

**Through the Ocean Waves:
The Autobiography of Bazaryn Shirendev**

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

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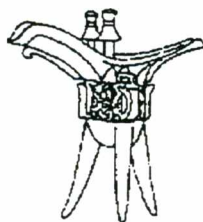
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Western Washington University

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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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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

The Mongols were a small tribe of steppe nomads which emerged from north-eastern 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 lamastery 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. - Buriad) 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 (Jebsundamba) 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 multi-party 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

Introduction: Time Does Not Stand Still

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 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 Yü. 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. Sükhbaatar.

Meanwhile, Dr. O. Shagdarsüren 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 Yü. 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 Yü. 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 *Ünen* 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*

Shishi (World News) " in the September 20, 1990 edition of *Ulaan Od*:

From information in *Ünen*, [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 Khural¹ 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 *Ünen* 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 Yü. Tsendenbal 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 Tsendenbal 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

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."

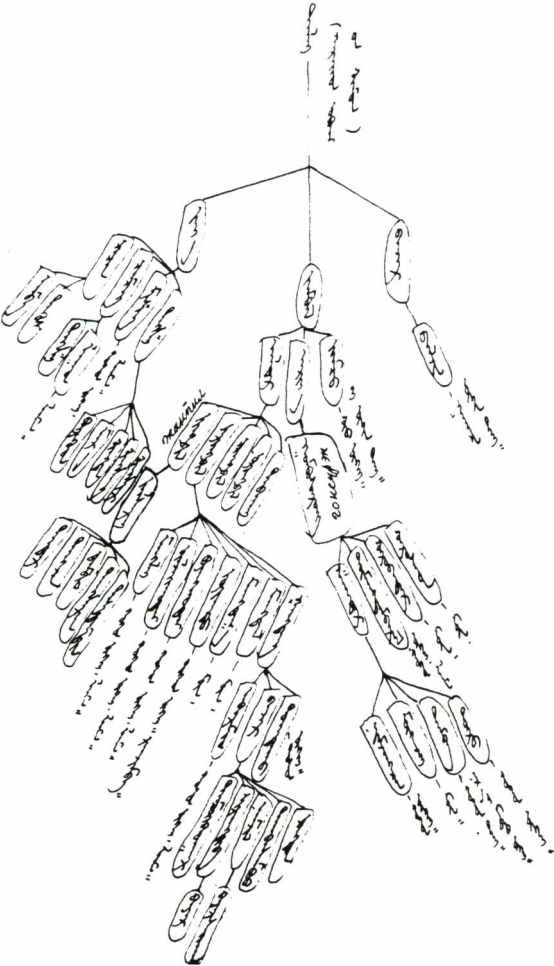
His wife was a Soviet citizen. In recent years Shirendev had been acting head of the Union of Students sent from Mongolia to the Soviet Union. There is no doubt that some people said he was loyal to the Soviet Union. From foreign reports, he was an informed person. He had studied almost all the history 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.

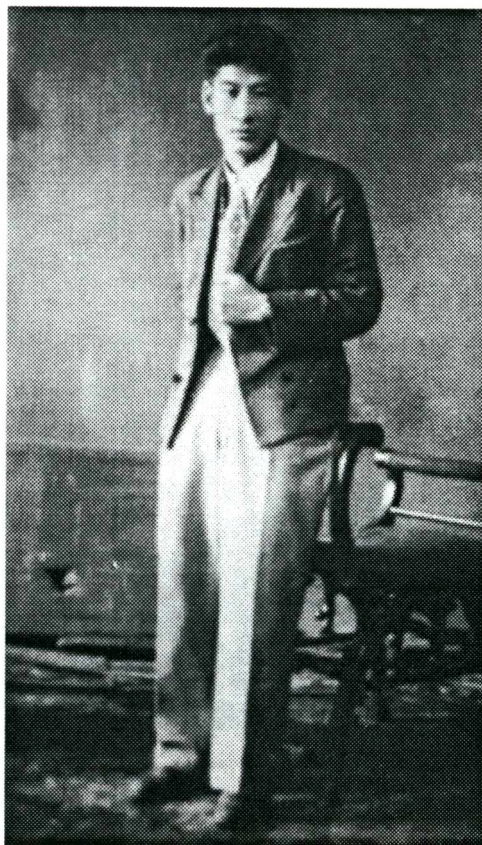
Journalist S. Raidan

Illustrations



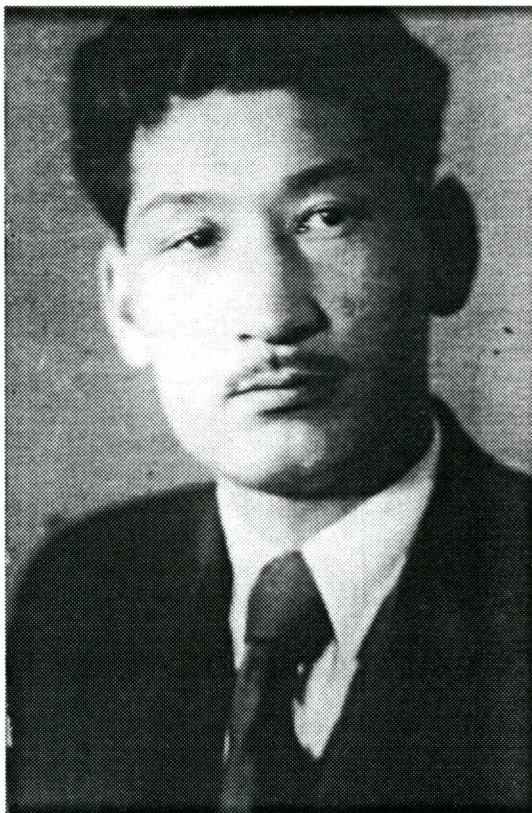
1. Family tree of Gandangiin Bazar of the Ach Khariad clan

2. The author at college in Irkutsk, 1938



3. The signing of the Mongolian-Soviet treaty. (From the right, Soviet ambassador Ivanov, K.K. Il'in, Choibalsan (seated), Molotov, Shirendev)

4. The author as rector of the state university



5. At a meeting of the Politburo of the MPRP, 1946. (From the left, Damba, Sürenjav, Tsedenbal, Bumtsend, Choibalsan, Yanjmaa, Shirendev.)

6. As Secretary in Charge of
Propaganda for the Politburo of the
MPRP



7. As People's Education Minister



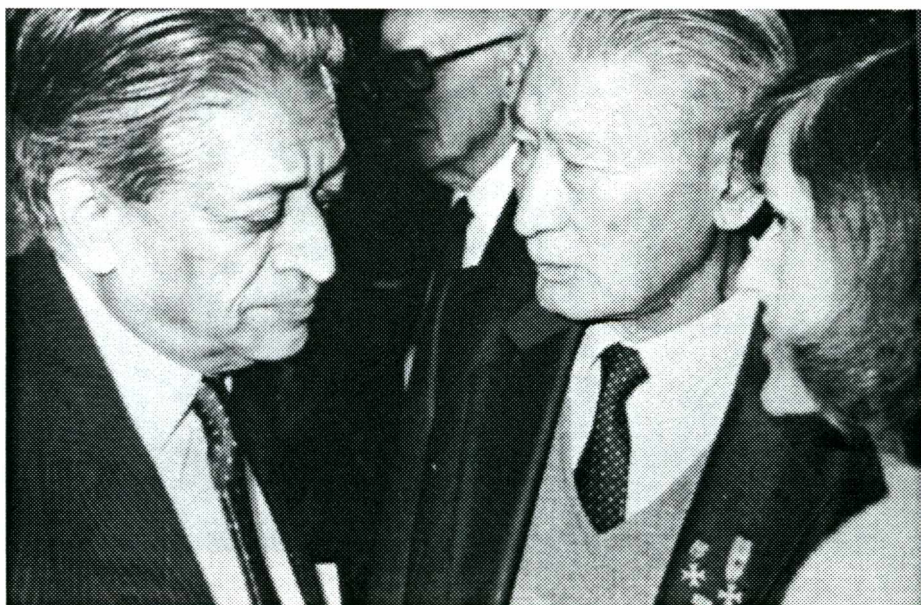
8. Kalinin presenting a medal to Choibalsan. (From the left, Gor'kin, Kalinin, Choibalsan, Shirendev.)



9. The Mongolian delegation at an International Peace Conference. (From the right, S. Udval, Shirendev, Lkhamsüren.)



10. At a peace conference in Warsaw with the author, K. Fedin



11. The author with Ramesh Chandra



12. At a peace conference with representatives from Sri Lanka and India



13. The author with Hero of the Soviet Union, A. Mereshev and People's Actor Andreyev during the Second World Peace Conference, Warsaw, 1955. S. Udval is standing at the far left.



14. The author with the English journalist I. Montague, Ulaanbaatar, 1966.
(From the left, Damdinsüren, Lady Montague, Dugersüren, Shirendev, a
journalist, Ivor Montague.)

15. With Academician B. Rinchen at the
Academy of Sciences, Ulaanbaatar, 1972.





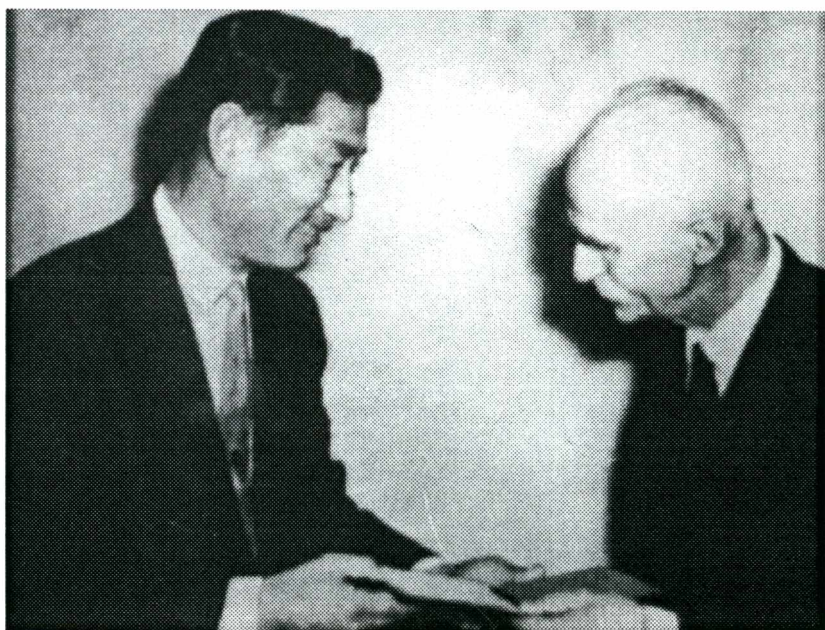
16. From the left, N. Jagvaral, unknown person, D. Tömör-Ochir, Shirendev; Ulaanbaatar, 1972



17. During discussions with B. Keldysh, President of the Soviet Academy of Sciences



18. Keldysh seeing Shirendev off at the airport, Moscow, 1962



19. With Katorvinskii, President of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw, 1963



20. With the Hungarian Mongolist György Kara at Shirendev's summer residence, Ulaanbaatar, 1970



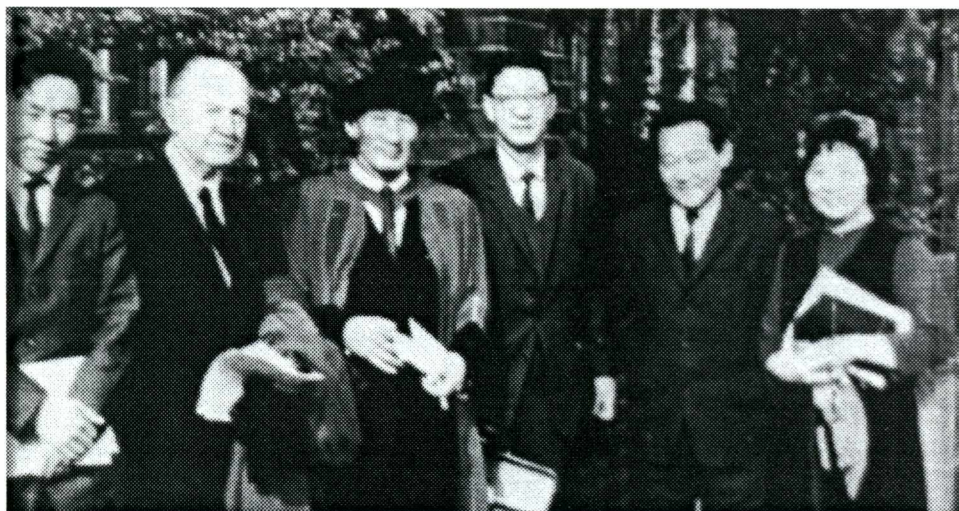
21. Academician Ts. Damdinsüren extending greetings on Shirendev's 50th birthday, Ulaanbaatar, 1962



22. At the Moscow Peace Conference. (From the left, Shirendev, unknown, Chojijilyn Chimed, Khamba lama Gombojav, unknown, Tömör-Ochir, unknown.)

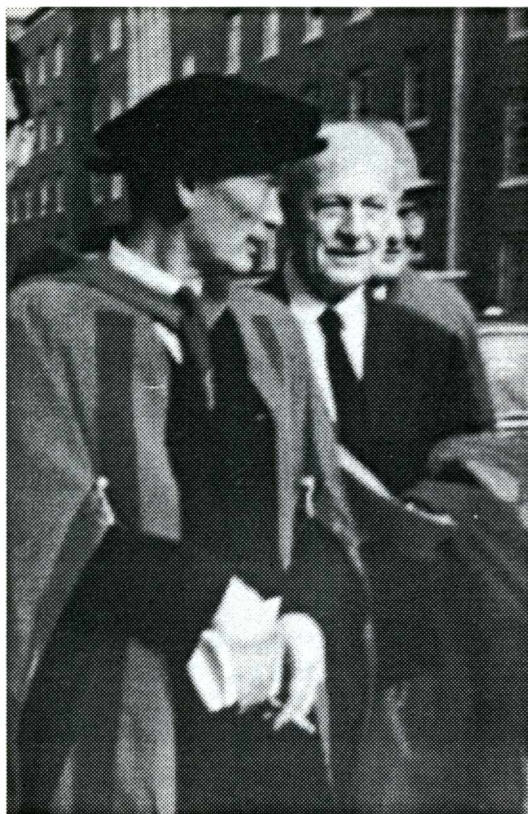


23. At the Asia and Pacific meeting in Beijing. (From the right, Shirendev, Dugersüren, Lodoidamba.)



24. After being awarded an honorary doctorate at Leeds University in England. (From the left, E. Puntsag, Professor O. Lattimore, Shirendev, Urgunge Onon, Ambassador Dambadarjaa, Narangerel Onon

25. The author at Leeds University after receiving honorary doctorate



26. Posing with a professor from Canada on the occasion of receiving an honorary doctorate from Leeds University

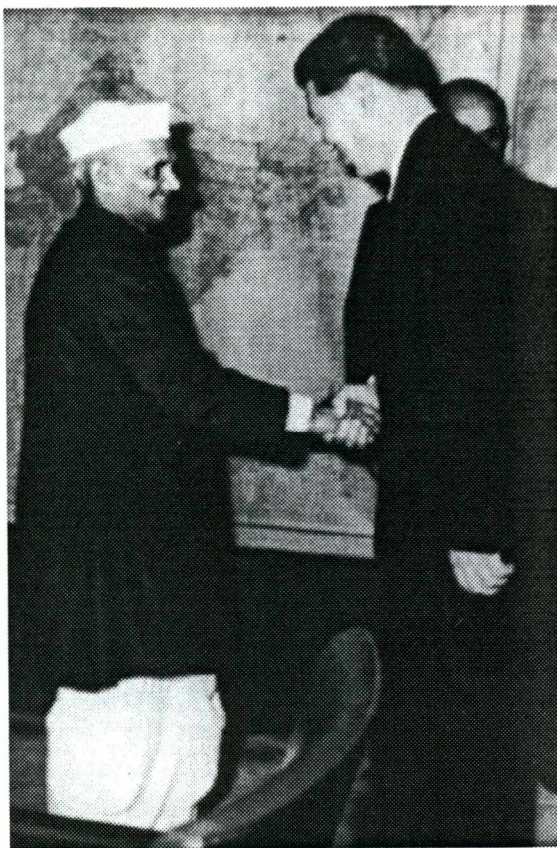


27. With Indian President Indira Gandhi



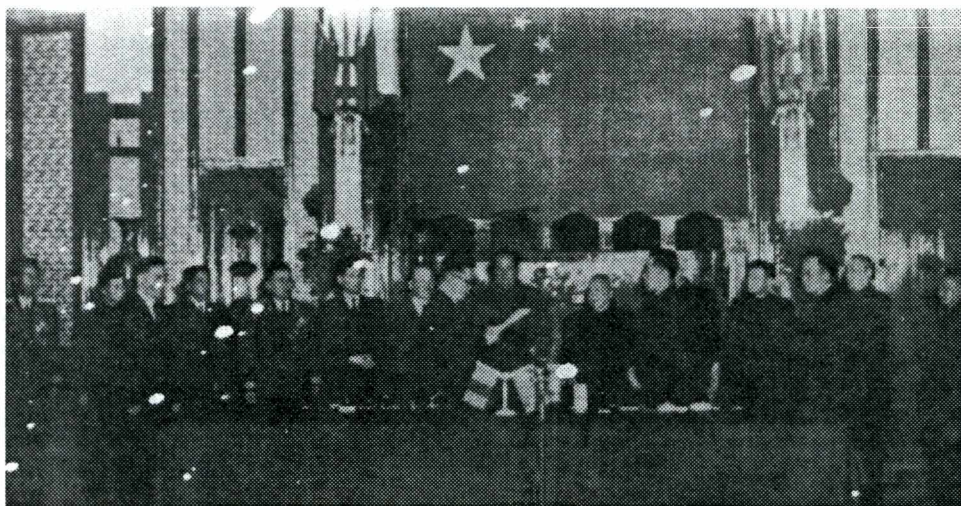
28. With the Brazilian author J. Amadu

29. With Prime Minister Lal
Bahadur Shastri of India





30. With Indonesian President Sukarno and J. Sambuu



31. At a high-level meeting between Mongolia and China. (Tsedenbal is making a speech, Mao is standing directly before the flags; on Mao's left are Liu Xiaqi and Zhou Enlai; to his right are Zhu De, Shirendev and Lkhamsüren.)



32. The foreign delegations meeting with President Nasser of Egypt



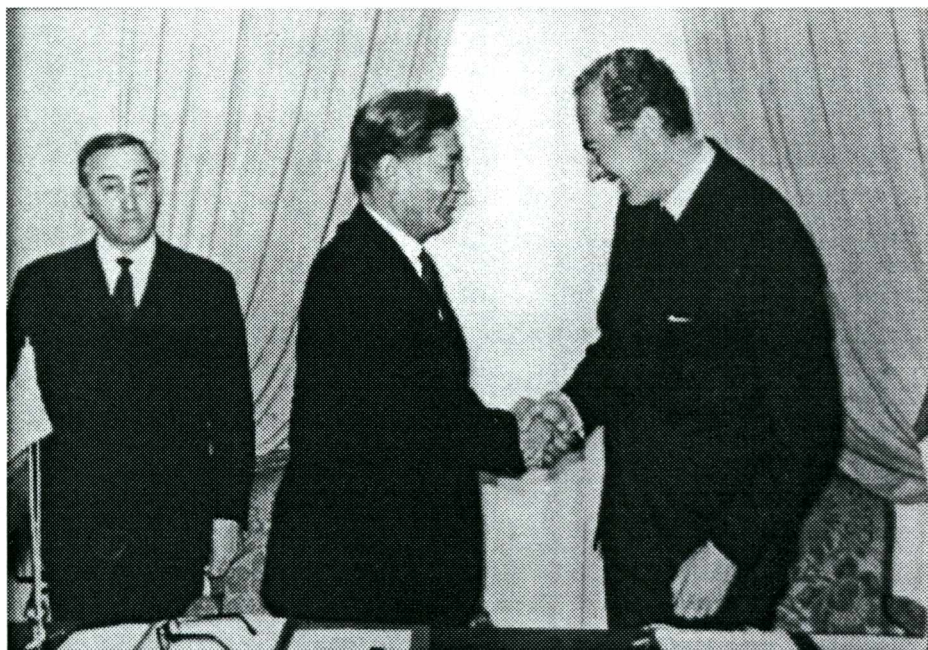
33. Delivering gifts to the Soviets during the war with Germany. (Front row, seated from the left, Sambuu, Ivanov, Choibalsan; the author is standing at the far right.)



34. With Czechoslovak President K. Gottwald

35. After being awarded a medal by the Polish government





36. With the French First Deputy Foreign Minister, M. Betancourt



37. At a reception for the cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova



38. Before J. Gurragchaa's space flight. (From the left, the author, B. Janibekov, J. Batmönkh, Gurragchaa, Ad'yaa, General Avkhia.)



39. The author's brothers and sisters. (From the left, Damchaabadgar, Shirendev, Namjil, Dagvasambuu, Lkhamjav, Sosorbaram.), Khövsgöl Aimag, 1965

40. The author's older sister,
Baljinnyam, with her daughter, Zagd



41. The author's wife, Zina, and his son, Bayar

42. The author's eldest son,
Vitya

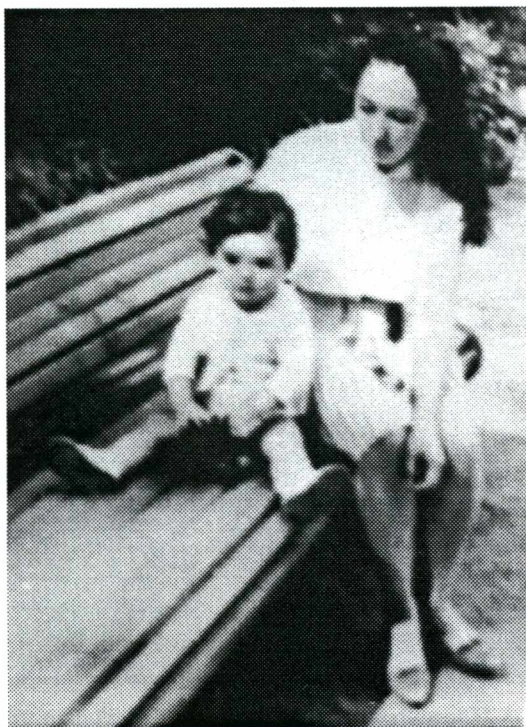


43. The author with his daughter Tanya and his grandson Donya, Ulaanbaatar, 1980

44. The author's granddaughter, Dariina,
age four, 1990



45. Daughter Tanya with her son
Donya, 1972



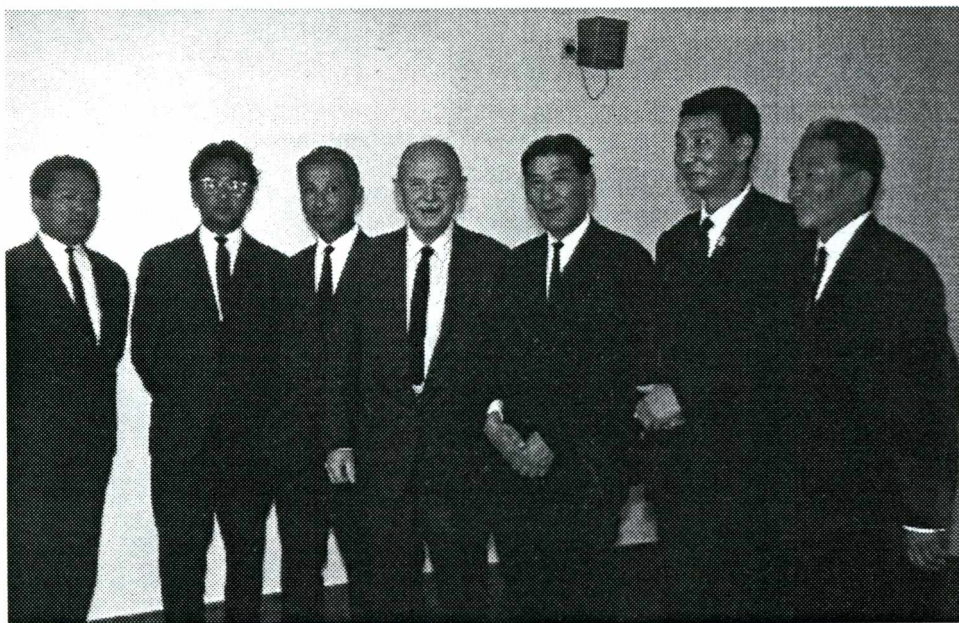
46. The author and his wife



47. Academician Shirendev with American Mongolist O. Lattimore, Ulaanbaatar, 1960

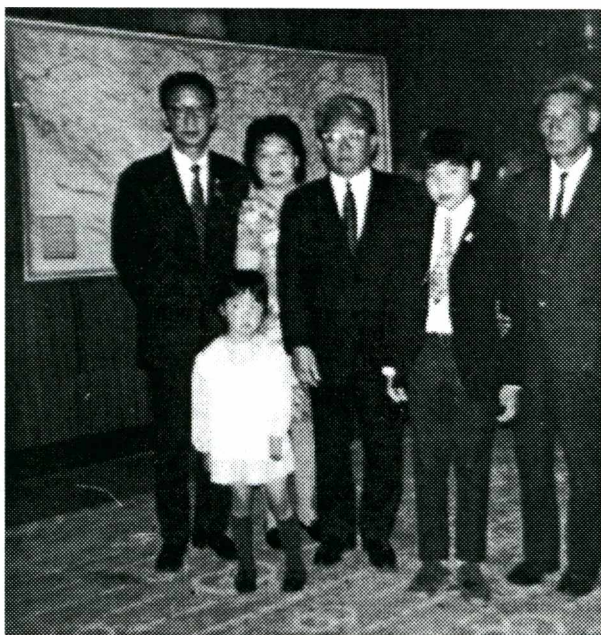


48. From the left, Dolgorsüren, Shirendev, Palam, Badmaarav. Occasion not identified



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, Erdenebilig, 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

