MAPPING MONGOLIA

Situating Mongolia in the World from Geologic Time to the Present

Penn Museum International Research Conferences
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MAPPING MONGOLIA

Situating Mongolia in the World from Geologic Time to the Present

EDITED BY

Paula L.W. Sabloff

University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology
Philadelphia

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This book was printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper.

This volume is dedicated to all our Mongolian friends and colleagues.

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Contributors

Editor: **Paula L.W. Sabloff, Ph.D.** Santa Fe Institute

Chunag Amartuvshin. Institute of Archaeology, Academy of Sciences, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

L. Ariuntsetseg. Ecology Program, National University of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Christopher P. Atwood, Ph.D. Department of Central Eurasian Studies, Indiana University

Thomas Barfield, Ph.D. Department of Anthropology, Boston University

Jamsranjav Bayarsaikhan, Mongolia National Museum

Jargalsaikhany Enkhsaikhan, L.L.D. Blue Banner (Mongolian NGO)

William Fitzhugh, Ph.D. Arctic Studies Center, Department of Anthropology, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution

Paul R. Goldin, Ph.D. Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Pennsylvania

Clyde E. Goulden, Ph.D. Asia Center, Academy of Natural Sciences

William Honeychurch, Ph.D. Department of Anthropology, Yale University

G. Cameron Hurst III, Ph.D. Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Pennsylvania

B. Nandintsetseg. Institute of Hydrology and Meteorology, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Lenore Pipes, B.A. Department of Anthropology, Swarthmore College

Theodore G. Schurr, Ph.D. Department of Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania

David Sneath, Ph.D. Department of Social Anthropology, University of Cambridge

Penn Museum International Research Conferences

Foreword

For more than a century, a core mission of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology has been to foster research that leads to new understandings about human culture. For much of the 20th century, this research took the form of worldwide expeditions that brought back both raw data and artifacts whose analysis continues to shed light on early complex societies of the New and Old worlds. The civilizations of pharonic Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, Rome, China, Mexico, and Central America are represented in galleries that display only the most remarkable of Penn Museum's vast holding of artifacts. These collections have long provided primary evidence for many distinct research programs engaging scholars from around the world.

As we moved into a new century, indeed a new millennium, Penn Museum sought to reinvigorate its commitment to research focused on questions of human societies. In 2005, working with then Williams Director Richard M. Leventhal, Michael J. Kowalski, Chairman of the Board of Overseers of the Penn Museum, gave a generous gift to the Museum to seed a new program of high-level conferences designed to engage themes central to the Museum's core research mission. According to Leventhal's vision, generating new knowledge and frameworks for understanding requires more than raw data and collections. More than ever, it depends on collaboration among communities of scholars investigating problems using

distinct lines of evidence and different modes of analysis. Recognizing the importance of collaborative and multidisciplinary endeavors in the social sciences, Penn Museum used the gift to launch a program of International Research Conferences that each brought together ten to fifteen scholars who have reached a critical point in their consideration of a shared problem.

During the three years until the spring of 2008, it was my privilege to identify, develop, run, and now to oversee the publication of eight such conferences. The dozen or so papers for each conference were submitted to all participants one month in advance of the meeting. The fact that the papers were circulated beforehand meant that no time was lost introducing new material to the group. Rather, after each paper was briefly summarized by its author, an intense and extended critique followed that allowed for sustained consideration of the contribution that both the data and the argument made to the larger questions. The discussions of individual papers were followed by a day discussing crosscutting issues and concluded with an overarching synthesis of ideas.

Mapping Mongolia: Situating Mongolia in the World from Geologic Time to the Present was the third conference of the series, held in the late spring of 2007. It is the second of the conferences to see publication. As Series Editor, I look forward to six more volumes that will appear over the next few years. The publication of the results of these conferences allows the new knowledge and understanding that they achieved to be shared broadly and to contribute to the uniquely human enterprise of self understanding.

Holly Pittman
Series Editor
Deputy Director for Academic Programs Penn Museum 2005–2008
Curator, Near East Section
Professor, History of Art
Bok Family Professor in the Humanities,
University of Pennsylvania

Preface and Acknowledgments: "–Scaping" Mongolia

Paula L.W. Sabloff

When I first started conducting research in Mongolia, I found that I could make a room full of anthropologists jealous by telling them where I worked. To a discipline whose members pride themselves on working in exotic locations, Mongolia is a glamorous research site, for few Western and even fewer American anthropologists had worked there during the Cold War.[1] Young anthropologists started to trickle in during the early 1990s: Norwegian, Danish, and French graduate students; Christopher Kaplonski, Peter Marsh, and Katherine Petrie from the United States; and, of course, the University of Cambridge research group (Mongolian and Inner Asian Studies Unit) headed by Caroline Humphrey and now David Sneath. So anthropology, my discipline, was becoming interested in Mongolia.

But the field of area studies was not showing much interest. The area studies approach groups geographically contiguous nation-states according to a common history and shared set of traits, such as religion or political organization (Appadurai 1996:16). Some nation-states fall through the cracks of these groupings. Since the demise of the Soviet Union, Mongolia became one such country. At the 2003 Association for Asian Studies annual meeting in New York (which was held in conjunction with the Mongolia Society meeting), I spoke with a publications representative of the

Institute of East Asian Studies at University of California–Berkeley about possibly publishing my research with them. She looked interested but said they had never considered Mongolian manuscripts before. When the Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (AMES) Program at the University of Pennsylvania, which easily accommodated Mongolia, split into the Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations and the East Asian Languages and Civilizations centers, I requested that Mongolia be placed in the East Asian Center. Luckily, I had met G. Cameron Hurst, Director of the latter, before. As he is an historian of Japan and Korea and understands the connection between Korea, Japan, and Mongolia, he agreed. Had he not, Mongolia would have been left out, for Penn has a South Asian Studies Department, but there is no Central Asian or Postsocialist Studies department or center.

The more I read, the more I learned that there were many possibilities for the placement of Mongolia in area studies clusters: Postsocialist Studies, Central Eurasia, Inner Asia, and Northeast Asia, for example. The fluidity of groupings in the Eurasian continent clearly concerned others, for the theme of the 2007 Annual Soyuz Symposium (a society for postsocialist studies) was "Locating 'Eurasia' in Postsocialist Studies: The Geopolitics of Naming" (Princeton University, April 27–29).

I found all this variation rather frustrating, and so I started asking my Mongolian friends where they think Mongolia belongs. Zanaa Jurmed, who headed the United Nations CEDAW[2]-Watch office in Ulaanbaatar and is Director of the Centre for Citizens Alliance, said that Mongolia is really part of East Asia. Jargalsaikhany Enkhsaikhan, former Mongolian Permanent Representative to the United Nations and current Mongolian Ambassador to Austria, placed Mongolia with its near neighbors as part of Northeast Asia. Several others told me that Mongolia is unique. But as I studied its history and culture, I learned Mongolia has been a crossroads or transition site from the formation of the Asian continent to recent history. It has also connected Asia with the Americas biologically and culturally. And it has greatly influenced the interaction of Asia and Europe—from the migration of Turks into Asia Minor to the Pax Mongolica of Chinggis Khan and the current diaspora of Mongolians into Europe and the Americas.

As I began my search for Mongolia's place among nations, I learned that scholars in several disciplines (e.g., anthropology, international relations) are challenging the whole concept of area studies. Building on David Harvey's *The Condition of Postmodernism* (1989), they think that under conditions

of globalization and transnationalism, networks of economic, political, social, and religious interaction often have no fixed territorial boundaries (Appadurai 1991:192–94; Held et al. 1999:15; Kriesi 2003:195; Glick Schiller 2004:445–52). Thus the use of the nation-state as the appropriate unit of analysis for human interactions is being challenged.

Social science has also moved from a focus on taxonomy and trait lists to the study of process, especially the globalization of the economy, the media, material culture and ideas, and the transnationalization of people and corporations. People are connected transnationally through kinship, work, travel, and membership in multi-sited organizations (e.g., NGOs or multilateral organizations such as the UN and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations [ASEAN]). They coalesce into transnational and sometimes global civil society (Batliwala and Brown 2006:2–4). What seem more important than taxonomy are the processes whereby people, ideas, and objects connect and move through space.

A group of Mongol scholars met at the Penn Museum, University of Pennsylvania, in May 2007 to discuss Mongolia's place in the world from geologic time to the present. Because Mongolia appears as an anomaly—one could even say orphan—in various grouping schemes, it serves as a perfect case study to critique the area studies methodology and test the efficacy of another grouping methodology, the "-scapes" method proposed by Arjun Appadurai (1991, 1996). By examining Mongolia's position vis-à-vis other areas of the world, we might find a methodology that helps both academia and diplomacy analyze the world today and act differently as well. In a world where academic labeling is used to legitimate differences and even war between nation-states (I am thinking especially of the work of the late Samuel P. Huntington), the development of a new grouping paradigm is not just an academic exercise; it is critical for world diplomacy and maybe even world peace.

I worked with Fred Hiebert, Research Associate at the Penn Museum and Archaeology Fellow at National Geographic, to convene a group of scholars from different disciplines to discuss how to conceptualize Mongolia through time and across space. As experts on different aspects of Mongolia, they could evaluate grouping methodologies from the perspectives of disciplines that range from the humanities (history and international relations) and social sciences (archaeology and anthropology) to the hard sciences (geology and ecology). What they share is the idea that all in-

teractions are located in space and thus there is value in plotting connections and processes on the earth's surface (Rodgers 2003:12; Glick Schiller 2004:457–58). We met for a four-day International Research Symposium called "Mapping Mongolia" in order to literally plot Mongolia and Mongolians on maps. In that way, we could compare area studies taxonomies and the more processual approach of "-scapes." This volume is the product of our work together.

We hope that readers will not only learn the sweep of Mongolian history from the chapters but will download the 33 maps found on a DVD at the back of the book. They were created in ArcGIS but are currently accessible as .psd (Acrobat Photoshop) files. By comparing maps of different time periods and intellectual orientations, readers can decide for themselves the place of Mongolia in the world community and the relative benefits of these and other grouping methodologies.

The chapters are organized according to the main themes of the conference. The first section, "Theorizing Mongolia's Connections," includes four chapters that present the parameters of the issue at hand. In Chapter 1, G. Cameron Hurst advocates that Mongol Studies be linked to an area studies program so that the country does not get lost in academia or diplomacy. Tracing the political and economic development of area studies after World War II, Hurst highlights its flaws as well as its response to recent demographic and political changes. Still, he believes area studies centers are here to stay, and in order to survive, Mongolian scholars need to connect firmly with an area, be it Northeast Asia, Postsocialist Studies, or Eurasia.

Chapter 2 poses the question, do Mongolian studies benefit from the area studies approach or from Appadurai's "-scape" approach? Or is this apposition a false one, i.e., nonproductive? Paula Sabloff briefly describes the "-scapes" approach in greater detail, explaining how a methodology developed to trace individuals' networks can use nation-states as the units of analysis. She concludes that this approach can be a powerful addition to the area studies methodology.

David Sneath argues in Chapter 3 that the concepts of nationality, ethnicity, and nation-state are late 19th century constructs that are awkwardly applied to Mongolia. Indeed, Stalin's imposition of such concepts on Mongolia and Inner Asia turned pre-nation-state polities into "peoples," or ethnic groups, thus obfuscating our understanding of the long-term trajectory of Mongolia. Sneath recreates Mongolia's long history, correcting the dis-

tortions of past classifications. The result is a challenge to the application of the term "Mongol people" to Appadurai's ethnoscape concept.

Christopher Atwood, in Chapter 4, provides a slightly different answer to the question, is "Central Asia" a useful concept? If so, does Mongolia belong in Central Asia? He recalls that Mongolia used to be the heartland of Central Eurasia and explains how it is now facing the same issues as other Central Eurasian countries. But ironically, Mongolia drew away from the classic image of Central Asia in medieval times. Atwood concludes by relating the area studies classifications to the concept of "-scape."

The second section, "Extending Beyond Current Borders," contains chapters that analyze the Mongolian people as inhabitants of a larger region that sometimes coincides with Central Asia and even reaches Europe and the Americas. Chapter 5, written by Clyde E. Goulden, B. Nandintsetseg, and L. Ariuntsetseg, provides the incredible sweep of geological time from the breakup of Pangaea to the present, showing the geographic connections of the Mongolian Plateau to all of Asia, from the shifting tectonic plates to weather patterns. The authors then explain why pastoral nomadism on the Mongolian Plateau is really the best type of livestock herding for this harsh environment.

Continuing the theme of pastoral nomadism, Thomas Barfield's Chapter 6 describes what it means to be a pastoral nomad on the Mongolian Plateau and the geographical extent of this lifestyle in Central Asia. He delineates the implications of pastoral nomadism for Mongolia's economy, lifestyle, and environment. He then recounts changes in lifestyle from the Qing Dynasty to the socialist era and then to postsocialism. As in Chapter 5, Barfield poses and answers the question, what is the most reasonable form of livestock herding for Mongolia's environment and economy? He also concludes that pastoral nomadism is still the best economic base for those engaged in raising livestock.

Chapter 7, written by Theodore Schurr and Lenore Pipes, presents linguistic and biological connections between Mongols, their neighbors, and "kin." These connections stretch from eastern Europe to the Americas and from the Lake Baikal region of Siberia to Southeast Asia, down to Melanesia.

William Fitzhugh and Jamsranjav Bayarsaikhan's Chapter 8 describes the spatial distribution of deer stones and khirigsuurs—burial mounds and their satellites—within and beyond Mongolia's current political borders. As

these landscape artifacts are practically the only remains of the Bronze Age within Mongolia, Fitzhugh and Bayarsaikhan mine their distribution to gain as much understanding of the period as possible and proposes the exploration of possible Mongol connections to Siberian and Native American Eskimo cultures. They begin the process of extrapolating the Bronze Age ideoscape from the database, thereby demonstrating the utility of Appadurai's approach for the archaeological understanding of Mongolia.

The final section, "Connecting to Other Polities," consists of four chapters that explore the linkage of various Mongolian polities or cultural patterns to other external groups. In Chapter 9, William Honeychurch and Chunag Amartuvshin suggest that it is difficult to fit Mongolia into one or another area studies map because it has a long history of acting as an interface between regions across the length and breadth of Eurasia. From Xiongnu times to today, Mongolia has connected different parts of the continent at different points in time. Therefore they find Appadurai's flexible "-scapes" approach more conducive to an understanding of Mongolia's place in the world than the area studies approach.

Paul Goldin presents an interesting balance to Honeychurch in Chapter 10 by describing the changing attitude of the Chinese toward their northern neighbors. Before the Xiongnu, Chinese writers considered non-Chinese as people with different customs but who are still human, that is, non-Chinese have the capacity to be taught the right (Chinese) way to behave. After the Xiongnu, the great Chinese writers considered non-Chinese as people who lacked the capacity to be civilized and who are therefore not quite human. The chapter brings up two central issues of the volume: what is the nature of boundaries between groups and what is the value of grouping Mongolia with China.

Jumping from the 4th century CE to the present, Jargalsaikhany Enkhsaikhan (Chapter 11) brings to the fore the problem of area studies in the current diplomatic atmosphere, where so many issues demand analysis beyond the region. He explains Mongolians' connections beyond the nation's borders and details Mongolia's international, diplomatic involvement in securing its nuclear-weapon-free status and preventing—or at least limiting—its immediate neighbors' nuclear activities from polluting the Mongolian people and environment. This final chapter brings home the idea that a nation's immediate neighbors have the power to determine its fate more readily than any other country. Therefore the area studies perspective retains

value. However, it needs to be broadened to include diplomatic relations with noncontiguous nation-states and international organizations such as the United Nations. It is here that the "-scapes" methodology proves useful.

These chapters confirm colleagues' impressions that there is value in both the area studies and "-scapes" analyses of Mongolia. But do the chapters favor the area studies or the "-scape" model of interconnectedness? Which one has more value in scholarly and diplomatic analysis of international relations? While we hope that readers will make their own decision, the authors of this volume suggest that there is no "best" methodology that fits all types of analysis. Different ways of situating Mongolia in the world community influence the preference for one methodology or the other (or even other ways of grouping people and landscapes).

I would like to thank the Penn Museum for the opportunity to convene the symposium and publish this volume. It was part of a short series of Penn Museum International Research Symposia stimulated by Richard M. Leventhal, then Williams Director of the Museum, and sponsored by a Museum patron. Thanks especially to Fred Hiebert for suggesting that we undertake the project and for stimulating its conceptualization and operationalization. He is always fun to work with. Of course I would not have been able to refine the conference theme without Arjun Appadurai's body of work. We all regret that family issues prevented him from joining us. Holly Pittman, Professor of Art History and Deputy Director for Academic Programs, graciously shepherded the symposium from its inception to publication. Andrew Insua, Linda Meiberg, Jeremy Pines, and Bryan Miller, all graduate students in various programs, provided excellent technical assistance. Andrew kindly gave us all an update on ArcGIS and Google Earth as well.

I offer special thanks to Christopher Atwood, whose Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongol Empire (2004) and emails guided the orthography over the chapters, millennia, and continents. And I want to express my appreciation to Federico Paredes Umaña, a graduate student in the Department of Anthropology, who generated all our maps. It turned out to be a huge task.

I also wish to thank the participants in the symposium, who clearly stimulated interesting and very different conversations from the kind we usually engage in with specialists in our own intellectual niches. This symposium was a wonderful way to experience the cross-fertilization that can

only result from discussions based on multiple perspectives. And had I realized ahead of time that I was really providing a four-day reunion party for David Sneath and Christopher Atwood, I would have brought balloons.

Finally, we all wish to thank the wonderful people in Mongolia who supported us and our work there. None of us could have succeeded without their physical, emotional, and intellectual support. They have become our guides, colleagues, and friends. For these reasons and more, I dedicate this volume to them.

NOTES

1. Exceptions include Owen Lattimore, Robert Rupen, William Ballis, and Caroline Humphrey.
2. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

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Theorizing Mongolia's Connections

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1

General Comments on Mapping Mongolia and Mongol Studies

G. CAMERON HURST[1]

I am an interloper in Mongol studies, but I want to take advantage of forty years of training in and administering East Asian area studies programs to make some observations about the growth and development of area studies in which, I think, Mongol studies has to fit. By looking at the problems within the American academy today, maybe we can see how that impacts Mongol studies.

SOME THOUGHTS ON "AREA STUDIES" IN THE UNITED STATES

For many of us, American colleges and universities still seem highly Euro-American even in the 21st century. And that is despite all the mouthings of presidents and chancellors of universities about globalizing the academy. Here at Penn [University of Pennsylvania], for example, we have fifteen professors of philosophy and twelve pages in the catalogue of graduate and undergraduate courses for philosophy. Yet there is no course that moves outside of the classical world and modern Europe—with the exception of one course in Indian philosophy. You can take Late and Early Plato, but if you want ancient philosophy, moral philosophy, or political philosophy

classes, the subject matter is only European. We may have come a long way, baby, but we still have a long way to go!

In the prewar era, of course, it was far worse. Outside of European and American grounded subjects in a few schools including Penn, you could study the world of classical China, India, or the Middle East in archaeology, literature, and classical languages or history, but it was entirely at the graduate level.

BREAKING THE EUROCENTRIC TRADITION

In the emerging Cold War during the 1950s, America found itself suddenly engaged in a struggle for minds and pocketbooks with peoples and nations all around the globe—in places about which we Americans had very little knowledge. Although nothing was further from the minds of the architects of post-war political knowledge than "knowledge for knowledge's sake," it did seem convenient that American colleges and universities began to prepare citizens with a greater understanding of languages and cultural traditions of South Asia, the Middle East, East Asia, and Africa. These areas had been excluded from the Eurocentric focus of higher education previously. Indeed, in those days if you knew anything about those areas, it was primarily through archaeology and literary texts or classical studies. That is to say, we had specialists in the *Tale of Genji* who couldn't order a cup of coffee in modern Japan; we had scholars of Mao's texts with no interest in the Chinese revolution and specialists in the study of hieroglyphics who had absolutely no contemporary knowledge of Egyptian social issues.

POSTWAR POLITICS AND "AREA STUDIES" OR "INTERNATIONAL STUDIES"

It was against such a background that the eminent geographer Robert Hall wrote an important report for the Social Science Research Council in 1947. In it he argued for the greater institutionalization of area studies. A member of Michigan's Department of Geography, Hall had been working for thirty years in Japanese studies and received several important awards from the Japanese government. He had a vision of an institutionalized approach to area studies that would build on language studies. He called for an interdisciplinary site of academic endeavor that would prevent humanities

disciplines, he felt, from developing in increasing isolation from one another. The approach would also demystify ivory tower studies and inform American citizens.

Placing emphasis on an informed citizenry that would help safeguard American interests in the aftermath of a global war and in the anticipation of future ones was key in helping to attract Center funding. And it still is. In other words, America really needed to unleash social scientists in the study of contemporary areas like East Asia and team them up with humanists to provide a kind of real-world knowledge that the foreign policy establishment could use in successfully negotiating the complex world of global competition between capitalism and communism.

Professor Hall and his peers succeeded beyond their wildest imagination: the postwar growth of area studies has been prodigious. And despite criticisms (often from within area studies itself) that they are "tied to the Orientalist legacy" or have made possible the reproduction of the North American style of learning, or worse, privileged the study of Asia today, area studies have added a great deal to American colleges and universities, primarily by broadening their excessively Euro-American outlook and exposing students to a wider appreciation of the human experience. Through the introduction of formerly untaught or rarely taught languages, the creation of numerous study abroad opportunities and even the establishment of branch campuses overseas, American higher education has certainly out-done virtually all others in providing at least the possibility for internationalizing students' educational experience. In turn, American institutions of higher learning were opened to ever larger numbers of foreign professors and foreign students, even if the reasons were more monetary than educational.

WHO DOES "AREA STUDIES"?

A couple of other phenomena have enhanced area studies. First is the radical change in the composition of the American populace, especially after the advent of the 1965 immigration law, which brought an enormous number of non-European peoples to this country and ultimately the halls of higher education. As a result, few students have grown up in this country without making friends with a recently arrived immigrant from Korea, Pakistan, China, or Iran. Many of our East Asian language students express interest in

learning Korean, for example, because their best friend in high school was a Korean or they studied *tae kwon do* in high school.

This demographic change has created a certain political pressure on American education. That is, as immigrant groups become large, become increasingly aware of other immigrant groups, and then become politically active, there is often a desire to see oneself in the curriculum of American universities. Now I grew up in California, which was certainly nowhere near as multiethnic as it is today, although at the time it seemed like an amazing center of diversity. There were large numbers of Chinese- and Japanese-Americans in my town, but nary a Korean, Indian, or Iranian. Yet now these groups are the largest and most active ethnic blocs there. So it is no accident that American universities have added Korean and various South Asian languages to the curriculum and hired more faculty knowledgeable in the history, culture, and literature of these areas. Indeed they, too, have become part of the American heritage.

[Ethnic studies also developed in the last few decades. We have to remember that] people of color and even Americans of East Asian ancestry—at that time mostly first-generation college goers—even women, were rare in area studies. Fast-forward several decades and suddenly there were [American-born] students of Japanese, English, Dominican, Colombian, and other backgrounds who were interested in area studies. They had a different perspective from my generation. It was often a desire—on the part of their parents as well as the students themselves—to learn more about their own heritage not necessarily for professional purposes but simply to know more about their own background. As a result, "ethnic studies" were either incorporated into area studies or, more commonly, ethnic studies departments began to proliferate so that we have, for example, East Asian programs on the one hand and Asian-American studies on the other. It is currently quite fashionable to see this as an enriching experience as the spread of diaspora studies argues that you ought to be studying Koreans or Indians or Palestinians or Jews wherever they are found, not just in their homelands.

Sometimes area and ethnic studies cooperate fairly well—to the point where area studies departments are sometimes willing to accept an Asian-American literature course for part of their requirement, and joint research projects are possible. But not necessarily. Initially there was a great deal of hostility, not the least because of the competition for scarce resources in the

American academy. The attitude that Asian-American studies is really part of American studies remains widespread and often hampers cooperation between the two disciplines or academic units that in fact share much in common.

A third phenomenon has also affected area studies greatly. The expansion of market capitalism has driven business people from virtually every country to work for local and multinational firms. The result is that more and more people enjoy substantial periods of residence abroad, bringing, of course, their children. Now a Japanese-American boy spends five years in middle and high school in Brazil; an African-American girl has a high school experience in Pakistan, for example. As a result, we find increasingly large numbers of freshmen on American campuses who have extensive overseas language and area studies experience. Both native and foreign-born Americans as well as foreign students show an interest in studying in even greater depth the language that they learned while overseas or brought with them from a country when their parents immigrated.

Attendance at a national area studies meeting now yields an amazing diversity of area studies specialists. I have seen this in Japanese and Korean studies over the last twenty years. Even in a relatively small field like Korean studies, this diversity has been well expressed. Koreanists are native and foreign-born ethnic Koreans; they are Americans and Europeans with various ethnic and national backgrounds; they are Indian-born Americans, former Mormon missionaries, part-Koreans (for example, children of GIs who were once stationed in Korea and married Korean women), or adopted Korean orphans named Smith; or scholars of Chinese and Japanese background teaching at home or in Australia. It's hard to characterize a Koreanist anymore, and the area of Korean studies has been strengthened and enriched thereby. Such scholars study Koreans at home and abroad.

Finally the subjects themselves have come to shape the direction of area studies. At least in East Asia, specific governments have entered the business of trying to shape international ways of knowing about their language, history, and culture by providing a variety of funds for academic positions, graduate fellowships, library materials, conferences, and publications to foreign nations, especially in the United States. I am thinking of the Japan Foundation and the Korea Foundation, the Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation [for International Scholarly Exchange—a Taiwanese foundation], and more recently the addition of Confucius institutes at American colleges and

universities. These use funding as a proactive means of shaping area studies. Indeed, without these kinds of things, we could no longer survive.

So area studies have certainly come a long way since I became involved. It is richer and more diverse, and the resulting research is more nuanced than ever. But area studies are by no means without problems within and without the academy. Let me address a few of them.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND FUNDING: FUNDING NATIONAL SECURITY?

Surely the thing that has engendered the most controversy is that area studies have often been seen to be in the service of government. Some scholars have frequently and convincingly argued, it is really the economic and political power of the state that has been "the ultimate force shaping scholarly studies of what used to be called the non-Western world." They are most vexed by the degree to which the intelligence function has been central to the development of area studies.

It is undeniable that the rationale for area studies knowledge may be the stepchild of the World War II OSS office of Bill Donovan. Therefore we should hardly be surprised to learn that in the early Cold War a number of area studies scholars (some of them quite well known) were recruited to work for the CIA. Russian Studies faculty were especially cooperative with this agency, but China scholars were also recruited.

Academic opinion was and still is divided on the matter of performing such service, for there are those who argue that government work is always wrong, and not everyone would agree with Cummings' definition of proper and improper academic cooperation with the nation's defense or security guards.

Now many in my generation were recipients of Title VI National Foreign Defense Language Fellowships (NDFL) awards for graduate study of less commonly taught languages in the 1960s and '70s. Most of us were comfortable accepting such funds because there was no overt statement that these awards were designed to provide America with a corps of people who were going to go to work for the CIA or stem the spread of communism. Anyway, if you were studying Japanese literature and writing a dissertation on the Heian Period, with a career planned in academic research and teaching, it was really hard to see that you were somehow in collusion with

the government. If you were studying Russian or Chinese or Vietnamese politics, however, it might have been a different issue.

Title VI funding has morphed somewhat and become sanitized. It is now organized into "national resource centers," the [originally Defense Department] fellowships into Foreign Language and Area Fellowships (FLAS) which appear far more benign and are designed to support the broader goal of simply providing America with a more globally aware body of citizens who may bring their expertise to government, business, academe, (now) NGOs, or journalism. But it still remains problematic.

Title VI may no longer recruit people like the scholars who served in developing United States political and social policy in Vietnam. We now have the establishment of some area studies funding that is much more closely designed to serve the nation's defense and security needs such as the National Security Education Program (NSEP), which is directly administered by the Defense Department. That the target languages are mainly Middle Eastern and Asian—Pashto, Arabic, Korean, and Chinese—gives one a sense of the thrust of this particular funding, even though the goals are broadly defined as trying to globalize the American citizenry. [More recently,] the National Strategic Language Initiative [was established by President Bush and] is funded by four government departments [State, Defense, Education, and the Department of National Intelligence]. I myself am running the Korean program in this particular endeavor. We had about 500 applicants for 25 fully funded fellowships to study Korean this summer. Mostly perceived as benign and a boon for the support of Korean studies, it is still hard not to think of these particular fellowships as Kim Jong Il fellowships. That's just the way it is. A former Secretary of State remarked that George Bush's "axis of evil" phraseology was "a speech writer's dream and a diplomat's nightmare." But it is true that Korean Studies has, in this sense, profited from them being lumped together.

The extensive and deep association of government funding for area studies over a long time, the mindset of post-9/11 America that seems willing to accept a preemptive strike as a normal course of action, the healing (somewhat) of scars from the Vietnam War, the transformation of such organizations as the group called the Concerned Asian Scholars [which has addressed such concerns as the crimes against the Korean "Comfort Women" of World War II], and just generational change have all seemed to have worked to mute criticism of government funding of area studies.

Now such funding seems almost as normal as breathing—at least for East Asian studies.

ACADEMIC CONCERNS

For those of us who are involved in administering area studies programs, the bigger worries are within the academy. There are two. The first is the large gap between institutional pronouncement and performance. Is there any American university, college, or even community college that does not feature some form of globalization or internationalization way up in the pecking order within its mission statement? Everyone is told to think globally and act locally. Well, what does that mean? Often it seems little more than a commitment to recruiting more foreign students to internationalize the campus and, of course, to fill its coffers with higher tuition paying out-of-state students, at least in state schools. More foreign-born scholars seem to be teaching here than ever before, and study abroad programs have vastly expanded.

On some campuses, global concerns have indeed led to an expansion of the curriculum beyond the narrow Euro-American base that has so long been the bedrock of American education. But as an old friend of mine and former Association for Asian Studies president Mary Beth Berry often highlighted when she went around making her speech, "How many French historians are there in your history department?" Even a school with as high an Asian student population as UC-Berkeley still has a history department in which the needs of American and early modern Europe are met while other world areas—even East Asia in Berkeley's case—lag way behind.

Penn is hardly an exception as my colleague Dr. Waldron noted in a letter to the president and provost after the History Department failed to admit even one graduate student this year in so-called world history, a category in which everything non-United States or non-European is lumped. Penn, which has an excellent history department, nonetheless is not likely to replace our recently departed colleague in South Asian history as long as we still have a huge perceived gap in the coverage of Georgia in the late 1930s. You may think that's funny, but it really isn't. Until we have two people who specialize in northern Georgia in the late 1930s, we are not going to go in for an Indian historian.

Globalization sometimes seems to mean more foreigners on campus—

more professors with global business and organization–advising capability, more administrators trying to raise money overseas, and more students studying abroad—with less consciousness paid to the curriculum. While some schools have undergone extensive curriculum revision, discussion of the curriculum is often limited to fighting over narrow additions to or subtractions from the current list of requirements. Here at Penn, for example, the Arts and Sciences faculty were for a time pitted against one another over whether to add an international requirement or one that we might call hyphenated American studies. We were fighting about which one was more important! Up to that point, it had been possible to fulfill virtually all graduation requirements in the college, with the exception of foreign languages, without moving outside a study of the United States since the 1950s—whether affiliated with history, society, art, music, and anything else. But you took two years of Spanish. That is no longer the case, but it has not been remedied by much. Now you have to take a course that has some foreign word in the title: French history, African civilization, Mongolian pottery, possibly.

The second problem is the loss of the social sciences to the throes of theory. Ever since Hall's championing of the union of social sciences with the humanities in area studies, we have seen a tremendous expansion of area studies across the broad sweep of the social sciences. But social sciences both prospered and suffered from the fact that they offered practical solutions for public policy makers. Thus the government first turned to various social science constituencies not only for basic information but also for specific policy formulation. Policy programs for village organization in Vietnam or land reform, fostering the growth of democratic institutions, and a host of other matters in developing countries brought social science scholars out of the academy and into cooperation with the government agencies—both open and clandestine—in ways unfamiliar to (and often criticized by) area studies humanities scholars.

Maybe it's partly a reaction against being dragged into such compromising political situations, but lately the social sciences have moved further away from the practical towards the theoretical. This is happening not only in economics but also in sociology, political science, and anthropology. Even in international relations, theory is crowding out those with a specialization in a particular area. It seems that the higher the ranking or aspiration to ranking of a particular social science department, the more theoretical the

coverage is likely to be. There are dozens of specialists, for example, in the political economy of China, but you are not likely to find them in any of the top-rated institutions. They are in the middle-ranked institutions instead. As Cummings himself puts it, "The rise of the rational choice and formal theory paradigms of social science inquiry have put at risk the subfields of economic history, historical sociology, comparative politics and the entire area studies project."

The University of Pennsylvania as a whole promises global education but has no mechanism for obtaining it. Professional schools are largely autonomous, and departments within them are essentially independent entities with their own agendas. Neither the president nor the provost has any real power to lead the university this way or that, and there is no centralized spokesperson for area studies or globalization in any fundraising activities.

Today's schools with really successful area studies programs have some kind of centralized leadership. At some schools it is the vice provost; at others it is a dean of international studies who has the real responsibility to distribute resources, that is, to support positions that do not necessarily have departmental champions. This is the person who can do something about Mongolian studies when the History Department may not be inclined. Many forward-looking schools have hired such figures, attaching a number of appointments to the position to attract top-flight administrators. But too many schools like Penn do not have their own champion of area studies, although the school as a whole is highly supportive of interdisciplinary research. As teaching appointments continue to be departmentally driven, there is no central vision of what the institution ought to look like. Certainly I don't think anybody wants to be at a university where everything is decided centrally. But equally, do we really want to be at the total mercy of departmental arbitrariness?

A perfect example at Penn is the area that has caused me the biggest headaches: the lack of anyone with Chinese political economy expertise. We live in an American economy that has been virtually outsourced to China, but we have no one on this campus with any expertise in Chinese economy and business. At the same time, we portray ourselves to the outside world as though we did. We have two outside-funded programs at the undergraduate and graduate level: the Huntsman Program in which one gets a B.A. in the College and a B.S. in Wharton with a language and area specialization (for example, Chinese), and the Lauder Institute where one

can get an M.B.A. in Wharton and an M.A. in International Studies with a focus on Chinese studies in the College. And even though this is supposed to be preparatory for doing business in China, we have no one in the College or in Wharton that has any passing knowledge of Chinese business or economics whatsoever!

When we have a speaker in Chinese political economy, the students—and we have hundreds of students of Chinese extraction—attend in droves. We even sponsor seminars and conferences on Chinese business, but they are always led by non-Penn faculty. I should say it isn't only China; there are literally no specialists with knowledge in the political economy of South Asia, the Middle East, or Africa either. How can our business students become internationalized?

No social science department has hired an East Asian specialist with their own funds for several decades. We now have two sociologists, both brought to the university by outside funding, a political economist of Japan, and most recently an anthropologist with Chinese experience. But they are also funded from the outside for at least the first three years of their tenure. In other words, no social science department has shown any interest in hiring East Asian specialists on their own initiative—on their own nickel. And this at a school with an enormous number of East Asian–American students and students from China, Japan, and Korea as well! The only exception has been a forward-looking law school, which has hired both a China- and a Japan-area trained legal scholar and is even considering the hiring of a third.

So we face a crisis in many universities where the social sciences are so enamored of theory or, like sociology, are so American-centric that we cannot count on them to support area studies. In such institutions therefore, it seems to me we have to have some direction that puts planning behind the platitudes of globalization. Globalization cannot mean just charting American market capitalism overseas and the spread of American pop culture. If presidents and provosts cannot do the job, then we need vice provosts and deans of international studies that can continue to globalize the curriculum to the degree that the world itself is globalized. Can we really afford to have a philosophy department in which ancient Greece and modern Europe are the only areas deemed worthy of study, or a sociology department in which the study of democracy, demography, aging, delinquency, or other social problems are confined to America or occasionally Western Europe? I certainly hope not.

IMPLICATIONS FOR MONGOLISTS

What does all this have to do with Mongol studies? Maybe nothing. But Mongol studies somehow fits within the area studies paradigm as American universities are currently formulated. And despite this conference, I hate to be the bearer of bad tidings, but I must say that things don't look too good, given what I have just sketched out.

First of all, size does matter. Cold War or not, Russia and China will continue to receive attention simply because of their size (both landmass and population) and their relative impact on the larger world. Mongolia is a sizable country but with a very small population.

Second, the United States government is not about to get out of the business of funding area studies for national security purposes. If you are not a threat, you are not likely to be funded. I am not sure what that implies for membership in the "Axis of Evil," and I'm not sure the Mongolian government wants to invite Osama bin Laden to take up residence in their country, but neither of those would hurt.

Third, there is not a large community of Mongol-Americans as there are Koreans, for example, to lobby the government or academic institutions to pay more attention to Mongolia. And fourth, there is not yet a Mongol foundation to provide funding for scholars, programs, and libraries to enhance the study of the country. The resurrection of Chinggis Khan is long overdue.

But the cloning of yourselves [i.e., conference participants] is probably the best thing that you can do. I think the best I can see for improving attention to Mongolia in the American academy is for you all to continue to work with existing area studies programs. Russian and Eastern European area studies programs are probably the best way to focus more upon the area of Mongolia, given its importance as a buffer zone or a nation of interaction between many people.

One of the most popular courses at the University of Kansas, where I taught for twenty-five years, was "Huns, Turks, and Mongols" taught by my colleague John Dardess, a historian, because everybody studying the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and East Asia was fascinated with the region that tied them all together. And it worked very well. That is, leveraging the geographical advantage seems to be the best bet for increasing attention towards Mongolia or Eurasia. That and continuing to organize superb

conferences like this one. "Mapping Mongolia," I hope, will indeed put Mongolia on the map.

NOTE

1. Unfortunately G. Cameron Hurst became ill after the conference and was not able to work on his contribution. Paula Sabloff transcribed and edited his talk from the video version. She kept the tone as close to his speech as possible. Those who know Cappy will be able to "hear" him speak as they read the chapter, although some text has been removed. The subtitles come from an outline he prepared for his talk. Special thanks to Paula Roberts, Associate Director for Administration, Center for East Asian Studies, who fact-checked the chapter. Most of the bracketed material comes from her.

2

"-Scaping" Mongolia

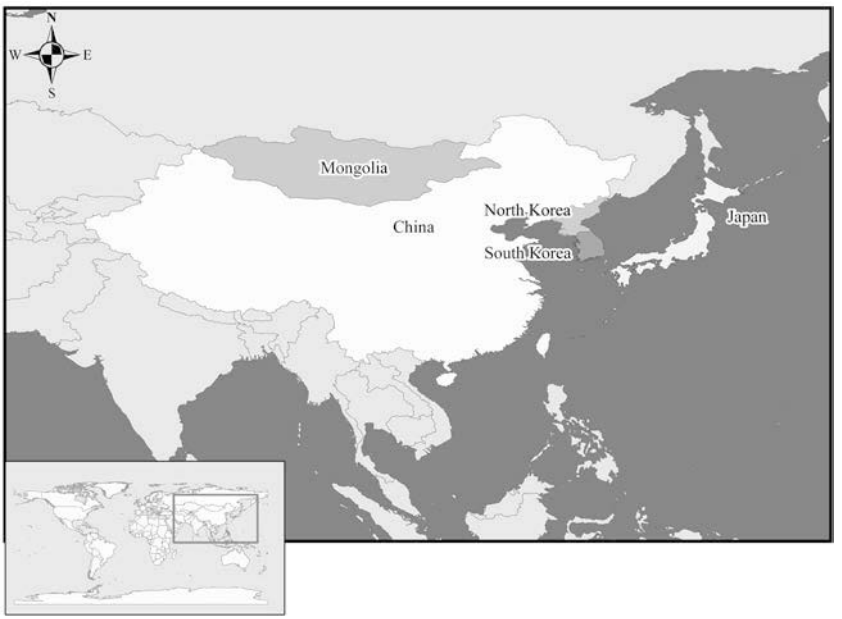
PAULA L.W. SABLOFF

Given that there are over 200 nation-states and territories in the world today, I think we would all agree that some form of grouping is necessary to make sense of so many. While there are several grouping paradigms in circulation today, a group of Mongol scholars and a Mongolian diplomat met at the Penn Museum in 2007 to consider the merits of two of them. The first is area studies as used in United States higher education institutions and international diplomacy. The other is "-scapes" of transnational flow, sometimes described as "landscapes of globalization" (Shumate, Bryant, and Monge 2005:74).[1] By discussing Mongolia from geologic time through the archaeological and historical records to the present day, we hoped to determine which grouping methodology is most useful for academia, diplomacy, or both.

The area studies methodology groups geographically contiguous nation-states by traits (e.g., religion, type of government, ideology, politics, and culture) and may be seen in Figures 2.1 and 2.2 (see DVD), which illustrate Mongolia's place in two such classifications. Developed in United States colleges and universities to meet the needs of Cold War diplomacy, area studies programs cross-cut the humanities and social sciences. The original goal was to advance knowledge of sensitive areas such as the Middle East and Soviet Union and thereby improve training for the diplomatic corps (Appadurai

1996:16). The unit of analysis is the nation-state, the component of international diplomacy. The regional divisions vary from university to university. Boston University, former home of the Central Eurasian Studies Society (CESS), has an East Asian Interdisciplinary Studies Center. Indiana University–Bloomington houses the Inner Asia and Uralic National Resource Center, the Department of Central Eurasian Studies, the East Asian Studies Center, and the Sinor Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies. In England, Cambridge University sponsors the Mongolia and Inner Asia Studies Unit (MIASU) in the Department of Social Anthropology (see Fig. 8.1). We can see that area groupings vary quite a bit. This variation is frequently the result of historical accident, determined by the interests of the faculty present when the centers are formed. Showing independence of spirit, these academic groupings rarely coincide with the United States State Department, which subsumes Mongolia under the "China desk."[2]

Area studies are still paramount in United States higher education institutions, largely because the government sponsors such programs there. G. Cameron Hurst presents a more detailed history and explains the continued utility of the area studies approach for scholars of Mongolia in Chapter 1.



2.1. (North)East Asia

In the 1990s when globalization and transnationalization studies took off, scholars wondered whether or not another methodology, network analysis, would better capture actual patterns of interaction. As part of this approach, Arjun Appadurai proposed that we study "-scapes." His idea was to focus network analysis on specific interaction patterns that transcend nation-states in the age of globalization. Interactions relevant to globalization and transnationalism are not only concrete social interactions but also abstract networks of ideas and media. Because Appadurai and other social scientists were predicting the diminution of nation-states' power under the new global conditions, researchers needed to be freed from geographic, or territorial, constraints to trace interactions around the globe (Smart and Smart 2003:266). Appadurai sees the world not as clusters of nation-states but rather as overlapping networks of individuals' social ties, technologies, and ideas. The different types of networks may overlap, but they are not necessarily coterminous and they are not limited to political boundaries. So, for example, material goods may move through Northeast Asian distribution networks while media images move from India to Africa, Mongolia, and the West (Appadurai 1996:32–33).

The purpose of this chapter is to trace the history of the "-scape" methodology and test its efficacy for understanding Mongolia's place in the world community. Of course the definition of Mongolia will change from geologic time to the present. The hope is that the "-scape" methodology will prevent countries such as Mongolia from being ignored, as they sometimes are in area studies. One can study Japan as a major player in the Pacific Rim area. But a "-scape" analysis of Japan would have to include Mongolia, too, for Japan is linked linguistically and economically to Mongolia (Japan is a major donor to Mongolia). Finally, we hope that this new processual way of examining a country will lead us to pose new questions, thereby boosting our theoretical and diplomatic understanding of other countries as well.

A BRIEF HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE "-SCAPE" CONCEPT

While people rightfully credit Appadurai with developing the "-scape" concept, Clifford Geertz (1973:21) may have stimulated Appadurai's thinking when he wrote: "The problem of how to get from a collection of ethnographic miniatures . . . —an assortment of remarks and anecdotes—to

wall-sized culturescapes of the nation, the epic, the continent, or the civilization is not so easily passed over with vague allusions to the virtues of concreteness and the down-to-earth mind."

In true Geertzian fashion, this sentence fixes a mental image of a landscape painting in the reader's mind. Writing before academia started studying globalization, Geertz's concern is how the researcher can abstract ethnographic detail to create an anthropological understanding of human behavior (Geertz' "thick description"). To carry the metaphor forward, Geertz wants to formulate a method whereby anthropologists convert various observed behaviors into a painting rather than a photograph. While a photograph is a snapshot capturing one view of an event (or people or scenery), a painting imbues the scene with the artist's understanding of that phenomenon.

Whether or not Geertz influenced Appadurai's thinking (consciously or subconsciously),[3] Appadurai rotates Geertz's landscape painting on its axis, converting it into a global map. The map resembles the ones found in the back of airline magazines, with the airports and multiple flight paths clearly visible. And just as these maps are specific to each airline, so Appadurai (1996:33–36) disaggregates peoples' connections, or networks, into themes or concepts. He names five:

- *Ethnoscape*: The spatial distribution of people of different ethnic identities who operate transnationally, e.g., tourists, merchants, laborers, immigrants, and refugees. Studies of culture must take into account the fact that these people behave according to the precepts of multiple cultures at any one time.
- *Technoscape*: The global flow and distribution of "mechanical and informational" technologies, such as electronic equipment. The technoscape "moves at high speeds across various kinds of previously impervious boundaries." National borders are practically irrelevant to the spread of technology as new technologies are transported through multiple means: university students carrying Christmas presents back to siblings in their home countries, researchers writing books or presenting at conferences, etc.
- *Financescape*: The rapid movement of global capital across national borders.
- *Mediascape*: The distribution of both the means of transmitting

information and the images themselves (Russian TV programs in Mongolia, or Bollywood and Rambo films in Africa). Such images are removed from cultural context as they travel the world.

- *Ideoscape*: The political ideologies usually controlled by governments to maintain state power. In their Enlightenment form (regarding human rights, democracy, and freedom), ideoscapes circle the globe with the backing of such multilateral organizations as the UN and USAID, among others.

The "-scapes" envisioned by Appadurai are not necessarily bounded by national territories. Indeed, people belonging to a particular ethnoscape, for example, may span the globe, thus breaking the area studies criterion of geographic contiguity. The Mongolian ethnoscape—the social network of Mongolian people—includes Mongols living in Mongolia, Inner Mongolia, the Russian Federation, South Korea, Germany, and the United States, among other places.

Like Google Earth, Appadurai's "-scapes" literally zoom over the earth, changing shape over time. Their distribution at any particular time may be actual—active social networks maintained through various means of communication such as face-to-face, the internet, or phone—or imaginary—people's *belief* that they are part of some larger international community. By tracing these paths and layering one "-scape" map over another, the researcher can trace the flow of ideas and behaviors beyond the usual territorial boundaries of anthropological or political analysis. Thus Appadurai has given us a tool to understand people's ideas and behaviors through the process of "-scape"-specific flows in the era of globalization.

Appadurai's ideas caught on in anthropology even before he published *Modernity at Large* in 1996. Anthropologists such as Nagengast (1994:119), Harrison (1995:48–49), and Kearney (1995:553) cite Appadurai's earlier works (1990, 1991), advocating the application of his perspective for the study of world problems such as violence, racism, and deterritorialization.

His vision remains influential in discussions of globalization (Smart and Smart 2003:267–68). Illouz and John (2003) incorporate the concept into their analysis of McDonald's in Israel, which they see as a lightning rod for the struggle between the state's religious ideology and a globalized liberal ideology. Pollock's (2005:22) study of American youth who act as human shields in Gaza concludes that these young people have developed a

transnational commitment "to an ideology of social equality, and this kind of globalization may be leading youth . . . to the sense of actually being somebody able to change the course of world events." The "-scape" concept has also been used in development anthropology (Hackenberg 2000:467) and archaeology (Hodder 2003).

Appadurai's paradigm has spread to other disciplines as well. Grugel, a political scientist, reviews several approaches to the globalization of democracy and concludes that the "ideoscape of democracy . . . [has] become the master term within political discourse" (2003:279). Education scholars Steiner-Khamsi and Stolpe (2006:65) use it to describe Amgalan's famous poster of the young Mongolian rider "bypassing capitalism" as a representation of the pre-1990 socialist "ideoscape." One of the more intriguing applications is Askegaard's (2005:7, 10–11) transformation of the ideoscape into a "business ideoscape," meaning any ideas in people's heads put there by the branding of consumer products.

APPLYING THE "-SCAPE" CONCEPT TO MONGOLIA

Is our analysis of Mongolia's connections to other nations enhanced by tracing the geographical distribution of Appadurai's particular networks? To answer this question, certain adaptations to the original concept must be made. The first is the appropriate unit of analysis. Appadurai devised the "-scape" concept to free anthropological analysis from bounded political territories. Therefore he envisions people as the appropriate unit of analysis, not nation-states or other polities. As people move through real space, their imaginations, or the internet, their networks also move over the earth. Therefore, their networks are frequently changing shape. Unlike Appadurai's use of individuals as the unit of analysis, nation-states do not move over the earth unless they are expanding or contracting through conquest or treaty. Nation-states are, by definition, political units bounded to discrete physical territories. Does it make sense, then, to try to apply the "-scape" concept to nation-states? Does visualizing a nation-state's network further our understanding of its relationships to or place among nations?

To test the feasibility of using the nation-state as a node in the international network, I have attempted to reconstruct Mongolia's postsocialist ideoscape. Appadurai defines ideoscapes as: "Concatenations of images . . . [that are] often directly political and frequently have to do with

the ideologies of states and the counterideologies of movements explicitly oriented to capturing state power or a piece of it. These ideoscapes are composed of elements of the Enlightenment worldview, which consists of a chain of ideas, terms, and images, including *freedom*, *welfare*, *rights*, *sovereignty*, *representation*, and the master term democracy" (1996:36).

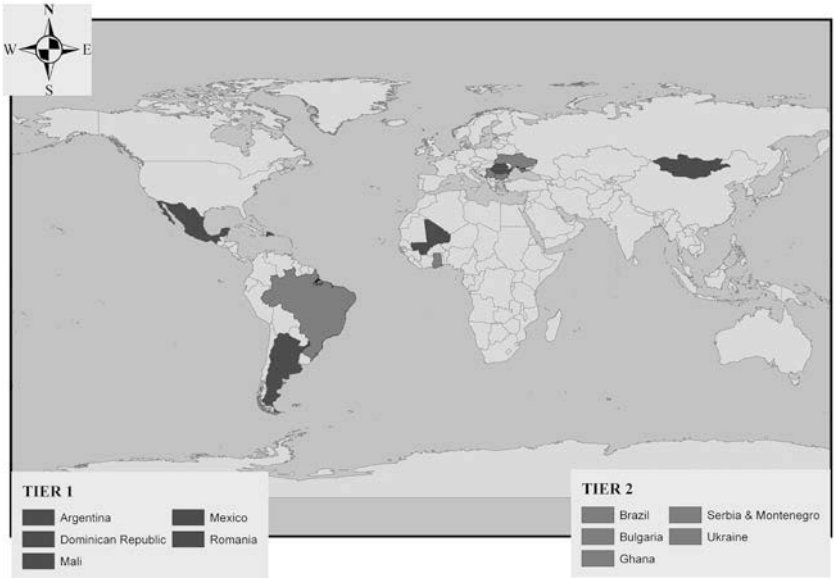
I quickly learned that ideoscapes are the most ethereal of the "-scapes." While Appadurai's first three "-scapes" (people, technological objects, and finance) are linked to the material world and therefore traceable, the last two (mediascapes and ideoscapes) seem to float in space. Because images and ideas travel over many paths—airwaves, phone connections, and print, for example—it is difficult to trace ideoscapes through space and plot them on a map.

How can we operationalize Mongolia's ideoscape? The first hurdle is to figure out how to apply Appadurai's methodology to an entire nation. I wrote to him, hoping he could provide examples of scholars who had built ideoscapes for individuals or nation-states, but he did not know of any (email communication of March 7, 2007). Nevertheless, I decided to try to construct a national ideoscape and test its utility. I started by building a map that was a compromise between an area studies conceptualization and one kind of ideoscape, Mongolia's political peers.

MONGOLIA'S POLITICAL PEERS

By looking for countries that share a basic ideology with Mongolia in the postsocialist era, I found I was building a list of nation-states with shared political traits. As area studies and political peers are both based on common traits or indicators, I would be changing only one parameter of the area studies maps (Figs. 2.1 and 2.2) to generate a map of political peers (Fig. 2.3). I would simply change from countries with geographic contiguity to countries with political similarity to Mongolia.

How could I determine Mongolia's political peers? Not having time to read all the political science and ethnographic reports on over 200 nation-states, I compared two major political indices to find whether or not the lists overlap. I know this is a crude measurement of ideological similarity,[4] but it is the only way to open the study to all nation-states. At any rate, I found that Mongolia appears in both indices.[5] The first is *Freedom House*. Founded in 1941 by Eleanor Roosevelt, Wendell Wilkie, and others, this nonpartisan



2.3. Mongolia's political peers. Tier 1 countries share Mongolia's Freedom House ratings for political rights and civil liberties, and they are within the confidence range of Mongolia's World Bank Governance Indicators. Tier 2 countries share 1 or more Freedom House ratings with Mongolia, and they are within the confidence range of Mongolia's World Bank Governance Indicators.

NGO (nongovernmental organization) supports democracy and freedom (political and human rights) through various programs. In 1972 it started publishing annual comparative assessments of "the state of political rights" around the world, nation by nation. The 2006 assessment used here weights 206 nations and territories by the state of the political rights and civil liberties given citizens. Analysts from the central office in New York and regional or country offices compile data from interviews, media reports, election results, etc., and rate the countries from 1 to 7, 1 being the most free or liberal and 7 the least. Mongolia scores 2 for both political rights and civil liberties (Freedom House 2007). Figure 2.3 includes countries that have the same scores (2) as Mongolia (the database is presented in Table 2.1).

The second index I used is the *World Bank Governance Indicators*. The World Bank Institute (WBI) conducts good governance and anticorruption programs in many countries. To support this mission, the WBI started gathering "governance indicators" on 213 countries in 1996. It publishes

Table 2.1. Mongolia's Political Peers

	FREEDOM HOUSE SCORES[1]		WORLD BANK GOVERNANCE INDICATORS[2]
	POLITICAL RIGHTS	CIVIL LIBERTIES	OVERALL PERCENTILE
Mongolia	2	2	51
	Tier 1 Nations		
Argentina	2	2	41
Dominican Republic	2	2	42
Mali	2	2	47
Mexico	2	2	49
Romania	2	2	53
	Tier 2 Nations		
Brazil	2	2	50
Bulgaria	1	2	59
Ghana	1	2	51
Serbia	3	2	35
Ukraine	3	2	38

1. Freedom House scores are for 2006 (Freedom House 2006).

2. World Bank Governance Indicators are for 2005 (World Bank 2006). The confidence range for Mongolia is 38–63. The countries listed fall within Mongolia's confidence range. The percentiles themselves are composite scores based on the World Bank's indicators: "voice/accountability," "political stability," "government effectiveness," "regulatory quality," "rule of law," and "corruption control."

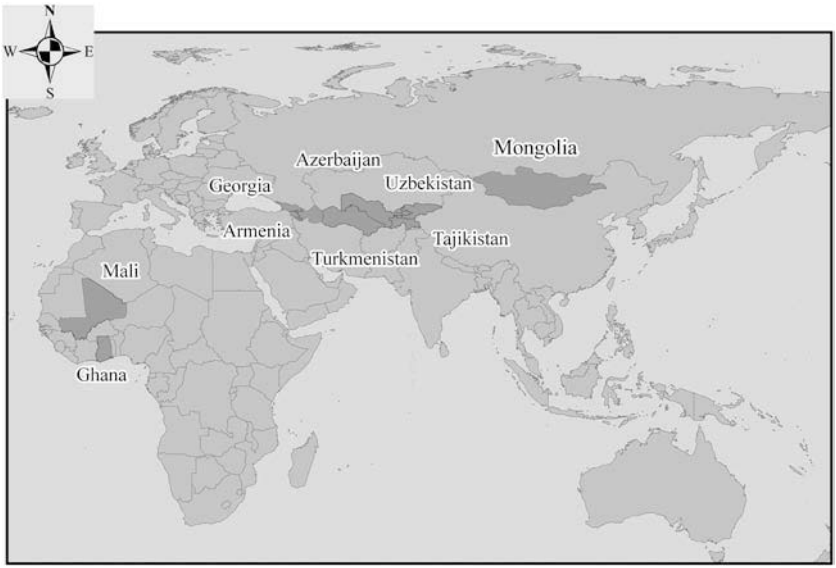
these findings annually. Analysts at the Institute aggregate 31 datasets from surveys of individuals, firms, think tanks, multilateral organizations, etc., worldwide. Based on the answers to questions concerning "voice" or accountability, political stability, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, and control of corruption, a team of analysts assigns each country an overall score and rank as well as individual scores for each indicator listed here. The scores also include a confidence range, or standard deviation of error. Mongolia's overall score is 51 with a confidence range of 38–63. I selected nation-states whose scores are within that confidence range as possible ideological peers for Mongolia.[6]

To be sure of my selections, I also checked the Freedom House and World Bank Governance Indicators rankings for Mongolia's neighboring nations (China, Japan, Kazakhstan, North Korea, South Korea, and the Russian Federation) and the nation-states that had been part of the Soviet Union. I followed this procedure for all maps.

By comparing Mongolia's scores with the other countries, I found two

tiers of political peers. In the first tier are Argentina, Dominican Republic, Mali, Mexico, and Romania. Although the last two, Mexico and Romania, share a socialist past with Mongolia and therefore would seem to be feasible peers, the first three countries have nothing to do with Mongolia's history or current connections in the world, to the best of my knowledge.

The second tier includes the former Soviet nations of Bulgaria, Serbia, and Ukraine, as well as Brazil and Ghana. Both tiers are marked on Figure 2.3, illustrating that Mongolia's political peers—the countries that are most similar in political practice and ideology—are often not contiguous to Mongolia or each other. In other words, Mongolia shares political traits, or political culture, more with some of the southern East European countries than its closest neighbors, the Central Asian countries. This finding is backed up by the UNDP-sponsored comparative study of Mongolia and Central Asian countries (Landman et al. 2006:9), which states, "The clearest democratic progress has been made in Mongolia, which has promulgated a democratic constitution, had regular competitive elections for all political offices, meaningful alternation in power, and has generally high levels of public support for democracy. Such advances have not been as evident in



2.4. Mongolia's economic peers. Countries with per capita GDP 0–$1,706 USD (2005 figures).

the other countries, where the least amount of progress toward democracy has been made in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan."

Because Mongolia's political peers are not its neighbors, the area studies approach cannot help us link Mongolia to its political, or ideological, peers. But although Figure 2.3 is a good start toward building Mongolia's ideoscape, it is inadequate for helping us understand Mongolia's true place in an international network of ideological/political peers. What do these countries have in common that is more relevant than neighboring countries? I built another map of Mongolia's economic peers, thinking it might yield some context for the political peer "-scape." But only two countries in the political peers map exhibit a per capita GDP within 1000USD of Mongolia, according to United Nations statistics (UN 2005) (see Fig. 2.4 and Table 2.2). Thus comparing political peers and economic peers tells us nothing. I tried another tack, preparing a map of some networks and flows of political culture and interaction rather than static traits. This map more closely approximates Appadurai's "-scape" concept.

Table 2.2. Mongolia's Economic Peers: Countries with Per Capita GDP 0-1,706USD (± 1,000USD of Mongolia's GDP, 2005)

	AVERAGE PER CAPITA GDP (USD)
Mongolia	706
Armenia	1,614
Azerbaijan	1,493
Georgia	1,450
Ghana	470
Kyrgystan	464
Mali	383
Tajikistan	360
Turkmenistan	1,205
Uzbekistan	466

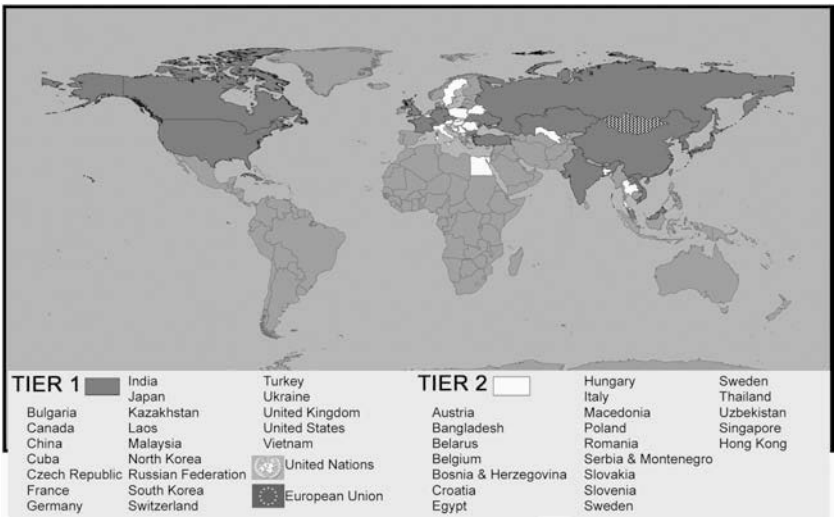
Source: United Nations 2005

MONGOLIA'S POLITICAL/IDEOLOGICAL NETWORK

I attempted to trace the possible ideological/political flows into Mongolia that would enable me to construct a map of nations and non-governmental organizations that might influence Mongolians' knowledge and attitudes toward governance, democracy, and politics. But my attempts at such a map are incomplete. Ideology flows through many sources including the media,

individuals, diplomatic relations, and participation in different international organizations. These would have to be aggregated to represent the national network, which is the unit of analysis under consideration. Yet I know I cannot recreate the media flows adequately. I have tried to think of the various ways ideas might flow into Mongolia. These include the television channels and programs I knew from living in Mongolia: a United States evangelical group maintained Eagle TV; Bollywood movies originally represented Indian thought in my early years of fieldwork but they were replaced with more sedate Indian programming by 2003. I certainly would never be able to learn what internet sites people were accessing or with whom people were corresponding via mail, email, or phone (there were an estimated 713,200 land phones and cell phones in Mongolia in 2005 [CIA]). However, I could tap into possible flows of diplomatic interaction by noting the nations that maintain an embassy or honorary consulate in Ulaanbaatar and the places where Mongolia maintains an embassy, honorary consulate, or permanent mission. Figure 2.5 presents a basic diplomatic network of Mongolia.

I could also learn some but not all of the organizations that sponsor programs in Mongolia. I have not been able to obtain an official list of international organizations—bilaterals (government-sponsored international



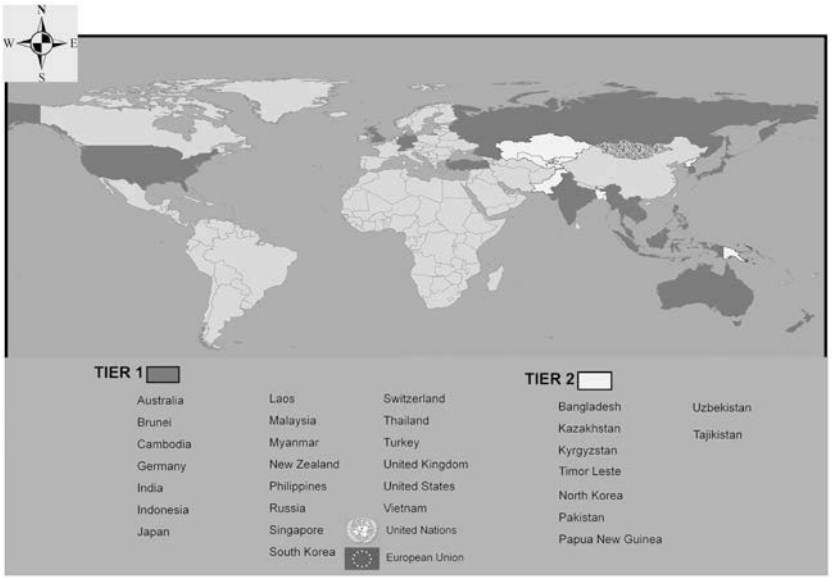
2.5. Mongolia's diplomatic network. Tier 1: Mongolia and the nation exchange embassies, missions, or consulates (includes UN and EU). Tier 2: Mongolia or the nation maintains an embassy, mission, or consulate in the other's country.

programs such as USAID), multilaterals (multinational organizations such as the UN and Asian Development Bank), and voluntary organizations (NGOs such as Save the Children or World Vision). I substituted a list of program sponsors provided by Ms. Davaadulam of UNDP and another one from the Directory of Development Organizations (2007). Knowing that both lists are incomplete, I added all the business cards of NGO workers I had collected from 1996 to 2006. It is not scientific, but it does increase the range of nations from which ideology flows into Mongolia.

I also surmised that Mongolians traveling abroad to conferences (for example, ASEAN or the United Nation's International Conference of New or Restored Democracies [ICNRD]) or programs (the Eisenhower Program in the United States) or serving as permanent representatives to international organizations (UN) are relaying ideological information back to Mongolia. For example, Burmaa Radnaa, Director of the Mongolian NGO Women for Social Progress, travels regularly to Southeast Asian countries, Europe, and the United States to attend conferences. I included only those organizations that have fewer than thirty member nations to prevent the entire map from being colored in. The member countries of some conferences and organizations may be found in Figure 2.5.

Before examining Figure 2.6, I need to make explicit that although all these foreign contacts help disseminate information and attitudes into many parts of the population, Mongolians' ideology is not totally imported. It also arises from Mongolian culture and history, having been formulated under tribal, feudal, and socialist regimes. And Mongolia is not just a recipient of foreign support; it also contributes to international affairs through disaster relief (for example, Mongolia sent blankets to Turkey after the 1999 earthquake and maintained troops in Iraq as part of President Bush's "Coalition of the Willing" starting in August, 2003). More important, it is an active participant in many international organizations. It has taken a leadership role in the ICNRD, for example. This is also reflected in Figure 2.6.

Figures 2.5 and 2.6 together give us a clearer picture of Mongolia's ideological connections than the area studies maps (Figs. 2.1 and 2.2) or the Political Peers map (Fig. 2.3). Unlike the Political Peers and Economic Peers maps, the Political Network map (Fig. 2.5) shows it is related to the Economic Network map (Fig. 2.6) and geographic proximity. That is, Figure 2.5 shows that Mongolia connects with its near neighbors (East Asia) and far neighbors (Southeast Asia) but also with other countries that share a basic



2.6. Political networks of Mongolia. Tier 1: Mongolia attends multiple international organizational meetings with this country (including the UN and EU). Tier 2: Mongolia attends at least one international organizational meeting with this country.

approach to governance (southern East Europe, the European Union, and the United States). It also demonstrates Mongolia's ties to multilaterals and voluntary organizations.

SOME CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Which methodology is more useful for academia and diplomacy? Clearly the area studies methodology is easier to visualize, for the major criterion of relatedness is geographic contiguity. This approach also makes sense if the unit of analysis remains nation-states, which are tied to physical territories. But the area studies grouping methodology marginalizes Mongolia and probably other nation-states as well. And it ignores the inclusion of noncontiguous nation-states as well as multilateral and voluntary organizations in Mongolia's political culture.

The "-scape" concept is time-consuming and amorphous when plotted on a world map. Still, it yields valuable relationships and processes not visible in the area studies approach. For example, the "-scape" methodology

allows for the central role of the United States, European Union, and United Nations in Mongolian ideology as these maintain multiple ideological links to Mongolia.

Is it valid to apply the "-scape" concept to a different unit of analysis from the one Appadurai devised the concept for? By using individuals as the units of analysis, Appadurai knew social scientists (or anyone else) could easily trace different networks outward from individuals (ego networks); anthropological fieldwork easily accommodates the collection of such data. But tracing the networks of an entire nation is cumbersome, and sometimes it is impossible to obtain such information. After all, one can ask several research participants who they email and one can observe them as they search the web, noting the various URLs they read. But one cannot learn the actual connections of all the citizens of a nation-state. That would be illegal.

There is another problem with applying the "-scape" methodology to nation-states. Appadurai developed the concept with the explicit idea of opening up people's transnational connections to other organizations, specifically multilateral and voluntary organizations (NGOs). He believed that nation-states are losing their significance in international affairs (1996:19), and some scholars in other fields agree (see Held, McGrew et al. 1999:27–28; Rodgers 2003:11–14).[7] Wouldn't using the concept for nation-states obviate his whole purpose? Is it even valid?

Despite the caveats mentioned above, I think so. While nation-states are not the only players in international relations and world politico-economic trends, they remain major players. Multilateral organizations are still based on nation-state membership. And when talking about ideology, the goal of international exchange is still to modify the political thinking and behavior of the citizenry and government in a particular nation-state. That is because citizenship, rights, and law enforcement are still mostly operating at the level of the nation-state (Kriesi 2003:196; Jargalsaikhany Enkhsaikhan, pers. comm. 2006).

Is the "-scape" methodology more useful to academia or diplomacy than the area studies approach? The beauty of the former is that organizations besides nation-states are brought into the analysis. A more sophisticated analysis than I have attempted here could give relative weight to the influence of particular nation-states, multilaterals, and voluntary organizations on the ideological processes operating in the country. This methodology also breaks the static traits, or taxonomy-building, methodology

inherent in area studies and focuses on processes—flows of information and interaction—instead.

Should the "-scape" methodology replace area studies in academia and diplomacy? Scholars in transnational studies continue to use nation-states as basic units because so many trends grow out of the interaction of persons within state boundaries (Rodgers 2003:14; Glick Schiller 2004:456–57). My initial response is that the "-scape" methodology should supplement area studies, not replace it.

We have been discussing the relative merits of two grouping methodologies. Ultimately the value of the different approaches will be determined not only by the thinking they stimulate but also by their relative usefulness for problem-solving. Clearly, both academia and diplomacy must engage in problem-solving so that particular intellectual and international issues may be resolved—or avoided.

NOTES

1. While this chapter concerns the "-scape" concept, it should be mentioned that another new approach is just entering social science. Stimulated by the geological and biological sciences and popularized by television news broadcasts and WiFi technology, the concept of "hot spots" was first proposed by J. Tuzo Wilson in 1963. According to him, "hot spot" theory identifies regions that sustain intense activity (volcanic eruptions) because of underlying, long-lasting concentrations of heat (USGS:1). The popularized version of the term identifies areas of the world that are experiencing intense politico-economic activity at any given moment. They are "hot." In our symposium, Fred Hiebert applied the concept to "cultural hot spots," or cultural configurations that might be in danger of disappearing. He then suggested the value of this concept to examining Mongolia's place in the world. He will be developing this idea in future publications.
2. There are two definitions of Eurasia: the entire landmass of Europe and Asia or the former Soviet countries. For this reason, I am not including a map of Eurasia.
3. Appadurai writes that ethnoscapes are analogous to "landscapes in visual art" in the introduction to his chapter, "Global Ethnoscapes" (1991:191–92).
4. A recent New York *Times* op-ed piece by Adam Michnik indicates how complex democratization among the former Soviet nations is (2007:A13).
5. I eliminated indices that do not include Mongolia. Also, I originally started by using Transparency International's corruption index, but because the other two indices incorporate it into theirs, I found that corruption was being given too much weight. The goal was to learn about rights and governance, not highlight corruption. Therefore I eliminated Transparency International's index from the study.
6. Because the scores/rankings of Freedom House and World Bank correlate closely with democratic goals, I assume the countries with similar scores share basic ideology.
7. The reader should bear in mind that other scholars disagree, believing that nation-states will maintain their centrality over time (Held, McGrew et al. 1999:47–49; Kriesi 2003:195).

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3

Mapping and the Headless State: Rethinking National Populist Concepts of Mongolia[1]

DAVID SNEATH

INTRODUCTION

How should we go about mapping Mongolia and establishing its contemporary and historical boundaries? And if we were to envisage Eurasia in terms of an "ethnoscape," how would we identify the "Mongol" parts of this distribution, and to what extent would these correspond to the nation-states that we are familiar with? Any discussion as to the geographical extent of a national or potentially national entity will reflect our concepts of a "people" and their relationship to territory. In approaching these questions then, we are bound to reflect upon the history of these concepts, and the political orders that identified persons and places as Mongol. This chapter argues that Benedict Anderson's ([1983] 1991) concept of the dynastic realm, which treats political society as a product of rulership, fits historical Mongolia better than the currently dominant notion of national populist thought, which conceives of *volk* (people)—culture and society—as autochthonous, grassroots entities to be thought of in terms of commonality and solidarity. For much of its history, the peoples and territories that might be described as Mongolian have not been subject to a single sovereign power or centralized state as it is commonly understood. Instead they were linked by a common aristocratic order—a "headless state." Historically, the

term Mongol only fully applied to members of the Borjigin aristocracy and extended to their subjects as part of the project of rulership (see Atwood 2004:507). The commonalities assumed of people sharing the same political identity (such as Monggol or Oirat) were very different from those of the era of national populism, in which they might be expected to share distinctive languages and phenomena described as culture and society. Mongolian territories, therefore, designated those ruled by Chinggisid Borjigin nobles, and groups of people and their lands might stop being Mongol if they renounced Chinggisid rule—as in the case of the Oirats. This reveals the political basis of the designation, a distributed aristocratic order that was state-like in many ways, but might or might not be unified under a single overlord.

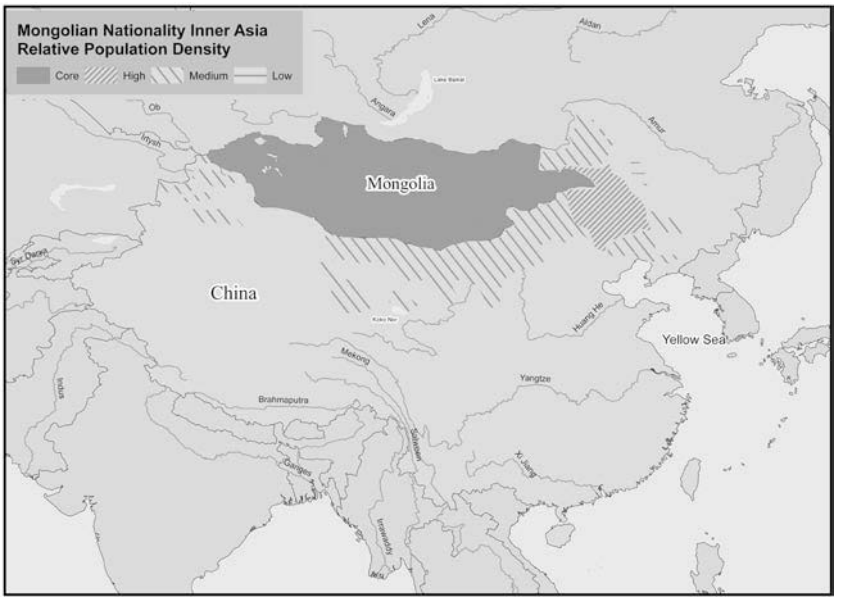
Mapping this headless state in different historical eras would be a challenging cartographical task, since its territories were often neither contiguous nor always unambiguous in their political affiliation. Since rulership generally applied to subject peoples more consistently than territories, a map of the people of this decentralized dynastic realm might have represented a better strategy than charting its lands. But in any case, this would have generated a fluid picture of political control rather than the largely stable boundaries and homogenous national spaces of the era of the nation-state.

The current distribution of populations described as Mongolian, then, reflects the legacy of the Borjigid project of rulership and the division of their subjects and territories between the Bogd Khan monarchy and the Chinese regimes that succeeded the Qing. The designation of any particular sets of persons and territories as Mongolian has always been a political practice, and it continues to be. Originally it indicated subjects of the Chinggisid project of rulership and later of the Mongolian nationalist one. Political processes have thrown up alternative sets of claims—such as the Pan-Mongolist movement of the early 20th century—and the discourse of ethnic identity might be used to generate new inclusive political categories. But the map of Mongolia can only ever reflect the implicit or explicit notion of political society held by its makers, and this is something that seems bound to contestation and change.

MAPPING MONGOLIA AND CONSTRUCTING AN ETHNOSCAPE

A short, constructivist answer to the question, what is the extent of Mongolia, would be, simply, the territory successfully claimed by a state bearing that name. Of course the recognition of these boundaries might be said to represent a political act in accepting the international status quo, but we need not express a view as to the legitimacy of this arrangement. This is now what we have by way of recognizably Mongolian territory, like it or not (see Fig. 3.1).

Alternatively, one could adopt the tacitly national populist project of attempting to trace the extent of territories inhabited by people who could be claimed to be Mongol. This would be to participate in constructing what, following Appadurai (1990), we might term the imagined world of a particular ethnoscape—a vision of people grouped into ethno-national categories, sometimes in motion, sometimes at rest in given territories. Appadurai is concerned with deterritorialization: the shifting, unstable nature of a human world in continuous movement. But in the dominant imagination of



3.1. Notional distribution of those with Mongolian nationality.

populations and territories, both stability and movement in this "-scape" are described in terms of ethno-national peoples, be they a "Mongolian minority" or an "Irish diaspora." And this conception of human collectivities has its roots in a broader mode of imagination that I describe as "national populist," not to dismiss it but to locate it in a philosophical tradition that sought to identify peoples as sets of persons sharing a (contested) set of characteristics. However, the more carefully one examines this process of identification, the more clearly it becomes an ideological project linked to the emergence of a particular school of political thought in the West. As Hobsbawm, Gellner, Anderson, and many others have shown, the national peoples of today were largely constructed in relatively recent historical time.

The history of Inner Asia shows nothing much like distinct peoples with discrete territories. As a result of projects of imperial and aristocratic rule over the last eight centuries, peoples and territories that might be claimed as Mongol are widely distributed over Inner Asia and indeed further abroad—from Yunan, for example, where there are officially recognized residents belonging to the Mongolian *minzu* (minority nationality), to Afghanistan where the Hazara claim Mongol descent, and Kalmykia on the Caspian steppe. As a result of more recent nationalist projects, a number of these territories and persons have some form of Mongol national status.

THE NOTION OF A NATIONAL PEOPLE

As Martin Thom (1990) points out, the concept of the nation that emerged in the 19th century was powerfully influenced by debates between monarchists and populists over whether a nation is constituted by its citizenry or its rulers.[2] The populist notion, propounded by the French philosopher Ernest Renan, lived on in the work of Fustel de Coulanges and his pupil Emile Durkheim; the notion of both nation and society that developed in 20th century social sciences reflects the victory of this populist politics over the *ancien regime*.

Durkheimian thought bears the imprint of Renan's nationalism, particularly his concern with solidarity and the collective conscience. One can almost see Durkheim's work as elaborating Renan's conception of the nation for use as a general theory of human aggregation. Here, the nation, or society, stood for the people or volk as a whole, with its own generalized culture, traditions, and form. In this populist imagination, human

aggregates were not simply the subjects of a ruler but social and cultural collectivities, and this was reflected in the emergence of various forms of folk studies. Sociology and particularly ethnology[3] took as their objects of study the cultural and the social as mass or at least collective phenomena, conceived of in the populist mode very different from the royalist historians of an earlier era.

But as Hobsbawm (1990) shows, in the age of populist national politics, the notion of shared kinship was an important element in the new ideologies of mass mobilization. The idiom of familial and fraternal relations, projected onto the "family writ large" of the nation, became a dominant theme. Those engaged in the intellectual and political project of nation construction made claims of national unity based on the idea of common descent. In the socially heterogeneous and divided region that was to become Albania, for example, Albanian nationalists such as Naim Frasheri (1846–1900) claimed, "All of us are only a single tribe, a single family; we are of one blood and one language" (cited in Hobsbawm 1990:53–54). In this historical imagination, tribes were the proto-national groups, the natural units or subunits of a given volk.

IMAGINING THE PROTO-NATION

The birth of Europe came to be envisaged as the *Völkerwanderung*—the "Wandering of Peoples." In this imagination, "peoples" appear as proto-nations, discrete populations in movement. This generated a sort of billiard ball model of history in which prenational tribal peoples moved as discrete integral units across Eurasia to collide with and displace each other (e.g., Davies 1997:215).

This vision of history has survived the numerous studies showing that "tribes" such as the Franks or Saxons were political projects including a wide and usually heterogeneous assembly of large and small noble houses and their subjects (Yorke 1990). When these Germanic peoples migrated into or invaded parts of the Roman Empire, the historical record shows the process to have been very different from the vision of discrete population units displacing each other. The Germanic elites frequently negotiated an authorized position within the imperial apparatus, typically as allied local rulers (*foederati)* who received a subsidy in return for the obligation to provide military support to Rome.

Any neat boundaries between native inhabitants and invading tribes quickly disappear. The iconic Alaric the Goth, for example, who sacked Rome in 410 C.E., was a Latin-speaking member of a Romanized Gothic aristocracy who commanded an army raised within the borders of the empire. The result of the Germanic invasions on Europe was not the replacement en masse of one human population with another, but the insertion of new aristocracies and their military followings into the existing order of the Roman provinces. Thus the Germanic tribes were not discrete bodies of kinsmen tracing common descent. They were, instead, the political entourages, and frequently the conquest projects, of noble families (Wolfram 1988:6). They displaced or intermarried with Roman elites, and the membership of their political formations was recruited from all sorts of sources, often from Roman subjects who preferred the new masters to their old ones. As Wolfram notes, "From the first appearance of the Gothic hordes on Roman soil, they attracted people from the native lower classes. At the time of the migration this attraction was a great advantage because it alleviated a constant shortage of manpower . . . Roman lower classes had been willing . . . since the third century: 'to become Goths' " (1988:8).

Just as in Europe, ruling elites in Inner Asia were frequently more mobile than their subjects. Historical accounts that might be interpreted as the migration of an entire people often refer to the movement of rulers and their entourages. In 105 C.E., for example, the northern Xiongnu were defeated and apparently "displaced" by the Xianbe who "occupied all the old territories of the Hsiung-nu [Xiongnu]" (Jagchid and Symons 1989:35). However, the Chinese sources make it clear that many of the inhabitants of the formerly Xiongnu territories took on the political identity of their new rulers. "The northern *Shan-yü* [Chanyu—emperor] took flight and the Hsien-pi [Xianbe] moved in and occupied his land. The remainder of the Hsiung-nu [Xiongnu] who did not go with him still numbered over 100,000 tents and all styled themselves Hsien-pi [Xianbe]" (Barfield 1989:87). The Xianbe as a political entity had come to occupy all the old territories of the Xiongnu, but if there ever was anything like a Xiongnu volk, it was not displaced by another such body.[4]

Like the Germanic invasions of the western Roman Empire or the Norman expansion in the Middle Ages, the Mongol conquests also introduced a military aristocracy in the subject territories. The empire expanded as its armies advanced, but the numbers of Mongols (whoever is meant by that

designation) involved were relatively small. Most Mongol armies numbered in the tens of thousands, the majority of whom were often drawn from subject allies such as Tatars, Khitans, and Türks. Although some troops were placed as garrisons in conquered territories (Allsen 1987:207), most were generally withdrawn after campaigns. After Batu's conquest of Russia and Eastern Europe in 1238–41, for example, the bulk of the Mongol army was withdrawn and the Golden Horde rapidly acquired a Turkic character. This was an imperial, not a colonial process. The aristocracy installed in this way was not a homogeneous ethnic stratum of Mongol tribesmen superimposed upon the subject peoples, but noble Mongol families such as the Chinggisid "white bone" houses that continued to rule the Kazakhs until Tsarist times. Far from becoming an imperial elite, the Mongol commoners often found themselves entirely impoverished by the process of conquest, so that some ended up having to sell their wives and children into slavery to meet the military and other obligations owed to their lords (Atwood 2004:506; Khazanov 1983:247).

Sociological terms developed in the age of popular nationalism are a poor guide to understanding the history of Eurasia. Anderson's dynastic realm seems to describe the situation better:

> These days it is perhaps difficult to put oneself emphatically into a world in which the dynastic realm appeared for most men as the only imaginable "political" system. For in fundamental ways, "serious" monarchy lies transverse to all modern conceptions of political life. Kingship organizes everything around a high center. Its legitimacy derives from divinity, not from population, who, after all, are subjects, not citizens. In the modern conception, state sovereignty is fully, flatly and evenly operated over each square centimetre of a legally demarcated territory. But in the older imagining, where states were defined by centers, borders were porous and indistinct, and sovereignties faded imperceptibly into one another. Hence, paradoxically enough, the ease with which premodern empires and kingdoms were able to sustain their rule over immensely heterogeneous, and often not even contiguous, populations for long periods of time. ([1983] 1991:19)

As Leach notes (1982:41), societies are political units, in practice, and they are more clearly a product of common rulers than common cultures.

And Gellner points out that the notion that people are bound to live in units defined by shared culture is a relatively recent one. "Culturally plural societies often worked well in the past: so well, in fact, that cultural plurality was sometimes invented where it was previously lacking" (1983:55). But in anthropology, the political construction of the social has often been backgrounded by the powerful heritage of classical ethnology, which assumed some more or less homogenous cultural and social entity as its object of study (the ethnos) and tended to regard peoples as cultural wholes.

RULERSHIP AND THE PRODUCTION OF PEOPLES

The nation-state is conventionally contrasted to the empire. The former is seen as a unitary political entity in which cultural forms have been made relatively uniform and largely correspond to the jurisdiction of the state (Gellner 1983), whereas the latter is seen as a political assemblage, with one or more subject societies under the rule of a central power.[5] But when we dispense with the fiction of the tribe as a proto-national ethnic unit, it becomes clear that polities such as the Yikh Monggol Ulus were in some sense imperial projects from their earliest days. The Mongol tribe was micro-imperial even as it was formed by the various nobles who swore fealty to Chinggis Khan in 1206 (see Skrynnikova 2006:88). The problem is that in the age of national populism, empires tended to be conceived of as conglomerates of volk, distinctive peoples pictured in the nationalist mold. As a result, translators of the *Secret History of the Mongols* (Cleaves 1982) have generally translated the word *ulus* as "people" because it was used for political units that included populations. But the description of collective identities in the *Secret History* does not match the ethno-national notion of peoples very well. The term *kitad*, for example, is used for the Jin dynasty and its subjects (*kitad irgen*), and it encompasses in one category people who were culturally and linguistically diverse and would now be described as Khitan, Chinese, and Jürchen (de Rachewiltz 2004:889). Since they were all subjects of the Jin dynasty that had replaced the Khitan ulus, they were all included in the term *kitad*. The term Monggol ulus is used for a set of noble families and their subjects.[6] But there was no preexisting ethnonym for the people included in the new state, although it is clear that there was some notion of their distinctiveness since it was also called "the *ulus* of the felt walled tents" (Cleaves 1982, §202), indicating the common use of yurt (*ger*) dwellings.

The early uses of the term Monggol only appear confusing if one is looking for a people or tribe in the traditional sense. The *Secret History* §52 records that Ambagai Qan ruled over *qamug Monggol,* which means "all the Mongols" (de Rachewiltz 2004:296), and in this context the Mongols are clearly distinct from all their rival steppe powers such as the Kereyid, Tatar, Merkid, and Naiman. But after the establishment of Chinggis Khan's state, the Monggol ulus included almost all of the subjugated steppe peoples; but it is improbable that the Monggol ulus absorbed these other peoples in only a few years. Some suggested that the term Qamag Mongol Ulus must have been the formal name of the earlier, smaller state ruled by Ambagai Qan, although there seems to be no evidence for this (de Rachewiltz 2004:296). But the recognition of aristocracy allows us to see that since the term Monggol indicated a set of ruling houses rather than a distinctive volk, their ulus could bear their name whether it was large or small, just as we might use the term Norman to designate both the great noble houses of medieval western Europe and the realms they ruled. Indeed in the Chinggisid era, the term ulus (often translated as "people" or "nation") meant something very much like patrimony, domain, or appanage (de Rachewiltz 2004:758). Jackson, for example, defines it as a "complex of herds, grazing-grounds and peoples granted to a Mongol prince; used especially of the larger territorial units held by Chinggis Khan's sons and his descendants" (2005:367). A Monggol ulus, then, was defined by the identity of its rulers, not some form of ethnic or tribal identity among its subjects.

It has been argued that the meaning of the term ulus changed from people when the Mongols were but simple nomads to the appanages of princely rulers when they became conquerors in the years of empire (de Rachewiltz 2004:758). So when the *Secret History* records that To'oril Khan told Temujin, "I will reunite for you your divided *ulus*" (§104), it was translated as "people" (e.g., Cleaves 1982:38; de Rachewiltz 2004:34) because it was supposed to be in the pre-state era. But when Ögödei Qaghan admits that one of his mistakes was to have had "the girls of my uncle's Odchigin's *ulus* brought to me" (§281), it is understood to mean a patrimonial domain (de Rachewiltz 2004:217). But it seems more logical to assume that the authors and readers of the *Secret History* understood the term ulus in a consistent way throughout the text and that it referred to a domain including people, land, and property defined by the rule of a lord.[7] As bodies of people required rulers, so Bodonchar, the ancestor of the Mongol nobility,

was recorded as saying, "it is right for a body to have a head, and for a coat to have a collar" (*Secret History §33*) when he encounters people who have no aristocracy, before promptly subjugating them.

A key aspect of imperial or royal power was the right to reorder domains, to apportion peoples and territories to subordinates and descendants as appanages. This was done by the Türk Qahgans, the Naiman Khan Inancha Bilge Khan in the late 12th century (Atwood 2004:397), and Qabul Qa'an when creating the Jurkin *obog,* and by many Chinggisid rulers. Far from being an unusual practice springing from the "distorting effects" of nomads conquering sedentary civilizations, this administrative constitution of units seems to have been an enduring feature of steppe life; indeed, the units created in this way were reproduced independent of effective imperial overlordship, as in the case of the Oirat and the largely independent Borjigin Mongol domains of the pre-Qing period. As Atwood writes, "After the fall of the Mongol Empire, appanage systems continued to divide the Mongols into districts ruled by hereditary noblemen. The units in such systems were called *tümen* and *otog* under the Northern Yuan dynasty (1368–1634), ulus or *anggi* under the Oirats and Züngars, and banners (*khoshuu*) under the Qing dynasty (1636–1912). While the systems varied, they all combined the idea of patrimonial rule and the union of pasture and people" (2004:19).

That is not to say that there was no concept of distinctive Monggol identity. From the time of the Chinggisid empire onwards, the domains of Mongol rulers formed a meaningful political category, and there is mention of *qamug Monggoljin keleten,* "all people of the Mongol tongue," in an early 14th century text (de Rachewiltz 2004:296). For administrative reasons, subjects of the empire were placed in a series of political categories that distinguished Mongols from others. Under the Yuan, for example, there were four ranked administrative categories: first Mongols, then Western and Central Asians, then Northern Chinese, and lastly Southern Chinese. But these were political as much as ethnic categories, largely concerned with eligibility of appointment to government office and based on the polities absorbed into the Mongol Empire. Although the Khitans probably spoke a Mongolic language, for example, they were placed in the Northern Chinese category rather than in, or next to, that of the Mongols.

Rather than primordial ethnic peoples, we can see structures of power that formed and shaped social fields, creating boundaries and applying designations. The most enormous of these projects—the Yeke Monggol Ulus

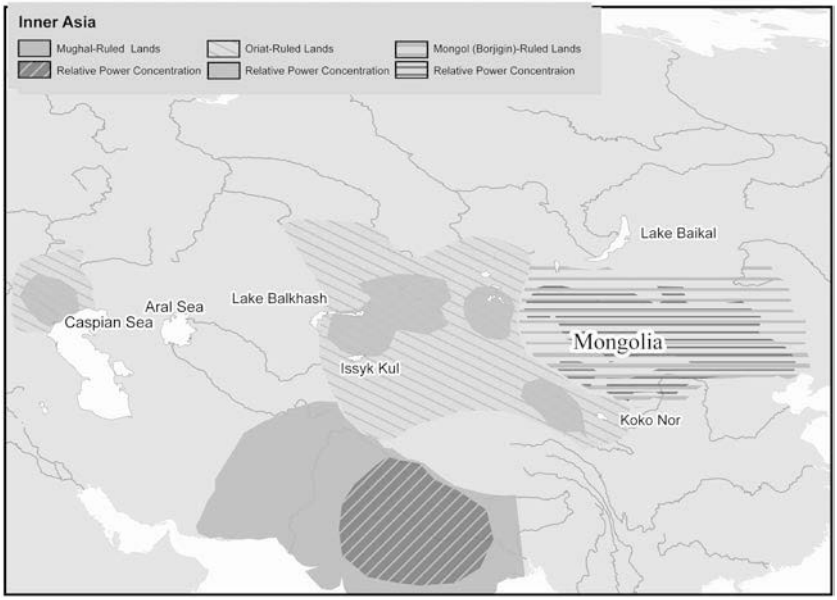
of Chinggis Khan—left us with the term Mongol. The breakup of the empire did not do away with the term Mongol because the Borjigid aristocracies that it had established retained it, and they did not require a centralized state structure to continue to rule their local domains. This lack of centralization has tended to be mistaken for tribalism—it seemed as if in the absence of the state the nomads must organize themselves through kinship structures and preserve their tribal Mongol identity (Sneath 2007).

But, rooted as it is in evolutionist colonial-era thought, the discourse of tribe has generated highly misleading readings of the history of Inner Asia and has tended to obscure the importance of aristocratic power in the recorded history of the steppes. If we look more carefully, however, we can find clear evidence for a sort of headless state—that is, an aristocratic order that may or may not be united under a single overlord but that included many of the characteristics generally associated with a state.

THE HEADLESS STATE

On September 20, 1640, a great assembly was held in western Mongolia. It was attended by the most powerful lords of the eastern Eurasian steppes—the Zasagtu and Tüshiyetü khans of the Khalkha (Outer Mongolia); the Oirat rulers Erdeni Baatur Khung-taiji, Khoo-örlög Taishi, and Güüshi Khan; along with some twenty other senior nobles. They were meeting to form a new "state" (*törö*) and to draw up its code of laws. But although it was described using the word for a state, the political formation they created would seem impossible in terms of the Weberian model of the ideatypical bureaucratic state. It had laws, rulers, and subjects, but it was to have no capital, no center, and no sovereign. It was a distributed, headless state formed by independent nobles (and their subjects) who shared an aristocratic social order and a common law code, the Monggol-Oirad tsaaji (see Fig. 3.2).

The standard historical narrative has represented both Oirat and Mongol society of the time as tribal (e.g., Soucek 2000:170). This is understandable as there was no identifiable imperial state ruling their territories at that time. There had been little by way of real political centralization among the Mongol princes since the collapse of the Yuan Dynasty at the end of the 14th century. In the 16th century, the Khalkha Mongol territory was divided among three dynasties: the Tüshiyetü Khans, the Zasagtu Khans in



3.2. Mongol-Oirat and Mughal realms in the 17th century. Darker tones indicate relative concentrations of power.

the west, and the Setsen Khans in the east. At this time the Oirat rulers controlled much of western Mongolia and what is now northern Xinjiang, and the clashes between them and the Chinggisid Mongol princes continued. But, perhaps spurred on by the growing power of the Manchus in the east, the leading Mongol and Oirat lords had decided that it was time to put aside old grievances and form a new political union. The confederation endured for forty-eight years before fracturing as war broke out between the Oirat Galdan Khan and the Khalkha Tüshiyetü Khan Chakhundorji, which led to Galdan's 1688 invasion of Mongolia.

The Borjigid Mongols of Khalkha swore fealty to the Qing in 1691 and replaced the Mongol-Oirat code with a set of similar laws, the Khalkha Jirum, in 1709. But the Oirats continued to use the 1640 law code, which remained in force among the Volga Kalmyks until 1892 when the tsarist colonial government abolished the nobility's authority (Atwood 2004:389). Riasanovsky (1965[1937]:47) notes that it was the most widely applied of Mongol laws, apart perhaps from those of Chinggis Khan himself, for which we have only fragmentary records.

The Mongol-Oirat laws of 1640 closely resemble an earlier, 16th century code made by Altan Khan and are part of a tradition of state that stretches back to the Chinggisid era, if not earlier. It is the closest thing we have to what would be conventionally described as tribal law. But the political entity that was governed by this law was not an empire in the conventional sense, and it was certainly nothing like a centralized state. The territory of the union was not even contiguous, for it included the domains of Khoo-örlög Taishi on the Volga some 3,000 km to the west, which later became the Kalmyk Khanate.

It is hardly surprising that the Monggol-Oirad tsaaji has generally been treated as a treaty rather than the charter of a new state, since it matched so few of the criteria of the state as it is usually conceived. But the union described itself unambiguously as törö which Humphrey and Hürelbaatar (2006) describe in this period as meaning "state," "sovereignty," or "government," indicating a concrete political formation as well as a principle of rulership. The Mongol-Oirat union can be described as a confederation, not the tribal confederation of Morgan, but a joint project of rulership by powerful aristocrats. Core features of the state as conceived of in 19th century social science are present: codified law, a hierarchy of political offices, stratification and property in the form of institutionalized rights over both resources and people. The provisions of the law stipulate punishments for various offences, usually livestock fines in units of nine and five. But for the aristocracy these fines included subject households, which were listed along with other possessions so that they are indistinguishable from property.

The code provides evidence of the entire apparatus of state other than centralized authority; it mentions courts (*örgüge*), judges (*jarguchin*), military conscription, and a hierarchy of officials. There were distinctions within the nobility and a series of subaltern ranks, and this hierarchy and administrative structure were common to both Mongol- (i.e., Chinggisid) and Oirat-ruled domains. The most senior figures were the "great lords" and "sons-in-law" and grouped with them in this stratum were the "office-holding" nobles, the *yamutu noyad*. The term *yam* indicates a senior office of state and was later used for the ministries of government. At this time, however, it may be that the office referred to membership in a senior council (Atwood 2006:216) or may have simply been the rulership of the largest administrative divisions, the ulus or anggi (noble appanages), which were

themselves divided into otogs—the peoples and pastures allocated to a noble (Dylykova 1981:117), usually of a few thousand households in size and described by Atwood as "the basic unit of Mongol socio-political life" (2004:430). They seem almost identical to the banner unit which is also mentioned at this time and later became the basic Mongol administrative unit under the Qing.[8] The rulers of these otogs may also have counted as office-holding nobles, or they may have been categorized in the next class down, the "lesser nobles" (*baga noyad*) and their sons-in-law (*tabunang*). All of these lords seem to have belonged to the ruling "bones"—Borjigin in the case of the Mongols and the Choros, Galwas and other non-Chinggisid noble houses in the case of the Oirat. They raised taxes, levied military forces, and enforced the law in their own domains. Beneath them there were a series of ranked officials who administered the common subjects on their lord's behalf. The otog officials (*tüshimed*, *erkheten*) ruled subjects grouped into units of forty households (*döchin*), headed by an official named a *demchi*, and these were divided into twenties (*khori*) headed by a *shülengge*, and these into groups of ten households, with a head (Buyanöljei and Ge 2000:256). Subjects were further classified into three ranks: the good, middle, and base; slaves (*bo'ol*) had a separate legal status.

This form of regulation penetrated every level of social life, including all manner of personal conduct.[9] Fines were stipulated for failure to report a theft, failing to pay a court fee, impersonating an official, insulting a social superior, and inappropriately placing wood in a domestic fire. The regulations extended to the size of dowries and wedding feasts for people of different ranks, the age of marriageable girls, and the number of marriages that should take place within the administrative units of forty households each year.

This set of laws, so similar to other Mongol codes that survive, cannot be seen as somehow exceptional. It shows that almost all the operations of the state could take place in local domains ruled by lords with or without an imperial state center. If we set out to map this headless state, we would have to include the areas ruled by all the signatories of the code—almost all of what is now Mongolia; much of Inner Mongolia; parts of Qinghai, Xinjiang, and Gansu; and far to the west the outlying region of the Caspian steppe which later became Kalmykia.

If the confederation had not broken up, perhaps we would today be engaged in the project of mapping Mongol-Oiradia. But history took a

different course, and since the Borjigid allied with the Qing who destroyed the heart of Oirat power, the Züngar Khanate, there is really only the Kalmyk state to remember the Oirats by, since most of the other Khoshuud were absorbed back into the Mongol category in Qing times.

CONSTRUCTING THE MONGOL NATION

The contemporary concepts of the Mongol people and nation emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As noted above, the term ulus had originally indicated the patrimonial domain of a Mongol lord. Over time, political, cultural, and linguistic distinctions may have generated collective identities that resembled the notion of peoples in some ways. As Atwood notes (1994:8), Mongol chronicles of the 17th century speak of ulus in the sense of a realm, associating it with both people and territory,[10] and Elverskog (2006:17) argues that in 16th and 17th century documents, ulus is used to mean a particular community under a given state. However, the ulus was so clearly a political entity, regularly used to translate the Chinese *guo* (dynasty), for example, that another term was needed to express the notion of the Mongols as a volk—a national people.

The term that was first taken up by early 20th century Mongolian nationalists was *Monggol obogtan*—meaning those of the Mongol obogs (houses, families). This term appears in 17th century texts such as the Altan Tobchi where it is used to describe the original establishment of the Mongol line. "Börte-chino . . . taking a girl called Goa Maral who had no husband, became the *Monggol obogtan*" (Munkh-Erdene 2006:58). In the new discourse of Mongolian nationalism that emerged in the 20th century, these historical references to common origins were used to build the notion of common "blood, race, descent, and the mysteries and mystifications of biological alikeness," the basic features that Geertz defines as central to the notion of nation or nationality (2000:231, cited in Munkh-Erdene 2006:59).

The term obogtan, although useful for establishing the notion of common Mongol identity, did not provide a very good match for the concept of nationality itself, and the Mongolian political elites of the early 20th century had to fashion the current notion out of a number of terms such as *ugsaa* (origin, descent), *izagur* (root, origin), and *ündüsü* (root, base). As Atwood (1994:19–20) points out, up until this point these terms were used primarily to describe the legitimate ancestry of the Mongol nobility.[11] *Izagurtan*, for

example, was another term for the aristocracy, since having good origins indicated noble birth.

When casting back for records of common ethnic origin, then, the Mongolian nationalists could only find accounts of ruling lineages. As Munkh-Erdene notes, "the Mongols' 'origin myths' were tied to the Chinggisid royal lineage that had established the Mongolian state and had been ruling the Mongols ever since" (2006:62). Historical Mongol texts included a great deal of genealogical information, but it almost all concerned the nobility, unsurprisingly perhaps, since for aristocrats descent was the basis for their position.

When it came to the "original ancestor," the texts were concerned with the origins of the rulers, not the subjects. So the *Dai Yuwan Ulus-un bichig* (Record of the Great Yuan *Ulus*), for example, translated into Mongolian from Manchu around 1640–44, states that "The ancestor of the Mongol people is Bodanchir"—i.e., Bodonchar, the ancestor of the Borjigin aristocracy. Indeed the very notion of Monggol was in many ways defined by Borjigin rule. Mongol chronicles such as the *Altan Khürdün Mingghan Khegesütü* written around 1739 describe the Oirat nobility's break with the Chinggisid rulers in the late 14th century as the separation of the Oirat's *ug ündüsün* (lineage/root) from the Monggol. After this political act, the Oirat are written of as distinct from the Mongols, although they continue to be included among those speaking Mongolian languages (*Monggol kheleten*).

Being properly Mongol, then, meant to be properly ruled by Borjigid. The concepts of Borjigin and Mongol were so strongly connected that sometimes the terms are intertwined—as in the title of the 1732 chronicle written by the Kharchin nobleman Lomi, the *Monggol-Borjigid obog-un teükhe* (History of the House of the Mongol-Borjigid). As Atwood puts it, "[Chinggis Khan's] descendants, the *Taiji* class, were the only full members of the Mongolian community" (2004:507).

Mongol commoners did not share common descent with the Borjigid, nor could they even do so in theory since descent from Bodonchar was the basis of aristocratic status. Grigorii Potanin, a Russian explorer who traveled through Mongolia in 1876–77, recorded a number of origin myths of Mongol commoners, and these were nothing like those of the nobility (Munkh-Erdene 2006:69) but involved mythical creatures who were generally not even human. But since the Monggol ulus was defined by its rulers rather than its subjects, Bodonchar could be spoken of synecdochically as

the ancestor of all the Mongols, although it transpires that he was, more precisely, only the ancestor of the Borjigin nobility. Since the notion of the Mongols as a unity was inseparable from the project and personnel of rulership, this presented no contradiction. As Munkh-Erdene shows, "the Mongolian nobility with its Chinggisid legitimacy was the symbol of Mongolian statehood . . . the elite tradition was a 'national' tradition" (2006:74). Like *yasu* (bone), the word *ündüsü* that was used to generate the term for nationality (*ündüsüten*) was another term indicating noble lineage. The "lineage of the Mongols," then, really only meant the aristocracy. Thus in 1912, for example, the ruling princes of Ulanchab wrote a letter protesting the new Chinese Republic's plan to incorporate Mongolian regions into China. They wrote "if [we Mongols] become the citizens [*irgen*] of the Chinese Republic [*zhong hua irgen ulus*], and the five races [*töröl*] unite and Mongol can no longer be our distinct name, then the bone-lineage/nationality [*yasu ündüsü*] of the Mongols [*Monggol khümün-ü*], born from Heaven in ancient times, will probably be obliterated" (Munkh-Erdene 2006:85–86).

But this aristocratic political discourse was fast being transformed by the new ideologies of ethnic nationalism. One of the principle architects of the Mongolian nationalist lexicon was Tsyben Zhamtsarano, a Buriat nationalist and ethnographer trained at St. Petersburg University, who became a powerful influence on the young Mongolian People's Republic after it was established. Zhamtsarano translated European notions of nationhood into a Mongolian context. He identified the different Mongol polities as tribes, i.e., as *Mongolskie plemena* in Russian. These were at a pre-national stage, but "spoke the various dialects of the Mongolian language and were dispersed throughout the vast land of Russia, China and Tibet, sometimes, called *Monggol khelten* and *Monggol tuurgatan*" (Munkh-Erdene 2006:90). He called for the establishment of a Mongol nation, arguing that all new states (*ulus törü*) were formed by a people sharing a common language (*khele*), ancestry (*ijagur*), religion (*shashin*), customs (*yosu*), teachings (*surtal*), and territory (*orun*) (Atwood 1994:23).

The Mongolian independence movement constructed a new discourse of popular nationalism in which the shared descent of the Chinggisid lineage was used as the template for the concept of the Mongolian nationality. As Gellner notes "Nationalism is, essentially, the general imposition of a high culture on society" (1983:57), and in this case high culture included the tracing of descent back to Bodonchar (Munkh-Erdene 2006:91). Kinship was

extended downwards to embrace the commoners, and in the new discourse the subjects of the Borjigin lordly lineage became themselves members of a political category conceived of as a sort of lineage-nationality—not so much a new imagined community since the aristocratic notion of the Mongol polity already existed, but a political community imagined in a new way—as a body with shared kin origins.

SOVIET TRANSFIGURATIONS

The notion of the polity, the ulus, was transformed during the Soviet period so that it resembled the Soviet version of the nation-state. Mongolian constitutions define the ulus in a way that is reminiscent of Stalin's notion of a nation. It had a territory and a *tör*—political leadership or state proper. But a nation also required a national people, an equivalent for the Russian *narod*. The first Mongolian term used was *arad*, an old term that meant "commoner," which had rather too specific a position in the old political order. So the compound term *arad tümen* was devised, meaning something like "myriad commoners," to reflect the notion of the whole people, the masses required by the new political order. This was a new concept, since the aristocratic political discourse had not constructed the polity with reference to a single general people. Subjects had appeared in discrete categories. There were the nobility (*taijnar* and *yazguurtan*), the *shar* (members of the Buddhist monastic establishments), and the *khar* (secular commoners or arad). Political statements were constructed with respect to these categories rather than to a general and inclusive national people. As late as 1934, when a politically active senior lama sought to address the Mongolians of Inner Mongolia, he issued four separate pamphlets addressed to the *taijnar* (princes), the lamas, the youth, and the people (commoners) respectively.[12]

The reconceptualization of the Mongols did not stop at the national level. As Bulag (1998:31–37) shows, the creation of ethnicity was another aspect of the socialist nation-building process. A set of Mongol terms was chosen to translate the key elements of Soviet theory on the historical stages of ethnic communities. The Russian *rod* (clan) was translated as *obog*, *plemya* (tribe) as *aimag*, *narodnost* (ethnic group/nationality) as *yastan,* and *natsiya* (nation) as *ündesten*. These terms were organized according to the Marxist version of the 19th century evolutionary scheme by which tribes were made up of clans. In addition, however, following the USSR in which the

state citizenry was made up of peoples of many ethnic groups or nationalities, Mongols were registered as members of ethnic or national minority groups—yastan.[13] This formed part of a wider vision by which "backward peoples would be upgraded, so as to merge with more progressive nationalities to become a Soviet nation" (Bulag 1998:32). These became official identities and the internal passports of citizens of the MPR recorded their yastan, such as Khalkha, Buriat, Barga, Torguud, or Zakhchin.

Like the tribe, the concept of ethnic group is rooted in the notion of kinship and common descent (Hobsbawm 1990:63). But it is very clear that these ethnic groups were not autochthonous kinship communities but politically defined categories that had been historically formed by rulers. The Zakhachin (Borderers), for example, of southern Khovd Province, originated as a Zünghar otog (administrative division) formed from a diverse set of subjects charged with the duty of acting as border wardens. After their lord surrendered to the Qing, they were formed into a banner and assigned duties to support the Manchu *amban* at Khovd (Atwood 2004:617). They remained administratively distinct and in the Soviet area were judged to be sufficiently distinct to be labelled a yastan. In this case, the relatively late incorporation of former Zünghar subjects by the Qing has left us with historical records that make clear the administrative acts by which groups of people acquired distinctive political identities that were later used as grounds for their identification as ethnic groups. But the conquest and relocation of populations date from the earliest historical times in Inner Asia. In any era the political landscape would represent the cumulative product of countless comparable acts of designation and allocation, great and small. It is hard to imagine self-structuring autochthonous kinship groups surviving this process intact, even if they had ever existed.

CONCLUSION

By way of a thought experiment, let us imagine that Normandy had survived as an independent polity long enough for its elites to form a state of that name in the 20th century. It would be rather clear to us that the boundaries of the Norman nation would be a matter of political happenstance. We are familiar with the notion that in many important respects, the term "Norman" only properly refers to the aristocracy descended from Rollo and his Norse companions, but the term could also be used to mean

their subjects—as in "the Norman army." The idea of an ancient and unitary Norman people would be rather obviously a political claim—since the Norse invaders were a small minority and it was simply the act of conquest that distinguished persons who became Norman from their neighbours who became French. Any specific cultural content that might be used to identify the new Norman nationality would be far from distinctive. In religion, dress, and habits they resembled their neighbors, and the language they came to speak was not Norse but something closely related to regional dialects of French (with some Norse words).

If this seems a little far-fetched, it is worth remembering how similar this story is to the actual history of France. The "land of the Franks" was created by conquest in an almost exactly analogous way. The descendants of the originally Germanic Frankish invaders, like the Normans, ended up speaking the Latin-based language of their subjects with some Germanic words. (This language was itself the result of Roman conquest and can hardly be thought of as indigenous either). In the Early Modern period, the state established by the kings of France became the basis for the claims of French nationalism. But as Hobsbawm (1990:60) noted, as late as 1789 50 percent of Frenchmen did not speak the French language at all. This was not unusual; the common languages of European nations did not somehow evolve naturally but had to be constructed and popularized through processes of imposition and education.

By analogy, when we approach the Mongol nation we are bound to treat the idea of a distinctive preexisting people with some caution. As Golden (1982:73) notes with regard to the term Türk, for a long time the term Monggol was a political rather than an ethnic identification. It was originally applied to the relatively small dynastic realm ruled by Qabul Qaghan, and when Qabul's great grandson, Chinggis Khan, conquered the other steppe polities of his time and established the Great Mongol Realm (Yeke Monggol Ulus) in the 13th century, he extended this political term to encompass hitherto separate domains. A brief look at the process of identification at this time shows no discrete peoples with distinctive features.

The Mongol rulers spoke a language thought to have been closely related to that of the Khitans, who had ruled much of this region from the late 9th to the early 12th century, and members of other polities such as the Tatars and perhaps Merkid probably spoke similar languages. We know very little about the languages spoken by the subjects of the original Monggol ulus,

but they may well have been diverse. Some of the oldest Mongol subjects are described as Uriangkhan or Uriankhai, a term usually taken to mean Tuvan-speaking groups. When Chinggis Khan set about conquering his neighbors, then, his subjects may well have included Uriankhans speaking a language less like his own than his Tatar enemies. After incorporation into the Great Mongol dynastic realm, these same Tatars could be identified as Mongols with respect to outsiders, although the earlier and better known term (Tatar) was widely used in Russia and Europe to mean the Mongols themselves and their steppe subjects.

Although most of the inhabitants of what was to become Mongolia seem to have shared similar mobile pastoral lifestyles (suggested by the phrase "the *ulus* (domain) of the felt walled tents"), they seem to have spoken different languages. The Naiman, ruling the west, probably spoke a Turkic language, not a Mongolic one and this may well have been true of the Önggüd, early members of the Yeke Monggol Ulus, living in what is now Inner Mongolia. It is even possible that some Kereyid, who in many ways formed the center of Chinggis Khan's new steppe kingdom, spoke a Turkic language since the names of many of their rulers appear to be Turkic.

The 19th and 20th century conception of national peoples resembled Stalin's famous definition: a historically constituted stable community sharing language, territory, and common culture. But until the age of national populism, the putative content of the ethno-national notion of a people was not necessarily important for processes of political identification. When the Mongol princes conquered the distant territories of Russia and established the Golden Horde, they quickly came to speak Turkic and converted to Islam. But their descent from Chinggis Khan made them both Mongol and legitimate rulers with claims to high office, and this heritage of rulership was more significant that language, habits, or cuisine. This was also true of the Mughal dynasty founded by the Timurid prince Babur, for example, that came to rule much of the Indian subcontinent. Babur was a Persian-speaking Muslim who had never seen Mongolia, but he and his descendants Akbar and Jahangir thought of themselves as Mongol and Chinggisid, rather than Indian or Persian (Balabanlilar 2007:4).[14] The dynastic name Mughal was a Persian rendering of the word Mongol, and it was a marker of Chinggisid descent rather than language, religion, territory, or anything much resembling contemporary notions of culture.

How might this perspective help us develop an answer to the question, what is the geographical extent of Mongolia? First, it seems to me that it helps to clarify the terms of the question and reminds us that any answer will represent a political claim of some sort. Today it is probably true to say that the relevant notion of Mongolia is the territory inhabited by persons who may be described as Mongol in the currently dominant discourse of nationality. But at the time of its emergence, the discourse of Mongolian nationality applied primarily to groups and territories with indigenous Chinggisid aristocracies; it was then extended during the era of the Communist Chinese and Mongolian People's Republic governments to include those who could be claimed as Mongol using the new ethno-national criteria. Since the Pan-Mongolist movement failed to generate a wider viable national claim, categories such as the Buriat and Kalmyk remained distinct, reflecting their legacy of non-Chinggisid rule.

We are left, then, with political processes that support two main categories of Mongolian nationality: citizenship of the state of Mongolia and the *minzu* policy of China. Theoretically we could generate maps that would show the places largely inhabited by people in these categories and, of the two, the map of Mongols in China would, of course, show far less by way of homogenous and continuous Mongolian territory. We would see blobs of all sizes scattered across the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, Liaoning, Gansu, Qinghai, northern Xinjiang, and so on. But, although historically this may represent a very low ebb in terms of territory that could be termed Mongol, it is far from unprecedented. Before the advent of the nation-state form in Inner Asia, the territories that might be called Mongolian (i.e., ruled by Borjigid and later Chinggisid rulers) were also frequently far-flung and discontinuous. In any historical era, then, mapping Mongolia would be a profoundly untidy political exercise.

NOTES

1. This paper includes extracts from the author's book (Sneath 2007).
2. As Hobsbawm notes, the concept of the nation is historically very young; it emerged during the Age of Revolution in which new elites, particularly in France and America, began to articulate a new political vocabulary to express the common interest of members of the state in opposition to monarchical identification of the state with the monarch of the *ancien regime*. "The 'nation' so considered, was a body of citizens whose collective sovereignty constituted them as a state which was their political expression" 1990:18–19).
3. Assuming some more or less homogenous cultural and social entity as its object of

study (an ethnos), classical ethnology reflected ethno-national historical thought, concerned with internal cohesion and peoples as cultural wholes.

4. Such an account sits uneasily with the tribal model; what of the solidarity of common descent? Had all these supposed kinsmen of the Xiongnu emperor suddenly invented corresponding genealogical links to the Xianbe ruler? The usual interpretation was to take this as a feature of the tribal federation. The Xiongnu tribe proper ruled, as first among equals, many other tribes. With the defeat of the Xiongnu core, these other tribes could join the Xianbe confederation. But as Khazanov (1983:152) notes, the notion of nomadic confederation is inappropriate since the polities concerned are generally formed by conquest.
5. Doyle, for example, defines the term in this way: "Empire . . . is a relationship, formal or informal, in which one state controls the effective political sovereignty of another political society" (1986:45).
6. The *Secret History* (§202) records the names of the lords of the ninety-five *minggan*, or thousand units of the Mongol ulus that Chinggis Khan established in 1206.
7. The other term translated as people was *irgen*, which also had the meaning of subject (de Rachewiltz 2004:303) and, like ulus, was clearly a term that implied political relations with a lord.
8. Monggol. The otog seems to have also been called a *khoshuu* in some documents (Bold 2001:96), and it seems they were similar if not identical administrative units from the references in the code. See Buyanöljei and Ge 2000:258.
9. As Durkheim remarked, "The state exercised its tyranny over the smallest things" ([1893]1964:159).
10. Perhaps influenced by Buddhist cosmological notions of the great continents, these sources describe the world as divided geographically into great realms or countries described as ulus. The *Erdeni tunumal neretü sudur oroshiba*, the 1607 biography of Altan Khan, for example, speaks of how he pacified the "great realms of Mongolia and China" (*Monggol khitad khoyar yekhe ulus*). See Atwood 1994:9.
11. Atwood writes, "*Ugsaa* derived ultimately from the word *ug* (stump, base, origin, or beginning and, as an adjective, original, basic, or initial). It was primarily used in the Qing period to mean a lineage, as in *khaan-u ugsaa* (royal lineage). *Ündüsü* had a similar primary meaning (root, beginning, origin, base or, as an adjective, original, basic, fundamental or principal). It was often used as a term to describe the legitimate ancestry of the Mongol nobility, as in phrases such as *khad-un ündüsü*, 'the origin/lineage of the sovereigns.' Along with *ijagur*, another term primarily meaning 'root' and later applied to royal lineages in particular, these three terms, combining and recombining in a variety of binomes, formed the main lexical resource out of which the post-1911 terminology of nationalities (as distinct from countries) would be formed" (Atwood 1994:21). During the 20th century, the favored term for nationality became *ündüsüten* rather than *obogtan*, probably because of the influence of Jamsarano, the prominent Buriat-Mongol nationalist, who perhaps sought a more open and inclusive term (see Munkh-Erdene 2006:61).
12. This was the Janggiya Khutugtu, active in the Ordos region. The term used in this document for people (*khümün arad*—"person commoner") was an unfamiliar one—a direct translation of the Chinese term *ren min*. This suggests that no Mongolian term came readily to the Khutugtu's mind, despite the fact that the Mongolian People's Republic had been using its own term—*ard tümen*—for some time. See Yang and Bulag 2003:88–89.

13. There are seventeen notionally Mongol yastan and four groups considered Turkic: the Kazakh, Uriankhai, Uzbek, and Tuvans. See Hirsch 1997:267 for the evolutionist scheme of *narodnost'* and *natsional'nost'*.
14. The author is grateful to one of the anonymous reviewers of this volume for this reference.

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4

Is There Such a Thing as Central/Inner (Eur)Asia and Is Mongolia a Part of It?

CHRISTOPHER P. ATWOOD

To the informed reader today, the vast area between Russia, the Middle East, India, and China's Han heartland is still all Central Asia. Scholars studying the area, however, find this term frustratingly polyvalent. In years of addressing various audiences, I have found that as a rule it is perilous to use "Central Asia" without giving a strict and specific definition. This confusion stems from the sedimentation of different historical usages, none of which has replaced the other. Thus someone speaking about Central Asia might be using the term according to Edwardian English, or as a translation of either of two distinct terms originally designed in Russian to be opposite and complementary, or using the language of social science or current United States policy interests. As a result of this ambiguity, I have joined many other academics in preferring to use "Inner Asia," "Central Eurasia," or else much more specific terms—"Tibeto-Mongolian," "the steppe belt," and so on. This confusion of usage raises the question, though, is the broad concept of Central Asia/Inner Asia/Central Eurasia useful? And if so, as a Mongolist I have to ask, does Mongolia belong to it? Lurking behind all these questions is the bigger one of whether area studies and the broad concepts used to structure them, such as "Central Asia," "the Middle East," "East Asia," or "Islam" have a future. Or do they need to be replaced by other concepts such as "-scapes?" In the conclusion I would like to suggest

that paradoxically it is "area studies" concepts which often express non-academic intuitions more closely, and "-scapes" that are valuable analytically, but at a rather recondite academic level.

"CENTRAL ASIA" AND ITS PERMUTATIONS

In British English, at least, the phrase "Central Asia" and its cognates originated in the reorganization of geographical conceptions of the generalized "East" or "Orient" sparked by the advent of mass ocean travel. The term "Far East" came to be used in its current sense of China, Japan, and Southeast Asia in the 1850s, and the more specific terms "Near East" and "Middle East" (which originally often included India) were then defined in relation to the "Far East" by the 1890s.[1]

"Central Asia," however, was only ambiguously part of this East, newly defined by maritime accessibility. From the 14th century at least up to the 1890s, the lands of the steppes and the Altaic-speaking peoples had regularly been called Tartary, a name derived ultimately from the Mongol Empire.[2] As memories of the Mongol Empire were overlain by more contemporary interests in the East (within which inland Asia was a backwater), Tartary came to be defined not by a people or a history but by its position on the map of Asia. From the 1840s to the 1890s, the broad area of landlocked Asia was often designated "High Asia" a term that vividly captured what travelers felt going from the plains of India or China up into mountains of Afghanistan, Tibet, or Mongolia.[3] The term Central Asia can be found in the present sense at least as far back as 1850, but it only came into its own in English usage with the creation of the Royal Central Asian Society in 1901.[4] Central and High Asia were broad terms covering all the countries inland from India, China proper, and the Middle East, and unlike Tartary they also included Tibet and the Himalayas. This broad usage of Central Asia for all of inland Asia—from Iran's northeastern Khorasan province, Kashmir, Nepal, and Bhutan north to Kazakhstan, Southern Siberia, and Mongolia (Inner and Outer)—is today rare in scholarly contexts; its major recent use was in the UNESCO History of Civilizations of Central Asia project (UNESCO 1998).

Since the Russians came to rule much of the area, they, too, had an interest in precise terminology. Eventually they used two rather clearly defined terms to divide the region. One was a very specific region they called

Sredniaia Aziia, literally "Middle Asia," that included present-day Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and parts of Kyrgyzstan. What unified this region was a geography divided into oases and deserts, its urban Islamic and Turco-Persian culture, and its status as a newly acquired part of the Russian Empire, mostly ruled through the client emirates of Bukhara and Khiva. Before the Russian conquest, these lands had been known to the Greeks as Transoxania (Land beyond the Oxus), to the Arabs as Mawarannahr (Land Beyond the River), and to the Iranians as Turan, a term used in the Persian national epic Shahnameh for the hostile lands beyond the Oxus/Amu Darya. From the 16th century on, the Uzbek rulers of Bukhara took over this literary sounding name of Turan for their own country. But later the new Russian rulers adopted the term Turkestan (Land of the Turks) for their new province, even though many of the inhabitants still spoke Iranian languages such as Tajik. Thus a term which had originally designated the largely nomadic lands north and east of Transoxania/Mawarannahr/Turan came to designate the urban centers of civilization of Bukhara and Samarqand (Levi 2002:8–12).

The rest of what the British called Central Asia was rather *Tsentral'naia Aziia* (Central Asia), a term that for the Russians included the Chinese imperial dependencies: Tuva, the Mongolian banners (Inner and Outer), Chinese Turkestan (Xinjiang), Kökenuur (Qinghai), and Tibet. The steppe lands of Kazakhstan were sometimes treated as part of Siberia, sometimes left on their own, and sometimes affiliated with Central Asia; they were rarely considered part of Middle Asia. Instead, Middle Asia and Kazakhstan became a common Soviet locution for what English writers would later call "the -stans."

Given the close intellectual ties between Russia and Germany, the terms Middle Asia and Central Asia went into German directly as Mittelasien and Zentralasien, respectively, with roughly the same connotations. The fairly sharp distinction between Middle Asia and Central Asia among the much-translated writings of Russian travelers and scholars might have generated some greater precision in the English-speaking world, except that both were always translated "Central Asia." Likewise, both terms were translated in French and Chinese in the same way: Asie centrale and Zhōng Yàxìyà. Only in a few specialized academic venues was the Soviet distinction maintained, usually by narrowing "Central Asia" to fit the Russians' "Middle Asia" and then choosing some other term ("Inner Asia" or "Central Eurasia") to cover the original English-speaking world's broad "Central Asia."

Faced with confusion in journalistic and geographical usage, scholars attempted to carve out their own special terms. The term Inner Asia was first given currency by Owen Lattimore's *Inner Asian Frontiers of China* (1940). As Lattimore's title implied, the term was used in contrast to China, and thus, like Russian Tsentral'naia Aziia and German Zentralasien meant in his hands the Qing Dynasty dependencies of China from 1755 to 1911: Mongolia (Inner and Outer), Tuva, Xinjiang or Chinese Turkestan, Kökenuur, and Tibet. Its literal meaning, as the inner or landlocked portion of Asia, made it easy, however, to extend the term to all of Edwardian "Central Asia" or any subpart thereof. Thus a book like Svat Soucek's *A History of Inner Asia*, which focused on Asia's landlocked Turco-Iranian regions, shares only Xinjiang with the original "Inner Asia" of Owen Lattimore (Kotkin 2007:499 n.39). Greater historical depth and cultural consistency were attained by Denis Sinor's coinage "Central Eurasia," which could include the Caspian and Black Sea steppes, and even his native Hungary by adding Eur- to Asia.[5]

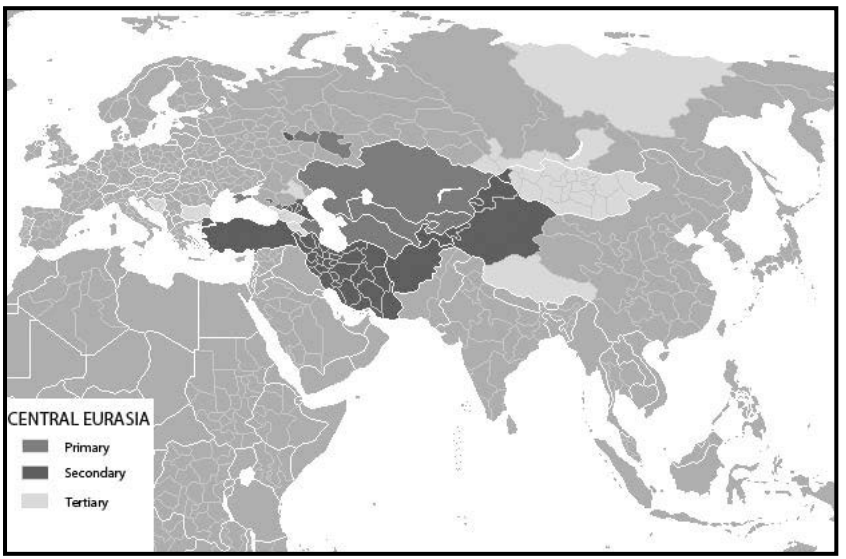
"Eurasia" as a term was suddenly catapulted into currency with the breakup of the Soviet empire in 1991—but in a way quite different in connotation from the Eurasia of Central Eurasia. A new term was needed for the occasions when "former Soviet Union" was too cumbersome and backward-looking, and for many journals and departments, "Eurasia" fit the bill. While Sinor had defined his Central Eurasia as the area untouched by the advance of Chinese, Indian, Persian-Islamic, and Russo-European civilizations, this new Eurasia not only *included* Russia but was in fact *centered* on it.[6] And while Sinor saw Central Eurasia as virtually disappearing in the modern era, eclipsed by the rise of Russia and China, the new Eurasia was very much a preserve of policy studies and contemporary politics.

CENTRAL EURASIA: SOLUTION TO THE OLD PUZZLE?

Just as the creation of the Royal Central Asian Society popularized the term "Central Asia," so the creation and naming of the Central Eurasian Studies Society (CESS) in 1999 posed anew the question, what is "Central Eurasia?" Is "Eurasia" here understood as the former Soviet empire, or is it "Central Eurasia" in Sinor's sense? Implicit is the claim that the vast area traditionally designated by terms like Tartary, Central Asia, Inner Asia, or Central Eurasia is a useful unit of analysis. But is there anything unifying such vast areas so that studying them together made sense?

Adding to the confusion were the close linguistic, cultural, and religious links of Middle Asia with Turkey and Iran. From that perspective, any Central Eurasia that included Uzbekistan or Tajikistan had to include Iran and Turkey as well. Outside policymakers, too, often approached the former Soviet "-stans" as so many arenas for rivalries between different agendas in the Muslim world: the Sunni-style Salafist extremism of al-Qaeda, Iran's Islamic Republic model, or the secularism of Turkey. Thus it is not surprising that the "Perspectives" section of the Central Eurasian Studies Society's first issue of its journal, the *Central Eurasian Studies Review*, actively took up the question of What is Central Eurasia? For many of the writers in this section, Central Eurasia was effectively defined as the area where Russia, Islam, and Turks interact (Khidirbekughli 2004:4–5; Lehrman 2004:5–6).

The core of this Central Eurasia would be the four Turkic-speaking countries of Central Asia, the Volga and Crimean Tatars, and Azerbaijan. Less central, but still close enough, are those areas where two out of three can be found: Turks and Muslims but not Russians, as in Xinjiang and Turkey; or Russians and Muslims but not Turks, as in Tajikistan and Chechnya (Fig. 4.1). The outermost penumbra is formed of areas where only one of



4.1. Mongolia and the "Central Eurasia" of the Central Eurasian Studies Society.

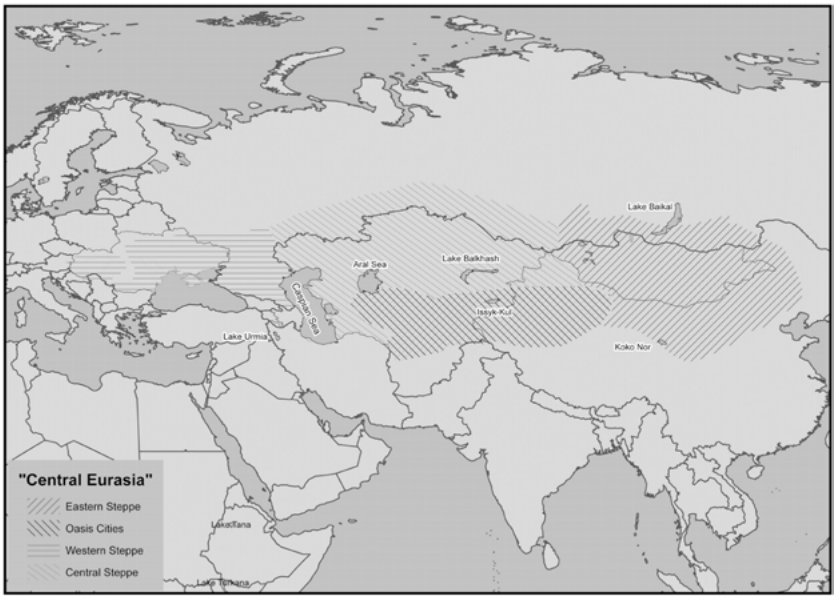
these features is still predominant, but a more-or-less strong background from the others can be seen, as in Iran, Afghanistan, Georgia, and so on.

From the perspective of a historian of Mongolia, however, such definitions of Central Eurasia exclude Mongolia. Once the very heart of Tartary, and High or Central Asia, Mongolia is now the odd man out as it lacks Russians, Muslims, and Turks, having in their place Chinese, Buddhists, and Mongols. The principles of unity which have been advanced to explain what holds together Central Eurasia define Mongolia as some land beyond Central Eurasia's eastern periphery.

These new policy-oriented definitions of "Central Eurasia" developed at the expense of the older definition crystallized by Rene Grousset (1970), Denis Sinor (1970:93–119), and others, who defined their region of study (whether called "Central Eurasia," "Inner Asia," or simply "the steppes") by the ancient Altaic trinity of yurt nomads, Altaic languages, and native religions. The emphasis on native religions did not necessarily mean that Muslims or Buddhists were disqualified but that their Islam or Buddhism was preferably seen as nominal, or at most a superficial gloss on their shamanistic essence.[7] Yet a strong case can be made that since the 14th century, the links unifying the Altaic nomads have gotten much weaker, and that the old idea of the steppe belt has little significance in modern society and culture.

The word "Mongol" is inextricably associated with Central Eurasian nomadism, not only because the Mongols are the largest modern population of yurt-nomads but also because of the Mongol world empire. Of all the Central Eurasian nomadic empires, this was the most powerful, the best documented, and the only one that included virtually all of Central Eurasia's nomads, from Southern Siberia and eastern Manchuria to Crimea and Turkey (Fig. 4.2). Despite the claim by some that its very size and rule over sedentary peoples make it atypical, it has consistently been the workshop where much of the most important research on classic nomadic polities is taking place.[8] The Mongol Empire, as shown by Thomas Allsen's research, is also the apogee of the cross-civilizational interaction that many see as Central Eurasia's primary contribution to world history (Allsen 1997, 2001, 2002).

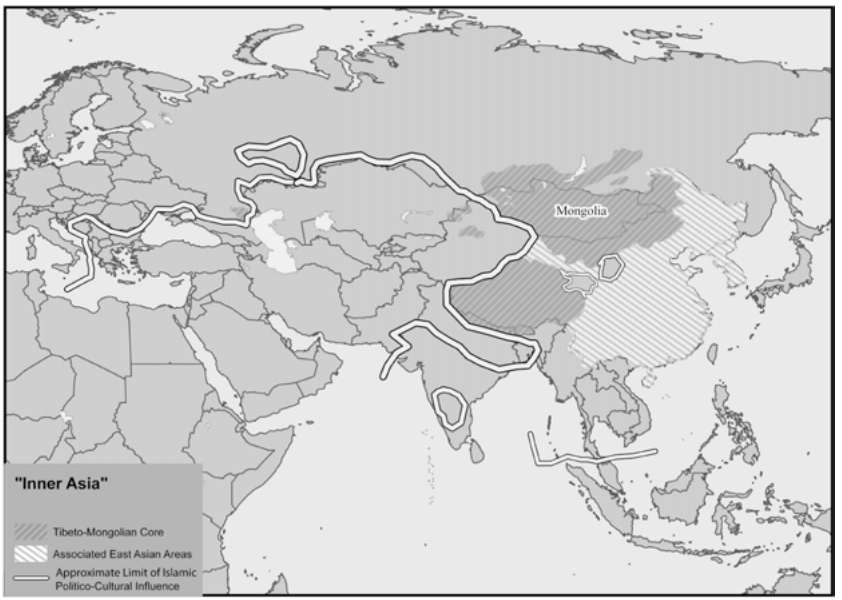
Certainly the decline of yurt nomadism, which is now practiced in anything like the classical form only in Kyrgyzstan, northern Xinjiang, Tuva, independent Mongolia, and the adjacent border regions of Inner Mongolia, has cut a vital link that once brought together peoples from Manchuria to



4.2. The Central Eurasia of archaeology and early to mid-medieval history.

Hungary.[9] Meanwhile the links between the Altaic languages, ongoing and powerful in the period from the 2nd century BCE to the 14th century CE, have weakened. Intra-Altaic circulation of loan words has effectively ceased, and with few exceptions Altaic languages are currently under far more powerful influences from non-Altaic languages than they are from other Altaic languages (Comrie 1981:64–65, 84–85).

Likewise, Central Eurasia's significance as a bridge between civilizations declined precisely as a result of its incorporation into neighboring civilizations. Because nomadic empires were not strongly associated with one or another world religion or civilization, they often forcefully promoted cultural interchange between two regions, East Asia and the Middle East, which were often not very welcoming to such exchange. Chances for this kind of exchange withered when the nomads themselves became participants in the world religions and reoriented their movements not to trade routes between civilizations but to pilgrimage routes into the heart of the great civilizations (Fig. 4.3).

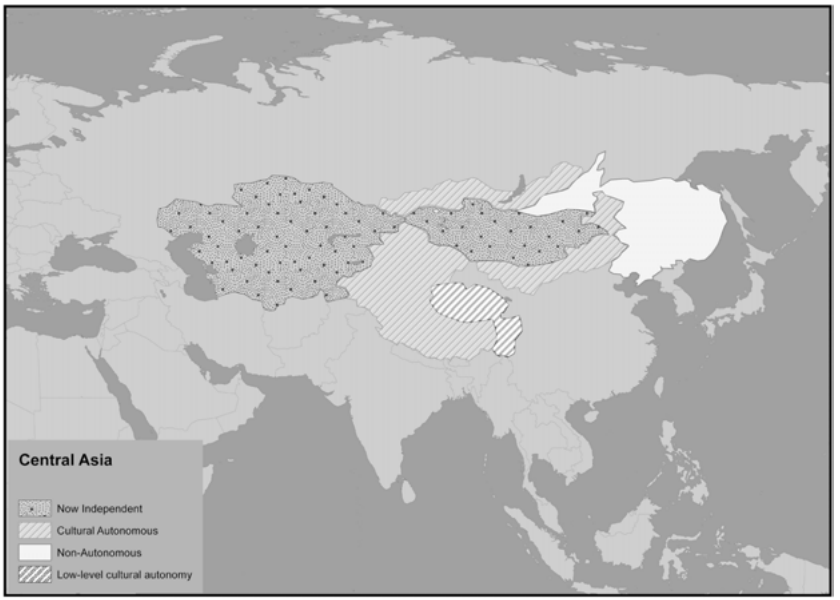


4.3. The Inner Asia of the Buddhist *oikumene,* 1260–1900.

MODERN GEOPOLITICS

In the 20th century, recurring patterns of crisis in the Russian and Chinese empires have helped define an area of instability situated between the two. The existence of regional majorities of non-Russian and non-Han Chinese populations, together with the ascription of "nationality" status to the territories implicit in the two empires' "autonomy" policies has marked this zone of instability as also a zone of ethnic politics. In the modern geopolitical definition, Central Eurasia is thus parallel to the old definition of Central (or Eastern, or East Central) Europe: a land of small and weak nationalities situated between two powerful politico-economic-cultural-demographic juggernauts, Germany and Russia (Fig. 4.4).

In the 18th and 19th centuries, countries in Asia had to acquire a modicum of modernization if they wished to avoid colonization and subsequent swamping by colonial settlers. But the countries of Central Eurasia were unable to do so because of their landlocked position, which impeded communications and reduced their options for independent contact with nonthreatening foreign advisers. They were also held back by the comparative



4.4. Central Asia of Sino-Soviet geopolitical competition and minority issues.

weakness and underdevelopment of the colonizing powers, Russia and China. Finally, while countries like India or Indonesia could easily absorb any number of colonial settlers, even small bodies of Russian or Chinese had outsized impact in Central Eurasia, with its sparse population. Even today, many of these same issues pertain. Central Eurasia's indigenous nations not only have no "nukes," they do not even have any plausible nuclear ambitions (see Enkhsaikhan's chapter, this volume).

In this definition, the Mongolian Plateau certainly fits into "Central Eurasia," having been like Poland alternately within one empire, then the next, and then partitioned between the two. Mongolia is unusual only in the current absence of a significant remnant colonial settler population. Xinjiang and Tibet, areas with significant secessionist movements that have forced their activities onto the world's news agenda, also fit in this geopolitical Central Eurasia. Inner Mongolia springs less readily to mind as its secessionist movement and presence on the world's agenda is so much weaker.[10] Still, to the degree that those areas where ethnic Mongols remain an important part of the population still exist, Inner Mongolia, too, is definitely part of this geopolitical Central Eurasia.

Even in geopolitics, however, many observers promote unifying concepts that have no relevance to Mongolia. If the issues defining Central Eurasia are radical Islam, terrorism, or pipelines, then Mongolia is not part of Central Eurasia, although the country does have significant oil reserves. But the last few years have demonstrated that while new actors such as the United States, the European Union, Japan, South Korea, and international organizations certainly have important roles to play, the countries with long-term staying geopolitical power in Central Eurasia are still Russia and China. How much time depth does this conception of Central Eurasia actually have? Before the 17th century, Russia was a minor player in the steppe. This is only one example of the limitations of the proposed unifying concepts for Central Eurasia: the limits of Russia, the limits of Islam, and the limits of Turks.

The Limits of Russia

The Russian expansion into inland Eurasia was eventually checked by the Manchu Qing (Ch'ing, 1636–1912) Dynasty, an empire which, while not ethnically Chinese, was certainly pervasively influenced by Chinese language and culture. Mongolia proper and Inner Mongolia, Tuva, and Xinjiang were thus all kept out of the Russian sphere of influence until the decline of the empire after its defeat by Japan in 1895.

With the fall of the Qing Empire, only Tuva and Mongolia proper (Outer Mongolia) were stripped permanently from the succeeding Republic of China. Fearing possible Russian infiltration, British India established a protectorate over Tibet, but Xinjiang came under strong Russian influence, to the extent that Stalin's purges were extended into the region under the rule of the Chinese general Sheng Shicai.[11] Russian language training of Xinjiang's elites was also widespread. It should be kept in mind, however, that Xinjiang's primary administrative language since about 1875 has been Chinese and that Russian sources have importance in its history only as those of a powerful foreign patron (comparable, for example, to that of the United States in South Korea), not as those of the administering colonial power.

More surprising is the real limit of Russophone influence on Mongolia. Up to 1911, Mongolia was part of the Qing Empire and few Mongolians had close contact with Russians. The imposition of a Soviet-style government on Mongolia was a tortuous process, beginning in 1921 but not completed

until 1940. Even after World War II, a significant Russian settler population did not develop; Russian was never used as an official administrative language; and Mongolian remained the main language of higher education. This is not to argue that Soviet Russian culture did not have a powerful impact on Mongolia but simply to note that despite the adoption of the Cyrillic script by 1950 and talk in the Cold War era of Mongolia as the Soviet Union's sixteenth republic, Russian influence was qualitatively less pervasive than in Central Asia.

This history is reflected in present-day social interactions. To take a simple example near home, the Central Asian and Russian communities developing around Indiana University are closely connected, but the Mongolian community interacts very little with either. Since 1990, the switch to English as the main foreign language in general education has been rapid, and the Mongolian government is now committed to the probably unrealistic goal of making Mongolia bilingual in English and Mongolian (Brooke 2005). While a number of persons are concerned about the rapid loss of Russian abilities, particularly since fluency in either English or any other non-Mongolian language does not seem to be taking its place, still the movement of Mongolia out of the Russian linguistic orbit is undeniable.

This linguistic movement can be illustrated well in the world of scholarship. In 1982, 79 percent of the Mongolian scholars at the flagship International Congress of Mongolists chose to give their papers in Russian. Ten years later only 2 percent did, and 94 percent spoke in Mongolian (see Table 4.1). English, however poor, is now used as much or more by Mongolian academics than Russian. The Russophone identity of Mongolia thus emerges not as a continuing and defining condition as it is in the Central Asian republics but only as a temporary phase, lasting from 1930 to 1990. Indeed, it is curious that even at the first international Congress of Mongolists in 1959, 88 percent of the Mongolian participants chose to speak in Mongolian. As far as Mongolist congresses go, the Russophone period of Mongolian scholarship really lasted two decades at most.

The Limits of Islam

The limits of Islam in inland Eurasia have generally been very sharp. It is striking how almost every community in the area has maintained the religious choices it made in the breakup of the Mongol Empire (1300 to 1400). The Turco-Mongol peoples of the former Golden Horde and the

Table 4.1. Proportions of Mongolian Scholars Giving Papers in Mongolian, Russian, and English at the International Congresses of Mongolists in Ulaanbaatar

YEAR/TOTAL MONGOLIAN PARTICIPANTS	PRESENTING IN MONGOLIAN	PRESENTING IN RUSSIAN	PRESENTING IN ENGLISH
1959:16	88%	13%	—
1970:45	7%	69%	24%
1976:63	29%	65%	6%
1982:72	21%	79%	—
1992:42	93%	2%	5%
1997:80	94%	—	6%
2002:94	95%	—	5%

Sources: Tsoloo (1961–62); Shirendew (1973, 1977–79); Bira (1985–86); *Mongolica* 1994–96(5–7): 26–28; 1999–2002(9–12): 30–33; 2003–06(13–14): 34–38.

Chaghatay Khanate chose Islam, while the Turco-Mongol peoples of the Yuan Dynasty chose either Tibetan-rite Buddhism or remained with their Altaic native religion.[12] The only exception to this continuity seems to be the conversion of the Uighurs of Besh-Baligh, Turpan, and Qumul to Islam in the early 15th century.[13]

It is often claimed that the influence of Buddhism on the Mongols before 1581 was superficial and restricted to the court. Recent archaeological discoveries have cast doubt on this contention by documenting, for example, the widespread depiction of Buddhist rosaries on Yuan-era seated funerary statues in southeastern Mongolia and central Inner Mongolia, and the occurrence of the Sanksrit syllable *om* on funerary bowls in Yuan tombs in northeast Mongolia and Trans-Baikalia (Bayar 2002:125–28, 177; Bayar 2000:17; Tümen 2006). Nor did Buddhism disappear in post-1368 Mongolia. There is direct documentation of continuous adherence to Buddhism among the large Mongol community in Beijing as well as among the Mongolophone and Turcophone populations in Kökenuur (Kara 2005:69–71, 143; Heissig 1980:25–26; Sperling 1992:741–50). Moreover, on the Mongolian Plateau, Esen Taishi appointed a Tibetan Buddhist *guoshi* (state preceptor) in the mid-15th century. Lubsang-Danzin's *Altan tobchi* records the presence of both a *bagshi* (Buddhist teacher) and a *jaarin* (shaman) at the court of Dayan Khan (1480?–1517?), the great restorer of Mongol unity (see Jagchid 1988:121–27; Bira 1990:165). Indirect evidence is just as important:

the preservation of 14th-century colophons and pre-classical features in the 17th to 18th century Mongolian versions of famous Indo-Tibetan Buddhist texts, such as the *Golden Beam* sutra, the *Twelve Deeds of the Buddha*, the *Pancaraksha*, Shantideva's *Bodhicaryavatara,* and Sa-skya Pandita's *Treasury of Aphoristic Jewels* necessarily imply continuous copying of these texts through Mongolia's "Dark Ages."[14] In two texts recently recovered from the Qasar shrine in Inner Mongolia and dating from before 1581, the *Chinggis Khaghan-u altan tobchi* and the *Chinggis Khaghan-u takil-un sudur oroshiba*, we find both Buddhist mythological elements such as the Shala tree, the wishing-jewel, the idea of Indra as the lord of the gods and so on, as well as Buddhist invocatory formulas (Dorungg-a 1998:98–100, 166; Chiodo 1989/91:202; Chiodo 1992:87). Thus while Mongolian practice in the period 1368 to 1581 certainly fell far short of the exacting standards of Gelugba (dGe-lugs-pa) Buddhist orthodoxy that prevailed afterwards, the Mongols' cultural vocabulary and communal identity remained, however tenuously, Buddhist.

Since the breakup of the Mongol Empire, Muslim nomads such as the Kazakhs, Nogay, Bashkirs, and Kyrgyz have fought against and competed for pasture with the Oirat (Kalmyk or West Mongolian) Buddhist nomads along a series of fronts from the Don to the Altai to the Tsaidam Basin in northern Tibet.[15] While fortunes have seesawed in this conflict, no players have switched sides for centuries. A striking illustration of the importance of history in this conflict has been how the southern Siberian Turks (Yenisey Kyrgyz and Tuvans), even when not Buddhist, have generally integrated easily into Mongolian Buddhist societies; evidently a common history in the Yuan and Qing dynasties and the resulting common cultural vocabulary have proven more important than language.[16] The strong similarity between Mongolian and south Siberian Turkic heroic fairy tales, linked to shamanic and hunting magic, as opposed to the more conventionally heroic epic of the Central Asian Turks also underlines this point.[17]

The contrasting religious affiliations resulted in differing human and intellectual ties. In many ways, Tibet and to a lesser degree China came to fulfill the same role toward Mongolia that Iran and the Arab world did toward the Central Asian Turkic world. Mongol pilgrims kowtowed their way south and east to Wutai Shan and Beijing in China and to Gümbüm (sKu-'bum), Labrang (bLa-brang), and the famous "Three Seats" of Lhasa, while Muslims were and are drawn, of course, to Mecca as well as to local and

Middle Eastern saints' tombs. Stories and narratives differ as well: for centuries Mongols were raised on *chadig* (*jataka*) tales of the Buddha's previous lives, the life of Milaraiba (Mi-la-ras-pa, the famous Tibetan yogin), as well as a distinctive 15th–16th century apocryphal story cycle of Chinggis Khan that, as noted above, contains important elements of Buddhist cosmology. In the 19th century, Chinese novels, particularly those with a Buddhist theme such as *Journey to the West*, became great sources of entertainment (Atwood 1992/93). In contrast, Turkic Muslim literature was formed by the legends of the Prophet Muhammad and 'Ali, by the romances of Layla and Majnun and Abolqasem Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*, and the tradition of Arabic and Persian poetry (Szuppe 2004).

The Buddhist world was probably not as united as the Islamic world. The fact that Mongols, Tibetans, and Chinese each had unrelated scripts while all Islamic peoples switched to the Arabic script is a sign of the greater diversity and lesser degree of cultural solidarity within the Buddhist *oikumene* (cultural world). Still, Johan Elverskog has demonstrated how Qing Dynasty Mongols in the 19th century saw themselves as forming (together with the Tibetans, Chinese, and their Manchu rulers) a single Buddhist commonwealth, facing challenges from both Hui and Turkestani rebels as well as Catholic missionaries (Elverskog 2006:139–46). Just as Turkestanis in China interpreted the 1864 revolt religiously as, in the words of the main Chaghatay Turkic history of the conflict, "Holy War in China" (*ghazât dar mulk-i Chîn*), so, too, the Oirats of Xinjiang made common cause with Chinese miners and Manchu soldiers in fighting the Turkestanis (Kim 2004:66–71, cf. 56–57, 94).[18] This action was informed by the legacy of the 11th century Buddhist Kalachakra Tantra, which pinned its hope for a spiritual and military response to Islam on the hidden kingdom of Shambhala (Newman 1998). This common Buddhist oikumene was only shattered in the turn of the 20th century, first by the Qing Dynasty's turn to secular reformism in the New Policies of 1901 and then by Mongolian and Tibetan nationalist readings of history, which played up anti-Chinese and anti-Manchu sentiments (see Atwood 2002:35–55).

Today an important revival of Buddhism is occurring in Mongolia. While there was only 1 monastery and 100 monks in 1990, by 2003, there were nearly 200 restored monasteries and about 3,000 monks. Just as important, if not more, for the purposes of this paper is the renewed identification of the Mongolian national community and state with Buddhism.

Buddhist mythological symbols and concepts such as the "wind horse," the "wishing jewel," and the "three times" were added to Mongolia's state emblems in the new constitution in 1992 and are identified as "symbols of the independence and sovereignty of Mongolia" (Kollmar-Paulenz 2003).

The Limits of Turks

While the earliest monuments of Old Turkish language are famously found in the heartland of modern Mongolia, Mongolian speakers began expanding at the expense of Turks in the 10th century (Golden 1992:183–87, 283–87). This expansion jumped all bounds when the Mongol Empire planted Mongolian-speaking communities as far as Kayseri, Kandahar, and Kiev. Although the fall of the empire brought the assimilation of the more far-flung Mongol communities into the indigenous populations, it did not halt the more gradual westward expansion of Mongolian language on the Mongol Plateau. (It should not be forgotten that numerous descendants of the Mongols in Afghanistan and Moghulistan remained Mongolian-speaking well into the 16th century.) The pre-Chinggisid Turkic-speaking Naiman tribe straddling the Altai appears to have moved into modern Kazakhstan by 1415, to be replaced on both sides of the Altai by the Mongolian-speaking Oirats. The Önggüds or White Tatars, Christian Turco-Sogdians of Inner Mongolia, were fully assimilated into the Buddhist Mongolian culture by the 16th century. Indeed, the father of the famous Mandukhai Sechen Khatun (Wise Empress Mandukhai), cofounder of the great Chinggisid revival of the 16th century, was an Önggüd. The expansion of the Oirats (including Kalmyks) reached its height in the 17th to 18th centuries. But after 1750, the Oirats, crushed by Russian and Qing power, retreated in the face of a Tibetan resurgence in Qinghai, a Kazakh resurgence in the Altai, and a Russian and Turkic resurgence in the Pontic-Caspian steppe. From 1750 to 1850, the Volga Kalmyks, the Xinjiang Oirats, and Kökenuur's "Upper Mongols" all suffered repeated devastating attacks from their former subjects.

This fault line in spoken language between Mongolic and Turkic was much widened by the breakdown in Turco-Mongolian symbiosis in the wake of the Mongol Empire. The Empire's ruling class was bilingual in Middle Turkish and Middle Mongolian, using Turkish to communicate with their subjects in the west and communicating directly in Mongolian with the Chinese, Tibetans, and Koreans. Uighur scribes, whether Christian or Buddhist, shared a script, a calendar, and a considerable terminology of civilization

with their Mongol employers (Allsen 1983). Despite Tibetanization, significant elements of this terminology and practice were preserved in Mongolian versions up to the 20th century. In fact, it is the Mongols, not the Muslim Uighurs of today, who inherited most of the Central Asian Buddhist terminology used in the Uighur oasis kingdom (Kara 2000; Shogaito 1991).

The fall of the Mongol Empire and Islamization in the west broke up this synthesis. Despite the Timurid renaissance of the vertical Uighur script, Islamization meant the replacement of the Uighur script with the Arabic script. Although the twelve-animal cycle was still used and Chinggis Khan's *jasaq* or law code often invoked by Muslim descendants of the Mongols, new calendars, new food, and new daily customs widened the breach between Muslim Turks and Buddhist Mongols.[19] Already in the Ilkhanate, the advent of the Islamic practice of endogamous marriages (marriages within the patriclan) had shocked many Mongols and their Uighur officials raised in the universal East Asian code of exogamy.[20] Oasis merchants from Turpan, Qumul, Samarqand, and Bukhara continued to trade in Mongolian animal products both internally and into China and Russia. But the Buddhist-Muslim religious divide meant that cosmopolitan clerics, scribes, and bankers from these oasis cities no longer served as tutors, scribes, judges, and advisers for the postimperial Mongol khans the way the Uighurs had. For the now Muslim Uighurs, vocabulary from Persian and Arabic replaced the Sanskrit-Chinese-Mongolian vocabulary of the old Buddhist Uighur scribal language.

On the other hand, the revival of Mongolian monastic Buddhism in the late 16th century gave the Mongols a wholly new and native source of clerical talent, one committed to a complete rejection of any coexistence with the Turkic Muslim or Russian Christian *buruu nomtan* ("ones with the wrong religion," i.e., infidels). This change can be seen clearly in personal names among the Oirats. Around 1500, they were still virtually illiterate and had undergone little influence from the mainstream Mongolian written culture. In this situation, in genealogies we find numerous Turkish names (e.g., Bay-Baghish, Aq-saqal, Eselbay, Yanis) and even titles (e.g., sultan, mirza) testifying to an Oirat-Turkic symbiosis. By 1650, however, with the Buddhist conversion, the creation of new monastic communities, and the popularization of the new Oirat Clear Script, such Turkic names and titles had completely disappeared to be replaced by Tibetan names and Mongolian titles, most drawn ultimately from Chinese.[21]

CONCLUSION

So is Mongolia part of Central Eurasia? The answer, not surprisingly, depends on how, and even more when, we define Central Eurasia. In the "ancient" or "classical" world of pagan steppe nomads that lasted up until the 14th century, Mongolia is not just part, but perhaps the very heart, of Central Eurasia. In the "modern" world of geopolitics, colonization, and science, Mongolia is also part of Central Eurasia, dealing with the same issues: formation of a premodern aristocratic ethnie into a modern egalitarian nation[22]; competition of established religion, reformist movements, and radical secularism; geopolitical competition between Russia and other powers, especially China; conflicts between nomads and advancing farmers of outside nationalities; and the long path of securing independence and an international personality apart from the imperial powers. Yet in this modern Central Eurasia, Mongolia remains something of the odd man out: Buddhist, not Muslim; comfortable with secularism, not anxiously eying religious opposition; democratic, not autocratic; fearing neglect from the Western democracies more than self-interested intervention; and exporting cashmere and copper, not cotton and natural gas.

It is in the "medieval" world of religious states, pilgrimages, and hagiographical literature that Mongolia and much of the rest of Central Eurasia part ways. In these "middle ages," lasting from the 14th century through the 19th, Central Eurasia appears not as one region but as two peripheries of two different worlds—one looking to Istanbul and Mecca and the other to Lhasa, Wutai Shan, and Beijing and beyond to Bodhgaya. One can compare this sundering of an ancient unity to the partition of the Mediterranean world (which was clearly a unity in the Hellenistic, Roman, and Late Antique periods) into the rival Christian and Islamic worlds in the Middle Ages. Yet those like Ferdinand Braudel who have striven to rescue the continuing economic and social unity of the Mediterranean from religious and intellectual division have scored significant intellectual successes. Their example shows us the fruitful possibilities for research into both continuing economic and social ties between Buddhist and Islamic Central Eurasia and a comparative intellectual and social anthropological history that treats how these separate entities handled the "classical" legacy of Altaic nomadism and Chinggis Khan.

Is Mongolia part of a unified Central Eurasia? The answer is definitely "yes" for the "ancient" historian (up through the breakup of the Mongol

Empire), pretty much "no" for the "medieval" historian (from the 14th century to the 19th), and a qualified "yes" for the "modern" historian. Political scientists, transition economists, students of international relations, and journalists are already fruitfully looking at Central Eurasia as a whole. Archaeologists already consider Central Eurasia a real unity, annoyingly broken along modern lines by the language difficulties of a field divided between Russian, Mongolian, and Chinese research languages. Specialists in shamanism, the material culture of nomadism, music, and oral literature will find variable amounts of common ground, although many of the links between Mongolian and Siberian Turkic cultures—often interpreted as ancient Altaic motifs—may well be the result of continuing "medieval" (i.e., post-Mongol empire) connections. However, specialists in world religions, literature, arts, and architecture will find that Mongolia and Uzbekistan, for example, function more as possible areas of parallel comparative research (like comparing European and Japanese feudalism or medieval Christian and Islamic philosophy) rather than as a single field.

Mongolia's position vis-à-vis "Central Eurasia" can be well conceptualized with the thematic idea of "-scapes," as Paula Sabloff discusses (see Chapter 2). Archaeologists, religious studies scholars, folklorists, sociocultural anthropologists, historians, and political scientists (not to speak of politicians!) all inhabit different "-scapes," with Mongolia situated in different locations in each. The significance of these alternate "-scapes" is particularly obvious when we map pilgrimages (both literal and metaphorical) that people in Mongolia, Kazakhstan, or Xinjiang, for example, make in pursuit of religious merit, higher education, or economic opportunity.[23] Suddenly the unified Central/Inner Eur/Asia fractures into patterns of travel and affiliation, patterns that differ for each community and within each community; these patterns can be mapped. Each of these "-scapes" is oriented to a different focal point of religious, economic, or intellectual capital, but these focal points are frequently situated entirely outside of Central Eurasia, whether it be in Mecca for Kazakh hajjis, in Beijing Uighur students, or in the United States Mongolian emigrants.

Yet the "-scapes" are unified by the fact that one person feels multiple "-scapes" operating in his or her life. A Mongolian accountant working in Washington, D.C., may retain a vivid sense of the Dalai Lama as a locus of religious merit, the steppes of Mongolia as an idealized natural environment, and above all of "Mongolian-ness"—rooted in language, history, and

race—as a vital part of her identity. All these may coexist with her "-scape" formed by nostalgic memories of student days in Moscow and her present "-scape" formed by American economic and political power. *Mutatis mutandis*, the same is true for other peoples of Central Eurasia. Some "-scapes" are seen as more intrinsically important and worthy of celebration than others, even if they do not seem to motivate action; those "-scapes" are usually the ones defined by language, religion, putative common ancestry, or history. It is exactly these historically rooted "-scapes," variable and multiple as they are, that form the basis for area studies. To this extent, then, it is outdated and unfashionable area studies that ironically speaks to those "-scapes" that are often seen as most crucial by nonacademics.

This is the future of area studies and why it will have to continue to negotiate a difficult passage between two poles. For those engaged in academic study, the lines of classification merely facilitate research and fruitful intellectual exchange, just as with historical periodization. But for those, often the same person, with an emotional investment in concepts of religious, linguistic, or national unity, the creation of broad areas becomes an important statement about self. Placing Mongolia on the map is an important task, because it helps shape how we, Mongols and non-Mongols alike, place the country and people in different Mongolian "-scapes." The academic will insist on being aware of the history of such classifications and how this history has reflected different moments in the history of Mongolia and the Mongols. Those with identities bound up in Mongolia, however, will naturally see something much more important in these classifications and find their endless constructions and reconstructions to be more than an intellectual game. As long as we recognize the difference between these two approaches, area studies can be an important site for intercultural and international learning and reflection.

NOTES

1. See the *Oxford English Dictionary/OED Online,* s.v. "Near East"; "Middle East"; "Far East."
2. *OED Online*, s.v. "Tartary" citations range from 1369 to 1891, although books with Tartary in the title were published with only a light touch of deliberate archaism into the 1930s, e.g., Lattimore 1930 and Fleming 1936.
3. There is no entry for "High Asia" in the *OED Online,* but it is found under "Ugro-," (1848), "Lepcha" (1862), "high" (1869), and "Balti" (1899).
4. There is no entry for "Central Asia" in the *OED Online*, but a citation from 1850 is found under "Altaic."

5. See Sinor (1954:82–103). In the second edition of the same work (Sinor 1970: 93–119) and in virtually all of his writings, however, he used the term Inner Asia for this entity, due to its greater currency at the time. Yet that he assigned to this term the same meaning as his own coinage "Central Eurasia" is demonstrated by the integral inclusion of Scythians, Huns, Avars, Khazars, Magyars, and other peoples west of the Urals in Sinor 1990.
6. A witty and provocative look at the new "Eurasia" is in Kotkin (2007:487–531).
7. This idea is, however, effectively refuted in DeWeese (1994) and Privratsky (2001). For arguments in a similar vein with regard to Mongolia, see Atwood (1996).
8. Barfield (1989) has argued strongly that the Mongol Empire is *not* a typical steppe empire. Despite this (I believe on many points very cogent) argument, any discussion of nomad polities is still likely to give pride of place to the empire of Chinggis Khan. It may not be the most typical nomadic empire, but it is the most important and best documented one.
9. The latest example is the policies in Inner Mongolia first of fencing pasture and then of *shengtai yimin*, or "ecological migration," undertaken to move herders off the steppe to relieve overgrazing. This policy is eliminating nomadism and indeed much of Inner Mongolia's steppe population rather rapidly (Williams 2002). The contemporary issue of "ecological migration" has not attracted significant attention outside the Inner Mongolian emigré community. See, however, Dickinson and Weber (2007).
10. On Inner Mongolian dissidence, see Togochog 2002. On modern politics in Inner Mongolia, see Bulag 2002 and 2004.
11. Ironically after Sheng Shicai's turn to the Kuomintang in 1942, the terrible legacy of the Stalinist purges in Xinjiang was publicized by his Soviet-supported enemies as evidence of his "fascism."
12. Like DeWeese, I prefer the term "native religion" to the misleading "shamanism" as a description of the pre-Islamic, pre-Buddhist, pre-Christian religion of the peoples of northern Asia.
13. On the history of the Uighurs (in the narrow sense) after the fall of the Yuan Empire, see Kim (1999:290–318) and Oda Juten (1978:22–45).
14. See the survey of the evidence in Ligeti (1973:5–10) and the examples in Kara (2005:46–47, 274).
15. On Zünghar and Kalmyk views of Islam see Atwood (2006:231–237). On Kazakh and Kyrgyz views of the Oirats, see Hatto (1989).
16. This can be seen vividly in Louisa Waugh (2003). As an English teacher in Mongolia's far western Tsengel *sum* (county), she found that Mongols and Tuvans formed a single social network of friends and marriage relatives. But it was almost impossible for her to straddle the social divide between the Mongol-Tuvan society on one side and the Kazakhs on the other. In Xinjiang, the small number of Turkic-speaking Tuvans have been included as part of the Mongol nationality and not with the Kazakhs who form the local majority (Mawkhanuli 2005).
17. Although Nora Chadwick and Victor Zhirmunsky disagree as to whether they are more properly "nonheroic epics" or "heroic folktales," both discern a Siberian Turkic type of narrative poetry that is quite different from the Central Asian types and much closer to Mongolian forms (Chadwick and Zhirmunsky 1969:78, 104, 106, 174, 180, 312ff.). Hatto (1993:269–78), in a comparative look at Mongolian and Kyrgyz epics, concurs with Heissig's description of Mongolian "epics" as "heroic folktales"

(*Heldenmärchen*) that, while sharing a number of motifs with Kyrgyz epics, stand out by imperviousness to history, their link to exorcistic religion, their "sense of black and white" in their heroes and monsters, and a "robust appetite for grotesques."

18. See also Yang 2001, who contrasts the Mongol view of the Hui (Chinese-speaking Muslim) insurgents of Gansu as cruel, if sometimes courageous bandits first with the current Chinese official view of them as popular rebels against the Qing dynasty's "semi-colonial, semi-feudal" regime and then with a Hui author's view of them as Sufi martyrs.
19. Insightful studies of the Chinggisid legacy in the Islamic successor states of the Mongol empire include Sela 2003, Aigle 2004a and 2004b, and Subtelny 2007.
20. See, for example, Morgan (1986:162–63). Morgan does not understand that the Mongol noble Qutlugh-Shah's outraged contention that Islam permits marriage to one's daughter or mother or sister is the common East Asian response to any marriages within the patriclan. In the Mongol (and Hindu, Tibetan, and Chinese) view, one's father's brother's daughter, a preferred partner according to Islamic law and custom, is for marital purposes quite equivalent to a sister, while patrilateral cousins in the descending generation or ascending generation are like nieces or aunts. The author of the Indian Buddhist text, the *Kâlacakra tantra*, written between 1025 and 1040 CE, made the same point (Newman 1998:319, 328).
21. This change may be verified by examining the genealogies of the Oirat nobles in, for example, Ghabang Sharab's "History of the Four Oirats," as found in Badai, Altan'orgil, and Erdeni (1985:234–39) or in Tsoloo (1967:74–78), or else the later Qing genealogies of the *Iledkel Shastir* conveniently resumed in Namsarai (1984).
22. On the concept of ethnie, see Anthony D. Smith's modern classic *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (1986).
23. The concept of "pilgrimage" as covering not just religious movements, but movements in search of educational, economic, or status advancement comes from Benedict Anderson (1991).

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Extending Beyond Current Borders

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5

The Geology, Climate, and Ecology of Mongolia

CLYDE E. GOULDEN, B. NANDINTSETSEG, AND L. ARIUNTSETSEG

INTRODUCTION

It is often said that Mongolia is a unique configuration of global and Asian trends. This singularity starts with its geology and topography, which are the culmination of tectonic geological pressures from the southern part of Asia. Half of Mongolia's ecosystems (the local climate, soils, and vegetation) are shared with China to the south; the other half are similar to Russia in the north. These ecosystems accommodate pastoral nomadism well, and Mongolian herders have sustained this lifestyle for centuries. However, the changing behavior patterns of postsocialist nomads combined with changing climate (warming associated with global climate change) are interacting with these ecosystems in a way that is causing desertification and therefore destruction of substantial parts of Mongolia's rangeland. Such damage, in the absence of adjustments to present herd sizes and grazing patterns, will eventually alter the nomadic lifestyle.

In this chapter, we describe the origin of the geological landscape of Asia and more specifically of Mongolia and how it imposes a unique climate and ecology on the region. We discuss the impacts of the climate on nomadic pastoralism and how the changing environment is affecting this unique lifestyle and exacerbating overgrazing problems. We conclude with a discussion of how recent climate changes could have profound negative

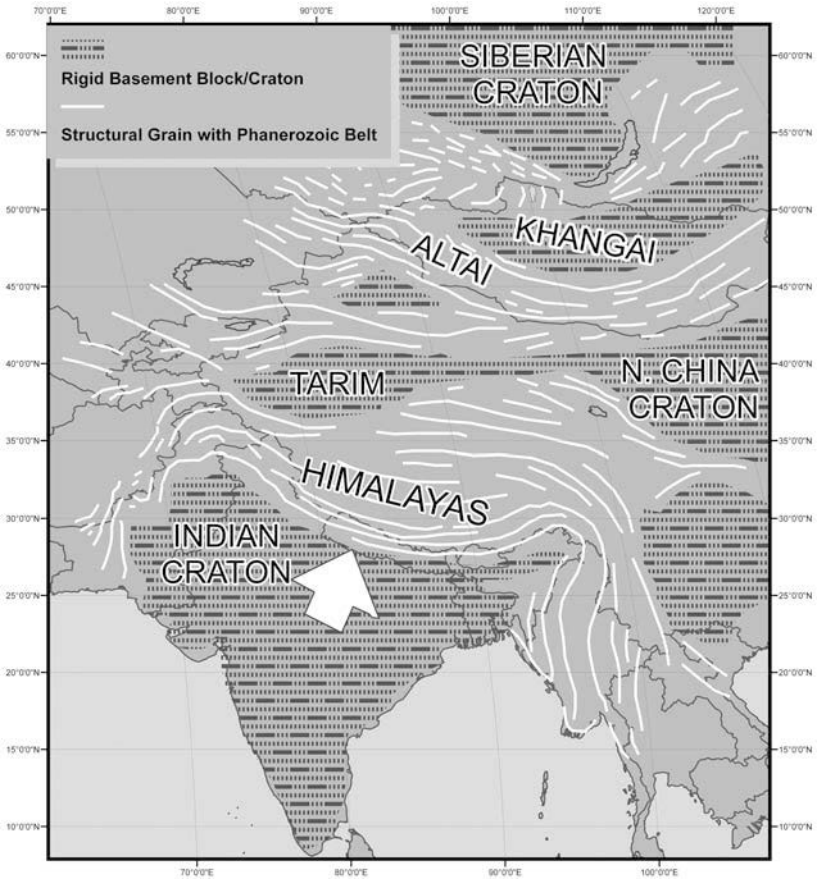
consequences on the environment and the people of Mongolia. Most of the conclusions are drawn from two studies: the "Assessments of Impacts and Adaptations to Climate Change" (AIACC), a project of the United Nations Environment Program (Batima 2005; Batima et al. 2005), and data and observations from a five-year study of the Lake Khövsgöl watershed. Both projects were funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

We have used a "landscape ecology" approach in this discussion and in many ways it is analogous with the "scape" approach discussed in the other chapters of this book. By focusing on spatial heterogeneity and its causes, we can better understand the underlying factors, geology, climate, and biology that shape similar geographic regions.

MONGOLIA'S PLACE IN THE GEOLOGICAL FORMATION OF ASIA

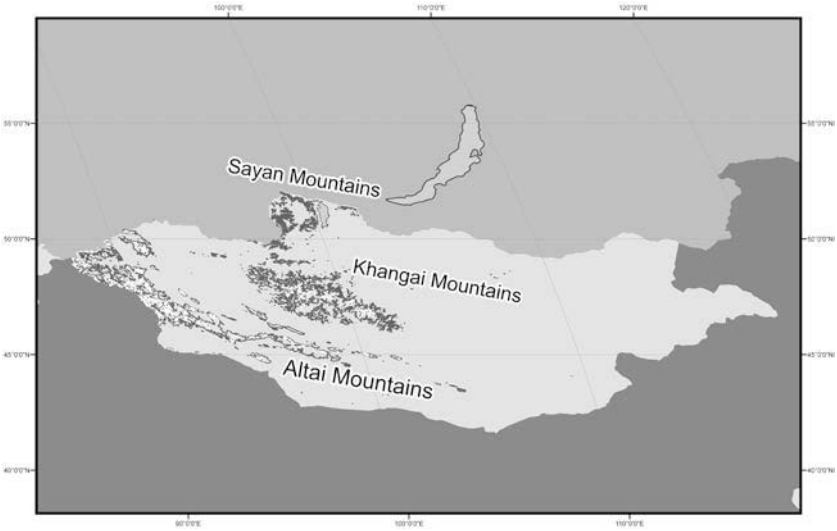
The present topography of Asia began to form during the last billion years; it results from the aggregation of ancient crustal fragments and other more recently formed crust from oceanic sediments and island arcs that make up present-day Asia (Windley et al. 2007). The Siberian Craton, a fragment of a former supercontinent consisting of a stable crystalline mass of granite, formed the core of the original continent (Cunningham 2005; Windley et al. 2007). This mass enlarged over millions of years as other land masses collided with and attached to this core, one by one. These granite craton fragments include the North China Craton, Tarim Craton, and South China Craton. The most recent addition occurred when the subcontinent of India collided with Asia.

Sandwiched between the craton fragments are sedimentary rock crusts and other younger crustal fragments that had originally formed as ocean sediments or volcanic deposits. They were uplifted by the movements of the craton fragments to become part of Asia along with other fragments of different origins (Cunningham 2005; Windley et al. 2007). This patchwork pattern can be seen in Figure 5.1. When the craton fragments that compose parts of China and Kazakhstan collided with the growing Asian continent, Mongolia became a plateau of folded crustal rock that is part of the Central Asian Fold Belt. But it is isolated from other parts of this Belt by its higher altitude, with an average of 1,580 m above mean sea level, and is often referred to as the Mongolian Plateau.



5.1. A generalized view of Asian topography with areas of mountain formation (modified from Cunningham 2005:437).

Over the last 200 million years, the sequential craton collisions raised mountain chains. The Altai and Sayan Mountains of northwestern Mongolia (Fig. 5.2) are two of the oldest mountain chains in northern Asia, predating the breakup of Pangaea (Zonenshain, Kuzmin, and Natapov 1990:73–86). The Western and Eastern Sayan Mountains extend eastward from the Russian Altai nearly to the southern tip of Lake Baikal; these formed when crustal fragments that became part of Mongolia moved northward and collided with the Siberian Craton. The Altai Mountains extend along the Russian-Kazakhstan border in the northwest and along the Chinese-Mongolian border in the southwest; they formed when the Siberian Craton



5.2. Topography of the Mongolian Plateau with major mountain ranges.

collided with the Kazakhstan Craton. These mountain chains, part of the Central Asian Fold Belt, are older than the Himalayas. Actually, major elevation increases had ceased by the time India collided with the growing Eurasian continent. But over the last 55 million years, Asia's topography has been greatly modified by faulting and folding from the pressure caused by the collision between India and Eurasia. From Mongolia northward into southern Siberia, faults and tectonic activity were reactivated by this last major collision, which led to increased mountain building in the Mongolian Altai (Cunningham 2005) and the formation of the Baikal Rift System.

Mountain formation has been concentrated in the sedimentary components that formed new crust between craton fragments due apparently to its being less thick or more easily modified by the pressure of tectonic activity (Jackson 2005). As a result of continued tectonic activity, Asian and Mongolian geology remain very active, with frequent earthquakes (e.g., Baljinnyam et al. 1993).

The collision of India with the Eurasian continent not only created the highest mountains in the world, the Himalayas, but also created the Baikal Rift System across southern Siberia, forming the deepest lake in the world (Leech et al. 2005; Molnar and Tapponnier 1975; Zonenshain, Kuzmin, and Natapov 1990; Cunningham 2005).

The tectonic activity of millions of years has caused Mongolia to exhibit affinities with both China and Russia. Southern Mongolia, situated on the Mongolian Plateau, shares the semiarid grasslands and deserts of northern China, while the Siberian taiga forests with permafrost extend into northern Mongolia (Figs. 5.3 and 5.4). In brief, Mongolia occupies an arid transition zone between the two that is a blend of its neighbors' landscapes, yet remains unique in some features.

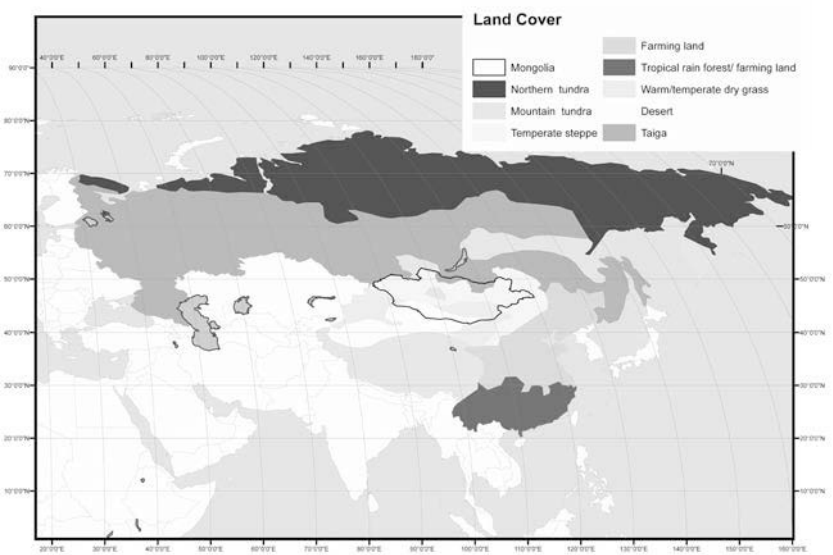
INTERACTION OF TOPOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE OF MONGOLIA

The climate of Mongolia and western China is strongly influenced by its topography and location north of the high Himalayan massif. The monsoons that bring rains to the southern and eastern parts of Asia cannot cross over the high, mountainous Tibetan Plateau to reach western China or Mongolia. The plateau also forces prevailing dry westerly winds of the mid-latitudes to move northeastward across northern China and Mongolia. Because the highest mountains in China and Mongolia are in the western and northern parts of each country, a large fraction of atmospheric moisture is lost as precipitation in the mountains (Fig. 5.5; see DVD). All of these factors contribute to the semiarid to arid conditions of large areas of Mongolia and western China.

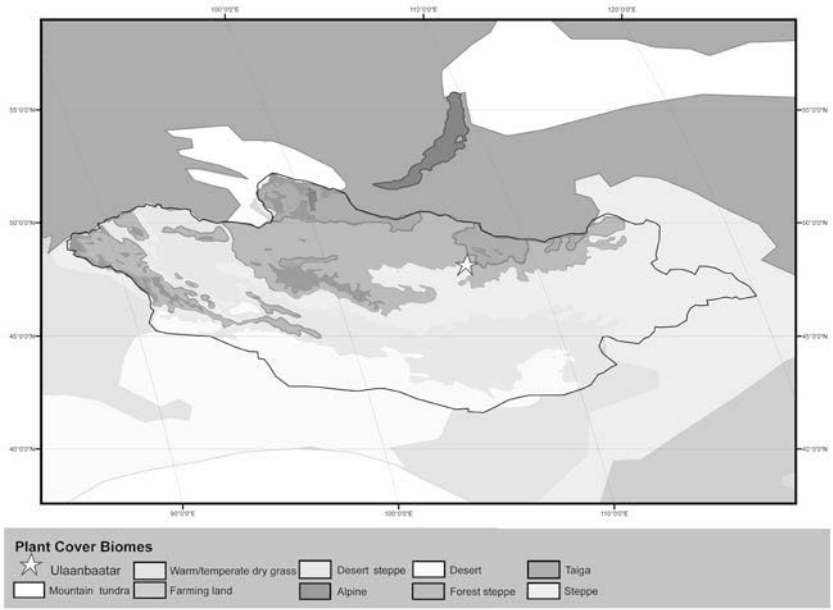
Mongolia's weather is also affected by its high mean altitude and northern latitude. The climate fluctuates from one extreme to the other. The elevation differences from the northern and western mountains to the southern and eastern lower altitude steppe regions (Fig. 5.2) create major thermal gradients that encourage heavy winds that can rapidly alter weather patterns. Mongolia typically has a long and cold dry winter (a Siberian winter) and a short but moist and warm summer (more like the weather of northern China).

Landscape and Temperature

Mongolia's temperature extremes range from -50° C during the winter in the north, to +50° C during the summer in the Gobi. The annual average air temperature is 0.7° C (33.4° F) compared with the average temperature of the earth of 14.4° C. Air temperature can change as much as 30° C in one day with the arrival of brisk northwesterly winds (Batjargal 2007).



5.3. Major plant cover biomes for Eastern Asia. Modified from "Potential Land Cover Pap Simulated by BIOME-LUC for Russian Siberia, Mongolia and China" (www.iiasa.ac.at).



5.4. Mongolian plant cover areas (modified from original by Dennis Murphy).

It is clear that a warming trend has been occurring throughout Mongolia. According to Batima et al. (2005), the mean surface temperature for Mongolia (averaged over the entire country) has warmed by 1.80° C from 1940 to 2003. This trend can be seen in a forty-five year record of temperature (1963–2005) collected at the Khatgal Meteorological Station located at the southern end of Lake Khövsgöl (Nandintsetseg and Goulden 2005). Other changes—a decrease in the number of extremely cold days and an increase in the number of extremely warm days—have also been detected (Nandintsetseg et al. 2007). The degree of warming in the north is comparable to warming trends that have occurred elsewhere in southern Siberia, though farther north in Siberia the warming is even greater.

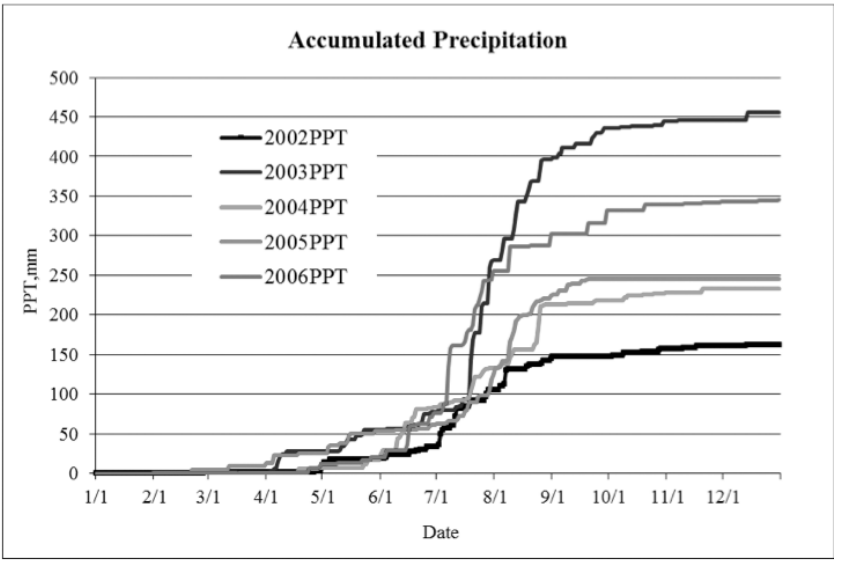
In many areas of the country, winds associated with rain or snow storms can be so strong as to cause serious damage to surface soils, livestock, and the mobile *gers* of the nomads. Winds of 140 to 160 km/hr have been recorded in large areas of southern Mongolia for short intervals (Batjargal 1992).

Landscape and Precipitation

Mongolia's average annual precipitation is only 230 mm. Most comes from the west and northwest, ultimately from the Atlantic Ocean. However, because of the wintertime anticyclonic pressure over Siberia and Mongolia, 90 percent of the total annual precipitation falls between April and September, most during July and August. Although annual precipitation is low, its intensity can be high, sometimes 40–65 mm may fall in a single hour. When this happens, serious flooding and erosion occur in mountain valleys.

In contrast with the rise in temperature, total annual precipitation has shown only a slight, insignificant increase. However, the amounts and timing of summer rains are quite variable. This can be seen in Figure 5.6 for the Khatgal Meteorological Station data collected between 2002 and 2006. The years 2003 and 2006 had precipitation slightly above or at normal average levels for the region. But 2004 and 2005 were relatively dry years; whereas 2002 had the lowest total precipitation for the year during the 1963 to 2006 period of records at Khatgal.

The summer rains generally begin in late June and continue until early August. There appears to be a relationship between the timing of the beginning of summer rains and the amount of precipitation for the year (Fig. 5.6). For example, average rainfalls for Khatgal are reported to be between



5.6. Graph of accumulated precipitation for the years 2002 to 2006. From data collected at the Khatgal (Mongolia) Meteorological Station by the Hydrometeorological Institute of Mongolia, Ministry of Nature and the Environment.

300 and 350 mm. This was realized in 2006 and exceeded in 2003, a cool and wet summer in which rains started early in June. In 2002, the rains started late in the summer and only 160 mm of precipitation fell. During the dry years of 2004 and 2005 (only 250 mm of precipitation for the year), rains did not really begin until mid to late July. Variability in the seasonal pattern of precipitation may result from recent climate change, but whether this change is a significant trend over a longer time period or just because of climatic variability has not yet been determined.

Between the different vegetation zones or biomes, variability in precipitation amounts from year to year also can be quite different as Fernandez-Gimenez and Swift (2003) document comparing coefficients of variation (COV) for annual precipitation for the mountain-steppe of 28 percent, for steppe of 30 percent, and for the desert-steppe 47 to 50 percent.

Snow contributes less than 20 percent of total annual precipitation. Most snowfalls are light (1–3 cm) and usually occur from the middle of October to the beginning of November. There are few winter storms as a result of the dominance of the anticyclone pressure over Mongolia, but

occasional heavy snow storms occur in the open steppe at the beginning or late in the winter.

*Dzud*s and Droughts

*Dzud*s, a Mongolian term, are very cold winters or winters with heavy snows and winds that restrict the ability of the livestock to get to forage. The amount of snow cover and its duration are very important to an understanding of dzuds. Because of the extreme cold, snow cover can remain for some time, melting and refreezing, producing a crust of ice on the soil and vegetation. The most serious recent dzuds occurred from 1999 to 2002 (Bat-Oyun, Shinoda, and Azzaya 2003). Many domestic animals can die during such dzuds because winter forage is difficult to find (see also Chapter 6, Barfield's description of climate).

Low summertime precipitation causes droughts; droughts are common in the semiarid climate of Mongolia and may become more frequent as the number of consecutive "heat wave days", the number of days with temperatures above average, has increased over the last 60 years (1940–2001; Batima et al. 2005). Drought occurs one year in five in the south, and one year in ten in the north on average (Batjargal 1992, 2007). Spring forest fires, common in northern Mongolia as they are throughout the taiga, are generally associated with drought years.

The worst droughts occurred with the consecutive dzuds from 1999 to 2002, affecting 50 to 70 percent of Mongolia (Batima 2005). The former had a large impact on reducing the growth of plant biomass in the steppe areas while the latter deprived livestock of winter forage and resulted in the death of more than 12 million domesticated animals.

Evapotranspiration

What happens to the precipitation? Plant growth is very dependent upon soil moisture content throughout Mongolia; yet on the steppe, 90 percent is lost to the atmosphere by evapotranspiration (Batjargal 2007). Of the remainder, 6.3 percent is surface runoff while only 3.6 percent remains in the soil. The 90 percent loss due to evapotranspiration represents the combined loss of water from soils due to evaporation and plant loss of water by transpiration.

With climate change and longer summer growing seasons, evapotranspiration is very likely to increase in Mongolia because it is highly correlated

with an increase in the number of plant growing degree days, the number of days in the year with average temperature above 5° C. With the gradual warming during the last century, spring now begins approximately 20 days earlier than in the mid-1990s, extending the time period for maximum evapotranspiration rates to occur.

Permafrost

Another similarity between northern Mongolia and Siberia is the presence of permafrost. Due to its cold climate, almost half of Mongolia has permafrost; northern Mongolia forms the southernmost boundary of the Siberian Continuous Permafrost Zone (Sharkhuu 2006), where deep soils remain frozen throughout the year. However, permafrost in Mongolia is relatively warm, ranging from -2 ° to -0.05° C. Studies in northern Mongolia indicate that this permafrost is undergoing thaw (Sharkhuu et al. 2007). With climate warming, the active layer or surface soil layer above permafrost that thaws each summer is gradually increasing in depth as the near-surface layer of permafrost thaws.

Data collected in the area around Lake Khövsgöl in northern Mongolia since the early 1980s indicate a rate of permafrost thaw and increase in active layer thickness of 3 to 25 cm per decade and an increase in the annual permafrost temperature from 0.2° C to 0.4° C per decade, depending on local landscape and ground conditions. Longterm monitoring shows that permafrost has been degrading more intensively during the last fifteen years than during the 1970–1980s (Sharkhuu et al 2007).

As permafrost thaws, the soils warm, increasing evaporation rates, and this thaw allows soil moisture to penetrate deeper into the soil profile, penetrating deeper and away from the shallow root systems of many plants, particularly of grasses. As a result, it is very likely to result in a more rapid loss of soil moisture.

VEGETATION: BIOMES AND ECOTONES

Because of the temperature and moisture gradient from north to south across Mongolia, east to west bands of similar temperature and moisture are associated with distinct vegetation biomes and ecotones. The northernmost band is represented by the taiga forest and to the south of this, a steppe forest ecotone band. Next is the steppe, the semi-desert biome or dry

steppe, and the desert in the south (Fig. 5.4). Because Mongolia has a small population and little road construction or economic development, many habitats have retained their unique plant and animal taxa. National parks and protected areas compose about 15 percent of the country and facilitate preservation when protected against poaching.

One can find strong correlation between the geology, precipitation gradients, and vegetation zones. High mountain zones on sedimentary geology have forests because they receive the most moisture from precipitation (>300 mm per year); semiarid zones with less moisture (precipitation ranging between 150 to 300 mm) support steppe habitats; areas receiving 100 to 150 mm of precipitation can only support a dry steppe or semidesert vegetation; while landscapes that receive less than 100 mm of precipitation are desert (compare Figs. 5.4 and 5.5).

Taiga and Forest-Steppe

Taiga forests of Siberia cover about 12 percent of Mongolia. This is a "light" taiga, primarily needle leaf or "evergreen" forest that is dominated by larch (*Larix sibirica*) and pine (*Pinus sibirica*). Larch is cold-tolerant and grows well on permafrost. Because of the permafrost soils, the root systems extend out laterally in thin organic rich soils over the frozen ground, and this may account for the more open condition of the forests. Taiga forests are dry and are frequently burned by both natural fires and man-made ground fires that primarily kill young seedlings and saplings. Fires do less damage to older trees that have a thick bark at the base that resists burning. However, frequent fires during sequential drought years, as occurred in 1996 and 1997 in northern Mongolia, can cause serious damage to all forest trees.

Most of Mongolia's forest is actually part of the forest-steppe transition. Here, forest is restricted to north-facing slopes while steppe vegetation covers south-facing slopes. Often there is permafrost on ridge tops and north-facing slopes but no permafrost on south-facing slopes, which is where nomads graze their animals. The steppe-forest zone is an ecotone between the more typical taiga of Siberia and the steppe regions of Mongolia and other mid-latitude countries of the Asian continent. In the northern part of the forest-steppe transition zone, trees are found on the east-, west- and north-facing mountain slopes. Farther south, the forest margin recedes towards the northern slope, and the steppe expands onto the eastern and

western slopes, eventually leaving few, if any, trees in the steppe areas of central Mongolia.

Steppe

Almost 80 percent of Mongolia's land area is covered by grassland or steppe; grasses and sedges are dominant in many areas (e.g., *Poa* spp., *Stipa* spp., *Leymus sp.,* and *Carex* spp.), or with forbs on dryer slopes. But as overgrazing increases, forbs (e.g., *Artemisia*, *Potentilla*, *Thymus,* and shrubs such as *Ephedra sinica* with deep roots that reach water deep in the soil) become more dominant (Gunin et al. 1999).

This is ideal grazing land for the nomad's mixed herds of sheep, cashmere goats, cows, and horses. Traditional herders know the good grazing plants and move in accordance with the seasonal growth of good forage plants and avoid grazing too long in one area. There is a great deal of folklore associated with their movements (Germeraad and Enebisch 1996).

Semi-desert and Desert

The semi-desert transition zone is drier than the steppe but receives more precipitation than desert areas. Shrubs are more common, grasses are sparse, and forest patches are rare. Here, camels are very important for herders, as well as cashmere goats. This ecotone is expanding northward as desertification, caused by heavy grazing pressure and climate change.

Mongolia's desert is not unique; much of the inland areas of Asia consist of desert (Taklimakan of the Tarim Basin, the Gobi), semiarid grasslands, or mountains. Still, the Gobi is one of the largest deserts in the world, extending more than 1500 km from east to west, and almost 1000 km north to south, i.e., from Mongolia to Inner Mongolia. It is actually a lowland surrounded by mountain ranges (Williams et al. 1996). There is sufficient grass in about three-quarters of the Gobi to support a modest number of nomadic herders, but damage to the plant cover in this region was already extensive by the early 1990s, leading to desertification. Desertification, defined as "land degradation in arid, semiarid and dry subhumid areas resulting from various factors, including climatic variation and human activities" (Batjargal 1992), is becoming widespread in Mongolia. It is caused by a combination of climate (droughts) and over-exploitation of the plant cover by livestock grazing. Batjargal (1992) suggests that 90 percent of Mongolian territory could be vulnerable to desertification if herders do not recognize

and adopt grazing methods that sustain the grassland for themselves and future generations.

PASTORAL NOMADISM AND CHANGING CLIMATE

Landscape and climate conditions play key roles in land use and sustainable development throughout Asia but particularly in Mongolia. Nomadic pastoralism, which depends on the frequent movement of animals, is the most suitable form of existence in this semiarid to arid landscape because overgrazing can quickly cause the loss of the best plant food species and reduces plant cover (Humphrey and Sneath 1999). Moving herds from one pasture to another over the course of a year depends on rangeland rich enough to sustain the herds. Traditional herders can identify nutritious versus poor plant foods for their livestock and know that they must move their herds frequently to avoid damage to seasonal pastures and even loss of nutritious plants. But in the mid 1990s, Mongolia's herder population almost doubled in size when inexperienced herders, individuals who had lost jobs in the cities during the country's unstable economic times, moved to the countryside to become new herders (Mearns 2004). These new herders, mostly young, lacked an understanding of the steppe plants and herd movements. Livestock numbers increased substantially (from 24 million to over 30 million head by the late 1990s), causing serious damage to plants and soils in pastures near population centers (*sum* centers). An estimated 12 million domesticated animals died during the severe droughts combined with harsh winter dzuds between 1999 and 2002 (AIACC 2006). With the more favorable weather that followed, livestock numbers have increased again—from 24 million to 40 million by the end of 2007. Substantial harm to pastures is apparent with loss of plant cover and drying of soils that extend well beyond the *sum* centers. As a result, there will be a serious depression of food resources for livestock when the next series with major drought and dzud years occur. This damage will be exacerbated by the adverse impacts of the changing climate that also causes reduced soil moisture and low forage yields.

Mongolia is somewhat unique as a range habitat because precipitation occurs primarily during the summer when it should be most beneficial to plant growth. However, the variability of the timing of rains coupled with cycles of drought affect the ability of the vegetation to recover from heavy

grazing pressure. A good pasture can be lost after one or two years of heavy grazing and drought, for this combination can quickly shift plant dominance from highly edible nutritious plant taxa to poor non-nutritious forms and even to toxic plants that sustain themselves in dry soils. This is because these plants either are not consumed by grazers or they have deep roots that can reach deep soil water.

Herders often say that any change in the climate is bad, for they know that Mongolia has reason to be concerned about climate change. The rising temperature and uncertainties in rainfall associated with climate change are likely to increase variability of extreme climate events, including their frequency and magnitude. Climate variability appears to be increasing and the greater the rate and magnitude of change, the greater the risk of negative impacts, particularly in this semiarid environment where droughts and dzuds are already common occurrences and have such devastating impacts on the nomads and their livestock (Humphrey and Sneath 1999).

The changing climate is compounding the impact of overgrazing, because the combination of climate warming and overgrazing both result in a greater loss of soil moisture critical to plant growth. By lengthening the growing season, climate change has produced very similar impacts to those resulting from plant cover removal from livestock overgrazing, i.e., warming of soils and reduced soil moisture, both of which encourage the growth of forbs that are tolerant of dry soils but at the same time may be less nutritious than most grass species.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

During the last 1000 million years, the Asian continent formed by the accretion of fragments of crust to a Siberian core following the breakup of earlier supercontinents. These craton fragments pushed and elevated oceanic sedimentary and other recently formed crustal rocks. The new crustal fragments, sandwiched between rigid craton plates of thick crystalline earth crust, were altered and folded by subsequent collisions as new craton fragments collided with the growing Asian continent, the largest and latest composed the Indian subcontinent. Crustal folding produced mountain chains, most notably the Central Asian Fold Belt and later the Himalayas. The resulting mountainous topography affects Asia's climate so that westerly winds are displaced northward while the monsoons of south and east

Asia are blocked. Because major mountain chains lie in the western parts of China and Mongolia, the moisture brought in by the westerlies is lost in the mountains, leaving little moisture for the central and eastern parts of Asia. As a result, Mongolia and northwestern China are largely semiarid steppe areas or arid deserts. In contrast, eastern China receives rains from the monsoons that cannot reach Mongolia. Thus topography and climate favor extensive agricultural activity in eastern China, but nomadic pastoralism on the semiarid Mongolian plateau.

Recent increases in the number of cashmere goats and all livestock is causing serious overgrazing problems that affect soil properties and plant nutrition for the animals. It is possible that the combination of overgrazing and the recent climate changes may lead to a more serious problem with desertification. Reducing herd sizes and returning to the more traditional ways of herding learned over centuries is very important to maintain sustainable pastures (Fernandez-Gimenez and Swift 2003).

The Mongolian landscape is unique in East Asia because the mountainous topography of the western and northern parts of the country creates a precipitation gradient that supports forests in the mountainous regions that transition into a semiarid steppe in the central and eastern part of the country and to the very dry southern desert. Mongolia's landscape has many similarities with the western part of the United States. Northern Mongolia is allied with the taiga of the Siberian forested lowlands while the southern desert extends into Inner Mongolia and the northwestern parts of China. Because the arid steppe regions do not recover quickly from overgrazing, there is a dependency upon nomadic pastoralism. Though Mongolia is regionally associated with its neighboring countries of eastern Asia, it has its own uniqueness that is akin to other regions of the world. In this context, a "scape" approach has great heuristic value because we can gain greater insight into resolving environmental problems by comparison with other similar landscape regions of the world and how the people of these regions remediate their environmental problems.

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6

Nomadic Pastoralism in Mongolia and Beyond

THOMAS BARFIELD

Pastoral nomadism has been the dominant economic force in Mongolia and neighboring regions for many thousands of years. It is a grassland economy that supports a distinctive way of life that constitutes both a technoscape and an ethnoscape. That is, the pastoral nomads of the Eurasian steppe share a common and recognizable set of techniques that allow them to exploit the grasslands by means of livestock production. These include not only the common types of livestock they raise, but dwellings such as yurts and the capacity to move whole families along with the herds. The striking cultural similarities among the horse-riding steppe nomads has also given them a distinctive cultural identity that has remained for more than 2500 years. Ecological conditions and political realities have continued to favor this way of life. The steppe's severely cold winters, short growing season, and relatively low average rainfall (punctuated by cycles of drought and early frosts) made agriculture there less dependable than pastoralism. Livestock numbers, particularly among sheep and goats, could recover relatively quickly from the droughts, winter freezes, and livestock epidemics that periodically decimated the herding economy.

The mobility of pastoral societies also allowed them to better weather political crises than farmers: they had the option of moving themselves and their animals out of harm's way when trouble struck. In contrast, historically

settled farming villages were more vulnerable to raiding by their nomadic neighbors. Such villages tended to flourish only when steppe polities could protect them; they declined dramatically when such protection was lacking.

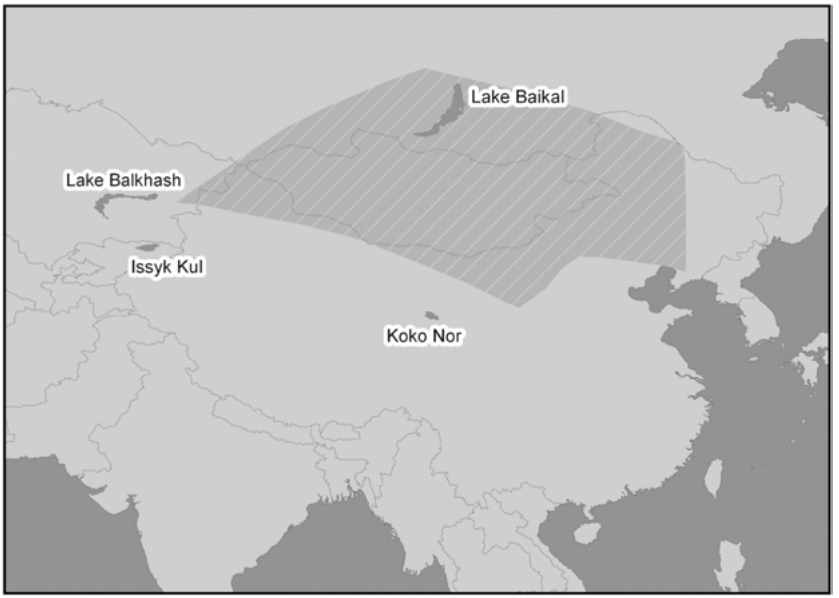
The continued dominance of pastoralism in Mongolia's economy into the 21st century is evidence that it remains a way of life—as it does throughout Central Asia—that is still far from obsolete. In 2005, 77 percent of the Mongolia's 2.6 million people lived in rangeland areas, probably the highest of any nation in the world, and most continued to rely on pastoralism (Kerven 2006:17). As Mongolia continues to adjust its role in the world economy, pastoralism will remain an economic mainstay, although the form it takes may change.

THE DEPTH AND BREADTH OF PASTORAL NOMADISM

Pastoralists historically occupied the rolling plains of grass, scrubland, and semi-desert punctuated by mountain ranges that extend from the Hungarian plain and the Black Sea in the west across the Kazakh steppe and Mongolian Plateau and into Manchuria (Fig. 6.1). This steppe pastoral zone has two major divisions: the Mongolian Plateau in the east and the Russian and Kazakh steppes in the west. The emergence of pastoral nomads as a unique ethnoscape in this region began in the 1st millennium BCE and (in geographical terms) has remained remarkably stable ever since. Seen from within, however, there are distinctions between the pastoral nomads on the Mongolian Plateau and their cousins on the lower-lying steppe lands in the west.

The Mongolian Plateau extends well beyond the modern nation-state of Mongolia to include parts of Buriatia in Russia and Inner Mongolia and northern Xinjiang in China. Lying at 1500 m or more in elevation, it is significantly higher, dryer, and colder than steppes to the west (see Goulden, this volume). Mountain ranges (Pamir, Tien-shan, and Altai) separate the two zones and constitute a long-term political and cultural frontier. With the exception of the Soviet period, nomads on the Mongolian Plateau historically focused their attention on China while those on the Kazakh and south Russian steppe had closer connections with the Near East and Europe.

The best pasturage on the Mongolian Plateau is located on the northern margin, in the regions drained by tributaries of Lake Baikal and the Amur River, and along the slopes of the Altai Mountains. Here, the steppe



6.1. Inner Asian historical pastoral sphere, corresponding with the Mongolian Plateau.

grasslands disappear into the Siberian forest zone, which was inhabited by dispersed groups of hunters and reindeer herders since 1000 BCE (Vainshtein 1980:129). They had connections with the steppe nomadic pastoralists further south who sought to extract from them high-value furs and other forest products that were then traded throughout Eurasia. But because the Siberian forest zone was not suitable for sheep or horse pastoralism (and because the steppe is unsuitable for reindeer pastoralism), the regions remained culturally distinct.

Though the cultures remained distinct, the people did not. From the earliest periods, groups from the forest zone often migrated south, adopting a new pastoral way of life in the process. Elements of their previous cultural background often persisted, however. The elaborate woodworking skills needed to make yurt frames undoubtedly had a forest zone origin that was retained even in the treeless steppe. The earliest classic horse nomads dating from the middle of the 1st millennium BCE were renowned for art motifs that included stylized forest predators and deer with elaborate antlers (Jacobson 2006; Jettmar 1964). The relationship among the peoples and

cultures along the Mongolian-Siberian interface has not been well explored. The written records available to historians are limited and archaeological research has only just begun (Allsen 2006:124–28).

The southern edge of the Mongolian Plateau, which overlooks China, came to be demarcated by the Great Wall. Although the ecological boundary between the steppe grasslands and the areas suitable for agriculture is not so sharp, it was the policy of many Chinese dynasties to draw a distinct line between them and the nomadic societies to their north. After 300 BCE this frontier zone (though not the Great Wall itself) remained surprisingly constant, as did China's attempts to keep its own border population isolated from the independent nomads of the north. While the frontier here was linear, it was hardly fixed, for it straddled a transitional region that could support nomads, farmers, or communities that mixed both. Unlike China's southern frontier where over the long term foreign peoples were culturally assimilated and incorporated into China, the steppe frontier remained largely impervious to such cultural assimilation (Lattimore 1940).

The nomadic pastoral ethnoscape was defined as much by politics as it was by economics. Conflicts between China and the nomads in Mongolia were rarely driven by disputes over frontier pasturelands, however. Far more significant to the nomads was the wealth of China that lay beyond the walls and was the source for cloth, metals, and grain. Nomadic peoples sought access to border markets where they could trade pastoral products for such goods, but if denied, they turned to raiding the frontier for these same products as well as captives who were often transported to the north to serve as farmers (Yü 1967; Jagchid and Symons 1989). Not surprisingly, over the centuries there came to be a similar pattern between the nomads and successive Chinese dynasties. These peace treaties organized regular borders for markets for peaceful trade and often included supplies of luxury goods as subsidy payments to the nomad political elite. Over the course of time, the steppe nomads in Mongolia found it advantageous to offer frontier peace in exchange for payments of silk and other valuable items from China. Such payments were often described as "gifts" by the Chinese governments that provided them, but they could be enormously large and made Mongolia a key link in a supply train that underlay the overland international "silk route." The Xiongnu Empire (209 BCE–155 CE), Türk Empire (552–630 CE and 683–734), Uighur Empire (745–840), and Mongol Empire (1206–1348) were the best known of these powerful steppe polities (Barfield 1989).

To the east the Mongolian steppe was separated from Manchuria by the Khinghan and Jehol Mountains. Nomadic peoples from Mongolia occupied the western slopes of the Khinghan Mountains from the late Bronze Age, but they made relatively little use of the far steeper slopes of the range's eastern flank that descended into the Manchurian Basin. Between the Khinghan and the Jehol mountains lay a large gap where rolling grasslands extended beyond the plateau into Manchuria, forming the Liaosi steppe. This was the home of an important nomadic population similar in culture to those found on the Mongolian Plateau but with its own distinct political history and tradition. From what can be discerned in Chinese accounts beginning in the 2nd century BCE, their socio-political organization has been more egalitarian than the more hierarchically organized central Mongolian nomads. For this reason these Manchurian steppe nomads and forest peoples often became subjects of their nomadic cousins in the west when the latter formed great empires. However, in times of anarchy when political organization within both China and Mongolia fragmented, groups from this region produced unusually powerful states that combined Chinese administration with a nomad military. This included almost all of the foreign dynasties that came to rule over China: Toba Wei (385–550), Khitan Liao (907–1125), Jurchen Jin (1114–1234), and Manchu Qing (1644–1911). The Qing was particularly effective in exploiting a dual organization rule, and it ruled Mongolia directly for over 200 years, a feat that no native Chinese dynasty was able to accomplish (Barfield 1989:229–65).

Mongolia's western neighbor was eastern Turkestan and the Altai Mountains. The southern area encompassed an extensive region of arid lands consisting of deserts, oases, and dry steppe stretching from the Gansu corridor to the oasis cities of southern Xinjiang. The pastoral areas lay north of this along the slopes of the Tien-shan and Altai Mountains. These usually constituted the western part of the Mongolian cultural zone. It was a core area for all the important nomadic empires (Xiongnu, Turks, Mongols, and Zunghars) based in central Mongolia. It only became culturally distinct from Mongolia after the Manchu Qing dynasty destroyed the Mongol-speaking Zunghar nomads in the mid-18th century and allowed the region to be resettled by Kazakh nomads, Turkic-speaking Muslims who dominate the Altai today (Millward 2007).

The Nomadic Economic Base

Pastoralism in Mongolia depended on the exploitation of the extensive but seasonal steppe and mountain pastures. Since humans cannot digest grass, raising livestock was an efficient way of exploiting the energy of a grassland ecosystem. This is the essence of the pastoralist technoscape. The herds consisted, as the Mongols say, of the "five animals": sheep, goats, horses, cattle, and camels, a pattern that remained constant from the rise of the first horse-riding pastoralists in the middle of the 1st millennium BCE into the 21st century (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1. Livestock Numbers in Contemporary Mongolia (2005)

Sheep	11,686,400
Goats	12,238,000
Cattle	1,841,600
Horses	2,005,300
Camels	256,600

Source: Kerven 2006:16

The ideal was to approach self-sufficiency in pastoral production by having all the animals necessary for both subsistence and transportation. The proportion of each species within a herd reflected the constraints imposed by local ecological conditions: a higher percentage of cattle in wetter regions, proportionately more goats than sheep in areas of marginal pasture, and larger numbers of camels along desert margins. In highland regions, yaks took the place of cows.

The horse has always held pride of place among Mongolian nomads. Indeed, steppe pastoralism has often been defined by the preeminence it gave to horse-raising and -riding. The horse figured most prominently in Mongolian military exploits because it gave them mobility and power in battle to defeat opponents much larger in number. The oral epics of steppe peoples have always sung their praises, and the horse sacrifice was an important ritual in traditional steppe religions. The man on horseback was the very symbol of steppe nomadism and a metaphor for its military and political power.

The number of horses has always been highest in those parts of the steppe with access to abundant pasture and water. Steppe horses are particularly well adapted to the harsh conditions of the region. Although small in

size, they are very hardy and capable of living on the open range throughout the winter without fodder, conditions that would kill other breeds of horses. Just as camels transformed the deserts of the Near East from barriers into highways, so the horse permitted rapid movement of steppe nomads across vast distances, allowing communication and cooperation among peoples that were highly dispersed.

Sheep and goats are by far the most important subsistence animals. They are the economic mainstay of steppe pastoralism because small stock reproduce more rapidly than large stock (cattle, horses, camels) and can consume a wider variety of grasses. They are also the main source of milk and meat for food, and wool, hair, and hides used to produce felt, rope, clothing, and storage bags. In the absence of wood their dried dung can be used as fuel.

On the Mongolian Plateau sheep historically accounted for between 50 and 60 percent of all animals raised, although their numbers declined in the arid deserts, at high altitudes, or in the forest margin regions where the pasture was poorer in grasses. In the 20th century the demand for fine wool increased; as a consequence, the percentage of sheep (key to the subsistence economy) declined as cashmere goats (most profitable in a cash economy) expanded. Today Mongolia produces 3,300 tons of raw cashmere, about 25 percent of the world's total (Kerven 2006:17–18).

Large stock (horses and cattle) provide a secondary source of milk and meat. Fermented mare's milk (*koumiss*), in particular, has been the favorite drink of the steppe nomads for thousands of years and remains so today. Herds of large stock are grazed separately from the sheep and goats because the latter crop the grass too closely for large stock to graze after them. This required special planning: specific pastures were either reserved for grazing large stock or they were pastured before the sheep and goats when a single pasture was used.

Bactrian (two-humped) camels are the breed that is most characteristic on the Eurasian steppe. In addition to providing mobility for ordinary nomadic families, camels were the transport foundation of the overland caravan routes linking eastern and western Eurasia for more than 2,000 years. When those routes declined, so did the importance of the camel. Unlike their one-humped dromedary relatives in Arabia, Bactrian camels have a thick wool coat that enables them to survive cold winters. Bactrian camels' hair has always been highly valued for making cloth and continues to be an important export to the world market today. The percentage of camels is

highest in arid areas where it was more difficult to raise horses and cattle. In the 1940s, for example, there were twice as many camels in the Gobi Desert as there were on the eastern steppe and six times more than in the forest steppe (Table 6.2).

Table 6.2. Herd Composition on the Northern Mongolian Steppe by Region (1940s)

	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL LIVESTOCK				
REGION	SHEEP	GOAT	CATTLE	HORSE	CAMEL
Eastern Steppe	58.6	14.0	11.7	12.8	2.9
Khanghai Forest-Steppe	57.7	17.0	13.0	11.1	1.2
Gobi Desert Steppe	51.1	27.6	4.5	9.2	7.6
Altai Mountain Steppe	56.0	29.1	5.7	6.5	2.7
TOTAL	55.4	22.3	8.7	9.9	3.7

Source: Krader 1955:309–12

Pastoralists in Mongolia take greater advantage of multiple uses of their animals than nomads in other parts of the world. The relatively rigid distinction between transport and subsistence animals common elsewhere was, and is, unusual here. If an animal could be used for both, it was. Steppe nomads not only rode horses but milked mares, ate horse meat (and sometimes blood), and used their skins for leather. Similarly, while they used camels primarily for carrying baggage, they also milked them and used them as a source of hair and occasionally food. Oxen that were exclusively subsistence animals elsewhere pulled carts, carried heavy loads, and were even ridden!

The Family Camp Group

Throughout central Eurasia, pre-modern pastoralists shared similar principles of organization. The minimal social unit on the steppe was the household, usually measured by the number of tents or yurts. The minimal economic and political unit was the camp group (*ail*, Mongolian; *aul*, Turkic). The term was applied both to the small mobile camping groups consisting of only a dozen yurts, as well as to the hundreds that might occupy a single large winter camping area. Ideally it was composed of patrilineal relatives who shared common pasture and camped together when possible (Krader 1963).

Camping groups composed of extended families were well adapted

to subsistence pastoral production. They could supply the labor needed to maximize herding without having to regularly hire outsiders. Because a herdsman could efficiently look after hundreds of animals, individually owned livestock could be combined to create a single large herd. Similarly, camping as extended family groups made it easier for the women to carry out their cooperative tasks such as milk processing or felt making. But individual owners were always responsible for their own livestock, and disagreements about their management traditionally were resolved by one party joining a different herding group. Large groups of kin also provided protection against theft and allies in disputes with other groups.

The organization of pastoralism beyond the family group is not well documented historically. For example, in the 18th and 19th centuries, Buddhist monasteries and princely families came to control large numbers of animals and the people who herded them. They reorganized the pastoral economy in order to graze different species separately, tailoring their migrations to the types of pasture and water requirements best suited to each. Such specialization improved the efficiency of pastoral production through better management of multiple resources. It was a strategy that required the unified management of a large number of animals, access to very large areas of grazing, and a high level of coordination. The pastoral collectives established in Mongolia during the 20th century were similarly specialized, but herding reverted back to the family level with the collapse of socialism. It is not known whether such reorganizations of the pastoral economy also occurred in earlier periods of highly centralized control, such as during the Mongol Empire in the 13th century.

Yurt Dwellings

Nomadism requires pastoralists to move with their animals throughout the seasonal migration. Shelter and household goods, therefore, need to be portable. In this respect nothing is more characteristic of, or so well adapted for, steppe pastoralism than the yurt. It consists of a series of folding wooden lattice frameworks that are set in a circle around a doorframe. Wooden spokes are then slotted into a round wooden crown and then tied onto the top of the lattice frame to form a hemispherical or flattened dome, depending on the angle at which they were bent. Four or five people can erect a yurt in about an hour. By employing round walls and a domed roof, yurts maximize the amount of usable space within the structure. The

design also withstands the most severe conditions encountered by any pastoral nomads, including high winds, severe cold, and rain or snowstorms. The heavy felts that cover the frame minimize heat loss through radiation, and its favorable ratio of exterior surface to enclosed space make it efficient to heat in the winter. During the summer season, the side felts can be rolled up or replaced with a reed screen to allow for easy air circulation, keeping its interior cool even in hot deserts (Szabo and Barfield 1991:59–81).

There are two main types of yurts: the Mongolian *ger* (Fig. 6.2) and the Turkic *ooee* (Fig. 6.3) (Kharuzin 1896). The Mongolian yurt has a lower profile and less headroom than the Turkic variety because its struts were straight. It also employs two center columns to support the roof crown. By

6.2. Latticework of a Mongolian *ger*.

6.3. Latticework of a Kazakh *ooee*, Altai Mountains.

contrast, the Turkic-style yurt is more hemispherical in profile because it has curved roof struts beginning about 40 cm above its attachment to the lattice and needs no internal columns.

Migratory Cycle

The migratory cycle on the Eurasian steppe takes two basic forms: horizontal movements across level plains and vertical movements up and down mountains. Nomads inhabiting the flat steppe generally made much longer migrations, moving north in the summer and south in the winter. Those employing vertical movements could accomplish the same feat simply by changing the altitude of their camps, so their migrations were much shorter. In both cases the goal is to seek fresh pastures to replace those that had been grazed out or dried out. This maximizes the amount of forage available to the animals, allowing nomadic pastoralists to maintain much larger herds by regular movement to new pastures. However, the size of the herd is always limited by the availability of grassland or fodder at the harshest season. For this reason, the capacity of winter camps has always been the critical variable in determining the carrying capacity of the grasslands. The number of satisfactory winter camping sites is therefore limited because each needs to combine ready access to water, shelter from the wind, and sufficient pasture to last the season. Favored locations include lower-lying mountain valleys, the banks of streambeds, and shallow depressions on the steppe. A windswept area free of snow is also preferable, but in a pinch the horses can be let loose to paw through icy surfaces to uncover the pasture below, which other animals can then graze. One way to make winter pastures last longer is to restrict grazing on them during other seasons, but this requires the ability to keep other pastoralists out. More than other seasonal camping areas, winter camps tend to remain fixed over time, and families usually return to the same site each year. Winter camps, therefore, usually have higher population concentrations than camps in other seasons.

Winter pastures can provide only a bare minimum of subsistence. Under open range conditions, the livestock lose considerable weight. As a somewhat sardonic nomad proverb explains, "Sheep are fat in the summer, strong in the autumn, weak in the winter, and dead by spring." In the 20th century governments made attempts to encourage greater production of fodder crops to supplement limited winter grazing, but this requires a

substantial capital investment that can be hard for poorer pastoralists to maintain over time.

Winter herding is a dangerous business, for shepherds freeze along with their animals when caught unprepared by sudden storms. The greatest danger to livestock is a *dzud*, a Turko-Mongolian term that describes conditions that impede or destroy access to grazing from October to May. Conditions that lead to dzud include heavy snowfall (white dzud) or the formation of an impenetrable ice layer over pastures (ice dzud). Although such severe events might occur but once a generation, they cripple the pastoral economy for years afterwards. An example of just how damaging such conditions could be occurred in 2003 when an estimated 2.5 million animals perished in Mongolia as a result of a severe winter dzud, one of a series that began there in 1999.

Aided by the spring thaw and rains, steppe pastures bloom and camping groups disperse widely to take advantage of the newly abundant pasture. Moving into these grasslands, nomads can now exploit pastures that have no permanent water sources but do have seasonally available pools of melted snow in low-lying areas. Animals weak from the winter's cold and hunger begin to recover their weight and vitality. Lambing commences and fresh milk becomes available. Although normally considered one of the best of times, as noted above there is always the risk of potential disaster if an unseasonable late spring snowstorm produces a dzud at the time when the newborn animals are at their most vulnerable.

Movement to the summer pastures begins when the spring grasses dry out or have been consumed by the animals. Herding households are most dispersed during this season in order to take advantage of all available pasture. To maximize production, the herd can be split up so that the milking animals remain near the camp while the other animals graze in more distant pastures. The abundant milk during this season can be processed into dried yoghurt for future use. Fermented mare's milk is drunk fresh.

The summer pastures are abandoned at the onset of cooler weather when nomads begin the return migration to their winter quarters. The sheep are normally sheared at this time. Much of the wool is reserved for felt production, which nomads make themselves using coarse wool to produce the yurt's thick felt wall panels and floor coverings. The more delicate wool sheared from the lambs can be made into cloaks, winter boots, or saddle blankets. Cashmere goats are sheared for their valuable wool, not

home use. Autumn is also traditionally the time to breed sheep in order to ensure a spring lambing, for lambs dropped out of season on the open steppe have a high mortality rate. Pastoralists who employ stored fodder cut it in the fall. While pastoralists attempt to maintain as many live animals as possible, they must also plan carefully to determine how many animals they can reasonably hope to support through the winter. For this reason, surplus livestock are slaughtered and their meat preserved for use during the winter.

Before the expanding Qing Empire came to control Mongolia in the last century, autumn was the season in which nomads most often raided sedentary areas in China. Their horses were strong, the work of the pastoral cycle was largely done, and the farmers had completed their harvests. When successful, such raids provided grain to help the nomads through the winter.

Control of Resources

In steppe pastoral societies, pasture is normally held in common by extended kinship or descent groups. Nomadic migrations were not random but within a defined range of pastures to which a group had access. Where pasture is dependable, nomads have only a few fixed camp sites to which they return each year. This is particularly true in the forest steppe zone where pastoralists could establish permanent winter villages with barns for their animals and cultivate nearby fields for grain and fodder. Where only marginal pastures are available, the migratory cycle displays both more frequent movement and greater variation in the location of camps. Right of transit through another's territory was a generally accepted principle, although disputes could easily arise when migrating groups were accused of moving too slowly in order to graze their animals. While nomads defended proprietary rights over such fixed investments as wells and winter camp sites (particularly if they had built barns or houses), the concept of exclusive land ownership was poorly developed at the family level.

The nomads' ability to readily transport their herds and families has had considerable political importance. In the pre-modern period, it made them practically invulnerable to conquest by neighboring sedentary states until modern times. For when steppe nomads were threatened with invasion, they, unlike farming communities, could temporarily move their entire population and pastoral economy out of harm's way. Attackers encountered nothing but empty plains and abandoned campsites, and they

were invariably forced to withdraw when their supplies ran low. The nomads would then harass a retreating army all the way back to the frontier, often inflicting such heavy losses that they would not think of returning any time soon. The Persian king Darius the Great lost much of his army when he attempted to chase the Scythian nomads across the steppes of southern Russia in 514 BCE (Herodotus 1987(iv): 131–32). The Chinese also complained of the same tactics four centuries later during their wars with the Xiongnu of Mongolia. No match for China's large armies, the Xiongnu made it a point to retreat before they were attacked, as Sima Qian wrote: "If the battle is going well for them they will advance, but if not, they will retreat, for they do not consider it a disgrace to run away. Their only concern is self-advantage, and they know nothing of propriety or righteousness" (1961(2): 159).

On the other hand, when one pastoral people, seeking to permanently occupy key pasture areas, attacked another, the latter could not resist by strategically retreating. If successful, the aggressor groups could occupy vital winter campsites and thereby take control of the whole area. Given a choice between submitting or fleeing, many defeated tribes maintained their autonomy by emigrating. Indeed, the history of central Eurasia was replete with examples of whole peoples periodically relocating hundreds, even thousands, of kilometers away and establishing new migratory ranges there. Such mass movements necessarily displaced other tribes in their turn, eventually leading to invasions of sedentary areas by those nomads occupying the margin of the steppe. These large-scale emigrations were the results of political decisions by tribes to find a new home range rather than fight for their old one. They were not the product of hungry sheep seeking new pasture. But they were exceptional.

This historical pattern changed when Mongolia became part of the Qing Empire. Princely families, supported by the Manchu government, were assigned large tracts of land and the people within them. The ordinary nomads assigned to these territories were banned from moving elsewhere. Buddhist monasteries were later granted similar legal rights over territory and manpower. This situation created what amounted to a feudal system and allowed for government control over nomad areas that had not previously been possible (Sandorj 1980).

PASTORALISM IN THE 20TH AND 21ST CENTURIES

From the 17th to 19th centuries, the nomadic peoples of the Eurasian steppe lost their political autonomy to the expanding Russian and Chinese empires. However, this had little impact on the fundamental organization of the pastoral economy at the family level. This changed during the 20th century when socialist governments imposed various types of collectivist institutions on their pastoral populations, beginning with areas that fell within the Soviet Union. Although avoiding formal incorporation into the Soviet Union, Mongolia became a client state in the mid-1920s. Its economic policies then closely followed the Soviet Union, its main trading partner and provider of foreign aid. However, unlike the Soviet Union, the rate of collectivization was slower and did less damage to the pastoral economy.

The southern areas (i.e., Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang) that fell under Chinese rule also saw the pastoral economy collectivized (but for a much shorter period) following the establishment of the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) in 1949. But collectivization presented far less of a challenge to Mongols in this region than the continuous encroachment on their land by poor Chinese peasants. Beginning in the mid-19th century these immigrant populations had increasingly displaced the indigenous Mongols and their pastoral economy, a process that began before and continued after the establishment of the PRC. The best pasture areas were converted into farms occupied by ethnic Chinese. The Mongol pastoralists were therefore pushed into ever more marginal areas and became a small minority within their own ethnic region. By 2000, Han Chinese constituted 80 percent of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region's 18.5 million people (Department of Population, Social, Science and Technology Statistics of the National Bureau of Statistics of China 2003).

Under socialism, traditional nomadic pastoralism was viewed as a low-technology, low-output system of production that was inferior to any sort of agriculture. To officials based in Beijing or Moscow, the regular seasonal movement and tent dwellings were not seen as a successful adaptation to a semiarid grassland environment but as evidence of an unfortunate backwardness. Mongol officials remained more sympathetic since many had direct experience with pastoralism and saw it as part of Mongolian culture. Socialist states therefore settled the nomads into fixed communities organized around collectives in which large-scale animal husbandry could meet

the requirements of the state. The collective structure changed herding patterns. The state-owned livestock was raised in a more stationary manner that required mechanization, the production of fodder for winter feeding, and saw the introduction of new varieties of more productive imported livestock. Herders were reorganized into specialized work units that focused on a single species rather than the mixed herds that families had raised before. Each collective added or expanded agriculture to produce more grain crops (Goldstein and Beall 1994; Humphrey 1994).

The economic outcome was mixed. General standards of living and levels of education rose with the help of state subsidies. Overall productivity of the pastoral economy rose along with a large increase in livestock density. However, overgrazing (caused by overstocking and the introduction of poorly adapted imported breeds) degraded the grasslands in many areas, sometimes severely. The increased level of mechanization also made pastoralists dependent on the subsidized fuel and spare parts that they could not otherwise afford. In other words, the system was not self-supporting economically and was eroding its own resource base. But government subsidies obscured the long-term consequences of these negative outcomes.

These contradictions became apparent with the beginning of economic reform in China in the mid-1980s and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The herding economies then became subject to market forces, and communities were no longer subsidized by the state. In Mongolia and Russia, pastoralists responded to the collapse of the old socialist institutions by reverting to a dependency on kinship networks for organizing production and acquiring goods where market mechanisms had failed. In China, pastoralists attempted to keep pace by intensifying pastoral production for the market. But such adaptations were no solution to the environmental and structural economic problems that they could not address themselves.

In their impressively documented comparative regional study, Humphrey and Sneath (1999) observe that pastoralists throughout the region now suffer from similar problems that have come in the wake of these changes. These include:

1. a drastic decline in local manufacturing and degradation of an already poor infrastructure;
2. growing economic differentiation among and within communities;

3. protectionist economic policies that have led to widespread smuggling to avoid them; and
4. unreliable laws concerning the ownership of private property along with poor fiscal and tax policies that discourage long-term investment.

Despite these common problems, there were significant differences between regions because pastoralists in China, Mongolia, and Russia confronted different state policies and economic problems. Beginning in the 1980s, economic reforms in China gradually replaced collectivism with a policy of privatization that returned livestock to individual families. This led to rising differences between those who have succeeded in the new economy and those who have not, in some cases leading to the emergence of patron-client relationships in which poorer pastoralists must seek work from their wealthier neighbors. Along with the allocation of animals, the Chinese government also granted households rights to specific pastures. In northern Xinjiang, where pastures were relatively plentiful and the economy more subsistence-based, observers praised this decision for avoiding a "tragedy of the commons," the over-exploitation of collective resources by maximizing individuals. However, in areas such as Inner Mongolia where the remaining pasturage is less dependable and overstocked, this has not been the case (Sneath 2000; Williams 2002). Some private owners raising cashmere goats for cash sales there have been "mining" their pastures in the hope of making so much money that they can afford to abandon pastoralism entirely and move away after the resource base collapses (Erdenijab 1996; Humphrey and Sneath 1999:90–108).

Mongols such as the Buriats who fell under direct Soviet rule saw the most severe damage done to the pastoral base. The environmental impact on the grasslands produced by the collectives in Russia could be seen so clearly from satellite images that even an untrained eye could trace the border with Mongolia (Humphrey and Sneath 1996 [1], Plate 7). Plowing the steppe to produce winter fodder and grain did much of the damage, but so did building barns, feeding livestock with hay, and using tractors and other vehicles to move livestock around. Most people lived in the collective's administrative center and few moved with the herds.

The collapse of the Soviet Union left its Mongol communities sorting through the wreckage of a system in which they could neither maintain what they had nor create something new. It became a netherworld where

people stayed bound to the old collectives for lack of other opportunities. They could not support the old infrastructure because fuel and machinery were either unavailable or too expensive for everyday use. The imported livestock breeds could not survive winters without fodder and shelter and, unlike local breeds, were incapable of making long treks on foot to more distant pastures during the summers. Even returning to a more subsistence-based pastoralism was difficult because after sixty years of living in a socialized economy, most collective members had no significant pastoral skills and were not keen to leave their houses to take care of livestock. In such a situation, kinship ties, important but more hidden in the Soviet period, became crucial to survival. Local leaders kept the system running by arranging barter transactions, thereby maintaining the importance of the collective as an institution. They discouraged any moves toward private production and appeared to hope that something would eventually turn up (Humphrey 1998).

Mongolia proper also experienced the collapse of its collective system when subsidies from the Soviet Union ended. However, because the country's pastures were more extensive and in better condition than those in Russia, their resource base was stronger. The majority of Mongols had also retained their pastoral skills, or at least had relatives who had. Networks of kin linked people in distant pastures with urban residents so that they could exchange meat and milk products for manufactured goods, operating outside of the money economy. Because pastoralism became more subsistence-oriented during the transition away from socialism (1990–), it was difficult to build the national economy, which depends on exportable pastoral products like camel and cashmere wool. Much of this has been smuggled into China because prices are higher there. Money earned there could be used to buy food and manufactured goods that have higher value in Mongolia.

Unlike either Russia or China, there was a mass move back to yurt dwelling in Mongolia. Many urban dwellers returned to the countryside to take up pastoralism for economic reasons. More recently, however, the pattern has been for rural Mongols to take their yurts and establish new urban neighborhoods around the capital, taking advantage of their new right to move and camp anywhere.

Such difficulties may suggest that pastoralism lacks a future in the region that was once its heartland. Certainly Mongolia is the only country

in the region that fully embraces an identity tied to pastoral nomadism. In Russia, mobile pastoralism is moving towards a form of cash ranching that only engages a minority of the community; neither regular movement nor animal ownership is likely to remain a critical component of their cultural identity. A similar process is occurring in Inner Mongolia where cash ranching of cashmere goats has become a business.

In contrast, a goodly percentage of Mongols in Mongolia and Kazakhs in northern Xinjiang and Mongolia remain firmly tied to a nomadic pastoral tradition and identity and use household labor extensively in their pastoral production. But while these people maintain the nomadic pastoral way of life, the Mongolian government finds it hard to integrate it into a cash economy in which specialization focusing on high-value pastoral products such as cashmere is needed to finance the national economy. People who view their herds as a way of living rather than a profit-making business may keep Mongol culture and tradition alive, but they find it hard to compete in a world where cash has taken precedence over culture and tradition. Still, the pastoral nomadic way of life has always kept itself distinct from the outside world, even as it interacted with it. As long as people have the means to preserve it as a way of life, the nomadic pastoral ethnoscape will endure.

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7

The Prehistory of Mongolian Populations as Revealed by Studies of Osteological, Dental, and Genetic Variation

THEODORE G. SCHURR AND LENORE PIPES

During the past decade, researchers have made a concerted effort to characterize the biogenetic diversity of populations from East Asia. This issue has drawn attention because it is one of several world regions where the initial stages of the diversification of anatomically modern humans took place (Nei and Roychoudhury 1993; Cavalli-Sforza, Menozzi, and Piazza 1994; Jin and Su 2000). In addition, the region is marked by significant, historically documented demographic events such as wars, territorial conquests, and population relocations (Phillips 1969; Gongor 1970; Spuler 1971, 1989, 1994; Sinor 1990; Saunders 2001; Morgan 2007). One of these events was, of course, the expansion of the Mongol Empire, which at its greatest extent, in the 13th and 14th centuries, included a large portion of Eastern Europe and most of Asia (except for India and the southeast portion of the Asian continent). Although it was the most extensive, the Mongol Empire was actually one of a series of great steppe empires that expanded westward to threaten European powers (Sinor 1990; Spuler 1994; Saunders 2001; Morgan 2007).

Despite these well-known political conquests, however, relatively little is known about the Mongols before their rise under Chinggis Khan. It is generally thought that the formation of the current population in Mongolia followed a complex process that involved the mixing of ethnically different

peoples. In this regard, it should be noted that Mongols have traditionally organized themselves into a fluid and flexible system of confederations, tribes, clans, and families (Philips 1969; Gongor 1970; Spuler 1971, 1989, 1994; Badamkhatan 1987; Nyambuu 1992; Saunders 2001; Morgan 2007). This history is of great interest to biological anthropologists because the demography and social organization of these populations may have shaped the patterns of biogenetic diversity in them.

In this chapter, we review data from studies of cranial, dental morphological trait, and genetic diversity in Asian and Siberian populations in an effort to address questions about the origins and affinities of Mongolians. The information about the biological diversity of these populations is drawn from Chinese, Mongolian, Russian, and English language sources; from researchers working in different academic traditions; and from reports published during different stages of development of the field of physical anthropology, which now includes genetics. Consequently, the perspectives coming from these research reports may differ somewhat in their views on the relationships of Mongolians to other Asian populations, and their descriptions of the biological diversity within them. Regardless of these differences, the biological data obtained over the past several decades allow us to begin mapping the process by which Mongolian populations came into being, both in terms of chronology and geography.

It is this effort to map Mongolian history that allows us to discuss these biological data in terms of "-scapes." While this concept is often used to describe specific interaction patterns that involve and transcend nation-states in the age of globalization, one can argue that such landscapes of globalization (Appadurai 1996) have been in existence and shaped Mongolian history for many millennia preceding the modern era. In fact, as we will argue, the patterns of biological variation that emerge from these studies reflect not only processes of evolution and adaptation but also social and political interactions and the exchange of ideas and technologies among populations living in the broad region that now encompasses the modern nation-state of Mongolia.

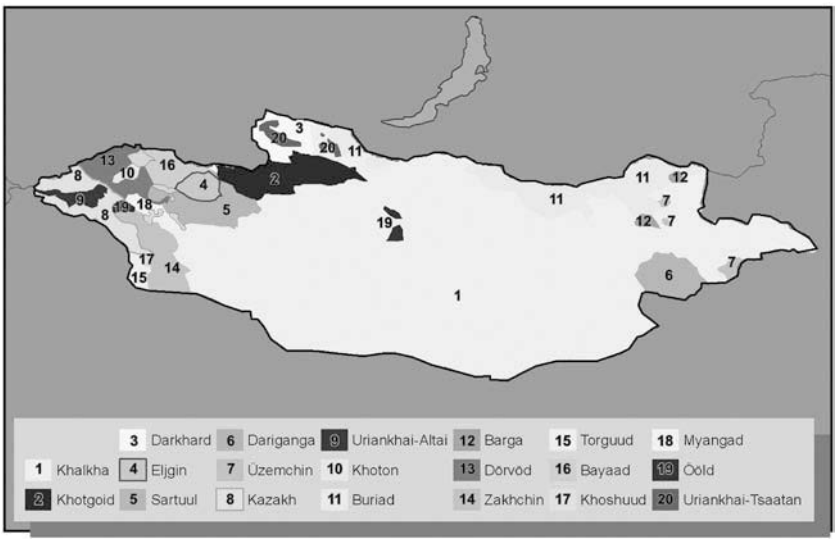
ETHNIC AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY IN MONGOLIA

Before describing the human biological diversity in Mongolia, we will discuss its ethnic and linguistic diversity. The presence of multiple ethnic

groups in the country—and the diversity of languages spoken there—reflect both the emergence of Turkic and Mongolic languages in Northeast Asia and the complex process of ethnogenesis that occurred over the past several millennia. Information about the ethnic identity and language practices of populations living in Mongolia also provides an important context for interpreting the biogenetic data of these groups.

Ethnic Diversity

The main ethnic group in Mongolia is the Khalkha, which is dispersed throughout the entire territory of Mongolia. There are also twenty other ethnic groups living mainly in the marginal areas of the country (Fig. 7.1). They can be generally placed in four culturally distinct clusters, including the Khalkha-Mongols, the Western Mongols or Oirats, Northeastern Mongols (Buriats, Darigangas), and Turkic speakers (Kazakhs, Khoton, Tsaatan, Tuvinians) (Badamkhatan 1987; Nyambuu 1992; Bulag 1998; Morgan 2007). The ethnic groups within the Western Mongol and Northeastern Mongol clusters have generally retained their ancient pre-Chinggis-period tribal names, and originated prior to the Mongol expansion. However, the origin of the Khalkha-Mongol cluster is more complicated, due to its being



7.1. Ethnic groups in Mongolia (modified from National Museum of Mongolian History map).

a rather recent (17th century) amalgam of intermixed tribes and families of heterogeneous origins rather than a single ethnic group per se (Badamkhatan 1987; Nyambuu 1992; Bulag 1998; Morgan 2007).

The Oirat Confederation was the most powerful group of tribes (which included the Durvuds, the Bayads, the Zakhchin, the Uriankhai, and the Torguuds) after the collapse of the Mongol Empire (Nyambuu 1992; Bulag 1998). During the late 16th and early 17th centuries, the scarcity of pasture lands and tribal warfare prompted the Torguuds and Durvuds to migrate to the steppes of western Siberia, which came under the control of Russia after the Yermak Expedition (Erdeniev 1985; Nasidze et al. 2005). In the late 17th century, the descendants of the Oirats formed the Kalmyk Khanate along the lower Volga River in Russia and became a new Mongolian-speaking ethnic group known as the Kalmyks (Erdeniev 1985; Galushkin, Spitsyn, and Crawford 2002). Today, the Torguuds live in the eastern and southeastern regions of the Kalmyk Republic, and are the numerically dominant tribe of the Kalmyk population (Erdeniev 1985; Galushkin, Spitsyn, and Crawford 2002).

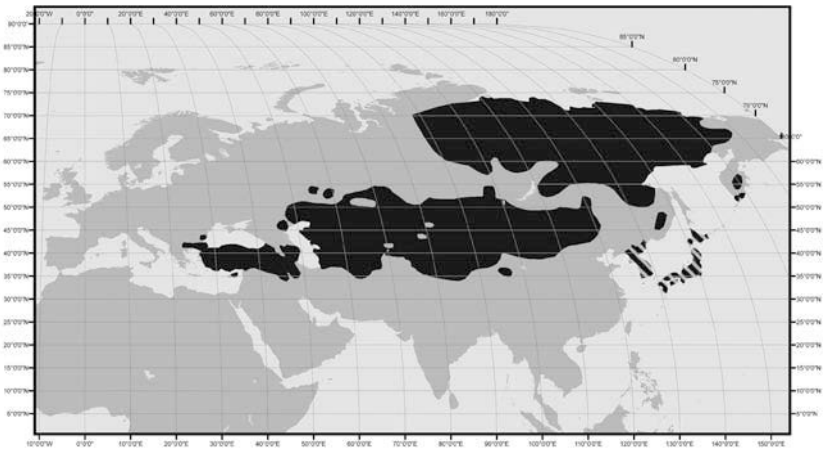
As for the Turkic cluster, the Kazakhs are the most recent arrival (late 19th century) to Mongolia. They are Sunni Muslim and trace their origins directly back to Chinggis Khan (Nyambuu 1992; Bulag 1998; Morgan 2007). The Kazakh populations consist of mostly Abak-Kerei and Naiman tribes who inhabited the Altai and Khovd regions of Mongolia after the Tarbagatai Protocol between Russia and the Qing Dynasty in 1864 (Nyambuu 1992; Bulag 1998; Paine 1996; Finke 1999). By contrast, the Tuvinians represent the ancient inhabitants (at least from the 11th century) of the far west of Mongolia (Nyambuu 1992; Bulag 1998; Morgan 2007).

Several ethnic groups are known to have non-Mongolian origins. The Khotons were brought as serfs from eastern Turkestan (now Sinkiang) to this region by Dzüngarian khans in the 17th century (Nyambuu 1992; Katoh et al. 2005b), while the Sartuuls descend from skilled slaves brought from Iran and Khoresm in the 13th and 14th centuries (Badamkhatan 1987; Nyambuu 1992). However, some groups have ambiguous, albeit non-Mongolian, origins, such as the Darkhads, a small group (~15,000 people) inhabiting the northern taiga region of Mongolia, the Uriankhai (Western Mongol cluster), and the Khamnigan (now a clan of the Buriats). In addition, a few groups were resettled partially or completely within the territory of Mongolia during Manchu rule, such as the Olet and Dariganga, with the latter forming ~300 years ago and now residing mostly in southeastern Mongolia

(Nyambuu 1992; Bulag 1998). Furthermore, the majority of Buriats lives to the south and east of Lake Baikal but also inhabits parts of northern and eastern Mongolia (e.g., Levin and Potapov 1964; Shimizu et al. 2006).

Linguistic Groups

The diversity of human groups in Mongolia is also reflected in the linguistic diversity of the region. A total of thirteen Mongolic languages are spoken in Northeast Asia, including Buriat (Mongolia, China, and Russia), Kalmyk-Oirat (chiefly from the Kalmykia Autonomous Region), and Mongolian (Golden 1992; Janhunen 2003). The latter is the primary language of most residents of Mongolia and is spoken by around 2.5 million people in Inner Mongolia, Mongolia, and Russia. Most linguists view Mongolic languages as belonging with Turkic and Tungusic languages in the Altaic family (Poppe 1965; Janhunen 2003; Starostin, Dybo, and Mudrak 2003) (Fig. 7.2). Within the Tungusic group, Manchu (Dongbei in China) had the greatest number of speakers and was formerly the *lingua franca* between China and the outside world for over 200 years, although today it is practically extinct (Huang 1990; Gorelova 2002; Janhunen 2003). Turkic languages are spoken principally in a nearly continuous band from Turkey, Armenia, and Azerbaijan through the Central Asian republics of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan to Xinjiang in China (Golden 1992;



7.2. Map showing distribution of Altaic languages in northern Eurasia (modified from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Altaic_family2.svg).

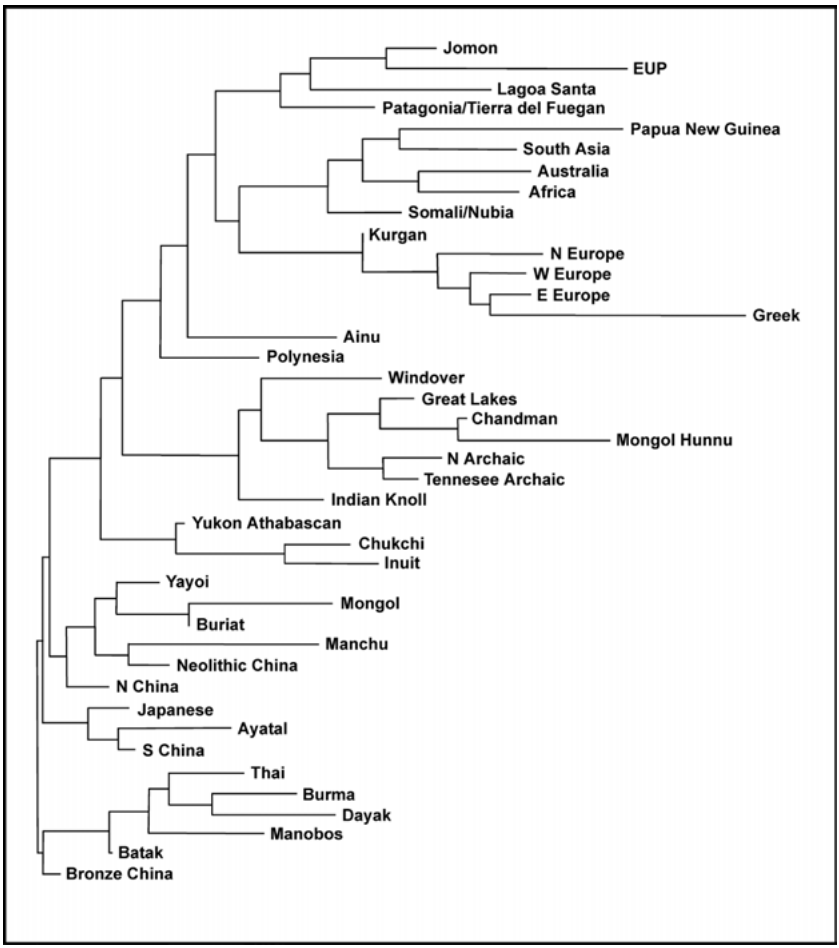
Janhunen 2003). In addition, because they share many linguistic features with Mongolic and Turkic languages, Japanese and Korean are also believed by some (but not all) linguists to be distantly related to them (Poppe 1965; Clauson 1968; Miller 1971; Starostin 1991; Vovin 2001).

CRANIO-FACIAL VARIATION IN MONGOLIA

Having outlined the ethnolinguistic diversity of Mongolia, we will now begin our discussion of the biogenetic diversity found in the country and surrounding areas. Over the past several decades, Russian and Mongolian scholars have undertaken extensive studies of the cranio-facial characteristics of human groups in northern Eurasia. These studies suggest that modern-day Mongolians inhabit the region proposed to represent the origin of the "Mongoloid" racial type,[1] which is prevalent in present-day Mongols as well as the majority of southern and eastern Siberian ethnic populations (Alexeev 1978; Alexeev and Gohman 1984; Alexeev and Trubnikova 1984; Bulag 1998).[2] However, almost all of the Turkic speakers in Mongolia are viewed as belonging to the Southern Siberian (Afanasiev) racial type. This type may have emerged during the introduction of steppe nomadism to East and Central Asia at the end of the Neolithic (2300–2000 BCE) by "Caucasoid" tribes of supposed Indo-European origin, who brought with them an influx of West Eurasian genes and physical traits (Phillips 1969; Alexeev, Gohman, and Tumen 1987; Thornton and Schurr 2004; Anthony 2007). The next several thousand years were marked by the appearance of a succession of dominating tribes that emerged through power struggles in the region (Spuler 1971, 1989, 1994; Sinor 1990; Morgan 2007). It has been suggested that, by the end of the Xiongnu domination of East and Central Asia (3rd century C.E.), the modern biological appearance of Mongolia's inhabitants had probably taken form (Alexeev 1978; Alexeev and Gohman 1984; Alexeev and Trubnikova 1984; Alexeev, Gohman, and Tumen 1987).

Using a less typological approach, Western and Japanese scholars have also analyzed craniofacial metric traits in world populations[3] (Fig. 7.3). They observed that the Mongolian Bronze Age Chandman and Mongol Hunnu (Xiongnu) appeared similar to modern Native Americans from the Great Lakes regions, as well as prehistoric Archaic Period individuals from North America (Brace et al. 2001; Seguchi 2004). Interestingly, the Mongolian Chandman sample was not closely related to the roughly contemporaneous

Chinese Bronze Age sample from Anyang. Nor were Mongols strongly related to the Mongolian Chandman, the Mongol Hunnu, or the late Paleolithic Chinese Upper Cave 101 sample. These patterns suggested biological differences between the Upper Paleolithic inhabitants of greater Northeast Asia and the Neolithic people who later expanded into Siberia and East Asia, as well as the influence of ancient Europeans on Bronze Age Mongolia.



7.3. Neighbor-joining tree based on Mahalanobis distances calculated from craniofacial metric data. Branch lengths reflect genetic distances, while the vertical distances between the lines have no quantitative significance. Bootstrap values represent the percentage of times per 1,000 runs that the branches appear together (modified from Seguchi 2004).

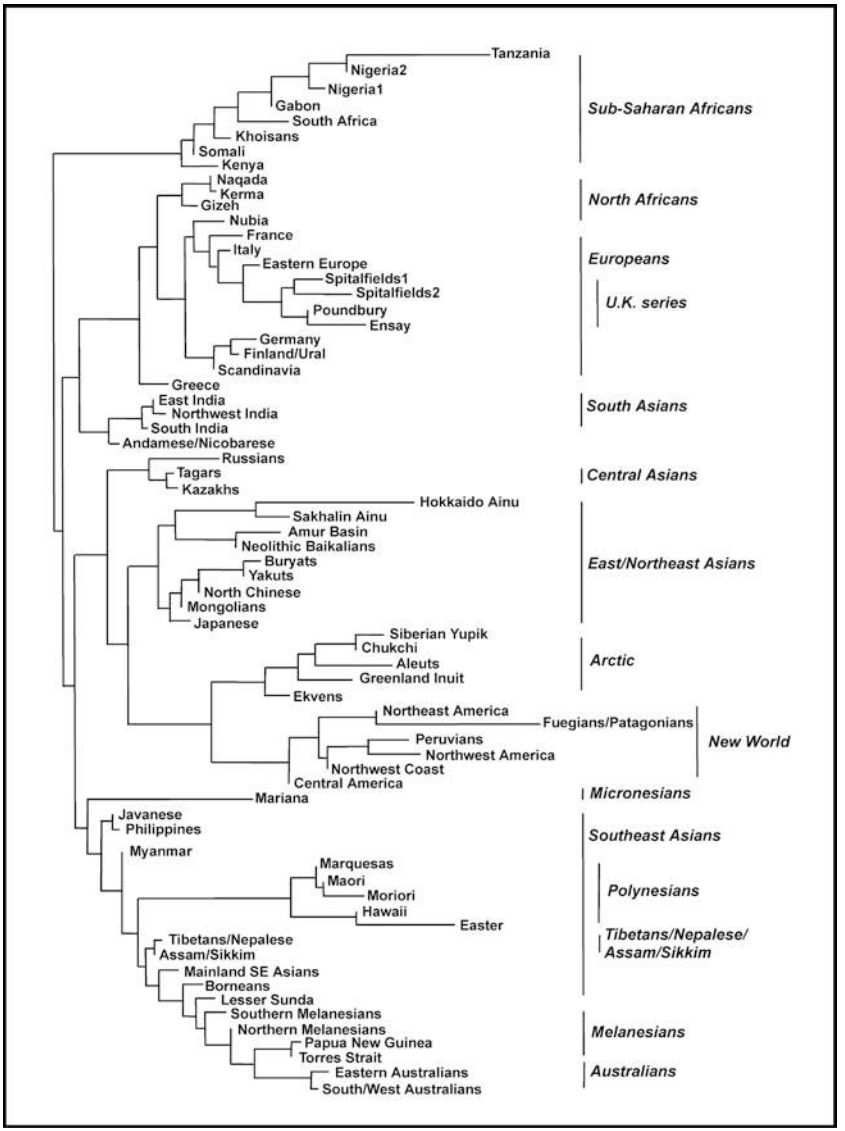
In a similar study, Hanihara, Ishida, and Dodo (2003) investigated the distribution of cranial metric traits in world populations but examined a more expansive data set than used in previous reports. In their neighboring-joining tree of mean measure of divergence (MMD) estimates, the East Asian (EAS), plus Northeast Asian (NEAS), and European samples formed two clearly discernable clusters; Mongols were situated in the former, while Central Asian (CAS) samples were located between the other clusters (Fig. 7.4). This study further revealed the clinal nature of discrete cranial trait variation across regions and the morphological discontinuity in isolated populations such as the Ainu, which probably resulted from restricted gene flow and local adaptation.

DENTAL TRAIT VARIATION IN MONGOLIA

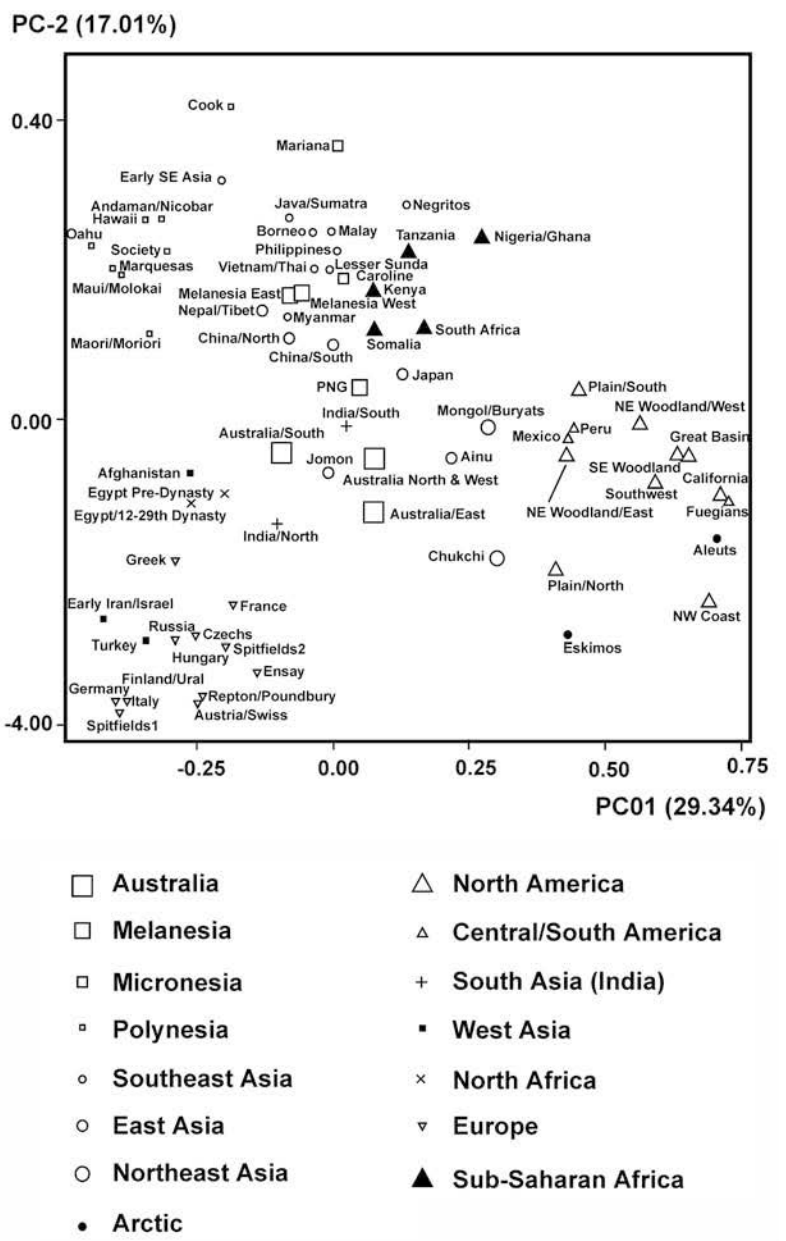
Various researchers have characterized dental variation in Asian and Native American populations in order to reconstruct the peopling of northern Eurasia and the Americas. Turner (1987, 1990, 1992; Turner, Manabe, and Hawkey 2000) interpreted the East Asian dental variation as indicating that the evolution of the Sundadont dental pattern took place in Southeast Asia. Sundadonty is a more generalized dental trait complex and was probably brought to Southeast and East Asia during the initial human expansions into these regions. Most extant populations from Southeast Asia and Australasia exhibit this dental pattern.

East Asian populations with Sundadont dental traits subsequently spread into Northeast Asia. Sundadonty likely evolved into sinodonty in northern China, Mongolia, and southern Siberia, possibly around 30,000 years ago, and certainly before 14,000 years ago, when Paleo-Siberian sinodonts had crossed Beringia into the New World (Turner 1987, 1990, 1992; Turner, Manabe, and Hawkey 2000). The Sinodont dental complex is characterized by traits such as shovel-shaped incisors, single-rooted upper first premolars, triple-rooted lower first molars, and other features. It is typical of Northeast Asian populations but also found in many Native Americans.

In their analysis of dental metric traits in world populations, Hanihara and Ishida (2005) also observed some of these same patterns (Fig. 7.5). In particular, they noted that the Native American, Arctic, and NEAS samples had relatively large mesiodistal crown diameters. Mongols and Buriats



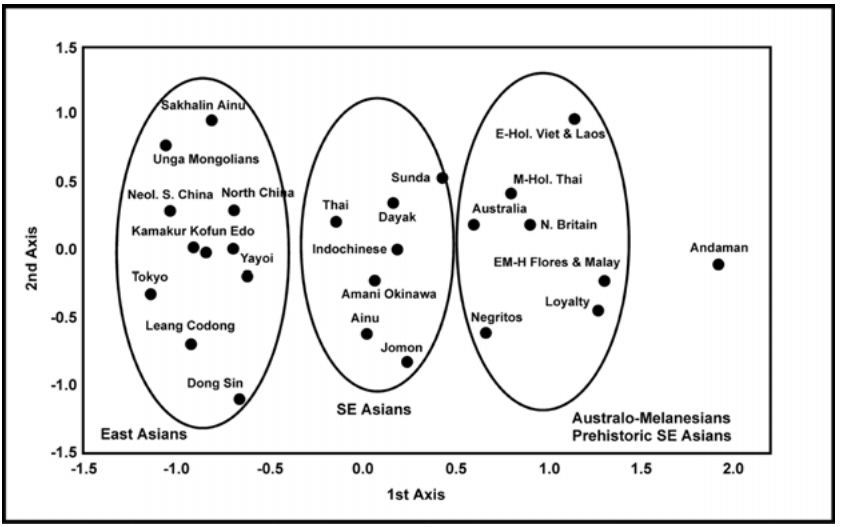
7.4. Neighbor-joining tree based on mean measure of divergence (MMD) distance estimated from cranial metric traits (Hanihara, Ishida, and Dodo 2003).



7.5. Scattergram of first and second principal components (PC) scores based on C-score data generated from dental metric traits (Hanihara and Ishida 2005).

showed similarities to Ainu, Jomon, and Japanese, but also to Native Americans. At the same time, they were slightly more distant from Chinese, Indians, and Aboriginal Australians, all of which have Sundadont traits.

In a similar study, Matsumura and Hudson (2005) examined both metric and nonmetric dental data to test the "two-layer" or immigration hypothesis for the peopling of Southeast Asia. They found close affinities between recent Australo-Melanesian and prehistoric Southeast Asian (SEAS) populations, whereas most modern Southeast Asians possessed a mixture of traits associated with East Asians and Australo-Melanesians (Fig. 7.6). In addition, for both metric and nonmetric dental traits, Mongols clustered with other EAS populations, including Buriats, Koreans, Japanese, and North Chinese populations.



7.6. Multi-dimensional scaling plot of genetic distances based on 16 nonmetric dental traits (redrawn from Matsumura and Hudson 2005).

Overall, these dental trait studies provide general support for the division of EAS populations into Sinodonts and Sundadonts. However, Matsumara and Hudson (2005) argue that Chinese and Japanese populations are more similar to SEAS populations, and that the dental characteristics of most modern Southeast Asians are a mixture of traits associated with East Asians and Australo-Melanesians. In fact, the trait variation of EAS/NEAS dental configurations is relatively large, suggesting a complex population

history marked by an early divergence of populations in this region and multiple migrations from outside sources (Hanihara 2008).

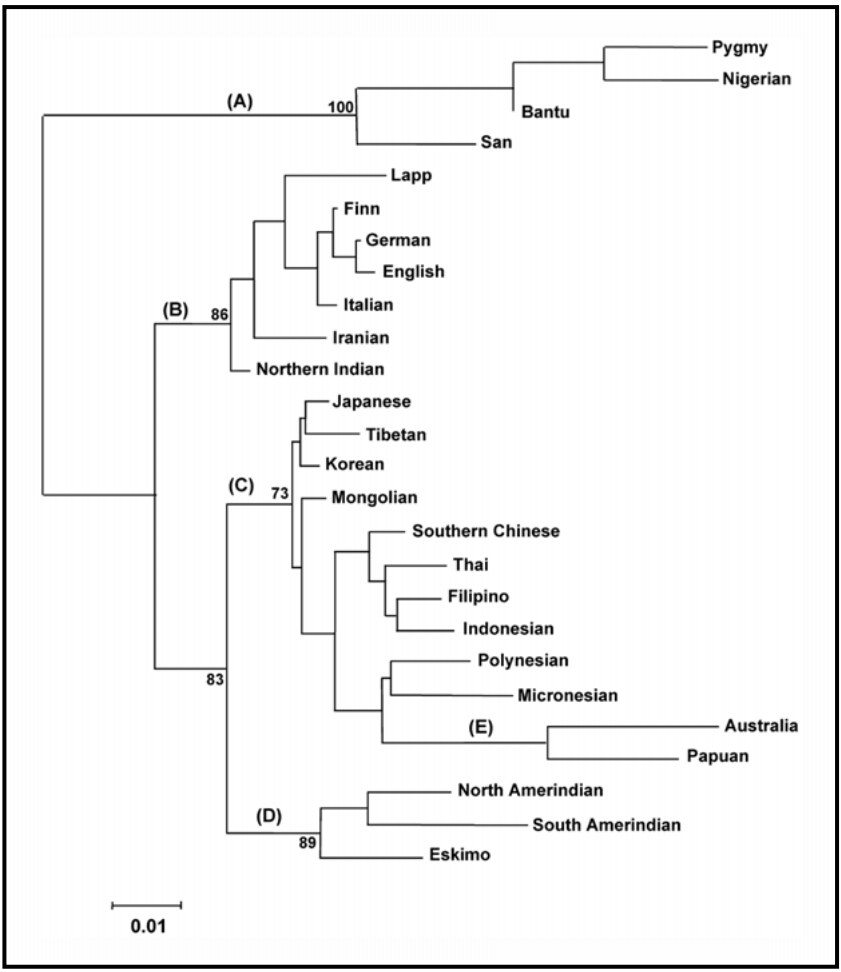
GENETIC VARIATION IN MONGOLIA

In the previous section, we discussed morphological traits that are variable in different human populations and across different regions. Because these traits are under considerable genetic control, they are quite useful for population history studies. In this section, we discuss data from a number of genetic studies of Asian populations and what they indicate about the history of Mongolian populations. The loci discussed include classical genetic markers, immune system genes, and molecular genetic markers such as the mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) and the Y-chromosome. This review of genetic studies is by no means exhaustive, but does provide a reasonably thorough overview of patterns of diversity in Mongolian and other Asian populations.

Classical Genetic Markers

Since the early 1970s, populations from different regions of Asia, including Mongolia, have been extensively analyzed for variation in some blood group systems, serum proteins, and red blood cell enzymes as well as immunoglobulins and HLA class-I and -II loci (Goedde et al. 1987; Matsumoto 1988; Nei and Roychoudhury 1993; Novoradovsky et al. 1993; Cavalli-Sforza, Menozzi, and Piazza 1994). In the early studies, Mongols were observed to cluster together with NEAS populations (i.e., Tibetans, Koreans, and Japanese) and were next closest to SEAS populations. They were less similar to Australo-Melanesian and New World populations (Nei and Roychoudhury 1993) (Fig. 7.7).

However, relatively few of the studies involving biochemical markers or polymorphisms were conducted with the aim of determining the genetic interrelations of Mongolian ethnic groups. Studies analyzing these markers have revealed a high genetic diversity within Mongolian populations but statistically insignificant values of genetic differentiation for regional populations (Rychkov and Batsuuri 1987; Batsuuri 1995; Batsuuri, Ganbold, and Sodgerel 1995; Chimge and Batsuuri 1995, 1999; Chimge et al. 1997; Ganbold, Batsuuri, and Tamjidmaa 1995 ; Ganbold, Batsuuri, and Sharav 1995; Galushkin, Spitsyn, and Crawford 2002). They also showed a decreasing



7.7. Neighbor-joining tree for 26 human populations based on genetic distances, (D_A), estimated from classical genetic markers, with bootstrap values indicated for each interior branch. Major groups of human populations are Africans (A), Caucasians (B), Greater Asians (C), Amerindians (D), and Australopapuans (E) (modified from Nei and Roychoudhury 1993).

cline of alleles from biochemical and immunological loci typically seen in European and West Asian populations from east to west.

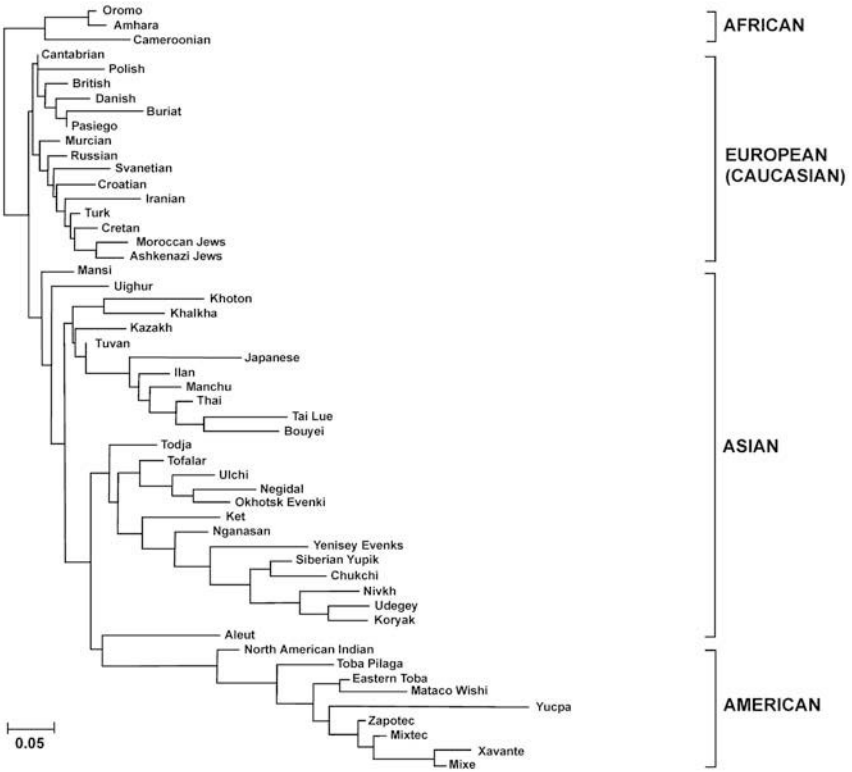
Immunoglobulin (antibody) data have also yielded interesting insights into Asian population history. Matsumoto (1988) summarized the distribution of immunoglobulin allotypes (Gm) in populations from different

regions of Asia. In general, Northeast Asian populations were characterized by the presence of four Gm haplotypes—ag, axg, ab3st, and afb1b3. They were further divided into two groups based on genetic distances estimated from Gm haplotype frequency distributions. The southern group was characterized by a high frequency of Gm^{afb1b3} and a low frequency of Gm^{ag}, while the northern group was characterized by a high frequency of both Gm^{ag} and Gm^{ab3st} and an extremely low frequency of Gm^{afb1b3}.

Populations in China, mainly Han but also minority ethnic groups, exhibited a remarkable heterogeneity of Gm allotypes from north to south. By contrast, Korean and Japanese populations were considerably more homogenous with respect to these genetic markers. The center of dispersion of the Gm^{afb1b3} gene characterizing SEAS populations was identified as the Guangxi and Yunnan area in southwest China (Matsumoto 1988).

The Gm^{ab3st} haplotype, which occurred at its highest frequency in northern Baikal Buriats, appeared widely in Northeast Asia. While dropping sharply in frequency from mainland China to Taiwan and Southeast Asia, this haplotype was present at high frequency among Koryaks, Yakuts, Tibetans, Olunchuns, Tungus, Koreans, Japanese, and Ainu, and was probably also introduced into the Hui, Uighurs, Indians, and Iranians through the Mongol expansion. Based on these findings, Japanese and Koreans clustered within the Northeast Asian group, which likely originated in the Baikal area of Siberia (Matsumoto 1988).[4]

Other immune gene data provided a somewhat different picture of Mongol genetic ancestry. In their analysis of HLA class-I and -II loci from CAS, EAS, and NEAS populations, Uinuk-ool, Takezaki, and Klein (2003) identified a set of alleles and haplotypes that differentiated all of the indigenous Asian populations from other Old World populations. This set was primarily responsible for the grouping of the Asian populations in a single cluster within their population tree (Fig. 7.8). Mongols clustered with Turkic-speaking groups in the part of the tree that also included Japanese, Han and Manchu, and SEAS populations. They were separated from the cluster that included nearly all native Siberian populations, and were also distant from Native American populations. The ethnic groups that did not fall into the native Siberian cluster (Buriat, Mansi, and Tuvan) showed clear evidence of admixture with European/West Eurasian or CAS populations.



7.8. Neighbor-joining tree of human populations based on genetic distances calculated from allele frequencies at the HLA-DRB1, -DQB1, and -DQA1 loci (Uinuk-ool, Takezaki, and Klein 2003).

Mitochondrial DNA Diversity

Numerous studies over the past twenty years have defined a variety of mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) lineages, or haplogroups, in different human populations. Because the mtDNA is strictly maternally inherited and does not recombine, one can reconstruct female genetic genealogies using mutational information contained in haplotypes defined in different human populations. Based on their mutational characteristics, these haplotypes[5] and the haplogroups to which they belong can be arranged in a network or a tree reflecting their sequence of evolution and phylogeographic relationships.

The initial examination of mtDNA variation in Mongolian populations began in the early-to-mid 1990s. Studies by Sambuughin, Petrishev, and

Rychkov (1991, 1992) provided a general impression of mtDNA diversity in the region, but the data were of sufficiently low resolution to reveal any phylogeographic patterns there. Kolman, Sambuughin, and Bermingham (1996) expanded on these findings through the analysis of an expanded set of markers in and sequencing of the hypervariable region I (HVSI) of the mtDNA genome. A similar analysis of Mongolian populations by Merriwether et al. (1996) was directed toward locating the ancestral homeland of Native American populations. Together, these two studies demonstrated that the four major mtDNA haplogroups commonly seen in Native American populations (A–D) were also present in Mongolia (e.g., see Schurr 2004). These maternal lineages comprised roughly half of the mtDNAs in the Mongolian populations sampled, with most of the rest likely belonging to East Eurasian haplogroups.[6] However, due to methodological constraints, these researchers were unable to further define these lineages.

Subsequent studies have provided much more detail about the mtDNA composition of Mongol populations from Xinjiang, Mongolia, and Inner Mongolia, as well as a tentative picture of diversity in other ethnic groups in Mongolia (Kong et al. 2003; Yao et al. 2004; Gokcumen et al. 2008; Pipes, Labuda, and Schurr 2008). All of them have generally shown that the haplogroup distribution in Mongolians consists of mostly East Eurasian lineages (A, B, C, D, F, G, M7, M8, M9, N9a, Y, Z), with a low to modest frequency (4–20 percent) of West Eurasian lineages (H, J, T, U, and W) (Fig. 7.9; see DVD). Most of the East Eurasian haplogroups are observed in indigenous Siberian and NEAS populations (Torroni et al. 1993, 1994; Starikovskaya et al. 1998, 2005; Schurr et al. 1999; Derbeneva et al. 2002a,b; Derenko et al. 2002, 2003, 2004; Pakendorf et al. 2003; Schurr and Wallace 2003; Gokcumen et al. 2008), while M7 haplotypes are much more common in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean populations (Yao et al. 2002; Kivisild et al. 2002; Tanaka et al. 2004; Lee at al. 2006). In addition, haplogroups B and F are commonly seen in East and SEAS populations as well as Tibetans (Ballinger et al. 1992; Torroni et al. 1994; Melton et al. 1995; Qian et al. 2001; Schurr and Wallace 2002; Yao et al. 2002; Kong et al. 2003; Tanaka et al. 2004; Macaulay et al. 2005; Li et al. 2007), but represent a small proportion of the mtDNAs in Mongolians (Fig. 7.9; see DVD).

Recent work with SEAS populations has provided insights into the antiquity and diversification of some of these maternal lineages (Macaulay et al. 2005; Li et al. 2007). Haplogroup ages were estimated for the high

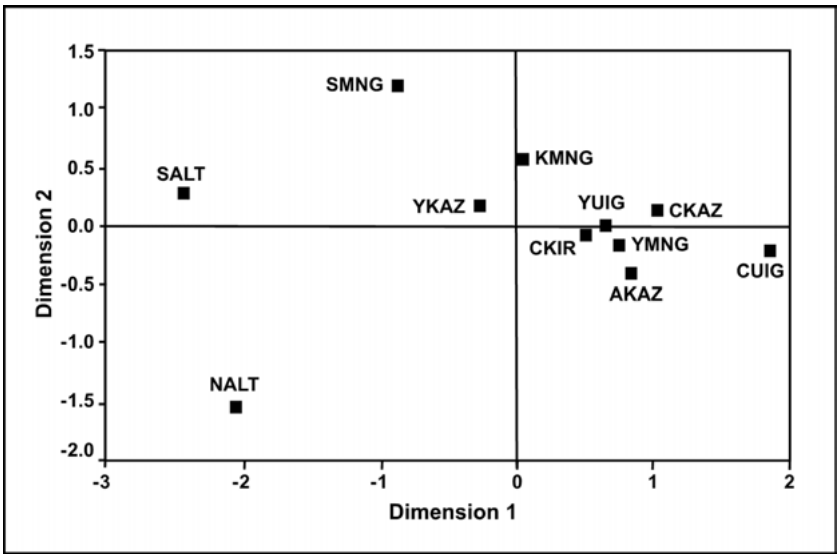
frequency haplogroups (B, F, M7, R) in the region, and they were found to originate about 50,000 years ago. In contrast, subhaplogroups appearing within specific regions or language families arose some 10,000–20,000 years ago. These findings confirm the early human colonization of Southeast Asia and the later emergence of regional gene pools, along with gene flow between them. This same process of genetic differentiation undoubtedly took place in Northeast Asia, giving rise to the distribution of maternal lineages observed there.

By contrast, the West Eurasian haplogroups are much more common in populations inhabiting regions to the west of Mongolia (Comas et al. 1998, 2004; Quintana-Murci et al. 2004; Gokcumen et al. 2008). All of these maternal lineages probably originated in Central or West Asia (Torroni et al. 1996, 1998; Macaulay et al. 1999; Richards et al. 2000; Capelli et al. 2003) prior to their being brought to East Asia by Neolithic steppe populations some 5,000 years ago (Golden 1992; Hiebert 1994; Frachetti 2002; Renfrew 2002; Thornton and Schurr 2004; Anthony 2007). Overall, the frequency of East Eurasian haplogroups decreases in an east-to-west direction, whereas the opposite trend occurs for West Eurasian haplogroups. This pattern likely emerged through the complex population interactions occurring across this region over the past several millennia.

The end result of these dynamic interactions is that most Turkic- and Mongolic-speaking groups possess a common set of maternal haplogroups (C, D, G2a, and H) and a minimal number of haplotypes from these lineages at appreciable frequencies. However, the overall patterns of haplotype diversity in these groups vary considerably, based on their local histories. These findings imply that most contemporary Turkic and Mongolic ethnic groups emerged from a common mtDNA pool that was widely distributed in Central and East Asia (Gokcumen et al. 2008). This interpretation is supported by the statistical analysis of mtDNA sequence diversity in which Mongol, Kazakh, Kirghiz, and Uighur populations cluster together (Fig. 7.10).

Y-chromosome Variation

Numerous studies over the past dozen years have defined a variety of paternal lineages, or Y-chromosome haplogroups, in different human populations.[7] The Y-chromosome evolves more slowly than the mtDNA but has accumulated sufficient variation to permit the delineation of specific branches of the paternal genealogy for human populations.



7.10. A multidimensional scaling plot (MDS) of genetic distances estimates based on mtDNA data for Central Asian populations and Altaian Kazakhs. Population abbreviations: Altaian Kazakhs (AKAZ) and Mongolians (SMNG) from Gokcumen et al. 2008; Mongolians (KMNG) from Kolman, Sambuughin, and Bermingham 1996; Northern Altaians (NALT) and Southern Altaians (SALT) from Zhadanov et al. 2006; Kazakhs (CKAZ), Kirghiz (CKIR), and Uighurs (CUIG) from Comas et al. 1998; and Uighurs (YUIG), Mongolians (YHMG), and Kazakhs (YKAZ) from Yao et al. 2004. The stress value for this plot is 0.0583 (Gokcumen et al. 2008).

These informative markers occur in the nonrecombining region of the Y-chromosome (NRY). Based on their mutational characteristics, these NRY haplogroups can be arranged in a network reflecting their sequence of evolution and phylogeographic relationships.

One of the first studies of Y-chromosome variation in Mongols involved the survey of CAS populations (Zerjal et al. 2002). This analysis revealed a wide array of haplogroups, as well as clinal distribution of West Eurasian haplotypes from west to east, in this broad region. Mongols had primarily haplogroups C and K along with low to moderate frequencies of other haplogroups present in Central/East Asia (D, N3, O3, R1a1) and low frequencies of paternal lineages more commonly seen in populations from the Caucasus and West Asia (J, L, R1a). This pattern of Y-chromosome diversity is generally consistent with the findings of other studies of CAS/EAS populations (Tajima et al. 2002; Katoh et al. 2005a; Xue et al. 2006). The

multidimensional scaling (MDS) analysis of genetic distances estimated from NRY data in these populations showed Mongolians to be similar to Uighurs and Uzbeks and somewhat more distant from Kazakhs, Kirghiz, and Tajiks to the west of them (Fig. 7.11; see DVD).

A similar analysis of the distribution pattern of Y-chromosome haplogroups revealed statistically significant genetic differences between the populations of the Baikal and Altai–Sayan regions (Derenko et al. 2006). These findings were attributed to the differential contribution of CAS/EAS and West Eurasian paternal lineages to the gene pools of modern South Siberians. In this regard, populations from the Baikal region demonstrated a higher prevalence of CAS/EAS lineages, while the populations of the Altai-Sayan regions had a more substantial paternal contribution from populations originating to the West.

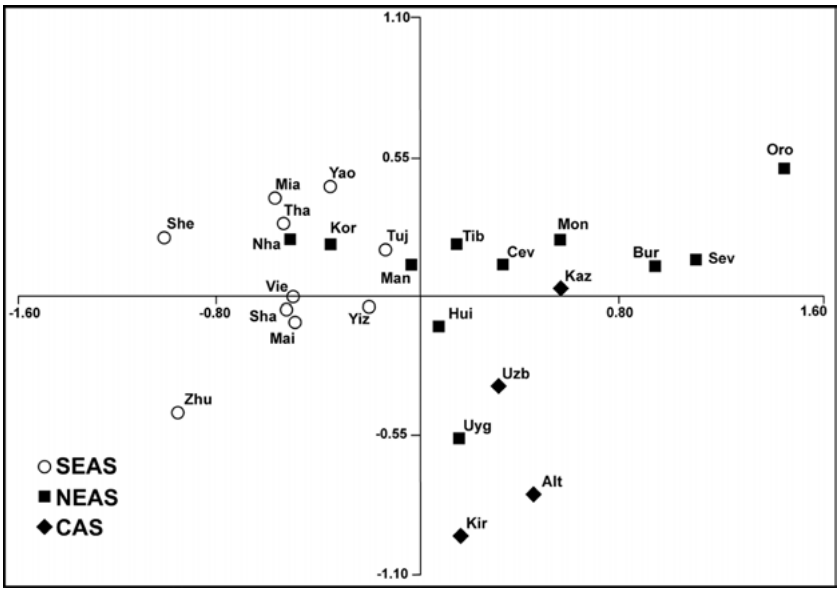
A comparable NRY study of CAS, NEAS, and SEAS populations also elucidated aspects of Central and East Asian history (Karafet et al. 2001). This study revealed that NEAS and SEAS populations shared a number of haplogroups, and NEAS and CAS groups also shared a number of paternal lineages not seen in SEAS, while very few were shared between all three of them. The MDS analysis of the F_{ST} values estimated from these Y-chromosome data revealed a broad clustering of CAS and NEAS groups and a general closeness of certain NEAS to SEAS groups (Fig. 7.12). It also placed Mongols between Tibetans, Kazakhs, Evenks, and Buriats, suggesting a strong East Asian genetic background with some relatedness to Turkic-speaking populations. These data further indicated that NEAS populations had formed through the mixing of East and Central Asian populations beginning some 30,000–40,000 years ago.

GENETIC INSIGHTS INTO MONGOLIAN POPULATION HISTORY

Having provided a basic background on biological diversity in Northeast Asia, we will now discuss how genetic data have been used to address specific questions about Mongolian population history.

Prehistoric Ancestors of Modern Mongolians

Further insights into the genetic history of Mongolian populations may come from the study of ancient DNA extracted from the skeletal remains

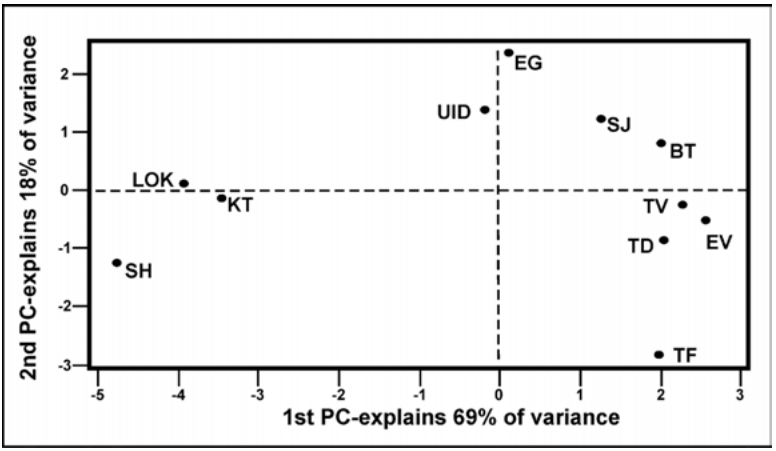


7.12. MDS plot of 25 Asian populations, based on F_{ST} genetic distances estimated from Y-chromosome data. Population abbreviations: Altai (Alt), Buriats (Bur), Chinese Evenks (Cev), Hui (Hui), Kazakhs (Kaz), Kirghiz (Kir), Koreans (Kor), Malaysian (Mal), Manchu (Man), Miao (Mia), Mongolians (Mon), Northern Han (Nha), Oroqen (Oro), Siberian Evenks (Sev), She (She), Southern Han (Sha), Taiwanese Han (Tha), Tibetans (Tib), Tujians (Tuj), Uighurs (Uyg), Uzbeks (Uzb), Vietnamese (Vie), Yao (Yao), Yizu (Yiz), and Zhuang (Zhu) (Karafet et al. 2001).

of archaeological populations. Ongoing study of Neolithic populations from the Cis-Baikal region has provided this kind of evidence. To ascertain the genetic ancestry of the Cis-Baikal populations, researchers compared mtDNA diversity in the early Neolithic Kitoi and late Neolithic Serovo-Glazkovo populations with that of modern populations from the Lake Baikal region (Mooder et al. 2003, 2005, 2006; Schurr 2003; Schurr et al. 2010). They observed distinct patterns of mtDNA diversity in the two prehistoric Cis-Baikal populations, the extent of which also seemed to mirror differences in mortuary practices, nutritional status, social organization, and other features (Mooder et al. 2005, 2006).

Mooder et al. (2006) also noted differences in population affinities for the Kitoi versus the Serovo-Glazkovo (Fig. 7.13). The Kitoi clustered near the Shors and Kets, whereas the Serovo-Glazkovo was located closer to the populations currently residing around the Baikal region. In addition, when

compared with the prehistoric Egiin Gol population from Mongolia, the Serovo-Glazkovo showed genetic similarities to this Xiongnu population. These data supported the distinctiveness of the two Neolithic peoples of the Cis-Baikal region and also implied that the Kitoi had left the region to be replaced by populations ancestral to contemporary Turkic- and Mongolic-speaking groups.



7.13. PC map of mtDNA haplogroup distributions for prehistoric and modern populations as estimated by F_{ST}. Population abbreviations: LOK, Lokomotiv; UID, Ust'-Ida; SH, Shorians; KT, Kets; TF, Tofalars; TD, Todjins; TV, Tuvinians; EV, Evenki; BT, Buryats; SJ, Sojots; EG, Egiin Gol (Mooder et al. 2006).

Furthermore, the mtDNA analysis of skeletal remains from the Egiin Gol site revealed that the populations of the Xiongnu period (3rd century BCE–2nd century CE) were characterized by mixed genetic ancestry, as 11 percent of their mtDNAs belonged to West Eurasian haplogroups (Keyser-Tracqui, Crubézy, and Ludes 2003; Keyser-Tracqui et al. 2006). The moderate frequencies and diversity of West Eurasian mtDNA lineages within the populations of southern Siberia and Mongolia (Derenko et al. 2002, 2003; Yao et al. 2002; Comas et al. 2004; Gokcumen et al. 2008) support the early penetration of ancient European steppe cultures into this region during the Neolithic, Bronze Age, and early Iron Age. The genetic results are consistent with physical anthropological data from the Pre-Scythian Period that show the presence of crania with "Caucasoid" and mixed "Caucasoid-Mongoloid" features in the south Siberian steppe and Western Mongolia

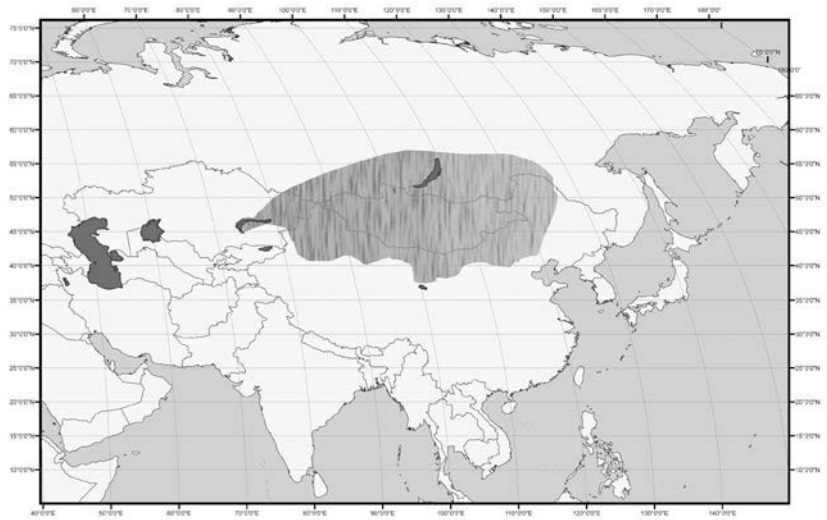
(Alekseev and Gohman 1984; Alekseev, Gohman, and Tumen 1987; Bruyako and Ostroverkhov 2004; Thornton and Schurr 2004). Since there are virtually no West Eurasian mtDNA lineages in the gene pools of northern and southern Han Chinese (Yao et al. 2002; Kivisild et al. 2002), Koreans (Horai et al. 1996; Derenko et al. 2004; Lee et al. 2006), or Japanese (Horai et al. 1996; Kivisild et al. 2002; Tanaka et al. 2004), Mongolia can be considered the eastern border of the distribution of maternal lineages that originated in West Eurasia.

As indicated above, relatively few studies have explored the genetic affinities of Mongolian ethnic groups. The ethnolinguistic and anthropological affiliations of groups that contributed to the formation of the Mongolian population are still unclear because numerous ethnic groups (including the Xiongnu, Syanbi, Jujan, Uighurs, and Kidans) could have been involved (Nyambuu 1992; Badamkhatan 1987; Bulag 1998; Morgan 2007). In fact, as noted above, the dominant ethnic group, the Khalkha, may have formed as a result of the admixture of different tribes that diverged only recently, perhaps ~300 years ago.

To investigate this question, Changchun et al. (2006) examined the mtDNA HVS-I sequences from sixteen Tuoba Xianbei remains excavated from Qilang Mountain Cemetery in Inner Mongolia and compared the resulting data with those from surrounding populations[8] (Fig. 7.14). Interestingly, the mtDNAs of the Tuoba Xianbei ethnic group belonged mainly to haplogroups C (31.3 percent) and D (43.8 percent) and showed the closest genetic similarity to populations of Oroqen, Mongols, and Ewenki (Evenki). This result was not surprising given the high frequencies of these same maternal lineages in Tungusic-speaking populations from eastern Siberia and the Amur River region (Pakendorf et al. 2003; Schurr and Wallace 2003; Starikovskaya et al. 2005) and East Asia (Schurr et al. 1999; Kivisild et al. 2002; Yao et al. 2002; Kong et al. 2003). However, the Xianbei data came from a small sample that probably does not represent the total genetic diversity that was once present in this population, especially since the Xianbei state is known to have incorporated numerous non-Han groups during its reign (Changchun et al. 2006).

Genetic Diversity of Mongolian Ethnic Groups

Recent molecular genetic studies have begun to reveal the nature and extent of diversity of different ethnic groups within Mongolia. The mtDNA



7.14. Map showing the expanse of the Xiongnu Empire (modified from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Hsiung-nu-Empire.png).

composition of most ethnic groups consisted of maternal lineages commonly seen in Siberia and East Asia, such as A, B, C, D, F, G, and others (Gokcumen et al. 2008; Pipes, Labuda, and Schurr 2008). However, some of these groups, in particular the Khoton, had low to moderate frequencies of West Eurasian lineages (e.g., H, J, and K), which are not commonly observed in East Asian populations, even at low frequencies. The largest ethnic group in Mongolia, the Khalkha, was more variable with respect to mtDNA haplogroup diversity compared with the other smaller populations, perhaps because of its recent complex origin (Badamkhatan 1987; Nyambuu 1992; Bulag 1998) and was also significantly genetically different from the Khoton and Zakhchins.

Similarly, recent Y-chromosome data have provided insights into the genetic relationships among different Mongolian ethnic groups (Katoh et al. 2005a,b). As noted above, haplogroup C*(xC3c) and its subhaplogroup C3c are the most common lineages in Mongolians, being seen commonly in the Khalkha, Uriankhai, and Zakhchin, but at much lower frequency in the Khoton. Between the two haplogroups, C*(xC3c) is more frequent in Khalkha and EAS populations (Northern Han, Korean Chinese, Korean, and Japanese), while C3c is more frequent in the Uriankhai, Zakhchin, and

Khoton from West Mongolia. Haplogroup D, which occurs at high frequencies in Japanese (Hammer and Horai 1995; Tajima et al. 2002), is present at very low frequencies in these groups. In addition, haplogroups F*(xJ,K), J, N3, and P appear at lower frequencies in Mongolian populations—and to a greater extent in Khalkha, Zakhchins, and Khoton—than other populations. By contrast, the common West Eurasian haplogroup R1a1, which may have been brought to Mongolia during the expansion of early nomadic groups in Central Asia, occurred at a very high frequency in the Khoton population and much lower frequencies in the Khalkha, Uriankhai, and Zakhchin.

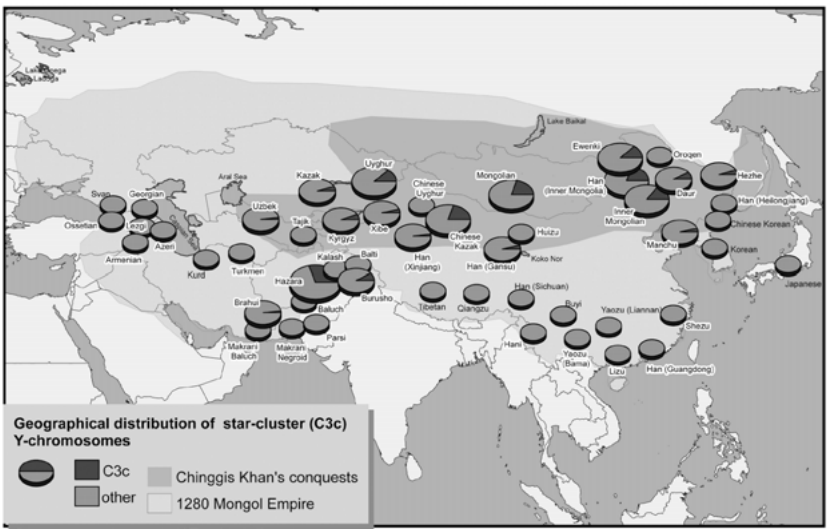
Overall, the distribution of male genetic lineages indicated that the Khalkha, Uriankhai, and Zakhchin were genetically similar to both EAS and Siberian populations. By contrast, the Khoton showed affinities with CAS populations based on both mtDNA and Y-chromosome data (Katoh et al. 2005a,b; Pipes, Labuda, and Schurr 2008) and may have arisen from a population of Turkic origin that recently migrated into the present territory of Mongolia (Batsuuri 1977; Nyambuu 1992). Interestingly, an earlier analysis of X-chromosome variation in Mongolian groups revealed strong similarities between the Uriankhai and Zakhchin populations (Katoh et al. 2002). These data, in the context of historical and ethnographic evidence (Nyambuu 1992), point to genetic admixture as the source of this close genetic relationship.

Legacy of Chinggis Khan

Chinggis Khan left a lasting political and cultural impact on Eurasia through the rapid expansion of his empire across a vast area in a matter of several hundred years. Beginning in eastern Mongolia, he and his male relatives led armies that conquered much of Central and East Asia, including the Western Xia in northern China and Khwarezmid Empire in Persia, ultimately expanding to Anatolia and Central Europe (Spuler 1971, 1989, 1994; Morgan 2007). As a result of their expansive and prolonged rule during the reign of the Mongol Empire, Chinggis Khan, his sons, and his grandsons also appear to have made a significant genetic impact on this region. This interpretation is affirmed by the pattern of genetic diversity in subhaplogroup C3c which, based on STR haplotype variation, was estimated to have originated in Mongolia some 1,000 years ago (Zerjal et al. 2002, 2003). In addition, approximately 8 percent of the men (~16 million individuals) from sixteen Asian populations living within the former Mongol Empire carried this unique Y chromosome lineage or closely related types (Fig. 7.15). The

historically documented events related to the Mongol Empire also support the genetic evidence, which suggests that this paternal lineage was spread by Chinggis Khan and his male kin as they established a long-lasting male dynasty (Zerjal et al. 2002, 2003).

Further evidence for the genetic impact of the Mongol expansion can be seen in the Mongolian-speaking Kalmyks, an ethnic group that descended from those Oirat who migrated to the lower Volga River in Russia during the Mongolian Expansion (Katzner 1986; Nyambuu 1992; Janhunen 2003; Nasizde et al. 2005). For approximately 300 years, the Kalmyks have lived interspersed among other ethnic groups, which were the original settlers of the region. However, genetic research has begun to show their connections to populations living farther to the east. For example, polymorphisms of glutathione S-transferases M1 and T1 (GSTM1 and GSTT1) revealed similarities between Kalmyks and Buriats (Popova et al. 2002). Likewise, classical genetic markers showed the Kalmyks to have close affinities with Buriats of the Baikal region and with Mongolians (Novoradovsky et al. 1993; Shimizu et al. 2006). A later analysis of mtDNA and Y-chromosome variation



7.15. Geographical distribution of star-cluster (C3c) Y-chromosomes. Populations are shown as circles with an area proportional to sample size; star-cluster chromosomes are indicated by gray (red in the DVD version) sectors. The shaded area represents the extent of Chinggis Khan's empire at the time of his death (1227) (Morgan 2007; Zerjal et al. 2003).

in Kalmyks also suggested their generally close relationship with Mongols (Nasidze et al. 2005). Interestingly, the NRY haplotypes associated with subhaplogroup C3c in Kalmyks were almost identical to those reported in Mongols, with the high frequency (31.3 percent) of duplicate alleles for the DYS19 locus being associated with the "Chinggis Khan" Y-chromosome STR haplotype (Zerjal et al. 2003). Thus genetic data clearly demonstrate biological links between the Kalmyks and Mongolian populations.

SUMMARY OF MONGOLIAN BIOGENETIC DIVERSITY

In this chapter, we have reviewed and summarized a number of different data sets from Mongolian, Siberian, and EAS populations in an effort to map the biological affinities of Mongols. What emerges from this analysis is the observation that the biogenetic diversity seen in Mongolian populations is layered, or stratified, and reflects the long human occupation as well as several major prehistoric and historic expansions of human groups across the region. While more recent events, such as the expansion of the Mongol Empire, have left a clearly identifiable genetic imprint on populations outside of the region, they are only the most recent to do so.

In general, there is a significant East Asian genetic background for most Mongolian groups, due to the early expansion of human populations into the region. Mitochondrial DNA and Y-chromosome data, as well as archaeological evidence, suggest that Northeast Asian groups formed through the mixing of ancient CAS and EAS populations by around 30,000–40,000 years ago. The populations that initially settled the region probably possessed craniofacial traits similar to populations across northern Eurasia and dental traits similar to Sundadont (ancestral) features seen in SEAS populations.

In the Late Pleistocene, perhaps due to changing climatic conditions associated with the Last Glacial Maximum (LGM), the cranial traits linked to the "Mongoloid" racial type and the dental traits characterizing the Sinodont dental complex arose in Northeast Asia, probably 20,000–15,000 years ago. Populations bearing these physical traits began expanding across Northeast Asia and eventually to the Americas, meeting populations bearing ancestral features in East Asia. This dispersal of Mongoloid groups led to the emergence of regionally differentiated populations in different parts of East Asia.

In the post-LGM Early Neolithic, populations re-expanded into the formerly glaciated areas (e.g., Forster 2004), including the northern reaches

of Eurasia. These expansions brought both older lineages representing the earliest colonization of the region and newer lineages that evolved from them (e.g., mtDNA haplogroups G, Y, and Z and NRY haplogroups N3 and R1a1). It also appears that the regional gene pools now distinguishing different parts of Northeast Asia (Amur-Okhotsk, Southeast Asia, East Asia, Altai-Sayan, etc.) began to take form at this time, based on the ages of the genetic lineages seen commonly in those areas (e.g., Schurr et al. 1999; Schurr and Wallace 2003; Starikovskaya et al. 2005).

Later, the invention of agriculture in Southeast Asia led to significant demographic growth of populations there, as well as their expansion north out of East Asia. This expansion may be reflected in the distribution of both mtDNA and Y-chromosome haplogroups in NEAS and EAS populations, which reveal the northward spread of mtDNA haplogroups B and F and NRY haplogroup O3, in addition to the influx of SEAS craniofacial and dental traits into Korea and Japan.

The last major influence on the biogenetic makeup of ancestral Mongol populations appears to have been the influx of ancient Indo-European steppe nomads into Central/East Asia. The steppe nomads brought with them mtDNA and Y-chromosome haplogroups that were not indigenous to East Asia, as well as "Caucasoid" cranial types seen in Bronze and Iron Age burials in Central Asia and western Mongolia.

The contact and merger of eastern and western populations produced the gene pool that is seen in today's Mongolian populations. This gene pool has largely persisted over the subsequent 3,000–4,000 years, despite the rise and fall of the Xiongnu and Xianbei Empires in the region and the struggle for control of this region by nomadic tribes and Han Chinese dynasties. The later expansion of Turkic speakers and rise of the Mongol Empire led to the spread of genetic lineages formerly confined to East Eurasia into Central and West Asia, along with the dispersal of some of the West Eurasian lineages acquired through admixture with ancient Indo-European populations in the previous millennia (e.g., Wells et al. 2001; Zerjal et al. 2002).

To further clarify the patterns of genetic diversity in Mongolia, it would be useful to analyze more expansively the DNA markers described above in the different ethnic groups present in the country. These data would complement ethnographic, historical, and linguistic evidence about the origins of these populations. The acquisition of more ancient DNA data from archaeological populations in Mongolia and adjacent territories would also

help elucidate the biological and cultural affinities of the nomadic steppe tribes that dominated this region for the past several thousand years. Finally, the continued analysis of mtDNA, Y-chromosome and autosomal loci in Mongolians, as well as populations from across Northeast Asia, will expand our understanding of the process of biological differentiation that has occurred in ethnic groups from South Siberia, Central Asia, and East Asia.

CONCLUDING REMARKS— THE GENO-"SCAPE" OF MONGOLIA

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, the patterns of biological variation in Central and East Asia that can be ascertained from studies of osteological, dental, and genetic diversity reflect not only processes of evolution and adaptation but also social and political interactions and the exchange of ideas and technologies between populations living in the broad region that now encompasses the modern nation-state of Mongolia.

We have shown that this diversity is layered or interwoven, and a product of over 40,000 years of human occupation of NEAS. This diversity has resulted from population expansions, cultural interactions, and the rise and fall of empires, as well as changing climatic conditions creating new selective conditions that have taken place during this period. We are also able to glean details of the formation of the gene pool for modern Mongolians from the different biological data sets, and the same can be done for the linguistic and archaeological evidence (see Fitzhugh and Bayarsaikhan, and Honeychurch and Amartuvshin, in this volume) from this region. Thus, when attempting to understand the broad temporal dimensions of Mongolian history, an area studies approach is actually very useful, even if the specific area under consideration (NEAS, Central-East, Inner Asia, etc.) varies subtly depending on the biological data set being examined.

At the same time, there are clearly aspects of these demographic events that allow for an approach employing the "-scape" concept, particularly with regard to network analysis. We can literally see such networks in the Y-chromosome lineage that appears to have arisen in the ancestors of Chinggis Khan and was disseminated by his male relatives, and also the interactions of the Xiongnu and Mongol empires with Han Chinese and Manchu empires, as recorded in imperial Chinese documents. The colonization of Mongolia and Inner Mongolia by Russian and Chinese powers, respectively,

further altered the ethnic landscape of Mongolia, and often forced minority populations to move from nation-state to nation-state (as seen, for example, in the genetic data from Altaian Kazakhs [Dulik et al. 2008; Gokcumen et al. 2008; Dulik, Osipova, and Schurr, forthcoming]). In addition, there are deeper networks of connections implicated by the linguistic ties between Altaic-speaking populations from across Central and East Asia, the spread of nomadic pastoralism from west to east in the 2nd and 3rd millennia BCE, and the entry of Buddhism from Tibet in the 13th and 14th centuries. However, as indicated above, these networks extend beyond the immediate confines of Mongolia proper and indicate that Mongolian identity and history have emerged through interactions extending across northern Eurasia and into East Asia over many millennia. This perspective is clearly consistent with the view that researchers need to be freed from geographic, or territorial, constraints to trace interactions around the globe (Smart and Smart 2003:266), even prehistoric ones.

The relevance of this point can be seen in the representation of modern Mongolian identity, which, in part, is traced to the emergence of the Mongol Empire and rule of Chinggis Khan. The link to this imperial past is made obvious by the presence of statues of Chinggis Khan at the National

7.16 New façade of the Mongolian Parliament with statue of Chinggis Khan in the middle. (Photo courtesy of Theodore G. Schurr)

Parliament building in Ulaanbaatar (Fig. 7.16), and the use of his name on everything from soft drinks to snack shops in Mongolia itself. However, while Chinggis Khan may have literally been the father of his country in a genetic sense, the characteristic features of Mongolian biology and culture required many thousands of years of evolution, adaptation, and cultural innovation and exchange to take their current form. Thus, it is by examining the Geno-scape of Mongolia that these different facets of its history come into clearer focus.

NOTES

1. Some of the general characteristics associated with the Mongoloid racial type (crania) are very forward-projecting malar (cheek) bones and comparatively flat faces, large circular orbits, and a moderate nasal aperture with a slightly pointed lower margin. In other words, Mongoloid peoples tend to have a larger and more gracile braincase as well as a broader skull, broader face, and flatter roof of the nose than non-Mongoloid populations (Alexeev 1978; Alexeev and Gohman 1984; Alexeev and Trubnikova 1984).
2. Mongoloid traits are thought to have emerged within an area defined by the southern steppe regions of Transbaikalia, the central and eastern regions of Mongolia, and several regions of Northern China (Jin and Su 2000). These include the presence of an epicanthal fold, lack of brow ridges, shallow mandibular fossa, small mastoid processes, stocky build, later eruption of full dentition (except second and third molars), less hair, fewer sweat glands, and a long torso (Phillips 1969; Fiedel 1992).
3. Cranial metric (discrete) traits include the dimensions of the skull and face (e.g., bizygomatic breadth, head length, nasal height). The features of cranio-facial shape and size show a high heritability (e.g., Neves and Hubbe 2005), hence are under considerable genetic control. In addition, nonmetric traits on the skull and mandible, including canals, foramina (openings), toruses, grooves, and sutures, are also used to assess the biological affinities of human groups. These nonmetric traits have been successfully used by other biodistance studies involving human populations (e.g., Konigsberg 1988; Lahr 1996; Prowse and Lovell 1996; Ishida and Dodo 1997) and their scoring procedures and descriptions are well established (Hauser and DeStefano 1989; Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994).
4. Similarly, studies of protein and nuclear DNA markers show that Koreans have close genetic affinities with Mongolians among Northeast Asians (Goedde et al. 1987; Saha and Tay 1992; Hong et al. 1993). They were also closely related to the Japanese but somewhat more distant from the Chinese. These genetic data support linguistic evidence suggesting that the ancestors of present-day Korean populations have a common origin with NEAS groups from the Altai-Sayan and Baikal regions of southeastern Siberia (e.g., Kim 1970). By contrast, mtDNA variation indicates that the Koreans are more closely related to the Chinese and Japanese among EAS populations (Harihara et al. 1988; Horai et al. 1996; Schurr et al. 1999; Lee et al. 2006). Recent studies of Y-chromosomal diversity also show that the Koreans possess lineages originating in both Northeast and Southeast Asia (Kim et al. 2000; Karafet et al. 2001). Thus, the peopling of Korea appears to have been a complex process with an initial northern Asian settlement followed by several migrations, mostly from southern to northern China (Jin et al. 2003). This process also likely reflects the population history of much of Northeast Asia in general.

5. A haplotype is a unique combination of mutations or polymorphisms present in a mitochondrial genome. MtDNA haplotypes that share phylogenetically important mutations are assigned to a specific haplotype group, or haplogroup. The terms "haplogroup" and "lineage" are used interchangeably to denote a distinct cluster of phylogenetically related mtDNAs, while the smaller branches of a haplogroup are usually called "subhaplogroups" or "sublineages."
6. When referring to mtDNA and Y-chromosome haplogroups or lineages, we use the terms "East Eurasian" and "West Eurasian" to refer to their putative geographic origin. Here, East Eurasia encompasses the region including Northeast, East, and Southeast Asia, whereas West Eurasia extends from Europe to the Near East and West Asia. Central Asia appears to be a crossroads where populations bearing these different lineages came into contact and contributed to their genetic makeup.
7. A haplotype is a unique combination of mutations or single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) present in the nonrecombining region of the Y-chromosome. NRY haplotypes that share phylogenetically important SNPs are assigned to a specific haplotype group, or haplogroup. The terms "haplogroup" and "lineage" are used interchangeably to denote a distinct cluster of phylogenetically related Y-chromosomes, while the smaller branches of a haplogroup are called "subhaplogroups" or "sublineages."
8. The Xianbei (Dongbei or ancient Manchus) were a nomadic people in ancient China that succeeded the Xiongnu and included a sizeable federation of non-Han groups. They first became a significant part of Chinese culture during the Han Dynasty, when they occupied the steppes in Manchuria and Eastern Mongolia (Changchun et al. 2006). After the fall of the Han Dynasty, the Xianbei formed a number of empires of their own, including the Yan Dynasty, Western Qin, Southern Liang, and the Northern Wei (see Honeychurch and Amartuvshin, this volume).

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8

Mapping Ritual Landscapes in Bronze Age Mongolia and Beyond: Interpreting the Ideoscape of the Deer Stone-Khirigsuur Complex

WILLIAM W. FITZHUGH AND JAMSRANJAV BAYARSAIKHAN

Thirty-three hundred years ago, during the Late Bronze Age, a striking new cultural landscape took form on the hills and grasslands of Mongolia and parts of southern Siberia and the Altai Mountain region. Consisting of *khirigsuur* boulder mounds and standing stones representing warriors with elaborate deer images on their torsos, the Deer Stone-Khirigsuur Complex (DSKC) is the first monumental cultural expression to appear in the steppe region of Inner Asia. The architectural complexity of khirigsuurs and the artistic genius of deer stones are remarkable organizational and creative achievements for a society based on nomadic pastoralism. Yet while being highly visible features of the Mongolian landscape tradition for 3000 years, their meaning, significance, and age remain little known. Further, unlike Scythian, Xiongnu, Turkic, and other Inner Asian cultures or empires, the deer stone horizon lacks a parent culture. No associated houses or villages have been discovered; no pottery styles or specific tool forms identify its material culture; until recently no specific human burial types defined its mortuary practices; and no texts—Chinese or otherwise—document its place in history. In short, khirigsuurs and deer stones have

been an architectural and stylistic chimera—inscrutable, with no precise dates or culture name, and without known antecedents or successors.

This chapter attempts to dispel some of the mystery that has grown up around deer stones since they were first reported by travelers and archaeologists in the late 1800s. Building upon a long tradition of Russian and Mongolian research, new field studies have determined the age range of deer stones in northern Mongolia from 3300–2700 BP and link them positively by age, architectural features, and ritual behavior to the khirigsuur mound complexes with which they are often associated. Many researchers have proposed that deer stone art is related to early Scythian art, usually as a parallel or derivative art form. New radiocarbon dates and excavations show that deer stones and khirigsuurs belong to a single cultural complex that predates Scythian origins by 300–600 years (Fig. 8.1). Although the precise connections are unknown, some DSKC traditions such as mound burials and the eastern orientation of subsidiary burial features are also present in Xiongnu funerary architecture and ritual. Deer stones and khirigsuurs only represent a small portion of the cultural life of early 1st millennium BCE Mongolia, but by adducing information from ethnography and contemporary life, we can reconstruct the outlines of a late Bronze Age society and

8.1. Deer stones, slab burials, and *khirigsuurs* at the Ulaan Tolgoi site, west of Erkhel Nuur, Khovsgol Aimag. (Photo courtesy of William Fitzhugh)

spiritual life even though few other archaeological materials are available. These findings also enable us to offer a perspective on wider cultural relationships with Western Asia and the circumpolar and North Pacific regions, and to test the appropriateness of Appadurai's (1996) concept of "-scapes" for interpreting these connections.

MONGOLIA AND THE NORTH

Deer stones began to be studied by Russian researchers more than one hundred years ago (Potanin 1881; Radlov 1893) and became a major Soviet research theme in the mid–late 20th century (Okladnikov 1954; Dikov 1958; Chlenova 1962; Volkov and Novgorodova 1975; Volkov 1981; Kubarev 1979; Khudyakov 1987; Novgorodova 1989; Savinov 1994). After the discovery of the famous frozen Pazyryk and Arzhan tombs (Rudenko 1970; Griaznov 1980), the chronological and stylistic relationship between early Scythian and deer stone art became more plausible. Esther Jacobson's (1993; Jacobson–Tepfer 2001) studies demonstrated connections between deer stones and Siberian Karasuk cultures, earlier reported by Russian scholars, and advanced understanding of the deer motif as a master spirit embedded in Siberian shamanic ritual and art (Jacobson 2002; Jacobson et al. 2001).

Of the dozen or so Mongolian deer stone sites excavated by Soviet and Mongolian archaeologists before 2000, few produced artifacts or evidence other than what was directly observed in deer stone art. The voluminous work conducted over thirty years by Vitali Volkov, who inventoried, documented, and unearthed deer stones from hundreds of sites (Volkov 1981), provided a huge body of comparative stylistic material, but the underlying issues of culture, dating, function, context, and meaning remained as obscure as before (Magail 2005).

One of us (Fitzhugh) became interested in deer stones as a possible new avenue of research into the roots of early circumpolar and Eskimo art. For many years Arctic archaeologists considered the arctic and boreal regions of northeastern Asia as a likely source for Okvik, Old Bering Sea, and Ipiutak art and ritual of the 1st millennium CE, which appear in the Bering Strait about the same time as early bronze and smelted iron imports (Larsen and Rainey 1948; Schuster 1951). Among these Asian elements are shamanistic symbols and paraphernalia, composite masks, predator-prey images, spirit transformation figures, and poly-iconic art. Yet solid links between

early Eskimo and Eurasian art have proven difficult to pin down and remain hypothetical. Providing a new body of data from the 1st millennium BCE, Mongolian deer stones offered the possibility of contributing to studies of Central and East Asian connections with Arctic cultures.

MONGOLIANS, ESKIMOS, AND "GLOBAL" ARCTIC

A Mongolian role in the history of Eskimos might seem surprising as we are still a long way from identifying specific Siberian migrations into the Americas, let alone identifying proto-Eskimos in Asia, but prospects are improving with advances in technique and anthropological theory (see Schurr and Pipes, this volume). One such development may be found in globalization theory (Appadurai 1996), which offers a method for investigating the dynamic axes—ethnos, technology, communications, economy, and ideology—that create historical and cultural change across space and time. By combining these fields with landscape and physical resources, a more contextualized method of understanding culture and history emerges. Although developed for modern multicultural, transnational change, these tools can also be helpful for understanding prehistoric culture change. However, in concentrating on cultural processes, Appardurai gives short shrift to the importance of geography, environment, and resource connections in cultural theory, even though these strands played a critical part in early anthropological theory.

Comparable ethnographic, biological, and linguistic homogeneity found from Alaska to Greenland (ca. 1200 CE) strongly supporting the Thule culture migration from Bering Strait does not occur in early northern Eurasian populations. Instead, the reindeer herding revolution and its technological complex seems to have spread throughout northern Eurasia during the 1st millennium CE not as a migration but through the diffusion of a superior technology and subsistence adaptation. Unlike the tundra zone of Siberia, Eurasian boreal forest lands were not suitable for large-scale managed animal grazing or horse rearing, and their agricultural potential for grain and root crop production was minimal. Here hunting, fishing, and reindeer herding were the economic mainstays. While the biomass of these resources was substantial, the seasonality and migratory behavior of major food resources, and environmental constraints on human mobility and settlement, resulted in dispersed human populations with a low level of

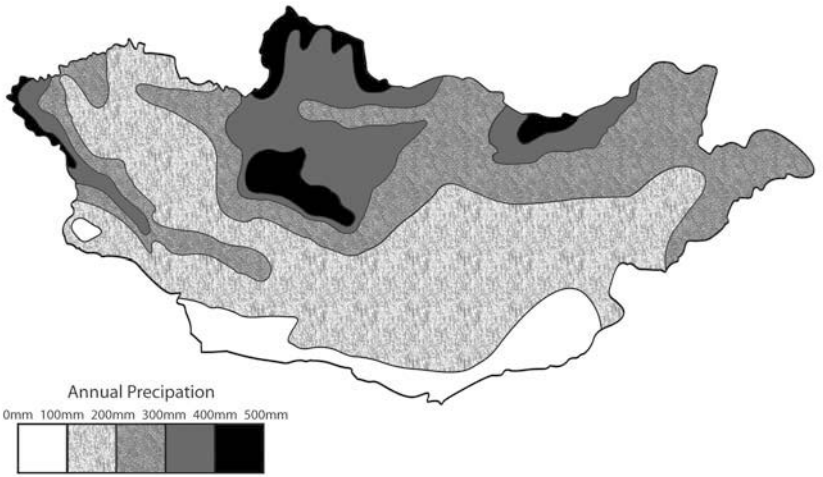
socio-political development. Warfare was local and large monuments and public architecture were either absent or did not survive.

Domestication of the horse around 3500 BCE (Outram et al. 2009) and the associated rise of militarism on the Central Asian steppe greatly enhanced opportunities for culture change and far-reaching connections. Beginning about this time, the steppe and arid portions of Western Asia repeatedly experienced massive cultural and historical change, and these changes were not limited to the steppe, for movements originating in the steppe often reached other regions. Mongolia and the Altai Mountain zone seem to have been one of the heartlands of human dispersal (Schurr and Pipes, this volume). Scythians may have moved westward from here into the Black Sea region; Altai Turkic peoples dispersed even more widely, into Western Asia and the taiga forests of Siberia to the Arctic and Pacific Ocean coasts. The Mongol expansion reached deep into northern China and Russia, briefly occupied Western Asia and Eastern Europe, and had repercussions far beyond these areas.

CORRIDOR OR BORDERLAND?

With the advent of horse domestication the steppe became an important east-west communication corridor (Fig. 8.2). When ecological and political conditions were suitable Mongolia came into contact with the more developed settled and technologically advanced societies to the south and west and served as a link to Manchuria, the Amur Valley, and northeastern Asia. At other times, Mongolians became more isolated and retreated to their gers and pastoral lifestyle. However, having acquired military skills and a taste for exotic goods, Mongolians increasingly turned to raiding and conquest and periodically became a well-organized cultural center with powerful leaders and highly visible cultural traditions. The first archaeologically recognized instance of this transition was during the era of deer stones and khirigsuurs in the Late Bronze Age.

From this broader view, we may consider what can be learned about one particular aspect of Appadurai's model—the ideoscape of Late Bronze Age Mongolia in relation to Central Asia and northern peoples. In this case we have the "benefit" of a limited field of agents, since at present little is known about other aspects of this culture system or its origins, demise, and relationships. We see in the following evidence little except religion,



8.2. Map of steppe precipitation zone.

cosmology, and burial, although we can infer something of social structure, economy, and cultural boundaries.

KHIRIGSUURS AND DEER STONES

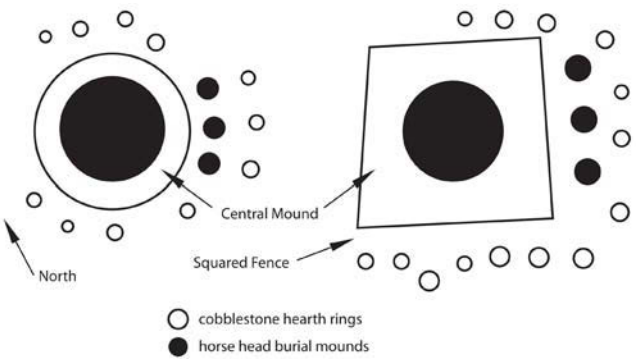
Khirigsuurs and deer stones (described by Russian researchers noted above and in English by Jacobson 1993; Jacobson-Tepfer 2001; Fitzhugh, Bayarsaikhan, and Marsh 2005; Frohlich and Bazarsad 2005; Fitzhugh 2009a,b,d, 2010, and n.d.) are the most widespread prominent archaeological features seen in the Mongolian landscape. Although frequently found at the same sites, khirigsuurs and deer stones have until recently—Khudyakov (1987) being the exception—not been seen as expressions of a single archaeological culture or even time period, and to date there is still no culture name for the parent DSKC complex.

Khirigsuur Geometry and Orientation

Uncounted numbers (certainly in the tens of thousands) of khirigsuurs are distributed across central and western Mongolia and neighboring regions of China, Kazakhstan, Russian Gorni-Altai, and Tuva, on valley floors, in passes, and up the eastern and southern slopes of prominent hills. Their sizes vary from 10 m to more than 100 m in diameter and their central mounds from

circular pavements to boulder mounds several meters high. Unlike simple mounds or kurgans, khirigsuurs follow a more complex architectural plan based on satellite features "orbiting" a central mound. Cobble or slab pavements extend out from the edge of the mound to a low fence-like enclosure of boulders of either circular or square shape. If square, its sides are oriented in cardinal directions and a small mound or paved area with a raised stone slab is often found at each corner. Small boulder features of various shapes sometimes occur within the paved inner enclosure, and often there is a heavier pavement or pathway linking the east side of the mound and the eastern fence wall. From recent excavations we now know that almost all khirigsuur central mounds cover human burials, usually placed on the ground or in shallow pits, often in slab-walled and slab-covered boxes. The shallow burials have resulted in human remains being poorly preserved or completely disintegrated. Compared to the elaborate mortuary architecture, grave goods are few and usually incidental to the burial ritual, consisting of a few fragments of pottery, a button, or—rarely—a bronze knife and in one case a bronze pick axe.

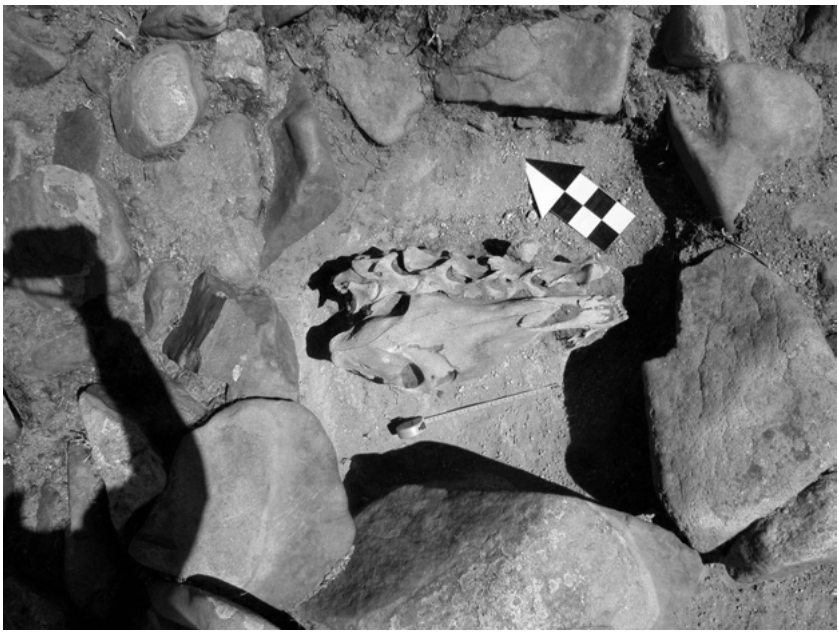
A few meters outside the east wall one often finds several small 2–3 m diameter boulder "satellite" mounds or circular pavements spaced 1–2 m apart. In large khirigsuurs, satellite mounds may extend around the outside of the north and south fence walls and often form ranks outward, row upon row. The final element of the khirigsuur plan is a series of small 1–2 m diameter cobble rings evenly spaced several meters apart outside the fence west of the khirigsuur. At large khirigsuurs, these ring features may encircle the entire complex, including the satellite mounds (Fig. 8.3).



8.3. Architectural diagram of round and square *khirigsuurs* (after Frohlich and Bazarsad 2005).

Beneath the satellite mounds are circular rock features containing a specially prepared "package" consisting of a single horse skull and mandible facing east or southeast (Fig. 8.4). Usually seven cervical vertebrae and four hoof cores are placed tightly alongside the skull. No artifacts, other bones, or burning accompany the horse remains. Ring features, on the other hand, almost always contain highly fragmented calcined mammal bones resulting from ceremonial feasts of animals ranging from caprids to large animals. Occasionally pottery fragments are found in or near these circular hearths.

Features of khirigsuur construction, including the alignment of the plaza entry pavement and of the fence walls, east-side horse mounds, and east-facing horse heads, indicate that khirigsuurs "face" in an eastern or southeasterly direction. This orientation is generally interpreted as pointing toward the rising spring or early summer sun, or to a "sacred" distant hill or mountain peak in that direction. Herders today revere such peaks and believe they are abodes of powerful spirits, and similar views probably prevailed in the distant past. Khirigsuurs when clustered around the southern



8.4. Typical arrangement of an east-facing horse head burial package with cervical vertebrae and hooves at Ulaan Tolgoi Deer Stone 4. (Photo courtesy of William Fitzhugh)

and eastern slopes of hills, as at the Ulaan Tolgoi site, align with the curving baseline tangent of the hill rather than a cardinal direction or spring equinox (see below), eastern sunrise, or distant hill or mountain. Astronomical or geodetic orientations are more typical of khirigsuurs on open slopes and valley floors.

Khirigsuurs can confidently be described as ceremonial mortuary complexes that include sacrifice and burial of horse heads accompanied by ritual feasting at peripheral hearths. Larger khirigsuurs are more carefully planned and constructed than smaller mounds; their fences, mounds and hearths are positioned with near-mathematical precision keyed on the central mound. Noting the variation in khirigsuur orientations (090–135 degrees) from a large sample of square mounds in the Khanui River valley, Allard and Erdenebaatar (2005:554) suggest their orientations correlate with the changing azimuth of the rising spring sun at the time of burial. In our view the satellite mounds and hearths result from a single ceremonial event in which the deceased was honored by the sacrifice and burial of defleshed horse heads and consumption of ritual meals cooked at the ring hearths surrounding the burial complex. Even large khirigsuurs like Urt Bulagiin in the Khanui Valley, with a huge central mound 5 m high and more than 1,700 horse mounds (ibid.), may have been constructed as a single ceremonial event. In an attempt to test whether this mound was built by accretion through horse sacrifices made over many years or decades, we excavated horse remains from a mound in the first row of horse burials constructed alongside the eastern fence and from presumably one of the last, in the outermost row, seven rows beyond the fence. Both horses dated exactly the same: 2780±50, 2790±40 (uncorrected; 2970–2770 cal. BP, 2-sigma range). It is therefore likely that even large khirigsuurs mark a ceremonial moment in time when large groups assembled for ceremonial activities honoring the passing of an extremely important person.

Khirigsuur Types and Spatial Distribution

Except in a few areas noted below, the geographic distribution of khirigsuurs has never been mapped in detail. However, khirigsuurs are most numerous in the central northern steppe and throughout the watered regions of western Mongolia. In any given region mounds are found in a variety of sizes and complexity, those in more marginal ecological or geographic locations being generally smaller than khirigsuurs in more well-watered

settings. Khirigsuur frequency, size and complexity declines in the Gobi and arid regions of eastern Mongolia; conversely, the largest and most abundant mounds are found in north-central Mongolia whose pastures are fed with melt-water streams in spring and thunderstorms in summer. Although numbers of khirigsuurs have been mapped and excavated as a result of recent salvage projects, it is primarily in Khövsgol and Egiin Gol regions that precise geographical mapping, distributional studies and excavations have been conducted (Fitzhugh, Bayarsaikhan, and Marsh 2005; Honeychurch 2003; Frohlich and Bazarsad 2005). Frohlich classifies khirigsuurs into three groups: Class I mounds have large central mounds and a complex array of secondary structures and are largely restricted to flat lands and valley bottom locations; Class II mounds are medium-size structures usually found on the lower slopes of hills; and Class III mounds are small structures with low central mounds or central pavements and fences 10–20 m in diameter associated with medium and high slopes of hills (Frohlich and Bazarsad 2005:64). A sample of 420 mounds mapped by Frohlich in Khövsgol aimag before 2005 documented 57 percent with circular fences and 43 with square fences. A larger sample of more than 2000 mounds mapped west of Mörön produced nearly equal proportions of round and squared khirigsuurs (Frohlich, pers. comm. 2008).

Frohlich has also studied khirigsuur geographic distribution using precise GPS mapping technology (Frohlich and Bazarsad 2005; Wallace and Frohlich 2005). Although more recent studies include larger samples and have more robust but similar conclusions, data collected in 2002–2004 show mounds are not evenly distributed over the landscape. Even on open steppe they occur in clusters that range from a few in some locations to many in central areas like Erkhel or Uushkiin Uvur (Uushkiin Övör). In most cases these clusters are found to the south or east of prominent hills or mountains (Class I), at the base of such hills (Class II), or up the lower slopes, ridges, or near the summits (Class III). Most clusters have a relatively even distribution of square and round khirigsuurs, although square features are more common among Class II and III mounds. Frohlich's recent excavations of all three mound classes and locations show no simple correlation with age or sex of the human remains recovered, which are generally from single shallow interments at the base of the mound. Presumably large C-I mounds which occupy valuable pasture land and require major organizational and labor requirements were for burial of high-status

individuals, whereas C-II mounds were for individuals with intermediate status, and the hillside C-III mounds for relatively low-status people. However, in the absence of burial goods and detailed osteological analysis status assignments are speculative.

As noted above, large khirigsuur clusters are strongly associated with prominent freestanding hills, in some cases small hills like Ulaan Tolgoi in the Lake Erkhel region, but also with larger hills or mountain complexes like Uushkiin Uvur near Mörön. Spatial patterning of khirigsuurs and khirigsuur clusters varies regionally. Small numbers of features are aggregated around small local topographic eminences or the sides or confluences of streams; larger groups and larger khirigsuurs (while still retaining smaller khirigsuurs) associate with larger hills and landscape features; and so on up to the largest and most dense concentrations around lakes or in major river valleys, such as the Delger Mörön plain at Uushkiin Uvur. This hierarchical distribution of density, size, and complexity roughly parallels the modern human and animal population density gradients of this region today. A similar proportional scale holds at the macro-level between regional centers. Size, frequency, and complexity of khirigsuurs and khirigsuur complexes in the Delger Mörön region are several orders of magnitude greater than in the Darkhad Valley 200 km to the north, west of Lake Khövsgol. Delger Mörön, on the other hand, appears to rank below the Khanui valley, if not in the number and density of khirigsuurs, in terms of mound size and numbers of horse burials. This discrepancy, as yet unquantified, raises the question of whether Khanui's larger mounds result from political rather than economic dominance. Khanui may have had a stronger political position with respect to trade and military power due to its geographic position along a major east-west steppe communication corridor.

DEER STONES

Unlike the rather standardized plan of khirigsuurs, deer stones demonstrate great individual artistic and thematic variation within a highly constrained physical form. Both are similar, however, in expressing variety within their class: khirigsuurs vary immensely in size, placement locus, and the numbers and placement of satellite mounds and hearths, whereas deer stones may be assigned to one or a few "types" but demonstrate great variation in artistic style; size, shape, and type of stone; location and placement of deer

motifs; type of belt; numbers, types, and forms of implements; numbers of necklace beads; and other elements.

Description

Deer stones are named for the leaping or flying cervids that dominate the central panel of the stone, which are always square or rectangular in cross-section (Fig. 8.5). Some stones have rounded tops, but most have flat tops that slant up toward the east or southeast. Below the peaked top on the east-facing side is the "face," which in rare cases is seen as a modeled or engraved human face but more often is indicated by two or three short, parallel slash marks. The north and south sides of the "head" area usually have a round circular groove, sometimes with a dangling tassel hanging from the bottom in a fair representation of a large, tasseled Bronze Age earring hoop. Some interpret the ring as a sun, particularly when a smaller grooved ring appears above it and to one side.

A looping series of evenly spaced shallow pits arcing from the stone's corners separates the "head" from the torso and represents a beaded necklace, which usually continues around the stone's four sides. Below the necklace is the torso section which carries deer images carved with legs folded

8.5a. Deer stone images from Ushkiin Uver. (Art by J. Bayarsaikhan)

8.5b. Deer stone image from Ulaan Tolgoi. (Art by J. Bayarsaikhan)

(or not shown), a prominent peak at the withers above the forelegs, and antlers scrolling along the back and two pointing forward. The head is not that of a deer but of a full-throated bird with a large bulging round eye and a long fleshy bill with a bulbous open end (calling/singing?). One or many identical deer images may be present, sometimes crammed into every open space, with miniature forms filling interstices. The deer image may be shown only on one side of the stone, but usually its body wraps completely around the four sides. Other motifs often seen in the torso area are a pentagonal-shaped emblem with internal inverted "V" chevron bars, discs (interpreted as shaman mirrors), bows and arrows, and non-cervid animal forms. A belt with diagonal patterning separates the torso from the lower body. Tools, weapons, and implements of various types (including chariot rein hooks), sizes, and styles are attached to the belt by lanyards. The details of these implement representations differ from stone to stone. Other than the head and torso, deer stones do not carry indications of a person's legs and arms. When faces are carved, mouths are seen as open as though singing or calling (shamanizing?).

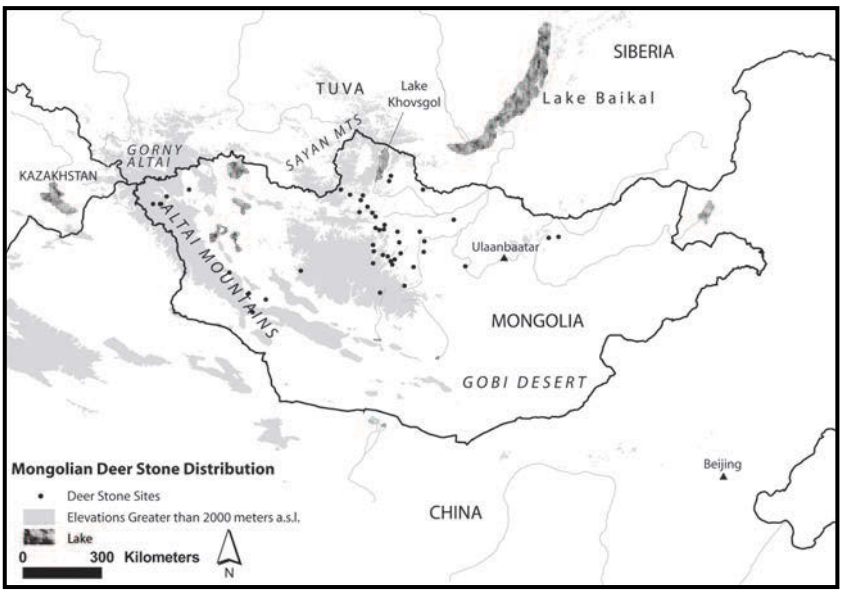
The three-tiered panel organization of the stone strongly suggests the head section is associated with sky/heaven by virtue of its ear/sun/moon reference; the torso with the earth/sky transition through the deer/bird image; and the belt and lower body with earth-world, through its belt/tool/weapon imagery. The carvings on deer stones are so specific and unique that they may represent "portraits" of particular individuals who could be identified by their distinctive tools, weapons, and protective deer-themed body tattoos.

Not all deer stones follow this standard "Mongolian deer stone" pattern. While this form probably accounts for 60–70 percent of deer stones, other types exist. Russian scholars define three basic types (Volkov 1981; Novgorodova 1989; Jacobson 1993; Savinov 1994; Kubarev 1979): (1) the Mongolian type, described above and most common in central northern Mongolia, has large bold, flowing deer images with folded legs and heavily festooned tool belts; (2) the Sayan-Altai type, dominating in mountainous northern and western Mongolia, has few if any "Mongolian deer" motifs, but instead rather stiff, statuesque-looking deer or other animals with extended legs, simple warrior belts, but few belt implements and tools or weapons. These torso tool carvings—frequently of large size—float on the stone unattached to the belt; (3) the Eurasian type is found in the steppe from the Altai to the

Pontic region and has few animals, a simple belt groove, a face indicated by two or three slash marks, and few other motifs. This type is also found in Mongolia together with Types 1 and 2 but is the only type associated with Scythian sites in western Eurasia. These types also differ in size: Type 1 being the largest, Type 2 intermediate, and Type 3 the smallest. Although widely cited, the reality of Volkov's type distinctions—especially Types 2 and 3—may be questioned. Our surveys show that all three are sometimes found in the same sites, especially in northern Mongolia, which raises the question of whether the types and their geographic distributions may result from chronological, cultural, or other criteria. As yet we cannot answer these questions.

Deer Stone Distributions

As in the case of khirigsuurs, deer stone distributions in Mongolia, although preliminarily mapped by Volkov, are also poorly known and are located primarily in northern and western Mongolia (Fig. 8.6). Like khirigsuurs, deer stones are found in steppe areas that provide pasturage for horses, caprids, and cattle; these locations are not deer habitat, either today



8.6. Deer Stone site distribution in Mongolia (modified from Volkov 1981).

or in the Bronze Age. Siberian deer would have been found in the forested Sayan, Khanghai, and Altai Mountains, not on the steppe.

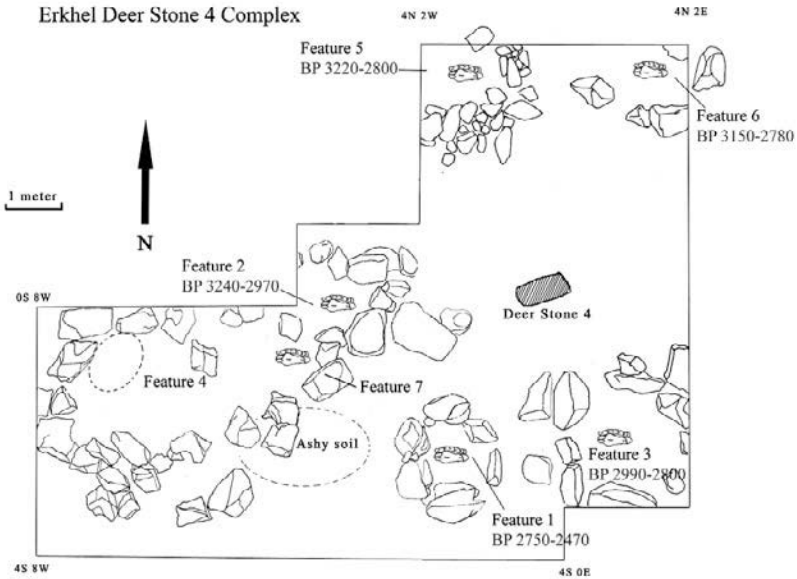
Unlike khirigsuurs, deer stone sites are more often found singly or in small groups of two or three stones in the central areas of open plains, and in these locations they are rarely accompanied by khirigsuurs. When found at valley edges they usually occur near the base of eastern slopes of hills, and they often share such locations with khirigsuurs. However the two types of features are not intermingled. While khirigsuurs are commonly distributed broadly over the landscape, multiple deer stones are almost always clustered in small, defined areas. Deer stone sites associated with khirigsuurs tend to have many stones, and in these situations the stones usually occur in north-south alignment 5–10 m apart, although they occasionally are set in a circular arrangement. Deer stones may also be found individually, in pairs or in clustered settings of 2–5 stones. Where multiple stones are present there is usually great diversity in size, shapes, types of stone, carving styles, thematic content and artistry. Such diversity / individuality occurs even when deer stones are found in linear settings where they obviously have been positioned according to a coordinated master site plan. Khirigsuurs on the other hand tend to follow a haphazard settlement plan (within the spatial constraints of the Class I–III distinctions noted above), one that is certainly not geometric, although there is a tendency for larger khirigsuurs and smaller khirigsuurs to segregate spatially.

Whether found singly or in groups, deer stones often appear as isolated features in the landscape. Cobbles or boulders often are seen at the surface around the stones and when excavated, pavements, oval rings, and small mounds are found. At Ulaan Tolgoi Deer Stone 4 was surrounded by six circular pavements over boulder features containing east-facing horse head burials (Fig. 5.7)—the same types of horse burials found at khirigsuurs. East of a cluster of deer stones at Khyadag East we found circular and rectangular pavements on which were food bone remains, and at Khyadag West four deer stones were ringed by a large circular pavement; while at Khort Azuur in the northern Darkhad we excavated four adjacent round pavements a few meters east of a north-south row of deer stones. All of these pavements contained butchered, cracked, or burned animal bones—probably the remains of ritual meals—that date to the same period as horse head burials (and presumably the deer stones) at these sites (Table 8.1).

Table 8.1. Selected Deer Stone Project Dates from DSKC Sites in Mongolia

SITE / FEATURE	LOCATION / YEAR	SAMPLE NO.	MATERIAL	UNCORRECTED	CALIB (2-SIG)
Ulaan Tolgoi DS4, S-7	Erkhel Lake / 2003	B-182959 AMS	charcoal	2930 ± 40 BP	BP 3220-2950
Ulaan Tolgoi DS4, F1	Erkhel Lake / 2004	B-193738 AMS	bone coll.	2530 ± 40 BP	BP 2750-2470
Ulaan Tolgoi DS4, F2	Erkhel Lake / 2004	B-193739 AMS	bone coll.	2950 ± 40 BP	BP 3240-2970
Ulaan Tolgoi DS4, F3	Erkhel Lake / 2004	B-193740 AMS	bone coll.	2810 ± 40 BP	BP 2990-2800
Ulaan Tolgoi DS4, F5	Erkhel Lake / 2005	B-207205 RAD	bone coll.	2790 ± 70 BP	BP 3220-2800
Ulaan Tolgoi DS4, F6	Erkhel Lake / 2005	B-207206 RAD	bone coll.	2740 ± 70 BP	BP 3150-2780
Ulaan Tolgoi DS5, F1	Erkhel Lake / 2005	B-215694 AMS	tooth coll.	2800 ± 40 BP	BP 2980-2790
Ulaan Tolgoi DS5, F2	Erkhel Lake / 2006	B-222535 AMS	tooth coll.	2830 ± 40 BP	BP 3050-2850
Ulaan Tolgoi M1, F1	Erkhel Lake / 2005	B-207209 AMS	bone coll.	1880 ± 40 BP	BP 1900-1720
Ulaan Tolgoi M1, F2	Erkhel Lake / 2005	B-215692 AMS	tooth coll.	2860 ± 40 BP	BP 3080-2870
Ulaan Tolgoi M1, F2	Erkhel Lake / 2005	B-215644 AMS	charcoal	2980 ± 40 BP	BP 3310-3000
Ulaan Tolgoi M1, F3	Erkhel Lake / 2005	B-215693 AMS	tooth coll.	2950 ± 60 BP	BP 3320-2940
Nukhtiin Am DS1/2, F1	Galt / 2006	B-222534 AMS	tooth coll.	2830 ± 40 BP	BP 3050-2850
Evdt 2 DS 2, Circ. feat.	Tsagaanuur / 2005	B-215643 AMS	charcoal	3030 ± 40 BP	BP 3350-3090
Tsatstain Kh DS1, F1	Tsagaanuur / 2005	B-207208 AMS	tooth coll.	2920 ± 40 BP	BP 3160-2920
Tsatstain Kh DS1, F2	Tsagaanuur / 2005	B-207207 AMS	tooth coll.	3000 ± 40 BP	BP 3330-3060
Urt Bulagyn KYR1-21	Khanuy Valley / 2006	B-222532 AMS	tooth coll.	2780 ± 50 BP	BP 2980-2770
Urt Bulagyn KYR1-22	Khanuy Valley / 2006	B-222533 AMS	tooth coll.	2790 ± 40 BP	BP 2970-2780
Nukhtiin Am Md1, F1	Galt / 2006	B-240685 AMS	tooth coll.	2630 ± 40 BP	BP 2790-2730
Khushuugiin Devseg, F3	Erkhel Lake / 2007	B-240689 AMS	tooth coll.	2680 ± 40 BP	BP 2860-2740
Khushuugiin Devseg, F1	Erkhel Lake / 2007	B-243716 AMS	tooth coll.	2410 ± 40 BP	BP 2700-2640*
Khyadag East DS pav.7	Erkhel Lake / 2007	B-240690 AMS	bone/tooth	2610 ± 40 BP	BP 2770-2720
Hort Uzuur DS2, L2, F1	Tsagaanuur / 2007	B-240691 AMS	charcoal	2710 ± 40 BP	BP 2870-2750
Avtiin Fea.5, Sample 6	Tsagaanuur / 2007	B-242730 AMS	charcoal	2670 ± 40 BP	BP 2850-2740
Khoton Lake 333, F18	Bayan Ölgii / 2008	B-246610 AMS	charcoal	2840 ± 40 BP	BP 3070-2860
Tsagaan Asga, F3	Bayan Ölgii / 2008	B-246611 AMS	charcoal	2850 ± 40 BP	BP 3070-2860
Tsagaan Asga, F4	Bayan Ölgii / 2008	B-246612 AMS	charcoal	3000 ± 40 BP	BP 3330-3070
On Khad Khushuu	Bayan Ölgii / 2008	B-246613 AMS	tooth coll.	2930 ± 40 BP	BP 3220-2960
Bor Hujiriin A1, F2	Tsagaan Uul / 2008	B-246614 AMS	tooth coll.	2640 ± 40 BP	BP 2790-2730
Bor Hujiriin A2, F1	Tsagaan Uul / 2008	B-246616 RAD	charcoal	2670 ± 50 BP	BP 2860-2740
Khushuugiin Gol, F2	Tsagaan Uul / 2008	B-246617 AMS	tooth coll.	2750 ± 40 BP	BP 2940-2760
Khushuugiin Gol A3, F3	Tsagaan Uul / 2008	B-246618 AMS	tooth coll.	2910 ± 40 BP	BP 3210-2940
Khushuugiin Gol F6	Tsagaan Uul / 2008	B-246619 AMS	charcoal	2850 ± 40 BP	BP 3070-2860
Khyadag East A3, F32	Burentogtokh / 2008	B-246620 AMS	tooth coll.	2520 ± 40 BP	BP 2740-2470
Khyadag East A2	Burentogtokh / 2008	B-246621 RAD	charcoal	2460 ± 50 BP	BP 2730-2350
Khyadag East A2	Burentogtokh / 2008	B-246622 RAD	charcoal	2520 ± 50 BP	BP 2750-2440‡
Khyadag West F1	Burentogtokh / 2008	B-246623 AMS	bone coll.	2610 ± 40 BP	BP 2870-2750

* B-243716 Khushuugiin Devseg F1 also has intercepts at BP 2610–2590 and 2540–2340
‡ B-246622 Khyadag East A2 has a second intercept at BP 2410–2370



8.7. Deer Stone 4 Complex at Erkhel site, Khovsgol Aimag.

These data confirm Khudyakov's (1987) suggestion that deer stones and khirigsuurs are part of a single ritual complex that often includes both types of ceremonial expression. Both components have similar ritual elements: sacrifice and burial of horse heads, cervical vertebrae, and hooves; absence of dedicated artifact inclusions; presence of ritual meals of both small caprids and larger animals (so far not known to include deer or other wild animals); presence of identical types of horse mounds and feast hearths; and an easterly orientation of deer stones, khirigsuurs, and their key components. Further, the similar "orbital" architecture, with khirigsuurs and deer stones as central organizing elements for satellite horse mounds and hearths (though not always present at either khirigsuurs or deer stone settings), suggests a conceptual or functional linkage between the two forms of monuments. The khirigsuur represents the resting place of corporeal remains, usually of a single person, while its surrounding satellite ritual features represent the efforts of many who honored this individual with horse sacrifices and hearth-centered feasts. Deer stones, on the other hand, represent cenotaphs, surrogate individuals who also are honored by horse sacrifice and burial and frequently also by butchering of animals on cobble

pavements located east of the deer stones. Oval cooking hearths with bone remains sometimes occur as well.

RECENT STUDIES

Since 2001 the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, the Mongolian Museum, and the Institute of Archaeology have been conducting studies of khirigsuurs and deer stones in the Darkhad and Delger-Mörön Valleys in Khövsgol aimag. Russian and Japanese studies have also been conducted in this DSKC heartland of northern Mongolia (Tsbyktarov 2002, 2003; Takahama 2006; Takahama et al. 2006) and in Xinjiang, China (Ling 2008).

As noted above, our studies have settled the questions of the deer stone and khirigsuur chronology and the relationship between these cultural forms. Radiocarbon dates reveal that both deer stones and khirigsuurs date to a 500 year period from ca. 3200–2700 BP (cal) and are components of a single mortuary-ceremonial complex. Precision GPS data and excavation of deer stones and khirigsuurs is revealing more about the internal structure of these sites, their relationships and information about human burials. Even in the absence of artifacts, much can be learned about the Late Bronze Age ideoscape in Mongolia from mapping and spatial data.

We have also begun to expand the geographic focus from our initial study area in Khövsgol aimag, with studies of deer stone sites in the Khanui River Valley which has some of the most artistically carved stones in Mongolia. Initial surveys have also been conducted in Bayan Ölgii in Western Mongolia in the Altai foothills. Here we have encountered forms of deer stones and khirigsuurs that differ from those of central Mongolia and are more similar to monuments previously studied in Gorni-Altai by Russian scholars (Kubarev 1979). At the Tsagaan Gol and Khoton Nuur sites we have found khirigsuurs with two, four, and sometimes eight internal radial "spokes" connecting central mounds to fences; greater variety in how fence and radial lines are constructed; and nearly total absence of horse sacrifice. Only a single khirigsuur among hundreds inspected in a 2008 survey had horse mounds, and this site, On Khad, produced a radiocarbon date range of 3220–2960 cal. BP on a horse tooth sample. On the other hand most medium and large khirigsuurs had an abundance of circular hearth circles, generally around the western side of the khirigsuur. Lacking horse remains, the Mongolian

Altai khirigsuurs are difficult to date; however charcoal from a hearth ring at Khoton Nuur 333 produced a date similar to horse tooth dates from Khövsgol mounds and deer stones, 3070–2860 cal. BP. So far the larger deer stone sites we have examined, including Tsagaan Gol and Tsagaan Asga, also lack horse features, and in their place around deer stones we have found circular hearths containing calcined food bones and charcoal from which we have obtained date ranges of 3070–2860 and 3330–3070 cal. BP.

Despite many similarities in deer stone types and motifs, the deer stones of central and western Mongolia display important differences. Most striking are differences in lithology. Granite, diorite, and other granular hard stone dominate across all three types of deer stones in the northern Mongolian provinces. In the Bayan Ölgii region such rocks are a minority. Granite stones of Volkov's Types 1–3 are found, but most deer stones are fashioned from slate or other soft rock that is easier to shape and carve but suffers more environmental deterioration. As a result, many western Mongolian deer stones are badly eroded and highly fractured, making the art difficult to see. In recent times, the soft stone has encouraged vandalism, and many of the stelae that have not shattered and still stand are covered with modern Cyrillic graffiti.

MAPPING CULTURES

Seven seasons of field studies have not solved many of the outstanding questions raised at the beginning of this essay, especially those relating to long-distance connections and influences; but we have made progress. Most importantly we have shown that research on ceremonial aspects of Late Bronze Age culture need not remain a backwater because of the absence of artifacts, grave goods, and settlement archaeology. While typological and art historical approaches of the past half-century had reached a point of diminishing returns, a combination of targeted research on clarifying crucial dating issues, large-scale excavations to learn more about context, function, and behavioral aspects of deer stone and khirigsuur sites, and detailed studying of material remains is producing new understandings. Much of the recent progress has come from combining art historical methods and typological study with excavation.

Several attempts have been made to study deer stone art by componential analysis of deer stone design elements (Khudiakov 1987; Novgorodova

1989; Savinov 1994). However, to be effective such studies need carefully provenanced, detailed site-based data on deer stone art. Many stones have fallen and are buried or have disturbed contexts; no systematic regional inventories exist; archival records are often incomplete or missing; and Volkov's compendium and deer stone illustrations can only be considered as a preliminary, partial corpus. An artistic and cultural treasure embodied in deer stones deserves a national inventory, systematic conservation, and careful documentation with modern technology, including laser scanning (Beaubien, Basiliki, and Fitzhugh 2007; Fitzhugh 2009c).

One area where we have made distinct progress relates to interpretation of the Bronze Age "ideoscape" or ritual landscape tradition. In viewing deer stone art as a direct reflection of individual and societal belief and practices, it becomes possible to explore the evolution of belief systems in new and revealing ways. Whether or not deer stones can be seen as "portraits" of historical persons belted with their own weapons and implements and tattooed with "person-specific" protective deer-bird transformation designs and articles of shamanistic power, the analysis of deer stone art reveals much more about Late Bronze Age society and cosmological belief or ideoscapes than can be gleaned from typological studies of the tools represented for purposes of dating or regional comparison, or for interpreting deer images as references to a mythological "earth goddess" or "animal cult." There needs to be better understanding of the deer-bird motif to explore why this should be such a dominant feature of deer stone art when the hunting of deer and other wild animals was already a peripheral part of everyday nomadic pastoral life. Is this symbol a holdover from the hunter's ethos? A spirit-vehicle to heaven for departed souls? A prophylactic against evil intrusion? Or simply a traditional symbolic cultural icon? And what is the dynamic between the deer-bird and the horse, one heavenly and the other worldly? We do not yet have answers, but the prominence of the deer-bird image on deer stones and rock art suggests it had a central place in the LBA ideoscape of peoples living along the Inner Asia forest-steppe transition where these animals were dominant in parallel environmental domains.

We believe these answers will come from a more contextual study of deer stone art and reconstructions of the excavated physical features of deer stone sites and their surroundings, including their association with khirigsuurs. Our data show the importance of horse sacrifices honoring individuals

represented by deer stones in the same way that they honor those buried in khirigsuur mounds. Excavation of deer stone surroundings, as we have done at Ulaan Tolgoi and Khyadag, have produced surprises, such as the presence of horse sacrifices and other animal and small artifact offerings placed at the base of deer stones, butchering pavements, feasting hearths, and other features. We are discovering there is more to deer stone sites than deer stone art.

Nevertheless we should also explore new ways to approach the study of deer stone art, especially at small scale. More detailed stylistic and componential analysis of motif elements is needed to determine how they were created, with what tools, and by which artists. How many deer stones at a given site or nearby sites were carved by the same artists, or schools of artists? What is the meaning of variation in the number and styles of tools and weapons, and in the number and placement of deer and other motifs? Is the "shield" motif a military shield, a warrior's badge of accomplishments with more bars meaning higher honors, or an abstract shamanistic skeletal motif (Bayarsaikhan 2005)? Most importantly, deer stone sites need to be studied like settlements or towns, albeit of "the departed," to explore relationships between stones in a "whole site" context. It is clear their placement is planned and organized and to some extent is "accretionary" and time-sequenced. What does this mean for chronology, art stylistic trends, and the artists who produced the art? Mapping such data on the ground would move us closer to a real reconstruction of the strange but beautiful landscape we now know as Bronze Age Mongolia.

In addition to detailed site-oriented studies, we need to map at much larger scales, for much of what we know has come from north-central Mongolia, and the DSKC extends far beyond this "core area." When we began receiving radiocarbon dates for both deer stones and khirigsuurs centering around 3000 BP rather than 2500 BP—that is, preceding rather than being coeval with or later than Scythian complex sites in Western Asia—it seemed that deer stones might have originated in central Mongolia and spread west to become a component of the early phase of Scythian culture and art as seen at early Scythian sites like Arzhan, dating to 2700 BP. The latter's famous golden deer headdress in particular appears to embody the signature peaked withers and flowing antlers of the "Mongolian deer" image. The mechanism of such a westward movement could well have been an expansion of new people who buried their dead in a very

different manner in square slab-bordered graves with elaborate deposits of artifacts and who began to appear in northern Mongolia about 2600 BP (Tsbyktarov 2002, 2003; Amartuvshin 2003; Honeychurch 2003; Allard and Erdenebaatar 2005). Slab burials often used deer stones as construction materials and placed their burials around the outskirts of khirigsuurs and deer stone sites, apparently recognizing the special power of these sites while at the same time not honoring DSKC ritual traditions. Since slab burials are rare in western Mongolia it seemed possible that the DSKC was not replaced by slab burial culture in this area, where older DSKC traditions originating in central Mongolia continued. Over time Western Mongolian khirigsuur forms and deer stone art shifted toward less complex, stylized deer stone art and khirigsuurs whose spoke-like forms were more suggestive of chariot symbolism, as noted by many Russian researchers, and just as we have found in the Altai area, they usually lack east-oriented subsidiary horse burial mounds.

This seemed like a fine model, and we began to test it in surveys in Bayan Ölgii in 2008. The results, still preliminary, do not yet offer much support. The few dates we have obtained from western Mongolian mounds and deer stones are contemporary with the dates from central Mongolian sites. These preliminary dates suggest that regional cultural differences in style or environment (such as fewer expendable horses) rather than chronology explain the difference between central and western Mongolian deer stones and khirigsuurs. The higher, more mountainous and drier regions of western Mongolia are occupied today by Muslim Kazakhs and Buddhist Khalka Mongol populations with different cultures and ecological adaptations than exhibited by Central Mongolian Mongol groups. Perhaps geography was partly responsible for cultural differences in the Bronze Age as well. However, more extensive data might demonstrate merit in the "western drift" hypothesis by which central Mongolian art influenced early Scythian art. The earlier deer stone dates show that proto-Scythian art must have been present in Mongolia, Southern Siberia, and the Altai region on perishable media like textiles, felt, bone, and wood as early as 3500 BP, 1000 years before it emerged in its most elaborate Scythian form in Western Asia. Steppe influences have long been cited in the development of Shang and Chou art of China as well.

So far, deer stone art, by itself, offers little to advance theories of circumpolar and North Pacific and Eskimo art. This is not to say that there is

evidence to the contrary; rather, there is simply not yet enough data from Northeastern Asia to address this hypothesis one way or the other. The Mongolian deer image is a powerful symbol supporting the concept of spiritual transformations among animals—itself a major theme in northern and North Pacific art, religion, and culture—and in this case it is associated with shamanistic elements including mirrors, skeletal images, and human faces shown singing, chanting, or blowing. But these images and styles do not yet approach a level of specificity to suggest it inspired or contributed to Iron Age art in the Eurasian Arctic or in Okvik or Old Bering Sea Eskimo art. What deer stone art does tell us is that societies and cultures were shifting from beliefs dominated by interactions between spiritual forces of nature (animals/people/cosmos) to relationships governed by more secular concepts involving bodily protection, personal prowess, control over animals (domestication), and worldly power (tattoos/weapons/status). For five hundred years when deer stones and khirigsuurs were produced, humans hung in the balance between earth and sky, spirits and gods, as they became ever more divorced from nature and more dependent on horses, military power, social control, and external contacts and trade. With the appearance of square burials and Scythian tombs by 600 BCE, material wealth, horse-power, and the transference of worldly assets into the next life became the dominant feature of mortuary ritual and the power of animal spirits receded into the background, where they were reserved for decorative purposes and the steeds of shamans. The ancient animal-based ideoscape had shifted to a people-centered world where religious ideas were expressed through a code of increasingly abstract and arcane symbols governed by a few all-powerful deities and elites.

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Connecting to Other Polities

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9

Timescapes from the Past: An Archaeogeography of Mongolia

WILLIAM HONEYCHURCH AND CHUNAG AMARTUVSHIN

TIME, TERRITORY AND IDENTITY

The expansion of the medieval Mongols across Eurasia 800 years ago created a varied legacy that can still be perceived and mapped quite clearly today. The distribution of contemporary human genes shows direct evidence of Mongol genetic influence across the Old World (Schurr, this volume). Studies of today's Eurasian foods and textile traditions reveal the imperial Mongol propensity for broadly disseminating cultural practices from one region to another (Buell, Anderson, and Perry 2000; Allsen 1997). The name "Chinggis" and its many permutations (Genghis, Cengiz, Jengiz, etc.), if mapped, would reveal a far-flung array of cultures in which the cult of the great Khan had meaning, much in the same way "Alexander" remains widespread across the former Greco-Asian empire. Associations connected with the medieval Mongols are indeed diverse, widespread, and not to be taken lightly. Even today, it is not uncommon to encounter genuine emotion with regard to Mongol domination, including Russians smarting from the "Tatar Yoke," Iraqis mourning the destruction of medieval Baghdad, and Chinese who insist that Chinggis Khan was indeed a native son. As these examples testify, the Mongolian legacy and identity have significance across a surprising breadth of the Old World.

While the medieval Mongols are often interpreted through the lens of the vast geographic region and diverse cultures they influenced, we take that same geographical perspective and propel it back in time in order to analyze the earliest roots of Mongolian politics, landscapes, and territory. This archaeogeographic exploration uses a deep time perspective to inform our understanding of Mongolia as a cultural, political, and geographic construct. We ask, how might a prehistorian envision Mongolia differently from the way it is presently viewed within a framework of nation-states, geopolitics, international development, historical, and area studies? In pursuing the temporal roots of the eastern steppe nomads, we argue that the spatial extent of the Mongol Empire and its vast legacy was only partly due to a 13th century political movement founded upon the ethnonym, "Mongol." In fact, the Mongol Empire was built upon multiple experiments in large-scale political organization beginning more than a millennium before the time of Chinggis Khan (Honeychurch and Amartuvshin 2006a; Lattimore 1962:252). A long-term view from archaeology encompasses these many periods of regional organization and helps identify geographical patterns and political strategies that were crucial ingredients for the pivotal role played by Mongolia in eastern Eurasia.

Using the archaeological record, we return to a period before the steppes of Mongolia had been politically unified or even conceived of as a cohesive area. Beginning as early as the Bronze Age, 3,400 years ago, we chart the earliest networks of interaction that initiated and partly guided the later growth of Mongolia. The precedents set at this early time shaped the first political models for integrating expansive steppe polities by the end of the 1st millennium BCE and continued as part of an eastern steppe political tradition. We pay particular attention to diachronic continuities that reflect long-standing ideas for how the political landscape of the nomadic steppe should be organized. Underlying this investigation is the premise that early social, economic, and political relationships, and the social memory of those relationships, become the building blocks of later political identities, often in the form of reconstructed ancestors, authoritative forebearers, and legitimizing ideologies (Rogers 2007; Van Dyke and Alcock 2003). In this sense, the Mongolia we pursue is as much a matter of time, especially the social time of memory, as it is of people, space, and environment. By paying attention to origins, precedents, and enduring patterns, we begin to answer the question of how and why this particular region gave rise to some of the world's truly great empires.

CONSTRUCTION OF MONGOLIAN TIMESCAPES

Our goal in using the concept of timescapes is to position Mongolia in a different light, one that is relevant to the dynamics and processes of the past but insightful about the present. "Timescapes" as a term improvises upon Arjun Appadurai's (1996) emphasis on the intersection of overlapping but distinctive fields of cultural activity. Appadurai's approach to studying cultural constellations is useful for undermining preconceived starting points of entity, type, or category. As an investigative procedure for studying trends in interaction across the eastern steppe, this kind of inquiry resists the common dichotomies of steppe/sown, core/periphery, civilized/barbaric—stereotypes often used to imagine steppe society as culturally dependent on neighboring sedentary civilizations. By adding a temporal dimension to Appadurai's framework, we explore how some aspects of these diverse fields of activity were remembered and reenacted over time to create social and geographic patterns unique to the steppe setting and its history. In taking this approach, we quite consciously follow in the intellectual footsteps of the great Inner Asian geographer Owen Lattimore ([1940]1992:19–20).

Since archaeologists work only indirectly with cultural and social worlds through material remains, our glimpses of the past are achieved through analysis of ancient material culture as an indicator of behavior and beliefs. Variability over space and time in material distributions, when studied carefully, can indicate the events and social processes we hope to know more about from the past. In this study, we focus on the monumental landscapes of Mongolia created during the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age, dated to the 2nd and 1st millennia BCE. Geographical distributions of monuments and their changing spatial relations with other monuments over time reflect choices made by steppe communities about the material expression of social ideas, relationships, and interactions. Our "timescapes" therefore are 500–600 year analytical slices of monumental geography sequenced over a period of almost 2,000 years. By looking at these slices of geography diachronically, we can begin to identify areas where overlap, cleavage, and joining in different kinds of monumental distributions occurred and created regions of enduring significance and legacy. These distinctive regions tended to comprise environmental and social boundaries with marked cultural diversity, which made them more dynamic, integrative, and synthetic than other parts of the eastern steppe. After more than a thousand years,

these same regions eventually formed the heartland of the largest steppe empires.

MAPPING THE MONGOLIAN PAST—EARLIEST CONTEXTS

The long period of time that was the Mongolian Bronze Age and Early Iron Age includes dramatic transformations in society and culture, and these changes were somehow intertwined with the practice of constructing impressive mounded or slab-built monuments in important locales. The mid to late 2nd millennium BCE was not only a time of monument building across most of the eastern steppe but also the period during which horse riding may have appeared, as well as extensive mobile herding. Towards the end of the 1st millennium BCE, a political organization arose on the eastern steppe under the name "Xiongnu" which rapidly integrated a territory encompassing modern Mongolia and parts of Manchuria, Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, and southern Siberia. The Xiongnu polity was made up primarily of pastoral nomadic communities whose model for regional organization set a precedent that was remembered, reused, and reworked by later steppe states and empires (Di Cosmo 1999).

These early periods of the Mongolian past are documented primarily by archaeology and not through historical texts. When the steppe peoples of the Xiongnu polity do appear in the Chinese histories of the Qin and Han dynasties, their depiction reflects the imminent threat these groups posed to the Chinese state rather than a candid interest in their society and beliefs (Di Cosmo 2002; Lattimore 1962:251; Goldin, this volume). While archaeological sources of information are still in the initial stages of development, they are transforming understandings of steppe society on almost an annual basis. The data available for our construction of timescapes come from both systematic surveys for research purposes and for rescue archaeology (Amartuvshin 2007). Distributions of monumental sites over relatively large regions are particularly well represented by the surveys of the past five years and, for the first time, can be used for intraregional comparison across the territory of Mongolia.

Three general monumental forms are commonly attributed to the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age of the eastern steppe: khirigsuurs, slab burials, and deer stones (Fig. 9.1). It is important to emphasize that these three types of monuments are broad categories containing significant formal,

chronological, and geographic variability within each site type. Khirigsuurs are large stone mounds with low quadrangular or circular surrounds built of single stones (Frohlich et al. 2009; Wright 2007; Tsybiktarov 1995). The central mound is constructed of systematically piled rocks, often around an internal cist made of large slabs with a capstone. Human skeletal remains are recovered from these cists most consistently in the western regions of Mongolia, while in central and east-central regions internal cists do not, as of yet, exhibit evidence for such remains. Smaller stone piles lying beyond the outermost stones, referred to as satellite features, often contain interred horse heads, though again this practice is not reported from western regions. Slab burials (Volkov 1967; Tsybiktarov 1998; Erdenebaatar 2004) have more consistent evidence for human interment and were constructed of moderate to large stone slabs, positioned on edge to create a rectangular enclosure around a central burial pit up to 1.8 m in depth. The burial is oriented approximately east-west, and artifactual and faunal remains are

9.1. Monumental sites of the 2nd and 1st millennium BCE. Upper left, *khirigsuur* with circular surround at Sar Khairkhan, Zavkhan Aimag. Upper right, slab burial from Baga Gazaryn Chuluu, Dundgov' Aimag. Lower left, Xiongnu period intermediate elite cemetery at Egiin Gol, Bulgan Aimag. Lower right, excavation of an elite Xiongnu tomb at Takhiltyn Khotgor, Khovd Aimag. (Latter photograph courtesy of Khovd Archaeology Project 2007, by permission of Bryan K. Miller.) For images of deer stones see Fitzhugh and Bayarsaikhan, this volume.

common. The well-known deer stone monuments are standing stelae made of dressed stone with pecked images of stylized deer or other forest animals, geometric shapes, and various tool and weapon depictions (Jacobson 1993; Fitzhugh and Bayarsaikhan, this volume).

Current field research includes studying the variability of these monuments from one location to another. Khirigsuurs are a good example of this trend since survey and excavation are showing that Bronze Age communities used somewhat similar monumental vocabularies in different ways (Tsybiktarov 2002). Settlement sites contemporary with these monuments are only beginning to be researched in Mongolia (Houle 2009; Honeychurch and Amartuvshin 2006b) and have been studied more extensively in South Siberia. In this region, habitations having relatively small living areas, little infrastructural investment, sparse artifact scatters, and minimal deposition are characteristic of this time period. Given extensive herd animal remains and minimal evidence for agriculture at these habitations, archaeologists suggest short-term and probably seasonal occupations by mobile herding and hunting groups (e.g., Davydova and Miniaev 2003; Grishin 1981).

Recently, the impressive monumental landscape has received most archaeological attention due to the scale and distinct visual prominence of these imposing features across the grasslands. The Russian archaeologist V.V. Volkov published two volumes that, among other important findings, reported field observations on the locations of khirigsuurs, slab burials, and deer stones (Volkov 1967; 1981). Based on numerous vehicle surveys across Mongolia, Volkov observed that khirigsuur monuments appear mainly in the west and central aimags while slab burials occur in the eastern and central regions, and deer stones are clustered heavily in the west-central provinces. Using cross-dating and stylistic comparisons, Volkov assigned the three monuments to periods ranging from the late 2nd to late 1st millennium BCE and suggested that these patterns result from the activities of different ethnic groups which came into contact through processes of pastoral migration. This explanation has recently been re-argued by Tsybiktarov (1998:142; 2003) and Erdenebaatar (2002), both of whom place emphasis on climate change as the reason behind broader regimes of movement and interethnic competition.

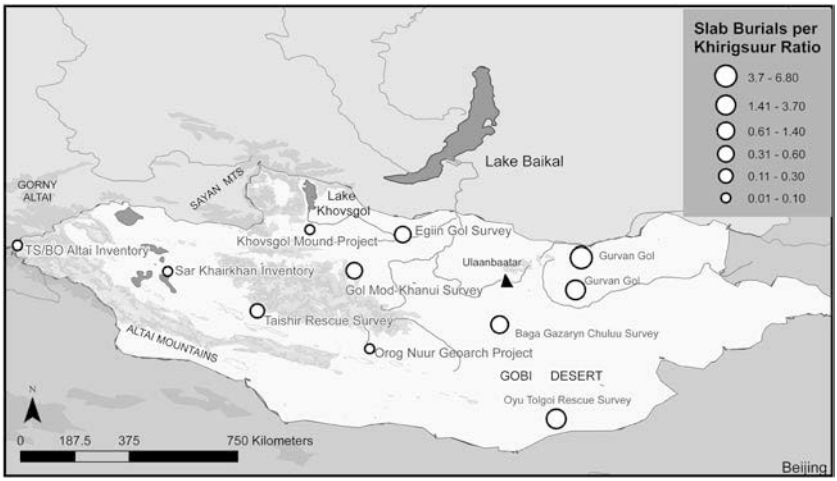
LATE BRONZE AGE CLINES, 1000–800 BCE

Several of Volkov's original hypotheses are now being examined. A very recent series of radiocarbon dates made on carefully excavated samples has grounded much of the typological and stylistic chronology. While the overall number of dates is still small and the number of sites and their geographical dispersion limited, the broadest outlines of contemporaneity are now detectable. Based on a growing series of dates from khirigsuur, slab burial, and deer stone contexts in Arkhangai, Bulgan, Khovsgol, and Bayankhongor aimags, khirigsuur mounds date to circa 1400–800 BCE and were fully contemporary with deer stone construction activities between 1300 and 700/600 BCE. From approximately 1100 BCE, slab burials began to be built and continued until 400–300 BCE, long after khirigsuurs and deer stones had fallen into disuse as monumental forms (Fitzhugh 2009; Frohlich et al. 2009; Allard and Erdenebaatar 2005; Honeychurch 2004; Torbat, Amartuvshin, and Erdenebat 2003). The radiocarbon chronology confirms the earliest and latest forms of monuments and the fact that all forms may have been practiced simultaneously for 200 to 300 years, though not in all regions.

In addition to the chronological relationship between monuments, systematic archaeological surveys carried out over the last decade provide a basis for testing the proposed locational differences of khirigsuurs and slab burials. Table 9.1 and Figure 9.2 present the same data from eleven different surveys arranged east-to-west across the territory of Mongolia and provide counts and ratios for khirigsuur and slab burial features.[1] The ratios indicate the number of slab burial features present per khirigsuur over the given survey area. Though the sample is small and survey methods vary substantially, the overall pattern of slab burial to khirigsuur ratios in comparison to east-west longitude shows an uneven but unmistakable pattern. As Volkov originally proposed, to the west and northwest, khirigsuur counts increase relative to slab burials; the reverse relationship holds true to the east and southeast. Based on these data, the distributions of the two monumental traditions are best described as clinal. Clines, or gradients, represent continuous variation over space, and where clines grade into one another, edges might be best described as areas of mixed and turbulent conjunction rather than hard boundaries.

Table 9.1. Survey Data by Region[1]

SURVEY	AIMAG	AREA (SQ KM)	KHIRIGSUUR_ COUNT	SLAB BURIAL COUNT	SB PER KH RATIO	KH INTERMENT	LONG	SURVEY TYPE
Gurvan Gol-Batshireet/ Delgerkhaan	Khentii	no data	200	1368	6.8	no excav	110°	semi-systematic pedestrian & vehicle
Gurvan Gol-Tsenkher Gol Survey	Khentii	no data	37	133	3.6	no excav	109°	semi-systematic pedestrian & vehicle
Oyu Tolgoi Rescue Survey	Omnogov'	70	3	11	3.7	no excav	107°	systematic pedestrian
Baga Gazaryn Chuluu Survey	Dundgov'	200	187	261	1.4	NO	106°	systematic pedestrian
Egiin Gol Survey	Bulgan	310	181	86	0.5	NO	103°	systematic pedestrian
Gol Mod-Khanui Survey	Arkhangai	25	54	30	0.6	YES	101°	systematic pedestrian
Orog Nuur Geoarchaeology Project	Bayankhongor	16–20	174	23	0.1	YES	100°	systematic pedestrian
Khovsgol Mound Project	Khovsgol	850	1334	15 (0–20)	0.01	YES	99°	systematic pedestrian
Taishir Rescue Survey	Gov'Altai	25	33	11	0.3	YES	96°	systematic pedestrian
Sar Khairkhan Inventory	Zavkhan	12	64	1 (0)	0.02	no excav	93°	non-systematic pedestrian & vehicle
TS/BO Altai Inventory	Bayan Olgii	no data	464	5 (0–10)	0.01	no excav	88°	semi-systematic pedestrian



9.2. Eleven archaeological survey areas across Mongolia represented by the ratio of slab burials to *khirigsuur* features (see Table 6.1 for survey data).

The dominant model of migrating ethnic groups in conflict does not explain the gradual dissipations of these two types of monuments, or their diachronic differences. Where survey data are available for areas with high numbers of both slab burials and khirigsuurs, such as the Egiin Gol Valley of north-central Mongolia, the model likewise cannot explain the structured association of these two monuments. Survey has shown that the spatial connections between these monuments are better understood in the context of transformation in choices and practices by a single local population (Wright 2006). Co-construction and reuse between khirigsuurs and slab burial sites do not display patterns suggestive of intrusive migration but instead a shift in monumental expression possibly tracking changes in social relationships by local communities over time (Honeychurch, Wright, and Amartuvshin 2009).

In contrast to viewing these distributions of monuments as indicating movements and clashes of exclusive culture-bearing groups, it might be useful instead to contextualize the nature and setting of monument use on the eastern steppe. Ritual and mortuary monuments of the late 2nd and early 1st millennium BCE were quite widespread and occurred in diverse forms. The monumental features, whether of earth, timber, or stone, were created not as objects unto themselves but as sites of social activity, which

resulted in material structures (Houle 2009). They were the outcome of collective behaviors, probably involving group performance and ceremony, and may have served to structure relationships between individuals and groups through an assignment of roles and prescribed interactions (e.g., Allard and Erdenebaatar 2005; Sherratt 1997:353). By reinterpreting a slab burial or khirigsuur as a point of social interaction and negotiation, new paths emerge for understanding their roles in early social dynamics.

A NEW MODEL: INTRAREGIONAL INTERACTION AND "HOTSPOT" FRONTIERS

In light of the survey results for monumental landscapes of the late Bronze and Early Iron Ages discussed above, we suggest a different kind of model for consideration. Early traditions of generalized monument building practices probably existed throughout many parts of the present territory of Mongolia and beyond. During the middle of the 2nd millennium BCE, these monument-based practices commenced and became a dominant mode for community creation of local landscapes. Between 1400 and 1100 BCE, monumental landscapes of the northwestern regions of present-day Mongolia were assembled using a number of feature types, the most common of which seems to have been the khirigsuur mound with a human interment (Table 9.1). The southeastern sectors of Mongolia, including much of the Gobi Desert, had contemporary monumental practices that are still poorly known but certainly included circular, rectangular, and hourglass-shaped stone features of masonry-like construction, sometimes having standing stone slabs and often an interred individual, positioned in various orientations (e.g., Tseveendorj et al. 2004).

The period between 1100 and 700/600 BCE witnessed widespread changes in social relationships that may have involved shifts to a more formalized political hierarchy, longer distance alliance-building using horse-based transport, and growing transactions of prestige items between steppe elite (Honeychurch, Wright, and Amartuvshin 2009). The need to express, embed, and support new relationships through "materializing" them (Earle 2004) may have encouraged the adoption of novel forms of mortuary practice focused on the monumental interment of prominent dead in ways reserved for elite subgroups. In the west, collective khirigsuur mound building gradually transitioned to a new dominant practice which took the shape

of stone, earth, and timber *kurgan* interments (e.g., Arzhan I/II, Aldy-Bel', Maiemir, Pazyryk, Chandman-Ulangom), while in the east, large stone slab "cist-like" burials emerged as the main monumental vocabulary. Based on our preliminary chronologies, in particular regions various monumental forms including khirigsuurs, kurgans, slab burials, deer stones as well as dramatic rock art panels were quite possibly contemporaneous creations. This is particularly true of khirigsuur and slab burial complexes in regions that are today considered the "central" part of the modern state of Mongolia (Honeychurch, Wright, and Amartuvshin 2009:431–32).

However, if khirigsuurs are primarily a western/northwestern form of monumental expression and slab burials are primarily an eastern/southeastern form, why do clinal patterns of gradual fall-off occur such that, for example, the far western site of Taishir is reported to have a small complement of slab burials (see Table 9.1)? Rather than seeing these outlying monuments as vestiges of "slab burial" building groups migrating to the west, we suggest local, agentive communities which participated with extra-local groups through alliance building, exchange, intermarriage, pastoral collaboration, and assistance in times of need. Monument building may have been an occasion to bring local and extra-local community members together and strengthen important long or medium distance ties through joint activities (e.g., Allard and Erdenebaatar 2005). Where these interaction spheres stretched across areas with different monumental traditions, localized monumental "vocabularies" tended to become more synthetic and diversified. Localized choices for monumental practices, therefore, were conditioned by smallscale, imperfectly and occasionally articulated interaction spheres and pastoral movement regimes that created a patchwork of communication and contact over multiple subregions of the steppe.

Such an incremental patchwork of networks, each covering a different spatial area encompassing more or less varied monumental traditions, over 400 years would indeed produce the clinal pattern we see today. This model of variable networks of contact and movement was originally developed to explain the spread of ceramic types manufactured by Bronze Age mobile pastoralists across parts of Central Asia (Frachetti 2004:17–19, 412–13). Similar processes were probably involved in the circulation of numerous ideas, technologies, styles, and forms among mobile steppe populations. However, what is also important in explaining the distributional dynamics of materials across a large region is the recognition that this process did not

entail exact replication as much as the transfer of general concepts which were adopted according to local agendas and understandings. As applied to eastern steppe monuments, these practices circulated as partial social and ideological "recipes" rather than as exact behavior sets, resulting in variability in the local expression, understanding, and use of monument forms. Just such a dynamic may underlie the perplexing problem of why similar khirigsuur constructions with similar landscape organizations were used for mortuary purposes in some regions and as nonmortuary structures elsewhere.

The model above also addresses the emergence of the central regions of Mongolia, which today include Töv, Arkhangai, and parts of Bulgan, Selenge, Övörkhangai, and Dundgov' aimags. Three thousand years ago, these regions were no more "central" than any other region of the eastern steppe. Over the millennia, multiple nomadic polities and eventually the nation-state of Mongolia grew around these core areas, creating an enduring, traditional political geography by which these regions are indeed conceived of as "central." Today this political geography molds the discourse on Mongolian identity and statehood and tacitly runs through most discussions of social and historical processes, including the present discussion. This conception of the eastern steppe, however, is a long-term product of social and political decision-making and is not in anyway a geographical default. With a deep time perspective, we can begin to hypothesize about the characteristics and events that predisposed these particular regions to become "central" and to play such an important role in defining Mongolia. A notable distinction of the region outlined above is its combination of ecotonal boundaries, accessibility to long-distance movement, and resource richness and stability, all of which contributed to an interactive dynamic very different from other regions of the eastern steppe.

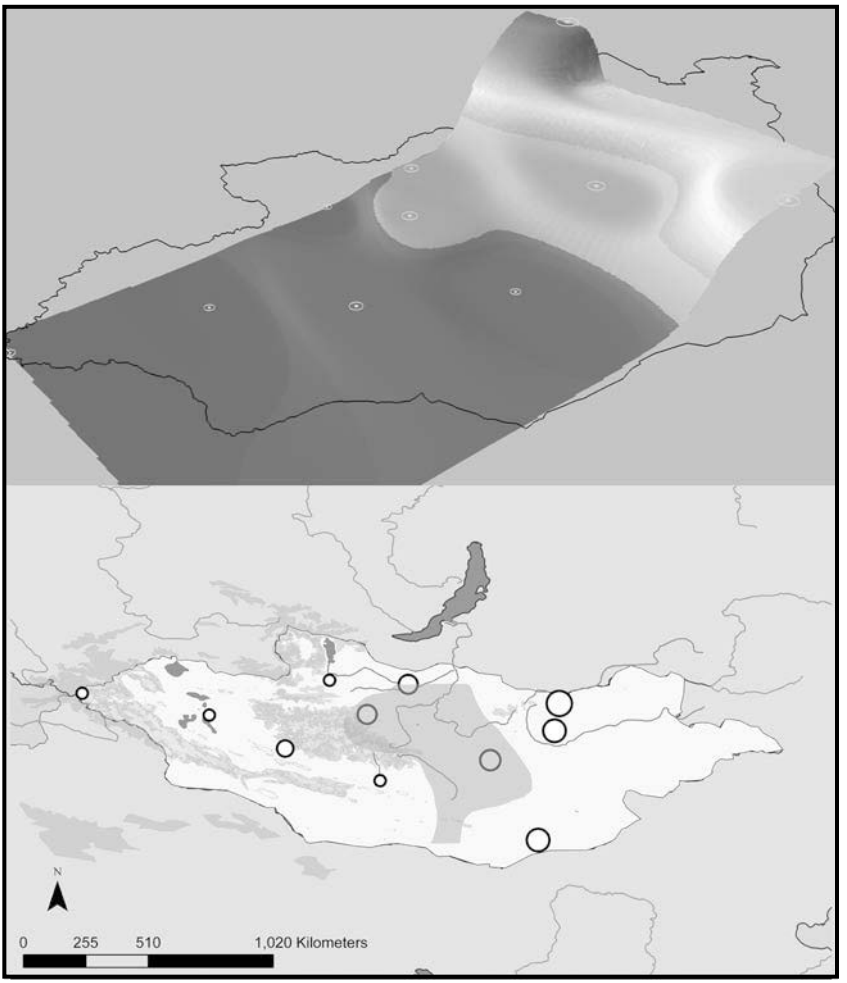
The phenomenon of multiple overlapping boundaries in this region is largely physiographic and geomorphological, but it has significance for the way macro-regional cultural patterns developed and conjoined. Epochs of riverine action, trending roughly from the south/southwest to the north/northeast along the primary basins of the Selenge, Orkhon, and Tuul rivers, gradually carved out broad swathes of low-lying grasslands between the Khangai and Khentii mountain ranges. This region therefore marks a primary topographical divide between the highland mountain systems of the north and northwest (Altai-Khangai-Khentii) and the lowland steppe of the southeast, extending into eastern Inner Mongolia. The riverine grasslands

and their mountain fringes also mark a gradual bioenvironmental transition between northerly forests and southern deserts. As described previously, the most basic division in monument construction techniques seems to be between a northwest tradition of khirigsuur-kurgan or mound-based structures and a southeastern tradition in which slab and cist structures predominate. While these geographical differences are quite broad and generalized, they fit a pattern of highland/lowland differentiation in which mountain frontiers correspond to cultural distinctions. Interestingly, this region of overlapping ecotonal and physiographic boundaries is also the area in which both of these monumental practices show relatively equal investment, based on our survey area sample (Table 9.1).

This complex overlap of multiple boundaries also created unique productive and movement possibilities. Climatic and topographical variables make this conjunction of grasslands, rolling hills, and mountain fringes one of the most productive regions in Mongolia in terms of pasture growth, agricultural potential, and reliable precipitation. The ability to combine a number of subsistence resources including pastoralism, agriculture, hunting-gathering, and fishing has also been a characteristic of many parts of this region and produced subsistence systems that were relatively reliable and stable over time (Honeychurch and Amartuvshin 2007). Numerous river basins produced natural corridors of movement through this productive environment and facilitated travel in strategic directions, most notably from far south to the north along the Ongii and Orkhon rivers, as well as to the northwest and northeast along the Selenge and Tuul respectively. While river valleys facilitated movement along waterways, they also created predictable routes and delimited topographies by which the control of movement could be accomplished (Honeychurch and Amartuvshin 2006a). This capability might have been particularly salient 3000 years ago when horse riding was being adopted and local elites were investing in more distant alliances to support their political positions at home.

By virtue of this resource and mobility corridor, communities inhabiting the future "core region" during the 1st millennium BCE may have been more stable and productive than their contemporaries and more successful in shaping alliances and networks with outlying communities. If so, then our timescapes analysis of monuments during this period should demonstrate qualitative differences between this corridor region and neighboring steppe areas. A first observation, already referenced above, is that the future core

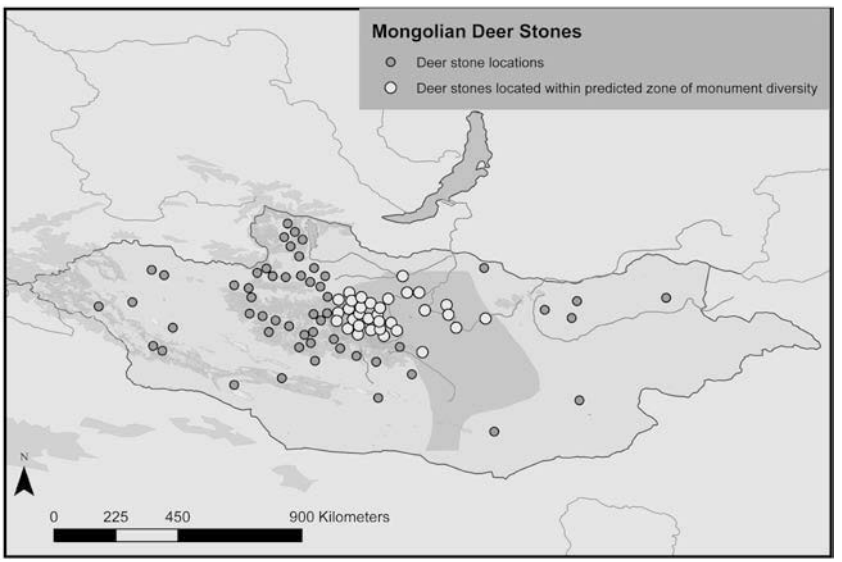
regions were characterized by interaction networks that maximized the diversity and uniqueness of local monumental landscapes. This point is clear from a predictive analysis of slab burial and khirigsuur ratios in which simultaneous investment in both monumental practices were about equal (Fig. 9.3).



9.3. An interpolated surface using the survey area ratios to estimate values for neighboring unsurveyed areas. The top image is a three-dimensional rendering of the interpolated surface. The middle region is where predicted ratios of slab burials to *khirigsuurs* are between 1:2 and 1:0.5. The lower image shows the two-dimensional extent of the same area. Interpolation used Inverse Distance Weighting (IDW) with eleven neighbors included and a distance decay power of five (Wheatley and Gillings 2002:193–95).

If we consider another timescape distribution, that of deer stone locations in reference to these other monuments, the region in which deer stones, khirigsuurs, and slab burials were all constructed and used most intensively between ca. 1100 and 700 BCE is that of central and eastern Arkhangai Aimag, in the middle of the group of aimags defined as central (Fig. 9.4). This conglomerate of different site types and practices seems to represent a genuine locational emphasis indicating monument diversity and intensity not seen in other regions of the eastern steppe.

Precisely in the region demarcated by our list of "central" aimags, interaction spheres and mobility patterns formed a cultural intersection 3000 years ago. This intersection drew upon practices to the west/northwest and to the east/southeast producing an area of greater cultural diversity and synthesis. Productive stability, extensive movement regimes, and a cultural geography differentiated along ecotones all contributed to a region that was marked by internal boundaries but woven together by sociocultural process. We describe this geographic formula as a "hotspot" of cultural activity along an environmental frontier region—a hotspot frontier, which may



9.4. An overlay of digitized deer stone locations in Mongolia (Tsybiktarov 2003:90) and the selected region of equal investment in slab burial and *khirigsuur* monuments. The overlap of these two distributions includes 38 percent of deer stones shown and the region of their highest geographic density.

have generated centuries of sociocultural synthesis, innovation, and competition. Based on this hypothesis, four basic qualities were significant in the making of an eastern steppe regional core: (a) multiple boundaries with ecotonal conjunctions; (b) resource and mobility corridors, (c) diversified cultural geography, and (d) repeated selection of this region as a political center, resulting in a precedent. It is this fourth quality, discussed below, that links the Mongolia of today with the eastern steppe of the Bronze Age.

REGIONAL CENTRALITY AND THE MAKING OF MODERN MONGOLIA

Internal frontiers, the networks that knitted them together culturally, and the hotspot generated by overlapping networks of interaction, gave rise to a "persistent trend" in the structuring of eastern steppe organizational patterns. The earliest evidence of these geographical patterns is in the growth and eventual arrangement of the Xiongnu polity (initiated ca. the 4th to 3rd century BCE), which formalized for the first time a regional-scale political center. According to historical sources, the Xiongnu state was organized into three subsections: western section, eastern section, and a central region having the seat of political power; the latter was also a probable place of origin for the polity (Watson 1993:136; Honeychurch and Wright 2008:529; Martynova 1988). This tripartite spatial structure is described in the textual accounts and presents one hypothesis for interpreting a similar pattern observed in the archaeological record of Xiongnu monumental sites (Yeruul-Erdene 2010:26–28).[2] The large stone and earthen monuments of the Xiongnu period differ from previous khirigsuur and slab burial forms. They include embanked ring-shaped structures up to 14 m in diameter and stone-sided quadrangular platforms reaching 30 m across and 1 m high (Fig. 9.1). These stone features were mortuary constructions and were grouped to create cemeteries, some numbering as many as 400 burials. Furthermore, there is good evidence to suggest that these were the burials of regional and local elite individuals (Miniaev and Sakharovskaia 2007; Batsaikhan 2003; Honeychurch, Nelson, and Amartuvshin 2007; but cf. Brosseder 2009).

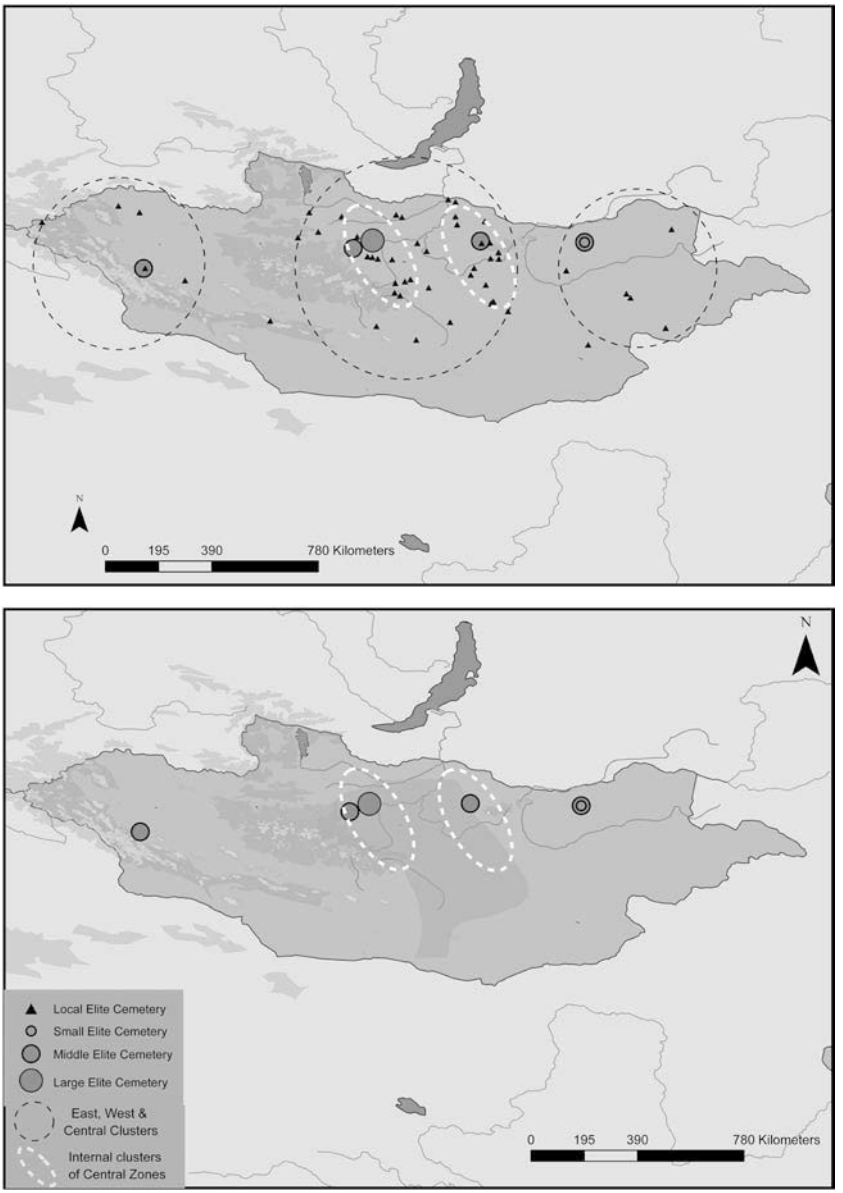
In the same way that choices for the construction of Bronze Age monuments tell us indirectly about communities, their traditions, and interactions, the spatial clustering of Xiongnu elite cemeteries can help identify

subregions of political investment during the 300 or so years of Xiongnu power. When all currently known Xiongnu cemeteries from Mongolia are mapped, a roughly tripartite geographical arrangement is recognizable across the eastern steppe (Fig. 9.5a).[3] The center of this distribution is divided between the central west and central north river systems where we see the majority of elite and intermediate elite cemeteries grouped together. This area corresponds quite well to the "hotspot region" defined by intensive intermixing of prior Bronze and Early Iron Age monumental practices (Fig. 9.5b). Our analysis strongly suggests that the centrality of this region during the Xiongnu period emerged from earlier social dynamics that culturally and logistically favored the area as a political heartland.

Unfortunately, regional burial chronology is not refined enough at present to differentiate the stages of growth in the cemetery pattern depicted in our composite map (Miller 2009:263–72). However, the earliest known dates from Mongolian and Siberian Xiongnu contexts, including burials and habitations, indeed come from this core region, suggesting some priority for this riverine-steppe corridor in the development of the larger polity (e.g., Torbat, Amartuvshin, and Erdenebat 2003; Amartuvshin and Honeychurch 2010). Once this core had been consolidated, political and military expansion extended outwards across the original formative networks that had made the area a hotspot in the first place. In other words, small-scale interactions of differentiated groups across the eastern steppe, during most of the 1st millennium BCE, created the structural precedents by which the first regional polity formed and matured.

The tripartite subregional division across this tremendous spatial expanse argues for a Xiongnu organizational strategy of horizontal distribution of political authority and decision making, resulting in eastern and western subcenters. This arrangement arose from both the need and the capability to delegate authority over a territory that, due to its size and the mobility of its inhabitants, was difficult to integrate through a single center. The genius of Xiongnu political organization was the networking together of much of this vast area through these three regions.

Xiongnu organization seems to have been oriented towards networking across and exploiting the diversity of internal boundaries. These included the northwest–southeast division marked by the confluence of different cultural practices as well as north-south variation between forests, grasslands, and deserts linking southern Siberia to Inner Mongolia and eventually to



9.5a, b. The uppermost map (a) shows the locations of intermediate elite and elite cemeteries in Mongolia based on the Mongolian Institute of Archaeology database (version 1, 2008). The distribution shows a tripartite division between eastern, western, and central clusters as well as a division within the central region. The lower map (b) shows an overlay of the central area of the Xiongnu period and the selected region of earlier investment in slab burial and *khirigsuur* monuments.

northern China. This conception of Xiongnu territory as a "networked space" essentially combines both the trans-ecological and trans-polity interchange that prefigured later steppe empires (Christian 2000; Koryakova and Epimakhov 2007:333).

TIME, SPACE, AND A REGION LOST IN DEFINITION

We return to the question of the temporal nature of Mongolian cultural identity and why we find it difficult today to categorize Mongolia as a part of a standard geographic collective. This study suggests that the difficulty arises from a very long history during which the peoples of the eastern steppe forged their region into a fundamental crossroads, interchange, and intersection of Eurasia. Mongolia has long been a territory that actively channeled the networks of distant regions and therefore participated in all of those regions to some extent. This networking has formed part of the Mongolian historical tradition and cultural identity.

In this discussion we drew upon Appadurai's concept of overlapping scapes in order to work within a more flexible framework for exploring relationships between space, time and culture. This approach allows us the freedom to range from medieval Eurasia to the Bronze Age eastern steppe and the Mongolia of today—a freedom of time and space that in our experience has been inaccessible through the area studies framework. Our experience with area studies has consistently been one of struggling with received geographical models for defining our research and identifying academic communities in which our interests might or might not "fit."

By taking Mongolia and the eastern steppe region as our departing point, more often than not, strict interpretation of modern political boundaries and area definitions have prevented our inclusion in, for example, studies centers, conference venues, or funding opportunities. The area studies approach explicitly organizes research through these bounded geographies with the objective of constructing multi- and cross-disciplinary knowledge communities held together by place, culture, and language. However, rigid interpretations of such boundedness diminishes the area studies "mission," which ultimately must be the enabling of innovative expansions of human knowledge.

The essence of geography can easily be lost through over-definition. We believe that having latitude to privilege different organizations of geography

relative to specific problems, time periods, and conceptual constructs is essential for growing geographic-based knowledge. In that sense, area studies can be viable if flexibility exists to involve an "area" in alternative geographic groupings innovatively, creatively, and based on cogent argument.

NOTES

1. *Table 9.1 Notes and Citations*: Most of these data were compiled just prior to the 2006 summer field season but they are representative of each region. The definition of khirigsuur used here is a central mound with a circular or quadrangular surrounding fence. Khirigsuur mounds without fences have been included in our totals for other studies (e.g., Honeychurch and Amartuvshin 2006b) though were not included here in order to maintain comparability across projects. *Gurvan Gol Surveys*: Norovsambuu and Katoh 1994. *Oyu Tolgoi Rescue Survey*: Tseveendorj et al 2003. *BGC Survey*: Amartuvshin and Honeychurch 2010. *Egiin Gol Survey*: Honeychurch 2004; Amartuvshin 2004; Wright 2006. *Gol Mod-Khanui Survey*: Allard and Erdenebaatar 2005; Houle 2009; Houle and Allard, pers. comm. 2006. Excavations by Allard and Houle have shown that some khirigsuurs included in this count are "burials on slopes" and have differences from other features called khirigsuurs. This is part of the variability that higher resolution studies are discovering and these features are included here because they fall into the khirigsuur category as defined by Mongol, Russian, and some foreign archaeologists. *Khovsgol Mound Project*: Frohlich et al. 2009, Fitzhugh 2009; Frohlich, pers. comm. 2006. The slab burial number is estimated by some accounts to be 0 and by some accounts to be 10–20. Since the Japanese expedition has reported the presence of slab burials in the immediate area (Takahama et al 2006), 15 was used as a reasonable estimate for what is certainly a very small representation of slab burials. *Orog Nuur Geoarchaeology Project*: Marcolongo 2005. *Taishir Rescue Survey*: Tseveendorj et al 2005. After excavating several "khirigsuur" features and discovering consistent evidence for human interment, the excavators considered categorizing them as "Mongun-Taiga" burials. All such features have been included here since Mongun-Taiga burials are considered by some researchers to be part of the khirigsuur tradition (Tsybiktarov 2002). Other researchers have argued that they are distinct from khirigsuurs (Chugunov 1994). *Sar Khairkhan Inventory*: Based on a 2007 Altai reconnaissance by authors. Note that no slab burials were discovered but a single slab burial was added to preserve the ratio. *Tsagaan Salaa/Baga Oigor Altai Inventory*: Jacobson, Kubarev, and Tseveendorj 2001; Jacobson-Tepfer 2008; Jacobson, pers. comm. 2006. Counts of slab burials in this region must be qualified. Jacobson, Kubarev, and Tseveendorj 2001 reports up to 10 possible slab burials, though these are quite uncertain. Since estimates can only be based upon the best available knowledge of standard surface typologies, we have chosen a count of 5 as reasonable until excavation can be used to test these stone features further.
2. By "Xiongnu archaeology" we refer to a specific material culture and its associated patterning, belonging to a highly organized society of the eastern steppe zone that was centered in Mongolia. The dates for this material culture overlap the historical dates of the textual Xiongnu state, and evidence-based arguments have been made in other publications to support comparability between the textual and material records (Honeychurch 2004: 95, 102–4). We view the textual and material records as distinct bodies

of information with different strengths and weaknesses that must be well understood prior to using ideas from one to compare with the other. See Goldin in this volume for a broader discussion of the meaning and use of the term "Xiongnu" and its problems in archaeology as well as Miller (2009).

3. This map is based on a comprehensive Mongolian database compiled in 2008 by the Mongolian Institute of Archaeology and leaves out some cemeteries in South Siberia and Inner Mongolia with similar material culture, though the addition of these sites does not change the east-west tripartite patterning.

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10

Steppe Nomads as a Philosophical Problem in Classical China

PAUL R. GOLDIN

One of the purposes of the "-scapes" approach to anthropological inquiry is to deconstruct the nation-state and see through its otherwise rigid contours; by focusing on "ethnoscapes," "technoscapes," "ideoscapes," and so on, one can observe both coherence across national boundaries and diversity within them. It stands to reason, then, that societies before nation-states should exhibit the same conceptual flexibility that the notion of "-scapes" offers us today—as is well-illustrated by Chinese attitudes toward their neighbors, especially those dwelling on the steppes to the north, and the profound changes that these attitudes underwent during the establishment of the first Chinese empire. The prevailing philosophical view in pre-imperial China was that all human beings are essentially alike, but that divergent habits and customs make them appear dissimilar. This meant that the Chinese conceived of their northern neighbors as *mutatis mutandis*, identical to themselves. To be sure, these neighbors were taken to be greedy and primitive but only because they had not benefited from the transformative influence of sage teachers (Pines 2005:63–75). They were not, in other words, condemned as intrinsically or irremediably evil. The ancient Chinese model of the world was one of concentric circles, with the Son of Heaven (*tianzi* 天子), that is, the Heaven-ordained ruler on earth, at the center shining like a beacon over the urbane Central States (*zhongguo*

中國). His enlightening influence, however, diminished as one moved further away, past the less urbane peripheral states, through the riotous frontier zones, to the darkest wastelands where morality was unknown and human beings resembled beasts (Dikötter 1992:2; Meserve 1982:54f.; Müller 1980:52–53; Lien-sheng Yang 1968:21f.).[1] The classical text most clearly exemplifying this idealized geography is the "Levies of Yu" ("Yugong" 禹貢) chapter of the *Exalted Documents* (*Shangshu* 尚書).[2]

According to this reasoning, if a sage were to take the barbarians under his wing—and in the past, it was sometimes averred, sages had done just that[3]—the barbarians would no longer be barbaric at all but would be made indistinguishable from the most accomplished citizens of the world. It goes without saying that the criteria of civilization were one-sided; as we shall see, many centuries would pass before there would be any record of a Chinese person who granted that foreigners might possess an alternative culture that was valid on its own terms.

Some of the clearest source material documenting these attitudes is found in the Confucian *Analects*, the ancient collection of the most authoritative statements attributed to Confucius (called "The Master" in the text). This example comes from the *Analects* 9.14: "The Master wished to dwell among the Nine Yi. Someone said: 'They are crude; what would you do about that?' The Master said: 'If a noble man dwelt among them, what crudeness would there be?' " (Cheng 1990:604–5; cf. the translation in Lau 1992:81).[4]

Yi 夷 was a name given indiscriminately to barbarians in the eastern regions; the use of the generic term "Nine Yi" reflects the awareness that there were various tribes in the area (as well as an inability, or unwillingness, to tell them all apart). Such pseudo-ethnonyms were all derogatory and never denoted any specific ethnic group; hence they can freely be rendered into English as "barbarian" (Di Cosmo 2002:100; Müller 1980:52).[5] The Yi, true to their name, were considered rude, but Confucius indicates that this condition is not inherent; were a noble man to dwell among them, they would swiftly be refined.

The idea that barbarians do not differ from the civilized Chinese with respect to their inborn nature is expressed in the general statement that *all* people are, by nature, similar (*Analects* 17.2): "The Master said: '[People] are close to one another by nature; they become distant from one another through their habits' " (Cheng 1990:1177; cf. the translation in Lau 1992:171).

This is often thought to be a late addition to the text for several reasons. Most noticeably, it contains the term *xing* 性 (human nature), which is found only in one other passage in the *Analects*. This comes in 5.12, where the word is mentioned precisely because Confucius is reported there never to have used it: "Zigong 子貢 said: 'One can hear of the Master's cultural splendor, but not of his sayings about human nature or the Way of Heaven'" (Cheng 1990:318). Zigong was right: arguments about *xing* were alien to Confucius's discourse and belong to a later period of Chinese philosophy. There is a conspicuous parallel to *Analects* 17.2 in the *Xunzi* 荀子,[6] where arguments about *xing* are right at home, raising the possibility that a follower of Xunzian philosophy might have inserted this item into the *Analects* centuries after Confucius's death. Finally, the passage appears in Chapter 17, which has long been dismissed as part of a spurious chunk of material (Chapters 16–20), displaying many late linguistic and rhetorical features, at the end of the book (Brooks and Brooks 1998:201f.; Makeham 1996:9f.; Lau 1992:265–70).

Still, the conviction that it is our habitude rather than our inborn nature that causes us to diverge from other people is consistent with the most important statement concerning barbarians in the *Analects*: "Were it not for Guan Zhong 管仲, we would be wearing our hair loose and buttoning [our clothes] to the left" (14.17). This appears as part of a larger discussion that warrants close reading:

> Zigong said: "Guan Zhong was not humane, was he? When Lord Huan 桓公 [of Qi 齊, r. 685–643 BCE] killed [his brother,] Ducal Son Jiu 公子糾, [Guan Zhong] could not bring himself to commit suicide, but even served [Lord Huan] as chief minister."
>
> The Master said: "When Guan Zhong served Lord Huan as chief minister, he made [Lord Huan] hegemon over the feudal lords and united the world under one dominion. To this day, the people have reaped the benefit of this. Were it not for Guan Zhong, we would be wearing our hair loose and buttoning [our clothes] to the left. How could this be compared to the petty fidelity[7] of common men and women, who hang themselves in a ditch, so that no one knows about it?" (Cheng 1990:988–92; cf. the translation in Lau 1992:137)

Properly judging the famous statesman and strategist Guan Zhong, who united the civilized world but did not always heed inconvenient moral

principles, is a matter of some solicitude in the *Analects*, and Confucius is careful never to speak of him with unqualified praise. Nevertheless, he cannot agree with Zigong's argument that it would have been better for Guan Zhong to kill himself (like his more punctilious associate Shao Hu 召忽) when his patron was dispatched by the ambitious Lord Huan. As Confucius emphasizes, it takes no special talent to commit suicide, but by expediently switching his allegiance and thereby maximizing the opportunity to apply his exceptional skills, Guan Zhong was able to accomplish something that few others could have done: by unifying the squabbling Chinese states, he prevented them from collapsing under the pressure of barbarians who would have otherwise overrun them and forced them to adopt strange customs. Confucius never explains precisely what is wrong with "wearing one's hair loose and buttoning one's clothes to the left," but uses the phrase as an elegant synecdoche for the whole array of barbarian mores, which are, one is given to understand, inferior to the Chinese ways.

The set phrase "wearing one's hair loose and buttoning one's clothes to the left" was endlessly repeated in following centuries, and the entire passage is treated to liberal annotation by traditional commentators, but none, as far as I know, ever pointed out that the most important word in Confucius's saying lies elsewhere. It is the word "we" (*wu* 吾).[8] Though it is often observed that the classical Chinese language has no word meaning "Chinese" (e.g., Pines 2005:59nn2, 63) we can see from this one syllable that there yet existed a *concept* of Chineseness. The word is especially significant, moreover, in view of Confucius's own ancestry, which has always been murky and must have included non-Chinese blood (or, more precisely, the blood of people who would have been regarded as aliens).[9] In order to have a notion of "Them," naturally, one must have a notion of "Us." We are civilized, and They are not; but just as They might become civilized under the right circumstances, We might become uncivilized under the wrong ones. Once again, birth and blood do not seem to have anything to do with one's course of life; what matters is how one acts.[10]

This is, of course, a core Confucian belief, and later admirers of Confucius's philosophy echoed his view that barbarians were merely unfortunate souls waiting to be civilized. Mencius (372–289 BCE), for example, notes straightforwardly (4B.1) that the sages Shun 舜 and King Wen 文王 were originally barbarians who were "able to carry out their aspirations in the Central States" (Jiao 1987:537–40).[11] Although the philosophers of the

Warring States period rarely seemed to be able to agree on anything, virtually everyone granted that barbarians differed because of their habits rather than their nature. Yuri Pines (Pines 2005:64ff.)[12] has carefully documented this attitude in the *Zuozhuan* 左傳, and shown that it extends even to eclectic texts such as the *Springs and Autumns of Mr. Lü* (*Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋): "The Man and Yi are nations with chirping[13] tongues, divergent customs and differing habits; their clothes, caps, girdles, palaces, dwellings, boats, carts, instruments, sounds, colors, and tastes are all different. But insofar as what they desire, they are as one [with us]" (Chen 2002:1303; cf. the translation in Knoblock and Riegel 2000:497f.).

The Man and Yi may speak incomprehensible languages (the very definition of "barbarians" in the West), but neither language nor taste is conceived in this text as inborn. The chapter goes on to add: "The sage kings grasped the One, and the barbarians of the four directions all arrived [in homage]." Although nearly three centuries had passed since Confucius, and although the authors of *Springs and Autumns of Mr. Lü* did not accept Confucian philosophy uncritically, their view of barbarians, and the possibility of civilizing them, was essentially the same.[14]

ENTER THE XIONGNU

The relatively late date of *Springs and Autumns of Mr. Lü* is noteworthy: in its treatment of barbarians, it must be considered backward-looking, for its postface is dated 239 BCE (Chen 2002:654),[15] by which time some Chinese courts had probably come into contact with the steppe power known as Xiongnu 匈奴.[16] And the Xiongnu changed everything. Two crucial themes are detectable in early imperial writing about the Xiongnu: their inborn nature was judged to be fundamentally different from that of the Chinese; and they were reckoned as merely the most recent incarnation of nomadic peoples who had populated the steppe zone since time immemorial. The first theme marked a radical departure from the pre-imperial discussions of non-Chinese peoples surveyed above, and the assertion that China had fought off mounted, warlike nomads long before the Xiongnu, though demonstrably incorrect, has, through its subtle influence on modern scholarship, immensely confused investigations into the nature and origins of the Xiongnu power that arose in the late 3rd century BCE.

The opening lines of the treatise on the Xiongnu in *Records of the*

Historian (*Shiji* 史記) illustrate both motifs. Sima Qian 司馬遷 begins[17]: "The progenitor of the Xiongnu was a descendant of the Xiahou clan 夏后氏 named Chunwei 淳維. Since before the time of Tang 唐 and Yu 虞 [i.e., the sages Yao 堯 and Shun], there have been [such tribes as the] Mountain Rong 山戎, Xianyun 獫狁, and Xunyu[18] 葷粥 dwelling in the northern badlands, moving in cycles with their herds of domesticated animals" (Sima 1959:2879; cf. the translations in Watson 1993[II]: 129; Psarras 2003:77f.; and de Groot 1921–26[I]: 1f.).

There are several problems with this passage that have been insufficiently appreciated. Most obviously, the chronology is self-contradictory. The founder of the Xiahou clan was Yu 禹, the sage king who established the legendary Xia dynasty. (Xiahou means "ruler of Xia.") But Yu came *after* Yao and Shun; if the ancestor of the Xiongnu was a descendant of Yu, how could they have been dwelling in the northern badlands since *before* the time of Yao and Shun?

Traditional commentators evidently sensed that this statement is confusing, for they have supplied historical notes, which, however, only confuse matters more. Sima Zhen 司馬貞 (ca. 656–720 CE), for example, reproduces a passage from a lost geographical text called *The Register Encompassing All the Lands* (*Kuodi pu* 括地譜) by the otherwise unknown Yue Yan 樂彥[19]: "Because Jie 桀, [the last King] of Xia, was without the Way, Tang, [founder of the Shang dynasty] expelled him at Mingtiao 鳴條; he died within three years. His son, Xunyu, married Jie's concubine[20] and withdrew to dwell in the northern wilderness, where he wandered with his herds. The Central States called [his tribe] Xiongnu" (Sima 1959:2880n1; cf. the translation in de Groot 1921–26[I]: 1f.). Sima Zhen goes on to conclude: "Thus the Chunwei who is their progenitor and this Xunyu are probably one and the same."[21]

The traditions regarding Xunyu, who manifested his barbarous character by appropriating his father's concubine—a capital offense under the Han dynasty (Goldin 2002:168nn 66, 92)—and then devoted the rest of his days to an uncivilized life, are supposed to elucidate Sima Qian's statement that "since before the time of Tang and Yu, there have been such tribes as the Mountain Rong, Xianyun, and Xunyu dwelling in the northern badlands."[22] Of course, this does not resolve the chronological difficulties, because Xunyu, the son of Jie, would have lived many generations after Yao and Shun. Thus it seems likely that the phrase "since before the time of Tang and Yu" is not meant to be taken literally but is simply a literary trope

meaning roughly "for as long as anyone can remember."[23] And this is how commentators understood the thrust of the passage. Sima Zhen quotes another earlier source, Fu Qian 服虔 (2nd century CE), who tried to clear up the farrago of exotic names by declaring simply: "In the time of Yao, they were called Xunyu; in the Zhou 周, they were called Xianyun; in the Qin 秦, they were called Xiongnu."[24] These were, in other words, construed as different names that had emerged over the centuries for essentially the same people.[25]

Today we know that this cannot be the case. The best evidence comes from archaeology: excavations undertaken over the past few decades show that very few cultures displaying signs of regular contact with Chinese states before the 4th century BC were nomadic (Di Cosmo 2002:59–87; and Di Cosmo 1999: esp. 893–944). All the available evidence indicates that the Xiongnu were the first mounted nomads that Chinese historians ever chronicled (Daffinà 1982:38–42), and the dates are strikingly late: the first solid textual reference reports an attack in 318 BCE (Sima 1959:207)[26]; the second narrates events that took place around 245 BCE (Sima 1959:2449f.).[27] Moreover, all references to the Xiongnu, it should be stressed, appear in texts from the Han dynasty or later. Remarkably, no Warring States writer ever seems to have noticed them.[28] The reason for this is not mysterious: before the 4th century, Chinese states had not yet penetrated far enough to the north to encounter pastoral nomads, though this method of subsistence had flourished on the steppes for centuries (Di Cosmo 1999:892 and 926).

In the same vein, although the names that Sima Qian lists in the opening lines of his treatise sound close to "Xiongnu" today (and may have in Sima Qian's time as well), Old Chinese reconstructions show that they would not have been confused in the Warring States. "Xiongnu" would have been *xoŋ-NA in Old Chinese; "Xunyu," *xur-luk; and "Xianyun," *hram'-lun'.[29] The names are manifestly unrelated.[30] Phonological change would have made these names seem more similar than they really are by the time of the famous commentators and must have induced them to explain the superficial affinity by declaring that the names referred to the same people and merely came from different epochs. But no one alive during the Warring States could have been misled in this manner.

A significant conclusion is to be gleaned from these recent insights: when pre-imperial authors mentioned the Rong, Di, and so on, they were not referring to nomads.[31] Scholars writing without the benefit of modern

archaeology, understandably, were not always aware of this and produced hypotheses that have to be discarded today.[32] For example, in his famous article on "The Greed of the Northern Barbarian," Denis Sinor concluded that "the *topos* of 'barbarian greed' may be a natural outgrowth of the unresolved opposition between nomadic and sedentary economics" (1978:179). It is clear that this assessment needs to be refined since it can hold true only for the Xiongnu and after. Sinor used demeaning characterizations of the Rong and Di in the *Zuozhuan* as part of his evidence, and for such pre-imperial examples of the *topos*, a different explanation is needed.

Lingering confusion about the origin and nature of the Xiongnu has undermined contemporary research in more insidious ways. What for example, is meant by "Xiongnu archaeology" before the inception of Modu's 冒頓 empire?[33] The very phrase reflects a category mistake. From the beginning, the semantic domain of the term "Xiongnu" was *political*: there is no reason to assume that it ever denoted a specific ethnic group[34]—and, indeed, plenty of reason not to. Even outstanding scholars have sometimes avoided delving into this problem. The redoubtable Rafe de Crespigny, for example, writes: "It seems sensible to recognise that the expression *Xiongnu* in texts of the Han period possesses a double meaning. On the one hand, *Xiongnu* referred to a specific tribal group, of specific ethnic origin, language and culture. At the same time, in extended meaning, *Xiongnu* refers to the political entity which was established under the dominance of that tribe" (1984:174).[35]

That may seem sensible, but if there is any evidence of this "specific tribal group, of specific ethnic origin, language and culture," it is not to be found in any hard sources, be they textual or archaeological. Excavations in the areas that came to be dominated by the Xiongnu have uncovered a wealth of distinct cultures (Di Cosmo 1994).[36] Some were agriculturalists who had settled in the region for centuries and accommodated themselves to the changing geopolitical realities by affiliating themselves with the latest hegemon—willingly or not, one cannot tell (Xie 2004[II]:1027–65; Erdélyi 1994:555f.; T'ang 1981; see also Schurr's chapter, this volume). It seems a near certainty that they did not all speak the same mother tongue. The folly of trying to reconstruct the "Xiongnu language" was elucidated long ago (Doerfer 1973:2ff.), but the same arguments cast serious doubt on the idea of a "Xiongnu people." It is one thing to call a site in Mongolia with artifacts from the 2nd or 1st centuries BCE (such as Noin Ula)[37] "Xiongnu," since there is little reason to doubt that the region would have been under

Xiongnu control at the time. That is no more objectionable than calling Lugdunum "Roman," even though the area had been cultivated by non-Romans for centuries. It is quite another matter, however, to use the name in connection with sites from earlier periods (such as Taohongbala 桃紅巴拉, in the Ordos: Tian 1976; Tian and Guo 1986), when, for all we know, the concept of the "Xiongnu" (whatever the derivation and original meaning of this slippery term) did not yet even exist. Ethnicity is, after all, as much a matter of identity and self-consciousness as of genetics and linguistics (Jones 1997). In the absence of any Xiongnu documents testifying to the authors' sense of self, it is imprudent to make assumptions about the ethnic allegiances of the people buried in the cemeteries of the ancient Ordos. Scholars have begun to appreciate this problem and approach the archaeological record with more sophistication (Lin Yun 1998:377–81; Psarras 2003:78ff.).[38]

"THEIR HEAVEN-ENDOWED NATURE"

After the opening two sentences of his treatise, fraught as they are with interpretive hazards, Sima Qian goes on to describe the basics of nomadic life. This section, though it contains some demonstrable inaccuracies, may have been based on the testimony of informants with firsthand information, if not on the author's own experience (Di Cosmo 2002:272). For readers accustomed to the Warring States view that all people are fundamentally alike, the text packs a big surprise at the end.

> The majority of their animals consist of horses, oxen and sheep, but they also have strange animals such as camels, asses, mules, *jueti* 駃騠, *taotu* 騊駼, and *dianxi* 驒騱.[39] Though they move their abodes in pursuit of water and grasslands, and though they have no walls or fortifications, no permanent dwellings, and no agriculture, they do divide their lands into individual [territories].[40] They have no literature or writing[41] and seal their covenants with oaths and speeches. As children, they can ride sheep and shoot birds and rodents with their bows; once they have grown a little, they shoot foxes and rabbits, which they use for food. The men are all strong enough to bend a bow and serve as armed cavalry in cases of emergency. According to their custom, when [affairs] are relaxed, they follow their herds and shoot wild animals for subsistence; when there is a crisis,

> the people are accustomed to attacking and raiding. This is their Heaven-endowed nature. (Sima 1959:2879; cf. the translations in Watson 1958[II]:129; Psarras 2003:76; de Groot 1921–26[I]:2f.)

"This is their Heaven-endowed nature"—a remarkable statement, for two reasons. First, if we are really meant to believe that the Xiongnu are scions of the Xiahou clan, their Heaven-endowed nature should be no different from that of any other descendants of Yu—a group that includes, naturally, all Chinese people. Second, there could scarcely be a more radical repudiation of the traditional belief that foreigners differ in their habits rather than their inborn nature. According this new viewpoint, nomads' habits differ *because of* their inborn nature. The consequences, for both philosophy and policy, are thoroughgoing. The Xiongnu can never be regarded as equals because they are constitutionally unsuited to civilized life and must be treated as permanent enemies with whom, under the best of circumstances, one can only hope for an uneasy détente.[42]

Sima Qian concludes this section with more ethnographic information, which, whether accurate or not, could only have been received negatively by Han readers.

> Their long-range weapon is the bow and arrow, their short-range weapons daggers and spears. In advantageous situations, they advance; in disadvantageous situations, they retreat. They are not ashamed to flee. Only profit attracts them; they know nothing of ritual and righteousness. From the rulers on down, they all eat the meat of the herd-animals and use their skins and hides for clothing, covering themselves in felt and fur. Those who are hardiest eat the fattest and choicest [pieces]; the aged eat the remnants. They value hardiness and vigor and depreciate age and weakness. When a father dies, [the son] takes his step-mother as his own wife, and when their brothers die, they take their [brothers'] wives as their own. It is their custom to have personal names, but no taboo-names or clan names.[43] (Sima 1959:2879; cf. the translations in Watson 1958[II]:129f.; Psarras 2003:76; de Groot 1921–26[I]:3f.)

The key statement here is that the Xiongnu "know nothing of ritual and righteousness"; all the other details are designed to illustrate that basic

indictment. They do not fight with honor; they do not dress with dignity; they do not honor their elders; they do not properly observe the sexual restrictions imposed by marriage; they do not even name themselves in a genealogically organized way (Wang Mingke 2006:188; Tao 1987:204ff.). If, in earlier times, barbarians were considered uncivilized, they have now become uncivilizable (Bauer 1980:11).

Indeed, knowledge of the Xiongnu practice of marrying widowed stepmothers led to the fanciful Chinese notion that Xiongnu men married their *birth* mothers too. In a surviving fragment of *Handling the Lute* (*Qincao* 琴操)—widely, but not securely, attributed to Cai Yong 蔡邕 (133–192 CE)[44]—Wang Zhaojun 王昭君, a Chinese palace lady given in marriage to the Xiongnu overlord Huhanye[45] 呼韓邪 (r. 58–31 BCE), asked her son upon her husband's death whether he intended to live as a Chinese or as a Xiongnu. When he replied that he wished to live as a Xiongnu, she committed suicide by swallowing poison (Yu Jiaxi 1974:665; Tao 1987:208f.). But this was evidently written to titillate. The more mundane truth is that Huhanye was succeeded by his eldest son, by a different wife. This son then wished to follow the Xiongnu custom and marry Wang Zhaojun, his stepmother; Zhaojun promptly petitioned the Chinese court to return home but was told to stay and obey. She did and bore her new husband two daughters (Ban et al. 1962:3807; Fan et al. 1965:2941).

Sima Qian's treatment of the Xiongnu, however defamatory it may seem to modern readers, was actually among the most sympathetic accounts of the Xiongnu that the Han dynasty produced; as Nicola Di Cosmo (2002:271) has astutely noted, "It is possible that Ssu-ma Ch'ien might have been regarded as a 'barbarophile' by his contemporaries." The later historian Ban Gu 班固 (32–92 CE) went far beyond Sima Qian in disparaging the Xiongnu and their intractable savagery:

> Thus the former kings measured the earth; in the center, they demarcated the royal demesne, divided the nine provinces, and arrayed the five service-domains,[46] where offerings [to the sovereign] were made according to the produce of the earth.[47] They hewed the outer and the inner [regions]. Some they disciplined with punishments and regulations, while shining upon others with culture and virtue; these were the different expedients for those who were far and those who were near [i.e., the barbarians and the Chinese, respectively].

> Therefore, according to the *Spring and Autumns*, the various Chinese [feudatories] are in the inner [regions], the Yi and Di in the outer. The Yi and Di are greedy and fond of profit; they wear their hair loose and button their clothes to the left; they have human faces but bestial hearts. Compared to those of China, their badges and clothing are different, their habits and customs divergent. Our food and drink are dissimilar, our languages mutually incomprehensible. They dwell in the remote northern frontier, in wildernesses where one must encamp in the cold; they pursue pasturelands and follow their herds, hunting in order to survive. Heaven and Earth dissevered the inner and outer [regions] by separating them with mountains and valleys, and blocking them off with sandy deserts. For this reason, the sage kings regarded [the Yi and Di] as birds and beasts, and neither made covenants with them nor attacked them. If [the sage kings] had made covenants with [the Yi and Di], they would have wasted their subsidies, and would have been cheated; if they had attacked [the Yi and Di], they would have wearied their armies and invited banditry. The land of [the Yi and Di] cannot be plowed so as to produce food; their people cannot be made subjects and tamed. Thus they are of the outer, not the inner; they are distant and not intimate. No rectification or teaching will penetrate their people; no official calendar will be attached to their nation. If they approach, we must chastise them and defend ourselves; if they depart, we must prepare for them and protect ourselves. But if they make offerings respectfully and appropriately, we may receive them with ritual and courtesy; we may "keep them on a loose rein,"[48] without breaking [the relationship], so that any crookedness will be on their side. This is, I submit, the constant way of the sage kings for controlling the Man and Yi. (Ban et al. 1962:3833f.; cf. the translations in Pines 2005:79f.; and Tinios 1983–85:197)

Where Sima Qian took pains to identify the Xiongnu with specific tribes known from earlier history—even though closer scrutiny reveals these associations to be specious—Ban Gu simply relegates them to the class of undifferentiated Yi and Di barbarians. With the operative assumption that the Xiongnu are no better than birds and beasts, he explains why it is imprudent either to negotiate with them or to conquer them; fundamentally

uneducable, they can never become homogenized subjects of the empire. The best method is to keep one's hand firmly on the bridle and reins, responding to them courteously if they render due homage, but always being ready to defend oneself if they revert to their true nature and attack (Tinios 1983–85:192; Wang Gungwu 1968:40f.).[49]

CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS

How long before Sima Qian can one detect this uncompromising and historically unprecedented attitude toward the Xiongnu? Some scholars identify the early Han statesman Jia Yi 賈誼 (201–169 BCE) as one of the first militantly ideological opponents of the Xiongnu (e.g., Di Cosmo 2002:201f.), but a review of his strategies shows that they were, in fact, more in line with the pre-imperial idea that the best way to deal with barbarians is to try to sway them with moral charisma. Jia Yi's slogan was "three guidelines and five baits" (*sanbiao wu'er* 三表五餌), which meant impressing the Xiongnu with one's moral excellence (three guidelines) while at the same time seducing their senses with China's opulent exports (five baits); under such pressure, the Xiongnu would naturally come to recognize the superiority of Chinese culture and reject their own ruler.[50] Jia Yi even anticipated the objection that this entailed welcoming the Xiongnu into the Chinese *oikumene*, and asserted that the entire human race properly belonged under the Chinese emperor's dominion[51]:

> Someone might say: "The Son of Heaven condescends to oversee someone else's people; we are concerned about this."
>
> I say: "If there are any who are not the Son of Heaven's people, is he still the Son of Heaven? It is said in the *Odes* 詩: 'Under billowing Heaven, there is nothing that is not the King's land. Along the sea-boundaries of the land, there is no one who is not the King's servitor.'[52] 'The King' is the Son of Heaven. Wherever boats or carts may go, wherever the footprints of human beings may reach, even if it be Man, Mo, Rong, or Di [territory], what is there that is not the seat of the Son of Heaven? Now the arrogant chieftain [of the Xiongnu][53] leads a sizable portion of the Son of Heaven's people; by not heeding the Son of Heaven, that arrogant chieftain commits a great crime. Now for the Son of Heaven to bring himself to

> embrace his people—that is the Son of Heaven's occupation; how is that 'condescending to oversee someone else's people'?" (Yan and Zhong 2000:139)

At most, one could accuse Jia Yi of unrealistic policies or cultural chauvinism, but it is evident that he did not accord with, and may not have even heard of, the opinion that the Xiongnu were too uncouth ever to be assimilated.

A more plausible antecedent is found in the person of Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (fl. 152–119 BCE), who is quoted by Ban Gu (if he is to be trusted) as having written that "those like the Xiongnu cannot be persuaded with humanity and righteousness; one can persuade them only with rich profit" (Ban et al. 1962:3831). Ban Gu goes on to criticize Dong Zhongshu's specific recommendations as impractical, but he shares the presupposition that incorporating the Xiongnu into the Chinese empire is an unattainable goal because of their refractory nature (Tinios 1983–85:186ff.; Lien-sheng Yang 1968:28; Yü 1967:38).

But the likeliest source is a memorial by Dong Zhongshu's political rival Zhufu Yan主父偃 (d. 127 BCE). After a survey of Chinese failures against the Xiongnu, Zhufu writes "Ours is not the only generation that has found the Xiongnu difficult to control. They make it their business to practice robbery, raiding and invading; this is so because of their Heaven-endowed nature. As far back as Shun and the Xia, Shang, and Zhou dynasties, surely no one placed limits on them or supervised them. [These rulers] regarded them as birds and beasts, for they do not belong to the category of mankind" (Sima 1959:2955; cf. the translation in Watson 1958[II]: 195f.).

This passage is remarkable not for its content but for its date (ca. 130 BCE), for it contains the same crucial phrase, "Heaven-endowed nature," that Sima Qian later adopted in his own account of the Xiongnu.[54] Inasmuch as Sima Qian himself quoted this section of the memorial in his biography of Zhufu Yan, it can plausibly be regarded as one of his primary sources. Moreover, the document may shed light on the much-discussed question of Sima Qian's political motivations. Zhufu Yan presented this uncompromisingly negative portrayal of the Xiongnu as part of a larger argument dissuading the Emperor from waging campaigns of conquest into the steppe. Why waste manpower and *matériel* trying to subjugate shadows? By borrowing Zhufu's phrasing,[55] Sima seems to be subtly casting his lot with the pacifist side as well.

One is forced to ask, however, why the new and hardened view that the Xiongnu were different because of their inborn nature would suddenly be so persuasive. Grim reality must have played a role. Whereas, over the course of centuries, literally dozens of distinct ethnic, cultural, and linguistic groups had become amalgamated into the nascent Chinese culture, the Xiongnu would not yield to this process of acculturation; it is easy to see how their stubborn autonomy—rooted, no doubt, in their distinctive methods of extracting economic value from their land and possessions[56]—engendered the notion that they *could not* be acculturated (Pines 2005:90f.; Lattimore 1940:277 and 407–9).[57]

The histories are replete with tales of Chinese captives and defectors among the Xiongnu (Wu 1995), and Sima Qian claims to reproduce the advice of the most influential of them, Zhonghang Yue 中行說 (Di Cosmo 2002:269f.; Jagchid and Symons 1989:25; Tao 1987:254, 335f.; Daffinà 1982:63–67; Yü 1967:37f.; de Groot 1921–26[I]: 80–83), a eunuch originally sent to accompany a Chinese princess given in marriage to Laoshang 老上 (r. 174–160 BCE), the second great Xiongnu overlord (*chanyu* 單于).[58] Zhonghang reminded Laoshang that the Xiongnu customs were uniquely suited to their terrain and way of life, and warned against the temptations of Han silks and other finery. He even justified the Xiongnu tendency to venerate the young instead of the old, which was judged ghastly by the standards of the Chinese doctrine of filial piety (*xiao* 孝); Zhonghang argued that it was a more appropriate attitude for a warlike people. For his service, he was branded a traitor by his compatriots back home, but Sima Qian concludes, with a tinge of admiration, that Zhonghang helped the Xiongnu avoid succumbing to Chinese luxuries and thus continue to bargain from a position of strength (Sima 1959:2898ff.). If it is true that Heaven made the Xiongnu different, perhaps this was because the peculiar attributes of the Xiongnu are more appropriate to the place where Heaven chose to locate them.

This may be the first historical example of a Chinese person who believed that Chinese customs were not necessarily best for all the people of the world. Surely there were other advisors, both Chinese and non-Chinese, who also encouraged the Xiongnu rulers not to conform to Chinese protocols, which could not benefit them in the long run.

But the power of imagination also has a hand in the formation of monumental empires, and it cannot be a coincidence that Chinese thinkers began to create an absolute philosophical boundary between China and the steppe

just as the Qin and Han dynasties were constructing the Great Walls along the same verge (Waldron 1990:13–29; An and Meng 2005:276ff.). Before this, the frontier zone had always been fluid and permeable. The salient achievement of the First Emperor of Qin was not that he defeated the remaining challengers to his supremacy (for they were already tottering when he inherited his vast kingdom as a boy), but that he bequeathed to his nation the *idea* of a Chinese empire, something that would have been unthinkable in Shang and even Zhou times, when what we now call "China" was a mosaic of diverse peoples and principalities. The story of pre-imperial history is the story of an emerging Chinese identity, which finally took hold only when a Chinese lord—disputed ancestry and all (Goldin 2002:81ff.)—claimed the entire Chinese world as his own. But as there is no Self without an Other, calling oneself Chinese meant calling someone else non-Chinese; the new China had to invent an irreconcilable opponent, and the Xiongnu were in the right place at the right time.

NOTES

1. Aihe Wang traces the development of this cosmology through the Shang and Zhou dynasties (2000:23–74).
2. Text in Kong (1817:153). See also James Legge's (1815–1897) perspicuous chart (Legge 1893–1895[III]: 149). The date of the "Yugong" is disputed, but Qu Wanli argues lucidly for a date in the mid-to-late Springs and Autumns (Qu 1969:116–60). More recent Chinese scholars seem eager to show that the idea has roots in China's prehistory; for example, Zhao Chunqing suggests that it goes back to the Longshan Culture 龍山文化 of Neolithic times (2006), whereas Yue Hongqin associates it with the Xia dynasty (2006).
3. For example, *Mencius* 3B.9, where it is said that the Duke of Zhou 周公 pacified the barbarians. Similarly, *Mencius* 1B.11, 3B.5, and 7B.4 relate that the barbarians in all directions yearned for sages to conquer and civilize them.
4. All translations in this paper are my own unless otherwise indicated, but for each extended quotation from primary sources, I provide a reference to an alternative translation for the reader's convenience.
5. These pseudo-ethnonyms included Rong 戎, "bellicose," for the barbarians of the west; Di 狄/翟, "feathered," for those of the north; Man 蠻, "savage," for those of the south; Yi, "nocuous," for those of the east; also Mo 貊, "wild beasts, somewhat like bears, that eat iron"; Hu 胡 "jowled (or bearded)"; and others. The root meanings of such names are, in my view (despite, e.g., Dikötter 1992:4), more significant than the fact that they are often written with animal radicals (狄, 蠻, 羌, etc.). These terms not only date to long before the standardization of the writing system but also would have had pejorative connotations even for a nonliterate audience.

   Christopher I. Beckwith is well-known for his objections to the use of the word "barbarian" (e.g., Beckwith 1987:173n1). Michael R. Drompp points out that in later

imperial usage, such terms as *rong* and *di* had lost much of their pejorative tinge (2005:174f.).

6. "The children of the Gan, Yue, Yi and Mo peoples all make the same sounds when they are born. When they are grown up, they have different customs; teaching causes this to be so" (Wang Xianqian 1988:2).
7. Following the commentary of Huang Kan 皇侃 (488–545 CE), Cheng (1990:993).
8. Conceivably, *wu* could mean "I," for Confucius's language does not routinely distinguish between the first person singular and plural. But in the context of this conversation with Zigong, even that would have to mean *"you and I,"* not simply "I."
9. For an overview of the problems and some ingenious, if speculative, suggestions, see Eno (2003).
10. The one negative assessment of foreigners appears in 3.6: "The Yi and Di with rulers are still not as good as the several Xia without them" (Cheng 1990:5.147), where "the several Xia" refer to the various Chinese feudatories. But this statement is vague and has not been interpreted by the tradition as a categorical indictment of non-Chinese peoples; one commentarial trend, in fact, turns the saying on its head and reads it as a criticism of Chinese rulers who are acting like barbarians. See the rich selection of commentary in Cheng (1990:147–50).

    Frank Dikötter tries to debunk what he calls "the delusive myth of a Chinese antiquity that abandoned racial standards in favor of a concept of cultural universalism" (Dikötter 1992:3), and presents instead evidence of "racial discrimination," but his readings are often forced; for example, he renders the statement *fei wo zulei, qi xin bi yi* 非我族類, 其心必異 (Yang Bojun 1990:818) as "if he is not of our race, he is sure to have a different mind." *Zulei* means simply "kind," not "race" in any modern sense.
11. Consider also 3A.4 (Jiao 1987:393), where Mencius cites the renowned Chen Liang 陳良, a native of Chu 楚 who "delighted in the way of the Duke of Zhou and Confucius" and went on to become a scholar unrivaled by any of the native Chinese, as an example of the principle that barbarians can adopt Chinese customs. Elsewhere, Mencius is cited by Huangfu Mi 皇甫謐 (215–282 CE) as having declared that the sage Yu 禹 was of barbarian birth, too (Sima 1959:686n1; cf. Hinsch 2004:90).
12. Pines did not address this theme explicitly in his earlier study of the *Zuozhuan* (Pines 2002).
13. Following the gloss on *fanshe* 反舌 by Liang Yusheng 梁玉繩 (1744–1819), Chen (2002:114n6—the first appearance of the term).
14. As far as one can infer from its scattered references, the *Huainanzi* 淮南子 appears to be in the same mold; e.g., "The Xiongnu produce coarse pelts; the Gan and Yue make clothes of fine kudzu. They each make what they need to equip themselves for their climate; they each protect themselves against heat or cold in accordance with their habitation. Everyone obtains what is appropriate; one's material goods are expedient for one's location" (Zhang 1997:47). That is, material culture is a function of people's livelihood, not their inborn nature; the Sage, it is implied, can rule all the peoples of the world by recognizing, and then responding to, their disparate needs. This is not surprising in view of the text's larger claims of universal rulership (Vankeerberghen 2001:111–18).
15. Knoblock and Riegel (2000:19f.) discuss the date.
16. In English, Psarras (2003, 2004) is the only extended study of Chinese relations with the Xiongnu incorporating archaeology. See also Holotová-Szinek and André 2003. Other Western works rely entirely on Chinese texts (Yü 1967, 1990; Barfield 1989).

Barfield's (1989:8–16) prominent thesis is that the Xiongnu become powerful only as a consequence of the foundation of the Chinese Empire, which they shrewdly raided and extorted. For the defects of this view, see Psarras 1992.

17. At least, this is the nearest approximation we have of what Sima Qian wrote. For the most recent study of the textual problems involving this chapter, see Honey 1999.
18. This name is persistently misread as "Xunzhou" in Hinsch (2004:87).
19. Or perhaps Le Yan; the surnames Le and Yue were distinct, even though they were written with the same character.
20. Despite Psarras (2003[I]: 78), "concubine" must be singular because the text says that Xunyu made her his *qi* 妻 (principal wife), and in Chinese usage a man can have only one *qi*.
21. Also see Fang Xuanling et al. (1974:264).
22. The names are written somewhat differently: Xunyu in Yue Yan's account is 獯粥; in Sima Qian's treatise, it is written 葷粥. But these were homophones even in Old Chinese (*xur-luk). Moreover, this is probably the same name as both Xunyu 獯鬻, which appears in *Mencius* 1B.3 (Jiao 1987:111), and Xunyu 薰育, which is found in "Zhou benji" 周本紀 (Sima 1959:113).
23. Sima Qian implies as much when he states that the Yellow Emperor 黃帝, with whom he begins his sweeping narrative, chased the Xunyu to the north (Sima 1959:6). This would mean that the Xunyu antedated even the Yellow Emperor.
24. Pei Yin 裴駰 (fl. 438 CE) attributes the same gloss to Jin Zhuo 晉灼 (Sima 1959:2880n3). Sima Zhen attributes a similar quote ("In the time of the Shang, they were called Xunyu, which was changed to Xiongnu") to *Fengsu tongyi* 風俗通義, by Ying Shao 應劭 (fl. 189–194 CE), but this is no longer found in the received text (Wang Liqi 1981:489).
25. This view persisted into the 20th century. Wang Guowei 王國維 (1877–1927) was the most eminent Chinese scholar to accept it (Wang 1936; more recently, see Liu Xueyao 1987:1–9; and Lin Gan 1986:4). For an example of a Western scholar, see Pritsak 1959. To his credit, Pritsak was one of the first writers to recognize that Xiongnu was not the name of an ethnic group; see below.
26. In identifying this as the first textual reference to the Xiongnu, I rely on the chronological arrangement of the material in Lin Gan (1988[I]: 149). Hinsch (2004:88) is alone in placing the formation of the Xiongnu polity as far back as "the eighth or seventh century BC." On China's first military encounters with mounted nomads, see, generally, Lattimore (1940:386–90).
27. This is the third item in Lin Gan's table; the second, from the *Shuoyuan* 說苑, is not credible as a historical source.
28. The lone possible exception is "Yan taizi Dan zhi yu Qin wanggui" 燕太子丹質於秦亡歸, an item in *Zhanguo ce* 戰國策 relating an event sometime around 228 BCE (Liu Xiang 1978:1129), but it is by no means certain that this text was written before the Han. As is well known, the same story is repeated nearly *verbatim* in the "Cike liezhuan" 刺客列傳 chapter of *Shiji* (Sima 1959:2529), and therefore may have been added to the text of the *Zhanguo ce* in Han times (if not later).

    Two other early notices are likewise dubious (Lin Gan 1986:48). The "Wanghui jie" 王會解 chapter of the *Yi Zhoushu* 逸周書 includes the Xiongnu in a list of tribes living in the north (Huang Huaixin et al. 1995:980). The passage is set as a discussion between King Tang 湯, the founder of the Shang dynasty, and his wise minister Yi Yin 伊尹, but

the presence of the terms *taotu* 騊駼 and *jueti* 駃騠 (Huang Huaixin et al. 1995:982), which denote Xiongnu herd animals and are otherwise unattested before the Han dynasty (see below), is a strong indication that this is a late text. The "Hainei nan jing" 海內南經 chapter of the *Shanhai jing* 山海經 mentions "the country of the Xiongnu and Kaiti" 開題, but the commentator Guo Pu 郭璞 (276–324 CE) immediately notes that one edition has the older name "Xianyun" for "Xiongnu" (Yuan 1996:333). A different chapter of *Shanhai jing*, incidentally, also mentions the *taotu* (Yuan 1996:294).

29. My reconstructions are based on the system in Sagart (1999), with the main distinction that I indicate the type A and B syllables using majuscule and minuscule, respectively. I am indebted to Wolfgang Behr for help with reconstructing some of these names.
30. Bernhard Karlgren (1889–1978) observed as early as 1945, on phonological grounds, that "Xianyun" and "Xiongnu" cannot be related (1945:142). Kaha'erman Muhan does enough linguistic legwork to show the same thing, yet never abandons his assumption that these are all merely different ways of writing the same name (Muhan 2000).
31. Sometimes the comment in the *Zuozhuan* (Yang Bojun 1990:939) that the Rong "value goods and deprecate land" (*gui huo yi tu* 貴貨易土) is interpreted as an indication that they were nomads (Yü 1967:5; Meserve 1982:54). The phrase *yi tu* could mean "they change their lands," but in this context probably means "they make light of land"; since this would be the only pre-imperial reference to nomads (perhaps centuries before the next securely attested one), I doubt that the statement means anything more than that the Rong undervalued their land.
32. Less excusable, considering the date of publication (and a telling example of the Chinese habit of ignoring Western scholarship), is the work of Lin Gan, who asserts that the Xunyu, Guifang 鬼方, and Xianyun were all nomadic ancestors of the Xiongnu going back to Xia times (2003:2f.). Jaroslav Průšek had long since demonstrated that the Bronze Age enemies of the various Chinese states could not have been nomads (Průšek 1971).
33. In this connection, one must reconsider the old, but never disproven, hypothesis that the name Modu (Old Chinese *MUK-TAK/MUK-TUNS/MUK-TUT) corresponds to Old Japanese *moto, "root, foundation," and thus means something like "the progenitor" (Fang 1930:1425–26). If this identification is correct—phonetically, it does not seem like a perfect fit—it would indicate that the idea of Xiongnu before Modu is a contradiction in terms. (Fang's larger thesis was more speculative: all the names of the Xiongnu rulers, he argued, were numbers, and thus represented an imitation of the Qin dynasty's convention of naming their emperors "First" and "Second.")

    Competing glosses of the name make it difficult to reconstruct with confidence. Sima Zhen (Sima 1959:2889n1) says that it can be pronounced Modun or Maodun (音墨, 又如字), i.e., Old Chinese *MUK-TUNS or *MUKS-TUNS, respectively; but Song Qi 宋祁 (998–1061) reads it as Modu (冒音墨, 頓音毒), i.e., *MUK-TAK (Wang Xianqian 1995:94A.5a). And there is yet a third distinct gloss: Mao Huang 毛晃 (12th century) reads 頓 as the equivalent of *TUT 當沒切 (Huang Gongshao 1781:26.24b). My understanding of the significance of these various glosses has benefited from correspondence with David P. Branner.
34. Despite Lin Gan, who assumes, curiously, that the Xiongnu must have been either Turks or Mongols and concludes that they were Turks because physical remains in some Xiongnu graves suggest that the deceased might have had big noses (Lin Gan 2003:37–38; also Lin Gan 1986:149ff.; 1983). A'erdingfu (2000) objects to Lin Gan's

arguments but on the grounds that the Xiongnu were really Mongoloids without big noses, not that the term is at all problematic as an ethnic designation.

Physical anthropology in the People's Republic of China is not always this unrefined, but even the most expert studies (e.g., Zhu 1994) still begin with the unquestioned premise that the Xiongnu were an ethnic group (*minzu* 民族) (see Sneath, this volume).

35. De Crespigny supports this assertion only by referring to the parallel of the Mongols and Manchus—who, naturally, lived fourteen to twenty centuries after the Xiongnu—as though it were a sort of truism that all Inner Asian political entities must have had a tribal origin.
36. My one quibble with Di Cosmo's path-breaking study is that he frequently refers to the relationship between mounted nomadic warriors and settled agrarian societies as "symbiotic," without specifying which indispensable goods or services the nomads would have provided (Di Cosmo 1994:1115).

    Wang Qingxian infers, on the basis of textual evidence alone, that the Xiongnu Empire must have been ethnically diverse, adding, persuasively, that it never would have become powerful otherwise (Wang Qingxian 2003; see also Hinsch 2004:88; Tao 1987:300ff.).
37. The foremost study is still Rudenko (1969). See also Umehara 1960. Silvi Antonini (1994:295) emphasizes that the Noin Ula tombs could have belonged to any nomadic group in the area.
38. Tian and Guo (1986) seemed to classify all non-Chinese cultures in the Ordos region, regardless of their date, as Xiongnu or "early Xiongnu." Since then, they have tried to refine their controversial views; now they concede that the name Xiongnu is not known until the end of the Warring States, but still maintain that "the Xiongnu were an ancient people in China's northern regions; before the name Xiongnu ever appeared, they had already gone through a long process of historical development" (Tian and Guo 2005:448).

    Wang Mingke discusses many of the pre-imperial sites reported by Tian and Guo and is careful not to associate them with the Xiongnu (2006:73–93).
39. The fullest discussion of these animals is still Egami (1951); see also Knechtges (1979:106nn12–14).
40. These statements are inaccurate (Kradin 2005; Psarras 2003:125f.; Di Cosmo 2002:251; Tao 1987:225ff.). Ancient steppe nomads did in fact engage in agriculture, though to a limited degree, and archaeology has revealed several Xiongnu fortifications. The best-known example is probably the so-called Ivolga *gorodishche* (Davydova 1995–96).
41. Tao Ketao entertains the possibility that the Xiongnu may have eventually devised a writing system of their own (1987:306ff.), but no example has ever been found. Lü Simian 呂思勉 (1884–1957) argued that the Xiongnu must have adopted Chinese writing for diplomatic and political purposes (Lü 1982:601–3).
42. Despite Wang Mingke, who writes that "Chinese people of the Han period . . . basically did not have any pejorative opinions regarding [the Xiongnu]" (2006:189). This view is not uncommon among contemporary Chinese researchers.
43. The claim that the Xiongnu had no clan names is probably false (Psarras 2003:124; Honey 1999:84f.; Tao 1987:209).
44. On the authorship of *Qincao*, see Ma 2005. It seems likely that there was more than one text by that name in antiquity, and sorting out which fragment belongs to which author may well be impossible with our limited knowledge today.

45. I am not aware of any ancient phonetic gloss elucidating this name, which could conceivably be read Hūhányé, Hūhánxié, Hūhányá, Hūhánxú, or Hūhánshé.
46. An allusion to "Yugong" (Kong 1817:153).
47. Following the commentary of Yan Shigu 顏師古 (581–645), in Ban et al. (1962:3834n4).
48. On the concept of *jimi* 羈靡/縻 ("loose reins" or, more literally, "bridle and reins"), see Lien-sheng Yang (1968:31–33).
49. Tinios argues compellingly that much of Ban Gu's rhetoric in this passage is borrowed from the great scholar and statesman Xiao Wangzhi 蕭望之 (ca. 107–47 BCE).
50. Most studies of the "three guidelines and five baits" strategy are perfunctory. Barfield (1989:51ff.), for example, calls it simply "Five Baits" and fails to note that it was devised by Jia Yi—whom he then mischaracterizes as an advocate of total war against the Xiongnu; Tinios's otherwise thorough study is no less superficial (1983–85:186). Wang Xingguo has the most sustained use of primary texts (1992:169–77); see also Lei 2006:284–88; Tao 1987:251; Yü 1967:11f. and 36ff.
51. On "the concept of the universal state," see Li Zhaojie (2002:27–29).
52. Mao 205, "Beishan" 北山. The received text of the *Odes* reads *putian* 溥天 where Jia Yi writes 普天.)
53. Following the commentary in Yan and Zhong (2000:4.152n140).
54. As far as I can tell, the only other comparable uses of this term in the *Shiji* are references to the cleverness of the people of Qi and the literary aptitude of scholars from Qi and Lu; both are ascribed to *tianxing* (Sima 1959:1513, 3117). I am indebted to Michael J. Hunter for the first reference.
55. Sima Qian's erroneous report that the Xiongnu had no walls or fortifications (see note 41, above) also appears to be taken from a remonstrance that Zhufu Yan attributes to Li Si 李斯 (d. 208 BCE) earlier in the same memorial (Sima 1959:2954). Zhufu's phrase *qinshou chu zhi* 禽獸畜之, incidentally, was later borrowed by Ban Gu.
56. Realist statesmen in the mold of Chao Cuo 鼂錯 (d. 154 BCE) recognized this (Lewis 2006:298); see Chao's memorial on border affairs (Ban et al. 1962:2284f.).
57. Müller suggests that these chauvinistic developments are due to increased Chinese contact with "noticeably different races" (1980:68). Psarras (2003:70f.) observes that archaeology has demonstrated coexistence at a number of sites, belying Han rhetoric. She also notes that Han attitudes toward the Xiongnu may have softened as some of them began to accept the trappings of Chinese culture (2004:75f.).
58. The likeliest explanation of this title (*dar-wa in Old Chinese) is still that of E. G. Pulleyblank (1962:256–57), who associates it with the later steppe titles *tarqan*, *tarxan,* and so on. See also Psarras (2003:128).

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11

Mapping Foreign Policy Interests: Mongolia's Case

JARGALSAIKHANY ENKHSAIKHAN

The traditional area studies approach is important for better understanding different societies and peoples. Such an approach can be compared to changing a two-dimensional picture into a three-dimensional one. The result is not only expanding the study of human societies and making it more interesting but also improving the practical use of the knowledge thus gained.

In the course of this conference's intellectual exercise, we have compared the degree of utility and effectiveness of different approaches for better examining the situation of a given country or nation at a time when the world is rapidly integrating and globalizing. The approaches include area studies and the concepts of "-scapes" and "hot spots." We cannot rule out that some sort of combined approach might prove to be practically more useful to understanding various nodes and "-scapes."

I welcome choosing Mongolia as a case study for the mapping exercise—not only because it is my country but also because it is one of the countries in the post-Cold War period that is trying to find its niche in the Asian region and the world. Because it is geopolitically sandwiched between two regional/global powers—Russia and China—Mongolia is relatively physically isolated from other small and medium countries with which it shares many common interests. In this transitional period from socialist to post-socialist

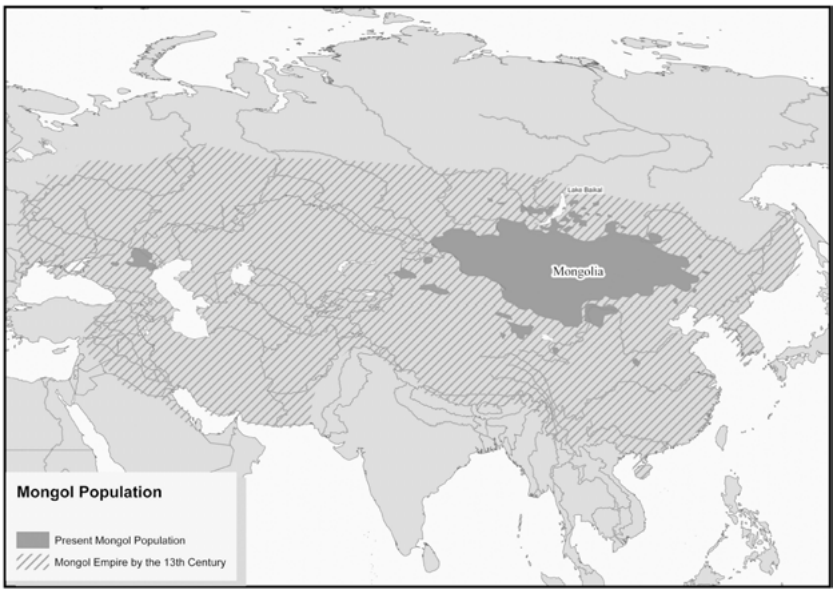
society, many in Mongolia are asking such questions as Who are we? What is our identity? Where we now and where are we going? Where will the 21st century and globalization lead us? Are we part of the Central Asian or Northeast Asian region? And how will the processes of integration and assimilation affect us? These questions surely need to be addressed for the sake of clarity and for devising practical policies.

As a former Mongolian diplomat and security analyst, I will share my views on why all Mongolians are not part of the present-day independent Mongolia, compare the socialist and post-socialist periods, and highlight its policy regarding some issues of nuclear security that affect human survival and development.

There are many foreign policy issues that could be used as examples to underline the utility of taking a broader approach than just area studies to better understand a country and its people. Thus my own experience shows that on the political level—at ministries of foreign affairs, defense, economic development, or finance of most of the countries with which Mongolia has diplomatic relations—my country is usually placed as part of larger Russia (especially during the Cold War) or China departments, often called desks; those who deal with Mongolian issues are usually China or Russia experts. Therefore in most cases, especially when they deal with broader policy issues, these experts tend first and foremost to look at Mongolian issues through the prism of that particular country's relations with Russia or China (usually through its relations with Russia in the Cold War period and China in the post-Cold War period). Such an attitude naturally has its drawbacks, especially when addressing Mongolia-related issues that are independent from and sometimes at variance with those of its immediate neighbors.

MONGOLIA AND THE MONGOLIAN DIASPORA

The Mongolian nation has long been a divided nation with some living near Lake Baikal or the Caspian Sea (Russia), some in what is today known as independent Mongolia, and some to the north of the Great Wall of China, known in general as Inner Mongolia (China). According to some estimates, there are around 7 million people who trace their roots to the Mongolian nation, many of whom have settled in countries that had formed part of Pax Mongolica in the 13th to 14th centuries (see Fig. 11.1). Today 2.5 million live



11.1. Mongol diaspora population compared with Mongol Empire borders in the 13th century.

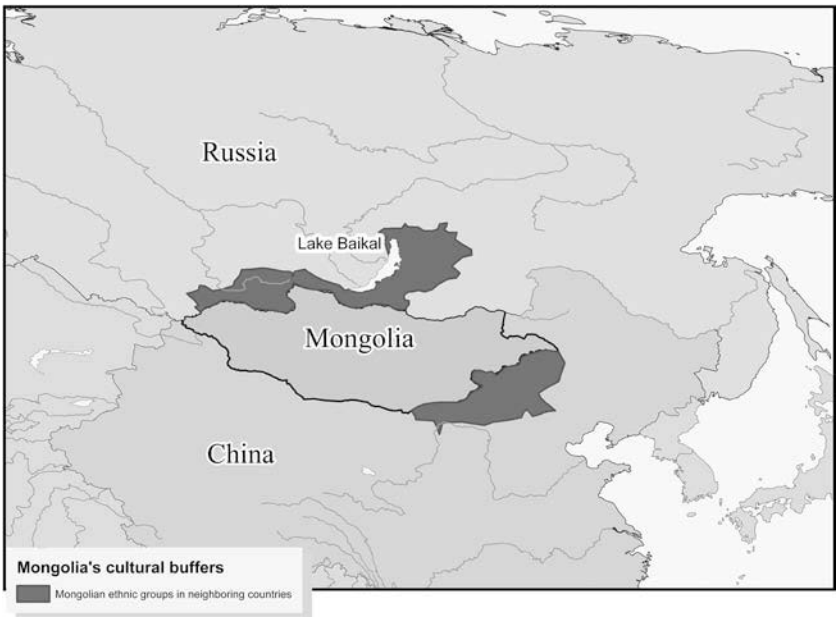
in independent Mongolia; almost 3.5 million live in Inner Mongolia and other parts of China; and under 1 million live in Russia, mostly in Buriatia and Kalmykia.

Independent Mongolia tries to maintain close relations with the peoples of Mongolian descent and, where possible, to expand those relations so as to help them maintain and enrich their common culture and language. Mongolia has no plans to invite the "other" Mongolians peoples to migrate back to their ancestral homeland or incite independent movements, including in the bordering areas. The security concept, adopted in 1994 by the Great People's Khural (parliament), clearly underlined that "Mongolia, being the ancestral homeland of Mongols . . . shall particularly eschew the injection of any political intent in these relations" (Parliament of Mongolia 1995:34). Mongolia recognizes that these people have been living on their respective territories for centuries and have accepted those lands as their own, as their homes.

On the other hand, it is very doubtful that the Mongolians living outside of independent Mongolia would want to migrate to Mongolia, abandoning thus their historical lands even when they are accorded somewhat

preferential treatment in adopting Mongolian citizenship. Furthermore, Mongolia understands that "merging" of the neighboring territories with Mongolia would in fact create a country where Mongolians would physically or numerically become a minority in their ancestral land. Such a turn of events would only hurt the interests of Mongolians on either side of the border. Still, Mongolia is working hard to promote and broaden economic and cultural relations with fellow Mongolians living outside of its territory without "injecting" any political intention to incite them to join Mongolia so as to create a Greater Mongolia. Broadening cultural, economic, and people-to-people relations is meant to help them maintain and strengthen their Mongolian identity, especially their unique culture and language.

From the broader geopolitical perspective, Mongolia is particularly interested in promoting cultural and people-to-people relations with those living immediately to the north and south of its border and helping them maintain their identity in the face of forces of assimilation and globalization. By doing so, it is also strengthening its own virtual cultural buffers (see Fig. 11.2) from the overwhelming influences of the neighboring states. Mongolia has demarcated its borders with Russia (3,485 km) and China



11.2. Mongolia's cultural buffers.

(4,677 km), and no one in Mongolia is interested in their revision either way. Therefore, bearing in mind that both of our neighbors are very sensitive to minority-related issues, and in order not to unnecessarily irritate them, Mongolia does not have any government agency that deals exclusively with this issue. However, Mongolia's friendship and cultural associations with Russia and China attach particular attention to promoting cultural and people-to-people relations with these peoples.

Though Mongolia is a unitary state, it has national minorities as well. The largest of them are the Kazakhs (a Turkic people) that make up about 5 percent of the population. They enjoy equal rights with Mongolians. They were granted permission to settle in Mongolia in the 19th and early 20th centuries. When in the early 1990s many of them expressed the desire to migrate to neighboring Kazakhstan and adopt Kazakh citizenship, Mongolia opened its borders for them to emigrate. And when many of them decided to return, they were accepted with no questions asked.

If state policies are transparent and constructive on both sides, diasporas could be a positive factor for greater understanding of those states and could serve as "bridges" for greater trust, cooperation, and enrichment of cultures.

MONGOLIA'S FOREIGN POLICY CHALLENGES

In many respects, and surely in foreign relations and diplomacy, Mongolian policies are mainly the product of its geographical location and reflections of the main events of that particular time period. In many cases, Mongolia's policies can be understood as reactions to the events occurring in neighboring Russia and China, to the ups and downs in their relations, or with other major powers. That is why Mongolia tries, within its limited possibilities and means available, to be as active as possible so as to try to influence events to its advantage or prevent measures that might adversely affect its sovereignty and independence.

After the disintegration of the Mongol Empire, various khans and warlords engaged in constant internecine wars, while Russia and China were expanding their territories. By the beginning of the 20th century, Mongolia found itself sandwiched between aggressively expanding Russia and China. Isolated and with nowhere else to turn (in 1911–13 Mongols tried to gain support for its independence from the United States, Japan, and other

influential countries but without success) and mindful of China's historical interest in absorbing Mongolia, it decided to seek Russia's protection, which coincided with the period of revolutionary changes there. Close relations with Soviet Russia meant that Mongolia had to toe the Soviet line in both its internal and foreign policies.

In the socialist period (1924–1990), the notion of the national interest was supplanted by that of "class interest," which in reality meant Soviet/Russian interest and virtual Soviet domination. This "class interest" transcended all domestic and foreign policy interests. Because of the "class" approach to all issues, including internal opposition to sovietization of Mongolian society, even national security came to be perceived through the prism of "class interest" and "class struggle." This approach divided the society into oppressed and oppressors; thus by the early 1930s, the country was in virtual civil war. This led to waves and waves of resistance, purges, and repressions and resulted in the virtual physical elimination of tens of thousands of Mongolians, especially independent-minded people, the elites, and the clergy. Until 1990 Mongolian society was under the heavy influence of the Soviet Union, while its "class struggle" approach to foreign policy and virtual self-isolation hampered its ability to win over friends and acquire partners.

In 1990, with the end of the Cold War and disintegration of the Soviet bloc, Mongolia found itself isolated, with neither allies nor many friends or partners. Therefore it began peaceful yet fundamental reorientation of its values by promoting democratic reforms and adopting a market economy. Its foreign policy and diplomatic priorities were to promote its own national interests as understood and defined by the Mongolians themselves and were reflected first in the new 1992 Constitution and then two years later in greater detail in three important policy-setting interrelated documents: the concepts of national security and of foreign policy, and the fundamentals of the military doctrine. These documents defined the basic tenets of Mongolia's foreign policy as follows:

- Pursue a pragmatic, open, and multi-pillar foreign policy.
- Ensure an external security environment primarily by political and legal means.
- Follow a policy of non-alignment, political realism, and pursuit of vital national interests, respecting the legitimate interests of its partners.

- Accord top priority to balanced relationships with its immediate neighbors, maintaining neutrality in their disputes unless they affect Mongolia's vital interests, in which case she would follow these interests.
- Pursue the policy of acquiring a "third neighbor," i.e., Eastern and Western democracies, international organizations, or other stakeholders that support Mongolia's democratic development. Especially foster strategic, political, and economic interests in Mongolia of the major powers and international organizations.

Mapping Mongolia's foreign policy can clearly distinguish its interests from those of the two neighbors, whose definition and perception of national security and national interest are in many respects at variance with those of Mongolia (except for a general interest in developing good-neighbor relations with all countries, especially their immediate neighbors). This can clearly be seen with regard to its nuclear policy and nuclear security issues.

MONGOLIA AND NUCLEAR ISSUES

Addressing Potential Nuclear Threats

Many people could ask what Mongolia has to do with nuclear issues; isn't it far from these issues? The answer is, not quite. Because of its location, Mongolia is directly affected by Russian and Chinese nuclear polices, whether military or peaceful. It could choose to either be passively affected by the perils of the nuclear age or play an active role in shaping its own future, defending its national interests and, to the extent possible, enjoying the dividends and benefits of the nuclear age.

In the late 1960s, at the height of the Sino-Soviet ideological dispute, Mongolia, which hosted Soviet troops and military bases, found itself involuntarily involved in the virtual nuclear standoff of the two neighbors. When China began developing nuclear weapons, the Soviets entertained the idea of making a preemptive nuclear strike against the fledgling Chinese nuclear weapons facilities so as to bring a halt to such a development. A preemptive strike would surely have had a devastating "collateral" if not direct effect on Mongolia. It was revealed later that at that time the Soviets even secretly approached the United States on this issue but did not find support. That may have averted a major catastrophe in that region. That

is why when the Cold War came to an end and the Soviets/Russians were withdrawing their troops and armaments from Mongolia in 1992, President P. Ochirbat went to the United Nations General Assembly and declared the country to be a nuclear-weapon-free zone and pledged to institutionalize that status. Since then, for the past fifteen years Mongolia has been working to realize that strategic goal.

The 1994 National Security Concept of Mongolia supported the policy to institutionalize Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status at the international level and used the nuclear-weapon-free concept as an important lever for pursuing Mongolia's security goals by political means. Thus in February 2000 the parliament adopted the Law on Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, which defined that status and the legal consequences for violating it.

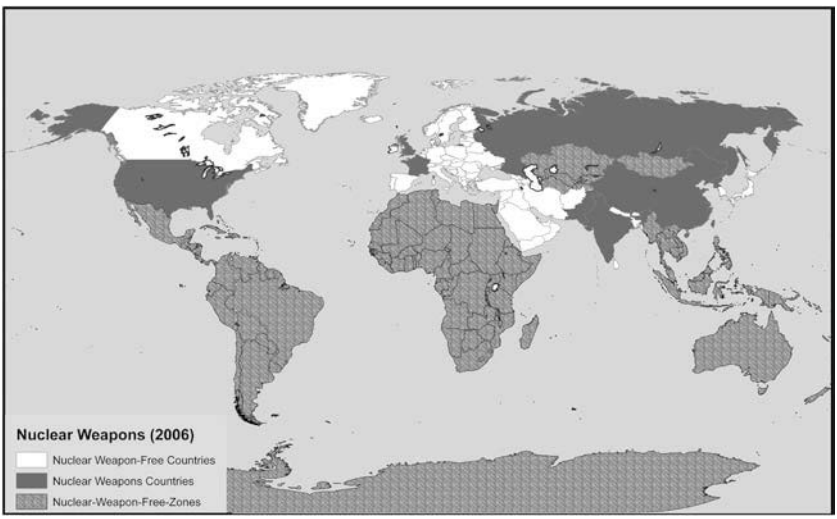
Another reason why Mongolia is involuntarily involved in nuclear issues is that around two dozen Russian and Chinese nuclear-related facilities, military and civilian, are located in the vicinity of Mongolia, thus bringing to her doorstep the perils of "silent nuclear threats" due to human error or mishaps. The third reason is that nuclear energy and nuclear science have enormous potential to contribute to Mongolia's socio-economic development and progress. For example, Mongolia's uranium deposits could be used to achieve relative energy security.[1] The rest of this chapter focuses on the first two issues, since the third is a very broad topic that deserves special study and consideration.

Nuclear-weapon-free Status of Mongolia

Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status (NWFS) policy is an important part of the overall policy of ensuring its security primarily by political and legal means and asserting its neutrality in future disputes among its neighbors and nuclear powers in general. The "status" would require that all nuclear-weapon states, especially its two immediate neighbors, pledge not to involve Mongolia or its territory in their geo-political nuclear calculations or policies because it does not want to find itself in a situation similar to Poland and the Czech Republic, which has become a cause of dispute between the United States and the Russian Federation. The latter considers the United States' plan to deploy elements of the missile defense system in these two new NATO-member states (a radar tracking station and interceptor missiles, respectively) as a threat to its national security interests. As a result, relations between the two former superpowers are under strain, which

has already led the Russian Federation to declare a moratorium on implementation of the treaty on conventional armed forces in Europe (the CFE) that limits Russia's and NATO's conventional forces and heavy weaponry in Europe. Mongolia's policy of institutionalizing its NWFS is intended to prevent such cases from occurring in Mongolia and keeping it either neutral or out of possible strategic rivalry or nuclear dispute. Therefore in a broader context, such a commitment by the five nuclear-weapon states (the P-5, who also happen to be the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council)—especially Russia and China—would be in the interests of these powers for ensuring predictability, greater confidence, and nuclear stability in the region in general (see Fig. 11.3 for a map of the other nuclear-free zones).

Institutionalization of Mongolia's NWFS is widely supported by the international community. In 1998, the United Nations General Assembly welcomed Mongolia's policy and called upon all member states to work with it in consolidating that status. Following up on the General Assembly resolution 53/77 D of 1998 and mindful of Mongolia's legislation regarding its status, the P-5 made a joint statement in October 2000, providing negative and positive security assurances to Mongolia. The joint statement was welcomed by the international community as an important step in institutionalizing the status. However, since political statements do not have



11.3. Nuclear-Weapon-Free world as of 2006.

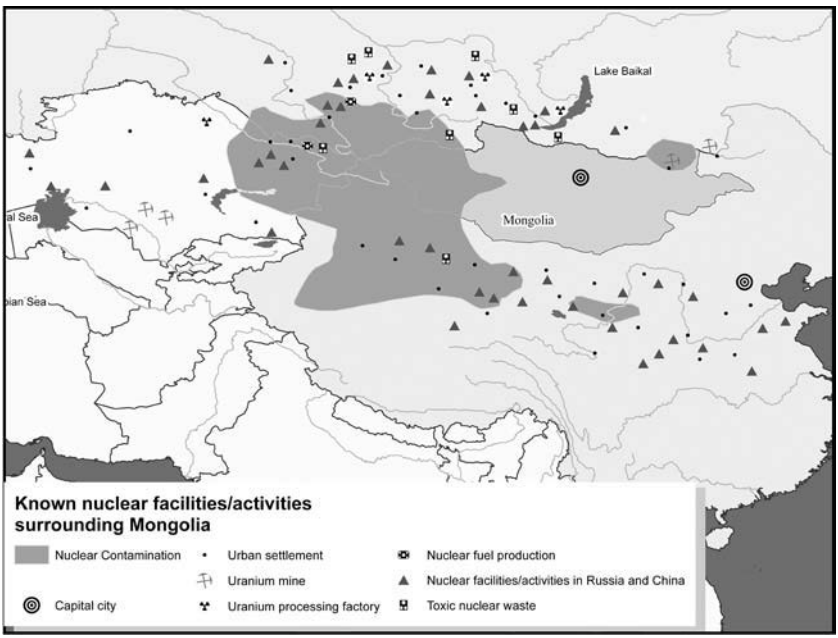
legally binding force and the statement is too general to be considered as a security assurance, Mongolia continues to work for legally binding and clearly defined security assurances. The assurance that Mongolia is seeking is for the P-5 not to engage in, authorize, or contribute to the performance of acts that could impel Mongolia to violate its pledge not to allow nuclear weapons on its territory. Once the P-5 provide such assurances, as they have done with regard to other nuclear-weapon-free zones, that would mean *de jure* recognition of its policy of neutrality vis-à-vis nuclear rivalry and other possible disputes among the major powers. Institutionalization of this status could also serve as a legal basis for addressing the issue of the "silent nuclear threats" on Mongolia's doorstep.

Silent Nuclear Threats

We are living in a nuclear age with its enormous promises as well as hidden perils.[2] In the past half century, the world witnessed escalation of the dangerous nuclear arms race and a race to "perfect" nuclear weapons through tests. Out of 2,047 registered nuclear weapons tests conducted in the world, 760 (about one-third) have been conducted by Russia and China, mostly in the vicinity of Mongolia. In fact, the Soviet Union conducted 207 atmospheric and 508 underground tests, while China conducted 23 atmospheric and 22 underground tests. The health and environmental consequences of these tests for Mongolia and its citizens have yet to be determined.

The question of nuclear waste disposal is one of the most challenging issues facing not only the international scientific community but the world in general. The world's 440 or so nuclear reactors have produced about 280,000 metric tons of spent nuclear fuel (over 12,000 metric tons per year), over 200,000 tons of which are waiting for permanent disposal. Annually 10,000–12,000 tons of "new" waste is being produced that will eventually need permanent disposal. United States President Bush in his 2006 State of the Union address put forth an Advanced Energy Initiative, part of which is the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP) designed to form an international partnership to reprocess spent nuclear fuel in a way that would render the plutonium in it usable for nuclear fuel but not nuclear weapons. This initiative, if successful, would reduce the amount of spent nuclear fuel that could be used for weapons. However, it would not solve the issue of nuclear waste.

Today Mongolia runs the risk of becoming sandwiched between its two immediate neighbors' enormous nuclear waste repositories with all the ensuing potential long-lasting health and environmental consequences (see Fig. 11.4). This is because its neighbors not only maintain nuclear waste storage sites on their territories adjacent to Mongolia but also because Russia in 2001 has adopted legislation allowing import of nuclear waste from other countries.[3] Thus it is estimated that by 2011 Russia could import 10,000–20,000 tons of nuclear waste, most of which is expected to be stored at the Zheleznogorsk (Krasnoyarsk region), Mayak, or Novaya Zemlya (Northern Archangelsk) storage facilities. The amount of nuclear waste to be produced in Russia proper would also increase as it is planning to build more nuclear power stations. At present, the share of nuclear power in overall electricity production is about 15 percent. The new power stations would practically double the share of nuclear-generated electricity and would reach to 27 percent by 2030. According to some Russian nuclear experts, the country has already imported for permanent disposal nuclear



11.4. Known nuclear facilities/activities surrounding Mongolia. Data derived from public websites.

wastes from Romania, Bulgaria, and Libya. With the possible increase of nuclear waste produced nationally as well as internationally, there have even been talks of building a global nuclear waste repository (also known as a multi-national nuke waste repository) in Russia. The latter is already searching for places to establish permanent repositories. Thus there is talk that Krasnokamensk, which is situated in the Chita region adjacent to Mongolia, might become a nuclear waste repository.

Another development that might affect Mongolia's nuclear environment is Russian President V. Putin's proposal to establish near the city of Angarsk, part of the Irkutsk region bordering on Mongolia, an International Uranium Enrichment Center as part of a possible future network of such centers. The center was made operational in late 2006 and there is a growing interest in the center's services. Mongolia wants to know if Russia would be ready to take back the spent nuclear fuel of the enriched uranium used in client states' nuclear power plants (which is the accepted international practice); and if yes, where or how would the spent nuclear fuel be stored or disposed of?

As to China, information on its nuclear facilities and waste is scarce and virtually inaccessible. Today China's eleven nuclear reactors produce about 8.7 GW(e) of electricity. According to the *Beijing Review* (Sept. 27, 2007), nuclear power accounts for only 1.8 percent and contributes only 2.3 percent of the total power production. The Medium- and Long-Term Plan of Nuclear Power Development, adopted in 2005, envisages speeding up the construction of more nuclear power plants that would increase the total nuclear electricity production to 40 GW(e). Thus it is expected that the share of electricity produced by these nuclear power plants would reach 4 percent of the total.

It is natural that China, which is struggling to reduce highly polluting coal consumption, is turning to nuclear energy. However, the question is how and where it would be disposing of its nuclear waste. According to Chinese nuclear experts, at present the country has two sites for disposing of medium and low radioactive waste: in Yumen of Gansu Province (bordering on Mongolia) and in Beilong in Guangdong Province on the southeast coast. As to the highly radioactive nuclear waste, China does not yet have a permanent disposal site. However Beishan, also in Gansu Province, is being designated as the best place since it is believed that the bedrock there is granite and the tectonic activity is stable (*Beijing Review*, Sept. 27, 2007).

To that end, several drilling tests for the construction of an underground laboratory for the Beishan nuclear waste disposal storehouse have already been carried out. It is estimated that the underground laboratory would be built by 2025 and that by 2040 the Beishan disposal storehouse for highly radioactive nuclear waste will be completed and made operational. According to China's Commission of Science, Technology, and Industry for National Defense, there would be only one permanent disposal storehouse for highly radioactive nuclear waste that has a designated life of 10,000 years; no other such storehouse would be built in the next 100–200 years.

Emerging Active Nuclear Policy

Peaceful nuclear cooperation is becoming an important area of international cooperation in general, and of Mongolia and its neighbors in particular. There are compelling reasons for such cooperation. Thus Mongolia, almost totally dependent on oil imports from Russia and with a limited and unreliable energy supply, is at present planning to exploit its uranium reserves, which amount to around 2 percent of the world's known uranium reserves, and build a small nuclear power reactor. This would mean that in due time, it will have to address the issue of safe disposal of its own nuclear waste as well. In this it would need to share the experience of its immediate neighbors as well as cooperate with them through acceding to the 1997 Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. That convention applies to nuclear waste produced by civilian nuclear reactors and applications as well as from military or defense programs when such materials are transferred permanently to and managed within exclusively civilian programs.

Though known as an "incentive" convention, i.e., without penalties, exchange of information on whether national measures to address the issues of nuclear waste conform with international standards set by the IAEA on enforcing strict safety and security standards, open peer review reports and their discussion all would promote confidence and provide a mechanism to address these issues together with Russia and China. This peer review mechanism could form the basis for further bilateral and trilateral cooperation on this issue that, if not handled properly, could impose undue burdens on future generations of all three peoples.

A potential source of concern for Mongolia is the safety condition of civilian nuclear facilities and activities in the areas adjacent to its borders,

that is, whether or not they fully conform to the requirements of the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS). After the Chernobyl and Three Mile Island accidents and numerous minor incidents at nuclear power reactors in Europe and Asia, many robust preventive measures have been taken to strengthen the nuclear safety regime. However, there cannot be room for complacency. The risk of accidents with tragic consequences still persists. Furthermore, one cannot rule out the potential threat of nuclear terrorism or malicious acts involving nuclear or other radioactive material. Therefore the security and safety of nuclear facilities remain a priority for all governments. Safety assessment is required not only for nuclear power reactors but also research reactors, fuel cycle facilities, all types of enrichment and fuel fabrication, as well as radioactive waste management facilities. Such assessments need to be in accordance with the Fundamental Safety Principles adopted by the IAEA and further detailed in its safety requirements—international basic safety standards for protection against ionizing radiation and the safety of radiation sources (BSS) and other technical standards and codes of conduct. The periodic review of implementation of the CNS and production of safety assessment reports, as well as progress in designing safer nuclear reactors, provide some degree of assurance that the potential "silent nuclear threats" are being accorded due attention, including assessment of engineering and human factors and ageing of nuclear facilities. Assurance is also needed that accident prevention and emergency preparedness and response measures are constantly taken.

Mindful of the benefits of the CNS, Mongolia is planning to accede to it. As a country that has little experience in nuclear issues and that is embarking on developing its own peaceful nuclear infrastructure, Mongolia needs to develop closer bilateral and sub-regional cooperation with its two neighbors so that the potential nuclear threat of the "peaceful atom" in any form or shape would be precluded and the enormous potential and benefits of the "peaceful atom" are actively used for the benefit of the peoples of these three countries.

Last, but not least, all three countries need to adopt the international norms regarding nuclear liability. This somewhat neglected aspect of nuclear cooperation needs to be addressed so that it would add a sense of the good will and responsibility of all three parties.

This chapter vividly demonstrates that the foreign policy interests of nation-states, depending on their geographical location, foreign policy, and

interests and priorities, must differ. While such differences may raise problems between a particular country and its neighbors, their interests may also coincide, as in the case of ensuring the safety and security of nuclear facilities. Such mutual interests provide broad possibilities for mutually beneficial cooperation. This chapter also highlights the importance of going beyond traditional area studies in better understanding different peoples and states and thus improving the practical use of the knowledge thus gained.

NOTES

1. Although Mongolia is engaged in some peaceful uses of nuclear science, many areas of nuclear application that can address the challenges of energy security, food security, disease control, poverty alleviation, water shortage, and other socio-economic problems are not addressed.
2. Helen Caldicott (2001) demonstrates how nuclear waste threatens global health because the toxicity of many elements in the waste is long-lived. Strontium 90 remains radioactive for 600 years. Because it emulates calcium, it enters the body as contaminated milk. Concentrated in bones and lactating breasts, it causes bone cancer, leukemia, and breast cancer. Babies and children are ten to twenty times more susceptible to the carcinogenic effects of radiation than adults. Plutonium, the most significant element in nuclear waste, is so carcinogenic that if half a kilo were evenly distributed around the world, it could cause cancer in everyone on earth. Lasting for half a million years, it enters the body through the lungs where it is known to cause cancer. It mimics iron in the body, migrating to bones where it can induce bone cancer or leukemia and to the liver where it can cause primary liver cancer. It crosses the placenta into the embryo and, like the drug thalidomide, causes gross birth deformities. Plutonium has a predilection for the testicles, where it induces genetic mutations in the sperm of humans and other animals that are passed on from generation to generation.
3. Meaning importing nuclear waste not only from Soviet-built nuclear power stations but also from other nuclear reactors if Russia provides nuclear fuel to that particular country. Russia's official reasoning for importing nuclear waste is that it will help provide the necessary funding for upgrading Russia's nuclear storage, cleaning up heavily contaminated land, and expanding its nuclear processing operations at the Mayak nuclear complex in the Ural Mountains.

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