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POLITICAL THOUGHT, KNOWLEDGE AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS OF MONGOLIANS IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

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Abstract

This paper examines the historical roots and internal evolution of Mongolian political thinking and political knowledge. The aim is generally to clarify at the theoretical level that the conditions for the formation of political thinking relate (1) to the creation of political life and state institutions; (2) to the differentiation of culture and science, literacy, the development of scientific research topics; and (3) to the strong influence of social group interests and ideological needs; and to explain this with the historical example of Mongolia. It should be emphasized here that although there are no early records of Mongolian political thought dating back to the Xiongnu years, there are little written records between the third-thirteenth centuries, so the method of reconstruction depends on evidence.

In addition, sources of historical research in political thought were organized into categories such as historical documents, legal documents, oral traditions, thinking and writings, documents of states and politicians, magazines, and party and state documents. It was stressed that the national revival in the early 20th century, the 1911 independence process, and the reform and legal reform efforts of the Bogd Khanate stimulated political and legal thinking. Political research from the 1920-1990s, dominated by Marxist theories and methodologies, is considered to be particularly important in the formation of the basis of political knowledge, research experience and human resources, as well as the formation of humanistic social values in modern political science since the 1990s.

Keywords: *Political thought, political knowledge, statecraft, source classification, Bogd Khanate Mongolia, legal reform, Marxist political science, political science, reform*

Introduction

It is now widely recognized that political thought constitutes an important part of spiritual and intellectual history, rich in content and national characteristics. It occupies a central place in the history of Mongolian social thought and remains one of its major directions. Mongolia's historical traditions are closely connected to the rapid development of modern political science, which has evolved by drawing upon the standards and experiences of developed countries while simultaneously creating models with distinct national characteristics. Therefore, when considering the current processes

involved in the formation and development of political science in Mongolia, it is necessary to briefly examine and summarize the history and traditions of Mongolian political thought, political knowledge, and political science.

Mongolians possess an ancient history and a long tradition of statehood, and political knowledge developed in close connection with this historical experience. Political thought therefore emerged historically as a comprehensive form of intellectual reflection that interpreted and summarized various phenomena and processes related to the state, society, political life, and social relations beyond the level of ordinary consciousness. This article examines the possibilities and foundations for studying Mongolian political thought and political knowledge through historical evidence, using selected works as examples. Its aim is to establish a chronological framework that illustrates the evolution of Mongolian political thought.

I. The General Conditions for the Emergence of Political Thought and the Early Mongolian Period

According to historical examples from countries in which political thought first developed, civilization emerged through the development of collective social life. As societies became politically organized, the state naturally emerged at a certain stage of development. This indicates that political thought is formed and matured within a political environment that shapes its content. Secondly, the cultural, intellectual, and specialized knowledge of a particular society must enable people to conceptualize and understand political conditions. In other words, the subject matter of political thought must itself emerge and mature. Thirdly, the origins and development of political thought are influenced less by purely cognitive needs than by social class and group interests, as well as by the role and importance of ideological factors that express and protect those interests. The development of political thought therefore depends upon the need to reflect political realities in ideological form. For example, differences in interests and positions among social groups and classes are inevitably formed within political consciousness and shape how political realities are understood and interpreted.

Historically, these and other related factors contributed to the emergence and development of political thought in ancient Eastern civilizations such as Egypt, India, and China, where some of the earliest centers of human culture, civilization, statehood, and social thought emerged during the fourth and third centuries BC.

A similar historical process can be observed in Mongolian history beginning in the third century BC, according to Mongolian historians. During this period, political life, along with its principal institutions, phenomena, and events, emerged in the Mongolian territories and Central Asia through the establishment of the first major state, the Xiongnu Empire. This provides an important historical basis for exploring the origins and early development of Mongolian political thought from the Xiongnu period onward. Consequently, Mongolian scholars have examined the origins of ancient Mongolian social, political, legal, religious, and worldview traditions primarily in connection with this era. As a result, a general understanding of the social and political life of the Xiongnu tribes has gradually been reconstructed. For example, certain ideas concerning the ruler and imperial authority, the heavenly origins of the emperor's legitimacy, the relationship between governance and political authority, and attitudes toward oppression and violence have become relatively clear. However, the content, principal ideas, and level of development of Mongolian political thought between the third and thirteenth centuries remain unclear due to the limited number of surviving historical documents and monuments.

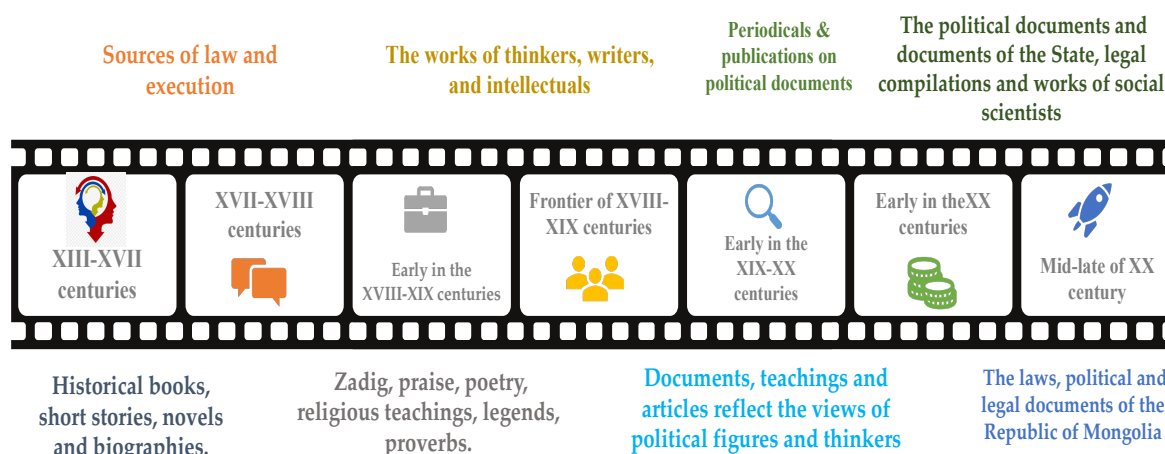
Consequently, when attempting to construct a historical overview of ancient Mongolian political thought, it is necessary to carefully examine both direct and indirect sources and facts related to the history of political thought, even when such materials remain fragmentary or partially obscure within the currently available historical documents. In addition, the search for new sources and documents, together with efforts to establish logical connections between their meanings and to reconstruct their broader content and significance, remains the most feasible and realistic objective in accordance with the scientific principles of research.

Several questions require further explanation and evidence, including whether Mongolian socio-political thought during this period had not yet developed sufficiently or independently, whether it had not yet reached an adequate level of political consciousness, or whether historical documents and sources related to this era have simply not yet been discovered. Nevertheless, it is clear that such questions must be answered through solid research-based explanations. Researchers emphasize that the origins, development, and history of political thought are shaped by a variety of historical factors and circumstances, as demonstrated by the development of political thought in ancient Eastern civilizations.¹ For example, history has shown that intellectual and spiritual diversity plays an important role in preserving philosophical, social, and political thought when it first emerges within a society. Likewise, the preservation and development of such thought also depend upon a settled way of life and the existence of knowledge and experience in recording history, culture, and ideas.

Therefore, in order to trace the historical outline and development of Mongolian political thought from ancient times, it is important to clarify whether traditional continuities existed within the Mongolian lands after the Xiongnu period. In doing so, it is necessary to analyze and examine the historical processes through which various khanates emerged and replaced one another, as well as whether a unified Mongolian nation had formed during this time. It is also important to consider whether the Mongols possessed a unified language and writing system, shared forms of nomadic life, animal husbandry, settlement patterns, and intellectual activity, and how these factors, within the broader framework of Mongolian social consciousness, influenced the development of political thought.

II. The Source Framework for the Study of the History of Mongolian Political Thought

The history of Mongolian political thought can be studied through a wide range of direct and indirect sources and documents. It should be noted that Mongolian scholars have examined and developed these materials from the perspectives of history, philosophy, literature, linguistics, and ethnology. Today, however, researchers in this field must also analyze these sources and works specifically from the perspective of the history of Mongolian political thought. The historical development of Mongolian political thought is reflected in numerous sources and documents, which should be considered according to their type, period, content, and authorship. The general classification may be summarized as follows. The sources for the study of Mongolian political thought may be presented chronologically, from the thirteenth to the twentieth centuries, as a continuous historical sequence.



1. Historical writings, chronicles, novels, and biographies from the thirteenth to seventeenth centuries: Works such as *The Secret History of the Mongols* (Mongolyn Nuuts Tovchoo), *The White History of the Ten Virtues* (Arvan Buyant Nomyn Tsagaan Tuukh), *The*

¹ A. Jambal, ed., *XIII-XIV зууны монголын улс төрийн сэтгэлгээний зарим асуудал* [Some Issues of Mongolian Political Thought of the 13th–14th Centuries] (Institute of Philosophy, Mongolian Academy of Sciences, 2006), 11.

Golden Chronicle (Altan Tovch), *The Jeweled Chronicle (Erdeniin Erkhi)*, *The Crystal Mirror (Bolor Toli)*, *The Blue Book (Khokh Devter)*, *The Yellow Chronicle (Shar Tuuj)*, and *The History of Asragch Nert (Asragch Nertiin Tuukh)* reflect issues concerning the organization of the state, legal values, responsibility, concepts of justice, and administrative regulation.

2. Folklore: Legends, oral narratives, praises, teachings, and proverbs express and transmit values related to homeland, freedom, justice, equality, resistance to oppression and exploitation, and respect for the state. Folklore is characterized by its concise and wise expression of political ideas.

3. The works of nineteenth- and twentieth-century thinkers, writers, and intellectuals: Figures such as Danzanravjaa, Khishigbat, Gelegbalsan, Danzanvanjil, Sandag, and Injinnashi reflected themes of social and political criticism, moral instruction, and calls for reform in their writings.

4. Documents, teachings, and articles reflecting the ideas of political figures and thinkers at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: The political positions, documents, articles, and speeches of figures such as B. Togtokhtur, M. Puteljavi, G. Serensantuv, Bogd Javzandamba, Damdinbazar, Khanddorj, Serenchimed, Nannasuren, Bodoo, Danzan, Sufiagar, and Tseveen reflect emerging national concepts, policy debates, and foreign policy orientations.

5. Periodicals and political documents of the early twentieth century: Publications such as *Shine Toli (New Mirror)* and *Nislel Khüree-nii Sonin Bichig (Newspapers of the Capital Region)* became important channels for the public dissemination of new knowledge and political understanding.

6. Twentieth-century party and state documents, legal compilations, and works by social scientists: Beginning in the early 1920s, a series of systematic works on political knowledge emerged, including reference books, textbooks, and dictionaries, which formed the conceptual and documentary foundations for the development of political science.

7. Mongolian state laws and political-legal documents of the twentieth century: The works of twentieth-century Mongolian social scientists may be classified into several major genres. The history of political thought is therefore not merely a history of ideas, but also a body of documents, institutional practices, and cultural forms through which those ideas were expressed.

The works of twentieth-century Mongolian social scientists may be divided into several major genres. Based on this broad range of sources, the history of political thought should be understood not merely as a “history of ideas,” but also as a body of documents, institutional practices, and cultural forms through which political ideas were expressed.

In the above-mentioned classification, consideration is given to the time of compilation, type, distinctions, characteristics, modes of expression of political ideas and thought, and the authors of the sources themselves. For example, Mongolia’s national and social figures, historical personalities, heroes, virtuous individuals, and important socio-historical events reflect the ideals, values, sincere aspirations, and dreams of both the nation and ordinary people. Mongolian political ideas and values are likewise preserved in folklore, where they are expressed in concise, wise, and elegant forms. This represents a unique cultural phenomenon, and it is reasonable to conclude that Mongolians have long valued justice, equality, and morality, as reflected in their views concerning society, the state, politics, homeland, freedom, oppression, exploitation, and injustice. Therefore, in order to identify and present the historical content of Mongolian political thought, it is necessary to examine the principal questions that have historically been raised, debated, and answered.

Firstly

The history of Mongolian political thought from ancient times to the present demonstrates a broad scope of development, encompassing political philosophy, political doctrines, theories, ideologies, and political ideals.

Secondly

Although questions concerning the state have always occupied a central place in Mongolian political thought, many other important issues related to social and political life have also been historically articulated. These include political policy, governance, the integrity and independence of the state, national unity, the disintegration and restoration of statehood, oppression, slavery, war and peace, law and order, justice, and equality.

The above classification takes into account the context in which the sources were produced, their types, distinctions, characteristics, modes of political thought and expression, and their authors. Consequently, the major intellectuals and scholars who contributed to the development of Mongolian social and political thought in the early twentieth century may be discussed as follows.

III. The Historical Context of the Early Twentieth Century and the Development of New Political Thought

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Mongolia's political life was marked by severe instability and conflict, yet this period also created opportunities for reform. It was an era characterized by repeated resistance movements, struggles, and uprisings by the Mongolian people, who suffered under the oppression of the Manchu Qing Dynasty and the destructive effects of the “New Government Policy” (*Shine Zasgiin Bodlogo*). On 29 December 1911, Bogd Javzandamba Khutagt was proclaimed ruler, marking the restoration of Mongolian independence.

The Great National Liberation Revolution, led by Da Lama Tserenchimed and Qing Wang Khanddorj, was an extraordinary period marked by courage, political influence, and wisdom that affected all levels of Mongolian society. It brought an end to the oppression of the Manchu Qing Dynasty and initiated efforts to secure international recognition of Mongolian independence. On the other hand, the period surrounding the Russo-Chinese agreements of 1915, during which Russia and China attempted to place Mongolia under Chinese authority while granting it limited autonomy, became a turning point that introduced major political and social changes during the era of the Bogd Khanate.

For example, between 1911 and 1919, the Bogd Khanate of Mongolia, which existed in a relatively independent form, attempted to incorporate aspects of Western legal culture and political thought while safeguarding national interests. In particular, the legal reforms carried out between 1911 and 1915 were significant in that they sought to strengthen and protect Mongolia's customs, independence, and sovereignty through the revision and amendment of earlier laws and regulations.

As mentioned above, the purpose of this “Overview of Mongolian Political and Legal Thought in the Early Twentieth Century” is to provide a broad overview of the major figures involved in the political and social reforms of the period, as well as their ideologies and writings. In particular, special attention is given to those who made valuable contributions to public enlightenment during this period of political and social instability. Among them were the first scholars and academic staff of the Bogd Khanate's Institute of Scripture, who devoted themselves to preserving the valuable heritage of Mongolian political thought and its intellectual traditions. Their works clearly reflect a broad intellectual vision that contributed to expanding the intellectual horizons of later generations. The scholarly significance of this paper lies in highlighting the historical role of Enlightenment thinkers in the development of Mongolian political thought through the examination of specific works.

IV. Enlightenment Thinkers and the Main Trends in Political Ideology in the Early Twentieth Century

As scholars have emphasized,² the study and development of Mongolian history and political thought should be understood within the broader context of the historical consciousness of Mongolian society as a whole. Among these Enlightenment figures was the sixth Darba Bandida, the abbot of Dashdarjaalin Monastery, located in present-day Rashaant soum of Khuvsgul aimag, and the teacher known as Darba Bandida Agvaanchoinjondondov. He was born in 1870 in the Khondlon Mergen Zasag Khoshuu of Sain Noyon Khan aimag, within the Khalkha region, to his father Nasan and mother Deva, and was given the name Damdinsuren.

² 5 Jambal, *XIII-XIV зууны монголын улс төрийн сэтгэлгээний зарим асуудал* [Some Issues of Mongolian Political Thought of the 13th–14th Centuries].

Darba Bandida Agvaanchoinjondov: The Moral Foundation of the State and the “Benefit of the People”

When the Twelfth Dalai Lama and Banchi Erene Baldanchoidog were asked to identify the sixth incarnation of Darba Bandida, they recognized Damdinsuren, the son of Nasan from Ulziibadrakh district, as the true reincarnation. In 1874, he was given the name Banchi Erenebeer Agvaanchoinjondov and the title Nomch Munban Khamba Bandida. He is said to have spent decades teaching Buddhist doctrine and serving as a spiritual teacher to monks from dozens of monasteries in northern Mongolia, including the monasteries of Ikh Khüree, Gandan, and Buryatia, as well as to nobles, reincarnated lamas, and numerous disciples.

Among his disciples was Munkh-Ochir Gombojav, widely known as “Mergen,” who later became one of the first modern Mongolian intellectuals to study in France, Germany, and the Soviet Union. Through his work as a scholar, researcher, and educator, Gombojav helped lay the foundations for modern Mongolian scholarship. Fluent in Mongolian, Tibetan, Chinese, Russian, English, French, and German, he combined Eastern and Western educational traditions through both classical and modern systems of learning. His intellectual outlook, emphasis on understanding issues from multiple perspectives, and his teachings inspired the creation of Darba Bandida’s *The Sacred Tradition of the People*, a work deserving of great respect and appreciation. In this work, Agvaanchoinjondov emphasized that “the original purpose of politics was not to exploit the majority for the benefit of a few people. The purpose of politics is to ensure the prosperity of the entire population without discrimination, to free people from hardship and suffering, and to educate them so that they may live in peace. Furthermore, order, purity, and modesty are the fundamental principles of politics. If the state is not properly established, it will soon perish”.³

The work was composed in 1922 by Agvaanchoinjondov at the request of the Mongolian government and the People’s Party in order to promote and introduce Mongolia’s new consultative government. In 1923, it was printed by the Mongolian Institute of Scriptures at the Russian and Mongolian printing houses in the capital. The historical and scholarly significance of the work lies in its realistic depiction of an important idea: that the Mongolian state had weakened and deteriorated, its laws and regulations had been violated, and corrupt officials within the state had deceived their superiors, abused those beneath them, and indulged in corruption, bribery, and greed for money. The work further states that:

*“The newly established People’s Party in Mongolia, with its right to consult with the masses, and the policies of the People’s Party, which are in harmony with the teachings of the Buddha, will lead the future state government by purifying the capital, strengthening the economy, and making the country prosperous and flourishing; by implementing laws that are neither too weak nor too strict; by ensuring that the conduct and ethics of those who enforce them remain pure; by not thinking about the personal interests of those engaged in public work, but always considering the benefit of others; by caring equally for the people; by educating people in the meaning of being human; by dispelling ignorance among the people; by opening the sacred path; and by teaching people to read and write in order to enlighten them”.*⁴

There is also a Tibetan version translated and adapted from the Mongolian text by Lovon Mijiddorj, who prepared a summarized rendering of the work.

³ Darba dandida Agvanchonjondov, *Ард түмний ариун ёсон оршиу* [*The Sacred Tradition of the People*], trans. P. Nyam-ochir (Niislel Khuree, 1923), 31.

⁴ L. Khurelbaatar, *Дарба бандидын «Ард түмний ариун ёсон» хэмээхийн төвд тайлбар: «Ариун ёсныг тодруулагч толь» хэмээх нь илтгэл* [*The Tibetan Commentary on Darba Bandida’s “Sacred Customs of the People”: A Report on the “Mirror Clarifying the Sacred Customs”*] (1998); Agvanchonjondov, *Ард түмний ариун ёсон оршиу* [*The Sacred Tradition of the People*], 7.

The above passage emphasizes that the newly established government promoted the rights and policies of the People's Party through the “scientific language” of religion, transmitting its new political and bureaucratic direction to the lamas, who formed the core of the national intelligentsia of the time. It further notes that the Mongolian text *The Sacred Way of the People* was translated into Tibetan in order to clarify its meanings and render it in a simpler and more accessible form. In this way, it became a powerful means of inspiring and educating both the religious community and the wider population. Mijiddorj revised and rewrote the explanatory text *The Sacred Way of the People* in Tibetan. Later, since no revised Tibetan version had been identified, P. Nyam-Ochir translated the work of Darba Bandida on *The Sacred Tradition of the People* into Tibetan and published it in Mongolian Cyrillic script on the occasion of the 110th anniversary of the birth of the wise scholar Gombojav. Today, the work survives in Cyrillic Mongolian, Uyghur Mongolian, and Tibetan versions, allowing scholars to continue studying its historical and intellectual significance. This work remains a valuable legacy that illuminates the historical development of Mongolian political thought.

In other words, the work expresses the idea that self-consciousness and self-knowledge are essential conditions for the existence and progress of human society. Therefore, social self-awareness should be regarded as an important achievement through which a society remembers, evaluates, and consciously learns from the lessons of its own history.

Chuluun Bat-Ochir: Civic Education, Moral Teachings, and the Foundations of State Reform.

It is also important to briefly examine the activities of Chuluun Bat-Ochir (born in 1874), who participated in governmental, legal, judicial, and educational affairs during the Bogd Khanate period. He was proficient in Manchu, Chinese, and Tibetan scripts, and from 1911 onward served as a scribe and assistant official in the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Office of Legal and Judicial Documents. He also participated in the establishment of the Institute of Scripture Writing, where he served as a member, secretary, and teacher. In addition, he contributed to the drafting of Mongolia's first constitution as a member of the Constitutional Drafting Commission in 1922.

Bat-Ochir's works, including *The Rising Sun* and *A Note on the Traditions of Mongolia*, addressed social, moral, and educational issues through the language of traditional ethical teachings. These works promoted educational values such as diligence in learning, honesty in labor, and respect toward family and society, particularly encouraging children to become disciplined, ethical, and responsible individuals.

Chuluun Bat-Ochir's moral and educational work *The Rising Sun*⁵ demonstrates that Mongolians of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries sought to preserve and transmit educational ideals through traditional ethical teachings. These ideals emphasized the proper upbringing of children, the cultivation of knowledge, and the development of individuals who were honest, disciplined, punctual, and wise. At the same time, the work reflects innovative approaches to education within the framework of traditional moral instruction. Furthermore, these ethical teachings clearly express the need to develop morally and psychologically sound individuals who possess a broad sense of beauty, conscientiousness, and diligence. The work also emphasizes the importance of learning and preserving the norms valued by society, including national language, culture, customs, and traditions, thereby demonstrating its enduring intellectual and educational significance.

Shortly after the National Liberation Revolution of 1911, the Bogd Khanate government began to address various social issues and supported the idea of establishing a parliamentary system and a constitutional state. Jamsran-Gendengiin Tseveen (1881–1940), who worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and founded the newspapers *Shine Toli* (*New Mirror*) and *Niislel Khüree-nii Sonin Bichig* (*Newspapers of the Capital Region*), played an especially important role in this movement. Having studied in Russian educational institutions and acquired knowledge in Eastern studies, linguistics, and

⁵ Ch. Bat-ochir, *Мандах нарны туяа хэмээх сургаал* [*The Teaching Called the Rays of the Rising Sun*], trans. A. Shagdar (Ulaanbaatar, 1992).

history, he arrived in Mongolia in 1912 and promoted enlightenment and political reform through cultural activities within the ministry, educational initiatives, and the press. He also participated in diplomatic negotiations with Russia and China between 1913 and 1915. From the 1920s onward, he continued his scholarly work within scientific institutions, although he was subjected to political repression in 1937 and was later rehabilitated.

Jamsrangiin Tseveen: Democratic Ideology, Parliamentary Understanding, and the Foundations of National Independence

For Jamsrangiin Tseveen, the independence and revival of the Mongolian nation were not merely the principal goals of his political struggle; as a democratic thinker, he also sought to challenge the oppression and outdated feudal mentality of society through his ideas. In particular, in the 40th issue of *Niislel Khüree-nii Sonin Bichig*, J. Tseveen criticized social injustice as follows:

*“In general, when an event is just, it is beautiful both to see and to hear. However, if it results in theft or crime, it should not be judged differently depending on whether the offender is a commoner or a nobleman, just as one should not falsely condemn a beggar. It is wrong to believe that the harsh laws of the Qing Dynasty are superior and not adapt laws from other civilized countries. It is strange that common people reject justice, which benefits many, while regarding foreign silk belts and glass carriages as innocent and good. Such behavior is an attempt to suppress the noble idea of showing compassion to the masses”.*⁶

The basis of his criticism was closely connected to his activities as a cultural official within the Mongolian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1912. During this time, he not only worked on various social, economic, political, and cultural issues related to the revival of the country, but also paid considerable attention to negotiations and agreements with foreign powers. In proposals submitted during the negotiations between Mongolia, Russia, and China under the name J. Tseveen-Amosnavji, he stated that “the Khanate of Mongolia will include the four Khalkha aimags, 150 khoshuu, six Uvurlachigyan jasag territories, 49 khoshuu, Solon, Khulunbuir Barga, Oirad, Kazakh, Uriankhai, and Daryganga”.⁷ In addition, he founded new newspapers, promoted knowledge in various scientific and cultural fields, advocated for a multifaceted democratic republican state and government, and became one of the first Mongolian thinkers to formulate a modern republican ideology in his work *The Rights of the State*.

In *The Law of the State*, Tseveen wrote:

“The first purpose of establishing politics was not to enslave the majority for the benefit of a few, but to establish a state that seeks the welfare of the entire population without discrimination, to free people from hardship and suffering, and to educate and guide them toward peaceful living. However, from ancient times to the present, if we observe both large and small states, those who possess supreme authority often value their own fame and interests more than the welfare of the people, causing the people to complain and struggle... When politics becomes unstable, rulers, following the demands of the times, gather representatives from each region, hold assemblies, discuss the state’s problems, revenues and expenditures, and establish laws and regulations to improve and educate the state... It is evident that the strength of the state depends upon its public benefit, and there are now more than sixty large and small state assemblies throughout the world. Not only do the rules, size, and powers of these assemblies differ, but the structure of the councils themselves also varies. In some countries, the council consists of one ger (single chamber), while in others it consists of two ger (two chambers), namely upper and lower houses...”

⁶ Jambal, XIII-XIV зууны монголын улс төрийн сэтгэлгээний зарим асуудал [Some Issues of Mongolian Political Thought of the 13th–14th Centuries].

⁷ Jambal, XIII-XIV зууны монголын улс төрийн сэтгэлгээний зарим асуудал [Some Issues of Mongolian Political Thought of the 13th–14th Centuries].

These ideas may naturally be regarded as a significant innovation in the history of Mongolian political thought. In the same work, J. Tseveen discussed the state institutions of Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, Norway, and Germany, which possessed unicameral systems, as well as Prussia, Saxony, Bavaria, Austria, England, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Turkey, and Japan, which maintained bicameral parliamentary systems. Through approximately forty discussions concerning congresses, constitutions, and legal systems, he introduced major new perspectives into Mongolian political thinking.⁸

Tseveen Jamsran, through the publication of periodicals such as *Shine Toli (New Mirror)* and *Niislel Khüree-nii Sonin Bichig (Newspapers of the Capital Region)*, contributed significantly to the dissemination of new knowledge among the national intelligentsia and to the formation of democratic ideals. His practical political involvement was clearly demonstrated through his participation in the establishment of the Mongolian People's Party in 1921 and in the development of its foundational programmatic documents, including the *Declaration to the People* and the *Ten Things to Aspire To*. These documents examined how contemporary global conditions—such as the expansion of capitalism, the aggressive policies of the great powers, and the pressures of colonialism—were affecting the fate of smaller nations, and they called for radical changes to the backwardness and religious-aristocratic oppression present in countries such as Mongolia and Tibet. Their principal objectives were: (1) to transfer state power on the basis of popular participation and establish representative institutions in which people could deliberate and make decisions; (2) to restore national independence and state sovereignty free from foreign domination; and (3) to reform domestic and foreign policy, religion, customs, and everyday ways of life in accordance with the demands of the modern era. In the *Ten Things to Aspire To*, these aims were further articulated through goals such as supporting ethnic minorities, expanding culture and education, respecting the rights of the people, cooperating with countries and movements sharing similar goals, and uniting the people in addressing public affairs.

It is evident that Jamsrangiin Tseveen, who initiated and carefully developed these documents, sought—within the scope of his education and intellectual background—to analyze the highly contradictory domestic and international conditions of his time at a sophisticated theoretical level and to propose practical solutions. The progressive character of his political ideology lay in its revolutionary democratic orientation, its opposition to national oppression, and its commitment to democracy, freedom, equality, and the advancement of economic and cultural development. It is also clear that J. Tseveen regarded Inner Mongolia as an important sphere in which he could realize his socio-political, cultural, and scholarly ideas. Moreover, he devoted himself to the development of Mongolia by participating in the establishment of numerous socio-political, economic, and cultural institutions, drafting policy documents and guidelines, and generously offering advice and intellectual leadership during both the Bogd Khanate and the People's Government periods. In this sense, Tseveen Jamsran became a central figure in the dissemination of democratic ideals, political and economic thought, and the broader intellectual revival of Mongolian society. He also extended support to leading figures of the Mongolian People's Revolution, particularly D. Bodoo, S. Danzan, D. Sukhbaatar, and Ts. Dambadorj, and it should be acknowledged that many of the revolutionary leaders of the period developed under his intellectual influence.

Chimidiin Demchigdorj (Dandaa Chinsan): Reformist Ideology, Pragmatic Economic Programs, Education, and Gender Issues

The works *The New Government* and *The Core Principles of the New Government* were written by Chimidiin Demchigdorj, widely known as Dandaa Chinsan, who was regarded by many as an exceptional intellectual figure. He was born in 1864 in the Kharchin region of present-day Inner Mongolia and later became the governor of the Ilden Gun Dashdorj district of Tusheet Khan aimag under the Bogd Khanate of Mongolia. He was proficient in Mongolian, Manchu, Tibetan, Chinese, and Japanese, and was known for his intellectual ability and dedication to scholarship. In 1904, he began working as a journalist for the newspaper *Da Gu Bao* in Beijing, later serving as an official responsible

⁸ J. Tseveen, *Улсын эрх [The Rights of the State]*, ed. S. Idshinnorov and Ch. Unurbayar (Ulaanbaatar, 2014).

for Mongolian, Tibetan, and ethnic affairs, and subsequently as a columnist in Chulugat. From 1912 onward, he also served within the military administration of Sun, Tsakhar, and Zhang Xiangguo, while additionally working as an official within the Ministry of Justice.

In 1913, during a period marked by global transformation and reform, he left Inner Mongolia and came to reside in the capital region of Mongolia. He was accepted into the Bogd Khanate and was granted territory within the Ilden Gun Dashdorj district of Tusheet Khan aimag, in what is now the northwestern part of the Batsumber agricultural area of Bayantsogt soum in Tuv aimag.⁹ Demchigdorj originally intended to compose and publish a four-volume work entitled *The Treasured Mirror of the Great Ship of God: A Teaching for the World in Sixty-Four Chapters*, although various circumstances prevented its publication at the time. In 1995, however, the researcher D. Dashbadrakh transcribed the manuscript from the old Mongolian script into Cyrillic Mongolian and made it publicly available.

When the Institute of Sacred Writing was established at the end of November 1921, at the initiative and recommendation of Jamsrangiin Tseveen, Ch. Demchigdorj became one of its first members, which greatly supported his literary and scholarly activities. Through works such as *The Matters of the New Government* (1915) and *The Main Principles of the New Government* (1922), he articulated his social and political views. A major part of Dandaa Chinsan's legacy lies in his extensive translation work. For example, the 240 volumes of the Yuan Dynasty Sutra, which he translated over many years from the period of the Mongol Empire to the era of the People's Government in 1929, constitute a valuable contribution that significantly expanded the documentary sources available for the study of Mongolian history, particularly the history of the Yuan Dynasty in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when Beijing served as the capital of the Mongol Empire. Among his many translations, he rendered into Mongolian works such as *The Story of the Eight Noble Men of the Tang Dynasty* from Chinese, *The Journey of the Mergut* from Manchu, *Great Asia during the Warring States Period* from Japanese, and *The Last Expulsion of the White Demon* and *The Horoscope of the Bride and Groom* from Tibetan. He continued to pursue his ideological and scholarly work through literature and translation until his death in 1932.

Studies examining the ideas of Ch. Demchigdorj, often referred to as Dandaa Chinsan, highlight his role as a thinker concerned with socio-political reform grounded in Eastern philosophy, especially Buddhist teachings and Confucian traditions. His writings are characterized by the principle of “repairing the old while preserving it within the new,” and he argued that social change must adapt to the conditions of the time through a balanced approach to continuity and reform. In other words, in order to secure peace and development for all people, he called for the creation of a new system of governance and civilization appropriate to the “revolution of the times” through an impartial examination of the old order, preserving what remained useful while eliminating what had become unnecessary. In works such as *The Matters of the New Government*, he advocated improving agriculture, introducing technical equipment and scientific methods, exploiting mineral resources and opportunities for industrialization, and expanding infrastructure such as transportation and communications as essential paths toward economic development. This constituted a pragmatic program for the reform of Mongolian society during that period.

In his work *The Main Principles of the New Government*, Demchigdorj wrote that “the profits gained from trade and exchange are enormous. Our Mongolians are very indifferent to this. If Mongolians themselves do not make efforts, and China and Russia come to settle and trade, then all the wealth of the country will inevitably flow abroad. Therefore, the Mongols should first establish trading centers along major roads and in places where people gather, expand trade in various goods, increase wealth, and preserve prosperity for future generations.” He further warned that “the economy must be developed rapidly, otherwise the country may become exhausted and empty.” Through such arguments, he emerged as an important thinker who made a significant contribution to the development of

⁹ Д.Дашжамцын бүтээлийн эмхтгэл: Монголын нийгэм-улс төрийн сэтгэлгээний түүхийн асуудал [Collected Works of D. Dashjams: Issues in the History of Mongolian Socio-Political Thought] (Institute of Philosophy, Mongolian Academy of Sciences, 2015).

Mongolian socio-economic thought. In the same work, he cautioned: “Do not forget that when land is rented to China because it is difficult to cultivate it yourself, eventually there will be no land, no water, and no place left to live.”

Although Chimidiin Demchigdorj showed great interest in the development of Western countries, he consistently argued that Mongolia should follow the example of advanced nations without becoming their colony. He expressed this idea in the following way:

*“There are many different countries beyond our own. Because our people do not know them well, we simply call them all Russia. These countries possess many forms of knowledge and have become rich and powerful together... When the knowledge of these countries first enters another country, they do not initially engage in peaceful trade. Instead, they sell all kinds of new and attractive goods. The countries of the world, whether rich or poor, gradually become dependent on them, and no one purchases the goods produced within their own country. As a result, all the wealth of that country flows abroad, and peace and stability disappear within it. Meanwhile, after discovering the weakness of the country and the difficulties of its land, they search for an opportunity and eventually destroy the country through conflict. Then the kings and officials of those countries oppress and kill the citizens... They oppress people even more harshly than slaves or herdsmen”.*¹⁰

Within Chimidiin Demchigdorj’s thought, the moral education and enlightenment of the people occupied a central place. He emphasized that:

*“The establishment of primary schools is extremely important. Because many people do not understand this, they suspect that such schools are merely teachings of the Russian party. If one thinks this way, it is a mistake... This is an important principle that must be adopted in the present revolution... Remember this and build schools to educate your sons and brothers, so that they may become wise and strong together and prosperous individually. Nowadays, knowledge of foreign languages is necessary. For us Mongolians, knowledge of the Russian script is especially important”.*¹¹

From these statements, it is evident that while he strongly supported the expansion of schools and education, he also criticized the denigration of women and argued that women should become equal members of society. He wrote:

*“The weakness of the state is connected to the ignorance of many citizens. The wisdom or ignorance of citizens is connected to the quality of education within the family. Although this does not depend entirely on whether the head of the household is wise or foolish, what is especially important is whether the wife is educated or uneducated. Therefore, the education of girls is an important matter that must not be neglected. Boys and girls should be educated equally so that future generations may become wise and capable. Countries that educate both men and women equally become prosperous together. Because our country also understands this, separate schools for girls have been established in the capital and in many provinces, and boys and girls are educated equally”.*¹²

Thus, in *The Main Principles of the New Government*, Demchigdorj emphasized that “the education of girls is an important matter.”

At the conclusion of his work, Demchigdorj wrote: “A brave man creates and acts. Later generations repair and rebuild old and current customs.” He further observed that “those who fall behind

¹⁰ Ch. Demchigdorj, *Шинэ засгийн гол ёс [The Fundamental Principles of the New Government]* (Ulaanbaatar, 2015).

¹¹ Д.Дашжамцын бүтээлийн эмхтгэл: Монголын нийгэм-улс төрийн сэтгэлгээний түүхийн асуудал [Collected Works of D. Dashjamts: Issues in the History of Mongolian Socio-Political Thought].

¹² Demchigdorj, *Шинэ засгийн гол ёс [The Fundamental Principles of the New Government]*.

the times are those who cling only to the past and the present.” These statements demonstrate the enduring significance of his efforts to introduce new ideas into all aspects of Mongolian society, politics, economics, and ethics, while also warning against social and economic stagnation. His ideas remain relevant even today.

For example, in his work *Erdenet Toli*, he wrote:

“A thing that has become old and broken over time is no longer itself; that which has been replaced and repaired over time is also no longer itself; and even that which becomes new and broken remains itself.”

This reflects an important idea concerning the transformation and development of social and political thought. Furthermore, he stated:

*“In all great and small matters, in good and bad, easy and difficult, rising and falling, the subtle nature of each is divided into two categories: good and bad. There are also three conditions: the condition of morality, the condition created by oneself, and the condition created by the revolution of the times... all that is good should be remembered, and all that is evil corrected... all that is brought into harmony with morality is considered proper, while all that is fierce, disrespectful, and contrary to morality is called rebellion”.*¹³

These statements demonstrate that he sought to approach social reform through both gradual and radical means. He further observed that:

“The general tendency of revolution in real time is a revolution in the existing condition itself. Since it concerns the rise and fall of the masses, as well as their corruption and decline, it is impossible not to recognize it.”

He continued by explaining that:

“If one looks carefully, every action, whether large or small, gradually becomes altered and transformed, eventually becoming different from its original form.”

Moreover, because revolutions differ according to the times in which they occur, he argued that societies inevitably decline when they cling excessively to old ways and ignore new realities. In this sense, he introduced important new ideas into the history of Mongolian thought concerning the tension between tradition and innovation. He also wrote:

*“No one can ignore the rise and decline of the people of Mongolia and other countries, nor the problems of the future. Wise people and ordinary people alike must observe the detailed conditions of the times, adjust themselves according to circumstances, help society organize itself, and determine what should be preserved and what should be abandoned. This does not mean that the revolution of time can be prevented”.*¹⁴

These passages demonstrate that his understanding of historical development and social change rested upon a broader philosophical foundation concerning transformation, adaptation, and the movement of history.

Bodoo Dogsomyn: The Conflict Between State-Building Practice and Revolutionary Change

¹³ Ch. Demchigdorj, *Эрдэнэт толь хэмээх шаагтур оруулав* [*The Precious Mirror: A Chronicle*] (Ulaanbaatar, 1995).

¹⁴ Demchigdorj, *Эрдэнэт толь хэмээх шаагтур оруулав* [*The Precious Mirror: A Chronicle*].

As a continuation of the reformist ideas discussed by Ch. Demchigdorj, one of the first revolutionaries and new intellectuals who fully understood the demands and spirit of the new era, and who fought to abolish colonialism and feudalism and establish a people's republic in Mongolia, was Dogsomyn Bodoo, the first Prime Minister of modern Mongolia. He was born in 1885 in the Dendev settlement (present-day Sergelen soum, Tuv aimag) and was associated with Manzushir Khutagt from an early age. He studied at the Mongolian script school of the Erdene Shanzudba Ministry and, as a disciple of the Eastern Monastery, received both religious and secular education. Bodoo worked as a scribe in the Erdene Shanzudba Ministry, as a proofreader for the Russian-Mongolian Press Committee, and as a translator and teacher at the Interpreter School attached to the Russian Consulate. He emerged as a leading intellectual educated in Mongolian, Tibetan, Manchu, and Chinese. He also worked as a reporter and editor for the newspaper *Mongolian Newspaper* in Harbin, Manchuria, and later contributed to publications such as *New Mirror* and *Capital Region Newspaper* in Niislel Khüree after 1912, where he published politically critical articles under the pseudonym "Bold Sword, Bo." During this period, he maintained close contact with young Russian diplomats.

During the struggle for Mongolian national independence, the secret group founded by D. Bodoo at Consul Hill merged with the secret group organized by Soliin Danzan at the Eastern Monastery, leading to the establishment of the Mongolian People's Party in June 1920. Thus, the Mongolian People's Revolution was initiated, and the struggle for national liberation entered a new phase. On 1 March 1921, at a session of the Supreme Council, the Mongolian People's Party was officially established, with S. Danzan appointed chairman of the party, Chagdarjav as prime minister of the Provisional Government, D. Bodoo as minister of foreign affairs, and D. Sukhbaatar as commander of all military forces.

D. Bodoo played a central role in organizing the People's Government, developing state policy, identifying urgent political goals, and implementing measures to address them. In April 1921, he began serving as Prime Minister. On 14 September 1921, the People's Government issued a declaration proclaiming Mongolia's independence and sent it to numerous foreign countries while calling for the establishment of trade and diplomatic relations. This declaration was signed by Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Dogsomyn Bodoo. From September 1921 onward, together with S. Danzan, he represented Mongolia in negotiations with Soviet Russia to conclude a treaty of friendship, and until 7 January 1922 he led both the provisional and permanent governments of the Mongolian People's Republic. He worked actively to secure international recognition of Mongolia's independence and to establish equal and friendly relations with Russia, China, and the United States. For example, he participated in diplomatic meetings with the United States consul and appealed to both China and Soviet Russia to recognize Mongolian independence.

Together with his colleagues, Bodoo established a new governmental structure, supervised the dissolution of the old ministries, transferred official seals and administrative authority, and limited the excessive powers of Bogd Javzandamba Khutagt. In November 1921, he drafted and ratified the *Tangaragyn Geree (Agreement of Oath)*, which restricted the authority of the Bogd and limited his role primarily to religious matters, while political affairs were to be administered by the Mongolian People's Party and the People's Government. After Soliin Danzan was removed as party leader in the autumn of 1921 and appointed Minister of Finance, D. Bodoo simultaneously served as both Prime Minister and party leader until 22 November 1921.

At the end of 1921, through the Youth Union, D. Bodoo implemented a series of radical leftist reforms, including measures such as cutting women's hair and shortening the cuffs of traditional robes. During the same period, the so-called Saj Lama Incident occurred, a counter-revolutionary affair in which forty-eight individuals were executed. Subsequently, a group within the party leadership accused Bodoo of political slander. In August 1922, the Internal Security Department raided and arrested him, subjecting him to severe torture. Accused of colluding with foreign countries such as the United States and China and of pursuing counter-revolutionary policies, he resigned from office on 7 January 1922, citing health reasons. Despite his withdrawal from politics, investigations against him continued, and on 31 August 1922 Dogsomyn Bodoo was falsely convicted of treason and executed. Under the so-called

“Bodoo Case,” fifteen people in total were sentenced to death. The execution order was signed by Elbegdorj Rinchino, General D. Sukhbaatar, and Chief of Staff Huva. Historical documents recording that D. Sukhbaatar awarded ten tugriks to those who carried out the execution are still preserved in the State Central Archive.

Between 1922 and 1989, Dogsomyn Bodoo was officially denounced as a traitor and counter-revolutionary, and speaking or writing truthfully about him was considered opposition to communist ideology. Later, with the emergence of the democratic movement and the establishment of a democratic constitutional order in Mongolia based on human rights and democratic principles, the Supreme Court of Mongolia overturned the case against Bodoo Dogsom through Resolution No. 236 of 11 June 1997. As a result, his honor was restored, and his historical role as one of the founders of the Mongolian People’s Revolution, a founder of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party and the People’s Government, and one of the first prominent journalists, teachers, writers, and representatives of modern political thought in Mongolia was officially rehabilitated and commemorated.

Tserendorj Balingiin: Constitutionalism and the Form of Government

Balingiin Tserendorj, the sixth Prime Minister of Mongolia, also known as “Khichengui,” was born in 1868 in the Kherlen Barsdai district of Ikh Shavi (present-day Delgerkhaan soum, Khentii aimag). From an early age, he was educated at home. Between 1885 and 1911, he worked as a scribe and translator in the Manchu administration, and after 1911 he served as deputy minister in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Bogd Khanate. Between 1913 and 1915, he continued as deputy minister, and from 1915 to 1919 he served as prime minister. Following the victory of the People’s Revolution in 1921, he worked within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and from 1923 to 1928 he served as Deputy Prime Minister and later Prime Minister of the Mongolian People’s Republic. He was also a member of the People’s Government delegation sent to negotiate relations with Soviet Russia and, on 5 November 1921, participated in the signing of the agreement between the two countries during a meeting with Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. B. Tserendorj was a prominent political and social figure who served as chairman of the Central Committee of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party between 1923 and 1928 and as a member of the State Great Khural of the Mongolian People’s Republic between 1924 and 1928. During the period of the People’s Government, he became the first recipient of special honors awarded by the Institute of Literary Writing, including the “First Class Order of Merit for Literary Writing in Mongolia.”

He participated in the drafting and adoption of the First Constitution of 1924, and although scholars may assess his contributions in different ways, his role in the political history of Mongolia deserves particular recognition. In his speech concerning the Constitution at the First Great Khural, he stated:

*“In the international community, there are three types of constitutions.
First, the Sovereign Monarchy.
Second, the Monarchy.*

Third, the Republic... In the first form, all rights are vested exclusively in the sovereign king, and all matters, from the beginning of war to its conclusion, fall entirely under the king’s authority. In the second form, the power of the monarch is limited in order to benefit the wealthy bourgeoisie, but not the true masses of the people. Regarding the third form, the republic: in China, Yuan Shikai seized power through military force and governed the state. For more than ten years, conflict of interests and disorder followed. Such conditions arise when tyrants seize power and disrupt the country by force. However, a true people’s republic is one that places the interests of the people first. Such a republic exists in Soviet Russia. Our Mongolian people achieved their freedom through the revolution of the eleventh year, but because of the circumstances within the country, Bogd Javzandamba was elevated as supreme ruler and a supreme government was established. There was no conflict between the Bogd and the government, although certain traitorous officials around

the Bogd acted out of selfish greed. Esteemed comrades and representatives, now that Mongolia has become a true People's Republic, and the first Great Khural that will hold supreme state authority is convening, I would like to present the proposed Constitution".¹⁵

Recognizing his contribution to the history of Mongolian statehood and society, and incorporating his legacy into the historical study of political science, should occupy an important place within the history of Mongolian political thought. Based on the considerations discussed above, it is evident that there are extensive opportunities to study the history of Mongolian political thought through relevant sources and historical documents.

The reason this article highlights only the principal works of major Enlightenment figures in relation to specific issues is because of the vast number of relevant sources and documents, both direct and indirect. Mongolian scholars have long examined these materials from the perspectives of history, philosophy, literature, linguistics, and ethnography.¹⁶ However, the task of analyzing these sources specifically from the perspective of the history of Mongolian political thought remains an important challenge for scholars in this field. Rather than listing all available materials in detail, this study instead seeks to classify them into broad categories. For example, the ideals, values, aspirations, and hopes of the Mongolian people concerning rights, freedom, justice, and equality are reflected in legends, oral traditions, and narratives concerning historical figures, heroes, virtuous individuals, and major socio-historical events. Indeed, the political ideals and values of the Mongolian people are also preserved in proverbs and oral literature, where they are expressed in concise yet eloquent forms.

This represents a unique and remarkable cultural phenomenon. It is therefore reasonable to regard it as evidence of the Mongolians' long-standing appreciation for justice, equality, and morality, reflected in their views concerning society, the state, politics, homeland, freedom, oppression, exploitation, and injustice. For this reason, it is appropriate to identify and examine the principal questions historically raised, debated, and answered within the broader development of Mongolian political thought. First, the history of Mongolian political thought from ancient times to the present demonstrates a broad intellectual scope and developed through the forms of political philosophy, doctrine, theory, ideology, and political ideals. Second, the question of the state has always occupied a central place within Mongolian political thought. Related themes such as political governance, state independence and integrity, national unity, state disintegration, oppression, slavery, war and peace, law and order, justice, and equality have likewise been addressed in historically specific ways.¹⁷

V. Twentieth-Century Changes and Research Trends

Throughout history, the content of Mongolian political thought and the range of issues it addressed gradually expanded and became more diverse, particularly during the twentieth century. In addition to the traditional themes discussed above, new questions emerged concerning the relationship between society and the state, the form and organization of government, constitutionalism, people's rights, freedom, democracy, justice, the establishment of a just society, revolution, political parties, and public organizations. This development was directly connected to the broader transformation of Mongolian political life throughout history, during which new political phenomena emerged and political thought itself developed independently according to its own internal logic and historical needs.

The distinguished scholar and academician Ch. Jugder divided the history of Mongolian socio-political and philosophical thought into three broad periods: (i) the period beginning in the early fourteenth century, (ii) the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries, and (iii) the nineteenth to twentieth

¹⁵ Улсын Их Хурлын сонин, Гурав дугаар дэвтэр [State Great Khural Newspaper, Issue Three], (Ulaanbaatar), 1924.

¹⁶ Jambal, XIII-XIV зууны монголын улс төрийн сэтгэлгээний зарим асуудал [Some Issues of Mongolian Political Thought of the 13th–14th Centuries].

¹⁷ G. Chuluunbaatar, ed., Улс төр, эрх зүйн судалгаа, Боть 1 [Political and Legal studies, Volume 1] (Institute of Philosophy, Mongolian Academy of Sciences, 2022), 12–41.

centuries.¹⁸ To this classification, we propose that the nineteenth and twentieth centuries should each be considered independent stages in the development of Mongolian political thought. It is important to note that the historical development of Mongolian political thought, although divided into separate periods and examined in a number of specialized studies, remains both interconnected and historically distinct. Each of these stages requires extensive independent research that cannot be fully addressed within a single work, given the differences in content, scope, number of thinkers, source materials, and historical duration.

For example, within the chronological development of political science research in Mongolia, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are often treated as a broad general period. Within this framework, the years 1972–1990 may be characterized as the period dominated by Marxist-Leninist philosophy and scientific communist theory; the years 1990–2000 as a transitional period marked by the search for new theories and methodologies; the years 2000–2010 as a period of new institutional and scholarly maturity in political science; and the period from 2010 to the present as one focused on analyzing the contemporary condition and future directions of political science research.

The above stages in the historical development of Mongolian political thought, although closely connected through tradition and ideology, also differ significantly in their origins and development, styles of thinking, historical circumstances, issues addressed, content, thinkers, written sources, and source types. These distinctions form the basis for the periodization outlined above. For example, the period from the third century BC to the fourteenth century is characterized by the initial emergence and maturation of Mongolian political thought, its first appearance in written sources, and the establishment of intellectual traditions that later became the foundation for the political ideas and thinking of subsequent generations.

During the second period, namely the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries, Mongolian political thought developed further under the influence of the political ideas and traditions inherited from earlier generations.¹⁹ As a result, written and recorded sources reflecting the political life of society and its major historical events and phenomena became more sophisticated and diverse. Historical chronicles, autobiographies, short stories, novels, and legal documents expanded both in quantity and in intellectual scope, thereby enriching the content of Mongolian political thought.²⁰

As Mongolians became increasingly interested in their own historical past from the early seventeenth century onward, a large number of historical texts, literary works, and comprehensive accounts of Mongolian history appeared during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This is evidenced by the fact that scholars of this era revisited earlier written, oral, and other historical materials concerning Mongolian social and political history, and directly or indirectly retold, reconstructed, cited, and interpreted their content and ideas. In this sense, as academician Sh. Bira and other scholars have demonstrated,²¹ the historical record of Mongolia was substantially compiled and consolidated during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This observation is equally relevant to the historiography of Mongolian political thought. Historical works such as *The Golden Tovch of the Basic Summary of Kings*, *The Great Yellow Novel of the Ancient Mongol Kings*, *The National Gem Tovch of the Kings*, *The Crystal Crown of the Dai Yuan Dynasty*, and *The Gem Crown*, all composed during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, attempted to reconstruct and preserve the general content and principal ideas of earlier Mongolian political thought. For this reason, such historical narratives and literary works should be regarded as important sources for the study of the history of Mongolian political thought.

¹⁸ Ch. Jugder, *Монголын нийгэм-улс төр, философийн сэтгэлгээний хөгжил* [Development of Mongolian Socio-Political and Philosophical Thought] («Бэмби сан» ХХК, 2008).

¹⁹ Ch. Jugder, *XV-XVIII зууны Монголын нийгэм-улс төр, гүн ухааны сэтгэлгээний хөгжлийн тойм* [Survey of the Development of Mongolian Socio-Political and Philosophical Thought in the 15th–18th Centuries] (ШУАХ, 1984).

²⁰ Jugder, *Монголын нийгэм-улс төр, философийн сэтгэлгээний хөгжил* [Development of Mongolian Socio-Political and Philosophical Thought].

²¹ Jambal, *XIII-XIV зууны монголын улс төрийн сэтгэлгээний зарим асуудал* [Some Issues of Mongolian Political Thought of the 13th–14th Centuries].

There is also sufficient reason to regard the nineteenth century as a distinct new stage in the historical development of Mongolian political thought. During this period, Mongolian social life and historical conditions changed considerably under the influence of both internal and external factors, and these transformations were reflected in political thinking. One important development of this period was the enrichment of political thought through the political ideas, teachings, and writings of historically significant figures,²² including socio-political leaders, major poets, writers, and intellectuals. It should also be noted that toward the end of the nineteenth century, socio-political thought became increasingly progressive in orientation, while ideas of criticism and reform began to emerge more actively. During this period, the relationship and mutual influence between political life and political thought became significantly closer and more dynamic than in previous eras.

When considering the sources and historical contributions of the periods discussed above, it is natural to examine in detail the nature and characteristics of Mongolian political thought itself. Mongolian political thought has maintained a long continuity through tradition from its origins to the present day, even while passing through historically distinct stages of development. Therefore, one important objective of this field of study is to classify the historical stages of Mongolian political thought and identify their specific content and differences. The identification and classification of the major stages in the emergence and development of Mongolian political thought should not be understood merely as an attempt to impose a model or framework upon history, but rather as a necessary research method with important methodological and pedagogical significance.

It is unnecessary to emphasize here that the twentieth century represented a completely new, dynamic, and intellectually rich stage in the transformation and development of Mongolian socio-political thought. The political ideas, teachings, and views of both the people and the thinkers who represented them began, on the one hand, to be systematically recorded in various written forms and genres. As a result, historical sources, memorial writings, and other documents relating to political thought naturally accumulated and developed. In other words, the new governmental policies implemented by the authorities at the beginning of the twentieth century strongly stimulated the growth of feudal nationalism. This became an important driving force behind the Mongolian national liberation movement, which called upon the people to struggle for national independence. Consequently, the government established as a result of this movement initially served to protect the interests of the feudal class and reflected a form of feudal patriotism that regarded religion as a symbol of statehood and national independence, uniting people under the banner of religion.

At the same time, another ideological current consistently supported the Mongolian people's struggle for national freedom and independence from the very beginning and sought to justify it from a more theoretical perspective: progressive democratic Enlightenment ideology. This progressive-democratic ideology not only exposed the policies of the Manchu-Chinese colonial authorities and their allied feudal elites, but also criticized feudalism as a social institution and promoted the idea of replacing the feudal state with a more progressive democratic or bourgeois republican form of government. In this sense, progressive-democratic ideology became one of the most important intellectual achievements of the Mongolian national liberation movement, expressing its national and social content, objectives, and ultimate goals to the fullest extent possible at the time.²³

Accordingly, all of the issues discussed above constitute the principal subjects and tools of research within the history of political thought. They demonstrate that the history of political thought is constructed through the systematic study of sources and historical documents, together with the careful recording and analysis of research findings. In other words, the actual historical development of political thought, its sources and monuments, and the historiography and scholarly study of political thought are

²² D. Dashjamts, *Монгол дахь дэвшил ардчилсан үзлийн хөгжлийн асуудалд (XIX-XX зууны зааг) [On the Development of Progressive Democratic Thought in Mongolia (At the Turn of the 19th–20th Centuries)]* (ИИУАХ, 1970); Sh. Natsagdorj, “То Ван ба түүний сургаал [To Van and His Teaching],” *ИИУА-ийн мэдээ сэтгүүл [Bulletin of the Academy of Sciences]* (Ulaanbaatar), 1966.

²³ D. Tsogtsaikhan, *Монголын нийгэм-улс төрийн сэтгэлгээний зарим асуудал: Бүтээлийн эмхэтгэл [Some Issues of Mongolian Socio-Political Thought: Collected Works]*, ed. Ts. Jargal and Ts. Gerel (Ulaanbaatar, 2015), 172.

closely connected, yet they remain fundamentally distinct from one another. As demonstrated by the broader global experience of studying political thought, the historiography of political thought generally develops much later than the actual political ideas and traditions themselves. This pattern is equally evident in the history of Mongolian political thought.

Scholars and representatives of various schools of thought around the world have employed a wide range of methodologies, approaches, and theories in studying the history of political thought. Likewise, Mongolian scholars, while emphasizing the shared characteristics of Mongolian intellectual culture and ways of thinking, have also stressed the importance of appropriate theoretical and methodological approaches in the study of political thought.

According to existing scholarship, researchers have shown, first, that political thought reflects the political realities and political life of a given period through concrete ideas, theories, doctrines, and teachings. Second, political thought is not merely a passive reflection of reality, but possesses its own internal logic, identity, independence, and intellectual activity, and in some cases may even develop more rapidly than political life itself. Third, scholars recognize and uphold the principle of approaching political thought within its specific historical context as a central methodological principle for analyzing and interpreting it. This requires us to reconsider the current level of pluralism and free intellectual inquiry and to approach the subject from a more scientific perspective rather than from narrowly politicized or ideological positions.

It may also be said that Mongolians traditionally approach life with a strong sense of lived experience, calmness, and harmony, while valuing moral and ethical principles in governance. There is little doubt that Mongolian state ideology is deeply rooted in the worldview, social relations, customs, and coexistence of the steppe nomadic tradition. At the same time, the concept of space occupies a central place within the Mongolian worldview, closely connected to traditional beliefs concerning Eternal Heaven, homeland, mountains, water, fire, and the veneration of ancestors.

The following picture emerges when we examine the issues, themes, and content of traditional Mongolian political thought that developed up to the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, together with its historical record and the political research conducted from the 1920s to the early 1990s, classified according to general direction and field. In this framework, the broadest areas of research include political history and studies of state and historical figures, while other fields, such as the study of state, party, and public organizational systems, foreign policy and international relations, the history of political thought, and the development of general political knowledge, also developed significantly.

From the 1920s to the early 1990s, a wide range of studies was conducted on the theory and history of the political system as a whole, including revolutions, socio-political movements, classes and class struggle, war, military affairs, and elections, resulting in the publication of numerous books and scholarly works. As part of the historical research undertaken from the 1940s onward, many studies examined the lives and activities of Mongolian political, military, and party leaders, placing them within the concrete historical conditions and struggles of their respective periods.

Among the studies and analyses carried out in Mongolia before the 1990s in the fields of history, philosophy, state and legal studies, and in some cases Mongolian literature, special attention should be given to research on the history of Mongolian socio-political thought and the resulting body of literature, which remain directly relevant and highly valuable to contemporary political science. This is because the history of political thought and political doctrine occupies an important place within political science and serves as a foundation for its ideological history. In this regard, particular significance belongs to the pre-1990s research on Mongolian socio-political thought, especially the fundamental works of academician Ch. Jugder, including *The First Notes on Political Education* (Ulaanbaatar, 1972), as well as works by scholars such as D. Dashjamts and B. Duger, including *A Brief Dictionary of Socio-Political Knowledge* (Ulaanbaatar, 1973), *The Foundations of Political Knowledge* (Ulaanbaatar, 1975), and *Political Reference* (Ulaanbaatar, 1986).

It should also be noted that within the broader framework of political research and development, general political knowledge was systematized and disseminated through textbooks, handbooks, thematic compilations, dictionaries, and reference works prepared for students of universities, secondary schools, technical and vocational institutions, as well as for party and youth political schools. At that time, political science had not yet been officially recognized as an independent academic discipline. Consequently, its theoretical foundations were formulated under concepts such as “political knowledge” and “the foundations of political knowledge,” and these studies were developed and disseminated primarily within the framework of Marxist theory and doctrine.

One of the most tangible outcomes of the broad social transformations and reforms implemented in Mongolia between the 1920s and the 1990s was the emergence of a new social type of individual. In this regard, the collaborative work *Problems of the Formation and Development of the Socialist Personality in the Mongolian People's Republic*²⁴ is particularly important because it examined the theoretical and methodological foundations of personality research, the process of forming a new socialist personality in Mongolia, and issues such as ideological and political education, humanism, labor, economic education, patriotism, internationalism, ethics, collectivism, discipline, aesthetics, and physical development. Related studies, such as *The Development of Social Relations and the Individual*,²⁵ are also noteworthy for demonstrating the close relationship between society, social relations, and the formation and upbringing of the individual within the context of Mongolian social life at the time.

As noted above, within the framework of political historical research conducted before the 1990s, the study of biographies of historical figures became established as an important direction of scholarship. This research emphasized the lives, socio-political activities, and military achievements of Mongolian state, party, and military leaders who contributed to the revolutionary social transformations of the early twentieth century, particularly the 1921 People's Revolution and its aftermath.

It should further be emphasized that many books and studies have since been published concerning previously neglected state, party, and military figures who, for ideological and political reasons, had not been adequately researched or discussed in earlier scholarship. Since the 1990s, scholars have increasingly focused on reassessing these figures, clarifying the historical conditions surrounding them, and evaluating both the strengths and weaknesses of their socio-political ideas. This process has contributed significantly to the expansion of biographical and historical research concerning Mongolian political and social figures.

Conclusion

From the discussion above, it becomes clear that the traditional structure and organization of scholarship during the period under consideration was primarily directed toward facilitating research, collaboration, and the pursuit of intellectual goals, whether intentional or unintentional. The scientific community was able to overcome major obstacles not merely through personal interest, but through determination, creativity, diligence, and sustained intellectual effort. It was equally important to cultivate the psychological and moral capacity to achieve meaningful accomplishments and to pass these contributions on to future generations of scholars and practitioners.²⁶ In this sense, it may be said that the scientific traditions inherited from earlier generations, when combined with modern intellectual practices, have the potential to contribute to the creation of a democratic, just, humane, and compassionate social environment, while also strengthening social unity through shared intellectual values.

²⁴ Mongolian Academy of Sciences IPSL, *The Problem of the Development of Socialist Personality in the People's Republic of China* (Press from the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, 1988).

²⁵ D. Chuluunjav, *The Development of Social Relations and the Individual* (Press from the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, 1980).

²⁶ Hans-Dieter Klingemann and Robert E. Goodin, *A New Handbook of Political Science*, vol. 23, ed. O. Khatanbold (2008), 301.

In this context, the early development of political science in Mongolia was largely grounded in the theoretical and methodological framework of Marxist political science and scientific communism. During this period, research methodologies often remained highly ideological, partisan, and imitative, aimed primarily at supporting the doctrines of a single political party and its leadership. Nevertheless, it should not be denied that scholars working within these formalized and restricted frameworks still attempted to study and analyze the major issues facing Mongolian society from as many perspectives as possible and with a genuine concern for historical and social reality.

Within the broader framework of political historical research conducted before the 1990s, the study of historical figures emerged as one of its principal directions. Scholars focused on the lives, socio-political activities, and military contributions of major state, party, and military leaders who played important roles in the revolutionary transformations of the early twentieth century, particularly the 1921 People's Revolution and its aftermath. At the same time, among the studies conducted before the 1990s in the fields of history, philosophy, state and legal studies, and in some cases Mongolian literature, research concerning the history of Mongolian socio-political thought and the resulting publications remains directly relevant and highly beneficial to contemporary political science. The history of political thought and political doctrine occupies a unique place within political science because it forms the intellectual and ideological history of the discipline itself. It should also be noted that, prior to the 1990s, general political knowledge in Mongolia was systematically developed and disseminated through textbooks, handbooks, thematic compilations, dictionaries, and reference materials intended for universities, colleges, secondary and technical schools, as well as party and youth political institutions.

It cannot be denied that the political research conducted between the 1920s and the early 1990s on the state, political parties, and other political phenomena produced a substantial body of literature, documentary materials, databases, scholarly experience, and intellectual resources. The scholars who conducted research in these fields and taught at universities formed an important intellectual foundation. It should therefore be emphasized that this accumulated intellectual resource made a significant contribution to the establishment and development of modern political science in Mongolia after the 1990s. In short, discussions concerning the origins and development of political science in Mongolia should have begun much earlier, and it is important to recognize that political science in Mongolia did not emerge suddenly or without historical foundations.

At the same time, it should not be forgotten that political science as an independent discipline—with its own theories, methodologies, principles, organizational structures, and research techniques—was relatively new in Mongolia. In other words, although political research before the 1990s possessed considerable theoretical, documentary, and educational value, it differed fundamentally in nature and scientific status from the political science that developed in Western countries. Therefore, an important and ongoing challenge has been the systematic transformation and renewal of this earlier framework while at the same time preserving and making productive use of the valuable intellectual achievements, traditions, and scholarly resources inherited from previous generations, alongside the introduction and development of modern political science methodologies and institutions.

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