

## **Khorchin Shamanic Attire: Ritual Functions, Symbolism, and Socio-Religious Influences**

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### **Abstract**

The vestments utilized in shamanic rituals constitute a crucial component of tangible cultural heritage, signifying the shaman's function in communicating with spirits and deities, as well as their socio-cultural status. The attire of the Khorchin shaman is characterized by a complex structure, comprising an inner deel (traditional robe), a ritual waistcoat (vest), a belt, headgear, boots, and auxiliary accouterments such as mirrors and bells. Each of these elements carries distinct symbolism and ritual functions. This study aims to analyze the structure, craftsmanship, artistic design of the embellishments, and the symbolic system of Khorchin shamanic attire from an ethnological and cultural studies perspective, with a view to determining the influence of regional historical context and socio-religious factors. Research findings indicate that the ritual attire of the Khorchin shaman is not merely a protective apparatus, but rather a complex ethno-aesthetic system of ritual performance. It serves to channel the efficacy of the ongod (ancestral spirits), amplify the potency of ritualistic actions, and facilitate the psychological concentration of the practitioner. By analyzing holistically the typologies, construction, aesthetic forms, and symbolic structures of Khorchin shamanic attire, this article elucidates how these elements have evolved in alignment with traditional shamanic rituals and cultural systems. This analysis provides a significant contribution to the fields of Mongolian shamanic studies and historical costume research.

**Keywords:** *Tangible Cultural Heritage, Ethnic Culture, Shamanism, Khorchin Shaman, Shamanic Vestments and Accessories, Symbolic System, Ritual Art, Khorchin Shamanism, Ritual Attire, Shamanic Symbolism, Religious Syncretism, Material Culture, Mongolian Spiritual Heritage, Ongod.*

### **Introduction**

Clothing is a form of tangible cultural heritage that expresses a nation's natural environment, lifestyle, religious beliefs, and aesthetic concepts. It is also a crucial art form that preserves multi-faceted historical, social, and cultural information. Thus, traditional clothing is not merely an object for daily use; it serves as a cultural code, signifying the cultural values, social relations, and customary systems of a given people.

The Khorchin is an ethnic group that settled in the basins of the Ergüne and Khanan rivers from the mid-16th century, spreading across a vast territory extending from the Eastern Khingan Mountains to the eastern shore of Lake Baikal and the southern part of Hulunbuir. (Erdemt, p.70) historical circumstances of settling in this expansive region became the foundation for the Khorchin people to develop their art, culture, and lifestyle in conjunction with the influences of various regional cultures. Their clothing and jewelry distinctly reflect their ethnic characteristics and the nature of cultural convergence.

Starting in the 17th century, the partitioning of the Khorchin into several banners (administrative units) created favorable conditions for the development of various local arts, crafts, and especially diverse types and forms of clothing and ornamentation. Presently, the Khorchin region is centered around Tongliao city, encompassing parts of Ulanhad and Khingan Aimags. The culture of this region has been enriched by the influence of cultural interactions and exchanges between Asia and Europe, while simultaneously preserving its unique characteristics.

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Throughout history, Mongolia served as a focal point for Asian and European jewelry and treasures, which provided a significant basis for the development of the art of clothing and ornamentation. The Khorchin tradition of adorning their everyday and ceremonial clothing with precious stones, embroidery, and metal decorations reflects their aesthetic sensibility and cultural awareness. This tradition of ornamentation was not limited to daily life; it was deeply and symbolically incorporated into religious rituals, particularly the shamanic vestments and accessories.

Khorchin shamanic attire is rich in embroidery, metalwork, symbolism, and imagery. These elements are closely linked to the shaman's ritual duties, the understanding of communion with the *ongod* (spirits), and the overall structure of the ritual. Consequently, this attire evolved into an elaborate artistic system for ritual purposes, going beyond a mere protective garment. It serves to enhance the ritual's efficacy, establish psychological concentration, and express profound symbolic meaning.

This study aims to comprehensively analyze the structure, craftsmanship, symbolism, and traditions of use of Khorchin shamanic ritual attire within the framework of ethnic culture, aesthetic thought, and ritual systems. The goal is to determine its position and significance within Mongolian shamanic culture. The study is novel in its integrated approach, which considers the structural elements, symbolism, and religious and socio-cultural influences on the Khorchin shaman's clothing. It synthesizes the syncretism of traditional clothing and shamanic rituals, clarifying their mutual influence and meaning. In this way, the research offers unique and interesting material for an international readership interested in ethnic culture, ritual studies, and the science of the spiritual realm.

## Literature Review

Researchers emphasize that the traditional clothing of the Khorchin people is a unique cultural expression, shaped in the intersectional space of nomadic and sedentary cultures of Northeast Asia and developed over many generations. Studies show that elements of neighboring cultures, especially Manchu and Chinese, have permeated Khorchin clothing and ornamentation, which is directly related to historical and social conditions. (Chin Ui, Wan, 2002; Bao Lun, 2007)

Researchers conclude that the Qing Dynasty's late-period policy of "expanding the territory" led to the large-scale settlement of Chinese citizens in the Khorchin territory. As they engaged in settled farming, this altered the local social structure—which had been dominated by nomadic life—and led to a shift toward a "semi-sedentary" form. (Chin Ui, Wan, 2002, p.24) This social change influenced the design and construction of Khorchin ethnic clothing, creating conditions for the integration of Manchu and Chinese clothing elements into the traditional Mongolian garment forms. (Bao Lun, 2007, p.89)

Some researchers argue that the state policies and uniform system implemented by the Manchu government among the Mongols exerted an institutional influence on the form and ornamentation of national clothing. For instance, the unique style developed in the clothing and artifacts of Khorchin shamans—where traditional Mongolian symbolism is combined with elements from neighboring cultures, suited to the peculiarities of their rituals—is considered as a result of state regulation and cultural interaction.

Research on the symbolism of shamanic attire and accessories places particular emphasis on the role and meaning of the mirror. The scholar Tserendagva.J defines the mirror as the "life-heart of the shaman's attire", noting that it is an amulet-like object that deflects evil, wards off misfortune, and protects against unseen dangers. (Tserendavga.J, 2009, p.114) The mirror is believed to be a tool for concentrating and transmitting the power of the *ongod* (spirits), supporting the shaman's ability to communicate between the three worlds.

Researcher Heissig.A expanded on this concept, noting that among many Mongolian ethnic groups, there is a common tradition of understanding the mirror not only as a ritual object but also as a seat for the *ongod* of deceased shamans and an inherited family amulet. (Hessig.A, 1987, p.124) Therefore, when a shaman dies, preserving and passing their mirror down to the family or lineage is a critical means of maintaining the continuity of the cult.

The aforementioned studies indicate that while certain historical and ethnographic research has been conducted on Khorchin ethnic clothing and shamanic accessories, there is a relative scarcity of comprehensive, integrated research that analyzes the design, aesthetics, symbolic structure, and ritual use of the Khorchin shaman's attire. This article thus aims to fill that gap by analyzing the Khorchin shaman's vestments and accessories within the context of their cultural, aesthetic, and ritual connections.

## Methodology

This study employed a combination of methodologies—including documentary analysis, visual observation, comparative analysis, and ethnographic evidence—to holistically investigate the structure, embroidery, symbolism, and ritual significance of the Khorchin shaman's attire.

### Data Collection Methods

Information was collected from the following sources:

- **Archival Materials:** Information regarding the symbolism of Khorchin shamanic clothing, hats, boots, accessories, and embroidery was reviewed from books, articles, and research works by Mongolian and foreign scholars.
- **Visual Sources:** Historical photographs, museum exhibit photographs, and local illustrations were utilized in the study.
- **Field Observation:** Direct, personal observation was conducted by participating in local shamanic rituals. During the observations, notes were taken on the colors of the clothing, the embroidery, the placement of accessories, and the methods of use.

The following criteria were applied in selecting artifacts and images:

- The type, design, and unique embroidery patterns of clothing that reflect historical and ethnic characteristics.
- Exhibits containing the key elements used in shamanic rituals.
- Reliable material where documentary evidence, museum information, and field observations overlapped.

### Figures, Schemes, and Tables

To make the research findings more comprehensible, a table was included showing the elements of the clothing, embroidery patterns, and the placement of ritual accessories.

### Analytical Framework

Coding and classification methods were developed to systematically analyze elements such as symbolism, color, and patterns. For instance:

- Color Coding: (blue – sky, red – fire, black – powerful *ongod*, etc.)
- Classification of Embroidery Symbolism: (eye pattern – to ward off evil spirits, dragon – to express the power of the sky, etc.)
- Function of Accessory Placement and Use: (mirror – protection, bells – calling the *ongod* with sound, etc.)

### Details of Field Observation

Participation in the rituals of a local practicing shaman allowed for the observation of clothing usage, the arrangement of accessories, and the sequence of rituals. Field observation took place between May and July 2023 in and around Tongliao and Ulanhad in the Khorchin region. Methods used included participation in rituals, interviews, and photographic documentation.

### Limitations

Most of the research material was based on secondary sources, thus limiting field observation. This limitation included:

- The meaning and rituals associated with certain *ongod* (spirits) and *dogshid* (wrathful deities) depend on the lived experience of the practicing shaman.
- Analysis based on archival and visual material may not fully cover all ritual practices and clothing variations.

To mitigate the effects of these limitations, multiple sources were compared in the study, and information from documents, museum exhibits, and field observations was used in an integrated manner.

## Results

The research findings show that the Khorchin shaman's attire is based on the foundational design of traditional Mongolian shamanic clothing but has a distinct structure enriched by specific ritual needs and religious-cultural interaction. Components such as the inner *deel*, waistcoat, hat, belt, mirror, and bells are not merely clothing elements; they serve as ritual tools for communicating with the *ongod* and reinforcing amuletic protection.

- **Male Khorchin Shaman's Deel:** The *deel* is typically long, right-fastening, and dominated by red, blue, and brown colors. The chest area features sewn patterns with symbols for offering and protection. Braided red threads, knots, and amulets incorporated around the wrists express the meaning of attracting the power of the *ongod* and protecting the body. The thumb protector (*erkhiivch*) symbolizes not only masculinity but also the shaman's magical actions. (Chen, 2006, p90)
- **The Waistcoat (*Uuj*):** The *uuj* is the central element of the ceremonial attire, holding multiple layers of spiritual and aesthetic meaning. The bronze mirror, bells, and metal ornaments worn on the chest have the function of appeasing the *ongod*, warding off evil forces, and concentrating the shaman's spiritual energy. The mirror is a reflection of the universe, a symbol of protection, and a tool connecting the shaman with the three worlds.
- **Female Khorchin Shaman's Attire:** The clothing of female shamans (*udgan*) has a more intricate design. Embroidery symbolizing nature and the cosmos predominates on the chest, sleeves, and hem. Precious materials like silver pendants, coral, and turquoise express the balance of male and female energy and the meaning of protection. It was observed that the ornamentation on the hats, belts, and hems includes silver pendants, tassels, banners, and depictions of the *noyon* (princely) guardian spirits.
- **Color and Religious Influence:** Khorchin shamanic clothing was initially dominated by black and blue. However, from the 18th to 19th centuries, under the influence of Buddhism, yellow and gold colors were added, symbolizing enlightenment, purification, and the protection of guardian deities. Five-colored ribbons and tassels symbolize the five elements, the five directions, and the balance of the universe.
- **Syncretism:** It was observed that Buddhist symbols (the wheel, lotus, and depictions of the goddess Tara) and elements from Manchu state ceremonies have permeated Khorchin shamanic clothing and accessories. This makes Khorchin shamanic attire a syncretic cultural heritage, integrating the philosophy of traditional shamanism, religious-cultural influences, and elements of state ceremony.

## Findings

### 1. Structure and Symbolism of Khorchin Shamanic Attire and Accessories

#### 1. Hat (*Malgai*), crown (*titem*)

- Expresses the power of the *ongod* and the presence of the guardian spirits; a vital ritual element.
- The bells, colored silk tassels, horns, and bird feathers on the apex (*orgoy*) create a spiritual channel, connecting directly with the *ongod* and the Sky.
- The five-crowned structure and five-colored silk symbolize the five elements and the power of the five skies.

#### 2. Robe (*Deel*), Armor-Robe (*Huyagt Deel*)

- **Colors:** Blue – sky, Green – *lus* (water spirits), Black – powerful *ongod*, Red – fire, Yellow – earth, White – purity.
- **Embroidery/Patterns:** Eye pattern – to see evil spirits, Swastika (*Khas temdeg*) – solar movement, Cloud pattern – connection with the sky, Fire pattern – purification, Dragon – power of the sky, Bird – ability to soar to the sky.
- **Manjig (Amulets), Honginuur (Toggles), Silk Ribbons:** Used to concentrate the power of the amulet and *ongod*, and for protection.

### 3. Boots (*Gutal*)

- Fine embroidery and stitching on the shaft and toe. Features three *manjig*, two *honginuur*, and one arrowhead (*zev*) on the front.
- Color Symbolism: White – purity, Black – powerful *ongod*, Red – fire, Green – *lus*, Blue – sky, Yellow – earth
- Honginuur: Voice of the *ongod*; Manjig- Concentrate the power of the amulet<sup>1</sup>. Arrowhead: Suppresses negative forces.

### Accessories

- Drum (Hengereg): The main ritual tool for connecting with the *ongod*.
- Cymbal (Tsan), Sword (Selem), Stick (Zasiuur): Serve to call and summon spirits and *ongod*, protect, and guide the path.
- Bronze Mirror (Hürel Tol): Used to protect against negative forces and purify the ritual.

### Influence of Buddhism

Some elements of the Khorchin shaman's clothing, hat, and boots (yellow and gold colors, five-colored silk banners) reflect Buddhist concepts. Depictions of the goddess Tara, flowers, and the wheel express the ideas of purification and protection, clearly demonstrating Buddhist influence. The *Laichin* tradition (*Laichin böö*), a type of shamanism, incorporated elements similar to the clothing and rituals of Buddhist *güremch* lamas (lamas who perform ritual exorcism/subjugation) into shamanic practices.

### Influence of the Manchu State

Some ornaments, pendants, and figures on the Khorchin shaman's clothing and accessories are mixed with elements from Manchu state ceremonies. The combination of Mongolian tradition, Buddhism, and Manchu state influence formed a syncretic, multi-layered symbolic system.

### Differentiation by Color, Pattern, and Seasonal Use

- **Color:** Black and blue – symbolize the sky; Green – nature; Red – fire; Yellow – earth; White – purity.
- **Patterns (*Hee Ugalz*):** Eye pattern, swastika, cloud pattern, fire pattern, dragon, bird – signify spiritual meaning, the *ongod*, and the qualities of the guardian spirits.
- **Seasonality:** Spring/Autumn – *deel* with blue lining, red/green belt; Summer – light silk *deel*; Winter – warm woolen or leather *deel*.

### 5. Connection with *Ongod*, *Dogshid*, and Cult Worship

- The clothing, hat, and accessories of the Khorchin shaman are directly connected with the *ongod*, guardian spirits, and spiritual forces.
- The colors, embroidery, and accessories used vary depending on the type of *ongod*, highlighting the ritual's efficacy.
- Each deity has its own offering and ritual, and the accessories function as guides and protectors in that specific ritual.

### Mutual Influence Between Khorchin Shaman (*Laichin*) and *Güremch* Lama

- The *Laichin* shaman adopted elements from the vestments and rituals of the Buddhist *güremch* lamas and integrated them into shamanic practice.
- This is not merely an expression of conflict between Buddhism and shamanism, but rather the creation of a unique cultural system characterized by syncretism and mutual absorption.

The research findings confirm that the Khorchin shaman's clothing, hat, boots, and accessories constitute a complete system for transmitting the power of the *ongod* and guardian spirits. It is a multi-layered symbolic system that has mutually absorbed the influences of Buddhism and the Manchu state. The color, embroidery, placement of accessories, and form express not only ornamentation but also ritual activeness, spiritual protection, and the concentration of energy.

## Discussion

### Clothing and Accessories

The Khorchin shaman's clothing and accessories are not merely decorative; they are tools for concentrating the power of the *ongod* and guardian spirits and increasing ritual effectiveness<sup>132</sup>.

Element	Function and Symbolism
<b>Belt and Shoulder Ornamentation</b>	Attract and protect the energy of the <i>ongod</i> <sup>134</sup> ; feature symbols of the bow shape, flower, sun, and fire <sup>135</sup> ; bells and toggles ( <i>tovruul</i> ) call the <i>ongod</i> with sound and ward off negative forces.
<b>Waistcoat (<i>Uuj</i>), Robe (<i>Deel</i>), Hat (<i>Malgai</i>), Boots (<i>Gutal</i>)</b>	Main ceremonial elements <sup>138</sup> ; mirror, pipe ( <i>gaans</i> ), drum ( <i>hengereg</i> ) – tools for energy transmission and connection with the <i>ongod</i> .
<b>Coral, Turquoise, Silver Inlay</b>	Balance male and female energies; express the harmony of natural forces.

### Influence of Buddhism

Buddhist elements incorporated into the Khorchin shaman's clothing and accessories have created a syncretic nature<sup>144</sup>.

Indicator	Description
<b>Symbolism, Imagery</b>	Flower, wheel, Tara – express ideas of enlightenment, purification, and protection
<b>Color Correlation</b>	The addition of yellow and gold in the 18th–19th centuries aligns with Buddhist concepts.
<b>Five Colors</b>	White, yellow, red, green, blue – symbolize the elements, the cosmos, spiritual purification, and balance.

### Influence of the Manchu State

Manchu state ceremony and imagery have permeated the structure of shamanic clothing and rituals.

- Pendants, ornaments, and figures are adapted to suit Khorchin shamanic practice.
- The confluence of Mongolian tradition, Buddhism, and Manchu state influence resulted in a distinctive symbolic system.

### Differentiation by Color, Season, and Use

- **Traditional Colors:** Black, blue – symbolize the sky and natural energy.
- **Buddhist Colors:** Yellow, gold – emphasize purification and the power of guardian spirits.
- **Seasonality:** Spring/Autumn – *deel* with blue lining, red/green belt; Summer – thin silk *deel*<sup>159</sup>; Winter – warm woolen or leather *deel*.

### Ongod, Dogshid, and Cult Worship

The worship of *ongod* and *dogshid* (wrathful deities) is central to Khorchin shamanic rituals<sup>162</sup>.

Element	Function and Symbolism
<b>Ongod</b>	The central cult object, embodying the spirits of deceased ancestors and master shamans.
<b>Dogshid, Deities (<i>Shüteen</i>)</b>	Earth and sky guardian spirits; associated with specific offerings and rituals.
<b>Tools (<i>Heregsel</i>)</b>	Drum, fiddle ( <i>huur</i> ) – for connecting with the <i>ongod</i> ; crown, knife, mirror – for protection; pipe, wooden staff – ritual guides.

### Influence of Güremch Lama

The vestments and rituals of the *güremch* lamas share similarities with traditional shamanic practices, exhibiting a syncretic character with Buddhist elements.

- **Five-Colored Banners:** Express Buddhist philosophy, energy, purification, and the power of guardian spirits<sup>174</sup>.

- "Realm of the Masters and Guardians" Sign: Aligns with the traditional Mongolian shamanic ritual of summoning *ongod* and fierce guardians.
- The *Laichin* tradition forms a unique cultural blend, incorporating Buddhist elements into its external imagery, symbolic language, and rituals.

### Hat, Clothing, Boots, and Symbolism

The accessories and implements of the Khorchin shaman are a complete system for transmitting the power of the *ongod* and the presence of the guardian spirits.

Element	Symbolism / Function
<b>Hat (<i>Malgai</i>)</b>	Five crowns – power of the sky; Eagle – messenger of the <i>ongod</i> ; Bells – audio signal; Five-colored silk – five elements; Feather – brave deity; Inner lining – sacred protection.
<b>Clothing (<i>Huvtsas</i>)</b>	Blue – sky; Green – <i>Ius</i> (water spirits); Black – <i>ongod</i> ; Red – fire; Yellow – earth; White – purity; Embroidery/Patterns – protection from evil spirits, concentration of <i>ongod</i> power.
<b>Boots (<i>Gutal</i>)</b>	Embroidery on the shaft and toe; <i>Manjig</i> , <i>Honginuur</i> , Arrowhead on the front – voice of the <i>ongod</i> , power of the amulet, suppresses negative forces.

In summary, the Khorchin shaman's clothing, hat, boots, and accessories:

- Concentrate and transmit the power of the *ongod* and guardian spirits.
- Provide protection from negative forces.
- Synthesize the influence of Buddhism and Manchu ceremony with shamanic practice.
- Express symbols connecting with energy, sky, earth, and nature through color, embroidery, and form.

These elements form a multi-layered symbolic system that is vital for the preservation and study of the traditional cultural heritage of Khorchin shamanism.

### The Distinctive Features of the Khorchin Shaman's Hat and its Symbolic Expression

The hat (*malgai*) is one of the most important ritual vestments in the Khorchin shamanic tradition, expressing the power of the *ongod* and the presence of the guardian spirits. This hat is sometimes called *orgoy* (crown or helmet), and its structure and form vary depending on the shaman's lineage and specific customs.

Khorchin shamans' hats are typically shallow-crowned or crownless, characterized by multi-colored cloth tassels hanging down the back. The crown often has bells installed, which ring when the *ongod* descend, signaling their arrival. The sound of these bells is not merely a signal; it is an expression of divine presence, the voice of the guardian, and a connector between worlds. This confirms that the shaman is ready to communicate with the heavens once the bells begin to ring. The tradition of using the ritual tool "Khonvug" only when deities arrive reinforces this understanding. The hat's structure also includes elements such as horns and bird feathers, which symbolize the shaman's ability to communicate with the *ongod* and the special magic of soaring to the heavens. For example, bird imagery is the figure of an "angel" or "celestial messenger," signifying the shaman's journey into the world of the spirits. Depictions of eagles, firebirds, and dragons along the hat's rim signify power, courage, and a celestial connection, while also symbolizing a connection between multiple existential planes.

From these observations, the Khorchin shaman's hat is not just an article of clothing, but an essential tool that expresses the presence of the *ongod* through tangible symbolism, concentrating the ritual's significance. The components—bells, colored cloth tassels, horns, and feathers—function as the language of communication between the shaman and the *ongod*, a transmitter of celestial signals, and a symbolic form that transcends space. The hat's structure and ornamentation are not mere decoration, but constitute a complete symbolic system that expresses the Khorchin shaman's belief, the spiritual channel connecting to the heavens, and the deep content of their cultural heritage.

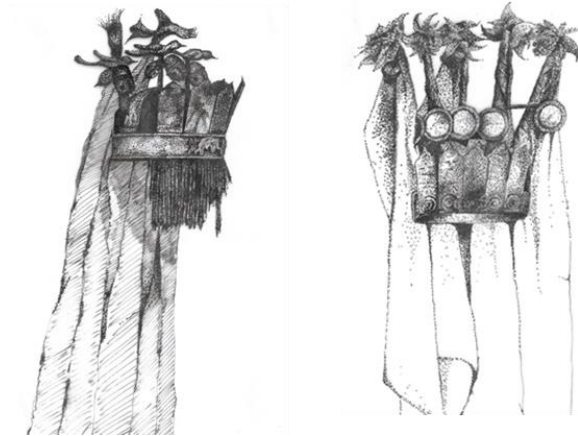


Figure 1. A ritual helmet (shamanic headdress) of a Khorchin shaman, inherited from the grandfather of Shaman Erdenebulag (Analytical sketch drawn by doctorate Yang Chao Bo 2024)

The color of the hat can signify clan or lineage. For example, the scholar S. Komaroff noted that Khular shamans wear reddish-brown, Darkhad wear blue or brown, and Khorchin shamans wear yellow hats (Komaroff, 2002, p. 45). This demonstrates that color choice is not just ornamental but represents ethnic distinction and spiritual power.

The element known as the *nüür samalga* (face screen) is located on the front of the hat. This screen serves not only to obscure the face and protect the shaman's identity but is also considered a magical tool to activate *lus*, *savdag*, and *ongod*. The ornamentation and shape of the *samalga* may change depending on the ritual's purpose and the type of guardian spirit, but its main goal is to create a secret and sacred environment. Shamans consider it an absolute necessity during *Khariin Zasal* (Black Purification/Exorcism) rituals that the face not be recognizable, as this is a powerful defense against the influence of evil spirits. The bells, colors, horns, bird feathers, and the hierarchical placement of the *samalga* are all complex symbolic instruments that act not only as ornaments but also as the foundation of the person's spiritual body protection, a bridge to the *ongod*, and a guide for existential power.



Figure 2. Shaman Erdenebulag's inner hat. (Analytical sketch by doctorate Yang Chao Bo 2024)

The Khorchin shaman's hat is not merely a tool for communicating with the celestial realm, but also a symbol of the spiritual connection between the three worlds. Bird imagery, such as the falcon and eagle, symbolizes the shaman's ability to fly and reach the world of the *ongod*. This tradition, where bird feathers were placed on the hat's rim to symbolize soaring to the sky, was established during the Xiongnu and Great Mongol Empire eras (Purev, 1999, p. 253). Khorchin shamans inherit this, using real feathers or feather-shaped cloth/leather loops on hats, shoulders, and sleeves to symbolize the *ongod's* capacity for flight. The hat's upper rim features powerful, magical depictions like the eagle, dragon, and firebird. A leather or cloth tassel is hung to cover the face, often featuring the sun and moon, which symbolize the cycle of nature, the balance of the world's two poles, and the enlightened path of the shaman's actions. The crown of the Khorchin hat is often open-topped, related to the concept of communicating directly with the *ongod* through the crown of the head and maintaining an unobstructed channel for the guardian's presence.

The *nüür samalga* on the front is a highly symbolic element. According to local tradition, the shamans of the Ar Khorchin region (Northern Khorchin) historically crafted these *samalga* (shamanic fringe/pendants) using the raw, untanned hide of antelope though it is now often replaced with cloth. Its primary purpose is to shield the shaman from being recognized by external, evil influences and malicious spirits during the journey through the dark realm. It prevents the shaman from being identified by external forces, creating an environment where the shaman interacts only with the celestial *ongod*.



Consequently, the *samalga* is regarded as an essential instrument within shamanic practice; it is defined as a potent medium capable of 'activating' (bringing into motion) the *lus-savdag* (water and earth spirits) and the *ongod-tengeri* (ancestral sky spirits)

The figures of the *khovogt böö* (esteemed shaman ancestor) are carved onto the hat's *titim* (crown), representing lineage, tradition, and the influence of the *ongod* guardians. Leaf carvings on the sides reflect the worship and respect for nature and all living things. The bird on the apex signifies the shaman as a "son of heaven," a communicator with the *ongod*'s rightful realm, and carries the symbolism of flying like a bird to the celestial realm and transmitting the guardian's decree. Five-colored silk ribbons, two and a half cubits long, with two small bells at the end of each, represent the five directions and the power of the five elements, while also calling the guardian and expressing the voice of the *ongod* (Heissig, 2013:82).

The *nüür samalga* provides protection on the face, acting as a tool to prevent the shaman from being recognized by evil forces and to create a veil of spiritual smoke during the journey through the dark world. The *samalga* is crucial for *Khariin Zasal* and rituals to subdue demons, as concealing the face prevents evil spirits from recognizing them. If recognized, there is a risk that these evil forces could return to "possess" the shaman. There is a tradition of securing three *honginuur* bells on leather straps and metal rings at each of the shaman's temples. These bells (*khonkh*) serve not merely as ornamentation but function as vital instruments for summoning protector spirits (*sakhius*), activating spiritual power, and maintaining the ritualistic intensity of the performance.

Component	Location in Illustration	Symbolism / Meaning
<b>Five Crowns (<i>Titem</i>)</b>	On the helmet's apex	The power of the five skies (represents the five elements)
<b>Image of the Eagle (<i>Bürged</i>)</b>	On the central crown	The majesty of the <i>ongod</i> guardian, Messenger of the Sky
<b>Bell (<i>Honkh</i>)</b>	At the end of the silk tassel	Auditory signal for the arrival of the <i>ongod</i>
<b>Five-Colored Silk (<i>Torg</i>)</b>	Suspended from the lower section	Five directions, five elements (red, yellow, blue, green, light blue)
<b>Leaf Carvings (<i>Navchit Siilber</i>)</b>	On the side crowns	Representation of the living world and nature
<b>Feather of the Black-eared Kite (<i>Elgee Shuvuunii Öd</i>)</b>	On the back tassel/belt	Brave deity, the life-soul of the ritual
<b>Inner hat is worn inside the helmet</b>		
<b>Inner Hat (<i>Dotgor Malgai</i>)</b>	Worn inside the helmet	Sacred protection, the shaman's "head space"
<b>Black Samalga (Face Veil)</b>	In front of the face	The wrathful nature of the guardian, channel connecting with the <i>ongod</i>

The five-crowned design of the helmet reflects the influence of Buddhist philosophy. Dr. Walter Heissig noted that the Khorchin shaman's five-crowned hat is similar in shape to the crowns worn by Buddhist deities, and the five-colored silk is similar in structure to the vestments of the *güremch* lamas. This symbolizes the power of subduing demons and purifying the mind, harmoniously integrated into the shamanic ritual. The inside of the bronze helmet is cushioned with a felt cap for comfort. The black tassel hanging in front symbolizes the hair and power of the fierce guardian and is considered an inner spiritual interpreter that connects the shaman with the *ongod*.

Therefore, the Khorchin shaman's hat is not just an item of clothing, but a tangible expression of deep meaning, worship, and the communication channel with the celestial *ongod*, representing the spiritual world. It is a vital tool for the shaman to convey divine decrees, provide healing and purification to people, and interact with the guardian spirits, as well as a symbol of historical tradition.

However, the tradition of the Khorchin shaman's hat and ritual vestments gradually faded and lost its original meaning due to various historical factors. Researchers emphasise that the powerful introduction of other religious movements in Mongolia was a primary factor that destabilized shamanism's position. During the Qing Dynasty's rule, a systematic change occurred in the traditional culture and customs of the Mongols, including shamanism, which was suppressed to a certain extent.

Following this, under the Bogd Khanate, Buddhism became the official state religion, intensifying the competition with and displacement of shamanism. During the socialist years, a policy of direct persecution of shamanism was implemented, and traditional spiritual ideologies suffered repression, further degrading this practice which valued secrecy and solitude.

The dominance of science and materialist thought from the late 20th century systematically denied the concept of the unseen world and spiritual values, disrupting the balance of traditional consciousness preserved for centuries. This change is also evident in the Khorchin shaman's hat and accessories, which, upon their revival, often came to be understood merely as ornamentation or theatrical props, detached from their deep spiritual meaning.

The "revival" of shamanism observed since the early 21st century often focuses on form over content, is sometimes interpreted through self-interest, and exhibits a blurring of the essential nature of traditional philosophy. This reflects not only a profound change in the beliefs and mindset of the Khorchin shamans but of the Mongols in general, showing how the ability to consciously value the unseen world is diminishing.

In the traditional view of ancient shamanism, human life is the process of "completing one's karma," and the shaman's clothes, armor, and accessories express this path and the spiritual bridge to the heavens. The Khorchin shaman's hat, *deel*, mirror, and drum are not mere ceremonial adornments but actual tools for transmitting the power of the *ongod* guardians and guiding the soul to the celestial realm. Scholar Walter Heissig noted that each of these elements serves as "the shaman's spiritual body of journey, a protective tool, and the abode of the *ongod* guardians," through which the shaman establishes a connection between the worlds (Heissig, 2013, pp. 79–83). Thus, researching and reviving the profound symbolism and historical meaning of Khorchin shamanic vestments, and understanding them in the contemporary context, is not only important for preserving cultural heritage but also a crucial step toward restoring the mental balance of the modern Mongolian people. For example, every component—the shaman's *deel*, armor, hat, *manjig*, bells, and snake imagery—has a specific function. They express the nature and power of the *ongod* while serving as a bridge to protect and transmit the spiritual path of the shaman.

Scholar H. Hu (Hu, 2005, p.97) noted that the Khorchin shaman's *deel* itself is a complete "armor" structure, where every color and design has a special spiritual meaning: for example, blue symbolizes the sky, green the *lus* (water spirits), and grey the synthesis of both powers (Hu, 2005, p.82). In this way, shamanic clothing is not just an item to be worn, but transforms into an abode for the *ongod* and a physical manifestation of the cult. Shamans believe that the *ongod* originate from the person's ancestors, and depending on their level of enlightenment, they can be of a higher or lower rank. High-level *ongod* reside in the "realm of the sky," and their age and power last through centuries. Therefore, the shaman's body, mind, and accessories must be pure, or there is a risk of falling under the possession of negative forces, as traditional teachings warn. This connection is reflected not only in the shaman's words and actions but in every part of their attire.

The bells (*khonginuur*), ritual streamers (*manjiq*), and ribbons situated on the posterior section of the Khorchin shamanic costume serve as a defensive mechanism against sudden negative energies approaching from behind, while simultaneously acting as guardians of the 'spinal path' of the ancestral spirits (*ongod*). Far from being mere aesthetic embellishments, these components form a functional architecture for spiritual security. This strategic configuration is designed to prevent the shaman from falling victim to 'ambush attacks' (unforeseen spiritual strikes) from the rear, ensuring the practitioner's metaphysical safety during ritual performance. A key element of the armor-robe is the special design around the armpit. In Mongolian shamanic tradition, the skin under the armpit is considered the thinnest, making it the "spiritual gate" for *ongod* and spirits to enter and exit. Therefore, some *deels* have a special opening in the armpit area. However, the front is designed to be closed, protecting the center of the heart and mind. *Manjig* (pendants) on the collarbone area, along with depictions of the sun, moon, and nine stars, serve to detect *ongod* and protect the self. *Manjig*, or worship pendants, are made of sheep's wool and cotton rolled and covered with cloth or silk, divided into two main types: body *manjig* and worship *manjig*. Their form and quantity are determined by the shaman's lineage and origin.

Khorchin shamans incorporate animal pelts on the back and shoulders of their armor-robos, preserving a complex style that combines celestial power with animal symbolism. Historically, the design of the Khorchin shaman's collar is similar to the collar of a *Khariin* (Black) person's *deel* used in state ceremonies, recalling the state-religion connection during the Xiongnu period and signifying operation under the auspices of the highest power. The ritual vestments and accessories of the

Khorchin shamans can be clearly seen in stone monuments, carvings, photographs, and museum exhibits.

These are not merely expressions of visual art, but exist as tangible evidence of the spiritual beliefs and rituals of their era. Thus, every element of the Khorchin shaman's ritual attire, such as the armored coat (*khuyagt deel*), necklaces, and hat, confirms their role as unique spiritual structures that preserve the heritage of their culture and worship.

#### Explanation of the Meaning and Symbolism of Khorchin Shaman Embroidery

No.	Embroidery / Pattern	Shape/Form	Meaning, Symbolism	Explanation
1.	Eye Pattern (Nüden khee)	Vertical and horizontal lines inside a dotted circle	The eye of the spirit guardian, "seeing" and chasing away evil spirits	Located on the hem and cuffs of the coat
2.	Swastika Symbol (Khas temdeg)	With four rotating limbs	Movement of the sun, the cycle of life, enlightenment	Indicates Buddhist influence; mostly on the chest piece/vest and belt
3	Cloud Pattern (Üülen khee)	Round, flexible curved lines	Connector to the heavenly realm, transmitter of power	On the shoulders of the coat, and the top of the hat
4	Fire Pattern (Galiin khee)	In the shape of seven flames	Purification, burning away evil things	On the drum, belt, and hat
5	Dragon Image (Luuny dürs)	A horned animal coiling its tail	Power, heavenly messenger	Worn only by high-ranking shamans
6	Bird Pattern (Shuvuuny khee)	A bird flying with spread wings	Ability to free the soul, soar to the heavens	On the hat and shoulders
7	Heavenly Ladder (Tengeriin shat)	A pattern of double square steps	Stepped connection with the 33 realms of heaven	Embroidered on the belt, sometimes on the hem
8	Vulture and Eagle Pattern (Tas bolon bürged khee)	Large-winged bird	Sharp sight, blessing of the spirit-guardian (ongod)	Embroidered on the hat feathers and chest piece
9	Lotus Flower (Lyanhua tsetseg)	An eight-petaled flower grown from water	Enlightenment, spiritual purification	Embroidery influenced by Buddhism; on the coat's trim

From these, the embroidery and patterns on Khorchin shaman clothing and accessories constitute a crucial ritual language with deep spiritual and symbolic meaning, beyond mere ornamentation. Traditional symbols such as the Eye pattern, Cloud pattern, and Fire pattern signify communication with spirit guardians, protection from evil forces, and connection with the heavenly realm. In contrast, the Swastika and Lotus flower demonstrate layered religious influences, having absorbed elements of Buddhism. Animal depictions like birds, dragons, and eagles symbolize the form of the shaman's guardian spirit, special power, and the ability to soar to the heavens, while also serving as markers of the shaman's rank. Thus, the system of embroidery and patterns in Khorchin shamanic clothing is a complex structure that profoundly illustrates the interrelation of historical tradition, spiritual belief, and religious culture.

### Patterns and Images of Animals Symbolizing Power

No.	Pattern / Embroidery Name	Shape/Form	Symbolism / Meaning	Placement / Explanation
1	Garuda Bird Pattern ( <i>Khangardi</i> )	A bird soaring high, wings spread	Power, authority, connector to the ongod spirits	On the top of the hat, chest piece, and shoulders
2	Dragon Pattern (Heavenly Dragon) ( <i>Luuny khee</i> )	A mythical horned animal coiling its tail	Heavenly power, dominating authority	On the chest, sleeves, belt, etc.; on the clothing of high- ranking shamans
3	Lion Image ( <i>Arslangyin dürs</i> )	A beast with furrowed brows and a mane/beard	Protective power, spiritual guardian, majesty	On the hem, belt, chest piece
4	Tiger Pattern ( <i>Baryn khee</i> )	A tiger running powerfully	A powerful protector, fighter against evil	On the wrists, knees, belt

Animal patterns and images such as the Garuda, Dragon, Lion, and Tiger, depicted on items like the hat, chest piece, and belt, carry deep ritualistic symbolism. They express the shaman's rank, role, the nature of the spirit-guardian, and the ability to connect with the *ongod* spirits.

- The Garuda (*Khangardi*) serves not only as a celestial messenger and a manifestation of the power to communicate directly with the *ongod-tengeri*, but also symbolizes the shaman's supernatural ability to take flight and journey through the heavenly realms.
- The Dragon notably appears only on the attire of high-ranking shamans, signifying supreme power and heavenly authority.
- Animals like the Lion and Tiger embody spiritual defense and the magic to subdue evil spirits.

Thus, embroidered patterns featuring animal depictions are a vital component of the traditional spiritual language, expressing the power of rituals.

### The Symbolism, Construction, and Spiritual Significance of Khorchin Shamanic Boots

"While the construction of the Khorchin shamanic boot shares formal similarities with traditional Mongolian footwear, it incorporates specialized forms, craftsmanship, and symbolic elements tailored to the belief systems of shamanism. These boots are not merely functional apparel but serve as a vital spiritual conduit designed to facilitate the transmission of power and mediate the practitioner's connection with the *ongod-tengeri* (celestial spirits).

Shamanism is a ritualistic practice that integrates the human psyche, soul, and vital energy with the physical body, a connection in which the ritual boots serve as a vital component. Consequently, the Khorchin shamanic boot has evolved beyond a mere functional garment into a sophisticated instrument of spiritual communication. Every aspect of its construction—color, design, and ornamentation—carries specific symbolic and ritualistic intent. For instance, the *manjig* (fringes), *khonginuur* (bells), and the pointed *zev* (arrowhead) attached to the front are not intended for aesthetic purposes alone; rather, they function as conduits for spiritual signals, protection, and the transmission of power from the *ongod-tengeri*.

Researcher S. Torbat notes: "The ritual boots represent not only the practitioner's (*ulaachiin*) right to access the celestial realms but also embody the tradition that without the appropriate footwear, it is impossible to traverse the spiritual space" (S. Torbat, 2003, p. 92). This underscores the metaphysical significance of the boots.

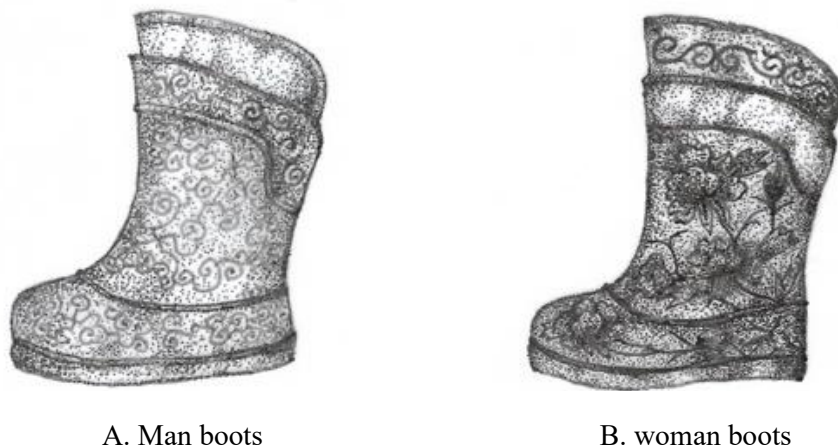
The construction of the boots typically utilizes raw, untanned hide (*sarmai*), providing durability and symbolic protection. The shafts and toes are adorned with intricate embroidery and ornamentation, representing the five natural elements, guardian animals, and the characteristics of the *ongod* (spirits). For instance, the patterns on the boot shafts symbolize the presence of the presiding deity. Attached to the front of the boots are three *manjig* (ritual fringes), two *khonginuur* (small bells), and a single *zev* (arrowhead/iron point). While the *khonginuur* act as the voice of the spirits and a signal for the soul, the

*manjig* serve as elements that concentrate the guardian's power. The pointed *zev* represents the shamanic amulet used to combat malevolent forces.

The decorative patterns on the toes of the boots symbolize the *lus* (water spirits), a distinctive feature of the attire for shamans whose *ongod* are connected to aquatic deities. Furthermore, the external colors and imagery reflect ancestral worship and spiritual protection. These elements are collectively utilized to draw support from protector spirits during the *ulaachi's* spiritual endeavors.

Color Symbolism (used according to the *ongod's* nature): white: purity, black: powerful on red: fire, green: *lus* (water spirits), blue: heaven, yellow: earth. The practitioner (*ulaach*) selects these colors to align with the specific characteristics of their *ongod* (spirits), establishing the foundational conditions for ritual readiness. Thus, the Khorchin shamanic boot exists not merely as a material object, but as a unique cultural expression—a bridge connecting the realms of Heaven, Earth, and Spirit. The footwear is a vital component of the practitioner's spiritual path and marks the commencement of the spirit's journey.

Figure 3. Khorchin shaman's boots (drawn by doctorate Yang Chao Bo, 2024)



The boots are an indispensable part of the shamanic attire, serving as a ritual instrument of profound significance through their structure, ornamentation, and symbolism. The boots illustrated above reflect the traditional culture and belief systems of the Khorchin through their patterns, color harmony, and craftsmanship. These aesthetic choices are symbolic of specific powers, amulets, and the presence of the *ongod*. For instance, the circular, floral embroidery on the toe—known as the *luzan* flower—traditionally symbolizes protection and the power of the *lus* (water spirits). These designs are intended to transmit a 'grounding' force to ward off malevolence, with their colors and forms varying according to the shaman's lineage and spirit characteristics.

In terms of color palette, deep blue and black predominate, representing the power of the Heavens and the foundational energy of the Earth (Tsuiyin, 2007, p. 26). The orange and green accents along the borders and seams symbolize the forces of fire and the *lus-savdag* (nature spirits), indicating the specific traits of the boot's presiding *ongod*.

Furthermore, in Khorchin tradition, the boots are perceived as the 'feet' of the *ongod* and are regarded as 'conductors of the spirit's presence.' Consequently, bells and *manjig* are hung on the exterior, while items shaped like anklebones (*shagai*) or other bone-like objects are sometimes placed inside to signify that the boots possess 'life' (*ami*). Researcher Tsuiyin notes: 'Khorchin shamanic boots are not mere footwear; they are instruments for transmitting spirit power, protection, and guiding energy' (Tsuiyin, 2007, p. 128).

Structurally, Khorchin shamans utilize high-shafted boots with slightly upturned toes, which signify guidance and protection. Every embroidered ornament differs according to the 'work' or specific function of the *ongod*. Occasionally, embossed stitching in the shape of an arrowhead (*zev*) or bell icons are attached to the shaft to serve as weapons against negative forces (Sain, 2007, p. 47). Ultimately, the Khorchin shamanic boot is a multi-faceted symbolic object designed for religious utility; its embroidery, color coordination, and form constitute a vital cultural heritage reflecting an internal system of belief.

### The Characteristics, Symbolism, and Function of the Khorchin Shamanic Mirror

Among the ritual implements of the Khorchin shaman, the bronze mirror (*toli*) occupies a central role. It serves as an indicator of ritual activity, a concentrator of power, and a protective shield. Shamanologists aptly refer to the mirror as the 'eye of the soul,' as it reveals the invisible world and facilitates communication with the *ongod-tengeri* (celestial spirits).

Crafted from bronze or brass, the Khorchin mirror is often embossed with depictions of the sun, moon, the 'Four Powerful Creatures' (Lion, Tiger, Garuda, and Dragon), and the twelve animals of the zodiac. These motifs represent the interconnectedness of the cosmos, time, nature, and the five elements. In this context, the mirror is understood not merely as a defensive tool, but as a 'cosmic axis'—a center of universal epistemology. The quantity and placement of mirrors on the shamanic attire correspond to the shaman's rank and the potency of their spirits; a greater number of mirrors indicates a high-level tutelary power. Thus, the Khorchin bronze mirror is a multi-faceted symbolic complex integrating shamanic tradition, existence, defensive power, and the continuity of heritage. It is revered not as a static artifact, but as a living manifestation of the deity.

The mirror functions as a bridge to abstract space. Its surface often carries engravings representing the three realms—heaven, earth, and water—serving to shield the practitioner from negative forces and amplify the efficacy of the ritual (Jamiyan, 2008, p. 157). According to belief, the image and form of the *ongod* reside within the mirror's reflection during their descent. Its metallic resonance and brilliant light act as signals in the spiritual world. Researcher Walther Heissig noted: 'The Mongolian shamanic mirror is a concentration of internal power intended to transmit the radiance of the *ongod*, protect against malevolent forces, and open the informational channel for understanding the words of the spirits' (Heissig, 2013, pp. 79–83).

Notably, the Khorchin mirror arrangement—often hung in multiple symmetrical rows across the chest and waist—reflects specific symbolic points associated with the physical body. It is considered an informational medium secondary only to the drum (*khengereg*), used to 'visualize' the spirits and interpret their messages. From the provided evidence, it is clear that the shamanic mirror is a multi-layered symbolic expression designed to reflect tutelary power and facilitate interaction with metaphysical dimensions.

### The Construction, Craftsmanship, and Symbolism of the Khorchin Shamanic Drum

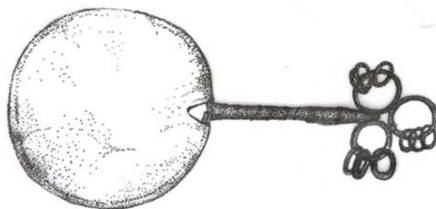


Figure 4. The Khorchin Shamanic drum (Analytic sketch by doctorate Yang Chao Bo, 2024)

The drum occupies a central role in Khorchin shamanic rituals, being one of the three essential implements of the practitioner. It is specifically referred to as the 'closed red drum' (*bitüü ulaan khengereg*), and its structure and craftsmanship embody the distinct characteristics of Khorchin shamanism. The frame of the drum is forged from thin iron, which is twisted into a circular ring, with the handle crafted by continuously hammering and extending the same material. At the base of the handle, three small rings are installed, each supporting three dangling iron links. These elements are not merely decorative but carry profound symbolic significance (Bo Lün, 2011, p. 53).

The drumhead, or the striking surface, is typically covered with the suede-like hide of a goat. This choice is made not only to enhance the resonance and rhythmic intensity but also to preserve the spiritual essence of the animal. The frame and the edges are similarly bound with hide, crafted to please the *ongod* (spirits) and produce a melodic, celestial resonance. The drum functions as more than a mere acoustic instrument; it is a sacred object intended to summon the spirits and transmit human supplications and offerings to the heavens. Consequently, each drum is believed to be imbued with its own specific *ongod*. A shaman selects, constructs, and performs a special 'consecration' (*amiluulakh*) ritual to bring the drum to life, following the divine instructions of their presiding spirit.

The drum is used in tandem with a drumstick (*beere* or *zasiur*), a dualism essential for projecting internal sounds into the celestial realm. The rhythm, intensity, and tempo vary depending on the specific objective of the ritual, serving as a metric of the shaman's potency. Furthermore, in Khorchin shamanic cosmology, the drum acts as the nexus between the sky, earth, and human realms, serving as a guide for the internal journey and the primary vehicle that ushers the shaman into the spirit world. Therefore,

the craftsmanship, resonance, materials, and form of the drum are meticulously selected and composed according to tradition."

### **Preservation of Cultural Heritage and Tradition**

- The ritual attire, headdresses, boots, and implements of the Khorchin shaman represent a unique expression of Mongolian shamanic heritage, preserving and transmitting profound spiritual beliefs.
- The research findings serve as a critical framework for interpreting these unique symbolic elements and communicating their meanings and functions to the public.
- Detailed analysis of the structure, color, and form of the garments and embroidery enhances the preservation of tangible cultural heritage, providing valuable data for museum exhibitions and further scholarly research.

### **Understanding Syncretism and Religious Interaction**

- The integration of Buddhist influences and Manchu state aesthetics within Khorchin shamanic rituals has created a multi-layered symbolic system. This study contributes to the broader understanding of cultural assimilation and religious syncretism.
- The results provide essential material for analyzing the syncretic nature and historical intersections between Buddhism and traditional shamanism.

### **Spiritual Rituals and Functional Significance**

- Attire and implements are not merely ornamental; they function as active ritual instruments that channel spiritual power (*ongod*) and dispel negative energies.
- The study elucidates the devotional meanings behind the structure, colors, and patterns of these ritual objects, providing a deeper understanding of shamanic praxis/ practical application.

### **Art, Craftsmanship, and Design**

- The craftsmanship and color harmony of Khorchin shamanic embroidery and attire offer inspiration for contemporary national artisans and designers, enabling the integration of traditional styles into modern art and fashion.
- The symbolic understanding of these patterns and palettes provides a cultural foundation for creating meaningful artistic works.

### **Academic Significance of the Research**

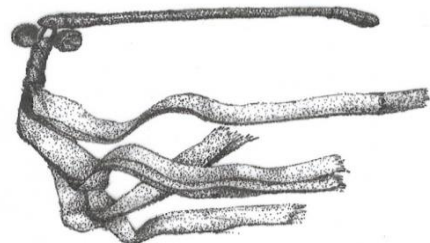
- This study synthesizes multifaceted cultural phenomena, including ritual utilization, symbolic systems, Buddhist influence, and Manchu political impact.
- It establishes a baseline of information for future in-depth research into the interconnections between traditional rituals and material culture.

### **Public Education and Cultural Awareness**

- Disseminating these research findings contributes to the appreciation, respect, and preservation of Mongolia's spiritual and shamanic heritage.
- The interpretation of Khorchin ritual symbols is essential for cultural education, museum curation, and the development of educational programs.

### **Conclusion**

This study has examined the distinctive characteristics of Khorchin shamanic attire—including headdresses, boots, and ritual implements—alongside their embroidery, symbolic structures, colors, and forms, to define their cultural, religious, and spiritual significance. Based on the research findings, the following core conclusions are drawn:



*Figure 5. The Khorchin shamanic drumstick (zasiur). (by doctorate Yang Chao Bo, 2024)*



1. Integration of Symbolism and Ritual: The ritual garments and implements of the Khorchin shaman are not merely aesthetic ornaments but serve a vital spiritual purpose: concentrating the power of the ongod, repelling negative energies, and facilitating ritual activity. The meticulous coordination of color, embroidery, and form serves as a direct expression of the specific traits of the presiding deities and protector spirits.

2. Syncretic Nature: The ritual practices of Khorchin shamanism represent a unique, multi-layered symbolic system formed by the integration of traditional Mongolian elements, Buddhist influences, and Manchu state aesthetics. This synthesis demonstrates the internal structure and adaptive capacity of shamanic culture for cultural assimilation.

3. Preservation of Cultural Heritage: Khorchin shamanic attire and implements constitute a unique expression of Mongolian spiritual heritage, playing a crucial role in preserving both tangible and metaphysical legacies. This research enhances the capacity to understand, interpret, and disseminate this heritage to the public.

4. Significance for Art, Craftsmanship, and Education: The embroidery and color harmony found in Khorchin shamanic attire provide rich cultural material for national craftsmanship, design, and educational programs.

In conclusion, Khorchin shamanic attire and implements are not simply tools for ritual; they represent a unique cultural synthesis vital for the preservation and interpretation of Mongolia's spiritual culture, religion, and traditional heritage. These research findings establish a fundamental baseline for future in-depth studies, preservation efforts, and the transmission of traditional rituals and symbolic systems.

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