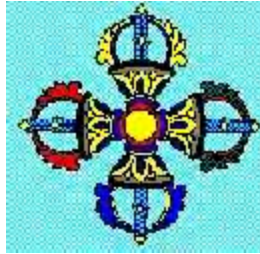


Tibetan & Mongolian Tea Bowls and Tsampa Boxes



Welcome!

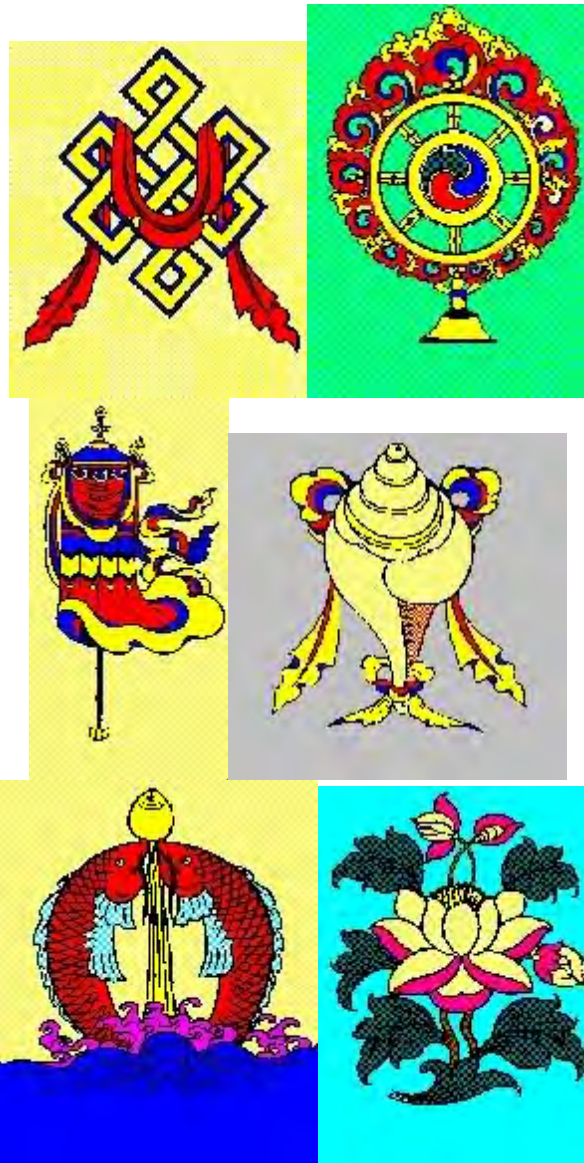
Pictured below is a sampling of different Tibetan style tea bowls and tsampa boxes. They are first, hand turned from different varieties of Asian burlwoods, then silversmiths take over adding linings, bases and lids. By implementing the age-old method of repoussé, beautiful designs and symbols are hammered into the silver. Further embellishment is sometimes added by inseting semi-precious stones of coral, lapis and turquoise.



The Eight Auspicious Symbols of Buddhism

The set of symbols, pictured below, are a favorite decorative motif placed on many utensils and religious objects of daily use throughout the Himalayan region, as well as China and Mongolia. They include, The Canopy, Covered Vase, Mystic Knot, Wheel of the Law, Official Umbrella, Conch Shell, Pair of Fish, and Lotus Flower.





**Fig. 1) Tea bowl and silver lid with semi precious stones.
The lid's finial top is a large red coral bead.**



**Fig 2.) A superior quality bowl with lid.
The silver repousse work shows
the touch of a master craftsman.**



**Fig 3.) This bowl shows the highest
quality birdseye grain of fine burlwood.**



Fig. 4) Symbolism abounds on this tea bowl showing mythical beasts.



Fig. 5) This tea bowl, with beautiful repousse work, comes from the Manchurian region of northern most China.



Fig. 6) This handsome tea bowl shows many traditional lattice patterns in the silver work.



Fig. 7) Three different semi-precious stones; lapis, coral, and turquoise, are set in stylized lotus petals around the base of this Mongolian style tea bowl.



Fig. 8) This Tibetan style tea bowl shows the symbols of the Eight Immortals. Each symbol representing a different condition in life.



Fig. 9) This tea bowl shows the traditional Eight Auspicious Symbols of Buddhism. A favorite motif used in many artistic mediums. The Endless Knot symbol is clearly visible.



Fig. 10) A large Tibetan style tea bowl with a heavy layer of finely worked silver on its base.



Fig. 11) A beautiful Mongolian style tea bowl, again showing the Eight Auspicious Symbols of Buddhism around its base. From left to right you can see the Double Fish, Sacred Jewel, Wheel of the Law, and Banner symbols.



Fig. 12) Two lovely tsampa boxes. One large, one slightly smaller. Both lathe turned from Chinese Elm burl, strapped with silver and inset with semi-precious stones.



Fig. 13) A Mongolian style tsampa container showing master craftsmanship in the woodwork and silversmithing.



Fig. 14) Another similar Mongolian style tsampa box with excellent workmanship.



Fig. 15) Tibetan style tea bowl with a variety of symbolism including a beautifully rendered Dragon in the center of the base.



Fig. 16) Mongolian style bowl with the symbol of the Lion Dog.



Fig. 17) Mongol style bowl with the Cash Coin symbol in the center of the base.



Fig. 18) Master silver work is evident in this beautiful pedestal style tea bowl with porcelain cup.



Fig. 19) A tea bowl of Mongolian origin. Finest burlwood with coral and turquoise cabochons.



Fig. 20) One of the most highly prized burlwoods in all of the Himalayan region is this example of unfinished Rhododendron burl.

The plants grow to huge size and height in the high altitude forests of both the Kingdoms of Sikkim and Bhutan.

The purpose of this webpage is to present to the public a series of images and text about a unique art form of Himalayan craftsmanship. An art form that, sadly, is in rapid decline and facing the threat of being forever lost. This is an attempt to help preserve an important part of their unique culture, heritage and art.

Recommended Reading List:

Turned Bowls of Tibet, Veronika Ronge (original text in German)

Peaks and Lamas, Marco Pallis

Treasure Seekers in China, Orvar Karlbeck

The Land of the Camel, Schuyler Cammann

The People of Tibet, Sir Charles Bell

Across Mongolian Plains, Roy Chapman Andrews

The Land of the Lamas, William Woodville Rockhill

Outlines of Chinese Symbolism & Art Motifs, C.A.S. Williams

Mongol Jewellery, Martha Boyer

Tibetan Art, Lumir Jisl

Mongolian Journey, Lumir Jisl