



Mongolian Buddhism



Animals, Plants and Bioethics

Fourth International Conference on Aspects of Mongolian Buddhism

20–21 October 2022, Budapest

Organizers:

Eötvös Loránd University
Department of Mongolian and Inner Asian Studies
Research Centre for Mongolian Studies
Budapest Centre of Buddhist Studies

In cooperation with:

Gandantegchenling Monastery, the Centre of Mongolian Buddhists
Embassy of Mongolia in Hungary
Oriental Collection, Library and Information Center, HAS
Ferenc Hopp Museum of Asiatic Arts
Dharma Gate Buddhist Church

Conference venue:

Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary
1088 Budapest, Múzeum körút 4, building F, Kodály Hall

Three international conferences on Aspects of Mongolian Buddhism have been held: Past, Present and Future in 2015, Buddhism in Practice in 2017, and Tradition and Innovation in 2019. The fourth conference is planned for October 2022 in Budapest on the theme 'Animals, Plants, and Bioethics'. The forum is for scholars and monks to present their work on different aspects of Mongolian Buddhism, noting that monasteries, monks, and devotees have always had a close connection with the environment. The topic also connects to the ongoing project of the Department of Mongolian and Inner Asian Studies entitled 'the interaction between CULTURA and NATURA in the Mongolian religious context'.

The historical framework for the conference lies in the life of Buddha Shakyamuni who lived closely with nature, taught his followers to take care of natural world. He gave his first teaching in the Deer Park, which became a core Buddhist symbol. Also, abstaining from taking the life of living forms is a precept the Buddha taught and is based on loving-kindness. This translates to the environmental ethic of conserving animals and plants. Traditionally the Mongols live in symbiosis with nature endeavouring to avoid causing damage while pacifying the local spirits of the earth instead. They sanctify animals decorating them with silken scarves. Various Buddhist deities have mounts. And among the Mongols, plants, animals and nature are integral to their Buddhist art, and in all aspects of their traditional nomadic life e. g. the behavioural taboos and customs concerning the livestock breeding lifestyle, the performance of folklore genres or the practise of traditional medicine.

Presentations cover many aspects of Mongolian Buddhism, including monasticism, vernacular religious practices, education, rituals, art, textology, folklore, and any other fields related to Mongolian Buddhism's historical and contemporary approach to nature. The conference will focus on the Buddhism of Mongols living in the present area of Mongolia and the beliefs and practices of Mongols living in China, Russia, or other places in the diaspora. The distinctiveness of Mongolian Buddhist tradition to nature and bioethics will be revealed through the presentations.

