

Монголын Сүм Хийдийн Түүхэн Товчоо Төсөл

UBR 925

Rinchen 925 - Dechingalaviin khural

Dechingalav/Dechingalva, Düinkhor datsan, Ikh amgalant tsag

Tibetan name: bde chen bskal-pa, dus-'khor grwa-tshang

Sanskrit name: Kalachakra

Mongolian translation of the name: Ikh amgalant tsag

English name: Dechingalaw/Kalachakra Assembly, Dechingalaw/Kalachakra monastic school

GPS was taken in front of the 6th building of Mongolian National University, the presumed site of the old temple

N 47°55.559'

E 106°55.063'

Dataprovider: G. Buyandelger, chanting master of Züün Khüree Dashchoilin monastery

Sources: Bawden, C. R. (translated and edited), *Tales of an Old Lama*, The Institute of Buddhist Studies [Buddhica Britannica Series Continua VIII], Tring, U. K. 1997

Northern Buddhist Conference on Ecology and Development. Ulaanbaatar 2005, pp. 302-303.

Pozdnev, A. M., *Mongolia and the Mongols*, edited by Krueger, J. R., translated by Shaw, J. R. and Plank, D., Bloomington, Indiana University 1971

Sereeter, Ö., *Mongoliin Ikh Khüree, Gandan khiidiin tүүkhen бүтэtsiin towch*. 1651-1938. Ulaanbaatar 1999, p. 40.

Printed information sheet in Mongolian on the present temple, which is now in the Gandan complex

Painting by Jügder (1913)

Photos: Tsültem (intr: 22, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 55, 56), Maidar (107), Sereeter (84), Film Archive (K23699, K23999, K24005, K24009, K24020), Shepetilnikov, Palsi (83), Geleta/Forbáth (152)

History

The Kalachakra teachings, the 'Wheel of time' (Tib. *dus-'khor*, pronounced as *Düinkhor* in Mongolia, *Tsagiin khürd* in Mongolian translation), is one of the secret tantric teachings given by Shakyamuni Buddha to the first King of the legendary kingdom of Shambhala, called Suchandra (Tib. *zla-ba bzang-po*, *Diwaasambu* / *Dewaaasambu* / *Dawasambu* in Mongolian pronunciation).

The teaching became widespread in the 11th century. It illustrates the inter-relationship between the phenomenal world, the physical body and the mind-animated nature or living beings. It serves as the basis for zodiac astrology and the temporal cycle. *Düinkhor* (Tib. *dus-'khor*, Skr. Kalachakra) is also the name of a higher tutelary tantric deity, who is one of the five wrathful tutelary deities of the Gelukpa tradition. His standing form, in which he is embracing his consort, has 4 faces (blue, red, yellow, white) symbolizing the four seasons. His twelve eyes symbolize the twelve months, his 24 arms the 24 hours, and his finger joints symbolize the 360 days. He treads on evil spirits.

The first tantric assembly (*jüd*, Tib. *rgyud*) was founded by the 2nd *jewtsündamba khutagt* in 1739 under the Tibetan name: *Bde-chen gsang-sngags gling* (*Dechinshanaglin*). Later, three places were established where tantric systems were followed, namely *Dechingalaw datsan*, *Badma yogo datsan* and *Jüid datsan* (see entry UBR 910 and UBR 912). According to the information sheet in the present day *Düinkhor datsan*, the original *datsan* was constructed in 1800 after the 4th *jewtsündamba khutagt* visited the Kalachakra temple in Lhasa and participated in the Kalachakra initiation (*awshig*, Skr. *abhisheka*) performed by Lkhokh or Lkhakh Jalsrai Galsan Tüwden Jigjid Gegeen (in short form, Lkhokh jalsrai gegeen, Tib. ? rgyal-sras bskal-bzang thub-bstan 'jigs-byed, Tibetan Yellow sect master of the 4th *jewtsündamba*). He founded *Dechingalawin süm* in the area of *Düinkhoriin aimag*, which got its name after its main tutelary deity, *Düinkhor*, and after a special ceremony called 'small *Düinkhor*' (*baga düinkhor*) or *Jambal choijin* (Tib. 'jam-dpal chos-skyong), which was held there every month. The main tutelary deity of the temple was *Düinkhor*, while the main protectors were *Dorjshüg* (Tib. *rdo-rje shugs(-ldan)*) and *Jamsran* (or *Ulaan sakhuis*, Tib. *lcam-sring*), the Red Protector. According to Sereeter (pp. 83-84.), the temple building was completed in 1806. The great treasury (*ikh san*) covered the expenses of the temple. Sereeter claims that despite many lamas being educated in the *datsan* they could not obtain a scholastic rank. 40 lamas belonged to the temple. However, according to G. Buyandelger, the *zeerembe* rank (Tib. *rtsis-rims-pa*), the highest academic qualification in astrology, could be obtained in the *datsan*.

Reproduced for the Arts Council of Mongolia by kind permission of the authors of the report 'Monasteries and Temples of Bogdiin Khüree, Ikh Khüree or Urga, the Old Capital City of Mongolia in the First Part of the Twentieth Century.' Survey conducted by Zsuzsa Majer and Krisztina Teleki, Budapest, Hungary. Published in Ulaanbaatar 2006. © held by the authors.

Монголын Сүм Хийдийн Түүхэн Товчоо Төсөл

The brass portrait (*gündaa*, Tib. *sku-'dra*) of Jalsrai gegeen (Lkhokh or Lkhakh Jalsrai Galsan Tüwden Jigjid Gegeen, Lkhokh jalsrai gegeen, Tib. ? rgyal-sras bskal-bzang thub-bstan 'jigs-byed), who, according to Jambal (English text p. 29., Mongolian text p. 706.) was the main Kalachakra tantra lama (*Düinkhoriin jüidin/jüdwiin lam*, Tib. *dus-'khor-gyi rgyud-pa'i bla-ma*) of the 4th *jewtsündamba* and the Dalai Lama (presumably the 8th, 'Jam-dpal rgya-mtso, 1758-1804) was kept in *Dechingalaw* temple.

The highest ranking lama in *Dechingalaw* temple was the *dorj lowon* (Tib. *rdo-rje slob-dpon*) with the first *dorj lowon* being the 4th *jewtsündamba khutagt* himself. According to the article in the volume of the *Northern Buddhist Conference on Ecology and Development* (p. 302.) the first disciplinary master was Chonzow noyon while the first chanting master was Badan. The second *dorj lowon* was the Tibetan *Ikhaaramba* (Tib. *lha-rams-pa*, the highest philosophical degree that could only be gained in Lhasa, once a year during the Lunar New Year) of *Shüteenii aimag*, while the third was the Vice Abbot of *Düinkhoriin aimag* who was followed, after his death in 1921, by Tsogt Zandan, the *tsorj lam* of (*Dash*) *Dandarlin aimag*. The disciplinary master was changed every year. There was a tradition that the outgoing disciplinary master led the *jewtsündamba* to the temple, while the incoming disciplinary master led him back to the palace.

Pozdnev claims (pp. 57-59.) that, thanks to the 4th *jewtsündamba khutagt's* devotion to the Kalachakra teachings, the temple was enlarged in 1807. From this time, many other rituals were held there apart from the Kalachakra ceremonies. In 1809 the temple's mezzanine and roof were solidly gilded. The *jewtsündamba khutagt* then set up his yurt in its courtyard which became his personal residence. Since that time, this place, the fenced-off courtyard of the Yellow Palace, became the permanent winter residence of the *jewtsündamba khutagts*. Pozdnev says that the *jewtsündamba khutagt* had his quarters in two yurts, one was made from wood and covered with felt, and the other was a typical Mongolian felt yurt ('one of which is wood and covered with felt, and the other of felt alone').

According to Pozdnev (p. 58.), the *Dechingalaw* temple along with the yurts and other quarters of the *jewtsündamba khutagt*, burned almost to the ground on the night of 15 January 1892 (the last winter month according to the Mongolian calendar). As he visited Mongolia in that year, he claims the rebuilding of the temple began in the same year using 50,000 *lan* of silver provided by the great treasury (*ikh san*) and the subordinated areas (*ikh shaw'*) to do this. Pozdnev describes how the façade and the internal plan of the temple remained the same, although the mezzanine was constructed in two tiers. Russian window panes donated by Buryats were installed in place of the former Chinese paper-covered windows. The *jewtsündamba khutagt* ordered new sculptures from the famous workshops of Beijing and Doloon nuur.

As Pozdnev describes (pp. 58-59.), and old pictures show, *Dechingalaw datsan* was the most imposing building in the whole city: 'All the wooden parts of its mezzanine and roof have been regilded, and now they literally burn in the sun... The cupola of the *datsan*, as before, is hung round with little bells, the low and silvery tinkle of which may be heard almost uninterruptedly.'

According to Poznev (p. 59.), Tibetan lamas chanted everyday in *Dechingalaw* temple. They came to Ikh Khüree from Tibet to be attendants of the *khutagt*. They lived near the *khutagt's* palace and were the court staff or bodyguards. Public services were occasionally held in this temple though only when the *jewtsündamba khutagt* could not go out to the main assembly hall (*Tsogchin*). In addition, a morning service was sometimes held here on the day of the Maitreya procession (*Maidar ergek*). Poznev also explains that, as *Dechingalaw* was the *Urga khutagts'* palace temple, all the lamas of the capital assembled on the death of the *khutagt* when his remains were brought to the temple until the time that he was buried (p. 59.).

Jügder's painting shows the temple in its state in 1913. According to Sereeter (p. 84.) the temple burnt down once again in 1914, and was rebuilt again in 1915 from 34,500 *lan* silver collected from the four Khalkha aimags, and the subordinates (*ikh shaw'*). From 1926 some financial units (*jas*) belonged to the *datsan*, like *Düinkhoriin jas* and *Zagdsambariin jas*.

The special ceremonies of the Kalachakra tradition were held in this temple. The most important of them was the great initiation of Kalchakra (*Düinkhoriin wan*), held in the last spring month. On the 15th of the last spring month traditionally a *Düinkhoriin chogo* (Tib. *dus-'khor-kyi cho-ga*) ceremony was held in all Mongolian monasteries and temples.

In the *Dechingalaw* temple, traditionally the Kalchakra (*Düinkhor*) ceremony began on the 1st of the last spring month. On the 2nd day a ritual dance called *Sagar* or *Gazriin büjig* (Tib. *sa-gar*, 'Earth-dance') was held seeking the permission of spirits for using the land where the *Dültsen jinkhor* (Tib. *rdul-tshon dkyil-'khor*, coloured sand mandala) was to be prepared. From the 4th onwards the *Dültsen jinkhor* and the *balins* and offerings were reproduced for the Arts Council of Mongolia by kind permission of the authors of the report 'Monasteries and Temples of Bogdiin Khüree, Ikh Khüree or Urga, the Old Capital City of Mongolia in the First Part of the Twentieth Century.' Survey conducted by Zsuzsa Majer and Krisztina Teleki, Budapest, Hungary. Published in Ulaanbaatar 2006. © held by the authors.

Монголын Сүм Хийдийн Түүхэн Товчоо Төсөл

prepared and consecrated and, on their completion, the Great *Düinkhor* ceremony began on the 13th day with the ritual dance of *Chogar* or *Takhiliin бүжиг* (Tib. *mchod-gar*, 'offering-dance') being held on the 15th. On the last day of the ceremony, a fire-offering called *Düinkhoriin jinsreg* (Tib. *dus-'khor-gyi sbyin-bsreg*, 'Kalachakra fire-offering') was organized. The final part of the ceremony was at the end when the *dültsen* sand mandala was destroyed with the sand being taken in a ceremonial procession to the source of Tuul River in Gachuurt (on the north-east of Ulaanbaatar) where it was offered to the spirits of land and water.

According to an article in the conference volume of the *Northern Buddhist Conference on Ecology and Development* (p. 302.), *Dechingalaw temple* was closed in 1937 just before the important celebration of the great day of the 4th *Jewtsündamba khutagt* on 15th of the middle winter lunar month. According to Sereeter, this temple ceased to operate in 1938. The tradition continued with a three-day *Düinkhor* ceremony using the painted mandala *Raibri jankhar* (Tib. *ras-bris dkhyil-'khor*) being held in the spring of 1938 in *Düinkhoriin aimag* but this was also stopped. After this the *Düinkhor* ritual was not held again anywhere in Mongolia until 1961, when it was re-instated in Gandan since when it has been held once a year in spring.

Current situation

The original *Dechingalaw* temple in Züün Khüree was totally destroyed. It was revived in the courtyard of Gandan monastery in 1992, with the new building being completed in 1994. The traditional ceremonies, especially the yearly Great *Düinkhor* festival, have been revived and are once again held in the new temple.

See the Current Situation entry for *Gandan* (Rinchen 912) for full details about the revived practices in this temple.