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Perspectives on Tibetan Culture

A Small Garland of Forget-me-nots
Offered to Elena De Rossi Filibeck

Edited by

Michela Clemente, Oscar Nalesini
and Federica Venturi



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PERSPECTIVES ON TIBETAN CULTURE

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Elena De Rossi Filibeck in Ladakh, 2005.

Photo: Courtesy of Beatrice Filibeck

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Introduction

This volume originated as the initiative of two former students of Elena De Rossi Filibeck, Michela Clemente and Federica Venturi, and of Oscar Nalesini, who collaborated with her on several projects over the years, in order to celebrate her as a teacher, colleague and dear friend. The result is this tome, which combines the efforts of many of Professor Filibeck's students, who wanted to thank her for directing their first steps in the field of Tibetology, and of some of her closest colleagues, who gladly presented a piece in appreciation of her friendship, warmth and genuine fellowship through the years.

The career of Elena De Rossi Filibeck began and developed at the Department of Oriental Studies of the University of Rome "La Sapienza", where she graduated in East Asian History in 1971, under the supervision of Professor Luciano Petech (1914-2010). Successively she became a researcher and then an Associate Professor in the same department, where she taught the history and culture of Tibet to several generations of students, from those toting the Red Book of Mao in the 1970s, to the iPhone generation in the 21st century. Her research has covered different aspects of Tibetan culture, particularly focusing on history, religious geography, codicology, philology, and more recently Ladakhi studies. She participated in the international study project carried out by the Institut für Tibet- und Buddhismuskunde of the University of Vienna in collaboration with IsMEO and travelled to Tabo (Spiti, Himachal Pradesh, India) with the aim of assessing a number of ancient manuscripts, texts and inscriptions found in the monastery there.

She also took part in several research projects and initiatives at the University of Rome "La Sapienza", some involving cooperation with other universities in Italy, such as the research project on "Passions and emotions in the civilizations of India and Tibet" (De Rossi Filibeck 2009). In recent years she has organized several conferences in the field. Notable among them are the 13th Colloquium of the International Association for Ladakh Studies (IALS), convened in Rome in 2007 together with John Bray (Bray and De Rossi Filibeck 2009); a conference on Tibetan art (De Rossi Filibeck 2012) and the international symposium on the occasion of the centennial anniversary of Professor Luciano Petech, which she convened in 2014 (De Rossi Filibeck *et al.*, 2016).

Her most important contributions to the field of Tibetology remain the catalogues of the manuscripts and xylographs preserved in the Tucci Tibetan Collection of the Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente (IsMEO, later renamed Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente, IsIAO) in Rome. The work began in 1979, when Professor Petech started an initial sorting of the texts. Soon, he asked Professor Filibeck and Dr. Ramon Prats to collaborate with him. In addition, he

enlisted the cooperation of Lama Ati 'Jam dpal seng ge (1914-1981), who had already started to work on the collection some years earlier. After a few months, Dr. Prats had to give up on this task and Professor Filibeck started to shoulder most of the work. At the end of 1980 she took over full charge and responsibility. The results of her painstaking work have been issued in two volumes, *Catalogue of the Tucci Tibetan Fund in the Library of IsMEO, Volume 1* and *Catalogue of the Tucci Tibetan Fund in the Library of IsIAO, Volume 2*, respectively published in 1994 and 2003.

However, even more than her commendable research and publications, Professor Filibeck should be acclaimed for having created a “Roman school” of Tibetologists. Her humanity shows in the care and affection she has demonstrated in her students’ regards, in her desire to see them grow, help them and encourage them when she saw they had passion and ability. Thus, there are now numerous younger scholars, in Italy and elsewhere, that were first introduced to the alluring world of Tibetan culture by her. For this, we especially want to thank her.

A few editorial decisions should be made clear. The articles have not been fully rendered uniform in all their aspects. We have decided to leave a fair amount of latitude to individual authors, and thus items such as the use of italics for honorific titles, or the plurals of Tibetan and Sanskrit titles have been left to the personal preferences of each author. We trust that this will not cause too much discomfort for the readers.

Also, this volume is not divided thematically. As the subjects of the articles are especially varied, we have decided to present them simply in alphabetical order by the author’s last name. Among the topics discussed may be found art, history, Buddhism, Bon, medicine, explorations of Tibet, iconography, religious geography, and other sub-fields. Any reader captivated by the subject of Tibetan studies at large should be able to find something of interest by perusing the table of contents. Naturally, we hope that Professor Filibeck will find them all appealing, and we heartily wish her many years of continued success.

The editors would like to thank Dr. Jean-Luc Achard for helping us finalize this project. We also wish to thank Roberto Vitali for his continued support in this enterprise and Beatrice Filibeck for sneaking photos from her mother’s computer in order to provide us with the image of Elena De Rossi Filibeck reproduced here.

The Editors,
Michela Clemente, Oscar Nalesini and Federica Venturi

Tabula Gratulatoria

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Alessandro Boesi	Christian Luczanits
John Bray	Filippo Lunardo
Katia Buffetrille	Francesco Maniscalco
Patrizia Cannata	Petra Maurer
Roberto Ciarla	Beniamino Melasecchi
Michela Clemente	Marcello Messana
Alice Crisanti	Fabio Miarelli
Mauro Crocenzi	Giorgio Milanetti
Cristoph Cüppers	Luca Milasi
Olaf Czaja	Oscar Nalesini
Patrizia Dadò	Jampa Panglung
Francesco D'Arelli	Margherita Pansa
Federica Delia	Marco Passavanti
Cristina Delvecchio	Fiorella Rispoli
Daniela De Palma	Adriano V. Rossi
Hildegard Diemberger	Donatella Rossi
Franz-Karl Ehrhard	Fabian Sanders
Helmut Eimer	Paolo Santangelo
Beatrice Filibeck	Arcangela Santoro
Giacomo Filibeck	Cristina Scherrer-Schaub
Gregorio Filibeck	Peter Schwieger
Irene Filibeck	Marta Sernesi
Camillo A. Formigatti	Elliot Sperling
Elisa Freschi	Ernst Steinkellner
Amy Heller	Helmut Tauscher
Christian Jahoda	Francis Tiso
Deborah Klimburg-Salter	Raffaele Torella
Per Kvaerne	Kurt Tropper
Alessandra Lazzari	Helga Uebach
Chiara Letizia	Federica Venturi
Erberto Lo Bue	Roberto Vitali

ELENA DE ROSSI FILIBECK'S PUBLICATIONS

Books and articles

1976

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1977

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1978

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1980

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1983

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1984

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1985

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1988

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1990

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2010

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2014

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2015

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