

# PAINTINGS AND PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES REPRESENTING THE MONGOLIAN MONASTIC CAPITAL CITY

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Apart from Tibetan and Mongolian chronicles, archival materials, travellers' notes and oral history, the old paintings and photo images are inevitable sources when studying the history of the Mongolian monastic capital city. The present article describes different paintings, drawings and photographs representing the monastic camp. While drawings and paintings were painted mostly by local Mongolian artists, photographs were taken by foreign researchers and travellers. The drawings and paintings are mostly preserved in Ulaanbaatar, and the photos taken by foreigners enrich different collections of the world, and only some of them are available in Ulaanbaatar. The article briefly introduces the Hungarian travellers who visited the monastic capital city, and lists photos taken by them in the 1920s.<sup>1</sup>

## Short History of the Capital City

The moving camp originally founded in 1639 for Öndör gegēn Janabajar (1635–1723), the 1<sup>st</sup> Bogd or ǰewcūndamba xutagt became the capital city of Mongolia in 1912 called Nislel Xūrē. During its more than three hundred year history the monastic camp had different names such as Örgō (Urga), Ix Xūrē, Dā Xūrē, Bogdīn Xūrē, Nislel Xūrē, Nislel Xūrē xot, and finally Ulaanbaatar. It was the centre of Mongolian Buddhist culture, where the reincarnated Bogds resided. After several re-locations, the monastic city settled in its permanent place in 1855, though since 1778, it has been situated in the present Ulaanbaatar basin. Apart from being the religious centre with a detailed lama hierarchy, high level monastic education, numerous temples and special religious events, it was also a centre of Manchu administration, Chinese and Russian commerce, and a destination of pilgrims and travellers. After the collapse of the Manchu empire in 1911, the 8<sup>th</sup> Bogd or Bogd xān (1870–1924) became the head of all religious and political power which resulted in a golden age of the Buddhist Church.<sup>2</sup> The palaces and the temples of his city were full of ornaments and artefacts and had vivid religious lives.

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<sup>1</sup> The present research of the author was supported by the OTKA PD 83465 scholarship of Hungary within the framework of researching the heritage of the Mongolian Monastic Capital.

<sup>2</sup> Szilágyi Zsolt: *A teokratikus mongol állam*. Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem, Belső-ázsiai Tanszék, Budapest 2011 [The Theocratic Mongolian State].

After the Chinese *Gamin* (army of the Kuo-min-tang, the Chinese Nationalist Party) invasion to Mongolia in 1919, Baron Ungern for Sternberg (1886–1921) came to ‘liberate’ Mongolia in 1920 by expelling the Chinese *Gamin* army. Experiencing the brutality of Ungern’s White Russian troops the emerging Mongol revolutionaries asked for help from the Soviets in liberating the country of these troops. The new Russian (Soviet) government sent its Red Army. The Red Army and the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Army recaptured the capital city in July 1921 and chased out Ungern’s troops. After this revolution, the People’s Government of Mongolia was declared and the Soviets ‘helped’ Mongolia on the way of Socialism. In the 1920s the new buildings of Ulaanbaatar started to be built, and the “old monastic camp or city” (referred in this article as “the Xürē”) and the “new, modern city” existed next to each other until 1937–1938, when the old monastic buildings were demolished or destroyed.

## Paintings and Drawings

Besides possessing artistic value, several paintings and drawings can be used as maps of the Xürē. The most well-known painting of it was painted by Jügder in 1912 (50×95 cm) having been commissioned by the Bogd xān. Jügder was a disciple of the famous sculptor monk, Gendendamba *agramba*, expert in Tantric studies, who lived in *Jōgoin aimag* of the 30 *aimag* districts of the Xürē.<sup>3</sup> Jügder climbed the surrounding mountains of the city to paint the “map”. This marvellous painting (⇒ Figure 1) shows the structure of the city naming its main parts with Written Mongolian inscriptions and presenting not only the hills, valleys, rivers, and streets but the monasteries and temples being active at the time. Less attention was paid to the presentation of the Chinese quarter, and the lay population quarters, thus their assemblies cannot be distinguished in details. However, numerous particulars are visible in the painting, such as stone-heaps on peaks, the litter heaps surrounding the Xürē, stūpas around Gandan, people, oxen-carts, yurts, and numerous other minute details. This picture hangs now on the wall of the Palace Museum of the Bogd khaan but prints of it are also available in bookshops.

Balgan’s “Da xürē” painting (⇒ Figure 2) was painted in the 1880s (130×140 cm). It is preserved in the Janabajar Museum of Fine Arts. There is also a drawing (149×149 cm) drawn by an unknown painter, which hangs on the wall of the Ulaanbaatar City Museum (⇒ Figure 3). It marks 129 places of the city with their names in Modern Mongolian, and is a very valuable source as temples, even districts, residences of nobles, and other institutions are marked on it. It is said to be a draft of Balgan’s painting. Apart from buildings Balgan’s painting and the drawing present the everyday life of monks and people.

In the Ulaanbaatar City Museum the Chinese merchant town with its agricultural fields is presented in a picture dated at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>3</sup> Nawān, D.: *Öwgön Dendewīn durdatgal*. Šinjlex Uxānī Akademīn Xewlel, Ulaanbaatar 1961 [Reminiscence of Old Dendew], pp. 10–11.

Though the Mongolian parts are neglected in it, the Chinese settlement is presented in details (⇒ Figure 4).

There is a painting painted by Manibadar in 1946 called *Nīslel xūrē* hanging on the wall of the Ulaanbaatar City Museum (⇒ Figure 5). This painting was based on Jügder's painting and shows the extent and details of the city. It is a large painting (148×282 cm, copy) so the temples can be seen in detail.

Two almost similar drawings (341/96, 86×86 cm; 368/96, 86×196 cm) are preserved in the National Library of Mongolia bearing the title “Gandan, Jūn xūrē (the Eastern Monastic District) and their surroundings”. (⇒ Figure 6, ⇒ Figure 7). These were drawn and painted on linen and show the two main parts of the old capital. One of them was possessed by the Ministry of Interior. It seems that they date from the 1920s. People were not presented in these drawn maps, but temples, *aimags*, lay population quarters, streets, and especially Russian stores were precisely drawn. Written Mongolian inscriptions indicate the names of stores and other sites.

Another significant painting by an unknown painter was published by Cültem (⇒ Figure 8).<sup>4</sup> This painting includes Tibetan inscriptions of the names of temples and the *aimags* that existed in the two main monastic quarters of the city. Due to the fact that the temples which were built after 1913 are not presented in it, and only 27 *aimags* are visible west of Gandan, one can suppose that it was painted between 1839–1855, when the city was located in nearby Tolgoit, but definitely before 1877. The original painting has to be further studied.

Another beautiful painting is preserved in the Badamkhand Museum of Art. In the Eastern part of the city 27 *aimags* are visible. The picture is defined as painted during the period of the 5<sup>th</sup> Bogd (1815–1841).

There are some methods to determine the age of a painting. Apart from the used paints the dates of the foundation of the temples can support this analysis. For instance Gandantegčēnlin temple was founded in 1838. The dates of the foundation of the three latest founded *aimags* of the total 30 *aimags* are also known: *Čoinxorlin aimag* separated from *Mergen xambīn aimag* in 1877; *Dašdandarlin aimag* separated from *Maxamaya aimag* in 1892, and *Ex Dagina aimag* came into existence in 1903. Avalokitešvara temple and Idgāčoinjinlin monastic school were founded after 1910.

The collection of the Palace Museum of the Bogd khaan preserves three small-size drawings or paintings which have been recently published in the catalogue of the Museum. One of them presents the *Xūrē Cam* dance, another one shows the middle part of the Eastern Monastic District, and the third one presents also monks.<sup>5</sup>

Moreover, other Mongolian style paintings of events and separate temples are available in different museums in Ulaanbaatar. In the Military Museum the “Welcome of the Bogd” (*Bogdīg jalax jam*) (⇒ Figure 9), in the Palace Museum

<sup>4</sup> Cültem, Nyam-Osor: *Mongolian Architecture*. State Publishing House, Ulaanbaatar 1988. Picture No. 54.

<sup>5</sup> When writing this article the catalogue was not available for the author. These graphics are not exhibited in the museum, but are preserved in its collection.

of the Bogd khaan the paintings of B. Šaraw (1869–1939) entitled the Bogd's Green Palace (140×188 cm) and his Summer Palace (130–170 cm) hang on the wall.

As for paintings related to the Xürē painted after the 1940s, two paintings of D. Damdinsüren (1909–1984),<sup>6</sup> entitled *Xürē Cam* (painted in 1966, 77×120 cm) and *Arwan jasgīn nādam* (Nādam festival of the ten bannerets, painted in 1965, 87×118 cm), show the central part of the capital, making visible the arrangement of its buildings. These paintings are preserved in the Janabajar Museum of Fine Arts and are also available in reprint as illustrations of several books related to Mongolian art. Presenting the monastic city is a favourable topic of modern Mongolian painters and foreign painters as well: one can study Dünbürē's paintings in the Ulaanbaatar City Museum (⇒ Figure 10) as well as different painters' paintings in the collection of the Mongolian National Modern Art Gallery.<sup>7</sup> Several of the painters learnt the history of the monastic city from old monks or lay people, or studied photographs and reminiscences, thus their paintings have more or less historic authenticity. Some foreigners also painted paintings using personal impressions (e.g. Nikolaj Rerih)<sup>8</sup> and graphics and drawings are available in some books, for example Roland Strasser's.<sup>9</sup>

Private collections contain valuable materials, too, such as Nobel Prize winner scholar Richard Ernst's collection in Switzerland. He possesses a unique painting of Gandan dated in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. 27 *aimags* are visible in it with their names in Tibetan. 27 monks are presented as well as stupas, temple buildings and yurts.

All in all, these old paintings and drawings of the city can be used as precise maps, thus we have data of its arrangements in the 19–20<sup>th</sup> century from different points of view (Mongolian, Chinese, monk, tourist). We can also see Mongolians' everyday life presented in them as well as the changes of the Xürē during the decades (Balgan's painting from 1880; Jügder's painting from 1912, etc.). The paintings of individual buildings should be compared with photos to check their accuracy.

## Old Photographs Available in Ulaanbaatar

Photographs of the Xürē were taken from the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Descriptions from the aspect of architecture and some old photographs appeared

<sup>6</sup> D. Damdinsüren became a lama when he was 11. He lived in *Čoinxorlin aimag* studying under prominent painters. He witnessed many religious events until he was forced to disrobe in 1937.

<sup>7</sup> The Art Gallery's paintings were painted related to Gandan (A. P. Stragonov, 50×70 cm; A. P. Stragonov, 90×122 cm; Šepetilnikov, 44,5×33 cm; Cembeldorj, 60×90 cm), the Bogd's Green Palace (Jamsran; Nacagdorj, 25×17 cm; Šepetilnikov, 44,5×33 cm), Dambadarjā Monastery (Gawā, 5×15 cm; Gawā, 34×21 cm; Šepetilnikov, 5×33 cm), Jūn xürē (Dünbürē, 40×60 cm; Dünbürē, 70×100 cm), and the Temple complex of Čoijin Lama (Gawā, 19×15 cm; Gawā, 33×23 cm, Jamsran).

<sup>8</sup> www.ec.icr.su/museum, www.roerich.org.

<sup>9</sup> Strasser, Roland: *Mongolen, Lamas and Dämonen. Reiseberichte aus Tibet und der Mongolei. Mit vielen Zeichnungen des Verfassers.* Deutsche Buch-Gemeinschaft, Berlin 1932.

in print, such as in the books on Mongolian architecture by Šepetilnikov<sup>10</sup>, Maidar<sup>11</sup> and Cültem.<sup>12</sup> Photographic references can also be found in researchers' and travellers' books, such as the photographs taken by Sakari Pälsi<sup>13</sup> or in the book of László Forbáth.<sup>14</sup> Some other old photographs are available in Serēter's book<sup>15</sup> and in other new prints. In 2011 a book called *Mongols in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries* was published in Mongolia,<sup>16</sup> which contains numerous old photographs. However, some of these publications do not contain precise data about the name of the photographer, the dates of the photographs, or the contents of the photographs.

The unpublished collection of the Film Archives (*Kino gerel jurag, dū awianī barimtīn arxiw*) houses a unique collection of old photographs containing numerous pictures of temples, monastic schools, and religious events of the Xürē. Relevant photos on religious topics or city structure are available in six boxes (92, 93, 95, 96, 21, 163. The boxes might have been renumbered in 2011). Materials related to religion (*Šašnī xolbogdoltoi matyerial*) are arranged to two boxes: Box 92 (K23612–K23920) contains photos of the Xürē (called Dā Xürē, K23677–K23712), and Dambadarjālin xīd situated in its north part (K23777–K23791), while Box 93 (K23921–24246) preserves photos of the Temple Complex of Čoijīn Lama (K23921–K23967), the Chinese temples (K23971–K23987), the Eastern Monastic District and the Yellow Palace situated in its centre (K23997–K24101), and Gandan monastery (K24226–K24240). The photos of Box 95 (24639–24897) show mainly religious events, such as *Cam* dance or Maitreya procession. Box 96 mostly contains photos of religious dignities. Box 163 (44662–45030) includes photos that were taken after the democratic change showing the revival of some monasteries. Box 21 (2432–2882) has only a few relevant photos as its head title is “Architecture, Ulaanbaatar 1930–1950.” All in all about 370 photos related to the Xürē are available in this archive. The photo cards inscriptions are incomplete.

Another huge collection of relevant photographs is the Photo Collection of the National Academy of Sciences, where small and big albums contain old photographs, such as small albums Nos. 34, 40, 59, and big albums Nos. 5, 24,

<sup>10</sup> Šepetilnikov, Nikolaj Mihailovič: *Arhitektura Mongolii*. Moskva 1960.

<sup>11</sup> Maidar, D.: *Mongolīn arxityektur ba xot baigūlalt*. Ulsīn Xewlelīn Gajar, Ulaanbaatar 1972 [Mongolian Architecture and City Planning].

<sup>12</sup> Cültem, Nyam-Osorīn: *Mongolian architecture*. State Publishing House, Ulaanbaatar 1988.

<sup>13</sup> Halén, Harry: *Memoria Saecularis Sakari Pälsi. Aufzeichnungen von einer Forschungsreise nach der Nordlichen Mongolei im Jahre 1909*. Société Finno-Ougrienne. Travaux ethnographiques X., Helsinki 1982. Sakari Pälsi was a Finnish explorer and film-maker accompanying G. J. Ramstedt in his journey to Mongolia.

<sup>14</sup> Forbáth László: *A megújított Mongolia*, Franklin, A Magyar Földrajzi Társaság Könyvtára, Budapest 1934, see also its English translation Geleta, Joseph: *The New Mongolia*, by Ladislaus Forbath, as related by Joseph Geleta; translated by Lawrence Wolfe, W. Heinemann Ltd. London, Toronto 1936.

<sup>15</sup> Serēter, Ōljī: *Mongolīn Ix Xürē, Gandan xīdīn tūxen бүтэцīн товч. 1651–1938*. Mongol ulsīn үндэснī төw архив, Ulaanbaatar 1999 [Short History of Ix Xürē and Gandan Monastery].

<sup>16</sup> Batsaixan, Ōxnoin (ed.): *Mongolčūd XX–XXI jūd*. Ulaanbaatar 2011 [Mongols in the 20–21<sup>st</sup> centuries].

30, 33, 38, and 40. The majority of these photos are similar to the Film Archives' photos, but their inscriptions are also incomplete.

In the National Museum of Mongolia there are a few rare photographs (e. g. a photo of Šaddüwlin) taken by Čerüšin in the 1910s.

On the internet old photos are also available legally or illegally. Private collections also exist.

## The Most Significant Travellers and Foreign Collections

Several travellers travelled through Mongolia when going from Russia to Beijing or vice versa. They moved along the route of Khyagta–Urga–Kalgan (or Xyagt–Da xürē–Čülalt Xälga). Chinese traders traded in Mongolia, and Russians were interested in the administration and trading routes and possibilities in Mongolia, too. Others were interested in the Mongolian culture, in Buddhism, or in the mystic Far-East. Foreigners came to have a new business in the Xürē working in a store (*pūs*), or just travelled on transit, thus traders, diplomats, pilgrims, researchers, missionaries and tourists visited Mongolia and the Xürē at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when geographical societies were renowned, and exploring the East had great romantic appeal as well as scientific value. At the very end of the 1910s some foreigners arriving from Siberian labour-camps had to face the invasion of the Chinese, and the fights of the White Russians and the Soviets in the area of Mongolia.

Travellers settled in the Xürē for years or stayed for a while. The Russian Consulate founded in 1861 and foreign stores had the main role in their support.<sup>17</sup> These travellers inform us not only about their adventures in the Xürē and in the countryside, but also about the Mongolian culture they researched or observed as foreigners. Their descriptions (e. g. A. M. Pozdneev, G. J. Ramstedt) and the photos they took are unique and valuable sources when studying the history of old monasteries and everyday life of Mongolia as they were experienced more than one hundred years ago.

To mention some travellers, Russian Nikolaj Mihajlovič Prževalskij (travelled in 1870–73), Grigorij Nikolaevič Potanin (1870s), Aleksej Matvevič Pozdneev (1876, 1892–1893),<sup>18</sup> Pjotr Kuzmič Kozlov (1905, 1907–1909, 1923–1926), Nikolaj Rerih (1900s), S. A. Kondratev (1920s), Andrej Dmitrievič Simukov (1930s) visited Mongolia. The majority of their photos are kept now in the archives of the Russian Geographical Society in Saint-Petersburg founded in 1845, though private museums of Rerih<sup>19</sup> and Kozlov<sup>20</sup> also exist. A. M. Pozdneev's activity must be underlined here as due to his visits (1876, 1892–93) we have valuable materials not only about the Bogds and their monastic camp,

<sup>17</sup> There was a Ministry to handle Chinese people's problems. It was called the Chamber of Solicitors (*Jargāčnī yām*) and was situated in Maimāčen.

<sup>18</sup> Pozdneev, Aleksej Matvevič: *Mongolija i Mongoly*. T. 1–2. Sankt-Peterburg 1896, 1898 (repr.).

<sup>19</sup> [www.ec.icr.su/museum](http://www.ec.icr.su/museum), [www.roerich.org](http://www.roerich.org)

<sup>20</sup> [www.kozlov-museum.ru](http://www.kozlov-museum.ru)

but also about Mongolian Buddhism, several rural monasteries, and the administrative system and relay stations and caravan routes of Mongolia.

As for travellers from Northern Europe, Gustav John Ramstedt linguist arrived from Finland with Sakari Pälsi (1898, 1909, 1912)<sup>21</sup> to research Turkic stone inscriptions and other topics. Frans August Larson came from Sweden (1895–1910s),<sup>22</sup> Henning Haslund-Christensen (1923)<sup>23</sup> and K. P. Albertsen from Denmark (1921–1922).<sup>24</sup> A Scottish Protestant Christian missionary, James Gilmour (1890s), Beatrix Bulstrode (1910s), and G. C. Binstead (1913) came from Great Britain. Their photos might be kept in the Royal Geographical Society in London.

Albert Kahn and Stefan Passe came from France and took the first chromophotographs in the 1910s<sup>25</sup>; the French Madame Catherine de Bourbonlon's photos of monasteries are also valuable (1880s), as well as Hermann Consten's collection (1907, 1911, 1928–1929)<sup>26</sup> who came from Germany.<sup>27</sup>

Photographs taken by Americans such as Roy Chapman Andrews (1921–1930)<sup>28</sup> and Japanese such as Tanaka shashin monk (1910s) are also known. Though several Chinese people lived in the city, photographs taken by them do not seem to have remained.

As for Central Europe, apart from the famous Polish scholar Władysław Kotwicz (1912) and Ferdynand Ossendowski (1920)<sup>29</sup>, the Austrian Hans Leder visited Mongolia several times (1899/1900, 1902, 1904/1905), but only a couple of photos taken by him are known.<sup>30</sup> As the list of visitors is still incomplete, descriptions and photographs by “unknown”, more precisely not widely known people also exist. Russian consuls resided in the Xürē, White Russians, then Soviets advised Mongolia, and from the 1920s several instructors, advisers visited the capital city as a new wave of visitors.

<sup>21</sup> Halén, Harry: *Memoria Saecularis Sakari Pälsi*.

<sup>22</sup> Cerenčulün, A. (transl.): *Mongol gūn F. A. Larson*. Ulaanbaatar 2009; Larson, Frans. August: *Larson Duke of Mongolia*. Little, Brown, and Company. Boston 1930.

<sup>23</sup> Haslund-Christensen, Henning – Sprigge, Elizabeth – Napier, Claude: *Tents in Mongolia (Yabonah): Adventures and Experiences Among the Nomads of Central Asia*. E. P. Dutton & Co., New York 1934; Haslund-Christensen, Henning – Sprigge, Elizabeth – Napier, Claude: *Men and Gods in Mongolia (Zayagan)*. E. P. Dutton & co., New York 1935.

<sup>24</sup> Albertsen, K. P.: *Örgöd bolj bui üil yavdlūd*. Translated by O. Enxnasan. Ündesnī Arxiwīn Gajar, Ulaanbaatar 2008, Albertsen, K. P.: *Recent events in Urga. A foreigner's experiences. Extracts from the Diary of Mr. K. P. Albertsen*. Tientain Press Ltd., Peking 1921.

<sup>25</sup> [www.albertkahn.co/museum.html](http://www.albertkahn.co/museum.html)

<sup>26</sup> Götting, Doris: *Bilder aus der Ferne: historische Fotografien des Mongoleiforschers Hermann Consten*. Bönen: Kettler 2005.

<sup>27</sup> Vasilij Vasiljevič Radloff, German-born Russian Turcologist also might have visited the capital city. He led the Orkhon expedition in 1891.

<sup>28</sup> Andrews, Roy Chapman: *On the Trail of Ancient Man*, New York 1926

<sup>29</sup> Ossendowski, Ferdinand: *Beasts, Men and Gods*, New York 1922

<sup>30</sup> For details see Lang, Maria-Katherina: "Scharfen Blickes. Die Sammlungen des Forschungsreisenden Hans Leder mit einem Exkurs über den Tsam-Tanz in der Mongolei. *Archiv für Völkerkunde*" 59–60, 2009–2010 Vienna, pp. 125–143.

## Hungarian Travellers

To mention some “unknown” or not widely known people, at least seven Hungarians visited the Xürē. Apart from Gábor Szentkatolnai Bálint linguist (1844–1913), who stayed in Urga for five months in 1873 to conduct a research,<sup>31</sup> some other Hungarians crossed Mongolia when returning home from the Siberian labour camps in the 1920s or coming a bit later. We have only scattered data about them.<sup>32</sup> Almost all of them had Russian wives.

József Geleta (living in Mongolia from cc. 1920–1929, ⇨ Figure 11) was an officer in the 1<sup>st</sup> World War.<sup>33</sup> As a prisoner of war he was deported to Siberia. He did not join the October Revolution in 1917 and the Red Army, but wanted to escape home via Mongolia and China. He arrived in Mongolia before Ungern von Sternberg, and maybe fought in the *Gamin* army of the Chinese. He lived in Xyagt where he married, then, in the Xürē, where he became the electro-technical expert of the Ministry of National Economy. He arrived in Hungary in 1929 with his family. His notes were published in an adventure book form by László Forbáth in Hungarian and in English.<sup>34</sup>

Andor Radnóti or Andor Roth (Andor Radnóti-Roth, 1893–1964) was born in Miskolc, and studied in Balassagyarmat.<sup>35</sup> He was a medical student at the university in Budapest, when he was enrolled to the army in 1914. He was captured by the Russians, and worked in the hospital of Verhneudinsk (today Ulān-Üd), and became a doctor of the Hungarian soldiers of the Soviet army in Siberia, and was a doctor near the River Selenge. He married Ada Abramovna and they wanted to return to Hungary via Mongolia and China. The Chinese troops invading Mongolia and the White Russian gangs’ activities in Mongolia hindered his plan. With the support of the writer-politician C-O. Dambadorj (1898–1932) and the Buryat scholar C. Žamcarano (1880–1942), Radnóti met the key figures of the revolution such as D. Süxbātar (1893–1923). In 1921 he fought in Xyagt, and he was a member of X. Čoibalsan (1895–1952)’s Committee of the Assessment of Damage, which was subordinated to the temporary Mongolian government. Until August 1922 he was an adviser of the Mongolian People’s

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<sup>31</sup> For details of Gábor Szentkatolnai Bálint’s activities see Birtalan Á. (ed. and intr.): *A Romanized Grammar of the East- and West-Mongolian Languages*. Budapest Oriental Reprints. Series 3. B. 3. Budapest 2009

<sup>32</sup> The interview with Jenő Báder, the son of Pál Báder was taken by Károly Nagy. He gave some information about Hungarians living in the city. Nagy Károly: *A kilencedik újjászületés*. [The ninth rebirth] *Világjárók* 167. Gondolat, Budapest 1985, pp. 307–316.

<sup>33</sup> Nagy Károly: *A kilencedik újjászületés*. pp. 311–312.

<sup>34</sup> Forbáth László: *A megújított Mongolia*, Franklin, A Magyar Földrajzi Társaság Könyvtára, Budapest 1934, see also its English translation Geleta, Joseph: *The New Mongolia*, by Ladislaus Forbath, as related by Joseph Geleta; translated by Lawrence Wolfe, W. Heinemann Ltd. London, Toronto 1936.

<sup>35</sup> The following description is based on Kara György: *Mongol iratok a Népi Forradalom idejéből*. A Magyar Földrajzi Társaság Könyvtára, Budapest 1971, pp. 1–8. Kara states that Andor Radnóti-Roth’s short biography is available in Mongolian in *Mongol arđin juramт cergin durdatgalud*, Ulaanbaatar 1969.



Revolutionary Army's Health Department. On 27 February 1922 he asked for exemption from this position. On 1 April 1922 he got permission to use his three photo cameras to take photos of "non military topics". He took a photo of Süxbātar, Čoibalsan and Xuwa which became well-known in Mongolia in 1971. He arrived in Hungary in the beginning of the 1930s. Before his arrival he worked for the Deutsch-mongolische Handelsgesellschaft, lived in China, and was a doctor there. In 1942 he was deported to the labour camp of Buchenwald, Germany where his son died. After 1956 he worked as a doctor for the police in Hungary, and obtained a lieutenant-colonel's rank. Before his death in 1964 he visited Mongolia again as a veteran of revolutions. Kara published and translated from Mongolian his 11 private documents which were kept in the Hungarian Labour Movement Museum in 1971. The documents include permissions, withdrawal of his revolvers, exit "visa", etc. Some of the documents were signed by Süxbātar and Xuwa.

Pál Báder (living in Mongolia from 1924–1958, also known as Jevgenij Pavlovič Báder) was a young mason in Budapest.<sup>36</sup> He was enrolled to the army in 1913. He became a prisoner of war in 1915, and lived in a prisoners' gaol in Ulān-Ūd where he worked as a repairman. He participated in the Revolution in October 1917, and near Xyagt he became a border guard. In 1924 he moved to Altanbulag, then to Ulaanbaatar. As a mason he participated in the building of several buildings of the modern city, such as the university, hospitals, schools, and other new buildings. He lived with his family in Ulaanbaatar and arrived in Hungary in 1958. He had a Russian wife. His son, Jenő Báder lived in Mongolia even in the 1970s. He was a doctor, and finally worked as a receptionist of the Hungarian Embassy.

Another escaped prisoner of war was Jenő Sallai<sup>37</sup> known by the Mongols as the "German Sallai". He was a smith and an accurate man (as are Germans). After leaving Ulaanbaatar he lived in Altanbulag until the 1950s.<sup>38</sup>

According to Jenő Báder<sup>39</sup> military experts who assisted to organise the new Mongolian People's Revolutionary Army also resided in Mongolia for a while, such as someone whose family name was Pánczél and János Mészáros (residing in Mongolia in the early 1920s), who was a tall, thin man. He is stated to have been the leader of the guards of the Lenin-Mausoleum first in Moscow, and a military adviser in Mongolia a few years later. In Hungary he became an officer in the Horthy regime, and died in 1956.

The photos of Forbáth's book and the photos taken by Andor Radnóti-Roth are available, but other photographs were not found.

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<sup>36</sup> An interview with his son is available in Nagy Károly: *A kilencedik újjászületés*. pp. 307–316. I would like to express my thanks to Ákos Avar who drew my attention to this book.

<sup>37</sup> According to the oral communication of László Kádár, who was a Hungarian ambassador in Mongolia, his surname was Szalai or Szalay or Sallai.

<sup>38</sup> Nagy Károly: *A kilencedik újjászületés*. p. 313.

<sup>39</sup> Nagy Károly: *A kilencedik újjászületés*. p. 313.

## Photographs in Forbáth's Book

László Forbáth wrote and published the adventures of József Geleta, who spent nine years in Mongolia (1920–1929). According to Forbáth,<sup>40</sup> Geleta was a confidential person of the new Mongolian government. He built the first electric plant in the capital city, and designed the building of the Parliament and other buildings. According to Geleta the city was situated in an area of 48 km<sup>2</sup> and had 80,000 residents.<sup>41</sup> The book contains about 100 images: 55 on religious topics, five on historical topics and 40 genres. Their origin is unsure as well as their present whereabouts. They might have been taken by Geleta, but the book may also include photos taken by others or collected by Forbáth. Moreover, Forbáth captioned the photos wrongly several times. For example Erdene jū is mixed with Daščoinxorlin monastery, and Berēwen xīd is written instead of Manjšir monastery. Not all photos were taken in the Xūrē. Some of them were taken in the countryside, but photos of Buryatia and Inner-Mongolia might also appear. What follows here is the revised list of the photos (numbers mean page numbers in Forbáth's Hungarian book; Forbáth's description was added in unsure cases referred as Forbáth; "maybe" or "?" were written when the author of the present article was unsure in the description. Urga means the Xūrē in the list).

### Religion (55 photos)

- 8 Golden mummy of a high-ranking lama (Urga, maybe Yonjon xamba)
- 8 The Bogd xan ūl with the Tibetan stone inscription of OM ĀH HŪM (Urga)
- 40 A man in shaman dress beating his drum
- 40 A furious man (Forbáth: a shaman in trance)
- 40 A *Cam* dancer with a drum and a skull cup in his hands in Manjšir monastery
- 40 Celebration in a monastery (maybe in a Buryat monastery)
- 40 Kālacakra dance in front of the Yellow Palace of the Bogd (Urga)
- 40 The White Old Man in front of a Russian-style building
- 40 *Cam* dance in Daščoinxorlin Monastery: the White Old Man and a child of Xašin xan.
- 40 *Cam* dance in Daščoinxorlin Monastery: two heroes (?) protecting the offering.
- 40 The Lion of *Cam* dance led by two monks

<sup>40</sup> Forbáth László: *A megujhodott Mongolia*. p. 9.

<sup>41</sup> Forbáth László: *A megujhodott Mongolia*. p.114.

- 56 Devotees settled on the Eastern slope of Manjšir monastery (Forbáth: arriving at *Cam* dance)
- 56 Elderly monks sitting in a row, in the open (Forbáth: Maitreya procession) (maybe Urga)
- 56 Monks having a rest among drums and cymbals (Forbáth: Maitreya procession) (maybe Urga)
- 56 The 30 *aimag*'s umbrellas (Forbáth: Maitreya procession) (Urga)
- 56 *Cam* dance in Manjšir Monastery
- 72 A young monk carrying a bin in the countryside
- 72 An itinerant monk carrying a camp tent in the countryside
- 72 Chinese monks in front of a Chinese temple (Forbáth: Chinese Autumn Festival)
- 72 Monks (Forbáth: Maitreya procession) (maybe Urga)
- 72 Novices (Forbáth: Novices of Maitreya procession with a drum on a cart) (maybe Urga)
- 88 Beggar monk (Forbáth: Beggar monk in the Urga market)
- 88 A Tibetan rinpoche
- 104 A ranking lama (Forbáth: Csoini Lusszan Csinde,<sup>42</sup> a representative of the Dalai Lama. He resided in Urga.)
- 104 Serēnen *otoč*, the Bogd's monk doctor (Urga)
- 120 *Owō* made of boughs with inscribed stones
- 120 *Owō* made of stones, bones and hats (maybe in Inner-Mongolia)
- 120 Brass (?) stupa near the Medical monastic school (Forbáth: silver stupa) (Urga)
- 120 White stupas (Urga)
- 152 A *zoč* tantric practitioner "performing a dance" on his carpet
- 152 A *zoč* tantric practitioner sitting on his carpet
- 152 A high ranking lama with an old lady (*čawganc*)
- 152 Daščoinxorlin monastery, on the bank of the Selbe River
- 152 Dečingalaw Temple or Kālacakra monastic school, the centre of the Eastern monastic district (Urga)
- 152 Erdene jū Monastery

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<sup>42</sup> Its correct Tibetan spelling is unknown by the author.

- 168 Carpet representing the White Old Man
- 168 Tsongkhapa's huge statue
- 168 Incense vessel in front of a monastery gate (maybe Urga)
- 168 Interior of a temple (maybe the temple of Yonjon xamba, Urga)
- 168 Small sitting statue of Śākyamuni Buddha
- 168 Temple of Yonjon xamba (Urga)
- 184 Chinese theatre's actor (?) in Maimāchen (Urga)
- 184 Geser Temple (Urga)
- 184 Protective wall and a gate of the Bogd's Green Palace (Urga)
- 184 The Bogd's Summer Palace (Urga)
- 184 Ornamented entrance of the Bogd's Green Palace (Urga)
- 184 Ornamented entrance of the Bogd's Green Palace (Urga)
- 184 The protective wall and gate of the Bogd's Green Palace (Urga)
- 200 Part of a protective wall (Urga)
- 200 Pilgrims in front of the White Palace (Urga)
- 200 Pilgrims (Urga)
- 216 An old ranked lama
- 216 The main temple of the Temple Complex of Čoijin Lama with Yonjon xamba's temple in the background (Urga)
- 232 The Bogd's company with his giant guard, Öndör Gongor (Urga)

### **Politics (5 photos)**

- 8 B. Cerendorj, the first Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Mongolia
- 88 A politician (Forbáth: a member of the National Assembly)
- 88 Portrait of a nobleman (Forbáth: Cecen xan)
- 104 A Tibetan diplomat (Urga)
- 200 The "passport" permission for Geleta's departure in written Mongolian, 1928

### **Genre (40 photos)**

- 8 Glade with horses

- 8 Sand desert
- 8 Stream bed
- 24 A couple of noble origin (maybe Urga)
- 24 Constructing a yurt
- 24 The yurt has been built
- 24 Glade with horses
- 24 Horseman of a relay-station
- 24 A hunter with his rifle gun and a *yangir*
- 24 An oxen-cart
- 24 Two curious ladies near a car
- 40 A longlegs man in front of a Russian-style building
- 88 A car sunk in water with a camel caravan in the background
- 88 A Mongolian shepherd and his flocks
- 104 A wrestler of the *Nādam* in 1928
- 104 Mongolians (Buryad? Inner-Mongolian?) and their horses
- 120 A camel-cart
- 120 National Theatre (Nogōn Bömbögör) designed by József Geleta József (Urga)
- 120 Two noble ladies, adults, children, foals and horses
- 120 Wrestlers of the *Nādam*
- 136 A lady with her children (maybe a Russian lady in Buryatia)
- 136 Boys (maybe Inner-Mongolian boys)
- 136 Girls (maybe Inner-Mongolian girls)
- 136 A corpse and a dog in a "cemetery"
- 136 Skulls and bones in a "cemetery"
- 136 Three corpses lying very near to each other in the open-air "cemetery"
- 136 Traditional Mongolian violinist
- 200 A *Xalx* noble woman
- 200 A *Xalx* noble woman
- 200 Rope market (or horse-market in Urga)
- 216 József Geleta József and three Mongolian laymen (maybe Urga)

- 216 A foreign man (He might be a Tibetan merchant. Forbáth: A man with lucky tab.)
- 216 Market (Forbáth: Market in Urga)
- 216 Russian stores on the bank of the River Selbe (Urga)
- 216 Small-scale sellers and monks or beggars (maybe Urga)
- 232 A Chinese store selling vegetables
- 232 A man collecting excrement to fire (Forbáth: in the Gobi)
- 232 A Mongolian worker with a samovar, open air kitchen and bins
- 232 A packed car (Forbáth: in the Gobi)
- 232 Travelling on a packed car (Forbáth: in the Gobi)

The majority of photos are in connection with religion. The photos of the *Cam* masked dance of Manjšir monastery and Daščoinxorlin monastery, the Maitreya procession and Kālacakra dance of the Xürē, the Bogds' palaces, the Temple complex of Čoijin lama and Yonjon xamba were all taken as well as portraits of ranked and poor monks, stupas, and pilgrims. The political school was housed in the Summer Palace of the Bogd.<sup>43</sup> Geleta witnessed the Chinese Autumn Festival in Uliastai.<sup>44</sup>

As for politics or history, Cerendorĵ's photo is the first one in the book. Geleta took photos during the 1<sup>st</sup> open-air public assembly which was held on 8 November 1924<sup>45</sup> with the leadership of Prime Minister Cerendorĵ. Later, the National Assemblies were also held in the theatre, later Parliament designed by Geleta.<sup>46</sup> Geleta knew Tibetan diplomats who lived in the Xürē.

Among the genre photos, the most interesting photos show the open-air "burying" of the Mongols. Though the one with the dog seem to be a normal corpse in traditional position used by the Mongols when leaving their dead relatives on the plain, the other two might show murdered people, especially the one with the mass of skulls. They might be in connection with the *Gamin* or Ungern's troops. The book says that the radio station of the city was built in 1918 on the order of the Chinese government, and Ungern's soldiers killed masses of their enemy behind the radio.<sup>47</sup> On the other hand the book also says that near "Chorin-Chure" (maybe *Čoirin xür Nādam?*) several corpses of Chinese were killed by Ungern's troops. Geleta mentions that he found a diary of a Hungarian doctor there, thus a Hungarian doctor might have fought with the Chinese against

<sup>43</sup> Forbáth László: *A megujhodott Mongolia*. p. 174.

<sup>44</sup> Forbáth László: *A megujhodott Mongolia*. p. 90.

<sup>45</sup> Forbáth László: *A megujhodott Mongolia*. p. 155.

<sup>46</sup> Forbáth László: *A megujhodott Mongolia*. p. 185.

<sup>47</sup> Forbáth László: *A megujhodott Mongolia*. p. 116.

Ungern's troops (According to K. Nagy, Geleta himself fought in the *Gamin* army).<sup>48</sup>

From the genre photos it is obvious that Geleta went to the countryside maybe to the nearby River Tül. He witnessed the building of a yurt and took a photo of the completed yurt. It seems that he met a man modelling a Shaman and a Tantric practitioner. Two noble ladies accompanied him maybe on the same trip (200). Several photos (Tibetan diplomats, noble women) were taken in a photo studio. It is a question what the connection between the studio and Geleta was. The packed car (232) could be the one Geleta left Mongolia in via the Gobi desert. Photos related to Buryatia and Inner-Mongolia (136) occur in the book as well as genres from the Xürē, such as its market and stores, and typical pictures of the traditional Mongolian culture (e.g. *Nādam*, a violinist). From the 100 photos 37 were taken in Urga, but several others might have been taken there, too.

### Photos taken by Andor Radnóti-Róth

Hungarian Andor Radnóti-Róth (1893–1964) took photos in the 1920s in the Mongolian capital city. He got permission from the Mongolian authorities on 1 April 1922 to use his cameras to take photos on topics “not related to military actions”.<sup>49</sup> These 66 photos are preserved now in the Historic Photo Archives of the Hungarian National Museum in Budapest.<sup>50</sup> The collections' name is “Mongolia until 1945”, Box 72. The photos were first preserved in the Hungarian Labour Movement Museum, but later were moved to the Hungarian National Museum. The 66 photos cover the topics of religion (30 photos), politics (15 photos), and genre (21). Historic figures such as Ĵalxanj xutagt Damdinbajar, Prime Minister Cerendorĵ, and maybe D. Süxbātar are visible in some photos. Several photos had precise description in Hungarian, whilst others' names were mixed up (the White Palace is referred everywhere as Green Palace). What follows here is the correct list of the photos.

#### Religion (30 photos)

- 69.106        The Bogd's Summer Palace (Serūn lawran, Urga)
- 69.109        Buddhist altar (maybe Urga)
- 69.110        The gate of the Bogd's Green Palace (Nogōn süm, Urga)
- 69.112        The Bogd's sedan chair (Urga)
- 69.113        The Bogd's White Palace (Cagān süm, Urga)

<sup>48</sup> Forbáth László: *A megujhodott Mongolia*. p. 311.

<sup>49</sup> Kara György: *Mongol iratok...* p. 2.

<sup>50</sup> I express my thanks to Ágnes Birtalan who drew my attention to the photo collection. A CD with the photos was sent by the Hungarian National Museum to the National Museum of Mongolia on the occasion of the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Mongolian State.

- 69.114 The Bogd's White Palace (Cagān süm, Urga)
- 69.115 The Bogd's White Palace (Cagān süm, Urga)
- 69.116 A monastic school (Urga)
- 69.117 A monastic school (Urga)
- 69.118 Huge sacrificial cakes with decorations (maybe Urga)
- 69.121 Golden mummy of a high-ranking lama (maybe Urga)
- 69.122 A small monastery in the countryside
- 69.123 The thrones of the Bogd and his wife (Urga)
- 69.124 Statue of Tsongkhapa
- 69.125 Sacrificial horses (*seterten*) (Urga)
- 69.181 Statue of Śākyamuni Buddha in a temple (maybe Urga)
- 69.180 Tent shrine of a Red Stream practitioner (*zoch*)
- 69.182 Incense vessel in front of a temple (maybe Urga)
- 69.184 The Bogd's White Palace (Cagān süm, Urga)
- 69.187 Avalokiteśvara Temple (Urga)
- 69.188 The Bogd's Summer Palace (Serūn lawran, Urga)
- 69.192 Stupas (Urga)
- 69.194 Maitreya Temple (Urga)
- 69.195 Temple complex of the State Oracle (Čoiĵin lama, Urga)
- 69.207 Maitreya procession (Urga)
- 69.208 Maitreya procession (Urga)
- 69.209 Maitreya procession crossing the River Selbe on a bridge (Urga)
- 69.210 A monastery in the countryside
- 69.211 Stupas (Urga)
- 69.222 Religious event in the countryside

### **Politics (15 photos)**

- 69.107 B. Cerendorĵ, the first Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Mongolia (1923–1928) in a celebration
- 69.221 Military assembly (Urga)
- 69.120 Prime Minister Cerendorĵ



- 69.127       ǰalxanj xutagt Damdinbajar and the Russian consul (Urga)  
 69.191       Prison (Urga)  
 69.197       Soviet and Mongolian military leaders (Urga)  
 69.201       Soviet and Mongolian military leaders (Urga)  
 69.202       Hand-salute of the army (Urga)  
 69.203       Soviet and Mongolian military leaders (Urga)  
 69.204       Juvenile assembly (Urga)  
 69.205       Assembly (Urga)  
 69.206       Juvenile assembly (Urga)  
 69.213       Mongolian and Soviet military leaders (Urga)  
 69.223       ǰalxanj xutagt Damdinbajar (Urga)  
 68.533       The Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Army in 1922 (reprint,  
                   Urga)

**Genre (21 photos)**

- 69.108       A nomadic girl  
 69.111       Market of timber and firewood (maybe Urga)  
 69.119       A horse rider child (*Nādam*)  
 69.126       Flood in the city (Urga)  
 69.183       Flood in the city (Urga)  
 69.185       Car settled in snow  
 69.186       Black market (Urga)  
 69.189       Black market (Urga)  
 69.190       Black market (Urga)  
 69.193       A Chinese merchant with his articles (maybe Urga)  
 69.196       *Nādam* (archery)  
 69.198       Camel foal  
 69.199       A Mongolian child (Urga)  
 69.212       Mongolian violinist  
 69.214       Old monk in the countryside  
 69.215       White-collar worker (Urga)

- 69.216 Nomadic family in front of a yurt
- 69.217 Nomadic old lady
- 69.218 Nomadic family
- 69.219 Visitors of the horse racing
- 69.220 Landscape (near Urga)

Radnóti took the majority of the photographs (at least 48) in the capital city. As for religious topics he photographed the most important palaces of the Bogd (Green Palace, White Palace, Summer Palace), and the most imposing temples such as the Temple Complex of Čoiĵin Lama, the Maitreya Temple, and the Avalokiteśvara Temple. It seems that he visited two monastic schools of Jūn xūrē with other foreigners in winter. He also took the photo of the Bogd's sedan chair and sacrificial horses standing in front of his palace. Photos of interiors of temples were taken surely inside the Green Palace and probably in the temple of Čoiĵin Lama. He witnessed the annual Maitreya procession in spring, and took photos of stupas situated in the city. He photographed religious topics also in the near and far countryside.

As for politics or history, Radnóti took the photos of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Army's salutation and muster led by Soviet or Hungarian (the Hungarian Mészáros might be seen in two photos) and Mongolian (Süxbātar might be seen in a photo) military leaders and advisers, and juvenile assemblies of the revolution with the participation of Ĵalxanj xutagt Damdinbajar (1874–1923), who was one of the 13<sup>th</sup> *xutagts* of the Bogd and a member of the Parliament, and the Russian consul. All these photos were taken in the capital city. A photo of B. Cerendorĵ, the first Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Mongolia (1923–1928) is also available when participating in a countryside event. It confirms Radnóti's close connection with the new government.

As for genres, Radnóti photographed the market and the summer flood of the city as well as a white-scholar worker. He took photos of nomadic people in the countryside, a *Nādam* festival's participants, and other interesting events.

## Summary

Comparing and describing the paintings and maps and the tremendous amount of photos of the Xūrē require further deep analysis. This *xūrē* was only one among the other 1000 monastic sites we have many paintings and photographs about. Such historic places as Erdene jū, the first monastery of Mongolia founded in 1586, or Manĵsir monastery, which was not far from the Xūrē have also more than 100 photos. Other sites, such as Jaya gegēnī xūrē have about 30 photos, while the other about 50 monasteries we have photos about are more negligible. The rest of the sites were not photographed at all.

As until now nobody attempted to write an article about travellers of Mongolia, the present article was aimed at mentioning some of them. Other visitors who took photos, and the many more visitors who did not take photos should be further studied.

When studying the photos of different collections, the collaboration of Mongolian institutes and foreign institutes is necessary. Mongolian monks and scholars can identify the contents of the photos, the names of monasteries, while in foreign institutes the names of the photographers and the date of the photographs can be known. For instance, among the photographs preserved in Mongolia photos taken by A. M. Podzneeov, P. K. Kozlov, Sh. A. Kondratev, A. D. Simukov are available, but the description of the cards do not contain precise data. "Unknown" collections might exist in several countries' museums or archives, such as is the case in Hungary. The publication of the photos is highly required to give free access for Mongolians and other inquiring people to get to know this heritage.

Interesting questions arose when studying the photographs. For instance it is still not known where Tsongkhapa's huge statue photographed by Andor Radnóti-Roth (69.124) and József Geleta (68) stood. Such a huge statue is unknown in connection with the Xürē.

Apart from photos some short films also show the life of the Mongolian capital city, such as the ones made by German and French filmmakers.

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