

Ja Lama with his legends

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Ja Lama (Mongolian: Жа Лама, also known as *Dambijantsan*, Mongolian: *Дамбийжанцан* or *Dambija*, Mongolian: *Дамбийжаа*, (1862–1922)

This article is about a person whose existence many have doubts although there are still facts and traces in history about this mysterious person. There are some photos of Ja' and papers on his arrest and release from prison.

He is claimed to be was an adventurer of unknown birth and background who posed as a Buddhist lama, though it is not clear whether he actually was one. It is alleged that the Ja Lama itself originated from the Astrakhan steppe, at the same time, another parallel version exaggerates the fact that he was a Torgut Palden.

This is a problem for orientalists. Lamas do not have such a headache because for them Ja lama is a being from different category not from the same place where we, the ordinary beings are.

Compared to Christian-European version, the Buddhist concept would be more suitable for Ja Lama. Buddhism says that human moves from a body to a body constantly, therefore we are all as passengers on the train-express fluttering the future. For us it seems as a movie where we move from one life to another, and as travellers in samsara, we keenly change wagons on this time-train. This cosmic express tows us all along because we always have an illusory ticket Trishna in our hands.

Such a strange and mystical person as Ja Lama, was not seen in an Asian steppes for a long time.

The only available birth date for him is 1862, but lamas believe this is wrong because the same Ja Lama was born few hundred years ago. And moreover, he is considered to be alive until today, many people who witnessed him fighting together with Bloody Baron, Ungern von Sternberg, have seen him also later.

Ja Lama and Ungern von Sternberg were old friends, and an average Mongol was afraid of Ja Lama because of his nature which was molded by Chod masters in Tibet. Such a hair-raising couple like Ungern and Ja Lama had fatalistic impact, both directly and indirectly. Interestingly, there was no such conflict between Ungern and Ja Lama even they were both well-known for their dominant behaviour and direct negative reactions.

Although the Ja Lama`s existence is based on photographs and impressions of persons who had contact with him, the problem is that his birth and life is not recorded in the books of the church, nor anywhere. Even the compilation chronicles do not contain anything about him - only legends. It seems like Ja lama was never born.

However, Prince Noryshkin Nikolai Nikolajevitsh met him personally at the Gusino Ozersky Monastery and was personally in contact with him. Ferdinand Ossendovski is writing about Ja lama, plus there are stories about Kobdo battle with many witnesses.

I have heard about the incident from 1957 (and some others), when Ja Lama was riding in Mongolia, wearing the same old berdanka which he had used to shot the Red Commissars.

Also Ja Lama` death is somehow mysterious. He was shot dead four times and finally Lenin demanded his head. Later Ja Lama` head was put on display at Kunstkammer of the Hermitage, labelled "No. 3394, head of a Mongolian".

Mongols are telling stories about him to this day; they admire him and consider him a Buddhist saint and miraculous immortal warrior. Both Ungern and Ja Lama are regarded as Shambala Warriors and emanations of Mahakala.

In my presentation I will expand on Ja Lama and his legends, and introduce some versions of his life.

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