announces a call for papers for the workshop

**Deities, Spirits and Demons**

**in Vernacular Beliefs and Rituals in Asia**

**9-10 November 2017 – Tartu, Estonia**

The study of religions in Asia has been increasingly expanding its spectrum of inquire into the kaleidoscopic realm of local traditions that are specific to a village or a lineage of transmission. Tradition-bearers and ritual experts master the heterogeneous corpus of vernacular beliefs and ritual practices about deities, spirits and demons as an essential part of the foundations of their authority in the community. Local classes of supernatural beings have often been marginalized, sometimes even demonized by institutionalised religions, yet they are alive in daily life in Asia and engage with social and political changes in their respective local and national contexts. Also, narratives about such beliefs transform, all the while evolving with the context wherein they emerge.

The workshop aims to gather scholars from the fields of folklore, anthropology, religious studies and area studies related to Asia. Contributions may address one or several of the following issues:

- Vernacular theories, beliefs and genres regarding deities, spirits and demons;
- Sacred and haunted places;
- Ritual experts and ritual practices dealing with deities, spirits and demons (exorcism, divination, geomancy, propitiation, etc);
- Changing and emerging belief narratives in urban contexts in Asia;
- Relationship between the living and the dead;
- Vernacular terminology and conceptualisation of the supernatural and magic.

The working language is English, time limit for the presentation is 20 minutes, followed by 10 minutes for questions and discussion. Participants are expected to pay for their own travel and accommodation. Participation fee of the workshop will be 60 EUR.

If you are interested in participating in this event, please submit the title of your paper and abstract (up to 250-300 words) before 01.03.2017. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us by email: vernacularasia2017@gmail.com. Pre-arranged panels of 3 to 4 participants will also be considered. Notification of acceptance will be sent not later than: 01.04.2017.

Organizing committee: Kikila Bhutia, Margaret Lyngdoh, Valentina Punzi, Baburam Saikia, Alevtina Solovyeva, Ülo Valk