

THE THREE SORROWING HILLS, MONGOLIA'S FIRST OPERA:
AN EXAMINATION OF LITERARY AND MUSICAL GENRE*

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Although Mongols had loved song, music and dance as a form of domestic entertainment for centuries,¹ the appearance of more highly developed secular forms of synthetic art² resembling theater as we know it came relatively late with the consolidation of Manchu power in Outer Mongolia. In the beginning of the eighteenth century local *pang-tzu* opera from the Chinese province of Shansi was imported by Chinese traders into several urban centers, and in all probability indigenous court theaters in several outlying districts³ sprung up as a result of this. By the second half of the nineteenth century social ballads and dialogue operas,⁴ built on a four-line folk song form often on the theme of social protest or longing for a lover known as *hariltsaa duu*, came increasingly into vogue, to the extent of becoming a type of nucleus for the creation of a national dramatic theater in the initial decades of the twentieth century.

Lubsan Huurchi, the famed epic singer and musician turned people's artist and composer of revolutionary songs, was the key person responsible for these social ballads and dialogue operas to become "urbanized" and "professionalized" in the capital and to be developed on stage right up to the opening of the State Music and Drama Theater in 1931. Stage plays fashioned on Chinese opera and employing Chinese dramaturgical effects en masse were performed side by side with classical repertoire of the regional variant of Chinese opera mentioned above. These plays often portrayed khans, princes and lamas as buffoons exploiting the arats. They generally circulated among "amateur circles" and, while successfully conveying political messages, were simplistic with regard to plot line and staging.

The Seventh Congress of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party in November 1929 and the Fifth Great Khural in January 1930 discussed the raising of cultural and educational levels in the country. It was pointed out that the "amateur circles" in question had indeed furthered the development of theatrical creativity, but were still unable to fashion a new theatrical art.⁵ As a result, new repertoire was not planned as such from then on, but rather intended as an experimental arena for new dramaturgists. With the closing of Chinese theaters⁶ in 1929, a lacuna had somehow to be filled.

The Resolution of 1932, insuring Party control over new literary and artistic organizations in the Soviet Union, and Zhdanov's defining the aims of socialist realism at the First All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers in 1934 had inevitable repercussions on Mongolian literary and cultural life of that decade.

Following the successful performance of *Not I* by the Mongolian State Music and Drama Theater at the International Olympiade of Revolutionary Theatrical Collectives in Moscow in 1933 and its participation that same year in the tenth anniversary of the Buryat Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic in Ulan-Ude, the director of this work, D. Namdag, approached its author, today known as the

founder of Mongolian national dramaturgy,⁷ D. Natsagdorj, once again with a request for more new repertoire.

Natsagdorj chose as the theme of this musical tragedy the legend of Yunden Göögöö which is found in a book by B. Sodnom about Natsagdorj.⁸ It goes as follows:

In the middle of the nineteenth century lived the master craftsman Tsend. He had a tall, handsome son by the name of Yunden. Yunden was twenty-five years old when he set out on a caravan for China. He suddenly fell ill on the way and was forced to sojourn with the Khorchin tribe in Inner Mongolia. Having gotten well soon after, he could not depart from his host's house without a horse. But before long, when it was discovered that he was a literate person, he was assigned to the local clerk's office and made many acquaintances. Eventually he fell in love with Siriima who lived with her poor family in the neighborhood. The pampered Garva from a rich family, it turned out, was in love with Yunden. At that time the local Prince Bal was trying to marry off his son, but could not find a suitable bride. Garva heard about this and presented Siriima to him. Fearing Yunden, Prince Bal summoned him, bestowed on him an official title, made him a retainer and quickly sent him off to China on official matters. Thus ridding himself of Yunden, he married his son to Siriima. Yunden got the news of what transpired through his trusted comrades, returned and angrily attacked the prince. For this offense the youth was sentenced to death. Upon hearing of Yunden's death, Siriima took her life as well.

Natsagdorj carefully preserved the poetic origins of the legend in the course of writing the libretto for his new opera. He exalted above all the loftiness of true and undaunted love in the first version of the opera which appeared in 1934. The name of Yunden was retained from the legend; his beloved was called Nansalmaa. The rich feudalism Baldan resembled Prince Bal in the legend. However, this legend was reworked on a grand scale following its premiere in 1934 in order to present a clearly defined class viewpoint and to stress the psychological makeup of the characters. The perfidiousness of Garva was personified with greater detail in the character Khorolma, now a procuress. The relationships between Khorolma and both Yunden and Balgan were focused on in particular by the author with the intent of sharper delineation of the plot line.

In the period of autonomy in Mongolia (1911-21), a three-stanza social ballad of protest was composed about the fate of Yunden and is known to this day throughout Mongolia.⁹ Its lyrics are as follows:

With a braid down his back
Walking with a confident stride
The infinitely handsome
Yunden Göögöö Da-wang.¹⁰

Walking with a sedate stride
With his braid plaited in three locks
Noble and light-hearted
Wonderful you are, Yunden Göögöö.

Da-wang of a Khorchin banner,
You sit at the place of honor in a yurt¹¹ for naught
My beloved so far away
Why not return, Yunden Göögöö?

It is evident from Namdag's memoir on *The Three Sorrowing Hills* that Natsagdorj was so inspired by this song that he was determined to create a brand new genre with his work.¹² It took him only two days to write the first act and to have it ready for rehearsal. Only a half month elapsed from the first rehearsal to the premiere performance of this unique musical drama. With personal concern for its success Natsagdorj often went to rehearsals to listen to advice from the artists.

Curiously enough, the original producer of *The Three Sorrowing Hills*, E. Oyun, is also the author of *Ardyn Hariltsaa Duu, Tüüni Ulanjal* (The Four-line Folk Song and its Traditions). In non-Mongolian sources *hariltsaa duu* is called "Wechsellied" or "Dialoglied" by Heissig,¹³ "conversation song" by Bawden,¹⁴ and "four-line song" by Salga.¹⁵ Oyun basically agrees with Heissig that the foundations of indigenous Mongolian literary theater lie in this highly versatile song form. She divides the genre into six categories: robber's songs, satirical and jesting songs, laments, lyrical songs, epic songs and odes. She is of the belief that repertoire in all six embodies national, class and ideological content to varying degrees and that its heroic-dramatical forms¹⁶ reflect the struggle against the oppressor class. Mention is made of lyrical-humanistic songs and those instructive in love which reflect the social problems of the day.

The theme of humanism is touched on briefly in the second version of our opera where mothers rock their children to sleep with cradle songs and gather young lads for a hunt at sunrise the following morning. The young maidens now enter and join them together in a chorus about the sun overcoming darkness and emitting golden rays of happiness to people. On the other hand, in the Buryat ballet *Blossoms of Life* the central theme is this very dualism of light and darkness where the noble and valiant folk hero Bator overcomes great odds to lead Mother, her three daughters, and the people to light and happiness.

In resolving the problem of thematic content in both versions of *The Three Sorrowing Hills*, another Buryat ballet *In the Name of Love*, composed by Zh. Batuyev and others in 1956-7, provides parallels more focal to the main themes in both. In very broad terms, this ballet, known as lyrical-heroic drama,¹⁷ in effect combines the lyrical-melodramatic of the first version of our opera with the heroic-epic of the second version staged in 1942, for it unites the fate of the protagonist Zorigto with that of the people amidst tragedy, the death of their beloved Seseg. It stands in contrast to the first version of *The Three Sorrowing Hills* which concludes in semi-tragedy with Nansalma killing the wicked feudalist Baldan and the wounding of the hero Yunden, but with the common people playing no role in it. The second version does unite the fate of the protagonists with that of the people throughout the entire opera, but amidst comic relief provided by the joyous wedding of Yunden and Nansalma.

The theme of eternal love and the presence of the so-called masses on stage are not unfamiliar phenomena in theater elsewhere in the world. The 1934 version of *The Three Sorrowing Hills* is quite appropriately termed romantic-pathetic melodrama¹⁸ with a theme of eternal love on the order of the very popular Chinese legend and opera *Liang Shan-po and Chu Ying-t'ai* 梁山伯與祝英台 and, to a lesser extent, of the Uzbek poetic legend *Farkhad and Shirin*.¹⁹ Strangely enough, when we revert back to the original legend of Yunden Göögöö, Siriima takes her own life upon hearing of the death of Yunden - the same fate befalls Juliet upon the death of Romeo.

When examining such heroic-epic classics of Russian opera as Borodin's *Prince Igor* and Glinka's *Ivan Susanin*, we note that the traditional amorous-intimate plot line is seldom an essential part of these operas. Yet once it becomes an integral, subordinate component of them, it is transformed into a domestic-verismo plot line. These two operas, and ours as well, do not fit well into the standard mold of amorous love, seen by Stalinist opera critics as a Western petty bourgeois aesthetic tendency.²⁰ Thus the Mongolian *hariltsaa duu* form, instructive in love, somehow found its identity with such classical tragedies as *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello*, *Hamlet*, and *Boris Godunov* which in the eyes of these critics all focus on inevitable or probable consequences of various social problems.

As Mussorgsky puts it, the developmental aim of tragedy is the common fate of the individual and the people.²¹ Seen in a broader Soviet context with regard to both classical Russian and the best of Soviet opera, the experiences of the individual become an organic part of the depicted social events, with the inner conflicts of the protagonist transformed into conflicts of his society. As applied to our opera, it was death as a natural consequence of a sequence of causes rather than a portrayal of eternal love which made *Ivan Susanin* acceptable in Stalinist eyes but not the first version of our opera staged in 1934.

The appearance of mass scenes in Mongolian and Buryat opera is particularly vivid in the 1942 version of our opera, in which we find amazing similarities with Glinka's legendary opera *Ruslan and Ludmilla*. In place of Chernomor's slaves and servants are the khan's servants and Yunden's warriors. At the end, instead of the people of Kiev rejoicing and glorifying Prince Ruslan's awakening Ludmilla, it is the arats who joyously celebrate the marriage of Yunden and Nansalma. In both operas a fairytale atmosphere is evoked with magnificent stage sets depicting magical castles and palaces.

Right up to the beginning of the 1930s the highly skilled art of improvising on musical core units known as *hariltsaa duu* by *huurchis* with Lubsan Huurchi at the fore continued hand in hand with the spontaneous composing of lyrics, now increasingly in step with the times. The accompaniment to new so-called revolutionary songs still remained heterophonic, characteristic of a number of traditional musics of East Asia and medieval European music. The traditional pentatonic scales,²² more or less intervallically equivalent to the Dorian and Mixolydian modes, remained intact up to this time.

After the State Music and Drama Theater was founded in 1931, such traditional plays as *Prince Sum'ya*, known as one-actor dramas²³ because all the performers' parts were sung in one and the same motif, began being actively reworked. Satirical dramas in a semi-improvised style such as *Deceptive Trust*, *The Avaricious Lama*, and *Conversation of the Old Man and Woman* were simultaneously staged. Perhaps the first time anything resembling operatic art song was used was in the play *Dark Force* by Buyannemekh in what B. Smirnov, a co-composer of *The Three Sorrowing Hills*, terms *pesennoye nachalo spektaklya*, the vocal beginnings of drama.²⁴

1934 and 1935 were a turning point in Mongolian theatrical history for they marked the beginnings of a new art form with a new aesthetic basis.²⁵ *The Three Sorrowing Hills* was already a considerable step forward from *Prince Sum'ya* in

that it contained four, instead of merely one, distinct motifs based on folk songs. This increase, however, was not matched by a corresponding increase in the number of individual character traits. Moreover, it was premature to introduce feelings of the characters in terms of psychologism into such a work.²⁶

In the second version of *The Three Sorrowing Hills* B. Damdinsüren and co-composers added leitmotifs to the original motifs, yet the same monotony of musical expression prevailed throughout the work. What the composers did accomplish, musically speaking, was to introduce Western-style duo singing, for example, in the dialogue of love between Yunden and Nansalma which was wholly constructed in parallelism, the most widespread manner of folk poetry discourse. It was actually a musical realization of the call-and-response character of the *hariltsaa duu* which was traditionally always soloistically sung.²⁷

Poetic lyricism and imagery are well known in the works of D. Natsagdorj who employed them generously in the libretto of his first opera. Natsagdorj drew from the rich treasure of epithets, similes and metaphors in folklore, especially from *üligers*, and utilized his own techniques of pastoral lyricism. He expanded as well on themes from folk songs of different genres. In the newly conceived second version he attempted to show as vividly and graphically as possible the basic principles which distinguished the main characters of the drama. Nansalma's poetic image was now to become the embodiment of the finest traits of Mongolian women and could perhaps be likened to the psychological depth and fidelity to life of Natasha in Dargomyzhskii's *Rusalka*. All we are able to say about musical imagery in the opera is that it is watered down and lacks the maturity of form the libretto had attained.

In spite of the Buryat opera *In the Name of Love* being composed in a much later era and thus being more musically sophisticated than our opera, we see a potential for musical maturity in an opera such as *The Three Sorrowing Hills*, as was the case in subsequent Mongolian operas. The Buryat ballet makes extensive use of polyphony, in particular a device known as contrastive polyphony (polymelody ?) or modulatory imitation of key pitches. The theme of love in the solo arias of Zorigto and Seseg is conveyed in a light type of major tonality against a bustling backdrop, whereas the opening measures of Dalyu's theme employ the salient tritone of B minor in sharp contrast. In general, dissonant harmonies in the form of unstable, clashing tonalities bordering on the grotesque depict the cold-hearted and implacable Dalyu.

In 1934 and 1935 two new theatrical works, *The Three Sorrowing Hills* and *Princess Dolgor and Arat Damdin*, appeared under the appellation *höggjimt jüjig* "music-drama play." However, it was not by coincidence that these operas, also called *ayalguit jüjig*, were quite similar in the style to the so-called song-operas prevailing in the thirties in the Soviet Union. *The Three Sorrowing Hills*, very broadly speaking, shares with song operas like Khrennikov's *Into the Storm* such basic principles as simplicity, directness and folkishness, and with Asafiev's ballet music a concreteness in musical language with regard to national color and popular customs. Nonetheless, our opera was set in pre-revolutionary Mongolia and thus could not identify with very concrete aspects of thematics in Soviet operas and the developing of appropriate artistic devices for them. The shortcomings of *The Three Sorrowing Hills* were consequently of a very different nature from those of many short-lived Soviet song operas of the thirties. We may draw a few analogies from the Ukrainian historical opera *Bogdan Khmel'nitskii* by K. Dankevich, presented at a dekada of Ukrainian art and literature in Moscow.

Although its libretto and historical genre were quite different from our opera, it was likewise an underdeveloped music-drama play or musical folk drama.²⁸ As in our opera, its operatic episodes were based on authentic national melodies (*dumas*), and it had little variation with respect to musical characterization of the main characters. As opera critics saw it, downplaying the role of the people in *Bogdan Khmel'nitskii* and omitting it altogether in the first version of our opera surely fell short of the great historical-folk drama traditions of Glinka, Mussorgsky and Tchaikovsky.²⁹

Similar tasks of overall revision, enriching the thematic content and raising the ideological and aesthetic levels, lay ahead of these two operas. As Stalin formulated the task of creating a classical Soviet opera, so Mongolia was obliged to create a classical Mongolian opera.

To achieve this meant reverting to or repeating the prior classical cycle of development of Russian music culture³⁰ or, more specifically, using folk melodies in art music, a trend having its origins in nineteenth-century European nationalism. We should recall a review of Glinka's first opera in the *Moscow Observer* in 1836 where a talented composer of the time, G. Verstovskii, postulated that to create an opera meant employing unadulterated folk motifs and sometimes imitating them, whereas Glinka would study the character of the folk music and subsequently employ full freedom to musical creativity. This level of creativity was impossible to attain in the initial versions of *The Three Sorrowing Hills*, not to mention those first operas of several of the Soviet Central Asian republics where so-called professionalism in music was non-existent prior to 1917. What these initial attempts at opera amounted to were loosely strung sequences of medleys, often sharing with Soviet operatic fiascos such general musical traits as insufficient expressivity in arias.

Natsagdorj did not change the first version of the libretto of *The Three Sorrowing Hills* enough to conform to the positive hero type in modern Soviet operas and thus to insure its subsequent success although, as we have seen, positive heroes had already existed in classical Russian opera. We might add here that Prokofiev was looking for less schematic librettos about positive and heroic types and suitable to be set to music to avoid creating mere "dramas set to music," whereas in our opera it was the musical motifs rather than those in the libretto which fell short of the norm in terms of schematism.

By way of concluding, let me say that *The Three Sorrowing Hills* became foremost among several stage plays covering a wide range of love themes, from the traditional dialogue opera *Prince Sum'ya* to several others featuring arats, often female, as central characters. Unlike the Soviet song-operas of the thirties mentioned earlier, our opera served as a model for subsequent Mongolian operas and has survived to this day as a major work of national operatic repertoire. Because it contains a good deal of folkloric idiom and imagery not unfamiliar to the common people, our opera has been widely performed by amateur circles on club stages outside the capital.

The new budding Mongolian opera at the same time was very far removed from such schools as expressionism, formalism, primitivism and exoticism contending in the Soviet Union at the time. They were avoided in Mongolia in order to nationalize various musical forms within the country and to train theatrical cadre in conformance with Soviet norms.³¹

A gap in Mongolian performing arts had now been essentially filled, something so vitally needed upon the conclusion of the International Olympiade of Revolutionary Theatrical Collectives in 1932. Suddenly such new paraphernalia as stage sets, stage presence, lighting and applause made their first appearance on the Mongolian theatrical stage, yet the aura of the Chinese "costumed drama" (*ku-chuang hsi-chü* 古裝戲劇) still lingered on.³²

Analysis of the Music Transcription

Our opera consists of a prelude, an interlude, a battle scene and several songs, including arias and duets.³³ The two solo arias we are examining are basically constructed in two pentatonic (five-tone) scales, Baldan's song being in the so-called Dorian mode (E G A B D) and Nansalmaa's song in the so-called Mixolydian (B \flat C E \flat F G). In the former, brass and percussion predominate to depict evil, whereas in the latter the warm timbres of strings (*pizzicato* is utilized to accentuate beats) and woodwinds in occasional imitation of the vocal line convey a lyrical-amorous quality.³⁴ Both are constructed in strophic form, disregarding the orchestral tutti at the beginning of Baldan's song. The Russian terms *kuplet* and *pripev* are used to denote this particular form.

The use of motifs in both songs are of particular interest. Baldan's song is totally in the style of the Soviet mass song employing a dotted rhythm in the first four measures and a syncopated rhythm thereafter as recurring rhythmic patterns or rhythmic motifs to evoke a march rhythm feeling. In Nansalmaa's song we find a melodic or folk song motif beginning with B C E, which G. Uvarova erroneously calls *maimachenskiye motivy*.³⁵ This recurring pattern is then transposed a fifth higher, becomes a reverse motif in measure 3, is inverted in measure 4, then is finally resolved in measure 5. Nansalmaa's song generally takes on the character of a lyrical-romantic song with measure 9 briefly making an incursion into the relative minor of E \flat major, then reiterating the notes of the scale one last time in the style of the long song with the last two sixteenths reminiscent of a laryngeal trill. The usual dominant-tonic resolution then follows.

The Three Sorrowing Hills
 Libretto by D. Natsagdorj and Ts. Damdinsüren
 Music by B. Damdinsüren and others
 Accompanied by the Mongolian State Theater Orchestra,
 Chuluun, conducting

GALDAN'S SONG - solo male aria sung by Noroonjav

Tutti 1 2 3 4

Vocal Solo 5 6 7 8

9 10 11 12

13 14 *rubato* 15 16

NANSALMAA'S SONG - solo female aria sung by the Merited Art Worker Tsogzolmaa

Tutti 1 2 3

4 5

Vocal Solo 6 7 (B C) 8

9 10 11

Text of the ballad *Yunden Gögögö*
(B. Smirnov, *Mongol'skaya Narodnaya Muzyka*)

53. ЮНДЭН ГӨӨГӨӨ
ЮНДЭН ГОГО¹⁾

Animato
Довольно живо, с чувством ♩-112

variant
ар

voice
Голос

shanza (shudraga)
Шанаа

Да - на - гар да - на - гар ал - хаа - тай - яа, хөө!

Да - лаа (мө - рөө) бу - тээсэн гэзэг тэй - еэ, хөө!

Да - лаа бу - тээ - сэн гэ - зэг - тэй - еэ (хө), хөө!

Да ван гийн Юн - дэн гөө - гөө

Да - (лай) ван - гийн Юн - дэн гөө - гөө

1) Мужское имя.



Данагар данагар алхаатайяа, хөө!
 Далаа бүтээсэн гээгтэйеэ, хөө!
 Да вангийн Юндэн гөөгөө
 Даанч цэвэрхэн төржээ, хөө!

Гунагар гунагар алхаатайяа, хөө!
 Гурваар дарсан гээгтэйеэ, хөө!
 Гунхсан сайхан Юндэн гөөгөө
 Гуниггүй цэвэрхэн төржээ, хөө!

Хорчин хушууны Да-ван чинь, хөө!
 Хойроор морилох нь юуных вэ, хөө!
 Холд явсан Юндэн гөөгөө минь, хөө!
 Хонгортоо ирэх нь яагаа вэ, хөө!

С косою, падающей на спину,
 Шагающий уверенной походкой,
 Безмерно прекрасный,
 Юндэн Гого Да-вани¹⁾.

Степенной походкой шагая,
 С косой, заплетенной из трех прядей,
 Чистый и беззаботный,
 Прекрасен ты, Юндэн Гого.

Да-ван хорчинского уезда,
 Чего ради располагаешься на хойморе²⁾,
 Далеко уехавший мой возлюбленный,
 Почему не возвращаешься, Юндэн Гого?

1) Административный чин в старой Монголии.

2) Почетное место в юрте.

Notes

*The name of our opera as it exists today is *O Tryokh Sud'bakh* (The Destinies of Three) with no allusion to sorrow. ("Tvorcheskoye sotruzhestvo masterov kul'tury" [Joint artistic creativity of the masters], *Mongoliya*, no. 10 (238), October 1978, p. 10.

1. G. A. Uvarova, *Sovremennyyi Mongol'skii Teatr* [Contemporary Mongolian Theater] (Moscow-Leningrad: "Art" State Publishers, 1947), pp. 15-16.

2. The religious counterpart of synthesized art was to be found in *tsam*, so-called mystery plays featuring masked pantomime and ritual dances which were imported from Tibet into Mongolia in the 1870s. According to Uvarova, pp. 21-22, religious and secular drama developed completely independently of each other due to their different functions in society.

3. Chinese theatrical troupes became established in such towns as Kobdo, Uliastai and Kiakhta where Chinese trading communities known as *maimaichen* had sprung up. In Urga Chinese theaters were set up rather late with the increased influx of Chinese settlers and consequent staging of Chinese theatrical performances in more sedentary Mongol areas. Yet at the palaces of the spiritual rulers of Mongolia, the *gegens*, epic-singers and musicians were always present to offer entertainment for their families and guests.

4. These forms are dealt with in a number of works primarily as literary or folkloric genre. K. H. Yatskovskaya in her article "K voprosu o zhanre pesni v sovremennoi mongol'skoi literature" [On the problem of song genre in modern Mongolian literature] in the *Proceedings of the Third International Congress of Mongolists* (Ulaanbaatar: Permanent Committee on the International Congress of Mongolists, 1972), pp. 262-265, uses the word *pesnya* (song) to mean a literary form in vocal style, citing the play *Ih Avgai* [The Old Woman] with the role of the *khuurchi* being absent. We are, on the other hand, only interested in those forms where his active musical role is present.

5. Uvarova, p. 60.

6. They performed both authentic Chinese and Mongolian dramas in Chinese style such as *Ushandar Khan*.

7. Ludmilla Gerasimovich, *History of Modern Mongolian Literature (1921-1964)* (Bloomington: Mongolia Society, 1970), p. 90.

8. B. Sodnom, *D. Natsagdorjiin Uran Zohiolyn Tuhai* [On the Works of D. Natsagdorj], Ulaanbaatar, 1959.

9. Boris Smirnov, *Mongol'skaya Narodnaya Muzyka* [Mongolian Folk Music] (Moscow: Soviet Composer, 1971), pp. 149-150. See facsimile of original work on pp. 49-50.

10. An administrative rank in old Mongolia (< Chin. 大王).

11. Hoimor.

12. Klara N. Yatskovskaya, *Dashdorziin Natsagdorzh: Zhizn' i Tvorchestvo* [D. Natsagdorj: His Life and His Works] (Moscow: "Science" Publishers, 1974), p. 117.

13. Walther Heissig, *Geschichte der mongolischen Literatur* [History of Mongolian Literature] (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1972), p. 641.

14. Charles Bawden, "The Mongol 'conversation song,'" in *Aspects of Altaic Civilization* (Bloomington, 1963), pp. 75-83. On p. 80 he uses an alternate term "ballad-opera" and speaks of "not a very wide variety of theme, as far as can be judged" dealing with bold warriors, dissolute girls and lamas, the parting of lovers through death, marriage to another, and the returning of a

traveler whose beloved has married another. Compare with E. Oyun's classification of *hariltsaa duu* genre in the main body of the text.

15. Mária Salga, "On Mongolian four-line songs in general," *Canada-Mongolia Review* 2:2 (1976), pp. 120-126.

16. D. Batsüren and J. Enebish, *Duunaas Duur' Hürsen Zam: Mongolyn Orchin Üyeiin Högjmiin Uran Būteeliin Tūūhen Toim* [From Song to Opera: A Historical Sketch of Contemporary Mongolian Musical Works] (Ulaanbaatar: Mongolian Composers' Union, 1971), p. 139. Compound adjectives in Russian and Mongolian are frequently used to specify song and opera, as well as mention literary genre of one kind or another.

17. *Muzykal'naya Kul'tura Buryatii* [Music Culture of Buryatia], the fourth in a series on the history of fine arts issued by the Buryat Academy of Social Sciences of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, Ulan Ude: Buryat Book Publishers, 1967, p. 66.

18. Uvarova, p. 114.

19. G. Mikhailov and Klara N. Yatskovskaya, *Literatura Vostoka: Mongol'skaya Literatura - Kratkii Oчерk* [Oriental Literature: A Brief Sketch of Mongolian Literature] (Moscow: "Science" Publishers, 1969), p. 168.

20. It is perhaps appropriate to mention here a controversy over the kiss in Ulaanbaatar several decades ago.

21. Ye. Grosheva, "Obraz naroda v sovetskoi opere" [The image of the people in Soviet opera], in *Sovetskaya Opera: Sbornik Kriticheskikh Statei* [Soviet Opera: A Collection of Critical Essays] (Moscow: State Music Publishers, 1953), p. 235.

22. Their relationship to the complexities of the Chinese adjustable pentatonic systems which in actuality consist of seven tones will not be dealt with here.

23. One-actor dramas or one-actor theater (Bawden, p. 78) shares similarities with various northern Chinese ballad-operas as single-instrument accompaniment with *Pei-ching ch'in-shu* 北京琴書 or *tan-ch'in ta-ku* 單琴大鼓 (Peking ballad-opera) and singing from a sitting position with *tsuo-ch'iang mei-hua* 坐腔鄧鄧 (Mei-hua "sitting vocal style" ballad-opera). See *Shan-tung ta-ku: Li-hua ta-ku, Chiao-tung ta-ku* 山東大鼓: 犁鐸大鼓, 膠東大鼓 [The Ballad-Operas of Shantung Province], ed. by Yü Hui-yung 余會泳 (Peking, "Music" Publishers, 1956), p. 22. Singing all performers' parts in one and the same motif is uncharacteristic of Northern Chinese ballad-opera vocalization in general.

24. Smirnov, p. 62.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 61.

26. Salga, p. 122, speaks of the manifestation of feelings in the four-line song as follows: "The folk singer chooses the aptest of expression from the inventory freely used by the community." This traditional sense of social identity could be construed as the element of folkishness in later versions of our opera.

27. In this connection we should take note of the appearance of duo singing as a distinct musico-literary genre in Inner Mongolia in the second half of the eighteenth century. This "two-actor theater" both with singers and dancers became particularly known with the works of Erzen'tei (Smirnov, p. 65). I believe it is now called *holboo shüleg* (couplet poetry). See G. Kara, *Chant d'un barde mongol* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1970).

28. "On the opera 'Bogdan Khmel'nitskii,'" in *Sovetskaya Opera*, p. 29.

29. A. Shaverdyan, "Pisatel' i sovetskaya opera" [Writers and Soviet opera], in *ibid.*, p. 150.

30. P. Apostolov, "Nasuschchye problemy Kazakhskoi muzyki" [Urgent problems in Kazakh music], in *ibid.*, p. 197.

31. Uvarova, p. 76.

32. In the premier performance of *The Three Sorrowing Hills* the actual wardrobes of the former nobility apparently provided some costumes for the performers. See D. Namdag, "Uchirtai Gurvan Tolgoi" [The Three Sorrowing Hills] in *D. Natsagdorjiin Tuhai Durtgal, Temdeglel* [Accounts and Memoirs Relating to D. Natsagdorj] (Ulaanbaatar: Committee on National Publications, 1966), p. 21.

33. Batsüren and Enebish, p. 77.

34. A similar use of these orchestral timbres is found in the ballets of Zh. Batuyev (*Muzykal'naya Kul'tura Buryatii*, p. 65).