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2020 KYOTO LECTURES

Thursday, June 25th, 18:00h

D. Max Moerman
Sherry Fowler

SPEAKER

DISCUSSANT

Demonology and Eroticism

Cartography and the Japanese Buddhist Imagination

The demonic female, an object of male anxiety and desire, has long been a stock character in Japanese Buddhist literature. It is also one that occupied specific locations in the history of Japanese cartography: *Rasetsukoku*, a dreaded island of female cannibals, and *Nyōgogashima*, a fabled isle of erotic fantasy. This presentation traces the appearance of these legendary realms of female isolation in tale literature, sutra illustration, popular fiction, and Japanese cartography from the 12th through the 19th century. By analyzing the persistence and transformation of these sites on maps of Japan, this presentation examines how the construction of Japanese identity relies on the mapping of the marginal. In doing so, it argues for the centrality of Buddhism to Japan's cartographic tradition and the importance of cartography in Japanese visual culture.

D. Max Moerman is an Associate Professor in the Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Cultures, Barnard College, Columbia University. His recent publications include *Localizing Paradise: Kumano Pilgrimage and the Religious Landscape of Premodern Japan* (Harvard, 2005); "The Archeology of Anxiety: An Underground History of Heian Religion" in *Centers and Peripheries in Heian Japan* (Hawaii, 2007); "Dying Like the Buddha: Intervisuality and the Cultic Image," *Impressions: The Journal of the Japanese Art Society of America* 28 (2007-2008); and *Geographies of the Imagination: Buddhist Cosmology and the Japanese World Map, 1364-1865* (Harvard, forthcoming).

Sherry Fowler is Associate Professor of Japanese Art History at University of Kansas. She is author of *Murōji: Rearranging Art and History at a Japanese Buddhist Temple* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005) and various articles on Japanese Buddhist art.

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

Italian School of East Asian Studies (ISEAS)

École Française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO)

4th Floor, 4 Yoshida Ushinomiya-cho, Sakyo-ku Kyoto, 606-8302 Japan

ISEAS | T: 075-751-8132 F: 075-751-8221 E: iseas@iseas-kyoto.org

EFEO | T: 075-761-3946 F: 075-761-3947 E: efeo.kyoto@gmail.com

