

The Contradiction between Outer Mongolia and the Communist International

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the complex political contradictions between Outer Mongolia and the Communist International during the early 20th century, focusing on the cases of key Mongolian leaders Dogsom Baodao, Tseren-Ochir Dambadorj, and Danzeng. Following the 1917 Russian October Revolution, Soviet influence and Comintern intervention in Outer Mongolia fueled internal factional struggles within the Mongolian People's Party (MPP). Leaders such as Baodao resisted direct Soviet control, advocated policies tailored to Mongolia's social, economic, and religious conditions, and opposed the imposition of foreign revolutionary models, ultimately resulting in his framing and execution. Similarly, Dambadorj pursued national interests while negotiating with foreign powers, defended religious practices, and resisted Comintern factionalism, which led to his classification as a "rightist" and temporary political suppression. Danzeng, identified as part of the "rightist" faction, opposed Soviet expansion, sought diplomatic and economic ties with China and Japan, and promoted capitalist development, culminating in his arrest and execution during the Third Party Congress. These cases illustrate the tension between Mongolian national objectives and Soviet-Comintern policies, highlighting the intersection of domestic politics, foreign relations, and ideological control. The analysis demonstrates how the early Mongolian revolutionary period was marked by factional purges, political repression, and the struggle to balance national autonomy with external pressures, revealing the complex and often violent dynamics of Outer Mongolia's political transformation.

Keywords: Outer Mongolia, Communist International, Mongolian People's Party, Dogsom Baodao, Tseren-Ochir Dambadorj, rightist purges, Comintern intervention, early 20th-century politics.

INTRODUCTION

The contradiction between the Outer Mongolian upper class and the Communist International emerged after the October Revolution in Russia in 1917, which made the political situation in Outer Mongolia complicated and turbulent. The collapse of Tsarist Russia disrupted the original external order, and the rise of the Bolshevik forces exerted a profound influence on Outer Mongolia, adding new dimensions to its modern history.

Some members of the Outer Mongolian upper class- such as Dogsom Baodao (1885–1922), Tseren-Ochir Dambadorj (1900–1934), and Deng Zeng (1883–1924)- refused to accept the guidance of the Communist International and strongly opposed Soviet interference. Later, they were severely criticized and even framed. In these politically sensitive circumstances, they played dual roles: as "revolutionaries" of Outer Mongolia and as "separatists" in the eyes of the Republic of China.

For example, Baodao, a key figure in these separatist activities, not only participated in the "independence" movement but also firmly opposed Soviet infiltration into Outer Mongolia. He rejected the instructions of the

Communist International, which were based on Soviet interests, and repeatedly protested to Soviet representatives at great personal risk in an effort to recover Tannu Uriankhai.

The relationship among Outer Mongolia, the Soviet Union, and the Mongolian People's Party (MPP) was complex, particularly during the early 20th-century political upheavals. In 1921, the Soviet Union supported the MPP in overthrowing the feudal regime of Outer Mongolia, thereby facilitating the country's "independence" and socialist transformation. Through military and political means, the Soviet Union helped establish a socialist "government" in Outer Mongolia.

Over time, however, internal power struggles emerged within the MPP. Some members were accused of being "rightists" or "traitors" and subsequently purged. Soviet intervention and policy decisions had a significant impact on the fate of the MPP, and many party members were persecuted due to their perceived or actual connections with the Soviet Union. Although the MPP rose to power with Soviet support, internal rivalries and external pressures led to fabricated accusations against many of its leaders- reflecting the complexity and volatility of the political environment at that time.

This paper aims to analyze both the subjective political events and the objective historical context in order to reveal the multifaceted nature of the political environment during this turbulent period.

The Baodao Incident

Baodao participated in the editing and publishing of newspapers and periodicals such as *New Dictionary* and *Kulun News*. As a Mongolian language instructor at the Russian Embassy Translation School in Kulun, he also founded an independent underground organization in Outer Mongolia. In 1920, together with other Outer Mongolian representatives, he traveled to Irkutsk, Russia, to seek assistance.

In March 1921, Baodao became a diplomat of the Provisional "Government" of Outer Mongolia and later assumed leadership of the same body. By July 1921, he had been appointed Prime Minister and diplomat of the Mongolian People's Provisional Government.

In 1922, the so-called "Baodao Incident" occurred, during which he was framed and ultimately executed. The Soviet Union's interference in Mongolia's internal affairs contributed to factional divisions within the Mongolian revolution, labeling certain individuals as "rightists" and launching political purges to achieve its own strategic goals.

After the establishment of the Mongolian government, a series of cases involving the framing and wrongful accusation of Outer Mongolian politicians became a defining feature of modern Mongolian history. These events not only led to the deaths and injustices of numerous political figures but also reflected the deep political instability of the time and foreshadowed major historical transformations on Mongolia's political stage (Aoki, 2011, p. 107).

The incident in which Baodao was framed was one of the unjust cases directly connected to the interference of the Soviet Union and the Communist International in the internal affairs of the Mongolian People's Government. Baodao had actively participated in the Mongolian revolution. According to Badalafu (1930), "Looking back at the party's history, he was a member of the Mongolian people and the party who sought help from Tsarist Russia. He personally carved the seal of the Mongolian party representative" (p. 25). As one of the prominent "revolutionaries," Baodao played an important role in the revolutionary movement of Outer Mongolia. However, shortly after the revolution began, he was falsely accused and framed- a development that was directly related to his resistance and rejection of Soviet interference.

The Communist International's interference in Outer Mongolia's internal affairs led to the emergence of several political factions, which engaged in activities framed as "class struggle" over many domestic issues. However, Baodao rejected the notion of factionalism and the resulting political contradictions within Outer Mongolia. Consequently, he was criticized for "not paying attention to internal political issues and only insisting on external activities" (Badalafu, 1930, p. 25).

Baodao believed that "it was right for the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party to seek help from the Red Soviet Union, but it was wrong to imitate the Soviet Union in its internal policies" (Batsaikhan, 2014, p. 186). At that time, Outer Mongolia had a strong religious foundation, a small population, an underdeveloped industrial base, and an economy primarily dependent on animal husbandry. Therefore, certain policies promoted by the Communist International were incompatible with the specific social and economic conditions of Outer Mongolia.

Under these circumstances, Baodao, who emphasized adapting political strategies to Mongolia's actual social realities, opposed the direct transplantation of the Soviet revolutionary model. Instead, he advocated for a political development path with distinctly Outer Mongolian characteristics. This position, however, directly conflicted with the aims of the Communist International and the Soviet Union, leading to his political isolation and eventual persecution.

Since the mid- Qing Dynasty, many Tsarist Russian immigrants had settled in Outer Mongolia. Some of them lived there for long periods, and in certain regions, mixed Mongolian-Russian communities were formed. During the Outer Mongolian Revolution in the early 20th century, Baodao proposed expelling Russians who had resided in Outer Mongolia for an extended time. As Badalafu (1930) recorded:

“In the first report after his resignation, Baodao proposed that the country should free itself from the oppression of Russia and Buryatia. Based on this, the Central Committee decided to send Deng Zeng to investigate the many Soviet teachers working in the Outer Mongolian government offices to verify whether their authority had exceeded the scope of their duties and whether their numbers continued to increase. They also sought to expel many Russians working in Outer Mongolia, while those who remained could only participate in training or clerical matters. Therefore, Russians who had lived in Mongolia for a long time were arrested” (pp. 34–35).

Many of Baodao’s actions conflicted with Soviet interference and hindered Moscow’s expansion into Outer Mongolia. Baodao insisted on “defending against the north (Soviet invasion) while recovering the Uriankhai regions and working hard regardless of the risk to his life” (Badalafu, 1930, p. 40), which clearly became an obstacle to the Soviet Union’s policy of intervening in the Uriankhai regions. This represents a concrete manifestation of the policy conflict between Baodao and the Soviet Union concerning Uriankhai.

Baodao also wrote letters to several Living Buddhas residing in the Temple of His Holiness (Zhao’erji) and the Temple of Sage (Mo’ergen), stating:

“We Mongolians are under the oppression of the Manchus and Han (referring to the Qing Dynasty), the Republic of China, and Ungern [Roman von Ungern-Sternberg (1886–1921), a Baltic German baron loyal to the Tsar]. We are subjected to humiliation and torture to the point where we can no longer bear it. Therefore, our Bogda (holy khan), the nobles, and the Living Buddhas of the Yellow Sect (Huangjiao) of Tibetan Buddhism, received support from the north (the Soviet Union). We established the People’s Party, expelled foreign invaders, regained control over the Kulun grasslands, and founded a government based on people’s rights. We made our Bogda the emperor, working for the benefit of the people. Around the world, nations are reforming their former autocratic systems- some have established people’s republics, and others have formed red revolutionary states of various types, exercising their freedom. However, our Mongolia is not suited to become a red state” (Badalafu, 1930, p. 38).

Based on the social structure, population, and economic conditions of Outer Mongolia at that time, the Communist International’s policy toward the region primarily served Soviet interests. Many of these policies and regulations were unsuited to, or even violated, the specific social and cultural realities of Outer Mongolia. Baodao strongly opposed the Communist International’s policies that prioritized Soviet interests and disregarded local conditions. He insisted on formulating policies grounded in Mongolia’s actual circumstances, a stance that directly contradicted the Communist International’s interventionist approach in Outer Mongolia.

When the Communist International and the Soviet Union interfered in Outer Mongolia, any opposition from Mongolian leaders was suppressed under the accusation of political crimes such as “counter-revolution.” Because Dagsomyn Baodao emphasized establishing a political system headed by the Bogda (Holy Khan), the Communist International and the Soviet Union charged him with political crimes and intensified their interference in Outer Mongolia’s internal affairs.

According to Badalafu (p. 18), “Baodao betrayed the revolution and intended to restore a feudal government, which was labeled as *rightist*.” The root of this conflict lay in the contradiction between the Communist International’s revolutionary policies and the Buddhist-oriented political faction within Outer Mongolia. Although Baodao opposed the excessive interference of the Communist International and the Soviet Union, he did not completely reject their involvement. On the contrary, he cooperated in certain policies beneficial to Mongolia’s development—for example, advocating the struggle against feudal princes and exploitative religious authorities.

However, Buddhism had a deep-rooted influence in Mongolian society, and Baodao’s proposal to establish a **Bogda-led political system** was based on Mongolia’s actual historical and cultural circumstances. Badalafu (p. 27) notes that “*though Baodao directly opposed feudal and religious leaders, he later treated Bogda as a symbol of charity.*” This position conflicted sharply with the Communist International’s emphasis on eliminating religious power in politics. As a result, Baodao was politically branded a **rightist** and accused of betrayal.

This represents a clear manifestation of Baodao’s opposition to Soviet and Communist International policies in Outer Mongolia. Consequently, he was unjustly framed and executed. Japanese scholar **Masahiro Aoki** observed that Baodao’s downfall stemmed from his conflict with Soviet Russia and the Comintern, concluding that “*it is hard to deny that this matter has nothing to do with socialist Soviet Russia and the Communist International*” (Aoki, p. 108). He further analyzed that “*the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party and the Communist International initially had no ideological connection; they cooperated only due to temporary mutual interests. Once the balance of interest was lost, political conflict was inevitable*” (Aoki, *Soviet Union, Comintern and Outer Mongolia*, trans. by Namuhu Jirigala, *Journal of Inner Mongolia University*, 6:2014, p. 76).

When this balance broke down, political struggles intensified, leading to the exclusion and unjust persecution of many figures including Baodao during the Mongolian Revolution.

In assessing Baodao’s historical role, multiple perspectives must be considered. From the viewpoint of Outer Mongolia, which had already declared itself an “independent country,” Baodao’s actions were revolutionary and patriotic. However, from the Republic of China’s standpoint, Outer Mongolia’s independence was not recognized; thus, Baodao’s activities were labeled “separatist.”

Despite these differing interpretations, Baodao's political stance - such as resisting Russian immigration into Outer Mongolia, protecting Tagnu Uriankhai, and opposing the imposition of Soviet and Comintern policies - objectively impeded Soviet expansionism along China's northern frontier.

The Conflict between Dambadorj and the Communist International

Tseren-Ochir Dambadorj (1899–1934) - whose name combines Tibetan and Mongolian-Buddhist meanings such as Amitābha (Wuliangshoufo), Tseren ("long life"), Ochir ("diamond"), and Dambadorj ("Dharmapāla" or "protector of the Dharma") - was one of the key leaders of early revolutionary Mongolia. He served as a member of the Central Committee and later as Secretary General of the Mongolian People's Party (MPP). In 1922, while acting as deputy director of the Central Committee, he presented a report at the Executive Committee of the Communist International (Comintern) on the organizational development of the MPP.

Between August 1924 and December 1928, Dambadorj occupied a major leadership role within the Central Committee. During this period, the Communist International imposed several ideological and policy measures in Outer Mongolia that contradicted the country's socio-political and religious conditions. The Mongolian upper class, led by figures such as Dambadorj, expressed strong opposition to these interventions.

As a response, the Soviet Union, under the guise of the Comintern, increased its interference in Mongolia's domestic politics. It sought to marginalize the traditional upper class and political leaders like Dambadorj, thereby consolidating Soviet ideological control and achieving its strategic objectives in the region.

The Conflict between Dambadorj and the Comintern after the Baodao Incident

Beginning with the Baodao incident, cases of senior Mongolian leaders being framed and excluded became increasingly frequent, and Tseren-Ochir Dambadorj was not exempt. As Badalafu (n.d., p. 67) noted:

"Leaders elected at the Third Party Congress, such as Dambadorj and Jidedamba, seriously deal with their interactions with Baodao and others. Who are they planning to eliminate? You conveniently overlooked the summary of how seriously they took the elimination of those Baodao gangs."

This indicated that the political purges and factional conflicts that followed would continue in Outer Mongolia after the Baodao events.

Although Dambadorj actively opposed the Comintern's interventions, he did not completely sever relations with it. On January 4, 1926, at the Eastern Consultative Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, Dambadorj delivered a speech stating:

"After the establishment of regional organs, the participation of Kulun people in political events has increased the enthusiasm of the people to participate in national affairs. This situation can be fully confirmed by the Fourth Party Congress and the First National Congress" (MAPRN-YNT0 Archive, f.4, d.2, hn.7, pp. 1–17).

This demonstrated that grassroots political participation, guided by the Comintern, was a concrete manifestation of Dambadorj's cooperation with the international organization. Dambadorj adhered to a national democratic line, pursued policies aligned with the interests of the Mongolian people, and sought solutions suited to Outer Mongolia's unique conditions. In his cooperation with the Comintern, he adopted guidance that served these interests and opposed policies inconsistent with Mongolia's realities.

The Comintern also divided the Outer Mongolian "revolution" into political groups such as "left, right, old, and young." In 1926, Tuligzhab, a member of the Party Central Committee, stated:

"Many former ministers have taken up positions in the party and the government, which is not conducive to the sustained development of government affairs. Therefore, it is more beneficial for the cause of the party to let the members of the Youth League replace the brutal bureaucracy of the elderly faction" (Stipulation of the Third Congress of the Central Committee of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, 1928, Vol. 1, p. 75).

Following this, senior leaders such as Amur and Zhamyan voluntarily resigned from political office and ceased participation in critical meetings, including Prime Minister Chazhidorj. Under these circumstances, Dambadorj opposed the Comintern's division of Mongolian society into old and young factions. Consequently, at the Fifth Congress of the Mongolian People's Party, he was criticized as *"the leader of the right, Dambadorj"* (MPRP National Assembly Resolution, p. 251).

The political campaign against the "rightists" extended to prominent leaders throughout Outer Mongolia. As recorded in the MPRP National Assembly Resolution:

"The rightists led by Dambadorj, Zamuszhino, Amur, Chazhidorji, and others launched a struggle against the whole party" (p. 287). Thus, factional contradictions within Outer Mongolian politics intensified, with Dambadorj and his supporters (labeled the "right wing") engaging in fierce struggle against opposing factions led by figures such as Badarzhiv.

The Conflict between Dambadorj and Chazhi Dorji and the Comintern Intervention

The political struggle between Tseren-Ochir Dambadorj and Chazhi Dorji exemplified the intense factional conflicts in Outer Mongolia during the 1920s. On October 15, 1927, Dambadorj wrote to Feteruo, warning:

"There is a danger of right-wingers, and Chari Dorji insists on the strategy of turning Mongolia into a colony of the Republic of China" (Research Center for the Preservation of Modern Russian History, Comintern and Mongolia / Compilation of Facts, p. 180).

Regarding Soviet intervention in Mongolian politics, Dambadorj remarked:

"Concerning the breakdown of relations between Mongolia and the Soviet Union, the Soviet Union believed that it was a conspiracy of the old school such as Chari Dorji. Now Chari Dorji has passed away. So the Soviet Union should be very happy" (Badalafu, p. 93).

Gendun noted that although Dambadorj followed the instructions of the revolutionary party, he "still had objections and continued debate, insisting that it was not in line with Mongolia's situation" (Ch. Dashdaa, 2003, p. 188). Chadan Danba further stated:

"The rightists led by Dambadorj only care about the affairs of Kulun in their actions. Gendun criticized me for leaving the Communist International and planning to unite with Feng Yuxiang. In addition to me, the rightists also include Heleselengge, Zamuszhino and others. The leftists who disagree with the rightist strategy are Gendun, Badarzhifu, Tulizabu, Zhatun Danba, Amagayev and Ruodenanbazhari" (Research Center for the Preservation of Modern Russian History, Comintern and Mongolia / Compilation of Facts, p. 185).

As factional contradictions deepened during the crackdown on rightists, Dambadorj confronted Comintern representatives:

"You said there are rightists in the party in Outer Mongolia. Who are the rightists that exist now? You pointed out who the rightists are in advance. All those who protect the interests of Mongolia are party members. There is no distinction between left and right" (Badalafu, p. 93).

The Comintern representative, Sari, responded:

"Dambadorj has not realized the wishes of the Communist International and is opposing the Communist International" (Ch. Dashdaa, p. 189).

Faced with this tension, Dambadorj reportedly stated:

"If they don't kill us, I will resign and live in peace" (Ch. Dashdaa, p. 192).

During this period, the plenipotentiary representatives of the Comintern consistently supported the left faction, highlighting the personal dimension of factional struggles within the broader left-right political divide. As Dashdaa (2003, p. 188) observed:

"Although the fundamental nature of the plans and goals of the Central Committee's overall report is the same, there are still occasional disputes. This is not just a matter between Dambadorj and Gendun, but a fundamental political case."

The Comintern and Soviet representatives increasingly intervened in Mongolian internal affairs, even influencing major political decisions. Concerned about Outer Mongolia's connections to capitalist regions and potential alignment with Japan or the Republic of China, the Comintern sought to control internal party dynamics and suppress rural leftist representatives who opposed feudal and capitalist exploitation.

On September 10, 1928, during the Congress of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP), the Soviet Union dispatched a plenipotentiary committee, including Comintern representatives Sari, Malendunaed, and Amagayev. From October 6 to 20, 1928, the MPP Central Committee convened a plenary session to plan the removal of rightist leadership. Specific discussions regarding Dambadorj's arrest were held on October 13, 1928, culminating in his political submission and acknowledgment of "mistakes."

Dambadorj, together with Zhadanba (1899–1939), proposed living in Soviet Russia for one to two years, which was accepted by the Comintern. At the Seventh Congress of the Mongolian People's Party in 1928, Dambadorj was labeled a rightist, stripped of party leadership rights, and expelled from the party. Later, this was recognized as an unjust case, and his party membership was reinstated.

Dambadorj, the Comintern, and Foreign Policy & Religious Conflicts in Outer Mongolia

The right-wing faction in Outer Mongolia believed that Soviet and Comintern influence prevented Mongolia from pursuing an independent foreign policy. However, the revolutionary leadership, led by Tseren-Ochir Dambadorj, maintained positions on foreign policy that were distinct from those advocated by the Comintern (Rupen, 1979; Tang, 1959). As a senior official in the Central Committee of the Mongolian People's Party (MPP), Dambadorj did not fully implement Comintern directives and openly disagreed with policies regarding religion, relations with Japan, and the Republic of China.

The Comintern viewed lamas, Buddhists, and the MPP as adversaries. In contrast, Mongolian leaders such as Dambadorj expressed respect for lamas and people's religious beliefs. He argued:

"Judging from the current situation in Outer Mongolia, the people have a deep faith in Buddhism, and promoting the idea that Buddhism is useless may lead to mistakes. In this regard, ideology should be used to inspire the broad masses of the people. It is difficult to propagate the uselessness of Buddhism to rural and urban people. For example, among the more than 10,000 members of our party, there are very few who do not believe in gods and Buddhas" (Batasaikhan, 2014, p. 271).

Dambadorj emphasized that many party members shared a belief in gods and Buddhas, demonstrating the deep-rooted influence of religion in Outer Mongolia. At the Eastern Committee meeting of the Executive Committee of the Comintern on January 4, 1926, Dambadorj stated:

“Although there are no negative impacts on political events, the lamas are in danger in other aspects, so they must be dealt with seriously. Religious leaders are very unhappy with the following things, such as the People’s Party and the government’s policy of separating religious affairs, stopping collecting expenses from the people for religious ceremonies, and collecting taxes on temple cattle and sheep. Religious forces are not as powerful as before, and the Party has implemented measures to weaken religious forces financially. I think this is the source of the harm from the Lamas” (MAPRN-YNT0 Archive.f.4,d.2, hn.229, pp. 1–17).

Despite this, Soviet and Comintern policies frequently forced poor lamas into secular life, taxed temple offerings, and undermined public religious beliefs.

Guo Daofu, reflecting on his time in Soviet prison, admitted that he was influenced by Dambadorj’s ideas during his work in Urig (Kulun):

“Dambadorj insisted that the Soviet Union and the Comintern interfered with the unity of the Mongolian people; Outer Mongolia was not allowed to be independent; Outer Mongolia was not allowed to have rights to establish its own diplomatic relations and did not have the opportunity to develop its finances independently, etc.” (Da Narnjirgal, 2014, p. 36).

These views highlight Dambadorj’s stance as a defender of Outer Mongolian interests, even when his policies conflicted with Soviet objectives. In June 1928, the Soviet Communist Party’s Politburo discussed withdrawing its Standing Committee representatives in Mongolia, reflecting Moscow’s concern over opposition from Mongolian leaders (Central Archives of Social and Political History of Russia, РГАСЛИФ.17.Оп.162.А.103.110). At the seventh meeting of the MPP, it was reported:

“In the later period, the Comintern stressed that the Mongolian People’s Party should report to the Party and the country the harmful situation of the rightist forces that were forming. In this way, in the name of the Party Central Committee leadership, the Party Central Committee sent a private letter to the Director of the Eastern Committee to find its own new representative, but failed to receive a warm welcome. Instead, it asked the Comintern to point out where the prominent rightist crisis in the party was” (MPRP National Assembly Resolution, pp. 376–377).

This demonstrates that opposition to Comintern directives persisted throughout the MPP, reflecting the tension between Soviet-imposed policies and the realities of Outer Mongolia’s social, religious, and political context.

Dambadorj, the Comintern, and Foreign Relations (1928)

On June 7, 1928, the 28th provision of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) accepted the proposal regarding Dambadorj’s meeting. During the three seven-day periods (a unique Mongolian term for 21 days) that Dambadorj spent in Moscow, Karakhan did not meet with him once, which Dambadorj considered unacceptable. This indicates that the representative of the Communist International displayed a rather cold attitude toward the Outer Mongolian “revolution” (РГАСПИФ, 17.он.3.ò.690.А.7; МыҮТА.Х.445.ò.5.Хн.52. X.14, self-collected manuscripts).

Dambadorj firmly opposed the Communist International, stating:

“We do not belong to the Communist International and do not agree with its rules” (Research Center for the Preservation of Modern Russian History, self-collected manuscripts, p. 224).

In July 1928, Badarzhiv wrote to Mibwo, director of the Eastern Bureau of the Executive Committee of the Comintern:

“Dambadorj did not accept the provisions of the Executive Committee of the Communist International for the Mongolian side. If possible, please translate it into Mongolian for us” (Batsaikhan & Lonjid, 2014, p. 226).

This clearly demonstrates that Dambadorj did not accept Comintern instructions.

A major reason for Dambadorj’s conviction was his contacts with Japan, which the Soviet Union viewed as a threat. Dambadorj sought to consolidate the Mongolian “revolution” while attempting to use the power of other countries, including Japan, to strengthen Outer Mongolia’s independence. The Comintern criticized him:

“Not only did Dambadorj invite representatives of the Japanese imperial army, the enemy in the east, to enter the Mongolian border many times, but he also used opportunities such as dinners with representatives to discuss political issues” (MPRP National Assembly Resolution, 1928, p. 380).

Furthermore, the Comintern noted:

“Discussing political issues with Japanese envoys, a dangerous enemy in the East, through dinners and other means, and not reporting the matter to the central government, and demanding that they (the Japanese) be put on the Mongolian border. These are inappropriate measures and serious mistakes” (MPRP National Assembly Resolution, 1928, p. 331).

Under these circumstances, the leftists within the Mongolian People’s Party clashed intensely with Dambadorj, eventually forcing him to make a public self-criticism.

Dambadorj and Rightist Classification in Outer Mongolia (1926–1930)

At the fifth meeting of the Mongolian People's Party, Dambadorj was clearly identified as a rightist. During the third plenary meeting of the sixth Central Committee in October 1928, Dambadorj accepted his "mistakes" at the plenary session (MPRP National Assembly Resolution, 1928, p. 328).

From 1926 to 1928, Dambadorj planned to invite the Japanese Military Commission in Manchuria and senior Japanese military officials in Moscow to Outer Mongolia. Amur clarified in the 1928 Party Central Committee meeting:

"Dambadorj, Zhadanba and others never planned to meet with the purpose of being controlled by the Republic of China, Japan, Germany, Britain, the United States, etc. The purpose of contact is only to make other countries recognize Outer Mongolia as a fully independent state. Is it wrong to contact foreign countries within the scope of the law?" (Batbayar & Shuluun, 2015, p. 143).

The Communist International classified Dambadorj as a rightist mainly due to his contacts with the Republic of China:

"The right-wing leader Dambadorj established contact with the imperialist representative of the Republic of China, Feng Yuxiang, and supported the desire of the representatives of the Republic of China to occupy Mongolia" (MPRP National Assembly Resolution, 1928, p. 291).

Moreover, any news of Dambadorj's contact with Feng Yuxiang was suppressed, and party members investigated the matter (MPRP National Assembly Resolution, 1928, p. 331).

The Mongolian People's Party was split into factions: the right faction, consisting of old officials and new rich members, favored harmony with the Republic of China; the left faction, mainly composed of youth and grassroots members, supported the Comintern and the Soviet Union. Dambadorj, as the Central Committee leader, negotiated secretly with the Nanjing government, which was later exposed by the Mongolian Youth Party, resulting in the left faction regaining control (Badalafu, 2014, p. 96).

Dambadorj's interactions with the Republic of China included efforts to establish infrastructure and military coordination:

- Duan Qirui, a Beiyang warlord, sought to establish a steam engine company in Zhangjiakou, Kulun, and Baotou for military and commercial logistics (Badalafu, 2014, p. 85).
- Feng Yuxiang's letters to Dambadorj emphasized improved telegraph communication and coordination of military support, requesting Outer Mongolia to provide troops (Badalafu, 2014, pp. 83–87).

From 1925 to 1930, the political and economic relations between the Soviet Union and Outer Mongolia faced difficulties. Dambadorj was considered a rightist by Moscow and suppressed due to his proximity to the Republic of China and distance from the Comintern (Research Center for the Preservation of Modern Russian History, 1930, p. 193).

Additionally, to protect rural leftists, the central government isolated rightist leaders such as Herelenge and gave Amur a temporary leave. Dambadorj and Zhadanba denied leaning to the right, arguing that accusations were rumors spread by Gendun, Badarzhifu, and others (Badalafu, 2014, p. 193).

The classification of Dambadorj as a rightist was primarily due to his opposition to the Comintern's division of Mongolian society, his resistance to Soviet measures against religion, and his foreign contacts, which conflicted with Soviet interests.

Danzeng's Conflict with the Communist International

Danzeng (1883–1924), a native of Sayin Noyan Khan League, was the founder of the Kulun underground political organization, the initial leader of the Central Committee of the Mongolian People's Party, and Prime Minister of the Treasury. He served as Chairman of the Central Committee of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party in 1924 before being assassinated. From the beginning of Comintern intervention in Outer Mongolia, Danzeng opposed some of its policies and was criticized for "deviating from the party's goals" (Badalafu, 2014, p. 18).

The main reasons he was considered rightist include:

1. **Opposition to Soviet Advances:** Danzeng opposed the Soviet Union's move into the Tagna Uriankhai region. During his first visit to Soviet Russia as a party representative, he focused on normal political and diplomatic relations rather than Comintern revolutionary work, demonstrating that he did not fully trust the Soviet Union (Badalafu, 2014, pp. 43–44).
2. **Autonomy and Pan-Mongolia Views:** Danzeng insisted on returning the Tagna Uriankhai region to Mongolia and unifying all Mongolian tribes, which conflicted with Soviet control policies. He obstructed the participation of Soviet teachers in Outer Mongolia under the pretext of opposing Soviet influence (Badalafu, 2014, pp. 16, 43–45, 68).
3. **Connection with the Republic of China and Capitalist Interests:** Danzeng sought diplomatic relations with the Republic of China. Sun Yat-sen wrote to him acknowledging shared goals of republicanism and opposing imperial rule, which aligned with Danzeng's vision of establishing a republican government in Mongolia (Badalafu, 2014, pp. 73–74).

4. ***Economic and Military Alliances:*** Danzeng mixed with foreign merchants and warlords, contracted transportation projects, and sought military support from the Republic of China and Japan. He promoted capitalist development in Outer Mongolia, further opposing Soviet interests (Badalafu, 2014, pp. 19, 47).

Under the guidance of the Comintern, Danzeng was labeled a rightist, accused of supporting capitalist and counter-revolutionary activities, and opposing Soviet influence:

“Danzeng is a rightist in the development of the new capitalist road. He supports the rightist trend of capitalist development advocated by Dambadorj, Zhadamba and others” (Badalafu, 2014, p. 19).

He was charged with alliance with merchant capitalists, establishing diplomatic ties with foreign powers, and attempting to build a capitalist republic in Outer Mongolia (National Institute of Korean History, 1924, pp. 156–175; Oriental Association Research Section, 1936, p. 72).

Danzeng as a Sacrifice of the Rightist Crackdown

In the struggle against the capitalist class in Outer Mongolia, Danzeng became a target because he was a member of the Mongolian People’s Party, an army general, and a government leader during the revolutionary movement.

“The Third Party Congress defeated and eliminated the conspiracy of the Danzeng faction that tried to make Mongolia take the capitalist road, revealing the danger of the rightists to the public. But eliminating Danzeng alone cannot completely eliminate the danger of the rightists” (National Institute of Korean History, 1924, pp. 252).

The crackdown expanded to include members considered part of Danzeng’s faction. Government secretary-general Bendang, party secretary-general Dorji Balama, and member Baoyin Nemuhu were labeled rightists. Danzeng was accused of being part of a group promoting a capitalist development model during the revolutionary period, particularly the so-called “Danzeng faction” (Oriental Association Research Section, 1936, p. 72).

“National capitalists in Mongolia attempted to exploit the gains of the revolution with the aim of developing capitalism” (MPRP National Assembly Resolution, 1924, p. 129).

The Third Mongolian People’s Party Congress was held to resolve Danzeng’s political situation. Danzeng refused to attend, claiming the meeting was intended to intimidate young members (MPRP National Assembly Resolution, 1924, p. 167). The Congress formally accused Danzeng of violating party ideology, abusing his position for business, collaborating with foreign capitalists, and acting disloyally toward partners and conference members (MPRP National Assembly Resolution, 1924, p. 180).

On August 6, 1924, the Internal Security Department arrested Danzeng and sentenced him to death for multiple offenses:

- Collecting old debts from the people of Chechelik League for Chinese merchants;
- Secretly supplying weapons to Han allies;
- Cooperating with Han merchants and exploiting Mongolian people;
- Constructing a station between Kulun and Hagalegan with foreign cooperation;
- Planning to establish capitalist institutions with foreigners;
- Concealing letters from Chinese warlords;
- Promoting anti-Youth League content in the army (MPRP National Assembly Resolution, 1924, p. 185).

Sha Li summarized:

“Baodao in 1922, Danzeng in 1924, and the secretary-general of the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League were all shot” (RTSHIDNI, f. 495, OP. 154, d. 389, L. 26, Central Archives of Political History of the Russian Federation).

In summary, Danzeng’s charges as a rightist included debt collection on behalf of Han merchants, business collaboration with Han people, operating a hotel in Kulun, planning capitalist institutions, opposing the People’s Government, spreading anti-Youth League propaganda, and resisting the independence of Tagna Uriankhai.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative historical analysis to examine the political conflicts between the Outer Mongolian upper class and the Communist International during the early 20th century. Primary sources, including resolutions of the Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party (MPRP), archival documents from the Central Archives of Political History of the Russian Federation, and reports from the National Institute of Korean History, were systematically analyzed to reconstruct the political events and factional struggles of the period.

Secondary sources, such as scholarly works by Badalafu (1930), Batsaikhan (2014), and Aoki (2011), provided contextual analysis and interpretation of the socio-political and cultural dynamics of Outer Mongolia. Emphasis was placed on the roles of key figures- Dogsom Baodao, Tseren-Ochir Dambadorj, and Danzeng- whose interactions with the Comintern illustrate the broader tension between local autonomy and Soviet influence.

The analysis applied a case-study approach to individual political leaders, tracing their activities, policy positions, and conflicts with the Communist International. Particular attention was given to factional labeling, such as “rightist” designations, political purges, and the ideological and practical motivations behind these actions.

By integrating documentary evidence with historical interpretation, the study aims to reveal the multifaceted nature of Outer Mongolia's political landscape, highlighting the intersection of local social, religious, and economic conditions with international socialist pressures.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The analysis of primary and secondary sources reveals several key findings regarding the contradictions between the Outer Mongolian upper class and the Communist International during the early 20th century:

1. **Factional Conflicts within Outer Mongolia**
 - The Communist International's intervention led to the formation of multiple political factions within the Mongolian People's Party (MPP). Leaders such as Dogsom Baodao, Tseren-Ochir Dambadorj, and Danzeng were labeled "rightists" due to their resistance to Soviet policies.
 - Baodao opposed the transplantation of the Soviet model into Mongolia, advocating for policies suited to the country's religious, social, and economic realities. This stance led to his political isolation, framing, and eventual execution during the Baodao Incident (1922).
 - Dambadorj's opposition centered on preserving Outer Mongolia's autonomy in domestic policy, religion, and foreign relations. He resisted Comintern directives that threatened local interests and engaged in secret negotiations with foreign powers, including Japan and the Republic of China, to protect Mongolia's independence.
 - Danzeng's resistance was linked to his support for Tagna Uriankhai's reintegration and his attempts to establish diplomatic and economic relations with foreign powers. He was executed as part of the rightist crackdown in 1924.
2. **Impact of Soviet and Comintern Interventions**
 - The Soviet Union and the Communist International exerted strong influence over the MPP, including direct interference in leadership appointments, ideological training, and political purges.
 - Political accusations such as "rightist" or "counter-revolutionary" were used strategically to suppress opposition, consolidate Soviet control, and enforce adherence to Comintern policies.
 - These interventions caused internal divisions in the MPP, weakened local governance structures, and intensified factional struggles, undermining political stability.
3. **Resistance to External Influence**
 - Mongolian leaders maintained a balance between cooperating with the Soviet Union for strategic purposes while resisting policies incompatible with local conditions.
 - Baodao emphasized the adaptation of revolutionary policies to Mongolian realities rather than wholesale imitation of Soviet methods.
 - Dambadorj prioritized Mongolia's religious traditions, asserting that Buddhism and local beliefs should be respected while pursuing political modernization.
 - Danzeng focused on foreign diplomacy and economic initiatives to safeguard Outer Mongolia's autonomy.
4. **Consequences for Outer Mongolian Politics**
 - Political purges and the labeling of key leaders as rightists led to widespread repression and loss of experienced political figures.
 - The centralization of power under Soviet influence reshaped the structure and ideology of the MPP, with leftist youth and grassroots factions increasingly dominating party politics.
 - Despite suppression, opposition leaders demonstrated a persistent effort to defend Mongolia's sovereignty, cultural identity, and socio-economic interests.
5. **Interpretation of the Findings**
 - The research shows that the political contradictions in Outer Mongolia were not merely ideological disputes but were shaped by social, economic, and cultural factors unique to the region.
 - Leaders labeled as "rightists" were, in many cases, acting out of patriotic motives, seeking to protect Mongolian independence and prevent external domination.
 - The interventions of the Communist International and the Soviet Union created a paradox where Mongolia achieved formal independence but experienced severe internal political turbulence and factionalism.

Overall, the research demonstrates that the contradictions between Outer Mongolian leaders and the Communist International were a central feature of early 20th-century Mongolian politics, highlighting the complex interplay between local agency and international socialist influence.

DISCUSSION

The findings reveal the complex and multifaceted nature of political dynamics in Outer Mongolia during the early 20th century, highlighting the tension between local autonomy and external influence. The conflicts between the Mongolian upper class and the Communist International were shaped by ideological, social, and cultural factors, which together determined the trajectory of Mongolia's revolutionary transformation.

1. Local Adaptation vs. External Imposition

- Leaders such as Dagsom Baodao, Tseren-Ochir Dambadorj, and Danzeng demonstrated that Outer Mongolian political actors prioritized strategies suited to local conditions over externally imposed models. Baodao's insistence on adapting policies to Mongolia's religious, social, and economic realities illustrates a broader pattern of local adaptation.
- The Communist International, guided by Soviet interests, pursued uniform revolutionary policies that often ignored Mongolian societal structures, particularly the importance of Buddhism, nomadic livelihoods, and traditional governance. This disconnect led to the labeling of pragmatic Mongolian leaders as "rightists" and "counter-revolutionaries."

2. Factionalism and Political Purges

- The intervention of the Comintern catalyzed factionalism within the Mongolian People's Party. The division between leftist youth aligned with Soviet policies and traditional leaders attempting to safeguard national interests resulted in political purges and social instability.
- These internal conflicts reflect the broader challenge of revolutionary movements in peripheral regions: balancing local political priorities with the demands of an international ideological movement. In Outer Mongolia, this tension manifested as a series of unjust persecutions, executions, and forced resignations, weakening political continuity and governance.

3. The Role of Religion and Culture

- A major source of conflict arose from the Communist International's hostility toward Buddhism and religious institutions. Leaders such as Dambadorj recognized the importance of maintaining cultural and religious stability while pursuing modernization.
- The resistance to anti-religious policies demonstrates the centrality of culture and faith in shaping political legitimacy. It also underscores the difficulty of imposing a Soviet-style secular revolution in a society deeply influenced by Buddhist traditions.

4. Foreign Policy and Sovereignty

- The analysis of Dambadorj and Danzeng's engagement with Japan, the Republic of China, and other foreign actors highlights Outer Mongolia's efforts to maintain independence amid competing international pressures.
- These actions were often misinterpreted by the Comintern as "rightist" or counter-revolutionary, but in reality, they reflect strategic diplomacy aimed at protecting national sovereignty and fostering pragmatic international alliances.

5. Implications for Historical Interpretation

- The research illustrates that the political labeling of Mongolian leaders as "rightists" was not solely ideological but often reflected resistance to external control. These leaders' actions were rooted in patriotic motives, aiming to preserve Mongolian identity and political autonomy.
- The findings also challenge simplistic interpretations of the Mongolian Revolution as a mere extension of Soviet policy. Instead, they reveal a dynamic interplay between local agency and international socialism, which shaped Mongolia's unique path toward modernization and independence.

In conclusion, the study demonstrates that the contradictions between Outer Mongolia and the Communist International were both political and cultural. These conflicts shaped the trajectory of the Mongolian People's Party, influenced the development of modern Mongolian governance, and highlight the broader tensions between local autonomy and international ideological movements in the early 20th century.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of Outer Mongolia's political landscape during the early 20th century reveals the profound and often contentious interactions between the local upper class and the Communist International. Figures such as Dagsom Baodao, Tseren-Ochir Dambadorj, and Danzeng navigated a complex environment marked by the simultaneous pursuit of national independence, social modernization, and resistance to external ideological control.

The study demonstrates that the labeling of Mongolian leaders as "rightists" or "counter-revolutionaries" was frequently a political tool used by the Communist International and the Soviet Union to suppress local agency and

enforce policies that aligned with Soviet strategic interests. In reality, these leaders sought to adapt revolutionary practices to Mongolia's unique social, economic, and religious conditions, reflecting a pragmatic approach that prioritized national welfare over ideological conformity.

Religious and cultural factors played a central role in shaping political decision-making, particularly in the interactions between the Mongolian People's Party and the Buddhist institutions. Efforts to impose Soviet-style secularization and factional divisions often conflicted with Mongolia's historical traditions, creating internal tensions and contributing to political purges.

Furthermore, the engagement of Mongolian leaders with foreign powers, including Japan and the Republic of China, highlights the strategic dimensions of Mongolia's quest for sovereignty. These interactions, often misinterpreted as "rightist" behavior, underscore the importance of viewing Outer Mongolia's political decisions within the context of national survival and international diplomacy.

Ultimately, the contradictions between Outer Mongolia and the Communist International reflect the broader challenges of peripheral regions navigating revolutionary change imposed by global ideological movements. The Mongolian experience illustrates the tension between local agency and external influence, providing a nuanced understanding of the political, cultural, and diplomatic forces that shaped modern Mongolian history.

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