Mongolians after Socialism:
Politics, Economy, Religion

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Mongolians After Socialism

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Introduction: Mongolians After Socialism

Bruce M. Knauft

Contemporary Mongolia is certainly a cauldron of dynamic development. Skyrocketing economic growth supports eye-popping new affluence while the rate of grinding poverty stays stubbornly high. Profits from mineral extraction provide booming infrastructure while traffic snarls the capital city and huge nomadic expanses continue to make Mongolia the least densely populated country in the world. In winter, the pristine "land of the eternal blue sky" abuts choking air pollution in urban areas while in the countryside harsh weather threatens large losses of livestock and endangers pastoral livelihoods. Environmental degradation is a constant threat. Yet, what stands out is the pride, energy, and resilience of the Mongolian people, even as their future is not entirely clear.

Politically and culturally as well, the Mongolian cauldron churns. A vigorously booming and free-wheeling open-market democracy of just three million people, Mongolia is sandwiched in a land-locked vice between autocratic super-giants: Russia to the north and China to the south. During the 20th century, seven decades of domination by the U.S.S.R. included brutal Stalinist purges and systematic obliteration of Mongolian Buddhist religion and culture. Now fully emerged as a free post-socialist nation, Mongolians are a vivacious, successful, and forward-looking people while also being deeply stamped by their immediate and longer history – including nationalist pride that reaches back 800 years and beyond, per the Mongol Empire forged by Chinggis Khan.

How are Mongolians discovering, recasting, and recreating themselves and their country – socially, economically, politically, culturally, and religiously? Though highly complex,

this issue is key not just for Mongolians but for understanding dynamic human development across a contemporary world.

Typically, the factors that inform this question get separated and segmented, both as points of view and topics of understanding. Policy reports, journalist reporting, and strategic analysis diverge from academic and scholarly understanding. Issues of "politics" get separated from those of "economics," on the one hand, and, even more, from those of "culture" or "religion," on the other. So, too, the push to understand the burgeoning dynamics of the fast-moving present get separated or divorced from the study of history. And this history is itself layered – the deeper history and present reconstruction of "Mongolian" national identity, the strong and now sensitive legacy of seven decades of overwhelming Soviet influence in all aspects of life, and now the recent but growing history of open capitalist development on a regional and even a world stage that was undreamed of for Mongolia just a few years ago. How to take stock of these dynamics without attempting or claiming too much, or cutting them up into separate rather than interconnected pieces?

The present volume makes a small but we hope important attempt to address these questions. Moving widely across the canvas of Mongolian economics, politics, culture, religion, history, and projected future development, this book portrays a dynamic whole that is more than the sum of its divisible parts. It combines Western-derived perspectives and analyses with Mongolian ones. It also combines different kinds of professional authorship. When was the last time you read a book that combines poignant first-hand presentations written by high national government officials, an American ambassador, Buddhist lamas and monks, a shaman, a Christian pastor, and Mongolian and Western paragons of academic scholarship? The result, we hope, is significantly more interesting than a disparate pastiche. Each account seriously

addresses interconnected questions of Mongolian identity and the priorities, challenges, and opportunities of capitalist commercialism, and legacies of proximate and deeper national and Buddhist history.

In important ways, the various accounts herein speak to each other – just as the participants themselves did at the original conference upon which this book is based. It is hard to convey the palpable dynamism that was evident among participants in highly animated discussion following individual presentations and in the linkages across participants during the conference as a whole. The head lama of Mongolia talks appreciatively and at length with a leading Mongolian social scientist, a former post doctoral fellow from Stanford, who is a strong proponent of secularism. The director of the national Mongolian planning commission comes back for a conference dinner to talk at length with academics and civil society leaders. Debates about Mongolian history and culture expose points of view – and factual details – that are just now emerging from the shadows of Soviet propaganda and oppression.

Organization of the book

To help introduce these various perspectives, this book is organized into four sections. Following this Introduction is an analytic overview of Mongolia since it was a "state at risk" in the wake of Soviet socialism during the early 1990s. This contribution delineates specific opportunities and challenges of current Mongolian political, economic, and cultural development. The practical assessments of the analysis include significant recommendations for Mongolian social policy and sustainable political development.

Part One of the volume, "Challenges of Governance, Economy, and Wealth Disparity," includes contributions by the U.S. Ambassador to Mongolia, the head of the national

Mongolian Planning Commission, the National Security Advisor to the Mongolian President, a leading Mongolian social scientist, and an American-trained anthropologist who conducted ethnographic fieldwork in a remote pastoral area of Mongolia. These contributions triangulate the great opportunities and deep challenges that confront contemporary Mongolia in the context of economic growth, burgeoning political democracy, and enormous and growing wealth disparity within the country. These are crucial issues that have a strong if not determining impact on the future of Mongolia as a thriving, independent, and sustainable country.

The next section of the volume addresses "Challenges of Contemporary Religion." Here are included the diverse perspectives of a royal Mongolian shaman, a Christian pastor, a top international scholar of Mongolian Buddhism, one of the highest and most revered lamas of Mongolia (now based in the U.S.), a highly trained monk who is helping spearhead an enormous Buddhist monument and spiritual-commercial complex outside the capital, and a lama who has had a keen role helping rebuild some of the more than 1,000 Mongolian Buddhist monasteries and temples (almost all of those then-existing) that were destroyed by the Soviets. It becomes quickly evident that religion and spirituality link directly to national identity and national social and cultural priorities – just as issues of politics and economics, discussed in the first part of the volume, beg cultural and human values that underlie and underscore national socioeconomic priorities.

The third section of the volume, "Constructions of Society and Culture," focuses on the historical construction and present rediscovery and reconstruction of Mongolian identity. Included here are the perspectives of a preeminent international scholar of Mongolian history and culture (presently at Cambridge University), Director of the Family Studies Center of Ulaanbaatar University, Chair of a major

Mongolian NGO and author of 20 books, and the Head of the Labor Relations Division of the Employer Association of Mongolia. Importantly, the institutions, organizations, and identities of contemporary Mongolians – as was also true in the past – are no less significant or "real" for being products of motivated construction and continual reformulation.

The volumes' final section, on "Legacies of Buddhism and Cultural History," focuses on key issues of Mongolian religious and cultural history that inform the present and emerging trajectory of Mongolia. Contributors include one of the world's leading scholars of Tibetan-Mongolian Buddhism, a historian of Mongolia from the US, two doctoral research fellows – one from Budapest, the other from the Mongolian Academy of Sciences – who have studied aspects of Mongolian religion and culture as remembered from the Soviet period, plus two scholars of Russian and Mongolian history – a senior researcher of Buddhism in Buryatia from Moscow State University, and the Professor and Head of the International Studies Institute at the Mongolian Academy of Sciences. Given the propaganda and tailored history of Mongolia that was taught under Soviet control, new views of Mongolian history, culture, and religion are particularly important to Mongolians as they forge their contemporary and future national identity.

To aid the reader in engaging the volumes various vantage points, the text of each chapter is preceded by editor's "headnotes." These introduce the contribution and place it in larger perspective. As such, the headnotes are intended to orient readers to the chapters before each is engaged more deeply and substantively.

Background and comparative significance

As previously mentioned, this volume is based on the intellectual and practical fruits of a major conference of the

same name, "Mongolians after Socialism," that was held at the Open Society Forum in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia on June 27-29, 2011. The conference, like this volume, was a joint effort across productively different points of view. The underlying idea and the bulk of support for the conference was provided by the States at Regional Risk Project (SARR), which I direct at Emory University in Atlanta. This multi-year project, which is supported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, brings together policy makers, civil society leaders, and in-region and international scholarly experts concerning countries and larger world areas that have undergone significant sociopolitical threat and transition.

Some of the SARR project world area components, including those in West Africa and East Africa, have engaged regions and nations that have been at pains to recover from prolonged periods of civil war, political strife, and sociocultural trauma. (Details are available on the SARR project website at <www.sarr.emory.edu>.) In Mongolia, by contrast, the social and political traumas of the recent past – including heavy Soviet domination and then a wrenching transition to free market capitalism – have given way to strong development both economically and in terms of democratic state government. In a sense, Mongolia is a positive case example of a country that endured violent social, political, and economic upheaval but which has recovered and developed successfully in comparative terms – despite being surrounded by autocratic and aggressive superpowers.

Though the continuation of its hopeful development cannot be guaranteed, Mongolia exemplifies a nation that has improved markedly across a range of indicators in the aftermath of socioeconomic and political turmoil. This fact is thrown into relief when Mongolia is compared and contrasted to significant other countries and areas of central Asia as well as parts of Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East.

Though Mongolia has the benefit of possessing large and lucrative mineral deposits to fuel its growth, this fact itself cannot explain its distinctive path of recovery and development. As is well known from countries ranging from Nigeria to the Congo (DRC), Sierra Leone, Iraq, and Afghanistan, abundance of natural resources does not ensure socioeconomic and political development. Indeed, a windfall of natural endowments can become a "resource curse" that is easily associated with political autocracy, corruption, stratified wealth inequality, and civil war or social strife – as has persisted for decades in mineral rich areas of East Congo. (These have also been a site of SARR project work).

The insufficiency of resource profits as an explanation of recovery following sociopolitical trauma begs the key and important role not just of social institutions but of collective identities informed by values – in a word, by culture. Cultural orientations, as difficult as they may be to measure or delineate with empirical firmness, and despite their reformulation over time, provide a key undergirding element that interacts with organizational orientations, institutional possibilities, political histories, and economic potentials to inform a country's development over time. This crucial fact is often underemphasized or neglected in existing understandings of national and regional development. As noted above, these often bifurcate into separate strands of economic versus political versus social or historical analysis.

To confront this issue, our Mongolians after Socialism project embraced from the start the importance of considering these interrelated features not just in conceptual or topical combination but through complementary perspectives or "subject positions" of knowledge and understanding. A Western-derived scholarly or academic understanding can hardly plumb the intricacies of contemporary Mongolian disposition; this arises from the perspectives of Mongolians

themselves. These include the viewpoints of accomplished Mongolian professionals and also those of civil society members and leaders outside standard professional fields.

Organizational context and acknowledgements

During a project trip to Mongolia in 2010, I was highly fortunate to receive perceptive guidance and advice concerning the above issues from a range of Mongolian organizations and individuals, including national government officials, the Asia Foundation, the American Center for Mongolian Studies, the American Embassy, faculty and administrators from the National University of Mongolia, the Customs University, the Mongolian University of Science and Technology, and a range of leaders from Buddhist religious and civil society organizations. All of these individuals and organizations deserve heartfelt thanks. Particularly important was my contact with Gerelmaa Amgaabazar, Manager of Social Policy and Education Programs at the Open Society Forum (OSF) in Ulaanbaatar.

OSF was especially interested in our SARR project and its interrelation of viewpoints across scholarly, civic, and policy perspectives, including with respect to democratic governance, socioeconomic development, education, and environmental concerns. Both highly connected and highly respected in the networks of Mongolian institutions and leaders, OSF became a prime linkage point for our SARR project in Mongolia. Paralleling the perspectives we were attempting to bridge and combine, the applied focus of OSF was informed by research and empirical and strategic analysis in ways that linked effectively with practical and policy implications. In short order, OSF in Ulaanbaatar became our organizational partner, provided the logistical organization for the conference in Ulaanbaatar, and also provided the venue for the three-day

conference, which was held at their OSF headquarters. For this and much more, Gerelmaa Amgaabazar deserves special thanks and credit.

We were particularly fortunate, with OSF facilitation, to have had simultaneous translation between Mongolian, English, and some Russian during all three days of the conference, including the substantial periods of lively discussion following presentations. Simultaneous translation was crucial to even out the linguistic and communicational playing field among diverse participants and to encourage open conversation across differences of national background and of civil, professional, and educational training. We are pleased at the resulting transparency of communication and the fact that presentations effectively crossed lines of language. This has also allowed the present volume to be translated and published in both a Mongolian language edition and an English language one – with all contributions included in both editions.

The final crucial part of our organizational and conceptual initiative for this project was wonderfully supplied by Dr. Richard Taupier of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Being both a senior university administrator and a historical scholar of Mongolia, with deep interest in Buddhism, Dr. Taupier frontally engaged and expanded the cultural, religious, and historical purview of the conference and integrally collaborated in all aspects of its conceptualization and organization. Along with the assistance and contacts of eminent scholar of Buddhism Glenn H. Mullin, he also enabled senior religious Mongolian leaders and other religious and historical scholars to be present as full presenters and participants. To this end, Dr. Taupier secured additional funding for the conference from the Rubin Foundation of New York, which we gratefully acknowledge. Dr. Taupier's sensibilities and guidance have been critical in this project, of which he is co-organizer as well as co-editor of the present volume.

A special thanks for consistent professionalism, acumen, and efficiency is also due the managing editor for both the English and Mongolian versions of this volume in Ulaanbaatar, Lkham Purevjav. Ms. Purejav is a graduate researcher in the Department of Ethnology and Anthropology at the Institute of History in the Mongolian Academy of Sciences. Without Lkham Purevjav's assiduous and consistent efforts, the production of these volumes would simply not have been possible. At Emory University in Atlanta, Helen Simmons, the Program Associate of SARR, played a similarly indispensable role, including concerning the overall logistical management of this project.

We are particularly pleased that this book is co-published by the Mongolian Academy of Sciences (MAS), the National University of Mongolia (NUM), and the Open Society Forum of Mongolia (OSF). Co-publication is supported at MAS by the Institute of History, Director, Dr. Chuluun Sampildondov, and by the Institute of International Studies, Director, Dr. Luvsan Khaisandai. The President of NUM, Dr. S. Tumur-Ochir, helped introduce our SARR conference, and co-publication is supported by the NUM Department of Anthropology, Chaired by Dr. Bum-Ochir Dulam.

The SARR conference in Ulaanbaatar was also introduced by Dr. Damdinsuren Bayanduuren, President of the Mongolian University of Science and Technology, and by the Head Lama of Mongolia, The Venerable Khamba Lama Gabju Choijamts, to whom we are most grateful. Thanks also go to the various conference section Chairs and Moderators and to Professor Bulgan Janchivdorj, former Head Professor at the Customs University of Mongolia, who was most helpful assisting us in establishing professional contacts and connections. Several conference participants were not able to supply papers that could be included in this collection, but their contributions were very useful at the conference, and

Ms. Enkhtuya Oidov, Director of the Mongolian Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Open Society Forum (OSF) Board Member, provided important feedback at our post-conference retreat in Terelj Valley, along with Dr. Richard Taupier, Dr. Daniel J. Murphy, and Gerelmaa Amgaabazar of OSF. OSF was instrumental in our project in innumerable ways, and we are glad this volume finds a place among its own substantial publications and reports.

The U.S. Embassy in Ulaanbaatar, under the direction of the Hon. Jonathan Addleton, Ambassador, was also most helpful in guidance. Ambassador Addleton not only helped introduce the conference but presented a significant conference paper, a version of which is included in this volume. We are also grateful for the generous reception for conference participants that the Ambassador hosted at his residence on the evening of June 27, 2011.

The thirty-four invited participants to the original conference included the Mongolian National Security Advisor, the head of the Mongolian Planning Commission, a senior advisor to the Mongolian President, a member of the Mongolian Parliament, the US Ambassador to Mongolia, the Presidents of two leading Mongolian universities, the head Buddhist Lama of Mongolia, five further Buddhist and Christian leaders, four leading figures of Mongolian civil society organizations, five major Mongolian academics, and nine international scholars of Mongolia. Participants came from eight countries and included spokespersons concerning Mongolians in regional contexts outside Mongolia per se. In facilitating conversation, expanded dialogue, and practical understanding across important networks of policy makers, civil society leaders and scholars, the conference was highly productive, including in the regional context of Inner Asia.

We are especially pleased that every one of the above persons not only attended the conference as a presenter or

session chair but stayed for one or more of the conference discussion sessions. This high level of interest and commitment were reflected in the fact that the Royal Shaman Tuvshintugs, who at the time was in the hospital with an acute medical condition, provided a handwritten version of a full presentation that was transcribed at his bedside, delivered by a spokesman at the conference itself, and subsequently translated for inclusion in the English as well as the Mongolian version of this volume. Engagement, critical discussion, and broadening of perspectives across governmental, civil society, academic, and religious points of view was in many ways frankly breathtaking.

During the completion of most edited volume publications, the extraction and editing of papers from constituent contributors is a labor-intensive task. The present case, however, provides an exception. Contributors exhibited high commitment to provide effective and timely textual renditions of their presentations across their different points of view. This high level of interest informs the diversity and, we hope, the larger value of this volume.

Conclusions

It is common in introductions and prefaces to books to separate the conceptual and organizational features of a project from its historical context and acknowledgments. In the present case, however, these are integrally connected; the process and medium whereby this volume has emerged is both integral to its theme and itself part of its message. In the same way that topical issues, alternative perspectives, subject positions, and organizational contexts beg to be bridged, so, too, it is important not to siphon off the practical dynamics that enable these connections as if they were "separate" from the "substance" of the work.

As an anthropologist with an interest in the relation between cultural, social, and politico-economic development within and across world areas, I am concerned to combine an ethnographic sensibility that takes seriously the viewpoints of diverse others with an analytic perspective that can inform larger understandings. This connection is at once strategic, scholarly, and practical; it draws on complementary aspects of understanding that enlarge and enrich rather than compromise or constrain each other. Facilitating this connection in organic terms through both the content and the social production of useful and critical knowledge is a significant objective of the present work. In my own field, this process entails what is sometimes called "engaged anthropology." Engaged anthropology connects scholarly and practical or applied aspects of knowledge not just as objects of understanding but as key objectives of conducting one's work, if not one's life.

The larger fruit of this project is the insights by, for, and about Mongolians themselves, including their rich and vibrant country, the strong opportunities it faces, and the great challenges that confront it. Mongolians after Socialism are grappling actively with their present in relation to their cultural and sociopolitical past and the trajectories of their envisaged future. If this volume has some small impact in reflecting, communicating, and progressively facilitating this process, it will have accomplished its purpose.

Postscript

To facilitate wider dissemination of the material and perspectives presented in this book, its full contents are available as PDF files in both English and Mongolian on the SARR project website. See <www.sarr.emory.edu/MAS>.

Comments and reactions concerning this publication are welcome. Please send email communications to Bruce Knauft (bruce.knauft@emory.edu), Richard Taupier (taupier@research@umass.edu), and/or Gerelmaa Amgaabazar (gerelmaa@forum.mn).

Mongolians Before, During, and After Socialism: Analytic Overview and Policy Implications

Bruce M. Knauft

Editor's introduction: *This contribution assesses Mongolia's potentials for socioeconomic, political, and cultural development as a double-edged sword. On the one hand are the benefits of mineral-derived revenue and robust democratic politics; on the other, are the challenges of wealth disparity, politicization, and short-term social and political accommodations at the expense of long-term sustainability. After an overview analysis of Mongolian state development that draws upon the contributions of this book's contributors, specific thematic findings are described and a range of policy implications considered, including the need for (a) a stronger and more sustainable national development trust fund, (b) electoral campaign and finance reform, (c) selectively reorganizing public and governmental administration of rural areas, (d) increasing the ability of Mongolians to reassess their country's distinctive cultural and historical resources – so they may be more creatively drawn upon in future assertions of national trajectory and identity. In all, the presentation assesses the distinctive features of Mongolia as an emergent "not-at-risk" state amid the challenges and potential threats bequeathed by its recent change and development.*

A landlocked territory sandwiched between China and Russia, Mongolia has, since the fall of the Mongol Empire, been largely a tenuous nation. This pattern reemerged in the 20th century during the extended period of Soviet control and repression and the ensuing first years of post-Socialist democracy and market liberalism. Prior to Soviet domination, Mongolia was under the control of the Manchu Qing Dynasty, in part or in whole, from 1691 to 1911. Viewed historically, then, with the partial exception of a brief period from 1911 to the early

1920s, the newly independent Mongolia of the early 1990s was reemerging from three centuries of foreign domination.

During the past two decades, however, Mongolian national wealth has grown from a very modest socialist baseline and is now poised to boom exponentially based on exploitation of extensive Mongolian natural resources, including especially coal, copper, fluorite, gold, iron ore, lead, molybdenum, oil, phosphates, tin, uranium, and wolfram. Some influential projections estimate that annual growth in Mongolian GDP will increase to 23% by 2013. This growth is intensifying a very large increase in Mongolian economic development, infrastructural construction, and urbanization that has already taken place during the last decade.

Post-socialist Mongolia government is a mixed Presidential-Parliamentary system that has become a highly robust and competitive multi-party democracy. Democratic principals quickly developed and remain strong in the Mongolian population notwithstanding growing disaffection with government (irrespective of political party) and distrust of high-level capitalist deal-making. On the Freedom House 2011 global map, Mongolia is a large island of political freedom amid superpowers and other nations of continental Asia north of the Himalayas that are rated as "not free."

From a pro-free market perspective, Mongolia offers important "lessons learned" of how a state at severe risk, with a history of Soviet purges, has developed a strong, modern democratic government, a soaring rate of economic growth, and modernization of commodities and lifestyle.

From another perspective, however, it could be argued that for much of the past twenty years Mongolia has suffered greatly under capitalist economic "shock-therapy." The transition to rampant capitalism has eliminated extensive socialist patterns of support, failed to replace or rebuild the previous rural market infrastructure, and fueled the loss and

only recent recovery of the ability to produce and process grains as a food staple. These difficulties have been accompanied by growing wealth disparity and an increased percentage of Mongolians falling into poverty, which with now afflicts more than a third of the population according to Mongolia's own national standard. From this perspective, it is only recently, through the increased exploitation of mineral resources, and in light of the development of a young system of democratic governance, that projections for Mongolian success have become more positive.

As emerged thematically in our project, potentially severe stresses are surfacing through very rapid economic growth projected primarily on the basis of expropriation of Mongolian mineral wealth through mining. The larger question is whether the previous "state at risk" in the wake of Soviet control and oppression is in danger of being replaced by a neo-liberal state of fragility or risk fueled by capitalist exploitation of enormous natural resources. This exploitation has the potential to outstrip national and governmental wherewithal to monitor, manage, and harness economic growth and profit-taking for the national good – as opposed to what contributors identified as ballooning wealth disparities and associated problems of rural livelihood, urbanization, and poverty.

Against this less optimistic scenario is the anticipated bulwark of Mongolian democracy. Democracy is hoped to provide for nationally balanced and sustainable growth and development. Challenges in this regard include acknowledged high levels of nepotism, favoritism, and cronyism, high and increasing levels of wealth disparity, and evidence of growing popular disaffection with government irrespective of party affiliation. In relative and regional terms, it should be noted, these trends are far less than they are in most other countries of central and inner Asia. But in the particular context of Mongolia, the stresses of catapulting internationalization and

economic growth, which impact both pastoral and urban livelihood, have material significance.

At the time of present writing (May, 2012), the former President of Mongolia, Nambaryn Enkhbayar, has been in jail for a month after having been taken from his house by SWAT team members on charges of corruption. Given that his political party had been hoping to make advances or serve as a power-broker following the upcoming June 28 Mongolian parliamentary elections, concerns are reflected in the Western press that the timing and content of the charges are politically motivated. However, Mongolian-language media and YouTube videos suggest alternative interpretations, and there is a significant sense within the country that the charges may ultimately be legitimate – and that international mining companies that are implicated in the corruption may be funding international news media highlights that portray the arrest of the former President in an unflattering light.

Debates abound concerning the extent of government corruption and collusion with mining interests and how these may be presently operating through one or another side of accusation or denial, media representation, legal action, and machinations of opposition versus coalition building among different political parties. In the mix, claims have even been made, and vigorously disputed, about whether current developments imply or evoke the specter of Soviet-era politics – or if this is simply a preposterous and inflammatory claim.

The historical and cultural context of political and economic developments in Mongolia obviously continues to be crucial. Foregrounding this fact, our project in Mongolia has stressed the relation of culture and history to political economy, including its potential as a positive resource. As against less rosy possibilities, it may be noted that the Mongolian nation, including during much of the time of the Mongolian Empire, was surprisingly tolerant in religious and cultural terms.

Mongolians have been primarily Buddhists for the 400-year period prior to the socialist revolution, and many Mongolians still place great store in Buddhist ideals of compassion and the belief that conditions in the future are determined by the morality of one's behavior in the present.

Whether individual Mongolians profess specific belief in Buddhism or not, the society as a whole remains positively predisposed to its associated moral precepts. This is reflected currently in the general tolerance of Christianity as well as shamanism in addition to Buddhism, and a general lack of politicization over religious or potential ethnic cleavages within the country. Historically, these trends have dovetailed with fluid political organization, migratory movement, and strong respect or reverence for the natural environment.

The flexible and largely tolerant organizational structures associated historically with Mongolian pastoral livelihood – and the historic Mongolian state – provide important potential cultural and historical resources that may be drawn upon as Mongolians grapple creatively with present challenges and future potentials. Today, historical and cultural predispositions additionally intertwine with post-socialist desires for economic development, western modernity, travel and experience outside Mongolia, constitutional rather than clerical government, and a growing sense of Mongolian national or nationalist identity.

How these influences will be drawn upon and recombined in Mongolia during the 21st century is a major issue that will have key implications for Mongolian political and economic development. An important finding of the project has been that the process of post-socialist cultural re-assessment is just now beginning to take place – as the heavy impact of Soviet-era propaganda wanes and the national archives and fuller history of Mongolia becomes more accessible and understandable to a wider Mongolian public. The potential here is for simpler and more narrowly nationalistic notions of Mongolian identity to be broadened and deepened in new and richer ways.

Larger implications

Contemporary Mongolia exposes deeper assumptions that inform received notions of state risk or fragility. Proper functions of a developed state are often taken to include national provision of basic levels of education, health care, public services and infrastructure, and protection of fundamental human rights through legal protection and security. While these functions are weakly administered, absent, or even explicitly withheld or contravened in classic "failed states," they can also be minimized, subverted, outsourced, or dominated by private interests or corporations beholden to non-public interests under conditions of strong neo-liberalism during free market development.

This potential exists in contemporary Mongolia in the context of a small and still significantly rural national population, fledging or weak government departments organized across the vast expanse of the country, and hyper-growth of mineral extraction. In this context, the activities that governmental departments and agencies do pursue are often seen by Mongolians as another kind of rent-seeking or extractive enterprise by the State – as opposed to being actions that support the welfare of the citizenry.

In practical terms, an important question is whether the resource wealth of Mongolia will lead the strength of its national state to develop along the lines of countries such as Norway, Chile, or Australia – or in the path of countries for which resources have become a curse, such as Nigeria, Congo (DRC), Sudan, and now, perhaps, Afghanistan and Iraq.

As a country of Inner Asia, and as a nation with a distinct social and cultural history of dispersed nomadic herders, on the one hand, and Buddhism, on the other, Mongolia may not be constrained by the same patterns that have influenced the path of state development in world areas such as Sub-Saharan Africa, or, on the other hand, Europe and its avatars.

For instance, the balancing act of the small Mongolian population to strongly adopt democracy and open market capitalism relatively free of state control is both special within its region and directly related to its asserted independence from both Russia and China. However distant in history or improbable in the present, the legacy and the implications of the Mongol Empire of Chinggis Khan, which spanned Asia from the gateways of Europe to parts of the Pacific Ocean, remain important for Mongolians. How their country will now develop in national, regional, and global context could reveal much about how we should be rethinking state development, state strength, and state fragility during the 21st century.

Specific themes

A number of robust themes, sometimes unanticipated, emerged during our project as participants from different professional, educational, and national backgrounds listened to and, especially, responded to each other's presentations during discussion. The following five themes emerged as especially salient.

1. Rapid economic development and wealth disparity

The stunning trajectory and future intensification of economic growth in Mongolia is complicated by growing wealth disparity. This occurs both between rural and urban areas and within the capital city as herders from the countryside are displaced to Ulaanbaatar, which now contains more than one-third of the country's population. In rural areas, systematic research as well as anecdotal reports also suggest that disparity of herd size, and of wealth, is growing, along with political nepotism and unequal access to government support and services.

At larger issue is how and to what degree revenue from mining and largely international corporate presence in

Mongolia can and will be used to expand versus restrict or privatize the distribution of government services and access across the population, including both rural and urban areas.

2. Economic capital, human capital, and government

At present, much economic growth in Mongolia comes in the form of foreign capital investment and the private profits and public revenue within the country that accrue from this. How the human capital and capacity of Mongolians can be appropriately supported and increased becomes pivotal if Mongolian economic and social development is to avoid becoming distorted by dependency on resource extraction, including by foreign entities.

At present, many of the new jobs anticipated in mining and related industries outstrip the availability of skilled Mongolian labor, especially in areas of technology and engineering. The potential dominance of foreign workers in Mongolian economic development, including at higher levels of expertise and corporate authority, seems significant.

On the other hand, in part as a legacy of Soviet-style education, Mongolians have a very high rate of literacy – typically assessed at 98% - and a strong commitment to education and educational advancement. They are also strongly multilingual, including increasingly in English, and are commonly reported to have strong mathematical aptitude, as reflected previously in the success of Mongolian students in Soviet-era mathematical and scientific training.

Amid these alternative capacities and challenges, the speed of economic growth poses stresses as well as opportunities for government in providing education, including the establishment of research-based academic orientations and support at Mongolia's two major universities, which continue to include a wide range of learned but relatively undynamic Soviet-era scholars. The potential is for growing numbers of

highly trained or highly trainable Mongolians, including in areas of science and technology; the risk is a burgeoning of foreign influence and a brain drain of qualified Mongolians elsewhere.

Amid the party and personal politics of Mongolia's competitive democratic process, establishing adequate public funds and effective accountable management for professional training and research-oriented institutes is difficult – as is maintaining adequate education for growing ranks of the urban poor. In both rural and urban areas, social problems that include joblessness and alcoholism, especially among men, increase the challenge to government to provide adequate education and job training. These challenges are likely to increase during expanding economic growth in the boom years ahead.

3. Economic growth and ecological / environmental challenge

A large portion of the expansive Mongolian grasslands are in ecologically fragile zones that are subject to increasing pressure from climate warming and reduction of rainfall during key months. Water is a vital and scarce resource that is appropriated or contested in key areas by hydro-hungry mining and mineral extraction and processing. Though the drilling of wells can increase water supply, this depletes aquifers and reduces the water table, fueling the prospects of water crisis in the future. Problems are also posed by land alienation and the ecological degradation of extensive open-pit mining in the context of herder livelihoods that continue to be the prime basis of economic viability as well as cultural value and social organization in rural areas of Mongolia.

In the capital of Ulaanbaaatar, severe cold during the winter months combines with centrally-situated Soviet-era coal plants, knotty traffic jams, and common burning of almost any combustible material in ger districts – including

rubber tires in addition to other refuse, wood, and coal – to produce a miasma of urban air pollution. During a significant portion of the year, breathing urban air is plainly dangerous, and visibility can be reduced to a very few yards even on sunny winter days.

Addressing these environmental concerns is a major challenge for Mongolian government and social planning and management services. How the presence and investment of foreign mineral extraction and other corporate firms can be tapped and harnessed to develop and sustain long-term environmental management – and mitigate water shortage, land degradation, air pollution, and the impact of climate change – is a key issue for Mongolian sustainable development during the 21st century.

4. National identity, religion, and the cultural resources of Mongolian history

Mongolia has a rich and influential cultural and political history that includes not only the expansive Mongol Empire but mutually determining and socio-politically supportive relations with Tibet, on the one hand, and Manchurian China, on the other. Mongolian Buddhism has been influential as a cultural and value orientation within and beyond these contexts, as well as within the nation, even though Buddhism was internally contested in addition to being severely disparaged – and its institutions bodily decimated and materially destroyed –during seven decades of Soviet domination. Among other atrocities, tens of thousands of monks, including virtually all of the senior clergy of the nation, were killed during Stalinist purges. Traditions of Mongolian religion and art, now carried on and extended by contemporary figures such as Lama Purevbat, are reemerging with cultural and national as well as religious significance.

Given the destruction of much Mongolian public material and cultural history, and the Soviet re-writing of Mongolian history, many Mongolians are just recently becoming more aware of the richness of their collective past. This past has the potential for providing a strong set of bequeathed cultural resources that Mongolia and Mongolians can draw upon in configuring their personal and national identity in a 21st century post-socialist context.

The full opening up of the Mongolian historical archives – which include vast quantities of both politically sensitive and mundane Soviet-era documents as well as many records of the pre-Soviet Mongolian past – has only recently begun to be politically and socially initiated. A limited number archival "gatekeepers" and a policy of restricted archival access are consistent with a hesitancy to widely expose material that includes or may include politically and personally sensitive information about a wide range of Soviet-era events and individuals, many of whom still hold important positions or are otherwise well known. That large swaths of the historical record have been broadly construed as "classified," if not state secrets, compounds problems of public access.

As such, the democratic and neo-liberal orientations that have "opened" Mongolian governance and markets have just begun to more deeply engage issues of Mongolian history, culture, art, and their implications for national identity. Increasingly open archival access and sociopolitical as well as scholarly interpretations can facilitate use of alternative dimensions of Mongolian history to help Mongolia imagine, reinvent, and project its national identity in ways that are less dependent on either the heavy-handed Soviet propaganda of the past or the appealing but sometimes unrealistic claims of neo-liberal panacea of economic growth.

5. Culture, politics, and economic growth in Mongolia

As mentioned further above, the challenges – and opportunities – of dynamic socioeconomic and political change in contemporary Mongolia pose new issues for understanding and promoting effective state functioning for the bulk of Mongolians. The question of whether Mongolian government is itself shaping or itself being shaped by capitalist development, including investment in and extraction of Mongolian resources, remains an important and importantly unanswered question.

At larger issue is the intertwined trajectory of Mongolian economy, politics, and culture. Though Mongolian economic development and its political dynamics, have been increasingly considered, the relationship of these to each other and especially to cultural orientations that underpin and guide national proclivities and orientations has seldom been addressed. Within that context, the present project has emphasized the interactive impact, mutual influence, and likely expanding role of cultural orientations in relation to Mongolian economy and politics, as well as the reverse. The significance of this mutual importance was born out in the dynamic exchanges, learning, and fresh perspectives opened up in presentations and especially in discussion and dialogue across diverse points of view during the project.

Positive potentials and policy implications

The several challenges and problems mentioned above concerning contemporary Mongolia should not negate or undermine appreciation of the important advances that Mongolia has made during the past two decades.

During this period, Mongolia has transitioned from a highly controlled and minimally-producing nation under Soviet influence to a dynamic and fully independent state

with a thriving and robust multi-party democracy, a galloping trajectory of economic growth, infrastructural development, a high level of national education, and a strong sense of national pride and identity that, for some, extends back to the Mongol Empire of Chinggis Khan and beyond. This is all the more remarkable for a country of less than 3 million persons landlocked between Russia and China– as historical and continuing 21st century behemoths in the heart of continental Asia. At the same time, it could be argued that Mongolia has largely downplayed or neglected social investment in favor of a neo-liberal market emphasis that has conferred most social advances on those few Mongolians who have become successful capitalists or politicians.

In a positive and constructive spirit, several concrete and practical implications of the "Mongolians After Socialism" project are as follows:

- Develop a strong and broad national sustainable development trust fund

  Countries from Norway to Papua New Guinea have used windfall profits from natural resource extraction to provide for longer term public good sustainability beyond immediate political allocations and distributions. The Mongolian government risks going in the other direction. Politicians have been known to promise cash giveaways to all their constituents. Recently, the government gave 538 shares of stock in the mega-mining TT enterprise (Erdenes-Tavan Tolgoi Ltd.) to every Mongolian. Once given, such allocations become entitlements that are politically difficult to eliminate or reduce – and they easily reinforce the self-interest and leverage of the multinational extractive corporations involved.

  Though some aspects of mining industry sustainable trust fund development are evident in Mongolia, these

could be made broader, given more resources, and managed with a more publicly transparent and democratically discussed mandate. Beyond funding of immediate national infrastructure projects, investment in human capacity building to reduce wealth inequality, including at the mid- and lower end of the education and employment spectrum, seems important for Mongolia's future.

Garnering substantial external revenue funds for longer sustainable trust fund development may appear politically difficult when the need for immediate spending on behalf of the mass electorate seems great. But campaigning for substantial sustainable trust legislation as an explicit way to vouchsafe the longer and more equitable future of Mongolian growth could itself have potent positive political appeal.

- Electoral campaign finance reform / legislation

Though refinement and reform of the Mongolian electoral process was not an explicit focus of our project, it did address how nepotism and network cronyism among wealthy and influential individuals had a disproportionate effect on those actually elected to office.

Given the large of flow of external wealth into Mongolia, and the problems posed by increasing wealth disparity, clearer limits and restrictions on electoral campaigning and the magnitude of campaign financing and financial donation are highly important for longer-term growth and stability in Mongolia. As above, such initiatives may seem politically difficult to mount in the short term. But, if presented openly and strongly to the Mongolian electorate, these could in fact have major appeal to voters.

- Rural administrative re-organization

  Current research suggests that stress on rural nomadic livelihoods fuels increases in rural wealth disparity. Those owning smaller herds are at increased danger of having to give up their animals and become either hired hands in the service of larger herd-owning families, or selling their remaining animals, leaving herding altogether, and becoming poor urban dwellers in Ulaanbaatar or smaller cities or towns.

  The current political structure of managing disputes and requests among herders at the local level – including requests to migrate to fresher pastures under conditions of ecological hardship or stress – allows but does not mandate local officials to intervene, including on behalf of families at risk. As such, there is a political vacuum when it comes to maintaining equity and facilitating the sustainability of herders who are at risk but who, with small help and accommodation during a period of particular stress, could maintain their livelihood.

  Previous attempts at establishing a larger "common good" approach to rural decision-making to facilitate equity among herders included Soviet collectivization and cooperative schemes, and, before that, Buddhist monasteries and aristocratic leaders. Though each of these systems had its own constraints, complexities, and inefficiencies, selective parts of their better aspects could be drawn upon to provide more robust forms of political organization in rural areas through which the temporary needs of pastoralists with mid- and low-sized animal herds could be more effectively addressed.

- **Expanding Mongolian awareness of cultural and historical resources for the 21st century**

  The vast majority of Mongolians are literate and have access to electronic news and information media. Beyond a basic understanding of Chinggis Khan and the Mongol Empire, however, awareness remains minimal among most Mongolians, including many of those highly educated, concerning the rich cultural resources afforded by Mongolian history, culture, and religion prior to the Socialist era.

  This issue goes beyond the general value of having an educated citizenry or moving beyond the constraints and lingering propaganda of the Socialist period. Mongolia now faces major challenges across a broad spectrum of social, economic, political, cultural fronts. As leaders and the citizenry search for novel and uniquely Mongolian ways to address and rise to these challenges, they will benefit greatly from an ability to draw upon a fuller range of Mongolian historical precedents and cultural resources. These can expand Mongolian nationalist identity beyond simple notions of Mongol heritage much less restrictive notions of genetic purity or Khalka chauvinism that, under conditions of growing wealth disparity, flirt with fascist orientations, including among the young in some political orientations.

Mongolian history provides strong evidence of unique forms of political, economic, and social organization that have been effectively suited to Mongolia for centuries, including at the regional and the local as well as the national level. Amid other important secular principles, values historically associated with both Mongolian Buddhism and the nomadic and herder ethos that preceded it can be drawn upon to manage these

levels of organization and keep them in balance with each other and with the natural environment.

Though the past is now gone, its deeper legacy remains an important cultural resource. Mongolia can draw more fully and creatively on a knowledge of its past culture, history, and religion both to increase the sense of pride and well being among citizens and to allow leaders to more deeply and creatively rethink how 21st century challenges can be addressed in effective Mongolian ways. In this sense, Mongolians have the impetus as well as the capacity to productively become "yet more Mongolian" while simultaneously recognizing the key strength of their country as a multi-ethnic and multi-religious nation.

Part One

Challenges of Governance, Economy, and Wealth Disparity

Chapter 1
The Challenges Never End: Managing Economic, Political, and Environmental Concerns During a Period Of Rapid Change

Jonathan S. Addleton

Editor's introduction: *Ambassador Addleton's contribution takes a broad perspective on key interrelationships between Mongolian environmental issues, economic growth, and political development. His paper contextualizes the great growth and economic contribution of mining in contemporary Mongolia by noting the environmental challenges of climate change, the threat of overgrazing associated with pastoral livelihoods, and issues of water management – in addition to the impact of mining per se. Stressing the accomplishments of Mongolian political development and also the challenges that it now faces, Dr. Addleton suggests that rapid change and economic growth in Mongolia accentuate the stresses that accompany the country's highly successful political and economic transition. He emphasizes that this is an expected and ongoing process, and that it puts a premium on decision-making by the Mongolian populace among an increasingly diverse and complex array of possibilities and choices. A PhD graduate as well as an American government official, Dr. Addleton was an active participant throughout the conference in addition to presenting opening remarks and also presenting a full written paper. The present contribution is abridged with U.S. government authorization from his longer written remarks.*

Thanks for the opportunity to provide some brief reflections on a topic that is both broad and expansive – "Mining, Political Economy and Environmental Sustainability."

International experience strongly suggests that mineral rich economies face enormous challenges. Some countries offer a "positive" example of the response to these challenges, other countries a more "negative" one. Policymakers in this country are already to some extent familiar with some of the relative "success stories", including Norway, Botswana and Chile. Other, larger countries which perhaps also offer useful "lessons learned" for Mongolia include Canada and Australia.

Among other things, these relatively positive examples highlight the importance of investments in both education and good governance; the need to address corruption concerns; the utility of putting aside monetary proceeds when commodity prices are high in anticipation of those periods when commodity prices inevitably decline; the importance of investments in infrastructure; and the usefulness of promoting economic diversification as a way to avoid a one dimensional, commodity-only economy.

Beyond that, international experience suggests that transparency as well as a system of "checks and balances" can be very helpful as mineral rich economies make both political and economic decisions that help shape the future.

Mongolia's advantages when facing the challenges of managing a resource rich economy and the sudden financial wealth that it can bring includes the country's high rate of literacy; the significant involvement of women in most if not all aspects of society; and the recognition that international experience is indeed relevant for Mongolia.

At least in theory, an effective parliamentary system can also help address concerns over "checks and balances," providing a forum in which many Mongolian voices are heard, not just those with the most money or power or influence. For this reason, discussions in this conference on how parliament operates, what it takes to become an MP and how election systems work in practice are certainly both important and useful.

One goal of the international community in Mongolia is to make some of this international experience available to Mongolia – while recognizing that, ultimately, it is Mongolians themselves that will have to make their own decisions regarding their own future.

As regards the environmental dimension of Mongolia's development, I would provide a few illustrative suggestions that may be helpful when addressing this issue.

First, while environmental issues connected with mining are certainly a concern, it is by no means the only one.

Quite apart from mining, global climate change could well have a significant impact.

And, even in the absence of climate change, a case could well be made that the pressures of growing herds of livestock on the Mongolian steppe could already be having a long-term environmental impact at least as great as that made by the Mongolian mining sector.

I wouldn't presume to suggest what is the "right" number of livestock for ensuring that Mongolia's grasslands are maintained and sustained. But I would certainly argue that the environmental impact of rangeland management is an important concern, at least as important as the environmental regulation of Mongolia's mining sector.

Third and finally, whether involving small projects or large projects, in my view the water issue looms especially large in Mongolia as an environmental issue – not only in the mining sector but in other sectors as well.

Put another way, the blue sky above Mongolia may indeed be eternal – but that is not necessarily the case with Mongolia's blue lakes, blue rivers and blue streams or, for that matter, the blue aquifers beneath the surface of the land.

In the remaining moments of my time, let me briefly state why I framed my remarks at the outset within the context of the phrase "The Challenges Never End."

Looking back on the various critiques of what has happened in Mongolia during the last twenty years, it sometimes seems to me as if at least some observers somehow imagine that there is a point when Mongolia reaches a place that might be described as "policy heaven" or "social nirvana," as if following a certain set of principles at one point in time will inevitably led to a clear, perfect and final destination.

In reality, of course, the quest for the perfect set of policies is a never-ending and often messy journey; indeed, once one set of policy objectives is reached after much labor and hardship, a whole new set of challenges will inevitably emerge.

Increasingly, I have come to think that for Mongolia – and perhaps for any country in Mongolia's position – the more successful it is, the harder it gets.

Certainly this generation of Mongolians faces a broad set of challenges, including the reality that Mongolia is in many ways becoming a more complicated and complex place for any number of reasons.

One reason is of course the added stakes that come into play with added wealth. Beyond that, though, there is the fact that Mongolia is becoming a more complicated place because individual citizens increasingly have the ability to choose from among a broad range of choices, not just one or two. Not surprisingly, sometimes these choices conflict with each other, highlighting the importance of both good governance and an effective judiciary.

More broadly, for individual Mongolians as well as for Mongolian society, the decision-making process never ends – success in one area of decision-making will simply lead to new challenges as well as new and more complicated decisions that will have to be made.

At some level, the dilemma that Mongolia faces is this: every time individual Mongolian citizens or the government writ large believes that it has "surmounted" one specific set of obstacles, a new set of challenges emerge.

Sympathetic foreigners – whether they are here in Mongolia as tourists, academics, researchers, businessmen, aid workers or diplomats such as myself – may offer useful advice from time to time. However, for Mongolians who live here, the story is of course a longer and much more complicated one, spanning several generations as decisions made now affect what happens to generations yet to be born.

Viewed through this lens, I would say that the three themes of this conference – "economic aspiration, political development and cultural identity" – become more important than ever.

Indeed, none of these themes can truly be "resolved" or "addressed" in isolation. On the contrary, they are closely linked and changes and challenges in any of these areas in turn affect and shape the other ones.

Hopefully, the analysis and reflections at events like this will enrich the discussion within Mongolia as it moves forward during a period that will almost certainly be marked by both incredible challenge and incredibly rapid change.

Chapter 2
Current Status of Mongolia's Economic and Social Development and Future Development Trends

Khashchuluun Chuluundorj

Editor's introduction: *As the head of the Mongolian government's primary planning and development committee, Mr. Khashchuluun's remarks provide a key perspective on – and bellwether of – the gargantuan and yet uneven economic development that now envelops Mongolia. By some estimates, Mongolian economic growth is poised to increase at an annual rate of more than 20% in the next few years – due largely to the revenue of large mining infrastructure projects in remote areas of the country. From the perspective of herders and rural populations, as well from the economic impact in towns, for the government, and in the teeming capital of Ulaanbaatar, these developments are far from remote. As Mr. Khashchuluun delineates, the Mongolian government has developed a sophisticated and fiscally responsible economic growth and social development plan that combines support for mining development and infrastructure along with economic sector diversification, growth of Mongolian human capital, and business-government partnerships. As he also notes, burgeoning economic growth in Mongolia abuts the fact the Mongolian rate of poverty has been stubbornly high if not rising.*

The challenges of pronounced and growing wealth disparity among Mongolians – including between increasing numbers of affluent elites and millionaires vis-a-vis dispossessed rural herders and swelling numbers of impoverished urban squatters in the capital city – emerged in our conference discussions as a key social and political as well as technical economic issue. The great growth of foreign cash influxes and of government expenditures begs questions of wealth distribution, the overall welfare of Mongolians, and the underlying values and purpose of national and social

development in Mongolia. It was striking how spontaneously and robustly these questions were raised and addressed from multiple vantage points in discussion following Mr. Khashchuluun's presentation. As opposed to the scholarly or professional division of technical economic issues from those of culture, history, meaning, and value, these became quickly and integrally intertwined. Amid his technical expertise, strategic analysis, and detailed economic understanding, it may be noted that Mr. Khashchuluun actively acknowledged and participated in this broader discussion, both after his presentation and later in the conference.

Current development level of Mongolia

In 2010, many nations showed signs of growth after having overcome the effects of global financial and economic crises. Mongolia reported economic recovery resulting from the *Stand-by* stabilizing program that was undertaken in cooperation with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). When the figures are all in, we anticipate recording a 6 percent increase of real GDP in 2010. If 2010 was a year of high inflation caused mainly by the increase of major food items, 2011 is expected to be low-inflation year.

The World Bank has placed Mongolia in the group of low-to-middle income countries; while in 2007 Mongolia ranked 115 out of 182 countries by its Human Development Index, having surpassed 67 countries in the world, in 2010 Mongolia secured 100th place and entered the group of countries with a medium level of human development. Last year's high inflation rates associated with food price increases are not expected this year. According to research-based estimates, international ranking and measurement studies should show improved economic competitiveness and business environment indicators for Mongolia.

In 2010, thanks to high prices of main export items on the global market, Mongolia enjoyed an increase in its GDP, reaching USD 2,221.5 in per capita terms. In order to further sustain this growth and development, new national programs were initiated. National programs such as "Mongolian Livestock" and the "Third Campaign to Recover Arable Lands [Atar-3]" target animal husbandry and agricultural sub-sectors and will create foundations for accelerating their development. Also, creation of new factories for meat, milk and leather processing in rural and urban areas that are projected in the implementation plan of the "Mongolian Industrialization Program" will increase output volume of the national processing industry.

Despite fast economic growth and numerous targeted actions and activities, poverty remains high in Mongolia. The poverty level that stood at 38.7 percent in 2009 has increased slightly in 2010, to 39.2 percent. Mongolian national policy documents - including the Millenium Development Goals-based National Development Policy for 2007-2015, and the Mongolian Government's Action Plan, prioritize poverty reduction and elevation of living standards as their key goals. The Mongolian government provides all support for these activities and actions.

The Mongolian Government has declared the 2011 as the Year of Employment Opportunities, and had intensified its efforts aimed at supporting job placement services, improving the system of training and re-training, and further encouraging on-the-job training and apprenticeship. High economic growth and the policy of supporting employment and job creation has indeed resulted in a drop in the unemployment rate from 13 percent in December 2010 to 8.7 percent as of June 2011.

Average household income is increasing steadily, standing at 263.7 thousand MNT in 2007, 363.6 thousand MNT in 2008, 402.5 thousand MNT in 2009 and 479.2 thousand

MNT in 2010, showing an 26.8 percent annual average increase rate.

In line with the plan to start several large mining projects, the Mongolian government is focusing on creating supporting infrastructure and financial systems. While many countries with vast natural resources have been able to effectively manage their revenues, a few examples exist of mismanagement and ineffective policies that resulted in waste of development opportunities. We are carefully studying lessons provided by their experiences to use in the development of our policies and programs. We understand that we will need to mobilize great effort in order to start economically exploiting large mining deposits and transporting, exporting, and selling minerals on the global market.

Mongolia does not want to become a raw-material/minerals supplier or to increase our dependence on any one economic aspect; government policies are essentially aimed in the opposite direction. It is important for Mongolia to develop multiple export items and support production of value-added products as part of our economic diversification policy. Our goal is to see Mongolia develop into an industrial country that can take advantage of (and not be subservient to) developments taking place in the mining sector.

In this respect, Mongolia has reached a new stage in its development. Our most immediate goals include building an industrial center in Sainshand city, creating similar centers in other regions, reforming the infrastructure sector, building new railroad and auto roads, and developing modern communication technologies across the country. Alongside the construction and infrastructure projects associated with the large Oyutolgoi, Tavan Tolgoi and Ukhaa Khudag mining projects, we are planning to launch a large-scale mid-term national infrastructure project titled "New Development." This project will build south-north and east-west lines of the

Millennium Road project, maintain and rebuild Ulaanbaatar's city road network, and conduct major construction work in relation to the "100 thousand apartments" project. Some of these project and programs have already started demonstrating solid outcomes.

The above remarks alluded to the creation of favorable natural environment. This is key to further economic growth and development in Mongolia, which is beginning to arrive at a phase full of development opportunities. The great interest of large international and transnational corporations in the Mongolian mining sector and in other sectors will be a major factor contributing to Mongolia's future development.

Macroeconomic situation

The Mongolian economy has shown rapid growth in a very short period thanks to a post-crisis external environment that has been very favorable to the Mongolian economy. This includes high-level decisions to launch large-scale national projects, creation of a better domestic business environment, and adoption of policies that support domestic consumption and boost local production. Together, these resulted in increased foreign investment and export growth. The Mongolian economy grew by 7 percent in the first half-year of 2010 and has picked up its growth speed to reach 14.3 percent in 2011. This one of the highest national economic growth rates not only in the region but also globally.

Although government spending in the first half of 2011 has increased by whopping 32 percent, this is only 40 percent of the GDP in nominal terms. Economic growth resulted in the increase of national revenue, which grew by almost 60 percent during the first 8 months of 2011 as compared to the previous year. The national budget has tabled a surplus of almost MNT 226 billion.

Minerals export in the first 8 months of 2011 has increased by about 80 percent, boosting export revenues to MNT 2.9 billion. At the same time, growing investment and construction work and increasing oil product prices and volumes have increased imports to USD 4.2 billion, resulting in foreign trade deficit of USD 1.3 billion. Despite widening this foreign trade deficit, the overall balance of payment in the first 7 months showed a net gain of USD 288 million proving positive balance in the foreign trade sector.

Foreign direct investment of USD 2.2 billion in the first 7 months has contributed to this positive balance of payment.

Due to increased GDP in nominal terms, money supply has increased by 61.7 percent compared to the previous year.

If we look at Mongolian economic structural trends for 2011-2013, we see that mining sector's volume in the GDP has increased as a result of launching the Oyutolgoi, Tavan Tolgoi and other large mining projects. Specifically, opening of a copper processing plant on the territory of the Oyutolgoi deposit in 2013 will result in the three-fold increase of copper mining compared to the current level. Also, it is estimated that coal mining from the Tavan Tolgoi mine will increase in 2012-2013, enabling extraction and export of about 15 million tons of coal annually.

It is a pleasure to note that mid-term real economic growth is estimated to continue at a high rate as a result of increased investment in the expanding mining sector and construction of accompanying infrastructure.

Mongolia's GDP is estimated to grow by 19.4 percent in 2011, by 19.9 percent in 2012 and by 14.8 percent in 2014, which will result in GDP per capita to reach USD 3458 in 2011, USD 5234 in 2012 and USD 6374 in 2013. Trade, transportation, mining, education and construction sectors are expected to be major contributors to this growth.

Foreign trade volume is estimated to reach USD 11 billion in 2011, USD 15.8 billion in 2012 and USD 18.7

billion in 2013. The foreign trade deficit is projected to be 1.9 percent of GDP in 2012, but in 2013 goods trade will increase to reach possible balance with the estimated surplus of 11-13 percent of GDP in 2013-2014. The main condition for mid-term positive balance of foreign trade is estimated to be faster growth of export volumes, which will surpass import volumes as a result of the launch of large mining exploitation projects. More specifically, it is projected that the goods export will increase by 23 percent in 2012, by 43.4 percent in 2013 and by 18.4 percent in 2014, while import volume will enjoy a steady increase of 11.2 percent throughout this period. As a result, foreign trade is expected to enjoy surplus of USD 1.7-2.4 billion starting 2013.

Balance of payments are expected to show a surplus of USD 1.2 billion in 2011, of USD 2 billion in 2012, and of USD 2.9 in 2013. The foreign currency reserve at the end of 2013 is estimated to reach USD 8.3 billion.

Real Sector Development

The Mongolian economy relies on few sectors, which are low in processing and are dominated by primary production. In other words, Mongolia has poorly developed industrial sectors. More specifically, in 2010 mining and agricultural sectors comprised 38 percent of GDP of Mongolia. Ninety percent of exports are constituted by unprocessed and low-technology products –basically, raw materials. These products are characterised by the highest fluctuation of prices on the global market. Also, agricultural products that make up 15 percent of export (including animal products and meat), are highly susceptible to weather conditions and natural forces, rendering subsistence of herders and agricultural workers highly dependent on climatic conditions.

If broken down by sectors, animal husbandry is the main agricultural sub-sector. It suffered a loss of 10 million

heads of stock during the hard winter of 2009-2010, which reduced the output of this sector by 19 percent. The sub-sector is now recovering, with a total of 12 million heads of stock raised in 2011. This increased the sub-sector production by 14 percent during the first half of 2011.

The "Third Campaign to Reclaim Arable Lands" launched by the Mongolian Government in 2008 has resulted in a substantial increase of crop, potato, and vegetable production. The 343.1 thousand hectares of land harvested in 2011 is expected to produce 419 thousand tons of grain, 174 thousand tons of potatoes, and 90.5 thousand tons of vegetables.

During the first 8 months of 2011, mining sector production has grown by 8 percent in real terms. This growth is mainly due to a 28 percent increase in coal mining and a two-fold increase in iron ore extraction. In order to facilitate further rapid expansion of the mining sector, there is a need to increase capacities of the transportation, energy, water, and infrastructure sectors.

Specific to the mining sector, further issues demanding policy decisions include development of responsible mining, improvement of natural and environmental restoration, and regulation of artisanal (including wildcat or "ninja") mining activities.

Mongolia is working to launch large-scale industrial projects in the near future that will help diversify the structure of its economy, including programs aimed at wide-scope development of technology application and high-technology use. One of the immediate projects ready for launch is the opening of the industrial complex in Sainshand city. Our ambition is to develop this project into an industrial complex serving the needs of not only Mongolia but North-East Asia generally, including the supply of processed goods to industrial production markets in China, Korea, and Japan. This should

encourage mutually beneficial cooperation with these and other developed countries.

This project includes the creation of a coking coal factory, metallurgical plant, coal handling and preparation plant, copper processing plant, constructions materials factory, oil refinery, a reliable infrastructure and engineering system, and social programs to support the smooth operations of these plants. For instance, building the coking coal plant will be fine-tuned in time and operations with the opening of the Tavan Tolgoi- Sainshand railroad line, and that of oil refinery with the opening of the Tavan Tolgoi-Choibalsan railroad line. This will facilitate uninterrupted transport, export, and distribution of products and goods.

I am confident that the Government's project aimed at supporting the use of advanced and high technology by building the Industrial Complex in Sainshand will increase Mongolia's economic competitiveness, boost our production of value-added end-products through the effective combination of technical and technological solutions, and ultimately speed the economic and social development of Mongolia – becoming in the process an important source of supply for the development needs of the entire region.

Since it is clear that financing numerous large-scale projects cannot rely on a single funding source, given the high risks associated with such reliance, we are planning to mobilize multiple funding sources in a stage-by-stage manner.

The Mongolian government sees private-public partnership as a preferred model in the financing the large investment projects. The government is working to improve and create legal and business environment for attracting private domestic and regional investors, financing joint projects through the recently created Development Bank, and issuing government bonds.

One recent example is the collaboration contract signed by Mongolian Stock Exchange and the London Stock Exchange. This enhances the long-term strategic goal of Mongolia by facilitating the entry of the Mongolian Stock Exchange to the international financial markets.

Chapter 3
Mongolian Economic Background and Political Destiny

Batchimeg Migeddorj

Editor's introduction: *It is rare for a high ranking government official, including especially a National Security policy advisor to a sitting President, to offer candid remarks for publication that combine scholarly background, critical analysis, practical concerns, and poigant strategic analysis of changes desired in the existing political system. Migeddorj Batchimeg's contribution here is positively striking in just these regards. Considering Mongolia in the comparative context of what is effectively known about the economic correlates of the development and sustainability of democracy, she considers both the exceptional strides that Mongolian democracy has taken and the grave risks that it still faces. On the one hand is the striking florescence of democratic Mongolian governance sandwiched geopolitically between autocratic China and Russia - as well as smaller undemocratic regional neighbors.*

On the other is the potential curse as well as benefit of great mineral wealth within Mongolia, including the threats, which she frontally addresses, of great wealth disparity, continuing poverty among one-third of the population, and a political system that structurally privileges those running for office to promise short-term welfare payments to constituents rather than supporting longer term national growth of a diversified and sustainable economy. At issue is whether the benefits of economic growth will rise and be equitably distributed fast enough to ensure the sustained continuation of Mongolia's robust democracy.

At the conclusion of her contribution, Ms. Batchimeg makes a ringing endorsement at once for optimistic belief in the positive power of Mongolian democracy and also for the hard-edged critical understanding that promotes informed citizens to make their politicians and policy makers act responsibly.

On the world map of the Freedom House, Mongolia looks like a single green island amidst a broad sea. What were the underlying reasons that enabled Mongolians living in the heart of the Eurasian mainland surrounded by mostly non-democratic countries, to long for democracy and freedom and indeed succeed in building them?

Researchers have identified many factors that facilitate emergence, sustainability and further strengthening of democracy, or its regress and collapse. For instance, geographic proximity to mature democracies, political heritage and experience, levels of economic and social development, size of the middle class relative to the overall population are often highlighted as important contextual factors for establishing and strengthening democracy.

Researchers who studied underlying factors and conditions of Mongolian democracy have offered interesting observations; some of them have even assessed Mongolia as "the least likely place" for democracy to flourish.[1] Indeed, Mongolia is physically isolated from Western and Eastern democratic systems, lacks historical traditions of building a democracy, and back in the 1990s in the midst of a strong push for democratization, Mongolia was suffering from widespread poverty and unemployment, and the country's economy was struggling with the shocks of the collapsing socialist system. But in 1992, when the entire Mongolian society was actively engaged in building a democratic society, and the Parliament adopted the first democratic Constitution, inflation reached 325 percent. While acknowledging the existence of many important factors that act as necessary preconditions for democracy, this presentation will focus on economic factors and will attempt to offer a brief analysis of the Mongolian case.

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[1] Fish, M. S. *Mongolia: Democracy Without Prerequisites*. Journal of Democracy - Volume 9, Number 3, July 1998, pp. 127-141.

A pre-eminent social scientist Seymour M. Lipset, well known for his analysis of the conditions for democracy, developed a theory emphasizing a clear link between socio-economic factors and a country's political development. He claims that economic prosperity and expansion of a middle class play an important role in the process of establishing and maintaining democracy.[2] Younger generations of scholars have further developed his idea and, in the process, have come to differentiate between reasons for democracy to succeed and preconditions for democracy to sustain and strengthen. In this respect, some scholars argue that economic prosperity is not an obligatory rationale for democracy to be initiated but a necessary condition for its further strengthening and development. This observation is deeply relevant to the Mongolian situation and an important issue for all Mongolians.

Many scholars contend that economic growth can become a source of increased well-being of all, decreased inequality, diversification of social life, and increased public participation, thus creating conditions for stronger democracy. But does economic growth always brings such results? Mongolian economy has been continuously growing in the last few years, and GDP has increased 6-7 times compared to the mid-1990s reaching USD 3500 in per capita terms. More specifically, GDP per capita, which in 1996 was MNT 292.8 thousand, reached MNT 3050.6 thousand in 2010, increasing 9-fold in 14 years.[3] Nevertheless, one of every three Mongolians is poor. Poverty threatens Mongolia's young democracy as it fuels inequality, corruption and election fraud.

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[2] Lipset, Seymour M. 1959. Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy. *American Political Science Review.*

[3] National Statistical Office, Statistical Yearbook 2011, section on macro-economic indicators.

The most important question facing Mongolians today is whether or not we will be able to maintain and further develop democracy that we built at the times of all-encompassing difficulties of 1990s. Democracy is important for us not only because of its relative advantages over other political systems, and its inherent opportunities to strengthen human rights and individual freedoms, but also because it provides Mongolia, sandwiched as it is between two world powers, a better possibility to maintain its independence, thus acting as a foundation for our national security.

At these times of growing global concerns about increasingly scarce energy resources, and growing demand for metals and other natural resources, the Mongolian mining sector has come to play an increasingly important role in the country's economy, while the specter of faster economic growth is becoming a reality in Mongolia. The government of Mongolia has set the goal of increasing GDP per capita five-fold during the next ten years. Given abundant natural resources and taking into account growing global demand for minerals, this goal is very much feasible for Mongolia given its small population.

But concerns remain. The main question is whether or not all Mongolians would be able to access the benefits of economic growth, which will create conditions for developing civil society and public participation, and increasing governance capacities for further strengthening Mongolian democracy. Or will the benefits of fast economic growth based on vast natural resources be used by few politicians and oligarchs for keeping and reinforcing their powers for generations to come, which will inevitably lead to social discontent and instability, provide reasons for unjustified use of arms, and take us down the road of undemocratic development?

The current Mongolian situation does not yet allow even the most hardcore optimists to claim that we have

completely ruled out a possible turn into a more pessimistic perspective development path. The worst news for us is that there are many real-life cases and empirically proven research findings showing that sudden economic growth based on vast mineral riches can have a negative impact on democracy, and may even become a reason and condition for undemocratic developments. The current situation is very fragile, and there many reasons to believe that a "resource curse" is possible. In sum, just as a choice of democracy over other political systems has fascinated and puzzled many researchers, the question of whether Mongolian democracy will survive in these times of delicate equilibrium has spurred the interest and imagination of political scientists and others.

I would like to highlight some of the important concerns.

First of all, the persisting high level of poverty and increasing inequality among Mongolians is seen by social groups as a normal social phenomena. Revisiting successive elections, we can see that instead of proposing effective economic policies aimed at improving this situation, political parties often attempt to secure their access to power by manipulating the immediate needs of the poor electorate through cash promises and ineffective social welfare policies. Display of such behavior by political parties often has a counter-effect of public distrust and disillusionment.

Secondly, some processes taking place in Mongolian society further expand the above reasons for concern. Since our democratic revolution, almost all political elections in Mongolia followed the majoritarian electoral system (sometimes called "first past the post"). Some elected politicians have often chosen cash distribution and other populist actions in their constituency as a way to strengthen their popularity. Unfortunately, such actions, which are reinforced by our existing election system, have fuelled 'constituency-oriented politics', diverting politicians away from large-scale national

policies, wide-ranging poverty reduction goals, and national economic security and social development aims. For example, fuel crisis is just one of many significant issues for Mongolia's economic security. It is alarming that despite obvious risks faced by current Mongolian society, the Parliamentary majority – which is well-aware of these risks – has chosen once again the majoritarian electoral system, which further complicates the situation.

Przerworski et. al. have arrived at an interesting conclusion after studying a link between economic growth and political systems in 135 countries. By comparing multiple cases of democratic development – including democratic strengthening, the weakening of democracy, and its slippage into totalitarian regimes -- they observed that a country that reached per capita GDP of $6055 never reverted to a totalitarian regime. Researchers claim as well that totalitarian regimes in which this level of GDP was attained were not able to keep running sustainably.[4]

The period 2012-2016 will be one of great economic growth in Mongolia, and during this timeframe, Mongolian should reach its critical threshold of GDP USD $6055 per capita. According to international experience, the political situation in Mongolia during this critical time will determine the fate of Mongolian democracy.

Rapid expansion of welfare programs in Mongolia are another reason for concern. Government spending now constitutes half of national GDP. This year's national budget income was 3,304.6 trillion tugrug or 42 percent of GDP, of which budget spending was 4,084.1 trillion tugrug or

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[4] Przeworski, Adam and Fernando Limongi. 1997. Modernization: Theories and Facts. *World Politics*. 49 155-183.

52.1 percent of GDP.[5] The size of Mongolia's government is growing exponentially, as is its scale of welfare programs. These spark the potential image of the Mongolian economy as a rachitic child (a child with rickets and a deterioration of the spine). Though state participation in social development is indeed important, empirical research shows that government spending in excess of 30 percent of GDP limits economic growth, further suppressing employment rates and desire for self-sufficiency by increasing dependence on welfare. The long-standing market experience of Western economies has demonstrated the inability of welfare economies to persist sustainable for long periods of time. Therefore, we fear that the existence of a welfare economy in Mongolia may further limit development of the diversified free economy that we all ultimately desire.

In closing, I would like to note that of the many geopolitical, political, social, cultural and economic factors important for Mongolia's political development, I have here been able to consider only a few of the domestic economic factors that I believe are critical for our political future.

The future of Mongolia's democracy in future years is closely linked to factors of economic process and development. Mongolia's future will be directly impacted by the economic policies that Mongolian political parties, politicians, and the Mongolian government chose to implement. If political economic policies continue to support the intention of securing power by means of expanding welfare programs, relying on mining sector income at the expense of neglecting other economic sectors, and serving the interests of wealthy, the future of Mongolian democracy that we believe to be the

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[5] Accessed at the website of the Ministry of Finance http://www.iltod.gov.mn/?p=805.

foundation of our national interests and national independence will suffer in the long run.

I have never doubted the sense of independence and national interest among Mongolians, both individually and collectively. This encourages me to believe in the better and more positive future of Mongolia. I firmly believe that we will overcome our risks and obstacles. But at the same time, my optimism does not prevent me from critically assessing the current situation. Optimism cannot serve as a reason for overlooking critical issues. Critical thinking makes us more concerned citizens who can more effectively claim responsibility from our policymakers.

Chapter 4
Mongolia's Post-Socialist Transition: A Great Neoliberal Transformation

Lhamsuren Munkh-Erdene

Editor's introduction: *A leading published Mongolian intellectual who was a post-doctoral fellow in Anthropology at Stanford University, Dr. Munkh-Erdene here takes a strongly critical view of recent Mongolian sociopolitical and economic development. Drawing on social and critical theories of capitalism and neoliberalism, he suggests that Mongolia has, in effect, replaced its former dependency on external Soviet Communism with a current dependency on Western free market neoliberalism. Amid the celebratory Western praise of Mongolia's open markets, economic growth, and democratic politics, Dr. Munkh-Erdene sounds a cautionary note, reminding us that in the process the preceding socialist economic support system for the Mongolian populace, along with its significant development of heavy industry, has been eviscerated if not demolished. So, too, he questions the asserted independence and autonomy of the Mongolian nation, now enmeshed as it is with foreign capital and market forces and institutions to which it is beholden and from which it is at pains to extract itself. At the conference itself, it is notable that Dr. Munkh-Erdene's views were actively considered and substantively and sometime appreciatively engaged, including by government officials and civic leaders.*

Karl Polanyi, who believed that "the economy is not autonomous, as it must be in economic theory, but subordinated to politics, religion, and social relations" argued that "the control of the economic system by the market is of overwhelming consequence to the whole organization of society: it means no less than the running of society as an

adjunct to the market" (2001: 60). Furthermore, Polanyi maintained that "fully self-regulating market economy is a utopian project; it is something that cannot exist" (Block 2001: xxv).

During the 1980s, and particularly with the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, however, a doctrine of market liberalism variously known as Thatcherism, Reaganism, neoliberalism, and "the Washington Consensus" came to dominate global politics. This doctrine not only forcefully advocated "that both national societies and the global economy can and should be organized through self-regulating markets" but also produced policy prescriptions known as structural adjustment (Block 2001: xviii). Institutions of global governance such as International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank implemented the structural adjustment program in many developing countries.

The Washington Consensus emerged as a reaction to post-Great Depression economic doctrine that maintained, "the only way ahead was to construct the right blend of state, market, and democratic institutions to guarantee peace, inclusion, well-being, and stability" and upheld that "the state should focus on full employment, economic growth, and the welfare of its citizens and that state power should be freely deployed, alongside of or, if necessary, intervening in or even substituting for market processes to achieve these ends" (Harvey 2005: 10). This system came to be referred to as "embedded liberalism" in order to "signal how market processes and entrepreneurial and corporate activities were surrounded by a web of social and political constraints and a regulatory environment that sometimes restrained but in other instances led the way in economic and industrial strategy" (Harvey 2005: 11).

The Washington Consensus in particular and the neoliberal agenda in general sought to dismantle this system

and liberate capital, and its entrepreneurial or corporate activities, from this "web of social and political constraints and a regulatory environment" which embedded the economy within the society. Thus, the Washington Consensus was to take economy out of the realm of the political, and, by implication, the realm of the social, and transfer it to the realm of the market, that is, to the realm of capital and, by implication, to capitalists.

The People's Republic of Mongolia was a Communist country. As such, it was on the extreme left of the socio-economic spectrum while free market capitalism would be placed on the opposite extreme and "embedded liberalism" was somewhere in the middle (see Harvey 2005 concerning embedded liberalism). As the Soviet system crumbled, Mongolia, following her Eastern European cousins, not only embraced Western liberal democracy but also embarked on building a free market economy. Thus, Mongolia's transition was a shift from the extreme left of this politicoeconomic continuum to the extreme right.

Though the Mongolian President optimistically vowed to make the country one of the Asian Tigers in a short period, Mongolia did not follow the developmental path and model of the Asian Tigers (Wade 1990). Instead, under the supervision of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, Mongolia's neophyte free marketers zealously launched a shock therapy (or structural adjustment) program in 1991 to establish a free market economy. The succeeding MPRP government, which came to power in 1992, somewhat slowed the pace of shock therapy. Yet, the free marketers, who returned to power in 1996, accelerated structural adjustment and launched a new privatization program (see Rossabi 2005). By this time, privatization had acquired its own internal "political dynamics" as the political parties each raced to build secure economic bases. Thus, the

succeeding MPRP government swiftly pushed privatization further to introduce private ownership of land. By 2004, with the market system's domination of the economy and the almost complete privatization of Mongolia's most valued companies, Mongolia had become, in less than two decades, a country that ran society as an adjunct to the market.

Control of the greater part of the Mongolian economy has been transferred from the realm of public/political to the realm of the private/market. Furthermore, privatization and deregulation together with corruption and mismanagement have amassed national wealth in the hands of a tiny minority, entailing dispossession, dislocation and displacement of the vast portion of the population. In addition, the virtual demolition of the socialist welfare state led to large-scale disentitlement. Structural adjustment thus not only created a market-dominated economy but also entailed a massive impoverishment of the population and the polarization of the society (see Rossabi 2005).

Moreover, shock therapy had a "Morgenthau Plan" effect on Mongolia's industry. As one observer noted, "the de-facto Morgenthau Plan proved exceedingly successful in de-industrialising Mongolia," just as had been the plan's intention in Germany (Reinert 2004: 158). "In Mongolia, fifty years of building industry was virtually annihilated over a period of just four years, from 1991 to 1995, not to recover again" (Reinert 2004: 158, see also Rossabi 2005). Yet, the structural adjustment program has been remarkably successful in making Mongolia a field for natural resource extraction.

Furthermore, while the policies and recommendations of the institutions of global governance such as the IMF have left the government little or no policy options, the extensive retreat of the state and the establishment of non-state institutions such as non-governmental organizations and international developmental agencies not only further depleted the state's

capacity but also entailed a substantial transfer of governmental purview to these institutions (see Rossabi 2005). Consequently, not only has a portion of the government's purview been transferred to non-elective, supposedly grassroots, yet often transnational institutions but state sovereignty seems to have been seriously challenged. The state seems to have become just one, yet the only elected, institution of governance. As a result, a regime of "transnational governmentality" appears to have been effectively established in Mongolia (see Ferguson and Gupta 2002 concerning transnational governmentality). In addition, the rolling back of the state changed the scope and nature of the Mongolian state. The Mongolian state really did retreat as a welfare state, yet at the same time it advanced as a "night watchman" state (Nozick 1999).

Mongolia's shock therapy not only transformed the society into "an adjunct to the market" but also boosted the country as a resource adjunct to the global market. Meanwhile, as the Communist regime reincarnated as a neoliberal night watchman state, Communist *nomenklatura* (key administrators) have successfully reinvented themselves as an oligarchic plutocracy. Yet, Mongolia's socialist industrialization had to be abandoned as well as Mongolia's socialist welfare system. At the same time, as the nation's independence and freedom have become mired in the global regime of transnational neoliberal governmentality. Mongolia, in effect, has replaced one form of dependency – Communist -- with another -- Capitalist.

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Chapter 5
Encountering the Franchise State: *Dzud*, *Otor*, and Transformations in Pastoral Risk

Daniel J. Murphy

Editor's introduction: *Harsh winters in Mongolia have a periodically devastating impact by killing livestock of herders. This has been a key and continuing feature of Mongolian society, but as Dr. Daniel Murphy shows in this strongly researched contribution, the contexts and outcomes of this environmental and livelihood stress are changing in contemporary Mongolia.*

Though a large portion of the Mongolian population continues their pastoral livelihood in expansive rural areas, the flexibility for herders to migrate under harsh winter conditions to save a larger percentage of their livestock has become much more selective. Relatively richer, larger, and more politically well-connected herder camps are now much more successful in relocating to save their livestock under locally harsh winter conditions that are poorer and smaller herder family groups. To a significant extent, as Dr. Murphy shows, this is due to the post-socialist political reorganization of rural administration, which makes it more difficult for disadvantaged herders in particular to obtain permission to migrate temporarily to less stressed areas under conditions of climatic crisis.

Below a certain threshold of livestock, such groups cannot viably continue their herding lifestyle, and are thus forced to sell their remaining livestock, hire themselves out as paid workers to larger herding groups or, often ultimately, move as impoverished squatters to urban centers, especially the capital of Ulaanbaatar, which now has large and increasing numbers of dislocated herders in slums on its expanding periphery. As a result, the spiraling cycle in Mongolia of selective rural impoverishment, lifestyle disruption, and residential dislocation and dependence is related in significant part to issues and problems of rural political administration that are often overlooked and not effectively addressed.

Introduction

Since 1991, rural administration in Mongolia has undergone dramatic change. Much of this change initially was the result of a dramatic drop in state revenue and an overhaul of fiscal policy as well as a major shift in state priorities regarding national economic development (Fernandez-Gimenez and Batbuyan 2004). Guiding rural administrative policy since this time have been two over-arching rhetorics of decentralization and local capacity building. This has occurred in the following primary ways: 1) administrative responsibility for local resource management has fallen to *soum* and *bag* governors and their respective councils and 2) community-based resource management institutions are promoted as a means to fill the void left by the collapse of collectives and supplement the institutional roles of local state actors. These strategies amount to "franchising" the state or, in other words, devolving state authority to non-state actors or empowering state actors with wide leverage in decision-making so that their "word" is imbued with the power of the state.

These policies are particularly neoliberal in that they are rooted in the increasing marginality of the pastoral sector within policy-makers visions of a future Mongolian economy. Though herders make-up a significant size of the Mongolian population, their importance in policy discussions and as a political constituency has largely been side-lined by more economically lucrative industries such as mining. These visions are further supported by the cultural marginality of herders in an increasingly urbanizing and "modern"' Mongolia. Moreover, the "efficiency" of the franchise state is lauded as a means to reduce the size of the central government and develop the fundamental basis of a market-society. In this contribution, I chart out the effects of such policy shifts on rural resource management, mobility, and the distribution of

risk among herding households. Additionally, I argue that the recent *dzud* disasters have largely been a result of not nature but of neoliberal transformations in state-society relations.

Background: Research Site and Methods

The data discussed in this paper were collected from December 2007 to November 2008 in Uguumur county in Mongolia. Uguumur, nowadays officially referred to as the 3rd district or Tsantiin Ovoo, is located in Bayanxutag *soum* in southern Xentii Aimag on the eastern steppes of Mongolia. Uguumur has a total population of 609 registered citizens divided into 166 registered households. Many of the citizens and households registered in Uguumur do not currently reside there nor do they actively herd. Only 139 households actively herd livestock and most that do live on the products of their herds. This research was collected from 68 of those households through interviews and observation. In addition, I spent 12 months living with herding families on the steppe actively participating as much as possible in their everyday tasks and activities.

Mobility and Risk

The connections between rural social transformation and *dzud*-based livestock loss are found in the way households manage both their herds and risk. Herding households in Uguumur face a variety of risks including predation from wolves, dogs, and birds-of-prey, disease, theft, and larger scale events like flooding, drought, spring dust and windstorms, and *dzud*. Though many of these pose a risk of herd loss, some do not, and some risks, like drought, are significantly more *covariate* or widespread in nature while predation is more *idiosyncratic* or limited in its damage beyond a single household. Events like dust storms are seasonal but frequent, whereas flash flooding

events are rare and temporally sporadic. Some events like *dzud* pose a risk of catastrophic loss and others, like theft, minimal loss.

Drought and *dzud* pose the greatest risk to herders and their livelihoods. Drought, though it does not pose an immediate risk of loss, threatens the future survivability of stock in winter, lowers body weight and fat reserves which affects fertility and sale returns, and can encourage overall weakness in animal health potentially fostering disease outbreaks. The conditions that produce *dzud*, however, pose an immediate, direct, and catastrophic threat of livestock loss to herding families.

Dzud is a complex social and ecological phenomenon. In western descriptions of the term, *dzud* refers to a meteorological event typified by extreme winter precipitation (e.g. snowfall) and below average winter temperatures. In essence, the combination of snow and/or ice along with excessively freezing conditions covers available forage thereby inducing massive livestock losses. These events have also been described as either stemming from summer droughts or being exacerbated by them. Recent work, however, has shown that there is no significant correlation between *dzud* and drought (Sternberg et al 2009). Yet, I would argue these descriptions and analyses misunderstand the definition of the term because according to Mongolian logics, the term *dzud* refers specifically to the massive death of livestock not to any one or any specific combination of environmental conditions. This is evident in the descriptors that are applied to the variety of conditions in which *dzud* occurs such as iron *dzud* (ice), black *dzud* (drought followed by no snow), white *dzud* (blizzards), cold *dzud* (extremely low temperature) or hoof *dzud* (trampling of pastures). Because *dzud* cannot be correlated with any specific condition, the term becomes complex for western epistemologies to grasp. Nevertheless, the ecological sources of these events cannot be denied.

There a number of strategies households can employ in these contexts. In the case of *dzud*, households provide additional fodder reserves, prepared feeds such as *xiiveg* or *barashig*, cover livestock with *nemxii* amongst other strategies. Some households try to prevent exposure to extreme cold by building complex *saravch*, adding *buuts* to the *xot*, and erecting *xalxavch* to guard stock from the wind. Yet, the primary risk management strategy in these conditions is herd and household mobility.

In normative analyses of household herd movement among Mongolia pastoralists, households are shown to move four times annually according to the season. Households move from one customary seasonal campsite to the next; for example, a household will move from their *zuslan* to their *namarjaa* in late August or early September. Though most households in Uguumur try to move in this pattern, many do not, moving either more or less depending on a variety of factors. When households leave this annual migration cycle, they conduct a movement strategy called *otor*. In my research, it was difficult to come across a commonly held definition of *otor*. Some households claimed that *otor* was only conducted in fall, while others stated that a household could do *otor* any time of the year. Some argue it is for fattening and others argue it is for escaping drought and *dzud*. In the scholarly literature some argue that *otor* is conducted in specially held "reserve pastures" while others point out that *otor* is practiced beyond soum, aimag, and in rare circumstances, national boundaries. For our purposes, I define *otor* as simply any move outside the four season campsite rotation cycle.

Many households conduct regular *otor* over the course of the year, typically in late spring and early summer for recovery and fall for fattening. But this is not the only kind of *otor* strategy. In my work I found a variety of *otor* strategies, all largely the result of an improvisational resource use strategy.

There were significant differences between short *otor* under 20 km and long *otor* over that distance. Short *otor* is typically used for recovery and fattening whereas long *otor* is used for drought and *dzud* avoidance. Some households also continually move over the landscape particularly during drought and when they exhibit little capacity to make claims on campsites. Others make long term investments in long distance *otor* camps, some times staying for a year or more. Some households move en masse in large groupings up to 20 households and others move alone, wary of being noticed by locals or administrators. Households with sufficient labor, either from members or from hired employees, also split their herds and place their *taviul mal* with households in other soums or even aimags. Some households, particularly the poorest, cannot move at all and this exposes them to the greatest amount of risk of total herd loss.

A number of factors impact the mobility strategies that households employ. Clearly, livestock have different seasonal needs; for example, the importance of xujir (salt and soda deposits) in the fall is paramount for effective fattening and breeding. Landscape formations, forage species diversity and mix, and other environmental factors strongly impact where and when households move. Economic resources like labor and cash for truck rental, additional hay, buuts for bedding, and fuel such as xurzun or coal also impact the distances households move. Often neglected, however, are the various political, cultural, and spiritual factors that impact migration decision making. In order to settle on new campsites household have to be able to make claims to those resources and establish some source of right to use them. Though rural soum administrators are required to establish *otor* contracts in the event of a *dzud*, households must still be able to enter into peaceful negotiations with local households. This requires not only a capacity to deal politically with local agencies and

households, but also a deep cultural understanding of how such things are or should be arranged and the ability to then do so. This is a dramatic contrast to the coordination of *otor* in the socialist period. Clearly, the means by which households secure access to campsites and other resources necessary for *otor* movements has been greatly impacted by the collapse of the rural collectives.

Institutions and Rural Transformation in Mongolia and Uguumur

Since 1991 the Mongolian state has embarked on a massive shift in rural governance; however, the realization of these regime strategies have only slowly emerged. For the greater part of the last 20 years, there has been an utter lack of involvement from the central state in resource management. In particular, the largely open access resource regime resulting from administrative decentralization and fiscal centralization created a space for informal institution building. Research data gathered in Uguumur county during 2007 and 2008 demonstrate that institutional transformations have been quite dramatic. In contrast to images of the moral economy of the steppe in which reciprocal access to campsites was governed by an ethic of mutual aid, I found major shifts in rural property practices. In addition to shifts in governance, these shifts I found were also driven by massive gains in livestock wealth and product prices which have fostered increasingly competitive resource practices over the last decade.

In this context, I found that local collectivities of kin-related households have emerged as the primary backbone upon which institutional change has been built. In short, the age and gendered hierarchies within kin groups, referred to as ax-duu or senior-junior relations, have become central principles of resource management and control in Uguumur. In

these kin collectivities, senior males or ax act as central figures of authority, organizing and at times delegating resource use practices, particularly in the context of environmental stress. These groups have also developed a variety of territorial defensive practices. Kin groups use territorial saturation and xuux or expulsion as primary tactics. Kin saturate a landscape through strategic spacing between households and herds delimiting the available pasturage to non-kin households. Expulsion practices include verbal threats but also livestock theft and physical violence.

Coupled with these new territorial practices I found that households were also engaging in new modes of exchange. Households reported selling, buying, renting, bribing, gifting, and otherwise transacting for access to campsites, wells, and even hay pastures within the customary territories of other households and kin groups, even local ones. Though in cases of gifting these practices mirror customary ethics; sales, rents, and other forms of transaction mark a significant departure from previous tenure regimes. In sum, these new informal practices impose additional costs to other households in making migration decisions and produce a highly fragmented pastoral landscape marked by social exclusion and hostile territoriality.

In addition, this shift in informal land relations has also been paralleled by recent developments in formal, administrative ones. Though passed in successive legislation in 1994,1998, and 2002, in 2006 the Uguumur ITX began issuing campsite possession leases. Concurrent with this major policy shift was the implementation of a new community-based resource management program instituted by IFAD that served as a vehicle for possession leasing. The new herder cooperatives created through this initiative, in practice, simply reflected the kin-based territorial groups and formalized their ties to land through contractual leasing thereby furthering the territorial

exclusions that had already begun to mark the landscape. Moreover, though rarely practiced since decollectivization, the provincial and county governments issued cross-boundary winter migration contracts following the drought of 2007. These contracts in effect permit households to make large-scale migrations in times of crisis without fear or threat from local administrations and households. Access to these contracts is mediated, however, by a shadowy politics of strategic gifting and corruption.

Though these practices and institutions seem like dramatic ruptures in rural Mongolian society, in effect, their presence was only visible in a moment of crisis like the *dzud* that some households faced in January of 2008. During "normal" times many of these issues are moot, because boundaries are only apparent when they are crossed. For instance, during good years, transacting for campsite access is relatively unimportant because it is simply not necessary. Moreover, expulsion and territorial saturation are less critical during times of plenty. And though the exclusions cemented by the leasing programs are apparent during these times, the exclusions that result from winter migration contracts are only apparent in dire circumstances. The impact of this temporally restricted fragmentation on household vulnerability and herd loss is seen clearly in these moments.

Dzud of 2008

The primary distinction in household herd loss from the winter of 2007-2008 is household location during the crucial months of January and February. Households that were able to move to unaffected soums in the central and northern regions of Khentii aimag experienced few to no losses. In effect, they escaped *dzud*. In contrast, households that remained behind, particularly those that could not leave Uguumur in the western

side of the soum, herd losses were dramatic. In one case, a single household lost nearly thirty percent of their total adult herd to starvation. These dramatic distinctions are critical in thinking not about how *dzud* impacts rural households but also for thinking about resource and risk management in the current political climate.

Table 1. Herd loss rate based on household location. Bayanxutag is the home soum.

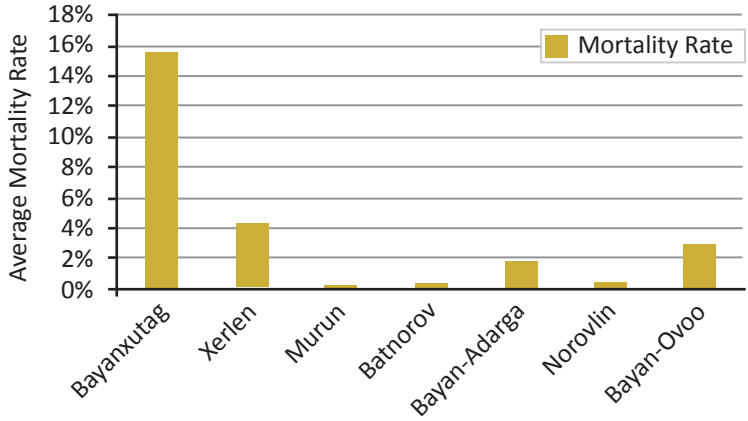
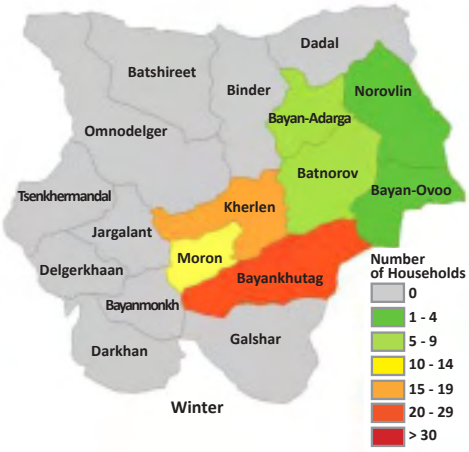
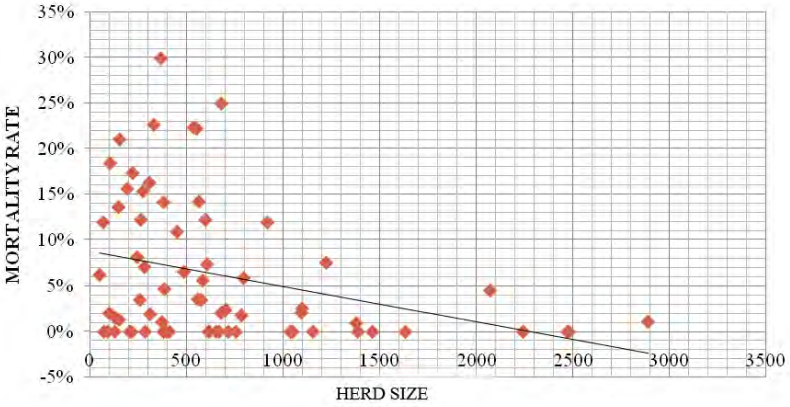


Table 2. Location of households during dzud of 2007-2008. Contracts were established for Bayan-Adarga, Norovlin, Bayan-Ovoo, and Kherlen soum on behalf of various wealthy herders. Batnorov and Murun soums refused contracts.



In contrast, households that stayed behind were largely poor or limited in their social networks. In particular, households with limited kin connections found themselves even more exposed to herd loss since they could not access the economic, political, or cultural resources to make *otor* a possibility. Only poor households who were able to either become clients or hired herders for the wealthy were able to escape massive herd losses; however, becoming a client household or hired herder surrenders a great deal of independence and foregoes the likelihood of growing one's herd to the point of being capable of independence. Clearly, then households lose herds for a number of reasons, many of which are largely out of their control.

Table 2. Location of households during dzud of 2007-2008. Contracts were established for Bayan-Adarga, Norovlin, Bayan-Ovoo, and Kherlen soum on behalf of various wealthy herders. Batnorov and Murun soums refused contracts.



Conclusion: State at Risk

The massive *dzud* losses in 2010 have been blamed on a number of factors including herder malfeasance through environmental degradation. Surely, overgrazing stemming

from excessive goat herds played a partial role, but similar rhetorics were issued following the 1999, 2001, and 2002 *dzuds* even though total livestock herds before the events were significantly lower than they were prior to the *dzud* of 2010. What my research here demonstrates and demonstrate elsewhere, are that the herd losses during these *dzud* were not the result of herder impropriety, laziness, or ineptitude but rather the utter lack of administrative focus on rural resource management and disaster prevention stemming from the increasing cultural and economic marginalization of herders from national development goals and priorities. Similarly, the unequal distribution of such losses stem from the ways in which the "franchising" of the state has fragmented pastoral landscapes and excluded the poor. Only by rethinking the role of the state in rural pastoral regions and de-fragmenting an exclusionary landscape marked by corruption, bribery, and patronage can we effectively address the problem of *dzud*.

Endnotes

My use of the name "Uguumur" is somewhat arbitrary. The area is typically referred to as 'gurav dugaar district' or third district in local speech and on official documents as Tsantiin Ovoo. But "third district" is too cumbersome and many would not recognize the name Tsantiin Ovoo. In the past, however, much of the area was referred to as Uguumur owing its namesake to a large mountain in the middle of the district. Each area of the district has its own place name and many of these overlap into other districts and soums. Taking the middle path, as my Buddhist friends would advise, I have chosen Uguumur.

Acknowledgements

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Chapter 6
Exercising the Right to Run for Office in Mongolia

Oyungerel Tsedevdamba

Editor's introduction: *This contribution has a distinctive style of presentation that involves bullet points, quotations, and personal examples drawn from family history rather than standard prose. The author is an accomplished and even best-selling writer in Mongolia, as well as a highly placed and highly regarded political advisor at the Presidential level. The contribution below, which communicates by multi-stranded evocation, tell a powerful and compelling story about elections and running for political office in Mongolia – from the Socialist period under Soviet control to the present. Beyond a "good news" story from "autocracy" of Communist Party control to "democracy," the story is laced with palpable and important nuance and even irony. To be "elected" was something very different in Mongolia during the 1990s from what we might associate with that term today. And to be "elected" in Mongolia today is not always the ideal scenario of democracy that one might like to envisage. In all, Oyungerel challenges both our sensibilities and our expectations – to be careful and mindful of our easy characterizations, and to respect the specificity, the distinctiveness – and the humor – of Mongolian political process and aspirations.*

Mongolian elections in the 1960s : Communist Socialism

- Single candidate for each office on ballot;
- Preferably a person who will vote for anything the party instructs;
- Candidates needn't to be outspoken or even knowledgeable of policy making;
- Candidates need to be leaders in labor and from a "workers" family background;
- No expense accrue to the candidate, all election spending was on the party's, (perhaps on the state's) cost;
- There were meetings with the voters during the election, but the candidate needn't answer questions, his spokesperson assigned by the party would speak for him/her;
- No competition, guaranteed victory with over 99% vote.

Example

Tsedevdamba Luvsan's 1960 election campaign leaflet

"Tsedevdamba Luvsan was born in a *family of a herder* in 1932, in *Tarialan soum* of Khuvsgul province. He joined the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party in 1957. Following his graduation from a tractor operators' course in 1956, he's been working as a tractor operator in the state enterprise in Tarialan.

Tsedevdamba received 'DT-54' tractor in July 1956, and he managed to artfully maintain and use the equipment *for which he was accountable*, and utilized it with love and

care, and he considered his work as a duty to his country and people therefore working honestly and loyally, and fulfilled his annual norms for 155-157.7% each year, and has been saving 415 to 12,400 tugriks annually from fuel saving and good maintenance of the tractor…"

"…Comrade Voters! Let's vote Tsedevdamba Luvsan, the candidate selected by the *Coalition of the Party and Non-party members!*"

Note: No debate over proposed laws in the Peoples' Presidium – all merely followed the Party's instructions on how to vote.

Mongolian Elections in 1990- 2008

- Multiple candidates on the ballots;
- Candidates have to be distinctive and outspoken or have many friends/relatives/supporters. Odd stars thrive;
- Candidates need to know about policymaking;
- Candidates must have money or raise money to finance their campaigns; Fundraising process has been non-transparent throughout these years;
- Most expenses for new candidates lay on their own personal cost, some election spending was on the party's, perhaps on the state's cost;
- The political parties demand up-front money from candidates to permit them to run for office as their party member.
- There are much more frequent and active meetings with the voters during the election campaign where the candidate is expected to speak for himself/herself and for the political party;

- Conflicts of interests and nepotism thrive for small and remote constituencies;
- No guaranteed victory for any candidate.

Example

Result of 2008 election at Tolbo soum of Bayan-Ulgii province shows the deepness of conflicts of interests and nepotism. Tolbo soum is located in 76 kilometers from Ulgii, the center of farthest province.

The soum has 20 elected representatives out of which 11 were selected by the soum representatives as their presidium. The presidium convenes more often that the representatives who, in turn, convenes once a year only during their four years term. The following 11 members of the Tolbo soum representatives that constitute a majority of the elected office of 20, and six *presidium members* that constitute the majority of the Presidium, are related to each other in the following manner:

1. Khabyl Shariv, soum party chairman of Mongolian People's Party or MPP (former MPRP);
2. Adilbek Shariv, MPP, Khabyl's younger brother;
3. Huyat Shariv, MPP, Khabyl's younger brother;
4. Shariv Sabit, MPP, Khabyl's father-in-law;
5. Klaskhan S, MPP, Khabyl's cousin;
6. Leikhan Bugubai, Democratic Party or DP, brother of B.Sadet, one of local DP leader;
7. Jaidarman Bektemir, DP, cousin of B.Sadet;
8. Egunbain Talant, DP, uncle of B.Sadet;
9. Khulunbain Marat, DP, uncle of B.Sadet;

10. Marat Saminkhan, MPP, current chair of the Soum Representative's Khural;
11. Unerkhan Semikhan, MPP, brother of Marat Saminkhan

Huyat's (#3) wife Khamkesh is the secretary of the Khural of the Soum representative, who's also a daughter-in-law of Khabyl (#1). This kind of nepotism in the soum level is the result of a small election constituency and the absence of regulations setting out the rights and requirements for running for office in an ethical manner.

Elections in 2012: The Democratic Present

- Unclear legal environment up to now;
- Harder for new candidates, independents and smaller parties;
- Harder on women and disadvantaged groups – they can't afford the steep party charges;
- Very expensive in the environment of paid media, politician-owned media;
- More awareness of various forms of election fraud.

Part Two

Challenges of Contemporary Religion

Chapter 7
Surviving Modernity in Mongolia

Vesna Wallace

Editor's introduction: *This succinct presentation by one of the world's great scholars of Mongolian Buddhism summarizes the challenges that Buddhism has faced and continues to face in Mongolia. Amid historical reconsideration and revisionism – and continuing propaganda – it is important to acknowledge and understand, as Dr. Wallace conveys, the enormity of repression faced by Buddhism, as Mongolia's longstanding religion and cultural tradition, during seven decades of Soviet socialist control. This included the summary execution of many thousands of monks and lamas, the closing and also the physical destruction of all but a tiny handful of the country's 3,000 temples, and virulent public vilification of Buddhist religious practices.*

Now awash in a boom of free market economic development, Mongolia faces, as Dr. Wallace describes it, two complementary forms of modern influence: one historically communist, with a significant continuing influence in the present, and the other capitalist. In the mix, Mongolian Buddhism struggles to assert and reinvent itself amid official ambivalence (and heavy taxation) and zealous Christian prosyletization that continues to borrow from anti-Buddhist communist propaganda. Despite these challenges, echoing a statement by Buddha himself that is referred to by Dr. Wallace in her conclusion, the Buddhist legacy continues to vibrantly reassert itself, and to redefine itself with resilience, in contemporary Mongolia.

When we think of modernity in traditional Buddhist regions, we are reminded that these regions have known different kinds of modernity. The traditionally Tibetan Buddhist regions in Mongolia and Russian Inner Asia encountered a modernity brought by the winds of a communist revolution in the early 20th century which secularized the Buddhist world-view and promoted the ascendancy of scientific materialism.

This communist modernity was far more detrimental to the Buddhist tradition than the kind of modernity in which the Tibetan Buddhist tradition finds itself today in different parts of the world. The modernity of the communist revolution, which forcibly imposed secular culture, values, and a way of life upon Mongolian society by means of systematic prohibition of religious freedom, anti-Buddhist propaganda, and the destruction of traditional Buddhist institutions and education, resulted in the tradition's demise, the effects of which continue to this very day. Thus, contemporary Buddhist tradition in Mongolia finds itself caught in a collision of the effects of communist modernity with a contemporary modernity that is dominantly characterized by materialism, individualism, and capitalism. The impact of two types of modernity, which began with the democratization of Mongolia in the late 1980s, has generated a crisis of modernity that is arguably unique among the post-communist societies.

In this short paper I will limit my comments to a few of the areas affected by the impact of these two kinds of modernity. I will briefly mention the ways that they have influenced Buddhism in Mongolia and some measures taken by Mongolian Buddhists to counteract their undesirable effects.

Prior to the communist revolution, there were about 850 Buddhist monasteries in Mongolia with 3,000 temples, comprised of approximately 6,000 buildings and accommodating nearly 100,000 monks. Buddhist monks made up about one-tenth of the Mongolian population within the first

two decades of the 20th century. Traditional Buddhist beliefs and practices permeated every aspect of Mongolian life, and ties with Buddhism in Tibet were intimate. With the formation of the Mongolian Peoples' Revolutionary Government (MPR), which took place in July of 1921, all this changed within two decades.

The MPR government's effort to diminish the influence of Buddhism began with the weakening of monasteries economically, which at that time had considerable wealth in terms of livestock. It imposed heavy taxes on monasteries, and this taxation has remained in effect even during the period of democratization. Contrary to the persistent misperception of Buddhist monasteries as repositories of wealth, until very recently, the reestablished and severely under-funded Buddhist monasteries continued to pay twelve different kinds of taxes to the government. In contrast, foreign, well-funded missionary organizations representing other faiths, which are often seen in the public eye as religions of the modern and successful, have been exempted from most of the taxes to which Buddhist monasteries have been subjected.

Communist modernity, steered by the Mongolian Peoples' Revolutionary Government Party (MPRP), heightened anti-religious propaganda, disparaged Buddhist beliefs as "unrealistic, cruel, deceptive, and without future," while promulgating their revolutionary ideology as "realistic, true, close to life, and always supportive of workers' rights."[1] The MPRP pursued anti-Buddhist propaganda through film, radio, and printed materials, which accused Buddhist monasteries of

[1] S. Purejav and D. Damshjamts, *BNMA-d Sum Hiyd Lam Naryn Asuudlyg Shiydverlesen Ny*. Ulaanbaatar: Ulsyn Khevleliyn Khereg Erkhelekh Khoroo, 1965, p.179.

damaging the national productive force. By 1934, the MPRP had produced twelve feature films that portrayed Buddhist ideas and practices as corrupt and shameless, while promoting the people's revolution as kind and beneficial, striving to protect the common man from exploitation by high-ranking lamas. By 1937, there were twelve traveling cinemas in Mongolia, and more than a half million people in the countryside saw the party's politically indoctrinating films. In 1936, the MPR government printed 3,000 copies of its first anti-Buddhist magazine and disseminated it among the lower-ranking lamas.

After Stalin solidified power in the Soviet Union, the economic reforms imposed on monasteries by the MPRP were replaced by the methodical secularization of Buddhist institutions, the destruction of Buddhist buildings, and the persecution of lamas. By 1938, 6,000 monks were imprisoned, and tens of thousands were forcibly secularized, exiled, and executed. Over 10,000 lower-ranking monks were forced into labor in animal husbandry, factories, road and bridge repairs, construction works, carpentry, and transportation, while others were placed into 120 craft-cooperatives. By 1940, Buddhism as an institutional religion entirely disappeared in Mongolia – until a temple at the Gandan monastery reopened in 1945 on the decree of Stalin himself, especially as a showpiece for visitors. A small number of surviving elders who continued to perform services there held the tradition's torch alive. In consequence, in 1969, the monastery became home to the Buddhist Institute, where elderly lamas taught. Those who became ordained at that time were allowed to wear monastic robes only inside the monastery.

In the earliest phase of the revolutionary period, one of the greatest obstacles the MPR government faced in advancing its revolutionary culture was the lack of support from Mongolia's youth. The overwhelming majority of Mongolian young men continued their traditional Buddhist education, whereas only

a few thousand of them attended the newly established public schools.[2] For this reason, the MPR government devised various strategies to attract and force Mongolia's youth and lower-ranking lamas into revolutionary activities. The revolutionary party's endeavor to attract Mongolian youth has not ceased to this day, even though its methods have changed to some degree. In an effort to make itself appealing to youth, it often presents itself as modern, smart, fashionable, and as no longer inimical to Buddhism.

While it is true that the revolutionary party no longer persecutes Buddhism, and, in the fall of 2000, publicly apologized to the Mongolian people for its previous persecution of religion, the weight of history has made many Buddhists mistrust the sincerity of this apology. Some Buddhists see it as a merely symbolic gesture motivated by a self-serving political agenda. Some revolutionary party's members have professed their faith in Buddhism, for they no longer see it as antithetical to their political views. But there are also those who have displayed their sympathy for Buddhism only at the election time in order to attract a larger constituency.

Experiencing the detrimental effects of communist revolution and of World War Two, in 1969 Venerable Gombojav, then the abbot of Gandan monastery, and Venerable Gomboev, the Head Lama of Buddhism in the Soviet Union, plus Bakula Rinpoche, and others, initiated the founding of an international NGO, called the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace, which remained to this day, headed by the Venerable Choijamts as its president and by Venerable Bulgan as its secretary. This first Buddhist NGO in Inner Asia facilitated a mutual cooperation among the Buddhists communities who

[2] The Archive of Public Security Organizations, Fund of Religion, issued in 1936.

had struggled under the Soviet regime, bringing them into dialogue with Buddhists from other Asian countries at the time when it was very difficult for Mongolians and Russians to travel abroad.

The MPRP's anti-religious campaigns, which succeeded in damaging traditional Buddhist education and destroying Buddhist cultural heritage in Mongolia, were celebrated by the MPR government at the time as a contribution to bringing modernity and progress to the region. One part of that modernization was the termination of the tradition of maintaining family-clan and spiritual lineages, which were at the core of Mongol life. These lineages were replaced with new identity markers such as the revolutionary party, cooperatives, and other newly instituted social groups. In the pre-revolutionary culture, by contrast, a person who could not list the names of his/her prior seven generations of the family lineage was not regarded as a Mongol, and any monk without affiliation to a lineage or monastery lacked social standing.

Given the replacement of this older system with an ostensibly more modern one, cynicism and suspicion concerning Buddhist institutions and their legacy persist to this day, especially among those educated during the Soviet period in the universities of Moscow and Irkutsk, who now constitute a significant proportion of the Mongolian government employees and country's intellectuals. One outcome of this distrust is an utter lack of public financial support for Buddhist monasteries, which lack resources for the fundamental needs of monks such as lodging and so on. Hence, one of the present tasks of the holders of the Buddhist tradition in Mongolia is to replace the old communist narrative with the one that is factually balanced and that expresses their willingness and ability to address the current needs and concerns of Mongolian people.

During the pat twenty years, the material and spiritual aspirations of Mongols have also provided fertile ground for

the proselytizing activities of foreign missionaries. A significant portion of these missionaries disseminate anti-Buddhist views in ways that resemble those of the old communist revolutionaries, proclaiming, for instance, "We give, Buddhism takes." A new constitutional law that guarantees freedom of religion has facilitated a continuous influx of diverse religious traditions and New Age groups from Europe, America, and Asia. In 2001, 182 religious organizations were registered at the Mongolian Ministry of Justice and were regulated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Among them, were 60 Christian organizations as well as 110 Buddhist ones – with the remaining dozen belonging to the less represented traditions of Baha'i, Shamanism, Islam, and Hinduism.

After a series of suicides among teenage converts to Christianity between 2001-2002, the Mongolian government surveyed foreign missionary organizations in the spring of 2003 and found that 80% of them were not registered at the Mongolian Ministry of Internal Affairs, as required, and that some of them were banned in other parts of the world. In the same year, a large survey conducted among Mongolian youth revealed that 50.3% of those polled acknowledged that religion plays an important role in their lives, while 49.7% said it does not have any impact on their lives. Those who professed Buddhism as their faith constituted 34% of survey participants, and when asked whom they trust most, 20.3% expressed their trust in Buddhist lamas. In this survey, 11% professed non-Buddhist faiths, while 31% declared themselves to be atheists. Moreover, records from 2007 show that while the number of Buddhist centers and monasteries in the country's capital of Ulaanbaatar decreased to about 30; the number of non-Buddhist religious organizations increased to 300.

The general confusion, lack of self-esteem, and search for identity resulting from the loss of traditionally formed identities

are evident nowadays in all levels of Mongolian society. Their effects manifest in widespread anxiety, depression, apathy, alcoholism, crime, bribery, and other forms of corruption. In response to these crippling circumstances, Mongols, especially among the younger generations, have begun to seek solutions to these difficulties and to find meaning in life through modern alternatives.

Due to the oppressive nature of the earlier communist regime, communist modernity did not give rise to the anxiety that is due to the available, wide array of lifestyle choices and future possibilities that are beyond the Buddhist tradition's control – and that present themselves to the Mongolia of today. Instead, the anxiety of the communist era arose from a lack of alternatives and from the absence of freedom of expression, which necessitated the careful concealment of one's private Buddhist practices. However, Mongolian concern with the possible disappearance of their Buddhist tradition in the country has been a common experience in response to both types of modernity.

At the present time, there is once again a fear among Mongolian Buddhists that Buddhism may be discarded as irrelevant to the modern world amid Mongolians exposure to an ever-widening array of alternative worldviews, values, and lifestyles. These are variously promoted by materialist atheists, growing Christian fundamentalists, Shamanists, and others. Each of these factions claims its superiority over Buddhism, in many cases expressing overt hostility in their words and actions to its tradition. On Christian and Shamanic radio and television programs, antagonism to Buddhist tradition is commonly expressed, with practices ridiculed and their holders reviled. On occasion, new converts to Christianity and followers of Shamanism have violently attacked Buddhism, destroying stupas in the countryside, burning classrooms at a branch of Gandan monastery in the town of Nalakhi, where

quarrels among Christians, Muslims, and Buddhists are common, and committing other acts of violence since the year 2000.

The search for a new identity has not been limited to individuals but affects the Mongolian state as well. In its attempts to recreate a Mongolian identity, the state has been unable to ignore Buddhist tradition and symbolism. For many, Buddhism provides an anchor in times of social instability, collective confusion, and the complexity of modern life.

Thus, a garuda – a large mythical bird-like creature which can consume a poisonous snake but not be affected by its poison – has once again become the symbol of Mongolia's capital. When Mr. Sharavdorj became the Minister of Defense, he revived the worship of Jamsran (Begtse) as a protector of the Mongolian military. Likewise, Vajrapani (Ochirvaany), who is believed to have incarnated as Chinggis Khan, the revered father of the Mongol nation, has again become a protector of the Mongolian state. During the Naadam festivities, in which the glorious imperial history and tradition of Mongolia are celebrated, when the standard-bearers dismount from their horses, they shout: "Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah! Our Lord Chinggis Khan, Vajrapani". Every three years, the new president of Mongolia worships and makes offerings to Vajrapani on behalf of the Mongol state at Otgontenger Mountain, believed to be an earthly home to Vajrapani and his mountainous emanation.

The fact that the Buddhist tradition is surviving modernity against all odds can be attested in many areas of Mongolian public and private life. When the relics of the Buddha were brought to Mongolia in 1993, tens of thousands of Mongols stood in line every day to pay homage. Similarly, when the relics of great Indian and Tibetan Buddhist masters were brought to Gandan monastery several years ago, masses of people came to pay homage and receive blessings.

Interest in the serious study of Buddhism among the youth has visibly increased over the last few years. At the Buddhist Zanabazar University at Gandan monastery, about 100 students, monastic and lay, are currently receiving traditional Buddhist education. When the Dharmacakra Student Club was founded in September of 2000 at the Mongolian National University, it had only four members. By 2004, its membership had grown to 60 students. This year, another 60 undergraduate students are enrolled in Tibetan language classes at the Mongolian National University, and a half a dozen are pursuing graduate degrees in Tibetan Studies. In the Mongolian National University, the study of the history of Buddhism and Buddhist philosophy is also available in the departments of philosophy, religious studies, and Mongolian studies.

Despite the seven decades of religious suppression, the Buddhist faith did not succumb in the minds of resilient Mongols. Monastic education is being revitalized, and in response to Christian missionaries' methods of attracting youth by offering free English classes, Buddhist centers such as the Foundation for the Preservation of Mahayana Teachings (FPMT) have also started making free English classes available to young people.

Although in the pre-revolutionary period, Buddhist teachings to the lay public were not common, nowadays, they are regular public events in Gandan monastery and in various Buddhist centers. The attendees make up a non-traditional audience that does not passively receive teachings but asks probing and challenging questions and raises issues relevant to life in a modern world.

To counteract the contrastive images of rival groups as modern, fun, and attractive, the Buddhist tradition has felt compelled to demonstrate that it too is not a religion of the backward and conservative, but a modern tradition, to which

talented, hip, and famous people also subscribe. An advantage that the Buddhist tradition has over foreign competing groups is its regional history that allows it to reclaim its old power places, pilgrimage sites, and locations linked to the worship of local mountain deities. Buddhism's long history in Mongolian regions provides it deep roots across the Mongolian countryside even though its traditions were suppressed for 70 years. Those who kept their faith during those trying times have continued to secretly carry out their Buddhist practices, which they do now openly.

The steady progress in the renewal of the Buddhist tradition in Mongolia despite the difficulties and challenges presented by the two discussed types of modernity reveals the ability to survive in adverse conditions and to adapt itself to new social and political realities. This adaptation is not necessarily to the detriment of the tradition but may be regarded as an expression of skillful means that facilitate its rejuvenation and reinvention.

As this conference is concerned in part with the cultural and spiritual identity of Mongolians and the potential outcomes of modernity or possible loss of Buddhist traditions, I would like to conclude with the Buddha's words spoken to Subhuti in the Vajracchedika Sutra. In that text, the Buddha assures Subhuti (and us) that the teachings of Mahayana will never perish and that there will be always those who will listen to them. He declared the following: "Subhuti . . . in a future time, in the final age…when the time of the destruction of the True Dharma comes to pass, there will be bodhisattvas and great beings endowed with good qualities, ethical conduct, and wisdom, who when the words of such discourses as these are being spoken, will recognize them as the truth."

Chapter 8
Contribution to the Development of Mongolian Buddhism by the Association of Mongolian Devotees

Bayantsagaan Sandag

Editor's introduction: *Among those promoting the development of Mongolian Buddhism, the devout monk Bayantsagaan has been among the most active, persistent, and humble. In addition to building and expanding the activities of his own temple and retreat center in Terelj Valley – including hanging suspended by ropes on the rock face as he and others paint enormous Buddhist tableaus – Bayatsagaan heads the Association of Mongolian Devotees [of Buddhism] (AMD). In this capacity and more generally, he has advised and helped restore more than seventy of the more than one thousand monasteries and temples that were destroyed in Mongolia during the socialist period.*

In his contribution here, Bayantsagaan summarizes his perspective on the revival of Mongolian Buddhism, including a frank appraisal of herculean efforts and contributions as well as the great challenges being faced. Bayantsagaan's linkage of religious development to civil rights and general tolerance is remarkable, especially in light of past repression. His assessment of eight practical challenges as well as eight major contributions of his organization to Buddhist development offers a cogently thought out, balanced, and systematically presented perspective.

The most important achievement of Mongolian democratic revolution is that spiritual and religious rights have been reestablished. The Association of Mongolian Devotees (AMD), [*Mongolyin Susegtnii Kholboo*], was established in March

1990 and directly received appreciation and support from the majority of Mongolians. AMD branch committees organized in all *aimags* (provincial divisions) enabled it to pursue intensive activities throughout Mongolia. An Activity Program adopted at the convention of the Congress of Mongolian Devotees has become a principal document for years now, and has been a touchstone not just activities but for changes in the perceptions and perspectives of modern Mongolians. How we can explain necessity, emergence and intense activities of AMD?

1. **It was accompanied by democratic revolution and freedom**
2. **Mongolians were motivated to seek their religious rights**
3. **Mongolians were encouraged by the support of democratic countries and by the Dalai Lama**
4. **Communism had been failing and people were highly aware of its shortcomings**
5. **It was fortunate that a few senior monks had survived the persecution of the socialist era and were able to revive activities of Buddhist monasteries**
6. **Though the Buddhist tradition in Mongolia has almost disappeared, a new revival opportunity for it had arrived**
7. **Freedom and democracy brought great enjoy to Mongolians following the severe regime of the socialist era**
8. **The population has sincerely wanted to revive Buddhism; their virtue has been great and that have made significant donations to the revival effort**
9. **During the initial stages of Buddhist revival, there was comparatively less competing religious influence that derived from foreign sources**

Challenges Encountered with Revival of Buddhism

Though I am the head of MDA, many people who have struggled for the revival of Buddhism in Mongolia have faced the special difficulty of not knowing much about their Buddhist religion given the socialist era efforts to eradicate it. Although Communist ideology weakened decisively after the fall of the Soviet Union, it still persisted in some sectors, and especially in countryside. Whole generations of Mongolians had experienced strong atheist ideology through official education and cultural representations, and some people kept their negative attitudes toward religion. However, these challenges didn't stop our activities, and they actually fuelled a more unified power for reviving Buddhism in Mongolia. That Buddhist ritual objects and sutras were rare (almost all of them had been destroyed) was one of the biggest challenges. Much of Buddhist tradition had been lost during socialist modernization, and there were no examples remaining of proper monasteries and monks. In all of Mongolia during the decades of socialism, only the one monastery of Gandetegchilen was permitted to exist, and its activities were quite limited.

MDA's Program and Its Achievements

1. Since 1990, Mongolians have actively embraced democratic and plural principles along with their religious rights, and during the ensuing period, their views and perceptions of religion have changed significantly. These changes have enabled the activities of MDA and its ability to tackle its many tasks.

2. Although the Buddhist knowledge that had been deeply embodied in Mongolian culture and customs was destroyed, and monks were persecuted during the socialist era, at the beginning of the 1990s we could still meet and learn from

the last figures of the earlier period. These senior monks were our main source for reviving the principles and the rituals of Mongolian Buddhism. They are now deeply honored for having provided us the inheritance to revive our traditional religion.

3. Mongolian devotees never lost hope to see the revival of Buddhism, and their faith has served as great power throughout Mongolia to reestablish former monasteries. With the guidance of AMD, more than seventy monasteries have been founded back in their original locations since 1990-1993, and these now have approximately one thousand monks.

4. The first Buddhist middle school was established in 1991 with the help of AMD, and it has emerged as a place of great activity for the training of Mongolian monks.

5. MDA has also directed its efforts to educate devotees in Buddhist philosophy and knowledge. For this purpose, branches of AMD were established in all *soums* and *aimags,* thus encouraging the sincere faith and devotion of devotees. For instance, the branches have organized public lectures and discussions which have helped devotees to better understand Buddhism.

6. AMD founded Lam-rim *dratsang* and established printing outlets in Ulaanbaatar for publishing materials and books on Buddhism. Based on this publishing activity, AMD has proposed to produce Altangerel and Sanduin Jud sutras to each family in all of Mongolia.

7. Following the AMD Activity Program objectives, local AMD branches have initiated projects to protect the environment and to revive rituals that recognize and honor *oboo*, mountains, and other sacred places. The first of these initiated the public worshipping rituals at Bayanzurkh mountain. Such *oboo* and mountain worshipping rituals help

to change young people's attitudes to nature and encourage them to respect the forces and deities that inform and protect our special and sacred places.

8. To foreground the missing role of religion in Mongolian politics, AMD founded Mongolian Democratic Devotees Party.

Solutions on Challenges Faced with Mongolian Buddhism

1. Buddhism develops best when it maintains its internal rules and structure. However, this precious tradition is for the most part no longer existent in contemporary Mongolia – at least in its previous form. We see that in some cases, people may simply make up practices and call them Buddhist. For instance, someone who lives an ordinary lay life may re-construct his residence and call it a monastery. A man claiming to be a monk may break monastic vows and make money by practicing banned activities of prophecy and astrological reading. Such examples illustrate how Buddhism has for some people simply become a means to obtain income and provide subsistence. Commenting on such problems, leading figures and representatives of Mongolian Buddhism sometimes say, "This is a *tsuvuun* (degenerate) time, and there is a lot of confusion." Under such circumstances, it is not always easy for people to act responsibly with respect to the development of Buddhism, especially given the low popular understanding of Buddhism and superstitious mind of Mongolians. Before socialism, when Buddhism flourished like the sun, special regulations and rules prevented or resisted such problems, and persons who distorted Buddhist principles and practices could be subject to strong judgment and criticism. When AMD launched its activities, a Law of Religious Rights was adopted. However, it seems this was not sufficiently developed or followed to effectively regulate religious affairs in Mongolia.

2. Buddhism persists in advocating and reinforcing elevated moral principles. Perhaps we need to ask ourselves, "Who are our monks?" The status of monks is one of the most important issues in Mongolian Buddhism and poses critical dilemmas. According to Buddhist doctrine, a principle feature is the taking and maintaining of monastic Vinai (vows). But there are few gelongs who follow 253 principles of Vinai, and the number of those who do not follow these principles seems to be increasing. Gening vows are now available for lay people as well, but those who take these vows do not always abide by them. Although there are clear rules and vows for monks to follow, their insufficient effort is reducing the value of Mongolian Buddhism.

3. There is an urgent need to develop and pay systematic attention (and develop policies for) the training of Buddhist monks in Mongolia. There are monks who act as a monk in the morning but shift to lay life in the afternoon. There are few teachers and few teachings of Buddhist principles, and the relationship between teacher and disciples, rules of monasteries, and bramid, are problematic, especially in the countryside. Therefore, we need to develop criteria for monks to uphold principles of civil and Buddhist education.

4. An additional challenge in Mongolian Buddhism is lack of unified policy; all monasteries and organizations work separately. Given that our goal is to work for the sake of all beings, including for our collective development, Mongolia monasteries and organization need to collaborate with each other. On the other hand, since the 1990s, active devotees have contributed much to the revival of Buddhism in Mongolia, including the restoration of more than seventy monasteries. Amid the challenge that Mongolian Buddhism faces, therefore, we always should remember the great efforts and contributions of devoted people.

5. We now live in a democratic country in which the existence of different religions is allowed. Therefore, Mongolian Buddhists need to understand other religions and their churches, and to collaborate with them for the wellbeing of society. In this regard, initiative should be undertaken to develop an overall corpus of information and data on religions. In this way, religious activities can be better understood and more efficiently directed to promoting social welfare. Also, priority may be placed on further promoting various forms of cooperation of monks with the welfare activities of NGOs.

6. As the center of Mongolian Buddhism, Gandentegchilen monastery should provide the best example to monasteries in the *soum* and *aimags* of Mongolia. To step into a more advanced stage of development, Mongolian Buddhism needs to unify its program for all its monasteries, and an assembly should be held every year to evaluate the implementation of Buddhist objectives.

7. Present day activities of monasteries are limited by daily rituals, sacred services, and prayers. Buddhism admits different stages and levels of development for its practitioners. To cultivate these capacities for growing numbers of persons, we need to pay attention to studies of history, philosophy and the bramida of Mongolian Buddhism, and to organize permanent lessons and lectures on meditation and good teachings that devotees can practice in their lives.

8. The economy of current monasteries is almost entirely dependent on the donations of devotees. Resources are thus it is quite limited. In terms of physical buildings, there is need to promote architectural standards and proper design for the erection of monasteries.

Chapter 9
Buddhism and the Grand Maitreya Complex Project in Mongolia

Bataa Mishig-Ish

Editor's introduction: *As an antidote to the previous Soviet destruction of Mongolia's cultural and religious heritage – including the demolition or degradation of all but one of the country's more than a thousand monasteries and temples – M. Bataa here describes plans for a large Buddha Maitreya complex to be constructed on a hilltop outside the Mongolian capital of Ulaanbaatar. Funded by private sources, the project draws on previous experience of successfully constructing a 40 meter Mongolian equestrian statue of Chinggis Khan (tied for the 16th highest statue in the world). The presently planned stupa and Maitreya, at 108m, would be the 4th tallest statue in the world –the other three being statues of Buddha in China, Japan, and Burma.*

Amid the palpable drive among many Asian countries to foreground their connection with Buddha and Buddhism generally, many Mongolians feel their country has a special place and claim. (The one surviving main monastery of Gandan still boasts a 26-meter statue of the Avalokitesvara emanation of Buddha that was, upon its completion in 1913, quite possibly the tallest free standing metal statue in the world.) The presently projected Maitreya complex includes inter-denominational Buddhist temples, meditation and retreat facilities, a state-of-the-art ecologically assisted power system, a hotel and commercial establishments, and sport facilities such as tennis courts; as such, it is anticipated to combine aspects of tourism, leisure, theme park, religious and spiritual center, technological marvel, commercial outlet, and resort.

As a former monk, M. Bataa is committed to both the spiritual and the economic viability of the project. In larger

perspective, the project illustrates the challenges, potentials, and alternative choices that Mongolians face as they attempt to utilize but not be overtaken by business aspects of economic growth, modernization, and foreign influence— and as they reconfigure and reassert their distinctive national, cultural, and religious identity.

Historically, Buddhism was briefly introduced to Mongolia 2000 years ago through the Silk Road of Central Asia. Later Buddhism was practiced amongst the royal families of the Mongols from the 13th to 14th centuries. In the 17th century Buddhism had become the dominant faith/religion among the Mongols at the time.

Due to the communist ideology and socialist regime in the 1930s, Buddhism was almost destroyed along with novices, temples, monasteries and scriptures. Thanks to the democratic changes that took place in the society in the early 1990s, Buddhism has been revived not only as the core of the traditional culture but also as indicated in the democratic principle of freedom of religion.

Currently Buddhism is the predominant religion in Mongolia, which is very similar to Tibetan Buddhism and still has many similarities with it. Some statistics suggest that 70-80% of the population is believed to be Buddhists. There are five bigger monastic institutions and several dozens of small and medium size temples housing from a few to dozens of monks throughout Mongolia. There are also several nunneries in Ulaanbaatar city.

Buddhist monks are mostly trained at their respective monasteries if these are large enough to accommodate them. One Buddhist monastic middle school currently operates plus three Buddhist colleges that belong to the three large

monasteries in Ulaanbaatar. Additionally, more than 300 monks are being training at Tibetan Buddhist monastic institutions in India. The total number of monks in Mongolia is approximately 2,500.

The Parliament of Mongolia passed the law concerning "State and Church Relations" in 1994. According to this law the registered monastic institutions could be tax exempt. Monastic institution is required to be registered by the City Council of the Local Government and by the Ministry of Law and Internal Affairs.

The Grand Maitreya Project/Complex

To revive Buddhist culture and education in Mongolia, several prominent individuals in Mongolia came together to establish "The Grand Maitreya Foundation" in September 2010. This foundation has been registered by the Ministry of Law and Internal Affairs as a foundation with the status of a non-government organization. The main organizational functions of the foundation are; promote Buddhist cultural and educational activities, support the publication of books with educational purposes, organize cultural and art events for preserving the traditional cultural values, establish effective institutional relations with similar Buddhist institutions overseas, and implement the Grand Maitreya Project, the largest Buddhist complex to be ever built in Mongolia. The Grand Maitreya Project is being implemented under the patronage of the President of Mongolia. The project concept was spearheaded by the Indra Future Foundation, which remains its major supporting private foundation.

The Grand Maitreya Complex will be a unique park offering a peaceful and serene atmosphere. Located on the outskirts of Ulaanbaatar, it will be the perfect location for a relaxing day spent out of the city with the family. The objective

of the complex is to highlight Mongolia's spiritual assets, capitalizing on the country's ancient history of Buddhism. With this in mind, this private sector initiative has been supported by the above-mentioned two organizations to construct a 108 meter stupa with a standing Maitreya statue of 54 meters.

There is stirring in the hearts and minds of some Mongolians that the time has come to regain some of the glories that Mongolia possessed in Buddhism prior to Soviet occupation. Mongolia has many ancient monasteries that were destroyed during the socialist days—now only a few are left standing, and these not very accessible to the average person.

Historically, Mongolia has a rich history of Buddhism, filled with devotee rituals and spiritual traditions. As a result, the concept of opening the Grand Maitreya complex is a perfect tool to rejuvenate Buddhism in Mongolia, but more importantly promote healthy values that are challenged with the onset of rapid growth fuelled by the mining boom. We think that the Grand Maitreya complex is a good concept.

The complex's location, just outside of Ulaanbaatar, will allow city dwellers to reconnect with their cultural and natural heritage in the Bogd Khan range of mountains. Expectations from the project are centered on the desire to bring Mongolian people together—to enjoy outdoor activities and spend quality time with loved ones. The complex is intended to revitalize interest in Buddhism so more people can learn about the teachings of Buddha and have a peaceful and meaningful existence.

The highlight of the Grand Maitreya complex will be the large stupa and statue of the forthcoming Maitreya Buddha perched on a hilltop (Heart Hill). The approach to the Buddha will lead up a series of steps with gardens on either side. The centre of the complex will have an ornate fountain, with other sections strategically positioned around the complex. There will be a spiritual section which will incorporate

various Mongolian temples; a section for internationally built temples; a knowledge section where people can learn art, yoga or meditation; a meditation hall, amphitheatre, and cinema amongst facilities, plus a food court serving a variety of international and local cuisine; a business service centre; a merchandising outlet; hotels and other services including a bank and tour operator.

Conclusion

We anticipate that the Grand Maitreya project will differentiate itself from other cultural and religious assets in the country and the region, so that it can offer, through its compelling vision, an attraction for many types of national and international visitors.

Chapter 10
The Development Of Shamanism In Mongolia After Socialism

Tuvshintugs Dorj

Editor's introduction: *Tuggi Dorj, as he is commonly known, is a devout and serious practicing royal Mongolian shaman. He maintains a widespread humanitarian practice of shamanic trance consultation as well as a deep knowledge of and commitment to the practice of esoteric ancestral Mongolian shamanism, including through his organized association with other Mongolian shamans. In his contribution here, Tuggi reveals the depths of difficulty and cultural loss that afflicted shamanism during the Manchu and then the Soviet-dominated socialist periods and major aspects of shamanic revival in Mongolia since the early 1990s.*

Today, shamanism is a widespread and even acclaimed popular culture feature of urban as well as rural life in Mongolia. In the process, as Tuggi Dorj discusses, Mongolian shamanism faces challenges as well as potentials, including uninformed practices of so-called shamanism that are undertaken as money-making schemes rather than for social good and broader well-being. The importance of recouping dwindling ancestral cultural knowledge concerning Mongolian shamanism is thrown into relief by the significant contributions of alternative shamanic consciousness and of strong personal and shared cultural harmony with the social, spiritual, and natural environment.

As Tuggi Dorj delineates, Mongolian shamanism evokes a rich and barely-tapped store of astrological, environmental, and geographic cultural knowledge, including in relation to the personal and social well-being of Mongolians. Importantly, Tuggi is a strong advocate of scientific research and technological study such as neuroscience to document and verify the powers and potentials of ancestrally transmitted Mongolian shamanism. In the process, he hopes, the positive human potential of Mongolian shamanism can be fully identified and made public for the benefit of humanity.

For much of the last century and a half, Mongolian shamanism has been restricted and its benefits denied. During the socialist era, religion was intentionally propagandized to the people as a poisonous and defiant activity. Even before this, however, during the late nineteenth, century, Manchu dynasty policies spread Lamaism in Mongolia and recruited Mongolians to Lamaism—with the larger intention to weaken Mongolian resolve to fight and rebel against Manchu rule. Due to this influence, Mongolian traditional shamanism was gradually weakened and largely forgotten, along with practices of worshiping heaven, respecting the elderly, commitment to abide by one's oaths, and the spirit and power of fighting together to fulfill heavenly destiny. Though shamanism had been actively practiced and its world view believed by many Mongolian tribes and peoples, its traditional ideology, ritual, and knowledge were greatly weakened.

Though there have been some written sources of shamanic tradition and rituals, these were not retained or handed down with proper secrecy within groups in subsequent generations, including by t*akhilch, tugch and suldech* tribes or by royal kinship. Consequently, shamanism as traditionally informed had all but vanished. Some recordings and sources about shamanism had the following inaccuracies, including during the socialist period of Soviet domination:

1. Shamanism was viewed and explained from the viewpoint of ordinary persons rather than from the perspective of the shaman
2. Basic shamanic meanings were modified to be consistent with socialist era order and political interests
3. Shamanism was defined to fit within the interests of Buddhism

The traditional meaning and rituals of the shamanism were degraded and turned into shamanism as associated with

certain Buddhist rituals. By adopting Buddhist rituals, Khalkh Mongol's yellow shamans tried to show more power than authentic black shamans. Due to this propaganda, shamanism was defined in a narrow framework, its meaning was changed, and its scope reduced. Consequently, traditional shamanism was practiced by only a few tribes. Shamanism had only been practiced as a developed tradition for 300-400 years in Mongolia by the beginning of the socialist period, and together with Buddhism, it fell under socialist repression. Along with Buddhist monks, many shamans were detained and sentenced to jail during this time, though, in contrast to the monks, few shamans were actually killed. Because shamans at that time lived primarily in remote rural places, their overall social influence was weak, and they had almost no power or wealth. Partly as a result of this, most shamans received "only" 5-10 year jail sentences during the socialist purges. Nevertheless, Mongolian shamanism has for centuries been inherited from generation to generation through domestic teaching and transmission, and I am one of the shamans who inherited shamanism in this way.

Below are some case studies of the histories and challenges faced by shamans who have received traditionally inherited shamanic power and practices in Mongolia.

Shaman Chur received a ten year jail sentence during the socialist period in Selenge aimag. Just before his arrest, he put his drum and costume in the river Uuriin, as a sign of becoming an ordinary man, though he kept his mirror and *khuur* (a Mongolian traditional musical instrument used to call shaman spirit). He never performed shaman rituals again. His mirror and *khuur* are kept by his son Khuushaan in Erdenet city. His two grandchildren became shamans and are holding their family shamanic spirit.

Shaman Choi (Choikhuu) was arrested and jailed together with shaman Chur by one decree and died due to the

illness on his way home after finishing his jail sentence. He put his shamanic belongings in the mountain, and his mirror (*toli*-specially made silver or golden, round shaped accessory of shaman), *khuur, seter, khiimori and khadag* (specially made band of silk) were left to his children. Now his grandchildren hold their family shaman spirit and continue their family shaman rituals.

Khukh gol's soyod Uriankhai shaman Luvsandorj's children have also recently received their family shaman spirit and continue to practice shamanic rituals.

Norjmaa, who came from Eg-Uul as a bride and became Khos's Shaman's disciple, was also arrested and sentenced. After completing her jail sentence, she never performed shaman rituals again; nonetheless, she continued to help people until the end of her life. She had no children, so her niece received the family shaman spirit five or six years ago, and she is continuing the shaman rituals.

Shaman Khuukhenjii was Darkhad's *uyalgan*. She came to Tsagaan-Uur as a bride and passed away in 2009. She helped Tsagaan-Uur's people by performing shaman rituals. Buryat people who came from Russia settled down in Tsagaan-Uur sum. Later their descendants followed Buddhist religious practice and studied Buddhism in Ikh Khuree.

Other examples include Ravjaa lama's descendants, who revived Udval shamanic rituals and are continuing them. Shaman Namjilmaa, descendant of shaman Joovon of Chandmani-Undur sum's Khalkhyn khairkhan, received family shaman spirit and has been performing shamanic rituals for three years.

In this way, shamanism, which had been hidden and almost forgotten during the socialist period, is now reviving again. Descendants of shamans are receiving their family shaman spirit. However, most of these shaman descendants weren't able to directly inherit shamanic knowledge from

their predecessors. Many of them have only seen or heard about shamanic rituals, and there are few traditionally trained shamans who can teach and advise them. This poses difficulties in properly reviving old traditions and rituals of family shamanism.

Although shamans are trying to revive shamanic rituals by asking about them from elderly persons who may have seen or heard about them, much of the relevant knowledge has been forgotten. Moreover, research materials and works about shaman rituals are very rare, and those existing try to explain shamanism rather than providing a practical training guide. Current geographical and astronomical terms and names are different from the old names of heavens (*tenger*), gods, and local deities; therefore, it is difficult to re-establish their previous names and associated meanings. Although some texts explains methods and timing for deifying mountains, hills, rivers, lakes, and so on, written largely by knowledgeable monks of that time it is difficult to locate and access these materials, as most of them are either lost or still being hidden. Those few exceptions are written in Tibetan and Sanskrit languages, so we face difficulties in translating these into contemporary Mongolian language. Today people and youths can easily obtain and analyze information and knowledge once it has been made available. Now it is time to make more accessible this information, excepting only the portions of proprietary information that is properly restricted and needs to be kept secret. This will also allow aspects of Mongolian shamanism to be considered or explained on the basis of scientific or philosophical examination.

At larger issue is our ability under present conditions to find proper ways of living in harmony with nature. I believe that religions generally connect with universal meaning, the nature of humanity and of the world around us, the influence of ancient science, and desire to find true knowledge of life.

The main differences between the religions appear to be their respective ways and method of propagating information and knowledge. Given Mongolia's history, however, these differences have become particularly complicated, and the earlier forms of shamanism clouded, due to social policies and political influences.

Shamanism is generally accepted by scholars to be the first and most fundamental form of human religion in historic and evolutionary terms. In this sense, shamanism is the ancestral origin or base of all religions. It is also arguably the most democratic, equitable, and, in its own way, scientific religion. Even when the state and society were punishing Mongolians and prohibiting their religion, shamanism was not erased during either the Manchu Dynasty or the Autonomous and Socialist periods. Even during these times, there is some evidence that shamans helped resolve social and religious issues by the means of discussion. Back in those times, shamans lived in their rural homesteads, helped other people by performing ceremonies during the evening and at night, and taught shamanic knowledge and rituals to their children. Although children grew up watching and listening to what they had been taught, they performed shamanic activities only rarely due to urbanization, work, society, and fear of stigma or reprisal.

During 1924-1930, when Mongolia was politically independent, shamans openly performed religious rituals. Even today some places near Ulaanbaatar city have shaman *ames*. Though shamans were oppressed, jailed, and driven into hiding from 1930 until the end of the 1950's, shamanic rituals were still privately practiced in rural areas. But new generations of youths, raised and socialized from 1960 through the middle of the 1980's, avoided and were afraid of talking about shamanism and other religions. Consequently, this religious tradition and its knowledge have been at risk.

Under the Soviets, including their interest in ethnographic

documentation, Mongolian researchers studied shamanism from 1950 to 1980 and gained significant information, as many shamans were alive at the time. However, due to social influence and political pressure, final drafts of research on shamanism were written from the limited perspective of ethnicity and myth, and they tended to adopt one-sided conclusions that denied the contemporary value and ongoing significance of shamanism. Consequently, during the socialist period, shamanism was viewed from a scientific point of view as a set of archaic linguistic and ethnic rituals. In real life, however, shamanism was secretly practiced among relatives and local people. From the standpoint of Mongolian society as a whole, however, shamanism was viewed as a backward relic of the past and as an ideology against law, science and proper social consciousness.

Shamanism after the Socialist Period

Since 1990 shamanism has been more actively and openly discussed among Mongolians. Scholars have begun more sensitive research on shamanism and on the descendants of shamans. Moreover, with the increasing modern need to live in harmony with tradition, state, and nature, and given the gradual revival of the shamanism, information on and knowledge of shamanism has started to be gathered from those who had kept their knowledge and traditions private. This information is now spreading to more and more people. [Indeed, shamanism has now become a very widespread public and urban as well a rural practice in Mongolia today.]

After receiving advice from the elderly and consulting about the exact time and place for auspicious practice, knowledgeable and powerful shamans now practice in Mongolia based on knowledge and ritual obtained through home schooling and other training. The Mongolian

"Organization of Shamanism" was established in 1995. This association has been important for providing accurate information and indicating the best exact periods of shamanic practice. The organization has provided a great opportunity for those wishing to inherit shaman knowledge to unite with those few shamans who kept ancestral knowledge and tradition.

At the same time, significant challenges to shamanism have also emerged. These include the use of shamanic "fascination" as a money-making tool, including as expressed by performing magic or giving away secret knowledge. This tendency and its misinformation have spread especially since 2002, when some of the last persons who had inherited detailed shaman knowledge passed away. Consequently, the character, tradition, and rituals of shamanism have frequently been changed, and blind faith in shamanism has become popular.

Most of the written resources that are used by contemporary shamans were produced during the socialist period. Scientific features of shamanism include astronomy, ecology, anthropology, mathematics, music, psychology, and the study of spirituality and hidden consciousness. Nowadays, however, basic knowledge of shamanism is not fully inherited by a new generation, so wrong understanding and blind faith are widespread. Moreover, shamanism loses its fundamental meaning when people believe only superficially in its mystical character, or, alternatively, when it becomes just an object of spiritual study [rather than an embodied practice].

The shaman's spirit is the main channel for obtaining information about the activity that he or she is going to do. In addition, it should correctly define the object, time, power, and method of shamanic practice and should protect, connect, and support or "own" *ulaach* (the shaman's person) by its own power. For example, in order to deify Bat's family home, fireplace, mettle and drum, first of all, the shaman should

identify Bat's heaven of fortune (birth zodiac), heaven of soul, and heaven of fire that keeps his family fireplace. Secondly, the shaman should find the time, place, and method of deifying these heavens. Finally, being guarded by his or her own shaman spirit, the shaman should perform shaman ritual to connect the family with its fireplace's spirit. However, as a result of losing and forgetting the main aspects of knowledge, ritual, and tradition, new shamans may use shamanism for unpleasant purposes.

Due to forgotten or misinterpreted information, people are only paying attention to the world of spirits and often imagining shamanism based on the small pieces of information that have been received from spirits. These lead to delusions about shamanism. If we worship shamanism in its correct way on the basis of viewing heaven, human, and land as a whole, and gaining correct information shamanism will help us to protect our world.

The existence of heaven causes the existence of earth. The existence of heaven and earth cause the existence of humans, the state, and society. When humans and human consciousness exists, spirit also exists together with them. Understanding the correspondence, coherence, and mutual influence between these and the appropriate way of using this understanding in our lives, in our state and society, and in the world – is called heaven worshipping shaman religion.

How we should solve the contemporary problems of Mongolian shamanism? How we should keep and inherit traditional knowledge? How we should explore and find the possible limit of the shamanism?

Science

It is important to study the possibility of justifying, confirming, and testing shamanic knowledge by using scientific methods

and technology. Firstly, the limit of concentration and capacities of intelligence need to be defined using the most suitable, simple, and accessible methods and technologies. Possible absolute baselines or benchmarks and their margins [maximum extent, or range of variation] need to be defined on the basis of technology. Secondly, there is a need to study the power and possibility of concentration, of the spiritual energy of shamans who attain a benchmark margin. Thirdly, there is need to study the power and duration of the influence of shamans and their spirits during their ritual performances. Fourthly, there is need to study and find the period of temporal synchronization during the shaman's ritual of deifying heaven, earth, water and time of stars,' seasons,' and nature's activation and the mutual influence of these, including their influence on people.

Except for science, which makes conclusions based on evidence and proof, it is difficult to conduct a thorough study or make a complete confirmation of the workings of shamanism, including the defining of norms and normative benchmarks. Ultimately, however, the following will become possible:

1. For those who want to live properly, it will open the way and method of charging and educating oneself by one's own possibility.
2. It will become possible to preserve and inherit true shamanism by reviving its main characters. Science can help correct the wrong understanding, imagination, and development of shamanic possibilities among people.
3. Major achievements of shamanic practice will step forward and contribute to the scientific knowledge of humanity and will guide people to find the correct and more direct way of living in harmony with nature.

4. Our awareness will help those people who cannot or who are not destined to become a shaman from being cheated, confused and from losing their time, money, and health.

Facing problems and possible solutions

First, we need to restore shamanic information and knowledge concerning the names, location, direction, and origin of stars and heavens.

The understanding of the heavens in shaman religion includes:

1. Spirits and *ongo takhilga* of our ancestors, royalties, and well known Mongolians who went to the heavens
2. The highest basis, cycle, universe, space, and highest idol of gaining the main information of shaman religion
3. Shamanism has independent names for stars and heavens

Of the heavens, most people know only about Big Dipper, the North Star, Morning Star, Evening Star, the location of sun and moon, and their practices of heavenly oblation, incense, offering, and so on. Very few people have general knowledge about the thirty-three heavens, eight planets, deifying of the sun and moon, or the names and times of deifying ceremonies. Indeed, the location of some heavens, and the time of their activation, is still unclear.

To remedy this situation, we are actively investigating and conducting research. It is necessary to gather information by going to places where shamanic traditions are well preserved and by meeting with elderly shamans and researchers. Moreover, we can restore some information through the comparison method. It is possible to confirm periods of synchronization of stars' and zodiacs' activation time, and the time of deifying ceremony, by comparing newly found names

and locations with scientific terms. Furthermore, we should meet with ordinary herdsmen and document their knowledge and information about names, locations, directions and knowledge of influences and time so that we can restore lost information and knowledge. Final conclusions and results should be scientifically documented and verified as fully as possible and should be properly presented to the world at large for the sake of humanity.

In addition, we need to take multiple measures and conduct activities of translation and historical derivation. For instance, terms recorded in Buddhist scriptures need to be studied and compared with sources from the outside that were later translated into Tibetan and Sanskrit.

Conclusion

As a nation, Mongolians, who worshiped heaven and shaman religion, had the most ancient, comprehensive, and detailed knowledge and method of astrology, geography, and mystical capacities. Mongolians knew the exact time of the year when the energy and influence of earth, water and star were high, and they used this energy and its influence in their life and governance. Shamanic knowledge helped them to find the correct deifying method and time and, in the process, to either protect themselves from powerful influence or properly use the weaker influences that were present. Contemporary shamanic knowledge is based on written and verbal information. Though some information is available about shaman's memoirs, directions, and "callings" (including short rhymes or songs that are used to call the shaman spirit), it is still unclear how to correctly perform some shamanic rituals. Knowledge and rituals are mixed with Buddhist practices, information, and knowledge. For instance, though most people can name parts and accessories of shamanic costumes, people cannot

explain their roles and symbolism of color, form and style. It is important to rediscover and reassert the historic and ancestral strengths of Mongolian shamanism for the benefit of Mongolians – and all of humanity.

Chapter 11
Developing Christianity in Mongolia During the Last Two Decades

Purevdorj Jamsran

Editor's introduction: *During the past twenty years, Protestant Evangelical Christianity has become an important force and major influence in Mongolian society. Reverend Purevdorj Jamsran poignantly summarizes these changes from the perspective of an insider who has been strongly associated with their development. From a negligible and practically nonexistent base at the outset of the 1990s, Christianity according to Reverend Jamsran has grown to include some 100,000 Mongolians, whom he assesses constitute approximately ten percent of the Mongolian voting electorate.*

Dividing Mongolian Christian development into three stages, Reverend Jamsran emphasizes the interweaving of social and cultural problems with the need for Mongolian spiritual development in the wake of the collapse of socialism. In this crucible of stress and transition, Christianity is seen as providing material, educational, and social as well as spiritual support, especially for young people. He describes how the initial thrust of Christianity through the influence of foreign missionaries and teachers has given way increasingly to Mongolian co-direction and co-leadership.

In an analysis of the causes and trajectory of Christian spread, Reverend Jamsran suggests that Christian involvement in humanitarian work, including in poverty reduction, social outreach to combat alcoholism and crime, and work among prisoners, has had both positive social effects and been a positive stimulus to the further growth of Christianity in Mongolia. As opposed to what he characterizes as emphasis on alien beings and magic, he assesses and asserts in conclusion that Christian impetus in Mongolia is currently growing with the same strong fervor and effectiveness that it did at its outset in the early 1990s.

One of the major changes in Mongolia following the collapse of socialism inevitably concerns religion. Along with traditional religion, Christianity is spreading rapidly and affecting a broad range of elements in society. My perspective does not represent all Christians. However, I can talk on behalf of Protestants and Evangelicals, who constitute about 90 percent of the Christians in Mongolia. I have been asked by the conference organizers to focus more on Mongolians and their lives rather than institutions, policies and systems. I present here the process of conversion and the history of Christianity in Mongolia during the last two decades.

Conversion

There was a spiritual revolution in Christianity that began at the same time as the democratic revolution of 1991 in Mongolia. This was the third period of conversion to Christianity and Evangelism, thus we call it the third spreading. In unofficial ways and through oral transmission Gospel (*Sainedee*) was familiar to Mongolians, but it became more wide spread after 1991. There is no clear research on why Mongolians openly accept Christianity. However, I can share with you my observations and work experience.

Instead of a failed socialist ideology, Mongolians were seeking another ideology to sustain their hope and faith. They needed beliefs to follow and rely on. Mongolia was spiritually starved and people became interested in very fundamental metaphysical issues, like what is truth and what is the meaning of life. People lost their beliefs in socialist ideals and atheism, which had been forced upon them. At just the same time, when people were searching for other meanings for their existence, the notion that "money and economy are the most important things in life" was increasingly advocated. At the same time, the Christian idea that "human life is created" was becoming

better known. People are interested in Christianity for different spiritual and economic reasons, such as seeking opportunity, learning new things, establishing friendships and social networks, and how to spend free time. Economic devastation, difficult life conditions, and poverty encourage people to open up to new ideas. Young people especially have been eager to know new things.

Development

I propose three main periods in the history of Christianity in Mongolia during the last two decades: (1) 1991-1995; (2) 1996-2005; and (3) 2006- present.

1. *The Period of Christian Formation in Mongolia, 1991-1995*

   During this period, many hundreds of Mongolians decided to convert to Christianity and flocked to churches. Most of them were young people, aged 18-25. The average age of the first believers was 20-22. Since the first Christians were young people, their main activities were missionary, teaching and leadership, which again attracted other people of the same age. They gathered in their homes, or rented work offices, and they studied new beliefs every week by inviting foreign specialists who worked in Mongolia. Well educated young people played important roles; in addition to often being proficient in different languages, they frequently had good experience with modern information technology as well as inter-cultural or cross-cultural experience. International organizations and individuals heard about the Christian conversions that were taking place in Mongolia, and they worked to support and extend these activities. International governments and

non-governmental organizations also became aware of the fact of religious freedom in Mongolia, and they launched humanitarian activities that supported young Christians. Young believers set up their own groups to spread missionary activity in the countryside, opening churches in province centers. There were only approximately twenty active (Evangelical) Christians in Mongolia at the beginning of the 1990s, but they had increased in number to 2000 by the end of 1992. That small group, who were addressed as "alien" in the press, grew intensively and reached 10,000 by 1995 according to their own accounts.

2. *The Period of Christian Growth and Transition, 1996-2005*

By the mid-1990s, it was not difficult to establish churches similar to those that had already been newly founded. But it remained difficult to find pastors who could lead, teach, and organize the churches. Therefore, many churches stepped forward to train their pastors, which they accomplished with the support and assistance of foreign organizations. At that time, practically every new professional field in Mongolia needed the guidance and experience of foreign specialists. Other challenges also loomed. First, perhaps only two percent of the churches were officially registered; most of them were home-based churches. This situation made it difficult to invite foreign specialists. Even though official registration of churches had increased, visas issued to foreigners entering Mongolia for religious purposes were rarely given. Therefore our international pastors tended to have only short-term tourist visas for teaching. Nonetheless, this exposure has helped us not only to learn Christianity but to learn about different cultures, histories, and ways of thinking. This impetus for pastoral training has also led

some Mongolian Christians to study abroad in Biblical schools. As local pastors began to fulfill their duties, there was a reduced need for foreign specialists in this regard, while Mongolians themselves adjusted Christian activities to their own social and cultural conditions. These years between the mid-1990s and mid-2000s hence marked a transition from external Christian leadership in Mongolia to internal and external co-leadership. This transition is continuing today.

With regard to the training of pastors, certified Biblical education carried with it international standards of understanding and accomplishment in addition to regional and local training and lecture programs within Mongolia. To better serve their members, churches in Mongolia consolidated and co-organized a large Union Bible Theological College and the Mongolian Evangelical Alliance. These organizations established a self-governing system between 1995-2000.

During this same period, many churches appeared in soum (county) centers, and the total number of churches rose to 370, with some 50,000 members. Churches collaborated in organizing humanitarian work projects, which became one of the biggest expressions of their beliefs, and for this purpose they established a variety of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as well. Churches and NGOs pursued diverse activities, such as spiritual advising for children and youths; giving lectures to childrearing parents, families and elders; caring for poor people through financial and spiritual assistance; training small and medium entrepreneurs in foreign languages, music, and so on. Now, Mongolians are increasingly aware of such activities taking place in small, medium and large ways.

3. The Period of Christian Identity from 2006 to the Present

Twenty years is certainly a short time in larger historical terms. Even so, if we divide this short time into periods, the current period can be considered a time of increased Christian maturity.

Although the process of training pastors has not yet met the needs of all the churches, many national pastors are now available for our local churches. Officially, a total of 180 pastors have been appointed to churches, and the Union Bible Theological College alone has trained 350 leaders in Bible knowledge programs that range from two to four years in duration. Through improved training and work experience, church leaders are becoming increasingly aware of the contributions they can offer Mongolian society both in education and in facilitating modern Mongolian citizenship. Today there are 600 churches and 100,000 Christians in Mongolia. This testifies to the degree that Christianity in Mongolia developed along with its democratic revolution and market economy and globalization to become an inseparable part of Mongolian society.

Development Factors

I would now like to address principal factors that have influenced the development and growth of Christianity of Mongolia.

Spiritual Space

As mentioned above, socialist ideology became unable to meet the spiritual needs of people. As such, there was a great attraction to supernatural things such as aliens, magic,

and people who were believed able to magically make fire. Christianity, which has hundreds of years of development and is one of the greatest heritages of humankind, began to provide alternative spiritual answers. It was a new belief to Mongolians, especially to young people, and thus it influenced them to make a revolution in the spiritual space of Mongolia.

The Economic Factor

During and after the democratic revolution of the early 1990s, Mongolians faced severe economic crises. During this difficult period, foreign voluntary and humanitarian organizations established by Christians made enormous efforts to help Mongolians with their struggle against poverty. They distributed flour, rice, and clothes to poor families, and I believe there are few impoverished families in Mongolia that did not receive their assistance. Through this work, many people came to churches, received the Gospel, and came to believe in Jesus Christ.

Education and Socialization

I assume that the most important factor of growth and development of Christianity in Mongolia relates to education and childrearing. When it became important to learn foreign languages and work with foreigners, Christian churches enabled Mongolians to learn English, Korean, and Japanese. Many young people came to churches to become acquainted with or connected to countries abroad and foreign people. They wanted to have friends for learning English, and many young Mongolian Christians went to study in universities abroad.

Initially, Mongolians came to churches for the sake of their individual interests, but later they were attracted by various church activities, including those that helped young people who were in unstable social relations. They were offered discipline and friendship that helped them escape alcoholism, family divorce, and crime. On the other hand, hundreds of people who were alcoholic and divorced came to churches seeking advice concerning their problems.

At the beginning of the 1990s, condition in prisons worsened and many young people died there. Christian organizations provided food, warm clothes and showed spiritual support. When prisoners were later released, many of them came to churches for socialization and contacts. Alternatively, parents who were worried about the fate of their children's education often voluntarily sent them to church schools, which offered an improved learning environment, and they requested lectures by pastors and church leaders for their children. Churches focused on creating a proper childhood environment over and above the formalities of education per se, and I think this was the right approach at the time, as well as attracting many people.

Different activities were organized in addition to those that focused on creating a better environment for children, such as providing health care and child advocacy, developing herding skills, and promoting agriculture and management of small and medium businesses to benefit people's lives. Training courses on parenting and family life were developed, based on international best examples, and today we see positive results from these activities.

Conclusion

Christianity was not registered in Mongolia in 1990, but today five percent of the Mongolian population have become Christians, who are active in all areas of Mongolian society. As politicians have emphasized, Christianity is now a major influence in Mongolia, and Christians comprise approximately ten percent of the country's voting population. Given the degree to which Christianity has grown and spread in Mongolia, there is no way that its influence can be ignored.

In my opinion, the intense growth of Christianity in Mongolia is still as strong as it was at the beginning of its conversion phase, toward the beginning of the 1990s. Christianity intends to continue fostering positive influences in Mongolian society. I would like to say in closing that during the twenty-year history of contemporary Christianity in Mongolia, we have been working for the wellbeing of our government, our society, and our people by melding Christianity with our unique cultural heritage and asserting this internationally.

Chapter 12
The Significance of Compassion in the Contemporary Practice of Buddhism

Arjia Rinpoche

Editor's introduction: *The 8th Arjia Rinpoche, Lobsang Tubten Jigme Gyatso, is considered by Buddhists to be a reincarnation of the father of Je Tsongkhapa, the great master of Tibetan Buddhist philosophy and practice, and founder of the Gelugpa school of Tibetan Buddhism. Born in 1950, the 8th Arjia Rinpoche is perhaps the most eminent living lama of Mongolian descent. Trained in Amdo at Kumbum Monastery, which he later headed, he enduring the Chinese cultural revolution and for decades managed to astutely support Tibetan Buddhism within China. He fled in 1998 after the Chinese attempted to draft him to become the tutor of their handpicked "replacement" of the Panchen Lama. In the process, he became one of the highest lamas to escape China in decades. His memoir is* Surviving the Dragon: A Tibetan Lama's Account of 40 Years of Chinese Rule. *In his contribution here, Arjia Rinpoche simply and yet profoundly highlights, in the contemporary Mongolian context, the significance of Buddhist compassion. Noting the importance of social and humanitarian outreach, the difficulties of modern materialism, and the importance of social open-mindedness, he concludes by emphasizing the importance of compassion not just as a focus of meditation or prayer, but as a daily, practical practice.*

At the very heart of Buddhism are wisdom and compassion. These have been important spiritual values for human beings–including Tibetans and Mongolians–for thousands of years. The cultivation of wisdom, as seen by the development of medicine, the study of cosmology, and the creation of monasteries, stupas, and other forms of Buddhist art, satisfies not only our spiritual yearnings, but also our material needs. However, what I'd like to discuss in this paper is not wisdom, but its counterpart, compassion. In Buddhism, compassion means loving all beings and bringing happiness to all. What then is its significance in contemporary Buddhist practice?

Sword in hand, Chinggis Khan once conquered a vast area across Asia and Europe. His success became legendary in the world, and even today it remains the pride and dream of the Mongols. However in the twenty-first century, whether a country has the strength to conquer or not no longer depends on the power of force or the size of its territory. People leave their homes and their loved ones to travel to other countries. What takes them there? Is it the vast territory or the strength of the military? Obviously not. It is the freedom, equality, and rule of law these countries offer that conquer the minds of others. In these countries, the value of individual life is respected, so that everyone is likely to maximize his strength and potential. This is, in fact, the practice of compassion. No doubt, what a Buddhist seeks and has always sought are the same goals as those important to members of a modern civilized society.

We have to admit that the regimes of the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China have brought a destructive impact upon the world, especially the Eastern civilizations, including Mongolia. Today, as Mongolia seeks modernization, politicians, economists, entrepreneurs, multinational corporations, and others often give top priority to the accumulation of material wealth. This is a grave challenge to

the Mongolian Buddhist philosophy. In fact, if a society pays no attention to compassion, the conduct of its people will fall into extreme chaos, posing a direct threat to social ethics.

Compassion is profound. Politicians need to follow the concept of compassion to draft laws and regulations that care for and protect society and aim to eliminate the gaps between different classes of people. Future generations should follow the rule of loving kindness to guarantee clean air, clear water, and ensure the balance of the biosphere. Mining people, as they accumulate great wealth, also need to follow the concept of compassion in order to avoid serious damage to the natural environment and maintain the pristine beauty of the earth. In short, it is compassion that can soothe not only the spiritual world but also the material world of those who are impacted by social change. The practice of compassion can satisfy all aspects of human life and environmental requirements. It helps to maintain society in a normal and healthy cycle.

How do we nurture our spirit of compassion? How do we make our society more humane? Buddhists will propose, quite naturally, to rebuild temples and restore the traditions of Buddhism. Yes, we are duty-bound to protect our traditional culture, but just to repeat the past is not enough. We have to bring forth the newest concepts and provide the best service for mankind. For example, in the past, our temples were places for monastics to worship, meditate, and study the sutras. But today, we need to open their doors to welcome all people to enter and meditate and study Buddhism. The temples need to give shelter to the homeless, to offer the poor a chance for a practical education, and become community centers where people can meet, socialize, discuss their problems and find solutions.

In Mongolia, the political upheavals of the last century have caused many people to lose their jobs, become homeless, and suffer from illnesses that are inadequately treated. As a

result, Buddhists, as well as practitioners of other religions, have started to explore providing employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, giving adequate education for school children of poor families, as well as establishing orphanages. This is the cultivation and practice of compassion.

In 2009, I visited Mongolia and began thinking about the situation there. I have often worried about what will happen if nomads lose their grazing grass. If a man doesn't have a job; if a woman doesn't have food; and if the children don't have the care of their parents, then what is the value of our Six Perfections and the Eight-Fold Path to Enlightenment?

In recent years, I have paid particular attention to charity work and medical conditions in Mongolia. Although the Mongolian government and the civil society have made many efforts to improve the situation, many of Mongolia's medical facilities are relatively old-fashioned, and many people must go to Korea, Thailand, and China just for physical checkups and for treatments. Recently, I have had conversations with people about the most pressing needs of Mongolia. They have told me that the country must have more up-to-date medical equipment and advanced medical personnel. The Country needs to adopt modern medical management systems.

When I was in Kumbum Monastery, we set up a Red Cross Chapter. We had a Tibetan hospital and did a good deal of charity work. When there were natural disasters, such as heavy snows or earthquakes, we went to the surrounding towns and country areas, to help the survivors. We also organized donations, clothing and drug distributions, and the chanting of prayers for the dead and suffering.

Because of this experience, coupled with the support of the government of Mongolia and the encouragement of friends, my spiritual students and I are now planning to build a Wellness Plus Medical Clinic in Ulaanbaatar. Then, if conditions allow, we will upgrade the services and create a

full-sized hospital. Our aim is to provide medical services for all, including people who live in the nomadic areas, and even those who do not have money. We will regularly send medical vans and take preventive measures to safeguard the health of the people who live in remote areas.

Compassion is not just for meditation and prayers. Compassion should be a daily, practical practice. In other words, the Pure Land is not just for visualization. We should make it a reality and transform samsara into nirvana—we should make a heaven on earth. As a Buddhist, I think this is the real meaning of compassion in contemporary Buddhist practice.

Part Three

Constructions of Society & Culture

Chapter 13
Constructing Socialist and Post-Socialist Identities in Mongolia[1]

David Andrews Sneath

Editor's introduction: *As one of the most well-known and well-regarded Western scholars of Mongolia, Dr. Sneath in his presentation connects the ethnic and national construction of Mongolian peoples and group identities across the 20th century to the present. Stressing that terms of ethnic, local, kinship, and even national identification are flexibly defined and configured, Dr. Sneath charts how Mongolian organizational forms and group identities have been actively constructed – and changed – in the context of different social purposes and political regimes.*

This is a longstanding historical process in Mongolia that continued dramatically with the construction of national and local group affiliation terms and identities during the Soviet-controlled socialist period. So, too, as Dr. Sneath shows, this process has continued during the post-socialist period to the present, including how politicians and others configure and mobilize various forms of identity and association appealing to and attempting to ally themselves with potential supporters in various constituencies in the country. Importantly, as he notes, this process has led to multiple overlapping networks and forms of group identity rather than stark polarization between some political or ethnic groups and others.

This process of flexible and flexibly-constructed Mongolian group identity, which ranges from the rural locale to the nation as a whole, is key to understanding the dynamism, the intrigue, the complexity and also the relative lack of social polarization between groups in Mongolia today. As such, Dr. Sneath's contribution is broad in scope, historically informed, theoretically astute, and of great practical contemporary significance.

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[1] This draft paper contains extracts from the author's article "Political Mobilization and the Construction of Collective Identity in Mongolia," published in *Central Asian Survey* 2010, 29 (3): 251-269.

Official histories of the Soviet period tended to project contemporary national and ethnic categories onto the past, so as to tell the story of the Mongol or Khalkh 'peoples' through time (e.g. Gongor 1978). However, more recent scholarship has challenged these historical representations (see Atwood 1994, Bulag 1998, Kaplonski 1998, Munkh-Erdene 2006, Elverskog 2006).

In the 20th century, Mongolia became subject to the Soviet version of nationalist thought. As the state constructed a single national 'people' (*ündesten, ard tümen*) it also, following the Soviet model, constructed the past in terms of tradition (*ulamjlal*), and launched the ethnographic project of identifying and describing sub-national 'ethnic' groups or tribes (*aimag, yastan*). Since the collapse of Soviet-style state socialism and the introduction of multi-party parliamentary politics, notions of both tradition and collective identity have become potential resources, particularly for politicians, to mobilize public support. Concepts of 'local homeland' (*nutag*) are particularly significant, reflecting to some degree the importance of social networks.

As Laclau (2005: 154) notes, "the construction of the 'people' is the political act *par excellence*." Both nationalism and populism require this construction, although the "exaltation of this ambiguous 'people' can take a variety of forms" (Canovan 1981: 294). Nationalism and ethnicity have frequently been constructed reciprocally, and as Alonso (1994: 391) remarks, "ethnicity is partly an effect of the particularizing projects of state formation." In the early twentieth century, Soviet activists, in particular the Comintern, created a new vocabulary for "revolutionary" national and ethnic groups. One of the principle architects of the Mongolian nationalist lexicon was Tsyben Zhamtsarano, a Buryat nationalist and ethnographer trained at St. Petersburg University. A set of Mongol terms were chosen to translate the key elements of

Soviet theory on the historical stages of ethnic communities. The term *yastan* was taken as the equivalent of the Russian *narodnost* (ethnic group/nationality).

Like the tribe, the concept of ethnic group is rooted in the notion of kinship and common descent (Hobsbawm 1990, p. 63)— as Alonso (1994: 392) puts it, the "false precept… that ethnic groups are genetically pure breeding populations with distinct, homogeneous, and bounded cultures." Indeed, the *yastan* 'ethnic groups' were not autocthonous kinship communities, but politically defined categories that had been historically formed by rulers. The Zakhchin ('Borderers') of southern Khovd province, for example, was originally the name given to a Zünghar administrative division formed from a diverse set of subjects charged with the duty of acting as border wardens. After their lord surrendered to the Qing they were formed into a banner (*khoshuu*) and assigned duties to support the Manchu official at Khovd (Atwood 2004, p. 617). They remained administratively distinct and were labeled a *yastan* in the Soviet era.

Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj, the newly elected president of Mongolia is of the Zakhchin 'ethnic group.' The electoral success of politicians from 'ethnic minorities' suggests that Mongolia's political discourse is not entirely dominated by the 'Khalkh-centrism' described by Bulag (1998:137), since sub-national ethnicity has not proved to be a barrier to high office in the Post-Soviet period. Politicians identified with 'minority' backgrounds have attracted plenty of 'Khalkh' voters, and there are, as yet, no political parties based on ethnicity or religious domination. But ethnic mobilization as a cultural project, rather than a party political one, is anything but a spent force. There are a number of movements that seek to mobilize *yastan* sub-national groups, and these may yet prove electorally significant.

Politically, the most salient sub-national form of collective identity is *locality* rather than ethnicity. Since territories are divided into nested series of named administrative districts, in most cases locality is conceived of in terms of units of government. This need not be seen as a recent development; forms of regional political identity were centrally important in the past. The importance of "roots" in local homelands is a central theme in Mongolian public life. With the collapse of Soviet communism as a viable political ideology, nationalism became one of the central features of the new political culture. The state celebration of Mongol tradition almost appeared to fill the gap left by the implosion of Marxist-Leninism. In both the Soviet and post-Soviet periods, the 'homeland' was elevated to the point of becoming a sacred principle. State sponsored culture celebrated the *saikhan ekh oron* or "beautiful motherland" in literature, song, poetry, and art. The logic of people rooted in their native places also applied to parts of the nation-state, and the notion of the *nutag* "local homeland" plays an important role in the imagination of community. Politicians of all stripes have been keen to present themselves as having rural roots, with a strong sense of tradition.

Interestingly, since the collapse of state socialism, local homeland identities have given rise to a new institutional form. The 1990s saw the rapid growth of the *nutagyn zövlöl*, or "local homeland councils." These organizations were established to operate as fundraising and lobby organizations, and also serve as central nodes for personal networks that link rural inhabitants to figures who assert some local attachment. Most of these councils were formed in the 1990s many of them at the time of the 60th or 70th anniversary of the foundation of the administrative district concerned. Officially classified as non-government organizations (*töriin bus baiguullaga*), a *nutgiin zövlöl* sprang up to represent every *aimag* and some *soums* in the national capital. Many other *soum* districts

that do not have such representation in Ulaanbaatar have established *nutgiin zövlöl* in the provincial *aimag* centres. These councils approach figures linked to the locality that have become successful in business, politics or some other sector, and ask them to join the *nutgiin zövlöl*.

We can see collective identities in Mongolia as discursive claims rather than a series of "social building blocks" that fit neatly inside each other, from household to region to nation. The terms used for collective identities are employed flexibly, referring to a wide range of categories of people, and these are applied to different contexts and modes of imagination – national, regional, ethnic, religious and so on. These are *context specific* groupings, dependent on a particular discourse or point of reference – be it as strangers in a capital city, activists in an environmental movement, or participants in national or local ceremony. We can see each of these as projects of mobilization, including the micro-mobilization projects of households concerned with common descent and stressing their local rural roots, using the idiom of descent or relatedness.

Constructing a National People

National identity, as it is understood today, is a relatively recent development in Mongolia, although authors differ in their understanding of politically significant identities in the Qing and pre-Qing periods.[2] Kaplonski (1998:35) argues,

[2] There are different positions on the nature of the ***ulus*** (the term now used to mean nation or state) in various historical periods. Atwood (1994), Munkh-Erdene (2006), and Elverskog (2006) do argue for the existence of some sort of collective Mongol identity indicated by the term ***monggol ulus*** (and in Munkh-Erdene's case also by the term ***obogtan***).

"Although its origins can be traced to the end of the 19th century, national identity on a broader scale became important only with the establishment of the socialist regime in the 1920s …. It was, therefore … largely the socialist government itself that was responsible for creating and propagating an identity based on the concept of 'nation' in Mongolia."

In the Qing period (1691-1911), Mongolia was ruled by an aristocracy - the descendants of Chinggis Khan's lineage who held the title *taiji*. Mongolia was divided into approximately one hundred petty principalities termed *khoshuu*, conventionally translated as "banner" in English, each governed by a *taiji* who held the title of *zasag*, meaning "ruler." During that era it is difficult to identify a clear sense of Mongol ethnic identity distinct from the tracing of noble or elite ancestry (Munkh-Erdene 2006, Atwood 1994, Elverskog 2006).[3] Mongol commoners did not share common descent with the nobility, nor could they do so even in theory, since descent from royal ancestors was the basis of aristocratic status.

When in a later era Mongolian nationalists cast back through history for records of a common ethnic origin for all Mongols, they found accounts of ruling lineages. Historically, the "lineage of the Mongols," then, was primarily a reference to the aristocracy. As Atwood (2004:507) puts it, "[Chinggis Khan's] descendants, the *Taiji* class, were the only full members of the Mongolian community." But in the twentieth century this aristocratic political discourse was transformed by new ideologies. Mongolian independence movements began to construct a new discourse of popular nationalism in which

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[3] As Elverskog has shown (2006, p. 16-17), the overarching category of 'the Mongols' was not the primary political identity for those, such as the Khorchins, who later came to be described in those terms.

the shared descent of the Chinggisid lineage was used as the template for the concept of the Mongolian nationality.

The assumed reality of ethnic groups became a kind of self-fulfilling prophesy during the state socialist era; they were associated with the backwardness of the past. The values to be aspired to were the Soviet goals of fraternal socialism (*bratskii sotsialism*) and *proletarian internationalism* (proletarskii internatsionalizm). But such political orthodoxy formed only a part of a wider form of historical imagination that might be termed national populism. By this I do not mean any particular political ideology, such as that characterized by Germani (1978:116) as authoritarian movements based on class alliance between elites and a largely urban proletariat. Rather, I use the term more inclusively to indicate the intertwining of the nationalist and populist modes of imagination.

Following Kaplonski (1998:36), I use Liah Greenfeld's notion of national identity as deriving from "membership in a people" in which each member "partakes in its superior, elite quality" with a resulting perceived homogeneity so that "a stratified national population is perceived as essentially homogenous, and the lines of status and class as superficial" (Greenfeld 1992:7).

The imaginative project of Soviet-inspired nation-state construction required a Mongolian equivalent for the Russian concept of *narod* or "people." At first the term that was found was *ard* – a term that originally meant "commoner." But the pre-revolutionary political discourse had not constructed the polity with reference to a single general "people." Subjects had appeared in discrete categories. There were the nobility (*taijnar / yazguurtan*), the *Shar* (members of the Buddhist monastic establishments), and the *Khar* (secular commoners or *arad*). Political statements were constructed with respect to these categories rather than to a general and inclusive national people.

The Construction of Ethnicity

Nationalism and ethnicity can be seen as reciprocally constructed. As Alonso (1994:391) notes, the anthropology of ethnicity suggests that "ethnicity is partly an effect of the particularizing projects of state formation." A set of Mongol terms were chosen to translate the key elements of Soviet theory on the historical stages of ethnic communities. The Russian narodnost (ethnic group/nationality) was translated as yastan.

Following the USSR, in which the state citizenry was made up of peoples of many ethnic groups or "nationalities," Mongols were registered as members of ethnic or national minority groups – yastan.[4] These became official identities and the internal passports of citizens of the MPR recorded their yastan. The vast majority were registered as Khalkha, making up 79% of the Mongolian population in the 1989 census. There were 25 other *yastan* ethnic categories identified, the largest of these, according to the 1989 census, being the Dörvöd (55,000), Bayad (39,000), Buryat (45,000), Dariganga (29,000), and Zakhchin (23,000), and Uriankhai (21,000).

Like the tribe, the concept of ethnic group is rooted in the notion of kinship and common descent (Hobsbawm 1990:63) as Alonso (1994:392) puts it, the "false precept … that ethnic groups are genetically pure breeding populations with distinct, homogeneous, and bounded cultures." Indeed, it is very clear that the *yastan* "ethnic groups" were not autocthonous kinship communities but politically defined categories that had been historically formed by rulers.

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[4] The census of Mongolia carried out in 2000 registered 23 notionally Mongol *yastan* (including the Khalkh) and four groups considered Turkic, the Kazakh, Urianghai, Uzbek and Tuvans (Dashbadrakh 2006:135). See Hirsch (1997:267) for the evolutionist scheme of *narodnost'* and *natsional'nost.'*

Parliamentary Democracy and the Discourse of Corruption

After the "democratic revolution" of 1990, in which protests and a hunger strike by a new generation of political activists led to the resignation of the Soviet-style government and constitutional reform, Mongolia introduced a multi-party parliamentary system. Although the old Soviet-style ruling party, the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) won more than 80% of the seats, it nevertheless chose to share power with the fledgling opposition parties, and introduced further political reforms, including a new 'non-Soviet' constitution in 1992 (Sanders 1992).

This placed Mongolia on a kind of middle road between parliamentary and presidential political systems (Munkh-Erdene 2010). The MPRP went on to win the 1992 elections but was defeated for the first time in 1996 by the Democratic Union coalition. The MPRP remained, however, the dominant political force in the country and swept back to power in a landslide victory in 2000. The opposition parties did better in the 2004 elections, which led to a hung parliament and a coalition government, but the MPRP was returned to power in the 2008 parliamentary elections amid accusations of electoral fraud and, for the first time, violent riots leading to some loss of life and a national state of emergency.

From its outset, the Mongolian parliamentary system has tended to be 'consociational' (Lijphart 1999), that is, marked by a certain amount of inclusivity and power-sharing despite occasionally bitter political in-fighting. The victors have generally tried to avoid outright polarization of the political class, cutting their opponents in on some portion of the available positions. This meant that in the early years of the new system the political struggle was not a fight to the death for either camp, and bitter though the arguments were, the system had a chance to stabilize without major challenges to the system as a whole.

There have been some wide-ranging change-overs of top posts in the public sector as a result of a change in the ruling party of government, but there has also been a good deal of continuity. Similarly, there is a mixture of opinion represented by television channels and newspapers with different political stances spanning the spectrum of party politics.

As in much of the former Soviet world, there has been a rapid increase in perceived corruption (*avilgal*).[5] It has become commonplace to think of bribery as an everyday part of Mongolian life – particularly among the relatively small new elite of wealthy businesspeople and politicians. This is linked in the popular imagination with the post-Soviet era – the "age of the market" (*zah zeeliin üye*). This discourse of everyday corruption should be distinguished, however, from the long-standing expectations and practices of gifting and mutual assistance within social networks, or *tanil tal*. These were well-established means of providing and receiving help and goods through family and friends in the state socialist period, and this was not generally seen as corrupt.

In the "age of the market" cash payments have become increasingly important and perceived corruption has mushroomed, but mutual help within social networks are still generally thought of in rather different terms than "corruption" among the rich and powerful (Sneath 2006, pp. 100-101). This public perception reflects both the corruption

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[5] The term now commonly translated as "corruption" is relatively new - *avilgal*, derived from the root verb "*to take*" (*avah*) and closely related to *avilgalah* - to make illicit profit, extort money, or be covetous. By the end of the 1990s it seemed that most Mongolians had to give some sort of inducement to get things done, and a government survey of 1,500 Mongolians showed that over 70% thought corruption had become widespread in the post-Soviet era, while only 7% thought it had been widespread during the state socialist period (see Sneath 2006: 89).

scandals that have continuously appeared in the press and the bitter experience of the privatisation of state assets, which appeared to generate fortunes for a few while the majority were left with next to nothing. Corruption in the wider sense has informed widespread notions of "moral decay" (*yös surtakhuuny yalzral*) since the collapse of state socialism. There is a pervasive suspicion of an elite who are said to be "eating money" *möngö idekh* - embezzling the public wealth.

As the July 2008 riots showed, a danger of power-sharing and consensus building is that the public may begin to worry that a self-interested elite is monopolizing both political and economic power. There is particular concern about the growth of mining operations, many of them foreign-owned, and seemingly the only type of economic enterprises that have flourished while other industries have suffered.

There is a fear that foreign companies are extracting the mineral wealth of the country, perhaps by buying off Mongolian politicians to do so. Public cynicism and discontent has been fed by the perception of a rather too-cozy accommodation between domestic and foreign big business, on the one hand, and, on the other, a political class meshed together by myriad private understandings and arrangements. However, despite a significant level of public disillusionment with the political class, electoral participation has remained reasonably good by western standards. Although the 2004 parliamentary election turn-out was just over 60% (Tuya 2005:.68), the 2008 parliamentary election and 2009 presidential elections enjoyed voter participation of 76% and 74% respectively.

The number of parliamentary seats assigned to different constituencies tends to slightly favour rural districts.[6] Politicians have tried to retain the loyalty of their constituencies, the

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[6] See page 158 for Footnote 6.

majority of which are rural, by stressing both their local links and struggling to win resources for their own districts. The pork barrel aspect of politics has drawn the critical attention of the Mongolian press.

Ethnic mobilization in the Post-Soviet Period

The 'ethnic groups' (*yastan*), although identified and constructed in the state socialist era, had generally been diminishing in importance as collective identities during the late Soviet period. But from the 1990s, ethnicity began to gain greater visibility, that is, as part of a process presented as the revival of traditional culture and a rediscovery of "roots" that had been covered over by Soviet modernism.

In a sense, collective identities of all types were being used in the search for mutual help networks in the social turmoil and economic precariousness of the post-socialist period. *Yastan* membership carries with it some sense of relatedness and common origin, but only for a certain proportion of people. Many Mongolians do not think of their 'ethnic' designation as particularly important, whereas most are very conscious of their locality identities.

To date there has been thankfully little by way of adversarial ethno-national mobilization. There are Kazakhs members of both the MPRP and opposition parties, and Kazakh MPs represent areas such as Bayan-Ölgii where many Kazakhs live, but these have not successfully formed a political

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[6] Most provinces (*aimags*) have about one parliamentary seat for between ten and twenty thousand voters, whereas in the city there are generally over twenty thousand voters per seat. In general the MPRP has retained stronger support in the rural districts than the city, reflecting its genuinely nation-wide party network of "cells" (*üüür*), which other political parties have struggled to match.

bloc. There are a number of Kazakh cultural organizations, often with links to Kazakhstan and other Islamic nations, but these are not as yet party political formations. But ethnic mobilization as a cultural project, rather than a party political one, is anything but a spent force.

Conclusion

In the era of parliamentary politics, ceremony and public ritual continue to play an important role in projects to reconstruct tradition, assert collective identity and deploy concepts of belonging. Here we see particularly clearly the terms of collective identity used normatively. They indicate sets of people who *ought* to feel some sort of commonality within a particular discourse – be it kinship, ethno-national history, or locality.

Although the concept of a national people has been deeply and powerfully installed in public culture, the mobilization of other forms of collective identity, and the claims by politicians and others to mutual loyalty and solidarity, largely remain as such – claims and projects. They are by no means always successful. Some people are concerned with ethnic history and identity, but many others are not. Indeed, beyond the immediate networks of family and friends, the collective identities that generally seem to have the most importance are largely those of locality – the *soum* and *aimag* administrative districts.

In all, we can see collective identities in Mongolia as discursive claims rather than a series of "social building blocks" that fit neatly inside each other from household to region to nation. The terms used for collective identities are employed flexibly, referring to a wide range of categories of people, and they are applied to different contexts and modes of imagination – national, regional, ethnic, religious and so on.

The range of social groupings referred to in this way is often overlapping and incoherent. In each case these are *context specific* groupings, dependent on a particular discourse or point of reference – be it as strangers in a capital city, activists in an environmental movement, or participants in a national or local ceremony.

We can see the above patterns as current projects of mobilization ranging from national politics to the micro-mobilization projects of households. They are concerned with common descent, stress local rural roots, and use idioms of descent or relatedness.

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Chapter 14
The False Term "Baga Yastan": Human Rights and Cultural Discrimination in Mongolia

Bat-Amgalan Baatarjav

Editor's introduction: *The language and linguistic stigma of those considered to be minority people are a key and important issue in many nations today, including in contemporary Mongolia. Addressing this issue, Bat-Amgalan Baatarjav describes how the term "baga yastan," which means "little" or "junior" people, carries a strong connotation of ignorance and incompetence as attributed to western ethnic Mongols. This is especially ironic, he suggests, because the language forms of western Mongols are in significant ways more indicative and ancestral of the Mongolian language, and its original script, than is the case of ostensibly non-dialectical Mongolian.*

Describing the linguistic and cultural stigma that he and others have endured as western Mongols, Bat-Amgalan Baatarjav emphasizes that the issue of ethnic stigma within Mongolia, and of ethnic Mongols living outside of it, is serious and has particularly negative and unfortunate impact on young people, including through the perpetration and reinforcement of misleading attributions on the internet. In conclusion, he calls on scholars and scientists to dispel such false characterizations and to reveal the unity of western and other ethnic Mongols with Mongolian linguistic and national traditions rather than viewing them as ignorant and at odds with them. In a postscript, the author thanks scholars and civic, political, and religious leaders for taking his plea seriously.

In two decades following the silent democratic revolution of 1990, Mongolia has faced many significant challenges. Surprisingly, the nation has, for the most part, achieved positive results despite major mental and cultural as well as political and economic changes. Of course, the most challenging of these has been the economic transition from a centrally planned to a market economy. Everyone discusses and calculates what we lost and what we gained during the transition period, especially our economists. But those of us in the social research community need to understand what attitudinal changes we have undergone so far, the results of these changes, and how they will affect our ability to overcome the challenges that our nation has yet to address.

Since 1990, a non-official and misleading term has been used with greater frequency in Ulaanbaatar and Mongolia. It is that the western part of Mongolia is a minority or "baga yastan." This term has been generally used, including by people from the western provinces themselves, even in the Socialist times. The term is now used with increasing frequency as an official designation as well as in colloquial speech or slang. The Mongolian word "baga" means "small", "junior" or "little." I see our understanding of "baga yastan" as a direct translation of the Russian slang, "maly narod" – малый народ, which literally means "minority people." But an incorrect understanding of this slang has saddled the term with a wholly different and derogatory connotation, that of ignorant and incompetent people. The terms hence brings a feeling of doubt and shame to those who are counted as "baga yastan", mainly from Uvs, Khovd and Bayan-Olge provinces.

The western regional provinces of Mongolia, including Gobi-Altai, Zavkhan and Khovsgol, have played an enormous role in preserving traditional Mongolian life styles and hospitality. When we encourage researchers to compare them with other regions in Mongolia, they find unique inheritances

of culture, religion and language. Most importantly, we observe the direct influence of modern parlance on the ancient Mongolian dialect, which is better preserved in these western Mongolian provinces, along with poems, songs, fairy-tales and legends that have been both told and sung. And yet, Western Mongolian is still called "baga yastan" language, though it is actually an important and ancient Mongolian dialect, inherited by the western Mongolian Oirad people: torguud, dorbod, myangad, oold, zakhchin, khoshuud, uriankhai and tuva.

It is hardly correct in a free independent Mongolia to name an ancient Mongolian dialect as a minority or "baga yastan" language, especially when most researchers know that this dialect is the direct language expressed in or by the old Mongolian Scripts. It is widely known that old Mongolian Script was designated as the original script of the nation, the vertical script, the script of the great Empire established by Chinggis Khan. Therefore, we must not forget that Mongolia is one nation, not only on its land, but including those Mongols who live abroad as a result of historical facts and reasons.

Unfortunately, most western province people do not know the more neutral original meaning of this misunderstood and presently stigmatizing term, and some have even accepted it as an official name and definition. Young people in particular have become embarrassed by their western Mongolian dialect, their native mother tongue. They have been influenced by a "hidden but intentional purpose" that is similar to the highly devious message of the Manchu Empire, an attempt to keep 19th century Mongolia from gaining the will to unite again under one flag.

Nowadays, this illusion has had many tragic social effects, especially among young people from western regional Mongolia who are discriminated against because of their dialect. They do not realize that it is actually an ancient Mongolian dialect, as most scientific researchers know. They

have become confused about their Mongol origins, being named as "baga yastan," a minority people, in their home country - Mongolia. This issue can be observed on the virtual world of the Internet when the issue discussed is "Halha Mongol" and "Oirad Mongol."

This brings me to discuss how four other young people and I were encouraged to set up Tod Nomin Gerel Center in 2006. I met Nadmid Sukhbaatar in 1992, at the inter University Scientific Conference held at the current National University of Mongolia – and we came to know each other because of our "unusual" Mongolian dialect. Except for listening to his speech, I would never have thought that he was a first year history student from the western part of Mongolia.

In our student years, our fellow students everywhere recognized us. They always asked us to speak Uvs language, and laughed at us. We tried to show them that we spoke Mongolian and that we had no problem understanding their spoken Mongolian. "Are you from Khovd or Uvs (western Mongolia)?" "Can you please demonstrate your baga yastan language?" "How do you say this in your language, please speak out in dorbet".

These were frequently asked questions. As young students, we felt a deep sense of neglect and discrimination in our hearts. We became shy about pronouncing our own original Mongolian language. After sixteen years, while visiting the Russian Republic of Kalmykia for the first time, I experienced that same feeling again, and similarly when in Volgograd and Moscow. People looked at me, wearing a national Mongolian jacket, as a real a minority. The police tried to stop me everywhere, creating problems. I understand deep in my heart how difficult it is to be a minority within the bigger nation which considers itself to have a different origin.

Unfortunately, this situation persists in Mongolia. This misleading term is still used, even more often these days, as

our young nation increases its use of internet communications. But this shows a lack of historical understanding. Politicians, police officers, schoolchildren, lamas, newspapers and even some young "scientists" are bravely using this false term, speaking "against the baga yastan". This is a significantly harmful yet largely unrecognized violation of the human rights and cultural development of western Mongolian people.

In my student years I saw many students and young men use their fists to prove that they were not minorities, but my approach was to read more Mongolian history and find out what the reasons were behind this discrimination. I believe that we are all of the same Mongolian nation. I now see that the lack of education is the main reason for failures of various kinds in practically every corner of the world.

Recently, during the Mongolian President's visit to Russia and Kalmykia, a well-known Torguud doctor from Mongolia asked a question of a dorbet Kalmyk man who was a well-known TV personality: "Do you speak the Torguud language? If not, you are not a real Kalmyk". My friend knew what he really meant, and asked me later if there is such discrimination against Mongolian Kalmyks (baga yastan) in Mongolia. This slang "baga yastan" now seems a source of serious discrimination against Oirads and western Mongolian people. Recently some people decided to describe Amarsanaa Baatar as a robber who has acted against his own people some hundreds of years ago. This is the same orientation as the Manchu-Chinese leaders whose goal was not to let the Mongols unite under one flag.

What can we say to our Mongolian brothers living abroad? Are we going to tell our brother Kalmyks in the Russian Federation, Olets in Kolon-buir, Ordos and Alasha, and Khoshuud in Kok Nuur, Dorbets in Xinjiang province, Torguuds in China, and New Jersey Kalmyks who are now living in the USA, that they are accepted only as minority

people in Mongolia? There is a Kalmyk man Bembya Chujaev, who is currently living and working in Ulaanbaatar, who knows seven generations that preceded him. Most Mongolian people know only three or less generations of their Mongolian heritage, yet they still think that they are important Mongolian people, different than the "minority – baga yastan" people, who live in the northwestern, northern and western regions of Mongolia.

The so-called "baga yastans" had never forgotten their tradition of hospitality and are trying to keep traditional and ancestral values of authentic honesty, hard work, and loyal hearts beating for their country. My position is that we need to be extremely strong in changing this attitude, and try to not pass it to our children. Mongolia is Mongolia, with different tribal names and yastans which have been united under one flag and which bring with them important traditions and history, especially in the wise education of children.

This unfortunate term "baga yastan" has creates serious misunderstanding among most Mongolian people and was also successfully used against western Mongolian Oirad people when the Manchu Emperor failed to defeat the Oirad warriors on the land of present Inner Mongolia – Ulaan Budan. After facing a strong defense by the kings and nobles of the Oirad, the Manchu Emperor announced that Oirads were vassals and robbers who had "tricked" him and fought against the great Manchu Empire for a hundred years. Great history tells the truth and sometimes hides it, but we can all see that the old Mongolian script speaks so-called "Uvs language."

I asked a linguist, professor Sambuu Akh, how to pronounce "My own Mongolian language" as it is written in old Mongolian script, and the answer was "ober un Mongol helen," which is read in modern Mongolian language as "ooriin Mongol hel." Western Mongolian people, Oirads, would have read this as "evreen Mongol keln," which is well understood

by Russian and American Kalmyks, Chinese Dorbets, Olets, Khoshuud and Torguud people. Oirads are an original Mongol tribe and Oirad is a dialect of the ancient Mongolian language. International and Mongolian scholars understand this, but it is not well understood among the Mongolian populace at large.

I encourage all who study western Mongolian or Oirad history and culture to speak out and comment on this topic. Their voices can have a large influence on human rights in the western region of Mongolia as well as Mongol bloodline brothers living abroad. Some people call the Mongolian language "halha dialect or language," but I understand it as a recently developed modern Mongolian dialect, influenced by use of the Cyrillic alphabet.

Upon hearing the Inner Mongolian dialect of a man from Shiliin Gol aimag, my first thought was, "Chinese language has had a great impact on their Mongolian parlance." But my understanding completely changed when I visited Kalmykia in 2006. A man from Shiliin Gol aimag used the words "madan, tadan" to say "our, your" or "bid nar, ta nar." I thought that this was not an original Mongolian dialect, but Kalmyk dialect proved that it was. Including within Mongolia itself, modern Mongolian language speakers have lost some of their ancient words and dialect, whereas Mongolians outside the country may retain a more ancestral form.

We modern Mongols are proud that we live in a free and independent Mongolia. But we must admit that we need to respect each other, and even our Mongol brethren living in different countries of the world. Unfortunately, many young people are still getting involved, often innocently, in discriminatory and unproductive arguments through the Internet that revolve around the aforementioned misunderstanding of the term "baga yastan." Most of them use "baga yastan" as a term of criticism or stigma when they refer to some political issue, argue about famous individuals

or newspaper articles, and even wrestling competitions. And so-called "halha Mongols" are always raising issues of "baga yastan," saying that they should leave Mongolia.

What is causing them to act in this way? It is misunderstanding and the lack of the historical knowledge – people are reading less and have less understanding of older concepts, as developed by previous rulers of Mongolia. Perhaps some are at pains to see Mongolia as a large and progressive nation. Mongolians know about the term baga yastan, but there is little serious understanding of this term and its implications, especially in the realm of political arguments. Unfortunately the term, as presently and inappropriately used, influences many sectors and increasing numbers of people in contemporary Mongolia.

What should be done to correct this situation? Responsibility rests on the shoulders of scientists, historians, and linguists to correct this situation by convincing those who do not understand the development, changes, and progress of Mongolian language and scripts. I encourage researchers to get deeply involved in this topic. We need to let western Mongols and Oirad people living across Mongolia and in other parts of the world know that Mongols should not be discriminated against as a minority, especially in the territory of their own country, Mongolia.

I would like to thank those who have allowed me to introduce this topic to the scientific and scholarly community, civic representatives, public figures and religious leaders. I wish all freedom of ideas in the democratic nation of Mongolia.

Chapter 15
Questions Concerning Values and the Sustainable Livelihood of Rural Mongolians

Narmandakh Damdinjav

Editor's introduction: *As a country in which protection of the environment and of sustainable pastoral livelihoods has a long and deep history, Mongolia is now faced with major challenges of land degradation caused by extensive and sometimes illegal mining operations, overgrazing, water depletion, the strong negative impact of climate change, and climatic disasters that include drought and dzud (harsh winter conditions that can quickly kill large numbers of livestock). In this contribution, the Head of the Labor Relations Division of the Employer Association of Mongolia assesses the relationship between long-standing rural values of environmental management, the stresses of modern development and social change, and alteration of social values in relation to current policies and intervention programs.*

Emphasizing the disjunction between traditional values and the response to current conditions, Dr. Damdinjav, highlights the need for greater integration of rural collective decision-making with environmental management programs and greater legally-mandated land remediation by mining operations. Government programs are assessed as relying too heavily on direct welfare payments or their equivalent and as further eroding traditional values of social and environmental responsibility. At larger issue is a reinforcing cycle of poverty, debt, and economic dependency that fosters short-term materialism rather than encouraging longstanding Mongolian cultural values of social and environmental respect and responsibility.

The purpose of this contribution is to examine the Mongolian tradition of ensuring sustainable living against contemporary changes in governmental and private sectors that have altered these patterns.

Mongolian traditional values of protecting nature and the environment

Economy, society, and nature were considered the main three pillars of life among nomadic Mongolians. Given their rich pastoral heritage, Mongolians have been deservedly considered to have rich customs and traditions of adapting to, revering, and protecting their natural environment. In this regard, O. Amarkhuu has classified these Mongolian customs and traditions into the following five deeply interrelated value orientations:

1. benevolence and respect for nature
2. prohibition against environmental misuse or degradation
3. teaching and education concerning nature
4. religious reverence for the landscape and geographic features
5. observation and cognizance of natural change

Traditional customs of protecting the environment are arguably a valuable achievement of nomads' intelligence, customs, and morality. Although the new Constitution, approved in 1992, obligates every citizen to protect the environment, many have not restored traditions and customs of protecting nature. How to resurrect the nature-protecting traditions and customs of Mongolians in urban areas and in places where mining is being actively developed emerges as a serious question. This issue is made poignant by recent Mongolian sayings and attitudes which suggest, in essence, that Mongolians should live for today and not for tomorrow.

Lifestyle and family values

Mongolian life ideals traditionally emphasized the importance of love, faith, family, parents, and children. To these have been added contemporary aspirations of living a healthy and long life, education, and elevated economic status and its associated lifestyle. However, these aspirations are difficult to satisfy or accomplish, and a significant segment of the population has broken with traditional social norms and distorted their orientation by resorting to activities that are generally agreed to be socially illegitimate or unacceptable.

Newly expanded orientations include bribery, cheating, misappropriating, stealing, robbing, threatening, and attempting to escape from difficult conditions by becoming homeless wanderers, alcoholics, devaluing life, and/or joining extremist or revolutionary groups. Due to overly generous and one-sided social welfare policies, the number of aimless, effortless, and passive people has increased, thus weakening the value of hard work and life values of those Mongolians who are striving for property, wealth, and success. In 2010, 39.2% of the Mongolian population and 29.8 % of Ulaanbaatar population were considered poor.

The tendency or at least the desire to become rich without effort is noticeable among people of all social levels. For many, material possessions, including money, a house, apartment, and car have become the most important goals in life. Against these, social and cultural values such as love or dedication to one's profession are frequently becoming "second place."

According to the research on "The Contemporary Situation of Mongolian Family Relations," conducted in 2009 by the Ulaanbaatar Institute of Philosophy, Sociology, and Law, 31.5% of the respondents (which is 19.5% higher than the previous survey result), answered that financial independence, material needs, money, and living environment have an

important role in their happiness. Concerning the values of families participating in the research, traditional values held dominant sway for 51.2% whereas contemporary values were dominant for 48.2%. Countryside residents, married people, and cohabitants placed more emphasis on traditional values, whereas citizens of urban areas, single persons, divorcees, and widowers give more importance to contemporary values.

I concur with Professor T. Namjil, who concluded that an increased emphasis on money and on financing material acquisitions has influenced family style. Under present conditions, the low or impoverished level of material living endured by many Mongolians leads many to increase rather than reduce their value emphasis on financial resources, and to reduce their respect for the values of the older generation.

Changes and trends in state, private sector, and public sector activities

Mongolia has drawn up a sustainable development plan based its own unique cultural heritage, and the country has been attempting to implement this plan since 1990, when Mongolia started reforms across virtually every sphere of social life, including politics, economy, culture, and society itself. The new constitution, enacted in 1992, ensures the human right to live in a healthy and secure environment and at the same time obligates every citizen to protect the environment. The concept of sustainable development is included in the Development Concept of Mongolia of 1996. This objective is also reflected in the 1990's Poverty Reduction Program, the 1998 Program for Sustainable Development of Mongolia, the 2008 Millennium Development Goals, and the Comprehensive National Development Strategy of Mongolia. Policies, institutions, and activities that influence living values have been studied and appropriate measures have been taken.

However, there has been lack of comprehensive consideration concerning actual problems such as poverty in relation to the environment, lack of coordination between sectors, and lack of sustainable funding for them.

The private sector has not established good governance, and this is particularly true with respect to social impact on the environment. The ministry of Nature, Environment, and Tourism established that a total of fifteen thousand hectares of Mongolian land has been damaged since 1990 due to the mining. Land remediation was made in only four thousand hectares of land. The results of the land inspection, which included investigation of more than two hundred economic entities, showed that of these, 15% had made sufficient, 47.7% made insufficient, and the remaining 32% made fair land remediation.

Approximately 80% of Mongolian territory is natural pasture land, and this supports the livelihood of some 160,000 households and 32 million head of livestock. Seventy percent of Mongolian pastureland has deteriorated to some degree. In the "Study on Mongolian Herders' Living" conducted by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the Association of Mongolian Pastureland Management, it was noted that "…Although climate change is one of the main reasons, uncontrolled usage is the main cause of pastureland deterioration."

Along with pastureland deterioration, the number of livestock has been fluctuating greatly due to drought and dzud. Although the Mongolian Government is taking measures such as setting up an emergency fodder fund, broadcasting weather forecasts, and developing programs to insure livestock, government measures have not and apparently cannot sufficiently decrease the present risk to pastoral livelihoods and to the Mongolian environment.

The Government of Mongolia and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation have jointly initiated and been implementing a "Green Gold", Pastureland Ecosystem Management Program since 2004. The basic goals of the first phase of this program are:

1. To test advanced technology and help it be adopted by herders
2. To introduce, promote, and facilitate pastureland co-management principles
3. To test and explore the legal environment for pastureland co-management and improvement

The first phase of the program demonstrated that less severely damaged pastureland can be easily recovered by improving its usage; on the contrary, it is difficult and expensive to recover heavily damaged pastureland under current climate conditions. Territorial principles of pastureland management were formulated during this phase of the program. Moreover, many herders of soums joined the Pastureland User Group (PUG), and these groups joined the Association of Pastureland User Groups (APUG), which became a new structural organization of herders. Establishing common interest use territories, PUG found that its Associations at the soum level were best suited to implement sustainable management of pastureland. This principle was included in the draft law on Pastureland.

Traditional values of relying on local homeland and kinship relations, and of attending to the development of children within rural areas, continue to be important among Mongolian pastoralists. More attention is now being paid to improve and upgrade education and knowledge, to ensure food safety, and to promote local business and jobs, and encourage savings. Yet loans, money transfers, grants, and allowances still constitute the bulk of family income, resulting in high levels of debt. By establishing local group associations and

non-governmental organizations, pastoralists are developing some participatory mechanisms that allow collective decision-making and planned contributions to development. As such, herders' initiative and participation continue to play an important role in protecting the environment, including management of water and of livestock, and combatting pollution and land degradation.

Mongolia now relies heavily on mining and natural resource based economic development. This path of development is fraught with risk to the environment, and all the more so in light of global and regional climate change and climatic disasters (such as drought and dzud). These latter appear to be happening more frequently and are further compromising the environment. The goal of the Mongolian government is to effectively use profits from mining to develop a more diversified economy, to improve Mongolians' living quality, and to create sustainable growth. However, the human development index of Mongolia continues to be low; with an index of 0.622, Mongolia is in 100th place out of 169 countries. Lack of effectiveness of institutions and governance, lack of citizen's real authority to participate in decision making, and lack of social responsibility of private sectors put Mongolia at the risk of encountering "the curse of wealth."

Mongolia has drawn up a "National Program on Climate Change Influence" and a range of other programs and projects to adapt to climate change and protect the environment. It is important to arrange and implement these programs and projects in an orderly manner, phased in by priority, and with assessment to ascertain the best means to ensure the participation and duty of private sectors, civil society, and citizen to implement them

Conclusions

Mongolia's climate change in the context of greatly increased mining-industry-based economic growth is accompanied by policies that may be overly populist and too strongly based on the provision of direct social welfare payments. There is strong need to tighten coordination between various strategic goals that have been designed to respond to climate change, to effectively manage the economy, and to reduce poverty.

Although it is important to educate Mongolians concerning global issues and world-level concerns, it is more important to train and educate people to live and work successfully at the local level. We are facing the test of "whether we can be a united Mongolia that can both think at a global level and work successfully at the local level by adapting to globalization and climate change." Mongolia is at an intersection or the crossroads of whether to become a dependent country that has "the curse of wealth" and disunity, or to become a country with economically, socially, culturally, politically, and ecologically interrelated and integrated development that can meet current needs without bringing damage to the resource needs of future generations.

It is praiseworthy that social control and participation have increased in state decision-making concerning the interrelationship of economy, society, and ecology. Yet, individual and family level decision-making should be more firmly integrated into the larger relationship between economy, society, and ecology. At present, amid increased mining and other forms of intrusive development, we are losing time to establish and strengthen the legal basis to put limits on industries and services and to ensure adequate compensation for and remediation of environmental degradation. Resources and possibilities that should meet the needs of the future generation are presently being depleted due to the degradation

of the environment. We have been using the entrails of the earth, animal, and plants while exporting our raw materials too cheaply to provide for local people, who can barely survive given their limited employment options and income.

Paying more attention to the problems of poverty and nature should now become our main strategy to ensure sustainable development.

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Part Four

Legacies of Buddhism & Cultural History

Chapter 16
Mongolian Buddhism Past and Present: Reflections on Culture at a Historical Crossroads

Glenn H. Mullin

Editor's introduction: *An accomplished author and translator of Tibetan Buddhism who has lived in Mongolia for a number of years, Glenn Mullin here provides a broad and poignant portrayal of Mongolian Buddhism and of Mongolia, more generally, from before the time of the Mongol Empire to the present. Breathtaking in sweep and analytic synthesis, his account foregrounds three major waves of Mongolian cultural and Buddhist religious "blossoming" – plus a fourth wave at the time of Zanabazar in the mid-seventeenth century. This strong historical perspective includes emphasis on key historical features and junctures that have been misreported, distorted, or downplayed by preceding Russian and sometimes also Chinese and Western biases of scholarship, not to mention highly propagandist portrayals.*

Particularly important is Mullin's use of deep historical perspective to highlight, contextualize, and throw into relief contemporary developments in Mongolian cultural and religious heritage during the present post-socialist period. He poignantly discuss key challenges faced by cultural resurgence and Buddhist religious redevelopment in contemporary Mongolia, including the continued export and loss of historic art and artifacts; the need for better government policies and greater support for Mongolia's cultural and religious heritage; historical overemphasis on Chinggis Khan as opposed to other (and less violent) Mongolian luminaries; a tendency to rely on assistance and experience from outside Mongolia or from the government rather than developing it organically within the country; and unfair advantages afforded Christianization within Mongolia vis-à-vis Buddhist initiatives that are economically strapped.

A great admirer of Mongolia, its history, and its culture, Mullin concludes by challenging Mongolians to more fully draw upon, live up to, and build upon the substantial legacy of their history in the present.

I would like to begin by stating clearly that I am a deep admirer of Mongolian culture. It has made a remarkable contribution to world culture in particular and Central and East Asian civilization in particular over the past 2,000 years, especially within the spheres of Buddhism and shamanism. I am highly aware that Mongols are a very proud people with an ancient history and may take offense at things of a critical nature said about them. For that reason, any conference discussing Mongolia under the general umbrella of "States at Risk" treads on somewhat thin ice. However, it is very important to address risk factors in order not to fall prey to them. My paper focuses on the Buddhist situation, so will only address these factors within Buddhist geopolitical and politico-spiritual contexts.

Modern Mongolia: Some Socio-Political Considerations

An interesting genre of indigenous Tibeto-Mongolian historical literature is known as the *Hor Chojung*, or Origins of Dharma in the Hor Regions. Several texts of this nature exist. "Hor" is the name generally used by Buddhist scholars in classical times (from the 13th century to 1921) to refer to the kingdoms of Central Asia that we generally think of today as being Mongolian in ethnicity.[1] It is interesting to note that the name "Mongolia" is not widely used in the Hor Chojung literature, even in the late nineteenth century.

Hor, of course, was far bigger than Mongolia is today. It included Buryatia and large parts of Siberia, Inner Mongolia,

[1] There are numerous texts of this genre, most of which were written in Tibetan by Mongol lamas. The most famous is Lobsang Tamdrin's *Hor Chojung Serdeb, or The Origins of Dharma in the Hor Regions: The Golden Annals*. A modern edition was published by photo-offset by The Academy of Indian Culture, New Delhi, 1964.

much of modern-day Kazakhstan, large parts of what today lie in Chinese provinces such as Qinghai, Szechwan and Xinjiang, and just about everything north (as well as northeast and north west) of the Great Wall. For that reason I often tease my Mongol friends by pointing out that they should not celebrate 1921 as "The Year of Mongol Independence" but rather as the year that the political leaders in Urga gave away three-quarters of traditional Mongolia. The Urga leaders at the time had been recently brought to power through military advice and assistance from the Soviets, and the Soviets certainly did not have Mongolia's best interests at heart in the creation of the Modern Mongolia borders. In fact, opposition voices such as the great Ja Lama Dampa Gyaltsen were silenced through assassination.[2]

The Manchu territories also fell under the umbrella of Hor. They too surrendered to Chinggis and adopted the Mongol "standing script." But seventy years of Soviet domination of Mongolia, and the onslaught of Soviet propaganda labeling the Manchus as "Chinese," has separated these Hor people from their traditional Mongol cousins. Very little research has been done on the treaty relationships between the various Hor (Tartar-Mongol-Dzungar-Manchu) nations, and most of what is available is distorted by political bias and propaganda

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[2] Ja Lama is typically presented as a psychopath and lunatic in Soviet-period Mongolian literature, a clear example of the Soviet dislike for him, and the propaganda campaign that they launched after his murder. Even Mongol mainstream scholars writing in the 1950s and 1960s continued this character distortion, completely overlooking the fact that he was one of the few Mongols who understood that the 1921 treaty that "created Modern Mongolia" was in fact a land grab on the part of Russia and China, with the new leadership in Urga being bought off or intimidated into submission.

(including Russian and Chinese; or by Western scholars beholden to the good graces of these two dictatorships).[3]

Buddhism in Mongolia: Three Waves of Cultural Blossoming

According to the *Origins of Dharma in the Hor Regions* by Lobsang Tamdrin, Buddhism came to the Hor region in three waves. The first wave began in the third century CE, during the time of the Indian Emperor Ashoka. This is some three centuries before Buddhism took root in China, and some eight centuries before it became firmly established in Tibet. Ashoka had extended his Buddhist empire northward all the way to the Silk Road, and he eventually captured the city of Khotan. Khotan was the westernmost region of Hor and thus was part of Mongolia. From Khotan Buddhism gradually spread eastward to the Mongolian Gobi kingdoms along the Silk Road. Lobsang Tamdrin states that even in these ancient days Hor supported a population of more than 100,000 Buddhist monks.

The second great wave of Mongolian Buddhism began with Chinggis Khan and his heirs, and the special relationship that Chinggis established with the Sakya School of Tibetan Buddhism. Indeed, Chinggis' grandson Emperor Kublai Khan went so far as to have his Tibetan guru Chogyal Pakpa (known to Mongols today as Pakpa Lama) create an easy form of the Tibetan script for use in all territories under his rule. This script, known as the *Pakyig*, continued as the script of choice by the Mongol emperors who came thereafter, and was in common use in Mongol Buddhism until the Third Wave

[3] An example is China Marches West, where the author Peter C. Perdue inadvertently or purposely confuses the Chinese with the Manchu Mongols, and misconstrues the Manchu-Khalkha-Tibet alliance in the colonization of China as somehow "the Manchus are Chinese."

took hold some three centuries later. Eventually the standard Tibetan script won out, however, and this is what we see in Mongolian monasteries today. The fall of Mongol rule in China, and the according rise of the Ming from Nanking, saw the retreat of the Mongols to their original territories north of the Great Wall. Eventually a lack of strong Mongol leadership, and the division of the remaining regions of the empire among the princely khans, also saw a decline of the Buddhist movement.

Mongolia's Third Buddhist wave, as outlined by Lobsang Tamdrin in *The Origins of Dharma in the Hor Regions*, refers to the Yellow School Movement that was inspired by the Third Dalai Lama's travels in the Mongol regions from 1578 under the patronage of Altan Khan. The Dalai Lama was not known by the name "Dalai" at the time. Rather, both at home and abroad he was known as Jey Tamchey Khyenpa, or "The Omniscient Master." The Third carried the ordination name of Sonam Gyatso. When he arrived in Hohhot, the then southern capital of Mongolia, Altan Khan translated the "Gyatso" part of his name into Mongolian. Thus Gyatso became Dalai, and Jey Tamchey Khyenpa became "Dalai Lama Dorjechang."

Although Hohhot is now no longer within Mongolia, having been lost to China in the treaty of 1921, the temple built by Altan Khan for the Third Dalai Lama in Hohhot in 1580 still stands today. Moreover, the Erdene Zuu temple built for the Third Dalai Lama in Karakorum by Abtai Sain Khan in 1584, has also largely survived. After the Third Dalai Lama's reincarnation was identified amongst the Mongol population of the Hohhot region, the Yellow School became the dominant sect of Mongolian Buddhism. It remains so today.

A Fourth Wave of Mongolian Buddhism

Lobsang Tamdrin's *Hor Chojung* mentions hundreds of other Buddhist lineages that came to Mongolia over the centuries.

However, the three waves listed above certainly played the most dominant roles in defining the character of Mongolian Buddhism.

It is perhaps relevant to speak of a fourth wave, which came with the advent of Under Gegen, a Mongol lama who travelled to Tibet in the mid-seventeenth century and became a close friend of the Fifth Dalai Lama. The two were co-students of the great Fourth Panchen Lama, Lobsang Chokyi Gyaltsen. Later Under Gegen became "lama king" of Mongolia, a role somewhat modeled on that of the Fifth Dalai Lama in Lhasa. Today he is popularly referred to as Zanabazar, a Mongolian mispronunciation of the Sanskrit form of his monastic name, i.e., Yeshe Dorje, or Jnanavajra in Sanskrit.

Zanabazar's work came to pervade much of the Hor region, and his vision of Mongolian Buddhism flourished for more than two and a quarter centuries, until the Communist takeover of 1921.[4] The Cultural Purges of 1928-1938, when most lamas and monks were killed or sent to gulags, marked Buddhism's sharp decline in Mongolia. That said, Mongolian Buddhism today is largely marked by the Zanabazar footprint.

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[4] Unfortunately the Communist takeover of Mongolia in 1921 led to the death of the Eighth's reincarnation under suspicious circumstances in 1924. The Mongolian incarnate Lama Tilopa, third highest lama in the country, apparently had one candidate recognized and enthroned in the late 1920s, although neither the Dalai nor Panchen Lama signed off on the recognition, perhaps because of their fear of the Communism that had overtaken Mongolia. Then after the Dalai and Panchen Lamas had passed away – the former in 1933 and the latter in 1937 – the Dalai Lama's regent, Gyaltsap Redreng Tulku, recognized and enthroned a Tibetan boy as the Ninth Jetsun Dampa. Thus two children came to carry the illustrious name of "Jetsun Dampa." The first one is said to have died in the Soviet Union in the 1950s or 1960s. Meanwhile the second candidate was educated in Tibet, and later went into India with the Tibetan refugees in 1959, when the Tibetans fled the Chinese Communist take-over. He has remained there since, and has only very recently passed away, having come back in his final days to Mongolia.

The Cultural Holocaust of 1928-1938

The Soviet-backed "Modern Mongolia" that emerged in 1921 proved to be a mixed blessing. Less than a decade later, Stalin carried Russia into a path of seemingly unprecedented mass murder, social repression, and repeated cultural purges, and Mongolia soon fell prey to the same evils. The Mongol regions directly under Russian occupation (Buryatia, Siberia and Tuva) suffered first, but this soon spread to independent Mongolia. Known by the somewhat benign term "The Cultural Purges," the Communist destructions included the murder of most representatives of Mongolia's pre-Communist period. Others suffered an even worse fate, being deported to Soviet concentration camps. A small museum in Ulaanbaatar documents some of the most horrific events of these cultural purges. The Arts Council of Mongolia has documented more than 1,250 monasteries and temples that were destroyed in this period, together with their libraries, art reserves, medical facilities and other treasures. One monastery in Ulaanbaatar, Gandan, was later allowed to re-open, largely as a Communist showpiece. It remained the only monastery permitted by law throughout the Communist period.

The Fall of Communism

The collapse of the Communist rule over the Soviet Union in 1989 resulted in rapid changes within Mongolia, and a democratic government quickly emerged. Circumstances transformed almost overnight. By the mid-1990s, the country had privatized most property and state assets, relaxed regulations on international travel, granted freedom of the press, and dismantled most of its state-owned monopolies.
Democracy also brought freedom of religion to Mongols. Whereas Gandan was the only monastery allowed during

the Communist era, the people are now allowed to begin the process of rebuilding. To date, small replicas of approximately 200 Buddhist temples have been created across the country. All of them are tiny compared to the originals that were ravaged by the Communists almost seven decades ago, but it is nonetheless a proud re-beginning.

Challenges and Risk Factors

The transformation of Mongolia from a rigidly controlled Soviet-style Communist police regime to an open market society has produced many amazing success stories. But there also have been challenges. I thought that it might be useful to list seven that I feel represent the most problematic of these.

1. Rank Capitalism's Contribution to the Loss of Buddhist Art

A free market society brings its own challenges, and one of these is the preservation of national treasures. During the period of the Cultural Purges, many brave Mongols risked their lives to save great works of art from the temples under attack. Then, twenty years later, during the Khrushchev "warm period," numerous museums were opened, and a request made to the general public to donate items to these as national treasures. Some were donated, while the bulk remained with the general public. As the older generation dies off, these items are being inherited by the offspring, often without the same dedication to preservation.

Although the government has implemented strong export regulations on art objects, it is difficult to enforce these regulations effectively, especially in a country where so few people are educated in identification of or care for antiquities. There is little doubt that many priceless artifacts are being lost on a daily basis.

The large land border with China is a major problem. Not only are many priceless masterpieces lost through this porous frontier, but there is the added crime of historical distortion. Mongolian masterpieces are carried first into China and then on to Hong Kong, where they are erroneously labeled as Tibetan. Tibetan art has become very fashionable in recent decades, and most Mongolian art is now sold under this label. This is a major concern for art historians. The world of Mongolian Buddhist art is still very new to Western art scholars, and knowledge of it is almost lost in its own homeland.

2. Government Impediments

Although Mongolia's 1,250 monasteries and temples were almost all destroyed in the 1930s by the Mongolian government and all of its art and literary treasures stolen, the post-Soviet Mongolian government has arguably done little or nothing to effectively assist in the rebuilding. In addition to doing little to help with the rebuilding, to the contrary, the government in many ways obstructs the re-building efforts by imposing heavy taxes on those lamas who are gathering funds for rebuilding projects. Though this is a matter of some dispute, the Hambo Lama of one temple confided in me that his community is forced to pay taxes in seven different categories on whatever funds he raises, the resultant sum being almost 30%. Former President Enkhbayar once confessed to me that he had attempted to get many of these tax categories removed, but had been fighting an uphill battle with bureaucrats.

3. The Distortion of Mongolian Buddhist History through Residual Communist Propaganda

Communist governments generally see academic activity in the field of the social sciences as a means to a political end,

and therefore as primarily having the function of political propaganda. As a result, Mongolia today staggers under the weight of more than seventy years of propaganda. It has infiltrated all levels of intellectual life and popular thinking.

One example is the distortion of the character of the immensely popular Gobi mystic Danzan Rabjaa (1803-1856). The Communists destroyed his monastery near Sainshand in the 1930s, and in the 1940s spent a fortune vilifying him. Then in the 1950s they decided that his popularity could best be used for propaganda purposes, so they presented him as a "Red School" lama who was anti-establishment and proletariat. Today, most Mongols think of him in this latter light. The reality is very different, and in fact he was the fifth incarnation of the famed Noyon Hutaght, a Yellow School graduate of Drepung Gomang Monastery who was a contemporary of Zanabazar and the Fifth Dalai Lama; and like them, he combined lineages from several different sects in his personal practice. However, Danzan Rabjaa's main guru was the Fourth Changkya, one of the ten top Yellow School Lamas, and the tutor of the Manchu emperor. The attempt to paint him as a "Red School Lama" is propaganda.

Jeff Watt from the Rubin Museum in NY visited Hamrin Hrid two years ago, having been told that Danzan Rabjaa was prominently Red School, and that the monastery had original Red School Art from him. Watt is one of the world's top iconographers. He was therefore surprised to discover that all the so-called Red School images in the monastery are in fact based on lineages from Sera Monastery, another famous Yellow School institution in Lhasa. We see this kind of distortion of history throughout Mongolian intellectual life and popular thought. It began as propaganda fueled by the Communists in the 1950s and 1960s, and became embodied in the writings and sayings of the state-scnctioned Mongol scholars of the period.

Another example is the anti-Manchu and anti-Tibetan propaganda of the Soviet period. Although completely uninformed of the nature of the Manchu-Khalkha-Tibetan alliance, the Communists saw the Mongol connection with these two super-powers – one economic and the other spiritual – as the deepest threat to Soviet control of Mongolia.

4. Post-Colonial Syndrome

Three years ago my good friend Professor Bob Thurman visited Mongolia, and at that time the then First Lady, the wife of President Enkhbayar, organized a press conference. The question of Tibetan versus Mongolian Buddhism came up, because Thurman is well known as a professor of Buddhist studies, and also as the director of Tibet House in New York City, while at the same time being one of the main students of the great Mongolian lama Geshey Wangyal.

One of the journalists asked him, "You have done a lot to promote Tibetan Buddhism in the West. Why do you not do more for Mongolian Buddhism?" My recollection is that Professor Thurman replied, "Mongols have to do more, not us Westerners. Instead of always talking about the war-mongers of Mongolian history, such as Chinggis Khan, you should look more to the hundreds of great wise men and sages in your history. Celebrate them in your media. The world will respond. Nobody outside of Mongolia likes Chinggis Khan. He murdered millions of innocent people." Naturally this shocked the audience. But there is truth in it.

5. The Tendency to Look Abroad Rather than at Home

Although it is wonderful that so many young monks and nuns are studying in the Tibetan monasteries of India, and so many Tibetan lamas come and teach in Mongolia, this in itself

creates something of a danger. Mongolian Buddhism went underground during the Communist period, and many of its unique lineages were preserved in this way. A major concern many of us have is that these lineages are being lost rather than sought out and used to revive the unique qualities of Mongolian Buddhism. The reasons for this include the large number of charismatic Tibetan lamas, their easy accessibility, the offer of scholarships for them to study in India, the difficulty of seeking out and training under these "hidden" Mongolian lineage holders, and other such considerations.

6. The "Leave it to the Government" Attitude

Under Communism, any public work worth doing was in principle expected to be done as a government initiative. In fact, if it was not a government project, it was probably prohibited. The effort to rebuild Buddhism has suffered considerably from this legacy. This pattern differs considerably from the Mongolian tradition of the past. Kublai Khaan, for example, personally built many hundreds of temples, sponsored many great Buddhist artworks and publications, and patronized thousands of monks and nuns in their study and practice. During the Communist era, the policy was that only the government should do public works. In the New capitalism, this has transferred to "Let someone else do it -- and hopefully a foreign-sponsored NGO."

7. The Foreign Christian "Buyers of Souls"

Buddhism is an eclectic tradition, and preaches the equality of all traditions. Buddhist refuge in Tibeto-Mongolian liturgy often opens with the words, "I look for inspiration to all enlightened masters past present and future of all ten directions of the universe." Thus it attempts to avoid the pitfall of sectarianism.

That said, the presence in Mongolia of well-funded foreign Christian evangelical missionaries from Korea and America does present a serious problem to the rebuilding of Mongolia's traditional culture. The reality is that there is not an even playing field. The Mongolian Buddhist infrastructure was utterly destroyed by the Communists. This includes not only temples, monasteries, libraries and artworks, but in addition all Buddhist educational institutes. In addition, when the Soviets exited from Mongolia in 1990, they left behind them a devastated economy and material infrastructure. It has not been easy for the handful of traditional spiritual leaders to keep pace under these conditions with foreign Evangelical Christians, who pour millions of dollars a month into the country.

Conclusion

Mongolia has a great Buddhist history stretching back to the pre-Christian era. Like all civilizations, it has experienced successes and downturns with the passing of the centuries. It is presently at a difficult crossroads.

Buddhist prophecy states that if every nation does its best in these times, the state of Shambhala will emerge and will bring about 1,000 years of golden civilization. The Kalachakra Tantra taught by the Buddha speaks of a land far to the north as being pivotal in the fulfillment of this prophecy. Many of the later Kalachakra texts identify this Northern Land as being Mongolia. In other words, according to the prophecy, the world will do well and enter a thousand years of a golden age if Mongolia revitalizes itself and manifests its enlightenment powers; otherwise, we face a thousand years of darkness.

Mongols have written more books on Kalachakra and Shambhala than any other peoples. It is therefore important that they now rise to the occasion of fulfilling this great destiny.

Chapter 17
Mongols and Oirats as Peacekeepers: Buddhist Warriors Behind the Lotus Throne

Richard Taupier

Editor's introduction: *Dr. Taupier's contribution makes a provocative and well-researched assertion: that the historical role of Mongolians in enabling, promoting and ensuring the integrity and influence of Tibet – including the development of Tibetan Buddhism – is greatly underappreciated. Citing several key historical periods and examples, Mongolia's central role is effectively documented in ways that recast our historical understanding of Mongolian importance. As Dr. Taupier suggests, the great attention given to the persona and legacy of Chinggis Khan both inside and outside Mongolia belie the key significance of other Mongolian leaders and periods.*

At larger issue, as discussed at length during our original conference, are the ways that Mongolians are now poised to rediscover, reinterpret, and reassert the richness of their history following seven decades of Soviet propaganda and Socialist rewriting of the Mongolian past. Given the sensitivity of much archival material, including from the socialist period, significant parts of the historical record are just now beginning to be more accessible within Mongolia to scholars as well as citizens. Future years may well see important new interpretations and assertions concerning Mongolian history, including especially by Mongolians themselves.

Histories are always written from particular vantage points. Indeed, it is not possible to speak about history except from the perspective of a specific time and orientation. Historical

perspectives are colored by many influences that include ideology, ethnicity, nationality, language, methodology and knowledge of specific primary and secondary sources. We never entirely escape these limitations. We can mitigate them in part through awareness and transparency about those factors that influence our historical perspective. We can seek to understand the perspectives of other historians by knowing about the influences to which they were subject and the vantage points from which they wrote and the audiences for whom they wrote. While historical facts may be perceived as neutral, history is always a matter of interpretation.

From a global perspective, the history of Mongolia and Mongolian people is relatively unknown and underappreciated. That history unfolded within the context of nomadic culture, and is often difficult for those without an understanding of nomadism to comprehend. Much of the history of Mongolians available in English has been shaped by external cultural views that are non-nomadicand non-Mongolian – and which contributed to misunderstanding and misinterpretation. The more these perspectives are repeated and strongly held, the harder they are to correct. It is my opinion that Mongolian history and culture should be seen and studied in the same light as all the great classical cultures of the world, no different than the history of Greece, Persia, Rome, Russia, China or Tibet.

This short paper takes note of another type of historical bias, namely the way in which other more dominant historical narratives have pushed Mongolians off center stage and caused them to be seen as only minor actors during many historic eras. I have challenged myself as a historian to place Mongolians and Oirats back at center stage and try to interpret important historical periods and events from their perspective. It is only through a multiplicity of perspectives that we can begin to fashion a more holistic understanding of Mongolian contributions to world history.

Qing history is one of those dominant historical narratives by which Mongolian history is overshadowed. For Manchu rulers that was intentional. They worked diligently to assimilate the eastern Mongol uluses into the Manchu Empire and, to a large extent, describe themselves as the inheritors of earlier Mongolian legacies. Their perspective was one in which all other narratives were sub-themes within the history of the Great Qing. Qing historiography is I think well understood in this respect.

Tibetan historical narratives have also unintentionally marginalized Mongolian history, but in other ways. First is the volume of historical materials from which Tibetan historians can draw; these are far greater than the materials available to historians of Mongolia. Tibetan histories, written from Tibetan perspectives, view other players as temporary agents. Tibet also occupied a centrally important ideological position in Buddhist Central Asia, with other cultures viewed as the recipients of those ideological values. It is the key reason that the Qing Dynasty worked so hard to place Tibet in a subservient role, to deny it independent moral authority from which other Central Asian rivals might draw support and legitimacy.

But of greater importance to the current lack of parity among Chinese, Tibetan and Mongolian historical perspective is what has happened over the past fifty to sixty years. Tibet, in its ongoing struggle to re-gain its independence, has done well in capturing global attention. Tibetan and Chinese historians have promoted competing narratives intended to influence public opinion about whether Tibetans have a legitimate historical claim to independent status. Our own positions in that dialogue are not central to this presentation. Neither of these perspectives is my concern in this paper, though their influence is important to note.

What is central to this paper is the construction and promotion of historical narratives about the roles that Mongolians have played in the affairs of Central Asia and the world during the past 800 years. In addressing this issue, it is important to move beyond the Chinggisid period and the Yuan Dynasty to discuss the ways in which later Mongols and Oirats altered the course of Asian history – and of world history – and gave us the legacies that allow us to understand how the robustly modern nation of Mongolia has been built on the outcomes of many past events. In doing so we can encourage others to gain a better appreciation for the ways in which Mongolians and other steppe cultures have contributed to the world as we now know it.

We can begin by looking back on some of the most important contributions that Mongolians have made relative to Tibet. We should note that Tibet itself was once the heart of a great Central Asian Empire. While that Empire had fallen apart more than 300 years before the rise of Chinggis Khan, its cultural influences were still strongly felt throughout much of Central Asia, especially through the agency of its religious orders and great lamas. But Tibet itself was often torn by regional and sectarian rivalries and violence. Aristocratic clans rose to regional prominence following the dissolution of imperial authority in the late 9th century. By the 11th century aristocratic clans began to patronize and become associated with competing Buddhist and Bon lineages. This was a period in which Tibetan Buddhism experienced an important second wave of development, as the Nyngma lineage experienced resurgence and the Kagyu, Sakya and Kadampa schools all began to take shape under the influence of early spiritual leaders and secular patrons.

But after its early imperial period, Tibet was able to experience periods of centralized authority and national unity only under the direct influence of external agents. From the

13th through the 17th centuries, Mongols and Oirats were the external influences that brought peace and stability to Tibet and allowed the Tibetans to realize many of their greatest accomplishments. The first time the Mongols played a direct role in Tibetan affairs was during the time of Godan Khan, the second son of Ogedei.

Godan Khan lived in the Kokonor region but all of Tibet was considered within his domain. In 1240 he demanded that the great Sakya Pandita should appear at his court and instruct him and his nobles in Buddhist Religion. In return, some sources indicate that Sakya Pandita was given authority over the thirteen fiefdoms of central Tibet. The Sakya leader instructed Tibetans that resistance to Mongol authority would be disastrous and that in return for tribute and help in matters of religion the Mongols would help the Tibetans to spread their religion far and wide. This version of events seems now to be rather simplified and truncated but the reality is that soon thereafter Mongol control and centralization of authority in Tibet was complete.

Sakya Pandita died in 1251 and Godan Khan in 1253. But Khubilai Khan, who inherited Godan's realm, quickly established a similar relationship with Sakya Pandita's heir and nephew, Sakya Phakpa. The rapport between Phakpa Lama and Khubilai Khan is well known. By 1264 Phakpa Lama had been given religious and temporal control not only of central Tibet but also of Amdo, Khams and Western Tibet. Sakya control of Tibet continued after the death of Phakpa Lama in 1280 but began to decline not long after the death of Khubilai in 1295. Without strong central authority internal strife again arose in Tibet. All of the thirteen central Tibetan myriarchies (districts "controlled by ten thousand rulers") became embroiled in a conflict that ended in the year 1350 when the Pakmodrupa gained eminence and were soon recognized by the Mongol Yuan Emperor Toghun Temur as the central

authority in Tibet. With the end of the Yuan Dynasty in 1368, Mongol influence in Tibet ended.

The next most significant period of Mongol influence came in the late 16th century and in a quite different manner. By the early 15th century Je Rinpoche Tsong-kha-pa had established the Gandenpa tradition, which would later become known as the Gelukpa lineage. Gendun Drubpa, later known as the First Dalai Lama, a direct disciple of Tsong-kha-pa, was instrumental in establishing its early institutions. The Second Dalai Lama, the first recognized Gelukpa tulku, continued that building tradition. By the time of the Third Dalai Lama the Gelukpas were attracting many followers and patrons. As a consequence they began also to develop enemies and rivals who feared their success and coveted the resources flowing toward them. Thus, when Altan Khan of the Tumed Mongols requested Sonam Gyatso to come to Kokonor in 1576 to spread the Dharma and encourage the so-called second wave of expansion to the Mongols, Sonam Gyatso and his followers were happy to be out of harm's way, under the protection of powerful Mongol leaders.

Thus Mongol patronage and protection, while not directly influencing Tibetan affairs, firmly established and protected the religious institution of the Dalai Lamas, created the Dalai Lama as a Central Asian and not merely a Tibetan spiritual leader, and led to a great influx of wealth to Gelukpa institutions. It is not a stretch to say that without Mongolian patronage the early Gelukpa movement might well have withered and died before reaching maturity.

The Third Dalai Lama also created the great monastery at Kum Bum in Kokonor. Sonam Gyatso and his followers extended Gelukpa influence into Central Mongolia when the Abatai Khan took refuge and brought his people under the influence of the Dharma. It was a stroke of karmic genius when the Fourth Dalai Lama was born to a grandson of Altan

Khan, a just reward for Mongolian patronage. No other non-Tibetan people, with the possible exception of the Khoshuds and the Kalmyks, share such a strong karmic relationship with the Dalai Lamas. To this day he is commonly regarded as one of their own. When the Fourth Dalai Lama was escorted to Lhasa by a strong contingent of Mongol cavalry, the Mongols signaled yet again that he and the religious institutions of which he was the leader continued to enjoy powerful protection.

Following the early passing of the Fourth Dalai Lama in 1617 the Manchus succeeded in driving a wedge between Mongolia and Tibet. Nor were the Mongols a unified people. The Chakhar Mongols rose as enemies of the Gelukpas and the young Fifth Dalai Lama. When a Chakhar army was sent to Tibet in 1637 it was the Oirats under the leadership of Gushii Khan who rose to the defense. It was they who became the next great patrons and protectors of the Dalai Lamas. Gushii Khan led the majority of the Khoshud people into the Kokonor region where many have remained until this day. He not only protected the Dalai Lamas from a hostile Mongol minority, but also took on and finally defeated all of the internal enemies of the Dalai Lama in Tibet.

As a consequence Gushii Khan was recognized as the de facto King of Tibet and was indeed given that title by the young Fifth Dalai Lama. But in 1642 Gushii Khan, following in the footsteps of Godan and Khubilai Khan, gave to the Great Fifth Dalai Lama the ultimate offering, complete authority over the political and religious affairs of Tibet. The result was the reintroduction of central political control and the enabling of an extended period of growth and stability perceived now as Tibet's golden age. It was only in the 18th century that Khoshud power waned in Tibet and Manchu power rose. But it is entirely appropriate to credit the Mongols with establishing the Dalai Lamas as pivotal, universal spiritual leaders in Central Asia and the Oirats with credit for establishing the Dalai Lamas as

the political leaders of Tibet and creating the form of Tibetan government that exists to this day, unfortunately in exile.

Tibet is now recognized as one of the great classical cultures of Central Asia and indeed the world. Yet few people in the world know or appreciate to what extent those accomplishments were made possible only with the support of various Mongol peoples over many centuries. This is what I intend when I say that it is important to balance historical accounts and to give appropriate credit to the many important Mongolian contributions of the past thousand years, not just at the time of Chinggis Khan, but up to the present. This is only one of many potential historical accounts that often remain untold. Additional well-researched historical narratives about Mongolian contributions to world history are needed to balance global knowledge of Central Asia.

I would like to end with one other short effort in re-examining important periods in Mongolian history. I have found it quite puzzling that Mongolians have looked almost exclusively to Chinggis Khan as their historic role model and cultural hero. Some three years ago I asked a Mongolian friend and scholar why Mongolians seem reluctant to recognize more recent historic figures as key role models in Mongolian history and whom might be considered to have played important roles in the making of modern Mongolia. I was quite surprised when he answered "Galdan Boshugtu, because it was he who forced the Khalkha Mongols to seek the protection of the Qing Empire." I asked, why not Zannabazar? He replied "many people blamed him for surrendering to the Manchus and forfeiting Mongolian freedom." Indeed Manchu rule hurt Mongolia's development badly and left scars still visible today.

But let us reflect on that. What if Zannabazar had not made that choice? What if he had joined with the Zunghar effort, opposed the Manchus, and lost, only to see Mongolia fully assimilated into the Qing Empire in the same way as

Kokonor, Inner Mongolia and Zungharia? Mongolia might have become merely another province of China, so over run by Han Chinese that it would have been unable to establish its independence in 1911. While it soon after fell under Soviet control, it retained its independent status. The nation that Zannabazar surrendered to the Manchus still existed, unlike Zungharia. It was that nation, fashioned by the Zunghar-Mongol conflict that emerged in 1990 with the right to self-determination, to take its place among free nations in a modern world, with the right to tell its own stories, preserve and celebrate its own culture and to fashion its own future.

We might say that Zannabazar deserves at least some of the credit for the present standing of the modern Mongolian nation. It seems that if we are to blame Zannabazar for the hardships that Mongolians suffered under the Qing we must also credit him in part with the freedom, opportunity and right to self-determination that Mongolians now possess. It is one of the reasons for the title of this paper, Mongols and Oirats as Peace Keepers. Zannabazar chose to make peace, perhaps an unpopular decision over the past 300 years. But, perhaps he was much wiser than we give him credit for. Perhaps he understood, with the kind of foresight with which true Buddhist saints are endowed, that the seemingly hard road held the greatest potential for ultimate freedom.

History is wonderful in this respect. It allows us to look back from our current vantage point, do our research well, and then propose interpretations from which we may learn new lessons that may serve us well in the future.

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Chapter 18
The Mongolian National Revolution of 1911 and Bogdo Jebtsumdamba Khutuktu, the Last Monarch of Mongolia

Batsaikhan Ookhnoi

Editor's introduction: *: In this strongly researched contribution, Professor Batsaikhan Ookhnoi reconsiders the role of the 8th Jebtsundamba – in rough terms, the Mongolian equivalent of Tibet's Dalai Lama at the time – in engineering the national independence of Mongolia from the Chinese Qing Empire in 1911. The facts and interpretation of this event are particularly important since, as asserted in his description, it is "the most special historical event that has occurred in the lives of Mongols during the past three hundred years." Given the heavily propagandized view of Mongolian history that was developed during the Stalinist and the longer socialist era in Mongolia – including demeaning and disparaging characterizations of the 8th Jebtsundamba and of Buddhism generally – such reconsiderations of Mongolian history are especially important and significant at the present time, that is, as the nation asserts its values and its history in relation to its course for the future.*

In the present case, Professor Batsaikhan argues for the strategically intelligent, foresightful, and politically effective personal role of the 8th Jebtsundamba in engineering Mongolian independence, including the successful strategic managing of Mongolian relations with Russia, with China, and also internally vis-à-vis powerful Mongolian nobles and clans. Addressing the claims of alternative interpretations, Professor Batsaikhan cites a rich tapestry of primary historical accounts and, in the process, provides the basis for further important work on this and related important junctures and reinterpretations of Mongolian history.

Introduction

On December 1, 1911, the Mongols seceded from the Manchu Empire, declared their independence, and elevated the Bogdo (Holy) Jebtsundamba Khutuktu to the throne as the Khaan of the Mongolian nation.[1]

Since 2007, Mongols have annually celebrated the 29th of December as the Day of our National Independence. This process was facilitated by the findings of many Mongolian and foreign scholars concerning the National Revolution of 1911. A more objective attitude has been taken toward historical studies than was the case during the socialist era, and a process of reviewing the recent ideologized historical past has begun in earnest. As part of this effort, I wish to recount here how Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu was described during the socialist years and the change of understanding with respect to him that has taken place during the post-socialist period.

Preconditions for the Mongolian National Revolution of 1911

Yaakov Shishmarev, a famous Russian diplomat who spent some 50 years of his life in Mongolia, noted in 1885 when writing about Mongols, "In case conditions are to be created for the Mongols to be united, the Khalkhas are certain to lead the movement. Many factors account for this. The most important one is that in Khalkha resides the reincarnation

[1] O. Batsaikhan, *Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu, the last king of Mongolia: life and legend*, revised second edition, Ulaanbaatar, 2011.

of Avid Jebtsundamba who all Mongols and Khalimags venerate."[2]

The authority and reputation of the Khutuktu were huge in Mongolia even though he was Tibetan and had been found, as a reincarnated leader, not in Mongolia but in Tibet. As such, the Manchu Emperor had accorded him no titles or privileges. Because he was so influential, it was noted that "although he is not directly in charge, he can be instrumental not only in Mongolia but also for others beyond her."[3]

Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu stated in 1909 in one of his decrees, "It is now time for us to think of how to promote Mongolia's religion and statehood, protect our land, and live for the long term in peace and happiness. If we miss this time, we will have to suffer a great deal and will be unable to control our land, much less foregoing lives of happiness. If I do not remind you of this, in spite of my knowledge, there is no use for the Mongolian nation to have venerated my eight reincarnations. I, therefore, cannot but advise you. You, nobles

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[2] Donesenie Russkogo konsula v Urge Shishmareva o polojyenii Mongolii (*Report of Shishmarev, Russian Consul in Urga on the situation of Mongolia*), iul 1885 – Sbornik geograficheskih topograficheskih i statisticheskh materilov po Azii Voyenno-uchenogo komiteta Glavnogo Shtaba Vyip. 22,SPb.8 1886,s. 154-160; Ocherki torgovyh i pogranichnyh otnoshenii s Mongoliei v period 1861-1886 gg i sovernennoe polojenie strany. (*Essays on trade and border relations with Mongolia in 1861-1886 and contemporary situation n the country*) – Gosudarstvennyi arhiv Chitiskoi oblasti F.1 Lst.1, c.3292; Otchet o 25 letnei deyatyelnosti Urginskogo konsulstva (*Report on 25 years of Activities of the Consulate in Khuree*), 1886; Edinarhova N.E., Russkii konsul v Mongolii (*Russian Consul in Mongolia*), Irkutsk, 2001.

[3] State Archive of Chita province (Russia), F.1, Lst.1, c.32921, p.21.

and officials, think well concerning the way forward, and let me immediately know of your views and opinions."[4]

Ample information is available concerning the secret meeting of Mongolian nobles in Khuree in July 1911. The United States Embassy in Peking informed its Government that the meeting was held in the Bogdo's residence and that he chaired it.[5] This indicates Bogdo's involvement in the initiative.

Dobdanov, a Buryat who arrived at Khuree on 21 October, 1911, mentioned in a letter to V. Kotvich the following concerning the political situation in Mongolia: "The future of Khalkha's life is now in the hands of the Bogdo Khaan only. But the Bogdo's political vision has not been clear so far."[6]

Dobdanov underscored when writing about the Bogdo that, "It is no coincidence for the Khutuktu to have been elevated to the throne as the Khaan of the Mongolian nation. He has in fact been so for many years. He had been working for years carefully and unswervingly to show the world that he was the Khaan of the Mongolian nation. The coup taken place was an outcome of Khutuktu's wise policy and the effect of his political wisdom."[7]

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[4] T. Tumurhuleg, *Naimdugaar Javzandamba hutagt yamar hun baiv*, Utga zohiol urlag, 1990 ony 4 dugeer saryn 6 (What kind of person the 8th Jebtsundamba Khutuktu was, Literature and Art, 6 April 1990).

[5] R.Bold, *Mongolyn tusgaar togtnolyn talaarh ANU-yn uzel handlaga, bair suuri, bodlogo* (1910-1973) (United States Attitude, Position and Policy on Mongolia's Independence) sedevt doktoryn dissartatsi, Ulaanbaatar, 2007, p.24.

[6] *V. Kotvichiin huviin arhivaas oldson Mongolyn tuuhend holbogdoh zarim bichig*, Sudlan hevluulsen akad.B.Shirendev, erhelsen akad. SH.Natsagdorj (*Some of V.Kotvich's personal documents relating to the history of Mongollia*, Researched and published by B.Shirendev, edited by Acad. Sh. Natsagdor). Ulaanbaatar, 1972, p.70.

[7] Ibid, p. 92.

Dobdanov also noted in his letter to Kotvich that, "the Mongolian National Revolution was a blow to the Manchu authorities and aided, as such, the Chinese revolution. The Chinese should be grateful to the Mongols for that and should, at least, recognize their [favorable] situation that is now created."[8] This demonstrates the wider significance of the Mongolian National Revolution of 1911 and suggests the importance of deeper historical study with respect to it. It may be possible to view the Mongolian Revolution of 1911 as a factor in the process that led the Manchu authorities to understand that they had no means to oppose the Chinese Revolution that was then spreading throughout the Manchu territories, including the remotest areas, and which had become an overwhelming process.

The culmination of the Mongolian national revolution of 1911: The enthronement of Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu as the Khaan of the Mongolian nation

A very interesting account of the ceremony of the Khan's enthronement was provided in 'Obugun bicheechiin oguulel"[9] ("Reminiscences of an Old Scribe") by G. Navaannmjil, who had attended the event and described what he saw. He wrote, "The 9th day of the mid-winter month came. (We) rode on horseback to the yellow palace in the centre of Ikh Khuree. When (we) dismounted from (our) horses and walked towards its main large gate, there were so many people gathered that it was impossible to see where the crowd ended. Nobles, officials, khutukhus, and lamas in their official headwear, jackets, and

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[8] Ibid, p. 92.

[9] G. Navaannamjil Ovgun bicheechiin ouguulel (Reminiscences of an Old Clerk) Ulaanbaatar, State Printing House, 1956.

variegated deels (gowns) were lined up for the occasion. When the Bogdo and Tsagaan Dari (White Tara) came in solemn pomp, all those gathered kowtowed and became quiet. The Bogdo and his consort were sitting in a beautiful Russian four-wheel yellow carriage flying a golden flag. Eight attendants and lamas were carrying the carriage. Before it high-ranking lamas and escorts were marching in file. A few nobles in black and wearing swords in red scabbards were leading the group. Many armed guards in their fine uniforms were marching in file along the sides of the road. When the Bogdo and his consort walked past the central gate of the palace and into the gher-palace, all those high-ranking nobles and lamas followed them. Other nobles were waiting, standing in front of the state palace."[10]

Bogdo and Ekh Dagina ("the Beauty") wore expensive black fox-fur hats with diamond buttons of rank on top, colorful deels, and speckled sable-fur jackets. Escorted by nobles, soivon and donir, they were slowly walking on the yellow silk walk prepared for the occasion. Three ceremonial parasols – two with golden dragon designs and one adorned with peacock feathers – were held above them from behind. A donir and a nobleman in black, with a sword in a red scabbard, led the procession. The Bogdo and Ekh Dagina were supported by their arms by assistants and nobles. Bogdo and Ekh Dagina, after visiting the Ochirdara temple, proceeded to the state gher-palace. Many khutuktus, khans, vans, beel, beis, gung, zasag and taij who were entitled to enter the palace, followed them.

Beis Puntsagtseren, a former Mongolian Minister in Khuree, came out with a rather long document and announced

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[10] Ibid.

loudly that a decree on distributing favors had been issued. All the laymen and lamas, officials and clerks became silent and kowtowed. Beis Puntsagtseren began reading the decree. But it was difficult to hear. With some efforts, I was able to make out, "The Bogdo was elevated as Bogdo, the sunshiny and myriad aged Khaan of the Mongolian nation and the Tsgaan Dari as the mother of the nation and the reigning title would be 'elevated by many.' And Ikh Khuree is to be called Niislel (Capital) Khuree. Thus Mongolia was established as a state and a great ceremony was held."[11]

L. Dendev, a researcher of Manchu history, viewed Mongolia's independence of 1911 as "a remarkable exploit that led to Mongolia's secession from the Manchu, the protection of her national identity, and the establishment of an independent Government in Mongolia," and he described these important events in his work.

Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu as the leader of the Mongolian National Revolution of 1911

The eighth Bogdo Jebtsundamba Agvaanluvsanchoijinnyamdanzanvanchigbalsambuu[12] was born in 1869 in Tibet in the family of Gonchigtseren, a well-off financial official of the Dalai Lama.

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[11] Ibid, pp. 182-185.

[12] L. Jamsran, *Shashin turiig khoslon barigch Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu Khaan - Mongolchuudyn sergen mandaltyn ehen* (Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu Khaan, Wielder of Power in both Religion and State - The Beginning of Mongols' Revival), Ulaanbaatar. 1992, pp. 158-184; S. Idshinnorov, G. Tserendorj, *Jebtsundamba Agvaanluvsanchoijinnyamdanzanvanchigbalsambuu*, Unen, 16 June 1990.

He arrived at Khuree on the morning of September 30, 1874 and received a joyous welcome.[13] The Khuree population doubled at the news of his pending arrival, and there were many nobles among them. Soon afterwards, in early October of the same year, the Khans and gungs of the four aimags of Khalkha gathered in Khuree, and a formal welcome was arranged for the eighth Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu and his elevation to the Bogdo throne. The Manchu Emperor conferred on him the corresponding title and rank along with the golden diploma of entitlement and a golden seal.

Since the Bogdo stayed in Khuree permanently following his arrival, after being found in Tibet when he was five years old, his life was closely linked to the history of Mongolia. He arrived in Mongolia in a group with seven members of his family, including his father, mother, elder brothers and Luvsankhaidav, a younger brother.

The Bogdo was taught from early on in Tibetan and Mongolian writing, and concerning religious conventions and Eastern customs and traditions. Old people who remember him mention that his Mongolian was better than his Tibetan. He was the last Khaan of the Mongolian nation, was enthroned three times, and was the only one to receive the gavj (Lamaist high clerical degree) out of the eight Bogdos who led the Mongolian Lamaist church.

It is often mentioned that when influential Mongolian nobles, close to the Bogdo, such as Da Lama Tserenchimed and Chin Van Khanddorj, commander of Tusheet Khan league, confided in the Bogdo their views on making Mongolia an independent nation, he decreed to hold a meeting of all the

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[13] Foreign Policy Archives of the Russian Empire, F., China desk 143, Lst. 491, No. 575, pp. 81-82.

khans, nobles, and high ranking lamas of the four Khalkha leagues during the Danshig offering to be performed by the leagues and Ikh Shabi in the summer of 1911, so that they could express their views on whether to accept or not the new policy course of the Manchu Government. The meeting has often been referred to as marking the beginning of the movement for Mongolia's national liberation.[14] The proponents of such an approach view the Mongolian khans and nobles as the initiators of the national movement and Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu as their supporter. A deeper analysis of the historical situation provides a somewhat different view.

In the late 19th century, the Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu sent his emissaries to Russia on a secret political mission.[15] In June 1911, T. Namnansuren, the good nobleman, wrote a letter to the Bogdo to alert him against the risks and dangers of the new Manchu policy being enforced in Khalkha. Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu, having reviewed the content of the letter, decreed to convene in July in Khuree a meeting of the khans, vans and noblemen the four aimags.[16]

The leading noblemen of the four leagues met in Khuree in the middle of 1911 and convened a meeting of noblemen, with each league and Shabi represented by four delegates to

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[14] S. Idshinnorov, G. Tserendorj, *Jebtsundamba Agvaanluvsanchoijinnyamdanzanvanchigbalsambuu*, Unen, 16 June 1990, No. 143.

[15] O. Batsaikhan, Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu, the Last King of Mongolia: Life and Legend, revised second edition, Ulaanbaatar, 2011.

[16] Z. Lonjid, *Bogd Gegeenten Oros ulsaas heden udaa tuslamj hussen be*, Mongol Ulsyn Ih surguuliin Niigmiin shinjleh uhaany surguuliin Erdem shinjilgeenii bicheg (How many times Bogdo Gegeen turned to Russia with request for assistance. Research papers of the School of Social Sciences, the Mongolian State University), Tuukh - 6, UB. 2007, p.70.

have the issue of "the need for Mongolia to be an independent state" –discussed as Bogdo had decreed a year earlier. But when Sando, the Manchu Amban in Khuree, became suspicious, the meeting was suspended. But it continued in the summer of 1911 under the pretext of performing a religious service for the benefit of the Bogdo.

The Khans, noblemen, officials and khutuktus and lamas of the four Khalkha leagues and many Shabis met in the summer of 1911 in the office of Khuree's Erdene Shanzodba under the pretext of performing, by Bogdo's decree, religious services. They discussed how to oppose to the 'new Manchu policy course' and restore Mongolia's independence. Since it was difficult to reach a consensus decision by many participants who were not free from the persecution of the Manchu Amban, a secret meeting for consultation was arranged in a gher set up in the woods at the back of the Bogdo Mountain for those noblemen and khutuktus led by the khans of the Khalkha's four leagues who were firmly opposed to the Manchu new policy, and who believed that it was a time for Mongolia to become independent in the interests of their nation, religion, state and land.

It was decided during the noblemen's secret meeting to "send a special deputation to Great Russia, the northern neighbor, to kindly explain Mongolia's situation and seek assistance. The foundation of the Qing Government had become weak and unstable, and it became impossible (for Mongolia) to bear foreign officials' and ministers' oppression, exploitation, and their complete disregard towards Mongols' interests. Although it was necessary to become independent and protect Mongolia's religion and land, it was very difficult to do so without foreign assistance" and to "appoint Chin Van Khanddorj, Da Lama Tserenchimed, and the official Khaisan as the deputation."

The Mongolian delegation took a letter seeking assistance from Russia. It was signed jointly by the Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu and the four Khalkha khans: Tusheet Khan Dashnyam, Zasagt Khan Sonomravdan, Setsen Khan Navaantseren and Sain Noen Namnansuren. Korostovets, a Russian minister in Peking, considered "the arrival in Russia's territory of the Mongol envoys at their own initiative to be useful as a pretext for negotiations (with the Manchu authorities –O. Batsaikhan)." M. Tornovskii noted in this connection that, "The Venerable Bogdo, could successfully hold, over the heads of their enemies, businesslike negotiations with the Imperial Russian Government to get assistance for Mongolia. He managed to get the support of the noblemen who believed in the possibility of obtaining their freedom from the Chinese with Russian assistance." He wrote that noblemen and lamas met in Khuree in June 1911 under the leadership of Bogdo the Venerable.

The political events that took place after the meeting held in Khuree during the Danshig offering for the benefit of the Bogdo in the summer of 1911, plus the noblemen's secret meeting held in the Bogdo mountain, show that a provisional government was in effect established at the time in Mongolia. This institution was formalized and was named a General Provisional Administrative Office for the Affairs of Khalkha Khuree on 30 November 1911 – after the delegation that had gone to Russia and successfully completed their mission had returned to Khuree.

An important immediate objective of the Provisional Government was to restore and declare Mongolia's independence. The Provisional Government issued on December 1, 1911, a Declaration proclaiming the end of the years of Manchu rule and the establishment of Mongolian independence as Sando was being expelled from Khuree.

A flag with Soyombo, a symbol of national liberation and independence, thus, began to fly in Ikh Khuree.

The Mongolian National Revolution, thus, broke out in the year of the boar and resulted in the elevation of Jebtsundamba Khutuktu to the throne as the Khaan of the Mongolian nation on the 9th day of the mid winter month or December 29, 1911. Obviously, the Bogdo's enthronement was aided by a number of factors. He, for one, was not only the religious leader of the Mongols. He could become, by then, the most popular statesman.

Mongols had long considered that the Bogdo's reincarnations were inevitably related to the Chinggis Khan's golden lineage – ever since the Lofty Enlightened Zanabazar, the first Bogdo Jebtsundamba, who was the son of Tusheet Khan, who was of the golden lineage. After his elevation as the Khaan of the Mongolian nation, Bogdo Jebtsundamba and Queen Ekh Dagina visited, on the first day of every Lunar New Year, the gher-palace of Avtai Sain Khaan, the father of the Tusheet Khan Gombodorj, and they set a fire in its hearth. This practice may have been meant to express the continuation of the stately tradition of Mongolia and was supported and followed by the sensitive and intelligent Bogdo Khaan under the impact of Chinggis Khan's descendents and other influential statesmen of Mongolia.

Bogdo's treatment in Mongolia's historical studies

After the demise of the Bogdo Khaan on May 24, 1924, the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) decreed on June 3, 1924 that Mongolia become a Republic.[17]

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[17] Ardyn Erkh sonin 1924 ony 6 dugaar saryn 25 (Newspaper *The Right of the People*, 26 June 1924).

It is said in the volume "History of the Mongolian People's Republic,"[18] Jebtsundamba Khutuktu, leader of the Mongolian Yellow faith was elevated as the Khaan of the Mongols and became the wielder of power both in the church and the state. The demise of the Enlightened Bogdo provided a convenient pretext for establishing Mongolia as a Republic."[19] But this did not provide any conclusion. It did, however, entail numerous references to the Bogdo's Government or references to the effect that the secular nobles and high-ranking lamas headed by the Bogdo were greedy exploiters.

The following was noted about Bogdo in the "Short Outline of the History of the Mongolian People's National Revolution," written by Kh. Choibalsan, D. Losol and G. Demid: "The fact that Bogdo caused grief and affliction to the people instead of ensuring their well-being, clearly showed the false and harmful nature of incarnates like him."[20]

The "Brief History of the MPRP" had the following to say about the Bogdo: "The Mongolian people's national liberation movement resulted following the formation of a feudal Government headed by absolute monarch Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu, and in the proclamation of Mongolia as an independent state."[21] The third edition of the

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[18] *Bugd Nairamdah Mongol Ard Ulsyn Tuuh*, nemj, zasvarlasan gurav dahi hevlel (*History of the Mongolian People's Republic*, Third Revised Edition), UB. 1984, p. 319.

[19] *Bugd Nairamdah Mongol Ard Ulsyn Tuuh*, nemj, zasvarlasan gurav dahi hevlel (*History of the Mongolian People's Republic*, Third Revised Edition), UB. 1984, p. 392.

[20] Kh.Choibalsan, D.Losol and G.Demid, "*Short Outline of the History of the Mongolian People's National Revolution*", Second edition, Ulaanbaatar, 1979, p. 25.

[21] *Mongol Ardyn Huvisgalt Namyn Tovch Tuuh*, (*Brief History of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party*), Ulaanbaatar, 1970, p. 94.

"Brief History of the MPRP," published in 1985, concluded that, "The Treaty of Oath" adopted on November 1, 1921, gave a powerful blow to the feudal schemes headed by the Bogdo and opposed to the revolution, and this was of a critical importance in the strengthening of the new people's statehood and Government."[22]

The following was noted about the Bogdo in "The Experience of the Struggle Successfully Waged by the Party against the Right Opportunists," published in 1932 by U. Badrakh, one of the main representatives of the Radical Left: "The eighth reincarnation of the Bogdo Jebtsundamba contributed, as he wielded power in both the church and the state, to the secession of Mongolia from the Manchu Empire and the establishment of Mongolia's autonomy beforehand and the people's Government presently."[23] This was but a statement of the truth that was difficult to avoid even under conditions of Stalinist propaganda. The histories of the MPRP and the MPR, written much later, however, could not recognize the impact of the Bogdo in a way that the above author did. This illustrates how strong the influence of ideology on historical research later became. Scholar Ts. Puntsagnorov wrote, "Historical analysis shows that the Enlightened Bogdo had been assessed as the sworn enemy and an oppressor of the Mongolian people till the last gasps of his breathing."[24]

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[22] *Mongol Ardyn Huvisgalt Namyn Tovch Tuuh*, nemj zasvarlasan gurav dahi hevlel. (*Brief History of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party*, Third revised Edition), Ulaanbaatar, 1985, p. 85.

[23] U. Badrah, Namaas baruun bourunhiichuud lugee temtssen amjilttai ih temtsliin turshlaga (The experience of the Struggle Successfully Waged by the Party against the Right Opportunists), Shine usegt buulgaj, hevleld beltgen, tailbar hiisen Chunt. Boldbaatar, Soron Suhbaatar, UB. 2001, p. 175.

[24] Ts. Puntsagnorov, *Mongolyn avtonomit uyeiin tuuh* (*History of Mongolia's Autonomy*), UB. 1955, p. 105.

Dr. Sh.Sandag, a Mongolian scholar, concluded in his book published in 1971 that, "The importance of the proclamation of Mongolia's national independence and the establishment of the Mongolian feudal state under the Bogdo Khaan, were not thoroughly considered and analyzed. The activities of the statesmen of that time were assessed in a very general way. The years 1911-1919 were termed as the 'period of Mongolia's autonomy.' Because of such approaches, I would rather say that the relevant issues were simplified or were avoided and objective reality was not clarified."[25] It ought to be noted that in spite of such conclusion, there are not many research works and books on the history of Mongolia's state and party written since then and containing a thorough and objective assessment of the issue under consideration.

Post socialist research works on Bogdo Khaan

The following was written about Bogdo in the historical book, *The Mongolia of the Twentieth Century*, published in early 1990s when a new liberal political atmosphere was becoming established in Mongolia: "When speaking of the leaders of the struggle for Mongolia's national independence, one cannot but mention the eighth Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu. Although he was Outer Mongolia's religious leader, all Mongols who professed the yellow faith worshipped him as their teacher and mentor. The so-called 'new policy course' of the Manchu Empire was opposed by him from the very beginning of its implementation in Mongolia. He considered that its implementation would lead to the loss of

[25] Sh. Sandag, *Mongolyn uls touriin gadaad hariltsaa* (Mongolia's External Political Relations), Volume 1, UB. 1971, p. 25.

'Mongols' fundamental customs." It concluded that it was understandable that this position of the Enlightened Bogdo had been conditioned by his ministers and the Mongols who had been close to him."[26]

T. Tumurkhuleg, a Mongolian scholar, wrote in 1990 in his article, "What kind of person the eighth Jebtsundamba Khutuktu was,"[27] that "The eighth Jebtsundamba Khutuktu of Khalkha was one of the persons who were cruelly decried in the modern history of Mongolia under the pretext of a struggle against religion. From what was written in books and sutras and what was said by the old people, he was smart, not stupid, courageous, not cowardly, and willful, not subservient."[28]

The fifth edition of the *History of Mongolia*, published in 2003, noted the following about the Bogdo: "The Bogdo Jebtsundamba, leader of the Mongolian yellow faith, was able to assert himself on the political scene and became the Khaan of the Mongolian nation and the state symbol because he had, from the very beginning of the national liberation movement, firmly stood for overthrowing the Manchu and Chinese rule. He restored and strengthened Mongolia's political independence and strove to unite the Mongols under the banner of the yellow faith." It concluded, "the Enlightened Bogdo, the limited monarch, passed away on 20 May 1924 when preparations were being undertaken to establish Mongolia as a Republic. His demise removed the grounds for the limited monarchy with

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[26] Ts. Puntsagnorov, *Mongolyn avtonomit uyeiin tuuh* (*History of Mongolia's Autonomy*), UB. 1955, p. 105.

[27] T. Tumurhuleg, *Naimdugaar Javzandamba hutagt yamar hun baiv*, Utga zohiol urlag, 1990 ony 4 dugeer saryn 6 (What kind of person the 8th Jebtsundamba Khutuktu was, Literature and Art, 6 April 1990.

[28] Ibid.

state power vested in people's government and accelerated the process of transforming the form of governance."

Baabar observed in his book *The Twentieth Century Mongolia: Migration and Settlement* that, "On the very day that Outer Mongolia overthrew the rule of the Chinese Qing regime, which lasted exactly 220 years, and solemnly proclaimed Mongolia Elevated by Many or independent Mongolia, a 41 year old Tibetan who had an unusually long name Agvaanluvsanchoijinyamdanzanvanchigbalsambuu, worshipped by the Mongols as the eighth Incarnation of Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu, was elevated as the Khaan of this new nation." He concluded that the Jebtsundamba was the "spiritual leader of the Mongols" and noted that there was no other person who could compete with him for the throne.

The Tusheet Khan Dashnyam, who was most closely related from among the four khans of Khalkha to the golden lineage of Chinggis Khan, could have been elevated as the Khaan of the Mongolian nation. But he was not and his words, that he was the most senior among the khans of the Bogdo Chinggis lineage compared to the Jebtsundamba of Tibetan origin, were hardly heeded by anyone.

If the Mongolian nobles were, indeed, more prominent among those who initiated and led the national movement to a successful conclusion than the Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu, a khan of the Golden Chinggis lineage could have been supported. But that was not the case. Instead, all followed the Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu. This indicates the Bogdo's influence and the measure of success he had in directing events. It is highly probable that the national revolution started according to his intention and spread and intensified with the support of Khalkha's nobles. Once the process started and intensified, some of the nobles might have taken activities incompatible with the policy pursued by the Bogdo Khaan.

Prof. Sh. Natsagdorj wrote, "If out of the eight Khutuktus elevated in Khalkha, the name of Zanabazar the Lofty, the first Khutuktu, is linked to the loss of Mongolia's independence, then the name of his last successor, the eighth Bogdo, is associated with the struggle for the restoration of Khalkha's independence. But it was not Jebtsundamba Khutuktu or the four khans of Khalkha who effected the Khalkha's secession from the Manchus and China, but rather a few influential lamas and nobles of Mongolia and several Inner Mongolian officials of that time. They included van Khanddorj of the Tusheet Khan league, the Bogdo's confidant Da Lama Tserenchimed, and the Inner Mongolian official, Khaisan." This view was supported and 'fully justified' by Dr. L. Jamsran, who wrote, elaborating these ideas, that, "The Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu played an important role in the national liberation movement of the Mongols to free themselves from the Qing regime and restore their independence. His elevation to a position of its ideological and political leader was not due to his efforts only. It ought to be explained in the context of efforts of statesmen like Khanddorj, Tserenchimed, Chagdarjav and others who relied on the Bogdo's reputation in the struggle for the restoration of Mongolia's state independence, and who had him enthroned to this end."

What the above scholars wrote about the Bogdo seems to assert that the Bogdo Jebtsundamba did not initiate and lead the struggle for Mongolia's national independence. Such views, in my humble opinion, are a result of a subjective approach towards the historical events. The consideration of the situation of Mongolian nobles under the Manchu rule, particularly the comparison of their reputation, independence, and influence relative to those of the eighth Bogdo Jebtsundamba shows that the Bogdo had more possibilities and opportunities than they did to initiate and lead the national movement. The Bogdo became the foremost leader of the struggle for the Mongolian

national independence because he could seize, with vision and foresight, his possibilities and opportunities.[29]

Bogdo's treatment in foreign historical works

Count Alfred Kaizerling (1861-1939), who worked for the Governor General of Khabarovsk as an official on special assignment, wrote in his memoir[30] about his visit to Khuree and his meeting with the Bogdo, "Khuree is where the gher-palace of the Khutuktu, the living Buddha in the East, is located. It is to Mongolia what Lhasa is to Tibet. The Khutuktu is venerated as much as the Dalai Lama. When he reached adulthood, he was to go to Peking to pay tribute to the Chinese Emperor and receive a blessing at a Buddhist temple there. Since the Peking Government was concerned about the influence of an adult and independent Khutuktu, blessed Khutuktus often happened to suddenly die on their way back to Khuree, and reincarnations were sought and found to take their places. But this Khutuktu did not go to Peking when he reached adulthood; despite pressures from Peking and those who surrounded him, he postponed his trip under various pretexts. He was safer in Khuree, and it was possible in Khuree to prevent Peking's direct assassination attempts on his life. His attitude towards Russia was favorable. He hoped that Russia would help him if his relations with Peking turned sour." He mentioned that he was sent to Khuree by Baron Korf to strengthen the friendship between Russia and Mongolia.

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[29] O. Batsaikhan, Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu, the Last King of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar, 2008.

[30] Alfred Kaizerling, *Vospominaniya o russkoi slujbe* (Memoirs on my Service in Russia), "Akademkniga", Moskva, 2001.

He noted the following about his meeting with the Khutuktuu: "….. Lamas were lined up along the sides of the stair we were ascending. On the upper floor a young fellow of about 18 years, dressed in a fine Tibetan style, was waiting for us. He confidently greeted and invited us to take seats. I presented to him Baron Korf's personal letter of greeting decorated with the state emblem and the Emperor's name in ornamental script. The Khutuktu sat on his throne on a sacred cushion and invited me to sit on a sofa opposite him. We were offered Chinese tea served on a golden tray. We had an easy, uninhibited conversation. I then presented the gifts brought for the Khutuktu. He liked a telephone set, the functioning of which was interesting to him. But he liked a music box more and was heartily amused by it. He laughed loudly when he heard a brief melody and said that it was like a horse galloping. He immediately had its lyrics translated by his disciple and was quite satisfied when informed of its content."

The next day count Alfred Keizerling attended a reception given by the Khutuktu. They discussed business and played chess. He wrote, "When I said, as instructed by Baron Korf, that it was important for Mongolia and Russia to get closer through trading, all those present supported me. Khutuktu inquired if I played chess. When we were playing chess, devout Buddhists came crawling one after another and got his blessing. On occasions, the Khutuktu blessed them with a chess piece he was holding. When doing so he was humming and what surprised me was the tune. It was the one he heard the day before. He checked and then checkmated me while blessing his subjects in the tune of Strauss' waltz. I was quite satisfied with my meeting with the Khutuktu and left the palace after offering my gratitude for the reception."[31] This excerpt

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[31] Alfred Kaizerling, *Vospominaniya o russkoi slujbe* (Memoirs on my Service in Russia), "Akademkniga", Moskva, 2001.

from the count's memoir is, in my opinion, indicative of not only the degree of the Khutuktu's independence, freedom and far-sightedness, but also his intention to get closer to Russia. Larson, who came from America, viewed the Bogdo as a "warm hearted person."

Monsieur de Panafie, Charge de'Affaires of France in St. Petersburg, reported to his Foreign Minister de Selv on December 8, 1911, based on the information of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, that "Now Mongolia is ruled by the Khutuktu who is the most venerable teacher of this nation."[32] A news report that appeared in the Frankfurter Tseitung newspaper on January 10, 1912 read, "The crisis in Mongolia has its origin in the failure of the last Chinese (*Manchu- O.Batsaikhn*) Emperors to conceal, driven by their political activities, their dissatisfaction with the Khutuktu, who is the religious leader of this nation. It was the Khutuktu who turned to the Russians. He, just like the Dalai Lama of Tibet, led the people who were discontented with Chinese sovereign rule."[33] It also noted, "This second living Buddha, overconfident in himself, entertained unrealistic ideas. The Khutuktu is rather old and likes alcoholic drinks and other earthly pleasures that are unacceptable to his religion."[34]

E. T. Williams of the United States noted about the Bogdo Khaan, "The Khutuktu is the third highest ranking living Buddha after Dalai Lama and Erdene Panchen Lama,"[35]

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[32] Frants bolon busad gadaad heleerh Mongolyn tuuhiin holbogdoltoi barimt bichgiin emhtgel (Collection of Documents in French and other Foreign Languages, relating to Mongolia's History). Compiled and translated by T. Tumurhuleg, UB. 2006, p. 158.

[33] Ibid, p. 172.

[34] Ibid.

[35] The American Journal of International Law, Vol.10, No.4. (Oct., 1916), pp. 798-808.

and he mentioned that, "there were 160 khutuktus in total in Tibet, Mongolia and China, and the Khuree Khutuktu led some 25 thousand lamas, and the number of his disciples reached 150,000."

The Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu sought the restoration of Mongolia's political independence and the unification of all Mongols. He issued an appeal to all Inner and Outer Mongols to unite and re-establish their nation state. Out of 49 banners of Inner Mongolia, 38 expressed their wish to join the newly independent Mongolia.[36] F. Moskovitin expressed his views on this issue in his letter of March 19, 1912, addressed to V. Kotvich: "You know, the Inner Mongolian nobles are beginning to aspire for union with the Khalkhas. The reason is that they are counting on getting Russia's support through the Khutuktu. Our Government, however, decided to support the Khalkha only."[37] Jamsran Tseveen wrote to V. Kotvich on 19 March 1912 that the Bogdo, the Radiant as the Sun, still had hope of uniting all the Mongols.[38]

I. Ya. Korostovets noted when writing about the situation of the Bogdo's Government in post-revolutionary Mongolia that, "The Khutuktu is standing firmly for friendship with Russia. He is supported by people like Van Khand, Namsrai,

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[36] Ogedei Taiwan (Tai-Ping), Usher Jilin uimeenii gerel ba suuder, Ovur Mongolyn surgan humuujliin hevleliin horoo, (Pros and cons of the uprising of the year of ox. Press committee for Education in Inner Mongolia) 2006.

[37] *V. Kotvichiin huviin arhivaas oldson Mongolyn tuuhend holbogdoh zarim bichig*, Sudlan hevluulsen akad.B.Shirendev, erhelsen akad. SH.Natsagdorj (*Some of V.Kotvich's personal documents relating to the history of Mongollia*, Researched and published by B.Shirendev, edited by Acad. Sh. Natsagdor). Ulaanbaatar, 1972, p. 181.

[38] Ibid, p. 192.

Tusheet Khan and Dalai Van, who joined our side."[39] In other words, his writing points to the critical role that the Bogdo Khaan played in the conclusion of the 1912 Treaty between Russia and Mongolia and the Bogdo's loyalty to friendship with Russia.

It was the eighth Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu who early on conceived the scenario of the Mongolian National Revolution of 1911, based on his estimates of Mongolia's situation under the Manchu rule and her administrative and legal circumstances. Circumstances played out successfully as he thought they would. It was noted more than once in historical sources that nobody took an independent step without the Bogdo's consent. By 1911, even nobles' meetings in Khuree and their adjournment did not take place without the Bogdo's blessing."[40] On the other hand, it should be underscored that though Buddhism was used at other times to suppress rather than encourage Mongolian national pride, it had a direct impact not only on preventing Chinese culture from penetrating into Mongolia in the early 20th century but also on the unification of the Mongols in the interest of their national independence. These developments occurred as the result of the Enlightened Bogdo, the head of the Mongolian Lamaist church, who then became Mongolia's national leader.

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[39] I. Ya. Korostovets, Ot Chinggis khaana do Sovetskoi respubliki, Otvetsvennyi redaktor O. Batsaikhan, Redaktory Bazarov, B.V, Ganjurov V. Ts, (From Chinggis Khaan to Soviet Republic, O. Batsaikhan, Editor-in-Chief, Editors: Bazarov, B.V, Ganjurov V. Ts) UB., 2004, p. 315.

[40] O. Batsaikhan, Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu, the Last King of Mongolia; Research work, Ulaanbaatar, 2008.

Conclusion

The secession in 1911 of the Mongols from the Manchu Qing Empire and the proclamation of the restoration of their independence opened a new era in Mongolian history. This new chapter of history in the early 20th century revived the Mongolian nation in Asia upon the elevation of the Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu to the throne as the Khaan of the Mongolian nation and the proclamation of the nation as 'Mongolia' and the era as 'elevated by many' and Ikh Khuree as 'Niislel Khuree.'

Obviously the consideration of the situation of Mongolian nobles under the Manchu rule, particularly the comparison of their reputation, independence and influence with those of the eighth Bogdo Jebtsundamba, show that the Bogdo had more possibilities and opportunities than they did to initiate and lead the national movement. The Bodo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu became the foremost leader of the struggle for the Mongolian national independence because he could seize, with vision and foresight, those possibilities and opportunities.

Liuba, Russian Consul General in Khuree, noted in his telegram sent to St. Petersburg in January 1912 that, "The Khutuktu is, without doubt, the person who led the event that led to the independence that Mongolia enjoys now."[41] This is nothing but an expression of the truth.

If the Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu could become an object of veneration of Mongolian national religion before 1911, he surely became, after the National Revolution of 1911, not only its spiritual but also its political leader – a ruler

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[41] RGIA, f. 892, op. 3, ed. hr. 127, l.1, Archives of the Russian Foreign Policy, Fond Mission in Peking, opis, deko 316.

of the Mongols in the true sense of the word. He is the father of the national revolution that brought about the revival of Mongolia as a nation.[42]

I view the National Revolution of 1911 as a most special historical event that has occurred in the lives of Mongols during the past three hundred years. It should, if its historical significance is to be considered, take a particularly important place in the life of Mongolia, as a landmark event that restored the foundation for the revival and further existence of the Mongolian nation and laid down the basis for the prosperity of its national tradition, customs, and culture.

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[42] O. Batsaikhan, Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu, the Last King of Mongolia, Research work, Ulaanbaatar, 2011.

Chapter 19
Buddhism in the Russian Republic of Buryatia: History and Contemporary Developments

Rustam Sabirov

Editor's introduction: *As very effectively portrayed by Rustam Sabirov in this chapter, Buddhism in the Russian Republic of Buryatia has had a dynamic and at times turbulent history due to factors beyond its control or influence. These dynamics help both contextualize and throw into relief the well-known suppression of Buddhist practices and leadership in Tibet under Chinese dominance since the 1950s. In Buryatia, a relatively favored geographic position vis-à-vis connections with the Far East led the Russian Empire to allow Buddhism uncharacteristic viability and support. This changed dramatically following the Russian Revolution, with tens of thousands of Buryatians killed and Buddhism violently suppressed from 1929 to 1940.*

More recently, with the breakup of the Soviet Union – and the discovery of important Buddhist relics and signs in Buryatia – Buddhism in the Republic has been revitalized. As Dr. Sabirov notes in conclusion, it may even be that as the suppression of Buddhism in Tibet continues, the resurgence of Buddhism in Mongolia and in neighboring Buryatia may assume greater regional and global as well as local significance.

The history of Buddhism in Buryatia can be divided into five stages.

1) **First Buddhist contact, 16th to early 17th centuries – prior to joining the Russian Empire**
2) **Late 17th to end of 19th centuries – spread of Buddhism, monastery building, publishing**

3) End of 19th to early 20th century – 'golden age' of Buddhism in Buryatia
4) 1920s to late 1980s – destruction and persecution
5) Late 1980s to present – restoration of the Sangha

The spread of Buddhism in the Baikal Lake region, the Russian Republic of Buryatia, is closely connected with the development of Buddhism in Mongolia to the south. This process was not simultaneous among different Buryat ethnic groups. Those from the more Eastern Selenga region adopted Buddhism earlier than others.

In 1712 a group of some 100 Mongolian and 50 Tibetan monks who fled Mongolia due to an upheaval came to Buryatia. Their arrival accelerated the spread of Buddhism. At that time prayer yurts of nobles and public nomadic temples began to appear. According to Russian statistical data of 1741, there were eleven temples and 150 monks in Buryatia (Lamaism 1983, p.17). The Empress Elizaveta decreed these monks (*lamas*) exempt from taxation and other obligations. Selenga Buryats of that time did not think about establishing an independent Buryat Sangha (congregational community). They did not consider themselves separate from the Buddhist centers of Mongolia and in fact belonged to the Mongolian Sangha.

It was the Russian government that initiated the process of creating an independent Buddhist Sangha in Buryatia. Russian officials were quite aware that the religious policy of the Qing Empire was aimed at control of the population of the Empire. The Russian government wanted to control the foreign religious interaction of the Buryats in order to help consolidate its position in Asia. To achieve this, Russian officials felt it important to accede to the beliefs of Buryats and to establish an independent Buryatian Sangha (Tsyrempilov 2010; Lamaism 1983).

The first wooden temple (*datsan*) in Buryatia was established in 1753 at the initiative of Damba Darzha Zayaev, a young Mongolian nobleman who had studied in Tibet (Lamaism 1983, p.20). It was called the Tsongolsky Datsan. At the same time the Gusinoozersky Datsan was built at the initiative of Zhimba Akhaldaev, who had studied in Urga, Mongolia. Thus two centers of Buddhism in Buryatia appeared. A third emerged in 18th century among the Khori Buryats. All three centers competed for leading positions. Officially all Buddhists of the Transbaikal Region were under control of the head lama of the Tsongolsky datsan. But in reality each of the three centers had their own head lamas confirmed by the Russian government. This competition reflected the interests of different groups of Buryat nobles who sought leading positions in the religious hierarchy for their relatives. High ranks in the Sangha hierarchy allowed important access to power and authority, not only for religious matters, but for worldly ones as well.

By 1831 there were listed 4,637 lamas in Buryatia and by 1846 34 monasteries (Lamaism 1983, p.26). It is interesting that the attitude of the Russian government towards Buddhists in Buryatia was different from its attitude toward the Kalmyks and Buryats in the Irkutsk area. Transbaikal was a cross-roads for communication with the Far East, and this was is an important reason why the religious policy there was more flexible and careful, whereas in Kalmykia and even the Western Baikal area, it was more repressive. For successful international policy in Mongolia and Tibet, Russia needed a reputation as a country that supported Buddhism. The government preferred to have one centralized structure than many competing monasteries, and one Khambo Lama (Head Lama) rather than several competing. At the same time, the government did not want Buddhists to be integrated too strongly within the Empire. Thus, different ministries controlled the religious life

of Kalmyks and Buryats ((Tsyrempilov 2010).

While the Russian Empire regulated religious affairs of the Buryats, Buddhists, for their part, tried to comprehend the Russian Empire from a Buddhist viewpoint and in Buddhist terms. They declared the Russian Emperor to be a *Cakravartin and Dharmaraja* and declared Ekaterina (Katherine) the Great to be a reincarnation of White Tara in 1767 (Tsyrempilov 2009). It is interesting that the present Khambo Lama Damba Ayusheev remembered this tradition when President Medvedev visited Buryatia recently. According to several newspapers, Buryat lamas were planning to recognize Medvedev as White Tara and make prostrations before him (Berezin 2009).

"The Regulations for the Lamaist Clergy" were introduced in 1853 and defined the structure and way of life of the Buddhist Sangha in Buryatia. According to the Regulations, the Khambo Lama was responsible for the adoption of new monks, assigning them to different positions and ranks. But all his decisions were to be confirmed by the Czar's administration. Officially there were to be no more than 34 monasteries and 285 monks. But in reality there were thousands of monks and new monasteries were built despite restrictions. For political reasons, the Russian government closed its eyes to these increases. Buddhism in Buryatia hence spread under different conditions than in Tibet and Mongolia. In Russia Buddhism had to interact with another world religion – Christianity. Buryats from Irkutsk suffered pressure to Christianize more than others, and baptized Buryats received preferred treatment in taking important positions in the local administration.

The Regulations prohibited many things, but for the Russian government it was more important to have control over the Sangha and retain its loyalty than achieve the fulfillment of all rules. The situation in Transbaikal was unique and for political reasons the government had to support the Buddhist Sangha, sometimes paying even more attention to the interests

of Buddhists than the Russian Orthodox Church. Nevertheless, Buryat Buddhists could not avoid the influence of Christianity. This can be seen in the evolution of the architecture of Buddhist monasteries and temples in Buryatia. In the first part of the 19th century, wooden buildings replaced felt yurts. But first wooden and later stone monasteries were built by the Russian carpenters according to the Russian traditions of religious architecture; they looked increasingly like Christian churches. Buryats often had to rebuild monasteries in the architectural styles of Tibet, China, and Mongolia.

Monasteries survived economically on donations from the laity, on the money given to the monks for performing rituals, and on income from trading and lending money. When the number of monasteries and monks increased, and they lacked adequate Buddhist literature and ritual objects, monasteries began publishing books and making *thangkas* (diety paintings) and various ritual objects from wood and metal. Publishing activity in Buryat monasteries was different from that in the Tibetan and Mongolian monasteries. Buryats did not publish the main canonical books, which they usually brought from Tibet and Mongolia. Instead they published especially ceremonial and educational books, and biographies of Buddhist teachers and saints. It is noticeable that Buryats modernized the Buddhist worldview to some extent in their books. They were generally more acquainted with science of that time than were the "medieval" Tibetans, and they had more knowledge of geography and of different cultures and the world in general. So Buryat lamas excluded from their books what they considered to be absurd and strange things, such as strange or magical creatures or fantastic countries.

At the end of 19th century, the spread of Buddhism in the western parts of Buryatia began. Buddhists confronted local shamans and the Russian Orthodox clergy there. In their struggle with the shamans, Buddhists used different methods

– from reinterpreting local deities and sacred spaces from the Buddhist point of view, and through persecution of shamans, burning their ritual objects and clothes. They assimilated the key and socially significant shamanic ceremonies, public and family cults of clan protectors, and protectors of the various ethnic groups. But it was impossible to successfully resist the Russian Orthodox Church, as it was very strong – and supported by the Russian government, which tried to prevent the further spread of Buddhism.

Again, however, the particular location of Buryatia had an important mitigating effect. Being closer than most other areas of Russia to Far Eastern civilizations, Buryatia attracted attention from some European Russian intellectuals interested in the spirituality and philosophy of the East. At the same time, Buryat intellectuals had an opportunity to learn European sciences and became acquainted with modern ideologies. As a result, at the turn of 20th century, a movement for renewal (*obnovlenchestvo*) of the Buddhist Sangha appeared in Buryatia. Although a similar movement had developed several decades earlier in Mongolia, it was not as active and powerful as in Buryatia. There it exceeded the bounds of the Sangha and evolved into an ideology of the Buryat reformers, responding to social and cultural changes in the world in an attempt to reform the Buryat society along the lines of these new ideals. Also they attempted to change the negative attitude towards "Lamaism" by considering it as a corrupted form of Buddhism. Instead, they proclaimed a return to the ideals of early Buddhism and looked for connections between Buddhism and European science. Well-known Buryat intellectuals Ts. Zhamtsarano, B. Baradiin, G. Tsybikov, E. D. Rinchino, and Agvan Dorjiev, headed this movement. After the revolution of 1917, they tried to save Buddhism from the antireligious campaign of the Soviet government by insisting that early Buddhism was very close to the ideas of Marxism. But their attempts finally failed.

The beginning of the 20th century was 'the golden age' of Buddhism in Buryatia. The most eminent Buddhist figures lived at that time, and intriguing developments took place. Agvan Dorjiev (1854-1938), one of the teachers of the 13th Dalai Lama, and a man who earned the highest philosophical degree of *Tsannid Khambo Lkharamba*, served as a diplomat who tried to establish connections between the Russian Empire and Tibet. He met the Emperor Nicolas II and received permission to build a Buddhist temple in St. Petersburg, which became the first Buddhist temple in Europe. Dorjiev was also one of the leaders of the renewal movement in Buryat Buddhism. But he did not survive the antireligious campaign and died in jail in 1938.

Another famous figure of Buddhism in Buryatia was Lubsan Samdan Tsydenov, religious leader, writer and poet, who tried to spread the Tantric Buddhist tradition in Buryatia. At the same time, he was interested in European sciences and world religions. In 1919, the year of the Russian Revolution, he became the head of a local theocratic state based on Buddhist principles. This state included about 13,000 people and lasted a year, until 1920. It is interesting that this state combined a traditional Buddhist model of statehood with European political traditions. For example, the head of the State was the Dharmaraja, but there was also a kind of parliament, as well as a President and Ministers (Tsyrempilov 2007).

By the early 20th century there were more than 40 monasteries and 10,000 lamas in Buryatia. Monasteries became the main religious and cultural centers. In the late 1920s, however, local Soviet authorities began arresting monks and closing and destroying monasteries. (Buryats rebelled against Russian rule in 1929 but the movement was crushed by the Red Army, killing an estimated 35,000 Buryats; many others fled. Fearing Buryat nationalism, Stalinist purges killed an additional estimated 10,000 Buryats following

1937 – purges which spread with yet greater carnage in Mongolia.) This antireligious campaign ended in 1940 when the Buddhist culture in Buryatia ceased to exist. From 1941 until 1946 there were no Buddhist monasteries in Buryatia. But in 1946, Ivolginsky and Aginslky monasteries were reopened for ideological reasons: the Soviet government felt it needed to show that freedom of religion existed in the USSR. While religious activity was under strict control, there were unregistered "wandering lamas" who performed rituals at the request of believers.

Another prominent Buryat Buddhist figure of the Soviet period was Bidia Dandaron (1913-1974), a famous Buddhologist and recognized a reincarnation of Jayagsy Gegen, the former Khambo Lama of Kumbum monastery in Tibet. Dandaron, spiritual son and follower of Lubsan Tsydenov, decided to revive the Buddhist Tantric tradition in Buryatia, and he attracted disciples from different parts of the Soviet Union. Among them were Buryats, Russians, Ukrainians, Jews, and Estonians. They formed the so-called "Sangha of Dandaron." Dandaron is known for his neo-Buddhism, a teaching in which he tried to combine Eastern philosophy with modern European science while continuing searches for his teacher. For this activity he was arrested and the 'Case of Dandaron' (1971-1973) became the biggest antireligious prosecution in the USSR. Dandaron was put in jail for a second time, for five years, and died in prison. Many of his followers were also persecuted.

The revival of Buddhism in Buryatia began in 1988. That year, Buddhist communities were allowed to be officially registered and governed by the Central Spiritual Board of Buddhists (in 1996 renamed The Buddhist Traditional Sangha of Russia), residing at Ivolginsky Datsan. By the end of 2003, there were more than 200 Buddhist communities across Russia (Zhukovskaya 2008, p. 13). The process of revival of Buddhism

in Buryatia has included building monasteries, opening the Buddhist Academy 'Dashi Choinkhorling', establishing the Association of lay Buddhists, establishing a Buddhist women center, publishing literature, and international connections. Another interesting feature of contemporary Buddhism in Buryatia is the building of small temples (*dugans*) according to clan principles. As a result, the community of each *dugan* can consist of people from a single place or family lineage.

One of the most important challenges for the contemporary Sangha in Buryatia has been finding its own distinctive place in the Tibetan-Mongolian Buddhist world. As Bernstein writes, "Should Buryat Buddhism be understood as adhering to a 'Tibetan' model, one most recently advanced through pilgrimages by monks and well funded laypersons to Tibetan monasteries in India? Or, as ethno-nationalists argue, should it downplay its international ties to assert itself as a truly independent 'Buryat' religion?" (Bernstein 2011, p. 625). The current head of the Buryat Sangha Khambo Lama Damba Ayusheev has always stood for an independent and autonomous Buryat Buddhism.

In this context, the exhumation of the body of Dashi-Dorji Itigelov (1852-1927) in 2002 became an event of great importance. Itigelov was the 12th Pandito Khambo Lama of Buryatia. Upon death, his body, seated in the lotus position, had not deteriorated. Now it is kept at Ivolginsky Datsan, placed in the glass sarcophagus for viewing on special occasions. The phenomenon of Itigelov attracted much attention to Buryatia and was encouraging to many believers. It is credited with starting a chain of events that may yet change the place of Buryat Sangha in the Buddhist world. As Damba Ayusheev puts it, "We, Buryats, received Buddhism thanks to the son of our people, Zayaev, who studied in Tibet . . . . The phenomenon of Zayaev allowed for the spread of Buddhism after his return from Tibet. Subsequently, Buryat Buddhism

received autocephaly and its own institution of Khambo Lamas, because when Catherine the Great met Zayaev, she understood that he was a great man" (Bernstein 2011, p. 639). Itigelov was a reincarnation of Zayaev, and Itigelov became a great master though he never traveled abroad to receive initiations from Tibetan lamas. "Why do we Buryats always try to bow in front of foreigners? Look at Itigelov – he never went anywhere," writes Ayusheev (ibid.). Foreign lamas and authorization from abroad are not seen as necessary as they had been previously to the further spread of Buddhism in Buryatia.

Between 2002 and 2004, 450 Buddha statues were found near the ruins of Aninsk monastery, and this has constituted a second important event for the status of Buddhism in contemporary Buryatia (after the Itigelov phenomenon). In 2005 in the Barguzin Valley, the image of the dancing goddess Yanzhima (Sarasvati) was seen to appear on the surface of a large stone. This has become a place of pilgrimage and has changed attitudes towards the Buryat Sangha and the Khambo Lama, giving them an additional source of legitimacy and authority. "In Hindu mythology Saraswati was also a sacred river, worshipped as much as the Ganges. However, due to the coming of 'dark times,' the river disappeared underground and was expected to come back at a better time. The coming of Saraswati-Ianzhima to Buryatia is regarded as a sign that the locus of the authentic spirituality had clearly moved northwards from its Indian origins, once again reconfiguring the notions of religious centers and peripheries" (ibid. p. 647).

Thus these findings and their interpretations have recontextualized the place of Buryatia in the Buddhist world (at least by the Buryats themselves and partially by the Mongols). These developments link Buyatian Buddhism to its Indian origins and to strengthen the legitimacy of its Sangha and the authority of its leaders. This constitutes an important

shift when taking into consideration the uncertain future of the Tibetan community in exile and the institution of the Dalai lamas.

Another specific feature of Buddhism in contemporary Buryatia is that Buddhists actively participate in political life. As was also the case several centuries ago, Buddhism has become an important instrument for gaining political influence in Buryatia (Namsarayeva 2008). Many contemporary lamas have been involved in politics. Among them were Deputies of the Supreme Soviet, the State Duma, and other organizations. Many local politicians also use Buddhism for political purposes. For example, the image of the 14th Dalai Lama was used during the election campaign of the President of Buryatia in 1998 (Namsarayeva 2008, p. 71). Many businessmen and politicians visit Dharamsala and get blessings from the Dalai Lama (ibid.).

Khambo Lama Damba Ayusheev is a member of Inter-religious Council and the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation. He is a rather contradictory figure; many people accuse him of having a disorganized Sangha, of failing to invite the 14th Dalai Lama to visit, and not showing proper respect to the Mongolian Bogdo Gegen (The Ninth Khalkha Jebtsundamba) when he was in Buryatia. They have said that he is rude, does not accept criticism, and has damaged relations with local authorities. But after the exhumation of Itigelov, the finding of relics at Aninsk, and the appearance of Yanzhima, his position became stronger.

Buryatia is a region where the influence of shamans was traditionally strong. Despite the Buddhist's own persecution of shamans before the 20th century, and by the Soviet authorities in the 20th century, shamanism in Buryatia survived and has experienced revival since 1990. The increasing number of shamans and shamanic cults, and their influence on the population, raises some concern among the Buddhists. It is

noticeable that Yanzhima and some other Buddhist relics were found near shamanic sites, thus transforming the religious space of the republic.

In 2000 there were more than 30 Buddhist monasteries and temples in Buryatia. Besides Buryat there are Tibetan lamas (such as Eshe Lodoy Rinpoche and Jampa Tinlei) who teach in the Republic. While the *Gelukpas* hold the preeminent Buddhist position, other Buddhist schools such as Dzogchen, Karma Kagyu, schools of Korean, Japanese, and Chinese Buddhism, plus Theravada Buddhism, also have followers in Buryatia. Tibetans and other teachers give lectures and initiations for lay people. They represent a transnational form of Buddhism that has evolved mostly in the West. It implies focus on the essence of Dharma, the teaching of meditation methods, and pays less attention to the ritual and monastic sides of Buddhism. The activities of these centers and teachers raise concerns for Khambo Lama Ayusheev because they are largely beyond the control of the traditional Sangha.

Conclusion

The specific geographic position of the Transbaikal region led the Russian government to create a relatively favorable policy towards Buddhism and thus encourage the spread of Buddhism in Buryatia prior to the Russian Revolution. Being a part of the Russian Empire, Buryatia was under various intellectual and cultural influences not only from the East, but from the West as well. These trends gave encouragement to the late 19th century renewal movement of the Buryat Sangha and made possible the appearance of influential Buryatian Buddhists such as Lubsan Tsydenov and Dandaron. After the collapse of the USSR, Buryat Sangha found itself in a completely different situation. It faced hardships connected with the restoration of monasteries and teaching monks.

Realizing that the Tibetan Buddhist world had changed after the occupation of Tibet by China, Buryats have looked for a new place in the Buddhist world. The events of the last decade (finding Buddhist relics and treasures, Itigelov, Yanzhima, and so forth) have strengthened the position of the Buryat Sangha and given it greater legitimacy and authority. Given the revival of Buddhism in Mongolia and in Buryatia, it may well be that the active center of Tibetan Buddhism is moving north.

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Chapter 20
Patterns of Monastic and Sangha Development in Khalkha Mongolia

Lkham Purevjav

Editor's introduction: *In this detailed and well-researched presentation, Lkham Purevjav delineates aspects of the social organizational, political, and economic history of Mongolian Buddhist monasteries over the course of several centuries. With an eye for detail and careful consideration of original sources, she is able to trace the growth of the monasteries and the number of monks, monastic organizational structure, the importance and organization of economic support, and, relatedly, their sometimes willing submission to higher outside political authority (including Qing Manchu). In all, Ms. Purevjav is able to greatly enrich our understanding of Mongolian monastic history, including its relationship – parallel in some ways, but different in others – to that in Tibet. Such rich primary research by skilled Mongolian historians such as Ms. Purevjav should form the basis for larger reconsiderations of Mongolian history within the country itself progressively and increasing in future years. In the present volume, for instance, there are striking parallels – and differences – between the forms of religious organization discussed by Ms. Purevjav and those flexible organizational structures of identification discussed in Dr. David Sneath's presentation concerning the historical formation – and reformulation – of Mongolian social and political organization over time.*

Introduction

The Mongol Empire (13th-14th centuries) was tolerant of most of its people's religions. It is interesting that Mongols initially became familiar with Buddhism through Dhayana (Zen) and Chinese Buddhist practitioners who served for the empire court. During Möngke Khaan's reign, Tibetan Buddhism became influential in the court. With the weakening of the Mongol Empire, however, Buddhism lost its ascendant position. Mongols converted to Buddhism for the second time by the late 16th century, and in ways that contrasted with the former empire's relation to Buddhism, which had been built upon a court-based and preceptor-based patron structure. Strong monastic organization, development of *sangha* (lay congregations), and intense laity education concerning the precepts of Buddhism characterized the second conversion. This conversion was conditioned by the claims of separate political entities, missionary activities, and, later, the features of the Manchu Qing administration system. By the end of 19th century, Mongolia had established one of the largest Buddhist monastic systems, including more than one thousand monasteries with ritual temples and associated lay *sangha*. In this paper, I outline the foundation and development of monasteries in Khalkha Mongolia from the 16th through the 19th centuries.

The Chinese Yuan dynasty (1271-1368) was founded by Kubilai Khaan as a successor to the Mongol Empire in China. After decades of strife and unstable leadership during the 14th century, the dynasty crumbled due to political disintegration in which groups and associated nobles sought separation of their community (*ulus*) from state (*tör*). At the time, contact with Tibetan Buddhist orders and monasteries became the most authoritative way to legitimate power as an independent community. This pattern had been modeled by Khubilai Khaan

himself, who had been the patron of Sakya lama Drogön Chögyal Phagpa, from whom he received tantric teachings and initiations. This became a classic relationship in which the lama help legitimate the emperor's power and, reciprocally, the emperor patronized the clergy. The nobles' competing contacts with Tibetan Buddhist orders and conversion characterized late 16th and 17th century history of Mongols. Consequently, Buddhism spread among all Mongol groups, including Tumed, Khalkha, Tsakhar, and Oirat. As Elverskog has argued "… Tibetan Buddhism and its orders were enabled to legitimate their powers separately for different Mongol groups (ulus) in the situation of political disintegration…The fact was that various leaders and their ulus realized that reasserting their independence on the grounds that the Dayan Khanid state had failed no longer served their interests."[i]

This early conversion situation continued until 1691 when the Khalkha Mongols came under Manchu rule. The Manchu Qing administration organized Khalkha Mongols into 36 noble appaneges or banners (*khoshuu*). The Banners continued to be expanded until they reached 86 in number by the end of the 19th century. Growth of self-sufficient communities or banners under Qing administration paved the way for another stage for Buddhism in Khalkha Mongolia in which each banner established its own monasteries, marking and making it a separate community. At the same time, with the growth of banner monasteries, Qing court-funded monasteries were also established. They were a few, but competitive and well known among Mongols.

Early Development: Idol and Ascetic Temples

The monastery *Erdene zuu*, the first largest Buddhist monastery in the second Mongol conversion, was built at the initiative of Abtai Khan, Khalkha in 1587 and marks the beginning of

Mongolia's major monastic development. Other monasteries were founded by ruling nobles and incarnate lamas who were identified within Khalkha's influential families. Tsogtu Taiji, one of the major nobles of Khalkha, built several temples in 1601-17. The first Jebtsundamba, Öndör Gegeen Zanabazar, the head of Khalkha Mongol's Buddhism (from a major ruling family of Khalkha, Tusheet Khan), built the monasteries of Ribogejeiling, Gandenshedubling (Shankh), and Dubkhang (Töbkhön). These monasteries were dedicated mainly to meditation and "creation" (*büteel*). Zanabazar's nephews, other high lamas of Khalkha, Zaya Bandida, and Lamyin Gegeen, were identified as his first powerful incarnate disciples, and they founded their monasteries in 1650 and 1677. But the Oirat Galdan Boshogt campaign in Khalkha Mongol destroyed most of these early temples and monasteries, and it took more than a half-century for them to be revived again.

Below is a list of monasteries founded in 1587-1686, during the early phases of the second period of Buddhist conversion in Khalkha Mongolia.

	Name of early monasteries of the second conversion	Founded Date	Founder	Root Order and Ritual school (Deg) from Tibet
1.	Erdene Zuu monastery	1587	Tusheet Khan Abtai	Sakya
2.	Narang monastery	1607		
3.	Zayayin Khüree monastery	1616	Zaya Bandida	Gelukpa, Sera dratsang
4.	Setgeshgui Chandmani 6 temples	1601-1617	Tsogtu Taiji	
5.	Gandendondubling monastery	1632		
6.	Gandenshedubling monastery (Baruun khüree or Shankhyin khiid)	1647	1st Jibzundamba -Zanabazar	Gelukpa, Braibung dratsang

7.	Gonganden dedling monastery (Lamyin Gegeenii Khüree)	1650	Lamyin Gegeen	Gelukpa, Tashilhumpo dratsang
8.	Ribogejeiling monastery (Saridagiin khiid)	1654	1st Jibzundamba	Gelukpa, Braibung and Choinkhorling *deg*
9.	Debsenbulag monastery	1659		
10.	Gündugarboling monastery	1660		Gelukpa, Tashilhumpo
11.	Gendunling	1686		

Galdan's campaign and Öndör Gegeen's absence in Khalkha resulted in a period of stasis during the second conversion till the mid of 18th century. The surviving temples and monasteries can be characterized mainly as statue and ascetic temples which were objects of veneration and/or pilgrimage but had no regular services, monastic training, or schooling. Gandentegchinlen, the leading Geluk monastery of Khalkha Mongol founded by Öndör Gegeen, had to be moved 23 times due to warfare and pasture management. The first monastery in the second conversion, Erdene Zuu evolved further as a central monastery for housing statues and pilgrimage center for Khalkha Mongols. The 108 stupa forming the wall of Erdene zuu were built by different banners, and represented and symbolized unity of all Khalkha Mongolia. It is interesting that while Erdene Zuu could have been developed as a Buddhist center of Khalkha Mongolia, its root order and primary dedication kept it mainly as a center for statues. The monasteries established by the first Jebtsundamba, Zanabazar (1635-1723) kept and continued this early tradition while becoming the foundation for further monastic development in Khalkha Mongolia.

Banner Community Monasteries

Banner community monasteries (*khoshuunii sum khiid*) are the major part of the Khalkha Mongol monastic system. The Chinggisid nobles turned into Banner governors, and through founding monasteries they legitimated their power as well. This was exemplified by the collaboration of Tumed Altan Khan and the 3rd Dalai Lama, Sodnomjamts, and by the later conversion activities of three khans of Khalkha Mongolia during the 16th century. As Ürgükh Tses[ii] records show, each Banner governor established a new temple, datsang (a monastic college) or chanting service (*jasaa khural*) when they came to power. By the end of the 19th century, each Banner had between seven and fifteen monasteries. They were relatively small, with 50-100 monks, and no regular (*togtmol*) year-round ritual activities. The majority of monks in Banner monasteries had a largely laity-like lifestyle (for instance, they were not necessarily celibate, and could have wives and children). They gathered for important ritual events in certain periods of the year at their associated monastery.

Monastic resources were managed within specific funds or endowments (*jisa*) that were set up to support each specific prayer service (*khural*) and ritual. This corporate endowment system was organized to preserve those prayer services and rituals, as well as to create new services and rituals by establishing new funds and raising additional donations. These funds consisted of two parts, a *jisa* and a *sang*, in which a portion of all funds were accumulated in a central account. When separate jisa funds faced difficulties, the *sang* became the source of support to preserve prayer services. But most of the Banner monasteries had no central *sang* and had limited support due to their lack of on-going functions. Therefore, it was often the case that some prayer services and rituals were not held, at least according to the Urgukh Tses records. If

additional funding or a new *jisa* was established for a specific prayer service or ritual, it could be restored.

During the Bogda monarchy, some Banner governors expressed an interest to join the Bogda Ikh Shabi. While giving up independent existence, in the process they were spared the fiscal burdens of maintaining their monasteries. Compared to the fragile economic positions of Banner governors, the Qing funded monasteries were solid, settled institutions with strong economic foundations. Economic records show that the Banner governors were the most active loan clients of monastic funds.

While the first Buddhist monasteries were established in the 16th century, after implementation of the Qing administration in Khalkha Mongolia, several monasteries were built with the sponsorship of the Qing court. Pozdneyev called them Qing Emperor monasteries. The Qing court brought enormous funding to these monasteries, though they had not played an important role in establishing Mongolian Buddhism. Since the Qing court provided the main funding, there was no need to develop a complex *jisa* system. Thus, in the second half of the 19th century their functions ceased without the customary imperial support.

Monasteries of "Great Disciples" (*Ikh Shabi*)

The third group of monasteries relates to *Ikh Shabi* (Great Disciple)[iii] of Jebtsundamba, the head religious figure of Khalkha Mongolian Buddhism. A special administrative office, *Erdene Shanzodba*, administered these *Ikh Shabi* monasteries, which were about twenty in number. The Jebtsundambda's powerful position and the associated financial resources of *Ikh Shabi* compared favorably with the more tenuous condition of banner monasteries.

Ikh Shabi's Gandentegchinling monastery in Ikh Khuree played an important role in Khalkha Mongol Buddhism due

to its function as the main root of the country's high monastic education. In its five *datsangs*[iv] monks were trained in different fields of Buddhist knowledge. Its *tsanid*[v] datsangs Tashichoinpel, Gungachoyling and Idgachoynzenling used three different curriculums exemplified by Gomang, Drepung, and Sera monasteries of Tibet. Ikh Khuree's Gandentegchinling developed as another strong example of the Geluk monasticism in Inner Asia. Ikh Khuree monasteries had a total of over 10,000 monks by the beginning of the 20th century and they trained the most learned monks of Khalkha Mongolia.

Monks came from the banner monasteries to attend the *datsangs* of Gandentegchenling monastery. After completing their study, some of them continued their learning and resided at the administrative unit *aimag*. The remaining majority of monks returned to their original Banner monasteries. Due to Ikh Khuree *datsangs'* strong network with local banners, advanced scholarship, extended monasticism and grand rituals, Gandentegchenling grew as the central monastery of Khalkha Mongolian Buddhism. There was even a tradition that after studying in Sera, Drepung and Ganden in Lhasa, the three great seats of Gelupk learning in Tibet, Mongolian monks stayed for some time in Ikh Khuree attending one of the *datsangs* of Gandentegchinling and then went back to their Banner monasteries. This exemplifies how Ikh Khuree grew as the center and sole legitimate institution of Khalkha Mongolian Buddhism.

Extended Monasticism and Regional Monasteries

The fourth group of Buddhist monasteries in Mongolia is comprised by those that were established in 1820-1880. As mentioned earlier, they grew rapidly in the second half of the 19th century. I identify them as "*regional monasteries*". Their functions were not limited within Banner borders and most

of them were located near main and central roads, post relay stations between Uliastai and Ikh Khuree, and trading posts along the Chinese border where they functioned as regional centers. One of them, Khand Ching Wang khüree, had 800 monks by 1890 and 1427 in 1931. In addition to having a complex *jisa* organization, these monasteries had tight networks with Banner monasteries, having shared rituals and *khurals* that enabled their rapid rise. For example, they sent groups of young monks to perform elaborate rituals and at the same time holding *khailan khural* – summer retreats for young monks.

Regional monasteries thus provided funding cooperation with Banner monasteries, while the Banner monasteries benefited from having important rituals. For example Yaruugiin khüree was nicknamed *badarchinguudiin khüree*, as it allowed wandering monks to stay there, which was not usual in most monasteries. Incarnate lamas played important roles in these regional monasteries. Earlier reincarnates such as Lamyin Gegeen's and Zaya Bandita's monasteries grew as large centers. However, later reincarnates as Narobanchin's and Naran's monasteries were not large centers, as the reincarnates themselves were mobile, traveling to different Banner governor's residents and Banner monasteries. These mobile reincarnates were the bridges for inter-Banner interactions. The emergence of large regional monasteries, monasticism in Ganden, expansion of the Bogda Ikh Shabi monasteries, and weakened Qing administration control in the late 19th century all resulted in a noticeable increase in the number of Buddhist monks in Mongolia.

The records of *Urgukh Tses* show us that the biggest monasteries, which had in residence 700-1500 monks, were mostly founded in 1810-1880. For example:

Monastery	Founded	Number of Monks
Khand Chin Wangyin khüree	1867	1427
Yaruugiin khüree	1867	824
Galuutyin khüree	1855	736
Dejeelen khüree	1814	880
Ulzyit khüree	1808	1010

Records show that large monasteries founded in the second half of the 9th century grew rapidly within 60 years. Many great scholars who trained in Ikh Khuree began establishing Buddhist schools even in local regions enabling attendance of monks from banner monasteries. In turn these regional monasteries helped to develop further the Ikh Khuree's training. Highly qualified monks from these regional monasteries were quite competitive vis-à-vis each other in the central monastic institutions.

Administrative and Economic Organization of Monasteries

There were two different administrative structures found in the monasteries in the 18th and 19th centuries.

1. The Jebtsundamba Incarnate's *Shabi* (group of disciples or subjects) was organized according to the *otoq* system. An *Otoq* was a pre-Qing, clan/territorial administrative unit that was kept only by the Jebzundamba's *Ih Shabi* (great disciples) during Qing period. The nature of an *otoq* administration was that it included people of the same kinship within each administrative unit.

2. Second organizational approach was the datsang structure in which people of different kinship, clans and territories were all included. The Lamyin Gegeen monastery used this *datsang* system, however, it had a specific territory and the *shabi* and

lay people were mostly from the same or similar areas, making it similar to the *otoq*.

According to Urgukh Tses[vi] records

> In Qianlong's 43rd year (1778) eight temples of were established, Tsogchin, Labrang, Nuvlin, Sharlin, Gushig, Divaajin, Mamba, and Choir and divine services for monks and laypeople began in Erdene Bandida Khutagt monastery.

This describes an administrative organization based on *datsang*, not on the Jebtsundamba's Great Discipline organization of *otoq*. Mongolian scholars have also confirmed this, as "lay, monks and sangha were organized by *datsang*."[vii] *Datsang* served not only as schools but as main administrative units as well. Datsangs were divided into smaller units, which were named with letters of the Tibetan alphabet like *Sha, Shi, Sho, Ge (he), Bu, Gu (Hu), O, Khor, So, Ni, Ul, Ju, Kha, Ga, Da, Do, and Dui*; a total of sixteen. These units did not appear in the monasteries of the Jebtsundamba, and economic records show that monks and lay people were enumerated according to these units.

The monks of Gandentegchilen monastery had a different system that initially divided monks into thirty *aimag* affiliations. The aimag were the main administrative units that were also associated with the monks' home Banners. Each *aimag* thus received monks from certain Banners, which had fixed relationships of alms giving and "sacred realm" (takhilyin oron). James Miller argues, "The localization of groups of monks within a monastery was based on their relationship with the lay community." [viii]

As it was mentioned above, the *jisa* was an economic organization of Buddhist monasteries designed to provide

expenditures for *khural* (chanting services), and regular rituals. *Jisa* (spyi-sa) is a Tibetan term meaning "community property, "communal good", or more literally "place of property."[ix]

In practice, *jisa* describes three modes of using money or material goods (cloth, food, land, buildings, livestock) that were given to purchase religious service for the donor. A jisa may refer to:

1. A storehouse, the place where donated goods or capital funds are stored
2. Goods or funds so donated that are liquidated to carry out the purpose of donor
3. A fund from the interest is used to pay for a specific recurring monastic function

The first record on a *jisa* in Khalkha Mongolian documents comes in 1656, describing how the Jebtsundamba's *shabi* (subject and disciple relationship) and monastery were established.[x] At that time, a *jisa* was not yet a form of organization. It referred to the livestock, goods, and food that were gathered and distributed to the participants. The herd, the primary form of monastic property, was placed in the hand of the people who offered the animals. When monasteries expanded, each datsang, temple and *khural* got its own *jisa*. Therefore, the names of *jisas* refer to their initial designations and purposes, like Manla, Khailan, Molom, Tsanit, Duinkhor, and Jud.[xi]

Let us take for example Lamyin Gegeen monastery. The first economic record of Lamyin Gegeen monastery concerns 1787[xii] and is an account of the Labrang Datsang livestock herd. However, there was no mention of a *jisa*. But *jisa* did appear in the numeric records of herds of the Labrang datsang[xiii] and it was a Tsogchin *jisa*, À (Tibetan letter) jisa.

Jisas were differentiated by their duties. A Tsogchin jisa was for support of divine services and main rituals. A *sangai jisa* was for maintaining agriculture and an *alivaa khurlyin jisa* (jisa of divine service-khural) was responsible for occasional divine services. The small monasteries had 1-2 *jisa*s and the biggest monasteries had 10-20 and sometimes more than that 50-100. According to the *Urgukh Tses*[xiv] Lamyin Gegeen monastery had 10 *jisas* (however there is another suggestion that it had approximately 20[xv] *jisas*) and 20 temples.

The economy of Mongolian nomadic society relied on livestock, which is dependent on climate. There is risk involved and the benefits are seasonal. But a monastery was a different institution that required consistent functions of monastic services; they needed an accumulation of wealth. Mongolian culture and lifestyle did little to counter these risks, so monasteries adapted new strategies to manage this problem. The accumulation of livestock and treasure is called *sang*.

Some researchers viewed *sang* as the private wealth of the reincarnate[xvi] lamas. But *sang* was divided into two parts, internal and external. The monasteries of the Jebtsundamba and Narobanchin reincarnates had private wealth, which was considered the internal *sang*.[xvii] Another view is that the *sang* was the accumulated wealth of high ranking monks in the monastery. But *sang* was established to accumulate livestock and wealth, and it included all three types of wealth, the private wealth of incarnate lamas, the herds of high ranking monks and the reserve herd of the monastery. Today, in the modern Mongolian vocabulary, *sang* has two meanings: any kind of fund, and state property. Both also relate to monastic economic activities.

James Miller argued that *jisa* and *sang* are semi-independent economic organizations and they function like corporations[xviii]. *Jisas* are not dependent on each other and the *jisa* nyarav (Tib. nyerba - meaning manager) runs each

independently. It means that the increase or decrease of *jisa* wealth depends upon the *nyarab's* management skill. A Jisa *nyarab* makes decisions on trading and arranging caravans– as well what kind of individuals and families can herd *jisa* livestock. The semi-independency of a *nyarab* can be seen as having unlimited right to use the *jisa* herd in order to preserve and increase it and to avoid risks. The term *Jisa nyarab* carries special meaning in the modern Mongolian language– that of a person who has wealth but is very careful and not willing to use it. Also, a term that is closely related *nyarab* is "hetsuu hun," clever one.

All *jisas* contributed to *sang* accumulation and when *jisas* were harmed by harsh winters and droughts, attempts were made to maintain the monastery *sang* by chanting services, rituals, and other monastic activities. Economically, *jisa* and *sang* units which substituted for each other. When a *jisa* went bankrupt and was unable to provide regular chanting and rituals, *sangs* contributed these, which the *jisa* later repaid after it had recovered.

Natsagdorj Sh argued[xix] that the Bogd Jebtsundamba's internal *sang* was constituted of alms and offering and the external *sang* was dedicated to making extra profits through trading, renting, and loans. As the *sang* is the accumulated institutional wealth of the monastery, it is possible to understand why internal *sangs* were named *Badrakh* (Flourishing) in both the Jebzundamba and Lamyin Gegeen monasteries.

A *jisa* did not possess households and individuals; it contracted or made agreements for herders with lay people, *shabi*, sometimes even those from neighboring Banners. Among the *jisas* of monasteries, the Tsogchin jisa played an important role. According to the economic records of Lamyin Gegeen monastery, the main duty of the *Tsogchin jisa*[xx] was the arrangement of rituals and gathering of contributions when other *jisas* were not able to conduct them.

> Tsogchin Gonkh, Danrag ritual, Namsrai *yamun's balin* and offering, Tseder zed, Manz of Manla khural, Labrang festival (*khurim*), Deity's candle offering, Tsesem of four directions, Tanjid, offering and *balin* of Oidov, Choinpormolom *jisaa*, Ravnai of Ikh Zuu, *manz* of *doorombo damjaa*.

These were main *khurals* and they all had their own *jisas*, even though the Tsogchin *jisa* could demand certain contributions for them.

> In that day when Tanjid was held the sang joined it and contributed 25 tea blocks, two blocks of wood, two pots of milk, some butter, and one pot of salt. Also, that night we contributed for Ninsa zed one medium size pot of flour, some butter, and one light; for offering horse, one inner *dash khadag*, four colored *sambai zuuvei*.[xxi]

This illustrates how the Tsogchin jisa cooperated with the *sang* in the some ritual performances and occasional events. Another record of the Tsogchin *jisa* is as follows:

> This *jisa* is weakened (chinee muhus bolson) thus imposition of one lang (liang), one tseng of goods: one inner-dash (khadag) will be imposed on other datsangs.

This indicates that if any of the *jisas* of a monastery weakened they could transfer and divide their duties among other *jisas*. *Sangs* and Tsogchin *jisas* coordinated this management. Based on activities of Inner Mongolian monasteries in 1940s, Miller argued that:

> Generally, *jisas* function independently; however, central administration Tsogchin cares about them . . . Tsogchin

> jisa is a main organizing and administration center and all *jisas* were subjected to it."[xxii]

Some smaller monasteries didn't have a *Tsogchin jisa*, so instead the *sang* of one of the biggest *jisas* took on the duty of coordination and management in the monastery.

Challenge of Monasticism and Increase of Monks

Inevitably, establishment of extensive monasteries and the growth of hundreds of banner and regional monasteries increased the number of monks. However, Buddhist scholars of the 18th-19th centuries criticized this growth, as this growth was associated with reduced commitment to monastic celibacy, which they considered a challenge to the development of Geluk monasticism in Khalkha Mongolia.

In Tibet, Tsongkhapa established Ganden monastery in 1409, and Drepung and Sera followed within a decade to become the three main schools in the Geluk tradition. These monasteries grew rapidly and there were more than 13,000 monks at the beginning of the 20th century. Scholars have often suggested that such growth is the root of the success of the Geluk tradition.

In Mongolian, the three main schools in the Gelukpa tradition were collectively called *Senbraigesum*.

In this situation, monastic discipline and rule became particularly important. According to the monastic educational curriculum of the Gelukpa tradition, Vinaya, or the subject of the morality of monks, was studied only at the end of monastic curriculum. George Dreyfus clarified this situation "Monks notice this paradox. A caustic Mongolian Geshe is supposed have said, "When there are vows, there is no [knowledge of the] Vinaya. When there is [knowledge of the] Vinaya, there is no vow. …When monks begin their careers, they are enthusiastic

and pure, but they do not know monastic discipline. Instead of studying it immediately, they wait for ten or fifteen years, when they finally turn to Vinaya, they understand what they should have done - but it is too late. By then they have become blasé and have lost their enthusiasm for monastic life."[xxiii]

This approach reflects the belief that morality cannot be understood theoretically – since moral rules can never be from observation or deduced philosophically. In Buddhist epistemology, morality is often described as "thoroughly hidden," a domain of reality that is inaccessible to direct experience or to reason. Therefore the discipline of monks is mainly regulated by rule of monasteries, not Vinaya.

There is an interesting story about an earlier response of Gandentegchinling monastery to this issue.

> The Fifth Rabjaa Khutagtu was faithful to the Fifth Bogd, who was assumed to be an incarnation of the Demchig deity. The Rabjaa incarnation lineage was banned due accusations against the Fourth Rbvjaa. A head lama of Ganden monastery, Agwaankhaidub did not want him to visit, and so Rabjaa was not given permission to come. However, the Fifth Rabjaa still came to Ikh Khüree and prostrated to the Fifth Bogd. In that time there was female demon[xxiv] who weakened the discipline and spirituality of the monks of Ikh Khüree. Agwaankhaidub decided to use Ravjaa to suppress that demon and made a *sor torma* (sacrificial ritual cake). When the Fifth Rabjaa stepped on the other side of Tuul River, Agwaankhaidub threw the *torma* and recited praise to a main protector of Geluk, Damdinchoijoo. Damdinchoijoo was not happy with the head lama's sacrificial ritual and intended to sacrifice Rabjaa to save the discipline of the monks of Ganden. Rabjaa fainted and fell down. When he awoke there was the demon laughing at him. Rabjaa suppressed the

demon through his tantric power and discipline of Ganden monastery improved greatly.

According to Buddhist monastic education, the study of Vinaya at the end of the curriculum reveals that discipline and morality rely primarily on the personal claims, choices, and decisions of the monks themselves. Whether to get married or to follow one's vows is a monk's decision.

As Pozdneyev observed, banner monasteries had just a few monks and they usually had no permanent residence at monasteries. For the important rituals, they gathered and performed the ritual and then went back to nomadic life, living like lay people. On the other hand, banner and regional monasteries were cultural, economic, and social centers which networked within banner and across banners, including in terms of herding livestock and holding and attending important community rituals and events. Through involvement in monasteries, families and individuals benefitted from social networks and expanded connections in addition to their direct ritual benefit or spiritual participation.

Endnotes

[i] Elverskog 2009: 21.
[ii] *Urgukh Tses* is records of banner monasteries which were collected in 1918. This was the result of the composition of a ten-volume history of Mongolia completed during the Bogda Monarchy (1911 – 1921).
[iii] Ikh Shabi means Great Disciple and it denotes subjects of Jibzundamba Khutagtu.
[iv] Tib. Dratsang-monastic school.
[v] Tib. Mtshan-nyid, mo. tsanid–1. philosophical studies, 2. the faculty for pursuing these studies.
[vi] Banzragch (2007): "History of Mongolian Monastery and Temples" (Compilation of Urgukh Tses).

[vii] Nasanbaljir Ts. (1969): "Erdene Bandida Khutagtyin Shavi," *Studia Historica*, Vol 8/1969.

[viii] Robert J. Miller, "Buddhist Monastic Economy: The Jisa Mechanism," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 1962, Vol. 3, pp.427-438.

[ix] Sukhbaatar O. "Loan Words in Mongolian Language," 1998, Ulaanbaatar.

[x] "Erdene Zuu and Biography of Ündur Gegeen", Central Library of Mongolia, Fund of manuscripts.

[xi] MNCA, Ì-89, D-1, HN-6: Complete Expenditure Records of Tsanid Datsang of Shuteen Aimag, Purevjav S. (1961): Khubisgalyin Umnuh Ih Hüree. UB.

[xii] MNCA, Ì-76, D-1, HN-1, p 57.

[xiii] MNCA, M-76, D-1, HN-8, p 5.

[xiv] Central Library of Mongolia, Urgukh Tses 7695.

[xv] Mongol Yos Zanshlyin Ih Tailbar Toli (*The Concise Encyclopedia of Mongolian Customs*) (2001). UB, p107.

[xvi] Purevjav S. (1978): Mongol Dahi Sharyin Shashnii Khuraangui Tuuh (Brief History of Buddhism in Mongolia). UB, p 58.

[xvii] Dilav Khutagt Jamsranjav, "Narvanchin Monastery in Outer Mongolia"in Ariun Setgel Avarlyin Undes (Compassion Is The Root of Taking Refuge) (2000), UB.

[xviii] Robert James Miller (1959): *Monasteries and Culture change in Inner Mongolia*. Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden.

[xix] Sum ard, khamjlaga and shabi, Ulaanbaatar, 1961.

[xix] Sum ard, khamjlaga and shabi, Ulaanbaatar, 1961.

[xx] MNAH, Ì-76, D-1, HN-35.

[xxi] Ibid.

[xxii] Ibid.

[xxiii] Dreyfus 2003: 115.

[xxiv] Tib. bdudmo-female demon.

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MNCA (Mongolian National Central Archive) Ì-89, D-1, HN-6 MNCA, Ì-76, D-1, HN-1, p 57. MNCA, M-76 D-1, HN-8, p 5.

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Chapter 21
Buddhist Ceremonies in the Mongolian Capital City Before the Communist Repression and After the Revival

Krisztina Teleki

Editor's introduction: *Buddhism in Mongolia has had dramatically different turns of fortune during the last century. Buddhism was firmly entrenched and expanded significantly during the decade of Mongolian independence beginning in 1911; it was severely repressed, with tens of thousands of monks and lamas executed and temples destroyed, during the late 1930s; and then, since the early 1990s and the end of Soviet socialist influence, it has significantly resurfaced and been reasserted. Remarkable in this context has been the post-socialist occurrence of elderly monks of 70, 80, or 90 years of age teaching from memory near-forgotten Buddhist texts and practices to post-socialist teenagers and young adults 50 years or more their junior.*

Given this context, the present findings of Dr. Teleki concerning the continuity of pre-repression and post-repression Buddhist rites and ceremonies in Mongolia is extraordinary. Her detailed archival, oral history, and contemporary ethnographic investigation here reveal the great extent to which the large and complex calendrical corpus of Buddhist liturgical rites, commemorations, and festivals that were evident in the capital's monasteries and elsewhere until the late 1930s are now to a surprising degree re-established and reasserted in the capital's monasteries, often with great exactitude.

This accomplishment is underscored and thrown into relief by the challenges that Mongolian Buddhism presently faces, both economically and in its relatively small number of monks and lamas, as well as by religious competition from Christianity and from increasing secular and/or capitalist

values. While these challenges are often large, the ability of Mongolian Buddhism to re-establish its key rites and practices following seventy years of anti-Buddhist socialist repression is testament to the dedication and devotion of core practitioners, old and new, and to the deep-seated cultural significance of Buddhism in Mongolia.

The aims of Mongolian Buddhist ceremonies are to pray for the benefit of the Buddhist faith and all sentient beings, to annihilate their internal and external obstacles, and to help achieve a favorable rebirth and enlightenment. The aim of my present paper is to portray Buddhist ceremonies that were held in Ulaanbaatar until 1937, as well as ceremonies that were revived after 1990.[1]

Destruction and Revival

In Mongolia prior to the systematic destruction of monasteries during the late 1930s, approximately 1,000 monastic sites were in existence. Urga – also called Ikh khüree, Daa khüree, Bogdiin khüree, or other names – was the biggest monastic camp (*khüree*) and was the centre of the Bogd (or Jawzandamba khutagt, T. rje btsun dam pa) lineage until 1924. Gelukpa (Yellow Stream) teachings dominated in its temples, of which there were approximately 100. The eastern monastic district had approximately 45 temples, Gandan had ten temples, and there were two large monasteries (Dambadarjaa and Dashchoinkhorlin) and a meditation retreat (Shaddüwlin) to

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[1] The present paper was written within the frame of OTKA PD 83465 project, which documents the Mongolian monastic capital city's heritage.

the north. In the quarters serving the lay population, Gelukpa and Nyingmapa (Red Stream) temples were located.[2]

Concerning Buddhist ceremonies, the descriptions of A. M. Pozdneev,[3] archival materials, photos, and oral history offer invaluable sources. Daily chanting was held in the main assembly hall and monthly and annual festivals made religious life eventful. All ceremonies were brought to a halt in 1937. Although Gandan was partially reopened in 1944, the majority of the old religious practices could be revived only after the democratic changes of 1990. The old monks, some from before the purges, fulfilled a principal role in the revival through the teaching of texts, music, offerings and monastic rules to disciples. Today more than 40 temples are functioning in Ulaanbaatar, of which more than 30 follow Gelukpa teachings.[4] Among them Gandan, Züün Khüree Dashchoilin, and Betüw monasteries are the largest with a large variety of ceremonies. Small temples do not have such expansive ceremonial life; they have fewer monks, and devotees and donations or revivers of tradition are sparse.

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[2] For details of the monastic capital's monasteries and temples see www.mongoliantemples.net/English; Teleki K., Bogdiin Khüree: *Monasteries and Temples of the Mongolian Monastic Capital* (1651-1938). PhD thesis, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest 2009; Teleki, K., *Monasteries and Temples of Bogdiin Khüree*. Ulaanbaatar 2011.

[3] Pozdneyev, A.M., *Religion and Ritual in Society: Lamaist Buddhism in late 19th-century Mongolia*. ed.: Krueger, J.R. The Mongolia Society. Bloomington 1978; Pozdneyev, A. M., *Mongolia and the Mongols*, edited by Krueger, J. R., translated by Shaw, J. R. and Plank, D., Bloomington, Indiana University 1971.

[4] For details of Ulaanbaatar's present-day temples see www.mongoliantemples.net/English; Majer Zs., *A Comparative Study of the Ceremonial Practice in Present-day Mongolian Monasteries*. PhD thesis, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest 2009.

Daily Chanting and Annual Festivals, Once and Again

Though Mongolian ceremonial language and ceremonies originated in Tibet, the daily chanting of prayers has differed from the Tibetan practice, as it consists of several prayers, including ones written by eminent Mongolian lamas. The daily chanting of prayers has been revived in almost all monasteries.[5] The 8th, 15th and 30th days once had great importance in the monthly ceremonial system of the old main assembly hall. Today monthly ceremonies are held on the 8th, 15th, 29th and 30th days.

As for annual ceremonies, the biggest festivals historically attracted numerous laypeople to Urga. The great Maitreya Festival, celebrating the future Buddha, *Maidar* (T. *byams pa*), which is now held in the first summer month, was one of the most spectacular events of Urga according to Pozdneev (1971, pp. 54-55.). The ceremony itself is called *Maidariin chogo*, or *Jambiin chogo* (T. *byams pa'i cho ga*). All the lamas and the lay population gathered in a procession around the monastic quarter following the statue of *Maidar*, carried on a huge cart with a green horse head. This festival was called *Maidar ergekh* ("circumambulation with Maitreya's statue"). There was another kind of recitation dedicated to *Maidar* (*Maidariin düitsen ödör*) on the 6th of the last summer month with a *Jasaa Jambiin chogo* ceremony. Today, it is performed, again in Gandan and in Züün khüree Dashchoilin monasteries, as well as in some rural monasteries, to hasten the coming of the future Buddha.

Another significant event has been the *Tsam* (T. '*chams*) religious dance, performed in summer with the participation

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[5] The texts of the daily chanting of Züün Khüree Dashchoilin Monastery were published in 2004. Jambal, B. – Mönkhsaikhan, D., *Tsogchin unshlagiin zereg tus amgalan garakhiin oron orshwoi*. Ulaanbaatar 2004.

of nearly 100 lamas. The aim of the dance is to conquer the enemies of the Buddhist faith, as well as to bring prosperity and wellbeing to the spectators. The monks of Züün khüree Dashchoilin monastery in Ulaanbaatar have been successful in reviving this demanding tantric practice.

The *Danshig* (or *bat orshil*, T. *brtan bzhugs*) ceremony was held for the longevity of the Bogd (the c. Today, it is performed only on special occasions, such as the commemoration festival of Öndör gegeen Zanabazar (1635-1723), or acknowledgements of young reincarnations of famous saints (*khutagt khuwilgaan*).

Preceding the Lunar New Year, *Tsagaan sar,* ceremonies lasting for three days were held in the main assembly hall to honor the wrathful deities, and the *Sor* (T. *zor*) fire offering was performed to remove harmful forces and prevent natural disasters. *Tsederlkham* (T. *tshes gtor lha mo*), the yearly ceremony of Baldanlkham goddess (T. dpal ldan lha mo, Skr. Çrídeví), was performed in all temples at the dawn of the New Year to pray for favorable circumstances for the coming year. Though today the three-day long ceremonies called *Khuuchin khural* are performed only in a few locations, the *Tsederlkham* ceremony is held in each temple of the capital city as well as in the countryside to greet the Lunar New Year.

The four great festivals of Buddha, the commemoration of Tsongkhapa (1357-1419), the founder of the Gelukpa tradition, and that of Öndör gegeen Zanabazar, the key figure responsible for the diffusion of the Gelukpa tradition in Mongolia, were held in nearly every temple. This is also the case today.[6] Today four ceremonies are held as "great days" of the

[6] For details of the present-day festivals and ceremonies see Diwaasambuu, G., *Gandantegchenlin khiid dakhin sergesen tüükh*. Ulaanbaatar 2009; Majer Zs., *A Comparative Study of the Ceremonial Practice in Present-day Mongolian Monasteries*. PhD thesis, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest 2009.

Buddha (*Burkhan bagshiin ikh düitsen ödör*), called *Tüwiin chogo* (T. *thub pa'i cho ga*) or *Burkhan bagshiin chogo*. All of them bear individual names referring to their purposes. In Urga, the New Year started with a special ceremonial period called the Great Prayer Festival (*Yeröөl chenbo khural*, T. *smon lam chen mo*; or *Tsagaan sariin doodbii/dudba(i)* T. *bstod pa*; or shortly, *Yeröөl*, T. *bstod pa*; or *Choinpürel jonaa*, T. *chos 'phrul bco lnga*). These ceremonies lasted for 15 days in the datsans, in some aimag temples, and in the main assembly halls of Gandan, Dambadarjaa, and Züün Khüree.

Another great festival day of the Buddha is on the 15th day of the first summer month, which commemorates his birth, the day he reached enlightenment and became a Buddha, and the day when he passed away (T. *mngon par byang chub pa'i dus chen*). The third festival of the Buddha is held on the 4th day of the last summer month. It commemorates the day when Buddha first preached the Dharma, often referred to as "the festival of his first turning of the wheel of Dharma" (*Choinkhor düitsen*, T. *chos 'khor dus chen*). Both of these ceremonies must have been held in the main assembly hall of Züün Khüree. Pozdneev mentions one of the *Choinkhor düitsens* (1971, pp. 54-55.) that was held on the 4th of the last summer month. The next festival on the 22nd day of the last autumn month is called *Lkhawawiin düitsen* (*yeröөl*) (T. l*ha las babs pa'i dus chen*). It is the day when Buddha descended from the Gods' realms, where he had spent ninety days teaching and spending the *Khailen* (T. *khas len*, "oath-taking") retreat. In the monastic schools, *Lkhawawiin dom* (T. *lha las babs pa'i ston mo*) was held on exactly the same day, and this event was also commemorated in some *aimag* temples. On the 25th day of the first winter month, the anniversary of Tsongkhapa's passing, called *Bogd lamiin düitsen yeröөl*, *Bogd Zonkhowiin düitsen yeröөl*, or *Zuliin düitsen*, was held. Today it is called *Zonkhowiin düitsen*, *Bogd lamiin düitsen* or, as often referred

to, *Zuliin 25*, "the 25th day of butter lamps," reflecting the tradition of lighting butter lamps and burning incense sticks in honour of Tsongkhapa.

One of the longest celebrations was the oath-taking retreat period (*Khailen* or *Yar khailen*, T. (*dbyar*) *khas len*, "(summer) oath-taking," also called *Yarnai*, T. *dbyar gnas*, "summer retreat"), which began on the 15th of the last summer month and lasted for 45 days. Only fully-ordained monks and novices were allowed to take part in this retreat, during which they read the Vinaya, confirmed their vows, confessed their possible mistakes and amended them. Today, it requires the participation of at least four fully ordained monks. *Sojin* (T. *gso sbyong*, confession of sins, purifying and confirming vows) was a part of this ceremony. On the 15th and 30th day of every month *Sojin* was held in the main assembly hall of Dambadarjaa monastery. Today, the practice of *Sojin* has hardly been revived, as fully ordained lamas are few in number. Circumambulation of the volumes of the Kanjur (Ganjuur, T. bka' gyur) and worship of *owoo* mounds were held near Urga. These traditions have been revived on a smaller scale.

Sources of Ceremonies held in 1937, and Present-day Practices

Sources of information on ceremonies held in Mongolian monasteries are extremely rare. However, the National Archives of Mongolia preserves lists of ceremonies of Urga's 28 Gelukpa temples.[7] They were all compiled in 1937 on the order of the Religious Authority (*Shashnii zakhirgaa*), including the names, dates, duration, number of required monks and actual participants of 623 ceremonies, which were held in and

[7] For the title of the texts, see the Bibliography.

until that year. These valuable documents are unique sources not only because they indicate how many monks belonged to certain temples before the closure of the monasteries but because they also demonstrate the lively religious life of the temples. According to our present knowledge, such sources are quite rare in the history of Ulaanbaatar, reaching back over 300 years.

Among the data concerning the 28 temples one can find descriptions of the main assembly hall (*Gandantegchenlin*) of Gandan monastery and its three relic temples (total 31 ceremonies) and two philosophical schools: *Güngaachoilin datsan* (42 ceremonies) and *Idgaachoizinlin datsan* (35); *Khailan jas* (3); the medical monastic school (17) of *Züün Khüree* as well as its 22 *aimag*[8] temples, namely *Jadar* (10), *Toisamlin* (23), *Tsetsen toin* (23), *Dashdandarlin* (17), *Jas* (20), *Nomch* (15), *Sangai* (16), *Zoogoi* (29), *Dugar* (14), *Mergen khamba* (12), *Biziyaa* (11), *Khüükhen noyon* (10), *Darkhan emch* (16), *Erkhem toin* (23), *Wangai* (48), *Barga* (7), *Namdollin* (26), *Bandid* (13), *Jamiyaansün/Choinsün* (25), *Lam nar* (17), *Mergen nomon khan* (15), *Örlüüd* (25) as well as the ceremonies of Dambadarjaa monastery (90). From these data we can gain a complex picture of Gelukpa religious life in the city. What follows here are a few examples of these ceremonies.

As for everyday practice, *Tsogchin* (T. *tshogs chen*) recitation was held in the main assembly halls, while in other temples the regular service of *Jasaa* was read by a few monks. (*Jasaa* means temporary service, family adoration, or regular activity.) Today *Tsogchin* has been revived almost everywhere, and in the biggest monasteries *Jasaa* consists of four lamas

[8] Züün khüree had 30 *aimags*, i.e. districts inhabited by monks. All *aimag* had an own temple.

who do the recitals requested by individuals every day. In several temples in Urga, *Jasaa Sakhius*, *Jasaa Tsedew*, or other *Jasaa* ceremonies related to the cult in the given temple were performed daily by pairs of lamas (two, four, eight, and so on). *San* (T. *bsangs*) incense offering, a purification ritual, was performed every day in a few temples, sometime with *dallaga* practice (T. g.*yang gugs*, ritual for summoning the forces of prosperity). Moreover, in certain temples there were daily rituals such as *Namsrain san* (T. *rnam sras bsangs*), *Maidariin san*, often with sacrificial cake offerings (*dorbul*, T. *gtor 'bul*) and *demberel* (T. *rten 'brel*). These rituals exist today as well.

Apart from Buddha Çākyamuni and Tsongkhapa, the highest religious dignitaries such as the eight Bogds were commemorated annually. This kind of *Düitsen yerööl* (*düitsen*, T. *dus chen*, "great day, festival") or *Daichid/Daichod yerööl* (T. '*das mchod*, "death anniversary, commemoration") ceremonies took place in each temple. The two terms are used inconsistently in the texts. These ceremonies consisted of praises and eulogies (*yerööl, magtaal*). Concerning the local dignitaries, on the 14th of the first spring month, the great feast day of Öndör Gegeen Zanabazar (today known as *Öndör gegeenii ikh düitsen ödör*) and the ceremony called *Öndör bogdiin düitsen yerööl* or *Öndör gegeenii düitsen yerööl*, *Tsagaan sariin 14-nii yerööl*, or *Tsagaan sariin yerööl*, or simply *Yerööl* was held. The lamas commemorated his beneficial deeds and his passing away.[9] As for his further incarnations the great feast day commemorating the 2nd Bogd, called *2-r bogdiin düitsen yerööl* was performed on the 17th

[9] Today, this ceremony is known as *Dawkhar yerööl*, "double prayer" referring to the fact that apart from the usual prayers of the Lunar New Year's 15 prayers, on this day that of Öndör gegeen is also recited.

day of the last winter month. The commemoration of the 3rd incarnation was held on the 21st day of the last autumn month, whilst that of the 4th incarnation took place on the 16th day of the middle winter month. The 5th Bogd was commemorated on the 3rd day of the first winter month. The 6th incarnation's ceremony was held on the 20th day of the first winter month, and the 7th incarnation was worshipped on the 12th day of the middle winter month. Apparently these ceremonies were held only in *Wangain* and *Lam nariin aimags*, whereas the commemoration of the 8th Bogd was held in several temples on the 17th day of the first summer month.

Today, only Öndör gegeen's prayers are recited on the 14th day of the first spring month, the others' cults have not been revived.[10] Furthermore, some other dignitaries' commemorations were held in few temples, such as that of *Khachin lam* (T. *mkhan chen bla ma*), which was held on the 7th day of the middle winter month in *Süngiin aimag*. The ceremony honouring *Jalkhanz khutagt* (T. *rgyal khang rtse*, one of the main incarnation lineages in Mongolia) was recited on the 9th day of the middle summer month in *Wangain aimag*, and the ceremony in honour of *Yonzon khamba* was held on the 7th day of the middle winter month in *Wangain* and *Erkhem toinii aimags*. The commemoration of the 8th Bogd or Bogd khaan (1870-1924) was held in several temples. Today this ceremony is held only in Gandan.

Ceremonies to worship the wrathful protectors were held often during the year. Each temple had an image or a sculpture representing its own tutelary deity (*yadam*, T. *yi dam*), and protector (*sakhius*, T. *bstan bsrung*). Nowadays, on the 29th day of each month the protectors are worshipped

[10] In the present-day Gandan monastery on this day there is a ceremony called *Uuliin lamiin chogo*, when the ritual text for the 8th Bogd, written by Luwsan (T. blo bzang, known as *Uuliin lam*, 'the lama from the mountain'), is recited.

in the framework of a ceremony, called *Sakhius* or *Khangal*. In Urga various rituals were held for their worship such as the ceremony dedicated to all the ten wrathful protectors, called *Arwan khangal*. The ceremony is held to protect all sentient beings and the lama community from any hindrance.

Ceremonies were performed in honour of the nine protectors (*9 khangal*), the six protectors (*6 khangal*), or only one or two of them such as *Lkham* or *Gombo, Gongor* and *Namsrai*. On some of these occasions, called *Sakhius danragt* or *Khangaliin danragt*, thanksgiving offerings (*danrag*, T. *gtang rag*) was made to the deities, sometimes together with *dügjüü* offerings (T. *drug bcu*). Among them, *Choijal dügjüü* or *Choijoo dügjüü* was and still is the most famous one dedicated to *Choijal* (T. *chos rgyal*, Skr. Yama), the Lord of Death. An important ceremony to worship the wrathful deities was *Danshig(iin) khangal* (T. *brtan bzhugs*) held for 3-4 days in the middle winter month in several *aimags* of the city. Furthermore, *Dergediin khangal* additional and/or assistant protector ceremonies were held in a few aimags. *Tümed khangal* or *Tümed sakhius* was another type of ceremony performed for the protectors. As it is clear from the archival material this ceremony was surely held in *Güngaachoilin datsan*. *Ikh sakhius* ("Great Protector") ceremony was held in almost every temple on different dates that related to their protectors and traditions.

Tutelary deities (mainly Buddhas and Bodhisattvas) such as Avalokiteçvara, the Bodhisattva of compassion, and T**ā**r**ā**, the saviouress, served as a basis for several practices of lamas. In a few temples sand maóðala (*dültson*, T. *rdul tshon*) of their tutelary deities were prepared. Today, only the K**ā**lacakra maóðalas is prepared every year in Gandan. *Chogo* (T. *cho ga*) meaning "ritual, ceremony, way of performance" is a collective name for certain kinds of bigger ceremonies dedicated mainly to Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and other tutelary deities. These

rituals required initiation in the cult and practices of the given deity. As for the Buddhas, *Awidiin chogo* with the aim of clearing away all sins and praying for the deceased to gain rebirth in the paradise of Amitābha Buddha, was performed, as well as *Ayuushiin chogo*, worshipping Amitāyus, the Buddha of Boundless life. As for the Bodhisattvas *Dar' ekhiin chogo* honouring Tārā, and *Janraisegiin chogo* (T. *spyan ras gzigs kyi cho ga*), the worship of Avalokiteçvara were performed. The ceremony in honour of the sixteen arhats or main disciples of Buddha (*Naidan chogo*) was also held. Today it is a usual ceremony held on the 30th day of each month.

Apart from the festivals described above, there were numerous other religious practices and events. As it is evident from the sources *Nünnai* or *Nügnee/Nügnei* (T. *smyung gnas*, "fasting ritual") was held from time to time by a small number of lamas. This was a fasting ritual, fasting practice or retreat lasting for 3-15 days focusing on Avalokiteçvara, Vajrapāói, Akåobhya (*Mintügwa yadamiin nünnai*) or the Medicine Buddha (*Manaliin nünnai*). *Dörwön tsagiin nünnai* ("seasonal fasting") and *Jasaa nünnai* were also held in few places. Today, if they wish, monks may fast individually. Fire-offering, called *Jasiin galiin takhil(ga)* was held in almost each temple on the 24th, 25th, or 26th day of the last winter month by two, four, or more appointed lamas. Its aim was to purify the financial unit and the treasury.

On the 25th day of the last summer month, the ceremony called "Consecration on the fortunate day" (*Dashnyam arawnai*, T. *bkra shis nyi ma rab gnas*) was held in *Wangain aimag*. Today, this is called 'the Great Consecration' (*Ikh arawnai*), and on this day all the objects of worship, statues, painted scrolls, and the shrines are re-consecrated in Gandan with the aim of renewing the effects of the original consecration.

Khajid (T. *mkha' spyod*) ceremony was held on the 10th day of each month by four appointed lamas in the relics temple

of the 5th Bogd. Today, in a few Mongolian monasteries, including Gandan, the *Khajidiin chogo* ceremony is held only once a year. However, in some temples, especially in Red Stream temples, it is held monthly on the 25th and the 10th days of the month. *Narkhajid* (T. *na ro mkha' spyod*, Skr. Sarvabuddha dākini) was the main tutelary deity of the 5th Bogd. It is said that when he was meditating on this goddess, he saw a red light above the Bogd Khan Mountain and the River Tuul. Thus, this ceremony has been held ever since then.

Ündes (T. *rgyud*, 'tantra') ceremony was held not only for the wrathful deities, but for Tārā, and other deities as well, and sacrificial cake offering (*dordow*, T. *gtor sgrub*) could be made to them (e.g. *Gürgüliin dordow*). The ceremony of *Günreg* (shortly for *Günreg Nambarnanzad*, T. *kun rig(s) rnam par snang mdzad*, Skr. Sarvavidyā Vairocana) for the deceased was held regularly at the request of individuals.

In *Toisamlin aimag* on the 15th day of every month the Guhyasamāja tantra (*Sanduin jüd*, T. *gsang 'dus rgyud*) was recited. Today, in almost each temple Guhyasamāja tantra is recited on this day. (Gandan lamas preserved the ceremonial rules of the old *Jüd datsan*.) The Mongolian *Sandui* was recited in *Gandantegchenlin* twice in winter until 1937 according to the text.

A special practice called *Bumbiin takhilga* ("vase offering") such as *Gongoriin bumba*, *Namsrain bumba*, *Jambaliin bumba*, *Manaliin bumba* was performed in a few temples. *Ganjuur* ceremonies were held infrequently and only in a couple of temples.[11] *Tsogchid* offering ceremonies (T. *tshogs mchod*, Skr. ganapūjā, "accumulation of offerings,"

[11] Today, on the 5th day of the last summer month, the *Jasaa Ikh Ganjuur* or *Altan Ganjuur* ceremony is held as one of the annual ceremonies performed only in Gandan.

feast offering) were also performed to honour wrathful deities. *Donchid* (T. *stong mchod*, "thousand-fold offering") was performed for several deities. *Büteel* is a ceremony with the recitation of the magic formula of a given deity several times. In philosophical monastic schools *Migzemiin büteel* (T. *dmigs rtse ma*) and *Janraisegiin büteel* were held for six days in the middle summer month with the participation of hundreds of lamas, whilst in other places these were recited randomly for a day by a few of lamas. Today, this ceremony is called *Maaniin büteel*. It is dedicated to *Janraiseg* and to achieve a healthy and peaceful life. In Urga *Dar' ekhiin büteel*, *Choijingiin büteel*, and *Gürgüliin büteel* were held as well. Ceremonies of the Medicine Buddha (*Manal*) were mostly held in the Medical monastic school. There were several types of ceremonies related to *Manal*.

The Gürem (T. *sku rim*) ceremony (today called also as *zasal*) was a usual practice including healing or protective rituals. *Günreg* ceremonies were held to elevate sentient beings from unfavorable rebirth to a better one, and to save them from any inauspicious rebirth. *Jadamba* (T. *brgyad stong pa*, Eight thousand verses version of Prajñāpāramitā) was read in *Dugariin aimag*.

In philosophical monastic schools several *dom* (T. *sdom*) were held in winter: four *ikh dom* and four *baga dom*. Their names refer to the day when they were held, such as *18-nii dom*, *19-nii dom*, *20-nii dom*, *21-nii dom*, *25-nii dom*. Their majority was held on great days of the Buddha. Moreover, *Gawjiin damjaa* (T. *dka' bcu'i dam bca'*), (*Parchin*) *Domiin damjaa* (T. *phar phyin ston mo'i dam bca'*) were held there as well as debates on the five volumes of philosophy (*Tawan bot'*, or *Daj ergekh*). *Joroo*,[12] *Jüshii/Züshii dom* (T. bcu bzhi)

[12] Exact meaning unknown. M. Ĵoroo, T.

are also mentioned as well as *Lkhawawiin düitsen yerööl* or *Lkhawawiin dom*, and *Lyankha dom* or *Lyankhiin dom*. According to Soninbayar[13] before the *dom* exams (*domiin damjaa*), the lamas who studied in the *dom* classes were ordered to participate in the given feasts of the four great *dom (ikh)* and the three small *dom (baga)*.[14] Today, philosophical exams can be taken only in the Dashchoimbel monastic school of Gandan monastery.

Seasonal ceremonies were held in some temples as well, such as *Namriin dund sariin khural* ("ceremony of the middle autumn month"), *Khawriin süül sariin khural* ("ceremony of the last autumn month"), *Öwliin tergüün sariin khural* ("ceremony of the first winter month"), *Öwliin dund sariin khural* ("ceremony of the middle winter month"), *Öwliin tergüün sariin 25-nii yerööl* (*Yerööl* ceremony on the 25th day of the first winter month), and *Arwan tawnii danrag* ("thanksgiving offering on the 15th of the month"). *Sariin chogo* or *Sariin khural* ("ceremony lasting for a month") or *Namriin neg sariin khural* ("ceremony for a month in autumn") were also held in some temples.

Although the archival sources do not include data about Nyingmapa temples, we can assume that their practices were similar to the present-day temples (about ten in number) which practice worship to Padmasambhava and the dākinis, thus, on the 10th and 25th day of the month, ceremonies are held in their honor.

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[13] Soninbayar, Sh. (ed.), Gandantegchinlen khiid, Shashnii deed surguuliin khurangui tüükh Tsagaan lawain duun egshig khemeekh orshiwoi. Ulaanbaatar 1995, pp. 66-67.

[14] According to Soninbayar the four great feasts were the following: *Lyankh dom* which was held on the 4th day of the last summer month, on the festival day when Buddha turned the wheel of Dharma; 22-*nii dom* was held on 22nd day of the last autumn month; 25-*nii dom* was celebrated on the annual commemoration day of Tsongkhapa, and *Jüshii dom* was held on the 14th day of the middle winter month.

Connections with Devotees

There is an important issue that is not mentioned in the written sources. From the archival sources we can see how busy religious life was in temples in the city until the beginning of the massive persecutions in the late 1930s, and in the 1990s we could witness its revival personally. Thanks to the enthusiastic old lamas and pious devotees we can again see the Maitreya procession, the *Tsam* masked dance, and several other ceremonies. At present we can observe how temples maintain their traditions and develop ritual practices. Apart from the large variety of ceremonies that are performed once again in temples, efforts made by monks in various other fields to support the everyday life of faithful devotees must be emphasized as well. Although in the recent years the reputation and number of monks has decreased in Ulaanbaatar, it now seems that monks who have remained in the community are making a tremendous contribution to the Buddhist faith and to the wellbeing of the community. Monks can meditate at home, receive more initiations, listen to religious teachings, and develop their personal knowledge as originally established by their old masters who have since passed away. Meanwhile, devotees can visit monasteries, give alms and offerings to monks, perform virtuous deeds, make prostrations, feed pigeons, light butter lamps, recite mantras with their their rosaries, turn prayer wheels, and express their gratitude in several other ways. Monks and devotees consecrate stūpas and worship *owoos* together. Devotees invite monks to their homes to perform rituals to liberate them from illness, bad fortune, hardship, and natural diseases. Monks also perform blessing of devotees' new homes, in order for life to prosper there, animate new religious objects to protect them, and give advice concerning weddings, house moving, and other life-issues.

Though ceremonies have not been revived at such a large scale in the countryside as in Ulaanbaatar, the conduct of the monks is similar, and their reputation is generally better there. Apart from daily chanting, they have hardly been able to revive other ceremonies and cannot educate their disciples properly, as even the maintenance of their community is not ensured, due to the lack of constant income and the need to pay taxes.

The cooperation of monasteries seems to have been revived in a small scale, which is adequate in the development of religious practices. At the beginning of the 20th century Mongolian and Tibetan lamas of the capital city made short visits to rural monasteries to give teachings and support new practices. This occurs as well today, but only rarely. In recent years, reincarnations of Mongolian saints (*khutagt khuwilgaan*) have been acknowledged, which is also very important in supporting the faith of the lay public. We can conclude that due to the small number of monks, the reintroduction of all the old ceremonies is not possible. Religious practices will have to be developed one step at a time.

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Kh193/42	without title [Annual ceremonies of the medical monastic school]
Kh196/8	Gandantegčinling-yin dangsa [List of *Gandantegchenlin*]
Kh199/55	Barγa-yin ayimaγ-un toγtamal qural-ud [Regular Ceremonies of *Bargiin aimag*]
Kh200/21	Wanggai ayimaγ-un qural-ud nersiin bürtgel dans [List of *Wangai aimag*'s Ceremonies]

Kh208/73 Duγar-yin ayimaγ-un nigen ǰil-dü toγtamal qurdaγ qural-yi todorqailaγsan küsünügtü [Data Sheet of *Dugariin aimag*'s Regular Ceremonies]

Kh211/18 Ĵamyangsüren-yin ayimaγ-un nigen ǰilün toγtamal qural-ud-un neres [Names of Regular Ceremonies held in *Jamiyaansürengiin aimag*]

Kh216/44 Toyisamling ayimaγ-un büküi qural-un dangsa [List of all Ceremonies of *Toisamlin aimag*]

Kh218/18 Mergen q.ambu-yin ayimaγ-un qural-un ungsilγ-a-un dangsa [List of Ceremonies held in *Mergen khambiin aimag*]

Kh224/9 Örligüd-ün ayimaγ-yin 27 on-u toγtamal qural-un bürgüdel-e [Regular Ceremonies in *Örlüüdiin aimag* held in 1937]

Kh240/1/2 27 on-u Dambadariǰiya keyid-ün toγtomal qural-un dangsa [List of Permanent Ceremonies held in Dambadarjaa monastery in 1937]

SKh188/144 Güngaachoilin datsangiin neg jild khurdag khurliin nersiig todorkhoilson dans [List of Annual Ceremonies held in *Güngaachoilin datsan*]

SKh189/2 Yidgg.ačoiǰingling dačan-un nigen ǰilün toγtamal quridaγ qural-un küsünüg-tü: [Data Sheet of Regular Annual Ceremonies of *Yidgaachoinzinlin datsan*]

SKh209/66 **Ĵooγai ayimaγ-un toγtamal qural-un dangsa [Regular Ceremonies in *Zoogoi aimag*]**

SKh212/38 **Namdolling ayimaγ-un toγtamal qural-ud [Regular Ceremonies in *Namdollin aimag*]**

TsKh227/48 **without title [Regular Ceremonies of *Erkhem toinii aimag*]**

Notes to Contributors[1]

Jonathan Addleton, PhD, was the United States Ambassador to Mongolia from November 2009 until July 2012. Previously, he served as USAID Mission Director in Pakistan (2006-2007), Cambodia (2004-2006), and Mongolia (2001-2004). His other Foreign Service assignments have taken him to Yemen, Jordan, Belgium, Kazakhstan, and South Africa. Dr. Addleton is a life member of both the Mongolia Society and the Nature Conservancy. He has a PhD and MA from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University and a BS from Northwestern University. His publications include many articles on Asia and two books, *Undermining the Center: The Gulf Migration and Pakistan* (Oxford University Press, 1993) and *Some Far and Distant Place* (University of Georgia Press, 2002).

Arjia Rinpoche is Director of the Tibetan Mongolian Buddhist Cultural Center in Bloomington, Indiana, and is one of Mongolia's most eminent lamas. At the age of two, Arjia Rinpoche was recognized by the 10th Panchen Lama as the throne holder and abbot of Kumbum Monastery. During the Cultural Revolution, he was forced to attend Chinese schools and worked in a labor camp for sixteen years. Following the Cultural Revolution, Ven. Arjia Rinpoche continued serving as Abbot of Kumbum--overseeing renovations in the monastery and reestablishing monastic studies.

In 1998, due to the strained political climate in Tibet, Ven. Rinpoche escaped to the United States and started the Tibetan Center for Compassion and Wisdom in Mill Valley, California.

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[1] Contributor names are alphabetized according to country custom. Unless requested otherwise by the author, Mongolian names are alphabetized by their first name, given Mongolian common use conventions. Western contributors are alphabetized as by common convention by last name.

In 2005, he was appointed Director of the Tibetan Mongolian Buddhist Cultural Center in Bloomington, Indiana by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. His memoirs are published as *Surviving the Dragon: A Tibetan Lama's Account of 40 Years of Chinese Rule* (New York, Rodale Books, 2010).

Bataa Mishig-Ish is Chief Advisor to Grand Maitreya Project and Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees of Grand Maitreya Foundation. He is also currently working as Director of International Affairs of the National Academy of Governance, Government Agency of Mongolia.

Bat-Amgalan Baatarjav is a historian and serves as the Chairman of the Tod Nomyn Gerel. He was born in 1972 in Uvs province of Mongolia. He finished his secondary school in 1990 and became an English student at the Foreign Language Institute of Mongolia (formerly the "Institute of the Russian Language"). He graduated as one of the first English teachers in Mongolia and started his career as an English Teacher at the Economic College of Mongolia (currently, the Institute of Economics and Finance), then at the Institute of Administration & Management Development, Government of Mongolia (current Academy of Management) as a Foreign Relations Liaison. In April 1997 he joined Erel Co., Ltd, a leading gold mining group, which had various sector activities in construction, production of building materials, education, and media. He served at Erel for four years, starting as a translator and then working as the head of the Foreign Relation Department until 2001 when he started his own business and career.

In 2006, he started a non-government organization to conduct research on western Mongolia, particularly the Oirad language dialect, their history, culture, and religion. He developed the active study and promotion of the Tod Mongol Script. He has served as the Chairman of the Tod Nomyn Gerel Center for the last five years. This organization has published twenty books in

a scientific serial widely known in Mongolia and internationally titled *Bibliotheca Oiratica*. He has also published four books in Biography Serica; and has organized eight international scientific conferences in Mongolia and abroad.

Batchimeg Migeddorj was recently elected and approved as a member of the Parliament of Mongolia. The Hon. Ms. Miggeddorj was previously the National Security Policy Advisor to the President of Mongolia. She received master degrees at Taiwan University in Political Science and the Mongolian University of Defense, and is also currently a doctoral student in Political Science. She is an expert in regional studies, Mongolian national security research, and Sino-Mongolian relations. She has worked as a lead researcher at the Institute of Strategic Studies at the Mongolian Ministry of Defense, has been Head of Trade and an Economic Representative of the Office of Ulaanbaatar in Taipei, and has been an Advisor and lead analyst at the Institute of Strategic Studies of the National Security Committee.

Batsaikhan Ookhnoi is a Research Fellow and Head of the Russian Department at the Institute of International Studies, The Mongolian Academy of Sciences. His research interests are in the modern area of international relations in Asia in the 20th Century, with emphasis on Mongolia and on the complexities of historical area analysis. He also has active interest in the secret history Sino – Soviet relations. He is interested in developing and analyzing Mongolian international history during the late 19th and early 20th century. He conducts regular archival research in Mongolia as well as in Russia, Taiwan, Germany, Japan, Korea, and the United Kingdom. He has also done extensive research at Tohoku University, Japan and Cambridge University, UK.

His latest publications are: *A History of Mongolia: Bogdo Jebtsundamba Khutuktu, The last king of Mongolia, The life and legend*, UB: Admon, Second edition, 2011, 722 pages; A History *of*

Mongolia: Becoming a nation state (1911-1946) UB: Admon press, 2005, 350 pages. In Mongolian: *Mongolian independence and Kiakhta Agreement of 1915 Between China, Russia and Mongolia*, UB: Admon press, 2002, 340 pages; *Diary of I.Ia.Korostovets, Russian Plenipotentiary in Mongolia in 1912-1913*, Compiled and edited by Batsaikhan Ookhnoi, Olga Bakich, Tatsuo Nakami, UB., Admon press, 2009, 440 pages, also in Russian, 2010.

Bayantsagaan Sandag is Head of Lamrim Monastery in Terelj Valley, Mongolia. The Ven. Bayantsagaan Sandag was born in 1952 in Myangad soum of Khovd province. After completing secondary school in 1970, he served in the army and then joined the Zanabazar School of Religious Studies, from which he graduated in 1976 as a Buddhist philosopher. He worked as a researcher at the Mongolian Academy of Sciences for eight years and was engaged in research on Buddhist philosophy. In 1990 he created a public organization, The Association of Mongolian Buddhists, and served as its President for nine years. During this period and since, he has participated actively in the effort to revive Buddhist traditions and monasteries in Mongolia. He also created the Lamrin temple in Terelj Valley based on the famous *Lamrin* teaching by Lama Tsongkhapa; he currently serves as its Director. He also serves as leader of The Center for Teachings and Creations of Aryabal, a non-governmental organization (NGO).

Khashchuluun Chuluundorj, is Chairman of the National Development and Innovation Committee, Government of Mongolia. He received a PhD in 2003 in the School of Economics at Keio University, Tokyo. He has been Dean at The School of Economics, National University of Mongolia and was a consultant of the joint Japan-Mongolia Study on Medium Term Development Strategy and the Public Investment Program for the Government of Mongolia. His recent papers include, “Privatization of the Health Sector in Mongolia,” Research Team Leader, Open Society

Forum, Oct. 2004; "Bibliography of Poverty-related Economic Documents in Mongolia," Research team coordinator, 2004, Open Society Forum; and "Economic Vulnerabilities and Human Security in Mongolia," Annex Paper, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, June, 2004.

Bruce M. Knauft, PhD, is Samuel C. Dobbs Professor of Anthropology and Director of the States at Regional Risk Project (SARR) at Emory University, Atlanta, GA, USA. His research combines politico-economic and cultural analysis and theory across different world areas, historically and in the present. His SARR project is an instance of "engaged anthropology" that cultivates networks of activist policy-makers, civil society leaders, and scholars across countries in Asia, Africa, and South America that have been recovering from sociopolitical upheaval or strife. (See the SARR project websitge at <sarr.emory.edu>.) As the head of SARR, Dr. Knauft plans, administers, budgets, and orchestrates this project in various world areas, including Inner Asia.

Trained as a cultural anthropologist, Dr. Knauft conducted two years of doctoral research among a remote rainforest people of Papua New Guinea, the Gebusi, with whom he still maintains contact. During his twenty-seven years at Emory, he has developed comparative interests and mentored advanced student research across a range of world areas, topics, and disciplinary perspectives. He has conducted engaged anthropology project work in East and West Africa, South Asia and the Himalayas, and Inner Asia. His numerous publications have addressed issues of political economy and culture; modernity and marginality; politics and violence; and gender and sexuality. His seven previous books include *The Gebusi, 3rd ed*. (McGraw-Hill, 2013), *Critically Modern* (Indiana University Press, 2002), *Exchanging the Past* (University of Chicago Press, 2002), *From Primitive to Post-colonial in Melanesia and Anthropology* (University of Michigan Press, 1999), *Genealogies for the Present in Cultural Anthropology* (Routledge Press, 1996),

and *Good Company and Violence* (University of California Press, 1985).

Lkham Purevjav is a researcher at the Department of Ethnology and Anthropology, Institute of History, Mongolian Academy of Sciences. Her research concerns the social and cultural functioning of Buddhism in Qing-period Mongolia and during Mongolian early modernization. Lkham Purevjav has authored *Mongolyin Burkhanii Shashinii Aman Tuuh* (Oral History of Mongolian Buddhism) published in Ulaanbaatar in 2010. She actively presents at international conferences, including "Ritual and Qing Administration: Sending Buddhist Monks to Yong He Gong and Dolonnur Monastery;" "Mongolian Historical Sources and Khotogoid Chingunjav" at the International conference (Ulaanbaatar, July 19-20, Mongolia); "Anthropological Perspectives in Mongolian Studies" at the Anthropology and Social Theory conference in May 2010 in Chita, Russia; and "Offering Ritual and Social Mobility in Mongolia in 18-19th Centuries," at the 16th Congress of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences," Kunming, China, 27-30, July, 2009. She has currently received an American Center for Mongolian Studies Fellowship and will be in residence at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, USA, during fall 2012.

Glenn H. Mullin is a Tibetologist, Buddhist writer, translator of classical Tibetan literature, and teacher of Tantric Buddhist meditation. He divides his time between writing, teaching, meditating, and leading tour groups to the power places of Nepal and Tibet. Glenn Mullin is the author, editor, and translator from Tibetan of more than twenty books on Tibetan Buddhism, including *The Fourteen Dalai Lamas, The Dalai Lamas on Tantra, The Practice of the Six Yogas of Naropa, The Tibetan Book of the Dead, The Practice of Kalachakra, Death and Dying, Female Buddhas, The Flying Mystics of Tibetan Buddhism, Path of the Bodhisattva*

Warrior, and Sacred Sites of the Dalai Lamas. A number of these works (many published by Snow Lion Publications, Ithaca, NY) focus on the lives and works of the early Dalai Lamas.

Glenn Mullin has also curated a number of important Tibetan art exhibitions. The first of these, "The Art of Compassion," was created for Tibet House in New Delhi and toured Europe for two years. As well as leading tour groups to the Buddhist power places of Nepal and Tibet, Glenn Mullin acts as consultant and advisor to independent groups wanting to travel safely and meaningfully through these sacred sites. He currently lives in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, and is also director of a Tibetan Buddhist Center in Seoul, South Korea.

Lhamsuren Munkh-Erdene, PhD, is currently a Lise Meitner Senior Fellow at the Institute of Social Anthropology, Austrian Academy of Sciences. He received his doctorate from Hokkaido University, Japan, in 2004 in the field of History and Area Studies. He is a professor at the National University of Mongolia and was a fellow of the Stanford Humanities Center, Stanford University, for 2008-2009. His current project looks at the construction of Mongolian national, ethnic, and sub-ethnic identities.

His recent publications are: "Where did the Mongol Empire come from? Medieval Mongol Ideas of People, State and Empire," *Inner Asia*, 13 (2); "1640 Great Code: An Inner Asian Parallel to the Treaty of Westphalia," *Central Asian Survey*, 29 (3) 2010; "Transformation of Mongolia's Political System: From Semi-parliamentary to Parliamentary?" *Asian Survey*, 50 (2), 2010; "Beneath the Headless State and Beyond the Aristocratic Orders," *Ab Imperio*, 4, 2009; "Selling of Good Father's Name: Legitimacy, Pride and Commodity," *Commemoration of Chinggis Khan in Modern Mongolia, Bulletin* 24, 2008; and "The Mongolian Nationality Lexicon: From the Chinggisid Lineage to Mongolian Nationality (From the seventeenth to early twentieth century)," *Inner Asia*, 8 (1), 2006.

Daniel J. Murphy, PhD, is currently Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Cincinnati (USA). He has conducted ethnographic research in eastern Mongolia exploring the connections between rural political and economic change and vulnerability to *dzud* disaster and has recently finished research on community vulnerability to climate change in western Montana, USA. He received his doctorate in Anthropology at The University of Kentucky. His most recent publications focus on environmental governance, resource politics, and disaster vulnerability in rural Mongolia.

Narmandakh Damdinjav, PhD, is currently Head of the Labor Relations Division, Employer Association of Mongolia. He has been an economist at the Cabinet Secretariat of the Mongolian People's Republic, Senior Coordinator of the Association of Mongolian Trade Unions, and Vice President of the Association of Mongolian Trade Unions.

Oyungerel Tsedevdamba was recently elected and approved as a member of the Parliament of Mongolia. The Hon. Ms. Tsedevdamba has been President of the Democratic Women's Union. She is a non-staff advisor to Mongolian President Elbegdorj Tsakhia. During her fifteen years in public service, Ms. Tsedevdamba has worked on the country's privatization efforts and social insurance reform, and served as advisor to the Prime Minister and was a previous Member of Parliament. As the co-founder and ex-Executive Director of the Liberty Center, a human rights watchdog, Ms. Tsedevdamba has developed a reputation as a tireless advocate for democracy and gender equality in Mongolia. As the co-founder and President of the Local Solutions Foundation, she is actively educating the Mongolian public on environmental health. She has been an activist with the Mongolian Democratic Party since 1991. In 2007, she authored *Notes on My Study in America*, a bestseller in Mongolia, and co-authored *Nomadic Dialogues*. In 2008,

Tsedevdamba co-authored *Green-Eyed Lama,* which was awarded The Best Book of 2008, 2009, and 2010 in Mongolia. In 2010, she authored *My Jobs Know How*, a bestseller in Mongolia, and she and translated and compiled two handbooks, *A Community Guide for Environmental Health and Small Directory of Jobs* and *Occupations*.

Purevdorj Jamsran is Principal at Union Bible Theological College and the senior pastor of Bayariin Medee Christian Church. Rev. Purevdorj Jamsran worked as a teacher at Teacher's College between 1990 and 1992. He founded Bayariin Medee Christian Church in 1993, where he has been the pastor. Rev. Purevdorj did his graduate study in theology at Singapore Bible College between 1998 and 2002. Since he has started his teaching service at Union Bible Theological College (UBTC) in 2003 as teacher and later was academic dean. He has taught many lessons and lectures on Biblical interpretation, basics of preaching, and theological issues. Currently, he is the principal of the UBTC. Purevdorj Jamsran is a representative of first generation Christians in modern Mongolia who helped establish many churches in the country. He is now researching and studying for a PhD in Religious Studies at The National University of Mongolia.

Rustam Sabirov, PhD, is a Senior Researcher at Moscow State University. He received his doctorate in history in 2004 from Moscow State University's Institute of Asian and African Studies. The subject of his dissertation was "The Religious Situation in Mongolia: The end of the 1980s through 2000." Since 2005, Dr. Sabirov has taught at the Institute of Asian and African Studies, including the following courses: History of Mongolia, History of Religions in Mongolia, Mongolia in the System of the International Relations, and Ethnology of Mongolia. He continues to focus his research on contemporary religion in Mongolia.

David Andrews Sneath, PhD, is Head of the Department and Reader in Anthropology of Political Economy in the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge. Dr. Sneath completed his Ph.D. at Cambridge University in 1991, studying social, economic, and political change among Mongolian pastoralists in Inner Mongolia, China. He went on to conduct postdoctoral research on environment and society in Mongolia and Inner Asia, winning a British Academy Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in 1994. In 1998 he took up a Lectureship in Anthropology and Development at Oxford University, and in 2000 he returned to the department of Social Anthropology at Cambridge, where he was Director of the Mongolia and Inner Asia Studies Unit until 2009, when he was appointed Head of Department.

Dr. Sneath is the author of *The Headless State: Aristocratic Orders, Kinship Society, and Misrepresentation of Nomad Inner Asia* (Columbia University Press, 2007); *Changing Inner Mongolia: Pastoral Mongolian Society and the Chinese State* (Oxford University Press, 2000); *The End of Nomadism?: Society, State and the Environment in Inner Asia* (with Caroline Humphrey, Duke University Press, 1999), and *Culture and Environment in Inner Asia* (co-edited with Caroline Humphrey, Whitehorse Press, 1996).

Richard Taupier, PhD, is Associate Director of Research Development at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He holds a doctorate in Regional Environmental Planning and an MS in Environmental Economics, both from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Dr. Taupier is also a PhD candidate in History, with a focus on Central Asian Buddhist cultures, particularly Mongolian and Tibetan political and cultural history. He has done extensive research in the adoption of Buddhism by both eastern and western (Oirat) Mongolian people and the extent to which Buddhist ideology shaped Mongolian and Oirat politics. His research activities in environmental and cultural sustainability led to a recent focus on the sustainability of Mongolian herding

families. In 2009 and 2010 he was a Senior Fulbright Specialist at The National University of Mongolia.

Krisztina Teleki, PhD, is a Research fellow at the Inner-Asian Department of Eцtvцs Lorбnd University, Budapest, Hungary. She received her MA in Tibetan and Mongolian majors at the same department, as well as her PhD in 2009. Her PhD thesis addresses the historical monasteries and temples of the Mongolian monastic capital city, and her present project concerns the study of its continuing heritage. She has been to Mongolia seven times since 1999 to study the past and present of Mongolian Buddhism based on archival sources, documentation through oral history with elder monks, examination of monastic ruins, and researching present-day monastic life.

Her recent publications are: "On the Current Condition of 190 Old and Present-Day Monastic Sites in the Mongolian Countryside," *Zentralasiatische Studien*, Bonn 2011, pp. 93-140; "Building on Ruins, Memories, and Persistence: Revival and survival of Buddhism in the countryside," In: *Silk Road,* vol. *7*, pp. 64-73, Seattle, Washington, USA 2009. See also http://www.silkroadfoundation.org/newsletter/vol7/srjournal_v7.pdf); "Origin and Spread of Buddhism in Buryatia: A Text of Buyandalai dooramba," In: *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* (AOH) 61 (2008), Budapest, pp. 521-541; and *Monasteries and Temples of Bogdiin*, Khuree,Ulaanbaatar 2011.

Tuvshintugs Dorj is a Royal Shaman of Mongolia and is deeply associated with the recovery of ancestral shamanic traditions in the country. He has a developed spiritual practice that attracts a range of practitioners as well as clients seeking help and advice.

Vesna Wallace, PhD, is a Professor in the Department of Religious Studies, the University of California, Santa Barbara. She received a PhD at the University of California, Berkeley in 1995. Her research

interests include Indian Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism and Mongolian Buddhism. She was formerly Professor and Yehan Numata Chair in Buddhist Studies at the University of Oxford. She has published four books and numerous articles. Her most recent publication is *The Kalacakratantra: The Chapter on Sadhana together with the Vimalaprabha*. She has also published *A Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life*. *Bodhic›ry›vat›ra*. Translated from Sanskrit and Tibetan by Vesna A. Wallace and B. Alan Wallace, Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 1997. She is currently editing a volume on Mongolian Buddhism, titled *Buddhism in Mongolian History, Society, and Culture*, which will be published by Oxford University Press.