"



6390 Holding each other's reins, on the shore,  
 They made ready to enter in file,  
 Head to tail, in a chain meanwhile.  
 Smoothly they went, and swayed to and fro,  
 Following first ones, forward they go.  
 When the water shoulders reached,  
 Some of them help and support beseeched.  
 Trembling they stuck to their saddles then.  
 Many poor inexperienced men  
 Quite lost their wits, and were thoroughly scared!  
 6400 Not having seen such a river, they stared...  
 They'd never crossed such a torrent before,  
 They were more used to sit by their door.  
 Here those poor devils, in terror now,  
 Got to the Orkun's middle somehow.  
 But their heads were all in a whirl,  
 Arguing, shouting, the water a-skirl,  
 Some decided to swim for the shore,  
 Plumped down into the water, what's more!  
 Those who held on, sailed down with the stream:  
 6410 "We shall get drowned!" they started to scream.  
 Some looked back, saw the swimmers then,  
 Some half-drowned – they went to help them.  
 Struggling and shouting, they lifted them out,  
 Grabbed flying bridles, turned horses about,  
 Slung sinking swimmers up on their croups,  
 So they saved many in terrified groups.  
 Asked them: "Why jump from your steeds where you sat?  
 Here, take my stirrup, and catch hold of that!"  
 All the survivors then reached the far shore –  
 6420 In one long thread they climbed out once more...  
 There they looked round for stragglers then,  
 Pulled out the last of them, all tired men.  
 Didn't leave any of them behind –  
 No further troubles then did they find.  
 All were safe – not one man lost –  
 Thus that wild river Orkun they crossed!  
 Thanks to Almambet's magic spell,  
 All successful, and all went well.  
 Was that not an achievement, then?  
 6430 All ashore, and no lost men!  
 Then near an island they stopped the night.  
 Outside their tents the fires burned bright.  
 Mares were brought to sacrifice there,  
 And for six days they had not a care!

Then some restless ones started to vow:  
 "We should be fighting those Chinks by now!"  
 So they prepared to ride on their way,  
 Raised their golden banner that day.  
 On that seventh day, Almambet  
 6440 Led his warriors further yet...  
 To the mount Dzhyulger\* he rode soon,  
 Then by the banks of the river Dzhyulyun.  
 Then he told: "The Altai's end here –  
 No more mountain ranges, that's clear.  
 Here is the pass which we must ride –  
 There lies Andzhi on the other side.  
 If we travel for four days then,  
 We should reach Chin-Manchin with our men.  
 Chin-Manchin\* lies there, to the East,  
 6450 So be prepared for that journey at least!  
 Now we must ride to Kék-Argin,  
 So remember whose land we are in!  
 To the North, which we shan't pass through,  
 Lies the land of Salangu.  
 Our winter quarters will be Erime.\*  
 Warriors of mine, we draw near now I say  
 To the whole horde of the Chinese folk –  
 I would warn you, this is no joke!  
 First we must pass now on our ways –  
 6460 Desert steppeland – eleven days...  
 So now listen, my men, to me:  
 Pour the water in skins, you see,  
 Fill them up, as full as you can,  
 For our travels, a two-day span.  
 Take enough to see us through,  
 For your men, and their horses too.  
 On the desert steppe we'll ride,  
 No more hills and mountains beside!  
 You'll be longing for peaks around,  
 6470 But not even a mound will be found!  
 When we meet mountains again, beware!  
 Dangerous serpents are living there!  
 Even one spoonful of snow you won't see.  
 Even one cliff with a crevice won't be.  
 Even one bush won't meet your eye.  
 Even not one, but six days must go by!..  
 Thus I bring you sad news today!"  
 Almambet, when he'd said his say,  
 Led on ahead towards Erime,



6480 Warriors followed him on his way.  
 Creatures ran wild, who no people knew.  
 Many had died, there remained rather few.  
 Hills and mounds were rising there,  
 On high slopes the grass grew rare.  
 Wild rams ran, whom folk had not met,  
 Many of them, like sand-grains set.  
 Anyone who gets lost in that place  
 Every danger has to face,  
 And those hordes of wild rams fears...  
 6490 Having pierced a few with their spears,  
 Some of the warriors who came then  
 Slew and skinned five or six of them,  
 Took from those rams their pure white fat,  
 Cooked it, and ate it, pleased at that!  
 Many tales of those rams now abound...  
 Then they saw hollows on hillsides wound,  
 And in some of them deer roamed too...  
 On the slopes the rare grass grew -  
 Many deer were seen there yet...  
 6500 Human beings they'd never met!  
 Warriors who came on the scene,  
 Even those who'd sorrowful been,  
 Now were glad, and took their spears,  
 Fixed a noose at the end, it appears,  
 And, like their forbears, off they raced,  
 And those frightened deer they shased...  
 Deer got mixed up with warriors too -  
 One of those who hunting knew,  
 Cast his noose round a reindeer's horn -  
 6510 Straightway his spear from his hand was torn,  
 And he was left with nothing at all!  
 "Ah!" he cried, "I have had a fall -  
 He has taken my spear, I declare!"  
 Called the others to help him there,  
 But that deer flew off, all the same!  
 Those who drew near with their bows took aim,  
 All too late the straight arrows flew,  
 Others wasted musket-shots too...  
 On the waterless desert waste,  
 6520 Still the wild deer and rams they chased!  
 On the ledges the wild rams ran,  
 All kinds of ruminant creatures then.  
 Over the steppes the wild kites flew,  
 In the forest the rooks weren't few.

All kinds of wildest creatures were there,  
 Wild asses prancing around with an air.  
 Wolves and foxes went prowling serene -  
 Who's not delighted, when such beauty's seen?  
 Grey-feathered crows were carking all day,  
 6530 Black-feathered crows were croaking away.  
 All taking care of their chicks in the nest,  
 Hawks, grouse, and falcons were seen at their best.  
 There were huge dragon-flies, big as a chick,  
 Field-mice, like puppies, who ran very quick -  
 All could be seen, as they scuttled around.  
 Burdocks with leaves like a tent-roof were found.  
 Reeds with leaves o'er the riverside bent,  
 Rushes with leaf-blades, tall as a tent.  
 There they were growing, and blowing they stood,  
 6540 Stalks like tall spears, and as thick as a wood!  
 Watering-place on the third day they found.  
 When they came there, and took a look round,  
 There they saw an enormous swan -  
 Wings would stretch a whole tent along,  
 Beak as long as a wooden trough,  
 Feathers like snow as he floated off,  
 Giving out most mournful cry...  
 There was a spring, with a pool nearby...  
 Everyone gasped to see such a sight -  
 6550 There wild creatures all drank with delight.  
 There were birch-trees, and elms so tall -  
 Look, they support the heavens and all!  
 Flowers of all sorts were blossoming there.  
 Nightingales sang a melodious air.  
 All was wonderful, all was new -  
 Sparrows as big as cockerels grew,  
 Cocks, as big as a barrel, walk.  
 Think as your wrist the angelica stalk.  
 Take a look at the stags which browse -  
 6560 They remind one of huge ginger cows!  
 Apples as big as a wood basin, look!  
 Vines with hooks, like a shepherd's crook!  
 Greengages there grow enormous too,  
 Big as the heart of a three-year-old ewe!  
 If you look at mosquitoes there -  
 They are as big as ducklings, I swear!  
 If you look at the marsh grass here,  
 Then it is like to a tufted spear!  
 Then there are fowl, which they call black geese -



6570 Take a look at the beaks of these!  
 They are traps, for the martens set;  
 Tales about them are current yet!  
 These black geese, with resounding quack,  
 Live on fish, and their gizzards pack!  
 They have tails as long as your arm,  
 They have teeth which can raise alarm!  
 Sharp as a knife, and steel-hard too.  
 One-winged birds live there, it's true!  
 Some people call them "kazilik".

6580 Listen, I'll tell you more in a tick –  
 Ogërek birds are one-winged, though whole!  
 Tortoises too, like a big washing bowl!  
 They lie still, like a round skull of bone.  
 All creatures live here, both known and unknown.  
 Listen awhile, and the truth I'll declare;  
 Stoats, and poisonous grasses are here,  
 Beings, not known as yet by man,  
 Even wild mammoths – believe if you can!  
 Creatures who live on human flesh,

6590 Each one a danger to man afresh!  
 Wild boars roam there, and wild bulls as well.  
 All round them desert and sand-dunes swell.  
 No man goes there, no slave of God,  
 So the hogs, with their tusks plough the sod!  
 There are wells, both dark and deep,  
 And they seethe with the waters they keep.  
 There are tigers, snow-leopards, and bears,  
 There are dens, and lodges, and lairs.  
 Bees, a-gathering honey fly there,

6600 Things found nowhere on earth lie there!  
 Even wild cattle and horses are found!"  
 So Almambet said to warriors round  
 "Well, there is room for all of us here!  
 If food runs short, then go shooting deer.  
 All is found here to supply your need,  
 If you get hungry, shoot wild sheep, indeed!  
 Here you can quietly live as you will.  
 If you get bored, you can go hunting still,  
 So don't get sad, but just live, and be glad,

6610 If you're impatient, there's boar to be had!  
 This is the place where the winter we'll spend –  
 All is so pleasant, beginning to end!  
 Shoot the wild stags, in the bush running free.  
 Desert all round keeps off each enemy,

So, do not worry, but live as you please;  
 Eat, drink you fill, and feel here at ease!  
 Those who felt cold, and were hungry before,  
 Now will be warm, and feel hungry no more.  
 Troubles we had you may well forget here!

6620 Take bows and muskets, go chasing the deer,  
 Or what you wish, then please your soul!  
 Seek what you want, and enjoy it whole.  
 Shoot sharp with musket, or boldly with bow.  
 Deer and hares are here, where you know,  
 Go, seek them out in their native part.  
 When with the steeds you make a start,  
 Then drive them off, and pastures find.  
 Time to train them bear in mind...  
 Judge all these matters between you then,

6630 Share out the horses among your men!  
 Take a place for feeding your steed,  
 Set your yurta nearby, indeed.  
 Visit your nearest neighbours too,  
 Keep up old friendships, make some new!  
 Take fallen poplars to make your fires,  
 In your yurtas seek heart's desires.  
 Let the smoke blacken the wheel in the roof –  
 Pass the winter, all trouble-proof!"  
 Almambet gave his orders thus,

6640 Seconded by bogatir Manas.  
 He was waiting, standing fast,  
 Watching the warriors to the last.  
 They went off to feed their steeds,  
 Then to satisfy their needs.  
 Then for horse-races they started to train...  
 Almambet advised, not in vain:  
 Off went the men, and shot their game,  
 Held discussions, when home they came.  
 Meat they had, enough, and to spare,

6650 So they chose their tit-bits there.  
 So, in that protected place,  
 Four long months they had to face.  
 When snow melted, and grass broke through,  
 Found wild onions, and mint-herbs too.  
 Horses, inactive, had fatter grown,  
 Having no battles nor enemies known.  
 But the folk grew tired at last,  
 And one another began to ask:  
 "When shall we cross swords with the foe?"



6660 Younger warriors wished to go!  
 "Let us meet those Chinks, at length –  
 Let us then test out our strength!"  
 All the people began to get bored,  
 Brave and bold ones no longer snored.  
 All had slept as long as they would...  
 When their fears subsided for good,  
 Then they said: "We wait in vain!"  
 They had got their strength back again:  
 "Now it's time to forge to Beijin!"

6670 That's the mood those troops were in!  
 All were agitating to start...  
 Then Almambet, he played his part.  
 Having observed the folk's unrest,  
 Went to Manas, as he thought best,  
 Wanting with him his thoughts to share.  
 All his forty knights were there:  
 Bold Kirgil, and wise Bakai,  
 Eleman's son, Teshtyuk, standing by.  
 From the Yeshteks, Dzhamgirchi was there,

6680 From the Kazakhs, Kekche was there,  
 Eloquent young Urbyu was there,  
 From Andizhan, Sandzhibek was there,  
 Son of Budaik, Muzburchak,  
 All the troop-leaders place did not lack.  
 Seemed they were all just waiting for him,  
 Warriors, too, with their faces grim.  
 So Almambet then took his seat,  
 Asked how they all had kept on their feet.  
 Then he rose, and his speech began:

6690 "Let's count our numbers, up to a man!  
 Let's do the will of great Allah too!  
 Let's accept our fate, and go through.  
 Let's get all the people called here,  
 Let's get the chieftains and leaders here,  
 Let's get all the squads numbered here,  
 Let's get together all fighting men here,  
 Let's get commanders with regiments too,  
 Let's get the numbers checked and true!  
 Let's get the army all present today,

6700 Let's get all numbered in proper array!"  
 Strictly thus spoke Almambet,  
 To all those who'd not counted yet.  
 Ordered them to count to the full...  
 Iraman's son, Irchiuul,

He whose long sash had tassels on,  
 Slave, with a cap, and a big pom-pom,  
 Slave, who had an unrestrained tongue,  
 Herald, town-crier, since he was young,  
 Thought: "How many of us should there be?"

6710 How many here scared stiff, like me?  
 Maybe I've lost some warriors, then?  
 Maybe I have some missing men?  
 Oh, let me not die then in vain!"  
 Leaders of thousands, and Beys again  
 Started to ask each other then:  
 "Have you got the right number of men?"  
 They felt restless, what should they do?  
 Then centurions, "tenners" too,  
 Hearing around them a hullabaloo,

6720 Started sniffing, and noses blew.  
 "Tenners" went galloping off, it appears,  
 In their hands holding high their spears.  
 Each one driving before him nine men,  
 Made them pass before Almambet then,  
 So he saw them with his own eyes.  
 Then the centurions did likewise,  
 Told their men "Ride, now all is set!"  
 Drove them on before Almambet,  
 So he saw them with his own eyes.

6730 Then the "thousanders" did likewise,  
 So the count was made thus again.  
 Then the Beys, with whole regiments came,  
 And they were counted, one and all,  
 At Almambet's stern bid and call.  
 Thirty-hundred-thousand men...  
 From their tents they were counted then.  
 All were present, as all should be.  
 To Manas they came finally.  
 Almambet asked: "Who's the tenner here,

6740 In the tent of Manas-bogatir?"  
 Soon they found him, and in he was led:  
 "Here is their "tenner", Commander!" they said.  
 And so they pointed to Tazbaimat.  
 He was the "tenner" – no doubt of that!  
 There he stood before Almambet then:  
 "I wish to see your group of ten men!"  
 Let them at once before me appear!  
 When you have found them, bring them in here!"  
 Taking his nine, with them then he rode,



6750 Making the tenth himself, on he strode.  
 There before his Commander they went,  
 Clattering hooves, o'er their horses bent.  
 Almambet fixed his gaze on them then,  
 But when he did so, saw only nine men.  
 One man was missing, had not arrived yet.  
 "You are the head of them!" said Almambet  
 "But one man has not yet appeared.  
 You are a cur, fat-bellied, cock-eared –  
 Better explain, and let it be soon!"

6760 "On the shores of Dzhalov and Chulun,  
 In the lowland of Korogotu,  
 They gave me nine, and I brought them through.  
 I brought them all, lost none on the way.  
 With those nine, myself stand today,  
 I follow on after my nine men!"  
 So Tazbaimat replied to him then.  
 "Those nine I brought together with me,  
 Safe and sound before you, to see.  
 Here they are all, unharmed as before,  
 So, with myself, we are ten once more!  
 My group of ten, it seems, is whole,  
 I have looked after them, like my own soul.  
 I drove them on – I'm behind you! I said!  
 "If you have come, just to see me lie dead,  
 Then I must ask you, bold Almambet,  
 What can I do as your servant yet?  
 Now I am ready to die!" he said.  
 Still then Almambet shook his head,  
 Very angry, he spoke sternly then:

6780 "Thirty-hundred-thousand men –  
 Off to Beijin! That's a long road then!  
 Thirty-hundred-thousand men –  
 All of them are safe and sound,  
 But one missing you have not found –  
 One not counted in your ten –  
 Lost, but where, and how, and when?  
 If that happened in other squads,  
 I'd call the leader to pay the odds.  
 If that has happened with your own men,  
 How can you avoid payment, then?  
 You must suffer, if you have lied!  
 Orders I've given can't be denied.  
 Just too bad – but liars must fall.  
 I shall not change my orders at all –

Find your man, or meet your fate!  
 Headsmen there, don't hesitate!"  
 So severe spoke Almambet.  
 Six executioners, already sat,  
 Ready to behead Tazbaimat –

6800 Axes ready sharpened for that!  
 Thinking "He can't be mistaken here –  
 He has put the matter quite clear!"  
 Nobody raised a protest then,  
 Nobody pitied that leader of ten.  
 Let them disrobe him, let the axe swish –  
 Then let his body be thrown in a ditch!  
 Karakodzho, from Argins, thought so,  
 And he spoke out, to let the folk know.  
 Then from his place, with none to check,

6810 Up there jumped the clever Serek,  
 Started to speak, a light in his eye.  
 He had once been named Baisabai.  
 If none other could find a way out –  
 Then it was time for Serek to shout.  
 So he stood up and started then:  
 "Hey, you knights!" he questioned them,  
 "When you counted them out in a row,  
 With all the others then numbered so,  
 Did you include blood-thirsty Manas?

6820 Was he numbered with them thus?  
 Was he, perchance, forgotten then,  
 Not numbered off, like the other men?  
 Others, as "tenners", all made things sure –  
 Ten in their group, not less, not more!  
 But this poor devil, Tazbaimat,  
 He has got one less than that!  
 All the others, one leader plus nine,  
 Ten is the measure, then all goes fine!  
 Tazbaimat knows that quite clear –

6830 One, however, seems missing here!  
 Who is the "tenner" for Manas?  
 Where is he? Explain it to us!  
 Was there not a mistake made here?  
 Where's the scribe, with list set clear –  
 We should find it, and make a check!"  
 So said the clever knight Serek.  
 Having heard what he had said,  
 Kadirseyit, the scribe, went ahead.  
 Into the list went peering thus –



6840 Tazbaimat's ten includes Manas!  
 There among his ten names it stood —  
 So Serek's clever guess was good!  
 So it turned out to be quite true:  
 "He did not tell me — he made a slip too!  
 Lion Manas! Because you said nought,  
 In this Chink's claws I was nearly caught!  
 All in vain then should I have died!"  
 Thus Tazbaimat to Manas then cried:  
 Many Kirghiz then started to laugh —  
 6850 All forty knights each other did chaff.  
 But Manas was not pleased, just look —  
 Angrily spoke, and offence he took:  
 "Good-for-nothing Tazbaimat,  
 If you're my "tenner", I ask you flat —  
 How could you fail to take note of me?  
 Such an omission there could not be!  
 If you're my "tenner", and took no account,  
 If I'm the one whom you have left out,  
 Then there is not a word more to say —  
 6860 I'll have your head lopped off today!  
 If you have really forgotten me then,  
 If you've not counted me with your men,  
 Then I shall go to Almambet —  
 Ask for your head!" said Manas, trembling yet.  
 Then he suddenly laughed out loud,  
 He, who never laughed in the crowd,  
 He, who knew not what laughter meant,  
 Always on serious things was bent!  
 Nonetheless, his laugh rang like gold!  
 6870 That Tazbaimat, who'd thought himself bold  
 Now was upset, and looked full of care.  
 People enlisted as warriors there,  
 All were accounted for now, I declare.  
 Almambet ended the whole affair:  
 Then to Manas he made his way,  
 For he had something more to say,  
 And, drawing nearer, addressed him thus:  
 "Listen to me, bogatir-Manas,  
 Hear what I say, to soothe your pains:  
 6880 "Valour runs through the brave man's veins.  
 Fighters are waiting and fretting, I'd say,  
 Horses well-fed, and prepared for the way.  
 Now comes the time to saddle them all!  
 Hear me, Manas, as I now make my call.

What I command, that your fighters must do,  
 All obey orders, Manas, and you too!  
 Listen to what your good Chink tells you now:  
 Who here is truthful, won't lie, anyhow?  
 Who here is bold, and to battle will race?  
 6890 Who here is strong, and fights foes face to face?  
 Who here in combat will joust against you?  
 Who here is eloquent, sharp of tongue too?  
 Who here is senseless, to death does not cede?  
 Who here is accurate — dead-shot indeed?  
 Who here in leading scares foes ere they're fought?  
 Who here is cunning, and will not be caught?  
 Who here is worthless, and not worth a name?  
 Who here is greedy for gold, and for gain?  
 Who here is ready, unknown ways to win?  
 6900 Who here is ready to scout round Beijin?  
 Who here can fight single combat with foe?  
 Who here is ready to battle to go?  
 Who here is ready to ride in the van?  
 Who here is willing to scout where he can?  
 Who here is victor with foes in the fight?  
 Who here gives no heathen foe a good fright?  
 Who here is fearless, and cries for campaign?  
 Who here is ready to give steeds the rein?  
 Who here is older, respected no less?  
 6910 Who here is wise, and the foe's plans can guess?  
 Who here is simple, and knows the folk's ways?  
 Who here are Khans, and Shaha, Sheiks and Beys?  
 Who here is fearless, when settling the score?  
 Who here is ready to go to the fore?  
 Who here is ready to scout round Kakan?  
 Who here already has done heathens harm?  
 Who here is yearning to clash with Chinks?  
 Who here is burning to ash, while he thinks?  
 Who here is not yet prepared, anyhow?  
 6920 Who here these questions will answer me now?  
 Such were the words of the bold Almambet.  
 They ring out strange in Manas' ears yet!  
 Those who had heard what he'd just had to say,  
 They were amazed, and quite carried away.  
 Not one of them were unwilling to fight,  
 Though he had given them all a good fright.  
 But on the whole, when they listened to him,  
 Heads went a-nodding, and faces looked grim.  
 With what he'd said, they could not but agree,



6930 Though they all trembled at what was to be!  
 None really wanted to meet with the foe...  
 They all grew quiet, and thoughtful, more so.  
 Then they began mid themselves to look round,  
 Where they were sitting, but small hope they found.  
 If their great foe were of some other kind,  
 Maybe some willing to scout they would find...  
 Bakburchun – with the lord of that land...  
 Kakan-chin – with its herds son each hand...  
 Chin-Manchin – with its heathenish gods...  
 6940 Who'd travel there? Only some senseless clods!  
 None would reply, whoever was called.  
 Even the warrior knights were stalled,  
 Silent stood – no more to discuss...  
 Once more up and spoke Manas:  
 "Bogatir Almambet!" said he,  
 "Much you have said to our company!  
 – What they are like, already you know –  
 You yourself are the man to go!  
 Many the words you've said between;  
 6950 What they can do, already you've seen!  
 Go yourself, and your valour show!  
 If any one of us should go,  
 He could do nought, no success would reach.  
 We do not know their babbling speech,  
 Nothing useful thus could we learn –  
 We should not know which way to turn.  
 We do not know their chattering tongue,  
 Nothing we'd learn from old or young.  
 At the castle gates we'd stand dumb,  
 6960 Knowing no word of their muttering tongue!  
 Of such heathens it's little we'd learn –  
 You were their Padishah, in your turn.  
 You were their leader, called the tune.  
 Long ago, to old Bakburchun,  
 You knew the road you had to go,  
 Long ago you took it also –  
 They looked up to you, muttering men,  
 As their respected leader then.  
 Wide-spread Kakan so well you knew,  
 6970 And its chitter-chattering too.  
 How many heights, how many ravines,  
 You knew by heart their lines, it seems,  
 Their very soil, you knew it so well,  
 Of their fortune-tellers could tell,

Of their cunning way, all you knew,  
 Gave them orders, which they obeyed too!  
 You also knew, in reality,  
 Old Tangshang, Andshi, Mandzhi,  
 Knew their people, through and through,  
 6980 And their valourous giants you knew.  
 All of them you knew so well!  
 How many were the years, pray tell,  
 That you lived and ruled among them?  
 Say some encouraging words for my men!  
 If the elders and youngsters approve,  
 If what I've said their minds will smoothe,  
 Khan Almambet, yourself you must go!  
 Choose one stout guard to protect you so –  
 One of them choose, and along with you take.  
 6990 You, Almambet, your own way must make!  
 Choose a well-experienced guard,  
 Then off you go – start scouting hard!  
 Take a man who is yours, heart and soul,  
 One who'll give all to gain your goal –  
 Some bold fellow, who death does not fear,  
 Skilful in arms, and in combat severe.  
 Someone of our great giants select –  
 He'll be your agent, proud and erect.  
 Take a good captain, the best one, you must!  
 7000 Also bestride a good war-horse you trust!  
 Understand well the words I say –  
 And prepare your steed for the way.  
 One who will gallop wherever you need,  
 One of the best you must choose, indeed,  
 So you'll not say: "My horse cannot move!"  
 One that without regrets you may prove.  
 In Kakanchan live a numerous horde.  
 Many knights there bear a double-edged sword.  
 So a wise comrade you must prepare –  
 7010 No ignoramus could make his way there!  
 If he's not bold, no good scout will he be.  
 If he's not sharp, nothing useful he'll see.  
 You must decide on a man you can trust,  
 One who can think ere he makes his thrust.  
 If he is spotted, he won't last long then...  
 Thirty times one-hundred-thousand men –  
 This is a truly mighty campaign!  
 Therefore yourself scout round well again,  
 So, Almambet, you will surely come through!



7020 That's what I wanted to say to you!"  
 To his thoughts he had given voice –  
 Almambet was the only choice!  
 He in turn did not refuse –  
 What other course was there to choose?  
 So he lowered his head awhile,  
 Sat and thought, without a smile,  
 And, of course, decided to go –  
 Told the forty warriors so!  
 He had an innermost gift as well,  
 7030 For the future he could foretell...  
 Rising then from where he sat,  
 Fixed his gaze on the men at that.  
 And Manas no more looked grim –  
 Bowed; and gave respects to him.  
 Standing thus, Almambet began:  
 "Oh, Manas, my dear Sultan!  
 I have thought it all over well –  
 Out of your knights one name I'll tell,  
 One who's befitted my comrade to be,  
 7040 Whom I've decided to take with me.  
 He's named Teke, and he's a Bey,  
 Combat fighter, any day.  
 Just like a hawk, <sup>so</sup> an unmatched brave,  
 Fears not the foe, when faced with the grave.  
 "What are you, death, to me?" thinks he –  
 To such death indifferent can be.  
 Eyes like flames begin to glow,  
 At the sight of an evil foe.  
 Speaks out straight, like a snake can hiss;  
 7050 Aiming his spear, he does not miss!  
 Once he is fired, to the foe does not yield,  
 One of the noblest names on the field,  
 All know him well as a brave that way,  
 And with what fury he goes to the fray,  
 Eager to win, on that he stakes,  
 And his sting from a viper he takes!  
 When attacked, doesn't quake before foes,  
 Like a tiger, himself on them throws.  
 In misfortune, he does not grieve,  
 7060 You know, Manas, who I mean, I believe?  
 He is your comrade, and copies your style –  
 Bears his spear ready with him all the while.  
 One of a thousand, I value him so,  
 That Sirgak – a born brave I know!

Him I wish as my comrade to take,  
 Let Sirgak come with me, share my fate.  
 We'll seek success in Great Bejin.  
 If I am set upon there, with great din,  
 Then, by the will of our Holy Lord,  
 7070 He is the one who will succour afford!  
 Stern Sirgak will alone face a horde.  
 Just watch him fighting, you'll never get bored!  
 Under his weight, his steed's back bends.  
 Covered in steel to his fingers ends,  
 Such a bold knight won't retreat from the foe,  
 Sword, shield and armour, upon them he'll go!"  
 So, Bejin warriors ready to face,  
 Almambet put his thigh-plates in place,  
 Put on his helmet, with vizor still raised,  
 7080 Girded his weaponry round his waist.  
 Then up to him there galloped Sirgak:  
 "There is only one thing we lack –  
 One spare stallion, a good fighting steed!  
 Choose from these warriors, in case of need!"  
 Thus Almambet gave the order then.  
 Wasted no time. Let Manas tell the men.  
 And Manas said at once, indeed;  
 "Kalkaman has a fine black steed –  
 Flies like the wind, a-scouting around,  
 7090 Seek him out, and let him be found!  
 Tell the owner you need his steed!  
 If he won't give it, then take the lead,  
 Strike the man down, and bring back the horse,  
 All as quick as you can, of course!"  
 Almambet straightway butted in:  
 "He'll be no good, we won't take him –  
 That black stallion you have in mind,  
 He is rather too old, I find.  
 He might give us some cause for fear;  
 7100 What we need is a younger one here!"  
 So Almambet did not agree –  
 No use on the long road he'd be!  
 Then Manas, too, changed his tune,  
 One other name he was crying soon:  
 "Tokotoi – he has a fine grey,  
 Better than any others, I'd say.  
 Like a winged Pegasus flies he –  
 Go to Tokotoi, and see.  
 If he won't give up his steed,



7110 Beat him down, and seize it, indeed!"  
 So said Manas severely then,  
 And to one of his serving men  
 Gave out the order straight away.  
 But Almambet had something to say:  
 He didn't care for Tokotoi's grey,  
 And explained himself this way:  
 "Lion Manas, just listen, please!  
 I don't really like either of these:  
 I won't swank before you, of course,  
 7120 But I've really seen a fine horse –  
 That is Bey Adzhi's Kyureng –  
 He is strong, and he is young.  
 Give him a word, he forges ahead –  
 I'd prefer to take him instead!  
 Whether it's jousting away with spears,  
 Whether some spiteful giant appears,  
 Then his saddle will not slip back!  
 When he gallops a steep slope track,  
 Then you don't slip backward, see.  
 7130 Such a powerful croup has he!  
 He is such an exceptional steed,  
 Even without a tail-strap, indeed!  
 When you descend a slippery slope,  
 When on another you'd give up hope,  
 Riding him down the mountain side,  
 From his saddle you will not slide,  
 Won't fall forward, onto his mane –  
 No, he won't stumble, you fear in vain!  
 Neither in the heat, nor snow,  
 7140 Nor when into battle you go!  
 If you gallop for forty days,  
 Right down in the ravine's deep ways,  
 He will not ever thirsty feel –  
 He's a real war-horse, made of steel,  
 Kicks away at sharp stones with his heel.<sup>90</sup>  
 When hostile riders start to wheel  
 On the dark road, which promises woes,  
 On the cursed track, where no good sprite goes,  
 If you ride on, where another man stays,  
 7150 Six whole weeks he'll go on his ways!  
 Nor will he lose then all his fat,  
 Nor will he lose his shoes at that,  
 For his hooves are firm and long –  
 Ne is a battle-horse, everywhere strong.

If you return from a six-month's campaign,  
 All his tracks will behind him remain.  
 If you seek herds of other steeds,  
 Let him run with them, as he needs,  
 Still he remains unfailingly true,  
 7160 Still, not waiting, will come back to you!  
 If he hears a wild battle cry,  
 Still he will not blink an eye.  
 In his upper guts, where it twists,  
 Fat stands out, as thick as your fist.<sup>91</sup>  
 When he fights for Kazakhs and Kirghiz,  
 When against Chinks he goes with a whizz,  
 Mane and tail stream out behind.  
 If no pasture you let him find,  
 If you take off no bridle, nor bit,  
 7170 Forty days fighting – he still is fit!  
 He won't grow hungry, he won't grow thin.  
 Herded with others, he'll bring them in.  
 He will not take an ill-favoured road –  
 On a good one he needs no goad.  
 He accomplishes, you see,  
 Sired by a good horse-spirit was he!  
 Bold and strong as a mountain ram –  
 Give me a steed like that, my good man!  
 If you don't get Kyureng for me,  
 7180 I shall never contented be!"  
 Such were the words of Almambet,  
 Clearly not contented yet!  
 People thought Adzhibai's Kyureng  
 Now has had his praises sung  
 By Almambet so wonderfully well –  
 Hearing all that which he had to tell,  
 Lion Manas gave orders in full:  
 "Irchiuul, and Bozuul,  
 Straddle your steeds and off you fly,  
 7190 To my good friend, bold Adzhibai.  
 Tell what our chieftain wishes to do,  
 How Almambet, for a week or two,  
 Wants to borrow his sturdy steed,  
 As a spare scouting-horse, indeed.  
 If my word carries weight with him,  
 If his agreement in this you win,  
 And with Adzhi to consent have come,  
 Then bring with you his horse Kyureng,  
 And hand him over to Almambet!"



7200 So said Manas, and the scene was set...  
 Glad to hear what their master said,  
 Bozuul and Irchi went ahead.  
 Galloped off to the tent of Adzhi,  
 Spoke with him there, as polite as could be:  
 Gave him a welcome, asked was he well,  
 Other chit-chat began to tell:  
 But they had said just a word or two,  
 When Adzhibai their converse broke through.  
 He had guessed that they had other ends:

7210 "Tell me what you have come for, my friends!  
 Have you some other purpose in mind,  
 Something, I mean, of a serious kind?  
 So Bozuul then made his reply:  
 "Well, you shall hear then, dear Adzhibai!  
 Something of which we knew nothing about,  
 Something which, maybe, you would miss out –  
 Namely concerning a wonderful horse,  
 With outstanding merits, of course!  
 Grey-brown steed, so goes the word.

7220 Ere this of such we had not heard.  
 Nor you riding such, had we seen yet.  
 But our master, high-born Almambet,  
 Much has said of it, bye-the-bye.  
 He spoke about it, and praised it sky-high!  
 He wants to go on a scouting campaign,  
 There 'mid those heathens, and never draw rein.  
 Maybe for several days he will go –  
 Only a steed of high quality, though,  
 Such as that grey-brown horse of yours.

7230 That Kyureng, if you'd lend for this course,  
 He'd be delighted to have such a steed –  
 That is why we have come here, indeed!"  
 So said Bozuul and Irchi.  
 Well, Adzhibai – no fool was he –  
 Then decided to lend it, what's more.  
 He, with incisors as long as a door –  
 Such teeth as those nobody had seen –  
 When he smiled, all showed white between.  
 "Even our ruler comes begging to us!"

7240 Loudly he laughed, in agreeing thus.  
 "If Almambet for my steed does yearn,  
 Let him go, then, my grey-brown Kyureng!  
 This is his time, I do believe –  
 Where will he higher honour receive?

Let him go, and good luck to him!  
 Devil take him, I know he will win!  
 If by chance such a steed is transferred,  
 What is he worth to me – not a turd!  
 Reins are short, and there is no tie.<sup>92</sup>

7250 If I should die, 'neath the sward should lie,  
 Not e'en a pillow I'd ask in reply.  
 For the fine words he already let fly,  
 For the whole truth told by bold Almambet,  
 For the keen eye which he on him set,  
 For the kind words he addressed to me,  
 For the great honour, which in this I see,  
 For the perception of me and my steed,  
 I am most grateful to him, indeed!  
 Only one knight knows another's worth.

7260 If he can't see it, then none can on earth!  
 Let Kyureng go then, free from my hand –  
 Why should I grudge him a master so grand?  
 If I thought Almambet might die –  
 Then Kyureng sacrificed would Iel!"  
 With those words he finished his say.  
 They took his bridle off then, straight away.  
 He gave orders to let them all go;  
 Off they went then, three in a row.  
 "Devil take you, you grey-brown nag –

7270 You are as proud as a mountain stag!"  
 So Adzhibai sent away his steed.  
 Both the servants set off at speed,  
 Back to Manas, and Almambet,  
 And arrived there, all in a sweat!  
 To Almambet, Kyureng they led,  
 There he stood, and stroked his head.  
 Soon as he felt him 'neath his hand,  
 Almambet felt glad, and grand!  
 Adzhibai's answer rang through his head.

7280 When they told him what he had said,  
 Almambet listened close to the last...  
 That Kyureng was made from the blast!  
 When he held him under control,  
 Then he trembled within his soul!  
 He had a canopy, blue as blue,  
 Bluer than steel, a-shining through.  
 In his own armour, with weapons rare,  
 Almambet, like a giant stood there.  
 In his looks, like Rustan was he,



7290 Real Kirghiz tiger he seemed to be.  
 His companion, the clever Sirgak,  
 Also was covered in steel, front and back.  
 He bowed to spirits of earlier knights,  
 Those who had lived, and perished in fights...  
 Legs all in armour, fat as your waist,  
 Keenly eyed, and severely faced,  
 Sits majestic on Telkizil.  
 Long, strong spear, with heand of steel,  
 Wearing high boots, with copper soles,  
 7300 Fearless Sirgak in his saddle rolls.  
 Took in his hand his polished spear,  
 Ready to scout the country near.  
 Preparations he made without fail -  
 Donned his impervious coat of mail,  
 Hung his ball-proof shield on his back.  
 Like a storm-cloud, his face looked black.  
 Threatening were his looks, indeed.  
 Having each bestraddled his steed,  
 Girths pulled tight, and muzzles cleared.  
 7310 Having by their folk been cheered,  
 Both these Beys were ready to start.  
 Everywhere they raised a spark.  
 Hooves went galloping on their way -  
 Listen now, what we have to say -  
 What took place, when all grew still...  
 Trouble-maker Kirghilchal,  
 Started a game of knucklebones gay;  
 Called in all the knights to play,  
 Gathered them in, and urged them on...  
 7320 When Almambet and Sirgak had gone,  
 Then their commander, old Bakai,  
 Went on patrol with observant eye.  
 In the game of knucklebones then,  
 Old Kirghilchal led one half of the men.  
 Other half followed the bold Abdilda.  
 In those two teams, the best players, by far,  
 Chosen from the brave knights of Manas.  
 Two teams of twenty players thus -  
 All of them artful and masterful men.  
 7330 Knucklebones always attracted them.  
 Here Kirghilchal had tethered four mares.  
 Listen, just how he managed affairs -  
 Four young mares as prizes tied nigh,  
 All four belonged to Adzhibai -

Let your forebears speak of their shame -  
 We shall tell you all as it came -  
 Kirghilchal's team were losing, it's true,  
 Comrades of Abdilda had won through.  
 Clever experienced players were theirs,  
 7340 So they said: "We have won those mares!  
 Don't wriggle out, you losing men!"  
 For Kirghilchal and his comrades then,  
 This game of knucklebones was no success -  
 Having the right to a few throws, no less;  
 They began making wild blows again.  
 Placing the knucklebones centrally then,  
 They began throwing from Adzhibai's side.  
 Kirghilchal's team of twenty shot wide,  
 Knocked from the ring only two or three bones...  
 7350 Not far away, in a place on their own,  
 Adzhibai's lads played their game very fast;  
 Knucklebones swiftly and deftly were cast.  
 They didn't notice the nearby line,  
 Where the others played too, at that time.  
 There stood their "khan" in an unnoticed spot.<sup>93</sup>  
 Two Kirghil team-mates were watching what's what,  
 Two keen-eyed fellows, who when on campaign,  
 Even in darkness a fox-trail would gain -  
 Kadir-Dzhainak, Shuutu as well,  
 7360 Both of them comrades of Kirghilchal.  
 They just stood there watching, what's more.  
 Adzhibai's comrades finished their score,  
 Knocked no more knucklebones out of the ring.  
 "If you have finished your final swing,  
 Lay down your beater upon the ground -  
 You've been too hasty, not all you have found.  
 You have not noticed at all in good time,  
 That your own "khan" was not knocked o'er the line.  
 I can do that for you, if you like -  
 7370 Once I shall beat, but hard I shall strike!"  
 "O Mighty Thinker, All-Wisest, hear then!  
 So said Dzhainak then to Adzhibai's men.  
 Aid me, I pray! With your help I shall win!"  
 They only laughed, and made mock of him.  
 He who is known as Tyumēnhadir,  
 Jumped from his place, and at him then did jeer:  
 "Why, don't you know - is it not clear to you,  
 What by yourself, on your own you can do?  
 Up until now, my dear friend Dzhainak,



7380 Have I at any time once held you back?  
 Now, my Dzhainak, if the truth be told,  
 Have you so suddenly learned to play bold?  
 We have quite often watched you, so tame,  
 How you did usually cast in this game.  
 If you have learned to be bold in your time,  
 If you can beat the "khan" o'er the line –  
 Well, beat it off then, and good luck to you,  
 If you can knock the "khan" out for us too –  
 Then you will show that you told us no lies –

7390 We shall hand over the mares, likewise!"  
 So he gave him the striker to cast,  
 But Dzhainak felt offence at what passed.  
 Nonetheless toed the line, and again,  
 Bending a little he took good aim,  
 Prayed to Allah, and not in vain,  
 Hurling the striker with might and main,  
 Beat the "khan" out, over the line,  
 Out of the circle, and all went fine!  
 From the strength of that blow, there you are –

7400 That metal "khan" went flying afar!  
 Off it flew, like a shot from a bow.  
 Few there were who saw it go!  
 Others didn't – too swift for the eye.  
 Nonetheless, those who still stood by  
 Felt their hearts beat warm and glad.  
 Long they laughed at success they'd had.  
 They were team-mates of Adzhibai,  
 And on them Serek cast his eye;  
 "Don't be so pleased with yourselves, bad boys,

7410 Lacking all conscience, and cackling such noise!  
 He beat the "khan" outside the line –  
 Nothing for you to crow of this time!"  
 Bozuul was confused as could be –  
 Asking: "Where's the "khan"? Where is he?  
 Started to gape and gaze around –  
 Then he ran, and the "khan" he found.  
 Bozuul, as confused as could be,  
 Put the "khan" back in the centre, see!  
 Kirghilchal, on the opposite side,  
 Shouted aloud, mouth open wide.  
 Then Chubak, Akbalta's bold son,  
 Comrade of Kirghilchal, that one,  
 Who was a raving lion of might  
 From the Noiguts, a notable knight,

One of the forty bogatirs,  
 Went to his tent, so it appears,  
 To give orders to a knight.  
 Trembling, and full of evil spite,  
 Old Irchi stood up, with dark face:

7430 "If you beat the "khan" from its place,  
 Take it and put it in your bag,  
 You can show it, and start to brag:  
 'That one and only "khan" we won!  
 Why in the centre did Bozuul run,  
 Placing it where the bones stand tight?  
 – With every cast increases your right  
 To be participant in the fun.  
 That one and only "khan" we won,  
 But you raised then such a fuss –

7440 You considered you'd beaten us!  
 But if you keep the rules of the game,  
 Better not quarrel with us, all the same!"  
 This rebuke to them having said,  
 Irchiul got not in the head.  
 Jumping up from his place, looking grim,  
 Bozuul came up to him:  
 "You, asking none about rules of the game,  
 Knocked the "khan" from the ring, all the same:  
 Now I ask you: 'Did you do tight?'

7450 Irchiul, don't start up a fight!  
 Better, I swear, if you'd kept the rule!"  
 Such were the words of Bozuul.  
 Here Kirgil, the old white-beard spoke;  
 Angry and sharply silence broke:  
 "You knocked the "khan" with one blow wide!  
 Those who played on Adzhibai's side,  
 After all, with that "khan's" retreat,  
 You were knocked out, and suffered defeat!  
 So, take your game and your mares away,  
 Clear all your knucklebones out, I say!  
 Only stop working each other ill!"  
 Such were the words of old Kirgil.  
 After hearing what he had said,  
 Bozuul once more raised his head:  
 "You say 'Stop!' but yourself do not cease!  
 Your white beard gives us no peace!  
 You are over sixty years old,  
 But you do not stop when you scold!  
 All other folk, excepting you,



7470 You regard as mere fools, it's true!"  
 Bozuul said these words, looking ill,  
 And he stood up against Kirgil.  
 "Don't you threaten a white-beard like that,  
 Or I'll certainly knock you flat!"  
 Irchiuul had this to say:  
 "You will not live for many a day,  
 You will die while yet quite young,  
 If you frown, and don't hold your tongue!  
 Bozuul, you head for a fall,  
 7480 Thinking yourself the best of all!  
 He, against whom you show anger still,  
 That is deeply respected Kirgil!  
 Are you not merely showing your greed?  
 Are you not cursed, Bozuul, indeed?  
 Old Kirgil, whom you treat that way –  
 He's nearly twice your age, I'd say.  
 Allah will punish you soon, you'll see!"  
 Thus spoke up the bold Irchi.  
 When Bozuul to that replied,  
 7490 Satan seemed to laugh inside:  
 "May you be cursed, Irchi, in your grave,  
 You loud-jabbering, dishonest slave!  
 You yourself did not win in the game,  
 But you're so haughty, all the same!  
 You were defeated in the play,  
 So you have nothing more to say!  
 High and mighty you like to speak,  
 Over-arrogant, though you're weak.  
 Always, everywhere, more than most,  
 7500 You will constantly brag and boast!  
 Raising a fuss, you natter away,  
 Every hour of the live-long day!  
 You play tricks, and deceive the folk.  
 Dishonest words you treat as a joke.  
 They nearly drive me out of my mind!  
 Almambet is honest and kind.  
 'Mid his me, who stand here yet,  
 There's none better than Almambet!  
 Everywhere, always, more than most,  
 7510 You speak cleverly, clearly boast!  
 When Almambet at first came here,  
 He at once got your picture clear.  
 Now I will open up your eyes:  
 Almambet has scorn for your lies!

He would not let you move more near,  
 Only said: 'Get away from here!'  
 When you started to quarrel with him.  
 Then old father Bakai stepped in:  
 You remain that Irchiuul –  
 7520 He whom wise men take as a fool!  
 To Almambet I went with you.  
 I was welcomed by him, it's true.  
 But dishonest ones, like you are,  
 Never get welcomed, near or far!  
 No use he found for such a cheat,  
 So then another you went to meet!  
 Off to see knight Chubak, the Noigut,  
 'Mid his folk held in high repute.  
 He's a rough one, and very tough –  
 7530 Thinks himself higher than common stuff!  
 'My words are worth much more than yours,  
 My Bey is higher than yours, of course!  
 When Alma first came to Manas,  
 Many of us became race-prizes thus.\*<sup>95</sup>  
 We then for a raid were set.  
 Glad of the coming of Almambet,  
 We forty knights ran races then,  
 Out on the steppe we organized them,  
 Hoping that he would stay with us yet,  
 7540 As an amusement the race-course we set.  
 When bogatir Almambet came thus,  
 Got acquainted with lion Manas,  
 For the winners of races then,  
 There were no prizes ready for them.  
 Forty knights, who in races rode,  
 Their own horses there bestrode.  
 If we put up their steeds as a prize,  
 Other knights might win them likewise!  
 Leaving a knight without his horse,  
 7550 None, said Serek, would like that, of course!  
 Better 'twould be that the youngest knights  
 Should be prizes for winners, by rights!  
 So Serek's very business-like word  
 Lion Manas did not find absurd!  
 He found thirteen youths to suit –  
 I was among that number, to boot!  
 I, in fact, became the first prize,  
 And after me, Irchi likewise.  
 Served as a prize for the seventh man in!



7560 Were you not punished thus for your sin,  
 If, having come before us here,  
 You as my equal wish to appear?  
 When Almambet first arrived, indeed,  
 Saying "Take this as your riding steed!"  
 Lion Manas gave him Sarala,  
 Huge as a camel, and there you are!  
 Wild as a mountain goat, you see,  
 But in the races, first home was he!  
 Since that very time, at least, -

7570 Listen to me, Irchi, you beast,  
 Take good note of what I say -  
 I live at peace with Alma till today!  
 After new pasture, with him now I stay.  
 Then the steed of Chubak, Kekteke,  
 Came home seventh, when racing then,  
 And, as his prize, you joined up with his men!  
 Telling the others 'I've won that Irchi!' -  
 That Chubak was as pleased as could be.  
 That's how it seemed to me, anyhow!

7580 That Chubak is your comrade now...  
 All the folk are aware very well -  
 One day not bickering you cannot dwell!"  
 So said the sensible Bozuul,  
 Making Irchi look just like a fool!  
 Those very words were heard by Irchi:  
 "Listen, good people, one moment to me -  
 Listen you young ones, and you who are old,  
 Listen, you wise ones, esteemed like pure gold -  
 Listen, and say not that we here have erred:

7590 Rogues he has called us - that was his word!  
 God alone knows, I swear it's true,  
 Just what evil that devil will do!  
 All you good folk for yourselves can see,  
 And my witnesses you can be!  
 My own master is now Chubak -  
 Why, then, another one should I lack?  
 Seems to me, Chubak is my friend -  
 Why serve a blaggard, to what good end?  
 Devil take you, and your knucklebone game!

7600 I shall be leaving soon, all the same!"  
 Knucklebones scattered everywhere...  
 All the knights who were gathered there  
 Ran to their steeds who were gathered there.  
 Iraman's son, Irchi, I declare,

Had a girdle, with tassel long,  
 Slave, in a cap with a pom-pom on,  
 Slave, with a tongue uncontrolled meanwhile,  
 To Chubak, who had gone to the isle,  
 With a cry came galloping there:

7610 "We came from equal sources, I swear:  
 We raise our hands, and one God we bless,  
 Though you came from Noiguts, no less.  
 While I'm from luckless Teits, you know!  
 Has not God then punished you so,  
 Since you count as a good-for-nought,  
 Chink Almambet, who our company sought?  
 He was made chief of our fighting men,  
 High-Commander we made him then:  
 As a Khan among khans he stood

7620 Leading our knights, as an expert should!  
 He, from Kalmaks, found a refuge with us,  
 Homeless orphan, took power thus.  
 He was accepted by our folk,  
 From their hands received power, no joke!  
 Just a slave, from China he came,  
 Took high command in his hands, all the same!  
 And, needing little to spur him on,  
 He has scouting to China gone!  
 Nobody asked your opinion far."

7630 That Chubak, son of Akbaltā,  
 He remained in the rear ranks then,  
 Seeing what happened, how, why, and when,  
 Said to himself "What can I do now?"  
 That one they call Bozuul, I vow,  
 Never will cease dirty tricks to hide.  
 We live together, side by side,  
 Help one another, as much as we can be,  
 So has not Allah, then, punished me?  
 Your forefathers were level with mine,

7640 Yet I live lower than you all the time!  
 Why did not Allah, then, punish you?  
 Having exalted Almambet too,  
 That curs'ed Bozuul, it's true,  
 Such senseless speeches then put through!"  
 Such were the words of Irchiuul.  
 Akbaltā's son, Chubak, was no fool.  
 He understood the words that were said,  
 Anger then filled his heart, and his head.  
 He was one of that lion breed too.



7650 For every man comes the time anew,  
 His real manhood and valour to show.  
 Like an owl's did his steed's eyes glow,  
 Being prepared for the three day's race.  
 Mane was cropped, stood straight in it's place.  
 Like a borzoi, his belly was tight,  
 Hooves stuck into the ground with might.  
 Amulet hanging, beat on his brow.  
 Handsome horse, Kekteke, I vow!  
 Doesn't grow tired in a month's run, indeed!

7660 Muzzle is dry. like no other steed.  
 With curved saddle, with sweat-cushion blue,  
 Brave Chubak had harnessed too.  
 Then he took all his weapons with him –  
 See how he stands there, looking all grim.  
 In full armour, I should tell,  
 Chain mail, breast-plates, shield as well,  
 Just see him now, a man of steel,  
 Covered in metal, from head to heel!  
 Then he swore: "I'll kill him today,  
 If I can find him on my way!  
 Yes, I'll slay that Almambet!  
 Hey, Noiguts! Let's be off, all set,  
 Find that Chink, God's curse on his head!  
 Then it won't be long ere he's dead!  
 Is there another as spiteful as he?"  
 Now he has gathered his thousand, see,  
 Now he is beating on his bronze drum,  
 Now he is shooting his flintlock gun,  
 Drumming, and summoning everyone.

7680 Thus Chubak, Akbalta's bold son,  
 After Almambet has fared,  
 Set off with his thousand prepared.  
 All his warriors hasten now,  
 Try to keep pace with him, somehow.  
 Hasten to fasten their saddle-girth,  
 If you make haste – then for all you're worth!  
 Round their tents the dust-clouds rise,  
 War-cry "Albalta!" he cries,  
 And it echoes, as on he pelts...

7690 With their powder-horns thrust in their belts,  
 Bending over their steeds they race,  
 Swords half-hid 'neath their robes, they chase,  
 In their saddles they swing and sway,  
 Nobody then could bar their way!

Over their shoulders flint-locks hung,  
 Spears in strong right hands they swung,  
 Anybody who saw those men  
 Would be surprised by all of them –  
 Like a land-slide, they swept on their way!

7700 This is what bold Chubak had to say:  
 "From Kalmaks, he took refuge with us,  
 From the Kazakhs, refused, he came thus,  
 Who knows who his forebears might be?  
 Traitor, who quitted his own land, see!  
 Left his own country, his native fold.  
 Why then, thinking himself so bold,  
 Does he not keep our customs of old?  
 There are five roads into Beijin –  
 What if we follow one of them in?"

7710 If mighty Allah won't help us to win,  
 If I am not preserved from on high,  
 Then, before my time I shall die!  
 Can a man stand out against Fate?  
 Can he defy his own death-date?  
 How can I leave the power to a Chink?  
 One who was cursed before birth, I should think?  
 One who went off, and left his own folk,  
 One who ere birth knew the curse's yoke!  
 How can I let such a man rule my men?

7720 He could be doubly a traitor then!  
 Andzhi, Kakan, and Altı-Shaar –  
 To each ruler, his own folk there are.  
 If strength suffice, Almambet I'll kill.  
 Should the Almighty not aid my will,  
 Then, with no regrets, I shall die!"  
 Thus said Chubak, with stern-set eye...  
 So, with all his warriors behind,  
 He went off, his revenge to find.  
 All who were left just watched them go,

7730 On the high bank, with the river below.  
 By Chubak, and his bully attack,  
 Many of them were taken aback.  
 'Mid the fighters dissention he'd sown.  
 Then old Bakai, on patrol on his own,  
 Having seen their tracks left behind,  
 Thought: "See, the knights divided I find!  
 It will be bad, if quarrels they stir –  
 Giving his steed, Koenboz, the spur,  
 Thinking: "Some may strike, some fall dead!"



7740 Urged his horse more quickly ahead.  
 Tucked his beard into his waist,  
 Bending o'er his steed made haste,  
 With his waving long white hair,  
 With his arrow-proof tunic there,  
 To the war-tent of Lion Manas,  
 To the magnanimous bogatir thus,  
 With a loud cry, arrived Bakai:  
 "You have been deprived of your knights.  
 You seem half-dead, and aimless somehow,  
 7750 And your power grows weaker now!  
 What has happened, Manas, to you?  
 Having united us, you sent us too,  
 Thousands, of many a various bent,  
 Which of us then by you was not sent?  
 Many who could not control their speech,  
 Seemingly villains, Chubak thus could reach,  
 Seemingly slandered the knight Almambet,  
 Seemingly good-for-nothings threaten him yet.  
 Seemingly blaggards spread spite among friends.  
 7760 He, though, in order to serve Kirghiz ends,  
 Went off to scout around old Beijin.  
 Those trouble-makers then spoke about him:  
 "He is alone, but with us he disputes,  
 And all our wishes he often refutes.  
 Bold Chubak, the Noigut knight,  
 One of your forty guards, all right,  
 Has gone chasing that Almambet.  
 Asking no-one's permission as yet,  
 Highly offended, has gone this time,  
 7770 And his banner has raised, as a sigh!  
 With him Kirghiz of forty tribes –  
 One whole regiment now there rides!  
 They've just departed on their way.  
 What will you do about that, just say?"  
 So spoke the fatherly old Bakai;  
 And Manas, a real knight, forby,  
 Went into his great Khan's tent,  
 There with Bakai some time he spent,  
 Turning over his knightly task...  
 7780 Lion Manas spoke up at last:  
 Having thought, he shook his head.  
 "Father Bakai!" to him he said:  
 "You are so wise, and rich in mind,  
 You are always the thoughtful kind,

And your words always edify us...  
 What has happened, dividing knights thus,  
 You have seen with your own eyes!  
 You'll go after Chubak, likewise;  
 Take my steed with you, brave Akkula,  
 7790 And to him then ride – there you are!  
 On this very difficult way,  
 On this discordant, heavy day,  
 Still your words can lighten our load,  
 Still they show us a healthy road.  
 Don't be humbled, and don't be sad!  
 If my warriors act so bad,  
 Then will Allah punish my soul,  
 Then I'll not ride in the ruler's role!  
 If my folk don't obey my word,  
 7800 How can I count myself their lord?  
 My white flintlock I'll throw away,  
 And I'll ride no more from today!"  
 So said Manas to wise Bakai:  
 Sorrow showed itself in his eye:  
 But he was full of boldness too,  
 Wide was his brow, head raised anew.  
 All his body was full of power,  
 Looks were threatening, eyes a-glower,  
 Roman nose, and temples steep,  
 7810 Large full lips, and eyes set deep.  
 Broad his skull, and chin thrust out,  
 Mouth firm-set, and eyes flashed about.  
 In all was knightly character shown,  
 Palms were broad, generosity known.  
 If he goes to fight, the way's clear,  
 All his knightly essence shines here.  
 Wide in breast and shoulders is he,  
 Massive chest, but slim waist you see!  
 Looks are threatening, angry his face,  
 7820 But his strength gives a certain grace.  
 Tiger's neck, and arms thick and long,  
 Shoulders wide, and heart firm and strong.  
 Eyelids smooth, with star-like eyes,  
 Tiger's breast, where the muscles rise.  
 Menacing looks Bakai sees again,  
 As he holds on to Akkula's rein...  
 Your wise old father, knight Bakai,  
 Quietly takes the road, by-and-by.  
 To Chubak, whose habits he knows,



7830 There, to give good advice, he goes.  
Smoothly trotting along on his horse,  
With his white beard waving, of course,  
Wise Bakai now fares afar,  
To Chubak, son of Akbalta.  
He is a very lion, also.  
When Chubak saw him riding so,  
First of all he wanted to scoff,  
Guessing why, while a good way off.  
Then he drew nearer, there you are,  
7840 Holding the bridle of Akkula!  
Then Chubak showed some surprise,  
And respect filled the younger man's eyes.  
When old Bakai drew near his guards  
How could the younger not show his regards?  
He rode forward upon his steed,  
Nearing Bakai, he paid good heed,  
Stopped his horse, and bade him good-day:  
"You used to ride in a different way,  
There, at the head of hundreds of men!  
7850 What has happened to you since then?!

I have no discord been sowing here,  
'Mid our neighbour Kirghizians dear.  
Clever and quick is your priceless Manas.  
He's from the same old source as us.  
It was never oppressive for me,  
One of his serving men to be.  
He's from Nogois, and I'm from Noiguts\* –  
Well, just consider, the same old roots –  
Anyone like your Manas, when he scours,  
7860 I've never seen in this world of ours.  
Such a pretender 'mid people again!  
If you'd not brought Akkula on the rein,  
If you'd not ridden to meet me, Bakai,  
I should have left, and have spit in his eye!  
Would that have been any shame, to my cost?  
Blood-thirsty one! May he get lost!  
I have been serving him thirteen years!  
In Chilan\* dale, where the river veers,  
At the feast of the Khan Chilab,  
7870 'Twixt Kirghiz and Chinese came the rub –  
Arguments led to a fisticuff "game" –  
But blows were bitter I'd say, all the same!  
Chinese took count of high numbers of them,  
But, nonetheless, we Kirghiz beat them then.

Though they were many, there still came more.  
Not being able to maintain the score,  
Many Kirghizians fled – younger ones.  
But we Nogois, your forefathers' sons,  
Kept up the fight against those Chinese,  
7880 Hand to hand conflict, hard as you please!  
Blow upon blow, but we beat them back!  
Standing before your servant Chubak,  
Were six Chinese, who joined in the frays –  
Cursed be they, to the end of their days!  
Thinking himself the chief, your Manas,  
In the ranks of Bey Koshoi thus,  
Getting frightened, gave up the day.  
Is this the truth, or a lie I say?  
Was he not quicker then, any old how,  
7890 Than this Chubak, who stands here now?  
How's a Noigut, then, worse than Nogois?  
Manas, or Chubak, who's the bolder boy?  
Do you not know the answer, Bakai?  
Why should I stand in the shade then, say why?  
In the valley of Temirdik\* –  
At the feast of the Khan Taish;  
Where' gainst Manas, single-handed did ride  
Maiden Saikal, from the Katkalang\* tribe –  
Is there a need now to say that I lied? –  
7900 Struck with her spear, and made him subside!  
When she prepared one more blow with her spear,  
When, for Manas, Judgement Day then drew near,  
When she might wound him severely once more,  
When, like a grunting, sharp-snouted wild boar,  
She might, unflouted, then tear out his heart,  
When for him daylight quite soon might depart,  
When for him darkness head-on might descend,  
Then, for his honour I stood, as a friend,  
Is that the truth, or a lie, my Bakai?  
7910 Then there, between them who stood, if not I?  
And I did not let Saikal conquer him –  
Is that a lie, or the truth, although grim?  
Was it not I, then, who gave him new wings?  
Why do you not recall straightway such things?  
Do you remember now, father Bakai?  
That Almambet, who from China drew nigh –  
Say, where's the truth, where's the lie, once again?  
Has he not gone a scouting campaign?  
In old Chambil a fortress has he.



7920 When Aichak-div's young son, did you see,  
 Beat down Manas, till he'd no strength to stand,  
 Then was preparing to take upper hand,  
 When his poor victim, all aimless did lie,  
 And was exhausted, and ready to die,  
 You were a witness yourself on that day,  
 How I then drove his tormentor away!  
 When a poor beggar all reason has lost,  
 Then can one kill him, and not count the cost?  
 As a present for me, unsought,  
 7930 Now, wise Bakai, Akkula you have brought!  
 In Tashkent I fought Panus-khan,  
 Son of the wonderful Khan Nuskan.  
 I besieged him, his city I seized,  
 That I did for Manas, as I pleased.  
 Then as leader of troops, head held high,  
 You were with us yourself, Bakai!  
 So, compared with leopard Manas,  
 That pretender, who rules all of us,  
 How was I worse than him before?  
 7940 On Sari-Ozen's yellow shore,  
 There he took from you your power!  
 Those who knew you, began to glower:  
 "Why does he not make Bakai a chief?"  
 They were sorry, beyond belief.  
 Power was placed in Almambet's hand,  
 To the torment of all the land.  
 He just tortures the people still,  
 But, respecting Manas' will,  
 Nobody said a word against that.  
 7950 Your Kalmak - well, may he fall flat!  
 So condemning to to torture the troops,  
 Many thousands, on mountain routes;  
 To the ill-fated Erime  
 Stood the road, taking ninety days.  
 Kirghiz fighters he almost killed,  
 Kirghiz men became weak-willed,  
 Very nearly were led to the brink.  
 So your cursed, yellow-faced Chink  
 Uncounted thousands of warriors all,  
 7960 Very nearly condemned to fall!  
 Many then thought "Our last days we spend!"  
 Many wept bitterly, nearing their end.  
 Almambet ordered Kirghiz "Go ahead!"  
 By that goading Kalmak they were led.

Many went out of their senses quite,  
 Many young fellows came near their last light,  
 Almost went on to the land of the dead,  
 Scarcely, scarcely could breathe, be it said,  
 Till a few days of rest gave it back!  
 7970 As Commander, that cunning Kalmak  
 Went off scouting! Can that be right?  
 I, Chubak, a Noigut knight,  
 Left here with nothing to think, nor do,  
 I feel depressed, and don't you too?  
 In this transient world, what can be?  
 Dear Bakai, no road bar for me!  
 You, my old fellow, don't hold back my hand,  
 Don't try to stop me from making a stand.  
 Don't hold me back from where I would go,  
 7980 Don't lead me on into further woe!  
 If you sow grass-seed, grass will grow.  
 God's slave, whose hour has come, will go!  
 He who's predestined to torment feels pain,  
 Set my hands both free here again.  
 Let me out on the roadway high!  
 O, people's elder, knight Bakai,  
 Giving me tireless Akkula,  
 Why add torture to me thus far?  
 All shall be as I have planned!  
 7990 Don't bar my way, set free my hand!  
 After Almambet I shall go,  
 Chase after him with my men, in a row,  
 From such a slave who comes from Andzhi,  
 I'll get my death-blow, if destined for me;  
 I, Chubak, son of Akbalt,  
 Will not suffer offence thus far!  
 So his angry speech did run...  
 Saying: "Eh, eh! wait a moment, my son!"  
 There stood respected Father Bakai.  
 8000 That was the moment, by-the-by.  
 When everyone should show restraint,  
 So he said: "Wait, don't make such complaint!  
 Think awhile, when you've heard my advice -  
 Listen, such wonders don't happen twice!  
 Made for flight by Allah on high,  
 Many various birds fill the sky:  
 On their wide-spread wings they soar,  
 Smoothly swaying, the heavens o'er.  
 Then they settle, with tail spread thus:



8010 Thanks to us, Manas is Manas!  
 That's what our loyal service has done!  
 If we start quarrels with him, my son,  
 If he trips us up, one and all,  
 Even if elephants – we should fall!  
 Even if hordes of us – we should be dead.  
 Clearly, the Chinese upset Almambet,  
 Then to save his poor little soul,  
 He started serving Kirghizia's goal.  
 No matter what his relations might say,  
 8020 Clearly, they hurt him severely that day!  
 So to our people his aid he gave,  
 Thus his poor injured gnat-soul to save,<sup>98</sup>  
 So, at last, we welcomed him in,  
 From the old city of Chin-Machin.  
 Let us cease raving against him here!  
 Haughty words do no good, that's clear:  
 Let us leave spiteful quarrels behind,  
 No more empty reproaches find!  
 To his relations he won't take the track,  
 8030 So, don't be stubborn, my dear Chubak!  
 Those Chinese no more will he serve,  
 Not an inch from us will he swerve!  
 Curb your anger, then, Khan Chubak!  
 Almambet came to us off the wrack;  
 Old heathen ties no more does he own,  
 He will serve us, and us alone!  
 All that nonsense you've told the Kirghiz  
 Is most unjust, yes indeed, it is!  
 All that he's doing is for me and you,  
 8040 Not for our foes, for our forty knights too!  
 He has gone spying now, just for us!  
 You have gathered your troops round you thus –  
 That I count youthful nonsense from you!  
 Listen, Chubak, to my words, they are true!  
 Break off with him, and the wolves will bite –  
 They will say: "The Kirghiz disunite!"  
 Other people will say so too,  
 If you split us, thieves will break through,  
 Stealing our goods, that's the truth, forby!  
 8050 Who's lost his rank, then, is it not I?  
 You have aroused in the people alarm.  
 What are you doing? Is it not harm?  
 If of my power I now am deprived,  
 Was it not I who this contrived?

What has happened some time ago  
 You regret very much, I know.  
 Almambet then left his own land,  
 And if you look how things now stand,  
 Clearly everyone knows he's Chinese,  
 8060 One who from his own land flees.  
 Yes, Almambet, by his eyes one sees,  
 Anyone sees, that he is Chinese.  
 He knows the roads, and therefore he'll lead,  
 Warriors riding behind him, indeed!  
 Pains of the spirit he suffers for us,  
 And he does you a great service thus.  
 So, because he serves us so well,  
 You would pursue him? What nonsense you tell!  
 For the sake of our people he'll steer,  
 8070 And for the sake of Manas-bogatir!  
 Thinking that he has my power thus won,  
 Do not torment yourself so, my dear son!  
 Don't torment others, and him don't pursue.  
 Don't chase an ally – what nonsense you do!"  
 So spoke Bakai, looking grey and grave.  
 Many instructions Chubak then he gave.  
 Hearing these words which Bakai had just said,  
 Our bold Chubak stopped awhile, shook his head,  
 And while thus undecided he was,  
 8080 Riding high on his steed, Aibanboz,  
 Up to them came our Lion Manas,  
 Eye-lashes long, and eyes deep-set thus.  
 Teeth unlike any other one's quite –  
 When he spoke they flashed all white.  
 Having seen that Chubak was cross,  
 Laughed outright, and not at a loss:  
 "This lonely Chink, who has come to us,  
 Has no equal among Kirghiz thus.  
 This refugee, who long since to us came,  
 8090 Has no equal among us again!  
 Who knows the roads? Then he must lead,  
 Be in command of our forces, indeed!  
 You, not seeing your failings, Chubak,  
 Have accused him, and painted him black,  
 Raised such a racket 'mong all in sight;  
 Time has come to put things right,  
 And to show you his worthiness now!  
 'Mid our people you've raised a row.  
 Nothing good, I think, has grown



8100 From such a slander as you have sown!"  
 Having arrivedm such words then said he  
 To bold Chubak in his war-gear, see:  
 He at Lion Manas gave a glance:  
 "To your tune I'll not do a dance!  
 Let our oaths remain in your mind.  
 Sit on your steed of the red-brown kind,  
 Sent to me as a gift, early on,  
 Horse and armour returned: Put it on!"<sup>99</sup>  
 Know that objection here I raise!

8110 In those long-past early days,  
 When I was thirteen years old, forby,  
 By lake Aral, in the high Altai,  
 On the stony pass, Ak-Changil,\*  
 I joined with you of my own free will.  
 How have you kept your word, anyway?  
 Where's the white cloth we divided that day?<sup>100</sup>  
 Where's the one road, which we chose for both?  
 Where's the handshake which sealed the oath?  
 Blades of our swords we licked once more,<sup>101</sup>

8120 With you then our joint way we swore!  
 When things went hard for you, I gave aid!  
 Have I my duty aside ever laid?  
 But you've not valued my help, noble knight!  
 When did I not help Kirghiz in the fight?  
 We licked our blades together, on oath,  
 We swore defence of the honour of both.  
 I have fought foemen, by the score,  
 O majestic Manas, what's more,  
 I have slain giants and dragons meanwhile!

8130 Did I ever my honour defile?  
 Since my childhood I fought by your side.  
 Is it good, that you would divide?  
 At old men's councils I did not sit,  
 To mass meetings I did not flit.  
 All that I did was in fact done for you,  
 Still untiring I serve you too.  
 But this thrice-cursed Kalmak received  
 Right to command, and you I believed.  
 He gave no rest to us on the road.

8140 We all suffered beneath his goad!  
 He then received such power untold.  
 All of the young ones, and all of the old.  
 He then had counted, and numbered again.  
 All were divided, with might and with main.

I, though, Chubak, to you near and dear —  
 I was not called to your counsels, that's clear.  
 I remained right where I was, with my men.  
 Seemingly, I was not wanted just then.  
 Now he has gone on his scouting campaign,

8150 I, in agreement with you, though, remain.  
 Oaths which you took, on your conscience must stay.  
 Since seventeen I've been yours, till today.  
 During that time to Manas I've been true.  
 Following you, my ordeal I've gone through!  
 Joined fast with you by my oath I've remained,  
 No equal footing have I ever claimed.  
 But that Kalmak, who took refuge with us,  
 From the Kirghiz much reknown received thus.  
 Always, and everywhere, you I have served,

8160 But my support have you nohow preferred.  
 Nor has that Chink, who no favour affords.  
 We both swore oaths on our axes and swords,<sup>102</sup>  
 But you still treat them as some passing jest;  
 Still you regard Almambet as the best!  
 Set on one side is the word of Chubak,  
 Almambet's honoured, but I just look black!  
 How can I help it, that me you ignore,  
 Always and everywhere, now as before?  
 Deepest offence settled down on my soul!

8170 No outworn hag can be praised, on the whole,  
 As some most worthy and grand racing steed.  
 My racing steed you've become now, indeed,  
 And I shall urge you, and spur you on thus!  
 Why did you treat me so badly, Manas?  
 Sometimes so heated, as many may say,  
 Sometimes so cool, and so silent all day?"  
 So bold Chubak went storming along!  
 Thinking "Just let him cool down later on!"  
 Silent, unmoving, Manas still stood there,

8180 Till wild Chubak could regain milder air:  
 Thus did Manas smooth the scene there again:  
 "If of the scouting campaign you complain,  
 Well, then, get going, and ride off today!"  
 So said Manas, in his wild lion way.  
 Then bold Chubak, brave Akbalta's son,  
 Whipped up his steed, with the lash well laid on.  
 Wanted to ride on his own scout campaign.  
 But old Bakai saw the danger again:  
 And he flew into a furious rage,



8190 And with the back of his sabre, that sage  
 Struck on a stone, so it echoed around:  
 "Cursed young idiots, minds still unsound,  
 Racing and chasing, each one on his steed,  
 As if Chinese were nearby on the mead!  
 So you go routing and shouting about,  
 But where's the enemy? You've not found out!  
 Where will you look then for him, can you say?  
 Shouting and mounting, you gallop away!  
 Well, then, and where are those Chinks, by-the-by?"

8200 Having said this, old noble Bakai,  
 Just like a squall of lashing cold rain,  
 Just like a boy, teasing jackdaws again,  
 He then drove back Chubak's mounted men,  
 Just like a sheep-flock, by wolves to their pen.  
 Sweeping their ranks then, he gave them a scare,  
 So all the warriors halted there.  
 Taking Chubak along with him then,  
 Lion Manas moved off with his men,  
 Thinking: "I'll try to make peace there yet,

8210 'Twixt wild Chubak, and mild Almambet:  
 I shall conciliate them, then return!"  
 So we shall leave them - that's their concern...  
 All they who donned their coats of chain mail,  
 Steel plates of armour, and robes, without fail  
 We shall leave them new for a while,  
 And on Alma and Sirgak we shall smile,  
 For we have something to tell of those two.  
 Listen and learn, and you'll hear something new!  
 Khan Almambet is your bold-hearted knight,

8220 Fearless Sirgak is your tiger, all right -  
 Nearest friend, and comrade-in-arms,  
 Closest support, in case of alarms,  
 Fellow-fighter, and friend to the end,  
 Faithful, fearless, whate'er fate may send!  
 All his great sorrows are shared by him,  
 Won't contradict, though your words sound grim!  
 'Neath hostile firs, he'll not run away,  
 Not fearing death, he will valour display.  
 Headlong they galloped, without drawing rein.

8230 When their pace slackened, they spurred on again.  
 Thus in one hour a day's journey they do!..  
 There is a pass called Tyuiundyu  
 To Grand Beijin, on the road yet afar -  
 There is a peak, where lies Akkuldzha,\*

There is a lake, where magic ducks swim,  
 There is a lake, which is called Shayin...  
 Further, the mountain ranges soar high,  
 Over the pass, where peaks pierce the sky.  
 There live Kakans, in their numberless way.

8240 If you ride on for another half-day,  
 If you ride over the pass to Angyush,\*  
 In that region of mountain-slope bush,  
 There live the tribe of Chinese Chiyku.  
 How far is that? If we only knew!  
 But, having reached it, Alma looked around -  
 Seventy-thousand families he found!  
 But, in a fright, they all hurried away!  
 Ducks on the lake they found not that day.  
 Mountain rams on the peak they found not,

8250 Never a soul on that lonely spot,  
 Of the numberless horde in Shayna!  
 "There," they thought, "our enemies are!  
 Seemingly heathens have seen us too!"  
 So thought Alma, as they rode on through.  
 Over the pass Tyuyundyu, on their way,  
 In Sari-Kiya not long did they stay.  
 Taking off bridles, they let their steeds feed,  
 Cropping the grass there, of which they had need.  
 Red-brown Sarala, Alma fed.

8260 Knight Sirgak his spare steed led.  
 Kartkyurēng, his riding steed true,  
 Red-brown Telkizil he fed too...  
 Not long after the knights set off thus:  
 "Through the pass they'll go!" thought Manas.  
 Very lightly he whipped his steed.  
 Where could they overtake them, indeed?  
 Better, then seen, he should shout at them,  
 Better still, beat his gold drum then,  
 Best of all, shoot his Akkelte!

8270 So he did, as they rode on their way.  
 Seeing Alma ahead, "Stop!" he cried,  
 And the echoes went sweeping wide.  
 He had a roar like a lion then...  
 "What has happened with our men -  
 Is it Manas has come?" thought Alma.  
 Glancing back, saw the pair afar,  
 Quite a long distance still away.  
 Still, it was difficult to say,  
 So he peered, and rode on slow,



8280 Something dark back there, like a crow!  
 If not a crow, well, what is it then?  
 Now it seems to be two men...  
 Lifting his spy-glass up to his eye,  
 With attention he started to pry -  
 Through that tube he began to peer,  
 Which you screwed six times, to see clear!  
 Which, when all in focus is set,  
 Still half a yard grows longer yet.  
 Which, when pointed, will cut a man out -

8290 There, with attention, Alma looked about;  
 There, where a six-day journey in view,  
 Seems no longer than a lasso -  
 So, having taken it out of its case,  
 Lifting it up before his face,  
 Looked though it then with his right eye -  
 There saw Manas and Chubak riding nigh,  
 Both of them, and was taken aback,  
 Thinking: "They've come the Chinks to attack!  
 Well, what kind of Kirghiz are these,

8300 Who, without waiting, attack as they please?  
 Though I serve them faithfully still -  
 They are suspicious - will I work them ill?  
 Knowing, of course, that I am Chinese,  
 May think I'm hostile to them, if they please!  
 They should not be so indifferent to me,  
 Thinking I'll not do my duty, you see!  
 Chasing me round - or did something betide -  
 Foes falling on them, from that further side,  
 Bringing distress on the heads of Kirghiz?

8310 Or has Manas then decided on this -  
 Tracking me down, with that bold Chubak,  
 Following after me, checking my track?  
 Or have the tribes of the Kyuderyu  
 Made a great battle against them too?  
 For Manas, who flies to the fray,  
 Has there arrived a most difficult day?  
 And, having lost Akkula, his steed,  
 Now does he ride Aibanboz, indeed?  
 Maybe to tell of some sad stroke of fate

8320 They're in a hurry, their woes to relate?"  
 Thinking it over, then said Almambet:  
 "What in this world will occur to me yet?"  
 Then he decided: "What will be, will be!  
 Why should I worry what happens to me?"

Meanwhile excited and angry Chubak,  
 Galloped quite near, and his brows were all black.  
 Seeing the anger which blazed in his eyes,  
 Almambet understood straightway, likewise.  
 "Here is a man who might quarrel with me,

8330 That is as plain as a poker might be!  
 Following him as a bow-shot, let's say,  
 Lion Manas went trotting away,  
 On his old war-horse, Aibanboz.  
 His old steed was tired, that he was!  
 He had grown weaker along the way,  
 Meanwhile the race-horse, Kekteke,  
 Galloped on swiftly along the road,  
 Bearing Chubak, who was no light load,  
 And he went ahead on the track...

8340 To Almambet, and also Sirgak,  
 He gave greetings, and wished them "Good-day!"  
 Sirgak replied in his own curt way.  
 Almambet, though, said not a word,  
 Just as though "Good-day!" he'd not heard.  
 Plunged in thought he seemed to stand:  
 "Damned deserter from fatherland!  
 Wrecker of everything, he looked grim,  
 Did not stir when I greeted him,  
 Only looked the other way...

8350 Well, I'll calm him down, if I may.  
 So I won't annoy him more,  
 This small insult I shall ignore!..."  
 So he turned his back on Alma,  
 Moved toward Sirgak - there you are!  
 He still sat quiet upon his steed,  
 Waiting for Manas, indeed.  
 And, in fact, with little fuss,  
 At that moment, up rode Manas,  
 And he finally joined their track

8360 Both these giants, Alma and Sirgak,  
 Then dismounted, each from his steed,  
 And Manas they both did greet.  
 He replied to each in due course.  
 Then Sirgak tied Manas' horse,  
 Spread a small mat, for him to sit.  
 Lion Manas thought: "This is it!"  
 As they began to show their mood,  
 He just watched quietly, not to be rude.  
 But it appeared all anger was calmed.



8370 Almambet remained unalarmed.  
 For at once he noticed a sign  
 That Manas would speak, in good time.  
 On his face his lips gaped wide –  
 What incisors were seen inside!  
 Flashes of white, as he started to smile,  
 Showed him in laughing mood meanwhile.  
 Loud he laughed, with nodding head:  
 "How are you both, dear knights?" he said  
 "We have just arrived on the scene –

8380 Signs of a quarrel there have been!...  
 "Speak out now, at last you may.  
 Let us hear what you have to say!"  
 Such were the questions for them set,  
 But Chubak stayed silent yet.  
 Not a word from him, not a sound –  
 Stood there, gazing at the ground.  
 Four bogatir stood round, all pat,  
 Side by side, and that was that!  
 Knight Alma, who the scouting led,

8390 When he heard what Manas had said,  
 When he'd asked them how they fared,  
 He came forward with answer prepared:  
 "Oh! Oh! Manas! Oh! Manas, my dear!  
 I understand, though not all I hear.  
 Don't pretend that you're simple so!  
 I look round on the world below,  
 On this deceptive and passing earth –  
 Does one enjoy eternal rebirth?  
 As I see it, we're mortals, all we –

8400 My brave fellows, just listen to me:  
 "Though I'm a heathen, still I'm strong!  
 As I see it, though maybe I'm wrong,  
 Bad luck waits for the wandering moke,  
 Scorned is the one who has left his folk.  
 Though I'm Chinese, I still am strong.  
 Scorned is the one who leaves homeland long.  
 Bad luck falls, when a brave so decides.  
 All who remain with their kin besides –  
 Listen to them, whatever they say,

8410 All about me, who from home ran away...  
 So the Almighty God upon high  
 Thinks to himself what a slave am I!  
 All who remain with their folk are knights,  
 They are respected by all, and by rights.

But about me, whom my people don't love,  
 That Almighty Allah above  
 Thinks "What kind of a slave have I!  
 In the dust of death let him lie!  
 Let him with no further torment go!"

8420 If it were not God's will that be so,  
 Would I then see my people again?  
 I have been suffering pangs of pain –  
 Who could consent then, such torment to bear?  
 But I have taken this on, I declare;  
 What kind of nobleman, then, am I?  
 Let my throne crumble, and let your Khan die!  
 Let me at last to peace once more go!  
 If Mighty Allah would not wish it so,  
 Who would again his beloved village see?

8430 Various burdens have fallen on me –  
 Who'd be prepared, then, such torment to bear?  
 This muddle-head, whom you brought with you here?  
 What a dumb master are you, I suppose!  
 Rather than tolerate any more woes,  
 Let me, your leader, now standing nearby,  
 Pass to that other world! Yes! Let me die!  
 Such deep offence do I get now from you –  
 Who else such insults would take, as I do?  
 When did I ask you to make me a chief?

8440 I come to you, and accept your belief!  
 Yes, even you, Chubak, with Manas,  
 If you grow angry, reproaching me thus,  
 You, my dear trouble-maker, Chubak –  
 I shall take down just a peg, alack!  
 Whom did I ask to make me their chief?  
 I came to serve you, and your new belief.  
 Though you, Chubak, with Manas have joined too.  
 I shall just knock that proud stuffing from you!  
 You stir up trouble, and make such a fuss,

8450 And you have shown me hostility thus!  
 You know quite well that I am Chinese,  
 Now here today, take your turn, if you please!  
 Do you not wish me your tongue to cut out?  
 Do you not wish I should then turn about,  
 And deny my belief as well?  
 Rascal Chubak, I need not tell –  
 I am Chinese – that's how things are!  
 You are the son of Akbalta –  
 What need have you to switch and swerve?



8460 Not bringing me your soldiers to serve,  
 Why did you gallop here, after me?  
 Whom to involve in hostility?  
 Stopping me serving the folk, as I would?  
 Why seek my tracks, as far as you could?  
 Would you then test your strength against me,  
 Thinking so well of yourself, I see!?  
 Should I not settle accounts with you?  
 Just at this moment I'm furious too -  
 Shall I not tear out your bladder of spleen?

8470 Have you my broken-down loneliness seen?  
 Was not that thought in your mind always thus -  
 "First of all people he came then to us!?"  
 Seeing me wander in hopeless despair,  
 "He came to us, seeking comradeship there?"  
 Was that not then the first thought in your mind?  
 "If Almambet lets his temper grow blind,  
 Will he not spill someone's blood on the spot?"  
 Tiger Chubak, am I right here, or not?  
 Fare you well my good knight, go away!

8480 Every occasion, by night and by day,  
 Gigantic son of old Akbalta,  
 You start a quarrel with me, there you are!  
 If I treat you here, as you treated me -  
 Then your dead corpse on the ground we should see!  
 When I begin of my people to speak,  
 Then in my soul I feel no longer weak.  
 From the Tangshang and the tribe of Mandzhi,  
 Almambet, standing here, saved himself, see!  
 Thanks to the courage I found in my roots!

8490 You then will say: "I'm from Kirghiz Noiguts!"  
 What a pretentious, arrogant phrase!  
 You then will say: "Thus my forebears I praise!"  
 What a most insolent, haughteous phrase!"  
 You say: "You're lonely - no kinsmen always!"  
 What a most lofty and arrogant word!  
 Clearly our kinsmen are gifts of the Lord!  
 What can I say of your hauteur, Chubak?  
 Almighty Allah decides forebears' tracks!  
 What can I say of your manner, so far?

8500 Almighty Allah decides what you are!  
 Furious, spurious churl of a man!  
 Have you not yet seen the real kind I am?  
 If not, your end is approaching quite near!  
 Ruffian you are, and unlucky, it's clear.

Will you remember yourself in good time?"  
 In his features was seen a stern line.  
 - Yes, he was angry, that knight Almambet.  
 Proudly he stood, and his strength gathered yet,  
 And he expressed himself, still not all done...

8510 Then Chubak, Albalta's huge son,  
 Though he was also a real mighty Bey,  
 Thought to himself: "Let him have his say!"  
 And so he listened to what he had said,  
 Stood there proudly, high held his head.  
 Not even stirring a finger he stood -  
 Just take a look, for his manner was good.  
 They were both influenced now by Manas.  
 Almambet then spoke without fuss.  
 Various aspects he still disapproved,  
 But still Chubak remained unmoved.

8520 He just stood there, old Akbalta's son,  
 Quietly listened till Alma was done,  
 Though he was touched on the raw, now and then,  
 Showed himself one of the staunchest of men.  
 Finally, Almambet had enough,  
 And no longer spoke rather rough.  
 Seeing Chubak standing there, held in check,  
 Not even moving his muscular neck,  
 And all the ire which he poured upon him,

8530 Took still unmoved, though his feelings were grim.  
 You modern people, just look on those two,  
 How those fierce lions then parted anew...  
 Having then finished with him, Almambet  
 Turned to Manas, who sat silent yet.  
 Looked him all over, and spoke his first phrase:  
 "My dear pretender, your forebears we praise!  
 Lion Manas, my knight, brave and grand!  
 Andizhan, which is shaped like a hand,  
 You seem to take for your own village now,

8540 Even collect your tribute, somehow!  
 Small Kokon, as big as your hand,  
 Take as your sheep-flock pasture-land.  
 You have scared them, and tribute take.  
 You arrive - all your own you make,  
 With thirty-hundred-thousand men,  
 Seems too many, my grey-mane, then!  
 Do not thoughts o'er flow from my head?  
 If Kakan with fury goes red,  
 If they open their gates to you,



8550 Will they not find such a number too?  
 Even such a small town as that?  
 But you thought to knock all Chinks flat!  
 Having arrived here, what did you do?  
 Quarrelled with one another anew!  
 So you were split, when numbers were flooded,  
 Said: "On Kakan my anger I poured!"  
 Said: "How many people I bent!"  
 Said: "Gainst the Chinks my warriors went!"  
 Said: "All the world I conquered so –"

8560 On Beijin I brought down woe!  
 Then to none I fought in the fray  
 Did I submit – won victory that day!"  
 You went round, and boasted so grand.  
 Now you can see yourself how things stand.  
 What a rout waits from Bakburchun!  
 When you see their hordes of men soon,  
 Looking around, don't feel yourself beat,  
 Saying: "They're none whom I don't defeat!"  
 Saying: "With musket and cannon I shoot!"

8570 Saying: "There's none whom I don't give the boot!"  
 Saying: "There's nowhere that I've not been!"  
 But just look on this earth that I've seen.  
 Is there a place here, where once you went?  
 Is there a brave, on whom blows you spent?  
 Is there a place, where once you stayed?  
 Is there a brave, whom you fought unafraid?  
 Is there a place where once you dwelt?  
 Is there a brave, whom blows you dealt?  
 Where is Beijin? The Chinese land?

8580 Where are the Chinks? Are they at hand?  
 What is the use to sit on this hill?  
 If you know it, then boldly tell!  
 Where is their land, and their city Tungsha?\*

Where are the Chinese folk so far?  
 – What do you feel in yourself, please say!"

Almambet questioned him in that way...  
 Lion Manas, whom nothing deters,  
 When he spoke so many hard words,  
 Scarcely heard him out to the end –

8590 So offended by words from his friend!  
 His incisors, as wide as a door,  
 Then he, like no one else, what's more,  
 Bared in laughter, blazing white,  
 Couldn't control his bitterness quite.

Grinned in scorn, and gave a sneer;  
 Then he said: "Well, Alma, my dear,  
 Of those good-for-nought Chinese  
 And their habits, inform me please!  
 On their sod, till now I've not trod,  
 8600 Never been here before, by God!  
 On this land I not been,  
 Never before these people seen:  
 Only yesterday, early at eve,  
 I remembered my own, and I grieve.  
 When I went out and looked around,  
 There the Great Bear at my back I found!  
 From the North the Pleiades spied,  
 Lost my faith in my folk, and cried:  
 "Venus above my head did ascend!"

8610 Thinking "Beijin is the wide world's end,  
 Clearly, it's crammed with people too –  
 It is the face of the universe, true!"  
 Such a thought I began to think,  
 And I could barely move or wink!  
 When I went out on the hill and gazed,  
 Far away, when one looked, amazed,  
 There the mist was drifting down, see,  
 One glimpsed no mounds as high as one's knee!  
 Mist and sky were mixed up so –

8620 Not e'en a spoonful of white winter snow!  
 Where, then, is your famed Beijin?  
 I see no walls, and no city within.  
 That Beijin to the devil may go,  
 And all you Chinks along with it so!  
 Who could guess things would turn out thus –  
 Just as the old man said to us?  
 As I see things, it isn't so hard:  
 They said: "The Chinks have Kuldzha\* as a guard.  
 As their protector still he goes,

8630 And he destroys all dangerous foes!"  
 Thus they said: "Their herald's a duck,  
 Wild rams and sheep bring messengers' luck!"  
 Everybody knows about this,  
 So the world goes round as it is,  
 For those excited Chinese men –  
 Where is the lake, with that duck on, then?  
 Where is the peak, with Kuldzhu, that wild ram?  
 Where is that land of the cursed yellow man?  
 Where are their warriors, hidden yet?



8640 Think just a moment, Almambet!  
 What kind of use can this be to us?"  
 When he questioned Almambet thus,  
 When these provocative words he spoke,  
 Almambet's patience nearly broke.  
 Angrily he looked left and right.  
 Fixing his glance on the bold-tongued knight,  
 Then the story of Bakburchun  
 He began to recount to him soon:  
 "When to the desert of Ilangyun  
 8650 We Chinese went swarming at noon,  
 When we came to Lake Erime,  
 There we dispersed, and went our way.  
 We were afraid of Kirghizians too.  
 From our fathers and forebears we knew,  
 That since ancient times, in the murk,  
 There lived a duck named Kuuordyk,  
 And its wings, as so we were told,  
 Were entirely covered in gold.  
 While its tail, if the story's true,  
 8660 Was besprinkled with emeralds green-blue.  
 She protected the road from foes too.  
 Clearly, from Lake Erime she flew,  
 Clearly a seal was set on her tail,  
 Clearly, Kuldzha skipped down to the dale,  
 Bearing the news on his horns held high...  
 Clearly, folk came before Kongurbai,  
 Told him, pointing with trembling hand,  
 How like numberless grains of sand,  
 Foes were encroaching upon his ways,  
 8670 On heights with forests, and rose-willow-bays.  
 Many people who lived there were scared,  
 Clearly, each group paid tribute declared.  
 Clearly, Chinese in the main were not blind -  
 Gathered together, and left none behind,  
 Crying: "Dzhigi! Dzhigi! Dzhigi!"  
 As it were hiccups, escaping free!  
 Clearly, they gathered round Kongurbai then.  
 Oh, may the devil take him to his den!  
 Half-a-hundred-weigh helmet has he -  
 8680 Clearly, he's donned it expectantly:  
 Clearly, he's mounted his steed Algara,  
 Clearly, he's waiting for us - there you are!  
 Clearly, he knows that you're on your way,  
 Clearly, he knew it before today!

Clearly, thrice a day he gets news,  
 So that he knows which plan to choose.  
 All round his realm he messengers sent,  
 On chosen war-steeds off they went...  
 He said: "We'll go to face the foe too -  
 8690 How can I leave my town without you?  
 Enemies come, yes, blood-thirsty brutes -  
 Out with your bows, every one who shoots!"  
 Ninety elephants, loaded with shot,  
 Then nine there came, with powder hot!  
 How they raised the dust all round!  
 Clearly, his warriors ready were found!  
 Kongurbai raised a dangerous din,  
 As he left the gates of Beijin.  
 Here's a great Khan, who will not yield -  
 8700 Let us see him, out on the field!  
 Give me your permission, I say,  
 Then from here I'll make my way.  
 I have shown you the road once when  
 I came here, having headed your men.  
 My bold Lion, gave your reply -  
 Your faithful servant here am I.  
 I renounced my folk, ah woe!  
 I desired to serve you so.  
 I drew near, and suffered, alack!  
 8710 He in whom you trust - your Chubak -  
 He has become your comrade-in-arms.  
 Don't think too long, and raise alarms,  
 Think of the quietude of your soul -  
 I'll return quickly from my goal!  
 Am I the kind who can't survive?  
 Why bind myself to you alive?  
 For the sake of saving my head,  
 I shall leave for a while instead.  
 He with whom I'm daggers drawn,  
 8720 Let him go scouting himself till dawn!  
 I am ready to swallow my pride!"  
 Having said this, he felt black inside.  
 He grew angry, and scowled indeed.  
 He was just ready to mount his steed,  
 Then Chubak, Akbalta's bold son,  
 Said to Sirgak, in a quiet tone:  
 "Hold him back there, don't let him ride!"  
 Lion Sirgak leapt straight to his side,  
 Seized the reins, and a quick look cast.



8730 Bold Chubak whispered: "Hold him fast!  
 Don't let him now bestraddle his steed!"  
 All was done quietly, quickly indeed.  
 But Alma took a grip on his whip –  
 "What are you doing – you're making a slip!"  
 So he said angrily, taking account –  
 Raised his whip, but could not mount.  
 Bold Sirgak kept hold of his horse,  
 Stopped Almambet on his wayward course.  
 So Manas stepped in steadily:

8740 "Listen, Almambet!" said he.  
 "You have told me about Beijin,  
 Now look what a flurry I'm in!  
 You described a beautiful spot,  
 Told me what kind of city they've got.  
 Seems it's a fortress, as you say.  
 Seems your Chinks are a horde, anyway!  
 Seems I must meet them on their own ground.  
 Seems I must go and scout around.  
 I must visit those homes afar,

8750 I must find out how strong they are!  
 I must know what a land I'm in,  
 Having arrived in Kakanchin!  
 I must see all for myself, you know.  
 To those Chinese I'm impatient to go!  
 I want to meet these famous folk –  
 Stop your quarrels – this is no joke!  
 You yourself will show us the way,  
 That's the main thing I have to say!"  
 "Well, I decided to go to Beijin,

8760 But I can't leave you! A fix we're in!"  
 He was angry with all those Kirghiz –  
 In such a temper he was, that is,  
 That he could not join his men,  
 And for a while he stood lost again!  
 He had no will to say even "Eh! Eh!"  
 But he pitied Manas that day,  
 Finally spoke what was on his mind:  
 "Well, we'll ride! Beijin we'll find!  
 If you had made up your mind long ago,

8770 Why did you have no sense to say so?  
 Did you not understand me, indeed?  
 When you came riding up on your steed,  
 I had no cause to be cross with you then.  
 I should have gone with you to Beijin –

Well, and I should have seen you through,  
 If you had armoured troops with you,  
 And if against those accursed Chinese  
 You had desired to go, if you please!  
 Then, in accordance with your aim,

8780 I should have made you a major again!  
 Should we not then have gone to Beijin?  
 But that old horse of yours was too thin –  
 Not the kind you could ride to war,  
 No solid fat on his rump, what's more!  
 If the foe should encircle us round,  
 No strength in him for flight would be found!  
 I shall not squabble again with Chubak –  
 He, since his birth, no boldness did lack.  
 I shall not get so offended again,

8790 I shall not quarrel with him again!  
 Brave Sirgak, he argues with me,  
 Bold Chubak a captain would be –  
 I shall make them both majors soon,  
 And we shall ride to Bakburchun,  
 To that land of my Chinese kin!"  
 Thus he pitied Manas within,  
 But he got in a temper so,  
 When Almambet said: "I won't go!"  
 All his not blood with fury did itch –

8800 Ready to leap straight down the ditch!  
 With his piercing glances thus,  
 Then grew angry our leopard Manas.  
 Like some wild creature, making a fuss,  
 Then grew angry our tiger Manas.  
 As if ready to strangle some soul,  
 Then he grew angry – a lion's role.  
 Then said to Almambet: "Just you wait!"  
 – And what words poured forth in spate!  
 "Magnifying yourself alone –

8810 All the others ran down, as unknown...  
 Only your spoken word you esteem,  
 All the others you call just a dream.  
 If the Almighty sends down death,  
 And decides to deprive me of breath –  
 From that cunning fright Kongurbai,  
 Could Akkula with you then fly?  
 If great Allah sends down death,  
 From that curse, which robs one of breath,  
 From that cunning Khan of Andzh,



8820 Could there be hope to save you or me?  
 Man does not die before his day.  
 While he sits on his throne, he will stay.  
 Death comes but once, not with every moon.  
 If the Almighty sends death soon,  
 Even if riding a cloud in the sky,  
 Will the musket-ball pass you by?  
 For a warrior knight, such as I,  
 Comes there not the day to die?  
 Even if forebears' spirits send aid,  
 8830 Say, can God's slave even then be saved?  
 If my knight, that lion Chubak,  
 Spear thrust forth, with sword starts to hack,  
 Will Kongurbai not fly from his steed?  
 Here stands before me Sirgak, indeed:  
 Will he not hew off the head of that Khan?"  
 With words like these bold Manas began,  
 Suddenly raged, until he shook...  
 Seeing his threatening, angry look,  
 Almambet felt no blessing beside -  
 8840 And he dared not say: "I won't ride!"  
 God rules above, Chubak!" he said.  
 Seeing Manas had no worthy steed,  
 Almambet felt alarmed at their course,  
 And, unwilling, bestrode his horse.  
 Praying to Allah, they moved on their ways,  
 One long night, and two whole days.  
 Never tiring, they trod their track,  
 Calling on Tengri, <sup>104</sup> turned not back.  
 And our famous Almambet  
 8850 Took Manas to the highest spot yet!  
 To the mountain crest Sayas -  
 That is the loftiest spot there was.  
 From that crest he saw hordes of Chinese -  
 Never such powerful foes as these:  
 "Come down off your steed!" said he,  
 "Sit down here along with me,  
 Take this spy-glass with jewelled tube,  
 Hold it in your hand, don't move,  
 Hold it steady at your right eye,  
 8860 Think about what you see pass by!"  
 Thus gave orders our Almambet.  
 So four knights with Manas at their head,  
 Hastened to reach the highest ground,  
 There to take a look all round...

Took the spy-glass in their hand,  
 Took a look at the city, and land,  
 Then these warriors were amazed,  
 As upon blossoming flowers they gazed,  
 Fruitful gardens, where soft fruits hang.  
 8870 O'er the plain the skylarks sang.  
 In the lakes croaked frogs, green-hued,  
 In the trees the cuckoos cuck-ooed.  
 Everywhere did nightingales trill,  
 Streams and brooklets flowed at will.  
 He who saw all this at a glance,  
 Where, in the dark, the headlands chance -  
 That was the ancient land of Beijin.  
 Almambet once lived therein,  
 With his people, on his own patch.  
 8880 They were known there as Butalach,  
 But the hill was called Buchala,  
 Grass and wild nuts there "kuchala".  
 Twixt Kakan and the city Kentun,  
 From that place, as they found soon,  
 Certainly it was hard to see,  
 But beyond the hills, wide and free,  
 They saw the steppeland Chungshi bloom.  
 Leading away from Bakburchun,  
 Lower hills, with hollows in -  
 8890 That was the saddle of Great Beijin.  
 On the right, defying all counts,  
 Golden spear-heads of many mounts.  
 From the southern side they start,  
 As in a mirror, shining apart,  
 Stand their sprouting plane-trees there,  
 Soaring like minarets in the air,  
 As they do in the cities around.  
 Skylarks, wild turkeys there are found.  
 Hens, and three-year-old foals sport there,  
 8900 And if you look at them, I declare,  
 They seem to grow before your eyes.  
 From the Kentun tribe they arise -  
 Folk who are sorry for Almambet,  
 Kyuderyu folk, who live there yet.  
 Whate'er you say, words won't suffice,  
 However you gaze, you can't fix your eyes,  
 However you try, it's misty there,  
 Sight can't pierce through, however you stare.  
 There does their capital, Bakburchun, stand.



- 8910 Let me tell you about that land...  
 Cities Kakun, and Chin-Manchin,  
 Hustling, bustling, Great Beijin.  
 Military maces, big as a bull,  
 Strong men with muscles, and bellies full,  
 Twin-headed halberds, like eagles soar,  
 Wrestlers, fencers, more and more.  
 Those who always conquer the foe,  
 Always victorious – there they go.  
 From the tribe of Manggyuba,
- 8920 Chieftains and captains – there you are!  
 Facing towards the Great Bear afar,  
 Spreads the land named Dzhiyangcha.  
 There stand the cities, Tungsha, Budacha.  
 Many subordinate people there are.  
 "Soorondyuk, my sire," said Alma,  
 Conquered them once, in times afar.  
 There stand Kaspang, Tungsha, and Beijin,  
 All 'neath my father's kith and kin!"  
 "Not having sought his folk, tired out,
- 8930 From his loneliness sick, no doubt,  
 Almambet came to us!" cried Chubak,  
 "Not having found his kin, alack!  
 Weak and exhausted, to us he came,  
 And all our people say the same!"  
 Having seen many folk of his own –  
 "That is Beijin!" said Alma, with a groan.  
 "Apples as big as a horse's head,  
 Nuts, like boulders in rivers!" he said,  
 That's the glittering picture for you!
- 8940 If you should ask about raisins too –  
 Big as the fist of a five-year-old.  
 Big are mosquitoes, like nose-bags, all told!  
 Excellent grass "bechendi" one finds,  
 Tall as cereals, watered five times.  
 Once a horse chews it, he goes on and on,  
 But after that, when the grass is all gone,  
 Seven whole days he'll not feed, for sure,  
 He won't feel hungry then any more.  
 There are snakes found "tyuiyunchach",
- 8950 Stretching a hundred spans – nothing to match!  
 Since I have left, I can say without sin –  
 He who but once is charmed by Beijin,  
 He then for ever its charms will enjoy.  
 Mine were Beijin and Tangshang, when a boy!

- Countless masses of Chinese – my folk –  
 Such are a Chinaman's words – no joke!  
 I'm a Kalmak, I admit, with a bow,<sup>105</sup>  
 Covered with mint is Beijin's steppeland now –  
 Is deep desire for such lands unknown,
- 8960 When one dreams: "Were that but my own!?"  
 Are these masses of Chinese again  
 Not the folk where I'd like to reign?  
 Thinking of all these folk, by-the-by,  
 And of glorious Kongurbai,  
 Dreaming: "Were he but my Bey!"  
 Does not such longing with us stay?  
 Your Chubak does his own folk praise,  
 But is it larger than mine, anyways?  
 Your Almambet, as before you I stand,
- 8970 These are my cares and sorrows at hand!  
 Am I not under such powers thus,  
 Quite unknown to you, dear Manas?  
 Cursed be the longing for one's own land!  
 If I thrived in my country grand,  
 Then that bullying knight Chubak  
 Would I not seize, and give him a crack?  
 Then your war, with all its fears,  
 Fought against me, would last seven years!  
 Famous Beijin now before you stands –
- 8980 Kongurbai took it all in his hands  
 When as a youth I was living there,  
 Though he was nobody, I must declare!  
 That great mountain Kaspang – there it rears,  
 Golden-gated Beijin there appears.  
 From this spot they may be seen.  
 There stands the pass Katal\* between.  
 There dwelt Kangais, a numberless horde,  
 And Kongurbai made himself their lord.  
 By his own wish and will reigned he...
- 8990 Almambet standing before you, see,  
 Then was engrossed in sorrow sore.  
 Am I not greater, very much more,  
 Than that upstart there, Chubak?  
 O, that vast people of mine, alack!  
 Am I no less than that boaster Chubak?  
 Worse than he, that puffed-up young hack?  
 One part of my land stands here,  
 But the other part, not so near,  
 Stands there facing the rising sun.



9000 If you wish, let's talk of that one:  
 There stand wide regions called Kei-Kap.  
 They're on the eastern side of the map.  
 Sprites and goblins there may be found,  
 All kinds of stories there run round.  
 In between Angir and Ingir,  
 There the peak Tashtalak stands clear.  
 In between fairies, and the folk,  
 Stands the borderland, that's no joke!  
 There are wonderful places to see –

9010 On the mountain named Achali,  
 Sixty kinds of tea are found!  
 Cursed by their forebears, great Beys around –  
 Endless riches each of them owns,  
 They have great treasures, precious stones,  
 Emeralds, diamonds, rubies too.  
 There are houses of gold all through.  
 There are sheep-folds with silver bound,  
 There the pits for pearls are found.  
 Bracelets, beads, and opals survive.

9020 Not worse than others do our folk thrive.  
 I'm not a man lacking noble kin yet!"  
 So said brave-hearted Almambet,  
 Saddening somewhat brave Manas so...  
 When he recalled those days long ago,  
 When he gazed there upon Kazan,  
 Then tears came to his eyes, though a man.  
 Barred such tears could not be kept,  
 So Almambet unwillingly wept.  
 Memories sad depression afford –

9030 "Here once was cut my umbilical cord!"  
 'He's real Chinese!' those who saw me cried.  
 Here on my navel the blood once dried!<sup>106</sup>  
 'He's real Chinese!' those who knew me cried.  
 Trembling all over, complaints he sighed.  
 Moaning and groaning, he weeping began.  
 Sedative pills come from Andizhan,  
 Made of a mixture of ashes from pines –  
 Suck it, and soon such woe declines.  
 Steamed with a little black pepper is this,

9040 With a little red pepper it is –  
 These pills help one, if his senses slip.  
 Such a powder, if laid on one lip,  
 Or if sucked through a golden pipe,  
 With a deep breath, one feels delight.

Coming back to his senses, indeed,  
 Alma cried: "Allah!" and mounted his steed.  
 On the road to Andzhi and Tungsha,  
 Swiftly he set off afar.  
 Riding along the road Almambet,  
 9050 To Manas made more speeches yet.  
 "My noble knight! just wait awhile!  
 If cursed heathens, in cunning style,  
 Suddenly start to hem us in,  
 If, by chance, things start to look grim,  
 You may say: "You knew, but said nought!  
 If we'd been warned, other roads we'd have sought!"  
 My noble knight, I have something to say,  
 Which I have not said till today:  
 'Mid those heathens, cursed by their kin,

9060 One man I fear there, and tremble within:  
 Living in regions of Manggyuba,  
 People called Sazangshang\* there are,  
 And they are ruled, as you will hear soon,  
 By a bold rogue called Makel-Magun.  
 If that bold heathen does not appear,  
 If only Chinese people round here,  
 Having attacked us, do not inform him,  
 Then all the rest of them, however grim  
 I, as a matter of honour, will face.

9070 Here is my fighting hand – no disgrace!  
 This is the road where before I fought,  
 These are my eyes, which for enemies sought!  
 Chinese people – the devil take all! –  
 I gave orders then, my beck and call;  
 Having defeated strong men with one blow,  
 I, Almambet, laid their heroes low!  
 This is the road where before I fought,  
 This is the hand which its enemies caught.  
 Lion Manas – to see you meet defeat,

9080 All uninformed of this, wouldn't be sweet!  
 Fearless Sirgak, and brave Manas,  
 Can a man spare himself, withdrawing thus?"  
 Almambet, Manas, and Chubak,  
 And their comrade-in-arms Khan Sirgak,  
 Set off then, out along their way.  
 Just rake a look at their glory, say!  
 Almambet, Chubak as well,  
 Lion Manas, Sirgak, truth to tell,  
 All began to show courage and grit,



9090 Steeds went prancing, champing the bit.  
 At a quick pace they strode without fear,  
 Steed Sarala, like a noble deer,  
 Steed Këkteke, who carried Chubak,  
 Beating the ground with its hooves all black,  
 Strongest of steeds, and dry-lipped was he,  
 Lion Manas you also can see,  
 Seated upon a hack, Aibanboz.  
 On Telgizil Sirgak seated was –  
 Excellent steed, and best of the breed –  
 9100 Let us leave them there, indeed!..  
 Of the Chinese, and their sixty-one tribes,  
 What is said by others besides?  
 Listen now, and learn of them thus –  
 It appears that they know of us!  
 It appears that the duck brought them news!  
 Leaders only expressed their views:  
 Ordered servants to beat on the bell!  
 Most perceptive wise men as well  
 Told the news they got from the crow, <sup>107</sup>  
 9110 Heard from that black-winged messenger so.  
 Esenkhan they informed beside,  
 Saying: 'Fierce enemies on us ride,  
 Also hordes of infantry come,  
 Noble knights, and strong-men some,  
 Giants, who knew just what to do,  
 To the last man came pushing through,  
 To defeat us, that's their plan –  
 Seize the territory of Kakan!  
 There is Teshtyuk, that's Eleman's son.  
 9120 From the Eshteks Dzhamgirchi has come,  
 From the Kazakhs Këkchë comes too,  
 From the Kipchaks there comes Urbyu,  
 From Andizhan comes Sandzhibek,  
 With them white-beard Muzburchak.  
 All with Lion Manas at their head.  
 Countless hosts he here has led.  
 Mounted, afoot, they're coming this way –  
 Listen now to what we say,  
 Esenkhan, our Padishah!  
 9130 Arm you warriors, all there are!  
 Coming to us is Lion Manas,  
 Fighters, like numberless blades of grass.  
 We have seen them!' so they said  
 News which takes a month has sped

To Esenkhan in a couple of days,  
 From these envoys, who know the crow's ways.  
 So Esenkhan heard all likewise,  
 Shook his head, and rubbed his eyes.  
 Most of the people by news were confused,  
 9140 Starting with Esenkhan, weren't amused!  
 Lost their senses, and feeling too,  
 Quite bewildered his courtiers grew.  
 Lost their heads, those around his throne,  
 All went limp when the news was known!  
 Captains and majors all went pale,  
 Their wise men all seemed to fail,  
 Started trembling then, to a man.  
 From ninety towns of wide Kakan,  
 Rocking and swaying, fearing harm,  
 9150 Many people called in alarm:  
 "Is there a brave man, who's travelled around,  
 Knowing where numerous foes are found?  
 Those who have come to us from afar,  
 Turks, who famous for fighting are,  
 Those who've directed their steps to Kakan.  
 Most of them, hosts of them, wishing us harm.  
 With Almambet, who came from here,  
 Acting as leader and guide, that's clear?  
 He has shown them our native ground,  
 9160 So these numberless hordes us surround!  
 What shall we do, good people, say?"  
 So questioned Esenkhan, anyway.  
 One of his chiefs, named Changeli,  
 Answered up, as bold as could be:  
 "Earlier on I travelled the world,  
 To Kei-Kap in my youth I hurled  
 Everywhere then I used to push –  
 One great mountain they call Tungush –  
 One of the highest of them, what's more,  
 9170 Far from us as the south-east shore.  
 In the southern part of that strand,  
 In one region of that far land,  
 There do djinns and fairies abide,  
 Sprites and goblins, and others beside.  
 From this spot to that far away,  
 Four months travelling, so they say.  
 That far land is called Manggyuba.  
 Sazanshangs the local folk are.  
 Leader of them is a cunning coon –



9180 One bold rogue, called Makel-Malgun  
 If they would only come to our aid,  
 Then not alone the Oguz\* brigade,  
 But all the Mussulmen of that land,  
 If they came against us to stand,  
 Then could scarcely bring us defeat!"  
 "If that is so, then make good speed,  
 Straddle your steeds, and off you go!  
 Let the scribe write my messages so.  
 Then he stamped them with awkward seal,  
 9190 Ordered the Shahs to send envoys hot-heel,  
 On their long journey to the south-east –  
 Seven Chinese officials, at least.  
 Having seen and heard all that,  
 Thinking: "Those brute Kirghiz will attack!"  
 Most of them still were petrified.  
 To the crow's a message was tied,  
 And that black fowl was then set free.  
 Saying: "Hear, and know, and see!"  
 Padishah added "Come back with news!"  
 9200 Esenkhan understood their views:  
 And what Kirghiz might do as well.  
 He had sent news to bold Makel,  
 Seventy days or so before –  
 Seven court Commanders-of-war.  
 – Bold Makel received news from the crow –  
 Thought to himself: "What can that mean so?  
 While in deep confusion he froze,  
 Taking on an old witch's pose,  
 Came the seven officials from far.  
 9210 Ruler of the land Manggyuba  
 Had a fortress, far from weak,  
 Seemed to be a whole mountain peak.  
 He had no court – he lived in a cave.  
 Cliff-cracks entry and exit gave.  
 Huge, but narrow, by-the-by,  
 Barely visible to the eye.  
 Now about Makel I will tell –  
 He was a giant, so listen well.  
 May the devil take him, forby,  
 9220 In his forehead he had one eye.  
 When he opens it, up it swells.  
 Humans can't understand what he tells.  
 That's a wonder which we can't reach.  
 If you listen, it sounds like speech,

But as soon as he opens his mouth,  
 Thunder sounds forth to north and south,  
 So it seems, when you try to hear.  
 Woolly hair sticks up everywhere,  
 As it does on a shaggy brown bear.  
 9230 If you look at him carefully there,  
 He is like a dragon in sight.  
 Up on the mountain, he roars all right.  
 Full of might, he was roaring yet.  
 Soldiers, more than the hairs on his head,  
 Listened when he ordered: "Prepare!"  
 Many thousand gathered there.  
 With respect, they obeyed their lord,  
 Many came, undressed, at his word.  
 All with long, long hair were found.  
 9240 As they marched it swept the ground.  
 Flowing down from each bare head,  
 Serving them thus – no need to dress.  
 One could not see, were they young or old,  
 Even the small one's big heads were bold,  
 Like an enormous round kettle were they.  
 From their arms and legs, let's say,  
 At a race-course distance, they tell,  
 Rose a suffocating smell!  
 Firs, some seventy arm-spans tall,  
 9250 As stout staffs would suit them all!  
 Just like minarets were their legs,  
 Not just one, but all, on their pegs,  
 One from another you could not tell –  
 Young or old looked the same as well.  
 At the sound of their captain's cry,  
 Thousands gathered there nearby.  
 If they saw snakes, they ate a few,  
 Everyone swallowed them, broken in two.  
 If they saw ants, they gobbled them quick.  
 9260 If they saw marmot, they stuffed till sick.  
 Feathered creatures from out the height  
 They passed not – killed and ate on sight.  
 If one should die, they eat its meat,  
 With all its giblets then complete.  
 Beetles too, and snakes and frogs,  
 Badgers, wolves, and hairy hogs,  
 Even burning tobacco-pipes eat!  
 Those who find nothing else as meat,  
 They take fir, or birch, willow too,



9270 All, including the roots, they chew!  
 They will ask: "Where are those Kirghiz?  
 Those who want to attack us like this?  
 Those they sometimes name Buruts –  
 Let them not live, those Kirghiz brutes!  
 Hew them down, to the roots!" they say  
 "They have the ways of beasts of prey!"  
 Some of these hairy ones run on all fours,  
 Borzois they seem, in their packs, of course.  
 If you look closely, truth to tell,  
 9280 They have horns on their heads as well!  
 They are ready to fight with a spear.  
 On a few two heads appear;  
 In one tribe, which they call "Uchku",  
 There are seven-headed ones too!  
 That's an old story which they tell,  
 "Who can catch such devils from hell?"  
 If at some of them you look,  
 Over their nose, mid-brow, to book,  
 There is one eye, as big as your fist.  
 9290 They are like beasts, to say the least!  
 Some have six legs, instead of a pair,  
 Some on each arm have two hands there.  
 And on others, what do you see?  
 Sticking out where two should be,  
 They have seven arms instead!  
 That is an ugly pack, as I've said.  
 If you don't believe me, my friends,  
 You can find them, where this road ends!  
 Down that road went giant Makel,  
 9300 With an unnumbered horde as well.  
 On narrow roads they could not pass by.  
 If they saw streams, they drank them dry.  
 If they saw springs, and they were small,  
 They could not slake their thirst there at all.  
 If they saw snow, not a flake was left – none!  
 If they met others, they pitied not one.  
 Such was this horde, the whole truth to tell.  
 "All follow me!" cried giant Makel.  
 Small, and tall, and old, and bold,  
 9310 Fear in the Kakan folk they unfold!  
 "What kind of enemy have we here?  
 I'll get ahead, and get the road clear!"  
 Answering this the giant Makel  
 Went to look at the enemy well.

Following him there came fighting men,  
 One hundred thousand, surely, of them.  
 In the crack of cliffs, down beneath,  
 Leaping from them, some met their death.  
 Captains and majors who went that way,  
 9320 Seeing all this, knew not what to say.  
 Sparing neither themselves, nor their steeds,  
 Looking not right nor left, who needs –  
 Into the city they galloped back,  
 Gave the alarm bell there a whack.  
 On their twin drums began to beat.  
 In a crowd they filled each street,  
 Major-generals, captains, men, –  
 To them Esenkhan came then.  
 When they had gathered in all their srray,  
 9330 Full of valour came Kong-tyure.\*  
 And towards him his envoys bowed.  
 Those seven heralds began to shout:  
 "We, who as envoys, rode to Makel,  
 Were quite beaten; we saw it well.  
 If those creatures came to Beijin,  
 People will see what misfortune they bring –  
 Looks are villainous! How they shout!  
 Don't understand what we speak about!  
 However hostile are those Kirghiz,  
 9340 Still they are humans – that's how it is!  
 They are much better than Sazangshangs!\*  
 If they should come in half-human gangs,  
 You will suffer, your subjects too!  
 If the Mussulmen come, then it's true,  
 They will steal cattle, though it's no joke –  
 Still that's no terror for common folk.  
 But those Sazangshangs will do worse –  
 Steal all the wheat – life's most terrible curse!  
 If the Mussulmen come, they'll take slaves;  
 9350 Sazanghangs will prepare no graves –  
 They will catch hold of you and me,  
 Any tasty person they see,  
 One, then another, they'll gobble down –  
 Even your throne they'll eat, and your crown!  
 Even your riches they'll swallow, what's more,  
 Then your trees, and your chamber door,  
 Birches, and poplars, and willows they'll chew –  
 Just take a look, and see what they'll do...  
 Ready to gobble and guzzle again –



9360 And if that happens, to whom then complain?  
 What for your grief and woe can be done?  
 Endless numbers of them will come,  
 All will then end in dust and in ash!  
 So they said, and the bells rang – clash!  
 All the leaders who heard this so,  
 Soon were enveloped in endless woe.  
 "If that's so, then we must prepare!"  
 So Kongurbai gave orders there:  
 One thousand asses, and six thousand dogs,  
 9370 Soon were caught, and cut down like logs.  
 Ninety thousand boars loaded then  
 On nine thousand camels for them.  
 Loaded up frogs, and beetles, and snakes –  
 Sixty thousand servants it takes –  
 Now you shall hear of these brave fellows too –  
 Hear the tale which I tell to you.  
 Nearby there's a lake Dzhanak\* 108  
 'Twixt its shores there runs a track –  
 Four, five, six hundred kilometres there,  
 9380 In that very same lake, I declare,  
 There were hills, where passes sweep,  
 Water a thousand arm-spans deep.  
 Now give all your attention to me –  
 So that people could live there, see,  
 Many great logs did they collect,  
 Iron supports did they erect,  
 Thus to build a ruler's court,  
 Many resources, of every sort,  
 Spent on cast-iron foundations, mind!  
 9390 Now look well, and what do you find?  
 Iron supports are everywhere,  
 Sliding bolts on all doors are there,  
 With a secret latch always.  
 Of those builders of long-past days,  
 There are many attractive tales.  
 Out on the road, with their ready bales,  
 Servants were waiting for Makel's horde,  
 Went to meet them, and welcome afford.  
 Here were camels, with dead loaded hogs,  
 9400 And some live ones, driven by dogs.  
 Other camels were led on the rein,  
 And their drivers, still under strain,  
 All along with the snakes and dogs,  
 Were at once swallowed by those hungry hogs!

Not just on creatures or humans they thrive,  
 Not leaving anything born still alive,  
 Not letting anything from them to swerve –  
 All those who came, to welcome and serve,  
 Camels, and all that on them they could find,  
 9410 Greedily gulped, and left nothing behind...  
 Not a single one could they save.  
 That was all seen by chiefs, bold and brave,  
 Those who came following after all.  
 Everything living those Sazangshangs stole,  
 Like old wizards, consumed them apace,  
 When the bold chiefs saw this take place,  
 Back to their troops they began to run.  
 Hastily then told everyone,  
 Gave them the news, which none surmised,  
 9420 And their soldiers were most surprised.  
 "Devil take them! No warriors they!  
 Take a look, and what can you say?  
 You see no good will come of them,  
 Of all those who greeted them then,  
 None were left by those Sazangshang –  
 May they be accursed, and hang!  
 Ate them all, to the last beast and man –  
 Soon as they saw them, feasting began!  
 Only the chiefs they had not spied –  
 9430 They ran back, and thus survived!  
 If that tribe of Manggyuba  
 Falls on us, you'll no longer be Shah!  
 Leaders, rulers, on this think well –  
 Do not think it's nonsense we tell.  
 They'll eat your camels and elephants too,  
 With their intestines, just as they do!  
 Giblets and guts are tit-bits for them.  
 Greedily they eat warrior-men.  
 Not only ours, but any they find,  
 9440 In the whole world leave none behind!  
 All will suffer their violent ways.  
 Shall we tolerate them all our days?  
 Think things over, again and again,  
 Old wise men, with a clever brain,  
 And our leaders, great and small.  
 Having invited these gluttons to call,  
 You have condemned us all to hell –  
 If you go near that lake – well, well!  
 Oh, this passing world, so fair!



9450 You will be killed and eaten there!"  
 Then the leaders who'd heard this word,  
 In our passing fair world, it occurred,  
 Where many different folk you'll find -  
 Beat on the bell, to their fate resigned:  
 "Guards! Come quickly, saddle your steeds!"  
 Thus they give orders to suit their needs.  
 Six thousand warriors gathered there,  
 All of them hanging, safe in the air.  
 On the bridge there, under the ground,  
 9460 Most of them hanging on tight were found.  
 Few of them then in tears began:  
 "Devil take you, chief Esenkhan!  
 Save us poor slaves, Laanat-manat!\*"  
 Ruler of the Sazangshang part,  
 Who could not be cut down by the sword,  
 Who, clad in iron, could not be gored,  
 Did not know of the bridge underground,  
 Even the lake did not notice around.  
 He was a thousand armspans high,  
 9470 Rode a rhinoceros, by-the-by!  
 Took no notice of lakes, you see,  
 On his way through the water went he.  
 Up to the rhino's it came  
 In some places, all the same,  
 Out he came, and climbed the hill.  
 See what a muddle-head was Makel,  
 But nobody could bar him likewise.  
 Water came up to the rhino's thighs,  
 But with Makel on his back went he.  
 9480 "Sang" he was called. Any lake or sea,  
 Was for him no more than a ditch.  
 And Makel his way did not switch -  
 May Allah aid me, up there on high,  
 Though here and there I may tell a lie!  
 To the gates of Kakan he rode,  
 Like a mountain - rhino and load!  
 Piled on its back, he thus arrived.  
 Narrow streets he pushed aside.  
 Could anybody stand up to him?  
 9490 People who saw him far off looked grim!  
 "What a wonder have we here?"  
 Trees he knocked down, if they stood near.  
 No room for him at the market again...  
 Kongurbai prepared for campaign.

He was as angry as he could be.  
 People were amazed to see -  
 Round about him stood his men,  
 Six-hundred-thousand gazed at him then.  
 Massive great monster, haughty, annoyed,  
 9500 He, that worthless one, all destroyed.  
 To the right of him sit his knights,  
 Thirty-six guardsmen with special rights.  
 Never making confusion nor fuss,  
 To the left thirty-six too sat thus.  
 With his swollen eyes Kongurbai -  
 Tiger's whiskers, and lion's eye.  
 With his tall hat, trimmed with gold.  
 To the place where he sat so bold,  
 With his guardsmen there as well,  
 9510 Up there came the giant Makel:  
 "Which of you is Kongurbai?"  
 Many warriors gave a cry,  
 Those who were standing round about,  
 Hearing him thus begin to shout.  
 Back from them all he did not hang,  
 Giant Makel, of the Sazangshang.  
 Hearing the voice of giant Makel,  
 Thinking himself a giant as well,  
 Kongurbai arose to greet,  
 9520 Bowing low before his feet.  
 There before the giant Makel,  
 Kongur stood, and he bowed as well.  
 Then Makel began to speak,  
 But his voice was an angry shriek:  
 "May you not live this day, Kongurbai!  
 May you fall, and not rise, say I!  
 May you not draw another breath!  
 You have offended us till death.  
 You shall no longer be a lord,  
 9530 You shall lie 'neath the graveyard sward!  
 Who's this Manas you speak about,  
 He, who's not heard of me, the loud?!  
 Who is that good-for-nought 'mid men?  
 What kind of strong-man is he then?  
 Show this good-for-nothing to me,  
 Then I will go and bind him, see!  
 I'll show you something you have not seen,  
 I'll come to grips with him, I mean.  
 Though he may be like a mountain high,



9540 I shall strike him, and down he'll lie!"  
 Bold Kongurbai began to reply:  
 "Listen, Makel, to what, where, and why –  
 If I speak, I shall speak my mind,  
 That is an answer for all mankind.  
 I shall tell, and explain to you thus,  
 What a great man is Lion Manas!  
 He who cannot be pierced by a spear,  
 See, what a marvellous man is here!  
 He who cannot be hewn by a sword –  
 9550 Here is a wonder, I give you my word!  
 Even a musket-ball won't pierce such.  
 See, here's a miracle none can touch!  
 If you put him in fire, he won't burn,  
 This is the marvel you'll have to learn!  
 With a few hundred thousand men,  
 He has come to seek out our den.  
 He is a wizard, who's stood time's test.  
 He's a magician – and one of the best!  
 Those beyond death support him somehow –  
 9560 That is the art which he masters now!  
 Bluebirds of happiness fly round his head.  
 Forty spirits his steps have led.  
 Understand my words, get them clear –  
 Wait a few days, and you'll see him here!  
 Bold Manas will arrive, by-and-by!"  
 So majestic spoke up Kongurbai,  
 As he answered Makel so well!  
 Hearing what he had said, Makel  
 Put a bridle upon his spleen:  
 9570 "You said Manas is great when seen,  
 And all the others are nought beside.  
 You praise Manas, and speak with pride.  
 If I continue to live on earth,  
 I'll disapprove you, for all I'm worth!  
 You have described Manas as your foe –  
 At your request I have come, you know.  
 You, not knowing my worth, thus offend  
 Me, Makel, your unvalued friend,  
 And all the while Manas you praise.  
 9580 For those who're here, bad words you raise!  
 Lion Manas I'll capture alive,  
 Then you will see how I shall thrive!  
 You'll be convinced, when my captive is he.  
 Both of you I'll swallow then, see!

First I'll travel, and all overtake,  
 Let on my path blood flow like a lake,  
 Let streams of blood, not water flow!  
 Lion Manas, whom you approve so,  
 I shall catch, and bring to you,  
 9590 Show my captive to you anew!  
 After that a great lesson I'll teach –  
 I shall finish you off, each with each!"  
 Saying so, anger then filled his soul,  
 As if ready to swallow them whole!  
 Avidly then at him he stared,  
 Grabbed his huge mace, to a tent compared,  
 Clutched at the iron, which couldn't be bent,  
 Till his hair at last stood on end!  
 Saying: "You think you're a hero likewise –  
 9600 If you're so bold, then open your eyes!"  
 Seemingly, God punished Kongurbai.  
 In great fear, he blinked one eye.  
 Stood up straight, then bowed again,  
 With respect to Makel, though in pain.  
 His offence to Makel he made good,  
 And with bowed head before him stood.  
 From Makel's mouth the flames burst forth,  
 Eyes were blazing for all they're worth.  
 Those who saw him just trembled with fear,  
 9610 Also those who his wild voice could hear.  
 That roared out, like spring thunder soon.  
 Many a time that giant Malgun\*  
 Then drew near to Kongurbai,  
 Waving his mace o'er his head on high.  
 Still with respect before him he stood,  
 Near to his throne of gilded wood.  
 For such esteem he could not beat him then,  
 And to strike such respectful men  
 Was not his habit, anyway,  
 9620 Therefore he let him in quiet stay.  
 But he could barely control his ire,  
 All his thoughts were mixed, and afire.  
 In his pocket he rummaged once more,  
 From the pouch of that wild boar,  
 He drew out his smoking pipe.  
 Plugging its bowl, the capacious type,  
 He stuffed tons of tobacco in –  
 Still it was not full to the brim.  
 And, on the top of all of that –



9630 People who saw it were quite knocked flat –  
 They'd not known anything of that bent –  
 Mouldering tinder, as big as a tent!  
 And he sucked away on his own –  
 Such among heathens was not known.  
 From his pipe no smoke there came –  
 But in the bowl there was heat, all the same.  
 To anybody who stood too near,  
 This, however, soon became clear.  
 They simply could not bear such heat –  
 9640 So they made off on hasty feet.  
 From such a pipe the glow was intense,  
 All who were near Makel went hence –  
 No one remained there, by his side.  
 All this bold Kongurbai, sharp-eyed,  
 Saw, and felt the pipe's heat, like a log,  
 Making him sleepy, just like a dog.  
 There he stood motionless by Makel,  
 While all his troops ran off as well!  
 In all directions, off they ran.  
 9650 Thought: "We'll be swallowed by that giant man!"  
 Kongurbai lost all hope of release.  
 Where could he hide, and when would this cease?  
 All his men had whipped away,  
 Fearing to lose their lives that day.  
 Then Makel breathed out the smoke,  
 Belched it forth, and that was no joke!  
 From his mouth the fumes spread round.  
 In the big city Tungsha, smoke was found!  
 People could one another not see –  
 9660 In the town they roamed helplessly!  
 How many fluffy, feathery things!  
 How many birds from his mouth took wings!  
 Ravers, jackdaws, magpies too,  
 From his mouth and whiskers flew!  
 Soared away rustling, high they ranged!..  
 By the narcotic his anger was changed,  
 Makel-Malgun opened up one eye –  
 Took a look at Kongurbai:  
 "You still wander this world the same –  
 9670 Where is he, whom Manas they name?  
 Where is he wandering still, I say?  
 Show me at least his shadow straightway!  
 You say no drop of his blood falls to earth;  
 Though to a thousand souls he gives birth,

Not one of them will escape my hand.  
 Show him to me, while here I stand!  
 Oh, you road, where I must roam thus,  
 Tell me yourself where to find that Manas!  
 Where is that Mussulman hiding from me?  
 9680 You seem half-hidden, o road, like he!  
 Furious heathen Makel there stood,  
 Poured out his anger, far as he could.  
 Then from terror Kongurbai,  
 Pointed away to the mountain high,  
 Where on the peak was found Almambet –  
 That to the westward there was set,  
 Where Kongurbai kept pointing yet.  
 Then, with a rumble, Malgun moved west.  
 Though Kongurbai had shown the way,  
 9690 Still he himself decided to stay...  
 And we shall have to leave them there,  
 And return to that other pair –  
 Of Alma and Manas something say –  
 Listen, now, what has come their way!  
 They have seen and shot a wild sheep,  
 And a good feast on it they keep.  
 Coming to a spot towards eve,  
 Spent the night there, dreams to weave.  
 Early they rose from their earthy bed,  
 9700 Almambet to Manas then said:  
 "Be more careful, comrade Manas –  
 In the east, there's a peak facing us,  
 With a deep hollow upon its south side.  
 On the west side an angle forms wide –  
 There lies in frozen masses as well,  
 Kētelēk, with the pass Sari-Bel.\*  
 That is the crossing – eleven roads there –  
 Six roads divide, lead off everywhere.  
 If you look there, where they all divide,  
 9710 There is the steppe of Kentun, spreading wide.  
 Many small merchants there are found,  
 There the trading roads lie around.  
 Many caravans take those routes,  
 Rich and poor there scurry, as suits.  
 There was a travelling highway wide;  
 If patrols came from the heathen side,  
 That was the place where they used to fare.  
 Rhinos and elephants I may find there.  
 With caravanners, I'll capture spies,



- 9720 Thieves and robbers, I'll cut off likewise.  
I shall find out about everything.  
Spies whom I find will another song sing!  
Then I'll be satisfied, and will return,  
Strong and successful, exceedingly stern.  
That bold Chubak I shall take with me,  
On the long road my comrade to be.  
I shall find out what awaits us yet!"  
So said Commander-in-chief Almambet.  
On his well-trained steed Sarala,
- 9730 Gripping his coloured spear, there you are! <sup>109</sup>  
Having saddled, bestraddled his steed,  
Wearing his iron armour indeed,  
Off on the road, his chosen way,  
Almambet set out that day.  
Also Chubak, Akbalta's bold son,  
Saddled his steed, his well-trained one,  
Taking with him his blue spear too,  
He set off to see Almambet through.  
They both rode to see all went well,
- 9740 All their weapons had donned, we tell.  
Chain-mail, breast-plates, silk mantle too,  
Spurring their steeds ahead anew,  
Raising the dust in pillars at that,  
So those two, Almambet and Chubak,  
To that pass began to ride.  
Having stayed their steeds on that side,  
To the pass strode Almambet.  
Head, like an apple, sticking out yet,  
Hiding his body behind a crag,
- 9750 Just as they do when hunting a stag,  
Poking forward the edge of his brow,  
As if aiming, he looks round now...  
To that pass where Alma was concealed,  
Up came giant Makel from the field...  
He then fished his tobacco-pipe out,  
But before he'd set out, that lout,  
He had shaken the ashes about.  
Everybody began to shout -  
They could not move, and began to cough.
- 9760 He, though, upon the way set off,  
Full of anger, with lips tight-set...  
At that time our Almambet  
Way to the small mountain pass had found.  
Earlier there bare steppe lay around.

- There's the trap! What a mountain there,  
Suddenly sprung up, out of the air!  
Well, if no mountain, at least mound.  
Seeing it there, Alma looked around...  
But, it seems, 'twas a huge Chinese knight!
- 9770 He gave everybody a fright,  
When they caught a curt glimpse of him -  
As if a mountain were moving in.  
"Really, have I Kakan not seen?  
Really, did mountains move there, I mean?  
In Beijin city, all was blessed,  
In cursed Tungsha was there no rest -  
Really, were moving mountains there?"  
So thought Almambet, I declare.  
"Send me aid! Oh, Allah!" he called.
- 9780 Spy-glass with hand-piece of yellow gold,  
And the whole tube as well, be it said,  
With its glass a-tinted with red,  
When unscrewed sixty times, it is moved,  
As it must be, ere it is proved,  
Lengthening it to a metre or more.  
If you look closely, as never before,  
Then it wipes out all you see beside,  
And it makes a six-day's ride  
Seem so short, just like a lasso!
- 9790 Such a spy-glass, already you knew,  
Now belonged to hawk Almambet,  
So to the glass his right eye he set,  
And the face of Makel did he see,  
Just as though right here were he!  
He saw that visage, with anger it gleamed.  
When you looked at Makel it seemed,  
Just like heathen snow he came,  
Like a camel, with shorn-off mane,  
With his mouth like a grave, forby.
- 9800 Grimly glittered his single eye,  
Like a big pool, and deep, somehow.  
And the wrinkles upon his brow  
Were like furrows on mountain slopes.  
For all his foes, for those were no hopes!  
On he strode, like some ruler high...  
When Alma looked him in the eye.  
Like heated earth he seemed to be,  
Take a look at his teeth and see -  
Just like a tiger's they stick out.



9810 Take a look at that one-eyed lout!  
 Like a forest its lashes stand.  
 Then Alma gazed, as if close at hand,  
 Gazed and gazed, and could not stop!  
 He was amazed, and caught on the hop.  
 Still he stared, but that heathen then,  
 Cunning heathen, who scared all men,  
 Found by chance on the pass like that,  
 Clearly felt he was caught in some trap,  
 Took his mace, and gave it a twist,  
 9820 Took his mace in his menacing fist,  
 Waved it high, with heaving chest,  
 Struck with it on the mountain's crest;  
 Finding it hindered him on his way,  
 Started to beat it, without delay.  
 Crash! crash! crash! went the mighty mace,  
 Cliffs came tumbling down from their place!..  
 "What is he doing, that heathen there?"  
 Thought Almambet, with a puzzled air.  
 There he stood, while the boulders sped...  
 9830 Like a great yurt, with rounded head,<sup>110</sup>  
 Cast-iron mace in Makel's right hand,  
 Turned to rubble a mountain-top grand...  
 When with all his power he struck,  
 Clouds of dust rose, all in a muck,  
 Then came a hail of rattling stones,  
 Rumbling down with moans and groans,..  
 Almambet could stand no more,  
 Back he ran to Chubak therefore,  
 Came down panting, to Akbalta's son.  
 9840 When he saw Almambet thus run:  
 "You're in a hurry!" Chubak then said,  
 "What's the matter? Lost your head?"  
 Almambet then to him replied:  
 "My dear tiger Chubak," he cried,  
 "I'd not seen, only heard before,  
 Something of this wild heathen boar.  
 But I feared him most of all -  
 Manggyuba that place they call,  
 Sazangshangs are the folk all round.  
 9850 There is this giant knight to be found.  
 Bold is he - Makel-Malgun,  
 He is no fairy, no goblin coon!  
 No one can really say for sure,  
 Even guess what he is, what's more.

He's most like a wild boar, that's it!  
 Can you make such a beast submit?  
 He who to fight with him would decide,  
 Will he then remain long alive?  
 Clearly, he wants to capture us -  
 9860 He intends precisely thus!  
 There is no road for him to go,  
 He has no men to help him so,  
 He has nobody to counsel him,  
 He has no knights, when things get grim!  
 He himself is a mountain, no less.  
 He is a giant - all awkwardness!  
 Clearly, he's received news from Kakan,  
 Clearly he's called by many a Khan,  
 So this heathen, made angry thus,  
 9870 Clearly has come a-hunting for us!  
 Why, then, should we stand in his way?  
 Let's disappear, I'd like to say.  
 Let's tell Manas, a wolf for the foe!  
 Let's inform him of what we know!  
 Why should we stand looking on here?  
 Let's get gone, while the road is clear!  
 Let's go back to leopard Manas,  
 Tell him all that we've learned thus!  
 We shall tell him the truth, no lies -  
 9880 All that we've seen with our own eyes!  
 Maybe Manas will do battle with him?  
 Maybe Manas his sails will trim!  
 That ill-intentioned giant Makel.  
 Bind him, or blind him, who can tell?"  
 So proposed Almambet, just that!  
 Listening stood his comrade Chubak,  
 Weighing every word in his head.  
 Then he replied: "Just think what you've said!  
 Why do you speak of retreat, Almambet?"  
 9890 Curses upon his heathen head yet!  
 Do not speak such such words as those -  
 Let's wait a bit, then come to blows.  
 Let's decide, get things in trim -  
 We shall try to do battle with him!  
 Can he really remain alive then?!  
 We shall destroy him, cursed among men!  
 If it becomes our turn to die -  
 Then the two of us there will lie.  
 If we fail then, side by side.



9900 They will say: "Like heroes they died!"  
 Let people praise you, and let them say:  
 "He was Chubak's fellow-fighter that day!"  
 Let me thus have a share in their praise!"  
 When Chubak had uttered this phrase,  
 Hearing what his comrade had said,  
 Almambet then nodded his head.  
 He replied: "I agree with you!  
 Having heard your courageous view,  
 To your valour I now must bow!"  
 9910 Having heard such manly words now,  
 I am quite lost, it seems to me.  
 Now you have shown your boldness, I see!"  
 And he thought: "Chubak is brave" –  
 No further proof of that I crave.  
 "Now I forgive your earlier scorn,  
 And all offences – esteem is born!"  
 And he added a few words still:  
 "That swine is cursed by his forebears' will!  
 Do not hurry that wild boar to face,  
 9920 Do not haste to that dangerous place,  
 If you do you'll come off worst,  
 And your heart could simply burst –  
 Listen to what I say to you:  
 "Wait until I shoot him too!  
 I shall set an ambush grim,  
 Then send my musket-ball through him!  
 If great Allah will gave me aid,  
 If your way is successfully made,  
 If you show then your valour clear,  
 9930 You can pierce him through with your spear.  
 You can take revenge on the foe,  
 You can strike while you live, you know!"  
 Having said this, then Almambet,  
 Dread Almambash, his musket, set –  
 With its blue barrel and muzzle of steel,  
 Where the smoke-clouds, like Isphahan's reel. <sup>III</sup>  
 Victims fall, when struck by its ball,  
 And Almambet prepared it all –  
 Charged it completely, ready to use,  
 9940 And then lit the long blue fuse...  
 Having done as Alma had said,  
 Bold Chubak went no further ahead.  
 He reined in his horse, Kekteke,  
 One of the best war-steeds of his day –

Slender neck in one sweeping curve,  
 Fat, and well-fed, with plenty of nerve.  
 Ready to gallop, and ready to fight.  
 Slender his shins, like children's light,  
 Sweep like the wind from the mountain's crest,  
 9950 Mane a-flying, never at rest...  
 Like an arrow this war-horse flew,  
 Armed Chubak astride him too,  
 With his sword clapped by his side,  
 Musket ready, prepared to ride,  
 Fuse there slowly glowing away,  
 Proudly he beset Kekteke,  
 Brave Chubak, and waited as well...  
 To the approaching giant Makel  
 Almambet drew near at last,  
 9960 Hastening on, he hid himself fast.  
 That accurs'd great giant, Makel,  
 Covered with earth, roared out like hell!  
 Deafening was his deadly roar,  
 Thundering like spring storms, what's more.  
 Wavering, he rode on aslant,  
 Like some stupified elephant.  
 Hidden Alma began to count:  
 There's the saddle-peak on his mount:  
 There's the place where his heart is found:  
 9970 Then his thoughts made a switch around:  
 Many ideas were in his head:  
 "Maybe in vain I'll shoot!" he said.  
 "Maybe the ball from Almambash  
 Will ricochet from his mail in a flash!  
 I will decoy him, then shoot straightway,  
 In that giant's great mouth – no delay!  
 That would be easier, so I find!"  
 That was the thought which filled his mind.  
 Then Almambet thought once more indeed:  
 9980 "Bold Makel comes, spurring his steed,  
 This heathen giant, who mountain-like hangs,  
 Has such enormous sturdy fangs,  
 Showing behind his big fat lips.  
 If my ball on one great tooth slips,  
 If it cannot there penetrate,  
 Though it reaches the open gate –  
 If it cannot knock out one tooth,  
 It will recoil on the soil, forsooth!  
 After which, that murderous swine



9990 Will destroy us, one at a time!  
 Maybe at his nose I'll aim?"  
 Almambet thought, "But all the same,  
 How it sticks out, like a snout, so great,  
 Wide as it were, as an open gate!  
 Here he comes, this gigantic boar!  
 Then Almambet, he thought once more:  
 "Maybe I shall shoot all in vain –  
 Though my musket shoots might and main?  
 If the ball merely pierces his skin –  
 10000 Then I am lost – I just cannot win!  
 Death will wait me, and no way out!  
 Lion Alma, your Sultan, doesn't doubt!  
 And how not, with such giants around?"  
 Still his mind another way found –  
 That one eye there, upon his brow –  
 That's where he points his musket now:  
 "I should have thought of that before,  
 I just hurried too much, what's more!  
 That's the spot where my shot will fly –  
 10010 In his one and only eye!  
 If I strike it with my ball,  
 Then it will be his turn to fall!"  
 Such a decision Alma then made,  
 As to his sights his right eye he laid.  
 "Just below that upper lash there,  
 Straight in the pupil I'll aim, I swear,  
 Sitting right in the white of his eye!"  
 So he was ready his shot to let fly.  
 Almambet took aim, to boot...  
 10020 Thinking: "When will that Chinaman shoot?"  
 Akbalta's son, the bold Chubak,  
 Gazed and gazed at the mountain track.  
 From the crest he did not take his eyes,  
 Never blinking or winking likewise;  
 Almambet meanwhile had aimed,  
 And the vital spot had gained.  
 Now his finger the trigger squeezed...  
 From the muzzle, by fire released,  
 Swifter that sound, the shot then flew,  
 10030 Sparks and smoke from the musket too...  
 Flying swiftly, the ball kept its line...  
 Sitting upon his rhino's spine,  
 Giant Makel leaped a yard in the air,  
 As the shot struck home, fair and square...

Then the pupil, as big as a pail,  
 Fell to the ground – the ball did not fail,  
 But his skull it could not penetrate,  
 Though it flew at terrific rate,  
 It had no impetus left to spare,  
 10040 Fell, with the eye-ball on the ground there.  
 Eyeball white, and musket-ball blue,  
 Rolled around on the ground there too...  
 From his saddle his buttocks rose,  
 From his stirrups, lost, his toes...  
 That huge heathen was sightless now,  
 Sank back again, struck dumb somehow!  
 Akbalta's son, the bold Chubak,  
 Let his horse's reins go slack,  
 Also flew towards Makel,  
 10050 Thinking to meet with a man as well...  
 But when he saw what a mound he was,  
 He was astounded then because  
 He'd not seen such a giant as here!  
 Gearing to lose his life, that's clear,  
 Struck with his spear in his mouth there too –  
 On the run, he pierced his lips through,  
 So Makel, though his rhino he grips,  
 Head over heels from the saddle slips...  
 Almambet, spurring Sarala there,  
 10060 In a moment came up with that pair.  
 While the giant then raised his head,  
 Almambet towards him sped.  
 With his battle-axe, wide as a door,  
 Struck him right on the crown, what's more!  
 Thus he lost all sense of his worth,  
 Rolled face-down, and clutched at the earth.  
 Then he suddenly rose on all fours –  
 Up stepped that bold Chubak of yours,  
 With his battle-axe gave him a blow,  
 10070 Right on his spine, and laid him low.  
 Then he hacked both legs off there,  
 Left him unconscious, gasping for air!  
 That all took place by Allah's will,  
 But they both were cautious still –  
 Scores of times shot their muskets grim,  
 And at last put an end to him...  
 Almambet then said to Chubak:  
 "As if by chance he laid on the track –  
 Just flopped down, to take a rest!"



10080 So he spoke to Chubak in jest.  
 He, the son of wise Akbalta,  
 Was not as clever as him by far.  
 He went up to the giant straightway:  
 "Maybe he'll rise again today?"  
 Thus he thought, as he drew near.  
 And that heathen just once did rear,  
 As he was taking his last deep breath,  
 Waved his right arm, before his death!  
 Then Chubak flew head over heels –

10090 Over and over, far he reels...  
 Did dying people not have a last wish?  
 Therefore he gave his right arm that swish!  
 Then, with a snort, he gave up the ghost –  
 His whole body, a lifeless post!  
 Bold Chubak, as strong as steel,  
 Not the least pity for him did feel:  
 "Well, and why are we waiting here?  
 We must chop off his head, that's clear,  
 And from the saddle-bow it must swing!"

10100 So, when Manas then sees such a thing,  
 He will keep us to fight further foes:  
 When he sees Makel's dead pose,  
 He will praise us before all our men!"  
 So Almambet agreed with him then:  
 "Here in this hollow his neck ends!" he said,  
 "Here is the line between shoulders and head –  
 Here is the place to make the blow!"  
 So Almambet the spot did show.  
 Bold Chubak swung his axe in sight!

10110 Struck at the giant's neck, all his might!  
 He thought straight off the head would fall,  
 When the axe struck, just once and for all!  
 There at the nape, on his spinal cord,  
 Right through the flesh and bone he bored,  
 Right through his spine the battle-axe went.  
 "Now, out it comes!" he thought, feeling spent.  
 So then with all his power he pulled –  
 Couldn't move it – completely fooled!  
 Went on tugging and lugging away,

10120 Backward and forward he then did sway.  
 Couldn't move it. He stiffened his legs...  
 "My dear Alma!" at last he begs:  
 "Is he really dead then, belike?  
 I took stock of the right place to strike,

But this cursed old axe of mine  
 I can't move, though I tug all the time!"  
 Then he added: "He can't be dead –  
 This old swine hangs on to his head!"  
 Thus pronounced the bold Chubak.

10130 Almambet listened, and made a wise-crack.  
 Then he laughed out long and loud:  
 "My dear knight, you're a little too proud!  
 Think awhile, and forget your pride –  
 We must cut from the other side,  
 With our swords through his flesh we must hack,  
 Then you will get your battle-axe back!"  
 So they hacked and slashed away,  
 Swords went flashing half that day –  
 Through the neck of that giant boar,

10140 Right till the sun had set once more.  
 So they slashed through half-a-day,  
 Then, at twilight, the axe fell away.  
 They had hacked his neck-bone through..  
 Almambet said: "Now what's to do?  
 After all the trouble we've had,  
 Lash it to your saddle, my lad!  
 That's the next thing you must do –  
 That's the advice I'd give to you!"  
 Akbalta's son, Chubak, agreed.

10150 Started to drag the head to his steed.  
 Lugged it, and tugged it to Kekteke,  
 Bending his hack along the way,  
 Came up to his faithful steed,  
 Lashed it to his saddle, indeed.  
 Scarcely standing, he started to sway,  
 Then, with the weight, his horse leaned that way,  
 Where the enormous head was tied,  
 Even more, when Chubak climbed astride –  
 That's what happened to Kekteke.

10160 Bold Chubak noticed that, anyway!  
 Seeing Alma had spotted it too,  
 Then he joked, as he used to do:  
 "That would not bend the spine of my steed,  
 Had I not loaded it down in my need!  
 Just take a look, dear Almambet!"  
 Then for long, with eye-lashes wet,  
 Seeing Chubak was uneasy still,  
 Almambet laughed, till he had his fill...  
 Then he remembered the rhino too,



10170 And how to ride those beasts he knew –  
 So he spurred to that one there,  
 Ordered Chubak to bring him near.  
 Ordered Chubak towards him to steer,  
 Told him to tie up the head by its hair,  
 On to the rhino's saddle bare,  
 And as a counter-weight, hang a stone there,  
 On the opposite side, of course,  
 While Chubak held the reins of his horse,  
 Also leading the rhino back  
 10180 To Manas, and the bold Sirgak!  
 Thus they both came up to them.  
 They had been thinking: "Where are those men?  
 When will they be coming back?  
 Over and over Khan Sirgak  
 With impatience had looked all round,  
 Till that pair on the road he found.  
 Then to Manas he went straightway,  
 And overjoyed to him did say:  
 "Oh, my grey wolf, who scares all foes,  
 10190 Oh, my great-spirited one, none oppose!  
 Clearly, Allah sends blessings on us –  
 Almambet and Chubak went off thus.  
 Clearly, they met a merchant man,  
 And good trade with him began:  
 All the roads have they explored,  
 And good news will they afford.  
 I took a look, they're returning now.  
 Clearly, great spoil they've won somehow!  
 I found it very hard to count –  
 10200 Jumbo or rhino, used as a mount!  
 From Kentun a tongue they have sought,  
 Someone by the hair they have caught.  
 We can say then: "You haven't been bored!  
 Not tired with scouting, a victory have scored.  
 Welcome back friends! How did you fare?  
 That's no melon or pumpkin there!  
 What's that enormous lump you've brought?  
 Is it a melon or pumpkin? What sort?  
 If it is, then we'll all have our fill –  
 10210 And there'll be some left over still!  
 Let them also take their share,  
 Let them think we're all hungry here,  
 And have been thirsty many a day!"  
 Thus he finished, and went his way,

Out to meet and greet them instead:  
 There for a melon he took the head,  
 Bound up, and lashed to the saddle peak.  
 Tried to lift it, but was too weak.  
 Down he flopped upon the ground,  
 10220 And the head beside him found...  
 And the lips rustled together sere...  
 "That's no melon, and what's this stone here?  
 I thought a bag, but it seems someone's head!  
 I thought these straps – no, it's hair instead!"  
 Having said thus, he turned the head round;  
 And what a sight bold Sirgak then found!  
 How he gazed at it, struck dumb...  
 Seeing that monster, he felt all numb.  
 Teeth like fangs, a yard long, forby,  
 10230 And in the forehead, a place for one eye.  
 Beard all matted, and tattered about,  
 Whiskers bristling, and sticking out.  
 So this head was like a round tent,  
 Like a domed yurt, strapped up, tight-pent.  
 With its own hair all swathed around...  
 When all this bold Sirgak then found,  
 Having gazed at this heathen head,  
 Touched in his mind, to Alma he said:  
 "Dear Almambet, what a fright, I declare!  
 10240 Are such monsters found everywhere there?  
 What kind of land is this you need?  
 May such Chinks find death, indeed!  
 Who ever knew that they were like this?  
 May misfortune take them, that is!  
 If such appear in the battle-hour,  
 All our men will be ground to flour!  
 May your Beijin just sink in the earth!  
 If those small traders to such give birth,  
 Say, what are others likely to be?  
 10250 If their merchants are such as he –  
 What are their warriors like, then say?  
 Who will survive their blows in the fray?  
 If we have a simple man here,  
 Then what are giants like to fear?  
 How do their opponents survive?  
 May all those Chinks with the Devil thrive!  
 I have not seen, nor heard of before  
 Anything worse than this, what's more!  
 You, Manas, have become a knight –



10260 You have your forty years all right,  
 On the Altai, there you were born,  
 Many found in you a sharp thorn.  
 On the Altai, there you grew bold,  
 Many folk did as you then told.  
 From the beginning a leader were you,  
 From early years were respected too.  
 Badly with me you did not deal,  
 I always followed right on your heel.  
 On this fallen head cast your eye,  
 10270 On this hair, these whiskers, forby!  
 On these teeth in this mouth just glance!  
 These two slaves of yours; perchance,  
 Have been up to tricks, overbold.  
 "Far from us lives one folk!" you told,  
 You it was who brought us here -  
 Now what foes we have it is clear!  
 Give your permission, and let me go!  
 Why come to grips with such a foe?  
 Why should I make things hard for you?  
 10280 If all I've heard and seen is true,  
 Then, it appears, I have come in vain.  
 Even if I fight, might and main,  
 How can I overcome such swine?  
 Let me go, if the choice is mine!  
 Thus he pleaded, Khan Sirgak.  
 Almambet went and answered him back,  
 Couldn't help laughing, anyhow,  
 So he simply said to him: "Now,  
 Bold Sirgak, just listen to me,  
 10290 And I'll open your eyes for you, see!  
 Don't think I am a good-for-nought -  
 I am, I'd say, quite another sort.  
 This Beijin is fortified ground.  
 Here Chinese in millions are found.  
 But if only thousands lived here,  
 Then only one, like Makel, it's quite clear,  
 From all who bear their burden, just see,  
 From all their Jumbos and rhinos, just he,  
 He alone is the only such one -  
 10300 Realize that, and all fear is done!"  
 Such were the words of Almambet.  
 Seeing all, and knowing all yet,  
 Like the lost eye of that giant loon,  
 When they named Makel-Malgun,\*

Bold Sirgak caught on to that all.  
 Soon they all laughed at the giant's fall.  
 "I thought for sure, they were all like he -  
 Then my heart almost leapt from me!  
 I saw Beijin, high-walled, and wide,  
 10310 And my heart just jumped inside!"  
 That was enough, he said no more.  
 Lion Sirgak, a brave one, for sure,  
 Tiger Chubak, Albalta's bold son,  
 Also fell silent, both were done.  
 Quickly each went to mount his steed.  
 If you mount, you must ride, indeed.  
 Place your spear 'neath the crook of your arm,  
 All in order, you'll come to no harm!  
 Off they went round Beijin to scout,  
 10320 With their swords from their waists sticking out.  
 They were ready to fight to the death,  
 Batter away, while they had breath,  
 'Cainst the numberless hordes of Chinese.  
 Axes swung from their belts at ease,  
 In their bullet-proof mail they rode,  
 Skirted the hollows, the crests bestrode,  
 To the endless mass of Kakans,  
 On the track of the foe, not by chance,  
 Two whole nights, and a day, I declare.  
 10330 Thus the long route did they slowly fare.  
 Now today what sights they see -  
 Heaving and seething humanity!  
 When these four, Alma at the head,  
 Then drew near to the foe without dread,  
 They were pleased to see them looked scared.  
 Fearless Chubak his views then aired:  
 "Listen, Sirgak!" he quickly said,  
 "Why has Alma led us on ahead?  
 Maybe he's leading us to the gate,  
 10340 So that we all shall meet a bad fate?  
 How can one think otherwise,  
 If to storm great Beijin he tries?  
 What, then has he brought us here for?  
 What kind of grave shall we find in store?  
 Our own soldiers are far behind.  
 Quick routes here they will not find.  
 If Alma to Kakan breaks through,  
 Tell me, what are we going to do?  
 Seems to me, he has led us astray.



10350 Seems to me we shall lose the day!  
 Seems to me he's prepared our death-place!"  
 So our Chubak then said, with grim face.  
 Various thoughts came into his head:  
 "How shall we know where we shall be led?"  
 He was alarmed then, through and through.  
 When Manas heard all that to-do,  
 He started laughing, he never cared –  
 He was thinking: "They are prepared!"  
 And he guessed their intentions too.  
 10360 Pause a moment, and take a view:  
 Far on ahead the gardens gleamed.  
 All that one could desire, they seemed.  
 There was the throne, where the Sultan sat,  
 Khan Alma took no notice of that.  
 He intended to pass on one side.  
 Spear-heads gleamed, and axes wide,  
 People's heads bobbed up all round,  
 Trenches trembled in the ground.  
 Seeing that, Chubak and Sirgak  
 10370 Also felt ants run down their back!  
 Blue spears raised to bluer skies,  
 In blue heavens they trembled likewise.  
 But your lion, Almambet,  
 He is not a-trembling yet!  
 Muskets can be heard to fire,  
 Huge dogs bark, both dark and dire,  
 Howl and growl on every side.  
 Both knights heard them, far and wide,  
 And began to shake, lose power.  
 10380 "If he'd thought of something dour,  
 He'd have said so!" thought Manas,  
 "So we won't let it worry us!  
 On both sides of the road to war,  
 Thirty tigers began to roar.  
 Those who followed their Alma,  
 Knights, who wolves to their enemies are,  
 Felt a tremor run down their spines...  
 If you looked ahead through the lines,  
 There a dragon lay and screamed.  
 10390 Blazing eyes, like glass beads gleamed.  
 Anyone seeing its fury in spate,  
 Trembled before its look of hate,  
 And their minds then got no rest.  
 When, avoiding a hilly crest,

They espied a monster there,  
 Saw its threatening, scaring air,  
 Saw its hooves, like stony crags,  
 Seven heads this freak there brags.  
 Like lassoes, his hair flies loose,  
 10400 Every lock of it, formed a noose.  
 And with those he captures his prey.  
 Having seen his furious way,  
 Though their death-hour had not yet come,  
 Still they stood before it dumb.  
 Going further, there they saw  
 One deep trench, all rough and raw.  
 Edges stuck like cliff crags high,  
 And across it, a bridge they spy.  
 Cast iron piers supported that,  
 10410 Each had an iron circle flat,  
 Big as a sheep-fold, the bridge to hold.  
 This would be used against foes, we were told.  
 All was prepared to mow them down.  
 Leading up to the bridge's crown,  
 There was a road, smooth-laid, and wide,  
 Spears and swords ready, on either side,  
 Stood a solid and numberless host,  
 Muskets ready, each man at his post.  
 Heaps of powder, where musket-balls lie,  
 10420 Fuses all ready, to make them fly  
 On both sides of the ditch men stand,  
 On the alert, and musket in hand...  
 Having seen all, with eyes not slack;  
 There, along an abandoned track,  
 Almambet rode along the ridge,  
 In the direction of the bridge.  
 Then moved forward the bold Chubak.  
 Lion Manas kept to Almambet's track.  
 Faithfully there, behind him he rode,  
 10430 On the empty track his steed strode.  
 Grey-maned Chubak did then decide  
 To cross over the bridge-road wide.  
 Seeing this, Almambet cried out:  
 "What do you think that you're about?  
 – Come back this moment!" he yelled, "You goof!"  
 When Kekteke, with just one hoof,  
 Trod on the bridge's wooden board,  
 From all sides the cannons roared.  
 Ninety muskets cracked afar,



10440 Nine-hundred Chinks howled "Chagaala!"\*

So their war-cry sounded out –  
Loudly they began to shout,  
No self-confidence did they lack.  
That same knight, our bold Chubak,  
Sadly scared, with nerves a-twitch,  
Rode away, and hid in the ditch.  
And Sirgak, who was with him, said:  
"What's the matter? You look half-dead!  
We saw the road which to Tungush leads,

10450 Saw hordes of warriors on their steeds,  
Saw a dragon, a lion saw too,  
Saw the earth upon which, it's true,  
None dare step, and alive remain!  
Warriors saw us, but 'twas plain,  
Had no orders to make an attack!  
What made those musketeers hang back?"  
To them then Almambet replied;  
Laughing all their questions aside:

"If someone comes, to these places goes,

10460 Someone who none of their secrets knows,  
Nothing of them has heard before –  
Then he can't take a single step more!  
If of such places he's unaware,  
Has not scouted to see what's there,  
If all the secrets he does not trace,  
Not one foot will he set on that place!  
If he does, he will not survive.  
He will not come back alive!  
This great bridge is heavily armed,

10470 Chinese protect it, unalarmed.  
Like an ants' nest there they swarm,  
But their patterns a real trap form.  
Things go ill for that careless one,  
He who dares on that bridge to run.  
He who puts one foot on it there,  
Straightway then is destroyed, I declare.  
Then those "patterns" come alive,  
And his soul to the devil they drive!  
Those false dragons, monsters, and snakes,

10480 Each of them its own shot takes!  
All those screaming young warriors there,  
Tigers, and lions, and wolves, are a snare!  
They are sorcery, witchcraft too,  
And the secret of what they do,

All on that bridge lies hidden yet!"  
Thus about this spoke Almambet,  
And with Manas began to laugh,  
These false figures had come to chaff,  
And while they spoke the twilight fell...

10490 Then Almambet continued his tale:  
"Listen, comrades!" again he said:  
"Their great city lies not far ahead.  
If with those heathens there we clash,  
Shall we not come to an awful crash?  
Bold Chubak, who's afraid of nought,  
By ant-patterns was clearly caught!  
Brave Sirgak, who falls straight on the foe,  
By false patterns was scared also!  
If you're a leader, the foe you must meet –

10500 Death is bitter, but life is sweet!  
Our Manas, who rarely would smile,  
And would laugh only once in a while,  
Bristling in all his whiskers thus,  
Clever, perceptive, knight Manas,  
Gave a bitter grin at last:  
"Where is their city, then?" he asked,  
"Where is the foe whom we have to fight?  
Where are their warriors all packed tight?  
Where is their all-destructive blast?

10510 We should get to grips at last!  
What will be, let it be!" said he,  
"Then what's coming we shall see!"  
Almambet then listened to him.  
He too agreed, with a bitter grin.  
Almambet therefore replied:  
"There's Kakanchan, where hordes reside,  
There lies the prosperous city Tungsha,  
There lies Beijin, in the mist afar,  
And Chilan, Chin-Manchin and Darban.

10520 – To that city Tungsha, of Kakan,  
One month's ride we'll have to share,  
If we make a detour round there.  
They have hidden their horses away,  
So, my comrade, what do you say?  
Clearly the foe is of us aware.  
Clearly they're gathering forces there,  
So you see, my dear bogatir,  
They stand waiting for us here!"  
Such remarks made Almambet;



10530 "So, my racer, hold your reins yet!  
 Many of them have no steeds to ride.  
 They have giants and wonders beside.  
 But these heathens have not humbled us,  
 Though we have fewer warriors thus.  
 Let Chubak, so fierce and strong,  
 With sharp ways, and sword-arm long,  
 As your comrade-in-arms, with you stay -  
 He's a tireless tiger, I'd say;  
 On through the gateway now I'll go,  
 10540 Of all the heathen hordes get to know,  
 I shall find out something yet!"  
 So to Manas said Almambet,  
 Whipped his steed, and jiggled the reins.  
 Thus Manas with Chubak remains.  
 With Sirgak, his confederate there,  
 Off went spurring, a well-matched pair.  
 To the hordes of Chinese that day  
 Almambet then led the way!  
 To the city, as evening fell,  
 10550 They both rode - and there's more to tell!  
 But we shall leave them to what they seek,  
 And of the Chinese now shall speak.  
 This is the story, as it goes -  
 So just listen, and hear about those...  
 Subjects of their Padishah,  
 Many gathered, from near and far.  
 Chinese Kongurbai, of strong will,  
 Kirmus-shah's son, Muradil,  
 Neskara, whose red pom-poms hang,  
 10560 And from Kalmaks, we meet Ushang.  
 He is respected by more than a few,  
 There's the black-maned Boro-onchu,  
 Katkalang's daughter, Saikal's on view,  
 Numerous other heathen folk too -  
 Can one name them all in one day?  
 From Solo-ons comes Alo-oke,  
 There's knight Dzholoi, with ways like a pig,  
 Tokshuker's brilliant son, Bozkertik -  
 These are all known leaders of men.  
 10570 Most esteemed among all of them -  
 Of all the elders, the wisest one -  
 So-orondyuk, that's Solobon's son,  
 And among others gathering there,  
 Some are magicians, with spells to spare.

There are those whose views are well-aired,  
 There are those, to meet foes prepared,  
 There are the rarely cunning men,  
 There are those, who at foes' borders then,  
 Into a bloody mess are made, and laid low,  
 10580 There are those who slay strong-men, one blow!  
 There are rulers of strong and weak,  
 There are eloquent ones who speak,  
 There are those who many tongues know,  
 There are those who shrewdness show,  
 There are those who arguments win,  
 There are those with breasts, fat and thin,  
 There are those with shoulders wide,  
 There are those with huge muscles beside,  
 There are those who use their brain,  
 10590 There are those who fight, might and main,  
 Sending their foes to Judgement Day...  
 Having hushed all converse away,  
 All the leaders had gathered alone,  
 Where the Padishah sat on his throne,  
 And all the courtiers gathered there,  
 Stood in a mass around his gold chair.  
 When they all were waiting then,  
 Keedeng came, most awkward of men.  
 Heathens welcomed him with grace,  
 10600 Esenkhan himself gave him place.  
 Keedeng drank fresh water alone.  
 Noblemen looked on him as their own -  
 He was three-hundred-and-fifty, all told;  
 They all rated him higher than gold.  
 Famous masters had him revered.  
 Nothing upon this earth he feared.  
 His long life had been well-employed -  
 How many foes had he destroyed!  
 It would be no mistake to assert -  
 10610 Satan served him as herald alert.  
 Keedeng began his speech thus:  
 "I tell you truly, not one of us  
 Will that Manas row leave alive.  
 Azezil\* as his spokesman does thrive.  
 This is no lie upon my tongue!  
 All those listening, old and young,  
 Hear my words, and learn from me:  
 None will survive this mad knight, you'll see!  
 Our Beijin will be left in a plight.



10620 None will survive, who puts up a fight!  
 They will not leave Kakan in one piece.  
 You may believe me, there's no release!  
 With our troops we shan't get away —  
 On our villages tribute they'll lay.  
 Sixty thousand maidens they'll find,  
 Having chosen the best, rich in mind,  
 Sit each of them on a light grey steed,  
 Dress them in gilt silk robes indeed!  
 Take sixty thousand silver dzhambi.\*  
 10630 Offer them all to this fierce enemy!  
 Ask them not to start fighting here.  
 Having done so, the rest is clear —  
 You may get by, without any rue...  
 Listen to what I am saying to you —  
 Surely more cunning than any of us,  
 Fights that lion, who's known as Manas!  
 Obviously, he won't die yet!  
 None who cross his path, don't forget,  
 Can survive his anger blind,  
 10640 But this clever Manas, bear in mind,  
 From Chinese hands his death will find.  
 He who rides forth, of the warrior kind,  
 Meeting Manas will not survive,  
 But Manas in death's world will arrive,  
 Sent to his end by you Chinese!"  
 Këedëng thus finished his speech.  
 Smoothly he had explained all so far...  
 There was one ruler, named Chabala,  
 — God has chastized him on his track —  
 10650 In one city its leading Kalmak,\*  
 He would not listen to this old man,  
 And a decisive answer began:  
 "Nine months already everyone waits.  
 You have been locked behind city gates.  
 Pitiful, 'mid your towers and domes,  
 You have stopped going out of your homes.  
 With this migrant bird you are pleased:  
 "We've seen our duckling, and now feel eased!"  
 What noisy welcome you gave that old man:  
 10660 'Our Kuldzha,\* our wild mountain ram,  
 Has at last to see us come!  
 So you notified everyone!  
 In your own city you're locked, you know!  
 Does that really suit you so?

Not even knowing where foes are placed!  
 Rulers of ours, does that suit your taste?  
 Not having seen how your foes can fight,  
 Just because Këedëng puts you right,  
 You are scared by this devilish pest!  
 10670 Listen to what I have to suggest:  
 Go out on any road you choose —  
 Give me the right to set you loose!  
 I will saddle my steed and ride,  
 I will go scouting, far and wide,  
 For a whole month I'll seek and find!  
 No other knight has such a mind,  
 None has gone seeking knowledge we need!  
 I'll serve the folk of Kakan, indeed!  
 Nobody else has done such a thing,  
 10680 I'll scout the foe, and make your ears ring!  
 Not having known our foe, face to face,  
 What sheer nonsense, presenting him maids!"  
 Thus Chubala said to those gathered there.  
 Then Kongurbai, with the boldest air,  
 Jumped up at once, and openly said:  
 "That Këedëng's gone right off his head —  
 I don't agree with that old man's advice!"  
 Këedëng didn't find that very nice.  
 Almambet and Sirgak he preferred,  
 10690 Straddled his horse then, without a word,  
 Hurried away, and looked very grim —  
 Nobody took any notice of him.  
 No one was interested now,  
 Where he was going, or why, or how...  
 Grey-maned sultan, your bold Almambet,  
 Then drew nearer the city yet.  
 When the twilight faded to grey,  
 Up to Almambet, on his way,  
 Këedëng rode up on his steed.  
 10700 Seeing Alma, he bowed, indeed,  
 He dismounted, and hurried to him.  
 Almambet gave a welcome grin.  
 They exchanged words, began to chat.  
 Këedëng later told him that  
 Chabala would be on his way:  
 "Try to catch him, my lad, I'd say!"  
 Then with that he turned around.  
 Këedëng, though a heathen, found  
 Much that he earlier could foretell:



10710 Was that no sign of his worth as well?  
 Off he went, and straightway too,  
 Kēēdēng was soon lost to view.  
 After he had gone, soon then,  
 With half-a-dozen serving men,  
 Up there galloped Chabala.  
 Thinking: "God sent me a slave, here you are!  
 Death for him, which he will not wish!"...  
 On the outskirts of Chok-Kamish,\*  
 Holding his musket well-aimed, not slack,  
 10720 Standing stock still there, waited Sirgak.  
 Took painted arrows, and deadly bow,  
 Hung in then on his shoulder so...  
 Mow, just look at the tricks of Alma –  
 On the road he tracked Chabala.  
 At a place where an old windmill stood,  
 Left by its owner long since, for good;  
 It has nothing to do with him,  
 But he stops there, hidden within,  
 With nobody to say him nay...  
 10730 Goaded his horse to the gallop, hey, hey,  
 Came that boastful warrior-man,  
 Chabala, official Kakan.  
 Nearer to Almambet did he race...  
 When he approached within striking space,  
 Coming towards him, nearer yet –  
 Then the valorous Almambet  
 Flew, with a cry, from where he lay hid...  
 Straightway into his lower rib,<sup>112</sup>  
 Pierced with his spear-head, not very deep.  
 10740 That damned heathen gave a sharp leap.  
 Waving his lance above his head,  
 Like a cap, it could be said,  
 Hurled his steed, by name Chandiboz,  
 Into the willowy patch, and across...  
 And Almambet then galloped away.  
 From the town outskirts, where he lay,  
 Bold Sirgak, a wolf for the foe,  
 Dashed to cut off the five comrades so,  
 Those five men who accompanied him,  
 10750 Thinking: "Laanat's\* punishment grim,  
 Now is falling upon his head!"  
 Turned towards Beijin instead,  
 Lashed their steeds along in fear,  
 Thinking: "Long since, having come here,

Those Kirghiz brutes have filled our track!"...  
 So, not even looking back,  
 Not even daring to think to do so,  
 Showing their horses' rumps to the foe,  
 Off they spurred, a-trembling then.  
 10760 Bold Sirgak, like a wolf, hunting them,  
 Speared one of them at the crest of his spine.  
 With a deep cry, he fell out of line.  
 Almambet came, and hacked off his head.  
 Right on the spot to the heathen sped,  
 Prancing on his horse Sarala.  
 Right on the dot, Almambet, there you are!  
 Chabala's three, half-dead with fear,  
 In their shoulder-blades pierced with his spear.  
 Aimed it straight, struck home with speed –  
 10770 Like a land-slide, each left his steed.  
 Following him, then lion Sirgak  
 All those heads from necks did hack.  
 Not a single one made a fight –  
 Death o'ertook them, dark as night.  
 Almambet was pleased with his mate.  
 In a blank spot, on an isle sedate,  
 On a short lead he tethered each steed.  
 Chabala met a hard fate indeed,  
 For not accepting the old man's advice.  
 10780 Almambet thought: "The masses are wise!"  
 Long is the road to Kaspang – very long.  
 We'll turn back now, that won't be wrong!  
 To Chubak, and to Lion Manas  
 We shall bring all the news with us.  
 We shall tell them all as it is,  
 Travel on then, and nought shall miss!  
 Chandiboz, Chabala's fine horse,  
 We shall present to Chubak, of course!  
 We shan't delay, and no further shall rove.  
 10790 Clearly, their steeds to high pastures they drove!  
 Clearly, Kongurbai, with his gang  
 Have seized already the road to Kaspang.  
 They have a wizard, by name Karagul –  
 He is a wise one, not just a fool,  
 Clearly, he has told them a lot –  
 "He is the boldest leader they've got!"  
 So thought Alma, when he saw what they'd done.  
 Driving six steeds, which in fighting they'd won,  
 To brave Manas and comrade Chubak,



10800 Back again came Almambet and Sirgak.  
 "Here is a present, a present!" they cried,  
 Meeting Chubak, who came up beside;  
 "May it bring us success for our land!"  
 "May reins of leadership stay in your hand!"  
 - Then to Chubak his reply Almambet made:  
 "Having called upon Allah for aid,  
 I shall change the weather!" said he,  
 "So don't go off in a hurry, you see!  
 Take a good rest now, and lie down!" he said, -

10810 That was the answer of Almambet.  
 Then toward Kaspang he turned,  
 Where Kambil its spring waters churned.  
 Four poisoned stones therein he cast.  
 From his book of spells at last,  
 Curses he read, and recited by heart.  
 From Baraiyiz\* he read a part.  
 Standing stock-still his spell he read -  
 Not all the text then had he said,  
 When the sky grew dark o'er the ground...

10820 Allah's slave, who saw all around,  
 Allah's slave, who God's favour knows,  
 Allah's slave, who slaughters his foes,  
 Allah's slave, Almambet, who's art  
 Showed its excellence, right from the start,  
 With the massing of clouds in the sky,  
 Whence in bucketfuls hail did fly,  
 And the moon disappeared on high,  
 All in the twinkling of an eye,  
 And all the stars were blotted out,

10830 Storm-clouds from mountains rolled in rout.  
 Into the hollows the mist then crept,  
 Thunder o'er western summits swept.  
 Then in the sky came a ruddy glow,  
 And in cascades on earth below,  
 Down poured pure transparent hail,  
 Filled the hollows, as from a huge pail,  
 Packed them tight with ice all white,  
 As again from the heavenly height,  
 Down blows the blizzard, its burden sheds -

10840 People just could not raise their heads.  
 Winds went whipping on every side,  
 Misty wreaths the peaks did hide.  
 In the high hillsides of Kaspang,  
 Loud the blizzard roared and rang.

People and beasts then shivered with cold,  
 Trembled, as if they were growing old.  
 Still the hurricane stormed on its way,  
 And the squalls made violent play,  
 Lastly swished and lashed the rain,

10850 Even snowflakes whitened the plain.  
 All round six-day tracks afar,  
 Snowdrifts rose, those ways to bar.  
 Sixty necklaces, hundreds of chains,  
 Bound travel-tents in sleety rains,  
 Lashed them round on every side.  
 Herdsmen to their herds could not ride.  
 Then Karagul, who on all this gazed,  
 Felt his head spinning, quite amazed.  
 Chief of the herdsmen, Karagul

10860 Was a wizard himself, and no fool.  
 "Day was dim, and night was bright!"  
 Said Karagul, "The weather's not right.  
 As I see it, things do not fit -  
 Everywhere now the snowflakes flit.  
 Truly that's how Almambet plays,  
 Working his spells, two nights, two days.  
 Weather has now settled as due.  
 Listen to what I say to you -  
 Foals have no fat beneath their skin,

10870 That's a deadly state they're in!  
 Understand me - take care of them so!  
 There are spots where there's been no snow.  
 'Mid the steeds, devil take them indeed -  
 There are sucklings of racing breed,  
 There are cattle, which soon may die -  
 Drive them down in the vale nearby,  
 Then you'll all feel more at ease.  
 Drive them down on the steppe, if you please.  
 Let's go to the plain Chëngëryu.

10880 There lies the city of Tungsha too.  
 All around it stands one stout wall,  
 There's no easy way in at all!  
 If nothing happens, except what we've heard,  
 If each Muslim becomes not a bird,  
 Does not fly through the sky to us then,  
 If like fierce hawks they don't sweep on our men,  
 If they don't capture us all in flight -  
 Then no man can reach us and fight.  
 Listen closely to what I say -



- 10890 There is for them to us no way.  
 Valued horses they cannot destroy.  
 We shall not be robbed of our joy.  
 So take care that you stay alive,  
 So let no regrets then thrive.  
 We must not be careless men,  
 And our cattle won't suffer then!  
 Clearly, that slow-moving Almambet fop,  
 Poisoned stones in the water will drop.  
 Clearly, he'll change the weather on high,
- 10900 Having decided our cattle must die.  
 So that we Chinese meet woe!"  
 With that he finished his warning so.  
 He was, 'twould seem, the wisest of souls.  
 His travel-tent, with sixty poles,  
 One hundred chains, and ninety roof-ribs,  
 All together, the order he gives,  
 Load on pack-horses, lash it fast.  
 He had many, if you should ask.  
 Nine hundred herdsman for horses had he -
- 10910 Ordered them: "Leave mountain pastures with me,  
 Seek out the shores of Chēngěryu,  
 Find Chěkmě hills, where a vale runs through:  
 One edge of the horse-herd then  
 Stopped on the outskirts of great Beijin.  
 To the vale of Chong-Kuchka,  
 Most of the horses they drove afar.  
 And dispersed them on pastures there...  
 On Sarala, his arrow-swift mare,  
 Having called on Shaimerden's\* name,
- 10920 Galloping up, our Almambet came.  
 Took his poisoned stones from the brook.  
 From the east a dry wind, look,  
 How it headlong swept the ground!  
 Wafting with it, flies buzzed around,  
 Wafting with it, birds twittered too,  
 From the ground the steam burst through.  
 Clouds which had hung o'er the peaks and skies,  
 How began to do otherwise -  
 They dispersed, and let in clear day.
- 10930 Only light ones, white clouds stay,  
 Hanging round the mountain crests.  
 Over the winding rivers rests  
 That same dry wind, as before...  
 So we can leave it, o'er the shore...

- Let's hear about Alma and Sirgak.  
 What kind of tale about them came back?  
 Listen, and you'll learn for sure:  
 "Two whole days and nights, what's more,  
 Lasted that rainy weather - no joke -
- 10940 Life became difficult for the folk.  
 Brute Kirghiz bad weather have brought!  
 Was it thus our end they sought?  
 Shrewd Almambet left us for them:  
 Thus has Allah punished us then!"  
 Chinamen heathens sent news about,  
 Messenger riders carried it out.  
 All the Chinese then, full of alarms,  
 Quickly called their men to arms.  
 'Mid that horde, such as no-one knows,
- 10950 Here are those with full quivers and bows.  
 When they shoot polished arrows from them,  
 Six day's journey those shots cover then!  
 Here are weight-lifters, moving huge blocks,  
 Those whose power a weak man shocks.  
 They lift huge ingots of silver and gold  
 Strong-men, full of muscles untold!  
 Clubs they use, big and round as a tent,  
 Never in vain to battle they went.  
 Here are those who galloped 'gainst foes,
- 10960 Smiting with mighty fighting blows!  
 Here are those who strike to kill,  
 Though you may call them weak ones still -  
 Yet they raise clubs - a cauldron's size -  
 Beat out brains of their foes likewise.  
 Here are those who cut strong long reeds,  
 Lash them to spears with tendons indeed.  
 Hew them, and glue them firmly in place,  
 Dangerous foes with them then face.  
 Standing a thousand spans away,
- 10970 With such spears they hold them at bay.  
 Here all kinds of warriors were.  
 Here my words will make you stir.  
 Here were fighters, like stars in the sky,  
 Whirling and skirling, and rising high.  
 Like great towers of stone they stood -  
 Hack with swords ten yards long, they could!  
 Giants were here without a steed -  
 None could carry their weight, indeed!  
 So, on foot, unmounted they stride.



10980 Here were deathless monsters beside,  
 Who in the valleys, with green grass  
 Stuffed themselves, let no one pass.  
 Here are warriors, hearts of steel,  
 Such as never a death-blow feel.  
 Here are heathens, who worship the Sun.  
 Here are those who battles have won.  
 Here are musketeers sharp-eyed,  
 Here are flint-lock shooters beside.  
 Here are those with lions' red fangs,  
 10990 Here are those who settled in gangs –  
 Old Kirghiz settlers, with their tales.  
 Here's the sharp-shooter, who never fails.  
 Countless hordes of fighters are here –  
 Lord of them all, Esenkhan, stands clear.  
 Those who see them must blink an eye –  
 Chief-Commander is knight Kongurbai.  
 He is the foremost warrior high.  
 At his side other fighters stand by –  
 Kirmus-shah's bold son, Muradil,  
 11000 With his red pom-pom stands Neskara still.  
 From the Kalmaks there comes Ushang,  
 Black-maned Boro-ondu, and his gang,  
 From the Kangai's comes Orongu,  
 Katkalang's daughter, Saikal, is here too.  
 One can't speak here of them all, this way –  
 From Solo-ons came Alo-oke.  
 Bold Dzholoi, with a viper's sting rare,  
 Bozkertik, son of Tokshuker,  
 He who was strength and stay of each one –  
 11010 So-orondyuk, old Solobon's son.  
 He was the father of Almambet.  
 All these chieftains, together yet,  
 To their god, Laanat they bow –  
 "So you say foes have invaded us now –  
 Fierce Kirghiz, led by clever Manas.  
 We therefore stand in confusion thus.  
 In our Beijin Akkuldzha\* has trod.  
 Kuurdék\* our protective duck-God,  
 Both have brought us this news we've heard –  
 11020 But that's an empty, unproved word!  
 They say the brute Kirghiz are here –  
 You have not seen them anywhere!  
 Why then all this hullabaloo,  
 Scaring the folk, confusing them too?

We have gathered masses of men,  
 Ordered them: "Join the forces!" then.  
 In so doing tormented our folk.  
 "Kuuordék's flown in!" What a joke!  
 What kind of words? Devil take them again!  
 11030 We've got alarmed, and all in vain!  
 That duck, our guardian, is a djinn,  
 That mountain goat's a sprite, like him!  
 We gathered men, like numberless sands,  
 Now we've this hullabaloo on our hands!  
 Of our scouts we've no news – what the hell!  
 Clearly the Devil misled Makel!  
 You ask; "Why place belief in your pluck?"  
 Say what you like, I'd have no luck!  
 You are a pack of Oguz, I see –  
 11040 You're just apack of pygmies for me!  
 And with that, Chabala set off thus.  
 Ere he went he said: "Your Manas  
 Will not come through this test alive –  
 Two of our giants won't let him survive!  
 Many warriors coming here  
 Will be caught and eaten, that's clear!  
 Knowing not where the battle will start,  
 Knowing not where's the enemy part,  
 Our fighting men are lost, to boot!  
 11050 Thinking; "Where's the foe we can shoot?"  
 Riders are restless to go ahead.  
 If you agree with what I've said,  
 Tell your soldiers about it then.  
 On towards those Mussulmen,  
 Northwards having set your track,  
 Lead your warriors, don't look back!  
 Look ahead, prepare for the fray.  
 To the Great then make your way.  
 When your warriors there have gone,  
 11060 See what will happen later on!"  
 Having gathered for counsel, see,  
 All the wise men came to agree,  
 Bowed before the great Azezil\*,  
 Found themselves with a common will ...  
 Lion Sirgak and Alma made a push,  
 On to Andzhi, Mandzhi, and Tungush.  
 Of they went on their scouting affair.  
 Meanwhile, we'll have to leave them there...  
 What then happened to Almambet,



11070 Listen awhile, and I'll tell you yet:  
 He, wherever he rode on his steed,  
 Kept a bag behind him, indeed,  
 Strapped to the saddle upon his nag –  
 Chabadan\* – his carpet-bag:  
 Who wants to know what lies inside?  
 Mostly people such bags deride.  
 This one was lined with silken brocade.  
 What was it then, and how was it made?  
 None had seen what lay within...  
 11080 In multitudinous Beijin,  
 Padishah had Almambet been,  
 When he was only just nineteen  
 Gains't Kakans he had gone to fight.  
 Many he struck no more saw the light!  
 When he rode, special clothee had he, –  
 Leather breeches, with ornaments, see.  
 These he donned, and top-boots as well.  
 No heels had they, the truth to tell.  
 Soles were soft and smooth, what's more.  
 11090 Closely fitting kaftan he wore.  
 That had no collar, with silk it was lined.  
 Cast around his shoulders behind,  
 He had a sleeveless jumper free,  
 Top-boots with wide uppers had he.  
 On his head a fur cap he wore...  
 Bold Sirgak showed his talent more.  
 Chosen by Almambet, as his mate,  
 Riding with him, and sharing his fate;  
 He wore clothes which he took from Chabal,  
 11100 And they suited his role as well.  
 He got the look of a Chinaman.  
 "Keep as quiet Sirgak as you can,  
 These Chinese, whom you cannot count,  
 Having seen, do not worry about!  
 Only say not a word between,  
 Don't get scared, when their fighters you've seen.  
 Don't get confused if their troops start to yell!  
 Having seen their wizards as well,  
 Don't get near them, don't be heard –  
 11100 Look like Chinese, but don't say a word!  
 Be very cautious how you go.  
 If someone chances to see you so,  
 Shows you respect, as if some lord,  
 Act the part, but don't say a word.

Try to pretend that you're dumb!" said he.  
 Then the hem of his robe wind blew free.  
 Then Alma made him cook soup, to please,  
 Taught him to jabber, like Chinese.  
 Threw round his neck a silken scarf –  
 11120 Now look, dear people, it makes you laugh!  
 What a game Alma starts to play!  
 If he lisps a bit in that way,  
 Then his speech sounds just like Chinese.  
 If he casts a look, ill at ease,  
 Then his glance threatened, just like Chinese.  
 If he gabbles a bit, should he please,  
 Then his speech sounds just like Mandzhi.  
 If he glances with puffy eyes, see,  
 Like a Padishah's is his mode...  
 11130 On the track to Tungsha they rode,  
 On ahead, towards their foes,  
 Placid, Sirgak behind Alma goes,  
 Safely bringing up the rear.  
 Here is the place where commanders appear,  
 Thousands of warriors there you may see –  
 These are Chinese men from Andzhi.  
 Their high commander for counsel went.  
 Nought to Sirgak and Alma that meant.  
 And the foe took no notice yet  
 11140 Of Sirgak, and knight Almambet.  
 Not at morn, but in twilight hour,  
 When your grey-maned Alma got there,  
 Dusk was falling over the land.  
 To the Chinese, who were in command,  
 He rode up, and stopped as well:  
 "Listen to what I have to tell,  
 All commanders, take note, I say!"  
 Beat on his drum, in the Chinese way.  
 Loudly began to raise an ado:  
 11150 "Seems brute Kirghiz have broken through!  
 But when they came, then all the same,  
 Giant Makel played a cunning game!  
 In Kentun he defeated them then:  
 Those who met him, unfortunate men,  
 Generals, who had come to scoff,  
 Had their heads, like apples, pulled off.  
 Seeing their leaders treated so,  
 Other Kirghiz thought it time to go!  
 So, it seems, they made off that day.



11160 "Let a big army get mounted straightway –  
 Let them go, cut off their retreat!"  
 So their ruler gave orders, all speed:  
 "Mount your horses at once and ride!"  
 Almambet whispered in Chinese beside.  
 All the numerous host, indeed,  
 Then got busy – each saddled his steed.  
 Many folk lived in Kentun and Tungush –  
 Day's ride between! Push on, then, push!  
 Ride as fast as you can all day.  
 11170 To the south he sent them away,  
 Lion Almambet, your knight,  
 Set them a nice little trap all right!  
 Leaders and troops he left behind,  
 Set off, Mandzhurian troops to find,  
 And, on arriving, to them drew near.  
 Speaking so that all saw things clear,  
 "Ride!" he cried, to the leading Kentun,  
 And the broad highway they took soon.  
 Leaving those, a new road he took –  
 11180 Off he whirled to the wild Angyuk.  
 When he arrived, they said at the door:  
 "Knight Naskara holds counsel of war!"  
 Went to the square, and found him then,  
 Sitting among the military men.  
 Then Alma cried to every one:  
 "In Kentun, the fighting's begun!"  
 Giants, each riding a rhino as steed –  
 One hundred thousand have come indeed!"  
 Off went Angyuks to Andzhi and Mandzhi...  
 11190 "Hear my words, take orders from me –  
 If you don't ride, having heard my call,  
 Mussulmen foes will slay you all!"  
 That's what Alma informed those men.  
 Warrior hordes got excited then,  
 Shouting and snorting, off they went soon,  
 In the direction of distant Kentun.  
 You may wonder at this, maybe,  
 Almambet, so successful you see.  
 Blessing on him, sent by Allah clear.  
 11200 Off he went, with Sirgak in his rear.  
 To the city gates they came.  
 He is lost, who has not seen the same!  
 From leading warriors, trained on the track,  
 From strong-giants, who know the knack,

Sixty are needed to open those gates,  
 And it to see them closed, one waits,  
 Sixty more are needed then!  
 Streets and squares – there are many of them.  
 City gates are guarded pat –  
 11210 Twelve thousand warriors needed for that!  
 Take one look, it won't be your last,  
 At those fighters who hold them fast!  
 They are all youngsters, so it would seem,  
 All in steely-blue armour they gleam.  
 All of them are tested and tried,  
 All strong youths, with shoulders wide.  
 They hew enemies into chunks –  
 Calves of their legs, like children's trunks.  
 Undefeated yet are they –  
 11220 Knock their foes flat out, any day!  
 They are leaders, one and all,  
 Rulers inside the city wall.  
 They disembowel ev'ry foe, each one,  
 Like a wild-tusked boar, on the run.  
 Almambet stood among them there.  
 Having seen open gates to the square,  
 Started to beat on his gold-rimmed drum.  
 At the sound of that they come,  
 Leaders of every squad, here they are!  
 11230 And, mistaken, not knowing Alma,  
 Went straight forward up to him,  
 Proudly started to mock, and grin.  
 Then Almambet his order gave,  
 Loudly, looking severe and grave,  
 "Mount your steeds!" he shouted at them,  
 In his gleaming golden robe then,  
 Cone-shaped hat, with emeralds too,  
 Shining brightly, greenish-blue,  
 Perched upon his precious head...  
 11240 As Padishah the Chinese he led –  
 In his youth he ruled them yet.  
 Having seen his jewels, you bet,  
 Those Chinese then began to stare!  
 "To all warriors, everywhere,  
 I sent heralds, news to drum.  
 Now, city guardsmen, to you I've come,  
 And my orders I give to you!"  
 Cried Almambet, in the hullabaloo.  
 They were taken in by his style,



11250 And those guardsmen, in a short while,  
 With a bustle, each mounted his horse,  
 And towards Kentun took their course,  
 Galloped along the track at full speed...  
 Chilaba, Almambet's forebear, indeed;  
 Was the founder of that old town,  
 To him later 'twas handed down,  
 As his inheritance it survived...  
 Straight upon that spot he arrived.  
 As Tungsha its praises they sang,  
 11260 Earlier named the fortress Bang-Bang!!  
 Walk all day round – the roads went far.  
 Some say that market was called Banga;  
 If you look around, far and wide –  
 Six whole miles to the other side!  
 When Almambet saw that land as well,  
 Bitter tears from his eyes then fell.  
 Here Almambet's brave heart just burned,  
 All the past to memory returned.  
 Tears returned to his eyes again,  
 11270 All the past he remembered so plain!  
 He could not hold back, as before –  
 Looked at familiar once more.  
 In his soul, distress he knew,  
 Seeing those places, his sorrow grew.  
 To a tree, which his own hand had set,  
 He drew nearer, weeping yet.  
 Soon as he remembered, indeed,  
 Hugged the plane-tree, not leaving his steed,  
 Saw how tall and graceful it grew...  
 11280 Tears fell in a flood anew:  
 "This is the land, where from windy youth,  
 I grew up and matured in truth.  
 May things go hard for that passing world!  
 That's where blood from my navel twirled,  
 That's where life a man of me made.  
 That's where I submitted to Fate.  
 That's where my plot from father I gained,  
 That's where my own six forebears reigned.  
 That's where unhappy in life I felt.  
 11290 That's the sad land where not only I dwelt;  
 Seven forebears of mine there died –"  
 Thinking of this, Alma again cried.  
 Once again he felt earlier woe,  
 Bitterly wept, a-sobbing so,

All his body became so weak –  
 From bitter sorrow he could not speak!  
 "Only think – bare-foot and bare-head,  
 From my second to fifth year sped...  
 That was my age when I lived there.  
 11300 Clothes had I none, ran bare, I declare!  
 That's the place of my playful cries,  
 When my hair did not reach my eyes.  
 Good-for-nothing Chinese, our folk,  
 Sat me on father's throne, for a joke.  
 But I left my father's seat,  
 Left the plane-tree I loved to meet,  
 That young tree, which my own hands set,  
 Thinking: "Let it keep growing yet!  
 If it can't grow, then let it go dry" –  
 11310 Judge then, Sirgak, how carefree was I!  
 Here, Sirgak, I stand and look,  
 Here, Sirgak, stands the throne I took!  
 Here, Sirgak, stands that sapling I own,  
 If I judge how fast it has grown –  
 Four arm-spans won't embrace it now!  
 When I see it again, somehow,  
 Then, Sirgak, I feel full of woes –  
 Allah almighty above only knows!  
 I'm his slave, his prodigal son –  
 11320 See, Sirgak, what a miserable one!  
 I have no elder brother, you see,  
 If, Sirgak, death comes for me,  
 Nothing, Sirgak, remains that far,  
 Neither Andzhin, nor Mandzhin, nor Tungsha;  
 I have no younger brother, you see.  
 If I go where nought waits for me,  
 Who, Sirgak, will miss me then,  
 What, Sirgak, will they say, those men?  
 Nephews, Sirgak, I have not one,  
 11330 Uncles, Sirgak, or nieces – none!  
 What Fate sends, one can't escape,  
 Aunties I've none, and no mistake!  
 If I drop, who will be my prop,  
 Who can esteem me, when life goes flop?  
 Death, however, I do not fear!  
 Though I have no relations here,  
 Such in this world are none for me;  
 If I leave this land I see,  
 Who will say: "My father has died?"



- 11340 Not one child of my own, wet-eyed!  
 Own relations and land – not for me!  
 No, Sirgak, seven sires you won't see,  
 Though, Sirgak, only heathens are they,  
 Still, Sirgak, in that world, so they say,  
 One great woe waits a prodigal son –  
 Where, Sirgak, those deeds I have done,  
 Whether, Sirgak, they were good or bad,  
 Still, Sirgak, they count them as mad,  
 Done, Sirgak, in a land not my own,
- 11350 So, Sirgak, successes I've none!  
 See, Sirgak, in this land, not mine,  
 They all scorn the deserter's line.  
 See, Sirgak, who dares that, meets woe!  
 Though he be honest, he acts not so.  
 Though he serves as a good man should,  
 Nowhere, Sirgak, is he understood.  
 Nowhere, Sirgak, is he counted a brave –  
 Every word of his, weighty and grave,  
 He, with no folk, is counted a fool,
- 11360 No matter what he says – that's the rule!  
 At a loss are those with no tribe.  
 Saving Chinese, here are none alive.  
 This is that land of which I thought,  
 Where I wandered, and hill and vale sought.  
 Where as a naked child I ran,  
 Shoeless, shirtless, still not a man,  
 Where I played, and found it fun,  
 Where amusements were never done,  
 Here is that passing world, sometimes rough,
- 11370 Here is that land, where I ne'er had enough!  
 Here's where I roamed, and ran all about,  
 Smothered in dust, with a shriek and a shout.  
 If you had said other worlds exist,  
 I should have been surprised what I'd missed!  
 There with Turnoi's young daughter I played –  
 Walked beside her, a wonderful maid!  
 Now I have come, no such beauty I've seen –  
 No beauty here, no such earlier queen!  
 Though attentively I look around,
- 11380 No Khan's servants, once mine, have I found!  
 Seemingly all are dead and gone –  
 Guest-house in ruins alone lingers on.  
 Then I looked, and was sad in my soul,  
 My painted home had disappeared whole.

- Then I felt a pang in my heart –  
 Earth had swallowed my native part.  
 Gone was my iron-built mansion too,  
 Gardens trod down, where folk walked through.  
 Trees long since had been hewn down,
- 11390 Here I stand in that land, that town,  
 Calling on Allah, my ruthless lord.  
 All the gentry, whom once I adored,  
 Now are wiped out, of life bereft –  
 Walls broken down, only ditches left.  
 All my salt, is now a salt-marsh.  
 Gone are my friends – their foes were harsh!  
 They overcame my mates, won power,  
 Smashed everything that once was in flower.  
 Gone my sulphur, turned into chalk –
- 11400 Humbled are those who taught me to walk.  
 Foes have drunk glory, and grown great in power.  
 Here I stand thinking and talking an hour,  
 But my poor heart is just turned into stone.  
 Woeful the folk, with no Khan of their own.  
 Fallen the folk, whose leader hailed far,  
 Therefore the land is named "Suffering Tungsha!"  
 Lacking its leaders, who left and went out,  
 Chinese folk, who live round about,  
 Speak of events as they really occur –
- 11410 Land brought to woe by foes hating her!  
 Leaders seized all, and then shared it out,  
 Not with the poor, who lived round about,  
 But with the rich, no mistake about that –  
 So poor folk died, where poverty sat!  
 But sons lived on, and numbers increased,  
 Folk scattered far, ran will, like a beast.  
 Those who lost all went wandering around –  
 With my own eyes such folk I have found.  
 Those who were thoughtless, lost power in their hands,
- 11420 They roamed afar, into various lands.  
 All my people, deprived the same,  
 On the others dependent became.  
 Those in power then drove them away,  
 Thus to others subjected were they.  
 Spoilt and lost, now my road do I see,  
 Lost at all cost, simply lost for me!"  
 Thus of his fate complained Almambet,  
 Standing murmuring, muttering yet:  
 "Heathens have poisoned all my race –



11430 In a dug trench they found them a place...  
 Swine and pig-lets there they bred,  
 Everywhere roaming, my people spread...  
 – And this black, unhappy earth,  
 Only survived where its soil was of worth!"  
 Those were the words of Almambet...  
 He exclaimed then: "I'm living yet,  
 Sucking the ashes of burnt-out pines,  
 Brought from Andizhan, betimes,  
 And they quench all kinds of desire –  
 11440 Boiled with black pepper over a fire,  
 Soaked then with red pepper too.  
 Any man's blessed, who sucks as I do,  
 Such tobacco, kept under one's tongue,  
 Or sniffs at snuff – a pinch with the thumb!  
 When you inhale it down very deep,  
 Then your head splits, or you just can't sleep!"  
 So he came to himself again yet...  
 Race-horse Kildzheiren used to sweat,  
 When in youth quick-brained Almambet,  
 11450 Forward to the battle-field set.  
 High-blooded Kildzheiren sweated more,  
 When Khan Alma pierced somebody sore.  
 Then there was thunder over Kakan!  
 Afterwards all grew quiet and calm.  
 When Kuzbar and Boro-onchu  
 Barred his road, and stopped him too,  
 When two giants – Dzholoi, Neskara,  
 Kept on his heels, well, there you are!  
 Almambet then fought with them,  
 11460 Then his horn, with its golden rim,  
 Unexpectedly from his hand fell...  
 Then Alma, experienced well,  
 When within race-course length about,  
 Then he said: "Lion Sirgak, dismount!"  
 And his spear in the ground stuck fast:  
 "Here is fertile soil at last!"  
 Tall and dense the grass there grew.  
 On the spot where his spear pierced through,  
 Bold Sirgak stretched out his hand,  
 11470 Tried to find the spear in the land...  
 There found a horn, with a golden rim,  
 Lying all musty, gold gone dim.  
 It had been pressed in the soil by the spear.  
 Bold Sirgak then pulled it clear.

Having called to him Sirgak,  
 Almambet once more took his track.  
 He had gilded bow and mail,  
 But that gilt horn was his now as well!  
 Found by Sirgak, and returned to him.  
 11480 What a wonder! Although grown dim,  
 It was worth at least seventeen mares:  
 "Take it, Sirgak, as a prize for your cares!"  
 So said Alma, a-laughing then,  
 One of the merriest of men.  
 Then Almambet went on his way,  
 Grinning and smiling, and looking gay.  
 Lion Sirgak, at his heels, lost for words...  
 Thinking: "When shall I see horse-herds?"  
 He was concerned all the time with those.  
 11490 In Kaspang a spring river flows,  
 That forms a barrier in one's way,  
 From its source to its end, let me say.  
 No mare could ever gallop so far!  
 No spear could reach its bed – there you are!  
 Even a war-horse could not cross here,  
 And not a single ford's found near!  
 Nine spears deep, and still no bed!  
 Tash and Shita\* fords lie far ahead,  
 And Almambet was thither bent –  
 11500 So across them then they went.  
 Meeting them along their route,  
 Herdsman Karagul came out.  
 Clearly, he'd seen them, observant wight,  
 Of Alma he'd just caught sight:  
 "Hey! hard of hand and heart!" he cried,  
 "Filling your foes with fright beside!  
 Man like an elephant lumping there,  
 Fierce as a tiger or lion, I'll swear!  
 He whom you fought has never survived –  
 11510 Who are you, who have just arrived?  
 With your blue sword at your waist, I swear,  
 Threatening like a huge cloud, here and there,  
 Striking like lightning, out of the blue,  
 Slaying the foe, who's shooting at you!  
 Who are you, like a giant, I say,  
 Conquering all who stand in your way?  
 You appear like some padishah bright,  
 Showing no mercy to those whom you fight.  
 Like some strong-man, full of power you rise –



11520 Who are you then, with your lynx-sharp eyes?  
 Like a tiger, you're ready to leap:  
 Who are you? What secrets d'you keep?  
 Who are you then, who would seize Karagul?  
 Such seems your wish, but I am no fool!"  
 Saying these words, Karagul turned his steed,  
 Played a trick on Alma, indeed.  
 Started to ride in the opposite way,  
 Back where he came from! What do you say?  
 Suddenly turned from him, full of unease!

11530 Chitter-chatter, like a Chinese,  
 Quick-witted Almambet spurred to him,  
 Said: "My city is Chin-Manchin.  
 There I was born, so you'll understand,  
 I'm from the tribe Kangu, and their land.  
 In Bakburchun I'm the Padishah,  
 Only son of my dear Papa.  
 Why do you not ride up to me?  
 You have a frightened look, I see!  
 Where are those foes, those Kirghiz brutes?

11540 Where's that bold fellow, whom fighting suits?  
 Who in such times decides to come here?  
 What sense was there in retreating in fear?  
 Who then can say where the Mussulmen are?  
 Where is that bold one, who'll go to Tungsha?  
 What is the sense in this caution you show?  
 Understand what I'm saying, I know!  
 You ought to pay me for bringing good news!  
 Listen more carefully now to my views:  
 Having caught sight of you, my esteemed friend,

11550 I have come here to please you in the end,  
 To make you easy, I give you my word!  
 Those Kirghiz folk are a numerous horde –  
 Just take a look, you can't count them all.  
 They love Islam, and on Allah they call.  
 Therefore, indeed, they're our real foes thus.  
 You must have heard of their leader, Manas!  
 He can remember Kakan and Beijin.  
 Much about us has been heard now by him.  
 Almambet, who left us long since,

11560 Roamed with Kazakhs, like some vagrant prince!  
 Still, he suffered regrets, all the same,  
 Till at last to Manas then he came.  
 Told him, it seems, of our people's roots,  
 Learned from him what Kirghizians suits.

Said he know the road to Beijin,  
 Started to show that long way to him.  
 Now, it seems, they've arrived back here!  
 In Kentun, hordes of people fear,  
 There, where the Kirghiz foe they met,

11570 Bold Makel came forth with a threat!  
 When all those fighters saw Makel,  
 All their proud boasting went to hell!  
 They all saw that monstrous beast,  
 Many went off their heads, at least.  
 Many hearts ceased beating that day,  
 And the others all ran away...  
 Having come, thinking to wreck Beijin,  
 Soon they themselves such a plight were in!  
 Those who remained alive, and well –

11580 May all those Mussulmen burn in hell –  
 Their own disaster did they choose!  
 My esteemed friend, I bring good news!  
 Nothing deceptive do you get!" –  
 Those were the words of Almambet.  
 Karagul was a wizard too,  
 Turned Torayigir around anew.  
 Still kept his distance, target clear,  
 Then caught a glimpse of Sirgak-bogatur,  
 Riding behind Padishah Almambet,

11590 Gazed on him, a-wondering yet...  
 Straightway he thought he was Chinese too –  
 Almost deceived himself, it's true.  
 Then he saw through his deceit:  
 "Rider, your comrade looks discreet,  
 But to my eyes he seems a foe –  
 Look at his horse – that tells me so!  
 Such a long neck, and longer mane,  
 Though he rides him well, all the same!  
 Such a wide croup, an arm-span; indeed!

11600 Karabayir is a real war-steed!<sup>116</sup>  
 And his rider gallops, what's more!  
 He himself looks like some wild boar.  
 Whosoe'er he attacks, he will kill –  
 Conquering character, strong in will!  
 Whom he struggles with, he will defeat –  
 Signs of a strong-man here I meet.  
 Ruler of people with hand severe,  
 Such worthy leader do I see here.  
 Slashing a stone in two, with one blow,



11610 There his sword hangs down below.  
 Where it falls, there death is due.  
 He has a tiger's manner too!  
 Seeing a thousand foes, he won't fly,  
 Stands up before them, eye to eye.  
 Knowing their number, he will not quake,  
 Of ten thousand mince-meat will make!  
 He will not tremble, nor shiver at all,  
 Will not into confusion fall.  
 He will pierce right through with his spear –

11620 Such a threat is one to fear!  
 Worthiness of a Sultan he shows.  
 His inner secrets nobody knows.  
 He will not flee from a foe who shoots.  
 Lion's character lies at his roots.  
 He puts forth a threatening air,  
 No matter how many foes are there!  
 Enemies, scared for all they're worth,  
 Just like hares, kick their heels at the earth.  
 He stands firm 'gainst a hostile host,

11630 Doesn't give way, more fearless than most.  
 Painted spear, with tassel at tip,  
 Steely point, which does not slip.  
 What it points at, that it destroys,  
 'Gainst the foe, full power employs.  
 Like an attacking tiger is he –  
 Just say: "Campaign!" and excited he'll be!  
 Much there is worthy! Say, who is he then?  
 I can approve the mood of such men,  
 So reveal his secret!" he said,

11640 Having asked this of Almambet,  
 He stood apart, and no nearer came,  
 Opposite him remained, all the same,  
 Waiting to know, just who was the man.  
 Bogatir Almambet then began:  
 "I will tell you enquire.  
 One great leader is his sire;  
 From Kakan, a-scouting came he,  
 He has a special knight quality.  
 He is a strong-man, known for his power –

11650 Foes who meet him know their last hour.  
 Yes, now let the sad secret come out –  
 He cannot hear you, however you shout,  
 He cannot speak, but just remains mute!"  
 So answered Almambet, to boot,

Thinking: "If Karagul comes this way,  
 I will arrange his Judgement Day!  
 – Almambet then moved nearer too.  
 On Toraigir, who lightning-swift flew,  
 There sat the angry Karagul,

11660 But up to him his steed did not pull.  
 He caught on: "Almambet – 'tis he!  
 Something seems to whisper to me!"  
 So he drew further from him still –  
 "He won't catch me, and work me ill!  
 He'll have no chance to be satisfied!"  
 So he rode, leaning further aside.  
 In that direction he tried to stay,  
 So he contrived to draw away.  
 So from a distance, he asked Almambet,

11670 Very stubbornly, one question yet:  
 "You have an auburn steed on the rein –  
 What kind of breed, if I ask not in vain?"  
 Hears a loud cry, but does not blink.  
 Sees countless steeds, passes all in a wink,  
 Overtakes every one in sight.  
 If it's a pitch-black moonless night,  
 He still finds his chosen way,  
 Strides, as though it still were day.  
 Not one unsure step does he take –

11680 He's of a breed which makes no mistake!  
 Though he may sweat, he lays back no ears,  
 Not though it thunders, and earth shakes with fears!  
 Water in streams to his belly won't reach,  
 Even when flood-water breaks through a breach!  
 He will not slip on the steepest slope,  
 Even with gravel and stones he can cope,  
 He treads no worse than a wild mountain beast.  
 He knows scores of knacks, at the least.  
 Of all horses, he's one of the best –

11690 Extraordinary tail and crest!  
 Not from Beijin come beasts like that –  
 Long is him mane, he's not over-fat,  
 And wherever his hooves may hie,  
 Earth goes flying up to the sky.  
 When he hears clash of steel, he grows strong,  
 Noise of battle spurs him along!  
 Not from our borders comes such a steed –  
 Such a war-horse you ride, indeed!  
 We don't see such battle-steeds here –



11700 Foreign horses you ride, it's clear?  
 From what region comes your horse?  
 Tell me about his breed, of course!"  
 Almambet answered Karagul then:  
 "Ah, you wizard, respected 'midst men!  
 Grand Makel came into Kentun,  
 There he met the enemy soon,  
 There he left but a few alive —  
 Tore off their heads! How could they survive?  
 From these defeated Kirghiz brutes,  
 11710 Each of us chose a steed which suits.  
 They were gifts from Chantu Mussulmen —  
 As war trophies we got them then!  
 So, Karagul, your guess rings true —  
 On foreign steeds we meet with you!"  
 That was the answer of Almambet,  
 Making out to be pleased with him yet,  
 Then he added: "You sort things out well —  
 Much that was true of our steeds did you tell!"  
 We have come to bring war-men, news,  
 11720 So Kaspan and Tungsha did we choose!  
 Good news here we decided to bring —  
 Foe defeated — that song do we sing!  
 That which you advised we shall do —  
 Why drag another steed with us too?  
 Specially one with a frisky style?!  
 Loose him in your herd meanwhile.  
 When I return from the men-of-war,  
 I can take hold of his bridle once more.  
 No sooner said, than the deed was done!  
 11730 Took off his bridle, and let him run!  
 No matter what a wizard was he,  
 Nor how clever he thought he'd be,  
 All his cunning dried up, came to nought —  
 If not dry, then where his clear thought?  
 Kartkyureng, in light-footed style —  
 May he lose himself meanwhile! —  
 In a flash disappeared in the herd,  
 Nothing more seen of him, nought occurred!  
 Since he mixed up with an unknown herd,  
 11740 Then, most likely, them all he'll disturb!  
 "Pure disaster that Karagul is!  
 If he clears off from me like this,  
 When to this maddened man I draw near,  
 I will certainly grab his reins here!"

Thinking thus, Almambet nearer drew,  
 Loudly and proudly he shouted too.  
 If Karagul set Torayigir free,  
 He knew he's gallop too dangerously,  
 So in his saddle-bag, six spans deep,  
 11750 Pitilessly much sand did he heap.  
 Thinking: "Just like an arrow he flies!  
 Torayigir on his haunches may rise,  
 I may be thrown, and die all in vain,  
 I'll pour more sand in, and hold tight the rein!..  
 Look at the tricks under Karagul's hat! —  
 Said to Alma: "Sarala you besat,  
 Flew on his in your gold robe here —  
 If a host of foes should appear,  
 Without thinking, you'll fall upon them —  
 11760 One of our famous fighting men!  
 Furious, fierce, and bold, I see —  
 Don't you come too near to me!  
 I can see the flame in your eyes —  
 You say that blood-thirsty host did arise —  
 But I'm offended at what you have said.  
 You've put your rough ideas in my head.  
 Stay where you are, don't come too near!  
 Who, and what you are is not clear!  
 From our gentry we shall hear all!"  
 11770 Such were the words of Karagul.  
 Torayigir, like a light cloud flew  
 When he lashed his haunches too,  
 Raising a cluster of dust very soon,  
 As Karagul rode off to Kentun...  
 There went a great and dangerous foe:  
 "Allah has punished me here, I know!  
 No good chasing after him yet!"  
 So to Sirgak said Almambet,  
 "No good wasting time doing nought —  
 11780 Time to seize the horse-herd we sought!  
 Clearly, he didn't believe what I said —  
 Went tearing off to Kentun instead!  
 He's a wise wizard, and cunning too —  
 Clearly, he'll bring back our foes, not a few!  
 Good-for-nought! Yes, may he get lost!  
 Clearly, he'll tell of us, to our cost!  
 If he prepares their strong fighting men,  
 They'll bring us woe on their spear-points then!  
 Khan Sirgak, no less clever than you —



11790 That Karagul knows a thing or two!"  
 Having all these things then made clear,  
 With his threatening painted spear,  
 Almambet plunged a hole in the ground.  
 There it gave out a deep ringing sound.  
 Horses, thousands of them too,  
 Trembled, and raised a hullabaloo!  
 In the hollow of Kasparang hills,  
 On the bank, where a fresh stream spills,  
 By an island, heads pasture there –  
 11800 No end seen to them, I declare!  
 Of the daring Sirgak and Alma,  
 Hear my story! Here you are!  
 Six hundred herdsman, it seems, were there,  
 When the herds all started to rear.  
 Some had these horses in their care,  
 Others had horses kept elsewhere.  
 Frightened, from their tents they ran.  
 Those who'd taken their trousers off then,  
 Got them mixed up, when put on again!  
 11810 Breathing deeply, they tugged in vain,  
 Breaking the bindings round the waist,  
 They fell head over heels in their haste.  
 One on another, they helpless fell,  
 Just like rams a-butting as well!  
 Sheer confusion reigned, nothing more,  
 Beating each other, they all felt sore,  
 Jumped around, in a terrified stew,  
 Legs in jacket-sleeves didn't go through,  
 Leather trousers left gaping wide,  
 11820 Tunics round shoulders, sleeves left aside –  
 Some were left bare-headed quite,  
 And in alarm, and quivering fright.  
 Thinking them caps, drew socks on their head,  
 Caps they put on their feet instead!  
 Tugged socks down, to cover their ears –  
 They had no swords, and they had no spears.  
 Thinking that there might be a war,  
 They took their crooks, and nothing more!  
 These they held like a lance, sticking out –  
 11830 All in confusion began to shout!  
 That is what happened to herdsman then,  
 And when they saw the fright of those men,  
 Out aloud shouted Almambet,  
 And the echoes are sounding yet!

Soon Almabash; his musket, he took,  
 Loud it thundered, finger on crook!  
 Bold Sirgak, he too, though a sage,  
 Like a lion began to rage.  
 In the spines of those heathens there  
 11840 He thrust his spear, taking aim with care.  
 Almambet, like Sirgak too,  
 All their turns and twists saw through.  
 Most of the herdsman on foot ran round;  
 Almambet, when riders he found,  
 Wounded those who saddled a steed,  
 And those on foot knocked flat, indeed!  
 Pierced them through, and there they lay...  
 Most of the horses they then drove away,  
 Mares and foals rounded up, somehow...  
 11850 Alma thought: "As I see it now,  
 These steeds will serve our fighting men,  
 Thirty hundred thousand of them!  
 They will do for our fighters there,  
 We shall join them now, I swear!  
 We shall prepare them all for the fight,  
 Then, if you please, we'll start all right,  
 With those Chinese a battle we'll start!"  
 Almambet had this aim at heart.  
 He was thinking of that alone;  
 11860 And his plans were all his own.  
 So he drubbed upon his white drum,  
 So he let shots from his musket come;  
 At those horses, a day's ride away,  
 Those who fed on the island, let's say,  
 Louder and louder Alma then cried.  
 Lion Sirgak, bogatir, replied,  
 Also his musket let off clear,  
 For the edge of the horse-herd near,  
 Feeding on island grass, came down,  
 11870 Raising a cloud of dust, white and brown.  
 Any herdsman who rode with them yet,  
 Soon were speared down by Almambet.  
 Having slain them, he galloped ahead,  
 With Sirgak in his rear, be it said.  
 At full gallop a head he would lop –  
 Herdsman's body would fall with a flop.  
 Kartkyureng came leading the herd,  
 Waiting only his master's word,  
 Tossing his head, he flew like a star!



11880 Bold Sirgak, and brave Alma,  
 Raised a loud cry, as high as could be –  
 Yelling at Kartkyureng, you see,  
 Found at the head of the frenzied herd.  
 Almambet cried his name – one word!  
 Slightly ahead, he led all the rest,  
 Dimly seen there, apart from the best.  
 One month's journey he could lead,  
 Evening, or moonless nights, indeed,  
 Not one unsure step made he –

11890 Leading that numberless horse-herd, see!  
 There he galloped, slightly ahead,  
 Leading all, prepared to be led,  
 Kartkurēng galloped, splish, splash, splash!  
 Over the fords Shita and Tash,  
 Leant on each other, some slightly lame,  
 Then to the gates of the fortress they came...  
 Karagul saw their dust in the air,  
 Still ahead of them all, I declare,  
 Kartkurēng galloped, with power to spare –

11900 And, for a while, let's leave him there...  
 Of Karagul, who'd already left,  
 Listen now! Of belief bereft,  
 On Torayigir he went out,  
 Kicking up the dust in a cloud,  
 On the road which ahead lay clear.  
 When to the fortress he drew near,  
 That unhappy Torayigir  
 Turned completely round in fear,  
 Shied to one side, with some strange whim –

11910 Karagul thought: "What's happened to him?  
 He has never before been scared,  
 Never shied back, wherever we fared!"  
 He'd been almost thrown from his seat,  
 By Torayigir's retreat!  
 Back in the saddle he had tipped,  
 Feet from the stirrups both had slipped...  
 When again he looked around,  
 Marshals who guarded the gates he found,  
 All lay stretched there, side by side;

11920 Spread like that, already had died...  
 Seeing them so, he thought, in a swoon;  
 "Is it worth it, to enter Kentun?"  
 Karagul looked, with fear in his eye:  
 "In Kasping there lives Kongurbai –

Curses on him – sits carefree there –  
 But I must tell him of this affair!  
 He has tens of thousands of men,  
 Warriors who can defend us then.  
 He is the War-Commander I'll call,

11930 Master, most important of all!  
 I shall then to Kentun bring him back –  
 He'll take revenge on that Mussulman pack!  
 He'll mow them down, where'er they may be!"  
 Having decided, off went he.  
 Torayigir, who flew like the wind,  
 Slashed with his lash, his quarters half-skinned.  
 Having turned to towards Shita-Kechyu,  
 Off he flew then, all in a stew.  
 Fire was burning within his breast;

11940 As he looked ahead without rest!  
 Then huge clouds of dust he heeds –  
 Foals were frisking, and racing-steeds!  
 Someone was driving off with his herd!  
 Karagul acted at once, not a word!  
 He played a trick, at least, he tried:  
 "Ai, ai, ai, kakai!" he cried,  
 Went to the herd to bar its way,  
 But Kartkurēng he could not stay.  
 He went galloping on, just as hard!

11950 If one part of the road was barred,  
 Then the herd raced to where it was free,  
 If they found it blocked, just see,  
 Then they reared, and reversed, like a flood...  
 When he saw them, all spattered with mud,  
 Then Karagul just had to make way:  
 "How can you deal with a mad mob, say?  
 Such a huge herd could tramp me to death!  
 Hear how wildly they snort out breath –  
 They would bunch up and bury me!

11960 Thus Karagul was exhausted, you see!  
 So towards the gates he went.  
 Lost was he, and utterly spent.  
 Then he tried vainly to open the gates.  
 Those strong gate-men, who knew their weights,  
 Only that sixty could move them apart.  
 Karagul tugged on them at the start;  
 Then gave up trying, a lost-hopeless one!  
 He couldn't see just what must be done –  
 All that remained a mystery.



11970 Though a most wily wizard was he  
Thinking: "Why give those brutes our herd?  
Better destroy them, upon my word!  
That is a better thing to do,  
Than give them up to the foe, it's true!  
Better destroy them – not one left alive –  
Only myself must surely survive!"  
So he took a knife from his waist –  
Sixteen horses he slew in a haste.  
Slashed their bellies, side to side,  
11980 Thus those poor horses fell and died...  
With his own eyes he saw them at hand –  
That they had fallen, did they understand?  
Those who had been behind, crushed round,  
Soon in the forward ranks were found...  
Karagul with himself argued then:  
"That bold rider, who threatened men,  
Was, it seems, himself Almambet!  
He came here, and is with us yet.  
I did not know him, at a loss  
11990 As to who he actually was!  
He confused me, poor Karagul –  
Made out of me a seeming fool!"  
Thinking thus, he turned around  
On his horse, with a single bound,  
In the direction towards Kaspang,  
And across the river-ford sprang –  
Went to tell the knight Kongurbai,  
All which so far had met his eye;  
"World catastrophe threatens us!"  
12000 Shaken, quaking, thought Karagul thus...  
Suddenly, from the side drew near  
Almambet, with ready-aimed spear:  
Noting: "There's his gold belt displayed,  
There's the low edge of his shoulder-blade.  
There's Karagul, by his forebears cursed –  
Now comes his hour – he must face the worst!"  
Almambet then adjusted his lance.  
Karagul left nothing to chance –  
Sword, shield and dagger ready, it's clear:  
12010 "I shall hew off the head of his spear  
With my trusty two-edged blade!"  
Thus was his plan of action laid.  
But the furious Almambet  
Struck his shoulder, with spear-head set.

Back from the saddle Karagul slipped,  
Feet out of the stirrups were ripped...  
How could he help but feel afraid?  
From behind further attack was made:  
Karagul, thus shaken, flew,  
12020 And his robe went flying too...  
Torayigir was Tyundyukchiu's steed –  
Stallion, huger than most, indeed.  
Like Dzhelmayan\* the camel, for speed,  
He came from some unearthly breed.  
He was not one you could overtake,  
Galloped along, all records to break!  
Raised a dust-cloud as on he sped,  
Further and further he flew ahead.  
Forward he went at break-neck speed –  
12030 Every step – one more in the lead!  
Torayigir outstripped all by far,  
Even Almambet's Sarala.  
That brave steed couldn't overtake him.  
Though he chased on, his chances were dim.  
Clearly, behind he began to hang...  
As to the stream Karasu, in Kaspang,  
Karagul went racing on,  
Leapt in the river, where ford there was none.  
When from this stream rose Torayigir,  
12040 Karagul seemed to disappear...  
Under the water somewhere he lay,  
As his steed went leaping away...  
Thinking that a real wizard was he,  
Karagul did so, deliberately.  
When his horse climbed out on the bank,  
Off he sped – his saddle a blank...  
On the road he left clouds of steam.  
There Karagul remained in the stream...  
Lost in the darkness, Almambet,  
12050 Couldn't see Karagul at all yet.  
Torayigir in the stream had leapt,  
But Sarala to the riverside kept  
Quite invisible, in the dark,  
Karagul disappeared, like a spark!  
Torayigir, in fording the stream,  
Neighed, and snorted, and whinnied a scream,  
Splashing and splashing had crossed the ford –  
All these noises could not be ignored –  
Almambet heard them, though he could not see.



12060 Thought: "That rogue's got away from me!"  
 Probably, it seems, if you please,  
 News about me has reached the Chinese.  
 There's no need to stand gaping here,  
 He's gone off somewhere else; it's clear...  
 Karagul still lay in the stream,  
 Left there by his horse he'd been,  
 When those long legs leapt ashore.  
 Almambet knew nothing for sure.  
 One thing only could not be deferred —

12070 Go back quickly, and seize that herd!  
 But he could not come too near —  
 He'd been troubled by Torayigir.  
 So with Sirgak he raised a cry.  
 In the wind their banners waved high.  
 Loudly they beat the travelling drums,  
 With a bang they fired their guns.  
 Thinking: "Back to Chubak and Manas,  
 While we're alive, and nought happens to us —  
 We must certainly not delay —"

12080 So they both hastened on their way...  
 Meanwhile the famous Torayigir,  
 Open-jawed, and flicking an ear,  
 Galloped away for all he was worth.  
 Spume went spluttering down on the earth.  
 To the brave Kongurbai raced he,  
 To his tent, whose spike he could see.  
 Galloped up, and waited outside,  
 Pawed the ground with hoof high and wide.  
 On the soil he began to beat...

12090 When Kongurbai heard the noise of his feet,  
 Then he opened wide both eyes,  
 Straight to the tent-flap then he flies,  
 Hastens outside, expectant quite,  
 Just awaiting to meet some fine knight.  
 Out he went and looked around —  
 Only a riderless horse he found.  
 Torayigir stood waiting yet,  
 Breathing hard, and covered in sweat...  
 Kongurbai looked round for men —

12100 Seeing an empty saddle then.  
 Thought at once: "Someone's seized my herd!"  
 Such an idea his mind disturbed.  
 Weapons he went for straight away,  
 War equipment prepared, hey, hey!

Frowned like a cloud before the storm,  
 Round his brow the blood ran warm.  
 Wide was his metal-threaded robe,  
 Through that tunic no bullet could probe.  
 Threads and discs of tempered steel —

12110 He had long since known its feel —  
 No steel spear-head could pierce it through —  
 Arrows grow tired from trying to!  
 If they shoot from a musket straight,  
 Even that ball will not penetrate!  
 Buttons are jewels, as big as your fist,  
 Beautiful sight, which shouldn't be missed  
 So he donned such a robe, my my!  
 Take a look now at Kongurbai!  
 Like a wild tiger, of pale blue hue,  
 Taking his musket with him too,  
 On his arrow-swift steed Algara  
 He went prancing, and glancing afar.  
 Having come to the belfry high,  
 He rang the bell. The people nearby  
 All gathered round the belfry tower —  
 "Kent" they call it, it rings the war-hour!  
 If you look with a careful eye,  
 You see it's hundreds of arm-spans high.  
 If you beat, but once, loud and clear,

12130 Nine days' journey away they hear!  
 There the echoes they clearly receive.  
 Even the warriors scarce can believe!  
 On the belfry the torches they lit,  
 Loud rang the bell when they beat on it.  
 Many Thousand warriors then,  
 Dashed to their steeds, like real fighting men!  
 Hundreds of thousands gathered nearby  
 To ninety thousand men, Kongurbai  
 Then decided to make a speech.

12140 Powerful strong-men, giants each,  
 Each with a steel-blue tip to his spear,  
 Each with sharp sword a-hanging near.  
 Giants they were, and each with his shield,  
 Footmen, 'neath whose weight steeds yield,  
 All in one mass, they moved in file,  
 And we'll leave them there for a while...  
 To Manas, and comrade Chubak  
 We must turn, and learn their luck:  
 Listen awhile, and you'll get the hang —



12150 In the foothills around Bazang,  
 On the shores of the Maraldu\*,  
 Knight Manas, Chubak with him too,  
 By the roadside waiting stood fast.  
 Two whole days and nights had passed  
 Since they'd seen Almambet and Sirgak,  
 When they both left on their scouting track:  
 "Something's happened to them, I fear,  
 Why have they not returned to us here?"  
 Bold Manas at last then said —  
 12160 Ride and see, on the road ahead,  
 Where those heathen cities stand,  
 In that distant, mist-shrouded land,  
 And then nearer too you'll see,  
 Hidden by haze, a hillock free.  
 Ridden upon that mound, Chubak,  
 Watch the road, that winding track,  
 Try to discover Alma and Sirgak.  
 If you do, then fetch them back,  
 But if the enemy there you see,  
 12170 Then return at once to me!  
 See if our friends are there about,  
 Anyway, then come back, my scout,  
 Whether you see them, or whether not,  
 Bring back then what news you've got!  
 In my soul I'm disturbed very deep —  
 Last two nights I did not sleep!  
 Mastered by restlessness, it seemed,  
 Leaning on my elbow, I dreamed,  
 Worried to bits by all my woes.  
 12180 If you've seen any sign of our foes,  
 Then inform me, Chubak, straightway —  
 I shall prepare for war that day!  
 Off you go, it's already dawn.  
 When you get there, don't stand and yawn,  
 Don't flop down, and start to snore!  
 Thus he directed Chubak once more.  
 Aibanboz, his steed, like a deer,  
 He turned round, and the way made clear...  
 To a hollow, where grass grew good,  
 12190 He then turned where a willow stood.  
 There he dismounted from his steed,  
 Bent down a branch or two, indeed.  
 No further watch need he now keep,  
 There he laid himself down to sleep!

While bold Chubak rode off on his way,  
 Couched on one side, Manas peaceful lay.  
 And, at last at rest, it seems,  
 Soon he dozed off in the land of dreams.  
 Let us leave him, lying there so...  
 12200 Bold Kongurbai was a dangerous foe —  
 Various stories about him there are —  
 Listen awhile, they go so far!  
 Bullet-proof robe on him flies free,  
 Kongurbai, a famed giant is he!  
 Nine long loops for buttons on show,  
 He's like a lump of fat swine, you know!  
 Nine big buckles fasten his mail.  
 He's like a big hairy pig, at the pail!  
 On his fat body, as huge as a mound,  
 12210 There are fastenings all around!  
 Algara, his steed, he esteemed,  
 More like a camel to look at, he seemed.  
 But he lowed him, like his flute.  
 On this black horse he sat, quite mute.  
 Then he gave Algara the lash...  
 On his hat did the gold ball flash.  
 That most threatening rogue of his race  
 Had a sweaty, cooked-meat face.  
 Look at his whiskers and beard, just see —  
 12220 They could pierce a plank, easily!  
 Like sharpened steel, the look in his eyes.  
 Bridge of his nose, like a peak did rise!  
 Full of determination was he,  
 Like an attacking tiger to see.  
 He did not look to left nor right,  
 Straight ahead he went, to the fight.  
 Chinese giant, his honour kept,  
 Unrestrained, on the foe he leapt.  
 Served the folk, with red pom-poms on caps:  
 12230 "Live or die, I shall try, no lapse!  
 I shall fight those dishonest brutes,  
 Pull their hair out, all by the roots!  
 Beards and whiskers I shall count,  
 I shall mow them, any amount!  
 I shall finish them off, by the score!  
 I shall fly, full of fury, to war!  
 'Gainst those Mussulmen — how they will fuss!  
 If they show courage, I'll stand for us!  
 If their hordes swarm around us so,



12240 I shall destroy them, and off I'll go!"  
 Thinking thus to himself, Kongurbai,  
 Chinese giant, a half-a-mile high,  
 With a loud cry, set out on his way.  
 Chinese people got moving that day,  
 Ploughing the earth, and making it shake,  
 Followed their leader, close in his wake...  
 Indistinct features of oncoming men,  
 Both Alma and Sirgak saw then.  
 Furious, and with a strident cry,  
 12250 Hordes of Chinese came sweeping by!  
 Warriors, finding small space on earth,  
 Seventy chiefs, made to show their worth!..  
 Almambet there, behind Sirgak,  
 Cried to his comrade, looking black;  
 "I shall block their front lines then,  
 One by one, I shall deal with them...  
 To Dzhal-Kamish\* and Bayandi-Su\*  
 Ride off now, and stay there too!  
 Don't say a word, keep lips dead tight.  
 12260 With these heathens don't start to fight!  
 With that swine, predestined to die,  
 When he starts to me to draw nigh,  
 I shall swiftly retreat from him then,  
 I shall flutter my robe, by the hem;  
 He'll think: "He's running away from me!"  
 He'll lose all sense of proportion, see:  
 "I am a more famous man than he!"  
 So he will think, and chase where I flee.  
 Just where you're waiting, he'll pass by -  
 12270 Try at that moment to raise your spear high!  
 When past your hide-out he starts to ride,  
 Try to thrust your spear in his side!  
 That aggressive heathen clown -  
 Strike with your spear, and hurl him down!  
 If you unseat chief Kongurbai,  
 Few will be left who their luck will try.  
 Though they have many, they won't attack us,  
 Few they have left who would dare do thus!  
 They will not raise a hand, no, not they!  
 12280 Get on your way, as quick as you may!"  
 Sensibly judged our Almambet.  
 Soon on his way Sirgak was set.  
 Then the Chinese were drawing near,  
 To Sirgak, all alone, that was clear.

So he did as Alma had said -  
 Sticking his spear in the bank-side ahead  
 By the swiftly-flowing Dzhal-Kamish,  
 Bold Sirgak fulfilled Alma's wish.  
 Firmly grasping the hasp of his spear,  
 12290 Khan-Sirgak thought: "Who will appear?"  
 Ready to strike, or ready to smile -  
 So we'll leave him there, for a while...  
 More we shall say of Kongurbai,  
 Of that gigantic strong-man, forby.  
 Listen then, to the story thus far:  
 He whipped up his steed Algara,  
 Slipped a blue idol in his breast,  
 Hung his musket behind, as was best,  
 With many thousand troops at his back,  
 12300 Fierce was his desire to attack...  
 Algara had fetlocks strong,  
 Head-gear with white decorations on,  
 Pom-poms of blue, and plates of mail.  
 Like some heavenly bird's was his tail,  
 Curving upwards, above his spine!  
 Right behind him, and strictly in line,  
 Galloped on Kildzheiren, with a will,  
 Kirmus-shah's young son, Muradil.  
 Pom-pom of red, and a painted spear,  
 12310 Long and strong, causing mountains to fear!  
 At his waist hung a cauldron-sized club.  
 He did not tremble - with that he would drub!  
 He just roared, like a lion afar;  
 After him pranced Neskara,  
 On Chadbar, a steed he could trust,  
 Raising behind him a column of dust;  
 After him, brave Kalmak, Ushang,  
 And in a rage, his war-cry rang.  
 He did not know that his end was not far -  
 12320 Loudly he screamed: "Tatala! Tatala!"\*  
 Dust went flying all around,  
 Like a land-slide, they shook the ground!  
 All the strong men, who battalions form,  
 Roared like thunder, before a storm.  
 Having caught sight of them, Almambet  
 Prayed to Allah above, in a sweat!  
 Up to its fetlocks, his steed stood stout,  
 Like a deer, with his breast thrust out.  
 Tail-strap stretched out longer too,



12330 Eyes went all red, like mountain ram's do.  
 On all four legs Sarala stood firm,  
 Like some huge camel, and did not squirm!  
 Light-brown racer, of noble breed;  
 Spine slightly curved from his withers indeed.  
 Ears stuck up, as they do on a hare,  
 Poking through his mane up there.  
 Almambet besat Sarala.  
 Kongurbai's road he traced afar,  
 And he fixed upon him his eye.

12340 In a fine rage rode Kongurbai,  
 Giant, o'er flowing with furious force,  
 Seated upon his camel-sized horse,  
 Making foes bow, like a hungry deer,  
 Making foes shrink, like pole-cats, in fear.  
 Fringe of hair sticking up like a comb,  
 Kongurbai drew near, lips a-foam.  
 Ushang then, his comrade knight,  
 Wanted to set Kongurbai aright,  
 And, at last, rode up to his side.

12350 He was sensible – mind very wide:  
 "There's the river Ayat," said he,  
 And it greatly interests me –  
 On its banks grow the rush and the reed –  
 Very good hiding-place, indeed!  
 Almambet may be hiding there!  
 If one step from your way you fare,  
 Will he not strike you, from his lair?  
 Travel a little slower, with care,  
 Gallop a little more carefully there!"

12360 So said Kalmak Ushang: "Beware!"  
 When he heard this, then brave Kongurbai  
 Looked at Ushang with an angry eye:  
 "So, you think the Kirghiz will win?  
 What kind of spiteful mood are you in?  
 When the Kirghiz stole our herds away,  
 Did you smile with scorn that day?  
 When through the broken gates they came,  
 Did you not mutter: 'Shame on us, shame!'  
 Why should you say: 'Almambet bars the way!'"

12370 You don't encourage me much, I must say!  
 They stole our herd 'neath your very nose –  
 Shame on you too, for praising such foes!  
 Don't be concerned with my soul, amiss,  
 I'd rather die, than tolerate this!

Why not gallop ahead, and see?  
 If I die, then dead I'll be –  
 Are they better than you or I?  
 Let my fame after death ring high!  
 If I live, then my answer I'll give –

12380 Then that Almambet will not live!  
 Neither will that Manas; I'd say –  
 Both their heads I shall carry away!"  
 Having said this, then Kongurbai  
 Whipped his black steed, and made him rear high.  
 Full of determination went he,  
 To that river, where rushes he'd see.  
 Thither he rode, without the least fear...  
 Clutching firm-handed his painted spear,  
 Showing off on his steed Sarala.

12390 Almambet, indeed, waited so far,  
 When he saw Kongurbai on his way,  
 Then he thought: "That awine's had his day!"  
 Firm and courageous, Almambet  
 Waited the coming conflict yet.  
 Now, at last, that mad Kongurbai  
 Full of fury, went passing nearby,  
 Just where Almambet stood hid...  
 When he heard him shout, as he did,  
 Clever Alma flew straight ahead,

13400 Just as Kalmak Ushang had said.  
 When Almambet rode suddenly out,  
 Kongurbai had a brain-storm, no doubt,  
 Of clear mind not a lamb's turd remained –  
 Couldn't turn his horse – he felt chained.  
 Couldn't make up his mind what to do –  
 With the famous Alma in view,  
 Daren't attack, to pierce with his spear...  
 Daren't turn round to see Alma clear.  
 Face to face did not dare to stay –

12410 Lashed his horse with his whip, and away!  
 Took the road toward Alapa,  
 Took to his heels, ran off, there you are!  
 Alapa was a smallish place;  
 Following him, his troops in disgrace,  
 Crowded in, and found no room...  
 Almambet whipped up Sarala soon...  
 Kongurbai pressed his blue god in his breast...  
 Almambet made him bow his proud crest,  
 Made him forget all his glory was worth,



12420 Made him lower his flag to the earth...  
 Kongurbai, who deemed himself fine;  
 Almambet struck with his spear, in his spine.  
 If his horse had not been so swift,  
 Would he not then this life have left?  
 Crack went his armour – see how it splits –  
 Plates and buckles fly off in bits!  
 Struck in the shoulder, just below,  
 From his ribs does the dark blood flow,  
 And the tip-tassel on Alma's spear,  
 12430 No longer blue, spotted red did appear...  
 Over he tipped, from stirrups feet slipped,  
 Quockly Angara's neck he gripped,  
 Took fast hold of Angara's mane.  
 From his side blood spurted again,  
 Flowed below, and dripped on the ground...  
 Having turned his black steed around,  
 Kongurbai limped back to his men...  
 With a cry that split your ears then,  
 Straddled upon his red-brown horse,  
 12440 Muradil came to his aid, of course!  
 Quiskly rode to the wounded one.  
 Then he drubbed thunder from his drum,  
 Then a shot from his musket he sent,  
 As towards Almambet he went.  
 Like a lion, with gleaming red eyes,  
 Muradil now towards him flies...  
 Almambet returned from the blow.  
 Long since he spared no mortal foe,  
 Long since he pitied no enemy,  
 12450 But he let Kongurbai go free –  
 He released his blood-stained spear...  
 Seeing Muradil drawing near,  
 Thinking: "There's that gold buckle shown,  
 There's his sword-like pectoral bone,  
 There's the top of his saddle-peak too,  
 There's his heart, which I'll pierce through!"  
 Almambet took everything in,  
 Necessary for him to win...  
 He, in turn glanced at Alma anew,  
 12460 Thinking: "There's his saddle-bow!" too,  
 "There's the edge of his heart, of course!"  
 Galloping on his red-brown horse,  
 Raising behind him a cloud of dust,  
 Getting ready to make his thrust,

He held firmly to his spear,  
 But Alma that point hewed sheer,  
 Thrust his own spear straight in his breast,  
 Of that giant Chinese got the best.  
 Muradil, who real knighthood feels,  
 12470 Just went flying, head over heels...  
 Muradil was knocked out thus,  
 And, as they say, he bit the dust.  
 Down he fell, left his horse standing there,  
 Almambet strained at his reins, hanging there.  
 Of those knights, and of those times,  
 For a while we'll leave our rhymes...  
 Now we'll turn to another who led  
 Hosts of Chinamen, at their head.  
 All in black, with breeches grey-blue,  
 12480 That was a giant named Boro-onchu.  
 He had a voice which like thunder roared.  
 Just take a glance, and you feel floored.  
 With a crack, sparks flew from his eyes.  
 He came galloping forward likewise...  
 Muradil's horse, Alma could not hold,  
 Rearing, and veering, and over-bold,  
 So he decided to leave it there,  
 Snorting, cavorting, with saddle bare...  
 In the meanwhile, recovering then,  
 12490 Muradil stood before Kongurbai's men  
 That great knight was covered in shame,  
 From his ribs drops of blood still came.  
 Then he thought: "Well, where are my friends?  
 Some must be here, to help make amends!  
 They could bring me a little first aid!  
 He felt angry, and most dismayed.  
 Even began to go off his head!  
 Kalmak Ushang stepped forward instead.  
 Met the wounded knight, looking black,  
 12500 "Did I not tell you to keep to your track?  
 Were you predestined to give up your soul?  
 Did I not tell you to keep self control?  
 Is there then nothing will frighten you yet?  
 Nobody else dare strike Almambet,  
 But you just couldn't leave him alone!"  
 Said Ushang: "Now results are known!"  
 Kongurbai, standing amongst his men,  
 Saw the sneer on Ushang's face then,  
 But he had to turn a blind eye –



12510 Dripping with blood too, was Kongurbai:  
 Doesn't know what to say, just groans,  
 Reason runs wild from pain in his bones.  
 Doctors were sought for, some clever men,  
 Seven they brought, from the best of them.  
 Curative herbs on his wound they laid.  
 They had effect, blessed calm they made:  
 And when his worst pains passed away,  
 He sat again in the saddle that day.  
 Feet in the stirrups, reins taken, of course,  
 12520 Once more he whipped his coal-black horse.  
 After his men he went galloping then,  
 Kongurbai, feeling stronger again,  
 Cries of Ushang; and Boro-onchu,  
 Heated his head; but what can he do?  
 Even stones grew heated likewise,  
 Shrill enough to kill were their cries,  
 As upon Almambet they sped,  
 With their spears stuck out ahead.  
 When he saw such a giants' attack,  
 12530 All before his eyes went black –  
 Lost himself – if not, what was that?  
 Down to the flowing stream Ayat,  
 Made his war-horse swiftly run...  
 There Chubak, Albalta's brave son,  
 Thought to himself: "What's happening now?"  
 Stood and watched and watched – where, why, how?  
 Straightening, then he attacked Ushang,  
 Into his side went his spear, with a clang!  
 In at the front, and out at the back,  
 12540 Pierced right through that giant Kalmak!  
 Over he went, like a rolling stone!  
 Having seen that, Alma, on his own,  
 Turned his horse around to go,  
 While Chubak, with Ushang brought low,  
 Took a blow from Boro-onchu,  
 Freed the reins, Kekteke spurred on through,  
 With his long tail a-sweeping the ground,  
 Flew away then, back to his mound  
 Neskara, of the tribe Kangai,  
 12550 Screamed aloud: "That slave must die!  
 Kill him, spill him, don't let him get by!"  
 Almambet, on hearing that cry,  
 Then got furious, new aim took,  
 And with a murderous threatening look;

Boro-onchu, who'd wounded Chubak,  
 With the sharp head of his spear struck back,  
 Pierced him fiercely, right on the side.  
 Boro-onchu from the saddle did slide,  
 Feet slipped out of the stirrups as well,  
 12560 So that he very nearly fell...  
 But he grabbed at that spear where it struck,  
 Quickly recovered, to his good luck,  
 And Chubak, spear freed from the blow,  
 Madly rode off, as he longed to do so,  
 After the herd, driven off by Sirgak.  
 Sorry at this, having left them like that,  
 Off galloped Almambet and Chubak.  
 After them chased the Chinks in a pack,  
 Hordes dashing forth, and not looking back...  
 12570 Having seen this, the brave Sirgak  
 Lashed with his whip Kekkazik, his steed,  
 Then his ominous spear, at need,  
 Gripped in his grasp, in his firm right hand,  
 And on guard did they both stand...  
 In a small hollow, near to a wood,  
 In their hiding-place, thus they stood...  
 Tokshuker's bold son, Bozkertik,  
 Had a steed, Kergyultyuk, strong and quick,  
 Unlike all others, beyond rebuke.  
 12580 Lashing and slashing at Kergyultyuk,  
 Hiding his musket behind his back,  
 Up rode bold Bozkertik on his nag,  
 Drew quite near to Almambet,  
 And against him his sharp spear set...  
 Then Almambet had a thought all his own –  
 He regretted that they rode alone:  
 "To our comrades and friends we know,  
 We should have come back long ago!  
 We should have joined our folk, waiting near!"  
 12590 True, he'd been struck in the spine by a spear,  
 Then the hem of his armoured robe  
 Helped to protect the horse he rode,  
 Covering parts of his back and breast –  
 He too suffered, like all the rest.  
 So, a support in adversity,  
 May our fearless Sirgak now be...  
 Holding his spear in steady straight line,  
 Hanging his musket behind his spine,  
 Bold knight Sirgak now rode on hard –



12600 To Boz-Uchuk\* the heathens' path barred.  
 Setting his sights on Almambet,  
 Bold Chubak overtook him yet.  
 His reknowned great steed, Kekteke,  
 Finding himself on his native way,  
 Felt like a foal without its herd,  
 Uncastrated, obeyed no word.  
 Lash him twelve times, not a step would he take –  
 Lazy-bones he, though all was at stake.  
 Well, all the knights were fighting now,  
 12610 Wondrous thunder they raised, anyhow!  
 They raised a slaughter, no faltering, true;  
 Kekteke like an arrow then flew.  
 Now no loveliness did he lack –  
 If no musket-ball strikes Chubak,  
 No other rake will o'er take on his track.  
 If his master goes in to attack,  
 Even if foes should ride on the blast,  
 They would not be saved thus at last.  
 Well, Kekteke was all in a sweat,  
 12620 With perspiration his hide was wet,  
 All in a foam, lips and nostrils swell,  
 Good-for-nothing – trained very well!  
 Into full gallop he went, without heed:  
 "Seems that Chubak has a lively steed,  
 Truly, a very good war-horse is he!  
 If that Chubak does not die suddenly,  
 If his days are not broken short,  
 Don't let him pass, to become their sport!  
 See, behind him pursues Bozkertik –  
 12630 In Almambet, where the fighting was thick,  
 Did he not stick the end of his sword?"  
 So thought Sirgak, and again he roared,  
 Then he let down the sharp end of his spear,  
 Out from his mountain hide-out swept clear...  
 Having seen Sirgak drawing near,  
 Bozkertik turned back in fear!  
 Spurred to a gallop his Kaldangker.  
 Though he made haste, he was beaten there –  
 Brave Sirgak overthrew him, what's more,  
 12640 Made Bozkertik start to rave and roar...  
 Cursing and swearing, he lay on the ground,  
 Good-for-nought, like a mighty mound,  
 Down he went on his head in the dust!  
 Deafening roared his musket, upthrust.

Fearless Sirgak, as well he might,  
 Gave a heart-rending cry, all right,  
 At the musket's exploded cap...  
 At the crest-edge, in a dry grassy gap,  
 Stopped all those who were following him...  
 12650 Akbalt's son, Chubak, looked grim.  
 Seated upon his steed, Kekteke,  
 Which seemed now in a mood for play,  
 With a cry: "Arise, brother knight!"  
 Up rode Chubak, showing signs of fright.  
 But Manas never budged an inch –  
 Snored away, with never a flinch.  
 So it seemed, he slept in a trance...  
 Up rode Chubak, and began to prance,  
 Right to Manas' ear did he come,  
 12660 Then began to drub on his drum.  
 Seemed he was sleeping, not stirring a lot.  
 From his snoring, his head had grown hot.  
 Still Chubak, as a knight, had his right –  
 And he cried then with all his might:  
 "Heathens are coming, Manas, arise!  
 Misfortune, comrade, before your eyes!"  
 Then he tried to lift up Manas,  
 But he o'ertaxed his forces thus:  
 Still he grew stubborn, our bold Chubak:  
 12670 Counting his age with Manas, on one track,  
 Raised him a little, then let him go flop.  
 He, like a dead man, caught on the hop,  
 All relaxed, just let himself drop.  
 Seeing that, Chubak had to stop.  
 He, who had raced there, met with a slop!  
 "Now God's punishment we shall cop!  
 Is Manas in need of a prop?  
 Will his life, like a bubble, just pop?  
 Will this attack his life just lop?  
 12680 How long did we our brows then mop,  
 Suffering torment, because of him?  
 What is he to those men of Chin-Chin?  
 Let him fall into their hands and die!  
 Better that we all in dust should lie!  
 Better for me to slay him outright,  
 Than he should die, without bitter fight!  
 Yes, I shall die, if death comes my way,  
 And whenever comes my last day,  
 I shall never such suffering lack!"



12690 So then thought to himself Chubak,  
 And at once he made haste for the deed,  
 Sat once again on his restless steed,  
 Took in his hand his painted spear,  
 Tunic edge of Manas flung clear,  
 Then in anger, before all those men,  
 Pricked Manas in his buttocks then!  
 Thinking: "What is happening here?"  
 Lion Manas grasped hold of the spear  
 Which had stung him, say, like a gnat –  
 12700 Not in the least was he scared by that!  
 "What are you doing, Chubak, my knight?  
 What is the matter – are you all right?  
 With your spear you pricked my rear!  
 Have you gone mad? Please make things clear!  
 Like some cocky, mischievous lad,  
 Have you gone crazy? That's too bad!"  
 Such were the questions put by Manas.  
 Then Chubak tried to answer thus:  
 Very quickly, and sharply outright:  
 12710 "Cursed be this day, my comrade knight!  
 At this time, your servants, I fear,  
 At this time, when our troops are not near,  
 They drove off a huge herd of steeds,  
 Never thinking of other needs!  
 They made for heathens a hullabaloo,  
 All were incited by Almambet too.  
 So it seems steeds were stolen away,  
 And on the hordes of Chinese, next day,  
 He then began a sudden attack,  
 12720 Caused a commotion, and things looked black!  
 They decided to slaughter those men  
 Who had already arrived here then –  
 You slept so soundly, not waking so,  
 And I thought: "Am I guilty, or no?"  
 Therefore I gave your buttocks a prick!"  
 Thus replied bold Chubak, very quick:  
 "Running around, and making such fuss,  
 In great Beijin the folk fluttered thus!  
 In that huge city they all gathered round,  
 12730 There Kongurbai, their giant, was found.  
 He against whom you fight, dear knight,  
 You won't compel him, however you fight!  
 Is this a place, then, where you can sleep?  
 It's a long road that you have to keep!

Huge is the army which you sent here –  
 You do not think, nor get things clear!  
 Seems you dream of Talas, that far place,  
 Seems you dream Kanikei's embrace!  
 Placing your arm around her form,  
 12740 You're like a lover, serene and warm!  
 Wherefore do you lie, and not move?  
 Here is no place, such dreams to prove!  
 Not the time now for dreaming all day!"  
 Then Manas began his say:  
 "Don't make such a fuss, Chubak!  
 Don't make everything look so black!  
 May those heathens accursed be!  
 Is there a mount, where no frays run free?  
 Is there a foe, whom we shall not fight?  
 12750 And meanwhile, Chubak, get things right –  
 Surely, you are hearty and hale?  
 Do not groan then, you'll only fail!  
 If the foe appears, then we'll slay,  
 And in the fighting we'll win our way!"  
 So spoke Manas, our brave bogatir,  
 Showing no hurry, and showing no fear,  
 Did not bestir himself in the least...  
 Then up spoke Chubak, when he ceased:  
 "He, indeed, has the name Manas!  
 12760 He, indeed, is himself Manas!  
 He, in his manner, is Manas!  
 And in his speech, he is Manas!  
 So if Manas is my tiger here,  
 If Almambet is my comrade dear,  
 If I cry: "The warriors have come!"  
 If the foe is scared, God is one!"  
 Aibanboz, Manas' swift steed,  
 Bold Chubak, running forward at speed,  
 Straight up to Manas then led.  
 12770 When Manas then stroked his head,  
 His great mane at once he shook.  
 Now see our hero's threatening look –  
 Grumbling, rumbling, numbling away,  
 All his equipment he donned that day,  
 Then prepared all his weapons for war:  
 On his face anger showed once more.  
 Tiger-skin stripes he seemed to wear;  
 If he sprang, then none would live there!  
 He had a tiger's look on him too,



12780 Armed with his musket in full view,  
 He was prepared to fight with the foe,  
 Roaring like a lion would go!  
 On his feet were curly-tipped shoes.  
 Proudly on Aibanboz he moves.  
 In his hand stands his painted spear,  
 At his back Akkelte\* shows clear,  
 Short white sceptre, with tassel of grey,  
 Blowing about on a windy day.  
 Smoothly controlling all as they need,  
 12790 Thus Manas bestraddled his steed.  
 At that moment, before you'd expect,  
 Chinese warriors onwards swept,  
 Chasing with angry cries, in a pack,  
 After Almambet and Sirgak.  
 But Manas no attention paid them,  
 Those whole hordes of Chinese men!  
 But he did not give them a single look -  
 Did not budge, and no notice took!  
 So Chubak to Manas then told:  
 12800 "You are called blood-thirsty and bold,  
 But you break oaths, and shame us all!"  
 He, it seems, response wished to call,  
 And was more clever than all the rest...  
 Onwards pushed the Chinese pest,  
 Raising a hubbub and hullabaloo,  
 As, like grains of sand, they swept through!  
 But he did not stir, all the same,  
 No matter how, in what hordes they came!  
 He just deemed them mosquitoes thus...  
 12810 If my tiger is that Manas,  
 If my comrade is Almambet,  
 There is no need to fear foes yet!  
 Will they not soon all come to woe?  
 Soon, defeated, will they not go?  
 With his painted, steel-shod spear,  
 He began to wave, without fear.  
 Kekteke, the steed he bestrode,  
 Then he whipped along the road,  
 And toward Almambet and Sirgak,  
 12820 Went off galloping on their track.  
 On Aibanboz, he gave a loud cry.  
 Those before him began to fly,  
 All together began to wail.  
 From his musket, which struck without fail,

Near or far, shots started to hail!  
 Barrel damask, and nozzle of steel!  
 Smoke from that Isphahan weapon choked breath!  
 Front sight a terror, and shots meant death...  
 From that sacred white gun Akkelte,  
 12830 Lion Manas shot all in his way.  
 Streaming ahead, this musket he fired!  
 Countless foes attacked, then retired.  
 In disorder, they scattered away,  
 When thunder threatened from Akkelte.  
 Lion Manas, that valorous knight,  
 With his war-cries put foes to flight.  
 Countless warriors, in the front lines,  
 Went quite mad, lost their heads at times.  
 Over Alma, Chubak, and Sirgak,  
 12840 Clouds of smoke hung round; blue-black  
 Sounds of firing never ceased,  
 Endlessly were the balls released,  
 Fuses fired, with their corners all red,  
 Thus they blocked the roadway ahead.  
 Then the knights began to wave swords,  
 And Almambet then uttered some words,  
 And to Sirgak-bogatir strictly said:  
 "Ride away now, full speed ahead -  
 Ride away, while the coast is clear.  
 12850 On the road by which we came here,  
 To the side of our warriors ride!"  
 Almambet did thus decide -  
 None could his own way then choose,  
 None could Almambet refuse.  
 So off went the bold Sirgak...  
 Of Almambet, Manas, and Chubak,  
 Of that valorous Kirghiz team,  
 Whom the grey-beards held in esteem,  
 Of the Chinese, who attacked as well,  
 12860 Of them all one can scarcely tell...  
 If you take a glance who's behind,  
 There a white staff, and red banner you'll find!  
 Tiring cries, and a hullabaloo,  
 Or a blue pole, and a red banner too.  
 There's great commotion, which flies to the skies,  
 Ten hundred thousands of muskets rise,  
 Flintlocks, and fuses, and caps there at hand,  
 Shots from such guns, which God's slave can withstand?  
 Or shots from cannons, with gunpowder full?



12870 Pommels on saddles, as big as a bull.  
 Horses which sweep, like a mountain blast,  
 Gigantic limbs, of a monstrous cast!  
 Just take a glance at those giants of theirs –  
 One cannot count them, however one stares!  
 Just take a glance, and what more can be spied?  
 Still bigger giants, with no steeds to ride!  
 They can't be found, such a burden to bear –  
 Legs are like minarets, sticking up there!  
 Glance at their arms, so brawny and bold –  
 12880 Like plane-tree branches, so many years old!  
 Those whom the horses can't bear have to walk.  
 People who've seen them, at once start to talk,  
 Such mighty giants can scare them to bits,  
 Frighten the lesser ones out of their wits,  
 Just like a flock of scattering sheep...  
 Such are the giants the Chinese keep!  
 Some are as big, and round as a tent,  
 Some upon victory only are bent,  
 Some tear your bowels out, like a wild boar!  
 12890 So strike those mighty giants-of-war...  
 Kongurbai's their Commander-in-Chief.  
 Of all Chinese, it is my belief,  
 One of the cunningest wizards still  
 Is Kirmus-Shah's bold son, Muradil.  
 Here's Neskara, with his pom-pom of red,  
 Here is Ushang, a Kalmak, be it said.  
 Here is black-bearded Boro-onchu,  
 Here, from Kangais, comes Orongu.  
 Katalang's daughter, Saikal, is here –  
 12900 How many more can I make clear?  
 Here, from Solons, comes Alo-oke,  
 Here is Dzholoi, with a wild boar's way,  
 Here's Tokshuker's young son, Bozkertik,  
 Here is one who moves his men quick –  
 So-orondyuk's son, swift Solobo,  
 Who counts a thousand as one, you know!  
 He has made his way from Beijin,  
 That wide vale, where Tungush flows in...  
 Shaking their spears, making tassels fly,  
 12910 Quaking, the earth beneath them does lie!  
 Packed tight with warriors all around,  
 If as a unit, one thousand you count,  
 Then ninety thousand's the whole amount!  
 Since they're so many, no space for them's found.

If you should try to pack them all in,  
 There, side by side, your chances are thin!  
 They are shooting, and hooting about,  
 Each one strikes, finds his own way out.  
 Warriors crammed to gether so tight...  
 12920 Three bogatirs galloped up from the side,  
 And they boldly barred their way.  
 From the warrior-van that day,  
 Six thousand died, to the very last man!  
 Those who to bring up the rear began,  
 Could they see the conflict or not?  
 Stocky, cocky, and rather squat,  
 With a puff-cheeked visage in ploy,  
 Keder's bold son, the enormous Dzholoi,  
 Just arrived, and to his delight,  
 12930 Sorted out a foe he could fight.  
 There, on Achbuudan herode,  
 Puffs of dust he raised as he strode,  
 Thus Dzholoi on the road now comes...  
 From the thunder of guns, and drums  
 Shying, the herd of horses sped.  
 Kartkyurëng, by the horse-god led,  
 Guiding the herd, ahead he went...  
 On they galloped, their strenght half-spent.  
 And behind the herd followed on  
 12940 Some young foals, who astray had gone.  
 Three-year-olds ran after them,  
 Tails cocked up, and waving then.  
 Foals without the herd started fights,  
 Outworn work-horses took their rights,  
 All of them ill, and weak at best,  
 They remained behind all the rest...  
 With a loud cry, on smelling them thus,  
 Almambet, Chubak, and Manas,  
 With Alma there, in the lead,  
 12950 Galloped up to the herd, indeed,  
 Understood then: "The steeds are here!"  
 Here is what Dzholoi saw clear:  
 "Chinese, cursed by their native kind,  
 Why do they drive the herd behind?  
 Ragamuffins, who look like beasts,  
 Heathens, who rode no steeds to feasts,  
 Awkward ones, who bestrode no steed,  
 Don't know the ways of a horse, indeed,  
 They do not hear their soothing word –



12960 Seems to me, they have scared the herd!  
 Wretches, who've never seen a real horse,  
 Wanting to bar them on their course!  
 Turn them back! Not let them stay!.."  
 Then Dzholoi rode on his way.  
 Almambet, a wolf for the foe,  
 Said to comrade Chubak: "Do so -  
 Bend down over the neck of your horse!  
 In the dust which they raise, of course,  
 There, unseen, we can make our way -  
 12970 Still Dzholoi behind wants to stay -  
 Overtake that wild boar, as you can,  
 Raise your sword, and strike like a man!  
 Strike your blow, and fetch him down,  
 Wolf for the foe, that heathen clown!  
 By the roadside hew off his head!"  
 And Chubak agreed - enough said!  
 He bent low o'er his horse's side,  
 Not looking round, began to ride,  
 Bowing over his steed's long mane.  
 12980 Not seeing anything wrong again,  
 Giant Dzholoi now changes his mind:  
 Leaving a cloud of dust behind,  
 Off he rode, the herd's way to ban,  
 Racing along on Achbuudan,  
 Overtaking the herd horses so...  
 Lion Manas, a wolf for the foe,  
 Stayed at the upper edge of the pack,  
 Heard Dzholoi come thundering back,  
 And from the southern edge of the herd,  
 12990 Brought behind him a warrior horde!  
 Raising a hubbub, they streamed ahead...  
 Then Chubak thought: "They'll soon be dead!  
 Let them come galloping near to me,  
 Those who with wild Dzholoi I see,  
 Let him beset the heavenly land,  
 Let him lie slain by my right hand!  
 So he got ready to strike his blow.  
 Bending over his steed's neck below,  
 Right in the centre of the herd,  
 13000 Clouds of dust he then bestirred...  
 When he met with Dzholoi on his track,  
 Then he thought to himself, Chubak,  
 Since he was a Noigut knight,  
 And Kekteke was galloping right,

Racing along, like an arrow in flight,  
 "I shall at once begin the fight!"  
 So no longer he delayed -  
 Whipping his steed, an attack he made,  
 Up to Dzholoi he galloped quite near,  
 13010 Pierced him through with his painted spear!  
 From his war-horse, Achbuudan,  
 He went flying, that unlucky man!  
 Head over heels he whirled through the air...  
 Bold Chubak just recovered his spear,  
 When he saw Ushang sweeping near.  
 And, before he could aim aright,  
 Heathen Ushang dashed up to smite,  
 And our brave Chubak, bogatir,  
 He struck down with his long, stout spear,  
 13020 Thus Chubak was left lying there...  
 Head in the dust - a calamity!  
 Thinking: "What will happen to me?  
 Since I'm o'erthrown, what success shall I find?  
 Poor Chubak was upset in his mind.  
 Round his waist the bridle was wound,  
 Round his steed was the other end bound,  
 Held his head, gave him no free play.  
 Then that excellent steed, Kekteke,  
 Standing above the prostrate Chubak,  
 13030 Started to twist and turn, alack!  
 Into the ground he pawed with one hoof,  
 Tossed his brow amulet up aloof,  
 Reared and plunged, began to neigh...  
 Spread on the ground poor Chubak still lay...  
 When Ushang struck him down with his spear,  
 Then he cried: "There goes one bogatir!"  
 While he boasted, and crowed so vain,  
 And his spear got in line again,  
 Up dashed vengeful Almambet -  
 13040 Straight on Ushang his spear was set,  
 And it pierced his side with a clang!  
 Then that fat Kalmak Ushang,  
 Over his horse's quarters flew,  
 And that giant was knocked down too,  
 Lying spread out, flat on the ground -  
 Take a look - in the dust he was found!  
 Galloping on his swift Sarala,  
 Almambet thunders by - there you are!  
 Sarala kicking up clods as well...



13050 As for Ushang, face-down he fell!  
 Then Almambet turned his horse around –  
 Also lying flat on the ground,  
 There it seemed, remained Chubak!  
 Up he reared, shouted out on his track!  
 All mixed up was Kekteke,  
 Bridle and stirrups, where were they?  
 On his wonderful waiting steed,  
 Poor Chubak could not climb; indeed!  
 But Alma, looking sad and grim,  
 13060 Soon came galloping up to him:  
 "What's all this here? What's happened, Chubak?  
 Where's all your valour, has that come a crack?  
 Have those heathens caught up with you?"  
 Coming towards him, Alma helped him through,  
 By his gold belt, and his silk robe too,  
 Grabbed a hold of him, heaved him anew...  
 Then Chubak, son of Albalta,  
 Found himself lifted up by Alma,  
 And set in his saddle secure...  
 13070 Lion Manas galloped up once more,  
 And came swiftly, straight to their side...  
 Meanwhile in thousands those heathens ride,  
 Following hotly upon their track,  
 Quickly encircled Alma and Chubak,  
 But to them Manas made his way,  
 Thundering with his gun Akkelte,  
 Loaded with powder, ready with ball,  
 Fuse all sparking – now what will befall?  
 Those Chinese hordes of warriors there,  
 13080 Fell in confusion, when shots filled the air!  
 Right in the van marched the giant Dzholoi:  
 Losing his steed, his legs must employ!  
 Now on foot, like a tower with its bell,  
 Looking around, then stumbled and fell.  
 Achbuudan, his steed, wild and raw,  
 Neskara then suddenly saw,  
 And his steed, who'd gone out of control,  
 Neskara captured, and brought back whole.  
 Taking great pains, and trouble, of course,  
 13090 Helped Dzholoi to get back on his horse,  
 And in his hands the reins he placed.  
 All the Chinese on their steeds then paced,  
 Led by their elder, Alo-oke,  
 With Kongurbai at their head, on their way.

When they started to move on their track,  
 Kongurbai said: "Our horses are slack!  
 Soon we shall lose our honoured good name!  
 Achbuudan is tired, all the same,  
 Our Dzholoi is a giant, no doubt,  
 13100 Now all the champions round about,  
 You excel, as is widely known.  
 You were told: "Ride off on your own,  
 And with our horses, perish the day,  
 Racing ahead, let them block the foe's way!"  
 So said Kongurbai, very clear.  
 Bold Dzholoi to those words gave ear –  
 Well, those Kalmaks were rich in herds,  
 And he answered back with these words:  
 "'Horse-herds before the foe let fly!' –  
 13110 How can you say such a thing, Kongurbai?!  
 Those brute Kirghiz you underrate –  
 Such bold men I've not met, to date!  
 Shrewd, resourceful, keen-witted too...  
 I thought; 'The herd won't let them through!'  
 But when I galloped there alone,  
 I, with my thoughts, was overthrown!  
 I took small care, not much did I see –  
 So forbear spirits then unseated me!  
 I thought: 'Alone!' – but thousands of them  
 13120 Later appeared, like huge elephants then.  
 I thought: 'Just II' – but they too were there –  
 Lay on their horses' necks, under long hair!  
 In the seething herd, hidden were they.  
 If I try barring the foe in that way,  
 I shall most certainly not go alone –  
 Such cunning foemen before I've not known!  
 Right in the midst of the hullabaloo,  
 Kirghiz were watchful, and waiting too!  
 I will not do so again, while alive –  
 13130 Anyone trying to, would not survive!  
 If you see one, and towards him you ride,  
 Someone attacks from the opposite side!  
 Unseen sally, spears ready, indeed –  
 Down you go flying, knocked clean off your steed!  
 Flat on your back, then you soon understand –  
 You thought to conquer that folk with one hand,  
 But you were not so smart as you seemed!  
 Try, as a leader, to do as you dreamed –  
 Then, when you meet them, you just bite the dust!



13140 Make no mistake then, such schemes do not trust!  
 So, you'll remember: "That's Dzholoi's word!"  
 Then you will know it's true what you heard!"  
 So spoke Dzholoi to their leader that way.  
 Not having dared to once disobey,  
 Hordes of their countless warrior-men,  
 Fussed and buzzed, than stopped, I declare...  
 And we shall also let them stop there...  
 Now of Sirgak, and his suffering air,  
 Listen to now he fared when found -

13150 He was lying there - dust all around,  
 Blood was a-dripping everywhere -  
 He had hurtful wounds to bear.  
 All the other fighters who wait,  
 He desired to warn of his fate.  
 So mounted slowly, dragged back to his men,  
 At that local stopping-place then,  
 On the Ular-Tash\* crest nearby.  
 Quartered there was father Bakai:  
 He had many things on his mind -

13160 Absent so long, where Manas would they find?  
 Old Bakai, who great wisdom preserved,  
 In his soul was deeply disturbed:  
 "Having sharpened axes and swords,  
 Lion Manas and Alma exchanged words:  
 Almambet decided to scout,  
 Took Sirgak with him, as look-out.  
 After the bickering Sirgak began,  
 That helpless Lion Manas, poor man,  
 Rode off alone to sort things out..."

13170 So, to search the roads round about,  
 Imperturbable old Bakai  
 Then bestraddled his steed, forby,  
 Put his spy-glass up to his eye,  
 Turned it six times, and held it high,  
 On the needed spot held it hard,  
 With the tube extended one yard.  
 That simply slew the ones that it found.  
 Thus old Bakai took a look around!  
 Things that were six days' travel away,

13180 Shrank to a race-course distance, say.  
 Such a spy-glass in hand he took,  
 Hawk-eyed Bakai, to have a look.  
 To his right eye the glass he pressed -  
 There the distance in twilight was dressed.

There a dim haze came in between,  
 Only a dull, dusty cloud was seen,  
 Rose up high, and smothered the track.  
 Seemed that Alma, Manas, and Chubak  
 Fell into hell, and escaped to hide...

13190 Alchali-Kir,\* though high and wide,  
 Hid in the dust, rising high in the sky:  
 - Having seen this, the wise old Bakai  
 Went off his head completely then,  
 Didn't know what, how, why, nor when!  
 He was seized by senselessness.  
 But, of a sudden, a break was made,  
 Allah sent him the needed aid.  
 If 'twas not aid, then what was that?..  
 Lashing Kekkazik with a whack,

13200 Up there rode the intrepid Sirgak!  
 From the fray he had broken away,  
 Slashed, and bashed, and crashed that day,  
 From the battle had barely got clear,  
 Heart still beating hard with fear.  
 All his courage had fallen slack...  
 Powerless now, up jogged Sirgak...  
 Beaten-up dust had deafened both ears,  
 Eyes were blinded too, it appears.  
 Ears could not hear, and eyes could not see -

13210 Dust had plunged him in misery...  
 From his body there dripped hot sweat,  
 All his body with sweat was wet...  
 Countless Chinese warriors there,  
 Raised a great hullabaloo in the air.  
 Crimson banners of war now flare,  
 Terrible noise splits the sky everywhere...  
 All this had then been seen by Sirgak.  
 On the white and bare mountain track,  
 Riding forward to catch his eye,

13220 Right in his road stood old Bakai!  
 He thought: "He'll see me!" but he did not.  
 Then Bakai shouted - no answer he got!  
 Taking no notice of that loud sound,  
 Not even pausing to look around,  
 Brave Sirgak rode on, did not stop,  
 Horse went on cantering, hippety-hop!  
 At full strength then yelled Bakai:  
 "Stop, Sirgak! Don't pass me by!"  
 But Sirgak did not listen, nor stay.



13230 Did not look either side of the way,  
 On nobody he turned an eye...  
 He got angry, our brave Bakai.  
 Full of audacity then was he:  
 Cursed may that Sirgak then be –  
 What he has learned he will not say,  
 Will not tell anyone today,  
 Will not openly all reveal –  
 What he saw, will only conceal!  
 Gallops along, makes haste at all cost –  
 13240 Seems that Manas already he's lost!"  
 That's what confusion Sirgak galloped in,  
 That's what Bakai just thought of him!  
 Bozdzhorgo, the steed he besat,  
 Flew like an arrow, swift as that,  
 Just as if the distance were small,  
 Bearing his master, spear, tassel, and all...  
 But he was clever, your old Bakai –  
 You will hear what he did, by-and-by!  
 First he turned his spear around,  
 13250 Held it tight, where the tassel is found,  
 Then Bozdzhorgo, upon whom he sat,  
 Gave a lash with his whip, at that,  
 And to Sirgak, who smelt his horse,  
 From the left side then set his course.  
 Headlong he flew towards Sirgak,  
 And made a sudden but strange attack:  
 Cried: "Trouble-maker Sirgak is here!"  
 Struck him with the blunt haft of his spear,  
 Gave him a heavy blow on his side:  
 13260 "You took no notice, though loud I cried!  
 What's wrong with you?" He poked him again,  
 Accused him, abused him, might and main!  
 Then he thrust the thick end of his spear  
 Into his ribs, and began to jeer...  
 So the fearless Sirgak, indeed,  
 Nearly went flying, thrown from his steed.  
 Only he grabbed his horse's mane,  
 Cried to Allah, to save him again...  
 Heavy, the end of the spear had sped!  
 13270 "Well, I call, and you don't turn your head!"  
 Then he saw Bakai scowling there,  
 And he moved his glance from the spear –  
 Straightway he recognized old Bakai –  
 Taken aback, he began to cry:

"Oh, aba, aba, father dear!  
 Other words he could not say clear,  
 Seemingly frightened out of his wits,  
 Then again, in starts and fits,  
 He repeated "Aba! Aba!"  
 13280 Old Bakai then went so far –  
 Beat him on the head with his whip:  
 "Can't you open eyes? Lost your grip?  
 Can't you collect your thoughts at all,  
 And at least answer, when I call?  
 You can no longer be called a man –  
 Just cry 'Aba!' – is that all you can?  
 Here is just the steppe, bare and wide;  
 Nobody comes here, none here abide!  
 What is it you're afraid of then?"  
 13290 When you used to be among men  
 Many would praise you, and slap your back:  
 "Best of the best is bold Sirgak!"  
 When you bestrode your steed for campaign,  
 Then Manas was your torch, not in vain!  
 Is he alive, full of fighting will?  
 Alma and Chubak, are they quarreling still?  
 Tell me, are they all safe and sound?"  
 Thus Bakai questioned him, standing his ground.  
 Then, at last, Sirgak tried to speak:  
 13300 "Alma tormented me, that's why I'm weak!  
 I tried to follow that cunning Kalmak,  
 But I just lost my reason, alack!  
 I was with him, among the Chinese –  
 What things he did! I was never at ease...  
 Many he wounded, others he slew,  
 In Kentun and Tungsha not a few!  
 Many Chinese raised a hallabaloo;  
 In Kakan there were hordes of them too,  
 Like squirming rain-worms, churning in dew!  
 13310 From the slopes of Kaspang anew,  
 From the shores of the Kara-Su,  
 Where you simply could not see through,  
 Where to your reason, all seemed absurd,  
 There we captured and drove off their herd!  
 I was then very much surprised  
 At the deeds which Alma devised!  
 If Chinese came, he chattered with them,  
 If Kalmaks came, he nattered with them!  
 I looked on, understood not a word –



13320 Useless was the chit-chat I heard!  
 Having travelled their endless ground,  
 There an enormous horse-herd he found,  
 And he drove them along our track,  
 Saying no danger would come from that,  
 We should find a safe place for them –  
 Then cried: "We're lost! Here come Chinese men –  
 Foes have arrived!" I went off my head,  
 Couldn't make sense of what he said –  
 All my efforts were vain, all the same!

13330 When from the gate Almambet then came,  
 When he a huge herd of steeds drove afar,  
 When to the vale in the range of Tungsha,  
 Springtime had barely come, indeed,  
 Kartkyureng, my father's fine steed,  
 Led at the head of the whole horse-herd!  
 Heathen Chinese guessed what had occurred,  
 And from all sides descended on us,  
 And with their hordes encircled us thus!  
 Knights, who into a frenzy were stirred,

13340 In that wrangling then were heard,  
 With their chief, with Manas the knight  
 Placing their hopes on their will and their might,  
 They came under the threat of the spear!  
 You may believe me, Aba, father dear –  
 They came under a musket-fire hell,  
 They came under the cannons as well!  
 Lion Manas, your bogatir too,  
 Battled the flame, and musket-fire knew!  
 Alma said: "Gallop, and tell of all this!"

13350 To the tribes of Kara-Kirghiz!  
 Take the message to them!" said he,  
 And especially then, chose me!  
 I do not know what has happened now,  
 Only I've galloped here somehow!  
 Think my words over, though muddled, alack!"  
 Thus at last spoke out bold Sirgak.  
 Told it all, incoherent, in haste.  
 Father Bakai saw how he was placed,  
 Then replied: "You may harm us, my lad,

13360 Crying: 'Chinese are all round us!' – that's bad!  
 You want to shout to our warriors too –  
 That would be the wrong thing to do!  
 On Manas you will bring down woe –  
 I should advise you not to do so!

That shows your imprudence, my lad –  
 Crying: 'Chinese are attacking!' – That's bad!  
 If you persist, and do just so,  
 Then all our knights you'll bring to woe!  
 You must listen, our men you must save!"

13370 Then Bakai thought: "God sends his slave –  
 All will be as we beg in prayer!"  
 Heralds arrive, and we get a scare –  
 Say, have we not got horses to spare?  
 Will they not gallop off anywhere?  
 Will they not return, bright and brisk?  
 But our men cannot take the risk!  
 All the sons of Nogois, that is us,  
 Will not the heathens slay them thus?  
 Tear down our posts, and let yurtas fall

13380 On famed Nogois, and destroy them all?  
 Leaving only their children to cry,  
 Smash down our towns and towers high,  
 Ruin, and rob, and rape our land,  
 Our Talas, like the palm of your hand?  
 I myself know how these heathens lay waste –  
 So Sirgak – don't be in a haste!  
 I shall find the right approach  
 To our people, so don't encroach!  
 Stop agitating, Sirgak, as you too!

13390 Wash all these blood-stains from you too!  
 Don't breathe so heavily, scowl and frown,  
 Gather your thoughts, and then cool down!  
 What if hordes come, on evil bent?  
 Empty phrases do not invent!  
 They have no cattle, no war-horse herds!  
 They are senseless, empty words.  
 'One of our men's worth a thousand of them!  
 Don't say such things – you'll be sorry then!  
 They are all dotty, and gabble and gasp,

13400 They have but little power in their grasp!  
 Don't say: 'I count them not folk – just clay!  
 Though there are multitudes of them, say,  
 Still we stole their horses away,  
 On the road we drove them, say!  
 Nobody asked who we were, anyway,  
 But we shall not trust them, say!  
 If you come, and boast and bray,  
 Then, without thinking what you say,  
 Will they not start, in disorder, a fray?



13410 Will they not fly against heathens, say?  
 Will they not raise up a racket that way?  
 If you prayers then to Allah we say,  
 Will those heathens Manas not slay?"  
 All this to him bold Bakai did say.  
 Many wise things he spoke that day.  
 Then set his steed, Bozdzhorgo, on his way.  
 In the breeze gleamed his beard of grey,  
 Dust arose – in his seat did he sway...  
 Gripping the spear-half tight as he may,  
 13420 There stretched out, Sirgak did not stay,  
 By Bakai's side it supported Sirgak,  
 Helped him along, when his horse fell back.  
 Making out he was in no haste,  
 And did not know just how he was placed,  
 And did not hear the high words of truth,  
 Poor Sirgak put on looks of youth.  
 So, just see, with arms a-tilt,  
 He held the pine-wood spear by the hilt,  
 Tugged along thus, beside Bakai,  
 13430 Thus arrived at the war-camp nearby.  
 Old Bakai then gave a shout,  
 Grey beard gleaming, blowing about.  
 Up to the warriors galloped he:  
 "Why no musket-practice, I see?  
 Just as if in some village you hide.  
 Why lie lazing upon your side?  
 Why don't you now your musket-fire try?  
 Just like sheep in a fold you lie!  
 Why are you all spread out in this mess?  
 13440 Now, it seems, God sends us success!  
 We have captured a horse-herd rare,  
 But it was an enormous affair!  
 Three of our bogatirs stayed there –  
 They decided for each a share...  
 Through Sirgak, it seems, they sent news!"  
 Thus old Bakai set out his views.  
 Thus news burst out 'mid the warrior-men.  
 Hearing his cries, they too clamoured then,  
 Made a hubbub: "We'll saddle, and ride!"  
 13450 So to each other aloud they cried.  
 Thousands, ten thousands, a racket reared,  
 Straddled their steeds, took sharpened spears,  
 They all renewed their sword-edges too,  
 On rough stones keened halberds anew.

Dashed about, clashed with others as well,  
 Started to catch their steeds, with a yell,  
 Raised their loud resounding cries,  
 Saddled, bestraddled their steeds likewise.  
 Sabres on shoulders, slanted neat –  
 13460 Quiet at last their hearts then beat!  
 Pulled on their helmets, visors left wide.  
 Powder charges got ready, beside.  
 Armour plates they buckled on,  
 Beys and Shahs – agitation was gone!  
 Thinking: "We'll meet our foe face to face!"  
 Strapped their campaign drums in their place.  
 Circling round, like clouds overhead,  
 Quieter now were all those who led –  
 Thinking: "Our foes will soon be dead!"  
 13470 Circling round, like crows overhead...  
 Spears got entangled, poked here and there,  
 Heads knocked on heads – with no room to spare!  
 Where grass was thick, and the water pure,  
 Horses were gaining strength, more and more.  
 All war-horses were now well-fed.  
 Muzburchak, with his white beard and head,  
 Led to make a surprise attack here,  
 His division moved forth from the rear,  
 But yet earlier, outstripping him,  
 13480 Like a white swan, with neck stretched thin,  
 Came Sandzhibek from Andizhan.  
 Seems he straddled his steed, that man,  
 Then towards Myunus he thrust,  
 Leaving behind him clouds of dust,  
 As, like a land-slide, his troops moved on,  
 Then, behind them, when they had gone,  
 Bearing banners on banners ahead,  
 Also raising the dust where he led,  
 From Eshteks came Dzhamgirchi –  
 13490 His Tatars came galloping free,  
 Many Tatars, each straddling his steed,  
 Like one herd burst forth, indeed!  
 By the stream, like rolling waves,  
 Came the Kazakhs, those bellicose braves,  
 With their war-cry, came in a cloud,  
 Beating their gold-rimmed war-drums aloud.  
 Fighting Kazakhs raised a hullabaloo,  
 One spear beat on another too.  
 Asking eagerly – "Where is the foe?"



13500 Looking all round, ahead they go!  
 And behind them, following on,  
 Bold Tështyuk, Eleman's famed son,  
 Bringing his warriors with him too,  
 Who, with a cry, then push on through.  
 Covered completely in armour blue,  
 On the Këk-Aral road, which they knew,  
 Having their muskets fired once more,  
 Thoroughly tested, to be sure,  
 With fifty squads of a hundred men,  
 13510 Having donned Kalpak caps then,  
 With a cry came cantering through,  
 Taz's son, the bold Urbyu!  
 Stepping forward with his men,  
 In the rear of the others then,  
 Off they moved in one great flock.  
 How many were there? Let's take stock!  
 Thirty hundred thousand men!  
 Like a land-slide they moved off then,  
 Spreading their wings along the way –  
 13520 Strong-men and bogatirs were they!  
 All at last were on the move,  
 Covering the rear, their pluck to prove,  
 By their brilliance, distinguished men –  
 Bold bogatirs, excelling all then,  
 Rode the comrade-in-arms of Manas –  
 Forty wolves, and a-howling thus!  
 Eldest of them all was Bakai.  
 Wolves, or tigers, or lions went by,  
 Each loading down his trusty steed!  
 13530 Seeing them, one rejoiced, indeed!  
 All the knights along the road,  
 On their steeds, in blue armour strode,  
 Bearing banners, with gold crescent shown,  
 Waving on long white staffs, wind-blown.  
 Father Bakai of all those is the head –  
 Forty comrades-in-arms he led.  
 They had forty thousand men,  
 With Akkula in reserve with them,  
 Steed of Manas, which would not swerve!  
 13540 Going ahead of all men who serve,  
 Crying: "Free the way! Let us through!"  
 Bold Bakai led all in view.  
 Such was that enormous host –  
 Off to the battle they waited most,

Let them gallop – they're all well-fed –  
 If they gallop, then full speed ahead!  
 Freeing their souls with their noisy style!  
 Let us leave them there for a while...  
 Now about Lion Manas and Chubak –  
 13550 Let us once more get on their track...  
 Let us hear something more about them!  
 Chinese forces opposing then  
 Cunning Manas, and bold Chubak,  
 Swooping and whooping, made their attack.  
 Raising a loud alarming cry,  
 Goddle-eyed giant, the great Kongurbai,  
 In the track of his troops then rode –  
 On his war-horse there he strode,  
 In his spear-proof coat of mail,  
 13560 With his blue spear, which could not fail,  
 With his armour-plates buckled on,  
 Like a mad elephant has gone,  
 Full speed ahead, to Manas, in his ire,  
 And his eyes were flaming with fire.  
 Long straight nose, with burning eyes,  
 Muscular-limbed, like a tiger he flies.  
 Deep dark pupils, threatening cry,  
 Body thick-set, round-shouldered, high.  
 That is the brave one – Kongurbai!  
 13570 Algara, his horse, seems to fly.  
 Like some majestic hawk he rears.  
 Wild, beastly beauty then appears:  
 Croup swells out, like a cauldron grand,  
 He gave him freedom to roll in the sand,  
 And to drink from the purest lake –  
 Even wild asses he'd overtake.  
 Floating mane, and fluid long tail,  
 Fed and prepared for the fray as well.  
 Like to blue-blue jewels, his hooves.  
 13580 Swan-necked, graceful, this black horse moves!  
 Kongurbai then lashed him along,  
 Aimed his spear with black tassel on.  
 Glaring-eyed he aimed it too,  
 Straight towards lion Manas he flew...  
 Knight Manas glimpsed him on his way –  
 When he saw him, his soul felt gay.  
 Heart began to beat on ahead,  
 "He has come, whom I waited!" he said.  
 "God has fulfilled my one desire!"



13590 That mad slave is full of wild fire!  
 "I shall not leave him alive!" said he,  
 Full of valour as he could be.  
 He had oft thought that Kongurbai  
 Might not come, and had heaved a sigh.  
 Saving him, of the rest he thought nought -  
 Of them not even as children, he thought,  
 But he had now seen Kongurbai,  
 And like a hawk, unhooded, on high, <sup>120</sup>  
 Knight Manas screeched, and gave a grin.  
 13600 Aibanboz, who stood under him,  
 Lashed by his whip, ahead did fly...  
 Lion Manas, and Kongurbai,  
 In single combat, as one seemed to melt.  
 Thinking: "There lies his golden belt,  
 There lie his ribs, where his heart is found!"  
 Lion Manas took a quick look around,  
 Set his spear, with greatest care,  
 Straight above that saddle-bow there.  
 When his spear at the foe's heart was set,  
 13610 When his spear-tassel flew free yet,  
 When with a cry Manas onward pressed,  
 When his spear struck his foe in the breast,  
 Then his armour rattled and rang...  
 Quarrelsome Kongurbai, with a clang,  
 On the croup of his camel-like horse,  
 Then fell backwards, head-first, of course!  
 For if Manas struck such a strong blow,  
 No one could stand up against it so!  
 Your bold lion, the knight Manas,  
 13620 Showed himself not so simple thus!  
 Kongurbai flew down from his steed.  
 Having unsaddled him thus, indeed,  
 Lion Manas took his sword in hand,  
 Ready to hew off his head, understand.  
 In the meanwhile, Boro-onchu  
 Had decided what he then must do!  
 With his black pom-pom upon his hat,  
 Struck at Manas with his spear, and spat!  
 He was one of their famous knights,  
 13630 So he rode facing Manas by rights.  
 But, in the blinking of an eye,  
 Almambet burst forth with a cry,  
 And, ere anyone else could come,  
 Set his tasselled spear, on the run,

Galloped against that Boro-onchu,  
 And to that host, so numberless too,  
 Raising a cloud of dust to the skies,  
 Thus barred the way before their eyes.  
 While they stood waving their swords to and fro,  
 13640 Boro-onchu got a sharp belly-blow!  
 Thus that black-beard met with defeat,  
 And went whirling out of his seat.  
 Having been struck, it seems, by Manas,  
 Down he fell from his saddle thus.  
 So Manas then turned round his horse -  
 You know it well - Aibanboz, of course -  
 But things turned out bad for Alma...  
 Since he'd offended the Chinks with his bar,  
 They began shooting shots, like rain,  
 13650 Musket-balls, arrows, again and again.  
 They began screaming their war-cry "Mendyul!"  
 Others, Kalmaks, screamed "Dzhabul! Dzhabul!"  
 Those who did so one can't count, it's clear...  
 Then Manas thought: "My knights are not here!  
 If I must die, then I'll never show fear!  
 Lacking my comrades, I'll show good cheer!  
 Here are a few bogatirs of mine found -  
 Heathens are screaming at us all around.  
 If I have slain Kongurbai with my spear,  
 13660 There'll be an end of the few of us here!"  
 On Aibanboz he swayed to and fro,  
 His white spear in his hand also.  
 Itkechpes\*, the wide river's ahead -  
 That's what they call Kara-Su, be it said -  
 Winding near here it can bring us woe...  
 If you enter, on horse-back so,  
 Then you can't touch the bed with your spear,  
 Even a war-horse will hold back in fear.  
 Cursed river, so deep, and no ford -  
 13670 Nine spears won't plumb it, I give you my word!  
 Brave Manas put his steed in to swim,  
 Plunged in the water, up to his chin.  
 Chinese pursuing raised such a din,  
 Hoping that here they'd get even with him!  
 Rained down showers of shafts on his head,  
 He went on all alone instead...  
 Raised down shots from their muskets too,  
 Even brought cannons, and fired a few!  
 Endless hordes of heathens came,



13680 Wiggled and writhed like rain-worms again.  
 Those Chinese who'd caught up with Manas,  
 Could not reach him with spear-tips thus.  
 But your grey-maned knight was caught too –  
 In the river he couldn't get through.  
 From the rear, keeping close on his track,  
 Carefully followed Alma and Chubak.  
 They kept close, and their fire was hot –  
 Almambash thundered out its shot.  
 Prayers to Allah began to sound,  
 13690 Echoes of them flew all around.  
 Almambet was clad in blue steel,  
 Coat of chain-mail, and plates as well.  
 Tread on a stone it was crushed – there you are,  
 By the hooves of his horse Sarala.  
 Just like candles its long ears burned.  
 There, beside him, Chubak's horse churned.  
 'Gainst the Chinese they cried "Kangai!"  
 Hastened forward, although to die...  
 In their rear he struck with his spear,  
 13700 Hewed off heads of those who drew near.  
 Right and left with heads they paid dear.  
 Kël-Kechyu's estuary flowed near;  
 Many heathen fighters he slew,  
 Those he struck, he hurled down too.  
 Many of them he left for dead,  
 Smoke did not disperse round his head,  
 Never ended the thundering shot,  
 When the fuse met powder, all hot!  
 From his musket's muzzle, to boot,  
 13710 When in a rage, he started to shoot.  
 At a race-course distance, he fired,  
 Almambash shot on, never fired.  
 Five to ten warriors died from one shot –  
 Fell to the ground, and that was their lot!  
 Those Chinese, not far from them,  
 Took to their heels most hastily then.  
 Meanwhile out pair loaded muskets once more,  
 Shot at Chinese who stood on the shore.  
 They were dropped by Alma and Chubak.  
 13720 Meanwhile your grey-maned one was not slack!  
 Over the river no track he left,  
 Let his steed Aibanboz swim deft.  
 On his horse was a ball-proof robe,  
 Chain-mail and plates, which nought could probe.

Shots released by the heathen fail,  
 They're no more danger to them than hail!  
 Uncovered spots were not to be seen,  
 So Manas of death did not dream:  
 Such a thought did not enter his head,  
 13730 Though the shots from all sides sped.  
 Shots from flint muskets, they fell short,  
 Steed Aibanboz in the waves made sport,  
 Swimming, and snorting away on the stream,  
 Nostrils blowing out water and steam.  
 Ears, like a hare's, were stuck up straight.  
 Though those heathens shot early and late,  
 Balls could not pierce his armour-plate,  
 Could not break through it, crooked or straight...  
 Finally out of the flood Manas climbed  
 13740 Undisturbed, and still with strong mind.  
 Having climbed from the river, Manas,  
 Seeing the heathens raise such a dust,  
 Which the whole earth then seemed to enshroud,  
 Hearing those warriors screaming aloud,  
 While the crowd, which surged around,  
 Just like rain-worms, squirmed on the ground,  
 Seeing steel spear-tips all ashine,  
 Heads a-swaying, line after line,  
 Saw that the earth beneath them shook,  
 13750 Raising a haze of dust, just look!  
 Banners beat banners, where tassels hang!..  
 Here's the impassable range of Tungshang.  
 Seething of enemy heathens one hears;  
 They are all led by their bogatirs:  
 Chief of all Chinese – Kongurbai!  
 Then one great leader catches your eye –  
 Shah Kirmus' son, Muradil,  
 Then Neskara, with red pom-poms still!  
 Then Ushang, who's from the Kalmaks,  
 13760 Boro-onchu, with grey beard, never lacks!  
 From Kangais comes Oronchu,  
 Katalang's daughter Saikal is here too.  
 Solo-on's here, son of Alo-oke,  
 Bold Dzholoi too, with his wild boar's way!  
 Son of Tokshuker – Bozkertik,  
 Solobon's son – So-orongyuk,  
 From the Dzhaicans comes young Dzhayan,  
 From Chagaans comes old Bayan,  
 Those who are named Dzhhyudee and Degen,



13770 Any of these to fight foes burn –  
 Hack off their heads, and nothing them saves!  
 Alma and Chubak are a pair of braves,  
 Who among the Kara-Kirghiz,  
 Share all the valour and wisdom there is!  
 Bold Manas' river they cross,  
 See how he did so too, without loss.  
 Having whipped up their pair of steeds,  
 Following on Manas, with same deeds,  
 Those two entered the river, like he...  
 13780 Arrows fly down like rain, just seel  
 Heathens from flint-lock muskets fire,  
 And from their muzzles the shots range higher,  
 Falling down then like showers of hail.  
 Almambet and Chubak they assail...  
 Then the Chinese in the river plunge,  
 Shouting and screaming and splashing they lunge,  
 Crying: "Capture that Kirghiz pair!"  
 All together they waded in there.  
 Having encircled them, things looked black  
 13790 For bogatirs Alma and Chubak!  
 With their swords and axes they waved –  
 Bold Manas saw them – the day was saved!  
 Your bogatir then understood  
 That, if captured, they'd come to no good!  
 So he thought out the matter thus:  
 "If they slaughter grey-maned ones with us,  
 Cursed be the safety of your Manas so!  
 Let me make my way to the foe,  
 And Alma and Chubak as well  
 13800 Let me rescue from heathen hell!  
 If my hour has come, let me die!  
 All that was written of me, forby,  
 Then I shall know, and understand..."  
 Thinking thus, with his whip in his hand,  
 Then he beat Aibanboz on the side –  
 On his assistance he now relied.  
 Back to the river he galloped then:  
 They tried to stop him, those two brave men,  
 Almambet first aloud to him cried;  
 13810 Waving him back to the further side:  
 "Oh, you awkward one, why have you come?"  
 Not understanding him, stood there numb.  
 But on the Chinamen, roaming about,  
 He attacked, and laid some of them out.

Those who came directly in view,  
 Numerous Chunks he promptly slew.  
 Kél-Kechyu became red with blood.  
 Chinamen raged then, all in one flood,  
 And how many of them replied,  
 13820 When he returned to the river-side!  
 When with those heathens he started to fight,  
 Aibanboz then displeased his knight.  
 "May he go to the devil!" cried he,  
 Whipping him on with difficulty.  
 Even before, he'd been all in a sweat:  
 When in the river again he got wet,  
 He caught a cold, and went all stiff,  
 His last powers dissolved in a whiff,  
 And with nostrils blown out wide,  
 13830 And with a swollen belly beside,  
 Aibanboz, in the cold Kék-Kechyu,  
 Started to swim with the current too!  
 Coming up from behind, Kongurbai  
 Watched our bogatir with sharp eye.  
 There the river grew narrow and swift.  
 With the current he started to drift.  
 When he came to that narrow place,  
 There he met Kongurbai, face to face.  
 That swine got ready as he drew near,  
 13840 And made a stab at him with his long spear.  
 He thought: "Sultan Manas I shall slay,  
 And let the river bear him away!  
 Surely, I can't miss him, I know!"  
 And with his spear gave another blow.  
 But Manas feared not death any time –  
 "What will he do next, that wild swine?"  
 So he thought, looked him straight in the face...  
 Kongurbai chose then another place –  
 Straight between the eyes, that was clear!  
 13850 Up he pranced, and struck with his spear...  
 Lion Manas, whose heart was like stone,  
 Did not even blink, gave no groan,  
 But the spear-head, aimed at his thus,  
 Grasped at the tip, without the least fuss.  
 Kongurbai was left standing still.  
 He who had thrust, and thought to kill;  
 But, not letting the spear reach his face,  
 Mighty Manas grabbed the tip in a trice,  
 Seized the black tassel, and held on fast.



13860 And when the lance was safe in his grasp,  
 He was glad that he seized the steel tip,  
 Held it firmly now in his grip!  
 Other end stayed in Kongurbai's hand.  
 He besat Algara on the land,  
 On the bank of the river, that was.  
 Bold Manas, on tired Aibanboz,  
 Floated onwards, along with the stream.  
 Kongurbai, that great giant, it would seem,  
 Went half-mad, when he had no success –  
 13870 Face went all distorted with stress...  
 Thus Manas his features saves –  
 He goes floating along with the waves...  
 Kongurbai, still holding his spear,  
 He gets pulled along, there and here,  
 While Manas still sits on his steed...  
 Then with a cry, to aid him in need,  
 Up came galloping Almambet,  
 Like some great tiger, furious yet,  
 Ready to spring upon his prey.  
 13880 If he fought, he would surely slay!  
 None would survive his blow, safe and sound.  
 Eyes blazed with anger, fire all round!  
 That quick-witted Almambet,  
 Head stretched forward on duck-like neck,  
 He then entered the river in time –  
 Waves lapped 'neath his horse's spine.  
 Sides were covered by water below –  
 Bold Almambet crossed the wide river so.  
 Reached the shore, all danger there passed,  
 13890 And he attacked Kongurbai at last!  
 He 'gainst that fury just could not stand –  
 Took to his heels to seek his own land.  
 He had thought to slay Manas,  
 But had met with failure thus.  
 He had struck at him with his spear,  
 But Manas had shown no fear,  
 Grasped the tip, and pulled him along,  
 So all his devilish plans went wrong.  
 Now Almambet, with a savage cry,  
 13900 Dashed towards him, with eager eye.  
 Not having strength to tear it away,  
 Kongurbai had to let his spear stay.  
 Algara, the steed he rode,  
 He turned around, and off he rode –

So he left his spear with Manas,  
 Who still held the slender end thus.  
 Only when he had let his spear go,  
 Could he turn his horse around so...  
 Back to his people went giant Kongurbai –  
 13910 Putting it plainly, he just had to fly!  
 Driven back to his warriors there  
 By Alma and Chubak, that bold pair,  
 They it was who put him to flight!  
 Raising a cloud of dust to the height,  
 Then the heathen horde came in sight,  
 And they were driven off in that fight.  
 Those two champions, still unafraid,  
 Back to Manas their way then made.  
 Manliness, stubbornness, all had shown.  
 13920 Two long spears did Manas now own!  
 Counting the one from Kongurbai,  
 Which he had wrenched from his grasp, forby!  
 He still floated along on his horse,  
 Now his garments were soaked, of course!  
 Everything dripping, below his waist,  
 So from the river he then made haste.  
 Thinking: "Have they died, my Kirghiz?"  
 When from the river he climbed like this,  
 Up to him came the first ranks of men –  
 13930 All made ready for battle then!  
 They made ready the war-steeds again,  
 Took Akkula, for Manas, by the rein,  
 Handed it over to bold Bakai,  
 Who, with white beard, was waiting nearby.  
 He was sitting upon his grey horse,  
 Bold Bakai, agitated, of course!  
 With a cry, then he took the rein,  
 Went off to find his master again;  
 Akkula, like a falcon flew free –  
 13940 He took him back with his master to be!  
 There to his master he handed him then.  
 After him came forty brave men,  
 Galloping at full speed on their way –  
 Lion Manas' war-comrades were they,  
 With the elder, Kirgil, at their head.  
 These Kirghiz were by honour led,  
 Ready to fight the Chinese to the last,  
 Their enormous host then swept past.  
 With a war-cry to battle they went;



13950 Full speed ahead their steeds they sent.  
 If you gallop – then gallop like those!  
 In their saddles, they bent their bows,  
 Shots went whizzing from muskets away,  
 Drums went drubbing, rousing dismay!  
 Arrows went whistling swift through the air,  
 Swords and axes gleamed everywhere.  
 Banners on staffs bellowed out in the breeze,  
 Take a look at all this, if you please!  
 Kara-Kirghiz were going to war –  
 13960 From all sides they came, more and more!  
 Young, untried warriors, elders too,  
 Nobody turned aside, all were true.  
 Like a land-slide, forward rolled they;  
 Deep content on their brows that day!  
 If the moonless dark night came down,  
 If the new day in mist starts to drown,  
 Then the earth you just cannot see...  
 Horses' ears then, like candles, stand free.  
 Made of a whirlwind this steed seems to be!  
 13970 On his forehead, what is it you see?  
 Traces which the halter have left.  
 Sinewous, glorious creature, and deft!  
 Long since a-scouting he has not been.  
 Idly he's lazed, now restless is seen.  
 On a moonless night he's in view,  
 If you ride in the dark, or the dew,  
 Candles, it seems, in his straight ears gleam,  
 So your road can by you then be seen!  
 On such a sacred steed, Akkula,  
 13980 Brave Manas now sits – there you are!  
 Holding his famous painted spear  
 At the ready, our bold bogatir!  
 Haft of the spear is made out of cane,  
 Dried in the sun, again and again.  
 By a skilled master it has been bound,  
 All in tendons, round and around.  
 Then it has been covered in glue,  
 Painted, prepared for jousting too.  
 "What kind of wood is that?" they ask.  
 13990 People can't answer – too hard a task!  
 Well, it's from cane, and sinews, and glue.  
 After that, it's been painted too!  
 Take a look here at such mastery!  
 If it pricks, it pierces, just see.

At whoever it chances to fly,  
 Hurl'd from his horse, on the ground he'll lie!  
 And if it's tugged, or dragged out of a wound,  
 Then some poor wretch lies dead, or has swooned!  
 If some foe tries to seize such a spear,  
 14000 All his five fingers will disappear!  
 With such a menacing painted spear  
 Firmly gripped in his hand, never fear,  
 With his huge Akkula 'neath him then  
 Sat Manas, the bravest of men!  
 Whipped his steed, and wasted away,  
 Ready to beat those heathens that day!  
 Then he took in his hand his sword,  
 When it was forged, even embers ran short,  
 Many a thicket they had to hew,  
 14010 Many the bellows which they then blew!  
 Many the bulls they killed to make these.  
 Karataz, forge-men, if you please,  
 Aid from Allah called down, in alarm,  
 Placing his trust in the strength of his arm!  
 For the tempering of that blade,  
 Many springs were waterless made.  
 Not withstanding that testing task,  
 Fifty-six smiths for a rest had to ask!  
 Summer and winter they hammered away,  
 14020 Ere they could make its curved tip stay!  
 Tempered by water from poisonous streams,  
 If at night you unsheathe it – no dreams –  
 There it burns, as if with red fire!  
 In the day it grows long, hilt grows higher.  
 In dragon's poison they cooled that blade –  
 Three whole months – that's how it was made!  
 Strike at a mountain – the stones will fly!  
 Strike at a body – the head there will lie!  
 Laid in dry grass – a fire it will start!  
 14030 He who is slashed by this sword – falls apart!  
 Such did Manas withdraw from its sheath.  
 Akkula suddenly shied beneath!  
 Then against the Chinese rode they,  
 Drubbing their war-drums on their way.  
 Thunder from Akkelte then roared!  
 Lion Manas, to strength restored  
 Then towards the enemy rode,  
 Cried aloud, gave his steed the goad,  
 Then his spear, sixty arm-spans long,



14040 He prepared, and thus felt strong...  
 Then his dragon, on whom he called,  
 Right behind him crept and crawled!  
 Then his wolves with short grey tails,  
 Those whose aid to him never fails,  
 Right behind him came running by.  
 In the sky did Alpkarakush\* fly,  
 With its pinions shielded his fame.  
 With black stripes, his tiger came,  
 Kaiberen\* and forty Chiltan,\*  
 14050 Fellow-travellers, came with him then.  
 With his fierce look, he stood out from the rest...  
 Raising the dust to the mountain's crest,  
 Galloped on his steed Akkula.  
 When he flew on the foes afar,  
 Then those heathens gave way on one side.  
 Those who stood before him cried,  
 As with his spear he struck them down.  
 Those further off he pierced with a frown.  
 Those nearer to, he slashed with his sword –  
 14060 Achalbats\* swirled of its own accord.  
 From his right eye the sparks did fly.  
 From his lips the steam rose high.  
 From his left eye the embers fell.  
 From Akkelte shots fell as well,  
 From that musket – lead hail, there you are!  
 Shots fell near, and shots fell afar,  
 Never missing their targets, true.  
 Muzzle of steel, and nozzle of blue,  
 Smoke like mist from that Isphahan steel.  
 14070 Sights once fixed on you – death you feel!  
 Thunder, no blunder, from Akkelte!  
 When, as chief of the troops that day,  
 Lion Manas rode forth with a cry,  
 Chinese in crowds began to fly.  
 His white spear, head big as your fist,  
 Went into battle, with thrust and twist...  
 Other knights rode forward too,  
 Piercing those heathens through and through.  
 Forcing those Chinks to dry: "Ta-ta!"  
 14080 Fleeing, waving their arms, there they are!  
 Battle between Kirghiz and Chinese!  
 Heathens first gave way at the knees.  
 They'd not the strength to defy those knights!  
 Those who did – they put out their lights.

Blood soon was flowing upon the ground.  
 Really and truly, their end they found!  
 Not taking note of what others might do,  
 They simply threw up their arms and flew!  
 They could not battle with them any more...  
 14090 Leopard Manas saw this, heard their roar...  
 He then galloped towards Kongurbai,  
 And when at last he then drew nigh,  
 Kongurbai from his senses went,  
 Algara galloping off he sent,  
 Beat with his feet, and his whip as well,  
 Flew to the town where he used to dwell.  
 Thus Kongurbai ceased his own attack...  
 Our Manas rode hot on his track.  
 Our grey-maned one pursued him then,  
 14100 Lion Manas, the bravest of men!  
 Thinking: "His forebears curse him, wild boar!  
 Hadn't the courage to face open war!  
 Saved his own skin, and so ran away –  
 Thus Kongurbai retreated today!"  
 This our Manas then understood.  
 Akkula seemed in a good mood –  
 Ready to go on fighting was he,  
 Akkula, in his majesty!  
 Thus distinguished from all other steeds!  
 14110 Still Manas to whip him up needs.  
 He must keep level with Kongurbai,  
 So Akkula on strong legs must fly!  
 With his chest sticking out like a deed,  
 With his tail-strap extending clear,  
 Made of a whirlwind he swept along,  
 With red eyes, like a mountain ram strong,  
 With his steps, like a long lasso,  
 When his hooves struck the meadow too,  
 Then from the blanket covering him,  
 14120 'Dust flew round his legs so slim!  
 And in the earth, through which his hooves beat,  
 And on the stones found beneath his feet,  
 Cracks appeared, the length of a child...  
 Not letting Algara run wild,  
 Our Manas kept level so.  
 Clods of earth went bursting below.  
 Lion Manas caught up with the foe,  
 Touched Kongurbai with his spear, just so –  
 He at once in confusion was thrown,



14130 But Manas found a target known!  
 "There is his waist-belt, his shoulder-blade there,  
 Here is his spine, but no place is bare.  
 You have been up to smart tricks, Kongurbai,  
 Now comes the moment for you to die!"  
 Now I shall strike!" And he struck home,  
 And at once Kongurbai gave a groan.  
 One sharp stroke, and he was upset,  
 Slid from the saddle, and forward yet,  
 Feet left the stirrups, dangling behind,  
 14140 Fell on the neck of his steed, half-blind.  
 Take a look at the game Manas played,  
 Which for the Chink he specially made...  
 Crimson blood ran down from his spine,  
 Over his armour in one long line,  
 Warm it was, as it flowed away,  
 Armour-plates hung in disarray,  
 Where the betasselled spear got a grip,  
 Dark blood flowed on the staff of his whip,  
 And came burbling, burbling down  
 14150 He was powerless now, poor clown!  
 When in dark blood he seemed to drown,  
 Then he came to the gates of his town...  
 Algara - may misfortune be his! -  
 By his usual custom, that is,  
 Over the sixty-stone-layered wall,  
 Leapt at once, not fearing to fall:  
 Fortress gateway was made of black stone.  
 Kongurbai, that steed of his own,  
 From one year of age had trained,  
 14160 And one layer he first arranged,  
 So his steed should jump over that.  
 Next day two black stones lay flat.  
 Next day three, and next day four,  
 So he went on then, more and more.  
 Trained his horse to jump over the wall,  
 No matter how many stones it was tall!  
 Thus, when needed, the habit was there.  
 Higher and higher steeds jumped in the air.  
 Thus, when sixty stones made a wall,  
 14170 Algara could jump over them all!  
 That was the usual habit he'd gained,  
 But Akkula had not so been trained,  
 Therefore some other means must adopt,  
 And at the gateway wall he stopped.

Forty comrades-in-arms of Manas,  
 Beat their heads 'gainst this wall, alas!  
 Some way through they had to find.  
 From their forefathers, bear in mind,  
 This old tale comes down to you:  
 14180 Somehow, though, they wormed their way through!  
 On the countless Chinese they flew,  
 Horsemen, footmen, bogatirs too.  
 Kumar's son, bold Debegi,  
 One of the best of knights was he,  
 Multitudes of Chinese chased.  
 Down to the fortress gates they raced.  
 On their heels they tried to hang.  
 Chinese musketeer Irang,  
 From the fort shot Bangl everywhere,  
 14190 Aimed at them with his flintlock there.  
 Debegi then came to harm -  
 Shot in the shoulder of his right arm.  
 Back to Kara-Kirghiz galloped he.  
 Those who got through the gates stayed free.  
 Many were captured, stood there dazed:  
 Those who saw those gates stared amazed.  
 Only experienced, trained strong-men,  
 Sixty of such, could open them  
 Seventy only could close them tight!  
 14200 Seemingly every man in sight  
 Hewed down trees to make those gates.  
 Beijin Fortress, erected, waits...  
 Many men's strength those towers fills,  
 Walls are high, rise up like hills,  
 Like sheer cliffs, whose crests can't be seen.  
 Chinese people were hidden between.  
 Fearing by Kirghiz to be slain,  
 Now in their fort they're besieged again;  
 Bleating and baa-ing, just like sheep,  
 14210 Frightened to death, the women weep...  
 Their strong men, and warriors too,  
 Lost their wits, don't know what to do!  
 None there were who'd oppose their foes -  
 Who again to the battle goes?  
 Not one soul. All stood aghast!  
 One thing alone - the gates were closed fast!  
 Sons of the countless Chinese folk  
 Feared for their lives, and that was no joke!  
 Many who'd gone to fight were slain,



14220 But from their Khans – no news again!  
 Essenkhan felt very sad –  
 In the cattle-bazaar, half-mad,  
 Spitting and spuming, flopped outright,  
 Lay Kongurbai, the self-styled knight.  
 Half-unconscious he lay spread.  
 From Algara he fell on his head.  
 In the cattle-bazaar he fell...  
 When they saw their chief not well,  
 All the Chinese raised such a cry:  
 14230 Take a look now at Kongurbai,  
 Who at the head of the folk had stood –  
 There he lay, all covered in blood.  
 No strength left, away he'd swooned.  
 Blood was dripping from his wound...  
 Hoarsely, noisily breathed he,  
 Eyes went rolling, but could not see.  
 Only half-conscious, at the best,  
 Reason shattered, within his breast. <sup>122</sup>  
 Not a scrap was left working there.  
 14240 On the great mob that thronged the square,  
 Great misfortune had suddenly sped.  
 All who saw Kongurbai then said:  
 "Why upon such tricks was he set?"  
 Many of them were full of regret.  
 They had lots of wise old men,  
 Various doctors they had then.  
 They went and told them of Kongurbai.  
 Thirty-six of them drew nigh.  
 On that spot he lay so ill,  
 14250 Where the mob was gathered still.  
 Chinese folk have good doctors too –  
 Drugs to stop flowing blood they knew.  
 These they brought to cure Kongurbai,  
 Many of them they then did try.  
 But they had to be patient men –  
 Two whole days he lay senseless then.  
 When another half-day had passed,  
 Then he opened his eyes at last.  
 When he saw his folk round him spread,  
 14260 Deep breaths he drew, which just split his head!  
 On the third day, then Kongurbai  
 Finally came to himself with a cry:  
 "Where are my high officials, then?  
 Tell me, where are my minister men?"

Where are my young officers too?  
 Where, my padishahs, where are you?  
 My commanders-in-chief, stand by –  
 We must take care of our folk, or they'll die!  
 Those Kirghiz of Manas, it's clear,  
 14270 Sons of our present people here,  
 Cannot in any way overcome...  
 All in vain is what we have done!  
 Better we offer to Kara-Kirghiz  
 Propitiation – which there is!  
 I have always fought for my folk,  
 Their well-being and honour's no joke!  
 Having seen Shah Manas' great power,  
 I before him have had to cower!  
 That man's reasoning power, I can't reach,  
 14280 Nor his forty knights can I teach!  
 Even the simple Mussulmen too,  
 We cannot equal, and that is true!  
 How the spines of their war-horses curve!  
 How their knights in the chail-mail serve!  
 How their young warriors slashing go!  
 How they lay our warriors low!  
 Seems they're all heroes, every one –  
 Only grow quiet when battle is done!  
 While their death-hour is not due,  
 14290 Fight the foe who thought to win through!  
 No, we surely can't cope with them –  
 We shall fall in misfortune then,  
 So I speak now to all of you:  
 That Manas stands above us, it's true!  
 With my own eyes I saw anger spread,  
 O'er his wide brow, and wedge-shaped head.  
 Eagle-beaked, with eyebrows which meet,  
 Menacing looks which enemies greet...  
 If I fall in Manas' hands  
 14300 Nought will remain of me, or my lands!  
 Big mouth he has, and deep-pupilled eyes,  
 Just like a lion, in every wise.  
 Threatening looks, just glance and see!  
 Thickish lips, deep-set eyes glance free.  
 He has the look of a hero on him –  
 When I remember, my thoughts grow grim.  
 Then I start to tremble with fear,  
 And my soul's ready to leave me here!  
 Wide is his breast, and his spirit too,



- 14310 Lids are smooth, and eyes starry-blue.  
Looks are stern, his face fury shows,  
Like a dangerous dragon he goes!  
He won't give way anywhen, anywhere –  
Clearly the mood of an elephant's there!  
Neck of a tiger, and strong-clawed hands,  
Powerful spine, like a stone his heart stands!  
Smooth is his brow, like stars are his eyes.  
Valour he has, and sharp words likewise!  
Foes who would fight him, just come to woe.
- 14320 One of the leopards, he leaps just so!  
I've understood! Why, friends, silent stand?  
Give him your goods, with an open hand.  
If you are sorry to part with these,  
He will bring woe on your head, should he please!  
Load up your camels with all can spare,  
All that flows over, in treasures there,  
With no regrets bring your presents to him –  
Gold that's superfluous, silver thrown in,  
Some of your slaves you can hand over then –
- 14330 All to the last, no regrets, my good men!  
Give silk materials, every hue,  
Satin and velvet, brocaded cloth too!  
Do not be sorry – but choose all with care.  
If you don't do so, you'll come to despair!  
Then, my dear numberless host of Chinese,  
I do not know, so don't ask me please,  
Just what your fate is likely to be!"  
So, let us leave them meanwhile, and see...  
Of the great slaughter, and blood-spilling fray,
- 14340 We must now hear, as we go on our way.  
Listen – you'll hear a collection of woes –  
Sword-blows on necks, on ears, on a nose,  
Stomachs slit open, and red blood which flies!  
Those who can't stay the hot tears in their eyes,  
Those in despair – there were many like that,  
Those whose dead bodies were left lying flat,  
Those who stood frozen, so many at hand.  
Those who on stumps of legs could not stand.  
Those who still chattered, though hacked to bits,
- 14350 Those who by battle were robbed of their wits.  
Those who with sightless eyes gazed around,  
Those who so helpless and hopeless were found,  
Those who had arms slashed, broken, or sore,  
Those who had lost all their strength, there were more.

- Those who gazed through dead eyes and swore.  
Those who begged mercy – of them there were more,  
Those whose dead steeds them no longer bore,  
Those who were lost now – of them there were more,  
Those who'd lost comrades they're still seeking for,
- 14360 Those who were blanks in their ranks, were still more.  
Some informed others: "Our leader has died!"  
"How's that? We've seen him just now!" they replied.  
Those who had still survived, stroke on stroke,  
Kara-Kirghiz and Chinese – two great folk –  
They had both gone to battle, alack!  
Clever Tështyuk was a real Kipchak,  
Many a single combat had fought –  
Never a scratch of the slightest sort,  
Hale and hearty remained in sight!
- 14370 Struck by a feathered arrow in flight  
Was Dzhamgirechi, a valorous knight,  
Struck in his lip, but the wound was slight.  
Some Kirghiz remained on the field,  
From those knights who never will yield –  
Eloquent, sensible, our Urbyu,  
Got a blow from a battle-axe too.  
Lost his senses from that crack!  
Here's gray-bearded Muzburak –  
Shot in his left shoulder was he,
- 14380 Wounded there specially painfully!  
Kongurbai's folk were all besieged,  
Then a swift bird Kongurbai released,  
From Kakan a message was sent  
To his Esenkhan's war-tent:  
"I am scared by these Kirghiz here –  
Mussulmen won't let us go, and get clear!  
Those who came with giant Makel,  
They have met their end as well!  
I am caught here in this trap,
- 14390 No way out for me, mayhap!  
Fortress here with sixty gates,  
At each one misfortune waits.  
Find a way out for us, Esenkhan,  
And release us, my good man!  
I've a spear-wound in my spine –  
Maybe this is the end of my line?  
I may go to that land in the skies!  
You, my elder, who are so wise,  
You are my Khan, so help me to rise;



14400 You are the hope which in me lies!  
 Find a way out for us, Esenkhan,  
 Thus I pray, as a dying man!"  
 Such were the words of his appeal,  
 And at the end he set his seal.  
 Long since such a wonder moves:  
 There is a bird which bears such news.  
 If it's bound to it, 'twill fly off quick,  
 And that bird's name is Tugalik.\*  
 One hundred fish it eats each day –  
 14410 It will carry to order, they say,  
 Any message; bound to its leg,  
 And so this one bore Tugalik.  
 Six day's travel to Bakburchun,  
 It completed before next noon.  
 At that place where it must alight,  
 There is a little bell in sight.  
 When he heard that small bell sound,  
 Esenkhan looked all around,  
 Thinking: "What news is this that's come?"  
 14420 Esenkhan stood and read, half-dumb.  
 There was written: "I cannot ride.  
 Roads are blocked on every side.  
 They are closed to me, it's true,  
 And I know not what to do!  
 I am confused, completely lost –  
 Army's defeated, to my cost...  
 On this bird my note you'll have found.  
 From the east to the west, all around,  
 Stand my men, besieged by fears –  
 14430 Strong men all, once bold bogatirs.  
 With their maces, their steeds bestrode,  
 But they cannot take to the road.  
 Now but little of life is mine –  
 I am wounded in the spine!"  
 When that news to them made its way,  
 Padishahs fell in disarray.  
 From the note they learned more still –  
 Their commander-in-chief was ill;  
 "This being so, let Kaspang men  
 14440 Save their souls, and bring presents then.  
 Don't despair of possessions there,  
 Nuggets of gold, and silver to spare,  
 Sapphires, pearls, and rubies fair –  
 If foes rob souls of the living air,

What use to you will jewels then be?  
 Do not regret precious stones, you see!  
 Don't regret possessions in store –  
 Save your lives, that will serve you more!  
 Precious things from treasures there,  
 14450 Let the camels you have then bear  
 To those Mussulmen, in their horde,  
 As the gifts which you afford  
 To those brutes; it can't be denied,  
 On receipt they'll be satisfied!  
 If into those riches they dive,  
 Leave us alone, and all alive,  
 Then you need not be sorry yet!  
 If I, Khan Kongurbai, show regret,  
 Then I'll bring woe upon my own head!"  
 14460 Such were the words his message said.  
 Having heard of this message then,  
 Haughty officials, and military men,  
 Grew confused, and showed concern.  
 Their great Khan had not stood firm!  
 They showed indecision complete.  
 In a short while, as it takes to cook meat,  
 From Kongurbai's Chinese men still  
 Kirmus-shah's fine son, Muradil,  
 Naskara, with red pom-pom too,  
 14470 And Kalmak Ushang – what's to do? –  
 With their riches, to save human life,  
 Gave their counsel to end the strife!  
 From the Kangais, there was Orangu,  
 Khan Kongurbai, their stern master too,  
 And many others gathered around –  
 Black-bearded Boro-onchu there was found.  
 Katkalang's daughter, Saikal the bold –  
 Really, can all their names be told?  
 From the Solo-ons, Alo-oke.  
 14480 Bold Dzholoi, a wild boar that day,  
 Tokshuker's son – Bozkertik –  
 Ninety-two years old, but still quick,  
 So-orondyuk – that's Solobon's son,  
 Scared for his life, that heathen one,  
 Prayers to his idol then made there –  
 All agreed their goods to spare!  
 Nine thousand camels of black were found,  
 And they were loaded, down to the ground.  
 Gold and silver, and red satin too –



14490 All these beasts had work to do...  
 Ginger camels were loaded as well –  
 Precious metals their burdens swell.  
 On their backs, in enormous bags,  
 Golden nuggets, and table-ware sags.  
 All other riches, with them beside,  
 With strong silken lassoes were tied.  
 Thirty thousand camels, what's more,  
 Loaded with silver, increased the score.  
 So they led camels, with white silver stacked...  
 14500 Just take a look at the way they're packed!  
 Sapphires, jewels, and emeralds, green-blue,  
 Loaded on camels – a thousand or two.  
 All were got ready as presents to make.  
 Then came those horses they wanted to rake.  
 Nine thousand steeds, each black, like the rest,  
 Experts had chosen the best of the best.  
 Nine thousand steeds of auburn they chose,  
 Nine thousands bays then, as well as those.  
 Excellent racing steeds they chose too,  
 14510 Stateliest steeds of spotted white hue.  
 Nine thousand steeds of grey then they took –  
 What clouds of dust they raised – well, just look!  
 Nine thousand steeds of greyish-brown tint,  
 From all the villages – there was no stint!  
 Spotted and dotted, they took steeds too,  
 One hundred thousand together they drew.  
 In the fortress they chose black-haired girls;  
 Ordered them: "Look in the glass, comb your curls!"  
 Teeth like pure pearls, and brows arching black,  
 14520 Necks like white swans, and plaits down the back!  
 Average there – just fifteen years,  
 Long slender fingers, and plaits behind ears.  
 When such maids swallow, through transparent skin  
 You can see throats with black-currants within! <sup>123</sup>  
 Nine thousand beautiful maidens they chose,  
 Taking the cream of the cream among those!  
 With their presents then everyone ran,  
 At their head came, from Andizhan,  
 With other exiles, old Alo-oke...  
 14530 There remain words from forebears today:  
 "Let the spear break, if it plunges ahead,  
 When the poor foeman's already half-dead –  
 Do not shame him, nor numble his soul!"  
 Old Bakai, and Kirgil, well and whole,

Went to Manas, his consent to seek.  
 Old Bakai was the first to speak:  
 "Take their gifts, Manas!" he said,  
 Nodding his wise and aged white head:  
 "Though they're heathens, a Khan rules them all!" <sup>124</sup>  
 14540 They have long since lived well 'hind their wall!  
 Though they're Chinese, a great people are they!  
 My bright Manas, just hear what I say:  
 They are now scared, from beginning to end,  
 Leave them in peace now, my clever old friend!"  
 Wise old Bakai this advice did employ:  
 "When they bring maidens to you, for your joy,  
 It would be course then, their men to destroy!  
 What if six Khans of ours meet, for this ploy?  
 What if we greet their envoys sent then?  
 14550 Let us take counsel together with them!  
 Don't let us torment our foes any more –  
 Better accept their rich presents, I'm sure!"  
 Lion Manas weighed up every word,  
 Which from the white-beard Bakai he had heard,  
 And he accepted his wise advice...  
 They received presents you won't see twice!  
 Some who desired took young maidens then,  
 Some thus inspired took camels with them,  
 Some, more retired, took treasure, for sure –  
 14560 Gold plates, and silver, and jewels in store.  
 Numberless cattle they also received –  
 Kirghiz and Chinese then each other believed.  
 Then all the fighters went back to their mates,  
 Into Kakan, with its seventy gates,  
 To seven cities, each one of which waits.  
 Then the Kirghiz went, glad of their fates.  
 They took their spoil, whate'er met their eye.  
 When a whole twelve-months had then passed by,  
 Then one month more, which quickly sped,  
 14570 They began to go home, so 'tis said.  
 Taking no short way, a long road instead.  
 Leaving Beijin, they rode on ahead,  
 And returned home, to their own dwelling-place... <sup>125</sup>

# Translator's Epilogue

What hordes of problems we've had to face!  
 Fifty-thousand translated lines –  
 I felt like a Manas, sometimes!  
 One thing I'd advise you to do –  
 Read him, read him, through and through!  
 There you'll learn to understand  
 114580 Ancient folk, from a more ancient land!..



# COMMENTARY

N	Line	Text
1	1	Kekētēi's death feast... In Keeping with the development of the subject-line of the epic "Manas", the episode of the "Great Campaign", published here, precedes that of "Kekētēi's Death Feast" (Kekētēi being one of the oldest counsellors of Manas) which, like the Great Campaign presents itself as an individual cycle of complete form. In the given account of the Great Campaign, the story starts with a short reminder of Kekētēi's death feast.
2	2	Grey-maned Manas... "Grey-maned" is a constant epithet of the warrior. Clearly, it belongs to the image of a wolf, which like the she-wolf, since ancient times, is accounted as the pro-genitor, and totem-god of all the Turkish people. This epithet is a symbol of boldness, of bravery, power, and invincibility.
3	12	'Gainst the snobs did he encroach... There follows a short re-telling of parts of the subject matter dealing with Kekētēi's death feast. A similar re-telling of the subject matter from a preceding episode as the opening of a new cycle in the epic "Manas" is traditional.
4	30	That your uncle Koshoi... In the epic, the addition of "your" to the name of a known hero, as a possessive adjective, is a common-place. This is because the narrator considers that the listener knows all the main heroes, and this makes them feel a participant in the events.
5	54	Guests returned to the homes... Further a repetition occurs, a short re-telling of subject matter again from Kekētēi's death feast - a list of guests who have come, the knights' amusements, games, and so on.
6	86	Forty tribes against the foe... Here the number forty is connected with the idea of the existence of a tribal union of Kirghizians, about which old legends and genealogies speak. In this union were found the so-called "old tribes". This naming "old" was kept up by later tribes, and is met with even among central Asian folk. As is known, Kirghizian tribes on Tyan Shan considered themselves "new" ones, proceeding from Dolonbiya, who in Chingis-Khan's time lived in the Fergan vale.
7	101	You have said that blood-feuds would end... "Bloodthirsty" in the original. The word has several meanings, such as

8	243	blood-sucker, predator, savage, or brave, bold, heroic. This word is often attached to Manas, in both negative and positive forms, in accordance with context. In epic poems of the Mongol people, this attribute has only a positive character, meaning good, healthy, red-faced, glorious, etc. There is a supposition that this word was borrowed from them, but that these good qualities have been later forgotten.
9	252	By Manas, the hawker and knight... hawker, hawkish, an epithet constantly used for Manas, connected with the traditional comparison with birds of prey, such as the hawk, the falcon, the eagle (see following note). Hawk Manas has his nest inside... In central-Asian symbolism, birds of prey, such as hawks, falcons, eagles, etc. are identified with the figure of a bogatir-knight, presenting him with the characteristics of strength, skill, beauty of action, etc. The exceptional features of such knights are often portrayed by the image of the image of the white gerfalcon, only rarely seen in those parts.
10	355	Go as guests, but woe to the rest... This shows that the countless numbers who came as guests, Manas was unable to entertain as befits worthy warriors, and in this way breaks the laws of hospitality.
11	383	We his four kinds of cattle shall steal... These four kinds consist of horses, horned cattle, camels, and the goats and sheep taken together as one. These four types represent among the people of central Asia, including Kazakhstan, an abundance of riches, even more so than gold or silver, or precious stones.
12	419	Thinking Manas is a leopard bold... In the epic these beasts of prey, including panthers, and tigers, all of huge size, formed a symbol of strength, agility and of predatory ability. Leopard was attached to people of agile power, as a second name.
13	429	May he 'neath mossy soil lay dead... This, and the line before - May he be punished 'neath heaven's deep blue, present themselves as a firm form of oath sworn by the knights. In them are reflected the pre-Islamic shamanistic conception of heaven, earth, fire and water. This idea gradually permeated the Mussulman religion later.
14	439	One with crescent-shaped horse-shoes... This portrays the type of mare usually brought for sacrificial purposes, of an important character. At lesser rituals, the usual four types of cattle were used, but always the best and most valuable.
15	494	Go straight in, wave your whips around... By custom, vagrant travellers, on entering a yurt, must hang up their



whips on a hook, to the left of the door-way. If he had some grudge against the host, then he entered the tent waving the whip he carried.

16 512 Round your head the bluebird's in flight... According to popular belief, if the mythical bird of happiness, the bluebird, settles near a man's head, it is a sign of good luck, success, esteem, and honour.

17 614 They stood there long as meat takes to cook... Original conception of time, used by vagrant cattle-breeders, corresponding approximately to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  -2 hours.

18 622 Sultan Manas - a wolf for the foe... A wolf, in that epic sense, applied to military or other leaders, and meaning invincible, bold, skilful, powerful. It has entered Turkish epic traditions, and is connected with a primitive conception of the wolf as progenitor of the people, and protector of all Turks.

19 652 Thick-lipped, and eyes behind slits remote... In the epic, a traditional form characterizing a knightly style and underlining his menacing look and severity. "Know a knight by deep-set eyes!" is a saying among the folk.

20 692 On they came seething like rain-worms in dew... literally "wriggling like teeming worms" a typical epic form giving the conception of a seething mass of disordered folk.

21 725 Lighting their fuses... literally "a fuse with a red corner" The tradition expression signifying a lighted fuse, ready to be placed in the charged musket.

22 748 To their "Good health!" - "God be thanked!" none cried... This reflects the traditional exchange of greetings of many Turkish peoples. Literally "Peace to you" or - "Good health to you!", and the reply "Thank God!" or - "So be it!" After this came questions about the family's welfare and good standing.

23 764 Then Bēgēl, like a wolf he could be... A constant epic form. See notes Nos. 2, 18, 33.

24 841 To the headquarters of lion Manas... In ancient Turkish epic tradition, lion (like leopard, panther or tiger), was reserved for a knight showing valour, strength, and skilful ability. See note 12.

25 897 Or, at least, a whole hour or two... That is literally expressed, "as long as it takes meat to cook". See note 17. One-and-a-half to two hours.

26 905 He who's successful in gaining his ends... Literally "He whose forbears' spirits do not desert him. The ideo of spiritual forbears, known to Turks, Altai, and others, is tied up with the ancient cult of protective spirits, among

esteemed forbears. It is counted that they can interfere in the lives of their successors. In olden times people prayed to them, and brought sacrifices to graves.

27 961 Heaven has sent an answer to me... Here the heavens are addressed; and a protective god there sends help. This is connected with the ancient cult of heaven, earth, fire, and water, known since olden times to Turkish and Mongolian tribes. See note 13.

28 1125 Raised open palms to brows, as was meet... A prayer on parting, a blessing, a wish for success. Palms raised like a half-open book, to the forehead, and then drawn down the face to the chin, or the end of the beard.

29 1384 No attempt to sleep he made... Literally, did not lie elbows on the ground in support. This expression is met with often in the epic. Most probably it reflects the action of travellers at night, in the open, who feared that insects may crawl in their ears, and slept with their heads on clasped hands, or lying with bent elbows - heads slightly raised from the ground.

30 1396 Took a gold drum in the usual way... A small drum, with one side covered by a yellow camel-skin, used in hawking, hunting, or on military campaign.

31 1405 Pigged with owl-plumes there, indeed... Owlfeathers in olden times, were thought to be a protection for horses against evil looks from people or other beasts, making them ill, inasmuch as the owl was considered by many of the Turkish peoples to be a sacred bird. At the same time they served as a decoration for his forelock, when taken from a bridegroom to the bride's parents.

32 1479 Camel-foals tied, all cried that day... There was one special way of tying camels, which did not allow them to stand during loading. They knelt for this purpose, and their forelegs were tied at the crook, the cord passing over the camel's neck.

33 1489 O, forty wolves of outstanding fame... This has in view the forty knights, chosen comrades-in-arms of Manas. Regarding the epithet wolves, see notes 2, 18, 23.

34 1499 Red-head Sergil from the folk Satai... Literally redheaded, i.e. auburn-haired.

35 1510 And Adigai, who predicts by sheep's bones... this refers to a special way of telling fortunes by burnt shoulder-blades of sheep, when the predictor takes note of the cracks formed in them, which for him have high meaning. Kirghizian fortune-tellers varied in function. Some told personal fates, others guessed so the outcome of battles or campaigns,



other just foretold the weather. Such predictions were echoes of the ancient belief in the magic power of animals' bones. Leaders often turned to these fortune-tellers before starting most important actions.

- 36 1591 Quite enough fluff for five pairs of socks... Traditional epic formula to give account of amount concerned. The previous line: Spiteful his features with bristles you see – gives an impression of a high level of emotional tension, especially of anger or fury.
- 37 1626 Crimson banners went flying then... in this instance we are told of the tribal banners of Manas' forebears, left to Manas after their death, by the progenitor of Nogois, the tribe to which he belonged. Crimson banners were a sign of ancient heritage among the Kirghizians.
- 38 1639 Where they all go, the flames won't grow dim... Traditional formula, expressing warriors' successes.
- 39 1641 With his dry muzzle went Akkula... dry-browed or muzzled was taken as a sign of high breeding, of swiftness and of friskiness in horses.
- 40 1664 And having crossed his hands on his breast... a sign of polite esteem when bowing or meeting an acquaintance.
- 41 1720 Grasping white handles of lengthy spears... here and everywhere else the word "ak" is used, meaning white – see Vocabulary – and that colour is used to signify a high quality. Akkelte, Akkula, Akkyube, etc.
- 42 1787 Suits me like one of my own age!... A man who happened to be of the same age as another, in many Turkish vagrant tribes, was accounted a near relative, and the sons of such a man as brothers.
- 43 1791 How they served hot chunks of fat... Literally gave it as hot food. Among ancient Turkish tribes it was felt that some kinds of food cooled one down, but others made one hot. Fatty meat belonged to the heating kind. Kirghizian wizards counted a third type as neutral in character. For instance, beef was counted as cooling, horse-meat as heating, and mutton as neutralizing. Green tea was considered cooling. All illnesses were accounted as colds or fevers. With a fever one should eat cooling foods, and vice versa.
- 44 1844 When in silk robes, and high boots grand... These high boots were an expensive masculine attribute, only to be found among leaders. Sometimes the heels were high and hollow, and had little bells inside them.
- 45 2011 Slaves from all sides, to fulfil his needs... Here and anywhere else, one can take this word slave in its direct sense – a servant of some kind, especially of a low order. These

were often prisoners-of-war, taken from other tribes, and used for this purpose. Then the word had a tinge of "stranger" about it. In the mouths of epic heroes, "slave" could also be used as a low, humiliating expression. The slave was part of the feudal tradition, and did not belong in the past among the Kirghizians and other vagrant tribes of central Asia, and Kazakhstan, where developed slavery was totally unknown. Later slaves were simply captives, sometimes criminals, and could be redeemed by the payment of a fine. Apart from this, a slave taken to serve the tribe could be given a small plot of land even to work on, and might also receive a small share of his master's goods, on his decease, if so said, though not related.

- 46 2109 Rumbles Manas, like a black avalanche... Black avalanche among the Kirghiz was the terror of terrors, – literally wild and cruel. The image comes from Mussulman mythology, where it takes the form of a tempter or tester of people. In the Koran it is not mentioned, but in tales of the middle ages about forthcoming disasters it plays a major role. It is connected with Iblis (see Azezil) who is found on an island near India, chained to a cliff, and accompanied by djinns.
- 47 2221 They were in a real trap, it appeared... later follows the story of how Manas ascended the throne, to the loud thunder of drums, and accompanied by a dragon and six tigers, but this is not included here. In fact subject matter is a little unclear here. The reciter mixes the story a little, with wild, fantastic fairy-tale terrors.
- 48 2257 Now disperse my sorrow and woe... This signifies that the knight is miserable, and yearns for a change, because he cannot take action in conflict against the foe. The motive of warriors yearning for battle is a tradition in such epics, among Turkish peoples.
- 49 2321 You will arouse the devil in me!.. Literally, the devil will be sitting on my neck.
- 50 2333 Then Manas said: "Choose your leader now... Here and in other places, it portrays the choice of military leaders, usually called a Khan.
- 51 2407 He who sleeps sound, though foes give him pain... Sound sleep is one of the characteristics of Knighthood. The knight usually has very sound long sleep before battle.
- 52 2445 Spirits, o forbears! Support us, be near!.. Here is a characteristic feature of the epic "Manas" – the mixup of heathen concepts, such as the appeal to forbears' spirits before battle, with the Mussulman's appeal to the one and only god Allah.



- 53 2474 Those who saw Ayaguz, Chuk-Terek... here is a geographical reality: the river Ayaguz flowing through the territory of Kazakhstan, tied with the legendary the Chuk-Terek, (the poplar) which in accordance with folk conceptions grows beside the Ayaguz. This is reflected in the Kazakh romantic epic "Kozi-Korpesh and Bayan-Sulu" the Chuk-Terek poplar grows near the grave of the hero.
- 54 2650 From those rogues with red pom-poms on caps... In the epic, the red pom-pom on a hat is a distinguishing sign of a military chief, or the leader of the Chinese folk. The Kalmaks use a black one for the same purpose.
- 55 2904 Thirty times one hundred thousand were there... The traditional counting of troops in the epic. The Kirghiz people earlier lacked the figure one million, and they carried on counting, using only hundreds of thousands.
- 56 2926 Led it away, on a cord of course... That means to take a spare horse with you, led on a bridle.
- 57 2935 For those horses there, not on a tie... this refers to those horses given without payment, as a free present.
- 58 2984 Stately Koën-Bel's mane flows... The horse's name means "with a hare's back" i.e. not a long spine sunk in the middle, but very slightly humped, as on a hare, which is a sign of friskiness in a steed.
- 59 3028 That is what tiger Manas then found... here Manas is not named as usual lion, nor leopard, but tiger, which signifies, like the others, one with fearless, powerful, agile, and unconquerable characteristics.
- 60 3062 Time to choose this day, full of power!.. that means a Friday, which for Mussulmen is excellent for exploits.
- 61 3129 Having promised a camel to slay... an expression often met in the epic. Usual Kirghizians, having inherited shamanism from the past, slew fine sheep, horses, and camels as sacrifices to the gods and their forefathers. Even elephants are mentioned, maybe to add weight so.
- 62 3261 Married women, is head-scarves of white... Among the Kirghiz only married women wore white head-dresses, in the form of a tall white turban-shaped wrap on the brow.
- 63 3271 Those who were fragrant as honey and musk... probably relates to the characteristic aroma of honey, used in beautifying preparations, highly valued in the past.
- 64 3663 Nine long months they bit patterns on hide... a special method of biting impressions as ornamentation on seams of sheepskin coats, or leather trousers and jackets.

- 65 3674 Only the patterns where snake-scales had been... This was a special national way of sewing seams, reminiscent of the fine scales on a snake's underside.
- 66 3728 Hollow out heels, with small jingling bells... masculine top-boots, worn only by leaders and high officials, with small bells in hollows in the heels. See note 44.
- 67 3768 Are the great Prophet's sacred words... most probably refers to poems from the Koran, and stories of prophet Mohammed. Usually they were citations, written on parchment, sewn in a small leather pouch, and carried as an amulet, against evil spells, sickness and dangers.
- 68 3815 May I be shot down by its ball!... one of the oaths repeated by knights, affirming decisions taken.
- 69 3841 To the front of their saddles, a drum... a small drum, covered with camel-skin on one side, used for hawking, falconry, or hunting. A few lines later it is mentioned as an elephant's skin, an exaggeration used to increase the weight and importance of Manas' drum.
- 70 3884 They slew a calf with a crumpled horn... A black calf was usually brought as a propitiatory sacrifice. The meat was cut in chunks, and divided among those present.
- 71 3926 Right flank and left, must we go on our way? This is the division of the people into wings, right and left. Each wing then had sub-sections where powerful family tribes held sway, standing after whom were lesser ones.
- 72 3930 So they slew yet more yellow-headed sheep... For ritual sacrifice special cattle were previously selected, with rare characteristics. They were kept apart from normal usage. It was thought that such pre-selection, specially among white or cream-coloured cattle, added significance and value to the pre-ordained sacrifice.
- 73 3998 Horses grow strong with the oats they ate... This gives a portrayal of a well-fed race-horse or war-horse, when he is full of strength, endurance and friskiness...
- 74 4003 Horses grow strong with the sweat they get... See note 73, where a similar picture is given.
- 75 4015 Not a paw in support I see... Here the foal's hoof is the equivalent of a son, by analogy - if a horse has no hoof, he lacks support, and if a man has no son, so does he.
- 76 4108 Who would me then as a good spirit greet?... See note 26, where a parallel example is found.
- 77 4136 But leave me shamed there in every way.. literally-they hung a three-legged trivet round my neck, an expression based on an old custom, when they did so to prisoners.



- 78 4159 I have no rights with my people now... a reflection on the childlessness of the knight. Such a one had lesser rights than one with a son, especially in the sphere of inheritance. The birth of a son in feudal tribal society gave not only a successor, but also another defender of the tribe itself. Childless heroes are traditional.
- 79 4224 Since like a camel-foal, groaning you cried... Here the word camel-foal is a affectionate name for a young son. The image is connected with the aesthetics of wandering cattle-breeders for whom it is a symbol of beauty, tenderness, weakness, and dependent helplessness.
- 80 4311 When our steeds' tongues grow fat and dark... That is when the horses will feed on plentiful grassy pastures.
- 81 4661 Choose such a steed for their new chief there... It was the custom to provide the military chief with a wellbred steed, as attribute to his command of a huge army.
- 82 4731 But instead of "feed" he read "steed"... That means a serious mistake, literally instead of a mare, he read camel, and vice versa - in other words he read badly.
- 83 4736 Son of mine, read that which you know!.. Here is given a mental translation of a natural thought.
- 84 4902 When our steeds' tongues grow black... See Note 80, of which this is a virtual repetition.
- 85 5281 Amulet there on his brow tosses high... The amulet was usually attached to the horse's forelock, in a small pouch containing quotes from the Koran, saving the steed from evil spells, disease, and danger. See note 67.
- 86 5571 Some still astride were tied hand and foot... a special means of binding a wounded man to his steed to prevent falling. His hands were tied to the horn of his saddle, and also by a rope going under his horse's belly. His legs were fixed to the saddle-girth. Criminals and any captives were all carried on horse-back in this way.
- 87 5880 Those who lay with their slacks round their calves... in cold weather, laying down to sleep for the night, to keep one's legs and feet warm, and in case of the need to dress quickly, campaigners did not take off their trousers, but let them down over their calves.
- 88 6275 Said his spells backwards, first to last... Oaths and spells said in reverse were a ritual in black, magic.
- 89 7043 Just like a hawk, an unmatched brave... a play on the name Sirgak, (hawk) typifying boldness, swift seizure, agility, taken as a name by one of Manas' comrades.
- 90 7145 Kicks away at sharp stones with his heel... refers to the road on which one rides, sharp as a file or needle.

- 91 7164 Fat stands out as thick as your fist... a clear reference to a well-fed steed, who can bear his rider quickly a long distance. The upper guts mentioned in the previous line are part of the stomach system of ruminant beasts.
- 92 7249 Reins are short, and there is no tie... this means that the horse is given for good, and no payment is required.
- 93 7355 There stood their "khan" on an unnoticed spot... In the game of knucklebones, the "khan" is a small metal disc, placed in the centre of the circle for playing this game.
- 94 7437 To be participant in the fun... If one group playing at knucklebones has knocked out more than the others, then it receives the right to cast their sticks thrice more.
- 95 7534 Many of us became race prizes thus... this means Manas decided, lacking valuable prizes for the horse-racing, usually steeds or cattle, to put forward young knights.
- 96 7823 Eyelids smooth, with star-like eyes... that means eyes of the Mongolian, without deep forehead sockets.
- 97 7988 Why add torture to me thus far?... In this line and the previous one stands the reason for Chubak's distress. Following the patriarchal norm, he cannot, as he should, refuse a gift from a deeply respected elder, especially Manas' invaluable steed, which he considers sacred.
- 98 8022 Thus his poor injured gnat-soul to save... The expression "gnat-soul" (petty) is often met in folklore of Turkish peoples of central Asia and Kazakhstan.
- 99 8108 Horse and armour returned... The return of the horse and armour shared out by Manas for his forty comrades-in-arms, including Chubak, means that with this refusal he releases himself from his oath of loyalty to Manas.
- 100 8116 Where's the white cloth we divided that day?... here we meet a ritual sharing of linen, as a sign of friendship.
- 101 8119 Blades of our swords we licked once more... to lick or kiss a sharp blade of a sword is an individual sign of the strengthening of an oath of friendship and loyalty.
- 102 8162 We both swore oaths on our axes and swords... the edges of axes or swords rubbed together, as an oath of loyalty.
- 103 8540 Even collect your tribute, somehow!.. refers to a tax on cattle, collected during the Kokand Khanate.
- 104 8848 Calling on Tengri, turned not back... in this context, Tengri, like its synonym Kudai, means a god. The term "almighty" often used, is also an attribute of Allah. Here is reflected a pre-Mussulman god, in a later form, personifying a single omnipresent divinity.



- 105 8956 I'm a Kalmak, I admit with a bow... Almambet names himself a Kalmak, though elsewhere he is named as Chinese.
- 106 9032 Here on my navel the blood once dried... refers to his native land. For many Turkish-speaking folk a traditional form for one's birthplace.
- 107 9109 Told the news they got from the crow... here the black crow is the bird-messenger bringing both good and bad news. This is a typical folk-lore form.
- 108 9377 Nearby there's a lake Dzhanak... further on the reciter tells a story about a river here, and a lake there, on whose beds are spread out a fantastic world of folk and cattle. A few lines were missed here to avoid confusion.
- 109 9730 Gripping his coloured spear... in the epic, knights have painted, polished, or coloured spears. This applies to their handles of course, not their metal heads.
- 110 9830 Like a great yurt, with rounded head... this describes Makel's huge mace. An average yurt has about four or five sections of felt-covered lattice-work, which can be folded up, and carried on horses or camels.
- 111 9936 Where the smoke-clouds, like Isphahan's reel... Isphahan, one of the largest towns in Iran, was famous in the middle ages, for producing fine steel weapons, hammered out on open smoky forges. The epithet Isphahan applied to excellent weapons owned by knights, appears in the epics of the peoples of central Asia and Kazakhstan.
- 112 10738 Straightway into his lower rib... lower ribs, eighth, ninth and tenth, connected by gristle to the upper ones, were counted as most vulnerable places when jousting.
- 113 11117 Then Alma made him cook soup, to please... literally soup of water, flour, and milk. The same word "boltushka" can be taken to mean jabber. Here we see signs of Alma's mockery of Sirgak, disguised as a Chinaman, and learning to chatter away like one of them.
- 114 11280 Tears fell in a flood anew... literally like knotted threads, used to tie up little lambs.. A traditional form in the epic context, meaning a flood of tears, all called up by some bitter event or memory.
- 115 11288 That's where my own six forebears reigned... In many of the tribes speaking Turkish, in central Asia, every member has to remember seven of his masculine forebears, in his father's line. The epic "Manas" begins in such a way with Alanchi-khan, Baigur, Babir-khan, Tyubei, Kegen, and Jakib, Manas' father.

- 116 11600 Karabayir is a real war-steed... But it is not a pure-bred horse, though it could be used on a war campaign because of its great powers of endurance.
- 117 12110 Like a will tiger, of pale-blue hue... Among Turkish folk of central Asia and Siberia, in the past, blue, or pale-blue tint was connected with the respect for the blue-maned wolf, the pro-genitor of the Turks, and with the blue of the sky. On Orkhon-Yenisei tunic memorials, the epithet "blue" was even applied to Turks themselves, and had the meaning "elite". Blue was the colour of aristocrats in society. In our times this archaic epithet is not always understood, and often this symbolism in hues is misinterpreted. In this way the blue tiger of these lines, may be taken to signify a snow-leopard.
- 118 13568 Like a mountain, bowed forward so high... literally - side wide, stature bowed. A slightly stooping stance was to be taken as the sign of a powerful knight.
- 119 13677 Floating mane, and fluid tail... The sign of a well-bred war-steed or race-horse.
- 120 13598 Like a hawk, unhooded, on high... That means a knight already equipped, ready to gallop off into battle, like a trained hawk or falcon, ready to pounce on its prey.
- 121 13687 Carefully followed Alma and Chubak... In the Kirghizian text stands the name of Sirgak, as Alma's comrade. That is a mistake in writing out the archive text, and has been corrected to read Chubak, since in this episode he was with Alma, chosen by him as his scout.
- 122 14239 Reason shattered, like all the rest... According to the conceptions or ancient Kirghizians, the foundation of a man was his soul, the complete personification of a man. They believed that the soul abides in one's breast, and that with it therefore abides his reason, senses also.
- 123 14524 You can see throat, and blackcurrants within... Traditional expression in epics and folktales of many eastern peoples, portraying the elegance, grace, and beauty of young maidens.
- 124 14539 Though they're heathens, a Khan rules them all... this gives a picture of a folk, at whose head stands a Khan as leader, organizing and directing sound life and activity among them. Such a folk is accounted a strong one, in comparison with those not united under one leader.



## EXPLANATORY VOCABULARY

(Words marked by an asterisk in the text)

Note: All Turkish words accented on last syllable.

**ABA** – 1. Uncle (masculine line). 2. Elder brother. 3. Respectful form of address for old people. These are all found in the epic.

**ABAKE** – affectionate form of address for an uncle, elder brother or any elderly respected person.

**ABZEL** – name of a cannon in Manas' army. In accordance with tradition, guns, swords, and other war equipment of knights had their own names. Literally Abzel means the best, excellent.

**AGA** – eldest brother. Uncle (masculine line) if older than nephew. Eldest relation in the masculine line.

**ADZHEKE** – affectionate form of the name Adzhibai, one of the close comrades-in-arms of Manas.

**AZEZIL** – in the epic a devil, demon, Satan, an evil spirit. In the Mussulman mythology it is used along with other names – Satan and Iblis.

Later legends tell that before his fall from heaven, Iblis was called Azazil or Al-Kharis. He was sent on earth to suppress the mutinous djinns and spirits, but becoming proud of his power, he disregarded Allah's commands. In another legend, he was a djinn who had broken into heaven unwarrantedly.

**AZIRET** – holiness, most sacred. Title of a caliph, prophet, or a priest. Title of the caliph Ali, son-in-law of the prophet Mahommed.

**AIL** – stopping place, village, settlement. Among Kirghiz this meant the place where nearest relations lived, or even a whole related tribe, later united not only by relationship, but territorial ties.

**AIVAN** – a terrace, an open verandah, a porch-way or entry.

**AK BARANG** – literally, a white gun. A cap-musket, as distinct from a flint-lock, or a finer fuse-musket. Sometimes Kék barang is met, meaning blue gun, also Kara barang, meaning a black gun, while Sir barang meant a grey or polished one. Thus guns were defined by hue.

**AK DZHEKER** – another definition of an ancient form of musketry.

**AKE** – father, elder brother. Title of respect for any elder man.

**AKKELTE** – literally, a white gun. The name of Manas' musket. White hue, in ancient epic tradition of Turkish and Mongolian peoples, was

accorded magic or sacred functions. With it were associated the conception of purity, brightness, goodness, and excellence, all determining the fate of their owner. Later this condensed into the meaning of the best, most excellent in quality.

**AKKULA** – abbreviated form Kula, whitish or greyish-brown. In the epic, the war-horse of Manas, of light-brown colour. Such horses of whitish or greyish tone were considered sacred, even holy, and having a beneficial effect on their masters. They were also considered to be excellent steeds. See Akkelte for similar remarks.

**AKKULDZHA** – literally white mountain ram. In the epic a legendary fantastic figure in the form of a ram, protecting the borders of Chinese land. On their horns they bring news of the approach of enemies. The image is connected with ancient Kirghizian traditions which deified beasts living in the mountains, and protected by a benevolent spirit. See Kayip.

**AKKYUBE** – literally a white robe or garment. See also Kyube.

**AKSAKAL** – literally a white beard. Respectful title for men of the elder generation, especially those in high social positions – the patriarchs, and wise men. Its use showed deep respect and esteem.

**AKSI** – in the epic, a place-name, frequently met as the name of a town in central Asia. In particular, this was the title of the capital where Fergan in the capital where Fergan lived in the middle ages.

**AR-CHANGIL** – literally white and muddy. The name of a mountainous pass. Such places are often mentioned in the epic, since they were the only way for driving cattle from one area of pasturage to another, or of passing through with mounted troops on campaign, or of driving camels on established trade routes.

**AKILAI** – the name of one of Manas' wives. The daughter of Khan Shooruk, over whom Manas triumphed in battle, taking her then as wife.

**ALA-KEL** – a place-name. Actually found as a lake in eastern Kazakhstan, between Tarbagatai and Dzhungar Ala-Too.

**ALAI** – a place-name in the epic, where Keketei, Manas' comrade-in-arms, kept his herds. In reality it is found as a valley between the crests of Alai, and Zail. Also found in the Pamir mountains.

**ALATAK** – a fantastic demon. In the epic "Manas", along with the widely-known mythical personages of epic legends, known among the peoples of the near and middle East as djinns, fairies, devils, and cyclop giants, there stand also beneficial demonic spirits such as charkee, chingroon, katin-ayu, etc, found further on in the wordlist here. There are a few impersonal goblins merely forming a background fantastic world, where epic events can take their place.



**ALMA** – abbreviated form of Almambet, Manas' closest comrade-in-arms.

**ALMABASH** – the name of one of the knight's excellent musket.

**ALMALU** – literally a fruitful apple-tree. In the epic, a named hollow in the mountains. Widely known in the middle Asia area.

**ALPKARAKUSH** – in the epic, and in fantastic fairy-tales, a gigantic bird: the protector and helper of the noble-spirited knight.

**ALTAI** – Mountain ranges, spread out on the southern part of West Siberia, in Mongolia, and China, forming the water-shed of the Ob, Irtysh and Yenisei, and rivers of the springless areas of central Asia. Altai was the dwelling-place of the Kirghizians in ancient times, and from there they migrated into Tyan-Shan, which is reflected in the matter and narrative of the epic.

**ALTI-SHAAR** – literally six cities. Under the name of Altishar, in the XVIIIth. century, appeared such a combination of cities in the Kashgaria of those days, comprising of Yakend, (see Dzherken) and Khotan, Yangi-Gissar, Kashgar, Aksu, and Kucha.

**ALCHALI-KIR** – Literally Alchali peak, range, or crest. Often met among small place-names in central Asia and Kazakhstan.

**ALCHIKI** – literally sheep or goat knee-bones, used among children, (and grown-ups too) in playing the game we know as "knucklebones".

**AMULET** – usually a small leather pouch of oblong or square form, in which is sewn paper or parchment on which texts from sacred books are written. It is carried as a means of protection against eye troubles. Horses also carry them sometimes fixed to their mane.

**ANGIR** – In the epic, the name of a mountain pass, or great highroad. Literally, in the Kirghizian tongue, it means uneven. Such reminiscences of roads up – hill, and down-dale, is characteristic of the epic, reflecting the past wanderings of Kirghizian cattle-men, and of foot-soldiers on the march in war-time.

**ANGYUSH** – in the epic the name of mountains spread in the area of habitation of fantastic tribes, with even more fantastic habits.

**ANDZHI (Andzhyu)** – the epic name for those countries and localities and cities where Chinese people dwell, noted for huge populations.

**ANDIZHAN** – as a geographical reality – the ancient city at the eastern end of the Fergan valley. In olden times it was one of the centres of feudal power. Along with Namangan and Kokand feudal regions, it constituted the Kokand Khanship. In the epic Andizhan, or Great Andizhan, is understood in a wider setting – as the area of the Fergan hollow, and may be read as meaning the whole valley.

**APA** – 1. Elder sister. 2. Form of address to elderly womenfolk.

**ARAK** – a strong inebriating drink, of the vodka type, usually fermented from sour milk or kumiss, a feast-day favourite with many.

**ARAL** – in the epic the name of a locality, lake or river. This is a widely spread toponym in central Asia and Kazakhstan. Frequently found as the name of a village or small town in Kirghizia. Aral is a town on the river Aksu. There is a lake Aral in Kazakhstan.

**ARBAK** – spirits of sacred or highly esteemed forebears. Who must either help those who pray to them, or punish their enemies.

**ARGIN** – the name of a family, or tribe. Ethnologically, a large group of Turkish tribes. In time it became the name of tribal groups in the Aral, among the peoples of central Asia and Kazakhstan – for instance Argins joined the group of central tribes among those living in Kazakhstan.

**ARKAN** – a lariat or lasso. A fairly thick rope made of strong wool or horse-hair. In common speech often used as a measure of length, amounting to about 5 to 8 metres.

**AT DZHARISH** – a racing event, where the best horses only competed.

**AT CHABIM** – a measure of distance for which mature horses race.

**ACHALBARS** – the name of a sword belonging to one of Manas' knights.

**ACH-BEL** – literally an uninhabited bare mountain pass. A place-name frequently met among the central Asian and Kazakhstan passes.

**ASHMARA** – the name of a pass, a mountain hollow, a river. Found geographically as a river flowing Kazakhstan.

**AYASH** – friend of the husband, or of the wife, known in the family.

**AYAT** – the name of a river. Geographically found as a tributary of the river Irtysh, in the Omsk and Tomsk region of Siberia.

**BEY** – a prosperous rich person. A landlord. A respectful form of address for an elderly or highly esteemed person. It is also met as an attribution to masculine personal names – for instance Bey Jakib is one of a group of elder brothers in the epic, Manas' father.

**BAIGA** – riding races. Horse-racing is traditional among the peoples of central Asia Kazakhstan.

**BAKBURCHUN (Bakburchin)** – name of the land or the city, or the capital where the enemies of Manas mainly live.

**BALTA** – abbreviation of the name Akbalta. See under A.

**BALIK** – in the epic the name of a mountainous locality or river.

**BARAYIZ** – a tractate, laying out the Mussulman's religious duties, also a section of the Mussulman laws dealing with inheritance.

**BARANG** – see under the heading Ak barang. A.



**BATMAN** – a measure of weight among the peoples of central Asia and Kazakhstan, having various forms in various places, ranging from one to several tens of poods, each weighing about 16 kilograms.

**BEIDZHIN** – (Beijin) – in the epic the name of a populous town or region in the land of the Chinese. In the text several variants appear. Great Beidzhin, Little Beidzhin, Borderland Beidzhin, etc. Later investigators take this as modern Beitinu, known now as Beshbalik the ancient capital of the Ugurs, found to the west of Guchen. It sounds also like Beipin (as Peking was called from the 15th. century onwards,) and like Beitszin, meaning "northern capital". It was indeed the name of the capital city of the Chinese Min dynasty, of the 15th to 17th cent., and of the Tsin dynasty of Manchuria, from the 18th. to the beginning of the 20th century. Therefore some investigators tie up the epic name Beidzhin with territory of the Tsin empire, seeing that in this epic poem one can see indirect reflections of the Kirghizian tribes' struggle against the Manchurians in the Tsin dynasty, from whom they made a fight to free themselves, in the 18th century, when they fell under its protectorate. It is interesting to note that Peking today is known in China itself as Beijin (Beidzhin) the capital.

**BEK** – 1. Title of a representative of the elite class, rulers of towns or districts or districts in the feudal Khanates. 2. Lord, master. In the epic usually signifies a man to whom power has been given.

**BELDEMCHI** – metal armament, in the form of plates, buckled around the waist and the chest-ribs, in the most vulnerable parts.

**BESHIN** – the time of afternoon prayers for Muslims. Second of the series of five periods when Mussulmen are bound to pray in one day.

**BIY** – 1. a nobleman, or rich person. 2. chief, head of the tribe. 3. judge in tribal groups, not elected, but accepted by the folk. The appearance of this word is connected with feudal conditions in Kirghizia. There biys fulfilled political, administrative and judicial functions, on the basis of the accepted norm of rights – the so-called adat, as distinct from the Muslim religious shariat.

**BOZ-DEBE** – literally a hill or mountain. In the epic it is also met in the meaning of the centre of the earth. The Kirghiz named such a mount or high plateau, where single combat tournaments took place with enemy warriors, Boz-debe. The mount referred to in the epic has been located in the Kushmaran mountains, in the basin of the river Karkara, where according to legend, Manas fought against the Kalmaks. Boz-Tepe is known as an archaeological memorial – the last of the ancient Kirghizian agricultural groups of the Bronze Age. The conception of the centre of the earth is perhaps tied up with the popular conception of the boundaries of the world and its very centre.

In legends the centre of the earth is a great stronghold, a place where one can take refuge from death.

**BOZ-UCHUK** – literally the end of the steppe, which was covered in feather-grass and wormwood. This is also a place-name in the epic, met with in small areas of central Asia and Kazakhstan.

**BUDACHA** – in the epic the invented name of a Chinese town or city.

**BUKARAI-SHARIP** – the name of a country in the epic, to which the Mussulman believers went. In the Kirghizian tongue Bukara means a subject, and Sharip means the Koran, the Holy Word.

**BURUT** – synonym for the word Kirghiz, used by the Kalmaks. This name was never by the Kirghizians themselves, Although in the tribal history of Kirghizia that name does not occur, nonetheless a few investigators think that Buruts existed with the Kirghizians in the Altai mountains. In the opinion of other specialists the so-called Yenesei Kirghiz, known in the XVII cent. in the Dzhungar feudal area, in the basin of the river Ili were named Buruts.

**BUTA** – the name of very expensive material, probably made in China.

**BUDDAN** – a race-horse, one of a swift tireless breed of speedy steeds. It is also the epithet sometimes used for a noble knight.

**BUKHARA** – a very ancient city in central Asia, now found in the territory of Uzbekistan. Way back in the XIII cent. it was known as a cultural centre, a trading post, and a training place for scientists and artists. It stood on the famous silk road from China.

**BUURUL-TYUN** – a place-name in the epic, probably a small locality.

**BILKILDAK** – literally auburn, bumpy. A place-name, met with as a geographical reality in some areas and settlements in central Asia and Kazakhstan. In this instance it is an inhabited spot not far from Karaganda in the northern territory of Kazakhstan.

**C** (In the Russian and Kirghiz tongues C sounds like S, but they have a letter for the combination CH, called che. See following:

**CHABALAN** – a narrow bag from the carpeted side of the yurt, used for keeping household utensils, and serving also as a decoration.

**CHADBAR** – literally auburn. A place-name in the epic, possibly a small locality. Also used as a name for reddish-brown steeds.

**CHAGALA** – in the epic, a war-cry, or cry of alarm among Chinese.

**CHAKMAK** – a place-name, met among those in central Asia, Turkey.

**CHALBAR** – leather trousers, with ornaments round waist and thighs.

**CHAMBIL** – a place-name. In Turkish and Uzbek epics, a promised, flourishing land, a social utopia, a place of equality and prosperity, at whose head stood a wise and just leader. Warrior defender.



**CHANACH** – a wine-skin made from the smoked hide of a goat, serving in the main as a container for kumiss and for dried preserves.

**CHANTU-BURUT** – Mussulman Kirghizians. See Burut.

**CHARKEE** – a fantastic being in folklore and legends. See Ubara.

**CHATKAL** – a place-name. Geographical reality found in Chatkal peak and the Chatkal valley and river so-named, in western Tyan-Shan.

**CHATIRASH** – a Kirghizian national game of the chess type.

**CHATIR-KEL** – the name of a lake in the epic. Geographically seen in Chatir-Kel, a sourceless salt-lake in the Tyan-Shan locality.

**CHEYREK** – a unit of weight, roughly equal to 4 to 6 kilograms in various regions of Kirghizia. In Talas is equal to 4 kilograms.

**CHEPKEN** – 1. A sort of buttoned man's jacket or tunic, covered with strong material, broadcloth. 2. A broadcloth dressing-gown.

**CHER** – literally sleepy forest, a grove. A name-place, invented.

**CHEMYUSH** the name of a river. Geographically found as Chumish, a right-wing tributary to the river Ob, in the west of Siberia.

**CHENGÉRLYU** – literally a place where there is a splinter, like a broken reed, or a rough grass-stalk. In the epic, a place-name.

**CHILTENI** – adherents of Islam, known holy men. In the epic and in tales of Turkish-speaking folk, the protectors and supporters of knights. In fatal difficult moments they appear in various forms, and give good advice. They bring long life, help in battles, and appear as the secret masters of the earthly life of people.

**CHINAR** (Chinara) – the oriental plane-tree, symbolic of beauty.

**CHIN-MACHIN** – in the folklore of Turkish and Iranian peoples, a fairy-tale land. Chin is identified with China. Machin, with other places found in the south of China, or in Manchuria possibly.

**CHOK-KAMISH** – place-name widely spread in inhabited areas by the Turkish-speaking peoples of central Asia, Kazakhstan, and Siberia.

**CHOK-TABIL** – place-name. The word Tabil meaning meadow-sweet, is frequently found as a place-name in many parts of central Asia.

**CHOK-TABILGI** – place-name, after the flower meadow-sweet. (Above)

**CHOLPON** – the star Venus. Symbolic of beauty and virginity.

**CHONG-BEL** – literally a great pass, or peak. Name of hilly regions.

**CHOLPOR** – a kind of warriors' footwear, of tough, long-tanned hide.

**CHOPKUT** – War-dress, upper protective armour, covered with a thick layer of wool and small protective metal discs, invulnerable to shots, arrows, and blows of battle-axes, swords and spears. Took the place of chain-mail, or was even put on over the top of it.

**CHORO** – name given to near and dear comrades, especially of Manas. The usual body-guards and men-at-arms, protecting military chiefs of Kirghiz tribes. They came from the middle layers of the people, as their prime supporters. They served a special role among Yenesei Kirghizians. The epic "Manas" was an echo of the days of the Turkish Khanate, when body-guards surrounded their leading Khans, and defended their interests. In the epic, forty body-guard knights protect the interest not only of their master, but of their people also. Manas himself was occupied with the same thing – people's rights.

**CHU** – a river, and a valley of the same name. Geographically the river Chu is formed by the confluence of the rivers Dzhuvanarik, and Kochkor, having their sources among the glaciers in the peaks of the Tersk-Alatau and Kirghizi mountains, near the lake Issik-Kul.

**CHULUU** – place-name, and name of a river, maybe a small region too.

**CHITAI** – one of the younger serving tanks among the Chinese people.

**CHILAN** – a small settlement, with a caravanserai stopping-place on the river Chilansu. It was located on the road between Kashgara – (see under K) and the town of Aksu. This region was for a long time a meeting-place of caravan routes from central Asia to China.

**CHINGROO** – a military instrument, giving the signal for the start of a battle, or the setting out on a military campaign somewhere.

**CHINGROON** – a bronze-beaked monster of fantastic strength, met with in epic stories and Asiatic folk tales and legends.

**DANGDUNG** – name of a mountain where Chinese or Kalmaks had settled.

**DARKAN** – a place-name. As a geographical reality it is found on the territory of central Asia and Kazakhstan. In particular it is in a village where Kirghiz live, to the east of the Issik Kul.

**DANG-DUNG BASH** – in the epic a mountain where are plentiful wild mountain goats, and it is a rich area for hunting and hawking.

**DASTAN** – a story or legend, as a folk-lore genre uniting poetry and prose in heroic epics, widely spread among the Turks of central Asia.

**DASTARKHAN** – 1. A table-cloth, or a low table on which eatables are placed. 2. Hospitality. A low three-legged small table with food.

**DEGEN-KIPCHAK** – ethnologically one of a group of related tribes among the Kipchaks, who themselves were widely spread in Kazakhstan.

**DÉGÉCHU** – In the epic poem this is an unspecified kind of wild plant.

**DÉRBEN** – the name of a tribe. Historically such a tribe was named by Rashid-ad-din, as a Mongolian one, in the time of Chingis Khan. In



his "Secret stories" it mentions the formation of such a tribe, from the four sons of Dura-sakhor. Ethnographers contend that the tribe was of Mongolian origin, resulting from campaigns and travels in many territories, among many peoples: Kirghiz, Uzbeks, Turkmeni, Kazakhs, Nogais, Bashkirs, Turks, and Azerbaijanians. Among Kirghiz Derben-Uulu is a tribal sub-section of the group Tinim-Seyit, which for a long time dwelt in Tyan-Shan, to the north of the river Narin.

DZHABU – an alarming cry, or war-cry among Kalmaks and Chinese.

DZHABIK – the line where the circular wall of the yurt joins the cupola-shaped roof, with its 4-spoked wheel-shaped opening giving ventilation, supported on specially fashioned beams joined to the hub.

DZHABIR-BAYAN – a fantastic monster or creature, according to folklore, one of the most powerful of all predatory beasts ever known.

DZHALOO – in the epic a place-name, possibly of some small region.

DZHAZAYIL – in the epic, one of the large muskets used by knights.

DZHAISAN – a war-commander or leader among Kalmaks, in China. The head of a tribe, or some eminent respected person in charge.

DZHAI-TASH – a poisonous stone, found, it seems, in the intestines of sheep, which has the magic power of changing the weather, if it is asked to do so, and placed in water. This is connected with the shamanistic conception related to the four elements of heaven, the earth, fire, and water. The ability of shamans (medicine-men) to call up wind or rain are reflected a Yenisei-Orkhon runic memorial of the ancient Turks. In Chinese sources we find mention of one of the progenitors of ancient Turks, who was born by a she-wolf, and he had the ability of bringing down blizzards, hurricanes and rain.

DZHALGIZ AYAK – a mythical ravenous creature, eating human flesh.

DZHAL-KAMISH – place-name found in some region of central Asia.

DZHAMBI – a nugget of silver, of a certain shape and weight, which serves as a monetary unit. Among Kirghiz, in traditional shooting competitions with bows and arrows, dzhambi were suspended on fine threads from high poles. Foot soldiers, or even riding horsemen, must sever the thread with their arrow to receive the prize nugget.

DZHANG-DZHUNG – in the epic, a chief commander, or major general among the Kalmaks in China. Leader, holding high military rank.

DZHANTAK – literally a camel-prickle. In the epic, the name of a river or lake locality, met with as a geographical reality in small localities in central Asia, and Kazakhstan, usually a valley.

DZHASO'OL – an envoy, fulfilling commissions by senior high officials.

DZHEDIGER – one of the Kirghizian tribes of the right wing, also a racial division or section among Kazakh and Uzbek tribes of Lokai.

DZHEKE – an expensive form of high boots which only leaders might wear. They had high heels, sometimes hollowed, with tiny bells, and were also found with toes curving upwards to form a point.

DZHELKAYIP – a ghost or spectre, usually invisible to human beings.

DZHELMOGUZ – old sorceress or witch, performing miracles sometimes.

DZHELMAYAN – a mythical camel, distinguished by strength and Rapidity.

DZHENE – wife of elder brother. Dzheneke, the affectionate form.

DZHERKEN – place-name, or region. Geographical reality Yakend, found as a town in Sintszyan, previously a well-known trading centre. 1882.

DZHIGIT – young man, bold young rider, a member of the Khan's or the captain's favoured group, forming a body-guard for the leader.

DZHIDIMAK – the centre of the circular space where the "khan" (a circular metal disc or cup) stands in the game of Ordo, see O), somewhat similar to our game of knucklebones, where sticks are thrown to drive them out of the circle. See Explanatory note 93)

DZHIYANGCHA – in the epic the name of a fictional Chinese region.

DZHYUGEN-TASH – literally stone bridle. In the epic the name of a mountain range or pass. Found in central Asia and Kazakhstan.

DZHYUGYURYUK – literally producer of a goat or ram. A small place.

DZHYULGER – name of mountain range, or maybe a mountainous region.

DZHYULYUN – name of mountain peak, river, or maybe a small region.

DZHYUYURME – name of a region in the epic, possibly a local name.

DZH in Kirghizian is one letter, taking the sound of J or soft G.

DILDE – a golden coin, or gold itself. Value in the epic unspecified.

DINGSE – a pom-pom or ball on the hat of some official person in China, used as a mark of distinction. Historically in the Tsin dynasty of Manchuria, rank was shown by various colours of dress.

DOOL – literally a drum. In the epic a place-name, maybe a region.

DOOTAI – in the epic one of the highest officials among Chinese. Historically the leader of the district, the Sintszyan governor.

DUVAL – a clay-built wall, used as a boundary line or division.

DYURYUIYE – a kind of silk fabric, most probably of Chinese type.

EGIZ-KARA – place-name. Geographical reality found in central Asia.



**EGIZEK** – literally twins, doubles. A place-name met with in Kazakhstan.

**EKI-KEMIN** – literally two Kemins. Name of locality and of river. Most likely the rivers Chong-Kemin, and Kichi-Chemin, nr. Issik-Kul.

**ERIME** – name of a desert wasteland, or lake in the land beyond death.

**ERTISH** – the river flowing through western Siberia and Kazakhstan. The Ili-Irtish are a between the two rivers is a region where many Kirghizian tribes settled on their wanderings in days long past.

**ESHTEK** – the name of a tribe Ishtek historically, a section or a group along with many others such as Kurdak, Yaskalbi, Tyrali etc. which were known among west-Siberian Tatars, and partly among the Tobolsk Tatars. The name of this tribal section is now forgotten.

**ILI** – a river flowing in Kazakhstan territory, and in westernmost China also, and finally falling into lake Balkhash, N. Kazakhstan.

**ICHIGI** – light footwear with long uppers, but no heels, made of light leather, with very soft soles, worn for purposes of rest. It is counted among the favourite foods of the Kirghizians, the Kazakhs, and many other tribes of Turkish derivation generally.

**KAINARLU** – literally spring-water. The name of a river in the epic. It is often met as the name of some small mountain stream as well.

**KAIBEREN** – See Kayip on the next line for which it also stands.

**KAYIP** – a benevolent spirit, protector of wild and domestic beasts.

**KAKAI** – see Kakanchin on the next line, for which it also is used.

**KAKANCHIN** – in the epic, the land where the Chinese live. In Turkish folk-lore the peoples of Kakan and Chin usually exist along with the Chinese, and it is taken as a distant legendary fairyland.

**KALBA** – a place-name Geographically found as the Kolbi peak, in the range of the Altai mountains, standing on Kazakhstan territory.

**KALDAI** – An office of high serving rank among Kalmaks and Chinese. In the epic it is also met as a war-cry. In this is found the reciter's conception of such war-cries (uran) characteristic of the migrant peoples of central Asia and Kazakhstan. In the past each tribe adopted the name of their progenitor patriarch, or of some knight who had distinguished himself among his military comrades. Sometimes a war-cry was adopted as a name for a tribe. The cry was usually given in advancing, and when on the battlefield, as an encouragement to show valour, and distinguish by brave and stoic behaviour in the battle. Finally, it was used to greet some great victory gained. In peaceful times it was used to encourage members of the tribe in horse-racing, and other competitive games.

**KALKAN** – a place-name, found as a geographic reality in the Ili vale.

**KALMAK** – in the epic, an enemy tribe, not only in the narrow ethnic sense as a general foe, along with the Chinese, but as special foes of Manas. The presentation of Kalmaks as epic foes has a direct connection with real history. It is known that the Kirghizians and the Kazakhs, Uzbeks, and Karakalpaks fought against the unbroken attacks on their lands in the XVth to XVIth centuries by western Mongolians, Oirats, and Kalmaks. Having broken off from the empire of Chingis-Khan, the Kalmaks (as the Russians named them) made a firm union then with the Oirats, in the Dzhungar government of the XVIIth to XVIIIth centuries. The attacks of the Oirats then fell upon the Yenisei Kirghizians, and other tribes found on the territory of their ancient forebears. Destructive attacks were made by Kalmaks on the Seven-River area, in the region of Issik-Kul, and Tyan-Shan. Kirghizians living in the region of Issik-Kul lake and western Tyan Shan, there fell into submission to the Kalmaks, but they revolted and conducted a merciless struggle against them. The events of the Kalmak wars were connected with the break-down of the Chingis-Khan empire, and with the establishment upon its ruins of new tribal and governmental unions of migrant cattle-breeding, Turkish-speaking peoples, dwelling in the Kipchak steppeland, from the Volga and the Urals, to Issik-Kul and the Tyan-Shan range. In the epic, the awakening of historical consciousness of many tribes and peoples – the Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Kara-kalpaks, Nogais, etc. is depicted as a period of long struggle with Oirat-Kalmak khans, and it became an epic time, not soon to be forgotten in the heroic folk-lore of all those peoples.

**KALPAK** – traditional Kirghizian masculine head-gear, in the form of a conical hat of white felt, decorated with hand-sewn patterns. The brim of the hat is cut in two places, and is sewn with a black velvet ribbon. On the crest of the hat there is usually seen a small decorative pom-pom, made of black silk threads hanging down.

**KALCHA** – literally severe, menacing. The constant epithet for the Chinese knight Kongurbai, a great strong-man, as well as a leader. Sometimes this epithet is used in its depreciative negative sense.

**KAMBIL** – an epic place-name for localities, mountains, or rivers.

**KAMKA** – sometimes found as Kanfa, a rare variety of Chinese silk.

**KATCHA** – a leather-plaited whip used by riders on horse-back.

**KANAT** – a rope or cable, a binding for the beams supporting the circular opening in the dome of Kirghizian yurtas, for ventilation.



**KANGAI** – one of the Kalmak tribes, or Kalmaks generally. It is also the name of their land, of mountain passes, and is heard too as a war-cry when advancing into battle, to scare the enemy troops.

**KANGU** – in the epic Almambet, speaking with Kirgil, so names his folk.

**KANDALCHA** – in the epic, a sort of sabre, having a curved blade.

**KANISH** – the wife of a Khan. An abbreviation of the name Kanikei, the wife of bogatir Manas. While single she was called Sanirabiyga.

**KARA-KIRGHIZ** – in the epic no distinction is made with Kirghizians in general, but this name was given to distinguish them from the Kazakhs, who were also generally known all around as Kirghizians.

**KARA-NOGOI** – one of the ethnological groups of Nogois. See under N. in the epic Nogois are met in various clear colours – Kara-Nogoi – black, Beli-Nogoi – white, Sari-Nogoi – yellow, thus showing groups.

**KARA-SAZ** – literally black marsh. Met as place-name in central Asia.

**KARASU** – name of a river, widely used in central Asia and Kazakhstan, and found in the Altai mountain, as a name for underground rivers.

**KARA-TASH** – literally black stone. Name of a locality or small area.

**KARA-TOKO** – in the epic a tribal name. Ethnologically they belonging to a section of the Kirghizians, joined with tribal Munduz.

**KARA-TOKOI** – literally dark forest, place-name. As geographic reality it is found as the name of small localities in central Asia, and especially where many bushes grow, and dark reeds and rushes on the banks of rivers and lakes, and dark boggy and marshy localities.

**KARA-UNKYUR** – literally black cave, used in the epic as place-name.

**KARA-SHAAR** – place-name, often connected with dwelling-places of Kalmaks. It is mentioned as the place where Jakib, Manas' father kept his cattle. As a geographic reality, Karashar is found in the Chinese region of Sintszyan. In this locality also lived Oirats, and some Turkish-speaking tribes such as Uigurs, Kazakhs, Kalmaks.

**KARNAI** – a long brass horn, with a flared tip, giving forth loud and raucous sounds. This usually announced a festive meeting of some kind, or the beginning of a military campaign, or sometimes a change of the settlement area. Occasionally revellers played them.

**KARISH** – measure of length, the distance between extended thumb and the middle finger. It also has the meaning of the number four.

**KASPANG** – the name of the place where Manas' foes live. Fictitious.

**KATAGAN** – the name of a tribe. Ethnologically Katagans were a firm union of Turkish-speaking tribes. Later the name was found among

Kirghizians, Kazakhs, and Uzbeks. Manas' comrade Koshoi was one.

**KATAL** – literally difficult, heavy. The name of a mountain pass.

**KATKALANG** – the name of a tribe. It has direct connection with the nick-name of Kalmak Khan Karacha. Literally stiff and stubborn. It is the name of woman-warrior Saikal's father. She once wounded Manas.

**KATIN-AYU** – literally woman-bear, a demonic being in the epic poem.

**KASHGAR** – in the epic frequently used for a town or place-name. Geographic reality – Kashgar town in Sintszyan, found by the river Kashgar in the southern foothills of the Tyan-Shan mountain range.

**KASHIK** – literally a spoon. The name of a stream, river, or lake.

**KENG-KOTON** – literally the wide Koton. The name of a river. Found geographically as the river Koton or Khotan. A town in Sintszyan.

**KENTUN** – in the epic of the great cities of the Chinese people.

**KERGE** – the wooden lattice framework of the cylindrical part of the yurt, on which the coverings of silk, satin, and felt hang.

**KERME-TOO** – literally a chain of hills. The name of mountains in Kirghizia. As a geographical folk name, it is found in Tyan-Shan.

**KEIKAP** (Kei-Kap, Keikof, Kaf) – a mythical mountain range, said to have been made by God of emeralds, circling the world, and barring the way to impassable spaces. It is supposed that to travel round this range takes 2000 years. In accordance with legends and myths djinns, fairies, and evil spirits live on Kaf. In oriental tales one often meets Kaf, with its mystical beings – here beneficial, kind creatures, and there sprites dangerous and hostile to man. There also lives their master, and his fairy daughter, the mistress of all the good fairies. In Turkish and Iranian folk-lore, Kaf is connected with the conception of the edge of the world.

**KEK-ARAL** – literally blue cow. In Kirghizian language Argin is connected with cows. In the epic it stands for mountain slopes.

**KEKKYUBE** – a knight's impenetrable war-robe. See also under Kyube.

**KEL-KAMISH** – literally a lake of reeds. A place-name met with in small localities in Kirghizia and Kazakhstan, meaning a marsh.

**KEL-KECHYU** – a lake crossing. In the epic it is the name of a river.

**KEMEGE** – a long trench, shallow and used for making fires near home.

**KEMESARA** – in the epic a place-name, maybe of some small region.

**KERPE** – 1. A small woollen blanket. 2. A narrow quilted blanket, used as part of the bedding, or as a cushion for guests to sit on.



**KIYIK** – wild cloven-hoofed beasts, but not including wild boars.

**KIRGHIZ-NOIGUT** – a tribal group of the Kirghizians. See Noigut.

**KISE** – a small leather pouch, hung at the waist, used for carrying flints, tinder and fuses for muskets, also a place for knives and other equipment used for long hunting trips and also on campaign.

**KOBULDUU** – literally with ruts or grooves. In the epic used as a name for hollows and valleys, and other small regions of uneven form.

**KOICHARGIR** – in the epic, the name of an old-fashioned musket.

**KOKAND** – name of a town, geographically found in the Fergan valley, in the basin of the river Sokh. Known already in the Xth century. From 1740 to 1876, was the capital of the Kokand Khanate – a feudal government, lasting from 1710 to 1876 in central Asia, shared by the Bukhara Khanate. The Kokand valley was a place for the settlement of Kirghizian tribes, occupying marshy places, or thickets, and valleys and hollows, spread out from the Fergand and Altai ranges and headlands, and also foothills belonging to those ranges.

**KOKUI** – an expression of sudden fright, or of deep dissatisfaction.

**KONG** – an abbreviation of the name Kongurbai, the same as Kongur, Kong-tyure, Kong-bai, etc. Chinese strong-man and leader. See below.

**KONGURBAI** – one of the chief opponents of Manas, from whose hand he finally dies in battle. Some investigators think that he might have received his name in the epic from Xhongor, living in the second half of the XVI cent, whose name is recorded in Kalmak historical documents. In "Manas", Kongurbai, a strong-man and knight of the Kalmaks, having maybe a certain claim to reality, nevertheless appears as an epic personage, obeying the laws of epic artistry.

**KORDOI** – a place-name, most likely defining a smallish region.

**KOSH** – 1. A migratory camp, with all its equipment. 2. A military detachment, a section of warriors. 3. A small yurt, such as was used for hunting expeditions. All three meanings are found here.

**KOSH-ARTISH** – literally, the place where travellers cross the pass. In the epic a place-name, possibly invented, or some small region.

**KULA** – abbreviation for Akkula, the name of Manas' steed. See A.

**KULACH** – an arm-span. Just over 2 metres. Distance between your finger-tips when both arms are stretched out at shoulder level. Old length measure for the peoples of central Asia and Kazakhstan.

**KULDZHA** – abbreviation for Akkuldzha, a white mountain ram. See A.

**KUMALAK** – a round pebble, used for fortune-telling, or for a game played mainly by children. This second meaning is intended here.

**KUMGAN** – a metal jug, usually bronze, with curving spout and handle used for washing and rinsing hands before Islamic prayers are said.

**KUMUL** – place-name, and name of country in the epic. As geographical reality it is found in the town Kumul in Chinese Sintszyan.

**KURDZHUN** – a travelling bag for carrying things, food products etc. in migrating from one place to another. On such travels it is usually slung over the horse's back, or between a camel's two humps.

**KUUORDEK** – literally swan-duck, cunning duck. These are found in many oriental myths. They live on the borders of China, according to popular belief, and give people warning of approaching enemies.

**KIYSHA-TOO** – literally crooked mountain. In the epic the name of a mountain or small locality which remains undefined; fictitious.

**KUNKAP** – the name of a kind of brocaded cloth, or silken material.

**KIPCHAKI** – a tribal union, related closely to Manas. Historically Kipchaks were a group of Kazakhs, Kirghiz, and other Turkish-speaking peoples. In general Kipchaks, until the XIth cent. known as Kimaki, were large-scale unions of tribes of Turkish extraction, long since having dwelt between the Irtysh and Ili rivers. There, in the XIth cent. arose a group of Kipchaks, heading this tribal union, which took their name. Later this name was shared by more tribes, covering a huge territory, from Irtysh to Tyan-Shan, and from the Urals to the Aral Sea, and from Sidari to the Black Sea. Kipchaks took part in forming the basic kernel of Turkish-speaking peoples – Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Karakalpaks, Bashkirs, and Kirghizians.

**KIRGILCHAL** – meaning Kirgil, Manas' comrade, only taking account of his old age. The 'chal' ending was a sign of respect for elders, especially those in authority, meaning 'grey-bearded' or 'grey-headed'.

**KITAI** – the Russian word for Chinese, in the epic the opponents of the Kirghizians. That was not one defined people, but included tribes of Mongol-Tungus origin, who took control of China in the north, and founded there a wide empire in the Xth. to XIIth. centuries. The epic Chinese, about whom we read, had close ties with the Tsin dynasty of Manchuria, who won northern China, and ruled there from the XVIIIth. to the beginning of the century. Against these the group of Kirghizian tribes who came there and submitted to the Tsin dynasty in the XVIIIth. century, led a struggle for freedom. The conception of the Chinese in the epic is generally tied up with tribes of them which in the past made attacks from that area where China is now situated, with its capital in Beijing, i.e. Peking.

**KITMIR** – a place-name in the epic not identified. Maybe imaginary.

**KYUBE** – a knight's war robe, worn over his armour, made in itself with metal threads, and little metal discs, which acted as an invulnerable



shield against shots from bows and arrows, battle-axes, swords, and even musket shots. Blankets likewise saved their steeds.

KYUBEK – a stone or clay trap, formed with a long, narrow throat, and a widened bottom, where the bait to attract the prey is placed.

KYUREEKE – a luxurious robe of silk, decorated with golden thread.

KYURPYULDEK – literally rumbling. Place-name, maybe a small area.

KYUCHALA – (Kyuchela) – sometimes called chilibukha – a small tropical tree, whose fruit, seeds, and bark contain alkaloids and strychnine.

LANAAT-MANAT (Lanat) in the epic, one of the Kalmak heathen gods.

MAALA – 1. Toen or village quarters. 2. A Chinese-Kirghiz village.

MALAKAI – A fur hat with wide earflaps and close-fitting neckpiece.

MANGUL – a tribe hostile to the Kirghizians. Sometimes taken as signifying Kalmaks, or one of their tribes. Ethnologically it is connected with Mongol-speaking folk, and with Oirats and Turgots.

MANGYUBA – place-name, signifying a distant part in the lands of the Chinese. Sometimes used in the epic as tribal name, unspecified.

MANDZHI (Mandzhu) – in the epic a tribe or people of the Kalmaks. The name of the land where they live. It is also used as a war-cry.

MANDZHURIA – name of a country, falling in with the historical name of Manchuria, found to the north-east of China. It comes from the name of the early feudal government of Manchu, found in the first half of the XVIIth. century in the territory of modern Manchuria.

MARAL-BASHI – place-name. As a geographical reality it is found in an old trading centre, on the cross-roads from Kashgara and Yakond, (see Dzherken) to Aksu. One of the important defences of Kashgaria.

MARALDU – literally stag. Watering place for stags. A small stream.

MARGELAN – in the epic a town, a valley, a mountain slope. This is historically a town in the Fergan valley, previously in the Kokand Khanate, holding an important trading position on the caravan route.

MATA – a rough white cotton-like material, made from shrubbery.

MENDYU – in the epic a war-cry used by Chinese and Kalmaks alike.

MERKI – a place-name, known in reality as a name for a stream or river, and as an inhabited locality, in particular in Kazakhstan.

MIRZA – a master, a lord, an aristocrat, a man of noble extraction.

MOLDO – 1. a learned man, specially one knowing Arabic. 2. A teacher of the old school. 3. A Mussulman priest or Mullah. 4. A Mussulman scribe, employed by a master. In general a wise man.

MURSHAP (Mirshap) – the chief of the night watch in Kokand. In the epic used to indicate the military rank of guardsman, or sentry.

NAI – a folk wind instrument of the flute type. Generally spread among central Asian peoples, especially the kind with six stops.

NAKERI – footwear, with curved-up pointed toes and decorated with patterns, as usually worn by knights and lords and leaders.

NAR – a single-humped camel, distinguished by great strength and powers of endurance, and therefore highly valued by their masters.

NARIN – 1. Name of a river, geographically located in the Sidar basin. 2. A folk dish, made of finely chopped meat, boiled in gravy.

NASVAI – tobacco of a special kind for chewing or placing under the tongue or lower lip. Also in the epic mentioned as tobacco snuff.

NESKARA – name of Chinese troop commander, openly hostile to Manas.

NOGOI – the name of a tribe. Historically, a group formed of Kipchaks (see K) at whose head stood Mongolian Mangit tribe members. In the second half of the XVth. cent. Mangits began to be called Nogois. These were known also as Kazakhs. In the epic, Manas' belonging to this tribe of Nogois is found in all the variants. Sometimes Nogois and Kirghiz are named as independent tribes, but they always show deepest and friendliest tribal attachments.

NOGAI – the name of Manas' grand-father. In this name some investigators see, as also in the name of Manas' wife Kanikei, a reflection of the Nogai tradition. Recorded tales connected with the history of the Nogai horde are widely spread among Turkish folk of central Asia, Kazakhstan, and Siberia. Among Kazakhs, for instance, there exists a complete cycle of Nogai tales. In ancient Kirghiz tales one meets the names Nogai and Shigai. (In the Manas epic we meet Shigai as Nogai's brother). In those stories it tells how they both lived on the Yenisei, and in union with tribes of Naimans, then resettled in central Asia. Kirghizians, in their legends and tales often united the Nogois from the Yenisei with the Nogai horde.

NOIGUT – a tribal name in the epic. Ethnologically one of the tribes of ancient Kirghizians, joined with the Ichkilik tribe. In accordance with legends, Noiguts had a separate group named Ichilik, and they had nine sections of various connections, and they always stood together with Kirghizian Kipchaks, who also joined the Ichiliks. In the epic they get together with Argins and Nogois, under their leader Manas. Investigators relate Noiguts to tribes of Mongolian extraction. Historically, their common participation was the result of the existence of tribal unions of various ethnological extraction, or of military unions for strategic purposes. From the XVIth. cent. on, the Noiguts mi-



grated to the mountain regions of Fergan, then the Pamirs and then Kashgar. From the XVIIth. cent. right up to the XVIIIth. cent. a certain part of the Noiguts lived in eastern Turkmenistan, and afterwards in the northern foothills of the Alai crest. In the epic the name of the progenitor of that tribe was Noigut.

NOOT – literally a pool, a reservoir. In the epic the name of a lake.

NUKER – a body-guard, standing in the service of a Khan or feudal lord – a Khan's servant. In the epic – a knight's servant, or comrade.

OGUZ – a personal name. In the epic, in genealogical tales, and in the legends of Turkish-speaking peoples, there is a group of Khan Oguz, the son of Karakhan, the common ancestor and progenitor of the Oguz. His name is met in the Oguz heroic epic "My grandfather Korkut's book", which deals with historical legends and stories of the Oguz tribe. Oguz-khan is also named in the genealogy of Manas.

OGUZI – in the epic the name of a tribe, founded by Oguz-khan. Historically a Turkish-speaking tribe, in central Asia in the VIIth. to the IXth cent. they played an important part in the ethnology of Turkmeni, Azerbaijanians, Gagauzi and Karakalpaki. Kirghizians had ancient ties with Oguzi tribes, with whom some united, when they lived in southern Siberia, and formed a political agreement with them then. In some folk-tales they speak of Turkmeni living as neighbours with Kirghiz in the Altai mountains. In Abu-l-Gaza's "Turkmen genealogy" it tells how some Turkmeni lived near lake Issik-Kul, in Almilik, in Sairam, and in the mountains of Ulug and Kichig-Tag. It follows that Kirghizians long ago had historical and ethnological ties with Turkmeni, and also with other central Asian peoples, and this had its reflection in the epic "Manas", as might be expected.

OGYUZ-KECHYU – literally ford of bulls. In the epic a hollow place.

OGYUZ-OTMEK – literally passing place for bulls. Low-lying place.

OI-BOI – a sorrowful exclamation by a sufferer, or a sympathizer.

OIRAT – one of the Kalmak tribes (see K) or a synonym for Kalmaks.

OOGAN – the name of a locality, a government, or a tribe of people. This may refer to nearby Afghanistan and folk living there.

ORA-TYUBE – a place-name and city. As a geographical reality, one of the ancient cities of the Fergan valley, which in the XVIIth. to the beginning of the XIXth. century entered the Kokand Khanate. Today it is found in the Tadzhikistan city bearing that same name.

ORDO – the national game of knucklebones. (See also under Alchiki) Players try by throwing sticks to drive sheep knee-bones from the circular play-ground, and capture the metal disc called the "khan".

ORKUN – a place-name for rivers, lakes, or inland seas. As a geographical reality, the river Orkun is a right-wing tributary of the river Selengi, falling into Lake Baikal. This river is mentioned several times in the epic, since it flows from the Altai towards the Tyan-Shan, on the route of migrant Kirghiz cattle-breeders.

OTAGOT – a cone of precious stones on the hat of a Kalmak or Chinese official, and on the helmets of their military commanders.

OCHOGOR – a type of old-fashioned musket of the flint-lock type.

PADISHAKH (Padishah) – a leader and governor of a union of tribes.

PERI – 1. a beauty, a fairy, an angel of heaven. 2. A fabulous angelic creature of feminine form, but occasionally masculine too. Such are widely spread in myths, epics, and legends of the East.

PROMISLITEL – that is the Thinker, Originator. Epithet for Allah.

RUSTAM – legendary knight, defender of his native land and people. Known in ancient times, in folk-tales of people living in the territory of modern central Asia, Iran and Afghanistan. Many motifs in the story of knight Rustam were discovered later in the written literature of central Asian peoples, Tadzhiks of the middle ages, and in Iran folk-lore, especially the classic "Shakh-nam" of the poet Firdosi, in worked-over form. With the Turks, as with the Persians, the name Rustam is the personification of bravery and valour.

SAZANGSHAN (Sashang) – in the epic a mythical people or land. Sometimes the giant Makel-Malgun adopts this name, as seen in the epic.

SAMARKAND – one of the great cultural centres of Middle Asia, long since known to the Kirghizians. This is historically the ancient town of Sogdiani, which later became part of the Bukhar Khanate. Now one of the greatest cultural and trading centres of Uzbekistan.

SAN – a counting measure of ten thousand. A great amount of anything.

SARPAI – 1. expensive material from which clothes are made. This is presented to highly esteemed guests at feasts. 2. A robe made of this.

SARTI – a tribal group, a people. In the beginning of the XVIIIth. century, Sarts were named as coming from Kashgar (see under K) when it was settled mainly by Uigurs (see under U). So one may understand the combination found in the epic – Uigur-Sarti. There is no other definition in history more exact than this. Some took Sarts to be Tadzhiks, but only town people. Others make Uzbeks of them, those who lost their independence and became assimilated into adjoining tribes, migrant Turks, Seldyuki and others, in the XIth. century on, named city-dwellers, traders, and so on, Sarts, and this took root. In everyday life, Sarts took on a settled existence, mainly in the Fergan valley, and other regions of Uzbekistan, irrespective of the language



they spoke, whether Tadzhik or Uzbek. Europeans, before the Russian revolution, spoke of Sarts as representatives of local folk in modern Uzbekistan, but in post-revolutionary days this stopped. Ethnographs note that Sart previously meant Kirghizians and Bashkirs.

**SARI-ARKA** – Kazakh steppe north of a line between Balkhash and Aral.

**SARI-BEL** – literally yellow pass. The name of a locality, mountain ravine, or valley, met with in central Asia, also in Kazakhstan.

**SARI-KOL** – literally yellow hand – name of mountain ravine or vale. Met with as a place-name in central Asia, for example Sari-kol, a peak in the Pamirs, the watershed of the rivers Tarim and Amudari.

**SARI-KIYA** – literally yellow slope, the name of a mountain. Often met with in central Asia and Kazakhstan. Usually the term yellow is used for a mountain stopping-place without grass and undergrowth.

**SARI-OZEN** – literally yellow river-bed. The name of a river found in small localities in central Asia where dried – up beds are seen.

**SEL** – a muddy mountain torrent in full spate. In the epic this word symbolizes the rapid approach of some all-destructive misfortune.

**SOLOONI** – the name of a tribe. Historically, Solooni are a Tungus-Manchurian people. At the present time they occupy a small part of the territory of Inner Mongolia, and also Manchuria, as dwellers of northern Manchuria noted, in Chinese sources of the XIIIth. cent. Separate groups of Soloons were transferred in the XVIIIth. to early XIXth. cent. to the Seven Rivers area, where they took up agriculture, and at the same time protected the borders of the Tsin empire.

**SOOGA** – a gift made by relatives from war-spoil, or from hunting or hawking prey. This was a customary procedure among vagrant people.

**SOOLON** – the name of expensive material used for making clothing.

**SULTAN** – a master from the nobility, the leader of the local people. Sometimes a Mussulman military chief, with unchallengeable powers.

**SUNG-DUNG** – a military chieftain among the Chinese and Kalmaks.

**SURNAL** – folk musical instrument, with bronze flared horn at the end of a long tube. On this traditional notes were played to celebrate important events, such as the start of a campaign, or to welcome returning warriors. Rich Kirghizians had their own surnai-players, who entertained them before departing on travels usually.

**SUSAMIR** – a place-name, an area of reserves belonging to Kirghizians. Such are found on the mountain ranges of Tyan-Shan. Susamir valley lies there, between Talas and Alatau, and Dzhungaltau, where the Susamir river, flowing as a tributary, joins the Narin system.

**SUYUNCHI** – Good news, or a gift for bringing it. By custom long since adopted by Turkish-speaking tribes, they generously reward the first one to bring glad news, who then cries "Suyunchi!" He is welcomed to the feast at once, and repeats the good news to all.

**SIRBARANG** – an old-fashioned type of knight's musket (see Akbarang).

**SIRNAIZA** – literally spear with a coloured shaft. This is the usual name for a knight's lance, especially those used in tournaments.

**TAI-OTMEK** – literally crossing for foal. In the epic found as a pass in the mountains, or as the name of some hollow place or a valley.

**TALAS** – the name of a river valley. Geographical reality is a river flowing through Kirghizian and Kazakhstan territory. Talas is also the name of a hollow in Tyan-Shan mountains, between Kirghiz peak and Talas Alatau. Talas is known from sources in VIth. cent. onwards.

**TALAGUR** – a place-name. The mountain vale where fantastic creatures are met, such as Akkuldzho (see A) and Kuordék (see K) preserving the borders of Chinese lands, and warning of the approach of foes.

**TANGSHANG** (Tang-shang, Tangsha) – place-name of Chinese and Kalmaks.

**TARBAGATAI** – name of mountain range. As a geographic reality, found in central Asia and Kazakhstan. Tarbagatai divides Zaisan hollow from the Balkhash basin in the mountains, and the area of Alakol lake.

**TATALA** – a cry based on the imitation of the spoken Kalmak tongue.

**TAM-KECHYU** – literally stony ford. In the epic, a fording-crossing.

**TEYIT** – the name of a tribe, Kirghizians related to the Ichkiliks.

**TEK-TURBAS** – literally do not stand still. Place-name in the epic.

**TEMIRDIK** – literally place where iron is. In the epic the name of a hollow, or maybe of some small locality, where iron-ore is found.

**TENGRI** – 1. God. 2. Heaven. The conception of Tengri is founded on the belief in a spiritual master-God. Also his place of dwelling and operating is involved. In ancient Turkish mythology his nonpersonal existence, as it were, decided the fates of peoples and their governments. It is supposed that the conception of Tengri arose before the Turkish era, and in almost unchanged form remained with the Mongolians of the Middle Ages. At a later date, Tengri, in the form of a righteous judge, and God of the heavens, more than any other, was kept in memory Khakasi and Mongolians. Worship of a personified form of god Tengri was observed among western Turks of the VIIIth. cent. Indirect ties of Tengri with heavenly spheres found its expression also among the Kirghizians in their epic "Manas", where Tengri not only means God in general, but heaven too.



**TESH-DZHARI** – a measure of length equal approximately to 1 metre, from the tip of the middle finger to the middle of the breastbone.

**TOI** – 1. a holiday feast. 2. Entertainment of guests with games, which by Turkish peoples' customs celebrates the birth of a child, and the announcement of its name; also memorial feasts made for a deceased one, for marriage ceremonies, for departure on campaign, for a military victory, for great new settlements, and new events. 3. For the entertainment of guests arranged in accordance with the ceremonies of sacrifice to God the protector, for the fulfilment of prayers made to Him in hope of receiving a long-awaited child.

**TORGUN** – a kind of expensive Chinese silk, brought by caravans.

**TORU KIPCHAK** – one of the groups of united tribes of Kipchaks (K)

**TUBAR** – a kind of expensive satin or silken cloth, maybe Chinese.

**TULPAR** – an outstanding race-horse, or war-horse. Sometimes seen in the mystical shape of a swift-winged Pegasus of Greek myths.

**TUNGSHA** – in the epic the name of a town, a steppeland or mountains. Usually assumed to be those distant places where Chinese folk dwell.

**TUNDUK** – the massive four-spoked wheel in the cupola-shaped roof of the yurt, which serves as a ventilator, held up by wood beams.

**TIYTAI** – in the epic, the name of a military rank among Chinese.

**TYUMEN** – literally ten thousand. A traditional means of counting riders and foot-soldiers before battle. Also used figuratively for any large number or horde. A hundred tyumeni made them a million.

**TYURE** – milord, a blue-blooded aristocrat, a man of noble extraction, a representative of the elite among the members of the tribe.

**TYURKI** – In the epic 1. an independent people. 2. A union of Turkish tribes, including Kirghiz, standing against the common enemy. Historically, the term Turk is also used politically for defining Turkish-speaking tribes of central Asia in the Vth. to VIIIth. cent. where they formed a united government under the Turkish Khanate. The Russian and Kirghiz letter Shei (three verticals standing on one horizontal,) comes a little later than T. It is written Sh in English.

**SHAIMERDEN** – Persian Shakhi-Mardan. Literally manly Shah. Found in the folk-lore of the majority of peoples of the near and far East. He is a legendary protector of epic heroes. This image takes on historical reality in Ali-ibn-Abu-Talibu, the fourth "righteous Caliph" son-in-law and cousin of the great Muslim prophet Mahommed.

**SHAITAN** – In Islamic mythology an evil spirit, Satan, the Devil. In accordance with the legend Satan was driven out of heaven by God into hell, for his refusal to bow before Man, created by God alone. In the Islamic conception Satan (Iblis) was sentenced to do evil until

Judgement Day, because he could not do good. In the epic he is met with in passing with a hostile attitude towards knights and valorous men, casting a shadow on their bravery. Manas, in angry mood, sometimes refers to his forty comrades-in-arms as real devils.

**SHARPILDAK** – literally incoming tide. In the epic obviously a lake.

**SHASHKALIK** – 1. A measure of the distance a horse might cover from sunrise till noon or late morning. 2. Geographically south-east.

**SHITA-KECHYU** – literally a trespasser's passage. The name of a ford.

**UBARA** – fantastic being, man with bronze nose, blood-sucking monster.

**UIGUR** – in the epic, a tribe or people. Historically one of the ancient Turkish-speaking peoples. In the VIIIth to IXth century they formed a powerful government in Kashgaria. It kept up endless hostilities against the Kirghizians in the IXth cent. but the Kirghiz finally won out against the central Asian powers of the Uigurs in Mongolia. Some experts connect the campaigns of Manas with this time. Uigurs considered themselves both a settled and a migrant people. Up to the end of the XVIIIth and beginning of the XIXth cent., those who stayed in towns in eastern Turkestan named themselves after the town in which they lived. Thus they were called Kashgarts, Yak-endits, Aksuits, Kuchini, Khotants, etc. Separate tribes took up a vagrant life of cattle-men, constantly seeking new pastures, and explored the vast territory of central Asia, in the northern Seven Rivers area, and in the Ili valley. In the middle of the XVIIIth century as the result of the winning of the Kashgarian region by Manchurian leaders of the Tsin dynasty, some of the Uigurs moved off and halted on the territory of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kirghizia in general.

**URYUK** – a lasso with a noose, used for capturing pasturing horses.

**ULAR-TASH** – literally stone of mountain turkeys. A mountain peak, found geographically among the smaller ones of central Asian ranges.

**UNINI** – the curved wooden beams supporting the ventilating wheel in the cupola-shaped roof of a Kirghizian yurt, letting out the smoke.

**URUMCHI** – a place-name. Geographically located in Urumchi (Dikhu) a town in the north-west of China, in the territory of Sintszyan.

**UZYUL** – the roofing material covering the upper part of the yurt.

**X** – In Russian and Kirghizian the letter X is pronounced as a kind of guttural K, written in English as Kh, uttered deep in the throat.

**KHAN** – the title of a feudal lord or master. A chieftain among the Turks and Mongols. In the epic – 1. Chief of a tribal union. 2. One of the elders of the tribe. 3. Chosen military leader. 4. A respected nobleman. 5. Title of esteem for men in high authority.



## CONTENTS

### "MANAS" – OUR SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION.

**CHINGIZ AITMATOV** ..... 3

**MANAS. The Great Campaign** ..... 17

**COMMENTARY** ..... 332

**EXPLANATORY VOCABULARY** ..... 344

Format 84×108<sup>1</sup>/<sub>32</sub>. Number of copies printed: 1000.

Order № 2442

Avenue Chui, 180. Bishkek, 720000. Kyrgyz Branch  
of the International Centre  
"Traditional Cultures and Enviroments"

Joint-stock company  
Kyrgyz Printing Plant  
Suvanberdiev str., 102  
Bishkek, 720005, Kyrgyz Republic



