

Religious Tolerance and the State in the Republic of Kalmykia

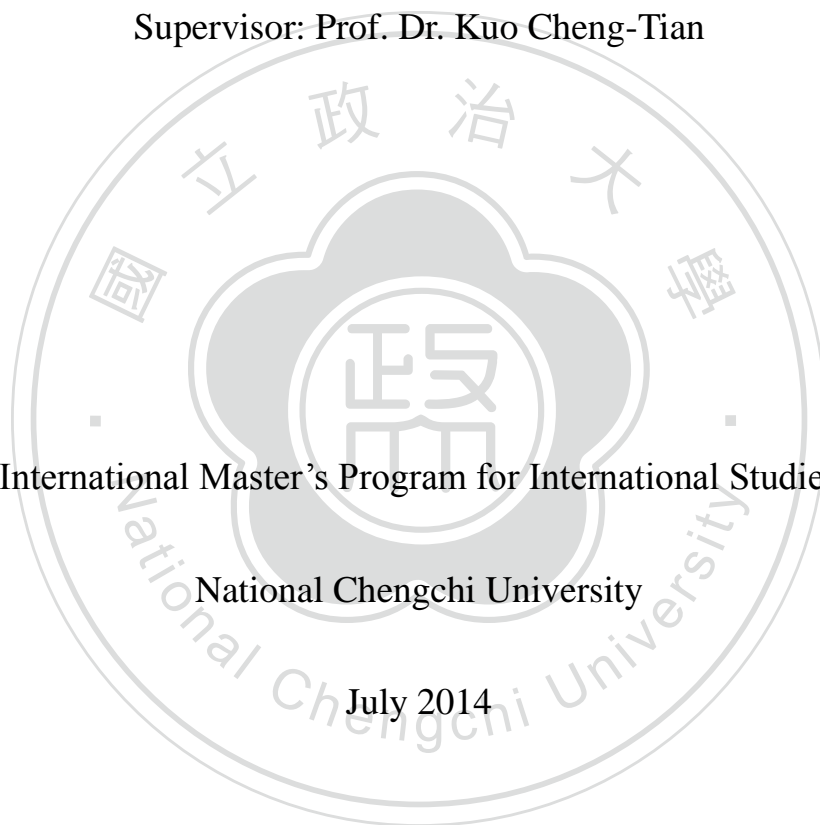
Kuberlinova Elzyata

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Kuo Cheng-Tian

International Master's Program for International Studies

National Chengchi University

July 2014



Abstract

這篇研究宗教與政治的關係、。我把卡爾梅克為例，從 1640 到 1995 我分析卡爾梅克佛教的變化與發展。再加上，我認為現在卡爾梅克共和國宗教寬容跟卡爾梅克佛教有關。我把卡爾梅克族宗教歷史分成三個階段：1640-1917 俄羅斯帝國，1922-1939 蘇聯，1991-1995 俄羅斯聯邦。論文結論是從 1640 到 1995 卡爾梅克佛教通過民主化的過程變了十分寬容，因此民族性與宗教之衝突非常少見。

This thesis explores the evolvement of Kalmyk Buddhism through the period of 1640 to 1995. Looking at the changes in religious theology, polity, and interaction with the state of Kalmyk Buddhism, I argue that these three dimensions went through the democratization process, and now in its current state contribute to the religious peace and tolerance in the modern Kalmykia.

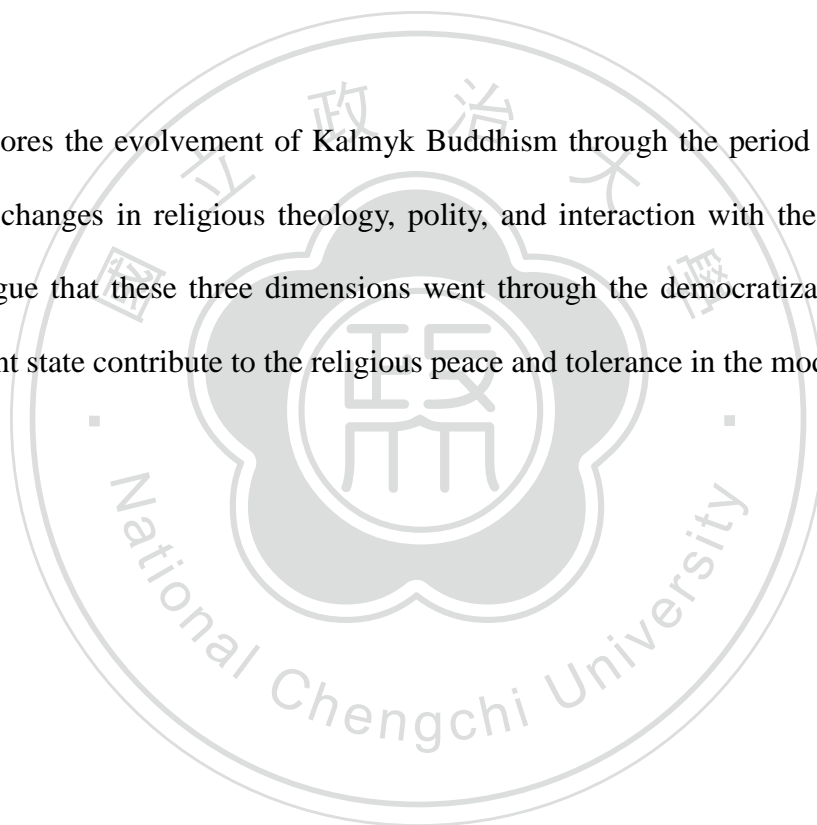


Table of Content

Chapter 1. Introduction.....	4
Chapter 2.Theoretical Framework.....	13
2.1. Literature Review on Religion and State Interactions	13
2.2. Buddhist Political Theology	20
2.3. Research Methodology	29
Chapter 3. Kalmyk Buddhism and the State from 1640 to 1917	34
3.1. Religious Situation in the Russian Empire	34
3.2. Political Theology of Kalmyk Buddhism	38
3.3. Religious Polity of Kalmyk Buddhism	42
3.4. Political Interactions between Kalmyk Buddhism and the Russian Empire.....	48
3.5. Summary.....	54
Chapter 4. Kalmyk Buddhism and the State from 1922 to 1939	56
4.1. Religious Situation in the Soviet Union.....	56
4.2. Political Theology of Kalmyk Buddhism	58
4.3. Religious Polity of Kalmyk Buddhism	61
4.4. Political Interactions between Kalmyk Buddhism and the Russian state	64
4.5. Summary.....	67
Chapter 5. Kalmyk Buddhism and the State from 1988 to 1995	69
5.1. Religious Situation in the Russian Federation	69
5.2. Political Theology of Kalmyk Buddhism	73
5.2. Religious Polity of Kalmyk Buddhism	78
5.4. Political Interactions between Kalmyk Buddhism and the Russian state	85
5.5. Summary.....	88
Chapter 6. Conclusion	90
Bibliography	95
Appendix 1.....	108
Appendix 2.....	109

Chapter 1. Introduction

Many popular conceptions tend to identify “authentic” Buddhism with nonviolence and peace has been understood to lie at the very heart of Buddhism. Buddhist precepts prohibiting killing and Buddhist texts speak in details about the moral consequences, in this and future lives, of harming another sentient being, human or otherwise.¹ Moreover, in contrast to other religions, neither a belief in religious redemption through warfare like the Crusades, nor special doctrines to mobilize religious masses against unbelievers exist in Buddhism. Therefore, Buddhist communities generally do not unite across national boundaries for a common goal or to combat a religious “other”.²

Notwithstanding all of the aforesaid, violence has been and remains to be present in Buddhist societies. The occupation of Tibet by China initiated the exodus of thousands of Tibetan monks under the leadership of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama into exile to India.³ In 1998 the members of radical the Tibet Youth Congress organized a major hunger-strike in New Delhi, which lead to the death by self-immolation one member of a strike, in order to gain more attention of the world community to the human rights violation in Tibet.⁴ However, their radical activities were aimed at themselves and were never violent. In Sri Lanka, where the majority of the population, the Sinhalas, predominantly Buddhist, are at war with a separatist fraction within the largest minority, the Tamils, who are predominately Hindu, the Buddhist monks have been advocating the violent

¹Juliane Schober, “Buddhism, violence and the state in Burma (Myanmar) and Sri Lanka,” in *Conflict in South and Southeast Asia: disrupting violence*, ed. Linell E. Cady and Sheldon W. Simon (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 52.

²Ibid.

³Patricia C. Marcello, *The Dalai Lama: A Biography* (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2003), 96.

⁴Tibetan Women's Association. *A Study of Tibetan Self-Immolations: February 27, 2009-March 30, 2012: The History, The Motive, and The Reaction*, 2012. <http://tibetanwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Self-Immolation-report.pdf> (accessed December 13, 2013).

riots in defense of a distinctly Buddhist nationalism.⁵ In 1997 thousands of Burmese Muslims have suffered from the violent rampage of the Buddhists population, led by the monks, and since then, the conflict between Muslim and Buddhist population remains present.⁶ Thailand state's assimilation policy against Muslim minorities in the Malay Pattani region, and favoritism of Buddhism, resurged into violence between Malay Muslim minorities and Thai Buddhist majority.⁷

At the same time the Soviet Union has been torn apart by the mobilization of minority ethnic groups, that in most cases are not only ethnically, but also religiously different from the majority population. Although the dissolution of the Soviet Union was deemed to be the perfect solution to prevent large scale violent ethnic conflict, it neither resolved the problem in the newly founded independent states, where the disputes continue to arise, (for instance: the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia, with the majority of population being Christian, and Azerbaijan, with the majority of population being Muslim; the Russia–Georgia War of 2008 with Georgia on one side, and Russia and the rebellious republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia on the other; the ethnic clashes in South Kyrgyzstan between Kyrgyz people and Uzbek people,⁸ etc.), nor in the successor state of the Soviet Union – the Russian Federation, which is where our main case of the Republic of Kalmykia is located. Nevertheless, despite the fact, that the dissolution of the Soviet Union, made the Russian Federation more ethnically and religiously homogenous than the Soviet Union has ever been, the two Chechen wars, numerous terrorist attack in Moscow, Saint-Petersburg and other large cities, as well as an increased incidence of

⁵Tessa J. Bartholomeusz, *In Defense of Dharma* (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), 9.

⁶Schober, "Buddhism, violence and the state in Burma (Myanmar) and Sri Lanka", 59-60.

⁷Joseph C. Liow, "Violence and the long road to reconciliation in Southern Thailand," in *Conflict in South and Southeast Asia: disrupting violence*, ed. Linell E. Cady and Sheldon W. Simon (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 154-155.

⁸For the conflicts in the post Soviet Union territories see: *Conflict and Peace in Euroasia*, edit. Debidatta Mahapatra (London and New York: Routledge, 2013).

violence evoked by ethnic and religious hatred, clearly demonstrates the existence of ethnic and religious problems.

However, unlike in South East Asia, in Russia, the violent clashes happen between Orthodox Russian majority and Muslim minorities, without any participation of Buddhist population. Indeed, even though ethnic Russian population is continuously leaving Muslim republics (if we compare results of the Russian Census from 2002⁹ and 2010¹⁰) due to the large discrimination, and non-Russian ethnic minorities are being discriminated in other Russian Orthodox regions¹¹, the interreligious and interethnic situation in Buddhist republics of Russia remains harmonious. As neither ethnic Russian, nor numerous Caucasian¹² ethnic groups are leaving Buddhist republics of Russia¹³, the remaining question is why.

In order to answer this question, this thesis will focus on examining the relations between Buddhism and the state, in the only Buddhist state¹⁴ in Europe – the Republic of Kalmykia¹⁵, which has the status of federal subject¹⁶ of the Russian Federation and is situated between Russian Orthodox regions (Volgogradskaya oblast', Rostovskaya oblast', Stavropol'skii krai,

⁹The Russian Census 2002, *The Population by the Ethnicity and Russian Language Ability by the Federal Subjects of the Russian Federation*, accessed 12 January 2014, <http://www.perepis2002.ru/index.html?id=17>.

¹⁰ Federal State Statistic Service, 2010 *The Population by the Ethnicity and Russian Language Ability by the Federal Subjects of the Russian Federation*, accessed 12 January 2014, http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/perepis2010/croc/Documents/Vol4/pub-04-04.pdf.

¹¹ Human Rights Watch, *Russian Federation: Ethnic Discrimination in Southern Russia, 1 August 1998*, accessed January 2014, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6a7d18.html>.

¹² Here the term Caucasian [кавказец] is used for a numerous Muslim ethnic groups, whose ancestral home is in the Caucasian mountain region.

¹³ See The Russian Census 2002, *The Population by the Ethnicity and Russian Language Ability by the Federal Subjects of the Russian Federation* and Federal State Statistic Service, 2010 *The Population by the Ethnicity and Russian Language Ability by the Federal Subjects of the Russian Federation*.

¹⁴ Here means a polity, and organized political community living under one government.

¹⁵ The Chapter 3. Article 65 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, guarantees Kalmykia the status of the Republic, with the highest degree of independence.

¹⁶ Means constituent entities of Russia, the head of which signed the 1992 *Federation treaty*, which establishing and regulating the current inner composition of Russia, based on division of authorities and powers among Russian government bodies and government bodies of constituent entities.

Astrahan'skaya oblast') and one Muslim republic (the Republic of Dagestan) of Russia.¹⁷ The case of the Republic of Kalmykia is not only valuable from the point of its special geographical location (being the only Buddhist state in Europe and borderland between Muslim and Russian Orthodox regions), but also, from the fact that despite the particularly diverse population structure¹⁸, with the majority of the population being religiously Buddhist, in Kalmykia unlike in the South East Asia, Buddhists do not fight religious "others".¹⁹

The aim of the study is to find an answer to the following questions: (1) *why there is no serious religious conflict in the Republic of Kalmykia, despite the presence of different religious and ethnic groups, when the Buddhists in South East Asia are fighting Muslims?* (2) *Why are the ethnic and religious "others" not discriminated?* (3) *And what facilitates the harmony found in the Republic of Kalmykia?*

We suggest the hypothesis that the reason for religious tolerance and harmony in the Republic of Kalmykia can be found in the democratic features of Kalmyks Buddhism, its "democratic theology," "democratic ecclesiology,"²⁰ and its interactions with the state.

In order to discover whether or not Kalmyk Buddhism possess the democratic features, I will examine political theology of Kalmyk Buddhism, its institutional structure and its interactions with the state. However, in order to completely concentrate on examining the Kalmyk Buddhism, we should first introduce the Kalmyk people and the Kalmyk state for better understanding the situation in which this Buddhism was nourished.

¹⁷See Appendix 1. Map 1.

¹⁸See Appendix 2. Table 1.

¹⁹ Kermen Nadneeva, *Tolerantnost' i Netolerantnost', Svetskoe i Religioznoe v Dukhovnom Prostranstve Yga Rossii i Kalmykii* (Tolerance and Intolerance, Secular and Religious in the Spiritual Space of the Russian South and Kalmykia, accessed February 18, 2014, <http://elibrary.ru/download/68953683.pdf>.

²⁰See Chapter 2.1.

The Kalmyks are the descendants of the Oirats, the western group of the Mongols, who originally belonged to the tribal confederation of the '*Forest People*'. The name '*Oirats*' has its origin from the place of the Oirats inhabited: between Baikal and Altai regions. Unlike the eastern group of Mongols, the Oirats are not directly related to Genghis Khan, even though they were a part of his empire as an ally tribe.²¹

In the fifteenth century the Oirats emerged as a growing political power: they expanded their territory from Altai to Ili (a region in present day China, at the border between China and Kazakhstan). However, not far along after that the Oirat started to be torn from inside with the race for power between different tribes. At the same time rivalry with the neighboring tribes of Mongols and Kazakhs for pastures created an unfavorable situation for their livestock. Therefore, many Oirats decided to leave in search for more secure land and uncontested pastures.²²

Our research is devoted to the Oirat tribes that left their ancestral home and migrated to lower Volga River and the north part of the Caspian Sea in 1630s, where they started to be called the Kalmyks.

The etymology of the name Kalmyk for the Oirats tribes that migrated to the banks of the Volga River and the Caspian Sea derives from Turkish verb '*kalmak*' – to stay, to remain²³. The name Kalmyk was first used by their Turkish neighbors and can be traced back to the mid-fourteenth-century work of the Arab geographer Ibn al-Wardi.²⁴ Historians have not yet reached a

²¹Utash B. Ochirov, "Oiraty zapadnoj Mongolii I severo-zapadnogo Kitaya: voprosy etnicheskoi istorii, demografii I geografii rasseleniya vo vtoroj polovine XVIII veka" (The Oirats of the Western Mongolia and Northwestern China: the questions of ethnical history, demography and geography of settlement in the second half of XVIII century), *Vestnik KIGI RAN* No. 2 (April 2010), 9.

²²Ibid.

²³"Kalmak", last modified May 27, 2014, <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/kalmak>.

²⁴Michael Khodarkovsky, *Where Two Worlds Met: The Russian State and the Kalmyk Nomads, 1600-1771* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1992), 7.

consensus on what the Kalmyks remained from. A. Pozdneev, P. Pallace and J.-P. Abel-Rémusat argue that the name Kalmyks points out the territorial isolation of the Kalmyks from the other Oirats-Mongols.²⁵ However, another group of scholars, such as C.-D. Nominhanov and V. Bartold disagree with them and state that the name Kalmyks points to the fact that the Kalmyks remain Buddhist, in comparison to the Oirats who turn to Islam, because only in the Muslim sources the Oirats are called Kalmyks.²⁶

Nonetheless, starting from the seventeenth century the name Kalmyk started to be largely used by the Oirats that settled down at the bank of the Volga River and the Caspian Sea in their dealings with Russian and Muslim neighbors, even though, among each other they continued to refer to themselves by their tribal, clan, or other internal affiliations for a long time from then. And according to Kalmyk scholar G. Avlyayev, complete consolidation of separate Oirat tribes that migrated to the Southwestern border of seventeenth-century Russia into the Kalmyks happened during the rule of Ayuki Khan (1669-1724).²⁷

After their arrival to the Southwestern border of Tsarist Russia, after the period of independence the Kalmyk tribes started to slowly fall under the power of Russian Tsar. In fact, the Kalmyks became a borderland power between the Orthodox Russian lands and the lands populated by Muslims. The Tsarist government sought to use the Kalmyk cavalry in support of its military campaigns against the Muslim powers at its Southern border: Persia, the Ottoman Empire, the Crimean Khanate, etc.²⁸

²⁵Genadij O. Avlyayev, *Proishozhdenie kalmytskogo naroda (The origins of the Kalmyk people)*, (Elista: Kalmytskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 2002), 11.

²⁶Ibid., 12.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Michael Khodarkovsky, *Where Two Worlds Met*, 107-108.

After the end of the Tsarist rule, the Kalmyks were dragged into the Civil War, and in 1920 they became a part of the Soviet Union with the status of Kalmyk Autonomous oblast', which in 1935 was upgraded to Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. In 1942 the whole Kalmyk people became the victim of deportation by the order of Stalin under the false accusation of treason, and cooperation with Nazi Germany, and were sent to Siberia, where they were forbidden to use their mother tongue and culture until the rehabilitation in 1957.²⁹

After the rehabilitation of the Kalmyk people and restoration of their Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, they started to come back to their home, in the steppes near the Caspian Sea and the Volga River to rebuild their homeland. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic changed into the Republic of Kalmykia, a federal subject of the Russian Federation.

As we can see from this short discourse, the history of Kalmyk people had many tragic twists and drastic changes: the migration from Dzungaria to what now is the Republic of Kalmykia, the accession of Russian rule, the deportation, and rehabilitation. Notwithstanding all the drastic and tragic twists in the history of Kalmyk people, they have managed to preserve their distinctive cultural characteristics, among which Buddhism is, indeed, the most remarkable.

By the time the arrival to Volga steppes in the seventeenth century, the Kalmyks were already Buddhists. The first wave of acceptance of Buddhism by the Mongol and Oirat tribes occurred during Genghis Khan's military campaigns in the end of the twelfth - beginning of the thirteenth centuries. However, at that time despite the acceptance of a new religion, most of the Oirat

²⁹Vladimir B. Ubushaev and Kirill V. Ubushaev, *Kalmyki: Vyselenie i Vozvrashenie (The Kalmyks: Exile and Return)*, (Elista: Izdatel'stvo Kalmytskogo gosydarstvenogo universiteta, 2007), 26.

people also continued to follow their traditional shamanist beliefs. And with the fall of Yuan dynasty in China the position of Buddhism significantly diminished.³⁰

The second wave of acceptance of Buddhism by the Mongol and Oirat tribes was the result of the active missionary activities of Tibetan preachers and lamas, mostly from Tibetan Gelukpa School. One of the evident signs of success of Buddhism in winning the hearts and minds of the Oirats is the decision of each of the Oirat *taishi* (prince) in 1615 to dedicate one of their sons to follow a path of monkhood.³¹ Moreover, in 1640 the Buddhism of Tibetan Gelukpa school obtained a position akin to that of a state religion for Mongol and Oirat tribes in *the Mongol-Oirat Code* (the code of law of Mongol and Oirat tribes).³² Although after leaving Dzungaria, the Kalmyks became rather isolated from the center of their religion – Tibet, and from other Buddhist centers, they still managed to maintain strong ties with the Tibet, and other Buddhists, despite the many attempts of Russian government to turn the Kalmyks into the Russian Orthodoxy.

As has already been mentioned, the aim of this work is to try to find an explanation to what facilitates the present religious tolerance in Kalmykia. In order to fully answer this question, we will trace back the history of Kalmyk Buddhism since the arrival of the Oirat tribes to the Caspian steppes until nowadays, and try to examine and analyze the changes, which occur in Kalmyk Buddhism during the given period of time. We will also concentrate on examining the transformation of original features of Tibetan Gelukpa school, which started was inevitable due

³⁰ Araltan N. Bashaev and Dyakieva B. Raisa, *Istoria Kalmykii I Kalmytskogo Naroda s Drevneishih Vremen do Nachala XIX veka* (*The History of Kalmykia and Kalmyk People from the Ancient Time till the XIX century*), (Elista: Ministerstvo obrazovaniya, kultury i nayki Respubliki Kalmykia, 2010), 44-45.

³¹ Ibid, 46.

³² Elza Bakaeva, "Buddhism v Kalmykii: Osnovnye Etapy Razvitiya" (Buddhism in Kalmykia: the Principal Development Stages), *Buddhism in Russia*, No. 42 (2009): 10, accessed November 17, 2013,; http://www.buddhismofrussia.ru/_journals/buddhism-of-russia-42.pdf.

to the change of political and social environment in Kalmyk state and Kalmyk society under Russian rule. By doing so, we hope to find an explanation to the present religious harmony in the Republic of Kalmykia, where Buddhist do not fight religious “others”.



Chapter 2.Theoretical framework

2.1. Literature Review on Religion and State Interactions

The end of nineteenth-beginning of the twentieth centuries and the work of famous scholar Emile Durkheim, gave birth to secularization theory³³, which prevailed in academia until the Iranian Islamist Revolution and the resurgence of religious movements all over the world with the dissolution of the Soviet bloc. Despite the secularization and promises of major decline, religion has not only survived, but also managed to preserve its long abiding relationships with politics. Our main points of concern are to fully understand the nature of interactions between religion and politics, and in order to do so, we are going to explore a number of the works devoted to the theme of religion-state relationships, as well as political theology.

French philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville views Protestant political theology, which dominates in American society as a source for the tolerance and peace, as well as democratic nature of American state. He goes further and uses the example of the United States to describe how abstract democratic theology can be translated into concrete democratic practices: the idea of a covenant with God, the freedom of conscience, and the priesthood of all believers, all found institutional forms within freedom of speech, independence, and balance between clergy and laity.³⁴ *“They keep aloof from party and public affairs. In the US religion exercises but little influence upon the laws and upon the details of public opinion, but it directs the customs of the community, and, by regulating domestic life, it regulates states”*.³⁵ He also argues that it is for the reason of Protestant political theology the United States are not terrorizing the whole world,

³³ Émile Durkheim, *The Division of Labour in Society*, (New York: Macmillam Press, 1997), 49-50.

³⁴ Alexis de Toqueville, in *Religion and Political Thought*, ed. M. Hoelzl and G. Ward (London and New York: Continuum, 2006), 155-156.

³⁵ Ibid.

although, they have the ability to do so. Thus, following de Tocqueville's thoughts we can conclude that the particular political theology, democratic polity and religious-state interaction that can be found in the Protestant religion of the majority of American population assist to religious peace and tolerance.

Thomas Hobbes in his masterpiece "*Leviathan*" provides a systematic account of the commonwealth, including the rational explanation of the formation of function of the state including religious dimension. The fact that Hobbes considers the religious dimension as important as secular politics makes it substantial for us to examine his work more thoroughly. According to Hobbes, the natural state of human society is "*war of each man against the other*", and in order to escape this pattern, he suggests to combine two conflicting principles of political power: social contract theory, which helps to foster a network and community feelings, and theory based on the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings rooted in the emphasis upon hierarchy in the Catholic tradition, which keeps all individual subjects in fear and awe.³⁶ Hobbes support for the necessity to combine the secular and religious powers in order to overcome the "*natural state of war*", also can be found in his distinction of two forms of supreme power: "*power of spirits invisible*" namely God, and "*the power of those men they shall therein offend*".

According to Hobbes, Christian political ecclesiology can hardly be called democratic, since king or civil sovereign, no matter whether it is one man, or an assembly of men possess the uniform supreme power in both religious and civil dimension: the sovereign possess "the right of judging what doctrines are fit for peace, and to be taught to the subjects" and "*the Christian*

³⁶Thomas Hobbes, in *Religion and Political Thought*, ed. M. Hoelzl and G. Ward (London and New York: Continuum, 2006), 102-105.

*kings are the supreme pastors of their people, and have power to ordain what pastors they please, to teach the Church, that is, to teach the people committed to their charge.*³⁷

In “*Religious Regimes and State-Formation: Toward a Research Perspective*” Max Bart draws a number of examples from the history of Roman Catholic Church and other religions to argue that religion and state have always been connected and religious regimes played an important role in processes of state-formation and state-development. For instance: in the Roman Empire, Christianity and the Roman Catholic Church were an important means of pacification and domestication in the hands of secular rulers; in the name of Allah, large number of Arabs were mobilized and sent into battles; the colonial expansion of the South and West European into America and Africa would not have been as successful without large support from the Church. He also notes, that the reason for the interdependency of state and religion lies in the similarity of their aims and functions fulfill important functions in the sphere of social organization and cultural orientation; develop policies towards nation-building and community-building; territorial and influential expansion tendencies; and so forth.³⁸

Although, Max Bart does admit the interdependent relationship between religion and state, and their similar features, his examples are limited to Abrahamic religions. Moreover, his argument about the similar aims and functions of the religions, are also only suitable for Abrahamic religions (Christianity), because for religious like Hinduism and Buddhism the main goal is a personal salvation.³⁹

³⁷Ibid., 116-118.

³⁸Mart Bax, “Religious Regimes and State-Formation: Toward a research perspective”, in *Religious Regimes and State-formation: Perspectives from European Ethnology*, ed. Eric L. Wolf et al. (Albany, N.Y. : State University of New York Press, 1991), 10-11.

³⁹ Charles Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism: And Historical Sketch, Vol. 1* (Surrey: Curzon Press, 1998), 9.

Contemporary scholar Jurgen Manemann in his book *“The Depolitization of God as a Challenge for Political Theology”* claims that although we all live in the time of different crises (economic, moral, political, ecological), however the religious crisis is absent. He continues his arguments and calls the developments after 9/11 the neopolitization of religion, and blame the secular political powers in abusing religion as a weapon in the fight for creating collective identities. In Manemann’s opinion, the political developments of after 9/11 demonstrate that the intrinsic relationships between monotheistic religions and violence cannot be broken and that “with God everything is permitted”.⁴⁰ Moreover, the Christian gnostic division of the world into good and evil hemispheres found its reflection into friend-foe politics pursued in the democratic societies.⁴¹

Although, since our research looks at the tolerance in the non-Abrahamic religion, namely Buddhism we cannot take into consideration his criticism of duality in Christianity, Manemann’s points about neopolitization of religion still stands.

Regina Schwartz’s views correspond the Mannemann’s, about rather non-peaceful than peaceful nature of monotheist religions, because “the danger of universal monotheism is asserting that its true is the Truth, its system of knowledge the System of knowledge, its ethnics, the Ethnics not because, as in particularism, any other option must be rejected, but because there is simply no other option.”⁴²

⁴⁰Jurgen Manemann, “The Depolitization of God as a Challenge for Political Theology” in *Religion and Political Thought*, ed. M. Hoelzl and G. Ward (London and New York: Continuum, 2006), 270.

⁴¹Ibid., 273.

⁴² Regina M.Schwartz, *The Crusade of Cain: The violent Legacy of Monotheism* (Chicago: University of Chichago Press, 1997), 33.

Karen Armstrong seconds her argument and add that 'All three traditions are dedicated in some way to love and benevolence and yet all three have developed a pattern of holy war and violence that is remarkably similar and which seems to surface from some deep compulsion that is inherent in this tradition of monotheism, the worship of only one God.⁴³

All of the three authors (Jurgen Manemann, Regina Schwartz, Karen Armstrong) emphasize that intolerance to accept the existence of something else except of the Truth, the System, and the Ethnic, makes it difficult for the monotheistic religions to adapt to the reality of diversity of people's believes in the modern world.

Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby's "*Fundamentalism Project*" examines the religious fundamentalist movements all over the world, thus, demonstrating, the negative side of religious resurgence. Relying on the essays collected in their volume, they conclude how religious fundamentalism is incompatible with of democratic values due to its denial of the ideas of pluralism, egalitarianism, religious tolerance, and disrespect for human rights.⁴⁴ However, in general, the countries there non-religious population dominate demonstrate very poorly in terms of democracy.⁴⁵ Which also can be an indicator that overall, the religion in the healthy degree does promote the democratic values.

Unlike Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby's, Mark Juergensmeyer in "*The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State*" rejects the notion of "religious fundamentalism", and gives rather positive description to the rise of religious nationalism in the

⁴³ Karen Armstrong, *The Crusades and Their Impact on Today's World* (New York: Anchor Books, 2001), 4.

⁴⁴ Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, *Fundamentalism Observed* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 817-835.

⁴⁵ Carsten Ankar. *Religion and Democracy: A Worldwide Comparison*. (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 101.

Middle East, South Asia, and post-Soviet. His great contribution to the study of religion and state relations is lying in his attempt to examine the religious nationalism through the lenses of politically engaged religious leaders. Juergensmeyer also argues that major conflicts in contemporary international politics are caused by the issue of dissent on whether the state should be secular or religious. Furthermore, he argues the rise of religious nationalism was caused by the fail of secular powers, both socialist and democratic to create a fair moral society, and give people stability which they were in need for.⁴⁶ In his piece Juergensmeyer notes the controversial nature of relationships between democracy and the “modern religious state”: on one hand, the foundation of religious law protects the democratic character of electoral and decision-making process, but, on the other hand, the protection of minority and individual rights remains at question.⁴⁷

The modern sociologist of religion Jose Casanova supports the idea of Muslim theologian Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazzali that religion, the world of politics and the world in general can have three types of relationships: 1) “caesaropapism”, there the secular power controls and uses religion for its own purposes, most frequently to legitimate political rule and to sanctify economic oppression and the certain stratification system; 2) theocracy, there the religion tries to shape the world according to god's ways; 3) detachment and separation, which is preferable by both religion and worldly people, since it protects the world from religion and religion from the world. However, Casanova states that none of three options can permanently solve the tension between ‘religion’ and ‘the world’.⁴⁸ Jose Casanova also points out how important the role of

⁴⁶Juergensmeyer Mark, *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 2-4.

⁴⁷Ibid., 171-188.

⁴⁸Jose Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 48-51.

religion in the public sphere of modern world, as it can promote the modern freedom and rights, assist the democratic civil society to fight the authoritarian rules; give an alternative opinion about morality and ethics of secular powers; as well as protect the traditional life.⁴⁹

Matthew Moen and Lowell S. Gustafson, the editors of the volume “*The Religious Challenge to the State*” highlighted the topic of religion as a source of regime opposition. Although, the ability of religion to be a basis of social cohesion and political legitimacy cannot be denied, Moen and Gustafson emphasize the role of religion in critique of the state, and of religious resources and infrastructure in helping resistance movements.⁵⁰

The author of the book “*Religion and Democracy in Taiwan*” Cheng-Tian Kuo, when answering questions surrounding of relations between religion and democracy complement the examining of the theological side of religion with the way institutions convert “*abstract democratic theology*” into “*concrete democratic practices*”.⁵¹ According to his definition: *a theology which is based on the support of human rights, the theological transformation from spiritual equality to political equality, and a positive attitude towards religion-state relationships is called a “democratic theology”; and a religious institution, which comprises the rules and norms that impart institutional checks on religious leaders, moderately equal power between clergy and laity, and the autonomy of local religious organizations is a “democratic ecclesiology”*⁵²

In this thesis we will employ Cheng-Tian Kuo’s denominations of “democratic theology” and “democratic ecclesiology” to explore the case of religious tolerance in Kalmykia

⁴⁹Ibid., 57-58.

⁵⁰Matthew Moen and Gustafson Lowell, *The Religious Challenge to the State* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), 10.

⁵¹ Cheng-Tian Kuo, *Religion and Democracy in Taiwan* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008), 5.

⁵²Ibid., 5-6.

2.2. Buddhist Political Theology

In this chapter we will examine the political theology of Buddhism. Although, some might argue that after *Siddhartha Gautama* (future Buddha), renounced his throne, and created *sangha* (a community of monks and nuns), who left their houses to adopt ascetic way of live, it seemed that the Buddhism entanglement with the world of politics was abandoned. However, early Buddhist sources indicate that the Buddha preached on a variety of political related topics, and the consistent concern in the canons for insuring good sangha-state relation through the legitimization of the rulers by the monastic order⁵³ prove this.

From the *Maha-parinibbana Sutta*, we know that the Buddha praised the democratic theology of Vajjian state, which was based on the social contract theory and equality of all people⁵⁴; and exemplifies its strength, justice and social solidarity as a model to inspire the Buddhist sangha.⁵⁵ However, political thought in the majority of Buddhist sources admits that to resist thriving of anarchy the kingship is needed. The narrative of the origins of Buddhist kingship can be found in the Agganna Sutta: “*then they instituted boundaries lines [on the land] and one steals another’s share. After... the third time...they beat the offender with fists, earth clods, with sticks, etc. When thus, stealing, reproof, lying, and violence had sprung up among them, they come together and said, ‘What if we elect some one of us, who shall get angry with him who merits anger, reproof, and banish him who merits banishment...’ He was called the ‘Great Elected One,’ ‘Lord of*

⁵³ Ian Harris, “Buddhism and Politics in Asia: the Textual and Historical Roots,” in *Buddhism and Politics in Twentieth Century Asia*, ed. by Ian Harris (London and New York: Continuum, 1999), 2-3.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Francis Story, *Maha-parinibbana Sutta: Last Days of the Buddha*, accessed November 27, 2013, <http://www.accesstosight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.16.1-6.vaji.html>.

Filed, '... *DharmaKing*.'⁵⁶

The Buddhist specialist Frank Reynolds suggests that in the early times there were two ideals of Buddhist kingship: the *cakkavatti* ('wheel-turning') and dharmaking (the monarch who lives and rules by the dharma). In the *cakkavatti* ideal supports the king was parallel to the Buddha; just as the Buddha was the highest religious figure, the king was the highest lay figure. Such a king was, like the Buddha/ a universal monarch who ruled perfect world by the worth of his own merit. Here the king is a kind of supernatural being whose righteousness calls forth the 'wheel of Dharma' and this spreading the teaching legitimates his rule. The king does no violence because in this realm no one commits crime.” Up until now, it is unclear if the ideal of *cakkavatti* has ever existed; however, we can be sure about the real historical existence of the second type of Buddhist kingship, namely dharmaking. The ideal of dharmaking, suggests the existence of a monarch, who rules an unideal world with righteousness and exemplifies dharma, and who brings harmony out of chaos and can do violence to obtain justice.⁵⁷

According to Buddhist tradition kings are just people, who have earned to be born kings, because of their good karma, however, their great potential can be used for both good and evil doing. For this reason, the Buddhist doctrine suggests the idea of the rule of *Dharma* (law, rule) for just kings, as the best solution of escaping from an evil path. The ideal kingship, in the Buddhist tradition runs by “*the world ruler, the just and righteous king, relying on the law of righteousness (Dharma), honoring it, regarding it highly and respecting it, with the law of righteousness as his standard, banner and sovereign, provides lawful protection, shelter and safety for his own*

⁵⁶ Henry C. Warren, *Buddhism in Translations* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1995), 326.

⁵⁷ Frank Reynolds, “The Two Wheels of Dhamma: A Study in Early Buddhism” in *The Two Wheels of Dhamma: Essay on the Theravada Tradition in India and Ceylon*, ed. By Gananath Obeyesekere, et al. (Chambersburg, PA: American Academy of Religion, 1972), 18.

*dependants. He provides lawful protection, shelter, and safety for the warrior-nobles attending on him; for his army, for the brahmins and householders, for the inhabitants of town and countryside, for ascetics and brahmins, for the beasts and birds.”*⁵⁸

Since all the power was in the hands of a person, even though his decisions were made in accordance to the rules of *Dharma*, and with the right intentions, we can say that the original ideal of Buddhist kingship is rather far from what we can call a democratic political theology, in our contemporary understanding.

The first Buddhist monarch who set an example for future king was Ashoka Maurya (304–232 B.C.E.), whose rule facilitated the spread of Buddhism through Southeast Asia and beyond through sending the envoys, monks, and building Buddhist temples. Indeed, the politics conducted by emperor Ashoka are remarkable: he appointed Dharma-officials to encourage virtue, take care of aged people, orphans and those in needs, secure equal judicial standards, and provide aid for human beings, and so on.⁵⁹ The other remarkable point of his rule is that despite the truly focal place of Buddhism in the empire, Ashoka urged tolerance and respect towards all religions. Moreover, he established one of the most important objectives for the Buddhist Dharma kings: the maintenance of discipline among monastic order, and purifying it from “lax monks”, if it is necessary.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Nyanaponika Thera and Bhikkhu Bodhi, *Aṅguttara Nikāya: Discourses of the Buddha An Anthology Part I*, accessed November 19, 2013. <https://mywebspace.wisc.edu/jrblack/web/BU/PDF/bpsanguttara1.pdf>.

⁵⁹ Peter Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teaching History and Practices* (New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 76.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 76-77.

Buddhist polities are usually founded on mutually beneficial relations between king, sangha and laity.⁶¹ Despite the fact that kingship was a lesser status than an arhat (saint), monks and kings existed in a symbiotic relationship. Monarchs preserved society from anarchy, built monasteries, temples, give gifts. Monks in the monastery instructed kings on their duties.⁶² At the same time, the lay people make donations to earn merit, and sangha maintain virtuous lives, thus letting laity earn good karma; where a political ruler acts as a supervisor, who receives the payment for his job in the form of merit, food and respect.⁶³

The Buddhist sangha must adhere to the rules by law, which are written down in the Vinaya canon (Vinaya is a code of laws for the Buddhist monastic community) developed by the Buddha to govern the sangha after his death. However, in the centuries following the death of Buddha, Buddhism has divided into a variety of traditions, due to the dissent over the interpretation of the rules written in the Vinaya. The exact reasons for the schism are still unknown; however, some points of dissent concerned the monk ownership of specific property, the handling of money and the relaxation of prohibitions on monks eating in the afternoon.⁶⁴ Over the centuries many separate Buddhist traditions either disappear or merged together and the two main ones that remain up to this day are: Theravada and Mahayana. Theravada tradition is also known as Hinayana, the Teaching of the Elders is widely spread in the countries of the Southeast Asia: Thailand, Burma, Laos, Cambodia, Sri Lanka.⁶⁵ Mahayana tradition⁶⁶, which also known as the

⁶¹ Todd Lewis, "Buddhism: the Politics of Compassionate Rule" in *God's Rule: the Politics of World Religions*, ed. by Jacob Neusmer, (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2003), 237.

⁶² Balkrishna Govind Gokhale, *Asoka Maurya* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1966), 28.

⁶³ Todd Lewis, "Buddhism: the Politics of Compassionate Rule" in *God's Rule: the Politics of World Religions*, ed. by Jacob Neusmer, (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2003), 237.

⁶⁴ Martin Mill, *Identity, Ritual and State in Tibetan Buddhism: the Foundations of Authority in Gelukpa Monasticism* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 10.

⁶⁵ Donald K. Sweater, *The Buddhist World of Southeast Asia* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010), 1.

⁶⁶ It is necessary to clarify, that in this work, the Tibetan Buddhism, which is also known as Vajrayana, or Diamond Way, will be regarded as "particular form of Mahayana practice".

Great Vehicle, can be commonly found in the East Asian countries, such as China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Mongolia, Nepal, Tibet, and the republics of Tuva, Buryatia and Kalmykia in the Russian Federation.⁶⁷

Richard S. Cohen provides the following description to the two branches of Buddhism: “*Hinayana champions the arhat (the Buddhist who reached Enlightenment) ideal, the Mahayana – the bodhisattva (a person who is able to reach nirvana but delays doing so through compassion for suffering beings) ideal; the Hinayana is centered on the Sangha, the Mahayana on the Buddha.*”⁶⁸ Indeed, The Theravada tradition does stress that to reach significant attainment and become Arhat⁶⁹ ones should join monastic order, thus the sangha struggle for individual attainments; while the Mahayana tradition provides the equal opportunity to be come a Buddha to monks and to lay people;⁷⁰ and the sangha have to not only “*help themselves in their spiritual paths but to provide the means for others to progress*”.⁷¹

Fowler claims that Mahayana branch of Buddhism in particular is marked by tolerance and adaptability, which can be proved by its successful spread in countries like China and Japan, whereas Theravada Buddhism has less successful missionary record.⁷²

The more democratic nature of Mahayana Buddhism in comparison with Theravada can be also seen from the quantitative study conducted by Carsten Anckar. He compared the compatibility of different religion with democracy and found that Mahayana dominated regions demonstrate a

⁶⁷ Paul Williams, *Mahayana Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations* (London and New York: Routledge, 1989), 186.

⁶⁸ Richard Cohen, "Discontented Categories: Hinayana and Mahayana in Indian Buddhist History," *American Academy of Religion*, 63, No. 1 (Spring 1995): 1-25, accessed November 8, 2013, doi: <http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/1465151?uid=2&uid=4&sid=21103163832193>.

⁶⁹ Arhat means ‘the perfected one’ who has attained nirvana.

⁷⁰ Cathy Cantwell, *Buddhism: the Basics* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), 69-70.

⁷¹ Ibid., 108.

⁷² Merv Fowler, *Buddhism: Beliefs and Practices* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 1999), 104.

greater degree of democracy and democratic stability than Theravada ones.⁷³

Unlike in historically state-supported Theravada Buddhism, where monkhood usually means the full-time commitment and there is almost no overlapping between monks' and lay duties; in Mahayana Buddhism, the laity, who reached some level of attainment have often been central to the transmission and preservation of the tradition and presented some of the Buddhist services. For instance, in Pure Land School, lay priests lead memorials and funerals.⁷⁴

Traditionally, in the Theravada branch of Buddhism the institution of sangha has its own power structure, which is based on the solid institutional hierarchical order. Culture of hierarchy pervades interactions with and among monks. Most basic is the seniority that monks acquire through years spent living a monastic life.⁷⁵ The institutional hierarchical order is less solid in Mahayana branch of Buddhism (except in Tibetan Buddhism), and varies depend on the school.⁷⁶ Overall, Theravada Buddhism is more interconnected with politics than Mahayana Buddhism, due to its long history of close entanglement between the state and sangha. However, Mahayana Buddhism (except for Tibetan Buddhism) has less involvement with the politics, and has more humanistic face.

Overall, based on the typology suggested by Trevor Ling, we can distinguish three types of relationships between Buddhism and secular authority. First one, which Ling calls the “radical distinction” existed at the time of Buddha, when the tribal republics in north-east India were being destroyed by aggressive new monarchies. Under these circumstances of social upheaval, the sangha was not only the embodiment and the transmitter of Buddhist ideas and values, but

⁷³ Anckar, *Religion and Democracy*, 99-100.

⁷⁴ Cantwell, *Buddhism: the Basics*, 117.

⁷⁵ Schober, “Buddhism, violence and the state in Burma (Myanmar) and Sri Lanka”, 54.

⁷⁶ Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism*, 236-237.

also was representing of remaining collective ideals and collective consciousness, which were being destroyed with the tribal republics. The second type of relationships emerged in India, when emperor Ashoka became a Buddhist, and also can be found in the ninth century Tibetan under the rule of Ral-pa-can in Tibet, Burma under the rule of Anawratha, in Ceylon in the eleventh century under the rule of Parakrama Bahu I, and Cakri or Rama I in Thailand in the eighteenth century. During this time, the kings saw their mission “*in protecting the Buddhist religion, purifying its institutions and encouraging its faithful practice.*” The sangha remained its place as a Buddhist society ordered by the king, which existed in conformity with Buddhist ideals. The European colonization, which brought up the overwrought of Buddhist monarchies caused the broke down of the second type of the relationships and caused the reversion of first type of relationship. The third type of relationships is one which existed in Tibet for 450 years, where an entire society was under the governance of one who was regarded as the embodiment of a Bodhisattva, Dalai-Lama. This combination of secular and spiritual power came to an end in 1950 with Chinese invasion.⁷⁷ It should be noted, that Trevor Ling’s classification does not entirely comprise our case under consideration, namely Kalmyk Buddhism, due to its unique geographical and political situation.

Kalmyk Buddhism takes its origin from Tibet. Therefore, in order to fully understand Kalmyk Buddhism, we will first look at the Tibetan Buddhism, or Lamaism, which is often considered a hybrid of Indian Buddhism and certain pre-Buddhist religions of Tibet.

The name “Lamaism” for Tibetan Buddhism comes from its emphasis on the importance of the role of Buddhist spiritual preceptor (lama), which can refer to any religious practitioner, who

⁷⁷Trevor Ling, *Buddha, Marx, and God: Some Aspects of religion in the modern world* (London: Macmillan Publishers Limited, 1979), 151-154.

became the source of religious teaching.⁷⁸ From surviving historical records and later tradition we can conclude that the expansion of Buddhism in Tibet can be traced back to political reasons: the king Khri strong Ide brtsan's (754-797) attempt to consolidate his power.⁷⁹ Thus, starting from the introduction of Buddhism in Tibet, it became an exceptional example of Buddhist kingship.

The early Buddhism did not have a church or ecclesiastical organization. The hierarchical system of Tibetan Buddhism date from thirteenth century A.D.,⁸⁰ and by the end of the fifteenth century Lamaism has reached its definitive form.⁸¹ Henceforth, Lamaism has three ranks of monasticism: (1) the clerical apprentice or scholar (*Genen*), it can refer to both a lay believer, who has promised to avoid the five great sins; and to the monastic devotee or scholar, who keeps the ten precepts and preparing for the holy orders; (2) the commencing but not quite fully ordained monk (*Getsul*); (3) the real monk, the priest over 25 years old, has been fully ordained and keeps 200 and 53 rules (*Gelung*); (4) the highest Master or Abbot, who chairs the full Monastery (*Kan-po*). Additionally, there are reincarnate lamas, who stand higher in the hierarchy than all aforesaid.⁸² The fact, that Lamaism allows lay practitioners to not only reach enlightenment, but also become spiritual guides, demonstrates the democratic nature of Lamaists practices, despite their strong hierarchical system.

Originally, Tibetan Buddhism was divided into eighteen school, however, only four remained until nowadays, those are: Sakya, Nyingma, Kaguy, and Gelukpa.⁸³ The school of Tibetan Buddhism dominated in our research case – the Kalmyk state - is the Gelukpathat was founded in

⁷⁸Mill, *Identity, Ritual and State*, 28.

⁷⁹Williams, *Mahayana Buddhism*, 188.

⁸⁰Austine Waddell, *Buddhism and Lamaism of Tibet* (New Delhi: Heritage Publishers, 1979), 227.

⁸¹Giuseppe Tucci, *The Religion of Tibet*, trans. by Geoffrey Samuel (Oakland: University of California Press, 1988) 33.

⁸²Waddell, *Buddhism and Lamaism of Tibet*, 170-17.

⁸³Geoffrey Samuel, *Introducing Tibetan Buddhism* (London: Roudledge, 2012), 18.

the fourteenth century by Tsonghhapa (1357-1419). The fate of the Gelukpa order has been bonded with the Mongol people for a long time. Firstly, with the support of Mongol forces the Gelukpa order reached its total political ascendance in Tibet under the rule of the Fifth Dalai-Lama (1617-1681).⁸⁴ Secondly, the title Dalai (Mongolian: vast as an ocean) Lama was given to the leader of Gelukpa order by Mongol Gusri Khan, when his army conquered Tibet, and made a pact about spiritual guidance of Gelukpa order to the Mongol Khans and Mongol people.⁸⁵ And, third, but not least connection, the Fourth Dalai Lama (1589–1617) was found in a Mongol family of the great-grandson of Altan Khan (1507–1582), who played a great role in converting Mongol tribes to Buddhism.⁸⁶

One of the distinctive features of the Gelukpa school is its emphasis of monasticism as the essential determinant of religious authority; and acceptance of the idea of reincarnation.⁸⁷ Gelukpa order distinguishes three general categories of authoritative religious practitioners: the incarnate lama (*tulku*), the Buddhist scholar (*geshe*), and the oracle (*lhapa* or *chosje*). The ecclesiastical structure of Gelukpa order has strong characteristics of interdependency: incarnate lamas destined to teach, however in order to reach the necessary level of knowledge, they have to first be tutored by geshe; at the same time, the authority of knowledge of incarnate lamas, including Dalai Lama depends on religious reputation of their tutors; conversely, incarnates involved in political affairs often look to affiliated oracles for aid in day-to-day decision making; and oracles, in their turn, are identified by incarnates and translated by geshe.⁸⁸

The interdependency described aforesaid, as well as the fact that anyone can attain the status of

⁸⁴Waddell, *Buddhism and Lamaism of Tibet*, 63.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 39.

⁸⁶Williams, *Mahayana Buddhism*, 192.

⁸⁷Waddell, *Buddhism and Lamaism of Tibet*, 63.

⁸⁸Mill, *Identity, Ritual and State*, 241-242.

geshe as long as a candidate takes a special scholarly training and pass the necessary exams,⁸⁹ gives the illustration of rather democratic feature of Gelukpa's hierarchical system

The attitude of current the Dalai Lama Fourteenth complements the general ideas of compatibility of Tibetan Buddhism and democracy. For instance, during the series of lectures at George Washington University, His Holiness the Dalai Lama Fourteen gave his perspectives on the relationships between Buddhism and democracy. According to him, both Buddhism and democracy are compatible due to the fact, that they are rooted in the egalitarianism. Moreover, as aforesaid, the examples of the democratic procedure of decision making has a long lasting history in the Buddhist tradition: the Buddhist monastic order's collective decision making; every rite concerning the maintenance of monastic practice must be performed with a congregation of at least four monks; and, even the teaching of the Buddha can be altered under certain circumstances by a congregation of a certain number of ordained monks.⁹⁰ Moreover, the unprecedented political decisions of Dalai Lama Fourteenth to give up his political power to the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies, and adopt the Charter of Tibetans in Exile, which was modelled on constitutions from established democracies⁹¹, also demonstrate rather flexible and tolerant character of Tibetan Buddhism.

2.3. Research Methodology

The research method used in this thesis will be the historical research method. The aim of historical research is to *“uncover the unknown; to answer questions; to seek implications or relationships of events from the past and their connections with the present; to assess past*

⁸⁹ Ibid, 237-240.

⁹⁰ His Holiness the Dalai Lama, “Buddhism, Asian Values, and Democracy,” in *World Religions and Democracy*, ed. Larry Diamond, et al. (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 2005), 70-71.

⁹¹ Ibid.

activities and accomplishments of individuals, agencies, or institutions; and to aid generally in our understanding of human culture”.⁹² Thus, our aim is to explore how Kalmyk Buddhism evolved over time, and how it facilitates religious tolerance in Kalmykia.

As mentioned above, we have divided our collected data into primary and secondary sources, according to Norman Cantor and Richard Schneider’s classification.⁹³ More specifically, for primary data we rely on the ethnographic works of I.A. Zhitesky, N.Y. Bichurin, and V.M. Bakunin, A. Pozdneev.

To explore the interactions between Kalmyk Buddhism and the Russian state, we will mainly use secondary sources. We examine the works of A.A. Kurapov “*Buddhism i Vlast v Kalmytskom Khanstve*”⁹⁴, Galini Dorzhievoj “*Buddhism Kalmykii v Veroispovedatel’noj politike Rossijskogo gosudarstva: seredina XVII – nachalo XX vv.*”⁹⁵, and A.N. Bashaev and K. N. Maksimov and “*Buddhiskaya Tserkov Kalmykii: 1900-1943 gg.*”⁹⁶

We divided our research framework into three main periods: from 1640 to 1917, from 1922 to 1939, and from 1988 to 1995. The decision to divide the timeframe precisely into these three periods has to do with the turning points in the history of Kalmyk Buddhism. Thus, we take 1640 as the beginning of the first period, as it is the year of adoption the Great Code of Laws (Kalmyk: Ики Цааджин Бичик), which recognized the Buddhism of the Tibetan Gelukpa school, as the

⁹² Bruce L. Berge, “Historiography and Oral Tradition” in *Qualitative Research Method for the Social Sciences* (Long Beach: California State University, 2001), 212.

⁹³ Norman F. Cantor and Richard I. Schneider, *How to Study History* (New York: Wiley-Blackwell, 1967), 22-24.

⁹⁴ Andrey Kurapov, *Buddhism i Vlast v Kalmytskom Khanstve v XVII-XVIII vv.* (*Buddhism and Power in the Kalmyk Khanate in XVII-XVIII centuries*) (Astrakhan': Dzhangar, 2007.)

⁹⁵ Galina Dorzhievoj, *Buddhism Kalmykii v Veroispovedatel’noj politike Rossijskogo gosudarstva: seredina XVII – nachalo XXvv.* (*Buddhism of Kalmykia in the Russian state’s religious policy: the middle of VII – beginning of XX centuries*), (Elista: Izd-vo Kalmytskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta, 2012.).

⁹⁶ Araltan Baskhaev, *Buddhiskaya Tserkov Kalmykii: 1900-1943 gg.* (*Buddhist Church of Kalmykia: 1900-1943*), (Elista: Dzhangar, 2007.)

official religion.⁹⁷ Moreover, the Kalmyk's arrival to the Caspiansteppes and their first contacts with the Russian state are marked by a high presence of Buddhist attributes and Buddhist actors.⁹⁸ Although, the annexation of the Kalmyk lands in 1771 lead to more regulations of the Kalmyk Buddhism by the Russian authorities, we believe that mutual friendly relations remained present between two parties. Therefore, we entitle the first period as a flourishing of Kalmyk Buddhism.

The second period, from 1922 to 1939, marks a period of oppression for not only Buddhism as a religious belief but also, for some period of time, for Kalmyks as an ethnos. We purposely left out the years of Russian Civil War (1917-1922), as there was no a unified policies on religious issues, which is crucial for examining Kalmyk Buddhism. Moreover, we end our second research period in 1939, as by that year Kalmyk Buddhism stopped its existence as a social institution.⁹⁹

The third period, 1988-1995, begins with the change of Russian state policy concerning religion: the legalization of religious practice, open prayer houses and foundation of religious communities. The third period represents the religious renaissance of Kalmyk Buddhism: the restoration of its relations with the state, the engagement of more people, and the establishment of new Buddhist communities.

In order to fully answer our main research questions: *why there is no serious religious conflict in the Republic of Kalmykia, despite the presence of different religious and ethnic groups, when the Buddhists in South East Asia are fighting Muslims? Why are the ethnic and religious "others" not discriminated by the Kalmyk and Buddhist majority? And what facilitates the harmony found*

⁹⁷Nikolay Bichurin, *Zapiski o Mongolii (Notes about Mongolia)*, Sankt-Peterburg: Tip. Karla Kraya, 1828).

⁹⁸Kurapov, *Buddhism i Vlast v Kalmytskom Khanstve*, 89.

⁹⁹Baskhaev, *Buddijskaya Cerkov' Kalmykii*, 181.

in the Republic of Kalmykia?

We suggest the hypothesis that the reason for religious tolerance and harmony in the Republic of Kalmykia can be found in the democratic features of Kalmyk Buddhism, its “democratic theology,” “democratic ecclesiology,”¹⁰⁰ and its interactions with the state. In order to explore Kalmyk Buddhism’s democratic features, we examine and analyze the evolution of Kalmyk Buddhism over time, its interactions with the state and the laity, as well as its institutional structure.

We take the attitude of the religious leaders and the *sangha* towards the socio-political matters as an indicator for the political theology. At the same time, we assume that the code of laws and rules of the *sangha*, and the laws of the central religious organizations are the valid indicators for the religious polity of Kalmyk Buddhism. Additionally, we also look at Kalmyk Buddhist *sangha* involvement in the political contacts, as well as the use or not use of the Kalmyk Buddhist ceremonies for the political purposes, as an indicator for the political interactions between Kalmyk Buddhism and the Russian state.

Due to the lack of time and resources we were not able to conduct our own interviews, hence, we use as our primary data sources from National Archive of the Republic of Kalmykia, the official interviews of the religious leaders in the newspapers, news websites, and official webpage of the central Buddhist organization of Kalmykia Golden Adobe of Buddha Shakyamuni. Moreover, at our requests, the *Shadzhin Lama* (head lama) of Kalmyk people and the President of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia Telo Tulku Rinpoche granted us with an access to the Charter of the Union, and the Charter of the Kalmyk Buddhist Monastery.

¹⁰⁰See Chapter 2.1.

Thus, we divide our data analysis in three dimensions:

(1) Political Theology of Kalmyk Buddhism

As political theology investigates the connections between religious and political ideas and practices, this dimension will deal with official statements of clergy on secular issues and the laws of monasteries and Buddhist organizations. We will also concentrate on the key points of the relationship between Buddhism, laity and the state. And in the end we will compare the results with the ideal of “democratic political theology”.

(2) Religious Polity of Kalmyk Buddhism

In this dimension, we explore the way Kalmyk Buddhist organizations are governed, and examine the role of monks in the Buddhist organizations, and the position of the laity therein. And in the end we will compare the results with the “democratic ecclesiology”.

(3) Political Interactions between Kalmyk Buddhism and the Russian state,

Due to the peculiarity of Kalmyk state, namely, being part of the Russian state, and the peripheral position of Buddhism in comparison to Russian Orthodox Christianity, this study will incorporate this dimension. It will study the political interactions between Kalmyk Buddhism and the Russian state, as well as the attitude of Kalmyk Buddhism, its organizations, and monks towards the central government of the Russian state.

Chapter3. Kalmyk Buddhism and the State from 1640 to 1917

3.1. Religious Situation in the Russian Empire

During the time period under consideration religion played a significant role in Tsarist Russia. Although colonization and expansion politics made Russia into a religiously diverse country, the priority was still given to the religion of the majority population – Russian Orthodoxy. The state and the Church were interconnected, and it was difficult to draw a line between them. The monarchs colonized new regions and expand Russian influence in the name of God, and Orthodoxy was one of important instruments in the production of loyal citizens.¹⁰¹

Starting from the Peter the Great until the October Revolution, the Russian Orthodox Church had an official status of a state department, which was administered by a secular bureaucracy, headed by procurator, who as “*an eye and ear of the tsar*” controlled the Holy Synod and the whole church.¹⁰² Thereby, the Russian Orthodoxy became an official state religion, subordinated to the state, and responsible for the legitimization of the Tsar’s authority.¹⁰³ “*The Tsar had come to be considered a semi-sacrosanct personality with unlimited power, the earthy representative of God*”.¹⁰⁴

Despite the dominant position of Russian Orthodoxy, the laws of the Russian Empire allowed “*people of other faiths, nonresident and foreign, the free exercise of their faith as worthy memory of the wise Russian princes, our ancestors and us have established and confirmed. All nations, staying in Russia, thank God almighty in different languages, according to the law and the*

¹⁰¹Kimmo Kaariainen, *Religion in Russia after the Collapse of Communism: Religious Renaissance or Secular State*(Lewiston, NY: E. Mellen Press, 1998), 11.

¹⁰²Bernard Pares, *A History of Russia* (London: Cape, 1947), 247.

¹⁰³Kaariainen, *Religion in Russia after the Collapse of Communism*,12

¹⁰⁴Kochan Lionel and Richard Abraham,*The Making of Modern Russia*(London: Penguin Books, 1962), 94.

*profession of their forefathers, and our blessing reign mole Creator of the universe on the multiplication of prosperity and strengthening force the All-Russian Empire".*¹⁰⁵ This law was concerned the Russian citizens who were colonized by the Empire (like the subject of our research the Kalmyks), invited from abroad to inhabit the free lands, or were temporary serving the Russian crown. The fact that despite the obvious connection between the state and Russian Orthodoxy, the representatives of other religions had to pray for the Tsar, indicates that the need for acknowledgement of not only political, but also religious leadership of Russian monarch.

In order to get an idea about the religious structure of Russian population, we should examine the results of the population Census. Unfortunately, the first complete reliable data about the religious affiliation of Russian Empire's population is only available from the first universal Census from 1897; however, it does not reduce its value for the overall picture of religious situation in Russian from 1640 to 1917.

Table 2.1. The first universal Census of the Russian Empire 1897.

Confession	Men	Women	Both *
Orthodox	42,954,739	44,168,865	87,123,604
Old believers	1,029,023	1,175,573	2,204,596
Armenian-Gregorians	625,592	553,649	1,179,241
Armenian-Catholics	20,028	18,812	38,840

¹⁰⁵ Alexander Gradovsky, *Nachala Russkogo Gosudarstvennogo Prava (Principles of Russian State Law)*, vol. I-III", (St. Petersburg: M. Stalusevich printing house, 1875 r. (volume I), 1876 r. (volume II), 1883 r. (volume III)), accessed February 19, 2014, http://constitution.garant.ru/science-work/pre-revolutionar/3988988/chapter/29/#block_134600.

Roman Catholics	5,686,361	5,781,633	11,467,994
Lutherans	1,739,814	1,832,839	3,572,653
Calvinists	42,877	42,523	85,400
Baptists	18,372	19,767	38,139
Mennonites	33,598	32,966	66,564
Anglicans	2,042	2,141	4,183
Other-Christian believers	2,371	1,581	3,952
Karaites	6,372	6,522	12,894
Judaism	2,547,144	2,668,661	5,215,805
Muslims	7,383,293	6,523,679	13,906,972
Buddhists and Lamaists	240,739	193,124	433,863
Other non-Christians believers	144,983	140,338	285,321
Total	62,477,348	63,162,673	125,640,021

Pervaya Vseobshchaya Perepis' Naseleniya Rossiiskoy Imperii 1897 g. Raspredeleniye Naseleniya po Veroispovedaniyam i Regionam” (The First Universal Census of the Russian Empire in 1897 Population by Religions and Regions), *Russkij Arkhipelag*, accessed February 19, 2014, http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/religio/statistics/said/statistics-imp.

From the Census results we can see that despite the fact that majority of the population affiliated themselves with Orthodoxy, the religious composition of Russian Empire was far more complex

than that.

As aforesaid, the Russian Orthodox Church was an official state department. However, in order to manage all confessions and make sure that the Orthodoxy remained the dominant religion, the Code of Laws of the Russian Empire allocated all confessions in the four hierarchical levels. Each of levels had its own scope of rights, privileges and restrictions. On the ground level the Russian Orthodox Church preserved its status of state religion with all the ensuing legal advantages. The second level of the legal hierarchy occupied so-called “*recognized tolerant confessions*”, which includes: the Catholicism, Protestantism, Armenian Gregorian and Armenian Catholic churches, Christian sects (Mennonites and Baptists). From the non-Christian faiths the second stage also occupied Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, and Shamanism. The third category was represented by so called “*unrecognized tolerated*” religion – some religious sects and the Old Believers. According to the official law the third category of religious believes did not exist, but was tolerated at the household level. The forth level belonged to “*unrecognized intolerated*” confessions, which were categorized as state hostile, and persecuted by law.¹⁰⁶

The state protection of the Orthodoxy was also expressed in the prohibition to the all other religions to carry on missionary activities among the population. The violation of the rule by any religious entity or individuals was persecuted by Russian law. The legal barriers were also constructed to keep Orthodox believers in the Church, in the form of prohibition of conversion from the Russian Orthodoxy to any other non-Christian confession was illegal.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, the Christians were not allowed to marry non-Christians; and even in the mixed marriages with

¹⁰⁶Fedor Kuliev, “Religiozniy Factor v Politike Rossiiskoi Imperii v Pervoi Polovine XIX v.” (Religious Factor in the Politics of the Russian Empire in the First Half of the XIX Century), in *Nauchnye Problemy Gumanitarnyx Issledovaniy*, 11 (2009), 74-75.

¹⁰⁷Kaariainen, *Religion in Russia after the Collapse of Communism*, 15.

one Orthodox and one non-Orthodox Christian believer, the children had to be raised in the Orthodoxy.¹⁰⁸

The Russian Orthodox Church was also in charge of school education especially from the nineteenth century. One of the main types of primary schools was parochial schools. The law of God was the first and main subject in the elementary school, and one of the most important ones' in the secondary school.¹⁰⁹

With the slight modifications, the same religious situation with the official gradation of religious believes in the four levels, an official state religion was Russian Orthodoxy was largely propagandized among the population, but the rest of religions were either tolerated or discriminated, remained until 1917. The Great October Socialist Revolution which ended the Russian monarchy also led to an end of the dominant place of the Russian Orthodoxy over the other religions.

3.2. Political Theology of Kalmyk Buddhism

In this part, we will examine the political theology of the Kalmyk Buddhism for the period from 1640 to 1917. Due to the scarce of our resources we will rely mainly on the ethnographic works.

I.A. Zhitesky describing the life of the Astrakhan's Kalmyk noted the existence of three social groups: nobility, commoners, and ecclesiastic.¹¹⁰ The nobility (Kalmyk: ЦаһанЯстэ) was divided into high nobility – *noyon* (Kalmyk: нойон) and lower nobility – *zaysang* (Kalmyk: зайсанг). The nobility was supposed to preserve and develop spiritual power in the society, and make sure

¹⁰⁸“Gradovskiy, *Nachala Russkogo Gosudarstvennogo Prava*“(Beginnings of Russian State Law).

¹⁰⁹ John S. Curtiss, *Church and State in Russia, 1900–1917* (New York: Oktagon books, 1972), 186-187.

¹¹⁰ Irodeon Zhitesky, *Ocherki Byta Astrakhanskikh Kalmykov* (*Essays on Life Astrakhan Kalmyks*) (Moscow: M.G. Voltchaninov printing house, 1893), 40-41.

Kalmyk people preserve a high spiritual life ¹¹¹ Zhitesky compared noyons with the representative of high spiritual power on the earth. He argued that noyons were untouchable by law, and “*an insult or a trick of a noyon was considered the same as an insult of the Buddha*”.¹¹²

The lowest strata were commoners (Kalmyk: Xapa Ясрэ), who had to fulfill the orders of nobility and clergy. Although the commoners were the lowest strata, already in the nineteenth century, Zhitesky noted that the line between nobility and commoners becoming less and less evident, as there were more and more mixed between different strata, due to the fact that roaming lands of the nobility is spread rather far from each other.¹¹³

The third strata were represented by the Buddhist clergy, and their responsibility was praying for other people.¹¹⁴ In the same note, Pallas noted the sacral status of Kalmyk monastic order: “*according to Lamaism rebirth in a human body was not common for everybody, but is something rare, which is only given to the noblest clergy, noyons, and other nobility.*”¹¹⁵ However, as we know, from other Buddhist sources, the rebirth in human body was not the privilege of the high social class, but people with the exceptional karma.¹¹⁶ Therefore, I will argue that Pallas must have been mistaken the reincarnate lamas with the whole sangha.

Additionally, by analyzing the greeting ceremonies in the Kamyk society described by Zhitesky, we can make some judgments about Kalmyk Buddhist theology’s position on the relations between the laity, nobility, and the sangha. Thus, unlike the nobility, who waits until a member of

¹¹¹Ibid.

¹¹²Ibid, 41.

¹¹³Ibid.

¹¹⁴Ibid, 43.

¹¹⁵Peter Pallas, *Puteshestviye po Raznym Mestam Rossiiskogo Gosudarstva (Travel to Different Places of the Russian state)*(St. Petersburg: Imperial Academy of Science, 1809), 496.

¹¹⁶Waddell, *Buddhism and Lamaism of Tibet*, 170-171.

the sangha greet him first by “*offering him his elbow*”, the laity was supposed to kneel and bow his head in front of the clergy.¹¹⁷

As the difference in the greeting ceremony of Kalmyk Buddhist clergy is attached to the position of one in the social hierarchy, we believe that this feature of the Kalmyk Buddhism demonstrate spiritual inequality in the Kalmyk society.

It also seems to us that the functions of the Kalmyk noyons somehow remind the ideal of Dharmaking in the Theravada Buddhism. Similarly with Dharmaking, the Kalmyk nobility had to encourage the Buddhist virtues in the society. However, due to the loose organization of the Kalmyks in the tribal confederation the function was assigned not to one Dharmaking, but the whole social strata of noyons and zaysangs.

Furthermore, if we look at the relations between the political and religious authorities, the inclusion of the laws concerning the clergy in civil legislation of 1640 provides strong evidence in the support of the close positive relation in between religious and secular in the Kalmyk society.

After thorough examination of *The Great Code of Law 1640* (Kalmyk: Ики Цааджин Бичик), we came to a conclusion that the document is composed in accordance with the canonical demands of Buddhist literature. The preface states the following objects of worshiping: Shakyamuni Buddha, Tsongkhapa, Dalai Lama, and Panchen Lama, and Ochir Dara Lama.¹¹⁸ T hereby, it demonstrates how the Buddhism legitimized the rule of political leaders by the laws.

¹¹⁷Ibid, 41.

¹¹⁸Konstantin Golstunskiy, *Mongolo-oyratskiye Zakony 1640 goda (Mongol-Oirat laws of 1640)*, (St. Petersburg: Imperial Academy of Sciences typography, 1887), 35.

Ochirova argues that since Lamaism was adopted as an official religion, the formula of alliance of secular and religious authorities started to be widely implemented by the Kalmyks. Buddhism legitimated the rule of Kalmyk khans and tayishis, and the Kalmyk rulers were providing Buddhism with financial and material support but also human resources.¹¹⁹ Subsequently, here again, we can draw some parallels between the Kalmyk rulers and the ideal of Dharmaking, who preserves society from anarchy, built monasteries, temples, made donations.¹²⁰ However, we should note that unlike in Tibet, the power of Kalmyk tayishis and khans were rather limited, due to their organization of a loose confederation of tribes.¹²¹

“Section 2. About Revisions and Responsibilities.” prohibited lamas to accept disciples, without official notification and permission of tayishi. A man was also not allowed to join monastic order by his unilateral decision; he needed to be granted with the permission from his tayishi first.¹²² Furthermore, “Article 8 of Section 2.” prohibited middle aged military man to become a monk by his unilateral decision, unless he was too old, or handicapped.¹²³ Women were not allowed to become a nun by the unilateral decision either.¹²⁴ After examining these articles, we can come to a conclusion, that secular needs exceeded the religious ones. Therefore, the forbiddance to join the monastic order without the permission from tayishi can be seen in the large dependence of the Kalmyk tribes on the military men power. Consequently, the practical needs prevailed over the spiritual needs, since the political rulers could regulate the number of people joining sangha.¹²⁵

¹¹⁹Nina Ochirova, “Buddijskoe Dukhovensto i Razvitie Kalmytskoq Kul’tyri” (Buddhist Clergy and Development of Kalmyk Culture) in *Buddhist Clergy and Kalmyk Culture*, ed. Nina Ochirova, Elza Bakaeva, Delyash Muzraeva (Elista: Dhangar, 2004), 5-6.

¹²⁰Balkrishna Govind Gokhale, *Asoka Maurya* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1966), 2

¹²¹Khodarkovsky, *Where Two Worlds Met*, 15.

¹²²Bichurin, *Zapiski o Mongolii, Tom 2 (Notes on Mongolia, Volume 2)*, 228-229.

¹²³Ibid.

¹²⁴Ibid, 229-230.

¹²⁵Ibid, 322-323.

However, the interconnection between secular and religious spheres can also be seen in the double functions of Kalmyk pilgrimages to Tibet. From one hand, pilgrimage was an essential part of Buddhist culture, which influenced the spiritual life of the khanate; and from the other hand, it had a policy objectives, like learning about political situation in the region, looking for some alliance, and asking for the blessing for one or another political decision.¹²⁶

The increased influence of the Russian Empire in the eighteenth century and followed incorporation of the Kalmyk Khanate in the Russian socio-political structure, lead to some changes in the political theology of Kalmyk Buddhism. Thus, under the pressure of the Russian Empire, the tradition of receiving the title of khan from Dalai Lama was first transferred to the Russian Tsar in 1757, and later on abandoned.¹²⁷

If we compare the political theology of Kalmyk Buddhism with the ideal of the “democratic political theology” that was determined earlier, we can come to a conclusion, that Kalmyk Buddhism mostly does not fit the definition in regard of the period from 1640 to 1917. Although, there is indeed the positive attitude between religion and state relations, as these two are interconnected in the symbiotic relationships; the Kalmyk Buddhist theology, undoubtedly, does not support neither spiritual not political equality in the Kalmyk society. On the contrary, we believe, that the Kalmyk Buddhism seems to be an elite religion which benefits from the established social order.

3.3. Religious Polity of Kalmyk Buddhism

The polity of Kalmyk Buddhism had three types of internal hierarchy: depending on monk's

¹²⁶ Baira Ochirova, “Tradicii Kalmytskikh Palomnichestv v Tibet” (Traditions of the Kalmyk Pilgrimages to Tibet), in *Nauchnye Problemy Gumanitarnyx Issledovanij*, 2 (2010): 150.

¹²⁷ National Archive of the Kalmyk Republic. Ф. 36 Оп 1. Д. 316. Л. 74-74.

specialization, monastic and administrative.

Depending on the specialization of his education, a monk could obtain a title of: *bagshi* (Kalmyk: багши) – the teacher of Buddhist philosophy; *emchi* (Kalmyk: эмчи), who was specializing in medicine; *zuragchi* (Kalmyk: зурхачи) – astrologer, or *zarachi* (Kalmyk: зарачи) – a painter.¹²⁸

The monastic hierarchy also consisted of four levels: (1) *surhalin-kebun* (Kalmyk: сургалин-кебун) – a secular student who is preparing to join the monastic order (2) *mandzhi* (Kalmyk: манджи) – a lowest level of ordination (3) *getsul* (Kalmyk: гецул) – a monk who is already 20 years old but keeps less than 200 vows and 53 rules (4) *gelung* (Kalmyk: гелюнг) – 25 years old, who keeps 200 and 53 rules.¹²⁹

The third type of hierarchy, which is at our particular interests, is an internal administrative hierarchy in the Kalmyk *khuruls* (temple). Similarly to the other regions where Gelukpa was a dominant school, until the end of eighteenth–beginning of the nineteenth centuries, the head of the Kalmyk administrative hierarchy was the Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama had an authority to appoint the Kalmyk head lamas, to authorize the building of new monasteries, and deciding the direction of the internal development of the Buddhist community. The direct head of the Kalmyk monastic order in Kalmykia, who was in charge of fulfilling the Dalai-Lama's orders, was the Kalmyk head lama.¹³⁰

One of the peculiarities of the Kalmyk Buddhist polity is its connection with the administrative division of the Kalmyk Khanate. Thus, by the eighteenth century, the Kalmyk Khanate was

¹²⁸Zhitesky, *Ocherki Byta Astrakhanskikh Kalmykov (Essays on Life Astrakhan Kalmyks)*, 51.

¹²⁹*Ibid.*, 50.

¹³⁰Vasily Bakunin, *Opisaniye Kalmytskikh Narodov (Description of the Kalmyk People)* (Elista: Kalmytskoye knizhnoye izdatel'stvo, 1995), 32.

divided into eleven *uluses*¹³¹: Erkhetelevsky, Harakhulovsky, Bagutovsky, Bol'shikh and Malykhzuyrganov, Khoben-noyonsky, Habuchinovsky, Barunovsky, Tsokhorovsky, Kereitsky, Caatanovsky and Derbetovsky. The khurul belonged to *ulus* (an administrative unit of Kalmyk tribes) and the ecclesiastics from other *uluses* could not get involved in its matters. The head of the all monasteries in the whole *ulus* was called an *akh-bagshi* (Kalmyk: ах-багши).¹³² The post of *akh-bagshi* was elected by all khuruls, and approved by the head Kalmyk lama.¹³³ Henceforth, we can say that the local religious organizations were moderately independent from the centre, as they could elect their own leader.

Starting from 1800 due to the reform posed on the Kalmyk Buddhism by the Russian Emperor, the *akh-bagshis* started to be in charge of the head lama election, and was started to be called the *Shadzhin Lama* (the head lama of Kalmyk people). After the election, the candidate on the post of the *Shadzhin Lama* had to also be approved by the Russian emperor.¹³⁴

The head of one monastery was called *bagshi* (Kalmyk: багши) or *akhlachi* (Kalmyk: ахлаци). *Bagshi* or *akhlachi* had to be a fully ordinate monks level of *gelung*, and his responsibilities comprised supervision of prayers and ceremonies, and management of the sangha.¹³⁵ *Bagshi* was also in charge of teaching the philosophy in the monastic schools. The post of *bagshi* was elected and lifelong.¹³⁶

Another important member of the Kalmyk Buddhist polity was a *gebko* (Kalmyk: gebko). The

¹³¹ A name for the administrative unit of Kalmyk people.

¹³² Genadij O. Avlyayev, *Proishozhdenie Kalmyckogo Naroda (The Origins of the Kalmyk People)*, (Elista: Kalmyckoeknizhnoeizdatel'stvo, 2002), 58.

¹³³ Andrey Kurapov, *Buddizmi Vlast' v Kalmytskom Khanstve XVII – XVIII vv. (Buddhism and the Power in the Kalmyk Khanate in XVII – XVIII Centuries)* (Elista: Dzhangar, 2007), 137.

¹³⁴ *Polnoe Sobranie Zakonov Rossiskoj Imperii* (Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire), accessed March 3, <http://www.runivers.ru/lib/book3130>.

¹³⁵ Zhitesky, *Ocherki Byta Astrakhanskikh Kalmykov*, 50.

¹³⁶ Kurapov, *Buddizmi vlast' v kalmytskom khanstve XVII – XVIII vv.*, 73.

gebko was elected annually by all the monks living in khurul, and his responsibilities included the supervision of the monk's obedience to Vinaya code and the general order of a monastery.¹³⁷

There are even more positions in the administrative hierarchy of the Kalmyk Buddhist polity, however, they are not relevant for our research.

There is no age limit on what time a person can join monastic order¹³⁸, but usually the education for future lamas started at the age of 8-10 and ends in 17. After finishing their education they could choose whether live the same life as lay people, with the only difference that they were signed up to local khuruls and had to go and conduct the prayers there. The lamas who live outside of the monastery had the same status as layman, and had to follow the same laws. Moreover, lamas who lived outside the monasteries had to pay the same taxes as the laymen, with only difference that his work will be his monastic specialization. The sangha living in the monastery had a higher status than layman, and were free from tax payment.¹³⁹

The khuruls' property comes from donations and religious services of the Buddhist sangha. The received property is divided into three parts: the first one is given to a monk, who earned it; the second one is distributed between all the members of khurul, depending on one's place in the hierarchy and administration; and the third one is left to khurul.¹⁴⁰

Moving on to the internal governing of the Buddhist polity, Pozdneev argues that the Mongolian societies did not have a strict guideline on how to manage one monastery, and all the decisions

¹³⁷Zhitesky, *Ocherki byta Astrakhanskikh kalmykov*, 50.

¹³⁸*Ibid.*, 50.

¹³⁹Alexei Pozdneev, *Ocherki byta buddiyskikh monastyrey i buddiyskogo dukhovenstva v Mongolii v svyazi s otnosheniyem sego poslednego k narodu*(*Sketches of life of Buddhist monasteries and Buddhist clergy in Mongolia in relation to the treatment of latter to the people*)(St. Petersburg: Imperial Academy of Sciences typography, 1887), 115.

¹⁴⁰Zhitesky, *Ocherki Byta Astrakhanskikh Kalmykov*, 54.

were in the hands of the head lamas.¹⁴¹ Due to the lack of data on the code of rules of Kalmyk khuruls, we will examine some provisions of Mongolian Zuu Erdene monastery, as we believe it should be similar to the Kalmyk ones.

Thus, one of provisions states, *“if gelung, getsul, or bagshi commits a crime, which is related to the four foundations of monastic life¹⁴², or if he is caught drinking alcohol, this will be considered as a violation of monastic vows. The monk who violated the vows will be stripped off his monastic clothes and attributes, and given eighty hits. If later he improves his behaviour, he can be returned his monastic clothes, his vows can be restored, but he will be given lower position in the worshipping ceremonies. However, if he keeps violating the rules, he will be kicked out of the monastery. At the same time, if a monk who already has violated the rules of the monastery commits a crime outside of it, he will be, without consideration, kicked out of the monastery and trialled according to the secular law. His personal property will turn into the property of monastery treasury.”*¹⁴³

The other provision which is at our particular interest declares: *“if a monk only a little bit violated the four foundations of monastic laws, such as he drank vodka as a medicine, or if he drank a little of vodka under the pressure of others, as a punishment he will have to clean the monastery and monastery yard for three days. After that he will be ordered to do thousand bows, and donate one horse or amount of money of one horse to the monastery treasury. If a monk does not have any money or property, he has to work the demand period of time, and only after that he will be allowed to participate in the worshipping ceremonies.”*

¹⁴¹Pozdneev, *Ocherki Byta buddiiskikh Monastyrey i Buddiiskogo Dukhovenstva v Mongolii v Svyazi s Otnosheniyem sego Poslednego k Narodu*, 182.

¹⁴²Chastity, theft, murder, and lies.

¹⁴³Pozdneev, *Ocherki Byta Buddiiskikh Monastyrey I Buddiiskogo Dukhovenstva v Mongolii*, 183.

Consequently, we can see that the punishment for the violation of the grand rules of monastic life is the same for all monks, and does not depend on the monk's place in the hierarchy. Moreover, the fact that ecclesiastic does not possess an immunity from the secular laws when he commits a crime, both inside and outside of the monastery, demonstrates the respect of Kalmyk Buddhism towards the secular law and the secular authorities. However, in the quarrel between two monks, the seniority means the less severe punishment. For instance, *“if lama has a fight with an older lama, he should be given ten hits in front of that older lama. However, if an older lama is not right and hit a younger lama, older lama should be put on his knees in front of all clergy.”*¹⁴⁴

Although, the high ordination gives a monk some security, the high ordinate lamas are still accountable to the rest of the sangha. Thus, according to the rules, the high positioned lamas have a duty to serve as well as take a good care of their subordinates; otherwise, they have to face the consequences. *“If one of the high lamas...is too cruel towards the rest of lamas, if they do not take care of the younger lamas, and do not teach with their bests, they should be striped of from their high status to the status of average lama. In their place should be put a person with a dignity, intelligence, and attentive towards the other lamas.”*¹⁴⁵ Although, this provision existed, it is unclear, who the change of the head of the administration could be implemented, as there were not any specific check up mechanisms.

From the aforesaid, we can come to a conclusion that although, there are some roots of the democratic features in the religious polity of Kalmyk Buddhism, generally speaking, it reminds the strong centralized system where all the important decisions are made by the head lama¹⁴⁶ and

¹⁴⁴Ibid., 184-185.

¹⁴⁵Ibid, 186.

¹⁴⁶ Pozdneev, *Ocherki Byta buddiiskikh Monastyrey i Buddiiskogo Dukhovenstva v Mongolii v Svyazi s Otnosheniyem sego Poslednego k Narodu*, 182.

the actual legal status of the sangha is actually higher than the laymen.¹⁴⁷ Furthermore, the laity did not have any influence over the religious polity of Kalmyk Buddhism, and their responsibilities were to fulfil the requests of the sangha and the nobility. The only entirely democratic feature of the religious polity of the Kalmyk Buddhism is the moderate independence of khuruls, as they belong to a particular ulus. And even this characteristics is more connected with the loose tribal organization of the Kalmyks, than the independent nature of its local Buddhist organizations,

Therefore, we will conclude that from the three characteristics of the “democratic ecclesiology”, namely: the rules and norms that impart institutional checks on religious leaders, moderately equal power between clergy and laity, and the autonomy of local religious organizations”, the only one which more or less fit is the autonomy of local religious organizations.

3.4. Political Interaction of Kalmyk Buddhism with the Russian state

Since their arrival to the Caspian steppes, the Russian state sought to include the Kalmyks in its sphere of political influence. As the political contacts between Russia and Kalmyks became more frequent, Kalmyk Buddhism, mainly represented by the Buddhist sangha, started to be involved in the interactions with the Russian state.

The seventeenth century’s Russian historical records show that the Kalmyk Buddhist sangha was not only participating but sometimes even leading the Kalmyk diplomatic envoys. For instance,

¹⁴⁷ Alexei Pozdneev, *Ocherki byta buddiiskikh monastyrey i buddiiskogo dukhovenstva v Mongolii v svyazi s otnosheniyem sego poslednego k narodu* (Sketches of life of Buddhist monasteries and Buddhist clergy in Mongolia in relation to the treatment of latter to the people)(St. Petersburg: Imperial Academy of Sciences typography, 1887), 115.

in June 1644, the Kalmyk envoy from Daichin tayishi was headed by bagshi Soving¹⁴⁸; in 1650 the head lama of Kalmyk people participated in the Russo-Kalmyk negotiations.¹⁴⁹

Starting from 1645, the Russian envoy to Kalmyk uluses Alexander Kudryavtsev received an order from the Russian authorities: “*Make them give the oaths according to their belief*”¹⁵⁰, and the Kalmyk Buddhism became an integral part of the Russo-Kalmyk political relations. Henceforth, following the religious aspect of Kalmyk tradition of political legitimization of all treaties between Kalmyks and Russia were signed with the presence of Buddha statuette¹⁵¹ (Kalmyk: бурхан).

One of the first attempts of the direct involvement of the Russian authorities in the Kalmyk Buddhist affairs was an order given to Kazan’s governor P. S. Saltykov, though whose territories Kalmyks have to pass to reach Tibet, “*do not let Ayuki’s envoys to China without the prior consent of the Russian government*”.¹⁵² As the Kalmyk pilgrimages to Tibet encompassed not only religious but also political implications, the Russian state authorities wanted to restrict the influence of Dalai Lama among the Kalmyks, and prevent the Kalmyks from finding the new alliance.¹⁵³

The political interactions between the Kalmyk Buddhism and the Russian state reached its peak during the time when *Shakur Lama* was the head lama of the Kalmyk Buddhism. A.A. Kurapov argues that Shakur Lama was sent from Tibet in 1718, with one political goal – to persuade the

¹⁴⁸Mergen Kichikov, *Obrazovaniye Kalmytskogo Khanstva (The Formation of Kalmyk Khanate)* (Elista: Kalmytskoeknizhnoeizdatelstvo, 1995), 75.

¹⁴⁹Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts. F. 119. Op. 1.1650. D.1 L. 136-136 ob.

¹⁵⁰Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts. F. 119. Op. 1.1645. D. 2. L. 327.

¹⁵¹Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts. F. 119. Op. 1.1655. D. 2. L. 65.

¹⁵²*Russo-kitajskie Otnosheniya v XVII veke: Materialy i Document (Russo-Chinese relations in XVII century: materials and documents)*, (Moscow: Nauka, 1978), 159.

¹⁵³Kurapov, *Buddizm i Vlast' v Kalmytskom Khanstve v XVII – XVIII vv.*, 101-102.

Kalmyks to return to Dzungaria. However, the changed political situation in Dzungaria and the Kalmyk Khanate prevented him from fulfilling it.¹⁵⁴

In 1724 at the meeting between Russian authorities represented by the Governor of Astrakhan Volynsky, Shakur lama suggested the Russian government to sign a treaty of an alliance of “two powers”: the power of Buddhist leader and the power of the secular ruler.¹⁵⁵ The treaty was signed, but did not bring any effect on the relations between Kalmyk Buddhism and the Russian state.¹⁵⁶

As we know, the Mongol-Oirat tradition of an alliance of two powers means that a secular ruler adopts Buddhism and becomes its protector. Shakur lama had changed the Mongol-Oirat traditional scheme in order to fit it to the reality of the Russian Empire. A.A. Kurapov viewed this willingness of closer cooperation and integration of Kalmyk Buddhism with the Russian state in the political disintegration of the Kalmyk Khanate, which was caused by the succession crisis after the death of Ayuki Khan in 1724.¹⁵⁷ He argues that one of the main characteristics of Kalmyk Buddhism was the predisposition to have close relation with the political centre, and with the political conflict in the Kalmyk Khanate, the Russian state became that centre.¹⁵⁸ Notwithstanding, whether Kurapov’s views are correct or not, the fact that the traditional scheme of the alliance of the “two powers” was changed so easily in order to fit the new political reality, indicates the high level of adaptability of Kalmyk Buddhism.

This nominal alliance between the Russian state and Shakur lama resulted in the increasing

¹⁵⁴Ibid.,110.

¹⁵⁵Ibid, 117.

¹⁵⁶National Archive of the Republic of Kalmykia.F. 36. Op. 1 D.15. L. 61.

¹⁵⁷Khodarkovsky, *Where Two Worlds Met*, 174.

¹⁵⁸Kurapov,*Buddizm i Vlast' v Kalmytskom Khanstve XVII – XVIII vv*,116.

authority of the Kalmyk Buddhist leader in Russo-Kalmyk political interactions. Thus, Shakur lama participated in the all most important negotiations between Kalmyks and Russia in 1720-1730s. Moreover, Russian representatives always consulted with Shakur lama during their visit, as they viewed Shakur lama as a spiritual leader, who can stabilize the political situation in the Kalmyk Khanate.¹⁵⁹

The policies of Shakur Lama as a head of the Kalmyk Buddhism made the Kalmyk Buddhism in an ally of the Russian state. And Shakur Lama nearly became a Russian official: he was receiving salary; receiving a letters of awards; sending representatives for the coronation of Anna Ioannovna.¹⁶⁰ Although, some might argues that the single behaviour of one lama does not represent the complete picture, we should not forget that we are talking about the head Kalmyk lama, who was officially appointed by Tibet, and who has the highest spiritual authority in the Kalmyk lands. Therefore, we argue that the policies of Shakur Lama lead to the change in the political interactions between Kalmyk Buddhism and the Russian state. If before, in its interactions with the Russian state the Kalmyk Buddhist sangha merely represented the interests of Kalmyk secular authorities, the policies of Shakur Lama made the Kalmyk Buddhist sangha in a separate actor with its own goals.

Even after the death of Shakur lama in 1736¹⁶¹ the relations between Kalmyk Buddhism and the Russian state remained rather close. Thus, in 1756 Kalmyk Buddhist sangha went to Siberia to represent the interests of the Russian state and persuade Altay people to join the Empire.¹⁶² The fact that Kalmyk Buddhist sangha took a role of the diplomatic envoys of the Russian state

¹⁵⁹Ibid.,129.

¹⁶⁰Ibid,117-149.

¹⁶¹Ibid, 160.

¹⁶²Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts.248. Op. 113. D. 1551. L. 663.

demonstrates that the alliance of “two laws” initiated by Shakur Lama still existed.

After the large part of the Kalmyks left to Dzungaria, Russia annexed the Kalmyk Khanate's lands, and the Kalmyk people were incorporated in the large governmental organization of the Russian authorities. Subsequently, Kalmyk Buddhism also practically became a part of Russian state government scheme.

Austine Waddell, in his book “*Buddhism and Lamaism of Tibet*” provides the following description of relations between Kalmyk Buddhism and Russia after 1771: “*the intercourse with the priest-god at Lhasa was strictly forbidden. Nor are they allowed to accept from Dalai Lama any orders or patents, nor to send him any ambassadors or presents. Nevertheless, he gives them secret advice by oracle. Thus, even the head Kalmyk Lama is now appointed by Russian government,...*”¹⁶³

Indeed, after 1771 the main direction of Russian government policy in relation to Buddhist community became limiting the political influence of the Buddhist clergy, downsizing the number of Buddhist monasteries, and including Buddhist clergy in the regional administrative system. On the 14 October, 1800 Paul I signed the Charter “*On liberty for all Kalmyks religious ceremonies*”. From now on the head of the Kalmyk Buddhism had a title of Shadzhin Lama with the fixed payments, and was appointed by the Russian Emperor.¹⁶⁴

In 1834 “*The Provision on Governance of Kalmyk People*” made changes in the position on Buddhist monastic community. From now on, the head Kalmyk Lama was to be appointed by the Emperor from the list presented by Ministry of Interior Affairs. Moreover, was founded a new

¹⁶³ Austine Waddell, *Buddhism and Lamaism of Tibet* (New Delhi: Heritage Publishers, 1979), 42

¹⁶⁴ “Polnoe Sobranie Zakonov Rossiskoj Imperii” (Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire), accessed March 3, <http://www.runivers.ru/lib/book3130>.

institution Lamaists Spiritual Board, which was managed by the Governor of Astrakhan and Ministry of Interior Affairs. The members of Lamaists Spiritual Board Lama were the head lama of Kalmyk people and four other Buddhist ecclesiastics, who were elected by Kalmyk Buddhist clergy for three years period. The functions of Lamaists Spiritual Board included the control of monasteries' economic lives, dealing with personnel issues, and managed the judicial decisions other the clergy. The decisions of the Board come into force only with the approval of Council Astrakhan's Kalmyk control.¹⁶⁵

In 1847 the increased of restrictions other Kalmyk Buddhism had resulted in the new "*Provision on Governance of Kalmyk People*", where the Lamaists Spiritual Board was abolished. The spiritual authority was transferred to the head lama of Kalmyk people, who was elected on the meeting of all bagshis from all ulus. However, despite the free election, the last decision was in the hands of Russian emperor, the only one who had a power to approve the elected figure on the post of Shadzhin lama. The functions of Shadzhin-lama included the personnel issues; judicial decisions other matrimonial cases, and maintenance of khuruls.¹⁶⁶

Despite the through control and restrictions posed on the Kalmyk Buddhism by the Russian state after the 1771, the Kalmyk Buddhism still served for the Russian empire's foreign policy objectives. In the diplomatic contacts with Tibet and Mongolia, the Russian authorities, especially during the reign of Nicolas II (1894 –1917) sent the Kalmyk Buddhist sangha.¹⁶⁷

In regard of interreligious relations between the Kalmyk Buddhism and the official religion of

¹⁶⁵ Andrey Kurapov, Rossiiskaya Gosudarstvennost i Budiskaya Obshchina Kalmykov v XVII – nachale XVIII v. (the Russian State and the Kalmyk Buddhist Community), in *Nauchnye Problemy Gumanitarnykh Issledovaniy*. 4 (2010): 92-93.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Araltan Baskhaev, *Buddijskaya Tserkov' Kalmykii: 1900-1943 gg. (Buddhist Church in Kalmykia: 1900-1943)*, (Elista: Dzhangar), 29-30.

the Russian Empire, the Russian Orthodoxy, we know that although there was some dissent of the part of the Kalmyk Buddhist sangha because of the intensified missionary activities of the Orthodox priests among the Kalmyk population, the attitude of the Kalmyk Buddhism remained rather peaceful. One of the good examples of the reaction of the Kalmyk Buddhist sangha to the intensified missionary activities of the Russian Orthodox Church was an attempt to initiate an open religious discussion with the Orthodox priests. The lost party had to leave the Kalmyk lands forever. However, the Russian Orthodox Church ignored the request.¹⁶⁸

3.5. *Summary*

In conclusion we can say that over the period under consideration, we can trace the changes in the political interactions between the Kalmyk Buddhism and the Russian state. Indeed, this change was largely a result of a change of the political status of the Kalmyk Khanate (first, the independent political entity, and from 1771 – a part of the Astrakhan Governorate). However, even after 1771, when the restrictions and control over the Kalmyk Buddhism became more severe, there were no any hostile encounters between it and the Russian state.

To conclude, I shall say that during the period from 1640 to 1917, the arrival of the Kalmyk to the Caspian steppes, the increased influence of the Russian Empire in the eighteenth century, and followed incorporation of the Kalmyk Khanate in the Russian socio-political structure, caused some changes for the political theology of the Kalmyk Buddhism. However, overall, Kalmyk Buddhism still flourished as a religion.

We detected some similarities in the political theology of the Kalmyk Buddhism with the Theravada Buddhism during the period from 1640 to 1917. It expressed in the Kalmyk social

¹⁶⁸ Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Empire. F. 119. Op. 1. 1736. D.40. L.43.

order with the nobility and sangha being on top, and the commoners being at the bottom. However, it is necessary to mention that unlike in the absolute Theravada Buddhism, the ideal of Dharmaking did not come to live even during the more centralized rule of the Auyki khan.

The annexation of the Kalmyk lands by the Russian state, did not lead to the deterioration of the relations between Kalmyk Buddhism and the Russian state. Kurapov might be rights in his arguments, that the reason for that is the predisposition of Kalmyk Buddhism to lean to a strong centralized political centre, which the Russian Empire was at that time.

Moreover, despite the positive relations between Kalmyk Buddhism and the both Russian and the Kalmyk states, the Kalmyk Buddhist political theology, undoubtedly, does not support political equality and human rights, as the Code of Law of 1640 proves. Neither, the religious polity guarantees the laity any voice in the Buddhist matters. The religious polity of the Kalmyk Buddhism reminds more of a centralized system, when the decision of the totalitarian ruler can be questioned, but it rarely happens.

Except for the positive relations with the state, the Kalmyk Buddhism fits the definition of a “democratic political theology” and “democratic ecclesiology” only by one characteristic—the moderate independence of khuruls. However, we might as well raise a question, if this kind of independence the result of the democratic nature of the Kalmyk Buddhism or the peculiarity of its administrative structure.

Therefore, we will conclude that, on the whole, during the period from 1640 to 1917, the Kalmyk Buddhism was neither democratic nor tolerant, which also can be provide by the amount of the military conflicts the Kalmyks participated in.

Chapter 4. Kalmyk Buddhism and the State from 1922 to 1939

4.1. Religious Situation in the Soviet Union

Our second period under examination starts in 1922 and ends in 1939. We purposely left out the years of the Russian Civil War (1917-1922), as there was not unified policy on religious issues, due to the existence of more than one government. Furthermore, since we agree with position of Araltan Baskhaev, that by the end of 1930 Kalmyk Buddhism stopped its forma existence as a social institution,¹⁶⁹ we took 1939 as the end of our second research period.

Generally speaking, the whole time of the Soviet Union can be characterized as the period of the oppression for all religions, including former state religion of the Imperial Russia—the Orthodoxy. Although, the degree of oppression varies depending on the precise time and religion, the ultimate political goals of the Soviet Union authorities always remained an entire elimination of all religions.¹⁷⁰

Despite the constitutional guarantees of freedom to hold religious services, in practice, the Soviet authorities employed a range of official measures to discourage religion and curb the activities of religious groups, as they seen the religion as an adversary to the Marxist's scientific materialism.¹⁷¹

In 1922 under the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was founded a key organization in the fight with the religion, which is known as the Antireligious Commission. Originally, the function of the Antireligious Commission was to separate the Church from the

¹⁶⁹Baskhaev, *BuddijskayaCerkov' Kalmykii*, 181.

¹⁷⁰Igor' Kurlyandskij, *Stalin, Vlast', I Religiya* (Stalin, Power, and Religion) (Moscow: Kuchkovo Pole, 2011), 190-191.

¹⁷¹Inen, Kimmo. *Religion in Russia after the Collapse of Communism: Religious Renaissance or Secular State*(Lewiston, NY: E. Mellen Press, 1998), 21.

state, and the schools from the Church; however, with expand of the Soviet antireligious sentiments grew the responsibilities of the Antireligious Commission.¹⁷²

Already in 1923, the Soviet authorities started to close the churches, temples, and pray houses, and to confiscate the buildings and other property.¹⁷³ Moreover, the antireligious propaganda increases all over the Union, as the Soviet government lounged the first antireligious newspaper “*Bezbozhnik*”, as one of its antireligious tools.¹⁷⁴

In 1923 the new decree “*On the registration of religious communities and permit of the convening of such congresses*” introduced the new demands to the religious organizations. From now on, the religious communities had to attain an official state registration from the local administration. Each religious organization had to have at least 50 members and an official Charter, which had to be approved by the local state’s authorities.¹⁷⁵

Although, the existence of religious communities was allowed, the state control posed on them was too severe. Moreover, its goal to eliminate the religion the Soviet government targeted not only the doctrines and communities, but the clergy. Thus, both former and active clergy were deprived from their elective suffrage.¹⁷⁶ The discrimination also spread over to the working sphere, former clergy were either refused to be employed, or if they were employed they were

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Igor' Kurlyandskij, *Stalin, Vlast' i Religiya*, 72.

¹⁷⁴ Evgenij Kuznetsov, “Antireligioznaya Agitaciya i Propaganda Sovetskoj Vlasti v Pervye Poslerevolucionnye Gody” (Antireligious Agitation and Propaganda of the Soviet Authorities in the First Years after the War), accessed March 18, 2014 <http://www.bogoslov.ru/text/728835.html>.

¹⁷⁵ “Postanovlenie ot 15 Aprelya 1923 goda. O poryadke Registratsii Religioznykh Obshchestv i Vydachi. Razreshenij na Sozyv S'ezdov Takovykh (The Decision of April 15, 1923. On the Procedure of Registration of Religious Communities and Issuance. Permissions on Convocation of the Congresses Such)”, accessed March 15, 2014, http://www.libussr.ru/doc_ussr/ussr_1616.htm.

¹⁷⁶ “Dekret VTSIK ot 04.11.1926 "Ob utverzhdenii Instruksii o Vyborakh Gorodskikh i Sel'skikh Sovetov i o Sozyve S'ezdov Sovetov" (The Decree of the Central Executive Committee from 04.11.1926 "On approval of the Instruction on the elections of city and village councils and on convocation of the congresses of Soviets)". accessed March 15, 2014 <http://www.lawmix.ru/sssr/16219>.

forced to leave their job.¹⁷⁷

In 1929 Stalin introduced a new law on “*religious organizations*”, which forbade all religious activities outside the churches and temples, classifying them as propaganda.¹⁷⁸ The new law was largely used by the NKVD (English: the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs) for the persecutions of the religious clergy, especially more influential one. Usually the NKVD used the accusation in the counterrevolutionary activities and anti-governmental propaganda to persecute the clergy.

Although during the Second World War Stalin reduced anti-religious policies in order to inspire the general population to fight with the Nazi Germany, and allowed to reopen some Churches pray houses,¹⁷⁹ it was a temporary measure, which ended soon after the War. The same softening of the antireligious policies happened after the death of Stalin, however already in 1959, the new leader Nikita Khrushchev began a new antireligious campaign.¹⁸⁰

Overall, the Soviet authorities were fairly consistent in their policies in regards of religion. The religion was a threat, a delusion, which had to be destroyed, what indeed, happened with our research subject – Kalmyk Buddhism.

4.2. The Political Theology of Kalmyk Buddhism

The traditional political theology of Kalmyk Buddhism with the the nobility and ecclesiastic

¹⁷⁷D.A. Dorzhieva, “Antireligioznaya Politika v Pervye Gody Sovetskoj Vlasti (1917-1928) (Antireligious policies of during the first years of the Soviet rule), in *Budiiskoe Dykhovenstvo i Kultura Kalmytskogo Naroda*, ed. Nina Ochirova et al. (Elista: Dzhangar, 2004), 60.

¹⁷⁸“Postanovlenie VTSIK, SNK RSFSR OT 08.04.1929. O Religioznykh Ob’edineniyakh (The Decree of the Central Executive Committee, People's Commissars of RSFSR from 08.04.1929 on Religious Associations)”, accessed March 16, 2014 <http://russia.bestpravo.ru/ussr/data04/tex16632.htm>.

¹⁷⁹Denis Janz, *World Christianity and Marxism*(New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 38–39

¹⁸⁰Vladimir Stepanov. “Rabota po Otrivy ot Tserkvi” (The Work of the Separation from the Church). *Mirt*, (Evangel’skaya Gazeta), April 6, 2014, 2009, accessed at <http://gazeta.mirt.ru/?2-11-912--1>.

being on top of the social ladder¹⁸¹ came to an end with the Russian Empire. And starting from 1922 until its formal annihilation in the end of 1930s, Kalmyk Buddhism tried to adapt to the new Soviet reality in order to survive. For that reason, the official political theology of Kalmyk Buddhism expressed wide-range support for all state's policies. Thus, for instance, Kalmyk Buddhist sangha tried to emphasize the similarity between the Buddhism and the Communism.¹⁸² Thus, instead of confronting the state, Kalmyk Buddhism started to adapt its political theology in accordance to the new political reality.

In 1928, the Spiritual Congress of Kalmyk Buddhists adopted a special decree that *“the sangha’s relation with the Soviet authorities is normal. The Soviet authority truly fulfils the decree about the separation of the church from the state, the freedom of conscience, and does not get involved in the religious affairs. The fulfilment of all Soviet authority’s orders is the holy duty of all the Buddhists and the sangha.”*¹⁸³

In our opinion, this position of the Kalmyk Buddhism can have ambivalent interpretation. On one hand, in this official statement the Kalmyk Buddhism framing the Soviet state’s commands to be the holy duty for all Buddhists and the sangha. However, as we all know, the Soviet state’s policies were far away from the original Buddhists democratic and humanistic ideas. Therefore, we might say that the Kalmyk Buddhism’s support of the Soviet policies made it an ally of a tyranny.

On another hand, the Soviet state’s fierce control of the all information channels, and the imminent threat of repressions, made it difficult for any institution or even an individual to

¹⁸¹Zhitesky, *Ocherki Byta Astrakhanskikh Kalmykov*, 40-41.

¹⁸²Baskhaev, *Buddhiskaya Tserkov’ Kalmykii*, 21.

¹⁸³National Archive of the Republic of Kalmykia. Ф.П-3. Оп.1. Д. 301. Л. 1-5 об.

express any kind of opposition to the Soviet policies. For this particular reason, we should look at the political theology of the Kalmyk Buddhism during the period from 1922-1939 with a considerable criticism.

The same goes for the official statements of Kalmyk Buddhist sangha, which were published in the newspapers. All their statements appealed to the accepting of the Communism, as a sole valid belief. For instance, in 1928 the head bagshi N. Khalyaev declared *“Lenin is the God. Lenin turned poor into rich, which means he is the God. I am from proletarian origins, and I stand behind the poor, in one word, I am the Bolshevik”*.¹⁸⁴

Another statement was made by twelfth ecclesiastics from Sharnutovskij khurul, after they monkhood in 1929: *“we were searching for the real God, but everything was in wane, and we realized there is no God. We solemnly declare that we will work equally with the rest of working Kalmyk for the sake of all society, and we encourage others to remove monastic clothes”*.¹⁸⁵

At the same time, the report of the Antireligious Commission of the Kalmyk Autonomous Oblast from May, 19, 1928 contradict to the official statements of Kalmyk sangha, and described their political mood as follow: *“all Buddhist clergy accepted the political authority of the Soviet power rather inertly; the Buddhist clergy does not participate in discussions of the election, redistribution of land; the Buddhist clergy does not read the books, as they are uneducated. There are some protests on the part of clergy, but single ones...”*¹⁸⁶

Unfortunately, there are not many valid sources on the political theology of Kalmyk Buddhism

¹⁸⁴Dordzhieva, *Buddijskaya Tserkov' Kalmykii*, 64.

¹⁸⁵ National Archive of the Republic of Kalmykia. P-3. Po.2 D.1302. L.112. Красная степь 13 сентября 1929 (Red Steppe 13 September 1929).

¹⁸⁶Dordzhieva, *Buddijskaya Tserkov' Kalmykii*, 62-61.

during this particular period. Moreover, as we already noted, even those sources that existed should be considered with a certain degree of the criticism. The vicious combat of the Soviet authorities with any statements which were not government approved, as well as the governmental control of the media channels make it difficult for us to grasp a real picture of the political theology of the Kalmyk Buddhism during this certain period.

However, if we take the tendencies of the Kalmyk Buddhism to lean towards the centralized power, as we saw in the previous research period, and a natural strive for survival, we might as well deem aforesaid statements to be accurate.

4.3. The Religious Polity of Kalmyk Buddhism

In order to examine the religious polity of Kalmyk Buddhism during the Soviet period, we will look at the law introduced at The Spiritual Congress of Kalmyk Ecclesiastics and Believing Laymen in 1923, July 19.

The Congress was authorized by the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR. The total number, of the delegates was 142, out of which 70 laymen and 72 ecclesiastics.¹⁸⁷

The new law, which determined the new religious polity of the Kalmyk Buddhism, was “*The Provision about the Governance of Spiritual Affairs of the Kalmyk Buddhists in the Kalmyk Autonomous Oblast*”. Adopted “*The Provision*” set a system of unified administrative government system for Kalmyk khuruls. According to “*The Provision*” the Spiritual Congress of Kalmyk Autonomous Oblast represented by both laity and ecclesiastics, governed all affairs of all Buddhist communities. The Congress had an authority to manage incomes and expenditures

¹⁸⁷National Archive of the Republic of Kalmykia F. P-3.Op.2. D.509. L. 13.

of khuruls; to conduct checkups and revisions; and to persecute the sangha for violation of the Vinaya code.¹⁸⁸

“*The Provision*” also founded the supreme executive body of the Spiritual Congress– the Central Spiritual Council. The Central Spiritual Council governed Kalmyk Buddhist affairs between the Spiritual Congresses, which were held every three years. The Central Spiritual Council consisted of seven members: the Shadzhin Lama of Kalmyk people, three laymen, and three ecclesiastics. The Central Spiritual Council was supposed to implement the decisions of the Spiritual Congress, manage work of ecclesiastics, and cooperate with the state’s authorities on the religious matters. All the decisions of the Central Spiritual Council were submitted to the Spiritual Assembly for the approval.¹⁸⁹

The head of the Central Spiritual Council was Shadzhin Lama of the Kalmyk people. Shadzhin Lama and other members of the Central Spiritual Council were elected by the Spiritual Congress from the representatives of the laity and ecclesiastic for three years. On the local level, the religious affairs were also governed by the elected spiritual leader of one ulus.¹⁹⁰

Moreover, “*The Provision*” of 1923 also founded the Revision Committee for checkups of the activities of the individual ecclesiastics and khuruls. The Revision Committee consisted of two laymen and one ecclesiastic.¹⁹¹

Although the reform of the Kalmyk Buddhist polity was caused by necessity to adapt to the new political realities, we cannot deny that it was a big step break towards its democratization. For

¹⁸⁸Baskhaev, *Buddhiskaya Tserkov' Kalmykii*, 103.

¹⁸⁹Dordzhieva, *Buddijskaya Tserkov' Kalmykii*, 39-40.

¹⁹⁰Ibid, 38.

¹⁹¹Ibid, 39.

the first time since the Kalmyks adopted Buddhism as their official religion, the laity obtained the power to intervene and influence Kalmyk Buddhism.

However, despite the democratization of the administrative system of Kalmyk Buddhism, all the decisions which made by the Spiritual Congress were just nominal, without the approval of the Soviet secular authorities.

Another document, which we will examine in order to explore that the religious polity of Kalmyk Buddhism is “*The Charter about the Internal Life of Monastics in the Buddhist Khuruls of Kalmyk Autonomous Oblast*”, which was adopted at the same Spiritual Congress of 1923.

The new changes introduced in “*The Charter*” were: the 16 years old age barrier for becoming madzhi;¹⁹² the clothes regulations, according to which the sangha was required to wear monastic clothes made of the cheap material, as the clothes and hats made of fur, silk, brocade, and leather were forbidden;¹⁹³ and housing regulations for all sangha.¹⁹⁴

Articles 13 to 16 of “*The Charter*” announced that the all property of monasteries’ and ecclesiastics’ belong to the lay believers. It included such property, as buildings, houses, livestock and even an income from the Buddhist services. Moreover, according to the new rules, the property could not be bought, sold, or rent without a permission from the Central Spiritual Council and the secular authorities. According to the new rules, without having a special permission, Kalmyk Buddhist sangha was not allowed to fulfill the spiritual requests of the laity. Moreover, if Kalmyk Buddhist sangha was fulfilling the spiritual requests of the laity, they were

¹⁹²Ibid.

¹⁹³Baskhaev, *Buddhiskaya Tserkov' Kalmykii*, 103.

¹⁹⁴Dordzhieva, *Buddijskaya Tserkov' Kalmykii*, 39.

not allowed to receive the payment.¹⁹⁵

Overall, similarly to the “*The Provision*”, the definitive goal of the new charter was to provide more rights to the laity, and to legalize the institutional checkups on the sangha in order to prevent the abuse of their authority.

From all aforesaid, we can come to a conclusion that during the 1920s the religious polity of the Kalmyk Buddhism underwent a large democratization process. Ironically, the democratization of the Kalmyk Buddhist polity was initiated by the Soviet state, which at the same time tried to extend its power over all spheres of the social and political life of its citizens. Unfortunately, the democratic changes of the Kalmyk Buddhist polity did not save the Kalmyk Buddhism from the destruction that was brought by the state in the end of 1930s.

4.4. Political Interactions between Kalmyk Buddhism and the Russian State

In the beginning of the period 1922-1939, Kalmyk Buddhism made a numerous attempts to comply with the requirements of the Soviet state. This tendency can be noticed in the invitation of the secular authorities to each of The Spiritual Congresses, and the reforms of the religious polity of Kalmyk Buddhism.¹⁹⁶ Moreover, after 1923 government decree nationalized all religious buildings and objects, and demanded an official registration from all religious communities, Kalmyk Buddhist sangha immediately followed the new rules of registration.¹⁹⁷ Despite the reforms of the Kalmyk Buddhist religious polity, the Soviet authorities still

¹⁹⁵Ibid.,40.

¹⁹⁶ National Achieve of the Republic of Kalmykia. P-3. Op.2., D.508f. L.58.

¹⁹⁷ Araltan Gordeev, *Buddhiiskaya Sangha Kalmykii (Buddhist Sangha of Kalmykia)* (Elista: Samizdat,2006), 35.

lconfiscated a large number of Buddhist objects, and buildings.¹⁹⁸

The increased involvement of the Soviet state in Kalmyk Buddhist affairs and the urge of Kalmyk Buddhism to survive in the new political realities practically led to the acceptance of any government directives. Thus, in the middle of 1920s to traditional functions of the Spiritual Congress was added a new task: to reconcile the Buddhism dogmas with the decrees and the policies of the Soviet authorities.¹⁹⁹

With the initiative of the Kalmyk Buddhist sangha in 1927 was organized the Buddhist Congress of the USSR.²⁰⁰ At the Congress the Kalmyk Buddhist sangha insisted on establishment a congress of all Buddhists nationalities in the USSR, with the center in Leningrad (now is known as Saint Petersburg).²⁰¹ This initiative once again indicated Kalmyk Buddhism's strive to cooperate with the Soviet state.

However, the attempt to reform Kalmyk Buddhism in accordance to the requirements of the Soviet state did not save it from the persecution. For instance, in July 1917 there were 28 big and 64 small khuruls and 2070 ecclesiastic in Kalmykia;²⁰² in 1936 in Kalmykia were 14 working temples, and 41 ecclesiastics;²⁰³ and by the 1939 there was no even one functioning khurul and even if there were some sangha remained they went into hiding.²⁰⁴

The wave of the closure of the khuruls in 1920s was followed by the repressions against the Kalmyk Buddhist sangha in 1930s.

¹⁹⁸D.A. Dorzhieva, "Antireligioznaya Politika v Pervye Gody Sovetskoj Vlasti, 56.

¹⁹⁹Dordzhieva, *Buddijskaya Tserkov' Kalmykii*, 58.

²⁰⁰Baskhaev, *Buddhiskaya Tserkov' Kalmykii*, 123.

²⁰¹Ibid, 124.

²⁰²Ibid, 68.

²⁰³Dordzhieva, *Buddijskaya Tserkov' Kalmykii*, 48-49.

²⁰⁴Nina Ochirova, "Buddhist Clergy and Development of Kalmyk Culture", 10.

The 1929 decree “*About the fight against counterrevolutionary elements in the governing bodies of religious associations*”,²⁰⁵ in reality meant the mass repression against the ecclesiastics of all confessions including Buddhism. One of the first to be arrested was the Shadzhin lama of Kalmyk people Luvsan Sharab Tepkin and other members of the Central Spiritual Council.²⁰⁶ Saving from the state’s persecution a lot of Buddhist sangha left their monastic path; the others immigrated to Tibet, China, and Mongolia.²⁰⁷

In 1935-1936, the Soviet authorities started a new attack on the Kalmyk Buddhist sangha, accusing them in the organizing the counterrevolutionary groups, and propaganda among the population. Fifty gelungs were arrested for counterrevolutionary activities, propaganda, and for conducting religious ceremonies.²⁰⁸ Dorzhieva does not deny the possibility of the opposition of the Soviet power among the sangha. However, she did not find any documents which prove the organization of any kind of resistance to the Soviet authorities, except for faked ones.²⁰⁹

Already by the end of the 1930s there was not functioning khuruls and no sangha left in Kalmykia.²¹⁰ Therefore, Baskhaev argues that in the end of 1930s the Kalmyk Buddhism stopped its existence as a social institution.²¹¹

Even after the Kalmyks returned from the Siberia in 1957, the ban on the Kalmyk Buddhism was still preserved. All the attempts of Kalmyks starting from the end of 1950s to open a Buddhist

²⁰⁵ Igor’ Kurlyandskij, “Protokoly Tsekrovnykh Mydrecov: k Istorii Mnimogo Povorota Stalina k Religii i Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi v 1930-e gody (The Church Records of Wise men: to History of Stalin’s Imaginary Turn to Religion and Orthodox Church in 1930s)”, *Politicheskij Zhurnal* (2003), accessed March 19, 2014, doi: <http://www.politjournal.ru/preview.php?action=Articles&dirid=50&tek=7705&issue=231>.

²⁰⁶ Dordzhieva, *Buddiiskaya Tserkov’ Kalmykii*, 99-100.

²⁰⁷ Baskhaev, *Buddhiiskaya Tserkov’ Kalmykii*, 132.

²⁰⁸ Dordzhieva, *Buddiiskaya Tserkov’ Kalmykii*, 100.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid, 103.

²¹¹ Baskhaev, *Buddhiiskaya Tserkov’ Kalmykii*, 181.

temple were denied under the different ideological excuses of Soviet state.²¹²

4.5. Summary

Overall, the political interactions between the Kalmyk Buddhism and the Soviet state during the period from 1922-1939 were akin one sided relations of the oppressor and a victim. The degree of the oppression was escalating with over the time: first just closure or merge of a few temples, and the implementation of a new governmental system, and later on, the actual execution of the sangha, and the demolition of the Buddhist buildings and objects. However, the results of the one sided oppression lead to the elimination of the Kalmyk Buddhism by 1939.

So far, we can be sure in one thing: in spite the fierce oppressive policies of the Soviet state, the reaction of Kalmyk Buddhism and Kalmyk Buddhist sangha stayed non-violent. Furthermore, as Galina Dorzhieva, did not find any archival documents, which proves Kalmyk sangha's anti-government activities, we can argue that the most robust answer to the oppressive policies of the Soviet state, was not an organized anti-Soviet movement, but an immigration.

At the same time, the repressive policies of the Soviet Union facilitated the transformation of the religious polity of Kalmyk Buddhism towards the more democratic ecclesiology. In its goal to fit the new political reality, Kalmyk Buddhism accepted the demands of the Soviet government, and made the laity and the sangha equal, provided the laity with the rights to influence the Buddhist matters, and guaranteed a moderate independence of the local level the religious organizations from each over. Thus, we can see how Kalmyk Buddhism moved away from Theravada Buddhist ideal, and started to adopt the ideas of equality between laity and the sangha, which are the norm

²¹²Nina Ochirova, "Buddhist Clergy and Development of Kalmyk Culture", 10.

in the Mahayana Buddhism. Hence, we can argue that in the religious polity of Kalmyk Buddhism in this period had democratic features.

Unfortunately, up until now, the topic of the political theology of the Kalmyk Buddhism during the period 1922-1939 remained largely under researched. And the data that is available cannot be utterly trusted, due to the Soviet state ideological control and oppressive policies. For this reason, I will leave the question of the political theology of the Kalmyk Buddhism during the Soviet period open for the further research.



Chapter 5. Kalmyk Buddhism and the State from 1988 to 1995

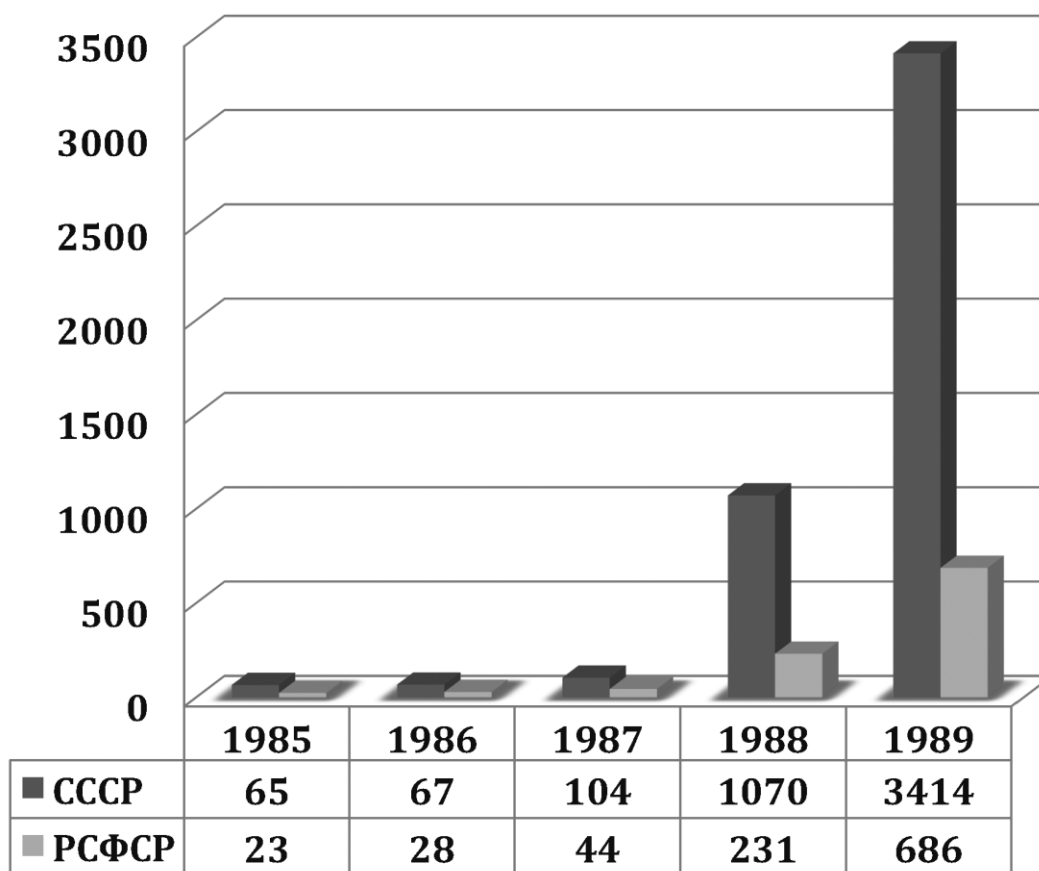
5.1. Religious Situation in the Russian Federation

1988 was chosen as the starting point for our third research period, due to the shift in the Soviet government policies in regard of religion. In 1988 the President of the USSR Mikhail Gorbachev held a meeting with Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Pimen and the members of the Synod. At the meeting was discussed the matter regarding the celebration of the millennium of Christianization of Kievan Rus'. In April 29, 1988 the country's leadership issued an official resolution, which provided a permission to celebrate the Millennium of the Christianization of Rus', as a major historical and cultural events in the country's life.²¹³

Despite the fact that up until 1990 there was no change in the legislation, the ideological shift of the political authorities' position towards religion can be reflected in some statistical data. Unlike before, when the Soviet central government vigorously controlled the registration of the religious organization, and mostly refused to all new applications; starting from 1988, the Soviet legislation practically let the local authorities decide whether or not satisfy applications for registration of a religious organization. Consequently, from 1988 the number of annually registered religious organizations saw ten times increase. (See the table 5.1.)

²¹³ Michail Shakhov, *Veroispovedatel'naya Politika Rossiiskogo Gosudarstva (Faith Policies of the Russian State)* (Moscow: RAGS, 2003), 50.

Table. 5.1. The statistical data of the number of the registered religious organizations.



Source: Michail Shakhov, *Veroispovedatel'naya Politika Rossijskogo Gosudarstva (Faith Policies of the Russian State)* (Moscow: RAGS, 2003), 50.

In 1990 religious believers, and even clergy, began to appear in the press and electronic media; the first religious leaders were elected to the Soviet parliament in 1989; a weekly religious newspaper was launched; and a religious presence began to establish itself in charity and education.²¹⁴

October 1, 1990, the new law “*On the Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations*”

²¹⁴Stephen White, Ian McAllister, and Ol'ga Kryshstanovskaya, “Religion and Politics in Postcommunist Russia”, *Religion, State and Society*, Vol. 22, No. 1, 1994.

indicated the complete alteration of religious politics of the Soviet state. From now on, all religious organizations were recognized to have legal personality, which also meant that religious organizations were allowed to have a property. The state registration of religious organizations to obtain the legal personality became voluntarily. The law also granted the participation of religious organizations in public life, their access to the media and the charity events. The discrimination or taxation of religious organizations and clergy was eliminated.²¹⁵

The law "*On Freedom of Conscience*" from October 25, 1990, became the main legal document, for seven years determining the Russian state religious policy. It guaranteed the freedom of religious beliefs, practices, religious education, and spread of the religious beliefs for all Russian citizens. The law decreased the number of citizen-founders for registration to ten persons. However, in orders to obtain the status of legal personality the organization were required to have a charter. Furthermore, the new law granted the religious organization and individual citizens with the permission to maintain international contacts, and invite foreign citizens to participate in religious activities, and to conduct religious education.²¹⁶

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the direction of the Russian state's religious policies remained liberal. In 1993, the same religious rights and freedoms were incorporated in the Constitution of the Russian Federation.²¹⁷

Although, the Article 4 of the Constitution stated the secular nature of the Russian state, forbade any religion to be established as a state one, and made the religious associations equal for the

²¹⁵Shakhov, *Veroispovedatel'naya Politika Rossiiskogo Gosudarstva*, 52.

²¹⁶*Ibid.*, 54.

²¹⁷"Constitution of the Russian Federation". Accessed May 8, 2014. <http://www.constitution.ru>.

law²¹⁸, in fact, the religious hierarchy was developed in new Russia, with the high position being returned to the Russian Orthodox Church, followed by Islam, Judaism and Buddhism, and others. The primary place of the Russian Orthodoxy in the political life of the state can be seen in the following examples: Moscow patriarch participated in the inauguration of the newly elected Russian President Yeltsin in July 1991²¹⁹, which reminded the coronation of the Tsar, when the patriarch was responsible for passing God's authority to the ruler; and the Orthodox Christmas became a public holiday for everybody, unlike other religious holidays.²²⁰

Despite Moscow's favoritism of Orthodoxy, the change of the governmental policy had a positive impact on the all confessions. 1990s are marked by increased interest of the general population towards religion. According to the study conducted by Academy of Sciences of the USSR, the percentage of people who believed in God sharply increased. The table below provides the data in the shift of religiosity among Russian population.

Table. 5.2. The degrees of belief in 1991, 1993 and 1996.

	1991	1993	1996
Believer	23%	32%	34%
Seeker	28%	28%	30%
Non-believer	7%	30%	24%
Atheist	35%	5%	6%
Do not know	7%	4%	6%

²¹⁸Ibid.

²¹⁹Dmitrij Kravtsev "Ego Demokraticeskoe Velichestvo" (His Democratic Highness), Expert Online, accessed May 15, : http://expert.ru/russian_reporter/2012/17/ego-demokraticeskoe-velichestvo.

²²⁰Vladimir Lagovsky, "S Rozhdestov Khristovym" (Merry Christmas), *Komsomol'skaya Pravda*, accessed May 17, 2014, doi: <http://www.kp.ru/daily/23435/35633>.

Source: Kaariainen, *Religion in Russia After the Collapse of Communism*, 91.

5.2. Political Theology of Kalmyk Buddhism

The liberalization of the Russian state religious policies, lead to the religious renaissance of all confessions, including Kalmyk Buddhism. In 1988, for the first time since 1939, Kalmyk Buddhist organization succeeded in obtaining the registration.²²¹ And already in 1991 was founded the the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia, which united all Buddhist organization in Kalmykia.²²²

The Charter of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia actually claimed “*non-involvement in the matters of the political parties and government, and does not participate in the elections to the state’s governmental bodies. However, as individuals, the members of the Union have the same rights as the other citizens to participate in the elections to the state’s governmental bodies and the political life.*”²²³

Although, the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia claimed its non-involvement in the political matters, the fact that as individual its members could participate in the politics, lead to an extraordinary situation, when already in 1991, Tuvan Dorzh –the first Shadzhin Lama of Kalmykia after the period of oppression was elected as a member of Supreme Council of Kalmyk ASSR, and the famous Buddhist ecclesiastic - Rinchen Dagva was elected as a member of City Council in

²²¹Ochirova, “Buddhist Clergy and Development of Kalmyk Culture”, 10.

²²² Nina Ochirova, et al., *Istoriya Buddhizma v SSSR i Rossiiskoj Federatsii (The History of Buddhism in the USSR and the Russian Federation in 1985-1999)* (Elista: Ministry of education, culture and science of the Kalmyk Republic, 2011), 71.

²²³The Charter of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia. 1991. 1.

Elista.²²⁴

Thus, the period from 1988 to 1995 saw not merely the religious renaissance of the Kalmyk Buddhism, but the revival of traditional relation akin of the alliance of the two powers: secular and religious.

The division between religious and political was completely erased in June 1993, when during the People's Khural (Parliament) of the Republic of Kalmykia by majority of vote revoked the separation of state and religion. Consequently, the period from 1993 until 1995 was a very special period of life for Buddhist in Kalmykia, when the religion was announced to be a part of the state's policy.²²⁵ Subsequently, the President of Kalmykia founded a Department of Religious Affairs under the President of the Kalmyk Republic. The second Kalmyk Shadzhin Lama Telo Tulku Rinpoche together with the head of the local Russian Orthodox Church Father Zosima became one of the chairmen of the Department.²²⁶ It is necessary to emphasize, that, despite the historical tradition of Kalmyk Buddhism begin closely linked with the Kalmyk people, in the Department of Religious Affairs, the Buddhists and Orthodox objectives were equally important. However, we do not concentrate on the Russian Orthodoxy, due to our time constraint.

Once again, the second time in a row, when the head of Kalmyk Buddhism was holding the political mandate, as the Department of Religious Affairs was one of the Republican bodies of the executive power. Moreover, we believe that acceptance of the political post indicate the Kalmyk Buddhism's support of the President Ilyumzhinov's²²⁷ policies. Therefore after the end

²²⁴Ochirova, et al., *Istoriya Budhisma v SSSR i Rossijskoj Federattsii*, 71.

²²⁵Ochirova, et al., *Istoriya Budhisma v SSSR i Rossijskoj Federattsii*, 77-78.

²²⁶National Archive of the Republic of Kalmykia. The Decree of President of the Kalmyk Republic from 12 July 1993, No.145.

²²⁷"Kirsan Ilyumzhinov", last modified June 21, 2014, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kirsan_Ilyumzhinov

of Ilyumzhinov's presidency, the Shadzhin Lama Telo Tulku Rinpoche expressed the gratitude towards Ilyumzhinov "*on the behalf of all Buddhists for his help and assistance to the Buddhism renaissance*".²²⁸

The Department of Religious Affairs was assigned the following functions: to assist in providing the Constitutional rights of citizens to the freedom of performing religious ceremonies; to study of forms and methods of religious organizations activities, and their influence on the population; to participate in the preparation of the bills, if they are in the competence of the Department, and if the President asked for it; to execute the building of the cultural objects, the repair works in the premises of religious organizations, and other financial help to religious organizations; to execute the international connections with religious organizations.²²⁹

At the same time, the main purpose of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia are "*to revive the lost national tradition of Kalmyk people and develop the Buddhist teaching in accordance with the tradition of Shakyamuni Buddha*".²³⁰ And the objectives of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia comprise the following paragraphs: to take care of the Dharma (Buddha teaching) in the Republic of Kalmykia; to study of Dharma and to organize prayers, and other religious rights and rituals; to spread the teaching in the society, directly and through the media, to develop and implement the programs of religious education in accordance with Dharma; publishing activities, publication of books, pamphlets, booklets, albums and other non-periodical publications relating to the Buddhist culture, the publication of the bulletin of the Union; search of citizens and legal

²²⁸“Shadzhin Lama Kalmykii Telo Tulku Rinpoche”, Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, accessed May 9, 2014, <http://www.kirsan.org/2010/shadjin-lama/#more-1203>.

²²⁹Ochirova, et al., *Istoriya Buddhisma v SSSR i Rossijskoj Federatsii*, 77-78.

²³⁰Elza Bakaeva “Ob Osobenostyakh Sovremenoj Religioznoj Situacii v Kalmykii: Buddhism i “Posvyashenye”” (About the Pecularity of the Modern Situation in Kalmykia: Buddhism and “the Dedicated”), *Etnos i Kultura*, 3 (2004): 34.

entities, both Russian and foreign, which are able and willing to carry out charitable and sponsorship activities for the implementation of the objectives of the Union; and last but not least, to develop and implement of educational programs in coordination with government authorities, public organizations, enterprises and citizens.²³¹

As we can see the functions of the Department of Religious Affairs largely correspond with the objectives of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia, which suggests the inclusion of the Kalmyk Buddhist renaissance matters in the political sphere. It is necessary to mention that despite the prioritizing the Buddhist revival programs, the Department of Religious Affairs also provided some material support to the Russian Orthodoxy.²³²

The political theology of the Kalmyk Buddhism was clearly expressed by the coordinator of the Union Dordzhi Lama. He stated that “*religious organizations should not stand apart from the political struggle*”. According to him, although religious organizations have not legal rights to participate in the elections, but they can express their political support to one or another candidate. He claimed that the Buddhism is a reason for the political stability in Kalmykia. Dordzhi Lama also said that “*nowadays for ordinary citizens, religious leaders act as influential mentors not only in everyday life but also in the political decision-making. It determines the active participation of religious leaders in the in political life of national republics*”.²³³

The representatives of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama in Russia geshe Dzhapma Thinley, who from 1993 to 1995 was performing the functions of the Shadzhin Lama of Kalmykia, in one of his

²³¹The Charter of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia, 1991.

²³²National Archive of the Republic of Kalmykia. The Decree of the President of the Republic of Kalmykia “About the Rehabilitation of the Kalmyk People and Governmental Support of its Renaissance and Development”, 25. December, 1993, No. 2290.

²³³“Vystepenie Dordzhi-Lamy, Koordinatora Ob’edineniya Buddhistov Kalmykii” (The Speech of Dordzhi-Lama, a Coordinator of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia, accessed May 3, 2014, <http://eurasia.com.ru/dorji3005.html>).

statement to Kalmyk media also clarified the position of the modern Buddhist authorities towards the political issues: *“We do not seek to rule the Buddhism in Russia. ...our goal is to help Kalmyks to restore their own independent Kalmyk Buddhism,.... The important is the Buddhism. The Teaching should be preserved in purity. As what kind of institutional form the Buddhism developed into, what kind of teaching will become prioritized in one or another monastery or Dharma center should be decided by the people. ...This is our principal difference from the other sectarian organizations, which are seeking to entice more people into the sect in order to manipulate them for political purposes....”*²³⁴

This statement denied the presence of the political goal in the Buddhism, and indicated the freewill of Buddhists to choose any form of Buddhism they want to.

The position of Telo Tulku Rinpoche towards the interreligious dialogue contributes to the notion of the peaceful interreligious situation in Kalmykia. Thus, according to his official profile, he pursues the policies to support the peaceful coexistence and cooperation of all traditional confessions in Kalmykia. Furthermore, in one of his official statements, he said that *“Today people of different ethnicities and believes live in our multiethnic republic. All of them live in peace and harmony, in friendship and mutual understanding. And because of this, we feel pure joy”*.²³⁵

As the Shadzhin Lama possesses the highest spiritual authority in the Kalmyk Buddhism, we will assume that the position of geshe Thinley and Telo Tulku Rinpoche expresses the position of the Kalmyk Buddhism in general. Consequently, by denying the political goals of the Buddhism,

²³⁴Buddhism in Russia <http://www.buddhismofrussia.ru/buddhism-of-russia/br23>.

²³⁵“Telo Tulku Rinpoche”, *Golden Abode of Buddha Shakyamuni*, accessed May 11, 2014, at http://khurul.ru/?page_id=29.

acknowledging the freewill of people to choose their own path of spiritual development, and promoting the multiethnic dialogue and peace, the Kalmyk Buddhism demonstrates the democratic nature of its political theology.

As was aforesaid, we believe, that the period from 1988-1995 saw the renaissance of the relations akin the alliance between the secular and religious powers, which existed in the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries. The objectives of the political and the Buddhist authorities intersect, which caused the other reason for the alliance. Thus, the Kalmyk Buddhism supported the rule of the secular rulers, the Kalmyk elite; and the secular power was providing the Kalmyk Buddhism with the financial and material support.²³⁶

In this manner, as we follow the definition of the democratic political theology, we can argue that the positive relations between Kalmyk Buddhism and the state, its support for the spiritual and political equality matches the definition, proposed in Chapter 2.

5.3. The Religious Polity of Kalmyk Buddhism

In order to examine the religious polity of Kalmyk Buddhism, we will further continue examining “the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia”.

One of the famous Kalmyk Buddhist scholars of Elza Bakaeva argued that despite its original goal to create a strong centralized religious organization, the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia failed. She viewed the causes of the failure in the work of leadership of the Union, namely Shadzhin-Lama Telo Tulku Rinpoche and the Vice-President geshe Dzhampa Thinley. Moreover, the fact

²³⁶Elena Ostrovskaya, “Rossijskij Buddhism v Oprave Grazhdanskogo Obshestva” (Russian Buddhism in the Frame of the Civil Society), in *Dvadtsat’ let Religioznoj Svobody v Rossii*, ed. Alexej Malyshev and Sergej Filatov (Moscow: Rossnep, 2009), 311.

that both Telo Tulku Rinpoche and Dzhampa Thinley resided outside of Kalmykia did not contribute to the efficiency of their work.²³⁷

However, in order to make our own judgment about the religious polity of Kalmyk Buddhism, we will first examine the Charter of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia.

According to the Charter, the participation in the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia is voluntarily.²³⁸

The voluntarily participation promotes the independency of the local religious organizations and individuals, since if there are dissent with the policies of the Union, they can easily leave it. Moreover, the Union can only suggest the general direction of the religious activities of organizations therein, it cannot appoint local leaders.²³⁹

The Buddhist Union of Kalmykia is governed by the following bodies: the Conference of the members of the Union, the President of the Union, the Vice-President, the Council of the Union, and the Revision Committee of the Union.²⁴⁰

The Conference of the Union is the supreme governing body of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia, which can decide all the matters in regard to the activities of the Union. The Conference should be held no less than every five years. Moreover, the Council of “the Union”, Revision Committee, or more than 50% of the members of the Union has the right to call for an emergency Conference.²⁴¹

The Conference has exclusive rights “*to adopt the main program of activities of the Union; to*

²³⁷Bakaeva “Ob Osobenostyakh Sovremenoj Religioznoj Situacii v Kalmykii: Buddhism i “Posvyashenye””, 34.

²³⁸The Charter of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia, 1991, 1.

²³⁹Ibid.

²⁴⁰Ibid.

²⁴¹Ibid, 2.

*make changes and additions to the Charter of the Union, as well as adoption of new edition of the Charter of the Union; to approve annual report, estimate expenses and balance of the Union; to approve the size and term of the admission fees; to elect and recall of the governing bodies of the Union”.*²⁴²

The decisions of the Conference of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia only have the power, if no less than 50 % of members were present. Moreover, the general questions at the Conference are decided by the open or close voting. The decision is adopted one, if 2/3 of present members vote in favor.²⁴³

During the period between the Conferences, the governing functions are executed by the Council of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia. The Council implements the main program of activities of the Union; adopts the programs, learning courses and disciplines; takes care of economic activities; accepts in the members of the Union,; and other questions given him by the Conference.²⁴⁴ The head of the Council is the President, who is elected by the Conference for term of life.²⁴⁵ The President of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia becomes the Shadzhin Lama of Kalmykia. It is necessary to emphasize that the Shadzhin Lama can only be an ecclesiastic with the ordination not lower than gelung.²⁴⁶

The Shadzhin Lama of Kalmykia has responsibilities in front of all the members of the Union, and can be dismissed from his position for the reason of discontent on the part of the members.²⁴⁷

The example of such course of events can be found in 1992, when the members of the Buddhist

²⁴²Ibid.

²⁴³Ibid, 3.

²⁴⁴Ibid.

²⁴⁵Ibid, 4.

²⁴⁶Ibid.

²⁴⁷M. B. Marzaeva, “Osobenosti Processa Buddhiskogo Vozrozhdeniya v Kalmykii (The Peculiarities of the Process of Buddhist Revival in Republic of Kalmykia, *Nauchnye Problemy Gumanitarnyx Issledovanij* 7 (2010), 33.

Union of Kalmykia called an emergency Conference. The request of an emergence Conference was explained by the “*discontent with the work*” of the Shadzhin Lama Tuvan Dordzh.²⁴⁸ As a result of the Conference, Tuvan Dorzh was dismissed from his position of the head of the Kalmyk Buddhist.²⁴⁹ At the same time, the new election was held, and by the majority of votes, the new Shadzhin Lama became Erdne Ombadykow better known as Telo Tulku Rinpoche, the USA citizens with Kalmyk roots.²⁵⁰ However, already in 1993 due to the departure of Telo Tulku to India for pursuing further Buddhist education, the duties of the Shadzhin Lama performed by geshe DzhampaThinley.²⁵¹

Continuing the topic of the institutional checks, the permanent governmental body, which is in charge of the financial and economic activities, is the Revision Committee. The Revision Committee is elected from the members of the Union for two years. The members of the Revision Committee cannot be the members of the Council or executive employees of the Union. The Revision Committee has an authority to ask for any kinds of documents and personal explanations from the members of the Union.²⁵²

Hereby, we can argue that due to the share of the supreme power by all members of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia, the adoption of the important decision by the majority voting, and impart of the institutional checks of Revision Committee on the President match the religious polity of the Kalmyk Buddhism with one of the characteristics of “the democratic ecclesiology”.

In order to look at the religious polity of the Kalmyk Buddhism on the micro level, we will

²⁴⁸Ibid.

²⁴⁹Ochirova, et al., *Istoriya Buddhisma v SSSR i Rossijskoj Federatsii*, 76.

²⁵⁰Baatr Boldyrev, “Ах-думетарбаарм”, *Khal'myg Unn*, 26 June, 1992, 2.

²⁵¹Tinely Lama, “Y Vas Budet Kalmytskij Buddhism” (You will have the Kalmyk Buddhism), *Izvestiya Kalmykii*, January 27, 1994.

²⁵²Charter of the Buddhists Union of Kalmykia. 1991.

continue by examining the Charter of the Centralized religious organization Kalmyk Centralized Buddhist Monastery “Geden Sheddup Choi Corling” (onwards: Kalmyk Buddhist Monastery).

Article 4 of the Charter determines rights and responsibilities of members of the Kalmyk Buddhist Monastery. The members of the Monastery have rights to “*enjoy the support, protection and assistance of the Monastery; to participate in the Monastery’s collective meetings; to choose and be chosen to the Monastery’s management and controlled bodies; make proposals in regard to the Monastery’s activities, as well as participate in their discussion and implementation; to receive information about the Monastery’s activities.*”²⁵³

Members of Kalmyk Buddhist Monastery have the following responsibilities: “*to comply with the Charter of the Monastery; to participate in the Monastery’s activities; to implement the decisions of the governmental bodies of the monastery; enhance the efficiency of the monastery with their activities.*”²⁵⁴

Judging aforesaid, we can see that “*The Charter*” encourage the active participation in the Monastery’s life on the part of all members. Moreover, it poses the same rights and responsibilities on the all members of the Monastery without regard of their status in the hierarchy.

In addition, any of the members can be dismissed for the actions, which discriminate or “creating moral or material damage to the Monastery”.²⁵⁵ The deficiency of this provision is the lack of definition what is “the moral or material damage”. However, we believe the fact that a decision to dismiss the members for violating the Monastery’s rule is made the majority voting of the

²⁵³ Charter of Kalmyk Buddhist Monastery "Geden Sheddup Choi Corling".

²⁵⁴ Ibid, 3.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

Council, make the judgment more impartial.

Moving on to the management of Kalmyk Buddhist Monastery, we can draw the parallel with the management of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia. Accordingly, the supreme governing body of the Monastery is the general meeting of all members, which is carried on annually. The expertise of the general meeting of all members of the Monastery include: “(1) *to make changes and additions to the Charter of the Monastery and affirmation of the new edition of the Charter of the Monastery;*(2) *to liquidate the Monastery...*; (3) *to determine the quantitative composition of the Monastery’s Council, the election of its members and early termination of their power;* (4) *to elect the Monastery’s Revision Committee;* (5) *to approve the annual reports from the Monastery’s Council, reports from the Monastery’s Revision Committee; to approve the internal documents, which regulate the Monastery’s activities;* (7) *to resolve other questions, covered by the Charter.*²⁵⁶

Continuing the topic governance of Kalmyk Buddhist Monastery’s, the permanent body of the executive power is represented by the Council of the Monastery. The membership in the Council restricted to the persons with the status of ge-nen, who are allowed to wear monastic clothes, older that eighteen, and living in the monastery full-time.²⁵⁷

The head of the Monastery is Kenpo-Lama, who is directly appointed by Shadzhin Lama for the period of five years.²⁵⁸ The Charter states, that the Kenpo-Lama should fulfill three requirements: to have clerical education, to strictly follow Vinay’s rule, and to enjoy the trust of others.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁶Ibid, 4.

²⁵⁷Ibid, 5.

²⁵⁸Ibid, 6.

²⁵⁹Ibid.

The interesting is the inclusion of the characteristics of being trustable by other monks, as one of the main demand to the Kenpo-Lama. It is seems to us, that the religious hierarchical authority is not enough to be a good leader, but the human quality of being likeable and trust worthy is needed.

The existence of the Revision Committee, to conduct the check of the economic and financial spheres of the life in the Kalmyk Buddhism monastery and its leaders, once again contributes to the democratic ecclesiology of the Kalmyk Buddhism.

What the relations between Buddhist clergy and laity is concerned, one of the famous statements of the Shadzhin Lama of Kalmykia Telo Tulku Rinpoce claim *“monks should go to school, establish cultural centers, and promote human values. We should not wait until people come to us, being the servants of the Buddha the sangha should go and serve people...”*²⁶⁰ Judging by this statement, there was a shift in the traditional Kalmyk Buddhist view on the relations between the sangha and the laity. Unlike before, now the Kalmyk Buddhist sangha was expected to *“serve people”*, when in the past, the sangha had a role of a more passive receiver of donations, who through this, let the laity earn good karma.²⁶¹

At last, we can see that the Kalmyk Buddhist polity bears a strong resemblance to the definition of the “democratic ecclesiology” set earlier: on both macro and micro level (the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia and the Kalmyk Buddhist Monastery) the work of religious leaders are elected, and their activities are checked by the Revision Committee; the local religious organization have a high level of autonomy since the participation in the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia is voluntarily.

²⁶⁰“Telo Tulku Rinpoche: Monks Should Go to the People”, *Golden Abode of Buddha Shakyamuni*, accessed May 11, 2014 at <http://khurul.ru/?p=15287>.

²⁶¹ Todd Lewis, “Buddhism: the Politics of Compassionate Rule”, 237.

5.4. Political Interaction between Kalmyk Buddhism and the Russian State

The approval of registration of the first Kalmyk Buddhist organization in 1988²⁶² indicated the major shift in the Kalmyk Buddhism and the Russian state's relation. For the first time since the Soviet *war on religion*, and the extermination of the Kalmyk Buddhism as a social institution in 1939, the Kalmyk Buddhism received an official governmental permission to exist.

At the same time, the general position of the Kalmyk Buddhism towards the Russian state was expressed in 1991, when newly founded Buddhist Union of Kalmykia refused to join the Central Spiritual Administration of Buddhists of the USSR²⁶³ (Russian: Центральное Духовное Управление Буддистов СССР), nowadays known as the Buddhist Traditional Sangha of Russia.

²⁶⁴ The Central Spiritual Administration of Buddhists of the USSR is an organization, which poses itself as a central Buddhist organization in Russia.²⁶⁵

Traditionally, the Central Spiritual Administration of Buddhists of the USSR had a close relation with the Russian state, as it was the only Buddhist organization which was tolerated by the Soviet regime.²⁶⁶

Elza Bakaeva argues that the announcement of independence of the Kalmyk Buddhism from the Central Spiritual Administration of the Buddhists of the USSR was caused by the goal of the

²⁶² Moskva v Tsentre Tibetskoy Kultury" (Moscow: in the Center of Tibetan Culture), *Buddhism in Russia* 23 (1995), accessed April 20, 2014, doi: <http://www.buddhismofrussia.ru/buddhism-of-russia/br23>.

²⁶³ "Tsentral'noe Upravlenie Budistov SSSR" (the Central Administration of the Buddhist in the USSR), *Entsiklopediya Zabajkal'ya*, accessed May 8, 2014, <http://ez.chita.ru/encycl/person/?id=6915>.

²⁶⁴ "Budiiskaya Tradicionaya Sangha Rossii", accessed May 8, 2014, <http://www.sangharussia.ru>.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Artem Terent'ev "Poslevoenaya Reanimaciya" (After War Reanimation), *Buddhism in Russia*, accessed May 2, 2014, doi: <http://buddhismofrussia.ru/HTML/br3afterWar.php?title=%CF%E1%EB%E5%E2%E5%ED%ED%E0%F0%E5%E0%ED%E8%EC%E0%F6%E8%FF>

Kalmyks to “revive their own national type of Buddhism”.²⁶⁷ Ochirova claimed that by searching the independence, the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia was pursuing the goal to establish the traditional direct connection with Tibet.²⁶⁸ Even if so, the decision of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia to be an independent religious entity resulted in its aloof from the interactions with the Russian state.

Nonetheless, during the period 1988-1995, there were no many political interactions between the Kalmyk Buddhism and the Russian state. We believe that the reasons for lack of political interactions are: the general disorder in the Russian state, which was caused by the collapse of the communism; and the weakness of the Kalmyk Buddhism as an institution, which had to do with the years of the Soviet oppression.

Nonetheless, with the help of the Kalmyk Republican government, in 1991 and 1992, the Kalmyk Buddhists sangha and believers succeeded in its goal to invite the spiritual leader the Dalai Lama Fourteenth to Kalmykia. Due to the political conflicts between the People’s Republic of China and the Dalai Lama, the official permission from the Russian state’s government was needed.²⁶⁹ Subsequently, for the first time since Kalmyks’ arrival to the Caspian Steppes and their incorporation in the Russian Empire, the Russian state authorities allowed the spiritual hierarch of the Kalmyk Buddhists to visit Kalmykia.²⁷⁰ Moreover, one of the directions of the Union’s activities is organizing the pilgrimages to India and the visits of Kalmyk believers to the

²⁶⁷Bakaeva “Ob Osobenostyakh Sovremenoj Religioznoj Situatsyi v Kalmykii: Buddhism i “Posvyashenye””, 29.

²⁶⁸Ochirova, et al., *Istoriya Budisma v SSSR i Rossijskoj Federatsii*, 72.

²⁶⁹Galina Tarlina “Ego Svatejshestvo na Kalmytskoj Zemle” (Hiss Holliness on Kalmyk land), *Elistinskie Novosti* No. 31, August 3, 1991.

²⁷⁰Ochirova, et al., *Istoriya Buddhisma v SSSR i Rossijskoj Federatsii*, 72-73.

teaching of the Dalai Lama.²⁷¹

In accordance with the Charter, despite the participation of the Tuvan Dorzh and Rinchen Dagva in the Kalmyk local government, the Kalmyk Buddhism hardly had any direct political interactions with the Russian state.²⁷²

The reform of 1993, which made the Kalmyk Buddhism into a part of the executive body of the regional Kalmyk Republican government²⁷³, and, as a matter of fact, since the Republic of Kalmykia is one of the federal subjects of the Russian Federation, the Kalmyk Buddhism became a part of the Russian state governmental institutions.²⁷⁴ In the framework of unity of the state and religion in Kalmykia, the Kalmyk Buddhism managed to obtain a large financial and material support, and tax exemption.²⁷⁵

However, as the Kalmyk President initiative of the unity of the state and religion did not correspond with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the Russian central government pressured the Republic of Kalmykia to separate the state and religion. Such changes were done accordingly, and the Department of the Religious Affairs became just as a non-governmental institution.²⁷⁶

Thus, the period of 1988-1995 saw the significantly low level of the political interactions

²⁷¹ “Kalmyk Buddhist Union“, *Golden Abode of Buddha Shakyamuni*, accessed May 11, http://khurul.ru/?page_id=45

²⁷² “Zakon Respubliki Kalmykiya. O Sbobode Veroispovedanij,” *Izvestiya Kalmykii*, 10 November, 1995.

²⁷³ National Archive of the Republic of Kalmykia. The Decree of President of the Kalmyk Republic from 12 July 1993, No.145.

²⁷⁴ “The Constitution of the Russian Federation,” *Konsultant Plus*, assessed April 5, 2014, http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_2875/?frame=2

²⁷⁵ National Archive of the Republic of Kalmykia. The Decree of the President of the Republic of Kalmykia “About the Rehabilitation of the Kalmyk People and Governmental Support of its Renaissance and Development”, 25 December, 1993, No. 2290.

²⁷⁶ Bakaeva “Ob Osobenostyakh Sovremenoj Religioznoj Situacii v Kalmykii: Buddhism i “Posvyasheniye””, 30-31.

between the Kalmyk Buddhism and the Russian state, which can be explained in the difficult internal situation for both actors. Nonetheless, we believe that refusal of the Kalmyk Buddhism to join the Buddhist Traditional Sangha of Russia, as well as separation of religion from state, which was implemented immediately, after the demand of the Russian government still indicates not willingness to active cooperation, but the hope to stay aside.

5.5. Summary

Overall, the period from 1988 to 1995 saw the liberalization of the religious policies of the Russian state. Due to this liberalization process, the annihilated in 1920s-1930s Kalmyk Buddhism, received a chance for a renaissance.

Similarly to before, one of the distinguished features of the newly revived Kalmyk Buddhism was the positive relations with the state. After the history of oppression and annihilation from the central government in Moscow, Kalmyk Buddhism stayed aloof from the interactions with the Russian state and concentrated on its immediate problems – restoration of lost and destroyed.

However, despite the refusal of Kalmyk central Buddhist organization to get involve in political matters, the loophole in its Charter provided the sangha with the permission to do so. In reality, we believe, that the holding of the political mandate of the sangha, indicates the tolerant attitude of Kalmyk Buddhism towards the sangha's lay activities.

Moreover, the support of Kalmyk Buddhist leaders, namely Telo Tulku Rinpoche and Dzhapma Thinley for the freewill of people in deciding their way of the Buddhist development and for the peaceful coexistence and cooperation of all traditional confessions in Kalmykia, also demonstrate the democratic features of the political theology of Kalmyk Buddhism.

As in the case of the religious polity of Kalmyk Buddhism, it seems to also have democratic practices, since the spiritual leaders of the Kalmyk Buddhism are not only elected but also accountable to the Revision Committee and the Conference; the laity and the sangha have equal rights in the Buddhist matters; and the local religious organizations are independent. Thus, from aforesaid, we came a conclusion that Kalmyk Buddhism in the period from 1988 to 1995 had all of the characteristics of a “democratic political theology” and “democratic political ecclesiology”, which facilitated the religious tolerance in Kalmykia, accordingly.



Chapter 6. Conclusion

The original aim of this study was to find an answer to a question: *what facilitates the harmony found in the Republic of Kalmykia*. And the proposed hypothesis argued that the reason for religious tolerance and harmony in the Republic of Kalmykia can be found in the democratic features of Kalmyk Buddhism, its “democratic theology,” “democratic ecclesiology,” and its interactions with the state.

In order to fully understand the religious tolerance and peace in nowadays Kalmykia, we explored Kalmyk Buddhism over the three periods of time: 1640 - 1917, 1922 - 1939, and 1988 - 1995. We found that in each period Kalmyk Buddhism has different characteristics in one of the three dimensions: political theology, religious polity, or interaction with the Russian state.

After the thorough examination of Kalmyk Buddhism, we came to a conclusion that on the whole, during the period from 1640 to 1917 it was neither democratic nor tolerant. In this period, Kalmyk Buddhism flourished as an official state religion of the Kalmyks, legitimated the rule of the secular authorities, represented by taishi, noyon, and khans; and the political elite was providing Kalmyk Buddhism with material support. In this way, at that particular time, Kalmyk Buddhism reminds us of Theravada branch of Buddhism, with not one Dharmaking, but with a whole social stratum of privileged people. Furthermore, the social inequality actually legally fixed in the 1640 Code of Laws, adopted by all Mongol and Oirat tribes, according to which the monks living in the monasteries have a higher status than lay people and are free from the tax payment.

At the same time, the religious polity of Kalmyk Buddhism was akin to a centralized system,

with the absolute power of a head ecclesiastic, be it a head lama or a head of the monastery. However, as the Kalmyk political system was represented by a loose confederation of different tribes, monasteries were belonged to an ulus, and had a moderate independence, due to the fact that the sangha from another ulus was not allowed to intertwine in the domestic affairs.

In regard of the relation with the state, during the period 1640-1917, Kalmyk Buddhism leaned towards the strong centralized state, be it the Kalmyk state, or the Russian state. Playing a role of a mediator between the Kalmyks and the Russian state, Kalmyk Buddhist sangha preserved its high status in the society. And even after the annexation of the Kalmyk Khanate lands, and incorporation of the Kalmyks in the Russian socio-political environment, Kalmyk Buddhism easily adapted to it, as the power hierarchy in the Russian Empire was similar to one in Kalmyk Buddhism (the religion legitimated the rule of the political authorities, the political authorities helped to maintain the spiritual life of its subjects, and the laity executed the orders of ecclesiastics and nobility).

In the second research period from 1922 to 1939, we discovered that under the pressure of the Soviet government, Kalmyk Buddhism began to transform from the non-democratic elite religion into a religion of the people. For the first time since the Kalmyk arrival to the Caspian steppes, the laity obtained the equal rights with the sangha, and had a say in the Buddhist issues. Moreover, the reforms of the religious polity of Kalmyk Buddhism reorganized its institutional structure: it made all of the important decisions into a matter of the general voting; and created the Revision Committee. We find fascinating that these democratic reforms of the religious polity of Kalmyk Buddhism largely were caused by the Soviet Union, which regime was non-democratic and oppressive in nature.

As for the political theology of Kalmyk Buddhism during the period from 1922 to 1939, we already stated that the totalitarian nature of the Soviet regime made it necessary for us to be careful in our judgments. So far, in regard of political theology of Kalmyk Buddhism during the Soviet period, we would like to say, that as we did not find any arguments supporting the anti-Soviet regime activities of Kalmyk Buddhist sangha, we could argue that despite all the oppressive policies, Kalmyk Buddhism's attitude towards the Soviet state remained rather positive. However, as history showed us, that the positive attitude and the reforms in accordance to the demands of the state does not protect from annihilation, which happened with Kalmyk Buddhism by the end of 1939.

The renaissance of Kalmyk Buddhism was brought about by the liberalization of the Russian state's religious policies in the end of 1980s- beginning of the 1990s. After the long period of oppression on the part of the Russian state, Kalmyk Buddhism chose to stay aloof from the political interactions with it. However, on the local level of the Republic of Kalmykia, Kalmyk Buddhist sangha played an active role and even hold a political mandate.

We believe that 1993-1995 saw an attempt to revive the old alliance of secular and religious powers, while the separation of religious and secular in Kalmykia was renounced. The Department of Religious Affairs, as a governmental body was in charge of religious policies of the Republic of Kalmykia, its objectives corresponded with the objectives of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia.

We also think that, as the leaders of Kalmyk Buddhism express their support for the freewill, equality, and peaceful coexistence of all traditional confessions in Kalmykia, Kalmyk Buddhism in 1988-1995 demonstrates the characteristics of democratic political theology. Moreover, after

the thorough examination of the Charter of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia and the Charter of the Kalmyk Buddhist Monastery, we came to a conclusion that Kalmyk Buddhism has a democratic ecclesiology, as it provides equal rights to laity and clergy to participate in the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia, guarantees the democratic elections for the religious leaders, comprises the norms of institutional checkups by Revision Committee, and moderate independence of local religious organizations.

From all aforesaid, we can see how Kalmyk Buddhism gradually transformed over the course of history towards more and more democratic religion. Hence, we will argue that Kalmyk Buddhism demonstrates a large level of adaptability. So far the one feature that remained unchanged is the positive relations between Kalmyk Buddhism and the state. This connection with the state can be explained in the origins of Kalmyk Buddhism from Tibetan Buddhism of Gelukpa School. Moreover, Kalmyk Buddhism is closely linked with the Kalmyk people, which also make it akin of an ethnic religion.

Following our proposed hypothesis, and clear definition of a “democratic theology,” “democratic ecclesiology”, we will conclude that Kalmyk Buddhism in the last researched period 1988-1995, indeed, poses all the characteristics of a “democratic theology” and “democratic ecclesiology”. Therefore, we will conclude that democratic political theology and democratic ecclesiology of majority population religion in Kalmykia, which is Kalmyk Buddhism, contribute to the peace and tolerance in the Republic of Kalmykia.

To conclude, we discovered in our research, Kalmyk Buddhism has gone a long and difficult way until it evolved to a peaceful and tolerant religion we find in Kalmykia now. We believe that the extraordinary situation of religious tolerance and peace in the Republic of Kalmykia could

provide some valuable lesson for less peaceful Buddhist states and regions like Thailand, Burma, and Sri Lanka. First of all, it seems to us that the non-violence even in the situation when the Buddhism is being oppressed is crucial for the religious peace and tolerance. Secondly, we believe, that the willingness of Buddhist leaders to reform the Buddhist religious polity in order to adapt to new socio-political realities, is also something that Buddhist leaders in the Southeast Asia can borrow from Kalmyk Buddhism. Thirdly, the cooperation with the state, independently on the nature of the state regime, and state religious policies, is something that Buddhist state of the Southeast Asia also are lacking.

Unfortunately, this research has wide scope of limitations. Firstly, there are no comprehensive studies on the topic of the political theology and the religious polity of Kalmyk Buddhism; hence, we had to combine on large scope or different sources, including archival documents, charters, ethnographic works, secondary sources, and internet sources. Secondly, the interviews with the sangha could enrich the information for the period 1988-1995; however, the resources and time are required. Thirdly, there is not many information on the topic for the Soviet period, and even if there is, we have to largely question its credibility. Nevertheless, we hope that this thesis will lay a foundation for the future research on the topic of Kalmyk Buddhism and the state, as it still remains largely under researched.

Bibliography

English language sources

Anderson, John. *Religion, State and Politics in the Soviet Union and Successor States*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Bartholomeusz, Tessa. *In Defense of Dharma*. London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2002.

Cantwell, Cathy. *Buddhism: the Basics*. New York: Routledge, 2009.

Casanova, Jose. *Public Religions in Modern World*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1991.

Cohen, Richard. "Discontented Categories: Hinayana and Mahayana in Indian Buddhist History." *American Academy of Religion*. 1 (1995): 1-25. Accessed November 8, 2013, doi: <http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/1465151?uid=2&uid=4&sid=21103163832193>.

Curtiss, John Shelton. *Church and state in Russia; the last years of the Empire, 1900-1917*, New York: Oktagon books, 1972.

Durkheim, Émile. *The Division of Labour in Society*, New York: Macmillam Press, 1997,

Eliot, Charles. *Hinduism and Buddhism: And Historical Sketch, Vol. 1*. Surrey: Curzon Press, 1998.

Fox, Jonathan. "Do Democracies Have Separation of Religion and State?." *Canadian Journal of Political Science*.no. 01 (2007): 1-25. Accessed December 13, 2013, doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0008423907070035>.

Gokhale, Balkrishna Govind. *Asoka Maurya*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1966.

Harris, Ian "Buddhism and Politics in Asia: the Textual and Historical Roots," in *Buddhism and Politics in Twentieth Century Asia*, edited by Ian Harris, 1-25. London and New York: Continuum, 1999.

Harvey, Peter. *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teaching history and practices*. New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Human Rights Watch, *Russian Federation: Ethnic Discrimination in Southern Russia*, 1 August 1998, accessed January 2014, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6a7d18.html>.

Huntington, Samuel. *The Clash of Civilization and Remaking of World Order*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.

Inen, Kimmo. *Religion in Russia after the collapse of communism: religious renaissance or secular state*. Lewiston, NY: E. Mellen Press, 1998.

Janz, Denis. *World Christianity and Marxism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Juergensmeyer, Mark. *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993.

Khodarkovsky Michael. *Where Two Worlds Met: The Russian State and the Kalmyk Nomads, 1600-1771*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1992.

Lewis, Todd "Buddhism: the politics of compassionate rule," in *God's Rule: the Politics of World Religion*, edited by Jacob Neusner, 233-256. Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 2003.

Liow, Joseph "Violence and the long road to reconciliation in Southern Thailand." In *Conflict in South and Southeast Asia: disrupting violence*, edited by Linell E. Cady and Sheldon W. Simon, 154-174. London and New York: Routledge, 2007.

Story, Francis. *Last days of the Buddha: the MahāParinibbāna Sutta*. Ceylon: Buddhist Publication Society, 1988. Accessed November 27, 2013. <http://www.accesstosight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.16.1-6.vaji.html>.

Mahapatra, Debidatta edit. *Conflict and Peace in Euroasia*. Routledge. New York, 2012 .

Marcello, Patricia. *The Dalai Lama: A Biography*. Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2003.

Mill, Martin. *Identity, Ritual and State in Tibetan Buddhism: the Foundations of Authority in Gelukpa Monasticism*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003.

Moen, Matthew, Gustafson-Lowell. *The Religious Challenge to the State*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992.

Mueller, Dennis. "The State and Religion." *Review of Social Economy*. no. 1 (2013): 1-19. 10.1080/00346764.2012.681115 (accessed December 13, 2013).

Nyanaponika Thera and Bhikkhu Bodhi. "Aṅguttara Nikāya: Discourses of the Buddha An Anthology Part I ". Buddhist Publication Society. Last modified September 6, 2013. Accessed November 19, 2013. <https://mywebpace.wisc.edu/jrblack/web/BU/PDF/bpsanguttara1.pdf>.

Pallas, Peter. *Puteshestvie po Raznym Mestam Rossiiskogo Gosudarstva (Travel to Different Places of the Russian state)*. St. Petersburg: Imperial Academy of Science, 1809.

Pares, Bernard. *A history of Russia*. London: Cape, 1947.

Kochan, Lionel, and Richard Abraham. *The making of modern Russia*. London: Penguin Books, 1962.

Schober, Juliane. Buddhism, Violence, and the state in Burma (Myanmar) and Sri Lanka. In *Conflict in South and Southeast Asia: disrupting violence*, edited by Linell E. Cady and Sheldon W. Simon, 51-70. London and New York: Routledge, 2007.

Sweater, Donald. *The Buddhist World of Southeast Asia*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010.

Tibetan Women's Association. , "A Study of Tibetan Self-Immolations: February 27,2009-March 30,2012: The History, The Motive, and The Reaction, 2012." Accessed December 13, 2013.<http://tibetanwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Self-Immolation-report.pdf>

Waddell, Austine. *Buddhism and Lamaism of Tibet*. New Delhi: Heritage Publishers, 1979.

Warren, Henry. *Buddhism in Translations*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1995.

White, Stephen, McAllister, Ian and Kryshstanovskaya, Ol'ga "Religion and Politics in Postcommunist Russia", *Religion, State and Society* 22,1, 1994.

Wikipedia. "Kirsan Ilyumzhinov". Last modified June 21, 2014, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kirsan_Ilyumzhinov

Wiktionary. "Kalmak". Last modified May 27, 2014. <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/kalmak>.

Williams, Paul. *Mahayana Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations*. London and New York: Routledge, 1989.

Russian language sources

Avlyayev, Genadij. *Proishozhdenie kalmytskogo naroda* (*The origins of Kalmyk people*). Elista: Kalmytskoe knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 2002.

Bakaeva, Elza. "Buddhism v Kalmykii: Osnovnye etapy razvitiya." *Buddhism v Rossii*. No. 42 (2009): 9-18. http://www.buddhismofrussia.ru/_journals/buddhism-of-russia-42.pdf

Bakaeva, Elza. "Ob Osobenostyakh Sovremenoi Religioznoi Situacii v Kalmykii: Buddhism i "Posvyasheniye" (About the Pecularity of the Modern Situation in Kalmykia: Buddhism and "the Dedicated")." *Etnosi Kultura*, 3 (2004): 23-39.

Bakunin, Vasiliy. *Opisaniye Kalmytskikh Narodov* (*Description of the Kalmyk People*). Elista: Kalmytskoye knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1995.

Bakshaev, Araltan and Dyakieva, B. Raisa. *Istoria Kalmykii i Kalmytskogo naroda s drevneishih vremen do nachala XIX veka* (*The history of Kalmykia and Kalmyk people from the ancient time till the XIX century*). Elista: Ministerstvo obrazovaniya, kultury i nayki Respubliki Kalmykia, 2010.

Baskhaev, Araltan. *Buddiyskaya Tserkov' Kalmykii: 1900-1943 gg.* (*Buddhist Church in Kalmykia: 1900-1943*). Elista: Dzhangar. 2007.

Biblioteka Normativno-Pravovyx Actov SSSR. "Postanovlenie ot 15 aprelya 1923 goda. O

poryadke registratsii religioznykh obshhestv i vydachi razreshenii na sozyv s'ezdov takovykh (The decision of April 15, 1923. On the procedure of registration of religious communities and issuance. Permissions on convocation of the congresses such)", accessed March 15, 2014, http://www.libussr.ru/doc_ussr/ussr_1616.htm

Boldyrev, Baatr. "Akh-dumetarbaarm", *Khal'myg Unn*, 26 June, 1992, 2.

"Buddijskaya Traditsionaya Sangha Rossii". Accessed May 8, 2014, <http://www.sangharussia.ru>.

Bizness i Vlast'. "Dekret VTSIK ot 04.11.1926 "Ob utverzhdenii Instruksii o vyborakh gorodskikh I sel'skikh sovetovi o sozyve s'ezdovsovetov" (The decree of the Central Executive Committee from 04.11.1926 "On approval of the Instruction on the elections of city and village councils and on convocation of the congresses of Soviets")". Accessed March 15, 2014 <http://www.lawmix.ru/sssr/16219>.

"Constitution of the Russian Federation". Accessed May 8, 2014. <http://www.constitution.ru>.

Dordzhieva, Galina. *Buddijskaya Tserkov' Kalmykii v Kontse XIX-Pervoj Polovine XX vv. (Buddhist Church of Kalmykia in the End of the XIX-First Half of XXCenturies)*. Moscow: The Institute of Russian history of RAS, 2001.

Euroasia. "Vystepenie Dordzhi-Lamy, Koordinatora Ob'edineniya Buddhistov Kalmykii" (The Speech of Dordzhi-Lama, a Coordinator of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia. Accessed May 3, 2014, <http://eurasia.com.ru/dorji3005.html>.

Golstunskiy, Konstantin. *Mongolo-oyratskiye Zakony 1640 goda (Mongol-Oirat laws of 1640)*. St. Petersburg: Imperial Academy of Sciences typography, 1887.

Golden Adobe of Buddha Shakyamuni. "TeloTulku Rinpoche". Accessed May 11, 2014, at http://khurul.ru/?page_id=29

Golden Adobe of Buddha Shakyamuni. "TeloTulku Rinpoche: Monks Should Go to the People". Accessed May 11, 2014 at <http://khurul.ru/?p=15287>. ??????????????

Gordeev, Araltan. *Buddhiiskaya Sangha Kalmykii (Buddhist Sangha of Kalmykia)*. Elista: Samizdat, 2006.

Gradovskiy, Alexander. *Nachala Russkogo Gosudarstvennogo Prava (Principles of Russian State Law)*, volume I-III". St. Petersburg: M. Stalysevich printing house, 1875 г. (volume I), 1876 г. (volume II), 1883 г. (volume III).

Kichikov, Mergen. *Obrazovaniye Kalmytskogo Khanstva (The Formation of Kalmyk Khanate)*. Elista: Kalmitskoe knizhnoe izdatelstvo, 1995.

Kirsan Ilyumzhinov. "Shadzhin Lama Kalmykii Telo Tulku Rinpoche". Accessed May 9, 2014, <http://www.kirsan.org/2010/shadjin-lama/#more-1203>. ??????????????????????

Konsultant Plus. "The Constituion of the Russian Federation." Accessed April 5, 2014, http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_2875/?frame=2

Kravcev, Dmitrij. "Ego Demokraticeskoe Velichestvo (His Democratic Highness)." Expert Online. Accessed May 15. doi: http://expert.ru/russian_reporter/2012/17/ego-demokraticeskoe-velichestvo.

Kuliev, Fedor. "Religiozni Factor v Politike Rossiiskoi Imperii v Pervoi Polovine XIX

v.(Religious Factor in the Politics of the Russian Empire in the First Half of the XIX Century).

"*Nauchnye Problemy Gumanitarnyx Issledovanij* 11 (2009): 74-75.

Kurapov, Andrey. *Buddizmi Vlast' v Kalmytskom Khanstve v XVII – XVIII vv.* (*Buddhism and the Power in the Kalmyk Khanate in XVII – XVIII Centuries*). Elista: Dzhangar, 2007.

Kurapov, Andrey. "Rossiiskaya Gosudarstvenost I Buddhiskaya Obshina Kalmykov v XVII – nachale XVIII v. (*the Russian State and the Kalmyk Buddhist Community*)". *Nauchnye Problemy Gumanitarnykh Issledovaniy* 4 (2010): 92-93.

Kurlyandskij, Igor'. "Protokoly Tsekrovnnyx Mydrecov: k Istorii Mnimogo Povorota Stalina k Religii i Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi v 1930-e gody (The Church Records of Wise men: to History of Stalin's Imaginary Turn to Religion and Orthodox Church in 1930s)", *Politicheskii Zhurnal* (2003). Accessed March 19, 2014. doi: <http://www.politjournal.ru/preview.php?action=Articles&dirid=50&tek=7705&issue=231>

Kurlyandskij, Igor'. *Stalin, Vlast', i Religiya (Stalin, Power, and Religion)*. Moscow: Kuchkovo Pole, 2011.

Kuznetsov, Evgenij. "Antireligioznaya Agitaciya I Propaganda Sovetskoi Vlasti v Pervye Poslerevolucionnye Gody" (Antireligious Agitation and Propaganda of the Soviet authorities in the first years after the War). Accessed March 18, 2014 <http://www.bogoslov.ru/text/728835.html>.

Lagovsky, Vladimir. "S Rozhdestvom Khristovym (Merry Christmas)". *Komsomol'skaya Pravda*. Accessed May 17, 2014. doi: <http://www.kp.ru/daily/23435/35633>

Lama, Tinely. "Y Vas Budet Kalmytskii Buddhism (You will have the Kalmyk

Buddhism).”*Izvestiya Kalmykii* January 27, 1994.

Marzaeva, M. B. “Osobnosti Protsessa Buddiskogo Vozrozhdeniya v Kalmykii (The Peculiarities of the Process of Buddhist Revival in Republic of Kalmykia).” *Nauchnye Problemy Gumanitarnyx Issledovanij* 7 (2010): 32-36.

Moskva v Tsentre Tibetskoi Kultury (Moscow: in the Center of Tibetan Culture).”*Buddhism in Russia* 23 (1995). Accessed April 20, 2014. doi: <http://www.buddhismofrussia.ru/buddhism-of-russia/br23>.

Nadneeva, Kerme.n *Tolerantnost’ i Netolerantnost’, Svetskoe i Religioznoe v Dukhovnom Prostranstve Yga Rossii I Kalmykii* (Tolerance and Intolerance, Secular and Religious in the Spiritual Space of the Russian South and Kalmykia. Accessed February 18, 2014, <http://elibrary.ru/download/68953683.pdf>.

Ochirova, Baira. “Tradicii Kalmytskikh Palomnichestv v Tibet” (Traditions of the Kalmyk Pilgrimages to Tibet), *Nauchnye Problemy Gumanitarnyx Issledovanij*, 2 (2010): 149-152.

Ochirova, Nina. “Buddhist Clergy and Development of Kalmyk Culture.” *Buddhist Clergy and Kalmyk Culture*, ed. Nina Ochirova, Elza Bakaeva, Delyash Muzraeva. Elista: Dhangar, 2004.

Ochirova, Nina.et al. *Istoriya Buddhisma v SSSR i Rossijskoi Federatsii (The History of Buddhism in the USSR and the Russian Federation in 1985-1999)*. Elista: Ministry of education, culture and science of the Kalmyk Republic, 2011.

Ochirov, Utash. “Oiraty Zapadnoj Mongolii i Severo-Zapadnogo Kitaya: Voprosy Etnicheskoi Istории, Demografii I Geografii Rasseleniya vo Vtoroj Polovine XVIII veka” (The Oirats of the

Western Mongolia and Northwestern China: the questions of ethnical history, demography and geography of settlement in the second half of XVII century”), *Vestnik KIGI RAN No 2* (April 2010): 9-15.

Ostrovskaya, Elena. “Rossijskij Buddhism v Oprave Grazhdanskogo Obshestva” (Russian Buddhism in the Frame of the Civil Society), in *Dvadtsat’ let Religioznoj Svobody v Rossii*), edited by Alexej Malyshev and Sergej Filatov 294-328. Moscow: Rossnep, 2009,

Zakonodatel’sтво Rossii. “Postanovlenie VTSIK, SNK RSFSR OT 08.04.1929 O Religioznykh Ob’edineniyakh (The Decree of the Central Executive Committee, People's Commissars of RSFSR from 08.04.1929 on Religious Associations)”. Accessed March 16, 2014 <http://russia.bestpravo.ru/ussr/data04/tex16632.htm>.

Pozdneev, Alexei. *Ocherki Byta Budiiskikh Monastyrey i Nuddiyskogo Dukhovenstva v Mongolii v Svyazi s Otnosheniyem Sego Poslednego k Narodu* (*Sketches of life of Buddhist monasteries and Buddhist clergy in Mongolia in relation to the treatment of latter to the people*). St. Petersburg: Imperial Academy of Sciences typography, 1887.

Russkij Arkhipelag. “Pervaya Vseobshchaya Perepis' Naseleniya Rossiyskoy Imperii 1897 g. Raspredeleniye Naseleniya po Veroispovedaniyami Regionam” (The First Universal Census of the Russian Empire in 1897 Population by Religions and Regions). Accessed February 19, 2014, http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/religio/statistics/said/statistics-imp/

Russo-Kitajskie Otnosheniya v XVII veke: Materialy i Dokument (*Russo-Chinese relations in XVII century: materials and documents*). Moscow: Nauka, 1978.

Russian Federation: Federal State Statistics Service. Itogi Vserossijskoj Perepisi Naseleniya 2010 goda v otnoshenii demograficheskikh i sotsialno-economiceskikh haracteristic otdel'nyx nacional'nostej (The results of whole Russian census of year 2010 in regard of demographic and socio-economic characteristics of individual nationalities). Accessed November 10, 2013. http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/perepis2010/croc/results2.html

Runivers. "Polnoe Sobranie Zakonov Rossiiskoj Impreii (Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire. Accessed March 3, 2014, at <http://www.runivers.ru/lib/book3130.%20????????????>

Shakhov, Michail. *Veroispovedatel'naya Politika Rossijskogo Gosudarstva (Faith Policies of the Russian State)*. Moscow: RAGS, 2003.

Tarlina, Galina. "Ego Svateishestvona Kalmyckoi Zemle" (Hiss Holiness on Kalmyk land). *Elistinskie Novosti No. 31*, August 3, 1991.

Terent'ev, Artem. "Poslevoenaya Reanimatsiya (After War Reanimation)." *Buddhism in Russia*. Accessed May 2, 2014. doi: <http://buddhismofrussia.ru/HTML/br3afterWar.php?title=%CF%E1%EB%E5%E2%E5%ED%E0%FF%20%F0%E5%E0%ED%E8%EC%E0%F6%E8%FF>

The Charter of the Buddhist Union of Kalmykia. 1991.

The Charter of the Kalmyk Buddhist Monastery. 2005.

The Russian Census 2002, *The Population by the Ethnicity and Russian Language Ability by the Federal Subjects of the Russian Federation*. Accessed 12 January 2014,

<http://www.perepis2002.ru/index.html?id=17>.

“Tsentral’noe Upravlenie Budistov SSSR” (the Central Administration of the Buddhist in the USSR), *Entsiklopediya Zabajkal’ya*. Accessed May 8, 2014, <http://ez.chita.ru/encycl/person/?id=6915>.

Ubushaev, Vladimir and Ubushaev, Kirill. *Kalmyki: Vyselenie i Vozvrashenie* (The Kalmyks: exile and return). Elista: Izdatel'stvo Kalmyckogo universiteta, 2007.

“Zakon Respubliki Kalmykiya. O Sbobode Veroispovedanii.” *Izvestiya Kalmykii*, 10 November, 1995.

Zhitesky, Irodeon. *Ocherki Byta Astrakhanskikh Kalmykov* (*Essays on Life Astrakhan Kalmyks*). Moscow: M.G. Voltchaninov printing house, 1893.

Archival documents

Archive of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Empire.F.119. Op. 1. 1736. D.40. L. 43.

National Archive of the Republic of Kalmykia. P-3. Op.2., D.508f. L.58.

National Archive of the Kalmyk Republic.F. 36 Op 1.D. 316. L. 74-74.

National Archive of the Republic of Kalmykia.F. 36. Op. 1 D.15. L. 61.

National Archive of the Republic of Kalmykia.F.P-3. Op.1. D. 301. L. 1-5 ob.

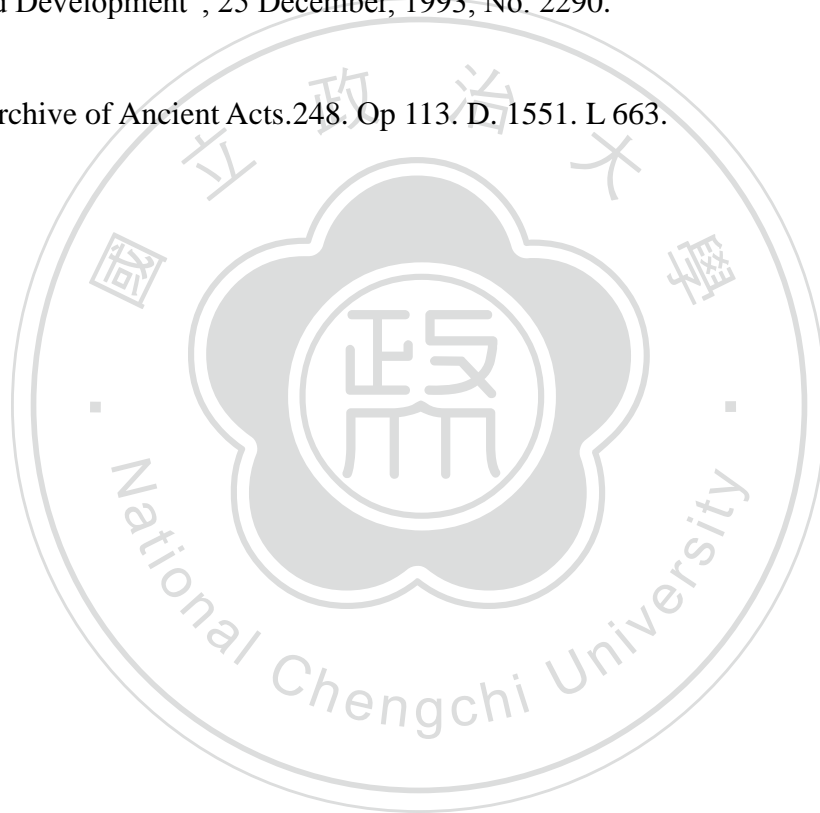
National Archive of the Republic of Kalmykia. P-3. Op.2 D.1302. L.112. Красная степь 13 сентября 1929 (Red Steppe 13 September 1929).

National Archive of the Republic of Kalmykia F. P-3.Op.2. D.509. L. 13

National Archive of the Republic of Kalmykia. The Decree of President of the Kalmyk Republic from 12 July 1993, No.145.

National Archive of the Republic of Kalmykia.The Decree of the President of the Republic of Kalmykia “About the Rehabilitation of the Kalmyk People and Governmental Support of its Renaissance and Development”, 25 December, 1993, No. 2290.

Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts.248. Op 113. D. 1551. L 663.



Appendix 1.

Map 1. The Republic of Kalmykia



Republic of Kalmykia

Source: Wikipedia. Kalmykia, accessed at <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d9/Kalmykia03.png>.

Appendix 2. Table 1. The ethnic structure of the Republic of Kalmykia 2010.

The Republic of Kalmykia – population (total)	289481	
People, who indicated their ethnic identity	283691	100.0
Kalmyks	162740	57.4
Russians	85712	30.2
Dargins	7590	2.7
Chechens	3343	1.2
Kazakhs	4948	1.7
Meskhethian Turks	3675	1.3
Avarss	2396	0.8
Ukranians	1531	0.5
Koreans	1342	0.5
Germans	1071	0.4
Other ethnicities (have not mentioned above)	9343	3.3
People, who did not indicate their ethnicity, including those for whom data were obtained from administrative sources	5790	

Source: Federal State Statistic Service, *The Population by the Ethnicity and Russian Language Ability by the Federal Subjects of the Russian Federation*, accessed 12 January 2014, http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/perepis2010/croc/Documents/Vol4/pub-04-04.pdf.