The Model Autonomous Region's Myth:

The Chinese Communist Party's Nationality Policy in Inner Mongolia, 1945-1976

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Abstract

This thesis examines the Chinese Communist Party's nationality policy from 1945 to 1976, with a primary focus on Inner Mongolia. In the 1950s, the CCP leadership hoped Inner Mongolia could be a good example for other non-Han regions. However, this research wants to argue that the "model autonomous region" is a myth. Certainly, in terms of stability, Inner Mongolia appears to be successful. Yet, in terms of the interests and rights of minority nationalities, numerous problems existed, even during the 1950s, the most peaceful period of Mao's era. This research aims to explain the problems and why Mao's CCP was awkward regarding nationality issues by exploring a large amount of historical documents, which were . The first chapter will discuss the international environment, how the CCP incorporated Inner Mongolian autonomous movements, and establish the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. Chapter 2 will discuss the civil war from 1946 to 1949 and how it impacted Inner Mongolia's land reform. Chapter 3 discusses the CCP's nationality policy after 1949 and how and why minority interests were not guaranteed. Chapter 4 will examine the minority people's resistance to the agricultural collectivisation movement, the minority's criticisms of the CCP in 1957 and the CCP's anti-local nationalism campaign. Chapter 5 will examine Inner Mongolia's situation in the Great Leap Forward and Ulanhu's conflicts with the North China Bureau. The last chapter will examine the darkest page in the IMAR's history, how and why Mongols were cruelly tortured, persecuted, and killed during the Cultural Revolution. In a brief conclusion, although sometimes the CCP's minority policy seemed lenient and moderate, it must serve the Party's core priorities. When the two were in conflict, the minority policy was immediately abandoned. Mao's totalitarian system would not allow minorities to be treated as "special," which would impede his overall aim.

Abbreviations: Organisations

CC	Central Committee
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
EMPAG	Eastern Mongolian People's Autonomous Government
FIMAM	Federation of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Movement
GLF	Great Leap Forward
IMAR	Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region
IMMR	Inner Mongolia Military Region
IMPRP	Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party
IMRC	Inner Mongolia Revolutionary Committee
KMT	Kuomintang (Nationalist Party)
MPR	Mongolian People's Republic
MPRP	Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party
MYRP	Mongolian Youth Revolutionary Party
PLA	People's Liberation Army
REAS	Regional Ethnic Autonomy System
SEAC	State Ethnic Affairs Commission
UFWD	United Front Work Department
XUAR	Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region

Abbreviations: Publications

CARCD	Song Yongyi (ed), *Chinese Anti-Rightist Campaign Database*, Hong Kong: Universities Service Centre for China Studies Collection, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2022.
CCRD	Song Yongyi (ed), *Chinese Cultural Revolution Database*, Hong Kong: Universities Service Centre for China Studies Collection, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2022.
DGLF	Song Yongyi (ed), *Database of Chinese Great Leap Forward and Great Famine*, 3rd edition, Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies at Harvard University: 2022
JYZWX	Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (ed), *Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian* (Selected Important Documents after 1949), Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1993.
JZSTGWX	Zhongyang danganguan (ed), *Jiefang zhanzheng shiqi tudi gaige wenjian xuanbian: 1945-1949* (Land Reform Documents during the War of Liberation: 1945-1949), Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 1981.
LRSPP	Song Yongyi (ed), *Database of the Chinese Political Campaigns in the 1950s: From Land Reform to the State-Private Partnership, 1949-1956*, 2nd edition, Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies at Harvard University, 2022.
MJNKKS	Yang Haiying (ed), *Mongoruiin Jenosaido ni kansuru Kiso Shiryō* (The Genocide of Mongolians Related Basic Materials), Tokyo: Fukyosha Publishing

MWWH	Zhonggong zhongyang tongzhanbu (ed), *Minzu wenti wenxian huibian* (Collected Documents of National Questions), Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 1991
NWZ	Neimenggu zizhiqu zhengxie wenshi ziliao weiyuanhui (ed), *Neimenggu wenshi ziliao*(Literature and History Materials of Inner Mongolia)
NZYLDSX	Neimenggu zizhiqu danganguan (ed), *Neimenggu zizhi yundong lianhehui dangan shiliao xuanbian*(Selected Materials of the Federation of Inner Mongolian Autonomous Movement), Beijing: Dangan chubanshe, 1989
ZZWX	Zhongyang danganguan (ed), *Zhonggong zhongyang wenjian xuanji* (Selected Documents of the CCP Central Committee), Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 1992. 18 Volumes, pre-1949.
ZZWX (1949-1966)	Zhongyang dang'anguan, zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (eds), *Zhonggong zhongyang wenjian xuanji (1949.10-1966.5)*(Selected Documents of the CCP Central Committee, 1949.10-1966.5), Beijing: Remin chubanshe, 2013. 50 Volumes.

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Introduction

"Model Autonomous Region"

In August 2020, when the Chinese State's focus was on controlling the COVID-19 pandemic, the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region (IMAR in short) authorities published its new education regulations. The document said:

> Starting in the autumn semester of this year, the first grade of primary school and the first grade of junior middle school in the Region will use the State's unified *Language and Literature* (*yuwen*: means Mandarin Chinese) textbooks; the first grade of primary school and the first grade of junior middle school will use the unified *Morality and Law (Politics)* (*daode yu fazhi*) textbooks in 2021; the first grade of junior high school will use the unified *History* (*lishi*) textbooks in 2022; and the instruction language and script will be the State's lingua franca (refers to Mandarin and simplified Chinese characters). [1]

Also, the Chinese language course would begin in the first grade of primary school, while in the past, it began in the third year. It affected Mongol-medium (also Korean-medium) schools in the IMAR. The authorities claimed that the Mongol and Korean language teaching times remained the same. It did not change the previous bilingual education.[2] Nevertheless, Christopher P. Atwood, a prominent American scholar of Mongolian history, pointed out, "Going from studying all your classes in Mongolian to just a few is a massive downgrade"[3].

The policy change triggered major Mongolian people's protests. The Mongols fiercely protested against the enhancement of the Chinese language and the undermining of

[1] "Quanqu minzu yuyan shouke xuexiao xiaoxue yinianji hecChuzhong yinianji shiyong guojia tongbian *yuwen* jiaocai shishi fang'an zhengce jiedu" (The Interpretation of the IMAR's Implementation Programme for the Use of State Unified *The Language and Literature* Textbooks in the First Grade of Primary and the First Grade of Junior High in National Minority Language Medium Schools), 31 August 2020, available at https://www.alsyq.gov.cn/art/2020/8/31/art_4279_350774.html.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Christopher P. Atwood, "Bilingual Education in Inner Mongolia: An Explainer," 30 August 2020, available at: https://madeinchinajournal.com/2020/08/30/bilingual-education-in-inner-mongolia-an-explainer.

the Mongolian language. Notably, Duguilang (Mongolian: circle) reappeared, a historical method of protesting, which has been praised by the CCP as a great form of “anti-imperialist anti-feudalist” struggle. The protesters signed their names on the petitions in a circle in the traditional vertical Mongolian script so the authorities could not recognise the leader, that is why it is called “Duguilang”. The 2020 protests were responded to by overseas Inner Mongol activists and their northern compatriots in Mongolia. However, like most protests in China, the Inner Mongolian people’s protests ended in vain. The Chinese authorities were adept at suppressing protests and “maintaining stability” (*wei wen*). Soon the police demanded and arrested the protestors.[4]

In September 2020, the former president of Mongolia, Tsakhia Elbegdorj, sent a letter to Chinese President Xi Jinping addressing the language issue and posted it on his Twitter. The former president wrote:

> You, perhaps, have heard and are aware of the fundamental provision in the Constitution of your country that states “All nationalities have the freedom to use and develop their own spoken and written language”, which is now being flagrantly infringed upon with respect to the Mongolian children in Inner Mongolia. …
>
> …The growing atrocity that seeks to dissolve and eliminate Mongolians as an independent ethnicity through their language and the increasingly restricted news regarding the matter is becoming ever so alarming. It is as if all Mongolians around the world have lost their brothers and sisters, friends and family to blind darkness, red storm, heinous torture, or to prison cages. Yet, they await, unswervingly, for good news.
>
> Your humane and transparent action and a decisive statement, such as “Mongolians of our country can fully exercise their right to study, use and inherit their native language. Actions to infringe upon this right must not be carried out. Such incidents must not reoccur in the future” are needed as never before.

[4] Zhongguo neimenggu baofa fan hanyu jiaoxue shiwei hou, dangdi jingfang xuanshang tongji shangbaiming jumin” (After Demonstrations Against the Chinese Language Teaching Erupted in China's Inner Mongolia, the Local Police Wanted Hundreds of the Residents), 3 September 2020, *BBC News Chinese*, available at: https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/chinese-news-54010258.

> Your only such a step could put an end to the aforementioned situation and its current and possible future consequences.[5]

The letter explicitly states the most profound worry of the Inner Mongols: Their language is under threat, and their independent ethnic identity will be eliminated. However, Mr Elbegdorj's emotional and tactful letter never reached his old friend, Xi, even though during his tenure, Mongolian-Chinese relations were in the honeymoon period.[6] The Chinese ambassador to Mongolia, Chai Wenrui, directly rejected the former Mongolian president's letter with strong words. Chai claimed: "The national common spoken and written language is a symbol of a country's sovereignty. It is the right and obligation of every citizen to learn and use the relevant spoken and written language." "All affairs involving Inner Mongolia, including Inner Mongolia's bilingual education reform, are China's internal affairs and do not allow others to interfere."[7]

Inner Mongolia's bilingual education controversy brought the so-called "model autonomous region", the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, into the international spotlight. When most people think of China's nationality (or ethnicity) problems, their immediate response will be the self-immolations in Tibet and the "re-education camp" in Xinjiang. Inner Mongolia, however, is rarely noticed. The vast frontier steppe in northern China has much fewer Han-minority conflicts and a much weaker clamour for independence. For decades, the CCP has always used the IMAR as a shining example to boast about the success of the Regional Ethnic Autonomy System[8]

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[5] Tsakhia Elbegdorj, "Letter to Mr. Xi Jinping, President of the PRC, Regarding the Issue of the Mongolian Language and Script in Inner Mongolia," 24 September 2020.

[6] In May 2014, Elbegdorj visited China. In August, Xi visited Mongolia. The two presidents met 5 times in 2014. In 2015, Elbegdorj visited China twice. "Xi Jinping huijian Menggu guo zongtong Elebeigedaoerji" (Xi Jinping Met the President of Mongolia Elbegdorj), *Xinhua News Agency*, 08 November 2014, on the Chinese government website, available at: https://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2014-11/08/content_2776470.htm. "Zhongguo tong Menggu guo de guanxi" (China's Relations with Mongolia), *China International Development Cooperation Agency*, updated in November 2024, available at: http://www.cidca.gov.cn/gjhdq/yz/mg2.htm.

[7] "Qian Menggu zongtong zhixin Xi Jinping kangyi hanyu jiaocai, zao shiguan tuihui" (The Former President of Mongolia Sent a Letter to Xi Jinping Prostesting Against Chinese Textbooks, yet Was returned by the Embassy), *Central News Agency*, 26 September 2020, available at: https://www.cna.com.tw/news/acn/202009260207.aspx.

[8] The Regional Ethnic Autonomy System is the official translation. However, the verbatim translation should be "National Regional Autonomy System", considering China always used the word "minority nationality" in English in the past to refer to its *shaoshu minzu*. The official term uses "ethnicity" instead of the traditional official jargon "nationality" and puts the word *region* in front of *ethnicity*, further weakening the emphasis on ethnicity/nationality

(REAS, in short, *minzu quyu zizhi zhidu*). To assimilate the rebellious minorities, teaching the three subjects of *Chinese Language and Literature*, *History,* and *Morality and Law* in Chinese was already implemented in Xinjiang in 2017 and in Tibet in 2018.[9] Yet, no matter how "model" the IMAR is, it did not escape the same fate of being assimilated. Western scholars who have expertise in China's minority nationality question argue that the controversial bilingual education is the consequence of the "Second Generation Ethnic Policy".[10] Since the early 2000s, the "Second Generation Ethnic Policy" advocates assert that China should abandon its Soviet-borrowed nationality policy and embrace the "melting pot" model of the United States.[11] As many believe, it is an assimilationist approach.

(*min zu*). Arguably, it implies the minority nationality policy is more assimilationist.

[9] "Neimenggu shuangyu jiaoxue zhengyi yu zhongguo shaoshu minzu zhengce de weimiao bianhua" (Inner Mongolian Bilingual Education's Controversies and the Subtle Changes in China's Minority Nationality Policy), 3 October 2020, *BBC News Chinese*, available at: https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/simp/chinese-news-54346824

[10] Atwood, "Bilingual Education in Inner Mongolia: An Explainer." Gerald Roche and James Leibold, "China's Second-generation Ethnic Policies Are Already Here," 7 September 2020, *Made in China Journal*, available at: https://madeinchinajournal.com/2020/09/07/chinas-second-generation-ethnic-policies-are-already-here/. "Neimenggu shuangyu jiaoxue zhengyi," *BBC News Chinese*.

[11] Ma Rong, a Peking University professor and an ethnic Hui, warns that China should draw lessons from the disintegration of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia while learning from the successful experience of the United States and India. Ma Rong points out that China's model, based on the Soviet national theory, in fact, enhances the "national consciousness", which may lead to separatism and national independence, jeopardising China's unification. In contrast, the US "melting-pot" model is more suitable for China's situation. He argues that minority policy should be "depoliticised" (*qu zhengzhihua*), replacing nationality (*minzu*), which is defined as a social-political group, with ethnicity (*zuqun*), in contrast, which he argues has less political but more cultural connotation. Ma Rong, "Lijie minzu guanxi de xin silu: Shaushu zuqun wenti de qu zhengzhihua" (A New Approach to Understanding Minority Group Relations: "Depoliticization" of the Ethnic Question), *Jornal of Peking University* (Philosophy and Social Sciences), Nov 2004, vol. 41, No. 6, 122-133.

The term "Second Generation Ethnic Policy" was invented by two Tsinghua University scholars, Hu Angang and Hu Lianhe, who supported Ma Rong in the ethnic theory debate. The two Hus possibly have more official background. Hu Angang and Hu Lianhe, "Di'erdai minzu zhengce: Cujin minzu jiaorong yiti he fanrong yiti" (The Second-generation Ethnic Policy: Toward Integrated Ethnic Fusion and Prosperity), Journal of Xinjiang Normal University (Edition of Philosophy and Social Sciences), 2011, No. 5, 1-12.

The United States Department of the Treasury imposed sanctions on a Chinese official, Hu Lianhe, who is believed to draft China's 2015 Anti-Terrorism Law, Xinjiang's 2015 Counter-Terrorism Laws and 2017 Anti-Extremism Regulation. "Report to Congress on the Imposition of Sanctions Pursuant to the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act Pursuant to Sec. 6(a) of the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act of 2020, P.L. 116-145," December 2023. It is not known yet whether this Hu Lianhe is the same person who wrote the essay with Hu Angang, due to the lack of direct evidence.

Ironically, the CCP used to fiercely condemn Chiang Kai-shek's *China's Destiny*, which arrogantly claimed China was one Chinese nation and "formed by the blending of numerous clans." [12] But now, the attitude of the CCP officials and its theorists towards the nationality issue is almost the same as that of Chiang. Ma Rong, an influential Peking University sociologist who contributed significantly to today's assimilationist "Second Generation Ethnic Policy", claims he totally agrees with arguments like "the Chinese nation is one" and "Within China, there are definitely no five big nationalities and any small nationalities," raised by a prominent historian Gu Xiegang in 1939.[13] Gu's arguments finally resulted in a fierce debate between the KMT and the CCP on the nationality issue.[14]

This thesis does not intend to elaborate on the current "Second Generation Ethnic Policy",[15] but wants to focus on the "First Generation Ethnic Policy", which was based on the Soviet model. However, people with general but not specific knowledge of China may ask, isn't there a successful case, that is, Inner Mongolia, for the "First Generation" policy? Why does the Party not apply Inner Mongolia's "successful

[12]According to Chiang, "These clans were originally branches of the same race…They maintained different cultures according to the differences in their geographical environment. And cultural differences gave rise to differences among the clans. However, during the past five thousand years, with increasing contacts and migrations, they have been continuously blended into a nation." Chiang Kai-shek, "China's Destiny" in *China's Destiny and Chinese Economic Theory*, New York: Roy Publishers, 1947, 30.

[13] Ma Rong, "Cong daqingdao minguo: Jiedu zhonghua minzu jindai goujian de yige shijiao" (From Qing to the Republic of China: A Perspective of Explaining the Construction of Chinese Nation in the Early Modern Period), Guojia xingzheng xueyuan xuebao, 2016, No.6, 37.

Ma Rong elaborates Gu Xiegang's arguments in "Ruhe renshi 'minzu' he 'zhonghua minzu': Huigu 1939 nian guanyu 'zhonghua minzu shi yige'de taolun" (How to Understand "minzu" and "zhonghua minzu": A Review of the Dabate in 1939 About "Chinese Nation is One"), in Ma Rong (ed), *Zhonghua minzu shi yige: Weirao 1939 nian zheyi yiti de da taolun*, Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press (China): 2016, 1-28.

[14] Xiong Fangliang, *Cong daqing dao minguo: Zhongguo minzu lilun zhengce de lishi bianqian (1644-1949)* (From Qing to the Republic of China: The Historical Change of China's Ethnic Theory and Policy, 1644-1949), Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press (China), 2016, 132-133.

[15] Nevertheless, the debate around the "Second Generation Ethnic Policy" in Chinese academia is worth mentioning, although some Chinese articles written by prominent figures were somewhat monotonous Communist cliché. It also attracted the participation of Western scholars. Some of the Western scholars' discussions include Mark Elliot, "The Case of the Missing Indigene: Debate Over a Second-Generation Ethnic Policy." Barry Sautman, "Scaling Back Minority Rights?: The Debate About China's Ethnic Policies," *Stanford Journal of International Law*, vol. 46, no.1, Summer 2010, 51-120; James Leibold, *Ethnic Policy in China: Is Reform Inevitable?* Honolulu: East-West Center, 2013.

experience" to other regions? When the IMAR celebrated its 10th anniversary in 1957, an editorial article in *People's Daily*, China's most significant propaganda media, praised it as "a good example of the Regional Ethnic Autonomy System".[16] The IMAR is repeatedly hailed as the "model" in the CCP's official narrative, and the Inner Mongols also become the "model minority" in this discourse[17], which is not only well-known in China but also noted by observers outside of China.[18] No doubt, in the 1950s, the CCP wanted Inner Mongolia to be the model for frontier non-Han regions, like Xinjiang, which became an autonomous region in 1955, and Tibet, which still maintained its theocracy to a large extent at the time. In the post-Mao era, the CCP still expects the IMAR to perform the same function. Nevertheless, it seems Inner Mongolia's experience is not replicable. Why?

[16] "Woguo shaoshu minzu shixing quyu zizhi de lianghao bangyang" (A Good Example of Our Country's Minority Nationality Implementing Regional Autonomy), *People's Daily*, 30 April 1957.

[17] For example, the former CCP general secretary Jiang Zemin in 1990 said: "Premier Zhou Enlai used to praise Inner Mongolia as the 'model autonomous region', we need to promote the fine tradition and strive for greater glory." "Jiang Zemin zongshuji kaocha Neimenggu shi zhichu jizhong jingli gaohao shehuizhuyi jianshe" (General Secretary Jiang Zemin Points out to Concentrate on Building Socialism Well When Visiting Inner Mongolia), *People's Daily*, 1 October 1990. In 2007, on the 60th anniversary of the IMAR, the CCP Central Committee sent a telegram, stating: "It has set a brilliant model for implementing the Regional Ethnic Autonomy System in our country." "Zhongyang guanyu qingzhu Neimenggu zizhiqu chengli 60 zhounian de hedian" (The Congratulatory Telegram of the CCP CC for Celebrating the 60th Anniversary of the IMAR), Xinhua News Agency, 8 August 2007, available at: https://www.gov.cn/jrzg/2007-08/08/content_710468.htm. In 2017, the CCP CC praised: "(The IMAR) has won and consistently coddled the lofty honour of the 'model autonomous region'!" "Zhonggong zhongyang, quanguorenda changweihui, guowuyuan,quanguozhengxie, zhongyangjunwei guanyu qingzhu Neimenggu zizhiqu chengli 70 zhounian de hedian" (The Congratulatory Telegram of the CCP CC, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, the State Council, the Political Consultative Conference and the Military Commission for Celebrating the 70th Anniversary of the IMAR), 8 August 2017, available at: https://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2017-08/09/content_5216769.htm.

[18] Atwood noted, "Mongols in China have sometimes been positioned as a model minority." "Bilingual Education in Inner Mongolia: An Explainer." An article from CNN also noted the Mongols were praised as "one of China's 'model minorities' that have been largely pacified and successfully integrated into the ethnic Han majority." Nectar Gan, "How China's New Language Policy Sparked Rare Backlash in Inner Mongolia", *CNN*, 5 September 2020, available at: https://edition.cnn.com/2020/09/05/asia/china-inner-mongolia-intl-hnk-dst. Cambridge anthropologist Uradyn E. Bulag, who is from Inner Mongolia, wrote: "Inner Mongolia is often presented as a possible fate for Tibet and Xinjiang, as Inner Mongolia is considered a model of the CCP solving its nationality questions." Uradyn E. Bulag, *The Mongols at China's Edge: History and the Politics of National Unity*, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC., 2002, 2.

This thesis argues that, from the perspective of minority rights and interests, Inner Mongolia's experience was actually unsuccessful. The "model autonomous region" is a myth. How can an unsuccessful model be promoted to other regions? Indisputably, Inner Mongolia is more "stable" and "harmonious" than insubordinate Xinjiang and Tibet. Yet, it is largely because the Mongols are the minority in their titular autonomous region and are hardly able to have strong resistance to the central government. The CCP, in fact, rarely pays attention to minority's demands. Mongol people's interests were eroded throughout Mao Zedong's era, even in the "Golden Age" 1950s.[19] This study is not referring to universal human rights, which no one had in Mao's era. Still, those questions directly concerned the Mongols: the assimilation, the decline of the native language, the treatment of national elites, the protection of the grasslands, and, most importantly, the real autonomy – the competence to govern their domestic affairs without intervention from higher authorities.

This study aims to explain why Mao's Inner Mongolia fell short of being an ideal example for the REAS and why the CCP's nationality policy was not effective. It will examine the historical ethnopolitics and the CCP's minority nationality policies in Inner Mongolia from 1945 to 1976. Mao's legacy remains the cornerstone of today's minority nationality policy and has largely shaped today's ethnopolitics. By studying Mao's politics, we can further understand the CCP's internal logic and why its nationality policy did not work well, even though the current leadership is drifting away from its predecessors. By challenging the "model autonomous region" myth, I hope this thesis can offer a new perspective for policymakers to reconsider China's ethnopolitics and gain a deeper understanding of the demands of minorities. Although few in Western academia who specialise in China's ethnic policies would believe the model myth, the relatively weaker interest in Inner Mongolia, compared to the stronger attention to Xinjiang and Tibet, or the "colourful" ethnic minorities in Southwestern China[20], suggests, to some extent, scholars may subconsciously assume Inner Mongolia is peaceful. It's not wrong, but it's not the whole picture. This

[19] Frank Dikötter, *The Tragedy of Liberation: A History of the Chinese Revolution, 1945-1957*, London: Bloomsbury, 2013, xv. Dikötter does not agree it was a "golden age", despite being better than the chaotic Cultural Revolution, but argues it was "one of the worst tyrannies".

[20] Bulag pointed out Inner Mongolia is not as "dangerous" as Xinjiang and Tibet, and not as "colourful" as Southwestern minorities, thus it was paid less attention in both China and Western academia. *The Mongols at China's Edge*, 3.

thesis hopes to shed some light on this less-explored region and draw more academic attention to it. Furthermore, it is possible that the CCP's propaganda, especially Mao's revolutionary words, could attract people who do not have much knowledge of China. As Julia Lovell points out, a perplexing case is that Maoist sympathisers in the West and Nepal believe Mao's ideas are "championing the rights of underprivileged minorities", without realising China's own ethnic minorities' sufferings under Mao's rule.[21] If possible, I hope this thesis could break the romanticised imagination of Mao's minority policies.

Before the discussion, a terminology problem needs to be addressed. The CCP official used to translate the Chinese word *minzu*[22] into "nationality" in English, while adopting Joseph Stalin's definition of the Russian word "natsiya" for *minzu*, which is equivalent to the English word "nation". Walker Connor points out that the usage of "nationality", a downgraded term, instead of "nation", justified China's rejection of creating Soviet-style national republics.[23] However, more official translations have used "ethnicity"[24] since the 1990s,[25] which is also frequently used by Western scholars when analysing China's nationality question. Strictly speaking, "national group" and "ethnic group" have different emphases, although many academic writings do not distinguish the two. For the scholars who do argue that the two

[21] Julia Lovell, *Maoism: A Global History, New York: Vintage Books*, 2020, 460.

[22] Most scholars believed the Chinese word "*minzu*" came from the Japanese word "*minzoku*." Hao Shiyuan, in contrast, argues it was more likely that the Japanese borrowed the word from Chinese in the 19th century. However, Hao agrees that the Japanese gave *minzoku* the meaning of "nation, volk, and ethnos", and it is no doubt that the Chinese borrowed it from Western works from Japanese translations. Hao Shiyuan, "Zhongwen 'minzu' yici yuanliu kaobian" (The Textual Research of the Evolution of the Chinese Term "Minzu"), *Minzu yanjiu*, 2004, No.6, 67.

[23] Walker Connor, *The National Question in Marxist-Leninist Theory and Strategy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984, xv.

[24] Ethnicity is a relatively new term in English. The first recording of its usage was in 1953, and the word did not come into the Oxford English Dictionary until 1972. Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, "Introduction", in Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan (eds), *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience,* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press: 1975, 1.

[25] In the 1990s, before Ma Rong's "de-politicisation" essay, official translations and many scholars began replacing "nationality" with "ethnicity". Zhu Lun, a scholar from the Chinese Academy of Social Science, insisted that China should continue using "nationality". Zhu Lun, "Lun 'minzu-guojia' yu 'duominzu guojia'"(On "Nation-State" and "Multinational State"), *Shijie minzu*, 1997, No.3, 1-11. Ning Sao, *Minzu yu guojia: Minzu guanxi yu minzu zhengce de guoji bijiao* (Ethnicity and State: An International Comparison About Ethnic Relations and Ethnic Policies), Beijing: Peking University Press, 1995.

concepts are different, they do not always have a consensus. Walker Connor argues that a group could be recognised by anthropologists or outsiders as an ethnicity, but the members of this group must have realised their uniqueness to become a nation. Thus, a nation is an ethnic group that has developed a sense of self-consciousness.[26] Nevertheless, more scholars highlight the political attribute of a nation, which is lacking or weaker in the concept of ethnicity. For example, Immanuel Wallerstein argues that nations are historical socio-political groups, associating with existing or yet-to-form state boundaries, while ethnic groups are cultural groups with certain behaviours which are passed on to the descendants, but the group is not associated with state boundaries.[27] Anthony D. Smith points out that an ethnic community (he uses the French term ethnie) usually does not have a political referent, and often does not necessarily have a common public culture and live in a historic territory. In contrast, a nation has to possess a historic homeland, share a public culture, and aspire to self-determination to some extent. An independent state is not necessary for a nation, but the critical characteristic is to have a certain degree of autonomy.[28] Will Kymlicka also accentuates the desire for autonomy as the key distinction of national minorities and ethnic groups. He argues that "national minorities" typically demand autonomous power or self-government to maintain their distinct societies within the mainstream society. "Ethnic groups", in contrast, have a relatively stronger willingness to integrate and do not pursue becoming "a separate

[26] Walker Connor, "A Nation Is a Nation, Is a State, Is an Ethnic Group Is a…," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 1978, Vol. 1, No. 4, 388.

[27] Immanuel Wallerstein, "Construction of Peoplehood: Racism, Nationalism, Ethnicity", in Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, translation of Etienne Balibar by Christ Turner, London and New York: Verso, 1991, 78.

[28] Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010, 12-13.

Smith defines a nation as "a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy, and common legal rights and duties for all members." Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*, London: Penguin Books, 1991, 14. He also distinguishes "ethnic categories" and "ethnic communities". The former can be recognised by outsiders, but may not have "self-awareness", which is similar to Connor's distinguishment of nations and ethnicities. Ethnic communities, or *ethnies*, argues Smith, usually have the following six main features: 1) a collective proper name; 2) a myth of common ancestry; 3) shared historical memories; 4) one or more differentiating elements of common culture; 5) an association with a specific 'homeland'; 6) a sense of solidarity for significant sectors of the population. Smith, *National Identity*, 21.

and self-governing nation" but mostly hope the majority to recognise their cultural distinctiveness.[29]

Based on the explanations above, this thesis argues "minority nationalities" or "national minorities" are closer to the CCP's notion when it created various "autonomous" units in the 1940s and 1950s. Although some groups may be closer to the understandings and definitions of "ethnicity", the main player of this thesis, the Mongols, is more in line with "national minority". This thesis will continue to use nationality in most cases as they were in Mao's era, although today, the Chinese state is indeed making efforts to convert minority nationalities to ethnicities by changing the term, which means, a range of issues anchored to nationality are reconsidered, including legal position, territory, autonomy etc.[30] Nevertheless, this thesis will not change the names of China's official organisations or administrative units if the current official translations use "ethnic" instead of "national".

Literature Review

Numerous books and articles have been written on the CCP's ethnopolitics and history in Inner Mongolia from the West and China, yet most of them have limitations. An important category is mainland China's publications. Most scholars concentrate on the CCP's nationality question and nationality policy in general,[31] and

[29] Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, 10-11.

[30] Uradyn E. Bulag, "Alter/native Mongolian Identity: From Nationality to Ethnic Group," in Elizabeth J. Perry and Mark Selden (eds), *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance*, 3rd edition, London: Routledge, 2010, 284.

[31] For example, Xiong Fangliang, *Cong daqing dao minguo*, Chapter 8 and 9. Although the two chapters contain paragraphs with ideological clichés, it well used translated Soviet documents to discuss the Comintern's influence on the CCP's nationality question.

The Chinese ethnologists, anthropologists, and political theorists who actively engaged in the "Second Generation Ethnic Policy" debate have written more or less about CCP nationality theory and the Regional Ethnic Autonomy System, although these are not often their most familiar areas. These scholars have excellent works; however, when they write about the REAS and CCP's nationality policy, due to the political taboo, their works are unavoidably very "official", even like tedious propaganda. This type of scholars includes Hao Shiyuan, Chen Jianyue, Zhou and Wang Xi'en from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Jin Binghao from Minzu University of China and so forth. Chen Jianyue and Jin Pinghao are prolific on CCP nationality policy. For example, Chen Jianyue, "Zhongguo gongchandang de zhonghua minzu guan lunshu: Yi zhonggong liujie liuzhong quanhui wei zhongxin de yanjiu" (The Discourse of the Communist Party of China on the Chinese Nation Centered on the Sixth Plenary Session of the Sixth Central Committee), *Minzu*

only a few specialise in the Inner Mongolian issue. Yet, scholars based in China are often confined by the strict official ideology, let alone the highly sensitive national minority issue. Although they are very familiar with relevant literature and write adequately in quantity, they hardly write anything beyond the official position. Even the most excellent works are cautious about not offending the Party, usually highly praising the Party's nationality policy and other achievements while downplaying the mistakes and disasters. For example, *The Outline of Inner Mongolian History*, a comprehensive history edited by Hao Weimin and Qimuddorji, objectively points out the CCP's "leftist mistakes" during the early land reform in 1947, the Great Leap Forward period and the Cultural Revolution with accurate historical facts, but it also adds clichés like "the CCP always makes nationality policies in different periods based on Inner Mongolia's nationality characteristics and regional characteristics, successfully solving the nationality question, leading the revolution and construction, and promoting the development of history."[32] The lack of critical evaluations of the CCP is a great pity for these works. Topics on highly controversial and sensitive political events, such as the Anti-Rightist Campaign, the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution,[33] are strictly censored, especially after Xi Jinping came into

yanjiu, 2022, No.6, 15-29; "Yi zhidu he fazhi baohu shaoshu minzu quanli: Zhongguo minzu quyu zizhi de lujing yu jingyan" (Protecting the Rights of Ethnic Minorities by Institution and Law:The Method and Experience of the Regional National Autonomy of China), *Minzu yanjiu*, 2009, No.4, 1-11. and "Makesi zhuyi minzu lilun zhongguohua de zaoqi tansuo: Jiyu gongchanguoji he zhongguo gongchandang wenxian de yanjiu" (The Early Exploration of the Sincisation of Marxist National Theory: Research Based on Comintern and Chinese Communist Party Literature), *Xi'nan minzu daxue xuebao*, 2022, No.5, 25-31.

Jin Binghao (ed), *Makesizhuyi minzu lilun fazhan shi* (The History of the Marxist National Theory's Development), Beijing: Zhongyang minzu daxue chubanshe, 2007; Jin Binghao, *Minzu lilun yu minzu zhengce gailun* (The Introduction of Nationality Theories and Nationality Policies), Beijing: Zhongyang minzu daxue chubanshe, 2006.

Nevertheless, Zhang Haiyang, from Minzu University of China, is one of the liberal scholars who participated in the "Second Generation Ethnic Policy" debate.

[32] Hao Weimin and Qimudedaoerji (eds), *Neimenggu tongshi gangyao* (The Outline of Inner Mongolian History), Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2006, 617.

Other good works: Hao Weimin (ed), *Neimenggu zizhiqu shi* (The History of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region), Hohhot: Neimenggu daxue chubanshe, 1991. Hao Weimin (ed), *Neimenggu geming shi* (The Revolutionary History of Inner Mongolia), Hohhot: Neimenggu daxue chubanshe, 1997. It ends in the early 1950s. Dalizhabu (ed), *Menggu shi gangyao* (The Outline of Mongolian History), Beijing: Zhongyang minzu daxue chubanshe, 2006. Wuyunbilige and Bailadugeqi (eds), *Menggu shi gangyao* (The Outline of Mongolian History), Hohhot: Neimenggu renmin chubanshe, 2006. The two books do not write about the history after 1947.

[33] Probably only one book about Inner Mongolia's Cultural Revolution has been published in mainland China. Tumen and Zhu Dongli, *Kang Sheng yu Neirendang yuanan* (Kang

power in 2012. Thus, these topics related to Inner Mongolia are also limited, except for the democratic (land) reform, which is considered a successful policy experiment of Ulanhu, the most powerful non-Han political figure in the CCP's history. Nevertheless, there are still several excellent works on these topics based on serious, extensive historical research with less ideological cliché, such as Mongol historian Rinqin's works. His works on Inner Mongolia's "Four Clean-ups" Movement in the early 1960s through research on regional archives filled the academic gap, which usually received much less attention than the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. Besides, by searching the local archives, his studies on the league and banner level are very valuable. [34]

Western and Chinese scholars who publish their works outside mainland China have produced the most critical research. These works covered various topics, from the CCP's early nationality theory and approach in the 1920s to the Cultural Revolution period. Earlier contributors to China's general minority issues after 1949 include

Sheng and the IMPRP Case), Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 1995.

[34] Rinqin writes extensively about Inner Mongolia's history after 1949. He also co-authored with Li Yuwei. Though somewhat inaccurate, the author's English titles are kept as the original to facilitate the search for his works.

Renqin, "Shilun ershi shiji liushi niandai neiemnggu shehui zhuyi jiaoyu yundong" (Four Spiritualization Movement of Inner Mongolia), *Mengguxue jikan,* 2011, No. 1, online journal, available at: https://www.sinoss.net/c/2018-06-13/548076.shtml. "1957 nian Neimenggu zhengfeng yundong yu minzu wenti" (A Rectification Campaign and Racial Problem in Inner Mongolia of 1957), *Mengguxue jikan*, 2016, No. 1, online journal, available at: https://www.sinoss.net/c/2018-06-13/548136.shtml. "Neimenggu zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang yundong chutan" (Examination of the Junior High School Graduate Lower Part Exercise in Inner Mongolia), *Mengguxue jikan*, 2015, No. 2, online journal, available at: https://www.sinoss.net/c/2018-06-13/548127.shtml. "Furunboiru mei bokuchiku-gyō chiiki ni okeru minshu kaikaku ni kansuru ichikōsatsu" (One Consideration About the Democratic Reform in Hulun-buir League Faith Cattle Breeding Area), *Mengguxue jikan*, 2014, No.3, online journal, available at: https://www.sinoss.net/c/2018-06-13/548118.shtml. "Uchimongoru ni okeru Seifūseisha undō ni tsuite: Horuchin uyokuzenki o jirei toshite" (A Research on Zhengfeng Zhengshe Movement in Inner Mongolia: A Case Study of Horqin Right Front Banner), *Mengguxue jikan*, 2015, No. 1, online journal, available at: https://www.sinoss.net/c/2018-06-13/548124.shtml.

Renqin and Li Yuwei, "Shilun zhalaite qi siqing yundong" (Tentatively on the "Four Clean-ups" Movement in Zhalaite County), *Mengguxue jikan*, 2013, No. 1, online journal, available at: https://www.sinoss.net/c/2018-06-13/548100.shtml. "Shilun neimenggu xumuye shehuizhuyi gaizao zhi tezheng" (The Animal Husbandry Socialist Transformation in Inner Mongolia), *Mengguxue jikan*, 2011, No. 2, online journal, available at: https://www.sinoss.net/c/2018-06-13/548079.shtml.

George Moseley,[35] June Dryer,[36] Walker Connor,[37] Wolfram Eberhard,[38] Lucian W. Pye,[39] and so forth. In addition, George Moseley's translation of a CCP pamphlet written by Zhang Zhiyi (Chang Chih-i),[40] a United Front Work Department cadre, largely helped the early research. Connor's *The National Question in Marxist-Leninist Theory and Strategy,* a pioneering study and one of the most cited works in the field of communist countries' engagement with nationalism, included a chapter discussing the evolution of the CCP's nationality policy. Nevertheless, Connor mostly focused on the pre-1949 period and only glanced quickly at the ethnopolitics after 1949. In the specific field of Inner Mongolia, scholars in the 1960s and 1970s have noticed the chaotic Cultural Revolution in this frontier region. William Heaton and Paul Hyer wrote a series of fantastic essays on post-1949 Inner Mongolia, providing a precise account of the Mao era's ethnopolitics. [41] These works brought the CCP's minority issues into the spotlight, opening up the academic virgin territory. Yet, due to the extreme isolation of China during the Cultural Revolution, the early research usually lacked adequate access to primary documents from the People's Republic of China. Many scholars used news or intelligence reports from Hong Kong, Taiwan and other countries; though valuable then, these reports were still insufficient and sometimes inaccurate.

[35] George Moseley, "China's Fresh Approach to the National Minority Question," *The China Quarterly*, 1965, No. 24, 15-27.

[36] June Dreyer, "China's Minority Nationalities: Traditional and Party Elites," Pacific Affairs, Vol. 43, No. 4, 1970-1917, 506-530; *China's Forty Millions: Minority Nationalities and National Integration in the People Republic of China*, Cambridge: Havard University Press, 1976.

[37] Connor, *The National Question in Marxist-Leninist Theory and Strategy*.

[38] Wolfram Eberhard, *China's Minorities: Yesterday and Today*, Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1982.

[39] Lucian W. Pye, "China: Ethnic Minorites and National Security," in Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan (eds), *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press: 1975, 489-514.

[40] George Moseley (ed and transl) *The Party and the National Question in China*, written by Chang Chih-i, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The M.I.T Press: 1966.

[41] The two authors also write widely on Mongolia (the MPR). Paul Hyer and William Heaton, "The Cultural Revolution in Inner Mongolia," *The China Quarterly*, 1968, No. 36, 114-128. Paul Hyer, Politics and Religion on China's Mongolian Frontier, *BYU Studies Quarterly*, 1965, Vol. 6, Issue 3, 163-170. William Heaton, "Inner Mongolia: The Haos and Huais of Chinese Policy Toward the Mongols," *Mongolian Studies*, Vol. 3, 1976, 97-115; "Chinese Communist Administration and Local Nationalism in Inner Mongolia", *The Mongolia Society Bulletin*, 1971, Vol.10, No.1, 11-47; "Inner Mongolia: 'Local Nationalism' and the Cultural Revolution," *The Mongolia Society Bulletin*, 1971, Vol. 10, No.2, 2-34.

As a result of China's opening up, more works on China's nationality question have been produced based on primary sources, including newspapers, journals, collections of documents, archives, memoirs, diaries, etc. German sinologist Thomas Heberer spends a chapter discussing the Cultural Revolution's disastrous impacts on national minorities.[42] Colin Mackerras, a leading Australian sinologist, has written several books on China's minorities since the 1990s.[43] However, these works often cover long periods of time and discuss China's minorities entirely, but are relatively weak in detail. There is an increasing number of specialised studies focusing on specific topics. The CCP's nationality theories, tactics, the role of the Comintern in the CCP's early nationality theory, the early practices, the refusal of the right to self-determination and the Soviet model of national republics and federalism after 1949, and other relevant topics are well-analysed with painstaking inspections of the CCP and the Soviet documents, thanks to the declassification of the documents after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Most of them focus on the pre-1949 period.[44] An interesting trend is that more scholars are attempting to understand China's ethnopolitics by exploring its cultural and historical traditions: an old empire, the

[42] Thomas Heberer, *China and its National Minorities: Autonomy or Assimilation?*New York: ME. Sharpe, 1989.

[43] Colin Mackerras, *China's Minorities: Integration and Modernization in the Twentieth Century*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994; *China's Ethnic Minorities and Globalisation*, London: Routledge-Curzon, 2003; *China's Minority Cultures: Identities and Integration Since 1912*, London: Longman Group, 1995.

[44] These works include Xiaoyuan Liu, *Frontier Passages: Ethnopolitics and the Rise of Chinese Communism, 1921-1945*, Washington, D. C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2004; Xiaoyuan Liu, *Recast All under Heaven: Revolution, War, Diplomacy, and Frontier China in the 20th Century*, New York and London: Continuum, 2010. Wang Ke, *Zhongguo: Cong tianxia dao minzu guoja* (China: From Under Heaven to National State), Taipei: Chengchi University Press, 2014, Chapter 10. James Leibold, "Constructing the Zhonghua Minzu: The Frontier and National Questions in Early 20th Century China," PhD Dissertation, University of Southern California, 2002; Leibold, *Reconfiguring Chinese Nationalism: How the Qing Frontier and its Indigenes Became Chinese*, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007. Linzhu Wang, *Self-determination and Minority Rights in China*, Leiden: Brill, 2019. It discusses China's self-determination theories and practices in the past and examines them from the perspective of international law. Besides, Xiong Fangliang's *Cong daqing dao minguo* also spends two chapters examining the Comintern's influence and the evolution of the CCP's nationality theory. Although his position is very official, and he is now an official of the State Ethnic Affairs Commission, the discussion still has good academic value. Elena Barabantseva, *Overseas Chinese, Ethnic Minorities and Nationalism: De-centering China*, London: Routledge, 2011, Chapter 2. This chapter focuses on the "socialist period" (1949 to the late 1970s). Although it does not examine many historical materials and probably a little bit over-relies on the early documents and some early research, this chapter theorises China's minorities and Overseas Chinese works under the United Front Work Department. It provides a new political theoretical analysis of China's minority policies.

concept of “Under Heaven”, the modern construction of a Chinese nation, and so on. In contrast, the earlier studies often placed China within a Marxist-Leninist framework. About the post-1949 period, Thomas S. Mullaney’s work on China’s Ethnic Classification Project *(minzu shibie*) is groundbreaking.[45] Taking Yunnan province as the main study case, Mullaney argues that the project was the centre of modern China’s ethnic questions, itself becoming a part of the history of each ethnicity. Moreover, by examining a large amount of evidence, he successfully challenges a common oversimplified view that arbitrarily assumes the CCP regime slavishly borrowed Soviet ethnicity/nationality theories. The Ethnic Classification Project was my knowledge blind spot; nevertheless, I agree with his argument that the CCP did not slavishly emulate the Soviet elder brother, but made many adjustments, which I will discuss in Chapter 3.

Regional studies of China’s minority nationalities are thriving. However, Western scholarship on Communist China has a stronger curiosity in the problematic rebellious Tibet and Xinjiang or the exotic southwestern nationalities.[46] They seem to pay less attention to the “boring” Inner Mongolia, except for the Cultural Revolution. Although many outstanding works have been written on Mongolian history and society since Owen Lattimore, studies related to Inner Mongolia remain insufficient in quantity. Nevertheless, fascinating works of history, political studies, and anthropology do exist. Christopher P. Atwood, a prominent Mongolian history scholar based in the US who speaks both Mongolian and Chinese, extensively scrutinises the primary sources in the two languages and writes from the perspective of the Mongol people. He thoroughly examines the history of Mongolian nationalism, the Inner Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party, the Comintern’s role in the 1920s, and the Eastern Mongols' interactions with the CCP after 1945.[47] Atwood points out

[45] Thomas S. Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation: Ethnic Classification in Modern China*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011.

[46] Bulag, *The Mongols at China’s Edge*, 2.

[47] Atwood is very prolific. I have to select the most relevant ones to my topic. Christopher P. Atwood, “A.I. Oshirov (c. 1901-1931): A Buriat Agent in Inner Mongolia”, in E. H. Kaplan & D. W. Whisenhunt (Eds), *Opuscula Altaica: Essays Presented in Honor of Henry Schwarz*, Bellingham, WA: East Asian Studies Press of Western Washington University, 1994, 44-93. *Young Mongols and Vigilantes in Inner* Mongolia’s *Interregnum Decades, 1911-1931*, Leiden: Brill, 2003. “The East Mongolian Revolution and Chinese Communism,” *Mongolian Studies*, vol. 15, The Nicholas Poppe Memorial Issue (1992), 7-83. “Sino-Soviet Diplomacy and the Second Partition of Mongolia,1945–1946,” in Stephen Kotkin and Bruce A. Elleman (eds), *Mongolia in the Twentieth Century: Landlocked Cosmopolitan*, New York: M. E.

that the CCP only had influence in the sinicised Mongolian regions, especially Hohhot Tumed, which fostered a group of the most loyal Mongol Communists. However, the CCP had little influence in the Mongolian-speaking regions. Thus, Atwood argues that the similarity to Chinese culture and society largely decided whether the Mongols would embrace the CCP.[48] This finding prompted me to consider the extent to which the CCP understood the non-Chinese speaking Mongols. Its nationality policy, for a long period, did have the support of the Tumed Mongols, represented by Ulanhu (Yun Ze). However, the CCP did not understand the Mongolian-speaking pastoral Mongols, and vice versa. It helped me to build the argument that the CCP's nationality policies were not successful even though it was able to incorporate the postwar period (in Chapter 1).

Historian Liu Xiaoyuan, who has widely and scrupulously explored published and unpublished documents from China, Russia, Taiwan, the UK, and the US, offers a profound discussion of the Inner Mongol autonomous movement from 1911 to 1950 and explains how it has been constrained by the complex international relations and rival great powers.[49] Liu argues that the post-war international conditions facilitated the CCP's triumph in incorporating Inner Mongolia's autonomous movement,[50] whereas its own nationality policy was ineffective and awkward when it encountered the Suiyuan Mongols during the Sino-Japanese War.[51] Liu's discerning arguments are the foundation of my first chapter, and my view is almost the same as his. Only on the land reform part, I tend to disagree with the details of some of his narratives.[52]

Sharpe, 1999, 137–161.

[48] Atwood, *Young Mongols and Vigilantes in Inner* Mongolia's *Interregnum Decades, 1911-1931*, 278-285.

[49] Xiaoyuan Liu, *Reins of Liberation: An Entangled History of Mongolian Independence, Chinese Territoriality, and Great Power Hegemony, 1911-1950*, Washington, D. C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2006.

[50] Liu, *Reins of Liberation,* 280.

[51] Liu, *Frontier Passages*, 129-139.

[52] For example, on Yun Ze (Ulanhu) 's land reform suggestion toward the Mongols in August 1946, Liu wrote: "Despite the CCPCC's approval, Yun's advice must have fallen on deaf ears among many of his Han colleagues, for, two years later, in both the eastern and western regions Inner Mongolia, the CCP's regional bureaus were still trying to correct exactly the same kind of "mistakes" that he had cautioned against." *Reins of Liberation*, 276. I will argue, the "mistakes" were not because the Han cadres did not listen to Yun's suggestions, but because the CCP CC imposed a radical land reform on all the regions it controlled. The cadres, including Yun Ze himself, had little choice but to obey.

Apart from scholars of history and political studies, several fantastic anthropological works have to be reviewed. Cambridge anthropologist David Sneath, an expert on Mongolia, provides an in-depth examination of the social and economic changes in pastoral Inner Mongolia, spanning the period from pre-1949 to the 1980s.[53] I've particularly benefited from his examination of the social and economic conditions in the pastoral areas before the Cultural Revolution (Chapter 3). The famine situation during the Great Leap Forward was largely unknown to many, and relevant materials are scarce. Sneath's research helps me understand the policies of that period and how the radical utopian GLF policies influenced the pastoral society.

The works of another Cambridge anthropologist, Uradyn E. Bulag, who was born in Inner Mongolia and writes widely about his homeland's history, culture and nationality question, are highly pertinent to my research.[54] Bulag frequently refers to Inner Mongolian politics after 1949 through the perspective and approach of anthropology, providing a penetrating insight into China's Mongolian frontier. I have benefited from many of his theories and arguments, like Ulanhu's dual identity, Mongol people's collaborative nationalism, which challenged the CCP's "Mongol traitor", and so on. One of his theories that helped me most in understanding history is "politicide," which he developed in collaboration with TJ Cheng and Mark Selden.[55] The three authors argue that the violence against the Mongols was a politicide, rather than genocide. The purge did not want to exterminate the Mongols but aimed at taming them and destroying their ability to challenge the regime. They shed new light on understanding China's nationality politics. I will discuss this theory in Chapter

[53] David Sneath, *Changing Inner Mongolia: Pastoral Mongolian Society and the Chinese State*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

[54] Bulag is fruitful on Mongolia-related issues. The works relevant to my research are *The Mongols at China's Edge: History and the Politics of National Unity*; "Independence as Restoration: Chinese and Mongolian Declarations of Independence and the 1911 Revolutions," *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, 2012, Vol. 10, Issue 52, No. 3, 1-16; "Mongolian Ethnicity and Linguistic Anxiety in China," *American Anthropologist*, 2003, Vol. 105, No. 4, 753-763. "Alter/native Mongolian Identity: From Nationality to Ethnic Group," in Perry and Selden (eds), *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance*, 261-287. Collaborative Nationalism: The Politics of Friendship on China's Mongolian Frontier, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, INC., 2010.

[55] TJ Cheng, Uradyn E. Bulag and Mark Selden, *A Chinese Rebel beyond the Great Wall: The Cultural Revolution and Ethnic Pogrom in Inner Mongolia*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2023.

6. Probably the only problem is that I tend to think the three authors are not clear about who did the politicide.

The atrocious Cultural Revolution in Inner Mongolia attracted the greatest attention from Western scholars and liberal Chinese researchers. The purge of the non-existent “Inner Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party” (IMPRP) alone at least persecuted 346,000 people and killed 16122. The victims were overwhelmingly Mongols.[56] In addition to the CCP-permitted publication *Kang Sheng yu neirendang yuan’an* (Kang Sheng and the IMPRP Case)[57], several outstanding publications exist. Wu Di (also known as Qi Zhi and Woody) published his research in Hong Kong and has been translated into English by Michael Schoenhals, a professor from Lund University, Sweden.[58] His book is the most comprehensive and profound on the Cultural Revolution in Inner Mongolia, based on many archival materials and

[56] It is the official statistics. Nevertheless, it might be an underestimation. The exact number of victims will never be known. “Zuigao renmin jiancha yuan tebie jiancha ting qisushu” (Indictment from the Special Procuratorate of the Supreme People’s Procuratorate), 2 November 1980, in Song Yongyi (ed), *Chinese Cultural Revolution Database*, cited as CCRD, Hong Kong: Universities Service Centre for China Studies Collection, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2022.

[57] Tumen and Zhu Dongli, *Kang Sheng yu neirendang yuanan*. It is one of the earliest books to systematically write about the cruel persecution of the Mongols during the Cultural Revolution. The author, Tumen, was a judge and a legal scholar. He used many archival documents and interviewed CCP cadres who used to work in Inner Mongolia. However, it is not academic research; it is closer to a non-fiction novel, which used to be a popular genre of writing about modern important events in the 1980s and 1990s in China. The book does not provide any references, and many details are imaginary. Besides, probably to avoid offending the authority, this book selects “China’s Beria” Kang Sheng, who has been officially denounced by the CCP, as the scapegoat. It is not true. Kang Sheng did have some words on the IMPRP case, but his role was not as severe as that of Inner Mongolia’s leaders.

Unfortunately, it has misled some of the Western scholars. For example, Frank Dikötter wrote: “Kang Sheng and Xie Fuzhi revisited the whole affair in early 1968, as they launched a campaign of terror against former members of the Mongolian People’s Party, set up by Ulanfu in the 1930s, who were now suspected of being spies and traitors.” Frank Dikötter, *The Cultural Revolution: A People’s History, 1962-1976*, New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016, 190. Dikötter’s reference was Tumen and Zhu Dongli, *Kang Sheng yu neirendang yuanan*. In fact, Kang Sheng and Xie Fuzhi’s role in the IMPRP case was trivial. Besides, Dikötter made several other mistakes here: the party’s name is not quite accurate; it was not founded by Ulanhu; and it was not founded in the 1930s.

[58] Qi Zhi (Wu Di, Woody), *Neimeng wenge shilu:“Minzu fenlie” yu “wasu” yundong* (Inner Mongolia’s Cultural Revolution: The “National Separatism” and the Purge), Hongkong: Tianxingjian chubanshe, 2010; The Cultural Revolution in Inner Mongolia: Extracts from an Unpublished History, edited and translated by Michael Schoenhals, Stockholm: Stockholm University, Center for Pacific Asia Studies, 1993. The Chinese version was not published until 2010, that’s why the English title said it was an “unpublished history”.

interviews with the victims and participants. Wu Di rebukes the CCP-sanctioned view that Kang Sheng was the main culprit of the IMPRP case. He argues that the top CCP leaders, including Mao Zedong and his comrades in arms, should be responsible for the horrible purge of the Mongols.[59] My point of view is not contradicted by his. Besides, the author was jailed in Inner Mongolia during the Cultural Revolution. His personal experience of the torture within the prison was valuable. In addition, a Japan-based Mongol cultural anthropologist, Yang Haiying, recorded the heinous atrocities by interviewing many of his compatriots.[60] Wang Lixiong, known for his writings on Tibet and Xinjiang, commented on Yang's book, "The Mongol people's suffering did not only come from the autocratic regime; meanwhile, a large number of ordinary Han people, along with the regime, committed exterminatory persecutions of the Mongols."[61] Kerry Brown, a British historian and former First Secretary of the UK Embassy in Beijing, analyses the characteristics of the language used in the Cultural Revolution and the purge of the IMPRP, which provides a new angle to understand the most chaotic period, 1967-1969, through the power of language. Although I'm not familiar with his research field, his analysis of the language by different Inner Mongolian leaders during the Cultural Revolution is illuminating. He points out that Teng Haiqing, the ruler of the

[59] Qi Zhi, *Neimeng wenge shilu*, 381-383.

[60] Yang Haiying, *Meiyou mubei de caoyuan: Mengguren yu wenge datusha* (The Grassland Without Tombstones: The Mongols and the Cultural Revolution Masscre), translated by Liu Yingbo and Liu Yanzi, New Taipei City: Gusa Press, 2014. The original version is Japanese. *Bonyo Naki Sogen: Uchimongoru ni okeru Bunkaidaikakumei, gyakusatsu no kiroku*, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2009.

Yang Haiying also has two other books about Inner Mongolia. His book on Ulanhu's self-determination dream is based on a large number of valuable documents he collected, although the interpretation is somewhat biased, not rigorous enough and has strong personal emotions. His work examining Mongol soldiers' participation in the 1959 Tibetan rebellion fills an academic gap and provides a fresh perspective on Mao's ethnopolitics. *Menggu qibing zai xizang huiwu riben dao: Meng-zang minzu de shidai beiju* (Mongol Chivalries Waving Japanese Swords in Tibet: The Mongol and Tibetan Peoples' Tragedy of the Times), translated by Jipuhulan, Taipei: Locus Publishing, 2017. The original version is Japanese, *Chibetto ni Mau Nihonto: Mongoru Kihei no Gendai-shi*, Tokyo: Bungeishunju, 2014; *Zai Zhongguo yu Menggu de jiafeng zhijian: Yige Menggu ren weijing de minzu zijue zhi meng* (Between China and Mongolia: A Mongol's Uncomplished Dream of Self-determination), translated by Chen Xinhui, Taipei: Gusa Press, 2018. The original version is Japanese, Chugoku to Mongoru no Hazamade: Uranfu no Minoranakatta Minzoku Jiketsu no Yume, Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2013.

[61] Wang Lixiong, "Suoyou hanren dou gai du de shu: Meiyou mubei de caoyuan" (The Book Every Han Should Read: The Grassland Without Tombstones), in Yang Haiying, *Meiyou mubei de caoyuan*, 5.

IMAR from 1967 to 1969, dismissed the issue of nationality, while other leaders paid more attention to it.[62] His findings make me realise that probably Teng did not intend to purge the Mongols, but as he claimed, he wanted to target “Ulanhu’s black line”, which I will explain in Chapter 6.

Overall, several superb publications have touched on the CCP’s engagement with Inner Mongolia. Nevertheless, how the nationality policy and ethnopolitics worked on the Mongolian land in Mao’s era, especially the relatively peaceful 1950s, is hardly scrutinised systematically. To better understand the minority question in Mao’s era, I believe an in-depth, meticulous analysis is still needed. Besides, many historical recordings have not been fully explored and examined. More details and stories can be discovered by probing into a large number of materials, official and unofficial, which are the foundation of a clear and accurate narrative of history. I hope my research can contribute a tiny part to comprehending the CCP’s nationality strategy in Inner Mongolia. However, my research also has limitations. Despite knowing the significance of archival research, I have never been able to access the archives in China, partly due to China’s harsh regulations on international travel from 2020 to 2022; during this period, I’ve constructed the major framework with other existing material. Besides, I also have my personal safety considerations.[63] Another limitation is that I do not know Mongolian, which limits my understanding of Inner Mongolian politics and history and, surely, limits access to more information. If further research can be done, I hope these limitations can be solved.

A Note on Sources

Despite authoritarian rule and rigid censorship, the Chinese authorities contributed greatly to the compilation of history. Circumspect Chinese historians have collected, proofread, annotated, and published a vast number of materials from the CCP

[62] Kerry Brown, *The Purge of the Inner Mongolian People’s Party in the Chinese Cultural Revolution, 1967-69: A Function of Language, Power and Violence*, Kent: Global Oriental, 2006.

[63] I visited the Inner Mongolia Archive in Hohhot in January 2020. I was told that I needed to submit a research proposal with my university’s permission stamp if I wanted to search and read the unpublished documents. I am not sure whether my research will cause the government’s suspicion because it largely involves “sensitive” issues. China’s censorship and ideological control are more draconian under Xi’s rule. Because of my lack of bravery, I have to choose a safer way.

Central Committee level to the county banner level, covering various topics of different regions and periods. This category includes policy documents, conference records, news reports, speeches, essays, letters, diaries, etc. Although they have been pre-selected and censored before publication, they have extremely high and irreplaceable historical value. Nevertheless, even senior CCP leaders' essays and speeches are still subject to censorship after being pre-selected. An excerpt of Ulanhu's speech, first published in 1990, contained concrete death numbers and death rates in several places, a dreadful result of the violent land reform. Yet these statistics quietly disappeared in the 1998 and 2013 versions, even though more content is included, and they are much longer than the 1990 excerpt.[64] This is by no means the only censorship I discovered while exploring the documents. Moreover, if the relevant person is still alive, he or she might demand to edit the original record before the publication. Hu Zhaoheng, a cadre working in Inner Mongolia from 1945 to the early 1960s, was not satisfied that a part of his diary was not viewed by himself before its publication. He subsequently selected and edited his diary and noted, "Due to subject and object reasons, they can not be published as the original yet."[65]

Another important category in the PRC is memoirs. Senior CCP leaders often write their personal memoirs after retiring. In addition to long books, many short memoirs have been collected by *wenshi ziliao* (Literature and Historical Materials), and the same genre concentrating on the CCP history, often under the name of *dangshi wenji* (collected essays of the Party history), *dangshi ziliao* (materials of the Party history), *geming huiyilu* (revolutionary memoirs), etc. Among them, *wenshi ziliao* has relatively high historical values. Initiated by Zhou Enlai in 1959, under the instruction of the People's Political Consultative Conference, *wenshi ziliao* aims to record the local history through first-hand personal narrations of celebrities and elites. Simultaneously, it tries to maintain the United Front, as a significant number of contributors are non-CCP elites and celebrities. The drawbacks are notable, as Renno Ryan Weiner points out that content is "obviously politicised and carefully

[64] See Chapter 2 footnote 105.

[65] Hu Zhaoheng, "Qianyan" (Preface), in "Hu Zhaoheng riji zhaichao (1946 4.1-12.31)", Xing'an meng dangshi ziliao zhengji bangongshi (ed) *Xing'an geming shihua* 2, Hohhot: 1988, 173.

selected" [66] and Martin Fromm argues it is a state project of "mobilising memory for the consolidation of Party-led national reintegration".[67] Nevertheless, *wenshi ziliao* indeed keeps the memory and the history from non-official personal perspectives. For instance, a Mongol elite, Dawa-Ochir, from the Buyanmandukhu faction of the Eastern Mongolian camp, recorded the CCP's contact with Eastern Mongols from his faction's standpoint.[68] Buyanmandukhu faction was often considered "conservative" or even "reactionary" by the CCP side, but Dawa-Ochir's retrospective accounts indeed supplement this period of history from a non-CCP point of view. In contrast, most cadres' memoirs are packed with blatant banal propagandistic cliché, yet, sometimes, they still honestly leak out fascinating details.

Despite not being published in the post-Mao era, many "secret" and "internal" Party-state materials were disclosed in piles and preserved during the Cultural Revolution. Some were printed in the Red Guard newspapers; some were released by the authorities or the rebels and activists for public criticism. "For the first time," wrote Frank Dikötter, "everybody could obtain a glimpse into the inner workings of the party."[69] Interestingly, many of Liu Shaoqi's speeches were never published in official publications after his vindication, but they were collated in a 1967 book, *China's Khrushchev Li Shaoqi Counter Revolutionary Revisionist Speeches*.[70] Other cadres, like Ulanhu,[71] are also in the same situation. A small number of them can still be purchased from second-hand bookstores. Fortunately, overseas scholars, especially the political dissidents of the PRC, with enormous courage, are dedicated to

[66] Benno Ryan Weiner, "The Chinese Revolution on the Tibetan Frontier: State Building, National Integration and Socialist Transformation, Zeku (Tsékhok) County, 1953-1958," PhD Dissertation, Columbia University, 2012, 48.

[67] Martin Fromm, "Producing History through 'Wenshi Ziliao': Personal Memory, Post-Mao Ideology, and Migration to Manchuria," PhD Dissertation, Columbia University, 2010, 1.

[68] Dawaaosier (Dawa-ochir) "Wode jingli jianwen" (My Experiences and What I have Seen), in *Neimenggu wenshi ziliao* 31, Hohhot: Neimenggu renmin chubanshe, 1988, 104-185.

[69] Dikötter, *The Cultural Revolution*, 71.

[70] Renmin chubanshe ziliaoshi (ed) *Pipan ziliao: Zhongguo de Heluxiaofu Liu Shaoqi fangeming xiuzhengzhuyi yanlun ji* (Materials for Criticism: China's Khrushchev Li Shaoqi Counter Revolutionary Revionist Speeches), Renmin chubanshe: 1967. It is a three-volume collection.

[71] I fetched two issues of *Ducaoji: Wulanfu fangeming yanlun xuanbian* (Poisonous Weed: Selection of Ulanhu's Counter-revolutionary Speeches) and one issue *Wulanfu fangeming xiuzhengzhuyi yanlun zhaibian* (Selection of Ulanhu's Counter-revolutionary Revisionist Speeches). They are Red Guard pamphlets. Far more such materials have been obtained by arduous scholars.

collecting and re-publishing them. Song Yongyi, a Chinese American scholar, together with other scholars, has collected, compiled and published four databases for PRC history and other document collections.[72] Song was arrested by the Chinese authorities in 1999 when he was collecting Cultural Revolution materials. He was imprisoned for half a year in the name of illegal acquisition of "the state's secrets" and "documents not allowed to leave the country". In addition, Yang Haiying has been publishing his collection of Inner Mongolian materials in Japan since 2009, *The Genocide of Mongolians Related Basic Materials*.[73] Now, the collection has 14 volumes. Besides, some brave people recorded the cruel politics and history under the dictatorship in their own ways. Bayantai wrote *Wasu zainan shilu* (Records of the Wasu Catastrophe)[74]. The book was not formally published but can be found on the Internet. The author was a Mongol rebel leader during the Cultural Revolution and was accepted by the Inner Mongolia Revolutionary Committee. He had access to many internal documents. The book contains a large number of shocking and extremely brutal details and provides a Mongol perspective on the catastrophic purge. These scholars contributed tremendously to the studies of modern Chinese politics and history.

Memoirs published outside China, without the constraint of ideology, are much bolder and more honest in writing about the Mao era's politics. Two important memoirs about Inner Mongolia's Cultural Revolution need to be addressed. Gao Shuhua and Cheng Tiejun published a detailed memoir from the perspective of a

[72] They are Song Yongyi (ed), *Chinese Cultural Revolution Database* (cited as CCRD) Hong Kong: Universities Service Centre for China Studies Collection, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2022. *Chinese Anti-Rightist Campaign Database* (cited as CARCD), Hong Kong: Universities Service Centre for China Studies Collection, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2022. *Database of Chinese Great Leap Forward and Great Famine* (cited as DGLF), 3rd edition, Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies at Harvard University: 2022. *Database of the Chinese Political Campaigns in the 1950s: From Land Reform to the State-Private Partnership*, *1949-1956* (cited as LRSPP)*,* 2nd edition, Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies at Harvard University, 2022. Other collections, for example, Song Yongyi (ed), *Fanyou juemi wenijan: Qingkuang jianbao (zhengfeng zhuanji) Huibian*, Mirrorbooks: 2015, Vol. 1-12, e-book.

[73] Yang Haiying (ed), *Mongoruiin Jenosaido ni kansuru Kiso Shiryō* (The Genocide of Mongolians Related Basic Materials), cited as MJNKKS, Tokyo: Fukyosha Publishing.

[74] Bayantai, *Wasu zainan shilu* (Records of the Wasu Catastrophe), non-published e-version. This book was initially released under the author's pseudonym, Alatengdelihai, and collected by *Nanmenggu renquan xinxi zhongxin* (The Southern Mongolian Human Rights Information Centre). Available at: https://www.smhric.org/IMPRP.pdf.

Chinese rebel leader. Gao, one of the most well-known rebels in Inner Mongolia, wrote about how he became one of the earliest rebels, the conflicts between different Red Guard factions, his political participation and his reflections on the Cultural Revolution and China's politics.[75] Cheng Tiejun (also TJ Cheng, Cheng Tijie) is Gao Shuhua's student and friend. He published his memoir in English in 2023, with Uradyn E. Bulag and Mark Selden. Cheng recalls his experience as a rebel, and the three authors supply Cheng's narrative with accurate historical facts through diligent research.

The CCP and Inner Mongolia: Outline

When talking about "separatist" or "independent" movements in China, it's the label of Tibet and Xinjiang; probably, Hong Kong is also added to the list now. It rarely reminds people of Inner Mongolia. In fact, many Inner Mongols also dreamed of getting rid of China's control and joining Outer Mongolia from the 1910s to the 1940s. Ironically, although the CCP now fiercely condemns and suffocates any independent movements, it used to be the most vocal advocate of non-Han nations' right to self-determination in the 1920s, at least in theory.[76] Some scholars may argue that the CCP's embrace of self-determination was under the pressure of its major funder and superior, the Comintern. I agree with another argument, represented by Liu Xiaoyuan, that many early Chinese Communists were genuine idealists and genuinely sympathetic to the independence of weaker nations.[77] An

[75] Gao Shuhua and Cheng Tiejun, *Neimeng wenge fenglei: Yiwei zaofanpai lingxiu de koushu shi* (The Tempest and Thunder of Inner Mongolia Cultural Revolution: An Oral History of a Rebel Leader), New York: Mingjing chubanshe, 2007.

[76] The CCP had expressed its endorsement of self-determination in numerous places. For example, "Tibet, Mongolia, Xinjiang, Qinghai and others, their relations with China proper should be up to their national self-determination.""Zhongguo gongchandang danggang caoan (zhailu)" (Draft Constitution of the CCP), June 1923, in Zhonggong zhongyang tongzhanbu (ed), *Minzu wenti wenxian huibian* (Collected Documents of National Questions), cited as MWWH, Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 1991, 22. In January 1929, the Fourth Army, led by Mao Zedong and Zhu De, declared one of its political aims: "Unify China; recognise the right to self-determination of the Manchu, Mongol, Hui, Tibetan, Miao and Yao nations.""Zhongguo Gongchandang hongsijun jundangbu 'gongchandang xuanyan'" (The Communist Manifesto of the Military-Party Department of the 4th Army of the CCP Red Army), January 1929, in MWWH, 97.

[77] The former argument can be seen in Wang Ke, *Xiaoshi de "guomin": Jindai Zhongguo "minzu" huayu yu shaoshu zuqun de guojia rentong* (The Disappearing "Nationals": Contemporary China's "Nationality" Discourse and the Ethnic Minorities' National

interesting example is that Mao Zedong strongly supported the disintegration of a big China before he joined the CCP.[78] However, during the Sino-Japanese War, the CCP gradually abandoned its previous pro-non-Han people's stance and shifted to Chinese nationalism. It still harshly denounced the ruling Party KMT's "great-Han chauvinism", yet it no longer emphasised self-determination, and meanwhile, it dismissed national minority nationalism as "parochial nationalism".[79]The CCP realised that they could not risk being viewed as an unpatriotic political party which intended to split China by the overwhelming majority of Han. They must demonstrate their patriotism and become defenders of China's territorial integrity. Chinese (or Han) nationalism was the most powerful weapon with which to enlist support.[80]

The first chapter will discuss the Inner Mongolian autonomous movements from 1945 to 1947. Scholars like Atwood, Liu Xiaoyuan, etc., have explored this topic well. Thus, this chapter will function as a background information part of the whole thesis: how Inner Mongolia became the first autonomous region of the CCP's regime, and what the origin of the Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party was. After the Japanese surrender in 1945, Inner Mongol political elites wanted to unify Inner and Outer Mongolia. The leader of the Mongolian People's Republic, Choibalsan, also

Identification), Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2017, 124-132. James Leibold, *Reconfiguring Chinese Nationalism*, 81-88. On the other hand, Liu Xiaoyuan argues that the early Chinese Communists regarded China's system as suppressive and were sympathetic to, and shared a similar feeling with, the national minorities' resistance to China. Moreover, the Soviet model encouraged the revolutionaries to utilise national minorities' resistance, which would contribute to overthrowing the current ruling regime. Afterwards, a federalist formula could be adopted to unify the country. Liu, *Reins of Liberation*, 81-82.

[78] Mao said, "I'm against a great Republic of China…China's twenty-two provinces, three special districts and two frontier regions, that is, twenty-seven places in total, should become twenty-seven states." Mao Zedong, "Hunan jianshe de genben wenti: Hunan gongheguo" (The Fundamental Question of Hunan's Construction: Hunan Republic), 3 September 1920, in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi and zhonggong Hunan shengwei 'Mao Zedong zaoqi wengao' bianjizu (ed) *Mao Zedong zaoqi wengao: 1912. 6-1920.11*(Mao Zedong's early writtings: 1912.6-1920.11), Changsha: Hunan chubanshe, 1990, 503-504. Mao also expressed the anti-unification and each province's self-determination in other earlier works, such as "Fandui tongyi" (Anti-Unification), 10 October 1920, 530-534. "Dapo meiyou jichu de dazhongguo, jianshe xuduo de Zhongguo, cong Hunan zuoqi" (Break Baseless China and Build More Chinas, Starting from Hunan), 5 September 1920, 507-509.

[79] Liu, *Frontier Passages*, 152-153.

[80] Many scholars, such as Xiaoyuan Liu, James Leibold, Linzhu Wang, etc, have fully discussed the CCP's early theory and the change of position on the national question during the Sino-Japanese War.

had the ambition of annexing Inner Mongolia. However, Stalin did not want Choibalsan to achieve his great Mongolian dream. Having to reject the Inner Mongols' petition, Choibalsan instructed the Inner Mongols to cooperate with the CCP. The elites from the eastern part of Inner Mongolia did not follow Choibalsan's advice immediately, as pro-KMT factions existed within them. They established an independent Eastern Mongolian People's Autonomous Government, a self-governing independent body. Nevertheless, these Mongol politicians soon realised their power was not strong enough and had to cooperate with other Chinese political forces, which meant the KMT or the CCP. The leftists among the Mongol elites were pro-CCP: Their history can be traced to the Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party established in 1925. The Eastern Mongolian politicians' choice was the CCP. The CCP's Mongol members, Ulanhu (Yun Ze) and his comrades, played a key role in incorporating independent Mongol political powers into the CCP system. In the spring of 1947, despite the Eastern Mongolian elites attempting to strive for more autonomous power, they were defeated by the CCP. On 1 May 1947, the CCP's first autonomous region, the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, was established. This chapter will argue that the CCP's incorporation of Inner Mongolia was largely owed to the international situation rather than a triumph of its nationality policy and ethnopolitics.

Chapter 2 will discuss the democratic land reform in Inner Mongolia (mainly Eastern part) during the civil war from 1946 to 1949. The CCP's land reform policy was not consistent. When it felt it was more necessary to maintain the United Front, it generously gave the Mongols, also "the target of the United Front", preferential treatment. When it thought mobilising people to support its war machine was more important, it would adopt a nationality-blind approach and turn to its familiar class struggle. Then, a radical land policy would be implemented. It caused widespread disasters among the Mongols. Ulanhu, the head of the autonomous region, in fact, had little freedom to pursue a lenient reform policy but had to obey the Party's will. The official narrative and many scholars praised Ulanhu's "Three Nos and Two Benefits" for pastoral areas democratic reform; this chapter, however, will argue that Ulanhu's model was not formally raised until the CCP CC realised the disastrous consequences of the radical land reform and decided to change, even though he wanted to adopt a more moderate approach. I will explain this decision-making

process in the CCP's vertical power structure. Fortunately, the CCP learned the lesson. Ulanhu's model was approved by the higher authorities and was implemented in the regions going through democratic reforms after the spring of 1948 and after 1949.

Chapter 3 focuses on the early 1950s. The paucity of studies on this period suggests many scholars believe it was a peaceful but boring age. Indeed, compared to the turbulent late 1950s, which was under the shadow of the Anti-Rightist Campaign and the Great Leap Forward, the early 1950s were relatively stable. Nevertheless, it buried the seed of dissatisfaction. National minorities were disappointed when the CCP broke its uplifting promises of self-determination and a federation. In the 1950s, learning from the Soviet experience, the Party promoted nationality equality. Nevertheless, even though the affirmative policies were thriving, the Mongols and other national minorities still felt their rights were eroded. My contribution is to discuss these lesser-known facts by examining a large amount of newspapers, documents, speeches, and so on. The Mongols complained about the incredibly high percentage of Han on Mongolian land, the rapid decline of the Mongolian language, the fact that national elites had no power and the loss of pasture land due to Han cultivation. Arguably, the first decade of Mao was the most "pro-minority" period of the Chairman's 27-year rule of China. However, the interests of minority nationalities must give way to the CCP's higher priorities, which can be explained within Terry Martin's framework of soft-line and hard-line policies. That is why even during the most affirmative period, the Mongols still felt ignored.

Chapter 4 will move to the impact of collectivisation on minority nationalities; besides examining the Mongol people's struggles, it will also look at other minority groups' problems and resistance. During the Hundred Flowers Campaign, an ephemeral liberal period, their sharp criticisms of the CCP broke out, concentrating on criticising the CCP's assimilation. The voice of demanding self-determination reappeared. Enraged by the disobedience of the minority nationalities, the CCP launched a Campaign against "local nationalism". By analysing the views and the violent condemnations of the Mongol "rightists", we could better understand the worries of national minorities, as well as the CCP's fear. Meanwhile, the Party also launched an anti-localism campaign in provinces where the Han people were in the majority. It demonstrated that Mao would never allow any local authorities to deviate from the

will of the Centre. It can be argued that in a highly centralised state[81] like China, the central authorities are antagonistic to local autonomy[82], even if it is merely a slight adjustment of the Centre's policy. In Mao's party-state China, the decision-making power was monopolised by the highest party authority, the CCP Central Committee. Party secretaries are the most powerful local-level leaders. Local authorities, no matter a province or a so-called "autonomous region", were required to obey the Party's disciplines and will.

The fifth chapter will examine Inner Mongolia during the catastrophic Great Leap Forward. Mao demanded his utopian plan be implemented throughout China. Thus, he rebuked Ulanhu's emphasis on Inner Mongolia's special nationality condition. Having to obey the Chairman, Inner Mongolia also suffered from the ridiculously radical policies. However, I noticed that Inner Mongolia did not experience the dreadful famine that other provinces did, which killed approximately 30 million people. This section will argue that, in addition to Ulanhu and his colleagues' more practical attitude, Inner Mongolia's natural conditions, in fact, played a significant role, which is largely overlooked in relevant scholarship. The second part of this chapter will examine the political conflicts between Ulanhu and his superiors at the

[81] A centralised political system, summarised by Paul D. Hutchcroft, can have the following features: 1) the central authorities appoints the local officials; 2) lack of local-level political participation; 3) lack of local-level legislative bodies; 4) no local leaders to confront the central authorities; 5) decision-making body at the national level is concentrated in the executive (if there is a legislative organ, it has little power); 6) if a legislative body exists, it is established as part of a parliamentary structure, rather than a presidential one (probably given in a centralised system, the parliamentary or legislative body has much less power); 7) the central authorities appoints a big proportion of national-level law makers; 8) a proportional representation electoral system, and a national pollical party decides the candidates; 9) all political parties are national rather than regional, and they can impose top decisions national wide; 10) bureaucracies have the protection of the system. Hutchcroft, "Centralization and Decentralization in Administration and Politics: Assessing Territorial Dimensions of Authority and Power," *Governance: An International Journal of Policy and Administration*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 2001, 37.
Using this framework, we can see that Mao's China has most of these features. Although China has the People's Congress (national and local) as its legislative body in theory, it has little power. China does have "8 democratic political parties" besides the CCP, but they have little influence over China's politics.

[82] The definition of local autonomy varies from scholar to scholar. Gordon L. Clark proposed two principles, which have been widely cited by social scientists, to measure autonomy: immunity and initiative. Immunity refers to the ability of local governments to resist the authority of higher authorities. Initiative refers to the competence of local governments to make laws and regulate the activities of residents. Gordon L. Clark, "A Theory of Local Autonomy," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 74, No. 2, 195-208. 195.

North China Bureau. Ulanhu's inactiveness in class struggle and his protection of Inner Mongolia's interests enraged the North China Bureau's cadres, which was why Ulanhu was toppled at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution.

The last chapter will examine Inner Mongolia's Cultural Revolution. As mentioned in the literature review section, scholars have discussed the atrocities against the Mongols in detail; this chapter did not contribute new historical facts. Nevertheless, I would like to contribute to the topic with my arguments. This chapter will discuss the concept of "politicide", which argues that the purge aimed to tame the Mongols rather than exterminate them. I agree with this theory, but I would like to humbly add that we probably need to be clearer on who the actors of the politicide were. During the research, I was personally perplexed by why the target of the purge, or the politicide, was not other minority groups like Tibetans, Uyghurs or Kazakhs. Then I realised that the actor of the politicide was not the Central authorities. The Mongols were surely one of the most "obedient" non-Han groups nationwide. However, on their own land, their loyalty was dubious in the eyes of their Han neighbours. The horrendous persecution was a move by the local authorities and grassroots, rather than the central authorities. Thus, when China's relations with the Soviet Union and Mongolia dramatically deteriorated, the Mongols were considered potential traitors. Besides, I would like to briefly discuss the Cultural Revolution in Tibet and Xinjiang as comparison, and argue that several unique political situations in Inner Mongolia "facilitated" the purge.

Due to my limited ability, this thesis cannot cover all the significant aspects of Inner Mongolia but must only select several of the most notable political events to examine. It aims to draw attention, however slight, to the "model autonomous region" myth and, moreover, to the inherent flaws in China's nationality policy. The centralised system of Mao's regime inevitably demanded that all its subjects give way to the will of the central authorities. The interest of minority nationalities was only considered when the CCP thought it might reduce the resistance to the policies. However, when the Party, or Mao Zedong, was determined to impose its orders on every single corner of China, Minority people's interests would be abandoned in no time. China's autonomy system was only in name, and no one was permitted to challenge Mao's decisions. Returning to the initial argument at the beginning of the introduction, this thesis aims to highlight that, if one considers only the regime's

stability, the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region is indeed the “model”. But if considering the minority’s demand, it is far from successful. Such a model can hardly be implemented in other regions, where non-Han people are still the majority.

Chapter 1 Great Powers and Inner Mongolian Autonomous Movements: 1945-1947

On 20 December 1935, in the name of Mao Zedong, the "Chinese Soviet Central Government's Declaration to the Inner Mongolian People" (1935 Declaration in short) was announced. The CCP proclaimed:

> We believed the previous six leagues, twenty-four tribes, forty-nine banners, the two regions Chahar and Tumed, and the whole territory of the three special banners in Ningxia, no matter having set counties or still steppe, all should return to Inner Mongolian people as the territory of the Inner Mongolian nation. Cancel the names and the actual administrations of Suiyuan, Chahar and Rehe. …
>
> We believe only the Inner Mongolian people themselves have the right to solve all their internal problems… Meanwhile, the Inner Mongolian nation can organise themselves freely. It has the right, based on the principle of autonomy, to organise its own life and establish its own government. It has the right to build federal relations with other nations and has the right to run separately.[1]

This declaration was regarded as the most crucial document by the Inner Mongols. Mao Zedong promised the Mongols' rights to independence. What the declaration fulfilled in the 1950s was the unification of the Inner Mongolian regions. Suiyuan, Chahar and Rehe, which were deliberately set to divide Inner Mongolian lands, were cancelled under the CCP's regime. But the promise of the most important political right, the right to run separately, was merely lip service. Instead of gaining independence, Inner Mongolia became the first "autonomous region" of the CCP regime through a series of negotiations, persuasions, and compromises from 1945 to 1947. The result disappointed the Inner Mongol elites who had been ardently pursuing the reunification of Inner and Outer Mongolia or the independence of Inner Mongolia from China.

[1] "Zhonghua suweiai zhongyang zhengfu dui Neimenggu renmin xuanyan" (The Declaration of the Chinese Soviet Central Government to the Inner Mongolian people), in MWWH, 322-324.

When Mao published this declaration in 1935, his real intention was to ensure the survival of the CCP. Due to Chiang Kai-shek's encirclement campaigns, the CCP had to abandon its Jiangxi base, go through the arduous Long March, and relocate to Yan'an. At least Mao wanted to convince the Inner Mongols not to be the CCP's enemy if they were unwilling to be the Party's ally. The declaration divulged: "Our Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army guerrilla have no intention to attack the steppe absolutely. But please do not allow Chinese warlords or the Japanese imperialist army to attack us passing the steppe, which would accelerate your own extinction."[2] However, when the Japanese surrendered in 1945, the CCP possessed a formidable army and was determined to seize at least parts of power from the KMT regime, although it had not yet planned to replace the KMT as the new ruler of China. It had less motivation to compromise with the Mongols.

This chapter will briefly examine the background of the separation between the two Mongolian countries and then discuss a series of external factors in the post-war period that prevented Inner Mongolia from getting rid of China's yoke. They were the Yalta Conference, the negotiation between China and the Soviet Union, the incoming America-Soviet confrontation and so on. This chapter will then examine the independent or autonomous movements in Inner Mongolia and how the CCP incorporated these forces into its regime, particularly the relatively influential Eastern Mongol group.

Strictly speaking, this chapter's main argument is the same as that of Western historians, like Liu Xiaoyuan and Christopher Atwood. I don't think I have contributed new arguments to this topic. I have to "reinvent the wheel", but probably provided some different historical details. However, if we want to examine the CCP's nationality policy after 1949, the history of the IMAR, and the purge of the IMPRP during the Cultural Revolution, this period of history could not be avoided. Chapter 1 will lay a foundation for the subsequent discussions.

Liu and Atwood have highlighted that the Soviet Union played a critical role in preventing the MPR from unifying with its southern cousins. Liu went further, pointing out that the lack of interest of America in the Inner Mongolian political arena made the independent movements disadvantaged. I would not challenge their arguments. I

[2] Ibid.

agree that without the involvement of great powers, the Inner Mongolian autonomous movements were doomed to fail initially. For the CCP, its success in Inner Mongolia was not due to its nationality policies as the Party's official narrative always brags about. Rather, the CCP benefited from the interwoven international and domestic politics. Also, the Mongols, especially the Eastern Mongols, had to choose the CCP.

A Short Background of Mongolia

The division of Inner and Outer Mongolia in the Qing Dynasty's official documents was both geographic and political. Roughly, the division was the Gobi Desert. However, adopting "inner" and "outer", rather than "southern" and "northern", had explicit, empire-centred political meanings. The usage of "inner (*nei*)" was because the southern part of Mongolia's submission to the Manchu was earlier,[3] which meant it had more intimate relations with the Qing court. At the end of 1911, the northern part of Mongolia declared independence from the Qing empire, though from 1915 to 1919, it was forced to renounce its independent status and admit China's suzerainty. The new regime was theocratic, with Jebtsundamba Khutuktu (Mongolia's most important Buddhist leader; later he was titled Bogd Khan) as its monarch. 35 of the 49 banners of Inner Mongolia supported the Urga (now Ulaanbaatar) government.[4]

[3] The Qing government set two administrative systems in Mongolia: *Neishu Menggu* (Mongolia directly under the rule of the imperial court), where the court sent officials to rule; *Waifan Menggu* (Outlying Mongolia, indirectly ruled by the imperial court), where Mongol princes could keep hereditary positions to govern their land and had more autonomy, although the Qing government also sent officials to preside over them. *Waifan Menggu* (Outlying Mongolia) was further divided into *Nei* (inner) Jasagh *Menggu* and *Wai* (outer) Jasagh Menggu (Jasagh or Zasag, meaning ruler or authority in Mongolian). Huhbator Borjigin, "The History and the Political Character of the Name of Nei Menggu (Inner Mongolia)," *Inner Asia*, 6 (2004), 63-64. Inner *Jasagh Mengu* had 6 leagues with 49 banners; Outer Jasagh included 4 leagues with 86 banners of Khalkha; it also included tribes of Dörbet and Torghut in western Mongolia and several tribes in Xinjiang and Qinghai. See Wuyunbilige and Bailadugeqi (eds) *Menggu shi gangyao* (An Outline of Mongolian History), Hohhot: Neimenggu renmin Chubanshe, 2006, 201-202.
In some documents, the *Nei Jasagh* was also called *Nei Menggu* (Inner Mongolia), and the *Wai Jasagh* was called *Wai Menggu* (Outer Mongolia).
The names of Inner and Outer Mongolia were frequently used in the Qing Dynasty's court documents after the 1870s. Nevertheless, one should notice that the territory of today's Inner Mongolia, which also incorporated parts of *Neishu Menggu*, was larger than *Nei Jasagh Menggu*.

[4] Makoto Tachibana found that some of the Inner Mongol nobles actually expressed a dual submission: on one hand they submitted to Yuan Shikai's government; on the other hand, they also submitted to the Bogd Khan's regime. These nobles waited to observe how the

However, Inner Mongolia neither joined the fledgling Mongolian regime nor gained independence, but stayed in the newly born Republic of China. There were several reasons explaining this failed reunification of Mongolia: The Outer Mongolian army was defeated by Yuan Shikai's troop (the president of the Republic of China from 1912 to 1915) when it marched to Inner Mongolia; Yuan promised to guarantee the Mongol princes and nobles privileges and won over them finally;[5] some Mongolian princes were sinicised and reluctant to have conflicts with China;[6] Russia and Japan needed to restore the balance of power in Northeastern Asia, while Eastern part of Inner Mongolia belonged to the Japanese sphere of interest, making Russia hard to interfere;[7] the complicated interactions in 1911 and 1912 among the great powers pushed the Inner Mongol princes stood together with the Chinese and missed their best opportunity for secession.[8]

During the Republican period, Inner Mongolia was an imprecise geographical concept rather than an administrative region with a settled border and territory. Most parts of Inner Mongolia belonged to Suiyuan, Chahar, Rehe, Fengtian and Heilongjiang in the 1920s. (Rehe, Fengtian and Heilongjiang would become territories of Manchukuo in the 1930s).[9] Owen Lattimore wisely pointed out that such

situation would develop. See Makoto Tachibana, "The 1911 Revolution and 'Mongolia': Independence, Constitutional Monarchy, or Republic", *Journal of Contemporary East Asia Studies*, 2014, 3:1, 82-86.

[5] Dalizhabu (Darijab) (ed), *Menggushi gangyao* (An Outline History of Mongol), Beijing: Zhongyangminzudaxue Chubanshe, 2011, 210-211.

[6] C. R. Bawden, *The Modern History of Mongolia*, London: Cox&Wyman Ltd, 1968, 199-200.

[7] Owen Lattimore, *The Mongols of Manchuria*, London: George Allen& Unwin, 1935, 123.

[8] Robert B. Valliant, "Inner Mongolia, 1912: The Failure of Independence," *Mongolian Studies*, Vol. 4,1977, 57.

[9] Today's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region also incorporates parts of ROC's Gansu province, later Ningxia province, where today's Alxa League is located. The administrative division in the Republican period changed often. In 1929, Ningxia province was separated from Gansu, the location of which was not today's Ningxia. Alxa League's Alashan Banner and Ejine Banner were considered *Taoxi* Mongolia, neither Outer nor Inner Mongolia. In the republican period, the concept of Inner Mongolia usually did not contain Alashan and Ejine. According to Ulanhu's account, in February 1949, Mao Zedong told him, "(Let's) incorporate Alashan and Ejine to you. Because they are also the places where the Mongols recuperate and multiply for hundreds of years." Because of Mao's words, Alashan and Ejine, in today's Alxa League, became a part of the IMAR. Liu Jieyu, "Huifu Neimenggu lishi de benlai mianmao: Jiu neimenggu zizhiqu xingzheng quyu de huading jishu yuan guojia fuzhuxi wulanfu de jishu" (Restoring the original looking of Inner Mongolian history: about the administrative division of IMAR a record of the former vice-president of China Ulanhu's recalling and narrating), in *Neimenggu wenshi ziliao* 50 (cited as NWZ), Hohhot: 1997, 259.

divisions had been done for a purpose. First, it prevented the Mongols from being united. Second, all the provinces encompassed a substantial part of Chinese territory, with only a marginal area of Mongol territory. It facilitated the absorption of the Mongol territory by the Chinese territory.[10] A book published in 1934 even claimed that "the name Inner Mongolia, in fact, should no longer exist. But Mongols are born and live here, so customarily, people still use the name of the ethnicity as the name of the geography."[11]

Contemporary Mongolian nationalism was burgeoning in the late 19th century, largely due to the influx of Chinese immigrants. In the past, the Qing Dynasty segregated its Han subjects and the Mongols, preserved Mongol nomadic economy and culture, and tightly controlled the cultivation of land in Mongolia.[12] However, some small-scale cultivation was still permitted to relieve the food crisis. Overall, the traditional nomadic economy was not impacted by cultivation, but some southern Mongolian land near Shanxi and Shaanxi's border gradually turned into farmland. For example, the pasture of Guihuacheng Tumed (including Tumed left and right banners, roughly today's Hohhot) was less than 1/5 in the middle of the 18th century.[13] Nevertheless, in 1902, the Qing government adopted an opening-up policy

The administrative division in ROC, see Fu Linxiang and Zheng Baoheng, *Zhongguo xingzheng quhua tongshi: Zhonghua minguo juan* (The Administrative Division History of China: The book of Republic of China), Shanghai: Fudandaxue chubanshe, 2007, 419-423, 432-450, 451-459, 471-486.

[10] Owen Lattimore, "The Eclipse of Inner Mongolian Nationalism," in Owen Lattimore, *Studies in Frontier History: Collected Papers, 1928-1958*, London: Oxford University Press, 1962, 427.

[11] Tan Tiwu, *Neimeng zhi jinxi* (The Ancient and Current Situations of Inner Mongolia), Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1934, 32.

[12] The Manchus also imposed a range of restrictions on the Mongols. The banner system was adopted to confine the Mongols migrating across banners and prevent conflicts and competition among different tribes. Scholars argue largely due to this policy, Mongolian society failed to produce a leader who could unify all the Mongols. See, Mei-hua Lan, "China's 'New Administration' in Mongolia", *Mongolia in the Twentieth Century: Landlocked Cosmopolitan*, Stephen Kotkin and Bruce A. Elleman (eds), New York: M.E.Sharpe, 1999, 39.

[13] Cheng Chongde (ed), *Qingdai xibu kaifa* (The Western Development in Qing Dynasty), Taiyuan: Shanxi guji chubanshe, 2002, 260-266. According to Cheng, in the middle of the Qing Dynasty, the Han peasants' cultivation was welcomed by the Mongols as they could receive rent. The Qing government imposed many restrictions on the cultivation. For example, in the late 17th century and 18th century, Chinese peasants were not allowed to marry Mongol women and had to go back to China proper after harvesting crops (261). The Manchus were suspicious of the Mongols and the Han's interaction, which may lead to them joining together to rebel against the Qing rulers.

towards the Mongolian land, encouraging cultivation and the colonisation of Han people. The collapsing Manchu court hoped that cultivating Mongolian land could increase revenues and relieve the financial difficulties caused by the huge indemnity to foreign powers. Also, the Han Chinese were expected to resist Russian penetration by filling this vast, scarcely populated borderland.[14] Since then, large numbers of Chinese have migrated into Inner Mongolia, occupying the Mongols' pasturelands. Besides, the railway development in the 20th century, as noted by Owen Lattimore, further accelerated the colonisation process, making China overpower Inner Mongolia at a gallop.[15] The immigration of the Chinese inevitably triggered ethnic friction, conflicts, and resentment among the Mongols.

Great Power Politics in the Post-War Period

Tragically, Mongolia's destiny in the 1940s was not decided by the Mongols but by the great powers: the US and the Soviet Union. The Yalta Conference was held secretly by the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union from 4 to 11 February 1945 and discussed the post-war world order. In exchange for the Soviet Union entering the war against Japan, the United States conceded China's interests to the Soviet Union without China's participation. Relevant articles were: status quo in Outer Mongolia (the Mongolian People's Republic) should be preserved; possession of Port Arthur and Dairen on lease should be restored; the rights possessed by Russia before the Russo-Japanese War to the operation of the Chinese-Eastern Railroad and the South-Manchurian railroad providing an outlet to Dairen should be restored.[16] Chiang Kai-shek was conscious that the conference

[14] About the new policy and new administration of the Qing Dynasty in the early 1900s, see Mei-hua Lan, "China's 'New Administration' in Mongolia," in *Mongolia in the Twentieth Century*. 39-53.

[15] Owen Lattimore, "The Historical Setting of Inner Mongolian Nationalism," in Owen Lattimore, *Studies in Frontier History: Collected Papers, 1928-1958*, London: Oxford University Press, 1962, 444-445. Lattimore always emphasised the role of the railway in the colonisation. He mentioned it in different essays. Also see "A Ruined Nestorian City in Inner Mongolia," 224; "On the Wickedness of Being Nomads," 416. He also pointed out that the Han settlers, in fact, suffered bitterly in the colonisation, which created "excessive landlordism". Inner Mongolia's soil and climate were unsuitable for agriculture, further magnifying the impoverishment of the Han peasants.

[16] "Document 450: Harriman Memorandum of Conversations", 10 February 1945, in Bryton Barron, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, Conferences at Malta and Yalta, 1945*, United States Government Printing Office, Washington:1955, available at:

was related to China, but he had to wait on tenterhooks and was not informed of the content until one month later: the Chinese ambassador to the United States, Wei Tao-ming (Wei Daoming), was told parts of the Yalta agreement by Franklin D. Roosevelt when he met the president; it was then that the ambassador telegrammed the Generalissimo about it.[17] Indeed, it was a betrayal and humiliation to Chiang Kai-shek from his ally, the US. However, it was uplifting news for the MPR because its former suzerain China, in fact, was prevented from reclaiming the steppe.

At the end of June 1945, the premier of the Republic of China, T. V. Soong (Song Ziwen), flew to Moscow to negotiate with Joseph Stalin. Soong underwent a series of bitter and tough negotiations on the Mongolian question. The status quo in Outer Mongolia, put on the table by the Yalta agreement, was interpreted completely differently by the Chinese and the Soviets. To the Chinese, the Sino-Soviet agreement in 1924 had already determined that the Soviet Union recognised Outer Mongolia as an integral part of China.[18] However, to the Soviets, the MPR was a de facto state that should have been granted independent status; besides, it was the buffer zone between the Soviet Union and Japan. Soong insisted that Outer Mongolia should not be independent, but Joseph Stalin would never allow China to re-seize this vast land. Stalin threatened to seize Inner Mongolia: “If this (Mongolian independence) does not happen, Outer Mongolia will be a rallying point for all Mongolians. It’s to the detriment of China and us, the unifying of Mongolians, from Inner and Northern Mongolia.”[19]

Chiang Kai-shek was already in a very disadvantageous and awkward position. The Outer Mongolian regime was born from various anti-Chinese clashes from the 1910s

https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945Malta/d450.

[17] “Wei Tao-Ming dian Chiang Chung-cheng ye Luosifu xun qi zai yaerda yu Shidalin suotan Yuandong jushi neirong” (Wei Daoming’s Telegram to Chiang Kai-shek about Meeting with Roosevelt and Asking Him the Contents of the Far-east Situation in Yalta’s Talk with Stalin), 14 March 1945, *Geming wenxian: Yaerda miyue youguan jiaoshe ji Zhong-Su xieding, Chiang Chung-cheng zongtong wenwu*, Academia Historica Colleciton, Digital Number: 002-010300-00056-025, available at: https://ahonline.drnh.gov.tw/index.php?act=Display/image/5075889PchhTjS#34l.

[18] *Zhong-Su jiejue xuanan dagang xieding* (Agreements on General Principles for Resolving Issues between the USSR and the Republic of China), article 5, 1924.

[19] “Record of a Meeting between T.V. Soong and Stalin,” 02 July 1945, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Victor Hoo Collection, box 6, folder 9, Hoover Institution Archives. Contributed by David Wolff, available at: https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/122505.

to the 1920s and remained independent for over twenty years. Its independence was a fait accompli. Nevertheless, giving up Outer Mongolia was the most reasonable decision that Chiang could make, at the cost of his authority as China's leader and his personal pride as a true nationalist. On 7 July, Chiang telegrammed to Soong: "This time, our country's approval of the independence of Outer Mongolia is the greatest sacrifice we can make."[20] Chiang needed to be redeemed elsewhere, or his sacrifice would be meaningless. The Generalissimo presented his conditions: The Soviets should guarantee the integrity of Manchurian sovereignty and administration, and must not support the rebellion in Xinjiang or the CCP.

The Sino-Soviet treaty, signed on 14 August 1945, further restricted Choibalsan's great Mongolian ambition. It agreed that if Outer Mongolia's referendum confirmed the independent desire of Mongolian people, "The Chinese government should recognise Outer Mongolia's independence, with its current boundary as the boundary."[21] With the incredibly high support rate for independence, the MPR finally got official recognition from China, but its boundary was also defined. The MPR could not expand its territory to Inner Mongolia. In the post-war period, many Inner Mongols went to Ulaanbaatar to demand the unification of Mongolia. Choibalsan had to tell his Inner Mongol visitors that, because of the restriction of the Sino-Soviet treaty, he could not help them; instead, they should cooperate with the CCP and get national liberation under the CCP's leadership.[22] Yet, Choibalsan was reluctant to abandon his dream. In February 1946, Choibalsan probed Stalin's opinion on creating an independent Inner Mongolia state, which would finally unite with the MPR. Stalin replied: "Creation of an independent state in Hinggan and Inner

[20] "Chiang Chung-cheng dian T. V. Soong Zhonguo suoyi yun Waimeng duli shiwei zuida xisheng" (Chiang Chung-cheng Telegrammed to T.V. Soong that China's Approval of the Independence of Outer Mongolia Is the Greatest Sacrifice), 7 July 1945, *Geming wenxian: Yaerda miyue youguan jiaoshe ji Zhong-Su xieding, Chiang Chung-cheng zongtong wenwu*, Academia Historica Colleciton, Digital Number: 002-020300-00048-050, available at: https://ahonline.drnh.gov.tw/index.php?act=Display/image/5075916YAnYrCO#21l.

[21] "Zhuanghua Minguo Suweiai Shehuizhuyi Gongheguo Lianbang youhao tongmeng tiaoyue zhi huanwen," (The Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance), 14 August 1945, available at: https://law.moj.gov.tw/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=Y0010083

[22] "Chahar ge meng qi jinkuang ji Chaxi liangmeng de gongzuo jingguo (zhailu)" (The Recent Situation of the Leagues and Banners of Chahar and the Working Experiences in Chahar League and Xilingol League(excerpt)), 27 October 1945, MWWH, 968. Dawaaosier (Dawa-Ochir) "Wode jingli jianwen" (My Experiences and What I have Seen), in NWZ 31, Hohhot: 1988, 157-158.

Mongolia will require a new war with China. Does one need it now!"[23]Choibalsan asked again: "Can we carry out propaganda work there?" Stalin answered: "You can, quietly." But it was not his true meaning.[24] Stalin knew clearly that if he or Choibalsan supported Inner Mongolia's independence, China would be enraged, and the Sino-Soviet relations would be completely devastated. Worse, the US might intervene. Nevertheless, Choibalsan did not abandon his great Mongolian dream until October 1949. On 1 October 1949, he even probed Stalin's attitude on whether a unified Mongolia could be a Soviet republic in exchange for Stalin's endorsement. Nevertheless, Stalin dismissed the idea, knowing Mao would not accept Inner Mongolia's loss.[25] On the same day, Mao announced the establishment of the People's Republic of China.

It was Moscow's logic in the 1920s as well. The Soviet Union helped Outer Mongolia to expel Chinese forces in 1921 and turned a blind eye to the establishment of the MPR in spite of the Sino-Soviet treaty in 1924. However, the Soviet Union curbed its actions from interfering in the Inner Mongolian issue. The Comintern emphasised that the Chinese revolutionary parties would help the Inner Mongols rather than the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party. The MPR's relations with its southern cousin should not surpass China. Moscow prioritised its relations with Sun Yat-sen and the KMT, which needed Outer Mongolia to abandon its ambition of Inner Mongolia. Besides, the pan-Mongolism was proliferating in northern and southern parts, and many Mongols yearned for unification. Moscow was afraid of the anti-Soviet feeling occurring among the Soviet Mongol population. It was leery of pan-Mongolism, although the MPR did not covet Buryatia at all.[26] The fate of the separation of the two Mongolian regions had probably already been determined in the 1920s.

The Soviet and the MPR's position left the Inner Mongols with little choice. The Mongol nation in the 20th century was relatively weak compared to its neighbours. Inevitably, it encountered many external interventions. If Inner Mongolia wanted to

[23] Sergey Radchenko, "Choibalsan's Great Mongolia Dream," *Inner Asia*, 11, 2009, 251.
[24] Ibid., 252.
[25] Sergey Radchenko, "Carving up the Steppes: Border. Territory and Nationalism in Mongolia, 1943-1949," Eurasia Border Review, 3 (Special Issue), 2012, 30-31.
[26] Christopher Atwood, *Young Mongols and Vigilantes*, 244.

achieve national liberation, no matter whether autonomy, independence, or unification, it had to seek the help of other forces. Its inland position limited the possible choice. Japan was defeated; the Soviet Union refused to help; the MPR could not make any difference without Stalin's permission. Now, China has become the only choice. Choibalsan told the Inner Mongols to cooperate with the CCP. Even if the Inner Mongols did not want to adopt Ulaanbaatar's suggestion, they only had two choices: the CCP or the KMT. The CCP had the geopolitical advantage of controlling the Inner Mongols. The KMT stayed in the south, but the CCP's headquarters, Yan'an and many bases were close to Inner Mongolia. It was able to adopt actions before the KMT power reached there.

The Ephemeral Inner Mongolian People's Republic

The CCP had largely abandoned its previous slogan of self-determination; instead, it would no longer tolerate any separatist movements. The CCP realised any separatist accusation would smear its patriotic image. "The KMT has caused domestic and international attention by taking advantage of the rumour about the so-called independence of Inner Mongolia. We should take a cautious attitude toward the Mongolian nationality issue… We should call for equality and autonomy of nationalities, but not the slogan of independence and self-determination."[27] When the CCP Central Committee knew an autonomous republic was founded in Eastern Mongolia, it instructed the subordinated branches: "It is over leftist to establish such an autonomous republic government, which is disadvantageous to the Mongol nationality, Chinese people and Soviet-Mongolia diplomacy. It only provides the reactionaries with an accusation of anti-Soviet and anti-communist…If necessary, we should claim we have no relations with them."[28] The CCP has determined that it would prevent any movements that would cause Inner Mongolia's separation.

[27] "Zhonggong Zhongyang guanyu Neimeng minzu wenti ying qu shenzhong taidu de zhishidian" (The CCP CC's Instructing Telegram about Taking a Cautious Attitude on the {roblem of Inner Mongolian Nationality), 18 February 1946, in MWWH, 1000.

[28] "Zhonggong Zhongyang guanyu buyi chengli Dongmeng renmin zizhi zhengfu gei dongbeiju de zhishi" (The CCP CC's Instruction to the Northeast Bureau about not Appropriate to Establish an East Mongolian People's Autonomous Government"), 24 February 1946, in MWWH, 1011.

In the mid-1940s, perceiving Japan's upcoming and foreseeable failure, the Inner Mongols reacted promptly. They organised their own political groups one after another. On 14 August 1944, in Zhangjiakou, a group of Mongol youths who used to study and were studying in Japan founded the Mongolian Youth Revolutionary Party. In September 1945, in Sonid Right Banner, the MYRP declared to establish the Inner Mongolian People's Republic Provisional Government.[29] Sonid Right Banner was also the location of Prince De's residence. Several schools facilitated the activists of the MYRP to develop the party among educated young people. In order to utilise the influence of the Mongol elites and establish a United Front, the MYRP chose Bayandalai as the chairman of the government, who used to be Prince De's private tutor and follower and also a high official in the Mengjiang United Autonomous Government. The activists sought to unify with the MPR or become independent.[30] The Provisional Government sent a delegation to the MPR to seek Choibalsan's help. On 27 August, the delegates arrived in the MPR. However, they were required to stay there under strict surveillance. The delegates could not see Choibalsan until 17 October. Choibalsan demurred at their requests, saying the international situation did not allow him to support the Inner Mongols. Much Worse, being accused of being a Japanese spy, the delegate and the chairman of the MYRP Delgerqogt were arrested and sentenced to twenty-five years of labour in a concentration camp and didn't return to Inner Mongolia until the end of 1956.[31]

The CCP responded promptly to the new Mongolian issue. Yan'an assigned its Mongol Communist Yun Ze (would be known as Ulanhu after 1949, meaning "the red son" in Mongolian)[32]and several other Mongols to communicate with the Inner

[29] The aims of the MYRP were opposing Japanese fascism and seeking national liberation. On 20 August 1945, they formally declared rebellion against the Mongolian Autonomous Federation, which was the Japanese puppet state with Prince De as its head. Because of a lack of information, they did not know Japan had surrendered. Deligeerchaoketu (Delgerqogt), "Wo suo liaojie de 'Menggu qingnian geming dang'" (What I know about the Mongolian Youth Revolutionary Party), in Wumeng zhengxie wenshi ziliao yanjiu weiyuanhui (ed) *Wulanchabu wenshi ziliao*, Issue 2, 1984, 101-114. Wang Shusheng and Hao Yufeng (eds) *Wulanfu Nianpu* (The Chronicle of Ulanhu's Life), Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi ziliao chubanshe, 1989, 132-133.

[30] Deligeerchaoketu (Delgerqogt), "Wo suo liaojie de 'Menggu qingnian geming dang'," 89-90, 109.

[31] Ibid., 113-114.

[32] It's not clear when Yun Ze officially used the name Ulanhu. He started using this name when he was in Yan'an. According to Ulanhu's colleague Keligeng, the CCP asked its Mongol members to have Mongol names in case their previous Chinese names leaked to

Mongolian People's Republic Provisional Government. Born in 1906 to a Mongol peasant family in Tumed Left Banner (now part of Hohhot), the most sinicised Mongolian region, Yun Ze did not speak Mongolian at all. Instead, just like many Han families who wished their children could have a brighter future, his grandfather required him and his cousin to receive traditional Confucian education, reading the Four Books and Five Classics (*sishu wujing*).[33] In 1923, he went to Beijing to study at Beijing's Mongolian and Tibetan School, where he met Li Dazhao and other Communists who often disseminated Marxism-Leninism. Due to Li Dazhao and others' efforts, Yun Ze and many Mongol schoolmates joined the CCP (Yun Ze joined the CCP in 1925). Then, these Mongol students were sponsored to study outside, including at Whampoa Military Academy, Mao Zedong's Peasant Movement Training Institute, in the Soviet Union and the MPR.[34] Years later, many of them would become the CCP's most loyal and competent Mongol cadres. Yun Ze went to Moscow Sun Yat-sen University to study in 1925. After returning to China in 1929, he worked underground in Western Mongolia. In February 1937, he organised the Mongol Banner Public Security Brigade (Later Mongol Banner Independent Brigade) with Mongol KMT members to fight against the Japanese.[35] In 1941, he went to Yan'an, and in 1945, he was an Alternate Member of the CCP CC.

Yun Ze and his associates arrived in Sonid Right Banner in the first half of October 1945. They demanded that the Provisional Government be cancelled. No doubt, Chairman Bayandalai rejected Yun Ze immediately. However, the real barrier in front of the Communist cadres was that the Soviet Army was behind this government. Yun Ze had to argue with a Soviet official.[36] The Soviet side insisted strongly that they

enemies, which would endanger other comrades working with them. Keligeng, "Guanyu Neimeng zizhi yundong tongyi de huiyi" (The Memories of the Unification of Inner Mongolia's Autonomous Movements), NWZ 50, 151. The name Ulanhu appeared on the CCP documents occasionally, but before 1949, he was mainly called Yun Ze.

[33] Wulanfu geming shiliao yanjiushi (ed), *Wulanfu huiyilu* (The Memoire of Ulanhu), Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi ziliao chubanshe, 1989, 1-19. As Atwood commented, Ulanhu's memoir was ghostwritten. It was written by historians based on Ulanhu's interviews, and it was distorted by politics. But it still contains a large amount of valuable materials. Atwood, *Young Mongols and Vigilantes*, 286.

[34] *Wulanfu huiyilu*, 40-79.

[35] *Wulanfu nianpu*, 86.

[36] In Ulanhu's official biography *Wulanfu zhuan*, this Soviet official was the Soviet consultant in the MPR Nikolayev. Wulanfu zhuan bianxie zu (ed), *Wulanfu zhuan,1906-1988 (The Biography of Ulanhu,1906-1988)*, Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2007, 108. However, in Liu Chun's memoir, the name of the Soviet official who argued with

approved the Provisional Government. The two sides reached a stalemate. Several days later, the Soviet consultant in the MPR, Nikolayev, admitted the MPR did not support the Provisional Government, and finally, the Soviets gave up their patronage.[37] Without the endorsement of the Soviet Union and the MPR, the Provisional Government lost its morale immediately. Besides, this government was organised in a rush and had no material base; they could not even solve the food problem except by eating the stored food of the lamas. They had to rely on other forces, and Yun Ze promised to provide them with food.[38] To undermine Bayandalai's authority, Yun Ze accused him of being the "traitor of Mongols" (*meng jian*) by taking advantage of the fact that Bayandalai used to work in the Japanese-supported Prince De's government. In the end, Yun Ze successfully persuaded many young participants to accept the CCP's leadership. Dominated by the CCP, the Provisional Government was re-elected. Yu Ze was elected as the chairman. Two Tumed Mongol Communists, along with Yun Ze, Kui Bi and Keligen, became ministers of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Economy, respectively.[39] Within one month, the problem of the Provisional Government was solved. Yun returned to Zhangjiakou on 27 October. To eliminate its influence completely, the new Chairman decided that the Provisional Government would relocate to Zhangbei, a county under CCP control. After arriving in Zhangbei, Yun stopped all activities of the Provisional Government, which gradually disappeared from public sight.[40]

Yun Ze was unknown. He was a political commissar with the military rank of Major General. Several days after this commissar left, the consultant Nikolayev came and agreed with Yu Ze. It seems the two were not the same person. Liu Chun, "Neimeng gongzuo de huiyi" (The Recalling of the Work in Inner Mongolia), in NWZ, 50, 39.

[37] *Wulanfu zhuan*, 108-110; "Guanyu chameng chengli 'Neimenggu renmin gongheguo linshizhengfu' wenti xiang Zhongyang de Qingshi"(Asking for Instructions to the CC about the Establishment of the "Inner Mongolian People's Republic Provisional Government" in Chahar League), 27 October 1945, in MWWH, 972.

[38] "Chahar ge meng qi jinkuang ji cha xi liangmeng de gongzuo jinguo (zhailu)" (The recent situation of the leagues and banners of Chahar and the working experiences in Chahar League and Xilingol League (excerpt)), 27 October 1945, MWWH, 968.

[39] Keligeng, "Guanyu Neimeng zizhi yundong tongyi de huiyi," 145. Kui Bi was Yun Ze's old friend and schoolmate. Like Yun Ze, he attended Beijing Mongolian and Tibetan School in 1923 and joined the CCP in 1925. He went to the MPR to study in 1927. Keligeng was younger. He studied at the Beijing Mongolian and Tibetan Schools in 1932.

[40] *Wulanfu zhuan*, 104-111.

Real Challenge: Eastern Mongolian People's Autonomous Government

The Inner Mongolian People's Provisional Government was probably a trifling episode in the post-war Mongolian people's autonomous movements. However, in Wangyemiao,[41] the Eastern Mongols' yearning for national independence became a real challenge to the CCP. Eastern Mongolia was ruled by the Japanese puppet state Manchukuo from 1932 to 1945. After the defeat of Japan, the Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (IMPRP) re-emerged, and their Eastern Mongolian People's Autonomous Government (EMPAG) was much more powerful.

The IMPRP's history dates back to the mid-1920s. It was created in 1924 by a KMT Mongol member, Bai Yunti (Serengdongrub), to achieve his pan-Mongolist ambition.[42] In October 1925, the First Congress of the IMPRP was held in Zhangjiakou. The IMPRP attracted many Mongol nationalists and different political factions, like Guo Daofu (Mersé) and his Hulun Buir countrymen[43], Duguilang activists, and young pro-Communist Mongol students from Beijing's Mongol and Tibetan School. The IMPRP received the patronage of the Comintern, which had

[41] It was also known as Wang-un Süme and was renamed Ulanhot, "the red city," in 1947.

[42] Bai Yunti (1984-1980) was a Kharachin Mongol. He worked as the Special Appointee in 1920, in charge of the KMT's party affairs in Inner Mongolia, as well as Rehe, Suiyuan, and Chahar. His assignment was to establish a branch committee of the KMT in Inner Mongolia, but Bai, in fact, went far beyond that. He created a new party in 1924, the "Inner Mongolian Nationalist Party" (*Neimenggu Guomindang* in Chinese/*Dotogadu Monggol-un arad-un nam* iin Mongolian). He deliberately ambiguated the "Inner Mongolian Nationalist Party" and the "Inner Mongolian Branch of China's Nationalist Party. Bai wanted Inner Mongolia's revolution to be led by the Mongolian People's Party. In 1924, when Bai visited Neislel Khüriye (later Ulaanbaatar), he proposed a new party, the Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party to the MPP. He wanted to make it a pan-Mongolist party. See Atwood, *Young Mongols and Vigilantes*, 184-189. In November 1924, the Inner Mongolian Nationalist Party remnamed itself the Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party. Atwood, ibid., 257. It also absorbed other political organisations and factions of the Inner Mongols.

[43] Mersé (1894-1934?) and his Hulun Buir countrymen were ethnic Daur. At his time, they identified themselves as Daur Mongol. Together with another Daur Fumingtai, Mersé established a student union and a party branch of the Mongolian People's Party (later the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party) from 1923-1925. He also became the leader of the Eastern Border People's Party (also called Hulun Buir Youth Party), which was endorsed by the Mongolian People's Party. The EBPP was incorporated into the IMPRP. Mersé became the secretary of the IMPRP at the First Congress in October 1925. Christopher P. Atwood, *Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongol Empire*, New York: Facts On File, Inc, 2004, 347-348. Also Christopher P. Atwood, "A.I. Oshirov (c. 1901-1931): A Buriat Agent in Inner Mongolia", in E. H. Kaplan & D. W. Whisenhunt (Eds), *Opuscula Altaica: Essays Presented in Honor of Henry Schwarz*, Bellingham, WA: East Asian Studies Press of Western Washington University, 1994, 57.

realised the possibility of revolution in Inner Mongolia. The Comintern's agent, A. I. Oshirov, a Buryat Mongol, was important in coordinating different factions within the IMPRP.[44] Though reluctant to follow the Comintern's instructions, the IMPRP allied with the KMT and the CCP and participated in the turbulent Chinese civil wars and revolutions.[45] The KMT-CCP split also impacted the IMPRP. In August 1927, a special conference of the IMPRP was held in Ulaanbaatar. At the conference, the IMPRP split: the leftists, supported by the Comintern, harshly criticised Bai Yunti and Mersé, controlled the power and re-set the party headquarter in Ulaanbaatar. Infuriated by the Comintern's interference, Bai Yunti shifted his loyalty to the KMT. The headquarters in Ulaanbaatar kept running but hardly made any achievements. According to Ulanhu, in 1933, the MPR cancelled the IMPRP's leading body in Ulaanbaatar. Without any headquarters on Chinese territory, the IMRPP disintegrated.[46]

However, in the eastern part of Inner Mongolia, the IMPRP survived, though barely, and it would rekindle the revolutionary fire in the post-war period. In July 1929, the Comintern sent several Moscow-educated Mongol students to Inner Mongolia to carry out the revolutionary work. Three IMPRP members were sent to middle and eastern Mongolia: Temurbagana, Pungsug and Delger.[47] It appeared that they lost contact with the MPR headquarters soon, but were able to develop several members during the Japanese-occupied period. The most influential leader in Eastern Mongolia, Khafungga, inspired by Pungsug, joined the IMPRP in 1932.[48]

Wangyemiao was a town with only over ten thousand people, but it was the political and military centre of the Hinggan province of Manchukuo, where many well-

[44] Atwood, "A.I. Oshirov (c. 1901-1931): A Buriat Agent in Inner Mongolia", 44-93.

[45] The Soviet Union did not want to see the expansion of pan-Mongolism, as it might lead to the MPR's reclaim of Tannu Tuva. It wanted the Chinese to lead the revolution in Inner Mongolia and encouraged Inner Mongols to cooperate with Sun Yat-sen's KMT, rather than the MPR. Atwood, *Young Mongols and Vigilantes*, 244. Also Atwood, A.I. Oshirov (c. 1901-1931), 61. Inner Mongols needed Soviet weapons and funds and had to accept the Comintern's instruction.

[46] *Wulanfu Huiyilu*, 74.

[47] Atwood, *Young Mongols and Vigilantes*, 961. Temurbagana and Pungsug studied at Communist University of the Toilers of the East. Bailadugeqi, "Duzhe laixin zhaideng," *Yanhuang chunqiu*, 2013 Issue 11, 93.

[48] Li Jinglan, "Hafenga"(Khafungga), in Zhongguo renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi neimenggu Hinggan meng weiyuanhui wenshi ziliao weiyuanhui (ed) *Xing'an wenshi ziliao* 4, Publisher: Hinggan meng zhengxie wenshi ziliao weiyuanhui, 1994, 140-141.

educated Mongol populations gathered. This town was the centre of the Mongolian national liberation in the post-war period. “It is the brain of the Mongols, like our Yan’an, which each Liberated Region looks up to,” commented Han Communist cadre Zhang Ce.[49] On 18 August 1945, three days after the Japanese surrender, Wangyemiao, Khafungga, Temurbagana, and others reorganised the Inner Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party. Under this nostalgic and very influential name, they quickly rallied a group of new members. In October 1945, the Inner Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Youth League was established.[50] Like most Mongols at that time, the Eastern Mongols zealously believed they would finally unite with their Outer Mongolian cousins. The reborn IMPRP worked committedly toward the dream. From August to September 1945, it launched a campaign, pleading with Mongols to sign for the unification of the two separated Mongolias. The result was reasonably uplifting: it collected nearly 10 thousand signatures in its controlled Hinggan area. In October, the Eastern Mongol leaders Khafungga,Temurbagana, and Buyanmandukhu, with other representatives, brought the signatures to the MPR.[51] No doubt, they were disillusioned. Choibalsan could not support the unification. Instead, Choibalsan suggested that the Eastern Mongols should cooperate with the CCP. Without the MPR’s support, the Eastern Mongols had to seek a high degree of autonomy within China. Nevertheless, the CCP was not their only option. Some Eastern Mongols preferred to ally with the ROC government and sought its official recognition.

The CCP held a Northeast People’s Congress in November 1945, inviting representatives from different political factions, including Eastern Mongol

[49] Jiang Mingsheng, “Yongyuan buneng wangji de gushi: Ji Zhang Ce zai wo meng huodong de pianduan” (The Story Which Will Never Be Forgotten: Zhang Ce’s Revolutionary Activities in Our League), *Xing’an geming shihua* 1, 1987, 194. Zhang Ce, “Zhang Ce guanyu Dongmenggu diqu (Xing’an) de gongzuo qingkuang he jingyan (zhailu) (Zhang Ce’s Eastern Mongolian Region (Hinggan) Work Situations and Experiences) (excerpt)), 15 August 1946, MWWH, 1319.

[50] Duguerzhabu (Dugarzhab), Wangdan, and Tegusi (Tegus), “Jiu Yiba yihou Neimenggu renmin geming dang zai Dongmenggu diqu de geming huodong pianduan” (The Inner Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party’s Revolutionary Activities in Eastern Mongolia After the 18 September), Xing’an meng dangshi ziliao zhengji bangongshi (ed) *Xing’an geming shihua* 2, 1988, 251-252.

[51] Wu Baiyin, “‘Neiwaimeng hebing’ qianming yundong shimo” (The Beginning and End of the ‘Unification of Inner and Outer Mongolia’ Signature Campaign), *Xing’an wenshi ziliao* 4, 63-64.

representatives.[52] The Eastern Mongols, who were staying for their new regime, probably did not know the MPR's decision. They talked about the dream of the unification of Inner and Outer Mongolia to the CCP Northeast Bureau's cadres. A CCP cadre, Lin Feng, replied that although the CCP supported the right to self-determination, the international treaty decided that the Inner Mongolia issue was China's domestic issue; joining the MPR was impossible domestically and internationally. The CCP side suggested that the Eastern Mongols contact Comrade Yun Ze and accept the CCP's nationality policy.[53] It seemed that the Mongols' contact with the Northeast Bureau did not have a satisfying result. A CCP cadre, Hu Zhaohen, who worked in Eastern Mongolia from 1946 to 1949, wrote that he heard Eastern Mongols felt the CCP did not trust them.[54]

The Eastern Mongols indeed contacted Yun Ze's Federation of Inner Mongolian Autonomous Movement (FIMAM) in December 1945 (not sure whether it was because of the suggestion of the Northeast Bureau). Surely, they hoped to unite the autonomous movements in the western area of Inner Mongolia, strengthening the force of Mongol national liberation. In early December 1945, an Eastern Mongol representative, Bao Yukun, arrived in Zhangjiakou and brought a Chinese letter written by Temurbagana. The letter said the Japanese had surrendered; it was the right time for the autonomous movement; they knew there must have been autonomous movements in Western Mongolia, so they sent a representative to contact. Yun Ze did not know who Temurbagana was, as Temurbagana used a Chinese name in the past. Nevertheless, from the letter, Yun Ze could tell that the writer had studied in the Soviet Union and had been sent back to China by the

[52] They were Urtu, Li Hongfan (Shirubsengge), Sangzhzaizhab, Dawa-Ochir, Medeltü and Ombaatar. Urtu was the commander of the Mongolian People's Autonomous Army's Southern Hinggan Command Headquarters. Li Hongfan was in charge of the IMPRP's affairs in southern Hinggan. Sangzhzaizhab was one of the executive committee members of the IMPRP (Eastern) executive committee. Medeltü was in charge of Wangyemiao's army.
See Hu Zhaoheng, "Hu Zhaoheng riji (1945-1947)" (Hu Zhaoheng's Diary: 1945-1947), 31 January 1946, in *Xing'an geming shihua* 1, 252. Li Hongfan, "Huiyi wo zai Zhemeng de gongzuo licheng" (A Recalling of My Work Experience in Jirem League), in Zhonggong Zhelimu meng wei dangshi bangongshi (ed) *Geming huiyilu* (diyiji), Tongliao: 1986, 53-54. Duguerzhabu et al, "Jiu Yiba yihou Neimenggu renmin geming dang zai Dongmenggu diqu de geming huodong pianduan," 251.

[53] Duguerzhabu et al, "Jiu Yiba yihou Neimenggu renmin geming dang zai Dongmenggu diqu de geming huodong pianduan," 251.

[54] "Hu Zhaoheng riji (1945-1947)", 19 February 1946, ibid., 261.

Comintern, just as he had.[55] In Zhangjiakou, Bao Yukun found that the FIMAM had just been set up. It was said that after seeing the establishment of FIMAM, Bao was delighted and highly praised, saying, “You are ahead. It is you who does the Inner Mongolian autonomous work better.” However, Bao did not realise that the so-called autonomy in the western part of Inner Mongolia was entirely different from the Eastern Mongols’ imagination. Far from an independent organisation, the FIMAM was suggested by the Jin-Cha-Ji Bureau and approved by the CCP CC. Its role was more “advisory” than a policymaking authority.[56] Besides, the term “autonomy” in the CCP’s dictionary always had a prerequisite: under the leadership of the CCP. Then, Bao told the FIMAM cadres that “we should do the autonomous work together.” This did not mean that the Eastern Mongols had prepared to accept the CCP’s leadership. In contrast, they hoped they could dominate the movement. Bao frankly told Yun Ze and the other cadres, “Outer Mongolia and we are the same nation. We will merge with Outer Mongolia in the future.” Yun Ze suggested the CCP send representatives to negotiate with the Eastern Mongols. The Ji-Cha-Ji Central Bureau approved it, deciding that Yun Ze and a Han cadre, Liu Chun, would lead the negotiation. Meanwhile, the Jin-Cha-Ji Central Bureau sent a work group led by Liu

[55] Temurbagana and other Eastern Mongols probably knew that the autonomous movement had links with the CCP or the Comintern in western Inner Mongolia. However, due to the lack of information, the Eastern Mongols had no idea who was in charge. The letter written by Temurbagana was sent to Foding, Yun Run (Yun Ze’s cousin), and Delger. Yun Run and Yun Ze were close when they were young. They went to Beijing and joined the CCP together. Both of them studied at Moscow Sun Yat-sen University. Yun Run worked in the IMPRP headquarters in Ulaanbaatar in the early 1930s *(Wulanfu huiyilu*, 152), but he has never been heard from again since then. Foding was also from Tumed Left Banner. Like the Yun cousins, he also attended the Beijing Mongolian and Tibetan School, became a member of the CCP, studied in the Soviet Union, and was sent back to China to engage in revolutionary work. However, Foding was trapped in a Siberian labour camp in the 1940s and did not return to Inner Mongolia until 1957. Delger also studied in the Soviet Union and was sent back to Inner Mongolia for revolutionary work. Yun Ze, Foding, Temurbagana, Pungsug and Delger were sent back together. Yun Ze and Foding went to Western Mongolia, Delger to Chahar Province, and Pungsug and Temurbagana to Rehe Province. (*Wulanfu huiyilu*, 105-106, 109)
Yun Ze realised that the writer of this letter must be an old member of the IMPRP who had studied in the Soviet Union and was sent back to China by the Comintern. Liu Chun, “Neimeng gongzuo de huiyi,” in NWZ, 50, 41-42.

[56] “Jin-Cha-Ji Zhongyangju guanyu chengli Neimenggu zizhi yundong lianhehui zhi Zhongyang bing gao Ji-Cha dian”(The Telegram From Jin-Cha-Ji Central Bureau to the CCP CC and Ji-Cha About the Establishment of the Federation of Inner Mongolian Autonomous Movement), 8 November 1945, in Neimenggu zizhiqu danganguan (ed) *Neimenggu zizhi yundong lianhehui dangan shiliao xuanbian*, cited as NZYLDSX, Beijing: Dangan chubanshe, 1989, 5.

Chun and Keligeng to Eastern Mongolia, mostly Mongol cadres. Their primary assignment was to persuade the local Mongols to accept and follow the CCP.[57] The primary target was the young people, who were thought to be more progressive and revolutionary. At the same time, the CCP also did "United Front" work among the upper strata of people.[58]

When Yun Ze prepared for the negotiation, the first Eastern Mongolian People's Congress convened on 16 January 1946 in Wangyemiao. About three hundred Mongol and Han representatives attended the congress. The Congress approved four official documents and laws of autonomy and declared the East Mongolian People's Autonomous Government founded.[59] A few CCP members also work in the Eastern Mongolian regime. A CCP Han cadre Hu Bingquan was kidnapped by the KMT army in Tuquan County in December 1945. The Eastern Mongolian troops, led by Askhan, defeated the KMT army and rescued him. Hu Bingquan then worked as a political commissar in the Eastern Mongolian troops.[60] At the Eastern Mongolian

[57] Liu Chun, "Neimeng gongzuo de huiyi," 44. Keligeng, "Guanyu Neimeng zizhi yundong tongyi de huiyi," 151.

[58] The memoirs of Keligeng and Wang Zaitian both recorded that the Communists received enthusiastic responses among the youth. Keligeng commented: "Contacting the youth was the task which required the most work and took the most time. I used to be involved in student movements and understood the youth's mood and ambitions. I got along very well with the youth. They invited me to give talks everywhere, and it always took half a day. My throat was dry, but I felt so happy." Keligeng, "Guanyu Neimeng zizhi yundong tongyi de huiyi," 152.

Wang Zaitian, a Mongol cadre from Horqin Left Middle Banner, Jirem League, was the director of the Social Affairs Department of the FIMAM. The Social Affairs Department was in charge of intelligence and anti-intelligence works. Wang Zaitian spent a lot of time bringing around upper-strata Mongols. But he thought the young people were the most important force. He wrote: "These young people were energetic and very active. They were the force that the Party could rely on in the Eastern Mongolian Autonomous movement. Most of these youth became the backbone of various fronts. This situation made me realise an important issue: we must prioritise the work of the youth and military. The military issue was also the youth issue. The core work of the military was uniting and winning over young military officers." Wang Zaitian, "Neimenggu zizhi zhengfu chegnli qianhou shehuibu wode bufen gongzuo huigu" (The Review of My Work at the Social Affairs Department Around the Establishment of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Government), in NWZ 50, 130-133.

[59] The four documents and laws were the *Eastern Mongolian Autonomous Law*, *the Eastern Mongolian Autonomous Government Organisational Law*, the *Eastern Mongolian Autonomous Government Administrative Programme*, and the *Eastern Mongolian Autonomous Declaration*. Liu Chun, "Neimeng gongzuo de huiyi," in NWZ 50, 49-51. Dawaaosier, "Wode jingli jianwen," in NWZ 31, 162. The two accounts were slightly different. Liu mentioned the term "people" in the four documents, but Dawa-Ochir did not.

[60] Duguerzhabu, "Neimenggu zizhijun qibing yihsi de youlai," 17. "Hu Zhaoheng, "Hu Zhaoheng riji (1945-1947)"(Hu Zhaoheng's Diary: 1945-1947), 12 February 1946, in

People's Congress, Hu represented the West Manchuria Branch Bureau to deliver a speech.[61] Choibalsan and the MPR immediately recognised and supported the establishment of the EMPAG. The Soviet army, which was still in China, consented tacitly. The CCP Northeast Bureau and the West Manchuria Branch Bureau sent telegrams congratulating them. Only the ROC government refused to recognise it.[62]

Nevertheless, the CCP soon realised the EMPAG was an intricate problem. Unlike the so-called Republic in West Sonid Banner, a nominal government without real power, the EMPAG's power was much stronger. It was founded on the basis of Manchukuo Hinggan Province and inherited its mature administrative system and the army. Manchukuo's Hinggan Army, which mainly consisted of Mongols, turned into one of the crucial forces of the Eastern Mongolian Autonomous Army.[63] The EMPAG claimed its territory included three leagues, Jirem, Ju Ud, and Josutu; two tribes (*aimag*), Hulunbuir and Butha; three banners, Yeke Myangan, Qiqihar and Surug.[64] In fact, many places were not under its control but occupied by the KMT or the

Xing'an geming shihua 1, 258. Duguerzhabu et al, "Jiu Yiba yihou Neimenggu renmin geming dang zai Dongmenggu diqu de geming huodong pianduan," ibid., 252.

[61]Bao Mingde, "Riben touxiang hou Dongmeng diqu de xingshi he Dongmeng zizhi zhengfu de chengli he yanbian" (The Situations in Eastern Mongolia After the Surrender of the Japanese and the Establishment and the Chenge of the Eastern Mongolian Autonomous Government), in Ximeng zhengxie wenshi ziliao yanjiu weiyuanhui (ed) *Xilinguole wenshi ziliao* 2, neibu faxing, 227.

[62] Bao Mingde, "Riben touxiang hou Dongmeng diqu de xingshi," 227. Zhang Ce, Hu Zhaoheng, and Fang Zhida, "Cong Dongmeng zizhi zhengfu dao Neimenggu zizhi zhengfu chengli de yixie qingkuang"(Some Situations from the Eastern Mongolian Autonomous Government to the Establishment of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Government), in NWZ 50, 100-101.

[63] *Wulanfu zhuan*, 125. Some of the Eastern Mongolian Autonomous Army was from the Manchukuo Hinggan Army (Mongols were the majority) and Hinggan Army Officer School (*Hinggan lujun junguan xuexiao*). They mutinied against the Japanese authority and welcomed the Soviet Red Army in August 1945. Later, they became the forces of the Wangyemiao regime. They also received weapons, ammunition and helmets from the Soviets. See Duguerzhabu (Dugarzhab), "Neimenggu zizhijun qibing yihsi de youlai," in *Xing'an wenshi ziliao* 3, 16.

[64] "Dongmenggu renmin zizhi zhengfu shuli xuanyan (yiwen)" (The Declaration of the Establishment of the Eastern Mongolian People's Autonomous Government), 19 January 1946, in Zhongguo renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi chifeng shi weiyuanhui wenshiziliao weiyuanhui (ed) *Chifeng shi wenshi ziliao xuanji 5*: *He Zizhang yu mengqi sishi*, 1989, 276. Jirem League was in ROC's Liaobei Province, Nenjiang Province and Jilin Province. Ju Ud and Josutu League were in Rehe Province. Hulunbuir and Butha were in Hinggan Province. Yeke Myangan was in Heilongjiang Province. Qiqihar Banner was in Nenjiang Province. Surug Banner was in Rehe Province.

CCP.[65] A Han cadre, Hu Zhaoheng, thought the Eastern Mongols' ambition for the territory was "parochial nationalism" because they wanted land, which used to be Mongolian but was now inhabited by Han people.[66] The CCP also realised that "the autonomous government's flag and its scale of the capital are like a self-ruling state, just without the name of the republic." Also, they put the CCP in an awkward situation. "The first article of their autonomous law involves our party, which says 'according to the CCP CC's nationality policy,' which is very detrimental to us today."[67] The EMPAG has taken advantage of the CCP's early policy, which zealously endorsed self-determination and self-rule. Much worse, the establishment of the EMPAG confirmed the CCP's concern that it might be out of China's control. "They viewed China as suzerain. They would adopt 'independent autonomy', separating from China," commented Liu Chun.[68] Not only did the Eastern Mongols plan to separate from China, but they also had certain capability to do so.

The EMPAG was not monolithic. Some factions and figures were more amiable to the CCP.[69] However, other factions were very hostile to the CCP's advancement in their territories and highly vigilant of the possible erosion of their autonomous power. The newborn regime had no centralised power, and some factions often had friction with the CCP. Several CCP reports complained about the conflicts with the Eastern Mongols, "In the north of Rehe, they want us to leave completely, often provoking

[65] The EMPAG's actual dominating region was smaller. For example, Linxi County, belonging to Ju Ud League, was occupied by the CCP. Nevertheless, He Zizhang, a military commander of the EMPAG, strongly demanded that the CCP withdraw from it. Qiqihar was a contested region between the ROC government and the CCP. It was dominated by the CCP after 24 April 1946. A large part of Josutu League was occupied by the KMT army in early 1946, such as Fuxin County; later, it was seized by the CCP. Hulunbuir had its own autonomous government and wanted to be independent too. A former official of the Hulunbuir Autonomous Government said they didn't have administrative relations with either the CCP or the EMPAG. Layi, "Guanyu Hulunbeier 'jiu · san" hou yiduan zhengqing de huiyi" (A Recalling About the Political Situation of Hulunbir after 3 September), in Zhongguo renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi hulunbeier meng weiyuanhui wenshi ziliao yanjiu weiyuanhui (ed) *Hulunbeier wehshi ziliao* 3, 1982, 9.

[66] "Hu Zhaoheng riji (1945-1947)", 21 February 1946, 262-263.

[67] Hu Xikui, "Hu Xikui guanyu Dongmeng wenti cailiao ji yijian," 3 March 1946, in MWWH, 1013.

[68] Liu Chun, "Neimeng gongzuo de huiyi," 50.

[69] According to CCP cadre Zhang Ce, these pro-CCP Mongols were usually IMPRP members and more progressive. While the upper class and old Manchukuo officials in the EMPAG were more "reactionary". Zhang Ce, "Zhang Ce guanyu Dongmenggu diqu (Xing'an) de gongzuo qingkuang he jingyan (zhailu), in MWWH, 1318-1319.

(us). In Linxi, there are only two thousand Mongols among the one hundred thousand population; they also wanted us to leave."[70] "They oppose us mobilising the masses to launch liquidation struggles."[71] "(Four banners in North and West Manchuria)…their inferior cadres were somewhat unsatisfied about our establishment of the regime and administrative system, thinking it was a deprivation of their right of autonomy."[72] Atwood discovers that in the regions where the CCP suffered military setbacks, the Eastern Mongols preferred to cooperate with the Communists, as they would otherwise be exposed to the KMT's threat. However, in the areas where the CCP had exclusive domination, the local Mongol people's relationships with the CCP were much less close.[73]

Some CCP cadres even considered conceding to a certain extent to avoid military clashes with these antagonistic Eastern Mongols. On 26 January 1946, Cheng Zihua, the secretary of Ji-Cha-Re-Liao Branch Bureau, reported to Lin Biao, Peng Zhen and Luo Ronghuan: "Chifeng's Red Army Political Commander Martinov suggested that we write to Wangyemiao, recognising their regime and their leadership of the armies, (so that they can) struggle for the establishment of Mongolian autonomous republic. In Jingpeng and Lindong, the chief of banners should be Mongols, and we can assume deputy positions. We can help them work under their leadership. … Probably, the KMT is trying to win over the Mongols to combat us. (In) the political struggle between the KMT and us over Mongolia, we should use enormous force to win Mongolia over. Now He Zizhang[74]'s troop arrives

[70] Hu Xikui, "Hu Xikui guanyu Dongmeng wenti cailiao ji yijian" (Hu Xikui's Materials and Opinions about the Eastern Mongolian Question), 3 March 1946, in MWWH, 1014. Huang Kecheng, "Huang Kecheng guanyu Dongmeng zizhi ingkuang de baogao" (Huang Kecheng's Report on the Situation of Eastern Mongolia's Autonomy), 3 March 1946, in MWWH, 1015.

[71] "Zhonggong Zhongyang Ji Re Liao fenju guanyu Rehe Menggu gongzuo wenti gei Zhongyang de baogao" (The CCP CC's Ji-Re-Liao Branch's report to the CC about Mongolian works in Rehe), 7 March 1946, in MWWH, 1021.

[72] "Dongbei kangri lianjun zhixia budui diqishi guanyu Neimeng qingkuang xiang Dongbeiju de baogao" (The Report of the 7th Division of the Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army to the Northeast Bureau on the Situations in Inner Mongolia), 29 January 1946, in MWWH, 997.

[73] Christopher Atwood, "The East Mongolian Revolution and Chinese Communism," *Mongolian Studies*, Vol. 15, The Nicholas Poppe Memorial Issue (1992), 51-52.

[74] He Zizhang was an Eastern Mongol elite. After the defeat of the Japanese, He Zizhang organised his own self-defence forces and autonomous association in Bairin Lefter Banner. Later, He Zizhang accepted the leadership of the Wangyemiao regime. On 1 December 1945, he established the Bairin Left Banner Government, which belonged to the Eastern

in the second district of Chifeng, we plan to use all the means to settle (the conflict) with him peacefully…"[75] This report revealed why the CCP was keen to solve the Inner Mongolian problem in the civil war period. The most direct and emergent motivation was realpolitik: The KMT was trying to persuade the Mongols to fight against the CCP. Perceiving the immediate threat, the CCP was eager to placate the Mongols, at least keeping them neutral rather than aggressive. Moreover, Inner Mongolia was strategically important to the CCP. If the CCP could control Inner Mongolia, they would gain a solid rear for the army and establish a direct connection with the Soviet-Mongolian military.[76] Cadres like Cheng Zihua did not reject the Soviet commander Martinov's suggestion, which would sacrifice the CCP's interests. He seriously considered using "enormous forces" and "all the means" to win over the Mongols. Nevertheless, the Soviet suggestion was utterly unacceptable to the CCP. Too many concessions would provide the excuse for the KMT, which had no hesitation in accusing the "traitorous" CCP of splitting China. Furthermore, the CCP did not want any independent powers outside its control if it were to establish its own regime in China.

Nevertheless, the CCP had the advantage of being able to contact the Eastern Mongols. The EMPAG was a much weaker power in the Chinese political arena compared to the KMT government and the CCP. The Eastern Mongols realised they needed assistance from other powers. They had few options: allying with the CCP or Chiang Kai-shek's regime. The most influential Mongol political leader, Choibalsan, had suggested that the Eastern Mongols should disband the IMRPP and ally with the CCP to achieve national liberation. Choibalsan's words probably played an essential role in pushing the Eastern Mongols to the CCP side. The ideological kinship between the CCP and the MPR facilitated the Eastern Mongols' establishment of relations with Chinese Communists. The reborn IMPRP also had backbone members

Mongolian autonomous regime. He Zizhang had been averse to the CCP initially. After the 3 April Conference, he cooperated with the CCP. Mengke, "He Zizhang yu mengqi sishi" (He Zizhang and the Fourth Division of Mongol Cavalry), in *Chifeng shi wenshi ziliao xuanji 5: He Zizhang yu mengqi sishi*, 18-22.

[75] "Zhonggong Zhongyang Ji-Re-Liao fenju guanyu Rebei Menggu wenti de baogao" (The Report from the Ji-Re-Liao Branch Bureau of the CCP CC about the Mongolian Problems in the North of Rehe), 26 January 1946, in MWWH, 995.

[76] "Zhonggong Zhongyang guanyu Neimeng gongzuo fangzhen gei Jin-Cha-Ji zhongyangju de zhishi" (The Instruction from the CCP CC About the Inner Mongolia's Work Guidline to the Jin-Cha-Ji Central Bureau), 23 October 1945, in MWWH, 964.

trained in the Soviet Union, like Temurbagana and Pungsug. Additionally, many educated Mongols, particularly the younger generation, believed communism to be an advanced and progressive ideology. As Hu Zhaoheng observed, “The Mongol young students… are proud of reading leftist books. They boasted about which leftists they had approached, what books they had read, or that some of their teachers were probably communists.”[77] “Their (Khafungga, Temurbagana, Dugarzhab and so on) admiration for the CCP could be seen everywhere.”[78] Most importantly, the Eastern Mongols expected the CCP to provide military assistance. They even raised unrealistic wishes, like “establishing an army with one hundred thousand soldiers”. Temurbagana hoped the CCP would provide ten thousand rifles to them and send experts to train the Mongols, while the EMPAG could reject the KMT government and use the CCP’s currency.[79]

Yet, some Eastern Mongol leaders did not want to be hostile to the KMT or the Republic of China. After all, the EMPAG defined itself as an autonomous organ within the Republic of China, although it was a de facto independent state. Thus, to some leaders, the priority was to get official recognition from the ROC.[80] A Soviet major, Sangjai, a Buryat, also suggested that the Mongols should not directly challenge the KMT government but try to conduct a “legal struggle.” Thus, in February 1946, an Eastern Mongol delegation headed by the pro-KMT Mongol Manibadara was sent to Chongqing, the ROC’s provisional capital in the Sino-Japanese war. The delegation was stopped in Beiping (Beijing) for three months and was not allowed to go to Chongqing. During this period, Manibadara encountered two American intelligence staff. He tried to gain American support by portraying the Wangyemiao regime as an anti-CCP force. However, the Americans suspected that the Eastern Mongolian autonomous movement had connections with the Soviet Union. Besides, at this moment, the Americans did not explicitly intend to intervene

[77] “Hu Zhaoheng riji (1945-1947),” 20 February 1946, 262.
[78] “Hu Zhaoheng riji (1945-1947),” 17 February 1946, 260.
[79] “Hu Zhaoheng riji (1945-1947),” 18&19 February 1946, 260-261.
[80] Hiroshi Futaki, “Boyanmandukhu and the Inner Mongolian Autonomy Movement,” *Tokyo gaikokugo daigaku ronshū* (Area and Culture Studies), issue 64, Tokyo Univesity of Foreign Studies, 2002, 80,” 79.

in the Inner Mongolian frontier. Manibarada did not get any results from this meeting, which was the only direct contact between the Eastern Mongols and Americans.[81]

Despite receiving nothing from the Americans, Manibadara was able to establish relations with the KMT's infamous intelligence agent, the Bureau of Investigation and Statistics. He met Dai Li, the director of the BIS, in Beiping. Dai Li gave Manibadara an uncertain reply: if the Eastern Mongols helped to fight against the CCP, Generalissimo Chiang might allow them autonomy. Manibadara was persuaded. He went back with the radio and two intelligent agents. This mission proved a downright failure. Less than one month later, on 17 March 1946, Dai Li died in an air crash. Thus, his ambiguous promise would never be fulfilled. Besides, when the delegation was stuck in Beiping, Wangyemiao's leadership met Yun Ze, the CCP's representative. Buyanmandukhu immediately sent Manibadara a secret letter, telling him to stop the petition to the KMT government.[82]

Meanwhile, within the EMPAG, a breach appeared among the senior leaders. Hu Zhaoheng realised that Buyanmandukhu was unsatisfied with Khafungga.[83] Meanwhile, Dugarzhab told Hu that some were unsatisfied with Buyanmandukhu because he was "an elder going through four dynasties", an official during the Qing Dynasty, the warlord period, Manchukuo, and the current EMPAG.[84] The official dissolution of the IMPRP was likely due to a rift among its leadership. On 1 March 1946, the IMPRP formally announced its dissolution.[85] From the end of February to

[81] Liu Xiaoyuan has examined this interesting episode in detail. See Liu, *Reins of Liberation*, 285-288. Liu also discusses the ineffectiveness of the American intelligence work on Inner Mongolia and how it misunderstood Inner Mongolia's politics, even wrongly assuming the CCP supported Mongols' independent movement.

[82] Dawaaosier, "Wode jingli jianwen," NWZ 31, 164-165, 170; Demuchukedonglupu, "Demuchukedonglupu zishu" (The Self-Account of Demchugdongrub), NWZ 13, Hohhot: 1984, 143-144. Butegeqi(Buteegq), "Zizhiqu chengli qian de yiduan huiyi" (A Memory Before the Establishment of the Autonomous Region) *Xing'an wensh iziliao* 3, 1990, 3-4.

[83] "Hu Zhaoheng riji (1945-1947)," 3 March 1946, 268.

[84] "Hu Zhaoheng riji (1945-1947)," 28 February 1946, 267.

[85] According to Dawaaosier, Li Hongfan, and Duguerzhabu et al., Khafungga declared the dissolution of the IMPRP shortly after he returned from the MPR, which was in December 1945. Li Hongfan said the IMPRP was disbanded in January 1946. See Dawaosier, "Wode jingli jianwen," 161-162. Duguerzhabu et al, "Jiu Yiba yihou Neimenggu renmin geming dang zai Dongmenggu diqu de geming huodong pianduan", ibid., 253. Li Hongfan, ""Huiyi wo zai Zhemeng de gongzuo lichen," 57.
Japanese scholar Hiroshi Futaki points out that the IMPRP officially announced its disbandment on 1 March 1946, which was published in the local newspaper on 12 March 1946. Besides, Futaki argus that the CCP's narrative that the "3 April Conference unified

March 1946, Khafungga, Temurbagana and other leaders decided to reorganise a New Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party. This new IMPRP excluded the EMPAG's chairman, Buyanmandukhu, and other conservatives. They also decided that the new IMPRP should conduct activities secretly and only recruit party members privately. In February 1946, Khafungga and Temurbagana sent Tegus to report the establishment of the new IMPRP to Askhan. Askhan frankly informed Fang Zhida, a CCP cadre, about the new IMPRP's situation and requested the CCP's support. The CCP side agreed and helped to recruit a group of members for the new IMPRP.[86] Nevertheless, arguing that the EMPAG accepted the CCP's leadership at this point may be somewhat excessive. The EMPAG may regard the CCP as a more potent ally, but hardly its superior.

The Dissolution of the Independent EMPAG

The leadership of EMPAG accepted the CCP's suggestion and went to Chengde for a negotiation. Yun Ze arrived in Chengde in late March 1946. The three EMPAG leaders going to Chengde were Buyanmandukhu, Khafungga and Temurbagana. The CCP most favoured Temurbagana. When the two sides met, Yun Ze recognised him immediately: he had already met Temurbagana when they both studied in the Soviet Union. Yun Ze did not know the name Temurbagana because Temurbagana had used the Chinese name Zhang Cheng in the past. Temurbanga was an old member of the IMPRPR in the 1920s, used to study at the Communist University of the Toilers of the East, and joined the VKP (b).[87] Khafunggga, an intellectual, had the

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the Eastern and Western Mongolian autonomous movements" might not be correct. He points out that, at the beginning of March 1946, when the IMPRP formally announced its dissolution, it also said the IMPRP only consisted of a group of intellectuals, implying its limitation, while the FIMAM was a "United Front" and consisted of nobles, monks, civilians, and everyone. The IMPRP believed the FIMAM was more suitable for the current situation. Futaki argues that the EMPAG had already admitted the FIMAM. Futaki, "Boyanmandukhu and the Inner Mongolian Autonomy Movement," 80. Considering the Eastern Mongols were not monolithic, and there was a pro-KMT faction within it, the EMPAG probably had not prepared to accept the leadership of the FIMAM (or the CCP).

[86] Duguerzhabu et al, "Jiu yiba yihou Neimenggu renmin geming dang zai Dongmenggu diqu de geming huodong pianduan," 253-254.

Atwood said the reorganisation was "one of the most mysterious, yet possibly important events" in the history of the IMPRP. Atwood, "The East Mongolian Revolution and Chinese Communism," 50.

[87] *Wulanfu zhuan*, 134

most significant influence among the youth, who respectfully called him “Teacher.” He worked for Manchukuo but joined the IMPRP secretly in 1932 and did underground work, as mentioned before.[88] Buyanmandukhu, however, was the least favoured. He used to be the president of Great Hinggan Province (*Hinggan zong sheng*) in Manchukuo. According to Yun Ze, Buyanmandukhu’s background of working for the Japanese exposed the nature of the EMPAG to some extent.[89] Yun Ze implied that the EMPAG was pro-Japanese and not revolutionary. Buyanmandukhu joined the IMPRP in October 1925.[90] However, perhaps because of his high position in the Japanese puppet Manchukuo and his lack of revolutionary zeal, he was perceived as untrustworthy to a certain degree.

The three leaders shared the same idea: unifying the Eastern and Western Inner Mongolian autonomous movements, and the IMPRP rather than the CCP should lead it. They and the CCP’s cadres had intense arguments.[91] After the initial contact, the Communists discovered from the three that Khafungga was the most active, and he dominated the negotiation. Buyanmandukhu did not participate much. Temurbagana, according to Liu Chun, after meeting Yun Ze, his attitude was more softened.[92] Yun Ze believed if he could persuade Khafungga and Temurbagana first, then Buyanmandukhu would follow the other two. Yun Ze talked to Temurbagana in private, persuading him to accept the CCP’s leadership. This strategy worked. Temurbagana was already a member of CPSU. The ideological and organisational affinity made it easier for him to recognise the CCP. Temurbagana even asked Yun Ze to change his CPSU membership to a CCP membership.[93] Yun Ze agreed. It broke the stalemate of the negotiation. Later, Khafungga was accepted as a CCP member as well.[94] Buyanmandukhu was isolated. As Temurbagana and Khafungga became CCP members, they were expected to represent the CCP’s interests and

[88] Li Jinglan, “Hafenga”(Khafungga), in *Xing’an wenshi ziliao*, vol 4, 41.
[89] *Wulanfu zhuan*, 134.
[90] Moergen, “Guanyu Boyanmandu” (About Buyanmandukhu), in *Xing’an wenshi ziliao*, vol 3, 69.
[91] Liu Chun, “Neimeng gongzuo de huiyi,” NWZ 50, 55. *Wulanfu zhuan*, 132-133.
[92] Liu Chun, “Neimeng gongzuo de Huiyi,” 55-56.
[93] Liu Chun, ibid., 58. *Wulanfu zhuan*, 135-138.
[94] The accounts of how Khafungga joined the CCP were different. Liu Chun said the secretary of the Ji-Re-Liao Branch Bureau, Cheng Zihua, proposed that Khafungga could be accepted as a Party member. Liu Chun, ibid., 58. *Wulanfu zhuan* wrote that Khafungga asked to join CCP himself, 138-139.

position. They did. The EMPAG soon made a compromise: they agreed to accept the CCP's nationality policy and to disband the EMPAG and the IMPRP.[95]

On 3 April 1946, the two sides held the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Movement Unification Conference and formally passed the agreements. Eastern Mongols agreed to accept the leadership of the FIMAM. Thus, the Eastern and Western Mongolian autonomous movements appeared to be unified. However, it was a thorough undermining of the Eastern Mongols' self-governing: they all had to accept the CCP's leadership; the 'Liberated Region (*jiefang qu*)'s governments would supervise the leagues and banners; the CCP army (the Eighth Route Army) would launch the mass mobilisation, reform the regime and keep the social order; the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Army changed its name to Inner Mongolian Self-Defence Army; the CCP military leaders would command the Inner Mongolian army within their military regions; the CCP would help the Mongols to train cadres and armies. The EMPAG was dismissed and would be replaced by Hinggan Province, led by the CCP's Northeastern authorities.[96] Temurbagana became the chairman of Hinggan Province. Two Han CCP cadres, Zhang Ce and Fang Zhida, became the vice chairman and the secretary general, respectively. CCP Eastern Mongolian Work Committee was established. Khafungga, Temurbagana and Askan were accepted as committee members.

The executive committee of the FIMAM added a vice-chairman position, which was assumed by Buyanmandukhu, to placate him and his supporters. Yet, Buyanmandukhu did not join the CCP, and he was excluded from the power centre. It was no more than a nominal and honourable title. Khafungga became the director of FIMAM's Eastern Branch, which was responsible for affairs of the four eastern leagues: Jirem, Hinggan, Naun Mur, and Hulunbuir.[97] Ju Ud and Josutu, which were Eastern Mongols' desired territory, were directly led by the FIMAM. Temurbagana assumed the chairman of Hinggan Province. Khafungga, Temurbagana, and other CCP-favoured Eastern Mongols like Askhan and Pungsug were appointed CCP

[95] Liu Chun mentioned the three Eastern Mongol leaders also agreed to dismiss the IMPRP after the negotiation.Liu Chun, "Neimenggu gongzuo de huiyi", ibid., 59. Dawaaosier, "Wode huiyi jianwen", 161-162.

[96] Liu Chun, ibid., 63-64.

[97] Naun Mur League now is merged with Hulunbuir League.

Hinggan work committee members.[98] However, other Eastern Mongols were not prepared to pay loyalty to the CCP. When the three leaders returned to Wangyemiao from Chengde and told their followers the EMPAG would be cancelled, they suffered many objections. Some pointed out that because the Eastern Mongolian People's Congress approved the foundation of the EMPAG, its cancellation should also be approved by the Congress. Khafungga had to spend much effort to persuade his associates to accept these decisions from the Chengde Conference and agree to convene a provisional congress, which in May 1946 approved the cancellation of the EMPAG and the founding of Hinggan Province.[99] Some Eastern Mongols told the CCP cadres they wanted a "high degree autonomy, with autonomy on the surface and independence in fact". Just a few weeks after the Chengde Conference, Hu Zhaoheng felt an anti-CCP emotion in the Eastern Mongolian government.[100]

Although many Eastern Mongols were disgruntled about the consequences of the Chengde Conference, the CCP was satisfied to reach its strategic goal: the CCP was able to establish a stable base in Mongol territory during the civil war. By absorbing several crucial Eastern Mongolian elites into the CCP and letting them govern the Mongol land, the Party was able to influence this region. Zhang Ce admitted: "Although I had became the secretary of CCP Eastern Mongolia Work Committee and the vice chairman of Hinggan Province, I could not decide everything like I did in the Han people's areas. Except for the most significant issues, it was the Mongol comrades who played a decisive role."[101]

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[98] "Neimenggu zizhi yundong tongyi huiyi de zhuyao jueyi" (The Main Resolutions of the United Conference of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Movements), 3 April 1946, in NZYLDSX, 51-53. Liu Chun, ibid., 63. Askhan had good relations with the CCP. On 25 January 1925, Askhan (the Minister of the Internal Defence Department of the EMPAG) and Lü Zhengcao (the Commander of the West Manchurian Military Region) signed an agreement. It was called "Lü-A Agreement" in Chinese. The Inner Mongolian Autonomous Army would accept the leadership and command of the West Manchurian Military Region. They would fight together against their common enemies. West Manchuria would provide the Mongols with weapons and ammunition. Hao Weimin(ed), *Neimenggu geming shi* (The Revolutionary History of Inner Mongolia), Hohhot: Neimenggu daxue chubanshe, 1997, 464. Pungsug was an old IMPRP member.

[99] Dawaaosier, "Wode jingli jianwen," 169. Dawa-Ochir was the first one to argue that the dissolution of the EMAG should be passed by the congress.

[100] Hu Zhaoheng, "Hu Zhaoheng riji zhaichao (1946 4.1-12.31)", 12 April and 15 April 1946, *Xing'an geming shihua 2*, 176-177.

[101] Zhang Ce, "Wode kanke yisheng" (My Rough Life), in Xing'an meng dangshi ziliao zhengji bangongshi (ed) *Xing'an geming shihua* 3, 1990, 88.

To avoid denunciation from the KMT, the CCP publicly declared that it had helped and supported the Eastern Mongols rather than mentioning its leadership. It also secretly absorbed Mongols as new CCP members.[102] Hinggan Province was able to maintain some degree of autonomy before the extensive penetration of the CCP's influence. Nevertheless, as the KMT army began to march toward Inner Mongolia, the Hinggan government retreated to Hailar, a city in the Hulunbuir area, in June 1946. The CCP cadres were concerned that "Eastern Mongol upper stratum rightists would be possibly destabilised," implying they would shift loyalty to the KMT. Thus, they transferred the Hinggan government and Eastern Mongol upper-class elites to Hulunbuir.[103] Fang Zhida, the secretary general and Temurbagana, the chairman of Hinggan Province, retreated with the Eastern Mongol elites; they were the only two CCP members. Khafungga stayed in Wangyemiao to supervise the mass mobilisation and land reform in Hinggan Province.[104] "Some reactionary backward conservatives have left Wangyemiao, now Wangyemiao's all kinds of reforms are striding forward." Party cadre Zhang Ce commented, satisfied with this decision.[105] Hulunbuir did not participate in the former EMPAG. It was the Northeast Democratic United Army (the CCP's army, *Dongbei minzhu lianjun*) that entered this city in the first place on 16 May 1946.[106] Thus, although Hulunbuir belonged to the newly founded Hinggan Province, Wangyemiao's Mongol politicians had little authority there.[107]

It needs to be pointed out that Eastern Mongol revolutionaries, like Khafungga and Temurbagana, who were deeply impacted by communist ideology, might genuinely have embraced the CCP's land reform. It might be facile to assume that the CCP imposed land reform upon the Mongols, although it often did. Liu Xiaoyuan points

[102] Tegusi (Tegus), "Wo dui wuyi dahui de zai renshi" (My New Understanding of the May 1st Conference), NWZ 50, 211.

[103] Zhang Ce, Hu Zhaoheng and Fang Zhida, "Cong Dongmeng zizhi zhengfu dao Neimenggu zizhi zhengfu chengli de yixie qingkuang," 105.

[104] Dawaaosier, "Wode jingli jianwen," 172-173.

[105] Zhang Ce, "Zhang Ce guanyu Dongmenggu diqu (Xing'an) de gongzuo qingkuang he jingyan (zhailu)," 15 August 1946, MWWH, 1316.

[106] Layi, "Guanyu Hulunbeier 'jiu · san" hou yiduan zhengqing de huiyi, " 9-11. According to Fang Zhida, the Hulunbuir authorities did not welcome the CCP force either. It hoped to be independent. Fang Zhida, "Canjia Neimenggu dongbu diqu geming gongzuo de huiyi" (The Recalling of the Revolutionary Work in the eastern area of Inner Mongolia), in *Xing'an geming shihua* 1, 49.

[107] Dawaaosier, "Wode jingli jianwen," 173.

out: “The newborn eastern Mongolian movement appeared much more radical than the CCP in announcing its goals of enhancing workers’ and farmers’ welfare and avoiding a ‘capitalist future.’”[108] When Khafungga superintended the mass mobilisation of Hinggan Province, he insisted on implementing the rent reduction and salary increase, as well as distributing land, without distinguishing the Mongols and the Han, which tragically wrecked many Mongols’ lives. In Mongolia, the local Mongols leased their land to the Han immigrants; thus, according to the orthodox communist view, these Mongols were landlords and exploiters, whereas the Han, the outside colonisers in the Mongols’ point of view, became the exploited labourers. Khafungga’s fellow countrymen lost incomes due to the forced rent reduction, while the Han benefited from salary increases. Being questioned as to whether it would make the Mongol economy bankrupt, Khafungga defended his position, arguing that improving the living conditions of poor peasants and hired labourers was necessary. He said it was justified that the Mongol landlords should give back part of the rents and interest to the exploited Han.[109] Liu Xiaoyuan comments that Khafengga was thinking like a Mongolian revolutionary, who believed the Han should be treated equally.[110]

The Establishment of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Government

The optimism of the CCP’s cadres after the Chengde conference did not last long. In May 1946, the CCP suffered several military failures in the Northeast, and the KMT’s offensive directly threatened Jirem League. Due to the adverse military situation and the over-radical class struggle, the East Mongolian army’s 2nd Division had several defections to the KMT side.[111] It worsened the CCP and Eastern Mongols’

[108] Liu, *Reins of Liberation*, 271.

[109] “Hafenga gei Jigemude de fuhan” (Khafungga’s Reply to Jegmude), 19 July 1946, in NZYLDSX, 78-80. “Hafenga zai xikeqianqi gongzuotuan qunzhong gongzuo zongjiehui shang de jianghua (tigang)” (Khafungga’s Speech at the West Horqin Front Banner Work Group’s Masses Work’s Summary Meeting (Outline)), 24 July 1946, NZYLDSX, 80-86. Liu Xiaoyuan commented Khafungga was a mass-line practitioner himself, and actually he went further than the CCP’s plan at this stage. *Reins of Liberation*, 166-167.

[110] Liu, *Reins of Liberation*, 275.

[111] Li Hongfan, “Huiyi wo zai Zhemeng de gongzuo licheng”, 63.
Bagana, “Jiefang zhanzheng shiqi kezuohouqi dashiji” (The Major Events of Horqin Left Rear Banner During the War of Liberation), in Zhengxie keerqin zuoyi houqi weiyuanhui wenshi ziliao weiyuanhui (ed) *Keerqin zuoyi houqi wenshi ziliao 3*, 72.

relationships. The CCP cadres began to view the Mongols dubiously. A document from the Jirem party committee harshly argued that, unlike the Western Mongols who embraced the CCP, most Eastern Mongol political elites were arrogant new bureaucrats "pretending to be revolutionary." The young intellectuals were also "without class consciousness" and "controlled by the upper strata". They were untrustworthy. "We used to regard the IMPRP as a fraternal party… (but we) exaggerated its revolutionary nature and effect. A small group of youth from landlord families or having connections with feudalist upper strata will be dithering seriously and deserting us."[112] "If the situation deteriorates significantly, it's very possible that today's 'friends' will become enemies. They will ally with the KMT to attack us…"[113] Soon after the document's release, the mass mobilisation went over-radical in Jirem League. Some Mongol cadres' families became the target of attack, even including Khafungga's mother. Some Mongol landlords were forced to escape to the KMT-controlled zone. Although in September 1946, the leftism was redressed, it intensified Eastern Mongols' resentment, especially Buyanmandukhu's faction.[114] They blamed Khafungga for the over-radical mass mobilisation. (In fact, Khafungga was not directly involved in Jirem League's movements. He mainly supervised the democratic reform in Hinggan.)

Buyanmandukhu's faction had already been discontent with Khafungga. The rift was caused by Manibadara's arrest in Hailar on 21 September 1946. Manibadara was accused of being a KMT spy and was arrested by Khafungga and Zhang Ce's order. A reason for his arrest, which had been half a year after his contact with the KMT side, was that Manibadara believed that Eastern Mongolia should not be involved in the KMT-CCP conflicts. His opinion impacted the "swinging people" and eroded their

According to Li Hongfan, they were the 13th Regiment, part of the 14th Regiment, and two companies of the 12th Regiment. However, he did not clearly give the time.

Bagana's article was slightly different. In June 1946, the commander of the 1st company of the 12th Regiment defected. Three companies of the 12th Regiment defected, one in August and two in September. This article only introduced the 12th Regiment's situation.

[112] "Dui guoqu Menggu gongzuo de jiantao ji jinhou gongzuo fangzhen renwu de baogao" (The Review of the Mongolian Work in the Past and the Report on the Guidelines and Assignments in the Future), 31 July 1946, MWWH, 1306-1307.

[113] Ibid., 1308.

[114] Dawaaosier, "Wode jingli lianwen," 177. Tao Zhu, the Party Secretary of CCP Liaoji Province Committee, had to apologise to Khafungga's mother. Li Hongfan, "Huiyi wo zai Zhemeng de gongzuo lichen," 63-65.

morale in the civil war. Manibadara sponsored many intellectuals during the Manchukuo period. Thus, he received sympathy.[115] This incident caused a breach between Khafungga's faction and Buyanmandukhu's faction. Buyanmandukhu's supporters insisted the arrest lacked evidence and even suspected Khafungga ordered Manibadara's arrest for personal reasons, as the two had been at odds for years. Nevertheless, Buyanmandukh's attempt to rescue Manibadara failed and had to accept it.[116] Yet, the two factions did not escalate the conflict; they had a long talk and solved the problem temporarily.[117]

As the CCP's army was in a dire situation on the Northeastern battlefields in the autumn and winter of 1946, unrest grew among the Eastern Mongols. The CCP lost Tongliao and Kailu on 22 and 26 October 1946. The government of Jirem League had to leave Tongliao and retreat to the north. In November 1946, most of Jirem League was occupied by the KMT army.[118] "There was a big shock here," noticed Hu Zhaoheng.[119] A certain number of Eastern Mongols ostracised the CCP. Around November 1946, the detestation of the CCP became too strong to be ignored. Hu Zhaoheng complained the estrangement in his diary: "…listening to their report. They talked in Mongolian. I could not understand and had to read newspapers. They were just like that several times recently."[120] "There were some abnormal phenomena here, in the executive committee (of the FIMAM Eastern Mongolian branch). (They) objected the Youth League and the Eighth Route Army."[121] Worse, some Eastern Mongols openly refused to help the CCP in the civil war. The 1st Division of Inner Mongolian Self-defence Army commander Medeltü laid his pistol on the table and asked Liu Chun aggressively: "In the past, we listened to the western part; now, you should listen to the eastern part. Do we Mongols have to follow the CCP to fight? Can we withdraw from this war and maintain neutrality?"[122] Medeltü was not hostile

[115] Chaogemandula (Tsogman-du-la), "Jindai Xing'an meng diqu tudi wenti yanjiu" (A Study on the Land Issues of Hinggan League Area in Modern Era), Doctoral Dissertation, Inner Mongolia University, 2012, 141-142.
[116] Dawaaosier, "Wode jingli jianwen," 173-174.
[117] Dawaaosier, Ibid., 175-179.
[118] Zhonggong Zhelimu meng dangshi bangongshi (ed) *Zhonggong Zhelimu meng dangshi dashiji* (The Major Events of the CCP in Jirem League), Tongliao: 1991, 14.
[119] "Hu Zhaoheng riji zhaichao (1946 4.1-12.31)," 9 November 1946, 219.
[120] "Hu Zhaoheng riji zhaichao (1946 4.1-12.31)," 6 November 1946, 218.
[121] "Hu Zhaoheng riji zhaichao (1946 4.1-12.31)," 14&15 November 1946, 220.
[122] Liu Chun, "Neimeng gongzuo de huiyi," 73.

to the CCP in the past. Before the Chengde Conference, his division even had a CCP cadre, Hu Bingquan, as the political commissar.[123] But now, even the relatively friendly Eastern Mongols were losing patience and confidence. The two CCP cadres, Liu Chun and Zhang Ce, realised the KMT army's large-scale attack did demoralise the Eastern Mongolian upper strata.[124]

The most critical issue for the CCP was that almost all the influential Eastern Mongol elites demanded a unified autonomous government rather than led by different provinces. The CCP CC had to respond on 26 November 1946: "About the inner Mongolian autonomy, in Eastern Mongolia, the old, the young, the progressive, and the backward all have this requirement. Furthermore, all the Inner Mongolian representatives of the National Assembly (held on 12 November 1946) also had this requirement. …It is estimated that the KMT will not allow the autonomy, but it may restore the Mongol Local Autonomy Political Affairs Committee (*meng zheng hui*) or adopt other deceptive means…Now, the domestic public opinion is gradually sympathetic to the autonomy of Inner Mongolia. Also, the KMT is gradually intruding into Inner Mongolia. Thus, the Central Committee thinks that in order to unite the Inner Mongolian people to resist Chiang Kai-shek's military attack and political-economic oppression, Eastern and Western Mongolia could be united to establish a regional,w highly autonomous government and publish a policy agenda. In the Mongol-Han mixed living areas, the Han's cooperation should be included. And do avoid adopting the form of the independent state."[125] The dreadful military situation in the Northeast area forced the CCP to play the United Front card and make concessions to the Mongols. Moreover, if the CCP did not promise autonomy to the Mongols, its foe, KMT, may do so and enlist public opinion's support. The CCP would not risk losing the Mongol allies in the civil war. It had to permit the autonomy, but it would make sure it was the CCP that presided over the regime of the Mongols.

From November 1946 to early 1947, both the CCP and the Eastern Mongols were thinking of how to organise the unified Inner Mongolian government. The Eastern

[123] "Hu Zhaoheng riji (1945-1946)," 12 February 1946*, Xing'an geming shihua 1*, 258.
[124] Liu Chun, "Neimeng gongzuo de huiyi," 73.
[125] "Zhonggong Zhongyang guanyu kaolü chengli Neimeng zizhi zhengfu de zhishi" (The CCP CC's Instruction about Considering Establishing an Inner Mongolian Autonomous Government), 26 November 1946, MWWH, 1083.

Mongol elites raised issues about what type of autonomy the new government should have and whether to re-establish the IMPRP. Buyanmandukhu insisted on establishing a high degree of autonomous government, like the former EMPAG. However, his opinion was accused of “de facto independence” and “national separatism”.[126] Khafungga and many Mongols asked to re-establish the IMPRP. They gave plausible reasons. In theory, the Communist Party was the party of workers, but there were few modern industries and no proletariat in Inner Mongolia. Thus, Inner Mongolia didn’t have the conditions to establish a communist party. It would be better to organise the IMPRP as the CCP’s peripheral organisation, and the CCP could lead the Inner Mongolian revolution through the IMPRP.[127] In the eyes of the Han Communists, this contention was the definitive proof that the Eastern Mongols wanted to seize power from the CCP’s hands. The Eastern Mongol Communists became untrustworthy immediately. The Northeast Bureau reported to the CCP CC:

> The leaders of Eastern Mongolia Khafungga, Temurbagana, Pungsug, and Western Mongolia’s Wu Xianwen,[128] advocated establishing the IMPRP. …they did activities among the masses secretly and colluded with the rightists, attempting to discuss it at the Inner Mongolian People’s Congress to make it an accomplished fact and then force the Party to admit it. Also, they spread many anti-communist speeches, such as if the CCP CC did not allow them to organise the IMPRP, it would be great Han chauvinism. (They) didn’t recognise the Inner Mongolian revolution as a part of the Chinese revolution. This event further proves that although Khafungga, Temurbagana, Pungsug and others

[126] Dawaaosier, “Wode jingli jianwen,” 180-181.

[127] Wang Zaitian, “Neimenggu zizhi zhengfu chegnli qianhou shehuibu wode bufen gongzuo huigu” (The Review of Part of My Work in the Department of Social Affairs Around the Establishment of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Government), in NWZ 50, 134. Tegusi, “Wo dui wuyi dahui de zai renshi,” 213.

[128] Wu Xianwen (ÖljeiOchir) was from Kharachin Banner, Ju Ud League (today’s Chifeng City), in Eastern Mongolia. Wu Xianwen was sent by the Comintern to study at the Communist University of the Toilers of the East in 1925. In 1928, he was sent back to China to do underground work. Bailadugeqi, “Duzhe laixin zhaideng,” *Yanhuang chunqiu*, 2013 Issue 11, 93. He was a member of the IMPRP’s central committee in 1927. His worked in Prince De’s army before 1945. After the Japanese surrender, he organised the forces for the CCP in Sonid and Ulanqab (Western Mongolia) in 1946 and joined the CCP in January 1947. Atwood, *Young Mongols and Vigilantes*, 1048. That is why the document said he was from Western Mongolia.

have joined the CCP, their thinking is nationalist. They used to be the rulers of Inner Mongolia and the military and political officers of the puppet Manchukuo. In order to maintain their status, they take advantage of the weakness that Yun Ze and other comrades do not have many connections with the Eastern Mongolian progressive masses. They attempt to form their own force. In fact, they are confronting Yun Ze…[129]

The language of this accusation was very austere, harshly discrediting the Eastern Mongolian leaders. They were no longer comrades but unpleasant conspirators conducting anti-CCP activities. According to another account, the Eastern Mongols even claimed that "if the CCP doesn't recognise the IMPRP, we will not be eligible to join the CCP," which meant they were threatening to quit the CCP. They claimed they would rather leave the CCP if they could reorganise the IMPRP.[130] Along with the IMPRP question, many Mongols still did not want to give up the dream of unifying Inner and Outer Mongolia.[131]

The disobedient Mongols were not merely the "conservatives" but also included the ones who joined the CCP. They were expected to abide by the Party's discipline. Why did they require to re-establish the IMPRP again? It was possible these Mongol Communists still held the old Comintern guideline that the IMPRP should lead Inner Mongolia's revolution, but they did not realise the CCP's ethnopolitical strategy had changed from pro-independence to anti-independence.[132] Besides, the Eastern Mongol leaders faced swelling opposition from their compatriots. Hu Zhaoheng recorded the information from loyal Mongol Communists, "the backward people (*luohou fenzi*) and progressive people (*jinbu fenzi*) are together. …They attacked Temurbagana because he did not allow to issue Mongol currency and let the Eighth Route Amry take all the cattle and sheep hides away with the Northeast currency; they attacked Askhan because he lost Jirem League; they attacked Khafungga's

[129] "Zhonggong Zhongyang dongbeiju guanyu neimeng zuzhi renming geming dang wenti de qingshi baogao" (The Report from the Northeast Bureau of the CCP CC about the People's Revolutionary Party's Organising Problem in Inner Mongolia), 18 April 1947, MWWH, 1100.
[130] Hu Zhaoheng, "Hu Zhaoheng riji zhaichao", 8 April 1947, in *Xing'an geming shihua* 3, 238.
[131] Ibid., 19 March 1947, 232.
[132] Bailadugeqi, "Duzhe laixin zhaideng," *Yanhuang chunqiu*, 2013 Issue 11, 93.

handling of the Solon incident;[133] they attacked Yun Ze that he doesn't know Mongolian and doesn't have much Mongolian colour…"[134] Probably because of these complaints, the Eastern Mongol Communists had to raise the IMPRP issue again to regain their countrymen's support.

These Mongol elites made a dreadful blunder. At least, they chose an awkward time. In the spring of 1947, the civil war's situation in the Northeast was gradually becoming favourable to the Communists, who were less eager to satisfy the Mongols' demands. In early April 1947, after the Linjiang Campaign, the KMT's four major offensives all failed. The CCP annihilated more than 43,000 enemies, reoccupied 11 lost cities, and successfully defended its bases in Manchuria.[135] The CCP army's morale was greatly boosted. It could think more of holding power and less of winning over the Mongol allies. Nevertheless, the CCP could still make concessions on re-establishing the IMPRP, but it would never make concessions on the power. On 23 April 1947, the CCP CC replied to the Northeast Bureau:

> If…these people firmly insist on reorganising it, and if our Party members can't convince them, it would be better to establish the IMPRP centred on our party actively. …At the same time, keep the independence and the development of the Inner Mongolian communist party. The core issue of Inner Mongolia was the military force must be controlled by our Party. The autonomous regime must be led by our Party. About the political organisation, no matter political parties or masses organisations, they won't make significant differences among the Inner Mongolian people…[136]

Probably, Khafungga had heard some information. He told other Mongols that the CCP CC allowed them to reorganise the IMPRP. It was not wholly wrong. However, when Tegus, a young Mongol CCP member, asked Yun Ze whether Khafungga's

[133] It was a rebellion in October 1946 in Solon Town, Tuquan County. The rebels were against the rule of the CCP. Two main leaders were executed in March 1947, some were killed, and the rest were sentenced.

[134] "Hu Zhaoheng riji zhaichao," 19 March 1947, 232.

[135] Ding Xiaochun, Ge Fulu and Wang Shiying (eds), *Dongbei jiefang zhanzheng dashiji* (The Major Events of the War of Liberation in the Northeast), Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi ziliao chubanshe, 1987, 115-117.

[136] "Zhonggong Zhongyang guanyu dui neimeng renmin geming dang de duice gei dongbeiju de zhishi" (The Instruction from the CCP CC to the Northeast Bureau About the Solution to the IMPRP), 23 April 1947, MWWH, 1103.

words were true, Yun Ze answered no. Yun Ze also showed a telegram from Choibalsan, who said having other political parties except the CCP in Inner Mongolia was unnecessary. Choibalsan's telegram was fatal to Khafungga's credibility. Admiring Choibalsan's authority, the young Mongols who used to respect Khafungga were sure he lied to them. Feeling cheated, these indignant young men stood unwaveringly with the CCP and strongly opposed the re-organisation of the IMPRP. Only in 1973 did Tegus finally see the telegram that the CCP CC, in fact, considered allowing the IMPRP's existence. Khafungga did not lie.[137] Due to the young revolutionary Mongols' objection, Khafungga and his associates' plan of reestablishing the IMPRP was abortive.

On 23 April 1947, the Inner Mongolian People's Congress was held in Wangyemiao. The Mongols, who still desired more autonomy, tried their last efforts. One month before the conference, the CCP cadres had pre-determined the name lists of the government and the senate, called the "electoral alliance" (*xuanju lianmeng*), including the upper, middle and lower strata, and the leftists, midlist and the rightists. They decided that Yun Ze would become the chairman of the autonomous government, Khafungga would serve as the vice-chairman, and Buyanmandukhu would hold the position of senate speaker.[138] The CCP cadres believed it would unite most of the people. Like most CCP elections, the representatives did not vote freely but needed to vote for the pre-determined names. However, the Eastern Mongol leaders, including Khafungga, Temurbagana, and Pungsug, who had already joined the CCP, tried to challenge the tacit rule and wanted to vote for the people they trusted. They ran an election campaign among the representatives.[139] According to Liu Chun, these Mongols wished to exclude the Mongol cadres from Yan'an (probably except Yun Ze and Kui Bi), the youth joining the revolution after the

[137] Tegusi, "Wo dui wuyi dahui de zai renshi," 213.

[138] Liu Chun, "Neimeng gongzuo de huiyi," 78. *Wulanfu huiyilu*, 220-221.

[139] Liu Chun commented: "These comrades did not vote for the Northeast Bureau-approved electoral alliance; they made a serious mistake. It was a violation of the discipline which was never allowed for Communists." Ulanhu's memoir commented: "A small number of people wanted a 'free election'. They invited guests and did canvassing, trying to overthrow the decision of the Northeast Bureau." Nevertheless, Tegus, who stood firmly with the CCP in 1947, said retrospectively in the 1990s: "I used to view these (canvassing) activities as a usurp of the leadership. But today, I see it as an activity of democratic election. It is much better than the method which makes representatives circle on the pre-determined list without full discussions." See Liu Chun, "Neimeng gongzuo de huiyi," 79, *Wulanfu huiyilu*, 220-221. Tegusi, 212. "Wo dui wuyi dahui de zai renshi," 212.

Japanese surrender and the Han people.[140] Their intention was obvious: making sure the ones who strived for genuine autonomy would dominate the autonomous government. Unfortunately, their activities leaked out. The CCP cadres promptly instructed all pro-CCP individuals to vote for the people on the predetermined list. Finally, the CCP won. It turned out that all the defeated candidates were the ones not obedient to the CCP's plan. Buyanmandukhu got the least votes among the elected candidates, just over half.[141]

The setting up of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Government (later Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region) was a significant symbol, formally incorporating Eastern Mongolia into the CCP regime. It was also the formal termination of the autonomy the Eastern Mongols used to enjoy in the last two years. Although several political conflicts occurred afterwards, they made no difference.

Chapter Summary

The CCP's force grew rapidly during the Sino-Japanese War. By 1945, the CCP's regime controlled 1 million square kilometres of land, had a regular army with 1.2 million personnel, and had 2.6 million militia. It did not struggle for survival like it used to in the Long March period. It already had the strength to compete with Chiang Kai-shek's government. Although winning over the Mongols to fight against the KMT

[140] Liu Chun, "Neimeng gongzuo de huiyi," 76-79. Dawaaosier, "Wode jingli jianwen," 182. *Wulanfu huiyilu*, 220-221.

[141] Dawaaosier, "Wode jingli jianwen," 183. Liu Chun, "Neimeng gongzuo de huiyi," 79. Ulanhu's memoir claimed, "I told them, if you need a free election, let the representatives choose freely." *Wulanfu huiyilu*, 220-221. It was probably not true, as it was not an actual "free" election. Liu Chun's account was closer to the reality: the CCP cadres clearly instructed the pro-CCP people how to vote: make sure the most favoured cadres get the most votes and ensure the "oppositions" get fewer votes. This strategy has been repeatedly used in the Party's history. For example, it was used at the CCP's 9th National Congress in 1969. Mao Zedong named ten cadres: Chen Yun, Zhu De, Li Fuchun, Li Xiannian, Nie Rongzhen, Ye Jianying, Chen Yi, Xu Xiangqian, Deng Zihui, and Zhang Dingcheng. They made political "mistakes", and Mao called them "opponents". But Mao insisted these ten people should be elected to the 9th Central Committee. "Does it matter that the Party has several opponents? You can just oppose!" Said Mao. Nevertheless, Mao hoped they would not get too many votes; thus, they could learn a lesson and reflect on their mistakes. All the representative groups received the task: Who needed to vote for the ten "opponents" and who would not vote. The task had to be assigned to every individual representative. After the representatives are clear about their task, they must swear by the "Party spirit" to vote strictly according to the instructions. Chi Zehou, "Zhonggong 'jiuda' neimu suoyi" (The Inside Story of the CCP 9th National Congress), *Yanhuang chunqiu*, 2003, No. 3, 48.

government was still crucial, the CCP did not want them to claim independence from China. It actively suppressed any independent attempts. However, the CCP would still make significant compromises and play the United Front card when it was in adversity and needed allies. We could see a pattern in the CCP's engagement with the Mongols' autonomous or independent movements. When the CCP was militarily disadvantaged, it was more likely to conciliate the Mongol people's autonomous demands. The CCP permitted the Mongols to establish an autonomous government when its bases in the Northeast were crumbling. However, the concession had a red line: the autonomy must not threaten the leadership of the CCP.

The CCP adopted similar strategies to engage with the two autonomous regimes. To gain the trust of the Mongols, the CCP often sent its Mongol cadres to penetrate their organisations and persuade the leftists to support the CCP. In the case of the Provisional Government, Yun Ze directly became its chairman and dismantled it later. Although Han cadres initially contacted the Eastern Mongols, Yun Ze became the top leader when the IMAR was established. The pro-CCP leftists among the Eastern Mongol elites, like Khafungga, Temurbagana and others, also became temporary executors of the Party's will.

I did not examine one point in detail: the CCP sent Mongol cadres to bring around the eastern Mongol youth. Despite receiving zealous responses from the revolutionary eastern Mongol youth, this method also exposed the CCP's limitations. CCP Mongol cadres usually encountered distrust and rejection when approaching their eastern compatriots. One significant reason was that most Mongol cadres were Chinese-speaking. Some of them spoke rusty Mongolian, while many had never learned to speak Mongolian at all. Yun Ze and many of his comrades in arms were from Tumed, one of the most sinicised Mongolian regions. They did not speak Mongolian; their names were originally Chinese, and they did not adopt Mongolian names until they arrived in Yan'an in the 1940s. Their Mongol identity was often questioned.[142] Wang Zaitian, a Mongol cadre from Horqin Left Middle Banner, spoke

[142] For example, Bayandalai accused Yun Ze of being a "real communist and false Mongol" because Yun didn't speak Mongolian. *Wulanfu zhuan*, 105. When Yun Ze went to Eastern Mongolia, sometimes people couldn't understand his accent, and there were rumours that he was not a real Mongol. Wang Zaitian needed to explain to the Eastern Mongols that Yun Ze was from Tumed; Tumed Mongols speak Chinese with Shanxi accent and don't speak Mongolian. Wang Zaitian, "Neimenggu zizhi zhengfu chegnli qianhou shehuibu wode bufen

Mongolian as his native language. However, his Mongolian skills became inept when he returned to Inner Mongolia after over two decades. He needed to bring a Mongolian translator when he went to the Sino-Mongolian border. To convince the eastern Mongols of his identity, Wang had to bring his mother with him, who spoke Jirem accent Mongolian idiomatically.[143] It was an innate deficiency since the CCP was born: the Party had little influence in the Mongolian-speaking region. By investigating the backgrounds of the Mongols who were attracted to the CCP in the 1920s, Atwood discovers that they were notably familiar with Chinese culture and language or highly sinicised. All the prominent Mongol Communists who joined the CCP from 1924 to 1925 were either from the Tumed Banner in Hohhot or the Kharachin Right Banner in southern Rehe. Both regions had large Chinese populations, and the Mongols had changed to ploughing from traditional pasturing. Thus, the CCP's influence was very limited in the pastoral and semi-pastoral regions or where the Chinese language was not spoken. Atwood concludes reasonably that the social proximity to the Chinese culture and language determined whether the CCP would attract the Mongols.[144]

Surely, most Chinese official narratives claim that incorporating the autonomous movements in Inner Mongolia onto the road led by the CCP proved the correctness and the advanced nature of the Party's nationality policy. However, it was the international environment that determined the Inner Mongols' fate: Stalin did not allow Choibalsan to annex Inner Mongolia. Without assistance from the MPR or the Soviets, the Inner Mongols had no choice but to cooperate with Chinese forces. Their autonomous ambition was doomed to fail.

gongzuo huigu," 132. Keligeng, from Tumed, also encountered such suspicion. He spoke Chinese with a Shanxi accent. The Eastern Mongols thought he was a Han person from Shanxi, not a Mongol. Keligeng, "Guanyu Neimeng zizhi yundong tongyi de huiyi,"151.

[143] Wang Zaitian, "Neimenggu Zizhi Zhengfu Chegnli Qainhou Shehuibu Wode Bufen Gongzuo Huigu" (The review of my part of work in the department of social affairs around the establishment of the Inner Mongolian autonomous government), Neimenggu Wenshiziliao, 50, pp. 123-124, 131-132.

[144] Atwood, *Young Mongols and Vigilantes*, 278-285.

Chapter 2 The Civil War, the Democratic Reform and the Swinging Ethnopolitical Policy in Inner Mongolia: 1946 to 1949

This chapter will discuss the CCP's national minority policy in Inner Mongolian areas during the civil war period by examining the democratic reform. Before the discussion, I need to clarify the terminology. In Chinese official jargon, democratic reform[1] usually connotes the establishment of the CCP's regime in national minority areas or pastoral areas, which is roughly equivalent to land reform in most rural areas. The two terms basically are the same, indicating the undermining or elimination of the old forces, the redistribution of wealth, and the CCP's regime building. Thus, this chapter did not strictly distinguish the two terms. In addition, this chapter employs numerous strong class struggle terms, such as landlords and local tyrants. As these words were from the CCP documents, I tried to keep them as orignial, but may add quotation marks to reduce the emotion.

The CCP's democratic reform policy in Inner Mongolia lacked consistency. It fluctuated over time, significantly influenced by the state of the civil war. When the CCP had a relatively strong will to maintain peace, it would adopt relatively moderate policies to sustain the United Front and enlist the Mongol people's support. In such a circumstance, the land reform would appear more moderate and would consider the interests of the Mongols. Yet, when the civil war situation was serious, and the CCP believed it could only rely on the poor, the United Front would be set aside, and the Party would enforce radical reforms. The interests of national minorities would give way to class struggle. The decisions of the superiors mostly dictated Inner Mongolian land reform policies. Sometimes it was the Northeast Bureau, which was directly involved in the civil war in Manchuria. More often, the reform decisions were made by the highest authority, the CCP CC. This section may seem lengthy, but I believe that historical research requires support from detailed and accurate information, which can help to mitigate the distortion of history.

I've been somewhat misdirected by the lack of accurate details in the historical narrative when researching Inner Mongolia's land reform. I found that most of the

[1] Democratic reform is also used to describe the CCP's regime building in the industrial and commercial fields. However, due to the limited space, this chapter will only focus on the rural areas' reform.

cadres' memoirs, especially those essays that applaud Ulanhu's "Three Nos and Two Benefits",[2] tend to focus on the regional level of the policy-making process and underline the contributions of Ulanhu and his colleagues, while hardly spot the role of higher authorities. After conducting arduous research, I found that this narrative is, in fact, inaccurate. In fact, Ulanhu and Inner Mongolian cadres had to obey the will of higher authorities: the Northeast Bureau and the CCP CC. While it is difficult to conclude whether the cadres' memoirs are motivated by a political need to glorify Ulanhu, their historical narratives are somewhat misleading.

Such a narrative may have influenced the research studies based on these memoirs, including both Chinese and English writings. Non-official researchers use Ulanhu's peaceful model to challenge the CCP's traditional violent land reform model, but they also tend to overlook the role of the higher authorities in Ulanhu's policy-shaping process.[3] Only a very few memoirs and academic studies examining Inner

[2] Most cadres' memoirs and discussions about "Three Nos" are collected in Neimenggu zizhiqu zhengxie wenshi ziliao weiyuanhui (ed) *Sanbu liangli yu wenkuanchang: Huiyi yu sikao*(Neimenggu wenshi ziliao 59) (cited as NWZ 59 below), 2006. Among them, Zhao Zhenbei's article "Zongjie Neimenggu muqu minzhu gaige de jingyan, " 87-106, was translated into English by Mongolian scholar Uradyn E. Bulag. Zhao Zhenbei, "A New Appraisal of Democratic Reform in the Pastoral Zone of Inner Mongolia in the 1940s," *Central Asian Survey*, 17:1, 109-137. Zhao's essay includes a large number of statistics on Inner Mongolia's agriculture, which are very valuable. Some other memoirs are also supported by the original data. Nevertheless, we need to bear in mind that the CCP's official discourse is very likely to highlight the achievements of the Party while downplaying the mistakes. In addition, the memory of the writer may become blurred over time; thus, some accounts could be contradictory to others. Researchers often need other evidence to verify these accounts.

Compared to the pastoral reform discussions, cadres writing about Inner Mongolian land reform in arable areas, in general, were more inclined to mention the upper authorities' role. Still, most of them only talked about it in one or two sentences.

[3] Most academic studies are in the Chinese language. Several discussions were written in English, like Bulag, "Chapter 4: From Inequality to Difference: Colonial Contradictions of Class and Ethnicity in 'Socialist China'", in *The Mongols at China's Edge*, 105-135. Bulag insightfully explores the dilemma of the policy of difference by examining the land policy toward the Mongols. Policies based on universalism may disadvantage some vulnerable groups, while policies based on difference (reverse discrimination) may lead others to perceive them as unfair. Besides, Cheng et al. and Liu Xiaoyuan spent several pages on the land reform. See Cheng, Bulag and Selden, *A Chinese Rebel beyond the Great Wall*, 40-42. Liu, *Reins of Liberation*, 271-278. It is agreed among scholars that the CCP adopted an ethnic-blind approach in the early stage of the land reform. Nevertheless, Bulag did not discuss the role of the higher authorities in Ulanhu's policy shifting, nor did Cheng et al and Liu.

Some good Chinese essays: Qinggeletu, "Neimenggu muqu minzhu gaige yundong" (The Democratic Reform in Inner Mongolia's Pastoral Areas), *Neimenggu shehui kexue*, 1995 (06), 32-37. Qinggeletu, "Neimenggu dongbu qu de tudi gaige" (The Land Reform in

Mongolia's land reform have noticed the impact of higher authorities. However, they often lack in-depth analysis of the root causes of such a top-down policy shift, or were still confined to the Northeast Bureau, but failed to notice that the CCP CC had the final say in the determination.[4] Besides, they receive little academic attention. In contrast, those scholars who study the overall land reform find it almost impossible to ignore the role of the centre. I believe such a blind spot needed to be addressed.

The CCP established a strict vertical power structure. When the top authority made determinations, the lower-level cadres were usually left with little choice but to stick to them. Ulanhu was no exception. The current historical evidence indicates that his moderate model did not fully develop until the CCP's top leaders decided to correct the previous leftist mistakes. Without a broader perspective, the previous scholarly accounts were probably somewhat limited in understanding the whole picture of the Inner Mongolian reform. This chapter tries to fill the lacuna by adding an examination of the CCP's overall land policy and the Northeast's land reform from 1946 to 1949. As the Inner Mongolian areas were under the leadership of the Northeast Bureau during the civil war, regardless of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region or

Eastern part of Inner Mongolia), *Neimenggu daxue xuebao* (renwen shehui kexue ban), 1998, issue 1, 13-19. Burentonglaga, "Zhaowuda meng tudi gaige yanjiu" (The Study of Zhaowuda Area Land Reform), Master Disseration, Inner Mongolia University, 2008. Cheng Tijie, "Neimeng dongbu 'wenhe tugai' yu Wulanfu de wenge daotai" (The Moderate Land Reform in Eastern Inner Mongolia and the Downfall of Ulanhu in the Cultural Revolution), in Song Yongyi (ed), *Chongshen Mao Zedong de tudi gaige: Zhonggong jianzheng chuqi de zhengzhi yundong 70 zhounian de lishi huigu*, part 2, Hongkong: Greenfield Bookstore, 2019.

[4] Liu Chun's memoir stated that Gao Gang and Luo Ronghuan (leaders of the Northeast Bureau) demanded Inner Mongolia change the previous leftist policy. Liu Chun, "Minzhu geming shiqi Neimenggu muye qu de minzhu gaige" (Inner Mongolia's Pastoral Areas' Democratic Reform During the Democratic Revolution Period), *in Xing'an dangshi wenji* 2, 127-144. A short anonymous essay, "1948 nian 2 yue Wulanfu muqu minzhu gaige sixiang zhuanbian de yuanyin" (The Reasons for the Change in Ulanhu's Thinking on the Democratic Reform of the Pastoral Areas in February 1948), *Xing'an dangshi wenji 3*, 255-259, probably based on Liu Chun's memoir, argued that the attitudes of the Northeast Bureau leaders played a decisive role in Ulanhu's pastoral reform thinking's change. Yet Liu Chun's memoir and this anonymous article did not examine the Central Committee's new decisions about land reform in late 1947 and early 1948. Without the Central Committee's policy shift in the first place, the Northeast Bureau could not have softened the radical land policy.

Tsogman-du-la's PhD thesis, "Jindai Xing'an meng diqu tudi wenti yanjiu" (A Study on the Land Issues of Hinggan League Area in Modern Era) listed the corrective actions of the CCP CC and the Northeast Bureau.

Mongolian areas outside of the IMAR, its rural revolution was inevitably highly impacted by the overall Northeast's political situation.

Land Reform Before and During the Chinese Civil War

The CCP began its land reform during the Jinggang Mountain period. The Chinese Soviet Republic regime, resisting the encirclement of the KMT government, was desperate to find a source for its financial expenditures. Thus, the "local tyrants" (*tu hao*) became its target. The CCP immediately launched the "fighting the local tyrants, distributing the land" (*da tu hao, fen tian di*) campaign. By confiscating the rich's properties, the CCP relieved its financial burden and won support from the poor peasants.[5]

Nevertheless, the radical land policy changed during the Sino-Japanese War period. To gain the most extensive support, the CCP implemented a more moderate land policy in its controlled regions called Rent and Interest Reduction (*jian zu jian xi*). The Party, although due to its ideological stance, was supposed to side with the poor, did not intend to intimidate landlords too much during the war. Thus, it made the compromised policy without destroying land ownership; it only required landlords and loan sharks to reduce rent and interest, relieving the burden on the poor.[6] By implementing the rent and interest reduction policy, some landlords' wealth slowly

[5] Chen Yung-fa, *Zhongguo gongchan geming qishinian* (The Seventy Years of Chinese Communist Revolution), Taipei: Linking Publishing, 2011, vol. 1, 250-251.

[6] The reduction of rents and interest rates policy was formally announced on 28 January 1942 by the CCP CC. The landlords were required to reduce 25% of their previous rent to relieve the tenant farmers' burden. The "reduction of interest rates" was targeted at the loan sharks. The Party recognised the loan relationship formed before the Sino-Japanese War. The standard interest rate was 15%. If the interest rate was above 100%, the debtors only needed to pay for the principal, not the interest. If the interest was above 200%, the debtors did not need to pay either the principal or the interest. "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu kangri genjudi tudi zhengce de jueding" (The CCP CC's Determination on the Land Policy of the Anti-Japanese Base Areas), 28 January 1942, in ZZWX, vol. 13 (1941-1942), 280-289. Suzanne Pepper found out that the policy was not as successful as expected. For example, in Shandong, only about 40% of the tenant families had benefited from rent reduction. The landlords may threaten the tenants who asked for a lower rent. Suzanne Pepper, *Civil War in China: The Political Struggle, 1945-1949*, Rowman&Littlefield Publishers, 1999, 263, 275.

flew to the poor. Households of landlords decreased while the number of middle peasants increased; some middle peasants came from previous poor peasants.[7]

On 4 May 1946, when the civil war was looming, the CCP CC released its new instruction on land reform, which was usually referred to as the "May Fourth Directive". It is believed that the previous reduction of the rent and interest rates policy was too moderate. In some regions, there had already been more radical struggles carried out by the zealous peasants, who were influenced and incited by CCP cadres. In some areas, absolute egalitarianism was implemented, giving everyone three *mu* of (1 *mu* is about 0.067 hectares) land. Although some top leaders, including Mao, still desired to carry on their previous mild land policy, they felt obligated to respond to the demand and revolutionary enthusiasm of peasants.[8]

The "May Fourth Directive" was still relatively mild. [9] It claimed that the reform would be better not to seize rich peasants' land, in case it might discourage middle

[7] For instance, according to the Jin-Sui Branch Bureau's investigation, 20 villages used to have 62 landlord households, but after the reduction of rent and interest in 1943, only 22 remained. Meanwhile, the number of middle peasant households increased from 375 to 795, 240 of which used to be poor peasants. Luo Pinghan, *Tudi gaige yundong shi, 1946-1948* (The History of the Land Reform Movement, 1946-1948), Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2018, 44-45.

[8] Many scholars argue that the purpose of the radical land reform was war mobilisation. The CCP believed by granting land to the poor, the poor would support them in the war. Yet, Yang Kuisong challenges this traditional view. Instead, he argues that the peasants had already begun to seize land from the landlords, even though the CCP still wanted to maintain its previous mild land policy. However, the CCP needed to respond to the people's zeal. Yang argues that the CCP was afraid of making the "right opportunist" mistake, which had been fatal to the CCP in 1927. Yang Kuisong, "Zhonggong tugai zhengce biandong de lishi kaocha (1946-1948): Youguan Zhonggong tugai shi de yige zhenglun wenti" Historical Investigations on the Dynamism of Land Reformation by the CPC Central Committee: 1946-1948: A Controversial Question about CCP's Land Reform History), *The Tōhō Gakuhō Journal of Oriental Studies*, Kyoto, Issue 81, 2007, 248.
Suzanne Pepper did not question the motivation for the war mobilisation, but she pointed out that the result didn't meet the CCP's expectations. Peasants who received land wanted to cultivate rather than be recruited to the CCP army. Some CCP cadres even found that recruiting became more difficult after land reform. Pepper, *Civil War in China,* 294-295.

[9] Scholars who studied CCP land reform usually think that when the CCP wanted to maintain peace and avoid war, its land policy would be less radical so that it could win over neutral forces. If it were determined to wage wars, it would use land reform to mobilise peasants (although the effect of mobilisation was under debate.) For instance, Yang Kuisong, "Zhanhou chuqi Zhonggong zhongyang tudi zhengce de biandong ji yuanyin: Zhuozhong yu wenxiandang'an de jiu" (The Cause of the Change of Land Policy of CPC Central Committee in the Initial Period after the Anti-Japanese War-with Focus on Literature and Documentary Interpretation), *Kaifang shidai*, May 2014, 70-73. Luo Pinghan, *Tudi gaige yundong shi, 1946-1948*, 078.

peasants and damage agricultural production. It insisted on involving middle peasants in the reform and promised that in no way would their land be encroached upon. Even to landlords, the CCP was trying to show its benignity. The Directive suggested that small and middle landlords should be treated differently from big landlords. Some big landlords were relatives of the anti-Japanese, and these landlords should be left with more land. [10] In June 1946, Mao Zedong began considering a further milder land policy. Because the CCP had suffered several military defeats in Manchuria, it had not prepared to fight the civil war. Thus, it still wanted to win the sympathy of the neutral forces and strive for a ceasefire.[11] On 19 July, the CCP CC sent the land purchase proposal to each bureau, asking for their opinions. The document emphasised winning over landlords to ease the panic and fear of the land reform.[12]

However, the Northeast's situation was very different. The leaders in this region objected to the CCP CC's land purchase plan.[13] The Northeast had the most acute KMT-CCP military conflicts. Although both sides agreed on a truce on 7 June 1946, the CCP in this region felt an imminent threat. In addition, the CCP had no bases in the Northeast, where the Japanese puppet Manchukuo ruled from 1932 to 1945. The CCP was keen to create bases in this region; therefore, land reform was necessary to mobilise the masses. If military conflicts were unavoidable, the CCP had to rely on the poor.[14] Relying on the poor, especially the poor peasants, was a requirement of

[10] Liu Shaoqi, "Guanyu tudi wenti de zhishi" (The Directive to Land Questions), 4 May 1946, in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian bianji weiyuanhui (ed) *Liu Shaoqi xuanji* (Selected Works of Liu Shaoqi), Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1981, vol. 1, 377-383.

[11] Yang Kuisong, "Zhanhou chuqi Zhonggong zhongyang tudi zhengce de biandong ji yuanyin," 80-82.

[12] "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu yanjiu dafu zhiding tudi zhengce zhong de jige zhongyao wenti de zhishi" (The CCP CC's Instructions on Several Important Issues During Researching, Responding, and Making Land Policies), 19 July 1946, in Zhongyang danganguan (ed) *Jiefang zhanzheng shiqi tudi gaige wenjian xuanbian*: 1945-1949, cited as JZSTGWX, Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 1981, 15.

[13] "The CC's suggestion about purchasing land, some regions asked to postpone its publication, in case it would impact the masses' anti-traitors and liquidation movements. Some regions asked to publish it earlier, the main aim is to solve the problem of anti-Japanese landlords and anti-Japanese warriors' landlord families' land." It could be inferred that the Northeast was one of the regions disagreeing with this proposal. "Zhonggong zhongyang dui Shandong diqu tudi gaige de zhishi" (The CCP CC's Instructions to Shandong's Land Reform), JZSTGWX, 35.

[14] For example, Liu Shaoqi said on 10 June 1946: "Our policy is striving for peace, but meanwhile, we must immediately prepare how to smash the KMT's all-out war firmly. We must prepare everything; we can mobilise the masses when the nationwide war breaks out,

the CCP's ideology.[15] More importantly, it has been proven effective over the two decades of the Chinese Communist Revolution. The Party's "revolutionary bases" were all established in impoverished rural areas, where the overwhelming majority of people were poor and middle peasants.

Owing to Manchukuo's rule, there were many "enemies" and "traitors" in the Northeast, providing the land revolution with legitimate excuses. After the release of the "May Fourth Directive", although the CCP CC still had contradictory attitudes about land reform in general, it repeatedly affirmed struggles and mass mobilisations in the Northeast, which had been more radical than the Directive. "(We) saw you firmly embraced the peasants' just demands of solving the land (problem), implemented the mass line, boldly mobilised the masses to do struggles of anti-traitor liquidation (*qing suan*), rent and interest reduction[16], distribution of land…you did very well, and they are completely correct."[17] "The experience has proved the liquidation movement must be developed to distribute the (Japanese) colonised land

insisting on the struggle in E, Yu, Chuan, Shaan and the vast area in Jiangnan. Based on previous experience, if we don't launch the land struggle among the peasants in the civil war, it will be very difficult to succeed and insist. Now, the Centre has instructed bases in North China and Central China to solve the land problem for peasants through anti-traitors, liquidation, rent and interest reduction." Zhonggong zhongyang dangshi he wenxian yanjiuyuan (ed) *Liu Shaoqi nianpu zengdingben,* vol. 2, Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2018, 218. n

[15] In 1926, in his essay "Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society", Mao Zedong argued that the poor peasants "are the worst off among the peasants and are highly receptive to revolutionary propaganda." Although this essay was still confined by the orthodox Maxist framework, which was not suitable for analysing the classes in Chinese society, Mao claimed "the semi-proletariat" class is the closest friend of Chinese revolution, including the semi-owner peasants, poor peasants, small handicraftmen, shop assistants and peddlers. Mao Zedong, "Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society," in *Selected Works of Mao Tsetung*, Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1965, Vol. 1, 13-21.

[16] The early stage of the CCP land revolution is usually referred to in the Party documents as "anti-traitors, liquidation, reduction of the rent and reduction of the interest" (*fanjian, qingsuan, jianzu, jianxi*). It was roughly from winter 1945 to spring 1946. The word "liquidation" (*qingsuan*) did not necessarily mean killing. Mostly, "liquidation" meant confiscating a part or all of the property of the so-called traitors, local tyrants and landlords, and redistributing it to the poor. The May Fourth Directive permitted the execution of "the most heinous traitors and public enemies who are demanded to be executed", while the rest were supposed to be dealt with "leniently". See Liu Shaoqi, "Guanyu tudi wenti de zhishi," 4 May 1946, Article 8.

[17] "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu shenru qingsuan yundong jiejue nongmin tudi wenti gei Ji-Re-Liao fenju de zhishi" (The CCP CC's Instructions to the Ji-Re-Liao Branch Bureau about Going Deeply on Liquidations and Solving the Land Problem of the Peasants), 17 May 1946, in JZSTGWX, 11.

(*kai tuo di, man tuo di*), which is correct."[18] Rather than winning over the Northeast's landlords, the Party emphasised cracking down on them, meanwhile giving the poor more benefits. "The extremely poor peasants and hired peasants received the least land. This situation needs to be paid close attention to." [19]

The Democratic Reform in CCP's Inner Mongolia: 1946 to 1947.7

Before examining the land reform, the administrative affiliation of different Inner Mongolian places needs to be clarified. No single administrative unit managed the CCP-controlled Inner Mongolia until the foundation of the IMAR on 1 May. Different administrative organs oversaw the land reform work, and the starting times varied.[20] Even after the establishment of the IMAR, due to the civil war, some Mongol banners and leagues were still under the administration of other Liberated Regions. Jirem League was governed by CCP Liaoji (later Liaobei) Province. Ju Ud League was governed by CCP Rehe Province. They did not belong to the IMAR until 1949. [21] The IMAG in 1947 governed four leagues of Hinggan, Xilingol, Chahar, and Naun Mur. In January 1948, Hulunbuir League was included.[22]

[18] "Zhonggong zhongyang qingbaobu guanyu jiejue tudi wenti de fangshi gei dongbeiju de zhishi" (The CCP CC Intelligence Department's Instructions to the Northeast Bureau about the Methods of Solving Land Problems) 19 May 1946, in JZSTGWX, 13.

[19] "Zhonggong zhongyang dui rehe chuli tudi wenti de jidian zhishi" (The CCP CC's Several Instructions about Dealing with Land Problems in Rehe), 5 June 1946, in JZSTGWX, 14.

[20] Two CCP branch bureaus were mainly involved: the West Manchuria Branch Bureau, under the Northeast Central Bureau, and the Ji-Re-Liao Branch Bureau, under the Jin-Cha-Ji Bureau, in 1946 and spring of 1947; after the spring of 1947, it was under the Northeast Bureau. In early 1947, the Ji-Re-Liao Branch Bureau changed its name to the Ji-Cha-Re-Liao Branch Bureau.

[21] When discussing the border of the IMAR, the North East Bureau on 1 April 1947 raised its opinion: "It is very difficult to decide the principle of the regional division at this conference. If it is inappropriate, it may cause disputes. Therefore, our opinions: at the conference, in general, we say each Inner Mongolian league and banner belong to the Inner Mongolian Autonomous area. But in fact, because of the struggle environment and the war, each league and banner and their relationships should maintain the status quo. After the national self-defense war succeeds, peace and democracy are achieved, then, (we) decide the region in detail." "Dongbeiju guanyu Neimeng zizhi wenti de yijian" (The Northeast Bureau's Opinions about Inner Mongolian Autonomy", 1 April 1947, in NZYLDSX, 171-172. The CCP CC agreed with the Northeast Bureau's opinion. "Zhongyang guanyu Neimeng gongzuo de zhishi gei dongbeiju bing zhuan Yun Ze dian" (The CCP CC's Telegram about Instructions of Inner Mongolian Works to the Northeast Bureau and forward to Yun Ze), 20 April 1947, in NZYLDSX, 223.

[22] Neimenggu zizhiqu renmin zhengfu zhengfu zhi bangongshi (ed) *Neimenggu zhizhiqu*

Earlier liquidation and the rent and interest reduction movement in Eastern Mongolia roughly started in January 1946, mostly in Han-inhabited areas.[23] Local Japanese collaborators, tyrannical landlords (*eba dizhu*) and fleeing landlords (*taowang dizhu*) were the main targets of the liquidation.[24] They were struggled or even executed; their properties were confiscated. In April 1946, in Jerim League[25]'s Tongliao County alone, there were 38 big struggling assembles for more than 500 people; 820 *dan*[26] of grains and 3,000 *mu* of land were obtained.[27] From February to May 1946, in Jingpeng County, Ju Ud League[28], the confiscation result was 512.8 *dan* of grains, 71600 *yuan*, 20 *liang* (1/16 *jin* and 1/32 kilo) of opium (*da yan*), 480 *mu* of land, 35 cattle, 16 horses, 491 sheep and so on. [29] After the attack, the local old forces (landlords, collaborators, etc.) were destroyed. Activists who followed the CCP held

zhi: Zhengfu zhi, Beijing: Fangzhi chubanshe, 2001, 176-183.

[23] In January 1946, the CCP sent a work team to Ningcheng County and Chifeng County, Ju Ud League (now Chifeng City), to start liquidating and reducing rents and interest rates. Chifeng shi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (ed) *Chifeng shizhi*, Hohhot: Neimenggu renmin chubanshe, 1996, 1976-1977.

[24] The phrase "fleeing landlords" means the landlord who resisted or avoided the "reduction of rents and interest rates" movement or land reform, tried to hide their crimes, and ran to the city and hid.

[25] Tongliao County and Kailu County were occupied by the CCP. While three Horqin Left Banners (Front, Middle and Rear) were controlled by the EMPAG. See *Zhonggong Zhelimu meng dangshi dashiji*, 3-4.

[26] On 16 February 1929, the government of the ROC published "Weights and Measures Acts", regulating that 1 *dan* is 100 litres. It came into effect on 1 January 1930. However, I don't know whether the CCP and the Northeast people used the same system.

[27] Li Hongfan, Xu Hejing and Ding Xiu, "Zhelimu meng nongcun muqu de minzhu gaige yundong" (The Democratic Reform Movement in Rural Areas and Pastoral Areas of Jerim League", in Geng Binying (ed) *Shuguang zhaoyao zhelimu*, Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 1988, 132.

[28] Ju Ud League's Bairin Left Banner and Bairin Right Banner were controlled by the EMPAG. The CCP controlled Jingpeng County and Linxi County. See Zhongguo renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi balin zuoqi weiyuanhui (ed) *Zhaowuda meng shu zai Lindong* (The office of Ju Ud League Lindong period), Chifeng: Neimenggu kexue jishu chubanshe, 2018, 98.

[29] "Jingpeng xian kuoda ganbu huiyi zongjie" (The Summary of Jingpeng County's Cadre Enlargement Conference), June 1946, in Liu Changjiang (ed), *Keshiketeng tudi gaige* (The Land Reform of Hexigten Banner), Hong Kong: Zhongguo renmin wenhua chubanshe, 2015, 26-27.

The term *yuan* was not clear. It was possibly the currency issued by the CCP Northeast Bank. But it could also be the currency of Manchukuo. 1 yuan of the Northeast Bank was equal to 10 yuan of Manchukuo.

Opium was used as hard currency. In Jingpeng County, the CCP district governments planted 146 *mu* of opium in total; the county organs planted 175 *mu* of opium. Ibid., 29.

power. The Party was able to procure enormous amounts of grain and other materials to support the upcoming war.

Class struggle was more cautious in the Mongol areas initially. Before being fully rooted in Inner Mongolia, the CCP did not want to risk triggering ethnic conflicts or hatred. If the Party thought it was necessary to conduct class struggles, it preferred more secure methods. The CCP CC instructed the Ji-Cha-Ji Central Bureau in October 1945: “Foster the progressive power of the Mongols. Any work dealing with Mongol traitors[30] (*mengjian*, transplanted from *hanjian*, Han traitors, describing those who collaborated with the Japanese invaders) and confiscating the properties of the main Mongol traitors should be done by the Mongols themselves.”[31] On 7 March 1946, the Ji-Re-Liao Branch Bureau, in charge of parts of Eastern Mongolian issues, reported to the CCP CC: “Among the Mongols, the liquidation and rent reduction policy will not be implemented at the moment. However, among the Han around them, this campaign should be implemented widely to impact the lower strata of Mongols. When the lower strata Mongols’ (consciousness) is improved, let them launch the campaign. ”[32]

This approach was very feasible. Many Mongols, especially the younger generation, had already been impacted by progressive and revolutionary ideas. They did not object to low to moderate levels of class struggle. Even in the EMPAG-controlled areas, Eastern Mongolian political elites often cooperated with the CCP in the mass movement.[33] It would be oversimplified to assume that the Mongols were forced to

[30] Mongol Athropologist Bulag explains that, through this phrase mengjian, the CCP recognised the Mongol as a nation, while at the same time, it denied the Mongols’ right to choose its own nation’s destiny. If they collaborated with the Japanese, they would become “traitors”. Bulag, *Collaborative Nationalism,* 113.

[31] “Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu Neimeng gongzuo fangzhen gei Jin-Cha-Ji zhongyangju de zhishi”(The CCP CC’s Instruction about Inner Mongolia’s Work Guideline to the Jin-Cha-Ji Central Bureau), 23 October, 1945, in MWWH, 965.

[32] “Zhonggong Zhongyang Ji-Re-Liao fenju guanyu Rehe Menggu gongzuo wenti gei zhongyang de baogao” (The CCP CC Ji-Re-Liao Branch Bureau’s Report on Rehe Mongolian Works to the CCP CC), 7 March 1946, in MWWH, 1021-1022.

[33] Atwood wrote that in March 1946 (before the 3 April Chengde Conference), “Most strikingly, the East Mongolian government agreed to have a joint Chinese and Mongolian work team formed that would open up a “reduce rents and reduce interest” campaign in Khorchin Right Front Banner, just outside of Wang-un Süme (Wangyemiao)…Here a landlord, Han Guodong, was the target.” Atwood, “The East Mongolian Revolution and Chinese Communism,” 50.

Nevertheless, the time of this paragraph is probably in doubt. It came from the article of

apply the CCP's mass movement, which was not always the case. For example, in Horqin Left Middle Banner, the local independent Eastern Mongolian authority cooperated with the CCP to launch the liquidation movement. The CCP work group, led by Zhao Shi, convinced two Mongol leaders, Askhan and Urtu,[34] that the two sides together established a committee to deal with the "Mongol traitors" and "local tyrants".[35] The committee realised the special historical context: Eastern Mongolia had been ruled by the Japanese puppet Manchukuo for about 14 years. The Japanese had implemented the policy of "endorsing the Mongols and suppressing the Han"(*fu meng yi han*). Thus, many Mongols became Manchukuo officials and worked for the Japanese. Thus, the work committee listed categories to differentiate three types of previous Manchukuo officials. (1) The ones who worked for Manchukuo as a cover but secretly struggled for national liberation. These people should become allies. (2) Those who had to work for Manchukuo due to economic pressure. The Party could try to win them over. (3) Those who served the Japanese imperialists loyally and oppressed the masses. Their crimes must be liquidated.

Zhang Ce et al., "Dongmeng genjudi de chuangjian" (The Establishment of the Eastern Mongolian Base), in Neimenggu dangwei dangshi ziliao zhengji yanjiu weiyuanhui bangongshi (ed), *Neimenggu dangshi ziliao*, 2, Hohhot: Neimenggu renmin chubanshe, 1988, 52. The authors were CCP cadres working in Inner Mongolia from 1946 to 1949. According to the article, in March 1946, the work group arrived in Horqin Right Front Banner and struggled against a landlord, Han Guodong.

However, another book states that the village land reform in the West Horqin Front Banner (aka Horqin Right Front Banner) started on 5 April 1946. The CCP Eastern Mongolian Work Committee sent a liquidation work group to Oti Nutag to carry out a trial. After one month of mobilisation, they struggled against the landlord Han Guodong. Wang Wangsheng (ed) *Keerqin youyi qianqi 370 nian* (The 370 Years of Horqin Right Front Banner), Hohhot: Neimenggu jiaoyu chubanshe, 2008, 209.

Another account says the CCP Eastern Mongolian Work Committee decided to send work groups to the West Horqin Front Banner and three other banners on 9 May 1946. "Xing'an meng tudi gaige dashiji" (The Major Events of Hinggan League's Land Reform), in *Xing'an dangshi wenji*, vol. 2, Ulanhot: 1993, 109.

Probably the memory of Zhang Ce et al. was inaccurate. In March 1946, the EMPAG was still independent. Not all the leaders in this government were pro-CCP. The CCP's land reform in Horqin Right Front Banner, where the independent Eastern Mongolian government was located, possibly started no earlier than the official dissolution of the EMPAG on 3 April 1946.

[34] Askhan was considered progressive and favoured by the CCP. Urtu was regarded as a "middle element" (*zhongjian fenzi*) but could be the target of the United Front. Urtu had worked as an official in the Manchukuo government. This history made him not very trusted by the CCP. Hu Zhaoheng commented that Urtu "only recently he behaved very progressive" and "had to be progressive". "Hu Zhaoheng riji," 31 January 1946, in *Xing'an geming shihua* 1, 252-253.

[35] Li Hongfan et al, "Zhelimu meng nongcun muqu de minzhu gaige yundong," 133.

Under the cooperation between the Eastern Mongolian authority and the CCP, a Manchukuo official, Qi Pengsheng, was attacked. Also, A Mongol Bao Shanyi's property was confiscated, and he was a "Mongol traitor", a landlord and a division leader of the KMT army.[36]

After the Eastern Mongol elites accepted the CCP's leadership on 3 April 1946, the CCP further expanded its influence in Mongolian banners. "Progressive Mongols" were chosen as cadres to lead the democratic reform. Some of the new CCP Mongol members were even more enthusiastic about the social-economic revolution than the old Mongol Communists and went further than the CCP's cautious intention, which could be seen in the previous chapter, Khafungga's example. At the time, the CCP CC would rather not be too radical when dealing with the Mongols. On 6 May 1946, the CCP CC instructed the Northeast and Rehe party committees that "the Mongol people's land problem should not be dealt with right now. It should be investigated in detail and treated separately."[37] Soon, the Rehe government launched the "borrowing grains from landlords" movement to mobilise people, promote land reform and ensure military supplies. The grains of Han traitor landlords and big bandit landlords must be confiscated, leaving them with only some grains for basic living. Normal big landlords were "borrowed" and allowed to keep twice the basic food. Nevertheless, the Rehe authorities treated the Mongol landlords differently: "Whether the Mongol landlords should be liquidated, whether their grain should be borrowed, it should be decided by the FIMAM or banner governments."[38]

[36] Ibid., 133.

[37] "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu jiejue dongbei, rehe dengdi de tudi wenti de zhishi" (The CCP CC's Instruction on Solving the Land Problem in Dongbei and Rehe), ZZWX, vol. 16, 155.

[38] The Federation of Inner Mongolian Autonomous Movement, an official organisation established by the CCP, led by Yun Ze (Ulanhu). Initially, the Jin-Cha-Ji Bureau thought the FIMAM should play an advisory role, but in May 1946, the Jin-Cha-Ji Bureau thought the FIMAM could be a local regime. Based on the principle of "separate governance of Mongols and Han" (*meng han fen zhi*), the FIMAM would lead Mongol leagues and banners.

"Rehe sheng zhengfu guanyu choujie liangshi yu qingcha diwei wuzi yundong de zhishi" (Rehe Government's Instruction on Borrowing Grains and Thoroughly Investigating the Enemies and Collaborationists' Supplies", May 1946, in Zhonggong hebei shengwei dangshi yanjiushi (ed) *Rehe jiefangqu*, Vol. 1, Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe, 1994, 129.

Still, some individuals were selected to be struggled. In July, in Bairin Right Banner, Ju Ud League, a big tyrannical herdlord, “Sanlama”, who was in charge of the banner’s religious affairs, was struggled against. He had over 40 rooms, thousands of livestock, and more than ten thousand *mu* of land. It was said he cruelly beat inferior lamas and his servants and took other people’s wives. More than 300 Mongols and Hans were mobilised to denounce him. During the struggle session (*pidou hui*), he was forced to kneel, slapped on the face, and shame-paraded on the street. The masses turned his boots, which were bestowed by Panchen Lama, upside down on his face. His property was confiscated, and he was sent to the Ju Ud League government to be imprisoned. At the end of 1946, he died in jail.[39] In August, responding to the Secretary of West Manchuria Li Fuchun’s instruction “Suppress those who commit the most heinous crimes (*zui da e ji*)”,[40] Horqin Right Middle Banner’s cadres organised a big public trial of a local power holder Garmawangchug, who was said to be a KMT secret brigadier. Pre-appointed activists vented their grievances (*su ku*) one by one, furiously denouncing his crimes. Amidst the masses’ cries, “Kill him! Kill this tyrant!” he was shot. [41]

Most middle and small landlords, lamas, and upper-strata people were viewed as “targets of the United Front” (*tongzhan duixiang*). The CCP opted to encourage them to help the poor people rather than directly struggle against them. In Horqin Right Middle Banner, the cadres started a “mutual assistance” movement. They found a landlord, Guo Haibao, who did not initially trust the CCP and brought a gun when he met the cadres. The cadres told him: “The rich need to help the poor; the Mongol traitors and Chiang Kai-shek’s spies will be overthrown.” Guo was persuaded and donated eight cattle and some land to help the poor, and the cadres bestowed him a wood board (*bian e*) in return, written “The Model Of Mutual Assistance”. Other villagers praised and congratulated him. Guo was also very happy, inviting the

[39]Daoerjisangbu, “Daban qingsuan douzheng jiankuang” (A Brief Summary of the Liquidation Struggle in Daban), Balin youqi shizhi bangongshi, balin youqi dang’an guan (eds),*Balin youqi tugai yundong*, Chifeng: 1993, 175.

[40] Xu Yixing, “Zhetiao caoyuan daolu shi zenyang kaipi de” (How was this grassland path opened), in Zhonggong keerqin youyi zhongqi wei dangshi bangongshi (ed) *Keyouzhongqi dangshi wenhui (diyiji)*, Ulanhot: 1993*,* 15. Buhe and Baoyin, “Zhongguo gongchandang keerqin youyi zhongqi dangshi dashiji (1946.4-1949.9)” (The CCP Horqin Right Middle Banner Party History’s Major Events, 1946.4-1949.9), ibid., 340.

[41] “Shasita! Ji gongshen eba garimawangchuke” (Kill him! A Report of the Public Trial of the Local Tyrant Garmawangchug), *Shenglibao*, 3 September 1946, ibid., 234-236.

Peasants Association cadres and all the villagers to a big banquet with 29 tables. Guo was praised as an “enlightened landlord”. Inspired by Guo’s example, some small and middle landlords and lamas also donated livestock to help the poor. A report said gleefully that every two households could share one cattle through the Mutual Assistance Movement.[42]

It should be noted that not all CCP senior decision-makers supported a mild class struggle among the Mongols. Lin Biao[43] explicitly expressed his disagreement with winning over the upper strata policy. He wrote to the CCP CC on 21 March 1946, “I still keep my last year December’s opinion. I think it is not appropriate only to please the upper strata. …The upper strata are all feudalists. Now, some partial experience has proved that it will be futile when dealing with the upper strata, but there will be results when dealing with the lower strata.”[44] It was unknown to what extent Lin Biao’s opinion impacted the overall policy towards the Mongols. Nonetheless, it probably reflected the Northeastern leaders’ anxiety, as the KMT-CCP confrontation in the Northeast was aggravating. The CCP was accustomed to relying on the lower strata of the masses when involved in military conflicts. Regions bearing greater pressure from the KMT offensive were more prone to radicalism.

Shortly after the Eastern Mongols were incorporated into the CCP’s rule on 3 April 1946, the newly founded Jirem government had to flee westward from Bayantala to Tongliao at the end of May. The CCP lost Siping City to the KMT army on 18 May, and Zhengjiatun, just about 30 kilometres away from Bayantala, was lost on 24 May.[45] On 10 June, the desperate Jirem government announced a thorough democratic reform, “Land to the tiller, house to the dweller, livestock to the herder (*geng zhe you qi tian, zhu zhe you qi wu, mu zhe you qi chu*).”[46] Some radical mass

[42] Maoaohai, “Xike zhongqi qunzhong yundong zongjie dahui shang jianghua” (The Speech on the West Horqin Middle Banner’s Mass Movement Summary Conference), November 1947, in *Xing’an dangshi wenji* 2, 83. “Xing’an xikezhongqi gongzuodui chuangzao huzhu yundong xinfangshi” (Hinggan West Horqin Middle Banner Work Team Created a New Method for the Mutual Assistance Movement), 27 November 1946, *Ximan Ribao*, in *Keyouzhongqi dangshi wenhui (diyiji)*, 198.

[43] Lin Biao was the Commander of the Northeast Democratic United Army in 1946 and was in charge of Northeastern affairs.

[44] “Lin Biao guanyu Menggu wenti zhengce de yijian” (Lin Biao’s Opinions about the Policy of Mongolian Questions), in MWWH, 1032.

[45] Li Hongfan, “Huiyi wo zai Zhemeng de gongzuo licheng”, 61.

[46] *Zhonggong Zhelimu meng dangshi dashiji*, 9.

movements were carried out in the turbulent war environment. However, the consequences of these radical mass movements were embarrassing. A Horqin Left Rear Banner captain feared being attacked and planned to defect. He failed and was executed. A company commander of the Eastern Mongolian army, Sewang, also resisted the struggle; he led his company to defect and killed several members of the liquidation team (*qingsuan dui*) and the Peasant Association (*nong hui*).[47] In two villages, Aoligao and Gongyingzi, the work team confiscated all the properties of landlords, herdlords and rich peasants and redistributed them to the poor herders in an egalitarian way. When the KMT army approached, the Jirem authorities had to retreat. The landlords and herdlords who had been attacked defected to the KMT side and returned with the Homecoming Legion (*huanxiang tuan*). They took revenge and also killed the cadres and activists.[48]

The desperate mood pervades among the Northeastern cadres. On 7 July 1946, Chen Yun, one of the vice secretaries of the Northeast Bureau, drafted "The Northeast's Situations and Tasks" (known as the July Seventh Resolution). It argued that establishing bases should be the priority; an essential part was mobilising the masses: launching anti-traitor liquidations, reducing rent and interest, and redistributing grain and land. The Northeast Bureau demanded that the May Fourth Directive be immediately implemented. Thus, the village regime would be controlled by peasants. The Resolution also demanded that cadres go to villages to mobilise the peasants.[49] Following the Resolution, the West Manchuria Branch Bureau on 22 July urged anxiously to devote efforts to the mass mobilisation: "Many places have not fully mobilised (the masses) and have not established bases. It is an extremely

[47]Jiruhe, "Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun neimenggu junqu qibing di'ershi shiertuan chengzhangshi" (The History of the 12th Regiment of the 2nd Cavalry Division of the PLA Inner Mongolian Region), in Zhongguo renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi keerqin zuoyi houqi weiyuanhui wenshi ziliao zhengji weiyuanhui (ed) *Keerqin zuoyi houqi wenshi ziliao* 1, 1986, 12-13.

[48] Quan Shan, "Jianguo qian kezuohouqi dangzhenjun gaikuang" (The Overview of the Party Plitics and Army in Horqin Left Rear Banner Before the Establishment of the PRC), in Zhengxie keerqin zuoyi houqi weiyuanhui wenshi ziliao weiyuanhui (ed) *Keerqin zuoyi houqi wenshi ziliao* 3, 1990, 19.

[49] Chen Yun, "Dongbei de xingshi he renwu" (The Northeast's Situations and Tasks), 7 July 1946, in *Chen Yun wenxuan (1926-1949)*, Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1984, 229-235.

severe life-and-death matter. Must concentrate the greatest efforts to solve the problem."[50]

On 22 July 1946, Tao Zhu, the secretary of CCP Liaoji committee, wrote to two cadres in Jirem League, Lü Mingren and Zhao Shi, that in the past, the mass mobilisation was right-leaning, and he would take responsibility. Tao Zhu urged Jirem League to launch the liquidation struggle "without restraint" among the Mongols, ensuring that the military forces and the regime were held by reliable progressive youths, and completely eliminating the Mongol traitor forces.[51] Impacted by the unfavourable war situation and the overall anxiety, Jirem League's Han cadres set new aims on 31 July 1946: "The princes and nobles must be undermined hugely and downgraded to poor peasants. The lamas' land needed to be 'squeezed out', and they must work. The big landlords would be downgraded to middle peasants." Besides, the Han cadres were more dubious of their Mongol colleagues, regarding most of them as "new bureaucrats" and "intellectuals without class awareness". [52]

They started a more radical movement. Some lamas were beaten. Even the family members of military cadres who had a "bad" background were targeted.[53] The pushback soon came. In August, Horqin Left Rear Banner, a company's vice-commander, Olbu, was accused of being a landlord's son by the cadres of the peasant association and the liquidation team. He was disarmed, put on a "dunce cap" (*gao mao*) and made a perp walk as public humiliation. After returning to his station, he led most of the company to defect to the KMT side. [54] The Eastern Mongolian Autonomous Army's 2nd Division (which had pledged loyalty to the CCP) had numerous rebellions and defections during this period, such as the 13th

[50] "Zhonggong ximan fenju guanyu nongmin tudi douzheng de zhishi" (The CCP West Manchuria Branch Bureau's Instructions about Peasant Land Struggles", 20 July 1946, in Liaoning sheng danganguan bianyan bu (ed), *Zhonggong zhongyang dongbeiju ximan fenju liaodong shengwei dang'an wenjian huiji* (yijiusiliunian-yijiusiqi nian) (The CCP CC Northeast Bureau's West Manchuria Branch Bureau and Liaodong Province Committee's Archival Documents Collection, Year 1946-1947), Liaoning dang'an guan: 1986, 2.

[51] Tao Zhu, "Xiegei Mingren Zhao Shi tongzhi de xin" (The Letter to Comrade Mingren and Zhao Shi), 22 July 1946, in Neimenggu dang'an guan (ed) *Neimenggu dang'an shiliao*, 1993 issue 5, 2.

[52] "Dui guoqu Menggu gongzuo de jiantao ji jinhou gongzuo fangzhen renwu de baogao," 31 July 1946, in MWWH, 1308-1309.

[53]Li Hongfan et al., "Zhelimu meng nongcun muqu de minzhu gaige yundong," 135.

[54] Quan Shan, "Jianguo qian kezuohouqi dangzhenjun gaikuang", 20.

Regiment, part of the 14th Regiment, and two companies of the 12th Regiment.[55] Although most of the reasons were not recorded, from the Party's later documents, it can be reasonably inferred that the radical land policy was also one of the triggers, besides the KMT army's military triumphs.[56]

When Jirem League was carrying out a radical land reform, Ulanhu wrote a report to the CCP CC about the Mongol land problem in August 1946. He argued that the most important issue in land distribution was to pay attention to the relationships between nationalities. He emphasised the collective ownership of Inner Mongolian land. Thus, when the land of Mongol traitors and tyrants was distributed to the Mongols and Hans, the Mongols maintained the collective ownership, while the Han were permitted to rent it. Besides, the "rent reduction" policy is better not to apply to the Mongols (except for the landlords). Ulanhu pointed out the fact that the Mongols used to be herders who were not skilled at ploughing; thus, they leased their lands to Han migrants. A majority of the Mongols, in some places, over 80%, leased land to the Han, even though they were not landlords at all. Finally, Ulanhu suggested not redistributing land in the pastoral area and trying not to redistribute it in the semi-pastoral area. [57] The CCP CC agreed with this report. The telegram on 10 August 1946, which was sent to Ulanhu and other bureaus, said: "Due to the nationality problem, the relationship between Mongol and Han land, the land ownership problem, and the awareness of the Mongol people, it is inappropriate to conduct land distribution in the pastoral area and semi-pastoral area. Except that in the arable area, the land of heinous landlords was distributed to the Mongols and the Han, it

[55] Li Hongfan, "Huiyi wo zai Zhemeng de gongzuo licheng", 63.

[56] The 4th Division in Ju Ud League also broke out several rebellions. The commanders of the 35th and 37th Regiment, the vice commander of the 34th Regiment Han Sangjie and several others led their soldiers to defect. Bailadugeqi, Jin Hai and Sai Hang, *Menggu minzu tongshi* (A History of the Mongol Nation), vol 5-2, Hohhot: Neimenggu daxue chubanshe, 2002, 605.

[57] "Yun Ze guanyu Neimeng tudi he zizhi wenti gei zhongyang de baogao" (Yun Ze's Report on Inner Mongolian Land and Autonomy Question to the CCP CC), 1 August 1946, in MWWH, 1057-1058.

Liu Xiaoyuan compared the contrasting attitudes of Ulanhu and Khafungga about land reform. He argued that Ulanhu (Yun Ze), in fact, acted more like a CCP member rather than a Mongol and "recommended to the CCPCC a tactful way, or a favourable treatment of a 'minority people', for consolidating the party's standing with the Inner Mongols". Khafungga, however, intended to distribute land equally without distinguishing the Mongols and the Han. He acted more like a Mongol revolutionary and demanded that the Han peasants be treated fairly. Liu Xiaoyuan, *Reins of Liberation*, 275, footnote 63.

would be better not to touch the Mongol landlords."[58] Ulanhu's report could be viewed as the prototype of his later "Three Nos" policy. Instead of an ethnic-blind approach adopted by his colleagues, Ulanhu advised considering the unique socio-economic and historical conditions of the Mongols. Nevertheless, a year later, he was unable to insist on his model but had to make concessions when the CCP CC demanded a radical land revolution.

The CCP's policy was usually equivocal, leaving policy executors much room for arbitrary explanation and manipulation. Even though Ulanhu supported a moderate land policy, his report also agreed that the property of Mongol traitors and tyrants should be confiscated and redistributed. Therefore, who the normal landlords were and who the Mongol traitors and tyrants were became a problem. If a cadre were more "leftist", he would go further than the policy's initial intention. The CCP's tradition valued being "left" rather than "right"; thus, Mongol cadres were also often induced to interpret policies from a left-leaning perspective. Ulanhu tried to maintain the United Front policy, but his colleagues' leftist tendency often failed it.

In the winter of 1945, the FIMAM began to send work groups to Chahar and Xilingol to establish the CCP's regime. In March 1946, the FIMAM's Chahar Branch and CCP-dominated Chahar League were founded. The Chahar Branch's director and the Chahar League's head were CCP Mongol cadres Su Jianxiao, born in Ili Xinjiang, and Chen Bingyu, from Tümed, respectively. In April 1946, in Beizimiao (Beisiin Süme), the Xilingol League government was established. Mongol Prince Sung (Sungjingwangchug) was chosen as the head of the league, and the deputy was a CCP Mongol cadre, Qolmon. The director of the FIMAM's Xilingol Branch was an upper-stratum noble first, and two months later, a CCP Mongol cadre, Qi Junshan, replaced him.[59] The CCP firmly controlled the regime while also placating the upper

[58] "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu Menggu tudi wenti gei Yun Ze, fenju, zhongyangju dian" (The CCP CC's telegram to Yun Ze, the Branch Bureau and the Central Bureau about the Mongol land), 10 August 1946, Zhonggong Neimenggu zizhiqu weiyuanhui dangshi Yanjiushi (ed), *Neimenggu de tudi zhidu gaige*, Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe, 2008, 42.

[59] Chen Shusen, "Dang de minzu zhengce tongzhan zhengce de huihuang shengli" (The Glorious Victory of the Party's Nationality Policy and the United Front Policy), in Ximeng zhengxie wenshi weiyuanhui (ed) *Nanwang de jiyi: Xilinguole minzhu geming wenji (Xilinguole wenshi ziliao 5)*, 2007, 89-91.

echelon. Beizimiao provided a new base for the FIMAM when the CCP had to give up Zhangjiakou in September 1946.

In August or September 1946, a young CCP Mongol cadre, Sukh, discovered a "reactionary" Living Buddha in East Hauqid Banner, with more than 1000 sheep and hundreds of cattle and horses. The Living Buddha's livestock was kept by Prince Sung, who was supposed to be won over by the CCP. Sukh thought the Living Buddha's livestock belonged to the category of "the enemies and collaborationists' property", and according to the FIMAM's policy, they should be confiscated, but there were no specific regulations about how to implement it. The cadre admitted in the memoir that he was not sure of the scope and limits of this policy. Thus, he and his colleagues decided to take the Living Buddha's livestock out of Prince Sung's land and confiscate all of them. However, when Ulanhu heard about this incident in October 1946, he told these young communists that they had overdone it. Ulanhu agreed that the Living Buddha was reactionary, but Prince Sung, who kept the livestock for him, was "the target of the United Front". Confiscating the livestock he kept damaged the Party's relationship with Prince Sung. Nevertheless, Ulanhu did not want to discourage his comrades' morale and impede future reforms. He said they didn't need to return the livestock to the Living Buddha. [60]

More evidence is still needed to determine how Ulanhu's report influenced the Northeast Bureau's land reform policy in Inner Mongolia (The Northeast Bureau's policy adjustment document did not mention Ulanhu's report or the CCP CC's suggestions). Nevertheless, the negative impacts of radical mass movements were too significant to be ignored. Mongol landlords and upper strata people in Mongol-Han mixed areas, even some "masses", were escaping. The Party also heard that in Nenjiang (now western Heilongjiang), tens of thousands of Mongols also planned to emigrate westward due to the fear of assimilation by the Han. On 1 September 1946, the Northeast Bureau released its instructions to the West Manchuria Branch Bureau, noting: "Because of some over-leftist policies, there were fluctuations, and one must be seriously alerted. The current main work is to correct and prevent left-

[60] Suhe, "Laoji muqu tedian, Zuohao muqu gongzuo" (Keeping in Mind the Features of Pastoral Areas and Do the Pastrol Areas Works Well), in Neimenggu zizhiqu zhengxie wenshi ziliao weiyuanhui (ed) *Sanbu liangli yu wenkuanchang: Huiyi yu sikao* (Neimenggu wenshi ziliao 59), cited as NWZ 59, Inner Mongolia: 2006, 37-39.

leaning tendencies." "Because the Mongols and the herders have not been mobilised, we should not treat the Mongol princes and nobles, the landlords and the lamas the same as the KMT reactionaries." "The Mongol people's struggle must be done through training Mongol cadres and the masses."[61] The West Manchuria Branch Bureau admitted the previous slogan "land to the tiller, house to the dweller, livestock to the herder" was wrong, "It escalated the confrontation between the Mongols and the Han, shook the centralists who may leave us too early, caused Mongol people even several progressivists' doubt and dissatisfaction with our Party and army, and created many excuses for the reactionaries."[62] Liaoji Province's Party Committee also acknowledged "our inappropriate policy" was one of the reasons that "Mongol army and Mongol upper strata people respond to the enemy's troops one after another". It urged, "(We) must immediately stop violently confisticating Mongol landlords' land, horses and house properties, except those who have committed the most heinous crimes and can't be won over. But they must be left to the Mongols themselves."[63]

Growing Radicalism: Spring 1947

The radicalism was suspended on the Mongolian land for several months. Nevertheless, in the spring of 1947, the perspective of peace was smashed. George Marshall's mission left China in January 1947, announcing that the peace negotiation had failed. On 18 March, Yan'an was taken over by the KMT army. The CCP was left with no choice but to fight an all-out war. Thus, it had to rely on the poor and middle peasants. The Party turned to its familiar land reform.

The Northeast's situation was worse. In the second half of 1946, many CCP-occupied regions in the Northeast were lost due to the KMT army's offensive. In

[61] "Dongbeiju guanyu Menggu gongzuo de zhishi" (The Northeast Bureau's Instructions about the Mongolian Work), 1 September 1946, in *Zhonggong ximan fenju ziliao huibian*, 79-81.

[62] "Zhongong ximan fenju guanyu dongmeng gongzuo de zhishi" (The CCP West Manchuria Bureau's Instructions about the Mongolian Works), 13 September 1946, in *Zhonggong ximan fenju ziliao huibian*, 76.

[63] "Zhonggong liaoji shengwei guanyu mengqu gongzuo de yijian (zhailu)" (The CCP Liaoji Province Committee's Opinions about Works in Mongolian Regions), 15 September 1946, in MWWH, 1072.

October 1946, the Northeast Bureau determined that the CCP's main aim in this region was consolidating currently occupied areas, especially keeping middle-small cities and villages. Its main work was "mobilising rural masses."[64] In November 1946, the Northeast Bureau announced the elimination of the "not-fully-cooked rice" (*jia sheng fan*, incomplete reform) problem, thoroughly wrecking the landlord class.[65] It gave an impetus to the hurricane-like land reform in the Northeast and directly caused the "Chopping and Digging Movement"[66], which started in the summer of 1947. The Northeast's turmoil also impacted much of the Mongolian land.

The CCP's overall policy in the spring of 1947 was still to make concessions to the Mongols, as discussed in the previous chapter. The appeasing attitude finally led to the creation of the IMAR on 1 May 1947. Most local cadres abided by the Party's line and tried to maintain the United Front on the land reform issue. The cadres of Liaoji Province probably had learned the lesson from Jirem's debacle and were more circumspect when dealing with the Mongols. On the one hand, they actively responded to the Northeast Bureau's new slogan, deciding to redistribute the land of big and middle landlords. On the other hand, they emphasised protecting Mongol landlords who lived in Han areas: "If (Mongol landlords' land) has not been distributed, it will not be distributed. Distribute Han landlords' land at first." "Mongols'

[64] Ding Xiaochun et al (eds) *Dongbei jiefang zhanzheng dashiji*, 86.

[65] "Dongbeiju guanyu jiejue tugai yundong zhong banshengbushu de wenti de zhishi" (The Northeast Bureau's Instructions about Solving the "Not Well Cooked" Problem in the Land Reform), 21 November 1946, in Dongbei jiefangqu caizheng jingji shi bianxiezu (ed) *Dongbei jiefangqu caizheng jingji shiliao xuanbian*, vol. 1, Harbin: Heilongjiang renmin chubanshe, 1988, 293-297.
The result was inspiring in some places. For example, in Bei'an, the cadres and the poor got 103558.8 shang of land, 16087.5 rooms, 3123 cattle and horses, 1227 big carts, about 8 billion to 9 billion *yuan* (probably the CCP's Northeast currency) of other properties, including clothes, cloth, textiles, gold, silver, banknotes, and grains, 1659 guns and rifles, over 100,000 bullets, 3 machine guns and 3 landmines. "Bei'an diqu qunyun zongjie"(The Summary of Bei'an Mass Movement) 15 February 1947, *Dongbei jiefangqu caizheng jingji shiliao xuanbian*, 315-316.

[66] In the summer of 1947, some peasants in the Northeast found out that although they had land, they did not have livestock, like cattle and horses, for farming. Encouraged by previous land reforms and the Northeast Bureau's eliminating "not-fully-cooked rice" (incomplete land reform) task, the peasants demanded the landlords hand out their treasures. The peasants used the landlords' silver and gold to buy livestock. This struggle soon spread to many villages. It was called the "chopping and digging" movement (*kan wa yundong*), coming from the popular slogan "chopping down the trees and digging out the treatures." See Luo Pinghan, "Dongbei jiefangqu 1947 nian tugai zhong de kan-wa yundong" (The Northeast Liberated Region's Chopping and Digging Movement in 1947 land reform), *Shijiqiao*, 2004, issue 4, 31-33.

livestock must not be distributed." If the Mongols strongly insisted on distributing the land, the cadres prudently suggested they "should adopt a mutual assistance method. Ask the Mongol landlords to give some land voluntarily to help the peasants without land and with a little land."[67] Rehe's policy was similar. It only decided to confiscate the land of "Mongol traitors with heinous crimes", while the "reducing the rent" policy applied to general princes and nobles if the Mongols asked for it.[68] The Han cadres did not want to disappoint the Mongol upper strata too much, "We decided the rent reduction is applied to Mongol princes, nobles and lamas in general. However, some places have implemented rent reductions for two or three years. The result is that much land has been reduced or completely reduced, almost like implementing the 'land to the tailor'. Besides, because some Mongol middle and small landlords had little savings, their lives were hard. It is inappropriate. We should regulate the reduction in general to be one year, no more than two years." [69] In these Han-dominated areas, Mongol landlords were much fewer than their Han counterparts. They had little impact on the overall mass movement. It was less challenging for the cadres to carry on the United Front policy to placate the Mongols and simultaneously launch vehement attacks against Han landlords.

However, in Mongol-dominated areas, the reaction was different. Horqin Right Middle Banner had one of the highest percentages of the Mongol population (in 1946, 91.58%[70]). The mass movement there did not distinguish landlords by nationality. To the local Mongol cadres and people, the land reform was likely not perceived as Han oppression or coercion, but rather as a liberation of the poor. The devoted cadres (mostly Mongols) actively responded to eliminating the "not-fully-cooked rice" movement. They ignited the class struggle by employing material

[67] "Muqian gaizao jiasheng gongzuo zhong cunzaizhe de jige wenti (jielu)" (Some Problems Existing in the Transforming the "Not-Well-Cooked" Work), 5 March 1947, in *Dongbei jiefangqu caizheng jingji shiliao xuanbian*, vol. 1, 326.

[68] "Guanyu muqian xingshi yu renwu-Cheng Zihua zai Ji-Cha-Re-Liao diyici dang daibiao huiyi shang de baogao" (About the Current Situations and Tasks: Cheng Zihua's Report on the First Ji-Cha-Re-Liao Party Congress), 3 May 1947, in *Rehe jiefangqu*, vol. 1, 309-310.

[69] "Guanyu tudi wenti-Zhao Yimin zai Ji-Cha-Re-Liao diyici dangdaibiao huiyi shang de baogao" (About the Land Issues: Zhao Yimin's Report on the First Ji-Cha-Re-Liao Party Congress), 7 May 1947, ibid., 364.

[70] Keerqin youyi zhongqi zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (ed) *Keerqin youyi zhongqi zhi* (The Chorography of Horqin Right Middle Banner), Hohhot: Neimenggu renmin chubanshe, 1993, 196.

interests: only those who participated would get the “fruits”. In some places, the struggle fruits that an active participant could get were twice as many as a non-active participant. If a person did not participate in the struggle, they received nothing.[71] Due to the change in the war situation, after the CCP’s work group left, some poor peasants returned the fruits to the landlords, voluntarily or involuntarily. At the end of 1946 and early 1947, the CCP returned, demanded the landlords to re-hand in their properties, and made new rules: If the poor or hired peasant had returned distributed properties to the landlords, he would not receive any this time. In contrast, those who did not return the properties received a reward, “in order to stimulate and educate the poor and hired peasants who were not resolute”. The struggle result was invigorating: over 20,000 bullets, 2 light machine guns, 2 grenade dischargers, and over 300 rifles; besides, there were over 200 horses, 254 cattle, 5 donkeys, 35 rooms, and over 140 *shang* (1 *shang* was 15 *mu*) land.[72]

The CCP’s top leaders soon discovered that the previous land distribution was not satisfactory. In April 1947, Liu Shaoqi arrived in Shanxi and was shocked to find out that the peasants were still in extreme poverty. “They don’t have clothes to wear…Many peasants haven’t made clothes for years; a household with eight or nine people had to share only one set of shabby clothes.”[73] Liu Shaoqi worried that if extreme poverty were not solved, the poor would lose trust in the CCP, which would disadvantage the Party in the civil war. Thus, a more thorough and radical mass movement was needed. “Without a systematic, universal and thorough mass movement, we can not completely solve the land problem”, Liu Shaoqi wrote to cadres who worked in the Jin-Sui base on 22 April.[74] Several days later, he encouraged the cadres to be bolder and more radical in land distribution and not fear

[71] Narenmandula, “Nongyun xuqu” (The Overture of the Peasant Movement), in *Keyouzhongqi dangshi wenhui (diyiji)*, 38.

[72] Maoaohai, “Xike zhongqi qunzhong yundong zongjie dahui shang jianghua,” 85.

[73] Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (ed) *Liu Shaoqi zhuan, 1898-1969* (The Biography of Liu Shaoqi, 1898-1969), Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2011, vol. 1, 519. Other CCP leaders also observed the extreme poverty of peasants as well. Yang Kuisong listed other records, such as Xie Juezai’s diary. Xie wrote many people had to eat grain husks; they had no meat for several years; they could not even afford salt. Xie Juezai, *Xie Juezai riji* (Xie Juezai’s Diary), Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1984, vol. 2, 1061.

[74] *Liu Shaoqi zhuan*, vol. 1, 519-520. Zhonggong zhongyang dangshi he wenxian yanjiuyuan (ed) *Liu Shaoqi nianpu*, vol. 2, 1943-1949 (zengdingben), Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2018, 243.

"going too far". "As long as ninety per cent of people advocate doing this, this should be done. Even if it is wrong, is it scary? No. It has benefits. If ninety per cent of people are wrong, then the ninety per cent will be responsible." [75] Liu's "ninety per cent"[76] principle permitted the tyranny of the majority, allowing violence and atrocities in the name of the masses. After Liu Shaoqi's speech, killings, beatings, and tortures increased dramatically.

Mao Zedong highly acknowledged Liu's new viewpoints on land reform.[77] On 25 July, he forwarded Liu's April letter to all the cadres in every CCP-controlled base and asked them to apply it.[78] Mao's approval further pushed the mass movement to go more leftist. From 17 July to 13 September, a two-month National Land Conference was held in Xibaipo, Hebei. On 10 October 1947, the CCP CC released the "Outline of Agrarian Law". It was a systematic ultraleft land reform proposal. The National Agrarian Law demanded the elimination of the feudal and half-feudal land system and the implementation of "land to the tiller". It demanded the abolishment of all land ownership by landlords, shrines, temples, monasteries, schools, institutions, and groups. In the countryside, all landlords' land and public land would be redistributed to people equally, regardless of age and gender. It also required "taking the more to compensate the less" and "taking the fertile to compensate the infertile". The ideal aim was that, in a village, everyone would have the same amount of land with the

[75] Liu Shaoqi, "Zai Jin-cha-ji zhongyangju ganbu hui shang de jianghua" (The Speech at the Jin-Cha-Ji Central Bureau's Cadres Conference), 30 April 1947, Renmin chubanshe ziliaoshi (ed) *Pipan ziliao: Zhongguo de Heluxiaofu Liu Shaoqi fangeming xiuzhengzhuyi yanlun ji, 1945.8-1957. 12*, 1967, 30-31.

[76] Even in the CCP's system, uniting with 90% while attacking 10% was somewhat dramatic. After 1949, Mao usually claimed "bad people" was 5%,

[77] Yang Kuisong pointed out that the change in Mao's attitude towards the land reform was due to Liu Shaoqi's letter on 22 April. After reading Liu's letter, Mao advocated a more radical land distribution. Mao received this letter in July 1947, and he did not realise Liu Shaoqi's letter and speech had caused widespread violence in May. Liu Shaoqi did realise the "leftist" tendency, but as Mao publicly supported the radical reform, everyone had to obey Mao's instructions. Even if Liu wanted to redress the mistake, he could not challenge Mao's decision. Yang Kuisong, "Zhonggong tugai zhengce biandong de Lishi Kaocha (1946-1948)," 222-223.

[78] Mao's comment about Liu Shaoqi's letter: "The problems Comrade Shaoqi pointed out do not only exist in one Liberated Region but also exist in all the Liberated Regions in different degrees. The principles he pointed out should be applied in all the Liberated Regions." Mao Zedong, "Mao Zedong dui Liu Shaoqi guanyu chedi jiejue tudi wenti gei Jinsui tongzhi de yifengxin de piyu" (Mao Zedong's Comments on Liu Shaoqi's Letter about Completely Solving the Land Problems to Jin-Sui's Comrades), 25 July 1947, in JZSTGWX, 61.

same quality.[79] It was a utopian blueprint for the redistribution of land and property. Inevitably, it would cause “leftist mistakes” if the CCP coerced it in the countryside.

Before the Agrarian Law’s formal publication, some Mongolian areas had already responded to the Central Committee’s new stance. (As noted previously, not all the leagues and banners currently belong to the IMAR. However, they were all deeply affected by the CCP’s extremely leftist policy, and under the administration of the Northeast Bureau, the policies across areas were highly similar. This part will discuss them as a whole.) A propaganda article, “Are there classes among the Mongols in Inner Mongolia”, was published in June 1947, arguing that there was severe class exploitation among the Mongols.[80] In Bairin Right Banner,[81] an “anti-upper strata line struggle conference” was held in July and August. Cadres who did not struggle against the Mongol upper strata people were criticised; some of them were dismissed from office.[82] Horqin Right Middle Banner went more radical. From July to October 1947, the “Three Fights Three Digs” campaign was launched: fight the Mongol traitors, fight Chiang’s spies, fight local tyrants, dig treasures, dig the root of bandits, and dig black guns. Landlord Guo Haibao, the previous “enlightened landlord” model for mutual assistance, was executed.[83] The Banner’s work group convened over 9000 people to struggle against an upper-stratum man, Delger. 83 people vented their grievances. Delger was beaten to death. The struggle fruits were more than 300 cattle, over 700 sheep, 110 horses, more than 200 clothes, 20 *liang* gold and 21,000 *liang* silver.[84] Delger used to side with the KMT. Convinced by the CCP’s United Front policy and other upper strata people, he led his soldiers back

[79] “Zhongguo tudifa dagang”(Outline of Agrarian Law), in ZZWX vol. 16, 547-550. See the particles 1, 2, 3, 5.

[80] “Neimenggu mengren zhong youmeiyou jieji” (Are There Classes Among the Mongols in Inner Mongolia), June 1947, in Neimenggu zizhiqu zhengxie wenshi ziliao weiyuanhui (ed) *Sanbu liangli yu wen kuan chang: Wenxian yu shiliao* (Neimenggu wenshi ziliao 56), cited as NWZ 56, Inner Mongolia: 2005, 245-251.

[81] Bairin Right Banner did not belong to the IMAR. It was still under the administration of Rehe Province and Ji-Cha-Re-Liao Branch Bureau.

[82] Wang Xinggui, “Zongshu” (The Overview), in *Balin youqi tugai yundong*, 11.

[83] Xu Yixing, “Zhetiao caoyuan daolu shi zenyang kaipi de,” 19. Buhe, “Keerqin youyi zhongqi de jiaofei fanba douzheng” (The Elimination of Bandits and Anti-Tyrants Struggle of Horqin Right Middle Banner), 232. The authors said due to his collusion with the bandits, Guo was “abandoned by the masses”, and “suppressed”, which should be the euphemism of killing.

[84] Maoaohai, “Xike zhongqi qunzhong yundong zongjie dahui shang jianghua,” 86-87.

and surrendered to the CCP in June 1947. CCP cadres promised they would not be punished and provided them with letters of certification and travel expenses if they wanted to go home. Delger asked to study at the Eastern Mongolian Military and Political Cadre's School[85] in Wangyemiao and got the approval. [86] A cadre said regretfully that if Delger had not gone back to his banner to pick up his family, he would have been protected by the school and would not have been killed. [87]

The Climax and Chaos: October 1947 to February 1948

After the release of the Outline of Agrarian Law, the frenzy began to spiral out of control. Inner Mongolian regions were not exempted. During the climax of the struggle, almost everything was confiscated and redistributed: land, livestock, clothes, furniture, farming tools, and houses. In Hexigten Banner, redistributed items mentioned in the Party committee's report included water tanks, lanterns, hoes, sickles, cloth, tea bottles, cupboards, mirrors, chopping boards, quilts, bed mats and so on, almost everything in daily life. [88] People were more zealous about distributing movable properties (*fu cai*) than land, which brought them direct benefits. Nevertheless, the most attractive items, like gold, silver, and other high-value properties, were not often distributed to the poor. In Jerim League, gold and silver were usually handed over to the government rather than given to the masses.[89] In Hulunbuir and Naun Mur, gold, silver and jewellery were confiscated by the peasant association, which purchased farming tools for the peasants.[90] In a Mongol village,

[85] The school opened on 18 April 1946. Khafungga was the initial headmaster, and Hu Zhaoheng was the political commissar. In August 1947, Ulanhu became the headmaster and political commissar. Bayintu, "Dongmenggu junzheng ganbu xuexiao gaishu" (The Eastern Mongolian Miltary and Political Cadres' School", *Xing'an geming shihua* 2, 69-80.

[86] Buhe and Baoyin, "Zhongguo gongchandang keerqin youyi zhongqi dangshi dashiji (1946.4-1949.9)," 345-347. Nari, "Keerqin youyi zhongqi ziwei dadui: Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun neimenggu qibing diwushi shisituan" (The Self-Defense Force of the Horqin Right Middle Banner: The Innre Mongolian 14th Regiment 5th Cavalry Division of the PLA), *Keyouzhongqi dangshi wenhui (diyiji)*, 27-28.

[87] Zhuronga, "Tuliemaodu yiqi fengxian de shimo"(The Beginning and the End of a Risk in Tuuleemod), *Keyouzhongqi dangshi wenhui (diyiji)*, 52.

[88] "Keshiketeng qiwei guanyu pingfen tudi de gongzuo zongjie" (The Hexigten Banner's Party Committee's Summary of the Work of Equal Redistribution of the Land), 13 April 1948, in Liu (ed), *Keshiketeng tudi gaige*, 80.

[89] Li Hongfan et al, "Zhelimu Meng Nongcun Muqu de Minzhu Gaige Yundong", 140.

[90] "Humeng nongqu tudi gaige zongshu" (The Overview of the Land Reform in the Arable Area in Hulunbuir League), *Neimenggu de tudi zhidu gaige*, 299.

Jilin Ail, in Bairin Right Banner, the local authorities said they would use the confiscated silver to create a cooperative and give the poor shares.[91] With some cases below, it could be inferred that most precious metals became the CCP regime's revenue.

The radical campaign designated people's classes hastily and harshly. It seemed that the more "landlords" were attacked, the more successful the land reform was. A farmer in Butha Banner, Naun Mur League, had no land during the Manchukuo period but only had an ox, a horse, and a few farming tools. After the Japanese surrender, he took some land previously occupied by Japanese colonisers (*kai tuo di*) and started to farm, hiring one or two workers during the busy time. He should have been classified as a "middle peasant" but was wrongly labelled as a rich peasant. Another peasant in this banner, who had only a herd of sheep and had hired one herder, was classified as a landlord.[92] The standards of middle peasants and herders or lower classes were extraordinarily draconian. In Hinggan League, if a peasant's 15% income was from "exploitation", he would be classified as a rich peasant and attacked in the land reform.[93] In Jerim League's semi-pastoral areas, the class label mainly depended on the average number of livestock (the standard was cattle over three years old) per person while also considering land incomes and exploitation relationships. If a household's cattle per capita was above 3, it was landlord or herdlord. If the area was more arable, the cattle numbers of rich, middle, poor, and hired peasants were 1.5, 1, less than 1, and zero, respectively. If the area was more pastoral, the cattle numbers of rich, middle and poor herders were 2, 1.5, and less than 1, respectively. 6-8 sheep or goats were converted to one cattle. The cadres participating in Jirem's democratic reform recalled, "When designating classes, we considered the amount of exploitation, but basically, they were determined by per capita livestock. So the attack range (*da ji mian*) was somewhat

[91] "Jilin aile mugai gongzuo zhongdian zongjie" (The Summary of Jilin Ail's Pastoral Reform), 13 December 1947, in *Balin youqi tugai yundong*, 67.

[92] "Humeng nongqu tudi gaige zongshu," 307-308.

[93] "Song Zhending tongzhi baogao xing'an meng gongzuo (jiexuan)" (Comrade Song Zhending Reporting the Hinggan League's Work), 22 July 1948, in Xing'an dangshi wenji 2, 49.

broad."[94] In Xilingol and Chahar's pastoral regions, if a herder hired one person, he would be classified as a rich herder.[95]

The consequence was that a large number of people were affected. In Jerim League, more than 20 per cent of the population suffered from attacks in this fervent movement: Hure Banner, 23.9%; Horqin Left Middle Banner, 23.7%; Naiman Banner, 21.6%; Horqin Left Middle Banner, 23%; Jarud Banner, 17.6%; the worst is Tong Liao County, 29% of the population were attacked.[96] In Hinggan League, about 3909 households of middle peasants were wrongly targeted, which accounted for 45% of the middle peasant households after the Party corrected its previous leftist mistakes.[97] The average rate of the victim in the democratic reform in the IMAR was 20.8% of households and 25.6% of the population.[98][99]

The struggle was very cruel. The worst landlords were executed directly. The masses' demand often surpassed the legal process. Hinggan Party Committee claimed, "If (a tyrannical landlord) had heinous crimes, the masses required to kill him, we should do as the masses required." "Due to feudal forces and tyrannical landlords' cruel oppression and exploitation, when peasants rise to revenge and struggle, beatings are unavoidable, and they can't be forbidden."[100] Although the

[94] Li Hongfan, "Huiyi wo zai Zhemeng de gongzuo lichen, " 72-73.

[95] Siqin'gaowa, "Xicha mugai zongshu" (The Review of Xilingol-Chahar's Pastoral Reform), *Nanwang de jiyi: Xilinguole minzhu geming wenji*, 120.

[96] Li Hongfan et al, "Zhelimu meng nongcun muqu de minzhu gaige yundong," 140.

[97] "Xing'an meng tudi gaige dashiji," 114.

[98] Wulanfu, "Zai Neimenggu ganbu huiyi shang de zongjie baogao tigang (jielu), " 9.

[99] Some scholars, when quoting these data, pointed out that the CCP CC regulated the "range of attack" (*daji mian*) should be below 8% of the households and 10% of the population, while Inner Mongolia surpassed 20%, like Qinggeletu, "Neimenggu dongbu qu de tudi gaige," 17; Cheng Tijie, "Neimeng dongbu 'wenhe tugai' yu Wulanfu de wenge daotai," 360-361.

This narrative was somewhat misleading. It's not because Inner Mongolian cadres were too radical that they ignored or violated the CC's regulations. When the land reform was launched, the CCP CC did not strictly regulate exact percentages. Thus, almost all the CCP-controlled regions went "over-leftist". 8% of the households and 10% of the population were decided by Mao Zedong on 15 February 1948, when the Party started to "rectify the deviation" (*jiu pian*). Only then did it become a strict standard of land reform. Each CCP region began to lower their "range of attack" under these two numbers. *Mao Zedong nianpu*, vol. 3 (1945.08-1949.09), 280.

[100] "Neimenggu gongchandang gongzuo weiyuanhui xing'an meng zhongxin qi wei dui xiaomie fengjian zhong qunzhong douzheng de jidian yijian" (Inner Mongolia's CCP Work Committee Hinggan League Central Banners Committee's Opinions about the Mass Struggle in the Elimination of Feudalism), 21 December 1947, *Xing'an dangshi wenji* 2, 31,

document added that, in many cases, they should not beat landlords or should not beat them to death, it still condoned and even encouraged violence. Some people committed suicide after being struggled against. Some were beaten to death. A report vividly detailed the process of struggling landlords in Kunduiling Township (*Xiang*), Hexigten Banner. Tortures like beating, hanging, dragging and burning were often used to force landlords to say where they hid treasures. A landlord Wang Xilan gave false information to the masses twice. Zealous activists went to the places reported to dig the treasures out but found nothing. The furious masses harshly beat him, used red-hot iron to burn him and locked him in a cold room. He finally died of the torture, yet the activists still did not get his treasures.[101]

The population of Hexigten Banner[102] was only about 88650 (Han 82792, Mongols 5858), while the land reform caused 621 deaths in the arable areas (lacked exact numbers of Han and Mongols) and 164 deaths in pastoral areas (4 Han, 160 Mongols). It accounted for 0.89% of the population. Even the party cadres had to admit "it was a pretty big number".[103] Hexigten Banner belonged to Ju Ud League, which was one of the most leftist regions. Mongol soldiers often saw corpses lying on the road due to the bloody struggles. Even their own families and relatives, who were supposed to be the honourable "families of revolutionary martyrs and servicemen", could also be heavily attacked and beaten to death. [104] Hexigten Banner's killing was not the worst. Qiqihar Township's killing was 1.2% of the population. A town in Jalaid Banner killed 248 people, 2.6% of the population. Several months later, Ulanhu admitted that "every struggle led to beatings and the killings are too many. It is a severe mistake. We should take it as a warning forever."[105] The suffering population

38.

[101] "Diwuqu Kunduiling xiang pingfen tudi baogao" (Report on the Equal Distribution of land in the 5th District, Kunduiling Township), 20 January 1948, in *Keshiketeng tudi gaige*, 187.

[102] On 1 December 1945, two administrative units, Jingpeng County and Hexigten Banner, were established in the same region, governing Han-dominated and Mongol-dominated areas respectively. On 8 March 1948, Jingpeng County was cancelled, and Hexigten Banner governed this region. Keshiketeng qi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (ed) *Keshiketeng qi zhi* (The Chorography of Hexigten Banner), Huhhot: 1993, 48, 51. The population was after the merge of the Jingpeng County and Hexigten Banner.

[103] "Tudi gaige zongshu", "Keshiketeng qiwei guanyu pingfen tudi de gongzuo zongjie", 13 April 1948, in *Keshiketeng tudi gaige*, 20, 73, 77-78.

[104] Aodesier "Wulanfu yu 'sanbuliangli' zhengce" (Ulanhu and the "Three Nos and Two Benefits' Policy), Wulanfu jinian wenji bianweihui (ed) *Wulanfu jinian wenji*, vol. 1, Beijing: Zhongyang Wenxian Chubanshe, 2010, 410.

[105] Wulanfu, "Zai Neimenggu ganbu huiyi shang de zongjie baogao tigang (jielu)" (The

included not only “class enemies” but also poor and middle peasants and herders, whom the CCP always claimed to protect and work for. Among Hexigten Banner’s 621 deaths in the arable areas, there were 73 poor peasants and 49 middle peasants. In the pastoral areas, among the 164 deaths, 18 were poor herders, and 26 were middle herders.[106]

After October 1947, the United Front was completely set aside. Most Mongol middle and small landlords and herdlords, even some big landlords and herdlords, had escaped the democratic reform previously, as the CCP intended to pacify national minorities. But not this time. Rehe Province enunciated: “Mongol and Han landlords’ land (except the nomadic areas) will be distributed equally in the same way. No one can reject, disrupt or resist the masses’ land distribution movement in the name of nationality.”[107] Yet, it was common for the Mongols to be landlords in their hometown, and the immigrated Han rented their land. Thus, Mongol landlords were afflicted heavily by the democratic reform. For example, Kunduiling, in Hexigten Banner, was a Mongol-Han mixed living township. There were more Mongol landlords than Han landlords. At least four of the first six landlords sentenced to death were Mongols. The peasant associations’ cadres discussed and decided who should be killed. Then, they were shot at a public trial.[108] Mongol upper-class people, like princes, nobles and lamas, also became the main target of class struggle. In early 1948, the biggest Tibetan Buddhist temple in Xilingol League, Beisiin süme (Beizimiao), was attacked. Mongol cadres mobilised the junior lamas to struggle against the senior lamas. The temple’s property, including dozens of chests of silver sycee, was confiscated and became the newly founded IMAR’s financial income.[109] A cadre Yun

Report Outline on the Inner Mongolian Cadres Conference), 30 July 1948, Wulanfu geming shiliao bianyanshi (ed) *Wulanfu lun muqu gongzuo* (Ulanhu on the Pastoral Area Works), Hohhot: Neimenggu renmin chubanshe, 1990, 9. The book was republished in 2013, and another version of this report was used. The main idea is the same, but the words and sentences differ slightly. It is a full version of Ulanhu’s speech rather than an excerpt like the 1990 one. However, the data on the death was deleted. The data also disappeared in other Ulanhu collections, like two versions of *Wulanfu wenxuan*, published respectively in 1999 and 2013.

[106] “Tudi gaige zongshu,” 20-21. “Keshiketeng qiwei guanyu pingfen tudi de gongzuo zongjie.”

[107] “Rehe sheng zhengfu bugao--Guanche zhixing ‘zhongguo tudifa dagang’de juti cuoshi” (Rehe Province Government Notice (Civil 9): The Specific Measures to Implement the “Outline of Agrarian Law”), 5 January 1948, in *Rehe jiefangqu*, vol. 1, 442.

[108] “Diwuqu Kunduiling xiang pingfen tudi baogao,” 193.

[109] Chaoluomeng, “Xilinguolemeng muqu minzhu gaige jingyan tan” (On the Experience of

Shiying recalled that four lamas were dragged by horses to death at a struggle session, including the highest Lama of the temple. The cadres had to admit the impact was very negative.[110] In Horqin Right Middle Banner, almost all the Lamaist temples were demolished. The activists besieged Hatu Temple (also Pujing Temple) and cruelly tortured the lamas. The result was 27 deaths.[111]

Prince Sung, one of the most important "United Front objects", also suffered miserably in the democratic reform. He had been a high official in Prince Demchugdongrub's Japanese puppet regime, Mengjiang United Autonomous Government. In November 1945, Prince Sung was appointed as a member of the Executive Committee of the CCP's FIMAM. On 9 November 1945, he and the other 14 upper-class people gave a self-humiliating statement, which said: "(We) helped the Japanese invaders committed many crimes of betraying our nation and country, and made our Mongolian people suffer too much. …Our betraying our nation's behaviour should have been punished severely. But the CCP and the democratic government saved us, treated us with a generous spirit and didn't punish our previous crimes. Our appreciation is beyond words."[112] In 1947, Prince Sung was appointed head of the counsellors' office at the IMAG. However, his loyal statement and the government's position did not guarantee his family's security in the democratic reform. Some Mongol leaders still wanted to protect the "United Front upper strata". According to a cadre Qolmon, they sent Prince Sung to Ulanhot (Wangyemiao) to attend a conference before the democratic reform began.[113] Sukh,

Xilingol League Pasture Area's Democratic Reform), NWZ 59, 46.

[110] Yun Shiying, "Huiyi Xilinguole meng de minzhu gaige" (The Recalling of the Democratic Reform in Xilingol League), NWZ 59, 33. Mo Zhiqing, "Zhandou zai jiefang Neimenggu de dadao shang" (Fighting on the Road of Liberating Inner Mongolia), in Ximeng zhengxie wenshi weiyuanhui (ed) *Saiwai fenghuo: Xilinguole meng minzhu geming wenji*, vol. 1, 2009, 169-170.

[111] "Zhonggong keyouzhongqi weiyuanhui guanyu tugai hou chuli miaochan ji lama de zhegnce wenti qingshi baogao" (The CCP Horqin Right Middle Banner Committee' Report on Asking for Instructions about Dealing With Temple's Properties and Lamas' Policies", 21 November 1952, in Zhonggong keerqin youyi zhongqi wei dangshi bangongshi (ed) *Keyouzhongqi dangshi wenhui (diyiji)* , Ulanhot: 1993, 313.

[112] "Qian wei xingmeng weiyuanzhang Songjinwangchuke deng fabiao shengming jue xixue qianchi wei menggu renmin fuwu" (The Previous Chairman of the Collaborationist Xingmeng Committee Sungjingwangchug and Others Made a Statement), 11 November 1946, *Jin-Cha-Ji ribao* (Jin-Cha-Ji Daily) , in NZYLDSX, 6-8.

[113] Chaoluomeng, "Xilinguolemeng muqu minzhu gaige jingyan tan" (Discussing the Experience of Xilingol League Pasture Area's Democratic Reform), NWZ 59, 46.

who personally engaged in the struggle against Prince Sung's family, said that they were informed by their superior, Wang Duo, that Prince Sung had colluded with rebelling bandits. The cadres went to East Hauqid Banner and mobilised people ger by ger, telling them about Prince Sung's crime. When the masses were mobilised, the cadres held a public trial. The activists from the herders denounced the Prince's crimes and vigorously demanded the execution of the Prince's son-in-law. CCP cadres responded to the "demand" immediately and killed the man on the spot. Prince Sung's silver and gold buried underground were dug out and confiscated. Some properties and livestock were distributed to poor herders, and some were taken by the Party. Impacted by the class struggle, Prince Sung died in 1948.[114] According to the memoirs of Party cadres published decades later, the accusation against Prince Sung was likely unfounded. They admitted that Prince Sung behaved well after the surrender of Japan and should be the target of unity. It was wrong to struggle against him.[115]

Even the CCP cadres' families with a "bad" background were subject to the violent land reform. Despite being born into a noble family, the head of Ju Ud League, Idagasurung, was accepted as a CCP member in March 1947. He was considered progressive and "had a very good performance". However, six of his family members in Hexigten Banner were beaten to death: his grandfather, father, stepmother, uncle, aunt and younger brother. His wife and children suffered from beating and burning and were kicked out of home by the masses. A cadre Su Lei in his retrospective account commented: "Although he (Idagasurung) can treat it (his family's tragedy) correctly, the leftist approach has had a very bad impact on the Party among the cadres and the masses."[116] "Treat it correctly" usually means understanding and forgiving the Party's "mistakes" and did not complain of one's personal agony.

The land reform frenzy caused panic among the people. Some began to rebel. In Xilingol, some people became bandits and rebels, robbing and inciting ordinary

[114] Suhe, "Laoji muqu tedian, Zuohao muqu gongzuo" (Keeping in Mind the Features of Pastoral Areas and Do the Pastrol Areas Works Well), NWZ 59, 40-41.
[115] Chaoluomeng, "Xilinguolemeng muqu minzhu gaige jingyan tan," 45-46.
[116] Su Lei, "Zai balin zuoqi kaizhan gongzuo de zhengrong suiyue" (The Period of Carrying out Works in Bairin Left Banner), in *Zhaowuda meng shu zai Lindong*, 392. "Tudi gaige zongshu," *Keshiketeng tudi gaige*. "Yidagasurong," in *Chifeng shi wenshi ziliao xuanji 5*: *He Zizhang yu mengqi sishi*, 193-197.

people to run away, “taking advantage of herders’ fear of the distribution and struggle,” commented the CCP side. The local police did not even have enough force to suppress the rebellion. The IMAR had to send armies to eliminate the bandits. The unrest was not subdued until the first half of 1949.[117] On 7 February 1948, Manzutun (literally Manchu village), Hinggan League, also broke out a small-scale rebellion. People were told, “Herdlords would be beheaded. The properties would be redistributed completely.” Their fear was not irrational because even the party cadre had to admit the rebels took advantage of “some extreme practice in arable and semi-pastoral areas”. The result was about 200 scared people joined the rebellion and tried to kill the land reform cadres. After they failed, these people took their horses, carriages and properties and prepared to flee to the MPR. The local banner government sent troops to fight the rebels and to persuade the “deceived masses” to come back. About 160 of the 200 returned. The rebellion was totally subdued after 3 months.[118]

The CCP expected people liberated from ruthless exploitation to become more zealous in agricultural production. The reality was often the opposite.[119] Hexigten Banner’s cadres had to admit that some lazy people and vagrants just wanted to “eat the struggle meal” rather than work hard; the middle peasants feared being wealthy because they would be attacked; the landlords and rich peasants lacked tools after the distribution. In the spring of 1948, due to the poor production, the cadres estimated that fifty or sixty per cent of the people of the banner lacked food. It would

[117] Chaoluomeng, “Xilinguolemeng muqu minzhu gaige jingyan tan,” 46.

[118] Sun Jiazhen, “Sanbuliangli zhengce de zhiding yu shishi” (The Formulation and Implementation of the “Three Nos and Two Benefits Policy), *Xing’an dangshi wenji* 1, 261-262. “Xing’an meng muqu minzhu gaige dashiji” (Hinggan League Pastoral Regions Democratic Reform Major Events), in *Xing’an dangshi wenji 2*, 169.

[119] Party cadres had to concede that land reform damaged agricultural production in the short term. Xi Zhongxun: “It shook the confidence of peasants about the ownership of land. The common phenomenon is that generally, peasants don’t want to produce seriously, thinking that as this time the land has been equally redistributed, how many years later will it be equally distributed again?” “Xi Zhongxun guanyu fen sanlei diqu shixing tugai de baogao” (Xi Zhongxun’s Report on Differentiating Three Types of Regions to Implement Land Reform), 8 Feburary 1948, JZSTGWX, 156. Fuping (Jin-Cha-Ji) Central Bureau: “Now, Peasants are generally sceptical about the private ownership and the right to free disposal of land after the land distribution; they are also sceptical about the guideline of getting rich. They suspected that one day, the land and properties would be distributed equally again.” “Fuping zhongyangju guanyu pingfen tudi de zhishi” (The Fuping Central Bureau’s Instructions about Equally Distribution of the Land), 8 February 1948, JZSTGWX, 254.

directly impact the CCP's war effort.[120] Livestock were more vulnerable to forced distribution. Some cadres believed livestock should also be equally distributed in pastoral and semi-pastoral areas, like land in arable areas. However, the economic cost was immense. By 1948, Ju Ud League's livestock decreased to 930,000 from 1.43 million in 1946. The worst county, Linxi, lost 70.1% of its sheep, from 9250 before the distribution to 2770 after the distribution[121]. Two banners in Chahar lost 50,000 cattle and sheep within several months.[122] As people feared being attacked if they had too many livestock, they slaughtered the animals to eat. During the distribution, herdsmen were unclear about livestock ownership, so they didn't feed them well. The process of the distribution usually lasted for days. The livestock was fed and managed centrally, but carelessly, during this period. Additionally, diseases spread rapidly among the concentrated animals. Thus, the loss of livestock could be massive before the distribution started. A village in Hexigten Banner procured more than 500 cattle for the redistribution, but there were only less than 200 when the distribution started. Another village collected more than 800 cattle and 1700 sheep, while when the distribution began, only about 500 cattle and 700 sheep were left. When the herdsmen finally obtained the livestock, these animals were largely unhealthy. The original herds were broken up due to the distribution, and the animals would run away or be eaten by wolves.[123]

The radical savage reform even seriously impacted other regions which had not been touched. Many herders immediately set off in trepidation when they heard of the CCP's policy. Wulan Sum and Kulun Sum in Chahar Right Middle Banner didn't implement the democratic reform until March 1952, but before the reform, these two places lost nearly 50% of their livestock. The herd owners heard that "the CCP will distribute people's properties" and "herdlords will be deprived of livestock and properties". Therefore, the scared herd owners started to deal with their livestock

[120] "Keshiketeng qiwei guanyu pingfen tudi de gongzuo zongjie, " 92.

[121] Wang Duo, "Huigu muqu minzhu gaige yu 'sanbuliangli' zhengce" (The Review of the Democratic Reform in the Pastoral Regions and the 'Three Nos and Two Benefits' Policy), NWZ 59, 6. Qian Zhanyuan, "Neimenggu muqu shixing 'sanbuliangli' zhengce he 'wenkuanchang' fangzhen licheng yu jingyan" (The Experience of Implementing the "Three Nos and Two Benefits" Policy and the "Steady, Lenient and Lasting" Guideline in Inner Mongolian Pastoral Areas), NWZ 59, 198.

[122] Qian Zhanyuan, "Neimenggu muqu shixing 'sanbuliangli' zhengce he 'wenkuanchang' fangzhen licheng yu jingyan, " 198.

[123] "Tudi gaige zongshu," *Keshiketeng tudi gaige*, 22-23.

hastily. They sold the livestock at an extremely low price: a tea brick could be exchanged for two or three sheep; half a kilo of wine could be exchanged for a sheep; even a package of matches could be exchanged for a sheep. CCP's official narrative explained that the herders misunderstood CCP's minority policy and wrongly believed the rumour, and also blamed "the people with ulterior motives", "the speculative traders", and the endless war for the loss of livestock.[124]

The land reform in Inner Mongolia from autumn 1947 to spring 1948 adopted an ethnic-blind approach, treating everyone equally.[125] The hue and cry from the Mongols was rapidly escalating. The CCP cadres finally realised that the ethnic issues had become too serious to dismiss. In June 1948, the Northeast Bureau had to reflect the democratic reform mistakes in the Mongolian region to appease the Mongols:

> ...in general, (they were) excessively leftist. The cadres had thoughts of "taking advantage of others, not differentiating the Mongols and Hans, and eradicating all Mongol feudalism". They did not care about the differences between nationalities, economies, customs and religions at all, dogmatically applying Han people's ways. Many Mongol cadres also suffered from discrimination. Despite the leftist tendency in the arable areas, most lama temples were destroyed, and even worshipping buddhas was banned. Mongols speaking Mongolian in the army were insulted as "donkey's cries". In the pure pastoral and semi-pastoral areas, the animal husbandry economy suffered from severe damage. Most herds of horses, cattle and sheep were distributed; they were slaughtered and eaten recklessly, and the death toll was very high. Most temples were destroyed as well. All these have caused widespread dissatisfaction among the Mongol masses from all strata…[126]

[124] Zhengxie wulanchabu shi chayou zhongqi weiyuanhui, "Chayouzhongqi muqu minzhu gaige de diaocha baogao" (The Investigation Report of the Democratic Reform in Chahar Right Middle Banner), in Neimenggu zizhiqu zhengxie (ed) *Neimenggu wenshi ziliao jicui*, vol. 8, Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 2017, 74.

[125] Bulag, *The Mongols at China's Edge*, 116.

[126] "Guanyu zhixing zhongyang tugai yu zhengdang zhishi jihua xiang zhongyang de baogao" (The Report to the CC about Implementing the CC's Land Reform and Party Rectification Instructions), 23 June 1948, in *Dongbei jiefangqu caizheng jingji shiliao xuanbian*, vol. 1, 90.

Correcting the Mistakes: "Three Nos and Two Benefits"

Researchers on Inner Mongolia's land reform always appreciate Ulanhu's "Three Nos and Two Benefits" model. Indeed, this model well-coordinated nationality relationships and class struggle, meanwhile achieving the CCP's aim of transforming the old society through a relatively peaceful approach. Ulanhu and his colleagues carefully differentiated the situations of arable (*nong ye qu*), semi-arable, semi-pastoral (*ban nong ban mu qu*), and pastoral areas (*mu qu*) and suggested different reform policies. Its main idea was that in pastoral areas, there were no distributions of livestock and properties of the herd owners, no struggles, and no designations of classes (three nos); instead, it demanded an increase in the wages of herders, which benefited both herdlords and the herders (two benefits). In arable areas, Ulanhu also advocated for preferential policies for the Mongols (and possibly other national minorities) to address their lower socioeconomic status.

Ulanhu's policy not only benefited his Mongol compatriots but also people in Xinjiang, Qinghai, Tibet and other national minority areas, which launched land reform after 1949. This section does not intend to depreciate its significance; rather, I try to demonstrate that the role of higher authorities in the policy shift was crucial by examining the chronology of the corrective measures. From the historical facts above, we know that every step of Inner Mongolian land reform was closely linked to the decisions of the higher authorities. Its corrective action was no exception.

CCP senior leaders gradually realised that the radical land reform must be reined, or they would lose people's support. Ren Bishi[127] was one of the earliest to perceive that land reform had gone too extreme. In November 1947, he wrote to Mao that some "new rich peasants" who were ruled by the CCP regime and gradually became rich should not be treated as the "old rich peasants" Besides, some places' class classification was too radical.[128] On 12 January 1948, he urged the cadres to unite middle peasants, not destroy individual landlords but wipe them out as a class,

[127] Ren Bishi was one of the "five great secretaries" from 1946 to 1950. The other four were Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai and Zhu De.

[128] Ren Bishi, "Guanyu jiefangqu zhengquan he xin funong zhengce wenti gei Mao Zedong de xin" 12 November 1947, in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian bianji weiyuanhui (ed) *Ren Bishi Xuanji*, Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1987, 411-412.

protect industry and commerce, win over intellectuals, and prohibit beatings and killings.[129] At the same time, Mao Zedong also considered a policy adjustment. On 9 January 1948, Mao forwarded Xi Zhongxun's report, which reflected many serious problems.[130] In the middle of January, Mao commented on Ren Bishi's 12 January speech, warning about the consequences of leftism.[131] Liu Shaoqi, on 23 January, said that "leftist mistakes and tail-ism (meaning leaders give up their leadership but pander to 'backward' people's requirements) have become the main danger"; if there were beatings and killings or encroachments of interests of middle peasants, the cadres should "immediately redress them". [132] On 15 February, Mao decided that those who were attacked in the land reform should be below 8% of the households and 10% of the population.[133] From then on, each CCP-controlled region took the two numbers as the standard, reducing the proportion of landlords and rich peasants.

[129] Ren Bishi, "Tudi aige zhong de jige wenti" (Several Problems in the Land reform), 12 January 1948, in JZSTGWX, 103-126.

[130] Xi Zhongxun's report: In old revolutionary base areas, the number of landlords and rich peasants was much lower than in other regions. If the common standard were applied to these old revolutionary regions and the land divided, people would be unsatisfied. He addressed three conditions in the "old regions": First, some rich peasants were actually the beneficiaries of the CCP's previous land reform policy; Second, some old landlords and peasants whose land had been confiscated many years ago had become ordinary farmers; Third, some peasants who were a little richer than others, or some CCP civil servants or teachers whose family lacked labours were labelled as exploiters. Xi Zhongxun also pointed out the cruel tortures and too many executions in the land reform. "Xi Zhongxun guanyu jiancha suishu gexian tudi gaige qingkuang de baogao" (Xi Zhongxun's Report on Examining the Land Reform Situations in Each County in Suiyuan), 4 January 1948, in JZSTGWX, 99-102.

[131] *Mao Zedong nianpu*, vol. 3 (1945.08-1949.09), 2023, 265.

[132] Liu Shaoqi, "Liu Shaoqi guanyu tugai zhengdang wenti gei Bo Yibo deng de zhishi" (Liu Shaoqi's Instructions on Land Reform and Party Rectification to Bo Yibo and Others), 23 January 1948, JZSTGWX, 132-133. According to Yang Kuisong's research, in early 1948, Liu Shaoqi was actually the defender of the radical land policy. Although he admitted there were mistakes and tried to correct them, he also argued, "Our policy is not wrong. We need to give the middle peasants some stimulation." He believed that only the Jin-Sui region and Xi Zhongxun's Shanbei had serious leftist problems, and the Party should be careful not to let the rightist points of view be revived because they opposed leftism. In February 1948, he still believed many village party branches were not trustworthy and that the Party needed to rely on poor peasants. Besides, Mao also considered not pouring cold water on the cadres and the masses. He emphasised the success of the land reform and downplayed the mistakes. Yang Kuisong, "Zhonggong tugai zhengce biandong de lishi kaocha (1946-1948)," 196-198, 206-208.

[133] *Mao Zedong nianpu*, vol. 3 (1945.08-1949.09), 280.

The Northeast's land reform policy shift began in February 1948. On 7 February 1948, Liu Shaoqi spoke out that "the Northeast's land struggle attacked 25% of the population. It's really too much." Liu Shaoqi suggested that if a person's exploiting income was no more than 25% or 30% of the total income, he should be classified as a middle peasant. [134] On 9 February 1948, the CCP CC forwarded Liu Shaoqi's report and demanded that the Northeast Bureau immediately correct the leftist mistakes. "The Northeast's land reform attacked too much population. It is very dangerous." The telegram, drafted by Mao, argued that landlords and rich peasants in China usually made up 8-10%. [135] Two days later, the Northeast Bureau replied that they agreed with the CCP CC and Liu Shaoqi's opinions, deciding that 25% exploitation income of the total (in some situations, it could be 30%) would be the standard for differentiating middle and rich peasants.[136] On 15 February, the *Northeast Daily* published an editorial, "The High Tide and the Leadership", urging to cool down the mass movement and redefine the middle peasants.[137]

Back to the issue of Inner Mongolia's democratic reform, Ulanhu's "Three Nos and Two Benefits" for pastoral areas began to develop in late February 1948. It went further than the Party's basic land reform principles. No matter how merciful the land policies (toward the Han) were, they still required class struggles and distributions of land. Ulanhu's formula cancelled class struggles and distributions of livestock; later, it added no class designations. However, this may not have happened if the CCP CC had refused to loosen its draconian and utopian policy. Although Ulanhu had sent the CCP CC his suggestions about conducting a milder land reform among the Mongols in August 1946, from the autumn of 1947 to early 1948, he had to abide by the CC's discipline and support the radical reform policy. On 1 January 1948, Ulanhu's article

[134]Liu Shaoqi, "Liu Shaoqi guanyu dongbei tudi gaige zhong dajimian taikuan de baogao" (Liu Shaoqi's Report on the Northeast Land Reform's Overattacking), 7 February 1948, in *Dongbei jiefangqu caizheng jingji shiliao xuanbian*, vol. 1, 368-369.

[135] "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu liji jiuzheng tudi gaige dajimian gouda gei dongbeiju de zhishi" (The CCP CC's instructions to the Northeast Bureau about the Land Reform's Overattacking), 9 February 1948, in *Dongbei jiefangqu caizheng jingji shiliao xuanbian*, vol. 1, 368. *Mao Zedong nianpu*, vol. 3 (1945.08-1949.09), 279.

[136] "Dongbeiju guanyu suoxiao dajimian wenti de baogao" (The Northeast Bureau's Report on Limiting the Range of Attack), 11 February 1948, in *Dongbei jiefangqu caizheng jingji shiliao xuanbian*, vol. 1, 369-371.

[137] "Gaochao yu lingdao" (The Hightide and the Leadership), 15 February 1948, *Dongbei ribao* (The Northeast Daily), in *Dongbei jiefangqu caizheng jingji shiliao xuanbian*, vol. 1, 371-378.

was published in *Inner Mongolia Daily*, which called for “equally distributing the land and completely eradicating feudalism.” “In pastoral areas, it needs to eradicate feudalism as well.” The article stimulated the rapid growth of radicalism and soon caused disasters.[138] Incidents dragging lamas to death in Beisiin süme and Manzutun rebellion happened after the publication of this article.

Around late February 1948, the Northeast Bureau’s new policy reached Inner Mongolia. Gao Gang, the deputy secretary of the Northeast Bureau, sent a telegram to the Inner Mongolia Party Committee that “Zalantun doesn’t have milk to buy”. Also, at the end of February, Luo Ronghuan, another deputy secretary of the Northeast Bureau, told Inner Mongolian cadres: “The spirit of the Outline of Agrarian Law can be used, but should be based on Inner Mongolia’s specific situations. The form of struggle should not be copied; pay attention to the nationality estrangement.”[139] The instructions from the higher authorities gave a green light for Ulanhu’s preferential policies for the Mongols. Meanwhile, the head of Horqin Right Front Banner Jirgal, who was sent to deal with Manzutun’s rebellion, reported his thoughts to Ulanhu that the pastoral area’s reform should not emulate the arable area’s model dogmatically. He suggested not to struggle against the landlords and distribute their livestock.[140]

The CCP’s authoritarian nature and strict discipline do not permit cadres much decision-making freedom. Party cadres can adjust Party policies to a small degree when they implement them locally to adapt them to local social and economic conditions. Nevertheless, they can never violate the party line, or they will suffer from severe punishments. The vertical power structure dictates that lower-level cadres must obey their superiors. Thus, even if Ulanhu and other Mongolian cadres realised

[138] The CCP cadres in their memoirs admitted after this article, they just aimed at destroying “feudalism” but did not know how. Thus, they dogmatically copied the experience in the arable areas, and caused many problems. Liu Chun, “Minzhu geming shiqi Neimenggu muye qu de minzhu gaige,” 135-137. Yun Shiying, “Huiyi Xilinguole meng de minzhu gaige, ” 32-33.

[139] Liu Chun, “Minzhu geming shiqi Neimenggu muye qu de minzhu gaige,” 138.

[140] Wang Shusheng, “Wulanfu tan muqu minzhu gaige” (Ulanhu Talked about the Democratic Reform in the Pastoral Areas), in NWZ 59, 169-170. Baoyanbatu, “Weishenm wulanmaodu meiyou shixing pingfen shengchu” (Why Did Not Wulanmaodu Implement the Equal Redistribution of Livestock), *Xing’an dangshi wenji* 2, 152-153.

that the reform was too radical and had created too many tragedies, they still had to stick to it until the Party changed the policy from above.

The “rectification of the deviation” (*jiu pian*) was in time. Some places that had not started or completed the land reform adjusted their previous policies. Horqin Right Middle Banner’s work committee, on 23 February, based on *The Northeast Daily’s* editorial “The Hightide and the Leadership,” made a series of more lenient policies about how to distribute land, calculate exploitation relationships, designate classes and so on.[141] Yet, this does not mean these places were free from leftist mistakes. Horqin Right Middle Banner started its own rectification of the deviation in October 1948 and discovered that about 664 households of middle peasants, 3321 people, were wrongly categorised to higher classes. Its initial landlords, herdlords, rich peasants and rich herders were 17.05% of the population,[142] higher than Mao’s 10% but lower than the IMAR’s average of 25.6%. The entire Northeast’s average was also above 25%.

Fortunately, the Northeast Bureau received and approved Ulanhu and his colleagues’ advice about the pastoral area reform. On 28 March 1948, the bureau’s land reform rectification report determined that “in the Mongolian region, the method of being cautious and slowly advancing should be adopted. In pure arable areas…confiscate the land properties of Mongol traitors and tyrannical rich peasants. Procure the extra land properties of small landlords and rich peasants; don’t dig the hidden wealth (*di cai*: usually means valuable treasures buried underground), and don’t kick (them) out of the big house. In semi-arable semi-pastoral areas, except for a few big landlords and local tyrants, in general, don’t touch (them). In pure pastoral areas, except for a few heinous big herdlords, with the government’s approval, don’t

[141] “Xikezhongqi qiwei guanyu qunyun gongzuo de buchong zhishi” (The West Horqin Middle Banner’s Party Committee’s Additional Instructions about the Mass Movement), 23 February 1948, in *Keyouzhongqi dangshi wenhui (diyiji)*, 182-186. Baoyin, “Tudi gaige dashiji” (The Major Events of the Land Reform), in *Keyouzhongqi dangshi wenhui (diyiji)*, 214.
According to Tsogman-du-la’s research, the banner’s “trial point” in late January 1948 still had slow progress. “Jindai Xing’an meng diqu tudi wenti yanjiu,” 173.

[142] “Xizhongqi ge nutuke pubian jinxing jiupian gongzuo” (West Horqin Middle Banner Started the Work of Rectification of Deviation), 19 February 1949, *Inner Mongolia Daily*, in *Keyouzhongqi dangshi wenhui (diyiji)*, 205-207. “Guanche dang de tuanjie zhongnong zhengce, xikezhongqi wancheng jiupian gongzuo” (Implementing the Party’s Uniting Middle Peasant’s Policy, West Horqin Middle Banner Finished the Rectification of Deviation Work), 13 May 1949, *Inner Mongolia Daily*, in *Keyouzhongqi dangshi wenhui (diyiji)*, 208-209.

touch the others."[143] Nevertheless, the new policy probably did not arrive in remote pastoral areas in time. In many pastoral areas, the distribution of livestock and the struggle against herdlords continued in April 1948 or even later.[144] Hulunbuir cadres in May or June 1948 also wanted to imitate the arable area's method, struggling against landlords and distributing their livestock, yet the Inner Mongolia Work Committee stopped it promptly.

The Northeast Bureau decided to convene an Inner Mongolian cadres' conference in Harbin. Northeast leaders like Lin Biao, Gao Gang, and Luo Ronghuan attended the conference.[145] On 30 July 1948, Ulanhu formally summarised the mistakes in the Inner Mongolian democratic reform."The policy that feudalism should also be eradicated in the pastoral area was wrong." "It was wrong to implement the same policy of equal land distribution in the semi-arable semi-pastoral area as in the arable area." "(The previous reform) didn't classify classes based on the specific economic situation in Inner Mongolia. Mongol peasants' arable work skills were relatively backward. It is not easy for them to rise to rich peasants. It's not suitable to struggle (them)." "Mongols were forced to come into farming from herding. Due to not knowing how to farm, small landlords renting out their land…It's not suitable to struggle against them as well."[146]

Ulanhu proposed his suggestions to protect the interests of the Mongols. In pastoral areas, except for heinous Mongol traitors and tyrants, big herdlords would not be touched; Herders' wages should be improved. In semi-arable semi-pastoral areas,

[143] "Dongbeiju guanyu pingfen tudi yundong de jiben zongjie" (The Northeast Bureau's Summary of the Equal Distribution of Land Movement), 28 March 1948, in *Dongbei jiefangqu caizheng jingji shiliao xuanbian*, vol. 1, 403.

[144] Xilingol League stopped the redistributions and struggles in April 1948. Siqin'gaowa, "Xicha mugai zongshu, " 120. Suhe, "Laoji muqu tedian, Zuohao muqu gongzuo," 40. Suhe's memoir confirmed Xilingol's radical struggle possibly starting in April 1948. "Xing'an meng muqu minzhu gaige dashiji," 169, said in late February, the cadres in Hinggan League received the CCP Inner Mongolia Work Committee's document that the pastoral democratic reform should not struggle against the herdlords, distribute their properties and designate classes. This might be inaccurate. Hinggan League's Horqin Right Middle Banner made a document in March 1948 which clearly instructed the distribution of herdlords' livestock in the nomadic areas and emphasised the importance of struggle. "Xikezhongqi qiwei guanyu tugai youguan zhengce wenti de zhishi" (The Party Committee of West Horqin Middle Banner's Instructions about the Questions of the Land Reform Policies), 8 March 1948, in *Keyouzhongqi dangshi wenhui (diyiji)*, 192.

[145] Liu Chun, "Minzhu geming shiqi Neimenggu muye qu de minzhu gaige," 142.

[146] Wulanfu, "Zai Neimenggu ganbu huiyi shang de zongjie baogao tigang (jielu), " 7-9.

big and middle landlords' fixed land and farm animals would be distributed to the poor, while herds would not. Small landlords and rich peasants would not be touched. In arable areas, for small Mongol landlords who leased their *hukou* land,[147] their properties would not be distributed (not including the land); Mongol rich peasants' properties would not be distributed if the exploitation income was below 50%, and only the extra land would be distributed.[148] The pastoral part was developed into the "Three Nos and Two Benefits" later, adding a new principle of "no class designations". The arable part was more benign than the Northeast's policy treating Han small landlords and rich peasants after the "rectification of the deviation", which still required procuring their extra livestock, farming tools, and grains.[149]

Furthermore, from 1951 to 1952, new policies were created for rent reduction and land reform in Suiyuan Province. Ulanhu argued that the "second landlords" (er dizhu, or er dongjia), mostly Han colonisers, who rented Mongolian land and leased it to other peasants, were the most serious exploiters. The exploitation of second landlords should be cancelled first, while rent reduction did not have to be applied to all Mongol landlords.[150] Mongol peasants could receive "one or two" proportions of land[151], while Han peasants usually receive one. Mongols were given lower-class labels. Mongol middle and big landlord labels must be approved by the league or the provincial government.[152]

[147] Hukou land: *Hukou di*: a type of land given to Mongol soldiers by the Qing government, for them to support families. Ibid., 11,

[148] Ibid., 7-9.

[149] "Dongbeiju guanyu pingfen tudi yundong de jiben zongjie," 402.

[150] "Wulanfu jiu suiyuan shengwei 'guanyu menggu jianzu wenti de zhishi' gei huabeiju bing zhongyang de xin" (Ulanhu's Letter to the North China Bureau and the CC about Suiyuan Province Committee's "Instructions on the Mongolian Rent Reduction"), 25 March 1951, *Neimenggu de tudi zhidu gaige*, 187.

[151] "Suiyuan sheng mengqi tudi gaige shishi banfa (cao'an)" (Suiyuan Province Mongol Banners' Land Reform Methods (Draft)), 3 December 1951, *Neimenggu de tudi zhidu gaige*, 201.

[152] "Suiyuan sheng mengqi tudi gaige shishi banfa (cao'an)," 201. "Suiyuan sheng guanyu mengmin huafen jieji chengfen buchong banfa" (Suiyuan Province's Additional Methods for Classifying Mongol People's Classes), 3 December 1951, *Neimenggu de tudi zhidu gaige*, 203-204.

Chapter Summary

As Liu Xiaoyuan points out, the CCP senior leaders rarely viewed the Han-minority relationships from a purely interethnic perspective. They were accustomed to analysing ethnic relations through the lens of class, as class struggle proved effective.[153] On the Inner Mongolian democratic reform issue, the CCP's ethnopolitical strategy was swinging. Whether to maintain the United Front policy and placate the Mongols depended on the war situation. When the CCP believed peace was possible and sought to maintain the United Front, it would endeavour to win the sympathies of all social strata and sectors. Thus, its land reform policy would be more lenient. However, when the war was urgent, the national minority's issue would give way to class struggle. When the Party realised the previous radicalism had caused widespread unrest, it would return to the United Front. Although the IMAR was a so-called autonomous region, its autonomous power hardly existed during this period, even less than it would have in the 1950s. The upper authorities, the Northeast Bureau and the CCP CC, largely determined the autonomous region's policies. Ulanhu's peaceful and moderate model was not formally raised until the CCP CC decided to correct the leftist mistakes.

The CCP established an integrated vertical power system in which all powers were concentrated within the central authority. Although the local authorities were supposed to take charge of local affairs, political scientist Zhao Suisheng argues, their formal role "was to implement centrally-made decisions."[154] The Inner Mongolian land reform was a typical case; the dominance of the Central Committee was evident from the beginning to the end. Nevertheless, the local cadres were not completely stripped of discretion in implementing the Party's policies. Scholars have noted that they may overfulfill the tasks assigned from above or pursue their agendas, which may not align with the central authority's goal.[155] The former was sometimes driven by ideological requirements, but more importantly, it may help the

[153] Liu, *Reins of Liberation*, 270.

[154] Zhao Suisheng, "China's Central-Local Relationship: A Historical Perspective," in Jia Hao and Lin Zhimin (eds), *Changing Central-Local Relations in China: Reform and State Capacity*, London and New York: Routledge, 2018, 19-20.

[155] Kai-Yuen Tsui and Youqiang Wang, "Decentralization with Political Trump: Vertical Control, Local Accountability and Regional Disparities in China," China Economic Review 19 (2008), 19.

local cadres' promotion. In contrast, the latter risks damaging their political career. In the CCP's history, in most cases, "being left" (over-fulfilling the task) is preferred over "being right" (under-fulfilling the task). Thus, we can identify some instances where the local cadres did not strictly follow the instructions from upper authorities, but behaved more radically than their superiors. During Mao's entire rule, the CCP's political movements frequently made "left-leaning mistakes" because of the preference for "being left". Ulanhu, however, usually appeared more "right-leaning", which would be viewed as under-fulfilling the task. It would cause the dissatisfaction of his superiors and colleagues, and finally lead to his downfall in the Cultural Revolution.

Scholars often argue that the significance of the CCP land reform was more political and social than economic. DeMare contends that the Party failed to transform the rural economy. After the land distribution, many peasants still lacked land; income inequality kept growing; and even the hiring of labour gradually returned.[156] Nevertheless, land reform destroyed the old power and old elites in rural areas, while the CCP-trusted activists controlled the local power.[157] Inner Mongolia's land reform severely attacked the princes, nobles, lamas, landlords, KMT and Manchukuo officials and so on, who, to a large extent, supported the old regime. It paved the way for the establishment of its own regime. The CCP admitted the violent land/democratic reform "caused widespread dissatisfaction among the Mongol masses from all strata". However, it should be noted that the CCP employed many

[156] Brian DeMare, *Land Wars: The Story of China's Agrarian Revolution*, California: Stanford University Press, 2019, 146-157. DeMare's evaluation of the land reform in the long term is thought-provoking. The CCP did not change the rural economy. Even in the political and cultural fields, there were many problems. Peasants lacked class awareness and were disinterested in participating in political affairs; the "liberated" peasants refused to prioritise the state's goals over their personal benefits; village cadres were corrupt, and so forth. In Inner Mongolia, it was similar. People did not prioritise the states' goal: some were afraid of being rich; some just wanted to acquire wealth through land reform. The cadres were very corrupt.

[157] Vivienne Shue, *Peasant China in Transition: The Dynamics of Development toward Socialism, 1949-1956*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980, 90-96. Steven I. Levine, *Anvil of Victory: The Communist Revolution in Manchuria, 1945-1948*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1987, 229-235. Frederick C. Teiwes, "The Establishment and Consolidation of the New Regime: 1949-57", in Roderick MacFarquhar (ed) *The Politics of China: The Eras of Mao and Deng*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, 36. Pepper, Suzanne, *Civil War in China: The Political Struggle, 1945-1949*, Rowman&Littlefield Publishers, 1999, 327-330.

Mongol cadres, who were no less revolutionary than their Han comrades, to impose the Party's will. Such a strategy possibly reduced the conflicts between nationalities to a certain degree.

Ulanhu's land/democratic reform model protected Mongol herders from class struggle and intended to redress the historical inequality and ease conflicts between Mongols and Han. After all, the Mongols were the indigenous people of the land. They were entitled to receive more land and preferential treatment than the Han immigrants/colonisers. However, like most affirmative actions worldwide, addressing historical unfairness by "reverse discrimination", Ulanhu's model inevitably caused some Han people's grudge. The Han's resentment against their Mongol neighbours would erupt in the 1960s. When Ulanhu was in power, he could shield the Mongols from being attacked, not always, but often. But when he lost power, the Mongols, without a protector, would unavoidably become victims of Han's grievance.

Chapter 3 China's Affirmative Nationality Policy and the Predicament of the Mongols

In the 1950s, a film called "The Spring of Inner Mongolia" (later renamed "The Victory of the Inner Mongolian People" by Mao Zedong) was shown publicly. It was the first film about minority nationalities after the establishment of the PRC and achieved great political success. In 1952, it was shown in Moscow to celebrate the second anniversary of the Sino-Soviet Treaty.[1] The same year, it won a screenplay award at the Karlovy Vary Film Festival. The film was initiated by Ulanhu in 1949.[2] Ulanhu's son Buhe was the consultant. It was said Buhe's wife, an actress, performed a dance in the film.[3] What interested me was not its political success but its initial "political mistake", which subtly reflected the CCP's national minority policy in the 1950s. The ruling party endeavoured to show its goodwill to minority groups and tried to avoid offending them.

The original story is now unavailable, but the filmmakers' accounts could help figure it out. In 1947, a KMT spy, Mr.Yang, went to a Mongol banner to persuade a Mongol Prince, Dorji, to cooperate with the KMT and resist the CCP. At the same time, two CCP cadres, Su He (perhaps Sukh in Mongolian) and Menghebateer (Monghbaatar), were also sent to work at this banner. The banner was Monghbaatar's home banner, but Su He was not trusted by Monghbaatar's friend Dundebu (Dondob, played by Enhesen), who was also the prince's herdsman. Dondob thought Su He was a Han (the name indeed deliberately blurred the character's nationality), and he insisted that the Han would only oppress and exploit the Mongols. However, gradually, Dondob realised Prince Dorji's evilness. The prince beat herders and children cruelly, killed Dondob's friend Monghbaatar, killed Monghbaatar's father, and gave Dondob a knife, forcing him to kill Su He. Dondob eventually came to realise that the

[1] "Sulian qingzhu zhongsu youhao tongmeng huzhu tiaoyue liang zhounian. Baozhi zazhi dou fabiao zhuanwen lunshu zhongsu youhao tongmeng de weida yiyi. Mosike shibajia yingyuan fangying woguo mingpian Neimeng renmin de shengli" (The Soviet Union Celebrated the Two-year Anniversary of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance. Newspapers and Journals Published Articles on the Great Significance of the Sino-Soviet Friendship and Alliance; 18 Cinemas in Moscow Showed Our Country Famous Film *The Victory of Inner Mongolian People*), *People's Daily*, 15 February 1952.

[2] Zhu Anping, "Neimeng chunguang yingpian fengbo" (The Crisis of The Spring of Inner Mongolia), *Yanhuang chunqiu*, 2011, No. 11, 67.

[3] Ibid., 70.

reactionary upper class was the true enemy. By contrast, the CCP kept helping the poor Mongols and was committed to the liberation of the Mongols. Thus, Dondob also stood together with the CCP firmly and joined the revolution.[4]

It is a typical CCP propaganda film, hailing class struggle and convincing its audience that the CCP is the only force that could liberate all nationalities. The officials highly praised the film when it was first shown in April 1950. The deputy minister of the State Ethnic Affairs Commission, Liu Geping, said the film "correctly reflected the struggle for the liberation of the Inner Mongolian people". The IMAR government also sent a fabric banner acclaiming the brotherhood of the Han and the Mongols.[5] Ulanhu's son Buhe published an article in *People's Daily* praising the film, which "reflects the Inner Mongolian people's life and struggle truly and artistically" and "criticises the parochial nationalism and explicitly opposes the KMT's great Han chauvinism".[6]

Unexpectedly, after only one week, the film director, Gan Xuewei, was told by Li Weihan, the head of the United Front Work Department (UFWD), that the film was not in accordance with the United Front policy and would be banned. The key reason was that the film portrayed a completely evil prince, which would be unfavourable for winning over the minority upper strata of people.[7] Although Mongol cadres were satisfied with the film, it was said that a Northwestern representative at a United Front conference raised this issue.[8] Nevertheless, the dim prospect of the film

[4] Gan Xuewei and Zhang Yue, "You Neimeng chunguang dao Neimeng renmin de shengli" (From the Spring of Inner Mongolia to the Victory of Inner Mongolian People), *Dianying yishu*, 5 January 2005, 60. Wang Guangfei, *Shiqinian zhongguo shaoshu minzu dianying yanjiu* (The Research on the Minority Nationality Films During the 17 Years), Beijing: Zhongguo dianying chubanshe, 2012, 30-35. It has a relatively detailed account of the original film story.

[5] "Zhengque fanying shaoshu minzu de diyi bu yingpian neimeng chunguang zai jing shiying"(The First Film Correctly Reflecting Minority Nationality The Spring of Inner Mongolia Had a Trial Screening in Beijing), *People's Daily*, 28 April 1950.

[6] Buhe, "Yige Menggu ren kan yibu Menggu pian: Neimeng chunguang"(A Mongol Watched a Mongolian film: The Spring of Inner Mongolia), *People's Daily*, 30 April 1950.

[7] Gan Xuewei and Zhang Yue, "You Neimeng chunguang dao Neimeng renmin de shengli," 60.

[8] According to Yu Ji's study, in March 1950, a military rebellion broke out in Yiwu county, Xinjiang. Besides, Tibet had not been submissive to the CCP regime. Zhou Enlai must placate the minority nationals and avoid triggering their anger. Yu Ji, "Guojia yizhi yu shaoshu minzu dianying: Zhou Enlai chuli yingpian 'Neimeng chunguang' shijian yanjiu (The will of State and Minority Nationality Films: A study of Zhou Enlai's Dealing with "The Spring of Inner Mongolia"), *Dianying yishu*, 5 July 2013, 138.

changed several days later when it caught the attention of Zhou Enlai. After watching the film, Zhou Enlai said the great Han chauvinism of Han rulers was the main reason for the backwardness of minorities and Han-minority conflicts. The Premier didn't blame the screenwriter, saying the mistake was due to the lack of agreement on the nationality policy of the officials. Eventually, Zhou suggested that the film be revised.[9] One month later, the screenwriter Wang Zhenzhi published his long self-criticism in *People's Daily*, promising to rewrite the prince.[10]

Later, Mao's wife, Jiang Qing, conveyed Mao's comments during the revising process. Mao didn't criticise the film's political mistake. Instead, he said not all the reactionary guys could be won over, and they must be defeated, such as Li Shouxin (he worked for Prince Demchugdongrub)[11], while the screenwriter's self-criticism failed to point it out.[12] Although Mao and Zhou had subtle disagreements, the new edition of the film mainly followed Zhou's opinions. It re-portrayed Prince Dorji as a neutral force. Though keeping contact with the KMT, the prince was reluctant to directly oppose the CCP. He even agreed with Communist Su He's request to set free the poor people who were forced to work for him. In the new edition, Prince Dorji's evil crimes in the previous story were committed by one of his subordinates, who also secretly colluded with the KMT. The revised film also set several "good" upper-class individuals, such as another prince allying with the CCP and one of Prince Dorji's subordinates, who always holds a pro-CCP stance. After the painstaking revision, the film was approved and praised by the CCP leaders. Mao renamed it as "The Victory of the Inner Mongolian People".[13]

In a communist country, artistic works are expected to serve political aims. The revised version of the film purposely expressed the CCP's eagerness to maintain

[9] Gan Xuewei and Zhang Yue, "You Neimeng chunguang dao Neimeng renmin de shengli," 59-60.

[10] Wang Zhenzhi, "Neimeng chunguang de jiantao"(The Self-criticism About the Spring of Inner Mongolia), *People's Daily*, 28 May 1950.

[11] Li Shouxin and Prince Demchugdongrub were in the MPR at that moment. In September 1950, the MPR extradited Demchugdongrub and Li Shouxin to China.

[12] Yin Aihua, *Yishixingtai, minzu, minjian: shiqinian shaoshu minzu ticai dianyingzhong de Xiangzheng yu yinyu* (Ideology, Nationality, Folk: The Symbols and Metaphors in the Minority Nationality Films During the Seventeen Years), PhD Thesis, Minzu University of China, May 2011, 26-28.

[13] Gan Xuewei and Zhang Yue, "You Neimeng chunguang dao Neimeng renmin de shengli," 60.

good relations with national minorities. To avoid offending the upper strata, the Party refrained from creating villain characters. The original story of “The Victory of the Inner Mongolian People” intended to demonstrate class exploitation and oppression existing among minority groups as well, and politely criticised parochial nationalism (or local nationalism). However, the Party’s official stance was to tone down the class struggle within the minorities and did not want to criticise their antagonism to the Han. The Party insisted that national minority people’s distrust of the CCP and the Han was a consequence of great Han chauvinism rather than parochial nationalism. The former should be overcome first, and the Party was cautious criticising the latter. The CCP was determined to appear progressive on the issue of minority nationality. As the new ruler of China, it must be different from the old, corrupt, cruel overlord, the KMT. As the KMT had been accused of being great Han chauvinists, the CCP was vigilant of the same mistake.

In the 1950s, the fledgling People’s Republic of China has incorporated Xinjiang and conquered Tibet. The territory extended to vast non-Han regions. To govern the frontier regions, the PRC intensively borrowed Soviet experiences. Despite rejecting the right to secede and a federation system, China absorbed the Soviet affirmative tendency towards minorities in the 1920s. From 1949 to 1957, the CCP indeed offered more preferential policies to national minorities than any other period of Mao’s rule.

The main findings of this chapter focus on the predicaments of the Mongols[14] under policies that seemed to favour the national minorities, and the explanation of the root cause of the problem. The Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region was expected to be the “model autonomous region” to demonstrate the “advanced nature” of China’s nationality policy. However, even during the most affirmative period, the “model national minority” still had numerous dissatisfactions. The Mongols faced enormous pressure of being assimilated. The rapid decline of the Mongolian language worried

[14] I did not find many publications focusing on this topic, other than Rinqin’s “1957nian Neimenggu zhengfeng yundong yu minzu wenti”. Rinqin also discusses some complaints of the Mongols, including the nationalisation problem, the ignorance of the Mongolian language, and the farmer-herder conflicts. Based on a large number of primary documents, his narrative is faithful to the facts. However, it seems that he overlooked the complexity of the issues. For example, Rinqin said that Han peasants ignore the IMAR government’s bans on land cultivation, but it seems he did not realise the IMAR authorities sometimes allow and even encourage it.

them. They complained that the minority cadres did not have real power. The loss of pasture land to cultivation even reminded them of the reactionary KMT period. The state's preferential treatment did not solve their predicaments. Why did China's progressive nationality policies still fail to satisfy the national minorities? At the end of this chapter, I will borrow two concepts, "hard-line" and "soft-line" policies, which Terry Martin developed when analysing Soviet national minority policies, to interpret Communist China's situation. My argument is that the national minority policies, no matter how preferential they appeared, were merely the CCP's "soft-line" secondary policies, and could be jettisoned at any time if they were contradictory to the "hard-line" primary goals. Consolidation of communist rule was the undisputed primary task of Mao's CCP, which hardly considered the interests of the people, including the national minorities.

Discarded Self-determination and Federation; Autonomy in Name

The CCP emulated almost all the Soviet political systems to build a new China. The approach to building a multinational state was no exception.[15] Mao Zedong used to tell Anastas Mikoyan in February 1949: "In resolving the national question in China, we learn from the Russian Bolsheviks."[16] China had a different demographic situation, in which the non-Han nationalities were 6.06% of the population, according to the 1953 census.[17] In the Soviet Union, in contrast, the largest national group, the Russians, was just above 50%, while roughly another half of the population was considered minorities. Nonetheless, the CCP leadership still paid certain attention to ethnopoetics. Scholars generally agree that China's relatively lenient policy in the 1950s came from the Party's experience of interacting with non-Han ethnic groups in the 1930s. Struggling to survive, the CCP made special promises to the minorities to

[15] Minglang Zhou has an excellent examination on this topic. Minglang Zhou, "The Fate of the Soviet Model of Multinational State-Building in the People's Republic of China," in Thomas P. Bernstein and Hua-Yi Li (eds), *China Learns from the Soviet Union, 1949-present*, Plymouth, UK: Lexington Books, 2010, 477-503.

[16] APRF: F. 39, Op. 1, D. 39, Ll. 78-88. Reprinted in Andrei Ledovskii, Raisa Mirovitskaia and Vladimir Miasnikov, Sovetsko-Kitaiskie Otnosheniia, Vol. 5, Book 2, 1946-February 1950 (Moscow: Pamiatniki Istoricheskoi Mysli, 2005), 81-87. Translated by Sergey Radchenko. https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/113352

[17] "Zhonghua renmin gongheguo guojia tongjiju guanyu quanguo renkou diaocha dengji jieguo de gongbao" (The Report of National Bureau of Statistics of the PRC about the National Census), *People's Daily*, 1 November 1954.

enlist their support. Such an experience made the Party believe that it is strategically important to unite other national groups.[18] Besides, non-Han people's land had rich natural resources, and the CCP needed them to support the construction of the new China. According to Mao, in April 1956, "And who has more land? The minority nationalities, who occupy so to 60 per cent of the territory. We say China is a country vast in territory, rich in resources and large in population; as a matter of fact, it is the Han nationality whose population is large and the minority nationalities whose territory is vast and whose resources are rich, or at least in all probability their resources under the soil are rich."[19]

Nevertheless, scholars have already noticed that, although the CCP intensively imitated the Soviet model to build the PRC, its constitution about the right to secede was one of the few cases which "deliberately parted" from the Soviet elder brother.[20] The Soviet constitution consistently granted other nationalities the right to secede from the Soviet Union. In contrast, China's 1954 constitution, though largely drawing on the experience from the 1936 Soviet constitution with the assistance of Soviet advisors,[21] discarded the right of minority regions to secede. 1954 constitution regulates: "All national autonomous areas are inseparable parts of the People's Republic of China."[22] It should be noted that the Soviet Union allowed its republics to reserve the right to secede only in theory, not in practice. As Walker Connor pointed out, the proponents of the right to national self-determination in the 1910s, including Woodrow Wilson, never planned to apply this principle universally. They merely intended to apply the principle "to areas formerly under the sovereign of the defeated powers."[23] The previous supporters of national self-determination would commonly

[18] Gladney, *Dislocating China*, 11-12. Pamela Kyle Crossley, "Thinking About Ethnicity in Early Modern China," *Late Imperial China*, Volume 11, Number 1, 1990, 18-19.

[19] Mao Zedong, "On the Ten Major Relationships," *Selected Works of Mao Tsetung*, Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1977, Vol. 5, 295.

[20] Frederick C. Teiwes, "Establishment and Consolidation of the New Regime," 104. James Leibold, *Ethnic Policy in China*, 5. Barry Sautman, "Scaling Back Minority Rights?: The Debate About China's Ethnic Policies," 86.

[21] China made the draft of the 1954 constitution with the assistance of the Soviet advisors. Mao even sent the draft to Moscow, asking the CPSU CC to offer opinions. See Shen Zhihua, *Sulian zhuanjia zai Zhongguo*, *1948-1960* (Soviet Specialists in China, 1948-1960), Beijing: Zhongguo guoji guangbo cchubanshe, 2003, 217-218.

[22] *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo xianfa* (Constitution of the People's Republic of China (1954), article 3.

[23] Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding*, Princeton: Princeton

abandon this doctrine if they came into power. In the case of the Soviet Union, the Bolsheviks used it as a weapon against the Tsarist Empire. After coming into power, they shifted their position completely and strongly opposed other nations to be independent of the newborn USSR. So did the CCP, which used to be an ardent champion of self-determination, immediately discard it after the establishment of the PRC.

Probably the earliest explicit rejection of the right to self-determination was made on 5 October 1949. The CCP CC said:

> "About the right to self-determination of the national minorities, today it should not be emphasised. In the past, during the civil war period, our Party, in order to win over the national minorities to oppose the reactionary rule of the KMT, used to emphasise this slogan, which was absolutely correct at that time. But today's situation has changed completely. The reactionary rule of the KMT has almost been overthrown. A new China led by our Party has been born."[24]

The frequently quoted speech claims that under the CCP's rule, there is no oppression of national minorities. Thus, the minority's right to be independent is no longer needed. Knowing that the position shift was awkward, the CCP reiterated it to national minorities. Li Weihan,[25] the head of the UFWD, said in 1951 that after overthrowing Chiang Kai-shek's rule, "Our national relationship has completely changed, from an era of national oppression to an era of national equality. The basic task of the national question has changed fundamentally. It is no longer helping the national minorities to get liberated from the system of national oppression."[26] Ulanhu,

University Press, 1994, 5.

[24] "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu shaoshuminzu 'zijuequan' wenti gei erye qianwei de zhishi" (The CCP CC's Instructions About 'the Right to Self-determination' Question to the Frontline Committee of the Second Field Army), 5 October 1949, Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (ed) *Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian,* vol 1, 24. The Frontline Committee of the Second Field Army included Liu Bocheng, Deng Xiaoping, Zhang Jichun, Chen Geng and Li Da.

[25] Li Weihan participated in minority nationality works during the Yan'an period. In 1940, he wrote "The Outline of Huihui (Chinese-Muslim) Question" and "The Outline of Mongol Question," which summarised the CCP's general policy toward national minorities in the 1940s.

[26] Li Weihan, "Youguan minzu zhengce de ruogan wenti" (Some Questions About the Nationality Policy), 21 December 1951, in Li Weihan, *Tongyi zhanxian yu minzu wenit* (The United Front and the Nationality Question), Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe, 2016, 586.

the most influential national minority cadre, also defended the Party's position in 1951: "Outer Mongolia was independent thirty years ago. We think (its) national self-determination is revolutionary and progressive. While Tibet, before the liberation, also wanted to be independent and raised about national self-determination, we say it is reactionary and backward. It's because Outer Mongolia and Tibet have different concrete historical conditions. One was (in) the period of reactionary rule; one is (in) the period of revolutionary victory."[27]

Nevertheless, an intriguing conversation between Mao and Anastas Mikoyan in February 1949 suggests that possibly the CCP leadership actually believed the cliché of dissuading non-Han groups from separating. Mao told Mikoyan that Outer Mongolia seceded from the Chinese state because the KMT was ruling at the time. When the CCP rules China, however, Outer Mongolia will desire "to accede to the Chinese state, by joining Inner Mongolia".[28] It sounds somewhat absurd today that Mao believed an independent state, born from its resistance to the Han's colonisation, would want to join China. The condescending comment showed the CCP knew little about other nations' nationalism.

At the same time, the CCP also abandoned the federation plan, which had been raised in the 1920s by the early Chinese Communists, who embraced the Soviet model. In 1945, Mao Zedong explicitly announced establishing a federation in his famous essay "On Coalition Government". Even in August 1949, when Zhou Enlai was drafting the "Common Programme of New Democracy", a Chinese federation was still suggested. However, Li Weihan disagreed with the federation proposal, and his opinion was adopted in the September final draft.[29] On 7 September 1949, just a

[27] "Wulanfu zai Suiyuan ganbu hui shang de baogao" (Ulanhu's Report at Suiyuan Cadres Conference), November 1951, in *Ducaoji: Wulanfu fangeming yanlun xuanbian, diyiji (1946-1954),* from LRSPP.

[28] "Memorandum of Conversation between Anastas Mikoyan and Mao Zedong", February 4, 1949, Wilson Center Digital Archive, APRF: F. 39, Op. 1, D. 39, Ll. 54-62. Reprinted in Andrei Ledovskii, Raisa Mirovitskaia and Vladimir Miasnikov, Sovetsko-Kitaiskie Otnosheniia, Vol. 5, Book 2, 1946-February 1950, Moscow: Pamiatniki Istoricheskoi Mysli, 2005, 66-72. Translated by Sergey Radchenko, https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/113318.

[29] "Common Programme of New Democracy" was revised several times and finally renamed as "Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference". According to a CCP historian and *Qiushi* journal editor Chen Yangyong, before the constitution was made, it functioned as a provisional constitution. Chen Yangyong, "Zhou Enlai yu gongtong gangling de zhiding" (Zhou Enlai and the Creation of

month before the establishment of the Beijing regime, Zhou Enlai explained how the new regime would deal with the national minority issue:

> About the country's system, another question is whether our country is going to be a multi-national federation. …We must prevent the imperialists from using the national issue to sow discord against China's unification, like the conspiracy of the British imperialists in Tibet and southern Xinjiang and of the American imperialists in Taiwan and Hainan Island. … (We should) unify all the nationalities into a big family, preventing the imperialists from sowing discord and dividing us….It is no doubt that any nationality has the right to self-determination. Nevertheless, today, the imperialists want to separate Tibet, Taiwan and even Xinjiang; under these circumstances, we hope all nationalities will not listen to the imperialists' instigating. Because of this, our country's name is called the People's Republic of China, not a federation. [30]

Although, as political scientist Brendan O'Leary argues, the Soviet Union was "the most prominent sham pluralist federation in the twentieth century", which centralised power in the CPSU,[31] the PRC still did not intend to learn from the Soviet elder brother to pay lip service to its national minorities. The Chinese translation of federation, *lian* (unite) *bang* (states, countries), clearly connotes the nature of federation: Union of states. The CCP was wary enough not to grant any state status to the national minorities, which might become the excuse for claiming independence.

In fact, China's position was actively backed by the Soviet Union. Anastas Mikoyan, in his visit to China in February 1949, told Mao Zedong that "our CC does not advise the Chinese Com[munist] Party to go overboard in the national question by means of providing independence to national minorities and thereby reducing the territory of the Chinese state in connection with the communists' takeover of power. One should

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the Common Programme), in *Dang de wenxian*, No.2, 2003, 28.

[30] Zhou Enlai, "Guanyu renmin zhengxie de jige wenti" (Some Questions About the People's Political Consultative Conference), 7 September 1949, in Zhonggong zhongyang tongyi zhanxian gongzuo bu, zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (eds) *Zhou Enlai tongyi zhanxian wenxuan* (Zhou Enlai's Selected Works of the United Front), Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1984, 139.

[31] Brendan O'Leary, "Federalism and Federation," *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Self-Determination*, available at: https://pesd.princeton.edu/node/431.

give autonomy and not independence to the national minorities." Mao Zedong "was glad to hear this advice, but you could tell by his face that he had no intention of giving independence to anybody whatsoever."[32] The Soviet suggestions and Mao's intention coincidentally agreed. Nevertheless, if the Soviets had not endorsed the CCP, it would have been very probable that the CCP would still have continued its policy. Long before the establishment of the RPC, the CCP had determined not to grant the national minorities the right to secede and prevent any independent claim.

Chinese leaders' rhetoric and logic were not rare in the communist world. It highly resembled the argument of Stalin in 1920, who used anti-imperialism as an excuse to deny other nations' right to get independence, although the Bolsheviks openly endorsed it:

> The demand for the secession of the border regions from Russia as the form of the relations between the centre and the border regions must be rejected not only because it runs counter to the very formulation of the question of establishing a union between the centre and the border regions, but primarily because it runs fundamentally counter to the interests of the mass of the people in both the centre and the border regions. Apart from the fact that the secession of the border regions would undermine the revolutionary might of central Russia, which is stimulating the movement for emancipation in the West and the East, the seceded border regions themselves would inevitably fall into the bondage of international imperialism. One has only to glance at Georgia, Armenia, Poland, Finland, etc., which have seceded from Russia but which have retained only the semblance of independence, having in reality been converted into unconditional vassals of the Entente....[33]

[32] APRF: F. 39, Op. 1, D. 39, Ll. 54-62. Reprinted in Andrei Ledovskii, Raisa Mirovitskaia and Vladimir Miasnikov, Sovetsko-Kitaiskie Otnosheniia, Vol. 5, Book 2, 1946-February 1950 (Moscow: Pamiatniki Istoricheskoi Mysli, 2005), 66-72. Translated by Sergey Radchenko. https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/113318.

[33] Stalin, "The Policy of the Soviet Government on the National Question in Russia," 10 October 1920, in *J. Stalin Works*, vol 4, Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1953, 364-365.
Stalin knew this reverse of previous position was strange. He defended the new Bolshevik position in the preface of his essay collection: "We are for the secession of India, Arabia, Egypt, Morocco and other colonies from the Entente, because secession in this case would mean the liberation of those oppressed countries from imperialism, a weakening of the positions of imperialism and a strengthening of the positions of the revolution. We are

However, self-determination and federation had been accepted and embraced by many national minority officials, especially those trained in the USSR and familiar with Leninist-Stalinist theories. They truly believed a federation would be suitable for their nations. The Soviet Union was a sham, but China went even further, refusing to appease minority nationalities on paper. In the 1950s and early 1960s, national minorities continuously questioned why the CCP shifted their position and why China did not have a federation system like the Soviet Union, especially during the Hundred Flowers Campaign in 1957. The people demanding a federation system ended up being labelled as "local nationalists" in the Anti-Rightist Campaign. The non-Han people with strong nationalist emotions still felt the U-turn on self-determination and federation was a betrayal to this day.[34]

What China bestowed on minority nationalities was "autonomy". The System of Regional Ethnic Autonomy (*minzu quyu zizhi zhidu*)[35] stemmed primarily from the Soviet national-territorial system, of which the "national-territorial system would be extended downward into smaller and smaller national territories".[36] The PRC's system is from the highest autonomous regions (*zizhi qu*), downward to autonomous prefectures (*zizhi zhou*) and then autonomous counties (*zizhi xian*). Below counties, there are also nationality townships (*xiang*), but they are not autonomous organs in China's administrative system. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the Soviet government, though applying affirmative actions, conducted a constant russification

against the secession of the border regions from Russia, because secession in that case would mean imperialist bondage for the border regions, a weakening of the revolutionary might of Russia and a strengthening of the positions of imperialism." See Stalin, "Author's Preface: To a Collection of Articles on the National Question Published in 1920," in *J. Stalin Works*, vol 4, 385-386.

[34] Today national minority dissidents are using history to accuse the CCP of being untrustworthy and treacherous. Tsering Woeser, a Tibetan writer, wrote to the *Radio Free Asia* that the CCP betrayed the independent promise to the Tibetans. "Bei liyong de geda huofo" (The Living Buddha Who Was Taken Advantage of), 04 October 2011, *Radio Free Asia*, available at: https://www.rfa.org/mandarin/pinglun/weise/weise-10042011100734.html. Similarly, Yang Haiying, in his book about Ulanhu's dream of national self-determination, also repeatedly expresses the anger of being betrayed. Nevertheless, he portrays Ulanhu as a brave Mongol challenger of Chinese rule, but he overlooked that even Han cadres also repeated "self-determination" in the 1940s. See Yang Haiying, *Zai Zhongguo yu Menggu de jiafeng zhijian*, for example, 58-69.

[35] The exact translation should be "the System of National Regional Autonomy". The change from "nationality" to "ethnicity", as numerous scholars have argued, indicates China is "depoliticising" minzu.

[36] Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001,10.

and assimilation policy toward its minority groups, merely maintaining cultural autonomy on a superficial level.[37] Largely, it was also China's case. Scholars point out that China's "autonomy" is very restricted, as it lacks enabling legislation; besides, the central authority maintains the power to disband autonomous organs arbitrarily.[38] The cancellation of autonomous organs happened during the Cultural Revolution. China's intention of allowing autonomy largely corresponded to modern political scientists' point of view: Autonomy can possibly "accommodate separatist movements without endangering the continued territorial integrity of an existing state". Nevertheless, autonomy in communist countries has also been correctly dismissed as not a "genuine practice".[39] In following discussions, in terms of the IMAR, it could be seen that the autonomous power was very weak.

The Affirmative Period: 1949 to 1957

Even though the CCP broke its promises of the right to self-determination and a federation and granted national minorities autonomy in name only, it was eager to show its benevolence to minority nationalities. Thus, in the 1950s, several measures were worth mentioning. The RPC organised a nationality identification and recognition project based on Stalin's definition of a nation: "A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture."[40] Many ethnologists, linguists, anthropologists, historians, and experts in other social science fields participated in the project. By 1953, 41

[37] Connor, *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding*, 14. Connor pointed out that the Bolsheviks believed that there would be a unified language for all when communism was built. Similar arguments can also be observed among China's cadres, which I will mention below.

[38] Erik Friberg, "'Masters of Their Homelands': Revisiting the Regional Ethnic Autonomy System in China in the Light of Local Institutional Developments," in Marc Weller and Stefan Wolff (eds), *Autonomy, Self-governance and Conflict Resolution: Innovative Approaches to Institutional Design in Divided Societies*, London: Routledge: 2005, 208. Barry Sautman, "Ethnic Law and Minority Rights in China: Progress and Constraints," *Law and Policy*, Vol. 21, No. 3, 1999, 288.

[39] Stefan Wolff and March Weller, "Self-determiantion and Autonomy," in Marc Weller and Stefan Wolff (eds), *Autonomy, Self-governance and Conflict Resolution: Innovative Approaches to Institutional Design in Divided Societies*, 1-2.

[40] Stalin, "Marxism and the National Question," in J. *Stalin Works*, Volume 2, 1907-1913, Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1953, 307.

nationalities had been identified.[41] In addition, the Chinese government decided to create writing systems for national minorities if they did not have one yet and reform the current writing system to improve literacy. The Soviet ethnologist G. P. Serdyuchenko played a significant role in creating writing systems for national minorities, although his zealous promotion of Cyrillic alphabet did not succeed.[42] (The Mongolian Cyrillisation would become a serious charge against Ulanhu during the Cultural Revolution.)

Thirdly, the CCP devoted efforts to training minority cadres. In June 1953,[43] China began to use the term "nationalisation *(minzu hua* in Chinese) of the national autonomous organs". On 9 September 1953, a *People's Daily* editorial claimed that autonomous organs must be "nationalised" gradually and that it was the core question of the nationality policy. Its theoretical basis was Stalin's argument. The editorial quoted: "It is necessary that not only the schools, but all institutions and all bodies, both Party and Soviet, should step by step be made national in character, that they should be conducted in the language that is understood by the masses, that they should function in conditions that correspond to the manner of life of the given nation." [44] This policy was believed to have drawn experiences from the Soviet *korenizatsiia* (indigenisation), which was a core of the Soviet nationality policy roughly from 1923 to 1938, seeking to promote national languages and elites. Nevertheless, China's nationalisation (*minzuhua*) mostly focused on promoting minority cadres, while the Soviet *korenizatsiia* was a comprehensive project applied not only to governments but to society; even laws and decrees were created to ensure its implementation.[45] The CCP did not just imitate the Soviet Union

[41] Dru C. Gladney, *Dislocating China: Muslims, Minorities, and Other Subaltern Subjects*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004, 9.

[42] Minglang Zhou, "The Fate of the Soviet Model of Multinational State-Building in the People's Republic of China," 484-488.

[43] On 15 June 1953, the State Ethnic Affairs Commission decided "must gradually make the autonomous organs nationalised". "Zhongyang renmin zhengfu minzushiwu weiyuanhui disanci (kuoda) huiyi guanyu tuixing minzu quyu zizhi jingyan de jiben zongjie" (The SEAC Third Conference (Enlarged)'s Summary of Experience of Promoting the Regional Ethnic Autonomy System), 15 June 1953, in Minzu zhengce wenjian huibian, Vol.1, Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1958, 107.

[44] "Report on National Factors in Party and State Affairs", 23rd April 1923, in *J. Stalin Works*, Vol 5, Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1953, 263.

[45] Martin did comprehensive research on Ukraine's *korenizatsiia*. The project tried to make Ukrainian the single working language in government organs, although Russian and Ukrainian had the same legal status. The government employees in Ukraine were required

dogmatically. The past experiences with national minorities in the 1930s convinced the Party that it was important to rely on national minority cadres. Thus, it started the minority cadre training in the Yan'an period. In 1937, the Central Party School in Yan'an set classes for minority cadres. In 1941, the Yan'an Nationality College was established, specialising in training national minority cadres and Han cadres working in national minority areas. In 1951, the Nationality College became the Central Nationality College (today's Minzu University of China). The nationalisation of autonomous organs was a further step in promoting minority cadres.

The foregone experiences and mistakes were indeed significant. After 1949, the CCP adopted more tolerant land policies towards national minorities than towards the Han. After becoming the new ruler of China, the Party's demand for land reform was less urgent than during the civil war. Thus, the overall land policy turned more lenient and cautious. Nevertheless, the minority nationalities were still considered special. To a certain degree, the Party drew a lesson from Inner Mongolia's land reform. On 28 February 1950, Zhou Enlai announced that land reform would be carried out in most newly conquered areas after the 1950 autumn harvest. Nevertheless, "In the six provinces of Guangxi, Yunnan, Guizhou, Sichuan, Xikang[46], and Suiyuan[47], before the 1951 autumn harvest, the land redistribution reform will not be implemented." These regions are populated by non-Han nationalities, which was why the government postponed land reform. Furthermore, "In Xinjiang, all minority nationalities living areas of the country, and Han-minority mixed living areas, before the 1951 autumn harvest, the land redistribution reform will not be implemented. Whether or not to implement the land redistribution reform is yet to be determined."[48] It should be noted that this instruction did not mean land reform would

to speak Ukrainian, or they could be fired. Factories and universities were expected to use Ukrainian. A large number of lectures, books and journals were in Ukrainian. Despite the linguistic korenizatsiia finally failing in Ukraine, the effort the Ukraine SSR invested was very considerable. See Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 75-124.
In Soviet East, the linguistic korenizatsiia was less successful. Nevertheless, Moscow provided cultural funds for the less developed Soviet East to train national cadres. The Soviet East republics were obsessed with hiring titular national workers, even if they were unqualified. Russians complained that they could not find a job because the natives replaced them. Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 125-181.

[46] Xikang means "Kham in the West". Kham is a Tibetan region. Now, the Western part of Xikang belongs to the Tibet Autonomous Region, and the eastern part belongs to Sichuan.

[47] Suiyuan merged with the IMAR in 1954.

[48] "Zhongyang renmin zhengfu zhengwuyuan fabu guanyu xin jiefangqu tudi gaige ji

not be implemented. It would. The CCP never wavered in its commitment to land reform. However, it was wary when making the decision and allowed the minorities a slower timetable to assuage their fears and resistance. “Being cautious and slowly advancing” (*shen zhong huan jin*) was raised in the Northeast Bureau’s report to the CCP CC in March 1948, reflecting the Mongolian land reform mistakes. Later, Zhou Enlai replaced “slowly” with “steadily”. Thanks to Ulanhu’s suggestions and the successful experience of Inner Mongolia, the CCP CC confirmed land reform would not be implemented in semi-arable semi-pastoral areas and pastoral areas. In case land reform in arable areas would cause social unrest and loss of animals in pastoral areas, the CCP instructed cadres to “vigorously promote” the “no struggles and no distributions; benefit both herdlords and herders” policy. Besides, the Party limited cultivation in minority areas: “If the cultivation is needed in the future, we should let national minorities do it themselves. If Han people want to cultivate land in national minority areas, it must be approved by the central bureau or the CC.”[49]

Like its Soviet predecessor used to criticise great Russian chauvinism, the CCP always criticised great Han chauvinism (*da hanzu zhuyi*) or great nationalism (*da minzu zhuyi*) before 1957. Although parochial nationalism or local nationalism, terms for national minorities, were also opposed, “but generally that is not where our emphasis lies,”[50] according to Mao. Zhou Enlai spoke on this question most, repeatedly arguing that “it is the Han that is sorry (*dui bu qi*, does bad things) for minority nationalities. Now, the Han comrades should accept the blame and apologise to them. (The Han cadres) need to do more explanatory works, explaining that China is different from the past and won’t suppress minority nationalities anymore.” “For many years, the Han have been sorry for minority nationalities and perhaps will make mistakes again unconsciously. (The Han) should reflect more on its own mistakes.”[51] Zhou Enlai insisted that the Han owed minority nationalities for

zhengshou gongliang de zhishi” (Government Administration Council of the Central People's Government Released Instructions about New Liberated Areas Land Reform and Procurement of Grains), *People’s Daily*, 1 March 1950.

[49] “Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu guoqu jinian nei dang zai shaoshu minzu zhong jinxing gongzuo de zhuyao jingyan zongjie (jielu)” (The CCP CC’s Summary of Works Among Minority Nationalities in the Past Few Years), 13 September 1953, in LRSPP.

[50] Mao Zedong, “On the Ten Major Relationships,” in *Selected Works of Mao Tsetung*, Vol. 5, 295.

[51] Zhou Enlai, “Guanyu xibei diqu de minzu gongzuo” (About the Nationality Works in the North Western Region), 26 June 1950, Zhonggong zhongyang tongyi zhanxian gongzuo bu

what they did in the past and should “pay the debt” until the Anti-Rightist Campaign. In March 1957, at the conference discussing creating the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Zhou said: “Someone is afraid that if we say paying the debt, it may undermine the nationality relationships. It is an unnecessary worry. How could this happen? Criticising oneself strictly will not cause dissatisfaction among others but will also make others notice their own drawbacks. … Some are afraid that the imperialists would take advantage of paying the debt. It is also unnecessary. Paying the debt is good for national unity.” Zhou argued that the Han rulers, who had always been in a dominant position in the past, either assimilated the national minorities or drove them to frontier regions with harsh economic conditions. Thus, the Han cadres need to admit the historical fact and say sorry to the national minorities.[52]

However, even if CCP senior leaders were often urged to provide preference to national minorities and respect their customs, local cadres largely ignored the CC’s requirements. In January 1953, a Party cadre, Zhang Zhiyi[53]reported that the Hui people in Henan Province were mistreated. Some mosques were occupied and redistributed in the land reform; some mosques had to close because of the lack of enough funds; akhunds were struggling for life; people were afraid of going to mosques and afraid of wearing dastars (It was usually associated with Sikhism. Chinese Muslim also used this loaned Persian word for their turbans) and hijabs; local cadres and people often made fun of and insulted the Hui with pigs and pork; the special fund for culture, education, and health was not used properly; Hui people’ middle schools were more ill-funded than general middle schools.[54]

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and zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (eds), *Zhou Enlai tongyi zhanxian wenxuan* (Selected works of Zhou Enlai on the United Front), Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1984, 191-192.

[52] Zhou Enlai, “Minzu quyu zizhi youliyu minzu tuanjie he gongtong jinbu” (The Regional Ethnic Autonomy Is Good for National Unity and Mutual Progress), 25 March 1957, *Zhou Enlai tongyi zhanxian wenxuan*, 340.

[53] Zhang Zhiyi was the deputy director of the State Ethnic Affairs Commission. In 1954, he was appointed the deputy head of the UFWD. He was probably better known among Western Scholars. His book *A Speech about the National Question and the National Policy in the Chinese Revolution* was translated into English by George Moseley and published in 1966 as *The Party and the National Question in China*. It was an important source for early studies on China’s nationality policy.

[54] Zhang Zhiyi, “Guanyu fangwen henan shaoshu minzu de baogao” (The Report About Vising Henan National Minorities), 30 January 1953, *Zhang zhiyi wenji*, Beijing: Huawen chubanshe, 2006, 236-240.

The top leaders were very concerned about the problem reported. In March 1953, responding to the Henan Hui people's situation, the CCP CC released a document criticising great Han chauvinism with fierce rhetoric. Mao Zedong thought the problem was very serious, and he edited the document personally:

> The nationality relationships are so abnormal in Henan (except Zhengzhou). …Probably, other provinces always have similar situations…In some places, the relations between nationalities are far from normal. For Communists, this is an intolerable situation. We must go to the root and criticise the great Han chauvinist ideas which exist to a serious degree among many Party members and cadres, namely, the reactionary ideas of the landlord class and the bourgeoisie or the ideas characteristic of the Kuomintang, which are manifested in the relations between nationalities. Mistakes in this respect must be corrected at once.[55]

Mao warned that it would be very dangerous if great Han chauvinism were not overcome. He also asked the Party newspapers and journals to report more problems about great Han chauvinism so people would criticise them publicly. [56] After Mao's instruction, Guizhou's cadres reflected their own problems. Some cadres did not allow the minorities to speak their native language and required them to speak Chinese; some cadres forced them to change clothes and hairstyle; the cadres claimed wearing Han clothes and speaking Chinese were progressive. God worship rituals and marriage customs were banned. National minorities' land for god worship was confiscated. Some cadres purposely distributed less land or substandard land to minorities, or failed to provide them with any land at all. The cadres decided to correct the mistakes.[57]

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[55] This part was included in the selected works of Mao. "Criticize Han Chauvinism," *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, vol 5, Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1977, 87-88. A little change is made from the original English translation.

[56] "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu pipan dahanzuzhuyi sixiang de zhishi" (The CCP CC's Instructions About Criticising Great Han Chauvinism), 16 March 1953, in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (ed), *Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, cited as JYZWX, Vol. 4, Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1993, 96-98.

[57] "Zhonggong Guizhousheng weiyuanhui renzhen jiancha he jiuzheng zhixing minzu zhengce zhong de piancha" (The CCP Guizhou Committee Seriously Examing and Correcting the Deviation in the Implementation of Nationality Policies), *People's Daily*, 11 October 1953.

However, to a large extent, the national relationship was much less satisfying than the CCP expected, and the local Party cadres didn't follow the central policy. The national minorities still kept venting their disappointment about the great Han chauvinism. They pointed out that the "great Han chauvinist" cadres were never really punished, and the Party always neglected the national minorities.[58] Indeed, compared to the fierce anti-local nationalism campaign in 1957 (Chapter 5), the opposition to great Han chauvinism was much less intense.

Predicaments of the Inner Mongols

This part will discuss the Mongols' predicament. Even though affirmative policies were implemented to appease minority nationalities, and Inner Mongolia appeared to be the most stable minority region, they still had disappointments and challenges.

Disillusionment of self-determination and federation. According to Stalin's definition, a nation or nationality has one's national territory. The Mongols did get their national territory, the IMAR. However, a power-limited autonomous government was not what Mongol nationalists expected. In March 1947, when the CCP was considering creating a government for the Mongols, Ulanhu sent his suggestions about what type of autonomy should be written in the future constitution to the Central Committee, and the first sentence said: "Recognise the right to self-determination of each nationality with China's territory; Establish an equal democratic federation with the free union of each nationality."[59] When the IMAR was established in May 1947, Ulanhu even used to persuade Mongol nationalists to accept the autonomous government, because it was only temporary. The final aim would be a federation based on the principle of self-determination:

> Why don't we have a free federation but an autonomous government? It is the revolutionary step and stage, decided by subjective and objective conditions…There are roughly three revolutionary stages. The first stage is the autonomous movement stage. It was before the establishment of the

[58] Qindamuni, "Shōsū minzoku no sakebi" (The Cries of National Minorities), translated by Hiroko Tsuchida and noted by Jihei Abe, published on *Nihon to Mongoru* (Japan and Mongolia), Vol. 51, No.1, September 2016, 109.

[59] "Yun Ze dui xianfa zhong guanyu shaoshu minzu wenti de yijian" (Yun Ze's Opinions About the National Minority Question in the Constitution), 27 March 1947, MWWH, 1324.

autonomous government. The second stage is the period after the establishment of the autonomous government. The third stage is the future's free federation stage. Why not have a federation today? Because the people of the country have not yet been liberated. A part of Inner Mongolia is still under the rule of the US and Chiang Kai-shek…

When a true democratic coalition government is established, democratisation is achieved, Inner Mongolian people are fully mobilised, and these conditions are reached, and national self-determination will be practised. Inner Mongolian people will decide whether to separate or unite themselves. If our Inner Mongolian people are willing to, (they) can have a Chinese democratic republic federation with Han people and other nationalities. [60]

Ulanhu's argument sounds very heretical in today's China, as any potential reference to the national minority's independence or separation is regarded as a political taboo. The speech was not included in any officially published Ulanhu's selected work and document collections. However, it was collected by the rebels during the Cultural Revolution as evidence of Ulanhu's counter-revolutionary crimes. Nevertheless, as a devoted Communist, Ulanhu did not go beyond the Party's line at all. He was just repeating the CCP's public claims. On the Inner Mongolian People's Congress, 23 April 1947, Zhang Pinghua, a Han cadre representing the West Manchuria Branch Bureau, sent the Mongols the CCP's wish: "Achieve autonomy; Strive for self-determination." Zhang confirmed the CCP firmly endorsed the right of each nation to self-determination. The audience burst into applause for his inspiring and promising speech.[61] Besides, Ulanhu did not seem to believe that the result of self-determination would be separation, but rather unification. He argued that the independent Tannu Uriankhai joined the Soviet Union, and Outer Mongolia achieved independence from Chiang Kai-shek's regime but became the firmest ally of the

[60] Wulanfu, "Neimeng minzu jiefang zhilu", (The Road of Inner Mongolian Nation's Liberation), May 1947, in *Ducaoji: Wulanfu fangeming yanlun xuanbian*, September 1967. Collected in Yang Haiying (ed), *Mongoruiin Jenosaido ni kansuru Kiso Shiryō*, cited as MJNKKS, Vol. 4, 163.

[61] "Neimeng renmin daibiao huiyi kaimu dianli kongqian shengda" (The Opening Ceremony of the Inner Mongolian People's Congress is Unprecentedly Grand), 23 April 1947, *Neimeng zizhibao*, in MWWH, 1325.

Soviet Union. The reason for uniting was that the Soviets truly helped them. Similarly, Inner Mongolia would unite with China.[62]

However, the slogan of self-determination was very tempting for Mongol nationalists. It also reflected that many Mongol nationalists at the time pursued at least a federation, which assumably would give Inner Mongolia more power if they could not get independence or join the MPR. Unexpectedly, the CCP denied its early vision of state building and rejected the national minority's right to self-determination and a federal state. After the "liberation" of the whole of China, the minority people still could not get the political system they wanted. Not only the Mongols but also the Uyghurs and other Turkic people in Xinjiang, and Tibetans were frustrated, as they were promised a federation by the CCP. Many of them demanded a federation like the Soviet Union. Nonetheless, they did not seem to realise the Soviet Union's federation was not real. Martin pointed out, "Although the 1922-1923 constitutional settlement was called a federation, it, in fact, concentrated all decision-making power in the centre. National republics were granted no more powers than Russian provinces."[63]

Minority on their own land. Another issue worrying the Mongols was the merge of the initial IMAR and Suiyuan province. The consequence was that the population ratio of the Han and the Mongols was hugely exacerbated, making the Mongols a small minority in the IMAR. When the IMAR was founded in 1947, it only governed the eastern part of Inner Mongolia. The western part belonged to Suiyuan province, which the CCP did not control until September 1949. In March 1949, Mao Zedong told Ulanhu, "restoring Inner Mongolia to its original historical form", promising a unified Inner Mongolia.[64] Mao and other CCP top leaders might have received the request to unify Inner Mongolia's land from Mongol Communists and agreed to fulfil the declaration made in 1935, which promised a unified Inner Mongolia like it used to be in the past.[65] The unification of their homeland was meaningful to the Mongols. In

[62] Wulanfu, "Neimeng zizhi yundong zhong de jiege wenti (excerpt)" (Several Questions in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Movement (excerpt)), 3 February 1947, in *Ducaoji* 1967, in MJNKKS, Vol. 4, 152.

[63] Martin, *The Affirmative Action*, 13.

[64] *Wulanfu Nianpu*, 201 *Wulanfu Zhuan*, 235-236.

[65] I have not found direct documents about those who initiated the merge of IM and Suiyuan. Anthropologist Uradyn E. Bulag is inclined to the narrative that it was the Mongol communists who asked for the return of all their historic territory and lobbied Mao and other

1928, Inner Mongolian land was mainly divided into three provinces: Rehe, Chahar and Suiyuan. (Some banners and counties are scattered in other provinces, like Ningxia.) “Inner Mongolia” ceased to exist as an administrative unit, and the Mongols lost the power to govern their own land. It was one of the significant events catalysing Inner Mongolian nationalism, along with the independence of Outer Mongolia, as Inner Mongolian scholar Uradyn E. Bulag points out.[66]

Ulanhu suggested that the new capital of unified Inner Mongolia be moved to Guisui, the capital of the old Suiyuan province, during the Republican period. Ulanhu and many Mongol communists came from this region. Mao agreed.[67] Guisui would be known by its original Mongol name, Hohhot, meaning “blue city” in Mongolian. The name Guisui, which derived from two Chinese phrases, “*guihua*” (submission and naturalisation) and “*suiyuan*”(appeasement of remote land), was the fruit of Chinese rulers’ superiority and arrogance. As a sign of colonialism, it must be abandoned. Ulanhu appreciated Mao’s decision. He said: “It conforms to the historical situation of Inner Mongolia, and it is good for the interests of the Mongol nation.” Yet, the merge was resisted by many Party cadres in Suiyuan. The exact reasons for the resistance were not clear. Probably the Suiyuan cadres did not want to lose power; probably they did not want to be ruled by the Mongols. It was reported that some people were resentful of the merge, saying it was like the Han were ruled by the Mongols’ Yuan Dynasty, which conquered China in the 13th century.[68]

Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai firmly insisted that Suiyuan be incorporated into the IMAR. Zhou Enlai personally persuaded the unsatisfied cadres to accept it.[69] According to Mao and Zhou, it would “open two doors” on the issue of the merging of

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CCP senior leaders to support them. He argues that the Mongols’ contributions to the CCP’s victory, Inner Mongolia’s strategic location (bordering on the MPR), and the ethnic affinity with the MPR gave the Mongols a strong bargaining power. Uradyn E. Bulag, “Alter/native Mongolian Identity: From Nationality to Ethnic Group”, in Elizabeth J. Perry and Mark Selden (eds), *Chinese Society: Change, Conflict and Resistance*, 3rd edition, London and New York: Routledge, 2010, 265-266. Anthropologist David Sneath highlighted the personal role of Ulanhu, who kept persuading the Party leadership to expand the IM territory. David Sneath, *Changing Inner Mongolia: Pastoral Mongolian Society and the Chinese State*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, 62.

[66] Uradyn E. Bulag, “Alter/native Mongolian Identity,” 264-265.

[67] *Wulanfu nianpu*, 1989, 222-223.

[68] Li Shiije, “Bixu jinyibu gonggu minzu tuanije” (Must Further Enhance National Unity), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 13 November 1957.

[69] *Wulanfu huiyilu*, 254.

the two regions, benefiting both the Han and the Mongols. One door was that Mongols would welcome the Han to mine in Bayan Obo and build a steel industry in Baotou; another door was that Han would support the unification of Inner Mongolia. The uncooperative cadres eventually agreed with the incorporation, perhaps seeing the benefits of the bargain. Finally, in the summer of 1952, the office of the IMAR moved to Guisui (it was renamed Hohhot in 1954).[70] In 1954, the administrative name of Suiyuan province was cancelled, and it was formally incorporated into the IMAR. In 1955 and 1956, by incorporating other counties and banners from Rehe Province (which was cancelled in 1955), Ningxia Province, and Gansu Province, the historical territory of Inner Mongolia was largely restored.

Initially, the Mongols welcomed the unification of their motherland, believing it finally ended the history of Inner Mongolia's weakness and humiliation. However, they soon realised the dim prospect of the Mongol nation: the IMAR incorporated vast land, on which had already lived a large number of Han People. The ratio of Han and Mongol populations reached 7:1 after the restoration of its historic territory. The huge demographic imbalance made the Mongols a minority on their own land. They were facing the destiny of being assimilated.[71] The complaint of the hurtful ratio of 7:1 and the worries about assimilation appeared again and again in the 1950s documents. In 1957, the people who said it was assimilation were condemned as rightists and struggled harshly.

Mongol scholar Yang Haiying claims it was Mao's conspiracy, as Mao and his Party did not want to see the political power falling into the Mongols' hands. Thus, Mao intentionally increased the Han population in Inner Mongolia, turning the steppe into a Chinese colony.[72] This accusation seems arbitrary as it lacks direct evidence. However, Mao did use organised migration to control frontier regions. Unlike the Soviet Union, during the 1920s, it strictly controlled migration to the non-Russian republics, intending to preserve the native non-Russian people's majority. (The illegal Slavic settlers in Kazakhstan and Kirgizia were even expelled. Nevertheless, this

[70] *Wulanfu zhuan*, 236.

[71] During the Hundred Flower campaign, such worries and complains emerged often. It would be discussed below. Scholars nowadays from Inner Mongolia also lamented about this consequence of the unification. Yang Haiying, *Zai zhongguo yu menggu de jiafeng zhijian,* 97-98; Bulag, "Alter/Native Mongolian Identity," 266-268.

[72] Yang Haiying, *Zai Zhongguo yu Menggu de Jiafeng Zhijian*, 97-98.

policy yielded to the economic interest of all-union and was stopped by 1927.[73]) In contrast, China encouraged Han people to go to the border region. On the one hand, it could alleviate the pressure on limited land in the mainland area. On the other hand, it could enhance the control of the frontier. Even the Soviet Union actively encouraged the CCP to colonise minority regions. In June 1949, about what the CCP should do after taking over Xinjiang, Stalin advised that "one should bring the percentage of the Chinese population to 30% by means of resettling the Chinese for all-sided development of this huge and rich region and for strengthening China's border protection", as in Xinjiang the Han Chinese population was under 5% at that time.[74] The method indeed worked for the CCP. After decades of colonisation, the Han population now is about 40% in Xinjiang.

The dilemma of the Mongolian language. An anecdote about Ulanhu was told with great relish by the Mongols. Ulanhu, a sinicised Mongol, was never able to master his national language. Yet, he was always dedicated to promoting Mongolian. It was said that, in May 1957, to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the IMAR, he asked his translators to translate his Chinese speech into Mongolian and write it down in Cyrillic letters, after which he would read it aloud. As Ulanhu had studied at Moscow Sun Yat-sen University and was fluent in Russian, Cyrillic letters were no stranger to him. Thus, despite not knowing his national language, he was able to deliver his speech in Mongolian.[75] Yet, the story can not be seen in any official publications.

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[73] Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 13-15.

[74] APRF: F. 45, Op. 1, D. 329, Ll. 1-7. Reprinted in Andrei Ledovskii, Raisa Mirovitskaia and Vladimir Miasnikov, Sovetsko-Kitaiskie Otnosheniia, Vol. 5, Book 2, 1946-February 1950 (Moscow: Pamiatniki Istoricheskoi Mysli, 2005), 148-151. Translated by Sergey Radchenko. https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/113380.

[75] Uradyn E. Bulag, "Mongolian Ethnicity and Linguistic Anxiety in China," 757. Bulag, *The Mongols at China's* Edge, 233. Tebuxin and Bai Yun, *Minzu lishi de Jianzheng: Tebuxin koushushi* (A Witness to the National History: Tubxin's Oral History), Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2018, 156-157.

Nevertheless, when and under what circumstances Ulanhu delivered the Mongolian speech were unclear. According to Tubxin, a prominent Mongol scholar, Ulanhu made his Mongolian speech when he welcomed the delegates from the Mongolian People's Republic, who came to Inner Mongolia to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the IMAR on 29 April 1947. It was the only time Ulanhu made the entire speech in Mongolian. Tebuxin and Bai Yun, 156-157.

Another version said Ulanhu deliberately did so at the rally celebrating the 10th anniversary of the IMAR on 1 May 1947. Such action made many Mongol listeners very touched, even burst into tears, regarding it as a bold disobedience of Chinese chauvinism. Uradyn E. Bulag, "Mongolian Ethnicity and Linguistic Anxiety in China," 757.

Ulanhu's official chronicle and biography published in the 1990s did not mention it. The deliberate neglect of this move by Chinese official publications is intriguing.

Despite not speaking Mongolian, Ulanhu was a devout Mongolian advocate. Realising the neglect of Mongolian by the Mongol cadres, in May 1953, Ulanhu urged that there should be a planned Mongolian learning among the cadres. The cadres who already knew some Mongolian needed to keep on learning in order to reach the level where Mongolian could be used; the cadres who could speak but could not read should learn the script; the Mongol cadres who did not speak it at all needed to learn some daily conversation sentences and words. Ulanhu even suggested the Han cadres in the IMAR learn Mongolian. He said it was voluntary for Han comrades, but the Han cadres whose work frequently required contact with Mongol people who did not understand Chinese had to learn to speak and write in Mongolian. Ulanhu also required that government documents sent to pastoral regions and Mongol-Han mixed regions should primarily use Mongolian; translations should be provided at all types of meetings if there are a significant number of Mongol participants; radios should increase Mongolian programmes; public services should have both Mongolian and Chinese signs and instructions.[76] Ulanhu's urge to learn Mongolian became stronger in a 1957 speech: Mongol cadres "must" learn Mongolian, while the Han cadres, "in order to contact with Mongol people closely and to deal with nationality relationships well, should learn Mongolian step by step." Ulanhu's efforts in advocating for Mongolia were admired, especially his urge for Han cadres to learn it. He was regarded as a hero who challenged the superiority of the Chinese and their language.[77]

Nevertheless, the promotion of the Mongolian language encountered strong resistance from Ulanhu's Mongol fellows. Many Mongol cadres were already sinicised and were very reluctant to learn a new language. A few were even willing to

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The latter version of the story sets Ulanhu's move in a more public setting, where the audience was not only the Mongols but also included Chinese. It conveys a much stronger sense of resistance to the hegemony of China.

[76] Wulanfu, "Dali jiaqiang menggu yuwen gongzuo" (Enhancing the Mongolian Language Work Significantly), 16 May 1953, *Wulanfu Wenxuan*, Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1999, 272-281. *Wulanfu Nianpu*, 293.

[77] Yang Haiying, *Zai Zhongguo yu Menggu de jiafeng zhijian*, 144-146. Bulag, *The Mongols at China's Edge*, 233-234.

forget their mother tongue to demonstrate they were not backward.[78] Some Mongolian cadres claimed that “in Inner Mongolia, you could do revolutionary works very well without knowing Mongolian”.[79] “Mongolian is not useful at all, so I definitely won’t learn.” “There will be a time conflict between learning Mongolian and learning theories and culture.” [80] Some Mongol cadres refused to deliver speeches in Mongolian, declaring that “because the time is limited, I will not speak in Mongolian.” When other Mongol people complained, they would answer: “I’m unable to speak it; how can you make me speak?” It was reported that some cadres even denied they were Mongols thus they could avoid the tedious task of learning their national language.[81] During the Hundred Flowers Campaign period of 1957, Ulanhu, at a meeting, asked other Mongol cadres how well they learned Mongolian, and most of them answered “not quite well”. The Party secretary of Ulanhot Yun Zi’an, a sinicised Mongol with a Chinese name, possibly from Ulanhu’s Yun clan, admitted that the usage of Mongolian in his city was not good, and his learning of Mongolian was poor.[82] It should be noted that Ulanhot’s former name was Wangyemiao, which used to be the capital of the EMPAG, and most officials of the EMPAG were Mongolian-speaking.

Some Mongol communists even used communist ideology and theories, or unrealistic utopian prospects (from nowadays’s points of view), to defend themselves for not learning Mongolian. They argued that “the proletariat knows no nationalities; it was parochial nationalism if one just focused on Mongolian.” Some fantasised that the language would be unified in the future. “What’s the point of learning Mongolian? We will not use it when we enter a communist society.”[83] “The world will sooner or later become one; I don’t care about nationalities.”[84]

[78] Wulanfu, “Dali jiaqiang menggu yuwen gongzuo,” 226.
[79] “Dadan jielu maodun, yonggan zhengshi maodun, zhengque chuli maodun” (Exposing Conflicts boldly, Facing Conflicts Bravely, Handling Conflicts Correctly), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 19 May 1957.
[80] Guo Wentong, “Tantan menggu yuwen de shiyong he fazhan” (On the Use and Development of Mongolian), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 27 May 1957.
[81] “Dadan jielu maodun,” *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 19 May 1957.
[82] “Shiyong he fazhan Menggu yuwen guanjijan zaiyu lingdao” (The Key of Using and Developing Mongolian Language was the Leadership), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 18 May 1957.
[83] Wulanfu, “Dali jiaqiang menggu yuwen gongzuo,” 274.
[84] “Dadan jielu maodun,” *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 19 May 1957.

Responding to the belief that Mongolian was a backward language, Ulanhu argued that the new Mongolian was written in Cyrillic (The Cyrillisation began in 1955, and ended in December 1957), which was a progressive writing system in the modern world. Thus, learning Mongolian was not backward at all, while knowing more than one language meant being well-educated. He encouraged the Mongol Party leaders to take the lead in learning the mother tongue.[85] Ulanhu had to justify Mongolian's "progressiveness" by arguing that it used Russian letters and the spelling system of the socialist MPR. This phenomenon was not rare in the communist world. A language belonging to a less developed nationality was often thought not civilised or revolutionary enough and despised by the "progressive" communists from this nationality who were pursuing a language of higher society.[86]

Although the IMAR government was resolute in promoting Mongolian, the language environment was upsetting. Despite the official language of the titular nationality of the IMAR, Mongolian was, in fact, a language of the minority, and a significant number of Mongol people had already lost their national language. The government and state enterprises often ignored Mongolian. A Daur linguist and educator complained that in Ulanhot, Mongolian was only used for the show during the National Holiday. (Many Daur people identified themselves as Mongols before the Daur were recognised as an official nationality of the PRC. For example, Merse, an ethnic Daur politician, identified himself as a Mongol. He was one of the founders of the IMPRP.) He also complained there were few Mongolian radio programmes; there were several Mongol districts around Ulanhot, but the people there had no Mongolian songs to listen to, and no Mongolian films and dramas to watch; his students questioned the worth of learning Mongolian.[87] A Mongol reader wrote to *Inner Mongolia Daily*, complaining that there were 20% Mongolian-speaking

[85] "Shiyong he fazhan Menggu yuwen guanjijan zaiyu lingdao," *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 18 May 1957.

[86] For example, when Vladimir Lenin demanded a full promotion of Ukrainian in Ukraine, the Ukrainian Bolsheviks voiced a clamorous opposition, believing the Ukrainian language, which was mostly used in the villages, belonged to low culture and should only be used to educate the peasants. It was Russian, an urban and high-culture language that was expected to be learned by Ukrainians. Besides, some Ukrainian Bolsheviks thought Ukrainian was not a proletariat language. The promotion of Ukrainian meant "the rule of the Ukrainian petit-bourgeois intelligentsia and the Ukrainian kulaks". Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 78-79.

[87] "Neimenggu dangwei tongzhanbu zhaokai de feidangrenshi zuotanhui zuori kuoda juxing," *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 7 June 1957.

herdsmen people's representatives in Taipusi Banner, but in the banner's People's Congress, every important report was only delivered in Chinese. There were few translations at the congress; most Mongolian-speaking representatives were not able to join group discussions. The organisers refused to use Mongolian by saying, "translation is time-consuming", "we don't have translation specialists", and "most people understand Chinese". The reader also complained that at the post office, there were no Mongolian letters but only Chinese characters, and there were no Mongolian-speaking staff. It was very difficult for the Mongols to use the post service.[88] Sometimes, the neglect of Mongolians caused more serious troubles. It was reported that a Chinese version of "emergency notice for firefighting" had been sent to Mongolian speakers. Because nobody understood Chinese, the firefighting was delayed, and the consequences of the fire were more severe than expected. The officers who did not speak Mongolian, when dealing with a theft incident, arrested both the thief and the victim and kept them in custody.[89]

The neglect of the Mongolian language even happened in the regions where Mongols were the majority. Hure Banner and Horqin Left Rear Banner in Jerim League were two Mongol-majority banners. However, many enterprises and some government departments still issued Chinese-only documents. The forestry section of the Hure Banner government sent the afforestation plan in Chinese to villages. However, the village cadres did not understand Chinese and did not implement the afforestation plan well. Hure Banner's bank, during the first half of 1957, only issued 6 Mongolian ones of the 57 official documents. Horqin Left Rear Banner's bank, taxation administration, and the supply and marketing cooperative (gong xiao she) only used Chinese, and Mongol people complained that they could not understand the state taxation policy.[90] In Xilingol League, some organs had more than 80% Mongol cadres, but they often held meetings and delivered speeches in Chinese.[91]

[88] "Gezu renmin laixin" (Letters from People of All Nationalities), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 17 June 1957.

[89] Renqin, "1957nian Neimenggu zhengfeng yundong yu minzu wenti," 5.

[90] "Zai shiyong Menggu yuwen fangmian you chengji you jingyan" (Having Achievements and Experiences on the Use of Mongolian), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 5 August 1957.

[91] "Changkai xionghuai, geshu jijian, jiejue renmin neibu maodun" (Open the Heart, Express Own Views, Solve the Internal Contradictions Among the People), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 18 May 1957.

Even Mongolian-speaking cadres and staff were often discriminated against. The cadres who only spoke Mongolian or did not speak Chinese well enough could not get promoted. Some cadres from Ulanqab League who did not understand Chinese were told to go back home and just focus on production. People did not respect Mongolian interpreters and translators, regarding them as Tsūyaku (Japanese word for interpretation) personnel during the Manchukuo period. Mongolian-speaking journalists of the Party's media were not taken as seriously as their Chinese-speaking colleagues. Since the Chinese had an overwhelming dominance in the IMAR, it was almost unavoidable for people who did not speak Chinese to be trapped in an embarrassing and disadvantaged position. The graduates from pure Mongolian primary and middle schools could not find good jobs because they did not speak Chinese. The Mongol cadres who came from pastoral areas, where Mongolian was widely spoken, found it hard to work in cities because they lacked knowledge of Chinese. Feeling the pressure of language, many Mongol cadres did not want their children to learn their mother tongue but instead sent them to Chinese schools for better job prospects.[92]

Worse, speaking Mongolian could be accused of being a "parochial nationalist". Some cadres told Mongolian-speaking colleagues that "you only read Mongolian, which means you have not overcome parochial nationalist thinking. Proletariats are not distinguished by nationalities." A public security officer in Chahar League delivered a speech in Chinese. When other people suggested he speak in Mongolian, another cadre shouted: "Oppose parochial nationalism!" A cadre in charge of culture and education said that he tried to promote the Party's nationality policy, arguing, "We should develop a national language." But he was criticised by his superior: "You should deeply examine your parochial nationalist thinking!" Ulanhu noticed these cases. He had to address it publicly, criticise the phenomenon, and claim that the masses demanded to learn and speak Mongolian, which was in their interest.[93]

Mongolian anthropologist Bulag believes the language environment for Mongols was even worse than that of the Tibetan or Uyghur languages during the first few

[92] "Dadan jielu maodun," *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 19 May 1957.
[93] Wulanfu, ""Dali jiaqiang menggu yuwen gongzuo," 276-277.

decades of the PRC. The reason is not only demographic but also political. The CCP may have a higher tolerance for the use of indigenous languages in Tibet and Xinjiang. The local languages were a necessary tool for the spread of communist ideology when there were not enough national cadres who were dedicated to communism. However, the creation of IMAR was largely due to the continuous endeavour of a group of Chinese-speaking Mongol communists, many of whom did not know Mongolian at all. Their insistence on using their mother tongue would be viewed as a claim to national identity and an expansion of local power, which would more easily cause suspicion of the Party.[94]

The treatment of national elites. Compared to the Han, the Mongol cadres and representatives did have a higher percentage of the population. Wang Duo, a Han official who was the Party Committee Secretary of the IMAR (equal to today's deputy secretary), said in April 1957, just before the 10th anniversary of IMAR: "In the IMAR, the Mongol-Han population ratio was 1:7, while the Mongol-Han cadre ratio was 1:5."[95] By promoting the national minorities on purpose, the Party demonstrated that it favoured minority people and gave them higher chances to access power. Indeed, the small population of the Mongols determined they were unable to surpass Han cadres by population. They were expected to be satisfied and appreciate the preferential treatment of the Party. However, from the Mongol perspective, they observed that the Mongol elite in government was in significant decline.[96] In 1947, when the IMAR was founded, 18 of 21 government committee members were Mongols, while 3 were Han; the Mongol percentage was 85.71%. In 1954, Mongol committee members of the People's Committee (the name of the government from 1954 to 1976)[97] were only 20 out of 45 (Han 23, and other minorities 2). Mongols were 44.45% of the total.[98] The 1954 Mongol committee members were only a little fewer than the Han, but compared to 1947, the Mongols felt their power was diminishing.

[94] Bulag, "Mongolian Ethnicity and Linguistic Anxiety in China," 758.
[95] Wang Duo, "Neimenggu zizhiqu shixian zizhi jihuang minzuhua de chengjiu" (The Achievements of the IMAR's Nationalisation), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 29 April 1957.
[96] Renqin, "1957nian Neimenggu zhengfeng yundong yu minzu wenti," 3-4.
[97] From 1954 to 1978, the Chinese government were called the "People's Committee".
[98] Wang Duo, "Neimenggu zizhiqu shixian zizhi jihuang minzuhua de chengjiu,"*Inner Mongolia Daily*, 29 April 1957.

Many Mongols wanted the Mongol cadres to become the majority in the Party and government organs. They did not think it was a true "nationalisation" if the national cadres were only a minority. Ulanhu expressed this opinion as well. On 19 September 1956, he spoke at the CCP's 8th Congress:

> …We should help national autonomous areas to draw up plans for the training of cadres so that the cadres of their nationality in the autonomous organs and in the attached enterprises, schools and people's organisations, as well as in the authority organs of the Party, will generally be in the majority in number and will have the main responsibility for their work…
>
> If only the autonomous organs are nationalised, but the authority organs of the Party are not nationalised, which are still not predominantly composed of cadres from their own nationalities, the principle of national regional autonomy will not yet be fully achieved, and it will not be easy to implement the Party's leadership among the national minorities fully.[99]

Ulanhu spoke not only for his Mongol people but also all the minority nationalities, as he was also the minister of the SEAC (from 1954 to 1966). This speech was delivered at the 8th Congress, which planned to improve the CCP's leadership, implement democracy within the CCP and reject the cult of personality. 1956 was the most liberal period of the Mao era. Mao used to have a generous attitude toward appointing national minority cadres. In July 1956, Mao said, "We should pay attention to training national minority party cadres. Gradually let the national minority cadres replace the Han cadres." " The national minority cadres should increase year-on-year in (autonomous) counties, prefectures, and regions. National minorities should have Party secretaries. Nationality cadres should be the majority of the members of (Party) committees." "Our nationality autonomy is to seriously make national minorities primary (*shaoshu minzu weizhu*) and the Han secondary (*hanren weifu*)."[100] In this context, Ulanhu could boldly and safely demand that the national minority cadres be the majority. However, during the Anti-Rightist Campaign in 1957,

[99] Wulanfu, "Dang shengli de jiejue le guonei minzu wenti" (The Party Has Solved Domestic Nationality Problems Successfully), *People's Daily*, 20 September 1956.

[100] Mao Zedong, "Guanyu sichuansheng zang yi qu gaige wenti" (On Sichuan Yi and Tibetan Regions Reform), in *Peiyang xuanba shaoshu minzu ganbu* (Training and Promoting Minority Nationality Cadres), Beijing: Zhonghua gongshang lianhe chubanshe, 1994, 259.

it would hardly be tolerated. Thus, Ulanhu revised his tone and argued: “Being the master of one’s own house, it does not necessarily mean the national staff is the majority in autonomous organs.”[101] Soon, some minority intellectuals who demanded that minority nationality cadres should be the majority in the autonomous organs were denounced as rightists and local nationalists. They were criticised and humiliated ruthlessly in the local newspaper. Besides, in today’s Ulanhu’s selected works, the sentence and paragraph demanding that the minority cadres should be the majority were deleted, as pointed out by Yang Haiying.[102]

The Mongols saw that the most powerful positions were in the Han people’s hands. During the Hundred Flowers Campaign, a Mongol official expressed his dissatisfaction and worries, saying that 75% of the Party Committee secretaries of the leagues were Han, only 24% were Mongols, 67% of the Party Committee members and the alternate members of the IMAR were Han; only 33% were Mongols. He also complained that most of the old cadres in the IMAR came from inner China, and the new cadres were trained and promoted by them; it was these inner China cadres and their protégés who controlled the destiny of Inner Mongolia.[103] Some Mongols were dubious about the standard of promoting cadres. They said that some Mongol officials did not want to be Mongol and rejected their national identity, but such rejection would be regarded as “having integrity” by their superiors, and they would be promoted. While the cadres who did not understand

[101] Wulanfu, “Zai Qingdao minzu gongzuo zuotanhui shang de fayan” (The Speech on the Qingdao Nationality Works Symposium), 5 August 1957, in Neimenggu Wulanfu yanjiuhui (ed), *Wulanfu lun minzu gongzuo* (Ulanhu on nationality works), Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe, 1997. 265.

[102] Yang Haiying, *Zai Zhongguo yu Menggu de jiafeng* zhijian,109. I compared 6 published versions: the first version was on 20 September 1965, *People’s Daily*; the following ones were respectively in *Minzu zhengce wenxian huibian* (The Collection of Nationality Policy Documents) 1958, in *Wulanfu lun minzu gongzuo* (Ulanhu on Nationality Works) 1997, in *Wulanfu wenxuan* (Selected Works of Ulanhu) 1999, in *Wulanfu lun minzu gongzuo* (Ulanhu on Nationality Works) 2013, and in *Wulanfu wenxuan* (Selected Works of Ulanhu) 2013. The last three versions deleted the paragraph quoted above. But the one in 1997, *Ulanhu On Nationality Works*, still reserved the paragraph. It is possible that the political environment changed between 1997 and 1999, and censorship became stricter.

[103] “Neimenggu zizhiqu youxie mengzu ganbu zai zhengfeng zhong guanyu minzu wenti de fanying” (Some IMAR Mongol Cadres’ Reflections on the Nationality Question During the Rectification), in Song Yongyi (ed), Fanyou juemi wenijan: Qingkuang jianbao (zhengfeng zhuanjij) Huibian, Vol . 3, Guoshi Chubanshe, e-book.

Chinese were considered less competent and could not get promotions.[104]

Outside of the Party and government, the treatment of national elites was not satisfying either. Many well-educated national minorities were not put in suitable positions. A Mongol who was one of the first Mongols studying in Japan was only appointed as a middle-school teacher, but he should have been treated as a "senior intellectual" according to China's policy, as most people were illiterate at the time. An old, famous Mongol artist was appointed to work as a cartographer in the Inner Mongolia People Publishing House. A prominent Daur linguist who actively participated in creating the new Daur writing system[105] did not have a safe place to live. The Mongol and other minorities privately questioned whether the national minority intellectuals had been treated as intellectuals.[106] In fact, the CCP did not mistreat minority intellectuals on purpose, because the Han intellectuals also complained very bitterly about their treatment. It was the inherent disadvantage of the totalitarian system. The CCP provided everyone with what they needed by making delicate, thorough plans. Yet, for the minority people, the frustration of the political system is often mixed with their deeply ingrained distrust of Chinese rulers. They would interpret the political conflicts from a nationality point of view and resent the Han domination.

The Mongols felt they were discriminated against. On the other hand, some Han people in the IMAR also grudged the preferential promotion of national minority elites. Believing it damaged fairness, they said: "Mongol communists are the first class; Han communists are the second; Mongol non-communists are the third; Han non-communists are the fourth." "Your job will be guaranteed if you are a communist and a (minority) nationality cadre".[107] These points of view were denounced as rightist during the Anti-Rightist Campaign because they attacked the CCP's nationality policy. Nevertheless, it was local nationalism that was believed to be a much bigger problem during the Anti-rightist Campaign; the denunciation of great-power chauvinism was much less harsh.

The encroachment of the pastureland. The CCP believed that by offering

[104] "Dadan jielu maodun," *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 19 May 1957.
[105] It might be the new Cyrillic writing system, which was abandoned in 1958.
[106] Qindamuni, "Shōsū minzoku no sakebi," 109-110.
[107] Li Shijie, "Bixu jinyibu gonggu minzu tuanije," *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 13 November 1957.

economic benefits to national minorities, it could achieve actual equality of nationalities. Zhou Enlai argued that when doing trade with national minorities, equality and mutual benefits were not enough. The Party should subsidise the minorities more and let minority people gain more benefits. He also suggested fewer taxes, more products, hydraulic engineering, and food relief.[108]

In practice, the interests of national minorities were often ignored. The cultivation of the pastureland by Han peasants often caused deep bitterness among the Mongols in history, and this grievance continued under the communist regime. Whether or not to cultivate the pastureland usually depended on China's overall political and economic situation, not on the Mongols' will. From 1947 to 1951, the IMAR government encouraged people to cultivate wasteland in arable areas to increase food production and support the regime during the civil war. People who cultivated new lands could have tax reductions as a reward and have ownership of the land. At the same time, the government said the pastureland should be protected in semi-pastoral areas, but people could work either in crop planting or in herding voluntarily. Nevertheless, planting crops was far more attractive, with advantages like shorter cycle time and lower risk compared to pastoralism. Lands not suitable for growing crops were still cultivated on a large scale, only to become desertified after a few years. Suiyuan Province (the western part of Inner Mongolia), after being taken over by the CCP in September 1949, encouraged cultivation even more actively. In total, it is estimated that 4 million *mu* of land was cultivated on average per year from 1947 to 1951.[109] How much pastureland was encroached on was unknown (the cultivated land included abandoned farms, woods and other types of land), but it appeared that the Mongol cadres-dominated government could not completely stand for Mongol herdsmen's interests but had to make compromises.

Around 1951 and 1952, the encouragement of cultivation gradually stopped. The policy in semi-pastoral areas became "protecting the pastureland (*bao hu mu chang*) and forbidding the cultivation of the wasteland *(jin zhi ken huang*)." *Kenhuang* literally meant cultivating wasteland. In this context, it meant pastureland: the dictation

[108] Zhou Enlai, "Guanyu xibei diqu de minzu gongzuo," 193.

[109] Yu Yong, "Dui Neimenggu zizhiqu kaihuang yu tuigeng zhengce de lishi kaocha" (Examine the History of the Policy of Reclaiming Wasteland and Forbidding Farming in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region), *Neimenggu shifan daxue xuebao*, 2005, Vol. 34, No.6, 62-63.

seemed to neglect that the grassland without crops was not wasted but an important means of production for Mongol herdsmen. Ulanhu explained that Inner Mongolia's transportation system was not well developed. Thus, grains were difficult to transport out; the soil quality was not suitable for crops, and the cultivation would not increase grain production much but only damage the pastureland. Besides, the cultivation had caused conflicts between the Mongols and the Han. Thus, the pastureland must be protected. Ulanhu repeated his point of view many times.[110] From 1951 to 1953, Suiyuan Province also issued four orders, requiring the protection of pastureland and forbidding cultivation.[111] After the merge of Inner Mongolia and Suiyuan in March 1954, the Inner Mongolia Branch Bureau (cancelled in 1955) soon reiterated "protecting the pastureland and forbidding the cultivation of the wasteland", and shut down all the farmland which had been cultivated in 1953.[112]

Nevertheless, China was eager to develop its heavy industry, which required high procurement of grains to export, to buy machines and other industrial resources. Mao Zedong harshly criticised the people who suggested that the pace of industrial development should be slower.[113] The rashness prompted all local Party organs to increase grain procurement, and Inner Mongolia was no exception. In October 1953, Ulanhu said Inner Mongolia had relatively good food production and could overachieve the grain procurement.[114] However, in early 1956, the high target of grain production led the IMAR to increase the arable land area to increase

[110] Wulanfu, "Zai fenju kuogan huiyishang de zongjie baogao tigang" (The Outline of the Summary Report on Inner Mongolia Branch Bureau's Cadre Enlarging Conference), in *Ducaoji*, in MJNKKS, Vol. 4, 175. Ulanhu repeated "protecting the pastureland and forbidding the cultivation". For example, on 16 January and 24 January 1951, in *Ducaoji*, in MJNKKS, Vol. 4, 171, 175. On 1 January, 15 June, and 28 December 1953, *in Wulanfu Nianpu,* 285, 295, 305.

[111] Renqin, "1957nian Neimenggu zhengfeng yundong yu minzu wenti," 6.

[112] Yu Yong, "Dui Neimenggu zizhiqu kaihuang yu tuigeng zhengce de lishi kaocha," 64.

[113] On the question of establishing cooperatives in rural areas, Mao criticised Deng Zihui as a "little feet woman" and his rightist-leaning mistake. Deng Zihui did not agree with Mao's ambitious plan. The political pressure caused the extremely rapid establishment of cooperatives all over the country. Chinese philosopher Liang Shuming reminded the CCP of peasants' heavy burden. Mao harshly criticised his reactionary thinking. Lin Yunhui, *Xiang shehuizhuyi guodu: Zhongguo jingji yu shehui de zhuanxing* (1953-1955) (Moving toward Socialism: The Transformation of China's Economy and Society (1953-1955)), Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2009, 168-201, 262-272.

[114] Lin Yunhui, ibid., 102.

production. Ulanhu again called for the cultivation of wasteland, using tax exemption as an incentive.[115]

Mongols had no choice but to endure the encroachment of their pastureland. The director of the transportation bureau of the IMAR, OljeiOchir, had to make a concessive statement, that "the immigration and the cultivation of pastureland were an inevitable trend. It was also a necessary measure to increase grain production." But he opposed unscientific cultivation, which failed to consider the interest of herdsmen. To solve the conflict between peasants (Han) and herdsmen (Mongol), he argued: "The cultivation must be combined with reforming the pastoral economy."[116] It was no longer forbidding cultivation but asking for scientific cultivation.

The cultivation caused more peasant-herder conflicts. As herders are Mongols, they were also Mongol-Han conflicts. An internal report in 1955 honestly recorded the clash between herders in Taipusi Lefter Banner and peasants from its two bordering counties:

> After the Party implemented the policies of "forbidding cultivation" and "protecting pastureland" in pastoral areas, the cultivations of Baochang County (Inner Mongolia) and Guyuan (Hebei Province) are still expanding to pastoral areas year by year…
>
> …The peasants lacked grass for cattle during this year's spring ploughing. Thus, hundreds of cattle-carts and thousands of peasants went to Taipusi Left Banner, collecting grass with iron rakes. They even pulled up the root of the grass. Because some herders tried to prevent the grass-collecting, several fights happened. Thus, the herders chose representatives to petition the banner's government. Some peasants going to the pastoral area to collect grass organised sentry teams. The herders are afraid of approaching them. Thus, the herders said: "We can solve natural disasters, but we can not solve human disasters."[117]

[115] Yu Yong, "Dui Neimenggu zizhiqu kaihuang yu tuigeng zhengce de lishi kaocha," 64.
[116] "Jiejue maodun, shi renmin neibu guanxi de mianmao weizhiyixin" (Solve the Contradiction. Renew the Internal Relationships Among the People), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 21 May 1957.
[117] Liao Youbin, "Neimenggu Chaha'er meng kaihuang mianji zhunian xiang muqu kuoda" (Inner Mongolia Chahar League's Cultivation Expanding to Pastoral Areas Year by Year),

A report written by a Mongol journalist, Qindman (pinyin: Qindamuni), was sharper. He wrote about Jasagh Banner's cultivation, comparing the CCP's cultivation with the KMT:

> Last year, about twenty thousand *mu* of land was cultivated. The twenty-thousand *mu* of pastureland had a history of blood and tears. In 1943, the KMT cultivated twenty thousand *mu* of land. This triggered the rage of the Mongols, who organised a riot with thousands of people. The KMT used about ten thousand troops to suppress the riot and massacred hundreds of people. But the Mongols did not give in. In the end, the KMT had to make a concession, and the pastureland was saved. On Ordos grassland, it was called "Incident March 26" and remembered forever. The history of blood and tears is still fresh in the memory of the Mongols, but now the pastureland is cultivated. [118]

However, the Party's propaganda overwhelmed the Mongols' resentment. The journalist complained that in Urad Front Banner, Uranchab (now part of Bayannur), the mass cultivation of pastureland during the collectivisation movement led many Mongol herdsmen to lose their land. The conflict between Mongol herdsmen and Han peasants escalated. However, the Inner Mongolian branch of Xinhua News Agency even wrote a report praising the solidarity between Mongol and Han people in this banner's collectivisation, which was published on Inner Mongolia Daily's homepage, completely ignoring the suffering of the Mongols. At the same time, the reports reflecting the voice of the Mongols were suppressed, which was "unacceptable".[119] Several Mongols who criticised the cultivation, including the journalist, were labelled as "local nationalists" during the Anti-Rightist Campaign. Yet, probably to appease the Mongols, the old policy of "protecting the pastureland and forbidding the cultivation" was restored in September 1957.[120] Nevertheless, during the Great Leap Forward, when food was in extreme shortage, the IMAR had to encourage cultivation again.

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20 June 1955, *Neibu cankao*, in LRSPP.

[118] Qindamuni, "Lankai muchang yinqile minzu jiufen" (The Mindless Cultivation of Pastureland Caused National Conflicts", *Neibu cankao*, 12 April 1957, in Song Yongyi (ed), CARCD.

[119] Qindamuni, "Shōsū minzoku no sakebi,"109.

[120] Yu Yong, "Dui Neimenggu Zizhiqu Kaihuang yu Tuigeng zhengce de Lishi Kaocha," 65.

Why Not Satisfying?

The 1950s were the most benign period for nationality policies. However, from the predicaments of the Mongols, we can still discover many problems in China's affirmative actions. I would like to use Terry Martin's "hard-line policies" and "soft-line policies" framework to explain the internal logic of the CCP's minority nationality policy. When explaining the Soviet *korenizatsiia* policy, Martin introduces the concept of "hard-line policies" and "soft-line policies". The hard-line ones were core prioritised policies of the Soviet Union, often imposed by force and violence regardless of how intense the opposition was. Industrialisation and collectivisation belong to the hard-line category, while the nationality policies belong to the soft-line category.[121] The soft-line policies were merely secondary, less important policies which were designed to help the implementation of the core policies. They would be abandoned if they contradicted the hard-line ones. Even if the soft-line policies were not implemented well, there would be no fatal punishment to the Party cadres: demotions were rare, while arrest or execution had never happened.

It was the same in China. The paramount ultimate goal of the CCP was maintaining and enhancing the Party's rule, even though different leaders may have different thoughts on state building. Mao Zedong's vision was more utopian and unrealistic, while Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai often had more practical blueprints. But they never disagreed on the consolidation of the CCP's rule. To ensure the ruling status, Mao's CCP usually committed to work on two tasks: 1) maintaining the correct communist ideology, and 2) increasing the country's power, especially industrial and military power, and international influence. Most of the hard-line policies were around the two aims, like the land reform, Five-Year plans, food quotas, the socialist transformation, the Anti-Rightist Campaign, the Great Leap Forward, the Cultural Revolution and so on. These hard-line policies were expected to consolidate the regime and were implemented at all costs. Despite inflicting catastrophic costs on the people, Mao's China was able to establish a relatively mature industrial system within a short period and increase its international influence, which enhanced the Party's legitimacy. The

[121] Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 21-22, 76.

CCP's control over Chinese society was also at its peak, and no domestic forces could threaten its rule.

In contrast, like its counterpart in the Soviet Union, China's nationality policy is also a "soft-line" policy, which also includes issues related to other parties, culture, education, intellectuals and so on. All the affirmative nationality policies serve one aim: to placate the minorities so they could voluntarily participate in building socialism and would embrace the CCP's rule. For instance, during the land reform, the Mongols received preferential treatment compared to their Han neighbours. Nevertheless, the preferential treatment was a type of soft-line policy, the fundamental aim of which was to mitigate the resistance of the Mongols in the land reform, to achieve the core hard-line policy. The CCP could postpone the timetable or lower the intensity of the struggles for the minorities, but the reform must be done.

The interests of minority nationalities would never compete with the Party's core aims. Take the encroachment of the grassland as an example, the state's hard-line task was to increase grain production, while the pastoral economy and the protection of the grassland were much less important. Thus, even though Inner Mongolia's authorities sometimes prohibited the cultivation, they could not resist the heavy pressure of high grain procurement. Ulanhu and other ethnic Mongol cadres had to yield and permit, or even advocate, the land cultivation. Minority nationalities complained that the great Han chauvinists were never seriously punished. The reason is that the "great Han chauvinist" cadres were the loyal hard-line policy implementers. They may make "leftist mistakes" and even result in dreadful disasters, but they guarantee the imposition of the Party's priorities. They were favoured by the CCP leadership.

Therefore, the CCP's rejection of its early promises of self-determination and federation was almost destined. When the CCP was struggling for the survival, it could give generous promises to win over the national minorities. However, when it became China's new ruler, its foremost aim was to enhance its ruling status. It would not accept the demands with centrifugal tendencies. Unfortunately, self-determination and federation were usually associated with secession and independence, which were still a political taboo in today's China.

However, to the local Mongols, especially those Mongol nationalists who had previously strived for independence or real autonomy, their core demands were not in line with the CCP. Their independent dream had been shattered after the establishment of the PRC. The Mongol nationalists had to make concessions, but they remained dedicated to preserving their national identity, including their language, culture, and way of life, as evident in their earlier complaints. However, even these compromised goals were difficult to reach. On the other hand, the Party's prioritised tasks, unfortunately, had little resonance for them. Such a conflict was actually inevitable. The Party-state's grandiose "hard-line" goals aiming at consolidating the regime. The interests of the state were always prioritised over those of the people. They took little account of the ordinary people, including the national minorities.

Chapter Summery

In a brief conclusion, by examining the grievances of the Mongols in the 1950s, we can see that even the most desirable period of Mao's 28-year rule was unable to satisfy the demands of the national minorities, including the Mongols, who were considered the most loyal minority to the CCP. Despite being given the title of autonomous region, Inner Mongolia had little actual power to decide its own affairs. Although the CCP genuinely condemned great Han chauvinism and provided a range of preferential policies to appease the national minorities, which even caused resentment among the Han people, many Mongols still felt their interests were constantly infringed. Under the pressure, even some Mongol cadres had to sacrifice their people's interests.

The root cause is that the national minority's interests were never the priority of the CCP. The interests of the minorities might sometimes be considered, in exchange for their support of the Party. However, as a soft-line policy, the purpose of the national minority policy is to serve the achievement of those hard-line objectives, such as land reform, five-year plans, and even the disastrous Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution. These hard-line policies either guaranteed the ideology or increased China's national power. The soft-line policies could be cancelled at any time, while the hard-line policies must be implemented. It was an irreconcilable

conflict between the state and the people in Communist China. The core interests of the CCP were hardly in accordance with the demands of the people.

As the CCP had promised the national minorities to grant them the right to self-determination and establish a federal state before it came into power, the rejection of the promises caused great disappointment. A time bomb has been planted. When the Party decided to loosen its control over freedom of speech during the Hundred Flowers Campaign period in the spring of 1957, the suppressed dissatisfactions burst forth. The national minorities began to challenge the regime, demanding that the Party improve their rights. The CCP was enraged. From the point of view of the CCP, the great Han chauvinism would not endanger the unification of the country, but the nationalism of the minorities would, which often connoted separatism and independence. The CCP immediately abandoned its previous stance of criticising great Han chauvinism, and turned to target the local nationalism.

Chapter 4 Nationality minorities in the Hundred Flowers Campaign and the Anti-Local Nationalism Struggle

The Anti-Rightist Campaign in 1957 can be seen as a turning point in the nationality policy. Until then, the CCP continued to criticise Great Han chauvinism. Although local nationalism was also criticised, this was not the focus. During the short Hundred Flowers Campaign period, the voices of national minorities prompted the Communist Party to be aware of the danger posed by the centrifugal tendencies of these minorities. From then on, the Communist Party turned its attention to attacking local nationalism. The Mao-era nationality policy never returned to the pre-1957 period.

Much of the research on the Hundred Flowers Campaign and the following Anti-Rightist Campaign has focused on the crackdown on intellectuals. The national minority issue involved in the campaign was still understudied. What were the complaints of the minority “rightists”? What did they want to achieve? How did the CCP react? This chapter aims to contribute some new knowledge to this field. Another finding of this chapter is that the CCP continued to attempt to maintain its original affirmative nationality policy to a certain degree during the Anti-Rightist Campaign, despite having determined to punish those disobedient minorities. In the early stages of the Anti-Rightist Campaign, the mistakes of the minority rightists who were selected as targets often included ‘undermining national unity’. In other words, the criticisms from the minority rightists against their own nationalities were more likely to be regarded as political mistakes. The attack on local nationalism occurred relatively late, around September 1957. Before that, the CCP had tried to win over national minorities through persuasion. However, these persuasions were not effective, and minority representatives and cadres continued to make sharp criticisms of nationalist policies at the Qingdao Nationality Work Symposium, from 20 July to 6 August 1957. Deng Xiaoping’s Report on the Rectification Campaign on 23 September marked the vehement denunciation of local nationalism. However, even so, the rightists of the national minorities still accounted for a far smaller proportion of their population than the Han, illustrating that the Communist Party of this period was still reluctant to abandon the United Front altogether. I hope the findings will help to understand the nuances of the nationality issue during Mao’s era.

This chapter will branch out to minority nationality issues in other regions, as they also display the problems of the PRC's nationality policy. Nevertheless, the main focus is still on Inner Mongolia. The speeches of Mongol "local nationalists" will be examined. From their arguments, we can see what type of opinions were unacceptable to the CCP. Additionally, the CCP's anti-local nationalism may also be relevant to anti-localism, which will be briefly discussed at the end of the chapter as a supplement to further understanding the CCP's politics.

Collectivisation and National Minority's Resentment in the 1950s

The 20th Congress of the CPSU in February 1956 prompted the CCP to consider how to build the Chinese state while avoiding Stalin's mistakes. It did not mean liberalisation or democratisation like Western countries. Actually, the Party never intended to abandon the Soviet model; it sought to rectify some of the Soviet Union's problems and accelerate the development of socialism within the framework of the Soviet model.[1] Nevertheless, the CCP's exploration of a better way of state-building partially liberalised the rigid social-political environment, though it only lasted for a short period.

On 25 April 1956, Mao delivered his speech "On the Ten Major Relationships" at an enlarged session of a Politburo meeting. Scholars agreed it was inspired by the 20th Congress of the CPSU to avoid its defects and mistakes. Although it shows Mao had already considered adjusting the Soviet model before the 20th Congress of the CPSU, there was no doubt that the criticism of Stalin during the 20th Congress encouraged Mao to explore China's way of state-building boldly.[2] Mao's main

[1] Shen Zhihua, *Wunai de xuanze: Lengzhan yu zhongsu tongmeng de mingyun (1945-1959)* (The Cold War and the Fate of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1945-1959), Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press (China), 2013, 398-403.

[2] MacFarquhar argues that the speech was probably made to address only economic problems initially, which was Mao's major concern in the spring of 1956. The latter five relationships were added to the speech because Mao started to ponder what steps to take after the 20th Congress of the CPSU. Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution: Contradictions among the People, 1956-1957*, London: Oxford University Press, 1974, 57. Shen Zhihua agreed with MacFarquhar's argument. See Shen Zhihua, *Wunai de xuanze*, 402-403. According to Bo Yibo's memoir, Mao and the Party leaders at the end of 1955 had realised some Soviet experiences were not suitable for China before the CPSU 20th Congress. Yet, it could be reasonably argued that the CPSU 20th Congress further pushed the CCP leadership to adjust the Soviet model. See Bo Yibo, *Ruogan zhongda juece yu shijian de huigu* (A Review of Some Important Determinations and

concern was the economy, so the first five relationships addressed the adjustment of economic relationships. Nevertheless, the question of national minority also entered Mao's mind. Mao pointed out that the CCP should focus on opposing the great Han chauvinism. He said:

> The minority nationalities have all contributed to the making of China's history. The huge Han population is the result of the intermingling of many nationalities over a long time. All through the ages, the reactionary rulers, chiefly from the Han nationality, sowed feelings of estrangement among our various nationalities and bullied the minority peoples. Even among the working people, it is not easy to eliminate the resultant influences in a short time.[3]

The background to Mao's address on the national minority problem was that numerous riots had occurred in southwestern China's national minority areas since the end of 1955. The riots were triggered by the agricultural collectivisation under duress and radical land reforms.

In 1953, the CCP launched an ambitious socialist transformation programme for its economy, aiming to convert ownership from private to public. One crucial part of the agricultural socialist transformation was collectivisation, starting in late 1951. As late as 1955, even though the CCP was eager to push the transformation, it still maintained that the collectivisation in minority areas should not imitate the approach in Han areas and pointed out that "catching Han areas" was wrong.[4] However, in July and August 1955, Mao harshly criticised the agricultural collectivisation work as right-leaning. He sarcastically called the cadres responsible for collectivisation "small-feet women" (unable to walk fast). After being seriously criticised, all the cadres had to obey the chairman's will and eagerly force peasants to join cooperatives.[5] From September 1955 to December 1955, the percentage of

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Practices), Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 1991, vol 1, 472.

[3] Mao Zedong, "On the Ten Major Relationships," 295.

[4] "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu zai shaoshu minzu diqu jinxing nongye shehuizhuyi gaizao wenti de zhishi"(The CCP CC's Instructions About the Agricultural Socialist Transformation in Minority Nationality Areas), 25 February 1955, in Zhongyang dang'anguan, zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (eds), *Zhonggong zhongyang wenjian xuanji* (1949.10-1966.5), Cited as ZZWX (1949-1966), Vol. 18 (1955.1-1955.3), Beijing: Remin chubanshe, 2013, 207-208.

[5] Lin Yunhui, *The History of the People's Republic of China*, Volume 2, *Xiang shehuizhuyi guodu: Zhongguo jingji yu shehui de zhuanxing* (1953-1955) (Moving toward Socialism:

agricultural households joining the cooperatives increased dramatically, from 32% to 63.3%, and then jumped to more than 80% by the end of January 1956.[6] Mao was very excited about the speed. Believing larger cooperatives would increase productivity, Mao further demanded the establishment of big, advanced cooperatives.[7] It required peasants who joined the cooperative to turn ownership of their land, livestock farming, large farm tools, and other primary means of production into collective ownership. They were allowed to maintain some means of subsistence, such as several trees, birds, and livestock, as well as small farm tools and tools for domestic sideline production.[8] At the end of 1956, 96% of peasants joined cooperatives, and 87% of peasants joined advanced cooperatives.[9]

National minorities were not permitted to be special in the radical campaign. They were forced to join the cooperatives like the Han people. The coercion triggered commotions and rebellions. In March 1956, in Bijie, Guizhou Province, more than 300 national minority people were involved in a riot and killed three militia leaders. In April, the CCP CC instructed the Guizhou Party Committee to reflect on the problems, especially great Han chauvinism, in the collectivisation movement in minority areas. The CCP CC pointed out that coercive orders and copying the working method in Han areas were harmful.[10] However, the directive from the highest power authority still failed to appease the angry national minorities. Another major riot occurred in Guizhou province shortly after. From May 1956 to January 1957, in Mashan, more than 5,000 people, mainly of the Miao nationality, as well as some Buyi and Han people, participated in an armed rebellion against unified purchasing and marketing, as well as agricultural collectivisation. Some grassroots cadres and CCP members even joined the uprising. It resulted in approximately 300

The Transformation of China's Economy and Society (1953-1955)), Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2009, 168-193.

[6] Pang Xianzhi and Jin Chongji (eds), *Mao Zedong zhuan*, Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2013, Vol. 3, 348-1349, 1369, 1377.

[7] Ibid., 1373-1375.

[8] "Gaoji nongye shengchan hezuoshe shifan zhangcheng" (The Bylaw of Advanced Agricultural Production Cooperatives), 30 June 1956, in JYZWX, Vol. 8, 407.

[9] *Mao Zedong zhuan*, Vol. 3, 1378.

[10] "Zhongogng zhongyang guanyu Jiancha minzu zhengce zhixing qingkuang de zhishi" (The CCP CC's directive about examining the situation of the implementation of nationality policy), 14 April 1956, ZZWX (1949-1966), Vol. 23, 74-76.

casualties among the army and cadres.[11] Historian Wang Haiguang concluded the problems of the collectivisation movement in Mashan: the peasants who did not want to join cooperatives were criticised as “wanting capitalism”; only 5% of private land was allowed to keep; the peasants were forced to invest their cattle into the cooperatives but only received the payment which was much lower than the market price or even none; the procurement of grain was extremely high, and the tax was so heavy that some peasants even complained it was worse than the KMT’s era; The industrial products sold by the Supply and Sales Agency (*gong xiao she*) were too expensive, and g*ong xiao she* refused to offer reasonable prices for the agricultural products (except grains) sold to it by the peasants. Besides, Mashan was a mountainous area, and many people lived far from each other, but the cadres often forced them to join the same big cooperative and required them to work together. The tradition of national minorities was ignored; the land for special use was not allowed to be retained. Moreover, the local national minorities always resented the Han rulers, which would easily turn the grudge against a disastrous policy into national conflicts.[12]

Mao’s criticism of “small-feet women” and right-leaning thoughts radicalised most of the CCP’s works from 1955 to 1956. It also accelerated land reform in national minority areas (some minority areas started land reform much later). Again, the minority people responded to the land reform with rebellions. Several uprisings broke out in Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province, at the end of December 1955. On 24 December 1955, more than 2,500 Yi people participated in an armed rebellion. It was suppressed four days later with 1530 rebels eradicated, but the unrest spread to other counties. On 25 December, in Ganluo County, more than 200 people rebelled. Also, on 25 December, several cadres in charge of democratic reform were killed and arrested in Zhaojue county. In Meigu County, a rebellion broke out in January 1956. About 3,000 people participated, with 1,800 firearms. Liangshan Prefecture’s rebellions did not cease until the end of 1957,

[11] Wang Haiguang, “Nongye jitihua yundong Beijing xia de minzu zhengce tiaozheng: Yi Guizhou sheng Mashan diqu ‘nao huangdi’ shijian de heping jiejue weili” (National Policy Adjustments under the Background of Agricultural Collectivization Movement: the Peaceful Settlement of Mashan Disturbance (Nao Huangi) Incident in Mashan Area of Guizhou Province as the Example), *Zhonggong dangshi yanjiu*, 2013, No. 2, 43-56.

[12] Wang Haiguang, ibid, 47-48.

involving tens of thousands of people.[13] In Xichang Division[14], another Yi people's area in Sichuan Province, from January to October 1956, about 14,000 people took part in rebellions to resist the land reform with 5,000 firearms. 148 soldiers and 70 local cadres were killed; 20 government offices and 305 private houses were burned.[15]

The reform in the Tibetan area also encountered vehement resistance. On 15 February 1956, in Garzê Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, the first Tibetan insurgency broke out. In Baiyu County, riots broke out in 26 out of 28 monasteries. On 7 March, more than 800 people encircled Sertar County.[16] By the end of May 1956, in Garzê, riots and rebellions occurred in 18 counties and 45 districts (20 counties and 77 districts in total), with 16,000 people involved. More than 300 Tibetan and Han cadres and about 150 activists and masses were reportedly killed and injured.[17] The situation was no better in another Tibetan area, Ngawa Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. Thirty land reform team members encountered an ambush and died in Chuosijia County in March 1956. In May, Maoergai's Party office, with about 200 cadres and militias, was attacked by more than 400 Tibetans. More than 60 militias surrendered to the rebels, except 6.[18] The riots made the CCP in 1956 decide that Tibet would not have a democratic reform within six years.

It should be noted that the CCP's land reform usually accompanies dramatic cultural and social custom reform. The people would find out not only that their economic interest was damaged, but also that their culture and religion were offended. The 14th Dalai Lama recalled how he heard about how the religious reform in the summer of

[13] Qin Heping and Ran Linwen (eds), *Sichuan minzu diqu minzhu gaige dashiji* (Major Events of the Democratic Reform in Sichuan Minority Nationality Areas), Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2007, preface17, 27-30. Sichuan sheng difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (ed), *Sichuan sheng zhi: Junshi zhi* (Chorography of Sichuan: Military), Chengdu: Sichuan renmin Chubanshe, 1999, 294-296.

[14] Division: Chinese "*zhuan qu*". Its administrative level was above a county and under a province.

[15] *Sichuan minzu diqu minzhu gaige dashiji*, 46.

[16] *Neibu cankao* (Internal Reference), 21 June 1956, quoted in Li Jianglin, *Dang tieniao zai tiankong feixiang: 1956-1962 Qingzang gaoyuan shang de mimi zhanzheng* (When Iron Birds Are Flying in the Sky: 1956-1962 The Secret War on the Tibetan Plateau), Taipei: Linking Publishing, 2012, 58.

[17] *Sichuan minzu diqu minzhu gaige dashiji*, preface, 19.

[18] *Neibu Cankao*, 21 June 1956, quoted in Li Jianglin, *Dang tieniao zai Tiankong Feixiang*, 58.

1955 was imposed on Tibetans in Kham (in Sichuan Province) and Amdo (in Qinghai Province): “The work of the monasteries was being grossly interfered with, and they began to indoctrinate the local population against religion. Monks and nuns were subject to severe harassment and publicly humiliated. For example, they were forced to join in extermination programmes of insects, rats, birds and all types of vermin, even though the Chinese authorities knew that taking any form of life is contrary to Buddhist teaching. If they refused, they were beaten.”[19] It was one of the reasons for many monastery riots. As most Tibetans were devoted Buddhists, the offence of religion deepened their resentment of the government.

Thus, when Mao delivered his “On Ten Relationships” speech in 1956, the national relationships were not promising and desperately needed adjustment. Mao blamed the great Han chauvinism. On 27 February 1957, Mao briefly discussed the national relationships and Tibetan issues in his speech “On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People”. The address was inspired by the Polish and Hungarian protests, which concerned Mao about the regime’s stability. Nationality relationships were one of “contradictions among the people.” He still believed that dealing with great Han chauvinism was pivotal to maintaining good relationships with the national minorities: “My ‘On Ten Relationships’ has a paragraph particularly talking about the relationships between the Han and national minorities must be dealt with well. The main question is to solve the great Han chauvinism. Has it been solved? Not yet. The CCP will hold a meeting this year, a plenary session of the CC, to discuss the United Front and the national minority question. Must change the great Han chauvinist style and thinking, monopolising everything and disrespecting national minorities.”[20]

Mao’s criticism of the great Han chauvinism seemed merely about radical work methods, which were blamed for the ferocious resistance from minority nationalities. Nevertheless, Mao’s determination to complete the reform was absolutely unshakable. The method of reform could be compromised, but the basic policy could not. On 14 May 1957, the CCP CC decided that the land reform in Garzê Prefecture

[19] The 14th Dalai Lama, *Freedom in Exile: The Autobiography of the Dalai Lama*, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1990, 104.
[20] Mao Zedong, “On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People,” 27 February 1957, in *Selected Works of Mao Tsetung*, Vol. 5, 384-421.

and Yunnan Tibetan agricultural area "was an established policy of the CC, which should be firmly conducted." The Party believed the problem in the previous reforms was that it did not cooperate with upper strata people; therefore, reforms in the future "must pay attention to fully consulting with the upper strata and make a good arrangement for them, in order to win over and neutralise all the people who are possible to be neutral and peaceful." The CC instructed the Sichuan Party Committee about the potential rebellion: "We should be fully prepared to give them a firm blow and achieve a complete victory." The Party demonstrated an uncompromising hawkish position on the rebellion and believed a military victory would be essential in "the successful completion of the democratic reform, which would stabilise the situation of Chamdo and Tibet."[21] Nevertheless, Mao did not realise that his communist revolution, which intended to eliminate private ownership and build public ownership, would inevitably cause conflict between the state and the people. Naturally, the national minorities would view it as a national conflict because outsiders, the Han rulers, imposed the "reforms" and "transformations" on them. Suppressing great Han chauvinism may appease the minorities for a short time, but it does not get to the root of the problem.

The collectivisation encountered much less resistance in the IMAR compared to Sichuan and Guizhou. So, Mao did not realise that Mongol people were also very disgruntled when he emphasised the importance of nationality relationships and criticised great Han chauvinism. Collectivisation also made the Mongols suffer, often worse than their Han counterparts. After joining the cooperative, farm tools and livestock owners would no longer monopolise the right to use them but had to share them with other members. (In the advanced cooperatives, they also had to give up private ownership. The ownership belonged to the cooperative.) The owners would receive certain payments, but usually very low. Many Mongols (as well as Han people elsewhere) sold and slaughtered their animals as a resistance. In Hulunbuir, the Mongols were worried about the loss of private ownership. Some herdowners began to squander their properties. A herdlord sold 300 sheep and more than 20 big livestock and got 7,000 yuan cash. Some deliberately slaughtered rams for

[21] "Zhonggong zhongyang dui Sichuan shengwei guanyu ganzi zhou jixu jinxing minzhu gaige de pishi" (The CCP CC's Instructions on Carrying on the Democratic Reform in Garzê Prefecture), 14 May 1957, in Qin Heping (ed) *Sichuan minzu diqu minzhu gaige ziliao ji*, Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2008, 29-30.

breeding.[22] Ulanchab lost about 250,000 to 300,000 livestock in 1956.[23] In addition, just like the situation of the Miao people in Guizhou, in the IMAR, the daily necessities like grains, oil, salt and industrial products were increasingly expensive, while the price of local national minorities' livestock, hunting and sideline products continued falling.[24] It seriously impeded the lives of national minorities.

Besides, the Mongols were disadvantaged compared to the Han people in Mongol-Han joint cooperatives, which worsened the relationship between the two nationality groups. More than 3400 cooperatives in the IMAR were nationalities joint-cooperatives (Mongol-Han joint-cooperatives were about 3000) in 1957[25]. They had been supposed to be a good example of the unity of nationalities. However, Mongol people's income was far from satisfactory. In a joint cooperative in Dalad Rear Banner, the income of the Mongol members was only 40% of the Han members.[26] In another joint cooperative in Chasuqi Town (belonging to Hohhot), in 1956, the income of 90% of Han peasants increased, but 80% of Mongol peasants decreased.[27] Even those favouring joint cooperatives had to admit that many Mongol members lost their incomes[28].

Usually, Mongol families had more land because the land reform had distributed more land to the Mongols and livestock, but fewer labourers. Taking Chasuqi Town's cooperative as an example, the Han members had 2.3 labourers per household,

[22] Shi Yunzi, "Neimenggu hulunbei'er muyequ zai xuanchuan zongluxian he tuixing huzhu hezuo hou bufen muzhu kaishi huihuo caichan zaisha niuyang" (After the Publication of the General Line and Promotion of Mutual Assistance and Cooperation, Some Herdlords Began to Squander Properties and Slaughter Breeding Rams), Neibu cankao, 31 December 1954, in LRSPP.

[23] Wangdan, "Jinyibu guanche nongmu jiehe ji fazhan duozhong jingji de fangzhen" (Further Implement the Policy of Combining of Agriculture and Pasturalism and Developing Multiple Types of Economy), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 1 May 1957.

[24] Eqi'erhuyaketu, "Tuanjie huzhu you'ai hezuo de minzu guanxi" (The United, Uutual Assisting, Friendly and Cooperative Nationality Relations), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 4 May 1957.

[25] ibid.

[26] Geshidalai, "Ying baozheng mengzu sheyuan zengjia shouru" (Should Guarantee the Mongol Members Increase the Income), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 3 May 1957.

[27] Zhu Sheng, "Sha'erqin cun menggu zuren dandu banshe dui minzu tuanjie he fazhan shengchan buli ma?" (Is it Bad for National Unit if the Mongols Establish Cooperatives of Their Own?) *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 27 May 1957.

[28] Yuan Zhijun, "Nongmu jiehe Haochu duo" (There Are Many Benefits for Combining Agriculture and Animal Husbandry), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 13 May 1957.

while the Mongols had 1.4. Regarding land, per Han labourers had about 7 *mu* of land on average, while Mongol labourers had 18.77 *mu* on average. As in the cooperative, members had to hand over the right to use land, farming tools, and livestock to the cooperative. Thus, Han members in the cooperative could use their Mongol fellows' land, tools and livestock freely. It was, in fact, subsidising the Han members with the Mongol members' land and livestock. The Mongols felt their interest were deprived. More frustrating, the payment in the cooperative was based on workload. This method was supposed to guarantee fairness. But the Mongols realised no matter how hard they worked, their family's payment would never catch up with the Han's, just because they had fewer labourers per family. Thus, many Mongols demanded that they have a separate cooperative, but their request was rejected. Local cadres argued that they were concerned that the Mongols' land was too much for them to utilise effectively, given their significantly smaller workforce; they believed it would be a waste of land resources. Furthermore, separating Mongols and Han into different cooperatives would be considered a threat to national unity.[29]

Thanks to Ulanhu's relatively practical suggestion, some potential calamitous consequences may have already been avoided. When the CCP decided to carry out a socialist transformation in animal husbandry, Ulanhu and Xinjiang's leader, Wang Enmao, had a disagreement. Wang Enmao contended for "relying on the impoverished herders (*pinku mumin*), while Ulanhu argued for "relying on the working herders (*laodong mumin*). The CCP CC decided that Ulanhu's suggestion was more appropriate. The CC replied: "Minority nationalities' pastoral areas have very different situations from arable areas. People in pastoral areas have relatively low political consciousness and educational levels. Such a slogan will make herdlords and herders with more livestock wrongly think that 'impoverishment is good'. Thus, livestock slaughter can happen."[30] The CCP has learned from the experience of Inner Moolia's disastrous democratic reform during the civil war.

[29] Zhu Sheng, "Sha'erqin cun menggu zuren dandu banshe dui minzu tuanjie he fazhan shengchan buli ma?" *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 27 May 1957

[30] "Zhongyang fu Xinjiang zizhiqu dangwei 'guanyu Xinjiang xumuye shehuizhuyi gaizao wenti' de baogao" (The CC's Reply to Xinjiang Autonomous Region Party Committee's Report 'About Xinjiang Animal Husbandry Socialist Transformation Questions), 25 July 1956, in LRSPP.

Although the CC's reply, assuming the national minority herders had lower "political consciousness and educational levels", was condescending and "great Han chauvinist", the Party indeed made less radical policies for minorities. Ulanhu used Inner Mongolia's special nationality situation to justify his more practical approach for years until 1958, when Mao decided to launch the Great Leap Forward.

The Hundred Flowers Campaign

In 1956, Mao and other CCP leaders were confident enough to create a more liberal environment for the intellectuals: the socialist transformation of ownership of the means of production had been completed; no major class struggles were needed; the intellectuals had gone through a series of thought reforms and were believed to have accepted the new ideology.[31] From 25 to 28 April, at a politburo conference, CCP leaders claimed, "Let a hundred flowers bloom; let a hundred schools of thought contend", and made it a policy towards art and academia. On May 2, Mao told non-Party people that China wanted intellectuals to express different opinions.

Yet it should be noted that Mao was clearly against "counter-revolutionary" opinions and the opinions he disliked: "Is it good to let (John) Dewey express his argument? It's not good. Is it good to let Hu Shi express his argument? Not good as well… Only the counter-revolutionary arguments were not allowed to be published. It is the people's democratic dictatorship. Is the publication of Hong Kong and Taiwan newspapers permitted? They should not be permitted. Not permitting has benefits."[32] How can people define what type of speech is counter-revolutionary and which is not? Mao did not say. The CCP could arbitrarily designate any ideas it disliked as "counter-revolutionary", as a well-known quote summarised: "There is freedom of speech, but I cannot guarantee freedom after speech."[33]

[31] Shen Zhihua, *Zhonghua renmin gonghe guo shi, di san juan, Sikao yu xuanze: Cong zhishi fenzi huiyi dao fanyoupai yundong (1956-1957)* (The History of the People's Republic of China, Volume 3. Reflections and Choices: The Consciousness of the Chinese Intellectuals and the Anti-Rightist Campaign (1956-1957)), Hongkong: The Chinese Univesity of Hong Kong, 2008, 213-218.

[32] *Mao Zedong zhuan*, Vol. 4, 1454-1455.

[33] Allegedly it is from Uganda's notorious dictator Idi Amin.

The 1956 Polish Poznań protests and the Hungarian Revolution served as warnings to the CCP, further prompting senior leaders to consider consolidating their regime. Roughly at the same time in China, from the second half of 1956 to early 1957, approximately ten thousand students and ten thousand workers participated in strikes. In many provinces, some peasants demanded to leave their cooperatives.[34] The severity and scale of the protests were perhaps inconsequential compared to the huge population. Yet, they indicated that some Chinese people also resented the ruling party, like the people in the two Eastern European countries. There were also numerous reports about severe and dangerous problems of the low-echelon cadres: corruption, implementing policies by force, enjoying luxury lifestyles but refusing to serve the people, and even beating and torturing the masses.[35]

Mao realised the seriousness, warning his Party on 15 November 1956, just a few days after the suppression of the Hungarian Revolution: “There were hundreds of thousands of cadres above the county level. The country’s destiny is in their hands. If they don’t (work) well, disengage from the masses, and do not struggle arduously, then the workers, peasants, and students would have reasons to disapprove of them. We must be vigilant, not fostering bureaucratic practices or forming an aristocracy out of touch with the people. The masses have reasons to remove those who are bureaucratic, do not solve the masses’ problems, scold the masses, suppress the masses and never correct the mistakes.” Mao’s solution was launching a rectification: “(We will) rectify three trends: firstly rectifying subjectivism, secondly rectifying sectarianism, thirdly rectifying bureaucratism.”[36] Mao had already considered starting a rectification within the Party after the 20th Congress of the CPSU. The protests in Poland and Hungary and the decadence of the CCP strengthened Mao’s determination to redress the Party’s problems completely. And, bolder than his comrades, Mao invited the non-Party people to criticise and help the CCP, encouraging “let a hundred flowers bloom; let a hundred schools of thought contend”. On 1 May 1957, *People’s Daily* published the directive of 27 April about the

[34] Ibid., 1575-1576.

[35] Shen Zhihua, *Sikao yu xuanze*, 468-469. “Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu chuli bagong bake wenti de zhishi” (The CCP CC’s Instructions About Dealing with the Strike Issue), 25 March 1957, in ZZWX (1949-1966), Vol. 25, 229-238.

[36] *Mao Zedong zhuan*, vol 4, 1576.

rectification campaign on the front page.[37] Encouraged by Mao and the new policy, criticisms of the CCP from non-party people and democratic parties poured out.

Research discussing national minorities during the Hundred Flowers Campaign and the following Anti-Rightist Campaign was limited.[38] Compared to the dissenting voices of intellectuals and members of the non-communist parties and groups, the national minority's discontent during the "Hundred Flowers Campaign" was much weaker. Relevant reports were also minimal. According to the government statistics, the Anti-Rightist Campaign labelled about 550,000 rightists in total; 5000 were national minorities, and 1700 of them were local nationalists.[39] The CCP remained cautious when targeting individuals of minority nationalities. The rightist ratio, 0.91%, was far lower than the minority population percentage in China, which was 6.06%, according to the 1953 census.[40] Though not in large numbers, from the point of view of the CCP, the critics from minority nationalities were questioning and challenging the Party's rule, even arguing for national independence or separation, which was intolerable.

At the beginning of the Hundred Flowers Campaign, criticising great Han chauvinism and expressing a pro-national minority stance was still a "political correctness". After all, Mao always talked about how the Han suppressed and exploited national minorities. The SEAC in Beijing followed this narrative as well. In early May, at a rectification mobilisation meeting, its deputy head Liu Chun (Han cadre) said both great Han chauvinism and local nationalism exist, and the former is the main danger in nationality relations.[41] The *People's Daily* also held the same position. Its editorial

[37] "Zhongguo gongchandang zhongyang weiyuanhui guanyu zhengfeng yundong de zhishi" (The CCP CC's Directive About the Rectification Campaign), *People's Daily*, 1 May 1957.

[38] Teiwes discussed the purge of national minority cadres and local nationalism. See Frederick C. Teiwes *Politics and Purges in China: Rectification and the Decline of Party Norms, 1950-1965*, 2nd edition, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1993, 290-293. Mongol scholar Rinqin examined the issues Mongol people raised in the spring of 1957, mainly about autonomous power, language, the protection of grassland and so on. Renqin, "1957 Nian Neimenggu Zhengfeng Yundong yu Minzu Wenti."

[39] "Fan difang minzu zhuyi douzheng jiqi kuodahua" (The Anti-local Nationalism Struggle and Its Expansion), available at: http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64107/65708/65722/4444737.html; "Fanyoupai douzheng jiqi kuodahua" (The Anti-rightist Struggle and Its Expansion), available at: http://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/64107/65708/65722/4444744.html.

[40] "Zhonghua renmin gongheguo guojia tongjiju guanyu quanguo renkou diaocha dengji jieguo de gongbao,"*People's Daily*, 1 November 1954

[41] Liu Chun concluded six problems in the nationality work: 1) The right of minority

office held a symposium and invited national minority cadres to discuss overcoming great Han chauvinism. Some national minority cadres said there were de facto inequalities between the Han and national minorities. Some argued the right of national minorities to self-governance had not been fully realised; the so-called autonomous prefectures only had minimal financial and military power, with power-limited minority cadres, and their superior organs often ignored their self-governing status. Some complained that the Han did not respect the customs and lifestyles of national minorities. For example, when exploring the coal reserves, a geological exploration team destroyed a mound in a Tu (also Monguor) autonomous county. Yet, the local Tu people believed the mound was sacred. In Hainan, some national minorities relied on the mountainous natural resources to sustain their livelihoods. When the government closed the mountains for afforestation, these people lost their source of livelihood, but the government failed to provide them with alternative methods of living promptly.[42] Some Han cadres and college teachers also raised issues of nationality work. A Han associate professor from Minzu College said that many Han people only saw the backwardness of the minorities without seeing their strengths, and wrongly believed the national minorities should always follow the Han. She also said the authorities did not pay attention to the research on the national minorities' antiques. There were more than 300,000 national minority antiques at Minzu College, but only three display rooms were available.[43]

nationalities to self-government has not been fully realised; the right to national equality has not been fully respected in the mixed areas and in the national diaspora; 2) insufficient care has been given to the nationalities in socialist transformation and socialist construction; 3) insufficient work has been done to build up the economies of the minority areas, and insufficient help has been given to the minority nationalities who have been leading a very difficult life; 4) the idea of "great Han chauvinism" and "local nationalism" still exists, and great Han chauvinism is the main danger in nationality relations; 5) the leading organs are detached from the national minority masses and the reality of the national minority areas; 6) there is insufficient publicity for nationality policies and work.

Liu Chun, "Minzu shiwu weiyuanhui: Lianxi minzu gongzuo jiancha lingdao zuofeng" (The State Ethnic Affairs Commission: Through Nationality Work to Reflect the Leadership Style), *People's Daily*, 9 May 1957.

[42] "Lai Beijing de minzu gongzuo ganbu zuotan: Fandui da hanzu zhuyi qingxiang" (Cadres Doing Nationality Works in Beijing: Opposing the Tendency of Great Han chauvinism), *People's Daily*, 13 May 1957.

[43] "Zaijing shaoshu minzu ganbu zai minwei zhaokai de zuotanhui shang jianyi" (The Minority Nationality Cadres in Beijing Gave Suggestions on the Meeting held by the SEAC), *People's Daily*, 11 May 1957.

Most Mongol complaints have been mentioned in the previous chapter. They are concerned about the Han-Mongol ratio, the decline of language, the treatment of elites and the loss of pastureland. The fear of assimilation was also shared by Mongols outside the IMAR. A Mongol Student, Yongzindalai, studying at Renmin University of China in Beijing, expressed his worry in a fierce and rebellious tone: "Now the Mongol people are apprehensive about whether or not they will exist in the future. Now, the assimilation is already quite a lot. It will be perilous after fifty years! The relationships between the Han and the Mongols are not equal but exploiting and being exploited. Inner Mongolia is rich in resources, but does not have the power of finance and the power of foreign trade. It is the Han's exploitation of the Mongols. The solution is to let Inner Mongolia gain independence or establish a federation. Inner Mongolia has vast land with good soil, but the peasants are hungry. The grains are 'unified' by the Han."[44] Another Mongol student, Suoenzheng, studying at Nankai University in Tianjin, not only criticised CCP's assimilation policy but also boldly argued for the unification between Inner and Outer Mongolia: "(Inner Mongolia) should be merged with Outer Mongolia, and Outer Mongolia should be the core. However, Outer Mongolia should not raise the question because it is already an independent country. It is inconvenient (for Outer Mongolia) to raise this question to China. It should be raised by our Inner Mongolians." He also wished Inner Mongolia could get rid of CCP control: "Inner Mongolia does not have its own Party. Now, the Party in Inner Mongolia is the same as the Chinese Communist Party and is guided by the CCP CC. Thus, it cannot make its own decisions and has to obey the CC in everything…It was a mistake for Inner Mongolia not to establish its own Party in the revolutionary struggle before the Liberation." About Ulanhu, the top CCP cadre in Inner Mongolia, this student claimed: "Ulanhu doesn't represent the interests of the Mongol nation. He is a traitor."[45]

Other minority students also sought greater independence and demonstrated a centrifugal tendency. In June 1957, some Chinese Korean students in Changchun

[44] *Gaodeng xuexiao youpai yanlun xuanbian* (Selected Remarks of the Rightists in Higher Education Institutions), Zhongguo renmin daxue weiyuanhui shehuizhuyi sixiang jiaoyu bangongshi: 1958, 703.

[45] "Wulixi Suoenzheng" (Department of Physics, Suoenzheng), in *Nankai daxue youpai fandong yanlun xuanji* (The Reactionary Speeches of the Rightists in Nankai University), Nankai daxue shehuizhuyi sixiang jiaoyu jiaoyanzu: 1957, 1-2.

City demanded the establishment of a Korean student union. They complained that Han students discriminated against them; their colleges did not have Korean books and journals, and did not consider their eating habits. Some pointed out that the translated Korean text was not grammatically correct, and were afraid they would lose their language, just like the Manchu and Hui people. Moreover, they expressed strong identification with North Korea. It was said they felt upset about a college's journal criticising North Korea's land reform mistakes. Some did not want to be Chinese citizens but rather North Korean citizens, as they shared the same traditions and had an affinity with them.[46] Not only minority students but also some Han students sharply criticised the CCP's national minority work. At Renmin University again, a student, Yue Wenbo, said: "Han cadres discriminate against the Tibetans. It is said that the land reform has caused a great uproar in Tibet. (The Party) wanted the Tibetans to oppose the Lamas and redistribute their land, but the peasants were unwilling to do so." Another Han student, Chen Guoxiong, wrote: "(National minority areas) are mostly dark corners. They need sunshine. But our cadres are not at a high level. Some of them don't have good thoughts."[47]

Young students' centrifugal tendencies and criticisms may not be a significant problem. However, grievances among national minority cadres may attract more attention to the CCP. In Yunnan, national minority cadres complained about the socialist transformation: "Cooperatives are suitable for the Han, not suitable for national minorities." "Cooperatives and the unified purchase and sale (*tong gou tong xiao*) damaged our national customs." "The leadership of the Party is the leadership of the Han." "All positions of autonomous prefectures must be held by the people of their own nationality, which will be considered nationalisation." They believed the Han cadres and the Party did not know the local conditions as well as they did. "Without the leadership of the Party Committee, we still can walk on our own as well." "The intervention of the Party Committee screwed up the business of our nationality."[48] In Xinjiang, a national minority cadre said: "(Although) national minority

[46] "Qingkuang jianbao (zhengfeng zhuanji) Huibian-1" (The collection of Brief Reports of the Situations (Rectification Collection)-1), 30 June 1957, Song Yongyi (ed), *Fanyou juemi wenijan: Qingkuang jianbao (zhengfeng zhuanji) Huibian*, volume 1, Mirrobooks: 2015, e-book.

[47] *Gaodeng xuexiao youpai yanlun xuanbian*, 703-704.

[48] "Minzu jubu liyi yingdang fucong guojia liyi" (Local Interests of One's Nationality Should Obey the Country's Interests), *People's Daily*, 15 December 1957.

leaders were appointed, they did not have junior national cadres. They are commanders without troops. They had to assign tasks to the junior Han cadres. Some Han cadres accepted tasks but did not implement them…Some cadres had great Han chauvinist thoughts…Thus, I suggested achieving a real nationalisation to change this situation."[49]

The Uyghurs and other national minorities in Xinjiang voiced the boldest and harshest criticisms. Some Uyghur cadres sought to establish their own republic, Uyghuristan, asserting the CCP did not follow the principle of Marxism-Leninism on the national question and believing they could build socialism independently. It was reported that the mayor of Urumqi, Abdurehim Said, claimed that Chinese people should be driven out of Urumqi and make it a purer Uyghur city.[50] The deputy chairman of the People's Committee of the Ili-Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture, Abdurehim Äysa, praised the American way of life and American support for Arab countries; he thought Arab people's life was better than Xinjiang's people, while there were little Americans in Arab countries, in contrast to Xinjiang which was full of Chinese.[51] Some college teachers argued that they used to have a sovereign state before the so-called liberation, while now they only had an autonomous region.[52] These opinions were reported by the Soviet Consul-General Dobashin in Urumqi in early 1958 after he had conversations with Chinese officials.

[49] "Zhonggong xinjiang weiwuer zizhiqu weiyuanhui yaoji gezu gejie minzhu renshi zuotan zhengfeng" (The Party Committee of the XUAR Invited Democratic People from All Nationalities and Sectors to the Rectification Symposium), *People's Daily*, 3 June 1957.

[50] "Memorandum on a Discussion held by the Consul-General of the USSR in Ürümchi, G.S. DOBASHIN, with the Secretary of the Party Committeee of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, Comrade LÜ JIANREN", January 7, 1958, Wilson Center Digital Archive, RGANI, fond 5, opis 49, delo 130, listy 49-53. Translated by David Brophy. https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/175898.

[51] "Memorandum of a Discussion held by USSR Consul-General in Ürümchi, G S. Dobashin, with First Secretary of the Party Committeee of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, Comrade Wang Enmao, and Chair of the People's Committee, Comrade S. Äzizov", January 17, 1958, Wilson Center Digital Archive, RGANI, fond 5, opis 49, delo 130, listy 54-56. Translated by David Brophy. https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/175894.

[52]"Memorandum on a Discussion held by the Consul-General of the USSR in Ürümchi, G.S. DOBASHIN, with the Secretary of the Party Committeee of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, Comrade LÜ JIANREN", Translated by David Brophy.

The Anti-Rightist Campaign

The anti-rightist campaign began in mid-June 1957. However, in the first three months, from June to September 1957, although the attacks of the rightists were violent, there was no sign that loving one's own nationality would be a problem. The attack on local nationalism and national minority dissidents began after Deng Xiaoping reported on the Rectification Movement on September 23, 1957.

In the early stage, most rightists were Han, and the very few national minority rightists were not accused of being "local nationalists". At least on the surface, the Party still wanted to demonstrate that it was the protector of minority nationalities and insisted on maintaining an affirmative stance. Insulting national minorities and damaging nationality relationships would be condemned. For example, one of the biggest rightists, Long Yun[53] (he was also an ethnic Yi) was criticised for his wrong argument on nationality issues, although it was far from his main "crime". Long Yun denied that Yunnan was a multinational province, saying all the nationalities had the same ancestor and used to be one nation before; classifying them into too many groups would create more trouble. He also said that as the national minorities had gained autonomy, they should not rely on others anymore, implying the government does not need to adopt too many affirmative actions. Then, a Peking University professor criticised Long Yun, saying that his opinion was similar to Chiang Kai-shek's; in his book *China's Destiny*, Chiang argued that other minorities were small clans within the Han. Other minority representatives from Yunnan also furiously expressed their anger against Long's denial of the existence of minority

[53] Long Yun used to be a powerful warlord, ruling Yunnan Province from 1928 to 1945. He had good connections with the CCP, which caused Chiang Kai-shek's suspect and dissatification. After 1949, he was given high positions in the new government, and was appointed as deputy chairman of the State Defense Committee of the PRC in 1954. In the Hundred Flowers Campaign in 1957, his criticism of the CCP made him one of the biggist rightists. Long Yun's main "reactionary" arguments included: 1) He criticised the Soviet Union, saying the cost of Korean War should not be paid by China alone, the debt owed to the Soviet Union was too high, and the Soviet army had dismantled many machines in Manchuria. 2) He said the Party's mistakes were rooted in the top leadership, and the Party-government dual track often created mistakes and confusion. 3) He said all the "movements" were just the CCP's purge. He used to complain about all the "revolutionary" movements like the land reform, the "three antis and five antis", the thought reform, the Korean War, the purge of anti-revolutionaries, the socialist transformation and so on. See Zhongguo guomindang geming weiyuanhui zhongyang zhengfeng bangongshi (ed), *Youpai fenzi Long Yun de fandong yanxing: Fan youpai zhuanji zhiyi* (The Rightist Long Yun's Reactionary Speeches and Behaviours: Anti-rightists Collection 1), from CARCD.

nationalities.[54] The Party wanted to attack political dissidents in every aspect. Long Yun's argument on nationality issues was much less important than his other criticisms of the Party, yet it provided the Party with excuses to mobilise others to denounce him.

A national minority rightsist's sins may also include damaging one's own interests. These rightists could be accused of being "a traitor of one's nation" or "selling out the interests of one's nationality". They would be furiously denounced by their own people, organised by the authority. This type of accusation differed significantly from those during the anti-local nationalism campaign. Reprimands like "selling out the interests of one's nationality" would be very rare after the CCP demanded opposing local nationalism because loving one's own nationality too much would be very sensitive. Strong love for one's own national group might mean being disloyal to their true motherland: the PRC. The minorities who were labelled as local nationalists were usually very eager to defend their nationalities' interests, demand genuine autonomy, and even express a tendency to get separated from China, no matter how weak it was. Their charge would be like "covering by the coat of loving one's nationality while committing anti-Party and anti-socialism conspiracy".

A Mongol Rong Xiang, who was labelled as a rightist in the early stage of the Anti-Rightist Campaign, was a similar case. As a talented sinicised Mongol who could write beautiful Chinese poetry, he was favoured by Han rulers during the Republic period. In 1933, he was recommended to serve as the head of Tumed Banner by Fu Zuoyi, a prominent military leader and the governor of Suiyuan province. Rong Xiang strived for Mongol banners' autonomy after Japan surrendered in 1945. Yet, the Nanjing government was reluctant to grant autonomous power to the non-Han regions, and at the same time, Mongol people's rights were being eroded further. Deeply disappointed by the KMT government, he pinned his hope to the CCP and helped to facilitate the peaceful regime change of Suiyuan Province in 1949.[55] In

[54] "Renmin daibiao jizhong pipan youpai fenzi" (People Representiatves Concentrately Criticised the Rightists), *People's Daily*, 29 June 1957. *Youpai fenzi Long Yun de fandong yanxing*, CARCD.

[55] Gao Ran, "Rong Xiang canyu minguo shiqi neimenggu difang zhengzhi Huodong yanjiu" (A research on Rong Xiang's Participation in Inner Mongolia's Local Political Activities in the Period of the Republic of China), Master Dissertation, Inner Mongolia Normal University, 2016.

1954, He was appointed as one of the deputy mayors of Hohhot. During the Anti-Rightist Campaign, he became one of the most prominent rightists in Inner Mongolia. Still, he was not a local nationalist. His Mongol fellows were mobilised to denounce him. They attacked not only Rong Xiang's anti-Party and anti-socialist speeches, but also his "anti-Mongol" speeches and activities. Rong Xiang would be condemned as a national traitor by his compatriots.

It should be added that a significant part of the denunciations of national minority rightists came from their own people. The CCP often preferred to let the national minorities struggle against the "reactionaries", "landlords", "counter-revolutionaries", or "rightists" of their own national group. At the same time, Han people were expected to refrain from attacking minorities in order not to hurt the unity of nationalities. If national minority activists criticised their people first, Han activists could participate later. When the campaign became "extremely leftist", this tradition may not be followed. In the Anti-Rightist Campaign, mostly, it was the minority people who were mobilised as the vanguard to fight the rightists of their nationalities.

According to an article criticising him in *Inner Mongolia Daily* in mid-June 1957, Rong Xiang stated that the PRC still lacked a well-developed personnel system after eight years of rule, whereas the Qing Empire had established numerous detailed regulations upon coming to power. A discontented Mongol reader, Nasanbat, argued that Rong Xiang's praise of the Qing Dynasty's "national oppression system" weakened the Mongols in all aspects, including political, economic, cultural, population and so on.[56] Rong Xiang was also accused of undermining the solidarity of Mongols, as it was said that he asserted Eastern Mongol cadres often bullied Western Mongols and that the Eastern Mongol cadres wanted to mess with him.[57] His lambast of Mongol nationalism made him guilty as well. It was reported he said, "(although we) criticised great Han nationalism, in fact, parochial nationalism is worse, bullying people so badly. The Han cadres are educated, and they are somewhat reasonable. The parochial nationalists are not reasonable at all. Even

[56] Nasenbatu, "Rongxiang de fayan shi yike ducao" (Rong Xiang's Speech Is a Poisonous Weed), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 17 June 1957.

[57] "Yanli bochi youpai fenzi fan shehuizhuyi miulun" (Harshly Rebutting the Rightists' Anti-Socialist Absurd Arguments), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 6 July 1957. Wang Qingkai, "Xianghua yangai xia de ducao" (The Poisonous Weeds Covered by Fragrant Followers), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 6 July 1957.

though they are reasoning, they are still very rude and unreasonable."[58] Such a speech was thought to damage the unity of nationalities. It is difficult to know whether it was Rong Xiang's original words or were exaggerated by his critics. Rong Xiang did criticise Mongol nationalism during the Hundred Flowers Campaign and the fight between Eastern and Western Mongols, but with a much milder tone.[59]

On 17 July 1957, several Mongol officials were specially invited to criticise Rong Xiang at the enlarged Political Consultative Conference of the IMAR. Urtu, the director of the IMAR Civil Affairs Department, pointed out that Rong Xiang used to pander to Chiang Kai-shek's assimilation policy, claiming the Mongols and the Han had a common origin. The outraged Mongol called Rong Xiang "scum of the Mongol nation and a running dog of Chiang Kai-shek". Another critic stated that Rong Xiang never defended the interests of the Mongols; furthermore, he attempted to prove that the Mongols and the Han were of the same origin and spoke a similar language. The man concluded Rong Xiang wanted to "sell out the Mongol nation and destroy the Mongol nation. Also, the critics found out that Rong Xiang used to praise the Kangxi Emperor of the Qing Dynasty highly. They asserted that the Qing Dynasty's lackeyman never mentioned the Kangxi Emperor's atrocities of massacring Mongols.[60]

More Mongol activists joined the struggle and exposed additional "anti-Mongol" crimes committed by Rong Xiang. Several days later, an article by a Mongol in *Inner Mongolia Daily* said Rong Xiang offered a Kangxi Emperor's sword to Chiang Kai-shek. However, the emperor used the sword on the frontline during his war against Galdan Khan, whom the author thought was a Mongol national hero resisting national oppression. The outraged Mongol decried that Rong Xiang was a Mongol traitor, having ingratiated himself with Chiang Kai-shek, an oppressor of Mongols, by

[58] Wang Qingkai, "Xianghua yangai xia de ducao."

[59] Rong Xiang criticised the national minority cadres: "Personally, I felt that nationalist sentiment is relatively strong in work units (*danwei*) led by (minority) nationality cadres." He also criticised Han cadres mildly: "The work units led by Han cadres don't pay much attention to nationality issues". About the estrangement of Eastern and Western Mongols, he said: "There is still a divide between the East and the West in individual work." From the previous report, it could be seen that these opinions are gentle and not offensive. "Fei dang renshi Jixu mingfang" (Non-Party People Continued to Express Opinions), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 6 June 1957.

[60] "Rong Xiang de fandong mianmu kaishi dabaolu" (Rong Xiang's Reactionary Face Began to Be Revealed", *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 19 July 1957.

offering him the sword of the Kangxi Emperor, a notorious butcher of Mongols.[61] A Tumed Mongol cadre, Yun Xusheng, reported that Rong Xiang used to ask Chiang Kai-shek to reclaim Outer Mongolia, attempting to bring the socialist MPR back to the bloody rule.[62] Rong Xiang used to praise Altan Khan, a Tumed Mongol leader in the 16th century who built the city Hohhot, reached a peace agreement with China's Ming Dynasty and paid tribute to China. Altan Khan's acceptance of China's tributary system is praised today by the Chinese; they say the Khan enhanced the Mongol-Han people's friendship, facilitated economic and cultural communication, and even promoted China's "unification". However, the Mongols in the 1950s thought that Altan Khan surrendered to China and lost his independence. Rong Xiang's Mongol fellows criticised his praise of Altan Khan as capitulationism and a disregard for Mongol national interests.[63] Impacted by this trend, Han activists also began to criticise Rong Xiang for betraying the Mongols. One of Rong Xiang's Han acquaintances claimed that Rong Xiang was chosen as the head of Tumed Banner by the KMT government because of his thorough sinicisation, which was why he always turned his back on the Mongol nation.[64]

Qingdao Symposium and Local Nationalism

After dealing with most "anti-Party" rightists, the CCP noticed the real disturbing voices from national minority people: the disobedience of the Party's rule and independent tendency. The Party was determined to suppress it. Initially, the CCP chose a milder method to solve the national minority's problem, which was to hold a symposium to persuade the minority cadres to change their mind. The relentless struggle against the rightists had begun in June 1957, with harsh public denunciation, yet it had not happened to "local nationalists" yet. The Party leaders might have wanted to persuade the national minorities to change their minds.

[61] "Jielu Rong Xiang choushi de yiye" (Revealing an Page of Rong Xiang's Ugly History), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 20 July 1957.
[62] Yun Xusheng, "Jiechuan Rong Xiang de chou'e dixi" (Debunking Rong Xiang's Ugly Background), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 20 July 1957.
[63] "Rong Xiang yinggai xixin gemian laoshi jiaodai" (Rong Xiang Should Repent Sincerely and Confess his Mistakes Honestly), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 6 August 1957.
[64] Guo Lingshu, "Rong Xiang de sixiang genyuan zainali" (Where is the Root of Rong Xiang's Thinking), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 20 July 1957.

From 20 July to 6 August 1957, a symposium on the nationality work was held in Qingdao. Zhou Enlai attended the symposium and delivered a speech of almost 15 thousand words. Zhou repeated the Party's cliché as usual: "We oppose two types of nationalism. That is, oppose both great power chauvinism (in China, mainly opposing great Han chauvinism) and local nationalism. We should especially pay attention to opposing great Han chauvinism." Nevertheless, the Party's attention was shifting to local nationalism. The mistakes of local nationalism were hardly mentioned before and always actively dismissed by the Party's top leaders like Mao and Zhou. However, this time, Zhou Enlai's speech notably increased the proportion of criticising local nationalism. He warned of the separatist tendency brought by local nationalism. Zhou repeatedly emphasised that only the unity of all nationalities would bring prosperity, while imperialists would take advantage of national independence. As there was a strong voice demanding a Soviet-style republic rather than China's autonomous region system, even asking for the constitutional right of self-determination, Zhou replied that, due to China and the Soviet Union having different historical and demographic situations, the Soviet system was unsuitable for China. Zhou refuted the complaint that the minority nationalities were being assimilated. He took the Manchu people as an example, who lost their native Manchu language but adopted Chinese. "Such an assimilation per se has progressive meaning. Now, the Manchu and the Han have the same language, which makes cooperation easier. Do Manchu compatriots demand to restore the Manchu language? I don't think so. Isn't it troublesome for 3 or 4 million people to learn Manchu from the beginning?" [65] (Nevertheless, Zhou Enlai did not expect a considerable number of the Manchus would begin to pick up their lost language in the 1980s and 1990s.[66])

Responding to Zhou's position, Ulanhu's speech the next day barely criticised the Han and the great Han chauvinism. Instead, he emphasised the importance of national unity, praised the Han people's contributions to the region inhabited by national minorities, criticised the nationalism of national minority cadres, and urged national minorities to warmly welcome Han cadres and their migrations. About the

[65] Zhou Enlai, "Guanyu woguo minzu zhengce de jige wenti" (Several Issues about Our Country's Nationality Policies), 4 August 1957, in Zhou Enlai tongyi zhanxian wenxuan, 362-388.

[66] Minglang Zhou, *Multilingualism in China: The Politics of Writing Reforms for Minority Languages 1949-2002*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2003, 46.

grudge toward Han cadres and people, Ulanhu said: “Although some Han cadres had drawbacks and mistakes of their thoughts and behaviours, which should be overcome and corrected, (we) should not exaggerate their drawbacks and mistakes.” “(We) should not regard the very few (Han) immigrants’ law-breaking behaviours as the entire Han nationality’s problem.” In the end, Ulanhu seriously reminded national minority people: “We implemented the Regional Ethnic Autonomy, the exercise of the right to autonomy and to achieve nationalisation for one reason only: it is undertaking socialist transformation and socialist construction and achieving communism in the future. Thus, it must be clear that after achieving the Regional Ethnic Autonomy and socialist transformation, the overriding central task in all the autonomous areas is socialist construction.”[67]

In general, the tone of Qingdao Symposium was to reconcile national conflicts rather than radicalise them. The criticism of local nationalism was more potent than before, but still mild compared to the hysterical condemnation against other rightists simultaneously. Basically, Zhou tried to maintain a harmonious national relationship and sought a balance between opposing great Han chauvinism and opposing local nationalism. Ulanhu followed this approach. As a national minority cadre, Ulanhu was expected to suppress his Mongol people’s and all the national minority people’s strong national sentiments.

I have found only very few relevant materials about what the national minority cadres said at this symposium. According to the materials, the symposium was not harmonious because minority cadres insisted on voicing their dissents and arguing with Zhou. The fierce Anti-Rightist Campaign did not stop them from speaking out. One document said a cadre named Ishaqov, a deputy chairman of the People’s Committee of the XUAR, at this symposium, wanted a Uyghur republic; in another document, a Chinese official, Xin Lanting, even claimed Ishaqov was demanding the separation of the XUAR from the PRC.[68] The two accusations were different, as a

[67] Wulanfu, “Qingdao minzu gongzuo zuotanhui zongjie” (The Summary of the Nationality Work Symposium in Qingdao), 5 August 1957, *Wulanfu Wenxuan*, 1999, vol 1, 474-483.

[68] “Memorandum on a Discussion held by the Consul-General of the USSR in Ürümchi, G.S. DOBASHIN, with Deputy Chairman of the People’s Committee of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, Comrade XIN LANTING”, January 12, 1958, Wilson Center Digital Archive, RGANI, fond 5, opis 49, delo 130, listy 57-58. Translated by David Brophy. https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/175895.

republic in the Soviet system did not mean separation, but merely highly autonomous. Yet, no doubt, Ishaqov opposed the current autonomous system in China. Zhou Enlai argued that a national republic is unrealistic; if so, Xinjiang would have had 13 republics, given the presence of 13 nationalities.[69] Nevertheless, Xinjiang's representatives countered Zhou's opinion, arguing that in Soviet Kazakhstan, there were also several nationalities, but the Soviet Union only created a Kazakh republic.[70] It was said that Xinjiang's representatives were dissatisfied with the Qingdao meeting and refused to change their minds. Thus, according to Zakirov, the chief of the Education Department of XUAR, the CCP CC was obliged to discuss the question of local nationalism in Xinjiang.[71] It was unclear whether representatives from other nationalities had expressed their dissatisfaction. Yet, it was highly possible that the CCP senior leaders were disappointed with the result of the Qingdao Symposium, which could not dissuade national minority cadres from asking for more power. Thus, the Party decided to launch an anti-local nationalism campaign.

On 23 September 1957, Deng Xiaoping, the head of the Anti-Rightist Leading Team, made a comprehensive report on the Rectification Movement.[72] It announced the war against local nationalism. Deng Xiaoping said there should be a "socialist education"[73] and "appropriate anti-rightist struggles" in those national minority areas

[69] Zhou Enlai, "Guanyu woguo minzu zhengce de jige wenti," 370.

[70] "M. Zimianin to the Department of the Central Committee of the CPSU and to Comrade Iu. V. Andropov", August 18, 1958, Wilson Center Digital Archive, RGANI, fond 5, opis 49, delo 130, listy 164-176. Translated by David Brophy. https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/175901.

[71] Ibid.

[72] Deng's report was published on the *People's Daily*, 19 October 1957, and the next day it was also published on other Party newspapers. According to Shen Zhihua, the published version was not complete. A significant amount of content was removed from the original version. See Shen Zhihua, *Sikao yu xuanze*, 648. I'm unable to obtain the original version and must rely on the published *People's Daily* version.
In the report, Deng examined the anti-rightist results among the bourgeoisie and intellectuals, in villages, among the working class, among national minorities, among the army, and among the Party and Youth League. He also gave further instructions for conducting anti-rightist struggles.

[73] "Socialist education" came from Mao Zedong's "Yijiuwuqinian Xiaji de Xingshi"(The Situation of the Summer of 1957), July 1957, see Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (ed), *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong Wengao*, Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1992, Vol. 6, 543-555. Mao claimed that all social classes and strata should have a rectification and socialist education.

and among the minority population, where “the socialist transformation of the ownership of means of production has been completed”.[74] It meant that for those areas where “socialist transformation” had not been done, there would not be anti-rightist campaigns, like Tibet. But for Inner Mongolia, the first autonomous region under the communist regime, which had already finished the land reform and all types of “socialist transformation”, fierce anti-rightist struggles were inevitable. According to Deng, in the minority areas, besides the same content as in the Han areas, the campaign should emphasise opposing the tendency of (local) nationalism. Deng demanded, “As regards those extremely bad elements who openly instigate national divisions, they should be resolutely exposed and repudiated.” Deng warned of the danger of national division, making opposing local nationalism a priority. Although Deng mentioned that it was still essential to oppose “great Han chauvinism”, it was no longer the focus.

On 15 October 1957, the CCP CC released the document “The directive of the CCP CC about rectification and socialist education among minority nationalities”, requiring national minorities to struggle against the local nationalists. It criticised the local nationalists in 3 aspects. Regarding the relationships of nationalities, they were “conservative and xenophobic, being negative or even opposing the solidarity and mutual help of all nationalities”. Regarding the Regional Ethnic Autonomy, they “ignored the historical development and realistic conditions, demanded to enlarge the autonomous region unprincipledly and to improve the administrative status of the autonomous area. Some disrespected the unified leadership of the state. There was even severe secessionist tendency, attempting to split the great family of the motherland. On the aspect of Party building, they had a tendency that contradicts the communist principle of unity and solidarity.[75] This document asserted the “anti-Party activists (*fan dang fen zi*) among the national minorities” were always “under the flag of nationalism and with the image of protecting national interests”, but they used

[74] Deng Xiaoping, “Guanyu zhengfeng yundong de baogao” (Report on the Rectification Campaign), 23 September 1957, published on 19 October 1957, *People’s Daily*. The English translation of this paragraph comes from Deng Xiaoping, “On the Minority Nationalities”,*Chinese Law &Government*, 1981, 14:4, 67-69.

[75] “Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu zai shaoshu minzu zhong jinxing zhengfeng he shehuizhuyi jiaoyu de zhishi” (The Directive of the CCP CC about Rectification and Socialist Education Mmong the Minority Nationalities), 15 October 1957, in ZZWX (1949-1966), Vol. 26, 268-278.

nationalism as a disguise to conduct anti-Party and anti-socialist activities, disrupt national solidarity and undermine the unification of the motherland.[76]

It was a serious accusation, signalling that the national minorities' nationalism would no longer be tolerated. Before the Anti-Rightist Campaign, the CCP constantly attacked great Han chauvinism, a nice gesture to reassure the national minorities. Although, in theory, the so-called "local nationalism" also needed to be opposed, it was not the Party's primary concern. The CCP was always eager to demonstrate its benignity to reduce the national minorities' doubt and hatred towards the successive Han regimes. However, through the Hundred Flowers Campaign and the Rectification, the CCP felt the intense national sentiment of the national minorities was a threat, especially the tendency of "secessionism", which may trigger the separation and independence of the minority land.

The Anti-Local Nationalism Campaign in the IMAR

The anti-local nationalism campaign in the IMAR began a few days before the release of the directive from the CCP CC, which required socialist education among national minorities. On October 9, a lengthy article against local nationalism was published on the front page of *Inner Mongolia Daily*. With fierce and hateful language, it accused a Mongol Sedorji (pinyin: Sedao'erji), a CCP member and a staff member at *Inner Mongolia Daily*, of "conspicuously splitting Inner Mongolia".

The credibility of the accusations in anti-rightist propaganda was somewhat questionable. There was not much trustworthy evidence proving that the rightists indeed expressed their so-called rightist arguments. Some allegations were based on written words, which were more reliable, but they were usually interpreted maliciously. Often, the opinions of rightists were reported by their colleagues, even friends and families, with aggressive words portraying the rightists as arrogant, vicious, hateful, unpleasant conspirators with moral shortcomings. It wasn't easy to know whether these reports were honest or not. Besides, numerous cases have shown that some "rightist arguments" are exaggerated on purpose and even fabricated. Even if a rightist did express "anti-Party" or "counter-revolutionary" points

[76] Ibid., 269.

of view, they could be lured by others to reach the “rightist quota”. Yet, although it may not be true, this type of article still conveyed clear messages: what kind of speech would be considered unacceptable and which opinions the CCP would not tolerate. Thus, they are still worth examining.

Inner Mongolia Daily’s article listed five main crimes of Sedorji. First, he “viciously attacked the Party’s leadership, opposed the REAS, and attempted to split Inner Mongolia”. He resented that the Mongols were outnumbered by the Han, who were controlling everything on the Mongolian land, while the Mongols were not the real masters of their own land. Thus, he desired a pure Mongolian region and argued that Inner Mongolia should abandon the Sinicised parts, such as Tumed Banner, Hohhot, and Baotou. It was said he hoped a line could be drawn from Argun Banner to Alxa Banner, and all the Mongols should migrate north of the line and elect their own leaders. He would volunteer to persuade other Mongols to move to the new area. It was also said he attacked the Party’s leadership, claiming the Party had only opposed local nationalism in the past, but not great Han chauvinism. Second, Sedorji “opposed socialist transformation and socialist construction, attempting to drag the Mongol nation backwards”. He was accused of lamenting despondently that “the destiny of the Mongol nation had been doomed” ten years ago. In 1947, the Eastern Mongolians’ dream of achieving true self-governing failed, while the IMAR, under the leadership of the CCP, became the only government of the Inner Mongolian people. He denied the achievements of the 10-year construction and refused to write articles to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the IMAR. Sedorji opposed Baotou’s steel industry. He said Mongol cadres working there would drive Mongols out and make room for the Han. He also said Mongol labourers in the factories would be sinicised. He also hated railways, claiming that the railway from Jining (in Ulanchab) to Erenhot damaged the pastureland and opened the door for the Han, who would go to the pasture area and take livestock and grains from the Mongols. Thirdly, Sedorji was accused of hating Han cadres and sowing discord among nationalities. He said Han cadres were even worse than Han traders in Mongolia (*lü meng shang*) in the past, who often used unequal exchange to exploit the Mongols. But at least those traders learnt Mongolian, while Han cadres did not. He hated the Chinese language, claiming he would never teach his son any Chinese characters or sentences. Fourth, it was said that Sedorji “damaged the unity of Mongol cadres and blasphemed senior

Mongol cadres." He disliked the sinicised Mongols, who did not speak Mongolian. He thought the cadres who connected with Han people well were not like the Mongols and claimed that the higher position these cadres held, the less attention they paid to their own nationality's benefits.[77] Fifth, he was accused of using his position against the Party. He worked at *Inner Mongolia Daily*, so he always demanded to publish reports that "stirred up national hatred" and "attacked the Party's policy", and encouraged other journalists to write more articles about Mongols' problems. He also used the chance of the Hundred Flowers Campaign to incite other people's dissatisfaction with the Party. After the vitriolic accusations, the article demanded that Sedorji "completely confess all the crimes against the Party". As a rightist, Sedorji received forced labour as punishment. His rightist label was removed in 1961.[78]

On 27 October 1957, another Mongol Qindman was publicly condemned.[79] He was a member of the CCP and a journalist for the *People's Daily*, working at the *People's Daily* Inner Mongolian journalist office. He said he used to be a sincere follower of the CCP, standing firmly on the issue of the *Sufan* Movement (the purge of counter-revolutionaries) and constantly denouncing the "counter-revolutionaries" fiercely. Yet, it seemed that his mind changed later. He told his colleague that his previous stance on the purge of counter-revolutionaries was mindless.[80] One of his articles, "The Voice of National Minorities", was accused of "slandering the Party's national minority policy" because he called it a policy of assimilation.[81] The journalist

[77] "Youpai fenzi sedao'erji yinmou fenlie Neimenggu"(The Rightist Sedorji is Splitting Inner Mongolia Conspicuously), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 9 October 1957.

[78] "Sedaoerji nianpu jianbian" (A Short Chronicle of Sedorji), in Aoqi (ed) *Sedaoerji wenji* (The Works of Sedorji), Hohhot: Neimenggu renmin chubanshe, 2001, 384.

[79] "Youpai fenzi qindamuni de zui'e huodong bei jielu" (The Rightist Qindamuni's Criminal Activities Were Disclosed), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 27 October 1957.

[80] Liu Heng, "Zhiyin wo dui dang shuole laoshihua: Woshi zenyang chengle 'wangu youpai de" (Only Because I Told the Truth to the Party: How did I become a Die-hard Rightist), Available at: https://www.marxists.org/chinese/reference-books/dissident-1956-1957/70.htm.

[81] I failed to find the original article. It was not published in *People's Daily* and *Inner Mongolia Daily*, possibly only circulated internally among Party cadres. However, I was able to find a Japanese translation, "Shōsū minzoku no sakebi" (The Cries of National Minorities), translated by Hiroko Tsuchida and annotated by Jihei Abe, published in *Nihon to Mongoru* (Japan and Mongolia), vol. 51, no. 1, September 2016, 106-112. This article has been quoted in the previous chapter.

highlighted several issues in this article, reflecting the Mongols' frustration and anger.

The first thing he worried about was the loss of language. Between 70% and 80% of Mongol children in Hohhot could not speak Mongolian. A Mongol cadre travelling from Darhan Muminggan United Banner (Ulanchab League) to Hohhot did not hear a single Mongolian sentence in 22 days. Mongols who didn't speak Chinese were seriously discriminated against, and only those who studied Chinese well were regarded as progressive. Many Mongols demonstrated their progressiveness by abandoning their mother tongue. Qindman worried that Mongolian had lost its function as a working language. And he said that because the Mongols had experienced a period of assimilation in their history, they were very sensitive about being assimilated. Besides, the journalist also reported other problems in his article: the Mongol intellectuals were not treated well; the Mongolian grassland was turned into cropland; although the Party demanded opposing great Han chauvinism, few Han cadres were punished for chauvinism, while many minority cadres were labelled as "local nationalists".[82] This article became his main "criminal evidence". The journalist was accused of stating that during the rule of reactionaries, it took 80 years to assimilate Tumed Banner, whereas the CCP took just 10 years to assimilate Hohhot; the so-called autonomy exists in name only, and whether the Mongols will truly become the masters is in question. Qindman even said to others, "The work of Inner Mongolia cannot be conducted well unless Ulanhu is dead," and that Mongol senior cadres were traitors to their nation.[83]

However, according to the journalist, his Han superior, Lin Mo, the head of the *People's Daily* Inner Mongolia office, was the person primarily responsible for "The Voice of National Minorities", but Lin Mo was not punished for this trouble-causing article at all. Qindman's *People's Daily* colleague Liu Heng, another rightist, said at that time, national minorities could not criticise great Han chauvinism. If they did, they would be labelled as "local nationalists" and attacked.[84] It was possible that a

[82] Ibid., 110.

[83] "Neimenggu zizhiqu youxie mengzu ganbu zai zhengfeng zhong guanyu minzu wenti de fanying," in Song Yongyi (ed), *Fanyou juemi* wenijan,Vol.3, e-book.

[84] Liu Heng, "Zhiyin wo dui dang shuole laoshihu." Liu Heng, "Zhongguo diyi dabao de youpai qun" (The Rightist Group of the Number One Newspaper of China), Available at: https://www.chinesepen.org/blog/archives/176415. Liu Heng mentioned that Qindman was

minority's dissatisfaction with the Party's nationality policy sounded harsher and more suspicious, as their loyalty to the CCP and China was often questioned.

Qindman's worry about the assimilation of the Mongols was seriously denounced. Because the assimilation of national minorities was an argument always used by the CCP to attack the KMT and prove the CCP supported the minorities, such a criticism of the CCP was considered a significant offence. Thus, he was denounced for "slandering the Party's policy as assimilation". *Inner Mongolia Daily*'s article said he called senior Mongol cadres "national traitors", "clowns" and "toadying to superiors", saying they had lost national esteem and were worse than the Han. In addition, Qindman reportedly claimed that Prince De was better than the CCP because Prince De was not in favour of cultivating the pastureland when he was in power, whereas the CCP was, which damaged the Mongol traditional pastoral lifestyle and led to assimilation.[85]

Like Sedorji, Qindman was also accused of splitting Inner Mongolia. He also wanted a "pure Mongol region", suggested "draw a line from Argun Banner to Alxa Banner", and argued, "all the Mongols should live north of the line". He also volunteered to persuade Mongol compatriots to migrate to the new pure Mongol region.[86] Interestingly, the two articles used the exact charges and even the same details. These charges may not be true or may be exaggerated on purpose. Yet, it was very possible that the Mongols did not want to mix with the Han, as they feared being

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labelled as "parochial nationalist" and rightist due to an article criticising great Han chauvinism. She didn't mention the name of the article, but it was possible "The Voice of National Minorities". This article was finished by the Mongol journalist and his superior, Lin Mo, together, and Lin Mo was the first author. Nevertheless, Lin Mo refused to take the responsibility, and he was a Han. In the end, Lin avoided the trouble, but Qindman became a rightist. According to Liu Heng, "national minorities could not criticise great Han chauvinism; when you did, they said you were a parochial nationalist".

The details were somewhat different in the interview with Qindman, conducted by Rinqin. Qindman attended the propaganda working conference of the Inner Mongolia Party Committee. Many problems were reported at the conference. After the conference, Lin Mo required his colleagues to write something about the mistakes and shortcomings of the nationality policy. As Lin Mo was the head of the People's Daily Inner Mongolia office, Qindman followed his requirement and summarised the opinions and suggestions raised by minority representatives at the conference. Lin Mo decided that the title of the article was "The Voice of National Minorities;" Renqin, "1957 Nian Neimenggu Zhengfeng Yundong yu Minzu Wenti," 3.

[85] "Youpai fenzi qindamuni de zui'e huodong bei jielu," *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 27 October 1957.

[86] Ibid.

assimilated. A similar opinion appeared in the “Rectification News” (*zhengfeng dongtai*) document. A Mongol cadre, Hada, said: “I think the way of solving the historical conflicts of the Mongol nation is to divide the autonomous region into two parts: the Han region and the Mongol region. Compress the mixed region. Develop new cities with pure Mongol nation features as economic-cultural centres in pasture regions.”[87] The opinion of a pure Mongol region may be popular among the Mongol intellectuals. The population ratio of 7:1 between the Han and the Mongols was always a source of worry for the Mongols. Possibly, Mongol intellectuals believed they could resist assimilation by rejecting mixing with the Han people.

The anti-local nationalism movement did not stop in 1957, but continued into 1958. This time, another Mongol intellectual, Tubxin, was publicly denounced. Tubxin was a highly educated Mongol youth. Born in 1925, he went to Japan and studied at Tokyo Imperial University (now Tokyo University) in 1943. In 1945, he returned to Eastern Mongolia and participated in the national liberation movement, becoming a member of the Inner Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party. He also embraced Marxism and joined the CCP in 1946. From 1949 to 1957, he was the deputy head of the Ulanchab League. In 1947, he was appointed director of Inner Mongolia People’s Press.

As the CCP often made people struggle against their own people, one article criticising Tubxin came from his Eastern Mongolian comrade Tegus, who also used to be a member of the IMPRP. This article summarised four “crimes” of Tubxin. First, he “viciously attacked the Party’s national, regional autonomy policy”. It was said Tubxin believed this policy “only solved the Han people’s problem but did not solve the Mongols’ problem”. Like other “rightist” Mongols, Tubxin also believed there were too many Han cadres in the IMAR and that the Mongols did not have much real power. He was accused of trying to “deprive the political rights of Han people” and “replace the dictatorship of the proletariat with the dictatorship of the nation”. Second, he was “against national unity”. His colleague claimed that Tubxin believed the Han culture suppressed the development of the Mongol culture, “In the past, the national minorities had protection (against assimilation). However, after the

[87] “Neimenggu zizhiqu youxie mengzu ganbu zai zhengfeng zhong guanyu minzu wenti de fanying,” Ebook.

liberation, such protection was removed due to the enhancement of national unity. So, it led to sinicisation." Third, Tubxin was "against socialism, that is, the progress of the Mongol nationality." He was said to have said, "The more progressive it is, the less national it will be. Socialism is more progressive; at that time, the Mongol nationality will be completely sinicised." Fourth, Tubxin was against the Party's leadership, as he said, "the great Han chauvinists were the majority of the Party."[88]

Tubxin's "rightist evidence" was a short talk at a Party meeting in May 1957. Although the details of his speech were unknown, Tubxin said he expressed his worries about the Mongols not having real power in the government and the loss of the Mongolian language. Ulanhu also attended the meeting. He was very touched by Tubxin's concerns and responded to them positively. Ulanhu "stood up and spoke excitedly for more than one hour" and claimed he had struggled against great Han chauvinism in the past and would continue struggling against it in the future. Ulanhu's attitude greatly inspired all the Mongols in the room. As Tubxin's speech was at the Party's meeting and in front of the highest leader of the IMAR (and was even resonated by Ulanhu), people thought it had nothing wrong. Even after the anti-rightist campaign began in June 1957, his speech was still considered normal. Only after the CCP decided to launch an anti-local nationalism campaign in September 1947 did Tubxin become the target.[89] He was expelled from the CCP in February 1958 and lost his job as director of the publishing house. The Party decided "to publicise his anti-Party and anti-socialist arguments, to further deeply criticise bourgeois local nationalist tendencies."[90] Then, people read the vehement criticism in the newspaper. It was said that Ulanhu defended Tubxin and did not agree to expel him from the CCP.[91] However, his objection did not work.

[88] Tegusi, "Tebuxin wei shui jiaoxiao" (Who Is Tubxin Clamouring for?), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 19 May 1958.

[89] Tebuxin and Bai Yun, *Minzu lishi de Jianzheng*, 161-163.

[90] "Zhonggong neimenggu zizhiqu diyijie daibiao dahui di'erci huiyi Guanyu kaichu zichanjieji defang minzuzhuyi fenzi Tebuxin dangji de jueyi (The Resolution of 2nd Session of the 1st IMAR CCP Congress about Expelling the Bourgeois Local Nationalist Tubxin from the Party), February 1958, in Song Yongyi (ed), *Qianming Zhongguo Youpai de Chuli Jielun he Geren Dang'an* (The punishment conclusions and individual profiles of thousand Chinese rightists), Mirrorbooks, 2015, ebook.

[91] Tebuxin and Bai Yun, *Minzu lishi de Jianzheng,* 165.

Tubxin was sent to the countryside to receive a “transform” (*gai zao*, usually forced labour). During the worst period, he and other rightists got up at four in the morning, had breakfast at five and began hard labour at six; after finishing their work and returning to the accommodation, it was usually eight in the evening.[92] In 1960, Tubxin was allowed to work as a teacher at Inner Mongolia Art School. In 1961, he received the treatment “*zhai mao*,” which literally meant “removing the (rightist) hat,” but it was neither rehabilitation nor an apology. “Removing the rightist hat” did not mean their rightist label was a mistake. It just implied these “rightists” had transformed themselves through working, so the Party treated them as usual. Tubxin was then arranged to work at Inner Mongolia University. But in 1965, he was targeted again during a political movement in the IMAR criticising national separatism.[93]

Chapter Summary

Before concluding, I would like to examine a broader political context: From 1957 to 1958, triggered by the Anti-Rightist Campaign, several major provincial political purges occurred. The victims were high cadres of the CCP in provinces. Probably inspired by Deng Xiaoping’s criticism of localism in his Report on the Rectification Campaign, Guangdong[94](including Hainan)[95], Fujian, Guangxi, and other provinces launched anti-localism struggles,[96] which continued even after the launch of the

[92] Ibid., 172.

[93] Hao Weimin, “Xuezhang yiyou, weiren Shibiao: He Tebuxin jiaoshou 80 shouchen” (An Academic Predecessor, Good friend, and Model Teacher), in Qimudedao’erji et al (eds), *Menggushi Yanjiu* (The study of Mongolian History), issue 8, Hohhot: Neimenggu daxue chubanshe, 2005, 3.

[94] There are three major anti-localism campaigns in Guangdong: the first was from 1951 to 1952, the second from 1957 to 1958, and the third from 1967 to 1968. The 1957 one was triggered by the nationwide anti-rightist campaign.

[95] Hainan was not a province until 1988. It was called “Hainan Administrative Region Office” and belonged to Guangdong Province in the 1950s. Hainan’s purge created a “localism anti-Party group”.

[96] Not all these provincial purges took place in the name of “anti-localism”. For example, although Zhejiang’s purge was one of the most serious, it did not pay much attention to condemning “localism”. When Zhejiang Province’s governor Sha Wenhan, vice governor Yang Siyi and another two cadres were expelled from the Party, they were called “bourgeois rightists”. See *People’s Daily*, 13 December 1957. Nevertheless, it was true that one month later, on 7 January 1958, *Zhejiang Daily* published an editorial “localism and communism are incompatible”, criticising Sha and Yang’s localism mistake. *Zhejiang Daily*, 7 January 1958. Yang Siyi’s major mistake was localism, while Sha Wenhan’s major

Great Leap Forward. In Liaoning and Shandong, cadres who questioned and refused to implement the extremely radical economic policy were also purged. The provincial purge resulted in dozens of provincial and vice-provincial level CCP officials being expelled from the Party or dismissed from office, along with many others who had associations with them.[97] A year ago, in April 1956, Mao in his "On the Ten Major Relationships" speech, also tried to address the relationship between the central and the local authorities". Mao claimed: "To resolve this contradiction, our attention should now be focussed on how to enlarge the powers of the local authorities to some extent, give them greater independence and let them do more, all on the premise that the unified leadership of the central authorities is to be strengthened."[98] It should note that, despite advocating for more local power, Mao underlined the premise: "the unified leadership of the central authorities is to be strengthened."

Some scholars examined "anti-localism" and "anti-local nationalism" together, as they have resembled features.[99] Firstly, like local nationalists, localists often

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mistake was protecting other rightists, demanding the separation of the Party and the government, and demanding democracy within the Party. Sha Shangzhi (Sha Wenhan's daughter), "Cong fanyou yundong kan zhongguo tese de zhengzhi douzheng" (The Anti-Rightist Campaign and Political Struggles with Chinese Characteristics), *Yanhuang chunqiu*, 2012, issue 11, 53-57.

Some research about localism and the provincial purges in 1957: Frederick C. Teiwes, *Politics and Purges in China: Rectification and the Decline of Party Norms, 1950-1965*, 2nd edition, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1993, 273-293. Ezra F. Vogel discussed the purge of Guangdong local cadres in 1957, *Canton Under Communism: Programs and Politics in a Provincial Capital: Programs and Politics in a Provincial Capital, 1949-1968*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1980, 211-216. Chen Hua-Sheng, "Guangdong's 'Anti-localism' Campaigns and Factional Conflict (1949~1975)," *Mainland China Studies*, Vol. 51, Issue 3, 2008, 1-36. Keith Forster, "Localism, Central Policy, and the Provincial Purges of 1957-1958: The case of Zhejiang," in Timothy Cheek and Tony Saich (eds), *New Perspectives on State Socialism in China*, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1997, 191-233.

[97]According to Teiwes, the victims included 4 alternate members of the CC, 1 provincial first secretary of the Party, 11 additional secretaries (not clear the meaning of 'additional secretary', probably deputy secretary), 4 governors and 10 vice governors, and so on. Teiwes, *Politics and Purges in China*, 274. Teiwes made a comprehensive study of the provincial purges in 1957 and 1958.

[98] Mao Zedong, "On the Ten Major Relationships," 292.

[99] For example, Teiwes called localism and local nationalism "twin" problems. Teiwes, *Politics and Purges in China*, 286.

Qin Xiaohua and Yang Zhiping briefly mentioned that in Guangxi, the local Party Committee launched both "anti-localism" and "anti-local nationalism" campaigns. They regard local nationalism as a type of localism. See Qin and Yang, "20 shiji 50 niandai fan 'difangzhuyi' yundong bijiao yanjiu"(A Comparative Study about the "Anti-localism" Campaign in the 1950s), *Shijiqiao*, December 2015, 13-20.

emphasised local special conditions to resist the central order. Gansu's localists claimed Gansu was backwards and had many minority nationalities, so it was suitable for a slower development speed. They often complained about Beijing's "left and impetuous" policies.[100] In Guangdong, the localists usually argued that Guangdong was the home of overseas Chinese, whose property at home should not be the target of land reform. They preferred a more peaceful land reform rather than a violent class struggle.[101] Secondly, like local nationalists disliking "outsider" Han cadres, the local cadres often had conflicts with non-local cadres. They wanted a "localisation of cadres", arguing that the outside cadres didn't speak local languages or know local conditions.[102] Guangdong's localists reportedly complained the outsiders entering Guangdong were like "Bo Gu and Wang Ming[103] entering the Soviet base." Local cadres often felt the outsiders had better treatment, like faster promotion and advantageous positions in political movements. Also, Guangdong's local cadres complained that "all the political campaigns are the purge of the locals" and "the northerners had taken all the good houses in Guangdong".[104]

Mao Zedong, in March 1958, at his Chengdu meeting (which was for Great Leap Forward mobilisation), also spent some words criticising localism and local nationalism: "All the provinces and cities should carry on anti-localism education." "Opposing localists, we should implement the policy of avoiding (being an official in) native places. Let them seize power in other provinces." "The localists are rightists in fact. They are the representatives of the bourgeoisie in the Party." "The rightists have been expelled from the Party. How can the local nationalists not be expelled from the

[100] Teiwes, *Politics and Purges in China*, 287.

[101] "Guangdong sheng dangnei de fan difangzhuyi douzheng" (The Anti-localism Struggle inside the Guangdong Party), *Neibu cankao*, 4 December 1957, in CARCD.

[102] Wang Kuang, "Fandui difangzhuyi" (Oppose localism), Zhonggong Shandongshengwei Xuanchuanbu (ed), *Fandui difang zhuyi: Zhengfeng xuexi cankao ziliao*, Jinan: Shandong renmin chubanshe, 1958, 38-40.

[103] Bo Gu and Wang Ming were thought to be "left-adventurists", severely damaging the CCP's strength in Jiangxi Soviet Zone in the 1930s. Bo Gu was directly responsible for the failure of the fifth "counter-encirclement campaign," and the CCP had to abandon its bases and flee to the north, which later became known as the "Long March." Wang Ming was the CCP's representative in Comintern in Moscow from 1931 to 1937. He firmly implemented the Comintern's instructions, which were believed to be very unsuitable for China's condition.

[104] Teiwes, *Politics and Purges in China*, 288. "Guangdong sheng dangnei de fan difangzhuyi douzheng," in CARCD.

Party?" "Don't compromise with the localists. Should send a group of outsiders to Guangdong and transfer a group of cadres from Guangdong to Beijing. Mix sand in the mud, mud in the sand, to change the soil."[105] Mao has expressed his attitude clearly. It serves as a warning to cadres who prioritise their local affairs over the Party's core interests.

Scholars have discussed the root cause of the purge of local cadres. Teiwes argues that the purge of provincial-level cadres during 1957 and 1958 can be understood as "preemptive measures to remove from power officials who conceivably might have obstructed the implementation of the Great Leap program". He notes that these cadres often supported "anti-reckless advance" (*fan maojin*), a moderate economic policy that Zhou Enlai and Chen Yun endorsed in 1956.[106] Nevertheless, although Mao always had unrealistic expectations of socialism building, it is hard to say whether Mao had already considered launching the GLF when Deng warned the "localists" and "local nationalists" in September 1957.[107] Scholars usually believe Mao's determination was spurred by Khrushchev's ambition of catching up with the US within 15 years. Besides, it should be noted that, in some specific cases, the conflict between central and local may not be the primary reason for the purge.[108] Anyway, as one of the earliest scholars studying China's provincial purges, Teiwes'

[105] Li Rui, *Dayuejin qinli ji* (My Experience of the Great Leap Forward), Haikou: Nanfang chubanshe, 1999, Vol. 1, 196.

[106] Teiwes, *Politics and Purges in China*, 274.

[107] The formation of the idea of GLF was a process. After the success of Anti-rightist Campaign, Mao was confident to promote his radical idea on the economic development again. In October 1957, Mao praised the slogan "more, faster, better, and more economically" (*duo kuai hao sheng*) and criticised some of his comrades worked in a "less, slower, worse, and less economically" way. See Mao Zedong, "Zai bajie sanzhong quanhui shang de jianghua" (Speech at the 3rd Plenary Session of the 8th CC of the CCP), *Mao Zedong sixiang wansui*, collected by Wang Zhaoxing during the Cultural Revolution, Wuhan:1968, Vol. 3 (1949.10-1957.12), 234-236. The Party has not used the slogan "more, faster, better, and more economically" since the autumn of 1956 due to Zhou Enlai and other realistic cadres' "anti-reckless advance" efforts. However, until this stage, as MacFarquhar argued, Mao was far less radical than he would be in 1959. There were still no direct spurs to push the formation of the GLF. It was later, in November 1957, the Soviet Union provided Mao with an inspirational challenge to launch the utopian economic campaign. See Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution: The Great Leap Forward, 1958-1960*, London: Oxford University Press, 1983, 4.

[108] Keith Forster studies the provincial purge in Zhejiang and challenges Teiwes' "preemptive measures" assumption. He points out that in Zhejiang, an important factor was the protracted antagonism between local and outside cadres since the 1940s. Keith Forster, "Localism, Central Policy, and the Provincial Purges of 1957-1958: The case of Zhejiang, "191-196.

argument was still illuminating: these cadres went against the will of the Centre and Mao. Similarly, Chinese historian Yang Kuisong, when examining the CCP's cadre policy and Guangdong's anti-localism events, points out that for Mao, emphasising too much on local conditions would severely hamper the implementation of the central will at the local level. Additionally, opposing a fierce class struggle would hinder the liberation of the poor from exploitation, ultimately leading the Party to lose the support of the masses. From Mao's point of view, "localism" was about class awareness, class position and class struggle.[109]

Returning to the issue of local nationalism, the Party's logic was similar. Probably, the CCP was less worried about the lack of class struggle in national minority areas, as its experience had proved that class struggle did not work as effectively as in Han areas. Yet, the emphasis on unique nationality conditions did impede the implementation of the central will at the local level. The local nationalists usually demand more autonomous power, which would doubtlessly undermine the CCP's leadership and the central power. Minority nationalities' demands were intrinsically incompatible with Mao's totalitarian system, which demanded control of every aspect of Chinese society.[110]

"Local nationalism" had another potential danger that "localism" didn't have. Many national minorities lived in the border region and often had strong connections with other countries. Inner Mongols wanted to be unified with the MPR. Some Korean students preferred North Korea to China. Xinjiang's non-Han people felt stronger affinities with Soviet republics in Central Asia. Their loyalty to China was often questioned. Thus, by harshly criticising local nationalism, the CCP wished to enhance minority nationalities' identification with China. Nevertheless, the fierce

[109] Yang Kuisong, "Jianguo chuqi zhonggong ganbu renyong zhengce kaocha: Jiantan 1950 niandai fan "difangzhuyi" de youlai" (The Examination of the CCP's Cadre Policy in the Early PRC Period: With a Discussion of the Origin of Anti-localism in the 1950s), Huadong shifan daxue zhongguo dangdaishi yanjiu zhongxin (ed), *Zhongguo dangdaishi yanjiu*, Issue 1, Beijing: Jiuzhou chubanshe, 2009, 38.

[110] Political scientists agree that a totalitarian state controls all aspects of its subjects' lives and enforces its ideas on society. For example, Robert Conquest, *Reflections on a Ravaged Century*, New York and London: Norton, 2000. 73–84. Carl Friedrich, "The Evolving Theory and Practice of Totalitarian Regimes," in Carl Friedrich, Michael Curtis and Benjamin R. Barber (eds), *Totalitarianism in Perspective: Three News*, New York: Praeger, 1969. Additionally, Friedrich notes that a totalitarian state typically features a centrally planned economy. Thus, Mao's determination to impose the planned economy would never tolerate the local authorities challenging the central power.

struggle further estranged national minorities. When Ili Xinjiang launched the anti-local nationalism campaign, some cadres obtained Soviet IDs and demanded to emigrate to the Soviet Union to avoid being persecuted.[111]

National minority loyalty may not be a significant issue for Beijing when China and its neighbours have good relations. Even though the minority nationalists challenged the CCP's authority, the CCP could still maintain its United Front policy to some extent. In 1957, China's foreign relations with its neighbours were still harmonious. Thus, the purge of local nationalists was not as harsh as that of Han intellectuals. However, when the relations between China and other countries deteriorate, the national minority will naturally be regarded as a potential threat to state security. During the Cultural Revolution, the brutal purge of the "Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party" was in the background of China's breaking with the Soviet Union and the MPR. Many Mongols were purged because they were suspected of being "spies of Mongolian revisionists". It will be discussed in the following chapters.

[111] Li Danhui, "Xinjiang Sulian qiaomin wenti de lishi kaocha: 1945-1965" A Historical Review of the Issue of Soviet Nationals in Xinjiang: 1945-1965), *Lishi yanjiu*, 2003, No. 3, 84. Li Danhui mentioned the national minorities' estrangement from China also encouraged and created favourable conditions for the Soviet Consulate to issue more IDs. From 8 February 1958 to 6 March 1959, the Soviet Consulate in Ili issued 4575 Soviet national identity documents. It was possible that the demand of Soviet ID increased among the local minority residents who wanted to avoid political struggles.

Chapter 5 Inner Mongolia in the Great Leap Forward and the "Four Clean-ups"

The Great Leap Forward, from 1958 to 1961, was one of China's most devastating human disasters, resulting in approximately 30 million deaths.[1]Contrary to the widespread devastation, Inner Mongolia managed to avert a significant hunger crisis during the Great Leap Forward. This was somewhat due to the relatively pragmatic leadership of Ulanhu and his colleagues, who downplayed the Great Leap Forward zeal with caution. Additionally, Inner Mongolia's natural advantages played a significant role, which probably few scholars realised.[2] Despite its infertile land, the region had vast territories and a small population, ensuring a more abundant food supply compared to other provinces.

The Socialist Education Movement, starting in 1963, interrupted the Party's previous moderate and practical economic and political policies. Dominated by Mao Zedong's will, the country had to refocus on class struggle. Inner Mongolia had to pay more attention to the class struggle, too. However, Inner Mongolia's officials had often used its unique nationality situation as an excuse to downplay the class struggle. In the early 1950s, the "democratic reform" work in the pastoral area of the IMAR followed Ulanhu's "Three Nos and Two Benefits" policy. Thus, Ulanhu's policy had to be abandoned and overthrown during the Socialist Education Movement. The Mongols in the pasturing area were categorised into classes. Also, the people who had been classified in classes had to be re-examined. Such a "reclassifying classes"

[1] The death number is in polemic. Frank Dikötter believed "at least 45 million people died unnecessarily from 1958 to 1962". Frank Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine: The History of China's Most Devastating Catastrophe, 1958*–62, 298, 333. Yang Jisheng believed 36 million died of starvation. Cao Shuji believed more than 32 million died due to the famine. Yang also pointed out that China's official attitude supports 17 million, while Li Chengrui, a former director of the National Bureau of Statistics of China, believed the death toll was 27 million, which can also be regarded as official. See Yang Jisheng: "Guanyu dajihuang niandai renkou sunshi de taolun"(The Discussion of the Population Loss During the Great Famine), in *Yanhuang chunqiu*, 2014, No. 9, 81.

[2] For instance, Cheng Tijie argued, "although Inner Mongolia is a vast area, it has little labour, with poor climate and backward technology. It is not a major grain-producing region. Coupled with rapid industrial development and urban expansion, Inner Mongolia is basically not self-sufficient in food and relies on the support of other provinces." Cheng Tijie, "Neimeng dongbu 'wenhe tugai' yu Wulanfu de wenge daotai," 368. In fact, counterintuitively, Inner Mongolia is always self-sufficient, and usually exports food to other provinces, due to the vast area. This point will be discussed below.

happened everywhere in China, and the result was often the middle peasants being labelled as rich peasants and the rich peasants becoming landlords.[3] Due to the deterioration of the Sino-Soviet and Sino-Mongolian relations and the CCP's focus on anti-revisionism, the Mongols in China found themselves in an awkward position. They were not only too close to their revisionist Northern cousins but also were suspected of not being loyal enough to China and the Chinese nation. During the Socialist Education Movement, some Mongols were accused of being "national separatists" and attacked. The attack of the Mongols was far less severe than it was in the Cultural Revolution. At this time, the political struggle of the masses was not as fierce as it would be several years later. Also, Ulanhu and his Mongol colleagues were still in power. They could limit some of the persecution of the Mongols, although Ulanhu and the Eastern Mongols were at odds, too. The attack of the Mongols in the Socialist Education Movement could be viewed as a prelude to the large-scale persecution of the Mongols after 1966, as they basically followed the same logic. However, Ulanhu's conflict with Li Xuefeng, the North China Bureau's first secretary, was escalating. At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, Li would ultimately defeat Ulanhu. The Mongols would lose their protector.

Inner Mongolia in the Great Leap Forward

During the Great Leap Forward, Inner Mongolia didn't escape Mao Zedong's Utopian frenzy. When reporting Inner Mongolia's situation to Mao at the Chengdu Meeting in March 1958, Ulanhu presented his plan to improve animal husbandry production. Inner Mongolia's goal was to increase the number of livestock from 23 million in 1958 to 60 million after ten years.[4] In his discussion of Inner Mongolia's regional and national situations, Ulanhu hinted at a more practical development plan by highlighting its unique nationality condition. However, in his dissatisfaction, Mao felt Ulanhu was overly emphasising Inner Mongolia's nationality situation. Inner Mongolia's speciality was often used by Inner Mongolian cadres as an excuse to

[3]. Reclassifying the classes was a nationwide problem. As Bo Yibo wrote: "About the standard of classifying the classes, because the Central Committee never made a unified regulation, it usually became too harsh in most places." Bo Yibo, *Ruogan zhongda juece yu shijian de huigu*, Vol. 2, 1126.

[4] Li Rui, *Dayuejin qinli ji*, Vol. 1, 181.

modify the CCP's overall guidelines, usually toning them down.[5] But Mao said to Ulanhu, "Do we eat the meal of communism, localism or nationalism? First of all, we should eat the meal of communism." "(I only care) which national group is more Marxist." "No matter what the nationality is, the only thing is who has the truth." "You can have the locality and the nationality, but not 'isms'." [6] Mao's disdain for localism and local nationalism was evident. While it was not his primary focus, Mao still took the time to criticise these problems at the Chengdu Meeting.[7] Ulanhu's emphasis on the unique situation of the Mongol nation would inevitably disrupt the overall planning of the Great Leap Forward, which was unacceptable to Mao. Ulanhu, in a difficult position, had no choice but to comply with the chairman's instructions. His official biography said he was honest: upon his return to Inner Mongolia, he openly conveyed Mao's criticisms of him to his colleagues.[8] The Party's nationality policy had to give in to Mao's revolutionary zeal.

After Mao highly praised and advocated the People's Commune in early August 1958,[9] all the villages and counties in China were keen to build this new type of organisation. The first People's Commune in Inner Mongolia was founded on 23

[5] *Wulanfu zhuan*, 275.

[6] Mao Zedong, "Zai Chengdu huiyi shang de chahua" March 1958, in Mao Zedong sixiang wansui, Vol. 4 (1958.1-1960.12), 46.

[7] Li Rui, *Dayuejin qinli ji*, Vol. 1, 181.

[8] *Wulanfu zhuan*, 275.

[9] Mao always preferred bigger agricultural cooperatives. Thus, in early 1958, incited by the zeal of the Great Leap Forward, more and more small cooperatives were merged into bigger cooperatives. The CCP leaders began to think of a new form of rural organisation. The idea of establishing People's Communes roughly developed in April and May 1958. According to Bo Yibo, at the end of April, the idea of People's Commune had been widely accepted by the CCP leadership. It was a utopian collective organisation which would include nurseries, canteens, schools, factories and so on, but the name was still not "commune". Later in May 1958, the word "commune" was used. Initially, the merged bigger cooperatives had different names, like "collective farm", "socialist big family", "communist farm", and so on. Some were also called "commune". On 1 July 1958, Chen Boda revealed the name "people's commune" on the CCP journal *Red Flag*. On 16 July, Chen Boda's article on *Red Flag* said, "Comrade Mao Zedong said, our direction should gradually and orderly organise industry, agriculture, commerce, schools, and soldiers into a big commune, which would become the fundamental unit of our society." It further elaborated Mao's idea of People's Commune.

See Bo Yibo, *Ruogan zhongda juece yu shijian de huigu*, Vol. 2, 731- 734.

The first people's commune was founded in Henan, in June 1958. On 6 August 1958, Mao praised "People's Commune is a good name!" He said People's Commune will oversee industry, agriculture, soldiers, schools, and commerce, and also manage production, life and regime. See *Mao Zedong nianpu: 1949-1976*, vol 3, 402-403.

August 1958[10], half a month after Mao's praise. By November 1958, 682 People's Communes were established in this autonomous region, covering 99% of peasants. Mongol herders also had to join People's Communes. There were 152 communes in the pastoral area, including 91.5% of the herding population and 82% of livestock.[11] Mao strongly preferred big communes, believing the bigger the better; he claimed: "Big (means) easier to manage. Labour is concentrated. The land can be managed concentratedly. The power would be different."[12] Yet, the environmental conditions limited the herders' People's Commune size. Communes in herding regions had about 650 households on average, based on *sum*. In contrast, in agricultural areas, they had 5000 households on average. The herders often had to ride their horses a long way to attend the political meetings and fell asleep there.[13]

It was said that Ulanhu and several cadres personally doubted the agricultural "sputniks" all over the country. Ulanhu used to say: "Just let them launch. We don't have sputniks. We don't launch."[14] Nevertheless, other provinces' "high production sputniks" created unbearable pressure on Inner Mongolia's leadership. Some cadres felt they were more "backward" than others. Finally, the IMAR Party Committee had to give up their practical goal, claiming that if other provinces could have high production, Inner Mongolia should also do so. In July 1958, the IMAR Party Committee urged its agricultural cooperatives to launch "sputniks" too. Soon, there were reports about "harvest farms", the output even dozens of times higher than the local average. The Party newspaper *Inner Mongolia Daily* proudly claimed, "Who said Inner Mongolia can't have high production 'sputniks?"[15] In Linhe County, a production team claimed its wheat yield per *mu* was 1593.5 kilograms (One *mu* is

[10] "Neimenggu jianli diyige renmin gongshe" (Inner Mongolia Founded its First People's Commune), 27 August 1958, *Neibu cankao*, in Song Yongyi (ed), in DGLF.

[11] *Neimenggu dashiji* (The Chronicles of Inner Mongolia), on Neimenggu quqing wang, http://www.nmgqq.com.cn/quqinggailan/nemenggudashiji/zhonghuarenmingongheguo/2017-2-18/9854.html (accessed on 17 December 2023).

[12] Mao Zedong, "Zai Beidaihe zhengzhiju kuoda huiyi shang de jianghua: San" (The Speech at Enlarged Meeting of Politburo at Beidaihe: 3), in *Mao Zedong sixiang wansui*, Vol. 4 (1958.1-1960.12), 106.

[13] David Sneath, *Changing Inner Mongolia: Pastoral Mongolian Society and the Chinese State*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, 81, 89.

[14] *Wulanfu zhuan*, 276-277. Wang Duo, *Wushi chunqiu: Wo zuo minzu gongzuo de jingli* (Fifty Years: My Experiences of Nationality Works), Hohhot: Neimenggu renmin chubanshe, 1992, 460.

[15] Wang Duo, *Wushi chunqiu*, 460.

666.67 square meters), and nine counties declared their yield per *mu* on average was above 200 kilos.[16] (To compare, on average, Inner Mongolia's grain production per *mu* was only 76.5 kilograms before the Great Leap Forward.[17]) Other miraculous sputniks were: potato per *mu* yield 13,486 *jin* (6743 kilograms), Cabbage per *mu* 150,000 *jin* (75,000 kilos), Rice per *mu* 3100 *jin* (1550 kilos), Proso millet per *mu* 1218 *jin* (609 kilos).[18] Inner Mongolia's agricultural sputniks were much less dramatic compared to other provinces. At the climax of the Great Leap Forward, at least eight production teams all over the country claimed its wheat per *mu* yield was above 5000 *jin* (2500 kilos): the highest was in Qinghai, and its production per *mu* was 8585 *jin* (4292.5 kilos). The rice production was more far-fetched; the highest yield per *mu* was 130434 *jin* (65217 kilos) in Guangxi. Henan Province reported its highest millet yield per *mu* was 27,733 *jin* (13,866.5 kilos). In Gansu, an agricultural cooperative's potato yield per *mu* reached 106,378 *jin* (53189 kilos).[19] However, the boasting of high production directly caused high procurement. Peasants were forced to hand in their seeds and basic food to the government.

Despite the "high production sputniks", from 1958 to 1962, grain production in the IMAR decreased. In the spring of 1958, a grain shortage occurred, possibly due to a drought that affected a large area of China[20]. The autumn saw a satisfactory harvest. The grain yield in Inner Mongolia had a new satisfying record: 9.65 billion *jin* (4.825 billion kilos). However, to pander to Mao's great leap forward zeal, all the provinces exaggerated their grain production. The IMAR announced its grain yield was 11.8 billion *jin*, 2.15 billion *jin* more than the actual yield. [21] Then, grain production began

[16] Ibid., 460-461.

[17] Ibid., 465.

[18] Hao Weimin, *Neimenggu zizhiqu shi*, 182.

[19] Li Rui, *Dayuejin qinli* ji, Vol. 2, 61-62.

[20] According to a *People's Daily* report: "There was very little rain in most parts of the country during this period. The vast majority of Xinjiang, Gansu, Shaanxi, Shanxi, Inner Mongolia and other provinces (autonomous regions) and the central part of the northeastern region did not receive a single drop of rain in ten days in mid-April. The central and southern Northeast, Inner Mongolia, most of North China, northwestern Gansu, southeastern Gansu and Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau, most of the places, March rainfall has been less than in previous years, April rainfall in the first and middle of the month is still very little." "Banyue nongqing" (Fortnight Agricultural Situations), *People's Daily*, 25 April 1958.

[21] Hao Weimin, *Neimenggu zizhiqu shi*, 182.

to decrease in 1959, from 8.68 billion *jin* to 7.18 billion *jin*. From 1961 to 1963, it was even dimmer: 6.68 billion *jin*, 6.51 billion *jin*, and 6.76 billion *jin*.[22]

Fortunately, Inner Mongolian animal husbandry was not impacted seriously by the Great Leap frenzy: from 1958 to 1965, the number of livestock kept increasing. In 1958, the number was 24,304 thousand. In 1959, it was 28,332 thousand, increasing by 4,028 thousand. From 1960 to 1965, the increasing number of livestock was 2,114 thousand, 736 thousand, 1,461 thousand, 4,409 thousand, 2,870 thousand, and 1,840 thousand. The number of livestock increased more slowly during the Great Leap Forward, but still kept growing. Mongol historian Hao Weimin explained that the IMAR authorities respected the special conditions of the pasturing area. They also learnt the lesson from the agricultural cooperative movement in 1956, which caused the loss of 2 million livestock. Even after People's Communes were established, the authorities still emphasised "the development of livestock is the first" while downplaying the ideological fervour.[23]

However, there was an unhappy side behind the gratifying livestock increase during the Great Leap Forward. According to anthropologist David Sneath's interview with Mongol herders, one of the reasons for the rapid growth was a strict restriction on meat consumption. The People's Commune frugally instructed its members on how much meat they could eat. The herders were forbidden to eat more than the regulated amount. A herder complained that they were not allowed to slaughter even a single sheep to treat their guests. The herders said surely there were a lot of animals, but the people were impoverished.[24] Controlled by the People's Commune, the herders were forced to eat less but sell more livestock to the government. From 1957 to 1962, the food consumption proportion of the livestock by herding families dropped from 39.9% to 24.2%. In contrast, the part of selling to the government increased from 33% to 41.1%. Besides, the Great Leap Forward made the people focus too much on eye-catching statistics while neglecting other problems: the quality and nutrition of the animals and the accelerating degradation of the

[22] Ibid., 265-266.
[23] Ibid., 267.
[24] David Sneath, *Changing Inner Mongolia*, 83-84.

pastureland. One would be labelled “defeatist” and harshly criticised if one tried to argue that the pastureland would be “used up” by overgrazing. [25]

The frenzy of the GLF also impacted the industrial sector. On 1 April 1958, the IMAR party committee held a meeting in Baotou, criticising “right-leaning conservatism” and determined to implement the CCP’s policy of the masses’ industry. Many small enterprises were established, regardless of their quality and local capabilities. Within a month after the Baotou meeting, over 4,000 small factories and mining industries were built in the IMAR.[26] In Butha Banner alone, which only had 130,000 people, the Party claimed to build 307 factories before May 1958 and claimed to build 1267 more in the banner at the end of 1958.[27] The steel production was the most important task during the Great Leap Forward. Inner Mongolia was no exception to the steel campaign. About 700,000 people in the IMAR joined the steel production movement. In 1958, 105 small steel factories were founded, and thousands of backyard furnaces were built. To get stones and bricks for backyard furnaces, people in Hohhot dismantled the walls of Suiyuan City, built in the Qing Dynasty.[28] At the end of the year, the IMAR claimed it produced 13 thousand tons of steel and 80 thousand tons of iron. In fact, the real production was only about half of the claimed number.[29] The IMAR’s top cadres sweated in steel production to demonstrate loyalty to Mao and his plan. In September 1958, they built a “secretary’s iron furnace.” Ulanhu was recorded cooling down the iron billets.[30] Cadres doing hard manual labour was not uncommon during the GLF. Soong Ch’ing-ling, a vice chairperson of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress at the time, also built a furnace in her garden and worked with her secretary, gardener, chef and other staff in front of the furnace.[31]

[25] Ibid., 84-86.
[26] Wang Duo, *Wushi chunqiu*, 461-462.
[27] Yang Jisheng, *Mubei*, Vol. 2, 1023.
[28] TJ Cheng, Uradyn E. Bulag, and Mark Selden, *A Chinese Rebel beyond the Great Wall: The Cultural Revolution and Ethnic Pogrom in Inner Mongolia*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2023, 19.
[29] *Wulanfu zhuan*, 277-278.
[30] *Wulanfu nianpu*, 392-393.
[31] “Song Qingling liangang” (The Steelmaking of Soong Ch’ing-ling), *People’s Daily*, 9 November 1958.

A Relatively Less Hungry Region

Although suffering from the chaos of the GLF, Inner Mongolia still had more food per capita than other provinces. According to TJ Cheng, who spent his youth in Inner Mongolia, the vegetable ration for residents in Hohhot was 500 grams per day, while in Beijing and Tianjin, it was only 250 grams.[32] Moreover, it was able to transport 2.372 billion *jin* (1.186 billion kilos) of grain to other provinces to help alleviate the dreadful hunger.[33] In 1960 alone, the worst year of the great famine, Inner Mongolia was responsible for transporting its 1.1 billion *jin* (0.55 billion kilos) of grain to other provinces. By the end of March 1960, 0.66 billion *jin* (0.33 billion kilos) had been transported, and the rest would be transported by 10 May.[34] (At the same time, other provinces with surpluses also received the same task. On 25 April, Heilongjiang province decided to increase its daily grain transportation from 32 million *jin* to 50 million *jin*, or even 60 million *jin*. These reports reflected the severe food shortage in the spring of 1960.[35])

It should be noted that Inner Mongolia was by no means a place where grain was prolific. The weather was cold and dry, and the land was infertile. In 1958, it accounted for only 1.9% of China's grain production. Its yield per *mu* was the lowest in China. The average yield per *mu* in China was 137.5 kilos (275 *jin*), while in Inner Mongolia it was 76.5 kilos (153 *jin*).[36] However, according to Yang Jisheng's calculation, Inner Mongolia's per capita grain budget [37] was higher than in other provinces.

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[32] Cheng et al., *A Chinese Rebel beyond the Great Wall*, 17.

[33] Hao Weimin, *Neimenggu zizhiqu shi*, 209

[34] "Neimenggu jiji diaoyun liangshi zhiyuan Jing-Jin-Hu deng di" (Inner Mongolia Actively Transported Grains to Support Beijing, Tianjin and Shanghai), *Neibu cankao*, 26 April 1960, in DGLF.

[35] Lin Yunhui, *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo shi, disijuan, 1958-1961, Wutuobang yundong: Cong dayuejin dao dajihuang* (The History of the People's Republic of China, Volume 4. The Utopian Movement: The Great Leap Forward and the Great Famine, 1958-1961), Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong: 2008, 555.

[36] Wang Duo, *Wushi chunqiu*, 465.

[37] The per capita grain budget included meal rations, animal feed, seed grain, and grain for industrial use. Roughly 70% of the per capita grain budget was for food rations, that is, how many grains one can eat. Yang's *Tombstone*'s English translation misunderstood the original text. The translation: "following deduction of the last three items, only 30 percent of the grain in hand was left for meal rations". It was actually 70% for meal rations, while animal feed, seed grain and grain for industrial use accounted for 30%.

Table: Per Capita Grain Budget for Each Province. Unit: *Jin* (half a kilo) (From Yang Jisheng *Tombstone*)[38]

Region	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961
Hebei	457.62	467.35	400.68	369.13	426.58
Shanxi	426.03	478.76	415.34	379.93	351.28
Inner Mongolia	535.47	747.29	609.51	503.65	465.22
Liaoning	547.86	573.25	531.30	382.85	394.08
Jilin	572.63	577.95	575.02	431.82	484.48
Heilongjiang	635.63	726.15	579.19	492.86	473.24
Jiangsu	452.86	460.40	406.41	377.34	360.99
Zhejiang	472.02	511.25	482.35	423.55	385.36
Anhui	446.72	468.76	352.37	414.21	345.92

[38] Yang Jisheng, *Mubei*, Vol. 1, 609-610.

Jiangxi	576.03	574.78	485.33	486.26	466.73
Fujian	513.67	560.27	435.19	363.67	337.15
Shandong	400.41	477.99	378.45	366.22	293.45
Guangdong	544.51	557.38	430.28	429.25	432.24
Guangxi	434.59	419.69	370.84	352.66	345.50
Hubei	539.71	536.91	433.79	417.01	362.68
Hunan	513.19	539.14	482.24	379.91	386.92
Henan	405.56	441.13	391.18	363.69	277.52
Sichuan	507.75	567.08	413.05	396.84	356.12
Yunnan	553.22	516.84	452.13	447.48	441.14
Guizhou	512.70	569.12	386.00	375.72	330.20
Shaanxi	406.38	489.14	409.68	402.83	306.20

Gansu	485.63	505.51	391.46	334.31	332.25
Qinghai	515.54	464.00	360.40	342.25	377.40
Xinjiang*[39]	557.34	569.42	542.69	516.52	436.58
Ningxia*[40]	454.34	567.91	452.94	368.96	375.75

(Yang notes that the peasants in fact had much less food than the data showed, as the privileged classes usually took much more food. It also should be noted that although 1961-1962 had the lowest number, many places loosened the grain policy, and the peasants actually had more food than the statistics reported.)

[39] Yang's book didn't list Xinjiang's per capita grain budget. Yet, he provided his calculation method: Grain Production minus procurement plus sales, which is the grain budget of a province. And it is divided by the population of that province; it is the per capita grain budget of the province. Besides, production number was raw grain number. It needs to be converted to commercial grain number, as the procurement and sales are commercial numbers. Raw grain number divided by 1.15 is the commercial grain number. *Mubei,* Vol. 1, 605-610.

Yang also offered the statistics of the grain production (raw grain without being processed), procurements and sales in Xinjiang from 1957 to 1961 (The unit was 100 million *Jin*). Grain production: 36.3, 40.6, 41.4, 40.34, 36. Procurement: 9.19, 13.3, 16.59, 13.13, 10.17. Sales: 8.72, 11.19, 16.07, 13.5, 9.87. *Mubei,* Vol. 1, 605-607.

Yang used the population statistics of each province from *Zhongguo renkou* (China's population) series. So, I also used *Zhongguo renkou: Xinjiang fence* (China's Population: Xinjiang), and obtained the population from 1957 to 1961 (unit: 10 thousand): 558.01, 582.35, 648.98, 686.33, 710.06. By using Yang's calculation method, I got the per capital grain budget of Xinjiang in the form.

Xinjiang's population see Zhou Chongjing (ed), *Zhongguo renkou: Xinjiang fence*, Beijing: Zhongguo caizheng jingji chubanshe, 1990, 66.

[40] Yang didn't list Ningxia's per capita grain budget either. He provided the statistics of the grain production (raw grain), procurement and sales in Ningxia from 1957 to 1961 (The unit was 100 million Jin). Grain production: 11, 13.9, 12.7, 9.1, 9.1. Procurement: 3.56, 4.56, 5.34, 2.74, 2.58. Sales: 2.14, 3.46, 3.76, 2.69, 2.3. From *Zhongguo renkou: Ningxia fence* (China's population: Ningxia), the population of Ningxia from 1957 to 1961 was: 1793807, 1935163, 2088556, 2130316, 2030588. Then, Ningxia's the per capita grain budget can be obtained.

Ningxia's population see Chang Naiguang et al (eds), *Zhongguo renkou: Ningxia fence* (China's Population: Ningxia), Beijing: Zhongguo caizheng jingji chubanshe, 1988, 67.

From the table above, it is easy to notice Inner Mongolia's per capita grain budget was relatively high. From 1957 to 1960, it maintained 500 *jin* per capita. Even in 1961, the number was the worst in the five years, but it was still higher than Jiangsu, Henan, Guangxi and Qinghai's "best" year 1958. Inner Mongolia was the first in 1958 and 1959, and the second in 1960 (the first was Xinjiang this year). The apparent lower per capita grain budget in 1957 might be explained by the severe natural disasters of that year. In 1957, natural disasters impacted 48.27 million *mu* of land in the IMAR, the worst year from 1951 to 1960. In contrast, during the great famine period, 1959 saw 14.2 million *mu* of land impacted by natural disasters; in 1960, it was 39.88 million *mu*. [41]

There is a beautiful story about Mongol herders adopting thousands of Chinese orphans from southern cities during the Great Leap Forward. At the end of 1959, Ulanhu met Zhu De's wife, Kang Keqing. Kang Keqing said there were some orphans in Shanghai and other cities; their lives were very difficult due to the lack of food in the orphanages. She got the impression that Inner Mongolia had a lot of milk and meat, so she asked Ulanhu if he could offer some milk powder to the children. Ulanhu agreed without any hesitation. Then Ulanhu suggested another solution: sending these children to Mongol herder families and letting the herders adopt them. It could give these children a better life and increase the population in the pastoral area. Kang Keqing thought Ulanhu was very thoughtful, and it was a good idea. After

[41] Saren listed the natural disasters happened in the IMAR, including draught, flood, pest, extreme weathers (frost, strong wind, and hail): in 1955, the land impacted by nature disaster was 15.85 million *mu*. 1956: 9.32 million *mu*. 1957: 48.27 million *mu*. 1958: 16.46 million *mu*. 1959: 14.2 million *mu*. 1960: 39.88 million *mu*. Usually, draught was the most threatening natural disaster in Inner Mongolia. "Neimenggu zizhiqu lishi dang'an ziliao [M], Minzhengting, Quanzong number: 255, Mulu 1, Anjuan number: 550", quoted in Saren, "20 shiji 50-60 niandai Neimenggu zizhiqu gezhong ziran zaihai tanxi" (An Analysis of Natural Disaster in Inner Mongolia 1950s-1960s), *Mengguxue jikan*,2011, No. 4, 2. Available at: https://www.sinoss.net/c/2018-06-13/548085.shtml.
In November 1957, the IMAR government reduced the food rations for city and town residents. Food for industry was also reduced. "Based on the supply level of food rations for residents of the region is 14.7 kilograms per person per month (refined grains), there will be an average reduction of 0.5 kilograms. Based on the current level of supply in food for industry, there will be an average reduction of 20%-25%. Food rations for cadres and university and high school students will be reduced by 0.5-1 kilo." *In Neimenggu dashiji* (The Chronicles of Inner Mongolia), available at: http://www.nmgqq.com.cn/quqinggailan/nemenggudashiji/zhonghuarenmingongheguo/2017-2-18/9854.html.This record did not say why the government decided to reduce food rations for residents and food for industry. It is highly possible because of the serious natural disaster of 1957.

Zhou Enlai learned about it, he was happy with this solution, too. Thus, from 1960 to 1961, thousands of orphan children were sent to Inner Mongolia.[42] Some of them were adopted by Mongol herders and grew up speaking Mongolian.[43] This story was always talked about to demonstrate the solidarity of nationalities. On the other hand, people in Inner Mongolia left the outside world the impression that they were relatively better off than people in the rest of the country. They were believed to be more capable of raising children during the famine.

According to the official statistics, the great famine did not cause population loss in Inner Mongolia, unlike in other provinces, although the birth rate decreased. Based on the form below, only 1961 saw a sharp population decrease. Scholars believed that in other parts of China, the population decrease was caused by deaths, while in the IMAR, it was caused by emigration. 438,700 people emigrated from the IMAR, mainly refugees going back home. Although 1961's situation was still difficult, and the birth rate was the lowest compared to other years, there was still a natural population increase.[44]

The demographic statistics from 1957-1963 (population number unit: thousand)[45]

[42] *Wulanfu* huiyilu, 1989, 257-258. Kang Keqing, *Kang Keqing huiyilu* (The Memoir of Kang Keqing), Beijing: Zhongguo funü chubanshe, 2011, 231-233.
It was not the first time Inner Mongolia accepted orphans from other provinces. In 1958, there were 308 orphans were sent to Inner Mongolia from Anhui Province. However, it became a disaster. These children were directly sent to their adoptive families. They were not used to the cold climate and caught pneumonia. Many of them could not digest milk, which caused diarrhoea. Local doctors also lacked the experience to offer proper treatment. The consequence was "within a month, 85 of these infants and young children died". In 1960, Inner Mongolian officials were more experienced than in 1958. The children were sent to nurseries first, allowing them to recover from the travelling tiredness and get used to the new environment. After they became healthier, they were picked up by their adoptive parents. Zhu Minghui, "Minzu weiren, guangyao qianqiu" (The Nation's Great man, Shining for Eternity), Wulanfu geming shiliao bianyanshi (ed), *Wulanfu jinian wenji*, vol 1, Hohhot: Neimenggu renmin chubanshe, 1989, 233-238.
Due to the spread of syphilis, many herders became infertile even though the disease was cured. So, sending children to these childless families can solve the problem of herders' lack of children. See Kang Keqing, 231.

[43] According to Bulag, only a few orphans were adopted by herder families. Most were sent to "revolutionary families," usually the families of soldiers and cadres. The herders must also be politically reliable. Bulag, *Collaborative Nationalism: The Politics of Friendship on China's Mongolian Frontie*r, 215-216.

[44] Song Yougong et al (eds), *Zhongguo renkou: Neimenggu fence* (China's Population: Inner Mongolia), Beijing: Zhongguo Caizheng jingji chubanshe, 1987, 67.

[45] Ibid., 69-70.

Year	Total Population (At the End of the year)	Everage Populati on	Birth Population		Death Population		Natural Increase		Migration Changes	
			Numbers	‰	Numbers	‰	Numbers	‰	Numbers	‰
1957	9,360.0	9,163.0	340,7.0	37.2	96.3	10.5	244.4	28.7	149.6	16.3
1958	9,861.0	9,610.5	273.0	28.4	76.3	7.9	196.7	20.5	304.3	31.7
1959	10,625.0	10,343.0	315.1	30.8	112.6	11.0	202.5	19.8	561.6	54.8
1960	11,911.0	11,268.0	831.7	29.4	106.5	9.4	225.2	20.0	1060.8	94.1
1961	11,631.0	11,771.0	259.9	22.1	103.2	8.8	156.7	13.3	-438.7	-37.1
1962	11,718.0	11,674.5	445.5	38.2	105.3	9.0	340.2	29.2	-253.2	-21.7

1963	12,154.0	11,936.0	493.0	41.3	101.5	8.5	391.5	32.8	40.5	3.7

Notably, Inner Mongolia was one of the destinations where people could escape from the unprecedented famine. Several relevant official reports were published in an internal publication, *Neibu cankao* (Internal Reference, which can only be read by cadres). In 1959, merely from 12 February to 17 February, Hohhot and Baotou saw an influx of 8407 people, who were mainly peasants from Hebei, Shandong, Shanxi and other provinces.[46] From January to February 1960, 5 areas of Inner Mongolia saw more than 89,200 people from 20 provinces inflexing into Inner Mongolia. 55% were from Hebei Province, 12% from Shandong, 7% from Henan, 3% from Shanxi, 2% from Jiangsu, 2% from Gansu, and 19% from other provinces. The authorities had to admit that one of the reasons for the sudden migration was that other places suffered from disasters, and the people could not feed themselves. However, the situation was not so optimistic for the refugees. The people from Gansu, Ningxia, and Liaoning were made to return home (the reasons are unknown yet), and the rest were allowed to stay. For those who were able to settle in, there were still problems. According to an internal report:

> Most of the resettlement in the forestry system, coal mines, farms, water conservancy projects and rural pastoral areas…However, due to the limited conditions, there are still problems with the reception and resettlement work in some places: (1) a small number of people live on the streets because they are not properly resettled. In the mining area of Zhaozishan, there are cases of inflowing people begging along the street and robbing for food. (2) In some areas, inflowing people continue to die due to illness, and six people have died in the Zhaozishan mining area and Hohhot. (3) A part of the inflow of people from Hohhot City to build the reservoir because they could not reach the quota for doing frozen earthwork, and they thought their wages were low; many of

[46] "Dapi wadi nongmin liuru Beijing Baotou deng shi" (A Large Number of Peasants Influxing into Beijing, Baotou and Other Cities), *Neibu cankao*, 24 February 1959, in DGLF.

them fled. (4) The inflow of people in Uda town is increasing, and the problem of food and accommodation cannot be solved; many people are staying in the cellar.[47]

The relatively better performance of the IMAR did not mean that life was easy there. Inner Mongolian people also suffered from food shortages. According to David Sneath, Mongolians in Jirem League called the famine period "the time of 5.4 *liang* (0.54 *jin*, equal to 0.27 kilo)," meaning people could only receive 0.54 *jin* of flour or other staple food daily from the government. [48]However, according to a 1955 regulation, for regions where the staple food was flour and *zaliang* (meaning staple excluding rice and flour), the lowest ration for adult residents and children above ten years old was 24 *jin* to 28.5 *jin* per month, which means 0.8 *jin* (0.4 kilos) to 0.95 *jin* (0.475 kilos) per day. 0.54 *jin* per day, as the Mongolians in Jirem recalled, meaning 16.2 *jin* per month, was barely enough for children above three but under six years old in normal years.[49] Ulanhu's homeland, Tumed Banner, suffered from hunger, too. 1960's famine was severe. In the spring of 1961, the local cadres told Ulanhu that the peasants had no grains left and had to dig out wild vegetables to eat. Ulanhu said, "People mustn't starve to death," and urged more grain to be sold to Tumed,

[47] "Dapi waisheng renyuan liuru Neimenggu" (A large Number of People from Other Provinces Influxed into Inner Mongolia), *Neibu cankao*, 17 March 1960, in DGLF.

[48] "Wu liang Si-nii Üye" in Mongolian. Sneath, *Changing Inner Mongolia*, 96-97.

[49] "Shizhen liangshi dingliang gongying zanxing banfa" (Interim Measures of Food Rationing), *People's Daily*, 25 August 1955. It was published by the State Council and lasted until the early 1990s.

The state provided people certain amount of food according to their age and profession. Here was the monthly rationing for the regions where the staple food was flour and *zaliang*.

Special heavy manual labourers: 45-55 *jin*. The average should not be over 50 *jin*.

Heavy manual labourers: 35-44 *jin*. The average should not be over 40 *jin*.

Light manual labourers: 26-34 *jin*. The average should not be over 32 *jin*.

Staff of institutions and organisations, staff and shop assistance of public and private enterprises, and other knowledge workers: 27-32 *jin*. The average should not be over 31 *jin*.

College and high school students: 29-36 *jin*. The average should not be over 35 *jin*.

Ordinary residents and children above 10: 24-28.5 *jin*. The average should not be over 27.5 *jin*.

Children above 6 but under 10: 18 jin to 23 *jin*. The average should not be over 22 *jin*.

Children above 3 but under 6: 12-17 *jin*. The average should not be over 14 *jin*.

Children under 3: 6-11 *jin*. The average should not be over 8 *jin*.

According to the document, the regions eating rice and the regions eating flour and other grains were slightly different. Rice-eating regions had slightly lower rations. Probably rice can provide more energy than other grains.

ensuring adults and children have 7 *liang* (0.35 kilos) of whole grains daily.[50] It was very possible that some people in the IMAR also died of malnutrition, but the death number was not high enough to catch the attention of the authorities, unlike in other provinces. David Sneath was told that in one sum, 180 people starved to death (but it seems no one knew which sum); however, the people he knew did not recall any deaths caused by starvation in their own districts. I haven't found official records about famine-related deaths during the GLF in Inner Mongolia.

Why Did Inner Mongolia Suffer Less

Yang Jisheng points out that the famine was less devastating in the remote national minority autonomous region. Xinjiang's death rate in 1960 was 15.67‰, which was not much higher than usual years. Xinjiang had a higher death rate during the normal years than other provinces. From 1955 to 1957, the death rates were all above 14‰, which means the Great Leap Forward did not impact it seriously.) Also, Inner Mongolia's death rate in 1960 was only 9.4‰.[51] It was actually the lowest in China, if all the official statistics were honest. In sharp contrast, in 1960, the death rate was 68.58‰ in Anhui, 53.97‰ in Sichuan, 52.33‰ in Guizhou, 41.30‰ in Gansu, 40.73‰ in Qinghai, 39.60‰ in Henan, 29.42‰ in Hunan, and 23.60‰ in Shandong.[52] These statistics may have been deliberately modified to appear less horrific, but Inner Mongolia was still much better than other provinces.

Yang argues that if a cadre had a stronger political centripetal force toward Mao, the region he was in charge of, whether a small county or a big province, would have had more severe famine. Yang mentions that, in 1959, the CCP, in fact, made some compromising policies for the peasants. The procurement was lowered. However, the most loyal cadres believed it was not Mao's real intention. They either implemented the new compromising policies negligently or refused to implement them at all. It turned out these cadres understood Mao very well. Mao was very unhappy with the concession. At Lushan Conference in July and August 1959, Mao's

[50] Zhang Rugang, "Shenqie mianhuai wulanfu tongzhi" (Deeply in Memory of Comrade Ulanhu), *Wulanfu jinian wenji*, 1990, Vol. 2, 68-69.
[51] Yang Jisheng, *Mubei*, 602.
[52] Ibid., 598.

grudge turned to Peng Dehuai, the defence minister at the time, who honestly and cautiously wrote a private letter to Mao criticising the GLF. Mao decided Peng Dehuai was “anti-party”, and several other cadres who were critical of the GLF were also from Peng’s anti-party clique. No one dared to question the GLF any more until the famine became extremely dreadful in 1961.[53] In addition, Yang Jisheng suggests that the lower death rate in remote national minority autonomous regions was due to weaker centripetal force on Mao by the local cadres. However, he also noted that Guangxi and Yunnan had higher death rates. The Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region’s death rate was 29.46‰; in Yunnan Province, which had many autonomous counties, the death rate was 26.26‰. Yang argues that there were more Han cadres in these two regions, and the Han had a stronger political centripetal force than national minorities.[54]

To some extent, Yang’s “political centripetal force” theory is reasonable but somewhat debatable. It did explain Mao’s most loyal cadres’ behaviour very well during the GLF. In terms of the national minorities, it might be true for Xinjiang’s Uyghur and other non-Han cadres and the Eastern Mongols that their “political centripetal force” was weaker. They used to have a self-governing history and dreamed of establishing their own national state. They did not directly connect to the CCP until the late 1940s. However, it is hard to argue that the Western Mongols had weaker political centripetal force than their Han counterparts. Most Western Mongol cadres received training in Yan’an, and some of them joined the CCP in the 1920s, like Ulanhu and his Tumed compatriots. No doubt, they were not as fervent about the GLF as Mao’s most favourite cadres, who were directly responsible for the incredibly high death rate in Sichuan, Henan, Anhui, etc. However, the loyalty of these Mongol cadres to the Chairman and the CCP was hardly less than that of their Han colleagues. Besides, Inner Mongolia had a large number of Han cadres: the official ratio of Mongol and Han cadres was 1:5 in 1957.[55] Even though Mongol cadres did have a weaker political centripetal force, it was hard to apply the same logic to the

[53] Ibid., 601.

[54] Ibid., 602.

[55] Wang Duo, “Neimenggu zizhiqu shixian zizhi jihuang minzuhua de chengjiu” (The Achievements of the IMAR’s Nationalisation), *Inner Mongolia Daily*, 29 April 1957.

Han in Inner Mongolia. I tend to argue that the “centripetal force” theory may not be very suitable for explaining Inner Mongolia’s low death rate during the GLF.

The reason for Inner Mongolia’s low death rate during the GLF might not be as complicated as imagined. Apart from the relatively more practical and less radical leadership, its natural condition was a blessing: It has a vast land with a low population density. Although Inner Mongolia’s land was the least prolific for grains, it didn’t have too many people either. Thus, the IMAR always had a higher per capita grain production than other regions. For example, in 1956, the per capita grain yield of China was about 408 *jin*,[56] while in Inner Mongolia, the per capita grain yield was above 1038.3 *jin*,[57] more than twice the country’s average, even though the land was the least fertile. Today, Inner Mongolia’s grain production per capita is still one of the highest in China, usually the third. Sometimes, its production per capita was even the second highest. In 2018, Inner Mongolia’s per capita grain production was 1463.76 kilos, slightly higher than the third highest Jilin’s 1450.20 kilos.[58]

Couldn’t a province with a grain surplus transport its food to other regions so that everyone can basically get access to a similar amount of food? It was very

[56] According to Tan Zhenlin, the deputy premier, the national grain yield was 216.2 billion *jin* in 1956; the population of the same year was about 530,130,000; therefore, the grain production per capita was 408 *jin*. Tan Zhenlin, “Guanyu woguo nongmin shouru qingkuang he shenghuo shuiping de chubu yanjiu” (A Preliminary Research About the Income Condition and Living Standard of Our Country’s Peasants), 5 May 1957, in DGLF.

[57] In 1956, Inner Mongolia’s grain production was 9.31 billion *jin*. Hao Weimin*, Neimenggu zizhiqu shi*, 145. The population was 8,966,000. Song Yougong et al (eds), *Zhongguo renkou: Neimenggu fence*, 64. Thus, the per capita grain production was about 1038.3 *jin* in 1956.

[58] According to the database of the National Bureau of Statistics, the top three regions in per capita food production are Heilongjiang, Jilin and Inner Mongolia. Below are the top five regions from 2018 to 2022. Heilongjiang is the only province with grain production per capita above 2000 kilos. Only Heilongjiang Jilin and Inner Mongolia are above 1000 kilos. (The unit is kilo.)

2022: Heilongjiang 2494.58, Jilin 1728.05, Inner Mongolia 1624.92, Xinjiang 700.73, Henan 687.39.

2021: Heilongjiang 2499.28, Jilin 1692.18, Inner Mongolia 1599.12, Xinjiang 670.31, Anhui 669.10.

2020: Heilongjiang 2346.96, Jilin 1569.29, Inner Mongolia 1521.01, Henan 688.02, Anhui 659.05.

2019: Heilongjiang 2279.86, Jilin 1572.56, Inner Mongolia 1510.25, Henan 677.50, Anhui 666.34.

2018: Heilongjiang 2232.17, Inner Mongolia 1463.76, Jilin 1450.20, Henan 675.26, Anhui 660.55.

Available at https://data.stats.gov.cn/easyquery.htm?cn=E0103.

challenging during the 1950s and 1960s because the transportation system in China was still extremely backwards. Inner Mongolia always had a grain transportation problem. A Xinhua News Agency report in 1953 said that, except for a few food-importing cities by the railway like Tongliao, Ulanhot, and Zalantun, the rest of the places in Inner Mongolia relied on motor vehicles and animal-driven carts to transport grains. However, there were only 20 motor vehicles in Eastern Mongolia. A lot of grains cannot be transported out. The grain backlog, which could not be transported out, in Tongliao was 6,000 tons, Horqin Left Middle Banner was 1,000 tons, Arun Banner was 4,000 tons, and Jalaid Banner was 3,000 tons.[59] China could not produce motor vehicles until 1956. In 1957, the vehicle production per year was only 7,500. At the same time, according to the CCP's own report, the UK can produce 1,050,000 motor vehicles per year.[60] The reliance on animal-drawn carts for transportation in rural areas was a clear indication of the primitive state of transportation in China during the 1950s and 1960s.

Inner Mongolia did significantly expand its railway before the Great Leap Forward, but it did not improve the domestic grain transportation much. By February 1958, the IMAR had about 3,300 kilometres of railway, and three railways reached out of the region: Beijing-Baotou Railway, Baotou-Lanzhou Railway, and Harbin-Manzhouli Railway.[61] Between 1952 and 1958, 1,387 kilometres of railway were built in Inner Mongolia.[62] Nevertheless, for a land with 1.405 million square kilometres,[63] it was far from enough. Besides, a significant part of them served the heavy industry, forestry and China-Mongolia-Soviet connection.[64] Moreover, the railways hardly

[59] "Neimeng dongbu diqu liangshi tonggou zhong cunzai de wenti" (The Problems in the Governmental Purchase of Grains in Eastern Areas of Inner Mongolia), 17 December 1953, in *Neibu cankao*, in LRSPP.

[60] "Guanyu yijiuwujiu nian guomin jingji jihua de jueyi" (The Resolution About the Plan of National Economy in 1959),10 December 1958, in ZZWX (1949-1966), Vol. 29, 283.

[61] Wulanfu, "Wulanfu zai Neimenggu zizhiqu dang daibiao hui shang zuo fandui defang minzuzhuyi de baogao" (Ulanhu's Report on Anti-Local Nationalism at the IMAR Party Congress), *People's Daily*, 26 February 1958.

[62] Neimenggu zizhiqu tongjiju (ed), *Huihuang de shiernian: Neimenggu zizhiqu jingji he wenhua jianshe chengjiu de tongji* (The Glorious 12 Years: The Statistics on the Economic and Cultural Achievements in the IMAR), Hohhot: Neimenggu renmin chubanshe, probably published in 1959, 83.

[63] The IMAR was 1.405 million square kilometres in 1958; now it's 1.183 million square kilometres. Ibid., 31.

[64] Among the 1387 kilometres of railways:
Jining-Erenhot Railway, 338 kilometres, connected the MPR and further the Soviet Union.

reached the vast rural, food-producing areas. Transporting the grains from the farm to the railway had to rely on motor vehicles and animal carts exclusively.

In 1960, Inner Mongolia received the task of sending 1.1 billion *jin* of grain to other provinces, but it faced significant transportation pressures. It had to repair roads, fix non-working cars, and mobilise animal-drawn carts. Xinhua News Agency reported: "According to the statistics on April 10th (1960), there were 580 motor vehicles in the whole (autonomous) region, but 200 of them could not participate in the grain transportation. More than 130 motor vehicles were in the three Eastern leagues, but due to the lack of components, they can hardly work."[65] Although the number of motor vehicles increased, the quality was still questionable. Thus, in the 1950s and 1960s, a large amount of food was not able to be transported to other provinces; it had to be kept and consumed locally.[66]

Baotou-Bayan Obo Railway, 136 kilometres, connected Baotou's steel industry and Bayan Obo's mine.

Yakeshi Forest Railway, 294 kilometres, Hulunbuir area, connected Kudu'er, Tulihe, Genhe, Yitulihe, Yin'a and Keyihe. These towns were all forest industrial towns, built for utilising the rich forest resources in the Greater Hinggan Range.

Ibid., 83-84.

[65] "Neimenggu jiji diaoyun liangshi zhiyuan Jing-Jin-Hu deng di" (Inner Mongolia Actively Transported Grains to Support Beijing, Tianjin and Shanghai), *Neibu cankao*, 26 April 1960, in DGLF.

[66] Other reports are complaining about the difficulty of grain transportation.

For example, in May 1953, the CCP Central Financial and Economic Affairs Commission reported the national grain reserve. They reported there were 8.8 billion *jin* of grain reserve (4.4 billion kilograms). However, they also recognised among them there were 3 billion *jin* of grain was difficult to transport. It was difficult to reply on this part of grain to be transferred national wide (to relieve famine or meet other demands). So, the commission argued that the country needed to have 8 billion to 9 billion *jin* of grains as "reasonable reserve" excluding the difficult-to-transport food. "Zhongcaiwei (cai) guanyu muqian liangshi qingkuang de tongbao" (Central Financial and Economic Affairs Commission's Report about the Current Grain Situation), 19 May 1953, in LRSPP. In December 1958, the CCP believed most provinces' grain production was sufficient for local supply, while the transportation demand for steel and coal increased dramatically, which created heavy pressures for the transportation system. Thus, the CCP required these provinces to consume local grain reserve to feed local population, meanwhile reduce grain transportation as much as possible. For example, the local grain seeds were given the priority and should be the mainstay. Imported seeds would only be secondary and only if necessary. Previous plans for seeds transporting had to be stopped except those had been transported. In addition, the CCP said people should eat local-produced grain, while pursing grain diversity was discouraged. If some grain exchange was necessary, it must be approved by the state. Because exchanging grains for diversity would increase transportation pressures too, and it was considered unnecessary, thus the CCP wanted to stop it. "Zhongyang pizhun liangshibu dangzu guanyu liangshi diaoyun wenti de baogao" (The CCP CC Approved the Report about Grain Transportation by the Party Organisation of

Therefore, a region with higher per capita food production had the advantage of feeding the local people. It should be noted that the grain yield differed from the grain budget, as discussed previously. It was the latter that determined how much grain the people could eat. Nevertheless, higher per capita production left more room for a higher food budget, even if the procurement increased. Inner Mongolia's per capita grain budget was high. Its peasants' income was also higher than that of most of their counterparts in China, although they were still poorer than city residents.[67]

The vast land with a low population density also helped Inner Mongolia to suffer less from the commune canteen, which was believed to be a symbol of communism by Mao. Mao claimed: "We can practice communism regarding food, clothing, and housing. Eating in public canteens without money is communism."[68] The utopian collective canteen proved to be a disaster. Many peasants' food, furniture, utensils, and even houses were confiscated to build canteens. They were forced to join the canteen, and some had to walk for kilometres to get there. Initially, the food was adequate, as no one needed to pay for the meal, but food waste was widespread. Gradually, the canteen lacked food as well, and people starved. Nevertheless, in Inner Mongolia, the percentage of people who ate at the commune canteen was the lowest. It was very impractical to build commune canteens when people lived scattered, and the herders might move from place to place. Thus, only 16.7% of people in Inner Mongolia went to the collective canteen, while in some provinces and cities, it was above 90%. For example, in Henan, 97.8%, Hunan 97.6%, Sichuan 96.7%, Yunnan 96.5%, Shanghai 94.5%, Guizhou 92.6%, and Anhui 90.5%. [69]Low commune canteen coverage meant Inner Mongolia luckily avoided many canteen problems.

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the Ministry of Food), 7 December 1958, in DGLF.

[67] It could be proved by Tan Zhenlin's report in 1957. "(In Longxi County, Fujian Province) every peasant can get about 20 *yuan* income after deducting the living cost. Every household with 5 people can receive 100 *yuan* net income. …Such a high income is not common in other places in the country, except Pearl River Delta, Yangtze Delta, Chengdu Plain and some cash crop areas, sparsely populated Northeast and Inner Mongolia and the big cities' suburb." Tan recognised the low population density contributing to Inner Mongolia's peasants' good life. Tan Zhenlin, "Guanyu woguo nongmin shouru qingkuang he shenghuo shuiping de chubu yanjiu," 5 May 1957, in DGLF.

[68] Mao Zedong, "Zai Beidaihe zhengzhiju kuoda huiyi shang de jianghua: San," in *Mao Zedong sixiang wansui*, Vol. 4 (1958.1-1960.12), 108.

[69] Yang Jisheng, *Mubei*, 752-753.

1962: A Short-lived Period of Lenient Nationality Policy and the Change in International Relations

Because of the unprecedented famine, there was a short period for people to reflect and criticise the Party's disastrous radical policy. The "Seven-Thousand Cadres Conference" in January and February 1962 was the climax of the criticism. At this conference, Mao had to make a self-criticism. Officials and political figures in charge of national minority works also seized the opportunity brought by the famine, urging the Party to ease the extremely radical policies in minority regions. In August 1961, the Northwest Bureau sent the CCP CC a report reviewing some mistakes in implementing national minority policies in Qinghai, Gansu and Tibet. The CCP CC forwarded it in December 1961. The Northwest Bureau argued that increasing livestock and developing productivity should be prioritised. Besides, the Party should cautiously classify classes among herders, reduce the size of People's Communes, protect national minority people's rights, protect freedom of religion, insist on the United Front, train more minority cadres, criticise great Han chauvinism and so on.[70] In general, the diction of this report was not far from the moderate line from 1949 to 1957. In April and May 1962, a United Front conference was held. The CCP was eager to win over intellectuals, prominent figures of industry and commerce, democratic parties, religious leaders and national minorities.[71] On 15 May 1962, Ulanhu, who was also the head of the State Ethnic Affairs Commission, submitted a report arguing for a lenient minority policy, together with Li Weihan (the head of the United Front Work Department), Xu Bing (the deputy minister of the UFWD), and Liu Chun (the deputy head of the SEAC).[72] Ulanhu and his colleagues' report gained the approval of the CCP CC. Three days later, on 18 May 1962, the tenth Panchen Lama sent a long report (70,000 Character Petition) to the Chinese government, criticising the cruel persecution of the Tibetans. Initially, the CCP cadres' response to

[70] "Zhonggong zhongyang pizhuan 'Xibei diqu diyici minzu gongzuo huiyi jiyao'" (The CCP CC Commenting and Forwarding "The Summary of the First Nationality Conference in the Northeast"), 6 December 1961, in DGLF.

[71] Li Weihan, *Huiyi yu yanjiu*, 871-875.

[72] "Zhonggong zhongyang pizhuan 'guanyu minzu gongzuo huiyi de baogao'" (The CCP CC Commenting and Forwarding the "Report About the Nationality Work Conference"), 20 June 1962, in DGLF.

Panchen's petition was relatively open-minded. Although they still insisted the achievements in Tibet were more crucial, they apologised for the mistakes and promised to correct them.[73]

However, the CCP became more left-leaning again at the Tenth Plenary Session of the Eighth CCP CC in September 1962. Mao brought the CCP back to its radical line, emphasising the class struggle and fighting against revisionism. As the Sino-Soviet split was deepening, Mao worried that China could be infiltrated by the "revisionists". Meanwhile, Mao's grudge against some of his comrades was growing. He was disappointed with Liu Shaoqi, who had a more pessimistic opinion of the Great Leap Forward. He was also unhappy with the new household responsibility system. Moreover, Mao refused to rehabilitate Peng Dehuai, who had been accused of being anti-Party because of his criticism of the GLF. Peng wrote Mao a long letter to defend himself, but Mao believed Peng was China's "revisionist" and insisted the punishment of Peng Dehuai was correct. Without thinking of the political system's

[73] There were several meeting documents about Panchen Lama's Petition. CCP senior cadres like Zhou Enlai, Peng Zhen, Xi Zhongxun, Li Weihan, Zhang Jingwu (The first secretary of the CCP Tibet Work Committee) and so on had conversations with the Panchen Lama. Their talks were very long, but basically the party cadres honestly admitted they made mistakes in Tibet and other Tibetan regions in Qinghai, Gansu,Yunnan and Sichuan. They made apologies to the Panchen Lama.

For example, Peng Zhen said: "The work achievements in Tibet are the main thing, but the religious issues have not been handled well, and there are too many prisoners. Some of them are serious mistakes. If they continue to exist, they will be detrimental to the trust of the party and cause losses."

Li Weihan's words were more regretful. he said, "Last year, I had admitted the mistakes to Panchen the Great Scholar (*da shi*). According to Chairman Mao's instructions, mistakes must always be reviewed once, twice, three times, a hundred times, until others don't want to listen anymore, and until we correct them. The Great Scholar's report raised this issue again. It's good to raise it. We admit our mistake again." Xi Zhongxun added: "Minister Li's words are an apology to the Great Scholar, and we apologise to you again."

Zhou Enlai's words in July 1962 were not as soft and apologetic as the words of Li Weihan and Xi Zhongxun. He mainly defended the CCP. But he also said it's good for the Panchen Lama to complain about the problems. Zhou said: "The attitude adopted by the Panchen the Great Scholar is basically different from that of the Dalai. He said all or most of what was on his mind, to work together and to make things better for the country within the motherland. As I said just now, it is for the sake of the reputation of the Party and the country." (Zhou's words were collected in the document of Peng Zhen and Panchen Lama's talk).

See "Peng Zhen tongzhi he Banchan, Apei de tanhua jiyao" (The Summary of the Talk Between Comrade Peng Zhen and the Panchen Lama, Ngapoi), 8 June 1962, "Xi Zhongxun Li Weihan deng tongzhi he Banchan tanhua jiyao (1) (2) (3)" (The Summary of Xi Zhongxun Li Weihan and Other Comrades and the Panchen Lama's Talk), on 21, 22, 25 June 1962, DGLF.

problem, Mao believed the harsh economic conditions were due to his cadres' corruption, and he even believed class enemies were controlling the power.[74] The change in international relations and domestic political conflicts made Mao believe the class struggle was one of the most urgent issues. He launched the "Four Clean-ups" Movement, also called the Socialist Education Movement.[75] The aim of the Socialist Education Movement was "opposing and preventing revisionism" and "peaceful evolution".

When the Sino-Soviet relations rapidly deteriorated in the 1960s, the MPR firmly aligned with the Soviet Union.[76] Tsedenbal, with his personal connections to the Soviet Union, had already perceived China's ambitions for Mongolian land. This perception, along with the escalating ideological polemic, led to a sharp increase in tension between the two states. On 22 December 1963, the Central Committee of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party passed a resolution denouncing the CCP.[77] On 12 June 1964, the MPRP sent a letter to the CCP, harshly criticising the CCP's ideological mistakes. The letter claimed: "Long-standing racial discrimination and nationalism, militant chauvinism, and an unprincipled mixture of dogmatism and

[74] Guo Dehong and Lin Xiaobo, *Siqing yundong shilu* (A History of the Four Clean-ups Movement), Hangzhou: Zhejiang renmin chubanshe, 2005, 6-19.

[75] The Four Clean-ups: Initially there were four small "clean-ups" in the countryside: to clean up accounts (*qing zhangmu*), clean up warehouses (*qing cangku*), clean up properties (*qing caiwu*), and clean up work points (*qing gongfen*). Tt was aimed to solve the serious corruption of commune cadres during the Great Leap Forward. In the city, it was "five Antis": anti-corruption (*fan tanwu fubai*), anti-speculation (*fan toujidaoba*), anti-extravagance and waste (*fan puzhang langfei*), anti-decentralization (*fan fensan zhuyi*), and anti-bureaucracy (*fan guanliaozhuyi*). Later, the campaign became "four big clean-ups" (or translated as four purifies): To clean up politics, economy, organisation, thought.

[76] About the Soviet-Mongolian alliance, my supervisor Sergey Radchenko has detailed and insightful examinations, with valuable translations of a large number of archival documents. Sergey Radchenko, "New Documents on Mongolia and the Cold War," Cold War International History Project Bulletin, Issue 16, 341-446; "The Soviets' Best Friend in Asia: The Mongolian Dimension of the Sino-Soviet Split," CWIHP Working Paper, No. 42, 2003, 2-23. Also, Liu Xiaoyuan, "Zhong-Meng guanxi zhengchanghua: Yige zhengzhi xianxiang de lichang" (The Normalisation of the Sino-Mongolian Relations: The Process of the Political Phenomenon), *Ershiyi shiji*, Part 1 (December 2022) and Part 2 (February 2023).

[77] "Guanyu Zhongguo gongchandang lingdao ren zai shijie gongchanzhuyi yundong zhong tiaoqi de fenqi he Menggu renmin geming dang de lichang" (On the CCP Leaders Stirring Up Divisions in the World Communist Movement and the Stance of the MPRP), 22 December 1963, translated from *Ünen*, 13 June 1964, in *Menggu renmin gemingdang fanhua yanlun* (The Anti-Chinese Speeches of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party), Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 1966, 85.

revisionism underlie the ideals and practices of the Chinese splittists."[78] Sino-Mongolian relations rapidly worsened.

Mongolia's anger toward China was not only ideological but also rooted in the fact that the CCP still viewed Mongolia as its former vassal. The CCP has repeatedly expressed its desire to reclaim Mongolian territory.[79] The MPR accused China of having "racial discrimination and nationalism" and "chauvinism", revealing Mongolia's grievance against China's suzerain mentality. Mao's conversation with the Japanese leftists on 10 July 1964 further triggered Mongolia's indignation, worsening the already unhappy Sino-Mongolian relations. Mao criticised the Soviet Union's chauvinism in front of the Japanese visitors: "The Soviet Union occupied too many places. At the Yalta Conference, Outer Mongolia was allowed to be independent in name and separated from China in name, but it was actually controlled by the Soviet Union. The territory of Outer Mongolia is much larger than the area of your Kuril Islands. We once mentioned whether it is possible to return Outer Mongolia to China. They said no."[80] The Japanese Media revealed this conversation. The Soviet Union's mouthpiece, Pravda, fiercely criticised Mao's arguments: "Why did Mao Zedong need to make such extravagant statements? The whole point is that the Chinese leaders are not satisfied with the existence of an independent Mongolian state that maintains friendly relations with the USSR and other socialist countries. They would like to deprive the MPR of its independence and make it a Chinese province."[81] After *Pravda*'s criticism of Mao, the Mongolian press also responded to Mao with outrage. On 9 September 1964, the MPRP's propaganda newspaper *Ünen* published a lengthy article condemning Mao's arguments. It said: "Mao Zedong bluntly stated his desire to annex the territory of neighbouring socialist countries without any basis." It

[78] "Menggu renmin geming dang 1964 nian 6 yue 12 ri zhi zhonggong zhongyang de xin" (The MPRP's Letter on 12 June 1964 to the CCP CC), translated from *Ünen*, 28 July 1964, *Menggu renmin gemingdang fanhua yanlun*, 98.

[79] About China's wish to reclaim Mongolia, see Sergey Radchenko, "New Documents on Mongolia and the Cold War," *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, Issue 16, 341-446.

[80] Mao Zedong, "Jiejian riben shehuidang renshi Zuozuomu Gengsan, Heitian Shounan, Xipo Jianguang deng de tanhua (The Conversation with Japan Socialist Party Members Kōzō Sasaki, Kuroda Hisao and Kanemitsu Hososakoin), 10 July 1964, *Mao zedong sixiang wansui*, Vol. 5 (1961-1968), 142.

[81] "Po Povodu Besedy Mao Tsze-duna C Gruppoy Yaponskikh Sotsialistov" (Regarding Mao Zedong's Talk with a Group of Japanese Socialists), *Pravda*, 2 September 1964.

vented its long-standing resentment of China's chauvinism: "Chinese leaders have long dreamed of turning the Mongolian People's Republic into a frontier region of China to administer. As early as 1936, Mao Zedong said in a conversation with the American writer Snow that with the victory of the Chinese people's revolution, the Mongolian People's Republic would 'directly become' a part of China." [82]

The worsening Sino-Mongolia relations threw the Mongols in China into an awkward situation. The authorities began to suspect that the Inner Mongols may be pro-Mongolia rather than pro-China. Some Inner Mongols were attacked and purged in the Socialist Education Movement because they were too close to their northern cousins, although the number of victims was limited. However, this persecution would reach its peak during the Cultural Revolution.

The Socialist Education Movement in Inner Mongolia

As the Party returned to Mao's radical line, the soft, moderate United Front policy was no longer tolerated. The head of the UFWD, Li Weihan, was labelled "revisionist" and "capitulationist".[83] The Panchen Lama was also criticised. National minorities also had to participate in the new wave of class struggle. Ulanhu was not keen on class struggle. Nevertheless, under the totalitarian system, he did not have much choice but to strive to obey the Party's decision.

Ulanhu's previous policies, like "Three Nos and Two Benefits", had significantly assuaged the negative impact of class struggle on the Mongols. But this time, the moderate policies were criticised. There was a big polemic about whether to designate classes among herders. Ulanhu initially still insisted on his "no class designation" policy. However, in 1963, the CCP North China Bureau held a "Four Clean-ups" conference in Hohhot, deciding that the people in the pastoral area had to be classified into different classes. Ulanhu had no choice but to abide by the North China Bureau's decision.[84] Initially, Ulanhu suggested that if the income from

[82] "Menggu tongxunshe jiu Mao Zedong tong yipi Riben shehui dang ren de tanhua fabiao de shengming", translated from *Ünen*, 9 September 1964, in *Menggu renmin gemingdang fanhua yanlun*, 119-122.

[83] Li Weihan, *Huiyi yu yanjiu*, 875-876.

[84] Zhao Zhenbei, "Guanghui de bangyang, buxiu de yeji," in *Wulanfu jinian wenji*, Vol. 2, 1990, 105-106.

exploitation were more than 70% of the total income, the person would be classified as a “herdlord”. Yet, his colleagues in the IMAR, even some Mongol cadres, were more radical than he. They were very reluctant to accept this relatively mild classification. After debating repeatedly, Ulanhu and his colleagues finally agreed that the exploitation income of over 60% of the total income would be a “herdlord”. However, Ulanhu still did not intend to relinquish his previous opinion on not classifying classes. According to one of his colleagues, Ulanhu told his colleagues twice that Comrade Liu Shaoqi said, “The pastoral area in the IMAR did not classify classes, and the livestock increased; if it classifies classes now, will it impact the development of livestock?” [85]Ulanhu tried his best to downplay class struggles and prioritise economic development. As class struggle was re-focused, the nationality problem needed to be linked to the class struggle as well. In December 1962, Ulanhu repeated the Party’s judgment that “the nature of the national question is class question.”[86] Under the new state guidelines, the nationality question had to give way to the class question. Even worse, the loyalty of the Mongols was under suspicion. Some Mongols were accused of being “national separatists (or splittists)” and harshly criticised during the Socialist Education Movement.

A Mongol scholar, Rinqin, discovered that the Mongols often became the attack target in Mongol-Han mixed living areas. In Jalaid Banner, a Mongol-Han mixed area, Mongol peasants were found to have more livestock. When the People’s Commune system was established, the Mongol peasants were allowed to keep one

[85] Ibid., 106.

[86] It was made in 1958 by the CCP CC when it commented a rebellion in Xunhua Salar Autonomous County in Qinghai Province. In April 1958, a rebellion took place in Xunhua Salar Autonomous County. It was said that about three or four thousand people were involved. The rebels kept attacking the town for 2 days and 3 nights. About 68.4% Party members and 65.9% Youth League members joined the rebellion. The CCP CC believed it was a bad consequence of neglecting ideological education. It argued the class education should be enhanced among national minority party members, making them embrace communism, rather than nationalism. Then the CCP CC argued: “In a classed society, the nature of national question is class question.” Huang Zhu, “Renmin ribao teyue pinglunyuan ‘ping suowei ‘minzu wenti de shizhi shi jieji wenti’ de youlai” (The Origin of People’s Daily Special Commentator’s “On the So-called the Nature of National Question is Class Question”), *Zhongguo tongyi zhanxian*, 2003, No. 9, 17.
Wulanfu, “Wulanfu zai zizhiqu minzu gongzuo huiyi shang de jianghua jilu gao” (The Transcript of Ulanhu’s Speech on the Autonomous Region Nationality Work Conference), 20 December 1962, in *Ducaoji: Wulanfu fangeming yanlun xuanbian, di’erji* (1955-1964), in DGLF.

to four cattle as the “household livestock” (*zi liu chu*). It was the alternative to the household plot or the subsidiary farm (*zi liu di*). When the Socialist Education Movement was launched, some Mongol peasants, due to their diligent work, owned more than a dozen cattle. Nevertheless, the growth in livestock was regarded as “the struggle between two roads (socialist and capitalist)” and a “class struggle in livestock production.” These Mongol peasants were criticised. Simply because they were richer, their class stance was considered problematic.[87] Besides, as many Mongols believed in Lamaism, some used to visit sacred Buddhist places or even meet the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama in the past. It became a political mistake.[88] The 14th Dalai Lama has been living in exile in India since 1959, while the 10th Panchen Lama was harshly denounced after his 70,000 Character Petition in 1962. Their followers were almost destined to be condemned in the political movement. Moreover, the Mongols received more land, lower class labels, and other favourable treatments due to the previous affirmative policies. Yet, these preferential policies caused their Han neighbours' resentment. Some Han peasants claimed their Mongol neighbours enjoyed privileges at the Han people’s expense.[89]

In the pastoral area, with almost all Mongol populations, anti-revisionism became a critical task. According to Rinqin, from 1963 to 1965, 33 People’s Communes and pastoral units launched the “Four Clean-ups” Movement. 23 among them were near the border to the Soviet Union and the MPR, indicating that Inner Mongolia had a unique position in the Sino-Soviet and Sino-Mongolian conflicts. The IMAR Party Committee emphasised in 1963 that “the most important task” in the pastoral area was “opposing the subversive activities of modern revisionism and the destructive activities of national separatists”. [90] In 1964, the authorities said, “Many production

[87] Renqin and Li Yuwei, “Shilun zhalaite qi siqing yundong” (Tentatively on the “Four Clean-ups” Movement in Zhalaite County), *Mengguxue jikan*, 2013, No. 1, online journal, available at: https://www.sinoss.net/c/2018-06-13/548100.shtml.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Cheng et al., *A Chinese Reble beyond the Great Wall*, 44.

[90] “Neimenggu Dangwei Dishiyici Muqu Gongzuo Huiyi Jiyao” (The Summary of Inner Mongolia Party Committee’s Eleventh Pastoral Area Work Conference), 25 July 1963, in *Neimengu Xumuye Wenxian Ziliao Xuanbian,* vol 2-B, 129-137, quoted in Renqin, “Shilun ershi shiji liushi niandai neiemnggu shehui zhuyi jiaoyu yundong” (Four Spiritualization Movement of Inner Mongolia), *Mengguxue jikan, 2011*, No. 1, online journal, available at: https://www.sinoss.net/c/2018-06-13/548076.shtml.
The author translated “Siqing” as “Four Spiritualization” in the English title and abstract.

teams and communes were at the border, where the foreign revisionist leadership groups are continuously doing subversive and destructive activities. If we don't prepare well and propagandise well, once there are problems, it will not be good for the entire anti-revisionist struggle".[91] Thus, some Mongols were labelled as national separatists or were suspected of having links with national separatists. It seemed that some Inner Mongolia leaders still tried to maintain "national unity" and did not want the Mongol to be denounced too harshly. For example, in New Barag Right Banner in Hulunbuir League, there were 24 "national separatists" found. Only 3 of them were struggled against. The guideline was "not to make too many enemies in the border areas".[92]

Some Mongolian intellectuals and cadres were also purged during the Socialist Education Movement, allegedly in the name of anti-national separatism. Eastern Mongols suffered more than their western counterparts. Eastern Mongols' history of seeking independence and dreaming of the unification of Inner and Outer Mongolia became their most unforgivable sins. Besides, many received an education during Manchukuo's period and even studied in Japan before 1945. The imperialist education background made their loyalty more suspicious. In contrast, the Western Mongols, especially Ulanhu's countrymen Tumed Mongols, were old communists trained in Yan'an. TJ Cheng believed Ulanhu used "opposing local nationalism" as an excuse to purge his Eastern rivals.[93] While Yang Haiying argued that by attacking "national separatists," Ulanhu could prove his loyalty to the CCP. Ulanhu's calculation was to sacrifice several Mongols while preserving most of his people.[94]

In Inner Mongolia Normal College (also called Teachers' College), a former Party secretary of the college Tömörbagan (not the Tömörbagan/Temurbagana in Chapter 1) was struggled, who later became a deputy director of IMAR Education

[91] "Neimenggu Dangwei Guanyu zai Muqu Kaizhan Shehuizhuyi Jiaoyu Yundong Wenti de Baogao"(Inner Mongolia Party Committee's report on conducting the Socialist Education Movement in pasturing area), 28th January 1964, in *Neimengu Xumuye Wenxian Ziliao Xuanbian*, vol 2-B, p. 159, quoted in Renqin, "Shilun Neimenggu Siqing Yundong."

[92] "Xin Baerhu youqi shehuizhuyi jiaoyu yundong shimo" (The Socialist Education Movement in New Barag Right Banner), 14 April 2011, Available at http://nmgqq.com.cn/shuzishizhi/nianjiankanwu/kanwu/shizhierlingwu/third0287/2011-4-14/4477.html.

[93] Cheng, "Neimeng dongbu 'wenhe tugai' yu Wulanfu de wenge daotai," 370.

[94] Yang Haiying, *Zai Zhongguo yu Menggu de jiafeng zhijian*, 216.

Department in 1964. He was suspected to be a “national separatist”. In 1962, a Mongol student, Mandakhchi, from the middle school attached to the Normal College, tried to run to the MPR, but he was arrested by the police. Tömörbagan made an effort to bring the student back to school and did not punish him. In 1963, three Mongol students from the Normal College successfully defected to the MPR. Mandakhchi, who had enrolled in the Normal College in 1963, was believed to be involved. Tömörbagan was blamed for his students’ defection. Although, after intensive investigations, no clear evidence of his separatism was found, he was still sent back to the college to be denounced in 1965. He was forced to bow, lower his head, and make self-criticisms. Other teachers and students denounced him furiously. Two students struggled with the former Party secretary and were also Eastern Mongols. The work team leader who investigated and denounced Tömörbagan was Cholmon, a Tumed Mongol. Students who viewed the struggle sessions privately thought it was an internal conflict between the Eastern and Western Mongols. [95]

If a Mongol was fond of the MPR, it could bring them trouble. Erdenitogtoh, from Hexigten Banner, working at the Inner Mongolia Language Commission, was denounced as an MPR spy. His “crimes” included talking to an expert from the MPR, using public funds to buy books to send to the MPR, sending old academic publications about languages and literature to the MPR, supporting Inner Mongolia’s Mongolian to adopt the Khalkha dialect (the official language of the MPR), and visiting the MRP without honestly confessing what he did. Also, his workplace lost some materials; the “Four Clean-ups” work team suspected that Erdenitogtoh sent them to the MRP. [96] If a Mongol questioned Ulanhu’s authority, it could become a “crime”, too. A Mongol historian and translator, Gaawaa, working at the Inner Mongolia Language Commission, was denounced. He was from Naiman Banner and received his education in Manchukuo. In addition to his national separatist thoughts, he was found opposing Ulanhu. He used to say, “I suspected Ulanhu. My suspicions are well-founded.” Because of the comment, the “Four Clean-ups” team harshly

[95] Cheng, “Neimeng dongbu ‘wenhe tugai’ yu Wulanfu de wenge daotai,” 370-371. Cheng et al., *A Chinese Reble beyond the Great Wall*, 44.

[96] “Siqing Jianbao 34”, 26 March 1966, in Yang Haiying (ed), MJNKKS, Vol. 8, Tokyo: Fukyosha Publishing, 2016, 493-496.

criticised him.[97] Ironically, Gaawaa would be condemned as a member of Ulanhu's gang in the Cultural Revolution. A new term was invented, "the separatist line of Ulanhu-Gaawaa-Long Gan national education," despite Gaawaa allegedly opposing Ulanhu during the "Four Clean-ups".[98]

In fact, not only the Eastern Mongols, but also some Tumed Mongols, were not exempt from the struggle. A Mongol scholar (he also has a Chinese name, Huang Jingtao), and his book "A Summary of Inner Mongolia's Development" was criticised by his colleagues. Togtoh was a Tumed Mongol and became a devoted follower of Marxism in Yan'an in the late 1930s. The book was finished in 1956 and published in April 1957, before the Anti-rightist Movement. When his book was published, the Party still tolerated the minority's nationalism to a certain extent. Yet, during the Socialist Education Movement, it became a target of attack. His book criticised Manchu and Han colonialism.[99] Thus, it was accused of "replacing the conflict between imperialism and the Chinese nation (*zhonghua minzu*), and the conflict between feudalism and the masses with national conflicts (Mongols and others)", "replacing class relations with nationality relations" and "on the path of undermining national unity and the unification of the motherland." Nevertheless, Togtoh was relatively lucky. His criticism was not as high-profile as others, and he was still addressed as a "comrade".[100]

Power Struggle between Ulanhu and Li Xuefeng

In approximately 1964, Li Xuefeng, the first secretary of the North China Bureau, began to attack the first secretary of Inner Mongolia repeatedly. Li would ultimately defeat Ulanhu at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. Several scholars point out

[97] "Siqing Jianbao 33", 23 March 1966, in Yang Haiying (ed), MJNKKS, Vol. 8, Tokyo: Fukyosha Publishing, 2016, 488-492.

[98] "Gewa: Jiechu de mengguzu wenxuejia shixuejia" (Gaawaa: A Prominent Littérateur and Historian), 11 November 2010, on the website of Institute of Ethnic Literature CASS. Available at: http://iel.cass.cn/ztpd/ddlt/zjda/201011/t20101111_2763008.shtml.

[99] Taoketao, Neimenggu fazhan gaishu (A Summary of Inner Mongolia's Development), only Part 1, Hohhot: Neimenggu renmin chubanshe, 1957.

[100] Daiyongtong and Ala, "Makesi Liening zhuyi haishi zichanjieji minzuzhuyi: Taoketao zhu Neimenggu fazhan gaishu (shangce) jindai bufen zhong de jige wenti" (Marxism-Leninism or Bourgeois Nationalism: Several Problems of Togtoh's *A Summary of Inner Mongolia's Development* (Part 1)), in MJNKKS, Vol. 8, 467-487.

that although Ulanhu was merely the second secretary of the North China Bureau, he was the first secretary Li Xuefeng's superior in the CCP's echelon.[101] Ulanhu became one of the six alternate members[102] of the CCP Political Bureau in September 1956 on the 1st Plenary Session of the 8th CC of the CCP. Li Xuefeng became one of the seven secretaries[103] of the Secretariat of the CCP on the same plenary. Both alternate members of the Politburo and secretaries of the Secretariat are called "Party and State leaders", but the former's rank is higher than the latter unless the secretary holds other higher positions.[104] Nevertheless, the differences between the two positions were not very obvious.

Li Xuefeng had a great advantage, which Ulanhu did not have. Li gained the approval of Both Mao Zedong and Liu Shaoqi in the early 1960s. In 1964, Mao was gradually displeased with Liu Shaoqi's rapidly growing personal authority in the Socialist Education Movement. In August 1964, Li Xuefeng questioned Liu's approach; Mao was very excited and immediately said, "Li Xuefeng disagreed. There were talented people in the Party in the White Area (KMT-occupied area). The representation of the correct work line in the White Area is Li Xuefeng." In the past, the phrase "representation of the correct work line in the White Area" belonged to Liu Shaoqi, which was even written in the Party's resolution.[105] Mao's words expressed

[101] Cheng et al., *A Chinese Reble beyond the Great* Wall, 60. Yang Haiying, Yang Haiying, *Zai Zhongguo yu Menggu de jiafeng zhijian*, 206.

[102] The six alternate members elected in September 1956 were Ulanhu, Zhang Wentian, Lu Dingyi, Chen Boda, Kang Sheng, Bo Yibo.

[103] The seven secretaries of the Secretariat elected in September 1956 were Deng Xiaoping, Peng Zhen, Wang Jiaxiang, Tan Zhenlin, Tan Zheng, Huang Kecheng, Li Xuefeng.

[104] It should be noted that even at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, although Ulanhu had been harshly criticised and lost most of the power, he was still allowed to stand with Mao Zedong on Tiananmen on 31 August and 1 October 1966. In official reports, Ulanhu was still listed before Li Xuefeng. Officially, Ulanhu was Li Xuefeng's superior in the party's events. (See, "Mao Zhuxi Jiejian Wushiwan Geming Shisheng" (Chairman Mao received 500,000 revolutionary teachers and students", *People's Daily*, 1st September 1966. *"Zai Wuchanjieji Wenhuadageming Gaochaozhong Relie Qingzhu Jianguo Shiqi Zhounian"* (Warmly elebrating the 17th anniversary of the PRC at the climax of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution), People's Daily, 2 October 1966.

Nevertheless, political figures can be given a high position in the hierarchy without any real power. The position of Song Qingling (Madame Sun Yat-sen) was often higher than Zhou Enlai, but she had no real power. In the People's Daily 2nd October's report above, Song Qingling were listed after Lin Biao and Liu Shaoqi, but before Zhou Enlai.

[105] Wang Li, *Wang Li fansi lu* (The Reflection of Wang Li), vol 2, Hong Kong: Beixing Chubanshe, 2008, 371-372, 544-545. In 1945, the CCP passed the "Resolutions on a Number of Historical Issues", praising Liu Shaoqi as the "representation of the correct work

his dissatisfaction with Liu and demonstrated his fondness for Li Xuefeng. Undoubtedly, Li's political status was no match for Liu Shaoqi. No one, including Li Xuefeng himself, would take Mao's words seriously. Yet, after all, Li Xuefeng gained Mao's praise. A prominent historian, Gao Hua, commented, "Mao's words seem to be joking, but not entirely. Liu Shaoqi's 'representation of the correct work line in the White Area was confirmed at the 7th Congress of the CCP. At that time, Mao was satisfied with Liu Shaoqi. Now, Mao was not satisfied with Liu Shaoqi. He gave the title to Li Xuefeng, who had also worked in the White Area. It was reasonable."[106] Wang Li, a member of the Central Cultural Revolution Team and an important figure in the early period of the Cultural Revolution, also commented, "In Chairman Mao's heart, Li Xuefeng's place was very high." Wang Li said even after Li Xuefeng followed Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping's "wrong line" in the early period of the Cultural Revolution, Mao still wanted to protect him.[107]

Nevertheless, Li Xuefeng was afraid of offending Liu Shaoqi. When Liu Shaoqi reiterated his opinion, Li made a self-criticism and agreed with Liu. At the time, Liu Shaoqi's wife, Wang Guangmei, was acquiring enormous influence by promoting her "Taoyuan Experience"[108] in the countryside in the Socialist Education Movement. Li Xuefeng did not want to steal the state's first lady's limelight, so he focused on the city's "Four Cleap-ups".[109] Li Xuefeng also sent a letter to Liu Shaoqi, claiming the cadres must firmly oppose the right-leaning thoughts in the "Four Clean-ups". In the letter, he also introduced his method of movement. It seems that Liu Shaoqi soon

line in the White Area".

[106] Gao Hua, "Zai Guizhou siqing yundong de beihou" (Behind Guizhou's Four Clean-ups Movement), in *Eershiyi shiji*, February, 2006, No. 93, 82-83.

[107] Wang Li, *Wang Li Fansilu*, 545.

[108] Taoyuan Experience: In November 1963, Wang Guangmei went to Taoyuan Production Brigade, in Hebei Province, to launch the "Four Clean-ups" Movement. Wang Guangmei worked as the work team's vice-leader, using her pseudonym Dong Pu. The work team lived and worked together with the local peasants, secretly picking several trusted ones. Wang Guangmei and her comrades believed the local cadres were extremely corrupt and were enemies. 43 of 46 cadres made self-criticism, and 39 were struggled against. A cadre named Wu Chen was accused of being a KMT spy. Wang Guangmei also encouraged tortures. Many "masses" were made to write self-criticisms too. After five months, the work team finished their "four clean-ups". Liu Shaoqi firmly supported his wife's approach in Taoyuan and promoted her Taoyuan Experience all over the country. See Tong Xiaoxi, *Jiduan niandai de gongmin zhengzhi: Qunzhong de wenhua dageming Shi* (Civic Politics in Extreme Times: The Masses' History of the Cultural Revolution), Hong Kong: China Cultural Communication Press, 2011, 46-57.

[109] Gao Hua, "Zai Guizhou siqing yundong de beihou," 83.

forgave Li Xuefeng's offence against his authority. On 12 October 1964, Liu forwarded the letter to all the Party Committees of provinces, cities, regions and ministries, asking other cadres to learn from Li's experience.[110] Two years later, at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, after Peng Zhen, the first secretary of Beijing's Party Committee, was accused of being anti-party, Li Xuefeng was appointed as the new first secretary of Beijing. This appointment proved that CCP's top leaders trusted Li. As Li Xuefeng had the endorsement of both Mao and Liu, Ulanhu was at a disadvantage in the power struggle. Li started to intervene in Inner Mongolia's governance in 1964. (Nevertheless, Li suffered harsh denunciations from the Red Guards and made self-criticisms repeatedly during the Cultural Revolution because he followed Liu Shaoqi's instructions. Mao and Zhou still protected him. In 1971, he was accused of being anti-party, along with Chen Boda and fell too.)

The failure of the Great Leap Forward deepened the food crisis. Many cadres tried to increase the arable land as much as possible. Li Xuefeng and Ulanhu already had disagreements about cultivating Inner Mongolian land. Ulanhu often resisted cultivating the "wasteland" and insisted on protecting the grassland. Yet, during the Great Leap Forward, he had to prioritise grain production, allowing grassland cultivation. The consequence turned out to be rapid desertification.[111] It made Ulanhu more determined to protect the grassland. In the early 1960s, Li and the North China Bureau wanted to turn more grassland into crop-growing land in Jarrud Banner, but Ulanhu and his colleagues prevented it. Some cadres believed it worsened the relations between Ulanhu and Li Xuefeng.[112] This assumption was

[110] "Zhonggong zhongyang pizhuan Li Xuefeng tongzhi gei Liu Shaoqi tongzhi de xin" (The CCP CC Forwarding the Letter from Comrade Li Xuefeng to Comrade Liu Shaoqi), 12 October 1964, in Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun guofang daxue dangshi dangjian zhenggong jiaoyanshi (ed), Zhonggong dangshi jiaoxue cankao ziliao, Vol. 24, Beijing: 1988, 501-503.

[111] Ulanhu said in December 1965, that 60% of the land cultivated in 1958 had became deserted. See "Wulanfu zai qingzhu 20 zhounian chouweihui zhaokai de zuotanhui shang de jianghua" (Ulanhu's Speech at the Symposium of the 20th Anniversary's Preparatory Meeting), 22 December 1965, *Ducaoji: Wulanfu fangeming yanlun xuanbian*, Vol. 3 (1965.11-1966.2), in CCRD.

[112] A Mongol cadre, Zhao Zhenbei, believed the dispute over land cultivation triggered Li Xuefeng's discontent with Ulanhu. I didn't find Zhao Zhenbei's article. It was referenced by Mongol scholar Rinqin. See Renqin, "Shilun ershi shiji liushi niandai neiemnggu shehui zhuyi jiaoyu yundong." Also, Zhao, in another article, mentioned that in 1962, Ulanhu stopped the North China Bureau's cultivation plan in Jarrud Banner. See Zhao Zhenbei, "Guanghui de Bangyang, Buxiu de Yeji," 106.

There are not many records about Jarrud Banner's land cultivation. A scholar, Zhong

reasonable. At the same time, Ulanhu also stopped the Department of Agriculture Cultivation (*nongken bu*)'s land-clearing plan in Hulunbuir. A cadre from the department whined resentfully, "Do you know the Department of Agriculture Cultivation has a problem with Inner Mongolia? …The department had sent hundreds of people and dozens of tractors, cars, and agricultural machinery to Nantun, preparing for a great cultivation. It was prevented by Ulanhu. The dispute went to the State Council. The person in charge of the department was criticised by Premier Zhou. The department lost millions of *yuan*. …We are answering Chairman Mao's call that the grain is the guideline. There was nothing wrong! How could the grassland and modernised farm compare to it? Which is more valuable, grain or grass? …"[113] It was very possible that Ulanhu's grassland protection also displeased the cadres from the North China Bureau if they believed grains were more important as well. Li Xuefeng was indignant that Inner Mongolia did not give grains to the state in 1964. The real reason, according to a Mongol cadre Cholmon, was that 1964's grain production had been impacted by disastrous coldness, only enough for self-sufficiency. Yet Li Xuefeng refused to sympathise with Inner Mongolia's difficulty. He accused Inner Mongolian officials of being very stingy, "not sparing one hair" (*yi mao bu ba*).[114]

Furthermore, Li was infuriated about Ulanhu's soft position on class struggle. According to the memoirs of Inner Mongolian cadres, Li visited Inner Mongolia repeatedly in 1964 and urged the cadres to engage more in class struggle. From March to April 1964, the leaders of the North China Bureau came to Hohhot and held a secretariat meeting from March to April 1964. At the meeting, Li interjected several times to criticise Inner Mongolia's inactivity of class struggle.[115] In July, Li came to

Wenjing's résumé, briefly wrote that Zhong used to object to the North China Bureau's land cultivation plan in Liao River's watershed, arguing it would damage the grassland, cause desertification, damage livestock husbandry, and harm national solidarity. The North China Bureau took his opinions into account and reduced the scale of cultivation to a significant degree. See https://www.gdass.org/ExpertsIntroduction_3619.shtml. Jarrud Banner was also at Liao River's watershed. It is possible that Zhao and Zhong meant the same incident.

[113] Liu Chunjing, "Wenge qianhou jiduan huiyi" (Some Memories Before and After the Cultural Revolution), in Yun Zhaoguang (ed), *Qingliang zhongsheng*, Hohhot: Yuanfang chubanshe, 2005, 46.

[114] Chaoluomeng, "Wo suo jingli de neimenggu wenhua dageming" (The Inner Mongolia's Cultural Revolution that I Experienced), in Yun Zhaoguang (ed), *Qingliang Zhongsheng*, Hohhot: Yuanfang Chubanshe, 2005, 65.

[115] *Wulanfu Zhuan*, 2007, p. 358.

Inner Mongolia again, calling the autonomous region “a pool of stagnant water” (si shui yi tan) and saying, “Some leaders were walking dead” (xing shi zou rou: meaning people who lack a soul and live a numb life). Some cadres realised that he was criticising Ulanhu.[116] According to Ulanhu’s younger sister Yun Qing, because Inner Mongolia suffered from serious wind disasters and droughts, Ulanhu prioritised dealing with the disasters rather than class struggle. However, Li Xuefeng said, “Inner Mongolia did not focus on class struggle and did not focus on the ‘Four Clean-ups’. Which one is more important, relief of disasters or class struggle?”[117] Li made speeches not only in Hohhot but also in other Leagues. From 3 to 16 October 1964, Ulanhu visited East Germany, while Inner Mongolia held a “Three-Level Cadres” conference starting on 6 October, lasting for one month. The main task of the conference was opposing right-leaning thoughts.[118] Li Xuefeng came back to Inner Mongolia again without Ulanhu’s presence. He criticised Ulanhu’s “Three Nos and Two Benefits” policy[119], which downplayed the class struggle. Li accused Ulanhu’s model of serving landlords and rich peasants and of lacking proletarian sentiment and a proletarian point of view.[120] He also arrogantly said “*meng*” in the Chinese word *menggu* (Mongol) meant being muddled (*hu tu*). He called on the cadres: “Stop

[116] Hao Weimin and Qimudedaoerji (eds), *Neimenggu tongshi gangyao*, Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2006, 598. Neimenggu zizhiqu dang’an ju and dang’an guan(eds), *Neimenggu zizhiqu dashiji: 1947-1987* (The Chronicles of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region), Hohhot: Neimenggu renmin chubanshe, 1988, 94. Wang Duo, *Wushi chunqiu*, 493-494.

[117] Yun Qing, “Zai wenhua dageming zhong” (In the Cultural Revolution), Amulan (collated) *Yun Qing wenji*, Hohhot: Neimenggu renmin chubanshe, 2005, 45-46.
Ulanhu’s opponents also accused him of “pitting the revolutionary struggle against the productive struggle”. In May 1966, Ulanhu’s colleague and later one of his main opponents, Quan Xingyuan, had a conversation with a North China Bureau’s cadre, Xie Xuegong. Quan Xingyuan mentioned that the North China Bureau had officially sent a telegram to criticise Inner Mongolia’s Party Committee on the class struggle issue. In January 1966, the Inner Mongolia Party Committee issued an emergent directive about Bayannur League’s disaster. In March 1966, the Ulanqab League invested a huge effort in fighting against the drought while downplaying the “Four Clean-ups” struggle, and it seems Ulanqab’s move got the Inner Mongolia Party Committee’s approval. The North China Bureau was furious. “Quan Xingyuan tongzhi tong Xie Xuegong tongzhi tanhua de jiyao” (The Minute of Comrade Quan Xingyuan and Comrade Xie Xuegong’s Conversation), 1 May 1966, Inner Mongolia Archive 11-20-563, collected in Yang (ed), MJNKKS, Vol. 3, 115.

[118] *Neimenggu Zizhiqu Dashiji: 1947-1987*, 95.

[119] Cheng Yi, “Bukanhuishou de wangshi”(Dreadful Memories of the Past), in Yun Zhaoguang (ed), *Qingliang zhongsheng*, 84.

[120] Mo Zhiqing, “Wenhua dageming diandi huiyi” (Memories of the Cultural Revolution),in Yun Zhaoguang (ed), *Qingliang zhongsheng*, 104.

being *meng*, stop being muddled, come on, get up to struggle!"[121] Li Xuefeng even aggressively asked whose hands the leadership was in and what colour the flag of the cadres was, and implied that Inner Mongolia was an independent kingdom.[122] In CCP's jargon, the charge of an "independent kingdom" was very serious. As mentioned before, Li Xuefeng's letter about how to carry out "Four Clean-ups" to Liu Shaoqi had been approved and forwarded widely on 12 October 1964. Possibly, Liu Shaoqi's approval further encouraged Li Xuefeng's, allowing him to be more confident in criticising Ulanhu and firmer in his leftist position. With hindsight, some Inner Mongolia cadres believed Li deliberately came to Inner Mongolia without Ulanhu's presence. Most cadres were not clear about Li's purpose at the time. However, a few cadres realised Li planned to bring Ulanhu down. It was said some wrote secret letters to the North China Bureau to report Ulanhu's political mistakes.[123] Ulanhu was enraged that they held the "Three-Level Cadres" conference without him.[124]

Emboldened by Li Xuefeng's public denunciation of Ulanhu, some cadres also started to oppose the first secretary of the IMAR. Xie Xuegong, a secretary of the Secretariat of the North China Bureau, criticised Inner Mongolia's right-leaning position on the nationality issues when he conducted the "Four Clean-ups" in person in Inner Mongolia.[125] Xie became a strong ally of Li Xuefeng. He was noticed furtively talking to other cadres,[126] probably inciting them to oppose Ulanhu. In April 1966, just before the Cultural Revolution, Xie returned to Inner Mongolia to prepare for the North China Bureau's meeting. He persuaded other cadres to collect opinions against Ulanhu.[127] In May 1965, Gao Jinming, a Manchu cadre, Ulanhu's inferior,[128] quarrelled with Ulanhu at a meeting, accusing him of oppressing democracy. Another cadre realised that Gao never acted so aggressively like this before. It was said that

[121] Tala, *Pingfan de rensheng: Tala geming huiyilu* (An Ordinary life: Tala's Revolutionary Memoir), Hohhot: Neimenggu renmin chubanshe, 2001, 364.
[122] Tala, ibid., 363-364. Mo Zhiqing, ""Wenhua dageming diandi huiyi," 104-105.
[123] Tala, *Pingfan de* rensheng, 363.
[124] Mo Zhiqing, "Wenhua dageming diandi huiyi," 105.
[125] Hao Weimin and Qimudedaoerji (eds), *Neimenggu tongshi gangyao*, 598-599.
[126] Mo Zhiqing, "Wenhua dageming diandi huiyi," 105.
[127] Chaoluomeng, "Wo suo jingli de neimenggu wenhua dageming," 67.
[128] Gao Jinming was a permanent secretary of Inner Mongolia's Party Committee. The permanent secretary's rank is lower than the first secretary.

after the meeting, Gao had called Li Xuefeng privately. [129] Guo Yiqing, the head of the propaganda department of Inner Mongolia's Party Committee, wrote three letters to Li Xuefeng to remind him of Ulanhu's problems.[130] Ulanhu's downfall would be coming soon.

Chapter Summary

In the late 1950s and the early 1960s, Mao Zedong's radicalism dominated China's politics. Although the Chairman made concessions temporarily due to the debacle of the GLF, he soon regained control and imposed his familiar class struggle on Chinese society again. In Inner Mongolia, however, Ulanhu was more pragmatic and indeed made efforts, no matter how feeble they were, to resist the radicalism. Nevertheless, he could not challenge Mao's authority. When he tried to use Inner Mongolia's special situation, a region with a certain number of national minorities, to resist Mao's utopian socialism-building plan, he was disapproved by Mao and had to yield to the GLF fanaticism. Mao did not permit any impediment to his ambition. As discussed in the last chapter, Mao considered strong local power to be a threat to the central authorities, regardless of localism or local nationalism. Local interests must obey the Party's core priorities. China's politics was like a tightrope walking for those realistic cadres. They had to be careful enough not to enrage the chairman, while at the same time, they needed to implement more practical policies to alleviate the utopian plan's damages. Ulanhu was still relatively more reasonable on animal husbandry, which contributed to the increase in livestock during the GLF, even though Inner Mongolia's grain production and industry did not escape from the GLF fanaticism. This chapter argues that Inner Mongolia's natural conditions, a vast land with high per capita grain production, were also crucial in mitigating the dreadful impact of the GLF. To a considerable extent, Inner Mongolia was lucky.

When China's political environment turned more radical, the CCP usually adopted a nationality-blind stance to rule its people. The United Front was put aside, and class struggle became the focus. Thus, a familiar pattern returned. Similar to the land

[129] Mo Zhiqing, "Wenhua dageming diandi huiyi," 101.

[130] "Neimenggu zizhiqu dangwei bangongshi guanyu Guo Yiqing zai wenhua dageming zhong suo fan yanzhong cuowu de shencha jielun he chuli yijian", 16 April 1983, in CCRD.

reform examined in Chapter 2, in the Socialist Education Movement, some Mongols were attacked because they were wealthier, like their well-off compatriots in the late 1940s. This time, however, their affluence was linked to the IMAR's preferential policies. Inevitably, it caused the Han people's grudge, which turned against the Mongols, but it would also turn against Ulanhu and his colleagues if the Han had opportunities to vent. Meanwhile, the deteriorating Sino-Soviet and Sino-Mongolian relations put Inner Mongols in a disadvantaged position. Their loyalty was questioned. Their close links with the MPR were dubious. These factors, together, made the ordinary Mongols more vulnerable to the political extremism of the 1960s. As Ulanhu was still in power, he was able to protect his Mongol countrymen from political extremism to a certain degree. However, again, Ulanhu could not challenge Mao's will. His resistance to political movements was limited. The Mongols became defenceless when Ulanhu was brought down during the Cultural Revolution.

Retrospectively, Li Xuefeng's attacks on Ulanhu looked, to some extent, absurd, as he prioritised class struggle rather than people's lives and welfare: he was enraged by Ulanhu's practical stance, prioritising response to natural disasters. Nonetheless, in the 1960s, paying attention to class struggle was approved and encouraged by the Party's senior leaders, especially Mao Zedong. It is why cadres like Li Xuefeng could gain Mao's favour. Ulanhu, however, despite obeying the Party's line, was inactive in the class struggle. His disadvantage in the power struggle was obvious.

Chapter 6 The Horrendous Atrocities: The Cultural Revolution

As the previous chapter discussed, some cadres from the North China Bureau's grudge against Ulanhu grew during the "Four Clean-ups" Movement. Ulanhu had to compromise, allowing the designation of classes and class struggle in the pastoral area. The situation of the Mongol people was worsening. As the Party had claimed, "the national question is a class question," national minorities were no longer protected by the previous affirmative policies. Even worse, the Mongols became the target of the Socialist Education Movement, as their economic conditions, due to previous policies favouring them, were better than their Han counterparts. They were given more land during the land reform. If they had to be given a class label (the Mongols in agricultural areas had to be classified), their class label was usually lower than their Han neighbours. Although not all Han people complained, it did make some of them disgruntled.[1] Han people's grudge was almost inevitable. When affirmative policies are implemented to benefit marginalised groups, the majority, who do not get the benefits, will often perceive "reverse discrimination". Now, Han people could use the new doctrine of class struggle to attack their Mongol neighbours.

Ulanhu's opposition to great Han chauvinism sounded raucous in the 1960s political environment, as the nationwide tone was class struggle, opposing revisionism, etc. He created more excuses for his North China Bureau's rivals to topple him. After Ulanhu's fall, Inner Mongolia was governed by Teng Haiqing. Teng launched the

[1] TJ Cheng provides two cases that demonstrate the willingness of some Han people to accept and even appreciate affirmative policies. In 1968, Cheng, as a journalist, asked several peasants how they found out about Ulanhu's land reform policy, which favoured the Mongols. His interviewees all said: "To be honest, this place used to be the Mongol people's land. They should get more (land). We are outsiders, escaping the famine and begging for food on the way to get here. They didn't kick us out, allowing us to survive; it's not bad at all. What's the point of fighting over who should get more land?". During the Cultural Revolution, denouncing Ulanhu's "crimes" was Inner Mongolia's "political correctness". But these peasants did not criticise Ulanhu's policies. It was very likely they did agree with the affirmative policies. See Cheng Tijie, "Neimeng dongbu 'wenhe tugai' yu Wulanfu de wenge daotai," 363-364. Also, Cheng's Han classmates from the semi-agricultural semi-pastoral area said Han people there were very grateful for Ulanhu's "Three Nos and Two Benefits". It prevented violent class struggles, gave people a more stable life, and helped to develop the economy. Nevertheless, it was true that many Han farmers were disappointed about getting higher class labels than the Mongols. Cheng et al, *A Chinese Rebel beyond the Great Wall*, University of Chicago Press, 2023, 42.

Wasu (digging and eradicating) campaign: “Digging up Ulanhu’s black line; Eradicating Ulanhu’s pernicious influence.” The purge of the “new Inner Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party” (new IMPRP, or just IMPRP[2]) was one of the most brutal persecutions during the Cultural Revolution. Although ruthless massacres and purges were not uncommon in the Cultural Revolution, it was the only pogrom against a national minority.

Scholars have been arguing about whether it was a genocide. No doubt, the appalling consequence of the *Wasu* campaign has tremendously hurt the Mongols. It was largely a de facto genocide. However, was the motivation of the purge genocidal? I will introduce TJ Cheng, Uradyn E. Bulag and Mark Selden’s suggestion that the purge of the IMPRP was a “politicide” rather than a “genocide”. The authorities intended to tame the Mongols rather than kill them. I agree with this concept, although I tend to think that probably who imposed the politicide needs to be discussed. During the research, I realised that the persecution of the Mongols was not merely a regime behaviour.

Scholars who have studied Inner Mongolia’s Cultural Revolution have generally observed that the deterioration of Sino-Soviet and Sino-Mongolian relations had a significant impact on the Mongols.[3] The previous chapters of this thesis also

[2] The IMPRP (*neirendang*) was used more frequently during the Cultural Revolution. As the authorities claimed that only IMPRP members after May 1947 (a non-existent stage) would be treated as enemies, in theory, the campaign only targeted the “new IMPRP” (*xin neirendang*).

[3] For example, Cheng et al. try to explain the hysteric Chinese nationalism against the Mongols “in the wake of the deepening conflict between China and the Soviet Union with its MPR ally, which made the existence of Inner Mongolia as an autonomous region a national security liability to China”. *A Chinese Rebel beyond the Great* Wall, 326.

Kerry Brown also notes that the Cultural Revolution in the IMAR was “idiosyncratic” because of the existence of the Mongols, “it implied the contentious issue of outside influences like the Mongolian People’s Republic across the border, the USSR beyond – both of which the Central Chinese state then regarded as threats and countries with which it had complicated and at times acrimonious relations.” Kerry Brown, *The Purge of the Inner Mongolian People’s Party in the Chinese Cultural Revolution, 1967-69*, ix.

Also, Brown analysed a range of documents regarding Zhou Enlai’s meetings with Inner Mongolian rebels and cadres. They did not discuss the nationality issue much, but Zhou inquired about the nationalities of the representatives. Brow argued it “formulated the problem of the IMAR in terms that did not refer to the presence of national minorities locally, but to centrally defined political considerations – allegiance, for instance, to outside forces (USSR and the Mongolian People’s Republic).” Ibid., 49. Personally, I don’t think Zhou Enlai considered the issue of minorities’ allegiance when he asked these questions. I agree that the loyalty of the Mongols could be a consideration of Zhongnanhai; nevertheless, I

addressed it. It did worsen the Mongol people's situation. Yet another question perplexed me. Why did the pogrom happen to the Mongols but not to the non-Han groups in Tibet and Xinjiang? The Tibetans and the Turkic people were far more rebellious than the Mongols. This chapter attempts to explain that the persecution of the Mongols was primarily driven by local political actors, including the local regime and grassroots activists, rather than by central authorities. The Mongols were the "model" minority nationality in China, but on their own land, they were viewed as traitors by the Han. Several Inner Mongolia's local political conditions combined together and resulted in the cruel persecution.

Ulanhu's Plight

In approximately 1965, Ulanhu discovered that Inner Mongolia's interests could not be guaranteed. In addition to the Socialist Education Movement's troubles, he also worried about over-cultivation (mostly Han people did it) and rapid desertification.[4] Besides, although the autonomous region had Bayan Obo iron-rare earth mines, the world's largest deposits of rare earth elements, and Baotou Steel, one of the largest steel producers in China, Inner Mongolia could not use their natural resources. These state industries were managed by Beijing's cadres. Ulanhu complained that Inner Mongolia "does not have an inch of steel" "Bayan Obo iron ore mine is ours, but (the state) does not give us iron"[5] "Ask Baotou Steel for steel, but the Department of Metallurgy did not spare one hair (*yi mao bu ba*: very stingy)".[6]

The new challenges pushed Ulanhu to denounce the great Han chauvinism eagerly. Probably, Ulanhu did not realise the CCP's centralised and authoritarian system was the root cause. Inner Mongolia, a so-called autonomous region, had very limited power to deal with its affairs. It had to obey the command of Zhongnanhai. It was Mao and other top leaders who decided to neglect the interests of minority nationalities and focus on class struggle. It was the top Party leaders who were keen

want to argue that the purge of the Mongols was more "locally" than "centrally".

[4] "Wulanfu zai qingzhu 20 zhounian chouweihui zhaokai de zuotanhui shang de jianghua," 22 December 1965, in CCRD.

[5] Neimeng doupi Wulanfu lianluozhan, Neimenggu dangwei jiguan "hongqi" zongbu, Husansi shiyuan "dongfanghong" zongdui, "Wulanfu de shida zuizhuang" (Ten Major Crimes of Ulanhu), 26 April 1967, in Yang Haiying (ed), MJNKKS, Vol. 3, 267-268.

[6] Qi Zhi, *Neimeng wenge shilu*, 87.

to increase the grain yield at the expense of the Mongol herders and their grassland. Thus, with little autonomous power, Ulanhu could hardly protect his people and their land. Yet, as a devout CCP cadre, he would not question the Party. Therefore, the great Han chauvinism became the scapegoat.

In addition to the issues above, Ulanhu's personal authority was also challenged. His opponents said he gave his home banner, Tumed Banner, many special treatments. Unfortunately, it was a fact. Under an authoritarian system, corruption, unfair favouring policies, and cronyism can hardly be avoided. Ulanhu's colleague Quan Xingyuan commented: "As long as a peasant from Tumed Left Banner is Ulanhu's relative, his personal affairs could directly reach the top. Ulanhu, at the secretariat meeting, could throw a tantrum for a commune member who is related to him."[7] People believed that Ulanhu gave Tumed Banner more economic benefits.[8] Besides, Ulanhu highly preferred to promote cadres from the Tumed Banner. One example was that in early 1966, he created an acting standing committee with 13 members. Among the 13, there were 9 Mongols, six of whom were from Tumed Banner.[9] Many of Ulanhu's families, relatives and Tumed fellows held important positions in the Party, government, and military.[10] Although cronyism and corruption were endemic among the CCP senior cadres, people naturally felt angry.

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[7] Gao Shuhua and Cheng Tiejun, *Neimeng wenge fenglei*, 429,

[8] There were some Ulanhu's "crimes" about favouring Tumed Banner, listed by the rebels. For example, in 1962, Ulanhu allocated each Mongol from Tumed Banner 20 *yuan* as the "nationality subsidy", except the "four types" people (*si lei fen zi*) (four types: landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, and bad guys). Also in 1962, about 8 or 9 households of "rich-middle" peasants went to the Inner Mongolia Party Committee, saying that they didn't have money to celebrate the new year. The Party Committee generously gave them about 800 yuan. See Qi Zhi, *Neimeng wenge shilu*, 84.
In 1966, Ulanhu arranged 54 per cent of the total investment in electric irrigation for Tumed. Besides, he invested heavily in his wife Yun Liwen's village. The anti-Ulanhu rebels claimed that from 1961 to 1966, Ulanhu invested 28,000 *yuan* in his wife's village, a small village with 42 households, and among them, 30% were political pariahs ("landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad guys, and rightists"). 6000 *yuan* of the total cost was spent on specifically sending a cadre to Xilingol League to buy 9 horses. Neimenggu zizhiqu dangwei jiguan jinggangshan geming zaofan zongdui et al, "Wulanfu fangeming jituan zuizhuang" (Ulanhu's Counterrevolutionary Gang's Crimes), 22 April 1967, in MJNKKS, Vol. 3, 478-479.

[9] "Zhonggong zhongyang huabeiju guanyu Wulanfu cuowu wenti de baogao" (The CCP CC North China Bureau's Report on Ulanhu's Mistakes), 27 January 1967, in CCRD.

[10] An amusing political joke is told in Bulag's *The Mongols at China's Edge*, 213. A person went to the Inner Mongolia government to look for his acquaintance. He shouted: "Lao Yun (Senior Yun)!" Half of the building windows were opened. The person realised it might be a

To defend himself, apart from explaining why the Mongols received more land than the Han, Ulanhu furiously claimed, “They are not opposing the speciality of Tumed Banner; in fact, they are opposing the Inner Mongolia Party Committee because they want to dig out the root! The root turns out to be the IM Party Committee!” Linking the criticisms against himself to opposing the leadership of the Party was a common strategy in China’s politics. It often worked well. Ulanhu also claimed: “They could further dig out the root! The root was Chairman Mao’s 1935 Declaration!” [11]

Ulanhu decided to use Chairman Mao’s 1935 Declaration as his weapon to fight against great Han chauvinism and to protect his people. Possibly, he could also justify his unjust preference for Tumed fellows. In December 1965, Ulanhu distributed copies of the declaration to his comrades at a meeting, asking them to read it and to think about “how to implement the Party’s nationality policy” and “how to implement Mao Zedong Thought”.[12] In January 1966, he required the entire autonomous region to study this declaration.[13] 1,255 copies of the Declaration were delivered in total.[14] Ulanhu believed his policies were strictly following Chairman Mao’s thoughts. However, it turned out to be a blunder.

When Mao wrote the 1935 Declaration, his Red Army and the CCP were in a dire situation. Mao was desperate to win over as many allies as possible. Thus, his tone was very pro-Mongol: He denounced the Mongol people’s oppressor, Chiang Kai-shek, praised the Mongol people’s hero, Genghis Khan, and promised to give them a

mistake and shouted again: “Xiao Yun (Junior Yun)!” And the other half of the windows were opened as well. Yun was Ulanhu’s Chinese surname, which is also shared by many Tumed Mongols. The joke derided the corruption and cronyism of Ulanhu’s circle.

[11] “Wulanfu zai tuqi siqing pian hui shang de jianghua ji chahua” (Ulanhu’s Speeches and Interjections at the Tumed Banner Four-cleanups Meetings), 26 to 28 January 1966, in CCRD.

[12] “Wulanfu zai tuqi siqing pian hui shang de jianghua ji chahua” (Ulanhu’s Speeches and Interjections on the Tumed Banner Four-cleanups Meetings), 26 to 28 January 1966, in CCRD.

[13] Ibid.

[14] “Xie Xuegong tongzhi guanyu Neimenggu qu dangwei yinfa yijiusanwu nian ‘zhonghua suweiai zhongyang zhengfu dui Neimenggu renmin xuanyan’, ‘Mao zhuxi he zhongyang fuze tongzhi guanyu Neimenggu gongzuo he minzu wenti de zhishi’ wenjian de diaocha baogao” (Comrade Xie Xuegong’s Report on the Investigation of Inner Mongolia Party Committee delivering 1935 ‘Chinese Soviet Central Government’s Declaration to Inner Mongolian People’ ‘Chairman Mao and Relevant Cadres’ Instructions about Inner Mongolian Work and Nationality Question’, 7 May 1966, IMA 11-20-561, in MJNKKS, Vol. 3, 126.

unified Inner Mongolia. Mao even promised the right to independence. However, on the eve of the Cultural Revolution, Mao had established an unprecedentedly powerful cult of personality. He was the almighty god in communist China. He was powerful enough to do whatever he wanted, and no one would dare to challenge him. The Mongols were no longer his allies but his subjects. He did not need to compromise with the Mongols any more. Instead, he required his subjects to obey his will completely. Ulanhu's overemphasis on nationality was unacceptable. At least, it was an obstacle to the communist utopia. The chairman had already told Ulanhu in 1958, "Do we eat the meal of communism, localism or nationalism? First of all, we should eat the meal of communism."[15]

From Ulanhu's Han colleagues' perspectives, fighting against great Han chauvinism was far less important than fighting against local nationalism. Besides, Inner Mongolia was "the frontline of anti-revisionism". Occasionally, some people defected to the MPR. Though not many, many cadres believed there were "local nationalist separatist activities". This problem must be solved. In addition, Ulanhu's rivals said Ulanhu delivered the 1935 Declaration without having the North China Bureau's approval. When Ulanhu asked the North China Bureau for its opinion about delivering the 1935 Declaration, the first secretary of the North China Bureau, Li Xuefeng, appeared very reluctant to approve it. Li said he had not read this document, did not know that the declaration was for internal or external (audience) and did not know what problems Ulanhu wanted to solve. But he agreed that Ulanhu could deliver the declaration within a small circle. However, Ulanhu printed more than a thousand copies of the declaration. Li Xuefeng was probably very dissatisfied with this move.[16] Even some Mongol cadres felt perplexed about the declaration. Tala, a Mongol military cadre, was one of them. He admitted it was the first time he read the declaration. Realising the "self-determination" theory appeared odd, he explained to others that it was against the KMT, while the Mongols had autonomy under the CCP's rule, and there was no need for self-determination any more.[17]

[15] See Chapter 5.

[16] "Xie Xuegong tongzhi guanyu Neimenggu qu dangwei yinfa yijiusanwu nian 'zhonghua suweiai zhongyang zhengfu dui Neimenggu renmin xuanyan'," 126-127.

[17] Tala, *Pingfan de rensheng*, 411.

Some of the cadres perceived the danger in Inner Mongolia's political arena. Ulanhu was their superior, yet the North China Bureau leadership's dissatisfaction with Ulanhu was too apparent. They did not know how to pick a side. Some of the Inner Mongolia party's Standing Committee members claimed they were sick and had to stay in the hospital.[18] Thus, they did not have to participate in Inner Mongolia's decisions or worry about offending anyone. Their absence provided Ulanhu with an excellent opportunity to centralise the power in his hands. He chose 13 people he trusted most to form an "acting standing committee." As previously mentioned, 9 of the 13 were Mongols, and 6 of the Mongols came from Tumed Banner.[19] Ulanhu also appointed his wife, son, and most trusted colleagues to key decision-making positions. Although the lack of staff may justify his move, it could hardly escape from the charge of corruption.

Ulanhu did not realise the danger. He was still actively fighting against the great Han chauvinism. On 19 March 1966, *Inner Mongolia Daily* published an article calling on cadres to learn Mongolian. It would be accused of "trying to resist studying Chairman Mao's works by promoting learning Mongolian".[20] Meanwhile, the North China Bureau seems more determined to overthrow Ulanhu. On 30 April, the North China Bureau sent Xie Xuegong and several other cadres to Inner Mongolia to investigate Ulanhu's mistakes.[21]

[18] Chaoluomeng, "Wo suo jingli de neimenggu wenhua dageming," 65-66. Yun Qing, "Zai wenhua dageming zhong," 46-47. But Wang Ze said he and another cadre Liu Jingping had hepatitis. They had to stay in the hospital. Wang Duo, *Wushi chunqiu*, 492.

[19] The Mongols were Cholmon (Tumed Mongol), Yun Shiying (Tumed Mongol), Hao Fan (Tumed Mongol), Houhe (Mongol), Buhe (Ulanhu's eldest son, and a Tumed Mongol), Chen Bingyu (Tumed Mongol) , He Xingge (Mongol), Tuke (Mongol), Yun Beifeng (Tumed Mongol). "Teng Haiqing guanyu neirendang wenti de huibao tigang" (Teng Haiqing's Report Outline on the IMPRP Problem), 22 December 1968, from Bayantai, *Wasu zainan shilu xubian*, in CCRD.

[20] "Huhehaote diqu wuchanjieji wenhua dageming dashiji (chugao)"(The Major Events of the Cultural Revolution in Hohhot (first draft)), in Husandi neimenggu daxue jinggangshan bingtuan zhubian, *Jingangshan*, June 1967, Issue 3, MJNKKS, Vol. 3, 278.

[21] Ibid.

North China Bureau's Qianmen Hotel Conference

On 1 May, Ulanhu went to Beijing to attend the Politburo's meeting. On 16 May 1966, the CCP Politburo issued a Notification[22] (known as the 16 May Notification) announcing the start of the Cultural Revolution. There was no obvious signal that the most superior leader of Inner Mongolia would fall. On 23 May, Ulanhu even attended a meeting criticising Zhu De, which Liu Shaoqi chaired. "He (Zhu De) said we still need to maintain good relations with the Soviet Union. They cannot leave us."[23]Said Ulanhu, implying Zhu De was pro-Soviet. He probably did not expect to be harshly criticised and removed from the office soon.

On 22 May 1966, just one day before Ulanhu criticised Zhu De, the North China Bureau leadership held a meeting at Qianmen Hotel. The meeting lasted about two months, until 23 July 1966.[24] It was still peaceful in May. Yet, Ulanhu probably realised he would be in trouble before the launch of the attack. On 5 May, he called his colleague Gao Jinming, who was still in Hohhot and asked Gao to withdraw the copies of the 1935 Declaration. However, Ulanhu did not know that Gao Jinming had already chosen Li Xuefeng's side and stabbed him in the back. Ulanhu told Gao Jinming: "You used to say the declaration had been over-delivered. So we withdraw them." Gao Jinming, in fact, believed Ulanhu should not have delivered the 1935 Declaration at all. He asked Ulanhu how to explain the withdrawal of the document. Ulanhu hesitated momentarily, saying: "You could say that was a historical document."[25] Ulanhu's sub-context was that a historical document should not be

[22] The Notification harshly denounced Peng Zhen, the first secretary and mayor of Beijing and a member of the "Cultural Revolution Five-Person Team." Peng Zhen tried to protect Wu Han, a historian and vice mayor of Beijing, from the violent criticisms of his play "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office." Peng's protection of Wu Han enraged Mao Zedong.
The Notification accused Peng Zhen of "standing on the bourgeoisie's position", "using a bourgeois worldview to view the situation and nature of the current academic critique", "opposing the Cultural Revolution line of the CCP CC headed by Comrade Mao Zedong", "cracking down on the proletarian left, harbouring the bourgeois right" and so on.

[23] "Zhongyang zhengzhiju pipan Zhu De jiyao" (The Minute of Politburo's Criticisms of Zhu De), 23 May 1966, in CCRD.

[24] The official publications list different dates of the North China Bureau meeting. *Neimenggu zhizhiqu dashiji* said it was from 21 May to 25 July. Wulanfu zhuan said it was from 22 May to 23 July. *Neimenggu zizhiqu dashiji: 1947*-1987, 100. *Wulanfu zhuan*, 495.

[25] "Huhehaote diqu wuchanjieji wenhua dageming dashiji (chugao)," 279.
"Xie Xuegong tongzhi guanyu Neimenggu qu dangwei yinfa yijiusanwu nian 'zhonghua suweiai zhongyang zhengfu dui Neimenggu renmin xuanyan'," 126-127.

implemented to deal with current issues, even though it was Chairman Mao's work. Nevertheless, it was too late to save his political life.

After 1 June, Ulanhu found himself in the centre of criticism. His former colleagues turned against him, and his former rivals finally seized the chance to bring him down. Ulanhu did not prepare anything for such vehement attacks, but his critics had been ready for the struggle against him long before. Ulanhu had to make a self-criticism on 14 June, admitting he had nationality prejudice.[26] Such self-criticism was too mild to meet his opponents' expectations. They criticised Ulanhu more harshly. Ulanhu did have sympathisers. Li Gui, the first secretary of the Hohhot Party Committee and a Han cadre, defended Ulanhu at the meeting.[27] Liu Jingping and Wang Duo, also at the North China Bureau's meeting, cried together with Ulanhu.[28]

Probably the final blow to Ulanhu was Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping's conversation with him on 2 July. Liu Shaoqi said: "Replacing the class struggle question with the nationality question is a bourgeois line. It represents the interests of Mongolian landlords, herdsmen and bourgeoisie." Ulanhu had to admit that he had bourgeois nationalism. Deng Xiaoping's criticism was even harsher: "You are not as good as Comrade Saifuddin,[29] who also stood up against local nationalism. You are taking the path of Burhan,[30] the path of Liu Geping,[31] and Tashi Wangchuk (Tibetan

[26] Qi Zhi, *Neimeng wenge shilu*, 109.

[27] Ibid.

[28] "Huhehaote diqu wuchanjieji wenhua dageming dashiji (chugao) (yixu)", in Husansi Neimenggu daxue jinggangshan bingtuan (ed), *Jinggangshan*, July 1967, Issue 4, in MJNKKS, Vol. 3, 325.

[29] Saifuddin Azizi was the secondary secretary of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

[30] Burhan Shahidi, a Uyghur, was the vice chairperson of the Political Consultative Conference. In 1964, he was accused of being an "international spy".

[31] Liu Geping, a Hui, was the deputy head of the SEAC. The head was Ulanhu. As Ulanhu worked in Inner Mongolia, Liu Geming was in charge of many works. In 1958, the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region was established. Liu Geping was appointed as the Chairman of Ningxia People's Government. He was denounced as a "local nationalist" in 1960 and was sent to Central Party School to study. However, Mao Zedong favoured Liu Geping. In the 1930s, he and other CCP members were arrested by the KMT. Liu Shaoqi suggested that the arrested CCP members could sign an anti-CCP declaration to leave the prison. Liu Shaoqi's suggestion was approved by Zhang Wentian, who was the general secretary of the CCP CC. Most CCP members did so and were released from jail, but Liu Geping refused to sign. He believed it would go against his faith. In the Cultural Revolution, to attack Liu Shaoqi, the ones who signed the anti-CCP declaration were denounced as traitors, while Liu Geping became a hero. Mao asked Liu Geming to lead the rebellion in Shanxi province during the Cultural Revolution. Wang Li, *Wang Li fansi lu*, 547-551.

spelling: bkra shis dbang phyug)[32] to create an independent kingdom. If you go further, you will be on the way to the Dalai and the Panchen." Ulanhu had no choice but to surrender, admitting all the accusations and promising to make a new self-criticism. Yet, Liu and Deng had never expected that months later, they would become political pariahs as well. Inner Mongolian rebels would furiously claim that Liu and Deng colluded with Ulanhu and tried to cover up his crimes.[33] It was not clear whether Mao wanted to bring Ulanhu down. According to Wang Li, Mao did not want to abandon Ulanhu because there was a concern about the minority nationality. If there was no better choice, Mao still wanted Ulanhu to govern Inner Mongolia. However, Ulanhu was defeated completely. Wang Li said Mao did not think or say much about Inner Mongolia.[34] From the information available, the overthrow of Ulanhu might be Li Xuefeng and the North China Bureau's initiative, but was not directly connected to higher authorities.

Finally, the North China Bureau listed five main crimes of Ulanhu. (1) Opposing Mao Zedong's thought, raising another banner and creating his own system. (2) Opposing class struggle and socialist revolution. (3) Grovelling to revisionism. (4) Using the 1935 Declaration as a guideline for secessionist activities and creating independent kingdoms. (5) Installing cronies and usurping leadership power.[35] On 16 August, Ulanhu's first secretary of the Inner Mongolia Party Committee and the secondary secretary of the North China Bureau were dismissed. He never returned to Inner Mongolia to work, except for a few short stays. Ulanhu's rivals did not want to admit

[32] Tashi Wangchuk, a Tibetan, joined the Red Army during the Long March. In 1957, he criticised some problems of minority nationality works. Later, he was denounced as a "local nationalist". See Phüntso Wangye "Huiyi Zhaxi Wangxu tongzhi" (The Reminiscence of Comrade Tashi Wangchuk) available at: https://web.archive.org/web/20071104160754mp_/http://gangjanba.middle-way.net/article/2007/0206/article_60.html. This article was also collected in the Chinese edition Melvyn C. Goldstein et al, *A Tibetan Revolutionary: The Political Life and Times of Bapa Phüntso Wangye*, translated by Huang Xiaoxiao, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2004, 334-357. It was not collected in the original English edition.

[33] For example, Inner Mongolia University's rebels wrote a long essay criticising Liu and Deng's talk with Ulanhu. "Zhongguo de Heluxiaofu baobi dangdai wangye de zuize nantao" (China's Khrushchev Can Not Escape the Punishment for Shielding the Modern Khan), *Jinggangshan*, Ocotober 1967, Issue 8, MJNKKS, Vol. 3, 396-403.

[34] Wang Li, *Wang Li fansilu*, 551-552.

[35] "Zhonggong zhongyang pizhuan zhonggong Neimenggu zizhiqu weiyuanhui de dianbao, he huabeiju 'guanyu Wulanfu cuowu wenti de baogao'" (The CCP CC Forwarding the IMAR Committee's Telegram and the North China Bureau's Report on Ulanhu's Mistakes), 27 Jaunary 1967, in CCRD.

that Mao wrote the 1935 Declaration. They claimed that it was written by dogmatists in the Party under the name of Mao.[36]

Nevertheless, the CCP leadership did not want to punish Ulanhu too harshly, possibly considering he was a national minority cadre. On 31 August, Ulanhu was still allowed to stand at Tiananmen Square Tower with Mao and other senior leaders.[37] It even triggered confusion and dissatisfaction among Inner Mongolian rebels. They could not understand why a counter-revolutionary bad guy still can stand together with Chairman Mao. Xie Xuegong repeatedly told these young people that Chairman Mao's decision was always correct. Xie quoted Lin Biao's words to make them stop questioning: "We must be resolute in implementing Chairman Mao's instructions, those we understand and those we don't."[38] But Ulanhu's good fortune did not last very long. In the winter of 1966, Ulanhu, his wife, and a daughter were put under house arrest in Beijing. [39]

Ulanhu's downfall directly triggered the large-scale persecution against the Mongols. The purge, *Wasu*, would be carried out in the name of "digging up Ulanhu's black line and eradicating Ulanhu's pernicious influence." Ulanhu's Mongol compatriots would inevitably become the target. They used to be the beneficiaries of Ulanhu's nationality policy, but now they were regarded as members of his "black gang". Ulanhu's fall was an important reason for triggering the pogrom. If he had been in power, he would have been able to protect his Mongol fellows to a certain extent.

[36] Ibid.

[37] "Mao Zhuxi jiejian wushiwan hongweibing he geming shisheng" (Chairman Mao Met 500,000 Red Guards and Revolutionary Teachers and Students), *People's Daily*, 1 September 1966.

[38] "Xie Xuegong zai Neimeng fujing geming shisheng huiyi shang de jianghua" (Xie Xuegong's Speech at the Meeting of Inner Mongolian Revolutionary Teachers and Students in Beijing), 9 September 1966, in CCRD. "Xie Xuegong yu Neimenggu daxue he Neimenggu shifan xueyuan hongweibing tan Wulanfu wenti" (Xie Xuegong Talked About Ulanhu's Problems with the Red Guards from Inner Mongolia University and Inner Mongolia Normal College), 26 October 1966, in CCRD.

[39] Wang Shusheng and Hao Yufeng (eds), *Wulanfu nianpu*, Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2013, 483.

Wasu and the Massive Persecution of the "IMPRP"

Like most places in China, Inner Mongolia soon fell into chaos. The previous bureaucratic system was paralysed; a large number of cadres were toppled, and the Red Guards fought against each other. The troops supported their favoured Red Guards to fight against the ones they hated. The anarchic, chaotic condition in Inner Mongolia paused only due to Zhongnanhai's intervention. [40] Teng Haiqing, a Han military cadre, was sent to Inner Mongolia in May 1967 to restore the social order. He was a deputy commander of Beijing Military Region before going to Inner Mongolia. On 1 November 1967, the IMAR Revolutionary Committee was established. General Teng Haiqing was appointed as the chairman of the IMRC. Under Teng's rule, the *Wasu* (Digging-up and Eradicating) campaign was launched.

The persecution of the "IMPRP" needs to be examined in the context of the "Cleansing the Class Ranks" (*qingli jieji duiwu*) campaign. The Chinese official narrative believes it was formally launched nationwide in May 1968.[41] However,

[40] The conservative-rebel conflicts in Hohhot, see Gao Shuhua and Cheng Tiejun, *Neimeng wenge fenglei: Yiwei zaofanpai lingxiu de koushu shi*, New York: Mingjing chubanshe, 2007. Also Cheng et al., *A Chinese Rebel beyond the Great Wall*. During the rebel-IMMR confrontation, a student, Han Tong, from Inner Mongolia Normal College, was shot dead on 5 February 1967. It was the first case in the Cultural Revolution that the army fired at students. The leaders in Beijing realised it was a severe issue. On 6 February, the State Council and the Central Military Commission sent an urgent telegram, requiring Hohhot's four major forces to send several representatives to Beijing to discuss the problem. Zhou Enlai received the representatives at least 6 times. When these representatives were in Beijing, the IMMR kept supporting a faction, Hongweijun, to fight against another faction, *Husansi*. On 13 April, Zhou Enlai, Kang Sheng and other key Central Cultural Revolutionary Group figures announced the CCP's decision. Zhou said: "Individual leaders of the Inner Mongolia Military Region, not everyone, have made direction and line errors in their support for the leftists since 5 February." Zhou declared that the IMMR, "instead of supporting the left, they supported the agents of Ulanhu, the Party's capitalist roaders." The secretary of Inner Mongolian Party Committee Wang Yilun, who backed the IMMR, was arrested. Another cadre, Wang Duo, received suspension as a punishment. Because he "wrongly" chose to stand on the side of the IMMR and Wang Yilun. Zhou Enlai allowed the masses in Inner Mongolia to struggle against them. However, some IMMR cadres refused to accept the CC's decision. Finally, Zhongnanhai lost patience. On 26 May, the Central Military Commission made decisions to punish the defiant IMMR cadres and dismissed several IMMR officials from office. Inner Mongolia Military Region was demoted to a provincial-level military region, under Beijing Military Region. "Zhongyang junwei guanyu chuli Neimenggu junqu de jueding" (The Central Military Commission's Decision about Dealing with the IMMR), 26 May 1967, in CCRD.

[41] On 19 May 1968, Mao read a report by Yao Wenyuan, *The Experience of the Military Control Committee of Beijing Xinhua Printing Factory in Mobilising the Masses for the Struggle against the Enemy*. The report satisfied Mao's paranoid belief that there were always "bad guys" hiding among the people. Mao highly praised the report, "of similar materials that I've read, this one is the best written". He demanded the report to be

many places had already started the brutal purge before Mao's formal order, and Inner Mongolia was one of them. According to Teng Haiqing's account, Inner Mongolia's "Cleansing the Class Ranks" started in November 1967.[42] The trigger was believed to be Jiang Qing's several speeches this month; in two of them, she demanded that the field of literature and art have "great chaos" again. "It will confuse the enemies!" She emphasised and repeated the sentence three times. [43]

Inner Mongolia's radicals soon answered Jiang Qing's call. On the night of 24 November, they suddenly arrested Tegus,[44] an Eastern Mongol cadre who oversaw the propaganda work. IM cadres in power and the rebels had thought the political stance of Tegus was opposed to Ulanhu, which was why Tegus was chosen as a consultant for a rebel group, *Lu Xun Corps,* the largest rebel group in the field of propaganda.[45] However, suddenly, the "anti-Ulanhu" hero became a traitor. Two Mongol rebels, Bayantai and Nasanbayar, who were also leaders of *Lu Xun Corps*, questioned the arrest of Tegus. Yet, they were criticised as "right-leaning" and had to

distributed nationwide so cadres could study it. 25 May, the CCP CC and the Central Cultural Revolutionary Group forwarded Mao's comment on the report, urging the newly established revolutionary committees and military forces to start the Cleansing the Class Ranks campaign. "Zhonggong zhongyang, zhongyang wenge zhuanfa Mao zhuxi guanyu 'Beijing xinhua yinshuachang junguanhui fadong qunzhong kaizhan duidi douzheng de jingyan' de pishi", 25 May 1968. In CCRC.

[42] "Teng Haiqing zai Huhehaote tieluju 'huochetou' zhaokai de dahui shang de jiancha" (Teng Haiqing's Self-criticism at Hohhot Railway Administration Meeting Convened by "Huochetou"), 18 June 1969, Jiangongbu baju yigongsi gongdaihui, *801 Tongxun*, 24 June 1969, Issue 8, from CCRD.

[43] "Zhonggong zhongyang, zhongyang wenge zhuanfa 'Jiang Qing tongzhi zai Beijing wenyi zuotanhui shang de jianghua'" (CCP CC, CCRG Forwarding "Comrade Jiang Qing's Talks at the Beijing Symposium on Literature and Art"), 13 November 1967. In CCRD. Jiang Qing's two speeches were on 9 November and 12 November.

[44] Tegus was an Eastern Mongol and has been mentioned in previous chapters. He studied at Kenkoku University in Manchukuo from 1942 to 1945, when he began to embrace communism. After Japan surrendered in 1945, he joined the reborn IMPRP. With his Eastern fellows, he signed the petition for "merging Inner and Outer Mongolia". After the MPR rejected the petition, he participated in the Eastern Mongolia Autonomous Government in 1946. Yang Haiying, *Meiyou mubei de caoyuan*, 144-147.

[45] Tegus and Ulanhu's conflicts emerged during the "Four Clean-ups" campaign. Ulanhu was reluctant to classify classes among the herders, while Tegus tended to believe there were also classes in pastoral areas. He wanted to make a detailed investigation. Wang Duo supported Tegus. Ulanhu suspected Tegus was opposing him and refused to read his investigation report. Ibid., 160-162. Bulag notes that during the Four Clean-ups, some Eastern Mongols joined the Chinese camp, as they also felt unfair about Tumed Mongol peasants' privilege, while their Eastern fellows did not enjoy. Bulag, *The Mongols at China's Edge*, 127-128. Although it is unknown whether Tegus was one of them opposing Ulanhu, his investigation of classes definitely caused Ulanhu's suspicion.

make self-criticisms repeatedly.[46] On 27 November, Jiang Qing further claimed, "During the Cultural Revolution, the class ranks should be gradually cleansed. Secret agents, traitors, and defectors must be cleansed within and outside the Party. Those with current counter-revolutionary activities must be dealt with seriously." [47]Other vital political figures like Zhou Enlai, Wang Hongwen, and Zhang Chunqiao also repeatedly talked about "cleansing the class" on various occasions. They boldened the political opportunists, who were preparing to reap more political gains at the expense of their political rivals and even the ordinary innocents.

Inner Mongolia's local version of "Cleansing the Class Ranks" was *Wasu*: "Digging up Ulanhu's black line; Eradicating Ulanhu's pernicious influence." Teng Haiqing has repeatedly emphasised this slogan since the establishment of the IMRC.[48] In January 1968, another Mongol cadre, Wang Zaitian, from Horqin Left Middle Banner, was "ferreted out" as a "traitor". Wang used to be in charge of the police and judicial system. When the IMRC was established, he was not accepted as a standing committee member. Although he was considered a "victim" of Ulanhu's rule and stood correctly with the rebels,[49] his history was not "clear": he used to serve in the

[46] Gao Shuhua and Cheng Tiejun, *Neimeng wenge fenglei*, 289-291.

[47] "Zhongyang shouzhang jiejian Beijing hongdaihui chengyuan shi de jianghua", 27 November 1967. In CCRD.

[48] In Chinese, "Wa Wulanfu heixian; Su Wulanfu liudu". Initially, the second verb was Qing (cleansing). Several days later, it was replaced by a more muscular verb, "Su" (eliminating or purging).

[49] A Red Guard leaflet claimed Ulanhu used to prepare materials against Wang Zaitian and Quan Xingyuan, and decided to remove them. "Huhehaote diqu wuchanjieji wenhua dageming dashiji (chugao)," 275-276.

[49] Wang Zaitian did not belong to the Eastern Mongol camp, although he was from eastern part of Inner Mongolia. Many Eastern Mongol elites received education in Manchukuo or Japan and ardently sought the unification of Inner and Outer Mongolia and then advocated the independence of Inner Mongolia. Wang Zaitian, however, joined the CCP in 1936. He was a liaison officer in Zhang Xueliang's Northeastern Army when he joined the CCP. From 1936 to 1939, he used his formal position as a cover to work for the CCP. In 1939, his CCP member identity was exposed, and then he went to Yan'an.

"old army" (Warlord Zhang Xueliang's[50] army).[51] It seems there was not even enough evidence against Wang. After Wang was arrested, Teng Haiqing told Beijing senior leaders: "We know (Wang) has problems, but we don't have many materials." Kang Sheng said: "Wang Zaitian was very sinister. I read a material about him last August. He was a spy of the Soviet revisionists…He was a loyal running dog of Zhang Xueliang, and could be a Japanese spy."[52] Teng Haiqing then told the masses in Inner Mongolia: "We don't have many materials against Wang Zaitian, but we do have." His material was the words of "Elder Kang".[53]

The Cleansing the Class Ranks campaign was not satisfied with some cadres' downfall. It also wanted to dig out the "spies" and "traitors" among ordinary people, many of whom had not been involved in politics. Although many early rebels had been tired of endless political struggles in Inner Mongolia, a tiny group actively embraced the new opportunity. They were extreme radicals, political opportunists, and even previous "conservatives" who had not been in the limelight yet.[54] They became cruel persecutors in the new political fanaticism. Together with the officials in power, they created one of the most horrendous purges in the Cultural Revolution.

Several incidents which happened before the Cultural Revolution endangered the

[50] Although Zhang had helped the CCP enormously by kidnapping Chiang Kai-shek on 12 December 1936 and was praised by Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai, during the Cultural Revolution, he was regarded as a counter-revolutionary warlord who brutally suppressed the CCP. One of Liu Shaoqi's "crimes" was Liu providing critical information to Zhang Xueliang, who killed and arrested many CCP members. See Zhongyang zhuan'an shencha xiaozu, "Guanyu pantu neijian gongzei Liu Shaoqi zuixing de shencha baogao" (Report on the Crimes of Liu Shaoqi, the Traitor, the Secret Enemy Agent, and the Strike Breaker), 18 October 1968, in CCRD.

[51] According to Teng's speech, Wang Zaitian "always has good performance and could not be a *sanfan* (three antis) element at all. He is standing on the side of Chairman Mao's line." Also, Wang was "affectionate to the rebels". At this time, Teng believed the IMRC's rejection of Wang was temporary. "Teng Haiqing, Gao Jinming chuanda zhongyang guanyu Neimenggu zizhiqu geming weiyuanhui de zhishi" (Teng Haiqing and Gao Jinming Conveying the Centre's Instructions about Establishing the Inner Mongolia Revolutionary Committee), 29 October 1967. From Neimenggu dangwei hongqi lianhe zongbu (ed), *Hongqi neican*, 4 November 1967, issue 16, in CCRD.

[52] "Teng Haiqing tongzhi chuanda zhongyang shouzhang de zhishi jingshen" (Comrade Teng Haiqing Conveying the Instructions from the Central Leaders), 13 February 1968, in CCRD.

[53] "Teng Haiqing Li Shude liang tongzhi chuanda zhongyang shouzhang de zhongyao zhishi" (Comrade Teng Haiqing and Comrade Li Shude Conveying the Central Leaders' Important Instructions), 13 February 1968, in CCRD.

[54] Gao and Cheng, *Neimeng wenge fenglei*, 291-292.

political status of the Mongols. One of them was Case 206. On 6 February 1963, a letter to the MPR was intercepted in Jining, Ulanchab. The letter was written by hand in old Mongolian script, and the sender called themselves “the second congress of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party”. By the time the letter was intercepted, this case was named Case 206. It caused great suspicion and alert among the Inner Mongolian authorities. The letter’s recipients were the Central Committee of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party, the Presidium and the Council of Ministers of People’s Great Khural. It wrote:

> The Sino-Mongolian border treaty signed on 26 December 1962 greatly hindered the unification of Inner and Outer Mongolia. Since the first party congress held on 26 November 1961, with 22 representatives, the number of party members has increased from 852 to 2346. But five days after the signing of the Sino-Mongolian border treaty, the number of party members dropped to 1892, and the hope of the unification of Inner and Outer Mongolia has come to nothing. Based on the above two points, our party recently held the second congress with 43 representatives on 3 February. At the meeting, the tasks, principles and policies of our party’s future work were mainly discussed and approved. The representatives at the congress unanimously expressed that Inner and Outer Mongolia would merge, and they were confident.[55]

The letter writer called their party the “Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party” (without the word “Inner”), the same as the ruling party of the MPR. They declared they would firmly accept the leadership of the MPR’s ruling party and believed they should set up a work committee under the leadership of the MPRP. However, they were working secretly, without military force, and had not yet built a connection with the MPR. They wrote five similar letters and believed that one of them would reach the MPR authorities. Besides, several thousand words were attacking the CCP. According to Bayantai, during the Cultural Revolution, someone added the word “Inner” in front of the party’s name. The mysterious organisation became the Inner

[55] Bayantai, *Wasu zainan shilu* (Records of the *Wasu* catastrophe), non-published e-version. This book was initially released under the author’s pseudonym, Alatengdelihai, and collected by Nanmenggu renquan xinxi zhongxin (The Southern Mongolian Human Rights Information Centre). Available at: https://www.smhric.org/IMPRP.pdf.

Mongolia People's Revolutionary Party. [56]

Inner Mongolia's authority immediately reported the incident to Beijing and launched an investigation. As the letter was written in traditional Mongolian, Mongol cadres and intellectuals who could write in Mongolian were suspected. The handwritings of the Mongol cadres in Hohhot and Jining were investigated and compared with the letter, but no match was found. No one was arrested at the time. The official conclusion was that there was no "Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party" in the IMAR at all; it was just a bluff by some individuals. As in the 1960s, people were highly alert to "enemies"; it was almost impossible to hold a meeting with dozens of people without being noticed. Besides, in February, Jining was very cold. If a meeting had been held, it must have been held indoors in a large room, let alone the accommodation.[57] Some cadres thought it might have been a KGB conspiracy, spreading panic in the border region of Inner Mongolia.[58]

Besides Case 206, the occasional defections to the MPR and some Mongol cadres' complaints about the politics[59] were also regarded as "proof" of the Inner Mongols' traitorous collusion with their northern cousins. Even ordinary cooperation between Inner and Outer Mongolia before the Sino-Soviet split became an excuse for the purge. Before 1957, there was a 43-person Committee for Mongolian terminology with members from both Inner and Outer Mongolia. It was a product of an aborted reform of the Mongolian language and script. In 1954, in their report, the languages and scripts creation and reformation team suggested that: "Because some nationalities are adjacent to the Soviet Union and the Mongolian People's Republic, they can adopt the Russian letters."[60] The Government Administration Council (later

[56] Bayantai, ibid.

[57] See Bayantai, ibid. Wang Zaitian, the cadre who was responsible for investigating the "206 case", expressed the same opinion in 1993. Tumen and Zhu Dongli, *Kang Sheng yu Neirendang yuan'an*, 134-135.

[58] Cheng et al., *A Chinese Rebel*, 185-186.

[59] A case called "Tao-Na-Song". In 1962, three Mongol cadres complained about the nationality policies after being drunk. They realised it would have disastrous consequences, so they took the initiative to admit their mistakes. The authorities thought their talks were not "national separatism / national splittism" but merely local nationalism. The three cadres received demotions as punishment. See Tumen and Zhu, *Kang Sheng yu Neirendang yuan'an*, 136.

[60] "Zhongyang renmin zhengfu zhengwuyuan wenjiao weiyuanhui, minzu yuyan wenzi yanjiu zhidao weiyuanhui ji zhongyang renmin zhengfu minzu shiwu weiyuanhui guanyu bangzhu shang wu wenzi de minzu chuangli wenzi wenti de baogao he zhengwuyuan pifu"

the State Council) approved this report. The IMAR accepted Soviet linguist Serdyuchenko's suggestions that Mongolians adopted the Cyrillic alphabet and launched the reform of the writing system. However, in November 1957, the Chinese authorities decided that minority languages should adopt the Latin alphabet if they needed to reform or create a writing system.[61] Some scholars explained it was due to the change in Sino-Soviet relations or Mao's rejection of being a younger brother of the USSR, but wanting to be an equal partner. [62] In addition, the Party was keen to suppress local nationalism and strengthen the national minority's independent tendency. As *Pinyin* adopted Latin letters, the scripts of other minority nationality languages should be the same as *Pinyin*'s. Anyway, the IMAR immediately stopped using Cyrillic letters. On 1 December 1957, the regional mouthpiece *Inner Mongolia Daily* changed its Mongolian title from Cyrillic to the traditional alphabet, even though the former had been used for years, and just a few months before that, Ulanhu had actively praised the advantage of the Cyrillic alphabet. However, during the Cultural Revolution, the 43-Person Committee was accused of being a cooperating spy organisation of the IMPRP and Mongolian revisionists, secretly plotting the unification of Inner and Outer Mongolia.

The fabricated accusation of the 43-person committee came from a Mongol novelist, Ulaanbagan, one of the most notorious *Wasu* activists.[63] Ulaanbagan is famous for his novel "The Fire on the Steppe" (*caoyuan fenghuo*), which was popular in the 1950s. In October 1967, Ulaanbagan formed the "Ferreting Out the Traitor Clique

(The Culture and Education Committee of the Government Administration Council of the Central People's Government, the Nationality Languages and Scripts Research Steering Committee, and Ethnic Affairs Commission of the Central People's Government's Report on Helping the Nationalities Without Scripts to Create Scripts and the GAC's Approval), May 1954, in *Minzu zhengce wenjian huibian*, Vol. 2, Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1958, 102.

[61] "Guowuyuan dui Zhongguo wenzi gaige weiyuanhui guanyu taolun zhuangwen fang'an he shaoshuminzu wenzi Fang'an zhong sheji zimu de jixiang yuanze de baogao de pifu" (The State Council's Reply to the China Script Reform Committee's Report on Zhuang's Script Plan and National Minorities' Letter Design Principles Plan), 10 December 1957, in *Minzu zhengce wenjian huibian*, Vol. 3, Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1958, 86-89. The report was submitted on 29 November 1957 and approved on 10 December.

[62] Minglang Zhou, *Multilingualism in China*: The Politics of Writing Reforms for Minority Languages 1949-2002, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2003, 203-205. Cheng et al., *A Chinese Rebel*, 184.

[63] "Neimenggu zizhiqu dangwei yundong bangongshi guanyu Wulanbagan zai wenhua dageming zhong suo fan de yanzhong zuixing he chuli yijian" (The Movement Office of the IMAR Party Committee's Report on Ulaanbagan's Severe Crimes During the Cultural Revolution and the Opinion About His Punishment), 10 February 1983, in CCRD.

Liaison Office"[64] (Liaison Station in short), together with another Mongol Erdeni-Uul.[65] When the members of the Liaison Office vehemently criticised Tegus and Khafungga (who had already been labelled a member of Ulanhu's gang), they discovered the history of the Inner Mongolia People's Revolutionary Party. Examined from the Cultural Revolution's point of view, the IMPRP in history was undoubtedly a suspicious organisation. Excitedly, these radicals began to write articles attacking the party's "counter-revolutionary" history since November 1967. These articles denounced that the IMPRP was composed of "social scums" like Japanese spies, Soviet-Mongol revisionist spies, KMT spies, Manchukuo officials so on.[66] The radicals also accurately attacked the IMPRP's Achilles' heel: it used to pursue the unification of Inner and Outer Mongolia and the independence of Inner Mongolia. Worse, they were not satisfied with just denouncing the historical political party but

[64] It's the translation from Cheng et al., *A Chinese Rebel*, 183. In Chinese, *Jiu pantu jituan lianluo zhan.*

Ulaanbagan was not directly responsible for the downfall of Tegus, but his office provided information for other rebels. According to Cheng, Tegus was kidnapped by "Ferreting out the Black Hands Liaison Station" (*Jiu heishou lianluo zhan*). They received information from Ulaanbagan, who had a personal grudge against Tegus. At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, Ulaanbagan had been labelled Ulanhu's gang member by Tegus. Cheng et al, *A Chinese Rebel*, 188-189.

[65]According to Qi Zhi, who interviewed Ulaanbagan and Erdeni-Uul, Ulaanbagan had political ambition, while Erdeni-Uul was more like a victim of China's politics. He wrote a report about the problems in the national minority works during the "Hundred Flowers campaign" in 1957. Then, he was harshly criticised. When he studied at the party school in 1959, he admitted his thoughts to the Party: the steel campaign was wasteful. He was criticised again. These "political mistakes" prevented him from getting promoted and a higher salary. At the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, he was accused of being a "counter-revolutionary" by Tegus and the work team. However, Mao withdrew the Work Teams (sent by Liu Shaoqi) and proclaimed they were following a "bourgeoisie reactionary line". Erdeni-Uul was liberated. Like most of the early rebels who were harshly repressed by Work Teams but liberated by Mao, Erdeni-Uul sincerely believed they were bad people in the Party. He must protect Chairman Mao and the Party. Thus, he devoted himself to the *Wasu* campaign. Qi Zhi, *Neimeng wenge fenglei*, 246-247.

It was a common mentality among the rebels during the Cultural Revolution: young people bravely responded to Mao's call at the early stage. They rebelled against "evil people" in their schools, colleges and work units (*danwei*). However, Liu Shaoqi and most leaders regarded the Cultural Revolution as another anti-rightist campaign. Liu decided to send work teams to schools and colleges to lead the revolution, and the rebellious people were regarded as rightists. They were criticised, struggled, and arrested. Some committed suicide. It was Mao Zedong who saved them. Thus, these people truly loved Mao and hated Liu Shaoqi and Liu's gang.

[66] "Neimenggu renmin gemingdang shi shenme huose" (What Kind of Thing Is the IMPRP), in Neimeng humeng haiqiqu hongse zaofanzhe geming dapipan lianluozhan geming dapipan bianjibu (ed), *Geming dapipan*, 18 March 1968, issue 3, in MJNKKS, Vol. 2, 661-668.

wanted to ferret out traitors and spies. One of Ulaanbagan's articles claimed that the IMPRP did not disband, but "the materials in our hand have proved that this party had recruited more than 2,000 members by 1963. They went underground according to the instructions of the Mongol revisionist." [67] 1963 was the year Case 206 happened. The accusation was fatal. As "enemies" have lurked among the masses, they must be eliminated at any cost.

Ulaanbagan reported the IMPRP problem to Guo Yiqing, a Han cadre who was the head of the propaganda department of the IM party committee before the Cultural Revolution. It seems Ulanhu had trusted Guo Yiqing, selecting him as one of the thirteen acting standing committee members (9 Mongols and 4 Hans). However, Guo perceived tension between Ulanhu and the North China Bureau before the Cultural Revolution. In early 1966, he cunningly took the North China Bureau's side and secretly wrote reports against his superior.[68] His reward was a standing committee member of the IMRC.[69] As early as 1965, Guo had already accused the Eastern Mongols of being "national separatists" and claimed these separatists had a reactionary past.[70] Ulaanbagan shared the same opinion. More importantly, Ulaanbagan provided "convincing evidence". Guo abetted Teng Haiqing and other cadres to be more determined to cleanse the traitors, "if we wanted to carry on *Wasu*, we should not be afraid of the risk. As long as the big goal is correct, five correct ones out of ten is an achievement. It is easy to deal with the other five wrong ones; apologise and let them see there are still five enemies."[71]

The Manchu cadre Gao Jinming had already proved his political shrewdness by attacking Ulanhu with the North China Bureau and allying with the rebels in early

[67] "Huhehaote shi renmin jianchayuan dui wUlaanbagan de qisushu" (Hohhot People's Procuratorate's Indictment of Ulaanbagan), 31 August 1983, in CCRD.

[68] "Neimenggu zizhiqu dangwei bangongshi guanyu Guo Yiqing zai wenhua dageming zhong suofan yanzhong cuowu de shencha jielun he chuli yijian" (The Movement Office of the IMAR Party Committee's Investigation Conclusions and Opinions on Guo Yiqing's Severe Mistakes During the Cultural Revolution), 16 April 1983, in CCRD.

[69] Cheng et al, *A Chinese Rebel*, 186.

[70] Tumen and Zhu Dongli, 149; "Guo Yiqing zai wenhua dageming zhong suofan yanzhong cuowu", 16 April 1983, in CCRD. Besides, Bayantai, in *Wasu zainan shilu*, claimed because of Guo Yiqing's report, Ulanhu lost trust in the Eastern Mongol elites. He removed many cadres with Manchukuo backgrounds and promoted loyal red cadres with Yan'an backgrounds.

[71] "Guo Yiqing zai wenhua dageming zhong suo fan yanzhong cuowu," 16 April 1983.

1967. This time, he joined *Wasu* and became an infamous *Wasu* activist. He was even more keen on the purge. The rebels who had previously worked with Gao Jinming agreed that he dominated the early stages of the *Wasu* campaign.[72] In early 1968, Teng Haiqing, the main culprit in the later stage of the purge, actually focused more on military defence on the border because China's relations with the Soviet Union and the MPR were deteriorating. Teng let Gao deal with internal politics. Gao had worked in Inner Mongolia for many years and was familiar with the local situation. It was believed Gao Jinming had the ambition of being the second "Mongolia's Khan" after Ulanhu. Yet, the Zhongnanhai appointed Teng Haiqing as the "first fiddle". Gao was not satisfied. Nevertheless, by dominating the *Wasu* campaign, he got the chance to seize more power in his hands.[73] Quan Xingyuan, who dealt Ulanhu a heavy blow at the North China Bureau Conference, approved *Wasu* and personally demanded two Mongol cadres be detained. Quan claimed: "Whether you are revolutionary or not, whether you are revolutionary enough or not, it will all be reflected on digging out the IMPRP…It's a huge spy organisation with foreign connections." [74]

Ulaanbagan, as a novelist, was talented in making up stories and fabricated a lot of "evidence" about the IMPRP. Mixed with detailed facts, his fake materials appeared very convincing. As Ulanhu had been removed, he was the ideal culprit of any "counter-revolutionary crimes". Ulaanbagan claimed: "Ulanhu harboured all the Japanese spies, Mongolian traitors, fascist partisans, executioners, reactionary military officers, and heads and backbones of the IMPRP. After obtaining legal memberships within the CCP, they intensified their counter-revolutionary activities even more. Since then, there were many variants of the IMPRP, dozens of reactionary organisations." Indeed, the background of the IMPRP members was complicated. However, Ulanhu not only prevented the re-establishment of the IMPRP in 1947 but as a Tumed Mongol, he did get along very well with his Eastern

[72] Both Gao Shuhua, the Han rebel leader and Bayantai, the author of *Wasu zainan shilu*, pointed out that Gao Jinming was the earliest culprit of *Wasu*. See Gao and Cheng, *Neimeng wenge fenglei*, 349-350. Bayantai, *Wasu zainan shilu*.

[73] Gao and Cheng, *Neimeng wenge fenglei*, 349-350.

[74] "Neimenggu dangwei yundongban guanyu Quan Xingyuan tongzhi zai wenhua dageming zhong zhuyao wenti de shencha jielun he chuli yijian de baogao" (The Movement Office of the IMAR Party Committee's Investigation Conclusions and Opinions on Comrade Quan Xingyuan's Majory Problemes During the Cultural Revolution), 20 May 1983, in CCRD.

compatriots. Ulaanbagan also made up many detailed maps, such as “Map of the Soviet-Mongolian Revisionist Intelligence System and Traitor Groups,” on which he marked 72 Soviet-Mongolian spy offices, 17 areas where reactionary parties like the IMPRP operated, and 29 bases of traitor groups and 3 places where the “Democratic Unification Party” (also non-existing) planned to launch armed rebellion. [75] A Red Guard newspaper, *Husansi,* claimed that Ulaanbagan deliberately stirred up national hatred, inciting Han people to purge his Mongol fellows, like “the IMPRP’s autonomous army was killing from Jirem League to Ju Ud League; Han people on both sides of Liao River were all killed”. He always called on: “Avenge our Han compatriot!”[76]

From Hohhot to Beijing, the CCP officials clearly knew the purge of the “IMPRP” would severely harm the Mongol-Han relationships. To demonstrate they were not targeting the Mongols, they said: “When we deal with Ulanhu, we need to criticise and struggle against Wang Yilun and Wang Duo (two Han cadres). The bad people from the Mongol area need to be ferreted out by the Mongols themselves.”[77] Beijing leadership also insisted that a Mongol military cadre, Wu Tao, should remain in the top position. Zhou Enlai personally protected Wu Tao because a Mongol cadre had symbolic value.[78] However, the Mongols were disproportionately attacked. When TJ Cheng talked to his girlfriend’s father in early 1968, the man told Cheng that two dozen cadres of his unit had been held in custody; except for one Han, all the others were Mongols.[79] Teng Haiqing had to admit, “According to our investigation of units like the IMMR’s institutions, the 5th Division of Cavalry, and the 2nd Independent Division, more than 80% of Mongol cadres were branded as IMPRPs.”[80] “In some work units, 100% national minority cadres were labelled as IMPRPs.”[81] Teng

[75] “Wulanbagan zai wenhua dageming zhong suo fan de yanzhong zuixing,” 10 Februrary 1983.

[76] “Wulanbagan hexu ren ye” (Who is Ulaanbagan?), *Husansi*, 27 July 1969, MJNKKS, Vol. 2, 816.

[77] “Teng Haiqing Li Shude liang tongzhi chuanda zhongyang shouzhang de zhongyao zhishi,” 13 February 1968.

[78] Cheng et al., *A Chinese Rebel*, 234.

[79] Cheng et al., *A Chinese Rebel*, 196.

[80] “Teng Haiqing deng guanyu wa Neirendang kuodahua xiang zhongyang de jiancha” (The Self-criticism of Teng Haiqing et al. about the Over-purge of the IMPRP to the Central), 19 April 1969, in CCRD.

[81] “Teng Haiqing zai Neimeng zhishu jiguan Mao Zedong sixiang daxuexiao de jiancha” (The Self-criticism of Teng Haiqing at Mao Zedong Thought School), 23 June 1969, in

admitted that some places had claimed: “The Mongols’ leader is not our Great Leader, Chairman Mao; their leader is Ulanhu.”[82] According to this claim, all the Mongols could be suspected of being Ulanhu’s followers and become targets of persecution. Mongol scholars and political dissidents claimed it was a genocide against the Mongols. Although the term “genocide” is not widely used in this context, the extraordinarily high percentage of Mongol victims makes the purge like an ethnic cleansing. Atwood notes, “It turned into a virtually genocidal campaign against the Mongols as a political and social force.”[83]

On 20 July 1968, the IMRC officially announced the measurements to address the IMPRP. The authorities divided the IMPRP into three phases. First, from 1925 to 1936, it was a bourgeois nationalist party. Second, from 18 August 1945 to 1 May 1947, it was a local nationalist party, and a small group of national minority reactionaries controlled its leadership. Third, after 1 May 1947, the IMPRP and its variations were all counter-revolutionary organisations. Thus, the IMPRP at the first two stages was considered an “internal contradiction among the people”. It was acceptable if people joined the IMPRP at the first stage. If joining the IMPRP at the second stage, they would be treated as a “general political-historical problem”, but they must confess everything. If CCP members or cadres concealed their history in the IMPRP, they would be severely punished. In the “third phase”, which was fabricated, the members must report themselves within a month after they receive the document. If they were leaders or backbones, they would be regarded as counterrevolutionaries. If they can confess or report others, the punishment could be less severe or not treated as counterrevolutionaries.[84] Since then, the “digging out of the new IMPRPs” campaign has spread to every corner of Inner Mongolia.

Although Gao Jinming was one of the earliest activists engaged in *Wasu*, he finally realised it had gone too far. Probably, one trigger was that his close ally Guo Yiqing

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CCRD.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Christopher P. Atwood, *Encyclopedia of Mongolia and the Mongol Empire*, New York: Facts On File, Inc.: 2004, 250.

Cheng et al. argue that the persecution of the “new IMPRP” was not genocide. The three authors introduce the concept of “politicide”. Cheng et al., *A Chinese Rebel*, 334-335, 338.

[84] “Guanyu dui Neimenggu renmin gemingdang de chuli yijian” (Opinions on Addressing the IMPRP), Neimenggu zizhiqu geming weiyuanhui wenjian [68] 351, 20 July 1968, in MJNKKS, Vol. 2, 126-133.

was “dug out” as an enemy, though not in Inner Mongolia, but in Guo’s home province, Henan.[85] The political trend in Beijing gave Gao an opportunity. Mao Zedong has been tired of the endless fighting among the rebels. He needed to restore order. In July 1968, the CCP required Guangxi’s different factions to end the “violent struggles immediately” (*wu dou*)[86]. Tsinghua University’s violent struggle was forcibly interrupted by the Workers' Mao Zedong Thought Propaganda Team, with 30,000 workers, which was directly sent by the Chairman.[87] Mao met Beijing’s Red Guard leaders[88] and sternly demanded that they stop fighting immediately. The rebels had responded to the Great Leader’s call to rebel, but now they were abandoned. From August to 1 September 1968, the Centre approved the establishment of the revolutionary committees in Yunnan, Fujian, Guangxi, Tibet, and Xinjiang. All the provinces and autonomous regions now had revolutionary committees. Party newspapers declared it was a triumph of the Cultural Revolution: “It signified the whole movement has entered the stage of struggle-criticise-reform (*douzheng-pipan-gaige, dou-pi-gai* in short).” [89]

Gao Jinming shrewdly noticed the new signal: it was time to reform. In September 1968, Gao claimed that the *Wasu* campaign had “reached the end” and that “the masses” would be purged if it continued. It was time to reform. However, Teng Haiqing felt challenged. He refused to stop *Wasu*. In November 1968, Teng accused Gao Jinming of representing the “right-leaning opportunist line” and dismissed him from office. Although Gao was still addressed as a “comrade”, he lost all his

[85] Qi Zhi, *Neimeng wenge shilu*, 323-326. Cheng et al., *A Chinese Rebel*, 222.

[86] The so-called “violent struggle” often involved wars with firearms and heavy weapons. Initially, Mao allowed the rebels to seize weapons from the PLA.
In Guangxi, it became a brutal oppression. *Lianzhi* faction, with official support, crazily massacred its enemy 422 faction. The “violent struggles” killed about 3,000 people. The total number killed in the aftermath purges was unknown, from 70, 400 to more than 500,000. Guangxi’s head, Wei Guoqing, said it was 150,000. Cannibalism happened in the massacre. Yan Lebin, “Wo canyu chuli Guangxi wenge yiliu wenti” (My Participation in Addressing the Issues of Guangxi Cultural Revolution), in *Yanhuang chunqiu*, 2012, No. 11, 14.

[87] Tang Shaojie, “Qinghua daxue gongxuandui shimo” (Tsinghua University’s Worker Propaganda Team), *Yanhuang chunqiu*, 2015, No. 2, 29.

[88] They were Nie Yuanzi (Peking University), Kuai Dafu (Tsinghua University), Han Aijing (Beihang College, now Beihang University), Tan Houlan (Beijing Normal University), and Wang Dabin (Beijing Geosciences College, now China University of Geosciences).

[89] Pang Xianzhi and Jin Chongji (eds), *Mao Zedong zhuan: 1949-1976*, Vol.2, Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2003, 1526-1527.

influence.[90] After removing the obstacle, Teng Haiqing's *Wasu* campaign went unrestrained. The darkest period of Inner Mongolia's history began. It created far more victims from November 1968 to April 1969 than previous purges. Qi Zhi points out that this period had the highest mortality and disability rates.[91]

The Atrocities

The number of victims of the IMPRP case was in dispute, let alone the whole *Wasu* campaign. (Some purges were not in the name of cleansing the "IMPRPs" or its related organisations, but searching the KMT or other spies.[92]) The official number in 1980 claimed that because of the IMPRP case alone, 16,222 people were persecuted to death; 87188 were severely maimed or crippled; more than 346,000 people suffered from the persecution. Taking other persecutions into consideration, 22941 were tortured to death in total.[93] Most publications in China quoted this data.

The Mongols have higher estimates. Ting Mao, a Mongol cadre and the second secretary of the IM party committee, said because of the purge of the "Ulanhu anti-Party Gang" and the "IMPRP", more than 20,000 were killed; about 170,000 were left wounded and disabled; more than 1 million people were impacted.[94] Overseas Mongol dissidents gave far more horrific numbers of victims. Some victims believed

[90] "Teng Haiqing zai zizhiqu geming weiyuanhui disici quanti weiyuan (kuoda) huiyi shang de jianghua" (Teng Haiqing's Speech at the IMRC's 4th Plenary (Enlarged) Session), 18 November 1968, in CCRD.

[91] However, it is hard to know how many victims were there. Besides, Qi Zhi notes that the number of victims did not include "the five black sorts" (*hei wu lei*). They were political pariahs. The authorities often believed they deserved the repression and even did not give them rehabilitation. Qi Zhi, *Neimeng wenge shilu*, 352.

[92] For example, Yuanbaoshan Ranch, a state-owned ranch, had a purge in the name of searching for KMT members. The ranch had around 400 people (including leaders, workers, and their families); after 48 days of *Wasu* struggle, 100% of the leaders, 90% of the workers and 50% of their families became victims. More than 40 were left crippled or maimed; 6 were beaten to death or suicide. Many victims were Han people. See Yuan Zhijiu and Liu Fengqi, "Yuanbaoshan muchang de *wasu* Zainan" (The Disastrous *Wasu* at Yuanbaoshan Ranch), *Yanhuang chunqiu*, 2013, No. 1, 72-76.

[93] "Zuigao renmin jiancha yuan tebie jiancha ting qisushu" (Indictment from the Special Procuratorate of the Supreme People's Procuratorate), 2 November 1980, in CCRD.

[94]"Neimenggu dangwei diershuji Ting Mao zhixin Huang Kecheng zhuijiu Teng Haiqing falü zeren" (The Second Secretary of the IM Party Committee Ting Mao's Letter to Huang Kecheng, Suggesting Holding Teng Haiqing Legally Accountable), from Bayantai, *Wasu zainan shilu*.

more than 40,000 died of the persecution, 140,000 were maimed, and more than 700,000 were persecuted.[95] One estimate claimed there were about 800,000 people who were arrested and imprisoned, about 500,000 were left with disability, and 50,000 were persecuted to death.[96] The highest estimation was from a Mongol journalist, Shirabjamsu, saying 300,000 Mongols were persecuted to death, combining the deaths on the spot and the deaths after being released. Mongol scholar Yang Haiying believed this was "highly reliable".[97] However, Qi Zhi cautiously questioned these figures, suggesting they were possibly exaggerated.[98]

Even the official statistics can change over time. For example, two documents about a rebel leader, Li Feng, who was responsible for the persecution of the innocents in Hulunbir, gave two different sets of statistics. The document in 1982 wrote: "A total of 78,618 people were ferreted out from the 'IMPRP' and its variants, of whom 3,821 were killed, 4,029 were permanently maimed, and 25,488 were disabled and injured."[99] The one in 1983 wrote: "As a result of the League's digging-up of the 'IMPRP' and its variants, a total of 84,453 people were dug up, 4,157 died (of whom 1,383 died at the time and 2,764 subsequently) and 30,916 were disabled and injured (of whom 4,029 were permanently maimed)."[100] All the 1983 victim data are higher than in 1982, except the victims who were maimed forever.

Nevertheless, the death toll was already tragic, even considering the lowest estimation. Cheng et al. point out that most of the 16,222 deaths caused by the anti-

[95] Hasigeerle, "Neirendang yuanan qinliji" (My Personal Experience of the IMPRP Case), *Yanhuang chunqiu*, 2009, No. 1, 25. The statistics came from the survey of the "32-Widows Petition Group".

[96] Cheng Tijie, "Sishi yunian huishou kan Neimeng wenge" (Review the Inner Mongolian Cultural Revolution after Forty Years), in Song Yongyi (ed), *Wenhua dageming, Lishi zhenxiang he jiti jiyi*, Hong Kong: Greenfield Bookstore, 2007, Vol. 2, 745-746.

[97] Yang Haiying, "The Truth about the Mongolian Genocide during the Chinese Cultural Revolution," *Asian Studies* (Shizuoka University), Special Issue 6, March 2017, 1, 67.

[98] Qi Zhi, *Neimeng wenge shilu*, 23. Qi Zhi argued that emotional biases may influence unofficial researchers, and their sources may be limited.

[99] Zhonggong Hulunbeier meng weiyuanhui, "Liang'an nei bushu zhongyang guanli de ganbu panxing he nixing renyuan dengjibiao: Li Feng" (The Sentenced and Will Be Sentenced List of Cadres not Under the Centre's Jurisdiction), 30 December 1982, in CCRD.

[100] "Zhonggong neimenggu zizhiqu dangwei yundong bangongshi guanyu Li Feng zai wenhua dageming zhong suofan zuixing he chuli yijian de baogao" (The Movement Office of the IMAR Party Committee's Report on Li Feng's Crimes during the Cultural Revolution and the Punishment), 18 May 1983, In CCRD.

IMPRP campaign were Mongols, and the Mongol population was only about 1.4 million when the purge started. It meant 11.5 Mongol were killed per thousand.[101] In contrast, taking China as a whole, the death toll was 2.2 per thousand from 1966 to 1971, according to American sociologist Andrew Walder's estimation.[102]

The torture was horrendous. Inner Mongolia Construction Company's purge used about 60 ways of torture.[103] In Togtoh County, more than 120 ways of torture were used.[104] Frequently used ways included jet position[105], stabbing the ribs, deprivation of sleep, crushing fingers with chopsticks or even with pliers, burning fingers, crushing calves with thick wood, hitting the head on the wall, and so on. An anti-Teng Haiqing leaflet claimed that a 38-year-old poor Mongol peasant, Wu Qinglong, had his tongue cut off. The torturers thought he would die, so they released him. But he finally survived.[106] Sometimes, Han people could also be accused of being IMPRP members. Anti-Teng Haiqing activists reported the tragedy of a Han person named Wang Quanda, who was a 37-year-old ordinary member of the Sanggendalai Commune in Bayannur League, and he was also a CCP member and a poor peasant. He was forced to admit that he was an IMPRP member. The torturers used the red-hot fire iron to burn him and dumped burning charcoals onto his head. They stuck his skin onto the ice and tore down his skin and flesh. He was finally tortured to death. The torturers threw his body into a well and claimed he had committed suicide.[107]

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[101] Cheng et al., *A Chinese Rebel*, 331. Cheng et al. use the data from *Zhongguo renkou: Neimenggu fence*, 349. From a different source, Qi Zhi also notes that the Mongol population was about 1,445,000 in 1965, which was were from Zhonggong neimenggu zizhiqu weiyuanhui zhengce yanjiushi (ed), *Neimenggu zizhiqu meng shi qi xian gaikuang* (The Overview of Inner Mongolia's Lagues, Cities, Banners, and Counties), Hohhot: 1985, 2.

[102] Quoted in Cheng et al., *A Chinese Rebel*, 331.

[103] "Guanyu Neimeng jianzhu gongsi weijiao neirendang qingkuang de baogao" (Report on Inner Mongolia Construction Company's Purge of the IMPRP, *5.22 Tongxun*, 19 June 1969, in CCRD.

[104] Qi Zhi, *Neimeng wenge shilu*, 351-352.

[105] It is one of the most common methods to struggle against victims during the Cultural Revolution. Victims were forced to bow 90 degrees with arms stretching back, like a jet. They often had to keep the position for a long time, enduring the pain and exhaustion.

[106] "Shetou jiuzheyang de bei ge le: Ji Wu Qinglong tongzhi shouhai guocheng" (The Tongue was Cut Off: How Comrade Wu Qinglong was Persecuted), Neimenggu zizhiqu geming weiyuanhui jiguan piteng lianluo zongzhan (ed), *5.22 Tongxun*, Issue 3, 16 June 1969, in CCRD.

[107] "Shishi shengyu xiongbian: Bameng zhong hou qi wa neirendang qingkuang (diaocha

Many *Wasu* activists were not thugs but the usual "decent" people. Many were sent-down youths (*zhishi qingnian* or *zhiqing* in short, "youths with knowledge"), yet they knew little about Inner Mongolia's situation, did not speak Mongolian, and had discrimination against the Mongols. They were eager to prove they had the correct position in political movements.[108] Some of the cruellest tortures were officers and soldiers of the PLA. After removing Gao Jinming in late 1968, Teng Haiqing asked the Beijing Military Region to send Han officers to help him continue *Wasu*.[109] Company 1 of the Jing-355th Force created horrific bloodbaths in Tuk Commune in Uxin Banner in the first half of 1969. This commune only had 2961 people, and 929 were accused of being IMPRP members. 49 were beaten to death or died afterwards due to the torture. 270 were left crippled or maimed. The sadistic soldiers wrapped the victim's head in iron wire, twisted it tightly with pliers, and the wire sunk into the scalp. They heated the shovel with fire and used the red-hot shovel to burn the victim's head. The victim's hair and scalp were burned off, and the skull was exposed. Leather whips were wrapped in iron wire; some victims were lashed so severely that their backbones were exposed. The wounds soon decayed. They were left to die without any medical treatment. Some victims' wounds were filled with salts or even boiling salt water, and they passed out from the severe pain.[110]

In addition to the cruel physical torture, the victims also suffered mentally. Many had to go through immense insult and humiliation. A victim, Boren, was deliberately forbidden to drink any water. When Boren asked for water, the torturers spilt the water on the ground and ordered him: "Lick it! Lick it!" In extreme thirst, Boren had to lick the dirty water on the ground "like a dog". Worse, a torturer asked Boren to urinate in a mug and forced him to drink his urine.[111] Under endless pressure, some victims began to question themselves. Tegus said: "They (the persecutors) were the

baogao)" (Facts Speak Louder Than Words: The Situation of Digging up IMPRP Members in Bayannur League Middle Rear Banner (Investigation Report)), Neimenggu zizhiqu geming weiyuanhui jiguan piteng lianluo zongzhan (ed), *5.22 Tongxun*, Issue 3, 16 June 1969, in CCRD.

[108] Cheng et al., *A Chinese Rebel*, 241.

[109] Ibid, 229.

[110] Bao Qingwu, "Yikezhao jun fenqu yuan jingzi 355 budui yilian (21 fendui) zai tuke gongshe wa 'xin neirendang' zhong yanzhong weifa luanji", 5 August 1978, in Zhonggong yikezhao meng weiyuanhui luoshi zhengce bangongshi (ed), *Neibu cailiao*, issues 3, in CCRD. Bao Qingwu was a journalist from *Inner Mongolia Daily*.

[111] Boren, "Wode zaoyu" (My Sufferings), 10 August 1979, in CCRD.

incarnation of the Party. They regarded me as the most dangerous enemy, insulting me and persecuting me. But I could not see them as enemies. I even thought their suspicion of me was somewhat reasonable because I did join the IMPRP before." [112]

The purge was far more savage and evil than what I can write here. However, it seems that the sadistic torturers did not want to kill the victims. The cruel beatings were the means to get the "confessions". (This point will be further discussed in the last part with Cheng, Bulag and Selden's argument.) Some victims had to plead guilty to avoid the endless torture. If they were lucky, they would become a good model of "being treated leniently if you confess". 26-year-old Hasgerel saw a Mongol man she knew was exempted from "jet position" at the struggle session, unlike other victims. He was released on the spot due to his "good attitude of confessing" and even received a shiny Chairman Mao badge worn on his clothes. Hasgerel, however, refused to admit she was an IMPRP member. She was beaten into a coma. The torturers wrote the "confession" and had her fingerprint on the paper. As the torturers got the "confession", they stopped beating Hasgerel.[113] Sometimes, only admitting that one was an IMPRP member (or a member of other "counterrevolutionary" groups) was not enough. Victims were forced to write down other people's names. Then, the torturers would follow the list to arrest more victims. Many victims had to list names they knew.

Some victims developed their own methods of resistance to the persecution. A cadre Cheng Yi was forced to tell the names he "recruited". He made up names like ükher, mori, temee, khoni and övs. His torturers were satisfied that they had obtained the names of the "IMPRP members" and stopped beating him. Actually, these words were cattle, horse, camel, sheep, and grass in Mongolian.[114] Similarly, a cadre, Yun Zhi'an, made up "names" according to the Mongolian zodiac, like khulgana and ükher (mouse and ox). The beaters gave Yun Zhi'an a break after getting the "list." However, after they discovered it was fake, they violently beat him again.[115] After

[112] Tegusi, "Haojie guohou de chensi" (Reflection After the Catastrophe), in *Neimenggu dang'an shiliao*, 1993, No. 4, 55.
[113] Hasigeerle, "Neirendang yuanan qinliji," 26-29.
[114] Cheng Yi, "Bukanhuishou de wangshi," in Yun Zhaoguang (ed), *Qingliang zhongsheng*, 88-89.
[115] Yun Zhi'an, "Wo zai wenhua dageming zhong de pianduan huigu" (My Experience during the Cultural Revolution), in Yun Zhaoguang (ed), *Qingliang zhongsheng*, 126.

endless tortures, Tala finally “confessed” that he was an IMPRP member. But he made up a story: In 1942, Ulanhu recruited him in Yan’an. Tala tried to express the information: his whole store was fabricated because developing the IMPRP in Yan’an was impossible. Additionally, Ulanhu was a significant political figure. If his IMPRP membership had anything to do with Ulanhu, the higher authorities may pay closer attention to his case. However, Tala’s torturers did not care about how he joined the IMPRP; they continued beating him so that he might accuse other senior officials of being IMPRP members under duress.[116]

The End of *Wasu*

The *Wasu* campaign turned Inner Mongolia into hell on earth. Miserable Mongolian people flocked to Beijing to report the cruel purge, hoping Chairman Mao could save them from hellish persecution. Zhou Enlai received hundreds of letters about the atrocities in Inner Mongolia. A rumour said that the Premier cried after reading these letters.[117] Meanwhile, Teng Haiqing started considering removing other colleagues in the IMRC. A rebel leader, Nasanbayar, was suspected of being an IMPRP member at the end of 1968, as he was the only one who openly opposed the purge of the IMPRP.[118] Teng Haiqing also wanted to get rid of Wu Tao, the second most powerful man in Inner Mongolia. Although Wu always followed Teng’s opinion on the *Wasu* issue, as a Mongol cadre, his attitude became more subtle as the purge went hysterical. He cautiously used Chairman Mao’s words to remind the activists that “95% of the cadres and the masses were trustworthy.”[119] Teng suspected his colleague’s loyalty and reported to Zhongnanhai that Wu was right-leaning and had suspicious connections with Ulanhu.[120]

But Mao Zedong had realised that the national “Cleansing the Class Ranks” had gone unstrained. Before the 9th National Congress of the CCP, Mao talked to the Central Cultural Revolution Group on 15 March 1969: “Struggling-criticising-

[116] Tala, *Pingfan de rensheng*, 439-444.
[117] Cheng et al., *A Chinese Rebel*, 254, 258.
[118] Gao and Cheng, *Neimeng wenge fenglei,* 392-393.
[119] Cheng et al., *A Chinese Rebel*, 232-233.
[120] “Teng Haiqing zai Tangshan xuexiban de dierci jiancha (yaodian)” (Teng Haiqing’s Second Self-Criticism at Tangshan Study Camp), 16 December 1970, in CCRD.

reforming, Cleansing the Class Ranks…arrested too many, imprisoned too many, liberated too few…. You are pushing them to the imperialist and revisionist side." Mao demanded that all those arrested during the "Cleansing the Class Ranks" campaign should be released, except those who committed criminal offences like murder, arson, poisoning, and vandalising. He pardoned the political prisoners, "It doesn't matter if they just wrote several reactionary slogans."[121]

Ironically, the Chairman did remind his comrades not to purge too many innocents in numerous cases. In May 1968, just a few days before "Cleaning the Class Ranks" was launched nationwide, Mao said: "More than 95% of the cadres are good." "You don't have to be arrested for putting up a few reactionary posters! In short, the scope of the current counterrevolution has now expanded significantly. The bad guys are always a tiny minority… more than 90% of them are leftists and centralists…Any purge of the counterrevolutionaries must be limited by 5%." [122] The purge quota of 5% was already absurd. Worse, many cadres would rather purge too many, exceeding 5%, than be viewed as "rightist." Teng Haiqing claimed: "Our cadres 50-60% are good, 30%-40% are not good." When the purge did "go too far", they had to criticise themselves for not following the Chairman's teachings.[123] The Chairman and the Party Centre are always correct and prescient.

In fact, Mao knew his campaigns always persecuted innocent people. However, he did not care about sacrificing some of them if the movement could smash the enemies. He said to Albanian delegates in October 1968: "We still need half a year to one year to do the 'Cleansing the Class Ranks' and to rectify the Party. So we can keep a period of peace, about 10 or 20 years. We cannot say that they did it so cleanly this time. We cannot say they did it entirely correctly, without any mistakes. As far as we know, many people still need rehabilitation. The masses either do not do it at all or do it fiercely."[124] The Great Leader permitted the atrocities, sacrificing innocent people in exchange for the so-called "peace".

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[121] *Mao Zedong zhuan: 1949-1976*, Vol.2, 1541-1542.

[122] *Mao Zedong nianpu*, Vol. 9, 161,163.

[123] Teng Haiqing wrote in his self-criticism: "This is a completely absurd argument that violates Mao Zedong Thought. Chairman Mao taught us 95% of our cadres are good." "Teng Haiqing zai Neimeng zhishu jiguan Mao Zedong sixiang daxuexiao de jiancha" (The Self-criticism of Teng Haiqing at Mao Zedong Thought School), 23 June 1969, in CCRD.

[124] "Mao Zhuxi jiejian Aerbaniya dang zheng daibiaotuan tanhua jilu" (Transcript of

Zhou Enlai knew about the atrocities as early as the autumn of 1968. His niece Zhou Bingjian, a 16-year-old sent-down youth in Xilingol League, wrote a letter to her uncle, saying she could not understand why so many people were accused of being members of the IMPRP.[125] The Premier had asked Chen Ruixian, a vice-commissar of the Beijing Military Region, to tell Teng Haiqing that in the countryside, people were beaten. However, Teng did not take it seriously, thinking Inner Mongolia did not have this problem.[126] Zhou Enlai's wife, Deng Yingchao, had to admit that Zhou Enlai could only do a little to restrain the situation.[127]

Anyway, in the spring of 1969, Mao finally decided to curb the Cleansing the Class Ranks campaign. Mao's comrades in arms perceived the change. They began to signal to the heads of each province that the purge needed to be constrained. In February 1969, Beijing leaders told Teng Haiqing not to go too fast in the Cleansing the Class Ranks campaign. In March, Mao's attitude was more evident. On 9 March, Kang Sheng criticised that Inner Mongolia had a serious "*bi-gong-xin*" (getting suspects' confession by cruel torture) problem. On 15 March, Xie Fuzhi told Inner Mongolian cadres that they needed to learn the lesson from the purge of the "reformation faction (*gai zu pai*)" [128]and "anti-Bolshevik Group (*AB tuan*)"[129] in the 1930s. Teng Haiqing later admitted that he did not take these persuasions and warnings seriously. He thought Beijing did not really know the situation; Inner Mongolia did not have these mistakes; he just needed to be more careful about the purge.[130] But Teng, Wu Tao and Li Shude, three cadres in Beijing participating in the

Chairman Mao's Reception of the Albanian Party and Government Delegation), 5 October 1968, in Song (ed), *Jimi Dang'an zhong xin faxian de Mao Zedong jianghua*, 2018, e-book.

[125] "Zhou Enlai yu Zhinü Zhou Bingjian," *Zhejiang laonian Bao*, 12 January 2007.

[126] "Teng Haiqing zai Huhehaote Tieluju 'Huochetou' Zhaokai Dahui shang de Jiancha", 24 June 1969.

[127] "Zhou Enlai yu Zhinü Zhou Bingjian," *Zhejiang Laonian Bao*, 12 January 2007.

[128] The purge of *Gaizupai* happened in the Xiang-Exi (Hunan and western Hubei) Soviet region, led by Xia Xi, the secretary of the Xiang-Exi Branch Bureau, who died during the Long March. A Communist, Duan Dechang, was killed in the purge. In the Cultural Revolution, it became Marshal He Long's crime. Zhou Enlai, Lin Biao and Jiang Qing claimed He Long should be responsible for Duan Dechang's death.

[129] The purge of the "Anti-Bolshevik Group" was a cruel red terror created by Mao Zedong in the Jiangxi Soviet region. At the time, Mao was the General Political Commissar and Secretary of the General Front Committee of the First Front Army of the Chinese Red Army. It lasted from 1930 to 1932. See Gao Hua, *Hong taiyang shi zenyang shengqi de*, also Gao Hua, "Su AB tuan shijian de lishi kaocha" (A Historical Examination of the Purge of Anti-Bolshevik Group), *Ershiyi shiji*, August 1999, No. 54, 60-70.

[130] "Teng Haiqing zai Huhehaote tieluju 'huochetou' zhaokai de dahui shang de jiancha," 24

9th National Congress, still wrote a letter back to Inner Mongolia about "implementing the policy" (*luoshi zhengce*: usually meant compensating the victims in political movements).[131] The letter said: "Some good comrades may have been interrogated due to enemies' activities and our lack of experience. Those subjected to the interrogation must not blame the masses but must view it positively. The fact that the masses are taking such an active part in the struggle is a sign of the prosperity of our country. It is understandable that such shortcomings should appear in such a significant mass movement."[132]

On 11 April, the Chairman said: "The 'Cleansing of the Class Ranks' has a tendency. It is going too far (*kuo da hua*)."[133] On 17 April, Kang Sheng explicitly said in a telephone call, "The Chairman said Inner Mongolia has already gone too far."[134] Teng Haiqing and his colleagues finally realised they had committed severe political mistakes. On 19 April, they wrote self-criticisms to the Centre.[135] On 22 May, the Centre formally required Inner Mongolian leaders to correct their "going too far" mistakes.[136] Teng Haiqing was required to go to "the masses", humbly listening to the masses' criticism. Nevertheless, Zhongnanhai's leaders agreed that Teng and his colleagues had done the work well. Inner Mongolia had enemies, but only a tiny minority. There was a "Ulanhu's blackline", but it was not "thick and long". The secret organisation IMPRP still existed; it would carry out conspiracy activities, but only had

June 1969.

[131] "Teng Haiqing, Wu Tao, Li Shude gei Neimenggu zizhiqu geweihui de xin" (Teng Haiqing, Wu Tao and Li Shude's letter to the IMRC), 4 April 1969, in CCRD.

[132] Ibid.

[133] Pang Xianzhi and Jin Chongji (eds), *Mao Zedong zhuan: 1949-1976*, Vol. 2, 1550.

[134] "Teng Haiqing zai Huhehaote tieluju 'huochetou' zhaokai de dahui shang de jiancha," 24 June 1969.

[135] "Teng Haiqing deng guanyu wa neirendang kuodahua xiang zhongyang de jiancha" (The Self-criticism of Teng Haiqing et al. about the Over-purge of the IMPRP to the Centre), 19 April 1969, in CCRD.

[136] It was called the "5.22 directive" (5.22 pishi). In some places, *Wasu* ended much earlier, while in others, even after the Centre's 5.22 directive, the persecution continued.
A sent-down youth said his Bayinbulag commune, in Xilingol League, immediately stopped the purge on 9 March 1969 because the Centre had told Teng Haiqing and Wu Tao that the purge of the IMPRP had gone too far. Teng Haiqing immediately ordered the campaign to stop at night. "Qu Zhe Fangtan"(The Interview of Qu Zhe), in Namula (Namraa) and Zhang Yan (ed), *Chaha'er-Xilinguole Koushushi: Zhiqing Fangtanlu, Zhuanjiyi* (Chahar-Silingol Oral History: The interview of the sent-down youths, the first volume), Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2019, 252. However, TJ Cheng pointed out that on 28 May 1969, in Jirem League, ten were arrested as the "IMPRP" members. On 31 May, one was tortured to death. Cheng et al, *A Chinese Rebel, 256*.

a few members.[137] Zhongnanhai believed Inner Mongolia's Cleansing the Class Ranks was correct. The problem was only "going too far".

The apogee of Inner Mongolia's Cultural Revolution was over. In the aftermath, the people organised anti-Teng Haiqing struggles and published the cruelty of Teng's *Wasu* in the Red Guards newspapers. Gao Jinming, who used to be an activist in *Wasu* but stopped earlier than Teng, temporarily became the representative of the correct line. Teng, after returning to Inner Mongolia, had to read his self-criticisms again and again in front of thousands of victims and their families. Many victims received rehabilitation. People feuded with each other again on whether or not to completely overthrow Teng Haiqing. Many *Wasu* activists suddenly became the loudest anti-Teng pioneers.[138]

Scholars specialising in the Inner Mongolian Cultural Revolution, like Qi Zhi and Cheng et al., point out that the timing of the stop of *Wasu* was intriguing. It coincided with the most tense period of Sino-Soviet relations, suggesting Zhongnanhai probably worried about the Soviet Union and the MPR may take advantage of China's internal conflicts to invade. Besides, the Party could not rule out the risk that the Mongols could be pushed to the enemy's camp due to the cruel purge.[139] Nevertheless, other scholars may argue that in the spring of 1969, the CCP leadership still did not think an all-out war would break out, while the dramatic response to the Zhenbao Island conflict was deliberately planned.[140]

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[137] "Zhonggong zhongyang pizhuan Neimeng geweihui hexin xiaozu chengbao de 'jianjue guanche zhixing zhongyang guanyu Neimeng dangqian gongzuo zhishi de jidian yijian'" (The CCP CC Commenting and Forwarding the Core Team of the IMRC's 'Firmly Implementing the Centre's Instructions of Inner Mongolian Current Work'), 22 May 1969, in CCRD.
"Wu Tao tongzhi chuanda zhongyang dui Neimeng dangqian gongzuo de zhishi" (Comrade Wu Tao Conveying the Centre's Instructions about Inner Mongolia's Current work), 22 May 1969, in CCRD.

[138] Gao and Cheng, *Neimeng wenge fenglei*, 396.

[139] Qi Zhi, *Neimeng wenge shilu*, 388-389. Cheng et al., *A Chinese Rebel*, 253.

[140] Yang Kuisong, "The Sino-Soviet Border Clash of 1969: From Zhenbao Island to Sino-American Rapprochement," *Cold War History*, 2000, 1:1, 27-37. Yang argues that initially Mao wanted to mobilise the people and the Party by using the border conflict. Mao and Zhou did not think a general war would be possible until August 1969, after the Tielieketi incident, although Lin Biao did believe the Soviet Union would invade after the Zhenbao Island conflict. Li Danhui argues Mao wanted to send a signal to the US, that China and the US had a common enemy. Li Danhui, "1969 nian zhongsu bianjie chongtu: Yuanqi he Jieguo (The 1969 Sino-Soviet Border Conflicts: Causes and Consequences), in *Dangdai*

Anyway, the escalating confrontation between China and the Soviet Union indeed made Beijing reconsider Inner Mongolia's geographic and strategic position. The CCP leadership had already thought that Inner Mongolia's borderline was too long for the state to defend.[141] At the end of July 1969, Inner Mongolia was divided. Three eastern leagues were assigned to Heilongjiang, Jilin and Liaoning. Three banners in Bayannur were assigned to Gansu and Ningxia. Cheng et al. argue that it showed the Party's deep distrust of the Mongols.[142] At the end of 1969, the CCP CC implemented full military control in Inner Mongolia. The Centre was wary of the unceasing fighting in the Inner Mongolian political arena, sending the leaders of rivalling factions to the "Mao Zedong Thought Study Camp". More than 8,000 Inner Mongolia's cadres and rebels were sent to Tangshan and were only released after 17 months.[143] As Zhongnanhai had recognised that enemies did exist, some "bad guys" should not be rehabilitated at all. The Centre claimed Inner Mongolia had gone too far in the rehabilitation, and Gao Jinming should be responsible for the mistake. Gao Jinming had to make public self-criticisms and accept criticisms repeatedly, along with his former superior and enemy, Teng Haiqing.[144]

The true rehabilitation of the victims came after the Cultural Revolution. However, it made the Mongols enraged. The two main culprits, Teng Haiqing and Gao Jinming,

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zhongguo shi yanjiu, 1996, No. 3, 39-50.

[141] For example, On 4 February 1969, Centre leaders met Teng Haiqing. Jiang Qing said: "Your border defence line is so long, and the cavalry is running everywhere. How could you handle it?" Kang Sheng said: "Inner Mongolia is as long as Chile in Latin America. How can you make commands in a war?" "The border line is so long, and the enemy can run everywhere." Zhou Enlai said: "We had considered a decision. We would carve out the two ends." "Zhongyang shouzhang 2 yue 4 ri jiejian Teng Haiqing tongzhi shi de zhishi" (The Central Leaders' Instructions When Receiving Comrade Teng Haiqing), 4 February 1969, in CCRD.

[142] Cheng et al, *A Chinese Rebel*, 266.

[143] "Study Camp" (*xue xi ban*) in short. According to Gao Shuhua, it was like a concentration camp. No linking-up (chuan lian), no phone calls, no letters, no visiting, no going out on the street. Their study task was to criticise Liu Shaoqi, Ulanhu, Teng Haiqing and other key figures. They also needed to denounce themselves and reprimand each other. See Gao and Cheng, *Neimeng wenge fenglei*, 410-420.

[144] According to Cultural Revolution jargon, rehabilitation cannot be "like a wind blowing" (yi feng chui). This phrase was also used in the rehabilitation process in other provinces. The Party insisted that some "counter-revolutionary" people must be cleansed. Purging them was proper.

According to Zhongnanhai leaders like Zhou Enlai, there were two "going too far" (*kuo da hua*). One was the purge of the IMPRP going too far; another was rehabilitation going too far. See Gao and Cheng, *Neimeng wenge fenglei*, 415.

were still Party cadres.[145] They were not held criminally responsible. Guo Yiqing was not prosecuted either. His punishment was a 2-year probation in the Party. The only main culprit who was held criminally accountable was the Mongol novelist Ulaanbagan. He was sentenced to prison for 15 years. A Mongol cadre, Monghtomor, argued that Ulaanbagan was not the primary leader in *Wasu*. There was no need to hold an ordinary person criminally responsible when the Centre had protected Teng Haiqing and other high-ranking officials. But Monghtomor's opinion was not accepted.[146]

After the Cultural Revolution, the victims asked the Party and the government to hold Teng Haiqing legally accountable. The Second Secretary of the IMAR, Ting Mao, wrote a letter to Huang Kecheng in August 1981,[147] who was responsible for rehabilitating, vindicating, and redressing unjust convictions during the Cultural Revolution. Ting Mao argued that Teng Haiqing must be legally responsible for the purge. However, Huang Kecheng's reply in September 1981 was disappointing. Huang thought the cruel consequence of purging the new IMPRP was Kang Sheng's mistake, while Teng Haiqing was merely an implementer of Kang Sheng's brutal purge. Huang also believed that the Cultural Revolution was a very abnormal period; it was difficult to hold individuals accountable unless they were the main culprits.[148]

Why the Mongols?

Inner Mongolia's Cultural Revolution is a topic too vast to be condensed into a single chapter. Thus, this chapter is inevitably insufficient in depth and breadth. Before concluding, I would like to address two questions. First, what is the nature of the purge of the IMPRP? Many Mongols insist that it was a genocide. If we look at the consequence, it was indeed an ethnic massacre, a "virtually genocide campaign", as Atwood described. However, the motivation behind the campaign warrants further

[145] Teng Haiqing was appointed as a vice commander of Ji'nan Military Region before he retired. Gao Jinming worked as a vice party secretary of Luoyang City, Henan, after the Cultural Revolution.

[146] Qi Zhi, *Neimeng wenge shilu*, 521-522.

[147] Huang Kecheng was the Standing Secretary of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection of the CCP from 1978 to 1985.

[148] Tumen and Zhu, *Kang Sheng yu neirendang yuan'an*, 299-300.

discussion. TJ Cheng, Uradyn E. Bulag and Mark Selden argue that it was not a genocide. Instead, they argue it corresponds to the concept of “politicide”.

> In contrast to genocide, the goal was not elimination of the Mongol people as a whole or their forced removal from China. Rather, it was the taming of the Mongols, especially their politically active members, and destruction of their capacity and will to organize “politically” in opposition to the Chinese state. Stated differently, the goal was to assure Mongol loyalty to China.

The term politicide, defined by Barbara Harff and Ted R. Gurr, refers to a large-scale killing based on victims’ “hierarchical position or political opposition to the regime and dominant groups”.[149] Cheng et al. point out that the Mongols were a group which has automatic power in theory and were regarded as separatists and traitors by the regime. However, the aim of the pogrom was not to eliminate but to tame the Mongols. Despite the cruel torture, the victims could actually be saved in the pogrom. One way to stop torture was that victims could prove their loyalty to the Party and state by reporting other suspects. The Party gave them opportunities to redeem.[150] Their insightful argument is thought-provoking. After examining some atrocities, I tend to agree that the current evidence does not support the genocide argument. The hysterical activists and torturers did not intend to kill the Mongols, but wanted their confessions and reports of others. In some cases, the victims did not have to report others, but only needed to admit that they were the IMPRP members, and then the torture could be stopped. For instance, the “model” seen by Hasgerel, who received a Chairman Mao badge as a reward for his confession, was an example of being “redeemed.” Even Hasgerel herself did not suffer from violent beatings any more after the torturers finally got her “confession”. The victims did have the chance to be saved.

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[149] Barbara Harff and Ted Robert Gurr, “Toward Empirical Theory of Genocides and Politicides: Identification and Measurement of Cases Since 1945”, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 32, No. 3, September, 1988, 360.
Besides, Manus I. Midlarsky agrees with Harff and Curr that genocide and politicide are different, arguing genocide is based on ethno-religious identity, while politicide is based on socioeconomic or political criteria. Manus. I. Midlarsky, *The killing Trap: Genocide in the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, 22.

[150] Cheng et al., *A Chinese Rebel*, 334-335, 338.

Nevertheless, about the concept “politicide”, the three scholars did not explain clearly who was exercising the “politicide”. If the aim of the purge was to ensure the Mongol people’s loyalty to China, is the Chinese state the player which imposed the politicide? Cheng et al wrote: “The Center’s purge of Ulanhu at the Qianmen Hotel Conference in Beijing in June and July 1966, however, reoriented the Cultural Revolution agenda to attacking the power held by Mongols in Inner Mongolia.”[151] Soon, almost all the Mongol leaders in the IMAR were removed. Can we argue it is the Party Centre that wanted to politicide the Mongols?

However, there will be another question: why did the pogrom happen to the Mongols, but not to other non-Han people? The loyalty of the Tibetans and Xinjiang’s non-Han people was even more questionable. In 1959, the 14th Dalai Lama and his followers went into exile in India, which also had tense relations with China since the border conflict in 1962. In May 1962, in Ili and Tacheng in Xinjiang, about 60,000 Chinese citizens, mostly Kazakhs but also Uyghurs, Uzbeks, Tartars and other minorities, crossed the border and migrated to the Soviet Union. While in Inner Mongolia, the defections to the MPR were only sporadic. Weren’t the Mongols “model” enough in Mao’s era? Cheng et al also noticed that in Tibet and Xinjiang, the non-Han population was not the target of mass persecution.[152] However, they did not explain the reason for the differences.

It’s necessary to briefly introduce the Cultural Revolution in Tibet and Xinjiang for comparison. First, although the national minorities in Tibet and Xinjiang were not the target of mass persecution, they did suffer painfully during the Cultural Revolution, especially from the “Destroying the Four Olds” (*po si jiu*) campaign, which claimed to destroy “old ideas”, “old culture”, “old customs” and “old habits”. In Tibet, the activists destroyed Buddhist statues, texts and temples, robbed the temples of their treasures, and struggled against old nobles and religious leaders.[153] In Xinjiang,

[151] Ibid., 335

[152] Ibid., 332-333.

[153] One of the best records of the Cultural Revolution in Tibet is Tsering Woeser’s *Forbidden Memory: Tibet During the Cultural Revolution*, Photographs by Tsering Dorje and translated by Susan T. Chen, University of Nebraska Press, 2006. The photos were from Tsering Woeser’s father, Tsering Dorje, who was a military officer and a photographer during the Cultural Revolution. Tsering Woeser interviewed many people about their experiences. The situation of “Destroying the Four Olds” was introduced in Chapter 1.

Qurans were burnt, and mosques were turned into pigsties.[154] Nevertheless, the "Destroying the Four Olds" movement did not target the minorities purposely. It targeted all the cultures and people that were thought to be "feudal" and "rotten" by the Red Guards.

Similar to other places in China, in Tibet and Xinjiang, antagonistic Red Guard factions launched "violent struggles". Rebel groups in Tibet had two major factions: the Gyenlog (the Rebels' General Headquarters, Chinese: *Zaozong*), which sought to overthrow Tibet's First Secretary Zhang Guohua; and the Nyamdrel (the Great Revolutionary Proletarian Alliance's General Headquarters, Chinese: *Dalianzhi*), which defended Zhang Guohua. The people, regardless of whether they were Tibetan, Han, or from other nationalities, were divided by political factions rather than their nationalities.[155] In Xinjiang, it appears that the non-Han population was less affected by the violent struggles of the rebel groups. Two factions clashed over whether to overthrow Wang Enmao, the First Secretary of Xinjiang. Zhou Enlai confirmed *Hongersi*, which was determined to bring Wang Enmao down, was a "revolutionary" rebel group. Wang had to make self-criticisms to the rebels. However, when *Hongsanlian*, one of the *Hongersi*'s sub-factions, planned to convene a meeting denouncing the great Han chauvinism of Wang Enmao, which would have tens of thousands of non-Han attendants, Zhou Enlai decided to prevent it.[156] The Premier did not provide an explanation, but it is likely similar to another CCP CC document, which claimed: "Xinjiang is a national minority region, and the Cultural Revolution there must be about strengthening national unity and preventing the use of Soviet revisionism and local nationalism for provocative purposes."[157] James Millward believes that Zhou Enlai was eager to prevent the non-Han population from

[154] James A. Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads: A History of Xinjiang*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2007, 275.

[155] About the struggle between two factions in Tibet, Tsering Woeser wrote: "Students, ordinary residents in the city, workers, cadres, farmers and nomads could be found in both factions, and there were Tibetans and Chinese in both. There was a saying at the time: 'Whom to trust --- The faction decides!'" (In Chinese: *qin bu qin, pai lai fen*: literally means "close or not, decided by the faction") See Tsering Woeser, *Forbidden Memory*, 205.

[156] "Zhou Enlai guanyu Xinjiang daxue hongsanlian zhaokai wuerqi minzu dahui de zhishi" (Zhou Enlai's Instructions about the 27 May Nationality Convention by *Hongsanlian* in Xinjiang University), 26 May 1968, in CCRD.

[157] "Zhonggong zhongyang gei Xinjiang zizhiqu dangwei de dianwen" (The CCP CC's Telegram to the Xinjiang Autonomy Region's Party Committee), 4 September 1968, in CCRD.

being drawn into factional conflicts. Additionally, Millward notes that the current documents indicate that the factional struggles most afflicted the Han people in eastern Xinjiang.[158]

It should be noted that the so-called national minorities' "counter-revolutionary" cases could be found in both Tibet and Xinjiang during the Cultural Revolution. However, unlike the IMPRP case in Inner Mongolia, the cases in Tibet and Xinjiang did not result in the purge against the local non-Han people. In 1969, a range of violent attacks occurred in Tibet, killing 15 PLA soldiers, 7 cadres, and 32 grassroots leaders and activists.[159] It was said that among the 71 counties in the Tibet Autonomous Region, 52 were involved.[160] It was known as the Nyemo Incident, as a Tibetan nun named Trinley Chödrön, from Nyemo County, was regarded as the leader. The Beijing authorities decided it was "revolt again (*zai pan*)", indicating it was the second revolt after the 14th Dalai Lama's exodus in 1959, the first revolt.[161] It was said that the authorities executed 295 individuals involved in the Nyemo Incident. Some were rehabilitated after the Cultural Revolution. Nevertheless, some of Tsering Woeser's interviewees believe the actual executions were higher than that.[162] In Xinjiang, a "counter-revolutionary" party, named East Turkestan People's Revolutionary Party, was discovered in June 1966. The authorities claimed that the Soviet intelligence agency in 1960 instructed the top officials of the XUAR to establish an organisation behind the scenes to fight against the Chinese rule. In February 1968, the East Turkestan People's Revolutionary Party was established.

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[158] Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads*, 271-273.

[159] Melvyn C. Goldstein, Ben Jiao and Tanzen Lhundrup, *On the Cultural Revolution in Tibet: The Nyemo Incident of 1969*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009, 1.

[160] Tsering Woeser, *Forbidden Memory*, 217.

[161] The reason for the Nyemo Incident is in dispute. In the past, Western scholars tended to view it as an ethnic conflict, Tibetans against Chinese oppression. On the other hand, Chinese writer Wang Lixiong, famous for his books on Tibet and Xinjiang (He was also Tsering Woeser's husband), argued that it was due to the imposition of the People's Commune that damaged the economic interests of the local Tibetan people. Melvyn C. Goldstein, along with Ben Jiao and Tanzen Lhundrup, disagrees with the argument that ethnic conflict is the cause of the conflict. They argue it was a factional conflict between the Gyenlog and the Nyamdrel, the two major Maoist rebel factions in Tibet. The literature review of the relevant studies can be seen in Goldstein et al., *The Nyemo Incident of 1969*, 3-7. Similarly, in Tsering Woeser's book, a Tibetan journalist and a Han rebel leader shared the same opinion as Godstein et al, insisting it was a violent struggle, or *wu dou*, among the masses. Tsering Woeser, *Forbidden Memory*, 218.

[162] Tsering Woeser, *Forbidden Memory*, 223.

They sent personnel to build connections with Soviet and Mongolian intelligence agencies. It was believed the party had 1522 members, printed more than fifty kinds of publications to advocate the independence of Xinjiang, and robbed the state banks and warehouses multiple times. Some revolts took place, but they were soon suppressed. Some were killed then and there.[163] In 1970, the Chinese authorities sentenced 32 to death, 198 to limited terms of imprisonment, and 135 received other punishments.[164] The authorities did crack down hard on the national minorities' rebellions and executed the rebels with no mercy. However, it seems that there lack of evidence to show that the government had purged the innocent minorities on a large scale, like in Inner Mongolia.[165]

Then, I realised I needed to move the attention from the Centre to the local level. The new leaders of the IMAR and "the masses" played a crucial role in the persecution of the Mongols. From Beijing's point of view, the Mongols were far less "problematic". The short-lived Mongolian autonomous movements during the civil war, in fact, were much weaker than the Soviet-supported East Turkestan Republic in Xinjiang, let alone the independent theocratic Tibetan regime. After 1949, Inner Mongolia was ruled by loyal Communists and never had large-scale rebellions and

[163] An exiled Uyghur political dissident, Ilshat H. Kokbore, who was appointed as the spokesman in Chinese by the World Uyghur Congress, mentioned the East Turkestan People's Revolutionary Party on his Twitter three times, twice of them are from an article he wrote for Radio Free Asia. He wrote, during the oppression of the East Turkestan People's Revolutionary Party's rebellion, "The Communist government has deployed its regular army and regimental militia to bomb and strafe entire Uyghur and Kazakh villages and Uyghur and Kazakh women and children of all ages." He wanted to demonstrate the crimes the CCP had committed; however, he did not give further convincing details. See Ilshat H. Kokbore, "Yangguang xia de zui'e" (The Crimes under the Sunshine), Radio Free Asia, 9 September 2024, available at: https://www.rfa.org/mandarin/pinglun/jujiaoweiwuer/ylxt-sin-under-the-sun-09092024140232.html.

[164] Ma Dazheng, *Guojia liyi gaoyu yiqie: Xinjiang wending wenti de guancha yu sikao* (The State Interest is Paramount: The Observation and Reflections on the Stability Question of Xinjiang) Urumqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 2002, 42-45. The relevant materials about the East Turkestan People's Revolutionary Party are very scarce. Millward also mentioned this case, but he did not provide more details. Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads*, 273-274.

[165] It should be noted that the lack of evidence did not mean that such a purge never happened. Perhaps some innocents were persecuted. Further studies are still required. Nevertheless, the purge in Tibet and Xinjiang was probably far less serious and caused lighter damage to society and the people than in Inner Mongolia. If something serious had happened, it should have left some traces in the non-official records, such as the Red Guard newspapers and the personal writings of the rebels, as happened in Inner Mongolia. Besides, today's Tibetan and Uyghur diaspora and political dissidents did mention the two cases, but they did not mention any subsequent cruel purges like the persecution of the IMPRP.

defections. However, from the perspective of the IMAR's non-Mongol people, the Mongols were easily considered a potential threat. They were close to the "revisionist" MPR. Several dubious cases and defections had happened. During the Cultural Revolution, class struggle was given unprecedented importance, and hatred of "enemies" was unprecedentedly strong. Cadres, rebels, political activists, and even ordinary people were all keen to ferret out enemies. The Mongols, tragically a minority on their own land with an unfavourable national identity, could easily become victims of the Cultural Revolution fanaticism.

In previous chapters, this thesis highlights the Centre's will, which overrode all the local interests. This was largely the case until the Cultural Revolution. When the CCP functioned "normally", local power holders such as Ulanhu had to obey the Central Committee's instructions constantly and had little freedom to make their own decisions. Ulanhu's democratic reform model was indeed unusual, but this policy could only exist if the CCP allowed it. However, during the Cultural Revolution, the Party Centre's power, counterintuitively, became relatively "weaker", despite the cult of personality of Mao Zedong being unprecedentedly crazy. The previous bureaucratic system was paralysed. The young rebels soon launched violent struggles against their rivals. Even after the revolutionary committees were established in each province, which symbolised that the social order had been restored, the previous bureaucratic system was no longer the same.

Back to the question of who conducted the politicide, can we say it was Inner Mongolia's new authority, led by Teng Haiqing? Partly. I tend to argue that the group that Teng Haiqing initially planned to tame or politicide, was probably not the "Mongols". More accurately, they were "Ulanhu's supporters", real or imagined. Teng Haiqing's slogan has made it clear: "Digging up Ulanhu's black line; Eradicating Ulanhu's pernicious influence." Unfortunately, most of Ulanhu's supporters were Mongols, or at least the authorities believed so. Thus, the Mongols became the primary victims of the bloody *Wasu* Campaign.

There seems to be a lack of deliberate attacks against the Mongols in Teng Haiqing's discourse. Kerry Brown analysed the language of Teng Haiqing's public speeches, finding out that Teng did not address the nationality problem much, except

mentioning “national splittism” (*minzu fenlie zhuyi*) on isolated occasions.[166] The new ruler of the IMAR was appointed by the Centre and represented the Centre; thus, he strictly adhered to the language permitted by the Centre, that is, a range of terminology about class and class struggle. Thus, Brown points out that Teng Haiqing framed the purge of the IMPRP as a simple “party rectification” campaign, which, as Brown argues, was a dislocation. No matter how Teng Haiqing downplayed the significance of the nationality issue, the cruel persecution of the Mongols was ongoing.[167] However, it probably demonstrated that the IMPRP case did not intend to target a specific nationality in Teng’s eyes. Teng perceived that many Mongol people complained, “The Cultural Revolution targeted the Mongols”, “the Han persecuted the Mongols”. He replied: “From the historical situation in Inner Mongolia, because Ulanhu promoted national splittism, created an independent kingdom and fostered some of his black forces in the organisation, so that more Mongol cadres had fallen. It is a fact. This is the unpleasant consequence of Ulanhu's counter-revolutionary revisionism and national splittism.”[168] He believed the authorities wanted to purge the “Ulanhu’s black gang”, rather than the Mongols, but the consequence was a de facto ethnic cleansing. It is also worth noting that the IMAR’s authority was not monolithic. Although Teng was less concerned about nationality, other cadres may hold different opinions. Kerry Brown points out that Gao Jinming’s speech emphasised the issue of

[166] Kerry Brown’s findings are very thought-provoking. Following his argument, I also examined Teng Haiqing’s speeches and agreed that Teng did not concentrate on the nationality issue. The only document focusing on the nationality issue I can find is “Teng Haiqing guanyu neirendang wenti de huibao tigang” (Teng Haiqing’s Report Outline on the IMPRP Problem), 22 December 1968, from Bayantai, *Wasu zainan shilu xubian*, in CCRD. However, it was not a publicised outline. Probably someone drafted the outline for Teng, but Teng did not use it.

The term “splittism” (*fenlie zhuyi*) did not necessarily connect to the national minority. During the Cultural Revolution, there were also petty-bourgeois splittism, right-leaning splittism, or just splittism. Anyone could be accused of being a splittist, which meant damaging the unity of the Party and the state.

[167] Kerry Brown, *The Purge of the Inner Mongolian People’s Party in the Chinese Cultural Revolution, 1967-69: A Function of Language, Power and Violence*, Kent: Global Oriental, 2006, 90-93, 102-103, 140.

[168] “Zuo juexin ba wuchanjieji wenhua dageming jinxing daodi de geming pai! Teng Haiqing Tongzhi zai jige xuedaihui shang de jianghua (zhaiyao)” (Be a Revolutionary Who Is Determined to Carry the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution Through to the End! Comrade Teng Haiqing’s Speech on Xuedaihui), 25 January 1968, in CCRD. Xuedaihui is short for “xuexi Mao zhuxi zhuzuo jiji fenzi daibiao dahui”, the meeting of representative activists in studying Chairman Mao's works.

nationality more.[169] It corresponded to the rebels' recalling that Gao was the early culprit of the purge. Other cadres may also want to purge the Mongols rather than enemies in general. They were also the executors of the politicide.

Besides, during the Cultural Revolution, local politics were also influenced by a new political force: the "revolutionary masses". The revolutionary committees were created based on Mao's "union of the three" (*san jiehe*) principle: representatives of the revolutionary masses, the military, and the revolutionary cadres should unite.[170] Thus, a large number of grassroots political activists were accepted into the newly founded revolutionary committees, and they were backed by their previous rebel factions. Although the "representatives of the revolutionary masses" were often less powerful than the cadres and the military officers in the revolutionary committees, it was the first time during Mao's rule that they could truly participate in politics. We can see the grassroots activists' zealous participation in the purge of the IMPRP, such as Ulaanbagan and his Liaison Station. Some activists were Mongols, and more were Han. These activists not only supported the purge but also actively provided key information and assumed the role of the torturer. It is another question that Cheng, Bulag and Selden warn: democracy might lead to the persecution of minorities.[171]

Yet, on the question of why the mass persecution against a national minority only happened in Inner Mongolia but not in Tibet and Xinjiang, why did the Han people in these two regions not purge their minority neighbours? Honestly, without further studies, I can't give the best answer. I tend to argue that Inner Mongolia was largely unlucky. Inner Mongolia's anarchic status was brought to a close much earlier, with the establishment of the revolutionary committee in November 1967; thus, it had time to focus on the "Cleansing the Class Ranks" Campaign. Tibet and Xinjiang, however, were the last two provinces which finally ceased the factional conflicts. Their revolutionary committee was established in September 1968; meanwhile, some leaders in Inner Mongolia were considering halting the *Wasu* campaign and responding to the struggle, criticism, and reform. Even after the establishment of the revolutionary committees, Tibet still experienced serious internal conflicts; Xinjiang's rebels continued to claim "down with Wang Enmao" openly, although Wang had been

[169] Kerry Brown, *The Purge of the Inner Mongolian People's* Party, 109-110.
[170] *Mao Zedong nianpu*, 6 February 1967, Vol 9 (1966.10-1976.09), 47.
[171] Cheng et al., *A Chinese Rebel*, 342.

accepted as a member of the revolutionary committee. Another possible reason was that in Tibet and Xinjiang, it was the Han cadres rather than the minority cadres who were attacked most vehemently. None of the high-ranking officials being attacked in Tibet were national minorities.[172] In Xinjiang, although two Uyghur cadres, Iminov and Burhan, were attacked, they were less critical than their Han colleagues.[173] While in Inner Mongolia, Ulanhu's fall directly resulted in the purge of his "supporters", who mainly were the Mongols, as the authorities believed. The CCP probably never trusted the minority cadre in Tibet and Xinjiang as much as it trusted Ulanhu. Therefore, these cadres were less likely to be promoted to high positions. However, when the Cultural Revolution came, most of the top cadres became the target of attack. The minority cadres who did not hold the highest provincial positions, however, probably suffered less.

[172] The rebels attacked Zhang Guohua at first. Later, Han cadres like Zhou Renshan, Wang Qimei and Yin Fatang, became the target of the vehement attack.
On 7 February 1967, Mao asked Lin Biao, Zhou Enlai, and others, "Are Zhang Guohua, Zhou Renshan, Wang Qimei and others good guys or bad guys? Please telegram me within one to two days." On 12 February, the Central Military Commission sent a telegram to the Tibetan Military Region. On 24 February, the Central Cultural Revolution Group replied to the rebels in Tibet that Zhang Guohua was standing with Chairman Mao. Although he made mistakes, he was a good comrade. Mao Zedong, "Zai Xizang junqu dangwei yifen dianbao shang de piyu" (The Comment on a Telegram of the Tibetan Military Region Party Committee), 7 February 1967, Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (ed), *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao*, Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1998, Vol. 12, 218-219.
Supported by Zhongnanhai, Zhang Guohua did not fall. Nevertheless, he was reappointed as the commander of the Chengdu Military Region and left Tibet. Other cadres, such as Zhou Renshan and Wang Qimei, were unlucky. They became "Liu Shaoqi's proxies in Tibet", which was recognised by the Centre. "Zhonggong zhongyang, zhongyang wenge guanyu xizang diqu wenhua dageming yinggai zhuyi de wenti" (The Questions Should Be Paid Attention to in Tibet's Cultural Revolution by the CCP CC, the Central Cultural Revolution Group), 11 February 1968, in CCRD.

[173] In Xinjiang, Wang Enmao was the biggest target. The Central leaders finally decided, although Wang made many mistakes and previously stood on Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping's "counterrevolutionary revisionist" and "bourgeois reactionary" line, he did good things for anti-local nationalism, anti-national splittism and the Production and Construction Corps. He should be accepted into the revolutionary committee. "Zhongyang shouzhang jiejian Xinjiang daibiao tuan de zhishi" (The Central Leaders' Instructions When Meeting with Xinjiang's Representatives), 29 August 1968, in CCRD. When the XUAR Revolutionary Committee was established, five cadres were named as proxies of Liu Shaoqi, Deng Xiaoping, and other "capitalist roaders." They were: Wu Guang, Lü Jianren, Zhang Zhonghan, Iminov, and Burhan. Iminov and Burhan were ranked last. "Xinjiang junqu dangwei guanyu chengli Xinjiang Weiwuer zizhiqu geming weiyuan hui de baogao" (The Xinjiang Military Region's Report about the Establishment of the XUAR Revolutionary Committee), 31 August 1968, in CCRD.

Chapter Summary

This chapter examines a range of political events that occurred before and during the Cultural Revolution in Inner Mongolia. After the IMAR's first secretary, Ulanhu's fall, the new leader, Teng Haiqing, a general appointed by Zhongnanhai, responded to the Centre's "Cleansing the Class Ranks" campaign. The localised version was *Wasu*, and the most important part of Wasu was the cruel persecution of the "Inner Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party", which ceased to exist before the establishment of the IMAR in 1947. Most of the victims of the IMPRP case were the Mongols.

I tend to agree with Cheng, Bulag and Selden's argument that the purge of the IMPRP was actually a "politicide", which aims to tame the Mongols and ensure their loyalty to China. Nevertheless, I would like to argue that such politicide was not from the Centre, but from the local political participants, including both the official and non-official forces. Although some leaders in the IMAR governments cared more about the nationality issue, Teng Haiqing, the main culprit for the Mongol people's horrifying sufferings, did not focus on it but concentrated more on class struggle. I tend to believe Teng's initial aim was to politicide Ulanhu's supporters rather than the Mongols. Unfortunately, as Ulanhu is a Mongol cadre, it is very easy for the persecutors to assume that most of his supporters were Mongols. Another interesting point is that in the Cultural Revolution, the people who held no Party-state positions before the Cultural Revolution truly participated in politics more deeply than ever. While the Party-state's power became weaker. The role of grassroots political activists was visible.

It's not to exonerate Zhongnanhai's figures or Teng Haiqing from the responsibilities for the de facto ethnic cleansing of the Mongols. No doubt, Mao's Cultural Revolution and the Cleansing the Class Ranks campaign were the root, and Teng was responsible for the deaths and disabilities that happened in Inner Mongolia's purge. Nevertheless, I believe that historical research needs to be clear and accurate in its facts and details, so that historical events can be better understood. Because I had problems understanding why, during the Cultural Revolution, such a pogrom against a non-Han nationality only happened to the Mongols, but not to the others. Then, I

realised that because I took a perspective from the Centre. But after the examination, I found that the purge of the IMPRP was essentially a local behaviour, not directly related to the Centre. Inner Mongolia's political situation largely catalysed the purge, while neither Tibet nor Xinjiang had similar conditions.

Epilogue

The IMAR has been praised as the “model autonomous region” by generations of CCP leaders, from Zhou Enlai in the 1950s allegedly to today’s Xi Jinping. Despite not being able to find Zhou Enlai’s original source, it is very possible. Mao’s CCP wanted the IMAR to be the model: a minority nationality region which wholeheartedly embraced the CCP’s leadership and devotedly built a new China. The IMAR did, at least from 1947 to 1966. That is why the Party regards it as a model. However, if considering the Mongol people’s demands, the IMAR is far from successful.

Even in the most peaceful 1950s, during which affirmative policies were thriving, Mongol people and other minority nationalities’ wails could still be heard, despite usually being overwhelmed by tedious propaganda. Han people’s colonisation, assimilation, and cultivation of grassland had been the focal point of Mongol-Han conflicts since the late Qing Dynasty. However, these problems still existed in the “socialist” PRC, which claims to be different from the previous “reactionary” regimes. The worry about the Mongolian language even continues today. In 1957, when criticisms of the Party were temporarily allowed, some Mongols disappointedly thought the CCP’s regime was worse than the KMT period. It is very ironic. The CCP kept denouncing that the KMT was the minority people’s exploiter and oppressor before 1949. Despite implementing preferential policies, the CCP’s performance seemed no better.

This thesis suggests that the CCP’s political system is inherently incapable of handling the minority’s demands. First, I would like to borrow two insightful concepts, hard-line policies and soft-line policies, from Terry Martin, a prominent historian with expertise in Soviet nationality policy. The two concepts provide a very helpful framework for understanding nationality policies in communist regimes. Nationality policy, no matter how affirmative and progressive, is a soft-line policy that must serve the core priorities, that is, the hard-line policies of the regime. Mao’s China were the same. Indeed, sometimes, the CCP would offer special moderate policies for minorities. However, these policies aimed to assuage the pushback from the core, hardline policies, which must be implemented uncompromisingly. Land reform, collectivisation, the Great Leap Forward, the Cultural Revolution, and other important issues, like regime control, territorial integrity, and state security, are far more

important to the CCP. Some of them directly represented Mao Zedong's will, which must be prioritised. For example, the CCP could offer a slower timetable for the minority's collectivisation, but it must be done. In 1958, Mao was determined to launch the GLF to catch up with the Soviet Union as soon as possible; he no longer tolerated minority nationalities' speciality. When Ulanhu talked about Inner Mongolia's nationality situation, trying to make Mao's utopian Great Leap Forward plan more applicable, Mao rebuked him.

Secondly, Mao created a totalitarian system, controlling every aspect of society with power highly centralised in the central authorities. Its power structure can impose hard-line policies effectively. Resistance could happen, but the CCP is able to mobilise all the resources to smash the resistance and enforce its will. Such a power structure requires the local authorities and subjects to obey the central authorities' commands, or they could not be implemented efficiently. The Party's hostility to the minority's local nationalism, as well as the localism of the Han, can be regarded as the system's intrinsic nature. When local authorities emphasise their own interests, they are challenging the central authorities. The greater the local autonomy, the weaker the control of the central authorities over the local authorities. Thus, when dealing with local nationalism (or localism), the CCP was intolerant. Only by defeating power challengers from the local authorities could the Party firmly and maximally control the power. Then it could enforce its core priorities to all its subjects. Local nationalism was probably considered more dangerous, as minority nationalities often demanded independence from China.

When discussing the CCP's rule in Inner Mongolia, Ulanhu, the Red Son, could never be omitted. Scholars have noted Ulanhu's dual identity: he was a Communist Party representative in front of the Mongols and, meanwhile, a Mongol representative in front of the CCP, but such a position is "fraught with dangers" and "ultimately impossible".[1] Ulanhu's promotion within the CCP hierarchy was rapid, largely due to his Mongol identity, which was employed by the CCP to weaken the resistance of the Mongols when it tried to build a regime on their land. Unlike Eastern Mongolian leaders, it was the CCP rather than his personal influence that made Ulanhu the leader of the Mongols. (Ulanhu's influence was possibly only limited to

[1] *Liu, Reins of Liberation*, 267-268. Bulag, *The Mongols at China's Edge*, 224-225.

his Tumed fellows.) Naturally, the CCP expected Ulanhu to be a loyal Party policy implementer.

Due to Ulanhu's relatively pragmatic governance, Inner Mongolia was stable until 1966. It avoided some catastrophes of political radicalism, although often Mao's ideas had to be imposed on the steppe. Ulanhu was cautious enough to follow the CCP's steps strictly. Although sometimes he adjusted the Party's policies to better adapt to Inner Mongolian-specific conditions, it did not go further than the overall line and was considered acceptable. However, as Qi Zhi argues, Ulanhu may begin to doubt the Party's will after the fiasco of the Great Leap Forward.[2] In the 1960s, Ulanhu seemed to have distanced himself somewhat from the Party's line. His passivity in the Socialist Education Movement triggered his colleagues' discontent. He became one of the earliest cadres who fell after the beginning of the Cultural Revolution.

The Cultural Revolution was an abnormal period. On the one hand, Mao Zedong's personal authority was never higher and so unshakable. On the other hand, local governance in China was chaotic. The masses, for the first time under the CCP's totalitarian rule, were given the power to defy and topple the officials and later participate in the communist regime, the Revolutionary Committee.[3] No doubt, their power was limited and granted by Mao. Yang Jishen, who used to be a rebel at Tsinghua University and is famous for his research on the Great Leap Forward's famine, remarked: "Chairman Mao, Mao Zedong Thought and the Party Centre's Directives are not allowed to oppose. People had to rebel by kneeling down, kneeling down in front of Mao."[4] Nevertheless, the Cultural Revolution still fuelled ordinary people's zeal for political participation. Some rebels were righteous, but some committed the cruellest crimes, usually in the name of revolution.

Thus, the persecution against the non-existent "IMPRP" had more "local" colour. From both the local authorities, and from ordinary grassroots activists. This thesis, in

[2] Qi Zhi, *Neimeng wenge shilu*, 69-70.

[3] Compared to the military cadres, the rebels' power was much weaker in the Revolutionary Committee. Nevertheless, compared to the hierarchical, bureaucratic system before the Cultural Revolution, the rebels did have more power.

[4] Yang Jisheng, *Tianfan difu: Zhongguo wenhua dageming shi* (The World Turned Upside Down: A History of the Chinese Cultural Revolution), Hong Kong: Cosmos Books Ltd, 2016, Vol. 1, 186.

no way, is defending Zhongnanhai's senior leaders. At least, it was Mao who launched the "Cleansing the Class Ranks" campaign. Besides, Zhongnanhai adopted a tacit attitude towards the persecution, which may satisfy Mao's constant paranoia. However, I tend to think that Inner Mongolian officials, such as Teng Haiqing, Gao Jinming, etc. and activists from the masses, such as Ulaanbagan, showed more initiative and activity in the purge, while the Centre was not directly involved.

It might be worth mentioning that after the Cultural Revolution, some Mongols took revenge against the persecutors who were not held criminally accountable. In 1981, a major Mongol students' strike broke out, urging the authorities to respect and protect the rights of the Mongols. The protestors remembered the darkest period of *Wasu*: they had been hurt too much and had not received justice. However, Zhongnanhai refused to compromise. Hu Yaobang demanded a hawkish stance in dealing with the protest. Under duress, the students finally gave up the strike. Several Mongol cadres believed to be sympathetic to the protestors were punished. The student leaders were also punished.[5] In 1985 and 1994, the Mongol people petitioned again, demanding to punish Teng Haiqing. Their voice was not considered. From the Mongol people's points of view, the real culprits did not receive the punishment they deserved, which meant they had not received justice. After decades, the purge against the Mongols is now a political taboo and no longer discussed publicly, but the Mongols will never forget the horrendous atrocities in the Cultural Revolution. It permanently damaged the Mongol-Han relationships.

A Possible Future?

Back to the Mongolian education controversy at the beginning of the thesis, to the Mongol people's dismay, the erosion of the Mongolian language did not stop in 2020. In October 2023, it was reported that Mongolian classes were reduced to 3 classes per week from 7 in primary and high schools. Kindergartens also stopped teaching Mongolian. Some Mongolian people claimed the Mongolian language *Gaokao* (The Nationwide Unified Examination for Admissions to General Universities and

[5] Qi Zhi, *Neimeng wenge fenglei*, 533-568.

Colleges) will disappear by 2028.[6] Scholars lament: “China’s Second Generation Ethnic Policies are already here.”[7]

Western scholars are very critical of the so-called “Second Generation Ethnic Policy” and disagree that China should adopt the US “melting pot” model. Indeed, it does not even try to hide the intention of assimilation. Elliot argues that Ma Rong, one of the most significant contributors to the “Second Generation Ethnic Policy”, chose the wrong analogy. China’s nationality relationships are not similar to the ethnic relationships in the US, where most of the population are immigrants. Elliot suggests a better analogy: China’s minority nationalities should be compared to the indigenous people in America and Australia. They are the original masters of their land. [8]

Elliot’s analogy is very thought-provoking. Then, a very immature thought came to me. I can not help thinking: Can China learn from Wales? Most scholars on China’s nationality policy focus on either the Soviet model or the American model. Is it possible to learn from minority regions in Europe, for example, Wales’ model?

I have been living in Wales for years and noticed the striking similarities between Wales and China’s minority “autonomous regions”. Taking Inner Mongolia as an example, the Welsh and the Mongols are the “indigenous” people compared to the latecomers, the English/the Han. Both regions are required to use bilingual road signs. Welsh and Mongolian are minority languages in their own homeland and suffer from the heavy pressures of the dominant language. Unfortunately, the hegemony of English in the UK and the hegemony of Mandarin Chinese in China are unshakable. A large number of Welsh/Mongols only speak the dominant language.

Nevertheless, the two nations are on a different track. When the Welsh campaigners protested for the right to use Welsh in court in the 1940s and 1950s, China emulated

[6] “Neimeng zhongxiaoxue mengguyu jiaoxue beixue liucheng, gaokaosheng mingnian luqu youhuifen jianban” (The Mongolian language Education in Inner Mongolia’s Primary and Middle Schools Was Undermined by 60 Per cent, Gaokao Students’ Preferential Scores for Admission Will be Halved Next Year), 4 October 2023, *Radio Free Asia*, available at: https://www.rfa.org/mandarin/yataibaodao/shaoshuminzu/gt1-10042023041532.html.

[7] Roche and Leibold, “China’s Second-generation Ethnic Policies Are Already Here,”7 September 2020.

[8] Elliot, “The Case of the Missing Indigene: Debate Over a Second-Generation Ethnic Policy,” 202-212.

the Soviet 1936 constitution and decided in its 1954 constitution: “Citizens of all nationalities have the right to use their own spoken and written languages in court proceedings. The people’s courts are to provide interpretation for any party unacquainted with the spoken or written language commonly used in the locality. In an area where people of national minorities live in compact communities or where a number of nationalities live together, hearings in people’s courts are conducted in the language commonly used in the locality, and judgments, notices and all other documents of the people’s courts are made public in such language.”[9] It sounds promising, however, only in theory. In 1967, the Welsh Language Act 1967 was passed, giving rights to use Welsh in legal proceedings. While in China, the Cultural Revolution's havoc was continuing. During the Cultural Revolution, the right to use native languages was repealed, and only Chinese was allowed.[10] The right has been restored in the 1982 constitution, yet China does not have a “rule of law”. Today, the UK’s devolution has been regarded as a good example of “sub-state autonomy”.[11] However, China’s autonomous region is merely lip service.

In China, Mongolian and other minority languages are suppressed by the authority. While in Wales, Welsh is not only protected but encouraged and funded. Its goal of reaching 1 million speakers by 2025 is highly achievable. Ulanhu used to encourage Han cadres to learn Mongolian,[12] and such a hope is shared by many non-Han people. As discussed in Chapter 4, Mongol intellectuals complained that new Han immigrants never learned Mongolian, which was even worse than Han traders during the Qing and Republic periods. The traders used unequal exchange to exploit Mongols, but at least they spoke Mongolian. In China, it may be a pipe dream for a long time. However, in Wales, the Welsh language is compulsory for students up to the age of 16. Many Welsh speakers speak both Welsh and English perfectly. Certainly, compulsory language education could cause pushback, like Irish in Ireland, French in English Canada, and so does Welsh in English-medium schools.

[9] *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo xianfa* (Constitution of the People's Republic of China (1954).

[10] Heberer, *China and its National Minorities: Autonomy or Assimilation?* 29.

[11] Elisabeth Nauclér, “Autonomy and Multilevel Governance: Experiences in Nordic and Continental European Cooperation,” in Marc Weller and Stefan Wolff (eds), *Autonomy, Self-governance and Conflict Resolution: Innovative Approaches to Institutional Design in Divided Societies*, London: Routledge: 2005, 91.

[12] Bulag, “Mongolian Ethnicity and Linguistic Anxiety in China,” 758-760.

Nevertheless, Welsh has a much brighter future than China's non-Han (even non-Mandarin) languages. One day, China will probably learn from these successful examples. This is unlikely in the foreseeable future. But, as China's non-Han regions are similar to Wales, it might be an option.

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