

**Société des études mongoles et sibériennes (SEMS)**

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# Lettre d'information des études mongoles et sibériennes n°99

24 avril 2026

Chères et chers collègues,

La Société des études mongoles et sibériennes vous envoie périodiquement les actualités de la recherche sur les études mongoles et sibériennes (événements, publications, nouveaux membres, soutenances de thèse et d'HDR...). Ces actualités ne sont absolument pas exhaustives et dépendent de ce que nous recevons, donc n'hésitez pas à nous faire parvenir les informations que vous souhaitez diffuser à l'adresse suivante : [isacharleux@orange.fr](mailto:isacharleux@orange.fr)

Nous vous invitons également à consulter périodiquement le Site des Études mongoles et sibériennes : <https://etudesmongolesetsiberiennes.fr/>.

Les précédentes lettres d'informations sont accessibles ici :

<https://etudesmongolesetsiberiennes.fr/lettre-sems/>

N'hésitez pas à nous envoyer votre cotisation pour soutenir la Société des études mongoles et sibériennes, qui a notamment pour objectif de publier la collection « Nord-Asie », d'aider les jeunes chercheurs et d'organiser des manifestations sur la Mongolie et la Sibérie.

Bien cordialement,

Isabelle Charleux

## Séminaires et colloques

### *Séminaire des études mongoles 2026*

Organisé par Isabelle Charleux, Anna Dupuy & Isaline Saunier

Jour et horaire : Un mardi sur deux **de 15h-17h**

Lieu : Campus Condorcet, **salle 3.086** du Bâtiment de recherche Nord (14 cours des Humanités, 93322 Aubervilliers, Métro Front Populaire (Ligne 12) ; RER B La Plaine – Stade de France). Il est également possible d'assister au séminaire **en ligne**.

Contacts : Isabelle Charleux ([isacharleux@orange.fr](mailto:isacharleux@orange.fr)), Anna Dupuy ([dupuy.anna@yahoo.fr](mailto:dupuy.anna@yahoo.fr)) & Isaline Saunier ([i\\_saunier@hotmail.fr](mailto:i_saunier@hotmail.fr))

#### **Programme :**

Mardi 5 mai 2026 : **Aurore Dumont** (Université Paris-Cité) : « La ville, une alternative à l'instabilité de la vie pastorale ? Mobilités contemporaines et logiques urbaines à Hulun Buir (Mongolie-Intérieure) ».

Mardi 19 mai 2026 : **Ma Xin** (EPHE) : « Réflexion sur la notion de “communauté” de la steppe : à travers les pratiques chamaniques du Hulunbuir (Mongolie-Intérieure) ».

Mardi 2 juin 2026 : **Mina Yalçintaş** (EPHE) : « Dynamiques spirituelles et quête de sens chez les Kazakhs de Mongolie : entre islam, croyances locales et traditions spirituelles mongoles ».



## ***23 avril 2026 : Lecture on the Mongolian and Tibetan Kanjur folios from Ablai Kit***

We are delighted that on 23 April at 6 p.m., Dr. Anna Turanskaya (University of Inner Mongolia, Hohhot) and Dr. Alexander Zorin (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) will present new findings on the Mongolian and Tibetan Kanjur folios from Ablai Kit in the Staatsbibliothek's holdings in their online lecture „From Dzungaria to Berlin: Tibetan and Mongolian Folios in the Holdings of the Staatsbibliothek.“

Join the lecture: <https://spk-berlin.webex.com/spk-berlin/j.php?MTID=m5673577d133f5a57faacb8ddd4bafc78>

Between 1717 and 1721, two Oirat monasteries—usually called Sem Palat (Russian for “Seven Chambers”) and Ablai-kit—were encountered by Russian expeditions in what was then the frontier zone of Dzungaria and is now eastern Kazakhstan. The monasteries had been abandoned by the Oirats following internal conflicts, and most of their cultural treasures were lost. Only a small number of artefacts survived, among them approximately 1,500 folios of Buddhist texts in Tibetan and Mongolian.

While the largest portion of these materials is preserved in Saint Petersburg, several European institutions also hold folios originating from these monasteries. These manuscripts represent some of the earliest Tibetan and Mongolian texts to enter European collections. The Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin preserves a particularly notable group: 23 Mongolian and 23 Tibetan folios, almost all of them from Ablai-kit.

In this talk, we will trace the history of these manuscripts. In particular, they are connected with the work of German scholars of Asian languages, Johann Christoph Christian Rüdiger and Bernhard Jülg, as well as with the most influential historical Tibetan typeface, produced by Ferdinand Theinhardt for Heinrich August Jäschke's Tibetan Dictionary (1881). We will also discuss the significance of these folios for the study of the Tibetan and Mongolian Buddhist canons.

## ***15 octobre 2026 : International workshop “New religious trends and Eschatology in the Inner Asia World”***

International workshop organised by the Centre de recherches sur les civilisations de l’Asie orientale (CRCAO UMR 8155, CNRS, Collège de France, EPHE-PSL, Université Paris Cité)

**Date:** Thursday 15 October 2026

**Location:** Collège de France – Institut des civilisations Adresse : 52 rue du Cardinal Lemoine, 75005 Paris  
Salle : Françoise Héritier, and Zoom

**Language:** English

**Organisers:** Aurore Dumont (Université Paris Cité, CRCAO) & Isabelle Charleux (CNRS, CRCAO).

**Contacts:** [aurore.dumont@u-paris.fr](mailto:aurore.dumont@u-paris.fr), [isacharleux@orange.fr](mailto:isacharleux@orange.fr)

Following the collapse of the communist regimes in 1990, a wide range of new religious trends have emerged and gained increasing popularity across Inner Asia – especially the Mongol cultural areas (Mongolia, Mongol-populated regions of China and Russia), as well as Tibetan cultural regions, Kazakhstan, and the Altai. These new trends involve both transformations within “traditional” religions – Buddhism, Islam and shamanism – and the rise of religious movements such as neo-shamanism, prosperity-oriented cults and New Age currents influenced by Russian esotericism (e.g. Agni Yoga). Often grounded in imagined archaic spiritual traditions, these emerging religious movements position themselves in contrast to established “world religions.” They introduce new terminologies, frequently drawing on metaphors of electricity, and promote ritual practices centred harnessing “energy” (*energi*) from natural elements, often combined with eschatological motifs. Their evolving ritual practices, narratives, and doctrinal frameworks (when they are made explicit) draw on a broad array of sources, including Buddhism and its Shambhalist eschatology, early twentieth-century religious movements such as Ak jang (“Burkhanism”) in the Altai, shamanism, local folklore, and other religious motifs. These new religious forms are frequently intertwined with ethno-national agendas and also generate at the same time dynamics of interethnic exchange and transnational convergence.

This international workshop seeks to examine how these new movements reflect local and global transformations, social anxieties, and geopolitical challenges in the contemporary contexts of Inner Asia marked by urbanization, global and ethnic dynamics, the expansion of the market economy, as well as heightened uncertainty linked to warfare, environmental degradation and climate change. It also aims to analyse these emerging trends in relation to the opposition they may encounter from institutional Buddhism and some authoritarian states’ prohibitive measures.

This workshop inaugurates the program “Religions et savoirs en mutation en Asie intérieure” (Religions and Changing Knowledge Inner Asia) of the new “Pôle Études mongoles” (Mongol studies Team) founded in January 2026 at the Centre de recherches sur les civilisations de l’Asie orientale (CRCAO). Three

discussants from three other cultural areas (China, Korea, Tibet) will provide a comparative perspective on these issues.

## Program

Introduction - Isabelle Charleux & Aurore Dumont

Saskia Abrahms-Kavunenko (Kyoto University): "Mongolian Connections: Visionary Science, Mysticism and the Dispersed Birthing of the New Age"

Isabelle Charleux (CNRS/CRCAO): "No more gods? The cult of natural elements in contemporary Mongolian pilgrimage"

Valeria Gazizova (Heidelberg University): "Art, Healing and Neo-Nomadic Spirituality of the Steppe"

Valentina Punzi (EPHE/CRCAO): "From the bottom of the ocean to the top of a thousand mountains: The reinvention of Zhang Zhung civilization in contemporary Chinese pop-culture"

Alya Solovyeva (University of Tartu, Estonia): "Resilient Eschatology and Cosmological Sovereignty in Contemporary Inner Asia"

Ma Xin (EPHE): "From Anonymous Forces to Ancestral Voices: Naming, Placing, and Calling Spirits in Barga Shamanism".



## Call for postdoctoral positions : NOMAD Project

### **NARRATIONS OF MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS. Cross-views on the artistic and literary representation of steppe women warriors between East and West (NOMAD)**

- Type of grant: FIS 2 (Fondo Italiano per la Scienza) Starting Grant
- ERC Fields: SH5 Texts and Concepts, SH8 Studies of Cultures and Arts
- Principal Investigator: Benedetta De Bonis
- Host Institution: University of Florence (1 february 2026-31 january 2029)
- Job profile: The project will be recruiting three postdoctoral researchers working on the art, film, or literature (or popular culture, video games) of the nomadic steppes: one on Central Asia (necessity of speaking/reading a Turkic language), one on Russia (which could also potentially include candidates working on Central Asian literature, art, or film in Russian, for example, related to the Soviet era), and one on Mongolia.
- Duration: Each contract will be for a duration of 24 months, and renewable for an additional 4 months (for a total of 28 months). The contract will begin on September 1, 2026.
- The calls for applications will be published at the beginning of May and will remain open for approximately two weeks. The selection process will take place online at the end of July. Candidates will be invited to send their CV, publications, and project proposals related to the NOMAD project's research program.
- For more information, please contact Benedetta De Bonis ([benedetta.debonis@unifi.it](mailto:benedetta.debonis@unifi.it)) and Isabelle Charleux ([isacharleux@orange.fr](mailto:isacharleux@orange.fr))

#### **ABSTRACT**

Since the dawn of European civilisation, the East has played a central role in shaping the identity of the West, serving both as a myth and as a mirror of its fears and utopias. Within this framework, the Eurasian steppe has long been imagined by essentially sedentary Europeans as a barbaric, anarchic, and negative realm. It was seen as the land of the Amazons, whose myth embodied unsettling aspects of femininity – such as masculine strength and resistance to male authority – rekindling ancestral fears of matriarchy.

Yet, the proliferation of translations and intercultural exchanges in (post)modernity laid the groundwork for moving beyond a reductive Manichean vision of the East/West relationship. Postcolonial philosophies, in particular, have challenged this binary, fostering a growing awareness of cultural transfer and the complex interplay between Western and non-Western histories.

In this context, the rediscovery and translation of indigenous sources, along with studies conducted since the 19th century, have opened new perspectives on steppe civilisations, shaped by the encounter of Eastern and Western viewpoints. Once cast as harbingers of the Apocalypse, nomadic empires have been re-evaluated: admired for their capacity to unite diverse cultures, their meritocratic structures, and their religious tolerance, they are now recognised as precursors of modernity and key agents of global history.

This reappraisal extends to steppe women, long confined to distorted representations that likened them to witches or unsettling warriors, indistinguishable from the men of their hordes. In reality, since antiquity these women enjoyed greater freedom than their contemporaries in sedentary societies. Wise and resilient, they could participate alongside men in warfare, politics, and commerce. They wielded considerable influence over their husbands, sometimes ensuring matrilineal succession and fostering privileged bonds between mothers and daughters.

Nevertheless, despite significant advances in historical and archaeological research – and repeated scholarly calls to reassess their legacy – there is still no comprehensive study of the imaginaries these women have inspired. Seeking to address this gap and to open a new field of inquiry, the NOMAD project investigates representations of steppe women – from the Amazons to nomadic queens and warriors rooted in historical figures, via fictional characters – in modern and contemporary literature and the arts (19th–21st centuries), both in East and West. It contrasts the external perspective of sedentary peoples with that of the civilisations which are the current heirs of the ancient nomadic empires.

A team of specialists in European and Asian languages and cultures (French, Italian, English, German, Hungarian, Russian, and Turkic-Mongolian areas) will examine:

- 1) the changing perception of steppe women warriors in the Eastern and Western imaginaries as a result of the translations and scholarly works carried out in the last three centuries;
- 2) the link between this change and the emergence of feminist claims;
- 3) the possibility of an Eastern influence, linked to the steppe cultures, on the model of the emancipated and combative woman dear to the West today.

To achieve these goals, NOMAD intends to use the tools provided by Digital Humanities: applying computational linguistic analysis to the corpus under study and creating a database of digitised texts and extracts, bibliographic resources, and iconographic material on the subject.

See the book related to the project: *Imaginaires des reines des steppes* (open access: <https://books.openedition.org/ugaeditions/54522>).

International Institute for the Study of Nomadic Civilizations

# CALL FOR PAPERS



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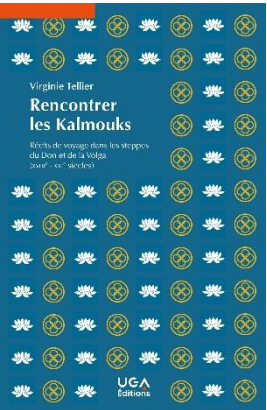
## STUDY OF NOMADIC CIVILIZATIONS

SUBMISSION DEADLINE - **30TH JUNE 2026**

Please send your manuscripts to the editorial office at  
[secretariat@unesco-iisnc.com](mailto:secretariat@unesco-iisnc.com).

## Publications

Virginie Tellier, *Rencontrer les Kalmouks. Récits de voyage dans les steppes du Don et de la Volga (XVIIIe - XXIe siècles)*, UGA Editions, 2026



Autour des années 1630, un peuple venu de Mongolie s’installe entre la mer Noire et la mer Caspienne. De tradition nomade et bouddhiste, les Kalmouks forment un royaume puissant jusqu’en 1771, moment où la plupart d’entre eux migrent vers l’Empire Qing. Ceux qui restent sont peu à peu intégrés à l’Empire russe, avant de former une république en URSS puis, à partir de 1991, au sein de la Fédération de Russie. Bien connus de l’Occident aux XVIII<sup>e</sup> et XIX<sup>e</sup> siècles, les Kalmouks se trouvent marginalisés dans le discours scientifique du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle. L’objectif de cet ouvrage est de rendre sa visibilité au peuple kalmouk à travers les regards de trois voyageuses et dix voyageurs – français mais aussi russe, tchèque, belge, polonais, allemand, letton ou ukrainien. Il tente de ressaisir des rencontres authentiques, effectuées dans le temps long, qui ont marqué la représentation du peuple kalmouk et interrogé l’identité même des voyageurs et voyageuses. Ces rencontres sont présentées au lecteur par ordre chronologique afin de mesurer les permanences et mutations de la représentation des Kalmouks et de dessiner ainsi, à partir de l’une de ses marges, une autre histoire de l’Europe.

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## Cotisation à la SEMS

### La Société des Études mongoles et sibériennes

La Société des Études mongoles et sibériennes est une association régie par la loi du 1<sup>er</sup> juillet 1901 et le décret du 16 août 1901, fondée par Roberte Hamayon en 2013. Elle a son siège au Centre d’études mongoles et sibériennes (54 boulevard Raspail, 75006, Paris). Depuis le 20 décembre 2023, elle est présidée par Anne Dalles Maréchal et Clément Jacquemoud, avec comme secrétaire Isaline Saunier, et trésorier Robin Toublan.

La SEMS a pour but de promouvoir la connaissance de la Mongolie et de la Sibérie (Asie septentrionale), rassembler les chercheurs spécialistes de ces régions, contribuer à la diffusion et à la valorisation de leurs travaux par des publications scientifiques et d’ouverture au grand public, par la mise au point d’une base de données électroniques et par des manifestations (conférences, événements culturels).

La SEMS contribue au financement de la collection papier *Nord-Asie*, supplément à la revue *Études mongoles & sibériennes, centrasiatiques & tibétaines*. Elle finance par ailleurs l’hébergement du site des Études mongoles et sibériennes.

Pour devenir membre de la SEMS (**cotisation annuelle 20 €, étudiants 15 €**), veuillez vous adresser à Robin Toublan : [robin.toublan@gmail.com](mailto:robin.toublan@gmail.com)