

The story of Dugar Jaisang and Mongolian folk understandings of Tibeto-Mongolian relations

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Late 19th –early 20th century accounts of Tibeto-Mongolian relations, from the point of view of Mongols, exist in several genres. One of these we may call academic in the European style. Among the various Mongol peoples, the Buryats especially – for among them several scholars were educated at Russian universities – developed a significant historical literature. The work of Dorzhi Banzarov, Galsan Gomboev, Tsybyk Zhamtsarano and Gombozhap Tsybikov, included studies related to Tibet written in objective style, aiming at historical veracity and published in Russian. A different genre, a cross between the *namtar* and personal reminiscences, is evident in the autobiographies of the Buryat activist lama Agvan Dorzhiev, advisor to the 13th Dalai Lama. Dorzhiev's writing combines a factual account of his activities with value-laden diatribes generated by the complex, conflictual politics of the revolutionary era. Much less is known, however, even by readers of the Mongolian and Russian language literature, about the view of Tibeto-Mongolian relations of 'ordinary people' – that is, people who may have been educated but were not transformed by European-style university education or by experience in high international politics. The proposed paper concerns such quasi-mythic views, in particular the story of Dugar Jaisang as recounted in Buryatia and Eastern Inner Mongolia in the first half of the 20th century. The popularity in regional culture of this story is evident from the fact that paintings and sculptures of Dugar Jaisang were commonly found in many monasteries and even continued to be produced and sold in Mongolian state art departments during the Socialist period.

Important sources of local views on Tibet are the numerous chronicles of Buryat history held in the archives of the Academy of Sciences in Ulan-Ude and the collections of oral narratives made by ethnographers of the period (Natsov, Potanin, Pozdeyev, Zhamtsarano, and others). In the late 19th century Buryat chronicles Tibet appears as the great 'land of snows', a place of consolidation (not of origin) of kingship and religion. If India is the place of origins, Tibet is where magical and unearthly events took place, along with wars and internal conflicts. Curiously, Mongols, or the principle of a Mongol presence, is central to all of this, and especially to kingship. There is a strange circularity, such that kingship, which originates as 'Mongolian' then evolves, though the splitting-off of younger sons,, into further kingly Mongolian and Buryat lines. Thus in Yumsunov's chronicle of the Hori Buryats kingship is said to have originated in India in the Sakya clan – which took descent however from the line of Mongolian kings called 'Raised by All'. When the Sakya king went to Tibet, it was because he came from the 'eternal kingly line', and bore numerous signs of supernatural powers, that he was recognised and raised to be the King of the Tibetans. Ancestors of both the Halh Mongolians and the Hori Buryats were descendants of this line. Kingship is here recognised to have its own magical power independent of religion. It

was only in a later age, when holy Chinggis Khan made an arrangement with the Sakya Lama Gunga Nimbu, and the latter sent talismans and relics to Mongolia, that the Mongols became acquainted with Buddhism. Even here, at the famous point of origin of the pact between kingship and religion, the Buryat accounts give precedence to kingly rule. It was said that when Chinggis, conquered Tibet and united its people, the festival of the New Year was changed to coincide with the anniversary of this date. The king could reorganise time itself. The lamas had to unite their festivals and rituals with the new calendar, and from this time onwards the New Year festival became recognised as a Buddhist one.

The story of Dugar Jaisang fits with this general line of emphasis. According to materials gathered by Natsov among Buryats in the 1920s–30s, Dugar Jaisang was a minor Mongol ruler who saved the Gelugpa religion. He set off to Tibet in the period of the 6th Dalai Lama to destroy its Ningmapa enemies, headed by a Ningma ruler descended from Gushi Khan. In one version, this attack was accomplished by force of arms and involved much killing. But the popular version, and that illustrated in countless paintings, has it that Dugar Jaisang magically enslaved a tiger, which became his supernatural weapon against the wrong believers (in various versions these are Bonpo or Karmapa). Misbehaving lamas, even of the Gelugpa, were punished and expelled from the monasteries. It is said that the Tibetan custom of showing one's tongue on meeting originated with Dugar Jaisang's purge. Anyone belonging to the infidel sect would have a black striped tongue, and he killed such people without mercy. The iconography of Dugar Jaisang is not Buddhist, however. He is depicted 'structurally' as a master of the whole of nature. The armed warrior subduing the tiger is the main subject, but visually balanced opposite to the tiger (fierce wild animal) is the tethered camel (tame domestic animal) on which Dugar Jaisang was riding to Tibet. In the other two corners of the painting are the deer roaming on the hill and the swans floating below on the lake. Trees to the left are balanced by rocks on the right, and in the sky a red sun is matched by a white moon.

The story of Dugar Jaisang is held by Mongols to be a 'reminder' to the Tibetans: Gelugpa Buddhism was rescued by our Mongol warrior. This idea was still current in the 1930s. According to one Mongolian lama who spent time in several Tibetan monasteries, when the Tibetan lamas became irritated at the learning and overweening ability of the Mongol lamas and threatened to send them home, the Dalai Lama is said to have pronounced as follows:

"Don't forget Dugar Jaisang has reached the age of ten, he's looking at us, he's laughing" (Dugar Jaisang arab xurchigeed, nash xaraad, ineej baina). This meant, Dugar Jaisang has been reincarnated and is reaching maturity and he may attack again.

In general Tibet appears as the deeply respected 'high' (deed) country, in contrast to the 'lower' (door) lands of the Mongols, and these terms do not only refer to geography. Nevertheless, folk accounts indicate that Mongolian peoples felt the qualities of Mongolness to be fundamental to the constitution of Tibet. A pure militancy, which contained its own supernatural power, was intrinsic to the upholding of the true religion.