

Manchu Years in the History of Mongolia

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要 旨

本論文はモンゴルの歴史上、満洲族がモンゴルを支配した時期を分析対象として、いかにしてモンゴルの領域が満洲族に支配されるにいたったのか、その行政と社会組織、漢族商人のモンゴルとの交易について検討する。さらに、モンゴルがロシアとの関係を深めて行った過程、満洲族によるモンゴル支配がいかに行われるようになったのかを明らかにする。本論は、モンゴルの民族解放運動を検証するための前段階に位置づけられる。

Key words: Mongols, Mongolia, Manchu rule, Ching dynasty, Khan, khoshuu

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1. Historical insights on relations of Mongols and Manchus

By early 20th century Mongol territories were under Manchu or Ching dynasty rule, which lasted more than 200 years. Like any other nationals, who became subjects to the Manchu rule, Mongols certainly were not always obedient followers of their policy. Mongol nationals became parts of Ching dynasty one after another in accordance with their peculiar structure based on the regions. Therefore, it is not only interesting, but also important to see how the Manchus managed to rule such a big territory for such a long time.

With the fall of Yuan dynasty Mongols¹ were forced to go back to the north and that gave opportunities for Mongol princes to become the owners of their respective regions. Once the Mongol princes got the power to control their own regions, they became not interested in being subject to anyone's rule. Thus, they became engaged in the struggle to become the dominant power to have, if possible, all Mongol regions in their hands. The last khan who succeeded uniting most of sovereign princes of Mongolia under one roof was Batmunkh Dayan Khan² (1460-1543). Although he succeeded to control several Mongol territories, he divided the land among his sons like other Mongol khans did. In particular, "Khalkha Mongolia was given to two of his sons Alchibolod and Gersenz and that in the end led to the division of it into 'outer' and 'inner' Mongolia"³. Though Batmunkh Dayan Khan could maintain some sort of unification of Mongols, with his death Mongols became disintegrated again into several separate domains.

Historically Mongols divided their territory into baruun gar (right wing) and zuun gar (left wing) and sometime in their history they were called as six tumen⁴ of Mongols and four tumen of Oirats. The central part of Mongolia was called Khalkha Mongolia, which later became a base for today's Mongolia. The internal struggle of Mongol princes to be the dominant power to control Khalkha (Outer) Mongolia eventually made them come under the Manchu rule in 1691, after Inner Mongolia's capitulation to Manchus in 1636, and later Western Mongolia or Oirats in 1756. Here there is a need to talk briefly about Manchus. Who were they? How they became a powerful nation to control many Asian nationals, including Chinese, Mongols, Tibetans and others.

Manchus were nomadic people similar to Mongols. "The Manchurians or Manchu are one of the numerous southern-Tungus tribes inhabiting the territory of present-day north-eastern China... The Manchu tribe dwelt in the southern part of Manchuria."⁵ They became powerful after Nurhachi, a Jurchen chieftain, became the Manchu prince in 1575 by conquering small principdoms one after another, and declaring himself as the Khan of Manchu state in 1616, challenging the Chinese Emperor Wan-Li in Beijing. Though Nurhachi himself did not see the fall of China, his descendants, including his son Abahai saw the rise of Manchu state. "In 1635, Abahai announced that his people would no longer be called Jurchens or Chienchou Jurchens, as was the Chinese usage, but 'Manchus'. And then, in May 1636, with forty-nine Inner Mongolian princes in attendance, Abahai proclaimed himself emperor of the Ch'ing ("pure") dynasty. In 1638, he added to his governmental apparatus a Li-fan Yuan (Court for the Administration of Borderlands), charged with the handling of Mongolian affairs. The functions of that organ were destined to expand".⁶

Like other nationals, Mongols were resisting with all their power not to fall victims to the Manchu rule. However, as stated above their succession struggles among themselves made them vulnerable to outside forces. As the book *History of the Mongolian People's Republic* narrates, gradually the Manchus began to move into Mongol lands by “taking skillful advantage of feudal disintegration, bribing some Mongol princes, crushing others by force or arms”.⁷

Ligden Khan (1592-1634), the last Khan descended from Chinggis Khan, tried to unite separate Mongol princedoms once again and protect his nation from getting more powerful Manchu state. However, as there was no one vision among Mongol princes with regard to their struggle against the Manchu rule and this struggle was not understood as a struggle for the independence of all Mongols, Ligden Khan's efforts failed to bring positive results. It was also unfortunate that many Inner Mongolian princes wanted to get separated from Ligden Khan, instead of supporting him. Consequently, two opposing forces, one who supported Ligden Khan and another who did not, finally collided into armed clashes. Thus, Ligden Khan's efforts did not bring positive outcomes and as stated above many Inner Mongolian domains became parts of the Manchu state.

There were other Mongol princes in Zuun Gar (Oirat) or Western Mongolia. After Inner Mongolia was subjugated to the Manchu rule, Khalkha or Mongolian princes faced two choices: either combining its power with Zuun Gariin Khaant Uls or Dzungar khanate and fight against Manchus or recognizing the Manchu state. At this time two forces were in a fight in Zuun Gariin Khaant Uls, one group determined to establish the Oirat Uls and another group interested in preserving their separate domains. During the process of this struggle, Torguud⁸'s Kho-Urlug and Khoshuud⁹'s khundlen Ubash took their people to Volga river (Russia) and got settled there (present day Khalmukia in Russia). Goosh Khan or Khoshuud Turbaikh prince moved with his people into Khukh Nuur. Another important figure of this period, Baatar Khuntaij declared himself Khan of all Oirats in 1635 by establishing the Oirat state. At his initiative a congress of all Mongolian sovereign princes was held with representatives from Khalkha Mongolia, Oirat and Khukh Nuur's Mongol princes and Torguud princes of Volga river. This conference was seen an important move as it was organized during a very unstable period when Mongols were in fact divided into several parts and their both internal and external situations were in disarray. They discussed and approved “Tzaaz bichig”, which aimed at uniting their efforts against Manchu rule and making an end in their internal struggles.

Although the Mongols showed their interests in uniting their efforts, no positive actions were taken after the conference for the joint Mongol and Oirat struggle. After the death of Baatar Khuntaij his son Galdan seized the power. Galdan continued his father's policy to expand peaceful political and economic relations with Russia. He also tried to maintain trade relations with China by dispatching embassies and caravans there every year. However, his relations with the Manchus deteriorated after a Manchu Emperor Kansi put a limit to the number of embassies and caravans. "Realizing that in the person of Galdan he had a serious opponent, the Manchu Emperor Kansi made numerous efforts to set the other Mongol feudal nobles against Galdan".¹⁰ Subsequently the Manchus succeeded in provoking a war between Khalkha and Oirat Mongols in 1688 but Galdan managed to win the fight. The defeat of Khalkha Mongolia in an intra-Mongol struggle made them much more weaker and finally in 1691, "in an elaborate ceremony at Dolonor in Inner Mongolia, the subjection of the Khalkha Mongols to the Manchu rule was formalized, and eastern Mongolia effectively became a part of the Manchu empire".¹¹

It took about six more decades for the last Mongol state-Zuungar or Oirat Mongolia to fall a victim to the Manchu rule. During 1755-1758 Zuungar Mongolia was engaged in an active struggle against the Manchus and the major anti-Manchu movements were led by Amarsanaa, an Oirat-Mongol prince, and Chingunjav, a Khotogoid¹² Prince. Compared with the resistance of other Mongols' struggle against the Manchus, these revolts carried several peculiar characteristics: 1) it comprised all level of society, including arats (common people), low rank lamas and representatives of princes or high rank people with titles; 2) those engaged in revolts used not only arms but also used different opposing methods like leaving their Manchu duties, driving their cattle deep into the steppes and moving into other areas etc.; and finally, although most of the management of the revolts were carried out by high or low rank princes, in some places management of revolt groups were even in the hands of arats. Despite their active struggle, Oirat Mongol revolts were severely suppressed by the Manchus and finally with the fall of an Oirat Mongol state in 1756, all Mongolia became subjects to the Ching dynasty rule.

Thus, by late 18th century all Mongol territories, including Inner Mongolia, Khalkha Mongolia and Oirat Mongolia became parts of the Manchu state. Mongols lost all their power to have their own and independent policy regarding their territories. Under Manchu rule they had no Khan, no government and even no capital city and all its state authority was in the hands of the Manchu state and its Emperor. The Mongol princes were given the right to be in charge of their only regional offices. These offices, in turn, had to report on their activities to the Manchu Emperor.

The Manchus carried out separate policies with regard to the nationals who became their subjects, in particular with regard to the Chinese and Mongolians up to an early 20th century. Perhaps, as it is stated in a book titled *History of Mongolia*, they (Manchus) had doubt on their long lasting existence, thus, they pursued a policy to keep Mongolian affairs, which had a similar lifestyle to them, separate from the Chinese. And if their power failed to exist in Beijing, they might have thought that they could move their government to Mongolia. However, no such things were destined to be happened.

2. Administrative system and social structure of Mongolia under Manchu rule

The main apparatus that was governing Mongolia under the Manchu rule was the Ministry, governing state affairs of Outer Mongolia. It was located in Beijing and developed policies and guidelines to be used on Mongolia. The most authoritative organization of the Manchu state with a duty to control and supervise Outer Mongolia was located in Uliastai, a town in Western Mongolia. The following table illustrates the organizational structure of Khalkha Mongolia under the Manchu rule during 1691-1754 (Table 1).

During the Manchu rule aimag (some sources say aimak) became the main and major unit of the administration. After subjugating Mongolia, the Manchus remained Tusheet Khan, Setsen Khan and Zasagt Khan aimags as the main administrative units. In addition, they established Sain Noyon Khan aimag by taking 19 khoshuus from Tusheet Khan aimag. This aimag was established and given to a prince named Dashdondov for his assistance to the Manchus in a struggle against Oirat Mongols in 1725.

Khoshuus (banner) were governed by Zasag noyon¹³. They were similar to a division in military terms. The main unit under khoshuu was soum (squadron), which was similar to a military unit. A soum was formed of 150 men (of military age) with their families. If the number exceeded 150 men after establishing a soum, then a half soum or khondogo was formed. Soums were divided into arvans (arav means ten in numbers). Taijs¹⁴ were not subject to soums, instead they formed bags or otogs separately.

Ikh Khuree¹⁵'s Department was established in 1758 and was responsible for not only the affairs of Tusheet Khan and Setsen Khan aimags and Bogd Jibzundamba's shav' but also was responsible for the relations with Russia. In 1762 Khovd Department was formed and was in charge of affairs of a Khovd province.

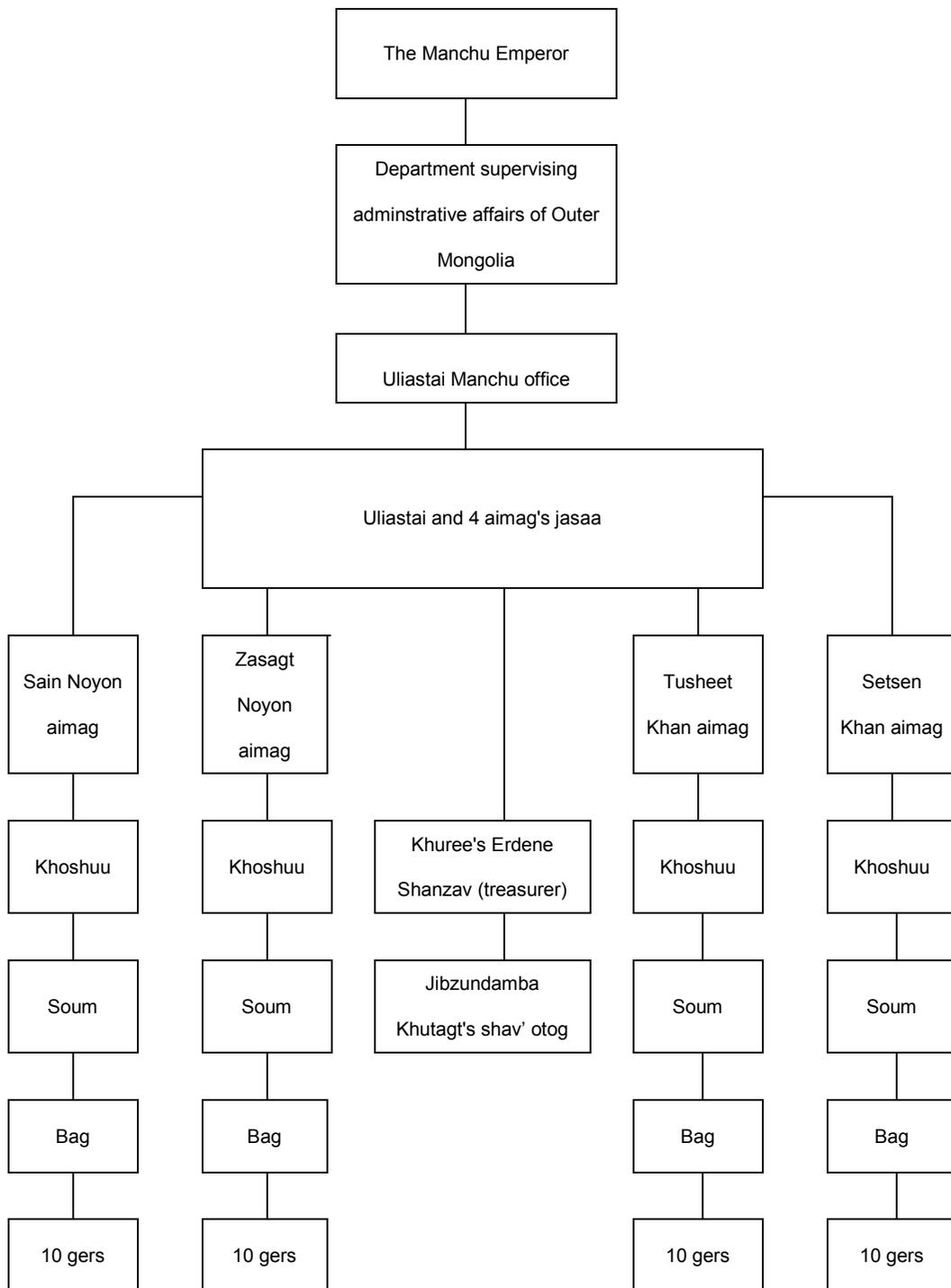


Table 1 Source: *History of Mongolia*. Ulaanbaatar: Admon Publishing House, 1999, p. 86

After occupying Oirat Mongolia, the Manchus created two aimags by dividing Durvud¹⁶ into left and right wings –Dalai Khan and Unen Zorigt Khan aimags in 1759. Moreover, they created many small khoshuus with an aim to prevent from any opportunities for all Mongols to become united. Consequently, Mongolia was divided into many small administrative units and by the 2nd half of the 18th century it had 125 khoshuus, which included Khuvsgul, Khovd and Tagna Uriankhai¹⁷ provinces as well.

During the Manchu rule, the population of Mongolia was divided into two categories as noble and non-noble citizens. The noble population was also divided among themselves as ruling (those who governed khoshuus) and non-ruling (those who did not). The remaining population was either arats¹⁸ or lamas. Arats in turn were divided into albat, khamjlaga¹⁹ and shavi nars²⁰. Arats were subject to Mongolian khoshuus or banners and in the end to the Manchu authority. They had no land and needed a permission to move from one place to another and in general were burdened by numerous labor and taxes. They were engaged in services such as postal relays, frontier guards, military men and herdsmen. Hamjlagas were owed by nobles, both ruling and non-ruling, and engaged in different types of services for their owners and their families. Shavis had the same fate as hamjlagas but were owed by monasteries and their khutagts.

As for lamas, they had an exclusive position during this period. Both the influence and number of monasteries and lamas or Buddhist priests increased. Lamas were divided among themselves into ranks and degrees. The highest role was given to khuvilgaans or “living gods” who were equal to upper class nobles. In 1641 the son of Tusheet Khan Gombodorj was promulgated as khuvilgaan under the name of Under Gegeen. He greatly influenced Khalkha princes to accept the Manchu rule during Doloon Nuur congress in 1691.

Consequently, the monasteries and temples became powerful and enormous amount of wealth was circulating in their hands. The monasteries were ruled by khutagts or senior monastery lamas, who in turn were divided into seal-bearing and non-seal bearing khutagts. According to the Manchu rule, seals were given to those khutagts whose shavi nars number reached 700 and there were 11 seal-bearing and around 50 non-seal bearing khutagts and khuvilgaans. The khutagts had their own shavi nars who played the same duties as albat arats. “Predictably, the Ch’ing government was sensitive to the importance of the Lamaist church and to the obedience it commanded among all Mongolian and Tibetan Buddhists.”²¹ Thus, they exempted higher rank lamas from service duties and payment of taxes. The highest-ranking khutagt was Jibzundamba (or

Javzandamba) Khutagt of Urga. Jibzundamba Khutagt's shavi system was formed when many princes had given shavi nars to Undur Gegeen. Later both human and material capital of Jibzundamba Khutagt was called Ikh shav' (great disciple). Most of its wealth was formed of gifts (including men) and offers given to the monastery and by "...1873, the then Bogd Javzandamba, the head of Mongolian religion, had under him 9.916 households, totaling 83.983 people. Their total herd counted half a million head, of which 36.000 were the property of the supreme lama."²²

As shav' was also exempted from most of the taxes and duties, there had been many who wanted to be shavi nars. In addition, many nobles registered their livestock on the name of monasteries and lamas, and this later (when the Manchu regime fell) led to many arguments over who owned the cattle. However, the Manchu government started taking some restrictive measures against the above-stated practices. They issued an order under which only lamas who were residing in the monastery and those, who did not possess any livestock in the countryside, could benefit exemptions from services and taxes.

As most of the men of the country were engaged in religious activities, Mongolia had not seen any progressive improvements with regard to the economy in early 20th century. "Lamaism diverted a considerable proportion of the male population from productive labour, thus impeding the development of the national economy and holding back the growth of the country's population."²³ The country was facing serious problems, in particular, impoverished economy, high taxes, decreases in the number of population as well as cattle, and enormous debts owed to the Chinese merchants.

3. Trade relations with the Chinese merchants

Both Mongolia and China became subjugated to the Manchu or Ching dynasty rule and although the Manchus had given to Manchu, Mongol and Chinese languages official status, it pursued different policies with regard to Mongolia and China. The Manchus did not want to mingle all the nationalities, which were under their control. Perhaps, they were fearing of any possible opposition that may be carried out collectively by different nationalities against their rule. Or perhaps, as earlier stated, they were not sure of their eternal existence. Thus, if they failed in one area they might have thought that they could move to another one.

Moreover, the Manchus also prohibited intermarriages among Mongols and Chinese, use of Chinese language in Mongolia, and Chinese traders bringing their families to Mongolia.

However, commercial relations between Mongolia and China did have a special impact in relations between these countries. Prior to the Manchu rule, Mongolia had trade relations with China on its frontier areas. As Manchus had no intention to mix the nationalities under its rule, it was employing a strict policy towards the Chinese merchants. To conduct trade in Mongolia the Chinese needed to have trading licenses. At the beginning only three places were authorized for trade activities - Khaalgan, Khukh-khot and Doloon Nuur. Later the Manchus allowed the Chinese traders to go to other areas but special restrictions were imposed, for example, on the number of people staying in one place, the kind of items, and etc. At the same time, a one-year time limit was imposed for those who wished to remain longer.

Trade relations between Mongolia and China were based on a barter trade. Livestock produces were the main items for such a trade as Mongolia's economy is based on animal husbandry since old times. Mongols grow five types of domestic animals, which include sheep, goat, horse, cow and camel. These animals are bred and trained from wild animals, thus, they suit well to the constant migration or lifestyle of nomadic people. In addition, this economy has a seasonal character as livestock produces can be processed only during warm seasons.

Despite the Manchu restrictions, the number of Chinese merchants was growing. They were settled in populated areas of Mongolia such as Urga, Khyagta, Uliastai and Khovd. As stated above, Mongolians used their livestock produces as trade items and purchased in return Chinese silk, cotton fabrics, tea, tobacco, metal, porcelain and pottery wares, and household items. Due to the seasonal character of their economy, Mongolians had to purchase necessary items on credit, which later became the main cause of the impoverishment of the population and badly hurt the whole economy of the country.

Credit operations of Chinese traders dated back to the late 17th century. At the initial stage, though the Manchus were imposing various restrictions, the Chinese managed to have a firm base in Mongolia. For Chinese traders it was a profitable business and they used any opportunity to charge high interest rates. There were such big money-lending or usurer firms as Da Shin Ku, Tyan I de (or Nast), Yuan Shan de, Se Sun chan,

Yun She hyo whose capital was worth of 40 million roubles.²⁴ Besides providing high interest credits, they got a huge profit by purchasing cattle and raw materials at a very low price in Mongolia and selling them at a higher price in China. For instance, “the Chinese were purchasing a sheep for a half brick of tea and a horse for 7 bricks of tea and selling a sheep for 3 lan²⁵s (1 lan was worth 10 bricks of tea in Khaalgan then) and a horse for 18 lans”.²⁶

Some large Chinese trading firms in Mongolia formed a joint company. Such companies set monopoly prices for raw materials as well as for transportation of such goods. They increased the high annual interest rate of 36%, set by the Manchu government, as many times as they wished by adding more interests if a borrower failed to pay debts by due date. In some cases, such people were obliged to perform any types of work for the usurers. Therefore, by the late 19th century the economy of the Mongolia was in disorder due to huge debts owed to the Chinese usurers, decrease in number of livestock and rising taxes. Mongolian nobles were also using the service of usurers and even some of the high-ranking nobles were shifting their personal debts to the people of their khoshuu or soums, and that made the lives of ordinary people unbearable.

4. What Manchu rule brought to Mongolia?

Hence, it is important to see what the Manchu rule brought to Mongols and Mongolia. How they managed to control Mongolia more than 200 years. From the above discussion the following conclusions can be made. What Mongolia gained or lost:

1. Disintegration: The Manchus tried to make Mongols as disintegrated as possible. Thus, regions already in disintegration were easy targets though some could resist for quite a long time. The Manchus knew that united Mongols would be very difficult to deal with, so, they took all possible measures to divide Mongolia into many small units. As a result, Mongolia was divided administratively into 4 aimags, which in turn into many khoshuus, and they were followed by soums, bags and gers respectively. In addition, such a division made the population split up and scattered over a huge territory.
2. Poverty: Mongolian people became highly dependent on Manchu or Chinese usurers who were charging enormous rates for any types of credits. As stated earlier, they charged a very high interest

rate on credits, which were supposed to be paid within a certain period of time. If such a time limit expired, they added up another interest and such a cycle was continued further. Consequently, the borrowers, mainly arats became tied in most cases for the rest of his life to the usurers. To such a heavy burden of themselves they also had to pay for the loans made by their princes of khoshuu or soums. It made the life of ordinary people enormously difficult as they became impoverished in masses.

3. Backward economy: Although social life did not change much during the Manchu rule, no change was seen in the development of Mongolian economy. Its economy remained as backward after more than 200 years of Manchu ruling.
4. Illiteracy: The major teaching that was practiced in Mongolia was Lamaism which had its roots in Tibet. Consequently, all religious books were written in Tibetan, thus, any religious services were conducted in Tibetan. For the majority of population these religious services and preaching were something very magic and important. Only lamas with high ranks could understand them and shavnars who became pupils of religious centers had to memorize all the preaching or incantations. Besides shavi centers, there were no other educational institutions and the majority of population was illiterate. Consequently, no journals or newspapers were published in Mongolian.
5. Decrease in the number of population: For various reasons, including support by the Manchu rulers the expansion of religion in Mongolia and tax benefits for religious centers and their permanent settlers-lamas, the number of lamas was on increase. Therefore, out of 100,000 male population 70,000 were lamas at the onset of the 20th century²⁷ and Mongolia was experiencing low rates in both marriages and birthrates. At the same time, medical services were rather primitive as it was mainly based on incantations or prayers. If prayers did not help Tibetan medicine was used. All these factors, as some scholars observe, made the number of population drop significantly.
6. Decrease in the number of livestock: The country's main economy animal husbandry suffered greatly during this period as well. Mongolians used their cattle and their produces as the main trading items and borrowed heavily from Chinese traders on credit. Consequently, the number of livestock decreased in huge numbers.

Although Manchu years brought such negative consequences how they managed to control this country for such a long period of time? Firstly, as most scholars observe the Mongolian princes' struggle to be a

dominant power on Mongol territories made them an easier target for a Manchu penetration. To weaken the strong determination of Mongol princes not to be subjects of the Manchu rule, the outsiders used the princes themselves smartly. As Thomas E. Ewing points out, "...it was the ruling nobles (banner princes) who were objects of Manchu interest—sometimes affectionate, sometimes implacable, but never impassive. Descended from Chinggis Khan, they claimed to be the lawful and hereditary rulers of Mongolian society, and the Ch'ing did all it could reinforce this claim. Ultimately, the success of Manchu rule hinged on the support which it could draw from the princes, and the institutional history of the Ch'ing administration of Mongolia testifies to how profoundly the Manchus understood this."²⁸ This way the Manchus used smartly the Mongol princes' struggle among themselves by at times supporting some of the princes, at times putting them against one another or suppressing them when force as needed. As a result, they managed to have all Mongol territories under their rule region after region. Secondly, when Manchus became the rulers of Mongol territories they divided them into many small units as they were fearing from any possible unification of Mongol princes. After the Manchus divided the territories into aimags, khoshuus and other small units, they gave power to control their respective territories to the princes of aimag, khoshuus and other units. When such princes or leaders got the power to control their own territories they did not fight against the regime as what they were offered, a territory, a title, a monetary allowance etc. were better offers than to fight with one another for a power. For Mongol princes at that time the most important thing was to keep their power in their sovereign territories as well as keep their titles as the rulers over their territories. Thus, Manchus introduced such titles as van, beil, beis and gung and respective monetary allowances for these titles. It looked as if they had not changed the Mongol princes' titles and power, but in fact they were titles and power authorized by the Manchu state. Thirdly, the Manchus exercised favorable policies towards the religious centers, their leaders and religion as a whole. They excluded high-ranking religious leaders, their monasteries, and those lamas who permanently staying in monasteries from taxes and duties. Of course, such a policy was greeted with a pleasure on the religious side. The lamas became silent prayers who did not wish to be engaged in a fight against the Manchu regime. This in turn made the male population of the country less productive as most of the men became permanent settlers of the monasteries and temples. Consequently, Mongolia was lacking to have its permanent army and effective soldiers. Finally, all the above-mentioned factors hindered the development of not only the economy but also the population growth as well. Both external and internal factors contributed negatively for Mongolia to have a leader who could have the country in his hands. More

than 200 years of Manchu domination exhausted the country and dissatisfaction with the Manchu regime was on rise not only in Mongolia but also in other territories ruled by the Manchus in early 20th century.

5. Relations with Russia

As for external relations, Mongolia did not exercise independent policy under the Manchu rule. When Manchus were expanding its areas into Mongol territories some of Mongol sovereign princes did have independent external relations mainly with Russia. During Baatar Khuntaj's rule Western Mongols had maintained both diplomatic and commercial relations with Russia. As mentioned earlier, during the early years of the Manchu rule Ikh Khuree's Department was in charge of Mongolian affairs with Russia. However, when Manchus were gaining more power and territories they prohibited Mongolia to have independent foreign policy with regard to Russia. It wanted to make Mongolia as isolated as possible fearing for the penetration of not only Russia but also other countries' penetration into this land. As a result, Mongol princes became responsible only for their local affairs and had a duty to report to the Manchus. Such a policy consequently made Mongolian princes passive observers of the world situation. Although Mongol princes reached Russia to ask for their assistance several times, when they faced a threat to their existence, particularly early 1600s and 1757. However, they were not provided the support they wanted except for occasional assistances. Russia, perhaps, either was not ready to be involved in the Mongolian affairs. Or perhaps, they sensed the situation that a lot more powerful state, in the name of Ching dynasty, was emerging on the land of China, in the East.

Thus, the succession struggle of Mongol sovereign princes made this country remain disintegrated for a long time and eventually two of its neighbors had been given the opportunity to expand their dominance over the Mongolian affairs. Such a vulnerable position was also facilitated with the fact the Mongolia lacked a solid leader who could unite all the sovereign princes and control such a vast territory. The small principedoms scattered over a huge territory and their constant struggle for power opened spaces for outside forces to come and maintain their control.

As for relations between Mongolia and Russia, they had no permanent character. In their struggle against each other some of Mongol princes were seeking Russian help and even sometimes agreed to be under a

Russian protectorate. However, such agreements bore a permanent nature and as Thomas E. Ewing points out “their interest invariably cooled once the threat had passed (apparently only the Altyn Khan Ombo Erdene in the 1630s actually did swear fealty to the Tsar)”.²⁹ After Altan Khanate became a part of Zasagt Khan their relations with Russia were diminished. Torguuds, a part of Oirat Mongols, started developing friendly relations with Russia and as stated previously Kho-Urlug prince moved to Volga river with his people and established there Kalmyk Khanate. When Oirat Mongols became powerful they did develop more frequent relations with Russia. In particular, during Baatar Khuntaij’s rule they had more regular trade relations with Russia. After his death his son Galdan continued such relations with Russia. When Mongols were facing the Manchu threat they sought for Russian help as well. However, Russia was not keen to interfere as either it did not want to worsen its relations with the Manchus or they were not ready to come to this area as it had other concerns on its other borders.

However, the situation had changed after Mongolia was subjugated to the Manchu state. Although Mongolia did have some independent foreign policy with regard to Russia, it did not last long. Consequently, Russia and Manchu became the ones who to decide the fate of Mongolia. They signed the Treaty of Nerchinsk (or Nerchuu) in 1689 and the Khyagta Treaty in 1727 where they defined their respective borders. Khyagta Treaty, as Baabar observes “as compared with the Nerchuu treaty of forty years previous, this one provided a clearer framework for the relations between the two countries and fixed their joint border from Central Asia to the Pacific shores. Mongols of Lake Baikal region were to become Russia’s subjects, and Mongols south of the Selenga those of China. But the state of Zuungar-lands to the west of the Uriankhai territory, known to be the geographical center of the Asian continent-managed to remain independent.”³⁰

For some time there was not much contact between Mongolia and Russia. General Muraviev’s trip to China made the Russians to turn their interests to Mongolia again. Muraviev, a governor general of Eastern Siberia, became a historical figure for his role to bring Amur basin region under Russia’s control. Subsequently under Aigun and Tientsin Treaties of 1858 and Beijing Treaty of 1860 not only Amur region but also PriAmur, Ussuri regions as well as some parts of Central Asia became parts of Russia’s jurisdiction. General Muraviev even suggested that Russia should also bring Mongolia under its control by writing in 1853 “In case the Manchu Dynasty fell and decided to retreat into its homeland in Manchuria, we should act at once to take steps to prevent a new Chinese government in Peking from extending its authority over Mongolia, which in

such an event could be proclaimed our protectorate”.³¹ Thus, a special Committee (Amur Committee) reviewed Muraviev’s report but suggested to have friendly relations with Mongols. The reason for making such a decision is quoted in *Between the Hammer and the Anvil? Chinese and Russian Policies in Outer Mongolia, 1911-1921* as “...in the opinion of the Committee any unnecessary participation in this matter, and in particular the placing of these two provinces (Manchuria and Mongolia) under our protection, will on the contrary arouse the opposition of the European powers and could force them moreover to occupy any part of China, Korea for example, and thereby put us in contact with a neighbor far more dangerous than the territory of China”.³²

Though Russia was not enthusiastic in interfering into Mongolian affairs due to various reasons, it did develop commercial activities in Mongolia. In 1860 Russia opened its consulate in Urga³³ and in about two decades the Russians were given rights for unrestricted trade and movement throughout Mongolia. These commercial rights were resulted from a number of agreements, which were finally made into a Russo-Chinese Treaty in 1881. Many Russian firms operated in Urga and other towns along with the Chinese firms. Moreover, the Russians were given the rights to open consulates in other Mongol towns such as Khovd and Uliastai.

Russia could not compete the Chinese firms which had made a firm base there, although it opened commercial firms and was engaged in commercial activities. Consequently the number of Russian firms started to decline. In 1910 P.P. Riabushinskii, a Moscow merchant, organized a conference with representatives of Moscow firms and banks in Moscow. This conference issued a decision to dispatch a group of Russian merchants to Mongolia with an aim “to survey travel routes, trade centers, the nature of imports and exports between Mongolia and Russia, the way of life and needs of the Mongolian population, and, in particular, the situation in the northern and northwestern Mongolian towns of Urga, Uliastai, and Kobdo. Special focus was to put on the inroads allegedly being made by Chinese merchants in the northwest”.³⁴ Upon their return, they published articles on their trip with a title *The Moscow Trade Expedition to Mongolia*, which provided a valuable information on the trade situation, the statistics on Mongolian imports and exports as well as on a whole Mongolia. Moreover, they indicated their concerns over the decline of Russian trade in Mongolia and agreed on their observation that the Chinese managed to control the trade activities there as they were well organized, united and had a good support of the local government. On the contrary, the

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Russian merchants in Mongolia were not organized and coordinated though the Russian consulate was operating for about 40 years. Prior to this expedition there had been several other expedition groups from Russia, headed N.M. Przhevalsky, G.N. Potanin, P.K. Kozlov, G.E. Grumn-Grzhimailo, B.Ya. Vladimirtsov and V.A. Obruchev, which did extensive research in Mongolia.

Besides the unfavorable position of Russian merchants, the international situation did contribute for Russia not to be involved in full scale in the affairs of Mongolia. Although Russia saw in Mongolia a strategic position in its Far East, it did not take an active participation in this area unless a real threat to the Russian security was seen there. At the same time, Russia was aware of other Western nations' interests in securing their commercial rights in different strategic regions of China, thus, they were waiting for an opportunity to claim their interests as well. Nevertheless, Russia did make two different agreements, one with Britain and another with Japan, which directly or indirectly concerned the position of Mongolia. In 1899 Russia and Britain signed an agreement where they recognized each other's spheres of influences respectively. According to this Scott-Muraviev agreement, the Yangtze was recognized as Britain's sphere of influence whereas the territory north of the Great Wall, including Mongolia, as Russia's sphere of influence.

There was another interested party, besides Western powers, in the affairs of Far East – Japan. Russia and Japan had tried to reach consensus on their interests in China, including Manchuria, several times. Consequently these two powers clashed in a Russo-Japanese war which brought a victory to a Japanese side. They finally reached an agreement with respect to their spheres of influences in this region, Russia recognizing southern Manchuria and Korea as Japan's spheres of interests while northern Manchuria and Mongolia were recognized as Russia's respectively.

Thus, Mongolia had a subordinate position in Russia's foreign policy regarding the Far East until the beginning of the 20th century. The Russians had extensive borderlines with China whom they wanted to have friendly relations whether they were Manchus or Chinese. China was the biggest trading partner to Russia. In addition, Russia like other Western powers were seeking special privileges in China, in particular in Manchuria, thus, they had to be careful of the Western powers' reaction when dealing with different affairs there.

6. References

- 1 A word Mongols is used to refer to all Mongols, including Inner and Western Mongolia.
- 2 Batmunkh or Dayan Khan's life is shown in a Mongolian historical film titled "Mandukhai Tsetsen Khatan".
- 3 *History of Mongolia*. Ulaanbaatar: Admon Publishing House, 1999, p. 116.
- 4 Tumen can be understood as small kingdoms.
- 5 *History of the Mongolian People's Republic*. Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2000, p. 169.
- 6 Clubb, Edmund O. *China and Russia: The Great Game*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1971, p. 20.
- 7 *History of the Mongolian People's Republic*. Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2000, p. 170.
- 8 Ethnic group of Western Mongolia
- 9 Ethnic group of Western Mongolia
- 10 *History of the Mongolian People's Republic*. Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2000, p. 174-5.
- 11 Clubb, Edmund O. *China and Russia: The "Great Game"*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1971, p. 35.
- 12 Ethnic group of Western Mongolia
- 13 A title for a higher ranking person, similar to lord or prince
- 14 Taij – a title of nobility held by the descendents of Chingis Khan and his brothers in the Borjigin line.
- 15 The capital city of Mongolia was called Ikh Khuree then
- 16 Durvud – ethnic group of Western Mongolia. By then so called Durvud tumen (a small principedom) included in itself besides durvud other ethnic groups such as bayad
- 17 Today's Kalmykia
- 18 Common people
- 19 working people
- 20 pupils of monasteries and temples
- 21 Uralic and Altaic Series. Volumes 138-139 (Thomas E. Ewing. Between the Hammer and the Anvil? Chinese and Russian Policies in Outer Mongolia. 1911-1921). London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004, p. 11.
- 22 Baabar. *History of Mongolia*. Ulaanbaatar: Monsudar, 2004, p. 94.
- 23 *History of the Mongolian People's Republic*. Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2000, p. 194.
- 24 *History of Mongolia*. Ulaanbaatar: Admon Publishing House, 1999, p. 276.
- 25 tael, ounce (usually of silver)
- 26 *Ibid.*, p. 276.
- 27 Baabar. *History of Mongolia*. Ulaanbaatar: Monsudar. 2004, p.99.
- 28 Uralic and Altaic Series. Volumes 138-139 (Thomas E. Ewing. Between the Hammer and the Anvil? Chinese and Russian Policies in Outer Mongolia. 1911-1921). London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004, p. 10.
- 29 Uralic and Altaic Series. Volumes 138-139 (Thomas E. Ewing. Between the Hammer and the Anvil? Chinese and Russian Policies in Outer Mongolia. 1911-1921). London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004, p. 17.
- 30 Baabar. *History of Mongolia*. Ulaanbaatar: Monsudar, 2004, p. 87.
- 31 Rupen, Robert. *How Mongolia is really ruled. A Political History of the Mongolian People's Republic, 1900-1978*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1979, pp. 6-7.
- 32 Uralic and Altaic Series. Volumes 138-139 (Thomas E. Ewing. Between the Hammer and the Anvil? Chinese and Russian Policies in Outer Mongolia. 1911-1921). London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004, p. 19.
- 33 Urga or Urgee – then the capital city of Mongolia
- 34 Endicott, Elizabeth. *Russian Merchants in Mongolia: The 1910 Moscow Trade Expedition*. Published in. Stephen Kotkin and Bruce A. Elleman (eds). *Mongolia in the Twentieth Century: Landlocked Cosmopolitan*. Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1999, p. 60.

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