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# The Second Czechoslovak-Mongolian Archaeological Expedition to Mongolia 1963: Lumír Jisl and Namsrain Ser-Odjav's exploration of Khentii Aimag

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**Summary:** This paper is focused on the second Czechoslovak-Mongolian Archaeological Expedition to Mongolia, Khentii Aimag from 9th September to 3rd October 1963, led by Lumír Jisl and Namsrain Ser-Odjav. Unlike the first Czechoslovak-Mongolian Archaeological Expedition in 1958, i.e. excavations of the Turkic Prince Kültegin on the Orkhon River Valley, the second one was devoted to the broad surface collection as well as extensive travelling around the new archaeological sites. The very first results of the Expedition were published in Polish in *Acta Archaelogica Carpathica* in 1965 (Jisl 1965). The findings were ground-breaking, among other reasons for creating a new detailed and broad map of the East Mongolian archaeological sites (Jisl; Ser-od-jave 1966a,b). The contribution is based on L. Jisl's unpublished travelogues (Jisl 1963b) as well as on extensive visual materials.

Lumír Jisl was born on April 18, 1921 in Újezd u Svijan in the region of Liberec, Czech Republic. His youthful passion for science was already intensely evident during his years at the grammar school in Turnov. His dream of completing his university education was realized after the war, when in the fall of 1945 he began studying his beloved archaeology at Charles University in Prague. At the same time, he attended lectures and studied at the Faculty of Arts at the Seminar for the Comparative Study of Religions. The fact that he had studied comparative religion had a significant influence on his professional activities after successfully

1) The final version of this article was supported by the grant "Current Research Trends in the Study of Religion" (MUNI/A/0858/2019) investigated by the Department for the Study of Religions in 2020.

graduating (about L. Jisl's work see Bělka 201a, b; 2015a, b; 2016; see also Kapišovská 2014).

He certainly was able to put his knowledge to good use a few years after completing his studies, when he worked with the Asian collections at the Silesian Museum in Opava (Troppau). Jisl rose fairly quickly to the position of scientific assistant in the museum and eventually to that of director. And it was here that he became acquainted – vicariously through the museum exhibits – with the figure of Hans Leder (February 4, 1843 – May 19, 1921), a native of the region of German background who had repeatedly travelled in Mongolia at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.[2] Leder brought back from Mongolia a huge amount of material, largely Mongolian and Tibetan Buddhist artefacts; today they are held in several renowned European museums. Hans Leder did not forget his native Opava and part of the treasures he brought back to Europe were placed in the museum there. Unfortunately all of the flammable materials, such as, for example, the hanging scroll temple images (Tib. *thangkas*), perished in a fire towards the end of the war; the only items to survive were a few conical clay offerings (Tib. *tsha-tsha*, see Berounský; Sklenka 2005).

And it was exactly these items that became the centre of scholarly interest of the new employee at the museum, Lumír Jisl, who was the first to write a scientific description of them, to identify them and to compare them with other similar items. In this way the very first Czechoslovak publication arose, in 1953, concerning the iconography of Tibetan Buddhist art (Jisl 1953). In this regard Jisl was, therefore, a pioneer.

His growing interest in Asian culture led him in the mid-1950s to Prague, where he was employed as a researcher at the Archaeological Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. At his new workplace in Prague he began his close professional collaboration with Josef Vaniš (January 6, 1927 – February 12, 2009) and Vladimír Sís (July 7, 1925 – September 7, 2001), both of whom were Czechoslovak filmmakers and photographers, and both of whom had also travelled in China and Tibet from 1953 to 1955. They had amassed during this time a large amount of photographic

2) Lumír Jisl was the first who published Hans Leder's biography, see Jisl 1963a; for more about the travels and collections of Hans Leder, see Lang 2010; 2014; 2016 and Lang; Bauer 2013.

and film material, which they put to good use after their return (see Jisl; Vaniš, Sís 1958a; 1958b; 1958c).

Lumír Jisl had already worked for the "collection of Lamaist art" at the Náprstek Museum, as prior to his arrival in Prague, no one else was capable of working with the Tibetan and Mongolian artefacts at a professional and scientific level. Of enormous help to him in gaining knowledge about Asia was the founder of Czechoslovak Mongolian studies, Pavel Poucha (December 29, 1905 – January 15, 1986; see Kolmaš; Šíma 1970; Kolmaš 1974; Grollová 1992; Schwarz; Blažek 2011). Poucha was someone to whom Jisl turned for many things, not least help in linguistic matters.

Poucha's trip to Mongolia in 1955 was in fact the first research trip of a Czechoslovak Mongolist to this country and the effort immediately bore fruit: in cooperation with Byambyn Rinchen (1905–1979) – the preeminent Mongolian linguist, ethnographer and scholar of religions – as well as with other colleagues at the Scientific Committee of the Mongolian People's Republic (the Academy of Science), an international agreement was prepared and later signed which was to form the basis of Jisl's Asian travels, as well that of the international archaeological expeditions (for more details see eg. Chuluun 2014).

Each one of Jisl's trips to Mongolia was different, was comprised of different goals and each progressed differently. The first trip in 1957–1958 was part of an overall trip to Asia, more than six months in duration, the main of which was to:

"…determine on site the conditions for the deployment of the Czechoslovak-Mongolian expedition, as had been suggested in 1956 by a member of the Mongolian Scientific Committee (equivalent to the Academy of Sciences) B. Rinchen, and as well as by a member of the Oriental Institute of the Academy of Sciences of Czechoslovakia, Pavel Poucha, in his memorandum submitted to the Archaeological Institute upon his return from Mongolia. That meant that I had to determine the position of the president of the Scientific Committee in terms of this enterprise as well as the degree of his potential involvement, and in the case of a favourable outcome, immediately select some areas of investigation. My further task was to open in Ulaanbaatar a promotional exhibition of the Czechoslovak Ministry of Education concerning Czechoslovak archaeological methods, which had been sent here in advance." (Jisl 1958a, p. 6)

We can ascertain Jisl's schedule by glancing at his itinerary after he returned, which is contained in the first report of his working trip to the Mongolian People's Republic in 1957. Jisl was in the Mongolian People's Republic from August 5th 1957, to September 5th 1957, and then, after his travels in China, from February 10th to February 13th 1957:

"August 6 – August 11, 1957: Arrival with Khambalama, the abbot of the monastery. Viewing of Gandan Monastery and the 'Lama's Museum' [Choijin Lama Monastery, LB]

August 15 – August 18, 1957: Trip to the east by automobile with B. Rinchen. Viewing of the ruins of the fortress towns Zun Kherem and Bars Khoto

August 19 – August 21, 1957: Ulaanbaatar. Photographs taken in the Lama's Museum. Viewing of the Palace of Bogd Gegeen

August 22 – September 1, 1957: Trip by automobile with the archaeologist Perlee … Erdene Zuu Monastery." (Jisl 1958a, p. 1–4)

The scientific culmination of Jisl's activity in Asia was the first (and indeed the last) Czechoslovak-Mongolian archaeological expedition which studied the monument of Prince Kültegin (8th century), located in the Orkhon River valley, about 380 km southwest of Ulaanbaatar.

The second trip to Mongolia in 1958, immediately following upon the first, took as its goal both archaeological research as well as anthropological field work. There was a pause of only a few months between the two trips and thus preparations were all the more challenging. In the expedition proposal, Jisl writes:

"In addition to the task of manifesting mutual assistance between the peoples' democracies and the educational task, there was as well a promotional mission: to demonstrate the high level of Czechoslovak archaeology on the world stage and thus to include our country not only among the capitalist states, but also within the socialist (the USSR and Poland) nations sending archaeological expeditions to foreign lands. As there was a lack of any previous experience of working on or even equipping such foreign expeditions, this was meant to be an experiment, the results of which, and experience gained, both positive and negative, would guide eventually future and possibly more extensive collaborative projects." (Jisl 1958b, p. 1)

The work on the archaeological digs was conducted from July 19, 1958 to September 14, 1958. This were not the first archaeological research in this locale; they were, however, the first to use contemporary scientific methods, as well as being larger than was usual at the time, as there were fifty researchers. Jisl's international team made a fantastic discovery in the summer of 1958: in an uncovered waste pit they discovered the stone head of Prince Kültegin. No such findings had ever been reported in Mongolia; this was an unqualified academic and scientific success, a 'first' on the world stage (see Jisl 1960c; Jisl 1997; Šmahelová 2008; Šmahelová; Pohl 2009; Martinovský 2000).

The promising beginnings of the research expedition soon, however, encountered huge difficulties when the planned continuation of the research trip was brought to a halt – largely due to bureaucratic obstacles – and in spite of all of Jisl's efforts, when in the end he wrote nearly despairing letters to the highest state and party officials. Jisl continually worked on his Mongolian materials – both archaeological and Buddhist – lecturing, publishing, and popularizing these themes in the Czechoslovak media. For a very long five years, however, he was unable to return to Mongolia: he spent his time working on previous discoveries and with preparations for the next trip.

During both of his first trips, Jisl systematically documented the Mongolia of the time, both in black-and-white and colour photographs. He published his first book about Mongolia in 1960, first in English as *Mongolian Journey* (Jisl 1960a) and then in German as *Mongolei. Kunst und Tradition*, (Jisl 1960b) and then one year later in Czech as *Umění starého Mongolska* [The Art of Old Mongolia, (Jisl 1961)].

The third and last trip took place from September 9, 1963 to October 3, 1963 and in contrast to the others had a different purpose:

> "The main expedition goal was to make an inventory of monuments in Mongolia as well as to discover still unknown archaeological objects. Another goal was a revised study of the objects already known from literature and oral sources. The expedition's operational area was the northern part of Khentii Aimag, especially the Onon River basin. The distance travelled during the whole expedition duration was 2,638 kilometres." (Jisl 1963c, p. 1.)

In the very beginning of L. Jisl's stay in Mongolia he travelled westward to see again the famous Prince Kültegin's monument excavation site in the Orkhon River basin. He visited the current state of the excavations. After this short trip he started the last field research trip together with Namsrain Ser-Odjav. Despite the traditional archaeological method of research, i.e. digging in the soil or making excavations, this expedition had a different methodology of scientific research. They used a surface collection of artefacts in different sites during their nomadic one-month expedition (see Figure 1). They travelled with their driver Lkhaanajav, a former lama, in a Russian-made GAZ69 off-road (see Figure 2). An integral part of the research was topographical work, photo documentation and drawings of the sites.

What never appeared in the expedition plans and working tasks, and what actually represents large portion of their field research, is something we could call "field study of religions". What exactly was this discipline? It was mainly the documentation of ruins and remains of Buddhist monasteries (they visited Baldan Bereeven monastery, see Figure 3 and 4), stupas, ovoos [Jisl: oboo] (see Figure 5) etc. It includes collections of artefacts found on the spot or – not so rare – given to the researches by local people (see Figure 6 and 7). Extremely exciting and important were rare visits to and explorations of remote caves in the mountains. These caves contained large amounts of thangkas, statues, miniatures tsakli, sutras, tsha-tsha, ritual instruments and other Buddhist paraphernalia hidden there by local lay people as well as by monks. All these things had been preserved there from the 1930s, when local people placed this stuff here in order to save it from massive antireligious oppression led by the Communist party and the government.

Another important part of the field research was detailed documentation of local museums visited during the expedition. The participants recorded photographic and verbal descriptions of local collections, especially the Buddhist ones.

How do we know about this important, but unofficial part of the expedition? L. Jisl and N. Ser-Odjav never mentioned this part of their field work, either in the official expedition reports which have not been published and are hidden in archives, or even in their articles, published in scientific journals. They never spoke publicly about this activity in their

university or conference lectures and contributions. The only source describing this part of the expedition work is L. Jisl's Mongolian private travelogue, a small pocket-sized notebook, where the author entered notes every day. The topic of the daily notes was, on the one hand, facts – places visited, people interviewed, photographs taken, local weather, distance travelled by the day, or short descriptions of their daily work. On the other hand, the daily entries also contain description of the author's mood, state of mind, relationship with his travel companions as well as with local people.

Some extracts from Lumír Jisl's unpublished 1963 Mongolian travelogue will be published here for the very first time:

"Wednesday 11 September, 3rd day of travel

11 °C, it's cold, overcast, and slight drizzle. Departure at 8:40 AM, mileage 92444.

In Batnorov Somon I was welcome as the first Czech to visit the village. We were offered meat sliced from ribs, tea with milk, cheese and sweet skimmed. At the end we ate "*targ*", or thin yogurt. Then we conversed with herders, whom Ser-Odjav questioned about where to find archaeological objects in the vicinity. One of the old men told us that they are in a cave on top of Baruun-bayan, about thirty kilometres away. We did find the cave! What an experience! The cave was small, probably artificially widened; herders from the area have been bringing objects related to the Lamaist cult for decades. The cave was filled up to half a meter with rotten thangkas, sutras, scapularies, and sacrificial bowls. The bottom layer was completely settled. Ser-Odjav only took a few books, and I collected everything that I could and that was worth it – well, more was worth it, but where to put it? And how to transport it to Prague? I took three thangkas, a number of scapulary pictures, three scapularies, a small bronze kapála, and several clay offerings – *tsa-tsas*. A complete praying kit in a special box: a bell, *dorje*, *damaru*, mirror and a cloth mat. I also took a torso of a beautifully carved wooden *phurbu* and a wooden Buddha nicely carved, but unfortunately without polychromy; and one more *dorje*. I wanted a book, too, but we were in a hurry (Ser-Odjav was bitten by mosquitoes). If I had not taken these things, Ser-Odjav would have thrown everything back. He did not care to save something for the museum. This is Mongolian care! On the other hand, customs officers at the airport take away from you each tiny knick-knack you want as a souvenir, in line with the order to prevent export of cultural heritage. In Norovlin Somon I spread all the things out to let them dry, because the cave was completely wet; therefore the objects were mostly destroyed. Nobody cared to take the things to the museum, although people knew about them. Again,

I must thankfully remember Hans Leder for having carried so many artefacts away from here. I think that there are fewer thangkas in the whole of Mongolia (at least in museums) than he had brought to Europe. At night we were offered dinner; we slept in Norovlin Somon.

[…]

Sunday 15 September, 7th day of travel.

This morning's miracle: warm and no clouds in the sky. We are to go somewhere to a cave. Departure at 9:10 AM; mileage 92834.

Splendid visibility, a big mountain with a snow cap to the north, on the Soviet border. They say it is perpetual snow there. Poucha is said to have been here in the somon; he did not get to the cave, though. At 92886 we approach the Onon for about two kilometres, but we leave it on the left and at 92892 we take a 45-degree turn to the right. At 92911 we find the cave; it's limestone and spacious.

[…]

The whole area is fenced off with a white thread; threads lead also to the entrance. There is an oboo in front of the cave and above, plus two smaller ones. Pieces of cloth hang on tree branches all around us; the grass is trampled around one of them as people circumvented the *oboo*. Another *oboo* at the entrance with gilded bronze statues placed on it. Manjushri, rather damaged (see Figure 8). Inside several small altars with books, pictures, bowls etc. Cloths and one thangka hang from the ceiling. I took with me a statue of a tiger, silver scapulary, two pictures […] the sky was clear all day.

[…]

A ritual arrowhead and candlesticks made of animal bones. They were placed into a bowl so that it was full of them […] everywhere lots of money; both coins and notes. Bowls lying around the cave, too. On the way back we took the same road, but we turned to the left bank of the Onon, where we rested, cooked and ate. I tried to fish, but the water was brown after the rains and I did not catch anything. We returned to Dadal at 7 PM with mileage of 92985; this means we travelled 150 kilometres in total. Russian cinema in the evening (see Figure 9).

[…]

Wednesday 18 September, 10th day of travel

Frost at night, clear skies in the morning. We sit in Dadal for the sixth day and we cannot move. We shall stay at least till tomorrow. If Ser-Odjav insists on riding a horse to that cave, we shall stay even longer.

I found a chalcedonic scraper on the road directly in the village. Ser-Odjav discovered another Neolithic settlement nearby during his ride on horseback.

Before noon I photographed praying wheels in the postal yurt (see Figure 10 and 11). The post office is in the yurt, where the telephone stands next to the altar with holy books and wheels; the old postmaster's mother sits beside it and tells her beads. Further I took pictures of a painted box and holy pictures in a wooden house. In the afternoon I photographed typical old Buryat homesteads. One ardent comrade hurried on his motorbike (Jawa) to call to Ser-Odjav that I took pictures of ugly old houses; why don't I photograph nice and new ones?" (Jisl 1963b)

## Conclusion

Lumír Jisl was not a field researcher of religions; he was an archaeologist. And also one thing is substantial: it was a risky, or at least inappropriate, business to study a living Buddhism in Mongolia at the 1960s. There were a lot of curious people from among guides, interpreters, expedition organizers, but also Buddhist monks and laymen, who might have asked: Why is the foreigner interested? The main precept in the study of live religions from the standpoint of scientific atheism at that time was: study your enemy, so that you can use his weapons to suppress him. This was certainly not an action in which Lumír Jisl wished to participate. It was absurd to imagine that scientific investigation could be unbiased at the time, and Jisl was well aware of the fact. If a religion could be studied in the Czechoslovak Republic, including study abroad, for instance in Mongolia, it would have had to be based on scientific atheism. Lumír Jisl was apparently reluctant to engage in any relationship with this highly ideological affair, as he would have found himself on shaky ground. Any intelligent person was at least aware of, if not having immediate experience with antireligious reprisals in the Soviet bloc. Moreover, his study of Buddhism focused on visual artefacts examined outside of ritualistic context, not on live forms. Finally, there was another important circumstance: the

Mongolians themselves did not study their religion in this way; if he had suggested he wished to study religious life by a neutral scientific method, he would have faced much more serious problems than described in his private travelogues. The first to start work on similar issues was the Mongolian member of the Academy of Sciences Byambiin Rinchen ten years later (see Rinchen – Maidar 1979), when he collected information for his renowned atlas of Mongolian monasteries. However, even this was not study of live religion; it was a study of religion that was almost dead at least according to the official view.

Jisl did not see the living Buddhism in Mongolia as a subject of scientific examination, but as something that is worth documenting. In this task, he perfectly succeeded. Moreover, the study of live religions was not among the research goals of the expedition. The amount of material is remarkable and what is important: nowhere in his texts about the Buddhism in Mongolia do we find a mention of a reactionist or obscure nature of religion, which was almost a necessity at that time.

If we compare the Western and central European production of the academic Buddhology in the period from 1945 to 1989, the level of results in Czechoslovakia was below average. The reasons are obvious. First it was the isolation from Western science after 1948 and radical restriction of academic freedoms, accompanied by imputation and indoctrination of Marxist-Leninist approach which was reflected in the so-called "scientific atheism" in the study of religions. Closing of the iron curtain on the Western border of the "camp of peace and socialism" did not bring full-fledged scientific cooperation within the region. Similarly to the development of industry, also science development was planned; free thought was replaced with fulfilment of the "state plan of scientific research". Scientific results were analogous to other industries: they fell behind in comparison with the free world.

The 1963 field research focused on Buddhist archaeological finds in eastern Mongolia was the last big expedition of Lumír Jisl. Although he visited Ulaanbaatar in 1969, he was not engaged in field research during the last trip.

The results of the archaeological expedition were published with Ser-Odjav as a co-author and thus this chapter of Jisl's life was closed. Neither Jisl nor Ser-Odjav published their findings in the area of the study

of religion, obtained in 1963. This contribution aims, at least partially, to fill in the gap.

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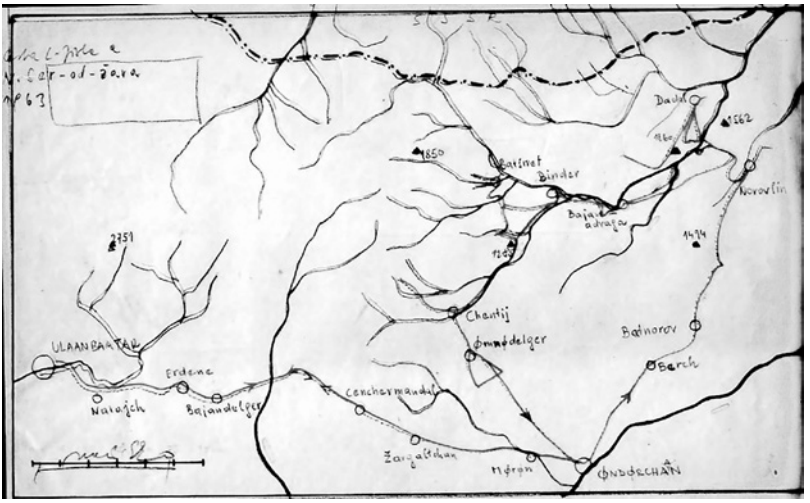


Figure 1. Itinerary of the second Czechoslovak-Mongolian Archaeological Expedition to Mongolia, Khentii Aimag from 9th September to 3rd October 1963, led by Lumír Jisl and Namsrain Ser-Odjav. Hand-drawing of Lumír Jisl.

Figure 2. Members of the second Czechoslovak-Mongolian Archaeological Expedition to Mongolia, Khentii Aimag (from the left: local guide, Namsrain Ser-Odjav, Lumír Jisl and Lkhaanajav, the driver). Photograph: L. Jisl 1963.

Figure 3. Baldan Bereeven Monastery, main building, Namsrain Ser-Odjav the left corner. Photograph: L. Jisl 1963.

Figure 4. Baldan Bereeven Monastery, Soyombo carved in the stone wall. Photograph: L. Jisl 1963.

Figure 5. Binder ovoo. Photograph: L. Jisl 1963.

Figure 6. Local craftsman Nanzat Chende in his yurt. Photograph: L. Jisl 1963.

Figure 7. Home altar in the Nanzat Chende's yurt. Photograph: L. Jisl 1963.

Figure 8. Ovoo at the entrance into a cave with gilded rather damaged bronze Manjushri statue placed on it. Photograph: L. Jisl 1963.

Figure 9. Local open-air cinema, Namsrain Ser-Odjav on the right. Photograph: L. Jisl 1963.

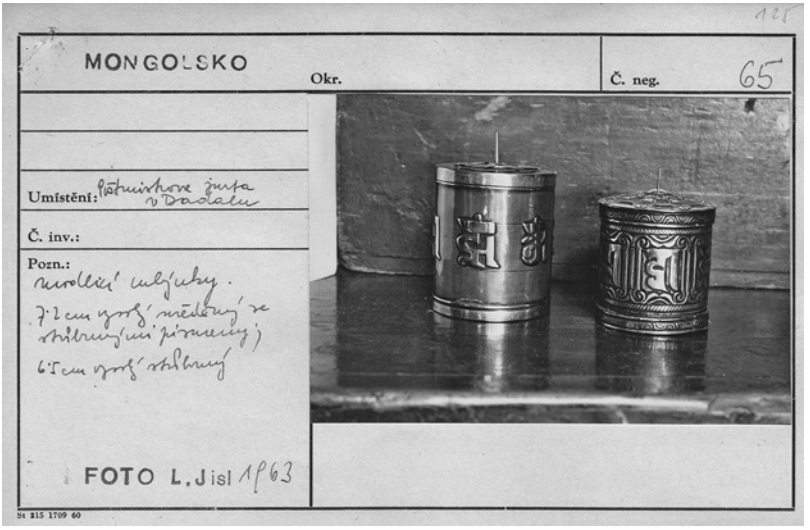


Figure 10. L. Jisl's card with description of the picture. Note on the card: "Postmaster's yurt in Dadal. Prayer wheels, a 7.2 cm tall copper one with silver letters; a 6.5 cm tall, silver. Photograph: L. Jisl 1963."

Figure 11. The Prayer wheels, a 7.2 cm tall copper one with silver letters; a 6.5 cm tall, silver; Postmaster's yurt in Dadal. Photograph: L. Jisl 1963.

# My teachers and other monks in photographs taken in Mongolia by Czechoslovak experts

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**Summary:** In this contribution, I focus on a group of color and black-and-white photographs of monks from the archive of the Czechoslovak archaeologist Lumír Jisl (1921–1969), the photographer Werner Forman (1921–2010), and Vojtěch Řepka (?–?). These photographs were taken on various occasions during their visits to Mongolia (in 1957, 1958 and 1963). These photographers did not know the names of the monks whose pictures they took, although Lumír Jisl was very accurate in noting down the place and time of all of his photographs. As the faces of some of these monks were familiar to me and, moreover, I realized that among them there were monks I had met previously, had heard of, and that even my generous and kind teachers could be seen in those photographs, I have tried to trace down their names, place of origin, the time they lived in, and other details from their lives.

## Introduction

The Czechoslovak archeologist Lumír Jisl (1921–1969)[1] took a great number of very interesting and valuable photographs, both in color and black-and-white concerning various topics during his three research expeditions to Mongolia between 1957 and 1963, or, to be more precise, between August 5, 1957, when he first arrived in Mongolia, up to his last research visit from September 19 to October 3, 1963.

His first book on Mongolia in English was published under the title *Mongolian Journey*[2] in 1960 and contained photographs taken during his first two trips. Following the English edition, this book was published as well in German and in Czech. The English and German versions of this

1) For details on Lumír Jisl and the expeditions he undetook in Mongolia see Bělka 2015 and Bělka 2016.

2) Jisl 1960.

book contain photographs concerning religion, including those taken on July 9, 1957 in Gandantegchinlen Monastery, Ulaanbaatar, when the consecration ritual of the stupa devoted to the 2,500th anniversary of the birth of the Buddha took place.

The photographs taken by Lumír Jisl during his three research expeditions to Mongolia were presented in two exhibitions co-organized by Czech researchers and the Institute of History and Archeology of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences: "108 Images of Mongolia. The Photographs of Czechoslovak Archaeologist Lumír Jisl 1957–1963"[3] in 2014, and "Ulaanbaatar 1957–1963: The Testimony of Lumír Jisl"[4] in 2015, as well as in two exhibition catalogues.

Some of Jisl's color and black-and-white photographs taken in Gandantegchinlen Monastery on August 6, 1957 and July 9, 1958, those taken at the time of the consecration ritual of the stupa devoted to the 2,500th anniversary of the birth of the Buddha, as well as those taken at the Naadam festival on the 36th anniversary of the Peoples' Revolution on July 11, 1957 were reproduced in Jisl's *Mongolian Journey*, published in 1960 and were displayed as well in the two exhibitions mentioned above. These images caught my attention. From among them, the photographs of monks are of special interest.

Many monks whose names or faces are familiar to me or whom I had met previously, including some of my kind, generous and meritorious teachers whose "names are difficult to mention"[5] can be found among Lumír Jisl's photographs. Although the date and place where the photographs were taken are provided with accuracy and precision in Jisl's book and in the exhibition catalogues, the names of the monks are usually missing. The purpose of this paper is thus to identify the names, the native places, eras and some other details related to the lives of some of these monks, with a view to contributing to the study of Lumír Jisl's photography.

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3) 108 Images of Mongolia 2014.

4) Ulaanbaatar 1957–1963: The Testimony of Lumír Jisl 2015.

5) There is a custom in Mongolian Tantric Buddhism that the names of closest teachers are not to be mentioned publicaly. Therefore there is a special phrase to express this situation: "names which are difficult to mention".

Here, in Picture 1,[6] we see a monk holding a pigeon. He is the same monk as the one pictured in No. 144 of Jisl's *Mongolian Journey*,[7] as well as being the same monk seen in Pictures 2 and 3 taken by Werner Forman.

This monk is Ochiryn Dagvajantsan (Mo. Очирын Дагважанцан), the *shunlaiv* (Tib. *gzhungs las pa*, the head of the philosophical monastic school) of Dashchoinpel datsan (i.e. 'monastic school'; built in 1736), holding the degree of *gavj* (Tib. *dka' bcu*, lit. 'ten hardships', an academic degree in philosophical studies). He was also a teacher at the Öndör Gegeen Zanabazar Mongolian Buddhist University (formerly the University of Religion): a kind, generous and meritorious teacher whose name I can only mention with great difficulty. *Shunlaiv*, who was also our teacher of the Prajñāpāramitā (we therefore used to call him "*Parchin*[8]*'s* teacher" – *Парчингийн багш*), was born in 1910[9] in a locality called Tsagaan chuluu (Цагаан чулуу) in present-day Erdenebulgan somon in Khövsgöl aimag. He became a monk at the age of 9 and after spending one year in Tsogchen temple (the main assembly hall of a monastery) of Dayan Deerkh Monastery, he moved to Ikh Khüree[10] and entered the Tsogchen temple of the Dashchoinpel datsan as a resident of the Sangai aimag (the residential monastic complex).[11] At the age of 13 he resided for more than two years at Darba Pandita Agvaanchoinjordonduv's (Mo. *Дарба бандида Агваанчойжордондув*, Tib. *'Dar pa paṇḍita Ngag dbang chos 'byor don grub*, 1870–1927) Rashaantyn khüree Monastery, joining its main assembly (Tsogchen temple) and philosophical faculty (Choir temple). He then came back to Ikh Khüree to study philosophy (Mo. *чойрын ном*) at the Dashchoinpel datsan. During periods of political repression, in which religion could not be practiced freely in Mongolia, he never broke his monastic vows and as soon as Gandantegchenlin Monastery was restored in 1944, he returned to monastic service. He was among the first seven

6) See as well Pict. 3 in 108 Images of Mongolia 2014, p. 21.
7) Jisl 1960, Pict. 144.
8) Parchin (Mo. *парчин*), *prajñāpāramitā* in Mongolian, from the Tibetan short form *phar phyin*, stemming from *pha rol tu phyin pa*.
9) Дашчойнпэл данцангийн түүх 2007, p. 48.
10) Lit. 'Great monastic city', an old name of the capital of Mongolia.
11) Өндөр гэгээн Занабазарын нэрэмжит Монголын бурхан шашины Их сургуулийн түүх 2010, p. 22.

monks that served in Gandantegchenlin Monastery right after its restoration.[12] *Shunlaiv* died in 2001.

Lumír Jisl took four pictures of the 47-year-old *shunlaiv* from four different angles as he stood between Tsogchen temple and the Gandantegchenlin temple of Gandantegchenlin Monastery. The name of the other monk who is standing near *shunlaiv* in Picture 3 is unknown.

In Picture 4, a monk is shown holding a rosary. He is the same monk as the monk standing to the left in front of Jasaany dugan (a temple where religious texts requested by individuals are read to them) of Gandantegchenlin Monastery in Picture 5.[13] His name is Batsükh.

The monk standing in the middle held the function of *tsorj* (Tib. *chos rje*, 'lord of religion'; one of the highest ranks in a monastic assembly and in Ikh Khüree in general) of Gandan Monastery. His name was Gombyn Osor; he was also nicknamed "Porcelain" Osor. He was born in 1906 in Daichin Tümet bag in Ochirai Tüsheet khoshuun, part of Tüsheet khan aimag, in a locality known as Arjargalant: it is now in Bürd somon, Övörkhangai aimag.[14] From early childhood onward, Gombyn Osor served in Shankh Monastery (known also as the Western Monastery "Baruun khüree") and was a *takhilch* ('offering preparer') of Chingis khaan's banner until sometime between 1925 and 1935.

In 1944, when religious services were again permitted at Gandantegchenlin Monastery, he came from the countryside to serve in the monastery again. My kind, generous and meritorious teacher Sanjdorj, whose name I can only mention with great difficulty, recollected that when *tsorj* Osor came from the countryside he stayed in their yard[15] and served in Gandantegchenlin Monastery. "I have never changed my monastic clothes into those of commoners", he used to say. Lumír Jisl took a photograph of *tsorj* Osor at the age of 51, before he attained the rank of *tsorj*. He became

12) The monks were abbot N. Erdenepel, *gesgüi* G. Gombodoo, *unzad* G. Bat-Ochir, *tsorj* R. Garamsed, *gevsh* M. Galaarid, *gelen* L. Luvsan "the High", *gevsh* G. Bat-Ochir, O. Dagvajantsan, G. Divaasambuu. For details, see Дивaасамбуу 2009, pp. 8–10.

13) See also Pict. 4 and 6 in 108 Images of Mongolia 2014, pp. 21–22.

14) Сонинбаяр 2005, Vol. I, p. 9.

15) Gandan Hill, Orkhony 7th street, gate No. 7.

the *tsorj* of Gandategchenlin Monastery in 1978 after *tsorj* Yondon, and passed away twenty years later in 1998.

The monk at *tsorj* Osor's right side is Jinba *gesgüi* (Tib. *dge bskos*, 'disciplinary master'). He came from Bulgan somon in Khovd aimag and previously had served in Torguut Monastery. He worked as a servant in Gandantegchenlin Monastery and spent many years in the position of junior and then senior *gesgüi.* He passed away at the beginning of 2000.

The monk in Picture 6[16] with a mantle (Mo. *жанч*, Tib. *zla gam*) over his shoulders and holding the ceremonial hat of a Buddhist monk, trimmed with a fringe (Mo. *шар малгай*, Tib. *zha gser*) is Luvsangombo or Luvsan. He was chanting master (Mo. *унзад*, Tib. *dbu mdzad*) of Tsogchen temple in Gandantegchenlin Monastery. He originally came from the Nomgony Dari ekh lamyn Monastery in Khashaat somon in Arkhangai aimag.

One of two monks who are playing the conch-shell trumpet in Picture 7 below was a generous teacher of mine whose name I can only mention with a great difficulty as well as being a teacher at the Buddhist University: Khandyn Baldorj (1916–1983). He was born in 1916 in Baldan Zasgiin khoshuu in Tüsheet khan aimag; today it is known as Noyon somon (Ömnögobi aimag). When he was 11-years-old, he entered the Ovootyn khiid Monastery in Ömnögobi aimag and stayed there until the age of 14.[17] In 1931, he followed his parents and travelled through Inner Mongolia, visiting Alasha, Gurvan khöl and Baruun Sönöd, where he participated in monastery life. He returned only after fifteen or sixteen years, in 1945. After his return, he served in Gandanshadüvlin Monastery in Ikhkhet somon in Dornogobi aimag, and together with 12 monks from Baldan zasgiin khoshuun, came to serve in Gandategchenlin Monastery in 1952.[18] He became the head of the monastic library and was one of the first teachers of the Buddhist University. He held the degree of *gevsh* (Tib. *dge bshes*, 'virtuous friend', a high academic degree in philosophical studies). During my studies at the university, the Teacher used to recount his life-story to us; he recalled how four of them, as young boys, decided to

16) See as well Pict. 5 in 108 Images of Mongolia 2014, p. 22.

17) Өндөр гэгээн Занабазарын нэрэмжит Монголын бурхан шашины Их сургуулийн түүх 2010, p. 19.

18) Диваасамбуу 2009, p. 26.

go to study in Tibet. They fled the monastery, but after spending more than one day on the way, hungry and nearly fatally parched with thirst, they returned to the monastery. The Teacher began teaching at the Buddhist University from the time of its opening in 1970. In a photograph showing the inaugural students and teachers at the Buddhist University, taken in 1970, one can find him standing on the right side in the front row near Dayanch bagsh (Z. Pürevjamts, also a teacher at the Buddhist University, 1905–1986). The students used to call him *Bal* (Tib. *dpal*) *bagsh* or teacher of Düira (Tib. *bsdus grwa*).[19] Werner Forman took Baldorj’s photograph when he was 44 years old.

One of two monks reading a sutra (on the left side) seen in Picture 8 is Yansagiin Yarinpel from the Gandantegchenlin Monastery. He was born in 1909 in Khongoryn gol in Sükhbaatar somon, Sükhbaatar aimag. He entered Öndör-Khamar Monastery in Erdenetsagaan somon (Sükhbaatar aimag); in 1954 moved to Gandategchenlin Monastery to serve as temple supervizor (Mo. *дуганч;* Tib. *‘du khang pa*) and service monk (Mo. *хурлын лам*). He died in 1994. I knew one of his disciples, Baldan *maaramba* (Tib. *sman rams pa*, ‘physician’) from Bulgan aimag, a famous doctor. Baldan maaramba died in the 1990s.

The monk that is sitting near Yarinpel is Sandagiin Gonchig, a *gesgüi* of Dashchoinpel datsan (Mo. *Дашчойнпэл данцан*, Tib. *Bkra shis chos ’phel*, founded in 1757). He was born in 1909[20] in Tsetsen Khairkhany Modot-Am (*Цэцэн Хайрханы Модот-Ам*) in Santmargad somon in Zavkhan aimag. He participated in the reopening and restoration of the Dashchoinpel datsan in 1990. Gonchig died in 2015.

The monks seen in Picture 9 below are, from the left, *gesgüi* Gombodoo, Dashdamba, and Sonomgenden, an accountant of Gandantegchenlin Monastery.

The monks in Picture 10 are (from the left): *tsorj* Osor (see as well Pict. 5), *gesgüi* Darambazar, *gesgüi* G. Gombodoo (i.e., Gombodorj, a liege of the Ikh shavi of Bogdo Gegeen, from Bayantsagaan somon in Central aimag), and Dashdamba.

19) Lit. “collected topics [of *pramāṇa*]”, an elementary class explaining basic logic.
20) Дашчойнпэл данцангийн түүх 2007, p. 55.

The monk in front of the multi-coloured tent with a junior *gesgüi* Samdan in Picture 11[21] is *gesgüi* G. Gombodoo; he can also be seen in Picture 12,[22] holding incense sticks.

The monk in Picture 13 is Dulamyn Dorjjantsan, a chief librarian of Gandategchenlin Monastery.[23] I knew him since I was a child, as he used to come to my father (Adiyagiin Ragchaa, 1927–2006) for the repair of old and damaged Buddhist ritual items. My father was a Buddhist worshipper and a very skilled handicraftsman who often used to repair and restore such items. I still have seven small Buddhist silver worship bowls once given to my father by D. Dorjjantsan as an expression of thanks for having repaired a ritual item. My father used to invite Dorjjantsan, *gavj* Pürev from Idgaa Choinzinlin in Bayan-ovoo somon (in Bayankhongor aimag), *gesgüi* Damba from Gandategchenlin Monastery, originally from Tsagaan-delger somon (in Dundgobi aimag), and Samdan (he resided next to our yard on Gandan Hill), as well as other monks for reading prayers and a banquet (Mo. *гуниэг*, Tib. *gsol tsigs*) after the Lunar New Year (Mo. *Цагаан сар*). Dorjjantsan was said to be a very good doctor. He was born in 1900 in Erdenetsogt somon (in Bayankhongor aimag) and became a monk in Bayanzurkh Monastery very early in life.[24] He was a doctor and an astrologer in Lamyn Gegeen Monastery. After Gandantegchenlin Monastery was reopened, he moved to Ulaanbaatar and entered Gandantegchenlin Monastery in the winter of 1949,[25] where he was in charge of the library. Dorjjantsan was a very skilled doctor as well: in addition to serving in the monastery, he worked at the Institute of Animal Husbandry of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Institute of Traditional Medicine and the Institute of Chemical Technology of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences. He also conducted research into Mongolian medicinal herbs, publishing a book on this topic. He was close to the researcher and scholar B. Rinchen (1905–1977). They were not only colleagues, but it is said that Dorjjantsan treated B. Rinchen as well. Dorjjantsan died in 1987. He was

21) See as well Pict. 93 in 108 Images of Mongolia 2014, p. 71.
22) See as well Pict. 95 in 108 Images of Mongolia 2014, p. 72.
23) Jisl 1960, Pict. 129.
24) Даандай 2014, p. 88.
25) Диваасамбуу 2009, pp. 8–10.

57 years old when Lumír Jisl took his photograph. It can be assumed that the monk sitting with his back to the photographer in both Pictures 14 and 15[26] is the monk Dorjjantsan.

The monk at his side in Picture 15, as well as the monk in the middle in Picture 11 is *gesgüi* G. Gombodoo; the first monk from the left and the monk giving the offerings in the photograph in Jisl's *Mongolian Journey* (1960, Pict. 130) is most likely Samdan from Övörkhangai aimag; he was a junior *gesgüi.* The monk standing at the entrance to the colourful tent in Picture 16,[27] also pictured conversing with scholar and researcher B. Rinchen in Picture 17,[28] is Erdenepil, the Reverend Abbot of Gandantegchenlin Monastery. Reverend Abbot Naidangiin Erdenepil was born in Ikh-Uul somon in Zavkhan aimag (formally this was known as Dalai Choinkhor Vangiin khoshuu in Sain Noyon Khan aimag) in 1887.[29] He became a monk very early on, and served in Tariatyn Khüree Monastery. Later on, he moved to Ikh khüree, and in 1933 he passed the examination for his *gavj* degree in Dashchoinpel datsan. When Gandantegchenlin Monastery was reopened, on June 22, 1944, now designated as the Temple of Prayer (Mo. *Мөргөлийн дуган*)[30] he was appointed as the first abbot and served in this position for sixteen years. In 1956, the Board of Directors of Gandantegchenlin Monastery awarded Abbot Naidangiin Erdenepil the title of Venerable (Mo. *Чин бишрэлт*) for his merit in Buddhist deeds. He translated the *Meghadūta* (lit. Cloud Messenger, Mo. *Үүлэн зардас*, Tib. *sprin gyi pho nya*) by Kālidāsa, a marvelous piece of ancient Sanskrit literature, into Mongolian. Abbot Erdenepil died in 1960. Lumír Jisl took his photograph when he was 70.

The monk on the far left in Picture 18 is the above-mentioned monk Batsükh. The monks walking beside him are Tsogzov (?) from Olon

26) See as well Picts. 14 and 15 in Ulaanbaatar 1957–1963: The Testimony of Lumír Jisl 2015, pp. 55–56.

27) See also Pict. 13 in Ulaanbaatar 1957–1963: The Testimony of Lumír Jisl 2015, pp. 54.

28) See also Pict. 91 in 108 Images of Mongolia 2014, p. 69.

29) Монголын сүм хийдийн түүхэн товчоо 2009, p. 73.

30) Диваасамбуу 2009, p. 8.

khüree[31] Monastery in Dornogobi aimag and the chanting master (Mo. *унзад*) Tsedendamba (?) from Bayan-Öndör somon in Övörkhangai aimag.

There are two pictures taken the same day, one shortly after the other: Picture 18 and Picture 127 in *Mongolian Journey* (Jisl 1960, Pict. 127). The monk walking next to the monk Batsükh – the first one on the left side, his face is partly obscured – can also be seen in Picture 19, where he is standing by the north-western corner (i.e., the rear right side in the picture) of the new stupa built to commemorate the 2,500th anniversary of the birth of the Buddha.[32] He can also be seen in Picture 126 in *Mongolian Journey* (Jisl 1960, Pict. 126). His name was Möngönii Natsagdorj,[33] and he was Senior Chanting Master (Mo. *их унзад,* Tib. *dbu mdzad chen mo*) of Gandantegchenlin Monastery; presumably, he came from Noyon somon in Ömnögobi aimag (formerly Baldan Zasgiin Khoshuu in Tüsheet khan aimag). M. Natsagdorj, a chanting master of Olon khüree in the former Mergen vangiin khoshuu, entered Gandantegchenlin Monastery in 1950.[34] He was a disciple of the *gevsh* Sharavyn Lkhamaajav (Tib. Lha ma skyabs, 1900–1971) from Süngiin aimag in Ikh khüree. I have known Senior Chanting Master Natsagdorj ever since I studied at the Buddhist school. I often used to visit him at home, we discussed his countrymen who were Buddhist scholars and who composed their works in Tibetan; he showed me their books. He used to live at the western side of Tasgany ovoo hill.[35] In his courtyard, there were many small yellowish dogs, as well as some cats and mice. It seemed interesting to me that the animals lived together harmlessly both inside and outside the yurt. M. Natsagdorj was dark-complexioned, rather fleshy, with a somewhat hoarse voice. He was very kind, generously answered everyone's questions, was well-versed in monastic practice, and highly literate in Buddhist philosophy (Mo. *чойрын ном*). He had many disciples among the monks as well as

31) Olon khüree (Mo. *Олон хүрээ* [Олны Хүрээ]) or Dechinchoinkhorlin Monastery was fonded in 1666 by a son of the Prince Sonom daichin, the first Noyon Khutagt Agvaangonchig (1622–1701).

32) See as well Pict. 92 in 108 Images of Mongolia 2014, p. 70.

33) Дашчойнпэл дацангийн түүх 2007, p. 33.

34) Диваасамбуу 2009, p. 24.

35) A hill on the west side of the former Gandantegchenlin Monastery complex, to the north of the present-day Geser Temple.

the laypeople, some of whom still could be found in Gandantegchenlin Monastery. Senior Chanting Master M. Natsagdorj used to serve in Olon khüree Monastery, and he initiated its revival in 1990.

In the Picture 18 the monk pictured on the far right is *shunlaiv* Dagvajantsan of Dashchoinpel datsan. The monk walking by his side is *gavj* B. Osor of Gandantegchenlin Monastery, who also served as *gavj* in Baruun Khüree Monastery in present-day Shankh somon in Övörkhangai aimag.

When the monasteries and temples were closed during the times of political repressions and even though religious services were revived in Gandantegchenlin Monastery in 1944, the practice of exams for obtaining the degree of *gavj* was discontinued until 1990. From all those who had obtained the degree in the past, B. Osor was the only *gavj* still alive. If he had not taken the effort to rejuvenate the examination process, the tradition of *gavj* degree examinations would have become entirely extinct. Therefore, in 1990, *gavj* B. Osor read the five volume treatise, and afterwards the examinations for the *gavj* degree[36] were restored. Among those who took the examination and obtained the degree of *gavj* were: T. Damdinsüren, nicknamed the “tall teacher” (*Өндөр багш*), the abbot of Gandategchenlin Monastery at the time; O. Dagvajantsan, a *shunlaiv* at Dashchoinpel datsan; G. Osor, *tsorj* at Gandantegchenlin Monastery; D. Jigmed-Odser, a *gevsh* of Ölgii Monastery (Dornogobi aimag), and Sayainnyambuu (1901–1996) from Khotont somon in Arkhangai aimag.

The monk seen in Picture 20 is D. Danzan (1916–2005); he was awarded the title of Meritious Person of Mongolia. D. Danzan was born in 1916 in a locality known as Khailaast river (*Хайлаастын гол*) in Daichin vangiin khosuu in Tüsheet khan aimag; it is currently in Orkhon somon (Bulgan aimag).[37] D. Danzan entered the Bulgany khüree Monastery, also known as the Vangiin Örgöö in 1921 and became a disciple of *gavj* Baldantseren. In 1934, he completed his studies and passed the examinations. He was appointed to the Düinkhor aimag (a district dealing with Kalachakra-tantra practices) of Ikh khüree in 1933, and in addition to studying philosophy, he participated in the tsam ritual and created mandalas and tormas (Mo.

36) Дашчойнпэл дацангийн түүх 2007, p. 42.

37) Монголын сүм хийдийн түүхэн товчоо 2009, p. 72.

*балин,* Tib. *gtor ma* 'offering cakes'). After the closure of the monasteries, he became a layman and worked at various jobs, including service in the army for five years after 1939. He took a job in an arts organization in 1944; there is a photograph of him working on the creation of the statues of Sükhbaatar and Choibalsan. After he entered Gandantegchenlin Monastery in 1948, he was in charge of offerings (Mo. *махилч*, Tib. *mchod dpon*), as well as working as a scribe, *gesgüi*, supervisor, administrative deputy and teacher at the Buddhist university. D. Danzan, also known as "Crafty," and N. Sereeter[38] initiated the revival of the Dechengalav datsan at Gandategchenlin Monastery in 1992. D. Danzan designed the building of the Buddhist university and that of Düinkhor datsan (Tib. *dus 'khor grwa tshang*; a monastic school for studying the Kalachakra tantric system). He was also a teacher (Tib. *slob dpon*) at Düinkhor datsan. Danzan died in 2005. W. Forman's photograph captured Danzan at the age of 44.

The monk seen feeding pigeons in Picture 21 is Güriin Dambadarjai. He came from Büregkhangai somon in Bulgan aimag. He can also be seen, second from left, as he stands with three other monks in front of a Mongolian yurt in Picture 22.

The second monk from the left is the *gevsh* of Süngiin aimag Sharavyn Lkhamaajav from Khövsgöl somon in Dornogobi aimag. The names of the two other monks are unknown. Sharavyn Lkhamaajav (Tib. Lha ma skyabs, 1900–1971) was born in 1900 in a locality known as Botgon toirom[39] in the former Gobi Mergen vangiin khoshuu in Tüsheet khan aimag; today it is known as Khövsgöl somon in Dornogobi aimag. At around the age of ten, he entered Amgalan Monastery where he studied Tibetan and Buddhist prayers (Mo. *шашины уншлага ном*). At the age of fifteen, he moved to Olon khüree Monastery in order to study philosophy. In 1938, as the wave of severe political repressions began, he was residing at the Dashchoinpel datsan in Ikh khüree where he had continued his philosophical studies since the age of 27. He was arrested and taken to prison where he was held until 1942. After the reopening of Gandantegchenlin Monastery, he

38) N. Sereeter worked with me in the library. He was one of those monks who played a very important role in revival of the *tsam* ritual in Gandategchenlin Monastery. Formerly, he had been a *garchim* in the *Khüree tsam*.

39) Дашчойнпэл дацангийн түүх 2007, p. 32; Сонинбаяр 2008, p. 13.

moved to Ulaanbaatar, entering the monastery in 1946. When the abbot, *gavj* S. Gombojav (1902–1980) known as the "Well-Versed" (Mo. *Номч мэргэн*) opened the "House of Sutras"[40] at the monastery, Sh. Lkhamaajav worked there as a translator. Together with T. Danzan-Odser (1901–1978), Sh. Ishtavkhai (1902–1972), *gavj* Ochir, *gavj* Jamiyanchoinpel (1894–1973?), *gevsh* Dashdamba, vice abbot S. Dagvadorj (1924–1993) and *tsorj* G. Divaasambuu (1928–2015) he assisted with the translation of many texts, the compilation of a Tibetan-Mongolian dictionary and the preparation of the *Dharmapada* (Mo. *Дармабада* – a collection of sayings of the Buddha) sutra for print. Reportedly he also took part in the editing of the Kangyur (Mo. *Ганжуур*, Tib. *bka' 'gyur*).

In 1965, Sh. Lkhamaajav wrote a biography in Tibetan of his own teacher from Süngiin angi – Chagdorjav (Tib. Dka' bcu mtsan nyid bla ma Phyag rdor skyabs, 1868–1934), entitled "A Boat of Faith for [Driving like a] River to the Ocean of Virtous Deeds of a Source of Cloud of Offerings Pleasing to Venerable Maitreya" (Mo. *Майдарын гэгээнийг баясуулан үйлдэх тахилын үүл гарахын орон зохиол үйлсийн далайнд зорчих сүжгийн сал онгоц*, Tib. *Rje btzun byam mgon mnyes par byed pa'i mchod sprin gyi 'byung gnas mdzad 'phrin rgya mtso'i chu lag dad pa'i gru gzings*).[41]

Sh. Lkhamaajav died in 1971. I know his family: his wife G. Dulamsüren (who came from Gobi-Altai) died in 2005, his daughter is still alive today.

When Vojtěch Řepka took a photograph of the *gevsh* of Süngiin aimag Sharavyn Lkhamaajav, he was 57 years old.

The former abbot of Gandantegchenlin Monastery Tömöriin Damdinsüren, nicknamed Danigaa, is shown in Picture 23 standing with the abbot of Gandategchenlin Monastery, Ven. Naidangiin Erdenepil, to his left. *Gesgüi* G. Gombodoo, only partially visibile, is standing behind him (Naidangiin Erdenepil and Tömöriin Damdinsüren have flowers in their

40) Сонинбаяр 2008, p. 4. The House of Sutras was a research center.

41) This biography was translated by Sh. Soninbayar, the director of the Institute for Wisdom Culture at Gandantegchenlin Monastery in 1995 and published on the occasion of Öndör Gegeen Zanabazar Mongolian Buddhist University's 25th anniversary. See as well The Collected Works (Tib. *Gsung 'bum*) of Chagdorjav, the *lama gavj* of Süngiin angi lama gavj Chagdorjav. 2008.

hands). Picture 23[42] was taken taken at the time of the Naadam festival of the 36th anniversary of the Peoples' Revolution (11th July 1957). His students used to call him "High teacher" (*Өндөр багш*) or "Abbot-teacher" (Mo. *Хамбо багш*, Tib. *mkhan po bla ma*). The "High" teacher was born in 1906 [1900][43] in a locality known as Baruunbayan in former Darkhan Chin vangiin khoshuu (Tüsheet khan aimag); it is now Erdene somon in Töv aimag. It is said that he entered Kherlengiin Züün khüree Monastery at the age of seven. At the age of eleven, he came to Ikh khüree and was assigned to one of its 30 aimags, the aimag known as Tsetsen toiny; there, he studied Buddhist philosophy in the Dashchoinpel datsan.[44] He entered Gandantegchenlin Monastery one year after its reopening and began teaching at the Buddhist University in 1978. When I was a student, the "High teacher" was teaching the Tibetan language, the translation of terminology, as well as the principles of Buddhist philosophy (Mo. *тогтсон таалал*, Tib. *grub mtha'*). When examinations for the degree of *gavj* were restored in 1990, he passed the exams and was awarded the degree of *gavj*, becoming the first abbot of Gandantegchenlin Monastery at that time (1990–1993). The "High teacher" died in 1995. Lumír Jisl took his photograph when he was 51.

In Picture 19,[45] there are many monks whose names and destinies remain unknown apart from those who have been identified above, such as the Venerable abbot N. Erdenepil, as well as *gesgüi* G. Gombodoo, *shunlaiv* Dagvajamts, logic teacher Baldorj, the "High teacher" Damdinsüren, the senior chanting master Natsagdorj, and *gesgüi* Samdan.

In the Pictures 24–31 below, there can be seen, among others, the abbot of Gandantegchenlin Monastery, the Ven. N. Erdenepil, *gesgüi* G. Gombodoo, G. Dambadarjai with two unknown monks, and one layman. These photographs were found in the photography archive of the Náprstek

42) See as well Pict. 48 in Ulaanbaatar 1957–1963: The Testimony of Lumír Jisl 2015, p. 89.

43) Дашчойнпэл дацангийн түүх 2007, p. 51; Өндөр гэгээн Занабазарын нэрэмжит Монголын бурхан шашины Их сургуулийн түүх 2010, p. 22; Монголын сүм хийдийн түүхэн товчоо 2009, p. 76.

44) Өндөр гэгээн Занабазарын нэрэмжит Монголын бурхан шашины Их сургуулийн түүх 2010, p. 22.

45) See as well Pict. 92 in 108 Images of Mongolia 2014, p. 70; Jisl 1960, Pict. 126.

Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures in Prague, Czech Republic. They were taken by Vojtěch Řepka in the summer of 1958 at time of the Czechoslovak trade exhibition in Ulaanbaatar. The negatives of the colour photographs were bequeathed to the museum after V. Řepka's death by his family, although with no description provided. A task for the future might well be to provide these photographs with a description of what they include, as well as the people depicted within them.

It can be noted that both before and after the People's Revolution of 1921, many foreign travelers and scholars visited Mongolia and collected valuable material related to Mongolian history and culture in the course of their journeys and expeditions. Many interesting photographs taken at those times are preserved in various museums and archives, some of which have been published or exhibited.

For example, some very interesting and rare photographs related to Mongolia were taken or collected by A.V. Adrianov (1854–1920), D.A. Klements (1847–1914), A.A. Lushnikov (1872–1947), and N.A. Charushin (1851–1937) during their travels in Mongolia. These materials are now in the collection of the Peter the Great's Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Kunstkamera), and were published in the volume *Mongolia and the Mongols* (Иванов, Чулуун 2016).

The Austrian scholar Hans Leder (1843–1921) travelled to Mongolia in 1899–1900, 1902, 1904–1905, assembling a gorgeous collection of academically precious items related to Mongolian history, culture, ethnography and religion. These items are now preserved in the Weltmuseum Wien, the Naturhistorisches Museum in Vienna, the Néprajzi Museum in Budapest, the Náprstek Museum in Prague, the Linden-Museum in Stuttgart, the Grassi Museum für Völkerkunde in Leipzig, Museum für Völkerkunde in Hamburg, as well as other institutions.[46]

In 1909, Sakari Palsi (1882–1965), the Finnish Central Asian researcher, and G.J. Ramstedt (1873–1950), the Finnish linguist, embarked on an academic expedition to Mongolia. Research material collected during this expedition was published in 1982, on the occasion of Sakari Palsi's

46) The Mongolian Collections. Retracing Hans Leder 2013.

anniversary, by Harry Halen.[47] Among the very rich and academically important material and photographs related to Mongolian history, archeology, ethnography, and so on, there are also many photographs of monks that can be found in this publication.

Important research materials including, for example, maps of Mongolia, census data and many photographs, collected by the Polish Mongolist W. Kotwicz (1872–1944) who travelled to Mongolia for research in 1912, are now preserved in the Archives of Sciences of PAN and PAU in Krakow (Poland). Among these materials – some of which were studied and published by the researchers B. Shirendev,[48] Ch. Dashdavaa, S. Tsolmon,[49] the Polish researchers Agata Bareja-Starzyńska, Jerzy Tulisow and the Japanese researcher Osamu Inoue,[50] – there are also photographs of monks to be seen.

## Conclusion

From among the great number of photographs taken by the Czechoslovak archeologist Lumír Jisl (1921–1969), the photographer Werner Forman (1921–2010), and Vojtěch Řepka, admittedly much lesser-known these days, I have, for the purposes of this article, focused only on the photographs of monks. I have endeavored to identify their names, degrees, places of origin, their dates of birth and death, as well as other details from their

47) Memoria Saecularis Sakari Pälsi. Aufzeichnungen von einer Forschungsreise nach der nördlichen Mongolei im Jahre 1909 nebst Bibliographien. Bearbeitet und herausgegeben von Harry Halèn, Helsinki, 1982. This book was translated into Mongolian by M. Saruul-Erdene, provided with notes and comments and published in Ulaanbaatar in 2016 as Г. Й. Рамстедт, Дорно этгээдэд долоон удаа: Черемис, Халимаг, Афганистан, Туркестан, Монголоор аялсан тэмдэглэл 1898–1912.

48) Ширэндэв 1972.

49) Из эпистолярного наследия В.Л.Котвича 2011.

50) In the Heart of Mongolia, 100th Anniversary of W.Kotwicz's Expedition to Mongolia in 1912, Studies and Selected Source Materials. ed. by J. Tulisow, O. Inoue, A. Bareja-Starzyńska, E. Dziurzyńska, Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences, Cracow 2012.

lives. I consider further detailed research of these photographs, aiming to give a detailed account of their personal data and stories, as well as their achievements and works, to be of utmost importance for understanding and defining the role of Mongolian monks and Buddhist scholars in history. Therefore, it is necessary to seek – in the archives of those non-Mongolian scholars, researchers and travelers who travelled or carried out fieldwork or research expeditions in Mongolia – such photographs of Mongolian monks in order to connect them to the information already found and to employ them for discovering more detail concerning their biographies and their works.

May happiness be with you!
*Өлзий хутаг орших болтугай!*

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Pict. 1. Ochiryn Dagvajantsan. Photo: Lumír Jisl, August 6, 1957. Courtesy of Lumír Jisl's estate.

Pict. 2. Ochiryn Dagvajantsan. Photo: Werner Forman, 1959. Courtesy of Werner Forman Archive.

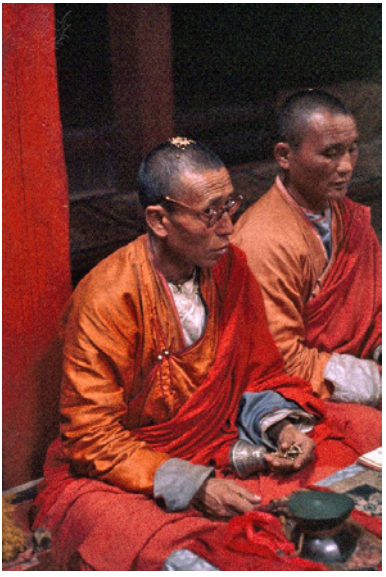
Pict. 3. Ochiryn Dagvajantsan. Photo: Werner Forman, 1959. Courtesy of Werner Forman Archive.

Pict. 4. Batsükh. Photo: Lumír Jisl, August 6, 1957. Courtesy of Lumír Jisl's estate.

Pict. 5. Batsükh, Tsorj Gombyn Osor and *gesgüi* Jinba (from the left). Photo: Lumír Jisl, August 6, 1957. Courtesy of Lumír Jisl's estate.

Pict. 6. Luvsangombo. Photo: Lumír Jisl, August 6, 1957. Courtesy of Lumír Jisl's estate.

Pict. 7. Khandyn Baldorj. Photo: Werner Forman, 1959. Courtesy of Werner Forman Archive.



Pict. 8. Yansagiin Yarinpel (on the left) and Sandagiin Gonchig. Photo: Werner Forman, 1959. Courtesy of Werner Forman Archive.

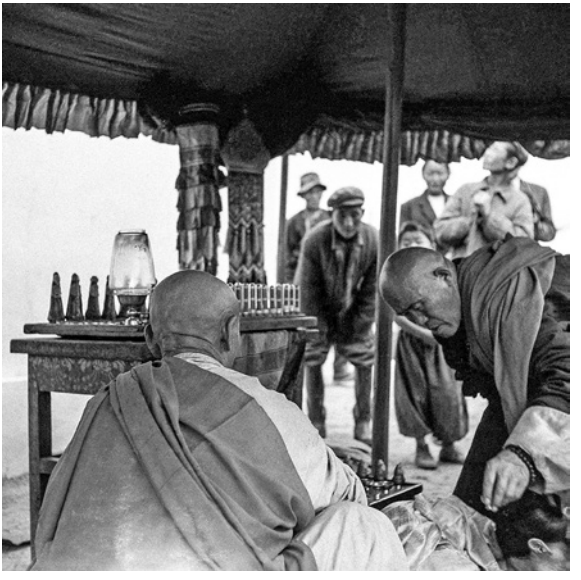
Pict. 9. Seated from the left: *gesgüi* Gombodoo, Dashdamba, and Sonomgenden. Photo: Werner Forman, 1959. Courtesy of Werner Forman Archive.

Pict. 10. Seated from the left: *tsorj* Osor (see as well Pict. 5), *gesgüi* Darambazar, *gesgüi* G. Gombodoo and Dashdamba. Photo: Werner Forman, 1959. Courtesy of Werner Forman Archive.

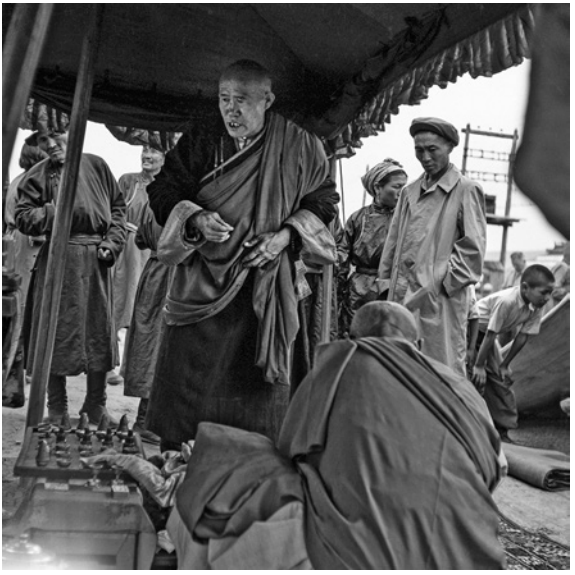
Pict. 11. From the left: Junior *gesgüi* Samdan, and *gesgüi* G. Gombodoo. Photo: Lumír Jisl, July 9, 1958. Courtesy of Lumír Jisl's estate.

Pict. 12. *Gesgüi* G. Gombodoo. Photo: Lumír Jisl, July 9, 1958. Courtesy of Lumír Jisl's estate.

Pict. 13. Dulamyn Dorjjantsan. Photo: Lumír Jisl, July 9, 1958. Courtesy of Lumír Jisl's estate.

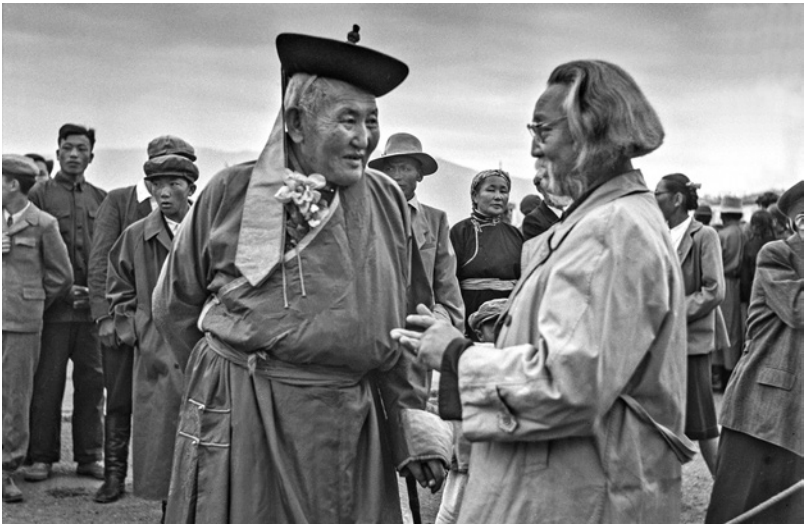


Pict. 14. Dulamyn Dorjjantsan, sitting with his back to the camera, with *gekhüi* G. Gombodoo. Photo: Lumír Jisl, July 9, 1958. Courtesy of Lumír Jisl's estate.



Pict. 15. Dulamyn Dorjjantsan, sitting with his back to the camera, with *gekhüi* G. Gombodoo. Photo: Lumír Jisl, July 9, 1958. Courtesy of Lumír Jisl's estate.

Pict. 16. Naidangiin Erdenepil, Reverend Abbot of Gandategchenlin Monastery. Photo: Lumír Jisl, July 9, 1958. Courtesy of Lumír Jisl's estate.



Pict. 17. Naidangiin Erdenepil in conversation with scholar and researcher B. Rinchen. Photo: Lumír Jisl, July 9, 1958. Courtesy of Lumír Jisl's estate.

Pict. 18. From the left: Batsükh, Tsogzov (?) and chanting master (Mo. *унзад*) Tsedendamba. The two monks on the right are, from left to right, *shunlaiv* Dagvajantsan and *gavj* B. Osor. Photo: Lumír Jisl, July 9, 1958. Courtesy of Lumír Jisl's estate.

Pict. 19. Consecration of new stupa built to commemorate the 2,500th anniversary of the birth of the Buddha's. Photo: Lumír Jisl, July 9, 1958. Courtesy of Lumír Jisl's estate.

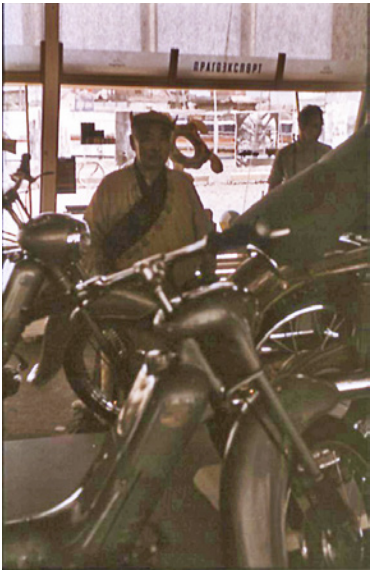
Pict. 20. D. Danzan, nicknamed "Crafty". Photo: Werner Forman, 1959. Courtesy of Werner Forman Archive.

Pict. 21. Güriin Dambadarjai. Photo: Vojtěch Řepka, 1958. Courtesy of the Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures.

Pict. 22. Monks in front of a Mongolian yurt (Güriin Dambadarjai stands to the left). Photo: Vojtěch Řepka, 1958. Courtesy of the Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures.

Pict. 23. The former abbot of Gandantegchenlin Monastery Tömöriin Damdinsüren, nicknamed Danigaa, standing with the abbot of Gandategchenlin Monastery, Ven. Naidangiin Erdenepil, to his left. *Gesgüi* G. Gombodoo, only partially visibile, is standing behind Tömöriin Damdinsüren.

Pict. 24. Monks  looking at motorcycles produced in Czechoslovakia. Photo: Vojtěch Řepka, 1958. Courtesy of the Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures.



Pict. 25. A monk looks at motorcycles produced in Czechoslovakia. Photo: Vojtěch Řepka, 1958. Courtesy of the Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures.

Pict. 26. Monks at the exhibit of Czechoslovak transport vehicles. Photo: Vojtěch Řepka, 1958. Courtesy of the Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures.

Pict. 27. A group of monks at the exhibit. The abbot of Gandategchenlin Monastery, N. Erdenepil, can be seen to the right (in yellow garments). Photo: Vojtěch Řepka, 1958. Courtesy of the Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures.

Pict. 28. The same group of monks in discussion at the exhibit. Photo: Vojtěch Řepka, 1958. Courtesy of the Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures.

Pict. 29. The group of monks in discussion at the exhibit. Photo: Vojtěch Řepka, 1958. Courtesy of the Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures.

Pict. 30. The group of monks in front of a display of tires. Photo: Vojtěch Řepka, 1958. Courtesy of the Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures.

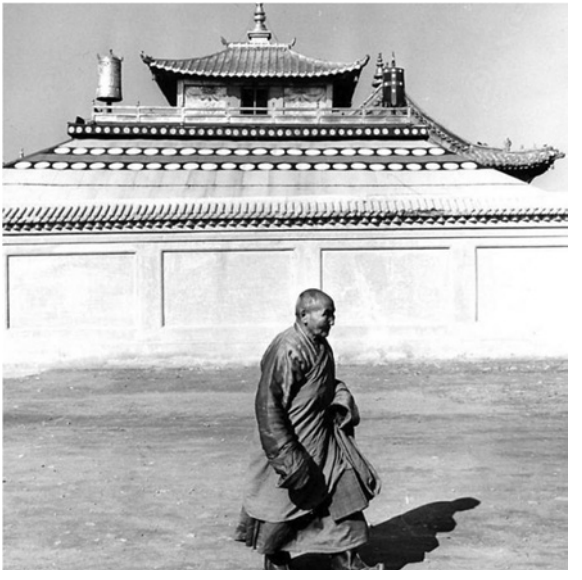
Pict. 31. The group of monks inside a bus at the exhibit of transport vehicles produced in Czechoslovakia. Photo: Vojtěch Řepka, 1958. Courtesy of the Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures.

Pict. 32. The first class of students at the Buddhist University, Ulaanbaatar 1971.

Pict. 33. S. Gonchig, *gesgüi* of Dashchoinpel datsan.

Pict. 34. A group of eight sculptors who worked on the statue of Sükhbaatar: the monk S. Choimbol, D. Damidmaa, Lkhamsüren, Pürev, Ravdan, the monk D. Danzan, the monk N. Jambaa, and Dashii.

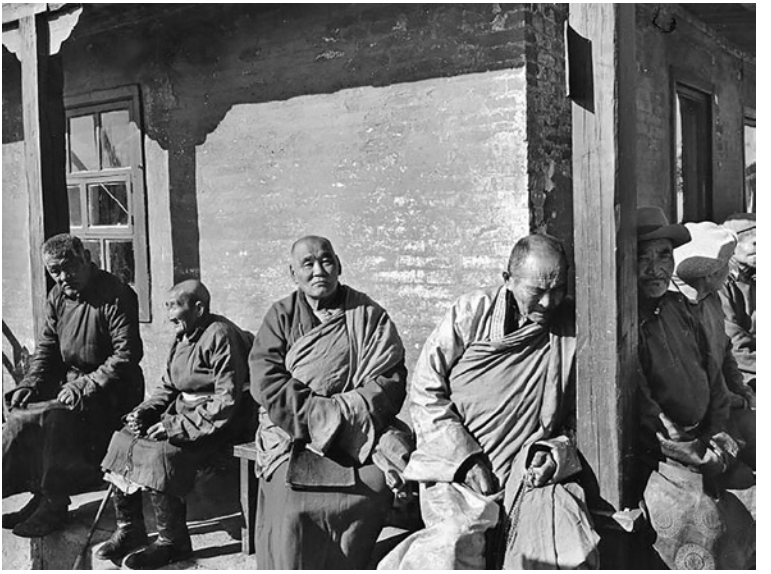
Pict. 35. The monk D. Danzan, nicknamed "Crafty," the Tibetan monk Jamtsala, abbot D. Choijamts, and the monk Sereeter.



Pict. 36. *Gavj* B. Osor of the Baruun Khüree (Shankh) Monastery.

Pict. 37. The “High” teacher or “abbot” Tömöriin Damdinsüren.

Pict. 38. Seated on the left: the “High teacher,” Dalai lama, Bakula Rinpoche. Embassy of India, 1994.



Pict. 39. The senior chanting master (Mo. *Их унзад*) M. Natsagdorj, a dark-complexioned monk is seated second from the right in a group of four men sitting on the west side of the Administrative temple (Mo. *Жасын дуган*) of Gandantegchenlin Monastery.

# "Visiting Mongolian Friends with Baton in Hand":[1] The sojourn of Czechoslovak composer and conductor Tibor Andrašovan in Mongolia in 1958

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*The fact that they have voluntarily mastered*
*[classical] music on such a high level*
*bears witness to the immense musical talent*
*of the Mongolian people.*
Tibor Andrašovan[2]

**Summary:** This paper focuses on the sojourn of the outstanding Czechoslovak composer of Slovak origin Tibor Andrašovan (1917–2001) in Mongolia. He was sent to work with the newly founded State philharmonic orchestra as a conductor in 1958 as part of a program of cultural cooperation between Czechoslovakia and Mongolia. He spent three months there conducting the orchestra, providing instrumental training to the musicians, and professional assistance to music instructors, as well as to one of the first Mongolian classical music composers S. Gonchigsumlaa (1915–1991) concerning the re-arrangement of his opera *Ünen* ('Truth'). Based on the archival materials, newspaper articles and family archives, this paper traces the engagement, almost forgotten today, of T. Andrašovan in Mongolia in the context of the formation of classical music in Mongolia as well as in the context of the first decade of Czechoslovak–Mongolian cultural cooperation.

1) The title of this article is borrowed from one of Andrašovan's articles discussing his work in Mongolia (Andrašovan 1959a).
2) Улсын дуурь бүжгийн эрдмийн театрын Симфони найрал хөгжим 2009, p. 33.

## 1. Introduction

According to various sources, the Mongols had previously encountered chamber orchestras, pianos, or gramophones through contact with foreign communities settled in Mongolia, as well as through contact with Western travellers, beginning in the second half of the 19th century (Даревская 1994, pp. 169–171). Later on, one of the first moves toward a more practical engagement with Western music occurred in 1913, when the first prime minister of theocratic Mongolia T. Namnansüren (1878–1919) was greatly impressed by the ceremonial performance of a Russian military brass band during his official visit to Saint Petersburg. Upon returning to Mongolia, he was presented with brass instruments for 8 to 10 performers as a gift. Subsequently the first ceremonial brass band was established, employing the Bogd Khan's guardsmen (*torgon tsereg*, lit. silk soldiers) in the fall of 1914. The band was trained and conducted by the "parish" clerk and Russian resident in Khüree[3] A.A. Koltsov; it performed for ceremonial purposes as well as for entertainment.[4]

Yet it was only in the early 1940s when the Russian instructors (*surgagch*) B.F.Smirnov[5] and F.I. Kleshko[6] were invited from the Soviet Union in order to supply professional training in classical music for the members of the

3) The former name of Ulaanbaatar.

4) For more details, see Kara 1991, Šíma 2009, Даваа 2014, Жанцанноров 2009, p. 123, Намдаг 1988, p. 135. The brass band is mentioned in Kondratyev's diary of 1923, albeit somewhat critically (Кульганек, Жуков 2006, p. 122).

5) Boris Fyodorovich Smirnov (1912–1971) was a Russian musician, composer and ethnomusicologist, author and co-author of many Mongolian songs, musical dramas, the first Mongolian opera *The Three Sorrowful Hills* (*Uchirtai gurvan tolgoi*, 1942, together with B. Damdinsuren) and music for the film *Tsogt taij* (1945, together with B. Damdinsuren). While in Mongolia (1940–1946), he also collected many Mongolian traditional songs and melodies; his ethnomusicological observations were later published in Музыкальная культура Монголии (*The Musical Culture of Mongolia*, 1963), Монгольская народная музыка (*Mongolian National Music*, 1971) and Музыка народной Монголии (*Music of the Mongolian People*, 1975). For details, see Энэбиш 1991, pp. 100–105, Батсүрэн 1989, pp. 80–84.

6) For details of F.I. Kleshko's work with Mongolian singers, see Жанцанноров 2009.

instrumental and vocal sections of Mongolian theatre. The enhancement of the theatrical arts, a project that began immediately after the People's Revolution of 1921 with the aim of bringing Mongolian theatre to a professional level, was one of the new government's priorities due to its role as a means of propaganda. This process of professionalisation – which aimed at the complete transformation of the traditional nomadic system, itself based on individual epic reciters, bards, singers, musicians and so on – had as its goal the establishment of the new institution of the theater according to European models. This took place under the guidance of Soviet instructors whose views were based upon the distinction between traditional folk and classical expression, with a greater appreciation of the latter as the 'higher' art. The intention was not, however, to abandon traditional music. Instead, it was to develop a European, i.e. classical, music: as the political leader of the country, Marshal Choibalsan, proudly declared in 1943, "the Mongolians have proved themselves able to master [classical music]." At the same time, the improvement of traditional music was envisioned, as the Marshall saw it as lacking in "magnificent and thundering sound" which was meant to be cultivated through the means of ensemble playing and performance.[7]

B.F. Smirnov, who saw the establishment of a symphony orchestra as his mission, first introduced European musical notation to Mongolian musicians; their performance of Mongolian music was traditionally based on playing by ear.[8] He had each of them learn how to play a European musical instrument in addition to the traditional instrument which was usually the focus of their performance activity.[9] Moreover, he transformed the traditional modifiable and vocal-dependent tuning of Mongolian

7) Quoted from a speech Marshal Choibalsan given at a meeting of theatre, circus and cinema actors, club activists and musicians on April 27, 1943 (Доржсүрэн 2011, p. 88).

8) In the monasteries, Tibetan musical notation was widely used. A special variety of notation has been found in the song-book manuscripts from Lamyn gegeenii khiid (presently Bayankhongor aimag, Erdenetsogt sum).

9) Жанцанноров 2009, p. 140. According to the violinist Ts. Khandjav, the official resolution for installing a European musical instrument as the second instrument for each musician was issued by Cultural Committee only in 1948 (Яруу тунгалагийн цоморлиг 2018, 8:59).

traditional instruments into a fixed tuning in order to facilitate playing from Western musical notation, as well as orchestral performance. Later on, he taught composers the basics of musical arrangement and composition (Жанцанноров 2009, pp. 140–141).

At approximately the same time, the first Mongolian composers – today considered as the founders of modern Mongolian classical and film music, as well as being composers of songs based upon genuine folksongs, a genre known as *zokhiolyn duu* ('authorial songs') – appeared on the scene. S. Gonchigsumlaa (1915–1991)[10] attended classes in music and composition while studying veterinary medicine in Irkutsk. After several years of working as a musician in Irkutsk and in the State Circus in Ulaanbaatar, he enrolled in composition and conducting classes of the State Conservatory in Moscow (1943–1950). Unlike him, B. Damdinsuren (1919–1992)[11] and L. Murdorj (1919–1996)[12] began their careers as musicians in the theatre

10) Before his studies at the State Conservatory in Moscow, Sembiin Gonchigsumlaa largely composed songs (including songs for children), at the time were very popular, and arrangements of folk melodies. Through his studies he gained the professional background necessary to work with a large range of classical music forms, including solo works, instrumental and longer symphonic pieces, operas (*Ünen* 'Truth'), ballets (*Gankhuyag*, *Sunjidmaa*), and film music (*Serelt* 'Awakening'; *Ulaanbaatart baigaa minii aav* 'My father in Ulaanbaatar'). For more details about his life and work, see Tsolmon 2011.

11) Bilegiin Damdinsüren proved his mettle as a composer while working as a musician in the Central State Theatre (*Ulsyn töv teatr*): he composed music for the early musical dramas performed there. He cooperated closely with B.F. Smirnov (see above, footnote 2). Together with L. Mördorj, he composed the Mongolian national anthem (1949). Many of his melodies, for example *Khentiin öndör uuland* ('In the high mountains of Khentii') for violin and orchestra, gained great popularity among the Mongolians. In 1958–1962, he further enhanced his compositional skills through study at the Beijing State Conservatory. For more details, see http://hugjimiin_inder.blog.gogo.mn/read/entry326846.

12) Luvsanjambyn Murdorj, as a disciple of the renowned *khuuchir* masters of the Central State Theatre, showed a distinctive mastery of the instrument. From 1937 onward, he worked in the army ensemble, as well as in the context of the battle of Khalkhyn gol; his patriotic and military songs and marches dominate his work of that period. Over his lifetime he composed around 200 songs, some of which became greatly popular (for instance, *Dörvön tsagiin tal* 'The steppe

and in the army ensemble, as well as, in the case of the latter, in the circus. They were both sent to the Soviet Union (Leningrad and Moscow, respectively) in the 1950s with the purpose of enhancing their professional musical training in both composition and conducting.

## 2. The early years of the Czechoslovak-Mongolian relationship as reflected in classical music

Above all others, the Soviet Union was the country that provided Mongolian musicians with professional musical training, education, and supervisory consultations (Tsolmon 2011, p. 24). Soon after Mongolia established diplomatic relations with the European countries of the Eastern Bloc[13] in April 1950, it sought opportunities for collaboration in art and culture with those countries as well. At first, the activities to be carried out between Czechoslovakia and Mongolia were set up in a plan of mutual cultural collaboration as agreed upon on an annual basis. The emphasis within the plan was placed upon education; a certain number of students were enlisted to study in Czechoslovakia. The aim of this collaboration in all other areas, i.e. science, music, theatre, film, radio, education, etc., was to promote each country's successes, demonstrate the latest achievements and, above all, to assist Mongolia in its development not only by sending experts or providing training, but also by affording the opportunities to participate in contests, festivals and various other events. The goals and forms of this mutual cooperation generally corresponded to the paradigms of such cooperation set out within Comecon.[14] One of

during the four seasons'). After his studies in the Soviet Union, he focused on incorporating traditional instruments into classical music and expanding their technical possibilities. For more details, see http://www.urlag.mn/post/9758.htm.

13) The Eastern Bloc generally refers to the satellite states of the Soviet Union during the Cold War (app. 1947–1991). Mongolia established diplomatic relations with the GDR, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Bulgaria within a short period of time, beginning in April 1950.

14) Comecon (1949–1991) was an organization for economic cooperation between the Eastern Bloc countries within a political framework. It was established as a response to the Marshall plan and had as its goal the coordination of interstate

Comecon's objectives was to equalize the living standards in the member states and their satellites. In practice, this meant that the more developed countries of the Communist bloc provided a larger share of assistance to developing countries within the bloc.

Two concerts given by Mongolian musicians at the Prague Spring Festival (*Pražské jaro*)[15] in June 1952 were among the first occasions for the presentation of Mongolian music in a European festival context. The instrumental section of the concert was represented solely by traditional instruments (*khuchir, shanz, morin khuur*), at times with piano accompaniment; the orchestral part was performed by the Prague Radio Orchestra. The programme consisted of Mongolian music, including folk songs, folk song arrangements, 'authorial songs' and instrumental classical music pieces, in addition to which F. Schubert's Serenade and J. Ježek's lied *Proti větru* ('Against the wind') were performed.[16]

Mutual collaboration in music during those years involved the exchange of musical materials, including scores, gramophone records and tape recordings for radio broadcasting purposes, as well as information about recent events in both countries; ensembles were also hosted (the Mongolian Song and Dance Ensemble, the Czechoslovak State Song and Dance Ensemble, BROLN,[17] The Smetana Quartet, etc.), as well as cultural delegations: those from Mongolia often travelled as observers to the Prague Spring Festival – L. Murdorj, G. Tserendorj, etc.[18]

In the summer of 1957, Emil Hršel, then the ambassador of Czechoslovakia to Mongolia, submitted the suggestion of appointing, in the near future, a conductor "in order to provide instruction, further training and amelioration to the symphony orchestra of the Music and Drama State

trade, industry, and research (COMECON). For Comecon with regards to Hungary, see Teleki 2018, p. 71.

15) Prague Spring (*Pražské jaro*) festival is an international festival of symphonic and chamber orchestras held annually in Prague; the festival inaugurated in 1946.

16) Archive of the Prague Spring Festival: https://festival.cz/koncert/umelci-mongolske-lidove-republiky/, https://festival.cz/koncert/vecer-mongolske-hudby/.

17) The abbreviation of the *Brněnský rozhlasový orchestr lidových nástrojů* (Brno Radio Orchestra of Folk Instruments).

18) PCC Draft 1956 Negotiation; Report 3; PCC 1957; Report 1, etc.

Theatre" in Ulaanbaatar.[19] This suggestion was approved by the Czechoslovaks in a very short period of time, and was added to the program of cultural cooperation for the second half of 1958.[20]

## 3. October 1958 – January 1959: Tibor Andrašovan's sojourn in Mongolia

The name of the appointee – Tibor Andrašovan – was announced to the relevant Mongolian officials shortly before the conductor's departure on September 18, 1958.

Tibor Andrašovan was born on April 3, 1917 in Slovenská Ľupča, in Horehronie (Upper Hron River region), a region that is renowned for its distinctive singing styles, such as multipart singing (Burlasová 1980, pp. 209, Margetová 2009, pp. 26–28). Tragic events in his family forced him earn a living as a pianist from the age of 15. He studied musicology at the Faculty of Art of Comenius University in Bratislava (graduating in 1941). He then studied composition with Eugen Suchoň[21] and Alexander Moyzes,[22] as well as conducting with Kornel Schimpl[23] at the State Conservatory in Bratislava. In 1945–1946 he studied orchestral conducting with Pavel Dědeček and choir conducting with Metod Doležil in Prague; he also attended the lectures in musicology at the Faculty of Arts of the Charles University. In 1946 he was engaged as a repetiteur and conductor at the Slovak National Theatre Opera, where he was also appointed as a dramaturg in 1948. Andrašovan worked in both positions up till 1955, when he became the artistic director of the Slovak Folk Music and Dance Ensemble (SĽUK).[24]

19) Topics to PCR Draft 1958.
20) PCC Draft 1958.
21) Eugen Suchoň (1908–1993) – a Slovak composer who laid the foundations of modern Slovak music and national opera.
22) Alexander Moyzes (1907–1984) – a Slovak neoromantic composer.
23) Kornel Schimpl (1907–1985) – a Slovak conductor, choirmaster, and music educator.
24) Muntág 2001, p. 5; Biography, dated September 11, 1958; typed document, signed by the composer. In the case of chronological discrepancies, this latter source has been used as it is more reliable.

Not only was Tibor Andrašovan an experienced conductor (Muntág 2001, p. 7), but by the time he was about to leave for Mongolia in the autumn of 1958, he had already composed a wide range of pieces, from symphonic and vocal-symphonic to chamber compositions, as well as the comic opera *Figliar Geľo* ('Geľo the Joker'), the ballet *Orfeus a Eurydika* ('Orpheus and Eurydice'), as well as drama and film music (e.g., *Drevená dedina* 'The Wooden Village'). Arrangements of folk songs and dance music into scenic performances, including those with a dramatic emphasis for the Lúčnica ensemble and SĽUK constituted a large part of his work.[25]

The official documents do not reveal any political grounds for the appointment of Andrašovan to Mongolia. Some time in 1956 – he just returned home from a tour with with SĽUK – he dared to make critical mention of how the percentage of Slovak representatives in the Czechoslovak embassies and among students abroad was much lower than that of the Czechs. Even though he was a member of the Communist party, this led to the accusation of bourgeois nationalism,[26] and as a result he was suspended from his position.[27] Andrašovan's musical specialization and skills were more than adequate for employment in the context of the plan of cultural cooperation with Mongolia. Thus he was offered an unpaid engagement in Ulaanbaatar, as opposed to other measures that could have been taken. The whole situation was perceived, not least by the conductor himself, as unjust punishment.[28]

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25) For more details see Biography, dated September 11, 1958, typed document; Laborecký 1998, pp. 17–18; Ak chceš zapaľovať – Musíš sám horieť 1992; http://hc.sk/en/hudba/osobnost-detail/33-tibor-andrasovan.

26) Slovak 'bourgeois nationalism' refers to the fabricated affair concerning the Communist Party of Slovakia in the 1950s; in the broader sense it was applied to any open expression of Slovak patriotism or any attempt to equalize the situation of Slovakia within Czechoslovakia; these were actions that still led to persecution in the late 1950s (for more details, see Slovakia in History 2013, pp. 284–302; Steiner 1973, Sovietizácia ČSR, etc.).

27) M. Andrašovanová, IN 2016; Ak chceš zapaľovať – Musíš sám horieť 1992, Kyseľ 2007.

28) Ibid. According to the records in the archives of the National Memory Institute in Bratislava, Slovakia, the State Security created a personal dossier (reg. No. 650) on Tibor Andrašovan on March 25, 1958. Such files were generally created for

Tibor Andrašovan arrived in Ulaanbaatar on October 9, 1958. His departure was briefly announced in the Czechoslovak newspapers, although the purpose of his trip to Mongolia was somewhat misinterpreted, as, for example, when his position was declared to be that of "director of the [Mongolian] State Opera."[29] The information published upon Andrašovan's return in January 1959, including a short TV segment,[30] was more accurate. These, together with a thorough report written by the ambassador of Czechoslovakia, Ján Teluch,[31] two articles authored by the composer himself, concert bulletins, posters, and several photographs in the possession of Andrašovan's family and archives, are the main sources for reconstructing the trajectory of Andrašovan's sojourn in Ulaanbaatar. This provides us with a great deal of insight into the first decades of the establishment of classical music in Mongolia.

## 2.1 TIBOR ANDRAŠOVAN'S CONTRIBUTION TO MONGOLIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC

After briefly becoming acquainted with local music and culture, Tibor Andrašovan began to rehearse with the State Symphony Orchestra. According to the initial plan, they were meant to prepare Dvořák's *Slavonic Dances*, as well as other Mongolian and Russian pieces. Andrašovan's work with orchestra consisted of 4 hours of practice and rehearsals twice daily. The hardship the musicians faced was described by Andrašovan:[32]

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those who, according to verified information, had committed "anti-state" activities, or were suspected of doing so (B. Kinčok, NMI, personal communication). The file on Andrašovan was terminated in 1962, and was not preserved in the archives.

29) (f) 1958a.

30) "Hudobný skladateľ Tibor Andrašovan v Mongolsku" (TV segment).

31) Report 2 (dated January 9, 1959). Ján Teluch (1909–1985) – ambassador of Czechoslovakia in MoPR in 1958–1961 (Dejmek 2013, p. 622; Přehled vedoucích úřadu).

32) Ibid.; -JL- 1959, Andrašovan 1959a.

"Working on the *Slavonic Dances* was difficult, as some instrumentalists (oboists, horn players, trombonists and percussionists) were largely beginners who had been studying for only one to three years. I have to admit that after a week of training, I began to think about how to intensify the work with the philharmonic orchestra in order to meet the established goals. Therefore, I visited the School of Arts to consult with the teachers there concerning their assistance… At this meeting with the teachers, we came to an agreement that the teachers would help the performers with individual training." (Andrašovan 1959a).

As the ambassador J. Teluch mentioned in his report (Report-2, dated January 9, 1959, p. 3), certain difficulties were caused by the fact that most of the orchestra members lived in yurts, hindering them from practicing at home. As the composer S. Gonchigsumlaa recollected several decades later at the time of his reunion with Tibor Andrašovan in Czechoslovakia, "He was very strict and demanding, and was not satisfied until the rehearsed part was perfect." (Andrašovanová, IN 2016). Andrašovan himself, however, claimed that despite these difficulties, he worked with pleasure, "as all the musicians and artists gratefully accepted his comments and obligingly fulfilled all the tasks he presented to them." (Andrašovan 1959a).

Six weeks later, the repertoire for the concerts was finally ready for performance: the symphonic poem *Oktyabriin tuya* ('The Aurora of October')[33] by L. Mördorj, Dvořák's *Slavonic Dances*, three songs for soprano and orchestra by S. Gonchigsumlaa, and the Polovtsian dances from Borodin's opera *Prince Igor*.

In addition to his rehearsals with the philharmonic, Andrašovan worked with L. Mördorj; he also worked with S. Gonchigsumlaa on his opera *Ünen* ('Truth'). Eventually, there was a decision to perform this work instead of Smetana's *Prodaná nevěsta* ('The Bartered Bride'), which had initially been planned.[34] Andrašovan helped with adjustments to the operatic work *Ünen* ('Truth'), including certain adjustments to the instrumentation and changes in the dramaturgy: each act was opened by an old storyteller with a fiddle (*khuurch*), who, in addition to "being a specific feature of Mongolian tradition, was able to deliver the idea of the opera to the audience" (Бирваа 1958).

33) Referred to as *Oslobodenie* ('Liberation') in the Slovak texts.

34) Bedřich Smetana (1824–1884) – the Czech Romantic-era composer.

"The melody of the symphonic music, expressive of tragedy, grief, struggle, and victory, as well as performance of the singers were improved, causing the audience to become moved by the story. Its culmination also became clearer. In the earlier dramaturgy, the songs of the partisans' choir, the dances and final chorus were not strong in their sense of movement, resembling a concerto rather than opera. The changes made created real on-stage action and movement." (Ibid.).

In addition to composing and conducting, Tibor Andrašovan's program also included lecturing, consulting, and discussions with colleagues. On October 27, he gave a lecture to 27 directors, university teachers and students on the topic of "Rhythm and gradation in the composition and art of dramaturgy." The ambassador reported that the lecture was followed by a discussion that lasted for no less than five hours (Report-2 1959, p. 1; -JL- 1959).

The symphony orchestra gave four concerts under T. Andrašovan's baton. Prior to the first one held on November 22, 1958 (See poster in Fig. 2) there were some concerns as to how the Mongolian audience would receive it as "it was the first time in the symphony orchestra's one-year-long existence[35] that a full-scale concert was being given." (Andrašovan 1959a, Andrašovan 1959b, Report-2, p. 2). However, these concerns were unfounded; the audience's reaction was highly enthusiastic. To ease the reception of the work, each Slavonic dance was introduced by an announcer. The eight dance, with its surprising epilogue, was strongly applauded and the audience demanded an encore, as they did following some of the works from the Mongolian composers: this occurred with L. Mördorj's *The Aurora of October* (Andrašovan 1959a).

"If one listened to the concert of this orchestra, unaware of the enormous effort that had preceded it, one would not find any difference between our own and any other orchestra: all the members played with a great enthusiasm, with no signs of false professionalism. On the contrary, a healthy musical performance emanated from the orchestra, in many ways helping to conceal its imperfections and to carry the audience to the roar of applause." (Andrašovan 1959a).

35) The State Symphony Orchestra was officially established by decree No. 118 of the Minister of Culture on June 5, 1957. The musicians were relocated from other orchestras in the city. The opening concert was given on February 25, 1958 at the State Theatre of Music and Drama (Батсайхан 1987, p. 1).

The concerts aroused extraordinary interest among the people and, as Andrašovan himself admitted, were even far better received by the audience and reviewers than the opera *Ünen* (see p. 78 below). An extra concert was added upon the personal request of the Prime Minister Yu. Tsedenbal:[36] government officials had not been able to attend any of the previous concerts due to their participation at the 13th congress of the MoPRP held at the same time (Andrašovan 1959a, Report-2 1959, p. 3). The opera *Ünen* was performed twice. The first performance was given on December 8, 1958, while the second one was given for government officials, party, and state authorities (Report-2 1959, p. 4).

In addition to the live performances, all the pieces played at the concerts, as well as the opera, were recorded in full by Mongolian State Radio. Andrašovan devoted part of his free time to training his Mongolian conductor colleagues, so that the rehearsed pieces could remain in the orchestra repertoire after his departure. Jamiyangiin Chuluun in particular excelled under his tutelage: Andrašovan trained him in conducting Dvořák's *Slavonic Dances* and later, he personally highly recommended him to the culture minister Sosorbaram for a study period in Czechoslovakia (Яруу тунгалагийн цоморлиг 2018, 38:13).

### 2.2 "GLEANINGS FROM LIFE IN ULAANBAATAR"[37]

As many others who visited Mongolia at that time, either as a member of a delegation or as an expert, when back in Czechoslovakia, Tibor Andrašovan published two articles in the newspapers to share his impressions with readers. What he wrote was most likely subject to some censorship, as noted by Slobodník (2018, pp. 45, 52), or he simply might have applied a certain degree of self-censorship, having in mind the previous negative experience which occurred after reporting the unpleasant encounters of the members of SĽUK during their visit in India to

36) Yumjaagiin Tsedenbal (1916–1991) – the leader of Mongolia during the socialist period.

37) This is the title that Andrašovan used when he published his article about his experiences during his sojourn in Mongolia (Andrašovan 1959b).

the editors of the Slovak journal *Smena* (Zavacká 2005, pp. 140–141). Andrašovan described the Mongolian way of life, something that usually struck foreigners as interesting and curious, such as visiting a yurt, where some of his new acquaintances and friends still resided, and the local cuisine, including goat meat roasted by placing red-hot stones inside the animal, while set down among glowing embers, as well as dried meat, which he referred to as "an ox in the bag"[38] (Andrašovan 1959b). He also described the extremely cold winter weather, camel caravans traversing areas with no roads, traditional horseracing, and so on.

His mention of the celebration of the October Revolution Day (November 7) in the hotel Altai (now home to the City Council) where he was staying with other foreign visitors, most of whom were professionals from the socialist countries, seems to have been mandatory. Naturally, as a musician, T. Andrašovan's attention was primarily focused on the musical side of life in Mongolia, although certain discrepancies can be seen in his understanding of Mongolian musical culture that might well have arisen from the ideologically adjusted information he obtained. On the one hand, he was reportedly amazed by the richness of the traditional Mongolian song repertoire (JL 1959), as well as the omnipresent melodies that accompanied many other activities, thus forming an integral part of of them. He was especially struck by how melodies were sung during the knuckle-bone shooting tournament.[39] His account, however, of musical performances at the Buddhist temple service, though generally lacking negative connotations,[40] concludes with the statement that "this temple music was, at one point, the only aesthetic experience available to local people" (Andrašovan 1959b). Similarly, his view concerning classical music was that "it had been denied to the people of Mongolia for centuries" (Andrašovan 1959a).

38) This would appear to refer to *boodog* and *borts*, respectively.

39) "Every Sunday Mongolian men gather in a room similar to what we use for playing billiards… in the evening, the number of players is reduced from eight to one and the best of all becomes "winner for the day". [Right at that moment] the melody culminates, and ecstasy is transferred to the beautiful panegyric singing". (Andrašovan 1959b) .

40) For attitudes to Buddhism in the travelogues of Czechoslovak authors in the 1950s, see Slobodník 2018, pp. 48–52.

To emphasize the novelty of the opera *Ünen*, Andrašovan described it as "the first Mongolian opera composed more or less according to European musical thinking in terms of harmonic and instrumental composition techniques;" this, in Andrašovan's view, was what made it different from all the "national" operas that preceded it (Andrašovan 1959a). Per his description, the operatic vocal parts used the traditional Mongolian melodic system based on the pentatonic scale with traditional vocal ornamentation. The singers sang in their usual natural way, as when singing folksongs, as these operas were "largely created by the people and were only additionally notated and upgraded with the help of the additional orchestral accompaniment."[41] Thus, "given the specific local colouring" one could hardly imagine European singers performing the *The Three Sorrowful Hills* (*Uchirtai gurvan tolgoi*) by B. Damdinsuren (Ibid.). Tibor Andrašovan further observed that the response of the spectators also differed from that of countries with a centuries-long opera tradition. Rather than applauding after an aria or a chorus, the spectators applauded during specific points in the narrative: as when, for example, a father was reunited with his son after twenty years of separation or when an enemy was defeated by hero, and so on. On the whole, Andrašovan found that Mongolian audiences reacted more spontaneously and sincerely to what was occurring on the stage (Andrašovan 1959a).

## 3. Conclusion

The subject of this article demonstrates how cooperation between the Czechoslovak Republic and the Mongolian People's Republic was carried out in the late 1950s within the socialist bloc. The political reasoning behind various decisions was at times merely implied, and yet was significant. Ultimately it was the commitment of various individuals which lay behind the success of this cultural cooperation, involving both the

41) This opera was first performed as (folk-)song drama (*ayalguut jüjig*) in 1934. In 1943, it was re-arranged, including a libretto, into a musical drama (*duulalt jüjig*); subsequently, in 1950, it was written as an opera (*duuri*) (Монгол үндэсний анхны дуурь Учиртай гурван толгой; Доржсүрэн 2011, p. 120).

creation of something completely new and the building up of bilateral ties – even if the names of the participants have faded over time. From the perspective of the people involved, such an experience could mean a significant new chapter in their lives.

What was intended as a punishment for T. Andrašovan turned out, instead, to be a triumph. Upon the personal request of the Mongolian Minister of Culture, the Czechoslovak conductor and composer worked with Mongolian musicians for nearly three months instead of the originally planned 45 days. The Ministry of Culture of the MoPR greatly appreciated his work – his engagement was described as the most successful activity in the history of the Czechoslovak-Mongolian cultural relationship hitherto,[42] and, as a sign of gratitude, presented him with round-trip plane tickets for a two-week trip to China in December 1958. Before his return home, Tibor Andrašovan was invited to the Cabinet of Ministers on January 9, 1959, and was bestowed the Award of Honour for Labour by the First Vice-President Ch. Surenjav, signed by Yu. Tsedenbal (-JL- 1959, Report-2 1959, p. 3). The Mongolian authorities expressed their wish for Andrašovan to return the following year to conduct *The Bartered Bride* at its premier. Although the translation of the text into Mongolian by one of the leading poets, Ch. Chimid, had been completed, and orchestra rehearsals of the overture and the most difficult sections had already begun under T. Andrašovan's baton during the last days of his stay in Ulaanbaatar (Report-2 1959, p. 2), the opera was not performed in Mongolia until the 1970s (albeit without Andrašovan's presence), due to various reasons, including the lack of an appropriate cast.

For the Mongolian symphony orchestra, instruction and rehearsal under Tibor Andrašovan's baton was one of their first times training with a European classical music professional. This experience became a strong impetus for the Mongolians to send the young violinist and conductor J. Chuluun (1928–1996) to study conducting in Prague for one year. It appears that the future development of Mongolian classical music was considered a highly important issue, as this study period was arranged without advance "official" planning, with most of the related expenses covered by the Mongolian government (Mongolia 6b). It is worth noting

42) Mongolia – 2, 1959, p. 9.

that J. Chuluun studied in Czechoslovakia twice, first in 1959–1960 (Mongolia 6c) and later again in 1966–1967. He was appointed chief conductor of the State Theatre of Music and Drama in June 1960 (Яруу тунгалагийн цоморлиг 2018, 38:57). In addition to becoming an eminent conductor he is also known as a composer: the ballet *Uran Khas* (‘Artisan Khas,’ first performed in 1973) is one of his most popular.

Tibor Andrašovan certainly benefited, in his professional life, from the success of his Mongolian sojourn: this is well attested by multiple positive references from the Mongolian authorities and the Czechoslovak embassy in Ulaanbaatar. Even though he never visited Mongolia again, he always recalled the Mongolians, in particular S. Gonchigsumlaa and J. Chuluun, whom he had worked with (M. Andrašovanová, IN 2016), with great affection.

## Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| MoPR | Mongolian People's Republic |
| MoPRP | Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party |
| MK | Ministerstvo kultury (The Ministry of Culture) |
| MŠK | Ministerstvo školství a kultury (The Ministry of Education and Culture) |
| NA ČR | Národní Archiv České republiky (The National Archives of the Czech Republic) |
| NMI | Ústav pamäti národa (The National Memory Institute) |

## Interviews

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Fig. 1. Tibor Andrašovan in front of the Hotel Altai (now the City Council). He was taken by a car to the theatre that previously stood across from Sukhbaatar Square every day (M. Andrašovanová, IN 2016). Ulaanbaatar, fall 1958. Photographer unknown. Archive of A. Andrašovan.


Fig. 2. Announcement of two concerts given by the Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Tibor Andrašovan. Ulaanbaatar, November 22 and 23, 1958. Courtesy of the Slovak State Scientific Library – Museum of Literature and Music, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia.

Fig. 3. Tibor Andrašovan at the conductor's podium, with the Mongolian Philharmonic Orchestra. The violinist to the right is B. Buyantogtokh; to her left is N. Janchiv; the violoncellist behind the conductor is Kh. Sharkhuu. Ulaanbaatar, fall-winter 1958. Photographer unknown. Archive of A. Andrašovan. Identification of the Mongolian musicians provided by Ch. Buyankhishig.

Fig. 4. During the intermission of a concert held in fall-winter 1958, Tibor Andrašovan (centre left) and the Czechoslovak ambassador to Mongolia, Ján Teluch (to the conductor's left) met with Yu. Tsedenbal (facing the conductor), as well as other party leaders: (from the left) Secretary of the MoPRP Central Committee D. Tömör-Ochir (standing behind Ján Teluch and Tibor Andrašovan), the head of the Cultural Committee (surname unknown) Bold, second secretary of the MoPRP Central Committee D. Damba (behind Yu. Tsedenbal to the left), deputy prime minister Ch. Sürenjav (behind Yu. Tsedenbal to the right), and Chairman of the People's Great Khural (parliament) J. Sambuu (to the far right). This meeting took place at the personal request of Secretary General of the MoPRP Central Committee, Yu. Tsedenbal. It is worth mentioning that not long afterwards D. Damba (1908–1989) was expelled from his position and sent to "internal exile". Similarly, both Ch. Sürenjav (1914–?) and D. Tömör-Ochir (1921–1985) lost their positions as Yu. Choibalsan's political rivals, the latter one having been charged with nationalism (Atwood 2004, pp. 125–126, 548–549). Photographer unknown. Courtesy of the Slovak State Scientific Library – Museum of Literature and Music in Banská Bystrica (documentation of the events, exhibitions Domovina moja [My Homeland], Dialógy [Dialogues], HA/V - 56). Identification of the Mongolian politicians was kindly provided by T. Odonkhüü and with the help of Report-2, p. 3.

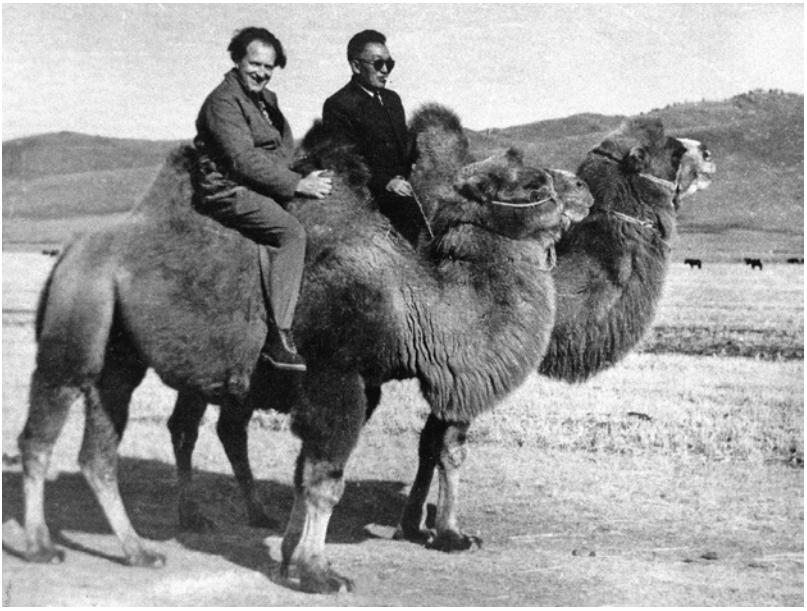

Fig. 5. Tibor Andrašovan riding camels with his Mongolian colleague S. Gonchigsumlaa during a trip to visit herders during his time off. Photographer unknown. Archive of A. Andrašovan and (Slovak) State Scientific Library – Museum of Literature and Music in Banská Bystrica. The identity of S. Gonchigsumlaa was confirmed by his son G. Zorig, and grandson Z. Khaidav

Fig. 6. In conjunction with Fig. 5, this image clearly demonstrates that in the late 1950s, foreigners could not travel unattended in the Mongolian countryside. Photographer unknown. Archive of A. Andrašovan.

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