

Монголын Сүм Хийдийн Түүхэн Товчоо Төсөл

UB 04 Lamrim datsan

Janchub lamrim datsan

Tibetan name: Chos-sde chen-po dga'-ldan chos-'phel gling, byang-chub lam-rim grwa-tshang

Written Mongolian name: tegüs bayisyulang-tu nom arbidqu yeke kölgen-ü keyid

English name: Lamrim monastic school

On Zanabazar Street, which leads to Gandan.

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Informant: S. Bayantsagaan, the head of the temple; Lodoidamba, the main disciplinary master of the temple (about 30 years old)

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Before 1938 a Lamrim datsan was situated in the Gandan complex on the left side of Güngaachoilin datsan. However, according to the current head, this new temple can not be considered as a revival of the old monastic school, it merely bears the same name and has the same purpose i.e. to spread the teachings of the *Lamrim*, Tsongkhapa's great work on the gradual path to enlightenment, and to hold ceremonies in connection with this teaching.

The present temple was built in 1990 on the initiation of the Association of Mongolian Believers (*Mongol süsegtanii kholboo*) and S. Bayantsagaan, a lama, who is now the head of the monastery. Before 1990 the monastery was operating in a yurt. The *lovon* (Tib. *slob-dpon*) lama of the temple, Khishigtiin Gombo is an old lama (born 1914 in the year of tiger), who studied in *Baruun khüree* (also known as *Shankhnii khüree/Tüsheet khanii khüree/Ribogeki Gandanshadublin*), Övörkhongai aimag, Kharkhorin sum and *Nomgonii süm* or *Nomgonii Dari Ekh lamiin khiid*, also called *Puntsagdarjailin*, Arkhangai aimag, Khashaat sum (in Elsiin tasarkhai, which is the sand dune area on the way to Kharkhorin). He was a disciple of Dari Ekh lamtan, Agwaantsültimjamts in the 1920-1930's and became a lama again in 1990. Since that time he has been the *lovon* lama of *Lamrim datsan*. The head, Bayantsagaan, is also the head of the Association of Mongolian Believers (*Mongol süsegtanii kholboo*), which initiated the foundation of about 85 monasteries and temples in Mongolia. Bayantsagaan studied and wrote his dissertation (at the Mongolian National University of Mongolia, MUIS) on the philosophy of *Lamrim*. As such he had a personal interest to establish a temple where studies of the *Lamrim* are emphasized.

The entrance of the complex is on the west of Zanabazar Street. Two rows of prayer wheels lead to the gate of the temple. To the south there is a stupa, which was completed in October 2005 and is surrounded by prayer wheels. In the back courtyard there is a two-storey building. The reception for ordering texts by individuals is on the right side of the entrance hall. In this temple there are fixed prices.

At the time of the survey this temple has the highest number of old lamas in Ulaanbaatar, who come from old monasteries in the countryside and the Ikh khüree temples. Many of those old lamas who joined *Lamrim datsan* after the revival were fortunately still attending the rituals at the time of the survey. The researchers were not able to interview all the old lamas in the monastery, as some of them did not attend the ceremonies during the survey period for a variety of reasons. However, they were able to meet and interview 9 of them, namely: the *lovon* lama called Gombo (see above); Nyamdorjiin Dashnyam, main disciplinary master (born 1913, had been a lama of *Bogdiin khüree*, *Idgaachoinzinlin datsan*, lived in *Düinkhor aimag*); Yondon Jambaa (1912-2007, *Zeerengiin khiid/khüree*, present Övörkhongai aimag, Sant sum); Tüwdengiin Badamsed (born 1914, *Nömrögiin khüree/ Samdanpuntsoglin/ Khatavchiin khüree/ Tsogtoi vangiin khüree*, present Zavkhan aimag, Nömrög sum); Ganjuuriin Tsendsüren (born 1927, *Baatar khoshuunii khiid*, present Khentii aimag, Jargaltiin am); Osoriin Indree (born 1924 in the year of rat, *Jadambiin khiid*, present Dundgovi aimag, Deren sum); Ambaagiin Tunaadegd (born 1921, *Arvaikheeriin khüree/ Bandid lamiin khiid/ Üizen vangiin khüree/ Delgerekh bulgiin khüree*, present Övörkhongai aimag centre, Taragt sum, Arvaikheer town); Ösökhiiin Bat-Ochir (born 1914, *Beliin khüree*, present Övörkhongai

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aimag, Kharkhorin sum); Tsembeliin Günchin (born 1917 in the year of snake, *Mengetiin khüree/khural*, present Dundgovi aimag, Luus sum). In 2007 an additional lama was interviewed, Darjaagiin Gonchig (born 1916, *Mengetiin khiid/khural*, present Dundgovi aimag, Luus sum). As indicated, prior to the purges these old lamas belonged to different monasteries and assemblies in different territories of Mongolia. The interviews with them concerned the old temples they belonged to and the details of religious life in them. (This material is to be published later as is out of the scope of the present survey.)

Presently, there are about 50 lamas in the temple. There is a *lovon*, two chanting masters and two disciplinary masters. There are three lamas with *gelen* vow. Four of the lamas have *gevsh* (Tib. *dge-bshes*) rank, an academic degree in philosophical studies requiring around 15 years of study. Four lamas were sent to study in Sera monastery, South India in 2003.

The main deities of the temple are *Gombo* (Tib. *mgon-po*, Skr. Mahakala), *Choiजू* (Tib. *chos-rgyal*, Skr. Dharmaraja, epithet of Yama), *Namsrai* (Tib. *rnam-(thos)-sras*, Skr. Vaishravana or Kuvera) and *Jamsran* (or *Ulaan sakhuis*, Tib. *lcam-sring*), the Red Protector.

The daily chanting is held from 9.30am. Various ceremonies are held monthly: on the 8th in honour of the Medicine Buddha (*Ikh Manal*, *Manaliin donchid*, Tib. *smān-bla'i stong-mchod* ceremony), and also the Four Mandalas of Tara (*Dari Ekhiin mandal shiva*) is offered; on the 10th and 25th *Narkhajid* dakini (Tib. *na-ro mkha'-spyod*, Skr. Sarvabuddhadakini) is worshipped (*Khajidiin chogo*); on the 29th the wrathful deities of the temple are worshipped (*Arvan khangal*); and on the 30th the ritual of the main disciples of Buddha, the sixteen arhats (*Naidan chogo*) is held.

The *Lamrim* ceremony, during which parts of the main work of Tsongkhapa, The gradual path that leads to the enlightenment, are read, is held in the middle month of every season from the 3rd to the 10th, in the other (first and last) months from the 3rd to the 5th of the month. On the 6th of every month, more detailed form of the *Lamrim* is read in a longer ceremony (*delgerekh ikh lamrim*, 'detailed *Lamrim*'). During these ceremonies the *Lamrim* text of Damtshigdorj or Bari lam Damtsigdorj (Tib. *brag-ri bla-ma dam-tshig-rdo-rje*, 1781-1848) is read. He was a great Mongolian lama and scholar, born in Govi mergen vangiiin khoshuu of Tüsheet khan aimag (present Dundgovi aimag, Saikhan ovoo sum). He studied in Tibet as well as in Dashchoimbel datsan of Ikh khüree. Later he founded a monastery called *Bragiriin khiid* on the bank of Ong River on the Rocky Mountain (khatat uul, Tib. *brag-ri*). His work on *Lamrim*, entitled *Pandelamsan* (Tib. *phan-bde lam-bzang lam-rim*, 'excellent beneficial gradual path of enlightenment') became a very important text in Mongolian monasteries. It is used as a main text in Sera monastery in Tibet.

On the 15th of every month the *Günreg* (Tib. *kun rigs*) ceremony is performed to *Günreg* (shortly for *Günreg Nambarnanzad*, Tib. *kun-rig(s)* (*rnam-par snang-mdzad*), Skr. Sarvavid Vairochana, a form of Vairochana Buddha) for the deceased. In the middle months of the year the initiation part is included, (*Vantai günreg*, Tib. *dbang*), while in the first and last months of the year the ceremony (*Lkhogtoi günreg*, Tib. *kun-rig-gi lho-sgo*) omits the initiation.

In this temple several special annual ceremonies are held. On the 16th of the first spring month *Danrag* (Tib. *gtang-rag*), a thanksgiving offering, is made to the wrathful protector deities. On the 17th of the first spring month the temple plans to revive the Maitreya procession, which, up to now, is only being held in *Gandan* and *Züün khüree Dashchoilin* monastery in Ulaanbaatar, and in a very few bigger monasteries in the countryside.

On the 8th of the first summer month, which is the great *Düitsen* month (Tib. *dus-chen*, 'great time, festival'), a thousand-fold offering is presented in honour of the Medicine Buddha (*Manaliin donchid* or *Donchidtoi Manal*, Tib. *smān-bla'i stong-mchod*). From the 13th until the 17th day of the month *Maaniin büteel* (Tib. *ma-n.i sgrub*) is performed to *Janraiseg* (Avalokiteshvara) for 5 days non-stop culminating with a water offering (*Usan takhil*, Tib. *chu gtor*, 'libation, water' (gtor-ma) offering'). On the 8th and 15th of the first summer month, the meditation of *Manal* (Tib. *smān-bla*, Skr. Bhaisajyaguru), the Medicine Buddha and *Janraiseg* are practiced with the participation of four to eight lamas. On the 3rd, 4th and 5th of the last summer month the *Ganjuur* is recited.

The *Shambalin chogo* (Tib. *shambha-la'i cho-ga*) ceremony for the deceased is held annually although there is no fixed date for it.

On the 22nd of the last autumn month, one of the Buddha anniversaries, when Buddha descended from the god realms (*Ikhavav(iin) düitshen*, Tib. *lha-las babs-pa dus-chen*), a ceremony entitled *Jalbasengiin*

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Ariin Donchid tsogchid (Tib. *rgyal-ba seng-ge'i nga-ro'i stong-mchod tshogs-mchod*), 'the feast-offering and thousandfold-offering to *Jalba senge aro/Jalba sengiin ar(o)* ('victorious lion's roar', name of a buddha') is performed.

Lamrim datsan has a meditation retreat, founded by Bayantsagaan, near the Turtle Rock in Terelj (50 kms from Ulaanbaatar in the Nalaikh district). The temple bears the name of *Aryabal* (Tib. *thugs-rje chen-po*, Skr. Aryapala, Mahakarunika), that is 'the great compassionate one', an epithet of Avalokitesvara (Aryapala meditation and initiation center, *Ariyaabal Burkhanii Nomlol Būteeliin Töv*, Tib. *thugs-rje chen-po'i e-wam zung 'jug bshad-sgrub bstan-rgyas gling*, Mongolian name: *Aryabala burqan-u ary-a biliy qooslal oroqui*). It was founded in 1998 and completed in September 2004. According to the disciplinarymaster of *Lamrim datsan*, about twenty lamas go to the retreat centre from Lamrim datsan to celebrate the great feast days. They burn butter lamps, meditate and do the fourfold meditation practice called *Bumshi* (Tib. 'bum bzhi). During the survey visit the two separate smaller shrines, topped with stupas, on either side of the main building, were being furnished with the objects of worship though they were not yet open for use. There is also a small hut high on the rocky hillside, which is for meditation. Bayantsagaan plans to establish an exhibition in the basement of this temple with 200-300 illustrations illustrating the stages of the enlightenment. He is now working on the inscriptions for the illustrations to be written in five languages (Mongolian, English, German, Japanese, Chinese). (By the summer of 2006 this exhibition was already opened).