

*Inner Asia power conflict*

*The neighboring big powers and the Buddhist church's part in making of the Mongol state*

PhD thesis

Zsolt Szilágyi

## **The Topic's Research and History**

The Manchu era's particularity the early Inner Asian period is one the most eventful and exciting period. The most important part of it that its effects even is felt after the ending of the last Chinese dynasty in 1911.

The thesis wants to present the Inner Asian Manchu conquest's conditions and effects. It also talk about the process of the conquest of the Mongolian land by the Manchus and gives and outline that what role did in the Russian-Chinese relation did the Inner-Asian region have. Reviews the starting of the Russian-Mongolian, Chinese-Mongolian and the Mongolian-Tibetan relationships. Researches of how the modern state of Mongolia came to be and what role did the neighboring states play in it. That the Mongols them self in what degree could they influence the process.

The “Manchu period” has a wider definition in Inner-Asia then in the traditional Chinese chronology in which it is put into between 1644-1911 when the Qing dynasty was ruled China. Since the Inner-Asian grassland in its eastern edge also includes the Manchurian lands so the period stars a half century earlier here.

In the Manchu period in the typical two sided nomad-China conflict a new side is introduced. The appearance of the Russians in Siberian changed the power balance in the conquest of the region. Russia after the successful conquering of Siberia, with China a as great counter balance, could now defend its interests in the area. Although the 17-18<sup>th</sup> century Russian-Mongol diplomatic relationship has not brought any real success to the Russians, later it was a good foundation for building up the diplomacy. In the time of the Manchu's power decline the Mongols had a good opportunity for a Russian-Mongolian alliance.

It is very important to take in consideration in researching the Manchu period and the modern Mongol state formation the role of the Buddhist church. From the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century in part because of the strong aid of the emperor the Buddhist church played a big role into the consolidation of the Manchu power. At the same time by the end of the period at the Khalkha region the church spread so much that it could become an alternative for the worldly administration. At the collapse of the Manchu power the church could instantly become the non existing Mongol government. Thanks to this in 1911 the 8<sup>th</sup> head of the Mongolian church could became the head of

state and church.

The present work is based on the doctoral dissertation written in 2004 (Beginning of the Modern Mongolian State), which is mainly concentrated on the 1911-1921 decade, the time of the Mongolian theocracy. The connected researches to this work show that this period is more connected to the prior two centuries Manchu rule than to the 20<sup>th</sup> century 1921's revolution following events.

The Mongolian history writing till the 1990 government change, the ruling ideology negatively evaluated the Manchu period. In accordance to the western (soviet) evolutionist view of history this period was marked as "feudal". Taking in to consideration the nomad traditions and live style it is only partly right. The Mongolian Buddhist church and its head was considered the enemy of the country and its nation, also as the hindrance of further development of society.

The goal of the Mongolian history writing after the governmental change due to political changes is to reconsider some of the questions of Mongolian history. In pursuit of this goal the Mongolian Academy of Sciences Institute of History in 2004 published a five tome work.

The research of this period is helped by old and newly published sources. A part of the sources are not only available in Mongolian but in Russian and in English language. One of them is *Russko-mongolskiye otnosheniya 1607-1636* which was published in 1959 then in 1974 the second and in 2000 the third tome.

About the early Mongolian-Manchu interaction, the Manchu empire only starting to obtain its form and separated into small khaganates Mongolian lands, document are published in the *Manchu-Mongol Relations on the Eve of the Qing Conquest* volume.

Apart from the several foreign publications there is a few Mongolian publications of sources. After the change of political situation in the 1990 a lot of before closed archives or only available for few peoples were opened and now available for research. One of the most earliest of this kind of collection is the L. Jamsran: *Mongol tүүхийн деег бицэг*, in which in the third tome some in the Manchu period born documents are included.

Not long ago a scientific workshop was made for exploring the western-Mongolian area born historical works and Oyirad sources. The Mongolian Academy of Sciences Institute of Linguistics and with the help of the University Pedagogy department's young associates the *Biblioteca Oiratca* first ten tomes were published, which present in full modern Mongolian transcription Oirad-Mongol historical works.

There are also published work which don't concentrate directly at the Mongolian matters but with international political events which have great effect on the Mongolian history. Lot of these sources, contracts and correspondences are published in Mongolian. The present dissertation is connected to the tome published in 2001 of Russian-Chinese contracts. The listed above are all

post-soviet new direction of history research in Mongolia, they are all examples of the broader explorations of the sources and publishing.

In Mongolia after the 16<sup>th</sup> century mostly the lama biographies and historical work are the most important sources of the age. One that must be mentioned is the biographies of the heads of the church. One was translated by Ch. Bawden and on Tibetan source there was another published by the Mongolian Academy Institute of Linguistics and 8<sup>th</sup> Bogdo Gegen's biography also was published by them. In this topic there is already a small summery in Hungarian which was written by the presented works author in 2010.

The Mongolian State Archive has almost 4000 document of the Manchu period and are available for research. Most are monastery budget report and regional administration orders. Although non of these have a been published in Cyrillic.

The Mongolian State Archive may have some manuscripts which may excite the historians. Since the library contains more then 21 000 manuscripts their still might be undiscovered material. In here my researches first result was made, in 2004 published *Manchu-Mongol Diplomatic Correspondence 1635-1896* the first published tome of the seven. This work is essential because in Hohhot in Inner-Mongolian University of Mongol Studies Center has published 22 tome series on Manchu government documents concentrating on Mongolia.

In the research except the above mentioned there were new sources found. For example IV and V bogdo gegen biography manuscript, this is kept in the Mongolian State Central Library. Also in 63 volumes a Manchu period laws in Mongolia. The biographies and the law volumes were published in the *Treasures of Mongolian Culture and Tibeto-Mongolian Buddhism CD Series*. All these new sources can give us new shadowing and new insight of the age and might even give us an insight on the society of the time.

## **Research Methods**

This work is based on the past few years of research in Mongolia. While working with the historical documents I put most off the attention on the manuscripts on the Buddhist church and on exploring the lama biographies since this is the one of the main themes of my thesis. The heads of the Buddhist church and the bogdo gegen material can help us determining the exact role of the church head, his role in Mongolian history and how society was layered.

A specific part of the sources are the later Manchu period manuscripts which contain governmental edicts, church decisions and bogdo gegen or other main lamas decisions. Most of those apart from official collections are in private hand and due to be lost or ruined. Their

specificity is given by that they write about, events like the death of VIII bogdo gegen which greatly influenced Mongolian history.

Not only does the libraries give the above material but also gives a chance of comparing them and doing source critics. Some times in the research their was a need of correcting older age descriptions and by introducing newer data some older ides are put to question.

### ***Results of the Research***

The birth of the Mongolian independent state in the 20<sup>th</sup> century is a very long process heading back all the way to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Not only did the specific separation of the Mongolian lands play a role in this but also the neighboring powers performances. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the independent states final borders were mostly the agreements with the neighboring states that played a role. Looking at this from this perspective the Mongols had not a lot off saying or control off the events around them.

This piece of work proves that the neighboring states had a bigger role then it is given, in the Inner-Asia power structure and in the Mongolian state's birth. The conquest of Inner-Asian area of both the Russian and the Manchu resulted in more division and separation of the Mongol inhabited land.

### **The Presentation of the Political and social Role of the Buddhist Church by Introducing a New Source Group**

In the western-part of the Mongol region (nowadays Modern Mongolia) the Buddhist church has had great effect on society and also had political influence. It can be said, this gives this works its uniqueness, that the strengthening of gelugpa influence and the political role choosing of the Mongol high lamas has greatly influenced the process of the birth of the modern Mongolian state.

It is to be thanked to the Buddhist church's social influence and to the work of Öndör Gegen and his decedents, that after the collapse of the Manchu dynasty, the Mongolian Khalkha territories could make an independent state.

## **The Manchu Rule**

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century the Mongols lived in a very thin association with each other, step by step their could be discerned three groups. Living south of the Gobi dessert, which were conquered quite early, already in the end of the first third of the 17<sup>th</sup> century were under Manchu rule, not only did it politically separate them away from the rest of the Mongols but also administration wise. In all the territorial gains which the Manchus acquired were because they used up all the moment off the separation of the Mongols, by inviting an inner character who helped in the conquest of the given territory. The conquering of the Mongol land were divided into three discernible phases, the conquest was done step by step because of the Manchu powers also concentrating on other legions.

## **The appearance of the Russians**

The Russians didn't play a big role in the Inner-Asia history in the 17<sup>th</sup> century as they played in the last century. Their appearance in Siberia and the cossacks conquest's first goal was finding precious metals and tax collection.

The Mongol people although divided could fight back better the cossacks then the ancient inhabitants of Siberia. The Mongols on regular bases marauded the southern Russian castle territories and from the beginning of the century an exchange of diplomats between the Russians and the Mongols was common. After the tsar's government realized that only with strong effort could the Mongols be conquered, the area became interesting in trade towards China. Of course they did now give up the idea of conquering the territory but because of lack of military strength only diplomacy measures could be used.

The Njercsinski agreement with the Kjahta, Bura(both in 1758) and Peking(1760) agreements put down the exact borders of Russian-Chinese territory . For this paper the important agreements are the ones made in 1758 which discern the border land between China and Russia making the first lines to Mongolia's norther border. Was this the first step to the birth of Mongolia?

## ***The Oirad Khanate as an Independent State***

After the fall off the Yuan dynasty the Oyirad and the central Mongol territories were trying to make a centralization of the power, although they tried they slowly grew separate. In the first half of the XV century the Oyirad nobles had great influence over the central areas that the ruling great khans who were legitimate on their position were now only puppets of the Oyirads.

The Jungarian summit made base for the new states birth which didn't follow Chingis traditions. The Oyrads were not Chingis descendents, so they didn't even have a chance of making or legitimate "traditional" state. Only the kuriltai could give legitimization to this new state but since not following traditions it was not held in the central territories it can be considered as a separate state. Since the Oirad Khaganate although for a short period of time did rule the western part of Mongolia, it is more viewed as an independent state rather as a state of Mongolia. This is why it can't be taken into consideration in to as part of Mongolia's history.

### **The Birth of the Mongolian State**

The new Mongolian state after 1911 was not able to defend its independence even from China who was having serious inner political problems. The Mongol state was trying to build up not only with Russians diplomatic relations but with others but it was a failure.

In 1912-13 the two sided Russian-Mongol and Russian-Chinese agreements and in 1915 the three sided Kyahta agreement in which the Russians dictated the newly born Mongolia's borders a political status. The 1921 revolution which was the last chapter of the birth of the independent Mongolian state, it was already clear that these events were forged by the happening in Russia. At first in 1919-21 the Mongols were only trying to achieve their independence and separate from China but by the influence of the Bolsheviks it resulted in the fall of theocracy. Mongolia was engulfed in the Russian civil war.

After the end of the revolution there was a small transitional period which was ended by the death of the head of the church. The new powers with some edicts have already restricted the church leaders' power in 1921 and almost instantly propaganda was lunched against the old system, which tried to make the church and the head lamas as negative figures. From 1924 May after the death of the head of the church there was nobody and nothing in the way of new power and the soviet interests. The next 20 years of politics, with big help of the Soviet Union and Chinese agreements, the fully internationally recognized Mongol state was be born.

## Publications Connected to the Topic of the Dissertation

### Books:

*Manchu-Mongol Diplomatic Correspondence 1635-1896. Treasures of Mongolian Culture and Tibeto-Mongolian Buddhism Vol. 1.* ed. Bethlenfalvy Géza. State Central Library of Mongolia, Research Group for Altaic Studies Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest 2004. 246. p.

*A mongol fő lámák rövid története.* Magyar Vallástudományi Társaság, Budapest 2010. 138. p.  
(Brief History of the Mongolian Head Lamas)

### Articles:

The Status and Political Role of Mongolian Buddhism after the Political Transformation. In: *Mongolian Studies in Europe. Proceedings of the Conference held on 24–25, November in Budapest.* Ed. by Ágnes Birtalan. Department of Inner Asian Studies, Budapest 2010. pp. 117–127.

Kínai-mongol kapcsolatok a XX-XXI. század fordulóján. In: *Kínai történelem és kultúra. Tanulmányok Ecsedy Ildikó emlékére.* Szerk. Hamar Imre – Salát Gergely. Balassi Kiadó, Budapest 2009. pp. 242-256. (Chinese-Mongol relations on the Turn of the 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> Centuries)

Öndör Gegen Zanabazar and his Role in the Mongolian Culture. In: *Chronica. Annual of the Institute of History, University of Szeged.* Vol. 7-8. (2007-2008) pp. 233-241.

The Nomadic Culture, Society and the Founder of the Mongolian Buddhist Church. In: *Acta Mongolica.* Vol. 8 (306). Center for Mongolian Studies, Ulaanbaatar 2008. pp. 289-296.

A buddhista egyház a modern mongol társadalomban. In: *Keréknymok.* Orientalisztikai és Buddhológiai folyóirat. No. 4. 2008/nyár. Tan Kapuja Buddhista Főiskola, Budapest 2008, pp. 60-73. (The Buddhist Church in the Modern Mongolian Society)

A tibeti buddhizmus és politikai szerepe. In: *História* 2008/3. Budapest 2008, pp. 8-10. (The Tibetan Buddhist and It's Political Role)

A IX. halha Bogdo gegen Dzsebcundamba Rinpoce rövid életrajza és napjainkban betöltött szerepe. In: *Keréknymok.* Orientalisztikai és Buddhológiai folyóirat. No. 3. 2008/tél. Tan Kapuja Buddhista Főiskola, Budapest 2008, pp. 86-94. (The Eighth Jebcundamba Rinpoce and his Role in Nowadays)

Legitimáció. A mongol buddhista egyház szerepe a világi hatalom legitimációjában. In: *Ethnolore. A Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Néprajzi Kutatóintézetének Évkönyve XXV.* Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest 2008, pp. 54-70. (Legitimacy. The Role of the Buddhist Church in the Legitimacy of the Secular Power.)

Galdan szent fája. Egy szent hely tiszteletének történeti háttere. In.: *Bolor-un gerel.* szerk.: Ágnes Birtalan and Attila Rákos, Department of Inner Asian Studies of ELTE, Research Group for Altaic Studies of HAS, Budapest 2005, pp. 737-746.

- A mongol buddhista egyház politikai szerepvállalása a mongol autonómia idején. In. *II. Orientalista Nap 2001.* szerk. Birtalan Ágnes – Yamaji Masanori, MTA Orientalisztika Bizottság, ELTE Orientalisztikai Intézet Budapest 2002, pp. 141-155. Summary p. 171. (The Political Role of the Mongolian Buddhist Church During the Mongolian Autonomy.)
- A mongol buddhista egyház feje, a VIII. Bogd geegen élete és politikai szerepvállalása. In. *Helyszellemek kultusza Mongóliában. Őseink nyomán Belső-Ázsiában III.* szerk. Birtalan Ágnes. Budapest 2004, pp. 261-284. (Biography of the 8th Bogd geegen and His Role in the Mongolian Policy)
- Some Remarks about Mongol-Tibetan Treaty, 1913. In: *Altaica Budapestinensia MMII. Proceedings of the 45th Permanent International Altaistic Conference.* Ed. by Alice Sárközi – Attila Rákos. Dept. of Inner Asia of ELTE – Research Group for Altaic Studies of HAS, Budapest 2003. pp. 312-318.
- Some aspects of the Researches on Archive Materials Concerning the History of Mongolia at the Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. In: *Nomadic Newsletter.* No. 32. Ulaanbaatar 2002, p. 6.
- Társadalmi változások a Teokratikus Mongol Állam időszakában. In. *I. Orientalista Nap 2000.* Birtalan Ágnes – Yamaji Masanori (szerk.), MTA Orientalisztika Bizottság – ELTE Orientalisztikai Intézet. Budapest 2001, pp. 202-209.
- Függetlenség, vagy autonómia? In: *Új Keleti Szemle. III. évf. 1-2.* Budapest 2001, pp. 69-77. (Is It Independence or Autonomy?)