

CURRICULUM VITÆ

Name: David Somfai, PhD (Altaic Linguistics)

Born: April 21, 1969, Budapest, Hungary

Nationality: Hungarian

Major Field: Turkic and Mongolic (Altaic) Philology and Linguistics

Ethnology of Inner Asian Peoples (Mongolic, Turkic and Tungusic)

Degrees obtained:

2007 PhD degree in Altaic Linguistics (title of my thesis: *Turkic and Mongolic Religious Terms*). Faculty of Letter and Arts, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary

2000 M.A. in Turkic Philology (*Auxiliary Verb Formations in Inner Asian Turkic Languages*). Department of Turkic Philology, Faculty Humanities, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary

2000 M.A. in Mongolic Studies (*Mongolic Elements in Kazak*). Department of Inner Asian Studies, Faculty of Humanities, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary

Employment History:

2022-2023 Assistant Professor, Kazakh Language and Turkic Studies, Nazarbayev University, Astana, Kazakhstan

2019-2023 Senior Researcher, Institute of Ethnology, ELKH

2018-2019 Visiting research fellow (11 months), National Museum of Ethnology (Minpaku) Suita/Osaka, Japan

2011-2014 Freelance researcher, International Turkic Academy, Kazakhstan

2010-2018 Researcher, Institute of Ethnology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences

2009-2010 Visiting scholar (12 months), Central Eurasian Department, Indiana University, Bloomington, USA

2007-2009 Researcher, Institute of Ethnology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences

2003-2007 Fellow researcher, Institute of Ethnology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Lecturing:

2021 Guest lecturer (1 week), Sibai Institute of the Bashkir State University, Russia

2019 Guest lecturer (1 week), Shiga University, Hikone, Japan

2016 Guest lecturer (PhD course of Ethnology), ELTE

2015 Guest lecturer (1 month), Al-Farabi Kazak National University

2013 Guest lecturer, University of Paris, EHESS (1 week), (Institut d'études de l'Islam et des sociétés du monde musulman)

2007 Guest lecturer, University of Venice (1 week), Department of Turkish Studies

2002-2009 Visiting professor (14 semesters), Inner Asian Department, ELTE University, Budapest

Education:

2002-05 PhD course in Altaic Linguistics, Department of Inner Asian Studies Faculty of Letter and Arts, ELTE University, Budapest, Hungary

1996-2000 M.A. in Turkic Philology, Department of Turkic Philology

M.A. in Mongolic Studies, Department of Inner Asia Faculty of Letter and Arts, ELTE University, Budapest, Hungary Exchange student:

2001 Exchange student, PhD in Turkic linguistics, Middle Eastern Studies (one semester), University of Manchester, United Kingdom

2000 Exchange Student, Mongolian Philology, Mongolian State University, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia (one semester)

1993-94 Exchange Student, B.A in Kazak Philology, Department of Kazak Philology Abai University, Almaty, Kazakhstan (two semesters)

Languages

Native: Hungarian

Fluent: English, Russian, Kazak, Kyrgyz, Mongol (Khalkha)

Intermediate: Turkish, other Turkic (Uzbek, Uighur, Tatar, Bashkurt, Turkmen, Kumuk, Tawlu/Karachai-Malkar, Nogai, Tuva, Yakut, Altai, Khakas) and Mongolic (Oirad/Kalmak, Buriad, Daur) languages of Central and Inner Asia, the Volga Region, Caucasus and Siberia

Basic: Persian (Tajik), Japanese, Chinese (Mandarin), Manchu, French

Ethnological and Ethno-musicological fieldworks

2023 Karakalpakstan (2 weeks)

2022 Kyrgyzstan (Narin, 1 week)

2022 Kazakhstan (Edil-Dzsajik, 2 weeks)

2022 Karakalpakstán, Özbekisztán (2 weeks)

2022 Mongolia (hotogoid, 2 weeks)

2021 Kongrats in Uzbekistan (2 weeks)

2021 Kumuks in Dagestan (2 weeks)

2021 Karakalpakstan (2 weeks)
2021 Nogays in Stavropol Krai (2 weeks)
2021 Bashkortustan (2 weeks)
2019 Bashkortustan (2 weeks)
2019 Amur and Sakhalin, Hokkaido (1 month)
2018 Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan (1 month)
2018 Nogai and Kumuk districts, Dagestan (Russian Federation) (2 weeks)
2018 Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan (1 month)
2017 Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan (2 weeks)
2016 Nogai District, Karachay-Cherkes Republic (Russian Federation) (2 weeks)
2016 West Anatolia and Trakia (Turkey) (2 weeks)
2014 Bashkortustan (Russian Federation) (2 weeks)
2014 Nogai and Kumuk districts, Dagestan (Russian Federation) (2 weeks)
2013 Sunan Yugur Aut. County (Gansu), China (1 week)
2013 Nogai District, Daghestan, Russian Federation (2 weeks)
2013 Kalmykia, Russian Federation (1 week)
2013 Southern Kazakhstan (Aral Region, Kyzyl-Orda) (2 weeks)
2012 Southern Kazakhstan (Turkistan, Shymkent) (2 weeks)
2011 Sary-arka, Kökshe-taw, Kazakhstan (2 weeks)
2011 Northern Tibet (Qinghai, Gansu), China: Salyrs and Yugurs (2 weeks)
2010 South Dakota (USA), Sioux Reservations (3 months)
2009 Chüy, Talas, Kyrgyzstan (2 months)
2009 Northwest China (Inner Mongolia, Manchuria: Daur) (2 weeks)
2008 Chüy, Kyrgyzstan (1 month)
2008 Khöwsgöl (Darkhat, Toha), Mongolia (1 month)
2007 Northwest China (Inner Mongolia, Manchuria) (1 month)
2007 Dornod, Khentii (Buriat, Khamnigan), Mongolia (1 month)
2006 Ysyk-köl, Jeti-suw, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan (2 months)
2005 South-Siberia (Khakasia, Tuva, Russia Federation) (2 weeks)
2004 Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, China (2 weeks)
2002 South Siberia (Altai Republic of the Russian Federation) (1 month)
2001 Yakutia (Russian Federation) (1 month)
2002 Southern Kyrgyzstan (2 weeks)
2001 Jergetal, Tajikistan (1 week)
2001 Kyrgyzstan (2 months)
2000 Khowd (Tuva), Khöwsgöl (Toha), Mongolia (1 month)

1999 Kyrgyzstan (2 months)
1998 South Siberia (Tuva, Khakassia of Russian Federation)
1998 Turkmenistan (1 month)
1997 Yakutia (Russian Federation) (1 month)
1997 Khöwsgöl (Toha), Mongolia (1 month)
1997 Mangystaw, Kazakhstan (1 month)
1996 Bashkurtustan (Russian Federation) (1 month)
1996 Atyraw, Kazakhstan (2 weeks)
1996 Bayan-Ölgii (Kazaks), Mongolia (1 month)
1995 South Siberia (Altai, Tuva), Russian Federation (2 months)
1995 Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan (1 month)
1994 Karakalpakstan, Uzbekistan (2 weeks)
1994 Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan (4 months)

Academic Awards and Scholarships:

2021 KEKK Foundation scholarship (2 weeks)
2018-2019 National Museum of Ethnology (Osaka, Japan) (11 months)
2018 KEKK Foundation scholarship (2 weeks)
2018 Klebersberg-scholarship (2 months)
2017 KEKK Foundation scholarship (2 weeks)
2016 KEKK Foundation scholarship (2 months)
2014 KEKK Foundation scholarship (2 months)
2012-13 ZUG Switzerland Funding (1 year)
2009-10 HAESF Senior Scholar, USA (12 month)
2007-08 ZUG Switzerland Funding (1 year)
2006-09 Eötvös State Scholarship, Kyrgyz State University, Bishkek (8 months)
2003-06 Fellow Researcher Scholarship of the Institute of Ethnology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences (3 years)
2002-03 PhD Hungarian State Scholarship, ELTE University, Budapest (1 year)
2001 Eötvös State Scholarship to University of Manchester, PhD (5 months)
2000 OSI Supplementary Grant to Mongolian State University (1 year)
1996-00 Soros Foundation Budapest, Culture Scholarship
1999 Hungarian Students' Conference, 5th place in Folklore Studies
1996-99 ELTE University Research Scholarship (4 years)
1993-94 Hungarian Ministry of Education Scholarship (MÖB) (1 year)

Conferences

2019. The 3rd International Scientific Conference Network Oriental studies: Oral and Written Traditions in the Context of Intercultural Interaction. Kalmyk State University. Elista. November 11-14. *The epic of Kögüdei-Mergen and its Mythological Background*.
- 2019 Sinophone Borderlands – Interaction at the Edges within the forthcoming workshop Peoples and Languages of the Sino – Russian borderlands: Dauria. University of Olomouc, Czechia. October 9-10. *The Daur version of Nisan saman and modern shamanic practices among the Daur*.
- 2018 Oirats and Kalmyks: International conference in Göttingen University, Germany. *The Khotons of Kyrgyzstan*.
- 2017 International Turkic Academy, Astana, Kazakhstan. *György Almásy's fieldwork in Kazakhstan (1900 and 1906)*.
- 2017 Endangered Varieties of Mongolian. Department of Inner Asia, ELTE University, Budapest. *Daur Dialects in Inner Mongolia*.
- 2016 International workshop at Shiga University, Hikone, Japan. Between Secularity and Religion: Shamanic and Buddhist Practices in Mongolia - Past and Present. *In the Wake of Vilmos Diószegi. Problems of Shamanism in Mongolia in the 1960s and nowadays*.
- 2016 Annual Conference of JAMS (Japanese Association for Mongolian Studies) at Otani University, Kyoto. *Khoton (Muslim) Kalmaks of Kyrgyzstan: Ethnic Identity and Acculturation among the Khoton Kalmak Diaspora*.
- 2016 Ethnonyms as Source of History and Anthropology. Institute of History, Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS), Budapest. *The Formation of Modern Turkic 'Ethnic' Groups in Central and Inner Asia*.
- 2015 The 550th Anniversary of the Kazakh Khanate, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest. *Tarikh-i Rashidi and the Kazak Khanate*.
- 2015 ISARS, International Conference on Shamanistic Research, Delphi, Greece. *Conflict between Traditional and Modern Muslim Practices*.
- 2015 The Role of Religion in Turkic Culture, Research Group of Turkology (HAS), Budapest, Hungary. *The Concept of 'Happiness' and the Ancient Turkic Notion of 'Soul'*.
- 2011 ISSR, International Conference on Shamanistic Research, Warsaw, Poland.
- 2010 Conference of the Mongolia Society (USA), Philadelphia, USA. *Khoton Kalmaks of Ysyk-Köl*.
- 2007 ISSR, International Conference on Shamanistic Research. Dobogókő, Hungary. *Animist Concept of Worshipping Nature in Popular Islam among the Kyrgyz*
- 2006 Conference on Epic Tradition, Ministry of Culture, Kyrgyzstan, Bishkek. *Epic Tradition and Spirituality among the Kyrgyz*.

2006 Conference for young researchers, Academy of Sciences. Hungary, Budapest.

2005 Food Semiotic Conference, Institute of Ethnography, Budapest. *The Nomadic Culture of Eating Mutton*.

2005 Folklore Conference dedicated to N. Sharakshinova, Irkutsk, Russia. *Vilmos Diószegi's fieldwork with Sharakshinova among the Bulagat-Buraiats (1957)*.

2004 ISSR, International Conference on Shamanistic Research, Changchun and Urumqi, China. *The Last Kazakh Baksı to Play the Kobız*.

2004 Conference commemorating István Kongur Mándoky, Budapest.

2003 Conference commemorating Vilmos Diószegi, Budapest.

2002 Permanent International Altaic Congress, Budapest.

2001 UNESCO Conference on Religion, Bishkek.

2000 UNESCO Conference on Shamanism, Budapest.

1999 Permanent International Altaic Congress, Prague.

1998 International Symposium of Ethno-musicology, Kyzyl, Tuva (Russia).

1997 International Congress of Mongolian Studies, Ulaanbaatar.

Filmography

- 1) 2021 Hová lett Turgan (Where is Turgan), documentary in the wake of György Almásy, Hungarian Scholar.
- 2) 2018 Hattyútánc a sivatagban (Swan Dance in the Desert), documentary about Bolatbek Kazak *gyraw* and his healing ritual.
- 3) 2015 Kun Apostol (the Cuman Apostol), documentary on István Mándoky Kongur, Cuman-Hungarian Turkologist
- 4) 2014 Csoma Sándor követői (Followers of Sándor Csoma) documentary of travelers to Central and Inner Asia (Vámbéry, Bálint and Almásy)
- 5) 2012 Vándorúton Ázsia szívébe (Journey to the Heart of Asia) documentary on György Almásy's trip to Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan
- 6) 2008 Sámánok határok nélkül (Shamans beyond borders) (with Mihály Hoppál) documentary on shamanic traditions in Hölün-Buir (Inner Mongolia, China)
Kitájok földjén (in the Land of the Kitai), documentary on Daur shamanic traditions
- 7) 2006 Way to the Upper World (Út a felső világra) (with Mihály Hoppál) documentary on Kyrgyz religious traditions in Xinjiang, China
- 8) 2001 Eleven Szellem (Living Spirits), documentary on Kyrgyz folklore (with András Kollmann)

Other Activities

2015 Photo exhibition and lecture on the Turkic peoples of Siberia, Csillaghegy Cultural House, Budapest

2015-2021 Head of Summer School on Kazak Studies, Lakitekel Népfőiskola (Folk High School)

2009 Photo exhibition about Inner Asia, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest

2008 Photo exhibition about Inner Asian Shamanic Traditions, University of Szeged, Klebelsberg Library

2005 Photo exhibition about a Kyrgyz shaman, Debrecen (with Mihály Hoppál)

2000 Photo exhibition about Siberian Shamanism, Győr, Hungary

2000 Photo exhibition about Inner Asia

Foundation for Hungarian Culture, Budapest

Millennium Programs, Kiskunlacháza

1999 Photo exhibition about Inner Asia

Radio Free Europe, Prague at the PIAC conference

1998-00 Free Lance Correspondent

Radio Liberty, Kazak and Kyrgyz Service