

Монголын Сүм Хийдийн Түүхэн Товчоо Төсөл

UB 08 Manba datsan

Other names: Mongol ulamjlalt emneleg surgaltiin Töv, Busdad tuslakhui anagaakh ukhaanii “Manba datsan” khiid

Tibetan name: sman-pa grwa-tshang

English name: Medical monastic school

The temple is in Bayanzürkh district, 2nd microdistrict, on Ikh toiruu, near the Mongolian University of Science and Technology.

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Informant: D. Natsagdorj, head of the temple

D. Jambadorj, 24 years old, has been a lama of the monastery for 10 years

Written sources: Sereeter, Ö., *Mongoliin Ikh khüree Gandan khiidiin түүхэн бүтэцийн товч*. 1651-1938. Ulaanbaatar 1999

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Printed leaflet produced by the temple (Mongoliin ulamjlalt emneleg surgaltiin Töv manba datsan)

A *Manba datsan* was situated in the area of Zүүн khüree before 1938. The head considers his temple to be its continuation and emphasizes this in the leaflet he has produced. However, currently there are two other temples bearing the same name, *Manba datsan*, in Ulaanbaatar (*Ikh khüree manba datsan*, and the one belonging to Gandan) and it can not be judged which has the closer connections with the old one.

The abbot, D. Natsagdorj, founded this Gelukpa medical monastery in 1990. He is also the director of the traditional Medicine College attached to the monastery. He graduated at Zanabazar University in Gandan and studied Traditional Medicine for several years in Dharamsala. He has the rank of *gevsh* (Tib. *dge-bshes*) and *maaramba*, academic rank in medical studies (Tib. *sman-rams-pa*). He also heads a traditional teaching hospital in the Sansar district in Ulaanbaatar.

Yo. Amgalan, the Vice abbot (*ded khamba*) of the temple also holds this position in *Gandan* monastery. The *tsorj*, G. Divaasambuu, is also the *tsorj* of *Gandan* and the founder of the new *Garma garjid Ürjin perenlailin* monastery (New Temples 28). There is also a *lovon*, two chanting masters, a disciplinary master, four *golch* or chanters. Furthermore, as in most temples, there is a *chombon* (offering master who is in charge of the offerings) and *duganch*, a shrine supervisor. There is also a lama with the title *gergen* lama, ‘old teaching lama’ (Tib. *dge-rgan*) called Sosoriin Dagva who was born in 1910. In the years immediately before the purges, he was a lama in *Dashchoimbel datsan*, Gandan in Ikh khüree, attached to *Toisamlin aimag*, and before that, he attended two countryside monasteries, *Mönkhiin khiid/Khuvilgaan khiid* (Luus sum) and Zava lam Damdin’s *Delgerchoir* monastery (Delger tsogt sum), both in the present Dundgovi aimag. He was also interviewed about the old temples to which he belonged and details of religious life in them. (Again, this material is to be published later as is out of the scope of the present survey.)

Presently there are about 40 lamas belonging to the temple only one of whom is a *gelen*. Some of the lamas are studying at the adjoining Medical College. Unusually, four lamas are studying in Tibet, one of whom has arrived back after completing his studies there.

On the left side of the courtyard in front of the temple there is a circle of prayer wheels with a big one in the centre. On the right side of the main gate there is a stupa with the sculpture of *Manal* (Tib. *sman-bla*, Skr. Bhaishajyaguru), the Medicine Buddha.

The temple is in a two-storey building, with the consulting rooms of the traditional medical clinic and the classrooms of the Traditional Medical College at the second floor, and a drug factory in the basement.

Inside the temple itself, there are two shops selling religious articles on the right and left side of the

Монголын Сүм Хийдийн Түүхэн Товчоо Төсөл

entrance. The reception for ordering texts by individuals is on the left side. In this temple there are fixed prices for the recitation of texts. An astrologer is available in a small room is on the left side of the temple. On the right side of the temple there is the pharmacy selling traditional drugs and their component elements.

The main deity of the temple is *Manal*. The main protector deities are *Shanlan* (Tib. *zhang-blon*) and *Damjan/Damjin*, 'the black coloured smith', (Tib. *dam-can*, being a shortened name for *Damjin garvanagvu*, Tib. *dam-can mgar-ba nag-po*), who are traditional protectors of doctors and medical schools. According to Sereeter (p 66.), the old Manba datsan, which was part of Züün khüree had the same protector deities.

Inside the temple there are the following objects of worship: in the middle there is a huge relief of Mairdar, the future Buddha, which can also be seen through corridor windows on the second floor. On the altar the three main images are of *Manal* in the middle, and on his two sides *Shanlan* and *Damjin*, the two protector deities of the temple. *Shanlan* is a blue coloured wrathful deity with flaming hair, wearing red robe and holding a jewel in his right hand and an alms bowl in his left hand. *Damjin* is a blue coloured wrathful deity wearing a big round hat and riding a billy-goat. There are various thangkhas as well: *Manal*; an assembly tree; three pictures of *Lkham* (shortly for *Baldan Lkham*, Tib. *dpal-ldan lha-mo*, Skr. Shridevi); and a thangka of *Nogoon Dari ekh* (Tib. *sgrol ljang*, Skr. Shyamatarā, the Green Tara). A three dimensional mandala or palace of *Manal* is on the right of the altar.

The daily chanting is held from 9.00am. If another ceremony is taking place at the same time, then the *Tsogchin* (daily chant) is read by four of the lamas on the right side of the shrine, while the second ceremony takes place in the shrine read by all of the lamas. In this way all of the ceremonies can be held from 9.00am, despite though the monastery having only one shrine. Lamas sitting separately on either side of the temple chant the readings requested by individuals.

People usually came to the temple to pray for and have texts read for their and their family member's health, and also in pray for their deceased kin to get a better rebirth. There are various monthly ceremonies. The most important, given the temple specializes in traditional medicine and the Medicine Buddha, are the ceremonies for the Medicine Buddha (*Manaliin Ikhogo*, *Manaliin donchid*, *Ikh manal*) held on the 8th of each lunar month. On the 10th of the month texts of the protector deities, namely *Jigjid* (Tib. 'jigs-byed, Skr. Bhairava, epithet of Yamantaka) *Shanlan*, *Gombo* (Tib. *mgon-po*, Skr. Mahakala), *Gongor* (Tib. *mgon dkar*, Skr. Sita Mahakala) and *Damjin* are recited. On the 14th *Ganjuur* is read and a ceremony is held for the deceased (*Oroin yerööl*). The ritual *Yum jai beren düisüm* (Tib. *yum rgyas 'bring bsdus gsum*, the collective name for three texts (*Ulaan*) *Yum*, Tib. *yum dkar*; *Nit*, Tib. *nyi-khri*; *Jadamba*, Tib. *brgyad-stong-pa*) in 21 volumes) is also read on the 14th. On the 15th Guhyasamaja tantra (*Sanduin jüd*) is read, while the 23rd is the day of reciting the *Lkhagtoi günreg* ceremony (Tib. *kun-rig-gi lho-sgo*, 'the south gate of omniscience'), which is performed in order to help the deceased to a better rebirth - to help them enter the realm of Buddha through the south gate of his palace. On the 25th a ceremony is held in honour of *Ayuush* or *Tsevegmed / Tsegmid* (Tib. *tshe-dpag-med*, Skr. Amitayus), the Bodhisattva of Longevity (*Tsegmediin chogo*, Tib. *tshe-dpag-med-kyi cho-ga*). On the 29th a special *balin* offering is presented to *Chojoo* (Tib. *chos-rgyal*, Skr. Dharmaraja, epithet of Yama) called *Chojoo dügjüü*, and texts of the wrathful deities (*Arvan khangal*) are recited. On the 30th a ceremony is held in honour of Buddha's main disciplines, the sixteen arhats (*Naidan*).

A special ceremony is held once a year and is called the *Devaajingiin chogo* (Tib. *bde-ba-can-gyi cho-ga*), the ritual of the Sukhavati Buddhafield, a paradise in the west or the pure land of *Avid* (Tib. 'od-dpag-med, Skr. Amitabha). This ceremony is aimed at clearing away all sins and praying for the deceased to take rebirth in the paradise of Amitabha Buddha.

Another annual ceremony is one held in honour of the Medicine Buddha (*Vantai Manal*, Tib. *dbang sman-bla*), in which a sand mandala to him is prepared (*dültsen jinkhor*, Tib. *rdul-tshon dkyil-'khor*). In 2005 it was held on from October 9th to the 11th (i.e. in the last autumn month 6-8.). At the end of the three day ceremony the mandala is taken and offered into (*zalach*) the Tuul river, at the place called Khar usan tokhoi at Gachuurt. A fire offering (*Jinsreg*, Tib. *sbyin-sgreg*) is also performed during these days. This ceremony was last performed in Mongolia in 1937, and it was revived after 70 years in this temple by G. Divaasambu, the *tsorj* lama of Gandan monastery, who taught the lamas how to perform it.

Монголын Сүм Хийдийн Түүхэн Товчоо Төсөл

The Traditional Medical College (*Otooch Manramba Deed Surguuli*) has operated on the second floor of the temple since 1991. Its director is D. Natsagdorj, the abbot of the temple. The college has around 250 students and 20 teachers. There are three departments: Department of Traditional Medicine, Department of European Medicine, and Department of General knowledge. The college has extensive foreign relations with institutions in England, Switzerland, Japan, USA, Russia, Korea, Germany and Italy. There is a medical library with about 15,000 books. There is also a museum of anatomy and history of medicine on the second floor of the temple building. The College has a small hospital nearby in Sansar district with 25 beds, which is used as a practice centre for the student doctors, and also a centre in the countryside for studying medicinal plants.

According to the leaflet produced by the monastery, they also have a countryside branch, founded in 2004, in Zamiin үүд, Dornogovi aimag, called *Dogdolgünsellin khiid (rtogs grol kun gsal gling)*.