

MAITREYA PROCESSION IN MONGOLIA

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The Maitreya procession, circumambulation or festival (*Maidar ergekhe, Jamgor*, Tib. *byams khor*) is one of the manifested practices of the cult of Maitreya (*Maidar, Jamba*, Tib. *byams pa*, ‘loving kindness’), the Future Buddha who resides at present in the Tuṣita Heaven as a Bodhisattva. According to Buddhist tradition, he will appear at our world as a successor of Buddha Śākyamuni (cc 560–480 BC), achieve complete enlightenment, and teach the pure Dharma. The prophecy of Maitreya’s arrival refers to a time in the future when the Dharma will have been forgotten by most on the terrestrial world.²⁵

The Maitreya procession aims at the motivation of Maitreya to appear in our world soon. Another reason is to make sentient beings calm and happy.²⁶ A head monk leads the cart of Maitreya, but other people cannot forego, but should follow and push the cart of Maitreya. Elderly Mongolian people claim that Maitreya will arrive when people’s size will be the same as the size of a cubit, and horses’ size will be as the size of a rabbit (*Tuulain chinee moritoy, tokhoin chine biyetei bolokh üyed Maidar burkhan zalna*).²⁷ They also claim that Maitreya’s green horse (*nogoon khalzan mori*) did not reach its full size, it is not a full horse now, but it needs several years to reach its full size.²⁸ The moving of the card should be slow: similar to the moving of an elephant. The height of the cart cannot exceed eight cubits from the ground²⁹ and should be decorated with an umbrella (*Maidariin shükher*). The statue of Maitreya can be a sitting (*suugaa Maidar*) or a standing form (*bosoo Maidar*).³⁰ The representation sitting on a throne (*sentii*, Tib.

²⁵ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maitreya>.

²⁶ Oral history collected by K. Teleki.

²⁷ Oral history collected by M. Nandinbaatar.

²⁸ Oral history collected by K. Teleki.

²⁹ Oral history collected by M. Nandinbaatar.

³⁰ Цндур Geegen Zanabazar (1635–1723) crafted the beautiful masterpiece of the standing Maitreya which is on exhibit

seng khri) became widespread aforesaid, before 1937. According to oral tradition, the standing statue refers to that the arrival of Buddha Maitreya at our world; the Jambudvīpa is closer and closer.³¹

The Mongolian Maitreya procession is with Tibetan origin where it was held first in 1409 on the day of the Lunar New Year³² in Lhasa, for the initiation of Lord Tsongkhapa (1357–1419), founder of the Tibetan Gelukpa stream, the teachings of which spread to the Mongolian land in the 16th century. The first procession in Mongolia took place in 1658 in Erdene Zuu monastery related to the ceremony for the longevity (*bat orshil*, Tib. *brtan bzhugs*) of Öndör Gegeen Zanabazar (1635–1723), the first Bogd Jebtsundamba Khutugtu of the Khalkhas.³³ Since that time on, the Maitreya procession developed and spread thorough the Mongol lands: monks of every large monastery and even several smaller monasteries used to make circumambulation with Maitreya's statue annually around their monasteries not only in the current area of Mongolia, but also in Inner Mongolia, Buryatia, Kalmykia, and Tuva. The procession included local specialties in all areas and monasteries. The practice of the Maitreya procession was ceased in 1937 in Mongolia, but revived in many rebuilt monasteries after the democratic changes in 1990. Due to socialist ideology was interrupted the practice of the Maitreya procession in all the other areas as well, and started to be revived, too.

The present article gives an overview about the general features of the procession, its history and current practice in Mongolia.

1. General Features of the Maitreya Procession

The following description summarizes the Maitreya procession of Züün Khüree Dashchoilin monastery situated in Ulaanbaatar, which illustrates the Mongolian practice of the procession in general. The procession is connected to the sacred text of Maitreya called *Jambiin chogo* (Tib. *byams pa'i cho ga*), which the monks recite in the Tibetan language.³⁴ During the ceremony that starts early in the morning, the abbot of the monastery brings out Maitreya's statue covered with a monastic mantel (*janch*) from the temple around 11am. The statue is placed (*Maidar zalakh*) with the sacred texts and a stupa to the already prepared and decorated cart standing in front of the monastery, outside of the monastery's wall in the south. These sacred items represent the trinity of the body, speech and mind (*güsüntüg*, Tib. *sku gsung thugs*) of the Buddha: the statue symbolizes the Buddha's body, the sutra³⁵ his speech, and the stupa his mind.

in the Choijin Lama Temple Museum.

³¹ Oral history collected by M. Nandinbaatar.

³² Pozdnev 1978, p. 497.

³³ Pozdnev 1971, p. 284.

³⁴ Cf. Majer 2008, p. 80. "rgyal ba byams pa'i sgrub thabs dang 'brel ba'i mchod cho ga dga' ldan pad tshor 'jug pa'i gru gzings zhes bya ba bzhugs so, in Mongolian translation: *Yalguusan Maidariin büteekh kholbootoi takhikh zan üil tögs bayasgalantiin lyankhuan ongots / zav*", "The Sādhana ritual of Buddha Maitreya, the victorious Loving One, The lotus boat of the Tuṣita Heaven' consists of 16 folios."

³⁵ This is mostly the Five Treatises of Maitreya (*Maidariin tavan nom, Jamchoi dena*, Tib. *byams chos sde lnga*) revealed by the Indian master, Asanga, 300–370 C.E. Cf. Majer 2008.

The cart is decorated with yellow silken umbrellas (*dug shükher*, Tib. *gdugs*), victory banners (*jantsan*, Tib. *rgyal mtshan*), five coloured silken ribbons (*badan*, Tib. *ba dan*) and other silken ornaments including various Buddhist symbols such as gems, the Eight Auspicious Signs (*naiman takhil*, Tib. *bkra shis rtags brgyad*), the Seven Symbols of Royalty (*khaan töriin doloon erdene*, Tib. *rgyal srid rin chen sna bdun*), and others. Even monks can carry these symbols during the about two-hour procession.³⁶

The statue of Maitreya is connected to a green horse head facing forth.³⁷ The horse head is mostly made of paper-maché. During the procession the abbot or another high ranking monk of the monastery (e.g. *tsorj*, Tib. *chos rje*), being responsible for the whole ceremony (*lamdakh lam*), pulls the vehicle with a blue silken thread or scarf tether (*tsulbuur*) attached to the statue and the horse. Next to the statue sits one or two monks (mostly fully-ordained monk, *gelen*, Tib. *dge slong*) and give blessing to devotees usually with mantra threads (*suntag*, Tib. *gzungs thag*) connected to the sacred scripts. Devotees can make offerings, mostly money to Maitreya and to the monastery through these monks. Devotees pull and move the cart by two long blue silken scarf thread and even push the cart from the back. In this way the cart circles the monastery clockwise with stopping (*Maidar üdlekh*, 'to have a tea break', *buudal* 'stop') in each direction (East, North, West, and South).

In these stops, high ranking monks take a seat on the prepared benches of monks. Maitreya's cart faces to the given direction and the monks recite the text of *Shirnen* (Tib. *sher snying*, *shes rab snying po* or *mdo*, the Heart Sutra, a short version of the Prajñāpāramitā sūtra).³⁸ Then, the cart turns toward the centre, and the monks recite the texts of the Ablution ritual and the Maṇḍala offering (*Tüi mandal*, Tib. *khrus maṇḍala*), and four monks perform these rituals. Also the 'Auspicious accomplishment' ritual (*Dashdondov dallaga*, Tib. *bkra shis don 'grub g yang 'gug*) takes place for calling forth prosperity.³⁹ High ranking monks drink a tea, and the procession go along to the next stop.

Finally, when returning back to the south of the monastery, the statue, the sacred texts and others are removed from the cart and taken back to the altar of the monastery (*dugand zalakh*). The ceremony continues with the recitation of the texts of *Ondogjan* (Tib. *mngon rtogs rgyan*, 'Ornament of Realization' written by Asanga), *Umanjüg* (Tib. *dbu ma la 'jug pa*, 'Entering to the Middle Way' written by Candrakīrti) and prayers and

³⁶ Cf. Majer 2008.

³⁷ Photographs of foreign processions show a white elephant instead of the green horse, but it was not used in the current area of Mongolia.

³⁸ According to M. Nandinbaatar's survey, also the text of *Chaa süm* (or *Chaa süm dorom*, Tib. *cha gsum (gtor ma)*, 'three parts', the threefold (sacrificial cake) ritual was recited in the 1930s. Even after the revival of the procession it is recited sometimes depending on the period of time dedicated to the procession.

³⁹ Cf. Majer 2008, p. 83.: "*Dashchiraw dallaga* (T. *bkra-shis char-'bebs-kyi g-yang-'gugs*, 'Ritual calling forth prosperity to cause rainfall of auspiciousness') are recited in order to ensure the spreading of the teachings of Maitreya. Many other texts such as remedy prayers (*zasltin nom*) including the *Dashjegwe naiman gegeen* (T. *bkra shis brtsegs pa*, 'Heap of auspiciousness' and *Nanjid* or *Naiman gegeen*, T. 'Eight brightnesses / illuminations') in their abbreviated form (*khuraangui*, T. *bsdus pa*) are chanted, too."

benedictions (*yerööl magtaal*). Devotees prostrate to Maitreya in the temple.

On the day of the Maitreya procession wear the high-ranking monks mostly yellow robes, yellow hats (*shashir*, Tib. *zhwa ser*), silken hats (*khilen malgai*) and others, whereas devotees wear mostly traditional Mongolian robes (*deel*).⁴⁰ The monks who play the musical instruments or hold Buddhist symbols wear a special cloth across their shoulders. Two monks hold leopard tails in their hands to drive away devotees from the way of the procession. In the procession, first goes a monk beating the gong followed by the monk (usually fully-ordained monk or disciplinary master) who purifies the road holding an incense burner (*boinzen*, Tib. *spas 'dzin*), and another monk who sprinkles holy water from a vessel (*bumba*, Tib. *bum pa*). Then, the *lamdakh lam*, the responsible monk of the ceremony comes followed by the chanting masters who play the cymbals, and others with flutes, horns, and others. Then, the abbot and other monks and the cart itself is coming.

The monks play different melodious musical instruments at the procession including *khonkh* bells, *denshig*, *tsan* (Tib. *zangs*) and *selen* cymbals (Tib. *sil snyan*), *duudaram*, *kharanga* gong (Tib. *'khar rnga*), *khengereg* drum (Tib. *rnga*), *ikh büree* or *ükhriin büree* horns, *bishgüür* flutes, and *dün büree* (or *lawai*, Tib. *gdung*) conch shell. The monks eat vegetarian food during the *Jambiin chogo* ceremony in most of the cases.

2. Maitreya Procession held in Mongolia until 1937

Mongolian monks organized the Maitreya processions annually mostly in spring, in summer or in autumn based on the lunar calendar. In many monasteries took place the procession after the Lunar New Year's 15-day ceremony (*Ikh yerööl*, Tib. *smon lam chen mo*, or *Choimbrel jonaa*, Tib. *chos 'phrul bco lnga*), on the 16th day of the new year. The old practice was similar to the current one: Maitreya's statue was placed to a cart with a green horse head, and the cart circled the monastery.

In almost all monasteries in which the *Tsam* (Tib. *'chams*) masked dance took place was also a Maitreya procession usually in a different season (e.g. Maitreya procession in spring, and *Tsam* dance in summer). However, some monasteries organized the Maitreya procession with the *Tsam* dance on the next day, such as Erdene Zuu,⁴¹ and even a special type of the Maitreya procession with the *Tsam* dance also existed (*Maidariin Tsam*), when certain *Tsam* characters performed their movements at the stops of the procession. These monasteries could have a separate, usual *Tsam* dance as well in another time.

The last Maitreya processions took place in 1937 in Mongolia, before the destructions of the monasteries.

Written Sources

Written sources are available in small number: Mongolian archival documents

⁴⁰ In former times, noblemen could wear their best robes and hats corresponding to their ranks.

⁴¹ Cf. Pozdneyev 1978, pp. 496–505. On the *Tsam* see Pozdneyev 1978, pp. 505–520.

are scarce, and Tibetan chronicles written by eminent Mongolian monks⁴² mentions only the date of the first procession. The Russian traveller and scholar, A. M. Pozdnev (1851–1920) observed the procession in Urga and in Erdene Zuu monastery in 1877,⁴³ as well as in Zeeren monastery, Sant district, Övörkhongai province in 1892.⁴⁴ Ex-monk D. Damdinsüren provides details about the Maitreya procession of Urga (*Khüree Maidar*) in the 1920–1930s.⁴⁵ Vesna A. Wallace and Uranchimeg Tsültem revealed the cult of Maitreya in Mongolia,⁴⁶ and Zsuzsa Majer described the Maitreya procession of Züün Khüree Dashchoilin monastery in detail.⁴⁷ Some websites inform devotees about the meaning of the procession, and photographs of the current processions are available, too.⁴⁸

Old Paintings and Photographs

Paintings of the Maitreya procession in Urga and perhaps that of Lamiin Gegeen's monastery are on exhibit in the Fine Arts Zanabazar Museum in Ulaanbaatar (e.g. B. Sharav's painting, D. Damdinsüren's painting). Additionally, the Museum of Bayankhongor province, and presumably the Bogd Khaan Palace Museum also include paintings. A photograph taken in the 1950s in the Bogd Khaan Palace Museum indicates a long painting with frame which might have been transferred to the museum from the Bogd's Khaistai Lavran palace in 1925.⁴⁹

Two significant photo collections in Ulaanbaatar include old photographs of the Maitreya procession in Urga (*Khüree Maidar*).⁵⁰ In the Archives for Cinema, Photography and Sound Recording the photos of Box 95 (K24639–24897) show religious festivals such as the *Tsam* dance and the Maitreya procession. This includes the following relevant black and white photographs: The Maitreya procession (K24758, K24764, K24766, K24767, K24769, K24876, K24808, K24809, K24833, K24811); Monks sitting at small tables (K24759), The umbrellas of the 30 *aimags* (K24760, K24761, K24770); Drums and novices at the Maitreya procession (K24762, K24880, K25004); Monks sitting in rows (K24763, K24801, K24843, K24379, K24846); Monks coming and going or wrestling (K24768); An umbrella of the Maitreya procession (K24804); Ablution rite (K24803); The cart of the Maitreya procession (K24845); Umbrellas (*shükher*) carried on small carts (K24847); Musical instruments (K24848); Two novices and a drum on a small cart (K24283). In the Photo Collection of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, mostly Large Album No. 38. includes photographs taken about the procession in 1932 by

⁴² Lokesh Chandra 1977; Lokesh Chandra 1964.

⁴³ Pozdnev 1978, pp. 497–498.

⁴⁴ Pozdnev 1971, pp. 124–126.

⁴⁵ Damdinsüren 1995.

⁴⁶ Uranchimeg 2015.

⁴⁷ Majer 2008, pp. 78–83.

⁴⁸ <https://ikon.mn/n/q5b>; <http://budda.mn/news/725.html>

⁴⁹ Mendsaikhan 2013: 286–287. He published an archival source entitled “Large and small paintings and other items transferred from the *Khaistai lawran* to the museum of the Institute of Sūtras and Scripts to enrich its exhibition (1925).”

⁵⁰ Cf. Teleki 2015.

M. Gombojav, photographer of the predecessor of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences. The collection includes the following relevant photographs: Large Album No. 38: 126–127. Ablution offering at the Maitreya procession (Gombojav, 1932); 127, 266. The cart of the Maitreya procession (Gombojav, 1932); 267. Monks sitting in rows (Gombojav, 1932); 272–279. The Maitreya procession (Gombojav, 1932); 280. The wheels of the cart (Gombojav, 1932); 281–282. Umbrellas of the 30 *aimags* (*dug shükher*, Tib. *gdugs*) (Gombojav, 1932); 283. The cart of the Maitreya procession (Gombojav, 1932); 284–285. Mobile drums (Gombojav, 1932); 286. A “station” of the procession (Gombojav, 1932); 287. Mobile drums (Gombojav, 1932); 288–289. An umbrella (Gombojav, 1932); 290. Monks sitting in front of drums (Gombojav, 1932); 291–293. Sitting monks (Gombojav, 1932); 294. *Duudaram* and other musical instruments (Gombojav, 1932); 295. Carrying the *ükhriin büree* horn (Gombojav, 1932); 296. Sitting monks (Gombojav, 1932); 297–298. Disciplinary masters (Gombojav, 1932); 299. Sitting monks (Gombojav, 1932); Large Album No. 30: 14. The Maitreya procession; 51. The Maitreya procession; Large Album No. 33: 81. Monks at the Maitreya procession; 62. Monks (presumably at the Maitreya procession); 64. The disciplinary masters; 66, 68, 73. The cart of the Maitreya procession; 75. The Maitreya procession; 76. The cart of the Maitreya procession; 91. Umbrellas at the Maitreya procession; 92. Sitting monks; Large Album No. 31: 71. “The Maidari procession in Urga, 1922. The Expedition made the first motion pictures of this festival. It has now been abolished.” (copy from an English book written by Roy-Chapman Andrews); Small Album No. 41: 76. The Maitreya procession (presumably in Urga).

Foreign travellers’s books include some other photographs⁵¹ as well as foreign collections,⁵² and the internet. Photograph about the procession of old rural monasteries are not known at the present state of research.

Maitreya Procession in Urga

The Maitreya procession in Urga (*Khüree Maidar*) used to be held in the last month of spring. According to A. M. Pozdnev, it was held on the 15th of the last month of summer in 1887.⁵³ He claims that about 30,000 monks participated in that event, and also the same number of devotees.⁵⁴ As photographs show, the large wooden cart with the standing statue of Maitreya circled the Eastern Monastic Quarter (Züün Khüree) of Urga, the monastic capital. All the monks of the 30 monastic districts (*aimag*) participated in this event carrying the yellow umbrella of their own districts as well as drums and other instruments on small carts. Crowds of devotees followed Maitreya’s wooden cart going

⁵¹ For instance, Roy-Chapman Andrews’ photographs taken in Urga in 1922.

⁵² For instance, the Hungarian National Museum houses the photos taken by Radnóti-Roth Andor in 1922. Cf. Teleki 2012.

⁵³ Cf. Majer, p. 79.

⁵⁴ Pozdnev 1978, p. 503. He also claims that the Maitreya procession in Erdene Zuu took place on the 22nd of the last month of autumn in 1877 with the participation of about 10,000 monks, and the number of devotees was more than in Urga.

on the circumambulation road (*goroo*, Tib. *skor lam*) or the *Maidariin zam*, ‘the road of the Maitreya procession’ that circled Züün Khüree. According to oral history, monks hold a lunch break in the North.⁵⁵ At present, Gandan monastery houses the survived, standing statue of the procession.

D. Damdinsüren painted his *Khüree Maidar* painting in 1965 being on exhibit in the Fine Arts Zanabazar Museum (No. 68.24.04). He claims in his book⁵⁶ that the procession used to be held around the 10th of the last month of spring without a prescribed date. On its first day the *Chodin Jamba* (Tib. *mchod rten byams pa*, the standing statue of Maitreya with a stūpa in his hair), the about 80 cm tall standing statue of Maitreya was taken out from the *Ikh burkhanii örgöö* yurt palace situated in the Bogd’s Yellow Palace, and was placed on a large, four-wheel cart to circle Züün Khüree. It was called the *Ikh Maidar* procession (‘great Maitreya’). He claims that Buddhist artists and painters with their disciples participated in the preparatory work of the procession. In the courtyard of the Western yurt palace (*Baruun örgöö*) was put up a yurt where carpenters, craftsmen, smiths, and tailor mended the implements of the procession preserved in the Bogd’s treasury called *Gegeenii san*. They mended the silken ornaments such as the *dug shükher* umbrellas (Tib. *gdugs*), the *jantsan* (Tib. *rgyal mtshan*) and *badan* (Tib. *ba dan*) flags, the symbols of the Eight Auspicious Symbols (*naiman takhil*) and the Seven Possessions of Royalty (*doloon erdene*). Two pieces of large, five-coloured silken umbrellas with seams were newly made annually with *badan* and *jantsan* flags. These were called the *Yaamt chimeg* ornaments and decorated both sides of Maitreya’s cart. The main umbrella of the cart was a yellow silken one having repaired several times. The old umbrellas called *agsan sharuud* (‘ex yellow ones’) were offered to *Anduu nar*, *Sangai*, *Zoogoi*, and other districts. The main umbrella was called the *Galzuu ulaan* (‘crazy red’). Damdinsüren claims that this expression might refer to the colour of the umbrella used originally for the Maitreya procession at the time of Öндөр Gegeen Zanabazar. There were numerous other ornaments as well: the umbrellas of the *aimag* monastic districts, their other, own (from 1 to 4 or from 5 to 8 pieces of) ornaments, and musical instruments on small carts.

Another, small scale Maitreya procession (*Dergediin Maidar*, ‘additional Maitreya’) took place on the next day of the great Maitreya procession in Urga inside of the Bogd’s Yellow Palace with the participation of a few monks. Presumably, the same Maitreya statuette was carried around on that occasion that at the large-scale Maitreya procession, but not on a large cart but a smaller cart.

Maitreya Procession in Rural Monasteries

Data about rural processions are scarce. Pozdneev claims that the Maitreya procession at Erdene Zuu took place on the 22nd of the last month of autumn in 1877 with the participation of about 10,000 monks. He adds that the number of devotees exceeded

⁵⁵ Oral history collected by M. Nandinbaatar.

⁵⁶ Damdinsüren 1995: 15–16. Cf. Teleki 2015.

Urga's.⁵⁷ He saw the procession also in Zeeren monastery, Sant district, Övörkhongai province on 1 August, 1892 where the idol of Maitreya was conveyed in a tall, yellow cart having painted representations of the eight-spoked Dharma wheel on both sides. 400 believers assembled for the procession.⁵⁸ Pozdnev claims that the Maitreya procession was held on the 15th of the last month of summer in Amarbayasgalant monastery.⁵⁹ He also mentions other favourable days of the Maitreya procession referring to Shar Süm monastery in Khovd where the procession was held on one of the first 15 days of the Lunar New Year. He claims that the following days can be also fixed to the performance: 7th, 8th and 15th of the first month of summer, 4th and 15th of the last month of summer, and the 22nd of the last month of autumn.⁶⁰

Based on the narratives of old monks being monks prior 1937 and their young disciplines, we can conclude that the procession was held annually in different monasteries on different dates. It could be the same day of the lunar calendar every year or a favourable day of the given year.⁶¹ People came from the far countryside on horseback to participate in this auspicious event.

The Maitreya procession was an individual practice in some monastic sites, whilst in other sites it was held before or after another ritual, e.g. after the New Year ceremonies, the Maṇi recitation period (*Maaniin бүтээл*) or the Kanjur recitation (*Ganjuur*). In the case of monasteries that had both the Maitreya procession and the *Tsam* dance existed two types: 1) a separate *Tsam* dance on the day before or after the Maitreya procession, or with a different date, 2) *Tsam* dance only at the Maitreya procession (*Maidariin Tsam*) including only some characters, less than the great *Tsam* (*Ikh Tsam*) dance.

Old monks accounted about that Maitreya's cart went along on the *goroo* circumambulation road that surrounded the monasteries. In some monasteries stood also *ovoo* heaps, prayer wheels or stupas at the four stations of the circumambulation in accordance with the four cardinal directions. In the case of the *Maidariin Tsam*, the dances of characters took place at the four stations.

3. The Maitreya Procession's Current Practice (Preliminary Survey)

The authors of the present article conducted a sketchy survey in 2018 to clarify the number of monasteries in which Maitreya procession takes place. It turned out that the procession is held in about 45 monasteries countrywide. Old monks, who were monks before 1937, started to revive this practice in the 1990s, and even nowadays monasteries revive, reintroduce, or revitalize it. The procession becomes an annual practice in these monasteries, though a few of them could not maintain the tradition after the passing

⁵⁷ Majer 2008, p. 79. cites Pozdnev, 1978, p. 503.

⁵⁸ Pozdnev 1971, pp. 124–126.

⁵⁹ Pozdnev, 1971, Vol. 1, pp. 16–32.

⁶⁰ Majer 2008, p. 79. cites Pozdnev 1978, pp. 497–498. Nowadays, favourable days or the great days of the lunar month, especially the 8th and 15th are chosen for the circumambulation as well as special days called *Dashnyam* (Tib. *bkra shis nyi ma*) or *Baljinnyam* (Tib. *dpal gyi nyi ma*).

⁶¹ Based on the interviews recorded by M. Nandinbaatar, also Krisztina Teleki and Zsuzsa Majer.

away of the old monks or because of the absence of monks in general. Monks' number, education, willing, and also financial circumstances influence the reintroduction of this annual practice. One can observe several local distinctiveness of the procession which reflects the old tradition of the given monastery and also innovations.

List of Monasteries with Maitreya Procession

The following list is based on a survey conducted by phone calls to the monks of the given monasteries (mostly to the abbot) following the 'snow ball' method.⁶² We could not contact some monasteries which were said to have the annual procession, whilst others not included in the list might also organize it. We documented some processions personally⁶³ and studied photographs on the internet. It seems that the following monasteries organize the Maitreya procession:

- Ulaanbaatar (2): Gandantegchenlin Khiid, Züün Khüree Dashchoilin Khiid
- Arkhangai province (3): Zayaiin Khüree Tögs Bayasgalant Buyan Delgerüülekh Khiid, Tsetserleg city; Gendengonchigdashpeljeelin Khiid, Jargalant district; Ölziichoinkhorlin Khiid, Tsenkher district
- Bayankhongor province (4): Pande Choinkhorlin, Erdenetsogt district; Dashdarjaalin, Khüreamaral district; Amarbuyantiin Khüree Khiid in Bayan-Öndör district; a monastery in Bayanbulag district;
- Bayan-Ölgii province (3): Rashgempilin Khiid, Ölgii city; Rashchoilin, Buyant district; a monastery in Buyant district
- Govi-Sumber province (1): Choir city, Züün Janjin Choiriin Khiid, Choidechembuubaldandashgomellin
- Darkhan-Uul province (1): Kharaagiin Dar'ekh lam Getsegdarjaalin Khiid, Darkhan city
- Dornod province (1): Danrigdanjailin, Choibalsan city; a rural monastery
- Dundgovi province (4): Dashgepellin Khiid, Mandalgovi city; Dambadarjaalin, Erdenedalai district; Dashchoinkhorlin, Adaatsag district; a monastery in Gurvansaikhan district (there are no monks now)
- Khentii province (2): Gundgavarlin Khiid, Chinggis city; Dashchoinkhorlin, Batnorov district
- Khovd province (7): Tügeemel Amarjuulagch Khiid, Khovd city; Rashigonzeplin Khiid, Mankhan district; Regembellin, Darvi district, monasteries in Myangad, Chandmaani Tsetseg and Dörgön districts
- Orkhon province (1): Gonchogsüm Khiid, Erdenet city

⁶² A more detailed, personal survey should be conducted in the future.

⁶³ The authors observed the Maitreya procession in Gandantegchenlin monastery and Züün Khüree Dashchoilin monastery in Ulaanbaatar several times. Besides, M. Nandinbaatar studied the procession in Övörkhongai province: in Shankhiin Baruun Khüree, Kharkhorin district in 2016; Gandanpuntsonglin monastery in Arvaikheer city in 2015, Övörkhongai province. Krisztina Teleki watched the procession in Ölziichoinkhorlin monastery in Tsenkher district in 2011 and Zayaiin Khüree in 2017, 2018 in Arkhangai province, Gundgavarlin monastery in Chinggis Khot, Khentii province in 2017, and Gonchogsümlin monastery in Erdenet, Orkhon province in 2018.

- Ömnögovi province (1): Maaniin Khiid, Dalanzadgad city
- Övörkhангай province (5): Gandanpuntsoglin Khiid, Arvaikheer city; Erdene Zuu Khiid, Kharkhorin city; Sankhiin Baruun Khüree Khiid, Kharkhorin district; Gandansemplen Khiid, Uyanga district; Tögs Bayasgalant Arvijin Delgerekh Khiid, Khujirt district
- Selenge province (1): Amarbayasgalant monastery, Baruun-Büren district
- Sükhbaatar province (3): Mandaliin Khüree Erdenemandal Khiid, Puntsogchoinkhorlin Khiid, Baruun-Urt city; Dechinchoinkhorlin, Uulbayan district; a monastery in Erdenetsagaan district
- Төв province (1): Erdenesant district
- Uvs province (5): Dechenravjaalin Khiid, Ulaangom city; Dejidchoipellin Khiid, Naranbulag district; Yondondambiidashchoilin, Khovd district; a monastery in Khyargas district; a monastery in Ömnögovi district
- Zavkhan province (3): Gandanpeljeelin, Tsetsen-Uul district; monasteries in Uliastai city and Urgamal district

It seems that Bulgan, Dornogovi, Govi-Altai, and Khövsgöl provinces do not have any monasteries with Maitreya procession.

Revival and Reintroduction

The monks started to hold the ceremony of *Jambiin chogo* (Tib. *byams pa'i cho ga*) in honour of Maitreya in Gandantegchenlin monastery when the standing, sandal wooden Maitreya statue used at the *Khüree Maidar* procession in Urga arrived there in 1944.⁶⁴ However, they could revive the procession itself at Gandantegchenlin monastery only at the time of the democratic changes in 1989 and in Züün Khüree Dashchoilin monastery in 1993.⁶⁵ Both monasteries follow the text order (*gorim*, Tib. *go rim*, 'order, sequence', the set of texts) of Urga. No other monastery has Maitreya procession in Ulaanbaatar.

Mostly old monks revived the tradition in the countryside in the 1990s, which is considered as "authentic revival" of old, local traditions. As old monks belonged once to different monasteries, the revived processions could follow the tradition of a certain, destroyed monastery, or the tradition of more monasteries situated once in the given area. Even some old Maitreya statues used before 1937 were available at that time (e.g. Gandantegchenlin monastery in Ulaanbaatar; Gendengonchigdashpeljeelin Khiid, Jargalant district, Arkhangai province, etc. some of which were stolen or disappeared later), or new statues were made of gips, wood, and other, cheap materials. The presence of certain *Tsam* figures at the procession was reintroduced in some monasteries, too.

Old monks revived the procession in the 1990s for instance in Gendengonchig

⁶⁴ Divaasambuu 2009, p. 85.

⁶⁵ The monks of both Gandantegchenlin monastery and Züün Khüree Dashchoilin monastery hold another *Jambiin chogo* ceremony (Tib. *byams pa'i cho ga*) in honour of Maitreya) on the 6th of the last month of summer but without the circumambulation.

Dashpeljeelin Khiid, Jargalant district, Arkhangai province; Delgeriin Choir monastery in Dundgovi province (stopped later and moved to Mandalgovi); Dambadarjaalin monastery, Erdenedalai district, Dundgovi province; Gundgavarlin Khiid in Chinggis (Öndörkhaan), Khentii province; Dashchoinkhorlin monastery, Batnorov district, Khentii province; Dashigonzeglin Khiid, Mankhan district, Khovd province; Gandanpuntsoglin Khiid, Arvaikheer, Övörkhangai province; Shankhiin Baruun Khüree, Kharkhorin district, Övörkhangai province; Gandantsepellin monastery, Uyanga district, Övörkhangai province; Erdene Zuu Khiid, Kharkhorin, Övörkhangai province; Amarbayasgalant Khiid, Baruun-Büren district, Selenge province; Pande Choinkhorlin, Erdenetsogt district, Bayankhongor province; Rashchoilin monastery, Buyant district, Bayan-Ölgii province; Dechinravjaalin, Ulaangom, Uvs province (stopped later and restarted in 2000); Dejidchoipellin monastery, Naranbulag district, Uvs province. Many monasteries have been maintaining the practice of the annual procession ever since in the same or in a bit modified form (e.g. lack of *Tsam* figures, absence of old statue, absence of Maitreya's pictorial representation), whilst others ceased it after the passing away of the old monks, and restarted later (in a bit modified form). The old carts used in the 1990s were replaced by vans in many monasteries and new, more beautiful statues of Maitreya were crafted.

Whilst the younger generation of monks revived the Maitreya procession only at a few monastic sites in the 2000s, several monasteries started it in the 2010s such as Zayaiin Khüree Tögs Bayasgalant Buyan Delgerüülekh Khiid in Tsetserleg, Arkhangai province; Rashgempilin Khiid, Ölgii, Bayan-Ölgii province; Maaniin Khiid in Dalanzadgad, Ömnögovi province; Gonchogsüm Khiid, Erdenet in Orkhon district, etc. Many of them follow the rules (*deg*, Tib. *sgrigs*, 'order, arrangement') of Gandantegchenlin monastery combined with traditional or innovative features or studied or adopted the rules of a rural monastery of the region, for instance Erdene Zuu and Baruun Khüree.

Various Dates of the Procession

The monks of almost all monasteries perform the procession annually on the same day when it was first held there after 1990 or on an auspicious day of the given month (even in rain and snow). It can follow the old tradition of the monastery or the region, or can be determined by an astrologer monk. Weather conditions and abundance in dairy products might also influence the local tradition. The date of the procession is based on the lunar calendar as ceremonies in usual. Monks do not organize the procession in winter at all, but from the start of spring until the end of autumn (from February to November).

Interestingly, most of the monasteries in Bayan-Ölgii, Khovd, and Uvs provinces have the procession in the first month of spring, after the lunar New Year, during or after the 15-day period of the *Ikh yerööl* ceremony (Tib. *smon lam chen mo*, 'Great prayers').⁶⁶

⁶⁶ It is also known as 'the great festival days of Buddha's miracle showing' (Tib. *Choimbrel jonaa*, Tib. *chos 'phrul bco lnga*, 'Fifteen miracles'), which commemorate the Buddha's defeat on the six masters, the holders of heretical doctrines

Gandantegchenlin monastery's procession is held later in spring. The majority of the monasteries have the procession in summer especially in the Khangai area. The monks in Dundgovi province and many other monasteries organize the procession in autumn. Pande Choinkhorlin monastery in Erdenetsogt district, Bayankhongor province closes the Maitreya 'period' with its procession on 30 of the last month of autumn.

Regarding the dates in the months, 3, 4, 8, 12, 13, 15, 16, 22, 30 appear, from which 3, 8, 15, 30 are special days of the moon in the lunar calendar, whereas other dates can refer to the feast days of the Buddha. For example, the 15 of the first spring month is the last day of the *Ikh yerööl* ceremony (monasteries in Khovd celebrate it with the procession), and its next day is the 16 (monasteries in Uvs hold the procession); 15 of the first month in summer is the commemoration day of Buddha's birth, enlightenment and passing away (Maaniin Khiid, Dalanzadgad, Ömnögovi province holds the procession on that day). 'Double fortunate' days called *Baljinnyam* (Tib. *dpal sbyin nyi ma*) and *Dashnyam* (Tib. *bkra shis nyi ma*) can be chosen for the procession or accompanying events, too (e.g. Zayaiin Khüree, Tsetserleg, Arkhangai province).

Maitreya's Statue, Cart, Sacred Texts, Tsam characters

The old Maitreya statues survived only at a five sites, but even if they survived are not used in general (e.g. *Khüree Maidar*). Mostly new statues are carried around during the procession, sometimes a different statue than the one which was used at the revival in the 1990s. Danrigdanjailin in Choibalsan city, Dornod province is an exceptional monastery possessing a Maitreya statue have been used at circumambulations for three-hundred years.

The statue can be a sitting or a standing form in different size (e.g. 11 cm, 1 m). Maitreya sits on a throne (*sentii*, Tib. *seng khri*) or stands on a lotus basis. The statues of the 1990s were mostly made of (gilt) plaster, paper-maché (e.g. Tögs Bayasgalant Arvijin Delgerekh Khiid, Khujirt district, Övörkhongai province) or wood, whilst nowadays casts (brass, copper, gilt) are popular. The statue can be coloured (e.g. Gonchogsümlin, Erdenet city, Orkhon province). Maitreya wears a *janch* mantel during the procession. Some monasteries, which has revived the tradition recently do not possess a statue, but carries the image of Maitreya sitting on a throne (*suudalt*, e.g. an A4 image in Rashgempilin, Ölgii, Bayan-Ölgii province; Maitreya's image drawn on linen in Yondondambii Dashchoilin, Khovd district, Uvs province; Maitreya's image in a frame in Khyargas district, Uvs province).

Maitreya's cart is always with a green horse head with neck but in different sizes. It is placed on various types of vehicles such as wooden carts with four wheels (*kham* with felt covering in Dashgempilin Khiid, Mandalgovi, Dundgovi province), or mostly a van with or without a kind of wooden construction (perhaps *gungarvaa*, Tib. *kun dga' ra ba na*) on it. The carts used before 1937 have not survived, but an old wheel is used

by mysterious methods.

for instance in Gandantsepellin monastery, in Uyanga district, Övörkhongai province. Umbrellas, Buddhist symbols and motifs ornament the carts and monks can also carry such Buddhist symbols or wear cloths with Buddhist symbols. Yellow colour dominates at the procession.

Monks often place sacred texts to the cart around Maitreya, mostly the Five Treatises of Maitreya (*Jamchoi dena*), but sometimes even the sets of the Kanjur and the Tanjur or other sacred texts (e.g. a volume of the Kanjur, different versions of the Prajñāpāramitā).

Usually, the monks recite the text of the *Jambiin chogo* on the day of the procession, but the monks of some monasteries could not revive its chanting. They recite the daily chanting, prayers and benedictions instead, or other texts following the local tradition. Mentioning some specialities, the monks recite the text of the *Jambiin chogo* for three days in Gandanpeljeelin monastery in Tsetsen-Uul district, Zavkhan province, and on the day before the procession itself in Dashchoinkhorlin monastery in Adaatsag district, Dundgovi province. Following the old tradition, the monks of Gendengonchigdashpeljeelin Khiid in Jargalant district, Arkhangai province hold a detailed ceremony in honour of the wrathful protectors from 16-30 of the last month of summer with the Maitreya procession on the 30.

A special form of the Maitreya procession existed before 1937: the Maitreya procession with *Tsam* (*Maidariin Tsam*). Whilst certain *Tsam* characters appeared at the processions in the 1990s referring to old tradition (mostly in Övörkhongai province), and some sites even still have them, we can state that the Maitreya procession with *Tsam* could not be revived. Only Gandanpuntsoglin monastery in Arvaikheer, Övörkhongai province has a short dance during the procession: the White Old Man performs it in the southern gate of the monastery. In given monasteries appear the White Old Man (*Tsagaan övgön*), two skeletons (*Khokhimoi*, *Dürted*, Tib. *dur khrod kyi bdag po*, *Tokhog*, Tib. *thod* ?), two Indian masters (*Azar*, Skr. *ācārya*), a deer (*buga*), an old couple (*emgen övgön khoyor*) with a dog (*nokhoi*), but they are only go along with the procession without dance performance. The White Old Man often distributes or throws candies to children and devotees. Interestingly, the five Offering Gods (*Takhiliin tenges*, Tib. *mchod lnga*) appear in Gandanpuntsoglin in Arvaikheer city, Övörkhongai province, and the five *Khands* (Tib. *mkha' 'gro*) in Zayaiin Khüree, Tsetserleg city, Arkhangai province, but they are not *Tsam* characters.

Local Features

One can observe local features in each monastery. These can reflect to the old, local traditions, but can also be innovations (e.g. chanting certain texts in Mongolian). Some examples of specialities:

- Maitreya's painting, painted scroll or appliqué can be stretched out on *telüür* frame or put to the cart during the procession. It can be observed in certain monasteries which

- also carried around the Maitreya statue itself: Gandanpuntsoglin Khiid, Arvaikheer, Övörkhongai province; Danrigdanjailin, Choibalsan, Dornod province).
- Sacred texts are placed on the cart and carried around together with the Maitreya procession. Apart from the usual *Jamchoi denaa*, sacred texts can be the *Prajñyāpāramitā* in eight thousand verses (*Jadamba*, Tib. *brgyad stong pa*) or the set of the Kanjur with or without the Tanjur (even in Cyrillic).
 - *Tsam* figures appear at the Maitreya procession mostly in the monasteries in Övörkhongai province, for instance the White Old Man, the two Indian masters, two skeletons, a deer, the trinity of an elderly couple with a dog. The eight *Takhiliin tenger* (Tib. *mchod lhà*) or the five *Khand* (Tib. *mkha' `gro*) also can appear.
 - Recitation of given prayers in the Mongolian language (e.g. Zayaiin Khüree Tögs Bayasgalant Buyan Delgerüülekh Khiid, Tsetserleg, Arkhangai province; Gonchogsüm Khiid, Erdenet, Orkhon province) and explanation of the meaning of the procession or rites to the public can be observed at few sites (e.g. Gonchogsüm Khiid, Erdenet, Orkhon province).
 - Devotees do not offer money to the monk(s) sitting on the cart, but donors hold and offer Buddhist symbols at the stops of the procession (e.g. Zayaiin Khüree Tögs Bayasgalant Buyan Delgerüülekh Khiid, Tsetserleg, Arkhangai province; Gonchogsüm Khiid, Erdenet, Orkhon province). Blessing is given with these symbols instead of *Suntag* thread.
 - The Maitreya procession is often organized before or after another religious event. For instance, it is held within the frame of or follows the *Choimbrel jonaa* ceremony in the western provinces, after the Kanjur recitation in Amarbayasgalant Khiid, Baruun-Büren district, Selenge province, and after the *Maaniin Büteel* ceremony in Gundgavarlin Khiid in Chinggis city, Khentii province. Another ceremony can start on the day after the procession (e.g. Vase offering ritual to the White Mahākāla and Kuvera in Gonchogsüm Khiid, Erdenet, Orkhon province), river or *ovoo* veneration (e.g. Gendengonchigdashedpeljeelin Khiid, Jargalant district, Arkhangai province; the veneration of Mt. Bulgan in Zayaiin Khüree Tögs Bayasgalant Buyan Delgerüülekh Khiid, Tsetserleg, Arkhangai province).
 - A small *Naadam* festival (*besreg naadam*) with horseracing (e.g. Zayaiin Khüree) or wrestling of children follows the procession in some cases (e.g. Ölziichoinkhorlin Khiid, Tsenkher district, Arkhangai province; Gendengonchigdashedpeljeelin Khiid, Jargalant district, Arkhangai province).
 - A special feature is the *sudar güilgekhe*, 'run the sutras (between lamas)' when reading the Five Treatises of Maitreya at the stops of the procession (e.g. Züün Khüree Dashchoilin monastery in Ulaanbaatar).
 - The abbot of the monastery himself gives blessing with *Suntag* thread wearing his *janch* mantel (e.g. Gandanpuntsoglin monastery, Arvaikheer, Övörkhongai province).
 - Some monasteries follow given rules (*deg*, Tib. *sgrig*), such as Tasilhunpo's rules

(*deg*) (Rashgonzeglin, Mankhan district, Khovd province), Erdene Zuu Khiid's rules (Gundgavarlin, Chinggis city, Khentii), Baruun Khüree's rules (Gandantsepellin, Uyanga district, Övörkhongai province), but the majority followed its own old *gorim* text order or the tradition of Gandantegchenlin monastery.

- Some monasteries have good connections, and the monks participate in each other's processions (e.g. Zayaiin Khüree in Arkhangai province and Gonchogsüm Khiid in Orkhon province).
- Certainly, the chanted texts or performed offerings at the four stops of the procession can be different. (The *gorims* require further studies.)
- People pull and push the cart itself. Otherwise, it is not favourable if devotees go before the cart as they have to follow Buddha Maitreya. Mostly the abbot, but also the *Tsorj* or the disciplinarian can lead the cart.
- The procession itself makes a circle (*goroo*, Tib. *skor lam*) clockwise and stops four times. However, its expanse differ: the procession takes place around the inner fence of Gandantegchenlin monastery, around monasteries in a bigger circle at other sites, around the district centres or stopping at certain places in the province centre in the four cardinal directions. Distance influences the period of time: processions can be shorter or longer. The monks go in the same way every year. If it is possible it stops at the same sites where the monks stopped before 1937.
- The reincarnating saints of monasteries often participate in the procession (e.g. Jonan Khanchin in Gundgavarlin, Chinggis city, Khentii province; Gachin Lama in Pande Choinkhorlin, Erdenetsogt district, Bayankhongor province).

Data sheet of the survey conducted in 2018 (data not asked remained an empty space)

Conclusion

The Mongolian Maitreya procession is with Tibetan origin. Monks of almost all large and even many smaller monasteries used to organize it prior to 1937 annually in spring, summer, or autumn. The tradition of the procession has been revived in about 45 monasteries in spite of the fact that the number of monks less from former times. The old monks revived the practice of the procession in the 1990s when rebuilding the monasteries, whilst other monasteries began the procession only in the 2000s and 2010s. The process of reintroduction will supposedly continue in the future at least in Bulgan, Khövsgöl, and other provinces in which Maitreya procession is not held.

Maitreya's pictorial image is carried around in some monasteries that have not possessed a statue yet. The monks of certain monasteries cannot recite the *Jambiin chogo*, but chant other prayers. A good cooperation of monks can help improvement if required.

The *Maidariin Tsam* during which *Tsam* figures performed their dances at the stops of the procession have not been revived, though certain *Tsam* figures go along with the procession in some monasteries. However, in the latest years these characters seem to

disappear. To keep the old tradition these should be included again to the procession.

Considering the about 30 years that has passed since the revival, one can observe small changes even in the tradition of a given monastery. All the processions include old traditional, local elements, which should be preserved. The large number of monasteries, which are reviving the Maitreya procession, illustrates the deep faith of the Mongols in the future Buddha, Maitreya.

Photographs



*Fig. 1. Maitreya. Зьвн
Khьree Dashchoilin
Monastery,
Ulaanbaatar, 2018*



*Fig. 2. Maitreya.
Gundgavarlin Monastery,
Chinggis city, Khentii
province, 2017*



*Fig. 3. Northern stop.
Зьн Кхъре Dashchoilin
Monastery, Ulaanbaatar,
2018*



*Fig. 4. Maitreya procession
in rain. Gundgavarlin
Monastery, Chinggis city,
Khentii province, 2017*



*Fig. 5. Maitreya's cart. Zayain
Кхъре Тугс Bayasgalant
Буян Делгерълекх Monastery,
Tsetserleg city, Arkhangai
province, 2017*



Fig. 6. Preparation of Maitreya's cart. Gandantegchenlin Monastery, Ulaanbaatar 2010

Fig. 7. Old cart and new van. Gundgavarlin Monastery, Chinggis city, Khentii province, 2017



Fig. 8. Maitreya. Gandantegchenlin Monastery, Ulaanbaatar, 2010

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Summary

Maitreya procession (Maidar ergek, Jamgor, Tib. byams `khor) is one of the manifested practices of the cult of Maitreya, the Future Buddha who resides at present in the Tushita Heaven as a bodhisattva. According to Buddhist tradition, he will appear in our world as a successor of Buddha Shakyamuni, achieve complete enlightenment, and teach the pure Dharma. The prophecy of the arrival of Maitreya refers to a time in the future when the Dharma will have been forgotten by most on the terrestrial world.

The reason to the Maitreya procession or circumambulation is to encourage Maitreya to appear in our world soon. The Mongolian procession is with Tibetan origin, when it was held first in 1409 on the day of the Lunar New Year in Lhasa, for the initiation of Je Tsongkhapa (1357-1419), founder of the Tibetan Gelukpa stream, the teachings of which became widespread also in the Mongolian land. According to our present knowledge, the first Mongolian procession took place at Erdene Zuu Monastery around 1657 related to the ceremony for the longevity (bat orshil, Tib. brtan bzhugs) of Undur Gegeen Zanabazar (1635-1723), the first Bogd Jebtsundamba Khutugtu of the Khalkhas. From that time on, the Maitreya procession became a popular practice thorough the Mongol land: monks of all large monasteries and even many smaller monasteries circumambulated Maitreya's statue annually around their monasteries in the area of the present-day Mongolia, and also in Inner Mongolia, Buryatia, Kalmykia, and Tuva. The procession had local specialties in all areas and monasteries. Due to the suppression of religion the procession was seized to end in 1937, but in the 1990's and even in recent years many monasteries revived the tradition. The paper aims to give a brief overview about the general features of the procession, its past and current practice in Mongolia.

Monastery	Revival of procession	Tradition	Annually	Date	Old statue is available	Type of current statue	Material of current statue	Type of vehicle	Image, thangka is used	Jambiin Chogo is held	Tsam figures appear	Special features
Ulaanbaatar, Gandantegchenlin Khiid	1989 (?)	Bogdiin Khüree	yes	on a fortunate day in the middle or last month of spring	yes	standing	copper, brass	van	no	yes	no	
Ulaanbaatar, Züün Khüree Dashehoitin Khiid	1993	Bogdiin Khüree	yes	3 of the first month of summer	no	sitting	wood	van	no	yes	no	Monks hold sticks with Buddhist symbols. 'Running the sutras (between lamas) (<i>sudar güilgekh</i>)' when reading the <i>Jamchoi demaa</i> at the stops of the procession.
Arkhangai, Jargalant sum, Gendengon-chigdashpeljeelin Khiid	1991	Asaatiin Khüree	yes	30 of the last month of summer	no	sitting (the old standing statue was used at the revival)	bronze / gilt brass	cart	no	no	no	Following the old tradition, Arvan Khangal is held from 16-30 of the month. The disciplinarian pulls the cart. Ovoo veneration and wrestling are held.
Arkhangai, Tsenkher sum, Ölzichoinkhorlin	2005		no	on a fortunate day	no	sitting	copper	van	no		no	The sets of the Kanjur and the Tanjur are venerated, too. Wrestling is held for children.
Arkhangai, Tsetserleg, Zayaain Khüree Tögs Bayasgalant Buyan Delgerüülekhiin Khiid (Gandangejeelin)	2017	Zayaain Khüree	yes	on a fortunate day in the first month of summer	no	standing	brass	van	no	yes	yes	As an innovation, certain prayers at the stops are chanted in Mongolian. Devotees offer Buddhist symbols at the stops. The veneration of Mt. Bulgan is held next day followed by wrestling and horseracing.
Bayankhongor, Erdenetsogt sum, Pande Choimkhorlin	1990	Gachin Lamiin Khiid		30 of the last month of autumn	no	standing	wood	van	no	yes		The sets of the Kanjur and the Tanjur are venerated, too. The ceremony has a special atmosphere due to the remained Lavran Temple. The reincarnating monk of the monastery, Gachin Lam participates in the procession every year.

Bayankhongor, Khüreamaral sum, Dashdarjaalin	2012/2013	Altangereli- in Khüree / Tegshbuyant / Baruun Khüree		15 of the first month of summer or autumn	yes	standing	plaster	van	no	yes	no	The sets of the Kanjur and the Tanjur are venerated.
Bayankhongor, Bayanbulag sum												
Bayankhongor, Bayan-Öndör sum, Amarbuyant Khiid		Amarbuyantiin Khüree		8 of the last month of summer								
Bayan-Ölgii, Buyant sum, Rashchoilin	1991	Sagsain Khüree		15-16 of the first month of spring	no	sitting	plaster	van (cart in the 1990s)	no	no	no	
Bayan-Ölgii, Ölgii, Rashgempilin	2018	Sagsain Khüree	yes	15 of the first month of spring	no	no statue	no statue	devotees carry it	yes (standing A4 image)	no	no	There is only one monk.
Bayan-Ölgii, Bulgan sum												
Govi-Sumber, Choir, Züün Janjin Choirin Khiid, Choidechembuubal-dandashgomellin	1990	Züün Janjin Choir	yes	3 of the first month of summer	no	sitting	copper	van	no	yes	no	The set of the Kanjur is venerated.
Darkhan-Uul, Kharaagiin Dari Ekh Lam Getsegdarjaalin Khiid	2014	Kharaagiin Dari Ekh Laminiin Khiid	yes	6 of the first month of autumn	no	sitting	copper	van	no	yes	no	The set of the Kanjur is venerated, too.
Dornod, Choibalsan, Danrigdanjaalin	2000	San Beisiin Khüree	yes	8 or 15 of the first month of summer	yes	standing	gilt copper	cart	yes	yes	no	The Maitreya statue of the procession is about 300 years old and was used in the 13 districts of Dornod. The sets of the Kanjur and the Tanjur are venerated, too.

Dundgovi, Mandal-govi, Dashgepellin	1990	Daichin Beisiin Khoshuu (first revived in the 1990s at Delgeriin Choir)	yes	3 of the first month of autumn	no	sitting (a standing statue was used in 1991 at Delgeriin Choir)	copper	cart (<i>khom</i>)	no	yes	no (White Old Man and other two characters in 1991 at Delgeriin Choir)	Old <i>Janchoi denar</i> sutra is available.
Dundgovi, Erdenedalai sum, Dam-badarjaalin	1990s	Ugtaal Sangiin Dalai Khiid	no	on a fortunate day on the first month of autumn	no	sitting	brass	cart	no	yes	no	
Dundgovi, Adatsag sum, Dashchoinkhorlin	2012	Tavin Jas		3 of the first month of autumn	yes	sitting	copper	cart	no	yes, on the day before the procession	no	The sets of the Kanjur and the Tanjur are not venerated.
Dundgovi, Gurvan-saikhan sum			no									
Khentii, Chinggis, Gundgavardin	1991	Setsen Khanii Khuree	yes	12 of the middle month of spring (actually it was seen in summer)	no	sitting	plaster	van (cart in the 1990s)	no	yes	no (White Muanin Buteel is held for seven days before the Maitreya procession. The set of the Kanjur is venerated, too. Wrestling is held. It follows the rules of Erdene Zuu.	
Khentii, Batmorov sum, Dashchoinkhorlin	1996	Daichin Beisiin Khoshuu	yes	30 of the last month of summer		sitting	plaster	cart	no	no	no	Prajāpāramitā in 16 volumes (part of the Kanjur)
Khovd, Man Khan sum, Rashgonzeglin	1990	Tugrugiin Khuree, Zergiin Khuree	yes	15 of the first month of spring	yes (in a private household)	sitting	copper	van	no	yes	no	If follows the rules of Tashilhunpo Monastery.
Khovd, Khovd, Tügeemel Amarjuulagch Khiid	2000	Khovdiin Shar Sum	yes	15 of the first month of spring		sitting	copper	van (cart on a small van)	no	yes	no	The set of the Kanjur is venerated, too.

Khovd, Darvi sum, Regembellin	2008	Delgerin Khüree (?)		8 of the middle month of summer	no	standing	gilt brass	cart	no	yes	no	<i>Jamchoi denza</i> is carried on the cart as usual in other monasteries.
Khovd, Myangad sum												
Khovd, Chandnaani sum												
Khovd, Tsetseg sum	2018											
Khovd, Dörgön sum												
Orkhon, Erdenet, Gonchogsamlin	2018		yes	13 of the middle month of autumn	no	standing	plaster	van	no	yes	yes (White Old Man)	It follows the rules of Zayain Khüree. The sets of the Kanjur and the Tanjur are venerated, too. As an innovation, certain prayers at the stops are chanted in Mongolian. Devotees offer Buddhist symbols at the stops. Preceding is Kanjur and Tanjur ceremony held, and Vase offering ritual starts on the next day of the Maitreya procession.
Ömnögovi, Dalanzadgad, Maanin Khuid	2018 (?)		yes	15 of the first month of summer				van				
Övörkhangai, Kharkhorin, Erdene Zuu	1990	Erdene Zuu	yes	8 of the first month of summer			sandalwood	van	no	no	yes, White Old Man, 2 Indian Masters, Deer	
Övörkhangai, Kharkhorin sum, Rivogjigandan-shaddulvin	1991	Banuun Khüree	yes	3 of the first month of summer	no	standing	brass	cart	no	no	no (in the 1900s a dog and an old couple)	

Övörkhangai, Uyanga sum, Gandantsepellin	1992	Sain Noyonii Khüree	yes	8 of the middle month of summer	yes	standing	plaster	cart (with old wheel)	no	yes	no (in the 1990s 2 Indian Masters, 2 Skeletons (<i>Khokh/mot</i>), White Old Man, Offering Gods)	It follows the rules of Baruun Khüree. Dash is also recited at the four stops.
Övörkhangai, Arvaikheer, Gandantsepellin	1994	Arvaikheer Khüree / Üzen Viangiin Khüree	yes	8 of the first month of autumn	no	sitting (1 m)	plaster, brass	cart	yes (applique)	yes	yes (White Old Man, 2 Skeletons (<i>Tokhog</i>), 2 Indian Masters, 8 Offering Gods)	The sets of the Kanjur and the Tanjur are venerated, too. The abbot of the monastery himself gives blessing with Suntag at the northern stop of the procession. The White Old Man performs a dance at the front gate of the monastery.
Övörkhangai, Khujirt sum, Togs Bayasgalant Arvijn Delgerekh Khiid	2000	Ilden Beiliin Khüree	yes	22 of the first month of autumn	no	standing	pa-per-maché	van	no	no	yes (an old couple and a dog)	It follows the rules of Baruun Khüree and Gandan.
Selenge, Baruunbüren sum, Amarbayasgalant Khiid	1997/1998	Amarbayasgalant Khiid	yes	15 of the last month of summer	no	sitting	copper	van	no	yes	no	Kanjur ceremony is held for 5 days followed by the Maitreya procession.
Sükhbaatar, Uulbayan sum, Dechinchoinkhorlin	1998	Dayanchiin Khiid / Orloi Mergen Khatagtiin Khiid		27, 28 of the last month of autumn		standing	plaster, gilt	cart	no	yes	no	Sakhius ceremony is held in honour of the wrathful protectors on 29 of the last month of autumn. The Prujñāpāramitā in 8,000 verses is placed to the cart. The procession follows the rules of Gandan monastery.
Sükhbaatar, Baruun-Urt, Erdenemandal Khiid, Puntsogdalhoinkhorlin Khiid	2016	Mandaliin Khüree		4 of the middle month of summer		standing (1 m)	gilt brass	van	no	yes	no	The first (Ka) volume of the Kanjur is venerated. It follows the rules of Gandan monastery, but the text order of the old tradition is also available.

	2017 (?)							3 of the middle month of summer										
Sükhbaatar, Erdeneetsagaan sum																		
Töv, Erdenesand sum																		
Uvs, Ulaangom, Dechinravjalin	1991/2000	Ulaangomii Khüree			yes	sitting (11 cm)	brass	van (cart in the 1990s)	no	no (it was held in the 1990s)	no							The sets of the Kanjur and the Tanjur are venerated, too.
Uvs, Naranbulag sum, Dejidechoipeelin	1990s	Ulaangomii Khüree				sitting		van	no	no	no							The set of the Kanjur is venerated. The procession circles the district centre.
Uvs, Khovd sum, Yondondambii Dashchoilin	1995	Yondondambii Dashchoilin			no	no statue	no statue	van	yes (sitting Maitreya drawn on linen)	no	no							Any sutra is not placed next to Maitreya.
Uvs, Khyargas sum																		Devotees hold sacred texts.
Uvs, Ömnögovii sum																		
Zavkhan, Tseltsen-Uul sum, Gandanpeljeelin	1997	Tegshiin Khüree	yes		no	standing	plaster	van	no	yes (for three days)								The sets of the Kanjur and the Tanjur are venerated, too. Jambin Chogo is held for three days.
Zavkhan, Ulinstai																		
Zavhan, Urgamal sum																		