

DALAI LAMA'S REPRESENTATIVE AGVAN DORJIEV
AND ALTAIST PROFESSOR WŁADYSŁAW KOTWICZ:
LETTERS OF 1912

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Agvan Dorjiev (Ngag dbang rdo rje) known also as Dorjjeff or Agvaandorj (1854-1938) was a well known figure of the 20th century relations between Tibet and Russia. Buryat by nationality Agvan Dorjiev studied in Tibet in Gomang College of the Drepung monastery and became the representative of Dalai Lama's interests in Russia. He was known among Tibetans as Sogpo Tsenshab Ngawang Lobsang (Sog po mtshan zhabs Ngag dbang blo bzang). He believed that Tsarist Russia was an important political power in Asia, alternative to Great Britain, and that Tibet could benefit from closer relations with Russia. Unfortunately, the First World War 1914-18 and the October Revolution in Russia of 1917 prevented these plans from happening. The Communist Russia did not develop friendly relations with Tibet. Soon Buddhism in the Soviet Republic was destroyed and Agvan Dorjiev's work on Buddhist development in Russia was ruined. However, some remnants of his strenuous efforts survived, such as the Buddhist temple in St. Petersburg. Although accused by the British of being a Russian spy and not a religious figure, which was also later maintained by the Mongols, Agvan Dorjiev remained an important leader of Tibetan Buddhism in Russia. His influence in shaping Tibeto-Russian and Tibeto-Mongolian relations should not be underestimated.

Throughout many years of Agvan Dorjiev's activity in Tsarist and communist Russia he developed close relations with scholars of Oriental Studies. One of them was an Altaist, Professor Władysław Kotwicz (1872-1944), a Pole by nationality. Since Poland lost her independence and in 1795 was partitioned between the Russian Empire, the Kingdom of Prussia and Habsburg Austria, Polish intelligentsia was often educated and worked in the institutions of the respective states. It was also the case of Władysław Kotwicz,¹ who graduated from the Department of Oriental Languages at the University of St. Petersburg in 1895 and from 1900 was lecturing Mongolian and Manchu there. At the same time, however, he became member of the staff of the Ministry of Finance of the Tsarist government making his career there in the Eastern Department. Therefore he had direct contacts with many important figures of the Tsarist Russia, both among scholars and intellectuals, as well as among politicians and people of influence.

Władysław Kotwicz's contacts proved useful during a visit of the Mongolian delegation in the summer of 1911. Top Mongolian politicians of that time: Da-Lama Tserenchimid, future Prime Minister and Minister of Internal Affairs, Prince Qangdadorji (Khanddorj), future Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Qayisang (Khaisan), a political activist from Inner Mongolia,

1 On Kotwicz's biography see Tulisow 1986 and Dziurzyńska 2012.

future Assistant to the Minister of Internal Affairs,² attempted to secure Russian favour in case of future Mongolian independence. On this occasion it was Agvan Dorjiev who made their initial contacts with the Russian side and who asked Kotwicz to break his holidays and take care of the Mongolian delegates in Russia.³ Most probably Kotwicz, owing to his contacts, arranged their meetings. In the following year 1912 Kotwicz undertook scholarly expedition to already independent Mongolia and was received with honours in Urga by the Mongolian officials.⁴

Due to his true friendship with the Mongols and his sentiment towards Mongolian independence, which was probably related to the situation of his own motherland, Kotwicz became engaged in Mongolian political affairs. Both men, Agvan Dorjiev and Władysław Kotwicz had interests in keeping mutual contacts. Perhaps these relations were more than official. However, only a few letters, which are the evidence of these contacts, survived. They are kept in the Private Archive of Władysław Kotwicz at the Archive of Sciences of the PAN and PAU in Cracow.

Professor W. Kotwicz's correspondence with important figures of the political scene of the 20th century Russia and Mongolia drew attention of scholars already many years ago. Fifty-one documents from the Kotwicz Private Archive were published by the Mongolian historian Shirendev in 1972. In 2011 Kotwicz's correspondence in Russian language collected from archives in Cracow and St. Petersburg, Kalmykia and Buryatia was published by Dashdavaa et al.⁵ Shirendev underlined (1972, p.11) the importance of Kotwicz's contacts and his role in supporting Mongols in their efforts to gain independence. He also remained an important advisor to the Mongols during their struggle to maintain this independence in the following years. Even later, the people's government of Mongolia attempted to employ Kotwicz as its advisor, these plans, however, were not fulfilled.⁶ Agvan Dorjiev's role in shaping Mongolian history was also acknowledged by Shirendev who called him a person 'working for the Tibetan case' (1972, p.12). Therefore Agvan Dorjiev's two letters to Władysław Kotwicz were reproduced in Shirendev's book and rendered also in Modern Mongolian. They were also translated into English in the monograph on the Mongolian independence of 1911 by Onon and Pritchatt.⁷ However, without knowing the political context of that time these letters remain hardly comprehensible.

One more field of common interest and co-operation of Agvan Dorjiev and Władysław Kotwicz was the construction of the Tibetan Buddhist temple in St. Petersburg. Dorjiev invited Kotwicz, together with two other eminent Orientalists, F. I. Stcherbatsky⁸ and A. D. Rudnev,⁹

2 Tulisow 2012, p.22, note 8. See also correspondence to Kotwicz by the mentioned politicians reproduced in Shirendev 1972 and translated into English in Onon and Pritchatt 1989.

3 Tulisow 2012, p.26, note 20. Letter dated 13.08.1911 [26.08.1911 according to the Julien calendar], Private Archive of Kotwicz K III-19, 134, p.54; Dashdavaa et al. 2011, p.78.

4 On the expedition see Tulisow 2012, pp.21-129.

5 Letter by Agvan Dorjiev to Kotwicz, Dashdavaa et al. 2011, p.78.

6 Bareja-Starzyńska 2014.

7 Onon and Pritchatt 1989.

8 Famous Russian Buddhologist Fedor I. Stcherbatsky (1866–1942).

9 Andrei D. Rudnev (1878-1958) was an eminent Russian Mongologist, who lived in Finland after the Russian revolution.

to be the members of the temple construction committee.¹⁰ The subject of building the temple was briefly mentioned also in one of the letters reproduced in the present article. In the Private Archive of Kotwicz there are kept unique photographs documenting the process of the temple erection. How important it was and still is to have built a Tibetan Buddhist temple in St. Petersburg one can grasp from the words written by Thubten Jigme Norbu alias Thaktser Rinpoche, who wrote in the Preface to Agvan Dorjiev's biography translated by him into English: "I was deeply impressed to find a bit of Tibet in surroundings otherwise so alien to it, but I was impressed still more by the character of the man who had had the courage to put it there" (p.7). Thaktser Rinpoche did not agree with the opinion that Agvan Dorjiev had been a Russian agent. He underlined Dorjiev's devotion to Buddhism and to Tibet. He felt personally attached to Agvan Dorjiev and he highly appreciated his work for Tibet.¹¹

It is also worth mentioning that when Agvan Dorjiev was arrested in 1922¹² while on his way back to Buryatia from the visit to Ural Kalmyks on the station called Rubakha (*urbaq-a*) and was in despair expecting all the worst including death, he turned to Kotwicz with the request to help him get out. Kotwicz in turn arranged an appeal to the authorities together with other scholars, such as Oldenburg, Stcherbatsky and Vladimirtsov¹³ stressing that Agvan Dorjiev was not involved in internal Russian politics and was engaged only in the Tibetan affairs. These efforts to release Agvan Dorjiev from prison combined with direct contact with politicians proved successful. The whole situation was described briefly in Agvan Dorjiev's autobiography (English translation by Thubten Jigme Norbu, p.43):¹⁴

"... One time I went to the Kalmuck district in order to have a look at the physicians in the teaching monastery I had established. On my way back I arrived at a juncture called Rubakha, close to Ural Kalmucks. (...) We were seized and placed in the railway prison. We were sent to Moscow and, without a careful investigation, put in the great prison Butyrskaja. (...) (p.45) I bribed the prison guard to send a letter to the great scholar Kotwicz. When he received it, several scholars made impassioned pleas, saying, "He was only involved in Tibetan affairs, not in domestic politics," and so on. It will be difficult to ever repay the kindness of the scholars Oldenburg, Kotwicz, Stcherbatsky and Vladimirtsov. I knew a minister of foreign office. I met with him and relied on his help. Since the eastern route to Buryatia was cut off by fighting, I again made my way to the Kalmuck lands."

Tibetan version of Agvan Dorjiev's autobiography written in 1923; fragment on the help from Kotwicz and other Orientalists (*Lavain egsgig* 2001, p.120, f. 32b (63)):

10 Andreev 2012, p.36.

11 Since Taktser Rinpoche (1922-2008) remained the most beloved teacher of Prof. Elliot Sperling, who also devoted his scholarly undertakings to the subject of Tibeto-Mongolian and Tibeto-Russian relations, it seemed justified to include this otherwise a bit far of the main stream of Tibetological studies subject into the present volume dedicated to Elliot Sperling.

12 According to Andreev this happened in 1918. Andreev 2012, p.80.

13 Boris Yakovlevich Vladimirtsov (1884-1931), great Russian Orientalist, Mongolist, member of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union.

14 *Dorjiev: Memoirs of a Tibetan Diplomat* by Thubten J. Norbu, Dan Martin, 1990.

- [4] ... *nga las gzhan du su*
 [5] *zhig yod || btson srung zhig la brngan pa sprad || mkhas mchog kho tha spe che la || yig bskur phyag son mkhas dbang 'ga' || lhar*
 [6] *'joms bod don byed pa las || nang don srid la kha 'khrid med || ces sogs gdung zhus btson nas || mkhas mchog ol ting spur*
 [33a1] *ga dang || kho tha spi che shar spad sa kho || sbal rti mar tshas rnam kyi ni || bka' drin nam yang 'khor bar dka'*
 [2] *phyi khag blon chen ya mon gyi || blon po zhig dang ngo shes yod || de thug rogs ram bgyis par brten || shar phyogs spo rang thu ru ni |*
 [3] *'gro lam 'khrugs pas bkag gyur bas || slar yang khal mig phyogs su phyin || ...*

Mongolian version of Dorjiev's autobiography written in 1921, p.37, ff. 13a35-13b7, *Lavain egshig* 2001, f.19b6-16:¹⁵

- [13a35] ... *kelberkei* [36] *yabudal-tu nigen jaruca-du kedün zoγos* [13b1] *ögcü qootobici-du kereg ucir-ıyan* [2] *bicijü ilgebei :* *ketürkei örösiyel-tü* [3] *propıysar merged-üd :* *keciyen medegülejü* [4] *γaryasan aci-yi :* *kejiyede γayakin* [5] *martaydamui :* *γadayadu-yin ministar-un* [6] *üilecin-ıyer :* *γar-ıyan barılcan tanılcaγad :* [7] *γadaγsi qalımay-un γajar kürükü-dür ...*

Perhaps Agvan Dorjiev and Władysław Kotwicz had more in common that we can see from the scarce evidence which has survived. Both acted as advisors to Tibetan and Mongolian governments, respectively, and applied efforts to secure their independence. It seems that they could trust each other when necessary and that they maintained friendly relations which they did not publicise. Their correspondence was translated into English by Urgungge Onon and Derrick Pritchatt (1989). However, some of the passages translated by them arbitrarily seem to include authors' implications of what was meant in the letters rather than the actual meaning. For example a passage on the political shape of relations of the Tibetans and Mongols¹⁶ with China called the 'commonwealth' (*qamturan törü*), was translated as "to serve China". Another passage mentions the concerns of Mongolian khans and nobles in taking common decisions. However, it was translated by Onon and Pritchatt as "the independence will not last much longer". Some passages were probably obscure to Onon and Pritchatt, such as the statement about sending money for erecting a certain building, which actually referred to the construction of the Buddhist temple in St. Petersburg.

It should be also pointed out that Dorjiev, who was treated as a Russian spy by the British and later also by the Mongols, in the letter dated 8th February 1912 writes about the opinion of

¹⁵ Mongolian version, written in verse in 1921 is a bit shorter and events are written in an abbreviated manner in comparison with the Tibetan version, which was written two years later.

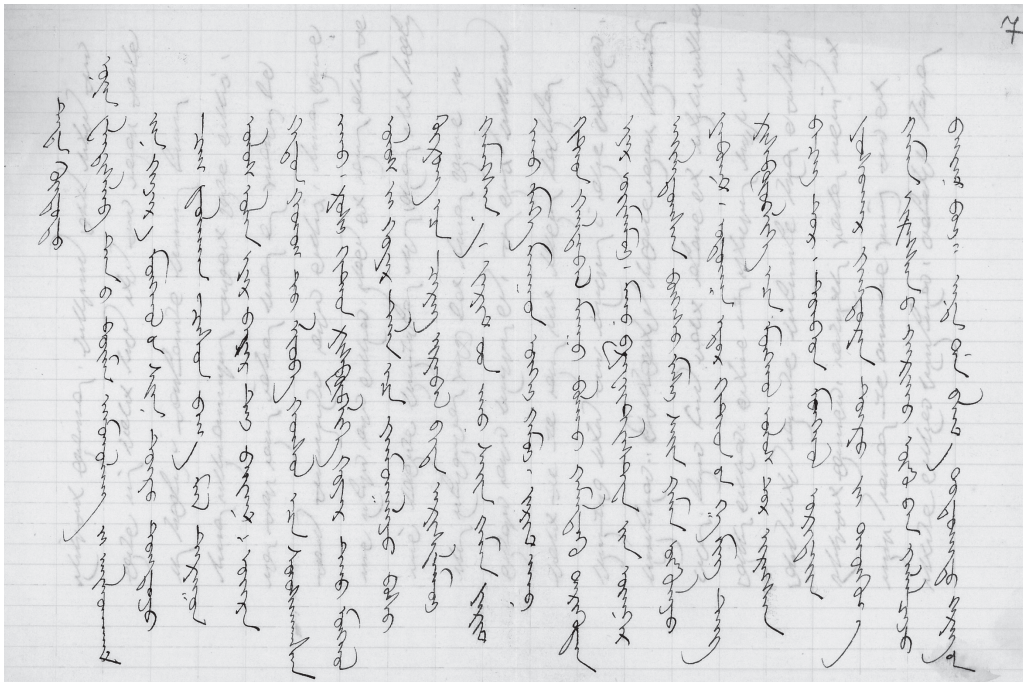
¹⁶ The Tibeto-Mongolian relations were very important. This can be known in more detail from the monograph on the Tibeto-Mongolian treaty, see Sperling et al. 2013.

“our government” (*manu praviytilstva*). The question is whether he refers here to the Mongolian government or to the Russian government? It seems that Consul Lyuba turns to him with words about ‘your Mongolian state’ (*tanu mongyol ulus*) and further in the letter Dorjiev’s ‘our government’ refers to the Mongolian government. He is very concerned about such development of the political events which would be the best for the Mongols. Perhaps letters presented here can prove his loyalty towards the Mongols.

Thus with hope to shed more light on the content of the letters which document the way the political situation was comprehended by the contemporaries in 1912 and to make the relationship of Agvan Dorjiev with Władysław Kotwicz better known, their correspondence is reproduced here again with English translation and with necessary explanations.

Letter 1

Private Archive of Kotwicz, Archive of Science of PAN and PAU, Cracow, K III-19 (243, pp.7-8) reproduced in Shirendev 1972 pp.161-163, Modern Mongolian version on p.164. Onon and Pritchatt 1989 pp.88-89.



Translation

Highly respected [Sir],

Noble Vladislav, I am sending you best wishes ten thousand times.¹⁷

Here new Mongolian rule was established. The weather is warm, snow is low and cattle is fat.

Majority of people are happy. Recently, a few days ago I heard the following from Consul Lyuba:¹⁸ Russia and the Chinese Republic will guard your Mongolian state from two sides and in case that soldiers appear from other empires we will protect [you].

[In response] to this statement some say that it is good. Some say that it is a trick. Some are discussing that if China approaches it will be bad and they are disturbed by this and similar [matters]. As to our government's¹⁹ true opinion it says that it is very good.

In the present day(s) in the document sent from the Guomintang²⁰ to the Mongolian state²¹ it is said that it will support the commonwealth²² with Tibet and Mongolia²³ as it was done in the past. The response to this statement is being discussed.

Here Da Lama became the Minister of Inner Affairs. Qayisang was bestowed a position of *gūng*. These two [men] decide on very important political matters. Whatever they say to the Khan, this is done. This [in turn] is not received very well by many princes and nobility. It is not known what will happen.

As to Lyuba he gave advice and discussed this [issue] with many nobles, saying [that when things are] reported by one person then in the end one cannot be sure what is going to happen. He said that even Da Lama and Qayisang should have taken council with many, but they did not comply with this saying.

People who ought to go to Petersburg: Jalkhanz Gegeen²⁴ and Dalai Vang²⁵ are waiting for orders to let them go. Governor,²⁶ who came from Barga,²⁷

17 Lit. 'thousand times requesting your peace'.

18 Viktor Fyodorovich Lyuba was a Russian consul in Urga. See Tulisow 2012, p.34.

19 Here *praviytilstva* from Russian *pravitel'stvo*.

20 Mong. *ya ming tang*.

21 Mong. *ulus*.

22 Or 'joint-government / collaborative government', Mong. *qamturan törü*. Onon and Pritchatt (p.88) translated this passage as "... the Tibetans and Mongols should serve the Chinese nation together as they did in the past". However, it seems that they did not translate it precisely.

23 Mong. *töbed mongγol*.

24 Jalkhanz Gegeen or Khuthugtu, Damdinbazar 1874-1923 (Tib. Rgyal khang rtse) was a politically active Buddhist incarnation supporting the Jetsundampa's government, especially in western Mongolia. In 1921 he became the Prime Minister. See Atwood 2004, pp.258-259, 471. About the line of reincarnations of Jalkhanz Gegeen see Laagan 2004, p.54.

25 Dalai Vang, Mongolian aristocrat. See Pozdneev 1971, I, pp.90, 249-250. The Minister of the Army, see Onon and Pritchatt 1989, footnote 33 to Chapter Five.

26 *Janggi*, from Manchu: 'governor', 'military commander'. See Zakharov 1875, p.957. I would like to thank J. Tulisow for the clarification. Here "Forefront Hero Damdinsüren" is meant. See Onon and Pritchatt 1989, footnote 35 to Chapter Five.

27 Barga, region of Mongolia, see Atwood 2004, pp.34-35.

was granted a position of duke²⁸ and nominated a Vice-Minister²⁹ of Outer (i.e. Foreign) Affairs.

It is said that Üjümcin and Sönid³⁰ and [people of] Abaya³¹ as well as of Alashan³² are in favour of following [the Mongolian government] and they are coming [to join Mongols]. They are not rushing to put in order their inner affairs [however]. Moreover, they do not find concord³³ among themselves. Some of them, actually, do not even think about it.

Requesting [Your] peace, Agvang.

On the 8th of February³⁴ from Kūriye.³⁵

Da Lama is in correspondence with Kokovtsov³⁶ as it is discussed. People are very afraid of that – it is said. Especially from the moment when he [Da Lama] knew that the last year's gold mine³⁷ of Sain Noyon was given to Lusinikov [=Lushnikov].³⁸ Lyuba said that it would be good if such cases were discussed and decided by many [people] and him. I know [about it].

With Kokovtsov [I remain in] correspondence.

Transliteration of the Mongolian text

[1] dede kündütü

[2] noyan vladislav tan-u bümen [tümen]³⁹ amuyulang-yi [-i] ayiladqanam

[3] ene γajar⁴⁰-a mongγol-un sine törü toytoju

[4] cay dulaqan casun bay-a mal taryun

28 Mong. *güng*.

29 Here *tavarsi minister* from Russian *товарищ министра*, which means 'vice-minister', 'deputy minister'. I am indebted to J. Tulisow for this information.

30 Mongolian groups in Inner Mongolia. The princes of Üjümcin and Sönid were junior descendants of the Chinggisid Bodi Alag Khan (1519-47), grandson of Batu-Möngke Dayan Khan, see Atwood 2004, p.565a.

31 Mong. *Abay-a-nar* – group of Mongols living in Inner Mongolia. Ligeti 1933.

32 Mong. *Alas-a nuγud*. Mongols living in the Alashan region.

33 Mong. *eb eye* – 'harmony and kindness' Lessing 1982, p.284; 'peace, concord, amity' Bawden 1997, p.555.

34 According to the Julien Calendar it was the 21st of February 1912.

35 I.e. Uрга, modern Ulan Bator.

36 Vladimir Nikolaevich Kokovtsov (1853—1943) served as the Prime Minister of Russia (1911—1914), during the reign of Emperor Nicholas II.

37 Mong. *altan γajar* – lit. 'golden place', here stands for 'gold mine'.

38 Shirendev 1972, p.164 (followed by Onon and Pritchatt p.89) reads his name in modern Mongolian as Lyusokhov, although it was not written so. It was actually written Lusinikov. A person with a similar name was Aleksey Mikhaylovich Lushnikov (1831-1901), a famous Russian millionaire and tea trading agent who got the confidence of Russian and Chinese merchants, and his sons, including Aleksey, an engineer involved in the construction of the Trans Siberian Railway (see Kandinsky's Family Tree <http://www.kandinsky.ru/oldenglish/tree06.shtml>). However, in the letter sent by Qayisang to Kotwicz on the 20th of January 1912, Mikhail Alekseevich Lutnikov, "a native from Kyakhta and a manager" popular among the Mongols, is mentioned (Shirendev 1972, p. 116, Onon and Pritchatt 1989, p. 97). This must be wrong for Mikhail Alekseevich Lushnikov, another son of Aleksey Mikhaylovich Lushnikov. Probably one of the sons, Aleksey or Mikhail, was mentioned in the letter.

39 Forms in square brackets are correct according to the principles of the Classical Mongolian.

40 Gamma is not marked with dots which is indicated by underlined sign γ.

- [5] ulus olan-iyar bayar-tai bayinam : oyira
 [6] kedün qonoy-tu lyuba konsul-aca sonosaysan [sonosuysan]
 [7] anu : rosi kitad respüblika qoyar tanu mongγol
 [8] ulus -yi [-i] qoyar tala-aca qamuγalayu busu
 [9] gürüng-ece cereg irebel bida arisilamui [arcilamui]
 [10] kemegsen-e . jarim-ud anu sayin kemen jarim
 [11] anu meke⁴¹ mayad ügei kemüi . jarim anu .
 [12] kitad qaldabal mayu bolqu kemeldekü terigüten
 [13] -iyer üyimemüi⁴² . manu praviytilstva⁴³-yin üneker
 [14] ayiladuγsan bügesü masi sayin kemen öggülejü
 [15] yabunam . odoqan edür kitad-un γa ming tang⁴⁴
 [16] respüblika-aca mongγol ulus-tur iregsen
 [17] bicig-tür . töbed mongγol uridayin
 [18] yosuγar qamturan törü-yi tedküy-e
 [19] kemen iregsen-ü qariγu ögkü-ben kelelcejü
 [20] bayinam bui : ende da blam-a dotoγadu kereg-ün
 [p.2, 1] minister boluγad . qayisang güng jerge-tei
 [2] bolju ene qoyar yeke erke-tei ulus törü
 [3] -yin yabudal-i toγtoγaju qaγan-daγan
 [4] yaγun ayiladqaγsan tegüber bolju bayinam .
 [5] egün tus olan noyad qad-un sedkel-tü
 [6] tung taγalamji ügei bayinam . yaγun bolqu
 [7] anu medesi ügei bayimui . Lyuba ber olan noyad-tu
 [8] anu jöblejü kelelcegdün nigen kümün-iyer yabudal
 [9] -iyan medegülged segül-dür yaγun bolqu-yi
 [10] boljusi ügei kemegsen ba . da blam-a qayisang
 [11] qoyar-tu-cu olan-iyar jöblen jokildun
 [12] kelelcekü kereg-tei kemegsen-i ülü kereglemüi .
 [13] kemeldemüi : piterbüürge⁴⁵ yabuqu ulus jilqanca
 [14] gegen . dalai vang qoyar odoqu ber jarliγ qariγu
 [15] küliyen bayimui . baryu-aca iregsen janggi-yi
 [16] güng jerge olγaju γadaγadu yamun-u tavorsi⁴⁶
 [17] mi~~n~~ister bolγabai . üjemcin sönid abay-a-nar
 [18] alas-a-nuγud cu daγaγu sanal-tai ber
 [19] irijü bayimui kemeldemüi . dotorki yosun
 [p.3, 1] duram-i toγtoγaqu-ban ülü yaγaramui . ülü
 [2] baran eb eyen cu ülü olumui . jarim-ud
 [3] kereg-tei degere cu ülü sanaqu buyu

41 'Deceit, fraud, trick' etc. Lessing 1982, 533b.

42 'To become disturbed, to bustle, to be excited', Lessing 1982, p.1001a.

43 In Russian *pravitel'stvo*, i.e. 'government'.

44 Guomintang.

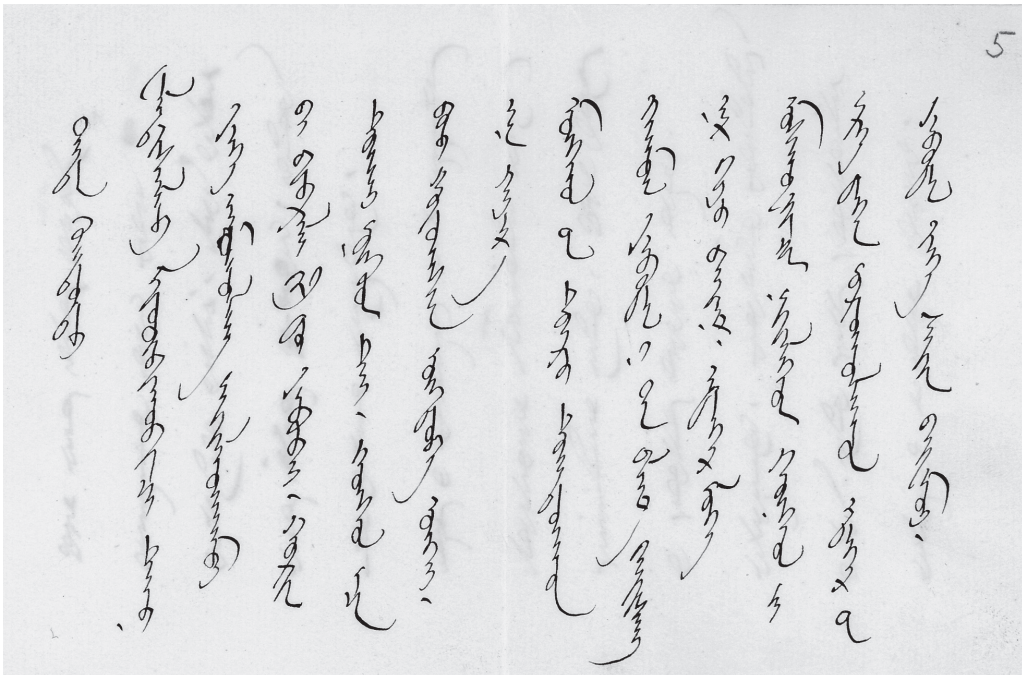
45 Petersburg.

46 In Russian *tovarishch*, however, *tovarishch ministra*, here *tavorsi mi~~n~~ister* means 'vice-minister', 'deputy minister'. I am indebted to J. Tulisow for this information.

- [4] eyin amuɣulang-yi [-i] ayiladqayci ayvang
 [5] pibrali-yin 8-du küriyen-e-ece
 [6] da blam-a ber koqobcob-tai bicig abulcaday
 [7] bi[y]⁴⁷ kemegsen-ece ulus yekede ayuju bayimui
 [8] kemeldenem . ilangɣui-a sayin noyan-u nituy⁴⁸-un
 [9] altan-u ɣajar-i luisiniqob-tu öber
 [10] -iyen medejü ögkü boluɣsan-aca . lyuba bi ene eyimü
 [11] yabudal-i olan-iyar ba . nada-luy-a cu
 [12] jöblelden toytobal sayin kemegsen-e . bi
 [13] medemüi koqobcob-tai bicig-iyer

Letter 2

Private Archive of Kotwicz, Archive of Science of PAN and PAU, Cracow, K III-19 (243, pp.5-6), see Shirendev 1972, p.165, on p.168 modern Mongolian translation, Onon and Pritchatt 1989, p.89.



47 Like Khalkha *büi*.

48 According to Shirendev 1972, p.168 *nodniin*, i.e. last year's.

Translation

Highly Respected [Sir],
 Vladislav Lyudvikovich, I am sending my best greetings.⁴⁹
 I went on the 21st of February. With about twenty people [of assistance] we asked
 Consul for weapon (*buu*), but we have not received (any).
 Here, after the establishment of the Mongolian rule all affairs are managed by Da
 Lama and Qaisang. Moskvitin became close with them and (they) subordinated
 the consul and [therefore] their situation is very good.
 All other khans and princes do not like it and they are very worried. Majority
 of⁵⁰ khans and princes went back.⁵¹ Now still they are said to be going back.
 If it is right to be in accord with many, “what will it mean?” they seem
 to wonder.⁵²
 If they get good advice from other people they do not use it. It is difficult to
 achieve suitable solution, but similarly, they do not want to use a good adviser.
 Indeed, [they] have not found yet understanding of the future.⁵³ Urgent matters or
 slow make no difference [to them].
 [Reporting] this is humble [servant] Agvang requesting your peace ten
 thousand times.
 On the 21st of February⁵⁴ from Kūriye.⁵⁵
 In the past I have sent 28 thousand.⁵⁶
 When I arrive I hope that the building⁵⁷ perhaps has been finished.⁵⁸
 Please send my greetings to Andrei⁵⁹ and to Vladimirtsov-s.⁶⁰

49 Lit. ‘requesting your great peace’.

50 Mong. *yeke baruγ*. Shirendev 1972, p.168 in his Modern Mongolian rendition wrote: *ikhenkh*, i.e. ‘majority’.

51 According to Byambaa Ragchaa it means that they came for council, but went back without taking up decisions. I am thankful for Byambaa Ragchaa for his help in translation of this passage. Onon and Pritchatt understood it similarly.

52 Onon and Pritchatt read this passage as: “It seems that independence will not last much longer”. However, there seem to be no grounds for such translation in the original text.

53 Mong. *darui alus ucir*.

54 According to the Julien calendar it was the 5th of March 1912.

55 I.e. Urga, modern Ulan Bator.

56 In 1912 Agvan Dorjiev was practically the only person feeling responsible to organize funds for building the Buddhist temple in St. Petersburg. See Andreev 2012, p.53. Therefore most probably the 28 thousand mentioned in the letter refers also to the money sent for this purpose.

57 Most probably the reference was made to the building of the Buddhist temple in St. Petersburg. Onon and Pritchatt wondered whether this passage concerned building of a house (p.89).

58 On the Buddhist temple in St. Petersburg see Andreev 2012. The first prayer session was performed on the 21st of February 1913, on the 300th anniversary of the House of Romanov (Andreev 2012, p.69).

59 Since Kotwicz maintained close contacts with Andrei D. Rudnev, he was probably mentioned here. I am indebted to J. Tulisow for this information.

60 Written as Valadi[m]ircab. Since the family name is written in Plural (-*ud*) most probably “Vladimirtsov and his family” was meant by Dorjiev.

Transliteration of the Mongolian text

- [1] dede kündütü
 [2] vladislab lyudbiqobici tanu
 [3] yeke amuɣulang ayiladqamui
 [4] bi bebrali⁶¹ 21- du yabubai . qorin⁶²
 [5] tuqai nököd-tei . qonsul-aca
 [6] buu guyuysan ögdöbe ügei .
 [7] ene ɣajar-a
 [8] mongɣol-un törü toytoɣad
 [9] qamuɣ yabudal-i ta blam-a qayisang
 [10] -nar kijü bayinam . edeger-lüge
 [11] moskoviycin niyleged qonsul-yi [-i]
 [12] erke-degen oroɣulɣad [oroɣuluyad]_edeger-ün
 [13] yabudal yeke sayin bayimui.
- [p.2, 1] busu qad noyad bügüde
 [2] taɣalaqu ügei tüng
 [3] bacimdaju bayinam . yeke baruɣ
 [4] qad noyad bucabai . odoo-a
 [5] cu bucaqu kemeldemüi .
 [6] olan-u taɣalal-iyar kelelcin [kelelcen]
 [7] jokiyabasu yaɣutai kemen
 [8] sanaydaqu metü . busu kümün
 [9] -ü sobiyd⁶³ ögbesü ülü .
 [10] kereglemüi . tokinaju [tokiyaju] toytotal-a
 [11] berke metü sayin sobiytniq⁶⁴
 [12] keregelekü-i [-yi] ülü küsekü .
- [p.3, 1] darui alus ucir-ıyan
 [2] oluy-a edüi⁶⁵ . kereg-ün yaɣaral
 [3] -tai udayan-i ilɣal ügei
 [4] bayimui . eyin
 [5] tümen amuɣulang ayiladqayci
 [6] öcüken ayvang .
 [7] pibrali-yin 21-du küriyence
 [8] urid qojid 28 mingɣ-a jabuɣulabai .
 [9] minu iretel-e barily-a tegüsgeged
 [10] bayiqu bui j-a kemen nayidanam
 [11] Andere
 [12] Valadi[m]jircab-ud-tu amuɣulang kürgekü-yi ɣuyubai

61 In Russian *fevral'*, i.e. February.

62 Shirendev 1972, p.168 rendered into Modern Mongolian as *kharin*.

63 For Russian *sovet*, i.e. 'advice'.

64 For Russian *sovetnik*, i.e. 'adviser'.

65 I.e. *olooyui*.



Cracow Construction of the Buddhist temple in St. Petersburg, probably 1909 (see Andreev 2012, p.50). Photo 14626, K III-19, 160, Archive of Science of PAN and PAU.



Cracow Interior of the temple in St Petersburg with incomplete Buddha's statue. Probably 1913-14. In front of the altar Karl-August Tönnison/Tennison (1883-1962), a Buddhist from Latvia (on Tennison see Andreev 2012, p.62 and Mait Talts, *The First Buddhist Priest on the Baltic Coast*). Photo 14633, K III-19, 160, Archive of Science of PAN and PAU.



Cracow Buddhist temple in St. Petersburg. Karl-August Tönnison/Tennison sitting on the stairs. Probably 1914 (see Andreev 2012, p. 60). Photo 14634, K III-19, 160, Archive of Science of PAN and PAU,

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