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Through the Ocean Waves: The Autobiography of Bazaryn Shirendev

B. (Bazaryn) Shirendev

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Through the Ocean Waves:
The Autobiography of Bazaryn Shirendev
Center for East Asian Studies
Western Washington University

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Through the Ocean Waves: The Autobiography of Bazaryn Shirendev
translated by Temujin Onon

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THROUGH THE OCEAN WAVES

The Autobiography of Bazaryn Shirendev

Translated by Temujin Onon

Notes by Henry G. Schwarz

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Manufactured in the United States of America
This book is dedicated to the translator’s mother, Narangerel
Introduction

The translation of Shirendev’s *Through the Ocean Waves* is a significant event for the historical understanding of modern Mongolia. This is the first personal biography by a central figure in the communist government that dominated the entire central part of the twentieth century. Shirendev is a remarkable statesman. The peaks and troughs of his career, alluded to in his title, reveal the inner turbulence of the history of his country, which was largely hidden until recently. Since 1990 Mongolia has changed direction politically, turning towards democracy, market relations and openness in public life. The publication of Shirendev’s book in Mongolian is part of this process. However, although his career is usually identified with the high socialism of the 1940s-80s, Shirendev’s book reveals that he really stands for a “Mongolianness” that spans virtually the whole of this century in all of its political guises. It is clear from Shirendev’s account that even a beacon of party activism such as himself remains in many ways attached to the traditional culture in which he grew up. His account contains a mixture of admiration for the experience of the herders with a determination to improve the social conditions of their lives.

Much of the fascination of this book lies in its depiction of Shirendev’s early life in rural early twentieth century Mongolia. We learn in detail of his own family hardships, of the organisation of the banners (“feudal” administrative units), of princes, famous wrestlers, lamas, shamans, and New Year festivals; we read of the relations between rich people and serfs, about the clans and their marriage rules, and the ways in which pastures were divided between households. Extended passages discuss the education of young children, both formal and informal. As a boy Shirendev was made a Buddhist lama and some fascinating pages describe his life with his brutal lama-teacher. Fleeing the monastery, Shirendev became a boy-servant for a series of herders, including a strange half-lama who was an exorciser of demons. What is new and significant about this whole section on Shirendev’s early life is that it is described from inside, through Mongol eyes.

The literature on Mongolia contains many descriptions of traditional pre-revolutionary life, but accounts of early socialist struggles in the countryside are rare indeed. Shirendev was sent to a new school and was soon appointed as a “junior instructor” to take charge of a collective near Tsetserleg. As a 17 year old, Shirendev made little headway as a leader, but he gives a vivid account of the foundering of his attempts and his realization of the greater knowledge and experience of the herder. Next he went to the Party School in Ulaanbaatar. The violent contrasts of life at the time (the early 1930s) emerge from his story: at one moment he was reading the journal *Socialist Road*, at the next he was attending the Buddhist Tsam dance at the monastery. Shirendev’s whole family was by now definitely associated with the Party and he describes his anxiety at the
uprising in the countryside and his fear for the safety of his relatives. After some years of further education in Russia, Shirendev returned to Mongolia as one of the few trained cadres ready to help run the country; some fascinating pages describe his first meetings with Tsedenbal and Choibalsan and the allocation of various duties to him. Soon Shirendev was an important figure in the Mongolian government. He was concerned above all with liaison with Russia and with translating between the two sides, “translating” not only in a literal sense, but explaining and interpreting for the Mongols the new ideas coming from Russia.

Shirendev’s account reveals the organisational ability and sheer hard work which was necessary to transform the country. He was involved in practically all of the great endeavours of his time, in developing industry, agriculture and medicine. His work was concerned with administration and propaganda, that is in getting popular support behind the government’s programs. For example, an interesting section of the book describes a meeting with Stalin at the end of the war and the subsequent organisation of the national plebiscite on independence from China, for which 13,000 preparatory meetings were held. In effect this was a colossal exercise in political education and mobilisation. Most of Shirendev’s career was, however, concerned with education in the general sense. He was central in the organization of the Academy of Sciences, the university, schools, and in the development of many academic and practical sciences in Mongolia. Having earned a doctorate in history at Moscow University, Shirendev never ceased to read widely and exercise his scholarly curiosity. A poet and painter as well as a historian, Shirendev also made sincere efforts to get to grips with physical and biological sciences in his role as President of the Academy of Sciences.

Shirendev’s main scholarly aim was a grand one: the attempt to understand the historical role of Mongolia in twentieth century politics. It was his learning and international experience, with the capacity it gave for independence of judgment, which seems to have been his undoing in his relations with Tsedenbal. After uneasy relations spanning several decades, Shirendev’s complete downfall was orchestrated in 1981, including incriminatory material dredged up from as early as 1948. Shirendev gives an illuminating and dignified account of this sad episode. Western readers will be interested in the tone of his writing, and its “dead-pan” description may seem unusual. At any rate, this personal tragedy did not induce him to renounce his beliefs nor his confidence in his achievements. Shirendev’s book ends with a telling and characteristically Mongolian symbolic metaphor: as a summer night turns from calm warmth to an explosive, thunderous electric storm, and then, in the morning, changes again to peaceful brightness, all the animals and birds also alter their characteristics, nimbly hiding during the storm but re-appearing again to be cheered by the sun in the morning.

Caroline Humphrey
King’s College, Cambridge
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The Mongols were a small tribe of steppe nomads which emerged from northeastern Mongolia in the twelfth century and went on to establish the largest continuous land empire in history. Their most famous leader was Chinggis Khan, who led them from 1189 until his death in 1227. By the latter half of the thirteenth century the Mongols were in control of Russia, China, Central Asia, and much of the Middle East. In addition, they had invaded parts of Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia.

During this period they extended the pastoral homeland of the Mongol tribes from northern Mongolia towards the more fertile land of what is now southeastern Inner Mongolia. Some of this new territory was occupied by the descendants of the semi-nomadic, semi-agricultural Khitan and Jurchen people who were the respective founders of the Liao (916-1125) and Jin (1125-1234) dynasties.

Mongol rule over China ceased with the advent of the Chinese Ming dynasty (1368-1644). When the Ming armies made military incursions into Mongolia, they did so with the assistance of various southern Mongolian tribes, but found that their campaigns against the highly mobile Mongols in the grasslands of northern Mongolia tended to be both tedious and unrewarding. In fact, the Mongols remained powerful enough to threaten Ming rule in Beijing from time to time, and a Mongol army led by Esen even succeeded in capturing the Ming emperor Yingzong in 1449.

However, some Mongol khans did submit to the Ming emperors in exchange for the right to trade for those goods which the nomadic people regarded as essential. In the middle part of the sixteenth century northern and central Mongolia began to be recognized as a distinct entity during the reign of Dayan Khan Batmönkh. It became known as Khalkha and occupied approximately the same territory as present-day Mongolia, i.e. excluding "Inner Mongolia".

The Ming dynasty was ultimately overthrown by the Manchus who were probably descendants of the Jurchen. A crucial factor in the success of the Manchus (founders of the Qing dynasty 1644-1911) was their military alliance with certain southern Mongolian groups which occupied land that bordered on and merged into western Manchuria. This alliance would ultimately further consolidate the distinction between "Inner" (southern) and "Outer" (Khalkha) Mongolia.

The Mongols originally followed a shamanist religion which was retained by the bulk of the population despite the fact that some of their leaders, such as Kubilai, had some sympathy towards Buddhism. During the first two hundred years of the Ming dynasty, shamanism remained dominant, at least in northern Mongolia, but during the latter half of the sixteenth century, the Mongolian nobility began to strive to acquire religious titles. Tibet was willing to cooperate in such matters. A Tibetan style of Mahayana Buddhism founded by Tsongkapa had retained some of the elements of Tibetan shamanism. Of all the Buddhist sects, it appeared to be the one most readily accepted by the Mongols, many of whom welcomed the stability and good fortune which Buddhism promised.
The Mongol Altan Khan conferred the Mongolian title Dalai on Sonam Gyatso, who became the third Dalai Lama, and in 1586, Abtai Sain Khan was persuaded to found Erdene Zuu monastery.

As they consolidated their empire, the Manchus felt it was necessary to reduce the potential threat to their empire from the warring, shamanist Mongols. It was thought that if the Mongols could be persuaded to follow the Buddhist doctrine, which preached passivity, they would no longer pose any great military threat. To achieve this end, the Manchus accelerated the spread of Buddhism to Mongolia from Tibet. Subsequently, many monasteries were constructed which recruited large numbers of the male population to become lamas. One such lamasery was the Gandantegchinlen monastery or Ikh Khüree (Da Khüree) where Ulaanbaatar is now situated. The ruling aristocracy in Khalkha accepted the titles and favors conferred on them by the Manchu emperors and thereby secured their position in this feudal society. Mongolia and Tuva thus became part of the Manchu empire.

During the mid-seventeenth century Russia was making rapid advances into southern and eastern Siberia and had taken control of Mongol (“Buryat”) lands to the south and east of Lake Baikal. The word Buryat (Mong. - Buriaad) may have been a clan surname which the Russians used when referring to various Mongol tribes of this area. The Manchus finally stemmed the Russian advance and concluded treaties which contained provisions for the demarcation of the Russian-Mongolian border east of Tuva.

From around 1748 the Manchu emperors wanted to protect the special status of their Manchu kinsmen and their allies in the Manchurian part of Inner Mongolia. This necessitated a policy which tried to prevent or at least limit Chinese migration into Manchuria and Mongolia.

However, by the mid-nineteenth century, the Manchus were no longer a distinct ethnic group, having largely become assimilated with the Chinese, and no longer pursued this policy with any vigor. In addition, the Inner Mongolian princes found that it was economically expedient to allow Chinese farmers to settle on and cultivate their pasture land. Subsequently, this meant that the nomadic Mongols themselves often had to take up farming in order to compete with the immigrant Chinese. As Russia was threatening to encroach still further into a sparsely populated Manchuria, the Manchu emperors felt it was necessary to defend their border against Russian incursions and did not oppose this unofficial Inner Mongolian policy of increased Chinese immigration.

With the collapse of the Manchu dynasty in 1911, Khalkha Mongolia (and Tibet for that matter) declared “independence,” but full independence was never accepted by the Chinese Republic established in 1912. The Mongols made their supreme religious leader, the “Living Buddha” Javzandamba (Jebtsundamba) Khutagt head of state. He was a Tibetan by birth and was popularly known as the Bogd (i.e. ‘Holy’) Khan.

Some far-sighted Mongols, aware that there would always be a threat of annexation by China, traveled to St. Petersburg to appeal (unsuccessfully) for major assistance from Russia and the other world powers. Russia was keen to increase its influence in Tibet and Mongolia but was reluctant to offend Britain and China by supporting full independence of these countries.

A secret agreement between Russia and Japan had placed “Outer” Mongolia within Russia’s sphere of influence but not ‘Inner’ Mongolia, which was to remain under Chinese and Japanese control, contrary to the wishes of the Inner Mongolians. In 1912 a
Russo-Mongolian treaty allowed “Outer” Mongolia a degree of autonomy and gave Russia some trading rights in Mongolia.

Soon after this, in 1913, Russia and China concluded a treaty which allowed the Mongols control of their own internal affairs but confirmed Chinese suzerainty over Mongolia. It was agreed that neither country would station troops in Mongolia.

The Mongols did not accept the terms of either of these treaties. Around this time the Mongols were in a particularly dire predicament. Their population was only just over 600,000. Infectious diseases were rife and the bulk of the meager wealth of the nation was held or controlled by the lamaseries, the nobility, and Chinese trading companies.

Following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, all existing treaties between China and Russia were annulled. This led to an invasion of Mongolia by Chinese armed forces in November 1919. Around this time, anti-Bolshevik ‘White’ Russian forces fleeing from the Red Army entered Mongolia and evicted the Chinese forces in order to establish a power base of their own. In turn, they were destroyed by Soviet forces.

The Soviet Union was, however, keen to support an independent Mongolia under the pretext of promoting “World Socialism.” Mongolia declared independence in July 1921 and became the world’s first People’s Republic in 1924.

It is debatable whether Sükhbaatar, the leader of the Mongolian Revolution, had much of an interest in Marxist-Leninist theory, but he and many other Mongols were keen to accept the Soviet system if it offered Mongolia some protection from China while allowing the Mongols a chance to preserve their national identity and gain international recognition of their independence.

They were, however, still faced with the major problem of transforming a feudal and a still almost “medieval” society as judged by twentieth century Western standards. The author of this book is one Mongol who had such aspirations and experienced in person the turmoil of feudalism, communism, and post-communist capitalism.

Over the seven decades after 1921, the Soviet Union undoubtedly gave Mongolia more than just nominal independence, and it should be acknowledged that whilst Soviet investment in Mongolia was substantial, there was relatively little colonization or exploitation of mineral or agricultural resources, in contrast to the situation, for example, in Kazakhstan or Tuva, regions which have some economic characteristics similar to those of Mongolia. It is probable that, in relative terms, no other country under communism advanced as rapidly as did Mongolia in the forty years between 1920 and 1960 in terms of population growth, education, public health, infrastructure and living standard.

Originally intended solely for a local Mongolian readership, the text before you assumes its reader will have at least a minimal knowledge of contemporary Mongolian terms and abbreviations. The translation follows the author’s original Mongolian style as closely as practicable, with only minor adjustments of sentence and paragraph breaks. Mongolian and Russian names have been transliterated from the Cyrillic in the way currently accepted in Mongolia and Russia. Chinese names have been transliterated using pinyin orthography, and an attempt has been made to use standard Latin alphabet spelling for names in other languages. The translator is responsible for any errors in this regard. An index (which was not included in the original book) has been added to assist researchers in this field. Additions to the text which have been made for the sake of clarification are indicated by square brackets.
Although most of this book was written in the 1980s and was ready for publication in 1989, publication was not achieved until December 1993, three years after multiparty democracy had been established in Mongolia. Throughout the early and mid-1980s Shirendev’s work was banned from publication in Mongolia, and even after he was officially exonerated, publication of his work was delayed still further.

This memoir is the first autobiography of a Mongol to be published in English, and gives an account by a person who was both an observer and participant in the social and political upheavals and transformations of Mongolia during the twentieth century. Very few people who held senior government posts during the Stalinist period are alive to tell their story today. For this reason Shirendev’s autobiography may be exceptional both for Mongolia and the former Eastern bloc nations.

Temujin Onon
Manchester, England
July 1997
Acknowledgments

Credit for bringing this translation to publication is due to Western Washington University and specifically to Professor Henry G. Schwarz and Professor Edward H. Kaplan of the Center for East Asian Studies.

Professor Schwarz, who for many years has been a leading scholar of Mongolian studies, has edited the entire text and has drawn upon Russian, Mongolian, and Chinese source materials to provide extensive footnotes on Mongolian terms and publications in addition to a large number of brief biographies which will assist the Western reader. Professor Kaplan who has compiled a detailed index with some of the characteristics of a glossary and has helpfully provided many suggestions for the English version of the text.

I am also grateful to Dr. Caroline Humphrey of King’s College, Cambridge for reading through the translation and giving me much useful advice. I would like to thank my wife Geraldine for typing the whole text. Finally I wish to dedicate this book to my mother Narangerel who encouraged me to translate the book for Shirendev and future generations of Mongols.
Preface

The things I have written about my own childhood before the revolution and when my parents were still alive are based on feelings which arose as a result of what I had seen, heard, and learned about Mongolian society, the economy and conditions at home and abroad.

The dawn's rays enlightened Mongolia. As this period of everlasting happiness started, the impoverished began to have a happy life. I became familiar with aspects of a new way of life linked to the education of the children of these people.

I was drawn into the Party organization at school, and through it into education, science, and wider mass activities. While writing this book of recollections, I knew in my heart that our main support was from the people’s government which led the country with distinction and sowed the seeds of economic and cultural development, from the Soviet people who provided fraternal assistance to the Mongolian people, and from our many senior distinguished and talented friends.

When I begin to reflect on this route which I have traveled, it feels as if I am about to swim through a great ocean wave.

B. Shirendev
There is no way of coordinating my thoughts with the policies and conditions of that period of Party dominance. It was a time when even allegedly intelligent people found that it was impossible to try to change the principles and directives of the Party, however burdensome and oppressive they might have been. In 1981 when the then president of the Academy of Sciences, B. Shirendev, was dismissed from office, our readership must have been wondering about the turmoil our publications were going through. Everyone knew that the publishing houses were not in a position to reveal their own thoughts on this matter. This was because the entire publishing industry was the platform of the sole political party.

During this time, the words uttered by the Party leadership were the unquestionable “truth.” Anyone who deviated from this “truth” was guilty. People with their own thoughts and ideas were looked upon with disdain, and we have only just left these contentious and difficult and times behind. Today we can feel a little freedom in the press and we may write freely. This was not something which we ourselves discovered. Right from the beginning, everything written by the world media was based on the thoughts of individuals. Under the oppression of the MPRP one person was worshipped, the ideas of other people were discussed, but we had no power to write according to our own wishes.

To cite one example of the many things that happened in our country during the years of stagnation, at the January 28, 1982 meeting of the Party committee of the Academy of Sciences which concerned B. Shirendev, the committee secretary M. Mijidgombo reported the detailed instructions contained within the resolutions of the Central Committee based on a speech by Yu. Tsedenbal. A journalist in the Academy of Sciences, P. Khorloo said,

The Central Committee of the MPRP has decided to show firm leadership and follow the main party line which has been noted with approval and received wholeheartedly by the Party members. That B. Shirendev’s methods of leadership were completely based on his personal characteristics was very apparent to us, the scientific workers and communists. Although Shirendev had read Tsedenbal’s letter he did not learn from it.

An Academy of Sciences reporter, Ch. Tseren, said,

A very important and significant decision has been made based on the principles of the MPRP Central Committee. Chadraa and Shirendev wrote as if to say only they were responsible for the many objectives reached and not the collective and scholarly leadership of the Soviet Union and the other fraternal countries and the studies and research produced with help from the USSR.

The deputy president of the National Committee on Science and Technology, leading member of the Academy of Sciences, M. Dash, stated that Shirendev had not cherished the valuable advice and ideas of Soviet scholars and at times had even insulted
them. He shielded himself behind a claim he was dealing with "theoretical questions" and distanced himself from life, practicality, and the aims of socialist organizations.

Dr. Sh. Sandag said,

Let us demonstrate our total aim which is to mobilize all our strength to fulfill and implement the decision of the Central Committee. The many important resolutions and directives issued by our higher Party organizations are of great significance. Shirendev changed one of his books, reworking it many times to protect M. Jamsran and G. Sukhbaatar.

Meanwhile, Dr. O. Shagdarsuren wrote, "The Central Committee has passed an important resolution regarding Shirendev. This resolution states that the significance of the knowledge gained from Soviet scholars was improperly not held in high esteem and that Shirendev's personal character was connected with his clear failure in this task. This is one of Shirendev's permanent failings." Dr. N. Ser-Odjav said, "Our dear leader, Comrade Yu. Tsedenbal, had paid great attention to the development of archeological research which Shirendev has yet to assist in."

Academician Sh. Natsagdorj said,

The MPRP Central Committee has passed a resolution on Shirendev which which we, as party members, should accept with gratitude. . . . Only Shirendev is praised for his scientific achievements. Although Yu. Tsedenbal and our major scholars are hardly mentioned, Shirendev is praised for 'the scientific study of Mongolian history.' This is simple flattery. Let us carry out all the directives in the resolution, item by item.

A corresponding member of the academy, Ts. Davaajamts, said, "We approve of this. The more one becomes familiar with this resolution of the Central Committee, the more obviously the question arises as to whether someone like this can really remain a party member."

Dr. A. Luvsandendev said,

Shirendev did not learn from Comrade Tsedenbal's letter of 1949 to the Party Central Committee and published in Unen the following year. At the time, the Party treated Shirendev with great compassion. When the Party treats our failings in this paternal way we usually get results, reflected in further work. Based on this, all workers would meet as one and the Institute's administration and party cells would begin the work of listening to these ideas. All the Institute workers were united in their thoughts. Plans were made to make special announcements and to prepare the implementation of the resolutions. During that month it could be discussed by all members of the party cells during expanded meetings.

Academician Ts. Tsegmid said, "This is a very broadly based resolution of the Central Committee and states the truth. We members of the Academy of Sciences who have not been able to put up a decent fight against Shirendev should admit our mistakes in the true Party way. The steps taken by the MPRP Central Committee regarding Shirendev appear to be highly appropriate. I feel that Shirendev cannot remain a member of the Academy of Sciences."

These are just a few sentences from the speeches made by those people at the meeting to prevent the further participation [in public life] of Comrade Shirendev. With the aim of destroying Shirendev's reputation by making use of many minor events, in 1981 the MPRP Central Committee resolution and other related materials were published in all the newspapers and journals of the time, and noisily broadcast on the radio. The
main aim was to hobble the many scholars of the Academy of Sciences, the intellectual center of our country. The real truth was stated by the leaders of the MPRP Central Committee in the 84th resolution on December 21, 1990:

The Politburo of the MPRP Central Committee passed a resolution regarding the work and character of B. Shirendev. At that time, when punishment was aimed at him by the Party, it was clear that some high-ranking officials who were working in the party leadership abused their power and those people who had not pleased them were given some kind of political label and all sorts of excuses were found to accuse them of doing something. The president of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, B. Shirendev, was criticized for all of his work. Valued differently from a political and ideological point of view, the inferences made about him are invalid, and it is right that his slandered name should be rehabilitated.

On December 12, 1991, the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of a scientific organization in our country, which coincided with the thirtieth anniversary of the Academy of Sciences, the title of Merited Worker of the Academy of Sciences was conferred on B. Shirendev by a decree of the president of Mongolia, Comrade P. Ochirbat.

The MPRP Central Committee resolution of 1981 stated that “when organizing research work, Shirendev only paid lip service to the study and practical transmission of the experience of research work carried out the USSR and other socialist countries, and the genuine application of this particularly important and significant work was ignored.” However, on Shirendev’s birthday, greetings were sent by M. V. Keldysh, the president of the USSR Academy of Sciences and by G. K. Skriabin, the first secretary, saying

your personal contribution to the establishment and development of Mongolian science is highly valued by Soviet scholars. You have strengthened the mutual relations between our two countries and you have in fact made a great contribution to world peace. For all these things we respectfully elect you a Foreign Member of the USSR Academy of Sciences. We wish you further success and ever-lasting health and happiness.

In 1985, on Shirendev’s birthday, the president of the USSR Academy of Sciences and Vice-President A. L. Yashin jointly sent a telegram saying, “There is no dispute at all over your distinguished merit in establishing and developing the Academy of Sciences of Mongolia, and your achievements are well known by the scientific world.” The famous American Mongolist scholar O. Lattimore wrote that “Mongolian science has many branches, and important research is being done. It has become a major center of science. The establishment of relations with our University of Leeds is a great achievement by this able scholar, Professor Shirendev, whose scholarly accomplishments are written with equal proficiency in Mongolian and Russian.”

When Academician Shirendev was dismissed from his job, the famous Soviet scholars A. L Yashin, P. N. Fedoseev, G. K. Skriabin, and many scholars in the USSR Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Far Eastern Studies, the Institute of History and the Institute of Economics were astonished, and sent a letter to the Central Committee of the USSR Academy of Sciences. This had been reported to Tsedenbal via A. P. Alexandrov, president of the USSR Academy of Sciences, but to no avail. In addition, the stories which had been published in English language newspapers such as the Hong Kong Star and in America, Japan and other countries were hidden from view by the leading people of the time.

The sinologist L. Begzjav translated an article from the Chinese journal Shijie
From information in *Unen*, [we learn that] the president of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, B. Shirendev, has been dismissed from his duties as leader of the People’s Ikh Khural\(^1\) and furthermore was punished with a harsh rebuke from the MPRP Central Committee. He merely paid lip service to the “rich experience” of Soviet scientific research but in reality paid no attention to it. Furthermore he was punished for not paying proper attention to the “valuable ideas and advice” of Soviet scholars.

Although this news caused surprise, the reason behind it could be understood. What harm could have been done by the leadership of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences not paying “proper attention” to the experience and advice of the Soviets. But, during the many years in the “Big Family,” Big Brother decided everything, and even afterwards the ideas of Soviet scholars were copied unchanged. Whether your work followed Soviet suggestions or not was the test that one’s loyalty to Moscow was not in question. At this time of great political pressure, the MPRP Central Committee member, Politburo member, secretary of the Central Committee, doctor of history and president of the Academy of Sciences was, to his distress, relieved of his official position.

Although the Moscow leadership was protected, [the Party] did not consider the harm caused to the honor and feelings of the Mongolian nation.

The Mongolian newspaper *Unen* reported that the president of the Academy of Sciences B. Shirendev had been relieved of his official duties and additionally punished with a severe rebuke from the Party. In the original newspaper article of January 15, 1982 which was concerned with Shirendev’s case, the MPRP Central Committee repetitiously set down his “crimes” in a tedious resolution. The Party Central Committee also flamboyantly wrote that it was appropriate to “hound” him from the Party. Those who were well acquainted with the situation in Mongolia noted that so tumultuous a condemnation of a responsible Central Committee member never occurred again during the next few years.

Shirendev, now over seventy years old, was one of the senior members of the MPRP and had been a Central Committee member for thirty-five years following the Eleventh Conference of the MPRP in 1947. As such, he was second only to Yū. Tsedenbal among the members of the Central Committee. During Choibalsan’s era of supreme leadership of the party and government, Shirendev was his assistant for three years. After Tsedenbal had gained power, Shirendev became First Deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, a Secretary of the Party Central Committee and a Politburo member. Later on, after leaving active political life, he began his many years of scholarly work.

Shirendev was the first rector of the state university, minister of education, and worked as president of the Academy of Sciences for twenty-two years. He was also chairman of the Committee of Mongolian Scholars. From then on he was considered as being of considerable fame in the field of science. How could a man of such standing and

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1 The word *khural* refers to a wide variety of assemblages, including assembly, caucus, congress, conference, convention, gathering, meeting, rally, and session. In the interest of maximizing clarity, we will leave the word khural untranslated in only two instances, both referring to government institutions. One is the Ardyn Ikh Khural [The Great People’s Congress], Mongolia’s parliament, hereafter called Ikh Khural. The other, the Baga Khural [Small Congress], performed ordinary legislative work between sessions of the Ikh Khural. Although one source states that it was abolished in 1951 (Sanders, *Historical Dictionary of Mongolia*, p. 102), Shirendev repeatedly refers to its activities in the 1950s.
Influence be thrown out of the Party? The MPRP Central Committee briefly stated in its “resolution” that his mistake was his unsuccessful direction of work in the Academy of Sciences, in which he clearly demonstrated a character which sought fame and glory. Other similar criticisms were leveled at him. One thing which drew the attention of many to the original resolution which criticized Shirendev was:

He merely paid lip service to the study of the expertise in establishing and promoting scientific research in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. But in his own work he neglected this especially important and significant work and he did not pay attention to the very important ideas and advice of Soviet scholars.

He was criticized for his “rudely trampling over specialists from fraternal countries” and for carrying out “a retreat from the Party line on the question of foreign governmental support.”

His wife was a Soviet citizen. In recent years Shirendev had been acting head of the Union of Students sent from Mongolia to the Soviet Union. There is no doubt that some people said he was loyal to the Soviet Union. From foreign reports, he was an informed person. He had studied almost all the history of Mongolia and was well informed about Mongolia’s former period. People saw that his great potential for scientific knowledge was a genuine reason for his fall.

According to some reports, after Shirendev was removed from his official position, talk spread about an impending disaster for those intellectuals in Ulaanbaatar who had based their ideas on his research work. Over many years the Soviets had the secret aim of distorting Mongolian history by force, and established several areas as off-limits to Mongolian scholars. Shirendev was someone who had encroached on these closed areas. This was not just a problem concerning one person. One person was punished for all the problems raised by the intellectuals who might engage in these activities. This was a clear warning to everyone.

It can be said that the “Shirendev question” was like a double-sided mirror. The Mongol intellectuals were reflected on one side, and the Soviet-Mongolian “special relationship” was reflected on the other. I humbly wish to recommend this book as a new interpretation for the wise reader.

Journalist S. Raidan
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47. Academician Shirendev with American Mongolist O. Lattimore, Ulaanbaatar, 1960
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49. Taken in Mongolia in 1966. From the left, London Embassy Attaché Lkhaashid, Academician Sh. Natsagdorj, Academician P. Khorloo, Professor Owen Lattimore, B. Shirendev, Leeds University Lecturer Urgunge Onon, Erdenebilib, foreign section of the Academy of Sciences.
50. In 1971, in Tsedenbal's office. (From the left, U. Onon, Toli S. Onon, Narangerel Onon, Tsedenbal, Temujin Onon, Shirendev.)

51. In front of the Great Hall at Leeds University. (From the left, Academy of Sciences researcher E. Puntsag, Professor O. Lattimore, Shirendev, Urgunge Onon, Ambassador Dambadarjaa, Narangerel Onon.)
52. A black and white photograph of (presumably) Choibalsan atop a Mongolian tank
How My Parents Used to Live

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Manchu empire ¹ feared establishing relations with those countries which had entered their era of capitalist imperialism and were dividing up and dominating the free markets of the world. Though the Manchus tried to isolate themselves, they were forced to relinquish that position. In 1897-8 China was partially divided up and various peripheral areas were occupied by capitalists from England, Germany, Russia and France. War broke out between China and Japan in 1894-1895.

The foreign aggressors penetrating China even managed to have an influence on closed-off frontier regions of the Manchu empire such as Mongolia. For example, Chinese traders in Mongolia became the agents of foreign capitalists engaging in large-scale trade which exploited the ordinary Mongolian people.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the Chinese traders had companies, stores and other outlets in all the Mongolian khoshuu, sum, bag, and otog.² These traders were widely scattered and engaged in buying up Mongolian livestock products and raw materials at low prices while simultaneously supplying tea, tobacco, cloth, flour, and grain at exploitatively high prices. The Chinese company Da Sheng Hu, for example, had an annual income of forty million pieces of silver and exported several hundred thousand head of livestock from Mongolia. In addition, the Tian Yi De and Yi He Dong companies each had an income of several million pieces of silver.

At the start of the twentieth century, trading companies from Russia, England, Germany, and Japan had penetrated as far as Khüree, the present-day Ulaanbaatar, and some of the larger aimag and khoshuu centers, in particular Tsetserleg, and Tariat Khüree of [Duke] Dalai Choinkhor. As a result of increased borrowing and debts owed to foreign capitalists, ordinary Mongols became impoverished and their standard of living deteriorated day by day.

The ordinary people had to provide labor for the horse relay stations, frontier guard and military service conscripts, pay official taxes and provide innumerable necessities for the palace of the Manchu emperor. For over two hundred years they also fulfilled the demands of the Mongolian feudal nobility.

In Northern Mongolia ³ the population was largely engaged in a nomadic economy. Children were sent to temples as disciples in order to study Buddhism. In 1725—

¹ By this time, the Manchu empire consisted of the Manchu homeland and several countries and territories conquered and annexed by the Manchus. These included China, Mongolia, and Eastern Turkestan.
² These four terms refer to local administrative units, listed in descending order. A khoshuu, or banner, is equivalent to a county; a sum, with the original meaning of arrow, is the largest subdivision of a khoshuu; and bag and otog are the smallest administrative units.
³ During the Manchu dynasty, Mongolia was divided, in addition to various other units explained in note 2, into Outer and Inner Mongolia, referring to the northern and southern parts of the country, respectively. These terms lost their raison d'être when the Manchu dynasty was abolished in early 1912.
Tüsheet Khan aimag \(^4\) was partitioned and our area was administered by Sain Noën Khan, \(^5\) one of the eight ruling princes of Khalkha during the Enkh Amgalan reign period of the Manchu Qing dynasty. \(^6\)

The thirteenth and last Sain Noën Khan Namnansüren, \(^7\) who was born at the end of the 19th century, participated energetically in the struggle to take Mongolia out of the Manchu empire. He headed the delegation of Mongolian representatives which went to Russia. \(^8\)

Dalai Choinkhor Chin Van (Wang) Tsedensodnom who was lord of one of the banners of Sain Noën Khan aimag and the eighth successor in line, assisted the Manchu army general based at Uliastai during the Manchu period. \(^9\) His banner was regarded as one of the wealthier and larger banners of Khalkha. \(^10\) Its total population was 25,000, of whom 7,000 were lamas living in over 100 temples. This banner also had about 600 taij \(^11\) noblemen and their families who lived as independent units. There were 30,000 livestock in total in the banner. \(^12\) The land was truly khangai, \(^13\) with many rivers such as the Ider, Khoid Terkh, Gichgene, Khanui, \(^14\) and so forth. Apart from the great water resources contained in the lakes such as Sangiin Dalai, Züün, and Terkhiin Tsagaan, \(^15\) mountains were the main feature of the land with small and large mountain valleys, forested ridges, rivers and streams, wells, lakes and ponds which made it a very beautiful place. Besides producing the very best dairy products, such as öröm, eezgii, khuruud, aaruul, and tsagaan tos, \(^16\) there were many blacksmiths, silversmiths, engravers, and

\(^4\) An aimag is the largest administrative unit in Mongolia, roughly corresponding to a province.

\(^5\) The resulting aimag covered most of present-day west-central Mongolia, including southern Khövsgöl, most of Zavkhan aimag, and portions of Bayankhongor, Övörkhangai, and Ömnögov’ aimags.

\(^6\) Enkh Amgalan (Engke Amugulang) means “peace, tranquility” and refers to the years 1662-1722 which outside Mongolia are best known as the Kangxi reign period.

\(^7\) For a brief biography, see Ad’yaagiin Dashnyam, *Khalkhyn Sain No’en Khan Namnansüren* (Ulaanbaatar, 1990).

\(^8\) Namnansüren and his delegation were in St. Petersburg in December 1913 and January 1914.

\(^9\) Tsedensodnom was appointed head of the (dai zhong zuo) banner in 1894 and transferred to his post in Uliastai on August 11, 1902. See *Qingdai Menggu guanshi zhuan* (Beijing : Minzu chubanshe, 1995), p. 748-9.

\(^10\) A term used by many Mongols nearly interchangeably with Northern Mongolia.

\(^11\) Taij is the lowest of seven hereditary ranks.

\(^12\) The figure of 30,000 head of livestock seems to be in error, the actual figure probably being at least ten times larger.

\(^13\) This term describes any hilly area with a pleasant climate, fertile soil, forests, rivers, and lakes.

\(^14\) The Ider, one of several rivers forming the Selenge River, originates in Ider sum of Zavkhan aimag, at 48 N 98 E. The Khoid Terkh, Urd Terkh and Gichgene all originate in the Khangai Mountains which form the border between Arkhangai and Bayankhongor aimags; they jointly form the Suman River which joins the Chuluut River which in turn becomes a tributary of the Selenge River. The Khanui is the easternmost of the rivers mentioned in the text and flows directly into the Selenge.

\(^15\) The Sangiin Dalai is located in Bürentogtokh sum of Khövsgöl aimag, bordering Zavkhan aimag, ca. 49 N 99 E. The Terkhiin Tsagaan is south of there in Tariat sum of Arkhangai aimag, ca. 48.20 N 99.50 E. As its name suggests, the Züün lies east of there. In 1964 Shirendev wrote a poem about this lake, but it was not published until thirty years later. See “Züün nuur,” in *Shönijn tald aduu yanışgaana* (Ulaanbaatar : Mongol Uran Zokhiol Khevleliin Gazar, 1994), p. 403-404.

\(^16\) There are two basic processes in the making of dairy products: scalding or boiling (khööröriulekh) and curdling (eedriulekh). Of the five products mentioned in the text, öröm and tsagaan tos belong to the first process. When milk is sufficiently boiled, a skin forms on the surface. Scooped up and dried, this skin is called öröm. When the skin is not dried but admixed with fat from another process, that of making airag, a mildly alcoholic beverage, the mixture is churned. The pure fat part rises, is skimmed off and becomes butter (*shar*...
saddlers.

In addition, it was mostly poor people who worked metal to make knives, lighters, silver articles, rings, locks and keys, as well as saddles, wooden ger frames and so forth. The ranks of the poor included some poor lamas.

The saddle pommels and saddle boards in this banner were decorated in spiral patterns made from *khargana* and cherry tree bark. A reputedly very talented craftsman called Jaa made hand guns and traditional Mongolian locks with many keys.

From early times, the banner was famous for its wrestlers. There was a lot of talk about a wrestler called Arslan [Lion] Tsagaan of Dalai Van. He lived with his parents in a poor household which owned one bull and one mare. From an early age whenever this Arslan Tsagaan worshipped at an ovoo and then went to wrestle he would always eventually win. For this reason, he was very interested in the wrestlers who went to compete in the khoshuu, aimag, and national naadam. Late one spring, when the first month of summer had nearly arrived, his family wanted to move from their winter camp but due to their poverty and lack of transport they were unable to move for some time. In order to make a profit and to improve his life, that spring he decided to go to wrestle at the supreme naadam of the Bogd in Da Khüree.

Before leaving for Da Khüree, he killed his only bull and gave the dried meat to his parents, telling them to use the meat and remain there until his return. He boiled the beef entrails and packing them on his horse, set off towards Da Khüree riding his only mare. However, due to the summer heat, the packed offal began to go bad and he had to eat it all at once and go without food for the next few days until he reached Da Khüree. On arrival there he went to a place called Doloon Khudag in the present-day Batsümber Valley where danshig rituals were conducted. Many tents were pitched and several thousand people, including lamas, laymen, nobility and ordinary herdsmen, had gathered there. Then he found the tent where the wrestlers who had journeyed from the banners used to stay. He tested his strength with them and defeated all of them.

Although they tried hard to allow Arslan Tsagaan to take part in the Bogd’s
naadam tournament as one of the famous wrestlers of Dalai Van, it was the custom at that
time to prohibit untitled and unknown wrestlers from participating in the Bogd’s 
tournament. So the naadam tournament began, but on the day before the wrestling competition,
Tsagaan fell asleep with his feet protruding under the edge of the tent. A group of people
who were watching the wrestlers preparing for the tournament came past the tent and saw
Arslan Tsagaan’s feet. They stopped at once and looked with interest at the sole of one of
his feet which indicated that he must have the strength of a tiger.

After they reported this to the officials in charge of the wrestling, Arslan Tsagaan
was allowed to enter the wrestling tournament for the first time. Tsagaan won the
naadam and received the title Arslan straight away. He collected the winnings from his
bets and won prizes for his victory including tea, flour, cloth, which he took home.

He won the Bogd’s tournament several times more and looked after his parents
until he died. Soon after his death his corpse was deposited in the steppe. It was said
that even five years later wolves were still using his rib cage to give birth in.

The banner lords obtained some well-made milk foods and artistic ornaments
made out of silver, iron and wood from their own subjects. They were proud of their
good wrestlers and competitions were held in wrestling and shagai [a game using sheep’s
anklebones] with the banner of Chin Van Khanddorj, a famous banner of Khalkha. For
example, among the senior lamas of myandag rank in Tariatyn Khüree, there were dis­
putes over theological debates. Good relations continued to be strained until finally they
ceased to get along with one another.

Several high-ranking lamas left their original monastery and founded the so­
called North Monastery in a beautiful valley with flowing water and north facing forests
at the far end of Tariat Pass. The main temple buildings were constructed at the top of a
beautiful peak. Since the lamas had to climb up the mountain to reach the temple hall,
granite steps were laid which still remain today. The reason why the lamas built granite
steps up to the temple buildings on a high peak was to compete with the relatives of Chin
Van Khanddorj, who had constructed an artificial lake in the middle of which was a
mound made of stone and mud. At the top of this there was a tiny artistically constructed
temple called Divaajin [Paradise]. The center of the banner of Dalai Choinkhor Van was
northwest of Terkhiin Tsagaan lake and was called Tariatyn Khüree, which was the site
of the above-mentioned monastery. There was a large rock in this lake where sacrifices
were made every year at the expense of the banner.

In the banner center was the lord’s own treasury and office of the ruling prince,
together with an enclosure containing gers. This was where official duties were carried
out. The lord himself lived in a large enclosure. On the northern side of this was a large
Chinese-style summer building with many glass windows. On the east and west sides
were the buildings housing the summer quarters. In the middle was a large space for the
so-called lord’s residence, which actually consisted of several gers, the lord having his

Traditionally, the corpses of most people were taken to designated localities and placed on the ground
rather than buried. This practice, which received much negative comment from foreign visitors, was partly
rooted in the ancient belief that the earth must not be violated by digging into it, lest the local deities who
reside in these localities wreak vengeance on the offenders. This practice was reinforced later on by the Bud­
dhist view of the body as being merely a vile vessel and the ideal of being kind to all sentient beings. Thus,
placing corpses in the open field was seen as the final act of kindness by offering sustenance (and shelter, as
shown in the text) to animals.

Myandag, < Tib. ming-hdags, is a ceremony in which a lama receives a religious name.
How My Parents Used to Live

own large personal ger containing ten sections of lattice wall frames.

Also living in the lord’s enclosure were his principal, second and third wives, his favored son, and his khongor, or favorite daughter. Their food and drink was prepared by servants and maids who worked in the enclosure. There were also some seamstresses. Close relatives and followers of the lord also had their own enclosures and there were several enclosures for the lord to move to in spring and summer.

The lord owned several hundred horses, tens of thousands of sheep, and many cattle and camels. They were herded by official serfs in specially designated areas of the countryside.

At the age of eighteen the lord was made deputy to the Manchu amban [governor] in Uliasti. Our lord was well educated in Mongolian, Tibetan, and Manchu. Highly respected by Sain Noën Khan Namnansüren, he was appointed deputy minister when autonomy was established.\(^{25}\)

The principal wife of the lord was a somewhat cruel woman who enjoyed her privileges. It was said that when the cook brought her some tea she would refuse to drink it, saying it was too thin. If it was then boiled and thickened, she considered it too thick and still rejected it. Many meals were considered by her to be too fatty, or else not rich enough or tasteless, and so were rejected. It was difficult to please this difficult woman. One summer when the lord was on a visit to the northern edge of the banner he came to our district. We were spending the summer in a valley called Shar Khooloi [Yellow gorge], on the west side of Khökh Nuur [Blue Lake] when news of the arrival of the lord caused a great flurry of activity. As well as having to pay official taxes, rich and poor alike gathered to collect together the choicest offerings of livestock and milk foods as gifts to their superiors. They did this out of faith and as an act of worship but were also careful to do it in a most flattering way.

One summer’s day at about noon, some horse and camel carts arrived together with many people on horseback who dismounted at the northern edge of the lake. We could see that several large and small gers, more than ten blue tents with white spiral patterns, and some yellow tents were being erected. Then, quite a while after these tents and gers had been erected, some people appeared with a few decorated horse carts. A coach arrived adorned with rubber tassels followed by several more people with horse carts. In front of, behind, and on both sides of those horse carts were crowds of people accompanying them on horseback.

The mounted people were wearing all kinds of hats, jackets, plumes, and buttons. We also saw fancily attired people on foot. These were the lord’s close officials, footmen, and retainers who were in the procession with him. Starting from where the lord had appeared, the local people knelt down everywhere right up to the tents. They made libations of milk, read scriptures, and prayed. When doing so, the people prostrated themselves in places quite far from the road with the children in their midst in a state of bewilderment.

Wealthy people, commanders and officers of the sum, and famous lamas and monks went to the place where the lord had alighted and met with his footmen and retainers. They talked as if they had had an audience with the lord, even though they did not meet him but prostrated themselves on seeing his figure in the distance. There were

\(^{25}\) In 1911. See note 21 above.
also people who boasted that the lord had smiled when he saw them. In reality, no middle-ranking or poor people were allowed near the place when the lord arrived and were actually chased away.

We heard it said that he scolded the gatekeepers and footmen and had them whipped. Then, after a rest, the lord set off in the morning back to the banner center. The children and young people went to where the lord and his followers were staying and gathered things like the knucklebones of butchered sheep. This was in fact, one of the largest events to have taken place in the area.

The chief of our district was called Dejid Khünd, an old man who wore a blue button. Dejid was short and wore a pigtail. He was usually seen wearing a steel striker and knife decorated with silver. Our family used to make our spring and summer camp near to his, and although my brothers and I were afraid of him, we were occasionally brave enough to go into their ger hoping to get a bowl of yoghurt or something else to eat or drink. Dejid had about ten horses, over twenty cows, about 200 sheep, and the three of them—himself, his wife, and son—lived together in a ger. Thinking about it now, their ger seemed to be about five or six lattice wall sections in size. Inside this tidy ger there were chests with old-fashioned mottled designs, cupboards with drawers, and stands for utensils. As well as the usual offerings to the Buddha which were found at the back of the ger as in all households, one peculiarity was a cupboard with drawers at the end of the bed where there was a pen, an ink pot, a flat writing board, and a writing book made of cloth-bound paper. I realize now that the hand-written book contained the accounts which were the official work of a commander.

Although there was only a small number of people in total in our district, there were many wealthy people and the majority of local people were of average wealth. It was said that there were not many poor people there.

The rich and famous people of the district were Khunkhaan Badrakh, Altan, Lkhagva, Ayuush the gelen [monk], Danzan the officer, his son Davaajav, and others. The main household of each owned 1000 sheep, 300-500 horses, over 100 cows, and fifty to sixty camels. Apart from their large ger and the extra gers used for storage, there were also the households of their sons young and old. A large accompanying family did the milking and looked after the sheep and horses of these rich people. The poor people became the servants of the rich and included our family, the Modon Gongor, Tsog-badrakh, Tümbii-Oidov and other families.

The rich people kept poor people at their winter and summer camps. If there was a grown-up boy, they would get him to look after the horses. Others would be made to look after the sheep. The little ones would look after the calves and lambs. The children’s mother would have to milk the cows. In the summer the father would beat wool and make felt, in winter he would slaughter the animals for food and do similar hard work. At that time, no-one received wages for doing household chores. Instead, the main payment consisted of getting enough food to live on from the household.

26 During the Manchu dynasty, civilian officials wore various insignias, including different colored buttons on top of hats. Of a total of nine ranks, the two top ranks wore two shades of red, the next two shades of blue, followed by two shades of white, two shades of gold, and with the lowest rank wearing silver. See Brunnert and Hagelstrom, Present Day Political Organization of China (Shanghai: Kelly & Walsh, 1912), p. 508. The events described in the text took place well after the fall of the Manchu dynasty, so Dejid appears to have been an official of the autonomous government of Mongolia. If that government had chosen to retain the insignias of the Manchu dynasty, Dejid was an official of either the third or fourth rank.
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Because some of the rich people made their servants work in permanent jobs, they would give them a few ladlefuls of butter or dried curds after the butter had been churned, or the heads, shanks, and offal of slaughtered animals. Once or twice a year a half brick or, if one was lucky, a whole brick of tea or else some cotton cloth and a few pounds of flour would be provided. Such generosity among the wealthy people was highly praised by the poor, who did their work as requested.

Some of the wives of the rich lords occasionally behaved irritably and arrogantly towards their servants, who were treated like beggars, vagrants and other hapless people. For the poor serfs, on the whole, there was no way but to accept this situation. Sometimes, they could no longer tolerate bad treatment and in despair confronted the wealthy people by refusing to do the work. As our area had only a small number of poor serfs, the wealthy used all kinds of coercion in response to serf rebellions to restore the situation to normal. However, it was said that only people like the rich man Lkhagva and the clerk Badrakh were severe enough to fall out with their serfs.

Apart from these serfs the people of the district were divided up into the original clans of Khariad, Bökhhchüüd, and Dairtan. The Dairtan and Bökhhchüüd each consisted of several dozen households. The Khariad however, called themselves either senior, middle, or junior Khariad. These three groups of Khariad amounted to several hundred households in total. In earlier times, the so-called Khariad might have been called Krid, [? Kereid, tr.] or Gerüüd. As well as being prohibited from marrying within their clan, at New Year people would go to visit those of their relatives who were the most senior members of their clan, whom they would formally greet. Our family was included among the junior Khariad.

In addition to tending the small livestock [sheep and goats] throughout the year, the herdsmen in our area herded cattle in winter, took the horses out to graze on distant pastures and the camels to remote desolate areas. The camels were brought in when their wool was to be gathered or when transportation was needed when moving camp. Camels had to be purchased from the gobi areas because they did not thrive in the Khangai Mountains. The red Mongolian cattle were relatively rare. The cattle consisted mostly of yaks or khainag [a yak-cow hybrid oxen] which were used for moving cargo, riding, pulling carts, and short-distance transportation.

Horses were not used for anything except riding. The mares were only rarely milked for airag (fermented milk). The yak and khainag produced thick, creamy milk. The cream was stored and butter was churned from it. “White butter” was stored in leather bags, wooden tubs, and sheep’s stomachs. In summer, the ewes would be sorted from the lambs and neighboring households would between themselves keep the lambs away from the ewes so that from June until the end of July, sheep could be milked for a month. The most fancy, precious and delicious cream, curds, and other milk foods were made from this milk. Sheep’s milk whey mixed with the brown flour obtained from mekheer [viviparous snakeweed] and butter would be offered when entertaining hon-

27 Airag, produced through fermentation, is mildly alcoholic. It serves as the base for at least three additional and much more potent alcoholic beverages. When airag is distilled once, it becomes arkh, when distilled twice arj, and three times, khorj. The latter can reach more than 90% alcohol by volume. However, in recent decades, with the availability of inexpensive liquors, especially vodka in the North, this liquor has fallen into disuse.

28 A variety of polygonum.
The usual milk foods were cow's milk and sheep's milk yoghurt, buttermilk, and airag. Milk was soured to make curds and cheese, or fermented and distilled to make shimiin arkhi. To preserve milk for use in winter and spring, curds would be boiled to make aaruul, and stored in sacks and bags. Some households took their butter and milk foods to sell to the temples and settlements. In the first month of winter, every household prepared food for the winter and spring. Large and small animals were slaughtered for storage and for making dried meat.

The provision of food by each family depended upon its capital wealth. A rich family of four or five individuals plus its serfs would annually slaughter about two cattle and ten sheep. A similarly sized middle-ranking family would slaughter one cow and five or six sheep. A poor family would slaughter only one or two sheep, but normally, they would also feed their children on the shanks, heads, and offal obtained from helping other families to prepare food.

In order to help free the spirit of the animal killed for food an offering of candles was made from their tallow. After this food had been prepared, a ritual was performed. This was conducted on the twenty-fifth day of the first month of winter or "candle month." Nowadays, the ceremony of the "twenty-fifth of the candle month" is held at the end of October. This was the birth day and date of death of the Tibetan Holy Buddha Zunkhav [Tsongkapa] and the candles were offered to signify mourning. When the stars came out at night, the candles were protected from the wind by placing them in a large pot. Outside, many candles were offered and people prostrated themselves to recite prayers and offer their praises to the Bogd.

Among ordinary folk it was not unusual to find talented people who could sing old songs, play the morinkhuur [horsehead fiddle] or the flute, sing praises, and tell stories. Some of the poor households raised their children by living off marmots and other wild animals, selling skins and furs. In summer they picked and dried wild mushrooms which they traded with itinerant Chinese for a half or whole brick of tea, or a couple of pounds of flour. Poor families such as ours gathered gichgene, yamaakhai, mekheer, onions, and blueberries which were used to supplement our meals.

The so-called gichgene grew in dark soil in damp places. It was a leafy plant with tasty roots which could also be picked and eaten. The khonin tarna and ukher tarna (varieties of wild leek) grew in the gaps between rocks and were also collected and eaten. The mekheer was the plant most widely gathered for food. It grew in damp mounds of soil and had short tasty roots. These roots were gathered by a mouse called mekheerin bor one at a time in the autumn. The mouse cleaned them and stored them underground for eating in winter. These stores of mekheer could be located by pounding the ground with a special club while listening for the hollow sound that signified the presence of a mouse den. Digging open the den with a stake, the bulk of the mekheer would be found less than 10 cm below ground. One store of mekheer would equal nearly half a sack-full. The young people of poor households would find several stores and dig out the mekheer which they then dried in the sun, fried, pounded, mixed with butter and whey, cleaned and boiled for addition to the meal.

A generic word for a wide variety of silverweed.

This appears to be a local name, possibly related to yamaa khargana (Caragana pygmaea).
In addition, the roots of the chikher öbs [Glycyrrhiza], degd [Gentiana], vongor tsetseg, sevelgene ("white potatoes" as known in Töv and Dornod aimags), would be gathered and handed over to lama-doctors. They took the leaves, roots and flowers of these plants and mixed them with many other things to make a white or green broth.

Many kinds of medicines were blended for treating people.

In summer, we were made to pick incense grass, juniper, wormwood, zeergene [ephedra], and green pine needles, which we mixed and boiled in a pot to produce a scented infusion. This was put in a shallow bucket which was then placed in a hole in the ground. Old people with chronic rheumatic conditions would sit around the bucket in their summer gowns and dip their feet in it for several days. This same method was used to obtain extracts from many types of plant to make curative waters. Sick people used them and later on they were found to be useful for treating rheumatic conditions. I mention this as an example of the traditional methods used in the lives of ordinary people. During my youth I considered these to be beneficial.

The pasture in the winter camp was carefully distributed as appropriate for the number of livestock possessed by each family. The chief of the district or sometimes the person appointed by the official ruling prince of the khoshuu would allocate the land. With winter pasture, apart from the basic difference in grazing between sheep and cattle, thin or sick animals would be put in nearby winter shelters. Thinking about it now, I recall that there was a 400-500 meter to two kilometer strip in the neighboring winter pasture which was not to be grazed by the animals and was left fallow. The sheltered slopes would be reserved during the lambing season for the pregnant animals and for livestock during windy snowstorms. The distant pastures on the mountain ridges would be grazed during the first month of winter by fattened animals, mostly cattle and horses. The pastures of the winter camp would be demarcated by specific mounds and rocks. Outside these established areas stones would be piled up and the locality markers made.

If a household allowed its livestock to graze on the winter pasture of another household, those animals would be penned for a few days by the owner of the pasture. When the owner of the animals arrived to reclaim them, words would be exchanged, and the animals would either be given back or [in cases where this did not happen], fighting would break out.

In our area, the happy joyous times were lunar New Year, the reading of family services, the summer sacrifices to local deities held at the ovoo, the meetings concerned with the local monastery, scripture readings, and the Maidar (Maitreya) ritual. Locally, there were Buddhist monasteries, temples, and several ovooes in the mountains. The flourishing of Buddhism which had forced out the pre-existing shamanism was a matter which I ponder even now.

There was a lama named Danzan who lived in a forest on the southern ridge of a valley called Tsokhiot. He lived with an old woman and owned several head of cattle. The people of our area spoke frequently about this lama whose camp I once saw while herding livestock. This lama used to read books in his ger which were fit for a library, and he was said to own many books.

One autumn a shaman named Damdin from Dayan Derkh near Lake Khövsgöl arrived at Lama Danzan's and aggressively demanded some offerings. Danzan, who was

31 This term is unknown to me.
32 In Jargalant sum of northern Bayankhongor aimag.
a Buddhist and had disliked Damdin previously, became angry and upset and they fought, almost killing each other in the process. Then, while the shaman Damdin was spending the night near Lama Danzan, he invoked some spirits and while putting a curse on Danzan to have him eaten, the shaman’s drum came through the roof hole of Danzan’s ger and revolved around the hearth. In reply, Danzan read some scriptures. While he was repelling the shaman’s curse, Shaman Damdin’s drum left the ger, and fell to the east side of the ger with a crash. Shaman Damdin lost consciousness, the spirit left and the sound of the shaman’s reading stopped.

Lama Danzan had won and Shaman Damdin, having lost his magical power, became an ordinary person again. He returned home despondently. This short tale is an example of how Buddhism, which had flourished in Mongolia since the middle of the seventeenth century, forced out the old religion of shamanism.
My Early Childhood

In accordance with the tradition at that time, the herdsman Gandan of the Ach Khariad clan of Dalai Choinkhor Van spent time studying the scriptures at the monastery temples and finally went out into the countryside to take charge of his family and livestock. He had three children whose names were Ad’yaakhűü, Bazar, and Togtokh.

The children lost their mother when Bazar was eight years old. They all lived with their father who died when Bazar was eighteen. Bazar’s father, Gandan, had only a few yaks all of which ended up being handed over to pay taxes. From his early youth Bazar had tended other people’s livestock and he was said to be a clean, handsome person. Because he had a tall nose, greenish eyes, and brownish hair, the local people nick-named him “Russian Bazar.”

From an early age Bazar was summoned time and again by various people to copy their accounts using Mongolian script. Eventually, even the banner seal office summoned him. After he completed all this clerical work, they called him “Bazar the Scribe.” Due to his initial poverty, he was unable to progress to become a senior clerk, and later on left clerical work to take up livestock herding. When he was young he was quite good at singing long-songs. He was also able to paint playing cards and dice, and he carved fancy dominoes out of birch wood. He hunted, prepared felt and leather, and repaired guns.

This was the way my father Bazar lived with my mother, Tserendulam.

My mother Tserendulam was the younger of the two daughters of the lone impoverished nun Bud who was the younger sister of quite a wealthy person called Mangal. My parents married and built a little ger. They owned two milking cows, a single gelding mount, and over ten sheep. They set up camp in winter on the slope of a hill at the mouth of a high ravine called Khudag. In spring they camped at a tiny stream which crossed the mouth of the ravine, or else in the valley of the Nükht river. In summer they would sometimes follow the mouth of that same Khudag valley, or crossing the so-called Tüleen Davaa, they entered a valley north of it where they camped at the Shar Khooloi river which emptied into Khökh Nuur. It was one of nature’s most beautiful places. Several valleys came between the mountains, some were wooded, others bare, some high and some low.

On the eastern side of this valley there was a large body of water called Khökh Nuur, surrounded by beautiful forested mountains. Right in the middle of the lake were several islands. There were some small hills with tall trees on these islands. When the lake was freezing or thawing, it made a beautiful sound. They said it was a noise made by local gods but actually it was produced when the ice either broke or froze, making a grating noise comparable to the sound made by mountain trees. A local legend described

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1 *Uürin duu*, “long songs”, are a still popular genre of Mongolian traditional music.
how large water buffalo and dragon-like creatures lived in the lake. A great many geese, mandarin ducks, ducks and other similar birds lived in the lake. As the lake was salty, it supported no fish. Rivers flowed into the lake from Shar Valley, ṫhokh Valley and many other places. The mouths of the valleys surrounding the lake were well-watered and had good grass and other vegetation. Since it was a very cool and pleasant place to spend the summer, many households would set up their encampments in groups settled together or near each other. There were several hundred cattle, horses, and sheep pastured here, all owned by rich families.

In some camps where several families owned an average number of livestock, it was the custom for them to cooperate and take turns looking after the animals. A rich household with many livestock would establish a separate and self-supporting camp. The horse herders, shepherds, milk maids, and other servants would live together in the kind of camp my parents lived in. My father looked after the rich families' horses, sheared their sheep, beat the wool, made felt and chopped firewood. My mother milked their cows and helped with the housework. As far as payment was concerned, there was none really, apart from the provision of meals for the household. In the summer and autumn months, two people together could earn a brick of tea or one lamb in wages. On the other hand, when we migrated and made camp, the rich family helped with our transportation and provided mounts if any to-ing and fro-ing was required. We lived like this for many years.

There were thirteen children in our family, ten boys and three girls. Five of these children did not survive infancy. The eldest child was born when my father was twenty-nine. My parents were always very worried about whether they would be able to raise their thirteen children to adulthood. In summer they only had the milk of two cows to feed their children, but not enough extra to make cheese. In winter they never had enough meat to eat. Because they were unable to obtain sufficient clothes, during the summer the children usually went about naked. In winter, on average there was one gown and one pair of boots for each two or three children. The others draped their parents' old gowns or sheepskins over their backs while they sat around the fire. In order to feed so many children, they looked after the livestock of one of the temples at our local monastery which was situated on the Nükht river. They would herd two or three hundred sheep from the livestock reserves of one temple. Several cattle might also be taken from that temple to be pastured.

All this would have to be achieved without allowing the animals to fall sick. The animals would be fattened and the wool handed over to the temple stores. In summer the sheep were milked for making cream and various dried cheeses. The cheeses of Dalai Van banner were famous throughout Khalkha and when they were ready they too were handed over to the temple stores. As well as raising cattle, other duties were performed, such as gathering cattle hair and moult, braiding ropes for the temple store, using oxen to transport firewood from the stores in the temple, milking cows and handing over prepared milk foods.

Every year in autumn, the bookkeeper of the temple and the clerks came to us to count the temple livestock, and enumerated the total increase in the number of new-born animals. If the animals were fat and growing well, the animals would be left with the original household, but if there had been mishaps and losses, the animals would be taken from that household, and transferred to another one. Thus, there was a danger that poor serfs could lose their livelihood.
The advantage of looking after animals in this way was that in summer, once there was enough food to feed the children, any surplus food could be stored away. When migrating, the oxen being herded could also be utilized. If work had been done successfully, two or three bricks of tea could be obtained per year from the stores. If not, then only two sick or starving sheep could be obtained for food. So, having received their "reward," the original animals were tended every day, and every year the new young animals were delivered in spring and fattened through the summer.

The eldest two of the eight children were my brother Damschaabadgar and my sister Baljinnyam, both of whom helped my parents to herd the livestock owned by the monastery.

As the situation of ordinary people worsened during the Manchu dynasty, uprisings against foreign and Manchu oppression occurred and were crushed. Influenced by the revolution in Russia in 1905 and the capitalist revolution of 1911 in China, a national freedom movement developed in Mongolia. The Manchu ambans were removed from both Khovd and Da Khüree and independence was declared. It is correct to regard this period as marking the renaissance of the country. The lord of our banner, Dalai Choin-khor Van Tsedensodnom took part in these activities and advanced to the position of Deputy Foreign Minister of the new Mongolian government. The official obligations of the people of the banner were not reduced in the least. The lives of the ordinary people were as poor as ever, and their ignorance remained unchanged. During this time, my parents continued to live in the old traditional way.

I, Bazar’s sixth son, was born in 1912, the second year of the “Elevated by All” [oinoö örgöödsön year period]. As three children had already died in infancy before I was born, my parents felt afraid and panicky. My parents tried to entrust my health to the tsorj lama Dambii of a datsan of the Nükht Khüree Monastery by giving him my father’s most valuable possession, a rifle which could fire a dead straight shot.

When I was eight years old, I began to look after the sheep of this monastery, and in the summer time I went with my mother and sister to look after the lambs and do the household chores. Every summer the household of the nun Tsevegjav camped with us. Her nephew Javzanjav was the same age as me and we played together. We used to play beside an ovoo in the area, running races, wrestling, and playing the “wolf and marmot” game. At that time it was customary for children to play with stones which were made to represent gers, sheep, cattle, and horse herds. This was one example of how children who lived in the country used to try to educate themselves.

We used to have an old dog named Yangir which I would lead along and tease, but one day I became very annoyed at him for biting me.

In autumn, the households of our camp separated and went to their respective winter camps. Having become separated from my companion Javzanjav I was very
lonely and often thought about him. One winter, a mendicant monk named Khaatsai fre­
quently visited us and we listened with interest to his reminiscences about his travels
around Lake Baikal, in the Gobi, Manchuria, and Hohhot.\(^5\)

As far as the ordinary people and the young were concerned, as there was rarely
any other news, they had to take an interest in such matters as religious events, celebra­
tions, meetings, prayers, rumors about the lords and poor people, thieves and swindlers,
stories told by parents and other people in the household, guessing games, folk songs and
morinkhuur music. Religious matters and magical tricks were not understood at all and
they were thought to be caused by secret, magical powers. However, the genuine work of
the masses and the things discussed in relation to life were both meaningful and instruc­
tive. The old tales, legends, and riddles were an interesting way of passing on informa­
tion and understanding about ancient history and biography.

My parents did not flatter the rich but they did look with compassion on the
poor. They instructed their children to follow the tradition of helping whenever possible,
and we have kept pleasant memories of how they themselves lived by these principles.
Our parents told us of their admiration for those households and young people who were
honest and helpful towards poor people.

It was thought that the making of well thought-out and artistic hand-made mul­
ticolored spiral designs, painted playing cards and dice, making planed and engraved
dominoes, chess pieces, and objects cast in iron and silver were truly beautiful skills
when mastered and could be appreciated by everyone.

When I reflect on the customs of the people and their traditions, I recall many
aspects which were good for the education and raising of children. The boys of school-
age mostly became novices of the lamas, who taught them religious texts in Tibetan.
Without being allowed to understand the meaning of things, they mostly just learned the
texts by heart. This was how lamas and monks were schooled in the Buddhist religion
which had spread through Mongolia. A learned lama in every temple would take two or
three child disciples to teach them the Tibetan alphabet and religious texts in Tibetan.
Several verses or sometimes up to half a page would be learned by heart at one time. The
majority of those children would have been related to their lama teachers, or else they
were the children of the wealthier people of the area.

When staying at the temple, the children followed a set of rules called Jayag.
These rules specified that the novices were to memorize the texts taught by their teachers.
They were prohibited from loitering, fighting, or causing a disturbance. In addition to
learning a few scriptures and attending temple meetings, they also did all the housework
for their teachers.

All the lamas in the temple were controlled by the tsogchin or gesgui lamas.
Children began to study in the temple from the age of five or seven, and were taught
scriptures in autumn, winter, and spring. In summer, when they returned to the countrysi­
de to help their parents, as a rule they continued to practice their lessons. Within five or
ten years the young monks had memorized the so-called greater and lesser texts. This
was equivalent to a modern middle-school education. Beyond this, they were designated
lama, gelen or getsel and took part in scripture meetings. Some of those who wished to
advance their knowledge further completed three courses at a temple of Buddhist phi-

\(^5\) Also spelled Kökeqota, Khôk Khot, etc., presently the capital of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region.
losophy called a *choir*, which would lead to the religious title Gabaj. Later, passing the agaramba damjaa examination would confer the rank of Scholar of Buddhist Philoso-
phy. The other area of study was conducted by the temple college of Buddhist medicine called mamba where people studied to become lama doctors. The lamas called this profession Sooregva in Tibetan.

Another area was astrology, which provided for the speciality of chronology [the science of calculating the passage of time and the assigning of dates to events]. Some people became proficient in art and made images of buddhas in clay, cast in metal, carved in wood, or painted on silk, cotton cloth, and paper. They studied the technique of drawing and sticking of things on paper called suvaaregva. To master the principles of the above-mentioned specialities, at least ten years of study was needed.

In addition, lamas who were staying in the gers in the countryside used to teach the scriptures to their relatives or the local children. This provided another way for children and young people to master the religious doctrines.

To conduct the official work of the feudal government and administration, literate people were required. Temporary schools were established so that the children of the wealthy and the nobility could study the Mongolian script. These schools were located in Niislel Khuree (now Ulaanbaatar), Khovd, Uliastai, Vangiin Khuree (now Bulgan), Zayain Khuree (now Tsetserleg) and at the banner seal (official administration) offices.

Before the revolution, there was such a school with forty-seven children in Ulaanbaatar. There were about twenty banner seal offices and evidence for the existence of over 200 pupils [in total]. As official business carried out in Mongolia between the aimag, banner, and government administration had to be completed in Mongolian script, students from the above schools would be employed by the government to work as clerks or assistant clerks. Due to the importance of that work, the most qualified young people were sent back to their native districts to undertake those clerical duties.

Since Manchu and Mongolian were adequate for communications between the Mongolian Foreign Ministry and other official places and the office of the Manchu Am-
ban in Niisel Khuree, and for official communications from the Jurgaan which adminis-
tered Mongolian affairs in Beijing, some talented and able children and young people were made to specialize in writing official documents in Manchu, Chinese, and Tibetan. Among them were the famous pre-revolutionary Mongolian intellectuals B. Tserendorj, A. Amar [1886-1939], and L. Dendev. B. Tserendorj knew Mongolian, Manchu and Chinese, L. Dendev knew Mongolian and Manchu, and A. Amar knew Mongolian, Man-
chu and Tibetan. I note in passing that although it was called Manchu, the script was

"gabcu < Tib. Dkah bcu < Skt. krcchra, daca "he who has mastered [the ten difficult things], i.e. who is able to interpret a term in ten different ways."
ment matters, the young people were also taught Tibetan for religious purposes. However, the ordinary people had a great desire to learn their native language. It was the custom among ordinary people that if anyone owned a book, they would use it to teach their own children or the children of the neighborhood while doing their house work.

Looking back on it now, as there were few livestock to tend but many family members and children in the household, there was plenty of opportunity to teach writing. However, depending on the situation at the time, domestic and herding work was a priority, and writing was taught only during free time. The highest priority was to give children an education in labor, though it was also desirable to teach them writing. It was the custom that young people be taught about housework and livestock herding from an early age.

For example, children were trained to sleep and rise at specified times. From dawn to sunset the time could be estimated by observing the height and rotation of the sun’s rays reflected within the ger. The children started to help by bringing firewood into the ger and fetched drinking water or snow and ice. They learned to look after the lambs and calves and to herd cattle and horses. The boys learned to cut firewood, to clean livestock pens, to saddle and bridle horses, riding techniques, moving and setting up camp, dismantling and erecting gers, gathering animal hair and wool, tanning sheepskin and leather, making felt, livestock corrals, shelters, and clay storage jars for milk foods.

Some of the children of the people who did blacksmith work and carpentry followed their fathers’ professions and learned to make iron strikers and knives, and artistically decorated objects made of copper, brass, silver and gold, or wooden objects such as buckets, containers, saddles, chests, ger frames, and so forth. The children learned to use the tools of carpenters, such as axes, saws, adzes, planes, and files which were needed to make such objects. The boys from hunting households mastered all kinds of hunting methods using guns and traps. The children of farming families studied plowing, planting, the watering of fields, and raising and harvesting the growing crops.

The girls learned how to cover and un-cover the smoke-hole of the ger, light fires, prepare tea and meals, milk cows and other animals, boil milk and skim the cream, make cheese, store clothing, begin cleaning the ger, cut material for boots, gowns, hats, jackets and shirts, sewing and decorating felt and leather, quilting and adorning things with spun thread, and cutting out and hemming clothing and embroidering beautiful things.

In addition to this education in everyday work, the children and young people learned about morals and ethics. They were taught how to respectfully invite grandparents, parents and their seniors into the ger to be seated on properly arranged carpets and offered food and drink. When older people gave the children presents, these children would accept them with respect, taking the presents with both hands. On the other hand when children were giving presents to their elders, the senior person would bless the child by raising his arms and wishing that the child would grow up to be tall and strong.

At Lunar New Year, the children and young people would greet their grandparents, parents, and elders with outstretched arms. In former times, during every celebration, the children and young people would sit quietly and listen attentively to all the ceremonial teachings and discussions of the elders without causing any disruption. It was also the custom that children would assist the old people in the neighborhood as much as possible.

While milking the animals and doing herding work, the children and young
people would learn to sing long songs and short songs and learn to play music on the morinkhuur and flute. During their free time between doing the housework and looking after the animals, they had running races, wrestling competitions, and at dusk they played a game involving throwing and finding a white stick. Besides traditional games like Mongolian draughts, dominoes, card games, and shagai, they played with stones which represented gers and livestock. Education was principally based on the Mongolian saying “To become a person you start by being small, to become a mount you start by being a foal.”

From early times, it was customary for the Mongols to want to teach their children to read and write. In the publishing industry this was called “the science of educating the people.” In the 1960’s a doctorate dissertation on this subject was published by the scholar Volkov of the Bashkir Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

The herdsman G. Bazar of the above-mentioned Ikh district used to teach the Mongolian script to his own sons and other boys who wished to become lamas. At that time, writing paper, books, pens, and pencils were scarce. Well-read people used to write with ink pens on soft, thin Chinese paper called muutuu. However, in rural areas where such paper, pens, and ink were unobtainable or, at least, expensive, blackboards were made out of wood and were written on with a sharp-pointed stick coated in ash. To make those blackboards, a log was cut into thin planks which were planed down. Each plank was made about one palm’s width in breadth and a hand in length, then coated in grease [lard, tallow] and dried in the sun or in front of a fire. Soot from cooking pots was applied and then it was written on with a stick sharpened like a pencil and then dipped in ash. Four or five pieces of wood could be glued together like a book to form a folding blackboard. After writing in ash on this blackboard, when the lesson was over the ash would be rubbed off and the writing could continue.

In the morning, before the livestock were put out to pasture or early or late in the day when the animals were put in the enclosure, candles or lamps had to be lit to teach the children. My father, Bazar, would, within a few minutes, teach his own children and five or six other children a single word followed by not more than two spelt-out numbers which the children would learn and copy for themselves. He would then show them how to correct their mistakes in the written script. Once the children had been taught all the vowels and several consonants, they were taught how to join letters to form words, and to join words to make sentences. Along with this, children were taught to copy already-copied texts or to copy a few paragraphs from block-printed or hand-copied scriptures which had been translated from Tibetan into Mongolian to be read to the children on long winter nights. Calling to mind a few of those titles, they included “Altan Gerel,” “Taravchamba,” “Banzragch” and others, and old folk tales such a “The Sea of Stories,” “Moon Cuckoo,” “Magical Corpse,” “The Tale of the Thirty-two Wooden Men,” all of which were interesting to read.

Whether taught to read books or not, all children were told stories by the local story tellers, who during the long winter evenings reminisced about interesting stories in

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7 From Ch. maotou “hairy head.”
9 For one version of this folk tale and an English translation, see The Mongol Tales of the 32 Wooden Men, translated and annotated by Sushama Lohia (Wiesbaden : Harrassowitz, 1968).
verse such as "The Manly Heroic Hunter Rinchen" and "The History of Khan Kharankhui." Also, the rural people thought it was extremely useful to develop the minds of their children by getting them to work out clever puzzles. It was the custom for the rural people to explain intellectual things to their children as well as they were able to.

For the subject of arithmetic, the parents taught their children to count from one to ten, then in tens up to 100, one thousand, ten thousand, a hundred thousand, a million, ten million, and up to a hundred million. In addition, there were numbers for a billion, a hundred billion, and so forth which were certainly not taught in our area. There was a custom that parents use concrete examples to teach the four areas of arithmetic, rather than endlessly counting numbers. Ankle bones, stones, and livestock were used to represent units from ten up to one hundred to explain the four areas of arithmetic.

For example, they would ask if you add two ankle bones to ten ankle bones or sheep, how many would there be? Or if three are given away from the ten ankle bones or sheep, how many are left? If ten ankle bones or sheep are divided equally between two people, how many will each person have? If ten ankle bones are multiplied by two, how many will there be? When teaching the four areas of arithmetic, some families included figures of hundreds and thousands to be worked out by the children. Abacus techniques were also taught.

Rural households supplied the children with information on weights and measures. These included fun, tsen, lan, van, zhin, sööm, töö, tokhoi, delen, ald, alkham gazar (Chinese mile), modny gazar, örtöö gazar, and so forth. Children were also taught about measuring lengths and calculating areas and a basic knowledge of geometrical methods concerned with the shape of things from a practical point of view, triangles, rectangles, ovals, circles, round shapes, kidney shapes, and so forth. Every-day examples were used when children were taught about the orientation of the stars and planets, the cycle of twelve years and their respective names, the sixty-year cycle, the months of the year, weeks in a month, days of the week, and the hours of the day. In the same way, eclipses of the moon and sun, the Milky Way, Orion, Pleiades, the Morning Star, and the Polar Star were taught to children. This was important when estimating the time during the night and finding correct [compass] bearings.

Rural households taught their children the names of the different colors, the five basic colors and their shades—white and whitish, red and reddish, green and greenish, blue and bluish, yellow and yellowish, and other refined tints. The colors of animals could be carefully distinguished using this knowledge.

When children were taught descriptions of anatomy for the first time, they were familiarized with the names of the joints, limbs, and many of the bones of animals.

Children were also given an understanding of geography from an early age. Ex-

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10 Some of these traditional terms are still being used privately, but the metric system is the sole official standard. Aside from being inherently unstandardizable, most traditional terms have had shifting values over time and space. Hence the following remarks should be considered only approximations. The first five are derived from Chinese, and their current values in China are as follows: fun < Ch. jin = .5 kg. The only meaning of van that I know of is derived from Ch. wang, "prince". The remaining terms are linear measures: 1 ald consists of 5 tokhoi, originally the distance between the middle fingers of a man's outstretched arms, ca. 1.6 meters; tokhoi is the same as a Chinese chi, or foot; a töö is the distance between the tip of the thumb to the tip of the index or middle finger when extended; sööm is about the same as töö; delen equals half an ald and is the distance from the tips of the fingers of an outstretched arm to the shoulder of the other arm; alkham gazar is a step or pace; modny gazar perhaps is similar to tokhoi; örtöö gazar is the distance between stages on the old relay system, about 30 km or 20 miles.
examples of mountain dales, plateaus, ridges and mountain ranges, woods, hills, slopes, plains, valleys, steppes, terraces, meadows, north and south facing mountain slopes, gorges, rocks, precipices, ditches, ponds, salt marshes, lakes, seas, rivers, streams, springs, and oases, were given to further increase their understanding.

As far as vegetation was concerned, all kinds of trees and bushes, grasses, flowers, leaves, fruits, mekheer, gichgene, yamaakhai, onions and wild onions grew in our area about which information was available.

Regarding animals, children were given an understanding of the name, age and sex of each of the five main livestock animals and the names and appearance of the fauna of the area. Children gained knowledge about the useful minerals and raw materials starting with rain stones, spar, talc, all kinds of flint, whetstones, copper, ochre, lime, sand, clay, gravel, turquoise, silver, gold, and so forth. These examples should be taken into consideration for the teaching of Mongolian and the revival of an education in native terms.

The children and young people respected their teachers very much and it was the custom for children to look after their books carefully. Some households and districts had a small number of books. This would nowadays be regarded as the household library. One example of how the Mongols respected books and their teachers is seen in the saying “learning is a noble wealth” which existed from ancient times. The common policy was to educate children in everyday work and morals and to provide practical information about nature and the world. However, some khoshuu and sum were only concerned with teaching the traditional script to a small number of children.

We had a folk tale concerning a bird called the Khan Garuda which was a very able and powerful creature. It used to be said that in the end it sprouted wings like a bird and became immensely powerful. Not long afterwards, a man from our district called Gelenkhüü, who was a talented artist, made some wings out of goatskin sacks which he held under his arms while he jumped from a high cliff on the north bank of the Ider river. Intending to land on some soft sand he descended into a herd of sheep causing a great commotion. Some time later I made a careful study of the biography of that same Gelenkhüü and in fact one of his dance compositions, called “Artistic Jade,” was performed on the stage of the National Opera and Dance Theater.

The fine arts of the ancient peoples were frequently encountered on the rocks and cliffs of our area. These included monuments, stones, and high or low circular or square burial mounds with stone monuments surrounding them or radiating outwards from them. Occasionally, when traveling across the steppe one comes across arrow heads, bronze and copper knives, and still-growing trees torn apart by lightning, all of which are evocative, giving birth to ideas which try to explain them. When our father used to talk about these burial mounds he explained that they were the burial places of many people who died in a great battle and the stone monuments were memorials to the heroic warriors.

People were fascinated by some old script at the end of a ravine called Khuyagt. It was said that this writing dated from a very ancient time and there was only one person in our area who could read it. He was a nobleman called Sürenjav who lived at the beginning of this century. He knew ancient scripts and was proficient in both Manchu and Mongolian. My elder brother Damchaabadgar used to say that astride his horse, he would point with his whip at the script and read it aloud word by word.

In winter, my father would find time to read us stories from old books and biog-
rhapsodies which he then discussed with us. He would also get us to guess riddles. One autumn we moved eastwards away from the lake and while we were staying at our autumn camp, a man turned up on a horse with his wrists bound and a large square block of wood around his neck. Another mounted man who was with him made him wander around the households of the encampment. Sometimes he was given some tea, and sometimes not. Having been found guilty of theft, he was being sent along the horse-relay route. This explained why he had the heavy wooden cangue around his neck. I observed the demeanor of this man and the situation he was in. He was making loud sobbing noises, obviously feeling ashamed of what he had done.

Early in the spring when the other households neighboring our winter camp moved away, we were the only household left in the entire camp as we had no transport. My father would go long distances to beg other households for transport and used to return home late at night.

Every night dogs barked and owls hooted incessantly on an uneven rock to the north of the winter camp. Because of this my mother felt uneasy. For a long time it was said to be a place where there were vampires, and this recent incessant noise from the owls was a bad omen. The noise from these birds frightened us and gave us nightmares. We younger children continually had nightmares because my father, mother, and my older brothers and sisters were constantly talking about campsite vampires, black demons, graveyard corpses, and almas [abominable snowmen] from the wilderness. All of this made us afraid to go out of the ger in the darkness of night.

Soon afterwards, my father did some herding work for a family and found some transport. We somehow managed to move from our winter camp, and traveled a distance of almost one ortöö. While we were spending the summer at Nükh Khüree news spread about a fortuitous event which was taking place. This was the imminent arrival of the banner lord’s lama teachers who were proceeding towards our Nükh monastery. There were some special banners in Khalkha where Tibetan lamas used to come to live near the lords in order to give them teaching. These lamas, who had been invited from Tibet and assigned to the banners, were called gachin teachers.

As Dalai Van, the lord of our banner was a man of high standing, from early on he used to invite gachin lamas from Tibet to stay at the monastery in the banner. The last of these lamas whom he invited was a man named Regdelbürelgiiü who lived alongside our lord Tsedensodnom. This gegeen was a novice, a thin Tibetan teenager with a swarthy appearance who was accompanied by twenty or thirty Tibetans who had also come to stay in the banner. The gegeen even had his own livestock corral and treasury. As all the contributions from the banner people went into this treasury, he became very rich. As he was with officials named after special clans, he too was given the clan name of Lamkhai. During the first period of the people’s government, he had a square, two-story building constructed called a semchin.

In order to invite the Vanchin Bogd [Panchen Lama] who was living in northern China, great preparations were made and livestock and silver were appropriated from the people. During the spring before the arrival of these lamas, there was a great flurry of activity and offerings had to be arranged for this propitious event which resulted in some people becoming impoverished.

Before the Bogd’s arrival, a reception area was prepared on the west-facing slope of Nükh Khüree. This required the cutting of a large number of tall, beautiful green trees from the mountain which were transported by ox-cart to be planted in several
rows lining his route. A garden was laid out in a few days. The yellow and blue-striped gers, a large plain red-striped ger and many other tents were erected. Mares were caught and milked, and cheeses were prepared along with gifts of flour, tea, cotton cloth, silk, and other goods. The lama arrived together with his large retinue and they filed majestically on horseback towards Nükht Khüree. On each of the five days that the gachin lama was at the temple, he would come to the door of the tsogchin temple. Seated on a high cushion with supports, he would give a lecture by reading scriptures and turned many worshippers into disciples.

While the lama was reading the scriptures, all those who wished to become his disciples were prostrating themselves before him, praying and making offerings. However, it was not that easy to become a disciple merely by kow-towing. First of all, the wealthy and affluent and other colorful and respected personages would go on the first day to occupy the front or best seats while the poorest people would go on the last day and would have to sit far away in the distance. (Despite this they still considered themselves very fortunate). My parents took turns with the neighboring households to go there and kowtow to the lama.

My parents led the older children, who were on foot. The little ones were carried in a basket on the back of an ox. In this manner they traveled a distance of half an örtöö. They struggled through the dust scattered by all the mounted people in the heat of summer and continued along, tired, weary and thirsty through lack of water. They finally sat down a considerable distance from where the lama was giving the lecture. The gachin lama sat on a tall cushion in the main doorway of the tsogchin temple, and while holding a tiny hand drum, read the scriptures in Tibetan. Beside him were two Tibetan lamas who occasionally said something. His interpreter was a Tibetan lama who spoke Mongolian badly and although it was almost impossible to hear him with the commotion going on, now and then we heard someone telling us we should kow-tow and pray hard. After we had returned home, the lamas headed back to the banner center.

The next spring we all moved and spent the summer near the lake. As autumn approached we made camp, herding some sheep at a wooded cliff called Tuleen Davaa. Since there was plenty of mekheer growing in that forest, the mice had stored a load of mekheer which we all helped to collect in several sacks to be dried later.

One year, towards the end of summer, a group of Russians came and spent several nights at our camp while they were buying up livestock. The local people purchased cigarettes, tobacco, white khadag, sugar, and felt hats from them. One day, my friend Javzanjav and I were leading some sheep along the far end of the Shar valley when we caught sight of one of the Russians from afar. We were afraid and ran away. We watched him walking towards the lake and suddenly he lay down. Then, there was gunfire. We were terrified and tried to flee with our sheep in the direction of our gers. The Russian then stood up, picked something up and fired into the air. There was a lot of smoke and a small bird which was flying fell to the ground. I now understood what was happening and waited to look at the bird which had been shot. Gradually, I approached nearer and nearer but could not go right up to it. However, when I had got quite a bit closer I looked back and saw the man apparently breaking and folding his gun. Since we had never seen a shotgun before, we assumed that he had dismantled and left his gun

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11 An elongated piece of cloth, often made of blue silk, that is presented on ceremonial occasions draped over both outstretched arms. It is given either by itself or in conjunction with another, more valuable gift.
after finishing his shooting and we went back home. Later on, the people in our area became acquainted with that man and they used to say he was a pleasant character and used to give the children sweets and toys.

We decided to make our autumn camp near the edge of the forest at Tüleen Davaa. Russians often used to drive cattle through there. We watched them as they went by and wanted to meet them, but did not have the courage to do so. Then one day, when my father had gone out to the sheep and we were left at home with my mother, a Russian came along thrashing his whip and rounding up some cattle which were grazing beside our ger. We noticed him, and while we peered at him through the door of our ger, my younger brother Namjil confidently went out and approached the Russian, who asked in broken Mongolian, “How are you?” He called to my brother, “Come here, come here, come here,” and he gave him ten möngö, a beautiful tobacco box, and several sweets wrapped in paper. On seeing that, we all filed out and raced up to that Russian. He searched about himself and also gave us some ten möngö pieces and some sweets. However, no one except my younger brother got one of those interesting and beautiful tobacco boxes. That was how we first saw a Russian.

In later years, when the Russians used to come through our area on their way to the Soviet trading organization Tsentr Soyuz, we got to know them very well and went to their gers and tents to help them carry water and saw firewood. In return they gave us some cakes. I learned the two words “Zdravstvui, tovarishch.” It is now amusing to think how awkwardly I spoke my first words of Russian and how equally uncomfortably that Russian said “How are you?” in Mongolian.

We spent the spring in a ravine in the first mountain pass west of the well. At that time I had a great desire to go to Bogd Khüree to see what was going on there.

Occasionally there were camel caravans which stretched into the distance passing along the road in front of our ger. These were continually traveling between Khüree and Uliastai. Once I managed to follow a caravan a considerable distance along the road to Khüree but my older brother Damchaabadgar came and forced me to return home. That evening I was scolded by my brothers, sisters, and parents.

My parents prepared the food for a household, churned butter, helped with the making of felt, and received a little payment which they used to make a living. They raised a small number of sheep until they had between thirty and forty in addition to three or four head of cattle.

Following the rise of the people’s government, some local people, in particular the rich people, were stuck in their winter camps and decided to sue their lord for the right to camp in winter in two wide valleys called Toson and Khongor, where it was the custom to pasture the lord’s horses. Subsequently, some poor and middle-ranking herding families who had lost their winter camp pastures were expelled from their old land and decided to look for new places to spend the winter.

So, one autumn, my family left our district and moved a distance of three or four örtöö over several days to camp at a place called Khongoryn Punzet. Having arrived there, we all missed our home district, including our friends who were the same age as us. We spent the winter with the Luvsantseren and Manuustai households in one of the ravines at Punzet. Both of them had several children. As they too had recently arrived in

12 Until the outbreak of massive inflation in the early 1990s, the national currency, the tugrig, consisted of 100 möngö.
My Early Childhood

the area, we all got on well, spending the winter in this strange place.

After the three families had put away their livestock, eaten their evening meal and covered and warmed their gers, they lit their oil lamps and listened to the many stories told by the old man Manuustai. These included stories of a black monster with ninety-five bald heads, a short black fifteen-headed monster, and the glorious heroic hunter Rinchen who spoke out for the people. It took him three nights to tell, entirely in verse, the story of that poor-man’s hero. He also talked about the Lunar New Year. These stories were told by ordinary people, with little variation across the country, and they have now been published.

The poor people in our area used to have a saying “Once in a while one gets enough to eat but at New Year there is always enough to eat”. According to old customs, although the ceremony of seeing in the New Year was thought to be a little more special in one’s local area, in fact it was generally the same everywhere. In old Mongolia it was the largest and best celebration held by the people. New Year was regarded as a time when the progressive year-round suffering was relieved. This celebration was planned and prepared well in advance.

In autumn, delicious milk foods were prepared and stored for New Year. Around October, tasty butter was churned and in November food to be offered at New Year was prepared, including mutton, and in settlements pastries were made, including a pastry shaped into five branches, and one shaped like a gabj wheel. The rural people also made pastries, boortsog, and meat dumplings. Jujubes, sugar and some gift items were purchased from Chinese shops, as were bolts of cotton and silk cloth and all kinds of khadag, silk and cotton thread.

The extent of these preparations depended on the wealth of each household. The people near us completed these preparations a few days in advance. On the eve of the New Year, portraits of Buddhas were put on display and in front of these, fresh offerings were placed in small cups. In front of the Buddha’s altar there was a large plate on which were arranged pieces of a sheep—the head, the back of a thigh, a shin bone, a shoulder blade, four long ribs, the stomach, and a tail. Pastries and sweets were placed on another plate. Candles and incense were lit that evening and the children and young people would eat their fill.

All the households would visit each other carrying plates of food and pots of tea. After reminiscing about things together they would leave three pieces of ice on the lintel of the ger as they left. This was done so that when the Lkhänp Buddha proceeded around the gers that evening to see off the present year and see in the New Year he could have a taste of those pieces of ice.

People would rise early the next morning and offer candles and incense to the Buddha. The fathers and their sons would take some incense and an old length of khadag which would be treated respectfully by taking it up a tall hill or rock [sic, probably ovoo -tr.] facing the sunrise. Then the khadag would be presented to the rock [ovoo] and the incense and juniper were lit to produce smoke and several prostrations would be made to the local deities.

From early times, there was a tradition among the Mongols connected with the noble relics of Chinggis Khan which were found in the area of the Örgön [Ergüne] river near the Amur river. The tradition stated that these relics included what was unquestionably the banner of his imperial majesty, Chinggis Khan. Later on, Manchu officials claimed it was the banner of a Manchu emperor, and after the establishment of the Bogd
Through the Ocean Waves

Khan nation, it was assumed by high-ranking politicians to be the banner of the Bogd Khan.

Male children who had come of age wore steel strikers and knives on their gowns, which were adorned with cuffs. The girls wore rings and earrings. Everyone, both rich and poor, wore their best clothes on that day. Women from wealthy households wore silver head-dresses studded with coral, pearls, turquoise, and azure stone in addition to earrings and rings. A wife would wear a deel adorned with trimmings of brocade and ribbons over which a rippling formal gown would be worn. It all appeared curiously beautiful.

The ceremony on New Year’s Day began with a greeting for the most senior person in the ger followed by one for the parents. Having heard their loving felicitations, the celebratory milk foods would be eaten with other food and drink. The most senior person from nearby or neighboring households, or from among close relatives would be greeted. In one of these greetings, the younger person would ask “Are you well? How is your health? Are your livestock healthy?” A silk khadag would be placed over his hands, palms facing upwards. The open end of the folded khadag would be facing the senior person during the greeting, and the older person would accept the khadag and express his good wishes. He would say “A colt has shoulders, a calf has muscles, have you entered the New Year well?” Then they would feast and eat meat and fat. Bansh (boiled meat dumplings) and buuz (steamed meat dumplings) would be made for the most honored guest.

When visiting other households, the adults would give presents and, in return, would receive presents when leaving. The children were also given gifts of food. This continued for several days or throughout the month, with people visiting one another, playing dominoes, dice games, shagai, cards, and other games. The meat and food which was placed in front of the Buddha at New Year was removed after three days and distributed among neighboring households and relatives. Everyone followed this popular custom, but occasionally someone was greedy or crooked, and this character would be accused and scolded by many people.

One New Year, a badarchin (mendicant monk)\(^\text{13}\) arrived in our area and wandered around the households begging for alms. He had finished his training at the dom (nowadays a graduate school) and while trying to pass the required examinations in religious debate, was trying to collect his expenses from the many worshippers. In accordance with his wishes, khadag, cotton scarves, squares of silk, halves of brick tea, sheep, and occasionally a few grams of silver were gathered in considerable quantities.

Once, when he had arranged to spend a night with one of the wealthy people of our area, he hoped to receive a pile of gifts. As night approached in that household, the food placed in front of the Buddha had not been put away. When the pilgrim entered, the owner of the ger and his wife stopped talking. Since they wanted to send the newly-arrived lodger on his way they gave him a cup of old, stewed tea and some dried fat. The resourceful pilgrim ate his fill of the family’s milk food, and as was his prerogative, decided to accept some further offerings. The lama then knelt in front of the Buddha and after mumbling some scriptures said in a loud voice several times “Well, let’s do it properly,” to the ger owner’s great astonishment. Noting his surprise, the lama replied, “This

\(^{13}\) Badar is a begging bowl.
year at New Year the Buddha will proceed through some lucky households, and he may even come to yours in the form of a portrait of the Buddha. Before I proceed onwards, if you gather the food and divide it among many people, luck will favor you.”

The owners of the ger believed what the lama had said. Taking the meat from in front of the Buddha, they heated it up and ate their fill together with the lama that evening and the next morning. Again thinking that the Buddha would bestow good fortune, the ger owner gave the lodger pilgrim two pieces of silver.

At the end of winter and spring, very heavy snow fell in our area. The snow became so packed down that the livestock could not graze. Snowstorms followed one after another over several months, and for several nights snow continued to fall, which resulted in a dangerous frost. This was known as the “Iron Frost Year.” Some of the very able households drove their livestock away to far-off pastures, saving half their animals and letting half die. Some resourceful households cleared snow and looked after their livestock, a few of which survived. That year all the households, both rich and poor, lost huge numbers of livestock in the freeze and all of them became impoverished. We nearly lost every one of our small number of livestock and were left with one cow, one mare and five sheep.

At that time, the poor people said that if you encounter good fortune, when you come across a jasaa, you will have enough to eat. If possible, every household maintained the custom of reading the jasaa every year. The oldtimers used to say that in Tibetan jasaa meant “everyone eats together.” The reading of jasaa was intended for the good fortune of the master of the ger and for the asking of his own blessing from Heaven.

There used to be a custom in our area involving the reading of a certain Buddhist jasaa called *Gobi Lkhaa* or *Dalkh*. The jasaa would be read once a year on the day appointed by the lamas. Between one and three lamas were invited to read it. The most senior lama sat at the front with a bell and a hand drum. The lama following him clashed a pair of cymbals. Behind him there was a young lama beating a drum. Special readings were devoted to this jasaa and suitable offerings were made to it.

During the reading of the jasaa, offerings were made according to the number of spirits present. In one part of the offering, starting from the right hand side, two cups of water, one cup of barley studded with incense, a candle in a cup and one cup of flour were placed in that order. In addition, in front of the offering to the spirits, and in front of the lama reading the scriptures, there was a cup of alcohol called “sacrificial liquor.”. A summons was made for good fortune, and to give the appearance of a blessing being received, the hands were held open. The “summoning vessel” contained “nine treasures,” milk foods, barley, and all sorts of other items. This vessel would always be preserved by the household. After three days, when the “summoning of prosperity” was over, the meat in the platter was taken out and a special portion was given to the children and young people. This was specially divided among the brothers and sisters as a share of the “summoning.”.

Around the beginning of the revolutionary period, all kinds of news about the Baron and Chinese forces spread among the local people of our area. We heard that of the Chinese who were panicking and fleeing, only one had come through our area but he had been killed. There was talk of perhaps a few dozen of the Baron’s “White” troops, who arrived at the local households and plundered saddled horses and clothing, cattle, and sheep. A group of people in our banner under Radnaa had put up some opposition,
refused to hand over their goods and were seized, beaten, and interrogated. They said Radnaa had fled and was returning. From time to time we heard that the Chinese and the Baron had been crushed and a people’s government had been established, but as we were young we did not understand much about it.

At the beginning of 1923, the first Party cell was established in our area. Its first members were Choisdoo and Baljirjav. At that time, the old administrative head of our district was changed and a member of the people’s government became its leader. It was said that official work had been reformed. Choisdoo, and other ordinary herdsmen, actively took part in the Party and administrative work in our area, and for this they were subjected to a considerable amount of insult and mockery. When thinking about it later, I saw that this was all the work of rich people and lamas. At the same time, Choisdoo worked on everyone’s behalf in the sum cooperative and as leader of the Party cell.

In 1928 I myself became one of Choisdoo’s students and learned Mongolian writing from him. I lived next door to him in the center of the sum. The ordinary people, the so-called members of the People’s party wearing their Khalmag hairstyles and tsan hats and most of the young children, understood little about what was being said about the victory of the People’s Revolution. It was sometimes heard that certain officious people had put themselves forward to lead the Mongolian nation, but children did not often understand what this meant.

Sometimes it was said that because the government was bad, and the fate of the masses was wretched, the Bogd had gone blind and his health had worsened. Prayers were read and people prayed to the Buddha. Finally, people realized that these were all rumours spread to counter the revolution and to take in the ordinary masses without them knowing why. However, from 1923 onwards, there began a great and interesting discussion about the People’s party and occasionally the ordinary people talked about Sükhbaatar and the revolutionaries. Later on the singing of a new song called “Shivee Khiagt” became popular among young people.

We went down to the end of the large ravine called Khongor which was used during the migrations of the wealthy family Davaajav mentioned earlier. After reaching the north bank of the Ider river, we went upstream to the mouth of a ravine called Khujirt which pointed north. We decided to move camp to a hilly place with hollows on the north bank of the Ider, where many khargana and sage brush plants grew. I used to go there to work for this Davaajav household. The river Ider was both long and fast, with clear water which in summer was always full of birds and fish. The great valleys and mountains on the south side of the river had forests, with high and low peaks, tiny ravines, rivers and streams, and many beautiful rocks.

In summer, many households made camp in the valleys to the north and south of the river, and I have pleasant memories of the people coming and going. One spring, while I was watching over some 200 lambs which belonged to this man Davaajav, I saw several lambs running away from the edge of the herd. I caught sight of several yellowish dogs going down towards the lambs. I recognized them as wolves, and I tried to shout but my throat tightened and I could not make a sound. Then, when I tried to run while holding a whip, my legs would not move. During that time these four wolves did not heed me at all. They chased a group of lambs, caught about ten of them and then ran off. So, when it was time to return the lambs to their mothers I drove the survivors back home.

When I told the Davaajav family about what had happened, Davaajav and a horseherder accompanied me to skin the lambs which had been taken by the wolves.
Since the wolves had seized the lambs, thrown most of them over their necks and run off, we returned with only two or three lamb skins. On my return Davaajav’s wife Khand did not scold me at all but asked how the strange wolves had appeared and how they had attacked the lambs. Then she tried to comfort me. When Davaajav’s elder sister, a nun, brought me into the ger, her companion, an old man called Danzan, was sitting silently reading through old Mongolian sutras. In accordance with an old custom, the nun had me sit down kneeling by the south-west side of the hearth. She put some milk in a bowl which she let me taste and then took an ember from the hearth.

After encircling my body three times carrying the ember, she returned it to the fire. This would drive out any harm and gave hope of preventing another similar loss. Neither the old man nor the woman blamed me for what had happened. After arriving in the new area I decided to befriend and play with Choisüren, the son of Tsogbadrakh, who had a large poor family like ours, and with Tümbii-Oidov, the son of a poor woman, and with my friends Dar’sereeter and Tegsh, who were from middle-ranking households. These two never changed, regardless of the hardship they experienced. They helped me look after the family’s livestock.

In winter, it snowed heavily in our area and as it was cold, every household stayed in its winter camp in a ravine. During the few months before the start of spring, all the households became well acquainted with, and wanted to be on good terms with each other. One summer, when we were all living together like this at the top of a wide valley called Khongor, we discussed something interesting which had happened at the previous winter camp.

A marmot had run from beside the family’s hearth and crossed the snow to enter a tree stump. The household from which the marmot had appeared had an exorcism performed and offered its only animals to a lama, thereby impoverishing itself. During that spring there was an outbreak of influenza. The subsequent death of a large number of people was blamed on that marmot which had appeared in the ger of that family. Ovoo were built all along the ravine and sacrifices were made. Scriptures were read at Nükh Khüree and in order to save themselves from the danger posed by the bad omen of that marmot, the “pitch fork pressing” was performed. This “pitch fork pressing” could not be done by unqualified lamas. A dough figure called a linga was made which had manacles on its arms and legs. A vampire bat was summoned and appropriated. A hole was dug into which it was placed and it was pressed down with a large stone.

In the autumn of that year, my father took me to Nükh Khüree monastery where I was to be made a lama. I was taken to a relative of my mother, a lama called Badgar. There I took my vows and became a novice lama. When taking my vows I was dressed in a deel with a slanting collar. Having bowed three times to the lama, I received a blessing. While I was holding a silk scarf, after the lama had read something, he blessed me on the head with the scriptures, and gave me a tiny wooden cup to keep inside my deel. A thin red cotton cloak called an orkhimj was wrapped over and around my shoulders, and I was told to be a good lama. My given name was changed and an avowed name was given to me which I have now forgotten.

In the winter my father took me to another lama at Nükh Khüree. Nükh Khüree was on the north bank of a tiny stream called Nükh Gol on the lower slopes of a mountain called Serten. There were about 300 lamas living there in an incredibly disorderly array of narrow dead-end passageways and enclosures. At the time it seemed to be a huge, unending place. This enclosure contained several Tsogchin, Choimprel, and
Khangal-like temples. Their topsy-turvy foundations can be seen to this day in the center of Shine Ider sum of Khövsgöl aimag. The temple was originally built over 150 years previously, out of offerings made by the ordinary people.

The enclosure where our lama teacher lived was at the end of a twisting lane. The large and small gates of the enclosure were painted red. In the northern part of the enclosure there was a summer house with paper windows and a mud roof, one large white ger, and a pile of dried animal dung for fuel.

“Lame” Badgar was a tall, thin gelen lama who liked to do everything in an arrogant manner.

Right in the middle of the enclosure was a Tsogchin temple, the Choimprel temple, and several smaller temples. The Tsogchin temple held services every morning, the Choimprel and Khangal held religious meetings once a year. In winter the temple held ritual exorcisms, and at the end of July the Maidar (Maitreya) ceremony was held. From [lunar] New Year’s Eve until the morning of New Year’s Day, the lamas read scriptures called “Arvan Khangal.” The slow reading of those scriptures accompanied by the sound of bells, hand drums, drums and cymbals, and the daily morning prostrations and greetings during the interval produced a majestic ceremony.

Later on, when I thought about this previously incomprehensible event, I realized that it was actually a ceremonial sacrifice to the Chotgör Lkham. I recall every part of the Arvan Khangal that was read aloud. The best and most exquisite foods and delicacies, which were placed in front of the Buddha, were feasted upon. Having asked for forgiveness and compassion, the pilgrims were seen on their way with polite felicitations.

On ordinary days, services were held in these same temple buildings to save the lives of those who were sick, to cleanse people stricken by suffering and hardship and in order to ensure that the deceased would be delivered into the next life without hindrance. During these services, the relatives of the sick people who had come to give offerings knelt down and prayed for the lives of the sick. This was a sorrowful, pitiful sight.

There was a layman, aged over forty, who was wearing a blue silk deel with brown cuffs. He had long hair, and carried a silver striker and knife. His wife wore a deel made with silk brocade, an over-deel, a glued hairpiece decorated with pearls and turquoise and a silver crown made by one of the blacksmiths of the Dalai Van Khoshuu. It was astonishing to see them stretch themselves out and pray several hundred times over.

The following day I saw a layman in blue cotton clothes and a pigtail along with his wife (a nun) and several children, all of whom were stretched out praying and wailing. During an exorcism, a so-called lüd, which was a tiny dough figure shaped like a human being was taken out and thrown in a direction specified by a lama. That lüd would serve as ransom for the person who had fallen ill. Actually it was this which led to the humorous popular saying “Dough can cheat sinful eyes.”

It was said that an exorcism was able to reverse anyone’s illness, worries, or any calamity. The lamas said that there were services to prolong life and bring good luck, and long-lasting fortune.

Once, I saw Dambii, the chief lama of the datsan temple, sitting on the front seat of the platform at the Tsogchin temple. He was elderly and wore a black moustache. He was dressed in a yellow silk gown with a “khiag” style black velvet collar with silk brocade.

The main administrator of the monastery was called the tsogchin gesgui. This position in the tsogchin temple was held year after year by a lama from our area called
Sharav. He was a thin man with a black moustache, of average stature and was very intelligent, but had a harsh character. At special meetings he wore a yellow silk gown and a shoovon hat, while during services he wore a hook-shaped hat called a shashir which was curved forwards with an evenly cropped crest, and a cape made of yellow flannel with many ribbons called a janch. In one hand he carried a beree, a large stick adorned with many silk khadag, and in the other hand he held an incense burner on a long rope, filled with smoking juniper. During the meeting he would walk quickly between the benches, or sit in silence. However he also had the right to beat into submission those people who, talking amongst themselves, lacked discipline.

The lovon maaramba and gelen ranks of lamas seemed to be of large build and had ruddy, tanned complexions. Other lamas had prominent ears and long chins, but on the whole they tended to be tall and thin and were dressed in red and yellow silk deel.

Compared with life in the countryside, the rules of the monastery were harsh. Isolated from our parents, from the first day we began to experience the harshness of our lama-teachers. As evening fell, when I went out of the ger to look in the direction of my home, all I could see was the glittering of the stars. No matter how poor we had been, I thought how nice it used to be to sit around the fire with my parents, brother and sisters.

After arriving at the monastery to begin my life with the lamas, my main duties after getting up in the morning were making the fire in the lama’s ger, preparing food and drink for the lama-teacher, and gathering refuse from the enclosures and passageways into baskets to be carried away from the temples and disposed of. I also fetched water or, in winter, ice, from the river, cut firewood, and did other jobs.

While doing this tiring work on my own, within a few months I had memorized the Tibetan alphabet and a few short Tibetan books such as the megzem and shimen beliefs, the praises of the Tsagaan Dar-Ekh, and other minor Tibetan works. In spite of not knowing what they meant, I could recite them without hesitation.

Sometimes I would become tired of working and I would play with novices of my own age. If I had not memorized my books sufficiently well I would be beaten by my teacher. He used a thick book bound with wooden boards to hit me on the head. He would also stab my scalp with a bamboo pen, and would punish me by singe ing me with burning incense.

Javzanjav, with whom I had grown up, had long since entered this monastery and had now become quite a well-educated novice. When I went to look for him and found him I was most happy. However, as well as becoming somewhat aloof because he had not seen me for so long, he now considered himself to be an educated lama and no longer thought me important.

One day, when the Choimprel service was in progress, the junior novices such as myself were carrying pots of tea from the kitchen into the temple hall. The pots were too big for us to manage. The temple manager, a gesgui, ordered two of us to help ladle tea for the lamas who were seated throughout the service. There were some ferocious lamas called giig who always carried a stick called a beree to hit people with. I was to start pouring tea from the tea pots into the bowls of the lamas beginning from right in the middle of the row of seats and heading down the row. From the middle upwards, where the more senior lamas were sitting, a different, more experienced person would pour the tea. Once, when I had difficulty lifting a tea pot, after I had served two or three lamas, a lama dropped his bowl of tea, which attracted the attention of all the lamas at the service. As soon as the commotion had begun, one of the giig, a fat grey-haired lama, came
straight up to me and without stopping to think beat me with his wooden stick and dragged me out of the temple by the ear.

Outside the temple I cried, and thinking about my home, I wandered the streets of the monastery for quite a while. As evening fell, when I went to my teacher's place, he was extremely angry, as no food or tea had been prepared. After hearing about what had happened in the temple hall he scolded me unreasonably. Because I was not allowed to say anything in front of the teacher, I brewed some tea and made the meal in silence. At that point my angry teacher slapped my face and kicked me from behind. After I had given him some food and drink, the lama walked around his ger reading his scriptures, then entered, prostrated himself in front of the Buddha and went to sleep.

I lay in bed and reflected on the day's events. Although I was crying quietly, my teacher heard me and scolded me saying "Why do you keep crying, you evil dog?" I fell silent and slept. On rising in the morning, I made his tea for him. When I was examined on my scriptures, since I had not memorized them at all, this teacher was again going to beat me and so I fled westwards from the monastery and decided to walk the two örtöö lengths [60 km.] back to my home.

I continued walking all day and when I had reached the half-way point, I went to spend the night at the ger of the elder brother of that lama-teacher. The family never doubted for a moment that I had escaped, but interestingly, they allowed me to stay for a few days to look after the calves. While doing this, I got to know their children.

Before long, my father learned about my escape and arrived at this household from which he decided to take me back to the monastery. Although I cried and begged him not to send me back to the monastery he would not agree. I returned to the lama-teacher's ger with my father but after a while I fled back again. Word was sent from my lama-teacher to my parents asking for me to be sent back promptly as it was difficult for him with no-one to do the housework and other chores. When I cried and begged not to be sent back to the lama, my mother told me in secret "When you fled and came here, your teacher found it very difficult with no one to do the work. Your teacher will not beat you now."

Thereafter, whenever I was with the lama, very little was said, and generally for that reason, life became easier. When I went to collect water and ice from the river half a kilometer from the monastery, on occasion I was able to meet with the school children from the school building in the newly-built enclosure next to the Chinese shop on the other side of the river.

Every pupil at this school wore an identical blue cotton gown, leather boots, and a rimmed hat. Several of them lived together in a ger with blankets on the beds. They also ate nice meals together. They were taught Mongolian script, and spoke with interest about the People's Party, trade unions, and the Young Pioneer's movement. They paraded and sang songs about the new era, which stirred my feelings and made me want to leave the monastery as soon as possible. I had a growing desire to head towards that school. However, I thought it would be too difficult to achieve this aim.

The monastery ceremonies carried on as before. One winter, I followed the other novices and lamas to observe an exorcism being performed. The sor ceremony was held two days before [lunar] New Year on the twenty-ninth day of the last winter month. The exorcisms would be directed towards bad omens as foretold by the throwing of dice. There was another ceremony similar to the sor requiring use of a ceremonial object called a dogjir which was made by some households and burned out on the steppe.
The sor was made from a large amount of flour mixed with butter and water and formed into a triangular shape one ald (six feet) or more in height. The free edges were decorated with paper spirals and painted with a continuous design in several colors using oil-based paints. The sor was carried by several people, followed by people carrying cymbals, drums, trumpets, and wood-wind instruments. Then came some lamas reading scriptures, followed by the most senior lamas of the tsorj rank who also took their turn in the exorcism. After the exorcists had done a special dance and made a procession, the sor was thrown onto a triangular pyramid of firewood and ignited with burning oil.

The Maidar (Maitreya) ceremony came around in the summer. When our monastery performed the Maidar, the other monasteries did not perform the tsam. The maidar Buddha was conveyed on a four-wheeled cart in a parade around the monastery, some lamas pulling it from in front and others pushing from behind. There was a legend that a green horse was harnessed in front of the cart conveying the Maidar who would thereby come down from the sky. The Maidar was thought to be the Buddha of prosperous times.

It was said that before the arrival of Buddha there were three gods in our universe, the Buddha becoming the fourth. Following him thereafter came the lovon Badamjunai, Zunkhav, and a thousand other Buddhas, one of whom would be the Maidar. The lamas said that if the Maidar was conveyed around a monastery on a cart whose wheels they were turning, his arrival on earth would be accelerated. Following the Maidar around the monastery was a procession of lamas, including the agaramba, gabj, gevsh, gelen, getsel and those of other ranks. The lamas carried bells, many cymbals, all kinds of drums, conch shells, trumpets, and wind instruments on both sides of the Maidar. The cart carrying the Maidar would stop four times, once at each side of the monastery. Scriptures would be read and food and tea called tsav and manz provided for the lamas. Having made a tour of the monastery in this way, the Maidar was returned to its temple.

The following spring I fled the monastery once and for all and arrived back home. I then met my companions Choisuren and Tümbii-Oidov. After playing on the banks of a beautiful clear river in a ravine where there was much forest and scree, I killed a zuram [gopher] by pouring water into its hole. My lama teacher who had arrived to spend a summer vacation at the ger next door to ours saw me do it and, calling me over, said “Hand over your sash and begging bowl. You have committed a sin by killing that gopher and you have broken your vows. Don’t let me see you again near the purity of a temple.” I was freed from all my worry and, as fear vanished, my heart gladdened.

When my father found out about what had happened and that I had broken my vows, he scolded me a little and said “You will have to wander about looking after the livestock of the household. Although we thought that having three or four moles on your shoulder meant that a lama’s sash was the right thing for you to wear, that is obviously not the case, and it is right that you should carry a gun and become a hunter.” Afterwards, I felt relieved when I was completely released from my duty to become a lama at the monastery.

From that time onwards, I spent every day looking after the sheep and cattle of the wealthy man Lkhagvaa and his younger brother Badrakh. After doing so I returned home for a short visit. The family next door to us had built a new ger and I may mention some of the felicitations which my brother Damchaabadgar recited on that occasion.
Established in this humble place
Is a ger of pure white.
A pine, finely splintered
Made like a lotus flower blossoming in eight directions
Let us anoint these long poles
Bending the willow tree
Made of a hundred short ger-pole thongs.
Made to surround the outside of the fortunate monastery
Let us anoint the big jade walls.
Trim the wide boards
Saw off the tall boards
Raise the short sticks
Able to braid ten thousand people together
Let us anoint the big jade door.

Damchaabadgar could write well and was a good reciter of felicitations and
teller of stories. On alternate days I used to either look after the sheep or the cattle of the
rich family called Badrakh at the winter camp. Altogether the two households owned
around 1600 sheep and 100 head of cattle.

When tending the cattle and sheep, despite having felt socks, Mongol boots,
sheepskin deel and warm hats, we still sometimes felt very cold in winter and we had to
run about a little in order to get warm. Eventually, the soles of our boots developed holes,
and although we spread scraps of leather and felt inside them, the snow still came
through the gaps and our feet became cold. We were frozen from looking after the
animals and arrived back late. The owners corralled the livestock and gave us hot milky
tea to drink. We then chopped firewood and gathered wet cow dung and frozen dung
which we piled up to make argal.

After bringing in some snow from alongside the winter camp for drinking water
and doing other chores, we ate our evening meal. For our meal we had one sheep’s
shank, a slice of sheep’s tail and a bowl of broth with blood sausage. For breakfast we ate
a piece of butter, two tiny pieces of dried cheese, and some curds. We then set off to
drive a herd of sheep or cattle out to pasture from the enclosure.

Our payment for a month’s work was one young lamb or a brick of tea. At that
time, half a sheep would have been a good wage.

While working at Badrakh’s we encountered a worrying problem. If any of the
sheep or cattle which we were herding strayed even slightly onto a neighboring house-
hold’s territory, you might be scolded and beaten by the owner of that land. There was a
clear boundary between every winter camp in our area. Stones were placed following a
line of hills or rocky spurs to delineate the borders of a locality. If any livestock crossed
those boundaries, the animals would be captured and confiscated and the person in
charge of the animal or its owner would be seized and beaten.

Badrakh carefully continued to pasture his livestock on other people’s land.
When we returned in the evening after pasturing the cattle, he would come out to meet us
and put the cattle quietly onto other people’s land to get them to eat plenty of grass. One
day, while tending Badrakh’s sheep in a beautiful area owned by Namsrai, I was blamed
for losing [control of] a hundred sheep which I could not handle.

The winter was barely over when several of us, including my elder brother
Damchaabadgar, my sister Baljinnyam, and my friends Choisüren and Tümbii-Oidov

Through the Ocean Waves
decided to join together the next spring and look after the livestock of the rich man named Davaajav. Afterwards, when I returned home in the autumn, a Chinese man called Khar Maikhant ("Black Tented") who lived in our area had a discussion with my father and agreed to hire me to do some work at his home.

There were two Chinese, Khar Maikhant and Tsagaan, who were idle traders at the Chinese stores at the Tariat and Nükh monasteries. When the households were preparing food [slaughtering livestock] and during the lambing season they bought animal skins and leather. At sheep-shearing time they bought wool. They mowed hay for and obtained furs from the majority of households in our area. Khar Maikhant had built two gers. One contained his possessions. He himself lived in the other one. In the morning at Khar Maikhant's, after I had got up to start the fire, I helped to make tea and a meal, I cleaned the ger, fetched drinking water, did errands, watched over the storage ger at night, and did other jobs for over a year.

Eventually Khan Maikhant decided to keep a ferocious dog. He kept it tied up during the day time and let it loose at night. The reason for this was furtively explained by the local people. This was the one place in the banner where there was a ger full of goods, while the owner stayed in another, different ger. Thieves had therefore tried to rob these goods from the Chinese.

On a snowy night one spring, these thieves quietly approached on yaks, dismounted and took two sacks of flour, several bricks of tea, silk for clothing, cotton cloth, and some pipe tobacco, and went away undetected. The next morning, the Chinese trader went with some local Mongols to follow the tracks in the snow, but could not find them as the thieves had placed Mongol boots over the yaks' hooves. Furthermore, they led the yaks through the snow to a resting place for the livestock, the sun came out and melted the snow, thus destroying the tracks.

Khar Maikhant was particularly afraid of the sound of dogs barking. Sometimes he would stick his rifle through the smoke-hole of the ger and shoot into the air. On occasion, a large number of Chinese would arrive at the household from other places to count the goods and make inventories of the stock. After those Chinese had headed back towards their banners and monasteries, I had nothing to do for a while.

Around that time, a wedding party was being held for the marriage of Lkhasurenjav, the son of a nun and one of the richest people in our area. My father went to sing at this wedding and my brother recited the felicitations. I went along with them to watch the celebration. Lkhasurenjav's ger was brand-new. A khadag and talisman could be seen suspended from the ceiling. There were four or five new chests painted in red with spiral patterns, bookshelves with many compartments at the head and foot of the bed, a container for food and drink called an eregneg, a blue quilted cotton mattress and a wooden bed with a spotted front, all of which made it a very beautiful ger.

When the celebration began, many people from both the groom's and bride's sides gathered together. While the groom was standing with a large number of people from his father's side, the bride arrived with several people on horseback. They tied up her horse and people greeted her. A piece of white felt along which the bride would walk was spread between the tie-post and the ger of the groom's father. A libation of milk was made, the door of the father's ger was opened and she was brought into the ger.

The wedding ceremony began at the encampment's south-western ger, owned by Lkhasurenjav's father. The lamas who were invited sat at the back of the ger on both the west and east sides. The parents of the bride and groom and other people were seated
according to their age and status. The assembled guests feasted on meat, butter, and li­
quor.

I give below a shortened version of my elder brother Damchaabadgar’s felicita­
tion at this wedding.


... Made from a hundred thousand fortunes,
The Buddhist religion blossoms
Made from ten thousand good omens
The laws of nature established
This universally fine day, it is said
The khadag of the holy altar of honorable Lkhasürenjav,
The wine for glamor
The beautiful bright lamp
The beautifully-scented lamp
The snow-white milk
The lotus as white as a swan
The fast white horse
The whole cooked bald white sheep
The flat white cheeses
The nine libations are all made of wine
All have come to overflow
When returning, be like a spring [of water]!
When passing through, be like an ocean!....

Then, everyone said in unison:

"Let that felicitation last forever!"

When the wedding feast was over, the bride and groom were taken to the new
ger built for them on the southeastern side of the encampment. A group of people from
both the bride’s and groom’s sides followed them into the new ger and performed an­
other ceremony. I recall that the ceremony began by lining up some wood chips in the
heart of the ger. Butter was poured on them and lit, so starting the celebration. That even­
ing some of the people went home while others stayed until early the next day.

Our household moved to a place called Khongor and after a few days I decided
to look after the livestock belonging to Batchuluun, the son of a lama called Mergen. They had a son and a daughter, both of whom were spoilt children. Since their father
knew my parents, they treated me quite well.

The lama Mergen, Batchuluun’s father, had recently died and his son dried the
corpse and interred it in a wooden shrine at the top of a mountain. This structure was
known by the local people as the shrine of Lama Mergen. I saw that shrine from a long
distance but never went near it. People who had seen it said that it was solidly built from
good logs. Inside it there was displayed a portrait of Buddha, along with an arrangement
of cups, khadag, tea and silver. The corpse was decorated with silver string, and relatives
and disciples went on a specific day every year to offer khadag. Children used to say that
on looking through the gaps in the shrine, they saw that the corpse of the lama appeared
dried up, just like borts [dried meat]. According to Indian and Tibetan custom, the inter­
nal organs would be removed from the corpse of a high-ranking lama. Juniper, worm­
wood, incense, and other grasses were inserted in their place. The body would be salted
and dried and oil paints applied to its face.

When people were asked what kind of person this lama was, as far as religious status was concerned, he was not particularly special, but he was proficient in magic, and he used his powers of divination and magic on his guests.

Afterwards my family set up camp with a family called Lodon. I tended their sheep and livestock. Lodon lived in his ger with his mother, who was a nun, his wife Dolgor, and their two baby children. They had few livestock but were people of good character. The most complicated work of the ger was done by his mother and his wife. Lodon, the master of the household, read scriptures, burned incense, and used to prostrate himself.

When I was there he found a new skill and became a zodoch. He carried a square tent with the duvchin insignia of a learned professional zodoch together with some pots and utensils, and wandered on foot for many days. He cast stones with a leather sling and he would pitch his tent where the stones fell. The doctrine of the zodoch was secret and was not to be discussed with anyone. He would go to the sources of the springs of the dragons, the lone tree, the winter camp with vampires, the encampments and places where the recently deceased were placed, and would read scriptures in the evening twilight and perform rituals without fear. In the process of becoming a zodoch, large hand-drums were used as well as the thigh bone of a woman of at least eighteen years of age which had been stripped of flesh and fashioned into a trumpet called a gan-dan.

Before the reading of his scriptures, a black tassel called a donroo was hung over his face. The lama read these scriptures, beating his hand drum, and blowing the gandan trumpet. I myself was a witness to this noise and commotion. One evening, when he was alone in his ger, he decided to perform a lüijin ceremony. He began by having his mother cover the smoke hole of the ger and shut the door. Then he unwrapped something from a parcel, covered his face with a black tassel and brought out his large hand drum. He extinguished his lamp and sat in silence. Afterwards, he read the scriptures in a loud, melodious voice and blew his trumpet, which made an unpleasant noise. This trumpet, which was made from a human thigh bone, made a terrible noise, one as if made by the dead and which brought about a sickening feeling in those who heard it. Whenever he blew his gandan trumpet, dogs began to bark. In the same manner, he pounded his drum hard and shouted and continued his reading. After having performed a little of the duvchin ritual in this manner he finished his reading, lit his candle and uncovered the smoke hole of his ger. During the morning after the reading, the lama had a secret discussion with his mother.

“When did the others come?” (she was likely here to be referring to the vampires and demons) his mother was heard to ask. Lodon replied, “After the gandan had been sounded.” His Mother went on, “When was it released?” Lodon replied, “After a sharp cry it went over a pass at a jutting rock northwest of here.”

Some lamas ignored the customs of the people and used all kinds of contrived methods to lead them astray and instill useless things in their minds. There was one reincarnation who was renowned in the district for openly slashing his tongue with a sword and driving a sword right through his chest to emerge from his back. This used to be quite a spectacle.

Once, this particular reincarnation, having assembled a large number of people together in a river valley, came down and pranced about a little. Then, when he began to
bleed through his mouth and nose, some members of the Revolutionary Youth league turned to the assembled gathering of people and said: “Well comrades, watch. We will reveal these swindlers for the cheats that they are.” On removing the clothing of the lama he was seen to be wearing a wide, flat, belt-like metal object around his chest suspended from his shoulders. Another metal bar was nailed above that metal sheet, which was covered in silk. When the lama seemed to drive the flexible metal sword towards his heart, it was made to go around his body and appeared to emerge from a hole in his back. Some thin, red vermilion paint was applied to that hole and when the sword went through blood seemed to appear. As the original sword was thin and blunt, the lama could place some vermilion between his teeth and draw the sword gently over his tongue to make it look as if it was bleeding.

Around this time, the lamas and nobility showed a great dislike for the members of the Party and Youth League. Our teacher began to slander Choisdoo (the chairman of the sum cooperative) in all kinds of ways. Apparently, Choisdoo had wanted to put a stop to the Buddhist sacrificial ceremonies, and to arrest and imprison lamas. It was claimed he was untrustworthy and should be eliminated. They spread rumours that he was a troublemaker. After returning from meetings in Ulaanbaatar he also attended regular local Party meetings and carried out propaganda work among the ordinary masses.

He was the sort of person who gained the respect of poor and middle-ranking people with respect. One day, when giving a talk, he spoke of the trickery of the lamas and to mock them he cited an example of this.

The doctrine in the monasteries was aimed at impoverishing ordinary people like us, and all kinds of tricks were used to keep us in ignorance of it. For example, there was a lama who was invited to a household to carry out a religious rite. Having prepared an effigy out of dough he placed a tiny piece of ice where its eyes should have been and placed it near the fire grate. He clanged some cymbals loudly and shouted something. As soon as the ice in the eyes of the dough effigy began to melt, he stopped reading in Tibetan and said in Mongolian ‘Eh, you are crying too. Whether you cry or not I will send you off.’ Then he beat his drum and clashed his cymbals together loudly.”

At this point the people at the meeting roared with laughter. Several lamas who were standing at the back of the meeting quickly ran off. Around that time, a considerable number of poor lamas and novices could be seen abandoning the monastery.

In 1927 my eldest brother Damchaabadgar left us to join the army and we all had more work to do at home. I accompanied a man called Bürgée to collect firewood from the forest, which I helped to deliver by ox cart to the temples and to the Chinese. That man Bürgée had ten wooden carts drawn by yak-cow hybrid oxen. I spent nearly two months with him, living in a hut in the forest. My job was to saw the trees he had felled, cut the firewood and look after the oxen. We would spend two days cutting firewood and on the third night we loaded the wood, hitched the carts and journeyed overnight one örtöö length in distance to deliver the firewood to the Chinese and lamas. In return for this work I received the meat of one sheep every month and had an opportunity to travel on long journeys for the first time.

There was a wealthy man in our area who, together with a young man called Lkhündev, used to transport hides and leather to Chinese shops at Mörnö monastery using more than twenty camels. On the return journey they brought back flour and grain. I spent over twenty days working with them. Quite warmly turned out in socks, boots and
a sheepskin deel, I led the camel caravan on foot, looked after the camels at the camp, and prior to the departure of the caravan, I made the camels lie down next to the cargo. I also prepared meals and drinks for the two caravan owners and sometimes helped to carry the flour.

I felt very proud to lead a camel caravan for the first time on a journey distant from our area. I never felt the least bit tired and found it all very interesting. We arrived in Möörön, where there was a large monastery on the north bank of the river. Alongside the monastery were Chinese and Russian shops. The gers of the ordinary people surrounded the settlement. In Möörön I was amazed when I saw a moving truck for the first time. The smell of gasoline was apparent from a long way off and it seemed to make a loud, bustling noise. From there we went to Khatgal where it was interesting to see Lake Khövsgöl for the first time with its surface of solid ice over which horse-drawn sledges, carts, and camel caravans could travel carrying Buriats, Russians, Chinese and many other people. At the time, Möörön and Khatgal seemed to me to be unbelievably large towns which almost made my head spin.

When I returned from this journey, I was given the equivalent of two sheep in wages and as I wished to give my parents and my brothers and sisters a gift, I presented them with a brick of tea, three catties of brown flour, and one box of sugar cubes. Late one evening when I returned to our ger, the people in our encampment were greeting Nomkhon and Lkhündev, and everyone was gathered in their ger. They talked about the places they had visited and distributed presents to their relatives. I too was very happy and ran to my ger to hand over the gifts before talking about my journey. I continued for several days telling them about the places I had been to.
My First Taste of the Benefits of Re-awakening Prosperity

Following the People's Revolution, primary schools, sum cooperatives, the sum administration, and Party and Youth League cells were established for the first time. One day, when my teacher Choisdoo was working as leader of the cooperative in the sum center, he turned to me and said: “Come and live next door to me, and while you are working as a fire-stoker for the cooperative, I could teach you the Mongolian script.”

He spent a few months at the center during the winter and spring during which I became his fire-stoker and cook and continued to learn the Mongolian script, which I had been taught previously by my father and eldest brother. In addition to being taught to read, I was paid wages for two or three months work: a sack of flour and two bricks of tea which I brought home for my family.

While I was with my teacher Choisdoo, I was recruited into the Young Pioneers organization which was located next to the primary school in the sum center. Wearing a red necktie, I went back home to my ger. My parents were quite happy at what I had brought but they disliked the tie I was wearing and muttered many things about it. In fact, there was a good reason behind this. The lamas and wealthy people looked askance at people who had been recruited into the Party, the Youth League, and the Pioneer movement, and aside from using them as workers, disliked them. The rich households mocked me for joining the pioneers, saying: “What will become of this little runt? Will he cry? Times are getting hard now.”

When word of this reached my parents’ ears, my father urged me to leave the Pioneers. I explained my reasons for joining and said: “I will be recruited into the Youth League as well as the Pioneers!” A local chuü lovon lama turned to my parents and said “Send the child to me.” Accordingly, on my arrival at the lovon lama’s, he burned some incense and said “You have been recruited by that so-called Pioneer organization and have taken to wrapping a blood-red thing around your neck. You have been possessed by demons and you must leave it.” Then he blessed my head and read something aloud. I left in silence and never went to see that lama again.

Around that time, a rich man named Lkhagva fell out with his servants who left him and went home. One day he turned to me and said “Come to our place and help us.” I went to his household and spent every day tending a thousand sheep. Later on I was to look after about 600 horses at night. The family members of that rich man Lkhagva were all aggressive individuals. They treated their servants in a bad-tempered manner.

One day while I was tending the sheep I fell asleep on the grass as I had not slept the previous night while watching over the horses. During this time, two sheep were eaten by a wolf, which resulted in the honorable Lkhagva scolding me in a menacing fashion: “Bad, begging dog, go to that Pioneer place where you can sit and sing your songs. Clear off!” I told him: “It is difficult to herd livestock both day and night, and so I
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am going home.” However, as they themselves had lost all their servants, they persuaded me to stay.

Around that time there was a strange, crazy nun nicknamed Joivor who wandered all over the place, riding the tethered horses owned by the households, galloping around at night and shouting. I was a bit wary of her and found her somewhat unpleasant. Sometimes I was most afraid and ran away from her. I was somewhat relieved when the nun left our area.

One night when I was keeping watch over the horses, I dismounted, lay on my coat and keeping a hold on my horse, fell asleep. The horse was startled by something, and when it galloped forwards, it broke loose from my hand and went off. Instinctively, I shouted “Hey, boy!” and holding my pole-lasso in my hand and with my coat draped over my shoulders, I followed the horse, which was again startled and continued to run a considerable distance. I carried on following the horse, and as I approached it I heard an incomprehensible cry in a woman’s voice quite a long way from the horse.

I remembered that mad woman and in fear I quietly walked up to the horse which was calmly grazing. Since my loose horse was now peacefully grazing next to the herd of horses, I took hold of it, mounted up and went around the horse herd a few times until dawn broke. Then, as the sun rose, I approached the encampment of the household where I saw a horse dragging an old felt horse-cloth. It must have been that mad nun, who having stolen a tethered horse from a household, had fallen off it and was shouting.

I continually felt like leaving that area with its harsh atmosphere, the heavy work load and the mad nun whom I feared and disliked. I wanted to find some decent work.

One day, while I was tending the sheep owned by this household, a man appeared in the distance, on a horse, coming towards me. It was my teacher Choisdoo. He came to tell me that an order had arrived at the banner center saying that a group of people was to be sent to the temporary agricultural school at Zayayn Khüree (now the town of Tsetserleg) and after discussion with the sum administration, it was decided to include me among them. He showed me the document underlined in red. It stated “Bazaryn Shirendev of the first district of Chandman’ sum is to be sent to the aimag Central School of Agriculture at Tsetserleg Mandal,” and it was signed by the leader of the sum.

I was extremely happy to hear this, but two things worried me. Firstly, how could I tell the household which was employing me that I was leaving them. Secondly, how could I leave my parents, and brothers and sisters whose lives would become more difficult. I told all this to my teacher Choisdoo. He replied, “You care about this household but this household does not care about you. I will go ahead of you and show them this document, and on behalf of the sum administration I will demand that you be sent there. Carry on driving the sheep towards the household. If you are concerned about the livelihood of your family, in two months’ time your elder brother will finally be discharged from the army and will be back. There is no need to worry.”

(My brother Damchaabadgar was recruited into the Youth League in 1933. He had already learned the Mongolian script on his own, and since he was used to reading newspapers and journals, in 1926 he was drafted into the People’s Revolutionary Army and studied at the Ulaanbaatar School for Junior Officers. Following a decision by the Central Committee of the Youth League he worked for six months in Dashbalbar sum of Dornod aimag, appropriating the capital of the feudal nobility. He returned to the school and came back home in 1929. In 1929 he was involved in appropriating the capital and
property of the lay feudalists. From 1930 on he was gathering property owned by the clerical feudalists at a time when there was considerable opposition and concealment of livestock and property. However, this work was successfully carried out with the help of poor and middle-ranking people. Half of the collected capital was given to the state and some was turned into aid for the poor. The process of gathering this capital was an important stimulus for the political energy of the ordinary masses.)

My teacher then said: “I will go to see your family tomorrow to introduce the idea to them. Go home tomorrow night.” Accordingly, I drove the sheep back towards the honorable Lkhagva’s ger. Meanwhile, my teacher had arrived there and was drinking tea. He looked at me and said: “Tomorrow all of you will return this child to his home unhindered.” The honorable Lkhagva replied that he would.

Then, after the teacher had departed, Lkhagva and his wife became very pleasant, prepared some delicious food and drink for me, and said sympathetically, “You will find it difficult to leave your parents and baby brothers to go away to a far-off place. Who will look after your parents and brothers and sisters? Think hard about it.” “My eldest brother will soon be returning from the army” I replied. Lkhagva said: “You don’t know if he is returning or not.” I replied “Whatever happens, I am going.” That night they sent their eldest son to watch over the horses and they told me to rest, as I was tired.

When I rose in the morning after a good night’s sleep, the wife of the honorable Lkhagva gave me some cream and khusam [milk-pan residue] and said to me: “Well my son, off you go to the sheep.” “No.” I replied and as I put on my summer deel, I draped my sheepskin gown over my shoulder and started to leave when she said: “Sit down, my son. Anyone going on a long journey should eat some milk foods.” In between giving me the food and drink, she tried hard to persuade me to stay there at their ger. The more she talked, the more I wanted to leave. She gave me a gift of two or three pieces of cheese. Then I walked back home, a distance of half an örtöö in total.

On my return, my mother cried and tried to stop me from going. My father supported me. As I was destined not to become a lama, I should be allowed to go and study. I kept pleading that soon my elder brother would arrive and that from an early age I explained to my mother that it was right to go and see things and learn about them.

Since my mother had begged me to stay for two nights at the ger, I spent the next two days there. My mother re-soled my boots and sewed decorations on my sheepskin deel. I shared the cheese which the honorable Lkhagva had given me with my brothers and sisters. I played for a while and prepared some firewood for my parents.

Then, in accordance with my teacher’s orders, they had someone send me by horse to the center of the sum. When I went out of the ger my father and mother kissed me. They wished me well saying, “Have a good journey, study well, and become a good person.” As soon as I had gone, my mother made a libation of milk behind me and she stood there crying. My father was standing in silence. At that time, I too felt uncomfortable inside, as I was going a long distance away from my parents, brothers, and sisters.

With a facade of determination, I said goodbye and calmly departed from my parents. My journey first took me to the sum center next to Nükht Khüree (monastery), where I spent the night at the ger of my teacher Choisdoo. The next morning I set off for Tariat Khüree, the banner center. When I left that morning, my teacher’s wife and children saw me off hospitably with some food and tea. My teacher gave me fifty möngö saying, “Now that you are on your way, study well. Really, it would be good if you were to study in Ulaanbaatar or in Soviet Russia.”
I kept on riding all day, and after traveling a distance of two örtöö lengths, I left the territory of my sum and stopped for the night. Then, late the next day, I reached Tar-iat Khüree, the banner center.

Tariat Khüree was located on the southern slopes of a tall forested mountain between the three tributaries of the Tariat river where a monastery consisting of three parts had been established. These were the west monastery, the central tsogchin temple, and the east monastery. The three monasteries each had Maidar and Tsam (ceremonies), and medical colleges called Mamba and monastic (Datsan) schools of astrology and of philosophy called tsanid. Later on I described this banner and the monastery in detail in the novel Terkhiin Tsagaan Nuur. There was an ovoo on top of a mountain called Dashdorj to the northwest of the monastery. Every year the lamas of each monastery used to make offerings at it. The tsanid meetings were generally held in this monastery in addition to the tsam of the Maidar which was held every year. There was a large settlement of Chinese traders called Ereen Mod far to the south of Tariat Khüree. The school of the central khoshuu administration was located quite a distance from that place.

I spent the night in the ger of the örtöö, and in the morning I set off for the aimag center. After several days on the road, we crossed the Tsagaan Davaa and arrived at the Tsetserleg Mandal aimag center, the monastery of Zayayn Gegeenii Khüree, or Zayayn Baayuu. This appeared to be a much larger and more beautiful town than Mörön or Tariat Khüree and the natural beauty of the area was especially pleasant. Behind the monastery, facing south on the summit of the peaked Bulgan mountain were several large painted images of buddhas. In the middle of the top row was Zunkhav (Tsongkapa), founder of the Lamaist religion. There was also a painting of a Tibetan lama, and just below that portrait running right to left were portraits of the disciple of Zunkhav Buddha, Jaltsavyn Khaidavji, and others. Below these two were the Tsagaan Dar Ekh [Goddess Tara] on the right hand side, and on the left was an unidentified and unclear figure of a buddha. Quite a way below these buddhas was another figure, said to be the portrait of a Tibetan of former times called Shigmuni.

I heard a strange legend concerning the engraving of these scriptures on the rock. A group of high-ranking lamas led by Lamyn Gegeen and Zayayn Gegeen was being taken on a journey to Baruun Zuu (Lhasa) in Tibet to do some good deeds, to make some offerings and attain the highest scholarly degrees at the choir datsan called Gomon near Lhasa. They exhausted their fund for expenses and as for the livestock they had brought with them, on their journey home they entered an uninhabited desert and lost their animals to bandits, who left them with only one horse between them.

They continued to go without food for several days. Although they had discussed whether they should kill their only horse, they eventually said, “We are gelen la- mas, you know. We will have committed a sin if we kill this horse.” However, the Lamyn Gegeen and the Zayayn Gegeen both said, “If a few of us should die from hunger, that would be a worse sin than killing the horse, which otherwise is unable to do us a good deed.” So they killed the horse, ate its meat, and kept going. They crossed the Mongolian border and obtained provisions and transport. In memory of the good deed performed by that horse, an initiative was begun to erect a large image of the Maidar Buddha in the present-day Züün Khüree (monastery) of Ulaanbaatar. The Zayayn Gegeen who killed and ate the horse also, according to legend, did a good deed at his own monastery by carving images of the Bogd Zunkhav and his disciples on the rock face of Bulgan moun- tain behind the modern town of Tsetserleg.
Normally, there were around 1000 lamas in this monastery, the number rising to 2000 during religious services. The temples and temple halls were Mongolian and Tibetan in appearance, each being four-sided two- or three-storey buildings. The largest temple was the tsogchin temple called Said Vangiin temple or Tsetsen Vangiin temple on the slopes of the Bulgan mountain. Next came the lavrin, gungereg, datsan, and several other temples. The monastery was called Deed Khūree (upper monastery) because there was a ravine running eastwards from it at the mouth of which was the Dood Khūree (lower monastery) where later on a food (animal products) processing plant was established. Both of these monasteries were controlled by a single administration. Genuine “Baayuu monastery” bricks were taken from the southeastern foot of the mountain which stretched away from the monastery.

There were Chinese shops and many business companies there. As there were nearly 300 Russians in this area, there were two Russian canteens, several meat shops, a barber, two or three artists, and one Russian primary school. In addition, during the period of the people's government, Party and Youth league offices, the buildings of the Official Banner Administration on Bulgan mountain, primary and middle schools, hospitals, and Mongolian cooperatives and transport enterprises were established.

People said that the Zayayn Gegeen had been arrested the previous year for counter-revolutionary activities and had been taken to Ulaanbaatar. The Zayayn Gegeen was one of the most important of the several khutagts of Khalkha, and he was known as the “Khutagt of Many Reincarnations.”

According to the religious story, his reincarnation had appeared in India on five occasions, in Tibet on three, and the next reincarnation was the first in Mongolia, with the birth occurring in the ger of one of the noblemen of Sain Noën Khan, or so the legend went. It was said that for the first time a seal was bestowed on that reincarnation by the Dalai Lama and the Vanchin Erdene. During the reign-period of the emperor Enkh Amgalan, the second reincarnation appeared in a son of Sain Noën Khan. The first Khalkha Bogd, Öndör Gegeen, met with him and granted him a title. The eighth reincarnation in Mongolia was said to have been Javzantseren, the last Erdene Zaya Bandid Khutagt.
My Desire for an Education

A small muddy stream flowed through Baayuu, taking its source from a ravine to the northwest of Zayayn Baayuu. Along the north bank of this stream was a recreation hall, a central sanatorium, and the aimag ministry, middle school and other institutions which had separate modern log buildings. In a corner west of this street was a specially built wooden "recreation" building, and behind this there was a fenced-in enclosure of average size in which around twenty gers had been set up in rows.

Our school had been established with about 140 pupils drawn from poor and middle-ranking households. The aim of this school was to train new personnel for the cooperatives. Three or four of the gers were for girls and the rest were for boys. In accordance with contemporary requirements, the school was a semi-military establishment. The 140 pupils were grouped into three divisions and each division was divided into companies. The leader of each ger was in charge of ten people, four or five gers would make up a division and a company student leader was appointed by the head teacher to be in charge of ten divisions. As far as administration and education were concerned, the company leaders were controlled by the head teacher or his deputy. At that time, our company leader was the oldest student, Darjaa. After he had completed his military service, he became head of the Central Security Police from 1940-1950.

We used to rise early in the morning to parade and do physical exercises. Later on in the day we again paraded. Before bed the roll was called. Pupils wore a sheepskin deel the color of yellow cotton drill, and each pupil had a hat made of white lamb’s skin, and black working boots. Morning and evening meals consisted of bread and butter with tea. The mid-day meal included meat, vegetables, and soup with noodles. Buuz and khuushuur were provided during celebrations. It was here that I had my first taste of cabbage, potatoes, and bread. Initially, I left these things uneaten, but eventually I got used to them.

The classrooms consisted of four or five gers fitted out with trestle tables. Lessons were given in Mongolian script, arithmetic, political studies, and agriculture. Four to six hours of lessons would be given every day. There were two teachers, Ts. Baldan and B. Sanjaastüreng. Baldan gave us interesting lessons on physical geography and politics. Our teacher Sanjaastüreng used easily understood examples when teaching the four areas of arithmetic. We used to practice our lessons in the ger late in the evening and we would go to our teachers to check out certain things. The two teachers had actually just completed a course at the student college in Ulaanbaatar. We respected them very much, both for being highly educated and for their highly principled and friendly relationship with the pupils.

The leader of our group of ten pupils was called Sharav. He set out the rules of the ger, appointed people to take their turn at being on duty, safeguarded hygiene, implemented schedules, directed homework, made announcements, and did other leadership
work. He was a very energetic leader, but sometimes behaved in a harsh manner. In ad-
dition to scolding people he on occasion prolonged the section meetings, which wasted
time and interfered with our homework. There were many examples of Sharav's own
code of discipline. He was vigorous and clever in public work, and although well edu-
cated he occasionally told lies.

In accordance with the custom at the time, one evening our school held a
friendly meeting with the pupils of the aimag middle school in their Red Comer. This
meeting took the form of a quiz competition between the two schools. We sang together
several times and a middle school girl came in first in the quiz competition, with a girl
from our school getting second place. Five wrestlers from each school came out to wrest-
tle, and one of our pupils came in first. Next, there was a theory competition. Five ques-
tions were asked in each subject area, covering politics, biology, physics, and chemistry.
The competition was conducted by one teacher from each side. Since this competition
was very interesting, all the students, including myself, noted down the questions and
answers. At the end of the tournament, the results were added up and the winners and
runners up in the singing, wrestling, and theory competitions were awarded exercise
books and pencils.

The theory competition became very interesting. As the following day was a rest
day, the students did not want to be dismissed and expressed their wish to continue with
the competition. The teachers agreed. It was very late and the kerosene lamp looked
smoky suspended from the roof of the wooden building. By the time some of the children
had dozed off on their wooden boards, nearly all the teachers had left except for a teacher
who taught military lessons.

That evening, our section leader, Sharav, was wearing an army-style cotton shirt
and trousers, braces, and a fine belt. A considerable number of badges had been pinned
to his braces, each one attached to a circle of red cloth. He looked very elegant. The
questions which could not be answered in the theory competition were helpfully ex-
plained by the teachers. At the end, section leader Sharav stood up and asked a question:
“Where did man first originate?” One of the middle-school pupils stood up and
replied that Man originated from the apes. Sharav rose and asked, “And where was that
monkey then?” The other pupil replied: “He was in some warm country, like Europe.”
“Couldn’t it have been a cold country?” Sharav asked. “It might have been” the pupil
replied. Sharav was seen carefully taking one of the books and pencils which were to be
given away as prizes. He asked “Where in Mongolia did the apes, which were the origin
of man, live? The pupil could not answer.

As none of the other pupils at that school could answer either, the questioner
himself answered to rightfully take the prize. Sharav rose, saying, “These apes used to
live in our Gobi and to the south of Khovd.” The students were all amazed and noted it
down in their books. So our Sharav got his book and pencil. The next day, when the
teacher was conducting the class, he made Sharav stand up and after scolding him a little,
explained to us that there was no evidence to say that the apes which were the predeces-
sors of man, ever lived in our Gobi.

Although the ger where we lived was warm, it was smoky, and so a Chinese
stove-repairer wearing old sheepskin trousers and a white sheepskin jacket came once to
repair the stove. The clay of the stove had fallen off due to our carelessness and smoke
was puffing out. While the Chinese was fixing the stove, the students helped him and
some of them decided to fix the stoves themselves. As the stove in our ger had largely
My Desire for an Education

collapsed, one day I repaired it. In order to fix our stove, I took a large enamelled wash basin which was outside the door of the women’s ger and after mixing some clay in it, I repaired the stove. After lighting a fire in the stove, it turned out quite well. Even our section leader praised me saying that it was quite good.

The following day I was suddenly summoned by the Division commander. I went in and stood there quietly. There was a girl pupil called Dolgor who was sitting and crying at one side of the ger. It turned out that she had brought the wash basin to wash her face in when she first arrived at the school. Not knowing this, I had mixed clay in it to repair the stove. That being the case I was guilty and I decided that I should wash and clean the basin for her.

I left the division commander’s ger and brought in the wash basin left outside the door of the women’s ger the previous day. I warmed it on the stove and used a piece of iron to prise off the frozen clay, peeling off some of the enamel in places. Then, after washing the basin clean I went up to the door of that ger and when I knocked at it, Dolgor appeared. On seeing the wash basin she threw it on the ground. I knew the reason for this, and with the matter still unresolved, I was very worried.

That evening, the leader of our group of ten told me that I was being summoned by the senior teacher Baldan. I entered the teacher’s ger and stood in silence. The chief of the sum was standing there and the girl Dolgor stood crying. The teacher, Ts. Baldan asked me about the mixing of clay in the wash basin and the peeling-off of the enamel. He said “You have done a good deed in repairing the stove in this school. Let Shirendev be praised on the notice board! Let this girl Dolgor scold all she wants!” and he let us go. This was the first time I had been summoned about a problem, and I was extremely pleased that the matter had been concluded in this way. Afterwards, I repaired the school stoves on several occasions. The school gave me an old wash-basin to mix clay in.

When the pupils at the school developed coughs, they were examined by the Soviet doctor of the aimag hospital, S. M. Nemoi. This man was a very pleasant character and was kind to the children. His wife was a paramedic and the couple had a baby. One day, the Pioneer organization of our school made the doctor an honorary pioneer and presented him with a tie. The doctor spoke Mongolian quite well.

On the May 1 holiday in Tsetserleg, all the town’s people—Mongols, Russians, and Chinese—gathered in the recreation area and formed a parade. The aimag Party committee and the leaders of the administration climbed up some steps to a platform raised on four long legs called an inder, where they made their speeches. When a Soviet instructor delivered greetings in Russian that day his speech and manner, voice, attire, and Russian language all seemed strange to me. At that time, Tsetserleg had a Russian doctor, a Russian primary school, and Russian instructors. They all lived and worked in comfortable yellow buildings made of logs and with glass windows. They had planted trees alongside the buildings.

I had become acquainted with a student pioneer named Kochetov who was at the Russian primary school in Tsetserleg. I used to frequently meet with him. He was interested in the Mongolian language and I was interested in Russian words. Thus, once when I happened to be outside his family’s house, they invited me in to visit with their son. That was the first time I had visited a Russian household. The house in which they lived had a shiny painted wooden floor, several rooms, and everyone in the household, including the boy, had his or her own comfortable bed.

While I was at school there, during 1929-1930, the property of the feudalists
was being confiscated and the government was elected to carry out many political activities to reduce their power. Responsible officials of the aimag used to take one or two students with them into the countryside to show us the work being carried out. I accompanied a member of the aimag cooperative called “KUTV” Sharav [KUTV being an acronym for Communist University for the Workers of the East] to Tsenkher sum where we watched a taij being stripped of his powers at a district meeting held in the left hand ger of two gers set up under the shelter of a large rock face.

The day prior to the meeting, I had accompanied Sharav to the large ger of a household on the west side of an encampment. The wife of the household spread a rug for us and entertained us with some tea and a meal. The owner of the household was the taij who had been stripped of power.

Soon afterwards, Sharav went out to spend the night in a tiny ger on the southeast side. Then, many people arrived from all directions on horseback, and a district meeting was held to discuss and criticize that taij. The taij was not permitted to be present. Having discussed the original question, it was decided to strip the taij of his elected powers. This was confirmed by a show of hands. At one point the chairman of the meeting ordered a servant to go and look around outside. The servant returned saying “There was a lama, a relative of the taij, standing outside and listening. I chased him off.” All through this period, the teachers talked about the ever-increasing struggle with the feudal lamas.

One day, we saw a large gathering of people who were waiting to be tried at the recreation ground. Some of the students from our school were allowed to go to watch some of the trial. A group of people from Övörkhangai aimag was standing trial, including one Sengedorj who was a banner chief and had feudal ancestry. After a hearing, the judge and chief prosecutor asked some questions to which the guilty replied. Sengedorj replied once and the lama replied twice: “It is true that we have been preparing to flee abroad. We have also been opposing the people’s government.” We then had to leave the trial and returned to school. Later we heard that some of the guilty had been executed and some had been sentenced to many years in prison.

Around that time, some lamas had attacked the official establishments and schools around temples such as Tariat Khüree. Sometimes they would band together in order to capture and beat the banner civil servants. They would also head towards the homes of the teachers where they had been known to thrust knives through the felt walls of the gers.

In accordance with directives at that time, all the officials of the aimag center and the school pupils assembled regularly for military training and to conduct mock battles between the “Whites” and the “Reds”. On Saturdays and Sundays we went into the forests in a ravine on the northwest side of Tsetserleg town to gather firewood for the official organizations in the aimag center.

Some days we performed a shadow theater or held singing and musical evenings. Generally, the musicians sang old-fashioned songs, and played music on string instruments, such as horsehead fiddles and flutes. Among them was a youngish girl called Dolgorsuren who was a good shanz player. She was said to be the last wife of the Zaya Gegeen. The Zaya Gegeen used to live in a European-style building on a terrace on the east side of Zayayn Khüree. While we were at school, the Zaya Gegeen was implicated in an uprising and imprisoned. However, around that time the monastery lamas were spreading rumours that when their “teacher” had been taken to Ulaanbaatar and
imprisoned, the gegeen multiplied a thousand times and could not be contained in prison, and neither could anyone tell which person was the real Zaya Gegeen. When talk of such magical powers of the Zaya Gegeen were discussed, the Party committee people told us it was all lies.

The male officials usually wore leather deel and military-style shirts and trousers. The women cut their hair short and wore short-sleeved deel. The members of the aimag Party committee, aimag ministries, cooperatives, internal security organizations and the army divisional officers wore military-style uniforms and generally carried guns.
An Unsuccessful Test

After nearly a year of study, we had completed our classes. Some of my friends were appointed to work in the official organizations of the aimag center, some went to the banner centers and some to the local collectives. At that time, the person in overall charge of aimag cooperative matters was known as the instructor of the cooperative. The person in overall charge of a cooperative within a banner was known as a junior instructor.

Several of my friends and myself were under the control of one of the senior instructors of a cooperative named Sünrev. He received us and told us to go to the Khan Öndör banner center where we would work under the control of a junior instructor of the collective. Within a few days, all the friends I had known for nearly two years had dispersed in all directions. We wrote each other letters and those who were appointed to neighboring areas could get together and discuss things.

One day, I rode out of Tsetserleg town on an örtöö horse owned by the aimag center. I crossed the Tsagaan pass and set off northwards. I had nothing apart from what I had worn at school—a blue cotton summer terleg, an old pair of otter-skin boots starting to tear at the front, and a green cap. It was not very pleasant to leave Tsetserleg town behind with its school where I had studied, and my teachers, friends, and acquaintances there. I kept thinking about where I would be working and the kind of work I would be doing.

I crossed the Tsagaan pass, descended the valley behind it which led to the north side of the Tamir river and arrived at a large square rock called Taikhar. On it were all kinds of Tibetan and Mongolian inscriptions. Some small cups and khadag had been placed on it. A boy was looking after some sheep nearby, and an old man with a long pig-tail, dressed in a blue deel with light-colored cuffs and a steel striker and knife, came galloping towards me on a brown horse.

“Where are you heading?” he asked me. “What is this stone?” I asked. “This stone was brought here from the top of a mountain on the other side of the river. Those are the marks which were made by it, can’t you see them?” he said, pointing with his finger, and they were indeed visible. The old man continued: “Well my boy, there is a good reason for this stone being here. A long time ago, a giant snake came down the north Tamir river and dug a hole where the stone lies now and lay down in a circle. As the snake was dangerous, a heroic man called Taikhar decided to destroy it. This hero broke a large piece of rock from the face of a cliff called Khanan on the Tamir river and carried it down to the hole where the snake had entered and placed it over the hole. So, the snake was crushed, and the people of the area rejoiced when they had been rescued from the danger of the giant snake.”

The many inscriptions on the stone in Mongolian, Tibetan, Manchu, Chinese, and Turkish were evidence of the worship of it. Foreign and native scholars have recorded the many inscriptions on the rock in their works. In 1960, the Mongolian historian
D. Perlee compiled these inscriptions into a book entitled *The Taikhar Stone*. It is possible that the word *taikhar* comes from *taishir*. It is noted down in the scriptures that the word *taishir* means "great teacher" in an Indian language. Some of our scholars still consider *taikhar* to be a Turkish word meaning "ridge stone." Since the original rock was in the shape of a hunchback, it was also thought that it could have been called *takhir* [cripple] stone in Mongolian.

I was delayed for quite a while talking with this old man. He pointed out the location of the ford in the river for me. I crossed the river and headed towards the Khan Öndör monastery. The Khan Öndör monastery’s name referred to the Chin Van, (a Manchu term denoting an Imperial son-in-law) of an administrative banner of Sain Noyan Khan aimag of Khalkha. It was the central monastery of Nayant banner.

The forebears of the Chin Van met with the Manchu emperors and became senior ministerial attendants. In the latter part of the sixth generation, he became the Nayant Van and in the tenth year of the Manchu Badarguul (Kangxi) period, he rose from being a beel (Manchu duke, First Grade) to become an Imperial son-in-law. Nayant Van’s father was originally of imperial Manchu parentage. Taking advantage of his wife’s lineage, he went to live in a special residence in Beijing and broke the links with his native land.

However, when he returned to his home district for the first time with his wife, his father presented the bride with a most valuable present, one which could not be moved from the area. One day he arranged for many families to be settled in an area around the most beautiful Khan Uul (mountain) in the area, and many thousand horses, cattle, and sheep were pastured there. A group of people were sent to flush the wild animals out of the mountain forests, and gold- and silver-bearing rocks were dug up and prepared. His son and the bride were brought to him, and it is said that the bride was presented with this gift. And so it was that the mountain came to be known as Günjin Uul ("Princess Mountain"). However, the last prince Nayant, a minister, did not visit his home district for a long time and continued to live in Beijing, where he died in the 1950s.

I headed for an enclosure on the west side of the monastery where the home of Dashvandan, the junior instructor of the collective, was located. At the back of an empty ger in the fenced enclosure sat a man writing with a brush on Chinese muutuu writing paper. He was sitting behind a varnished table covered with a red table cloth. He was quite old, wore a light-brown deel, and had a swarthy, oval face. His name was Dashvandan.

When I asked, "May I speak to you?" he said nothing but continued writing for quite a while. Then, he turned to me and asked "Well, what work have you come to do?" I showed him my credentials. The junior instructor of the collective examined my credentials and after a little thought said, "You can become chief of the new collective in Chuluut sum, north of Khan Öndör sum." To get there a person would need to travel a distance of over two örtöö lengths. Due to the importance of the work of the collective, a few important things had to be discussed. He continually repeated the words "That's right now," but said nothing which made any sense. For a while, I just stood there, confused. The junior instructor gave me no explanation but said, "Tomorrow morning you will set off in that direction. Until now no-one has been in charge there, so go and take up

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1 *Tajkhir chuluu*. Ulaanbaatar, 1960. (Studia archaeologica ; t. 1, fasc. 4).
As I was a young and inexperienced seventeen-year old, not having done any official work or experienced life, I was unable to ask him for any explanations. The man did not wish to talk very much anyway. When I asked some of the local people, I discovered that the collective to which I was to be appointed was not in the center of Chuluut Gol sum but was a considerable distance away at Shireet monastery. I spent the night with a family in the sum center. The next morning I rode an örtöö horse across several mountains and reached Shireet Gegeen monastery which was located on a south-facing mountain slope on the north bank of the Chuluut river. The Shireet Gegeen Khüree had the so-called Shivee Shireet seal of the old Sain Noën Khan aimag and a khutagt was present there with his disciples.

The first reincarnation of Shivee Shireet appeared ten times in India, followed by six reincarnations in Tibet, and was finally reincarnated in Mongolia for the first time at the ger of the grandfather of the Sain Noën Khan. When this seventh reincarnation died, his teacher, a tsorj lama, was said to have become the next reincarnation. This Shireet Gegeen monastery was a somewhat small monastery consisting of several temples with over a hundred lamas.

The collective’s center was half a kilometer from the monastery on the banks of the Chuluut river. The goods held by the collective were located at the center of the cooperative. There was one tiny wooden building which looked like a lama-trader’s building. On its right-hand side three gers had been set up in an orderly way. The right-hand ger was very large, with a smoke-hole cover, and the left-hand ger was of average size. The smoke-hole had a rope attached to it and smoke could be seen coming from the chimney.

After returning my horse to the young man who had arrived to do horse-relay duties, I entered the smoking ger. There were wooden beds on both sides of the ger covered with mottled blankets, and a tiny mirror and a silver cup had been placed on a suitcase at the back of the ger. The ger had red curtains made from some woollen cloth which had possibly been used by the lamas of the monastery and appeared to be very comfortable. There were two women there, and at the back of the ger sat the husband, a fat, noisy, jovial character with a black beard and a rough face. He was smoking a long-stemmed pipe, and he took a silver striker and a pipe cleaner from a red silk bag adorned with black brocade. He sat there tapping these things together.

During their work break, the women drank tea and seemed to enjoy themselves in a normal way. When I entered they did not appear to pay me much attention. Then the more senior of the two women asked me, “Well boy, where have you come from?” “I have come from the center of Khan Öndör.” The husband then asked, “Where do you come from? Where are you going?” “My home is in Chandman’ Ölzii Uul banner. Not far away. I have just come from there,” I replied. After sitting awhile in silence, the husband asked, “What is there in the center of Khan Öndör?” “Nothing,” I replied. “Are you at school there?” “No.” “What is your name?” I replied, telling him my name.

While I drank my tea the husband went out and came straight back in. “Have you come on foot?” he asked. “No, I came on horseback.” “There is only my horse at the tethering post. There doesn’t appear to be any other horse.” “I sent my horse back.” The three of them looked at me in astonishment. Then the older woman asked, “Well my boy, how will you return?” “I’m not going back for the time being.” I replied.

While those three people continued to look surprised, we heard the thunderous
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noise of several galloping horses. On hearing that noise, they all went out and the husband went into the old trading building. The other two wives ran outside and went to the north ger where they pulled the smoke-hole cover shut and went in. I followed them and when I entered the cooperative building, I saw several sacks of flour, and some cotton cloth and tea in a corner, all covered in dust. In another corner there were several dozen bags of wool and animal hair which appeared to be stacked at random. One of the people who came in took some pipe tobacco and tea, others took away one or two yards of daalimba [cotton drill] and some raisins. The people who came in addressed the bearded man as “Khaivii”.

I left and went to see what was happening in the north ger, which turned out to be the Red Ger. This spacious ger also had blue woollen cloth curtains and quilted mattresses, and some pictures had been hung on the walls showing Lenin and Sükhbaatar on his horse. Some contemporary pamphlets and journals had been stuffed in various places here and there. In the middle of the ger, twenty or thirty books were lined up on a tiny table which was covered with a red table cloth. In addition, there were a considerable number of journals and newspapers. No one other than myself entered the red ger. The two girls were named Doljin and Dolgor.

It seemed as if these three people had finished their work for the day. Khaivii lived five kilometers from the center of our collective. He herded the livestock and went to the center during the day to work as a manager of a branch of the collective. The two girls were the principal and assistant managers of the Red ger. While we were talking, Khaivii asked me what work I had come to do. I told him the reason I had come. His demeanour changed altogether and looking at me carefully, he exclaimed, “Oh! So we have a young boss!”

After they had talked about it among themselves, they made me a meal and some tea and invited me to go and look at the collective. We all went out together, and on approaching the west ger, the woman Doljin drew back the smoke-hole cover of the ger and Dolgor unlocked it. On entering, it looked like the treasury ger of a monastery with its red and yellow cloth trimmings and yellow cloth curtains. Long thin cushions had been piled up three, four, and sometimes five layers high. At the north side of the ger, there was a table with a dusty Chinese abacus, a writing pen and ink pot, and a book with a dark brown cover. There was also a large bulky hearth and an iron stove.

There was a strong smell of damp, making it impossible for people to live there. When I asked about the committee of the collective, Khaivii replied, “I am one of the leaders and at present I am carrying out the chairman’s duties on a temporary basis. The secretary is out in the countryside. He has not been seen around here recently and it is not known when he will be back. It has been three years since the collective was established and there are thirty members living in scattered ravines. Two meetings have been held so far. As far as these goods are concerned, after we had confiscated the feudalists’ property, this ger with the cushions, a rug, and a gun were handed over to the jurisdiction of the collective. Over a hundred head of cattle and three hundred sheep have been gathered from the members but there are still a number of livestock held by members which have not yet been precisely counted.”

When the accounts and the property of the collective members were examined at the time the collective was established, the number of livestock owned by each herdsman was recorded. Thereafter no more than two resolutions were required to elect the leadership. However, only one official document had been sent to the sum administration
and the junior instructor of the collective, and only one or two written replies had been received from them.

When I asked Khaivii how the official business should have been conducted, he replied, “I do not know much about it. On the other hand only you, our leader, have finished school, and you should be able to guide and lead us with the instructions which you have brought.” I did not know if he was praising or mocking me. When I asked, “So, what do we do?” he said, “Well, I don’t really know. It would be better to summon the secretary.” “Will we have a meeting soon?” I asked. “When we order a meeting, not even a few of them turn up. Even when we send two or three members out to go around for a few days ordering people to do so, they do not come, which is a very difficult problem.”

It was quite late when Khaivii left. I finished my meal and fell asleep. I got up in the morning and while thinking about what to do next, the girl Dolgor said, “Go into the west ger. Lift the edge of it and let the dampness out.” and so I did.

Khaivii had told me that no wages were paid there. “We eat the yoghurt made from the milk of the collective’s cows, and one sheep is slaughtered every month. When there is a meeting of all the members, we will slaughter a cow and share out the meat. The leg of a slaughtered cow was dried and saved from the previous meeting. You will probably have to eat that.” Due to the pressure of their work, Khaivii, Dolgor, and Doljin were unable to help or advise me. After leaving things for a day, the following day they sent for the secretary and two or three days later, word was received: “In addition to his family having moved a great distance, the secretary is not at home and has gone to look for his animals. On his return we will send him to you.” After we waited a few days he had still not arrived and so again we sent someone after him.

The secretary, a man of about thirty, turned up the following day. Having worked as a minor official in the army, he said a lot of things and showed off, but did not know anything at all about the work. “There is hardship back home, and I wish to be excused from my position as secretary at the forthcoming meeting,” he told us and left. One day, the leader of the sum and the chairman of the cooperative of the sum center arrived and went to see the managers of the Red Ger, where they enjoyed themselves, enthusing about old times.

I invited the two of them into my ger and discussed my worries. When I asked a few questions, the leader of the sum said, “When you want to hold a meeting, if you summon people through the district leader, who is not far from here, you will attract people more quickly. All twenty of the cooperative’s horses are kept by two households which are on the other side of the river. You may obtain mounts there.” When the chairman of the cooperative was talking about his experience, he said that going around the members to re-count their livestock was a priority. Afterwards he instructed me to go around the households to recruit new members.

In order to get to talk to those families which looked after the collective’s horses, I needed a horse myself, and during the next day or two a collective member brought along an old gelding. I was ready to set off to visit those families except that I did not have a saddle and so I let the horse graze for a day. When I enquired about obtaining a saddle, it seemed that none was available. I was about to set off using an old cushion for a saddle when the woman Dolgor, the manager of the Red Ger, came out and looked at me. “How can you possibly ride bare-back? Here is an old saddle of Doljin’s. Saddle up with this and go. I will tell Doljin,” she said.

So, having saddled the horse with Doljin’s old saddle, I visited several house-
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holds. Since they all regarded me as the chairman of the cooperative, I was invited to sit in the place of honor, and they treated me with respect.

There was a very experienced old man in one of the households who turned out to be one of the leaders of the cooperative’s committee. He said, “Well, this collective has been established in a so-so manner. After saying that they would bring together a few animals, on the whole, these have not yet been handed over to the cooperative. We did not know how to look after the animals and really did not know what to do with them at that point. The junior instructor of the collective and the leader of the sum are going backwards and forwards over this matter. In addition, they only discuss world matters and they look like people who have forgotten how to look after a few animals. Around here, my boy, you will be sorry to have taken this appointment, but it will be all right if one of the experienced people from the area is elected chairman of the cooperative.”

I realized that what he had said was very true. I also went to one or two other households where it was said that the collective was an organization which did no work other than to gather animals and eat them. For this reason, the genuine herdsmen and working people disliked sitting by idly while the unemployed and lazy people appeared to take advantage of this laggardly situation. So, nearly a month later, one of the repeatedly requested meetings was held.

All the leading members, the managers of the Red Ger, and the rest of us spoke at the meeting. It was customary that people make speeches about the world situation and the general situation in Mongolia. The meeting then continued for a day and the next day a cow was slaughtered and eaten. A little airag and milk was brought along, and everyone had a drink together.

The committee of the collective proposed that a new leader be sent to the households to do the work of recruiting new members. The secretary who requested leave should be replaced and a new secretary elected and sent with two people to count the livestock owned by the households. We all went to do our respective tasks. I wandered around the households for five or six days. Regardless of whether there were several gers or just a single ger, I would enter and say, “We are establishing Socialism. You must join the collective.”

This was followed by a short discussion about the weather, and then I left. Some of the people sat in silence listening to my speech. Others began to talk about completely different things, about Tsetserleg town and the arrival of summer. Some of them in passing did acknowledge what I had said, but remarked they had to wait for permission before agreeing, perhaps when their brothers had returned from somewhere, or when their sons had returned from the army, or when their father had returned from searching for lost animals, and so forth. Thus, after several days I had still not managed to recruit a single member. The secretary arrived five or six days later, but I had not obtained anything more substantial than a few names of households and the number of their livestock.

I spent some of the time reading books and newspapers in the Red Ger. At other times I played with the children on the river bank. Occasionally, I wandered through the gers and passed my time eating yoghurt.

The Chuluut river was full of all kinds of large and small fish. I had heard of people catching them and grilling their flesh but I had never seen it done. Once, after the Chuluut river had flooded and the waters had receded, many large fish were stranded in puddles from the overflow. After many days without rain, when the puddles dried up, the fish died and were eaten by hawks. This used to produce a bad smell.
I had an idea and decided to find a way to catch and fry some fish. Armed with a basket and two pitch forks, I went to the water’s edge with three of my companions. The flood waters had collected there into an oval-shaped hollow five or six meters long and three meters wide in which several large fish were thrashing about. Holding the forks and the basket we chased the fish from the wide end of the pond towards the narrowest inlet where the basket was held by two boys while the other two frightened the fish with the forks. The fish jumped out fiercely and inevitably entered the basket, which was quickly lifted up, although of course, several of them fell back into the water. However, two average-sized fish remained in the bottom of the basket. We lifted the basket with the fish writhing and rolling about. One of them continued leaping and got back into the water. Using the basket and the forks we found a way to restrain the other one. We took it back to the center of the collective, gutted it, sliced it with a knife and fried it in butter.

We all sat down like cultured people and were about to eat the fish, but no one could bring themselves to do so. One of us then invited some people in from outside to try the tasty food. Not one of them could eat it. After the fish had been left on the plate for quite a while, one of my friends invited some young people to eat it without telling them what it was. They tasted it but spat it out. This was the first fish I had ever caught, and although it was of little use, the experience was valuable. Twenty six years later I was on the Suman river in Arkhangai aimag with a rod and hook, accompanied by (Politburo member) Jagvaral. I caught two large fish on that occasion, which made a total lifetime catch of three. I have never fished again.

One day, a summons arrived from Sünrev, the senior instructor at the cooperative in Tsetserleg town. As I galloped into Tsetserleg by relay horse, the leaders of the cooperatives were gathered there from all around and were receiving their wages. It appeared that some had been dismissed and others were being transferred elsewhere. They gave me fifteen tögrög. I did not know whether this was a month’s salary, half a month’s, or just a reward. This was because when I first went to Chuluut, the leader of the cooperative had said that there would be no wages. I mentioned my worries to the secretary of the senior instructors of the collective. He replied, “The leaders are being appointed from among experienced local people and soon you will be released from your duties. You can go now, I will discuss it later”.

I used my money to buy a Mongol deel and an old bicycle from a friend of mine. Then I returned to the cooperative’s center. I assembled and rode the bicycle, which disturbed the dogs of the nearby households. Later, the local children and the novice lamas of Shireet Khtüree practiced with it until it broke and could not be repaired.

Soon afterwards there was a national holiday. Several hundred people were gathered at the cooperative’s center. Speeches were made and a wrestling tournament was held. During the proceedings someone collapsed and died, which caused a great stir. Several days afterwards, my eldest brother Damchaabadgar who had left our area to join the army, returned and came to see me at the collective’s center. “A young, inexperienced person like you is not suited to major work like this. You should either return home and stay with me, or else return to school,” he said.

Around this time, some lamas from Shireet Gegeen monastery came through our area and asked if we had any lamb skins which could be put inside a deel. They stopped and listened to the meetings before returning home.

Nearly three months later, a tall man named Dovdon arrived from Ulaanbaatar. He was on assignment from the Central Committee of the Youth League and was con-
cerned with spreading information about the regulations governing the Communist International Youth Organization (KIM). He was quite talkative, and discussed educational and cultural matters. He told me that I should go to Ulaanbaatar to study at the Party School, and that he would speak on my behalf at the aimag and Youth League committee.

Meanwhile, a junior instructor of the cooperative came to our cooperative center and said, "Go to Tsetserleg, I want to send you to school there. For the time being I will transfer your responsibilities to Khaivii." Accordingly, he handed a bound volume over to Khaivii and a day or two later I set off for Tsetserleg. On my departure, some of the members of the cooperative gave me some aaruul and khuruud (dried milk curds) and wished me a good journey. Later on, I came across this Dovdon in the center of Tsetserleg Mandal. He said to me, "It is time you went to school, we will meet in Ulaanbaatar. Go and see the committee of the aimag Youth League." The aimag, Party, and Youth League committees were in a room on the second floor of the two-story building which was the aimag recreation hall.

The chairman of the Youth League committee was a man called Chimed of the KUTV whom I knew from my former school days. I went along to the committee of the aimag Youth League. When I opened the door and enquired about Chimed, a young man asked me, "What do you want with him?" and began to interrogate me fiercely. I replied that I had decided to attend school and wished to join the committee of the Youth League.

The young man then replied, "I am now [head of the committee of] this Youth League. A group of people, including the leaders of the Party committee and the Youth League, became rightists, and after expulsion from their posts here were called to Ulaanbaatar. You should go to do a week's Pioneer work in the countryside, where you will deliver documents to the Youth League cells in the two sums. You must give the instructions in person." He then wrote down some notes. I rode by relay horse to the centers of Zürkh and Chandman' sum and delivered the documents and instructions to the leaders of the Youth League organizations. I gave verbal instructions about holding a meeting to enroll country children in the Pioneer movement, and on my way back I went home to visit my mother and my brothers and sisters.

My mother was very happy. "It is nice to have a child go away healthy and return to see us in this way. You can continue to go to school" she said. However, my mother and brothers and sisters did not mention my father, and when I asked about him, after hesitating in silence, they gently told me the news. "Last winter your father fell ill and died. Because he was bringing up many children, he did not have enough food or drink for himself, and went to bed hungry. He continued worrying and exhausting himself, and developed a stomach cancer and died. He was barely 49 years old."

Having told me this they cried and I cried with them. Although we comforted each other, we thought about him from time to time and cried again. When we looked at the things he used to use, we missed him even more, and as he supported the family with wages from his official obligations, he could not really afford to die. I was so sad that I could not repay all the worry that he suffered while raising us. Then, when it was time to go, they all wished me well and my mother sent me on my way and made a libation of milk behind me.

So, one autumn day, I arrived at the center of Tsetserleg and a few days later I climbed aboard an old truck and set off with a group of people for Ulaanbaatar. Javzan,
the wife of my elder cousin Sanjaajav, was also on this truck. She looked after me on the journey, and paid for meals when we stopped along the way.
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We left Tsetserleg and followed the bank of the Urd [South] Tamir river to a crossing point on Ögii lake, where we spent the night. The following day we had a tire puncture and we continued to be delayed by one breakdown after another until we arrived at the aimag center of Bogd Khan Uul aimag, now Lün sum of Töv aimag. This aimag center had a considerable number of newly constructed log buildings. Hospitals, schools, and leading aimag administrative organizations were being established. Many enclosures for gers had been built, section after section.

After stopping in a ger hotel for the night, we set off early in the morning for Ulaanbaatar. By constantly repairing the truck and pumping up the tires we reached Ulaanbaatar shortly before sunset. The Shar Khöv Pass was the last of several hills to the west of Ulaanbaatar and when we crossed it we could see the smoke rising from the mountain valleys of Ulaanbaatar.

Suddenly, I remembered something my mother had once told me. When she was small, she had traveled with her mother and her brothers on foot with a camel caravan to kow-tow to the Bogd at Bogd Khüree. On their return they crossed the Shar Khöv pass where she said there was a beautiful view of Bogd Khüree.

We continued skirting along the edge of Ulaanbaatar’s Baruun Selbe. Javzan and I got off the truck and followed a lane full of garbage and bones past a tall pile of refuse to a tiny north-facing gate where Sanjaajav’s relatives lived. We spent a few nights there. My cousin Sanjaajav was working as an official in the city. Since there were still a few days to go before the Party school was to start, I went along with Sanjaajav, his wife and their relatives to get acquainted with the layout of the city. The Tuul river flowed south of Ulaanbaatar and there were several ravines and a forested mountain called Bogd Uul on its south bank. Right in the middle of one of the north-facing slopes of this mountain were the words “Um Maa Khum” in Tibetan. To the north of the city there were many ravines on different levels. These slopes were known as the Dalan Davkhar [Seventy Layers].

According to my understanding at the time, Ulaanbaatar was divided into the following districts: The Gandan was the area from Dasgan Ovoo westward to the slopes of the mountain; the Züün Khüree district stretched [from the Gandan] towards the east and north, including the western part of the Züün Selbe; Ulaanbaatar city proper lay between the Züün Selbe and Baruun Selbe rivers and further to the east and west. East of the city was the Maakhuur hill, not very far from the Ushaan Den where three radio towers had been erected during the Gamin (Chinese) period. The valley east of here was called Naimag Khot or Amgalanbaatar. The Bogd’s old palaces were on the north bank of the Tuul, south of the city, and a branch of the Party School was located there.

While walking through the center of the city itself, I saw a large wooden building called the “Recreation Ground” and an old two-story wooden building which was the
Defense Ministry. To the right of this was a two-story Chinese building. Further to the west and in front of the Recreation Ground was a wide square beyond which were several groups of log cabins with small stockades.

The largest building in the city was on the east bank of the Baruun Selbe. It was a two-story brick construction called the Ondör Cooperative where a lot of activity and commotion took place. Next door to it there was an attractive building where things were traded. To the west of these two buildings was a street where there were a considerable number of cooperative stores. To the south of the Ondör Cooperative, on the east side of the Baruun Selbe, was a large two-story building. This was the Department of Internal Security.

Basically, the administration structures for the city proper and the city ger enclosures [stockades] were situated between the two Selbe rivers and to the south of Züün Khüree. Reaching the edge of Züün Khüree and following the Baruun Selbe was an area of Chinese streets known as Baruun Damnuurgachin and the Tövd (Tibetan) district. When walking along the Chinese streets, the shops of Sodnomdarjaa, Beejin Tsagaan and others were prominent with their tall gates and high blue colored Chinese-style brick walls. There were travelers and caravan drivers along this street. On the streets to the southeast and southwest of the Recreation Ground were several large mounds consisting of refuse heaped up from earlier times.

There were many soldiers within the city who could sometimes be seen parading en-masse or riding on horseback. There were also horse carts and beautiful slender-wheeled horse-drawn carriages with seats having backrests and bells. Many people were wandering about on bicycles. A large number of dogs roamed the doorways and lanes of the city ger enclosures, and along the banks of the Selbe and on the mounds of garbage. There was talk of building a large factory called a Kombinat ["industrial combine"] in a valley next to the Bogd’s palace to the south of the river. Below a terraced enclosure on the southern edge of the city, there was a small building made of red brick. This was the Electric Light Station.

Having gained quite a good idea of the layout of the city, I went for a walk in the central square. Suddenly it seemed that someone had started talking away in a loud voice. I stopped and looked around but could not see anyone near me. Amazed, I continued to listen and when I came across someone I asked him, “Who is that person talking?” “It is the radio talking” he replied. “Where is it then?” I asked. “It’s a long way from here. It is located in a special building called Ushaan Den where there are three tall iron poles from where it comes this way along many branching wires. A person talking over there can be heard from a cable speaker hung on a wooden post” he said and pointed out a stubby speaker on the top of a post not far from us. I would have liked to have seen those three tall things called Ushaan Den and, if possible, the place where the transmissions were made.

I had two days to spend before classes started at school. I left the household where I was staying and crossed the Bogd’s narrow red wooden bridge spanning the Dund river which flowed south of Ulaanbaatar. I passed by the Bogd Khan’s Winter Palace and went to the left of a cluster of temples to get to the white building with its group of gers which comprised the Party School.

The Party School had been established on the site of one of the Bogd’s several palaces. Quite a few trees had been planted there and wooden pavilions were provided for people to stop and rest in. There was also a large, artistically shaped wooden clock
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which was broken. People said that this was one of the things which had remained from the Bogd Khan’s era. The pupils at the school were taught their lessons in these buildings, and some of them lived there as well. There was a wooden building and a group of gers to the right of the school where the teachers lived.

Before long, classes began. The first-year pupils were taught in the third room in the second building. We were given lessons in mathematics, geography, biology, international and national politics, Mongolian affairs, and history. The teachers used meaningful teaching methods, especially in the biology and geography lessons which were very interesting.

Nearly every evening, the Party, Youth League, workers’ and MOPR (an international organization to assist revolutionaries) mass organizations held meetings. People from the Party Central Committee and the City committee came to organize meetings where ideas and criticisms were voiced openly. During such meetings, it was mainly the third-year students and in particular a sallow-faced green-eyed final year student called Naidan who harshly criticized the rightists.

Sometimes harsh struggles took place with wealthy people over the rapid establishment of communes and cooperatives. Loud and vivid speeches were made calling for the immediate establishment of socialism. In addition, so that the Party members could become pure, the Youth League members invited us to sit and watch while they criticized the teachers and workers.

Spring arrived, and around the time classes were drawing to a close, a new course to reinforce our frontier troops was being organized by a special committee in the Department of Internal Security. I took part in this along with the first year pupils of the Party School who had gone through their winter term graduation in 1930. After this came the spring and summer terms, along with some not very interesting instruction in parading and shooting which took place in an enclosure on the Chinese Avenue.

However, a group of students had been sent to the main Military Academy and when the remaining half of them were sent back to the Party School, I accompanied them. Before classes re-started, while I was staying with my relatives in their ger, a man named Jügendamjil, who had been doing aimag judicial work when I was at school in Tsetserleg, turned up and asked me to come and stay with his family. I followed him quite a long way south along the street from Öndör Khoshuu to an enclosure on the south side of the club of the Tenth District.

There were two gers inside that stockade, the one on the right being where Jügendamjil and his wife lived. As they were both employed doing official work, their wages were good, food and drink were plentiful and their ger was comfortable. I did no work for them other than chopping firewood and making the fire. However, they gave me an old deel, a Russian-style shirt and trousers. As well as looking after me, they took me to see things at the district club.

I visited the Revolutionary Museum located in a separate building where the pre-revolutionary situation in Mongolia was portrayed in photographs, charts, and statistics. Some items which once belonged to the feudalists were on display. There were pictures of D. Sukhbaatar, who led the revolution, a photograph of the Partisans, and material which showed the workings of the Ikh Khural in detail. There was a map of Mongolia and things illustrating native objects which were interesting to look at. I used to go there again and again.

I read some poetry written by Buyannemekh, a Mongolian translation of French
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and European History, and the journal Socialist Road. One day, Jügdernamjil and his wife took me along to watch the Tsam dancing at the monastery. The Tsam was performed on the middle day of the last month of summer or at the beginning of August while the annual district Naadam was being held. The many faces of the Choijin deity were portrayed here. The Tsam would appear through the door of a large temple hall. This Tsam dance would have been practiced for perhaps 30 or 45 days beforehand under the leadership of professional dance experts called chambon.

The Tsam started from around ten o'clock in the morning at the door of the main monastery temple and lasted until seven or eight o'clock in the evening. When the lamas assembled, many worshippers arrived dressed in beautiful clothes. The lamas were seated in front of them in order of seniority. The khamba and tsorj lamas sat at the top along with the unzad who was sitting clashing a pair of cymbals. Below them there was noise coming from large and small drums, trumpets, and thigh-bone trumpets.

An old man called Khashin Khan appeared leading eight children, and presented the children with gifts. He was the "master of the gifts." Next, two skeletons appeared which performed a special dance. The skeletons represented the bones of dead people. A choijin called pojid appeared with eight ferocious looking masks. Two does named Shavaa and Makhi Buga appeared with many-branching antlers and leaped and pranced fiercely but beautifully.

Afterwards, Gongor and Namsrai, the lords of treasures and wealth, walked on slowly and performed in a dignified manner. Sendem and Zunkharsum also appeared. Sendem, who was the buddha protecting people from curses, appeared as a spirit with the head of a lion and performed a gentle dance. One after another, the red guardian spirits called Jamsran, each being larger than the previous one, came to worship all the holy celestials. Eight children appeared wearing jagged red masks with white teeth. They ran, jumped, and danced energetically.

Afterwards, Jamsran's elder brother Erevgii Laikhan and his wife Erevgii Lkham also gave a fierce performance wearing jagged red masks. Jamsran then stuck out his tongue and appeared in a mask with grinning teeth. He first performed alone, then appeared in a dance with his children, younger brother, and sister-in-law. One so-called Nojin Shi, companion of the protector of the temporary after-life Choijin-Gombo, Makhgal and his wife Baldan Lkham performed together as four characters wearing multi-colored masks. After this, Baldan Lkham performed alone and then her husband Gombo appeared and performed by himself. The previous four leading companions and the two spouses performed together as six. Dressed as four bearded Indian characters in Jagar-like white clothing, four old men with white hair appeared holding sticks. They performed and clowned about, making the audience laugh.

Then, there was an interval in the Tsam. The twenty one Dar-Ekh appeared wearing a headdress called shanag which portrayed a female figure. They were arranged in identical pairs, clothed in red, green, white, and blue. After that, the master of the Tsam, the chambon, appeared and danced the Tsam, first on his own, then with the twenty one Dar-Ekh. He was dressed just like his Dar-Ekh dancers. Based on their good deeds in the after-life, people were sent off either to heaven or hell as decided by the so-called Erleg Nomon Khan. Zamandi, the wife of Damdin Choijoo, appeared with a severe, fearsome, dark face and performed in a formal, haughty manner.

Then, while we were waiting, Damdin Choijoo made a tremendous, ferocious entry wearing a cow's head with flames blazing from the ends of the horns. He was
greeted by the whole Tsam, drums and cymbals tunefully ringing out. Damdin Choijoo was, on his own, much more haughty than his wife. As soon as he had performed in his slow, stiff manner, the whole Tsam followed him and danced to the tune of the drums and cymbals. This completed the Tsam dancing.

Afterwards, many people carried the sor (tsakhar) towards the monastery boundary. When moving off in a direction determined by the throw of dice, the whole Tsam and all the other people followed, blowing trumpets. When they reached the place where the sor ritual was performed, they did some Tsam dancing for a while, and Damdin Choijoo returned, followed by the lamas and the Tsam participants blowing trumpets. Those remaining followed behind, still dancing in pairs. Last of all came the chambon, which completed the Tsam ceremony.

One day, I asked the school principal for some free time to go into the town. While I was walking away from the school, the young man with the swarthy face who taught arithmetic to our class rode up to me on his bicycle and asked, “Do you want to go into town?” I replied that I did. This teacher was called B. Battseren. “In that case, sit behind me on the bicycle and we’ll go,” he told me. I rode pillion behind him. This particular teacher lived in the town, and being a Buriat, he spoke a little Russian. From then onwards, I enjoyed following this teacher around to see different things. He even took me along when going on errands, and got me to stay and look after his bicycle. Occasionally, he gave me pastries and sweets. So, we became good friends.

I told him that I had put my name down to go to the KUTV school. When he heard this he said, “I will also be attending school in the Soviet Union this year, and then I will attend the Rabfak Middle School. Over five or six years, general subjects are taught there, including Math, Physics, Natural Sciences, Chemistry, and most important, Russian. However, the school you want to attend is only temporary and hardly offers any courses for a general education.” “How can I get to attend the school you will be going to? Will you help me to get there?” I asked. “I will be going through the auspices of the Ministry of Education. The interviewer there is “lame” Natsag. Let’s both go and talk to him about it.” My teacher also promised to discuss my change of school with the administration of the Party School.

Two or three days later, my teacher Battseren came to see me, saying, “I have discussed the matter of sending you to a different school with the administration of the Party School. You need to talk to the Ministry of Education. If they agree, we won’t refuse.” So, Battseren and I both went to the Ministry of Education and enquired after this person Ch. Natsag. We were shown the door to his room. On entering, I saw a young man wearing a brown deel trimmed in black who seemed to recognize my teacher, Battseren, and immediately began to talk and joke with him. When I spoke about wanting to go to that school, he said it was all right, they would send me. “However, I don’t suppose that when you get there you won’t study and will have to come home?” he said. I told him that I would try as hard as I could and that I could study well. Despite the fact that Natsag did not know me, he had a very familiar manner. “Stop lying, you still look like a wretch who can’t learn. We won’t send you” he said, causing me great embarrassment. Then, Natsag continued, “Oh, I’m only joking. Go you little wretch.”

As I had decided to go to school, I spent the summer with the family of Jüg dernamjil and occasionally met with my teacher Battseren to go for walks together. Jüg dernamjil and his wife went for a long vacation in his native district in Zavkhan aimag. However, they did not dismantle their ger and said that I should look
after it. Since I was to leave for school shortly, with the help of an old man called Aranjin who lived in the enclosure (stockade) next door I dismantled the ger and dried out the felt covers before storing them with a family which Jügdernamjil knew. Aranjin had always been poor. He lived on his own, earning his living by delivering water by horse cart. Later on he got married. The old pock-marked man was an extremely sensible and pleasant character. People claimed that he was a brother of General Sükhbaatar. “Go and tell this fact to the city administration, and when you ask them for some fuel and money, we will raise a petition for you,” we urged. But the old mild-mannered Aranjin totally refused.

Occasionally, we went to the district club where we watched performances of stage plays. When the tiny groups came to perform, the main actors appeared first, and announced their parts. Then the others came and explained their roles. The majority of the plays portrayed cruel feudalists, shrewd lamas, greedy Chinese traders, and foreign capitalists and generals. Although these plays were artistically and poetically feeble, they offered an additional contribution to raising the understanding of the masses at the time. The old people of the district and even some lamas came to watch these plays with great interest and found them most amusing.

“The Boy with the Ragged Deel” was one such play which was performed. The story went that two poor brothers who were hunters went hunting in some distant place. When the younger brother appeared from afar wearing a deel made out of the fleece of a wild sheep, his elder brother mistook him for a wild sheep and shot and killed him, a most sorrowful event. On the one hand, this act illustrated the suffering of the poor, but it was also a lesson which taught people to be careful and to pay attention to things. No one who came to see this play could stay silent, and some of them sat down and cried.

Around May or June 1932, there was some furtive talk about an uprising which had occurred. One night, the students at the city’s Senior and Junior Officers’ colleges, under the leadership of Ministers Ölziibat and Sodnom, quietly set off in the direction of Arkhangai, Övörkhangai, Khövsgöl, and Zavkhan aimags with weapons and motorised transport. This was the uprising of 1932. From 1929-1930, the feudalists and senior lamas who had had their property and livestock confiscated began to hate the people’s government and intensified their opposition to it. The lamas spread a rumour that the time was right for the Vanchin Bogd to proceed through Mongolia to destroy the people’s government.

Around this time, the leftist deviationists who were among the Party leadership carelessly attacked the wealthier commoners instead of struggling against the lay and secular feudalists. No distinction was made between wealthy and middle-ranking commoners, and instead of using propaganda, authoritarian methods were used. They did not pay attention to the poor people and to those who had voluntarily collectivized, nor to the first forms of cooperatives which could have been further developed for the sake of the national economy. Instead they directly set about organizing cooperatives and communes on a wide scale.

In their struggle against the revolution the lay and secular feudalists exploited the mistakes made by the leftist deviationists. In the spring of 1932 they organized uprisings in the majority of sums in Arkhangai, Övörkhangai, Khövsgöl, and Zavkhan aimags. These uprisings reduced the power of the government. The participants were feudalists, the relatives of feudalists and some wealthy herdsmen and lamas whose capital and property had been confiscated. The insurgents occupied the monastery at Rashaant Uul (later
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to become Rashaant sum) which became the main center of the uprising, known as the “Office of Ochirbat.” For a month they occupied Tariat Khüree monastery which was the seat of Prince Dalai Choinkhor. Thus the insurgents’ base became known to the people as Ereen Mod Tariat Khüree.

The insurgents organized a group of so-called lama-soldiers whose units were headed by various artificially created duvchin and khuvilgaan. They were armed with Birdaan rifles, sticks, and clubs. These skirmishes were led by factions headed by Agaramba Tserenjav, ‘Green Hat’ Damdinsuren, General Tügi, duvchin Sambuu, General Jav, duvchin Ragchaa and others. They spread counter-revolutionary propaganda and fought for their cause. At the trial, Lama Byamba said,

I thought that after the destruction of the Taij’s party, the present People’s Party would perish. The Vanchin Bogd would come and re-establish the old government. In addition to having a hold on both the Mongolian government and religion, I [we] had already made plans to liquidate the people’s government well before the opposition movement had begun. This is because in the second month of the twenty-second year (1933) over a hundred lamas had gathered at the monastery of Abkhai Beis where a plan to liquidate the people’s government was discussed. They admitted that they would probably not win [on their own]. To achieve this they would bring in the Vanchin Bogd together with Japanese troops. While I was pondering how they could achieve what they were discussing, on the fourth month of the twenty-second year (1933), a counter-struggle began and those insurgents who were on my side joined in.

Regarding the insurgents’ exploitation of the commoners’ faith, duvchin Sambuu stated: “It is true that the person who was elevated to Gegeen had only been giving away human urine and the filth of old shirts [i.e. garbage] to the ordinary people.” Duvchin Ragchaa urgently announced, “The Shambala war has begun. The Vanchin Bogd has occupied Ulaanbaatar. There is no reason to be afraid. We must continue this movement energetically.”

When “Green Hat” Damdinsuren appointed someone as a general, he would always give him a yellow necktie to wear. The flag of the insurgents bore a portrait of the Lkham Buddha, and they still performed the sor ceremony for the troops on occasion.

The troops of duvchin Sambuu were led by four senior and four junior generals. Plans were made with Tserenjav regarding the establishment of organizations following a separation from the Office of Ochirbat after the fighting had ended. The mighty general reported that

After joining with duvchin Sambuu at Bugsein Khüree, someone was shot dead and later on his body was chopped up. Duvchin Sambuu, Jav, Bor Gegeen, and Eemegt Gegeen had about 800 soldiers at this monastery. In fact, I served as one of Bor Gegeen’s militiamen. Once, when we were beating a spy we had captured from the People’s army, the teacher duvchin Sambuu ordered us to beat him harder, and we beat the revolutionary to death. When the Bor Gegeen Samdan was making a sacrifice to the flag he made a sacrifice with the heart of a khamuut zaan (mange-ridden elephant). If the people did not offer us food and drink, we just seized it anyway. I myself took part in the destruction of the administration of Tosontsengel sum.

Sodnom, the Minister of Industry, was captured, tortured, and killed at the camp of the insurgents who were at Tariat Khüree and Ereen Mod monasteries. Sodnom’s remains were brought back to Ulaanbaatar in June. We took part in his funeral in the Züün Altan valley. The Industrial Combine which was completed in 1932 was named after
The senior doctor in Arkhangai aimag, our respected pioneer, Dr. Nemoi, volunteered to accompany a unit of the People's Revolutionary army, and was himself captured by the insurgents while treating the wounded. One day while he was treating some wounded insurgents, he was shot dead and his body thrown on a hill to the east of the monastery. A detachment of the People's Revolutionary Army and some partisans, consisting of Arkhangai aimag activists, liberated Tariatyn Khüree. After the bulk of the insurgents' forces had been crushed, Dr. Nemoi's remains were transported and interred on a hill to the west of Tsetserleg, where a monument was erected. In 1961, Nemoi's remains were transported and re-interred near the Central Hospital of the aimag. Around the time the new monument was being erected, Nemoi's wife and son came to take part in the ceremony. This hospital, the Central Hospital in Arkhangai aimag, was named after him. I met with those two friends of mine at the Academy of Sciences building and we talked about our memories of the events of that time. His wife and son had both worked at the Botkin hospital in Moscow.

While units of the People's Revolutionary Army formed from Partisans of Party and Youth League members were crushing the insurgents' rebellion, units of the People's Revolutionary Army distributed propaganda leaflets with the help of aircraft. Party members and military commissars had moved directly towards the detachments of the attacking insurgents in order to distribute propaganda. Some of them lost their lives, but others succeeded in dispersing the insurgents' detachments and even won a few over to their own side.

Neither the officers and soldiers of our People's Army, nor the members of the Party and Youth League spared their lives or their blood in the struggle to distance the poor and middle-ranking lamas from the influence of the counter-revolutionaries, and to win them over to their own side. After a short period of time, the rebellion was crushed.

The trouble caused by the lay and secular counter-revolutionary feudalists resulted in the deaths of many people. Among the damaged and destroyed sum centers and settlements were some damaged monasteries and temples. The cooperatives lost money and goods valued at many millions of tögrög. Livestock, which formed the livelihood of collectives, cooperatives, and collectivized and private herdsmen were lost on a vast scale. During the rebellion, some of the local people were conscripted into the rebel forces and were worrying about how to escape. The insurgents seized local officials, Party and Youth League members, and intellectuals. They threatened them with beatings and imprisonment, many people were killed, and non-Party and Youth League members and ordinary young people were conscripted into their forces. However, some did manage to escape from the lamaist soldiers and by hiding in different places saved their lives.

Young women were violently abused, and everywhere the herdsmen's cheese, meat, food, drink, livestock, and property were seized during widespread banditry. Some rowdy groups became the helpers of the insurgents, and the ordinary people were intimidated by various generals, duvchin and officials and then beaten and threatened. For this reason, some officials outside the Party and Youth League managed to get themselves recruited by the Partisan detachments to struggle against the insurgents. Others, who were not recruited, went for many months without enough to eat or drink, concealed in the mountains, and if caught were questioned, tortured, and harried to death.

Around that time, my [former] teacher Choisdoo, who was from my area, was recruited into the Partisan army and was captured by the rebels three or four times, but
succeeded in escaping each time. After working as a spy for the Partisan army, he was shot and wounded and while he lay on the ground he shouted, "Destroy the rebels! Let the People's government rise up!" Then, a lama who happened to dislike him came along with two lamaist soldiers and tore his heart out as a sacrifice to the flag.

About this time, my relatives, just like other ordinary people, feared being trampled upon by the insurgents. The rebels were looking for my elder brother Dam-chaabadgar, who was chairman of the sum cooperative, with the aim of arresting and punishing him. However, so that the collective's money would not be lost to the rebels, he hid in the mountains. Though he was captured on one occasion, he escaped with his life. Then, after the rebellion had been suppressed, he returned and handed over all the money to the collective. The rebels had succeeded in setting fire to all the buildings and property of the collective.

In June 1932, a joint meeting of the Party Central Committee and the Central Investigative Commission was held at which the policies of the deviationists were resolutely condemned, and their leadership, including Shijee, a secretary of the Central Committee, Badrakh, and others were dismissed from their posts. Genden, and Eldev-Ochir were promoted to positions in the national leadership. Following this plenum, a decision was taken to carry out the "New Turn" policy. This affirmed the Party line, and clearly showed how the country would be gradually developed along a non-capitalist route to reach socialism.

While this decision was being taken, there is evidence that advice was being given to our Party by the Comintern and the Soviet Communist Party. In fact, I heard that a report on the New Turn policy had been given by Eldev-Ochir at the Recreation Ground. The remainder of the rebels were eliminated by November 1932. Their principal leaders were arrested and taken to Ulaanbaatar. While evidence was being gathered, the aimag and sums which had suffered in the rebellions had their collectives and schools rebuilt. The active participants in rebellious activities were tried by the ordinary people at local meetings.

The population as a whole clearly understood all the facets of the lay and secular feudalist rebels and successfully demanded that their leaders be tried under revolutionary law and be summarily executed on the Recreation Ground at Ulaanbaatar during April and May 1933.
At Middle School and College in the Soviet Union

In the autumn of 1932 I was able to attend school in the Soviet Union. After I obtained some money from the Ministry of Education for traveling expenses and clothing, I went around the cooperative shops with my teacher and friend Battseren to buy a cheap European-style suit, a pair of boots, and two outer shirts which I packed in my suitcase without even unfolding them. After arriving in the Soviet Union, I tried to wear the shirts and the suit but found that they were all too large.

We left Ulaanbaatar with a group of students in a truck owned by the Ministry of Education and reached the town of Altanbulag, having passed through the villages of Kharaa and Yeröö. Altanbulag had a Russian-like appearance and seemed to consist of many streets lined with tiny log cabins. The Soviet consular building was in the center along with the buildings of the Party and other public organizations. There was a small temple on a terrace to the northwest of the town where in 1921 the People’s Partisans had liberated the place from Chinese occupation using four machine guns installed there. Interestingly, it became known as The Four-Sided Temple.

There was a hollow on one side of the temple which contained a small two-story building with an enclosure. This was a liquor distillery owned by a wealthy black American woman. When the distillery was taken over by the state it was said that she opened a canteen and made a living through trading. Alongside the distillery was a large enclosure where the customs building was located. The Mongolian-Soviet border was visible a short distance away. We set off to cross the border in the truck. There was a large wooden gate with a blue frame on our side of the border on which the state insignia of Mongolia—the Soembo design—was clearly marked. A little further on was another large gate lined with bricks, on the upper edge of which was the Soviet insignia with the letters USSR.

I felt as if I was indeed passing from one country to another when I went through these gates. We showed our papers at the border along with the things we were carrying, and before very long we moved off into the town of Ar Khiagt, also known as Troitskosavsk. Troitskosavsk was a Soviet frontier town located in a wooded area on the north side of the pass. Military barracks, the houses of ordinary people, and Christian churches were all present. From there we went to the bank of the Selenge river where we boarded a tiny passenger boat bound for Deed Üd (Ulaan Üd). Although it was a very novel experience to travel on a ship for the first time, the choppy waves made me ill and I passed the night feeling quite exhausted. We arrived in the city of Deed Üd the following day.

We arrived at the port and alighted from the boat onto the bank where we were met by Törtogtokh, the leader of the Mongolian Rabfak Students’ Union and a few other students. They took us away by car. The city of Deed Üd appeared different from the towns and settlements I had seen previously as it was a large, clean city. It consisted
mainly of individual wooden buildings, streets, and open, sandy places.

We continued our journey and stopped at a two-story building on a Mongolian street near the city center. The students of the Mongol Rabfak lived there and had their meals there as well. We occupied a room there where we rested for a day and the next morning followed the regular students to familiarize ourselves with the layout of the city. We spent a few days there wandering around the place.

Above all, we wanted to see the railway and the station. What I saw completely changed any preconceptions I had of a railroad. It was my understanding that a so-called train was a convoy of carriages which rolled along a thick, wide polished metal road, but in fact it was totally different. Although the two thin rails of the track did not impress me when I saw them, I was amazed by the size of the train, its pulling power, and the large number of carriages being drawn.

As we walked past the houses and enclosures, we came across Russians and Buryats. Since we could not speak any Russian, we asked the students accompanying us to interpret for us. We went to watch a shadow theater in one of the parks of Deed Ud.

One day, we accompanied our friends to see a Russian Orthodox church where many people seemed to be standing upright and making a sign by touching a hand to their head and chest and singing songs in loud voices. This was their way of worshipping and reciting readings with their priest. There were a few people dressed in black at the far end of the church who appeared to be conducting the service. The priests were bearded and wore a symbolic cross called a zagalmai on a soft cord hung around their necks. We took off our hats, stood there for a while and followed the worshippers through the church, noting that they were lighting candles. There were many statues and paintings of gods. When I saw all this, although it was quite different from the ceremony and layout of a Mongolian Lamaist temple, it was still clearly a temple of religious worship.

Before long, classes began. It was decided that lessons would be given on the top floor of the two-story building in the town center, a short distance from our living accommodations. During the early 1930’s, as there were no native Mongols who had completed middle school, let alone any higher education, it became necessary to train veterinarians, zoo veterinary technicians, engineers, and other specialists. With this aim in mind, a school named Mongol Rabfak was established in a Soviet city. The Mongolian and Soviet governments came to an agreement regarding the education of middle school pupils and the USSR People’s Educational Commissariat (now the Ministry of Education) organized the implementation of this agreement.

During the discussions on which city the school was to be established in, the leadership of Soviet Buryatia suggested that the school should be established in its own capital, Deed Ud (Ulaan Ud), and in 1930 the foundations of the school were laid there. The school curriculum was adapted from that of the old gimnaz and the contemporary Soviet Ten-Year school. Russian and Buryat teachers with a higher education and many years’ experience of teaching were appointed to teach at this school. During a five year period of study we were to have lessons in Russian, mathematics, physics, chemistry, international relations, botany, biology, zoology, and other interesting subjects. As the first-year courses were extremely hard, we focused our attention mainly on memorizing Russian words, reading, and writing. During breaks in our lessons we played with Rus-
sian children with whom we practised a few of the sentences we had been taught.

In winter, the stores provided the children of our school with a somewhat short overcoat and in summer we were given green cotton trousers and shirts. Although the food we ate was good, overall there was not enough of it at the time. When we were being taught by our teachers, they used to tell us, "Above all, you should direct the bulk of your attention to the four subjects—Russian language, Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry. Without those you will not be able to advance." As they told us this repeatedly, we made sure we found time to concentrate on these subjects.

From the second year onwards, we began to memorize Russian songs and poems. In particular, we learned A. S. Pushkin’s "Anchar", "Prison", "In Siberia", and the short poems of N. A. Nekrasov. At each stage of our class’s progress, as well as watching films and learning songs, we decided to carry out some community work. Sengee, who had worked at the Tsetserleg Youth League in Arkhangai, organized a theater group with "Tall" Lkhagvajav, Oyuun, and others. They presented Mongolian plays, including "Queen Dolgor and the commoner Damdin," "The Three Significant Hills" and plays which they themselves had written. I became friends with a Russian boy, Tolya, a Buryat boy, Lev, and a Tungus boy named Gosha. I spoke with them in Russian and occasionally visited them at their homes during holidays.

When summer arrived, the students went to stay in several wooden buildings at the edge of the city where we played football and followed the young Buryats by standing in a circle holding hands and taking part in a dance called "Yookhor." Radnaabazar, one of the students at our school, performed a Caucasian dance and Törtogtokh did a Russian dance. Later, we decided to learn to dance a European dance in pairs. With Radnaabazar in charge, a group of students did extremely well at sports and gave all kinds of performances. They always talked about becoming circus performers.

Pupils such as Sengee and Radnaabazar wrote short plays and poems which were displayed on notice boards. There was a considerable increase in the number of people who enjoyed writing poetry. One of our students, named Batmönkh, used to imitate A. S. Pushkin while reading poetry. In order to do this he bought some old clothes from the commission store which sold second-hand clothes. Dressed in some black clothes with long pleats, over which he wore an open deel and a tsan hat, he made the audience laugh.

Sometimes our school would go to help with the construction of the locomotive and wagon-repair works. The teachers Sh. Luvsanvandan and later, D. Choijilsüren were sent from Ulaanbaatar to teach Mongolian at this school. Though Luvsanvandan was teaching lessons in Mongolian, he strove to learn Russian and did a lot of reading. On rest days he would go around telling us interesting facts on ancient history, literature, and the biographies of scholars. The teacher Choijilsüren discussed Mongolian history and classical and modern Mongolian literature and gave us advice on techniques to use when writing compositions in Mongolian. Both of these teachers advised us to study hard at Russian, Mathematics, Physics, and Biology, and to go on to obtain higher and professional qualifications. Later on, many students followed that advice. The teachers all advised us as follows: It will be good for the country if you all get qualifications and become proficient in foreign languages. However, we already have quite a lot of people who can speak in public.

The math teacher was a huge old Buryat man called Khazagaev. Abasheev, the Russian language teacher, was also a plump old man. The two of them used to tell us that
during the autonomous period they had been to Da Khüree and had taken part in the ini-
tial establishment of Mongolian schools there. They had been awarded the Mongolian
Erdene Ochir medal for Mongolians living abroad. A group of Russian and Buryat teach-
ers, including A. I. Alekseev, Bazhin, and others, quoted from the works of famous Rus-
sian literary authors and so greatly increased our knowledge about this subject.

Our students organized their own work in the community and kept in touch with
the situation in Mongolia. The Ninth Party Congress held in 1934 approved the change in
policy ("New Turn" policy) and pointed out the new direction of the nation’s develop-
ment. From 1933 to 1937 Mongolia’s feudal classes were liquidated and a struggle was
undertaken to develop the nation along a non-capitalist route. About this time, the Indus-
trial Combine began production. In addition to the establishment of industries, handicraft
associations were organized which began to attract herdsmen and poor lamas.

The automotive transport organization called Mongol Teekh had undergone
considerable development, and its branches were operating in the aimag banners. The
large foreign companies continued to diminish in number, and in the end were com-
pletely excluded from the country. Education, culture, and the press continued to develop
across the nation. The Mongolian Theater was established in 1931 and in 1933 the acting
troupe “Kharkhikhuin Zasag” performed in an international competition of revolutionary
theater held in Moscow, where it achieved quite a high placing. On its way home, it [the
theater troupe] performed at our school’s summer camp. This provided a great impetus
for the further progress of the free artist E. Oyuun and others.

After the Japanese imperialists penetrated deeply into northern China, we were
repeatedly informed about the danger posed to Mongolian independence. A verbal
agreement was reached between the Soviet Union and Mongolia in 1934, and in 1936 a
protocol for mutual assistance was established which strengthened the independence of
our country and was a significant factor in its further development.

We obtained reading material from Mongolia in the form of political texts,
newspapers, journals and literature. Around this time, leading Mongolian figures con-
tinually came to give speeches. A Youth League cell was established and linked to our
school. I was elected its secretary for a few years. On one occasion the Youth League
members who were studying in the Soviet Union appointed me as their representative to
the Ninth Congress of the Youth League. As this congress was to be convened just two
days later, I had to hurry to get there. With my invitation from the Central Committee of
the Youth League, I set off on one of the twice-weekly U-2 flights from Ulaan Üd to
Ulaanbaatar. I sat in an open, three-seater plane with an aged Buryat woman who was
dressed in a warm coat. On seeing that the woman felt unwell I also felt uncomfortable.
We descended to an airfield northeast of Altanbulag to recover for a while.

During the stop I met a few German businessmen who were on their way from
Ulaanbaatar westwards through the Soviet Union. “Have a good meal and a glass of
vodka. Then you will feel better for your onward journey towards Ulaanbaatar,” they
suggested. I ate well and drank some tea. However, since I could not bear the smell of
alcohol, let alone drink it, I did not take their advice. When we flew on again I felt worse.
Somehow we managed to reach the airport next to Ulaanbaatar’s Maakhuur hill.

On my arrival at the airport, I spent quite a while in a state of bewilderment as I
did not recognize anyone and did not know where to go. Then, someone at the airport
telephoned the Central Committee of the Youth League, which replied that a car was
being sent, so I should wait there. I went for a short walk in the breeze and felt a bit bet-
An “America-8” car drew up with just a driver inside. “Have a seat in the car. I will take you” he said. I got into the car and on the way to the city center I noted its main features.

The Ministry of Transport was near the East Terrace along with other square modern buildings, the Army Club, the Youth League Offices, the Ministry of Defense, the Office of the Party Central Committee and other new buildings which had been constructed. On the northern and eastern sides of the Choijin Lama Temple there were several wooden buildings with tall pointed roofs, as well as several new buildings made of white stone.

The car came to a stop outside the door of one of those buildings. On entering the building, one of the former pupils of the Tsetserleg middle school, a girl called Doljin, greeted me and asked in a familiar way “Did you have a good journey?” She told me that all my relatives were well and that she had married Sodnomdorj, the secretary of the Central Committee of the Youth League. Sodnomdorj was working at the office of the Youth League in my native aimag, and as I knew something about it, he invited me to his home. I had some tea there and then went to the ger where the delegates were staying.

During the congress we listened to the report made by the Central Committee of the Youth League, criticisms were made and a Central Committee was elected. The congress was held in the old Recreation Hall, which was a wooden, ger-shaped building. Speeches were made by leading figures in the Party and government. I have fond memories of this, my first opportunity to listen to participants giving speeches and reading reports at a major conference. While the congress was in progress, I went to enquire after my male cousin Sanjaajav in order to obtain news of my family.

While I was asking about Jügdernamjil’s family, he gave me some unfortunate news. After I had left for school, Jügdernamjil returned from holiday and worked successfully along with his wife. Unfortunately, he had contracted a severe recurrent infection the previous year and finally died of it. I was very sad at the death of so young a person.

After the congress had ended, the secretary of the Central Committee of the Youth League called me over before I left and said, “I want to present you with this award for all your work in the Youth League cell,” and he presented me with a pocket watch. Until then I had never tried to use a watch, and as I did not know how to use one, I was afraid I might break it. Then I bought some tobacco, sweets and books, and returned to my school. After arriving back I gave a talk about what was new in Ulaanbaatar and about the congress. My friends gathered in my quarters on several evenings to ask about the situation in Mongolia, and they smoked the few boxes of tobacco I had brought back and ate the sweets.

Occasionally we did some subbotnik [voluntary unpaid work done for patriotic reasons] work at construction sites in Ulaan Üd and in the neighboring villages. During the years of my schooling in the Soviet Union (1932-1937), farmers and cooperative workers were successfully growing and harvesting their own crops. Everyone talked about industry in the Urals, Ukraine, and Moscow, where several power stations, steel smelters, automobile factories, and machine tool and equipment factories were being established on a wide scale.

The Second Five-Year Plan of the Soviet people was fulfilled ahead of time, and we became familiar with the triumphs of this period of the establishment of socialism. Our teachers taught us about the opposition to the imperialist capitalists and the danger
posed by their cruel Fascism, and the great deeds and struggles carried out by the Soviet people in the international arena. We also understood these things from our reading of the Mongolian press.

We had interesting discussions on the situation in the Soviet Union and its capital, Moscow. Some Mongolian students who were returning home from their studies at KUTV [Communist University of the Working Masses of the East] and the cavalry colleges in Moscow and Tver’ met with us and told us about what was going on in those places. The students who had graduated from the KUTV were appointed to important posts in the Party and in the community.

Some of the students at the school were badly prepared [for such tasks]. As they needed to be taught through interpreters, their educational achievements were poor by the time they returned home. I remember one of my friends who considered our school to be a “great big school,” as he put it, and that he “had already finished his math and physics the previous year” and that this year he was “just completing his politics” [i.e. was finishing well ahead of schedule]. I remember my other friends teasing him about saying this.

The first group of my friends who finished their studies at the school included Radnaabazar (who later founded our State Circus), Dashiimaa, who graduated from the Mongolian State University and became a lecturer there, and Yu. Tsedenbal who, having studied in Irkutsk, spent a year in Ulaan Ùd before graduating. I was in the third group of students, which graduated after him in 1937. [Following our graduation] we decided we would go to see the sights of Moscow and Leningrad.

On the way to Moscow and Leningrad we passed Lake Baikal with its pure clean water, some long Siberian rivers, the Ural mountains, and various large and small towns, until we reached Moscow, the Soviet capital. From the very first day I heard we were going to visit Moscow, I was eager to get there as soon as possible. The nearer we approached Moscow, the more impatient we became, and just as we entered the outskirts of the city, we got off at a large station where some people from the Moscow City Education Department greeted us and accommodated us in a college building on the edge of the city. Moscow was extremely large, and it was impossible to know in which direction you were heading. It was the sort of city which could make you feel giddy.

We stayed there for several days during which we saw the Metro with its beautiful and palatial stations, the underground tracks, Lenin’s mausoleum, Red Square, Museums, and Gorki Park. From there we took a train to Leningrad and visited the place which commemorated the start of the revolution, famous museums of history and art, the Petropavlovskii Prison where revolutionaries with a vision of democracy were made to suffer during the Tsarist era, the Cathedral of St.Isaac with its many marble columns, and the Baltic coast and Gulf of Finland.

After studying in small frontier towns, I felt as if I was in a dream in these two large famous and historic cities. We decided that the things we had seen there would not be forgotten for a long time and we tried to mention them when the opportunity arose.

After finishing school I sat for my exams, and because entry to college was the right thing to do, I went to the Mongolian embassy in Moscow where I talked about this with ambassador Dar’zav. He thought that I should become a composer at the College of Theater. I had never taken part in any plays while at the Rabfak, and as I had no talent for this, I turned down his suggestion. One of the staff at the embassy said I had no option but to go to that college, and so, accompanied by an interpreter, I went to the Arbat square where the college was located.
Accordingly, we arrived at the Lunacharskii National College of Artistic Theater, a large multi-story building. We passed many of its rooms on our way to a room on the third floor which we entered to find a short, dark-haired woman dressed in a blue shirt. On inquiring who she was she turned out to be Anna Furmanova, the wife of the composer Furmanov. I found out from her about the college and the courses which were taken by would-be composers. I decided that these were not for me. I left and returned to the embassy. When I explained what had happened, they replied, "In that case, go to Siberia and enroll at the Irkutsk Teacher Training College." I gladly accepted this advice and soon left Moscow to get to Irkutsk early to do my entrance examinations.

On my way back from Moscow, I continually reflected on the things I had seen in Moscow and Leningrad and regretted that I had not remained to enroll at one of the colleges of those two large cities. I was still blaming myself for not doing this as I arrived in Irkutsk.

Irkutsk was built a long time ago on the Angara, a river with cold, clear water, and which is one of eastern Siberia's most famous streams. There were over 200,000 people living there. The city had many large industries, several theaters, museums, a university, a teacher training college, a mining institute, a college of agriculture, and many specialized middle schools in addition to the general middle schools.

The main street of the city was named after Karl Marx. On both sides of it there were beautiful old two- and four-story buildings. A number of other streets where cultural buildings and schools were located intersected with this street. The administration of our college was located at the far end of Karl Marx Street on the banks of the Angara next to a large garden named after the Paris Commune. When I arrived there I saw a white two-story building connected to a long, narrow building and several smaller buildings within an enclosure. The college administration and the history classroom were accommodated within this building. However, the mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, foreign and national languages, international relations and other classes were held on opposite sides of the city. Each classroom in the college contained four groups of three seats.

I went to see the secretary of the school administration to explain why I had been enrolled there. A report had already been received. "It says here that a student is arriving from Mongolia. That must be you. From here you should go to our classroom accommodation at a place called Temiryazev Street where you will meet with the secretary of the examination commission," he said. I asked where that street was located and walked about a kilometer to a two-story building. I went through the main entrance and opened a door marked "Examination Commission," where I saw a Russian woman of about the same age as me. When I told her why I was there, she answered, "You are too late. Two examinations have been held and the third will be held the day after tomorrow. That one is in mathematics." She explained the rules of the examination to me. I took a copy of the examination program and I spent two days studying math lessons.

Two days later, I competed in the mathematics examination along with three other candidates. Within ten days I managed to sit for the examinations in the remaining two subjects, and managed to gain a place on the college's history course, where I began my studies.

The two-story building where I arrived continued (eastwards) on into a long, narrow building where I was accommodated in a room with four other people. The building was nick-named "The Sausage" by the students due to its long, crooked shape.
four who were with me were third and fourth-year students, and were quite a lot older than me. They all greeted me pleasantly and joked with me. Some of them were school administrators, others were head teachers of middle schools or classroom teachers. There were some people who had studied for two years at home and began their formal studies in the school itself from the third year onwards.

The students used to go to the countryside during their holidays. When they went home to visit their wives and children they would bring back food and drink which they shared with me. One of them was Aleksandr Merkur’ev. Since he was about my age, I used to ask him for advice. He took a great interest in the current situation in Mongolia. He used to say “Mongolia is one of our good friends” and he became a very close friend of mine. I also learned a great deal from the students about the customs of the Russian people and their history.

By all accounts, the first-year courses were not particularly easy and I spent all my free time studying. I passed the winter and the spring examinations. Included among my many new friends were Foman, Blagrev, Shumilevskii, and Gubenko. I used to sit in the library with these four friends of mine preparing for the examinations.

The academic library in Irkutsk had a wide range of interesting books. Here I had the opportunity to read books on historical subjects, and in particular, textbooks on Far Eastern history and literature. Thus I read with interest the accounts of the 13th century European travelers in Mongolia such as Plano Carpini, D. Rubrick and Marco Polo, and the famous Russian scholar I. Bichurin. Later, I read works about the Orient, especially about China, Japan, and India and the works of the learned experts on Mongolian history such as N. M. Yadrintsev, V. V. Radlov, A. V. Klements, G. N. Potanin, A. M. Pozdneev, famous scholars on India such as O. Rozenberg, O. Sherbatskoi and G. Ol’denburg, and the China specialists V. M. Alekseev, N. V. Kyunir, and the researcher on Arab culture I. Yu. Krachkovskii. I used to quote them in seminars and when giving talks during my course work.

Three people had already enrolled in colleges in the city before me. B. Gombojav had studied at the College of Finance. Lkhamsüren was unable to graduate from college there and returned home. Tsedenbal did complete his studies and returned home. Gombojav continually changed courses and spent many years there. Our classes were taught by professors, lecturers, and other senior professionals. It was interesting to listen to their lectures. There was an extra-curricular group studying historical research and a literature study group, both of which I decided to attend in the evenings.

In addition to Russian, we also studied Latin and English. During the five years we studied the following courses in sequence: ancient history, medieval history, recent and modern history, Russian and Soviet history, colonial history, European literature, Russian literature, archeology, historical source materials, political economy theory, history of the Communist Party, dialectic and historical materials, pedagogy, psychology, teaching materials, military studies, and a general history of art. We also had sports lessons. The teachers conducted seminars in general history, Soviet history and Party history. They regularly asked the students to present reports on these subjects. We wrote articles and compositions on our own in Russian Language and Literature classes which we then discussed and criticized in class. Sometimes, public figures in the city came to give talks and lectures on art, literature, history, and politics.

Around this time, a Mongolian branch of a veterinary hospital was being established alongside the Irkutsk Agricultural and Technical College. I went to give lectures
and talks at that college and I carried out public work assignments from the Komsomol committee. The principal of the college, P. F. Pigelëv, wanted me to take the Mongolian students to do some community work during the summer vacation. I accompanied the Mongolian students of the agricultural technical college on a two-month visit to a village a hundred kilometers away.

I invited Gombojav, a student at the Irkutsk Medical College, to spend the summer with me. We spent a pleasant holiday reading books, newspapers and journals. We also played football, and together we learned songs and music which we performed in public along with Mongolian plays.

We visited the houses of the Russian villagers and learned a lot about their way of life. As the village people regarded us as friendly Mongolian youngsters, they invited us into their homes. The local Russian children came to us to take part in sporting competitions which we held in the evenings. Thus we became well acquainted with our new friends and passed the summer in this village in its natural, wooded location.

During our holiday, the school principal, P. F. Pigelëv, came to visit us on several occasions and offered us friendly advice and instruction. Later on, he became leader of the Irkutsk Youth League. Having been a responsible member of the City Party committee, he advanced further to become deputy director of the Organizational Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and head of a department in the USSR Supreme Soviet. I once came across him unexpectedly while he was working in one of these positions and we talked about our old times in Irkutsk.

We returned to our classes in the autumn, and after spending the winter and spring there, I returned to Ulaanbaatar in 1939 for a holiday. On my arrival, I went to stay with my elder cousin Sanjaajav. I decided it would be nice to watch the army naadam that year. The day before the naadam, my cousin Sanjaajav and his relatives went to a place near where the naadam was being held on the south bank of the river Tuul and erected a ger. I went along with them on the day of the naadam, and we passed the time together eating and drinking airag. During the daytime we watched the wrestling, horse racing, and archery, and in the evening we watched plays being performed.

At that time, European-style dancing was quite popular among the young people of Ulaanbaatar and dancing went on all over the place. Young people, generally dressed in Mongolian deel, gathered every evening to dance on a wooden platform in the naadam square in front of the Army Club. Occasionally, military personnel and Mongolian students wearing European clothing could be seen among them. Being students of a Soviet college, we mingled with these young people, who invited us to pass the time dancing.

Every ministry trumpeted the successes of its respective branches in photographs and charts displayed in ‘Red Corners’ built from wood and in tents and pavilions in the naadam field. On each day of the naadam, a large number of gers and tents were erected in the naadam field on and behind the north terrace of the river. People from the countryside and the towns could rest here. Kitchens and shops were opened in the tents, where there was plenty of food and drink as well as goods to buy.

Following instructions from Natsag, Departmental Head of the Ministry of Education, I went on duty at the Ministry of Education’s Red Corner and while I was there giving brief explanations of the things on display to visitors, Natsag suddenly entered and called me over in a whisper, saying, “As soon as these people have gone, close the Red Corner and put away the photograph of the leaders on the wall. These people were arrested last night and have been taken to prison.” The photograph was of Luvsansharav
At Middle School and College in the Soviet Union

and Dogsom. So, I followed orders and handed over the display to the next person to be on duty. That evening, I reflected with surprise on how dangerous life was in our country. While we were being attacked by Japan from abroad, what was happening to our leadership seemed strange, but we went along with it, assuming that the Party was doing things properly. However, our worship of this one man [Choibalsan] turned out to be a mistake, as everyone found out in the end.

When the naadam was over, I was summoned to the Ministry of Education where my old acquaintance Natsag declared in a grand manner, “We are moving you to the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Defense.” When I replied, “Would it not be more useful to the country if I finished my schooling?” He smiled and said, “I know more than you do. I was just joking when I said you were to join the army. However, you will actually spend a month on a military course teaching Russian.”

Accordingly, I went to the Ministry of Defense and accepted my appointment. I went to the summer camp of the General Military College, which was in a bend of the Tuul river on a plain to the northwest of Buyant Ukhaa where the national naadam was held. A two-month preparatory course had been established alongside the school for junior officers who would go to train in the Soviet Union.

Every day I taught them about world affairs in addition to the Russian language. We concentrated on the Russian alphabet, sentence construction, and modern conversation. Since that course was the direct responsibility of the general college, it became one of its branches and the course students all lived in army accommodations within the military organization. I too had to wear leather army boots, a green army shirt, trousers, cap, and belt. I was put in a room with a student and a Russian driver.

One evening, the director of the General College was coming and so we had to get on parade quickly. He arrived in an open-top car and was wearing an oriental-style army hat along with his medals. He inspected the parade and went away, never to be seen again. However, the school commissioner, Luvsandorj, continued to meet with the teachers and handed out orders. I became acquainted with Dashnyam, a teacher of national history, B. Lkhamsüren, the Mongolian language teacher, and the teachers of politics S. Ravdan, Lkhündev, and Demchig. Later on, Ravdan became a general.

While we were listening to the singers and musicians in the square at the naadam Army Club, a man who looked like an army officer came up and said, “Everyone stand up! The father of General Demid is coming.” Accordingly, we all stood up and looked towards the door and clapped. We were unable to see who was coming, but after people had sat down, an army officer led in an old countryman and seated him right at the front of the audience. Then, we listened to music while looking at the general’s father. When the meeting was over, before
the many officers had set off in their cars, we heard General Demid talking to the instructors and advisors in fluent Russian.

One day, which happened to be a rest day, the weather was hot and I took off my regulation leather boots. Dressed in my European-style trousers I went for a walk along the river bank. Meanwhile, the commissar Luvsandorj of the General (Military) College came along on his horse. Recognizing me, he told me to go over to the headquarters. I duly entered the ger which housed the staff headquarters and while I was standing to attention in military fashion, Luvsandorj shouted in a deep, loud voice that he was going to “punish me.” I stood in silence listening to the commissar. Outwardly he appeared very fierce, and although he behaved in a threatening way towards people, he was really a good, compassionate man. “You must not walk around in ordinary clothes like this in a military area. It is against regulations. So go and get changed out of your play clothes and don’t do it again,” he told me.

Soon afterwards I returned to school in Irkutsk. When I had resumed my studies there, I heard that General Demid had arrived by train. When I heard that he had died of food poisoning, I felt sad, as he was someone I had just seen recently. His remains were cremated and transported to Ulaanbaatar for burial. On hearing that he had been declared an enemy, I was astonished and felt disgusted at having grieved at his death.

During the time I was teaching the short course for the soldiers in Ulaanbaatar, and after my return to Irkutsk, I listened to many lectures about the dangers of war. In 1933 a militarist party led by Hitler gained power in Germany, a large European state. It began to arrest members of rising forces in its own country and in particular members of the Communist Party. Throughout this time, Japan had been advancing into China. Later on, after Japan occupied Manchuria, it encroached on the Mongolian and Soviet borders. In 1935 the Italian imperialists invaded Ethiopia, and in 1936 Germany and Italy assisted the Spanish Falange Fascists, and war broke out against the government of the Republic of Spain. In 1936 Germany and Japan formed an imperialist coalition against the Comintern, which became known as the Berlin-Tokyo-Rome Axis.

At that time, the Soviet Union and the Comintern united other international parties and conducted a major effort to prevent the danger of war breaking out. The danger of war was fast approaching the Soviet Union and our motherland, Mongolia. In 1938, the Japanese imperialists attacked the Soviet Far Eastern frontier near Lake Khasan, but were destroyed. Around the same time they also encroached on our own eastern frontier near Bulan Ders and Lake Buir. The newspapers in Irkutsk continued to put out reports about the Japanese attack on the Mongolian border. Sometimes reports from Tass would be printed in large type and posted on buildings. While our motherland was being attacked by the Japanese, we Mongols were worried and spent day and night trying to obtain news of what was happening. Some Japanese spies did infiltrate into parts of our country to carry out harmful and destructive work. We felt anxious when, from time to time, we received news of their capture.

In 1939, the Japanese imperialists fought hard over several months in an attack on the eastern frontier of Mongolia in the area of Khalkhyn Gol. During that difficult time, when an attack was being made on the national frontier of Mongolia, threatening its independence, the Soviet government announced to the whole world that it would offer military assistance to Mongolia. Powerful units of the Soviet Red Army went to the battle front at Khalkhyn Gol and dealt a decisive blow to the Japanese imperialists, thereby preserving our independence.
When I visited Ulaanbaatar in 1939 for a vacation, the city was in a war-time situation, and a general state of anxiety prevailed. Anti-aircraft guns had been installed in some of the buildings of the city. Soviet and Mongolian soldiers could be seen heading eastwards. However, our people were confident that with the help of the Soviet Red Army, we would be victorious, and we expressed our gratitude to the Soviet Army and the Soviet people.

During May, when I was at college, and even in the autumn, after I had returned there, people used to say, “When the Soviet Army destroys the Japanese it will be a help to all of you. We ourselves are also ready and willing to fight for you.” In fact, a few of my acquaintances did fight in the battle at Khalkhyn Gol. In April 1939, Hitler’s Germany attacked Czechoslovakia, and in September the Germans attacked Poland and progressively began to occupy the countries of Europe. Due to a mistake made by the Western Imperialists, the Soviet-Finnish war began, in which Finland was defeated. Since that time, relations between those countries have normalised and have continued to improve steadily.

The following year, B. Tüdev, N. Luvsanchütem, and D. Tsedev, who had studied at school with me, joined me in the history course and we enjoyed being together again as a group. I met a Russian language student named Zina Zhuravleva who was at the Teacher Training College. We used to study together in the library and occasionally went together to the cinema and theater. On our days off I would visit her at home and meet her brothers and sisters.

When I briefly came back to Ulaanbaatar during the summer vacation of 1940, it turned out that my elder cousin Sanjaajav had died. I spent the summer with his wife and relatives. The wife of my deceased cousin Sanjaajav gave me a few tögrög and said “Take this and buy something to send to your mother. Someone from back home is here right now.” I duly spent half of it to buy some sweets and had the remaining money taken back home with a letter.

After the military naadam was over, I returned to Irkutsk by car via Ulaan Üd. As well as sitting the final class examinations in the academic year, it was very important for me to do some advance preparation for the national examinations. Apart from my days off, I spent the whole winter studying in the library. On Saturdays and Sundays however, I relaxed by taking Zina to the cinema.

Then, in the winter of 1940, Zina and I settled down together after a small student wedding. We first went to register at the Marriage Registry Office. Then we assembled at the house of one of the students. There were six of us celebrating the wedding, including Zina’s girlfriends and B. Tüdev and D. Tsedev from Mongolia. After that we went to Zina’s relatives, where many people had gathered for the celebration.

Soon, the spring of 1941 arrived, and one warm day while I was sitting and studying, the administrative secretary rushed into our classroom, and after asking the teacher for permission to speak, turned to me and said “Go and see the principal right away.” I was taken by surprise, and for an instant it seemed as if my classmates were looking in my direction, wondering what had happened. I practically ran from the second to the third floor and into the principal’s room.

The principal looked at me in astonishment. “Why are you panicking like this?” he asked. “I’m all right, I’ve just run up the stairs,” I replied. The principal asked me to sit down. “In just two hours time, your Minister of Education, Mashlai, will be arriving at the city railway station. The Siberian author, G. F. Kungurov, who is a departmental head
of the Ministry of Education in this region and myself will meet him there. We want to take you as an interpreter.”

When we reached the railway station, the head of the Regional Education Department was already there. As soon as the train pulled in, Mashlai, a youngish-looking minister got off, accompanied by a Russian. Mashlai had previously been studying with us in middle school. As his Russian was quite reasonable, he did not need an interpreter for ordinary conversation. I took him to a hotel in Irkutsk, and spent two days with him visiting different places and actually seeing quite a few things.

The evening before Mashlai’s return journey, he wanted to meet and thank I. Kachalin, the first secretary of the regional Party committee. At the appointed time, we escorted the minister to the four-story building of the regional Party committee where we entered the room of the first secretary. The chairman was standing behind a desk on both sides of which several leaders of the regional departments were standing in a line. I accompanied the minister along the two lines of people.

When we greeted the chairman he replied, “Honorable Sir, what can we do for you?” Minister Mashlai was taken aback and stood for a while in silence. Then I translated his reply from Mongolian into Russian. “I would like to thank you, chairman, and the staff of the Ministry of Education for the kind treatment of our Mongolian students who have been studying in your city.” Neither of them said very much after this, and the ceremony was concluded. As we left, Mashlai told me, “Go and do well in your exams, and you may go to the teacher training college to teach history.”

Towards the end of June 1941, on the first clear days of the Siberian summer, I was busy doing my final middle school exams in Irkutsk. I passed the third examination, and although I was quite tired when studying for the fourth examination, I was determined to pass it too. I and my Soviet student friends did our homework and discussed difficult questions. When an examination was approaching, we studied the subject intensively, sometimes staying up late into the night.

One day, we skipped lessons and stayed up late, making ourselves very tired. On my return to the communal sleeping accommodation I thought I would sleep well. While I was sound asleep one of my friends, a Russian student, suddenly pulled the blanket off me and woke me up in a panic, repeatedly saying, “The war has begun, war is starting,” and turned up the radio which was hanging on the wall. I got up quickly and listened to the news on the radio with my friend.

We learned that the non-aggression treaty between the Soviet Union and Germany had been broken, and that the Fascist German army had been mobilized. On June 22, 1941 there was an attack by aircraft and tank units on the sacred Soviet frontier. An appeal was made to “cast the enemy out of the motherland and to defend the socialist victory.” After hearing this news, the two of us repeatedly discussed what it all meant. Then we went out of the dormitory to see that the teachers and students who were living in the accommodation had gathered in the courtyard. They demonstrated their readiness and determination to defend the motherland and crush the enemy, and they cursed the Hitlerite Fascists for their betrayal.

The school administration immediately ordered all the students, teachers, and workers to assemble, and a tremendous gathering was organized. We vowed en masse to carry out everything needed to crush the encroaching aggressors in accordance with the appeal from the Party. Thus, everyone’s thoughts, aspirations, aims, and activities were directed towards the battle with the cruel Fascists.
A state of war had engulfed the whole Soviet Union. Many of my friends at college were unable to complete their schooling as they were to set off for the front. When we saw our friends off we wished them good luck in crushing the enemy, and hoped that they would obtain military decorations on their return. New army units were being formed all over Irkutsk, and they were moving off in trains heading west. Ordinary life was transformed by the war, and there was continuous talk about the situation on the front. As the destiny of everyone there and that of the Mongolian and Soviet people was being decided, inevitably it drew everyone’s attention.

We sat our exams right in the middle of all this, and finished college. When the time came to return, I left my wife behind in Irkutsk and traveled on my own by train to Ulaan Üd. I went from there by car across the Soviet border at Khiagt [Kyakhta]. I had passed through this gateway ten years earlier, but my first journey to the Soviet Union now seemed like yesterday. However, I had become accustomed through studying there to life in the Soviet Union, and I thought about my Soviet friends and contemporaries who had gone to the battlefront. The straightforward honesty of the Russian people and their noble character seemed to be like that of our Khalkha people, and I would never forget the good qualities they showed in their work.

After crossing the Mongolian border I looked ahead toward the open plains of the motherland with its blue sky and golden sun rising as if greeting me. After I had crossed the frontier I went to see the director of the aimag education department. Having obtained a few tögrög to spend on the journey from Altanbulag to Ulaanbaatar, I looked for a car, but as none was available, I wandered about for a while outside the entrance of the Selenge aimag Ministry, and spent the night in the house of an old lady, a cook with whom I had stayed on previous occasions.

The next day I was able to set off by car and, after passing through Kharaa and Yeröö, arrived in Ulaanbaatar. On my arrival, I stayed with my cousin’s family and learned from them that my mother had died that spring. She was fifty-eight and had died after a serious illness. A year earlier she had been talking joyfully about receiving my letter, together with a little money and some sweets, and knowing that I was healthy and studying well. Although I had not seen my mother for many years, I felt heartbroken and grieved over her death. When I arrived from Irkutsk all I had was two suitcases full of books. I decided to pass the time reading them.
After I had completed my schooling I went to register at the Department for new cadres, which was under the control of the Ministry of Education. A person who was possibly a secretary told me that Minister Mashlai wanted to see me.

The Ministry of Education was located to the east of two tiny two-story buildings which were on the left of the two-story building which accommodated the Party Central Committee, later to become the City Central Committee. I went up to the second floor and arrived at a room with painted walls. There was an upright stove in the room where Mashlai greeted me, saying, “As we have appointed you as one of the teachers at the Teacher Training College, you should go there right away and assume your duties.”

I went to the Teacher Training College that same day and met with the principal, N. Palaan, who said, “You will teach Mongolian History. Plan your program and bring it here to be confirmed. Before classes commence, you will have to help with the painting of the school and its living quarters, and with the repair of the tables and chairs.”

I duly spent a few days re-reading the books I had brought, and in addition to preparing a course program, I went to the school every day and spent some hours helping to carry and install the tables and chairs for the classrooms and living quarters. During one of the work breaks I asked the principal for somewhere to live and he promised to give me a room. I got the room and had a few days to prepare for classes.

The room was in the students’ lodgings, and had neither lock nor keys. Also, the windows were broken. I cleaned it up, obtained a lock and key and glazed the windows. When I made a fire the smoke billowed out, since the stove would not work. I borrowed an iron military-style bed and a tiny student’s bookshelf from the school. I tried for several days to get the stove repaired. The relevant office kept telling me that the repair would be done that day or the next, but I had no success with them. This was the first difficulty I encountered after completing my schooling.

While I was preparing my agreed course program, some cadres of the Ministry of Education called on me, saying that the minister was summoning me. So I went along to Minister Mashlai’s room. “The Central Committee is registering those people who have had a higher education. Now go to the cadres’ section at the Central Committee,” he said. When I inquired at this Department of Cadres located in the two-story building of the Central Committee, the departmental head met me and asked me to complete some details on a form about my grandfather, my father, and myself. Then he told me to see Badarch, who assisted the General Secretary of the Central Committee. On my arrival there he said, “Our leader Tsedenbal has asked for you to come.”

I went into a room where my former school acquaintance Tsedenbal congratulated me on successfully completing my studies. He asked about what was happening in Irkutsk, and we talked for quite a while about old times at the school. Then he said, “It is likely that we will get you to work in the government. Marshal Choibalsan wants to
meet you and talk about it. Now you will go to the government building. I will let them know by telephone that you are coming."

I left the Party Central Committee building and went across to the government building (later to become the Teacher Training College), which was located to the left of it. It was one of the largest buildings in Ulaanbaatar. I gave my name to the officer on duty, who wanted me to complete an entry form and demanded identification. I had nothing apart from my school graduation certificate. The officer on duty did not read Russian and reached for the telephone to report that someone had come to see the Marshal, and when this was confirmed, he wrote a permit for me saying, "Take this to the Marshal's secretary."

I went up to the second floor of the building and went along a beautiful, wide corridor. I opened the door of a north-facing room to see a few people sitting there wearing green army uniforms in addition to a considerable number of people dressed in ordinary clothing. Among them was a man of Chinese appearance sitting behind a desk. I wondered if he might have been Choibalsan's Chinese interpreter. However, he actually turned out to be Choibalsan's secretary, Bat-Ochir.

Standing with a group of people who appeared to be commissars was a tall, thin, long-chinned man who had a perturbed, deranged look about him. He kept staring at me and would laugh occasionally. He came up to me in that manner, took hold of me by the chin and looked at me. I was taken aback. Later, when I was introduced to him he turned out to be an unimportant character called Commissar Choijil (father of the author Chimid), an ordinary person playing a trick on me. A short, swarthy young man who was also wearing an army uniform appeared to be writing something behind another desk. [Some people said that] he was P. Shagdarsuren, Choibalsan's secretary. Then the door bell rang.

The short, swarthy young secretary opened the beautiful bookcase-like door and went in. This was the first time I had seen such a door and while I sat gazing at it the secretary reappeared and asked, "Is your name Shirendev?" I replied that it was. "In that case, come this way," he said. I felt quite panicky at meeting such an important person for the first time, the leader of a nation.

As I entered, a man wearing a green single-breasted military jacket without tabs stood up and took a few steps towards me, meeting me in the middle of the room where he shook my hand. I watched him say "How do you do?" It really was Marshal Choibalsan, whose photograph I had seen many times. He congratulated me on having completed my schooling. After listening to detailed accounts of my life and education, and about my brothers and other relatives, he said, "Now you must return the benefit of your ten years of schooling and higher education to the Party and country. You may work as a reviewer of government educational and scientific work."

I was lost for words when I heard the great words of this important person. "What does a reviewer do exactly?" I asked.

He is someone who familiarizes me with questions concerning schools, science, culture, hospitals, and education. Besides that, you can do translation work for me. In particular, I receive news through the press and radio several times a day about the frontline battles now being fought in the Soviet Patriotic War. It would also be good to tell me about important books and literature. Being an educated man, you will quickly become expert at dealing with these matters. It is a fact, however, that you have been cut off from life in the countryside for over ten years now, and so before you start this job you will spend two
months traveling in Ömnögobi, Dornogobi, Övörkhangai, Bayankhongor, Gobi-Altai, and Arkhangai aimags, visiting two or three sums in each of them, where you will spend two or three days becoming familiar with their work. When visiting the sums you will be seeing different districts and households. I will provide you with a car and you may assume your duties tomorrow. Come and see me once more before you leave the day after tomorrow.

I went back down to the Central Committee building and had to wait for a break in Tsedenbal’s work before I could see him. Quite some time later I met with him and explained what Choibalsan had said. Tsedenbal replied, “That’s right. I know what your talk was about. There is a lot of work to do to fulfil the Marshal’s assignment. Since we have done our work for the day, come to my place and we will have a meal together.”

We sat in Tsedenbal’s large black ZIS-110 car and set off towards the area of the State Bank. Tsedenbal’s young bodyguard Dashdavaa was sitting next to me. We went up some stairs at the extreme left hand side of the bank building and entered through a door. At that time, Tsedenbal had no family and was living with his commissar. The windows in the room had blue curtains and there was a tiny bedroom, at the front of which was a radio receiver. There was quite a large room for books and newspapers and down the corridor on the left was a tiny study. There were not many things in these rooms. Books, newspapers, and journals were scattered about. It was clearly a place for a young single man.

As soon as Tsedenbal arrived, the commissar used a multi-layered ringed steamer to warm up some ordinary food obtained from a canteen. He shared it between the two of us and ate a little himself. After Tsedenbal had eaten he returned to his work and I too went back to my quarters.

Two days later I went to see Marshal Choibalsan and we spent nearly two hours discussing how I was to go around the countryside to become familiar with life there. He said that I was to go to the aimag and sum centers, where I would leave my car and travel on horseback around the households, staying with them and wandering about to experience life there. I would need to walk around the aimag centers. Out in the countryside I would have to eat and sleep with families of differing wealth. In the encampments which had many livestock, the wealthiest family was normally on the southwest side, and the poorest families were camped to the east and particularly the northeast.

[He said that] the lifestyle of the people had changed considerably from when I was last in the countryside ten years previously, and that some knowledge of that difference would be of great help to me in my later work. The aimags which I would be visiting would include gobi, khangai, and kheer zones.¹ He brought out a small map of Mongolia on which he himself marked out the sums I was to visit. I realized later that these sums were special in their natural features, character, and in the lifestyle of the people.

When he found time to discuss these fine details with me, I realized that

¹These terms refer to three zones with distinctive climatic, hydrographic, soil, and vegetation characteristics. Khangai, as already explained on p. 2n13, is clearly the most desirable zone, with plenty of water and vegetation, pleasant climate, and fertile soils. Gobi (or gov¹ in contemporary orthography in the Mongolian Republic) is best translated as steppe or scrubland, with the connotation of being able to support enough animals and plants to sustain some human habitation. The Western habit of calling the zone the “Gobi Desert,” which conjures up a vision of uninhabitable wastelands, is thus clearly wrong, or at least as much an exaggeration as the nineteenth century practice of referring to the American west’s high plains as the “Great American Desert.” This “desert” label actually comes much closer to the third term here, kheer, which describes any place that is uninhabited or where life is extremely difficult to maintain.
Choibalsan was truly a man with a rich experience of life. Then I remembered something which had been on my mind and which I had been wanting to say. I had left my wife behind in Irkutsk, and I asked whether or not it would be difficult to bring her here while the war was going on. After listening to me Choibalsan said, “That will probably be all right.” He picked up the telephone to talk with the Soviet ambassador Ivanov and conveyed my request. “Your request will soon be granted. There is no need to worry about it,” he added. I felt so happy, I stood there speechless.

He then called for his secretary and asked, “Is Shirendev’s car ready? Check it out and let me know.” Meanwhile, he continued to explain and brief me about the rural situation. The secretary returned, “The black M car is ready with the driver Sundui.” Choibalsan turned to me and said, “You can’t go into the countryside dressed like that. You need to wear a Mongol deel, army-style trousers, and leather boots.” I was worried because I did not have a Mongol deel. I left and went to the home of Chuluunbat, one of my cousin’s relatives, where I put on an old brown cotton deel of his, a yellow sash, and a brimmed hat, and then returned to my quarters. The next morning I set off on my intended route.

At that time the whole country was utilizing its potential to the full, especially in livestock raising, wool gathering and developing handicrafts. Also, some even more important goals were being decided upon, such as assisting the Soviet motherland at the battle front and strengthening the national defenses.

We left Ulaanbaatar and headed south towards Ömnögobi. Having been separated from the traditional lifestyle of my motherland during the preceding ten years or so, and never having seen the Gobi myself, this area seemed interesting and beautiful, yet at the same time lonely. I went along thinking constantly about the time I had spent studying in the Soviet Union and the friends I had studied with. Traveling in a car with a driver for the first time over such a great distance was like being in a dream.

Prior to this, my driver Sundui had worked for Finance Minister Düüchin, Prime Minister Amar, Deputy Prime Minister L. Sereeter, Jamsran, and others. Along the way he talked about the old days. The driver remarked, “Of all the leaders that I have served, only Sereeter is still alive. The others all became enemies of the people and were arrested.” My driver felt bad about this afterwards and mentioned, darkly, how unlucky it was to have a car.

Right from the start of the journey the driver was skilful, modest, friendly, and careful, and I valued him highly. I reminisced with him about what I had seen when studying in the Soviet Union. The two of us chatted and enthused about things, passing the time as we traveled on our long journey.

We continued on until we were within seventy kilometers of Dalanzadgad, the capital of Ömnögobi aimag, when we saw an open Amerika-8 car in front of us conveying a single passenger. My driver and I decided to go and meet him. When we slowed down, the other car approached and stopped. Sitting next to the driver was an elderly, military general-like figure sporting several medals. He was dressed in a military uniform with goggles on his cap and he had a somewhat flat, tanned face.

“How are you doing?” I asked “Fine. Where are you going?” he replied. “I’m going to Ömnögobi aimag center.” “What business do you have there?” “I’m going to find out about the local situation there.” “Where do you usually work?” “I have just been appointed to a government post, as a reviewer.” “What is a reviewer?” “I understand that it is almost like being a secretary.”
“Do you have any credentials?” I showed him Choibalsan’s hand-written credentials stating that I was traveling to become familiar with the work of such-and-such an aimag. He read it, handed it back to me and said, “I understand now. The leader of the aimag is called Dejid and the Party committee chairman is Erdenebilig. You should meet them and accept their advice when it comes to finding out about the local situation.”

I thanked him and was about to depart when he asked, “Do you recognize me?” “No,” I replied. He looked quite disappointed. “Why don’t you recognize me? I am the leader of the Baga Khural, Partisan Dashzeveg,” he said. “I have heard your name spoken many times, but this is the first time I have seen your face,” I said.

He said farewell and set off. We also went on our way. We reached the capital of Ömnögobi aimag where we spent the night in an örtöö ger, and the next morning we set off for several sums in the Gobi.

This was my first time in the Gobi. The bare sandy hills, open steppe, and sand dunes were natural formations which seemed unusual. I thought about the things mentioned in the works of famous nineteenth and twentieth century travelers in Mongolia such as the great Russian scholars Potanin, Przheval’skii, Obruchev, Komarov, and others.

I saw swift black-tailed and white antelope which swirled backwards and forwards making the dust fly as they galloped across the steppe. When the beautiful, fleet-footed antelope caught sight of the car on the vast, wide plains they jumped, pranced and galloped with natural, active movements and seemed to run for their lives, all of which I found very interesting.

It was a long way to go from household to household. There were no large groups of gers as in the Khangai. Usually there would be two gers together or one on its own, located a long way from the next one. Outside the ger there would be a horse or camel ready for riding, or else there was a baby camel on a tether bellowing its greeting.

The items used by the Gobi households and the types of milk foods were quite different from those of the Khangai. For example, because these people migrated over long distances, there were no large wooden chests or religious altars like those of the Khangai households. Also, making tea and dried curds with camels’ milk seemed strange. For fuel, the households used sheep and horse dung or at best, the shavag [artemisia bush]. Drinking water came from shallow ponds or from cold, deep wells, the water appearing cloudy from the Gobi dust. Though the situation in the Gobi was different due to natural conditions, the straight-forward directness of the people when they talked and the entertaining of guests according to Mongolian traditions were the same as in the Khangai.

As I had not lived in Mongolia for several years, when I was among the ordinary people for the first time again, sleeping in their gers, sharing their food and drink, 

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3 See Nikolai Mikhailovich Przheval’skii (1839-1888), Mongolia, the Tangut Country, and the Solitudes of Northern Tibet, Being a Narrative of Three Years’ Travel in Eastern High Asia (London: Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1876).
and discussing the old times, it seemed that their enthusiastic talk, working life, and other interests had genuinely progressed in the preceding ten years.

I spent some time in the wide valleys of the Gobi and the deserts where, when glancing up at some majestic mountain-like formation I was surprised to see many large buildings like some kind of town or settlement. On approaching more closely to determine which mountain or which town it might have been, it might turn out to be just four or five camels, a herd of horses, or a few hundred antelope. The fact that such small animals could appear so large from afar fitted in with the natural seasonal mirages of the Gobi, a truly amazing sight.

We spent five or six days with the herdsmen of three sums in Övörkhangai aimag and asked them for directions to Dornogobi aimag. On the way, we were suddenly stopped by a vast sand dune which we decided to go around by trying to cross another smaller area of sand. We set off, but the wheels of the car became stuck and started spinning, creating a problem for us which took the whole day to overcome. It felt like traveling through a large [solid] ocean wave.

After spending several days in the countryside with many different households, I found lice in my only set of underwear. I wanted to wash them but we did not come across any water. When we stopped the car out in the steppe, I walked a long distance from the car and took off my underclothes but even rubbing them with fine sand did not clean them properly. Then, realizing what I was up to my driver said, “Wipe your shirt and pants with this and leave them in the wind.” He gave me a bottle of gasoline which I used, and after leaving them in the breeze for a while, I put my clothes back on. I now felt that they were very clean and I thanked the driver for his wise advice.

By the end of August, the weather in the Gobi was hot, and it became even hotter in the sandy and desert areas. The more we shovelled to dig out the car’s wheels, the more the sand collapsed and soon we and the engine had used up our ten-litre water container. This made us even more worried. Inevitably, the driver found a way out and we continued to wander for half a day until we finally arrived in Sainshand, the capital of Dornogobi aimag.

After spending several days in a remote area of the Gobi, seeing neither humans nor animal life, the aimag capital felt like a large, comfortable city. We spent a night here and thought about going into the countryside again. When we talked about the reason for our journey with a departmental chief of the aimag Party committee, he said, “Let’s all go together to see the chairman of the Party committee. Then you can tell him about your work.” I replied, “We have no business with the Party chairman, we only want to see the countryside and the situation there.” “Since you hold an important position in the capital, you must meet the chairman of the Party committee, and you will tell him the reason you are here.”

He decided to take me there. The Party committee was located in a single mud building. Along the corridor there were two or three upright stoves. Its two or three doors faced north and south. Cardboard signs had been pasted on the doors with lettering in red paint stating “Organization Department,” “General Department,” or “Women’s Department.” Next to one of these doors were the words “Chairman of the Aimag Party Committee” in gold-colored clay paint.

When I opened the door to go in, I saw a tiny room in the corner of which was a
table with a red, hand-made woollen tablecloth. Behind it sat a young swarthy-faced man wearing a grey cotton terleg. He rose and greeted us, and then asked us about our business there. The young man opened a door which was painted with yellow and white stripes and invited us in. Right in the middle of this comfortable room was an old-fashioned carpet. The walls were lined with bookcases. To one side was a conference table large enough for ten people to sit around. There were photographs of Stalin and Choibalsan on the walls.

A man of about thirty got up and came towards us to shake hands. He was of average height and had a pale complexion. He was wearing a navy-blue military-style shirt and trousers, a broad belt and an Altan Gadas medal on his lapel. Chairman Dorjgotov was a pleasant character. Although he said little, he was obviously well educated. I later learned that he had studied for three years at KUTV in Moscow. (This same Dorjgotov later became Minister of Trade and Procurement, a responsible position in the government).

Chairman Dorjgotov was interested in our business there and asked me to show him my credentials. I duly took out my credentials and handed them to him. The chairman read them over to himself as if he was not going to give them back to me. Putting them on the desk he asked, “When did you arrive in Ulaanbaatar? Are you a Mongol? Leave your documents with me and I will return them to you later today or tomorrow morning. Now you may go with my secretary and rest at the ger reserved for officials.”

I sat in the car with the other young man and after quite a long drive, we arrived at an unoccupied ger in the middle of a straight row of about ten gers. Apart from two beds it was empty. While we were sitting there, someone entered and started the fire to make some tea for us. We drank our tea.

Quite some time later, a young man entered wearing a Mongol deel and said, “Someone wants to meet you.” We accompanied him out of the ger and went to a tiny white building which was next to the gers. The sign on the door said “Ministry of Interior Personnel.” As we entered one of the rooms, a clever, devious-looking man of thin build and average height introduced himself as Dazanvaanchig and by a roundabout and inquisitive way found out quite a lot about why I was there, the schools I had attended, and my job. He then told me to go back and rest.

When we arrived back at the ger, some food and drink, including Gobi-style airag, were brought in. When I went to call to my driver so that we could eat together they told me, “Your driver has been put up somewhere else and he will be eating there.”

I ate my meal and just before sunset I decided to go for a walk outside and have a look at the aimag center. As I emerged from the ger a young man with a green cap and wearing an officer’s uniform appeared and asked me, “Where are you off to?” “I want to go and look around outside,” I replied. “You should not go very far; one of the aimag leaders will probably want to meet you.” “I won’t go very far, just around here to get some air.” “Stay in your ger,” he said with a disapproving look. As I stared in silence standing next to him, I thought it likely that all these gers were the living quarters of the military personnel. I went back into the ger and sat for a while before falling asleep.

I had probably been asleep for over an hour when someone came in and woke

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5 A cotton-padded gown.
6 The full name of the medal should read Altan Gadas Odun, literally the Star of the Golden Stake, referring to the Polar Star.
me. It was the same young man who had not wanted me to leave the ger that evening.

"The chairman of the Party committee has asked me if you would like to come over," he said. As I left the ger I asked him, "Are you coming too?" and his attitude seemed to change completely. "No, you can go there yourself," he replied.

Once again I entered that same room at the Party committee. I saw three people sitting together. They were the chairman of the Party committee, a departmental head of the Interior Ministry and an instructor in that department who was a Kalmyk Mongol. The two chairmen, who seemed quiet and formal earlier, were now talking and laughing. The chairman of the Party committee took my credentials out of his desk and gave them back to me with a smile.

They then said, "As we are a border aimag, we have to be careful. Don't worry about it. We should have been suspicious when a previously unheard-of person arrived so suddenly and with such impressive credentials. Your pale, bearded face and slightly different accent reminded us that we have been caught out on more than one occasion by people on horseback or sometimes with a car and carrying all kinds of credentials. We inquired about you by telephoning Ulaanbaatar. When we found out you were who you said you were, we were relieved." They all laughed and told me about their area in detail. I returned to the ger for the night, and the next morning we set off to visit the sums.

Occasionally, antelope would gallop across the road in front of the car. Once my driver shot one of them, brought it to one of the households where we were conducting our business, and with it entertained them at a meal. The lifestyle of the people in this aimag was the same as in Omnogobi. Talk centered mainly on fattening livestock and helping the army. They were very interested in asking me about the war.

I learned that there was a place not far from the aimag center where a Russian agricultural expert called Shubin was doing some experimental growing of vegetables. Having passed through the aimag center the evening before my departure for Övörkhangai, I decided to visit this place where vegetables were being grown experimentally. The scientist Shubin, who was working at the Institute of Science, lived in a ger with a group of Mongolian friends. They were growing cabbages, watermelons, oats, and wheat in a small field. The crop in this experimental place was excellent, and Shubin led me around the whole field, talking about the plants as he went. He presented me with two large melons and some onions to eat on the journey.

It was strange to leave Ulaanbaatar and travel around the Gobi for several days before coming across a Soviet person again. When a Soviet citizen can come into the harsh conditions of the Gobi and work in the summer heat conducting such a good experiment to raise edible vegetables and grain, I felt that the Gobi could be transformed in the future and made beautiful. When Soviet people could come to work in this way, I wondered how a Mongolian such as myself could be so afraid of a little difficulty in their own country.

I was struck by the things the scientist Shubin had talked about, and I thought that he had begun a scheme to bring plants and vegetation into the vast deserts of southern Mongolia. It was late when we followed the Ongiiin Gol on our way towards Övörkhangai and asked someone for directions to the sum center which we were aiming for. The man told us that the sum center was not very far away. "You two should get out and walk; what do you need a car for?" he said. My driver and I asked him about the route. "On your way you will come across a large, uninhabited monastery among the rocks. That was once the Ongiiin Khüree and soon after crossing the ridge to the west of
it, you will find the sum center on the north bank of the river."

Duly following his instructions, my driver and I followed a tiny path, but as soon as it became dark we lost our way. We carried on further and approached a cluster of hills thinking that soon we would come across the Ongiin Khüree. After we crossed ten tiny hills we came up against a crag and could go no further, but neither could we descend, and so we strode on upwards. My driver and I let off a few gun shots and shouted, but we did not hear any dogs barking, and so it seemed that there were no households nearby. We switched on the car’s head lamps and ate a little meat and Shubin’s melons, which we had brought along with us.

We awoke early the next morning and on looking around found that we had walked up to the top of a high, rocky mountain. We went back down by the route we had taken the previous night and could see the water of the Ongiin Gol. There was some smoke wafting up from across the river. As we approached the smoke we found a lone ger and a dog and a horse tethered nearby. As we came up to the ger, an old man appeared from inside it, dressed like a lama. After asking about the route into the sum center, we asked him about his life and what he was doing there.

It turned out that he had been a lama at the Ongiin monastery. He had been left behind on his own, and he made a living by guarding a household’s property. The foundations of the monastery were visible three hundred meters away, next to the cliff face. He led us up a hill to the west of the monastery to point out the way. So we set off: When we invited him to sit in the car, he wandered around outside it, not knowing how to open the door. When the driver opened it for him, he went and sat down cross-legged on the back seat.

We went to the abandoned monastery and spent quite a while looking around it, guided by the lama. Due to the demolition of the abandoned monastery, many of the temple buildings were damaged, and a large number of bronze Buddhas lay scattered everywhere. As we had come across many monasteries on our journey, there was little of interest for us as we walked through it. We arrived at another hilltop further on where we could see a few gers on the north bank of the Ongiin River.

We gave the man a few tögrög and sent him home. We carried on and arrived at the sum center where we spent two days. We washed our dirty underclothes in the Ongiin River and after drying them in the sun, returned to the sum center in the evening where we spent the night. We set off the next day for Övörkhangai aimag. After arriving there we visited three sums where the natural landscape differed from both Khangai and Gobi. There were many sheep and cattle and the milk foods were similar to those in the Khangai. Leaving this aimag, we toured Bayankhongor and Gobi-Altai aimags. After nearly a month and a half we returned to Ulaanbaatar.

Bayankhongor and Gobi-Altai aimags were similar to the Khangai in that both seemed to be cool mountainous regions with plenty of rivers and green vegetation. Since the livelihood of the people in Bayankhongor and Gobi-Altai was similar to that in the Khangai, I had quite a feeling of nostalgia.

Once, when we were going over a long, high, well-known pass called the Egiin Davaa, we accompanied a Pikap car which was carrying a group of military officers. When we talked with those people at both ends of the pass they told us that back in 1932 a detachment of rebels had hidden themselves in the pass and made attacks on the people who were using it. The rebels also set fire to a cooperative and a truck at the bottom of the far end of the pass. They pointed out the frame of the truck, which was still there.
After crossing the Egiin Davaa we headed towards Tsetserleg, passing several places, including the headwaters of the Chuluut River, the Ikh Tamir River, Taikhar Chuluu, and Tsagaan Davaa among others. I had been well acquainted with all these places more than ten years before undertaking this journey. We encountered several beautiful Khangai mountains, forests, and wide rivers where we stopped the car several times to run about and breathe in the clean air, swim in the waters of the Tamir, and stop at households to ask after people I knew. We finally arrived at Tsetserleg late in the day.

Although Tsetserleg had acquired several new buildings, the Zayayn Khüree monastery had ceased to exist. We stayed overnight at a ger hotel and I wandered around Tsetserleg on my own until late. I climbed the hill to the west of the city, and walked along the streets of the town past the buildings and enclosures where I had studied. I slept well that night, proud of the things I had done in my youth. Then I rose early and after quite a long walk in the town center, I went into a canteen where I had a meal before we set off on our way. I thought about the first time I traveled to Ulaanbaatar along this road some ten years previously. As we entered Ulaanbaatar I recalled the mountains, hills, and plains which I had first come across in those early days.

The day after my return I set off to take up my work in the government building. I went to see Marshal Choibalsan and told him about my journey. We had visited fifteen sums across five aimags, and I discussed with him my impressions about the small households. Choibalsan replied, "Well, that's good. You have actually seen a bit of life now, but as you have been studying outside your motherland for many years, you have lost touch with the many pressing problems facing the people of our country. In a few days' time you will spend fifteen days in Büren sum of Töv aimag doing propaganda work."

I traveled to the sum along with Nyamaa, the wife of Sambuu, our ambassador in Moscow. As this was Sambuu’s native sum, his relatives cordially welcomed his wife and made her comfortable. I spent the night in that sum. While I was touring the households of the districts on horseback doing propaganda work, having just traveled through several aimags, I regretted that I was unable to quickly bring into focus all the things connected with the lives of the ordinary people here. At that time I did not pay attention to the practical experience of our people and how they were raising and making a profit from their livestock. I only caught some news about the effect on them of the shortage of a wide range of necessities including tea, tobacco, flour, grain and other items.

On my return, my family received the necessary visas and documents and permission to move to Ulaanbaatar and duly set off. I took a Pikap car and met my wife Zina and my son Vitya at Ulaan Üd. Prior to their arrival I had been living with a family that I knew, but on hearing that my own family was arriving, I begged the government administration for some accommodations. They gave us two rooms in a tiny two-story brick building to the east of the Choijin Lama Temple. I obtained two twisted chairs and a sandalwood table from the government building and an iron bed frame and some old blankets from the home of my friend Chuluunbat. I now regarded it as quite a comfortable home.

So, my family arrived, and we had our first home in which to begin our new family life. This place of ours had an upright, coal-burning stove, but there was no hot water, and the rooms were tiny. Nevertheless, to a recently-graduated college student like myself it was an unbelievably palatial residence. My wife and I washed the windows, and as soon as my salary arrived, we gradually began to furnish our home with plates and
Around that time, following invitations from the Mongolian government, some Soviets came to work in Mongolia and made friends with Mongolian intellectuals. Reciprocal visits began to take place. Radnaabazar, the circus director with whom I had studied at school, the playwright Oyuun, and other friends of mine had attained positions of responsibility. On occasion I would get together with them to discuss our school days together.

By that time Ulaanbaatar had changed somewhat, but there were still no paved roads or squares. The largest building was the four-story Number One Ten-Year Middle School. There was a three-story residence for staff of the interior ministry, a government building, the old Central Committee building (now the Teacher Training College and formerly the City Party Committee building). Apart from these, there were no particularly large buildings.

Ulaanbaatar had almost no planted trees. Only the [State] Bank, the Soviet embassy, and the government building had one or two trees planted alongside them. When I had some free time I used to meet with my friends who had studied in Irkutsk, and we would plan how Ulaanbaatar could be planted with trees and its streets and squares paved with stone. On rest days or before holidays we would clean up the city, and we hurried to carry out the assignments of the city Party committee when starting the work of tree planting outside the doors of some of the buildings.

On August 16, 1941 I was appointed as the official government “reviewer.” For two and a half years, until February 1944, I learned many things about life. Around the time I began my work, the German and Italian fascists and the Japanese militarists on the one hand and the nations of England, America, and France on the other were competing among themselves to dominate world resources and markets. World War II began in 1939 with massacres of people and the mass destruction of national economies, culture, education, and artistic monuments. On June 22, 1941, Hitler’s Germany and its allies attacked the Soviet Union and the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people began.

At the outbreak of this war, I was finishing my education at the Teacher Training College in Irkutsk and I took further national examinations before returning to my motherland.

As I began my work, the Mongolian people and Party, as led by the government, decided to use their own economy and culture to face up to the crisis of World War II, but were vigilant in protecting their country from both Japanese militarism and the Chinese Guomindang. That period was memorable for the maximum possible help given by Mongolia to the Soviet people at the battle front in their Great Patriotic War.

From 1941 onwards, the aim of the repeatedly issued resolutions of the MPRP Central Committee and the Council of Ministers of Mongolia was for the Mongolian people to continue to join hands with the Soviet people to assist the Soviet motherland at its battle front. We took delight in courageously laboring under that slogan. When looking back on the many initiatives carried out by our Party and government at that time, and their implementation by the energetic and determined laboring masses, our people, the Soviet Union, and all progressive peoples were struggling fiercely with the cruelest forces of fascism. This is something which the Mongolian people should be proud of.

While I was working during that two-year period, the foreign policy of our Party and government was to assist the Soviet people in their patriotic war, to guard the sacred frontiers of our country against Japanese militarism, and to protect against the danger
posed by the Chinese army. However, there was an inadequate supply of trained cadres, money, and capital for the implementation of the measures which had to be taken to develop our economy and culture.

The movement to assist the Soviet Patriotic War at the battle front flourished across the whole country. There was involvement of workers, herdsmen, and intellectuals on a wide scale. Money was collected from them, and more and more work was done to help the war effort of our loyal friends, the Soviet people.

The herdsmen made a voluntary contribution of several thousand horses to the battle front. Money was collected to establish the Revolutionary Mongolia tank column and the Mongol Ard air squadron, both of which were delivered to units of the Soviet forces. Delegations headed by leading figures in the Party and government traveled in person to the battle front on several occasions in order to present those gifts.

At the same time, the MPRP Central Committee and the government of Mongolia carried out even more work to ensure that our military commanders were armed with combat experience. The People's Army was armed with new Soviet battle techniques. In addition to improving battle training, volunteer cavalry detachments were organized and trained with the aim of establishing a readiness to defend the motherland and the people. The Mongols will never forget the great importance of all this.

The potential internal reserves of the motherland were mobilized in ways which suited conditions during World War II. The delivery of food and light industrial goods was carried out on a large scale both for our own needs and for the needs of the Soviet Patriotic War. During those difficult times milk and butter plants were widely established across the country, the processing of meat, wool, hides, leather, and fur was increased and improved, and light industries and food industries were established. Despite a shortage of trained cadres in all sectors of the economy, there were further advances in preventive medicine, culture, and science. For example, at that time there were only five or six people who had graduated from a Soviet college and at most only a few dozen had finished technical school in the Soviet Union.

For this reason, young people with scant experience of education and life had been working in the leading organs of the Party and government, or after many years of practical experience they might be working in the aimag leadership or as military officers with, at best, an education from the KUTV.

This shortage of trained cadres was the result of the cruel deaths of thousands of select cadres in the Party, government, army and other branches of the economy, education, and science between 1937 and 1949. This was later revealed from historical documents. We had to pay attention to the training of cadres. In accordance with a 1941 resolution of the MPRP Central Committee, the Party Central School attached to the Central Committee became the Party Higher School. As soon as this school had been established, some teaching was done there by Tsedenbal, the General Secretary of the Party Central Committee, and Stårenjav, secretary of the Party Committee and director of the school. I too taught some classes on general history.

The celebration to mark the opening of the Mongolian State University was held on October 5, 1942 at the Lenin Club. Speeches were made by Choibalsan and Tsedenbal. I also participated in the meeting, and my article entitled “A Great Event” was published in the October 6 edition of Unen.

This was just about the first article I had ever written. It celebrated the inauguration of the university and expressed my thoughts on its significance. Soon after the
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university’s establishment, I began teaching history classes there. There were additional valuable contributions from the many senior Soviet specialist advisers, instructors, medical teachers, lecturers, and engineers who were working in the Party and government organizations, in units of the People’s army and at the economic and cultural institutes. This valuable contribution, which improved the knowledge and skills of the trained cadres, was immortalized in the thoughts of everyone who was present at the time.

By 1940, Kh. Choibalsan was prime minister of Mongolia, the leading member of the main working group of the MPRP Central Committee, Minister of Defense, and Supreme General (marshal) of the armed forces. He was directly responsible for the Foreign Ministry and the Interior Ministry, and had become a super-heroic and outstandingly decorated leader. In addition, he had been a close friend of Sukhbaatar. As he was famous for being a loyal revolutionary, everyone strove to address him in a respectful manner. In so doing, everyone working for him addressed him as “Marshal, Sir!” and bowed to him. However, G. Bumtsend, the most senior member of the government leadership and a participant with Choibalsan in the revolution, used to address him with “You, Choibalsan” in a familiar way. Also Yanjmaa addressed him as “Choibalsan” or sometimes as “Marshal.”

As I myself had only just begun to work there, I was completely faithful to Choibalsan. When he carried out work relating to documents, accounts, and official activities it seemed that he was careful to find out the reasons behind the detailed, demanding problems he encountered. Choibalsan had seen much suffering from an early age, and had worked with many different kinds of people. Although he had a quick temper, he recognized the fact immediately, and seemed to regret it afterwards.

While I was working for Choibalsan, I had to perform certain duties every day. I would listen to the radio at appointed times for news from the battle front of the Soviet Red Army, including the areas, towns and settlements which had been attacked and occupied by Hitler’s German armies. I noted the units of the Soviet Red Army which were battling and containing Hitler’s German troops on many fronts, and which in some places had succeeded in smashing them and driving them back. There was a large map of the western part of the Soviet Union in Choibalsan’s office. I used to note my findings on it using red and blue pencils and tiny flags.

When Choibalsan heard the sad news that Hitler’s troops had occupied certain Soviet cities, had surrounded Leningrad and were approaching Moscow, he was worried but used to say, “The Hitlerites will soon be crushed and evicted from the entire Soviet Union.” True enough, soon the Soviet Union had destroyed and dispersed Hitler’s army near Moscow, and important news of the breaking of the siege of Leningrad was joyfully heard by Choibalsan, who immediately telephoned his congratulations to the Soviet ambassador, to the Soviet military specialists working in Mongolia and in addition to Stalin, V. M. Molotov, K. Ya. Voroshilov, and other Soviet leaders, and to the famous generals G. K. Zhukov, I. S. Konev, and his other acquaintances.

In accordance with the instructions of the MPRP Central Committee, and at Choibalsan’s request, I gave him a twice-weekly talk entitled “Short History of the All-Union Communist (Bolshevik) Party” which lasted nearly two hours. I was very worried about accepting an assignment from Choibalsan on this subject, and I was confronted with the problem of how to explain such a [profound] subject to him. Whatever assignment I was to fulfill, first of all I had to read the related texts and make brief notes on the items I would be talking about. Then, spreading my notes out, I would deliver my
speech.

I had not yet learned much about teaching techniques. Choibalsan, who noted my awkwardness, used to comfort me saying, “Your talks have become interesting. If sometimes you ask me many impressive questions which I cannot answer, you should not worry. Instead, look up the things you don’t know, and please tell me about them later.”

At the beginning, my inexpert style of writing was not very interesting. When I gave short talks on the principal questions, sometimes people listened attentively but occasionally, perhaps through tiredness or through thinking about their own work, their attention seemed to wander. They paid close attention during interesting talks on ancient Rome, Greece, and nineteenth-century European culture, science, and education. On the other hand, lectures about the cruel khans and feudal lords did not arouse much interest. They also took an interest in Soviet literary works, in particular I. Erenburg’s composition “Storm,” and I was asked to explain the content of the work to them. On several occasions I talked about Erenburg’s composition at Choibalsan’s house.

One spring day I went to the Ikh Tenger residence to give a reading of this literature, and while unravelling its meaning, I was served some delicious yoghurt. After I had eaten it I discussed the meaning of the book, and fell asleep. When I awoke and looked around, Choibalsan had gone. I got up in a panic and the [body]guards on duty poured water on my face saying, “How could he have fallen asleep after eating just yoghurt?” As soon as those young men had informed Choibalsan that I had returned to consciousness, he immediately came out of the living room and returned to the study where he sat down. “Well, let’s carry on reading the book,” he said, as if completely unaware that I had fallen asleep. When I had admitted that I was wrong to have fallen asleep he replied, “That’s alright. I gave you some goat’s milk yoghurt, which really does cause sleepiness.”

Every Saturday evening, Choibalsan would watch films in his residence, together with his wife, children, and some of his other relatives. He asked me to explain the content of the films to him. I also had to report back to him about the work of the Institute of Science, the People’s Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Arts’ Committee, and other organizations. I had only just started these activities, and as I did not understand them very well, I visited the organizations to read their relevant publications and the resolutions and decisions made by the Central Committee and the government. I read the reports and explanatory information relating to those organizations, and met with the specialists who were working there in order to obtain advice, and to get a grasp of the work of those organizations.

When I began my work in that official capacity, the following gave me unstinting help: A. V. Rusekov, who was an adviser in the People’s Ministry of Education, the Teacher Training College, the professional teaching staff of Number One Ten-Year Middle School, the advisers in the Ministry of Health and various physicians, the adviser of the Arts Committee Ya. F. Ryzhakin, the composer B. P. Smirnov, and the theater instructor A. R. Rabinovich. I translated letters from the Soviets addressed to Choibalsan and helped in the “Mongolization” of the replies. I also gained experience in the drafting of official documents.

In accordance with a directive of the Party Central Committee, I became familiar with contemporary Mongolian literature and art, and I attended a meeting of composers and theater artists where I gave a lecture entitled “Revolutionary Composition and the Aims of Artists.” I tried to reflect the situation of our contemporary literature as carefully
as possible. Literature which had already been published was discussed and analyzed. This report was published in a special pamphlet in 1943. While writing the report I read the relevant texts and books in the Soviet literature. The advice I took from Soviet professionals also proved to be useful.

I processed all the congratulatory messages of the Party Central Committee and government as well as all the texts sent from our Party and government leaders to the leaders of the Soviet Party and government. At the same time, my work was greatly assisted by Soviet specialists, in particular the adviser to the Party Central Committee Yu. K. Prikhodov, the government adviser N. V. Tsapkin, and other able friends. Tsedenbal was well versed in Mongolian and Russian, and as he was experienced at making good use of reference texts, Choibalsan had to show every book to Tsedenbal and accept his opinions about them.

Choibalsan used to receive Soviet specialists and hold detailed discussions with them, either individually or in pairs or groups. These specialists used to work in several different ministries, offices, industrial, and cultural organizations. I was asked to interpret for him during these discussions. Choibalsan took me with him as a translator during receptions for the Soviet and Tuvan ambassadors in Ulaanbaatar, for the commanders of the Soviet Trans-Baikal military region, and for the generals of the the Seventeenth Army.

Choibalsan had studied in Irkutsk for several years before the revolution. Having worked with Soviet specialists for many years, he knew some conversational Russian. When I was translating into Russian or translating the words of the specialists into Mongolian, he would sometimes correct me in a clear but uncritical way. So when I was confronted with having to translate words of an agricultural, livestock, and household nature, I always made use of the relevant dictionaries and a “Mongolized” dictionary of sophisticated Russian words. I took great care to ensure that my translations were correct.

As I mentioned before, Choibalsan understood conversational Russian, and when he met with the Soviet ambassador I. A. Ivanov and other Soviet government people in Moscow, he used to go on his own. It was sometimes said that he also made use of Prime Minister Amar, and later on, our translator at the Moscow embassy, K. K. Il’in. He allowed me to take part in several official receptions.

The main official content of the discussions between the two sides was related to friendship matters. When Choibalsan was attending the meetings of the Presidium of the Party Central Committee, he would discuss many important problems with the members of the presidium in Tsedenbal’s room. Tsedenbal, General Secretary of the Party Central Committee, Secretary Ch. Sürenjav and other officials, such as Secretary D. Damba, and S. Yanjmaa, took part in these meetings along with their advisers. Occasionally, I was asked to sit in on their meetings as an interpreter so as to keep the Central Committee and government advisers informed about the matters under discussion. In order to do that I had to translate into two languages, which was confusing. Listening to the discussions about the problems and their solutions taught me much and increased the breadth of my knowledge.

In order to implement the plans of the important laws and resolutions, Choibalsan sent groups of leading people holding responsible positions to aimag districts and

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7 Ivan Alekseevich Ivanov (1906-1948) was ambassador to Mongolia from 1939 to 1947.
industrial areas with instructions to obtain the views of the people there. When the people in charge of getting these views had returned, the Presidium of the Central Committee occasionally gathered in Choibalsan’s office and talked about their findings. Some of them spoke briefly and succinctly about practical abilities, while others told long-winded tales about everything they had seen, but were lazy about tackling the issues.

Apart from Choibalsan and Tsedenbal, other people in a position of responsibility included Bumtsend, the chairman of the Presidium of the National Baga Khural, the Agriculture Minister Ch. Sürenjav, who was Second Secretary of the Party Central Committee and concurrently First Deputy Prime Minister, the secretary of the Central Committee, D. Damba, S. Yanjmaa, First Deputy Prime Minister S. Luvsan, and the acting general of all the armed forces J. Lkhagvasüreng. Bumstend was over 60 years old, and had a black moustache and spectacles. Despite not being an educated or cultured man, he was a wise man of few words. He was actually a quite good-natured, jovial and pleasant elderly man. Stikhbaatar’s wife, Yanjmaa, truly worked hard for the sake of the Party and government. She was regarded as an ordinary, helpful, and plain-speaking person. Sürenjav was viewed as a decisive, determined person in the execution of his duties, both when summoning others to carry out their assignments, and when giving reports and making speeches. These things he had learned to do at the Teacher Training College and at the KUTV. However, although he (Sürenjav) strove bravely to make decisions, he was unable to set priorities and could not get a good grasp of the issues. Although Damba had little schooling, from an early age he had worked with all kinds of people in the Youth League and army. He was very experienced, and although he said little when handing out assignments, he spoke in a precise and organized way. First Deputy Prime Minister S. Luvsan learned to read and write at an early age, and occasionally did some official work. He was particularly adept at financial accounting work, and produced statistics in many different areas to the best of his ability. He also had connections with many people.

In accordance with the 64th resolution of the Presidium of the Party Central Committee of September 5, 1942, confirmed by the other leaders on the staff of the lecture group of the Central Committee, I was to participate in lecturing to the activists. N. Lkhamsüreng, Ch. Lodoidamba, and others also took part in this work.

The Party Central Committee and leading members of the government and the leaders of special ministerial offices held lectures and discussions during the congress for local leaders on subjects such as the Soviet Patriotic War, cultural lessons, the sanitation of official buildings, civilized behavior, the arrangement of comfortable settlements, and the planting of trees and shrubs.

The 83rd resolution of the Presidium of the Central Committee on December 17, 1942 appointed me as adviser to the journal *Namyn Baigualalt* [Party Organization], which was a highly respected assignment. Afterwards, I escorted Choibalsan, the government adviser N. V. Tsapkin, and the Soviet ambassador I. A. Ivanov as an interpreter on a journey through Khentii, Dornod, Javkhlan Sharga (now Sükhbaatar), Bulgan, and Khövsgöl aimags. Before Choibalsan embarked on that journey through the countryside he determined all the sums and households he would visit, but unannounced would directly go to meet the leading people, the workers and ordinary herdsmen with whom he could talk pleasantly about old times. His secretary noted down what he said in Mongolian while I took notes in Russian. As I followed him, I told the Soviet specialists what was being said.
Besides giving advice on work to the people he met, he would briefly speak about the situation on the front line of the Soviet Patriotic War, and he emphasised that the Soviet Red Army would soon be victorious. When he arrived back from the countryside he would summon the Presidium of the Party Central Committee, the leading members of the Council of Ministers, leaders of local ministries and local officials in order to hand out assignments, rectify shortcomings and improve the quality of their work.

A training school for volunteer cavalry detachments was established on the eastern slopes of Zorgol Khairkhan Uul of Önjüü sum in Töv aimag. Beside the many mounted herdsmen who had gathered there from Töv aimag, there were volunteer cavalry detachments from Ulaanbaatar who came and set themselves up in gers and tents, practiced battle and cavalry manoeuvres and engaged in tactical training. General I. Mijid of the volunteer cavalry detachment, his staff commander Darjaa and other commissars, as well as Choibalsan, Tsedenbal, and Soviet Ambassador Ivanov took part in this.

Once, when the Presidium of the Party Central Committee convened a meeting, Choibalsan, Tsedenbal, and Bumtsend started the meeting at 9 pm to discuss an aimag report on the successful wintering of livestock, working with cadres, and a report from the secretary of the city Party committee. The Presidium of the Party Central Committee asked the speakers many questions, and they were still talking at 1 am. Then, the presidium members agreed to conclude the meeting and to defer until the following day the question of the assistance to be offered by the Mongolian people to the Soviet war front.

When the MPRP was organizing the work of explaining the nature of the war to the public, everyone who understood it was interested in the course the war was taking. Party and government workers and those in responsible positions always listened to news of the war and followed the progress of battles, which they marked on maps in blue and red pencil. Everyone felt sadness when the enemy occupied a town or a settlement, but we all felt proud whenever the enemy was beaten or a town was liberated.

An undertaking to send communally-raised and personal gifts to the Soviet Army was widely carried out by industrial enterprises, intellectuals, and ordinary herdsmen. Officials saved money from their salaries, herdsmen donated geldings from their private herds, and workers donated the best products from their factories. In general, all the classes of our country were ready to do their best to hasten victory and show their true loyalty to the struggle of the Soviet people, as revealed in a letter sent to the Party Central Committee, the government, and to the Soviet Army. This was a great moment for the ideals and understanding of the Mongolian people. As the German advance against the Red Army continued, the first column of gifts from the Mongolian people to the Red Army was delivered at the end of February 1942 by representatives headed by Deputy Prime Minister Luvsan and Party Central Committee Secretary Yanjmaa.
At the end of 1942, four freight trains laden with newly-collected presents set off on their long journey to the Soviet battle front. Choibalsan was in charge of the leading train of the convoy. The other trains were headed by the chairman of the Presidium of the National Baga Khural G. Bumtsend, the secretary of the Party Central Committee Ch. Sürenjav, and General Ch. Mijid of the People's Volunteer Cavalry Corps. I myself took part in the delegation led by Choibalsan. This was an opportunity to learn about life in the heroic fighting units of the Soviet Army. Troops and their supplies were flowing in a constant uninterrupted convoy along the railway line towards the battle front.

These trains took several days to complete the journey. When the delegation arrived at Yaroslavskii station in Moscow, it was cordially received by some Soviet Party and government leaders. Choibalsan was housed in special accommodations down a small street called Ostrovskii. The others were put up in a hotel. Around this time, a famous officer of the civil war, Colonel-General of the Cavalry O. I. Gorodovikov, held a reception for us at the Hotel Natsional where we had some close discussions. He mentioned fighting alongside Budenny in the Civil war, and said that cavalry were needed in this war too. He presented Choibalsan with a pearl-handled hand gun and gave me another, smaller one.

After spending a few days in Moscow, the delegation split up to head out in several directions to hand over the gifts to the battling armies, divisions, units, soldiers and officers on the four battle fronts. A delegation led by Choibalsan set off to deliver some of the gifts to the Western Front. Well before our delegation had set off for that same front, the heroic Soviet army had succeeded in smashing Hitler's German forces near Moscow at a critical moment and was pursuing them westwards.

During our journey to the Western Front, the delegation came under the protection of several military units. When we had to go through the forests covered in thick snow, our transport was painted white for camouflage. There were recently liberated war-damaged towns and settlements all along the route traveled by the delegation. Large damaged enemy guns, trucks, and fragments of tanks lay scattered about. There were buildings with crumbling walls, broken stoves, and bare gardens scorched by the fires of war.

We came across signs nailed to trees on both sides of the road which marked the graves of the Fascists. When we saw them, although we felt that the enemy had got what he deserved from the defenders of the Motherland, there was also a feeling that it was the destructiveness of Hitler and his companions which was to blame for these soldiers being separated from their peaceful Motherland and forced into such a war.

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1 Oka Ivanovich Gorodovikov, an ethnic Kalmyk, was born in 1879. During the second world war, he was chiefly responsible for the formation of cavalry units. He retired in 1947 and died on February 26, 1960.
When we came across a sign showing five red stars erected at the side of the road, we knew that it marked the grave of a Soviet soldier. We wondered about which Soviet region and town he might have come from, and whose son he was, and imagined how he had heroically fought for his Motherland, and was now resting in peace. These determined people lost their precious lives in order to liberate their pristine land from the aggressive enemy. This was not only for the honest cause of the Soviet people, but was for the sake of social advancement by all peoples and races. As they are the true heroes of our time, how can History ever forget them?

As we witnessed all these things along our route following the events of a tough battle, the immeasurable loss, damage, destruction, death, and suffering experienced by the Soviet people in their struggle for victory was clearly imprinted on our minds.

The delegation continued on its journey, viewing many things along the way. We entered a forest in which there was a smallish building. This turned out to be the command headquarters of the front. Due to its fortification (it was hidden under pine needles), from the outside it could not be recognized as a building. The commanders of the front saluted in military fashion and cordially received the delegation led by the Mongolian Marshal. They invited us into their accommodation, where we had some close, friendly discussions.

The colonel-general in command at the front was I. S. Konev (later to become a marshal), the commander of the staff headquarters was Colonel-General V. D. Sokolovskii, and the representative of the Senior Command was Lieutenant-General N. A. Bulganin (later to become Marshal and Prime Minister of the Soviet Union). All of them gave us detailed information about the situation on the Western Front.

V. D. Sokolovskii was a handsome [well-built] man of about fifty, and his eyes, speech, and mannerisms led us to think he was a perfect example of an intelligent general. Choibalsan congratulated and informed them that they had been awarded the Order of the MPR by a decree of the Presidium of the Baga Khural of Mongolia. Choibalsan personally presented them with the medals. Although the front command was quite busy, they managed to treat the delegation [to a meal] and showed a film about the war. The same evening, a concert was held by the army musicians. During this performance we temporarily forgot that we had arrived at the battle front of a major war and it felt just as if we were among happy, proud people in peace time. Of course, this was not the case. It was a difficult time during an enormously severe struggle when the Soviet people had to fight as well as enjoy artistic performances and relaxation.

The delegation then went to several units of the three armies at the front commanded by Lieutenant-General I. Kh. Bagramyan, who later became a marshal, and the lieutenant-generals I. V. Boldin and N. A. Belov. While the delegation was handing over the presents and letters from the people to the several hundred soldiers and officers, the representatives found out about the battle situation.

When I visited the units at the front, they appeared similar to the ones I had come across in peace time. There were few soldiers in groups together and not many people about in general. Some had occupied their proper positions, some were engaged in battle with the enemy and some were preparing to take their turn in the tough battle. They all appeared to be strong, barrel-chested men dressed in white felt coats and gray fur hats. They were carrying automatic weapons.

One of them caught sight of us and smiled as if he were meeting his parents and family, an event which I will always remember. I sometimes wonder where he is and
what he is doing now and I wished that I could have met with him and talked. There were also some colorful officers wearing binoculars around their necks and guns on their hips who seemed to be busily rushing around the place. It was apparent that each and every man, whether soldier or officer, had a clear job to do. Whenever the signal was given, they all seemed to know how to carry out their orders.

The commanding officer, Lieutenant-General I. Kh. Bagramyan was a hugely-built man and seemed to be a wise, intelligent officer. The generals I. A. Boldin and N. A. Belov struck us as being two quiet, ordinary Russians. The Soviet army officers talked to us about the famous generals who emerged from among the Russian people to battle with foreign enemies during many periods of their history. They also told us about the People’s Heroes, the October Revolution, famous generals of the civil war, and other famous people inspired by their native traditions and the fighting ability of their warriors. They now had the opportunity to take their turn to honorably fulfill the duty presented by history, by vanquishing the invading enemy. Once having liberated the Motherland they said that they had been destined by history to rescue the whole world from the danger of Fascism.

Under the cover of special protection, the delegation crossed into the line of fire and entered a fortified building. The Soviet artillery units opened heavy fire on the enemy, and we watched an aircraft bombing raid in progress. The Soviet people who manufactured those large guns and aircraft wanted to raise the strength and fighting ability of the Motherland, and they thought of ways to transmit knowledge on how to build these things to industry, which was welcomed by the workers there. In a short period of time the weapons were being mass-produced and received by the military commanders who used them to exterminate the enemy. That was how the slogan “Aim for total Victory” was realized.

Regardless of the weather, Soviet aircraft would soar into the sky and fearlessly attack the enemy, after which we watched the Fascists’ aircraft catch fire and fall to the ground. On December 14-15 we visited a Soviet mortar battery. While concealed in trenches we watched the shelling of a concealed enemy hideout through binoculars. We also visited a tank unit where we saw the powerful technology being guided towards the enemy. It was exciting to witness how the able Soviet soldiers controlled their weapons and used their talent and determination when engaging the enemy in battle.

One morning, the delegation was invited into a Katyusha artillery battery where we were placed in a safe area and everyone was given a pair of binoculars. We were shown the location of the enemy’s hiding place and the Katyusha missile launchers which were mounted on vehicles ready to be fired. When the Katyushas were fired towards the enemy we heard a thunderous noise with flashes of lighting and what looked like flaming missiles. Clearly, this was the weapon needed to smash the enemy.

That evening, after we had arrived at our accommodations at the front, we were resting when an officer entered and saluted Marshal Choibalsan, “The Katyusha battery which was fired in your presence at the enemy resulted in the following: We were able to strike several of the enemy’s reinforced hideouts, and several dozen soldiers, machine guns and heavy artillery units were destroyed. Several Fascists were captured alive. If you wish, you may see the captured Fascists and ask them any questions.” Then, a youngish Fascist soldier wearing a large torn gray coat and boots was dragged in. Choibalsan asked about him and he replied, “We are members of the Fascist SS, and we were carrying out orders from our command. We do not know what will happen to us
now." We thought that they must have been feeling despondent from the moment they were defeated near Moscow and pursued westwards.

The delegation returned to Moscow for a few days before again setting off to visit a tank unit on the Western Front. This next journey resulted from a decision taken by the MPRP Central Committee and Council of Ministers to use some of the national budget to purchase a tank column named "Revolutionary Mongolia" which was to be handed over by a delegation headed by Choibalsan. Following a reception held for the delegation at the tank unit, the tank commander and the soldiers paraded for the gathering in honor of the Mongolian nation. Each tank was clearly marked with its own name, for example "Party Central Committee," "Council of Ministers," "Sükhbaatar," "Marshal Choibalsan," "Khatanbaatar Magsarjav" and the names of the eighteen aimags. At the ceremony, Colonel A. S. Leonov, the commander-in-chief of the tank units, accepted the gift of tanks and made a speech. Choibalsan, leader of the delegation also made a speech. The commanders of the tank unit made a promise to us saying "These giant machines which all of you have presented to us will be driven into Berlin to smash the enemy."

There was a lot of news [in the press] about the visit of the representatives. All their names were published in the newspaper for the troops of the Western Front and their related units. The letters of thanks written by the officers to the Mongolian people were also printed. In addition, we brought back many letters and poems from the officers and soldiers at the front addressed to the Mongolian people, and these were published in our press time and again. The soldiers and officers of the Soviet army revealed their heartfelt feelings and the high value they placed on the genuine concern of the people in far-away Mongolia.

After Marshal Choibalsan and the delegation had returned to Moscow from the front, Soviet Marshal G. K. Zhukov went to Choibalsan’s special residence to discuss the situation at the front and the progress being made there. We heard later that Zhukov had been working in Moscow following the defeat of Hitler’s German forces which had been surrounding Stalingrad. After M. I. Kalinin had received Kh. Choibalsan and G. Bumtsend, and Choibalsan had been awarded the Order of Suvorov, Kalinin said, "Well, let’s have some tea. I am very fond of the tea in Moscow." Turning to Bumtsend he asked, "How many cups of tea do you drink in a day?" Bumtsend replied, "Actually we Mongols say ‘How many pots of tea do you drink in a day?’" Kalinin laughed heartily at this and said "Your people are really something!"

On February 2, 1943, the Mongolian delegation headed by Choibalsan was received in the Kremlin Palace by leading members of the Soviet Party and government headed by I. V. Stalin. I was present at the discussions, which lasted a few hours. During the meeting Stalin said, "It is at times of hardship that you realize the quality of your friends." He was referring to 1921 when the Soviet people offered assistance to the Mongolians who were suffering. "Now, in this difficult war-time situation, the Mongols are repaying us" he joked.

There were over forty people from the Mongolian side at the reception, including Bumtsend and Sürenjav, who had delivered gifts to the front. I assumed the task of interpreting for both sides. Although I tried to do this carefully without making any mistakes, I was scolded by Choibalsan and Sürenjav for omitting an occasional word.

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2 Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin (1875-1946), served as the Soviet Union’s president, officially called the chairman of the presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, from 1938 to 1946.
Choibalsan later told me that while I was interpreting in Russian and Mongolian, Stalin had asked “How and where was this young man educated?”

As the reception drew to a close, waiters ran around to serve champagne, hard liquor, and food. While I was taking advantage of this opportunity to have a bit of the delicious food at one of the tables, Stalin rose and said two or three words in a slow Georgian accent which I did not hear properly. A. A. Zhdanov, a member of the Politburo of the USSR Communist Party, came to my assistance saying that Stalin had just said, “Hey young man, a toast to the young man who has been interpreting for us!”

Zhdanov said that I should go and touch glasses with Stalin, and asked me what kind of liquor I preferred. I told him quite truthfully that I wanted only the mildest liquor. In a panic I took the glass and went up to Stalin, splashing it on my sleeves so that hardly anything remained in my glass. Noticing this, L. P. Beria asked, “Aren’t you drinking a toast to Stalin?” I was afraid and replied, ”I will drink, I will drink.” Beria filled my glass with hard liquor. I took it and touched glasses with Stalin. Then I drank it in one gulp. I felt something burning inside me, along with some dizziness. It seemed as if the floor of the large room was rising and the ceiling was falling. I sat down on a chair, barely able to wait for the end of the reception. But luckily the reception soon came to an end, and I went back to my room.

While Choibalsan was in Moscow, he was met by the famous Soviet actors L. N. Sverdlin, who played D. Sukhbaatar, and N. K. Cherkasov who had played the baron [von Ungern Sterberg]. The famous sculptor S. D. Merkurov came to make a bust of Choibalsan and the artist S. V. Gerasimov painted his portrait.

The delegation returned (to Mongolia) to tell the people about where they had been and the things which they had seen there. On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Red Army, on February 23, 1943, new trainloads of gifts from Mongolian workers set off for the front. On this occasion, two trains were sent, accompanied by a delegation headed by the General Secretary of the Central Committee, Tsedenbal, who visited many of the units and companies at the front to present them with the gifts.

The MPRP Central Committee expressed its wish to send a group of people to take a course at the Higher Party School attached to the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Bolshevik Party. It was decided that the Central Committee members N. Lkhamsüren, Ch. Lodoidamba, Sh. Luvsanvandan, Ts. Namsrai, and myself would be sent there.

In the middle of June we left Ulaanbaatar and arrived in Moscow, where we stayed in the staff accommodations at the Mongolian embassy. We made our way to the

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3 Andrei Aleksandrovich Zhdanov, born in 1896, served as Politburo member from 1939 until his death on August 31, 1948.
4 Lavrentii Pavlovich Beria, born in 1899 in Georgia, was at the time of Shirendev’s visit the Soviet Union’s Commissar of Internal Affairs. After Stalin’s death, Beria was purged in July 1953 and on December 23, 1954 was executed by firing squad.
5 Nikolai Konstantinovich Cherkasov (1903-1966), was an actor at the Pushkin State Academy Drama Theater in Leningrad from 1933 until shortly before his death.
6 Sergei Dmitrievich Merkurov was born in Armenia in 1881, studied during most of the first decade of the twentieth century in Zurich, Munich, Florence and Paris. He died on June 8, 1952.
7 Sergei Vasil’evich Gerasimov, born in 1885, was a painter and graphic artist who received his training before the first world war at the Stroganov Arts College and the College of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture in Moscow. He died on April 20, 1964.
Through the Ocean Waves

College in Moscow and showed them our letter of appointment. From July 1, 1943 the Party Central Committee of the All-Union Republics of the USSR prepared lectures for the Frontier, Regional, and City Party committees. We decided to enroll in the six-month preparatory course, during which we were taught an interesting course on international relations.

The topics taught included the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union, the history of the All-Union Communist Party, history of the Soviet Union, international relations from 1917 to 1934, foreign policy of the Soviet Union, world economics, political geography, the economy of the Soviet Union during the second world war, wartime propaganda, and political agitation. These courses were taught by famous academicians and corresponding members, including G. F. Aleksandrov, the philosopher M. M. Rozental, B. M. Kedorov, the academicians of USSR History B. G. Grekov and V. P. Volgin, the academician S. V. Bakhrushin, the historian and academician E. V. Tarle, P. N. Pospelov, and E. M. Yaroslavskii who, despite being in poor health, gave several lectures. He had been present at the trial and execution of Baron Ungern in Novosibirsk. Some famous diplomats, such as the international economist L. A. Leont’ev, gave lectures in international relations.

As there were plenty of printed lectures and books on those subjects at that college, we strove to read and study them. Leading figures in the international revolutionary movement also came to give us lectures. Among them were Palmiro Togliatti, Otto Kuusinen, Vasili Kolarov (who came to our Party’s Ninth Congress as a representative of the Comintern), and Dolores Ibarruri who gave several lectures in Russian on specialist subjects. The course attendees also met with and listened to the talks given by war heroes of the Motherland, generals, officers, and soldiers. Lectures on Lenin were given by the Party Central Committee staff member and close friend of Lenin, E. D. Stasova, and by L. A. Foteeva who worked during Lenin’s time.

After we had completed our course, at our own request, we learned about the ideological work of some of the Party organizations in Moscow, the editorial work of art

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8 The philosopher Georgii Fedorovich Aleksandrov was born in St. Petersburg in 1908. He received his doctorate in 1938 and became a member of the USSR Academy of Sciences in 1946. He died on July 21, 1961.

9 Vyacheslav Petrovich Volgin (1879-1962) joined the USSR Academy of Sciences in 1930 and served as one of its vice-presidents between 1942 and 1953.

10 Sergei Vladimirovich Bakhrushin (1882-1950), a native of Moscow, graduated from Moscow University in 1904. His specialty was Russian history, and he also helped write the histories of several Asian ethnic groups, including the Yakuts, Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Turkmen, Tatars, and Komis.

11 Born in Kiev in 1875, Evgenii Viktorovich Tarle graduated from Kiev University in 1896 and then moved on to Leningrad (Petrograd) University from 1903 to 1921. His main works dealt with Russian and Italian history. He died on January 5, 1955.

12 Emel’yan Mikhailovich Yaroslavskii was born in 1878 as Minei Izrailevich Gubel’man, received a few years of college education and worked as a pharmacist and bookbinder before devoting himself to revolutionary work. After the Bolshevik victory, he spent a lifetime in the teaching of party history. He died on December 4, 1943, shortly after his meeting with Shirendev.

13 Togliatti (1893-1964) was the long-time leader of the Italian Communist Party.

14 Born in Finland in 1881, Otto Vil’gel’movich Kuusinen spent a lifetime in the Communist movement both in Finland and later in the Soviet Union. He died in Moscow on May 17, 1964.

15 Elena Dmitrievna Stasova (1873-1966), a native of St. Petersburg, owed her later prominence to her collaboration with Krupskaya, Lenin’s wife, in Sunday workers’ schools and various underground activities before 1917.
and news journals, and education at university, higher, and middle schools. During our studies there, J. Sambuu, who was our ambassador, was very kind to us and sometimes used to invite us for meals.

When we returned home in early January 1944, N. Lkhamsüren was appointed head of the ideology section of the Party Central Committee, Ts. Namsrai became manager of the publication department of the Party Central Committee and was in charge of the translations of the works of Lenin and Stalin. Sh. Luvsanvandan became manager of the Education Department of the Central Committee, and Ch. Lodoidamba was appointed as a lecturer. I remained a reviewer, as before.

Around that time, Choibalsan said that since I had been a member of the Youth League for a long time, it was now time for me to be recruited into the Party. I was recruited by the party cell attached to the government.
In the Depths of the Ocean

I was summoned to Choibalsan's office, where the full members and deputy members of the Politburo of the Central Committee were all gathered. Until 1943 the leadership of the MPRP Central Committee was known as the Presidium. At its meeting in February 1943, the Central Committee confirmed that the Presidium would henceforth be known as the Politburo of the Central Committee.

At that time, the areas of responsibility of the Politburo members were as follows: Choibalsan was a member of the Politburo of the Party Central Committee and, as Prime Minister, he was directly responsible for all government work, the Ministry of Defense, the Interior Ministry, the Foreign Ministry, and legal bodies.

Tsedenbal, who was General Secretary of the Party Central Committee, was responsible for all the work of the Central Committee and aspects of Party leadership in the Foreign and Interior Ministries, the Defense Ministry, and legal organizations. Later on, he became head of the Political Department of the army, chairman of the Council of Ministers, and assistant to the chairman of the Planning Commission.

Suurenjav participated in all Central Committee work as second secretary of the Party Central Committee and was responsible for agricultural matters. He later became a First Deputy Prime Minister. Damba worked on the Ulaanbaatar City Party Committee and in areas of industry, trade, transport, and communication. Yanjmaa was mainly concerned with women's matters, Bumtsend worked in the Presidium of the Baga Khural, Lkhagvastüre worked in the Ministry of Defense and Jambaldorj, who later became a deputy member of the Politburo, was responsible for the work of the legal bodies.

At a meeting of the Politburo, Choibalsan suggested that I should be confirmed as secretary in charge of the propaganda of the Central Committee of the MPRP. Afterwards, Tsedenbal and other members of the Politburo made speeches supporting Choibalsan's idea. At a meeting on February 9, 1944, my post as propaganda secretary was confirmed. Furthermore, it was agreed that this would be discussed and confirmed at a meeting of the Central Committee.

For a while, I sat in silence, worried that I would not be able to carry out such vast and highly responsible work. Choibalsan asked, "Well, Shirendev, what do you think about that?" I rose and, like those who had previously been appointed to that position, I replied, "Although I am glad to be entrusted to do this pressing work, having had no prior experience of it I have humble reservations about mastering many aspects of the job." Choibalsan continued, "No-one has a ready-made ability to do this. If you do everything you can and go through life working with care and attention, you will master this leading position."

After the meeting ended I went home and rested for a while, thinking that because I had already been appointed to this responsible job, it was important to begin reading about its work from resolutions published in Soviet texts. From the beginning of
the school year I decided that first of all I would get advice from Tsedenbal, the General Secretary of the MPRP Central Committee, who had some experience in Party work.

When I went to meet him at home, he was sitting in his tiny library reading journals and newspapers, which he had marked in blue and red pencil. I went in, and after talking about various official matters, I began to mention the things which had to be asked and sorted out.

Tsedenbal replied,

You have just returned from the Soviet Union, where you learned a lot from scholars. As you want to advance your career, it is right that you should begin putting what you have learned into practice. Read the resolutions of the Tenth [Party] Congress and the plenums concerning propaganda. Get to know the propaganda-related work of the newspaper publishing house, the education and arts establishments and the scientific institutes. At the same time you can ask for advice from the Soviet specialists working there. Visit the industrial areas of Ulaanbaatar and the aimags and sums to learn about the propaganda work done in these places, and give talks to the workers. As head of the lecturing committee you should further extend that work. It would be a good idea to attract intellectuals into propaganda work on a wide scale. Attention should be paid to improving the quality of the handbooks, journals, and diaries of the agitators and the quality of *Ünen*. You should continue to broaden your knowledge by continuous study. That much is obvious. Carry on reading the newspapers and journals connected with the propaganda work of the All-Union Communist Party, and after thinking it all through, begin your work.

The day after I had been appointed to my new position, I arrived at the Central Committee to find that a room had been prepared for me. I worked for four years under Tsedenbal as secretary in charge of propaganda for the MPRP Central Committee. I spent a day assembling some members of the propaganda department to find out what they did, familiarized myself with their work and asked some of them for advice. The next day I was also given advice on the relevant problems by the leaders of the Central Committee.

Even then, I was still confronted by a situation in which I did not actually know how to do my job, and I felt as if I was out of my depth. I subscribed to Soviet newspapers and journals, to publications on the education of the masses, and on science. I even re-examined the notes from my time at college in Irkutsk and read over the many pamphlets which I had brought back from the lecture course at the All-Union Communist (Bolshevik) Party Central Committee. I made a special note of the material which was immediately necessary for my work and slowly carried out my work according to plan. I scrutinized the journals *Propagandist*, *Agitator’s Note Book*, *Party Organization* and the leader articles in *Ünen*.

At that time, the publication of agricultural and cultural matters was carefully planned, along with verbal propaganda which, of course, appeared every day. Some days, I was unable to read as much as I had planned or intended. I felt anxious at having been drawn into this vast field of work, but I carried on working and learning from my experienced, educated friends.

When I began working I received constant advice from the Party organization and from the Soviet specialists Yu. K. Prikhodov, N. V. Tsapkin, and D. I. Sidorov, who had a wealth of experience in the propaganda field. These friends of mine and I toured the aimags and often visited the economic and cultural establishments which were using book-keeping methods to examine statistics. I paid attention to the instructions and advice given to the people.
When I went into the countryside to explain the convening of the Plenum of the aimag Party committee, the work of the Party cells in the sums, and the progress of the patriotic war, I became more and more familiar with the work and lifestyle of the people in the aimags, sums, and rural districts. Along the way, I listened carefully to the leadership of the aimag Party committees, the propaganda workers and the leaders of the Party cells in the sums. While I accepted their ideas and advice, I was also confronted by questions from them which flustered me, as I could not answer all of them satisfactorily. Therefore I sometimes read up on the relevant books and prepared answers beforehand, or else I openly asked the more senior, experience people for guidance.

In order to carry out this propaganda work, it was important to find out about the political, economic, and cultural methods employed by the government and about the Soviet Patriotic War and the international situation. Thus it became my official duty to listen to the radio and read regular publications. In addition, lectures and talks on culture and civilization had to be delivered to the people. Articles were written and discussions were carried out on the activities of scholars, cultural figures, and the writers of culturally-developed nations. Explanations of hygiene and civilized behavior had to be given at that time.

Great difficulties were encountered when conducting propaganda work in the countryside. In the Gobi, Khangai, and Kheer [steppe] zones, the herdsmen in the aimag and sums had a livelihood based on private livestock. Party propaganda was distributed to several hundred of the private economic units explaining the foreign and domestic policies of the Party. Unlike now, there were no aircraft, cars, radios, or telecommunications to organize political and economic activities. Radio transmissions did not reach much beyond the aimag centers, and a slow horse-relay system was used to deliver newspapers and journals to the countryside. Only very occasionally did telephone communication and auto transport reach the sums and rural districts.

From the point of view of meaning and content, the articles in Ünen were not always of great significance. The director of the newspaper, G. Jamts, was almost always blamed for an inadequate linguistic style. I too was often blamed, as I was in charge of much of this work. The authors Ts. Damdinsüren and B. Rinchen, who had been falsely accused and imprisoned were released from prison. Ts. Damdinsüren was appointed as the editor in charge of the newspaper and B. Rinchen was re-admitted to the Party and appointed deputy manager of the Russian language version of Ünen. The manager in overall charge of this newspaper was the Soviet specialist and woman journalist V. Vavilina. From that time on, the content and linguistic style of the two newspapers improved noticeably, which was helpful for the readership, as well as for those things connected with these papers with which in the main I was concerned.

At that time, not only was literacy at a low level among the ordinary people, but the number of people with even a primary school education was inadequate. The Party and government organized and carried out large-scale work to fulfill the plans to increase the number of livestock, to fatten them in summer and autumn, keep them healthy through the winter and spring, gather wool and animal hair with the minimum of waste for delivery to the state, fulfill the official procurement obligations on time, to deliver goods to the herdsmen using draft animals, and to establish schools, cultural facilities and medical and veterinary services.

As I slowly gained experience in my work, I met with and had discussions with teachers, doctors, and people who were in publishing. Having listened to their experi-
In the Depths of the Ocean

ences, I was immediately able to work out the correct line to follow in doing the work. One of the major conferences at that time was that of the Ulaanbaatar artists, and an important conference of theater, circus, and film workers was held in July 1944.

Government reports were considered at several of these conferences. These conferences included the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Youth League, the meeting marking the twentieth anniversary of Sükhbaatar’s death, a conference entitled “The Position of Revolutionary Youth League Work and Concerning the Fulfillment of the Aims of the Party Organization,” the twenty-fifth anniversary of Ünen, and the thirtieth anniversary of the October Socialist Revolution.

While I was preparing these reports, reading the relevant texts and seeking advice from people was good training for me. I wrote these reports in Mongolian and then translated them into Russian in order to familiarize the advisers and instructors with their contents. Large changes had to be made following merciless criticism, which was helpful in my subsequent work. Besides Party work, I had piles of other duties to carry out.

At that time the Mongolian State University had been established, but no rector had as yet been appointed. The university was considered to be of great importance, and my position as secretary in charge of the propaganda work of the Party Central Committee helped me to gain appointment as its rector. The Politburo of the Party Central Committee passed a resolution on September 1, 1944, which read: “As mentioned before, in paying special attention to the problem of cadres, the MPRP Central Committee has appointed the director of the Party Higher School, and a secretary of the Central Committee, so that the leading people in responsible positions will be able to teach the cadres.”

By the spring of 1943, a movement to assist the battle front in the Patriotic war had spread across the whole country. The output and quality of food and light industrial products was raised. With the aim of increasing the numbers of privately held livestock, there was support for the development of the highest expertise in animal husbandry among the masses. Agro-industrial collectives were strengthened, and the Party carried out validation of the indoctrination and propaganda work for the improvement of trade and transport.

During the time the Soviet Patriotic War was being fought, I went with a Soviet instructor to visit an old man who had been talking some nonsense about the war. Before very long, some groups of local people gathered at the household we were visiting. I took a small map of the world out of my case and discoursed at length about the war situation to the people gathered there.

The master of the household had been drinking shimiin arkhi [distilled fermented mare’s milk] and had become quite drunk. He turned to me and said, “You, my boy, are telling lies. Whatever you say about the limitless universe as drawn on a piece of paper the size of your hand, it can’t be believed.” The gathered audience laughed as if they were proud to help the old man mock me rather than accept my unconvincing talk. I regretted this very much. For a few moments I was unable to collect my thoughts sufficiently to give a well-founded reply.

There happened to be an identity card with a finger nail-size photograph pasted on it lying beside the household’s framed picture of a Buddha. My Soviet instructor picked up the card and asked, “Whose photograph is this?” “That’s my son” the man replied. “This isn’t your son. You are lying again.” The old man became very angry. “That’s my son, without a doubt,” and he began to shout and cry. The instructor laughed and asked, “Is he taller or shorter than you?” “My son is immeasurably taller than me.”
The instructor continued, "Since such a tall person can be portrayed in such a small picture, it is obvious that you can portray the universe on a tiny piece of paper.

The people in the ger immediately understood what he had said, and actually began to believe what we were saying. In addition however, these people had promised to make a gift of horses for the Soviet Patriotic War, and when Party propaganda was honestly explained to them, their working energy was revived and their enthusiasm clearly increased.

I witnessed the transformation in the lifestyle of the people during my attendance at the plenums of the aimag Party committees, the Baga Khurals, the Party cell meetings in the sums, and during my visits to nearly all the aimags and many of their sums. For a period of four years I continued learning from senior workers and from the life experiences of the people. These people had many years of work experience, and were the ones who strove to take the initiative in performing labor aimed at helping the country and the community. Although the people who made speeches and read reports at the meetings were never highly educated, they had a solid experience of life and work and I came across many people who spoke wisely and succinctly.

During 1944-1945 I learned about the workings of several sums in Övörkhangai and Bayankhongor aimags. I was handing out instructions while still inexperienced, a fact which I both realized and regretted whenever working in one of the sums. Still, while working and traveling around many districts in this sum, the methods of testing and instructing were carried out confidently and useful statistics were compiled and summarized.

All those in charge of the sum and its districts, over thirty in total, were assembled in the large official ger in the sum center, talked about what they had seen in that area and individually drew some quite important conclusions from their observations. It seemed as if they were making speeches to encourage the people to do their work more energetically. People listened in silence to my speech, which lasted for over forty minutes, after which I sat down once again.

During my speech I felt a little worried over why the audience was so silent. "Do these shortcomings exist in your sum? What do you all think about it? If such shortcomings exist, how do we correct them?" I asked. That day, there happened to be a spring blizzard, and as it was chilly, someone sitting next to the stove was putting some argal [dried dung] fuel into it. A group of comrades stared at the sky through the smoke hole in the roof. They had the look of people worried about their livestock herds and the problems back home.

Instead of answering my questions, a group of leading people looked at the leader of the sum as if waiting for him to say something. The people noticed that I was waiting for an answer, and they looked worried. The sum leader slowly drew on his long, white-stemmed pipe and kept making a tapping noise on the soles of his Mongol boots, with no sign of a reply to my question. I felt despondent at this and turned to him saying, "What do you actually think about this? Will you tell me your ideas?"

That man, who had a vast experience of life, looked at me and said, "That's right. I heard what you said. We understand our shortcomings. These things happen." In a couple of words he had dismissed everything I had based my speech on. With that, the meeting ended.

During my journey back from the sum, I reconsidered my own working methods and thought about why all the material I had gathered over several days and my
conclusions were unable to make any impression on this man. I felt that an individual's intellect and experience of life were as valuable as knowledge of written texts. In the car on my way back I thought about the psychology of the Mongols. There was good reasoning behind the Mongolian sayings “Hurry and you will get cold,” “Overcome anger with intelligence,” “Overcome poison with help,” and I contemplated them as we approached our destination. The car stopped and my train of thought was broken.

This event was a good lesson for me, and when I thought about it again, I realized that my conclusions were obviously of no use to the experienced comrades sitting there. I regretted making so divorced from reality a speech, and once again I realized the importance of striving to learn more from experienced people. Although in my youth I was raised among the ordinary people, I had been separated from ordinary life for many years. After completing their education, everyone who was appointed to any job, large or small, could learn from the wide, ocean-like experience of life. As the great writer of the proletariat M. Gorkii once said, “I had to graduate from the University of Life.”

Around the end of October 1945, I accompanied the Central Committee instructor, D. I. Sidorov, and the secretary of the Central Committee of the Youth League, N. Dangaasüren, to the town of Tsetserleg to lead the joint plenum of the Arkhangai aimag Party committee. The reason I had taken Dangaasüren with me on several visits to the countryside was that the secretary in charge of propaganda work used to be concerned with Youth League work, and Dangaasüren, who had only recently been appointed as head of the Youth League, was still being supervised.

As the conference ended, it began to snow heavily, but due to the demands of work, all of us, including our instructor, decided to set off for Ulaanbaatar early in the morning in two modern M-Pikap cars. It snowed all day and night, making the road impassable. The cars became stuck in the snow. All four of us, the instructor Sidorov, myself, my driver Tsedendamba, and Sidorov's driver Dorj shoveled snow, which allowed the cars to move perhaps ten meters or at best fifty meters before they got stuck again.

We carried on digging that night in a valley near the Ar Tamir livestock station. As dawn broke the next morning, we continued digging in the snow, but no trucks could be seen coming from either Tsetserleg or Ulaanbaatar. It continued to snow and a blinding snowstorm started which lasted all day until the following evening. The digging made us very tired, and a sheep’s shoulder blade and leg which we had brought with us were frozen and inedible. The drivers used soldering irons to warm the meat which we shared out and ate.

While we were standing there in the cold, a man approached on a horse dragging a pole-lasso behind him. “Have you seen the horses?” he asked us. We replied that we had not seen any horses and asked him how far we were from the telegraph station at Lake Ögii. He said that it was over ten kilometers away. We explained why we wanted to know and told him where we were from. We asked him to go to the Ögii station and request them to inform Marshal Choibalsan that we had been stuck in the snow for three days.

Although the man himself was feeling the cold from looking for his lost horses, he went to the telegraph station and conveyed our request. Then, just as we were growing tired from digging the snow, the blizzard stopped. Two or three trucks set off from Ulaanbaatar heading west to clear a path for us. We somehow made it to the Ögii telegraph station, and while we were spending a day and a night there, under Marshal Choibalsan’s orders, the Central Committee’s Russian chief mechanic, Maskalev,
brought an American "Dodge" truck with some steel ropes and boards for putting under
the wheels of a car as well as some food and drink. Thus, we arrived in Ulaanbaatar in
good health. My good and caring drivers on this occasion, D. Tsedendamba, N. Sereeter,
and D. Nyamdavaa, became inseparably good friends of mine.

While I was working as a secretary of the Party Central Committee from 1944 to
1948, as far as propaganda work was concerned, my main initial task was to indoctrinate
people about the struggle being conducted by the Soviet people and the rising world
powers against Hitler's Germany. The events leading to the formation of the post-war
socialist camp were also major topics for dissemination among the population. The he­
roic Soviet armies liberated towns, settlements, and vast areas of the Motherland from
Hitler's grasping oppressors, banished them from the Motherland, and helped to release
the many peoples of Eastern Europe from Fascist slavery.

Gatherings were held in Ulaanbaatar and other aimags and settlements. Following
these mass meetings, workers, employees, students, and the ordinary people of
Ulaanbaatar celebrated this victory of the Soviet people as if it were their own. They
greeted each other with news of the victory, shook hands, and some of them kissed each
other. We embraced and congratulated the Soviet specialists, sang songs, and entertained
everyone with food and vodka.

In addition to the end-of-war celebrations for the Soviet people we held on May
9, 1945, the Soviet people also held a special victory parade on June 24 in Red Square in
Moscow, the capital of the Soviet Union. This was not only a victory celebration for the
Soviet people, but was also a celebration for the progressive peoples of the world.

I led our country's delegation at the 220th anniversary of the founding of the
USSR Academy of Sciences. We took part in this anniversary conference on June 17,
1945. Later on, at the invitation of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, we went to visit
Moscow, Leningrad, and other cities. On June 24 we had the opportunity to watch the
majestic parade taking place in Moscow. As rector of the Mongolian State University and
member of the Institute of Science, I headed the delegation, in accordance with a resolu­
tion of the MPRP Central Committee. The delegation include J. Dugersiiren, who was
president of the Institute of Science at that time, and the full member B. Rinchen.

Among the famous foreign scholars who participated at the 220th anniversary of
the founding of the USSR Academy of Sciences was the famous French physicist Paul
Langevin. Around this time, our delegation met with many famous Soviet scholars of the
USSR, including Academician V. L. Kamarov, the president of the USSR Academy of
Sciences, metallurgist I. Bardin who was the vice-president, I. A. Orbeli the Far Eastern
specialist, the nuclear physicist P. L Kapitsa, the mechanical engineer E. G. Bruevich, the

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1 The Mongolian text of the memoir mentions S.G. Strumilin, but in his list of errata on the back page of the
book, Shirendev says that this should be V. L. Kamarov.
2 Ivan Pavlovich Bardin (1883-1960) was the director of the Institute of Metallurgy of the USSR Academy of
Sciences from 1939 until his death.
3 Iosif Abgarovich Orbeli (1887-1961) graduated from St. Petersburg University in 1911, and then served
there as faculty member from 1914 to 1931. He became a member of the USSR Academy of Sciences in 1935
and served in numerous academic functions. His specialties were Armenian epigraphy, Muslim tiles and
Sassanid metal. He was an honorary member of the London Archeological Society and the Iranian Academy
of Sciences.

When our delegation visited Leningrad, I met with Kozin at his home and visited him several times later in order to obtain ideas and advice on Mongolian studies and on the pre-Revolutionary period in Mongolia. At the time the Bogd Khan government was being established, he [Kozin] actually took part in the discussions between Imperial Russia and Mongolia. From 1911 to 1915, he had worked as an adviser in the Finance Department of the Mongolian government and became a famous scholar through studying and publishing the “Secret History of the Mongols.” As well as discussing topics of academic interest, he mentioned some interesting things about the visit of the Mongolian delegation to St. Petersburg after the establishment of the Bogd Khan nation in 1911, and of the meetings they had with Tsar Nicholas II and his foreign minister, Sazanov.

The Prime Minister of the Bogd Khan government of that time, Sain Noën Khan Namnansüren, headed the large delegation, which stayed at the Astoria hotel. The young Kozin acted as interpreter for them. The delegation, led by the Sain Noën Khan, attempted to seek support from Russia and other European nations. Kozin remarked that Namnansüren was the kind of person who wanted to introduce new things into the country. According to Kozin, the Sain Noën Khan was also interested in telephone communications and meat cold storage, both of which were mentioned in Kozin’s book. Around 1912-1913, a telephone system with a few numbers was installed in the capital, and the Mongolian medal Erdenii Ochir was struck in St. Petersburg. One historical reference in the archives noted that Namnansüren brought back for himself and the Bogd a three-way folding table mirror, a vessel [samovar] for hot tea, and a folding razor called the “Five Purities”

After the Mongolian delegation returned from St. Petersburg, European-style buildings began to appear in Mongolia. These included the tiny wooden pavilion on the bank of the Dund river built by Namnansüren, the small two-story temple-like building erected by Daichin Van Khanddorj, now in front of Number One Ten-year School, and also the log-built European-style structure built by Erdenii Dalai Jonon Van Shiren Damdin, now situated near the university. Similar buildings also proliferated in the aimag and khoshuu centers.

Around 1958-1959, Academician I. M. Maiskii told me that in 1917-1918, when he was leading the livestock purchasing expedition for Tsentrsoyuz in Mongolia, he was working to the west of the present-day capital of Khövsgöl aimag, where the banner lord Erdene Düüregch Jonon Van Namkhaijanjan had a two-story Russian-style log building constructed at the Erdene Düüregch Van monastery. Several large grandfather clocks had been placed in its corridors, and guests were received in a large hall specially built for the purpose.

Maiskii also mentioned that in the summer of 1916 he went to Zayayn Khüree and pitched his tent at the eastern side of the Erdene Bulgan mountain. While he was resting there, some ten elderly lamas of Zaya Gegeen monastery came to inquire about him. In addition to taking his cigarette box, they tried to buy his straw hat and binoculars, and invited him into Zayayn Khüree.

In Maiskii’s work Sovremennaya Mongoliya [Contemporary Mongolia], written

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4 Sergei Andreevich Kozin (1879-1956) was a prominent Russian Mongolist. His early work on the Secret History of the Mongols was followed by major contributions to our knowledge of Mongolian and other Inner Asian epics, particularly the Geser and Janggar.
in 1918, he stated that he had come across a learned pilgrim-lama who had wandered through India and China and had returned to his native land. This aroused my interest. When I asked Maiskii if it was true, he said that it was true, but that he had forgotten the lama’s name. There really was such a lama, and he was able to converse “in Russian and English.”

When Maiskii edited and reprinted his *Contemporary Mongolia*, he asked me to clarify some of the things mentioned in his book. The second edition of the book identified the lama as Sodnom. These books showed that from the beginning of the twentieth century there were some intellectuals in Mongolia who sought progress and European culture. Leading figures in our government, such as N. Khayankhyarvaa, D. Chagdarjav, A. Danzan, and others, traveled abroad and on returning home promoted many important ideas concerning the direction of national development, a fact which I repeatedly mentioned in articles I published.

On that beautiful day in history, June 6, 1945, Red Square was ceremonially decorated, and there were large portraits of Lenin and Stalin on the side of the building to the north of it. The flags of the Soviet republics fluttered on the sides of the other buildings, and a twenty-five meter high fountain sprayed water in all directions. On the ceremonial platform stood the Party leaders of the Soviet Union, government leaders, famous figures, senior Soviet deputies, famous and heroic Red Army marshals, generals, and officers. There were workers, collective farmers, scholars, and foreign representatives, among whom were the delegates who took part in the anniversary celebrations of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

At 9:55 in the morning, I. V Stalin, M. I. Kalinin, Ye. K. Voroshilov, A. I. Mikoyan and other leading Party and government figures appeared on the platform. Everyone in Red Square turned towards them and applauded loudly. At exactly 10 am the USSR Marshal and twice-decorated hero, G. K. Zhukov, came through the Spasskii Gate of the Kremlin palace on a white horse and was met by the USSR Marshal in charge of the parade, the twice-decorated hero, K. K. Rokossovskii, who was riding a black horse. Rokossovskii reported in a proud, majestic manner that the parade was ready. After the outstanding hero Marshal Zhukov had inspected the victory parade, he went up onto the platform and congratulated the victory-leading Party of Lenin, the victorious people and the heroic armies, and gave his good wishes for the success of peace-time labor.

Before the beginning of the parade, a thousand musicians began to play the Soviet national anthem, and there was a fifty cannon gun salute. This, and the majestic congratulations given to the victorious armies of Red Square will always remain in my memory. As the parade of the victorious armies began, the famous army units which had battled heroically on the many fronts in Karelia, Belorussia, Ukraine, and Stalingrad filed out in a shimmering array, and everyone shouted “hurrah.” The warriors who had gained eternal fame in battle and the officers and generals with their gleaming medals marched along with the air of majestic victors, which radiated in all directions. Then, during one part of the Soviet military parade, flags with the swastikas of the many defeated units of the Fascist German army were carried along drooping, and were then thrown down all at

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5 An English translation can be found in *Contemporary Mongolia*, published by the Human Relations Area Files of New Haven in 1956.
6 Anastas Ivanovich Mikoyan (1895-1978) served in many high government posts, including that of president of the Soviet Union in 1964-65.
once which was a symbol of the complete banishment of their souls. The principal lesson from World War II was that another war to destroy mankind must not be allowed to occur. The peoples of the world were reminded to let peace reign forever in this world.
The Mongolian People’s Vote for Independence

In 1921 the Soviet Union recognized Mongolia’s independence. Furthermore, a mutual friendship treaty was signed on November 5, between our two countries which confirmed the freedom and independence of the Mongolian nation. Included among the Soviet Union’s acts of assistance was the decisive military support given when the Japanese militarists encroached on our territory. We Mongolians should always remember this.

During the difficult years of World War II and in particular during the years of the Soviet people’s Patriotic War, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet government led the army under the slogan “For Total Victory” and stirred up the ideology, energy, and patriotism of the masses. While delivering victory in the tough battle with the enemy, the Soviet Union continued to pay attention to strengthening the defense of Mongolia’s independence, assisting its socio-economic development and strengthening the friendship between the peoples of the two countries. In implementing the measures to assist Mongolian independence, the Soviet Seventeenth Army and Soviet military specialists assumed major obligations.

The Soviet government and its foreign affairs organizations paid great attention to the recognition of the independence of the Mongolian state. In February 1945 the government leaders of the Soviet Union, United States, and Great Britain discussed at their conference in Yalta important questions relating to the end of World War II and the government and economy of post-war Germany and other European countries. During these meetings, discussions took place on the Far East, and two or three months following the end of the war in Europe, the Soviet Union did its duty and entered the war against Japan. The Soviet Union proposed a timely solution to the question of recognition of the Mongolian position.

The Soviet Union recognized its duty and declared war on Japan on August 9, 1945, and on the following day, Mongolia also declared war on Japan. Along with some units of the Soviet army, the Mongolian troops dealt a blow to the Kwantung Army and helped to liberate the Chinese nation.

Following the tripartite discussions which led to the declaration of war by the Soviet Union on Japan, talks were held between the Soviet Union and the Chinese Guomindang government. The Prime Minister of the Guomindang government, Sung Hsi-pen, and the foreign minister, Wang Hsi-tze, took part in the discussions. The Soviet government familiarized the Chinese side with the tripartite discussions on safeguarding the independence of Mongolia. The Chinese government responded to this question by agreeing to support Mongolian independence, if the Mongolian people as a whole voted for independence after Japan had been defeated. When the Soviet government invited the Mongolian Prime Minister Marshal Choibalsan to Moscow for an exchange of views, Choibalsan conveyed the thanks of Mongolia’s government to the Soviet Union for their thoughtfulness in their discussions with China on the subject of Mongolia.
I, along with some friends, had taken part in the celebrations of the 220th anniversary of the USSR Academy of Sciences. While I was preparing to return home, the Prime Minister of the Mongolian People’s Republic, Marshal Choibalsan, sent word through J. Sambuu, our ambassador in Moscow, saying that he wanted to meet me. When I met Choibalsan, he asked me about the anniversary celebrations of the USSR Academy of Sciences and briefly mentioned his own reasons for coming to Moscow. Then he said I could stay and work with him in Moscow. When Choibalsan had concluded his discussions with the Soviet government, a reception was held one evening at which I too was present. The Soviet side included I. V. Stalin, V. M. Molotov, A. Ya. Vishinskii, and others. On our side Ambassador Sambuu and myself accompanied Choibalsan.

Stalin was talking to Choibalsan before the start of the reception, and turning to him asked jokingly what might happen if a Chinese delegation headed by Sung Hsi-pen was invited to this reception. Choibalsan understood the literal meaning of these words and said, “No need, not necessary.” The Soviet comrades standing next to Stalin smiled and Stalin laughed loudly saying “In that case, let’s all go and eat,” and invited Choibalsan into the reception room.

During the reception, I interpreted for Stalin and Choibalsan, who discussed things of mutual interest and the especially joyful marking of the historically significant end to World War II. They made a toast to friendship between our two countries. Choibalsan raised his glass several times to toast the leadership of the Soviet Party and government, the great Soviet people, the victorious and heroic Soviet Army, and the leading Soviet comrades who were present at the reception. Each time he made a toast, I interpreted for him.

As the reception drew to a close, Stalin turned to me and made a toast, “To old friends,” which I felt was a huge reward. For Stalin to call me an old acquaintance he must have remembered when I interpreted for him at the reception for the Mongolian delegation headed by Choibalsan which had donated gifts at the battle front. The next morning Sambuu and I accompanied Choibalsan to a special plane which was leaving for Ulaanbaatar.

The foreign ministers of the Soviet Union and China exchanged communiques in accordance with the climate of the discussions being carried out between the Soviet and Chinese governments on the one hand and the Soviet and Mongolian governments on the other. As mentioned above, the Chinese side said, “If the whole Mongolian people vote for independence, our country will accept this after Japan has surrendered in the war.” Since Japanese military power had been hard hit by the Soviet Red Army, and the position of the allied forces and the Chinese army had been judged by the Japanese to be too powerful to fight against, the Japanese government and the senior Japanese military command signaled their surrender on September 2, 1945.

With the Japanese surrender came the end of World War II. Thanks to the even more important changes in international relations and the situation in the Far East which assisted peace, there would soon be freedom from social oppression.

The above-mentioned meetings in the Crimea and the meetings between the Soviet and Chinese governments considered an agreement on the question of the recognition of Mongolian independence. The Presidium of the Baga Khural passed a resolution on October 20, 1945 to conduct a nation-wide plebiscite on the nation’s independence.

The preparatory work of the plebiscite was carried out in under a month during
which the Party, government, and public organizations were required to work enor-
mously hard. A Central Public Commission was established to carry out the work. This
was headed by Bumtsend, the chairman of the Presidium of the Baga Khural. Tsedenbal,
General Secretary of the Central Committee, Secretary Ch. Sürenjav, Central Committee
secretary D. Damba, and myself took part as deputies on this commission.

There was a large amount of material connected with the plebiscite, including
topics for discussion, which were prepared and printed in Ulaanbaatar and then distrib-
uted to other districts. The preparatory work involved over 13,000 meetings held
throughout the country in which many thousands of herdsmen, workers, and intellectuals
participated. Thousands of letters and telegrams arrived from workers addressed to the
Central Commission. The Party and government rallied around, and voting was carried
out for the sake of national independence, which clearly everyone was ready to defend.

All men and women who had the right to vote were able to take part in the
plebiscite. Each deputy of the Central Commission was responsible for organizing the
plebiscite in two aimags. Tsedenbal, General Secretary of the Central Committee, was
responsible for Uvs and Khovd aimags. I was responsible for Övörkhangai and Bayan-
khongor aimags, where I spent nearly a month. I set off with all the propaganda and in-
formation material prepared by the Central Committee and the ballot papers prepared by
the Central Commission for the plebiscite.

I conducted seminars in each of the two aimag centers on issues concerning the
plebiscite. Also taking part in the seminars were the aimag Party committee, the aimag
administration, leading people in the official organizations of the aimag center, those in
positions of responsibility, and the leaders of the sum administration. During the semi-
nars for the plebiscite I explained the details of the resolutions and directives originating
from the Central Committee and the Central Commission. The working plan for the
propaganda program was explained in detail to the households, sums, districts, and offi-
cial organizations. Subjects for discussion and publicity posters were handed over to re-
 sponsible individuals.

The process of informing people involved going into each household and dis-
cussing and agreeing on the details of the time and place of the voting. The ballot papers
for the plebiscite were received from the districts, sums, and households and were
counted before noon on October 20. The task was to work out how to report the results to
the Central Commission, as there were no telephone communications between the sums,
no transport to convey the information, a shortage of people who were qualified to count
the ballot papers and other even greater difficulties.

In order to achieve these aims, each district needed to organize the conveyance
of the information by örtöö horse-relay. This involved putting the ballot papers in special
bags which were strapped to saddles and carried over distances of five to ten kilometers
at the fastest gallop possible, when a transfer would then be made to another fresh, sad-
dled horse and the riders would ride as fast as possible to the next örtöö station. Informa-
tion would be sent by the above method from the districts to the sum centers using tem-
porary örtöö stopping points.

To ensure that all information was sent by motor transport from the sum centers
to the aimag centers, all local trucks and passenger vehicles were requisitioned for this
work. However, because there were not enough cars in the aimag centers, trucks and pas-
senger cars traveling from Ulaanbaatar to the provinces were also requisitioned for the
day. To count the ballot papers, the accountants in the districts, sum, and aimag centers
were mobilized to sit down and count the ballots with the help of their abacuses. For those who were sick, elderly, or otherwise unable to attend to vote, people were specially sent out to them on horseback. Their votes were collected and those who could not write indicated their choice with a thumb-print.

This work, which was demonstrated in seminars, was organized by all sum centers, official places, schools, and households. In order to check and recheck whether this work had been done correctly and commendably or not, the sum leadership traveled around on horseback. When I myself went around the various sums and households of the aimags by passenger car to catch any shortcomings, all the people in charge were informed immediately, where possible by telephone, or else by horse-relay.

On October 20, 1945 the national flag was flown everywhere in Mongolia. Old men and women, and all other adults gathered at 6 am in the appropriate places to cast their votes. People worked to achieve a result by 12 noon in the local districts and by 8 p.m. in the aimag centers. In order to produce a result on the plebiscite in these two aimags, many accountants using abacuses repeatedly checked the preceding results.

The first results had barely reached one hundred per cent when the chief of the aimag communication office came running up to me in a panic, saying that Bumtsend, the chairman of the Central Commission, was on the telephone demanding the results. In order to give these advance results, I myself went to the communication building and shouted down the telephone, "Is anyone there? Can you hear me?" until my voice became hoarse. At 9 p.m. I gave the news to the people in charge at the Ministry of Communications, and by midnight the final confirmed result was reported by telephone to the Central Commission. I set off at night to personally deliver the draft documents from the two aimags.

I left Bayankhongor with the final result and all the confirmatory documents which had been checked and rechecked by many inspectors and were now verified. I passed through Övörkhangai, from whose authorities I took the results and documents, and headed for Ulaanbaatar. The worn smooth tires of the car were punctured several times, which continually delayed us, but we finally arrived and handed over all our materials to the apparatus of the Central Commission.

I signed the document [showing the ballot result] and telephoned Bumtsend at home to inform him about it. Since we believed that the people's plebiscite had been successfully conducted, I had already discussed a plan with the aimag leadership to erect an independence flag pole in the aimag center. This pole was made of several beams connected together, and had been freshly repainted. The total number of voters was displayed in blue and red paint, which were the colors of the national flag. A meeting was held beside it, and many people made speeches there. I. Lamjav, the chairman of the Party committee in Bayankhongor aimag, D. Peljee, the head of the administration, and D. Damdin, the Party chairman in Övörhangai aimag, were in office at that time. As well as being able to work in a responsible, persistent, and organized way, I was proud to think that the masses had a special enthusiasm for political activities.

Around 12 midnight on the twentieth, the joyful news was announced across the nation. The plebiscite was one hundred per cent complete. The official representative of the Guomindang government, the Deputy Interior Minister, Li Feng-hsien, headed the Chinese group which had come to inspect the voting. They arrived in Ulaanbaatar and visited some places in the city. They realized that the Mongolian people were united in their desire for independence, and returned back home. A Mongolian government dele-
Through the Ocean Waves

gation headed by Ch. Sürenjav delivered the results of the plebiscite to the Guomindang government. The Guomindang government became aware of this news in early 1946 and agreed to Mongolian independence. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were established on December 13, 1946.

I took a special interest in localities in Bayankhongor and Övörkhangai aimags, which were noteworthy for their historical figures, and other memorable things. The talented local people demonstrated that they could do amazing things when constructing monasteries, as seen in the remains of the old Galuut Khüree monastery in Bayankhongor aimag center and to the west of it, the Nomon Khaan monastery in Mandal sum, where there were beautiful stone carvings and wooden objects.

For example, two large stone lions had been cast aside at the Nomon Khaan monastery, considered as being of no use. A truck belonging to the Ministry of Transport was passing through there once and took the lions to Ulaanbaatar. They were positioned at the entrance to the main building of the state university where they can still be seen today.

There is some evidence that the two lions were carved in 1880 by a commoner who lived in a sum to the south-west of Bayankhongor aimag center. When we were traveling through there I sent my companion, L. Dugersüren, to that particular household to speak with the sculptor’s wife, who confirmed the details and showed him the steel-tipped chisel that her husband had used. Dugersüren made a note of the man’s name and patronymic.

After the lions had been installed at the entrance to the university, I wanted to preserve some memory of that herdsman by writing a short article in the newspaper. Dugersüren reassured me that the information about him was somewhere at home and promised to bring it. Sadly, it turned out that he was unable to remember where he had put it.

I learned about memorable historical events from some interesting people I came across in Ulaanbaatar at that time, as well as from the old-timers I had met in the countryside. This knowledge proved to be most useful to me later on. I recorded the social backgrounds and fighting methods of each group of nearly one hundred Partisans who had taken part in the People’s Revolution of 1921. I published most of this in Mongolia in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, which became a useful reference book for writers. I listened to what these people had to say with my research clearly in mind.

From what I had noted down, I gained clear information about pre-Revolutionary Mongolian society and politics, the conditions in the country at the time, relations between the feudal and commoner classes, the trade conducted by Chinese shops in Mongolia, the temples and monasteries, the lifestyle and activities of lamas, and in particular the lives of the official serfs and serf families, the livelihood of the herdsmen, official feudal obligations, the People’s Revolutionary Movement, and the main areas in which the above mentioned People’s Revolutionary Movement partisans had been active.

The information I discovered about the period before and during the People’s Revolution turned out to be most useful. In everyday contacts I listened to people and discussed things while also being confronted with the historical facts behind them. The people who were being drawn into the country’s growing political movement were intellectually mature enough to carry on the people’s struggle. Although it was clear from the speech of those straightforward, honest and determined people that they were uneducated, there were quite a few people with natural intelligence and talent. Some people
who were working as servants for the feudalists or doing official work for the feudal lords and lamas prior to the revolution also personally took part in Party and government work and in the political campaigns of the early years of the revolution. The information from these participants proved to be very useful for understanding and verifying the material I was studying.

Another event which occurred at that time were the joint resolutions no. 31 and no. 27, respectively passed by the Council of Ministers and the Party Central Committee on May 18, 1945, which stated that all publications and official documents were, from January 1, 1946 onward, to be printed in the new [Cyrillic] alphabet.

As the Soviet Patriotic War came to an end, the supply of a wide range of necessary goods for the ordinary people could be satisfied, and expenditure on the national economy and culture was increased. The national capital, Ulaanbaatar, was adorned by the planting of trees, and subbotniks and other appropriate community work was started. I myself, as rector of the State University, and B. Jargalsaikhan, who was head of the Institute of Science, were appointed to hold joint discussions in Moscow with the USSR Academy of Sciences at the end of 1945 and the beginning of 1946. During that time we learned about the work of several institutes allied to the USSR Academy of Sciences.

It was decided during these discussions that the academy’s corresponding member, S. K. Kizelev, would lead an archeological research team to our country. Professor P. V. Pogrel'skii, whose field was agriculture and economics, headed a group to study problems of fodder and pasture, and Academician M. I. Lavrenko and Prof. A. A. Yunatov were also included in the expedition. Prof. I. Efremov was to lead a paleontology expedition about which discussions were in progress.

The agreements were signed after the results of these talks were reported to the respective governments. As our government had agreed to the basis of these discussions, the subsequent agreements were soon signed by both the Academy of Sciences and our Institute of Science. Soviet research teams arrived in our country to carry out the work. There was a shortage of local specialists in these areas, and so the above teams both began to carry out their important work and helped to train local personnel.

While we were in Moscow, we began to make preparations for the establishment of our own Academy of Sciences. We obtained advice about this from the Soviet Academy of Sciences. We met with Academician I. Bardin to discuss the establishment of the future academy. In order to establish an Academy of Sciences we required three things: highly trained cadres, a good laboratory base, and a vigilant attitude from the leadership. These things did not yet exist in our country. Bardin said, “Well, my friends, you should begin by tackling the first two areas, and then you may be able to establish an academy.” That turned out to be important and positive advice for the organization of scientific work.

The Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance and other agreements on joint economic and cultural cooperation were signed between Mongolia and the Soviet Union in February 1946. At that time, the Soviet people were recovering from the serious wounds inflicted on them during the Patriotic War. They faced the huge and ubiquitous task of reviving their national economy and expanding the heroic labor force.

Prime Minister Choibalsan was appointed head of the Mongolian government delegation which signed the Treaty of 1946. The delegation also included Tsedenbal, who was General Secretary of the MPRP Central Committee, myself as secretary of the Party Central Committee and rector of the state university, First Deputy Prime Minister
Luvsan, who was sent to Moscow to conduct trade talks, and J. Sambuu the Mongolian ambassador to the Soviet Union.

The Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance and the talks which covered economic and cultural matters led the Soviet Union to offer great assistance in power generation, mining, building, and other sectors of industry in addition to the development of agriculture, farming, culture, science, education, and health care. This assistance resulted in the construction of large projects, one of which was the Trans-Mongolian Railway. Thanks to Soviet aid, industrial production in 1960 was 5.4 times as great as in 1940. During this period there was a considerable growth in agriculture, and by 1959 socialist industrial relations were established in this sector.

During the discussions, I took part in a meeting with I. V. Stalin. At the end of the reception Stalin raised his glass and made a toast “To Shirendev, the Russian language professor who has been interpreting for us!” This was reported in the Soviet press at that time and my Soviet friends said jokingly, “Because Stalin called you ‘professor’ you had better do your academic work well and become a scholar!” I took that to heart and treated my academic work seriously, eventually becoming a candidate scholar and later on obtaining my doctorate.

The treaty of 1946 strengthened all aspects of joint cooperation and friendship between the Soviet Union and Mongolia. Fraternal relations were also established and developed with the newly democratized nations. Later on, in 1961, our country became a member of the United Nations and was therefore recognized by the international community.

On April 17, 1946 a meeting of the Central Committee of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party passed a resolution about political and educational work in the nation. At this meeting of the MPRP Central Committee, it was noted that during the twenty-five years of independence, there had been a great increase in political awareness among the working population. While commending the degree of literacy and general education among the population and this great increase in work activity, some shortcomings which were detrimental to the further cultural advancement of the labor force were emphasized. The statistics showing the lack of success in teaching of the new alphabet to adults was an example cited for criticism. This resolution was passed with the aim of rectifying the deficiencies in politics, education, and increasing knowledge of the new alphabet.

The first subbotnik intended to make the capital city look more attractive was organized on June 15, 1946, and was attended by leading figures. In the same year, a resolution was passed to protect state and public property and property owned by collectives.

On August 13, 1946 the 51st Resolution of the Council of Ministers stated that Mongolia would try to join the United Nations, and that the Mongolian government had appointed its sovereign representative Tsedenbal to be its delegate to the United Nations.

On April 5 1946 a gathering was held in the main square in Ulaanbaatar for the ceremonial unveiling of the Sukhbaatar monument. On May 3, 1946 a gathering of workers was held in Sukhbaatar square during which G. K. Zhukov and R. Ya. Malinovskii were made honorary citizens of Ulaanbaatar and presented with certificates. When Marshal R. Ya. Malinovskii came on a visit to the Mongolian State University, he donated some classroom equipment and planted a commemorative tree.

The social sciences faculty of the state university was opened in 1947. The Party
Central Committee discussed the situation of literature and the arts and passed a resolution concerning these areas. In 1945, 1946, and 1947 I published several articles in books and in the press about the role of the Party in doctrine, propaganda, culture, education, and the arts. At a meeting of Ulaanbaatar intellectuals held on January 17, 1948, there was a discussion about fulfilling the task of developing the nation’s economy and culture, as laid down in the First Five-Year Plan following the conclusions of the 11th MPRP Ikh Khural.

At the meeting, I presented a report on my assignment entitled, “The Results of the Eleventh Party Congress and the Duties of Intellectuals.” Included in this report were the tasks of the rural intellectuals, and the tasks of intellectuals in the areas of technology, trade, health care, and in the education of the masses. Ways to direct the duties of intellectuals in science, art, and literature were clarified and focused upon.

Valuable contributions to the development of the arts were made by Ts. Tsegmid, a leading talented artist of our stage, who played the cruel Chinese warlord Hsiu Shu-chang and various Mongolian feudal lords, N. Tsegmid, who played the Bogd Khan, D. Tserendulam, who played the Bogd’s wife, D. Bat-Ochir, who played greedy Chinese traders, J. Luvsanjav, who portrayed lamas in real-life situations, E. Sharavdoo and Ch. Dolgorüren, who skillfully played Mongolian women, and the famous people’s singers, J. Dorjdagva and D. Ichinkhorloo.

Others who began to be well-known at that time included the actors O. Renchinnorov, the singers Tsogzolmaa and A. Zagdsüren, and the poets E. Oyuun, S. Genden, and L. Vangan. Circus arts were developed by the composers J. Radnaabazar and L. Natsag and the clown D. Danzan. The personal artistic achievements of the talented people’s artists J. Manbadar and Y. Yadamsüren, and the contemporary merited personalities G. Odon, L. Gavaa, D. Choiodog, O. Tsevegjav, and the musical composers B. Damdinsüren, S. Gonchigsumlaa, L. Mördorj, Ch. Chuluun and others, made a great contribution to the developing arts.

In 1948, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the death of Sukhbaatar, several places in the country were named after him. These included the State Publishing House, the capital’s Number 2 Middle School, the Fifth District, the electricity generating station, and the spa at Khujirt.

After taking classes in Russian, Soviet, Ancient Greek, Roman, and European literature at the teacher training college in Irkutsk, I became interested in literature and wanted to meet our own writers. I read the plays “Ayuush” by D. Sengee and “Zam” by Ch. Oidov, and when I gave the authors my opinions they accepted them gratefully and asked me to re-read the revisions they had written. I met with Ch. Chimed, D. Sengee, and Ch. Lkhamsiiren on several occasions.

In 1948, at the First Congress of Mongolian Writers, Ch. Lodoidamba, B. Baldoor and I produced a joint report on the situation in Mongolian literature. The report included the aims of the period in question and the classification and listing of different types of literature. It turned out, however, that I was not to present this report at the Writers’ Congress. It was presented by L. Dügersüren, a departmental head in the Party Central Committee. I will discuss my dismissal from my position later in this book.

The Fifth Congress of Mongolian Trade Unions elected me a member of the plenum of the Central Council of the Trade Unions. I was also elected a member of the Party Central Committee. At the plenum, I was elected candidate member and secretary of the Politburo.
While I was doing these jobs, on March 24, 1948, the Politburo of the Central Committee held a meeting to discuss Kh. Choibalsan's report on me. After my dismissal as secretary of the Central Committee, I remained a candidate member of the Politburo and continued to work as rector of the state university.

In the above resolution I was criticized for an unfounded attack on the Soviet specialist and government adviser S. P. Volozhaninov. While attending a meeting of the academic council of the Mongolian State University, B. Rinchen had made an attack on the Soviet specialist, which I allowed to pass without comment. It was pointed out that I was starting to deviate from the Party line regarding the nation's foreign policy. Apparently, when I carried out the decisions made by the Party's Tenth Congress on propaganda work, I did so with a hopeless lack of enthusiasm, and gave priority only to education. Ch. Sürenjav, a member of the Party Central Committee Politburo said I was attacking the Central Committee. In this way I was hit by an ocean wave.

Although I wanted to ask my experienced friends for help, some of them had been careful to join in blaming me. Many others were cautious and afraid of getting involved. For example, when discussing the deficiencies in trade and agriculture, some of the leading people who were responsible for these areas repeatedly blamed the difficulties on poor propaganda. Although I might have been responsible for the shortcomings of the propaganda, this was not the reason for the lack of increase in livestock numbers, nor for the difficult climatic conditions at the time.

The resolution actually had an adverse effect on this matter. For example, the official policy on the state procurement of basic agricultural products was carried out from 1941 onwards. When considering the number of livestock available at that time, the procurement of wool, meat, and milk by the state at extremely low prices impaired labor initiatives in the economy, and also hindered the growth in livestock numbers.

At receptions, I sometimes took part in heated discussions about my work which was not being properly appraised. Considering what I was being blamed for, it appeared that my name was being linked to mistakes which had been made by others. The things I had said in error were at that time in fact true. Choibalsan's adviser Volozhaninov was disgusted when he heard about the matter. "There are things which you and I disagree on," he said. "That's obvious from everything that has happened," I replied.

As far as Sürenjav was concerned, he had been dismissed from his position as Second Secretary of the Party Central Committee. While he was working as First Deputy Prime Minister with responsibility for agriculture, he had stated that the main shortcomings in agriculture were due to the poor quality of Central Committee propaganda, to which I replied, "You have tried to cover up the deficiencies in the work which you are directly responsible for by putting most of the blame on the Central Committee." All of this reached Choibalsan's ears through different channels. Choibalsan was appalled by it and, without making his own involvement known, passed a Politburo resolution. This resolution also mentioned, among other things, that rules were not being followed when cadres were being assigned to their posts.

Apparently I had been paying attention to attracting, as far as possible, highly literate, trained people into the field of work I was in charge of, along with those who were related to certain accused workers. For example, B. Rinchen, L. Dendev and Ts. Dorj were appointed respectively as professors of Mongolian, Manchu, and Tibetan at the university. I considered that the rebuke came from the Party, and while carefully improving my work I kept an ear open for signs of my impending arrest.
Later, the accusers seemed to realize the validity of my position. I had not yet been dismissed from my position as a candidate member of the Politburo of the Party Central Committee when, in 1952, during the first elections of the Ikh Khural, I was elected one of its deputies. When the composition of the government was being decided at that congress, Choibalsan called me over and told me that the following day the Ikh Khural would confirm that I would be appointed Minister of Education while still working as rector of the state university.

As my eternal worship of Choibalsan had weakened a little, I told him directly, "The job at the Ministry is a lot worse. Will my move to that position provide another excuse to blame me even more?" Choibalsan's face darkened and he fell silent. Then he told me angrily to come and see him at a certain time the following day.

I spent the day deep in thought about my inevitable arrest the next day. In the morning, without a word to my wife, I put on some quite warm clothing and went to Choibalsan's office at the appointed time. Choibalsan was in a pleasant mood that day and said, "You were wrong to speak so impertinently yesterday. I know you have a quick temper, but I still think you should not say such things. In a few minutes' time the Ikh Khural will commence and we could appoint you Minister of People's Education."

(Choibalsan always used to say "that could be done," "this could be done" and other similar expressions.)

During this conversation I was determined to raise several issues. These were that the decent teachers who had been forced into the army should be returned to their teaching posts, that teacher-training in the higher and middle schools should be extended, and that teachers' salaries should be raised as an incentive for them. Choibalsan said, "You should start work. After you have learned about the work done in schools, think up some questions." "All right Marshal, I will do my best in this work," I replied, and I was duly appointed Minister of Education.

After Choibalsan's death in 1953, I was appointed as the Prime Minister's deputy in charge of culture, and in 1954 I became First Deputy Prime Minister. At the Twelfth Congress of the MPRP, held in December 1954, I was elected a member of the Party Central Committee. At its plenum I was elected a full member of the Central Committee and Politburo. When I was elected First Deputy Prime Minister, the government advisor S. P. Volozhaninov, who had earlier argued with me, actually expressed his gratitude, or so I heard later. When the Mongolian-Soviet Friendship Society was established in 1951, I was elected its president.

During the years from 1944 to 1957, I had been secretary of the Party Central Committee for four years, candidate and full member of the Politburo of the Party Central Committee for three years, was elected a member of the Central Committee on eight occasions, and was member of the State Baga Khural. Up to 1981 I had been elected a deputy of the Ikh Khural on ten different occasions.

I had been working on laying the foundations of a state university for nine years. The resolutions of the Tenth [Party] Congress were carried out in our country. The rural economy was transformed to meet the requirements of the Second World War, and further measures were taken to develop the culture and education of the masses.

One of the most important measures taken during this difficult period was the establishment of the Mongolian State University. In the beginning, the university had about ninety students and a small number of lecturers, who were housed in a small two-story building, now the Yugoslav embassy.
On September 1, 1944 the Politburo of the MPRP passed its 85th and 56th resolutions which appointed me as the first rector of the state university. No rector had previously been appointed. The academic departments were directed by the Soviet Buryat teacher N. Ivanov with N. Chimeddamba as director of finances.

When I took up my post as rector of the state university, my orientation in the job was based on what I had learned during my years of study at a Soviet college. When I reflected on my years of study in Irkutsk, I realized I had only a rough grasp of student work and no knowledge of how to lead and manage teachers and workers. I could only appreciate things from the other side [i.e. from a student’s point of view].

Nevertheless, I started work in our first institute of higher education, and while supervising certain problems which arose from the first year’s activities, I improved the students’ knowledge of Russian and I strove to undertake specialist courses. I also mastered the basics of Marxist-Leninism, and met with the students for talks on questions relating to student morals and to inquire about which areas of their studies they found interesting. In conjunction with the university’s Party and Youth League organizations, [faculty] deans, course directors and class leaders, we planned and carried out many aspects of university work.

When organizing that work, as the students were living in far away corners of the city and even in gers, the way the students conducted themselves in public was adapted to suit the situation at the time. The university employed teachers from the Soviet Union such as S. I. Khromov, S. I. Abakumov,1 L. S. Kashtanov, I. B. Veitsman, G. I. Krylov, A. G. Bannikov, V. N. Klyueva, V. I. Garin, A. A. Yunatov, E. M. Murzaev, S. N. Anfilogov, and others. When I began to organize the working of the university, I was supported and advised by Soviet specialists. The people who helped me to lead the organization of all the university work, including the teaching of courses, were friends of mine who had gained experience during their many years of teaching in various university departments in Moscow, Kiev, and Voronezh.

In addition to teaching the courses required by the university administration, the lecturers also passed on their own values to the students, and gave talks on student education and lifestyle. The students were also familiarized with new research in each lecturer’s own individual field of academic work. Much academic research work was carried out among these students. Writers and leading industrial workers were invited to the university to give the students talks about their particular careers.

The work was mainly carried out among the students by the first Mongolian lecturers, in particular Sh. Luvsanvandan and B. Rinchen, who taught grammar, Ts. Damdinsüren, who taught literature, and I myself, who taught world history.

We had all learned the Russian language well and mastered teaching methods from the Soviet lecturers. Furthermore, we used these skills when teaching in the universities and middle schools and paid attention to turning out highly-trained cadres. The progress and conclusion of the Soviet Patriotic War and the international situation occupied an important place in the teaching. Ch. Natsag, an honest, straightforward character, was an outstanding organizer and became a much-respected senior figure in the education of the people. His name should have a place in the history of the university for his great and unending work to improve its resources. Particularly noteworthy was his role

1 The philologist Sergei Ivanovich Abakumov (1890-1949) spent most of his career teaching Russian in Kazan.
in the construction of the first main building, and the satisfactory provision of the best possible standard of accommodation for teachers and students.

In addition to these activities, which were being conducted among the students, the university administration was left to sort out problems such as determining the type of course in each faculty, the time allocated to it, the writing of course syllabi in Russian and Mongolian, the preparation and distribution to the best of our ability of text books, reference materials and visual aids, which were valuable resources for the lecturers and students in each course, and the basic problem of implementing the correct timetable for the classes.

When this work was being carried out, the deputy rectors of the university, S. I. Khromov, S. M. Popov, D. T. Kokorev, and I. K. Kuz'min, instilled the university with their own experience, and offered great assistance in the training of Mongolian teachers. Those who should be mentioned as having made a great contribution to the further development of the university from around 1950 included D. Tsevegmid, the deputy rector in charge of university courses, the physics lecturers N. Sodnom and D. Batsuur' who were among the first graduates, the mathematics lecturers S. Dashimaa and L. Shagdar, the senior veterinarian Ts. Toivgo, the chemist D. Dashjamts, the linguist T. Pagva, the economist Ch. Sereeter, the agricultural specialists P. Shinjee and D. Gonchig, and other associates of mine who should be noted for their individual contributions to the further development of the university.

It was even more important to try to retain those graduates who had studied well by making them lecturers. However, it was not easy to overcome the difficulty posed by the leading organizations, ministries, and departments, which fought over the good graduates.

Whenever I myself went to Moscow, I would go along to the Soviet Committee on Higher Education and meet with its chairman, S. Kaftanov, his deputy and the heads of departments. I used to bring back text books, reference materials and visual aids on certain important course subjects. I also met with Professor I. S. Galkin, the principal of Moscow University, and I became personally acquainted with a faculty similar to the one at our own university, and its departmental work.

As for the university faculties which we had but they did not, I became acquainted with the departmental work of the faculties of the Moscow colleges of medicine, veterinary science, agriculture, and teacher training, from which I also obtained text books and reference materials for our university library. Afterwards, I met with S. I. Vavilov,2 who had become rector of Moscow State University, and I obtained some advice and books from him. His younger brother, N. I. Vavilov was a famous biologist who was wrongly purged during the Stalinist era. Later, I met with the former on two occasions after he had become President of the Soviet Academy of Sciences.

With the help of the Soviet teachers who were working in our university, the text books which I had brought back were adapted and improved to suit the prevailing conditions in our country. Furthermore, we obtained ideas from related ministries and departments, had the academic advisers discuss them, and then obtained ratification from the Ministry of Education. The social sciences course was, however, ratified by either the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee or by the advisers of the Secretaries of

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2 Sergei Ivanovich Vavilov (1891-1951) was world-famous for his many contributions to our knowledge of physics.
the Central Committee.

The MPRP Central Committee and the government paid great attention to Mongolia's first university, and leading figures personally took part in the final examinations, university meetings, and at the fifth and tenth anniversaries of the founding of the university. Their most important speeches had become significant for the activities of the university.

While I was working with the many professional lecturers, it was clear from the beginning that they all had the required knowledge which, as time went by, was also demanded of me. Therefore, I had to read the specialist textbooks and simplified reference materials on medicine, veterinary medicine, animal husbandry, zootechnology, farming, and other areas. This proved useful in my further university work. I also attended lectures in those subjects.

Within six months, I sat for the national examinations, which to some extent strengthened my understanding of these subjects.

At a special ceremony on January 4, 1946, the first foundation stone of the building of the state university was laid by Choibalsan and others. We marked our entry into the new university building with a ceremony on November 3, 1946, which I opened with a speech.

As the Red Army fought increasingly hard to free the Motherland and the oppressed peoples of Europe from Hitler's yoke, the old universities, libraries, and museums of Europe were saved from destruction. At a time when many thousands of the best people in research, art, and culture have been rescued from Hitler's hell, we too have come to have a university.

I ended my remarks by observing that we were now in that university's building.

Choibalsan gave a speech at the first graduation ceremony of the university, held on June 29, 1946. On September 27, I read a report at a meeting which was held concerning the 1947-1948 academic year. By that time, the number of students at the university had reached 800. Of the forty-seven students who gained higher professional diplomas at the second graduation in 1947, there were seventeen zootechnicians, sixteen teachers and fourteen senior medical doctors. Despite the initially small number of university graduates, their practical ability clearly showed that they were of a high academic standard.

The tenth anniversary of the state university was held on October 24, 1952, in the National Theater building. The leading figures in our country took part in it. As university rector, I reported that there were 276 different courses across all the faculties of the university. We had 1200 students in thirty-two departments. At the seventh graduation ceremony, there were 513 graduates, including eighty-six physicians, thirty technicians, eighty-eight mathematics/physics teachers, fifty-four history teachers, and thirty-six economists, all of whose names were published in the press. Many colleges were established following the founding of our first college [university].

On October 10, 1946, a resolution of the MPRP Central Committee and Council of Ministers brought about the establishment of a commission to write the history of the MPR. I was asked to lead this commission. Soviet Mongolists and a group of our historians took part in this work, which was first published in Russian in 1954 and later published in Mongolian. The Presidium of the USSR Academy of Sciences held an open conference in connection with the publication in Moscow of the first volume of the his-
The Mongolian People’s Vote for Independence

tory that year. The conference was chaired by the president of the USSR Academy of
Sciences, Academician N. A. Nesmeyanov. Leading scholars of the USSR Academy of
Sciences took part, along with many directors and specialists of its subordinate institutes of
history.

During the writing of the text, I initially acted as chairman of the organizing
committee for our side, and later became editor-in-chief of the project. The editor-in-
chief on the Soviet side was Academician B. D. Grekov. The editing of the work for the
Soi/ets was done by Ye. M. Zhukov who gave a short report and answered questions put
to him by the Presidium of the USSR Academy of Sciences. I then made a speech on
behalf of the Mongolian editorial committee. [In this speech I mentioned that] Volume
one of the History of the MPR was the first product of the collaboration between the
scholars of the two countries. Soviet academicians and corresponding members took part
in the work. References in Mongolian, Russian, and other languages were gathered and
studied from a specialist viewpoint. This summary of Mongolian history from ancient
times up to the present day was regarded as a significant piece of academic research. I
expressed my gratitude to the energetic Mongolian scholars and their helpful Soviet
friends for writing the work.

In addition, the Soviet and Mongolian scholars who together wrote many de-
tailed volumes of the history and other works, proposed ideas for other projects. At that
time, our historians who were afraid of some kind of coercion, were deficient in the re-
quirements, practice, and organization needed for independently-minded writing. How-
ever unsatisfactory the work was at the beginning, it became the new center piece of our
historiography, and undoubtedly was of help later on when mistakes in it were corrected
and other histories were written.

When writing the details of Mongolian history, we considered that it was impor-
tant to pay close attention to supplementary texts in Mongolian, Russian, and Chinese.
We exchanged ideas with our Soviet colleagues, and in order to allow the participation of
other historians in this work, we decided to approach the Chinese. They too were inter-
ested in taking part in this work, and we were informed later that the historians Wang Tu-
hsien and Hang Chu-ling had been appointed.

A delegation led by Ch. Sürenjav took part in the fifth anniversary of the
founding of the Republic of Czechoslovakia. The two of us set off for Prague on April
26, 1950. On our arrival we were received by Rudolf Slánský, chairman of the Central
Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and by Prime Minister Antonin
Zápotocký. They expressed their thanks to the MPRP and the Mongolian government
and her people for sending the delegation, and gave their good wishes for success and
prosperity. Afterwards, we were received by the chairman of the Central Committee of
the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and Kliment Gottwald, the president of
Czechoslovakia, with whom we had some close discussions.

They were interested in Mongolia and asked us about the nation’s economic and
cultural development. Furthermore, after Bogumir Shmeral, the leader of the Czechoslo-
vak Communist Party, had attended our Party’s Ninth Congress on behalf of the Comin-
tern, he had told them some very interesting things about Mongolia, which they men-
tioned in quite some detail. He talked in particular about the establishment of the

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3 Boris Dmitrievich Grekov (1882-1953) became a member of the USSR Academy of Sciences in 1935 and
wrote many works on Russian history, including one on the fall of the Golden Horde.
Czechoslovak Republic and the aggressive policies of imperialist countries, and pointed out the significance of the coalescence of the Soviet-led world union of socialist countries. He obviously had the qualities to become a famous figure in the world Communist movement.

On behalf of the MPRP Central Committee, the government, and Prime Minister Choibalsan, Sürenjav offered greetings and good wishes to the friendly people of Czechoslovakia, the government, leaders of the Party Central Committee, and to the executive member of the Comintern, Kliment Gottwald. Sürenjav had brought some gifts in the form of Mongolian deel and hats for K. Gottwald, A. Zápotocký, and several other Czechoslovak leaders. After they had dressed up in these clothes, we had our picture taken together. I translated what Sürenjav had said into Russian for the benefit of Zápotocký and the others.

During the anniversary celebrations, as rector of our university I met with the Czechoslovak Minister of Education and the president of the Academy of Sciences, Professor Zdenek Nedelyi, and the Minister of Information and Culture, Vaclav Kopetski. They explained in detail the work of their academy and this ministry of which they were the leaders. I also visited the Karl University of Prague, and in addition to learning about its work, I attended a graduation ceremony there which was based on the medieval traditions of a European university. I wrote two articles entitled “Czechoslovakia on the Road to Socialism” and “The Rise of the New Culture in Czechoslovakia.”

In March 1951 I went as a representative to the Second Regular Conference of the Labor Party of Hungary, where I met the secretary of the Central Committee, Mátiás Rákosi, as well as other leading figures. I conveyed greetings from the MPRP Central Committee to the Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party, and to the government and the people.

Rákosi had been in Siberia during the Civil war, and in 1920-1921 spent some time near Ar Khiagt. He talked about the situation in Mongolia during that period in a very knowledgeable way. The leader of the English Communist Party, Harry Pollitt, and others were among the delegates at the Hungarian Labor Party Conference. We met with them at the Margitsiget Hotel, where we were staying. During free intervals at the conference they asked us about Mongolia and talked to us about their Party. I wrote an article on the Second Conference of the Hungarian Labor Party entitled “My Visit to Hungary” which was printed in Ŭnen.
My Involvement in the Education of our People

As mentioned above, after the initial assembly following the first elections of the Ikh Khural, I took my place in the government as Minister of Education. For the first time, delegations from the fraternal democratic nations attended the anniversary celebrations held on July 11, 1951, which was the thirtieth anniversary of the People’s Revolution. The leading figures of the time received foreign delegations, and the first major steps were taken by the government to conduct discussions with those countries and strengthen relations with them.

Those who took part included the deputy chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, M. P. Tarasov, the Bulgarian Minister of Health P. Kolarov (son of V. Kolarov), the Bulgarian ambassador to Moscow and Ulaanbaatar, Stela Blagoeva (daughter of the famous revolutionary Dmitrii Balgoev), the chairman of the Council of Hungarian Trade Unions, Fozher Kharushtyak, the East German deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Anton Ackermann, the deputy Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia, Zdenek Fierlinger, and representatives of other countries. As a member of the Naadam Commission, I familiarized the delegations of these popular democracies with a description of Ulaanbaatar and arranged entertainment for them at a rural household in Songino [just southwest of Ulaanbaatar].

A genuinely high standard of political and propaganda activities was carried out at the thirtieth anniversary of the People’s Revolution. The delegations which had arrived from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries sent their congratulations and good wishes on behalf of their Parties, governments, and peoples. This became a sign of friendship and fraternal relations based on the mass proletarian internationalism of the socialist countries.

At that time, the Ministry of Education was primarily involved in teaching reading and writing to the ordinary people, with the aim of raising their general standard of education and political knowledge. It was also in charge of many other different activities, including aimag clubs, “red corners” attached to sums and other official organizations, local cinemas, theaters, literary and art clubs, sporting competitions, and political and scientific lectures and talks.

From 1947 onwards, we had a duty to establish complete literacy among the population and particularly among those people aged sixteen to forty. Reading circles and temporary schools were organized in official buildings and factories in Ulaanbaatar and in aimag centers, sums, and districts where both young people and adults were widely encouraged to participate in reading and writing.

In 1952, literacy was achieved by all thirteen to fifteen-year old children in Dornod aimag, and by 1954 it was thought that the majority of adults in our country were literate.

Around that time, the Ministry of Education was simultaneously in charge of both the people’s education and educational enlightenment. After my graduation from
the teacher training college in Irkutsk I gained a grasp of educational theory, and having been in charge of educational work in the MPRP Central Committee, I felt I understood the orientation of work in this ministry. However, after being appointed to perform a higher role in this ministry, starting in, as it were, at the “deep end of life,” it became extremely clear that, in the main, my knowledge was grossly inadequate.

The directors of the aimag clubs were brought together in Ulaanbaatar, and a seminar was held on political and general education. After the ministry of education had made further adjustments to their clear job descriptions, they headed back to their local areas. Music and theater groups were revived under the direction of the aimag clubs, and the participation of talented youth and intellectuals was encouraged in these areas.

There was a revival of music and theater groups directed by aimag clubs. Talented young people and intellectuals were extensively encouraged to participate in these groups. With the help of art managers, art committees and theater workers, the standard of plays and concert performances in the aimag clubs was improved. Performers were sent to perform in local areas and were appointed to local music groups to carry out instructional activities. In addition to the aimag centers, mobile cinemas were sent out to the sums and districts. The “red corners” in the sums were turned into propaganda centers where work was carried out to attract those intellectuals working in schools and in the medical and veterinary services.

A start was made in organizing activities such as volley ball, athletic races, chess and draughts, and painting. In addition, lectures were given on health matters, hygiene, and civilized behavior. Propaganda posters were displayed in “red corners” and picture posters were painted and photographic exhibitions organized with help from the Arts Management Committee and the Ministry of Education.

The clubs and “red corners” were not always housed in buildings suitable for all these activities. There was a shortage of musical instruments and films which had been made in Mongolia or translated into Mongolian. We were also confronted by a lack of equipment and cinema technicians even though the MPRP Central Committee and the government had allowed an appropriate amount of expenditure for these things in the estimated state budget.

In 1954, kindergartens were established in Arkhangai, Bulgan, Gobi-Altaï, Zavkhan, Töv, Uvs, and Övörkhangai aimags. All this work was carried out by one deputy minister in the Ministry of Education, with help from a few other people.

The most important role of the Ministry of Education was the provision of leadership for primary and middle schools, specialist training schools, and for the state university. I myself had assisted in the administration of the state university, and it was quite feasible to coordinate that work with the work of the Ministry of Education. However, many difficulties were encountered in strengthening the common material base of the technical colleges and related ministries and in the formulation of clear objectives for the careers of the graduates of these colleges.

There was a great shortage of primary and middle school teachers, and the standard of their teaching was inadequate. The teaching methods used by the teachers were unsupervised, and in addition to the very unsatisfactory teaching materials used in the schools, the buildings and accommodations of the middle schools of the aimag towns and the rural primary schools were insufficient as well. The majority of schools held their lessons in felt gers, which was where the pupils were also accommodated.

The private [non-collectivized] herding families had no wish to send their chil-
dren to school for an education. They preferred to keep them at home to herd the animals and do household chores. They resisted any possible enrollment of their children into the schools, and many problems arose when they used various excuses to remove their children from school.

In October 1951 the school year began with the leaders of the aimag education departments and the staff of the Ministry of Education holding a meeting to present a report on improving the educational standard of pupils and the work of teachers. In order to raise the professional standard of the teachers and the educational attainment of pupils, the resources of the famous educationalists were used to a great extent. Education workers taught teachers and students using the theories and wisdom of the famous Soviet and Polish educationalists K. Ushinskii, A. Makarenko, and Jan Amos Kaminskii. In 1952, a teacher training institute was established in Ulaanbaatar and teacher training schools with 60 places each were opened in Dormod and Arkhangai aimags. These provided enough trained cadres to teach the primary schools which opened in 1951.

Of the 115 teachers with further education, seven headed education departments, twelve were head teachers of middle schools, and sixteen contributed greatly to improving the working of the Ten-Year middle schools. All the school programs were re-inspected during the 1951-1952 academic year. Several new directives were produced on school inspection regulations, student committees, parent-teacher associations, and on the problems of teaching and finance in the schools. During this academic year, five different middle school text books and six different primary school books were published. At the same time, the principle key workers in the ministry of education examined all aspects of the work of 249 schools.

The 1952 plan for schools envisaged a 15 per cent increase, and it was planned to double the number of major school buildings. In 1952 there was a forty per cent reduction in the number of pupils who left school prematurely compared with 1951. During 1951, new Ten-Year schools were established in Ömnögöbi and Sükhbaatar aimags and in Ulaanbaatar, in 1952 in Bayankhongor, Dundgobi, and Gobi-Altai, and in 1954 in Arkhangai, Bayan Ölgii, Khövsgöl, and Ulaanbaatar.

Teachers were also sent on both long and short professional training courses. Books and pamphlets were published and the quality of teaching journals was raised to improve their knowledge and teaching methods. These methods reflected the experience of teachers in the Soviet Union and other countries.

As well as having good classroom teachers, it was important to have good text books and source materials to reinforce the lessons taught to the students and to broaden their knowledge. Ensuring a satisfactory supply of text books for the widely established Eight-Year and Ten-Year middle schools in local areas was a brand-new problem which we had to face. With this aim in mind, text books and other publications were printed within the country and at the same time several dozen titles were translated and printed in the Soviet Union.

I met with the USSR Minister of Education and the president of the Academy of Educational Sciences [to discuss such matters]. When we requested that middle school teachers (in particular, Russian language teachers) be invited from the Soviet Union, new

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1 Anton Semënovich Makarenko, born in 1888, graduated from the Poltava Teachers' Institute in 1917. From 1920 until 1937 he was engaged in various experimental self-education schemes within labor camps and other organizations under the control of the OGPU and its successor, the NKVD. He died on April 1, 1939.
text books be translated and printed in Mongolian, and these explanatory books for students and hand books for teachers be provided, it was all done in the name of the Ministry of Education.

The teachers who arrived from the Soviet Union in response to our appeal were highly qualified and experienced, and not disheartened by the difficult conditions in the countryside. These people came and applied their efforts to providing our schools with great help and expertise. As we were more determined than ever to educate our pupils on our own, in addition to classes taught by teachers, much attention was paid to the Pioneer and youth organizations and to duties which could be carried out by parents as appropriate.

In resolution 281/75 of the Council of Ministers and the Party Central Committee, which was passed on August 8, 1952, the schools which were educating young children were to begin teaching Marxist-Leninist doctrine. This task was put to the teachers by the People's Education establishments. In order to fulfill this resolution, the People's Ministry of Education sent its ideas on joint cooperation to the aimag Party committees, Party cells, the Presidium of the aimag Baga Khural, and the sum administration. The aim was to raise the standard of learning and the quality of knowledge of the students, to rectify the situation of students being held back a year at school, to provide practical help for hygiene, civilized living, and the development of sports and physical education. To improve the leadership in the schools it was decided to put the following suggestions to the Central Committee and government:

- The director and classroom teachers in ten-year schools are to have not less than two years' working experience, and will be graduates of institutes.
- The director and classroom teachers in seven-year schools are to have not less than two years' working experience, and will be graduates of institutes.
- The teachers in primary schools will have worked for not less than three years and will be appointed after they have completed their training at a teacher-training college (tekhnikum).
- The inertia existing in school teaching practices is to be ended and the assignment of professionally qualified teachers to other non-teaching work is to be halted (and teachers are to be required to teach for not less than four years in any one school).
- The head teacher, school director, classroom teachers and the director of the aimag education department will hold an annual meeting. The teachers in primary and seven-year schools are to hold seminars to improve their teaching skills.
- To satisfy the schools' requirements, the People's Ministry of Education is to increase recruitment to and graduation from the teacher training colleges every year.
- Quality circles are to be organized on a wide scale to improve the knowledge of school pupils.
- Three million tögrög are to be spent every year on rural school buildings and accommodations.
- In order to improve the provision of teaching resources in the gobi, teachers in the gobi are to receive a 5% increase in salary.
- The Council of Ministers will determine the level of salary for the directors and classroom teachers of middle schools.
- Important steps are to be taken at the office of the Presidium of the Ikh Khural to award medals to those energetic, dedicated teachers who have given many years' continuous service in education work.
- Two-story buildings are to be constructed to accommodate ten-year schools in the centers of Gobi-Altai, Zavkhan, Bayan Ölgii, and Bayankhongor aimags, and accommodation for sixty pupils are to be built at seven-year schools at Taishir in Gobi-Altai, Delüün in Bayan Ölgii.
My Involvement in the Education of our People

Övörkhangai aimag center, Guchin Us sum, Delgertsogt in Dundgobi, and Binder in Khentii. Materials for the repair of school buildings sufficient for all aimags in 1952 was supplied during February and March.

When organizing the solutions to the above-mentioned problems in education, much attention was paid to training school inspectors and raising their qualifications and practical ability. An experiment which was carried out at the school in Erdene sum of Töv aimag was given as an example in the article “Baitsaagchnar” [The Inspectors].

The employees of the apparatus of the Ministry of Education and the staff of the rural and urban departments conducted inspections on their own, in pairs, or in groups to assess the state of preparation at the time of the winter and spring examinations. They asked questions about classroom instruction and educational methods, and issued directives on school work.

The first National Conference of Head Teachers was convened in Ulaanbaatar on August 11, 1952. The Minister of People’s Education presented a report entitled “Concerning the Aims of Improving Education in Schools.” There was ratification of the regulations concerning Pupils’ Councils in middle schools and parent-teacher associations in primary, seven-year and ten-year schools. The MPRP Central Committee decided to establish a training course in the 1953/54 school year for Russian-language teachers attached to the National Teachers’ Institute.

A resolution of the Council of Ministers on April 30, 1953, allowed teachers to be examined and awarded primary or middle school teaching qualifications. In addition, a decree was issued by the Presidium of the Ikh Khural on May 15, 1953 entitled “Concerning the Awards and Medals of the MPR to be Conferred on Outstanding and Reliable Teachers of Many Years’ Standing.” The Minister of Education of Mongolia issued the 171st directive on July 27, 1953, which mandated various important measures, including issuing booklets entitled “Instructions on Teaching Methods in Schools” and “Instructions on Teachers’ Leadership in the Classroom.”

While this work was being carried out, my continual reading of works on new Soviet educational theory, journals, newspapers and texts which demonstrated the most advanced teaching practices, proved to be of great help for educational work at that time. In addition, the Soviet specialists and advisers who were working in our Ministry of Education and some Soviet teachers who were working in the teacher training college, technical colleges and some middle schools, all assisted us greatly with their knowledge and experience. Those teachers of long-standing experience who had clearly demonstrated their improved qualifications also helped our Ministry of Education to achieve its aims. Our Party Central Committee, the Council of Ministers, and local Party, government, and Youth League organizations paid attention to and assisted with the work of the educational organizations.

At that time, there were few people with a middle school education in the country, let alone a higher education. This meant that it was important to send qualified teachers to educate the pupils and other young people and to involve the Youth League and Pioneer organizations on a large scale. As well as teaching pupils during normal lessons and outside school, the teachers, with help from the Youth League and Pioneers, organized sporting competitions in volleyball, football, chess, draughts etc. They were also concerned with those children who displayed talent in art and literature by forming groups for these activities.
They also carried out a significant amount of work in promoting proficiency in household activities such as sewing and livestock herding in addition to organizing the proper utilization of children’s free time. Nowadays, the parents of children are all educated and it should be possible for them to carry out educational activities for their children to a greater extent than was done previously.

While I was Minister of Education I had the opportunity to accompany Tsedenbal to the celebrations of the second anniversary of the founding of the German Democratic Republic. Around this time we met with the leader of the German Communist Party, leading figures in the international communist movement, and with Wilhelm Pieck, a member of the executive committee of the Comintern.

In January 1952, Marshal Choibalsan, Prime Minister of Mongolia and member of the Politburo of the MPRP Central Committee passed away. A countrywide state of mourning was proclaimed. It took a long time to resolve the question of whom to appoint as Prime Minister, and there was disagreement among the members of the Politburo. D. Damba, myself and others supported the idea of appointing Tsedenbal. Tsedenbal had worked in the Party and government leadership with Choibalsan for over a decade. He had gained great expertise and higher qualifications in finance and economics. In accordance with a decision of the MPRP Central Committee, Tsedenbal was appointed to that position by a decree of the Presidium of the Ikh Khural.

It was important to develop school education further in our country, to link education to work and make teaching relevant to life. To fulfill these aims, it was decided to hold workers’ classes in the general schools and measures were also taken to increase time devoted to practical lessons in physics, chemistry, biology, and other subjects.

In 1955, the Council of Ministers and the Party Central Committee passed a resolution to begin compulsory primary school education for all children of school age. It was decided to establish evening classes for adults in seven-year schools in Ulaanbaatar, at the Industrial Combine, at the Central Workers’ Council in Nalaikh, and in the aimag capitals. The bulk of the work involved in carrying out these measures was done by the enthusiasts of clubs and “red corners,” the Arts Committee, employees of the Ministry of Education, and teachers.

Prominent among those engaged in such work were the senior teacher L. Jürmed, the senior teacher of Zavkhan aimag D. Renchin, Rashi-Onolt of Övörkhangai, Sh. Luvsanvandan and D. Choijilsüren of Ulaanbaatar, the geography teachers D. Batsükh and D. Bazar, the female teacher S. Tserendulam, the math teacher Ts. Sharavnyambuu, the chemistry teacher Doljin, and the employees of the Ministry of Education M. Jamsran, B. Sodov, M. Tömör-Ochir, Ts. Sodnomjams, Kh. Luvsanbaldan, T. Mashlai and others who helped to develop the people’s education.

While the first volume of the new Mongolian history was being written, we worked to cover the period of the People’s Revolution, and while preparing and writing about related topics, I completed my candidate scholar dissertation written in Russian. After showing this work to the Mongolian historians to obtain their advice, I had it examined by the specialists at the Far Eastern Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences, who offered me advice on corrections and invited me to defend my dissertation there. Accordingly, on October 27, 1954, I defended my candidate scholar degree in History at the Far Eastern Institute of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. I later made improvements to the text, which was published in Moscow as “The Victory of the People’s Revolution and the Establishment of the MPR.”
Working to Represent the People

While I was working as rector of the state university and Minister of Education, I also chaired the Mongolian Peace Committee from 1949 to 1959. I took part in several major international peace conferences in Warsaw, Vienna, Helsinki, Stockholm, and Moscow, and attended meetings of the delegations of the countries of Asia and the Pacific. On a number of occasions I also attended the anti-nuclear meeting in Tokyo and conferences of the World Peace Council of which I was a member.

World War II had ended with the loss of several million lives, and four years later there was a threat of a new war. Many internationally renowned scientific and cultural figures appealed to the people of the world to unite against the danger of war. At the initiative of the International Union of Cultural Personages and the International Women’s Union, it was announced that an international peace conference would be convened. These offices made their proposals in February 1949 in an appeal to the people of all nations. Those who took an active role included the famous French scholar F. Joliot-Curie, the outstanding and well-known Frenchman Eugene Cotton, the senior English cleric H. Johnson, and the famous Soviet authors A. Fadeev and I. Erenburg.

The people of Mongolia and the other socialist countries played an active role in the world-wide struggle for peace. In 1949, a Mongolian delegation headed by Tsedenbal took part in the first peace conferences held in Paris and Prague. The wishes and aspirations of the ordinary people and the peace workers of all nations were made abundantly clear.

The first conference of Mongolian peace workers was held on September 21-22, 1949 in Ulaanbaatar, at which Tsedenbal read a report entitled “To Oppose the New Warlords and for Perpetual Friendship among Nations,” which was the basis of the Mongolian Peace and Friendship Organization. Several important resolutions were made and a National Peace Committee, consisting of twenty-one members, was established. I was accepted as its chairman.

The Mongolian Peace Committee and its local organizations expressed the wishes and aims of the ordinary people and during the first few years of the peace

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1 Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Fadeev, whose real name was Bulyga, was born in 1901. He studied briefly at Vladivostok Business College and at the Moscow Mining Institute. After participating in numerous activities during the civil war, stretching from the Ussuri to Petrograd where, in 1921, he helped crush the Kronstadt uprising, he spent most of his public life in supervising literary and artistic institutions, as well as visiting various countries as a member of peace delegations. He committed suicide on May 13, 1956.

2 Il'ya Grigor'evich Erenburg was born in 1891. After being expelled from high school for participating in the 1905-07 revolutionary activities, he went to Paris where he stayed until his return to Russia in 1917. After a brief stint with newspapers in Kiev, he was sent back to Western Europe as a Soviet correspondent. When the Germans invaded France in 1940, he returned to the USSR where, until his death in 1967, he was engaged in various political and propaganda activities.
movement the leadership of the MPRP organized and carried out a great deal of work to implement the resolutions of the international peace organizations.

On October 11, 1950 I read a report at a Mongolian peace conference entitled "The Mongolian People's Opposition to the New Warmongers and the Struggle for Peace." This conference appointed ten people, including myself and S. Udval, to represent it at the Second International Conference in Warsaw, which was convened on November 16, 1950.

Warsaw had suffered badly during the war, but renewal work had begun there. We were briefly informed about the contemporary situation in Warsaw, and we visited the birthplace of the famous Polish composer Chopin, which was nearby. I made a speech at the Second World Peace Conference on November 20, 1950. This conference delievered its message to the peoples of the world. On my return I reported back to a gathering of workers, and wrote two articles entitled "The Great Assembly of the Peoples of the World" and "Victory in the War for Peace," both of which were published in Unen.

Our delegation was received by Boleslaw Bierut, General Secretary of the United Polish Workers' Party and chairman of the Government Council, in his own residence. Bierut was extremely interested in the Mongolian climate and in the economy and agriculture of Mongolia. When he bid us farewell, he asked us to convey his greetings to Marshal Kh. Choibalsan. During the conference, our delegation was received not just by Bierut, but also by the commanding general of the Polish armed forces, Marshal of the USSR and Poland, K. K. Rokossovskii. During the conference, Frédéric Joliot-Curie was elected chairman of the World Peace Council. As France had banned peace activities in its country, the Mongolian committee sent a telegram to the French prime minister about the defense of world peace.

I headed the Mongolian delegation at the Stockholm conference, and wrote an article in the press entitled, "The Mongolian People Warmly Support the Decision of the Permanent Assembly of the World Friendship Conference." In this article I described the third assembly of the permanent commission of the Conference for World Peace, which concluded its work on March 19, 1955 in Stockholm, the capital of Sweden. I also mentioned the decision taken to convene a peace conference in the winter of 1950. Stockholm is situated on several islands in an area surrounded by water, and its artistically constructed buildings [gained it the reputation of being] one of Europe's most beautiful cities.

The Presidium of the MPR Baga Khural issued a statement about the attention being paid to the World Peace Committee entitled "Concerning the Total Reduction and Prohibition of all Types of Nuclear and Bacteriological Weapons of Mass Destruction." Over 600,000 of our citizens signed a petition in 1950 in response to the appeal made in Stockholm by the permanent commission of the World Peace Conference. This petition called for a peace treaty between the five great powers. There was active participation by workers, herdsmen, scholars, writers, teachers, clerics, and other men, women, and members of the public in activities which supported the resolution of the World Peace Council and conference.

The people of Mongolia opposed foreign aggression. Voluntary donations of money were collected to assist the fraternal Korean and Vietnamese people, to strengthen world peace, and for the struggle to end the commotion in the Gulf of Suez and the wars in Korea and Vietnam.

In response to the desire for peace of the Mongolian people and the peoples of
the new popular democracies, the Presidium of the Baga Khural of the MPR passed a law on February 27, 1951 entitled “A Law for the Defense of Peace.” According to the first article of this law, it was proclaimed that “factions which have supported, verbally or in writing, the propaganda process to provoke another war, will be punished with ten- to twenty-five-year prison sentences.” We paid much attention to expediting the call for a conference in Vienna between the five superpowers, representing the eighty-five member nations of the UN. On April 26, 1951, leading figures in our Party and government were signatories to this appeal by the World Peace Conference.

The famous Soviet author and member of the World Peace Council II’ya Erenburg, the famous Cuban poet Nicolas Gilyen and the famous Chilean poet Pablo Neruda stopped by in Ulaanbaatar on September 15, 1951, en route to Beijing. They were received by the Mongolian Peace Committee, and discussions were held on the common struggle for peace. Afterwards, I remember meeting the Soviet author Konstantin Simonov who was visiting our country. On March 30, 1952, I made a speech at a mass demonstration in the capital opposing the use of bacteriological weapons in Korea.

The People’s Republic of China, wanting to strengthen its position on the world stage, found that it was important to improve relations with the countries of Asia and the Pacific. In order to achieve this aim [the Chinese] strove to organize a meeting with the powerful and famous leaders of these nations, and a conference was organized in Beijing in October 1952 for the countries of Asia and the Pacific. During this conference, we visited famous sights such as the Heavenly Temple, the gates of Tian’anmen Square, the gardens on Wang Shu Shan mountain where the Yung Ho-Kung Buddhist temple was located, the man-made lakes of Beijing and the [Ming] Tombs on the edge of the city.

The newspapers carried articles with titles such as “Our People Fully Support the Convening of a Conference for the Sake of Peace in the Countries of Asia and the Pacific” and “In Mongolia Prior to the Conference for the Peace Workers of the Countries of Asia and the Pacific.” On September 30, the host committee held a meeting in Beijing about this peace conference. It was attended by the leaders of the delegations of twenty-nine Asian and Pacific countries and representatives from organizations such as the World Peace Council. The host committee decided unanimously to convene the conference on October 2, 1952.

I arrived in Beijing on September 20, 1952, leading the Mongolian delegation as chairman of the Mongolian National Peace Committee. The delegation included M. Dügerstüren, the author Ch. Lodoidamba, the physician Dulamjav and others. The Chinese side included the chairman of the Beijing Party committee Peng Zhen, the deputy chairman of the permanent government commission the scholar Guo Moruo, and the

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3 Peng Zhen was born in 1899 in Shanxi and became one of the earliest members of the Chinese Communist Party. Until 1949, he was mainly engaged in underground and base area work in North China. He joined the party’s Politiiburo in 1951 and until the “cultural revolution” remained a key figure among China’s leadership. Like Liu Shaoqi, he became an early victim of Mao’s purge, was later rehabilitated, and in the ‘80s came out against expansion of Deng Xiaoping’s reforms. He died in April 1997.

4 A native of Sichuan, Guo Moruo (1892-1978) graduated with a degree in archeology from Tokyo University in 1920. For the next seven years, he worked in various capacities for the alliance between the Guominand and the Communists. When the alliance broke down in 1927, he fled to Japan where he stayed for ten years. He spent the war years in China’s wartime capital of Chongqing. He joined the Communists shortly before their conquest of China in 1949 and until his death served in and dominated many cultural organizations,
Chinese political figure Song Qingling, Sun Yat-Sen’s widow. The Soviet delegation was headed by the author B. Kozhevnikov. Each time Peng Zhen met with the leaders of the delegations of the socialist countries he said that the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee was now directing the activities of the conference.

When the conference was convened on October 3, 1952, I was elected one of its six leaders and was appointed deputy chairman of the commission in charge of the Korean problem. We played an active role in preparing the documents of the conference and in the activities of the commission. As delegation members, we decided among ourselves which subjects would be included in the speeches which represented our own people, and supported the statements put out by the conference. During the reports there were discussions on the questions involving Japan and Korea, cultural relations, the development of economic relations, the question of national sovereignty, the protection of the rights of women and children, the peace treaty between the five superpowers, the ratification and proclamation of the resolutions made by the conference, and the movement for peace in the Near and Middle East.

The main speech at the conference was given by Guo Moruo. We met with the internationally renowned S. Kitchlu of India, who had been awarded the Lenin World Peace Prize. He mentioned in his speech in Beijing that Mongolia had retained its ancient Indian traditions and culture and it would be expedient to develop this connection further.

As the conference was drawing to an end, B. Jargalsaikhan, our ambassador in Beijing, came to the Beijing Hotel where I was staying and told me that following an invitation by the Chinese government, our government delegation would soon be arriving in Beijing. Prime Minister Tsedenbal would be heading the delegation, which included Foreign Minister N. Lkhamsüren and myself as Minister of Education, and Ambassador Jargalsaikhan. I was told that, therefore, I should not return home, but instead wait for the arrival of the delegation. The delegation arrived in Beijing on September 28, 1952, and Ambassador Jargalsaikhan and I went to meet them at the airport.

The Chinese officials meeting our delegation included Liu Shaoqi, Zhu De, Zhou Enlai and other Party and government leaders. Among them was my old friend, president of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the scholar and author Guo Moruo. He

including the Academy of Sciences. Among the most faithful of the Maoists, he was one of the few leading figures who were not purged by Mao.

Song Qingling (1893-1981) was one of four children of the influential Song family of Shanghai, all of whom became politically prominent. After 1927, however, while her brother and her two sisters became closely allied with Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek), who married her sister Meiling, she sided with the Communists and stayed on in China after 1949.

Born in Hunan in 1898, Liu briefly visited the Soviet Union in 1921. Upon returning to China that same year, he organized underground labor unions. During the second world war, he was chiefly responsible for creating and coordinating Communist base areas behind Japanese lines, and by the end of the war, Liu was second only to Mao Zedong in party standing. In addition to holding many high positions in the party, he became China’s president in April 1959. He became Mao’s chief victim during the “cultural revolution” and died in prison in 1969.

Zhu De (1886-1976) started his adult life as an officer in one of the many warlord armies in the 1910s. After joining the Chinese Communist Party in 1922, he worked in a variety of military positions in the new Guomindang army. When the alliance between China’s two main parties broke in 1927, he helped Mao Zedong establish a base area where he rose to become the chief military officer. From then until his death, he remained at the top of Communist China’s armed forces.
introduced me to Zhou Enlai, explaining to him that I was a member of the Mongolian delegation and Minister of Education, rector of the state university, and chairman of the Mongolian Peace Committee.

Zhou Enlai was a tall, well-built figure, wearing a blue shirt and blue trousers. He had wide black eyebrows and white, un-Chinese teeth. He made very rapid movements. On being introduced to me, he said that two students from China were studying at our university and, as this was insufficient, asked me if it would be possible for more students to study there. "That's possible," I replied. Guo Moruo and I had met in Moscow in 1946 at the 220th anniversary of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, and after that we always used to meet at international peace conferences. While I was in Beijing he twice invited me to his home where we had some close discussions.

Meanwhile, we could hear the hum of aircraft engines not far away, and before long the Soviet Ilyushin-14 touched down. The delegation was cordially greeted according to official protocol and accommodated in a special residence. Zhou Enlai, Liu Shaoqi, and Mao Zedong met the delegates in order. The delegates were all present at a reception on October 4, 1952 in honor of Mao Zedong, chairman of the Chinese central government, and Prime Minister Tsedenbal of Mongolia. Mao walked in a slow, gentle manner and used to look up only to speak a word or two at a time. He liked to use humorous phrases based on old Chinese proverbs.

During the discussions, I had thought that a treaty could be established for the mutual recognition of the sovereign independence of the two countries and in the field of friendship and cooperation. However, in accordance with Mao’s wishes, discussions were conducted on economic and cultural cooperation between the two countries. This led to an agreement on economic, cultural and educational cooperation which was signed by Prime Ministers Zhou Enlai and Tsedenbal in Beijing on October 4, 1952. Clear agreements were also made between the respective official bodies concerned with agriculture, trade, culture, and education. It was mentioned that the agreements would remain valid for ten years.

On October 17, 1952, the Mongolian delegation returned home from Beijing. On my arrival I wrote an article entitled "The Conference for Peace Workers of the Nations of Asia and the Pacific." On June 7, 1955, a Mongolian national Baga Khural was held on the question of preserving peace. I read a report there entitled "The Struggle for the Sake of Peace for all Peoples and the International Situation." It was also confirmed that the Peace Assembly to be held in Helsinki "would be attended by the Mongolian representatives B. Shirendev and Ts. Damdinsüren."

As chairman of the Mongolian Peace Committee, I led the delegation which took part in the conference for the Peoples’ Defense of Peace which was held in Vienna on December 12, 1952. Vienna was located in the Danube Alps. The lives and achievements of the famous composers W. Mozart and L. Beethoven were commemorated in many places in that city. Later, when I visited Vienna again I toured famous places such as the Vienna Woods, where the outstanding musician Johann Strauss used to live. He was buried in a forest on the edge of the city.

I made a speech at this conference on December 17, 1952 in which I spoke about the urgent need to stop the bloodshed in the wars continuing in Korea, Vietnam, and Malaya. It was even more important to conclude a peace treaty between the nations of America, France, the Soviet Union and China, which was one of the fundamental subjects under discussion. I assisted Professor F. Joliot-Curie and Mr. Farge with their
suggestions.

As a result of the peace movement, there was a cease-fire in July 1953 in the Korean war, which marked a major coup for the peace workers. I made a speech at this conference in which delegations from sixty-eight countries were taking part. Important decisions were made on disarmament, socio-economic organization, and cultural relations between the peoples of the world.

I was proud to be able to attend the Stockholm conference and the Moscow conference on disarmament at which decisions of historical importance were made. The city of Helsinki is located on the Gulf of Finland, and from an architectural point of view is an amazing city.

I also took part in the Friendship Congress of African and Asian Peoples which was held in Cairo in December 1957, and in the Sixth Anti-Nuclear Conference held in Tokyo in August 1960.

Mongolia's representatives who took part in these meetings and conferences contributed actively to the work of the conference and its commissions, and in formulating the documents of the conference. Our delegation explained the peaceful policies of our own government from the platforms of these conferences and meetings, revealed the peaceful aspirations of our people, and repeatedly demanded that Mongolia should become a member of the United Nations.

These demands were put forward by our delegations at the Sixth Anti-Nuclear Conference held in Tokyo and in the resolutions and decisions made at the Asian and African Friendship Congress in Cairo. While the efforts of the Mongolian peace organizations were closely connected to the other mass organizations of the country's workers, youth, students and women, the cooperation and ties with the peace organizations of other countries became even wider and stronger.

Many foreign peace delegations and famous personages were invited by the Mongolian peace organizations to visit Mongolia. They included the Brazilian author Jorge Amadu, the Cuban poet Nicolas Gilyen, the French peace worker Yves Farge, the famous English figure Ivor Montagu, the head cleric of Canterbury Cathedral Hewlett Johnson, the Soviet author I. Erenburg, and the Japanese artist Maruki, who was severely afflicted by the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima by the American aggressors.

Some poems about Mongolia were composed by Amadu and Gilen and these were published. Montagu and Johnson were awarded the Mongolian Altan Gadas medal. When they visited Mongolia, these people were very interested in finding out about Mongolian history, culture, and current affairs. Ivor Montagu wrote a book on contemporary Mongolia entitled *Land of Blue Sky*. They made speeches at international peace conferences and meetings to assist our entry into the United Nations, and wrote about Mongolia in their own countries.

Later, when I myself visited England, Ivor Montagu traveled a long distance to meet me. When I was on vacation in Bulgaria in 1980, I happened to be reading about the trial and investigation of Georgii Dmitrov in Leipzig and the reminiscences of the revolutionaries, when I came across an interesting article by the young Ivor Montagu who was a reporter at that trial.

During the world peace conferences and meetings the Mongolian delegation met

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with famous peace workers on many occasions, and exchanged ideas on important problems in the world peace movement. I was a member of the World Peace Council from 1957 on, and as elections to the Bureau of the World Peace Council were being held from 1957 to 1963, I had several opportunities to meet with these people.

They included the Belgian woman Isabella Bloem, the famous English scholar J. D. Bernal, the Soviet writers A. Fadeev, A. Korneichuk, and N. Tikhonov, the Brazilian Jorge Amadu, the Turkish poet Nazim Hikmet, the Indians Ramashveri Nehru and Ramesh Chandra, the Ceylonese priest U. Saranankara, the black Canadian priest James Endicott, the Frenchman Eugene Cotton, and others. There were also other personages such as the clever scholar Joliot-Curie whose ideas greatly influenced world culture and science, and the charming and friendly A. Fadeev. All these personages were always modest and attentive to our thoughts and ideas. Famous figures, such as the determined woman Bloem and the compassionate and intelligent Ramashveri Nehru always used to exchange ideas with our delegates on the struggle for peace. Y. Farge, A. Amadu, N. Gilen, the Turkish poet Nazim Hikmet, and likewise James Endicott continued to discuss Mongolia with interest. Although the delegates at successive conferences each had distinctly different ideologies, professions and social standing, they shared a characteristic way of expressing their views on peace.

The speech I had made at the World Peace Assembly in Helsinki was published in Ünen. Soon afterwards, a Mongolian committee of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Association was established. There were thirteen members, including B. Shirendev, Sh. Luvsanvandan, B. Rinchen, L. Tsogzolmaa and Y. Yadamsüren. I was elected its leader.

While I was in Moscow studying for my doctoral thesis in October 1957, some of my colleagues and I took part in the organizing committee of the Cairo conference of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Association. We attended this conference in December 1957.

After we had familiarized ourselves with the city of Cairo, our delegation went to visit the 140-meter high pyramids which were built from square stones shaped like tsats [religious clay figure] and piled up into the shape of a suvraga [stupa, a sometimes multi-story religious edifice]. The remains of the pharaohs of the early, middle, and later kingdoms of Egypt were interred in these stupa-like structures. Near the pyramids there was a monument called the Sphinx, carved out of solid rock. It had a lion’s body and the head of a man. The delegation also visited the main center of Egyptian culture in the city of Alexandria. The city was named after Alexander of Macedonia, who founded the city around 300 BC. Famous people lived there, including the mathematician and philosopher Archimedes, the mathematician Euclid, the astronomer Ptolemy, and Aristarchus.

That conference was attended by public and political figures, scholars and journalists from many Asian and African countries. Around the time of the meeting of the organizing committee, our government issued instructions that I was to attend an official meeting with the president of Egypt, Gamal Abdel Nasser, along with some of my colleagues and P. Tserentssoodol who spoke French.

We explained the importance of establishing diplomatic relations between our two countries. Nasser said that there were no difficulties in establishing relations between our two countries, and that the ambassadors in Moscow or Beijing could assume concurrent responsibility. Following this discussion, our foreign ministry made contact with them and later on diplomatic relations were established. We repeated our discussion with Nasser to the Egyptian Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister.

The leaders of the delegations traveled to Damascus in order to inform the Syr-
ian government leadership of the aims of the conference. We went there along with a group of leading figures from some of the other countries. We were instructed by our government to meet with Syrian President Kuatl Shkuri, the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister to raise the matter of establishing relations between our two countries.

Around that time there was a campaign going on in Egypt to unite with Syria to become a united Arab nation, and as this was about to happen, the Syrian leadership suddenly avoided making any decision about establishing diplomatic relations with us. They would ask us, "How did your discussions go with President Nasser? We can rely on his views on the subject." Together with the Soviet delegation we paid a visit to the Central Committee of the Syrian Communist Party where we were received by the Secretary of the Party Central Committee, Khaled Bagdash. Our delegation also visited memorable places in Damascus, the Syrian capital.

In the speeches I made at the meetings of the organizing committee in Cairo and when speaking with the people present there, I resolutely condemned the anti-Egyptian English and French imperialists and the despotic attack made by Israel. I revealed the solidarity which existed between the Mongolian people and the peoples of Asia and Africa, whose independence we supported.

During our conference speeches, our meetings with the many other delegations and in official talks, we continually discussed how we could obtain help to become a member of the United Nations. When this question arose, Tang Minzhou, the plenipotentiary Chinese representative, met with us and said, "You do not need to pursue this matter. In due course, our two countries will gain entry to the United Nations." When I explained to him the importance of pursuing this question he replied, "In that case do not express your opinion on China."

During the conference, our delegation became well acquainted with the internal and foreign affairs of the Asian and African countries which had sent delegations. We used everyday examples to illustrate some of the problems concerning the development of our own country and its foreign relations. Having visited Egypt and Syria, my participation in the organization of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Association and its conferences was recorded in great detail in the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The famous French scholar Frédéric Joliot-Curie and the famous international figure Eugene Cotton were continually accompanied by many famous people at the World Peace Conferences held from 1949 to 1967. I had a chance to shake hands with them but not to hold a conversation. I did, however, hear them speak on several occasions at the conferences. Joliot-Curie was a public figure with a scholarly appearance who used to discuss those ideas and principles which had profound meanings. Eugene Cotton appeared to be an ordinary sort of person who used to talk about the compassionate views of women.

The English scientist J. D. Bernal gave talks in public on important theoretical research being carried out in nuclear physics. When the English journalist Ivor Montagu introduced me to J.D. Bernal, Bernal had already asked Montagu to brief him on Mongolia’s geography and its recent economic and cultural achievements. He asked me to verify a few things for him and expressed his wish to visit Mongolia.

The questions raised by the conference were discussed by people from many different backgrounds. They included the black Canadian priest James Endicott, the senior English cleric Hewlett Johnson, the Belgian political figure Isabella Bloem, the popular Indian figures S. Kitchlu, Ramashveri Nehru and Ramesh Chandra, and the
Japanese scholar Usun Kouri. We always had a working relationship with the scholars and writers of the socialist countries.

We avidly read some of their works including A. Fadeev’s “Young Guard,” K. Semenov’s “Wait for me” and “All Day and Night,” I. Erenburg’s “Storm” and “The Fall of Paris,” and B. Polevoi’s “Story about a Real Person.” The last work was about A. Meresyev, whom we had met on many occasions at international peace conferences.

I also obtained advice from Soviet authors on many occasions during peace conferences held from 1949 to 1957. Among them were A. Fadeev, A. Korneichuk, A. Surkov, B. Polevoi, M. Turszade, K. Fedin, N. Tikhonov, and I. Erenburg. I also often met with different authors to talk about the conference activities. They included Korneichuk’s wife Vanda Vasilevskaya, The East German writer Anna Seegers, the Czechoslovak poet Jan Dradaa, G. Fuchkova, wife of the author G. Fuchik, the Chinese authors Guo Moruo, Ding Ling, Mao Dun, Eh Mi Hsiao, the Korean author Jan Ser Ya, the Indian writer Anand, the Polish scholar Infil’d, and the American singer Paul Robeson.

Fadeev, Korneichuk, and Erenburg gave us advice on the ideas discussed at the conference. Fadeev was succeeded by Korneichuk as deputy chairman of the World Peace Council. Erenburg was a member of the World Peace Council executive committee. Fadeev once remarked to me, “It’s good that our Mongolian friends are taking an active part at the conference. In addition to participating in the meetings of the commission, it would be ideal if, having met with the delegates of the Asian and African nations, you could get them to understand as much as possible about some of the questions discussed at the conference and to familiarize them with your own wishes.”

Korneichuk said, “Because the conferences are attended by people of all parties and opinions, they deviate from the topics clearly under discussion and they talk about their own views on matters. As representatives of socialist countries we must face the problems from the standpoint of the policy of our Party and government and it is important to discuss our ideas in language everyone can understand.”

Once, when I asked Erenburg for advice on ideas for a speech, he replied, “It would be a good idea if you, my friends, concentrated your attention on peace in Asia and the threat to this continent posed by the imperialists.” As Erenburg was fluent in French, he often participated for the Soviet side in the Commission for Conference Resolutions and at the meetings of the Presidium of the Peace Council. The audience was drawn to his lively speech and witty proverbs criticizing the anti-peace elements. Every time I met him he seemed to be chain-smoking cigarettes or puffing at his wooden pipe.

From 1958 until 1959, I took part in the meeting of the Presidium of the World Peace Council held in Warsaw. I flew there with the Soviet delegation, but as Warsaw was fog-bound, we were diverted to a town northeast of the city. We waited there until the evening, but as the fog had not yet cleared, that night we set off from the town by bus towards Warsaw, which we were determined to reach before the conference started in the morning.

We had been traveling for just over a hundred kilometers when one of the rear tires burst and we came to a stop on the road. The bus driver waved down a passing car and returned to the town to find another tire. He came back around dawn and managed to fix the wheel with the help of the traveling delegation. We set off again behind schedule and finally arrived in Warsaw at about eleven.

As we had not slept during that cold December night we all felt tired and it was
impossible for us to take part in the morning session of the conference. Erenburg, who was the most senior among us, was extremely tired, and having run out of his own cigarettes began to smoke ours. On arrival, we checked into our hotel, and were immediately invited to have breakfast. I sat at a table with Erenburg and some of the other Soviet delegates.

A woman who spoke Russian arrived on behalf of the Polish Peace Committee and sat with us. She turned to Erenburg and handed him a tiny notebook saying, “Would you please write something memorable with your signature?” The travel-weary Erenburg took it and asked her for her name which was Lyuba. Erenburg’s composition read, “Lyuba, I will never forget the night and the morning I have spent in your country.” The Polish woman was not aware of what had happened, and she gratefully accepted his bitter recollection of the tiring journey.

The struggle for peace conducted by the ordinary people was not in vain. Thanks to the influence of the forces of peace and the efforts of peace lovers in the Soviet Union and the fraternal socialist countries, the Korean war was stopped and a major risk of war provoked by English, French, and Israeli aggressors in the Near East and Suez regions was averted. Furthermore, the peace movement contributed greatly towards increasing the trust between peoples and relaxing the dangerous international situation and the Cold War.

Although I was transferred to another post in 1960, I continued to take part in the work of the peace and friendship organizations and for over thirty years I remained a member of the World Peace Council and the Mongolian Peace Committee.

I headed the Mongolian delegation at the sixth International Anti-Nuclear Conference for Complete Nuclear Disarmament which was held in Tokyo on August 2–9, 1969. On our way to Tokyo, the delegation stopped at the Chinese city of Hong Kong. We spent several days there with Almaas, our Japanese-language interpreter, while we waited for our visas from the Japanese consulate in Hong Kong. We were staying in a somewhat uncomfortable hotel of average quality. Since the price of the meals there was outside our budget, we saved some money by eating in a tiny Chinese restaurant at the edge of the city center.

We were eating there one day when we overheard two elderly, casually-dressed European men enjoying themselves at the next table. They were speaking in Russian, and as this was my first trip to Tokyo, I wanted to introduce myself, thinking that they might be fellow travelers on their way to Japan. I was very keen to find out about the flight from Hong Kong to Tokyo and about Tokyo itself. However, without an introduction, it was not easy to talk to them or to make their acquaintance. I noticed that there was a copy of Pravda on their table.

When I went over and asked them, “May I have a quick look at your paper?” the two of them looked at me in amazement and replied, “All right,” and handed me their newspaper. I glanced at it and returned it to them, thanking them. They too looked as if they wanted to talk with me. I took that opportunity to question them, “Are you both going to Tokyo?” “No, we are on our way to Canada. We are staying in the city for a few nights. That’s our friend over there,” said one of them, pointing in another direction. “We have lost our passports and so we are having to stay here.” “Have you been here long?” I asked. “We sent our families to Canada ahead of us, and we have gotten into a mess trying to follow them,” he replied.

I assumed that they were Soviet citizens who were on a long journey to Canada
but had lost their passports. "Doesn’t your country have a consulate here?" I asked. The pair looked at me in astonishment and asked, "What would we have a consulate here for?" "In that case, how will the two of you get passports?" I asked. They replied that if they could not get them back after making a few inquiries through the police, they would buy some passports. "With enough money, it can be done," they said.

I doubted very much that they were seamen. I asked them what transport they would use to get to Canada. "We have sent half our luggage with some people we trust, and so the two of us have only a little luggage between us." I then wondered if they were conveying trade goods. Then they asked, "Have you been to Soviet Russia and if so, where have you visited and what is your nationality?"

I told them the truth, that I was traveling to Tokyo from Mongolia. This seemed to intrigue them. "Is that so? We know your country well. We once traveled through the khoshuus of the northern part of Saín Noën Khan aimag, and on to Da Khüree. We spent quite some time in your country." I was pleased to think that these two men were the blood brothers of the Soviet troops who were helping us at that time. "When you were fighting against Ungern, which unit of the Soviet army were you with?" I asked. "We weren’t with the Soviet units. Instead, having fought alongside Ungern’s troops, because our Baron General’s army was defeated, we barely managed to escape with our lives into northern Manchuria."

Now I too understood what had happened. I realized I was not with friends, but rather that I had been chatting with the enemy. "How did you manage to get here?" I asked. "Well, like many others we settled in northern Manchuria, where we made a living. We established an enterprise which made a red wine called Temple Wine and while we were trying to make it profitable, we were caught up in the revolution in China, just like the one in Russia. Our winery was forced to pay heavy taxes and we were faced with closure. For this reason, a group of us sold the winery, our capital and our belongings. We are using this money to leave for Canada." Having fled from the October Revolution, and after fighting against the Soviet government, these people had become stateless and were in great difficulties, with nowhere to go.

Our interpreter Almaas had gone to the Japanese consulate on several occasions to inquire about our visas but always returned with the reply, "Not here yet." However after we had sent him there again one day he returned with the joyful news that permission for our visas had arrived. He told us that we were to go to the consulate straight away, and we both left the hotel in a fluster.

While we were walking in that direction a rickshaw suddenly drew up alongside us, pulled by a man who was groaning and panting. "I’m available now. Where do you want to go? I will take you there," he said. We had previously heard about these carriages, which we had seen in films. We thanked him but we declined to participate in that Hong Kong custom of using transport drawn by people.

We carried on until we reached a tiny building made of blue bricks and enclosed by a low Oriental-style rampart. There was a line of men and women stretching for several hundred meters from the main gate of the courtyard to the consulate building. They appeared to be European tourists waiting for their visas.

While we stood there at the end of the line, a young Japanese man approached us and asked, "Are you from Mongolia?" and after greeting us, promptly escorted us through the entrance of the consulate. There was a low partition stretching right across the middle of the room on the other side of which several officials were examining and
stamping the visas and passports of the tourists. The young Japanese man who was accompanying us went up to a short gray-haired man sitting beyond the partition who handed him a small visa application form printed in Japanese and English. Almaas completed the Japanese part of the form and I filled in some details in English before giving it back to the Japanese official.

The Japanese official recorded in our passports that we had permission to enter Japan by way of Tokyo, and having stamped them, invited us in for coffee in an adjacent room which was comfortably furnished with low tables. We chatted there for a while and drank a black infusion called coffee together with the Japanese consul-general and a Japanese official who held the rank of colonel.

When we inquired about the route to Tokyo he asked, “Which aircraft [airline?] will you be taking there?” We replied that we would be taking a [Cathay Pacific?] Boeing aircraft. Whether the Japanese official was performing his duty to promote his country, or whether it was for his own personal profit he remarked sarcastically, “Our own national airline isn’t bad, you know.” “Naturally, of course, on leaving home, we had booked on the first airline we came across,” we replied.

Later on, it turned out that this Japanese could speak Russian and I asked him how he learned to speak the language so well. “Of course, I speak it well. I studied Russian when I was working in the espionage department of the Kwantung army in northern China. I am forgetting my Russian now. At the time I also tried to learn Mongolian,” he replied, and he said several sentences in perfect Mongolian.

The sixth World Anti-Nuclear Conference was particularly significant as it coincided with the fifteenth anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Delegations from twenty-nine countries and about ten organizations from the world democracies took part. When the conference was convened, people gathered there from all regions of Japan. I fulfilled my role as deputy chairman of the main session.

We obtained help from some Japanese public figures who were at the meeting and from the Soviet delegation. Concerning Mongolia’s membership in the United Nations, we ensured that this item was to be included in the main resolution from that conference.

The main content of the conference resolutions related to the important demands on the American, English, and French governments to reduce their troop numbers and weapons, to bring about the permanent cessation of the manufacture of nuclear weapons and their testing and usage, to nullify the cruel treaties joining Japan, America, and other despotic military regimes, to stop the attacks on foreign countries, and to unite the two Germanies, the two Koreas and the two Vietnams based on democratic principles.

Tokyo was a city which had both Japanese and European characteristics. It was founded in the fifteenth century on the southeastern coast of Honshu island and used to be merely Japan’s eastern capital. The city had rich industrial companies, shops, apartments, and palaces along with many poor people. Although there were plenty of goods for sale, the ordinary people had limited means to buy things, and the monetary exchange rate was said to be weak.

In 1962 I took part in the World Peace Conference which was being held in Moscow that year. The reinforcement of world peace and the further calming of the international situation, together with an awareness of the danger of war were reflected in the most positive measures undertaken by the Soviet peace program. This corresponded with the critical interests of mankind as voiced by the conference participants.
Mongolia contributed to the calming of the international situation and the strengthening of peace for the countries of Asia and the rest of the world. The MPR struggled continuously to limit the proliferation of weapons. An idea was proposed by the Mongolian government on the joint formulation and signing of an international non-aggression pact of the countries of Asia and the Pacific. This won wide support from all the leaders of world peace.

The Mongolia-Poland Friendship Society was established on July 21, 1960. I served as its chairman until 1981. Following the establishment of diplomatic relations between Mongolia and Poland in April 1950, the fraternal parties and governments of the two countries grew closer as did the friendship and cooperation between the two peoples. Party and government representatives of the two countries took part in all the major party conferences, anniversaries of revolutions and important government matters on a reciprocal basis. The economic, cultural, and scientific links between the two countries grew stronger every year.

At the invitation of the Polish-Mongolian Friendship Society, I took part in a conference held in Warsaw for representatives of the socialist countries. I was invited by the Polish Academy of Sciences to travel to Poland on several occasions for the signing of agreements between our two academies on joint projects carried out during 1971 and 1972. I had an opportunity to become well acquainted with the activities of the Polish people and its scholars.

Every year, this society organized a conference or meeting with a special agenda which coincided with a noteworthy day or a national holiday in both countries. There would be radio broadcasts and articles published in the press, arrangements would be made to exchange representatives and so forth. Also taking part in this were the Mongolian workers and Polish specialists who worked at the ferro-concrete factory in Darkhan, and at the timber-processing factory which were both built with Polish loans and aid. Embassy staff and Mongolian specialists who had graduated from Polish colleges also took an active part in these activities.

The 500th anniversary of the famous Polish scholar N. Copernicus was widely proclaimed in our country in May 1972 when the Polish Prime Minister G. Yablonski paid us a visit and personally took part in a ceremony to establish a monument to Copernicus. The activities of the Friendship Society were highly valued by the Polish side and the Polish government decorated me and some others on two occasions in 1966 and 1972. I was awarded the Five Star and Commander Cross medals in 1972.

From 1972 to 1981 I was the chairman of the Association of Mongolian Graduates of the Soviet Union. It was the intention of the presidium of this association that all students who had been educated in the Soviet Union from the first year of the revolution until 1981 would be registered with the association. Permanent links would be set up with their particular educational establishment.

Some of the graduates of the Soviet colleges were invited to dinner parties and seminars which were aimed at improving the education of Mongolian specialists working in organizations such as the Ministry of Health and the Ulaanbaatar Railway. Occasionally, some highly qualified specialists from Moscow, Leningrad, and other cities came to do this work here. Likewise, some highly qualified lecturers in mathematics and physics went to Irkutsk to study and improve their qualifications. Activists in the association repeatedly traveled to the Soviet Union in order to learn about its economic and cultural achievements, and they had discussions and meetings with the Mongolian students and
representatives living in several Soviet cities.

A huge amount of assistance for this was received from our old acquaintance V. P. Elyutin who was president of the Mongolian-Soviet Friendship Society and Minister for the Soviet Higher and Special Intermediate Level Institutes, his deputy N. N. Sofinskii, and other colleagues. Our association carried out many useful measures which helped to establish the Soviet Palace of Science and Culture in Ulaanbaatar. These included meetings with famous Soviet scholars. The Mongolian graduates of Soviet colleges also organized concerts and film shows which were useful in helping us to learn about life in the Soviet Union. As chairman of the Association of Graduates, I was also a member of the presidium of the Mongolian-Soviet Friendship Society.

When we celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the first attendance of Mongolian students at schools in the Soviet Union, the Central Committee of the MPRP decided that a report would be presented at the Conference of People’s Representatives in Ulaanbaatar, and it was the intention that the anniversary celebrations would be headed by the representatives who had been sent to carry out activities in Moscow.

As a member of the administration of the Mongolian-Soviet Friendship Society, I tried to organize the activities of this association along the lines of the Academy of Sciences, which was my own specialized field of work. The events of the conferences included the 100th anniversary of the birth of Lenin, the 50th and 60th anniversaries of the October Socialist Revolution, the fortieth, fiftieth, and sixtieth anniversaries of the Mongolian People’s Revolution, the anniversaries of the discussions on the establishment of friendly relations between the Mongolian People’s Republic and the Soviet Union in 1921, the 1946 friendship treaty between the Soviet Union and Mongolia, with the establishment of talks on joint cooperation, and the 250th anniversary of the USSR Academy of Sciences. I took part in the organizing committees of the academy, which were working on the events commemorating the above mentioned anniversary celebrations. I presented reports at the meetings which were held in Ulaanbaatar and Moscow, and these were published in the media at the time.

From June 25 to July 5, 1967, I headed a delegation which was attending a “Mongolian Cultural Week” taking place in Soviet Azerbaijan. We visited Baku and several other towns and regions where we learned about their work.

Azerbaijan had heavy industries, including mining, metallurgy, petroleum, chemicals, and electricity generation. There were also many types of agriculture. It was definitely one of the booming republics of the Soviet Union. The Azerbaijani capital, Baku, was recorded as having been founded in the seventh century. Later on, it became a major center for petroleum.

We visited a town on the slopes of the high Caucasus mountains where the mountains and forests combined to produce a beautiful, natural climate. There were tea, tobacco, and silk industries, factories with modern equipment, three state farms, and over twenty cooperatives, all with good incomes. While we were there we learned of their great achievements in painting, architecture, and music.

The people of Azerbaijan were also highly talented when it came to composing poetry, playing music, and singing. Everywhere we went we were greeted from afar and they performed their national music, sang songs for us, and wished us well. We also met many famous figures in the Party, government, science, culture, art, literature, industry, and agriculture. We had close discussions with them and we both learned about each others’ work.
During the Mongolian-Soviet friendship month held in our country every year, delegations arrived from the Soviet Union, including leading workers and engineers, public figures in the Party and government, scholars and writers. On their arrival we had friendly meetings with them, and forged links in the areas of work with which they were concerned. This invigorated the work of our Friendship Society.

At the second congress of the Mongolian Writers’ Union in 1956 I was recruited to become one of its members. I was also elected a member of the plenum of the Writers’ Union, and I became a member of the Presidium of the Committee of the Writers’ Union at its third congress held in 1963.

Two short books of mine, *Mongol nutag* [Mongolia] and *Baigaliin üzesgelen, khüni bayasgalan* [An Exhibition of Nature, the People’s Wealth] were published under the auspices of the Writers’ Committee. These publications included poetry, stories, cinema dialogue, dances and plays. We took care in the poetry, dialogue, and stories to draw the attention of young people to the need to cherish the beautiful natural wealth of our country.

Thanks to the promotion of the music of the Mongolian people, and the growth in numbers of talented actors, singers, and musicians during the years after the revolution, the modern arts flourished and dance composition began to develop. We were careful to gather together and portray those events which arose out of the relationships between our old and new societies, the thoughts and feelings of the people and aspects relating to those people who were close to nature. These topics could be seen in the above-mentioned texts in the form of literature, poetry, dialogue and short stories.

During the 1984 conference of the Committee of the Writers’ Union, someone in a responsible position in the Party Central Committee happened to be looking at the list of committee members and remarked, “Why have you not removed Shirendev’s name from the membership list?” My subsequent expulsion from membership in the Writers’ Union was reported in the newspaper *Utga Zokhol Urlag*. However, in 1988 during a regular session of the Writers’ Union, the authors J. Byamba and S. Erdene wished to reinstate me as a member. I was elected a representative and was asked to make a speech at the meeting.

From 1952 to 1955 I was deputy chairman of the committee in charge of state prizes. When the State Award Commission was transformed in 1955, I was appointed deputy chairman in charge of the scientific-technical branch of that commission. Following my appointment in 1963 I worked as a member of the Higher Commission for Academic Awards which was linked to the Council of Ministers. From 1961 to 1966 I chaired the council which coordinated academic research in Mongolia, and I was its deputy chairman from 1966 to 1971. In 1966 I became chairman of the coordinating council which led the movement to utilize space research for the sake of peace. From 1969 I was editor-in-chief of the project to compile a Mongolian encyclopedia and I was deputy chairman of the Mongolian Society for the Preservation of Nature. In 1989 I became deputy chairman of the commission for the protection and restoration of historical monuments. In May 1981 I was appointed to the post of chairman of the National Committee of Mongolian Scholars.
In Government Office

After helping to fulfill the duties of Minister of Education, rector of the state university, and chairman of the Friendship Committee, I became second-in-charge of cultural and educational matters under the Council of Ministers. This followed a decree of the Party Central Committee and the Council of Ministers on January 31-February 2, 1953. Having become Deputy Minister of Education in 1953, I was relieved of my post as rector of the state university. In addition to acting as chairman of the Mongolian Peace Committee from 1949 to 1959, from 1947 to 1957 I also fulfilled the duties of chairman of the Society for Cultural Relations with the Soviet Union. I was elected chairman of this society on May 22, 1947 and continued to work in this position when it became the Mongolian-Soviet Friendship Society.

During this time, the Soviet Union was fulfilling the two five-year plans following the Second World War, and was successfully reviving its national economy, industry, agriculture, culture, and areas of science. Our society widely advertised the successes and gains of the Soviet Union and its people, and we worked to establish close links with foreign cultural associations.

I worked with V. Sergeev for over thirty years in the field of friendly relations. He was the director of the Palace of Soviet Science and Culture in Ulaanbaatar. Sergeev recalled, “I first arrived in 1951 as a member of the Soviet delegation to the First Conference of the Mongolian Society for Cultural Relations with the Soviet Union. I presented your society with white Italian marble busts of Lenin and Stalin carved by the famous Soviet sculptor S. Merkulev. Those statues are valuable works of art.” I do not know where Lenin’s bust is located. Stalin’s is preserved in the European book collection at the State Library.

I was then elected a regular member of the Politburo of the MPRP Central Committee at a plenum meeting of the MPRP Central Committee on March 2-5, 1954. Prior to this I had been working as a secretary in charge of the propaganda section of the MPRP Central Committee. Having acquired a grasp of the practical activities of the cultural, arts, and health organizations, I worked for over nine years as rector of the university. Since I had also worked for several years as Minister of Education, I may have understood and was able to do all aspects of cultural work. That being the case, as I was simultaneously responsible for several areas across a wide range of subordinate activities, I came across a number of problems.

For a long time, I did not have a clear idea of the work of health organizations, and I considered that, above all, it was right to pay attention to this work. I selected a group of people to find out about the medical treatment centers in the countryside and in Ulaanbaatar. I personally observed the work carried out in several treatment centers, and after drawing my conclusions from the gathered material, I exchanged ideas with Health Minister G. Tuvaan, senior directors of the clinics, doctors, and Soviet specialists in order
to improve medical services for all the people. The proposals arising from these meetings were carried out.

In accordance with the wishes of the Ministry of Health, the money which was required for some buildings and building work, the equipping of hospitals and the supply of medicines was treated as if these were tasks and directives assigned by the Council of Ministers. At the same time, meetings and seminars in the towns and countryside were conducted through the channels of the Ministry of Health to improve the knowledge and performance of the doctors.

The faculties of medicine in the university and the technical colleges increased their student intake, and staff received training in basic hygiene and in the treatment of venereal and skin diseases. During those years the development of medical sciences was carried out by doctors such as B. Gongorjav, G. Tuvaan, A. Dagzmaa, G. Gipilmaa, T. Shagdarsüren, B. Ragaaba, G. Lodon, D. Densaama, R. Nyamzaa and others. In carrying out this work they used their knowledge and practical skills which were acquired in both the Soviet Union and their own country.

On July 26, 1953, the Presidium of the Ikh Khural issued a decree providing state assistance to help with the raising of large families. The purpose of this was to provide the necessary resources and conditions for socially useful activities, the education of families with many children, and to provide incentives to have large families. Following a two-year study of health care organizations, issues were raised which led to an important resolution being passed by the Mongolian Council of Ministers entitled “Measures to be Taken to Improve the Health Care of the People.” This resolution included the following points:

- The work of the hospital organizations to be streamlined in order to improve basic hospital services for the people.
- Patients to be treated compassionately by hospital staff, who are to provide a quality standard of service.
- Several clear steps are to be taken to improve hospital services for children.
- Highly-qualified doctors are to take responsibility for factory and district clinics which are to receive assistance with their working methods.
- Annual meetings of the leading health workers are to be held in Ulaanbaatar and in the aimags to allow them to discuss their experiences.
- With the aim of combating tuberculosis and venereal diseases, there will be an increase in the number of health workers, new hospitals will be established in some places and personnel will be trained.
- Courses for intermediate-grade midwives will be established.
- Clinic-based hygiene work will be actively carried out among the ordinary population.
- Several grades of awards to be introduced in order to encourage leading workers in hospital organizations.
- More attention will have to be paid to the work of the hospitals by the leading establishments in the aimags and ministries.

The country paid much attention to the theater, cinema, circus, descriptive arts and other arts organizations. Great steps were taken to improve the political education of the workers in these organizations, the standard of creative work, the help and support offered to the local education and art organizations, and the artistic and ideological standard of literary achievements.
While this work was being carried out, I was directed to assume the duties of First Deputy Prime Minister by the first session of the Council of Ministers. While in this post, as well as contributing to the implementation of these measures, I was also directly responsible for the work of the Ministry of Education and the state university. I also strove to fulfill my assignments in public organizations such as the peace and friendship organizations.

Meanwhile, the Politburo of the Party Central Committee had appointed me First Deputy Prime Minister on April 7, 1954 and relieved me of my post as Minister of Education. My new post was confirmed by the first session of the second Ikh Khural. I had never previously been elected to this post, which was a brand-new experience for me.

For example, the work involved leading the government administration and local organizations, and managing agricultural problems. I submitted my own ideas to the Central Committee and the Council of Ministers, formulating and planning decisions and resolutions, examining the results of the decisions taken, and other wide-ranging duties. As usual, I continued to carry out my duties as chairman of the Peace Committee and chairman of the Mongolian-Soviet Friendship Society.

My work in leading the local aimag administrative organizations in agriculture and the state inspectorate organizations already required me to travel to the snow-stricken aimags and sums in winter and spring to find out, among other things, how the livestock in private hands, and those held by collectives and state farms were being kept alive and well through the winter, about the spring lambing period, and the early spring pasturing. I also needed to find out about other leading areas of expertise.

For these reasons I would go out into the countryside accompanied by one of the assistants from a state farm or from the headquarters of the Ministry of Agriculture, or else with a zootechnician or veterinarian. I would obtain professional advice from them, become familiar with the good and bad aspects of livestock herding and provide answers to their questions on the spot. Where there were large demands for capital investment, I would have discussions with the aimag party committee and administration. On my arrival back in the capital, I would exchange opinions with the relevant ministries and apply to the Party Central Committee and the government for a decision. Due to the predominance of private herdsman in the livestock economy at that time, the negdel, of course, faced the greatest difficulties across the nation since their successful inception. These included problems in fattening the livestock to help to increase their numbers, maintaining their health, ensuring their survival over the winter, raising the young in spring, making hay in the autumn with horse-drawn hay-making machines, and building winter enclosures.

In spite of this, in order to resolve the above-mentioned problems, the Party and government organizations and agricultural workers organized teams of leading workers and experienced herdsmen to do work in the localities. At that time, livestock disease was still a considerable problem, and groups of veterinary workers were urgently sent to combat occasional outbreaks of contagious diseases.

The digging of wells became a national priority, and these were made the responsibility of the sums and local districts. When carrying out work such as autumn hay making, large amounts of cash, transport, and organization were required. Most of this was financed from the state budget or by other ad hoc methods, but the required organizational work was carried out through the agricultural organizations. Attention was paid
to developing agricultural collectives and state farms, and support for their organization and their material base was provided. In particular, leading and experienced Party members, zootechnicians, agronomists, veterinary surgeons, and economists were appointed to work in these organizations.

At the beginning I had no knowledge at all of farming or vegetable growing, and so I had to learn about these matters quickly. I began to visit the Jargalant, Boroo, Tsagaan Tolgoi, Tüvshürülekh, and Inget Tolgoi state farms [northwest of Ulaanbaatar] during their spring sowing and autumn harvesting campaigns.

When doing that I used to take along the leading state farm and agricultural specialists so as to learn from them about many aspects of the work, including plowing methods, fertilizers, planting, plant growth, measurement prior to harvesting, classification of seed quality, proper harvesting techniques for grain and vegetables, the advance preparation of tractors and combine harvesters, the training of mechanics and other skilled workers, the transportation of harvested grain to storage facilities, and other matters.

In addition, I studied the basic books, newspapers, journals, and instructional literature on farming, vegetables, soil, and agricultural techniques. In order to verify the things I had learned, I went onto the farmland with such people as the Mongolian agronomist Kh. Banzragch and other agricultural specialists to have things explained to me.

At that time there was a movement in our country to grow maize for livestock fodder. One spring, the government organized training in maize-planting techniques. This was conducted by L. Rinchin (later to become Minister of Agriculture), Kh. Banzragch (later to become Minister of State Farms) and was observed by leading members of the Central Committee and government ministers such as myself. This experiment taught us all a good lesson. The maize crops did not ripen. Soviet specialists immediately advised us to turn them into silage for the livestock.

One day, some of us in charge of agricultural problems went to watch the training being given for silage production at the Jargalant state farm. This was mainly being carried out by Soviet specialists. We learned about how the maize was chopped up and stored in deep, specially dug silage pits. When we went to see it, the fodder turned out to have a pleasant aroma, smelling good enough to be eaten by people let alone by livestock. The maize had obviously become a good quality vegetable-based feed. Though, the Mongolian livestock initially refused to eat it, eventually they became accustomed to it.

When I was touring the negdels I brought along some Mongolian agricultural experts who taught me about their work and gave me advice. They, for their part, concentrated on their own specialties and voiced their opinions on plans which would assist agriculture. Among my friends who taught me about the work of state farms and collectives was Soviet Ambassador V. I. Pisarev, who was an agricultural specialist. Pisarev was a leading expert on farming who had worked on the Baltic Sea coast and in Kazakhstan. While in Kazakhstan he personally took part in establishing new breeds of cattle there.

D. Damba, the First Secretary of the Central Committee, was himself in charge of agriculture. I used to accompany him on visits to state farms, collectives, and to certain aimags. Sometimes, J. Sambuu, the chairman of the Presidium of the Ikht Khural, would make repeated visits to state farms, in particular those at Bayanchandman’ in Töv aimag, the Jargalant state farm, and the Bor Nuur agricultural and livestock farm.
Through the Ocean Waves

The MPRP Central Committee and the Mongolian government wished to make a study of the further development of the nation's agriculture. To investigate how the Soviet Union could help in this matter, G. Voronov, former party chairman of Chita region [in Siberia] and deputy minister and director of the office in charge of sheep farming within the Soviet Ministry of Agriculture, was sent to our country.

Voronov came with a plan to survey many aimags and localities in the west and northwest of our country, including soil and water [resources] and state farms and collectives. This plan was highly acclaimed and a group of us, including myself as first deputy prime minister, D. Baljinnyam the agriculture minister, and D. Damba accompanied him to the western aimags. A group of experts including Soviet ambassador Pisarev accompanied Voronov.

Voronov and the rest of us left Ulaanbaatar to spend several days visiting several sums and collectives in Bulgan aimag, the Inget Tolgoi state farm, some negdels [sum collectives] in Khövsööl, Zavkhan, Gobi-altai (Zakhui sum in particular), Bayankhongor, and Arkhangai aimags, and Tuvshirüulekh State Farm. All aspects of our agriculture were studied and the local people and ourselves were given valuable advice on the spot.

Eventually, before Voronov returned to Moscow, a Soviet aid plan was formulated for us. This turned out to be a valuable lesson for us and our Mongolian friends. The plan was drawn up by the appropriate Soviet organization under Voronov’s professional supervision, following a directive issued by the Soviet Communist Party and the Soviet government. It was well known that the Soviet aid plan became a very important resource for our agriculture.

According to the official regulations in the above-mentioned 1941 resolution, wool, hair, meat, and milk were bought up at low prices. This resulted in a new law on taxation being passed by the Presidium of the Ikh Khural on May 8, 1954, which considerably reduced the tax burden on private herdsmen. For example, the new taxation law of June 1954 which was concerned with livestock, granted the lowest level of taxation for those owning twenty-one to fifty head of livestock. Those herding [families] with up to 20 head of livestock were completely exempt from taxation.

In March 1953, the plenum of the MPRP Central Committee discussed the question entitled “The Organization of the Herding Collectives and the Strengthening of the Economy.” The plenum also drew conclusions on the successes and failures of the local manufacturing cooperatives and gave clear instructions on the achievement of working aims for the future. Further important steps were taken in the process of collectivization. This was the basic resolution of this plenum which was connected with the important measures being carried out by the MPRP Central Committee and Council of Ministers.

On February 13, 1954, the Council of Ministers passed a resolution entitled “The Organization of Labor in Local Manufacturing Cooperatives and Ways of Financing the Cost of Labor.” The Party Central Committee and the Council of Ministers put a great deal of work into increasing the loans taken out by collectives, and to reduce the cost of livestock products procured by the state. Plans were drawn up for agricultural buildings and establishments and expert help was provided for them.

Appeals were made to people in positions of responsibility in the aimag organizations and aimag centers to go and take up positions as leaders of the agricultural collectives. Short training courses were organized for the volunteers on how to run a collec-
tive. Participants included Dorjpalam and Minjuur of Arkhangai, Oidov of Bulgan, Lodoolkhüü of Gobi-Altai and many others who had become heroes of labor. Zootechnicians and economists were also sent to these collectives.

In 1955 a resolution was passed to strengthen the economic basis of the state farms. This included clear instructions to state farms on the production of grain, milk, vegetables, cattle, and sheep. Now that the work brigade had become the basic unit of production on the state farms, the main agricultural tasks became mechanized and a system of payment had to be devised to reward people for the jobs they had done. There needed to be improvements made in planning, statistics, and accounting, and the proper experts had to be provided for this. Measures were also taken to improve the living standards and cultural facilities of the workers and officials.

In order to further strengthen the organization and financing of the rural collectives, the first Congress of Outstanding Workers of Manufacturing Cooperatives was convened in March 1955. A total of 521 outstanding workers were selected to take part in this conference. In addition, some of the leading herdsman (each in charge of over 1000 head of livestock), and representatives of the aimag and district Party and government organizations took part in it. The first Congress of Collective Farm Workers confirmed the exemplary new regulations of the general code relating to the collectives.

It was then decided to recruit wealthy and upper-middle-ranking private herding families into the collectives. The proportion of the country’s herdsman in the collectives ranged from 10.9% to 34.3%. The process of integrating these [private] herdsman was not identical in all the aimags and sums. By 1957 a large proportion of the private herdsman had been collectivized in Bayankhongor, Bulgan, Khovd, and Uvs aimags. From 1953 to 1957 the capital invested in the national economy was 2.7 times as great as it was in the first five-year plan.

In January 1957 the Presidium of the Ikh Khural issued a decree awarding leading people in agriculture Hero of Labor of the MPR awards and medals. Those agricultural experts who had successfully improved working methods in veterinary services and zootechnical services were awarded titles such as Merited Veterinary Surgeon of the MPR and Merited Zootechnician of the MPR. When the socialist branches of agriculture and agricultural organizations were strengthened, the results gained by these and other related methods stimulated the cooperative movement.

On October 20, 1956 a resolution was passed to organize a permanent course for technical specialists in agriculture. The preparatory course for technical specialists in agriculture was started in Arkhust in 1956 and a decision was made to increase the number of students thereafter. By 1957, 35% of the private herdsman holding 25% of all livestock had been included in agricultural collectives and 78.6% of all farmland had been collectivized.

The plenum of the MPRP Central Committee held in April 1954 discussed the measures to be taken to further develop the livestock economy and improve the quality of its output. The plenum acknowledged that the basic reason for the unsatisfactory state of the livestock economy was the lack of enthusiasm which could stimulate interest among the herders to increase livestock numbers. As an incentive to the herdsman and workers, prices were raised for wool, milk, and other livestock products and for raw materials which were procured by the state. Steps were also taken to reduce official taxes in the livestock economy.

This decision resulted in some disagreement. Some people said that support for
the negdels was a priority. Somewhere along the way I said that there was actually only a small number of working people supporting us and the entire nation. What I said was then distorted and made to look as if I was a defender of private herdsmen and petty capitalists.

However, such talk soon died down.

The first congress of leading collective farm workers discussed the "textbook" model for future collectives and in March 1955 the Council of Ministers and the MPRP Central Committee confirmed the regulations concerning the aims and objectives of the membership, manufacturing requirements, the land, the agricultural collectives and their principal activities, the capital of agricultural collectives, the organization of labor, wages and work obligations, the management of agricultural collectives, and the organization and establishment of agricultural collectives.

Around that time, advances were being made in industry, construction, transport, communications, health care, and culture. The 790 km rail link between Ulaanbaatar and Zamyn Üüd was completed in 1956. This meant that the length of railway lines had increased 3.4 fold in five years. New automotive transport depots were established in twelve aimags with a considerable increase in the number of trucks.

In 1954 the Soviet Union paid for the construction and equipment of airports under its own jurisdiction at Ulaanbaatar and Sainshand. Also included in this were five Ilyushin-14 aircraft which helped us to develop our first civil airline.

In 1956 about 3000 young people were assigned to work on the railways, 2000 in mining industries, and three hundred in the construction and petroleum industries. There was a rapid increase in the number of young workers. In 1956 seventy per cent of the workers in labor units were young people, which was a new and welcome development.

On October 17, 1955 I received the delegations which were participating in a conference on the Soviet-Mongolian-Chinese railway, and learned about the railway from them. The Soviet delegation was led by T. G. Yermakov, the Chinese were led by Mi Yun, and the Mongols were headed by A. Tsogtsoikhan. The construction of the railway carried on towards Zamyn Üüd. As soon as it had reached Ereen [called Erlien on the Chinese side of the border], a reception was held for the three national delegations.

Our side was represented by Tsendenbal, Damba, and myself. The Soviet Minister of Railways Beshchev and the Chinese Minister of Railways Tian Duyang, the leader of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region Ulaankhüü and the deputy leaders, Wang Tse-tien and Damdinsüren, attended a ceremony held in Ulaanbaatar. We traveled on a special train to Ereen before returning home.

From 1950 onwards, we established diplomatic relations with the majority of the new democratic nations. In addition in 1954, diplomatic relations were established with Vietnam, in 1955 with India, and in 1956 with Burma and Indonesia. During this period, leading Party and government figures from various foreign countries made visits to our country. In October 1954 Boleslaw Bierut, the First Secretary of the United Democratic Party of Poland, visited Ulaanbaatar, and on September 21, 1956 the Indonesian President Akhmed Sukarno paid us a visit. I took part in the receptions held for them, together with J. Sambuu, chairman of the Presidium of the Ikh Khural.

A delegation of Politburo members of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee and the Council of Ministers visited our country on April 8-10, 1956. I took part in a reception for them together with Tsendenbal, who was chairman of the Council of
Ministers, and J. Sambuu, chairman of the Presidium of the Ikh Khural. Around the time A. I. Mikoyan was arriving, an official announcement was made that 40,000 square meters of housing were to be provided by the Soviet Union between 1956 and 1960. In addition, all the property of the Choibalsan-Tamsagbulag railway line was handed over to a joint Mongolian-Soviet shareholding company called the Ulaanbaatar Company.

Agreement was also reached on establishing a milk processing plant in Ulaanbaatar, four grain mills in the countryside, and six mechanized livestock stations. Mikoyan learned about the building work being provided by the Soviet Union to Mongolia and he met with his embassy staff to give them advice and instructions. During his speeches Mikoyan produced clear proposals for the strengthening of friendship and wider cooperation between the Mongolian and Soviet peoples. Mikoyan was a jovial, witty man. While he was staying at the Ikh Tenger guest house, I was directed to spend some time there by the Central Committee and government. When we went out together for some fresh air he said that the Bogd Uul and the area around Ulaanbaatar was just like the northern Caucasus mountains—both were clean and beautiful places.

In 1955, at the tenth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, a majority (fifty-two) of its members voted to accept Mongolia into its membership. However, this was again obstructed by the United States and Chiang Kai-shek’s delegation. In 1956 the Council of Arab Nations passed a resolution supporting our country’s efforts to take up its rightful place in the United Nations. Following a decree by the Council of Friendship between African and Asian nations, the progressive forces of all African and Asian countries made an appeal on every July 11 as a demonstration of international support for the entry of Mongolia into the United Nations.

Around that time, an event of international importance occurred at the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party. The Central Committee, after discussing the new five-year plan, began to criticize the distorted worship of Stalin. A decision was taken to strengthen the collective leadership of the Party. The conference resolution was approved by the majority of international communist and workers’ parties which drew appropriate conclusions for use in their own activities.

The fourth plenum of the MPRP Central Committee in 1956 discussed the outcome of the Twentieth Congress and criticized the problems associated with the worship of Choibalsan. The Politburo was given the task of investigating this question. Accordingly, in order to examine the mistakes and distortions committed by the Ministry of the Interior during 1937-1940, the Politburo appointed a twenty-six-member commission which was headed by myself. For six months we were relieved of our other duties in order to examine the work of this ministry.

From the time of Stalin’s death in the spring of 1953 until 1957 there were continual changes in the Soviet leadership. N. S. Khrushchev, who was First Secretary of the Moscow Party committee, became the second most senior person in the Secretariat of the Central Committee. The press reported that G. M. Malenkov, who was a secretary of the Central Committee in Stalinist times, became chairman of the Council of Ministers and leader of the Presidium of the Central Committee. While Stalin was being criticized, Malenkov was replaced, and N. A. Bulganin, who had been Defense Minister, was appointed chairman of the Council of Ministers. Following N. S. Khrushchev’s appointment as First Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, it appeared that some people who had been purged during the Stalinist period had begun to be rehabilitated.

When I began working as a member of this commission to investigate the activities
of the Ministry of the Interior, everything was new to me, and I encountered considerable difficulties due to lack of experience. In order to complete this work, it was important that the MPRP Ikh Khural, its plenum and the Presidium of the Central Committee allow us access to the documents of the Interior Ministry and Foreign Ministry covering the 1937-1940 period. The members of the commission were divided into four groups. It seemed that even with a good knowledge of those documents, some matters concerned with the activities of the Interior Ministry could not be clarified without access to Choibalsan’s secret papers, which were kept by Tsedenbal, chairman of the Council of Ministers.

First Secretary D. Damba supported the request of the commission to see the secret papers, but Tsedenbal refused on the grounds that they were state secrets. The commission had to draw its conclusions based on the available evidence. It offered the following suggestions to the Politburo of the Central Committee.

1. The Party and government figures of that early time, B. Baasanjav, J. Lkhümbé, Yu. Magsarjav, S. Yandag, T. Balganjav, B. Banzragch, E. Jamsran, Ts. Nasanbaljir, and L. Dendev, the military figures Sh. Damba, D. Luvsandonoi, L. Darjav, and T. Dashzeveg, the journalists Övgöödei, Ts. Damdinsüren and others, twenty-six in total, were judged to have been innocent.

2. As questions relating to P. Genden, G. Demid, Sh. Luvsanvandan, D. Losol, D. Dogsom, and others had been resolved in the Soviet Union, a request was made to the Soviet Communist Party for an immediate decision on their rehabilitation. When this question was originally put to the Soviet leadership by a delegation of our Party and government in Moscow in 1957, they said it would be quite appropriate for us to write to them about these people.

Accordingly, Secretary Damba wrote in his letter of reply, “We have no evidence that the above-mentioned people were Japanese spies nor that they were working against the Soviet Union.” Incidentally, the Soviet scholar of philosophy, Dr. V. Burov, writing in the first issue of Argumenty i Fakty of 1991, stated, “The Soviet Interior Ministry and some people in the diplomatic service had taken part in the false accusation of some Mongols.” This is likely to be a reference to the fact that, above all, Stalin and his henchmen N. Yezhov and L. Beria, who carried out his vile accusatory work, assigned advisers and instructors to collaborate with Choibalsan in the Interior Ministry to carry out purges of many people.

Among them was I. Ivanov, to whom evidence of participation in such purges has now been linked. Ivanov had been a senior official in the Soviet Interior Ministry. He arrived [in Mongolia] in mid-1939 to take up the post of ambassador. On July 10, 1938 the secretary of the MPRP Central Committee, Sh. Luvsansharav and the chairman of the State Baga Khural, D. Dogsom, and others were arrested and brought to Choibalsan’s office. Furthermore, the above-mentioned Ivanov was present when they were sent to the Soviet Union, a fact mentioned by our deputy Interior Minister, B. Jambaldorj, on more than one occasion. It was clear that when Ivanov was ambassador to our country he received the titles Leading Soviet Chekist and was awarded the rank of Major-General of Public Security.

3. A permanent commission to be established to work alongside the Ikh Khural to investigate all the people who had been falsely accused through the channels of the Ministry of the Interior.

4. While correcting the mistakes and corruption of this period, those honest and
educated members of the ministry in question should be promoted.

While these matters were being discussed, serious disagreements developed between Tsedenbal and Damba. Damba wanted to intensify the investigations, but Tsedenbal wanted to delay them, saying that they needed a proper occasion to view the evidence in detail, and he wanted to proceed with caution.

As head of the commission I wanted to carry out the above proposals, and so I supported the views of Damba and some others. Tsedenbal disliked what was happening and quietly tested my opinions in secret.

Once, I happened to be celebrating my son’s birthday and invited some friends to my home. Among them was D. Tsedev, with whom I had studied in the Soviet Union (He was a former Minister of the Interior and later moved to work in the Ikh Khural ). He repeatedly asked me what I now thought about Tsedenbal. I asked him, “Did Tsedenbal want you to ask me this?” adding that this was not something he should ask me. At that point Tsedev snatched up his hat and left. He then went to see Damba and said, “Following an order from Deputy Interior Minister D. Bataa, what would happen if I discussed some nonsense with Shirendev?”

Damba raised the original question and, in order to prove that he disagreed with Tsedenbal over this matter, he spoke with some conviction at one of the Politburo meetings saying, “Comrade Tsedenbal has refused to reveal Choibalsan’s secret documents to the commission and has backed off from this investigation into the purges. He has also been spying on the work of Politburo member Shirendev.”

While the two leaders argued ferociously at the meeting, I stood up and said, “Tsedenbal, I am glad that at least you sent a decent man to check me out.” The members of the Politburo broke into laughter and the argument died down. Later on, in fact, Tsedev told some people about this matter. In addition, it was demanded that D. Damba was to have N. Lkhamsüren and me arrested as “imperialist spies.” Lkhamsüren wrote an article about this which was published in the newspaper Khööölмör in early 1990. This event felt like another encounter with an ocean wave.

Our commission proposed the establishment of a rehabilitation commission under the control of the Ikh Khural, which did operate for a while and then ceased to exist in 1960. As the Party members demanded that the investigation should continue, the investigating commission headed by T. Genden continued operating until 1961-62, although towards the end everyone knew that it was, of course, defunct.

Now that the purges which had been carried out by the Interior Ministry were revealed by the investigation, some intellectuals in the Party Central Committee, the City Party committee, the Central Committee of the Youth League, the state university, and other organizations complained about the slow development of the country. Subsequently, important debates occurred and proposals were made to try to accelerate development. After this had begun, Tsedenbal secretly supported the direction taken by the Leadership of the Central Committee, in particular Damba.

However, when criticism began to affect Tsedenbal directly, the Politburo, led by Tsedenbal and Damba decided to arrange a meeting between some of the politburo leaders and the intellectuals. J. Sambuu, Damdin (the city Party committee chairman), the Central Committee member D. Baljinnyam and I were sent to the above organizations to get them to talk openly and freely about their ideas and then report back. It was announced to the [rest of the] Politburo that these people had been sent. D. Baljinnyam, D. Samdan, and I went to the state university to listen to the ideas of the lecturers.
While we were sitting listening to several of the lecturers, Ts. Damdinsüren came up to us and said, "I assume that following this discussion no action will be taken against us." I believed that we had been sent to listen to them in confidence, and that no action would be taken. "No, no action will be taken," I said, raising my hand. We related the content of their discussions to the Central Committee.

Tsedenbal and D. Tömör-Ochir passed a resolution entitled "Some Ideas and Speeches Counter to our Party Policy," and listed the names of the people present at the meeting. Eventually, I too was forced to put my name to this resolution. Having read the original draft of the resolution, and after we had been told to tell them that they could speak in confidence, I disagreed, saying that it was wrong to mention only a few names in this resolution. Only two or three names from the state university were mentioned and the rest were omitted.

In fact, from this meeting, carried out on the orders of Damba and the others, N. Dangaasüren, the secretary of the Central Committee of the Youth League, J. Tömörbaatar and D. Lkhambjav of the Institute of Party History, and Z. Sodnomtseren, secretary of the Party committee of Choibalsan (Dornod) aimag, were included in the resolution. Because Tsedenbal had hand-written the final draft of the resolution, there was practically no way of altering it, and his was the leading signature. He had the others affix their signatures in support of the resolution, which was passed on December 5, 1956.

Damba talked about these events when he met with his friends from the Institute of Social Sciences prior to his death in 1989. Based on that resolution, the regular plenum of the Central Committee conducted detailed discussions about those "intellectuals who had strayed."

I stated at the plenum that it was wrong to include all intellectuals in this just because a few groups of intellectuals had been mistaken about things, and as they had their origins in nomadic herding families, they were fulfilling a major role in the establishment of socialism. The proper thing would be for us to educate them and instruct them in their work. However, in order to teach and educate those lost and misguided people it would be necessary to speak with them in confidence. Having found out about those errors, keeping silent and not doing anything about them, or trying to reconcile them would not in reality be a good, comradely thing to do for that intellectual. But someone who can talk for him in confidence must be considered a truly good friend of that person. We must educate our people to be loyal and honest in their work, discussions, and all other things. In fact, I said, this matter would be even more significant during the establishment of socialism. I believe that the manuscript of this speech of mine is kept in the archives of the Party Central Committee.

At the invitation of the government of the Soviet Union, a Party and government delegation set off from Ulaanbaatar on May 10, 1957, led by Tsedenbal, chairman of the Council of Ministers. The delegation included the Party First Secretary and member of the Presidium of the Ikh Khural D. Damba, First Deputy Prime Minister B. Shirendev, Deputy Prime Minister and chairman of the State Planning Commission L. Tsend, Foreign Minister D. Adibish, Minister in charge of the Livestock Economy L. Baljinnyam, Finance Minister D. Molomjams, and Minister of Industry O. Bat-Ochir.

When the delegation arrived in Moscow, they were greeted by the chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union N. A. Bulganin, the First Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party N. S. Khrushchev, A. I. Mikoyan, V. M. Molotov, G. M. Per-
vukhin, M. A. Suslov, the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation M. A. Yasnov, the minister B. N. Beshchev, A. A. Gromyko, V. V. Matskevich, A. G. Zverev, F. G. Kabanov, P. F. Lomanov, and other officials.

The talks between the government delegations of Mongolia and the Soviet Union began on May 10, 1957 in Moscow’s Kremlin. Those who took part in the discussions included Bulganin, Khrushchev, Mikoyan, Tsedenbal, D. Damba and others. Ideas were exchanged on international problems of significant interest to Mongolia and the Soviet Union, and on the further development and strengthening of fraternal friendship and joint activities between the peoples of the two nations.

Khrushchev and Bulganin received the delegation led by Tsedenbal. The Mongolian delegation went to lay a wreath at the mausoleum of Lenin and Stalin. The Mongolian ambassador S. Bataa hosted a banquet on May 13, 1957. Representing the Soviet side were Bulganin, Kaganovich, Malenkov, Mikoyan, Molotov, Pervukhin, Saburov, Khrushchev, Shepilov and others. The Mongolian side included Tsedenbal, L. Tsend, B. Adilbish, D. Baljinnyam, D. Molomjamts, O. Bat-Ochir, and myself. Speeches were made by Tsedenbal, Damba, and Bulganin.

The joint Mongolian-Soviet statement and the report on the discussions between the MPRP and the Soviet Communist Party was signed on May 15, 1957 in the Kremlin Palace. This report was signed by Damba and Khrushchev. The discussions resulted in the permanent transfer of the Mongolneft (Mongol Petroleum) trust to Mongolia. An agreement was reached on May 15 in Moscow over the sale of the Soviet share in the joint Soviet-Mongolian company Sovmongol-metall. The Soviet Union also agreed to donate 2500 tractors, 550 combine harvesters, 200 small electricity-generating plants, about 3000 trucks, and 10,000 head of good breeding livestock.

In addition, there was to be a 200,000,000 ruble loan on easy repayment terms, and the commencement of the construction of apartment blocks in the Döchin Myangat district of Ulaanbaatar. A medical expedition was to be carried out to improve the health of the people, the Soviet Union being responsible for fifty per cent of the cost.

Another event in the history of Mongolian-Soviet friendship which took place around that time was the visit to Ulaanbaatar in May 1957 by the leader of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Marshal K. Ye. Voroshilov. The invitation was extended by the Ikh Khural and government. In accordance with Oriental tradition, two ceremonial gates were constructed for his visit. One was on the road between Buyant Ukhaa Airport and Ulaanbaatar, and the other one was erected near the Industrial Combine.

Accompanying Voroshilov were Sh. Rashidov, chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Uzbek Republic, and the corresponding members of the USSR Academy of Sciences V.P. Elyutin, a chemist, and N.T. Fedorenko, a Chinese language specialist. Fedorenko was for a time the Soviet representative at the United Nations before being transferred back to academic work.

V.P. Elyutin later visited our country several times and as chairman of the Association of Graduates of Soviet Colleges, I met with him in Moscow on several occasions to discuss official business. Sometimes I came across him at assemblies of the USSR Academy of Sciences, and we sometimes corresponded by mail.

Fedorenko had from his early days been an outstanding student of the Chinese language and became highly qualified in this field. He worked for many years as a diplomat at the Soviet embassy in Beijing while becoming a scholar of Chinese studies. He was wounded while fighting in the Soviet army at the battle of Khalkhyn Gol and was
treated at the military hospital in Choibalsan. After we became acquainted in 1956-1957, we exchanged books and publications. He was appointed one of the secretaries of the Writers’ Union of the USSR, and I met with him on several occasions to ask him about Chinese literature and art. He used to give me some interesting replies.

During a break from the speeches and meetings with Party Central Committee members and government leaders, I and a group of leading figures in the Party and government accompanied Voroshilov on a visit to the Bayanchandmani sum negdel and the Jargalant State Farm, where he learned about life in the countryside. Voroshilov paid a visit to a family in a Mongol ger where there were some photographs, mainly of Lenin and the current Soviet leadership.

He spotted his own photograph and asked in astonishment, “Was this photograph put here for my visit?” Voroshilov talked with the people in an amiable way and once remarked, “Your ger isn’t that bad, it is quite pleasant here.” Even though there was a cold blizzard blowing that spring day, many herdsmen, young and old, men and women alike, traveled from far away to see him.

A gathering was held in front of the negdel administration building where representatives of the herdsmen and the negdel leadership presented Voroshilov with a saddled horse and a baby camel. Voroshilov replied by saying a few words on behalf of Mongolian-Soviet friendship, offered his thanks and congratulated the assembled masses. At the end of his speech he said, “I am fond of horses and I would like to accept this horse which has been blessed by all of you. However, I will leave this poor baby camel in your care. If I were to take this baby camel to a far-off place I believe it would miss its parents and pine away.”

The assembled herdsmen were moved at Voroshilov’s speech and broke into applause, some of them wiping away their tears. Voroshilov was invited to a place which had been specially prepared for honored guests. Many gers and tents were erected on the northern side of a beautiful wooded hill south of the road to Ulaanbaatar about fifty-two kilometers from Bayan Chandaman’ and Jargalant. The guests were entertained by displays of wrestling, horse racing, singing, and music.
Defending My Doctorate

While investigating the activities of the Ministry of the Interior during that earlier period of purges when people were being cruelly tormented and executed, I learned some hideously sad facts. I became exhausted and fell ill, unable to sleep, and suffered a further chronic stomach illness which prevented me from undertaking any official duties. Beside the need to undergo a prolonged period of medical treatment, I decided that having reached my forties, it was time for me to improve my qualifications. I repeatedly explained all this to the Party Central Committee, Comrade Tsedenbal, and to other members of the Politburo.

I wanted to be sent to the Soviet Union for a period of three years to study for my doctorate, and I hoped that this would give me the opportunity to receive some treatment. But Tsedenbal would not accept this and told me, "You can go for a while to get treatment but then you must resume your duties," which in fact hindered my plans considerably.

On the advice of doctors, in early summer 1957 I visited the Czechoslovak State Hospital at Karlovy Vary together with my wife Zina, my son Bayar and daughter Tanya. I was treated there for over a month. During that time I stayed in an annex of the Hotel Bristol in a small special building called Yavorina where I was accommodated along with the Party members of various other countries.

The people vacationing there included the Czechoslovak Prime Minister William Shirokii, the leader of the French Communist Party Waldek Roche, the Bulgarian Communist Party member Tsola Dragoicheva, the leader of the Italian Communist Party Pertini (who later became president of Italy), the wife of Vasily Kolarov, the son of Dzerzhinskii (a lecturer in the Central Committee whose given name I forget), the chairman of the Lithuanian Party Central Committee A. Snechkus, and the propaganda secretary of the Byelorussian Communist Party Central Committee V. Shauro (later to become chairman of the Cultural Department of the Central Committee).

We became acquainted with these friends and their families with whom we dined and reminisced together. During our free time at the hospital we went on trips and sometimes visited the cinema or passed the time playing various games. Tsola Dragoicheva, Pertini and his wife Maria, and Shirokii enjoyed singing and could sing well. We asked them to talk about the history and culture of their countries and they asked us about Mongolian history, customs, and current affairs.

We found out about the history of Karlovy Vary and the healing powers of its water. There were similarities here with the spas of Mongolia and the northern Caucasus. There were interesting stories from Mongolia, the Soviet Union, and Czechoslovakia about deer which drank the spa waters and ran off again, rejuvenated. The Russian Tsar Peter was treated at Karlovy Vary, and the street where he stayed was named after him. This tsar returned home and had the clever idea to proclaim that the waters of the north-
ern Caucasus mountains were useful medicinally.

There is a street in the Karlovy Vary spa region where the buildings along both sides of it commemorate Karl Marx and the famous Russian author I.S. Turgenev, who visited it on three separate occasions in different years. I wondered whether Marx became interested in the Russian language while he was taking the waters and strolling in the fresh air there.

Despite receiving good medical treatment for some time, because my health had not improved much, I repeated my request to be treated in the Soviet Union for a longer period. The Central Committee Politburo member Sambuu, First Secretary D. Damba, and other people supported my request for permission to look after my genuine ill-health, and the Politburo passed a resolution agreeing to this.

Following this decision, Damba wrote to USSR Central Committee secretary M. Suslov on June 20, 1957, requesting permission to send me to the Far Eastern Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences where I would submit my doctorate thesis. (I still have part of this letter.) In a letter of recommendation concerning this official appointment, Tsedenbal wrote,

Shirendev is a leading figure of Mongolia, and alongside his political work he has paid much attention to science. Having achieved his doctoral candidacy in Mongolian history he has agreed to submit his doctoral thesis in the form of a three-volume “History of the MPR” through the Far Eastern Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences. We request your assistance in this matter.

Suslov wrote a letter in reply to this request, accepting me for my doctoral studies and giving permission for my treatment.

Around the time I began studying for my doctorate in Moscow, D. Tsevegmid and a group of other colleagues awarded me the title of Professor at a meeting of the general academic council of the Mongolian Institute of Science and Higher Education held on October 11, 1957.

I was appointed to work as a senior staff member in the Mongolian section of the Far Eastern Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences. My studies were reflected in its plan for the study of Mongolia. The subject of my work was “History of the People’s Revolution of 1921,” and was intended to contribute to the writing of my doctoral thesis. This was approved by the faculties and departments of the Far Eastern Institute and also by its academic council. Academician Ye. M. Zhukov was appointed as chief supervisor of my research work.

While carrying out this research I was still acting as rector of the university. I read a large amount of material on the history of the Mongolian revolution which was held in the archives of the Comintern, the Central Archives of the Soviet Red Army, the Archives of the October Revolution, in the library of the Far Eastern Institute and in the Lenin Library in Moscow. At the same time, I accepted the orders of the senior researchers at the Far Eastern Institute, I took part in formulating the research plans of the Mongolian section and regularly participated in the discussions and criticisms of topical questions which were held on certain days of the week. I sat in on the meetings where candidate Ph.D. and doctorate theses were being submitted on interesting topics which came under the planned research work being carried out by the institute. On occasion I defended my own ideas related to my dissertation.

I regularly obtained advice and ideas from the professors of the many depart-
ments of that institute, from Far East specialists, and in particular from the Mongolists. For three years, I worked as a member of the institute along with many other people. I maintained friendly relations with the director of the institute, Dr. B. G. Gafurov, and Dr. R. Ulyanovskii, the Mongolist scholars I. Zlatkin, S. Dylykov, G. Sanzheev, and Yu. Roerich.

The Mongolist scholars used to ask me to give talks on the foreign and domestic affairs of Mongolia. I took part in academic conferences and meetings on the key issues concerning the revolutions in Mongolia, Korea, and Vietnam. There were visits from highly-regarded scholars from India, some African countries, England, and the United States, including the U.S. historian and author William Dubois [W. E. B. Dubois]. Historians and students of ancient Japan and Africa also came to give talks and lectures. All these people took part in interesting meetings with the Soviet scholars with whom they exchanged ideas.

I continued doing this academic work until 1960. While I was writing my planned thesis, I wanted to improve my qualifications. I studied English and regularly sat in on the lectures given at the Moscow Hall of Scholars. A special program of interesting lectures was conducted there by famous and highly qualified scholars from all over the Soviet Union, including academicians, corresponding members, holders of doctorates, and professors.

On several occasions I attended lectures on the methodology of historical research which were given by Academician M. Nechkina and Professor M. Rostovtsov. Valuable, relevant, and interesting lectures were given on the main problems encountered in historical research, and on the ways source materials could be utilized. I mostly attended the lectures given in history, philosophy, sociology, international studies, and economics. However, I also attended interesting lectures on topics in physics, biology, geology, chemistry, and astronomy.

As a result of this I saw that a scientific and technical revolution was beginning in those developing nations where special attention was paid to establishing new institutes covering new and varied subjects. This required large amounts of capital expenditure. Each of the Soviet republics had an academy of sciences, and I felt that our country should pay attention to understanding how our trained personnel could be improved and the field of scholarly work broadened.

Academician Ye. M. Zhukov, who had many academic and public commitments, sometimes missed his appointments on Sundays. However, regardless of how little time he had, he always made it to our meetings, which pleased me greatly. Zhukov was an exceptionally well-known expert on the Far East and on international relations. He used to talk about the important international conferences which he had attended on many occasions in America and various European countries. In addition, because he read about some of the important subjects I was studying, he could give me some relevant books and some of his own work to read.

I later came across Academician Zhukov several times at academic conferences, meetings, and international conventions organized by the USSR Academy of Sciences on historical subjects. Whenever I went to Moscow he would also telephone me, and I remember him saying “Come to our house,” and I would visit them at home.

When Zhukov was approaching seventy, his health worsened and he passed away in 1980. I was deeply saddened by his death, which was a great loss to the study of Soviet and world history. I offered my condolences to Zhukov’s family. His wife Tamara
Nikolaevna and his son Sasha continued to invite me to their home, and we reminisced about Academician Zhukov and the works in his library, with its many albums and several thousand books.

I completed the basic text of my thesis by early 1960, and having shown it to Ye. M. Zhukov, my supervisor, and to the section and departmental councils, and after some discussions with the Academic Council of the Institute, a decision was made to allow me to submit this thesis for my doctorate.

Accordingly, while people were summarizing and distributing the thesis to various places, it was shown to the official reviewers appointed by the Academic Council of the Institute. These reviewers were Academician I. M. Maiskii, the corresponding member A. A. Guber, and Professor A. F. Miller. I obtained plenty of valuable advice from them.

Then, before long, I was defending my doctorate at a meeting of the Academic Council of the Institute held on December 3, 1960, at which speeches were made by my thesis supervisor, Zhukov, and by many official and unofficial reviewers.

Around that time an idea emerged from Mongolia to have me recalled before I had completed my studies. Soon after I had defended my doctorate, a letter arrived from Tsedebnal asking me to return home. I realized that the letter was timed to recall me before I was able to sit for my oral examinations. The director of the Far Eastern Institute, Academician B. G. Gafurov, wanted me to complete my dissertation work ahead of time, and on June 1, 1960 I was granted Certificate Number 140. (I still have the original document.)

During my three years in the city of Moscow, I frequented its many marvelous theaters and museums, and I will never forget my experience of the best of early and contemporary Soviet culture. I used to visit the Central History Museum of the USSR, the Uspensky Hall of Moscow’s Kremlin, the hall of Vasily Blazhenny, the Archangel Hall, the Marble Hall, the six galleries of the Tretyakov, the Oruzheinaya Palace, and the Armaments Museum.

The Tretyakov Gallery contained paintings and sculptures from the seventeenth through the early twentieth century. The works of outstanding Soviet artists were preserved there. They included the interesting works of V. G. Perov, V. M. Basnetsov, I. I. Levitan, and I. Ye. Repin.

A Move into the Field of Academic Work

After defending my doctorate, I returned to Ulaanbaatar and telephoned Tse-
denbal the next day to let him know of my arrival.

The chairman arrived on time for our meeting and immediately greeted me in a
pleasant manner, "It is good of you to have arrived so quickly after receiving my letter
and without being able to defend your doctorate." When I told him that I had put my sig-
nature to the summary of the dissertation, his expression changed completely "Why do
you look so unhappy if you have successfully defended it?" he asked. "Yes, that’s right,"
I replied.

He continued, "We are putting you in charge of the Central Council of Trade
Unions." "Having previously done all kinds of official work, my health is not suited to
leadership duties. So, will you move me to an academic post, as we have so few people
with a doctorate?" I asked. Tsedenbal replied, "In that case, since the Institute of Science
and the state university have merged, you could go there." I agreed that that was what I
wanted. I went home and felt very pleased at my good luck in being appointed to work in
the Institute of Higher Education and Science at my own request.

Between 1959 and 1960, within the framework of the Institute of Higher Educa-
tion and Science, the groundwork was laid to establish an Institute of Social Sciences,
and departments of Animal Husbandry, Natural Sciences, and Medical Sciences. Shortly
afterwards, following a resolution of the Council of Ministers passed on February 3,
1960, the Department of Animal Husbandry was moved to the College of Agriculture,
and the departments of Natural Sciences and Medical Sciences became a joint department
in the university. This left only the previously established Department of Social Sciences
at the Institute of Higher Education and Science.

I was confirmed as president of the Institute of Higher Education and Science at
the first session of the fourth Ikh Khural on July 6, 1960. I took up my post and went to
visit the organizations associated with the Institute to get to know the staff and the things
they were doing.

During the election of the Ikh Khural, I met with the electors of the fifty-third
ballot of Sükhabatar aimag. On my return from the international Anti-Nuclear Confer-
ence in Tokyo, I learned about the organization of teaching at the state university. After
several hundred years of feudal oppression and exploitation by the greedy Manchu-
Chinese traders, there was great poverty and destitution. The seemingly eternal struggle
of the impoverished Mongolian people led to an awakening by the light of the October
Revolution. Their enthusiasm was kindled, and from a historical point of view, they were
clearly extremely fortunate.

I used scientific principles to explain my ideas based on the materials I had
gathered on Mongolian history. I hoped to explain the situation in Mongolia at the turn of
the century. With this aim in mind, I wrote the works XIX, XX zuuny zaag dakh’ Mongol
Through the Ocean Waves

oron [Mongolia in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century], 1 1921 ony Mongolyn ardyń khuv’sgalyn tüükh [History of the Mongolian People’s Revolution of 1921], and V.I. Lenin ba Mongolyn ard tümen [V.I. Lenin and the Mongolian People] which were published in Russian and Mongolian,2 and Kapitalizmyg algasan n’ [By-passing Capitalism]3 which was published in thirteen foreign languages.

As far as recent history is concerned, two important events occurred in our country at the threshold of the twentieth century. One determined the destiny of the Bogd Khan Mongolian Nation (established in 1911) as a consequence of the self-interests of the neighboring empires, which left a sad and indelible stain on our history. The other was the proclamation of a new Mongolian nation in 1921, with a people’s government which, thanks to the new era, led to complete independence, recognized not only by her two neighbors but by the whole world as well. Thus, it would be correct to say that all mankind are forever guarding our independence.

Judging these works from a modern standpoint, they were written in accordance with the ideological framework prevailing at the time, and there are plenty of things which require adjustment. And so I feel there is room for improvement. I participated in editing and writing the appropriate chapters of the first volume of Bügd Nairamdakh Mongol Ard Ulsyn tüükh [History of the Mongolian People’s Republic],5 Mongol zövöl töniin khariltsaany tüükh: 1921-1978 [History of Mongolian-Soviet Relations, 1921-1978],5 Delkhiin II dainy tovch tüükh [A Short History of World War Two] and Oktyabr’ ba tüünii daraagii khuv’sgal [The October Revolution and the Revolution which Followed].6 I also had other books, pamphlets, and a considerable number of other articles published.

In 1971 I received an award from the government of Mongolia for my book 1921 ony Mongolyn ardyń khuv’sgalyn tüükh, and I received an award from the Academy of Sciences for Oktyabr’ ba tüünii daraagii khuv’sgal. I was pleased and proud to think that my humble achievements were valued by the public, and I strove to write even more. Having become president of the Institute of Science and Higher Education, I gained some ideas from the revolution taking place in science and technology. The research process and the training of personnel were considered most important.

On June 20, 1960 the Institute of Higher Education and Science made a pro-

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1 The Russian version is Mongoliya na rubezhe XIX-XX vekov: istoriya sotsial’no-ekonomicheskogo razvitiya (Ulaanbaatar: Kom-t po delam pechat, 1963).
4 It is the third, not the first, volume that Shirendev co-edited (with M. Sanjedorj), published in 1969 (?) in Ulaanbaatar. This third volume was translated into English and annotated by William A. Brown and Urgunse Onon. It was published under the title History of the Mongolian People’s Republic by the East Asian Research Center at Harvard University in 1976.
5 Published in Ulaanbaatar. The Russian version is Istoriya sovetsko-mongol’skikh otnoshenii, published in Moscow. Both versions were published in 1981.
6 The Russian version, Vliyanie Velikoi Oktyabrskoi sootvisticheskoi revolyutsii na Mongoliyu, was published by Izdatel’svo polit. literatury of Moscow in 1967.
posal to the leading authorities. This was highly significant for the further development of our society and its activities. It was proposed that an Academy of Sciences should be established. The time had come to divide up the committees in charge of higher education. Right from the beginning until 1965, the structure of the academy was expanded, and people capable of doing research work were released from other organizations. As these research workers were attracted into the academy, they received training in the universities of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

The leading scientific expertise of the Soviet Union was studied, and in later years, agreements were signed with the USSR Academy of Sciences to carry on joint research projects. These ideas were shown in advance to the MPRP Central Committee and the Council of Ministers.

After further discussions and clarification of the direction being taken, a decision was made on October 13, 1960 to establish an Academy of Sciences the following year. Additional preparatory work needed to be carried out. In December 1960, a delegation consisting of research workers, and including myself as president of the Institute of Higher Education and Science, and Ch. Sereeter as secretary of the institute’s scholars, held discussions with a delegation from the USSR Academy of Sciences, and on December 12, 1960, an agreement was concluded on joint academic work.

Ye. K. Fedorov led the Soviet side in the discussions. He was a scholar, secretary, and geographer in the Soviet Academy of Sciences, and had taken part in a study of the North Pole in the 1930s. He was also a Hero of the USSR and a publicly acclaimed academician. Fedorov paid particular attention to our questions, and assisted us in all aspects of the development of science in our country.

From that time onwards, I met with him to discuss business matters concerning the work of the academy and received advice from him. We met at the CMEA (Council for Mutual and Economic Assistance) meetings, at the 1963 Geneva conference for international scholars, which discussed the introduction of science and technology in under-developed nations, at the conference of representatives of the academy of sciences of socialist countries held in Sofia in 1969, and at the conference on the peaceful utilization of space research held at the United Nations in 1968. Later on, he invited me to his home on several occasions, where we exchanged ideas during close and friendly discussions on cooperation in academic research.

Our delegation met with Academician Fedorov and several leading members of the academy. They explained the structure of research work in the USSR Academy of Sciences, and we studied some of their expertise in conducting research. As we were planning to establish institutes of agriculture and medicine within our academy, we visited the All-Union Lenin Academy of Agriculture, the associated institutes and departments of the medical academy under the Soviet Ministry of Health, and the institutes in charge of research in genetics, livestock breeding, veterinary science, farming, seed planting, soil science and immunization against viral illnesses. We received valuable advice from all of them. We were introduced to P. Lobanov, the principal academician of the Soviet Academy of Agriculture, and V. Temakov, the principal academician at the Academy of Medicine, with whom we began a working relationship.

On January 13, 1961 the MPRP Central Committee and the Council of Ministers ratified the agreement negotiated by our representatives. Research workers were transferred from certain ministries and from the university and colleges in order to do the preparatory work for the establishment of the academy. We drew up the rules for the nomi-
nation of people to become academicians and corresponding members, determined the composition of the Presidium of the Academy, drew up the academy's budget, and performed many other tasks.

In this resolution, the Politburo of the MPRP Central Committee approved the budgetary plan of the Academy of Sciences, and it was agreed that the opening ceremony of the Academy of Sciences would be held on May 24, 1961. The Presidium of the People's Ilkh Khural announced the establishment of the Academy of Sciences on May 16, 1961. The Council of Ministers confirmed the regulations of the Academy of Sciences, and in its resolution of May 22, 1961 indicated the initial composition of the membership of the academy, which consisted of nine academicians and nineteen corresponding members.

Initially, the Institutes of Language and Literature, History, and Natural Sciences, the State Library, the Central Museum, the Temple Museums and the Bogd Khan Museum, were included under the academy's jurisdiction. The First Assembly of the Academy of Sciences was held on May 22, 1961, at which a seven-member presidium was established, with myself as president-elect and corresponding member Ch. Sereeter as academic secretary.

The foreign members elected included the Soviet scholar and physicist Academician M. V. Keldysh, the geographer and polar researcher Academician Ye. K. Fedorov, the Indian philosopher Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the Chinese literary scholar Guo Moruo, and the Hungarian Mongolist scholar Lajos Ligeti. The assembly also confirmed Academician Ts. Damdinsuren as director of the Institute of Language and Literature, the candidate scholar of history D. Tsedev7 as director of the Institute of History, the corresponding member L. Baldandash as director of the Institute of Agriculture, and corresponding member J. Jamsran became director of the Institute of Natural Sciences.

On the evening of May 24, 1961, a joint celebration was held at the State Opera and Dance Theater for research workers and prominent figures in education and culture. Representatives of the working classes, collectivized herdsment, and the capital's population took part. Party and government leaders, political activists, and the diplomatic corps in Ulaanbaatar were present at this meeting, which was celebrating the founding of the Academy of Sciences. Right at the back of the theater stage was a red flag with portraits of the founders of scientific Communist theory, namely Marx, Engels, and Lenin. There was also a bust of D. Sükhbaatar, the leader of the People's Revolution and founder of the MPRP and people's government. As president-elect of the Academy of Sciences, I opened the meeting with a speech.

Our ancestors desired a scholarly education and learned books, as parched ground craves rain. If not today, then by tomorrow, our scholars will uncover the generous wealth of our birthplace to turn it into a wealthy nation. Our science will, if not tomorrow then the day after, profitably utilize the riches of our soil, the farmland, the livestock economy, forests, and rivers. Perhaps not even the next day, but one day, our science must overcome the technical problems which confront us. We will strive to complete this work in as short a

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7 Dojoogjin Tsedev, born in 1940, has edited many works on the history of Mongolian literature. He is also the author of a work on the history of Mongolian poetry which was then translated and published as Modern Mongolian Poetry, 1921-1986 (Ulaanbaatar: State Publishing House, 1989). Tsedev has also published at least one volume of his own poems.
time as possible. With the power of science, we hope that the time will arrive when we will ameliorate the cold of winter, the harshness of the wind, and moisten the soil of the Gobi.

Tsedenbal made a speech during this celebration, and congratulatory speeches were made by Sharav on behalf of the working classes, by the writer Ch. Lodoidamba on behalf of the intellectuals and by a negdel milkmaid named Tsermaa on behalf of the herding-collectives. Scholars and research workers offered their congratulations and thanks to the MPRP Central Committee and the Council of Ministers. Pioneer pupils bearing flowers entered the hall amidst the resounding sound of trumpets and drums. This was a proud, celebratory event for people of all ages. Warm congratulations and good wishes were offered on behalf of young people in conjunction with the establishment of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences. This was the manner in which our people proudly received the establishment of the academy. The Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and several associated organizations and famous scholars sent congratulatory telegrams which were read out at the conference.

Congratulatory cards and telegrams addressed to the meeting arrived from the English professor of physics J. D. Bernal, the Finnish scholar of Mongolian Pentti Aalto, other higher institutes of the Mongolian State University, all ministries, specialist centers, aimag Party committees, the executive committee of the National Assembly of Deputies, and other places. Following the meeting, an interesting celebratory concert was given by selected, talented artists.

The 1961 annual conference of the Academy of Sciences confirmed the 1961–1965 five-year academic plan. This plan focused on the most challenging problems of the livestock economy, the study of pasture and vegetation, veterinary science, medicine, history, language, literature, geography, geology, botany, and economics.

The MPRP Central Committee and the Council of Ministers agreed to take account of the academic plan of the academy in the annual joint plan for the development of the nation’s economy and culture. As an experiment, the Züünkharaa state farm was brought under the control of the academy’s experimental station at Züünkharaa. The academy’s fruit-growing station at Shaamar was transformed into a center for research into fruit growing. The Bulgan fruit-growing station in Khovd aimag was expanded. Livestock veterinary services and the industrial bioprocessing sector were developed.

The Institute of Economics attached to the State Planning Commission was established in 1963. Seismology stations were built at Tosontsengel, Khövsgöl aimag, and in Dornogobi aimag. Councils were established to coordinate the research linked with the Academy of Sciences. The state university and some colleges carried out the training of professional workers in pastoral and zoological studies. Accommodations were built for the joint Institute of Physics and Chemistry. Specialists with higher qualifications were

8 Chadraabalyyn Lodoidamba, born in 1917 (some sources say 1916), distinguished himself as a writer of novels and short stories, particularly his Tungalag Tamir [Clear Tamir], first published in 1962, a novel about a river in eastern Arkhangai aimag, which has been reprinted and translated several times since then. He also translated into Mongolian The Headless Horseman by Mayne Reid (1818-1883). Lodoidamba died in 1970.

9 Pentti Aalto, born in 1917, has been a major figure in Altaic and comparative linguistics. He is perhaps best known for his two-volume Latin Sources on North-eastern Eurasia, co-authored with Tuomo Pekkanen (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1975-1980), Oriental Studies in Finland, 1828-1918 (Helsinki, 1971), and A Catalogue of the Hedin Collection of Mongolian Literature (Stockholm, 1953). On the occasion of his seventieth birthday, a festchrift was published under the title Studies in Altaic and Comparative Philology (Helsinki, 1987).
transferred to the academy and highly-qualified research workers were trained every year. Later on, research staff were trained for annual reaccreditation. Between 1961 and 1965 the number of research workers increased from 178 to 353, and research assistants increased in number by 210 from the 1400 working in 1961.

During the first five-year period, 1961-1965, over eighty single-subject projects were initiated, and 216 other research tasks were completed in addition to several innovations suggested for implementation in industry. The Orkhon breed of sheep and the Orkhon strain of wheat were developed. A study was carried out on permafrost as a result of which several cold-storage facilities were built near Ulaanbaatar. With the help of the technology of the institutes of physics and technology, chatsargana (Sea Buckthorn)-based oil was produced. A profit of over ten million tögrög was made from the sale of academic research publications during this five-year period.

The Academy of Sciences encountered considerable difficulties during its early years, particularly in the training of specialist staff and in carrying out academic work, where there was a lack of expertise. Leading people repeatedly criticized the organization of the Academy of Sciences in official documents, claiming that it had become "incapable of standing on its own two feet." Time and again Tsedenbal would quote Stalin's phrase "those bookish know-it-alls" in his speeches.

But that was not all. He openly declared that as research in natural philosophy, technology, and economics was being conducted in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, extra expenditure on these subjects was not necessary. The number of staff and the budget were not only frozen, but even reduced on a few occasions.

As scientific and technical studies developed, much effort was directed to the proper explanation of the social and economic reasons behind the selection of important fields and subjects of research. The scientific part of the new program of the MPRP as ratified by its Fifteenth Congress in 1966 went as follows:

- All possible means will be used to develop natural, technical, and social sciences, and extensive training of research workers will be carried out.
- Academic research is to be directed towards the intensification of agriculture (raising the quality of livestock, grain, and vegetables and improving the livestock stations) and the prospecting for natural resources and their exploitation.
- Mongolia will concentrate on following the experience of socialist organizations following a non-capitalist route of development, and will study questions related to the international movement of Communist workers.
- To raise the theoretical standard of research work in conjunction with the rising demands of modern society, science, and technology. To strengthen the links between academic research work and its practical application.

These various aims were implemented in coordination with the Academy of Sciences, as the second academic five-year plan was carried out between 1966 and 1970. With the help of the Soviet side in a joint Mongolian-Soviet geological expedition, we drew up geological, tectonic, and seismological maps, and studied several important areas from the perspectives of stratigraphy, paleontology, petrology, and geochemistry.

During this period, our biologists studied many aspects of wild mammals, fishing, and game resources. The chemists carried out extensive studies of the chemical composition of all kinds of natural and raw material reserves. Geographers studied the natural vegetation zones of our country and the basic composition of ancient permafrost
rock, and the main sectors of the national economy with the aim of producing maps for middle schools and colleges. Economists produced estimates of the growth of the population up to the year 2000, and carried out, among other things, projections of the economic development of the country and the optimum composition of the livestock herds.

Physicists and mathematicians studied some theoretical problems in nuclear physics, studied observations and photographs made by satellites, and produced the necessary equipment for the processing of certain kinds of vegetable-based raw materials. Historians published the three-volume "History of the MPR," and linguists compiled and printed a considerable amount of literature of historical significance and a grammar of the Mongolian language. The academic work produced by the academy in the 1971-1975 period included some concrete results, such as standard-scale and large-scale maps and various suggestions of practical importance.

As a result of the pressure applied by certain ministries, in 1968 the control of several research institutes was transferred from the academy to those ministries. These included the institutes which were under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Medical Institute, which came under the Ministry of Health.

In 1968 the Politburo of the Party Central Committee passed a resolution which brought all museums under the control of the Ministry of Culture after 1969. Some people felt that the practical application of the work of those institutes under government control should be the main aim of research. However, they were unable to achieve all these aims. Some of the ministries directed these newly-acquired former institutes of the academy to do everyday routine tasks and made them into subordinate organizations. They were expected to spend time writing reports, issuing directives and plans, and doing other work of little significance.

In November 1971, the staff of the Academy of Sciences marked the fiftieth anniversary of the first scientific organization in our country, known as the Institute of Books, and the tenth anniversary of the Academy of Sciences. The scientific and cultural achievements of the country were highly valued, and a decree of the Ikh Khural conferred the Order of Sükhbaatar on the academy. In addition, the prestigious title, Merited Scientist of the MPR, was created.

At a gathering during the anniversary conference I read a report entitled "The Fiftieth Anniversary of Mongolian Science." Representatives from the academy of sciences of the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and other countries made speeches and presented congratulatory citations from the presidents of their respective academies. Furthermore, those who were present were informed that letters of congratulation had been sent to the conference from the scientific organizations of foreign countries, various scholars, ministries and special departments of the Mongolian government, and other organizations.

From 1975, the Institute of Physics and Mathematics became the Institute of Physics and Technology and the Institute of Mathematics. In addition, the Institute of Biology was broken up into the Institute of General and Experimental Biology and the Institute of Botany. Improved accommodations were agreed to for the Information Department and the Research Supplies Department.

During the first half of 1980 the following institutes became part of the Academy of Sciences: the Institute of Geography and Permafrost Studies, the Institute of Geology, the Institute of Chemistry, the Institute of Far Eastern Studies, the Institute of Physics and Technology, the Institute of Philosophy, Sociology and Rights, the Institute
of Botany, the Institute of Industrial Development and Distribution, and the Institute of History, which happened to be the academy’s first institute at the time of its founding in 1961.

After the Institute of Mathematics had been established, computers came into use and we began to receive important advice from people such as A. Dordnitsin, a regular member of the USSR Academy of Sciences and principal of the Mathematics Center, and Il’ev, a secretary and scholar of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. The Soviet Academy of Sciences offered us trained personnel and the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences donated the Analog-1 computer which they themselves had constructed. This machine is still working to this very day.

The organizational structure of our research organizations was, in the main, exactly like that of the majority of such organizations in the other socialist countries. These were created out of the institutes of the academy, the laboratories, the multidisciplinary chairs in the university, and the colleges and institutes carrying out work in subordinate subjects which had been established alongside the ministries and special departments. In addition to carrying out its own responsibilities, each part of this system played a clear role in the implementation of a united policy in science.

This unique organization of the Academy of Sciences in the Soviet Union (and later on in other socialist countries as well) was also established in our country. Following the supervised transformation of the Academy of Sciences, in 1974, the Council of Ministers ratified the new character of the reorganized academy. In its original form, the Academy of Sciences was a higher research organization of Mongolia which united distinguished scholars in their socio-political activities. The academy’s aim was to develop the foundations for studies in the most important areas of natural and social sciences. It was pointed out that this would help to establish socialism.

When making a distinction between fundamental and subordinate academic work, each of these two scientific areas would be influenced by socio-economic factors. In the end, we tried to work in clearly different ways, based on whether we wished to directly or indirectly influence the material wealth or intellectual life of the country. When getting to know the profound processes which occur in nature and society and the basis of the principles underlying them, logic was revealed in the results of directed research, and previously unrealized new tendencies were uncovered.

The quality of life can only be evaluated by drawing conclusions from the material gathered. If one considers a scientific principle which is used as a formula to understand material objects, it will be found in the laws of physics and the recognition of how this law is reflected in human understanding. To fulfill this responsibility, science began to gather a huge amount of information and, having examined it, managed to record it clearly. When mankind was finding out about the universe, the main methods of testing and the main research techniques were used. The solving of problems turned to using research for the sake of testing theory. Things which could be perceived and recognized were investigated, conclusions were drawn, and there were discussions about the utilization of the most important categories of scientific understanding.

Science is also about categories, hypotheses, and abstract systems comprised of theoretical matters. These areas of scientific study include natural and social processes, objective phenomena and powerful forces. For this reason, science is an information system for nature, society, and knowledge. The creation of science and its development have been clarified through industrialization and social practice. Science remains rela-
tively independent through these processes. Why this relative independence of science? Science incessantly focuses the other forms of scientific and social understanding and in turn these influence economics, political policy, ethics, art, and religion.

A recent phenomenon is the further classification of science. The Academy of Sciences was shaped between 1961 and 1981, during which time the direction of research work was established. Skilled workers were trained, laboratories were established, and foundation courses were jointly set up.

One of the original establishments within the Academy of Sciences was the State Library, where around three million books and rare hand-written manuscripts are held. Rare manuscripts are held in the Mongolian, Tibetan, and Oriental literature collections. Among them are the books of past and present Mongolian scholars, the 109 thick volumes of the *Ganjur* and the 226 volumes of the *Danjur* in Mongolian and other translations of famous books and manuscripts. The encyclopedia-like *Ganjur* and *Danjur* are two works of translations and explanations of ancient Indian philosophy, medicine, art, and astrology.

The Academy of Sciences had publishing facilities capable of producing over 1000 pages of different kinds of research from its various branches.

Besides conducting foundation courses, the links between subordinate courses and productive industries were strengthened and further scientific ideas were taken up and implemented, generally successfully. The institutes of the main branches and the research planning organizations and laboratories began to direct the subordinate research which was aimed at developing plans, programs, technology, and suggestions for further research. Although the subordinate courses had a useful and active influence, the experience of world science continued to show the importance of first developing the foundations of science.

Some of the university and college professors, lecturers, and the graduate and senior undergraduate students carried out research work independently, or else in theoretical fields subordinate to the working plan of the academy and its branch institutes. This was supported on all sides by the academy, the university, the colleges, and the branch institutes. It was well known that if this work was further intensified it would have been useful for the development of our science.

All the science departments collected statistics on our country’s minerals, raw materials, vegetation, mammals, economy, and livestock which were used in the writing of original text books for middle schools and colleges. Sometimes translations and "Mongolizations" of foreign language books were made so that teachers and pupils could become knowledgeable about some of the characteristics of our country. It was thought even more important to present the world’s scientific advances in a way which suited the Mongolian way of thinking.

Despite the fact that the above ideas were put forward on more than one occasion, it is regrettable that they were not heeded by the college and middle school leadership of the time.

It was particularly important that laboratories for the natural sciences were established in the Academy of Sciences with new and up-to-date equipment and instrumentation. With the help of some of the member countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, a genetics laboratory and a radio-electronics laboratory were established. A production office, a factory to produce research equipment, and a computer center were started in the academy with help from the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet
Union and East Germany.

One of the driving forces which would have increased the benefits of academic research was the composition of the trained personnel. During the twenty years following the establishment of the Academy of Sciences, people were sent on assignment to the organizations of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries through the channels of the colleges and to undertake postgraduate studies so as to improve their qualifications. Large numbers of skilled workers were trained by giving them experience in joint expeditions, commissions, and other work.

Out of 370 college graduates who received training between 1961 and 1981, 264 were trained at colleges in the Soviet Union. Of these, seventy-nine were postgraduates and twenty-seven were Ph.D. candidates. The colleges trained ninety-six students in physics and technology, sixty-two in chemistry, forty-nine in biology, thirty-two in geology, ten in genetics, thirty-one in economics, and about twenty in philosophy and sociology. The 178 staff members of the Academy of Sciences in 1961 had grown to 1,346 in 1980-81, including 1,061 research workers, 150 candidate scholars, and forty scholars with doctorates. To quote a few examples, in 1980 there were forty staff members in the Institute of History, 100 in the Institute of Chemistry, and more than 200 in the Institute of Physics and Technology.

The Party Central Committee issued a directive which streamlined the personnel of the research institutes in 1979-1980. This was done, in principle, to increase the benefits from their work, and while important questions were being considered, all kinds of ideas were put forward about the relative numbers of research workers in the academy and its branch institutes and the structure of the research organizations. This operation focused on the academy with the hope of destroying or moving its institutes of the natural and technical sciences elsewhere. In the main, it was those diligent students who, having studied hard in their own country’s primary and middle schools and successfully completed their graduate courses in the university or in one of the colleges, were now working in the academy. However, when selecting people for research work, we were unable to pay enough attention to their natural talents, characteristics, and ability to achieve, which resulted in considerable losses.

As already mentioned, for science to develop it was important to train skilled personnel. A suggestion was made to establish a special ten-year school for talented children and young people based at School Number 14, which was to be linked to the Academy of Sciences and the Ministry of Education. Although a considerable amount of planning work was done, nothing was achieved. Some people studied after a fashion, but without knowing where to go or what to study, had prematurely entered into research work, and helped to fill the staff quota.

Attention was paid to the few people who had spent many years fulfilling regular appointments, and care was taken to employ capable people in the Academy of Sciences. All members of the staff of the Academy of Sciences were coordinated as a single unit. Similar demands were placed on each of them. Staff were educated in a climate which raised the quality of their work, and further demands were made on them to adopt an academic philosophy. We began to acquire the sort of scholars who were able to direct quite large research units in the laboratories and departments.

We took great care to carry out research in the natural, technical, and social sciences, which was important for the present and future needs of our country. Working relationships were improved and important ideas on the direction of these relationships
were raised from the time the academy was established. However, in reality, during the last thirty years the coordination of those ideas was lacking, and did not lead to increased achievements. There was a conceited attitude in conjunction with inadequate thinking and action. The decisive factor in this situation was the shortage of skilled workers and the lack of modern equipment suitable for use in research work.

The bilateral and unilateral activities agreed upon between our academy and the academies of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries undoubtedly influenced the development of our research workers, raised the theoretical standard of research work and the benefits economics flowing from it. Prior to the first signing in 1967 of a notable agreement between the presidents of the Mongolian and Soviet Academies of Sciences, many new ideas had enriched the content of these discussions. In particular, joint expeditions carried out research according to common principles and programs. The scholars coordinated and linked the work they were doing by a mutual exchange of questions. When helping to train skilled research personnel, and when it came to issuing scientific news and announcements, it was agreed that there would be such things as a mutual exchange of relevant publications.

Those who took an active part in the signing of this agreement included the president of the USSR Academy of Sciences M.V. Keldysh, his deputy M. D. Millionshikov, and M. A. Lavrent’ev, and A. A. Logunov. Keldysh had been appointed president of the USSR Academy of Sciences in May 1961. I met him many times and received advice from him on establishing priorities in physics, mathematics, science, and technology, based on the needs of our country.

In order to establish the above-mentioned agreement between the two academies, I was invited to travel to Moscow. Keldysh met our delegation and seated me in his own car. As we traveled through Moscow, he pointed out a place called Nikitin Gate near Arbat Street. “This is where I grew up and studied,” he told me, and he talked about his early life with great enthusiasm. As Keldysh was an outstanding scholar in the fields of physics, mathematics, and technology, he enjoyed talking about these subjects.

Since there was a vast scope for research in these subjects, he said that it was possible for any country to carry out some kind of research. He advised me on the appropriate areas to study, and said that they would be able to help train skilled staff for our academy.

The Presidium of the USSR Academy of Sciences had set out a program of visits for our delegation. We visited several of the Soviet Academy’s research establishments, in particular the institutes where scholars were conducting research in physics and mathematics laboratories. These included the many branch institutes of the Academy of Sciences in Novosibirsk, where we met with the staff.

As a result of Keldysh’s initiatives, several institutes of the USSR Academy of Sciences which were doing research in physics, mathematics, and technology would train specialists in mathematics and physics for our academy from the time the agreement was made until 1982.

After meeting with the deputy presidents of the USSR Academy of Sciences, the technology scholar V. A. Kotelnikov, the physicist M. D. Millionshikov, and the nuclear physicist Academician A. A. Logunov, we visited the Siberian branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences where we had a working meeting with a vice-president of the USSR Academy of Sciences, Academician S. T. Belyaev. When I asked them for advice, in addition to discussing Keldysh’s ideas, they gave me their own valuable advice.
Whenever I went [to Moscow] on behalf of the academies of the two countries, or to attend an international research meeting, Keldysh would always try to meet me in person, or if he was unable to do so, would beg to be forgiven and would invite me to the Blue Room of the Praga Restaurant where we would have lunch together and talk about old times. Because he was a punctual person, whenever we met over lunch, his close friends used to say that it was because we had always arranged to do it that way. These people were the same age as myself and were very friendly towards me.

Keldysh was a short, slightly built man with a weak voice. He used to look straight up at people when talking to them. He sent me a greeting card on my sixtieth birthday containing a beautiful message which I have carefully preserved.

He had become acquainted with the natural environment of Mongolia, its climate, history, customs, recent scientific advances and, in particular, with the nature of the research work being carried out there. He told us about the experience of the Academies of Sciences in Uzbekistan, Tadjikistan, and Kirgizia, and about the proper way to manage the branch units of the Academy of Sciences in the autonomous republics.

Although Keldysh was a quiet man, he liked to engage in informal conversations and enjoyed humor and jokes. Whenever we invited him to our country he accepted the invitation with pleasure, and regardless of the season used to inquire about the nice things he had seen, and asked if he could set up a tent and spend a night or two in a tent breathing in our fresh, natural air.

Included among his many scholarly subordinates was A. I. Lavrent’ev, whom we met when we visited the Siberian branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Lavrent’ev invited us to his own tiny, two-story house. He was a tall man with quick movements, who made an effort to focus on major theoretical and practical problems. Since he was training skilled personnel in foundation courses, he created an initiative at the university in Novosibirsk whereby he selected workers’ and farmers’ children to be brought in for training. He himself taught some of the lessons. He asked some of his subordinates to teach some classes too, and to do some coaching. He had a genuine passion for science, and through his activities became an experienced trainer of skilled personnel.

During the implementation of the above-mentioned agreement, the joint activities of the two academies were based on two-year plans until 1972, a three-year plan during 1973-1976 and a five-year plan from 1976 onwards. From 1967 until the present day, the research organizations of the two academies have had an equal right to exchange research workers, and they did so every year. In this way, research was conducted in areas of mutual interest and there were good opportunities to become familiar with expertise in research, publication, and the basic requirements for research work. One of the traditional forms of cooperation between the two academies involved the joint organization of scientific expeditions in Mongolia. These included:

1) A joint Mongolian-Soviet geological expedition led by the USSR State Award holder A. A. Yashin (a foreign member of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences), who was awarded the order of the Red Flag of Labor of the MPR, the Soviet scholar and geologist N.S. Zaitsev, and our corresponding member of the Academy of Science, Dr. B. Luvsandanzan.

2) An historical/cultural expedition carried out from 1967 onwards and led by Academician and Hero of Socialist Labor A. P. Okladnikov, holder of a Soviet State Award and holder of the Altan Gadas medal of the MPR, along with Sh. Natsagdorj and myself. He too was a foreign member of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences.
A Move into the Field of Academic Work

(3) A joint Mongolian-Soviet biology expedition led by USSR Academician Ye. M. Lavrenko, holder of the Mongolian Altan Gadas medal, the present USSR Academician V. E. Sokolov, the corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences Ts. Davaajamts, and the director of the Institute of General and Experimental Biology of the Academy of Sciences, O. Shagdarsüren.  

(4) Mongolian-Soviet paleontological expeditions conducted from 1969 onwards, and led by the corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences A. G. Vologdin, the corresponding member P. P. Tatarinov, and our doctor of geological sciences R. Barsbold.

The joint geological expedition carried out much work on the history of surface formations, a study of the spatial distribution of resources in the country, and clarification of the issues involved in the mining of useful minerals. The main results of the research of this expedition were published in Russian in thirty volumes with four maps of the country.


In addition, it should be mentioned that some reports and accounts focused on practical ideas and discoveries.

The joint paleontological expedition carried out studies on the marine creatures of the Paleozoic era, the land animals and fresh water creatures of the Mesozoic and Cenozoic eras. The discovery of large graveyards of dinosaurs, mammals, and other animals has been of great significance for world science. The report and initial conclusions on the research work of the joint paleontological expedition were published and ran to seven volumes. These works included Am'tny aimag ba biostratigrafia [The Classification of Animals and Biostratigraphy] (1971), Mongolyn mezozoii, kainozoin am'tan, urgamaal, biostratigrafia [Animals, Plants, and the Biostratigraphy of the Mesozoic and Cenozoic Eras in Mongolia] (1976), and Baruuun Mongolyn neogeny khөөriin zarin bulgiin tukhai [Concerning Certain Families of Rhinoceroses of Western Mongolia] (1971).

Shagdarsüren is widely known as the chief editor of Mongolia’s first systematic attempt to catalog the country’s endangered plants and animals, Бүгд Найрамдагх Монгол Ард Uls, ulaan nom (Ulaanbaatar: Ulsyn Khevlelii Gazar, 1987). The results of this expedition were published in Rastitel'nyi i zhivotnyi mir Mongoli/Mongol orny urgamal ba am'tny aimag (Leningrad: Nauka, Leningradskoye otdele, 1977).
The joint biology expedition which was studying climatic conditions and many important questions relating to natural resources revealed the results of its research in a nineteen-volume publication. These included the five-volume BNMAU-yn shav’zh [Insects of the MPR] (1971-1977), BNMAU-yn khoit goviin tsöl tal [Deserts and Plains of the Northern Gobi of the MPR] (1974), and BNMAU-yn oi [Forests of the MPR] (1978). This expedition also produced and published maps of the vegetation and soil of Mongolia.

The joint expedition on history and culture carried out many aspects of the study of the Old and New Stone Age, and the Bronze Age and Iron Age on the territory of Mongolia. In 1978, Academician A.P. Okladnikov edited the single-subject publication entitled Arkheologiya i etnografiya Mongolii [Mongolian Archeology and Ethnography]. Some of the other Mongolian and Soviet scholars of the expedition also wrote books and other publications.

The exchange of academic representatives between the two academies was especially significant for the far-reaching foundation courses of our academy, the planning and selection of critical decisions, and therefore the introduction into industry of scientific leadership and gains, and the training of skilled personnel to do this. In 1979, for example, each institute within our academy had links with between three and fifteen institutes of the USSR Academy of Sciences. This was a clear demonstration of the cooperation between the two academies. Over the course of twenty years 600 workers in the academy had done research at organizations of the USSR Academy of Sciences. Five hundred and twenty-three had achieved the degree of candidate scholar at the Soviet Academy of Sciences or other Soviet universities and colleges. Fifty-eight people successfully defended their doctorates at these institutions.

We also carried out joint activities with the academies of several of the other fraternal socialist countries. Agreements were signed on joint research projects with the academies of East Germany and Cuba in 1963, with the Bulgarian and Hungarian academies in 1966, with the Czechoslovak National Academy of Sciences in 1969, and with the Polish Academy of Sciences in 1973. There was also an exchange of scholars with these academies.

We exchanged ideas with many of their members, including the philosopher Tadeus Kotarbinski and the presidents Groshkovski and V. Tshebyatovski who succeeded him, the academic secretaries Genrik Yablonski, a foreign member of our academy, and Jan Kachmarik, the economist Tsesomski, the sociologist Jan Shepanyski, the president of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences Angel Balevskii, the president of the East German Academy of Sciences Hermann Klahr, another foreign member of our Academy of Sciences and its academic secretary K. Grötte, the president of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the medical scholar I. Rusnyak, the Mongolist and foreign member of our academy Lajos Ligeti, the nuclear physicist and foreign member of our academy Lajos Janosi, the president of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences and foreign member of our academy, Ya. Kozheshnik, and the former vice-president Rositskii.

Our acquaintance with the activities of some of the institutes of the above-mentioned academies proved useful in our work. We visited famous and historical places in the above countries, including the so-called Zwinger Palace art gallery in Dresden.

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11 Published in Novosibirsk by the Siberian branch of Nauka.
where we viewed some interesting works by famous painters of many different eras as well as various objects made of porcelain and metal. We visited the tiny two-story summer house near Berlin where we gained important knowledge about the famous physicist Albert Einstein, who lived there in 1929. We also went to see the interesting documents which were kept in the museum where the Potsdam Agreement was signed at a meeting of the Soviet Union, United States, England, and France.

The Academies of Science of Bulgaria, Hungary, East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Cuba, and the Committee on Social Sciences and the Science Center of Vietnam carried out joint activities with our academy, the main ones being agreements to exchange scholars, the carrying out of joint research in areas of mutual interest, the reciprocal invitation of representatives to take part in scientific activities, the publication of research and different ways of exchanging other kinds of material.

Mongolian scholars were also elected as foreign members of the USSR Academy of Sciences and some of the scientific organizations of other foreign countries. I was elected a foreign member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1964, of the USSR Academy of Sciences in 1966 and of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in 1973. I was also awarded honorary doctorates by foreign universities: in 1974 in East Germany, in 1976 in Bulgaria, in 1974 in Poland and in 1970 at the University of Leeds in England where I was awarded an honorary doctorate in literature.

I visited England in May 1970 to attend a degree-awarding ceremony at the invitation of Leeds University. While in London, we visited Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's Cathedral, the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Houses of Parliament and some monuments. Accompanied by Professor Lattimore, we left London by car to travel to Cambridge. There were about 9,000 students in the twenty-eight colleges of Cambridge University, which was one of the original English universities, having been founded some seven hundred years previously. There were about 450 overseas students studying there. We also met with E. H. Carr, professor of history at this college. He had been studying the political life of the Soviet Union for some thirty years.

We also paid a visit to Oxford University. There were also twenty-eight colleges there including five colleges for women. The university, like others in England, owned many churches and jealously guarded its old traditions. Old paintings, portraits, tables, chairs and so forth were held in high esteem. This university had a famous press which printed its first book in 1478.

Stratford-on-Avon was the town where William Shakespeare (1564-1616) lived and died, and is an international center for Shakespearean studies. Its theaters and museums attract much interest from tourists. The Shakespeare Society, which was established in 1874, preserved the writer's heritage and has worked continuously to foster museums and exhibitions.

On the four-hundredth anniversary (1964) of Shakespeare's birth, the society established the Shakespeare Center. This building is located in the courtyard of the house where Shakespeare was born. The center is now in charge of the work of studying, promoting, and developing Shakespeare's works, organizing an annual festival of his plays, celebrating his birthday, sending the players on foreign tours, receiving guests, and so forth. When we looked at the register of visitors to Shakespeare's house/museum, we saw that two people from Mongolia had already been there. While we were in Stratford-on-Avon, we were taken to see the play "Richard the Third" in the Shakespeare Theater. Every year people came from as far away as London to see Shakespeare's plays.
Through the Ocean Waves

During the preceding six years, the number of students at Leeds University had grown by fifty per cent to eight thousand, fourteen per cent of whom were women. There were 1200 academic staff, and the university had seven faculties and seventy departments which taught ninety-nine courses. There were over eight hundred overseas students from ninety one countries making up nearly a tenth of all the students. Leeds had been a university of international standing for sixty-six years.

On May 14, 1970, the highest authority of the university, known as the University Court, confirmed the decision to confer an honorary doctorate on me. When this was done, the university published a report about this decision which included a short biography of me. According to the program of the ceremony, at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, May 20, 1970, nine foreign and British people were to be awarded degrees in the Great Hall of the University. This particular ceremony for conferring honorary degrees was held once a year in addition to the graduation ceremony.

Those who took part in the ceremony included the university’s masters of ceremonies, members of the university assembly, past and present members of the university’s administration, professors, honorary graduates, the university council, court members, church representatives, city leaders, the reporting professors for the honorary graduates, the president of the university council, the chancellor and vice-chancellor. All the people who were wearing mantles bearing a coat of arms and decorated with pendants and ribbons slowly filed through the middle of the hall in a set order while organ music played, walked past the seated audience and guests and mounted the stage, where they took up their positions.

Vice-Chancellor Colonel J. H Kitson opened the ceremony. He summoned the honorary degree candidates one at a time, greeting each on the stage, and introduced him to the chancellor by reading him a short biography of the candidate. I was introduced by Professor O. Lattimore in this ceremony, which was a pleasant affair.

In his introductory report, Prof. O. Lattimore mentioned the successes our country had achieved in culture and science as a result of the Mongolian People’s Revolution and noted that “Shirendev was one of the intellectuals who appeared following the revolution.” He read a brief biography and told the audience about Shirendev’s contribution to the development of cultural relations between Leeds and Mongolia. At this point, the audience applauded loudly.

Other people present at the ceremony included our ambassador, S. Dambadarjaa, Academician Sh. Luvsanvandan who was teaching at Leeds, and E. Puntsag who was a researcher in the department of Far Eastern Studies in the Academy of Sciences. Those who received honorary degrees in the ceremony were loaned a special gown and hat by the university, and although these outfits were usually taken back after having been used for the ceremony, mine were presented to me to keep as a souvenir. They said that they would send the degree certificates later. After the ceremony, a banquet was held at which Ambassador Dambadarjaa and the Mongolists Lattimore and Urgunge (Onon) were present.

On my return to London, I was met at the railway station by representatives of the British Council who took us to the Park Lane Hotel in Piccadilly. We went to meet the vice-chancellor of London University, Sir Brian Windeyer. The vice-chancellor told me that there were 36,000 regular students at the University of London and 35,000 students taking correspondence courses. The regular students studied for three years if they were in the Faculty of Social Sciences; the correspondence course students spent four
years and medical students studied for five or six years.

Our program included a visit to the British Academy on May 21, where D. F. Allen, the secretary of the academy, greeted us at a cordial reception and told us about the work of the academy. Its fourteen departments included Ancient History, Medieval History, Modern History, Theology, Far Eastern and African Studies, Classical Literature, Philosophy, Law, Economics, Economic History, Archeology, History of Art, and Social and Political Science. The Royal Society was one of the academy's responsible bodies which carried out research into natural sciences.

At the end of our visit Lord Fulton, the chairman of the British Council, organized a reception in our honor. In total, over sixty people were invited to the reception, including our ambassador and the staff of the Mongolian embassy, senior officials from the British Foreign Office, the British Academy, the British Museum, the Anglo-Mongolian Society, the Asia and Central Asian Society, various professors, and some Mongolist scholars.

Professor Lattimore made a speech there, saying

I have had links with Mongolia for forty years. I was born in America. However the twenty years or so that I have spent in my own country amount to only half the time I have spent on Mongolian studies. My wife is dead now but I will not sit by idly. I think I will be able to work for another ten years or so. I will write about and compare the history of old Mongolia with the new Mongolia."

Ivor Montagu had written three volumes of recollections about his work and life. He presented me with a souvenir copy of the first volume which contained accounts of his early life until the time of his marriage. A person named Wolff came to meet us. Mr. Serge Wolff had been working with some Mongolian students in Berlin in the 1920s. He had written an account of some recollections entitled "The Mongolians who Pursued an Education in Western Europe, 1926-1929." There was a Mr. Wood [?] who was the deputy editor of the English journal Nature. With the support of the British Council he had requested a meeting with me. He wished to learn about the development of natural sciences in Mongolia and the growth of research work there. I replied to his interesting questions and gave him a clear description of science in Mongolia and the role of the Academy of Sciences.

In 1967 Academician Ts. Toivgoo was elected a regular member of the All-Union Lenin Agricultural Academy, and in 1970 Academician B. Rinchen was elected an honorary member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Our research organizations and scholars were members of world-wide organizations such as the Permanent Committee of Mongolian Scholars, the International Commission for the Study of Central Asian Culture and Civilization, the International Association of Social Studies and Sociology, and the International Association of Philosophers.

In the field of Mongolian Studies, scholars such as the American Mongolists O. Lattimore and Khanginy Gombojav, the scholar from England Urgunge Onon, the West


\[13\] Known in the West as John Gombojab Hangin (1921-1989), who for many years taught at Indiana University and founded the Mongolia Society of the United States.
German Mongolist Walther Heissig, the Japanese Mongolists Shirō Hattori, Iwamura, Shigeo Ozawa, and Abematsu repeatedly visited our country to take part in congresses and conferences of Mongolists, and meetings on Central Asian affairs and on the non-capitalist development of Mongolia. They exchanged ideas and information with us on Mongolian studies which assisted our historical and linguistic research.

The Party and government leaders of the day began to blame us for copying the work done in foreign countries. We repeatedly explained that since every country had studied its own history, language, literature, politics, and philosophy, all of us would have to use the same terminology for these subjects. We also had to study the characteristics of the research of these countries, since without possessing the scholars and institutions which used the universal theories and techniques of mathematics, physics, technology, geology, biology, and plant science, how could anyone possibly match the development of these particular countries? The critically important questions in research, including the terminology of subjects, had already been decided by the research organizations of these other countries, and consequently the names of the subjects are identical.

When choosing the direction academic studies should follow, it was felt that attention needed to be paid to the most critical long-term questions and topics at a particular time in the course of history, and to the wider aspects of natural, social, and technical sciences. While planning research work, it was crucial to pay attention to the prime demands of social and economic development, the proposed aims, the experience of other countries in planning research work, and the general trend of scientific and technical advances. Looking once again at an overview of the transformed organization, it was quite correct that our social scientists paid attention to observing and correcting the routine use of dogma.

Along with some Soviet scholars, our geologists had established several characteristics of the geological structure of the country and studied the principles of the location and development of all kinds of useful minerals and ores on the Central Asian plateau in the territory of Mongolia. Mongolia's tectonic and geological charts and ore strata were studied and charts showing predictive models were constructed and published. Also worth mentioning is the first national atlas of Mongolia, which appeared towards the end of 1980, having taken many years to compile. I met many times with the Soviet scholar A. Vinogradov and the academicians D. I. Shcherbakov, A. V. Sidorenko, A. L. Yashin, Kuznetsov, I. V. Luchitskii, A. A. Trofimuk and A. G. Vologdin. I listened to their relevant reports on and explanations of research in geology in Mongolia.

Following the above lines of research, our scholars relied on the methodology and experience of the scholars of the Soviet Union and other friendly countries. This work was carried out on a wide scale, and its subsequent publication was their contribution to the knowledge of our motherland. The research work done by our scholars between 1961 and 1980 led to the publication in 1981 of *BNMAU-yn Shinjlekh Ukhaany Akademiin tovch tüikh* [A Short History of the Academy of Sciences of the MPR]. As all relevant details can be found in this book, I will not repeat them here.

The infinite material universe and its endless potential development mean that,

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15 This book, written by Shirendev, was actually published in 1980, while its Russian version, *Kratkii ocherk istorii Akademii nauk Mongol'skoi Narodnoi Respubliki*, was published the following year, both in Ulaanbaatar.
at any one time, no inquiry, compilation or conclusion can be perfect. Only genuine achievements will continue to be handed down as being useful to successive generations of researchers. The tentative ideas and conclusions made during the above projects were cast aside when more advanced research allowed more far-reaching conclusions to become possible.

Brand-new paths of research were established within the system of the Academy of Sciences. In particular, the Department of Sociology was permeated by the methodology used in economics, mathematics, and sociology. In addition to the growth of research methods useful in Far Eastern studies, law, development of the industrial work force, architecture, science and information services and scientific logic, an initiative was also undertaken to produce a Mongolian national encyclopedia. The proposed contents of the several volumes of that encyclopedia were set forth in detail to reflect the aim of attracting a wide readership. However, progress in actually producing the work has been slow. Only one volume, a dictionary, has been prepared for publication.

Many new branches of science emerged in our country, including space research, genetic theory, electronics, solid-state physics, the use of computers in research, the manufacturing of research tools and equipment, the utilization of solar energy and energy from hot springs, microbiology, soil science, thermodynamics, research into radioactive particles, geochemistry, biochemistry, physics, and biophysical techniques.

Following the establishment of the Academy of Sciences, letters were received from foreign scholars and ordinary citizens with all kinds of suggestions. Information arrived from Gobi-Altai stating that the takh' was now extinct in our country. We sent people on a number of occasions to investigate whether this was in fact the case. Some claimed to have seen not more than one or two of these horses while others said that there were no takhi at all. As a result of this, we planned to obtain a few takhi foals from Czechoslovakia for re-introduction into Mongolia.

The Institute of Biology was established with the main aim of carrying out research in microbiology. The Institute of Physics and Technology led the introduction of computers and electronics into research work. Based on this research, the MONEL Company began to manufacture two thousand color television sets every year.

It was right that in establishing our model for future work, basic research development should take priority over technical development and supplementary research. Any such planning would need to take account of exploiting the rich mineral and fuel reserves of the country while simultaneously protecting the natural environment. All the problems associated with the appropriate development of the nation’s labor force were considered and resolved.

We also tried to coordinate the research activities of the Academy of Sciences with the research work being carried out by the university, colleges, and branch institutes. The Mongolian State University actively took part with the academy in research projects in chemistry, physics, biology, botany, philosophy, economics, and law and rights. Other colleges and branch institutes also took part in their own specialist fields of research work.

In 1962 a coordinating council was established for the Academy of Sciences. In 1966 the Institute of Scientific History, which was transferred to the control of the

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16 The takh’ or taki is best known in the West as Przewalski’s horse (Equus przewalskii). This small but robust horse is native to East Central Asia and is named after N.M. Przevalskii (1839-1888) who discovered it.
Council of Ministers, produced a long-term program on the key problems of the development of technology. Although it had focused on the above-mentioned program of objectives, on the Five-Year research plan and on the plan to introduce research findings into industry, its organizational methods were poor and its resulting failure was regrettable.

When the Soviet cosmonaut G. Titov visited our country I wrote a poem, part of which went as follows:

Well, will you tell us about the interesting things you have seen
along the way?
Will you tell us about your journey?
What are the unusual things in the universe?
What interesting knowledge has been gained?
Flying far away to these places, on your way to the sky,
what deserves special attention?
The space which you have flown through again
What use can it be put to in our lives?

At the invitation of the Soviet government, a conference was held in Moscow on November 15-20, 1965 on the peaceful utilization of space research. It was attended by the delegations of socialist countries, including Bulgaria, Hungary, East Germany, Cuba, Mongolia, Romania, the Soviet Union, and Czechoslovakia. The president of the USSR Academy of Sciences, Academician M. V. Keldysh, read a report on the main subject of the conference. Reports were also read by the director of the USSR Meteorological Office, Academician Ye.K. Fedorov, on the climate of the atmosphere and by the USSR Minister of Communications, N. D. Pisurtsev, on communications in space, and by the director of the Headquarters of the USSR Department of Health, V. N. Pravetskii, on space medicine and technology.

On November 18, our delegation met with the Soviet cosmonauts A. Nikolaev, P. Popovich, and A. Leonov at the Mongolian embassy in the Soviet Union. At this meeting, the cosmonauts gave a detailed description of space research and their own experiences. It was noted that Mongolia had participated in the initial work of processing the necessary food and provisions (dried meat etc.) that the cosmonauts required during their preparation for space and during the space flight itself. It was considered important that the representatives of all the national bodies should participate in coordinating and controlling organizations for the joint utilization of space research. Within two to three months, these organizations had absorbed the ideas of each country and the conference had agreed on several occasions to discuss the details of every question based on the national reports of the participant countries.

Following a resolution of the Council of Ministers on March 4, 1966, the Council for the Peaceful Utilization of Space Research was established alongside the Academy of Sciences. I was appointed its chairman. In April 1967 a gathering of delegations from the socialist countries was held in Moscow and the Intercosmos program was confirmed.

I led a Mongolian delegation to a UN. meeting on the peaceful utilization of space research held on August 14-27, 1968. The delegation included the Deputy Minister of Communications D. Garam-Ochir, the deputy director of the leading official meteorology center B. Myagmarjav, and an official from the Foreign Ministry Z. Rendoo.
On July 13, 1976 I signed an agreement between the Mongolian and Soviet governments on space flights by citizens of the socialist countries, and in 1977 preparations began for a space flight by one of our citizens. Personnel trained in space science were sent to study in the Soviet Union. A space research section was established in the Academy of Sciences and further work was carried out to select people for the space flight.

While these trained personnel were being prepared for the space research flight, the selection and training of our people and our participation in international space research was greatly assisted by the USSR Academy of Sciences and in particular by the chairman of the Interkosmos project, Academician R. Z. Sagdeev, the Vice-president of the USSR Academy of Sciences A. V. Sidorenko, the director of the Institute of Space Medicine O. G. Gazenko, Academician A. L. Yashin and the leadership of the Space City, in particular Air Force Lieutenant-General G. Beregevoinar.

As the time approached to prepare our people for the space flight, in July 1977 Academician B. N. Petrov visited our country for a vacation, during which he helped us greatly in our work. The chairman of the Council of Ministers J. Batmonkh and S. Jalanaajav, the secretary of the MPRP Central Committee, hosted a reception and had talks with academician Petrov which were highly significant for the preparations. Prior to Petrov’s visit, A. Nikolaev, V. V. Tereshkova and V. V. Gorbatko visited our country and met with us at the offices of the Presidium of the Academy, where they gave us important advice. Following the Vienna conference, all the working relationships were agreed to with Academician B. N. Petrov, with whom we met several times.

Petrov died in 1980, which was a great loss to the Soviet Union, the socialist countries, and world science. When confronted with this regrettable event, I was full of sorrow and attended his funeral. The publicity and organization for putting one of our people into space was led by the MPRP Central Committee. The Central Committee established a special commission, initially chaired by Secretary Jalanaajav, who was succeeded by G. Ad’aya. The commission included myself and B. Chadraa from the Academy of Sciences, J. Avkhai, who was Minister for the Protection of the Environment, and B. Dejid, Minister of Public Security. Why Dejid was included I do not know.

Soviet scholars had carried out much work in their efforts to conquer space and had made many new discoveries. The glorious son of the Soviet Union, Yu. Gagarin, opened the way for man to fly in space. Since then, many dozens of Soviet people have flown in space and people have flown to the moon. Soviet expenditure and finance were not only intended to satisfy the wishes of our country and the other nine countries to go into space, but also to do research into what was important in our lives in the unexplored vastness of space, to introduce useful things for the people of our world and for the national economy. The study of the many detailed technical requirements of the useful minerals on our planet, and studies of the climate, soil, water and vegetation could be carried out better from space than on the ground.

We selected J. Gurragchaa and M. Ganzorig (Gankhuyag being an embarrassing word in Russian, his name was changed to Ganzorig) from a large number of applicants. They undertook over two years of training at Moscow’s Space City in spacecraft technology and equipment, zero-gravity conditions, spacecraft operation, trouble-shooting, intelligent overcoming of probable difficulties, flying the craft and parachuting from it. In addition to training for a landing at sea, we had prepared over thirty of our own research programs, which they were taught to carry out.
Two weeks before take-off they went to Baikonur to make their pre-flight preparations. A Mongolian delegation led by J. Batmönkh traveled to Baikonur on March 22, 1981, and I also took part in a meeting with the cosmonauts. However, we could only communicate with them through a glass window with microphones and loudspeakers on either side of it. The delegation went to the space technology center and to the station which had prepared the space flight to learn about the systems and equipment of the other spacecraft. Each item of equipment on the craft and station consisted of a large number of gear wheels, mechanisms, nuts and bolts, and wires which made it almost seem like a living creature.

At the appointed time, the bus carrying the two cosmonauts arrived at the launch pad. The two cosmonauts were among the main group which emerged from the first bus. They were wearing the white suits which would be worn during the take-off and landing. At other times they wore ordinary clothing. This specialized clothing contained radio, telephone and signaling equipment and a powered breathing apparatus. Among the second group of people were two men who were wearing ordinary, military uniforms.

After the flight crew had given their report, the leading group of two crew members had their photographs taken with our delegation. The spacecraft Soyuz-39 was ready on the launch pad, attached to its rockets. Each rocket produced twenty million horse-power. Once the cosmonauts had entered the spacecraft, they connected all the systems of the spacecraft and linked some three thousand instruments and switches which monitored the spacecraft’s steering mechanism, electricity supply, radio, television, temperature, automatic controls, air, and living environment. These were all specially numbered. All those instruments and mechanisms were repeatedly monitored by many systems in the launch station and at the Moscow center. This work took nearly three hours to complete.

At about 5 p.m. Moscow time, we were 1800 meters away from the launch site. At that moment V. Zhanibekov and J. Gurragchaa reported from the Soyuz-39 craft before take-off. When the command was given, flames appeared from below the rockets and a thunderous noise was heard. Five supports fell away from the spacecraft in different directions. The spacecraft consisted of three parts along with its rockets. It gradually began to pull away from the launch pad and, in the blink of an eye, gathered speed.

Five hundred and twenty-nine seconds later it had entered space. One hundred and eighteen seconds later, at a height of forty-five kilometers, the first stage of the rocket was released. The second stage broke away four hundred and thirty kilometers from the launch pad, and at four hundred and ninety one kilometers, the third stage began to work. Basically, within nine minutes, the spacecraft had begun its space flight. At this moment, all the Soviet and Mongolian colleagues who were watching from the observation area congratulated each other. The three-stage spacecraft, which could travel around the world in ninety minutes had been connected to the launch platform with four hundred interlocking “teeth.”

The cosmonauts V. Kovalenok, V. Savynykh, V. Zhanibekov, and J. Gurragchaa had been working feverishly aboard Salyut-6 and Soyuz-39. They knew everything on board the spacecraft and gave interviews with journalists. They also conducted over twenty studies in physics, technology, geology, biology, and medicine. They were also to observe the phosphorite deposit at Khövsgöl, the Tavan Tolgoi coal deposit [in the Gobi], pasture, water supplies and rivers, and valuable resources below the surface. The vessel orbited over the city of Ulaanbaatar at 8 pm on March 28.
Fourteen assignments were carried out, including the physical, technical, and technological study of some nuclear high-energy solar particles from space, the Tuya experiment, which studied the physical changes in the bodies of the cosmonauts, and the Polyarizatsi experiment, which measured to what extent sunlight was reflected from the atmosphere and to what extent it penetrated to earth and was transformed into heat.

In order to study the use of materials in space, all kinds of substances were melted, dissolved, and grown in the twelve Pristall experiments, the Erdem study of natural resources and the Biosfer-Mon study of the formations on the surface of earth which could be measured with instruments. The studies carried out included the Chatsargana (Sea Buckthorn) study, which examined how the cosmonauts were affected by the Chatsargana-enriched food during the flight, the study of the deterioration of physiological processes under conditions of weightlessness, the Biorhythm study into the influence of changing time patterns, the Time Period study and others.

While these programs were being devised, B. Chadraa, who was secretary of the commission and vice-president of the Academy of Sciences, carried out all the work of the commission on his own. The subjects studied in space followed the Interkosmos program and were useful for the production of geological and geographical maps, for the prospecting for useful and valuable mineral deposits, and the study of vegetation. The pictures taken from space have been very helpful in prospecting for oil and other raw materials, and for archeological expeditions.

Telegrams were received from Academician A. P. Aleksandrov, president of the USSR Academy of Sciences, and from the vice-president and chairman of the Interkosmos space project, Academician V. N. Kotelnikov, who warmly congratulated the Mongolian-Soviet space crew on board the Soyuz-39 spacecraft, and the Mongolian specialists for their jointly-designed flight plans in the Salyut-6 and Soyuz installations. The Soyuz-39 spacecraft was piloted by the Soviet commander, cosmonaut Vladimir Zhanibekov, and the Mongolian citizen, research cosmonaut, Jugderdemidiin Gurragchaa who completed all the planned research work and experiments of the joint Soviet-Mongolian space program and returned to earth on March 30. In conjunction with this amazing event of huge international significance, Soviet scholars, designers, engineers, technicians and space researchers sent warm congratulations to our country’s scholars.

When Comrades Gurragchaa and Zhanibekov arrived back in Moscow, they were received by a joyous Moscow public and by Leonid Brezhnev, the General Secretary of the USSR Communist Party and chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. The title Hero of the USSR and the Order of Lenin were conferred on them in a presentation which was transmitted on television around the world. When Zhanibekov and Gurragchaa arrived in Ulaanbaatar, they were received warmly and cordially by the Mongolian people. All the members of our space commission took part in several meetings, and their speeches appeared in the press. Gurragchaa and Zhanibekov were received and congratulated by Tsedenbal, who presented each of them with the order of Hero of the MPR and the Sükhbaatar medal.

The almas has been called the “antelope man” by our people. In other countries it has been called the “abominable snowman,” about which many things have been written. Many expeditions to find it have been made by the scholars of many countries. There have been fierce arguments about it and continual claims of proof that the almas does exist have been followed by silence. However, towards the end of the 1950s a clamor of
Through the Ocean Waves

interest arose again, and Soviet and American scholars began the process of studying it.

Professor B. Porshnev, a Soviet scholar and an expert in ancient and medieval history, suggested to the Presidium of the Soviet Academy of Sciences that research and expedition work should be actively carried out. When this question was discussed, biologists and archeologists argued among themselves whether such an animal could exist. Porshnev said, "Science cannot solve this question by argument, only by evidence!" No one was able to refute this. A commission which included various experts was established by the Presidium of the Academy.

This commission, headed by Porshnev, went out into the Soviet Altai, Siberia, and the Caucasus to gather local tales and legends. They also established links with American scholars, with whom they exchanged material. American scholars had written about repeated sightings in their own country of a bulky, hairy and large-footed animal. Copies were made of the footprints made in snow and mud, and these were published in newspapers and journals. The animal was known as "Big Foot."

Porshnev had the courage to turn to the research organizations of certain countries in Central Asia, including our own academy, and a letter from him arrived addressed to me. In the letter (which I have kept), he asked, "Because your country is one of the legendary habitats of the almas, will you help us by taking an active part in its study?" Before replying to that letter, I met with our leader Tsedenbal and explained the reasons why we should organize an expedition.

Tsedenbal said "there is no point in organizing such an expedition, is there? We should instead be carrying out research into things which would be of practical help in our lives." I wrote a letter to Porshnev saying, "I have received your request and I wish to correspond with you on this matter. However, it would be better if you send a copy of your letter through our embassy and addressed to Comrade Tsedenbal."

A few months later, Tsedenbal suddenly summoned me to his office saying that he had received a letter from the Soviet scholar Porshnev. He showed it to me and asked, "What do you think about this?" I replied that there were many legends about the almas in our country and that I believed we should send some people to find out about it. Tsedenbal agreed saying, "In that case, you may organize an expedition to go with him in connection with this matter."

J. Damdin, nicknamed "Cannon" Damdin, and the biology lecturer R. Ravjir were appointed to travel to Bulgan sum on the boundary between the aimags of Bayan Ölgii and Khovd, and to certain places in Gobi-Altai aimag on a number of occasions. Damdin spent a few months sleeping in mountainous and rocky places. Ravjir spent a whole year there, living all through the winter and summer. As they conducted searches, they gathered a considerable number of legends and information about the occasional sightings of the almas creature.

This material ought to be in the archives of the Academy of Sciences. When I discussed the matter with B. Rinchen he was very interested in the original question and once traveled to the place where Damdin and Ravjir were conducting their search. On meeting with them he gave them much advice based on his own thoughts and ideas. While Rinchen was doing that, he obtained from Ravjir and the others a human skull bearing some whitened hair and returned with it to Ulaanbaatar. According to him, the thing might have been the skull and hair of an almas. It was sent to a research laboratory in Poland. We received a reply from the Soviets saying that it was not an almas and from the Polish side saying that it was.
Once, during a seminar given in Ulaanbaatar by some frontier guards and the chief of a frontier post, I asked Tsedenbal for permission to meet with them. We had a long talk about the almas. I asked them, “Since you all frequent the remote mountainous regions of Mongolia, would you help us seek out and capture a live almas creature? As you possess binoculars and accurate, rapid-fire weapons, you have the means to give us this assistance.” I also promised them appropriate rewards for success.

They were all very interested in what I had said and promised to try as hard as they could to find one while patrolling the frontier. They agreed that it would be a fascinating assignment. They gave Damdin and Ravjir much information of a legendary kind. After Ravjir had spent the winter in the Gobi-Altai mountains, he found some dried dung, but it was difficult to tell whether it was of human or animal origin. He found the footprints of a large animal in mud and brought back some impressions of them. Again, when we delivered these to a Soviet scientific laboratory, they sent a reply saying that it was doubtful that these were the droppings or footprints of the almas. Thus, the research came to an end.

In actual fact, if one considers the views of the scholars of the world on the subject of the almas, there are many different opinions. A considerable majority believe that such an animal might have existed in ancient times, since there are many legends about it in Central Asia. There also could have been ape-like animals in the Himalayan mountains in pre-historic times. This is why European scholars have named it the “Snowman.” Japanese scholars have accepted this idea and have been carrying out research in the Himalayas for many years. Another group of scholars claims that the almas probably wandered into those countries during an earlier era. Since the creature was wild and lived in remote grasslands, it fled from modern development, but it is not clear whether it became extinct. Even now, news of new sightings of the almas crop up from time to time. We can only say for sure that almas exists when we actually find one. The search for the almas will continue to attract the attention of readers.
As a Servant of the People and a Messenger of the Government

I was elected a member of the Ikh Khural for the first time in 1949. From 1951 onwards I was elected a deputy of the Ikh Khural at ten elections. On my return from doctorate studies in 1960, I was elected a deputy from Sükhebaatar aimag in the fourth elections of the now very different Ikh Khural.

Having worked in the permanent commissions of the assembly in the areas of culture, education, and health, I was both elected a deputy in the fifth elections held in 1963 and elected deputy chairman of the Ikh Khural, a position I held until the tenth elections. Since I had been elected a deputy representing Ulaanbaatar city and several aimag districts, I used to meet with the workers of industrial, agricultural, cultural, educational, and scientific enterprises. It was also my duty to ask them to give talks on their own work or professions, to ask questions and obtain answers, and to find out about their own aspirations.

When I met the electors, they had many interesting questions and made various demands which turned out to be linked to some aspects of the fundamental roles of deputies. These included the question of fulfilling the assignments given by the electors and accepting their requests, reaching appropriate decisions on matters at the responsible offices of the executive administration of the Ikh Khural and at the Party committees of Ulaanbaatar city and the aimags, the passing on of the methods of the central government and especially those of the State Planning Commission to the proper authorities, including the annual plan and deciding what items were appropriate to include in it, and the reporting by the aimag administration to the electorate about what in the plan was not achievable.

We intended to take up the request made by the electorate regarding the improvement of education for young people, and in particular, to exert more vigilance to prevent crime. The research on this matter was assisted by the State Procurator, the Supreme Court, the Mongolian Revolutionary Youth League, the Committee of Senior Personages in the Revolutionary Youth League, the Committee of Senior Personages in the Revolutionary Movement, and the Academy of Science’s Institute of Philosophy, Sociology and Rights. We released the results of this research during 1980. In order to improve the education of young people, as much research-based advice as possible was provided in open forums.

A supplementary report was presented at an assembly of the Ikh Khural on June 29, 1972. The title of the report was “The Useful Exploitation of Natural Resources and the Preservation of Surrounding Areas Based on some Fundamental Scientific Questions.” The report included the idea that the protection of nature should be placed at the forefront of science. The successful implementation of the experience of the Soviet Un-
As a Servant of the People and a Messenger of the Government

ion and other countries in preserving their own natural environment was put forward as an example. Prior to this, Marx and Engels had taught that a failure to be culturally oriented would result in a growth of disorder and ultimately nothing but emptiness. Here, I will highlight some items in the original report:

Throughout their lives, people breathe the air, drink the water, utilize what is directly produced by nature and process its raw materials. Thus, nature is the source for satisfaction of the material and intellectual needs of mankind. Mankind, surrounded by nature, along with nature itself, tries to mutually serve one another in many ways.

The whole fabric of society, and of industry in particular, relies on human and natural resources. And as all activities follow the laws of nature, mankind is inseparable from it. Lakes, rivers, springs, and wells irrigate the soil, grow vegetation and are useful for the conservation of water resources. On the other hand, we must of course, fulfill the important duty of coordinating the use of water in forests, rivers, springs and wells. Around some of our rivers, in particular at the source of the river Tuul, excessive cutting of trees and vegetation has occurred. The natural balance of water has been lost and either flooding occurs repeatedly or else the river water easily evaporates.

Game animals, which provide a large amount of national income, are an important part of nature. Due to the suitable condition of the water resources in Mongolia, there are many kinds of fish in the rivers, of which a considerable number are important in game fishing such as sturgeon, sagamkhai,¹ sigov,² and carp. There are favorable possibilities to increase the extent of game fishing and the variety and stocks of game fish. The hunting of wild animals and birds is a large additional source of national income.

The lack of attention paid to the structure of herds of wild animals and the indiscriminate use of modern guns and automatic weapons has led to the excessive killing of mature [breeding] animal species. This has adversely affected the gene pool of the majority of these species of wildlife. Our research workers and biologists have put forward principles to be used in the protection plans of all categories of game resources in every aimag.

Of all the natural resources, useful minerals are unique in being non-replenishable. Because of this, the utilization of non-renewable resources is different from that of renewable natural resources. We should pay attention to the fact that we are only conserving iron, copper, and lead, and that pure forms of these metals are almost never encountered in nature. It is important to look at the correct utilization of minerals and raw materials.

Our country is making efforts to protect nature along with the Soviet Union, China, Japan and the countries of Asia and the Pacific. With the aim of maintaining a clean environment, the government and institutes of the Soviet Union set out a clear policy to stop the testing of nuclear and biological weapons of mass destruction and to prevent the use of these weapons. As this initiative had the approval and support of the people of the world, great steps were being taken towards an agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States.

Our government passed resolutions and laws on the utilization of land, hunting, fishing, and the proper exploitation of mineral deposits, and the Ministry for the Protection of Nature was established. This was all useful for coordinating and directing the practical activities of the national and cooperative organizations in the utilization of natural resources. In order to use these natural resources more effectively than was done previously, it was important to perfect and fully carry out all aspects of practical organization, research, publicity, education and artistry.

Regarding the matter of clean air, there was a particularly important obligation to

¹ A salt water fish, possibly a kind of perch.
² I am not familiar with this fish.
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give thought to the location of residential areas and factories at the original planning stage and to plant greenery in residential areas. It was even more important to organize orderly routes for automobiles which were polluting the air with dust and damaging the ground around cities, aimag centers, and villages and settlements in general. People will become compassionate and thoughtful through having an understanding of nature and an inclination towards natural things.

The protection of nature involves the correct use of resources, and the careful treatment of animals. It is particularly important that education in nature conservation be carried out by schools and youth organizations. From ancient times our people were careful about fire and steppe fires. There is also a good tradition of keeping water clean and pure, burning animal bones and refuse, and looking after young trees.

When I was working in the Council of Ministers from 1956 to 1957, we began an experiment to mobilize the work force to plant trees all the way from the Industrial Combine to the Merry-go-Round and towards the slopes of Mt. Chandmani. It was also the aim at that time to plant trees and shrubs in Ulaanbaatar, in aimag and sum centers, and in towns and settlements in general.

The beauty of nature encourages the creativity of people, stirs up their feelings, and brings forth their enthusiasm. With the aim of promoting the protection of nature I wrote several poems and stories one of which I will quote here.

\[\text{AN AUTUMN'S EVENING.}\]

Everyone wishes for the rising sun  
The sun shines on us for a long time too.  
Illuminating all animals  
Reviving all living things  
As the golden sun travels  
Far to the west  
Illuminating every corner of the world's lands  
The two neighboring Universes of the blue sky  
Encountering each other on their way back  
Interrupting you in your encounter here today  
Let's join together on another pleasant morning.  
The sun, following its destiny  
Speaks to its well-known earth.  
Looking for a warm shelter  
Our cherished sun  
Where lies buried our fortune  
Again beaming in the early morning  
Before returning, with its beams  
Signalling its salute in a hundred thousand directions  
In that way, behind the mountains on the other side  
Becoming beautiful and clear  
Why did it begin to set?  
Like all the lofty heights of our land  
Meeting the rising sun  
The evening sun was reflected in my neatly arranged room  
Seeing it off with tender feelings and wish to meet it soon.  
Below the sparse cloud  
Above the protruding mountains
Staring in any direction the view becomes clear
The wafting tree tops
Are seen for the last time
The evening’s dimness has arrived,
The myriad planets glitter
Rising early the next day
Wanting to greet the rising sun
Our land rests
The dawn sleeping peacefully.

December 1961

The Presidium of the Ikh Khural assigned me to take part in the bilateral activities of the International Parliament. I represented our government in a visit to India and Nepal from November 20 to December 10, 1964. After we had visited India we flew from Delhi via the Indian city of Patna to Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal. We could see farmers working in fields on the lower slopes of the mountains there. Although it was winter, Kathmandu was pleasantly warm and the air was fresh, like the middle month of our autumn. The snowy-white mountain ranges of the Jomolungma peak of the great Himalayas were always visible from Kathmandu airport.

Nepal was closely linked with the historical origins of Buddhism. The people of Nepal had been struggling for several hundred years to revive and protect their ancient history, culture, freedom, and independence. They achieved their independence in 1923.

Farming and livestock-raising occupied the dominant positions in the Nepalese economy. In addition to the growing of wheat, maize, sugar cane, and cotton, sheep, yaks, and other animals were raised in mountainous areas. The people made artistically designed carpets, textiles, and other items from silk, iron, wood and clay. They were especially talented at producing handicrafts. For this reason, their Buddhist works of art and implements used to be highly praised by the Mongols who had a saying, “A Nepalese blacksmith makes something in one strike when other blacksmiths need to strike it a hundred times.” Later on, Nepal began to develop weaving, cement, and automobile-repair industries.

Diplomatic relations were established between Mongolia and Nepal in 1961. In the winter of 1964 I had an opportunity to visit Nepal at the head of a Mongolian delegation. Our delegation was warmly received in the majestic building which housed the government of Nepal, and we were accommodated at the Royal Majestic Hotel. While we were staying there, the flag of our government continued to fly from the top of the building.

Kathmandu is located on the lower slopes of a mountain and contains ancient establishments and many old buildings, including some palaces which look like Buddhist temples. There were religious temples, stupas, walls and several gates in every street. The people in the town were mostly Nepalese, and there were also quite a few Indians and Tibetans, but few Europeans.

We went to visit the stupas and a temple called Chodon Jaran Khashuur, built in

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3 For some additional comments by Shirendev on this and two subsequent visits to India, see his “My impressions on India revisited,” in Mongol ba Enetkheg, edited by Sh. Bira (Ulaanbaatar, 1989).
4 Known in the West as Mt. Everest.
early times on a hill called Soyombo-Narst to the northeast of the city. This temple had been built with the help of Mongolian lamas. A tiny forest had been planted on the mountain side where a huge number of monkeys ran about all over the place, screeching as they went. There were Nepalese and Tibetan worshippers around the many large and small stupas which had been erected according to Buddhist tradition. Many pilgrims could be seen prostrating themselves in a manner which reminded me of the temples of the pre-Revolutionary period in Mongolia.

While we were learning about the memorable things in the temple and the religious ceremonies being conducted there, we were surprised to be greeted by some old lama pilgrims who had left several aimags in Inner Mongolia forty or fifty years previously.

During several meetings we had in Kathmandu with the regular leader of the Panchkhya government assembly, his deputy and other members, they asked us to explain the details of the organizations of the supreme and executive bodies of the Mongolian government, their activities, and the principles of the Ikh Khural elections. The prime minister of Nepal, the Honorable Tulsi Gira, and his Majesty Mahindra Bir Vikram, the King of Nepal, each received our delegation in their respective palaces, and we have fond memories of discussions about a visit to Mongolia, Mongolian affairs, meetings with Party and government leaders and relations between the two countries.

We visited a place called the Academic Institute of the Kingdom of Nepal, where members of this institute, including many senior figures aged over seventy, had gathered to greet us. They told us about the dictionaries and the introductory explanations they had written in certain old books and about the initiatives they were carrying out on historical and linguistic texts. This reminded us of the early work which we ourselves had carried out at our Institute of Science.

We agreed to their request to give a short talk on the position of science in our country, following which they asked us many questions. They were very interested in the development of science in our country and regarded us as having a degree of expertise in this field. Following an initiative by the Nepal-Mongolia Friendship Society, some Nepalese cultural and public organizations gathered in a small club house to greet our delegation. We replied to speeches given by some of their people and expressed the thanks of our nation. The club house had also arranged a display of Mongolian photographic scenes. After the meeting, the leaders of the Nepal-Mongolia Society presented each member of our delegation with a traditional Nepalese tiger-skin hat. This reminded us of a similar custom among our own people.

At the official reception, the ministers of the Kingdom of Nepal, government officials, and public representatives asked us about Mongolia with great interest. Among the Nepalese people there were some with genuine Nepalese features, while others had Tibetan and Indian features, and there were quite a few people with a Mongolian appearance. Nepalese and Mongols have many religious words in common and also occasionally other words, like soembo, [the Mongolian national emblem] which had a common origin.

We continued our return journey from Nepal with a visit to India. This was, in fact, my third visit to this country. The word India had a gentle ring to it. Indian literature and scholarly works had been translated into Mongolian through the medium of the precious and historically important and scientific Tibetan language. These works flourished among the Mongolian people, who often discussed the interesting tales and legends of
As a Servant of the People and a Messenger of the Government

the land of Jagar and its famous Himalayas, and the holy water of the river Ganges. I too had a real interest in Indian books and literature.

Friendly relations between our two countries began in the early 1950s, from which time there was a broadening of the mutual understanding between us. From the 1950s onwards, when I was taking part in both major and minor international peace conferences, I came across Indian scholars, public figures and politicians. Among them were Ramashveri Nehru, Ramesh Chandra, the nuclear physicist Kosombi, the judge Singh (Sengee) and others. In 1946 Djavakharlal Nehru was appointed as a professor of the Gandan religious school in Ulaanbaatar, and after the founding of the Academy of Sciences, he became one of its foreign members, along with the Indian political figure and philosopher Gatkha Krishnan. This showed our deep respect for ancient India and its scholarly works.

I first visited the famous country of India in 1963 along with the historians Sh. Bira and Sh. Natsagdorj. We were taking part in the activities of the Twenty-sixth International Congress of Orientalists. We listened as [Prime Minister Jawaharlal] Nehru delivered his greetings at the conference. That great man had a slow gentle manner, and although he was old he came across as a handsome, elegant, and profound character.

On that occasion we stayed at the Hotel Djamlat and visited the Red Fort wall, the Buddhist Pearl Temple, the Far Eastern Institute established by the Mongolist scholar Arkhu Bira, the famous medieval architectural monument, the Taj Mahal, some Indian cultural and religious centers and various other memorable places.

My second visit was in 1964 as leader of the delegation of the Ikh Khural. In addition to visiting those memorable places again, we laid a wreath at the memorial of that famous father of modern India, Mahatma Gandhi. We met with many people, including members of the upper and lower houses of the Indian parliament, the famous woman Naidu Khand (there are many Mongolian women with the name Khand), and with Hussein, the deputy president.

On November 26, 1964, we were received by the Prime Minister of India, Lal Bahadur Shastri, with whom we had quite a long and close discussion. He was a somewhat short man, and had warm eyes and a jovial manner. After listening to our talk he said that the old Mongolia was successfully developing along its path of modernization and he approved of our peaceful foreign policy. In the middle of his conversation he said his name Lal meant red [Ulaan] and Bahadur was hero [Baatar] so that his name was the same as that of our capital city!

He mentioned in his speech that India had become both an agricultural and industrial country. In addition to the development of machinery, machine tools and spares, electrical equipment and chemicals, her traditional culture, art, and literature were also developing in a modern framework.

Nehru had written a work entitled The Opening of India, in which he wrote: “India has either obstinately held on to its old customs or else has been over-grateful for foreign culture. Thus, we have carried on with our former way of existence, but also need to look for new things to do.” His suggestion was actually implemented. In reality, the traditional economy, culture, and civilization of their country had flourished alongside their deliberate adoption of the heritage, culture, and civilization of foreign and, in particular, European countries. All the leading figures in the country sensibly felt that this was good for the country.

In 1980 I visited India for the third time, again as a leader of a delegation of the
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Ikh Khural. On this occasion we visited the two cities of Benares and Sarnat, both of which had produced Buddhist teachings. I saw a considerable number of historical sights there. We also met with a large number of government officials, public figures, research workers, artists, and literary authors. During the evening we watched artistic performances and traditional singing and dancing.

We were received by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi with whom we had some pleasant discussions. When Gandhi met us she was standing right in the middle of a beautiful carpet in the official reception room of her palace. She adjusted her gown, called a sari, a tiny amount and invited us to sit down. Although she appeared tired from her work, she looked at us gently with her wise sparkling eyes and thanked us.

On December 25-26, 1980 the delegation of the Ikh Khural visited Bangladesh. We were received there by President Rahman, Vice-President Ablus Saitar, Prime Minister Sheikh Azizur [Zia ur] Rahman and many other public figures. We were taken to some commemorative places in the Bangladeshi capital, Dacca, and the cemetery on the banks of the river Ganges.

The First Congress of Asian and Afriacian Nations was held from April 18-24, 1955 in the Indonesian [summer] capital city of Bandung. This congress included countries which in total covered a vast area of Asia and Africa. The strengthening of friendship and cooperation between all the nationalities and the defense of national freedom and independence against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism were a valuable contribution to the struggle which these countries were carrying out.

The tenth anniversary celebration of the Bandung conference was attended by various national delegations, including one from North Vietnam led by its president, Pham Van Dong. I headed the Mongolian delegation, which included the ambassador to Indonesia D. Tsevegmid, and the Foreign Ministry official O. Damdindorj. The North Korean delegation was headed by Prime Ministerial Secretary Kim Ir Sen, and the Chinese delegation was led by Prime Minister Zhou Enlai. The chairman of the government council of Sudan also took part, in addition to delegations from India, Pakistan, Mali, Ghana, Ethiopia, Nepal, Lebanon, Iran, Tanzania, Zambia, Afghanistan, Jordan, Japan, Cyprus, Morocco, and Kuwait.

Sukarno, the president of the Republic of Indonesia, received the delegation. Receptions and formal ceremonies were arranged at Merdeka Palace in Jakarta, at Bogor Palace near Jakarta, and on the island of Bali to the east of Jakarta. Indonesia consists of the Malay peninsula and over 3000 islands.

The Indonesian capital, Jakarta, was located in the northwestern part of the island of Java. There were many ancient temples and buildings on the island of Bali, and many outstanding craftsmen worked there, using wood and metal to make figurines of people and buddhas. In a courtyard in the Museum of History in Jakarta we saw part of the stone monument erected to the Mongolian leader and the troops who lost their lives in an ocean storm called a typhoon while they were sailing towards Japan during the reign of Khubilai Khan.

During this time, we held several meetings with the delegations from China, Indonesia, and other Asian and African countries. Talks were held on the planning and

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5 Bandung, like Bagio in the Philippines and certain other mountain resorts in tropical countries, serves as the "summer capital" of Indonesia. The actual capital is Jakarta, as Shirendev correctly states later on.

6 Shirendev is mistaken here. The Malay peninsula does not belong to Indonesia but is part of Malaysia.
preparation for the congress of Asian and African Nations to be held in Algeria. Secret
discussions were also held on which countries were to be invited to participate in it.

The main conference ceremony was held in Bandung, where President Sukarno
delivered his congratulations and talked about the significance of the first Bandung con-
ference and the further development of its views. The government leaders who had as-
sembled at the conference gave short speeches, and in addition to declaring the full sup-
port of our Ikh Khural and government on the above mentioned matters, we were deter-
mained to obtain the details of the forthcoming conference in Algeria.

Because they were careful to exclude the Soviet Union from the conference de-
spite its huge Asian territory, we met with some of the delegates of the tenth anniversary
meeting to state that our country was determined to allow the Soviet Union to take part in
the conference in Algeria. With Tsevegmid in the lead, Damdindorj and myself concen-
trated on meeting the people who had arrived for the conference. We maintained that the
rising figures of India and the majority of Asian and African countries should not organ-
ize a conference in Algeria without the participation of the Soviet Union, this obviously
being the view of our government. We agreed with Pham Van Dong on this question, and
although he came to our hotel from his own accommodation in the palace, as we had
been sent on a different course, we were unable to meet. We arranged to meet on two
occasions but in the end we were unable to do so.

One evening, the delegations went for an informal stroll to a public square in
one of the gardens in the main town on the island of Bali. The Indonesians gave a con-
cert which lasted a few minutes, and then we ourselves danced and sang together. This
involved the leaders and some members of each delegation demonstrating their own
dances to the best of their ability. During the dancing that evening, a tall handsome
young man of mixed Anglo-Indonesian race led the festivities. He invited the delegates,
leaders and ordinary members alike, to sing any songs they knew. This announcement
was greeted with applause by President Sukarno, his second wife, a twenty-four year old
woman of Japanese [?] origin called Devi, and court ministers. We could hardly wait to
hear the singing of the honored delegates.

Sukarno had a talent for literature, art, music, and painting. In fact, he himself
had composed the music and lyrics performed for the Bandung conference. In addition,
the plans he had made for new, modern buildings were displayed in exhibitions where his
oil paintings and water colors were on show. Sukarno was clearly a politician, but one
with a knowledge of many languages. He was a good speaker who held literature and art
in high esteem and had a quick mind.

The delegations flew to Bandung in a number of different aircraft. I was invited
to sit in the plane with Zhou Enlai, at which point I thought I might have a chance to dis-
cuss the Algerian conference with him. I had managed to find an interpreter so as to ask
Zhou about the preparations for the conference to be held in Algeria, but Zhou kept his
eyes fixed on the scenery visible through the window. He pointed to the top of a smoking
volcano. Sukarno turned to me and said, “Look at that. We could go several times around
the hole in the top of that volcano.” We all gazed at it with interest.

When we went back to our seats I tried to raise the question again, but [Zhou]
continued to waste time looking through the window and commenting that “The moun-

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7 The capital city of Bali is Singaraja.
tains of Indonesia are just like those of Southern China. Then the secretary of the Central Committee of the Indonesian Communist Party came along and talked merrily through his interpreter, thereby using up all the time we had left.

In spite of that disappointment, what we had learned from the others turned out to be true in the end. Although it was Algeria’s turn to host the conference, this did not come about. There were various reasons for this, including the fact that President Akhmed Ben Bella had been deposed.

Around the time Prime Minister Zhou Enlai arrived for the anniversary celebrations of the Bandung meeting, several hundred Chinese performers were also arriving. A few of the Chinese female performers came to dance for us at an evening reception. They were accompanied by some Chinese musicians playing the *huqin* and *sanxian* instruments. Premier Zhou Enlai stood up and began to sing an ancient Chinese long-song, at which point all those present applauded and invited the other delegates to sing as well. This invitation was supported by Sukarno’s second wife, Devi, who ran up to all the delegates asking “Which of you can sing?” in the manner of a dissolute woman.

As soon as this request was put to our delegation, Dondogiin Tsevegmid replied that although he himself could not sing, the young Damdindorj would sing for them. Damdindorj replied that that he could do anything else, but not this. While I was begging and cajoling him to agree, Tsevegmid had given my name to the young man in charge of the reception, who announced that the leader of the Mongolian delegation would sing. Because I too had never been able to sing, the three of us did not know what to do. The young man introduced me to the audience in English and everyone applauded. Since I knew that there was no way out of it now, I sang a verse of a song from the play “Sharaigolyn Gurvan Khan” in a loud voice, unafraid of making a mistake in the words.

The strength of a tiger within my body
The weapons of war I hold in my hand
When we look at all you heroes
Our hearts will be filled with pride.

As soon as I sat down, the audience broke into loud applause, but I did not know whether this was due to politeness or a response to the unrestrained enthusiasm of my singing.

We had only a brief opportunity during the anniversary celebrations to look around the Indonesian capital and some other towns, and to see the local customs in rural villages. This country of many islands and peninsulas has a warm climate and plants and fruits are plentiful. On the island of Bali our delegation watched a mask dance performed by several thousand people which was a clear and very interesting portrayal of Far Eastern dancing similar to that in India, Ceylon, Tibet, and also Mongolia with its Tsam

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8 These are two traditional string instruments found throughout East Asia, including Mongolia where they are known as *khuuchir* and *shanz*, respectively. The *huqin* is bowed and the *sanxian* is plucked with the fingers. While they are now generally considered Chinese instruments, it should be remembered that, along with other instruments, they originated beyond China, most likely in Central Asia, whence they were imported into China, probably no later than the Tang dynasty (618-907). The *hu* in *huqin* is the traditional somewhat derogatory name given by Chinese to the peoples to the north and west of China.
dance. Many of the people were wearing costumes portraying animals. Taking part in the dance were legendary lions, tigers, elephants, snakes, dragons, ancient kings, lords and their retainers. There were many performances portraying the situation of the ordinary people. The dance music was performed in a wide square. This music reminded us of the dance music of India, Ceylon, Tibet, and Mongolia.

In addition to dancing we watched parades of the military and ordinary people in Jakarta and Busda. The procession of ordinary citizens consisted mainly of Indonesian women, who wore multi-colored scarves draped over their shoulders as they filed along dancing in a manner similar to the Dar’ Ekh dance routine which used to be performed in the monasteries of Mongolia.

We left Indonesia and flew to Beijing where O. Damdindorj and myself left before continuing on our journey home.

In January 1968 I led a delegation to Paris to sign a joint cultural agreement between Mongolia and France. Our delegation was received by the French First Deputy Foreign Minister and the government secretary Monsieur A. Betancourt. J. Boudevin, the director of the French Foreign Ministry department in charge of foreign cultural affairs, led the discussions on the French side. The agreements were signed by Betancourt and me. The French officials noted the great significance of the establishment of cultural talks with Mongolia, which might lead to further development of political and economic relations. It was obvious from the discussions that France paid much attention to the teaching of her own language abroad. This was an important point for inclusion in her discussions with other countries.

During our visit we learned about life in many of the towns and settlements in Northern France, and we visited the household of a private farmer. They owned about two hundred cows, from which they produced many thousands of litres of milk every year. They also had a small piece of farm land which they used for growing fodder. The planting work was done using two tractors, one large and one small. They also owned a few agricultural trucks, passenger cars, and some horse-drawn carts, which were used for doing work in the nearby fields. When they had finished their work, they and two employees explained their situation to us in detail. “I am a poor man with a small income and in a year I earn about half a million francs,” he told us.

We visited the famous Parisian cathedral Notre Dame, the Cathedral of the Virgin Mary, the Palace of St. Germain, which had been a venue for international conferences from early times, the mirrored Palace of Versailles, the monument to that famous woman Jeanne d’Arc, the Arc de Triomphe, the Eiffel Tower and the Sorbonne University.

On the outskirts of the city we visited the university’s nuclear physics center and entered the laboratory where the famous scientist F. Joliot-Curie and his wife Erna Curie used to work. F. J. Curie’s brother Pierre was married to the French scientist Marie Skodovskaya-Curie.

In addition, we visited the French Academy, the National Library, and the State Archives, where we found out about the ancient historical documents and the collections.

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9 Tsam is a Tibetan word meaning dance. A source of good illustrations of this dance and the masks used by performers is Werner Forman and Byamba Rinchen, Lamaistische Tanzmasken: Der Erlik-Tsam in der Mongolei (Leipzig: Koehler & Amelang, 1967).

10 We are unable to identify Busda.
of academic works kept there. On entering the French National Archives we saw the
document sent by the Mongolian emperor, Sultan II Khan-Ölziit, to King Philip of
France and a photograph of a page of the manuscript sent to King Charles of England.
This was kept in the manuscript collection in the State Library.

Valerii Zorin, the Soviet ambassador to France, greeted us and invited us to his
home where he and his wife had prepared lunch. We talked for nearly two hours. Zorin
happened to be one of the first Pioneers to be recruited after the October Revolution. As
ambassador to France he was a well-known diplomat, and he had been USSR Deputy
Foreign Minister at one time. When we talked about things which happened years ago, he
mentioned that when Mongolia was to be admitted to the United Nations, it was sup­
ported by the Soviet government and foreign ministry. Soviet diplomats came to an
agreement with the diplomats of other countries and with the UN Security Council in
order to secure the immediate entry of Mongolia along with Mauritania. The French told
us that they wanted to send a representative to Mongolia. This would be worked out by
Betancourt or the people under his direct control.

In July 1972 the French National Assembly invited a delegation of the Ikh
Khural to visit France from May 27 to June 3, 1974. The day after our arrival, we were
received by Edgar Faure, the leader of the National Assembly, who made a speech. After
a meeting which lasted half an hour, a lunch buffet was prepared for our delegation in the
Hall of the National Assembly. As our visit coincided with the meeting of the National
Assembly, we had an opportunity to observe its proceedings.

The French National Assembly consisted of four hundred and ninety members
at that time, and it was the custom that groups representing the same party sat together.
The sitting members of the French Communist Party sat at the left side of the hall, fol­
lowed by the Socialists, with the Centrists in the middle, then the Reformists, the In­
dependent Party, and the UDR (the Gaullists), who sat at the extreme right hand side.

Our delegation was given special seats. The session was opened by Edgar Faure.
The matters for discussion were announced and the new President, Giscard D’Estaing,
read his report. The leader of the Assembly then made an announcement: “Today, our
Assembly is being observed by a delegation of the MPR People’s Ikh Khural.” The par­
liamentary members then congratulated him with thunderous applause.

Our delegation visited a major demonstration of French science and technology
at Rambouillet near Paris, where the French Electricity Research Laboratory was located.
Many things were being done there with electric motors which could operate machinery.
The main manufacturing centers for French aeronautical and spacecraft equipment were
at Toulouse, Bordeaux, Marseilles, Cannes and Paris.

The delegates met with the members of the France-Mongolia friendship group
of the National Assembly, led by Monsieur Lagorce and over ten members with the rank
of bureau secretary of the Assembly. Lagorce opened the meeting with a short talk about
our visit to France. He remarked that France was very interested in developing trading
links between the two countries, as Mongolia was rich in horse meat, hides, leather, furs,
and natural resources which France was in need of.

During my two visits to Paris, I went to see some of the famous sights in the
city. These included the war-damaged cathedral of Notre Dame, the Champs de Mars, the
Opera House, the Louvre Palace Museum, the Palace at Versailles and the monument to
the French national heroine Jeanne d’Arc.

In accordance with my directions from the Presidium of the Ikh Khural, I met
with the officials of the leading institutions of each country I visited. The peaceful policy of Mongolia with regard to international problems was demonstrated by Mongolia’s social and cultural institutions and in particular her political organizations and elections.

We also learned about the activities of the leading institutions of the countries we visited. The senior government authorities of the two nations exchanged views on joint cooperation, a communique was issued and signings of particular agreements were carried out.

In 1969, following an invitation by the parliament of the United Arab Republic, I made my third visit to Egypt in a delegation headed by S. Luvsan, deputy chairman of the Ikh Khural.
Through Inner Mongolia

In 1989 I received an invitation from the scholars of Inner Mongolia University. Accordingly, in October 1990, I was able to spend two weeks there and saw many different things. The Inner Mongolians described their region as “a large and beautiful country of wealth,” which was made clear in one of their guide books.

The Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region was established on May 1, 1947 as one of the provinces of the People’s Republic of China. It has an area of 1,200,000 square kilometers and has a population of over twenty million, including two and a half million Mongols. The region consists of eight aimags, four cities, and 101 khoshuu and settlements. More than ten nationalities live together in harmony, including Chinese, Mongols, Hui [Chinese Muslims], Manchus, Koreans, Dagur, Khorchin, and others.

In addition to high mountains, dense forests, wide steppes, deserts, and gobi [semi-deserts], there are the Khatan Gol or Yellow River, and lakes and ponds. The region produces fodder for livestock, grain, vegetables and fruit. It also contains great mineral wealth. The region is rich in iron ore, coal, and oil. Since I had not examined the detailed economic statistics of the region, my understanding of them was limited.

As a consequence of the establishment of the autonomous region, I witnessed with my own eyes the revival of the culture, art, language, history and traditions of the Mongols and other races, and the development of their education and culture. For a few days I traveled by car around Hohhot and its surrounding area, the Ordos, and Baotou, which was the way I saw most things.

Hohhot stretched for several dozen kilometers in an east-west direction in a vast valley in front of a multi-layered plateau called Dalan Khar Uul. The valley contained plantations of forests, fruits and berries, vegetable fields and large fields of grain which were worked by many households living in densely packed buildings made of mud and brick. Mongols herded flocks of sheep. Though it seemed strange, we occasionally came across a Chinese herdsman.

Hohhot was founded in the seventeenth century and became a major political and economic center of the Tümed people. The construction of its first famous Buddhist monastery (Ikh Zuu) began in 1579. Sengedüren, the eldest son of Altan Khan of the Tümed, invited the third Dalai Lama, Sodnomjamts, to Hohhot, and asked him to recite the Buddhist texts of Sakyamuni. In 1652, the Fifth Dalai Lama stopped there for the mid-day meal on his way from Tümed to Beijing, and read some scriptures.

The temple buildings were constructed in a beautiful, artistic style and housed, among other items, the ten-volume Ganjuur, a valuable compilation embodying parts of the Mongol historical and cultural heritage. In 1986 this temple was declared an impor-

1 The Khorchins are not recognized as a separate nationality.
2 The Tümeds are a Southern Mongolian tribe.
tant monument and came under the protection of the state. Queen Mandukhai had spent some of her life in Hohhot. We visited a garden named after her. We had many opportunities to learn about the history of Mongolian culture and art and about the customs of the other nationalities when we visited the Five Stupas of Hohhot, the Baga Zuu, and the National Museum.

One of the sights in Hohhot was the department store for traditional Mongolian merchandise. Although it was a place for trading, in reality it also revived production of the many individual items used by the Mongolian races in early times, and so could be regarded as an important cultural museum for all the many nationalities of the region.

Hohhot was divided into old and new quarters, the old quarter containing temples, walls, enclosures, and a few streets with buildings made of blue brick. The new quarter, however, included Inner Mongolia University, Inner Mongolia Normal University, a theater, cultural palaces, and the building housing the government of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region. There were beautiful, modern and towering multi-story buildings, long streets, wide squares, forests, and many parks.

Hohhot was said to have a population of over 700,000, but there seemed to be few passenger cars on the roads, not from any lack of driving ability among the population but to conserve gasoline and keep the city air clean. In order to improve the health of its citizens, bicycle riding was very popular. The city had its own bicycle factory, and it was noticeable that the bicycle traffic was orderly and pedestrians gave way to cars. I was struck by the thought that in a country much like ours, with livestock including many hundreds of thousands of horses, the capital city, towns, settlements, and district centers all had bicycles and light, covered carriages which were manufactured using metal bearings, rubber, and light high-speed gears. Horse-drawn taxis had also been established to serve the urban population, thus saving fuel and keeping the air clean, which was a most advantageous way of reviving the traditional customs of the people.

The shops in the city carried both goods which had been imported through official channels and also many thousands of different useful items made out of the primary and secondary raw materials of the region. When I saw this, I thought that if we melted down all the glass we threw away, we could begin to make beautiful containers and all sorts of other goods. This, of course, is an initiative we ourselves should undertake.

We headed westwards from Hohhot towards the vast desert of the Ordos, where the shrine of Chinggis had been established. On the way, we stopped to look at Badgar Zuu, one of the famous old monasteries of Inner Mongolia. The artistically-created temple buildings had been built on a rocky cliff. We entered some of the buildings where religious services were held and which the people supported with all their hearts.

Despite the fact that this temple building had its own unique history, it had been falsely criticized and destroyed by the deviationists during the 1950s and the early 1960s. Actualy, widespread destruction did not occur until the so-called Cultural Revolution, which lasted from 1966 until Mao Zedong’s death in 1976, though its most actively destructive stage had ended by the end of the ‘60s.

We had lunch in Dongsheng, the neat compact capital of Baruun Tümed. On our way back we stopped at Baotou, a city of over one million people and the center of the iron-mining region. While we were there we learned a great deal about the history of the
area and its contemporary affairs.

As planned by Inner Mongolia University, we arrived at the Shrine of Chinggis, where we paid our respects. Over three hundred years ago, eight white gers were erected at this place and a large [religious] sacrifice was carried out. Chinggis’s belongings, legends, and other memorable items were still being preserved there. In 1954, the Government Council of the People’s Republic of China passed a resolution which authorized spending a large amount of money on this charitable cause, and a shrine was erected, thanks to the energetic participation of the leading political figure in the autonomous government of Inner Mongolia, the revolutionary leader Ulaankhüü.  

The local people had worked hard to stabilize the shifting sand dunes of the Ordos desert by planting trees and bushes there. The three large halls of Chinggis were located in a separate area of 55,000 square meters called Gandirin Shil, which had a large garden containing all kinds of trees. The roofs of the three sacred temples were in the shape of Mongol ger. The three pavilions were constructed on a platform one meter high. Five other sections had also been built, including a central temple with southwest, southeast, east, and west-facing temples. The central pavilion was twenty-four meters tall, and there were two eighteen meter-high pavilions on either side of it, each one having black and blue tiles on its roof. Right in the middle of the veranda beside the large door of the central pavilion was an inscription in gold lettering which read “The Shrine of Chinggis Khan.”

This shrine was proclaimed one of the important monuments of the People’s Republic of China. Inside the main pavilion there was a large figure of Chinggis carved out of granite, in front of which stood a few people offering tea, khadags, milk foods and [sacrificial] wine in accordance with Mongolian custom. The ancient ceremony was respectfully conducted by the remaining descendants of the famous original five hundred Darkhad people. Four young people dressed in Mongol deel recited the felicitations connected with the spirit of Chinggis. The whole ceremony was conducted by Sharaldai, the deputy chairman of the Chinggis Research Center.

After the ceremony, I went to look at the black and white flags and other things used by Chinggis and his close followers. These were all kept in the three pavilions. Within the halls of the pavilions, I saw how gers, palaces and other memorable things portrayed the customs of the Mongols.

I became well acquainted with the educational and academic work being carried out in Inner Mongolia. Inner Mongolia University was established in 1957, with Ulaankhüü as its rector. He continued to work there for a long period. Many famous professors who had worked with him succeeded him, including Chinggeltei, Buusiyang,  

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4 Ulanfu, a Tumed whose original name was Yunze, was born in 1903 [or 1904 or 1906] and joined the Chinese Communist Party in 1925. After 1949 he became the most powerful non-Chinese in Beijing, where he held many posts, including those of member of the party’s politburo and vice-premier of the national government. He became one of the chief victims of Mao’s “cultural revolution” and died some time during the late 1980s.

5 Chinggeltei, also Cenggeltei or Qinggeertai, born in 1924, became one of China’s foremost specialists in Mongolian linguistics. He served as vice-president of Inner Mongolia University, vice-president of the China Philology Society of Nationalities, vice-chairman of the Council of the Mongolian Philology Society of China, and vice-president of the International Association of Mongolian Studies. He is also a long-time deputy to the National People’s Congress of China.
Tûvshin,7 Buyankhishig,8 Choijinjav,9 and the elder and younger Baatar. They produced a large amount of scholarly work during their many years of teaching and leadership work.

At present, there are several departments in the university, including Mongolian language, Chinese language, history, philosophy, economics, law, and foreign languages. There is a center for research in agriculture, and research institutes in mathematics, theoretical physics, power and energy, biology, and other subjects. The university has a large library, and computer technology is being skillfully used for linguistic research.

Following the establishment in 1952 of the Inner Mongolia Normal College [now University], teachers were trained in educational science, Mongolian language, Chinese language, history, foreign languages, art, mathematics, physics, chemistry, physical education, and other areas. These two establishments of higher education also teach courses in Marxism-Leninism, political economic theory, and politics.

Much care was taken when the college buildings were being designed to aid the teaching process. For example, both of these institutions occupied a large area of land where woods, lakes, and ponds could be created. Accommodations for teaching staff, student halls of residence, a library, a cultural center, a refectory, a hospital, sports grounds, and other facilities were all built simultaneously for the convenience of the teachers, students and workers, and with the aim of strengthening the relations between these groups, which was considered an important task. This all reminded me of the layout of university buildings in England and France.

Inner Mongolia Normal University was, like Inner Mongolia University, concerned with academic achievement, but also carried out some research work and the training of skilled personnel. I was presented with some of the publications of the Normal University, including the two-volume Qauli jüül-ün bicig [Textbook of Law], Oyirad teikeen surbulji bicig [Source Materials for Oirad History] and Kôkeqota-yin teikeen Monggol surbulji bicig [History of Hohhot] in six volumes.10 In addition, Professor Chinggeltei of the university gave me some of his best work, and Professor Buusiyang gave me a cherished souvenir entitled Kelen-ü sinjilel-un uduridqal [Introduction to Linguistic Research].11

We are now broadening our relations with China, including the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, and study of the development of these countries will create an agreeable context for such studies. After President Ochirbat of Mongolia paid a visit to China and Inner Mongolia, Chinese Party, government, and cultural figures, including the Inner Mongolian leader, Bökhöö, visited our country, which was of great significance

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6 Born in 1934, Buusiyang, better known by his Sinicized name Baoxiang, was serving as one of Inner Mongolia University’s vice-presidents during Shirendev’s visit.
7 Tûvshin, also spelled Töbsin and Tubuxin, was one of the thousands of Mongol victims of Mao Zedong’s “cultural revolution.” In the 1980s, he served for several years as president of Inner Mongolia University, in which capacity he led a delegation to Western Washington University and some other American institutions.
8 Buyankesig or Buyankheshig was born in 1936 and is a well-known poet.
9 Choijinjav, also Coyijungjab and Queijingzhabu, was born in 1931. He has cooperated with Chinggeltei (q.v.) in field researches and has written several books on Mongolian dialects.
10 The first two titles were published by the Inner Mongolian Cultural Publishing House in Hailar in 1989 and 1985 respectively. The third title was published between 1987 and 1990 by the Hohhot Mongolian History and Literature Society.
11 Published in 1988 by Inner Mongolia University Press.
for the future development of the traditional friendship and cooperation between our two countries. The number of citizens traveling to and from both countries is increasing.

We Mongols can see and learn much from visiting our neighbors, China and Inner Mongolia. For example, thanks to the support and development of initiatives by service sector workers, herdsmen, and the light and food industries, their goods can be traded with foreign countries, or manufactured and processed for the nation. The development of the livestock sector and their outstanding expertise in vegetable growing, especially salad vegetables, fruits and berries, should be studied. Our citizens should make a visit to this country a supreme priority. Similarly, it will be even more useful for us to study the good work they have done in reviving their history, culture, and heritage.
Epilogue

I recall the efforts I made in my study and work between 1941 and 1981 as follows. While I followed this tortuous path through life I was very aware that my failures outnumbered my successes, although I have said little about them. After completing my doctoral studies between 1957 and 1960, I passed my doctorate examinations and returned home. I was then moved to the Institute of Science and the Academy of Sciences where I worked for the next twenty-one years.

During this time the MPRP Central Committee and all its conferences repeatedly castigated and vilified people such as the Party and government employees L. Tsend, D. Tömör-Ochir, Lookhuuz, S. Jalan-Aajav and others, who were dismissed and their actions described in detail in the press. They were discussed at meetings held in many different places, a commotion was stirred up, their human rights were violated, and they were sent into exile.

In passing, I will take this opportunity to mention another matter which took place before all this happened. In 1956, during the investigation into the activities of the Ministry of the Interior, Tsedenbal had concealed certain secret documents of Choibalsan, and a disagreement arose between Tsedenbal and Damba over the non-disclosure of these documents to the Politburo of the Central Committee and to the commission investigating the Ministry of the Interior. When Damba demanded the release of the documents, Tsedenbal thought that I too was against him and treated me with great suspicion. Relations worsened between the two of them, and Damba was dismissed from his post.

The former Party and government official N. Lkhamsuren included the following paragraph in his memoirs, published in Khödölmor on November 28, 1989: “Damba was told that N. Lkhamsuren and Shirendev had to be arrested immediately, as they were representatives of imperialism in our midst. To this day, Shirendev has been unaware of this.”

On re-examining the deliberate references made to “imperialist propaganda” in the 1956 Party Central Committee resolution on the intellectuals, what Lkhamsuren wrote was probably true. Actually, something like this did happen. While I was in Moscow working on my doctorate, a group of people, including Damba, were dismissed from their official positions. In addition, the Party Central Committee members who were appointed by the MPRP Sixteenth and Seventeenth Congresses blamed a considerable number of the deputies for all kinds of shortcomings. Those blamed were expelled from the Central Committee and from the ranks of the people’s deputies.

In accordance with the government’s electoral regulations, there was a widespread custom whereby matters were decided with a show of hands, without allowing for any discussion. In 1981 I experienced just such an event when I was dismissed from all official positions and forced to accept my punishment.

There is another little story connected with this matter. Earlier I mentioned that
in 1948 a resolution of the Central Committee of the Politburo was passed which dismissed me from my duties as a secretary of the Party Central Committee. Items in this resolution which were quoted as being "anti-Soviet" were kept in reserve for more than three decades by Tsedenbal, who then included them in the 1981 resolution.

In 1954 no attention at all was paid to the 1948 resolution, and I was appointed to senior official positions, including membership in the Politburo and deputy chairmanship of the Council of Ministers. I was also asked to work as chairman of the Mongolian-Soviet Friendship Society over a period of many years, and I was elected a deputy in the Ikh Khural. There had to be a reason why I was being praised and recommended.

I fell ill and I received treatment in Moscow from 1957 until 1960. When I returned, with doctorate in hand, Tsedenbal continued to view me with suspicion, and kept me under surveillance. Once he asked me, "If you say you were born in Arkhangai aimag, why does your registration document have Khövsgöl aimag printed on it?" I thought nothing of this and replied, "It's true, I was born in Arkhangai aimag, but in the 1940s our three sums Shine Ider, Jargalant, and Galt were incorporated into Khövsgöl aimag."

Afterwards, Tsedenbal sent some people to my native area on a number of occasions to meet with my family and the local people. I heard later that they did not find anything suspicious or untoward. He questioned me several times about whether my income had increased since I had become a member of several academies of sciences and had received a doctorate from Leeds University. However, this was not the case and so I was not found guilty.

However, the investigations continued, either at Tsedenbal's initiative, or at that of his wife or other people who were trying to obtain favors from the two of them. The meanings and relationships in a book written about me entitled Son of the Khangai Mountains published in the Soviet Union\(^1\) and in my own work Short History of the Academy of Sciences of the MPR\(^2\) were distorted in order to fit their own way of thinking, and to make my behavior appear strange to others. All these things were put together bit by bit, and this criticism of my "self-praise" was included in the Politburo resolution of 1981.

Whenever a new member was elected to the Academy of Sciences, it was customary to write a short biography of that scholar in order to introduce him to the research staff and to the readership in general. In accordance with this practice, the Far Eastern Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences decided to publish a tiny book about me, a task which was given to the research worker E. Novgorodova. The Academic Council of this institute discussed and checked the article and, after gaining the approval of the authorities, received permission to go ahead with it, with V. V. Grafurow as its editor.

The resolution which criticized me stated that I had the book written by my daughter-in-law with the aim of praising myself. Actually, she had been living with my wife's adopted son, and after leaving him, she did some research work in our country which led her to do a study of many people in my home area. She wrote her work based on the material she had collected, and I had clarified some points for her.

The resolution noted that "Shirendev had mentioned his name six times in the

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book *Short History of the Academy of Sciences of the MPR.*" In actual fact, this was in the context of the official signing of agreements with other academies. During this period, the work of the Academy of Sciences was investigated every year, sometimes on several occasions. Material on me was being compiled with the aim of gaining control of the academy in order to bring about an investigation of it. The veterinarian Maidar, who had no idea of how to conduct research work, was put in charge of the academy.

Based on an investigation into the activities of Tsedenbal’s entourage by the 9th Commission of the MPRP, *Une* carried an article on April 30, 1991 about Maidar which said that he had seized control of many organizations, such as the Academy of Sciences, but was unable to show leadership in running any of them. Several prominent figures who were working with him drew his attention to this problem time and again. Maidar deflected questions posed by the Academy of Sciences, but he did get some workers on his side and gave them assignments. He had them compile reports of shortcomings in the work of the academy and in my own work in particular.

But that was not all. The article also mentioned how he approached the question of the construction and location of the barely-conceived new academy building. The resolution made the important point: “The distant location of the buildings of the institutes from the city center has been a hindrance to research workers, and has caused them to fall behind in their work.” In addition, Maidar’s decision to prevent suitable people from working in the academy was aimed at reducing the number of staff.

In 1980, a commission was appointed, headed by D. Gombojav, who was a secretary on the Party committee in charge of trade affairs. Tsedenbal, together with Maidar, his deputy in the Council of Ministers in charge of the academy, secretly directed the work of that commission and collected a list of shortcomings in my work and in the work of the academy, “embellishing” them along the way.

Although this commission had a duty to examine the research organizations, it concentrated its efforts solely on the academy and its presidium, and did not check the branch institutes very carefully. After the commission had made its report, D. Tsevegmid, the deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, came up with the idea of transferring the academy’s institutes of physics and technology, mathematics, botany, biology, and chemistry to the Mongolian State University and other related ministries.

This idea, which would leave the Academy of Sciences with only a few institutes, namely history, language, and social sciences, was a return to the position the Scientific Institute was in before 1960. In reality, this was an attempt to disband the Academy of Sciences. I was furious about this and confronted Tsevegmid in my own abrupt manner, saying, “As a corresponding member of the academy, how could you suggest such an idea? Have you forgotten how, as a small fry, you defended your own candidacy for the Ph.D.?”

The chairman, Tsevegmid, was in a fix, but a clever idea got him out of it: “If Shirendev carries on giving Tsedenbal bottles of vodka,” he said, “he can get his staff back,” which was an unfounded comment. At the time, some of the leading people in the Party Central Committee and government reported that this kind of talk was going around. However, I thought it must have been a lie and I gave it little further attention.

So, in response to a suggestion made by the commission, the Party Central Committee passed a resolution on December 25, 1980 which was intended to criticize and disparage only the Academy of Sciences. However, at the initiative of the honest members of that commission, the short-comings in the branch institutes were also men-
tioned in detail. The resolution carried a list of twenty-four instructions to the ministries concerned with the Academy of Sciences, the National Committee on Science and Technology, and the National Committee on Higher, Middle, and Specialist Education. The majority of these tasks could not be accomplished in one year. They would take several years for completion. The Academy of Sciences remained under surveillance following this resolution, and material about me continued to be gathered.

Well before the Eighteenth Congress of the MPRP, as I was approaching my seventieth birthday, I asked Tsedenbal if he would allow me to retire before the Party Congress preceding the forthcoming elections to the Ikh Khural. Tsedenbal’s reply was, “You’re all right, carry on working.”

Soon afterwards, the round of elections in Chuluut sum of Arkhangai aimag decided to elect me as a deputy to the Ikh Khural. Tsedenbal told me to go to Arkhangai aimag and meet with the electors. As before, my short biography was distributed in that sum, and was praised and admired. As soon as I had been elected as a representative to the Eighteenth Congress of the MPRP, I was assigned to make a speech there to the Congress and, in accordance with practice then, I submitted my prepared speech to the editorial commission a month in advance of the congress. When my speech was returned to me before the congress, appended to the text was a note saying, “In this speech, you must mention the fact that Tsedenbal has been leading the Party and government for over forty years.” At the congress I was once again elected a member of the Party Central Committee. Five months later surveillance of the academy was still being carried out in an “energetic” manner.

It was likely that the joke about vodka had reached Tsedenbal’s ears. I surmised that material was still being collected on me. So, the question is, why did they hide the fact that they would soon be discussing me?

Then it all began. A meeting was held to unveil the findings of the public prosecutor’s office regarding the vice-president of the Academy of Sciences, corresponding member and physicist B. Chadraa, and T. Baldan, who was the director of the Institute of Chemistry. At the meeting, I briefed those present about the work of my two friends and said that there were good reasons to re-examine the areas which had generated the accusations against them.

Later, towards the end of December 1981 when Chadraa’s case was being discussed, the Party Investigative Commission held a long meeting at the end of which they condemned him, dismissed him from his post, and issued a decree expelling him from the Party.

As the meeting ended and we were about to leave, B.Dejid, the chairman of the Party Investigative Commission said, “Wait here, we will talk about you now. This material has been gathered about you.” He raised both fists, his face darkened and I wondered if he was going to take advantage of his large physique to knock me down. He continued in a ferocious, aggressive manner, “Strange types like you don’t know any Russian,” and put me through a Russian language examination. Many people spoke at that meeting and used the gathered material to blame me for a large number of things. “Whether you accept it or not, even harsher measures than this will be taken,” Dejid told me in a menacing way.

Because I had been in the Party for many years, I thought that I would not be expelled, and that anyway I had no option but to accept my guilt. A day or two later I received a message urgently summoning me to a meeting to be held in Tsevegmid’s of-
While I was waiting, someone entered and said, "Shirendev, you are summoned to a meeting of the Politburo." Tsevegmid looked aghast at me and said, "No, what on earth is going on now?" "You know more about this than I do," I replied curtly, and left.

On entering Tsedenbal's room, the entire Politburo, except Maidar, was already there, sitting and waiting. Dejid briefly explained to those present the contents of the resolution about me. Tsedenbal began by glancing in my direction. "Ah! Have you admitted all your shortcomings at the meeting of the Party Central Committee?" Then he added, "Well, anyway, a Politburo resolution will go out on this matter. Have you anything to say?" "I have nothing to say," I replied.

In theory, as I was a member of the Party Central Committee, both the Politburo and the Party Central Committee were supposed to inform me in advance about such discussions. So I felt that there was no need for me to say anything at the meeting. I accepted all their criticisms in silence. Since the resolution mentioned that if I disagreed with it I would be thrown out of the Party, there was no point in trying to explain anything anyway. The Politburo members sat in silence until Tsedenbal raised his hand and asked, "Well, is the resolution correct?" The members then passed it.

The Politburo member D. Molomjamts and deputy member B. Lkhamsüren both asked me, "Shirendev, don't you want to know what is said in this resolution which is trying to get rid of you?" For my information, they told me about a few things which were in it. As I considered it to be a slanderous but harmless resolution, I let them know that I agreed with it and left.

Several days later, on December 30, 1981, the Politburo of the Party Central Committee passed a resolution entitled "Concerning the Unprincipled and Irresponsible Activities and Self-glorification of Comrade B. Shirendev." This resolution was completely different from what had been described in the Politburo meeting. The charges had grown in variety and detail, and it was published in all the newspapers of the capital and widely broadcast on the radio.

As my wife was seriously ill, I was careful not to tell her what had happened, but curiously, my wife of many years seemed to have an idea of what was taking place. Then, soon afterwards she suffered a fatal [cerebral] hemorrhage. As the resolution appeared just before New Year, that was the first New Year which we did not celebrate in our family. It was spent in sadness.

The next day Academician Ts. Damdinsüren came to visit us and brought a bottle of vodka with him. "I have read that resolution which concerns you. Be brave, I have seen a lot of things in my time. I spent a year and three months in prison, have twice been thrown out of the Party and was rebuked on four occasions. There is still time to find out the reason for all this." The two of us then drank the vodka and talked about old times.

Among the many press reports and radio broadcasts about the resolution was an article printed in the Russian-language newspaper Novosti Mongolii. Articles were also translated into English and French for distribution by the embassies in foreign countries. Eighteen thousand copies of a special leaflet were printed and distributed. On January 28, 1982, an expanded meeting of the Party committee of the academy discussed the resolution. The late convening of that meeting permitted better preparation of "reliable" people who were to make speeches there. The fact that I was prevented from participating in the meeting was also contrary to Party rules and to stipulated rights under basic law.

It was my duty to admit to the shortcomings mentioned in the resolution, and I
would not deny that there were plenty of deficiencies. My only regret is that all those who criticized me at the meeting, including the Party Central Committee, the Politburo, and Tsedenbal, had not alerted me to the shortcomings in my work, but instead all made approving and supportive noises. As a result of all this, I realized at the time that you are taking a great risk when you trust people whom you know.

This meeting of the academy’s Party committee expelled me from its membership. Whether it was because the resolution had been translated into a number of languages or perhaps because they understood nothing about it, several newspapers such as the *Hong Kong Star* and *Renmin Ribao* carried a story entitled “Commotion in the Mongolian Academy of Sciences.” The *Renmin Ribao* said, “Shirendev was thought to be on the side of the Soviets, but in fact he has turned out to be on the side of the Chinese.” When this resolution was distributed through the Mongolian embassies, Mongols said, “We have expelled Shirendev from membership in our academy. Surely the same thing will happen in your academies.” However, the academies in these other countries said that no principle requiring this existed.

Even so, I remained a member of the Academy of Sciences as before. During the regular plenum of the Party Central Committee, Tsedenbal said, “You must have read what was published on Shirendev in the press. Let’s expel him from the Central Committee, shall we?” He raised his hand, and all the conference members also raised their hands in their usual, involuntary manner. I was also expelled from the presidium of the Mongolian-Soviet Friendship Society, and was relieved of my posts as president of the Mongolian Association of Graduates of Soviet Colleges, and as president of the Mongolian-Polish Friendship Society.

I was also expelled from the presidium of the Peace Committee. Not only that, but one investigator in the Ministry of the Interior, the Procurator’s investigator, Badarch, along with some others, produced an investigative report on me.

Once again I had been hit by an ocean wave and came close to disappearing. On occasion, well-informed friends would alert me, saying, “People are watching your door, and your telephone is permanently tapped, so be careful.”

I was dismissed as editor of Volume One of *History of World War II, First Edition*, which was published in 1980, and Sh. Natsagdorj was appointed in my place. I have a copy of the suggestions which I sent to the editorial staff who were correcting many pages of this book. They included the Bulgarian academician Sirkov, and the Soviet academicians Zhukov and Zhilin.

Later on, I wanted to have my name restored as one of the authors of the book and so on June 20, 1987 made an appeal to the Chief Procurator, S. Büdragchaa. This appeal was, however, transferred to the State Supreme Court on July 1, 1987, where it was handed over to the city judge. He replied, “As Shirendev has been punished by the Party, the appeal is invalid.”

Although in 1987 and 1988 I made further appeals to [Party leader] J. Batmönkh to have my case re-examined, I received no reply. However, in 1987, when I appealed to B. Lamjav, chairman of the Party Central Committee, to reverse the guilty verdict, the reversal was then properly carried out as requested.

It was said that my books had been prohibited and some had even been burned. My paintings, which were on display in museums and other places, were taken down and torn up. My part in the documentary *Tuulsan Zam* [Traveled Road] was cut out, my book *Khangai Uulyn Khiiu* [Son of the Khangai Mountains] was burned and things about me
in the Russian-language textbook *Raduga* were torn up during a subbotnik organized to destroy everything of mine.

From 1981 onwards I had been working on a textbook of historical notes entitled *Serel* [Awakening]. After I submitted it for publication, there were repeated delays until it was finally published in 1990. It is well known that it was not easy for me to get these recollections published. As soon as I had discussed this situation with the Party Central Committee Secretaries D. Namsrai and Ts. Balkhaajav, the appropriate organizations were informed that they were to carry on publishing anything written by me. About ten of my articles were published in various journals. These included the journal *Shinjlekh ukhaan am'dral* [Science and Life], the secretary of which was B.Ölziisüren, who gave it due attention and published quite a few things in the journal. After my meeting with these secretaries, I took part in an international conference in Ulaanbaatar and in two conferences in the Soviet Union.

After my expulsion from the academy, the New Year greeting cards which had been sent to me by foreign scholars were kept from me by the foreign affairs section of the academy for nearly two months. When I found out about this from someone, I went in pursuit of the greeting cards and was told, “Because your things are being examined by people from the Ministry of the Interior, we cannot give them to you.” I did not approve of this highly improper and illegal act and I spoke to the president of the Academy of Sciences, Ch. Tseren, and to the chairman of the Party committee, Kh. Tserev. They told the foreign affairs section to let me have the greeting cards, which I was then able to obtain.

After I was dismissed from my job, certain people who had worked together with me in the past were wary about meeting or talking with me. If they accidentally came across me, they would immediately try to get away, and occasionally even tried to find a way to rebuke me. Also, those people who had accused me in the past were still attempting to work their contrived material into newspapers and journals. Really, given how confused a period in history this was, it was understandable that certain types of people would appear and reveal themselves for what they were.

The herdsmen, workers, and the majority of intellectuals behaved towards me as they had always done, and continued to have a good relationship with me. While I was burdened by my thoughts, I revealed my emotions in a short article entitled “One Summer Night” (A Picture of Nature).

When confronting my powerful feelings under these circumstances, I wrote a few very short essays and articles which were banned at the time and could not have been published anywhere. I thought about the overcast sky which always clears, the falling rain which always returns and the setting sun which always rises, and so I wrote the poem “One Summer Night.”

Due to the harsh climate of our motherland, the rapid and abrupt transformation of the weather is taken for granted and is even useful in the everyday work of the Mongols, particular that of the country people. When I was staying at a summer camp I noticed how the weather could waver and be transformed in an instant, something which I mention in my reflections.
It was the middle of summer, and to the rear of a knoll which ran south from a rocky ridge on the northwestern slopes of the Bogd Uul, the pride of the capital, there was a wooded gorge which continued down and opened out at the place where the summer camp was located. A beautiful, sunny, July day drew to an end.

When the golden sun slanted towards the horizon far to the west above the wide, vast Tuul river valley, pink and murky-grey clouds were separating and sometimes rejoining like a floating camel caravan, and when taken in with a glance, looked like the looming brocades of a snowy majestic mountain.

Above the tall mountains to the west, the thick clouds still shadowed the slopes and hills of the plains, which were cloaked in a dark blanket.

Suddenly, for some unknown reason, the winds blowing from the northwest completely changed their direction and turned to blow from the south as if to see off the evening sun on its journey, the yellow sun surging westwards as it set. At a stroke, the stifling heat of the day was exchanged for the cool, fresh air of the evening.

In a magical way, as though blessed by nature, that abrupt fluctuation in the weather spontaneously influenced the characters of the animals. Cuckoos and other small birds fluttered their wings, soared into the air and chirped and frolicked to and fro. A beautiful flock of piebald magpies perched in line on the poles of the corral, twittering with their throbbing voices as hard as they could, as if forewarning of some dangerous event.

Having drunk their fill, a few cows lazily chewed their cud in the thick soft grass, barely capable of arising and standing as if not knowing why they were doing so. However, regardless of the weather, the black crows and grey hawks were used to flying high and expertly seeking out and scooping up the remains of food carelessly thrown away by the summer campers.

Before long the clouds gathered and coalesced to cover the sky and shut out the sun. In an instant, dusk arrived, beckoning in the night and its darkness. The shrill sounds of children and the lively talk of adults quieted down as noise died away from the traffic climbing up the paved asphalt road of the mountain valley. Suddenly, the summer campers became quiet. The gathering strength of the whistling wind was reminiscent of a spring storm on the open steppe. Flashes of lightning flew like sparks and when the thick, swarming black clouds were slashed open by these flaming arrows, the heavens gave out a vibrating, rumbling noise.

That frightening thunderous noise repeatedly rattled the windows, its echoes numbing the minds of the people. The tremendous noise coming from the heavens sounded just like the explosions from heavy gun fire during the war. The transformation taking place in the air caused the trees and bushes to sway in the summer camp. The tall, graceful poplars blocked the rushing whistling wind, with their long limbs and wet leaves
bowing, bending, thrashing, and entwining around each other. Acacia, larch, pine, spruce, and planted trees such as the bird-cherry tree clasped each other while remaining rooted, as if trading blows.

As midnight approached, the glaring, thunderous noise of the heavens subsided into the distance. But the rain still poured down without stopping, and flowed down the rain gutters from the roofs of the buildings, making a continuous gurgling noise.

The summer campers saw out this anxious night in different ways. The tired children, who had spent the whole day running about and playing, were used to sleeping soundly whatever the circumstances, tucked up in their warm, brownish-colored quilts. The thunderous noise of the rain and the damp coldness made some people try and work out the reason for this unusually dark night. They paced to-and-fro peering in vain through the windows. Others found ways to catch drips coming through the holes in the roof by placing buckets and basins underneath them. One clever person who had anticipated all possible needs, lit some previously prepared dry wood in the iron stove using an unseen ember, thereby warming the building. Some of the more argumentative people, who had not forgotten the floods of previous years speculated with glee that anything might happen in rain as heavy as this. However, those who had had some experience of life said that the evening rain would not last long, and as the old-timers used to say, a thunderous sky usually never ended in flooding.

As the summer campers had thought, the thunderous noise and glare of the night did not in fact last long. Suddenly, by the middle of the night, the heavily falling rain seemed to die down and stop. The thick clouds in the night sky were blown away by the wind turning from the north, and while the clouds were being dispersed, the dawn soon arrived.

All the crises experienced by the people as a result of the ferocious fluctuation in the heavens were over now. The dim and dark harshness of the night changed into a clear, bright morning, and everything became peaceful. All around, nature awoke from its sleep, and the living things nearby rearranged themselves. The trees, bowed by the wind, and the grass and plants, flattened by the weight of water, regained their usual shapes and heights, and flowers and bouquets of many colors blossomed. The morning sun beamed its yellowish rays over the high mountain tops, and as the rays sparkled down, they illuminated every building in the summer camp. A powerful heat turned on everyone like friendly laughter and warmed everything which had been made uncomfortable by the rain and dampness of the night before. Mist rose from the wet ground basking in the morning sun. Mingling and wafting with the aroma of clean, clear air, it seemed to be purifying the hearts of all living creatures.

The whistling, melodious singing of the Mongolian lark, the singer of the steppes, was heard nearby. The cuckoo’s song echoed in the trees of the southern mountains. Everyone is touched by Mother Nature’s hidden, tuneful, but communicative echoes. The gentle, gurgling noise of the clear stream coming down the mountain comforts everyone.

On December 20, 1991 the current Presidium of the Central Committee passed a resolution which read:

... it is obvious that at the time Shirendev was being punished by the Party, some high officials in the Party and government leadership who had misused their powers gave those
people they disliked a bad name politically, and used all sorts of pretexts to criticize them. All kinds of information on the above-mentioned activities were gathered and utilized through the channels of the Party Investigative Commission and the Ministry of Public Security. Some people in responsible positions in the Academy of Sciences were forcibly included in this investigation, the consequences of which were reflected in the above-mentioned Politburo resolution of 1981 and in the material issued at the meeting of academy activists which was held in response to it. Nowadays, many kinds of work are being carried out by the transformed organizations of our country. Democracy and open discussion are growing, our citizens are using their powers, and the time has come to strive actively for the good of our motherland.

I presented a typed manuscript of this book to my editor on June 5, 1989. Before long it was transferred to the joint editorial board of the Soëmbo publishing company. However...

In an interview published in the newspaper *Ardyn Erkh* on August 1, 1990, the Japanese specialist I. Shirano said, "In terms of your national income per head of population, you are quite poor. It is possible to escape from this situation, but for this to happen you must work single-mindedly for the sake of the nation. If you do this, in ten to fifteen years' time Mongolia will become as developed as Thailand or South Korea and in twenty five years you will be able to catch up with Japan."

If we wish to raise the glory of our dear country with the famous name Mongolia, then Mongols must maintain an honest, dignified temperament. At home, in public, or while traveling in foreign countries, their thoughts must always be disciplined. Whether in managing the economy, producing goods, or acquiring knowledge, it is right that we should strive and work to say that it was achieved in Mongolia, using Mongolian wisdom and techniques.

May the pillars of government be strengthened,
May you cherish your native customs,
May you do it before you talk about it.
Along the path of D. Sükhbaatar we will all reach
the summit of happiness.

Kind-hearted ones,
Let us make this a country of good workers.
If flowers can adorn the wide world
Then good people will decorate the nation.
References Employed in the Footnotes


—Henry G. Schwarz
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Note: Some non-Mongolian names have been transliterated into Mongolian in the original, and then transliterated into English for this translation of the Mongolian original text. Wherever possible an attempt has been made to restore them to their original spelling.

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