Shamanism is one of the oldest forms of religion in Mongolia. It has been developed on the basis of the belief in totemism and dates back to 300 to 400 BC. The Huns, ancestors of the Mongolians, worshiped shamanism and made it the state religion. Since then the people of Mongol origin, who lived in the territory of Mongolia, have been worshiped shamanism. The word shaman (böö) is a common noun that can be divided into two categories: a male shaman (büge) and a female shaman (idugan). Hun and Mongol people worshiped the sun and the moon, and made sacrificial offerings to the heavens, the earth, spirits, and their ancestors.

The main rite of shamanism is to worship and sacrifice heaven. Shamanism venerates the blue sky and green earth. In shamanism, there are 55 deities (Tenger) of the west who are well disposed towards humans and 44 deities (Tenger) of the east who cause all misfortunes. Shamanism worships a total of 99 deities. These deities are answerable to the clans or tribes, including individual persons, before the power of nature. In addition, in shamanism there are water spirits (lus), and mountain spirits (savdag), as well as souls and amulets. Devotees worship these objects as their guardians.

The life of the hunters is devoted to catching beasts. There is a notion that the dispositions of wild beasts are linked to the spirits. This established a relationship between hunters and wild beasts and created a method for how to deal with them, together with rules on how to kill or control them. The rites involving libations and consecrations were established, as was a habit to preserve nature and conserve wild beasts. These habits became traditions that have been observed by nomadic peoples from generation to generation. Over time, the skills and methods used to domesticate some wild animals and to hunt others were transferred to animal breeders. The animal breeders then started worshipping nature, mountains, waters, and the sun.
and moon. These rituals formed and spread widely and have been performed and maintained up to the present day.

In shamanism there is a view that every being has a spirit. The invocations, incantations, and consecrations in shamanism are performed by shamans, who are considered to be unusual and to possess the magical power or "ongon" of the spirits. There are three varieties of spirits. The first is the soul of a living being or of the body flesh obtained from the mother; the second is the conscience of thinking, which is the soul of bones obtained from the father; and the third is the soul, reincarnation, or spirit separated from the body after death. In shamanism, the spirit is a life in the body. If the spirit is separated from the body, the living body dies. There are the notions of invocation of spirit and exorcism of the evil spirit. The shamans perform rituals of the incantations, invocations and exorcism.

The aggregation of shamanistic views can be considered in the following sense:

1. The preference for the penetration of the shamanistic spirit. The role of the shaman is to regulate and pacify them.
2. The preference to invite the shaman's ongon, which serves to support good deeds and to drive away evil spirits. The ongon abides in holy places, so they are invited in to demonstrate their supernatural power.
3. The preference for the magical ability of shamanism in exorcising evil spirits. Devotees believe that the ongon of spirits can drive out misfortune, illness, and evil spirits with the guardian power of shamans. For instance, it is said in an invocation that exorcises evil spirits:

   We let you free,
   When the horns of goats reach into space
   When the scut of camels drags along the ground
   When field hares grow horns
   When calves shall have tusks

Rituals are the main elements of Mongolian shamanism and play very important role in its practices. There are two important entities that shamanic rituals seek to invoke or influence. The first is the White Heaven, which controls everything in the western direction. The other is the heart-shaped Black Heaven, which controls everything in the eastern direction. The shamanic rites seek to invoke the ninety-nine deities, to whom offerings are made. There are also the mountain-rites, cairn-rites, and tree-rites and spring-rites, all of which are related to the traditions and rituals of worshipping the earth as Mother. Together with them, there are the fire-rites, ancestor-rites, saddle-thongs rites, destiny-rites, and horse-rites. There are also the entrance-rites and lightning-rites. Shamanist rites assume that nature has godliness. Shamans use the rites to get into contact with this godliness, which occurs while the shamans are in a trance.
December 23rd and 24th of every lunar year are, for Mongolians, the days of worshiping fire. On December 23rd, the deity of fire appears and informs Indra about the living beings of the universe. The worshiping of fire of the Mongols has traversed many centuries, undergone various changes, and adapted to diverse local spaces, but its general tenor is the same.

The masters of fire are called as “Mother of fire”, “Song of fire”, “Heaven of mother-fire” “Daughter-deity of fire,” and “Heaven of fire”. Since Buddhism spread over Mongolia, the name “Hermit heaven, King of the Fire Meraja” has become commonly used.

The preparation for worship is the first act of these rituals. Then the fire deity is invited. Offerings are made to them. Then the ode to fire is recited, and a prayer and statement for fire deities and a benediction are uttered. Then we entrust the fire deity to make the devotees healthy and wealthy and solicit offering in a melodious tune. The offerings of worship were shared with all the participants. The proceedings of the rituals of worshiping fire are established in detail. For example, the colour of fire is red, so the breast of a sheep is covered by red threads. We regard the khyalgana as the best sort of grass for animals and put a piece of this grass on it. As we call upon horses to be scattered over the valley, we offer the breast. We also offer ribs as an offering of camels, rectum of sheep as an offering of sheep, and the area outside of the breast as an offering of goats. We kindle ghee lamps and incense on four sides of the trivet to prevent a fire from the evils. The offerings to the fire must be sanctimonious. So, wood for the fire worship are collected from the places where animals do not trod. The breast meat, which is used for worship, is prepared in the autumn and kept in a store cleanly.

Mongolians celebrate the ritual of worshipping fire as the “small Lunar Month” and perform them according to the established rules. The statement, invocation, and benediction of worshipping fire were orally transmitted and, later, they written in sutras and books. Here, let us quote a short benediction of worshipping fire:

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**FIRE WORSHIPPING CEREMONIES**

We pray by proffering grease
To the noble spirit of fire
Flaming as a cloud;
Feeding the ground with its warmth
May a good omen prevail the world over!
We drop melted grease on
Your flame and pray for you;
We may stay in boundless ecstasy
By having numberless animals
By sanctifying this holy spirit of worship;
Let our animals increase
Let our life be longer
Let us live in incomparable rapture;
We beseech the offerings
From magnanimous mother-fire
Whose origins are from heaven
Whose birth was from earth
Khurai, khurai, khurai!

We beseech an offering
From fire heaven
Whose origin is from Heaven
Whose birth is from the green earth.
Khurai, khurai, khurai!

We beseech a bounty
From the propitious mother-fire
Whose origin is from powerful Heaven
Whose birth is from mother-earth
Khurai, khurai, khurai!

We beseech the bounty of
Longevity and animals
From the sacred fire Heaven
Starting from a golden planet
Khurai, khurai, khurai!
We beseech an offering
Of the group of camels ruled by the camel stallion
And of the herd of cows ruled by the bull
From the lambent fire
Khurai, khurai, khurai!
We beseech an offering of gold, silver and money
For the family and individuals
A harem of horses
From lambent mother-fire
Khurai, khurai, khurai!

We beseech a flock of sheep, a source of happiness
From the holy fire-heaven
Which is the origin of hearth and altar;
Dear fire-mother

Please give a piece from
Your body like a mountain;
Dear mother-fire
Split a piece
Of your body like rock and give it to us;
Dear light-mother
Break off a piece
Of your body like the Geser and give it to us;
Sanctified mother
Cut off a piece of
Your body like the ocean and give it to us;
The spirits of
The thick maned stallion
And of the mare with the caked udder
Khurai, khurai, khurai!

TABOOS CONCERNING FIRE WORSHIP AND THE FAMILY HEARTH

Mongolians venerate the fire and hearth as holy and have many taboos originated from the rites and customs concerned with it. For instance:

- Non-members of a family or strangers are not entitled to stoke a family’s fire. If he or she stokes a fire of another family, it can be considered as an insult to a family’s hearth;
- It is forbidden to cross the northern part of a family’s hearth. If this happens, it is a sign of disrespect or humiliation;
- It is forbidden for one to go around the hearth in a counter-clockwise direction;
- It is forbidden to stoke a fire with an iron poker within a week of the ceremony of worshipping fire (this is considered to be a period of the absence of the fire-god);
- Maternal nieces are forbidden to enter when the maternal uncle’s ceremony of worshiping fire is performed;
- It is forbidden to give dairy products and grains to somebody within three days of the ceremony of worshipping fire;
- Mothers who recently gave birth are forbidden to come near the burning fire;
- It is forbidden to burn anything that can defile a fire or make it dirty;
- It is forbidden to pour water on a fire (If you need to extinguish a fire with water, we say, “Please take off your legs, dear god of fire,” in advance and extinguish the fire);
- It is forbidden to spit into a fire;
- It is forbidden to play with fire (If one does this, it is considered as the loss of animals);
- It is forbidden to trample a fire in extinguishing it;
- It is forbidden to sit down with parted legs near a hearth or fire place;
- It is forbidden for a pregnant mother to be present during the ceremony of worshipping fire when milk-vodka and melted grease are dropped onto a fire (It is believed that the pregnant mother would be at risk of a miscarriage. So it is considered as a danger.);
- It is forbidden to go cross over a fire;
- It is forbidden to drop milk on a fire (It is believed that the udder of cow might break);
- It is forbidden to wave a red cloth over a fire;
- It is forbidden to stab a fire with a knife;
- It is forbidden to burn dog faeces and the skins of onion and garlic;
- It is forbidden to burn Artemisia.

There is a saying:

Do not sanctify your fire with artemisia.
Do not infect your corral of sheep with parasites.

- It is forbidden to drop salt on a fire (Only when we drive out evils, do we burn salt);
- It is forbidden to point one’s finger at a fire (It is believed that the god of fire might get angry.); and
- It is forbidden to stand or sit on the stove or trivet.

There are many forbidden practices concerning fire and the fire-worship ceremonies in ancient law. People were subjected to severe punishment if they assaulted someone’s hearth. We, Mongolians, venerate fire, sun and moon in our genius and wish our hearth and altar to be holy forever and as prosperous as the flames of fire.
The rituals of mountain and cairn worship were originally shamanistic, but they were enriched and developed with the notions and teachings of Buddhism and concepts of nature and the universe. This ceremony involves inviting the spirits of the mountains and water to please and express our requests to them.

According to shamanism there are spirits in the trees, mountains, and water. There are two spirits, savdag and lus. These are words borrowed from Tibetan. Savdag means master of the earth or mountain nymphs. Lus means master of water and humidity or water nymphs. In the sutra Buman tsagaan lus there is a definition: “The water spirit exists in water, the earth spirit exists in the ground. The wrathful deity lives in space.”

The water spirits are defined as blue, yellow, and black, according to their colours. The white king deity is the king of all the masters of water. The good and bad omens of human beings depend upon the will of the white deity. We beseech the white deity to cause us to be in his good graces and make offerings of a boiled saddle of mutton, sacred cakes, rendered cream, ghee lamps, grain and milk vodka, and other things to him.

There are provisions for rituals at a cairn or sacred site. There are thirteen cairns in an array which are to be sanctified. The middle cairn is the biggest and tallest and is a symbol of Sümber agula (Lofty mountain). There are two cairns from the middle cairn on the western and eastern sides. They are symbols of the four great continents. They are smaller than the middle cairn. There are another small eight cairns. They are known as the eight little continents.

The day to observe the cairn-worshipping ceremony is selected by astrologist in advance. Then it is announced to the locality. Early in the morning before the sun rises, local people start moving to a place where the cairn worshipping ceremony is to be performed. People attend a cairn-worshipping ceremony preparing offerings in advance and wear their holiday clothes. We esteem this event greatly. A person, who receives the stomach of a sacrificed sheep in the previous cairn-ceremony can prepare an offering of meat for this ceremony.

On the appointed day monks gather. The bottom ends of four poles are driven into the ground in four directions and the upper ends of four poles are connected and festooned with decoration of various colours. The four square cloth tents are erected before the cairn. The first tent is dedicated to monks who are going to congregate. Other two tents are for use by dignitaries near and in front of the cairn. A white sheet of linen is unfolded on which the statues of Buddha
and of other Buddha are placed. It is compulsory to place the statue of Thunder Bolt (Vajrapani). Sacred cakes and other offerings for mountain and water nymphs are placed before the statutes of the Buddha.

These offerings consist of dairy products, boiled mutton, skim of milk and rendered cream. The cairn worshiping ceremony starts by offering sacred cake to the Thunder Bolt. The benediction prayer seeks to supplicate the Thunder Bolt, which is the esoteric master. It is believed to be the destroyer of all the evils and saviour to assist in the burden of suffering beings. It also aids in getting rid of evils and driving out evils that live in the upper and lower realms with the bright flames. After this offering, sacred cakes are proffered to the Thunder Bolt. The monks burn dry juniper needles and incense and other aromas. They chant sutras dedicated to the mountains and cairns. When they chant they enumerate the names of mountain and water spirits, and extol and invite them to patronize the local people. Attendants get an endowment of the offerings. After this, the leading monk of the cairn worshiping ceremony makes a libation of grains and milk vodka. At this time the monks chant sutras, such as the White Umbrella, which implies the illumination of the darkness in ten directions, the Eight Saints, the Aggregate of providence, the Eight Saints of space, the Tree sutra, the Provider for water spirits’ grace and other auspicious poems.

After this, Nanti, Ubanantu, and other spirits of water and supporters of holiness are invited to deliver bounties for the sake of all beings. At the end of the event, the monks, who were congregating, go out of the tent and each monk takes a pebble from the ground and put it on the stone cairn, places sacred cake at the middle of the stone cairn, four long ribs of the shoulder at the back side of the stone cairn, and fat tail at the east side and silver-coin at the south side and khadag (sacred scarf). At the north side of the cairn-stone, the monks consecrate the pebbles which they took with milk vodka and holy water and place them at the back of the stone-cairn. Thus, the cairn worshiping ceremony is over.

After the ceremony is finished attendants come down to the foot of the mountain and attend a small Naadam event, including horse racing, wrestling and archery, with the accompaniment of singing and reciting of benedictions and odes. In such a manner the mountain and water spirits are pleased with Mongolia.
The ritual for summoning prosperity is a symbolic ritual to bring out the bounty of life and nature. During this ceremony, the peculiarly patterned cloth sack or wooden box containing grains, confections and sweets, samples of various minerals, and a piece of gold and silver are prepared. They are mostly made of pieces of silk or brocade and can be kept in the locked chests or trunks. These sacks can be brought out of the containers at the moment of the ritual day for summoning prosperity. This is an established custom.

Bag and box for this ritual

The majority of Mongolians make the bags for this ritual with bright yellow silk and hem them with red silk or make the bag cover with bright red silk and hem them with yellow silk. But western Mongolians decorate these boxes with various jewels with various patterns on the top of their lid. The four sides of the box have the pictures of eight auspicious signs of luck. The upper parts of this box are wide and lower parts are narrow. The bottom is flat and even. There is a hole at the top of the box in which an arrow for the summoning prosperity is placed.

This ceremony is Mongolian traditional ceremony of bringing in an iron arrow for the summoning prosperity which symbolizes the meaning to bring and call for fulfilling wishes and longevity. There is a certain number of ceremonies including Suvarna Prabhasa, Virosana, Tara and other rituals. These ceremonies are performed in spring or in autumn. Monks perform these ceremonies at the request of a family. During the ceremony, holding the arrow for the summoning prosperity, the head of family rides his horse round the corral of sheep in a clock-wise direction and then enters the ger. The leading monk of the ritual for the summoning prosperity asks him, "Did you collect offerings well?" to which the reply is, "Yes, I did." Those who are present in ger put on their hats as soon as the chanting ends. The head of the family holds his sack up and earnestly calls for offerings to be flourished. All those who are present support him by repeating "khurai, khurai, khurai". Afterwards, the lady of the family proffers ghee to her fire and makes offerings to the statues of Buddha. Within three days after the ceremony, the family does not give anything to anybody or sell any animals to anybody. It is a strong established custom.

Stick for summoning prosperity

The arrow for the summoning prosperity is a long and curved stick with small ball covered with wool that is attached to its end. Three feathers are attached to its sides. Brass or bronze metal and various coloured gauzy scarves are attached to the stick below the feathers. The lower end of the stick should be clad with an iron arrow. It is an established custom that the head of family will hold up the stick and go round the corral of the sheep during the ceremony for summoning prosperity.

Pail for summoning prosperity

It is a tradition in Mongolia to make the pail for the summoning prosperity from a cypress tree with handles on its two sides. When the ceremony for summoning prosperity is arranged they fill this pail with milk, either with fermented mare’s milk or clotted milk, and anoint the brim of the pail with ghee, skim milk, or cream. The pail for the summoning prosperity is not washed off. Therefore, the metal belt around the pail is crusted with milk.
Mongolians love their animals and look after them. Because of this, they have a custom and tradition to make animals sacred and entrust the stars, fire, Buddha and stone cairns to protect them. Every family is eager to increase their domestic animals and abide by the religious services to obtain good fortune. This service is performed mostly during autumn. Conducted by the monks this service is received by almost all families every autumn. The animals (horses, sheep, camels, goats or cows) are consecrated or re-consecrated during this service. The neck of each animal is tied with the blessed ribbon. Before the ceremony is held, all the livestock animals are brought to the corral. The head of family brings the animal to be blessed near the flames of a fire and announces the animal's colour, pedigree, offspring and yields, and the benefits of it to the owner. He then entrusts the consecrating of this animal and its spirit to the deity of the fire. The owner expresses his best wishes, anoints the animal with milk, and returns it to its companions. During the ceremony, the animal owner proffers pieces of breast and chin bone as an offering to a fire. The right foreleg with a shank is placed before the altar. The bones of the ankle and hock are burnt. The ashes of burnt bones are then put into the sack for the summoning prosperity next morning. It is customary. The blessed animals are forbidden to be ridden, beat, cursed, stabbed, or sold.
The Tsam dance is an assembly of religious dancing by wrathful deities. The characters of religious dancing are the fanciful figures of Buddhist disciples in their dreamy meditations. The dancing characters seek to drive out evils by their outer appearances and jumping. The dancing is not performed on any fixed day but rather on the occasions of certain events. The dancing can be performed in any season or any day. This dancing is usually performed in the court of a Buddhist monastery. The blue, red, or yellow silken canopy is erected just opposite the main temple. In some cases four flags are placed beside it. Under the canopy, the skin of a tiger is laid out on the floor and a table covered with silk is placed on it. This is a place in which the dancing is conducted or the centre where the dancing will be constituted.

The first circle starts from the distance of one metre from the four pillars round the canopy. The circles are marked with lines of chalk. Two white circles are drawn at a distance of 6 or 7 metres from the first circle. The dancing is performed along places between these circles. Two parallel circles are drawn out of these drawn circles. These circles are dedicated to the dancers of Yamantag, the Wrathful. Two white lines are drawn from those lines to the main entrance of the temple. The wrathful deities walk along these lines. Those lines cross over each other. There are small circles on each cross, which are for the deities to stand prior to dancing. The clothing of the religious dancers is sewn without prints on their surface. The fabric is folded and the edges of the folded fabric are sewn together. The folded part of the fabric is notched into semi-rounded holes through which a head can go. The lower part of the folded fabric is flared up. The sleeves are widened and include an arrow case shaped in a way that allows the deities to conceal the arrows and bow inside their sleeves.

They put on cloaks with five pieces of ornaments over the above-mentioned clothing. They wear apron-shaped clothing with red or green coloured insertions round the waist. This insertion is hemmed with black silk and yellow and red ribbons are fixed onto it.

The deities wear eight big rosaries with bright yellow beads around their necks. The rosaries over the back and front of the deities can reach down to their waist. They tuck the prayer wheels with eight spokes into their sashes. Three yellow-ribbons are fixed with the prayer wheels and bells are attached to the middle ribbon. The edges of the ribbons are yellow. The masks of the dancing deities are modeled with the features of the wrathful faces.

The religious dancing starts by paying reverence to the Yamantag, the Wrathful deity. After it, the effigy to be exor-
cised can be hallowed, which is followed by monks entering the congregation hall. The first monks to go out hold incense burners. The monks holding up sacred cakes come out next, followed by monks holding golden pitchers bearing tassels and evil effigies. Afterwards, the monks who will perform musical instruments come out. Then an evil effigy is placed on the specially arranged table. As soon as ganglin (a fife traditionally made of a human femoral bone) is blown, the religious dancing starts. Two dancers in skull masks and light white gowns patterned after a human skeleton start dancing. After them a team of crows comes out. They are clad in crow shaped masks with sharp bills and wear brown jackets and black flared trousers. The dancers in skull masks dance on two sides of the evil effigy. They try to snatch the evil effigy from the crow masked dancers. But the crow masked dancers hold up a wooden stick and keep them away from the evil effigy. By thus the first act of religious dancing ends.

The second act starts with fast rhythmical music. As soon as the music stops the monks holding up a bloody skull in one hand and four sacred cakes and Mandala (representation of cosmos) in the other come out. They come to the evil effigy and shout “Argam” and pour the blood of the skull into the Mandala. Afterwards, they stand up and come to the monks keeping the evil effigy and sit near them in the canopy. In response, the skull masked dancers run to the west or to the east and demonstrate various movements. They wave sticks at each other and run round the canopy six times and stand up on both sides of the canopy as sentries. The crow masked dancers attack the evil effigy from time to time. The skull masked dancers point out at them with sticks. When the ganglin is blown again, two Indian sages come out. Indian sages are from ancient India. Their masks look like the faces of ordinary human beings. The colours of their face are brown and the sizes are bigger than ordinary men. The mouths and noses are also made to look sarcastic. The Indian sages are clad in long brown silk gowns with silk blue sashes. Their hair is combed and worn in pigtails or in buns. They do not enter the circles of dancing, instead staying at the main temple, moving their arms and legs in various ways. Their main duty is to welcome King Chakravarti.

At the next sounding of gangling, King Chakravarti and his queen and prince come all together. They are in ordinary Indian gowns. The king holds up a pitcher in his hand and is accompanied by two Indian sages with their unsheathed shields slung over their shoulders. At the beginning of the circulation, the Indian sages welcome them and prostrate and strew flowers over their path. They invite the king and his attendants to be seated upon a specially arranged divan. As soon as the king and his attendants sit down, those Indian sages stand as sentries on both sides. Then the gangling is blown again. King Khashan, accompanied by six small princes comes out. They are in Mongolian gowns. King Khashan
puts on his robe. The princes hold up musical instruments. There is a myth that King Khashan welcomed the saints which turned into other forms and came down from heaven to the planet. Therefore, King Khashan welcomes attending Buddhists with sacred scarves.

The cymbals then strike three times and the gangling is blown. The Choijoo Buddha’s attendants come out. Those attendants are called Bojuud. King Khashan bows and welcomes them. The attendants come to the first circle of dancing. The Indian sages welcome them and pour flour before them. The attendants jump over all the circles during their dancing. The dancing is mostly jumping by alternating their legs and hopping on two legs, squatting, and running in a circle. These are their total dancing movements, and then the attendants come back to their main temple. The faces of the next two attendants are brown. The face of the third attendant is blue. The face of fourth one is green.

The cymbals strike nine times and the gangling is blown. Two masked men from sham country appear. One of them, called Mankhi, wears a cow-headed mask. The other, called Deer, wears a deer-headed mask. They both hold a shield in their right hand and a skull in their left hand. The Indian sages pour blood at the moment they appear.

Afterwards, the mask of Vajrapani (Ochirvaan’) appears. He holds a thunder bolt in his right hand and a lasso made of twisted silk in his left hand. The myth says that Vajrapani catches evil with the lasso. The Indian sages pours blood before the mask of Vajrapani. Then the mask of Lkham Buddha appears. He holds up a cleaver with a thunder bolt handle in his right hand and a skull in his left hand. The Indian sages pour blood before him. The black faced mask of Gombo Buddha appears. He holds up a cleaver with a thunders bolt handle in his right hand and a skull in his left hand. The Indian sages strew flowers at his feet. He drinks it up and dodders along. At this moment the skull-masked man gives a glass of milk-vodka to the White Old Man. He drinks it and then staggers for a bit, but then recovers and speeds up his movements. He dances until he becomes exhausted and falls. After the fall, he gets up and starts working on a sheep skin which is given to him by the Indian sage.

Following the White Old Man, thirty-two representative monk dancers appear in pairs. King Khashan receives them. The Indian sages strew flowers at their feet. They hold up knives and skulls in their hands and dance and jump within the first circle of dancing for long time.

At the end of this act, a blue bull-headed Choijoo Buddha with unusually big flaming horns appears. The mask has five skulls and a thunder bolt on its top.

King Khashan welcomes Choijoo, but those Indian sages pour blood full of skulls. After jumping he stays together with other wrathful deities in the middle of dancing circle. At this moment the monks chant the Lotus Sutra. A monk brings the sutra out of the main temple. Afterwards, Jamsran with a shield in his hand together with his attendants comes out while monks chant from the sutra. Choijoo, Jamsran and others jump round the circle. Then the evil effigy is burnt. Choijoo and others in succession come back into the main temple. At last, the representative dancers come back into the main temple, thus ending the ceremony.
The ceremonial performance of the Maitreya Buddha of Vajra-yana was formed and practiced in temples of the yellow sect of Mongolia. Together with its rites and chanting, it spread widely and became very a significant ceremony, especially while the sovereign state of the Bogd Khan existed. The Bogd Khan and other Buddhist saints declared the day to perform a ceremony of Maitreya Buddha with all the proper solemnities at the Gandan Monastery and at its branches of Ikh Khüree. There were very religious rituals which could be called as a grand demonstration around the temple. There is a view that Buddha in the form of the Maitreya Buddha may revisit this planet and resurrect his teachings in the next epoch. The Maitreya Buddha revisits and practices benevolence for the goodness of all beings in six realms. The purpose of the ritual is clear.

All the temples and monasteries prepare for ceremonial performances of the Maitreya Buddha. The congregation for the ceremonial performance of the Maitreya Buddha starts at five o'clock every morning for almost ten days before the ceremonial performance. This congregation starts at sunrise on the appointed day of the performance and ends at six o'clock. The Maitreya Buddha is enshrined in a small glass case and transferred on a two-wheeled cart with a green wooden horse made of papier-mache.

The head of the monastery (khamba lam) and his subordinate monks take the gilded statuette of the Maitreya Buddha out of the temple; dignitary monks, organized according to rank, carry sutras containing five classes of works about the Maitreya Buddha and set them before the statuette of the Maitreya figure. Monks burn juniper needles and incense and offer flowers, seven treasures of the state, auspicious eight offerings and offerings of five desires. Thus, the ceremonial performance of the Maitreya Buddha starts. The high dignitary monks clad in tall hats are at the head of procession. They are accompanied by the monks of monastery, trumpeters, and conch-blowers.

During the ceremonial period almost twenty monks take the lashes of horse and attach them to the cart and drag the cart before the procession. Two monks holding the tails of tigers and five monks holding whips have the duty of controlling the crowd of devotees. The procession starts from the door of the congregation hall and go out of the door of the court. The cart with the Maitreya Buddha is turned clockwise and stops to look to the congregation hall.

This ceremony starts with offering a Mandala to the Maitreya Buddha and requesting the Maitreya who supports the exalted one’s cause to give his sacred teachings. It also instructs these participants to abide by these teachings. Then they stop at the north of the monastery and make an offering and chant. Then monks make a break and leave the cart there. After almost three hours monks gather and sit before the Maitreya Buddha and congregate to attain the sanctity of Buddha-hood including reception and benevolence chanting and get reincarnation in the land of happiness. The cart is moved to the door of the eastern side of the monastery and the Idol is placed facing the south. Then the monks congregate and chant five kinds of works about the Maitreya Buddha. The two or three pieces of sutra are distributed to each chanting monks.

The procession of the Maitreya enters the main door of the monastery while the monks congregate and chant. The Idol is placed in the main temple, thus bringing this ceremony to a close.