

DSAKHCHIN (WEST-MONGOLIAN) FOLKSONGS WITH BUDDHIST CONTENT*

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The Hungarian–Mongolian Joint Expedition aiming to investigate the languages and folk culture of West- and North-Mongolian ethnic groups started its research in 1991. Taking part in the activity of the expedition I had the opportunity to observe the renewed activity of the monks' communities that became possible due to the political changes in 1990. In this article I will present a few folk-songs with Buddhist content recorded from old Dsakhchin monks. This noteworthy new source material substantially contributes to the study of the Buddhist culture among the Mongols. A short description of genre analysis will be attached to each song.

Key words: Oirat (West-Mongolian) folk culture, Tibetan Buddhism, Mongolian Buddhism, folk-song, Oirat dialect, Mongolian mythology.

The task of a series of Hungarian–Mongolian expeditions launched in 1991 was to collect and process data concerning the dialects and culture of the West- and North-Mongolian ethnic groups. As a member of the research group I have had several times the opportunity to catch a glimpse of the life of several monasteries and monks' communities that were able to revive after the political change in the 1990s. I have focused my interest on texts in folklore and ritual tradition. Since I had formerly dealt with the typology and classification of the songs of the West-Mongolian Oirat population, I deemed it important to collect a special group of folksongs in the monaster-

* With the present article I wish to pay homage to Professor Ernst Steinkellner whose studies on the Tibetan mountain cult encouraged me and some of my colleagues to investigate the links in the popular culture of the Tibetans and Mongols. A version of the present article appeared in Hungarian: Nyugat-mongol (dzahcsin) buddhista népdalok. A Magyar–mongol nyelvjárás- és népi műveltségkutató expedíció 1991-es gyűjtéséből [West-Mongolian (Dsakhchin) Buddhist folksongs. On the basis of the 1991 Hungarian–Mongolian Joint Expedition Researching Dialects and Folk Culture]. *Kerékyomok. Orientalisztikai és Buddhológiai Folyóirat* 2008 tél, pp. 25–36.

ies comprising both Buddhist motives and textual elements of rites. Hereby I would like to present a group of folksongs collected from a group of monks of a West Mongolian (Dsakhchin) monastery revived in 1991.¹

Mongolian folksongs with Buddhist content

There are plenty of information and knowledge preserved in the songs of the Mongols which comprise not only various fields of the traditional folk culture, but numerous elements of the culture of the religious and secular elite as well. The term “Buddhist folksongs” may first sound self-contradictory, yet everyday life of the Mongols is so much intertwined with various phenomena and aspects of Buddhism that in the world of poetic images of even such earthly themes as family or love, a prevalence of Buddhist motives is quite obvious. For example, the singer (the ego in the folksong) often compares his father to Buddha Śākyamuni or his mother and lover to Goddess Tārā (Birtalan 1992, pp. 75, 89, *passim*).

In my dissertation I dealt with folksong typology based on the Oirat folksong material collected by the renowned Mongolist B. Ya. Vladimirtsov (Vladimircov 1926) at the beginning of the 20th century. The systems of genres upon which I was able to build that wide-ranging material were different from those of the forerunners’ heterogeneous hierarchy of genres.² The possibilities of systematising Mongolian folksongs were summarised in several well definable parallel systems in the dissertation.³

Buddhist songs in the hierarchy of genres based on thematic diversity

In the hierarchy of genres built upon the contents and themes of the Oirat, Khalkha and Inner-Mongolian folksongs analysed, the songs related to religion form a separate category:

¹ The activity of the Expedition has been supported by the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund (OTKA) as a research project No. 62501. Here I would like to express my gratitude to my colleague J. Coló, himself a Dsakhchin, whose personal involvement in the fieldwork was of great help during the expedition.

² Heterogeneous hierarchy of genres means that the different aspects and elements of contents (e.g. love songs, family songs, songs with Buddhist themes, historical songs, outlaws’ songs, etc.) and of structure (e.g. narrative epic songs, ritual songs containing elements of panegyric texts) and the way of performance (Mongolian emic classification: long songs, short songs) and of the actual situation of communication (which member of the community sings to whom, e.g. children to their parents, or the son-in-law to his maternal uncles or to the brothers, etc.) were all involved and analysed within the same structure. In my dissertation all possible ways of classification were analysed in separate structures.

³ For literature and detailed analysis by genres, see Birtalan (1992, pp. 16–30).

1. folksongs attached to Shamanism and the cult of local spirits, which abound in semantic and structural elements borrowed from ritual and sacrificial texts,⁴
2. group of songs attached to Buddhism, classified according to content and thematic elements into subgroups as follows:⁵
 - 2.1. Buddhist philosophy and teaching
 - 2.1.1. philosophy of the Dharma
 - 2.1.2. mastering the Dharma
 - 2.1.3. the six kinds of existence, the Samsāra
 - 2.1.4. rebirth of individuals
 - 2.1.5. vices and virtues
 - 2.2. the divinities
 - 2.2.1. enumeration and praise of divinities
 - 2.2.2. enumeration of Buddhist allegoric phenomena
 - 2.3. the monasteries
 - 2.3.1. panegyric on the monasteries⁶
 - 2.3.2. building of the monasteries
 - 2.3.3. panegyric of the Lion Throne
 - 2.4. monastic life
 - 2.4.1. panegyric of the monks and their lives
 - 2.4.2. monk abandoning the community
 - 2.4.3. absurdities of monastic life (mocking songs)
 - 2.5. Buddhist rituals
 - 2.5.1. invitation of the living Buddha into the monastery
 - 2.5.2. *danšig* ritual⁷

⁴ On the possibility of the classification of ritual texts by genres, see in detail Birtalan (2004c). The ritual texts have common poetic elements with folksongs, such as parallelism and alliteration but their structure is different from the regular strophic structure of folksongs.

⁵ The subgroups were set up in an order that proceeds from the most abstract themes (different aspects of the Teaching) towards the practical aspects of religion. The system introduced may naturally be altered by adding songs with contents different from those mentioned.

⁶ NB! Here I do not mean the *magtāl* “eulogy, praise”, the ritual genre (Khalkha form; Khalkha is the official language of the Republic of Mongolia, further Khal.; Mong. indicates the written Mongolian form), but the panegyric elements are transplanted into the strophic folksongs.

⁷ When a living Buddha (Mong. *qubilγan*, Khal. *xuwilgān*) enters his residential monastery (Khal. *xuwilgān jalax*) to settle down in the community of the monks, among the series of rituals staged for him the ritual of an endowment to the monastery is of great importance. The faithful, first of all those belonging to the noble class offer precious sacral objects (Khal. *örgö-*) to the monastery. One of the most important objects is the *danšig mandal* (Khal.) made of rare metals and gems. Pozdneev, whose 19th century monograph on Mongolian monasteries is still a standard work, describes the participants of the ritual as follows: “... načinaetsja ceremonija *dangšika* (*tangsuy*). Per-vym podnositsja mandal ot lica vseh monastyrskih lam, vsled za lamami načinajut podnosit’ *dangšik* svetskie ljudi i, konečno, prežde vseh hošunnyj knjaz’.” See Pozdneev (1887, pp. 254–257). The expression *danšig* comes from the Tibetan (Tib. *brtan-bzhugs*), whose Mongolian translation *batu orusil* (Mong.) is hardly used in the texts.

2.5.3. *balin* ritual⁸

2.5.4. sounding the ritual instruments

2.6. folksongs of art-song origin

Besides the above system based on content, the folksongs with Buddhist themes can also be classified according to the following lines:

I. Classification by the manner of performance (emic genre comprehension), they belong to the so-called “long songs” with a solemn character (Khal. *urtin dū*) except for those mocking at the monks, which are short songs (Khal. *bogino dū*).

II. Classification by the occasion of the performance, they are mostly songs to begin a family or community ceremony or feast (except for the songs mocking the monks which are never sung at the beginning).

III. Classification by the communication (communicative situation). A coherent connection exists between the singer and the person the song is addressed to. Mongols use it for the classification of folksongs (it is also an emic classification: e.g. song to the father, to the mother, to the paternal relatives, to the maternal relatives, etc.). It is evident during the performance of song with following contents: family, love, wedding, but it has not been possible to establish so far concerning the Buddhist songs. The Buddhist folksongs are performed by either the eminent members of the community, or those who are considered good singers. It does not seem to be determined whether the songs are sung to the parents or a special group of guests (relatives, honoured visitors). This classification category needs further investigation in fieldwork.

What is characteristic of all the five Dsakhchin songs I am going to present is that all are performed as long songs. Conveying solemn contents, they can either be sung at the start of a family ceremony or some time in the initial phase.

Buddhism and monasteries of the Dsakhchins

The Western Mongols or Oirats (Mong. *oyirad*, Oir. *ōrd*) speak a separate language within the Mongolian languages. Their culture emerged along the borderline of Mongolian and Turkic cultures. The Oirats migrated to the steppe from the woodland during the 13th century and became a political factor in Inner Asia in the 14th century. They could establish an independent state in the 17th century, but this Oirat (alias Dzhungar) Empire lost its independence because of the growing Manchu Empire around the middle of the 18th century.⁹ A fundamental element of policy during the period of the Oirat Empire was the ideological support of Buddhism, together with

⁸ Mong. *balin*, Khal. *balin* < Sanskrit (further Sanskr.) *bali* (comp. Tib. *gtor-ma*) is the ritual whose central element is the demolition of the offering made of pastry into which the maleficent forces are driven. The *balin* ritual is the part of the *cam* dance festival as well.

⁹ On the history, sources and literature of the Oirats, and on their standard literary language with rich references, see Birtalan – Rákos (2002).

the Tibetan alliance. The Buddhist culture of the Oirats was fundamentally influenced by their outstanding master Oirat Zaya pandita (Written Oir. *Oqtorɣuyin dalai*, Tib. *Nam-khas rgya-mcho*), who was famous not only as a translator but also as the founder of the clear Oirat script (Oir. *todorxoi üzüq*) and their standard literary language.¹⁰ All over the territory inhabited by West Mongols (the Altai and Tarbaghatai Mountains, the Jungar basin, and the territory of Kukunor/Köke nayur) a great number of monasteries were built, each ethnic group such as the Dsakhchins having their own group of monasteries. The Dsakhchins (Khal. *jaxčín*, Oir. *zaxčín*, *jaxčín*) were settled as frontier-guards on the area of Khowd circle (today Khowd province). Their ethnic name originally indicated their engagement, (Mong. *jaq-a*) “border, edge, neck” + *-čín* (nomen actoris). Several families coming from different Oirat and Khal-kha clans were collected and settled down on the eastern slopes of the Altai Mountains, where they merged into what became the Oirat ethnic group with an integral culture.¹¹ The Dsakhchins had three important monasteries the history of which is briefly summarised in a manuscript. The manuscript is designated as a *namtar* (Tib. *rnam-thar*), and registers the most important events of the monasteries and also the most precious devotional objects they possessed (Birtalan 1985).

Out of the three monasteries mentioned in the manuscript, the one in which Buddhist religious practice was first revived by the former monks after the political change at the beginning of the 1990s ending a six-decade pause, is called *Tögrögîn dacan* (Mong. *Rasi-jeg-ling dačan*, Tib. *Bkra-shis brcegs gling*), and is situated in Mankhan district, Khowd province (Khal. *Xowd*, *Manxan*) (Birtalan 2003). The religion oppressed and banned for such a long time could gradually regain its former position, first through the former monks who maintaining themselves as shepherds during the hard times revived the one-time *sangha* “assembly of monks”. Like their ancestors who had round tents for their ritual ceremonies at the time of the Buddhist conversion, they also built yurt shrines to shelter the sacral objects they had kept in secret for long decades, and to educate the novices. The four monks who resuscitated the community of the *Tögrögîn dacan* provided very interesting data concerning the history of the monastery; they spoke about the circumstances of the new start and the rituals, too. In an earlier study about the local spirits I presented their biographies and used the data collected from them for the introduction of this cult of the Dsakhchins’ folk religion (Birtalan 2004b, pp. 8–9, 35–37).

Dsakhchin Buddhist folksongs

From among the four monks (Galdnā Badam aged 75, Šarwīn Donruw aged 82, Togtoxīn Sanjā aged 79 in 1991, and Bāsain Cegmed) it was Badam and Sanjā who recited folksong texts. The texts of the five folksongs are a mixture of Oirat and Khal-

¹⁰ On the Buddhism of the Oirat ethnic groups in detail, with bibliographical references, see Birtalan–Rákos (2002, pp. 39–46).

¹¹ For a review of the literature on the Dsakhchins, see Birtalan (2004a).

kha language elements, and there is an archaic touch to their style in accord with the solemn, elevated Buddhist contents, for instance the use of the written Mongolian *-γsan/-gsen* (nomen perfecti) instead of the ordinary spoken form of *-sn/-s(A)⁴n*. As the texts are attached to folksongs, the influence of rhythm and melody could not be eliminated from the recital of the words. In the transcription I preserved these transformed elements (such as a shortened syllable, insertion of a sound or an extra syllable).

First to be presented are Sanjā's song texts, with a brief survey of the possible classification by contents and the main characteristics of structure.

Sanjā's 1st song: *Burxan šäšin ogtorgūd delgernä*¹² "Buddha's religion will spread in the universe".

A folksong with Buddhist contents, sub-grouped according to contents as follows:

1st strophe: there is no division on external and internal parallel images:¹³ thematic groups: 2.1. Buddhist philosophy and teaching, 2.1.1. philosophy of the Dharma.

2nd strophe: external image: Buddhist mythology (lion), the internal image: 2.1. Buddhist philosophy and teaching.

3rd–4th strophes: there is no division on external and internal images: thematic groups: 2.2. the divinities, 2.2.1. enumeration and praise of the divinities, 2.2.2. enumeration of Buddhist allegoric phenomena. This type of strophe also occurs in ritual Shamanic texts where the enumerated divinities and spirits (among them several transcendental figures coming from Buddhism) take possession of the body of the Shaman as medium through the different parts of the body referred to in the text.

<i>Oroi dēr min' xandaγ baina,</i> <i>Očirwān' xüčün tögsgsn.</i> <i>Magnai bīd min'</i> <i>Manjširīn bogd xüčün tögsgsn.</i> <i>Tergün bīg min'</i> <i>Tetgeč naiman Cagān tenger ejelsen.</i> <i>Dalān bīg min'</i> <i>Dalan tawn Maxgāl ejelsen.</i>	On the top of my head settles Vajrapāṇi the powerfully strong. ¹⁴ On my forehead Saint Mañjuśrī the powerfully strong. ¹⁵ My head is occupied by the eight guarding White Divinities. My shoulder-blade is occupied by the seventy-five Mahākāla. ¹⁶
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¹² The Mongolian folksongs are referred to with their first text line.

¹³ Mongolian folksongs are similar in their structure to the Hungarian folksongs (parallel external and internal images). After the first half of the 4-line or rarely 2-line strophes which depicts an external image of nature, a reflection presenting an inner, emotional state follows. In traditional Mongolian folksongs the first strophe presents a different world of images from the imagery of the following strophes.

¹⁴ Khal. *Očirwāni*, Sanskr. *Vajrapāṇi* "One who holds a *vajra* (sceptre) in his hand" is a popular *bodhisattva* in Mongolian folk religion, cf. Birtalan (2001, p. 1018); Kollmar-Paulenz (2002, pp. 1222–1223).

¹⁵ Khal. *Manjšir*, Sanskr. *Mañjuśrī* "One who has gentle glory" is a *bodhisattva* of wisdom, cf. Kollmar-Paulenz (2002, pp. 1193–1194).

¹⁶ Khal. *Maxgāl*, Sanskr. *Mahākāla* "The great black" is considered to be the Buddhist protector deity of the Mongols; appears also frequently in folk religious ritual texts, cf. Kollmar-Paulenz (2002, pp. 1208–1209).

<i>Barūn nutugt min'</i>	On my right side (is)
<i>Badm Sambū burxn xūčin tögsgsn.</i>	Padmasmbhava the powerfully strong. ¹⁷
<i>Jūn nutgt min'</i>	On my left side (is)
<i>Junkxuw Burxn xūčin tögsgsn.</i>	Cong-kha-pa the powerfully strong. ¹⁸
<i>Dund bīg min'</i>	My middle body (trunk)
<i>Dōrd naiman aimag</i>	is occupied by the eight lower
<i>Dogšin lusīn xād ejelsen.</i>	groups of savage dragon khans.
<i>Xamag bīg min'</i>	All of my body is occupied by
<i>Xān burxad, xar lusīn xād ejelsn.</i>	Khan Buddhas, black dragon khans. ¹⁹

5th strophe: external natural picture (tree); internal image: 2.1. Buddhist philosophy and teaching; 2.1.2. mastering of the Dharma

6th strophe: proverb

<i>Burxan šāšin</i>	Buddha's religion
<i>ogtorgūd delgernā.</i>	will spread in the universe.
<i>Buyun kesen ämtn</i>	Those who act morally
<i>Burxnā orond törnā.</i>	are born in Buddha's land.
<i>Kūč iktē arslan</i>	The powerfully strong lion
<i>kürkürün toglaḷi nādnā.</i>	is playing roaring.
<i>Kūmnā küslīg xangagč</i>	The wishes of the human being
<i>lam gurwan erdene.</i>	are fulfilled by the three gems of the monk. ²⁰
<i>Mādar gidig burxanīg</i>	Buddha called Maitreya
<i>magnā dārā šūtnā.</i>	is honoured on the forehead.
<i>Mān'in jurgān üsgīg</i>	The six syllables ²¹ of <i>maṇi</i>
<i>julān dārā šūtnā.</i>	are honoured on top of the head.

¹⁷ Khal. *Badam Sambū*, Sanskr. *Padmasambhava* the legendary great missionary of Tibet in the 8th century, very popular in folk religious cults and textual tradition, cf. Kollmar-Paulenz (2002, pp. 1216–1217).

¹⁸ Khal. *Junxuw*, Tib. *Cong-kha-pa* (1357–1419), Tibetan philosopher and Dharma-master, the founder of the dGe-lugs-pa order. In the folk religious texts he appears as protective deity.

¹⁹ Detail of the text from the invocation of a Darkhad Shamanic song (collected during an expedition, 1998 Mörön city, Khöwsgöl province). For the complete text with analysis and comparison, see Birtalan: Darkhad Shamanic Texts. Performer, Genre, Communication (manuscript).

²⁰ Sanskr. *triratna*: Buddha, Dharma, Sangha “the Buddha, the Teaching and the Assembly of monks”.

²¹ The second word (Sansk. *maṇi*) of the mantra formula *Om, maṇi padme, huṃ!* in the Mongolian languages became standard for designation of prayers and *mantras*. The text refers to the six syllables of this well-known *mantra*.

<i>Junxuw gidig burxnīg julān dārā šūtnā. Jurgān üsüg mǎn'īg jürkenānā ekinde šūtnā.</i>	Buddha called Cong-kha-pa is honoured on top of the head. ²² The six syllables of <i>maṇi</i> are honoured deep in the heart.
<i>Jandan gidig modon jalaltaguē goya. Suxā gidig modon šungxa ginā ulān.</i>	The tree called sandal is nice and straight. The colour of the tree called tamarisk is said to be red like blood.
<i>Suruyā gisin erdemīg surgultānguā surduk. Dūdxā ike nerīg ēj āw olgadag. Dūrdx ike nerīg ewrīn sǎnār oldag.</i>	The knowledge to be attained is learnt without learning. The great name one is called is given by the parents. The great name one is remembered by is acquired by one's good deeds. ²³

Sanjā's 2nd song: *Nāman tüwtā Sūmbür ül* "The Sümerü mountain with eight isles"

Sub-grouped by contents: philosophy and ritual. An almost word by word parallel to the first strophe is found in folksong No. 108 in Vladimirtsov's collection at the beginning of the 20th century (Vladimircov 1926, song No. 108).

<i>Nāmn tibṭā Sūmr-ül nar sarān čimektā. Nasn ürgüljīd bār'ldn törökči dambr šajīn xoyir.</i>	The Sümerü mountain with eight isles is adorned with the Sun and the Moon. For the whole life are fruitfully intertwined the <i>ḍamaru</i> and religion.
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1st strophe: external image: Buddhist mythology (Sümerü mountain), the internal image: the Buddhist Teaching: 2.1. Buddhist philosophy and teaching

2nd–4th strophes: the external image and the internal image both are of Buddhist content: 2.5. Buddhist rituals, 2.5.3. *balin* ritual; 2.1. Buddhist philosophy and teaching, 2.1.4. human rebirth.

5th strophe: Buddhist parable (mustard seed is paralleled with human rebirth), cf. 2.1.4. human rebirth

²² In folk religion Cong-kha-pa is often recalled as a protecting Buddha, cf. the shamanic invocation above.

²³ Proverb-like couplet. Proverbs and riddles are often inserted into other kinds of folkloric and ritual texts, e.g. folksongs, folktales and heroic epics, shamanic invocations.

<i>Nāman tüwtā Sūmbür ūl nara saradān čimegtē. Nasan ürgüljīdān bārildān törökči dambar šajin xoyur.</i>	The Sümerü mountain with eight isles is²⁴ adorned with the Sun and the Moon. For their whole life are fruitfully intertwined the <i>damaru</i> and religion.²⁵
<i>Takal balnggān örgäxdār tarālängin ornd törnā. Tačängü mungxukār yowaxadār tamīn tüwtā törnā.</i>	If you offer a sacrifice, a <i>balin</i> sacrifice, you will be born in the peaceful heaven. If you keep yearning and behaving silly, you will be born on the island of hell.
<i>Julu küjān örgäxdār Junxuwan ornda törnā.</i>	If you offer devotional lights and censers, you will be born on the land of Cong- kha-pa.
<i>Jugār demī yowaxdār jürdin xawcgād törnā.</i>	If you live a senseless life, you will be born into the abyss of the interim existence.
<i>Ergül mörgül kēxeldār erdemīn oranda törnā.</i>	If you bow yourself with respect, you will be born on the land of knowledge.
<i>Ergü munxugār yowaxlārā Erligīn tüwd törnā.</i>	If you behave silly and immoderate,²⁶ you will be born on the island Erlig.²⁶
<i>Jūnā üjūrte toklasan yünger tarā mete, künā törlig olagč tere-lugā ädil.</i>	On the tip of the needle balancing a mustard seed or finding the human rebirth are comparable.²⁷

²⁴ The world mountain called Sümerü in the Mongolian mythology originates in the Sanskrit name of the mountain Meru. In myths and ritual texts – likewise in the folksong – the world mountain is often connected with astral phenomena, see in detail Birtalan (2001, pp. 1044–1045).

²⁵ In the folksongs a frequent expression is *dambr šajin xoyor* “*damaru* (drum) and religion”. Further investigation is needed to explore why these two words are connected. A possible cause is deterioration of the text: maybe the original expression connected to religion faded and was substituted with the similarly sounding “*damaru* (drum)” (Mong. *damaru*, *dambaru* < Sanskr. *ḍamaru*). Mr. Gergely Orosz kindly informed me that to his mind Khal. *dambar*, Oir. *dambr*, *dambar* could be explained as a distorted form of Tib. *ston pa* “master teacher”, thus the interpretation of the expression as “master and Teaching” could be less obscure.

²⁶ Khan Erlig is the ruler of the lower regions in Mongolian mythology, and the prince of the hell/hells in folk religion syncretised with the Buddhist religion, cf. Birtalan (2001, pp. 981–983).

²⁷ The mustard seed is used as a symbol not only in Christianity but in Buddhism as well. It is its tiny size that is also emphasised in Buddhist tradition (in Christian scriptures, see Matthew 13: 31–32; Mark 4: 30–32). Another simile: *Narīn jūnā üjürtö/yünger budng* (= *budān*) *toktoxo-yū?* See Vladimircov (1926, song 56. 2ab): “Can the mustard seed be balanced on the top of the thin needle?”; Oir. *yünger* < Tib. *yungs-dkar/kar* “white mustard”, see Das (1960, p. 1139).

Sanjā's 3rd song: *Küjīn utān manarxān gigč* "The swirl of smoke from the joss-stick"

Sub-groups by contents: monastic life, rituals, invitation of a saint, *danšig* ritual

1st strophe: the external image is also of Buddhist content: incense offering; the internal image: monastic life: 2.4. monastic life, 2.4.1. panegyric of monks and their life

2nd–6th strophes: the external image is also connected to Buddhism (2nd–4th): 2.5. Buddhist rituals, 2.5.1. invitation of the living Buddha into the monastery; the external image is a real natural image (5th–6th: saddle-horse, fog); the internal image (2nd–4th, 6th) 2.5. Buddhist rituals, 2.5.2. *danšig* ritual, (5th) 2.5.1. invitation of the living Buddha into the monastery

7th (incomplete) strophe:²⁸ 2.4. monastic life, 2.4.1. panegyric of the monks and their life

<i>Küjīn utān manarxān gigč</i> <i>kürüşügā xolo.</i> <i>Kürēd yowj mörgnā gigč</i> <i>yūnī sāxān jayāmb!</i> <i>Altan šara jūji</i> <i>arīn jamār jalarnā.</i> <i>Arwan āmgīn noyod</i> <i>danšigān örgād mörgnā.</i> <i>Dörüljün šara jūji</i> <i>dötīn jamār jalarnā.</i> <i>Dörün āmgīm noyod</i> <i>danšigān örgād mörgnā.</i> <i>Gurūljīn šara jūji</i> <i>gūgīn jamār jalarnā.</i> <i>Gurūn āmgīn noyod.</i> <i>danšigān örgād mörgnā.</i> <i>Altādān jusgč</i> <i>mör kölgān targalulād.</i> <i>Körkā melemger bogdān</i> <i>altan širāndān jalnā.</i>	The swirl of smoke from the joss-stick [is seen] from incredibly far. Entering the monastery and bowing your head [there] is a wonderful fate! The golden-yellow sedan-chair is approaching along the northern road. The nobles of the ten provinces offer their <i>danšig</i> and all bow. The four-sided yellow sedan-chair is approaching along the nearby road. The nobles of the four provinces offer their <i>danšig</i> and all bow. The three-sided yellow sedan-chair is approaching in the ravine. The nobles of the three provinces offer their <i>danšig</i> and all bow. During the summer in the Altay we fatten the steed, the saddle-horse. The saint who has kind eyes we invite to the golden throne.
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²⁸ This pair of lines is often added to folksongs of Buddhist content, and also to songs connected with family.

<i>Serūn [...] denjīd</i> <i>serūnī budan tatnā-l.</i> <i>Šine xūčin šāw'nar</i> <i>danšigān örgād mörgnā.</i>	Onto the cool [...] hill a cold fog is settling. The old and new pupils offer their <i>danšig</i> and all bow.
<i>Dalā lamān āldāsār</i> <i>dayārān xamta jirginā.</i>	Under the holy order of the Dalai Lama we live happily together.

Badam's 1st song *Xān ūlān orōd* "On top of the Khan Mountain"

Sub-groups by content: building of monasteries, panegyric of the monks and their life

1st strophe: the external image is also of Buddhist content: incense offering; the internal image: 2.3. monasteries, 2.3.1. panegyric on the monasteries

2nd–4th strophes: the external image is also connected to Buddhism: 2.3. the monasteries, 2.3.2. building the monasteries; the internal image: 2.1. Buddhist philosophy and teaching, 2.1.5. vices and virtues

5th–6th strophes: no Buddhist connotation, but prepare for the next (7th–10th) strophes with their allegoric parallelism

7th, 9th strophes: in 9th: the external images are of the nature (river), in 7th: the external image is also of Buddhist content (cf. the internal image); the internal images: 2.4. monastic life, 2.4.1. panegyric of the monks and their life

8th, 10th strophes: secular contents: panegyric of the noblemen and the *nādam*-games²⁹ and praise of the feast

<i>Xān ūlān orōd</i> <i>sangīn utā manrnā.</i> <i>Xaš ike dugundū</i> <i>julān gerel todarxā.</i>	On top of the Khan Mountain smoke from the joss-stick is swirling. In the great jade shrine the light of the candle is clearly seen.
<i>Altalj būriksn</i> <i>altan šara sūm.</i> <i>Ayūl nūgūl xoyarān</i> <i>lam tandān dātxana.</i>	Gold-plated was erected the golden yellow shrine. Against peril and sin I entrust myself to the honourable monk.
<i>Kēlj būriksan</i> <i>kīdīn šara sūm.</i> <i>Kilinc nūgūl xoyarān</i> <i>lam tamdān dātxana.</i>	Richly decorated was erected the golden shrine of the church. Against sin and offence I entrust myself to the honourable monk.

²⁹ *Nādam* < Khal. *nād*- "to play, to amuse" is nowadays an annual festival organised on 11th–13th July to the memory of the revolution (1924). Originally the three competitions of the *nādam*: wrestling, archery and horse races served as military practice and also as a kind of offering for the lord-spirits of the nature or the ancestor-spirits.

<i>Xobdolj bāriksan</i> <i>xowdīn šara sūmū.</i> <i>Xoyir nügül bügdīn</i> <i>xutugta tandān dātxana.</i>	[...] was erected the yellow church of Khowd. Against the two kinds (?) of sin³⁰ I entrust myself to the saint.
<i>Xun cengān juljugan</i> <i>gurwn göwi gatlj,</i> <i>xums turūgān kücej,</i> <i>xurdun colān olnā.</i>	The swan's nestlings³¹ cross over the three Gobis. By the time they grow up they have reached the rank of the "fast".
<i>Xulun takīn juljugan</i> <i>gurwn göwi gatlj,</i> <i>xums turūgān kücej,</i> <i>xurdun colān olnā.</i>	The onager's foals and the wild horse's foals go across the three Gobis. By the time they grow up they have been reached the rank of the "fast".
<i>Sān lamān šāwi</i> <i>nāmān nasa kücej,</i> <i>nārin üjgēn tāni,</i> <i>mergen colān olnā.</i>	The pupil of a good monk is eight years old. Having learnt [the knowledge of] clear writing he has reached the rank of the "wise".
<i>Sān sādīn ürün</i> <i>yesün nasa kücej,</i> <i>bīr yandagān tāni,</i> <i>cecen colān olnā.</i>	The son of the good minister is nine years old. He knows pen and ink and has reached the rank of the "smart".
<i>Usnān tan' sāxān</i> <i>ulān sārīn usun.</i> <i>Ulusīn tan' sāxān</i> <i>lam noyin xoyir.</i>	Among the rivers beautiful is the water of the red bed. Among the people beautiful are the lama and the nobleman.

³⁰ The word by word expression in Dsakhchin is: "the two kinds of sin all"; the expression (*xoyur* "two, both") at the beginning of the line might be the result of corruption (perhaps follows the *x*-alliteration); there is no similar line in parallel texts.

³¹ For several Mongolian ethnic groups (first of all the Eastern Buryats and Oirats) the swan is a mythic progenitress. It is a frequent motive in ritual texts (e.g. *dallaga* "asking for luck, beckoning fortune" or *dūdlaga* "shamanic invocation") and in the folksongs. In detail, see Birtalan (2001, pp. 1026–1027).

<i>Nādamīn tan' sāxān</i> <i>šagā šatar xoyir.</i> <i>Nārīn čin' sāxān</i> <i>ārki čigān xoyir.</i>	At the <i>nādam</i> nice are the ankle bone game ³² and the chess. At the feast fine are the milk brandy and the kumis.
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Badam's 2nd song: *Gajrīn xolās gūdūltā* "Running from a faraway land"

Sub-groups by contents: sounding of the ritual instruments, panegyric of the monks and their life

1st strophe: external image: natural picture (fast saddle-horse); internal image: 2.4. monastic life, 2.4.1. panegyric of monks and their life

2nd–4th strophes: external image: 2.3. the monasteries, 2.3.3. panegyric on the Lion Throne; internal image: 2.4. monastic life, 2.4.1. panegyric of the monks and their life; 2nd strophe: internal image: panegyric of secular persons (office-holders)

5th–7th strophes: external image: 2.5. Buddhist rituals, 2.5.4. sounding the ritual instruments; internal image: 2.4. monastic life, 2.4.1. panegyric of the monks and their lives

<i>Gajrīn xolās gūdūltā</i> <i>altan šarga mōrin.</i> <i>Tūnīg xöllögči-n'</i> <i>naran mete bogdo.</i>	From a faraway land is running the golden yellow saddle-horse. It is harnessed to his cart by the saint who is similar to the Sun.
<i>Dörwön arslantā širēg</i> <i>dölgön giḡ sanūjā!</i> <i>Dörwön tūmūn sādnarīg</i> <i>šinggin giḡ sanūjā!</i>	The throne of four lions you should not imagine calm. The forty-thousand office-holders you should not imagine weak.
<i>Nāmān arslantā širēg</i> <i>namūxan giḡ sanūjā!</i> <i>Nāmān tūmūn šāwnarīg</i> <i>šinggin giḡ sanūjā!</i>	The throne of eight lions you should not imagine low. The eighty-thousand pupils you should not imagine weak.
<i>Arwan arslantā širēg</i> <i>namūn giḡ sanūjā!</i> <i>Arwan tūmūn šāwīg</i> <i>šinggin giḡ sanūjā!</i>	The throne of ten lions you should not imagine low. The ten-thousand pupils you should not imagine weak.

³² Khal. *šagai*, Mong. *siyai* "ankle bone, astragal" is the object of more than hundred games. During the *nādam* festival usually the *šagai xarwax* "shooting anklebones" is played by adults. In detail see Birtalan (2006, pp. 24–73).

<i>Cagān golīn ekende cagān dungān tatnā. Cacarsan olan šāwnarīg šinggin giġ bodūjā!</i>	At the fountain-head of the White river the white shell-horn is blown. The numerous pupils scattered you should not consider weak.
<i>Utā golīn ekende utxan būrāgān tatnā. Ū tūmūn šāwnarīg šinggin giġ sanūjā!</i>	At the fountain-head of the Long river the long trumpet is blown. The countless pupils you should not imagine weak.
<i>Arā golīn eknde altan būrāgān tatnā. Arwan tūmūn šāwnarīg šinggin giġ sanūjā!</i>	At the fountain-head of the Northern river the golden trumpet is blown. The tens of thousands of pupils you should not imagine weak.

Summary

The text of each of the five folksongs recited by the two Dsakhchin monks is typically Buddhist in content. Parallel texts, or certain analogous elements and motives can be found in the earliest collections, such as those of Pozdneev (1887), Ramstedt (Ramstedt–Halén 1974) and Vladimirtsov (1926), and in later publications of e.g. Jackovskaja (1988), Jagdsüren (1975), Colō (1987) and Katū (2005, Katū–Pürewĵaw 2004). The Mongolian Buddhist folksongs preserving a tradition of several hundred years – through both their vocabulary and contents – may contribute to a better understanding of the influence of Mongolian and Tibetan Buddhism upon the Mongolian folk culture.

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