

Institut für Asien- und Afrikawissenschaften
Zentralasien-Seminar

Tibet Kolloquium

Einladung

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Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

Humans and Their Others: Man and Horse and Man and King in Early Tibet

There is an easy duplicity in human attitudes toward the domesticated horse. We see the saddle sores, mouth sores, and severe pain caused by the girth. Yet we imagine that the horse is a trusted, willing partner. The situation is much the same in early Tibet, save for the fact that this duplicity extends into the afterlife. The horse was the favored psychopomp guide to the land of the dead, and its duty was to carry the deceased across the passes and fords that separate the living from the dead. Scores of horses were sacrificed for this purpose in traditional Tibetan funerals, as attested by archaeological evidence. Old Tibetan ritual texts from Dunhuang inform us about the origins of this funerary partnership between horse and man, and sing the praises of the faithful horse. These emphasize an ethic of equality, and are yet keenly aware of the plight of the horse as a domesticated animal subservient to man. Examining these and other dynamics from Old Tibetan ritual texts and other early documents, we will explore the ways in which practical, intimate knowledge of the partnership between horse and man informs Tibetan conceptions of this same relationship in the afterlife, and how the image of horse and rider is also used to characterize man's place in relation to a different, superior non-human other, the king.

Mittwoch, 12. November 2014

18.00 Uhr c.t.

Invalidenstr. 118, **Raum 217**

(S-Bahn Nordbahnhof, U6 Naturkundemuseum)