



“Cultural Interflow between India and Mongolia”

International Conference: 18-19th February 2026, New Delhi, India

CALL FOR PAPERS

Research papers are invited from scholars to participate in the International Conference on “Cultural Interflow between India and Mongolia” to be held on 18-19 February 2026 in New Delhi, India.

The Conference is organized by Prof. Nirmala Sharma, an eminent Art Historian and Mongolian Scholar in collaboration with Brihattar Bharat & Area Studies, the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Ministry of Culture, Government of India. The concept note, Topics & Areas are mentioned below:

Concept note:

Cultural Interflow between India and Mongolia

India and Mongolia have ancient historical ties for more than 2000 years. Mongolia is the land where monasteries had the academic traditions of Nalanda, where Sanskrit names are prevalent, where mantras ring forth in the immensities of space and silence, where stotras to Goddess Tārā were hummed amidst the clanging of sonorous instruments, where Meghadūta is the classical lyric, whose national flag is soyambo or svayambhū the only national flag with a Sanskrit name. India and Mongolia with centuries so living, shall ever be pilgrims of a shared eternity.

Prof. Byambyn Rinchen used to narrate: If you happen to stop in any yurt which you meet first on your way in the vast steppes, where the night may overtake you, before the fire of a hearth you will hear from the mouth of an old shepherd the philosophical poem Bodhicaryāvatāra composed by the famous Indian poet and thinker Śāntideva, well known to the Europeans through the beautiful French translation by Finot and translated into Mongolian language already in the 13th century. You will not be surprised if an old shepherd sitting thoughtfully on the hillock grazing herds, having come to know you to be a philologist will enter into animated conversation with you

regarding the Sanskrit grammar of Pāṇini which was translated into Mongolian language already in the 17th century, the level of which was achieved by the European linguists only during the last century. The full translation of the work of Pāṇini appeared in French only in 1948.”

In cave paintings of the 5th century BC two Indians with white horses visited the court of a Hun ruler. A coin of the 1st century BC found in Mathura has the name Qagan Hagāmaṣa (Mon. qaga ‘to attack’ and maši ‘very much’). In the 6th century the kingdom of Juan-jan chose an Indian monk as Royal Preceptor. In 590-604 two Indian monks Śākyavarmśa and Narendrayaśas went to Mongolia. Chinggis Khan had a trident on top of his helmet and nine tridents as his imperial flag. In 1234, the grandson of Chinggis Khan invited the Grand Lama of the Sakyapas from Tibet to Lanchow to spread Buddhism. Kashmirian monk Namu and his brother came to the court of Ögödei Khan. He was appointed National Preceptor by Möngke Khan (ruled 1251-59). In 1256 at 300 feet high stupa was constructed at Karakorum.

The first Jibcundampa (1635-1722) is better known by his Sanskrit name Zanabazar (Jñāna vajra). His birth is hailed in Mongolian chronicles as an incarnation of an Indian ācārya. Before his birth appeared an Indian ācārya wearing a pandita cap, riding an elephant and said: “I am going to Khalka to Tūshiyetü Khan.” Tūshiyetü Khan was a direct descendant of Chinggis Khan. He started the construction of his monastery at Ulaanbaatar in 1652. He built a sculpture forge at Erdeni Zu. He revived the Pāla style introduced to the Mongol court by artist-prince Anike in the 13th century. Two Indian ācāryas came to his court and taught him Sanskrit. They introduced Indian cuisine, narrated stories of the Dvātrimśikā and Vetāla-pañcaviṃśati, which became engrossing folktales narrated in the evenings, while seated around the fire, in every Mongol yurt. The two versions of the ‘thirty-two Wooden Men’ have been special favorites of popular story-telling and are preserved in a wealth of manuscripts. The two are closely associated with each other. King Bhoja (Araji Booji or Arji Burji Khan in Mongolian) discovers the magic throne of King Vikramāditya and wishes to sit on it. Each time he attempts, one of the wooden men who are fixed on the steps of the throne restrains him. Each figure recounts an episode from the life of Vikramāditya and warns that he will not be able to ascend the throne unless he is equal in wisdom to Vikramāditya.

The poem ‘Kubla Khan’ of Coleridge immortalized the stately pleasure dome in Xanadu (Chinese Shang-tu ‘Upper Capital’) and the Mongol Emperor as a man of genius, as against the general European perception of the Mongols as a violent barbaric people. It was sanctified by 108 stupas in the glorious perfection of beauty in the words of the Sanang Setsen Annals. The Mongols have bequeathed four crucial inventions of (i) opening of the contacts of the East and West, (ii) paper currency, (iii) gun powder and (iv) steam. In the 5th century Byzantium paid 350 pounds of gold as annual tribute to the Huns. The Huns ruled parts of Europe from 370-455. They overran the empire of Ostrogoths, defeated the Visigoths and arrived at the Danube. Attila received 6,000 pounds of gold in 433, and the tribute was raised to 2100 pounds of gold per annum. The Golden Horde ruled the whole of Russia, Ukraine, Belorussia for three centuries (1223-1502). Their galloping horses across howling icy winds opened up the West and the East. They introduced gun-

powder that modernized warfare. The Mongols invented paper currency to free the currency from cowrie, copper, silver and gold pieces. The Mongols gave steam to Europe. Thousands of Mongols were working in Italian cities. They were using hot air turbines for turning the prayer wheels of *Om maṇi-padme hūm* from the Kāraṇḍavyūha. It gave rise to steam screw propellers of ships and steam-jet blowers. The Mongols gave a new dimension to the Sanskrit maṇi-padme. The young poet Ts Bavuudorj, in the English rendering of Simon Wickham-Smith “sings of the mantras as ornaments of sound.”

The Mongolian Materia Medica of Āyurveda written by Jambaldorje in the 19th century is a rare work for the identification of herbs as Āyurveda was the medical system in Mongol lands. The illustrations of the surgical instruments are unique. Mongolian Āyurvedic texts deserve to be compared to Sanskrit texts whence they are derived.

The first series of seven Mongolian stamps issued in 1924 was called *eldav-ochir* or viśvavajra to symbolize the invincibility of the Mongolian people. The National Flag Soyambo (Skt. Svayambhū) is headed by Om with čandra, bindu and nāda.

There are Mongolian words in Hindi: like bahadur, khan, kot (suffix for towns), Burhan, Bakshi. Every domain of Mongol life and mind, from scripts, words, narrative literature, medicine, down to the loading of the gun has elements of Sanskrit. The dhāranī for the gun begins with *Om āh hūm* and invokes Mañjuśrī, Yamantaka, Avalokiteśvara, Vajrapāṇi and Yakṣas so that the gun does not miss. To the Mongols India is the Holy Land, Qutugtun-u oron.

Prof. Nirmala Sharma
New Delhi, India

Topics and areas:

- 1) New archaeological discoveries in India or Mongolia that connect the two Countries.
- 2) Temples, stupas, sculptures connected to one or other of the two Countries.
- 3) The stylistic origins of trans-ethnic art related to one of the two Countries
- 4) Sanskrit names, texts, Stotra's, manuscripts found in Mongolia.
- 5) Indian classical lyrics found in Mongolia
- 6) Monks, travelers and visitors from India to Mongolia or vice versa.
- 7) Coins, sculptures, paintings, Thangkas, mandalas, symbols, motifs, embroidery that echoes the other Country.

Submission guidelines:

- Expressions of interest and registration are open until December 10, 2025. Please submit the form enclosed at the end and send it on the email mentioned.

- **Abstract:**
Please send an abstract of your research paper, comprising 200-500 words, in a Word document format, 12 fonts in 'Times New Roman' by **December 10, 2025**. The abstract should concisely outline the scope and principal finds of your research.
- **Research Paper:**
The full-length research paper should have a minimum word count of 3500 words, including the bibliography, and should be submitted in Word document format. The paper should adhere to academic standards and include clear citations and references. The deadline for submitting the research paper is **January 15, 2026**.

Please ensure that your submissions comply with the guidelines and deadlines. Submission should be sent to: in.mong.int.conference@gmail.com with the subject line "Submission: [Title of Research paper]."

Conference Format:

- The Conference is an in-person event, to be held at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, New Delhi, India.
- We shall provide you with an invitation to make your Visa possible.
- Scholars will be provided with accommodation and hospitality.

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Or on: in.mong.int.conference@gmail.com We are here to help with any conference related queries you may have.