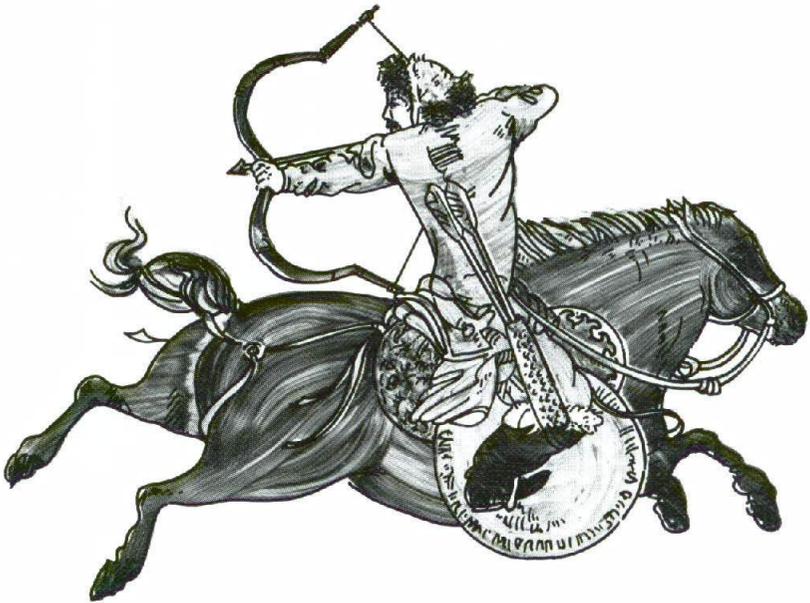


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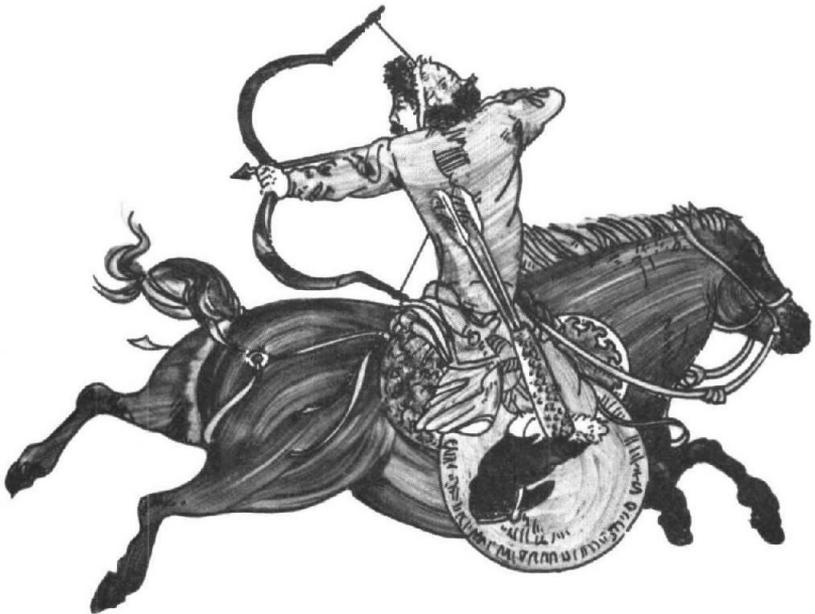
a country study



Mongolia

a country study

Federal Research Division
Library of Congress
Edited by
Robert L. Worden and
Andrea Matles Savada
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Foreword

This volume is one in a continuing series of books now being prepared by the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress under the Country Studies—Area Handbook Program. The last page of this book lists the other published studies.

Most books in the series deal with a particular foreign country, describing and analyzing its political, economic, social, and national security systems and institutions, and examining the interrelationships of those systems and the ways they are shaped by cultural factors. Each study is written by a multidisciplinary team of social scientists. The authors seek to provide a basic understanding of the observed society, striving for a dynamic rather than a static portrayal. Particular attention is devoted to the people who make up the society, their origins, dominant beliefs and values, their common interests and the issues on which they are divided, the nature and extent of their involvement with national institutions, and their attitudes toward each other and toward their social system and political order.

The books represent the analysis of the authors and should not be construed as an expression of an official United States government position, policy, or decision. The authors have sought to adhere to accepted standards of scholarly objectivity. Corrections, additions, and suggestions for changes from readers will be welcomed for use in future editions.

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Contents

	Page
Foreword	iii
Acknowledgments	v
Preface	xiii
Country Profile	xxi
Introduction	xxvii
Chapter 1. Historical Setting	1
<i>Robert L. Worden</i>	
EARLY DEVELOPMENT, ca. 220 B.C.-A.D. 1206	5
Origins of the Mongols	5
Xiongnu and Yuezhi	6
Donghu, Toba, and Ruruan	7
Rise of the Türk	10
Influence of Tang China	10
Kitan and Jurchen	11
THE ERA OF CHINGGIS KHAN, 1206-27	13
Rise of Chinggis Khan	13
Early Wars in China	15
Conquest of Khwarizm and Reconnaissance into Europe	16
The Last Campaign of Chinggis Khan	18
SUCCESSORS OF CHINGGIS, 1228-59	18
Ogedei and Continuing Conquests	18
Subetei and the European Expedition	20
Reign of Kuyuk	21
Mengke and the War in China	22
KHUBILAI KHAN AND THE YUAN DYNASTY, 1261-1368	23
A New Khan	23
The Yuan Dynasty	25
The Ilkhans	27
The Golden Horde	27
The Mongol Decline	30
MONGOLIA IN TRANSITION, 1368-1911	31
Return to Nomadic Patterns	31
Caught Between the Russians and the Manchus	32
The End of Independence	36

MODERN MONGOLIA, 1911-84	38
Period of Autonomy, 1911-21	38
Revolutionary Transformation, 1921-24	40
Consolidation of the Mongolian People's Republic, 1925-28	42
Purges of the Opposition, 1928-32	44
Economic Gradualism and National Defense, 1932-45	46
Peacetime Development, 1946-52	50
Socialist Construction under Tsendenbal, 1952-84	51
Chapter 2. The Society and Its Environment	57
	<i>Donald R. DeGlopper</i>
GEOGRAPHY	60
Landforms	60
Climate	63
Environmental Concerns	66
POPULATION	67
Vital Rates	67
Pro-natal Policies	69
Population Distribution	71
The Urban Population	71
ETHNIC AND LINGUISTIC GROUPS	72
Mongols and Kazakhs	72
Chinese, Russians, and Others	73
SOCIETY	75
Pastoral Nomadism	75
Traditional Patterns	80
Planned Modernization	81
Collectivized Farming and Herding	87
Kinship, Family, and Marriage	91
Position of Women	94
Social Mobility	96
Cultural Unity and Mongol Identity	98
RELIGION	100
Buddhism	100
The Suppression of Buddhism	102
Uses of Buddhism	103
Religious Survivals	104
HEALTH AND WELFARE	104
Health-Care Systems	104
Precautions Against AIDS	107
EDUCATION	107
The School System	107
Higher Education	110

Study in the Soviet Union	110
Mongolian Science	111
Science, Progress, and Tradition	112
Chapter 3. The Economy	115
	<i>Roxane D.V. Sismanidis</i>
SOCIALIST FRAMEWORK OF THE ECONOMY	118
Role of the Government	118
Planning	119
Budget	121
Structure of the Economy	121
Economic Reforms	123
NATURAL RESOURCES	125
AGRICULTURE	127
Crop Production	131
Animal Husbandry	132
Forestry	134
Fishing	136
INDUSTRY	137
Light Industry	139
Mining	141
Energy	142
Construction	143
SERVICES	144
Banking and Insurance	144
Domestic Trade and Other Services	146
Retail Trade and Consumption	146
LABOR FORCE	149
Composition	149
Labor Force Policy and Planning	150
Working Conditions and Income	152
Trade Unions	154
FOREIGN ECONOMIC RELATIONS AND	
COMECON	156
Participation in Comecon	158
Foreign Assistance, Investment, and Joint	
Ventures	158
Exports and Imports	161
Trading Partners	162
Tourism	163
TRANSPORTATION	163
Roads	164
Railroads	165
Inland Waterways	167

Civil Aviation	167
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	168
Chapter 4. Government and Politics	171
	<i>Marcia R. Ristaino</i>
GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE	173
Form of Government	173
Constitutional Framework	175
Major State Organizations	178
Local Administration	183
MONGOLIAN PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY PARTY ...	184
Membership	185
Party Congress	185
Central Committee	187
Political Bureau and Secretariat	188
Regional and Local Party Organizations	189
Mass Organizations	190
THE POLITICAL PROCESS	194
Democratic Centralism	194
Political Issues	198
Role of the Military	200
General Political Values and Attitudes	202
FOREIGN POLICY	203
Motivation and Goals	203
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	204
Foreign Relations	204
International Organizations	212
THE MEDIA	212
Information Policy	213
Major Channels	214
Foreign Sources	216
Chapter 5. National Security	219
	<i>Ronald E. Dolan</i>
THE ARMED FORCES	222
Historical Traditions	222
Beginning of Modern Military Practices, 1911-21 ...	223
The Mongolian Army, 1921-68	228
Organization since 1968	240
Civil-Military Relations	246
Economic Role	246
Threat Perception	247
CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SECURITY	248
The Legal System	249

The Penal System	255
Law Enforcement	256
Appendix. Tables	261
Bibliography	273
Glossary	299
Index	303
List of Figures	
1 Administrative Divisions of Mongolia, 1989	xxvi
2 Tribes, Nations, and Boundaries of Mongolia and Inner Asia, ca. A.D. 1150-1227	14
3 The Mongol Empire, ca. A.D. 1280	24
4 Topography and Drainage	62
5 Precipitation	64
6 Temperature	65
7 Population Density, 1986	68
8 Age-Sex Ratio, 1990 Projection	70
9 Minerals and Mining, 1989	126
10 Agriculture and Forestry, 1985	130
11 Industry, 1985	140
12 Transportation, 1989	166
13 Organization of the Government, 1989	174
14 Organization of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, 1989	186
15 Organization of the Armed Forces, 1989	240
16 Armed Forces Personnel Strength, Selected Years, 1978-88	242
17 Officer and Enlisted Ranks and Insignia, 1989	244

Preface

This is the first revised edition of the *Area Handbook for Mongolia*, published in 1970. The new edition recounts events in Mongolia during the intervening years and brings up to date such developments as the changing geopolitical role of Mongolia in Sino-Soviet relations, the establishment of diplomatic relations between Mongolia and the United States, the evolution to a more open, reform-minded administration, and broad economic achievements.

Like its predecessor, this study is an attempt to present an objective and concise account of the major social, economic, political, and national security concerns of contemporary Mongolia, as well as to provide a historical framework for this overview. The 1970 edition, which this volume replaces, was prepared for The American University by a team composed of Trevor N. Dupuy, Wendell Blanchard, Martin Blumenson, Richard L. Butwell, Nancy Gager Clinch, Alvin D. Coox, Grace Person Hayes, Marilyn Heilprin, Virginia M. Herman, Steven J. Hunter, Brooke Nihart, Francis J. Romance, and Ellen L. Sato.

The current *Mongolia: A Country Study* results from the combined efforts of a multidisciplinary team. The authors obtained information from a variety of sources, including scholarly studies, official reports from government and international organizations, as well as foreign and domestic newspapers and periodicals. Brief commentary on some of the more useful and readily accessible English-language sources appears at the end of each chapter. Full references to these and other sources used by the authors are listed in the Bibliography. Users of the book seeking additional materials on Mongolia, the Mongols, and Inner Asian peoples are encouraged to consult the annual editions of the *Bibliography of Asian Studies* and *The American Bibliography of Slavic and East European Studies* and Lidia Pavlovna Popova, et alii *Mongol Studies in the Soviet Union: A Bibliography of Soviet Publications, 1981-1986* (Bloomington, Indiana: Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 1988).

The authors have limited the use of foreign and technical terms, which are defined when they first appear. Readers are also referred to the Glossary in the back of the book. The contemporary place-names used in this book have been romanized—but without using the dieresis and breve diacritics—from Mongolian Cyrillic Script according to the system approved by the United States Board on Geographic Names and the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names for British Official Use. The pinyin system of romanization

is used for Chinese personal names and place-names, although occasionally some familiar Wade-Giles romanizations have been provided. All measurements are given in the metric system. A conversion table is provided to assist readers unfamiliar with metric measurements (see table 1, Appendix).

Table A. Chronology of Important Events

Date	Events
3d century B.C.	Iron weapons in use; Xiongnu invasion of China repulsed
2d-1st centuries B.C.	Nomads expand west; pressure on China continues
1st-2d centuries A.D.	Renewed attacks on China
A.D. 317	Xianbei conquer northern China
386-533	Period of Northern Wei Dynasty, established by the Toba in northern China
mid-8th century	Possible early Mongol links with Tibetan Buddhism
916-1125	Period of Kitan Liao Dynasty, established over eastern Mongolia, Manchuria, and northern China
1038-1227	Tangut Western Xia Dynasty, established in northwestern China
1115-1234	Jurchen establish Jin Dynasty in Manchuria, northern China
1139-47	Jurchen defeat Mongols in Pamirs
1196-1206	Temujin unites Mongols, assumes title of Chinggis Khan
1209-15	Mongols conquer south to Beijing, west to Lake Balkash
1220-26	Southwest Asia conquered; invasion of Europe and China
1227	Chinggis dies
1231	Korea invaded
1235	Capital rebuilt at Karakorum
1237-41	Expedition into Europe, halted at Vienna with death of Ogedei
1240-1480	Suzerainty over Russia established by Golden Horde (see Glossary)
c. 1252-79	Conquest of Song China
1260	Mongols defeated by Egyptian Mamluks

Table A.—Continued

Date	Events
1274 and 1281	Unsuccessful attempts at invasion of Japan
1279	Yuan Dynasty established in China
1368	Yuan Dynasty destroyed; Mongols driven back into Mongolia
1388	Chinese troops destroy Karakorum
1391	Timur defeats Golden Horde
1400-54	Civil war ends Mongol unity
1409-49	Renewed Mongol invasions of China
1466	Dayan Khan reunites most of Mongolia
1480-1502	Muscovites end Mongol control of Russia; last of Golden Horde defeated
1571	Mongols end 300-year war with China
1586	Buddhism becomes state religion
1641-52	Russians defeat Buryat Mongols, gain control of Lake Baykal region
1672	Mongols raid Siberia and Russia
1691	Most Khalkha Mongols accept suzerainty of Manchus, absorbed into Chinese empire (Qing Dynasty, 1644-1911)
1728	Sino-Russian Treaty of Kyakhta redefines traditional Mongolian borders
1732	Dzungar Mongols defeated; Mongol independence ended
1750s	Chinese divide Mongolia into northern, Outer Mongolia (see Glossary), and southern, Inner Mongolia (see Glossary)
1783	Last reigning descendant of Chinggis in the Crimea deposed by Russians
December 1, 1911	Outer Mongolia proclaims independence from China
December 28, 1911	Mongolia establishes autonomous theocratic government

Table A.—Continued

Date	Events
November 3, 1912	Russia affirms Mongolia's separation from China
November 5, 1913	Sino-Russian agreement acknowledges Chinese suzerainty over Mongolia
May 25, 1915	Treaty of Kyakhta formalizes Mongolian autonomy
September 1918	Chinese troops occupy Outer Mongolia
March-June 1920	Mongolian People's Party formed, establishes links with Communist International (see Glossary) and Soviets
October 1920	Russian White Guards invade Mongolia
March 1-3, 1921	First National Party Congress of the Mongolian People's Party held in Kyakhta, Soviet Union
March 13, 1921	Mongolian People's Provisional Government formed
July 1921	Mongolian-Soviet army drives out White Guards
July 11, 1921	Mongolian People's Government, a limited monarchy, proclaimed
September 14, 1921	Mongolian independence proclaimed
November 5, 1921	Soviets recognize Mongolian People's Government
February 22, 1923	Revolutionary hero Damdiny Sukhe Bator dies
May 31, 1924	Sino-Soviet treaty recognizes Chinese sovereignty over Mongolia
August 1924	Mongolian People's Party becomes Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party
November 6, 1924	First National Great Hural convenes
November 25, 1924	Mongolian People's Republic proclaimed; Soviet style state constitution adopted; Nijslel Huree renamed Ulaanbaatar
March 1925	Soviet troops ostensibly withdraw
September 1927	Inner-party struggle at Sixth Party Congress

Table A.—Continued

Date	Events
December 1928	Horloyn Choybalsan emerges as party leader
1929-32	Feudal estates confiscated; religious communities suppressed
April-May 1932	Soviet troops help quell rebellions; party repudiates extremism
November 27, 1934	Mongolian-Soviet "gentlemen's agreement" allows Soviet troops into Mongolia
March 12, 1936	Treaty and mutual defense protocol signed with Soviet Union
1937-39	High-level government purges
1938	Buddhist monasteries closed
1939	Choybalsan emerges as undisputed leader
July-August 1939	Mongolian-Soviet joint force defeats Japanese at Halhin Gol
March-April 1940	Yumjaagiyn Tsendenbal becomes party general secretary
August 10, 1945	Mongolia declares war on Japan
January 5, 1946	China recognizes Mongolia's independence
February 27, 1946	Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance and Agreement on Economic and Cultural Cooperation signed with Soviet Union
February 1949	Ninth National Great Hural, first since 1940, convenes
January 26, 1952	Choybalsan dies
May 1952	Tsendenbal becomes premier
December 1952	Economic and cultural cooperation agreement signed with China
April 1956	"Personality cult" of Choybalsan condemned
October 1956	New collective efforts start
July 6, 1960	New state Constitution adopted
October 27, 1961	Mongolia admitted to United Nations

Table A.—Continued

Date	Events
January 1962	Choybalsan's "personality cult" again condemned
June 7, 1962	Mongolia joins Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon—see Glossary)
1966	Serious Mongolian-Chinese differences emerge
June 1974	Jambyn Batmonh becomes chairman of Council of Ministers; Tsendenbal becomes chairman of the Presidium of the People's Great Hural and continues as party first secretary
August 23, 1984	Tsendenbal retires; Batmonh becomes party general secretary
December 12, 1984	Batmonh elected chairman of Presidium of People's Great Hural; Dumaagiyn Sodnom becomes premier
April 1986	Long-term trade agreement signed with China
January 15, 1987	Soviet Union announces intention to withdraw one of five Soviet divisions stationed in Mongolia
January 27, 1987	Diplomatic relations established with the United States
November 28, 1988	Treaty on a border control system signed with China
March 7, 1989	Soviets announce that troop withdrawal plans had been finalized

Country Profile

Country

Formal Name: Mongolian People's Republic.

Short Form: Mongolia.

Term for Citizens: Mongolian(s).

Capital: Ulaanbaatar.

Date of Independence: March 13, 1921, from China. Formerly Outer Mongolia (see Glossary), a dependency of China, 1691-1911; autonomous state under Russian protection, 1912-19; partially under Chinese control, 1919-21.

Geography

Size: Total 1,565,000 square kilometers.

Topography: Mountains and rolling plateaus; vast semidesert and desert plains, 90 percent pasture or desert wasteland, less than 1 percent arable, 8 to 10 percent forested; mountains in north, west and southwest; Gobi, a vast desert in southeast; Selenge river system in north.

Climate: Desert; high, cold, dry, continental climate; sharp seasonal fluctuations and variation; little precipitation; great diurnal temperature changes.

Society

Population: 2,125,463 in July 1989; in 1989, birth rate 35.1 per 1,000; death rate 7.6 per 1,000. Approximately 51 percent live in urban areas; nearly 25 percent in Ulaanbaatar in 1986. In 1987 population density per square kilometer 1.36; sex ratio 50.1 percent male, 49.9 percent female as of 1986.

Ethnic Groups: Nearly 90 percent Mongol. Rest Kazakh (5.3 percent), Chinese (2 percent), Russian (2 percent); Tuvins (see Glossary), Uzbeks (see Glossary), Uighurs (see Glossary), and others (1.5 percent).

Languages: Khalkha Mongol (official language), 90 percent; minor languages include Turkic, Chinese, Russian, and Kazakh.

Religion: Predominantly Yellow Sect of Tibetan Buddhism (Lamaism); about 4 percent Muslim (primarily in southwest), some shamanism. Limited religious activity although freedom of religion guaranteed in 1960 Constitution.

Health: Life expectancy in 1989 sixty-three for males, sixty-seven for females. Infant mortality 49 to 53 per 1,000; 112 hospitals in 1986 with a ratio of 110 hospital beds and 24.8 doctors per 10,000 population. Overall free medical care; medical specialists and facilities concentrated in urban areas; close cooperation with Soviet Union in medical research and training.

Education: Four years compulsory elementary school overall and four years compulsory secondary school in all but most remote areas; two-year noncompulsory general secondary. Higher education: one university, seven other institutes of higher learning. In 1985 primary and secondary education included: 28 specialized secondary schools, 40 vocational schools, 900 general education schools enrolling 435,900 students; many Mongolian students study at universities and technical schools in the Soviet Union and East European countries—approximately 11,000 studied abroad in 1986–87. In the late 1980s, educational reform plans announced for 11-year system of general education with traditional emphasis. In 1985 national literacy rate estimated at 80 percent; 100 percent claimed by government.

Media: Thirty-five newspapers and thirty-eight magazines published in 1986.

Economy

Major Features: Economy traditionally based on agriculture, livestock breeding, and forestry. In 1980s Soviets assisted in development of extensive mineral resources; mining and processing of coal, copper, molybdenum, tin, tungsten, and gold accounted for large portion of industrial production.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP): In 1985 estimated at US\$1.7 billion; per capita income based on GDP was US\$880.

Agriculture: Livestock predominates; camels, cattle, goats, horses, and sheep major livestock types. Crops include wheat, barley, oats, hay, potatoes, and vegetables.

Industry: Processing of forestry, animal, and fishery products; building materials, food and beverage; and mining (particularly coal).

Resources: Coal, copper, molybdenum, tungsten, phosphates, tin, rare earth, sodium chloride, nickel, zinc, wolfram, fluorite, and gold.

Exports: In 1985 approximately 2 billion tugriks (US\$670 million; free on board). Major commodities: cement, lumber and sawn timber, wool, large and small hides, grain, meat, clothing, and minerals. Nearly all trade with communist countries (about 80 percent with Soviet Union); 3.3 percent to noncommunist countries in 1986.

Imports: Approximately 3.3 billion tugriks (US\$1.0 billion, cost, insurance, and freight, 1985). Major imports: machine tools, diesel generators, electric motors, transformers, construction equipment, gasoline and diesel fuel, iron and steel, foodstuffs, and consumer durables. Nearly all trade with communist countries (about 80 percent with Soviet Union); 1.7 percent to noncommunist countries in 1986.

Exchange Rate: 2.985 tugriks = US\$1 in March 1989.

Fiscal Year: Calendar year.

Transportation and Communications

Inland Waterways: 397 kilometers of principal routes, primarily on Hovsgol Nuur and Selenge Moron, navigable only 5 months of year.

Roads: In 1986 total highways 6,700 kilometers; 900 kilometers paved. Main roads linked Ulaanbaatar with Chinese and Soviet frontiers at Erenhot and Kyakhta, respectively. Bus services in Ulaanbaatar and other large towns; road haulage services throughout country on basis of motor-transport depots, mostly in *aymag* (provincial) centers.

Railroads: Diesel-drive rolling stock; 1,750 kilometers of 1.524-meter broad-gauge track in 1986. In 1984 accounted for more than 70 percent of total freight turnover.

Civil Aviation: Airfields totaled eighty, thirty usable, ten with permanent-surface runways; largest at Ulaanbaatar. National carrier: Mongolian Airlines (MIAT). Domestic service to provincial-level and many county centers. International service from Ulaanbaatar to Irkutsk, Soviet Union, and Beijing. Total route length, 38,300 kilometers. Aeroflot connected Ulaanbaatar to major world capitals.

Telecommunications: New radio relay lines planned; 13 AM, 1 FM radio station, 1 television station with 18 provincial-level relays; 88,100 television sets; 207,000 radio receivers; at least one satellite ground station.

Government and Politics

Party and Government: Communist, modeled on Soviet system; limited degree of private ownership permitted by 1960 Constitution. Unicameral People's Great Hural with 370 deputies elected in June 1986 for four-year term; 328 were members or candidate members of ruling Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party. Council of Ministers with highest executive power. Political processes guided in theory by People's Great Hural, which enacts basic laws of country, but real power vested in ten-person party Political Bureau. Central Committee appoints and removes Political Bureau members and is itself appointed by National Party Congress. Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party only legal party in 1989. Land, natural resources, factories, transport, and banking organizations state property. Cooperative ownership of most public enterprises, especially livestock herding.

Administrative Divisions: Eighteen provinces (*aymags*), three municipalities (*hots*), and counties (*somons*), each with own Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party organization, which directs work of local assemblies, cooperatives, and government on its level.

Judicial System: Blend of Soviet, Chinese, and Turkish systems of law; administered by courts and Office of the Procurator of the Republic—appointed to five-year term by People's Great Hural. No constitutional provision for judicial review of legislative acts; does not accept International Court of Justice jurisdiction. Supreme Court elected by People's Great Hural for four-year term. Lower court judges elected by local assemblies for three-year terms. People's Great Hural appoints procurator, who appoints lower-level procurators. Procurator and Supreme Court accountable to People's Great Hural and its presidium.

Foreign Affairs: Heavily dependent on Soviet Union for economic assistance, technical aid, and labor. Historical focus on two neighbors—China and Soviet Union, with which it shares strategic location; latter with a powerful influence over many aspects of foreign policy. Diplomatic relations established with United States in 1987.

National Security

Armed Forces: Mongolian People's Army—21,000 (17,000 conscripts); Mongolian People's Air Force—3,500, in 1988.

Military Budget: US\$249.44 million (1987).

Military Units: Four motorized rifle divisions; one air fighter regiment; two transport squadrons; one helicopter squadron.

Equipment: T-54, T-55, T-62 main battle tanks; 100mm anti-tank guns; 120mm and 160mm mortars; 122mm, 130mm, and 152mm towed artillery; 14.5mm, 37mm, and 57mm air defense guns; 122mm, 132mm, and 140mm multiple rocket launchers; SA-7 surface-to-air missiles; MiG-21 fighters; An-2, An-24, An-26, and An-32 transports; Mi-4 and Mi-8 helicopters.

Auxiliary Forces: Paramilitary force (responsible for border patrol, guard duty, and immigration) of 15,000 under jurisdiction of Ministry of Public Security; also militia (internal security troops) and 200,000 army reservists.



Figure 1. Administrative Divisions of Mongolia, 1989

Introduction

MONGOLIA AND THE MONGOL PEOPLE have periodically been at the center of international events. The histories of nations—indeed, of continents—have been rewritten and major cultural and political changes have occurred because of a virtual handful of seemingly remote pastoral nomads. The thirteenth-century accomplishments of Chinggis Khan in conquering a swath of the world from modern-day Korea to southern Russia and in invading deep into Europe, and the cultural achievements of his grandson, Khubilai Khan, in China are well-known in world history. Seven hundred years later, a much compressed Mongolian nation again attracted world attention, as a strategic battleground between Japan and the Soviet Union in the 1930s and between the Soviet Union and China in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In the 1980s, the Mongolian People's Republic continued to be a critical geopolitical factor in Sino-Soviet relations.

The Mongols arose from obscure origins in the recesses of Inner Asia to unify their immediate nomadic neighbors and then to conquer much of the Eurasian landmass, ruling large parts of it for more than a century. Emerging from a newly consolidated heartland north of the Gobi in the thirteenth century, the Mongols and their armies—made up of conquered peoples—thrust through western Asia, crossed the Ural Mountains, invaded the countries of Eastern Europe, and pressed on to Austria and the Adriatic. They also advanced through southwest Asia to the eastern Mediterranean and they conquered the Chinese empire. At about the same time, they embarked on ambitious maritime expeditions against Java and Japan. The Mongols were phenomenally hard-driving and ambitious for such a small group, and their accomplishments were considerable. Only the Mamluks of Egypt, the “divine winds” of Japan, and the Mongols' own legal tradition—the need to return home to elect a new khan—halted the inexorable Mongol military advances.

Resistance to, and accommodation of, the Mongols had mixed effects on the national development of some of the conquered nations. European kingdoms and principalities formed alliances to do battle, albeit unsuccessfully, against the Mongol armies. Europeans even joined the hated Muslims in Egypt and Palestine to oppose the common Mongol enemy. Although the Mongol invasion of Japan was not successful, it contributed to the eventual downfall of Japan's ruling faction. The conquering Mongols

brought an infusion of new ideas and unity to China, but they were eventually absorbed and lost their ability to rule over a people hundreds of times more numerous than they were themselves.

But Mongol influence did not end with the termination of military conquests or absorption. Their presence was institutionalized in many of the lands that they conquered, through the adoption of Mongol military tactics, administrative forms, and commercial enterprises. The historical development of such disparate nations as Russia, China, and Iran were directly affected by the Mongols. Wherever they settled outside their homeland, the Mongols brought about cultural change and institutional improvements. Although there never was a Pax Mongolica, the spread of the Mongol polity across Eurasia resulted in a large measure of cultural exchange. Chinese scribes and artists served the court of the Ilkans in Iran, Italian merchants served the great khans in Karakorum and Dadu (as Beijing was then known), papal envoys recorded events in the courts of the great khans, Mongol princes were dispatched to all points of the great Mongol empire to observe and be observed, and the Golden Horde (see Glossary) and their Tatar (see Glossary) descendants left a lasting mark on Muscovy through administrative developments and intermarriage. Although eventually subsumed as part of the Chinese empire, the Mongols were quick to seek independence when that empire disintegrated in 1911.

The Mongol character has been greatly influenced by the extremes of Mongolia's geography, comprising huge rolling plateaus, rugged mountain ranges, and areas susceptible to earthquakes. On the one hand, Mongolia has Hovsgol Nuur—one of Asia's largest freshwater lakes—and river systems that drain toward the Arctic and Pacific oceans and into Central Asia, and on the other, the Gobi, a vast arid rangeland within which there are even less hospitable desert areas. The climate is mostly cold and dry with long frigid winters and short hot summers. Minimal precipitation, temperatures that freeze the nation's rivers and freshwater lakes for long periods of the year, and severe blizzards and dust storms leave only about 1 percent of the land arable and make human and livestock existence fragile at best.

Such an inhospitable land, not unexpectedly, is home to a relatively small, widely dispersed population. Of the 4 million plus Mongols—only a fourfold increase over the population of the era of Chinggis Khan—only a little more than 2 million people live in the modern Mongolian People's Republic (the rest are minority peoples in China and the Soviet Union). Except for a concentration of 500,000 people in Ulaanbaatar, the capital, population is sparsely distributed: another quarter of the population resides

in small urban areas and the remaining approximately 49 percent live in the vast countryside. The population, however, is young and growing rapidly as government incentives encourage large families to offset labor shortages. Nearly 90 percent of the population is composed of ethnic Mongols, making the nation extremely homogeneous; Turkic peoples, such as Tuvins (see Glossary) and Kazakhs, Chinese, Russians, and other minorities make up the remainder.

Nomadic peoples of uncertain origins are recorded as living in what is now the Mongolian People's Republic in the third century B.C., and archaeological evidence takes human habitation in the Gobi back a hundred centuries or more earlier. Warfare was a way of life, against other nomadic peoples in competition for land, and in the south against the Chinese, whose high culture and fertile lands were always attractive to the Mongols and other Inner Asian peoples. China responded with punitive expeditions, which pushed these pre-Mongol and proto-Mongol peoples farther north, west, and east and resulted in periods of Chinese hegemony over parts of Inner Asia. The Mongols of Chinggis Khan emerged in central Mongolia in the twelfth century under Chinggis's grandfather. Tribal alliances, wars, clan confederations, and more wars contributed to a new Mongol unity and organization and the eventual conquest of lands throughout Eurasia.

The high point of Mongol achievements was followed by gradual fragmentation. The Mongol successes throughout the first part of the thirteenth century were eroded by overextension of lines of control from the capital, first at Karakorum and later at Dadu. By the late fourteenth century, only local vestiges of Mongol glory persisted in parts of Asia. The main core of the Mongol population in China retreated to the old homeland, where their governing system devolved into a quasi-feudalistic system fraught with disunity and conflict. Caught between the emergence of tsarist Russia and the Manchus—distant cousins of the Mongols—in the seventeenth century, Mongolia eventually was absorbed into the periphery of the Chinese polity, where it remained until 1911. As the Chinese imperial system disintegrated, the Mongols sought national independence; the Chinese did not willingly give up, however, and Mongolia continued to be divided into northern (Outer Mongolia—see Glossary) and southern (Inner Mongolia—see Glossary) sections. Russian interest in Mongolia was replaced by Soviet involvement; the Japanese sought political leverage and applied periodic pressure up through World War II.

Throughout the twentieth century, Russian and Soviet influence over Mongolia has been a predominant factor in its national

development. The tsarist government aided Mongolian revolutionaries both diplomatically and militarily against the Chinese, and anti-Bolshevik White Russian military forces did active battle against both the Chinese and the indigenous revolutionaries. The theocratic monarchy established after 1911 was greatly limited by the Mongolian Revolution of 1921 and eventually was replaced by a "people's republic" under heavy Soviet influence. This influence continued throughout the twentieth century in the form of political guidance and economic aid. Severe purges of monarchists, Buddhists, conservative revolutionaries, and any other real or perceived opponent of the new communist regime took place throughout the 1920s and the early 1930s. Extremism bordered on national disaster before evolving into more moderate policies of a new Mongolian socialism characterized by closely planned economic growth. Joint Mongolian-Soviet armies successfully fended off Japanese military advances in 1939. The rest of World War II produced further agricultural and industrial development in support of Moscow's war efforts and made Mongolia a critical buffer in the Soviet Far Eastern defense system. Technically neutral, Mongolia declared war against Japan only in August 1945.

Peacetime brought additional Soviet and East European economic aid (and eventually membership in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance [Comecon—see Glossary]) and a new relationship with the People's Republic of China, after its establishment in 1949. Improved Mongolian-Chinese relations resulted in still more economic assistance from, and trade with, Beijing. Mongolia's external policies, however, were founded on those of the Soviet Union, and relations with China, always influenced by suspicions over real or imaginary claims by China to "lost territories," faltered in the wake of the Sino-Soviet rift that developed in the late 1950s. By the late 1960s, Mongolia had become an armed camp; Soviet and Chinese troops were poised against one another along the Mongolian-Chinese border. Tensions between Ulaanbaatar and Beijing lessened only when Sino-Soviet rapprochement began to evolve in the mid-1980s. The issue of Soviet troop withdrawal from Mongolia still constrained Mongolian-Chinese relations in the late 1980s.

Some of the same late twentieth-century geopolitical developments that lessened tensions with China also brought Mongolia farther into the mainstream of world affairs. Mongolia participated more actively in international organizations and improved relations with a growing number of Western countries, including the United States, which established diplomatic relations with Mongolia in 1987.

Traditional Mongolian society was affected heavily by foreign influences: commerce was controlled by Chinese merchants and the state religion—Tibetan Buddhism (or, Lamaism—see Glossary)—was simultaneously bureaucratic and otherworldly. Modern society has been shaped by the continued foreign—primarily Soviet—influence. Despite increasing urbanization and industrialization, however, nearly half of the population in the late 1980s lived either by the traditional methods of pastoral nomadism—moving their herds (sheep, horses, cattle, goats, and yaks) from one area of temporary sustenance to another—or in a close symbiotic relationship with the nomads. Despite its hardships, the nomadic life provides Mongols with national values and a sense of historical identity and pride.

Traditional values and practices have made modernization of society a difficult task, however. Once they had eliminated what the communists called feudal aspects of society, Mongolia's new leaders still had to take radical steps to modernize their country. Scientific methods were applied to animal husbandry and agriculture, and new industries, such as copper and coal mining, were developed. Herding and agricultural collectives, mines, factories, and education institutions became the focal point of a social organization controlled by state administrators, most of whom were members of the ruling Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party. Modernization inevitably brought greater differentiation and mobility in Mongolian society as party functionaries, white collar administrators, factory workers, and increasing numbers of urban residents (who typically have larger family units than rural residents) surpassed in numbers and opportunities the once self-sufficient pastoralists, who remain at the bottom of the social system.

The development of the economy has been closely associated with social modernization in Mongolia. Beginning with the 1921 revolution, the government took increasing control over the economy. Mongolia has a planned economy based on state and cooperative ownership. Annual planning began in 1941, and five-year plans began in 1948. The plans have been closely integrated with the five-year plans of the Soviet Union since 1961 and with Comecon multilateral plans since 1976. In the years since 1921, Mongolia has been transformed from an almost strictly agrarian economy to a diversified agricultural-industrial economy. Economic reforms in the Soviet Union inspired similar efforts in Mongolia under Jambyn Batmonh, premier between 1974 and 1984 and general secretary of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party after 1984. The acceleration of economic development, greater application of science and technology to production, improved management and

planning, greater independence for economic enterprises, and better balance among individual, collective, and societal interests were the target areas of reform in the late 1980s.

Underpinning society and the economy are the government and party. Mongolia has a highly centralized government run by a cabinet (the Council of Ministers), with a unicameral legislature (People's Great Hural), and an independent judicial branch overseeing the courts and the criminal justice system. Provinces, provincial-level cities, counties, and town centers constitute local administration. As in all communist-run states, there is one-party rule. The Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, with a membership of nearly 90,000, operates with quinquennial party congresses and an elected Central Committee. The party's Political Bureau and Secretariat provide standing leadership and carry out day-to-day business. Local party administration coincides with government offices and production units at each level.

Mongolia's national security is intimately linked with that of the Soviet Union. The armed forces have a rich historical tradition in the legacy of the great khans—an era of Mongolian history still resented by the Soviets—and of their more immediate revolutionary forbearers of the 1910s and 1920s. The Mongolian People's Army was established in 1921, when the new provisional national government was proclaimed. As is the case in all aspects of modern Mongolian organization, Soviet influence has predominated. Soviet Red Army troops remained in Mongolia at least until 1925, and they were brought back in the 1930s to help quell anticommunist rebellions. Since then, they have had a major military presence, poised first against the Japanese and later against the Chinese threat. Up through the 1940s, Mongolian troops had had fighting experiences against White Russians, Chinese warlord armies, Mongolian rebels, the Japanese, and Chinese Guomintang (Kuomintang in Wade-Giles romanization) or, Chinese Nationalist Party, forces.

In the 1950s, serious efforts were made at military modernization, but it was the Sino-Soviet rift that brought about the most dramatic changes. Increasingly close ties developed between the Mongolian and Soviet armed forces in accordance with a succession of mutual defense pacts. Open hostilities between Soviet and Chinese forces in the late 1960s further strengthened ties and led to still greater modernization of the ground and air forces. By 1988 the armed forces numbered 24,500 active-duty personnel—most organized into four motorized rifle divisions and a MiG-21 fighter regiment—and some 200,000 reservists and paramilitary personnel.

Military training for able-bodied civilians—both men and women—and universal male military conscription (from age eighteen to age twenty-eight) are key elements in a country with a tradition in which all men were considered warriors. Additionally, all citizens are obliged to participate in civil defense preparedness activities. Close ties between the military establishment and the civilian economy have existed since the 1930s; many industries continue to produce both military matériel and civilian-use goods. Demobilized soldiers normally have greater technical skills than those who did not serve in the military and thus contributes significantly to the economy upon completion of military service. The military also plays an important economic role through numerous military construction projects for the civilian sector.

In sum, the Mongolian People's Republic, as it reaches the 1990s, is a small, economically developing country that has made great strides since it emerged from centuries of Chinese domination. The measure of progress is controlled by a one-party, highly centralized system that has long been influenced by its Soviet mentors. Because Mongolia's foreign policy is coordinated with that of the Soviet Union and is closely integrated with, and heavily dependent on, Soviet and East European assistance, the degree to which Mongolia is able to conduct its own affairs is questionable. As it has been for several millennia, Mongolia will continue to be geopolitically important.

June 30, 1989

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As this book was being completed, extraordinary developments were occurring in Mongolia. Opposition parties emerged, the top leadership of the ruling party, the state, and the government was replaced, and free multiparty elections were held. Criticisms of the old regime brought admissions of falsified official statistics (the authors of this book were plagued continually with irreconcilable figures; users of the statistical data in this book thus are warned to keep in mind the "official" nature of many of the figures used). Accompanying the rejection of the old regime was a resurgence of nationalism (including renewed and positive interest in the ancient regime of Chinggis Khan). Like the peoples of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, Mongolians wanted to reform their country's social, political, and economic sectors and to be more open to the West. The changes set in motion in 1984 by the replacement of Yumjaagiyn Tsendenbal with the reform leadership of

Jambyn Batmonh were coming to fruition in 1990, as even Batmonh himself was replaced as the top party and state leader.

Throughout 1989, Tsedenbal was criticized for having had a “dogmatic interpretation of socialism” and for having rushed to the conclusion that the period of socialism had begun. The 1989 leadership blamed Tsedenbal not only for the problems of the past but also for having contributed to the current leadership’s inability to determine the level of economic construction because of his earlier flawed analyses. In an effort to push blame back still farther, Tsedenbal’s reputation was linked with that of his predecessor, Horloyn Choybalsan, whom Batmonh had criticized at the Fifth Plenary Session of the Nineteenth Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party National Party Congress in December 1988.

Amidst the criticism of recent Mongolian leaders, the previous negative analysis of the historical role of Chinggis Khan was revised. Chinggis was seen in an increasingly favorable light as the Mongol nation’s founder and as a national hero, a position not well received in Moscow. Calls for publication of historical texts and literature in Mongol script, rather than in Cyrillic, grew, and the usage of Mongol-language rather than Russian-language words increased. Officials expressed concern midway through 1989 that some of the new nationalist pride might be taking a dangerous anti-Soviet line, and appropriate warnings were made to those whose thinking may have been swayed by “bourgeois propaganda.”

Western material culture also took hold in reform-minded Mongolia. Semi-professional rock music groups emerged after a decade of low-key development (odes to Chinggis Khan were among the hottest rock hits), and avant-garde artists began to enjoy official sanction. The emphasis on cultural reform, however, appeared to concentrate on a renewed interest in traditional prerevolutionary achievements.

High-level exchanges with the Soviet Union continued to be the norm in relations between Ulaanbaatar and Moscow; these included Batmonh’s brief “working visit” with Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev to reaffirm the two communist parties’ “close comradeship” in July 1989. As a sign of more openness among communist countries, in July 1989 Mongolia and Albania restored formal diplomatic relations and the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party normalized relations with the Chinese Communist Party. Indicative of the continually improving relations with China was the visit one month later to Mongolia by the Chinese foreign minister, Qian Qichen. The capitalist world was not ignored: the minister of foreign economic relations and supply was dispatched to Britain and the United States in July 1989 in search of investment and joint

venture possibilities, and diplomatic relations were established with the European Economic Community in August 1989.

Domestic organizational activity also took place in the last half of 1989. In August 1989, the government announced that a new draft constitution of the Mongolian People's Republic would be forthcoming in 1990 as part of the process of changing "outdated laws and rules necessitated by the process of renewal. . . ." There were changes in the top leadership, such as the retirement of Minister of Defense Jamsrangiyn Yondon in September 1989 and his replacement by Lieutenant General Lubsangombyn Molomjamts.

In late 1989, the government revealed the existence in Dornod Aymag of the Mardai uranium mine and the nearby town of Erdes, which were developed and run as concessions by the Soviet Union. Established by a 1981 intergovernmental agreement, the mine began shipments of uranium ore to the Soviet Union in 1988. The government also disclosed that unemployment officially was 27,000, but unofficial estimates ran as high as three times that figure. Furthermore, Mongolia was more forthright about the economic drawbacks stemming from the country's political and ideological orientation.

In late 1989, the new openness about economic conditions occasioned an admission by a deputy minister of foreign economic relations and supply that many official statistics had been falsified during the Tsedenbal years to bolster claims of economic progress. The statistics had found their way into United Nations (UN) publications and had been used for years by foreign analysts projecting the state of the Mongolian economy. After the admission, both the Mongolian leadership and media criticized the government's channelling of inaccurate economic statistics to UN agencies as well as Mongolia's refusal to seek economic assistance from Western countries.

Dissatisfaction with Mongolia's previously self-imposed isolation and with Soviet plans to reduce its economic presence in Mongolia led to great Mongolian efforts in late 1989 and early 1990 to expand foreign economic relations beyond communist countries. Having joined the Group of 77—the coalition of more than 120 developing countries in the UN—in June 1989, Mongolia sought to join the Asian Development Bank, to establish official relations with the European Economic Community, and to become a member of the International Civil Aviation Organization. Mongolian officials actively promoted joint ventures with capitalist companies, and they welcomed visits by Western and Asian business representatives. Plans were underway to teach foreign languages for trade

purposes and to foster expanded tourism. In December 1989, Batmonh announced that relations between Mongolia and China had been normalized and that conditions were favorable for economic cooperation.

The decade ended with the Seventh Plenary Session of the Nineteenth National Party Congress from December 11 to 12 and a two-day session of the People's Great Hural from December 12 to 13. The party plenum retired three Political Bureau members and appointed two new, younger men to candidate membership. The plenary session closed with a resolution calling for more energetic implementation of the party's economic and social policy and a promise to hold the Twentieth National Party Congress of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party in late November 1990. For the first time, People's Great Hural sessions were broadcast nationally over both radio and television as the deputies approved a draft socio-economic development plan and a draft state budget for 1990. Universal, equal, and direct suffrage through secret ballot for national and local assembly elections was provided in a draft law also approved by the People's Great Hural.

In December 1989 and early 1990, the Mongolian Democratic Union, a group of intellectuals and students labeled as an "unauthorized organization" by the government-controlled media, started holding rallies in Ulaanbaatar, first to voice support for the party and *hural* documents on socio-economic reconstruction but later to demand democracy, government reform, and a multiparty system. They also advocated bringing Tsedenbal, who had been living in Moscow since 1984, to trial for having allowed Mongolia to stagnate during his thirty-two-year regime. An early response from the Political Bureau was the announcement that it had rehabilitated people illegally repressed in the 1930s and 1940s. Amidst contradictory reports of whether or not the party and government had both granted official recognition to the Mongolian Democratic Union but had banned public assemblies and demonstrations, the media criticized the union for making "ridiculous and contradictory statements" about the administration's reform efforts. Union members, believing they were acting in defiance of the public assembly ban, continued to hold mass rallies and to issue calls for action by the government.

The year 1990 may prove the most momentous in Mongolia's modern history. In March Council of Ministers Chairman, or Premier, Dumaagiyn Sodnom made a six-day trip to Japan, the first visit of a Mongolian People's Republic leader to a noncommunist country. Called "epoch making" by Japanese prime minister Kaifu Toshiki, the trip included a visit with Emperor Akihito, eulogies

for Chinggis Khan, the signing of a most-favored-nation trade agreement, and Kaifu's promise to donate US\$3 million worth of medical equipment and supplies and to encourage Japanese firms to assist in the construction of a steel mill in Mongolia.

Momentous change awaited Sodnom upon his return to Ulaanbaatar. From March 12 to 14, 1990, the Eighth Plenary Session of the Nineteenth National Party Congress was held in response to the continual protests—including hunger strikes—by opposition groups. As a result of the meeting, the five-man Political Bureau—including the two new members elected in December 1989—was replaced with a more reform-minded leadership. The new members were Gombojabyn Ochirbat, the former chairman of the Central Council of the Mongolian Trade Unions who had been ousted by Tsedenbal in 1982; Lodongiyn Tudeb, director of *Unen* (Truth), the party newspaper; Tserenpiliyn Gombosuren, minister of foreign affairs; Nyamyn Michigdorj, head of the party's new Social-Economic Department, and Tsebeenjabyn Oold, chairman of the party's Control Commission. Sixty-one-year-old Ochirbat—seen by observers as a compromise candidate—succeeded Batmonh as general secretary of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party. In doing so, Ochirbat bypassed the heir apparent to the position, Tserendashiyn Namsray, who was in charge of party security and whose succession was feared by liberal party members and opposition groups. Tsedenbal was expelled from the party and party leaders purged by Tsedenbal in the 1960s were politically rehabilitated. Changes in the government followed. On March 22 Batmonh was replaced as chairman of the Presidium of the People's Great Hural—the equivalent of president—by forty-eight-year-old Minister of Foreign Economic Relations and Supply Punsalmaagiyn Ochirbat (no relation to the new party general secretary). Sodnom was replaced as an interim premier by fifty-five-year-old Deputy Premier and Minister of Agriculture and Food Sharabyn Gun-gaadorj.

With new leaders in charge of the ruling party, the state, and the government, efforts were made to control the pace of reform while moving ahead with structural political changes. Deputies to the People's Great Hural, however, sought more fundamental change by amending the preamble and Article 82 of the Constitution to delete references about the leading and guiding role in society of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party. Presidium chairman Ochirbat declared this move "as an important step in separating party and state as well as in the renewal of the state system." Furthermore, a Law on Elections was passed and multiparty *hural* elections were set for June 1990. Because they perceived the

new law as favoring the ruling party, opposition groups mounted still more protests culminating in a demonstration of an estimated 40,000 people in Ulaanbaatar in late March.

While offering limited domestic political reforms, efforts were made to reassure China and the Soviet Union that the new leadership was stable. Presidium chairman Ochirbat visited Beijing in early May, the first visit by a Mongolian head of state in twenty-eight years. After talks with China's top party, state, and government leaders—who expressed concern over the unrest in Mongolia—a joint communiqué was issued declaring the intention to return to the level of friendship and cooperation the two countries once had, noting that their 1960 Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance was still in force. Both party general secretary Ochirbat and Presidium chairman Ochirbat visited Moscow in mid-March to seek support for their domestic political reforms and to resolve some of Ulaanbaatar's economic grievances. Soviet leaders expressed support for Mongolia's "successful renewal" and agreed to measures that would redress currency exchange and trade problems between the two countries. To complete the momentous month of March 1990, the Republic of Korea (South Korea) became the 106th country to establish diplomatic relations with Mongolia. Later in the year Mongolia entered into substantial telecommunications and trade agreements with South Korea. Despite a policy that considers Mongolia as part of China, officials of the Republic of China government in Taiwan held talks with Mongolian representatives in the United States concerning possible Taiwan agricultural and vocational aid in exchange for trade and convenient visa issuance procedures.

In the face of continuing opposition hunger strikes and rallies, the People's Great Hural amended the Constitution in May, legalizing political parties and allowing direct elections. An important democratic change was the establishment of the Small Hural (Baga Hural)—a fifty-seat standing legislature empowered to deal with budgets, economic plans, and supervision of the work of the government. In the Small Hural, seats were apportioned according to party preferences expressed on ballots by the electorate. The People's Great Hural would have legislative veto power and the authority to elect the head of state; members of the Small Hural could not concurrently be deputies to the People's Great Hural. Agreement on the amendments came after opposition group representatives met with the ruling party and reached a consensus.

Structural changes in the government during this period included, among others, the establishment of several new ministries (Agriculture, Light, and Food Industry; Construction; Education; Health

and Social Security; Heavy Industry; and Trade and Cooperation) and the consolidation or abolition of several old ministries (Agriculture and Food Industry; Foreign Economic Relations and Supply; Light Industry; Power, Mining Industry, and Geology; Social Economy and Services; and Trade and Procurement). All deputy chairmen of the Council of Ministers, or deputy premiers, were replaced, as were the majority of ministers. The process was a continual one with more changes in the offing as the decade progressed.

Primary and general elections were held in late July. The Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party won a comfortable majority in the People's Great Hural, taking 357 of the 430 seats, or 84.6 percent, and 61.7 percent share of the party preference vote, giving it 31 of the 50 seats in the Small Hural. The largest opposition force, the Mongolian Democratic Party, won thirteen seats, while the Social Democratic Party and the National Progress Party each won three seats. The other registered political parties, the Free Labor Party and the Mongolian Green Party, did not win representation in the Small Hural.

Punsalmaagiyn Ochirbat was sworn in as Mongolia's first elected president in September 1990, the day after he had been overwhelmingly voted in by the First Session of the Twelfth People's Great Hural. While noting Mongolia's "historically . . . complicated situation" in his nationally televised inaugural address, Ochirbat stressed the need to move away from excessive involvement with the Soviet Union and pursue a nonaligned foreign policy with stronger ties with the nations of the Asia-Pacific region. He called for the introduction of a market economy domestically, and said he would seek membership with the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank. A possible visit to the United States was an early agenda item for the new president.

The same day Ochirbat was elected president, the People's Great Hural elected D. Gombojab, a Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party member, as its new chairman. In a move recognizing the dramatic nature of Mongolia's electoral revolution, Radnaasumbereliyn Gonchigdorj, the thirty-six-year-old leader of the Social Democratic Party—and former Mongolia People's Revolutionary Party member—was elected vice president of Mongolia and chairman of the Small Hural. Several days later, the People's Great Hural elected as premier Dashyn Byambarusen, a forty-eight-year-old reform-minded economist, member of the Mongolia People's Revolutionary Party, first deputy chairman of the former Council of Ministers, and chairman of the State Socioeconomic Development Committee. He immediately pledged to form a coalition government, including members of the Mongolian Green Party,

which had failed to obtain a seat in the People's Great Hural or the Small Hural. Among the problems Byambasuren's government faced was an accumulated US\$5.7 billion debt owed to the Soviet Union. Structural alterations came with Byambasuren's accession. His official title was changed from chairman of the Council of Ministers to premier or prime minister, and the Council of Ministers became known simply as the government. The Small Hural held its first session in September and had as its main tasks the revision of all basic laws and regulations and restructuring the state and the national economy. By October a new sixteen-member cabinet was in place.

An easing up on religious institutions accompanied political reforms. The official media reported in September 1990 that "almost all" of the eighteen *aymags* had their own working temples or monasteries. The Gandan monastery in Ulaanbaatar was said to be so "overloaded" that a second monastery, home for 500 monks, was opened in an old temple that had been used as an exhibition hall since 1937. Moreover, some 80,000 people reportedly joined the Union of Mongolian Believers and its Democratic Party of Mongolian Believers.

The Mongolian political scene in 1990 was extraordinarily dynamic and, as admitted by its new leaders, complicated. It was the culmination of more than half a decade of reform efforts and, perhaps, an evolutionary stage of the revolution that had begun in 1921. Despite the presence of reform-minded leaders, the inclusion of opposition parties in decision making, and majority rule by the communist party, the burgeoning democracy did not assure political or economic stability. At best, Mongolian society was facing a long period of readjustment in all sectors.

Just before this book was sent to press, a new comprehensive reference book on Mongolia—*Information Mongolia* (Oxford, 1990)—was published by Pergamon Press as part of its Countries of the World Information Series. It was compiled and edited by the Academy of Sciences of the Mongolian People's Republic and contains a foreword by President Ochirbat. This encyclopedic seventy-two chapter work is recommended for those seeking greater coverage and detail than provided by *Mongolia: A Country Study*.

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