CHAPTER 3

IMPACT OF SOVIET SYSTEM ON SOCIETY

SOCIETY UNDER CHINGIS KHAAN AND MANCHUS

Under Chingis Khaan society was divided into three sections: wealthy cattle breeders, a steppe pastoral nobility and Noyons, who has different titles like, Baatar «hero», Sechen «wise», Mergen «sharp shooter», Bilge «wise» and Bokh «strong man». Noyon and Nokurs was a new privileged class. They were exempt from taxes and had full share of the booty captured from vanquished people. They were also free from any kind of punishment. With the introduction of Yasa (law). Chingis Khaan made the nobility more powerful than before. According to this law the arats were obliged to take permission from their masters to join other nobles. and the people captured from the conquered countries had also to join the military whenever required. In Yuan dynasty, Buddhism played a great role in strengthen the feudal class. As the ruling dynasty gave special privileges to the Buddhist clergy so in return high ranking monks helped them in exploiting the common masses. Buddhist clergy was given land and was exempted from all taxes. Between the 14th and 16th centuries the condition of the slaves remained unchanged. The cattle breeders dealt with the live stock economy and changed pasture grounds only after taking previous permission from their feudal lords. Between the 14th to 17th centuries two main classes were Taijis also known as Tsagaan Yastan. Taijis who belonged to the Chingis Khaan were the highest class of that period. There was other class of the Taijis who were obliged to provide military service to the khaans and also provide material aid to them. The arats were dependent on their Ezen «lord» build yurts borrowing money etc. They had to take permission to graze their cattle on the pastures as the Ezen had fixed the places of grazing grounds for these arats. Among the arats there were privileged and unprivileged class. The most privileged class was that of the darkhan «craftsmen» who by their skill of work for nobles distinguished themselves from other common arats. They had to consult Ezens even in their private matters like marrying children. This class was exempt from taxes and certain kind of punishments. Sain khun «wealthy people» Dund khun «well-to-do people» and Khar khun «the lowest served in the
household of the feudal nobles. Between 16th-17th centuries feudal relation highly developed but economy was still based on live stock breeding. Sanjdorj writes, "the land most important tool of production was the property of the feudal classes. The Mongolian feudal lords controlled huge economic units by utilizing the labour of personal serfs. The personal serfs of the ruling prince, they had to perform other duties also without any compensation and officially supplied the feudal lords communication services. Commoners provided their own livestock man power and property.

Manchu divided these people into three classes, which were called as, Albat arats, Khamjilga arats and Shavinars. The albat arats were responsible for the rich feudal lords, had to pay taxes and provide military for the up keep of the aimags and khushuus «banners». They had to pay gifts and expenses for the travel of the high ranking lamas and feudal form Lasa to Peking. They were also obliged to look after the stocks of the lords and had to provide food and horses for postal services to them free of charges. Khamjilga arats were responsible for paying taxes to the Taijis and work in their households and pay their debts. According to the law made in 1764, the Manchu government encouraged the high ranking lamas by bonding arat population to them. These were called shavinars and they have to look after the monasteries and monasterial livestock, were obliged to pay the funds from their personal belongings. The skilled personal were used for religious works and artists painters and handicraft men were used for religious art and building monasteries. During this period, writes historian Shirendev, "Mongolian society became poor and most people became beggers: the feudal mode of production declined rapidly. Agricultural degenerated and all feudal lama profit got reduced. The impoverished people worked for the feudal lords and could hardly make both ends meet. Some started skilled farming on wages under foreign merchants and worked as caravan drivers to the merchants."

**SOCIETY UNDER SOCIALIST PERIOD**

Soviet-Union took full advantage of the strategic location of Mongolia and used it as a buffer state against China and any possible threat of Japan. It also utilized its raw material for its own trade surpluse. But at the same time there is no possibility to deny the role

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1 Burq, Natandakh Mongol Aid Ustun Tunkh p 148
2 Sanjidob, M. Manchu Chinese Colonial Rule in Northern Mongolia, p 13
3 Shirendev, B. History of the Mongolian People's Revolution, p 23
it played for the development of human resources, social progress and building of a totally new work force in Mongolia.

Seventy years of Soviet-style system was not altogether so bad as people consider it now. The development and progress which Mongolia made was possible only with the help of Soviet specialists and technology. Tremendous achievements were made especially in the field of human development. Life expectancy increased from 46.7 years in 1960 to 62.5 years in 1990. Adult literacy rose to 93 per cent. Virtually the entire population had access to health services. 98 per cent of the pregnant women received pre-natal care. 87 per cent of one year old children were immunized against disease; malnutrition was rare. On average, Mongolian received seven years of formal education. In the sphere of gender equality 98 % of women were literate and 86 % were in labour force.

It was a big task to replace the traditional social, economic and political set-up into a modern one, with a few literate population, under populated strong kinship society, scattered all over in the vast steppe with a limited communication and transport system. Most of the population lived in the nomadic or semi nomadic way of life, with a very few other careers. There were no middle class or urban class of Mongols except the foreigners, especially Chinese and Russian merchants who were running the urban economy. Mongol princes and high ranking Lamas were the sole masters of the land and livestock wealth. Monasteries possessed enormous wealth, had the right to rule over secular population within their ministerial territory. Besides paying taxes to the monasterial treasury, people had to pay some ritual offerings also to the holy mountains and Bogd-mountain. For the construction of temples and shrines money was collected from the people. The personal serfs had to pay the taxes of their land owners. So without any intellectual class, MPRP (Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party) had to face many difficulties in forming a new society.

For this reason also Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party had to sought help from either China or Russia. From 1921-1989, Mongolia modeled itself in Soviet colour in its internal as well as external policies.

After the revolution and the formation of the MPR from 1921-1924, with the help of Soviet Union many steps were taken to change the feudal set up into a new system of socialist society. This was not an easy task because the nature of the economy was still feudal.

1 Griffin, Keith. Poverty and the Transition to a Market Economy in Mongolia pp1-26.
In the process of social orientation of the country, the Lamaism was a major hurdle and it was a Herculean task to come with. Grips to this class of exploiters who were the real authority and controllers of economy. It had some aspects of economy which were capitalist in the form but it was not a capitalist society. So the problem MPR faced was how to by pass capitalism and establish the rule of the working class so as to transform the society into a socialist one. The problem was explained by Shirendev he writes, “The transition from feudalism to socialism in Mongolia was effected through discharging tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution with a simultaneous gradual development of the pre-requisites for socialist construction, especially in industry, the transport and communication”. More intensive and extensive industrialization, replacement of private property in agriculture by socialist property through cooperation of individual peasant and cultural revolution. In order to weaken the strong hold of feudal lords the party had to take some measures. As the church was strong so the party people had to respect the sentiments of the arats, who considered the clergies as next to god, so in 1921. Javtsandamba Khutugt was made the nominal head of the state with limited powers. It was made clear that the church was not redeemable and would be eventually be challenged and destroyed. Constitution gave full freedom of religion to all citizens of Mongolia but at the same time religious affairs were separated from the state. The measure which the government took was to free all the shavinars from the shavi lands and they were organized into local regional and national political districts with their own elected representatives, the nationalizing the land and live stock, the serfs and shavinars were given the cattle confiscated from the monasteries, as these people had no live stock of their own. They used to tender the herds and pastures of the nobles and monasteries. The arats were allowed to move freely in pastures they liked, so the difference between the shavinars and albatnars was abolished. Serfdom was done away with by abolishing the debts owned by the people to the foreign merchants. Taxes were imposed on foreign merchants, feudal nobles and high ranking lamas. All these measures were taken during 1922-1924. Military service of the poor for the feudal nobles were also abolished. Between 1930-31 military service was made compulsory for the high lamas, and tax was also imposed on them and high ranking lamas were asked to pay stipend to the lamas who remained in the monasteries. Lamas were punished and sent to prison if they violated the law on religion which separates religion and state.

1 Shirendev. B History of the Mongolian People's Revolution p. 52
Poster symbolising the country's non-capitalist development

Source: Shirendyb, B., By-passing Capitalism, Ulan Bator, 1968.
People were forbidden to pay any kind of money for the building of new temples and lamas were not allowed to travel to countryside without prior permission. Certain companies were established in order to collect the cattle and other kind of property from the monasteries. In order to achieve the desired results, the three pronged programme was launched and it was considered opinion of the authorities that this can be achieved in a phased manner. These stages recommended were spread over at time span of 1921-60.

From 1921-1940, democratic tasks of the revolution were accomplished. Stage two 1940-1960 the foundation for socialist society were laid down by passing the stage of capitalism. Third stage was from 1960 onwards to build socialism.

In the first stage, foreign capital was ousted from the country's economy, foreign debt was annulled and a special state control was imposed on foreign trade, financial loan, cooperated and state trade was created. The foundation of national industry was laid and the first mechanized transport and communication centres were created. This played a decisive part in strengthening the country's productive force and its economic independence.

A new working class and working intelligentsia was formed and grew in the process of the creation and development of new state and cooperative sector on the basis of social property. From 1940, was the stage for socialism, the implementation of the task of laying the foundation of socialism began with the elaboration and realization of sweeping measures designed at transforming agricultural production along socialist principles1.

Sh. Bira2 points out that, "the revolutionary democratic changes that made it possible to abolish feudal production relations created the necessary pre-requisite for the socialist reorganization of agriculture. It was necessary to develop agricultural economy along the lines of peasant cooperatives for three reasons. Number one, it was essential to raise the labour productivity in agriculture and animal husbandry in line with the requirements of the national economy. Modern technology has to be used in order to transfer backward cattle breeding into an advanced intensive economic activity."

In 1929 the 8th party congress of the Mongolian people's Republic Party implemented policies of forced collectivization of herds.

1 Dashdondov II. India and Mongolia (Experience and Interaction), pp 110-121
2 Bira. Sh. Mongolia. Road to Socialism, pp I9-20
Sedentary life in Mongolia started only after the establishment of Buddhist monasteries and foreign trade especially in Ulaanbaatar. In order to consolidate centre of sedentary economic activities into an administrative centre by confiscating monasterial and feudal property. In 1932 not only did the nomads resist by destroying 7 million heads of their herds, but the country side was in an open armed rebellion before the measures were repealed. In 1950's gradual collectivization of the nomads was reintroduced with more successful results because they were allowed to retain their nomadic traditions and migratory life within the collective economic unites. Secondly, the condition of the masses has to be improved, and thirdly to achieve the single socialist economic system for the development of the country. This was accomplished in three stages, with the help of Soviet expertise and economic aid. Between 1921-1955 arats were taught the advantages of the collective work, during 1956-1959 agricultural associations were found almost every where and from 1959 onwards the government took further measures to strengthen the agricultural task.

_Arat_ producers Associations were established in 1934 and the income from these associations were divided among the members. In order to save the animals from the cold, many animal shelters were constructed, long and short term credit were give to them. In order to increase the animals veterinary centres with specialists were established. In 1955-1959 the cooperative congress meeting was held by which ownership of cattle was reduced and cattle owned by the members of association were distributed zone wise. The name of the _arat_ producer Association «Ardiin Uildverleliin Negdel» was renamed as Rural Economy Collectives «Khodoo Aj Akhun Negdel».

New model rules were made to built stations for hay moving and mechanized livestock. _Arat_ farms in many aimags and sums were united with agricultural associations and cross-breeding of cattle was started and members were encouraged to fulfill the targets before hand, for which they were given awards.

Between 1960-1990. practically every Mongolian herding house hold was a member of a local organization, the negdel in which livestock production was managed jointly in line with socialist state planning. The negdel was a comprehensive unite meeting every single aspect of the herding household social and economic needs. It marketed all livestock products jointly, and supplied consumer goods in return. Nearly all the families and private livestock in addition to the livestock they herded for collective or in addition to their wage
labour. Such private herding satisfied a large part of family's basic subsistence needs throughout the socialist era. Under the Negdel was Suuri which consisted of one to two households. These Suuris were responsible for day to day management.

Different trade unions came into existence. It was these unions who helped the nomadic population in building the new society. Many arat associations were formed in order to help common people and train them in the ideology of Marxism and Leninism. Arats were helped in digging wells constructing light fencing for their use in summer. Government encouraged these arats cooperatives giving them funds in building cattle shed, making hay, transporting loads, etc. These were the highest forms of socialist cooperative economy. Several schemes were introduced for the well being of association members. They were provided family allowances, disability and old age pension. Their children were given free education in different boarding schools. Works were provided with long term credits and materials for building private homes.

In the field of industry, Mongolia lacked both finance working class, experience in industrial development, which determined the stage of the entire industrialization process. E. M. Meekese noted that small scale Chinese workshop manufactured vessels gold and silver articles and processed skin and hides that were useful in the daily life of the Mongols. Prior to the introduction of socialism few Mongols were involved in trade or craft or skills that could be adopted to modern industrial life. As Tsedenbal puts it, “Before the revolution, Mongolia was a neglected colonial hinterland of the Manchurian Empire. Pre-capitalist forms of exploitation of the masses both by local feudal lords and by foreign traders and usurers dominated the country. Mongolia lacked not only in industry and modern means of transportation but even a developed system of agriculture and a monetary system of its own.”

So in 1924 with the help of Soviet Union a bank was established, which gave loans on favorable terms. Soviet specialized technicians and engineers came to Mongolia and created favorable conditions for the socialist construction of the society. Machines, tools and equipment’s were exchanged with the raw products. Russian geologists helped Mongolian experts in exploring mineral deposits, which in turn were used in establishing a number of industries. The first thermal power station was established in Ulaanbaatar in 1934.
During the second stage of socialist industrialization, power industry showed a considerable growth.

In 1940, industry accounted for only 9% of the national income production, whereas this figure in 1987 was 34.2%. Essential qualitative changes have occurred in the structure of the industrial branch and in its territorial distribution. The fuel, power, mining, and building material industries developed rapidly. Many new industrial centres and towns like Darhan, Erdenet, Choibalsan and Baganuur were built besides the oldest centre of Ulaanbaatar. In view of the successful industrialization of all the economic branches, vital changes are taking place in the country's social and class structures.

With the development of agriculture, industry, construction and other branches of economy a new working class came into existence. During 1954 with the Soviet aid projects on industrialization started and many new industrial cities came into existence and considerable advance was made to move from rural animal breeding economy to a agro-industrial economy. In big cities government was able to establish sedentary life but in rural area one observes it was difficult to do so as nomads has to move to different camps due to the necessity of good pastures as their herds cannot live on the pasture which are not green. While in sedentary life agriculture, irrigation is a must. But for Mongols who believed in shamanism and Lamaism to dig the earth was considered sin and nature can take revenge, as I have mentioned in the chapter of the religion. Secondly, nomads cannot store the grain for a long time as they have the animals to eat, for that they need to increase the number of their animals than to use their time in agriculture. Attitude towards money is also different as all the trade is done by barter system and they still believe in it. Even in Manchu period nobles, lamas and commoners bought goods from Chinese merchants on the same system. It were always foreigners who were in trade and money lending business as Mongols hated this practice. Even for agricultural work Chinese farmers were hired. Mongols considered trade as a money building business and the exploitation of commoners.

From 1960 to 1983 the number of workers doubled. These are skilled workers from vocational schools, and with these trained workers quality of work improved. The wages and salaries of the workers show a steady growth during the socialist period. With the emergence of working class, trade unions also grew. These trade

1 Shirendev, B. By Passing Capitalism p 117
unions played the role of communist collages educating the people in communist ways. They worked hard to develop the political as well as socialist consciousness of the working class. Under these unions, rest houses, sanitariums, pioneer camps, kindergartens were built. Benefits were provided to all the office and factory workers without deducting their pay.

With the growth of working class, labour productivity also increased, and with every passing year technical skill and knowledge of workers developed. The working hours were usually eight hours and for students who were working besides studying, their working hours were shortened and they were given 54 days leave, without deducting their pay during the examination period. All the workers irrespective of their age were entitled to all benefits like housing, medical care, paid vocations at the time of joining work. The Mongolian worker, as pointed out by Owen Lattimore, did not suffer from the complex of hatred of the machine as was the case in the western countries during the period of industrial revolution. For a Mongolian worker, the machine was that without which a superior kind of job could not be obtained. Social security in case of sickness, they were treated free of charge, old age pension was given according the time they worked in the office. Office workers get pension at the age of 60, large families were given special allowances.

The formation of the national intelligentsia in Mongolia took place at democratic stage of the country’s development, when children from herdsmen’s family were extensively trained at schools and on courses at home and abroad to become teachers, physicians etc. Training specialists with higher education increased sharply at new stage of development of the country through the creation of national higher educational establishment. In 1988 Mongolian share of technical intelligentsia has increased considerably1.

With the increase of population, urbanization also started, as a result people from rural areas migrated to big cities especially Ulaanbaatar where all political, social, economic activities were centered. Urbanization brought the change to all aspects of life, education, social, political and economic. In the field of education the number increased. Ts.Bathbayar writes, “In 1979, among 492,600 urban people receiving education, people with higher education numbered 42,800, people with secondary education totaled 111,500, those with an incomplete secondary or primary education numbered 338,300. A decade later those with secondary and specialized

1 Information Mongolia p 246
secondary education equaled 250,000, and those with an incomplete secondary or primary education increased 444,100.”

As far as the socialist system was concerned the position of the people was officially defined to only one class that is workers constituted the society. But when observed keenly, the Mongol society was stratified in different classes, according to their economic and social and political status.

On the top of the ladder there were the people who managed the country and were holding the reins in their hands. They were known as *Tsagaan* workers. They enjoyed all the privileges which otherwise weren’t meant for the rest of the people. The common people or the workers were known as *Khokh* or blue collar people.

The society was classified as per the role of the people, such as party members, trustworthy and untrustworthy people as well as into workers class, cooperative herdsmen class and the intelligentsia. The 1979 census showed Mongolian class structure to consist of approximately forty percent workers, thirty nine percent herdsmen cooperatives and 21 percent of intelligentsia. The intelligentsia were regarded as unreliable people, who might easily switch sides.

Member ship in the party was essential condition for every one who wished to pursue a professional career in any field of work. This in Mongolia was called *Ariin khaalag* (rear door). Any person who had access to the rear door could get anything done. Card holders of the party, of course enjoyed the benefits of the state, but they were also instrumental in extending the privileges of their friends, relatives, or their acquaintances. Thus any link with the card holders was a key to success, and it was over and above the party consideration.

The workers and members of the MPRP were trusted and were provided all the facilities such as good accommodation, highest position in the government jobs, good health care and their children were sent to the best universities in foreign lands. The people who were not party members were always under the fear of secret police. They always kept an eye on the activities and if found criticizing government policies, were sent to remote areas. Anything against government or party was taken as an offense. The people who had gone through the red terror of 1930 were most sacred to be against the government.

The managerial elite occupied 3rd position in the stratification who included technical specialists, engineers, doctors, professors and
financial planning experts. These urban elite were fluent in Russian, and were trained in universities. In 1970's and 1980's it was order of the day to inquire whether a person knows Russian or not. Even foreigners were asked such questions. Students from herder families and from industrial workers families, including some student from intelligentsia were sent to Soviet Union to study the language. Many students were thrown out of the universities if found to be close to foreign students especially from capitalist countries.

The lowest section included the industrial workers, employees of the state farms and administrative and clerical personnel, who performed their duties out of fear then the work ethic or for positive incentives. Good work meant good living standard, and idleness meant months in labour camps and reduction in pay.

Under communist regime although their behavior was that of a good child of socialist order, but their nomadic character persisted. The alien persisted long rule has been a disturbing factor to the Mongols and it has shaped their introvert cultural behavior. The alien writers do not hold any good opinion about their personal attitudes and are called the zalkhuu «lazy» people. But a close observation of the Mongol society depicts the Mongols are as good as any other society. However, their traits for instance telling a lie, shirking work and so on is the outcome of the prolonged foreign domination and not as a genetically inherited trait.

During the regime of Tsedenbal, pro-soviet thinkers were encouraged in every respect, but the any idea or approach adopted by the free thinking was discarded. Intellectualism was banned. Free thinking intellectuals included scholars, artists, painters and composers became an object of strong attacks, or victims of harsh suppression at the hands of the ideological department of MPRP and the ministry of interior.

"We the older generation pass on our knowledge and live experience to the younger generations. When a worker retire, he hands over his tools and instruments to the young worker and similarly a cattle breeder passes on his knowledge to the young cattle breeder. This was the practice and is still being continued [1]."

SOCIETY IN TRANSITION

After the political victory of Democratic party in 1996, the 75 year long communist regime came to an end. During these years Mongolia achieved high developments in human resources, such as population

[1] Personal interview with Sh Natsagdorj
growth, qualified educated youth, gender equality in every field, access to public health service and improvement in social and economic life. Human capital formation evidently was given a high priority and as a result, Mongolia's level of human development was noticeably higher than one would expect given her level of material development.1

With the disintegration of the former USSR and the downfall of the socialist system, Mongolia found herself all alone faced with a tremendous challenge of building democratic institutions and the basis for a free market. This transition proved to be a big trial for Mongolia which previously had a centrally planned economy and it was not an easy task to accomplish the democratic reforms on her own.

Political liberalization brought forth unprecedented freedom of speech and freedom of assembly and association. A rapid revival of traditional culture has accompanied A large section of workers, peasants and intellectuals still depend on the values based on the doctrine of Marxism-Leninism. The dogmatic concept of Marxism Leninism propagated by the MPRP are so deep rooted in all spheres of Mongolian life that it is difficult to unlink one from another. Conservatives support and justify such values based national identity under the pretext that deviation from it will go against the national interests of Mongolia. Marxist-Leninist ideology and its influence is reduced through national resurgence. Chingis Khaan, who, before the democratic reforms was described as bloodthirsty and aggressive feudal lord is now reassessed as a historical figure, and his portrait can be seen widely in the country. In socialist era his name was a taboo and people were afraid to mention his name, as secret police in Doloodyaam «Ministry of Interior», were present everywhere to campaign against it. Even in the school history text books Chingis Khaan was considered as a conqueror who brought misfortune and sufferings to other nations. But now he is considered to be the pride and hero of the Mongolian nation. On July 10, 1996, commemorating on the 790 years of the foundation of the Mongolian statehood, President P. Ochirbat said, 790 years ago, on the memorable 16th day of the first summer month of the year tiger of the fourteenth sixty years lunar cycle, that is on May 25th 1206 according to Georgian calendar. Chingis Khaan convened on the upper bank of Onon River a Great Assembly of the Mongolian princes based on the ancient tradition of the Mongolian state institutions. By raising the

1 Griffen, Keith Op Cit p 1-26
2 Dashpurev, D. Mongolia. (Culture, Economic, Politic). p 123-133
E. Hotel Chingis Khan, constructed in Yerevan.
state nine white banners, he proclaimed the establishment of the Great Mongol State uniting the Central Asian 'felt dwellers'.

The new hotel constructed recently is named after *Chingis Khaan*. At the beginning of the construction, it was decided to name the hotel after the name of river *Selenge*, but the atmosphere for the nationalism was rapidly raised in the transition time, so at the last moment it was changed into *Chingis Khaan*.

**Political Reforms**

In 1990 Mongolia held the first free election in its eighty years of modern history and has taken important steps towards a multi-party, pluralistic and democratic society. For the first time in Mongolian history, multi-party system, universal suffrage and free election was held in 1990, in which 13 political parties contested. The election were won by the former communist party, the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, which took 70 seats of the 76 seats in the parliament the state *Ikh Khural* «National assembly» and five seats went to the opposition Mongolian National Democratic and Mongolian Social Democratic Parties. and one seat going to an independent candidate. The state *Ikh Khural* passed many important laws and for the first time President and Vice President, Primer and two Deputy Prime Ministers from opposition parties were also elected. In 1992, constitution was adopted and under the provision of new constitution, Mongolia was declared a parliamentary democratic country with a elected president as its head with limited powers. In 1996, the democratic coalition made up of the Mongolian National Democratic party, Mongolian Social Democratic Party and others 50 out of 60 seats, leaving the remaining ones to the ousted. The administrative power is vested in the cabinet *Ikh Khural* which consists of Prime Minister and other ministers.

one of the major development in the changed political life is abandonment of the secret police, *Dotood Yaam* which massacred thousands of people since its formation. It was the state apparatus of purges and terror.

The reform process in Mongolia has been both far reaching scope and remarkably peaceful in nature, particularly when compared to the political climate prevailing in neighbouring countries as well as in Central Asia in general, where ethnic diversity produces the major antagonism within and between nation states.

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1 Mongol Messenger, July 17th, 1996
In the Baga Khural «little K.hural», the ethnic Kazakhs in Mongolia reflected the views on the treatment of Kazakhs and it was said that the treatment with them is good and the migration which took place in the beginning of transition, was not due to the discrimination. Mongolia is usually praised by international organizations for the achievements.

However the international community of aid donors is becoming an important factor in domestic policy making, extending for beyond the economic sphere. Particularly the Western donors maintain a considerable pressure on the government in the direction of continued democratization.

Since 1990, there emerged many NGOs who have helped set up and guide several local activist groups: they in turn, have helped tutor ordinary Mongolians on the basics of democracy. Groups like women for social progress proved instrumental in the success of the 1996 general elections. In independent polls 20% of the electorate said they were directly influenced by the work of WSP (Women Socialist Party). “In 1992, we did not know how an NGO worked, but we knew there should not be a monopoly of power,” says Bormaa, the head of the WSP. “We met with Asian Foundation and they promised to support us. Closely allied with the democratic forces opposed to the communist government. WSP started a voter education project that sent thousands of volunteers throughout the remote countryside delivering the political manifestos of the candidates in all the nations provinces. 36% of the new Mongolian Parliamentarians have been beneficiaries of Asia Foundation grants, and eight came from NGOs aided by the Asian Foundation”.

The process of transition to market relations is inevitably followed by a social class transformation, particularly in urban areas, where people to a higher extent than in rural areas and small towns have cut their links to livestock herding. The working class has gone under a tremendous change, as their salaries are diminishing, and they are losing the purchasing power but in order to keep their status, they have to supplement with the other sources of income so many people have taken part time jobs as taxi drivers, petty traders, barter brooking and every odd job to get money for survival. Some teachers have started working as tourist guides, some has opened their own private schools, some doctors work as interpreters, engineers work as consultants, and some educated people returned to their native places and started again steppe life. Accordingly, a group of nouveaux

1Thayer, N. Mongolia, Forward Steppes, p 21
riches has emerged, devouring its wealth mainly from domestic and international trade and brokering, and engaging heavily inconspicuous consumption. Most dramatic changes have occurred for urban state employees in factories and offices who have either been laid off, face staff cuts in the coming years, or have experienced that the purchasing power of their salaries is diminishing year by year. Large number of urban dwellers are now unable to live off their monthly salaries and whatever else is possible in the modern city. Among the educated, physicists and mathematicians may be seen to run computer business.

Mr. Gankhuyag, director of research centre of the Mongolian parliament, in his article, which was published in Ardiin Erkh, writes that Mongolian society is a close well knit society consists some times on more than 300-400 members and if in high position can help to the entire family and relations. In this respect big family system has a great influence on the economy and politics. Secondly, a person who sees his classmate for some special reason accomplishes his mission that is classmates who develop friendship during school days, help each other very often. For example, the so called “New Age” wing in the ruling party was established by those people who were classmates at the Russian social science academy. Under the socialism, when Mongolians were forced to live in a community type of condition, would become friends in profession, if they happen to work for say about 10 years in one and the same place. An illustration of this is the fact that the founders of Social Democratic Party are researchers from the institute of the academy of science. Ties between natives, is the traditional relationship existent in Mongolian society, basing on the traditions, today a new kind of business type is booming, so we can say that a person with many friends can feel like a vast rolling plain. Mongolians if they want to get some job done, they would rather go to their friends and acquaintances holding important posts rather than think of law and other factors which could help them get their jobs done. The bribery, existent in the previous old society, the so called rear door, under socialism, and corruption and Mafia today are all related to each other and have their common source in the society.

Many social problems started in transition like robbery. Thieves and pickpockets are keeping pace with the time and their number is growing fast. Last year 2,200 pickpockets were registered but as of may this year, they numbered roughly 2,600. This was the official figure but it is said that there are many of them roaming around. The line they pay is also very low so they continue the trade. Another problem the country faces is unemployment and suicide.
which was unknown in the socialist period but now a common word. In the 2 million population 114,500 are able bodied work force and the total number of unemployed is 218,500. These are the people who are forced to commit crime. Unemployment and inflation was stated as the main reason for the deterioration of living standards. According to the showing of the recent census there are 3,135 families of 14,542 people living under the poverty line in Ulaanbaatar. Distrust for tomorrow and social instability have all been cited as ways that suicide effects the family unit. According to the statistics, family discomfort is one of the main reason for suicide, followed by debts and other community disabilities. Family conflicts were the cause of 61.1% of female suicides, compared with 32.6% in males.

According to the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization, one third of the Mongolian population lives below the nutritional starvation levels. Thousands of homeless children beg on the streets of Ulaanbaatar. The FAO report recommended emergency food assistance. Consumer prices shot up immediately after the democrats assumed power, rising from 3.2% a month in the first half of 1996. Inflation skyrocketed and the value of Mongolian currency, the togrog, dropped from 700 to the US dollar in August to 800.

Some of the informants said that the cultural activities have altogether closed-down due to the privatization. Cinema, theatres, clubs are all gone. Mongolian circus which in socialist period was highly developed and were organized, is now struggling for its survival and some foreign donor countries and NGOs are arraigning their trips to other countries. Cultural groups on folk music and dance are also invited outside of Mongolia now often than before. Cinema halls have become the centres of black market, places, were money can be changed into the hard currency. Zakh «flee market» which in socialist period was active, but it were Chinese who were selling vegetables and other articles of daily life. But now Mongols dominate this market and are selling the goods which they buy in China or other neighboring countries. Even in the first phase of the transition some NGOs of Mongolia sold the things which were sent for common people, and money was used for personal use.

CULTURAL CHANGES

Under Chingis Khaan and his successors, art and literature, works like Tears of Togoontemur or the tale of the wise discourses of the orphan boy with nine warlords of Chingis Khaan in which the sentiments of the people against feudal aristocracy were reflected. Mongolian historiography began in the 13th century. During this
period was written the important work on history, namely *Tsagaan tuukh* «white history» which is preserved in a 16th century transcript. Besides the history of the Mongols by Rashid-ud-din-Fazalulla 13-14th centuries, and other works written in the 17th century were *Ganjuur Tanjur*, translation of Buddhist chronicles. *Altan Tovchi, Shar Tovchi* and *Erdeniin Tovchi*. In 18-19th centuries literature was of the Buddhist nature. Under the Manchu domination, several writings were against feudal lords, lamas and Manchurian masters. Thus a new critical literary trend had emerged, by the 19th century which was a departure from the medieval tradition of realism. After the revolution there appeared many writers, but the outstanding was D. Natsagdorj who is regarded as the founder of the modern Mongolian literature. He succeed in presenting a true picture of that age. His works and contributions to literature were a model for the modern Mongolian literature. His best and famous creation is *Minii Nutag* «My Motherland».

Socialist period also saw an increase in human resources. Literacy rate increased so dose the work of literature. This time it was based on socialist ideology. Many works were written on socialism and works of Marx and Lenin were translated from Russian to Mongolian with the help of Russian writers. Art, music, theater, film industry all were given new shape. In music while old melodies and ancient instruments continued. new instruments were introduced, so a. new cultural intelligentsia emerged.

During the power of *Tsedenbal*, political system, inside as well as outside remained a copy of Soviet-Union. Foreign policies also changed according to the Soviet system.