

Revivalist trends in Kyrgyz mosaic culture

Shabnum Qadir¹, Darakhshan Abdullah², Nasir Nabi¹

¹ PhD Student, Centre of Central Asian Studies, University of Kashmir, Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, India

² Associate Professor, Centre of Central Asian Studies, University of Kashmir, Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir, India

Abstract

Disintegration of erstwhile Soviet Union and the subsequent rise of five newly independent states of Central Asia, namely Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan have resulted in far reaching consequences to the socio-political and cultural aspects of these states. The five states including Kyrgyz apart from economic and political transition, marked revivalist trends in the age old customs and traditions which were undermined during Soviet yoke in the process of forming communist set up. The age old customs and traditions has received serious blow under Soviet cultural policy. However in the post independent period the Customs and Traditions are assuming new significance and a new socio cultural order is developing where remote past and immediate past are mixing up. Almost everywhere re-animation of traditions has been observed: from state and national identity, culture and religions up to various sorts of ethnic, clan and regional peculiarities. In this paper an attempt has been made to analyze the peculiarities of Kyrgyz culture in its historical perspective and their revival in post-independent period which present state is using as an essential tool for nation building process and national identity. The paper will also seek to analyze how this glorification of age old customs and traditions is giving birth to a interesting cultural synthesis.

Keywords: customs; traditionalization; modernisation; iron curtain

Introduction

Kyrgyz ^[1], like many other Central Asia people, had remained scattered in their distant past and formed part and parcel of many regimes. In the process of symbioses ^[2] they imbibed different cultural influences which were well reflected from Kyrgyz customs and traditions. Besides nomadism, and trade ^[3] which played conspicuous role in shaping the diversity within Kyrgyz culture, different faiths, contributed significantly in shaping the cultural aspects of Kyrgyz people since Central Asia has remained a fertile soil for different religions. Before Islam, the major religions of the region were Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Manichaeism and Nestorian Christianity along with the Shamanistic practices. Like other regions of Turkistan, these religions

penetrated into Kyrgyzstan in due course of time; however Shamanism ^[4] which is often referred as the World's oldest belief system was predominate and ⁵ the Kyrgyz inhabiting the Altai and Yensi regions followed shamanism comprehensively and as such their customs and traditions bore persistent influence of shamanism even after embracing the Islam like many other nomads of the region. Though, Islam as a faith was accepted by the Kyrgyz people during 9th to 12th century, yet they are said to have never been orthodox Muslims in their faith and approach ^[6]. The continuation of practice of hanging Tails of animals like

¹ Kyrgyz are said to have inhabited the Altai and Yenisei regions, M.A Camplike, *The Turks of central Asia*, oxford University Press, London: 1918, pp. 66-67.

² The date of migration of Kyrgyz to the Tenisha region is uncertain, but history of the Kyrgyz falls into two distinct periods; the Yonsei and Tenisha periods. During their migration to the Tenisha region Kyrgyz underwent tremendous change and they came into contact with a culture which was much advanced than their own as a result they sharply differed from their ancestors & Yenisei region. R Vaidyanathan, *The Formation of Soviet Central Asian Republics: A Study in Soviet Nationalities Policy, 1917-1936*, People's Publishing House, New Delhi: 1967, p. 11.

³ For a long time Kyrgyzstan (talas) was an important center on Silk route. Traders of different nations and religions drove their caravan to china and India through Kyrgyz territory land transmitted their material and non-material culture as well. Mohamed Tahir, *Encyclopaedic Survey of Islamic Culture*, Annol publication, New Delhi: 1997, p.113.

⁴ Shamanism was a specific set of beliefs and practices used by shamans in serving the spirit world and their own people. It was the religious leaders' job to keep the people in harmony with nature and the spirit world, and to heal them or bring them back into harmony when needed. Hunting and Gathering people, nomadic animal herding cultures, and some other animists who live in small, mobile groups or isolated villages still depend on shamans for healing and spiritual protection in many parts of the world. C.E Bosworth, "Shamanism" Chinar Adle and Irfan Habib, (Eds.) *History of civilizations of central Asia*, Vol. V, London: 2000, pp.801-803

⁵ David. C. King, *Kyrgyzstan*, Marshall Cavendish, U.K.: 2005, p. 84.

⁶ Perhaps the reason for this flexible approach was that Islam in the region was spread through the efforts of peace loving wandering Sufis. Most of the Kyrgyz belong to the Hanfia order a school that is regarded most liberal among five schools of thought. Kyrgyz have never been ardent followers of five fundamentals of Islam. For instance they were not so particular in offering the five prayers of the day yet the long fast month of Ramadan was observed strictly. Lawrence Mitchell, *Kyrgyzstan*, Brad it Travel Guides, U.K: 2003, p.23.

horse^[7] etc at the grave sites, or a common practice of tying votive rags to selected trees, usually close to a stream or waterfall en-route to a traditional holy site reveals the influence of traditional culture^[8]. Similarly great importance was ascribed to the visit the grave yard^[9], which continued even after accepting Islam. The Quran used to be recited at grave yards to prevent the deceased from the evil spirits^[10]. Continuation of such symbioses gave rise to a sort of composite culture. Often they ignored the Quranic and Shariat injunctions^[11] in preference to *Adat*;^[12] many Pre-Islamic practices faded with the advent of Islam but by and large Kyrgyz culture remained more composite rather than orthodox Islamic culture. The above assertion about the diversity of Kyrgyz culture is well reflected by examining the Kyrgyz customs and traditions at micro level like institution of family and its associated rituals and practices. Family, a perpetual organization of several generations^[13] was pivotal centre of traditional society^[14]. Family was patriarchal in nature and all decisions were taken by the head of the family. Traditionally, the property was usually distributed among the sons; elder son inherited the fathers rank and title, whereas youngest son inherited parental yurt

and appurtenances^[15] where as daughters had no claim on the property of family, once they were married. An individual's life within family passed through series of tradition and rituals with a thin veneer of religion. Since family rituals and traditions had key position among Kyrgyz people, their celebration was as much important as other national celebrations. Many times they followed cumbersome measures and practices to uphold these customs.

Among Kyrgyz people birth of all children especially male that enriches the family was sermonized with great celebrations^[16]. From the very initial stage, pregnant women were prevented from heavy household chores and were forbidden to go outside *aul* premises without protection. She was protected from evil forces and malicious spirits through amulets, to protect her from impure forces^[17] she was not allowed to leave the house alone at night^[18]. For the protection of the mother and child from evil spirits fire was burnt in the yurt throughout day and night^[19]. It was a common belief that a female demon having crooked feet called *Albarste* was responsible for difficult childbirth. To satiate the superstitious belief, knife was placed close to pregnant women with thin edge facing the door. The loaded gun was also placed just above the women's head on the yurts trellised frame work to scare off the evil forces^[20]. The barking of dogs in front of yurt was also thought to scare the evil spirits^[21].

The birth was handled by the experience hands and soon after the birth; Islamic custom called "*azan Shakira*" (calling of prayer into the ear of new born child) was Performed along with naming ceremony^[22]. Besides *azan Shakira*, next important ceremony was *zharyas katan*, a custom to shave off hair of the head of the baby except two little tufts over the ears on completing first year of age^[23]. Another ritual associated with child birth was cradle

⁷ During pre- Islamic times Turks sacrificed horses at the funeral of the chief, and hanged up the skin over the grave. Some Kyrgyz in the eastern Turkistan were keeping skull of the favourite horse on the graves with a view to get young ones from their mares. *The Continuer Encyclopaedia of Animal symbolism in Arts*, Continuum International publication, London: 2004, p.69.

⁸ In pre-Islamic times people used to visit Biblical tombs this practice continued when people visited tombs of Muslim saint. David C.king, *Kyrgyzstan*, Marshall Cavendish, U.K:2005, p. 85.

⁹ Since a common notion was that by visiting these graves they will receive energy from dead; a Shamanistic approach of believing in the living spirits. Some also believed that Mazars were harbingers of good future for the destitute like mentally ill and infertility among women. They Sacrificed animals like goat and sheep at these graves, boiled its meat and ate it. Same was true of springs which were held in great esteem, animal sacrifice was part of respect for the springs.

¹⁰ Nazgul Asanakumova, "Kyrgyz Religious Beliefs: Popular Conceptions of Mazar Worship and Islam", Gulnara Aitpaeva (Ed.), *MB Mazar worship in Kyrgyzstan: Rituals and practitioners in Talas*, Aigine Cultural Research Center, Bishkek: 2007, p.413

¹¹ Traditional Kyrgyz leaders called Bii's and Manaps resolve their conflicts over pasture lands, livestock, family and kinship through customary law rather than according to the Shariat. Melvin Ember, *Encyclopaedia of sex and Gender*, Springer publication, London: 2003, p.572.

¹² *Adat* is a generic term derived from Arabic language for describing a variety of local customary practices and tradition as observed by Muslim communities in north Caucasus, Central Asia and South East Asia. The term refers in a boarder sense, to the customary norms, rules, interdiction, injunctions that guide individuals conduct as a member of the community and the sanctions and the forms of address by which these norms and rules, are upheld. It also includes the set of local and traditional laws and dispute resolution systems by which society was regulated.

¹³ Traditionally extended family consisted of father, his wife, his married and unmarried daughters and sons and the children of his sons. Lawrence Krader, *People of central Asia*, Moutan & Co. Netherlands: 1963, p.141

¹⁴ Family jointly owned the dwellings and cultivated land, domesticated animals, possessed cultural tools and equipments. Krader Lawrence, *People of central Asia*, p.141

¹⁵ A.M.B Meakin, *In Russian Turkistan: A Garden of Asia and its people*, G.Allen, London: 1915, p.134

¹⁶ Continuity of family line was regarded very important. According to Kyrgyz proverb "A house with children a market and a house without children the grave." A family which had ten or more children was considered a happy family.

¹⁷ David J Philips, *People on the Move*, William Cary library, London: 2001, p.319.

¹⁸ Weapons, wolves, eagles, bills and owl talons were forbidden where ever she live.

¹⁹ According to the tradition first forty days were regarded dangerous for the baby.

²⁰ Customs and ceremonies of Kyrgyzstan, www.svetlanasbrides.com/Kyrgyzstan/culture/folklore.html, p.11, accessed on 6 December, 2016

²¹ Superstitious beliefs obliged them to put *dog's shirt* to a new born baby. It was common belief used clothes of an old person or a well-respected woman with many children by putting a shirt on a dog for a while and thereafter was used for new born. Customs and Ceremonies of Kyrgyzstan, Available online at www.svetlanasbrides.com/Kyrgyzstan/culture/folklore.html p.11

²² Name giving custom has special significance among Kyrgyz people and it was a common belief that name has strong impact on the personality and destiny of the man, so children were usually named on the name of Kirgiz hero and batirs, besides Islamic names prior to pre-soviet period. Bruce G. Privates, *Muslim Turkistan: Kazakh Religion and collective memory*, Curzon press, Great Britain: 2001, p.94

²³ When these grew long they were plaited, and in case of a girl an amulet or string of coral was attached to its ends. Annette M beki, *In Russian Turkistan: A Garden of Asia*, p.96.

ceremony known as *bosuks toi* which was usually held on 9th or 12th day when a cradle was carried by the maternal grandparents filled with flat breads, (for distribution among relatives) clothes and toys etc for new born baby. To rejoice the birth of baby, gifts were exchanged [24]. On the 40th day of birth, the child in a ritualistic manner was washed and new shirt made by a mother or grandmother from forty pieces of rags was worn to new born child [25]. This ceremony was followed by first step²⁶ celebration, which was wonderful scene for the child was put outside in front of yurt with his legs tied up with a string weaved of two thin woollen black and white threads which symbolized two aspects of life “joyful as well as sad” and thread was cut by a respected elder. Thus by this ritual, Kyrgyz people used to train their posterity to face the challenges of day to day life right from the childhood [27].

Similarly, the transition from one sexual stage to another was followed by the performance of different rituals and practices. In case of a girl attaining 9-10 years of age, the ritual when the two plaits of a girl used to get undone; [which she had behind the ear or head] was performed. Instead of this, twenty little plaits were added which was an indication of her adulthood and more importantly an inception of change in her clothes, etiquettes and behaviour as well [28]. The next grand ceremony associated with boy's rituals was “*sunhat toy*”, Circumcision [29] or *Khatanga* [30].

²⁴ Ritualism demanded that in cradle ceremony, the grandfather of the baby had the cradle on his right shoulder of his son-in-law, to deliver it to the mother of the baby. Ajaz A Banday, “Socio-cultural similarities between Chinese Turkistan and Kashmir”. Mushtaq A. kaw, (Ed.), *Central Asia in Retrospect and Prospect*, Roadworthy Publications New Delhi: 2010, pp 307-312.

²⁵ The bath according to superstitious belief required forty spoons of warm water to encounter the evil eye. Available online at: www.svetlanabrides.com/Kyrgyzstan/culture.html, p.2

²⁶ The ritual was known as tussah kesar
²⁷ Available online at:
www.svetlanabrides.com/Kyrgyzstan/culture.html, p.2

²⁸ Although grand feasts were arranged on the ritual of boys and no such feasts neither publicly nor at family level was arranged on the occasions associated with girl rituals. One such ceremony associated with boys was first shaving of moustache and first riding on horseback. On this occasion a cattle on the part of father was slaughtered to celebrate the end of adolescence age.

²⁹ Circumcision Islamic ritual *sumnat* is the surgical removal of the foreskin from male organ penis; sometimes it also refers to less common practices of uncovering the glands of the penis by removing some of the foreskin and leaving the remainder as a flap; According to Islamic law, *sharia*, sanctions *sumnat* often according to local custom-adat; for example, boys in the Arabic area are circumcised from seven days after birth to three years of age. Shrine Akiner, “*Cultural change and continuity in central Asia*”, Kegan Paul International, London: 1991, pp.161-62.

³⁰ The origin of the practice is not known, but it is commonly associated with semantic religions, Islam, Judaism and Christianity who usually circumcise their male children during infancy. Hence circumcision became known to Central Asia at very early stage i.e. between the 5th and 6th century B.C when Jews arrived in Central Asia. They left their imprints and influence on the Kyrgyz, therefore the practice may have continued before Islam was accepted superficially by the nomadic people. Although the Kyrgyz ignored the obligatory duties of Islam, but like other Central Asian people they widely accepted circumcision and made it occasion for celebration.

Circumcision ceremonies were celebrated fibrously, where all relatives, neighbours and friends were invited. Circumcision without a ceremony due to lack of financial resources ‘was considered a social rebuke and a gloomy scene for child. Guests used to arrive very early and used to giving *bata* (blessing) gifts in kind or cash were presented to a child. After lunch, entertainment programs like race competition etc. were held to enhance the child's progress and prosperity [31].

Next to childbirth ceremony, was marriage and its associated rituals which carried a special significance for every central Asian family including Kyrgyz people. The common practice among Kyrgyz was to arrange the marriage of their sons and daughters at their early age. Marriages were exogamous [32] in nature and mostly avoided to arrange marriages among their near relatives. Generally speaking marriages were arranged; and most of the times elders or at least three chief persons of a tribe worked as marriage brokers as well as ambassadors on the part of parties [33]. Sometimes marriages were also arranged by female matchmaker called *djinal* [34] or *kouda-tusser* [35]. In arranging marriage neither love nor compatibility was considered, often nomadic women were forced to marry leaders or representatives of the other tribes in order to ensure peace or a political and military union. Apart from arranged marriages, a sort of chase game known as “*Kyz-Kuumai*”, or chasing after the bride was also common among Kyrgyz people. In such case man who was equipped with a thick leather whip³⁶ mostly chased a young woman, both on horse backs and if he was successful to catch and kiss her, then he asks for women's hand in marriage [37]. If the women successfully avoided her chaser by hitting, she was thus given a right to select her own groom. Bride Kidnapping “*alai kachuu*” or marriage abduction was also a time honoured custom among Kyrgyz people. In this practice a man abducts his future wife either by his consent or without it. It was an alternative way of getting married

Elizabeth E. Bacon., *Central Asians under Russian Rule: A study in cultural change*, Cornell University press London: 1966, p.27.

³¹ Available online at: www.fantasticasia.net/176travel=sumnot%20toi%20toi%20tradition%20Kyrgyzstan, p.2, accessed on 12 December, 2016

³² Due to exogamous taboos Kyrgyz abstained to marry with any one related within seven generations in the male line.

³³ Dunmore, *The Pamirs; A Narrative of a year's Expedition on Horseback and on Foot Through Kashmir, Western Tibet, Chinese Tartary and Russian Central Asia*, London: 1893, p.119

³⁴ M.A camplike, *The Turks of Central Asia*, p.50

³⁵ who proceed to the parents of the bride, offering presents among them, especially prepared for the occasion, a dish of liver and mutton fat called *konyruk-baour*, which signifies that they “mean matrimony”, after which compliment is returned by presents and a similar dish, sent by the girl's parents to those of the bridegroom. These gifts are called *kiet*. It was regarded as important that the families of the boy and girl be of some social and economic status. These brokers were awarded by the father of the bride present like cloak, *khalat*, for their services they rendered for the arrangement of the marriage. Dunmore, *The pamirs; A Narrative of a year's Expedition on Horseback and on Foot Through Kashmir, Western Tibet, Chinese Tartary and Russian Central Asia*, p.119

³⁶ L.M. Hanrahan, “Implication of International Human Rights Law and Bride Kidnapping in Kyrgyzstan”, *Fletcher journal of Developmental Studies*, Vol.XVI. London: 2000, p.1

³⁷ David C. King, *Kyrgyzstan*, p.111

since the custom does not involve substantial financial expenses like *Kalym* [38] and marriage feast. In such marriages the role of female relatives especially mother of the groom was very significant. She used to shower traditional sweets, bread, fruits and place a white scarf over the head of a new daughter in law, a ritualizing way of proclaiming the pair to be married. The bride kidnapped women and her parents accept bride kidnapping even it was against their will since they were aware of fact that a kidnapped woman was not considered “virgin” anymore [39]. In case of arranged marriages, generally the bridegrooms had to pay one *Yambu* (a nugget of silver) as well as horses, camels, yaks, sheep and gun to their father-in-law [40]. The number of these articles depending upon their means and demands made as *kalym* [41]. After this *Nikkah* ceremony was held were Mullah (Muslim priest) in presence of tribal chiefs recite verses from the Quran and preaches to the new couple briefly on their impending roles as Muslim parents and gives them their blessings [42]. Ritualism leads the mullah to put two coins in a bowl of water and passes it to the couple as a witness, who all drinks from it, after which bride and groom were considered husband and wife [43]. Another ritual followed after *Nikkah* ceremony was *opko chapti*, (a ritual where in newly slaughtered goat’s raw lung

was used to hit the backs of the bride and the groom who sat back to back) and afterwards cooked lung was served to the couple [44]. Groom and his relatives were entertained in a special yurt and *Dastorkon*, a large cloth filled with different kinds of food, sweets and various kinds of traditional bread; meat etc. was spread for them [45].

On this occasion traditional wedding songs were sang in the praise of bride and groom [46]. Subsequently, the bride was taken to her husband’s house on horse [47] back, decorated with bridle, reins, saddle mattress, and saddle bag. On reaching grooms house, the ritual of veil lifting was performed by the members of groom who forwarded monetary gifts to the bride which was followed by number of other rituals like offering of *koumiss*, [48] *Kelin Kirgizuu*; welcoming the bride to her new house; *Sep jayuu*, displaying of her dowry to relatives etc. [49]

Generally monogamy⁵⁰ was widespread, but polygamy [51] was permitted and was in practice especially among financially well of families, who preferred young bride after their first or sometimes second wives [52]. The custom of levirate marriage was also in vogue among nomads where in it was obligatory for brother in law to marry with the widow of deceased brother [53]. Though marriage ceremonies were very expensive since these *Tois* were celebrated with all pomp and show, yet these ceremonies were ideal manifestation for developing social and financial ties between families [54].

Like other rituals, the Funeral rites of the Kyrgyzstan were mixture of Muslim customs and Pre-Islamic beliefs. Relatives and neighbours of the deceased take active part in the funeral ceremonies. Besides sharing grief, guests and fellow neighbours were expected to bring different items and large amount of money at funerals as was the case at the time of wedding [55]. The departure cycle of the deceased for

38 It was generally believed that the *kalym* was bride price given by the husband to the father of bride and it was in nature of the purchase of money. However, Schyler has clearly pointed out that *kalym* was absolutely the property of bride and remained with her as a sort of financial support in case of divorce, *kalym* was paid in the form of cash or kind (livestock, goods) etc. The payment of *kalym* or *kalying* on the part of the groom’s family to the bride’s family usually in the form of livestock or other articles is an instance. The *kalym* as such was a symbol of social status to both the families; the higher amount of *kalam*, always ascribed the greater prestige to bride, groom and their families. In certain cases, this *kalam* was avoided for exchanging a son and a daughter in marriage. Eugene, Schuyler, Notes of journey of Russian Turkistan, Khokand, Bukhara, and Kuldja, New York Charles Scribner, 1885, p.78. The Kyrgyz grooms had to pay very heavily to the parents of the bride and it was considered rather difficult to get a wife that was thought to be most expensive article. Dunmore, *The pamirs: A Narrative of a year’s Expedition on Horseback and on Foot Through Kashmir, Western Tibet, Chinese Tartary and Russian Central Asia*, p.118

39 Sevara Azizova, *Bride Kidnapping in Kazakhstan in Discourses of Law and Custom, Nationalism and Tradition, Kinship and Gender*, thesis submitted in Department of Gender studies, Central European University, Hungary: 2009, p.27

40 Dunmore, *The pamirs: A Narrative of a year’s Expedition on Horseback and on Foot Through Kashmir, Western Tibet, Chinese Tartary and Russian Central Asia*, p.119.

41 *Kalym* was not the purchase price for the bride since in Islam; bridegroom had definite obligations towards women after marriage. As such it was the part of the legal and social obligation to arrange the feasting on the occasion of wedding ceremony. When the *kalym* was paid and provisions for the marriage feast delivered, the wedding was held. On wedding groom spent lavishly. Some Kyrgyz people also used horse meat for wedding feast. Both bride and groom wore a traditional dress. The bride wore (*shokulo*) i.e. a cone shaped headdress with a veil on the top. It has been found that Kyrgyz groom had to pay between 10 and 30 yaks or their equivalent in other livestock, C.P, Skrine, *Chinese Central Asia*, Pilgrims Book House, London: 1926, p.161

42 Bruce G. Priveratsky, *Muslim Turkistan: Kazak Religion and Collective Memory*, Curzon Press, Britain: 2001, p.96

43 Once young couple was married they were provided a separate tent and hence forward were deemed congenial to start their separate family. James Hutton, *Central Asia from Aryan to Cossacks*, Manas Publication Delhi: 1875, p.346.

44 Paul George Geiss, *Pre-Czarist and Czarist Central Asia*, Routledge, London: 2000, pp.52-53.

45 Another custom that was popular on the occasion was role of bride’s younger sister who used to prick or press down the knees of the brother in law in order to get presents from Kouklakis Elmira, *My Fairy tale: Kyrgyz wedding*, P. 3

46 The traditional songs expressed the emotional and feeling of the relatives and through them they conveyed the advice how to become a good daughter-in-law and how to deal with future domestic affairs. Kouklakis Elmira, *My Fairy tale: Kyrgyz wedding*, p. 5.

47 Horse was regarded high in the frame work of nomadic life and to serve horse meat was a symbol of high status of family.

48 The National drink among Kazakhs, Karakalpak’s, & Kyrgyz, prepared from mare’s fermented milk. Traditionally, the milk is poured into a special leather bag for fermentation & is then stirred with special wooden stick to turn the milk into kameez (kumis). Rafis Abazov, *Culture and Customs of Central Asian Republics*, Green wood press London: 2007, p.159

49 Kouklakis Elmira, *My Fairy tale: Kyrgyz wedding*, P. 3.

50 Monogamy is derived from greek word “*monos*” means “alone” and “*famous*” means “marriage”. It is a form of relationship in which an individual has only one partner during their life time.

51 Polygamy is the act of marrying multiple spouses, that man having more than one husband or wife at the same time.

52 Elizabeth E. Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rule A study in cultural change*, p.40

53 Coral R. Ember and L Meivin Emer: *Encyclopaedia of sex and Gender: Men and Women in the World’s Culture*, Vol. I, Springer press, USA: 2003, p.597.

54 Elizabeth E. Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rule: A Study in Cultural Change*, p.40.

55 Kathleen R Kachnast, *Better a Hundred Friends than a hundred Rubles*, World Book Publication, Washington: 2004, p.22.

the final journey comprised of several stages ^[56]. After the death of a person, three closest persons of the family washed the body and wrapped the body in a white shroud or “kepin” ^[57]. Afterwards the body of deceased was put on the left side of the Yurt in case of the man and on right side in case of women. The deceased was not left unattended even for a single moment until he/she was carried to the burial on a special stretch (*taboot*). Special prayer was performed and body of deceased was buried in the grave by Imam according to the *Sharia* law ^[58]. Immediately after the burial, the women relatives of the deceased prepare funeral feast where they slaughter the favourite horse of deceased including a good number of livestock. For a week, the relatives of the deceased serve dinner to the people coming daily to mourn the death. Respect for the dead was exhibited by commemoration ceremonies on the third, ninth and on anniversary ^[59]. Before dinner, the Qur’an was recited aloud in honour of the deceased and the rite was called *ash*. Another peculiar custom related to the mourning was that a mourning flag with different colors, like red in case the deceased was young person, black if the middle aged and white if elderly, was hoisted to the upper structure of yurt. On the final day of funeral ceremony, the close relatives of the deceased in a ritualistic manner used to burn their black clothes and the image of the deceased was taken to his or her grave ^[60]. Only after these rituals routine life was resumed by the mourning family.

This life cycle of rituals and traditions were followed persistently by Kyrgyz until the Soviet occupation. Under Soviets regime the traditional institutions along with their customs and traditions were considered as archaic hurdles in the development of Socialistic society. They believed that traditional institutions and identities were incompatible with ideological goals and revolutionary ideas of socialistic society. So in the wake of socio-cultural transformation, several legislations were passed and restrictions were imposed to minimize the importance of age old customs and practices ^[61]. The customs and practices discouraged or banned by Soviet regime were numerous, since regime lunched an extensive policy of Sovietization ^[62] and Modernization. The assertion is well substantiated by examining the changes in popular customs once celebrated with great enthusiasm within Kyrgyz family during period under review.

⁵⁶ The ritual include announcement of death, change of clothes, weeping etc. Suad Joseph and Afsaneh Naimabadi, *Encyclopaedia of Women and Islamic Culture, Family, body, Sexuality and Health*, Brill Publications, London: p. 118

⁵⁷ This white shroud was prepared by the person himself or by his/her children and was about 15-22 meters in length. Customs and Traditions, available online at, www.svetlanasbrides.com/Kyrgyzstan/culture/folklore.html: p.5.

⁵⁸ The body was laid in the grave with its head facing the direction of Kibla.

⁵⁹ Elizabeth E. Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rule: A Study in Cultural Change*, p.80.

⁶⁰ It is believed that on the anniversary even competition like horse riding, men’s rustling etc were held. Available at: www.svetlanasbrides.com/Kyrgyz/culture/folklore.html. p. 7

⁶¹ The Islamic institution of *waqf* (pious endowment), was confiscated and its institutions- mosques, madrasas, khangahs- were closed, customs like *jentic toi* (child birth), circumcision, traditional marriages, funeral customs etc. witnessed changes. Svat Soucek, *A History of Inner Asia*, Cambridge university press, London: 2000, p.231

⁶² It is the adoption of a political system based on the model of Soviets (workers councils) or the adoption of a way of life and mentality modeled after the Soviet Period.

The abolition of joint family system and introduction of nuclear family resulted in the discontinuation of many traditions associated with this institution. Thus, various traditions pertaining to childbirth ceased since child birth was conducted in the hospitals ^[63] and the hospital authorities kept the new born in their care and custody and deprived parents to perform the Islamic ritual of *Azan* and *Shahadah* ^[64]. To avoid the name giving ceremony the birth of a child was registered and name was simply chosen by parents, afterwards birth certificate was issued.⁶⁵ Accordingly, the grand feasts previously arranged on the cradle ceremony ^[66] of the child attended by large gathering of huge participation of relatives and other people was replaced by small family parties in which husband and wife together contributed and invited small number of friends and relatives ^[67]. The practice of circumcision was banned as it was termed as barbaric, primitive, unhealthy custom causing children serious psychological trauma ^[68].

Also to provide better conditions for upbringing and nourishment of children, special institutions called *crèches* and kindergartens were opened ^[69]. These institutions helped Soviets authorities in minimizing the influence of parents over children and shifted the upbringing responsibility to the state authorities. The modern education, better medical facilities, trained doctors and nurses, influenced their ideology, as such various superstitious beliefs and customs like *Albarste* or firing of the gun shot at the eve of birth, wearing *dog’s shirt* to new born baby, believing the barking of dogs as a bad omen, using amulets to secure pregnant women or newborn child, pierce male child’s ears and plait his hair especially prior to the circumcision vanished to a large extent.

Similarly many Kyrgyz customs and traditions related to marriage institution witnessed remarkable changes during soviet era. The legislation of the Family Code in 1918 ^[70] banned the traditional marriage practices like payment and acceptance of *Kalym*, forced marriage, early marriage, polygamy, levirate, etc ^[71]. The practice of early marriage

⁶³ The traditional midwives were replaced by the better trained nurses, as earlier young mothers died because for want of skilled women to attend them and as such various customs and beliefs got a death knell. Elizabeth.E. Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rule: A study in Cultural Change*, pp.178-79

⁶⁴ Z. Arifkhanova, “Post-Soviet Transformation in Uzbek Ritual life”, *Journal of Central Asian Studies*, Vol. XVI, No. 1, University of Kashmir, Srinagar: 2006, p.3

⁶⁵ However, there was Russianisation of names on behalf of authorities as *Alim* become *Alimove*, *Gaffar* becomes *Gaffarove* similarly in case of girls “eve” was added to their names.

⁶⁶ K Mumbetaliyeva, *Central Asian Survey*, Vol XII, No.2, 1985, p.120

⁶⁷ E.Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rule: A Study in Cultural Change*, pp.178,-182.

⁶⁸ But in spite of the ban Kyrgyz people followed this practice secretly. Alexander Henningsen, *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 8, No. 1, p.94

⁶⁹ Anntte M B Meakin, *In Russian Turkistan, A Garden of Asia and its people*, pp.96-99.

⁷⁰ According to which they set the marriage age for both boys and girls for boys it was 18 and for girls 16. Saud Joseph and Afsaneh Naimabadi, *Encyclopaedia of Women and Islamic Cultures: Family, Law and Politics*, p.255.

⁷¹ In consequence of legislation and soviet education policy, a remarkable change came in the marriage age of Kyrgyz boys and girls. The Soviets banned the practice of polygamy and was declared criminal offence;⁷¹ those found guilty were severely punished in the form of fine or long term imprisonment.⁷¹ Despite strict laws the practice was not completely wiped out. In order to deceive the spirit of registration polygamous man

was perceived not only harmful for the health of girls but was deemed as deprivation of their freedom as well. Registration process also helped in control the practice of early marriage [72]. With the registration of marriage, where it was compulsory for couples to register their marriage in a local office of the ZAGS [73]. Islamic marriage ceremony i.e. *Nikkha* got undermined. The official age for marriage was increased to eighteen. Traditional weddings were replaced by the soviet style weddings, the bride and the bridegroom were often seen dressed in western kind of clothes [74] known as “*Komsomol Skii Vecher*” [75]. In the traditional society it was difficult for women to get divorce, but under Soviets it became easy for her to get divorce once she moved an application for divorce [76].

The Soviet government also banned the age old custom of Bride abduction and practise of paying *kalym*, [77] since they compared the practice equivalent to the selling of women like cattle [78] as a result, by late 1930's *kalym* practically disappeared [79]. The age old custom of match makers also disappeared, instead of arranged marriages; the parties

register their new born babies from other wives on the name of the first wife, who remained the officially registered wife. Alexander Benningsen, *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1989, p.191

72 In some cases when the bride was not 18 years old she was married according to sharia (Muslim law) and the marriage was registered when she reaches the age of 18 years; Leonid Darsky and Sergei Scherbov “Marital Status Behavior of Women in the Former Soviet Republics”, *European Journal of Population*, p. 43.

73 Zapateo Grazhdanskogo Sistani The ZAG officers asked for documents attesting the age of Spouses, and medical examination were conducted to ensure the age of spouses; Saud Joseph and Afsanah Najmabadi, *Encyclopedia of women and Islamic culture, Family, body, sexuality and health*, Vol. VII, Brill Publishers, London: 2005. p. 256

74 Elmira Koyukuk, *My fairy Tale: Kyrgyz Wedding*, p.20

75 That is communist youth wedding or in Kyrgyz red wedding. The wedding were performed mostly in modern style in which bride, bridegroom and their friends as well as relatives set in long tables, ate food, sang song and dance to Russian and Western pop music. Elmira Kocumkulki, *My fairy Tale: Kyrgyz Wedding*, p.22

76 Besides this, economic freedom also encouraged women to seek divorce in the courts which was till then the monopoly of men William K. Medlin, William M. Cave and Finley Carpenter, *Education and Development in Central Asia: A Case Study on Social Change in Uzbekistan*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, Netherlands: 1971, p. 64.

77 The practice was declared a criminal offence; liable to severe punishment, if anyone was found practicing the custom was given four years of imprisonment along with fine However, despite all these measures the practice did not disappear completely. Even though this practice was not found commonly in 1930s-1940s, but in 1950s-1960s people shifted to money economy and *kalym* reappeared and was paid in cash and gifts. Moreover, guests were encouraged to give gifts to the couple with philosophy that will help, the new couple, financially. Elizabeth E. Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rule: A Study in Cultural Change*, p.141.

78 Elmira Kogumkulkizi, “My Fairy Tale Kyrgyz wedding”, available on: <http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/culture/wedding/wedding.html>, Accessed on 2 January 2017, p. 17

79 Despite the Soviet efforts the practice never disappeared from the actual life of the people and by 1980's rarely marriages were performed without the payment of *kalym*. The tradition was defended by the girls themselves who feel themselves dishonoured, suspected of sexual misbehaviour or of some shameful illness of their parents if they were not offered a substantial amount of *kalym*. Alexander Benningsen, “Islam in Retrospect”, *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. VIII, No. 1, U.K., 1989, p. 95

themselves fixed it in a formal way. Similarly the *khujven*⁸⁰ disappears and was replaced with the modern transport facilities [81].

Age old funeral customs like other traditions also witnessed changes [82]. The ritual was replaced by civil funerals patterned on Russian Mortuary customs with religious aspects deleted [83]. In 1964, when the issue of religious and secular rituals was raised at the bureaus of RSFSR (Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic) party organization, new civil rights were introduced and it was resolved to provide a day to commemorate the dead [84].

The mourning feasts which involved huge expenditure on different occasions were banned, though at times they were organized secretly in a limited manner [85]. The burials performed by the clergy were either registered or they were more often unofficial. However, during late 80's the funerals ceremonies became more pretentious [86].

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of new independent central Asian countries gave a severe blow to the iron curtain cultural policy of the Soviets and have far reaching consequences on these newly independent nations including Kyrgyzstan [87]. All aspect of these nations like economy, society, and polity witnessed rapid changes [88].

The resurgence of socio cultural traditions as a matter of fact dates back to the late 80s when a trend during glasnost perestroika emerged to lessen the domination of the imperial culture which remained a hall mark during soviet period. The process of socio cultural revivalism received further impetus with the formation of new independent states since customs and traditions are being used to restore the broken links with past for the formation of national and cultural identity. Therefore a new socio cultural order is developing where remote past and immediate past are mixing, resulting in an interesting cultural synthesis which is well reflected from the study of institution of family and its associated practices in contemporary Kyrgyzstan.

The family pattern witnessed to and fro shift in the Post-Soviet period. The trend of nuclear families introduced by the Soviet regime witnessed set back in the earlier years of Independence. The economic crises like lack of

80 Kind of pannier arranged on pair of camel or mules; Arminius wembrey, “Sketches of Central Asian among the Turkomans”, available online at <http://www.tcole.tribal.rugs/art>, accessed on 06 January, 2016

81 Now bride and dowry was taken to husband's house in a car; Tamara Dragadza, *Kinship Marriages in Soviet Union*, Routledge Press, New York: 1986, p. 70.

82 The religious and funeral procession were not allowed without the special permission of the government.

83 Sometimes, the relatives used to bribe the local Soviet authorities for permitting to bury their relatives in accordance with the tradition. Elizabeth E Bacon, *Central Asians under Russian Rule: A Study in Cultural Change*, p.181

84 Yaccovi Roi, *Islam in Soviet Union*, Columbia University press, London:2000, p.47

85 Stephen P Dunn and Ethel Dunn, “Soviet Regime and Native Culture in Kazakhstan: The Major Peoples”, *Chicago Journal*, Vol. 8, No.3, 1967, p.166

86 In Kyrgyztan the Cost of a mazar in 1987 reached the fantastic price of 60,000 rubbles and an average funeral was attended by over 500 People, Including party army and Militia notables; Alexander Benningsen, *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 8, No. 1, pp.95-96

87 Mustaq A. Kaw, *Central Asia in Retrospect & Prospect*, read worthy publication, Delhi: 2010, p.233.

88 Radford David, *Understanding the Challenges of Religious Switching: the Dynamics and Interplay of Social and Cultural Capital*, Flinders University, Australia: 2011, p.01.

employment, high inflation, high cost of housing due to transition forced families to live jointly and the traditional patriarchal social relation combined with the accumulated wisdom of many generations, like the respect to elders and the spirit of mutual help between relatives or neighbours on occasions of fortune and misfortune is reviving in the present era^[89] However, at the same time the trend towards nuclear families is persisting due to the fact that young people under urbanization process are moving away from their parental home immediately after marriage where they used to buy or rent a property to live with family having fewer children^[90]. Nevertheless they often met to celebrate festivals together giving their families a sort of integration. Similarly, the institution of marriage and its associated customs also reflects certain extermination of the Soviet policy and revival of the Pre-Soviet era practices^[91]. The obligatory registration of marriages in civil courts has been abandoned and instead, *Nikah* is being performed openly and even at certain places young couple performs the religious ritual in mosques^[92]. With the legalization of *Nikah*, its associated customs like *mehar* and *kalym* has been restored. It is believed that the payment of *kalym* helps bride's family in arranging wedding feasts^[93]. The practice in fact has re-appeared even during the latter phases of the Soviet period but after independence it assumed new heights and the amount of *kalym* has increased^[94] due to inflation, which consequently increased the bride kidnapping tradition in Post-Soviet era^[95], since many of the grooms are not in a position to pay the amount of *kalyam*^[96]. In present marriages are arranged by parents, but dating is also becoming common practice were young girls and boys are encouraged to meet before marriage to understand each other before they are blindly married. Early marriage system is also reviving since it follows the logic of traditional norm of relieving moral, societal pressure on parents but due to transition and economic crisis, the revival is at low pace^[97].

⁸⁹ Although among Kyrgyz the process of nuclear families was not as fast as among the sedentary population because of their nomadic life style and the continue search for new pasture lands.

⁹⁰ These urban houses and apartments could not accommodate large families.

⁹¹ Darakshan Abdullah, "Tradition and change in Central Asian Culture: An Appraisal of Soviet Cultural policies", *International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research*, Vol. 3, Issue 4, December 2015, p.325.

⁹² Ayjaz Wani and Sheeraz Lone, "Changes in the Institution of Marriage in Uzbekistan from Pre- Soviet to Post Independent Era", *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, Vol. 3, Issue 4, June, 2012, p.90.

⁹³ Darakshan Abdullah, *International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research*, Vol. 3, Issue 4, 2015, p.325

⁹⁴ Ayjaz Wani and Sheeraz Lone, *Journal of Eurasian studies*, Vol. IV, Issue 2, 2012, p. 91

⁹⁵ Victor Agadjanian and Lesia Nedoluzkho, "Arranged and Forced Marriages in Kyrgyzstan: Persistence or Change", *National Council for Eurasian and East European Research*, University of Washington: 2013, p.23

⁹⁶ Many people no longer can afford *kalym* (bride prices), and 40% of marriages post-independence are from kidnappings, which enable men to avoid paying *kalym* or costs of ceremonies. Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development Chui oblast, Kyrgyzstan (APWLD) Chiang Mai, Thailand, www.apwld.org

⁹⁷ 57% of women from poor families are married before 18 years of age (vs.9.1% from rich families). Many parents believe child marriage will protect their daughters. The groom's family often hope that underage brides will be more accommodating and patient.. Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development

The wedding toys are held either on the streets in front of the hosts house or in an open air restaurants. These ceremonies also have become more lavish due to introduction of new dishes served in these parties and the costly gifts presented to the couple on the occasion. Moreover there is difference in expenditure on weddings among different strata of society. Many old customs, like women together with males accompany the bride to her new home where they stay until next day to conduct the rite of *Yuzotchi* "show her face" ceremony^[98].

The observance of other traditional ritual like Akika Tui, Beshik Tui, sunat tui (circumcision) cradle ceremony, first hair cutting ceremonies not only revived but are celebrated with great reverence where presence of religious head, (imam and otins) is important and cannot be performed without them^[99]. After this ritual invited guests comprising Relatives Friends neighbours and co workers are entertained with musical parties and are served with number of dishes. Like other Kyrgyz cultural practices, traditional funeral customs have also been restored^[100]. funeral practices, like erecting a yurt, killing a horse, women's singing of lamentation (*qoshoq*), men's out loud crying (*okuruu*), distribution of gifts of clothes (*oluntuk kiyit*) to relatives who wash the deceased body, burial, and subsequent memorial feast offerings (*qirqi, jildiq, ash*) to honor the deceased spirit (*arbaq*)^[101] is no longer an unusual sight in Kyrgyzstan. Attendance at Muslim burial sites also reflects a significant rise in recent years^[102].

Conclusion

As a consequence of inherent adoptability, flexibility, and assimilation that has remained a conspicuous feature of Kyrgyz culture a unique and composite culture highly influenced by humanisms and toleration is emerging in Kyrgyzstan in post independent period.

References

1. Ajaz A Banday, "Socio-cultural similarities between Chinese Turkistan and Kashmir". Mushtaq A kaw, (Ed.), *Central Asia in Retrospect and Prospect*, Roadworthy Publications New Delhi, 2010, 307-312.
2. Alexander Benningsen, "Islam in Retrospect", *Central Asian Survey*. 1989; 8:1. U.K.,
3. Anntte M, Meakin B. In Russian Turkistan: A Garden of Asia and its people, Allen G. London: 1915.
4. Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development Chui oblast, Kyrgyzstan (APWLD) Chiang Mai, Thailand.
5. Ayjaz Wani, Sheeraz Lone. "Changes in the Institution of Marriage in Uzbekistan from Pre- Soviet to Post Independent Era", *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, 2012, 3(4).

Chui oblast, Kyrgyzstan (APWLD) Chiang Mai, Thailand, www.apwld.org

⁹⁸ Darakshan Abdullah, *International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research*, Vol. 3, Issue 4, 2015, p.325

⁹⁹ Feride Acar and ayse Gunes Ayata, " Gender and Identity Construction; Women in Central Asia", *The Caucasus and Turkey*, p. 300

¹⁰⁰ Mehrdad Haghayeghi, *Islam and Politics in Central Asia*, Martin press, New York: 1995, p.98

¹⁰¹ Elmira Kochumkulova, Re-Islamization in Post -Soviet Kyrgyzstan: A Case Study of Kyrgyz Funeral Customs, p.1

¹⁰² Mehrdad Haghayeghi, *Islam and Politics in Central Asia*, p.98

6. Bruce G. Priveratsky, *Muslim Turkistan: Kazak Religion and Collective Memory*, Curzon Press, Britain: 2001.
7. Bosworth CE. "Shamanism" Chinar Adle and Irfan Habib, (Eds.) *History of civilizations of central Asia*, London, 2000, 5.
8. Skrine CP. *Chinese Central Asia*, Pilgrims Book House, London, 1926.
9. Coral R, Ember L, Meivin Emer. *Encyclopaedia of sex and Gender: Men and Women in the World's Culture*, Vol. I, Springer press, USA, 2003.
10. Darakshan Abdullah, "Tradition and change in Central Asian Culture: An Appraisal of Soviet Cultural policies", *International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research*, 2015, 3(4).
11. David J Philips. *People on the Move*, William Cary library, London, 2001.
12. David C. King, *Kyrgyzstan*, Marshall Cavendish, U.K, 2005.
13. Dunmore. *The Pamirs; A Narrative of a year's Expedition on Horseback and on Foot Through Kashmir, Western Tibet, Chinese Tartary and Russian Central Asia*, London, 1893.
14. Elizabeth E. Bacon. *Central Asians under Russian Rule: A study in cultural change*, Cornell University press London, 1966.
15. Elmira Kochumkulova, *Re-Islamization in Post –Soviet Kyrgyzstan: A Case Study of Kyrgyz Funeral Customs*, p.1
16. Elmira Kocumkulki, *My fairy Tale: Kyrgyz Wedding*, Available online at: www.svetlanasbrides.com/Kyrgyz/culture/folklore.html
17. *Encyclopedia of women and Islamic culture, Family, body, sexuality and health*, Brill Publishers, London, 2005, 7.
18. Eugene, Schuyler, *Notes of journey of Russian Turkistan, Khokand, Bukhara, and Kuldja*, New york Charles Scribner, 1885.
19. James Hutton, *Central Asia from Aryan to Cossacks*, Manas Publication Delhi, 1875.
20. Mumbetaliyeva K. *Central Asian Survey*. 1985; 12:2.
21. Kathleen R Kachnast, *Better a Hundred Friends than a hundred Rubles*, World Book Publication, Washington, 2004.
22. Kouklakis Elmira, *My Fairy tale: Kyrgyz wedding*, p. 5.
23. L.M. Hanrahan, "Implication of International Human Rights Law and Bride Kidnapping in Kyrgyzstan", *Fletcher journal of Developmental Studies*, 2000, 16. London:
24. Lawrence Krader, *People of central Asia*, Moutan & Co. Netherlands, 1963.
25. Lawrence Mitchell, *Kyrgyzstan*, Brad it Travel Guides, U.K, 2003.
26. MA Camplike, *The Turks of central Asia*, oxford University Press, London, 1918.
27. Mehrdad Haghayeghi, *Islam and Politics in Central Asia*, Martin press, New York, 1995, 98.
28. Melvin Ember, *Encyclopaedia of sex and Gender*, Springer publication, London, 2003.
29. Mohamed Tahir, *Encyclopaedic Survey of Islamic Culture*, Anmol publication, New Delhi, 1997.
30. Mustaq A. Kaw, *Central Asia in Retrospect & Prospect*, read worthy publication, Delhi, 2010.
31. Nazgul Asanakumova, "Kyrgyz Religious Beliefs: Popular Conceptions of Mazar Worship and Islam", Gulnara Aitpaeva (Ed.), *MB Mazar worship in Kyrgyzstan: Rituals and practitioners in Talas*, Aigine Cultural Research Center, Bishkek, 2007.
32. Paul George Geiss, *Pre-Czarist and Czarist Central Asia*, Routledge, London, 2000.
33. R Vaidyanathan, *The Formation of Soviet Central Asian Republics: A Study in Soviet Nationalities Policy* People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1967, 1917-1936.
34. Radford David, *Understanding the Challenges of Religious Switching: the Dynamics and Interplay of Social and Cultural Capital*, Flinders University, Australia, 2011.
35. Rafis Abazov. *Culture and Customs of Central Asian Republics*, Green wood press London, 2007.
36. Saud Joseph and Afsanaeh Naimabadi, *Encyclopaedia of Women and Islamic Cultures: Family, Law and Politic*.
37. Sevara Azizova, *Bride Kidnapping in Kazakhstan in Discourses of Law and Custom, Nationalism and Tradition, Kinship and Gender*, thesis submitted in Department of Gender studies, Central European University, Hungary, 2009.
38. Shrine Akiner, *Cultural change and continuity in central Asia*, kegan paul International, London, 1991.
39. Stephen P Dunn and Ethel Dunn, "Soviet Regime and Native Culture in Kazakhstan: The Major Peoples", *Chicago Journal*. 1967; 8:3.
40. Suad Joseph and Afsaneh Naimabadi, *Encyclopaedia of Women and Islamic Culture, Family, body, Sexuality and Health*, Brill Publications, London:
41. Svat Soucek, *A History of Inner Asia*, Cambridge university press, London, 2000.
42. Tamara Dragadza, *Kinship Marriages in Soviet Union*, Routledge Press, New York, 1986.
43. *The Continuer Encyclopaedia of Animal symbolism in Arts*, Continuum International publication, London, 2004.
44. Victor Agadjanian and Lesia Nedoluzkho, "Arranged and Forced Marriages in Kyrgyzstan: Persistence or Change", *National Council for Eurasian and East European Research*, University of Washington, 2013.
45. William K. Medlin, William M. Cave and Finley Carpenter, *Education and Development in Central Asia: A Case Study on Social Change in Uzbekistan*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, Netherlands, 1971.
46. Yaccovi Roi, *Islam in Soviet Union*, Colombia University press London, 2000.
47. Z. Arifkhanova, "Post-Soviet Transformation in Uzbek Ritual life", *Journal of Central Asian Studies*, Vol. XVI, No. 1, University of Kashmir, Srinagar, 2006.
48. <http://www.tcole.tribal.rugs/art>,
49. [www.fantasticasia.net/176travel=sunnot toi%20toi%20tradition %20Kyrgyzstan](http://www.fantasticasia.net/176travel=sunnot%20toi%20toi%20tradition%20Kyrgyzstan).
50. www.apwld.org
51. *Customs and Ceremonies of Kyrgyzstan*, Available online at www.svetlanasbrides.com/Kyrgyzstan/culture/folklore.html
52. ElmiraKogumkulkizi, "My Fairy Tale Kyrgyz wedding", available on: <http://deptswashington.edu/silkroad/culture/wedding/wedding.Html>.