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On the Current Condition of 190 Old and Present-Day Monastic Sites in the Mongolian Countryside

The present article is based on personal visits and research of the authors who have executed fieldwork in Mongolia five times since 1999. Though data was gathered during former visits in some of the most famous monasteries such as *Erdene zuu* and *Baruun khüree* (in Öwörkhongai province), *Amarbayaşgalant khiid* (in Selenge province), *Dashchoinkhorlin khiid* (in Bulgan province), *Khamriin khiid* (in Dornogow' province) as well as all monastic sites in the Ulaanbaatar area¹ the biggest part of the material was collected in 2007 summer, when, within the framework of the Documentation of Mongolian Monasteries project organized by the Arts Council of Mongolia (ACM), the authors had the possibility to survey all the monastic sites in the whole area of Öwörkhongai and Dundgow' provinces (*aimag*), and also in the southern part of Töw province as well as some sites situated in other provinces but very near to the borders. It meant the survey of all monastic sites, i.e. ruins of destroyed monasteries as well as revived or newly established temples. The project of ACM aimed at documenting the current condition of all monastic sites countrywide that existed before the purges and destruction of monasteries in 1937-38, collecting oral history on them, and also surveying the new ones which were reconstructed or newly built after the democratic change in 1990. Though the present article details only the circumstances which were experienced in the above-mentioned three provinces, conclusions drawn here give an overall picture about the present condition of old monastic sites of the whole country as well as the situation of the present-day temples.

1 On these sites in Ulaanbaatar see the following publications by the authors: Majer, Zs. – Teleki, K., *Monasteries and Temples of Bogdiin khüree, Ikh khüree, or Ugra, the Old Capital City of Mongolia in the First Part of the Twentieth Century*, 2006, Documentation of Mongolian Monasteries, www.mongoliantemples.net; Majer, Zs. – Teleki, K., *Survey of Active Buddhist Temples in Ulaanbaatar in 2005 - 2006 with some annotations in 2007*, 2007, Documentation of Mongolian Monasteries, www.mongoliantemples.net; Majer, Zs., *A Comparative Study of the Ceremonial Practice in Present-day Mongolian Monasteries*, PhD thesis, Eötvös Loránd University, Doctoral School of Linguistics / Mongolian Studies, Budapest 2008; Teleki, K., *Bogdiin Khüree: Monasteries and Temples of the Mongolian Capital (1651-1938)*, PhD Thesis, Eötvös Loránd University, Doctoral School of Linguistics / Mongolian Studies, Budapest 2008.

FIELDWORK CIRCUMSTANCES

Originally, the ACM initiated the project to count all monasteries of the country that existed prior to 1937, to document their current condition, collect oral history on them from local people and to determine which of them were revived after the democratic change. First a pilot project was executed led by Renske Franken in some sub provinces of Töv aimag in 2004 in which Krisztina Teleki participated. Then, the authors surveyed the old monastic sites and also all new temples in the Ulaanbaatar area in 2005-2006. The Documentation of Mongolian Monasteries project originally aimed at documenting only the old monastic sites in the area of the present Mongolia, but on the authors' suggestion currently working temples became surveyed, too, in the 2007 survey executed countrywide, when ACM sent six teams to the field to survey 2 or 3 provinces each. While the other five teams consisted of a Mongol researcher and a lama, 'Team D' included the authors as the only foreign researchers and O. Enkhbayar, a young Mongol lama of *Idgaachoinzinlin datsan (Gandantegchenlin monastery, Ulaanbaatar)*.² As the two researchers, who already interviewed 32 old lamas³ living in Ulaanbaatar in 2005-2006 (and later in 2007 several more, being all in all 40 old lamas in the Ulaanbaatar area), put an emphasis on the historical importance of old lamas' memories and the revival and operation of present-day temples, the project goals of the ACM was complemented with these objectives using detailed questionnaires prepared by the authors.

During the three months, from 24 May to 22 August 2007, travelling daily 100-150 km in a Russian UAZ, and sleeping in tents in the Gow' desert and other extreme surroundings, at different places every night, Team D documented an average 2-3 sites a day. The documentation included recording GPS data, drawing drafts of the visible arrangement of monastery buildings, taking photos, studying written sources and collecting all the available oral history regarding the sites. During the fieldwork all in all 190 monastic sites were surveyed in the three provinces, exactly 70 in Öwörkhangaï aimag from which 21 are present-day, 49 are old monastic sites; 94 in Dundgow' aimag from which 17 are pre-

² The authors' participation was supported by the Stein-Arnold Exploration Fund of the British Academy and the Gate of the Dharma Buddhist Foundation (Hungary), and Zsuzsa Majer gained also funds from the research exchange program (OTKA 62501) between the Department of Inner Asian Studies, ELTE, Budapest and the Institute of Language and Literature of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences.

³ Throughout the text, the term lama is used instead of the term 'monk', as Mongols use the term '*lam*' (T. *bla-ma*), that is, 'lama', for each member of an assembly without any distinction related to vows or ranks and even for married lamas who do not keep the Vinaya rules purely. Thus, as using the term monk was felt inappropriate in many cases, the term lama was chosen, but even this is used in its Mongolian meaning.

sent-day, 77 are old monastic sites; and 26 in Töv aimag's three southern sub-provinces (*sum*) from which 2 are present-day, and 24 are old monastic sites. In other words all the total 150 old monastic sites and 40 present-day temples were studied (present-day temples can be active, inactive or partly inactive, see details below).⁴

During the fieldwork period 74 interviews were conducted in the three *aimags*, 34 of them with old lamas or old ex-lamas (9 in Öwörkhantai, 23 in Dundgow',⁵ and 2 in Töv aimag), 16 with other local elderly people living in the vicinity of old sites or being knowledgeable on old sites, while 23 interviews were recorded on the initiation and operation of currently working temples with their heads or ranked lamas. From the additional 40 interviews which were recorded with old lamas by the authors in 2006 and 2007 in Ulaanbaatar, 17 are also relevant to the monastic sites which situated once in the three surveyed provinces, precisely 5 to Öwörkhantai, 10 to Dundgow', and 2 to Töv provinces. All in all, from the interviews with old lamas first hand detailed information was gained on 36 old monasteries (11 in Öwörkhantai, 22 in Dundgow' and 3 in Töv aimag) from the 150 visited ones, sometimes authentic data on the same monastery was gained from two or three different old lamas.

MAPS USED FOR THE SURVEY

During the survey in Öwörkhantai, Dundgow' and finally in Töv aimag the monastery lists and maps of Rinchen's atlas⁶ (the three relevant maps of the

⁴ The descriptions of the temples by the authors one by one will be soon available at www.mongoliantemples.net. An article in Hungarian has been already published on the countryside fieldwork results by the authors (Majer, Zs. – Teleki K., *Kolostorok régen és ma a mongol vidéken* [Mongolian Monasteries in the Countryside: Past and Present]. In: *Keréknymok. Orientalisztikai és Buddhológiai Folyóirat, Tan Kapuja Buddhista Főiskola*, Budapest, 2008/Summer (vol. 4.), pp. 74-88.). In 2009 a book was published based on ACM's survey results. Photos and GPS records published in the book related to Öwörkhantai province, Dundgow' province and the southern part of Töv province were taken by the authors of this article (Tsedendamba, S. – Lkhagwa, L. – Soninbayar, Sh. – Luwsanbaldan, E. – Otgonbaatar, R. – Amgalan, N. (eds.). *Mongoliin süm khiidiin tүүхэн товчоон* [Brief History of Mongolian Monasteries]. Ulaanbaatar 2009).

⁵ One interview was conducted via phone and therefore was not recorded.

⁶ Rinchen, B., *Mongol ard ulsiin ugsaатnii судlal, khelnii шинjелеiin atlas* [Ethnographic and Linguistic Atlas of the Mongolian People's Republic], Ulaanbaatar 1979 (map No. 38. Öwörkhantai *aimag*, map No. 36. Dundgow' *aimag*, map No. 32. Töv aimag). This atlas is referred thereafter as Rinchen atlas/map and monastery numbers of its maps are given as Rinchen and the number of the monastery (for example Rinchen 722). A part of the atlas contains lists of the monasteries and temples that existed in the past (941 in number) by *aimags*, on separate maps of *the aimags* and the Ulaanbaatar area with all

three provinces were made by O. Pürew and D. Maidar) were used as a basis. These maps indicate not only the names of the old monastic sites and their location with place names (e.g. Tuul River, Delgerkhangai Mountain), but also their rough place on a very simple blank map of the given *aimag*. Without these lists and maps the survey could not have been carried out with the same success. Maidar's lists⁷ were also used which indicate fewer places than that of Rinchen. Starting the research mostly in the centre of a given sub-province the local governors (*sumiin darga*) or other authorities, old lamas or other locals were made to check or confirm monastery names and place names of the two lists, then, with the help of local countryside shepherds living near the exact location of the ruins were defined and finally found in this way.

Based on the fieldwork experience some remarks must be made on Rinchen's and Maidar's lists and maps. First of all, one can conclude that all the old bigger monasteries are marked on Rinchen's map, i.e. his list could be completed by only some smaller temples or assemblies which were not so well-known. However, the *aimag* and *sum* borders have changed since of the publication of both maps, thus several sites marked on them belong now to other *sums* or even to other *aimags*. It made sometimes difficult to ask for a site that was supposed to be in one of the *sums* but turned out to be situated in another *sum* now, as people usually know about sites situated within the present borders of their *sum*⁸. Moreover, in all cases the sites are marked only roughly on both maps, not reflecting their real location or direction and real distance from *sum* centres. This may derive from the fact that Rinchen's map (and supposedly that of Maidar, too) was made based on second hand information, collected by different means from data providers from every part of the country (e.g. letters, oral information). What Rinchen gives as place names or location for a site, are only names of well known big mountain ranges, lakes, rivers, valleys,

these temples marked. It is the fruit of cooperation by many Mongolian scholars, the Institute of Linguistics, Institute of Geography of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, and the National Institution of Geodesy. The map shows the monasteries, temples and religious assemblies of Mongolia in the early part of the 20th century, and despite being deficient, is still the most complete record of them.

⁷ Maidar, D., *Mongoliin khot tosgonii gurwan zurag* [Three Maps of Mongolian Settlements], Ulaanbaatar 1970 (maps and monastery numbers of his maps and lists are referred thereafter as Maidar).

⁸ This may also resulted in that some sites were not surveyed by neither groups. Using Rinchen's map, the group surveying one of the *aimags* a site was marked in found that it is not situated in their *aimag*, so they are not to survey it, but as there was no communication between the teams (as it was impossible in the countryside conditions) they could not inform the other team surveying the neighbouring *aimag* the given site is situated now that they should search for that even if it is not marked on their map.

which are sometimes very far (even 80 kilometres) from the site itself the place name was used to mark. Furthermore, there are serious misspellings in some monastery names, in some cases on both maps, for instance *Dalijiin khural* is written (Rinchen 407) instead of *Dalai eejiin jas / khural*; and *Dargatain khural* is written instead of *Darigatiin khural* (Rinchen 434). These kinds of mistakes also appear in place names, which are, as mentioned above, far from being accurate.

The list of Maidar includes monastery names and in some cases additional data on its founder or abbot, number of lamas, number of buildings, but these data proved to be very unreliable. Maidar's map itself is too small and difficult to make out, therefore was not useful during the survey in the identification of sites. Maidar's list sometimes contains monasteries which are not listed by Rinchen, but of many of them none of the informants heard about. In some cases he double marked monasteries by two different name variants (Mongolian name/Tibetan name or by monastery name/place name and in some cases by distorted names). The maps on Öwörkhongai, Dundgow' and Töw in Rinchen's map collection were also made by D. Maidar himself and professor O. Pürew, but Maidar's map was made prior to them. As very few published sources contain scattered data on monasteries for example the Encyclopedia of Öwörkhongai province⁹ or the publications dedicated to anniversaries of some sub-provinces, the two maps were, despite all of their deficiencies, very useful.

FINDING SITES

As local people usually still know well and are ready to show the location of the nearby old monastic sites even if these are marked by some bricks or foundations of temples now, almost all the places which had been searched for were found. Whether the team found the exact location of a site or not, and especially whether it obtained detailed information on its history depended on whether there were old lamas or old ex-lamas still living in the *sum*. Sometimes the old lamas could provide data not only on sites marked on Rinchen's map that were asked for, but also on other assemblies not marked, so the list of monasteries was completed in this way. However, in most of the cases there were nor old lamas, neither old local people. In very restricted number old local people could also tell information about the history of a site, its ranked lamas, ceremonies, etc., but only when they had had close connection with a once-existing monastery (e.g. living nearby, lama relative). Meanwhile, mid-

⁹ Ichinnorow, S. – Osor, G. – Gendgee, D. – Bayarsaikhan, B. – Jargalsaikhan, Ts.-Ichinnorow, J. – Baljinnyam, B., *Öwörkhongai aimag. Tailbar tol'* [Encyclopedia of Öwörkhongai Province], Ulaanbaatar 2002.

dle-aged or young people know nothing on the history of these sites. In some *sum* centres, local authorities (local governor, people's representative, teachers, etc.) also could provide information, though mostly restricted to the location itself or some scattered data about the old site. However, such *sum* was very rare where these authorities would know about all monastic sites in the area of their own *sum*. In some *sum* centres we were provided with copies of the book published for some anniversary of the given *sum*, and these also contained descriptions but mainly scattered data on their famous lamas or on the sites situated once in their area.

In case of *sum* centres having an active monastery, which is quite rare, information was gathered from lamas, too, but it turned out that in monasteries or temples with no old lamas still living, young lamas do not usually knew about these sites or their history, unless not personally concerned (their master showed the site of their old monasteries to them, etc.).

From the sites marked on Rinchen's map, the team was unable to find only six or seven in the surveyed areas. These were not known by informants, and in some cases people did not hear even about the place names given for them by Rinchen. In other cases reaching the sites as determined by Rinchen was impossible, or being guided there by local people traces of the monastery/temple were not found. From the sites not marked by Rinchen, but known through informants, remnants were not found in two cases.

In Öwörkhangai aimag, which is a considerably densely populated area, there were sites situated in remote areas where they were possible to be found only with the help of guides taken there and back from *sum* centres. Movings to new pastures caused problems in finding the sites and informants, who together with their place of living were mentioned in the *sum* centre but arriving to the site it turned out that the informant has moved further to an unknown place.

Dundgow' aimag is a very scarcely inhabited *aimag*, and especially in the past some years due to serious draughts people have been moving out from its southern *sums* to the north and outside the *aimag* area. It made the search for sites very difficult, especially in the southern part and in *sums* like Ölziit which have huge almost uninhabited land areas. In Dundgow' many sites are situated in remote and uninhabited places where they were possible to be found only with the help of local guides. Additionally, in Dundgow' aimag's three north-eastern *sums*, Tsagaandelger, Gow'-Ugtaal and Bayanjargalan it was very difficult to survey the old sites, as some of them were situated possibly at their common borders and were known by people and marked by Rinchen and Maidar by different names and at different place names. It was partly due to the rough marking and rough place names (instead of real location) given by Rin-

chen that these sites were not found, or, that a site found by the researchers could not be identified with the name and number given by Rinchen.

Töv aimag is a very densely populated area compared to Dundgow' or even Öwörkhantai, but as most of its inhabitants have moved here from different *aimags* from all over Mongolia because of serious draughts and other causes, there are similarly a very few locally born people. Therefore, most families found when searching for locations of old monastic sites could not give information on them, and could not even instruct the surveyors on their exact sites even if situated very near to their own dwellings. All in all, it was not easier to find sites in Töv aimag than in other *aimags*, in spite being densely populated. Though in each of the provinces the researchers faced different difficulties, due to the flat area it was not so difficult to travel and to reach the sites, as it would have been in other provinces for example with hilly areas covered by forests.

REMARKS ON FINDING THE INFORMANTS

As it can be seen from the survey data detailed below, in Dundgow' the number of still living old lamas that could be interviewed (23) is much higher than in Öwörkhantai (9), which is a consequence of the much higher number of old monastic sites situated in their area. However, a considerable number of informants of all provinces have moved to the capital and *aimag* centres following their families, so much less of them lives still in the countryside.

In finding the informants, that is, old lamas the following problems were experienced: apart from those interviewed there are some additional old lamas still living in the remote countryside, some in the locality of old monasteries themselves, but about 2-3 of such old lamas were not found as no one knew their exact place of living in the *sum*. In Öwörkhantai two people who were searched for in hope of possible interviews had been just moving to a new site on the days of the survey team visit, once the surveyors were even shown the place one of them had left only one day ago to move to another area but no one knew exactly where. In these cases, were the survey teams given more time to search for a given informant, even days for finding one of them, this would have helped this kind of problem and an approximately 2-3 additional interviews would have been made per *aimags*. On top of it, it is also highly possible that the surveyors were not informed in some *sums* on all the possible informants despite all efforts. Also a few old ex-lamas were said to have moved to Ulaanbaatar, where it was impossible to find them having no names of relatives, contact address or phone number to them (though for one of them we managed to get a phone number and managed to interview him in Ulaanbaatar after returning from the field). A few old lamas or ex-lamas were said to have moved to Arwaikheer or to Mandalgow', the *aimag* centres, again with the sur-

veyors being unable to get any contact data to them. In some cases it would have been possible to find them, but the team had no possibility to return to the *aimag* centres after being informed on someone's moving to there (where they had searched for possible informants with more or less success, but when staying there having no exact names to search for, these informants were not found). All in all, an approximately 2-3 additional interviews would have been made per *aimags* if the teams had more time also with a possibility to return to the *aimag* centres after finishing the survey in a whole *aimag*. The problem of finding old ex-lamas not yet interviewed in Ulaanbaatar without having contact data to them is more difficult to solve.

Considering the fact that our team found only 9 old lamas in Öwörkhongai and 23 in Dundgow', being two *aimags* surveyed in full, and also counting the 40 old lamas found in Ulaanbaatar, the presumable number of still living lamas who had been lamas prior to 1937 could be around 250 in the whole county (in 2007-2009). This article cannot include much of the precious information gained from them for the history of the individual temples. However, all the interviews will be available in voice and text formats at the website of the monasteries mapping project and their relevant parts are cited in the site descriptions that will be available there, too.

DETAILS OF THE SURVEYED SITES BY AIMAGS

MONASTIC SITES IN ÖWÖRKHANGAI AIMAG

The area of the province is divided into 18 sub-provinces. Its centre is Arwai-kheer city, and there is another city, Kharkhorin. The *aimag* is famous as the first monastery of Mongolia, *Erdene zuu* (founded in 1586) is situated here, and several of its monastic sites are connected to Öndör gegegen Zanabazar (1635-1723). The *aimag* area belonged to different *khoshuus* of the old Sain noyon khan *aimag* (namely Sain noyon khanii *khoshuu*, Üizen wangiin *khoshuu*, Ilden beiliin *khoshuu*, Akhai güinii *khoshuu*, Noyon khutagtiin *shaw'*) and TüsHEET khan *aimag* (namely TüsHEET khanii *khoshuu*, Dalai güinii *khoshuu*). In the area of the present *aimag* all in all 70 monastic sites were surveyed, among them 49 are old monastery sites and 21 are new temples.

Old monastic sites

Rinchen marked 33 monasteries and temples on his map of the *aimag* (map No. 38.). However, from our survey it seems that 49 old monastic sites existed once in the area of the present *aimag*, which are the following, listed by sub-provinces:

Büird sum: *Mukhariin khural* / *Mukhariin khiid* (Rinchen 849); *Timent* (place name) / *Temeltiin (?) khural* (Rinchen 848, not visited in lack of enough infor-

mation); *Daichin / Danchin / Lanchin khural* (Rinchen 847, not visited in lack of enough information); ‘assembly at Süree’ (indicated on a map in the local museum, not visited in lack of enough information); *Shireet tsagaan nuur*¹⁰

Yesön züil sum: *Dalai güinii khüree / Dalai güngiin khüree* (Rinchen 850, Maidar 668, see also 664); *Yesön züiliin khural / Yesön züiliin khüree / Dashgüngaadechlen / Yesön züiliin süm* (Rinchen 851, Maidar 667); *Öwgön suwraga / Yesönzüiliin suwraga / Öwgön tsagaan suwraga / Öwgön suwraganii khural / Öndör gegeenii khüi darsan suwraga*

Ölziit sum: *Baruun khural / Yargaitiin süm* (Rinchen 852); *Züün khural* (Rinchen 853); *Beilin khüree / Beiliin khüree / Ilden beiliin (khoshuunii) khüree / Ölziit khüree / Ribogejigandannorowlin / Ribo gejee gandan norowlin* (Rinchen 843, Maidar 699, see also 670 and 687)

Khujirt sum: *Ilden beiliin khoshuunii Khaluun usan süm / Khaluun usan khiid / Khaluun usnii khural / Rashaanii khural* (Rinchen 841, Maidar 669)

Kharkhorin sum: *Baruun khüree / Ribogejigandanshaddüwlin / Tüsheet khanii khüree / Shankhiin khüree* (Rinchen 844, Maidar 688); *Erdene zuu (khiid)* (Rinchen 842, Maidar 674); *Zuugiin lamiin süm / Zuugiin khuwilgaan lamiin süm / Zuugiin khuwilgaanii khiid / Yonzon lamiin khiid* (Rinchen 845, Maidar 675)

Bat-Ölzii sum: *Töwkhön khiid / Duwkhan* (Rinchen 818, Maidar 672); *Bor burgasiin khural* (Rinchen 819); *Khyatruuliin rashaanii süm* (Maidar 673, not visited being impossible to reach by car)

Uyanga sum: *Bööröljüütiin khural / Öwgön khiid / Züün ereetiin khural* (Rinchen 821); *Sain noyonii khüree / Uyangiin khüree / Sain khanii khüree / Khan khögshnii khüree / Gandan semplen / Ongiin khüree* (Rinchen 820 Maidar 678, see also 686); *Ush'khai / Ush akhai khiid / Uushkhai / Züün ereetiin khural* (Rinchen 822); *Baruun ereetiin khural* (Rinchen 823); *Olon süm / Olon sümiin khiid*

Züünbayan-Ulaan sum: *Khüitengiin khural / Khüiten khiid / Khüiten khural* (Rinchen 837, Maidar 680); *Lawran / Lawran Bandidiin khural* (Rinchen 840, Maidar 683); *Akhai beisiin khüree / Akhai beiliin khüree / Akhai güngiin khüree / Tseegüngiin khüree / Gandanshadüwlin* (Rinchen 838, Maidar 682, see also 679); ‘ruin at Khangai owoo’ (registered by the place name, may be the same as the site marked by Rinchen as 839, *Belen khüree khiid*)

Arwaikheer city: *Arwaikheeriin khüree / Bart khüree / Üizen wangiin (khoshuunii) khüree / Delgerekh bulgiin khüree* (Rinchen 833, see Maidar 684 and 696)

Taragt sum: *Baruun khural / Ulaan / Uulan lamiin khiid / Khadatiin örtöö süm / Khadatiin örtöö khural* (Rinchen 835, Maidar 685); *Gandandashchoilin datsan / Züün khural / Khar usnii khiid* (Rinchen 836); *Dugan shandiin khiid* (Rinchen 834)

¹⁰ In these lists by sub-provinces, being the first occurrence of monastery and temple names, all name variants of a given site are given together with the numbers given for the site on the Rinchen’s map and on Maidar’s map.

Khairkhandulaan sum: *Khüitengiin khüree / Khüitnii khüree / Khüitnii örtöö khural / Gandanshadüwlin khiid* (Rinchen 825, Maidar 700); *Rigsümgombiin süm / Maan' üsegtei tokhio / Maan' üsegt khad* (site found, remnants not found, known through the Encyclopaedia of Öwörkhangaï province¹¹ and through informant); *Gar'diin yargait / Gar'diin khural / Gar'diin örtöö süm / Gar'diin örtöö khural* (Rinchen 826, Maidar 690) (exact monastery site not found, but the place given by Rinchen found); *Bicheechiin tsagaan owoo* (place name) / *(Bicheechiin) örtöö khural*

Nariinteel sum: *Tsagaan owoogiin khural / Tsagaan owoonii örtöö süm / Tsagaan owoonii süm* (Rinchen 824, Maidar 689)

Bogd sum: *Noyon khutagtiin khiid (Erdene bandid khutagt) / Noyon khutagtiin süm* (Rinchen 827, Maidar 698); *Sairiin khashaat / Sair khashaatiin khural* (Rinchen 828)

Tögrög sum: *Dar'-ekhiin jas at Uushgiin rashaan / Dar'-ekhiin jas / Ushgiin süm / Uushgiin khiid / Uushgiin sümiin Dar'-ekhiin jas* (Rinchen 829); *Bayangiin jas / Bayangiin khural / Bayangiin sümiin To wan jas / Bayangiin süm* (Rinchen 830, Maidar 695); *Demchigtiin süm / Demchigiin süm* (named süm, i.e. temple, but proved to be only a spectacular natural formation)

Bayangol sum: *Ongiin khural / Ongiin örtöö süm / Ongiin süm* (Rinchen 831, Maidar 694); *Ünegtiin khural (örtöö khural) / Ünegtiin süm* (Rinchen 832, Maidar 693, exact monastery site not found, not even the place called Ünegt given by Rinchen)

Sant sum: *Zeerengiin khiid / Zeerengiin süm* (Rinchen 854, Maidar 691); *Tsakhariin khiid* (exact monastery site not found, not even the place given by Maidar 692, which may be identical with the one registered by us as 'assembly at Khawchir'); 'assembly or Temple at Khawchir' (may be identical with *Tsakhariin khiid* marked by Maidar, the site of which was not found)

Bayan-Öndör sum: *Aman usnii khiid* (Rinchen 709, Maidar 609); *Kharztain khural / Kharztain süm* (Rinchen 855, Maidar 665, may be identical with *Janchiwdarjaalin khiid* marked by Maidar 666); *Janchiwdarjaalin khiid* (Maidar 666 marked it at a place called Khartsaga, the monastery site not found, not even the place given by Maidar, may be identical with *Kharztain khural / Kharztain süm*)

Guchin-Us sum: no old monastic sites

Baruunbayan-Ulaan sum: no old monastic sites

To summarize the data given above by sub-provinces, we can conclude that from the 33 old monastery sites marked by Rinchen 32 was identified. In one other case the exact monastery site or remnants were not found, but the place

¹¹ Ichinnorow, S. – Osor, G. – Gendgee, D. – Bayarsaikhan, B. – Jargalsaikhan, Ts.-
Ichinnorow, J. – Baljinnyam, B., *Öwörkhangaï aimag. Tailbar tol'* [Encyclopedia of Öwörkhangaï Province], 2002 Place of publishing unknown

given by Rinchen for its location was found and informants confirmed there was a temple there (Khairkhandulaan: *Gar'diin yargait*). In one case the exact monastery site listed by Rinchen and Maidar (and also marked on a map in the Museum of Öwörkhangaï Province situated in Arwaikheer city) was not found, not even was the place confirmed as no-one knew about such a place (Bayan-gol: *Ünegtiin khural* in a place called Ünegt). Two sites marked by Rinchen were not visited personally: in one case the site was inaccessible by car, in the other no remnants were known at the place by locals (Bürd: *Timent* (place name) / *Temeltiin (?) khural*; *Daichin/ Danchin / Lanchin khural*). A monastery site (not marked by Rinchen nor by Maidar, but marked on a map in a local *sum* museum) was not found, not even the place marked (no-one knew about such a place) (Bürd: 'assembly at *Süree*', registered by us under the place name). However, these three sites were all presented on a map in the local museum at Bürd *sum* centre, thus, they had to exist once.

An additional place was found which is marked on Rinchen's map, and may be identical with another monastery marked only by Maidar which was not found. This may have been double marked by Maidar meaning that the two may be only one (Bayan-Öndör: *Kharztain khural*, Rinchen 855, Maidar 665, may be identical with *Janchiwdarjaalin khiid* situated at a place called Khartsaga indicated by Maidar 666). In one case the monastery site was not found, not even the place given by Maidar (was not listed in Rinchen), but the site may be identical with another monastery found which was marked by Rinchen (also marked on Maidar, who may have double marked the same monastery, meaning that the two may be only one) (Bayan-Öndör: *Janchiwdarjaalin khiid*, at a place called Khartsaga, which may be identical with *Kharztain khural / Kharztain süm* marked by Rinchen and Maidar).

One monastery site which was found and was registered by the place name and the monastery listed by Rinchen may be not identical, so these may have been two different monasteries (Züünbayan-Ulaan: 'ruin at Khangai owoo' (place name) may be the same as the site marked by Rinchen as *Belen khüree khiid*).

One site marked only on Maidar's map was not visited though exact site was known through informants, as it was very far and was not possible to reach by car, only in 6 hours on horseback (Bat-Ölziit: *Khyatruuliin rashaanii süm*).

In one case remnants were not found, though the site (rock with mantras on it marking the temple site) was found (Khairkhandulaan: *Rigsümgombiin süm*). Thought this site was not marked by Rinchen, it was known through the Encyclopaedia of Öwörkhangaï province and an informant.

In one case the exact monastery site (not listed in Rinchen) was not found not even the place given by Maidar, but may be identical with another site found without identified monastery name (Sant: *Tsakhariin khiid*, (which may be identical with the ruin found at Khawchir).

Four monastic sites were found, which were not marked by either Rinchen or Maidar. These sites are in Uyanga: *Olon süm / Olon sümiin khiid*; in Khairkhandulaan: *Bicheechiin tsagaan owoo* (place name) / *(Bicheechiin) örtöö khural*; in Bürd: *Shireet tsagaan nuur*; in Yesön-Züil: *Öwgön suwraga / Yesönzüiliin suwraga / Öwgön tsagaan suwraga / Öwgön suwraganii khural / Öndör gegeenii khüi darsan suwraga*. The two latest ones were connected to Öndör gegeen Zanabazar, and are well known.

In one case the monastery site was found, confirmed as being monastery site by locals, but the name of the old monastery was not identified (therefore it was registered by the place name). This may be identical with another monastery marked on Maidar and not found (Sant: registered as 'assembly or temple at Khawchir', may be identical with *Tsakhariin khiid*, the site of which was not found).

In one case a site was found, which was marked as a temple, i.e. *süm*, in books (not marked in Rinchen or Maidar), but proved to be only a spectacular natural formation, where lamas are said to have been meditating in caves (Tögrög: *Demchigiin süm / Demchigiin süm*).

In the area of the two present sub-provinces Baruunbayan-Ulaan and Guchin-Uus no monasteries or temples were situated in the old times.

Current temples

In Öwörkhangaï aimag 21 newly established or revived monasteries and temples were surveyed.

Bürd sum: *Dashrawjaalin* (active)

Yesönzüil sum: *Dashgüngaadejidlin khiid* (one lama living far away, thus ceremonies are held only on great days)

Ölziit sum: *Gandan legshed dashchoilon* (active but with only one lama), new temple at the site of the old *Ilden beiliin khüree* (one lama living far away, thus ceremonies are held only on great days)

Khujirt sum: *Gandan peljeelin khiid / Tögs bayasgalant arwijn delgerekh khiid* (active)

Kharkhorin sum: *Shankhnii / Shankhiin Baruun Khüree khiid* (active)

Kharkhorin city (in Kharkhorin sum): *Bat Erdene zuu / Erdene zuu* (active) and its branch, *Lusiin süm* (active, but ceremonies are held only on great days)

Bat-Ölzii sum: *Dechinchoinkhorlin khiid* (active); *Töwkhön khiid / Duwkhan* (active with only one resident lama)

Uyanga sum: *Gandansemplen khiid* (active); *Manba datsan* (is being built currently); *Ush'khai / Ush' akhai / Uushkhai* (place of worship)

Taragt sum: temple with unknown name (new temple on the site of *Khadatiin örtöö khural / Baruun khural* (one lama living far away, thus ceremonies are held only on great days)

Arwaikheer city (in Taragt sum): *Lamiin geegen Luwsandanzanjantsan neremjit khiid* / *Nomiin örgöö khiid*; *Gandanpuntsoglin khiid*; *Ürjin namdol dedanlin* (active)

Bayan-Öndör sum: *Gedendarjaalin* (active)

Nariinteel sum: *Gewaachoilin khiid* / *Buyanii nomiin khiid* (active but with only one lama)

Sant sum: *Gandanchoilin* / *Tögs bayasgalant nomiin khiid* (inactive, no lamas)

Bogd sum: *Diwaajingiin yerööl khiid* (active but with only one lama)

Among the 21 present-day monastic sites in Öwörkhantai, 11 are currently actively operating with 4-40 lamas in their assemblies¹²; one temple is active, but with ceremonies only on great days (Kharkhorin city: *Lusiin süm*, which is a branch of *Erdene zuu*); four monasteries are active but only one lama resides in them permanently (though in some periods together with 1-4 novices) performing daily chanting and readings for people or only ceremonies on great days (Ölziit: *Gandan legshed dashchoilon*, Bat-Ölzii: *Töwkhön khiid*; Narinteel: *Gewaachoilin khiid* / *Buyanii nomiin khiid*; Bogd: *Diwaajingiin yerööl khiid*); three monasteries have only one lama, but not living nearby, therefore, in these ceremonies are held only on great days (Yesön-Züil: *Dashgüngaadejidlin khiid*; Ölziit: new temple at the site of the old *Ilden beiliin khüree* (name unknown); Taragt: a temple with unknown name (new temple on the site of *Khadatiin örtöö khural*); one is inactive as there are not any lamas remained there (Sant: *Gandanchoilin*); one is being built now with the head lama's yurt on the site (Uyanga: *Manba datsan*); and there is one place of worship (*mörgöliin süm*) without lamas (*Uyanga: Ush'khai*).

Nowadays, there are no active temples in 7 sub-provinces of the 18 of Öwörkhantai, namely Khairkhandulaan, Tögrög, Bayangol, Guchin-Uus, Züünbayan-Ulaan, Baruunbayan-Ulaan and Sant (in this *sum* there was a revived temple but it is inactive by now). Other sub-provinces have active temples (Arwaikheer city in Taragt *sum* (three active temples), Bayan-Öndör, Bogd (active temple but with only one lama), Büрд, Kharkhorin, Kharkhorin city in Kharkhorin *sum*, Bat-Ölzii (two temples, one of them with only one resident lama), Khujirt, Nariinteel (active temple but only with one lama), Uyanga (an active temple, a place of worship and also a temple building in process)) or partly active temple with ceremonies only on great days (Yesönzüil (one lama living far away, thus ceremonies are held only on great days), Ölziit (two temples, one has only one lama and the other also, but here ceremonies are held only on great days), Taragt (only one lama but not resident and the ceremonies are only on great days)). Of the 21 current temples in Öwörkhantai 15 operate in *sum* centers (of these three in the *aimag* center, Arwaikheer city and two in Kharkhorin city) and the remaining six in the countryside, at old monastic

¹² These are listed by sub-provinces above.

sites. 13 of the current monasteries or temples can be considered as the revival of an old monastery, while seven temples are new foundations after 1990. In the whole area of the Öwörkhongai province there is only one temple which belongs to the Red Sect (Arwaikheer city: Ürjin namdol dedanlin).

Interviews recorded on old Öwörkhongai monasteries

In Öwörkhongai aimag during the field survey 29 interviews were recorded, from these nine with old lamas (one old lama of these, called Samdandamba residing in Arwaikheer showed signs of senility in his speech therefore the data given by him is not reliable), and four with old people in the locality (only with the knowledgeable, who could provide data; additional old people were also asked, but interviews were not recorded with them), and the remaining 16 were made about currently working temples with its heads or lamas. Moreover, in Ulaanbaatar six old lamas served data in 2006 and 2007 on old monasteries situated once in Öwörkhongai, as two of the lamas had belonged to two monasteries in order. Thanks to the reminiscences of these old lamas details of 11 old monastic sites and their history were gained.

Dalai güonii khüree (Yesön züil sum, L. Sedbazar, born 1913)

Yesön züiliin khural (Yesön züil sum, Ch. Jamba, born 1923, S. Norjmaa, born 1919 interviewed in Ulaanbaatar)

Baruun khural (Ölziit sum, J. Namjil, born 1917. S. Norjmaa, born 1919 interviewed in Ulaanbaatar)

Züün khural (Ölziit sum, J. Namjil, born 1917)

Beilin khüree (Ölziit sum, J. Namjil, born 1917; Ö. Bat-Ochir, born 1914 interviewed in Ulaanbaatar)

Baruun khüree (Kharkhorin sum, N. Dashtseren, born 1925; Kh. Gombo, born 1914 interviewed in Ulaanbaatar)

Sain noyonii khüree (Uyanga sum, Ts. Tserendorj, born 1918; Ch. Jam'yaansenge, born 1919; M. Menddawa, born 1920 interviewed in Ulaanbaatar)

Arwaikheeriin khüree (Taragt sum, G. Zündüidamba, born 1920)

Dar'-ekhiin jas at Uushigiin rashaan (Tögrög sum, D. Ishdorj, born 1917)

Gandandashchoilin datsan / Züün khural / Khar usnii khiid (Taragt sum, A. Tünaadegd, born 1921)

Zeerengiin khiid (Sant sum, J. Yondon, 1914-2007 interviewed in Ulaanbaatar)

MONASTIC SITES IN DUNDGOW' AIMAG

The area of the province is divided into 15 sub-provinces. Its centre is Mandalgow' city. The aimag area belonged to different *khoshuus* of the old Tüsheets khan aimag (namely Daichin beisiin khoshuu, Tüsheets wangiin khoshuu, and possibly Achit güinii khoshuu) and Setsen khan aimag (Borjigin Setsen wangiin khoshuu). In the area of the present Dundgow' aimag all in all 94 monastic sites

were surveyed, among them 77 are old and 17 are new temples. It is evident that in Dundgow' there were twice as many monasteries as in Öwörkhangaï aimag.

Old monastic sites

Rinchen marked 66 monasteries and temples on his map of the aimag (map No. 36.). However, it seems that 77 old monastic sites existed once in the area of the present aimag, which are the following by sub-provinces:

Erdenedalai sum: *Sangiin dalai khiid / Ugtaal Sangiin dalai khiid / Dambadarjaalin* (Rinchen 706, Maidar 604); *Delgerekhiin khiid / Delgeriin jas / Delgerekhiin khural* (Rinchen 712, Maidar 608); *Tengelegiin khiid / Tengelig khiid* (Rinchen 707, Maidaar 602); *Khadan usnii khiid / Khadaasnii khiid / Khadaasnii khural / Khadan süm* (Rinchen 714, Maidar 603); *Ünestiin khiid / Kheree ünestiin khiid / Tsagaan-Owoogiin khiid / Ünstiin khiid* (Rinchen 710, Maidar 606); *Tsawchiriin khiid / Dechintarwaalin* (Rinchen 706, Maidar 607); and the *Zodiin khural* at the bank of Khashaat river (Khashaatiin gol)

Saikhan-Owoo sum: *Tögrögiin khiid* (Rinchen 716, Maidar 623); *Delgerekhiin khiid / Delgerekh khural* (Rinchen 713, Maidar 624); *Oigchiin tsagaan khural / Oichiin süm / Oigchiin tsagaan suwraga / Tsagaan suwraga* (Rinchen 718, Maidar 620); *Khutagt lamiin khiid / Urd khiid / Dund khiid / Ongiin khutagt lamiin süm / Dashtseepe(l)lin / Ölziigöör arwijlagch khiid* (Rinchen 717, Maidar 621); *Bari / Bragri (khamba) lamiin khiid / Khoit khiid / Khoid khiid / Bari / Bagri lam Damtsigdorjiin khiid / Gündüjambaalin*

Delgerkhangai sum: *Dalkhiin jas(aa) / Dalkhiin khural / Ralkhiin (Lkhasiin) khural* (Rinchen 720, Maidar 617); *Khoshuu khiid / Dashpuntsoglin / Ölziigöör arwijluagch khiid / Ongiin 3 khiidiin urd khiid / Gandanshaddüwlin / Tüshee wangiin khüree / Ongiin goliin khüree / Gaihamshigt sain bilegt süm* (Rinchen 719; Maidar 618)

Khuld sum: *Luusiin khiid / Luusiin khural / Gonojürmeddechilen* (Rinchen 723); *Shuwuutiin khiid / Shuwuutain khiid* (Rinchen 722, Maidar 612); *Ül oldokhiin khiid / Oldokhiin khiid* (Rinchen 721, Maidar 592); *Mengetiin khiid / Mengetiin khural* (Rinchen 724, Maidar 610); *Khewtüüliin khiid / Khewtüüliin khural* (Rinchen 725, Maidar 611)

Luus sum: *Dugantiin khiid / Dugant jas / (Delger tsogtiin khiid)* (Rinchen 711)

Adaatsag sum: *Zuutiin khiid* (Rinchen 731); *Khorin jas / Zaraa khorin / Zaraa khornii khural* (Rinchen 733); *Tawin jas / Tawin lamiin khural* (Rinchen 732, Maidaar 593); *Shine shawiin khiid / Shine shaw' / Shine shawiin khural* (Rinchen 734); *Lowonchimbiin süm / 'Temple at Südtei valley (Südtei am)' / Sajaa mor't / mor'chin dorjiin khiid*

Delgertsogt sum: *Tsorjiin jas / Tsorjiin khüree / Tsorjiin khiid* (Rinchen 737); *Delgeriin choir / Choir / Delgeriin choiriin khiid / Delger choiriin khiid* (Rinchen 735, Maidaar 598); *Khurliin khiid* (Rinchen 736, Maidar 599); *Tsakhiurtiin jas / Dorjdamba*

datsan / Awai eejiin jas / Dorjdamba khiid / Tsakhiriin khural (Rinchen 738); Tsakhir erdene lamiin khural (Rinchen 740); Emtiin khural / Emtiin khiid (Rinchen 739); Noyonii khiid at Tsagaan lake (Tsagaan nuur)

Saintsagaan sum: Zoogiin jas / Zoogiin khural (Rinchen 729); Narangiin khiid / Narangiin jas (Rinchen 728, Maidar 595); Mökhiin khiid / Khuwilgaan khiid / Mökhiin jas / Mökhiin khural (Rinchen 726); Ganjuuriin khural / Ganjuur khiid (Rinchen 727); Khorin khural / Khorinii khiid / Khamar khornii khiid (Rinchen 730)

Gurwansaikhan sum: Guchin jas (Rinchen 751); Ikh jas / Khoshuu jas / Khoshuu khural (Rinchen 744); Üizen akhai / Üizenkhai / Togoo takhiliin khural (Rinchen 747); Tawiiin jas / Tawonii khiid / Tawin (Rinchen 745); Uuliin mamba / Uul mambiin khiid (Rinchen 749); Tawan jas / Tawanii jas / Tawan jasiin khural (Rinchen 748)

Ölziit sum: Tsagaan khadat / Tsagaan khiid / Tsagaan khural / jas / Tsagaan khadnii khural (Rinchen 754); Bayanii khiid / Erdene bayangiin khiid / Erdene bayangiin khiid / Erdene bayanii khiid (Rinchen 750, Maidar 587); Bilüünii khiid / Bulag bilüünii khural (Rinchen 755); Dalain khiid / Dalai khiid (Rinchen 756, Maidar 591); Noyonii khiid / Khar noyonii khiid (Rinchen 753); Taliin khural / Taliin khiid (Rinchen 757); Khötliin jas / Khötliin khiid (Rinchen 752, Maidar 588); Stone temple at the spring situated at Khönjliin ariin Buyantiin süüj (unfinished temple building, thus never functioned)

Öndörshil sum: Dalai jas / Dalai(n) khural (Rinchen 759); Awrakhiin jas / Awrakhiin khural / Awrakhiin khiid (Rinchen 758)

Tsagaandelger sum: Baruun choir / Borjignii Baruun choir / Borjignii Baruun Janjin choir khiid / Bod' ikh amgalant khiid (Rinchen 768); Dar' ekhiin jas / Dar' ekhiin khural (Rinchen 760); Lamiin khural / Lamiin jas / Khongor tolgoiin jas (Rinchen 771); Zülegtiin jas / Zülegtiin khural / Tulgan jas / Tulgiin jas / Tulga khural / Bayan uulin jas (Rinchen 770); Lowongiin jas (double marked by Rinchen as Khaldain khural Rinchen 772 and as Tsegeenii khural Rinchen 769); Ukhaatai jas / Ikh Zalaagiin jas; Baruun Cheejiin/ Tseejiin / Sheejiin jas (not found, may be identical with an other site found (being an alternative name of any site found but not identified)); (Züün) Cheejiin/ Tseejiin / Sheejiin jas which may be identical with Tsagaan ergiin khiid (Rinchen 767) (supposed to be two alternative names for the same site)

Guw'-Ugtaal sum: Uutiin jas (Rinchen 766); Duraaliin jas / Duraaliin khiid (Rinchen 764); Züün Ganjuur / Züün Ganjuuriin khiid (Rinchen 763, Maidar 582); Baruun Ganjuur / Baruun Ganjuuriin khiid (Rinchen 746, Maidar 594); Guchit jas / Guchitiin jas / Guchitiin jasiin khiid / Guchitiin khural (Rinchen 762, Maidar 616); Enger zülegtiin jas / Enger zülegtiin khural (Kharnuud khural) (Rinchen 765)

Deren sum: Tegshiin khiid / Tegshiin jas / Genden puntsaglin (Rinchen 741, Maidar 597); Jadambiin khiid / Jadambiin jas / Jadamba khiid (Rinchen 742); Beliin jas / Beliin khural (Rinchen 743, Maidar 596); Zod assembly at Zaraagiin zülegt; Zod assembly at Khögtst

Bayanjargalan sum: *Uuliin khural / Uuliin jas / Ikh dogshin otgiin uuliin jas / Uuliin mamba datsan / Uul manbemiin khiid* (Maidar 584); *Mujiin jas; Suwragan jas*

Two monastery sites marked by Rinchen were not found; no one knew them and not even the places given by Rinchen for them. These two sites may be therefore identical with other sites found by the team: one was marked in Bayanjargalan by Rinchen as *Baruun tsoor khiid* (Rinchen 761, Maidar 58, name variations: *Baruun tsorgiin khiid / Baruun tsorgo*), the other in Gow'-ugtaal as *Züün tsoor khural* or *Ikh ereenii khural* (Rinchen 766, name variations: *Züün tsoor / Züün tsoor khural / Züün tsorgo / Ikh ereenii khural*)

To summarize the data on old monastery sites in Dundgow' given above by sub-provinces, we can conclude that all in all 77 old sites were surveyed. On Rinchen's map only 60 sites were marked in the *aimag*, but from these 6 sites marked by him were not found. However, in the Dundgow' area in many cases it was not clear whether a monastic site found was identical with any of the sites marked on Rinchen's map or not, due to the alternate name variations and also due to place names given by Rinchen being unknown today.

One temple site found was double marked by Rinchen under two different names and numbers (Tsagaandelger: a temple site found as *Lowongiin jas* (marked by Rinchen as *Khaldain khural* Rinchen 772 and *Tsegeenii khural* Rinchen 769).

Two monastery sites marked by Rinchen were not found, as no informants knew them and not even the place given for them by Rinchen: These two sites may be therefore identical with other two sites found by the team but for which names were not known (Bayanjargalan: site registered as *Baruun tsoor / Baruun tsorgiin khiid / Baruun tsorgo* as this may be identical with *Baruun tsoor khiid* (Rinchen 761, Maidar 583); and Gow'-Ugtaal: site registered as *Züün tsoor / Züün tsoor khural / Züün tsorgo* as this may be identical with *Züün tsoor khural* or *Ikh ereenii khural* (Rinchen 766).

In one case a monastery site was found, but the name of the old monastery at the site was not known. Thus, it was registered under two monastery names (one given by Rinchen and one by an informant) that are supposed to be two alternative names of this same site. But these may not be identical but two different monasteries as well, one of them being this site found and the other being an other site marked by Rinchen but not found: (Tsagaandelger: (*Züün*) *Cheejiin / Tseejiin / Sheejiin jas* that might be identical with *Tsagaan ergiin khiid* (Rinchen 767).

One monastery site known through an informant was not found, not even the place as the exact place was not known, therefore this may be identical with an other site found (being an alternative name of any site found but not identified): (Tsagaandelger: *Baruun Cheejiin / Tseejiin / Sheejiin jas*).

One temple marked only by Maidar was found (Bayanjargalan: *Uuliin khural / Uuliin jas / Ikh dogshin otgiin uuliin jas / Uuliin mamba datsan / Uul manbemiin khiid*).

Nine monastery sites were found which were not marked by Rinchen nor by Maidar: Erdenedalai: *Zod* assembly at the bank of Khashaat river (Khashaatiin gol) (registered under the place name); Saikhan-Owoo: *Bari / Bagri (khamba) lamiin khiid / Khoit khiid / Khoid khiid / Bari / Bagri lam Damtsigdorjiin khiid / Gündüjambaalin*; Adaatsag: *Lowonchimbiin süm / Temple at Südtei am / Sajaa mor't / Sajaa mor'chin dorjiin khiid*; Delgertsogt: *Noyonii khiid* at Tsagaan lake (Tsagaan nuur); Bayanjargalan: *Mujiin jas*; Bayanjargalan: *Suwragan jas*; Tsagaandelger: *Ukhaatai jas / Ikh Zalaagiin jas*; Deren: *Zod* assembly at Zaraagiin züleg; Deren: *Zod* assembly at Khögtst.

One monastery site, not marked in Rinchen nor in Maidar's lists was found, but it was a monastery that was started to be build but not finished, therefore never functioned (Ölziit: Stone temple at the spring situated at Khönjliin ariin Buyantiin süüj).

Current temples

In Dundgow' aimag all in all 17 newly established or revived temples were found.

Saikhan-Owoo sum: *Gündüjambaalin / Khotol öglögch*

Adaatsag sum: *Dashchoinkhorlin datsan / Dashchoinkhorlin khiid; Zuutiin khiid / Gandandarjaalin* (with ceremonies only on great days performed by lamas coming from Ulaanbaatar for the occasion)

Delgertsogt sum: *Delgeriin choir / Choir; Tsakhiurt* (temple revived at the old *Tsakhiurt* monastery site, inactive); Temple being built in the centre of Delgertsogt sum (is being built, name not known)

Mandalgow' city (in Saintsagaan sum): *Dashgimpellin khiid*

Gurwsansaikhan sum: *Gandanchoinkhorlin khiid*

Erdenedalai sum: *Dambadarjaalin* (ceremonies only on great days)

Luus sum: *Gonoijürmeddechilen khiid* (ceremonies only on great days)

Öndörshil sum: *Maanii örgöö* (ceremonies only on great days)

Bayanjargalan sum: *Gandandashlin / Gandan sodnom jaawiilin* (ceremonies only on great days)

Tsagaandelger sum: *Gandanrawjaalin / Baruun choir khiid* (ceremonies only on great days)

Gow'-Ugtaal: *Ganjuur khiid* (ceremonies only on great days)

Delgerkhangai sum: *Dashpuntsoglin* (inactive, with only one lama)

Khuld sum: New temple in the centre of Khuld sum (name unknown, inactive, three novices left without a master)

Deren sum: *Dagdanpuntsaglin khiid* (only two old lamas in the assembly, but ceremonies are not held any more due to their old age and health condition)

Among the 17 new or revived temple sites in Dundgow', only five are currently actively working with 4-40 lamas. Additional six temples operate with ceremonies held only on great days, when a few lamas gather for the occasion (Erdenedalai: *Dambadarjaalin*; Luus sum: *Gonoijürmeddechilen khiid*; Öndörshil: *Maanii örgöö*; Bayanjargalan: *Gandandashlin / Gandan sodnom jaawiilin*; Tsagaandelger: *Gandanrawjaalin / Baruun choir khiid*; Gow'-Ugtaal: *Ganjuur khiid*). Five temples do not work any more from different reasons: in one case, there is only one lama in the *sum* centre, but the temple is not working any more and is left neglected (Delgerkhangai: *Dashpuntsoglin*), in an other case there are three child aged lamas but left without a teacher so the temple is not active anymore (new temple at the centre of *Khuld*, name unknown), in other two cases there are only annual ceremonies when lamas from the city come (Adaatsag: *Zuutiin khiid / Gandandarjaalin*; Delgertsogt: name not known, revived at the old *Tsakhiurt* monastery site), in one case the remained two lamas are very old and unable to gather so the temple was closed years ago (Deren: *Dagdanpuntsaglin khiid*). One temple is being built now, though the construction seems to have stopped (temple being built in the centre of Delgertsogt).

Nowadays, there are no active temples in 4 sub-provinces of the 15 of Dundgow', namely Ölzii, Delgerkhangai, Khuld and Deren (the temples in the last three of these are inactive by now), 5 other sub-provinces (Adaatsag, Saikhan-Owoo, Delgertsogt, Gurvansaikhan, and Mandalgow' city in Saintsagaan sum) have active temples and temples operate partly with ceremonies only at great days in 6 sub-provinces (Erdenedalai, Luus, Öndörshil, Bayanjargalan, Tsagaandelger and Gow'-Ugtaal). Of the 17 current temples in Dundgow' 13 operate in *sum* centres (of these one in the *aimag* centre, Mandalgow' city) and the remaining four in the countryside, at old monastic sites. 15 of the current monasteries or temples can be considered as the revival of an old monastery, while the remaining two temples are new foundations after 1990. In the whole area of the Dundgow' province no Red Sect temples were found in 2007.

Interviews recorded on old Dundgow' monasteries

In Dundgow' *aimag* 39 interviews were recorded during the field survey, from which 23 were with old lamas, and ten with old people in the locality, and six about currently working temples with its heads or lamas. However, from the 23 old lamas one lama (Agwaandarjaa, born 1922 interviewed in Tsagaandelger sum) did not say any details so this interview was not successful; one lama (Ch. Samdanprenlei, born 1918, interviewed in Mandalgow' city) belonged once to Bogdiin Khüree, the old Mongolian monastic capital; one lama (Kh. Rawjir,

born 1925, interviewed in Gurwansaikhan sum) belonged to a monastery in Inner-Mongolia (and not a monastery site of the present-day Mongolia), one lama (B. Namsrai, born 1913, interviewed in Öndörshil sum) belonged once to *Ölgii* monastery which was situated in the present area of Dornogow' aimag in Mandakh sum, and one lama (Ch. Ishdowdon, born 1913, interviewed in Bayanjargalan sum) belonged once to *Borjignii Züün Choir* monastery, which was situated in the present area of Gow'-Sümer aimag, Sümer sum. Thus, these five interviews do not count from the aspect of Dundgow' aimag monastery sites. In addition, in Ulaanbaatar and Zuunmod 9 old lamas served data in 2006 and 2007 on old monasteries situated once in Dundgow', as some of the lamas had belonged to two or more monasteries in order¹³. Thanks to the reminiscences of these old lamas details of 22 old monastic sites of Dundgow' and their history was gained.

Tsawchiriin khiid (Erdenedalai sum, T. Namsrai, born 1923)

Khadan usnii khiid (Erdenedalai sum, L. Yondon, born 1914)

Tögrögiin khiid (Saikhan-Owoo sum, P. Namjil, born 1921)¹⁴

Bari /Bragri (khamba) lamiin khiid (Saikhan-Owoo sum, N. Dawaa, born 1913; B. Budjaw, born 1927)

Khutagt lamiin khiid (Sainkhan-Owoo sum, Ts. Dashdorj, born 1908, interviewed in Ulaanbaatar)

Mengetiin khiid (Khuld sum, Ts. Günchin, born 1917, interviewed in Ulaanbaatar; D. Gonchig, born 1916, interviewed in Ulaanbaatar)

Luusiin khiid (Khuld sum, D. Dogsüm, born 1928)

Ül oldokhiin khiid / Oldokhiin khiid (Khuld sum, Pürew, born 1923)

Zuutiin khiid (Adaatsag sum, P. Yondonprenlei, born 1921)

Khorin jas (Adaatsag sum, Ch. Bazar, born 1921; M. Shagdarzaw, born 1917)

Tawin jas (Adaatsag sum, D. Chültem, born 1920)

Shine shawiin khiid (Adaatsag sum, D. Dorj, 1914, interviewed in Mandalgow')

Delgeriin choir (Delgertsogt sum, M. Shagdarzaw, born 1917, B. Süren, born 1911 interviewed in Ulaanbaatar, S. Dagwa, born 1910, interviewed in Ulaanbaatar)

Tsakhiurtiin jas (Delgertsogt sum, B. Süren, born 1911, interviewed in Ulaanbaatar)

Taliin khural / Taliin khiid (Ölziit sum, S. Tüwden, born 1926)

Baruun Choir (Tsagaandelger sum, Ya. Ishbaldan, born 1916; M. Samdan, born 1918, interviewed in Ulaanbaatar; B. Shirawnamjil, born 1921, interviewed in Zuunmod)

¹³ Of these, 7 interviews on 9 monasteries were made prior to the project in 2006 (some of these lamas were reinterviewed in 2007).

¹⁴ As the informant was away to Ulaanbaatar when the team visited his place of residence, he was interviewed via phone. Thus, this interview was not recorded.

Baruun Ganjuur(iin khiid) (Gow'-Ugtaal sum, R. Rawjaa, born 1925)
Beliin jas (Deren sum, N. Dowdonchuluu, born 1921)
Jadamba khiid (Deren sum, N. Gongor, born 1921; O. Indree, born 1924, interviewed in Ulaanbaatar)
Mökhiin khiid (Saintsagaan sum, S. Dagwa, born 1910, interviewed in Ulaanbaatar)
Ganjuuriin khural (Saintsagaan sum, O. Chojamts, born 1913, interviewed in Ulaanbaatar)
 Zod temple at Khögtst (Deren sum, Kh. Banzar, born 1914, interviewed in Ulaanbaatar)

MONASTIC SITES IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF TÖW AIMAG

Only the three southern sub-provinces of Töw aimag, namely Bayantsagaan, Bayan-Önjüül, and Altanbulag were totally surveyed by us¹⁵ and information for monastic sites in Sergelen was also gained during the survey. All in all 26 sites were surveyed in the area, of which 24 are old monasteries and 2 are present-day temples.

Old monastery sites

The area of the present Töw aimag was rich in monastic sites: Rinchen marked 92 sites in his map of this *aimag*. All in all 24 sites were surveyed in the area covered by our trip, of which 22 were marked by Rinchen.

Battsagaan sum: *Öwörgurwan jas / Öwörgurwan khiid* (Rinchen 428); *Darigatiin jas / Darigatiin khural / Mandaliin jas* (Rinchen 434); *Khüisiin jas / khural* (Rinchen 429); *Tsawchiriin jas / Naidan jas / khural* (Rinchen 433); *Zülegtiin jas / Öwör zülegtiin khural* (Rinchen 432); *Amgalangiin jas / khural* (Rinchen 431); *Delger ölziit jas / khural* (Rinchen 430)

Bayan-Önjüül sum: *Ejirgiin jas / Ijirgiin jas / Öndördawaanii khural* (Rinchen 409); *Baraatiin jas / Bayanbaratiin khural* (Rinchen 406); *Dalai eejiin jas* (Rinchen 407); *Güyengiin jas / khural* (Rinchen 410); *Khalzan gelengiin jas / khural* (Rinchen 408); *Shine usnii jas / khural* (Rinchen 411); *Ulkhiiin jas / Khachid bagiin khural* (Rinchen 412); Remnants in the old Bayanbaraat sum centre (probably it was a temple)

Altanbulag sum: *Öwör gandan (khiid)* (Rinchen 415); *Bor öndöriin jas / khural / Danjaalangiin jas / Danjaalingiin khiid* (Rinchen 414, Maidar 335); *Gendlengiin jas / Gendenlingiin jas* (Rinchen 413, Maidar 339); *Tariatiin jas / khural* (Rinchen 375); *Dag yarinpil khiid*, 'temple at Khuurai valley (Khuurai am)' (Rinchen 369, Maidar 370); *Bayartiin jas / khural / Janraisegiin jas* (Rinchen 370); *Bulgiin tokhoi(n khural)*

¹⁵ The other part of Töw aimag were surveyed by an other team sent by ACM in 2007 autumn, but this article is only on the results gained personally in our survey.

/ *Dar' ekh lamiin khiid* (Rinchen 371); *Ar shawartiin am / Olon shandiin khiid / Olon shandiin khural* (Rinchen 416, remnants were not found)

Zuunmod city: *Manzshir khiid* (Rinchen 424, Maidar 341)

To summarize, 22 sites marked by Rinchen were found in the south part of Töv. A place defined by Rinchen was found but the exact monastery site with the remnants were not found there (Altanbulag: *Ar shawartiin am / Olon shandiin khiid / Olon shandiin khural*). A site which was not marked on Rinchen's map, and is only presumed that it was a monastery was found (in Bayan-Önjүүл, at the old Bayanbaraat sum centre).

Current temples

All in all 2 were surveyed in Töv aimag, both are still active:

Battsagaan sum: *Khüisiin khiid / Zogsoodiin khüis khiid*;

Zuunmod city: *Dashchoinkhorlin khiid*

As the survey was conducted by us only in some sub-provinces of Töv, consequences cannot be drawn for the whole *aimag*. Only one present-day temple was found in the three sub-provinces Bayantsagaan, Bayan-Önjүүл and Altanbulag and an additional in Zuunmod city centre.

Interviews recorded on old Töv aimag monasteries

On sites in the southern part of Töv aimag during the field survey 6 interviews were recorded, from these 3 with old lamas, and two with old people in the locality, and one was made about a currently working temple (giving information on the current temple and on the old monastery as well). One of the old lamas interviewed, P. Badam-Ochir, born 1921, gave data on *Bambar-Erdene* monastery of Sergelen sum which was not visited by the team, and an other, L. Dashdorj, born 1918, provided data not only on two *jas* temples in the vicinity but on the old Bogdiin Khüree as well. However, in Ulaanbaatar and Zuunmod an additional three old lamas served data in 2006 and 2007 on three old monasteries situated in Töv. One of them, M. Lkhamsüren (born 1920) talked about *Tsaqaan tolgoin jas / khural* of Lün sum, which was not surveyed by the team. Thanks to the reminiscences of these old lamas details of 3 old monastic sites visited by the team in Töv aimag was gained, namely

Darigatiin jas (Bayantsagaan sum, L. Damba, born 1927)

Bayanbaraatiin khural (Bayan-Önjүүл sum, Ts. Tserenpuntsog, born 1914, interviewed in Zuunmod)

Manzshir khiid (Zuunmod city, Ts. Dorj, 1901-2007)

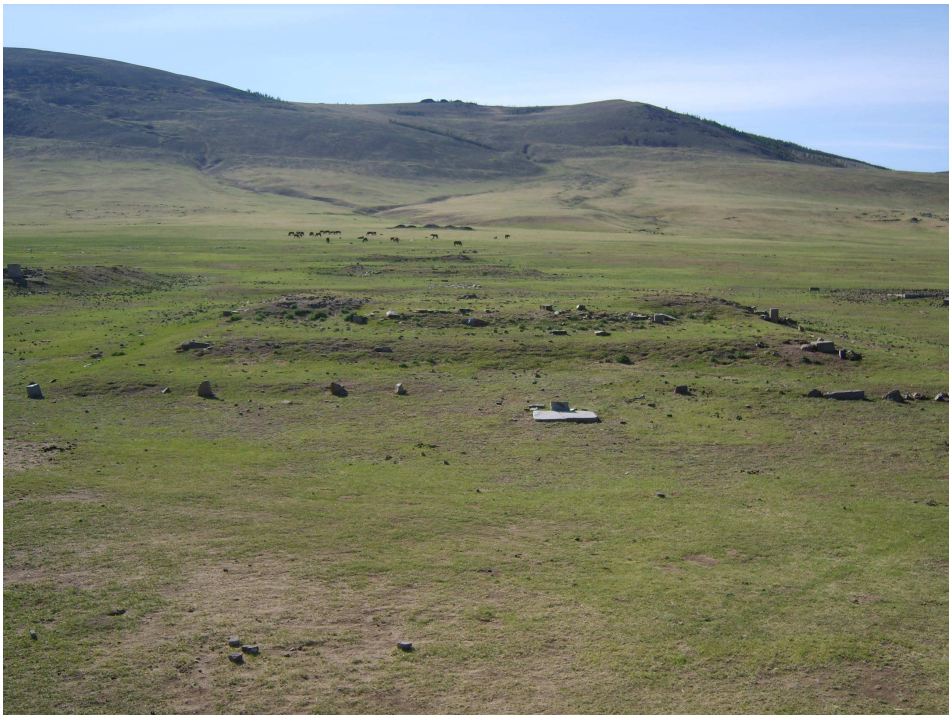
ADDITIONAL MONASTERIES SURVEYED IN THE 2007 FIELDWORK OUTSIDE THE THREE AIMAGS

Two old monastic sites outside the three *aimags*, but very near to their borders were surveyed as well. These were the followings: Dornogow' aimag, Dalan

jargalan sum: *Ikh nartiin jas / Ikh nartiin khiid* (Rinchen 630); Arkhangai aimag, Khashaat sum: *Nomgonii khiid / Puntsogdarjaalin / Nomgonii (khuwilgaan) Dar' ekh lamiin khiid / Khuwilgaan dar' ekhiin khiid /süm* (Rinchen 846, marked it in Öwörkhangai aimag, Bürd sum, Maidar 205) (one of its ex-monks, Kh. Gombo, born 1914 was interviewed in Ulaanbaatar). Also the new temple in Choir, Gow'-Sümer aimag (*Züün janjin choir khiid*) was surveyed, and an interview was made with one of its monks, Ch. Ishdowdon (born 1913), who spoke on his old monastery, *Borjignii Züün Choir* monastery, which was situated in the present area of Gow'-Sümer aimag, Sümber sum.

CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM THE FIELDWORK RESULTS ON OLD MONASTIC SITES

CURRENT STATE OF OLD MONASTIC SITES



Foundation of temples of Akhai beisiin khüree. Öwörkhangai aimag, Züünbayan-Ulaan sum

Based on the survey on the 150 old sites, we can state that on each site (which was not a temple working in a yurt without any kitchen or other building put up) there are visible signs, at least the foundations of the old buildings marked by elevations or stones/ bricks, however small the monastery and its buildings were. In many cases yurt temples also had stone foundations which are still visible. The only exception is when a smaller site was situated in a *sum* centre or in another place when it was built over. In case of monastic complexes situated at the present site of *sum* or *aimag* centres, there are still remains, visible foundations in between the fences of yurts and houses, even if some of them were built over. In case of even very small *jas* sites, situated at a remote place, it can be said that even these are never without visible remains. Therefore, in case of those very few sites where no remnants were found even though the exact site was shown or exact instructions were given to the surveyors to find them, finding no remains means that the exact site itself was not found. These sites not found (as no remains were found), were in Öwörkhangaï province, Khairkhandulaan sum: *Rigsümgombiin süm*; *Bicheechiin tsagaan owoo*; in Dundgow' province, Bayanjargalan sum: *Mujiin jas*; in Töw aimag, Altanbulag sum: *Ar shawartiin am*; *Bayartiin jas*; *Bulgiin tokhoi(n khural)* (See details of the sites not found in the survey report part by *aimags* and *sums*).

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As widely known and as was experienced in all sites, the destruction was almost complete in 1937-38, even half meter thick stone walls were pulled down completely and huge monastic complexes with their hundreds of buildings. What was not destroyed then, was finished in different ways in the 70 years that went on.

In the area of the surveyed three *aimags* there were basically three kinds of monasteries in terms of building material: monasteries with wooden buildings, brick buildings (with mud) and stone buildings, always depending on the ma-

terials being available in the area. In most cases, however, different building materials were used in one complex, for example, the main temple building or the temple buildings were made of wood, while the other buildings, dwellings of lamas, kitchens of brick and mud. Brick was burnt in a kiln or burning stove (*baayuu*) situated near the monastery site, primarily by the Chinese. Chinese workers took part in monastery constructions, carving, and decoration of the temples, thus, there were Chinese settlements near bigger monastery sites. Due to lack of woods, in the Gow' area almost everything was made of brick but sometimes wood and stone were transported for construction of bigger temple buildings.

The current state of the remnants depends on the material they were made of. Evidently more remained of the stone buildings (though still being not more than the foundations but these being still easy to make out) and of the brick buildings (again with clear foundations visible and some walls or wall remnants still standing) than of the wooden buildings, of which, apart from some exceptional cases, nothing remained, and even their exact sites where they stood within a complex is impossible to determine in case there was not any stone foundation for them. In case of complexes with wooden temples and brick and mud dwellings the sites of the wooden temples themselves, when even the foundations can not be made out now, can be judged only from the layout of the other buildings' remnants.

The material of the buildings determines also the extent to which these sites and the remnants were disturbed by people in the decades after their destruction and are disturbed till today (see below), as this is partly determined by the usefulness of the materials remained.

It is only a very few percent of old monastic sites where there are still even partial remains, with at least a temple building standing. In some cases these remained temple buildings were revived and are currently used as a temple, but in other cases they were not revived, and thus are now in an extremely bad state of repair. Those which were revived but have been left without lamas and are inactive or are operating only with occasional services are also in a bad state of repair, for instance *Sangiin dalai khiid* (Erdenedalai sum, Dundgow' aimag). Remained and neglected buildings situated at a remote site are now in terrible state of repair, for example *Ünestiin khiid* (Erdenedalai sum, Dundgow' aimag). and *Khorin khural* (Saintsagaan sum, Dundgow' aimag) in lack of any protection or care. Of the 150 surveyed sites remains of at least one temple building are still standing only at six sites. These are in Öwörkhantai aimag: *Baruun khüree* (Kharkhorin sum), *Erdene zuu* (Kharkhorin city); and in Dundgow' aimag: *Sangiin dalai khiid* (Erdendalai), *Ünestiin khiid* (Erdenedalai), *Zuutiin khiid* (Adaatsag), *Khorin khural* (Tsagaandelger).



Survived temple building of Üneștiin khiid. Öwörkhangaï aimag, Erdenedalai sum

There are sites where the main temple building or any temple building did not remain, but there are considerable remnants of the other buildings, mostly lamas' dwellings with standing walls or wall fragments and where the layout of the old complex is still easy to make out. These sites also should deserve protection. These are the followings in Öwörkhangaï aimag: *Baruun khural* (Ölziit), *Noyon khutagtiin khiid* (Bogd), *Zeerengiin khiid* (Sant); the followings in Dundgow' aimag: *Khadan usnii khiid* (Erdenedalai), *Tsawchiriin khiid* (Erdenedalai), *Bari /Bragri (khamba) lamiin khiid* (Saikhan-Owoo), *Khutagt lamiin khiid* (Saikhan-Owoo), *Lowonchimbiin süm* (Adaatsag), *Guchin jas* (Gurwansaikhan), *Uuliin mamba* (Gurwansaikhan), *Bilüünii khiid* (Ölziit), *Dalain khiid* (Ölziit), *Noyonii khiid* (Ölziit), *Taliin khural* (Ölziit), *Khötliin jas* (Ölziit), *Awrahiin jas* (Öndörshil), *Tegshiin khiid* (Deren); and in Töw aimag *Manzshir khiid* (Zuunmod).

At almost every site there are fragments of different equipments and utensils for personal use, such as pots, vessels and bows, scissors, horseshoes etc. Moreover, on some sites much valuable things and relics were found, such as fragments of sculptures, terracotta figures, nicely ornamented friezes, roof tiles and bricks, ornamented bricks, offering cups and other offering and wor-

ship objects usually damaged or broken into pieces, together with sheets of Tibetan language sutras. Considerable amount of scattered worship object remnants and pieces of sculptures, etc. were found at the following sites in Öwörkhangai: *Züün khural* (Ölziit), *Zuugiin lamiin süm* (Kharkhorin city), *Akhai beisiin khüree* (Züünbayan-Ulaan), *Noyon khutagtiin khiid* (Bogd), *Ongiin khural* (Bayangol), *Zeerengiin khiid* (Sant); at the following sites in Dundgow': *Khadan usnii khiid* (Erdenedalai), *Ünestiin khiid* (Erdenedalai), *Tsawchiriin khiid* (Erdenedalai), *Tögrögiin khiid* (Saikhan-Owoo), *Oigchiin tsagaan khural* (Saikhan-Owoo), *Khutagt lamiin khiid* (Saikhan-Owoo), *Khoshuu khiid* (Delgerkhangai), *Ganjuuriin khural* (Saintsagaan), *Guchin jas* (Gurwansaikhan), *Tawiin jas* (Gurwansaikhan); *Bayanii* (Ölziit), *Bilüünii khiid* (Ölziit), *Noyonii khiid* (Ölziit), *Taliin khural* (Ölziit), *Khötliin jas* (Ölziit). Among the sites visited in Töv no sites had such remnants or scattered things in considerable amount.



Findings at Tawiin jas. Dundgow' aimag, Gurwansaikhan sum

The other factor determining the current state of the remnants is whether their remained buildings were used for other purposes and also to what extent their materials were and still are taken away by people to use them for their

purposes. It is partly influenced by the location of the site: whether they are situated in *sum* centres or *bag* centres ('village/community', the smallest administrative unit inside the *sum*) or near *sum* centres or near roads, or whether they are situated at out-of-the-way remote sites. Most of the remnants of monastic sites (if not their materials) were used for different purposes under the socialist times, as buildings, party offices or warehouses of agricultural cooperations (*negdel*), not only in *sum* or *bag* centres but in the remote countryside as well. In many cases the so called *brigad* / *barigad* ('brigade', smaller regional work units inside the agricultural cooperation or *sum* districts, between about 1960-1990.) and *bag* centres, as well as *sum* centres, were put up at old monastery sites for this purpose of using the remained buildings. Its positive effect during the survey was that though since the democratic change these *brigad* and also many *bag* centres are left neglected, in ruins, but these partly ruined centres still made easy to find sites situated by them, as their still standing buildings could be seen easily from distance. In case of sites being situated at inhabited areas or at 'roads' with considerable traffic, after the destruction the material was taken away for building other buildings: in the socialist times at order from the party and later and now by families living nearby, who use the material to build winter dwellings or shelters for animals. These less concerned sites situated in remote areas, but only in case of being no families living nearby.

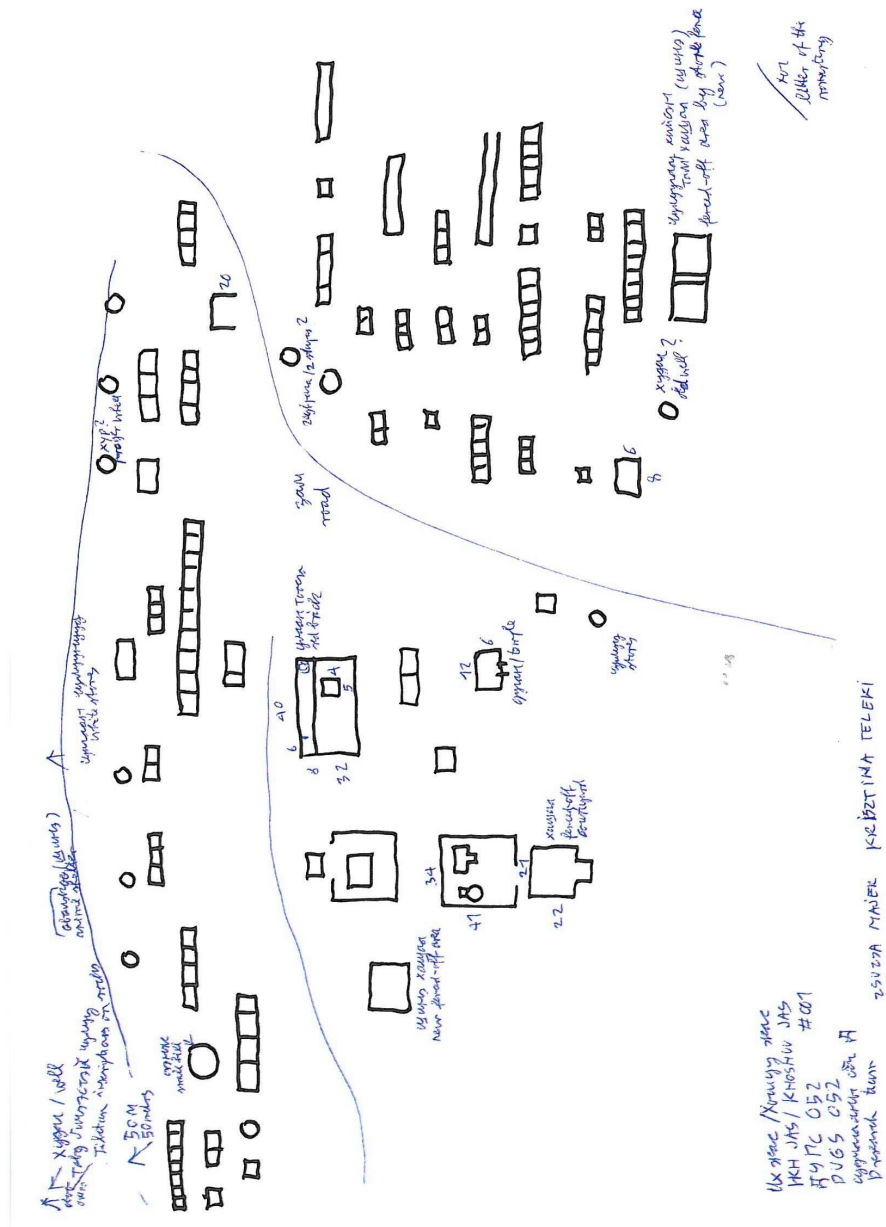
The third factor determining the current state of the remnants was and still is the fact of the sites being hunted for treasures. However, it is not determined by the location of the site being situated near or far from inhabited centres: sites near *sum* centres or roads are dug because they are easy to reach and are well known by people, and sites situated at very or extremely remote locales are dug because it is easy to search at such places without being notified or caught at the site. This treasure hunting often goes together with taking away all the useful materials, especially brick from the site, and people who dig primarily for bricks take away (and keep or usually sell) all worship objects they happen to find. In other cases, it is a more direct search for valuable and expensive artifacts and precious objects, when people with metal detectors go treasure hunting at the sites, or if they lack this useful tool, are well prepared and know the methods of how to find the really precious things they need. In most cases, the biggest holes were dug along the northern wall of the main or all the temples where, as well known, worship objects and offerings are placed in a temple, because it is supposed that when the walls were pulled down, objects that were not taken away prior to this, were buried by the ruins. Apart from these well planned diggings, sites with hundreds (!) of holes were not rare to find, showing how thorough is this search for treasures that supposedly went on for decades and is most sorrowfully still in process. The smaller sites,

especially sites of the small *jas* temples that consisted of only some buildings and have almost no visible remnants, especially if their buildings were made of wood, are not searched for treasures and not dug, particularly as there is no other useful material as brick there, and also as they are not so well-known by people (though it is important to mention that people living nearby or in the *sum* in most cases still know the exact sites of even these small assemblies). This phenomenon of diggings is supposed to have been strengthened after the democratic change in 1989 or even before it in the last decades, when consequences became more light and rare. Anyway, it is very much a question of today's Mongolia, when artifacts and worship objects are sold in Art Shops and Souvenir shops at every corner in Ulaanbaatar and even in sites frequented by tourists in the countryside, and when there is a good market for people to sell their findings without any risk. Even the surveyors caught several times people digging on the sites. The most shocking of these cases was when the surveyors were accompanied by a local governor of the *sum* the site was situated in (Saikhan-Owoo *sum* in Dundgow', at the site of *Oigchiin tsagaan khural*). When the people were caught at the site digging, the local governor found nothing wrong in it, therefore did not even tell them not to do it. It was only the surveyors who tried to explain that it is forbidden, no wonder why so ineffective without the help of or even seemingly against the local governor. This event clearly showed that the protection of these old monastic sites is very far from being solved. Of the 150 old monastic sites visited in the three *aimags* there were not more than 3-5 sites (apart from sites being well known and actively working such as *Erdene zuu* (Kharkhorin city) or *Baruun khüree* (Kharkhorin *sum*) in Öwörkhongai, or *Sangiin dalai khiid* (Erdenedalai *sum*) in Dundgow' with a sign marking that they are old monastic sites under state or *aimag* protection. The researchers themselves see no possibility of effective protection, deriving from the fact that most of the sites are situated far away from inhabited places, which makes their protection or control impossible (and which also helps treasure hunters in reaching their aims). However, it is more than clear that any protection could be realized only with close co-operation with the local governments. On some sites, usually on remote ones, there are still a considerable amount of worship objects, like offering cups and small terracotta sculptures etc. broken into pieces and leaves of Tibetan language holy scripts scattered around. People, who happen to pass by these sites, feel free to take any of these objects, lacking any education concerning the protection of these sites and objects. Even the lama, coming from one of the monastic schools of Gandan monastery, Ulaanbaatar, accompanying the surveyors on the survey felt free to take these objects for himself, having no feeling of wrongdoing concerning this. In the researchers' opinion, these findings should be given

into local museums, monasteries, or authorities, though in the present situation even in this way the further fate of these objects would be very unsure. Another way of misusing these old sites is today when a family 'moves in' and uses the remnants, for example a still standing lama dwelling or partially remained walls of a temple as dwelling or rather as shelter for animals after making the required repair or changes. This was experienced for example at the site of *Ünestiin khiid* (Erdenedalai sum, Dundgow' aimag), where a family was found building their new home in the remnants of the lamas' dwellings there. In other cases when a family had spent a season nearby, they tend to use the remnants, in case of only foundations being remained, as litter disposal places. Even in this context, people do not know or do not care that they use old monastic sites.

FEATURES OF LOCATION AND ARRANGEMENT OF MONASTIC SITES

Monasteries were set up on sites abound in water, which could be rivers, creeks or wells (sometimes there were separate wells for people and for animals). By the time that passed on till today and especially in the last some years many of these springs and rivers dried out in Dundgow' and in the south part of Töv, but the trees that managed to survive in the dried out river bends still show in how beautiful areas some of these monasteries were built. If the landscape features made it possible monasteries were founded in the foreground of hills or mountains, which protected them from the strong wind coming from the northwest. They faced to the south in every case as it is usual in Mongolia. Small assemblies sometimes operated in yurts or small buildings as the residents were few in number or if they were only temporary assemblies. In case of monasteries and monastic cities every site had a main assembly hall in the centre and other temples were built surrounding it or in the same row, which later one was the special arrangement used in case of monasteries situated in the Gow' area. Lamas' dwellings (yurts of cells) surrounded the central part consisting of temples mainly in an upside down U shape (this arrangement is called *khüree deg*, the word *khüree* having the meaning 'circle' here, and *deg* being a word derived from Tib. *sgrigs*, 'arrangement'). The residence of the head of the monastery and of *khutagts* ('saint, majesty, dignified', a class of high Buddhist incarnate priests in Mongolia) or *khuwilgaans* ('emanation', reincarnation, incarnated lama) could be a yurt, a bigger yurt within a courtyard or even a small palace situated anywhere within or near the complex separately. Some monastic complexes stood in a fenced-off area (the material of the fence was similar to the material of the buildings, as was available), but most of them were not fenced off, but stood in a plain area. Sometimes only the central temples or some of them were fenced-off and not the surrounding buildings and dwellings. Litter was displaced usually a bit far



Sketch of the remnants drawn by the authors at Ikh jas, a middle-sized monastery site. Dundgow' aimag, Gurwansaikhan sum

(about 100 m) from the monastic site in the southeast to avoid the bad smell reaching the monastery. The surrounding hills and mountains were honoured and on their peaks *owoos* (stone heaps on the peaks and crossroads for the worship of local spirits) were erected and usually there was one or some of them that were worshipped annually by the monastery's lamas. Holy springs (*rashaan*, Skrt. *rasayāna*); special rocks (for example *uushai*, human shaped rock) of the neighbouring area were also worshipped. An interesting fact is that some sites are situated just beside ancient (e.g. Turkic) burial or sacred places (*kheregüsüür*).

As it was mentioned above, monasteries were built of bricks and mud, wood or stone. In the case of buildings made of brick in almost every case there was one or several kilns (*baayuu*) nearby where blue (gray) or red coloured bricks were burnt. As mostly Chinese operated these kilns, and built and decorated the temple buildings, and also because of commercial purposes, there were small Chinese settlements next to several bigger monasteries. Chinese merchants wandered the countryside and stopped by monasteries to sell their products and the bigger sites there were Chinese stores (*püüs*, Chinese *pu zi / pu li*) in permanent places where animal products (wool, leather, etc.) were bought from Mongolians and other products (silk, flour, etc.) were sold for them.

TYPES OF MONASTIC SITES

Old monastic sites can be divided into the following categories: monastic city (*khüree*) with about 800-2000 lamas, monastery (*khiid*) with about 50-500 lamas, temple (*süm* or *dugan*, Tib. 'du-khang) with some dozens of lamas and assembly (*khural* or *jas*) with only a few lamas. In some assemblies (operating for example in a yurt) permanent ceremonies could be held by a few lamas, while in other assemblies (also named as *khural* or *jas*), which were guarded usually by only one lama, ceremonies were held for example only for some days in summer by lamas coming from big monasteries of the area for this purpose. A special type of assemblies was the *örtöö jas* or *örtöö khural*, which were established nearby relay stations (*örtöö*) of Mongols, situated about 30 kilometres from each other on the route. It seems that there was such a route in Öwörkhongai and another for Chinese merchants in Dundgow', by which several monasteries were situated in the area surveyed.

The administrative divisions of Mongolia at the beginning of the 20th century were totally different from that of today's Mongolia. While in the old times the area of the *Khalkh* Mongols was divided into four big areas of the four *khans*, today there are 18 big and some smaller provinces (*aimag*), and some cities with county level state. According to the old administrative divisions the three present *aimags* visited by us were situated in the area of three old *aimag* divisions, namely Setsen khan, Tüsheet khan and Sain noyon khan *aimag*. The old

aimag divisions were divided into smaller units (*khoshuu*, 'banner, battalion, administrative unit'), the centre of which was the monastic city of a worldly noble (*khüree*). These *aimag* divisions and especially the *khoshuu* subdivisions within them had changed many times.

The biggest monastic sites in the area visited were of course always big centres in the given *aimag* and *khoshuu* of the old administrative divisions. These were the followings by *aimags*: in Öwörkhangaï *aimag*: *Dalai gūnii khüree* (Yesönzüil), *Beilin khüree* (Ölziit), *Baruun khüree* (Kharkhorin sum), *Erdene zuu* (Kharkhorin city), *Sain noyonii khüree* (Uyanga), *Akhai beisiin khüree* (Züünbayan-Ulaan), *Arwaikheeriin khüree* (Arwaikheer city); in Dundgow' *aimag*: *Sangiin dalai khiid* (Erdenedalai), *Khoshuu khiid* (Delgerkhangaï), *Ül oldokhiin khiid* (Khuld), *Delgeriin choir* (Delgertsogt), *Ikh jas* (Gurwan-Saikhan), *Baruun choir* (Tsagaandelger). No such big sites were visited as none were situated in Töv *aimag*'s southern part. On the area of the different *khoshuus* there were different kinds of monasteries from the big complexes housing around 1000 lamas, through various other monasteries with some hundreds of lamas and several temples, to shrines guarded by only one lama. Moreover, they were founded in different periods from the 16th century till the beginning of the 20th century. For example the monasteries *Erdene zuu* (Kharkhorin city) and *Baruun* (Kharkhorin sum) were founded early (by Awtai sain khan in 1586 and by Öndör Gegeen Zanabazar around 1650), while Zawa Damdin (1867-1937) founded several monasteries in Dundgow' at the beginning of the 20th century. Most of the small *jas* temples were founded at the beginning of the 20th century. In some areas there were many small *jas* temples with only one guard or offering preparer in residence, and these were visited by lamas of the main monastery of the area (*khoshuu*) or bigger monasteries usually in summer for holding ceremonies. In some areas there were *jas* temples for every *otog* (clan), often named after the *otog* names of the area.

Of the small *zod* (Tib. *gcod*, 'cutting through')¹⁶ tantric temples, many of them operating in yurts (sometimes with kitchen and other buildings put up) only some were marked on Rinchen's map, occasionally. In other cases *zod* masters lived nearby the big monastic complexes, holding ceremonies in their own yurts. Sometimes they even had small temples nearby. In most cases these *zod* temples were not registered separately by the survey team, but mentioned

¹⁶ A system of practices for the purpose of cutting through the four *Māras* and ego-clinging based on the *Prajñāpāramitā*. This practice was introduced by the Indian *śiddha* Phadampa Sangye (Padamba sanjee, Tib. pha-dam-pa sangs-rgyas, who introduced the 'pacification of suffering' teaching (*Shijed*, Tib. zhi-byed) teaching in Tibet, and his disciple and his Tibetan consort Machik labdrön (Majiglawdonma, Tib. ma-gcig lab-sgron ma, 'Only Mother Lamp of Dharma', 1055-1143).

together with the big monastery complex. Some sites of small *zod* assemblies were found by the surveyors based on informants' instructions, which was difficult as similarly to other small assemblies or assemblies operating in yurt temples these were not always marked on Rinchen's map and top of it there are almost no remnants in these cases. However, in case being no old lama or knowledgeable old local people still living in a given *sum*, it is now impossible to trace these *zod* assemblies, similarly to other small temples. Therefore we can conclude that even the outcomes of the present survey revealed some less than the actual number of old monastery and assembly sites in the area, but to get a fuller and more exact number of temples will never be possible.

FOLLOWED SECTS

Teachings of the Yellow Sect were extremely dominant in the area similarly to other areas of the area of today's Mongolia. It seems that only *Erdene zuu*, which was the first monastery in Mongolia and the small assembly of the lama known as *Morchin Dorj* (i.e. *Lowonchimbiin süm*, Dundgow' aimag, Adaatsag sum) followed the views of the Sakya Sect (Mong. *saġa*, Tib. *sa-skya*), while *Noyon khutagt's* monastery (*Noyon khutagtiin khiid*, Bogd sum, Öwörkhantai aimag) was famous about its Red Sect teachings (Nyingma, Mong. *nyinmaa(ba/wa)*, Tib. *rnying-ma(-pa)*). No traces of Kagyü Sect (Mong. *garjid/gajüd*, Tib. *bka'-(b)rgyud*) were found in the area. *Zoch* tantric masters followed different tantric lineages, and there were temples of *zoch* masters also nearby the monasteries, in some cases even inside the monastic complex itself. In the latter case, it was usually the *Lamrim datsan* (Tib. *lam-rim grwa-tshang*) in which *zoch* lamas gathered. It is important to notice that sometimes high-ranking lamas of the assemblies were *zoch* tantric masters as well, as Yellow Sect and *zod* tantric systems do not preclude each other. There was no monastery situated in the area with Mongolian reading at the beginning of the 20th century, nor Chinese Buddhist temples. Muslim or Catholic temples were found neither, though these also existed in some areas in Mongolia before the purges.

MONASTERY NAMES

The monasteries were and are known under different names or name variants. Usually a monastery was known under several different names, such as for example a name given after the place it was situated, another, Tibetan name, a name which is the Mongolian translation of the Tibetan name, and perhaps a name including the name or title of a famous lama associated with the site. The names can be classified into the following name categories (with some examples for each):

There were monasteries named after the famous lama or *khutagt* who founded it or who headed it. In Öwörkhantai aimag the examples are *Zuugiin lamiin süm*

(Kharkhorin city); *Lawran Bandidiin khural* (Züünbayan-Ulaan), *Noyon khutagtiin khiid* (Bogd); in Dundgow' aimag *Bari /Bragri (khamba) lamiin khiid* (Saikhan-Owoo), *Khutagt lamiin khiid* (Saikhan-Owoo), *Tsorjiin jas* (Delgertsogt); *Tsakhir erdene lamiin khural* (Delgertsogt), in Töv aimag *Khalzan gelengiin jas* (Bayan-Önjüül), *Dar' ekh lamiin khiid* (Altanbulag), *Manzshir khiid* (Zuunmod city).

There were monasteries named after a noble whose area it was situated in. In Öwörkhantai aimag the monastery names of this kind are *Dalai gүнii khüree* (Yesönzüül), *Beilin khüree* (Ölziit), *Sain noyonii khüree* (Uyanga), *Akhai beisiin khüree* (Züünbayan-Ulaan), in Dundgow' *Noyonii khiid* (Ölziit).

There are names given after the number of the lamas belonging to the monastery's community at the time of its foundation. In Dundgow' aimag many monasteries were named this way: *Zuutiin khiid* (Adaatsag), *Khorin jas* (Adaatsag), *Tawin jas* (Rinchen 732), *Khorin khural* (Saintsagaan), *Guchin jas* (Gurwansaikhan), *Tawin jas* (Gurwansaikhan), *Tawan jas* (Gurwansaikhan), *Guchit jas* (Gow'-Ugtaal).

There were also monasteries named after someone for whom the monastery was founded. Examples are *Awai eejiin jas* (Delgertsogt) in Dundgow' aimag and *Dalai eejiin jas* (Bayan-Önjüül) situated in Töv aimag. These two assemblies were named after the breast-feeding nanny of Öндөр Gegeen Zanabazar and her sister for whom he founded these.

There were monasteries with Tibetan names (used usually only as name variants). In Öwörkhantai aimag for example *Ribogejigandanshaddüwlin* (Tib. *ri-bo dge-rgyas dga'-ldan bshad-sgrub gling*, i.e. *Baruun khüree* in Kharkhorin sum), *Gandan semplen* (Tib. *dga'-ldan tshe 'phel gling*, i.e. *Sain noyonii khüree* in Uyanga), *Töwkhön khiid* (Tib. *sgrub-khang* in Bat-Ölziit), *Gandandashchoilin datsan* (Tib. *dga'-ldan bkra-shis chos gling* in Taragt), *Ribogejigandannorowlin* (Tib. *ri-bo dge-rgyas dga'-ldan nor-bu gling*, i.e. *Beilin khüree* in Ölziit), *Gandanshadüwlin* (Tib. *dga'-ldan bshad-sgrub gling*, i.e. *Akhai beisiin khüree* in Züünbayan-Ulaan), *Gandanshadüwlin* (Tib. *dga'-ldan bshad-sgrub gling*, i.e. *Khüitengiin khüree* in Nariinteel sum), and in Dundgow' *Gündüjambaalin* (Tib. *kun-tu spyin-pa gling*, i.e. *Bari /Bragri (khamba) lamiin khiid* in Saikhan-Owoo), *Dashtseepe(l)lin* (Tib. *bkra-shis tshe 'phel gling*, i.e. *Khutagt lamiin khiid* in Saikhan-Owoo), *Dorjdamba datsan* (Tib. *rdo-rje brtan-pa grwa-tshang*, i.e. *Tsakhirtiin jas* in Delgertsogt) had Tibetan names or name variants that are known till now. In general, all monasteries and temples, and even individual temples and monastic schools within a monastery complex had Tibetan names, but only for a couple of them was the Tibetan name the widely used one.

Mongolian translations of the Tibetan monastery name were also used (for example *Ölziigöör arwiжуuлагч khiid*, Dundgow' aimag, Saikhan-Owoo sum), in case of some monasteries being a widely-known name.

Numerous monasteries were named after the place they were situated. These sites in Öwörkhangaï aimag were for example *Khyatruuliin rashaanii süm* (Bat-Ölzii sum), *Bööröljüütiin khural / Züün ereetiin khural* (Uyanga), *Baruun ereetiin khural* (Uyanga sum), *Khar usnii khiid* (Taragt), *Tsagaan owoogiin khural* (Nariinteel), *Ongiin khural* (Bayangol sum), *Aman usnii khiid* (Bayan-Öndör); in Dundgow' *Delgeriin choir* (Delgertsogt), *Tsagaan khadat* (Ölziit), *Bilüünii khiid / Bulag bilüünii khural* (Ölziit), *Khongor tolgoïn jas* (Tsagaandelger), *Zülegtiin jas / Bayan uulin jas* (Tsagaandelger), and in Töw aimag: *Ar shawartiin am / Olon shandiin khiid* (Altanbulag), *Bor öndöriin jas* (Altanbulag), *Bulgiin tokhoi(n khural)* (Altanbulag).

There were monasteries with names with various meanings like 'Old monastery', (*Öwgön khiid*, i.e. *Sain noyonii khüree* in Uyanga sum, Öwörkhangaï aimag), 'Great jas / assembly' (*Ikh jas* in Gurwan-Saikhan sum, Dundgow' aimag), 'Medical temple in the mountains' (*Uuliin mamba / Uul mambiin khiid*, Gurbansaikhan sum, Dundgow' aimag), 'Monastery of printing blocks' (*Bart khüree*, i.e. *Arwaikheerin khüree* in Arwaikheer city, Öwörkhangaï aimag).

Some monasteries were named after the *otog* (clan) in the area of which the monastery was situated, for example sites found in Dundgow': *Uuliin khural* (Bayanjargalan), *Ukhaatai jas* (Tsagaandelger) and *Uutiin jas* (Gow'-Ugtaal).

There were assemblies named after a deity (e.g. *Dar' ekhiin jas* in Tsagaandelger sum, Dundgow' aimag; *Janraisegiin jas*, i.e. *Bayartiin jas* in Altanbulag sum, Töw aimag).

Some monasteries were named in pairs 'eastern and western monastery' as in Dundgow' *Züün Ganjuur(iin khiid)* (Gow'-Ugtaal) and *Baruun Ganjuur(iin khiid)* (Gow'-Ugtaal); *Baruun choir* (Tsagaandelger) with its pair *Züün choir khiid* in the present Gow'-Sümber aimag's Sümber sum; and in Öwörkhangaï aimag *Baruun khural* (Taragt) and *Züün khural* (Taragt), and another other two monasteries with their names being similarly *Baruun khural* (Ölziit) and *Züün khural* (Ölziit).

Monastic cities were named after the *khoshuu* the centre of which the monastery was. These were for example *Üzen wangiin (khoshuunii) khüree* (Arwaikheer city), *Ilden beiliin (khoshuunii) khüree* (Ölziit sum), and *TüsHEET khanii khüree* (i.e. *Baruun khüree* in Kharkhorin sum) in Öwörkhangaï aimag, and *Tüshee wangiin khüree* (i.e. *Khoshuu khiid* in Delgerkhangaï) in Dundgow' aimag.

Moreover, some monastic cities are named after the *aimag* or *sum* in the centre of which the monastery is situated now *Arwaikheeriin khüree* (Arwaikheer city), *Uyangiin khüree* (i.e. *Sain noyonii khüree* in Uyanga), even old lamas frequently use these names when speaking about their old monasteries. However, as these *aimag* and *sum* territories were formed in the socialist period and re-formed in the last decades, these monastery names are always of newer origin, in contrast to the regional names including the name of the old *khoshuu* areas.

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE INTERVIEWS MADE WITH OLD LAMAS

All informants were very helpful and very glad to talk about their time spent in the old monasteries in their childhood and young years. Interviews were made with the help of the questionnaire form (prepared for the survey by the authors) due to the lack of time to ask the informants for telling their own stories, and also as it was the effective way to get detailed information. Sensitive questions about their own experiences on circumstances of arrestments of lamas and destroying of the monastery were omitted in many cases.

In the three *aimags* 35 old lamas were found and interviewed (9 in Öwörkhanguai, 23 in Dundgow', and 3 in the southern part of Töw). These lamas were born in the 1910's-1920's and are now in their 80's-100's, some in very bad state of health. Some were meeting the surveyors in his bed he can not leave, and many are hard of hearing or seeing or even blind. What is very important, all of them had clear mind, they could remember and tell things, even if of course not remembering all details, though some could give only restricted information. There was only one informant who had shown signs of senility in his speech, with the consequence that the data he gave was not reliable.

Generally, these informants started to learn Tibetan prayers at their 5-7 years of age, then becoming a lama and belonging to the community of a monastery. Some of them had belonged to two or even three different monasteries in order, becoming a lama in a smaller one, and then studying in a bigger one. They were forced to secular life in the 1930's (the majority of them in 1937) and usually fulfilled military service for 5-10 years. The family name of some of the informants are the name of their mother (instead of father's name as traditionally) as it had to be kept in secret to avoid prejudice that they are offsprings of lamas, considered 'counter-revolutionarists'. Most of the monasteries were destroyed in 1937-1938 but 1945 was mentioned as well as date of destroying by informants. In some case the old lamas managed to hide some artifacts (statue of the main protector, books, etc.), and the surveyors were shown boxes these were hidden in and later recovered. After disarming they became shepherds or undertake other professions like driver etc., and most of them got married under pressure. During the soviet period secret ceremonies were held by some groups of ex-lamas, but these were mentioned to the surveyors in only some cases, this being still a difficult topic. However, almost all of them participated in the revival of the given old monastery or a new temple in the *sum* centre together with all other lamas who were alive that time. Those who have moved to Ulaanbaatar participated in the revival there, but these lamas also participated in ceremonies in their homeland temples, returning for these occasions temporarily.

Based on the old lama's activities in the revival, the ceremonial system of the new temples followed the old traditions. When the revival started the old lamas became the high-ranking lamas of the new assemblies, fulfilling such duties as abbot (*khamba*, Tib. *mkhan-po*), *tsorj* (Tib. *chos-rje*, 'lord of religion'), *lowon* (Tib. *slob-dpon*, master), disciplinary master (*gesgüi*, Tib. *dge-bskyos*) and chanting master (*unzad / umzad*, Tib. *dbu-mdzad*). In places where several old lamas gathered together all such ranks were fulfilled by them. The old protector deity became protector of the new assembly as well. Ceremonies and texts chanted in a given temple and also the way of chanting and melodies followed the tradition of the old monasteries.

Data providers could provide relevant data on the name of the monastery and its *datsans* (if there was any), temples, buildings and stūpas, philosophical schools; exact location of the monastic site according to the old and new administrative divisions (*aimag / khoshuu* and *aimag / sum*); name of the surrounding area; mountains, owoos, springs that were worshipped nearby the site; main protectors and deities of the monastery; approximate number of lamas; famous lamas and *khuwilgaan* if there was any; ranks in the monastery; names of some of the ranked lamas (sometimes this information was not asked, if yes, lamas of smaller monasteries could provide relevant data); name of *zoch* lamas living nearby; building material of the temples and other buildings; handbook (*igchaa / igcha*, Tib. *yig-cha*) of the philosophical monastic school (mainly if they studied it); the main ceremonies and events of the monastic life; and the closing of the monastery, capturing of high-ranking lamas, and the names of old lamas still alive. They also mentioned if laypeople or poor had lived nearby and also Chinese merchants, their stores (*püüs*, Chinese *pu zi / pu li*) and Chinese workers if there were any in the area. They were able to help drawing the draft of the arrangement of the old monastery site, by accounting in detail the arrangement of the buildings orally. Some lamas even draw the sketch themselves.

Unfortunately, only two or three of them were in a health condition good enough to accompany us to the site of their old monastery, and to show us around it and give detailed explanations of the remnants. Usually they do not live at the site or nearby, but in *sum* or *aimag* centres.

Data providers could not really serve precise data on the Tibetan name of the monastery, only if it was widely known by its Tibetan name; the details of its *datsans* and its temples, only on the one they belonged to or studied in; the foundation date of the monastery (in case if it being not a specially well known one or being a newer one, founded at the beginning of the 20th century); number of herds and flocks and other economic data of the monastery; the circumstances of destroying of the monastery (who did it and how). It was very rare that an informant could name the date of closing and destroying the monas-

tery, they usually answered relating to a general period saying “it was in the period when monasteries were closed”. Only a very few of them owns a drawing of the arrangement of the old monastery.

Old photos were not found at all, though in a monastery in Uyanga sum, Öwörkhangai aimag, they had one displayed on the temple wall (*Gandansemplen khiid*) but the picture was taken from the Archives; and in Saikhan-Owoo sum, Dundgow’ aimag, in an other temple (*Gündüjambaalin*), which is situated at the ruins of *Bari /Bragri (khamba) lamiin khiid* the head showed us old pictures of an other monastery in the area, *Khoshuu khiid* (Delgerkhangai sum), taken also from the Archives. In the same monastery, old paintings and drawings showing the old monastery (*Bari /Bragri (khamba) lamiin khiid*) are kept in the yurt museum established at the site. New paintings based on the memories of old lamas representing the old complex of *Baruun Ganjuur(iin khiid)* and *Züün Ganjuur(iin khiid)* are displayed in the new *Ganjuur* temple (*Ganjuur khiid*) in Gow’-Ugtaal sum, Dundgow’ aimag. In Uyanga sum, Öwörkhangai aimag, a drawing of *Sain noyonii khüree* made on the basis of the instructions from old lamas was shown to the surveyors. No other drawings or sketches were found.

The authors studied the collection of the Film Archives in Ulaanbaatar looking for relevant photos. Boxes 92 and 93 contain some photos related to some monasteries of the three provinces. For example photos of *Erdene zuu* (K24102-24213), *Baruun khüree* and *Zuugiin lamiin khiid* (K24217-K24222), *Töwkhön khiid* (K23792-K23805), *Ongiin goliin khiid* (K23643-K23650), and *Manzshir khiid* (K23806-K23920) are available there. Box 163 also contains some photos, mainly related to the revival of *Erdene zuu*.

GENERAL FEATURES OF OLD MONASTIC LIFE BASED ON THE INTERVIEWS

There was a main assembly hall in every monastery where the daily chanting was held. There was at least another temple dedicated to the wrathful protector to the monastery (called *Sakhiusnii dugan* or *Arwan khangal*), too. Other temples, dedicated to *Tārā* (*Dar’ ekhiin dugan / süm*, Tib. *sgrol-ma*), the Medicine Buddha (*Manaliin dugan*, Tib. *sman-bla*), Maitreya (*Maidariin dugan*, Tib. *byams-pa*), Avalokiteśvara (*Janraisegiin dugan*, Tib. *spyen-ras-gzigs*), or to the Kanjur (*Ganjuuriin dugan*, Tib. *bka’-gyur*), etc. also stood in bigger monasteries, with daily chanting, special ceremonies and training. Stūpas stood in or near to many of the monastic places, sometimes in a row (like the 8 stūpas of Buddha) in the north, sometimes at the four sides of the complex. There was sometimes only one large stūpa, and in other monasteries small stūpas were scattered in the area around the complex. Books were printed in some monasteries, but a separate printing house (*barkhan*, Tib. *par-khang*) operated only in some big monastic cities.

Monastic schools (*datsan*, Tib. *grwa-tshang*) belonged to the bigger monasteries and monastic cities. The most usual was the philosophical monastic school (*choir datsan*, Tib. *chos-grwa grwa-tshang*), where exams could be taken regularly (*domiin damjaa*, Tib. *sdom-pa'i/ston-mo'i (?) dam-bca'*, *gawjiin damjaa*, Tib. *dka'-bcu'i dam-bca'*). Other monastic schools, such as medical (*Manba/Mamba datsan*, Tib. *sman-pa grwa-tshang*), astrological (*Zurkhai datsan*, Tib. *rtsis-pa grwa-tshang*), Gradual Path (*Lamrim datsan*, Tib. *lam-rim grwa-tshang*) and tantric (*Jüid datsan*, Tib. *rgyud grwa-tshang*) also existed in many bigger monasteries surveyed in the area. In them, other exams could be taken, for example that of tantric schools (*agramba*, Tib. *sngags-rams-pa*) and that of medical schools (*maaramba*, Tib. *sman-rams-pa*), but these were much more rare. At least a doctor (*otoch / emch*) and an astrologer (*zurkhaich*) belonged to every bigger site.

Tsam dance was performed in only some of the larger monasteries, and on different dates and scale, with different types of *Tsam* performed. Maitreya's statue with its green horse was circumambulated (*Maidar ergek*) annually in almost every monastery, usually in spring or autumn. *Tsam* dance was in many cases held the day after the Maitreya circumambulation. The volumes of the Kanjur (*Ganjuur*, Tib. *bka'-gyur*) and other sacred books were circumambulated (*Ganjuur ergek*), too, sometimes on camel carts and sometimes carried by people. In some cases the circumambulation took place around the given monastery or monastic city for a day, and in some cases in the area of the whole *khoshuu* lasting for a month. It seems that ceremonies of the Lunar New Year like the three days long *khuuchin khural* ('old ceremonies', being the last ceremonies of the year on the 27-29th of the last winter month), *sor zalakh* (Tib. *zor-phreng*, the ritual burning of the pyramidal sacrificial cake and structure), *Tsedor lkham* (Tib. *tshes-gtor lha-mo*, 'the yearly ceremonial cake offering to Baldan lkham') on New-Year's Eve, and the *Choinpürel molom yerööl* (Tib. *chos-phrul smon-lam*, 'prayers of miracle showing', ceremonies commemorating Buddha's defeat of the six masters, the holders of heretical doctrines by mysterious methods including miracles) or *Ikh yerööl* ('great prayers') for 15 days were held in every monastery and the annual great days of the Buddha and also of Tsongkapa were said to be celebrated everywhere as well. Fully-ordained lamas (*gelen*, Tib. *dge-slong*, bhikṣu) belonged to almost every monastery in considerable number, therefore *Khailen* summer retreat (Tib. *khas-len*) for 45 day to strengthen the vows of lamas and to amend downfalls was held in almost every monastery (for this ceremony at least four *gelen* lama is required, and therefore nowadays, in lack of them, is not often held even in Mongolian monasteries). Meditational fasts (*Nünnai / Nügnai*, Tib. *smyung gnas*) were also held in almost every monastery.

The monasteries were lead by the head, usually bearing the title of abbot, *tsorj* or *lowon*. Individual temples (even of a complex) were lead by the head (*ter-*

güün) who could bore the title *khamba* (this later or in case of individual temples). In *datsans* the head was called *shunlaiw* (Tib. *gzhung lugs-pa / gzhung las-pa*). Other important ranks were that of the disciplinary masters and the chanting masters. Of these, there were 2 or 4 in the main assembly hall (*tsog-chin*, Tib. *tshogs-chen*) and usually 2-2 in the other temples. As for the tasks these title-holders carry out, the *unzad* leads the chanting, being very skilled in the melodies and the method of chanting though, as important, they are well versed in all the texts that are used in all the ceremonies held in their monastery / monastic school; the *gesgüi* is responsible for keeping order in every aspect of monastic life in the temple, maintaining order during the ceremonies and carrying out punishments if necessary; while the *tsorj* and the *lowon* both have important roles in special events or ceremonies, when they perform specific ceremonial tasks or conduct the meditation practices necessary for performing the rituals. In a limited number of bigger monasteries there was an oracle who, in trans, interpreted the pronouncements of the protectors (*choi-jin*, Tib. *chos-skyong*, Skrt. *dharmapāla*). Administrators (*zaisan*, *daamal*, *demch*) belonged to only the big monasteries, while the small ones only had maybe a *nyaraw* (Tib. *gnyer-pa*) to deal with the property of the monastery. Financial units (*jas*) belonged to every temple in the bigger sites, but there were just a few or only one in small monasteries or temples. Usually the only financial unit was called 'main financial unit' (*ikh jas*). In addition, there were other assistants fulfilling other duties. In every temple the offering master (*chombon / chowombo*, Tib. *mchod-dpon*) together with the offering assistants (*takhilch*), was responsible for the preparation and proper arrangement of the offerings. The chanting masters' assistants were the chanters (*golch*, 'central ones', named after the fact that they sat in the most inner rows of lama benches in one line with the ranked ones), taking a leading part in the recitation. Disciplinary assistants (*geyeg*, Tib. *dge-g-yog*) helped with the activities of the disciplinary masters (*gesgüi*) while the shrine keepers (*duganch*, Tib. *du-khang-pa*) were responsible for keeping the temples clean and ensuring that the right belongings or accessories were ready when needed. These are the same in bigger temples today, according to size and possibilities.

The biggest monastic centres were founded as residences for nobles such as Sain *noyon khan*, Ilden *beil*, Akhai *gün*, etc., so laymen and also Chinese merchants could live around it. Lay population did not reside in the monastic area, but surrounding the monastery, and poor families and beggars also could live nearby, mainly around the big monastic cities. According to the monastic rules, lamas were forbidden to make any relationship with women. Those lamas who were interested in women or had wife could not live in the monastery as they were chased out, but in the countryside, but they still came to the ceremonies every day or rarely. Believers often visited the monasteries for

pilgrimage and worship, or visiting their sons, brothers or other relatives who belonged there, and the monasteries were operating from their donations (brick tea, dairy products, livestock, silk, juniper, flour, wheat, etc.), too. Monasteries had livestock being herd on remote pastures.

There was no nunnery in the area (in fact there is no data on any nunnery in Mongolia's area in the old times at all) with woman lamas (*getselmaa*, Tib. *dge-tshul-ma*, Skrt. śramaṇerikā, female novice, with 10 precepts or *gelenmaa*, Tib. *dge-slong-ma*, Skrt. bhikṣunī, fully ordained nun with 386 precepts) living in. Women practitioners belonged to only *zod* tantric assemblies, and in a very few cases also to *zod* temples within big monastery complexes (this was accounted by some informants).

There were connections between monasteries situated close to each other or in the same district. In many cases lamas visited each other's monastery, or came for (specialized) studies for a period. Furthermore, there was a central monastery in every *khoshuu*, which was the biggest of the area, with other monasteries being subordinated to it. Lamas occasionally came from Tibet or mainly from *Bogdiin Khüree*, the monastic capital, for some days to give initiations and teachings. Tibetan resident lamas lived only in a very few monasteries in the area. Itinerant lamas (*badarchin*) wandered huge areas for pilgrimage and to collect alms. *Zoch* tantric masters also wandered in the countryside to meditate and do their tantric practices. For periods, they also stopped by monastic complexes and held their ceremonies there or nearby.

CONCLUSIONS ON CURRENTLY WORKING (NEWLY FOUNDED OR REVIVED) TEMPLES

When revival started funds for reconstruction of partially remained and ruined monasteries or for establishing new temples came mostly from individuals, including old lamas still living and their families, the descendants of lamas who were purged or who have passed away since then, as well as local businessmen and authorities, even local party leaders. *Gandan* monastery and the Mongolian State also contributed. As works started various foreign organizations and Buddhist institutions offered help both from Europe and America and from Asian countries such as Taiwan, Japan, Nepal, Hong Kong and India. Rinpoches who embraced the movement of Buddhist revival in Mongolia like Gurudeva¹⁷ or Kushok Bakula (1917-2003)¹⁸ also had a main part in providing

¹⁷ A highly esteemed lama of Inner-Mongolian origin who, escaping the purges of the Chinese, went to and learnt for decades in Tibet and Nepal. He contributed greatly to the revival, restoration and reopening of temples in Mongolia (*Amarbayasgalant*, *Delgeriin choir*, etc.)

financial means for the rebuilding. In most cases where there was no remained temple building ceremonies were started still immediately in *aimag* and *sum* centres, in any place where these gatherings were possible, being even a room in the local cultural centre or school building, or in a yurt, as rebuilding or construction was a slower process. It was an extremely rare case that any temple building survived intact and still suitable for ceremonies from the first moment so most new temples have been set up in newly built buildings.

However, restoration of old monasteries and temples is easier than keep them operating with an assembly. This effectively depends on the calling and education of the young lamas and the generosity of donors who provide the financial background of the lama community. Without this in the countryside the remote smaller temples, even temples nicely restored in the past years are left abandoned due to the lack of finance and lamas.

In the survey 40 present-day temples were surveyed in the three *aimags*. As it can be seen from the survey data, in Dundgow' there are fewer revived or present-day temples than in Öwörkhantai (its area is more scarcely populated, too). In Öwörkhantai 21 temples, in Dundgow' 17, and in the south part of Töv 2 temples were found and surveyed, including those that are inactive now. Of these, only one was a Red Sect (Nyingmapa) one.

Most of the currently working temples (about 80 percent) are revived old temples, but these are mostly in the *sum* centres, not on the old site. Only a very few was revived on the old site, in partly revived buildings or newly erected temples, and these are still active in a still fewer cases, in case of very famous sites or if being situated in the *sum* centre or other easy to reach places. In many cases when temples were found on old sites, with the passing away of old lamas and especially in lack of possibilities to maintain operation, ceremonies ceased and assemblies dispersed, with only in some cases being able to establish themselves in the *sum* centres again where the temple became more accessible for donators thus gaining more chance to survive. An example of such monasteries revived at its old site and later moved to the *sum* centre is *Ül oldokhiin khiid* (Rinchen 721, in Khuld sum, Dundgow' – unfortunately the new temple in the *sum* centre is inactive by now, too).

¹⁸ A Geshe Lharampa (*gewsh lkhaaramba*, Tib. *dge-bshes lha-rams-pa*, holder of the highest academic degree in Buddhist philosophy) from Tibet's Drepung Losaling Monastery (Tib. 'bras-spungs blo-gsal-gling), the former Indian ambassador to Mongolia from 1989. As ambassador, he contributed immeasurably to the revival of Buddhist institutions in Mongolia. Apart from regular teachings in Ulaanbaatar, he spent his time with travelling all over the country giving teachings. In Ulaanbaatar he founded the only temple fully residential by now.

Today, except from *Gandan*, the centre of Mongolian Buddhism, there is no state funding, so temples operate as private 'enterprises' wherever they depend on donations of devotees visiting on daily basis or on great ceremonial days, and on donations from companies and various foreign or local organizations. This is completed by the amount gained from reciting texts on request. Since the time of Buddha Śākyamuni donors (*jandag*, Tib. *sbyin-bdag*) have had a very important role in the maintenance of the lama community and today the places situated far away from devotees or other financial sources cannot survive. All in all, the *sum* centre and even the *aimag* centre, and mostly Ulaanbaatar are more favourable and possible places for the operation of temples than remote and isolated places.

In most cases it is not the case that a new current temple is the revival of an old one. In most cases, in a *sum* (which is different from the administrative divisions of the times before the purges) only one temple was opened after 1989 (either by the reconstruction of a ruined monastery or temple or by building a small new one), with the participation of old lamas from different old monasteries in the area, and mostly in the *sum* centres, where people can reach it easily for participating in ceremonies, requesting readings and support the operation of the temple by giving offerings to its lama community. In these cases, the new temple should be considered as the revival of all the monasteries that were situated in the present area of the *sum*, or in the area (as *sum* borders have changed). From the 40 current temples, 5 or 6 proved to be newly founded temples with no proven connections with old monasteries, thought at their foundations usually old lamas participated as well. After 2000, new private temples also opened in *aimag* centres: their heads had studied in Ulaanbaatar and then opened their own temples.

In the case of some old sites with greater lama populations it was not rare that 40-50 old lamas participated in the reopenings around 1990, whilst in isolated places sometimes only one or two lamas tried to revive the faded belief. However, almost twenty years had passed on since then.

Though numerous monasteries and temples were revived in the countryside a very said fact is that almost half of the all revived temples or newly built temples have become partly inactive by now (with only annual or monthly ceremonies) and one fourth being totally inactive. From the 40 temples in the area surveyed, 9 is inactive now, without lamas and 14 is only partly active, with only monthly or rather annual ceremonies held, for which their ex-lamas use to come back from Ulaanbaatar. 17 years after the revival only 17 of the 40 temples were found being active with at least 4 lamas, and daily chanting (the biggest of these have 20-30 lamas, but most have much less).

What accounts for the closing down of the temples is that with the passing away of the old lamas who kept temples working and ceremonies performed

and with the lack of lamas already well trained and willing to move in many countryside revived temples have become completely abandoned. The young lamas having been left without a master either disrobe while staying in their homeland and live secular life afterwards finding a better paid 'business' or herding animals, or go away to the capital as they have higher donations and perhaps permanent salaries there if they join one of the main monasteries and learn there. Usually they never return to their home temples. It is a common problem in the countryside that due to the lack of teachers and donations the revived small temples are not able to survive after the masters' passing away. In the most fortunate cases, these temples remain partly active with a very limited number of lamas insisting to stay (mostly only one lama), in other cases with ceremonies only held on great days of the year or in some with monthly ceremonies. Some of the lamas who had left for the bigger monasteries and Buddhist institutions in Ulaanbaatar visit their home temples for these ceremonies sometimes accompanied by some other lama acquaintances from the Ulaanbaatar monastery to help to perform the rituals, which is also a way to help upkeeping the local traditions. However, in most cases there is not much hope that they will settle back in the near future and contribute to the local religious life adding the knowledge they have gained in Ulaanbaatar. On the other hand, for the greater part, the temples are completely left without lamas, not working any more. In these cases the temple buildings (being either newly built ones or renovated old buildings) themselves are in a very bad state of repair and remain with the worship objects taken away by the lamas who left the temple or, if left unguarded, stolen by thieves. (See details on the new temples and their present state in the part by *aimags*)

Nowadays this situation in the countryside means that though there were many temples founded after 1990, by now it is rather rare that an actively working temple can be found in a *sum* (sub-province, administrative unit within the *aimag*). The still active temples are mainly famous and revived historic monasteries, such as *Erdene zuu* (Kharkhorin city) founded as the first monastery in Mongolia in 1586 and *Baruun khüree* (Kharkhorin *sum*) founded by Öndör Gegeen Zanabazar in 1654 in Öwörkhangai; or monasteries situated on isolated but famous places also attracting pilgrims and tourists, such as *Töwkhön khiid* retreat monastery in Öwörkhangai (Bat-Ölzii *sum*) or *Bari /Bragri (khamba) lamiin khiid* (Saikhan-Owoo *sum*, this latter has three of four tourist yurt camps nearby) in Dundgow' at a spectacular site, or temples situated at *sum* centres or other easy to reach places with good transport connections.

Today even *sum* centres with active temples are rare, while *aimag* centres may have 2-3 operating temples, as their population is able to maintain more temples. This is also where lamas of temples that cease operation possibly join in. These *aimag* and *sum* centres have permanent populations and devotee com-

munities, therefore usual donations are ensured. Moreover, people from the remote countryside *ails* (yurts) visit the *sum* centre from time to time, and can also visit the temples. A *sum* centre is also good for young lamas to keep connection with modern life they so much consider important.

Recognizing eminent lamas' reincarnations show the present need for religious dignitaries to direct lamas and the devotees in religious affairs. Several of them, related to certain monasteries or lineages have been searched for and some had been recognized by now. But in most cases their recognition is controversial, or they are recognized by only a small group. In the surveyed area 3 reincarnations were met, all living in Dundgow' aimag, Nüremjawiin Dawaa, an old lama known as Naidan lam (1913-, was a lama in *Bari lamiin khiid*, and participated in its revival) living in Dundgow' aimag, Saikhan-Owoo sum was recognized as the reincarnation of Yonzon bagsh or Minjüür Yonzon (arrested and disappeared in 1925) of the old *Bari /Bragri (khamba) lamiin khiid* (Saikhan-Owoo sum). Presently he belongs to the revived temple on its ruins (Saikhan-Owoo sum), but being very old and ill, rarely participates at the ceremonies. The 30 years old Luwsandarjaa perenleinamjil heading *Delgeriin Choir* monastery in Dundgow' aimag, Delgertsogt sum, was recognized in 2000 as reincarnation of Zawa lam Damdin (1867-1937), the famous Mongolian philosopher lama, founder of many temples, among them *Delgeriin choir*, and composer of the last Buddhist chronicle, the Golden Annals. Batmönkh (born in 1942, known by his lama name Batnyam), was recognized in 2002 as the 5th reincarnation of Lowon khuwilgaan of Baruun Choir (*Baruun choir*, Tsagaandelger sum). He formally belongs to the new temple in Tsagaandelger sum centre (*Gandanrawjaalin / Baruun choir khiid*), but very rarely gathers there but lives in the countryside. Of the three, Luwsandarjaa perenleinamjil is known more widely, and heads an active monastery, with wide connections in Mongolia (especially with his ex-monastery, *Amarbayasgalant khiid* in Selenge aimag), in Tibet and abroad.

There are also several young lamas heading countryside temples who make every effort to preserve the traditions locally left by their old masters. Lamas with great calling also struggle individually to upkeep their isolated temples. These samples show that a few exceptional lamas including young ones still have enough faith and persistence. To solve the problem of the present disappointing situation in the countryside, for the temples struggling for survival visits of lamas from *Gandan* and other bigger temples and of Tibetan teachers, and the return of their young lamas after their studies in Ulaanbaatar or abroad would be the only solution. But for this, even if a few lamas with great calling for the task would be ready to reside in these temples, financial means should also be available. At this moment, this seems to be solved only for a few countryside temples with connections and foreign funds.

SUMMARY

The only detailed accounts of the old way of ceremonial life and the old monasteries is by Pozdneev¹⁹, and also no complete list or account appeared on the once existing monasteries and temples of Mongolia, except for the also deficient maps of Rinchen atlas and Maidar. About the monastic life's special features as once practiced in Mongolian monasteries the sources are scarce. Therefore, the first-hand interviews conducted during the survey, once published will reveal important details. In the framework of the present article it was possible to publish only the basic outcomes and some statistical data of our survey of 150 old and 40 present-day Mongolian monastic sites. As the sites surveyed represent all kinds of Mongolian Buddhist monastic structures (monastic cities, monasteries, temples and small or even temporary assemblies) and no one ever visited and documented so many of them in the area of today's Mongolia the further and more detailed account of the results and the description of the data collected on the individual sites is of high importance. It is of primary importance that from the 150 sites those 36 monasteries on which the authors collected in depth information through first hand oral history, are different in terms of date of founding, size, location, and type. Among them there are big monastic cities of one thousand lamas, founded by Öndör Gegeen, monasteries being centres of the *khoshuu* also with a thousand lama, smaller monasteries with only 20-30 lamas and even sites with only occasional or annual ceremonies. Therefore the data gained on these monasteries of different types, once published, can result in an overall picture of the monastic life in the flourishing period of Mongolian Buddhism.

Similarly, as no account appeared of the revived and presently active Mongolian Buddhist temples of the countryside areas the experiences gained on all temples in a given area can contribute much to our knowledge of present-day Mongolian Buddhism, giving a picture of the exceptional situation of the several biggest and well-financed temples or monasteries or those being situated on famous and often visited sites, and the difficulties and struggle for survival of the numerous small assemblies. Based on the knowledge of the situation of all temples in the area surveyed the consequence can be drawn that the situation of countryside temples in other Mongolian provinces is the same, and this

¹⁹ Pozdneev, A. M., *Mongolija i Mongoly*. T. 1-2. Sankt-Peterburg 1896, 1898 (repr.); Pozdneev, A. M., *Očerki byta buddijskih monastyrej i buddijskogo duhovenstva v Mongolii*, Sankt-Peterburg 1887; Pozdneyev, A. M., *Religion and Ritual in Society: Lamaist Buddhism in late 19th-century Mongolia*. ed.: Krueger, J.R., The Mongolia Society. Bloomington 1978; Pozdneyev, A. M., *Mongolia and the Mongols*, edited by Krueger, J. R., translated by Shaw, J. R. and Plank, D., Bloomington, Indiana University 1971.

also emphasizes the importance of our survey, the basic results of which are summarized hereby.

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