

Institute of Language and Literature of Mongolian Academy of Sciences

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Logo of the ILL © ILL

The Institute of Language and Literature (ILL) at the Mongolian Academy of Sciences is a scientific organisation that manages academic researches on philology, literature, and folklore in Mongolia. The ILL was founded as the Institute of Sutra and Script in 1921. The name subsequently institute changed to the Cabinet of Philology in 1930, to the Centre for the Study of Philology and Literature in 1957, and finally to the Institute of Language and Literature in 1961 when the Mongolian Academy of Sciences was established. First director of the institute was Mr S. Jamiyan. Today, Dr L. Bold—a professor, academician, and doctor of linguistics—leads the institute.

The Scientific Board of the institute reviews and confirms basic direction of research activities as well as the middle- and long-term goals. This board includes representatives of the scientific researchers of institute. The institute has the following sectors and departments:

- Sector of Linguistics
- Sector of Altai Studies
- Sector of Literature Studies
- Sector for the Study of Intangible Cultural Heritage and Folklore
- Sector for Tibetan /Literature on Tibetan/ Studies
- Treasury of Oral and Written Monuments
- Home Museum of Ts. Damdinsuren, the well-known scholar and academician
- Two additional centres
- Library

The Institute of Culture and Art of Mongolia was branched off the Sector of Art Studies at the ILL in August 1989.

The central mission of the ILL is to create a mental output that coalesces with social requests and promotes collaboration of national philology and modernity and promotes interdisciplinary research. The main lines of activity are:

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- Structure, system, and typological studies of the Mongolian language
- Poethic and methodological studies of Mongolian folklore and written literature

At the present time, the institute has more than forty researchers, and about 80 per cent of them have scientific degrees and titles. Apart from main lines of activity, the research team pays attention to strengthening the public's language and grammar capacity and implementing the language policy of the government. Therefore, on 8 September 1970, the ILL was awarded the UNESCO Nadezhda K. Krupskaya Literacy Prize for its contribution to reducing illiteracy.

As a result of many years of work, the researchers at the ILL published *An Encyclopaedia of the Mongolian Words* (1927), *A Grammar of the Mongolian Script* (1964–1967), and *An Encyclopaedia of Mongolian Language* (2008).

ILL researchers actively conduct studies on ancient and modern Mongolian literature and folklore as well as intangible cultural heritage. They also participate in the activities geared towards the preservation, advertisement, and training of the Mongolian long folk song and the heroic epics based on the UNESCO 2003 Convention.

In 1981, the Tibetan Studies sector was founded. Researchers in this sector primarily study the historical relationship between Mongolia and Tibet, and a lot of sutras and books in Tibetan language were published by Mongolians.

The researchers conduct several activities on preserving and investigating the ancient books of Mongolia, which are preserved in Mongolia. For instance, in 2004, the centre for the Secret History of the Mongols was founded to investigate this unique literature, language, and historical source. Researchers of that institute have been published information in modern Mongolian for the public.

Since 1962, the ILL at the Mongolian Academy of Sciences has been implementing fieldwork on folk heritage and local dialects one to three times per year. Sometimes folk tellers and singers have been invited to make audio and video recordings. As a result of these activities, the ILL has built a treasury of audio recordings and manuscripts of

Mongolian cultural heritage. For instance, this treasury contains tales, heroic epics, long and short songs, and wise and metaphoric words. Also our researchers have recorded ethnic legends and stories about rituals and customs and festivals. About 1100 hours of audio recordings have been preserved in this fund. We are also preserving 451 units of handwritten books and manuscripts.

Home Museum of Ts. Damdinsuren is an enlightening centre that preserves five thousand rare books and five thousand sutras in Tibetan and Mongolian as well as written scholarly heritage.

The foreign collaboration of the institute develops in philological and cultural fields. For instance, in 2003, the academician Kh. Sampildendev was chosen as the chairman of the Association of the East Asian Customs.



Interview with Yanjmaa, long song singer © M. Dojdagwa



Library of the ILL © Bayarmaa Batkhurel



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