

John Gombojab Hangin (1921-1989) 25 years later



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Mongol-American Cultural Association

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Outline

- Biographical notes
 - Historical backdrop
- Gho Bagsh 25 years later
 - Academic and Scholarly
 - The Mongolia Society
 - Social and Political
 - US-Mongolia diplomatic relationship
 - Mongol-American Cultural Association
- Žanggiy-a – a poem by Gombojab Hangin, 1989
- Personal and Concluding remarks

Biographical Notes

- Prior to America (1921-1948)
 - Hangin family of the Plain White Banner of the Taipus Left-Wing Herd, Tsakhar, later became the Taipus Left Wing Banner
 - Father Fullehengge (1897-1936) and mother Galindari (1899-2001)
 - Grandfather Samtanlhungrub (Sa Amban, 1878-1932)
 - one of four siblings, born May 10, 1921 two sisters, Saichungga and Buudai and one brother who died at an early age
 - wife Sarangerel (b. 1923), 3 children (sons Erdene-uul, Erkhimbatu, daughter Gereltei)
 - at an early age, studied Chinese, Mongol and Manchu
 - Japan 1937, prep school, 1938 persuaded by Wu Ho-Ling to enter the school of Forestry, Hokkaido University, returned to SM December 1941
 - Taught at Mongolian Reconstruction school at Chiang jia-kou (Kalgan), Girls' School in Sili-yin Gol
 - Appointed to Office of the President's Secretariat in 1944, daily affairs of Prince De, witnessed the demise of the Japanese occupation and the turmoil of 1945-46
 - 1948 Travelled to America

Biographical Notes

- America (1948-1989)
 - 1948-53 Research Fellow, Mongol Project, Johns Hopkins University
 - 1953-64 Instructorships, Washington DC, Columbia
 - MA Columbia University
 - 1961 Founding of the Mongolia Society (www.MongoliaSociety.org)
 - 1962 Mongolia Society Newsletter
 - 1965 Mongolia Society Bulletin
 - 1974 Mongolian Studies Journal (Volume 32 in 2010)
 - 1961 Mongolia admitted to United Nations
 - 1964-1989 Indiana University
 - 1967 First trip to Mongolia
 - 1970 PhD
 - 1972 -73 Visiting Scholar Bonn University
 - 1979-1983 – Sabaaticals, Visiting Scholar (Tenri, Tokyo Japan)
 - 1987 Visited his roots in Southern Mongolia
 - 1987 US-Mongolia diplomatic relations established
 - 1987 Mongol-American Cultural Association (www.MACA-usa.org)
 - First Chinggis Khaan Memorial Ceremony by Mongols in the US
 - 1989 Research grant, Dictionary project, Ulaanbaatar

Scholarship

- 15 Books
 - 1956 A Mongol Reader (with William Austin, Urgunge Onon)
 - 1968 Basic course in Mongolian
 - 1970 Concise English-Mongolian dictionary
 - 1973 Mongolian English Dictionary (with F. Lessing and others)
 - 1986 Modern Mongolian-English dictionary
- 25 Journal articles
 - Mongolian Studies, Central Asiatic Journal, Journal of the American Oriental Society, various Proceedings
- 4 Reviews
- 12 Conferences 1967-1987
 - 1973 International Symposium in Ulaanbaatar
- Numerous Lectures, Presentations US and Japan
- Numerous Grants and Fellowships
 - 1967 grant to visit Mongolia (travelled frequently to Mongolia after this)

Some NY Times Headlines 1961

(Year Mongolia Society was founded)

BRIDGES ATTACKS PLAN ON MONGOLIA

Assails Any 'Package Deal'
for Ties and U. N. Entry

By **E. W. KENWORTHY**
Special to The New York Times.

U. S.-MONGOLIA STEP DECRIED BY TAIWAN

Special to The New York Times.

LATTIMORE TRIP HIT

Dodd Demands Inquiry Into
Visit to Outer Mongolia

WASHINGTON, Aug. 22
(UPI) — Senator Thomas J. Dodd, Democrat of Connecticut, said today he would ask the Senate Internal Security subcommittee to investigate the visit of Owen Lattimore, the Johns Hopkins University Far Eastern specialist, to Outer Mongolia.

Mongolia's Recognition

Group Protests Proposal; Denies
Value as "Listening Post"

In the past, when an Administration has seen fit to take action on foreign policy without consulting Congress, as at Yalta and Potsdam, the security interests of the United States have suffered. I would suggest that the State Department pay attention to what the American people want. Else the department may

MARVIN LIEBMAN,
Secretary, Committee of One Million
(Against the Admission of Communist China to the United Nations).

New York, July 13, 1961.

U. S. and Soviet Clash in Council Over Mauritania and Mongolia

By **SAM POPE BREWER**
Special to The New York Times.

2 NEW MEMBERS APPROVED BY U. N.

Africans Split on Mauritania
—No Dissent on Mongolia

By RICHARD EDER
Special to The New York Times

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., Oct. 27—The General Assembly voted the admission of Outer Mongolia and Mauritania today as the 103d and 103d members of the United Nations.

Although the entry of Mongolia was approved without dissent, the Mauritanian application caused a sharp split among the organization's African members. Mauritania's admission was finally approved by a vote of 68 to 13, with 20 abstentions.

In a three-hour debate, Morocco and a dozen other North African and Arab nations contended in the Assembly that Mauritania was a dummy nation set up to promote colonial interests.

The admission of Mongolia took place in a more routine fashion. The Soviet Union spoke briefly in favor of admittance and Nationalist China outlined its opposition but said it would not participate in the voting.

After the Mongolian delegation took its seats, its head, Dondog Tsevegmid, took the floor for a speech of thanks.

To the surprise of many, Mr. Tsevegmid spoke in Mongolian. The interpreters, meanwhile, read a short prepared statement in English, Spanish, French, Russian and Chinese.

Mr. Tsevegmid, however, continued speaking for some time after the statement had been read and apparently was understood by no one except the other members of his delegation.

Passing of Diluv Khutagt NYT April 8, 1965

Head of Buddhist Sect Dies in a Tenement Here

Scholar and Former Ruler of 900 Lamas Was 82

By WILL LISSNER

In the living room of a tiny ground-floor rear flat in a shabby tenement at 204 East 32d Street, the Dilowa Hutukhtu—Living Buddha of the Yellow Sect of Mahayana Buddhism—died at 7:15 A.M. yesterday.

Once he was the spiritual and temporal ruler of 900 lamas, or monks, and the head of three lamaseries. For nine years he was also the governor of one of Outer Mongolia's four provinces. Then, after the Communists drove him into exile, he was able to spend three years in Lhasa, Tibet, as tutor to the present Dalai Lama, who is the head of the Yellow Sect.

At his death the distinguished Orientalist and Buddhist scholar was just an old man of 82 suffering from cancer, in exile among strangers. He was



Shabby Rooms Were a Home to Outer Mongolia Exile

tended by three student followers and other members of his sect.

The spiritual leader's living room was 12 feet by 12 feet. His bedroom, containing a cot and two chairs, was 6 feet by 8 feet. With the Dilowa when he



IN MOURNING: Buddhist clergy attending the Dil Hutukhtu are, from left: the Rev. Dorpa Jampal Djeje, the Rev. Salting, the Rev. Napsang Chanjo, the Most Rev. Da Lama, the Rev. Yarpia Lharanpe and the Rev. Bassang Badmaev, the Rev. Ravjampa S. The Dilowa was 82 years old.

Letter to the Editor

NY Times : March 28, 1977

'Mongolia Was Never A Part of China'

To the Editor:

In an attempt to rebuke "An Open Letter to President Carter" by the National Association of Chinese-Americans which asked Carter to recognize Communist China and abandon Taiwan, Peter Yu in his letter (March 15) claims, among other things, that "Outer Mongolia," i.e. the Mongolian People's Republic, is *legally* (emphasis mine) part of China!

I can well appreciate Mr. Yu's dilemma and frustration. That is to say two or more Chinas is something he cannot stomach. Yet for the time being, he is willing to "support" the two-Chinas policy. I have no quarrel on this issue with Mr. Yu. But a word must be said in regard to his ludicrous contention that the Mongolian People's Republic is a part of China.

Historically, Mongolia was never a part of China. Not until the mid-17th century did Mongolia recognize the then Manchu Emperor as the Great Khan of Mongolia, not unsimilar to India's relations to the British Empire. Only for the brief period 1915-1921 was China able to take advantage of the international situation and force the Mongols to accept a status of "autonomy" under China's sovereignty. Never in history has China extended its direct rule over Mongolia. On the other hand, China was a part of the Great Mongol Empire for over a century. The Mongols at least know conquest and colonialism do not bestow the sacred right of sovereignty over any nation. It would be as absurd for the Mongols to claim sovereignty over Russia and Iran as for Mr. Yu to claim Korea and Vietnam, Burma and many others as a part of China.

But let me not dwell on the past which is dead and buried, and examine the "legality" of Mongolia's independence, which Mr. Yu wishes to deny.

Mongolia's independence was internationally recognized when she gained admittance to full membership in the United Nations in 1961. And at present, more than eighty nations including all major powers except the United States have diplomatic relations with the M.P.R. That is not all; the Republic of China itself accepted the result of the plebiscite held on Oct. 20, 1945, in Mongolia and formally recognized Mongolia's independence on Jan. 5, 1946.

Mongolia's boundaries are guaranteed with bilateral and multilateral treaties between Mongolia and her two neighbors, the Soviet Union and the Chinese People's Republic.

Unfortunately, there are still many who suffer from the "Mongolia is a part of China" syndrome.

(Assoc. Prof.) J. GOMBOJAB HANGIN
Uralic and Altaic Studies
Indiana University
Bloomington, Ind., March 18, 1977

1987, 1988, 1989

U.S. AND MONGOLIA IN CEREMONY ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

By RICHARD HALLORAN, Special to the New York Times
Published: January 28, 1987

WASHINGTON, Jan. 27— The United States and Mongolia established diplomatic relations today.

Secretary of State George P. Shultz and the chief United Nations representative of Mongolia, Gendengiin Nyamdoo, signed the documents in a brief ceremony in the Treaty Room in the State Department this afternoon, culminating an off-and-on negotiation dating back at least 15 years.

Ulanhu, 82, a Mongol Who Rose To High Posts in Beijing, Is Dead

AP
Published: December 9, 1988

BEIJING, Dec. 8— Ulanhu, a former deputy chairman of the Chinese National People's Congress who fought for Mongolian rights during his long political career, died today, the official New China News Agency said. He was 82 years old.

Owen Lattimore, Far East Scholar Accused by McCarthy, Dies at 88

By ERIC PACE
Published: June 1, 1989

Owen Lattimore, a Far East scholar who was a principal target of Senator Joseph R. McCarthy in the 1950's, died in his sleep early yesterday at Miriam Hospital in Providence, R.I., relatives said. He was 88 years old and lived in Pawtucket, R.I.

J. G. Hangin, 68, Professor, Dies (NY Times October 19, 1989)

John Gombojab Hangin, a university professor in the United States and an expert on Mongolian language and culture, died of heart disease Oct. 9 in Ulan Bator, the capital of Mongolia, where he was doing research. He was 68 years old and lived in Bloomington, Ind.

Dr. Hangin, who was born in Chakhar, Inner Mongolia, in 1921, studied at Hokkaido Imperial University and later earned a Ph.D. from Indiana University. He was a representative in the National Assembly of the Republic of China in 1947 and came to the United States after the Communist Government took power in 1949.

He was one of a handful of Mongols living in the United States and for years served as the main channel for the exchange of information between American officials and scholars and their counterparts in Mongolia. His efforts helped to lay the groundwork for recognition of the Mongolian People's Republic by the United Nations in 1961 and American recognition in 1987.

He was the founder of the Mongolia Society and was a professor of Uralic and Altaic languages at Indiana University. He had joined the faculty there in 1964, after teaching at Columbia and Georgetown universities, and the University of California at Berkeley.

Dr. Hangin compiled several English-Mongolian dictionaries and wrote several Mongolian language textbooks and a Mongolian reader.

Gho Bagsh 25 years later

- Gho Bagsh lived in “interesting” times, full of turbulence, challenges, defeats, but victories as well
 - His work and achievements have consequences that are still vibrant, strong and impactful today, 25 years later.
- Gombojab’ s legacy
 - Beliefs and Values
 - Scholarly productivity, impact on the next generation of scholars
 - Achievements of lasting value
 - Mongolia Society
 - J. of Mongolian Studies, numerous publications -
 - Mongol-American Cultural Association
 - 1999 Chinggis Khaan Symposium in memory of GH
 - 2013 – 26th Chinggis Khaan memorial ceremony
 - US-Mongolia academic, cultural, diplomatic ties

Pictures



First Chinggis Khaan Memorial Ceremony 1987



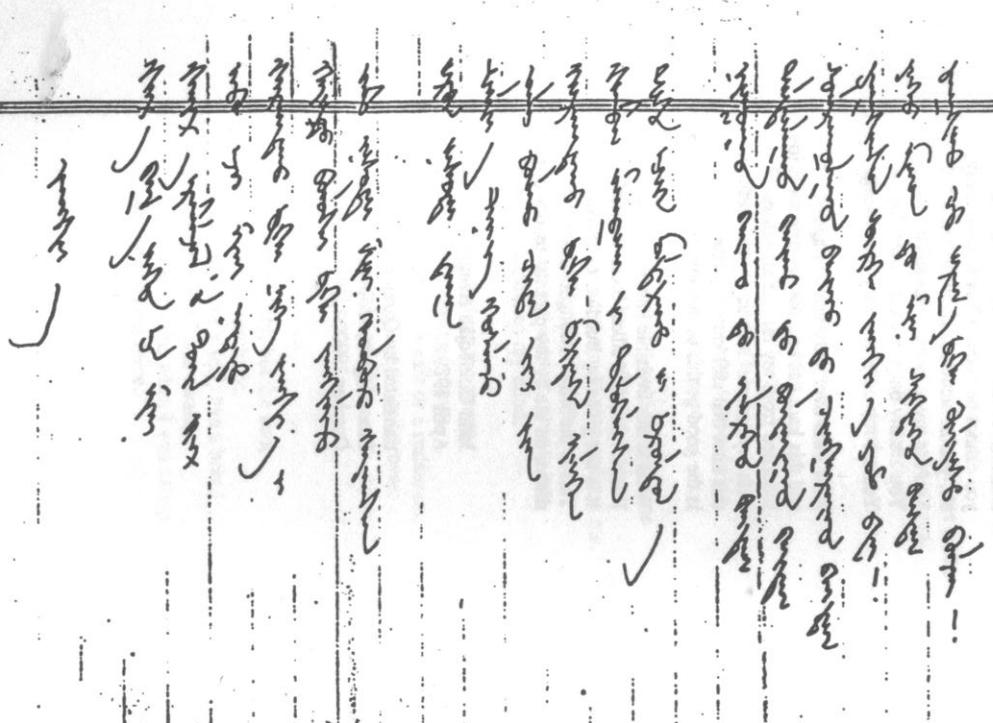
Chinggeltu, Saichungga, Amursanaa, Lo Bagsh, Tsorj Lama



Grave and Monument

Žanggiy-a (The Knot)

by Gombojab Hangin (Spring 1989)



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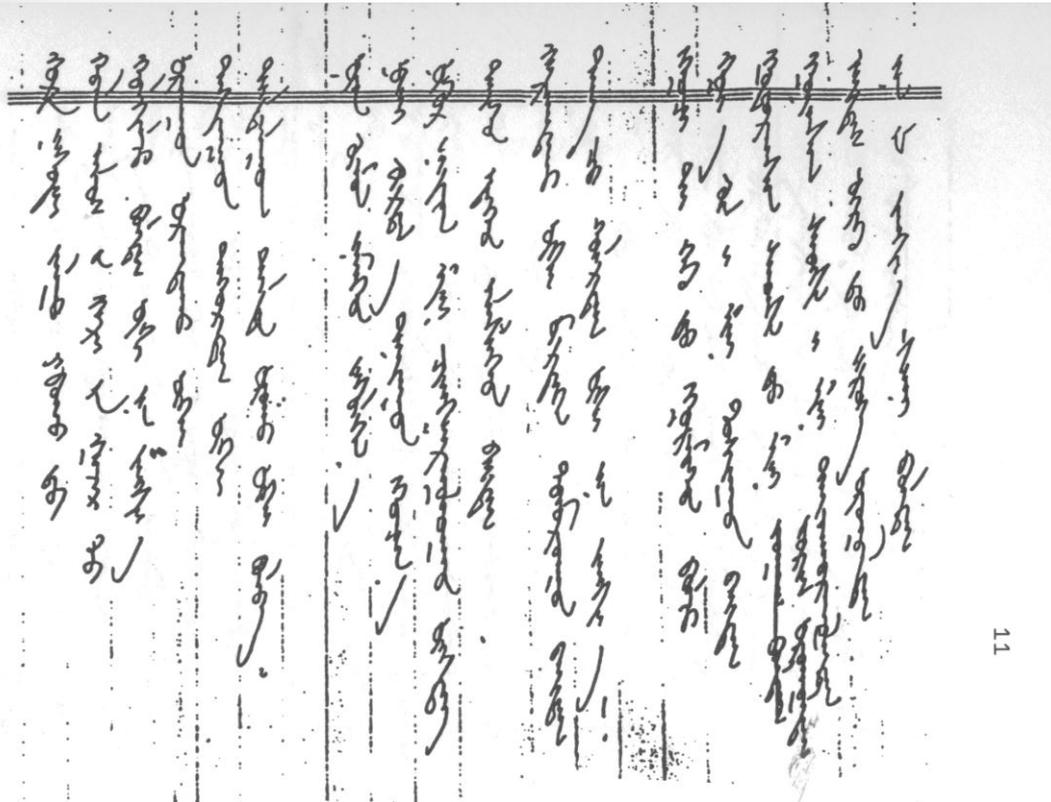
While yet a simple and innocent child,
With love and hope in abundance,
My dad and mom tied an invisible knot to me,
Tied so I couldn't be free of it,
Placed on me and connected to my life.

At the age of ten,
In an unruly and silly mood,
I tried with all my might,
This invisible but obvious knot,
That thing I thought represented all that is ugly,
to escape its hold.

Trying to deny it, it kept becoming more obvious,
Trying to conceal it, it kept reappearing,
Trying to loosen its hold, it kept on tightening,
What a powerful knot this is!
Pressing into my flesh and bones,
Its hold unyielding no matter what I do!

Zangiy-a (The Knot)

by Gombojab Hangin (Spring 1989)



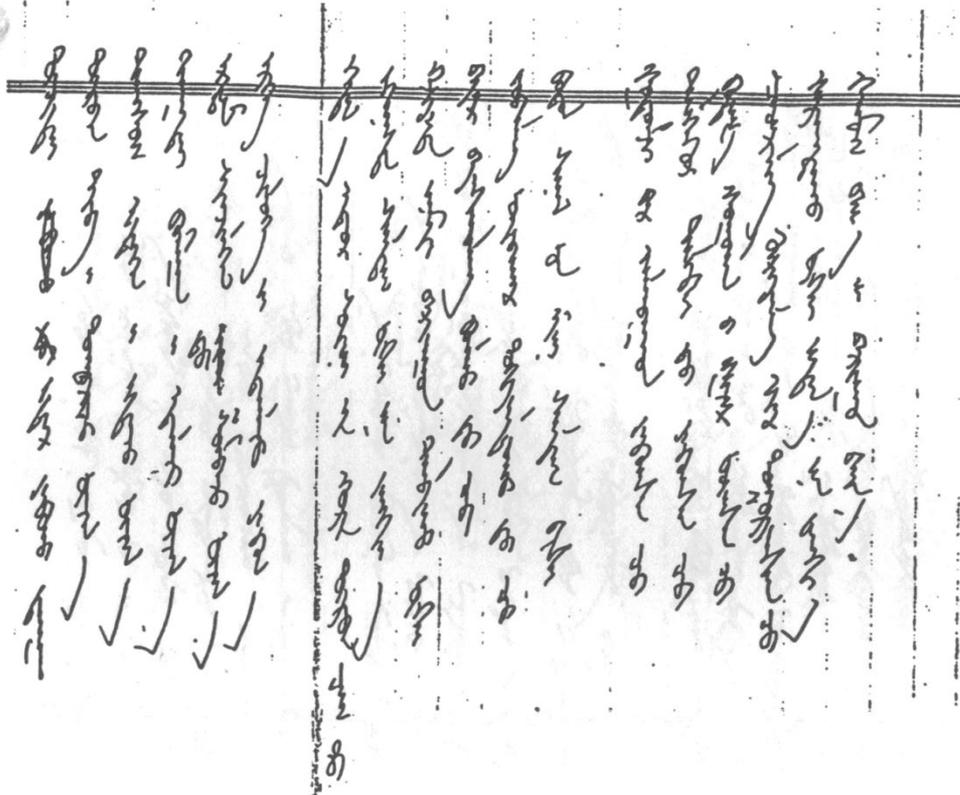
At the age of twenty, in my youthfulness,
In a distant foreign land,
This knot that cannot move far from me,
Tearing it, it tears not,
Striking it, it frays not,
Covering it, it would not be covered.

Distinguished gentlemen encouraged it,
Even down to dogs, recognizing it, barked,
My sweetheart would make it firmer,
Enemies and the like made fun of it,
Even in its invisibility, it grew larger,
This too unyielding knot!

Then at thirty a three-fold change,
As it bound even my legs,
Provided energy when I was under duress,
Provided solace when my heart was troubled,
Provided courage when fear approached,
This very knot has become my companion.

Zangiy-a (The Knot)

by Gombojab Hangin (Spring 1989)



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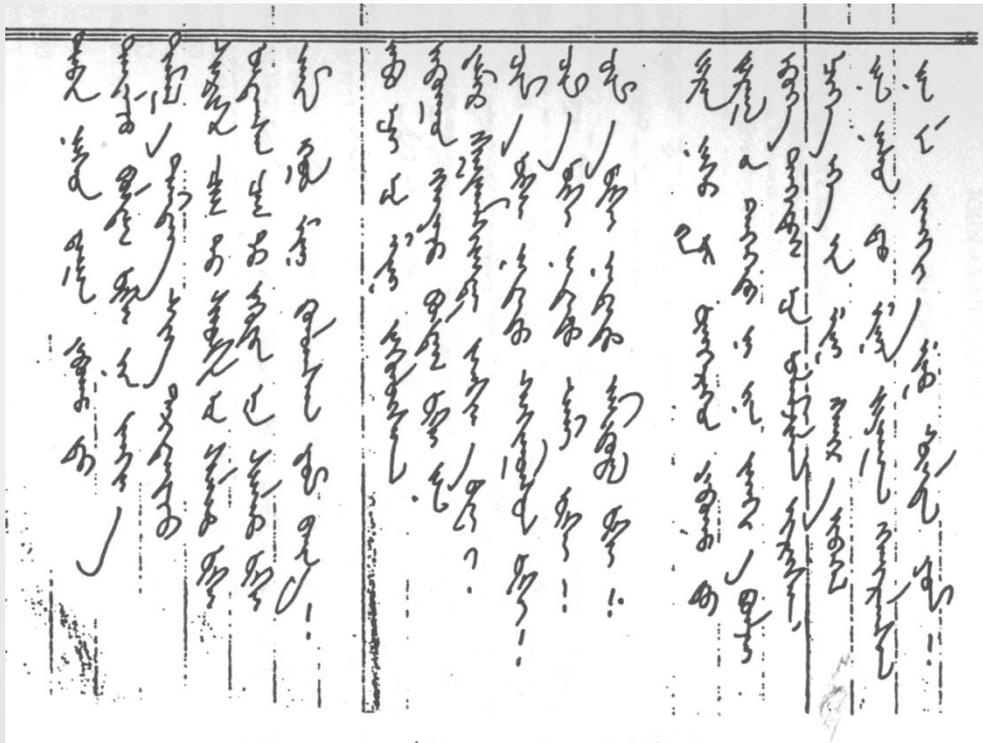
At the age of forty, robust as I was,
I travelled four continents,
I tasted exotic foods,
I experienced pleasures of all kinds,
I immersed myself in learning and science,
I enjoyed independence and freedom.

Yet day and night for 24 hours,
This knot which never leaves me,
I'm caught in its constant grasp,
Even during celebration and joy,
Even when confronted by sadness or depression,
It does not abandon my thoughts.

Even while pacing down a boulevard,
Even going to a square of shops,
Even having arrived at a place of various foods,
Even while traversing a garden park,
Even though this knot remains invisible,
My entire body is held in its grasp.

Zangiy-a (The Knot)

by Gombojab Hangin (Spring 1989)



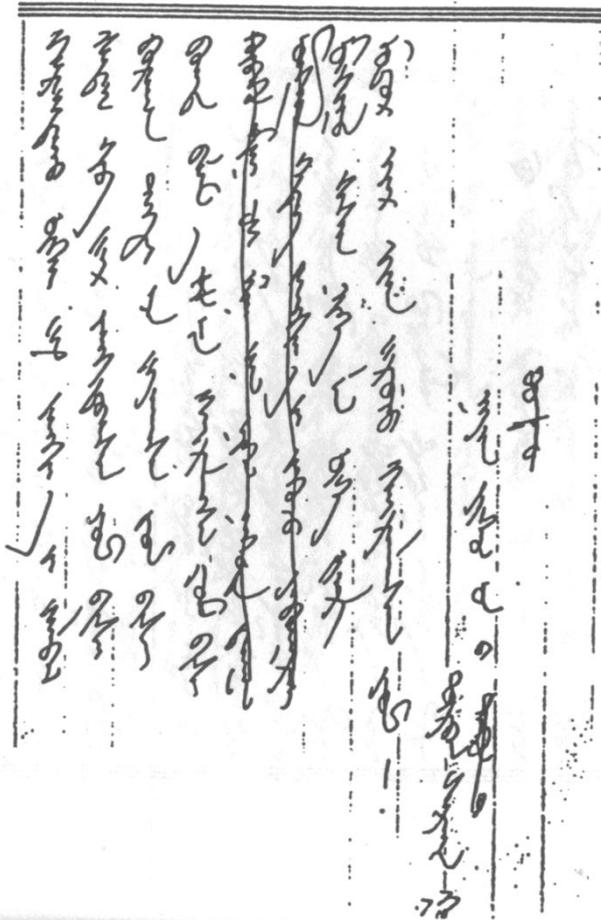
At the age of fifty,
Still this knot cannot be undone,
Still as visible as if it were a tattoo or brand,
During waking hours, it does not leave
my consciousness,
During sleeping hours, it does not leave my dreams,
It has become the core of my being!

Attached to me by my dad and mom,
That which I cannot grasp and throw away,
What kind of amazing knot is this?
Without you I have no spiritual guardian!
Without you I have no spark of life!
Without you I have no existence!

Having passed the age of 60,
This knot has become my highest joy,
Inherited from my forefathers,
It is my father and mother's loving blessing,
This knot bequeathed by destiny is at this age
the symbol of my soul!

Zangiy-a (The Knot)

by Gombojab Hangin (Spring 1989)



To describe this invisible knot,
It's not an offering bolt or scarf
of silk knotted up,
It was not predestined by deities in the sky,
It was not granted by a holy grand lama,
It's this single word 'Mongol' that
was witnessed and
Lovingly bestowed by the esteemed
hands of my parents!