1. Record Nr. UNISA990006171690203316 WOMUTT, Andreina **Autore Titolo** Movimiento perpetuo / Andreina Womutt Caracas, : Fundarte Alcaldia del Municipio Libertador, 1991 Pubbl/distr/stampa **ISBN** 980-253-075-1 Descrizione fisica 144 p.; 21 cm Cuadernos de difusion ; 154 Collana 792.8 Disciplina Soggetti Danza - Venezuela Collocazione VI.7. COLL.53/ 16 VI.7. COLL.53/ 16a VI.7. COLL.53/ 16b Lingua di pubblicazione Spagnolo

Materiale a stampa

Monografia

Formato

Livello bibliografico

2. Record Nr. UNINA9910838185703321

Autore Domenig Gaudenz

Titolo Founding Territorial Cults in Early Japan: Traces of a Forgotten Ritual in

Ancient Myths and Legends / / Gaudenz Domenig

Pubbl/distr/stampa Leiden;; Boston:,: Brill,, 2024

©2024

ISBN 9789004686458

Edizione [1st ed.]

Descrizione fisica 1 online resource (320 pages) : illustrations

Collana Asian Studies E-Books Online, Collection 2024

Brill's Japanese Studies Library;; 76

Disciplina 299.5/6

Soggetti Cults - Japan - History - To 1500

Land settlement - Japan - Religious aspects Rites and ceremonies - Japan - History - To 1500

Japan Religion To 1185

Lingua di pubblicazione Inglese

Formato Materiale a stampa

Livello bibliografico Monografia

Nota di bibliografia Includes bibliographical references and index.

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Sommario/riassunto

The first book that deals with the territorial cults of early Japan by focusing on how such cults were founded in ownerless regions. Numerous ancient Japanese myths and legends are discussed to show that the typical founding ritual was a two-phase ritual that turned the territory into a horizontal microcosm, complete with its own 'terrestrial heaven' inhabited by local deities. Reversing Mircea Eliade's popular thesis, the author concludes that the concept of the human-made horizontal microcosm is not a reflection but the source of the religious concept of the macrocosm with gods dwelling high up in the sky. The open access publication of this book has been published with the support of the Swiss National Science Foundation.