

HEAVEN  
a melodic fantasy

Oh Heaven!

An insignificant creature, I stop turning through the breadth of the great steppe, I call only upwards, I try only to gain what I desire and, beneath the nighttime skies, I am affected by the power of the small secret. How to measure that what is limited is without limit, that that which is bounded is without bounds?

Beneath my feet, the globe of the world suddenly disappears, there is no above or beneath, no west or east. In the boundless darkness, the stars' dull glow weakly flashes, as though they were communicating with one another with their small white rays. Nothing can be felt in the darkness, everything is held in a strange and silent melody, my body weakens in the pulsating of the universe.

Beneath the sky of a hundred nights, I gently dream. Explanations in this mysterious life, like ideas, are not under my control and, while I am not affected by the domination of heaven, which is for nothing and for no-one, still I am aware of the open space. Penetrating the deep secret of heaven, moving outwards through the doors of the universe, and opening the endlessly lovely, undying, everlasting and peaceful world, the stars rushed in song through the rays of the open space, the entire world resounds as a single musical body.

Oh Heaven!

What is it that is stored up in this world, which we call eternal and deathless? An ancient town disappears into the dust of ages, the great khans who shook the world are transmuted into motes of dust, everything is sunk into the ocean of forgetting, all bodies are disintegrated, but the eternal sky has remained. Once, it was stretched out as though nothing existed, it was aware of neither end nor beginning.

I have come into this world looking only upon you. I have satiated myself, swallowing your clear blue, I have come to fill my eyes and to absorb myself into your body. But your greatness is not contained, even in wisdom, even in mind and heart, even in watching eyes....

But, although I come close to you through your boundaries, I do not reach you. In my simplicity and naïveté, I feel that I am swelling as I drink of the waters of the mirage which is an ocean.

Oh Heaven!

Nothing in this world fully contains you. But you hold yourself within yourself, these strange imaginings appear like a dream to me and, if I make real these imaginings, they are weaker than intelligence.

I do not feel this, neither literally nor figuratively.

Oh Heaven!

You may think that clouds are not floating spaces, but how can you not notice that they are substantially present?

If we refer to things which do not disappear as Truth, this is you. All things which disappears are not true, they remain only temporarily, and I imagine the truth as nothing other than this!

You, though, as opposed to the sun, stars, people, creatures, seas and oceans, are the one thing which we know to be upon the earth which does not disappear.

In your inconceivable presence, I feel small and, although I know that the milliards and milliards of bright years spread outwards, that the sky is without completion, yet, in the depths of my despair, I take from you interminable power. This sky alone created me. For millions and millions of years, it has kept me in its belly in various forms, I perceived myself once, in the brilliance of light, standing bodily upon the broad universe, preparing the moments of the future, come into the world.

Oh Heaven!

I stand and bow before your great power, which encompasses the minuscule stars which shine in the inconceivably broad sphere, the vast sun, the wise people.

Although we perish beneath the eternal skies, unsounding and with great power, still my trust in what I seek and in how I live is in the Truth, in Heaven alone! In the small life of a human being, with all its amusements, what might we say? Only the pen, however, demolishes you through tirades and cursing!

We all feel your great characteristics –unmoving, unbreaking, soundless and unnoticed - and we seek from ourselves the beginning of purification, the meaning of greatness and of standing eternal!

Oh Heaven!

We trust, first, that you understand all the behavior of this spinning world, that humans are come into being as creatures, and we trust that you are the only witness to our virtue and wickedness, eternally watching each and every person, your skyblue eyes unblinking.

When once the earth conversed with the sky, at first there was not one person who said it was a secret.

Only the sky, which itself was clearer than clear, was more secret than secret, a bright light which made the darkness visible. When I was in the depths of despair, it empowered me and protected me on summer nights upon the great steppes!

I listen for the breaking of the bow, in my experience of the grass and vegetation, stepping beneath the starry book that is the sky, I loose myself from the narcotic effects of the passion of a summer night, and so my heart is free. As though I have I gone out beneath the sky, I taste the sky through its hidden meaning, proud of being called a descendent of children, the most powerful of creatures.

Oh Heaven! The children whom you have created struggle, undying, across the extent of space. They struggle with the deep secrets, century after

century, they are burnt like Bruno, drawing a bright line across the eternal darkness of the world.

We travel within the great belly of Heaven, in the spherical cradle of the world, we remain in the unlit belly, we go out into the illuminated skies, we come together in boundless freedom....

Oh Heaven!

In the rhythm of my life, in the deep secret of experiencing life, in the measure of my every step, I kneel and pray beneath You, before the great sun.

The word *human* is as imposing to hear as *Heaven*. Truly, its divine beginnings exists among humans and so I kneel down to creatures, who are the children of Heaven.

Oh Heaven!

I am standing below the eternally skyblue, silent, boundless, unnoticed, undying, unbreaking, worthy and majestic, pure and precious, immanent, beautiful Heaven. To me, it is something to admire, to strive for, to rely upon and to trust. I do not even know how to name it. When we study it, we know it as the Heavens, but the truth shines clearly in my mind!

I watch the silent sky for a while.

I watch the horses and cattle amid the smoke.

I watch the clouds moving in columns, and the gers.

I watch the ordinary blue of the bare mountains.

I am amused by how the cute little rabbits stand up amid the vegetation, and

I realise where my ancestors received the power to defeat Death.

I gaze my life through, but I am not bored.

And oh, when we have the Heavens, with their white clouds, peaceful

impressive

borderless

utterly blue

what is there to fear?

Beneath Heaven, with its extraordinary power, does not the one who loves life spend but one existence as a human or animal?

And now, as though the ancestors are inclining their heads, we receive support from above, and

our descendents set up camp beneath the peaceful, fearless, eternal blue.

The distant Heavens are dwelling within our hearts.

And so I do not feel

that I am broken away from Heaven.

When we are sad and sheltering,

Heaven is so close, watching the people and the animals!

Above the mountains, above the green vegetation,

above the fire's flame, above the waves upon the ocean,

above the land, above everything, it strives onwards!  
And, striving onwards above every creature in this world,  
we say it is united with the endless, beginningless breadth!  
In times of difficulty and danger, only Heaven pacifies the mind,  
taking pity with its deathless

unvanishing  
truthful and  
eternal silence.

Oh, Heaven is watching us!  
As though gazing at my ancestors in the distance of years,  
it inclines its head above us, peaceful, noble and undying,  
as though clearing away my every error and wickedness!

When my ancestors went out, resolved to fight,  
they received their power from the distant blue sky.  
Now I feel the pounding of my heart.  
Beneath the sky, gently watching me since I was in my cradle,  
I have grown up to live a life of lies.  
My descendents will look up and read upon the skyblue pages of eternity.  
The distant mirror is untouched, they are watching as I judge my life!

1983-1985

## LIFE WAS HERE BEFORE US

The mountains, the rivers and the hills remain to us,  
and wise people proceed from the world.  
While the autumn days, and spring winds, and gazelles, and willows  
live their lives, I watch their memories, and feel love.  
And we remember upon the sunny earth, in whom we place our trust,  
how we counted them, the leaves falling, moving in the far distance.  
The people who hold the earth for posterity  
were coming back, like dust amongst the stars!  
On the earth of those who are returned, of all who have come here,  
I am living in laughter and in tears!  
Natsagdorj has kept for me the rays of the silver moon, and  
Ravjaa has given to me the sound of the river.  
I wade through the grasses  
in the land which my ancestors bequeathed to me.  
I live upon this earth, as though  
enjoying the land I have inherited.  
And I shall come back, to create the glorious earth,  
and leave it to my children.  
I rest upon the shores of the ocean bequeathed to me by Homer,  
and listen to the crashing of the beautiful waves.  
In a hollow of skyblue smoke, bequeathed to me by Zanabazar,  
I watch a man jogging on horseback along the road.  
In the shadow of the white clouds, the tigers bequeathed to me by Einstein,  
I love the Himalayas, praised by the old Indian sage Tagore.  
Glorious Sūkhbaatar comes into the world, the Mongolian nation rises anew.  
We take nothing for ourselves, we make fine gifts to our descendents on their  
return....  
Zanabazar has left behind his genius, cast in bronze for a hundred thousand  
years,  
revealing the noble form and beauty of those who shine like the Buddha!  
Sunny days, cloudy days, stoked grass and white gers,  
low wooden buildings, magnificent pyramids, the mausoleum of the Taj  
Mahal,  
hollows full of violets, peaks of eternal snows, the blue stars of night,  
the closeness of Nirvana, the poems of Rudak, Persian carpets –  
people pass from the sunny world, leaving all these behind.  
We keep our trust in the four great oceans and the five great continents,  
but our descendents, left behind upon the earth,  
will praise in wonder  
the art of centuries, made by the body, created by talent,  
the mastery of coming into being, the wisdom of return!  
We keep for ourselves the honor and the wisdom  
of love and longing, of forests and of meadows!  
And we keep for ourselves the moon, the sun and space, and  
everything created by humans throughout a million years!  
We'll carry on our backs the entire burden of the world,  
we'll take the world across the universe!  
Upon this earth, in which we place our trust,

we gather our ancestors' wisdom of a thousand years,  
and they are joined with us,  
and we govern the world through which we move!  
We are waiting for the mountains, the rivers and the hills,  
for wise people to come from the world!  
We are waiting for them all...!

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## FREEDOM

Later generations travel along the road of past eras.  
It was destroyed for our sakes a thousand years ago....  
Having first come into being, they later strove for freedom,  
they have pursued freedom since times gone by....  
Though exhausted, these people and animals have not given in,  
they move from the battle to the fight, they do not die for their own sakes!  
The bud remains, just as when autumn leaves fall,  
and silence dissolves into the freedom.  
And, when the ancestors were no more, then we came.  
And, after I have gone, then my descendents will come.  
My sunny world turns around in space.  
The changing customs create the circumstance,  
and even dust in a pitcher is part of what makes the earth.  
We may certainly walk upon this sleeping earth,  
and our elders have lived here, vigilant and aware.  
Though they have spilt their blood, they have not sold their freedom,  
and the sons of famous men may certainly live.  
Through death and birth, Mother Earth has waited for us,  
I love the genius of my generation!  
Divine Bruno, liberated Spartacus, fearless Sükh,  
determined Gagarin, Jeanne d'Arc from so far away –  
they are all my people!  
Bruno burnt like a lotus flame, discovering the freedom of the mind,  
gazing coolly upon us from the depths of the stars.  
Spartacus offered up his youth in battle, and  
even now dwells in my body and mind....  
And Gagarin, who flew to freedom in the realm of skies,  
and Ravjaa, the great and wise man of letters, these  
were the golden limbs, the distant parts of our lives!  
They were born for our sakes, we who had not come into being!  
They did not do nor break just one thing in this world.  
If they had caused harm their lives would have been lost.  
Children, grain and books are contained in my freedom,  
always they make us hard, like strong iron.  
Let the power of the ocean, the power of men, the power of birds, the power  
of animals  
enrich the freedom of all things upon the divine world!  
Better to be dead tomorrow than be today without freedom!  
Better to die standing up than to live on your knees!  
Until my life is finished, I shall remain true  
to the legacy bequeathed to me by my ancestors!  
When the knife is brandished against the grey hair of Mother Earth,  
I will stand, like Manlai Van, facing the mockers,  
and I shall die standing, like our ancestors.  
My freedom will remain!

## MOTHERLAND

I make obeisance to You, my divine motherland.  
I believe that the truth dwells in the stones lying here and there.  
My way of life bespeaks Your joy.  
I make obeisance to Your greatness every day!  
I go to You in the counting of my breaths,  
I look upon You when my eyes are closed.  
I do good for Your benefit.  
I am shameful before You for my wrong actions!  
Lying upon the snow on winter days,  
I see the fine snow, falling and glistening in colorful lines,  
and the many animals around me here are Yours!  
Now I am seeing everything through Your eyes.  
My motherland, with Your power permeating me, I am empowered.  
With Your kind love come into me, I am learning to love everything.  
Oh, my motherland, I know the blazing, harsh fire to be You.  
I live my life, relying on the gentle breath within!  
Oh, my motherland, I know the pure bright air is Yours.  
You penetrate me in the counting of my breaths!  
Oh, my motherland! You come to us, changing into all things.  
My way of life is Your deep joy.  
I try to find You in the rocks,  
You stand up out of the world's vegetation.  
To be of benefit to all, You dwell in everything,  
and You lead us from the path of wickedness.  
All the colors and melodies of the world bespeak You.  
As You protect my health,  
grant all powerless creatures the magic of Your love!  
Truly, the world has limits, but its qualities are eternal.  
It is forever undying, forever unbecoming,  
it stretches boundless in all directions,  
its center rests at every point.  
The motivations for all that takes birth  
do not balance completely, but  
I make obeisance to You, my motherland,  
You straighten out the body's wrong and right!  
My savior, my purifying father,  
Bless me with your golden hands, grant me with love all that I desire!  
May You be my eternal and virtuous companion.  
When I see the shape of wickedness in me, may I flee immediately.  
When I hear my flattering voice, may I destroy it,  
and may I shun the fearful beasts when I cannot make a sound.  
May all sickness avoid me,  
and similarly may I draw sickness out.  
You penetrate me in the counting of my breaths,  
and I watch You when my eyes are closed.  
May my wise thoughts please you more and more,  
and may the root quality be the quality of humanity!  
Everywhere spread my motherland's beauty, her eternal qualities,



help bring pleasure to the many in this world!  
If my body, thoughts, my heart and all my work be Yours,  
my motherland, then You are mine, and I live in your shining light!

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## A MAN

All the rivers of the world are flowing around me.  
All the mountains of the world are in my possession.  
In the morning, the blue whale in the ocean chill floats after me,  
the sky stretches itself completely, and a great wind arises....  
I carry away every peak, my footsteps hard upon the Himalayas.  
Centuries passed when I wandered without food to eat.  
Centuries passed when I fought with sword in hand.  
I became ancient Homer and conceived the Iliad.  
With great Leonardo I fashioned La Gioconda.  
I was burnt with Bruno, his force was leonine.  
I proclaimed myself through centuries and centuries of lives,  
I raised up pyramids in the world of beasts, for years I struggled,  
I smiled Gagarin's smile among the distant stars.  
I am A MAN!  
I built the Taj Mahal, it lives up to its great name,  
I blew wind through a flute upon a loaded cart,  
and took a man's name in every century.  
I was not an animal!  
The tundra is watching me. Africa is watching me.  
A Tungusic meteor fell, I was its witness. Paris hanged me with Villon.  
I have flown through the endless universe on the round ship of the world,  
I have travelled for many, many eons – I am A MAN!  
I am black-skinned, yellow-skinned, white, and,  
with a plough, I break the steppe of the entire world, of me.  
And while, in Mongolia, Italy, Russia, Italy, Niger,  
I am known by many, many names,  
I am A MAN!  
I am very young, kissing my love in the shade of a lime tree,  
I am very old, turning the pages of an ancient book, giving out my wisdom,  
I am a little boy, sliding along on a sledge....  
I am A MAN!  
I am a girl, running about with her hair bound in pigtails.  
I am a lover, going after a married man.  
I am a mother, giving birth to many, many children, an offering to the world.  
I am a woman, living until her hair turns grey.  
I am a doctor, a judge or a wise man, I have a hundred million names,  
but in this grey world, I am A MAN!  
I have been called Ovid, Spartacus, Galileo, Zanabazar, Pascal,  
but in this sunny world, I have been a man, and I have lived as a man!  
I am deathlessly, eternally A MAN!  
    I die in America!  
    I am born in Africa!  
I am like someone in a story, A MAN!  
    In England, I drive a car!  
    In Albania, I herd sheep!  
I am A MAN!  
Through my body courses Homer's blood.  
Like Poseidon, I rule the rivers and the oceans.

Like Apollo, I know the southern and the northern limits of the desert and the  
steppe.

I am nourished by the wisdom of Aeschylus,  
I dream the dreams of Einstein.

On the lonely steppe I plant grains, among animals I tame the lions,  
In the deserts of Arabia I dig a well, I occupy the whole world....

From the great to the ordinary,  
In whatever way, I am A MAN!

"It will not kill me, it will not have victory over me."

Millions and millions of times I am born in the sunny world.

The voices of a million infants, barely born, complete the world.

A thousand thousand ships sail on the seven seas.

A horseman, standing in the stirrups, races down the path of the stars,  
galloping his knowledge through four thousand years,

and I am making food in the fire's heart,  
stretching my hands out to the stars and planets.

Outside, in the ger, here and there, dwelling in every center of the earth, I am  
A MAN!

I eat a slice of bread, I drink a bowl of tea, I do my work,

I travel on a distant road, singing and carrying my backpack.

I am A MAN! I like to get wet in the snow, to stand out in the rain.

I am A MAN! I like to read a brand new book, to kiss a woman's lips.

I am A MAN! I praise myself, I criticize myself, I write songs about myself.

I am A MAN! I mock myself, I am amazed by my rottenness, I smile like the  
Mona Lisa,

I am fat and skinny and old and young and healthy and sick!

I am born in France and Vietnam, I am born in Hiroshima and Ulaanbaatar,

I am born everywhere, I am living everywhere.

I am A MAN!

In the morning, I wash my face with the water of the chill oceans, I rub my  
body with sunshine.

By day, I wade the Atlantic ocean, I cut the meadowgrass, I load the car.

In the evening, I fly by plane from Havana to Mexico.

For a million million years, I have had no spare time.

I am A MAN,

filled with this world!

The world is filled with me, I lie down and hold the universe!

I am A MAN!

Like a bird sitting on its eggs,

in my own world, I am THE MASTER!

Dense falls the rain as I cry upon the world,

and dew collects on the petals of colorful flowers....

I jump from the eternal snowpeaks of the Himalayas, I swim the seven gentle  
seas.

And when I come home, I sleep amid the scent of the dungfire's blue smoke.

As I hold the distant stars, and embrace the entire world,

I contain within myself the many unimagined, unsolved secrets,

I stand there, my child in one hand, a flower in the other.

I am A MAN!

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## ALLEGRO

*dedicated to my teachers B Yavuukhulan and M Tsedendorj*

People do not die in the sunny world.  
They come flying back, like birds in autumn.  
I go out onto the deep mistbound steppe, and  
the springtime pasque flower is blossoming again.

I gaze overhead at the sky, united with  
the breadth of those eternal blue Heavens.  
The endless and beginningless glimmer in the rivers' patterns  
flow gently in the heart of the yearning world.

Someone paces down the path through the world,  
another takes care of the branches stroked by their hands.  
But, waiting for the people to return,  
the stars above the earth spend the cool night in silence.

People are sitting around the fire, sharing stories,  
making music on the fiddle, telling lies from truth.  
Those who are forever gone return to them,  
and they know that, come evening, they will be living once again in song.

I watch how the people bring the headstrong white horses  
of the day and the night rushing into the wide world.  
In the morning, on the ancient meadows, the girls gather flowers,  
and I wonder at the desire, glistening in the dew upon their feet.

Bruno comes at dusk from antiquity to open the door.  
That which has burnt him no longer illuminates others.  
Silently, he stands at the threshold, his mantle sags around him.  
His eyes are thoughtful, like two stars falling and glimmering....

The people are coming back after a thousand thousand years,  
whispering to us words read from the pages of the eternal book.  
Shining within me are the wondrous rays of these people,  
living again in my thoughts through the book held in my hand.

We are the continuing memory of those who are no longer here!  
What an incomparable memorial to them are we during our lives!  
They leave the shining world and return through us,  
living as before, beneath the shining sun....

SPRING'S BRAID, OR THE LYRICAL PRECIPICE  
*a portrait*

*for D Bor and J Gombojav*

In the scent of a springtime wind, there is a seed waiting one day to bud, hidden on the branch of a springtime tree. Day after day, the warm breath of the sun comes closer and, when it appears, I imagine it as though born again upon the earth, it occupies the mind's thoughts and the body's pulsating, and I begin this day to keep note.

As a result of our discussion, the thought came to me that these ups and downs, all things which pain and concern and please my mind, are here collected and placed before you in a form which is not quite a poem!

I watch how the people round about me live, how they love, what they do, it's fascinating, it's like a movie, it's as if I am come upon the earth from somewhere, in order to get to know these people....

But, that notwithstanding, as I watch someone among the many who are unknown to me, there is something interesting in the faces which pass me by. And when I look at a face which I will never again see, at that moment in fact it is as though something is born, desirous of looking upon that form. Reading a beautiful poem, it is in fact as though something is born, desirous of reading it, I am happy as though I have received an immeasurably great reward. I go to the riverbank and dip my foot in, and I feel in my body the river, cool and clear, and I sit there smiling as though I am being tickled. The sunlight turns the deep waters yellow and, from time to time, there are glistening ripples of gold and I think my feet are dipped in golden waters and, this being so, it is in fact as though something is born, desirous....

In such millions and millions of moments does my life consist, each moment is an unrepeated pattern, I think, as though dedicated to insignificant me. There is no-one living around me now who was born two thousand years ago, a hundred years ago, or who will be born a million years, three hundred years from now. Through people I can understand life, I know from them gossip, and love, and fame, the separation of death, and happiness. And I come alongside each one of them upon the earth, as though predestined by the limitless universe, they quarrel with me, they bring me happiness, and I come to love these people as my source of pain and pleasure. Today, I appear on the road and, among these eight million people, let alone among almost five billion people, I will not try to find that girl who, smiling, passed me by. But a thousand thousand years from now, it will have been as though this slight form for which I am searching were approaching....And so our paths will cross amid the limitless universe, like a moment on Tver Boulevard....

I have waited for a million million years in order to see and welcome the Buddha-like form which is the arrangement of that which is beautiful in the human world. It came into this world, and I could hardly look upon this extraordinary person who was like a lightning flash....In fact it was as though the object of my entire life had been to look upon her....I was amazed, I feel in my body that this single moment was the equivalent of many thousands of years. But it was all a lie! For me, things of beauty do not come to an end. Yet another beautiful thing was being revealed. A few steps away, the Pushkin Memorial was waiting for me.

Above me the sky is shining, over there looms the Russia Cinema. The streaming fountain glistens in the sun and a girl is placing a flower at bronze Pushkin's feet. From high up, Pushkin looks down, gazing sadly at the girl. Will he come down from his plinth to kiss the gentle hand which picked the flower?

Strange it is how, as though tired of fame,  
he holds his palm against his heart.  
He wishes to bow to Mother Russia,  
and even this wish is fulfilled in his heart.

Does he know this verse of mine? Nowadays, Russia bows to Pushkin. On the plinth, where *he has stood, without moving, for a hundred years*, he is become a symbol of the majesty and wisdom of the Russian people. The Russian people would be inconceivable without Pushkin, it is inconceivable to imagine people and animals without Pushkin. We find ourselves transmitted through Pushkin, and Pushkin represents the ultimate in human talent, the beauty within humanity, he shows through himself the flame of the mind. In revering Pushkin, mankind reveres itself. This man Pushkin is able to represent his people, he is able to meld with his people's elegance, their particular qualities and their faults. If you would embody the Russian people in a single person, the image which is able to express their fire, their talent, their characteristics reveals itself as Pushkin. Pushkin was already able to show the people, transmitted through himself, and thus it is obvious that he was also able to show humanity!

The reason for this is that the Russian people are one part of humanity. If you would know the heart and mind of the people, you need to know Pushkin. And, if a person comes from another planet and would know humanity, it is necessary for them to know Pushkin. Humanity's pride is not limited to one race or to one country, and we, mankind, say that we will reveal ourselves, that we will bring Pushkin to birth, and I am standing at the feet of that Buddha-like poet. But the world around me is wonderful, and I need to feel and know and think about it. I am come into such a wonderful world of humanity, where we are all able to show every creature and entire peoples.

Homer, Lenin, Zanabazar, Lomonosov, Einstein, Ibn Sin, Sükhbaatar, Injinashi, Pascal....

The world is a place of great display and, while I take pleasure in watching it, I feel that it is necessary for me to leave in the museum my own destiny. The shoemaker does not send to the scholar one who needs shoes, the wise man shows a book to the scholar, the cook prepares food for that pair, the singer entertains the cook, the farmer offers his harvest to the cook, and, in experiencing the joys and miseries of the farmer, they are poets, each one restoring to the other what he or she lacks, and I wander among these people, they who are blessed and fulfilled. A man comes to the Pushkin Memorial. A man comes back from the Pushkin Memorial. I do not doubt what they say, that everyone's thoughts are the same. We are living, not in Homer's world of two thousand years ago, but in Gamzatov's world today, not among the stone steps of the Roman Empire, nor among the sculptures of Greek myths, rather we are listening to the noise of Tver Boulevard, we are watching the girls passing nearby, we are experiencing the loveliness of the world, and I am

happy that I am not in the past, nor in the future but in this present time. The world which is coming is my life, the years which are coming are my life, and more interesting to me are the lives of the people who are living with me at this time. They continue unbroken the pattern of humanity, they were living a thousand thousand years ago, wandering about haphazardly, doing what once they did not do, tasting what once they did not taste. I was, indeed, born some centuries ago, I was burnt at the stake, fell in love with a girl called Juliet, drank beer with Shakespeare, worshipped in the ancient temples and haggled at a bar in a marketplace.

Or else, being born a hundred years hence, there might have come fine days when I might have flown to another planet, brought soil from the moon, made a date with Valya in the shadows beneath a tree, and gone on holiday to an underwater resort. But no, I have been born in these times, my hands have reached into the soil of Dariganga, I mourned the death of Tsedendorj, I watched the life of Yavuukhulan, I spoke with Gamzatov, Vinokurov and Soloukhin, I made friends with Mend-Ooyo and Tsogt, in fact I underwent the twentieth century and, if I live slowly, I will die during the first half of the twenty-first.

I feel sorry for my father, riding a horse at the trot along the road to the brigade headquarters. I watch the drunkard, swaying through the door into his house in the local town, and I smile. I wander among the hills, holding the bridle, but, not finding the hobbled horse, I make up a song. There is a mysterious significance in this world to the love of mother and father and younger and older siblings. Nothing is more precious than the excitement of childhood. At first, the reason for my coming into this world was to herd the young calves, but then I loved to watch the Mongolian cosmonauts, I loved to speak with them, I loved everything!

Who knows where my love for Mongolia comes from! To some extent I am aware how it resides, like a bird's egg, deep within my heart, and I have feared lest it might affect the shadows of other things. The sunny white buildings in this region, the families in the local town, the children milking the cows on a summer evening, are all these things which originated on the wild steppe? The stories told by my mother and the old women on winter nights around the stove, the images of the poets with their hats and curved pipes occupying the grade school classrooms, are these things which originated in the poem "My lateborn lamb"? Who knows, to some extent I am aware how these thoughts of my motherland have been beating within my heart.

I sense the blue of the sky every day and, in my mind, the splinters of clear skyblue grow to a melody, the grasses' mind is secretly influenced. I lie down and crawl on the ground, whispering sadly to nature, and I realise it is sticking to my chest and I feel its fine qualities spreading like a joy throughout my sadness.

The eyes of Maria Tsvetaeva, Pasternak and Yavuu, even the eyes of Lenin, of Dostoevsky and Gagarin have looked upon the Pushkin memorial. I am happy to be looking with their contemplative gaze, looking at the memorial with loving eyes like their's, walking the earth in their steps.

I did have one thought, in fact. Long-dead people of former times who lived in caves, the Roman Emperor Julius Ceasar, the emperors of poetry, Vergil, Catullus, Homer the Greek, the Indian Nagarjuna, the T'ang dynasty poet Li Po and the Englishman Shakespeare, also my eighty-five year old mother and



the hundred billion people who have lived on the earth before me, as well as the billions of people now living, have all been, and are today, looking at the bright blue sky and the pure sun. But it is by coming onto the earth that they might look upon the sun which crosses through creation, until this day dissolves into the limitlessness of this world, that they might see the blue sky! Being alive, how wonderful it is every morning to look upon the sun, the sky, the mountains, and people and grasses. What could be happier than this? I wrote this poem:

When I am alive, I play and laugh.  
When I am not here, I leave everything behind.  
From the earth I take nothing, I go naked, as I came.  
Everything I have seen, my descendants, I leave for you.

Breath is one's own highest wealth, and is the start of well-being,  
and no reputation can compare with my simple body.  
My eye sees the living world, my hand takes it.  
My ears hear a song, my heart is moved by it.

Silver and gold are worthless, the rays of the moon feel glorious.  
I shelter among the plants and the rocks of the finite earth.  
I walk with my head held high, like a mountain peak.  
I am like the hills, within myself I hold a precious store.

I am happy upon the earth, living the richest life of all.  
My watching eyes preserve the earth, the sun and the oceans!  
Though nothing belongs to one man, I am absorbed into the sky possessed  
by everyman.

Distilled wine, again distilled like arz, I keep in poetry!

I come and I go. As it was before, so will the future be!  
I am smiling, and I am crying. As it was before, so will the future be!  
On the wild steppe grow flowers named for many, many girls.  
And, in the measureless, limitless sky, every young man is a shining star.

All who are come upon the earth watch the pure sun, Heaven's eye.  
And, when they leave the world, they take the sun's rays as a sign....  
To those alive, it is the one and only precious, priceless sun!  
And, in a shining moment, all absorb the sun into their beloved bodies!

My elder brothers, at every step, people get used to happiness and to the world. They should enjoy every moment but, should their pleasure in these wonderful things cease, what difference would there be if they were blind?  
A person craves happiness too much, his wishes are in fact never satisfied!  
How great it is to come into contact with someone observing the construction and the roof of the building which preserves what has been collected over the centuries, the people and beautiful girls and old women and the vehicles passing by. Or else, how pleasant it is to hear the words, *Excuse me*, or to stand behind someone and watch them curse! The earth, the sky, the sun and stars, books, love, homeland, birds and forests, my poems and human

wealth, smiles and friendly glances, drops of water, rain and snow, the moon are my rewards and the sun, come upon the earth, has granted me a reward, and the white snow of winter and the leaves of autumn and stones are all utterly wonderful. Time alone, though, will move them forward, it will transform them for itself into happiness, it will drink the cup of breath dry....

I would write poems about the ocean of the fiery sun, eternally blazing, about the peaceful blue stars pouring like rain into boundlessness, about those stars' weak light, about the world which wears itself away, turning and turning, about the secrets of space!

I imagine that I have lived upon the earth since ancient times, wandering the earth for a thousand thousand years, listening with blind Homer to the growling of the ocean's waves, then sheltering in a cave with the first people, pushing mammoths into pits and pummeling them with stones and wood. And then the ancient earth was covered with water and there were vast and monstrous fish. It is as though I have been crushed under the feet of ancient dinosaurs, become rocky scree, have been the serpent which pierced the lovely breasts of Cleopatra, have rushed in banditry along the dusty roads, have been burnt at the stake with Bruno and become smoke, have moved with the clouds, been on the early Mongolian people's campaigns, sung songs amidst the cheering, and dozed amid the melancholy squeaking of the carts....And it is as though I have been a donkey, shaking its tail, moving *clipclop* along the stony road, a lion snarling in an African forest, an eagle circling on a rocky Kavkaz precipice....I imagine that I have lived through a thousand thousand years, have been changed into the stars and flowers and young goats and into the wheels of carts, have studied the stars with Ibn Sin, have played on the fiddle, have been a phantom wandering at dead of night, have meditated with the Buddha and forgotten the world, have been stretched out with Christ, and have flourished a red flag in the Paris Commune. And I imagine that I have been drunk with Li Po, have struggled to grasp the moon fallen in a river, have taken an oath of freedom with Spartacus, have galloped upon speedy horses along the road to Rome from Capuya. I imagine in my mind that I have been Tsiolkovski in the depths of space, have felt hunger with him and have flown with Yuri Gagarin into the distant canopy of space. I imagine that, with my elder brother Bor, I have been sitting, listening with enjoyment for many hundreds of years to recent conversations with Sürenjav the poet.

I am living, then, eternally upon the earth, born again and again, changing into all things, it is as though all people are seen as changed versions of me and I am seen to be changed into the form of all people...there is no past, present, or future, then, no beginning or conclusion and it is as though I am turning back into the eternal flow....I have discovered in myself the distress of Spartacus, the sorrow of Chingünjav's mother, the enthusiasm of Oleg Koshevoi, a naïve and childlike will, and Einstein's stubbornness and, in my curious joy, I have revealed myself to others and others to myself. That Einstein is not dead is a small aspect of my own character, and the life of Koshevoi is a part of my desiring mind! The lives of all who lived before me are continued through the lives of my own contemporaries, we do not break mankind's line of inheritance, but we leave the earth to the people of the future.

What is happier than thinking in such a way? I am entrusting to my children the study of something as being a little bigger, a little further away. Sorrow is not generally something allotted to me! For me, it is all akin to the whispering of autumn grasses, the drizzle of falling rain, the mother awaiting her child, the woman waiting for her lover, the lord losing his position, the herdsman seeking his horse. The life of the hungry children in England, the people who are executed in Iran, the scholars of today and of former times are all sorrowful. A renewed joy is born on discovering the meaning of living, admiring, of barely seeing their sorrow, and the happiness and misery is too much experienced all through their bodies. The more the power of evil spirits pains their hearts, the more they grieve for a single fallen leaf, they are saddened for the origins of a life as though they have done nothing, and the more they think about it the happier they are. This happiness is not mine, but all people experience it and we consider it as being the one link between all the people of the world.

Tolstoi, Einsein and Socrates were all sinful people, who cleared away their sins, they struggled against their wickedness and purified themselves and, by this purification, every mark upon their mind was washed away and, in the end, they were become like the Buddha! At first, they collected from the world all the evil and the good things and, finally, abandoning what they had identified as being bad, they created a single beautiful jewel, which they gave to humanity. Now, I am whispering with barefoot Socrates, lively and spirited Pushkin, Ishikawa Takuboku of rainsoaked melancholy, and Byron, who blazes red like a fire, I am sitting with those who live around me, and I am watching the silent contemplation of Basho, Galileo, Ravjaa and Tagore.

In the heart's blazing fire, music and wisdom are united in a gentle melody, the jewel is created for, and given to, mankind. These people think never of themselves, their lives are dedicated to others. Regular and happy people have no awareness of the pleasure of these great people. And I wrote a poem!

As though dissolving into the book which I am reading,  
I sink deeper and deeper into my seat, reading with determination.  
Like Spartacus' army, organised in long columns,  
the letters in the open book before me grow dim before my eyes.

Every word and letter and point are armies, generals and shields.  
I am seized by the rumbling of the great battle of death.  
I am led, in front of our men, along the long and serried ranks,  
moving as though awakening forgotten memories...

In the pale light, my body is wracked by pain,  
I follow Spartacus into the final attack.  
My kite...like a trembling javelin striking his hip,  
a cold tip reaching to my liver...

One sad instant in front of our men touches me,  
I am joined, for a short while, with a moment of misty distance.  
Spartacus, his entire body chopped to pieces, fell to the earth,  
and did he eventually see a piece of heaven?

The final voice, shouting out of a thousand places,  
seemed to come and find me in the darkness....  
The open book grew wings and suddenly flew away,  
its profound echoes scattering through my body.

My fine elder brothers, when I started writing this poem, I decided that I would answer some questions about poetry, creativity and music. A work of art never explains itself to you and it is only by listening to its whisper that a person can make art. Talent is somewhat similar for the creator and the reader. The talent for reading is an artistic talent! In this way, the reader creates along with the creator. The capability to preserve through art what the creator intends for himself, and the talent of contemplation which comes from the art, are what creates the reader. Hemingway's theory of mountain ice-caps is relevant here. It does not clarify what is clear in music, images and art, rather it clarifies the beauty that is hidden. We experience the secret of reading, and this reveals the secrets of fine art, the vigor of the creative process. The amusement, understanding and sadness changes and creates itself by means of the reader, and this is the nature of art. In art you find proofs such as  $2+2=4$ . To establish an understanding by means of analysis is a portrayal of art. The difference is inherent to it. The imagination of people who read, observe and listen to poetry, fine art and music is the movement of the mind and it simply exemplifies the patterns of thought. Art is the symbol of the mind.

In their exposition of the principal laws of economic and political thought, Marx and Engels appreciated Balzac and did not underplay Balzac's creative influence in favor of contemporary economics. Einstein, the proponent of relativity theory, claimed that Dostoevsky was, in his opinion, superior to Gauss.

Superior to Gauss, the king of mathematics...but Balzac and Dostoevsky were not scholars. When they were alive, though, they possessed the great talent of explaining humanity and their own society, with sensitivity and through their own imagery. How might we answer those who think about the artists mentioned above as being frivolous people, or as suffering from mental illness? We know that the first poets were identified from among the early scholars through their cosmic intuition, and that they wandered, by means of their intuition, for many years throughout the cosmos. I wrote another poem.

## WRITING

Upon the stone bodies, joined through the ages,  
the ancients have left pale shadows of rocks....  
Grasses and the splayed antlers of stags have found a space,  
and have stopped here, embraced by the years, until today.

An archer, with bow and arrow, has secured himself in this space.  
He whispers a secret prayer, his arrow flies slowly through time....  
On the thin bark of a sheltered tree, once again,  
people have been forced to sign the marriage register.

Like an unhappy couple, they have soon split up.  
They read to mend the parts they do not grasp, the words which do not exist.  
They tightly hold their writing, their hopes, their sadness,  
and only when their bodies are changed into words, do they find eternity....

My elder brothers, Leonardo da Vinci sculpted the famous image *La Gioconda* many centuries ago. From that time until now, the pride, reverence, debate and annotations surrounding this image has been unceasing!

Although there have been a thousand explanations for *La Gioconda*, no-one's explanation has been able to satisfy everyone. Mona Lisa keeps her self to herself. Even a thousand years later, the secret of her smile will remain the same. The picture's secret stays insoluble. Everyone who looks at *La Gioconda* enjoys coming up with their own explanation. And every explanation is true to the one proposing it! This is the reason why the image is eternal. Thus Homer and Shakespeare will live forever, because they have come down through the ages with the people. For a thousand thousand years humanity has discussed the nature of death and has offered explanations. But no-one knows in fact what death is. Although we know it to be the case, we observe that people leave their life without hope of return, and while everyone realises that they are destined to die, still they feel sorry when those close to them die, they grieve, but they do not understand death. While the secrets of art and the secrets of death are similar, they work against comprehension. People make art so as to thwart death, to compete with time, to keep themselves present. By this token, art is not about death but about life. In art, we discover the beauty and the truth of life. To us, art is a sensate power. We feel that, as we proceed through life, it is not as though we are being needed by something, rather it is as though we are standing in the mists of autumn, as though we are swallowing the dawn's rays. This understanding is established by means of analysis. Hundreds of years ago, no-one could hold onto the idea of a revolving earth, but what was once bizarre is today a common idea. Decades ago, there was the hope of space flight, but today it is like travelling through the neighborhood. And decades ago, even scholars did not believe in the theory of relativity, but what was once bizarre is today, in our century, a source of pride. Analysing in this way, this understanding is not secret, it is a part of real life. But when we look at *La Gioconda*, we discuss her with reverence, but we think not at all about those things which are a regular part of our lives! All the understanding which is established by means of analysis becomes clear, and the more time passes, the more we use it, like our daily bread. We store up the secrets of artistic creation, and the more time passes, the more mysterious they become and we imagine them to be extraordinary. But we also think that a poet's work is of greater value than all the extraordinary, everyday things. Day-to-day life, and the sun, morning after morning, these things are extraordinary.

The art and understanding which are analysed are like a child's father and mother. Humanity cannot imagine their absence. That the man who created *La Gioconda* is no different from the man who created the flying machine is significant and, as human culture proceeds through the ages, human beauty and the secrets of the human mind are revealed without words.

When we look at *La Gioconda*, we become beautiful ourselves and, when we read Tiuchev, we feel that we are moving forwards. Although no-one created *La Gioconda*, generally a person creates for people, and this is the meaning. Seeing that her smile is secret, we can comprehend that she is not understood. But Mona Lisa is clear before our eyes, we look at her, we taste and hear and smell her, what more explanation is necessary?

The museum catalog explains how, in Florence, Leonardo da Vinci fell in love with a sixteen-year-old girl called Gioconda, or Mona Lisa. It tells how the girl had married, and how her husband had died at a young age. It tells how Leonardo da Vinci preserved his lover's portrait forever.... But when we look at this picture, it is not certain to us that the girl was called Gioconda or whether Leonardo da Vinci was a man of genius, in fact, when we look at this picture, we forget everything, we forget that we are on the earth, we grasp the magic of the picture but we gaze at the picture, we are breathing with the picture. The picture's extraordinary quality takes us from the earth, we grasp onto the enchantment of Mona Lisa. So, in the moment when we manage to free ourselves from the image, there really was a man named Leonardo da Vinci, who created an eternal and extraordinary portrait of a young girl named Gioconda. If we think of all these things together, the magic of the picture causes us to fall into a state of weightlessness and we forget ourselves, or else we think of enjoying the moment of happiness, which is akin to magic, and so we take pleasure in being alive, we are truly proud and forceful and we grasp onto our divine wish to move a few steps away from our ordinary life. Thus people take power from themselves and from the art which they have created, they create art of themselves and their art enhances their beauty. As D Uriankhai once said, "There is a fiery engine within us!"

The creation of Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*, Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* or even his Ninth Symphony could be said to be their own eternal and undying memorials. Just as Pushkin and Beethoven will never be born again, so no-one will ever again be able to compose *Eugene Onegin* or the Ninth Symphony. This is the truth. Someone else might have been creating other work alongside these pieces, but it is certain that they could not have created precisely the works of those other men. But did Pushkin and Beethoven make their own memorials? We have every reason to say that, previously, there was a man named Beethoven or Pushkin, not even a poet or a composer, and that that man created in poetry or in melody a memorial dedicated to people. People love people, people suffer from shyness, people do not forget people, people make people beautiful...! Pushkin created all these things in himself and the everyday man Pushkin became the godlike man Pushkin. Out of the effort to create beauty in himself he made people beautiful, he climbed the ladder and, having offered beauty to the people, he fashioned himself into the form of a beautiful and eternal man. So I think that Pushkin created *Eugene Onegin*, and humanity created Pushkin and humanity was embodied in this single man, Pushkin, and I think that through him poetry came to be revealed. Because poets are creative artists, they do not destroy anything! In the history of humanity, no poet has defected from his motherland. Or else Byron, Petefi, Musa Jalil and many thousands of poets have given their folded lives for the happiness of mankind. And so I wrote this poem.

...without fail,  
    poets are men,  
but assassins are  
    cowardly!  
Only in their fear  
are they cowards!  
So, then,  
they didn't shoot divine Pushkin or Dante,  
but they did cause them to be shot!  
It was so that they would not descend  
    from the heights of fame to where the wild beasts are.

The ones who give their lives  
    remain in their people!  
Foggy Russia did not at that time understand  
    Lermontov, who was light like the whitening of dawn.  
For fine hundred years, they have given their lives for the truth,  
and it has remained a riddle!  
We struggle, we do not think –  
this was no proverb, it was the law!  
They were convinced, they proclaimed Chaadaev mad,  
who had called the people to freedom!  
They removed Lobachevski from his post,  
who had described the universe's geometry, calling him mad and useless!  
But do you think they could separate this wisdom  
from the mind of the Russian people?

My fine elder brothers, although it might seem as though artistic works always initiate with human beings and although it might seem that it is the artist who makes them, I should again say that they are created in partnership. The truth is, that what is written or spoken by creative artists takes place in human life and relationships or else in nature. Then its form is found, but it needs at one point a creator to manifest it and make it clear to other people. This is not, though, an artistic secret, it is merely one of very many crystals.

Clear ideas are clear secrets. Secrets, however are clear and clarity, however, is secret, and this is the nature of art.

My fine elder brothers, Musa Jalil, Chernishevski, Dostoevsky, Fuchik, Nazim Hikmet and Lermontov are sitting in jail. They are sitting, leaning against the jail walls, contemplating the world, they it is who have created human beauty. Outside, there are people guarding the guns, they are in fact paying no attention to those who are shut up, away from the world. The guards did not know that they were suppressing and destroying human pride, the fount of their own wisdom and beauty. These guards imagine that they are driving a car, but it is the car which is steering. The car is a human thing which, on the road of change, destroys and smashes much that is valuable. Creativity is their most dangerous enemy, it unwinds the screws. And they are fearful of creativity.

So, their hands unshaking, they shoot the thinkers, the ones who speak human truths, they shoot Lorca, Miklós Radnóti, Lermontov and Fuchik. Their hearts were become stone, but they were not ill. Killing was for them like

washing their hands or slicing bread. At morning time, the god Jupiter stretched out upon a rock the hero Prometheus, who had stolen fire for humanity. And I wrote a poem.

From the time of Shakespeare,  
great people of genius  
have had their skins flayed,  
but there were idiots alive,  
indulging in the suffering of others!  
In this time philistines remained,  
and punishment was allotted to the poets!  
Dante was sentenced to death,  
and they shot Pushkin with a poisoned arrow!  
Vanishing into the sky, sad with stars,  
Lermontov was pursued from the northern capital!  
Soon Kavkaz was shaking to the sound of bullets and,  
at the beginning of the long road, by means of a duel, a full-stop was made!  
The red fire was like a hungry carnivore,  
it pounced and swallowed Bruno, and the fools  
were content to gaze patiently  
as he was changed in the fire!  
And now the living descendants of Dante  
are continuing their ancestors' heritage.  
As we praise and honor great Pushkin,  
we are aiming fire at his descendants....

My fine elder brothers, among our vast family, is it true that Beethoven was deaf? Although everyone speaks about him as being deaf, Beethoven listened to the speech of flowers and understood the whispering of distant stars. In the country of the deaf, the mind does not hear human qualities. Most people hear with their ears, but they do not take melody into their heart. But his ears did not listen alone, they felt the whispering of the world in his heart. For Beethoven life was revealed through music and, through listening to it in his body, he created melody from it. Now, when I listen to the purity of the *Moonlight Sonata*, or else to a magnificent symphony, I try to find Beethoven's two forms. Walking in contemplation along a moonlit riverbank, the waves on the lake glinting a little in the pale light, a lurching boat, touching the shadow of a beautiful young woman, Beethoven worked with all of this and the clear purity went into his deep desires. But amidst the stormy winds, the lightning, the fierce struggle and the sorrowful regret, the mountains stand and fight and Beethoven imagines the spark which glimmers in his eyes to be magnificent and wrathful.

Beethoven lived as though he had unified the two extremes of the world. He raised himself between two conflicting mindsets, one attractive like delicate flowers, the other rough and severe like rubble, and his destiny was to create music from homeland, love, nature, struggle, beauty and the search for truth. The music which he himself created took birth in, brought pleasure to, and embodied his intentions for, the world. For him, life was experienced as a powerful struggle, as sorrow. If I were to portray Beethoven as happy and laughing, it would not be Beethoven. And now my fine elder brothers, this



portrait, "Spring's Braid, or The Lyrical Precipice" is drawing to a close. Life is not the braiding of creative circumstance, it is a measure of time which has been perfectly organised by fate.

So only when people come together do they come together, and in separation alone is their day of separation. Such things are not in fact compounded by every situation which has ever been created, but by the primacy of the sun beyond. When you do not believe in genuine love, you imagine it to be a story and, when you do not believe in true friendship, you laugh about it. But, at that moment, please turn away from yourself and consider how you have fallen from the human level into that of the animals. I used to be fond of shouting in front of people, but now I have grown to silent contemplation. Tomorrow I shall start on the road to become a genuine person.

Moscow/Ulaanbaatar, 1982-1984

## LIFE

The trees grow like divine wishes,  
and the round moon turns the river silver.  
The swallows weave ahead along the white banks,  
and the horses of time whinny and snort.

A man is walking, tired from his journey,  
over the broad path of the vast earth.  
The sky glimmers, utterly limitless,  
and he sits to rest upon the colored stones.

My life pulses in the space between the stars,  
the fine and lovely snows pile up....  
Snow in summer, rain in winter -  
the children believe my funny stories.

The mountains are secret, like scholars' wisdom,  
the rivers alert, as though suddenly shocked.  
The roads are all branching like destiny,  
and all the stars drop like the rain.

The butterfly flits happily across the silent meadow.  
Every moment, a great gift is taken from the world.  
Life is short, and perfect loveliness.  
Dissatisfied with its taste, we want happiness, and to be without grief.

The ruddy shelduck's wings glimmer in the sun,  
as though suddenly invisible.  
United with the depths of Heaven,  
as though not here, I'm happy with this life!

Beautiful, the swans wings are glimmering in the sun,  
a single instance of magic, and life itself aglimmer!  
A tired traveller in the invisible breadth of the world,  
I am come, as though for rest, to the edge of the pure spring!

## JOINED WITH NATURE

1

My love, please stand and slowly observe the skyblue stars of evening,  
and strive for the ancient distance, and soothe your excited mind.  
Call upon your desiring thoughts, be ready to receive them.  
My love, please slowly observe the skyblue stars on a cold night.  
The first step is to join your loving body with the skies!

2

My love, please catch in your palms the magic drops of summer rain,  
and, tired in the coolness, sip what remains upon the flower's leaves.  
If there be a medicine to revive the human body, withered like grass, it is the  
rain.  
In the cold drops is held the secret for a hundred years of life.  
The next step is to join your body with the world of water!

3

My love, please gaze every morning at the sun, rising in the red overhead,  
and purify your mind in the rain of light beneath the vast skies.  
In the world of colorful images, you are my small spring of light,  
the daughter of the mother sun who dwells above, a sundrop fallen on the  
land.  
The third step is to join your colorful beautiful body with the shining light!

4

My love, please consider as you walk in the light of the gently packed snows,  
and find the secrets of the snowbirds, their intuition, in the turning falling  
flakes.  
Floating in the white mist of dreams, we return to the world of children.  
There is no return to those times passed!  
The fourth step is to join these signs of yours, your loveliness, with the  
snowflakes!

5

My love, please wander the hills and understand the years,  
and open to yourself the bridge of going and coming, from the line of days.  
There is a powerful chain established, and the mountains and you and I are  
all alike.  
Please come back from among the silent hills of the world!  
The fifth step is to join your pure thoughts with time!

6

My love, please sit upon the river bank and talk with the others,  
and use your voice to wear, wear away the lovely colored stones!  
Sadness and misery flow like a pattern, know that all are joined with time!  
Your beauty is not your own, it is of the natural world!  
If nothing is special upon the earth, the sixth step is to join with the flow!

7

My love, please listen to the whispering of the grass the whole evening,  
and you will join with the profound secrets of the broad earth, and your  
thoughts will be deepened and your mind expanded.  
You live in the width of the earth, not in the space you have taken for yourself,  
and the scent of the grass growing ceaselessly about your feet pervades the  
earth.

If no other road exists for us, the seventh step is to join with the grass!

8

My dear love, please stand amid the morning mists of autumn,  
and, my darling, please understand why I have not answered all the questions  
you have put to me.

In the morning, you know it is not pleasure, but a melancholy secret!  
It is in a grove within your gently sighing heart, whilst the snow is falling!  
When there is no hope, the eighth step is to join with the autumn mists!

9

My love, please grasp the cold stones and embrace the earth,  
and the stones of your homeland will whisper the source of their power.  
Please bow to the high fate which has made you human, a life once obtained.  
You feel that to live is an indestructible link between life and earth!  
The ninth step is to join with wonderful fire, water, air and earth!

10

My love, please listen to the melody of the wind, and tune your mind within,  
and comprehend freedom on the earth beneath the moon.  
Beautiful melodies and sad songs always disturb the human mind,  
and so the earth's anxiety and disorder are dissolved into the heart!  
The tenth step is straightaway to join with the wind from future times!

11

My love, please listen to the song of the cranes and love other people,  
for you needs must pass with the living along the roads of the dusty world.  
Please seek from the birds how to live with kindness over a long lifetime,  
for, though naughty when young, you are cautious, and the birds are your  
secret grooms.  
The eleventh step is to join among the cranes in great space!

12

My love, please receive the four times, the color and the melody of every  
season,  
and ask of the broad trees' yellowing leaves the thousand secrets of meeting  
and separation!  
Please learn from the ancient mountains how to be serious, how not to pay  
attention to crude things....  
The mountains, who have worn away the wind, will speak of gentleness and  
loyalty.  
The twelfth step is to join with the natural earth, and learn its language!

#### IN PLACE OF A CONCLUSION

You understand, my dear, to observe the skyblue stars of evening, to join with  
the sky.  
You understand, my dear, to taste the silver drops of rain, to awaken your  
body.  
You understand, my dear, to gaze every morning at the rising sun, to purify  
your thoughts.  
You understand, my dear, to join with beauty and intuition in the  
heavypacked snowfall.  
You understand, my dear, to sense your body through the years, stationed  
amongst the hills.  
You understand, my dear, and know that, on the bank of the gently flowing  
river, there is no return.  
You understand, my dear, to listen to the grasses whispering, to stretch your  
infant mind.  
You understand, my dear, to unlock the many secrets in the mists of morning.  
You understand, my dear, to take the power and grasp the cold rocks, and  
hold the earth.  
You understand, my dear, how the wind provokes free movement in the  
human world.  
You understand, my dear, that, the cranes' song produces a gentle mind  
which loves creatures.  
You understand, my dear, to talk with the mountains on the dusty earth, and  
learn the language of nature.

#### IN PLACE OF A BEGINNING

Please find in yourself, my love, the first step, to join with nature!  
Take always to yourself the spring, to purify your mind and your body.  
Find in the perfect world the language of mountains and water, and read the  
ocean's waves in translation!  
And find in nature's verity the power to eliminate sadness, the gift of eternal  
happiness!

## TIME

Dark dark dark dark skies....  
Endless endless endless endless time....  
Beginningless beginningless, endless space, space....  
Deserted deserted, nothing to match the time, the time....  
Billowing on the limitless shore of space, of time's great dark river,  
the law, the people and towns, the sun and moon are afloat on this great  
river.

But time prevails in this turning world, time is victorious.  
The stars are, and they are not, and time connects all, washes all away.  
Dark dark, the great river of time billows onwards....  
Inconceivable inconceivable space, and here and there the fire of faith  
flashes.

We are drowning in the river of vast time,  
but do we not, with time, replenish our bodies?  
Amid the silence of the not quite empty, not quite empty space,  
the world's sphere revolves, wearing itself away....  
A single eye watches a leaf, me, floating on the river of time,  
imagines it, unsevered from timelessness....

1979-1982

MY MOTHERLAND, EXPOSED  
*an essay*

In my child's imagination, I conceived of my motherland as the sky and the hills. Now the years have passed and I now believe all beautiful things to be my motherland. The veiled form of my motherland is in the beautiful woman passing by, and I have no doubt that the child beginning to move in her belly is linked with the starry world, that it senses the wind and the storms.

The microcosmic infant growing in the woman's belly is formed through the working of the stars and has the magic powers of humanity. Moments are measured in the mother's gait and, two days later, he stands firmly on his feet and I know that the young boy looking at the Pleiades, flashing in the breadth of boundless space, is my son and the son of humans and animals!

The woman walks on, carrying the infant in her belly. In her, we say, dwells the motherland.

The willow trees sway before me, their leaves are rustling. Even in these trees the motherland dwells, and all the leaves are watching me with the eyes of the motherland. The motherland, we say, is the divine power which dwells in all humans. The longing of humans and animals, the brightest of images, is the motherland. Thinking that into her is absorbed all that is good and beautiful, our desires have struggled to create a compassionate truth, and through this struggle has made humans into Buddhas.

Golden Hill is truly alive. People have been worshipping this mountain for many centuries and the thoughts of many thousands of people are focussed on this one point, this mountain. The faith and wishes of all people are absorbed by it, and from this one ordinary mountain is brought the love of one's motherland. It was useless for my ancestors to fail to pay the mountain homage! They had to dissolve their love into one thing alone! And the object of this eternal love, which has come down to us, is Golden Hill in Dariganga.

So, every time I look at this mountain which is the quintessence of faith and secret desires down the ages, I am aware that, three hundred years ago, my ancestors' ancestors were standing, worshipping this mountain, just as I am doing. My ancestors cross over this mountain to meet with me. And, when three hundred years have passed, my descendants will come, like I am doing, and worship Golden Hill, and I feel that, by living in the world, I am crossing over the mountain. Golden Hill is worshipped because it is a mountain made through the magic of thought. It is true and everlasting because we love and worship it. In whatever we begin to worship, there love resides. When there is love residing, there too will be fine thoughts and good actions. My mother told me the following story:

"Once upon a time, before a monk went to study in Lhasa, his mother, who had raised him, asked him to make her an image of White Tara.

"When the boy had completed his studies in the distant land, he suddenly realised as he stood outside his ger that he had forgotten his mother's request. But it was too late to go back. Because he had failed to fulfill his mother's wishes, it would be hard for him to look her directly in the face, so he looked around at the land which had so influenced his mind, until he spied a spherical white stone.

"A thought glistened inside the boy, he quickly snatched the stone and held it inside his pocket, wrapped in a lovely offering scarf. And so, as his time with

his mother was drawing to a close, she mentioned her request to him and he offered her the bound stone. He said to her, 'Mother, I want you never to unwrap this.'

Right up until the end of her life, his mother believed this stone to be the Buddha. One day, the nature of the universe came to touch her. She said, 'My son, forty years I have worshipped the Buddha from the depths of my heart. I have always followed the path of virtue, I have entrusted all my desires to the Buddha.'

"Now the time is come for me to leave my life on the earth. If I could see the Buddha,' she said, 'my mind would be content.'

"What could the boy do? He stood there, silent, for a long time and finally he resolved to tell her the truth...!

"Well, let's look at the stone, then,' he said. 'One who has trusted in the Buddha for forty years, worshipping him in her thoughts by day and in her dreams by night should not depart in darkness.'

"With deep regret, the boy unwound the offering scarf. But there was no stone, rather there stood White Tara, shining in pure gold, beautiful and perfect. The explanation is as follows:

Utterly trusting in something, one is able to focus everything into the power of thought. This being so, there is not a single thing which is not created."

Living alone beneath the moving clouds, I call upon my motherland. This motherland of mine is my Idol, receiving my devotion. By the power of this idol, I cleanse and purify my body, mind and spirit.

The path which reaches the peak of my motherland's beauty is Mother Nature. The path to this Nature is the cleansing of the superior levels of the inner mind. And right action and right thought repairs the road which reaches the superior truth of the mind.

The circumstance which gave birth to great Sükhbaatar, Zanabazar and Natsagdorj has continued for a thousand thousand years. It is not of them, but of my motherland, which bears them across, which is the platform from where they might serve others.



## GRASS

Oh, grasses, my parents and my brothers and my children at a single time....  
Oh, grasses, my dear body and my pure desire and my loving companions....  
Sighing gently, I stroke the grasses.  
My grasses, I take in your scent as an infant's soft curly hair.  
My grasses, I stroke you as old men stroke their white beards.  
My grasses, I kiss you as I kiss my passionate lover's hair, black as spades.  
Oh, grasses, my coursing blood, my pigtails....  
Oh, my ancestors in times rubbed and wasted away,  
oh, they blow in the wind, dissolve into grasses.  
Oh, my ancestors become the grasses, swaying in  
the cold rain of autumn.  
Oh, my grasses, do the humans and animals, absorbed into  
the earth, grow from age to age?  
Oh, man is born and poetry is born upon the sunbleached green.  
Oh, I grasp at the ashes. The young shoots sprout in my burning hand, and  
oh, the wind caresses them, I feel the grasses blowing in the wind.  
Oh, the green, green sap, I happily fall asleep in the sharp scent of the wild  
grasses,  
I have withered away and bloomed again for many centuries!  
My umbilicus linked to solid rock and flowers,  
I enliven the world with my warm blood.  
Verdant young shoots stick out from between the rocks, and  
oh, my children are dancing in the wind....  
Rocks worn away become flowers, or flowers grown hard become rocks,  
and I grow, tucked between the rocks and the flowers, my warm blood waters  
the flowers and the rocks.  
The whole world, the animals and people, dwell upon the flowers' petals.  
Oh, grasses, grasses –  
my life, my horses, my lovers, my distant future and my ancient past.  
Oh, grasses, my sadness and my flourishing, my place to live,  
oh, I, the Grasspoet, sing of you!  
Oh, these lines of song from so many thousand verdant poets,  
oh, Shagdarsüren, an interwoven carpet of grasses on the wild steppe,  
oh, Whitman the elder, leaves of grass,  
oh, my old mother, singing lullabies to me in my cradle,  
oh, Saruulbuyan and Mend-Ooyo, Yavuukhulan and Injinashi, grasses and  
vegetation reaching to your soles, grasses....  
Oh, my bitter harvest, absorbed into the earth, growing from the earth's  
depths!  
From an inconceivable distance of years, I create the song of the ancestors....  
My hundred million grandchildren, the voices of morning and evening....  
Oh, grasses, blowing in the wind, washed by the rain, growing in the sun.  
Oh, grasses, my poem, my black-eyed beloved,  
oh, they kiss, they are birthed, they die. The blood returns, the stars glisten,  
desire is born.  
Oh, they are all become grasses....  
Oh, my green song of eternity, grasses, my golden idol, grasses!

An eternal, ancient magic....  
The life of the wide world....  
The grasses, the grasses....

## A SECOND SONG OF GRASS

Grasses grow and completely cover the world.  
They struggle upwards like a green flame,  
with all their relatives they meet with the sunlight.  
Grasses grow, as though itching my whole body.  
By day, human beings make noise like animals,  
by night they dream like children,  
they grow amid the sleep which grants eternity.  
At dawn the grasses awaken to play like boys and girls.  
The young shoots grow, shrieking over the broad and peaceful earth.  
The invincible signs of this world dissolve into the grasses,  
They grow straight up and, though crushed by cartwheels, they rise again.  
All peoples enjoy the protection of the abundant grasses,  
heading off on foot, and standing there, pulling at the grasses.  
The grasses, with humans and animals, manage every calamity,  
dying together, awakening together, through many eons,  
falling, exactly like a man, struck down by the scythe of cruel war,  
rising, exactly like a man, from the smoke of fires,  
never abandoning the world!  
Destroyed in death with my ancestors,  
the lineage of grasses is dedicated now to the turning world....  
Like a jewel they wear away, wear down thousands of years.  
A single grain from the peaceful steppe,  
planted on the land, grows straightaway,  
proves this life to be invincible!  
This gives grasses their fame, the loyal friends of animals and humans.  
In the world's society, the relatives of the sun proclaim their being.  
The grasses of the world, like anyone else, love freedom.  
Like the rain teeming against the beneficent sun, they nowhere penetrate the  
darkness.

Though every highway on this earth is laid free from potholes,  
still the extraordinary grasses push up, they tear the rocks apart,  
and stand, like heroes.  
Like needles, their young bodies directly penetrate the road and,  
from pitch darkness, they stand to grasp the sun's light.  
With all my strength I sing the grasses!  
They even push up through the peaks of far off mountains,  
they even wear away the bottom of the sea.  
In peaceful times, men and grasses make friends,  
and they strive to support each other beneath the distant stars,  
and they are great allies!  
Oh! The realm of grasses, the realm of humans, the realm of stars!  
Oh! the realm of animals, the realm of birds, the realm of fish!  
Oh! the realm of rivers, the realm of rocks, the realm of fire – listen!  
Enrichening the life-sustaining succulent green bodies, the invincible grasses,  
let us praise their name!

### A THIRD SONG OF GRASS

I am the grasses, my life serene,  
lithe in the western wind,  
each one blowing, gently swaying,  
pushing even through the undiminished snows.  
I am not affected by the horses' hooves upon the wild steppe,  
I am not trampled by someone's hard soles,  
and, fortunate, though I rest between many grasses,  
I am the carpet beneath a pair of lovers.  
I am not licked by the red tongues of autumn fires,  
nor does my body smell of smoke and ash.  
The oak is felled in the warm eastern winds,  
but my weak body remains fixed to the earth.  
In autumn, I wither, turning yellow from the tip,  
but in spring I bud green from my roots.  
I grow up, tickling the little girls' feet,  
feeling the misty blue spring.  
The autumn moves across my tips,  
but in my roots the spring is hiding.  
Things change and transform from body to body,  
and in my own body I bring them together.  
I am the grasses....  
No need for great fame,  
I sleep and dream beneath the snows,  
I have no connection with time!  
My serene life is a green carpet for people!  
And I am the mantle for many who are no more here!  
I have no connection with anything.  
The sunlight is my God.  
All the grasses are my relatives.  
I am a cover for the world.  
I alone am the dark green memorial  
for you who are not here.  
I sway beneath your feet,  
I rock noisily above your head.  
My serene life holds the sadness of time,  
and living souls dissolve  
into the gently rippling grasses.  
You humans are grasses!  
You, and we, are linked as one!  
When you live, you are my younger brothers, my older sisters.  
When you are no longer, you are my younger brothers, my older sisters.  
When this world has been, you, we have been inseparable,  
forever mingled in our bodies.  
The grasses penetrate even the stone tombs,  
faithful right up to your memorial!  
The target may be right, or the target may be wrong, but the grasses forgive,  
and the grasses come back and are reborn.  
The grasses are your loyal companions,

they remain above your corpse,  
weeping like widows in the blowing winds.  
They are whitened by the starlight night.  
The grasses, a monument not made by human hand!  
The grasses, the breath of days spent travelling!  
The grasses –  
they give themselves great honor!  
You are retained forever in the world.  
There is a special magic in the grasses!  
There is no death in the grasses,  
the eye of death compares with death  
the withering of the grasses' tips,  
and the roots are still alive.  
Proclaiming life even where they stand,  
a monument to many people's lives, the final prize.  
Though not a word is spoken, the swaying grasses nod in silence.  
I understand, with not a word, their unknown secret.  
The grasses grow, silent under the distant stars.  
Their lack of empty chatter is a great sign.  
A person's fame will disappear, but  
oh, the grasses still remain.  
Living creatures go away, but  
oh, the grasses still grow.

1983

## LEAVES

Deep in my heart, a little book of destiny – I am pulsing to the noise of leaves,  
and the inscriptions of time past are lost amid imperceptible arteries.  
The green pages are rustling in the book of handbreadth leaves.  
The first man's steps are approaching, a pulse throbbing with dull sound.

There are many green eyes gazing at me.  
I wonder at the hidden language of ancient leaves.  
Hearing in the leaves the breath of ancestors,  
the small and green and gentle-bodied stars call out to the leaves.

Oh, a hundred years ago, the ancestors of the leaves  
were lovely, journeying in this noisy green world.  
When, golden, they fell, their prayer was to join the soil and,  
in the storms, these leaves flew by themselves, unseparated.

Oh, leaves, leaves, gentle as lips,  
elegant green eyes, lovely as a first love whispering.  
Oh, leaves, leaves, the fine melody of Mother Nature,  
the gentle whisper of music, continues to be heard while we remain alive!

The forms of the melancholy and forgiving secret,  
these green leaves are true and false, like a dream!  
Life and sickness, like an impression upon my heart, and  
these green leaves like a roof, like the shadow of a roof!

A wise prophet bows to the book of leaves.  
If his guess is right, its image preserves the secrets of the stars.  
Its fine veins, unrealised, are the paths of destiny,  
the bodies of leaves our galactic astrologers through the ages!

Shamaness leaves, shaman leaves, scholar leaves!  
Keeping the changing seasons in your green bodies as though collecting  
Songs.

Rustling gently, you are beautiful like a young girl's untouched body.  
And, once guessed, we penetrate the secret of the subtle leaves.

The stars have fought their way above the trees, have fallen and become  
leaves.

We grasp the leaves from the heavenly branches, are as though born  
from a mother's womb.

So many young melodic leaves, of wild cherry, willow, and birch!  
I scry you in the mirror of your distant ancestors.

The figure of a horseman rides over the green, green leaves.  
The young girl, naïve, imagines him the King of Hearts.  
Oh, what is there absorbed into the paths through the book of leaves?  
As they watch our lives, the leaves do not cry for our bodies!

1983

## STONES

I stop at the head of the low mountain pass, where the round, blue stones crunch, and I gaze into the autumn's azure distance, like a gift from my ancestors. The few white ger are almost flying, flying away in the blue vision of horses, and the chill breeze sings the tears of the sky....

My Naranbulag, my sunspring...a few horses drinking there, they seem small to me, like bustards through the mirage ....

I get down from my horse and imagine somehow that I am stroking the blue, blue stones. When I was young, I chased over these stones with leather straps, I feel distressed. The stones are in pain, they are hurting. And, though I beat them every day with wet leather straps, the stones said nothing. But I am tired. So I take a rest, sitting on the stones.

"The rascal sits upon the stones, just like a bird," said my grandmother, "and he screams with all his might."

Thinking back now, these stones toughened me up, they gave me the strength to travel far away. My grandmother is now gone. Only the stones remain. Perhaps my grandmother is a melody, collecting dried dung in the blue mirage of autumn, abandoning me in the azure distance, dissolving into the mirage of the earth.

I rode off and came to the source of the spring. Among these stones was the place where my father had pitched the ger. Here is where I experienced the world and its people. I fell upon the colorful world, the first days moved away from me and, one day in a time yet to come, I will be missing from the earth and I will join once more with the first days. My day of reckoning will come upon the earth, I will bask in the red winter sun and, from these instances of rainbows will come crystals of fine snow, shining in my eyes in the sunlight. The days stacked up and, later, the blue and yellow and red and green stones of the stars would crunch in my hands. When I was young, gazing at the heavenly bridge, the seam joining fact with fiction, I thought the stars to be like colored stones....

I played with the most beautiful, the most lovely stones, I wandered about looking for my own Khongorzul!

For me, to come across that dear little child was like finding riches among the stars, and I went off gathering stones.

I wander among the shining mists of recollection, my thoughts were like unsullied white stones stored away in the very depths of thought, I sat there watching them as though on a film. If I were now to meet with little Khongorzul, playing like starboys and stargirls, we would not recognise one another. Even if we did recognise one another, it would be as though visitors from distant planets. We would be starpoets.

I would go collecting star stones. I would remember the stargirl. We would be smiling, but this sad thought of returning would awaken me:

With a poet's bragging mind, I  
Grasp the stars in the night sky.

I think about how I wrote this when I was about ten years old. In this golden age, when I moved among the stars, I laid out the contents of my life. Now I have dissolved into poetry the pure, clear mind of infancy, and I ask that



nothing dirty the stones of the stars. And so, I give you this poem about the stones:

The stones of this world stand out, like strongwilled, powerful young men.  
They oppose the turning seasons, the storms, they pay no attention to heat or  
cold.

The many lamps of shining blue stone at every point beneath the blue sky,  
I would never argue but that they are the soul of the eternal golden world!  
In this universe, does anything but time overcome  
these many blue stones, worn away and dissolved into the years?  
I think that time does not observe the flow of the great river.  
Do not the stones have victory over time, as it fades into the splashing  
waves?

Forever wearing myself away, I search for perfect victory,  
and these worldstones, like the human mind, do not burn in the red fires.  
If the rivers and the oceans wear the stones down and absorb them,  
then my thoughts are right! These great waters are dissolved stones!  
Like sugar granules dissolved into tea, we are always drinking the water of  
dissolved stones.  
And now, because we have drunk the stone waters, we trust that we cannot  
be broken.

And in time, we have found how we might raise up a memorial of marble.  
But with the stones we fight against time, in awe of the armed ancients.  
We know that, naked and tough like these true stones, we are unbreakable,  
and that those desiring eternity move through generations, honoring the  
stones.

But, to win victory, the stones stand, like men who have given up everything.  
The particles of stone, unburnt by fire, are my ancestors who moved upon  
the earth....

All people from the past are become stone and, returning to us, they have  
victory over time,  
and even now these stones are alive, like us they have pleasure and sorrow.  
We voice the centuries of each stone, equal to eras of lightning and centuries  
of atoms.

Creatures who travel far, over the edge of time, grasped weapons of stone.  
People at first built shelters, prepared their food, protected their bodies, and  
oh, now that we are become strong, we offer song to the stones!  
A thousand years away, a group of stone men crossed the river of time and,  
thinking silently in the mists, sighed into the whistling wind.  
Stone men, blue in the moonlight – a sign of undying humanity.  
And now, the unflickering candle of the stones does not burn out in the wind  
Pushing through the sky.

I stroke the foreheads of the stone men on the cool steppe, they are cold.  
I approach the group of stone men, the greybeards of the universe!  
Even in our daily life we befriend the stones,  
and, on the broad steppe, we erect cities of stone to span the years!  
We die from this ordinary earth, and  
the stones of our homeland become our memorial.  
They watch over eternal peace and, in silence, they become friends,  
and someone will mark with stone their final point upon the turning earth.

In our lives, we take from the stones our strong will and our power and,  
forever travelling, in the stones we will remain alive!

## A SONG FOR THE STONES

My family, you deep blue stones,  
I have not left you since I came to you.  
As I walk upon the skin of the world,  
beneath my feet the strong flowers hold me up.

Like pigeons fluttering together,  
these stones are innocent in the world.  
As the years go by,  
you grow closer to me.

I know that my ancestors are here,  
costumed as the stones of this world.

Oh, my stones,  
do I not hear your breathing?

Do I not read just a little of the letter,  
come to me from the deep distance of the years?

My ancestors have left this world,  
and their life is dissolved into the stones.

Are they forever looking upon us with eyes of stone?  
Everywhere in the moon's dull glow, they notice me,  
and I imagine the stones are recording my every step.

Even the sky seems to me to have the stones' blue color,  
even the soaring cranes for me are birds of stone.  
Oh, my living stones,  
as I sit upon the stones in the peace of evening,  
my life grows longer, my vigor increases.  
Maybe even the distant stars are stones.

Poets in this world like to make comparisons with stones.  
Every man likes to be unbreakable and strong.  
Oh, I offered to my relatives a song for the stones,  
and my love and trust grew strong like the stones!

Moscow/Ulaanbaatar  
1979, 1982, 1984

## HILLS

My home of the hills kept secrets of my easy childhood,  
I turned and shook off the dust of my journey.  
A chill breeze wept deep within my simple heart,  
and I lay upon the flowers and took my rest.  
In these many rounded homes of the sands,  
ancient people were heard in celebration.  
Their singing voices shot rays of red from the hills,  
and, as though from my early dreams of childhood,  
a woman in a red deel sits looking northeastwards  
into the mists of evening, singing as she plaits her queue,  
the rain heavily splashing, my heart drenched.

The patterns in the sand, the waves of my mind,  
the whispering of my grandmother, the drizzling rain,  
hints for remembering the ancient times....  
And now, with the wind and the rain, I am far away.

The butterfly has found shelter in life's flowers,  
and I have secreted my grandmother among the hills of girls.  
We search for grandmother, for stories, for the heavens and for the clear sky,  
but without success...the world is twenty years ago!

And birds are twittering on the hillocks,  
they fly off towards the Himalayan peaks.  
My thoughts have bloomed in the blue rays of story,  
and my poems flow at evening.

The autumn wind faintly, faintly canters,  
dances here  
    and there  
        and here  
            and there.

This rainy day is like when I reminisced with my grandmother,  
a sunny life is like knowing fact from fiction,  
and my careful life and my naïve thoughts are far apart!

The hills swam in the silken white mists,  
the hills came to life among the yellow sands,  
the hills, like a string of beads, my grandmother's thoughts,  
or the hills, round like a woman's breasts –

Tuning the memories of my easy childhood,  
there's a chill breeze in my simple heart.  
My grandmother appears from the autumn rain,  
as though whispering stories to me, sitting on the hills....

The hills are alive, rumbling like camels.  
Their cloud-calves, moving the distance, send down rain.

Like two calves, playing in the moonlight,  
the hills all seem drenched in the autumn rains.

As though the two white hills are rumbling....  
As though on earth are the white rain of autumn and the moonlit night....  
I stand among the hills, soaked in the rain and,  
in the grey mists, the hills are with me.

My home of the hills kept secrets of my easy childhood,  
ancient people were heard in celebration....

## THE PREY

My brothers and sisters, the rivers and streams, are melded with my life.  
My younger and older brothers, the grasses, weave through my body.  
The prey – antelopes, wildcats, foxes, rabbits – are all my younger brothers.  
The carnivores – lions, wolves, snow-leopards, bears – are all my older  
brothers and my sisters.

I call all the animals of the earth together - *Please come*, I say.  
The father of us all is the distant blue heaven, my gentle mother the earth!  
It's pointless to say *These are animals, these are birds* – the elements are just  
the same!

We have always been equally the children of Mother Nature!  
Oh, like my beloved, I caress this delicate young birch.  
My gentle girl used to play with me at the edges of its branches, and  
I return across nature to the pure white birch.  
I remember the noise of leaves, my love's whisper, when I was living, and  
oh, this poor young deer is my own brother, three months old.  
Eating grass from my hand, drinking water from the stream, resting in the  
shade of a tree.

Five thousand years ago I was a young goat, bleating into the spring winds.  
Until men came and the earth was changed, nature took every form born to a  
Mother!

The distant white mountains are my mother's relatives!  
They changed into gentle bodies and caressed me, they  
protected me from dangerous storms and wind and rain, spreading their  
fragrant flowers.

My son the mountain, the ornament of father sky and mother earth!  
I am watching my brother in his sheepskin deel,  
I understand a little our people's songs of horseback shooting!  
I am glancing at my brother in his deerskin deel,  
And they shoot from horseback, who were raised by Mother Nature just the  
same!

It has a sheepskin deel and they shoot it, thinking it alive.  
Hey! Isn't that Mother Nature's lovely mind and body over there?  
The many creatures have a heart like us, and they weep....  
Think about this - my young brother wears a coat made from his older brother.  
The fish swimming in the water are your kindly children,  
and the oceans come from the many fish weeping, and there they swim!  
And all the birds flying in the heavens are your kin....  
They are losing patience, heading out from people, they will find freedom in  
the skies!

Oh, do not take power from Mother Earth, your brothers are the animals,  
please adapt to them, please live among them with a loving mind!  
On the measureless earth, on the one road of compassion, saving people and  
other beings,  
our loving brothers, the animals, the birds and trees, have always shown us  
kindness.

My son grew up on the grassy steppe,  
contemplated things beneath the high heavens.  
He shared the melancholy of the autumn grasses,  
and listened to the whisper of the silent stars!  
My son grew up on the wild steppe,  
smelt the pasque flower's late blooms, became a man!  
He sipped the waters of the streams and played amid the river's rocks.  
He grew used to the silence of beauty!  
He was modest when compared to the hills.  
He was intelligent when talking with the mountains, great and small.  
From the first, he was acquainted with every road,  
he drank from the dark-eyed springs!  
He loved the galloping herds of wild beasts, throwing up dust,  
and, sorrowful among the cranes, felt pity for his own mother!  
The world and the steppe, his country became his home,  
and the starry night brought my son peace!  
My son grew up on the grassy steppe,  
his inheritance were the wild steppe and the autumn harvest!  
The starry heights and the gently packed snows  
and the stories of winter nights were my son's friends!  
He thought the stones of his ancestors' land were like a heart,  
and, better still, he befriended the beasts, hunted beneath the blue skies!  
He read the wild steppe like a scholar's book,  
gave life to young creatures when needed, to willows and to springs!  
My only son grew up with love upon the steppe,  
the rocks and the autumn mountains educated him!  
My son grasped loveliness and elegance from columns of swans,  
my son searched for greatness in the depths of the eternal sky!  
Nature, my mother, the one and only university –  
bright, modest, powerful and elegant –  
please make of my little son Gangaa, my very own work,  
a man, balanced within himself!

Moscow 1983

## FOR YOU

I was leading you,  
one snowy midnight.  
The world was flickering like stories,  
and we were walking among the stars,  
with snow falling on our faces.

We were heading into the future,  
our children falling from the distant stars,  
like snowflakes, like stories. And,  
in the morning, we were joined eternally.  
You, a little girl, had become  
mother to my children.

I waited for you on the path through the world.  
On many moonlit, moonless nights, there were sounds far off.  
My love for you was unconstrained,  
not as my lover, casually, but as my wife.  
Peaceful you were, and gentle,  
and I loved you naturally.

You gave me children  
on the springtime grass.  
Within your hot tears, I  
became a man.

I feel you in my body, I know you in my mind.  
When I see you, I know you, and when I touch you, I know you.  
Twenty years ago, we two greeted the snowfall winter,  
and our paths remained two.  
I followed the way which showed me Heaven.  
My love, you were a girl of this world.  
Among the snowfall stars,  
you and I are moving onwards, over the river of time,  
over the bridge which shows Heaven....  
Out of the depth between the silent stars, snow is falling on our faces.  
You and I are moving onwards....

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## MOTHER TONGUE

*A culture should not forget the language in which it is raised.  
A people should not leave their homeland until death.*

*D Natsagdorj*

*If today my mother tongue should perish,  
Tomorrow, I should die.*

*Rasul Gamzatov*

My mother tongue is like independent heroes.  
My mother tongue is the seat of the mortal soul.  
My mother tongue has inspired my ancestors to victory.  
My mother tongue has remained in fame for centuries and centuries....  
In my mother tongue, my ancestors dwell among my descendants.  
Its great merit has not been worn away by the rain or the wind.  
Listen to the silence of our mother tongue, hear our ancestors breath!  
Trust in the magic of the living words, hurrying out of the distant past!  
The mother tongue has the ability to heal body and mind.  
The mother tongue has the power to light a spark of talent in the past.  
My mother tongue washes omens in the gentle rays of speech.  
My mother tongue sends me into the future on the golden ship of thoughts.  
We know that the sky is blue beyond the white clouds.  
We know that springs's flowers are growing beneath the winter's snow.  
We hear in my mother tongue the rustling of the leaves of a hundred autumns,  
and the call of six thousand cranes are gathered there together.  
We know that in my mother tongue my distant relatives are sleeping.  
In future times, on this golden earth, men will be born from my mother tongue.  
The Mongolian language mixes with the sound of silver bridles on the earth,  
such fresh clarity, like the blue of the eternal sky.  
Oh, the beautiful Mongolian language! The melody of my parent's speech,  
I hear it gently, gently in the distant haze of stars.  
The vicious enemy who kills our people attacks our mother tongue.  
Two hundred fifty years the sun stood guard and, even when the Mongolian  
language was threatened,  
the powerful fortress of my invincible mother tongue blocked the path,  
shredding the attack with its knife of sublime import!  
My mother tongue, like the sun and moon shining on the snowbound peaks.  
Though a million million years may pass, my mother tongue, and we move on,  
still you remain.  
But we journey deep into our mother tongue, as into a mine!  
Beneath the shining sun, please search for us in the depths of our mother  
tongue!



## THE PEOPLE'S SONG

The song of my people is precious and held by none.  
It attracts the autumn birds, circling in the sky, with its beautiful sound.  
Resting for a while, I swallow the rhythm like a cool drink,  
as if resting from the summer's heat in the shade of a limetree.  
To all who hear my people's song, it is like casting rocks from the mind.  
Their life grows longer, and underfoot the earth grows broader....  
Traversing the ages upon the melody of my ancestors' yearning,  
I speak gently with them, tears flowing in compassionate eyes.  
Rowing down the rivers of the people's timeless song,  
I move across time, taking the elders' yearning,  
and I, the brown hawk with power in its wings, speak of my people.  
I know the knife is not the firesmoke, I know the song to be victorious, and so I  
pray.

The bird of song flies through life, creates all things,  
it sinks from a distance into us, and into our descendants,  
and the voice of the people, my wise elders, sings out, *hooray! hooray!*  
We imagine the juncture of meaning and sense, that it has passed!  
The song of my people is lovely, like a horseman galloping across the steppe,  
it pacifies the mind while we have breath, it brings us closer to Heaven.  
Oh, like the hills of many secrets is the song of my people....  
Slowly I walk down the tracks of the world in which I live.  
The song of my people is precious and held by none.  
The old are weeping, for the secret cure is pertinent to all things!  
In a single moment it brings life which has passed below Heaven,  
such power sinks into the people's song and we deny it until death!

1983

## A POEM WRITTEN IN THE MOONLIGHT

The moonlight strikes the surface of an autumn lake.  
While this sight awakens in me a slight melancholy,  
I watch the earth, glistening in the light of the full moon,  
and consider the meaning of our birth, our path through life!  
Even amid empty space, the magic of light is lovely.  
Taken in by the lovely oscillation of bewitching colors,  
in my naïve youth, I wondered that the moonlight was not the moon.  
In my joyful laughter, my eyes shone in the bright light of the earth.  
Standing in the center of my ancestors' thoughts, their ideas perfect,  
I think about the world and the behavior of people, I honor subtle thought.  
The earth changes thousands of times as it turns, and they are absent,  
but are dwelling now amongst us, in our minds!  
I do not praise eyes of happiness, rather the light which comes into the mind,  
and I drive away wicked thoughts with the elders' teaching....  
The flowers of my pure, fresh mind develop on paper,  
move into the skyblue distance, to be gathered by my descendants.  
My ancestors gave to me neither an unsung song, nor sadness.  
Praise the wise and not the famous, entrust to them humane activity!  
They understand that, among the people born today are people from before.  
The leaves that wither on the full earth are the beginning of new leaves!  
I think how every morning is the beginning of life.  
I imagine that every evening is the end of life....  
The beginning and the end continue what exists with neither start nor finish,  
it is the eternal circle of the turning world.  
I trust in the strength of the human mind, rather than in marble.  
I think of its wondrous creations, and the scholars who have absorbed them.  
I compare this body with the melancholy lake of autumn,  
I liken to the moon all that is brought into its warm light!  
The colored moon is too far away to reach, but its light touches us here.  
The scholars of antiquity are no longer with us, but send their wisdom!  
In the deep darkness, is the mind attracted to the waters of the lake?  
In the light of the moon, protecting us from a strange land, do we not perceive  
the fullness of its beauty?