

## DEPARTMENT OF MONGOL AND INNER ASIAN STUDIES

1088 Budapest, Múzeum krt. 4/B, Hungary

Teaching activity related to Mongolian studies has been going on at Eötvös Loránd University from the 1870s under the guidance of prominent scholars like József Budenz and Gábor Bálint of Szentkatolna. The history of the Department, is inseparable from the academic interests of Lajos Ligeti, who founded the Department of Inner Asian Studies in 1938, his pupil and successor György Kara, and later the latter's pupil Ágnes Birtalan, who has been the head of the Department since 2002.

Ligeti laid the greatest stress on philological research, devoted great attention to the analysis of Middle Mongolian and pre-classical literary language. He published several 13–16<sup>th</sup> century Mongolian literary records in the volumes of *Mongol Nyelveléktár* and *Monumenta Linguae Mongolicae*. Ligeti set up the Research Group of Altaic Studies of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1969. From among the Research Group members, Alice Sárközi, Géza Bethlenfalvy, Zsolt Szilágyi have substantially contributed to teaching and research at the Department.

When Ligeti retired, György Kara took over the chair. Under his guidance, philology-based research continued, and research became increasingly diversified, the weight of Altaic, Tibetan and Buddhist researches increased in teaching. The research of Mongolian folk culture and dialects was initiated in 1991 and has been in progress since then under the leadership of Alice Sárközi and Ágnes Birtalan. Upon the recommendation of the chair, the faculty leadership endorsed Katalin Uray-Kóhalmi's appointment as guest professor, which greatly bolstered the Manchu and Siberian studies. The main research fields at present are:

- Religion (shamanism, Buddhism and popular religion of Mongolian ethnic groups)
- Mongolian language and culture (Khalkha, Oirat, Kalmyk, Buriat, etc.)
- Traditional nomadic culture of Mongolian ethnic groups
- Processing of the historical sources of the Manchu era and the contemporary period

Mongolian studies and researches are based on traditional text analytical philology and up-to-date fieldwork techniques. Lessons cover Mongolian linguistics, religious studies, traditional culture, folklore and history. During the BA course students learn the language (spoken and written Mongolian) and the bases of Inner Asian philology and Mongolian studies. At the MA-level the students will be capable of independent research work. Great emphasis is laid on the improvement of the students' skills of expression both orally and in writing. Due to student exchange programs four students and two researchers have chances annually to study five months at the National University of Mongolia or other educational institutions in order to study in a Mongolian milieu. PhD candidates can deepen their knowledge

at the doctoral program so as to be armed with all skills and knowledge for scholarship. During the operation of the Mongolian major 75 students graduated, 17 PhD dissertations were defended during the last decades, and several articles, monographs, individual fieldworks, new carriers grew out from the scientific workshop of the Department.

The teaching and research work going on in our Department was rewarded with a certificate of merit by the Mongolian Academy of Sciences in 2010.

Apart from monographs published mainly in Hungarian and in English, the Department is famous for its series: the *Debter*, the *Monumenta*, the *Treasures of Mongolian Culture and Tibeto-Mongolian Buddhism*, and the *DVD series of Traditional Mongolian Culture*.

### Research Centre for Mongol Studies

For the official initiation of Ágnes Birtalan, the Research Centre for Mongol Studies came into existence at the Department of Mongol and Inner Asian Studies in 2014 with the support of the Government of Mongolia (National Council for Mongolian Studies), the Ministry of Education and Science of Mongolia (Foundation for the Promotion of Mongolian Studies), and the Mongolian Embassy in Budapest. Ts. Elbegdorj, president of Mongolia opened the Research Centre ceremonially on 18<sup>th</sup> October with the donation of recent Mongolian publications, valuable computing devices, and a fund of 15 000 EUR for the operation of the new centre. The scientific opening of the Centre took place on 12<sup>th</sup> November during the visit of B. Enkhtüвшin, president of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences within the framework of a workshop. Under the guidance of Ágnes Birtalan two young research fellows (Attila Rákos, Krisztina Teleki) started to work in the centre to complete the following tasks in the first six months:

- Procession and publication of interviews recorded with old monks in cooperation with the Institute of History, Mongolian Academy of Sciences
- Procession and publication of previous fieldwork materials related to the Khalkha, Oirat and Darkhad dialects
- Developing a website for online publication possibilities ([innerasia.hu](http://innerasia.hu), [facebook.com/belsoazsia](https://facebook.com/belsoazsia))
- Organizing the international workshop "Mongolian Buddhism: Past, Present and Future" on 16–17<sup>th</sup> April, 2015
- In accordance with the Mongolian state policy developing an online Mongolian language learning system for Mongols living abroad, especially for children in order to aid the preservation of their Mongolian identity
- Assistance of the Department: participation in teaching, organizing scientific forums and other events.

**Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Research Centre for the Humanities**

## **INSTITUTE OF ETHNOLOGY**

**1014 Budapest, Országház utca 30., Hungary**

The Institute of Ethnology was founded by an order of the president of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1967. The aim was to create better conditions for the development of ethnology in Hungary and to define the scope of this science as follows: ethnology should deal with the study of the way of life, material culture and folklore of the Hungarian people in its ethnic, historical and social context and with regard to its European constituents, it has to investigate the rapid change of the contemporary peasantry as well as the general laws of social evolution. The new Institute had to carry out investigations and co-ordinate research in Hungary on all these targets.

Today the Institute is integrated into the Research Centre for the Humanities of Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The Institute has four departments: Department of Social Anthropology, Department of Historical Ethnography, Department of Non-European Studies and Department of Folklore (Folk Poetry and Narratives). The Archive and the Library serve as public collections.

### **International relations**

The Institute has built up a network of relations with similar institutions abroad. It participated in some joint projects and represented Hungary in the International Carpatho-Balkanian Committee. Research with American colleagues was allowed in the 1980s and Institute staff have been carrying out field-work among American Hungarians ever since.

A good relationship was formed with Finnish ethnological institutions for organising conferences and publishing their results. After 1990 closer contacts were formed between some scholars of among others the Laboratoire d'Ethnologie et Sociologie Comparative (Nanterre, France), the Max Planck Institute of Ethnology (Halle, Germany), the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (Beijing, China), the Mongolian Academy of Sciences (Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar) and the Indiana University (Bloomington, USA) and some researchers of the Institute who worked on common programs. Today the Institute maintains an institutional partnership with seven research centres in four countries.

From 2011 to 2014, the Institute takes part in the ETNOFOLK project, funded by the EU Structural Funds through the Central Europe Programme, which integrates the central European countries (the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Austria and Hungary) and aims to present the Central European folk cultural heritage, providing possibilities to present and preserve it now and in the future. The proposed project outcome will be an extensive web portal displaying samples of folk architecture, costumes, music, songs, customs, devotion, etc. in audiovisual forms.



1. President Ts. Elbegdorj hands the donation of Mongolia for establishing the Research Centre for Mongol Studies to Ágnes Birtalan, head of the department (18 October, 2014)



2. President Ts. Elbegdorj visiting the Eötvös Loránd University (18 October, 2014)



3. President of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, B. Enkhtüshin and ambassador of Mongolia, T. Gandi with Ágnes Birtalan at the Department of Mongol and Inner Asian Studies (12 November, 2014)



4. The delegation of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences participating on the workshop held on the occasion of the opening of the Research Centre of Mongol Studies at the Eötvös Loránd University (12 November, 2014)



5. Books donated by president Ts. Elbegdorj to the department and the research centre (18 October, 2014)



6. The building of the department and the research centre on the campus of the university (left)