

THIS IS AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE GEO MAGAZINE ARTICLE, ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN GERMAN. THE AUTHOR, CHRISTIAN JUNGBLUT, PROVIDED ADDITIONAL MATERIAL TO U.C.R. PERSONNEL. WHAT FOLLOWS IS JUNGBLUT'S *ORIGINAL DRAFT* FOR THE GEO ARTICLE, WHICH THE EDITOR LATER SHORTENED IN THE MAGAZINE PUBLICATION. JUNGBLUT'S WRITINGS – REDACTED BY GEO'S EDITOR – ARE INCLUDED HERE AND ARE NOTABLE BY "SMALL CAPS", WITH BLUE BORDERS IN THE SIDE MARGIN, AND "RED" TEXT. FINALLY, THE AUTHOR'S TEXT ACCOMPANYING HIS PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE GEO ARTICLE ARE INCLUDED AT THE END OF THIS DOCUMENT. WITH PERMISSION FROM THE AUTHOR, THE FULL-VERSION GEO ARTICLE IS PRINTED HERE:

“WHEN HUNTING IS HARDLY MORE THAN SLAYING”

GEO MAGAZINE

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Already on the very first day David (true name: Ralph Essington) is hunting down a gazelle and is not completely satisfied. The whole morning long, it looked as if he could not find a trophy. But in the afternoon our hunting guide discovers a pack far away. For half an hour Essington ducks and hides with his crew of locals – guide, driver and translator – behind a rock, that sticks out of the flat ground like a cliff and shines oily black in the evening sun. The three Mongolians are close together and are discussing their plan. Essington sits a little away, the gun in his hand. His face is expressionless.

In a valley gazelles are grazing. “Maam”, the hunting guide looks out over the rock, points silently at one of the animals and holds up his spread hand three times and his thumb one time. 16 inches of length, 40 centimeters, he signals his size-estimate of the antlers.

With the first shot Essington tears off a piece of the ear of the male animal. It shakes briefly, starts running and finally is petrified in trauma and panic. With the second shot Essington succeeds in killing the animal.

The men run down the hill. The gazelle lies on the sharp rocks as if it was resting. With his hands the hunting guide measures the antlers: 16 inches. The translator dances around. Full of charm he calls out repeatedly: “What a beautiful trophy.”

Ralph Essington ignores him. He thinks about the next prey. He wants an Argali Sheep.

THAT'S HOW THE MONGOLIANS CALL THE WILD GOBI SHEEP “OVIS AMON DARWINI” WHICH IS AS BIG AS A CALF. LIKE THE BLACK TAIL GAZELLE, IT IS LISTED IN THE INTERNATIONAL RED BOOK FOR ENDANGERED SPECIES. THE GOBI ARGALI SHEEP, AND ESPECIALLY HIS SIBLINGS IN THE HIGH ALTAI, THE “OVIS AMON AMON”, ARE IN DANGER OF BECOMING EXTINCT. BUT THE MONGOLIAN GOVERNMENT STILL GIVES PERMISSION TO HUNT THEM.

The shooting of one of these wild sheep the size of a calf shall be the highlight of his trip. At least 46 inches, the largely curled horns should measure. That's what he told the hunting guide with emphasis. With this trophy, the 60 year old radiologist wants to impress his friends back home in the U.S. State of Washington.

On the way back to the camp Maam talks about Snow Leopards, and the people who come for the hunting tours all the way to Mongolia's Gobi. Snow Leopards – just like

the Argali – are on the para-national nature protection organization IUCN’s list of mammals that are in danger to become extinct... Then Dr. Essington murmurs something about the big fines that you have to pay in the U.S.A. for possession of such an illegal hide (skin). He looks out the car window in the evening sun that lies over the Mongolian desert, like a huge tomato and whispers respectfully: “A Snow Leopard is like the Mona Lisa”.

THE NEXT DAY DAVID (RALPH ESSINGTON) KILLS A CAPRICORN. EARLIER IN THE MORNING, THE GROUP OF HUNTERS HAS SEEN SOME WILD SHEEP, BUT BECAUSE OF THE LOCATION THEY CANNOT BE APPROACHED, OR THE HORNS ARE SMALLER THAN 46 INCHES. DAVID SAYS, IN A BAD MOOD: “ALMOST NO OLD ANIMALS – THEY HAVE BEEN HUNTED TOO MUCH, APPARENTLY.” HE AND THE MONGOLIANS ARE SEARCHING THROUGH THEIR BINOCULARS, TOWARD THE DUNE ISLAND WHICH IS CALLED MUCHUSCHUU – “BLUE MOUTH”. IT IS COVERED WITH COLORED LITTLE ROCKS AND SHINES IN THE MORNING SUN AS IF COATED WITH RUST. MUCHUSCHUU IS A MAGICAL, TEMPTING, AND BEAUTIFUL PLACE. THE DUNES ARE SACRED LAND TO THE MONGOLIANS. ON ONE OF THE HILLS, THE HUNTING GUIDE DISCOVERS SIX CAPRICORNS. THE HORNS OF THE BIGGEST ONE CURL INTO TWO HUGE BOWS ACROSS HIS BACK. HE LOOKS PROUD, LIKE A MASTER AND COMPLETELY INVINCIBLE. “HE’S A NICE ONE”, DAVID SIGHS WHILE HE LIES ON HIS BELLY STARING THROUGH THE LENS. SUDDENLY THE ANIMALS START RUNNING AND ARE SWALLOWED BY THE DUNES. DAVID WIPES HIS HAND OVER HIS EYES AS IF HE WAS THE VICTIM OF AN ILLUSION. “ICH KNOW WHERE WE CAN FIND THEM”, THE HUNTING GUIDE CALLS OUT AND DIRECTS THE DRIVER, TALKING CONSTANTLY WHILE THEY TRAVEL THROUGH SAND THAT LOOKS LIKE PETRIFIED WAVES.

EVERY HOLE, EVERY SMALL ROCK IS FAMILIAR TO MAAM AND HE DIRECTS THE DRIVER IN A WILD ZIGZAG OVER THE THOUSANDS OF SIMILAR HILLS. MAAM IS A NOMAD WITH CATTLE. A FEW HUNDRED KILOMETERS AWAY HE HAS HIS HOUSE (“YURTE”), 100 SHEEP, AND GOATS ARE GRAZING THERE, TEN HORSES, TEN COWS AND FIFTY CAMELS. IN THIS PART OF THE GOBI, HE ONLY CAME FOR THE “LONG-NOSED PEOPLE” FROM EUROPE AND AMERICA TO FIND GAZELLES, CAPRICORNS AND WILD SHEEP FOR THEM, WHICH HE HIMSELF IS NOT ALLOWED TO HUNT. MAAM ONLY NEEDS TO CROSS AN AREA ONCE AND EVERY DETAIL OF THE LANDSCAPE IS IMPRINTED IN HIS MEMORY. HE ASKS THE DRIVER TO STOP AND RUNS AWAY ALONE – BENT OVER AND WITH O-SHAPED LEGS FROM HORSE RIDING. MAAM IS A SMALL BROWN SHADOW. HIS SKIN IS BROWN LEATHER, HIS “DELL”, THE MONGOLIAN COAT WHICH IS BUTTONED SIDWAYS, IS ALSO BROWN. HE CIRCLES THE ANIMAL, SMELLING IT BEFORE IT SMELLS HIM. HE IS THE HUNTER WHO BRINGS TOURISTS AS CLOSE AS 200 METERS TO THE ANIMAL SO THEY CAN SHOOT IT.

BUT DAVID HESITATES. THE MEN SIT ON SOME ROCKS IN THE DUNES. DOWN BELOW SIX CAPRICORNS ARE WAITING. “WHICH ONE?” DAVID WANTS TO KNOW. THE SECOND ONE FROM THE LEFT MAAM SHOWS HIM WITH HIS HAND. THE ANIMAL LIFTS ITS HEAD. ITS HUGE HORNS SHINE IN THE TWILIGHT AS IF THEY WERE COVERED WITH GOLDEN DUST. MAAM BENDS HIS HEAD. DAVID FARTS LOUDLY. HE ALREADY DID THAT WHEN HE SHOT THE GAZELLE.

THE SHOT SHAKES THROUGH THE CLEAR MORNING AIR. “HIT” EXCLAIMS THE TRANSLATOR APPROACHES DAVID AND PRESSES HIS HAND. FOR THIS TROPHY HE WILL MAKE A GOOD TIP. DAVID EXHALES DEEPLY HIS FACE BECOMES ALL WOBBLY. BUT HIS EYES ARE SPARKLING. THE ANIMAL LIES ON THE SIDE. THE HUGE HORNS LOOK NOW LIKE DEAD, PETRIFIED WOOD. NEXT TO IT ON THE SAND IS A LIGHT RED SPOT. “ALL THAT BLOOD IS NOT GOOD FOR THE PICTURE”, SHOUTS DAVID WHO HOLDS A

VIDEO CAMERA IN HIS HAND. THE ANIMAL IS BEING ERECTED. DAVID KNEELS BEHIND IT WITH A BIG SMILE AND THE TRANSLATOR TAKES PICTURES. "WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KEEP?" MAAM ASKS THE AMERICAN. "ONLY THE HEAD...NO MEAT?" MAAM MAKES SURE. HE CAN'T UNDERSTAND THAT THESE LONG-NOSE HUNTERS SHOOT ANIMALS NOT FOR THEIR MEAT BUT ONLY FOR THE TROPHY. WITHOUT ANSWERING DAVID TURNS AROUND AND SAYS: "AND NOW THE ARGALI."

MAAM DIPS HIS FINGERTIPS IN THE BLOOD OF THE ANIMAL AND DRIPS SOME ON THE END OF THE GUN OF DAVID'S REMINGTON. "WHY?" DAVID ASKS IMPATIENTLY AND DISAPPROVINGLY. "SO THE SPIRITS OF THE ANIMALS WILL CALM DOWN AND WE WILL BE WELCOMED FOR THE ARGALI," MAAM ANSWERS SOLEMNLY AND BENDS OVER LIKE A MONK. DAVID SHAKES HIS HEAD, BUT DOES NOT WIPE OFF THE BLOOD DROP. DURING A SHORT BREAK DAVID EATS COOKIES, A SMALL SAUSAGE, THEN AGAIN MORE COOKIES. MAAM STARTS TELLING A MYTH:

"WHEN THE ARGALI CAME TO GOBI THERE WERE ONLY FOUR ANIMALS – ONE MALE AND THREE FEMALES. A FARMER FOUND THEM AND THOUGHT: THOSE SHEEP HAVE MORE MEAT THAN MINE. HE TOOK HIS GUN AND SHOT THE MALE ARGALI. TOGETHER WITH HIS WIFE HE ATE THE MEAT. ONE YEAR LATER THE MAN DIED SUDDENLY. HE WAS NOT SICK. HE LAY DOWN AND DIED. ANOTHER YEAR LATER HIS WIFE DIED. FROM THEN ON EVERYBODY KNEW THAT THE ARGALI ARE HOLY ANIMALS AND SHOULD NOT BE HUNTED. THE MYTH IS 50 YEARS OLD.

"THAT'S A NICE STORY" SHOUTS DAVID. COOKIE CRUMBS FALL OUT OF HIS MOUTH. ON THE WAY TO THE CAMP, MAAM LEANS FORWARD TO DAVID WHO IS SITTING NEXT TO THE DRIVER. MAAM PLAYS WITH HIS BEARD AND SAYS: "I HAVE HEARD YOU ARE AN IMPORTANT DOCTOR IN AMERICA?"

"YES, I AM A RADIOLOGIST. OUR TRANSLATOR AS WELL IS A DOCTOR".

THE MENTIONED ONE BOWS WHILE HE TRANSLATES.

"I HAVE A RADIOLOGICAL INSTITUTE WITH 60 EMPLOYEES", SAID DAVID, WHOSE TONGUE HAS LOOSENED AFTER THE SUCCESSFUL HUNT, TELLS MAAM. "I JUST BOUGHT NEW EQUIPMENT FOR SIX MILLION DOLLARS."

THE TRANSLATOR SMILES WHILE TRANSLATING INTO A VACUUM. "HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN HUNTING FOR?" MAAM ASKS. DAVID RAISES THE EAR PROTECTION ABOVE HIS HEAD.

"40, 50 YEARS. MY FIRST BIRD, I SHOT WHEN I WAS SIX, MY FIRST MALE DEER WHEN I WAS 15."

"I ALSO HAVE BEEN HUNTING FOR 45 YEARS", MAAM SAYS. HE PUTS HIS HAND ON DAVID'S SEAT, MOVING CLOSER. "AND HOW OLD ARE YOU?"

"60".

"I AM 54", MAAM SAYS.

DAVID BRUSHES HIS SIDEBURNS.

"WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO HUNT NEXT?"

DAVID SAID, "AT THE BEGINNING OF JANUARY IN NEPAL, IN APRIL IN CAMEROON, IN OCTOBER IN CHINA. IN BETWEEN, I'LL GET SOME PUMAS IN TEXAS." DAVID TURNS AROUND HALFWAY TO MAAM, WHO COMPLAINS, "MONGOLIANS ARE ONLY ALLOWED TO HUNT WOLVES AND FOXES IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY, AND THERE ARE HIGH FINES FOR SHOOTING GAZELLES, CAPRICORNS AND ARGALI SHEEP HERE." "HOW HIGH?" DAVID ASKS. "VERY HIGH", MAAM ANSWERS WITHOUT BEING INTERESTED.

“And in how many countries have you gone hunting yet?” Maam asks.

“In 70. I was in Africa for 20 times. I was in Kamchatka, Poland, Brazil and Kazakhstan. There is hardly any interesting country in the world, where I have not hunted.”

HE POINTS TO THE TRUNK WHERE THE DEAD ANIMAL RESTS. “THIS IS MY TENTH CAPRICORN - ONE IN TURKEY, ONE IN AUSTRIA, FOUR IN SPAIN, ONE IN SUDAN, ONE IN ARGENTINA AND NOW THE SECOND ONE IN MONGOLIA.”

“What was your biggest animal...?”

“An elephant in Kenya.”

“BUT I HAVE SHOT SEVERAL ELEPHANTS ALREADY.”

Maam leans back. *“And how many trophies do you own?”*

“306 trophies, exactly.”

The doctor from far-away America is a headhunter. He is one of those few thousand people who travel the continents looking constantly for bigger and rarer trophies. It costs 40,000 Marks (U.S. \$22,500) and often more, to shoot one of these animals in high demand. Only in rare cases are there species that Washington D.C. and the United Nations *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species* (C.I.T.E.S.) forbid from entering into any kind of export trade – including trophy imports. On their restless hunts these men even put up with the strain and burden of long hikes, and inconveniences of camping in the wilderness.

DAVID ALWAYS DRAGS HIS WIFE ALONG. IN THE GOBI SHE JUST STAYS IN THE HOUSE (A “YURTE” – THE MONGOLIAN TENT-HOUSE). WHEN SHE TAKES A LOOK AT THE DEAD ANIMAL OUT OF THE CORNER OF HER EYES AND THEN TURNS AWAY, HER HUSBAND OVERLOOKS THAT GESTURE. DAVID’S BLOODY TRAIL FOLLOWS HIM AROUND THE GLOBE. HIS GUIDES AND THE PEOPLE IN THOSE FAR-AWAY PLACES ARE REPLACEABLE SHADOWS TO HIM AND THE COUNTRIES JUST AN ARENA FOR HIS OBSESSION.

Men like David are the trivial rearguard of colonial conquerors. Hunting crews deliver them to exotic wilderness spots around the globe, from Kenya to Siberia, from Pakistan to Romania, shooting animals for dollars. For their prey, these customers cut off big game animal’s heads, and carry them home to display on the living room wall.

DAVID IS A HUNTER, LIKE SO MANY OTHERS WHO ARRIVE DURING THE HUNTING SEASON FROM AUGUST THROUGH OCTOBER. THEY COME IN BIG NUMBERS TO THE MONGOLIAN CAPITOL, ULAANBAATAR.

One of the most popular dispensaries is Mongolia: a country beautiful like a natural park and almost as untouched. Populated by maybe 50,000 Argali wild sheep, 90,000 Capricorns and 350,000 gazelles. And by 2.3 million people, most of whom consider a monthly wage of 60 Marks (U.S. \$35) as quite good. And like always, when rich people come to a poor country, an instant market is established, offering anything exotic, that strangers could possibly be interested in.

The bazaars, where hunts in Mongolia’s Gobi are marketed, are the lobby of the “Ulaanbaatar Hotel” and the *Hunter’s Bar* of the “Bayangol Hotel”. In these two biggest hotels in the capitol city Ulaanbaatar, hunting guides and translators, drivers and travel

agencies, legal companies and an abundance of black-market businessmen offer their services to the highest bidders, from June through November.

BEFORE THE HUNTING TRIP, A DISTRICT ATTORNEY FROM THE GERMAN PROVINCE OF SAUERLAND CONFESSED TO ME, UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF SEVERAL BEERS, HOW MANY COUNTRIES HE HAS HUNTED AND THEN LECTURED TO ME, HIS STORY ABOUT BEING A "CARETAKER" AS IF IT WAS HIS TASK TO WATCH OVER ALL THE WILD ANIMAL STOCK OF MONGOLIA. A LITTLE INDUSTRIALIST FROM AUGSBURG INVITED ME IN THE HUNTER'S BAR TO ADMIRE HIS CAPRICORN TROPHY. HE ORDERED STAFF TO OPEN THE STORAGE ROOM NEXT TO THE LOBBY, JUST FOR ME, WHERE ON ALL THE SHELVES WERE STACKED HORNS AND ANTLERS: HERE, IN THIS NON-DESCRIPT CORNER OF A HOTEL INFESTED WITH HUMAN BAR-FLIES, WERE MORE THAN 100 BIG GAME ANIMALS, SPENDING THEIR AFTERLIFE AS DUST TRAPS.

IN THE BAR OF THIS TRASHED, FORMERLY SOCIALIST, LUXURY HOTEL RESORT IN ULAANBAATAR, I MET A GYNECOLOGIST FROM MUNICH WITH A BEARD OF THREE DAYS AND A DAZED LOOK. "PHHT, AND THAT ANIMAL WAS GONE", HE TELLS ME HOW HE GOT A 50 INCH BIG ARGALI SHEEP TROPHY. MEANWHILE HIS TRANSLATOR WAS BARTERING WITH FIVE YOUNG LADIES ABOUT THE PRICE OF THEIR LOVE SERVICES.

When I arrived in Ulaanbaatar, my hunting adventure began with a disguise, so my profession as a journalist would not be detected. Pretending to be a Travel Agent for rich German and Scandinavian customers, I traveled to Mongolia. In my undercover investigations, mostly among operating managers for hunting tourism companies, I sorted out this wild territory of Central Asia.

MR. GALBADRAKH IS FROM THE "MORNINGSTAR COMPANY", ONE OF THE FOUR HUNTING ENTERPRISES IN MONGOLIA. HE MADE AN APPOINTMENT WITH ME VERY MYSTERIOUSLY IN SOME KIND OF GALLERY FOR MONGOLIAN TRADITIONAL CRAFTS, AND HE TOOK ME AFTER A SHORT WELCOME, TO A SIDE ROOM OF THE SHOP. GALBADRAKH SEEMED TO WEAR WOOLEN FAKE HAIR, HAD THE BUILD OF A WEIGHT LIFTER AND DEMANDED, FOR STARTERS, THAT EVERYTHING BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL. "OH IN HIGH ALTAI THERE ARE RARELY ANY MORE BIG GAME ANIMALS", HE MUMBLES. "I JUST CAME BACK FROM THERE WITH A CANADIAN HUNTER. HE GOT A NICE TROPHY BUT WE HAD TO LOOK FOR 25 DAYS". HE DIGS HIS FOOT IN THE GROUND. "I STILL HAVE AN OFFICIAL LICENSE FOR THIS YEAR TO HUNT THE GOBI ARGALI. THAT'S MUCH BETTER." I SAY, "BUT THEY ARE JUST AS RARE, RIGHT?" "NO, THERE ARE MORE BIG MALES", HE COUNTERS.

"AND WHAT ABOUT SNOW LEOPARDS? CAN YOU HELP ME KILL ONE?"

"THEY ARE IN THE RED BOOK, NO OFFICIAL LICENSES, NO WAY", GALBADRAKH SAYS AND SMILES.

"I KNOW, I KNOW. BUT DESPITE THE LAW THERE MUST BE A HUNT FOR SNOW LEOPARDS, BECAUSE AT YOUR BORDERS, CUSTOMS OFFICIALS CONFISCATE SKINS ALL THE TIME."

GALBADRAKH TIPS HIS RIGHT FOOT. "FOR NEXT YEAR I CAN PROBABLY GET TWO SNOW LEOPARD HUNTING LICENSES". "MY GOVERNMENT ALLOWS SNOW LEOPARD SHOOTING DESPITE PROHIBITIONS IN THE RED BOOK". "I CAN GET THE LICENSES" GALBADRAKH IS EVASIVE, FINALLY BLURTING OUT, "OK, BUT HOW YOU GET THE TROPHIES ACROSS THE GERMAN BORDER IS UP TO YOU."

THE NEXT DAY, IN THE LOBBY OF THE HOTEL BAYANGOL, ANOTHER CO-OWNER OF THE MORNINGSTAR COMPANY ADDRESSED ME. MR. BAASANHUU WAS WEARING A

CAMOUFLAGE SUIT AND CARRIED A BRIEFCASE IN HIS HAND. “THE USA WANTS TO ELIMINATE THE “IMPORTATION BAN” FOR MONGOLIAN ALTAI ARGALI TROPHIES”, HE BLURTS OUT HAPPILY. ON HIS BRIEFCASE IS A STICKER WITH A DRAWING OF AN ARGALI SHEEP. I POINTED AT IT. “THAT’S THE FOUNDATION FOR WILD SHEEP OF MONGOLIA. I AM THEIR CHAIRMAN”, HE SAYS PROUDLY, POINTING AT THE STICKER.

“I SEE. WHAT IS THIS FOUNDATION DOING?”

“THEY TAKE CARE OF THE PRESERVATION OF THE ARGALI AND ARE IN TOUCH WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.”

I CONCLUDED THAT THE MAIN ISSUE IS TO COLLECT MONEY FROM ABROAD. “AND WHAT ELSE IS THE FOUNDATION DOING? HOW DOES IT PRESERVE RARE SHEEP?”

BAASANHUU RAISED HIS EYEBROWS.

“DOES YOUR FOUNDATION WORK ON STOPPING THE HUNTING?”

“STOPPING THE HUNTING??” BAASANHUU HAS AN IDIOTIC GRIN. “WHAT ELSE DO WE DO? WELL, WHAT ELSE?”, HE MURMURS TO HIMSELF. “OH WELL, WE ARE PLANNING FEEDING PLACES FOR WHEN THE ARGALI SHEEP CANNOT FIND FOOD IN THE WINTERTIME.”

“GOOD IDEA”, I ENCOURAGE HIM.

“SO THE OLD MALES WITH THE BIGGEST TROPHY HORNS CAN SURVIVE FOR OUR CUSTOMERS TO HUNT.” BAASANHUU LEANS BACK FEELING FLATTERED. HE THEN EXPLAINED HOW THE THIRD OWNER OF HIS HUNTING BUSINESS IS THE CHAIRMAN OF THE “MONGOLIAN GREEN PARTY”.

BAASANHUU DENIED THAT THERE WERE DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST HUNTERS. AND HE DENIED THAT COMMERCIAL HUNTS ARE ENDANGERING THIS SPECIES OF ARGALI.

The benefit of the tourism companies is the lethal shot, a business that is filling many private and government pockets in Mongolia. Three million U.S. Dollars come into this country every year, as payment for close to 1,000 shot animals. The network of hunting helpers goes right through Ulaanbaatar: from the lobbies of the hotels to the offices of the four official hunting expedition companies, to the socialist apartment buildings of the translators, to the Government Ministry of Nature which issues the shooting licenses, and to Customs which allows the export of trophies.

“My company, “Mongol An” has the best connections to Mongolian Government departments.” Mr. Buyandelger continued, ***“Through me you get the biggest trophies”.*** Buyandelger runs the national hunters association known as “Mongol An”. He promises government connections and good hunting, from behind his huge desk while waving a price list. Buyandelger sells nearly half of all Mongolian big game hunting trips. His association manages more than 20 camps in remote wildlife areas, and in 1994 obtained seven of the 16 national licenses to hunt wild Argali sheep.

U.S. \$30,000 DOLLARS, OR ABOUT 50,000 MARKS, IS THE COST OF A HUNT FOR WILD SHEEP WITH MONGOL AN. BUYANDELGER MAKES ABOUT THREE MILLION MARKS A YEAR FROM FOREIGNERS – THROUGH HALF A THOUSAND “MERCY SHOTS” AT ARGALI, CAPRICORN, GAZELLES, MARALES, BEARS AND WOLVES.))

Approximately 45,000 Mark (U.S. \$26,000) will have to be paid to shoot a wild sheep. ***“You get a capricorn extra in front of your gun for that, that alone is usually 4,000 Marks (U.S. \$2,500)”***, adds Buyandelger.

I tell him about the plans of my imaginary client. Mostly they are interested in hunting Snow Leopards.

“Those are protected on the C.I.T.E.S. list”, Buyandelger murmurs hesitatingly.

“Yes, but Snow Leopards are being hunted – on the borders Customs find their skins all the time,” I say.

Buyandelger plays with his pen, listening intently.

I tell him that his competitor offered me two licenses to shoot Snow Leopards.

“We will be able to get more Snow Leopards for you”, Buyandelger replies quickly. He explains urgently, that more and more attacks by these spectacular wild cats have been reported by local farmers, and the Snow Leopards are killing many domestic animals owned by farmers. ***“That means the numbers of Snow Leopards are on the rise”*** – for Buyandelger this was reason enough to issue hunting licenses for Snow Leopards.

BUYANDELGER KEPT SILENT ABOUT THE FACT THAT FARMERS DURING SOCIALISM, OFTEN DID NOT REPORT SNATCHED ANIMALS BECAUSE THEY HAD TO COVER THE LOSS OUT OF THEIR OWN POCKET.

“How many Snow Leopards can you sell to me for my clients, next year?” I ask.

HIS PROMISE OF “MORE SNOW LEOPARDS” IS TOO VAGUE FOR ME. “HOW MANY SNOW LEOPARDS CAN YOU OFFER TO ME FOR NEXT YEAR’S HUNT?”

“I CAN GET MANY,” BUYANDELGER EVADES.

COME ON, MR. BUYANDELGER: FIVE, TEN, OR MAYBE ONE HUNDRED?”

“I can get you at least five Leopards. Maybe more.” Buyandelger leans over and taps his pen five times on the table, confirming his numbers.

“And what about the C.I.T.E.S. prohibitions, that make it illegal?”

Buyandelger smiles indulgently. ***“You can declare the trophies as “museum objects” or objects for “scientific research”. C.I.T.E.S. gives exemptions for those purposes, so it’s easy to cross the border like that. Don’t worry. We’ll get your big cats.”*** Buyandelger takes a deep breath. ***“Any more problems?”***

PERHAPS THE DIRECTOR, DELGERSUREN, HAS EVEN BETTER CONTACTS INSIDE THE GOVERNMENT – BETTER THAN BUYANDELGER. DELGERSUREN ALREADY WAS DIRECTOR OF THE BIGGEST MONGOLIAN TOURISM COMPANY, JUULCHIN, IN SOCIALIST TIMES. MANY OF HIS FORMER POLITICAL FRIENDS NOW OCCUPY HIGH POSITIONS IN THE ADMINISTRATION, AND MANY ARE GOVERNMENT MINISTERS. DELGERSUREN PRETENDED TO BE INCAPABLE OF MAKING MISTAKES.

WHEN I VISITED HIM, HE SAT IN HIS ARMCHAIR, BURPING CONSTANTLY, SCRATCHING HIS BELLY. HE OFTEN REACHED FOR THE TELEPHONE TO LET ME KNOW THAT HE IS NOT REALLY INTERESTED IN ANY FURTHER CUSTOMERS.

“SNOW LEOPARDS? GOOD DOLLARS! NOT REALLY LEGAL!” HE KEEPS SHAKING HIS HEAD AND MAKING AN INNOCENT, SURPRISED FACE.

I TOLD HIM HOW A HUNTER FROM MUNICH TOLD ME IN THE HOTEL LOBBY HOW HE GOT HIS CAPRICORN TROPHY THROUGH JUULCHIN. HIS CAMP WAS LOCATED NEAR CHINA AT MONGOLIA’S BORDER.

HUNTING IS PROHIBITED THERE. HOWEVER, A LOT OF BIG CAPRICORNS LIVE THERE. ONCE, A POLICE MAN SHOWED UP. BUT A FEW DOLLARS CALMED HIM DOWN AND THE CAPRICORN WAS SHOT. FURTHERMORE, DELGERSUREN MUST HAVE AN IDEA HOW HIS CHIEF TRANSLATOR AND HIS DRIVER, ADJA, ALWAYS MANAGED TO KILL SUPER-SIZED TROPHIES, CULLED DIMINISHING POPULATIONS OF WILD SHEEP, FOR THE FOREIGNERS.

IT'S AN OPEN SECRET IN THE BUSINESS. ADJA SUPPOSEDLY DRIVES HUNTERS UP TO HIGH ALTAI MOUNTAINS, TO MYANGAN UGALZAT. THESE ARE KNOWN AS THE MOUNTAINS OF 1,000 ARGALI – AN OFFICIAL “NATURE PROTECTION PARK” WHERE HUNTING IS OFFICIALLY BANNED, BUT CARRIED OUT BY GUIDES WHO ARE WELL CONNECTED TO MINISTRY OFFICIALS. THERE ARE MALE ARGALI WITH 60 INCH HORNS, LIKE AT NO OTHER PLACE ANYMORE.

BUT HOW DID ADJA GET U.S. \$30,000 DOLLAR TO BUY A BRAND NEW JAPANESE CAR, AND THEN A NEW RUSSIAN JEEP? THAT'S WHAT INSIDERS OF THE BUSINESS CAN'T FIGURE OUT. IT IS KNOWN THAT ADJA HAD ACCOMPANIED A MEXICAN MILLIONAIRE TO HUNT SNOW LEOPARDS BEFORE THE POLITICAL CHANGES CAME TO HIS COUNTRY. FOR ONE HUNT A TEXAN WITH TWO ANGRY DOGS WAS FLOWN TO MONGOLIA. THE DOGS FOUND THE SHY NOCTURNAL CAT, THEY SURROUNDED IT WITH HOWLING, BARKING, DOGS. KILLING THE CAT WAS A PIECE OF CAKE.

EVEN THOUGH ADJA IS AN ARGALI SHEEP SPECIALIST, TODAY HE ONLY MAKES 40 DOLLARS A MONTH. HE LIVES FROM TIPS. IT HAPPENS THAT A FOREIGNER HANDS HIM U.S. \$1,000 DOLLARS WHEN HE IS HAPPY WITH THE TROPHY. BUT THAT IS NOT ENOUGH TO BUY TWO EXPENSIVE JEeps. A LOT OF JEALOUS COMPETITORS AND ENVIOUS RUMORS ARE CIRCULATING AROUND ADJA.

WINKING HIS EYES AS A SIGNAL TO ME, ANOTHER DRIVER AND TRANSLATOR FOR JUULCHIN LEAVES THE HOTEL LOBBY. I MEET HIM OUTSIDE. HE BENDS OVER HIS FAT BELLY AND WHISPERS: “YOU HAVE CUSTOMERS FOR SNOW LEOPARDS”.

I NOD MY HEAD, LETTING HIM KNOW I AM OPEN FOR BUSINESS.

My further research showed that not only the caretakers of “Mongol An” are selling and shooting their strongest animals (their finest, genetic blood lines that should remain alive to propagate) in Mongolia, to hunters from abroad. But additionally, the Government Ministry of Nature and the “Mongolian National Commission of Rare Animals” are also involved in the business. Even the Chairman of the Mongolian “Green Party” is on the side of big game hunters.

“Greens here in Mongolia are different from Greens in Europe”, says Mr. Nyam in his office. *“We encourage the usage of natures resources.”* The Forest Ranger engineer looks like an overgrown high school kid. After the turn to capitalism he became Vice Governor of the environmental department. Now he is leading the Green Party – and he also organizes hunting trips with his company.

I let him know about the concerns of my imaginary customers: they might feel nervous about the fact that the co-owner of a hunting company also runs the Green Party at the same time. Nyam reassures me in a soothing voice that there is no conflict of interest. The hunt for Argali would not endanger the species. *“Mostly they shoot old animals”,* he says. *“They would die soon anyway”.*

The killing of Argali is a sort of mercy killing? The extinction of largest, dominant animals who, with their extraordinary genetic potential and their experience, secure the

survival of their species, is now an act of compassion? It seems to fit, that the business partner of the Chairman of the Mongolian Green Party is also the head of a foundation for the “protection” of the wild sheep.

AND WHEN I TOLD HIM THAT HIS PARTNER PROMISED ME TWO SHOTS AT SNOW LEOPARDS, NYAM PRETENDED TO BE UPSET: “I DON’T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT”, HE SAID.

At night in the lobby of the “Bayangol Hotel”. A man winks his eye and wants to meet me outside: another translator. In the network of the hunting services the translators are the real wire-pullers for every successful hunt. They choose the area, they determine the spots for the camps, and they invite politicians, police men and wildlife inspectors into the camp for communal boozing.

“You have customers for Snow Leopards?” he asks nervously.

I nod my head.

“Good. I have seen Leopards on my most recent hunting trip. Now, in the fall, is a good time for the hunt. They already have their winter skin and the first snow is on the ground. One can find their tracks easily.”

“How exactly is this all happening?”

His upper body is moving tensely. **“You book a Capricorn hunt. And then, I promise, we also find a Snow Leopard.”**

“Will we have enough time for that?” I count that the hunt for a Capricorn usually takes about ten days, the one for a Snow Leopard requires about three more weeks.

“No, no, no!” The man’s hands are waiving. **“The Capricorn we’ll find in a few days. Then we’ll get the Leopard.”**

“How will we get him so fast?”

“We capture a goat in his District. When the Snow Leopard comes to eat – PING! That happens fast. Leopards are often shot like that.” He whispers. **“I know the Chairmen of the District Hunting Association, and one of the hunting guides very well.”**

“How much will it cost?”

“For everyone of the three of us, it will cost U.S. \$10,000 in cash.” He presses my hand. **“Your customers will get a real dream trophy for that.”**

“And how do we get it across the border, and home?”

“I know a few people at Customs at Ulaanbaatar airport. Or, your client takes the train over the border to Irkutsk, Russia, then flies from there to Warsaw, and then take the train or car over the German border. There are many hiding-places and rarely any controls.” He presses my hand once more.

A FEW DAYS LATER I GOT NEWS FROM HIM, THAT EVERYTHING WAS PREPARED FOR MY CUSTOMERS. WE SHOULD JUST HURRY UP. A COMPETITOR MADE ME ANOTHER INTERESTING OFFER. HE PUT VODKA, BEER, WINE AND TEA ON THE TABLE. HAPPILY

HE LIFTED HIS GLASS TO TOAST ME, AND THEN HE RUBBED HIS HANDS. HE SHOWED ME IN HIS LITTLE APARTMENT FULL OF HORNS AND SKINS. IN HIS HEAD THE “DOLLAR” WORD WAS GOING AROUND AND AROUND. THIS MAN IS A HUNTING INSPECTOR WHO IS SUPPOSED TO PREVENT ILLEGAL SHOOTING OF RARE ANIMALS. BUT HIS PAY IS LOUSY U.S. \$20 PER MONTH. AND WHAT CAN YOU BUY NOWADAYS FOR THAT IN MONGOLIA? A REFRIGERATOR COSTS U.S. \$600, AND HE NEEDS ONE. PLUS, HIS DAUGHTER WANTS TO GO TO COLLEGE – THAT’S \$10 DOLLARS PER MONTH.

“I CHARGE \$300 DOLLARS FOR THE TROPHY OF A SNOW LEOPARD. HOW MANY DO YOU NEED PER YEAR?” HE GROANS AND MOANS. WHEN I PARTED HE QUOTED ME ONE OF HIS OWN POEMS: “THE MOUNTAINS OF THE ARGALI GLOW IN THE SUN.”

HIS BOSSES WORK IN THE GOVERNMENT MINISTRY OF NATURE. IN THE MINISTRY IS THE TOP MAN, THE VICE GOVERNOR CHIRIDOM, WHO IS BIG AND WELL FED. HE THINKS OF HIMSELF AS BEING VERY SMART AND LIKES TO HEAR HIMSELF TALK. I WITNESSED AN INTERVIEW IN WHICH HE WAS TALKING CONSTANTLY FOR 45 MINUTES STRAIGHT, STATING AT THE END: “I HOPE I HAVE ANSWERED ALL QUESTIONS.”

CHIRIDOM IS OBSESSED BY ONE IDEA. HE WANTS TO TURN ALL MONGOLIA INTO A NATURE PARK – A NOBLE PLAN THAT SEEMS LIKE AN ECONOMIC BULL. BUT HE CALCULATES THAT RICH WESTERN INDUSTRIAL NATIONS WILL PUMP BILLIONS OF DOLLARS INTO MONGOLIA TO CREATE AN EDEN, AND TO CALM DOWN THEIR BAD CONSCIENCE ABOUT THE ECOLOGICAL SINS CAUSED BY THEIR OWN COUNTRIES. HE CLAIMED 102 NATIONS THOUGHT THIS WAS A BRILLIANT IDEA.

HOWEVER, THE BIG DOWNPOUR OF DOLLARS INTO THIS COUNTRY OF NOMADS HAS NOT HAPPENED YET. FOREIGNERS ARE STILL HUNTING. MORE THAN FIVE MILLION MARKS THEY ARE BRINGING INTO MONGOLIA. HALF OF THAT GOES TO GOVERNMENT. THAT LIABILITIES MULTIPLY FOR A COUNTRY WITH THE POPULATION OF HAMBURG, AND A COMPLETE LACK OF FOREIGN CURRENCY. THE MINISTRY OF NATURE SETS THE NUMBERS OF HUNTING LICENSES, AND THEN GIVES THEM AWAY TO BUSINESSES OWNED BY FRIENDS OF THE MINISTER.

CHIRIDOM HAD ANOTHER BRILLIANT IDEA, WHICH HE DOES NOT REALLY TALK ABOUT SINCE IT MAY SOUND LIKE BLACKMAIL. BUT AFTER THE STRANGE INTERVIEW, HE SMILES AND SAYS: “I WOULD LIKE TO TELL THE AMERICANS THAT WE HAVE ENOUGH WILDLIFE HERE.”

I INQUIRE, “DO YOU MEAN TO SAY MONGOLIA HAS MANY ARGALI AND SNOW LEOPARDS?”

“BOTH.” CHIRIDOM SAYS. “WE HAVE 4,000 SNOW LEOPARDS IN MONGOLIA. AND IT IS POSSIBLE TO ERASE AN ENTRY ON THE RED BOOK ONCE AGAIN, IF ONE WANTS IT.”

“IN MONGOLIA THERE ARE 1,700 SNOW LEOPARDS ACCORDING TO THE CENSUS OF THIS YEAR. THE STOCK SEEMS TO BE STABLE, BUT THE SPECIES IS CERTAINLY ENDANGERED”, SAID THE ZOOLOGIST AMARSANAA, WHO SPECIALIZES IN CATS AND WORKS AT THE “BIOLOGICAL INSTITUTE” OF MONGOLIA. AMARSANAA LOOKED TIRED AND HE HAD A FLIMSY DESK IN A BIG EMPTY OFFICE. HIS EXPLANATIONS WITH A LOW VOICE WERE JUST AS SAD. HE DESCRIBED SLOWLY, HOW THIS MAGNIFICENT ANIMAL IS MORE AND MORE ENDANGERED AND IN DISTRESS.

THIS PROCESS STARTED WHEN THE NOMADS BEGAN TO CHASE CATS, WILD SHEEP AND CAPRICORNS AWAY FROM THEIR FEEDING GROUNDS WITH THEIR CATTLE AND REDUCED ESPECIALLY THE NUMBER OF ARGALI SHEEP. THEN THE CATTLE BROUGHT KILLER TICKS WHICH ALSO AFFECTED THE SNOW LEOPARDS. IN PAIN AND IN HUNGER, THE SNOW LEOPARD CHANGED ITS BEHAVIOR, AND STARTED TO KILL, NOT ONE DOMESTIC GOAT AT A TIME, BUT TEN OR TWELVE. AMARSANAA CLAIMS 160 BIG CATS

WERE SHOT LAST YEAR. HUNTING CATS THAT KILL DOMESTIC ANIMALS IS A GIVEN, BUT CONSIDER TEN PERCENT OF THE ENTIRE STOCK KILLED BY NOMADS AND TROPHY HUNTERS. "OFTEN THE HUNTING INSPECTORS ARE INVOLVED IN HUNTING DEALS", HE SAYS VOICELESS, "THEY SHOULD BE PAID BETTER." I THOUGHT THAT AMARSANAA IS SUFFERING FROM THE MISERY OF THE CAT AND I ASKED HIM ABOUT IT.

FOR THE FIRST TIME HIS FACE SHOWS SIGNS OF LIFE: "ACTUALLY I PREFER BEAVERS. THEY ARE MORE PATIENT AND BRAVER. SURE THE SNOW LEOPARD IS A BEAUTIFUL ANIMAL. BUT HE IS NOT AS WILD OR FAST AS ONE THINKS. HE ACTUALLY IS A STUPID ANIMAL, MORE STUPID THAN THE WOLF. THE SNOW LEOPARD IS ALWAYS IN HIDING."

THE SPECIALIST FOR ARGALI SHEEP WAS WAITING, ALREADY SETTLED IN ONE OF THE LONELY CHAIRS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE OFFICE. HE SAT THERE LIKE A BEGGAR, HOLDING HIS BRIEFCASE ON HIS KNEES. "YOU JUST HEARD ABOUT THE DANGER FOR THE ARGALI BY THE KETTLE", HE EXPLAINS. "WE DON'T KNOW WHETHER THE STOCK IS RISING OR FALLING. WE HAVEN'T COUNTED FOR YEARS. WE JUST DON'T HAVE THE MONEY."

"ON WHAT BASIS DO YOU GIVE OUT LICENSES TO HUNT ARGALI?" I WONDER.

HIS SMALL SHOULDERS RISE UP, SHRUGGING ONCE. "I DON'T REALLY KNOW MYSELF". HE CLEARS HIS THROAT. "WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW WHAT I THINK ABOUT ARGALI?"

"SURE."

"IT'S A STRONG ANIMAL. IT IS SMART, VERY SMART AND HAS GOOD VISION."

"IT'S A HEAVENLY ANIMAL", SAYS DRIVER MAAM SEVEN DAYS LATER ON OUR TRIP THROUGH GOBI. HE BENDS HIS HEAD AND HOLDS HIS FOLDED HANDS AGAINST HIS FOREHEAD. MAAM WOKE ME UP EARLY. NOW HE KNEELS IN FRONT OF THE OVEN OF MY TENT AND STARTS A FIRE WITH CAMEL SHIT.

"WHY DO YOU HELP AMERICANS TO KILL ARGALI, MAAM?"

"I DON'T LIKE IT THAT THE AMERICANS AND THE EUROPEANS COME HERE." MAAM LOOKS INTO THE FIRE. "SOMETIMES MY NEIGHBORS SAY: YOU DO IT FOR THE DOLLARS. NO. WHEN I WAS A YOUNG MAN I BECAME A HUNTER. THAT'S MY DESTINY."

A few days later. On the back of a jeep, I am riding through the dessert. I am still working undercover, posing as a Travel Agent looking for new hunting venues for my German clients. While in Ulaanbaatar I hooked up with Ralph Essington, the American doctor who wants to shoot Argali Sheep. This morning we started before dusk to get to a remote mountain area. Maam assumes there will be some big Argali males there.

The American sits next to the driver – like all his other hunting trips. He stares through the windshield at the windy road and says: "Search and destroy mission." "Jesus", David whispers.

"WHAT A BEAUTIFUL TROPHY." HE PULLS THE REMINGTON OUT OF IT'S COVER AND POINTS AT IT. "WAIT, MAYBE WE WILL FIND A BETTER ONE", THE TRANSLATOR WHISPERS. DAVID PUTS THE GUN BACK IN THE CAR. WHEN THE SUN IS HIGH, MAAM SEES FAR AWAY ON TOP OF SOME DUNES, THREE MALE ARGALI WHICH HAVE EVEN BIGGER HORNS. TO NOT CHASE THE ANIMALS AWAY, MAAM WANTS TO CIRCLE THEM. "NOT THROUGH THE OPEN AREA", HE SHOUTS. "FIRST ON THE ROAD". THEN THEY WILL THINK WE ARE HARMLESS. THEY KNOW HOW TO THINK. AND THE LEADING ANIMAL SEES EVERYTHING." THE GROUP CONTINUES ON FOOT IN THE HEAT OF HIGH NOON. MAAM IS IN FRONT WITH HIS NAKED UPPER BODY. HE HAS WRAPPED HIS SHIRT AROUND HIS HEAD. THE TRANSLATOR IS CARRYING DAVID'S REMINGTON. THE

DRIVER HAS THE BINOCULARS. DAVID WALKS BEHIND THEM. SWEATING.

THE HIKE TAKES ABOUT TWO HOURS. THE ARGALI HAVE DISAPPEARED. DAVID SITS DOWN IN THE SAND AND PULLS A BOOK OUT OF HIS BAG, A BOOK ON WAR WITH THE TITLE "THE SUM OF ALL FEARS". MAAM DOESN'T GIVE UP TO FIND THE ANIMALS, RUNS AWAY ALONE AND ONLY RETURNS THREE HOURS LATER. HIS NOSE IS BLEEDING. DAVID PUTS THE BOOK BACK IN HIS BAG AND SHOUTS: "WAITING AROUND IS BORING."

"WOULD YOU SHOOT IF COINCIDENTALLY A SNOW LEOPARD CAME BY HERE?" I ASK HIM. "I ALREADY SAID, SUCH A TROPHY IS LIKE A MONA LISA", HE REPLIES, "BUT IT IS DANGEROUS TO OWN ONE. YOU ALWAYS HAVE TO HIDE IT AND YOU CAN'T SHOW IT TO ANYONE."

WE GET BACK IN THE JEEP. DAVID MURMURS: "I WISH I HAD SHOT THE SHEEP THIS MORNING." SUDDENLY THE TRANSLATOR DISCOVERS AN ARGALI IN A VALLEY TO THE SIDE. HE RUNS BEHIND THE HILL. THE MEN JUMP OUT OF THE CAR. DAVID IS CARRYING HIS REMINGTON BY HIMSELF THIS TIME, AND IS FIRST ON TOP OF THE HILL EVEN IN ADVANCE OF THE TRANSLATOR.

The Argali's head is up high and proud, as if he was chiseled out of light colored rock. The animal is standing on the opposite hill. Ralph Essington throws himself down onto the ground, aims, and pulls the trigger. The animal shivers violently, shakes, then goes down on its knees. It attempts to get up again, then sinks back to the ground. The hunter pulls the trigger again. The animal falls to the side, immobile, and not moving anymore.

The men run down the hill. The moment they are standing around the animal in a circle, suddenly an eerie death mood befalls them. Maam keeps silent and is depressed. So is the Essington, the shooter: the horns of this magnificent animal are not 46 inches long – the size that was ordered and paid for, but are only an average 41 inches across.

The driver passes the video camera to Dr. Essington. He takes it reluctantly. Then he looks, his lips pressed tightly together, through the lens at the Argali. And talks into the microphone: "It's not really what I came for. But now it is mine."

END OF GEO MAGAZINE ARTICLE

CAPTIONS TO PHOTOGRAPHS IN GEO:

Title pages 58-59: When hunting is hardly more than slaying (page 58/59)

Photographs pages 58-59: shows the eye of a dead Zebra reflecting hunter's & guns;

Quote on Zebra photo: "The zebra is dead. Next it has to be a giraffe or even better, a cheetah".

Quote, pages 58-59: "This is not a pleasant report on hunting. This is a report on the "dark side" of hunting. This is about the kind of hunter who, in the fever of the passion and in the run after trophies, has lost any sense for measurement. This is especially true in Mongolia where souvenir-greedy tourists even pay to be able to shoot Snow Leopards which are in danger of extinction. This is also true in Pakistan where Arabic dealers go after "Kragentrappen" (collar...?) under enormous effort. Like the big wildlife hunt all over the world."

Photos pages 60-61: shows a person holding the bloody skull of a sheep, held by the horn in his hand. **Quote on sheep photo:** “Killed against the law – an object of evidence needed in court”

Quote, pages 60-61: “An official of the F.W.S. Department for deer protection in the U.S. State of Idaho carries confiscated skulls of Bighorn sheep from the Rocky Mountains to their headquarters. Instead of using them as ornaments, a trophy collection, after being boiled and bleached, shall now serve as objects of evidence to stop an illegally operating hunting guide.”

Photos pages 62-63: shows a person posing behind a huge, dead Grizzly bear.

Quote, pages 62-63: “The Australian Peter Stapley is accused of having killed a brown bear in Alaska in 1986 illegally. The blurry picture by an amateur photographer was discovered by the “US Fish and Wildlife Service” through an undercover investigation which helped to bring a good number of illegal hunters to court trials. Stapley was able to go underground and the accusation is now beyond the statute of limitations.”

Photos pages 63-64: The first little picture shows a man with a dead gazelle. The second little picture shows a man carrying a dead leopard on his shoulders. The third picture shows advertisement from a travel agency to go deer hunting in Poland, for three days, including the hunt for two male deer for 1,525 Marks (U.S. \$850) – their special offer of the year.

The big picture shows a couple talking with person in uniform in some kind of club or restaurant, in the background animal trophies are attached to the walls. The picture on page 65 shows an airborne helicopter, with head of an elk dangling on below on a rope.

Quote, page 65 with Heading: “Hunting-ethics minimal – Anything goes that is not forbidden by law”. The international fair “Hunt and Dog” in Dortmund is a classical meeting-place for hunting organizations and customers. As many as the expectations and opinions are on what is good and bad about hunting: Some think only the original fight, one on one, between a hunter with a bow and the prey is fair. Others have no ethical doubts about tricking a Snow Leopard, and then to shoot him. Some just want cheap shots, others are looking for luxury – with trophy transports by helicopter included.

page 66-67: shows all continents and the animals listed by the World Nature Protection Union, IUCN, that **are** endangered by hunting for various reasons such as trophy, decoration, sports, aphrodisiacs, for healing drugs, for delicacy foods and clothing, for superstitious beliefs, and to prevent competition with domestic animals.

Text pages 66-67 with Heading: “To die for business, in all parks” At Kamchatka helicopters were chasing snow Tigers, running directly in front of the guns of trophy hunters – the price for the hunt: 12,000 Marks (U.S. \$7,000). The hunt for Snow Leopards is officially forbidden in Mongolia – but the unofficial price paid to Ministry officials, for this exceptional killing permit: 20,000 Mark (U.S. \$12,000). More efficiently, South Africa is protecting its rhinoceros against poaching. Package price for seven days of hunting: 37,000 Mark (\$20,000).

Ever since transcontinental flights were available for discount prices in the 1980’s,

business of wildlife hunting is flourishing worldwide. Countless big and small hunting organizations offer well organized tours to very remote places. In Tanzania alone, every year “sports hunters” shoot about 7,000 wild animals. Hunting organizations there, are grossing with their safaris for about 600 hunters around 30 million Marks (\$18 million).

The brochures for hunting organizations offer trophy hunters in Africa a varied selection – from the “21 day big wildlife package” that includes a shooting permit for an elephant, a buffalo, a lion, a leopard and one of each of the most common antelopes (total price for two hunters: 54,000 Mark (\$30,000), to the “five-day-buffalo short safari” for 6,750 Marks (U.S. \$4,000), appealing to the hunting guest in a hurry.

Many African countries sell professional hunting guides permits for several years for wildlife areas where sport hunters are allowed to hunt. At some places where the permits and the public have their share properly managed, it is working well (*see pages 70/71*). But in other places there are no controls: In Tanzania for example despite prohibitive laws, wildlife is shot again and again from car windows, while these animals are drinking at water holes.

More harmless is the hunting business in Zimbabwe: During the off hunting season, so-called “Splatball Safaris” – elephants are being shot with soft bullets filled with colored water. An orange spot on the gray skin shows the hunter he has a theoretical “kill”.

Photos page 68-69 picture of Mongolian houses in the snow and sheep. Text to picture: “In Mongolia the customer is King – including hunting privileges. For example Mongolia, the one who has dollars, is allowed to shoot.” Mongolia is about the size of Germany and Scandinavia together – but only about two million people live here. Their basis of existence has been raising cattle for ages, while hunting was always an extra. Today the hunt is almost forbidden for Mongolians. The horns in front of the house belong to a tourist.

Hunters’ brochures praise Mongolia as a paradise for trophy collectors. Here, they say people are still “open-minded”, and the prices for trophies are “well-balanced”. Deer-shooters of all countries are magically drawn by promises like that – also attracted are the customers who pay to hunt for rare and protected animals, with a handful of cash.

page 70/71 gray background – the little picture: shows a man with a dead Aries in the snow. Text to picture: “the pride of the hunter in the Pamir mountains in Tajikistan: a Marco-Polo Aries with huge “snail horns” (curled horns).”

Photograph of a dead elk, a Snow Leopard, and the skin of a tiger. Text to pictures: “Unfortunately, the hunting trip organizers regret that the number of elks in the European part of Russia are crashing. But in Yakutia Peninsula, the customer is still guaranteed a huge elk with big horns. Under the table, Snow Leopards can also be offered for the hunt.

Comment to pictures: “The country of the unlimited possibilities for hunters is far East. Central Asia and the former Soviet Union – an “Eldorado” for thieves and collectors

Ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union, in succession those former territories that were previously part of the Soviet Union, the hunt began for animals that previously lived in relative safety behind the Iron Curtain. Now that has changed, and the carnage has a

new sponsor in Central Asian governments. “The hunt for trophies has gotten totally out of control there,” says Georg Schwede from the environmental foundation WWF. Up until 1990, in the Soviet Union a functioning “Wildlife-Management” policy was existent: previously, wildlife protectors counted wildlife numbers on a regular basis and they controlled the shooting. Today, Government departments are still determining yearly rates (quota) of how many animals of one species can be hunted and they sell exactly counted licenses for this highly profitable business via private hunting organizations to foreign trophy hunters – but the money for controls is missing.

“Despite all restrictions, hunters are shooting again and again from helicopters down on their promised, paid-for, great bears. On the ground they realize that they did not get the three meter bear (three yards) they were hoping for,” says Schwede. “With a little bribing money they will get a second chance to kill a second bear, easily.” Russian members of the WWF report that sometimes eight to ten bears are shot on just one license. The consequences are foreseeable: In 1989 there were 11,000 brown bears on the peninsula of Kamchatka, but between 1991 and 1993 according to Russian biologists 3,000 to 6,000 bears were killed.

Some hunters don’t even hesitate to shoot highly endangered species. In January 1994 Schwede met Japanese hunters on the airport of Vladivostok. They wanted to shoot Siberian tigers. A maximum of 250 of these wild cats are still living in the wilderness. In exceptional cases trophy hunters are getting a hunting permission – to shoot “problem-tigers, who are presumably a threat to farmers and their animals. To deal better with the uncontrolled hunting, the WWF is working together with local Government departments to protect nature. They try to build up special anti-poacher brigades and to realize management plans for the concerned species.

Also the republic of Turkmenistan wants to earn from the business with the tourists bringing foreign exchange into the country. According to the plans of the Government department for the environment, in the year 1993 the Badchy-park should have been opened for hunters. But under international pressure their permit was withdrawn – and despite that, at least ten foreign groups were still hunting in this nature park in the winter of 1993/94.

The former Director of the Badchys-reservation, Schapowalow, complains that in his park, and in other Turkmenian reservations, there are no more experts to protect nature. There are no more wildlife rangers to work anymore on population surveys, or to monitor hunting activities. Without any scientific basis, many permits were issued to shoot “Kropfgazellen”, the extremely rare Persian Leopard, and the giant wild sheep or Argali were issued.

Since April 1995, no more trophies of Argali can ever be legally imported into the European Union no matter from where they originate. Only if plans for a defined purpose are demonstrated, as a plan essential to secure the survival of this endangered species, can this law can be overturned to allow the import of an Argali specimen. Unlike Europe, the United States still permit unlimited imports of commercial Argali trophy sheep from Mongolia.

Photograph on page 72: man with dead Capricorn. Text to picture: The American Ralph Essington with a killed Capricorn. “Besides the Capricorn – the brochure “Hunt International” entices the Argali is being hunted here.” It underlies the Washington agreement to protect certain species.

page 77 picture: Mongolian at his home with the skin of a snow leopard and a lynx. Text to picture: “What do you want? The skin of a lynx or rather that of a big Snow Leopard? Only between 500 and 1,000 of the latter are still living in Mongolia.”

Photograph: showing author of article, Christian Jungblut, with Mongolians and the skull of an Argali trophy sheep. Text: “The supposedly organizer of hunting rips and the real author for GEO Magazine Christian Jungblut, 52, found with his three Mongolian hunting guides in the Gobi Desert, his best dream trophy: the bleached skull of an Argali male sheep that died naturally.”