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KYOTO LECTURES

Friday, October 16th, 18:00h

Giacomella Orofino

Cosmogonic Myths in the Tibetan Bon Magic Ritual of the Blazing Water (*dbal chu*)

SPEAKER

The religious literature of the Bon school transmits highly interesting theogonic and cosmogonic narratives, mythical accounts of different kinds, and exorcism rituals rarely found in mainstream Buddhist Tibetan literary traditions. Generally considered by the followers of Bon as a heritage of the archaic cultural milieu of indigenous pre-Buddhist Tibet, research on this early lore is far from complete, due to the huge amount of material absorbed and re-formulated in the later Bon literary canon. This talk will examine the creation myths of the cosmic eggs found in the "Blazing water" (*dbal chu*) apotropaic ritual tradition. Their narratives represent a marvelous example of stratification of diverse elements that contributed to shape a religious literature with clearly recognizable features. As a conclusion some hypothesis will be formulated on the construction strategies of Bon "nativist" identity discourse in medieval Tibet.

Giacomella Orofino is an Associate Professor of Tibetan Studies at the University of Naples "L'Orientale". She has worked extensively on Tibetan religious history and literature. Her most recent publications include: "The Long Voyage of a Trickster Story from Ancient Greece to Tibet" in Jim Rheingans (ed.) *Tibetan Literary Genres, Texts, and Text Types. From Genre Classification to Transformation* (2015) and "A Note on Two Theogonic Myths Found in a Bon Magic Ritual", in Havnevik, H. and Ramble C. (eds), *From Bhakti to Bon. Festschrift for Per Kværne* (2015). She is also co-founder of the NGO ASIA, that supports the preservation of the identity and cultural heritage of the peoples in the Himalayan regions, and President of the "Centre of Buddhist Studies" at the University of Naples "L'Orientale", promoting knowledge of Buddhist philosophy, literature, art and culture from an interdisciplinary perspective.

This lecture will be held at the Institute for Research in Humanities (IRH), Kyoto University (seminar room 1, 1st floor).

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