

**THE JOURNAL OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION FOR BON  
RESEARCH**



**LA REVUE DE L'ASSOCIATION  
INTERNATIONALE POUR LA  
RECHERCHE SUR LE BŌN**



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The International Association for Bon Research  
L'association pour la recherche sur le Bön  
c/o Dr J.F. Marc des Jardins  
Department of Religion,  
Concordia University  
1455 de Maisonneuve Ouest, R205  
Montreal, Quebec H3G 1M8

**Logo:** “Gshen rab mi bo descending to Earth as a Coucou bird” by Agnieszka Helman-Wazny

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**Introduction:** The JIABR – RAIRB is the yearly publication of the International Association for Bon Research. The IABR is a non-profit organisation registered under the Federal Canadian Registrar (DATE). IABR - AIRB is an association dedicated to the study and the promotion of research on the Tibetan Bön religion. It is an association of dedicated researchers who engage in the critical analysis and research on Bön according to commonly accepted scientific criteria in scientific institutes. The fields of studies represented by our members encompass the different academic disciplines found in Humanities, Social Sciences and other connected specialities. This association is devoted exclusively to scholarly exchanges and academic enquiries and promotes research as well as the dissemination of results on topics stemming from antiquity to the contemporary scene. IABR - AIRB is open to all. All research panels are especially open to those who use primary source material and fieldwork derived data in accordance with standard scientific research methods.

**Contributions:** Contributors are members of research and academic institutions, Ph.D. students, independent researchers and scholars. Submitted papers undergo a peer review process and must not be a prior publication, must be based on original research on primary sources and be a contribution to the field. Interested scholars who would like to submit an article should contact the editor-in-chief directly ([marc.desjardins@concordia.ca](mailto:marc.desjardins@concordia.ca)).

**Notes from the field:** The JIABR – RAIRB accepts contributions which may not have received full textual analysis yet. These are printed in the section 'Notes from the Field' of the publication. These notes are field reports which contain contributions to the field and pass also through the peer review process.

**Reviews:** Publications for review should be submitted directly to the chief-editor at the above electronic address.



International Association for Bon Research



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## Words from the Chief-editor

It is with great pleasure that I would like to introduce this new contribution to the field of Tibetan Studies in general and to the study of Bon society, culture, worldviews and religions which is this *Journal of the International Association for Bon Research*. The project started in 2008 at the Blou Conference on Bon. An assembled team of scholars decided enthusiastically to create a non-profit scholarly association which would focus on researching Bon in all its manifestations and from any periods of history. This organisation was conceived as an agent which would help disseminate discoveries and frontline research results in various forms, chiefly among them, through publications. This International Association for Bon Research was also mandated to coordinate and find means to support research by scholars (attached to a teaching, a research institution or independent) as well as graduate students. The overview was to help in the development of this relatively new field of research in Tibetan Studies which in the past, was often ignored or overshadowed by more popular themes.

This new scholarly venue and its inaugural issue is the direct result of the Conference on Bon, Shangshung and Early Tibet, hosted by the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London in September 2011. This conference was organized by Dr Nathan W. Hill and assembled a variety of scholars, representatives of the Bon religion and important members of the Tibetan Buddhist community. The content of this volume reflects the variety of perspectives presented at the conference. Although most papers follow a scholarly approach, some include religious viewpoints and Tibetan traditional narratives. We have also included what we hope will be a continuing part of this Journal and that is, a section entitled 'Notes from the Field'. This will bring fresh data collected directly from fieldwork and presented simply, potentially without contextualization or analysis. Those chosen to be published are thought to bring significant contributions to our research area.

Together with our President, Professor Samten G. Karmay, I would like to thank Dr Nathan W. Hill, Jane Savory, and Professor Charles Ramble for their hard work in making the conference a success. We also extend our gratitude to SOAS, the London Shangshung Institute, the British Academy, and the Kalpa Group for the generous financial support the conference received. Finally, we thank Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak

of Tritten Norbutse Bon Monastery, and Professor Namkhai Norbu for their contributions, as well as all of the participants and contributors to this volume.

J.F. Marc des Jardins  
Montreal, October 2013.