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THE EARLY PERIOD OF THE JAPANESE INVASION 1931-1933

The Manchurian Incident and the Mongolian Response

During the summer of 1931, a series of conflicts occurred between the Chinese and the Japanese military adventurers along the Korean border. Among these conflicts, the Wanbaoshan Incident was the most sinister; because of this incident, tension between the two countries greatly increased. These incidents were planned and instigated by the Japanese militarists to create a pretext for invasion.

In the early morning of September 18, 1931, the Japanese army stationed at the Japanese Concession in the Shenyang (Mukden) area shelled the military base of Zhang Xueliang's forces located at the Northern Camp and started the Manchurian Incident. At that very moment, Zhang, who was in Beiping, asked for instructions from Nanjing. The watchword of the KMT was "nonresistance," a policy that, it was thought, would earn China the support of world opinion and force the Japanese to back down through peaceful measures. Although the League of Nations in Geneva was sympathetic to China, such moral support could neither help the antiaggressive advocacy of certain Japanese politicians nor halt the militarists' adventures. The Japanese Guandong Army in Dalian and Lüshun took advantage of the Chinese policy of nonresistance to swiftly occupy all of Manchuria, including the Jerim League, the Hulunbuir area, and the Yeke-Minggan Banner of eastern Inner Mongolia. During this time, the Soviet Union's military was suffering from Stalin's purges, and so could mobilize no real strength to halt Japanese expansion.

This incident had a great impact in Mongolia, China, and northeast Asia. It also changed Prince De's fate and made him a notable figure in the history of twentieth-century Mongolia. Further, it marked the beginning of open Japanese intervention in Mongolian affairs. As for Prince De himself, this incident was a major turning point. It not only changed his philosophy of life, but also gradually led him away from an extreme conservative position toward all kinds of progressive liberal ideologies, and from a narrow-minded desire for rehabilitation of Mongolian feudalistic institutions to the goals of Mongolian national survival and independence.

The Japanese occupation of Mukden unexpectedly deprived many Mongols of their political bases. Merse's Normal Academy of the Northeast Mongolian Banners was affected first, and it disintegrated. As for Merse himself, because of his earlier involvement with the Comintern and the Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, he felt deep antagonism toward Japan. Moreover, because of his socialistic inclinations, he left Mukden immediately after the fall of the city and returned to his homeland, Hulunbuir. Later, when Japanese forces invaded that area, he proceeded to Ulaanbaatar and disappeared. Some reports said that he was killed by Su Bingwen, a commander of the Chi-

nese remnant forces, but there is no evidence to support this.

Although the Normal Academy of the Northeast Mongolian Banners existed for only two years, many students were influenced by Merse's zeal for Mongolian reconstruction and survival. Among them, a group of radicals deeply influenced by his leftist inclinations later joined the Communist International upon the recommendation of one Altanbagana, a Kharachin Mongol who was trained in Ulaanbaatar during the active period of the Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party. These young radicals joined the Communist Party not necessarily because of their devotion to the philosophy of Marx and Lenin, but rather to fulfill their own strong nationalistic aspirations. Their goal was to unite Inner and Outer Mongolia and to establish an independent country for all Mongols. During the Japanese occupation, most of the students of this academy left Mukden, returned to their homes, and waited for their chance to struggle for the survival of their own people.

The Mongol princes and nobles were, of course, also disturbed. Among them, Prince Namjilsereng of the Darkhan Banner (formally known as the Khorchin Left Central Banner), then the deputy head of the Jerim League, fled to Beiping, along with his family. Wubao, the newly appointed *jasag* of Bingtu Banner (formally known as the Khorchin Left Front Banner), also soon fled to Beiping. The goal of this man, an opportunist, was perhaps to show his loyalty to the Chinese government merely to assure his own personal political advantage in the future. The great majority of the ruling nobles simply waited anxiously for the dust to settle.

By this time, the Japanese militarists had already brought the former Manchu emperor, Puyi, from Tianjin to Dalian and prepared to use him as a political puppet to appease the people of the Japanese-occupied regions. Some Mongol nobles who had received their ranks and titles from the former dynasty began to relax and look forward to an imperial restoration and the renewal of all their feudalistic privileges. Some even hoped a second Qing Dynasty would be established. The leaders of this group were Chimedsampil, the head of the Jerim League; Yeshikhaishun, the Tushiyetu prince of the Khorchin Right Central Banner; and Guifu and his son, Lingsheng, of the Hulunbuir area. The liaison officer between the Japanese Guandong Army and the Mongols was Jitsuzo Kikutake, a special agent of the Southern Manchurian Railway Company.

The Japanese occupation of Manchuria spawned two political rumors: one raised hopes for the restoration of the Manchu's Qing Dynasty; the other looked forward to establishment of a Manchu-Mongol country. The Mongols responded differently to these two rumors. The former won the support of the nobles; the latter particularly appealed to the intellectuals and commoners. It soon became apparent, however, that these rumors were in fact groundless. First, it would have been extremely difficult to effect a complete restoration of the Qing Dynasty because too many things had changed since the abdication of the last Manchu emperor twenty years earlier. Second, after the death of Prince Gungsangnorbu in the spring of 1930, Inner Mongolia lost its common leader, a man who had high prestige and enjoyed personal contacts with many Japanese leaders.

Many Mongols who were antagonistic toward Chinese cultivation of herding lands would have been glad to see the Japanese push the Chinese settlers out from their former grazing fields. That was the attitude of many Mongols in the realms under Japanese occupation. But the response from the western Inner Mongolian leaders was different from that in the east. They maintained a wait-and-see attitude and had no desire for the Japanese to intervene further in their own areas. Most of the conservative ruling nobles

were more pro-Chinese than pro-Manchu, and feared Japanese aggression. The intellectuals, liberal or radical, were mostly influenced by their Chinese educations and were basically anti-Japanese. As for the two leagues of Josotu and Juu Uda, although the Japanese had not yet invaded their territory, it was clear that their central locations made invasion inevitable, and their leaders could do nothing but wait and prepare for the change to come. Moreover, because of their close relationship with the Nanjing government, they were more disillusioned than most.

A group of eastern Mongolian intellectuals tried to use the Manchurian Incident to create a movement to establish an independent Mongolian state. They organized their own military forces and attacked and occupied such cities in Mongolian territory as Taonan and Bayantala (Tongliao), that were still occupied by remnant Chinese forces. At first, the Japanese tolerated their activities; but as this manifestation of Mongolian nationalism peaked, Japan decided to establish its puppet state, Manchukuo ("The Manchu Country"), and brought the movement to a halt by threatening to kill its leaders. Under such circumstances, the nationalists disbanded their forces "of their own accord." The most influential initiators of this movement were Jirgalang, a Dahur Mongol intellectual educated in Japan; Khafungga, an intellectual from the Bingtu Banner and a former student of Merse at the Normal Academy of the Northeast Mongolian Banners and Ashkan, an intellectual from the Darkhan Banner, educated in the Mongolian-Tibetan Academy in Beijing. In order to pacify these intellectuals, the Japanese offered them official posts in the Manchukuo government. But their desire for Mongolian self-determination did not waver. Afterward, when Prince De initiated the Inner Mongolian Autonomy Movement, many young men came to join him from areas of Japanese occupation. Their dissatisfaction with Japanese policy toward the Mongols in Manchukuo was one of the main reasons for their defections. Jirgalang was one of these young men.

The Changing Situation in Nanjing and Manchuria

Japan's invasion had tremendous political impact on the Chinese government. China's policy of nonresistance was seriously criticized by the great majority of the Chinese people and created many political problems. In the spring of 1932, after a long period of consultation between different groups in the KMT, Chiang Kai-shek decided to step down from his administrative position and assume the position of chairman of the military committee in order to manage the national defense against Japan and the pacification of the Chinese Communists. Chiang had his long-time political opponent Wang Jingwei take over the Executive Yuan, the central organ of national administration. The KMT soon reshuffled the government to encourage unity among national minorities and convened the Conference on National Calamities at Luoyang in April 1932. Prince De, Wu Heling, and a dozen of the Mongol leaders were invited to attend the conference. Some Tibetans were also invited, among whom were two leading figures with intimate connections with Mongolia: the Panchen Lama and the *Janggiya Khutugtu*. It was apparent that the renewed attention the National Government was paying to Inner Mongolia was caused by the rumor that the Japanese were plotting to establish a Manchu-Mongolian country.

This conference did not produce any concrete results. Except among the rebellious Communist Party members, who were already calling for a united front against Ja-

pan, it did bring about a sense of unity in public opinion against Japan and a temporary settlement of the long-confused political situation. For the Mongol members, there was no new achievement. Although it brought Prince De and Wu Heling together again, they reached no compromise or understanding with the Chinese authorities.

In the meantime, because of the new cooperation between Chiang Kai-shek and Wang Jingwei, Bai Yunti, as a follower of Wang, also returned to Nanjing. Although the situation seemed favorable for Bai to obtain the post of minister in charge of the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission, this was blocked by strong opposition from the Nanjing Joint Office of the Mongolian League and Banner Delegates under Wu Heling. Nevertheless, its hand forced by the new situation, the National Government had to reshuffle its cabinet, and Ma Fuxiang was removed from his post as minister of the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission. The new appointee, Shi Qingyang, was associated with the Guangdong clique and Sichuan warlords. He had no previous links with Wu Heling, but because of his personal relations with the Guangdong clique and with Wang, he had to make some concessions to Bai Yunti in order to rebalance the power struggle among Mongolian politicians, and so he removed Wu from his post as head of the Mongolian Affairs Bureau. This new situation provided a good chance for Prince De and other anti-Wu elements to attempt to land a final blow on Wu.

Before the Conference on National Calamities, the Japanese Guangdong Army had installed Puyi as the head of state in Changchun in order to enhance the legitimacy of their puppet state, Manchukuo. Japanese propaganda aimed at the Mongols no longer centered on the independence issue but on the need for harmony among Japanese, Manchus, Mongols, Chinese, and Moslems. The Japanese now emphasized unity, not separation. Unable, however, to completely ignore the Mongolian demand for independence or at least self-rule, they established the Kinggan (Xing'an) General Bureau as a special office for Mongolian affairs in the central administration of Manchukuo and appointed Chimedsampil, the extremely conservative head of the Jerim League, as its head. They established the Kinggan South Province in the area of the Jerim League, the Kinggan East Province in the land of the Dahur Mongols along the Non River Valley, and the Kinggan North Province in Hulunbuir district, abolishing the leagues and putting the banners under the jurisdiction of the newly established Kinggan provinces.

To show the Japanese belief that Mongolia should be ruled by the Mongols, Yeshikhaishun, Elechun, and Lingsheng were each appointed as provincial governors. In reality, Lingsheng resisted Japanese interference as governor of Kinggan North Province. The other two provinces and the Kinggan General Bureau, however, were entirely controlled by the Japanese. Chimedsampil, well known as an unyielding, stern conservative, now became a puppet displaying unquestioned obedience. This was the way the Japanese "satisfied" the Mongolian desire for self-rule and separation from Chinese domination.¹

¹ During this period, Morishima, a Japanese spy, appeared in Kalgan. He had a Chinese wife and was known among the Japanese as Moko-ronin, or the "adventurer of Mongolia." He was assigned to establish contact with the Mongol leaders, especially Prince De; his mission, however, was unsuccessful because he failed to change the mind of his chief Mongol counterpart. To the very end of World War II in 1945, Morishima still had not established a friendly relationship with Prince De and was despised by most of the Mongol leaders. During that time, Prince De was still concentrating his attention on the Chinese government and was attempting to solve Mongolian problems

In the meantime, the Commission of Inquiry of the League of Nations, headed by Lord Lytton, arrived in Beiping, and the Beiping Association of Fellow Mongols presented the commission with a memorandum. First, the Mongols denounced Japanese aggression, and second, they expressed their opposition to any form of illegal organization created by the Japanese. Later, when the commission arrived in Manchukuo, it received another memorandum from the representative of the "Manchukuo" Mongols. This memorandum expressed support for Manchukuo and an appreciation of Japanese activity; and it denounced the treacherous deeds the Chinese government had perpetrated against the Mongols. The spokesman of this group was Namkhajab, an intellectual of the Darkhan Banner who was educated at Beiping Normal University.

Prince De's First Visit with Chiang Kai-shek and His Conflict with Wu Heling

During the summer of 1932, Prince Sodnamrabdan, head of the Shilingol League, fell ill, and doctors advised him to rest. He asked his deputy head, Prince De, to manage the affairs of the league for a few months. Taking advantage of this opportunity, Prince De sent out a telegram to the National Government in the name of all the *jasag* princes of the league expressing their opposition to The Organizational Law of Mongolian Leagues, Tribes, and Banners and to repeat their demand to reshuffle the Nanjing Office of the Mongolian League and Banner Delegates out from under Wu Heling's control and to dismiss Ayulugei from his position as the deputy head of the Josotu League. The reasoning behind the last demand went as follows: "Only nobles are qualified to be head or deputy head of a league, and Ayulugei is not a noble by birth."

Earlier, in 1931, when Prince Gungsangnorbu died, the deputy head of the Josotu League, Dagdanwangshug, was promoted to the position of league head. Although he was the *jasag* of the Tanggud Khalkha, the smallest banner of the Josotu League, he had no experience in political matters. In order to continue the leadership and prestige of the league that were established during the time of Gungsangnorbu, Wu Heling and others supported Ayulugei, an elder of Kharachin, to take up the new office of deputy head to manage league affairs. This support was also for the purpose of fulfilling the promise contained in the Organizational Law of Mongolian Leagues, Tribes, and Banners that the rights of all Mongols were equal without regard to status as commoner or noble.

Prince De's demand played into Wu Heling's hands. Wu immediately responded that democracy had to be carried out in Mongolia and asked why the feudal nobles should demand monopoly ruling power forever. Although Wu's counterattack disappointed the Mongol conservatives, the government had to support Wu's idea because of its own publicized doctrine. The delegates of the Nanjing Office of the Mongolian League and Banner Delegates also supported Wu and rejected all interference from outside. In addition, in past years Wu Heling had done many things for the leagues and banners; so, when faced with such a crisis, most of the leaders kept their mouths shut. As mentioned, Prince Sodnamrabdan was a man of honor. Because of his personal friendship with my father, the uncle of Wu's wife, he also refused to join the anti-Wu struggle.

through it. His main goal was to defeat Wu Heling and reshuffle the Nanjing Office of Mongolian League and Banner Delegates.

This refusal provided Wu Heling with powerful support.

Nevertheless, Prince De was put in the limelight, and all of Wu's opponents gathered under his shadow. They esteemed Prince De as their leader and formed a powerful new group. This attracted the attention of the National Government, especially Chiang Kai-shek and his staff. Soon Gui Yongqing came to Sunid to visit with Prince De as a representative of Chiang. Their talks were harmonious and friendly. Soon after Gui's return, Prince De got a telegram from Chiang inviting him to Hankou for a visit. From then on, Prince De and Gui Yongqing had a solidly established friendship.

In the meantime, the Mongolian community in Beiping had divided into two factions, and two "Beiping Associations of Fellow Mongols" appeared at the same time. Nevertheless, most of the Beiping Mongols sided with Wu Heling. Students of the Mongolian-Tibetan Academy also split into two factions.²

At this time, the Panchen Lama arrived in Beiping, and many Mongols gathered in the old capital. Among them were the elderly leader of Chahar, Jodbajab *amban*; the influential *tusalagchi* of the Dorben Keuked Banner of the Ulanchar League, Dewagenden; and the delegate of the head of the Yekejuu League, Rashisereng, and others. In the meantime, Wu Heling also arrived from Nanjing. Mongol leaders realized that an all-out struggle between Prince De and Wu Heling would be a great loss for all Mongols. After consultation with Wu Heling, they decided in the name of Dewagenden and Rashisereng to invite all influential Mongol leaders in Beiping to a luncheon party at the well-known Jieying Restaurant in order to discuss ways to avoid conflict. As a result of this gathering, the attendants asked Jodbajab, Dewagenden, and my father, who had good personal relationships with persons on both sides, to represent them, visit Prince De, and work toward a breakthrough. I accompanied my father on this trip.

The next morning, the three Mongol elders went to the Song-zhu-si Temple, where they were welcomed by Buyandalai and Bai Fashan, the *demchi* lama of the temple. Then they went into the temple and met with Prince De. About noon they came out smiling. They had resolved that Prince De would not reshuffle the Nanjing Office of the Mongolian League and Banner Delegates and that Wu Heling would remain as head but would honor the prince's proposals and cooperate wholeheartedly. The prince accepted this, and both parties decided to talk again the next day. At the first negotiation, Buyandalai sat by and did not utter a single word.

The next day, the same group again went to see Prince De. The results, how-

² Among the Beiping Mongols, Ao Yunzhang was a man quite learned in Chinese literature. Originally, his family was from the Aukhan Banner of the Juu Uda league, but he himself was thoroughly Sinicized and could not speak Mongolian. When Wu Peifu was in power, Ao was made head of the Aviation Bureau. Because his personal relationship with Wu Heling was less than amicable and also because he was friendly with Bai Yunti, he decided to join Prince De's group. From then on, he drafted most of the prince's important statements. He led the anti-Wu Beiping Association of Fellow Mongols. Among the Mongol nobles in Beiping who joined this group were Chimbudorji and Kichiyeltumergen. Chimbudorji's purpose was to exploit Prince De's prestige and take over the post of deputy head of the Josotu League. Kichiyeltumergen's ancestors were meritorious supporters of the Manchus even before their occupation of Beijing. In order to reward them for their merit, the Manchu emperor conferred upon these ancestors the rank of first ranking prince (the Jorigtu *qinwang*) with high emoluments but no banner to rule. This Kichiyeltumergen was a Sinicized playboy without any Mongol-ness about him at all. Because of these complications, the anti-Wu Mongolian Association in Beiping did not last long.

ever, were entirely different from the first ones. Buyandalai sabotaged the agreement because he strongly insisted on taking over Wu Heling's position as head of the Nanjing Office. Nevertheless, my father intervened by bringing Wu Heling with him to see Prince De so the two could talk frankly face to face. During this meeting, each recognized the other as a fighter for Mongolian survival, but they still could not agree on method and strategy. The prince insisted that Wu's great achievement, the Organizational Law of Mongolian Leagues, Tribes, and Banners, was a complete failure and pointed out that it was even worse than the old Regulations for the Treatment of Mongolia, as issued by the Beijing government. He demanded that the original ruling power of the Mongolian princes and nobles remain unaltered. Wu, however, regarding the regulations as a dead historical document, insisted that the prerogatives of the Mongol nobles could not continue forever. Thus they were unable to reach an agreement.

Finally, my father, as an elder and a peacemaker, exhorted them and said, "Neither of you should oppose the other anymore. I earnestly hope that your friendship will be restored." Then he pointed at his niece's husband, Wu Heling, and said to the prince, "I sincerely hope that one day he will be your associate." They thereupon stopped arguing and diplomatically expressed their hopes for cooperation in the future. Although this promise was only a formality of that moment, it materialized in the Inner Mongolian Autonomy Movement in the fall of 1933. The *khambus* of the Panchen Lama also tried to bring the two sides together, but their efforts also ended in vain.

Prince De's first visit with Chiang Kai-shek was harmonious and established a good mutual understanding, but no concrete result was reached. Following the visit, Prince De met with several of Chiang's assistants, such as Yang Yongtai, Gui Yongqing, Cao Haosen, and others. Prince De's hopes were to change government policy toward Mongolia, establish a Mongolian military, and acquire real power; he had no interest in the Nanjing government's offer of a high honorary position. He explained to Chiang's assistants that his purpose in visiting the generalissimo was to reach a solution for the Mongolian problem, not to secure for himself an appointment to a high official position. In short, after this visit, Prince De saw Chiang as the real leader of China and as a statesman of good faith; and Chiang also recognized Prince De as a leader of the Mongolian national movement, and not as an opportunist seeking personal gain. Although this visit did not produce any constructive specific result, the mutual understanding influenced Mongolian politics in later days.

Only the following could be considered a result of this visit. Chiang promised to establish one Mongolian cavalry division and a branch of the Central Military Academy in Sunid for training cavalry officers. It seems that Gui Yongqing made these suggestions. Later, Nanjing, realizing that Sunid was too far away, changed the site of the branch school to Miaotan, just north of Zhangbei *xian*. The Japanese invasion of Rehe and the subsequent threat to Shilingol and Chahar prevented these projects from ever being carried out.

Before his departure to Hankou, Prince De had already arranged for Khorjurjab, a "prince in leisure" of the Sunid Left Banner, to lead a group of Mongolian "delegates" to go to Nanjing and express their good will to the government. This group received a warm welcome in Nanjing; the newspapers hailed their visit as the first appearance of Mongolian princes in the new capital. In order to exploit this good press and apply pres-

sure on their mortal enemy, Wu Heling, Bai Yunti and his group showed great concern for the delegation and willingness to cooperate with it.³

Prince De arrived while Khorjurjab's group was in Nanjing. He visited with Wang Jingwei, head of the Executive Yuan; Dai Chuanxian, the head of the Examination Yuan, who was known as a famous Buddhologist and an expert in frontier affairs; and other dignitaries of the party and government. Before Prince De's departure, Chiang Kai-shek returned to Nanjing and had a second courtesy meeting with Prince De.

In short, Prince De's visit to Nanjing was not successful; it failed to remove Wu Heling from his post. Nevertheless, the National Government, trying not to disappoint the prince, offered him an appointment as minister of the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission. News of this offer greatly worried Shi Qingyang (who was the incumbent minister of this commission) and disappointed Bai Yunti (who had been competing for this post). Prince De, however, rejected this offer, emphasizing that his visit to the capital was not to seek any official position but to achieve a breakthrough leading to improvement in the present Mongolian situation. In so doing, he relieved both Shi and Bai of their worries. In order not to become involved in personal politics in the capital, he did not recommend that Bai take over Shi's position. Consequently, Bai's "assistance" to the prince also gradually decreased. Nevertheless, most Mongol intellectuals in Nanjing and Beijing applauded his rejection of a high official position.

Just before Prince De's departure, both the Panchen Lama and the *Janggiya Khutugtu* arrived in Nanjing. By the end of December, the National Government appointed the Panchen Lama as the Pacification Envoy for the Western Frontier Region and the *khutugtu* as the Pacification Envoy for Mongolian Banners. This measure satisfied Janggiya, who had long expected a position of political leadership. It was unprecedented for a lama to be openly appointed as a governmental official with a legal status that could let him interfere in Mongolian politics. The Manchu rulers were the initiators of a policy for using religion to control the Mongols, although they still honored—at least ostensibly—the separation of religion and politics. It was evident that Yan Xishan and Dai Chuanxian were the behind-the-scenes directors and managers of this political performance. They thought that if a "Living Buddha" (*Khutugtu*) appeared, the Mongolian problem could easily be solved. They did not realize that times had changed, and that this kind of trick would no longer work. The growing influence of the intelligentsia in Mongolian society was significant, and this kind of backward policy undoubtedly reduced

³ Although the opposition he faced was heavy, it did not affect Wu and his Nanjing Office of the Mongolian League and Banner Delegates because all the delegates were dispatched to the capital by their own league heads, and the head of the office was elected by the delegates themselves. Prince De was only a deputy head of a league. He might dispatch a delegate from his own league, but he was unable to transfer delegates of other leagues. Moreover, the head of the office was not appointed by the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission; and by law, the government was also unable to remove him. Although the league heads did not oppose Prince De, they did not want to offend Wu either. Chimedsampil, head of the Jerim League, was Wu's leading opponent, but his league was occupied by the Japanese. Chimedsampil himself had been appointed by Puyi as head of the Mongolian administration in Manchukuo, and so was unable to join the campaign. The head of the Shilingol League, Prince Sodnamrabdan, deeply disliked Buyandalai and did not endorse him as head of the Nanjing Office of the Mongolian League and Banner Delegates.

their confidence in the Chinese government.⁴

During this time, two active and adventurous youths named Yu Fugeng (from the Kharachin Left Banner and educated in the Beiping Mongolian-Tibetan Academy) and Yun Jixian (from Hohhot Tumed and educated in the Central Military Academy in Nanjing) joined Prince De's camp and helped him organize the Student Brigade in order to give military training to the young students gathered in Sunid and create cadres for the future Mongolian forces. The founding of this brigade attracted more adventurous persons to Prince De's camp.

During this time, Fu Zuoyi, the governor of Suiyuan Province, was pushing hard with his policy to extend the power of the province and *xians* in order to disintegrate the leagues and banners. The Tumed Banner was the first target for his encroachment. The *amban* of Tumed, Rong Xiang, was a graduate of the University of Law and Politics in Beijing (later to become the College of Law of Beiping University). Rong Xiang wanted to resist Fu Zuoyi but was powerless to do so. Nevertheless, two Beijing University students named Ren Bingjun and Mergenbagatur (Kang Ren) were daring enough to speak out in opposition. Because of their outspoken opposition and association with Prince De, Fu had them arrested and put into prison. After they were released, they went to Beiping to continue their studies and there cast their lot with the camp of Prince De. They also persuaded many more students to join Prince De's camp. Mergenbator introduced his schoolmate's father, Wang Shiqing, an expert in ancient Chinese literature, to Prince De. Later, this man became one of Prince De's secretaries, and he either drafted or polished many important statements. He was a faithful and prudent person, but his advice was limited to questions of phrasing and wording in documents.

The Japanese Occupation of Rehe and the Emergence of Li Shouxin

In the history of Inner Mongolia, 1933 was a year of special significance. The Inner Mongolian Autonomy movement began during this year, and Japanese aggression toward the western half of Inner Mongolia also flared up. During the spring of 1933, the Japanese Guandong Army defeated Tang Yuling's forces, occupied the whole area of Rehe, including the two Mongolian leagues of Josotu and Juu Uda, and put them under the control of Manchukuo. During this war, Cui Xingwu, commander of one of Tang's brigades, surrendered. Colonel Matsumuro Takayoshi, head of the Japanese Special Service (intelligence) Office in Chengde and a well-known military Mongolian specialist, seized this opportunity and bribed Cui with a high-paying civilian post, thereby persuading him to retire, then promoted Li Shouxin to be the commander of Cui's former brigade. Matsumuro then had the Manchukuo Army offer Li the rank of lieutenant general and reorganized his troops into the Kinggan Guerilla Division as a special strategic component of the Japanese intrusion into western Inner Mongolia.⁵

⁴ It should be mentioned here that the *Janggiya Khutugtu* and Wu Heling, who had originally been at odds over Mongolian policy, were reconciled with each other through the mediation of the *Khutugtu's* teacher.

⁵ Li Shouxin was born in the Tumed Right Banner of the Josotu League. In his youthful days his parents sent him to a monastery of the Tugon Gegeen's monastic system to become a lama. One

During Japan's invasion of the Rehe region, a Kharachin Right Banner Mongol named Wu Guting, then an assistant officer in Tang Yuling's staff, became resentful of Japanese aggression. He recruited many militant and adventurous youth from the banners of the Josotu and Juu Uda Leagues, and organized them into contingents of volunteers to resist the Japanese. It was at this time, however, that Cui Xingwu surrendered and the entire situation in Rehe changed. Because the members of Wu Guting's group were mostly Mongols, Japanese agents hoped to use them as pawns to manipulate Mongolian affairs; and consequently the group became a target of these agents. Under great military pressure and temptation, Wu Guting's forces eventually became transformed from anti-Japanese volunteers into a Japanese strategic force aiming at further encroachment on western Inner Mongolia.

After Rehe was occupied, the Japanese began attacking the Great Wall line, thereby threatening the stability of Beiping and Tianjin. In May, the Chinese were forced to sign an armistice agreement at Tanggu and promised to withdraw forces from the Great Wall. This gave the Japanese a chance to push forward the next step of their invasion, into North China. Meanwhile, they moved Li Shouxin's forces westward and took over Doloonnor, the gateway to western Inner Mongolia.⁶

day, a group of Chinese bandits arrived at the temple and forced him to take care of their horses. When they withdrew, the bandit chief forced him to go with them. From then on, he was completely separated from other Mongols. He could not even speak Mongolian. As time passed, the headman died and Li was made the new bandit leader because of his courage and friendly attitude. Under Li's leadership, the band usually appeared in the southwestern Rehe district and was known as "Da-xin-zi," which means "Big Xin." (The Chinese word *xin* means "faithful," and Li's given name contained this word.) These bands sometimes appeared along the Mongol-Chinese border of the Josotu and Juu Uda Leagues.

Cui Xingwu was at heart a would-be ruler from horseback. After Tang Yulin's takeover of Rehe, he was made a brigade commander and assigned to recruit armed bandits into Tang's forces. He eventually persuaded Li Shouxin and his band to submit to Tang, and Tang put Li and his men under Cui Xingwu's command. By the time of the Japanese invasion, Li had already been promoted to the rank of a regimental commanding officer within Cui's brigade. Colonel Matsumoro Takayoshi suddenly promoted Li Shouxin to a very important position to perform Japanese "work" on Mongolia. All of Li's followers, however, were Chinese; almost no Mongols were involved. Because of his background, Li was an intensely realistic and opportunistic man who had no national pride or sense of Mongolian identity. Later, during the Japanese occupation of western Inner Mongolia, he was made the number-two leader of the Mongolian regime and became a tool for the Japanese authorities to use to check Prince De. Although he was unconditionally faithful to the Japanese, he was smooth, slick, and talented in manipulating circumstances to gain benefits for himself.

⁶ In 1691, Doloonnor was the site of the Manchu Emperor Kangxi's acceptance of the surrender of the Khalkha leaders defeated by Galdan, the leader of the Oirad Mongols. Later, to commemorate this historical event, the Mongol nobles built a monastery, the Koke Sume (ch. Huizong si), on this spot. In 1731, Emperor Yungcheng built another imperial temple, the Shira Sume (Shanyin-si), in its vicinity and appointed the Janggiya *Khutugtu* as its abbot. Twelve *Khutugtus* were also assigned to reside in these two monasteries. Doloonnor then became a great center of Buddhism in Inner Mongolia. Because it was located on the road from Beijing to Ulaanbaatar (then Urga) of the Khalkha, it also became a commercial center linking Mongols and Chinese. The Manchu court established a preparatory magistracy (*ting*) there to manage Chinese affairs. At the beginning of the republic, the preparatory magistracy was made into the Duolun *xian*. The Mongol *shabinar* (lay disciples) of the Janggiya *Khutugtu* and other great lamas, however, were ruled separately by the

Li Shouxin's occupation of Doloonnor greatly influenced both the Chinese government and the Mongolian banners. Feng Yuxiang, who had been expelled from politics after the collapse of the "Enlarged Conference" in the summer of 1930, suddenly reappeared in Kalgan. He openly urged the whole nation to take action against Japan and titled himself commander-in-chief of the People's Anti-Japanese Allied Forces to fight for the protection of Chahar. The sudden rise of Feng worried the Mongol leaders of Shilingol and Chahar, who recalled his early militarist anti-Mongol behavior and his pro-Russian, leftist inclinations. Besides recruiting his old followers and local Chinese forces, Feng also reorganized the Mongolian forces under his control. He appointed Jodbajab of Chahar as commander of the First Army and offered Prince De the post of commander of the Second Army. Because of the geographic distance between Kalgan and Sunid, it was possible for Prince De to decline Feng's offer in a diplomatic manner, but the Chahar leaders could not resist.

To eliminate the obstacles in his way, Feng arrested Nimaodzar, "the spirit of Jodbajab," who was popular among the Chahars and had good contacts with Nanjing. Later, Nimaodzar was released through the efforts of Yao/Yue Jingtao (Murungga), a founder of the early Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party who had good personal relations with Feng. Nevertheless, Feng's arrogance once again greatly offended the Mongols, and anti-Feng sentiment among the Mongols encouraged Japanese propaganda against the Chinese.

The KMT government in Nanjing did not approve of Feng's return to prominence, and three months later, Feng's position collapsed without anything having been accomplished. His collapse was not occasioned by Chiang Kai-shek alone but also by the public consensus against him. Feng handed the provincial government of Chahar back to Song Zheyuan, announced his resignation, and returned to his retirement at Mount Tai in Shandong. During Feng's occupation of Kalgan, his troops did on one occasion recover Doloonnor from the hands of Li Shouxin. Following Feng's collapse, however, Li's forces once again occupied the city.

While Feng was still in Kalgan, Prince De accompanied his mother on a pilgrimage to Wutai Mountain. At Kalgan, he visited Feng, who explained to him the reasons for and importance of his actions against Japan. This conversation, however, did not change Prince De's opposition to Feng's activities. Following Song Zheyuan's reappointment as governor and the subsequent reshuffle of the provincial government, Prince De was again appointed as a commissioner.

During northern China's long period of instability, Zhang Xueliang resigned and left for Europe. The Chinese Government appointed He Yingqin, Minister of Military Administration, as Commissioner-in-Charge of the Beiping Branch of the Military Committee and directed Huang Fu, Head Commissioner of the Executive Yuan's Beiping Political Adjustment Committee, to manage negotiations with Japan. Most of the Mongols did not really notice, but to Prince De, the changes were significant. He had to consider the problems that a defeat of China would present, the instability of the present circumstances, and the viability of the Chinese Government's guarantee of protection for Inner Mongolia.

lama administration. Because of its historical background, Doloonnor gradually came to be recognized not only as a religious center but also as a center of Inner Mongolia's economy, politics, and military strategy.

In the Tanggu Agreement, the Chinese more or less recognized the Japanese takeover of the Rehe region; and as a consequence, the Guandong Army reorganized several northern and western banners of the Juu Uda League into the so-called "Mongolian Autonomous" Kinggan West Province. The Japanese placed the remaining banners of the Juu Uda League and all banners of the Josotu League (except for Lama Kuriye) under the jurisdiction of the two Chinese provinces of Jinzhou and Rehe, in both of which there was a majority of Chinese agricultural settlers. In order to show their attentiveness to the demands of the Mongols, the Japanese also abolished all *xians* previously established by the Chinese government in the territories of these banners. Even so, these measures did not satisfy all Mongols in these banners. Many young and educated Mongols who were disillusioned about life in their homeland decided to leave the Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo and to find a place where they could be more free and able to do something to promote the survival of their own Mongol people. Many young Mongol adventurers went to western Inner Mongolia and joined Prince De's camp.

The Beginning of Japanese Encroachment into Western Inner Mongolian Territory

After consolidating its occupation of Rehe, the Japanese Guandong Army began its "Mongolian work." The army dispatched Major Tanaka Hisashi and Altanwachir (Jin Yongchang) as consultants to go to Ujumuchin and to visit with Prince Sodnamrabdan, head of the Shilingol League. The Guandong Army also invited Prince So to visit Manchukuo's head of state, Puyi. This Japanese mission received the cold shoulder. Prince So, however, had little choice but to send his *jikirugch*, Khuturi, to congratulate Puyi. At this time, Tanaka asked for permission to establish a Japanese Special Service Office in Ujumuchin, and to establish links with the other banners of Shilingol. Prince So answered, "I cannot approve of establishing any such organization. You are not welcome to stay in my banner. If you insist on establishing a Special Service Office, that will be your affair and I will assume no responsibility for it." The first contact between the Japanese military and the Mongol Prince So ended in a very unfriendly atmosphere. Nevertheless, the Guandong Army succeeded in establishing a Special Service Office in the vicinity of the banner office at Ujumuchin to administer intelligence operations.

These problems put Prince So in a very difficult position: first, he was the most influential prince in Shilingol and perhaps all of western Inner Mongolia; second, he was strongly antagonistic toward Japan and its invasion of Inner Mongolia; third, his own banner and the five eastern banners of his league had to buy agrarian products from the territory of Japanese-ruled Manchukuo, especially from Rehe district; and fourth, he did not want to respond coldly to Puyi, his former lord. Hence, he reluctantly accepted part of Tanaka's request. Although Prince So allowed the Japanese to come, he assumed a strongly noncooperative attitude and boycotted their activities.

The first appointee to head the Japanese Special Service Office was Morishima, who, as mentioned earlier in a footnote, had a Chinese wife and had lived in Kalgan for years. He was honored by most Japanese spies as a senior participant in the "Mongolian work" who had traveled extensively in both Outer and Inner Mongolia. He could speak some imperfect Mongolian with a strong Japanese accent. Among the Mongols he usually posed as a "friend of the Mongol people," but most Mongols regarded him as the

opposite. Since Morishima and his men were regarded as *persona non grata*, the Ujumuchin Banner provided only two yurts for them and did not give them any other supplies. Two men were assigned to “serve” (i.e., watch) them, and no other people could contact them. This shut them off from any possibility of gathering useful intelligence. When winter came, their lack of fuel made them unable to withstand the severely cold temperatures. Morishima had no choice but to leave. Thus the people of Ujumuchin, on their first try, temporarily expelled the Japanese from their banner.

Although the Guandong Army’s first contact with western Inner Mongolia ended in failure, Prince Sodnamrabdan and his officials (especially Togtokhu, the senior *tusalagchi* who directed these negotiations) began to worry about the future Japanese threat. These officials reported their concerns to the authorities of Chahar Province, the Mongolian-Tibetan Affairs Commission, and the Military Committee Beiping Branch. But the responses of these organizations were nothing more than production of documents; these organizations could not even negotiate with the Japanese, much less stop Japanese aggression. This was why Prince So eventually lent his support to Prince De and the Inner Mongolian Autonomy movement.

Prince So’s rejection led the Japanese to alter their methods for carrying out the “Mongolian work.” The Japanese gradually shifted their attention away from Prince So and toward Prince De. Of course, the latter’s activities and articles about him in the newspapers had already attracted the attention of the Japanese. It was probably about this time that a Japanese by the name of Sasame Tsueno disguised himself as a lama and appeared in Sunid to meet with Prince De. He brought a letter from General Matsui Iwane and General Hayashi Senjuro to the Prince and told him that Japan wanted to help the Mongols found an independent country, and that his mission was for this purpose. He was, of course, welcomed by Prince De, who had him stay secretly in a temple of his banner. Earlier, before the Manchurian Incident, Sasame had already come to Beiping and Manchuria. He brought Askhan and Kokebagatur (Han Fenglin) back to Japan and arranged for them to study at the Shikan Gakko, a well-known Japanese military academy. The young Mongol officers of the Kinggan (Xing’an) Army of Manchukuo later came to admire Askhan. He appeared very pro-Japanese, but in reality he was a leftist. Later, after Japan’s surrender in 1945, he became one of the initiators of the Eastern Mongolian Autonomy Movement. He died soon after the Chinese Communist takeover of eastern Inner Mongolia.

As mentioned, the Guandong Army invited Prince So to go to Manchukuo and visit Puyi, but he reluctantly sent his *jakirugchi*, Khuturi, in order to maintain access to Manchurian food supplies and also to avoid embarrassment. Other eastern banners of Shilingol also sent delegates to celebrate Puyi’s inauguration for the same reason. Among these delegates was one Urgungge from the Abaga Left Banner, a son-in-law of the old Prince Yangsang. Urgungge’s assignment as a delegate, however, did not change Yangsang’s pro-Chinese attitudes. The four western Shilingol banners rejected the Guandong Army’s invitation because these banners did not depend on a food supply from Manchuria and were also influenced by Prince De’s negative response. At that time, Prince De’s attitudes toward Japan were still frigid, and he did not want to either please the Guandong Army or offend the Nanjing government.

Colonel Matsumoro, head of the Chengde Special Service Office, was active in the “Mongolian work.” Under his management, Special Service Offices were established in Ujumuchin and Doloonnor. Although the former Special Service Office collapsed, the

latter office functioned quite well under the administration of Captain Shishiura. The Chahar leaders, especially Jodbajab, were the main targets of these offices. Matsumoro soon came to Doloonnor to convene a conference of Mongolian delegates. News of this had a great impact on both Shilingol and Chahar. After cautious consultations, the banners agreed that they should not offend the Japanese by bluntly rejecting their invitation. These banners did agree, however, that they should not conclude any agreements with the Japanese. So the delegates sent by the banners were lower-ranking officials who had no authorizations to conclude agreements.

Meanwhile, Matsumoro's airplane developed engine problems and landed unexpectedly in a mountainous area east of Doloonnor, where he was captured by a group of bandits. Although released through Li Shouxin's intervention, he was forced to cease his military service permanently because of his negligence of the army's moral tradition. He did not kill himself but instead had allowed the enemy to capture him. By so doing, he marred the pride of the glorious "Imperial Army." Immediately after his release, he was promoted to the rank of major-general and ordered to retire.

Matsumoro's stepdown also affected Sasame. A conflict soon broke out between Sasame and Morishima, who was supported by Tanaka Hisashi. Sasame was recalled, and the Guandong Army forbade him to enter Mongolia ever again. After these events, Japanese activity in western Inner Mongolia cooled off for a short period.

The fall of Rehe, the retreat of the Nanjing government forces, the political instability of North China, the arrogance of Fu Zuoyi and other top border officials toward the Mongols, and Japan's activities all caused the leaders of western Inner Mongolia to realize that great change was inevitable. Making a breakthrough to such understanding was, however, a difficult task for them.

As already noted, although the Soviets were opposed to Japan's aggression, they were preoccupied with internal problems of their own and had no strength to put pressure on Japan. On the one hand, the Kremlin restored its diplomatic ties with China (severed in 1929) because of the border conflict in Manchuria. But on the other hand, the Russians, under Japanese pressure, sold the northern half of the Chinese Eastern Railroad to Japan and withdrew from northern Manchuria.

After the 1928 fall of the Outer Mongolian nationalistic leader Dambadorji, nobody in Outer Mongolia took an active interest in Inner Mongolia or the movement to unify the two Mongolias. At the same time, Choibalsan, influenced by Stalin's elimination of his opponents, carried out his own party purge. Thousands of people were brutally liquidated, and some of the threatened leaders fled to Inner Mongolia, thus creating deep confusion among the Inner Mongols toward Urga (Ulaanbaatar). This of course led many independence-minded Inner Mongols to turn their attention to Japan.