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**Reading the Mahāvamsa** Kristin Scheible 2016-11-08 Vamsa is a dynamic genre of Buddhist history filled with otherworldly characters and the exploits of real-life heroes. These narratives collapse the temporal distance between Buddha and the reader, building an emotionally resonant connection with an outsized religious figure and a longed-for past. The fifth-century Pali text Mahavamsa is a particularly effective example, using metaphor and other rhetorical devices to ethically transform readers, to stimulate and then to calm them. Reading the Mahavamsa advocates a new, literary approach to this text by revealing its embedded reading advice (to experience samvega and pasada) and affective work of metaphors (the Buddha's dharma as light) and salient characters (nagas). Kristin Scheible argues that the Mahavamsa requires a particular kind of reading. In the text's proem, special instructions draw readers to the metaphor of light and the nagas, or salient snake-beings, of the first chapter. Nagas are both model worshippers and unworthy hoarders of Buddha's relics. As nonhuman agents, they challenge political and historicist readings of the text. Scheible sees these slippery characters and the narrative's potent and playful metaphors as techniques for refocusing the reader's attention on the text's emotional aims. Her work explains the Mahavamsa's central motivational role in contemporary Sri Lankan Buddhist and nationalist circles. It also speaks broadly to strategies of reading religious texts and to the internal and external cues that give such works lives beyond the page.

*Text to Tradition* Deven M. Patel 2014-01-07 Written in the twelfth century, the Naisadhiyacarita (The Adventures of Nala, King of Nisadha) is a seminal Sanskrit poem beloved by South Asian literary communities for nearly a millennium. This volume introduces readers to the poem's author, his reading communities, the modes through which the poem has been read and used, the contexts through which it became canonical, its literary offspring, and the emotional power it still holds for the culture that values it. The study privileges the intellectual, affective, and social forms of cultural practice informing a region's people and institutions. It treats literary texts as traditions in their own right and draws attention to the critical genres and actors involved in their reception.

*Wombs in Labor* Amrita Pande 2014-09-23 Surrogacy is India's new form of outsourcing, as couples from

all over the world hire Indian women to bear their children for a fraction of the cost of surrogacy elsewhere with little to no government oversight or regulation. In the first detailed ethnography of India's surrogacy industry, Amrita Pande visits clinics and hostels and speaks with surrogates and their families, clients, doctors, brokers, and hostel matrons in order to shed light on this burgeoning business and the experiences of the laborers within it. From recruitment to training to delivery, Pande's research focuses on how reproduction meets production in surrogacy and how this reflects characteristics of India's larger labor system. Pande's interviews prove surrogates are more than victims of disciplinary power, and she examines the strategies they deploy to retain control over their bodies and reproductive futures. While some women are coerced into the business by their families, others negotiate with clients and their clinics to gain access to technologies and networks otherwise closed to them. As surrogates, the women Pande meets get to know and make the most of advanced medical discoveries. They traverse borders and straddle relationships that test the boundaries of race, class, religion, and nationality. Those who focus on the inherent inequalities of India's surrogacy industry believe the practice should be either banned or strictly regulated. Pande instead advocates for a better understanding of this complex labor market, envisioning an international model of fair-trade surrogacy founded on openness and transparency in all business, medical, and emotional exchanges.

*Teaching Buddhism* Todd Lewis 2017 This volume explores the ways that leading scholars of Buddhism are updating, revising, and correcting widely accepted understandings of, and instruction on Buddhist traditions. Each essay presents new insight on Buddhist thought in such a way that it can be easily applied to university and monastic courses.

Dividing Texts Bidur Bhattarai 2019-12-02 The number of manuscripts produced in the Indian sub-continent is astounding and is the result of a massive enterprise that was carried out over a vast geographical area and over a vast stretch of time. Focusing mainly on areas of Northern India and Nepal between 800 to 1300 CE and on manuscripts containing Sanskrit texts, the present study investigates a fundamental and so far rarely studied aspect of manuscript production: visual organisation. Scribes adopted a variety of visual strategies to distinguish one text from another and to differentiate the various sections within a single text (chapters, sub-chapters, etc.). Their repertoire includes the use of space(s) on the folio, the adoption of different writing styles, the inclusion of symbols of various kind, the application of colours ('rubrication'), or a combination of all these. This study includes a description of these various strategies and an analysis of their different implementations across the selected geographical areas. It sheds light on how manuscripts were produced, as well as on some aspects of their employment in ritual contexts, in different areas of India and Nepal.

**Buddhist Art of Myanmar** Sylvia Fraser-Lu 2015-01-01 A stunning showcase of exceptional and rare works of Buddhist art, presented to the international community for the first time The practice of Buddhism in Myanmar (Burma) has resulted in the production of dazzling objects since the 5th century. This landmark publication presents the first overview of these magnificent works of art from major museums in Myanmar and collections in the United States, including sculptures, paintings, textiles, and religious implements created for temples and monasteries, or for personal devotion. Many of these pieces have never before been seen outside of Myanmar. Accompanied by brilliant color photography, essays by Sylvia Fraser-Lu, Donald M. Stadtner, and scholars from around the world synthesize the history of Myanmar from the ancient through colonial periods and discuss the critical links between religion, geography, governance, historiography, and artistic production. The authors examine the multiplicity of styles and techniques throughout the country, the ways Buddhist narratives have been conveyed through works of art, and the context in which the diverse objects were used. Certain to be the essential resource on the subject, *Buddhist Art of Myanmar* illuminates two millennia of rarely seen

masterpieces.

**Brought to Life by the Voice** Amanda Weidman 2021-06-15 A free open access ebook is available upon publication. Learn more at [www.luminosoa.org](http://www.luminosoa.org). To produce the song sequences that are central to Indian popular cinema, singers' voices are first recorded in the studio and then played back on the set to be lip-synced and danced to by actors and actresses as the visuals are filmed. Since the 1950s, playback singers have become revered celebrities in their own right. *Brought to Life by the Voice* explores the distinctive aesthetics and affective power generated by this division of labor between onscreen body and offscreen voice in South Indian Tamil cinema. In Amanda Weidman's historical and ethnographic account, playback is not just a cinematic technique, but a powerful and ubiquitous element of aural public culture that has shaped the complex dynamics of postcolonial gendered subjectivity, politicized ethnolinguistic identity, and neoliberal transformation in South India.

**Protecting the Dharma through Calligraphy in Tang China** Pietro De Laurentis 2021-11-30 This is a study of the earliest and finest collated inscription in the history of Chinese calligraphy, the Ji Wang shengjiao xu 卽王聖教序 (Preface to the Sacred Teaching Scriptures Translated by Xuanzang in Wang Xizhi's Collated Characters), which was erected on January 1, 673. The stele records the two texts written by the Tang emperors Taizong (599–649) and Gaozong (628–683) in honor of the monk Xuanzang (d. 664) and the Buddhist scripture Xin jing (Heart Sutra), collated in the semi-cursive characters of the great master of Chinese calligraphy, Wang Xizhi (303–361). It is thus a Buddhist inscription that combines Buddhist authority, political power, and artistic charm in one single monument. The present book reconstructs the multifaceted context in which the stele was devised, aiming at highlighting the specific role calligraphy played in the propagation and protection of Buddhism in medieval China.

**Language of the Snakes** Andrew Ollett 2017-10-10 A free ebook version of this title is available through Luminos, University of California Press's Open Access publishing program. Visit [www.luminosoa.org](http://www.luminosoa.org) to learn more. *Language of the Snakes* traces the history of the Prakrit language as a literary phenomenon, starting from its cultivation in courts of the Deccan in the first centuries of the common era. Although little studied today, Prakrit was an important vector of the kavya movement and once joined Sanskrit at the apex of classical Indian literary culture. The opposition between Prakrit and Sanskrit was at the center of an enduring "language order" in India, a set of ways of thinking about, naming, classifying, representing, and ultimately using languages. As a language of classical literature that nevertheless retained its associations with more demotic language practices, Prakrit both embodies major cultural tensions—between high and low, transregional and regional, cosmopolitan and vernacular—and provides a unique perspective onto the history of literature and culture in South Asia.

*The Place of Devotion* Sukanya Sarbadhikary 2015-08-07 A free ebook version of this title is available through Luminos, University of California Press's new open access publishing program for monographs. Visit [www.luminosoa.org](http://www.luminosoa.org) to learn more. Hindu devotional traditions have long been recognized for their sacred geographies as well as the sensuous aspects of their devotees' experiences. Largely overlooked, however, are the subtle links between these religious expressions. Based on intensive fieldwork conducted among worshippers in Bengal's Navadvip-Mayapur sacred complex, this book discusses the diverse and contrasting ways in which Bengal-Vaishnava devotees experience sacred geography and divinity. Sukanya Sarbadhikary documents an extensive range of practices, which draw on the interactions of mind, body, and viscera. She shows how perspectives on religion, embodiment, affect, and space are enriched when sacred spatialities of internal and external forms are studied at once.

**Of Gods and Books** Florinda De Simini 2016-11-07 India has been the homeland of diverse manuscript

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traditions that do not cease to impress scholars for their imposing size and complexity. Nevertheless, many topics concerning the study of Indian manuscript cultures still remain to receive systematic examination. *Of Gods and Books* pays attention to one of these topics - the use of manuscripts as ritualistic tools. Literary sources deal quite extensively with rituals principally focused on manuscripts, whose worship, donation and preservation are duly prescribed. Around these activities, a specific category of ritual gift is created, which finds attestations in pre-tantric, as well as in smārta and tantric, literature, and whose practice is also variously reflected in epigraphical documents. De Simini offers a first systematic study of the textual evidence on the topic of the worship and donation of knowledge. She gives account of possible implications for the relationships between religion and power. The book is indispensable for a deeper understanding of the cultural aspects of manuscript transmission in medieval India, and beyond.

*The Creative South* Andrea Acri 2022-04-12 This edited volume programmatically reconsiders the creative contribution of the littoral and insular regions of Maritime Asia to shaping new paradigms in the Buddhist and Hindu art and architecture of the mediaeval Asian world. Far from being a mere southern conduit for the maritime circulation of Indic religions, in the period from ca. the 7th to the 14th century those regions transformed across mainland and island polities the rituals, icons, and architecture that embodied these religious insights with a dynamism that often eclipsed the established cultural centres in Northern India, Central Asia, and mainland China. This collective body of work brings together new research aiming to recalibrate the importance of these innovations in art and architecture, thereby highlighting the cultural creativity of the monsoon-influenced Southern rim of the Asian landmass. "Although Maritime Asia in mediaeval times was not as densely populated as the agrarian hinterland, Asia's coasts were highly urbanized. The region from southern India to south China was a heterogeneous blend of cultures, leavened with a strong interest in trade. This cosmopolitan society afforded plentiful opportunities for artists to find patrons and develop individual styles and aesthetic sensibilities. In the bustling ports of Asia's south coast, rulers sought to embellish their prestige and attract foreign merchants by sponsoring the development of monumental complexes and centres of learning and debate. These educational institutions attracted teachers from all over Asia, and in their cloisters they developed new intellectual frameworks which were reflected in works of art and architecture. Scholars moved frequently by sea, influencing and being influenced by other foreigners such as Japanese and central Asians who were also attracted to these places. This very variety has hindered scholarly research in the past. This volume contributes to the endeavour to show how Maritime Asia was not an incoherent jumble of misunderstood influences from better-known civilizations; there was a pattern to this creativity, which the authors in this collection clarify for us. The maritime world of Asia may have lain on the margins of the land, but it provided a physical and intellectual medium through which artistic ideas from east and west flowed freely. Maritime Asia also made significant original contributions which hold their own with those of the hinterland of the Asian continent. Unconstrained by the burden of static hierarchical courts, the peoples of Maritime Asia built on the inspiration provided by a hybrid society to demonstrate a high degree of artistic originality while testing but not breaking the link with conventional iconography."-- Professor John Miksic, Department of Southeast Asian Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, National University of Singapore (NUS) "The collective objective of this two-volume work is to give substance to the oft cited mantra that mediaeval maritime Southeast Asia was as much an innovative contributor to, as a recipient, in the cultural conversations that took place across the Bay of Bengal and South China Sea. In bracketing these studies between the 7th and 14th centuries, the editors have drawn into focus two key traditions that are explicated in texts, ritual art and architecture and religious landscapes of this period: tantric Buddhism and esoteric Shaivism. A great strength of these studies is this focus, for which the editors are to be commended. The chapters contain much that represents significant milestones in building new understanding in the field, including overdue

recognition of the importance of Southeast Asian esoteric Buddhist practice in shaping Chinese Buddhism. Nowhere did the architects of the religious landscape of early Southeast Asia think of themselves as being on the periphery, or as outsiders, looking in. Rather, they knowingly imbued their tirthas and sacred centres with the same authority as those in India and created religious edifices that were on occasions beyond India's experience. I highly commend this publication to anyone with an interest in bringing a wider lens to the study of Indian esoteric religious practices and to understanding the relationship of early Hindu-Buddhist Southeast Asia to the wider Asian world." -- John Guy, Senior Curator of South and Southeast Asian Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York "The Creative South is a rich compendium of scholarship concerning the religious art of Southeast Asia and its ties to India in the period beginning in the 8th century. It was a time when merchants were crisscrossing the seas from India to China and when advocates of innovative doctrines and rituals were finding ready support among the rulers of the varied kingdoms. From the identification of images embraced by the seafarers to the mysteries of the fire shrines in Cambodian temples, from the funerary beliefs of Odisha to the unique character of the Javanese Ramayana, these eighteen studies provide fresh understandings of the patterns of reception and innovation." -- Hiram Woodward, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Quincy Scott Curator of Asian Art Emeritus, The Walters Art Museum

The Oxford Handbook of Buddhist Practice Kevin Trainor 2022 "This Handbook provides a state-of-the-art exploration of several key dynamics in current studies of the Buddhist tradition with a focus on practice. Embodiment, materiality, emotion, and gender shape the way most Buddhists engage with their traditions, in contrast to popular representations of Buddhism as spiritual, disembodied, and largely devoid of ritual. This volume highlights how practice often represents a fluid, dynamic, and strategic means of defining identity and negotiating the challenges of everyday life. Essays explore the transformational aims of practices that require practitioners to move, gesture, and emote in prescribed ways, including the ways that scholars' own embodied practices are integral to their research methodology. The chapters are written by acknowledged experts in their respective subject areas and taken together offer an overview of current thinking in the field. The volume is of particular value to scholars who seek an orientation to current perspectives on important conceptual, theoretical, and methodological concerns that are shaping the field in areas outside their primary expertise. The inclusion of substantial, up-to-date bibliographies also makes the volume an important guide to current scholarship"--

**Into the Twilight of Sanskrit Court Poetry** Jesse Knutson 2014-03-14 At the turn of the twelfth-century into the thirteenth, at the court of King Laksmanasena of Bengal, Sanskrit poetry showed profound and sudden changes: a new social scope made its definitive entrance into high literature. Courtly and pastoral, rural and urban, cosmopolitan and vernacular confronted each other in a commingling of high and low styles. A literary salon in what is now Bangladesh, at the eastern extreme of the nexus of regional courtly cultures that defined the age, seems to have implicitly reformulated its entire literary system in the context of the imminent breakdown of the old courtly world, as Turkish power expanded and redefined the landscape. Through close readings of a little-known corpus of texts from eastern India, this ambitious book demonstrates how a local and rural sensibility came to infuse the cosmopolitan language of Sanskrit, creating a regional literary idiom that would define the emergence of the Bengali language and its literary traditions.

**Indic Manuscript Cultures through the Ages** Vincenzo Vergiani 2017-12-18 This collection of essays explores the history of the book in pre-modern South Asia looking at the production, circulation, fruition and preservation of manuscripts in different areas and across time. Edited by the team of the Cambridge-based Sanskrit Manuscripts Project and including contributions of the researchers who collaborated with

it, it covers a wide range of topics related to South Asian manuscript culture: from the material dimension (palaeography, layout, decoration) and the complicated interactions of manuscripts with printing in late medieval Tibet and in modern Tamil Nadu, to reading, writing, editing and educational practices, from manuscripts as sources for the study of religious, literary and intellectual traditions, to the creation of collections in medieval India and Cambodia (one major centre of the so-called Sanskrit cosmopolis), and the formation of the Cambridge collections in the colonial period. The contributions reflect the variety of idioms, literary genres, religious movements, and social actors (intellectuals, scribes, patrons) of ancient South Asia, as well as the variety of approaches, interests and specialisms of the authors, and their impassioned engagement with manuscripts.

*Material Culture and Asian Religions* Benjamin Fleming 2014-03-26 Traditionally, research on the history of Asian religions has been marked by a bias for literary evidence, privileging canonical texts penned in 'classical' languages. Not only has a focus on literary evidence shaped the dominant narratives about the religious histories of Asia, in both scholarship and popular culture, but it has contributed to the tendency to study different religious traditions in relative isolation from one another. Today, moreover, historical work is often based on modern textual editions and, increasingly, on electronic databases. What may be lost, in the process, is the visceral sense of the text as artifact – as a material object that formed part of a broader material culture, in which the boundaries between religious traditions were sometimes more fluid than canonical literature might suggest. This volume brings together specialists in a variety of Asian cultures to discuss the methodological challenges involved in integrating material evidence for the reconstruction of the religious histories of South, Southeast, Central, and East Asia. By means of specific 'test cases,' the volume explores the importance of considering material and literary evidence in concert. What untold stories do these sources help us to recover? How might they push us to reevaluate historical narratives traditionally told from literary sources? By addressing these questions from the perspectives of different subfields and religious traditions, contributors map out the challenges involved in interpreting different types of data, assessing the problems of interpretation distinct to specific types of material evidence (e.g., coins, temple art, manuscripts, donative inscriptions) and considering the issues raised by the different patterns in the preservation of such evidence in different locales. Special attention is paid to newly-discovered and neglected sources; to our evidence for trade, migration, and inter-regional cultural exchange; and to geographical locales that served as "contact zones" connecting cultures. In addition, the chapters in this volume represent the rich range of religious traditions across Asia – including Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Shinto, and Chinese religions, as well as Islam and eastern Christianities.

**Creating the Universe** Eric Huntington 2019-01-20 Buddhist representations of the cosmos across nearly two thousand years of history in Tibet, Nepal, and India show that cosmology is a rich language for the expression of diverse religious ideas, with cosmological thinking at the center of Buddhist thought, art, and practice. In *Creating the Universe*, Eric Huntington presents examples of visual art and architecture, primary texts, ritual ideologies, and material practices accompanied by extensive explanatory diagrams to reveal the immense complexity of cosmological thinking in Himalayan Buddhism. Employing comparisons across function, medium, culture, and history, he exposes cosmology as a fundamental mode of engagement with numerous aspects of religion, from preliminary lessons to the highest rituals for enlightenment. This wide-ranging work will interest scholars and students of many fields, including Buddhist studies, religious studies, art history, and area studies.

**How to Read Buddhist Art** Kurt Behrendt 2019-11-29 Intended to inspire the devout and provide a focus for religious practice, Buddhist artworks stand at the center of a great religious tradition that swept across Asia during the first millennia. *How to Read Buddhist Art* assembles fifty-four masterpieces from The Met collection to explore how images of the Buddha crossed linguistic and cultural barriers, and how

they took on different (yet remarkably consistent) characteristics in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, the Himalayas, China, Korea, Japan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Cambodia, and Indonesia. Works highlighted in this rich, concise overview include reliquaries, images of the Buddha that attempt to capture his transcendence, diverse bodhisattvas who protect and help the devout on their personal path, and representations of important teachers. The book offers the essential iconographic frameworks needed to understand Buddhist art and practice, helping the reader to appreciate how artists gave form to subtle aspects of the teachings, especially in the sublime expression of the Buddha himself.

**The Yogin and the Madman** Andrew Quintman 2013-11-12 Tibetan biographers began writing Jetsun Milarepa's (1052-1135) life story shortly after his death, initiating a literary tradition that turned the poet and saint into a model of virtuosic Buddhist practice throughout the Himalayan world. Andrew Quintman traces this history and its innovations in narrative and aesthetic representation across four centuries, culminating in a detailed analysis of the genre's most famous example, composed in 1488 by Tsangnyön Heruka, or the "Madman of Western Tibet." Quintman imagines these works as a kind of physical body supplanting the yogin's corporeal relics.

**The Oxford Illustrated History of the Book** James Raven 2020-07-31 In 14 original essays, The Oxford Illustrated History of the Book reveals the history of books in all their various forms, from the ancient world to the digital present. Leading international scholars offer an original and richly illustrated narrative that is global in scope. The history of the book is the history of millions of written, printed, and illustrated texts, their manufacture, distribution, and reception. Here are different types of production, from clay tablets to scrolls, from inscribed codices to printed books, pamphlets, magazines, and newspapers, from written parchment to digital texts. The history of the book is a history of different methods of circulation and dissemination, all dependent on innovations in transport, from coastal and transoceanic shipping to roads, trains, planes and the internet. It is a history of different modes of reading and reception, from learned debate and individual study to public instruction and entertainment. It is a history of manufacture, craftsmanship, dissemination, reading and debate. Yet the history of books is not simply a question of material form, nor indeed of the history of reading and reception. The larger question is of the effect of textual production, distribution and reception - of how books themselves made history. To this end, each chapter of this volume, succinctly bounded by period and geography, offers incisive and stimulating insights into the relationship between books and the story of their times.

**Voicing Subjects** Laura Kunreuther 2014-03-26 Voicing Subjects traces the relation between public speech and notions of personal interiority in Kathmandu. It explores two seemingly distinct formations of voice that have emerged in the midst of the country's recent political and economic upheavals: a political voice associated with civic empowerment and collective agency, and an intimate voice associated with emotional proximity and authentic feeling. Both are produced and circulated through the media, especially through interactive technologies. The author argues that these two formations of voice are mutually constitutive and aligned with modern ideologies of democracy and neoliberal economic projects. This ethnography is set during an extraordinary period in Nepal's history that has seen a relatively peaceful 1990 revolution that re-established democracy, a Maoist civil war, and the massacre of the royal family. These dramatic changes have been accompanied by the proliferation of intimate and political discourse in the expanding public sphere, making the figure of voice ever more critical to an understanding of emerging subjectivity, structural change and cultural mediation.

Material Devotion in a South Indian Poetic World Leah Elizabeth Comeau 2020-03-19 Material Devotion in a South Indian Poetic World contributes new methods for the study and interpretation of material religion found within literary landscapes. The poets of Hindu devotion are known for their intimate celebration of

deities, and while verses over a thousand years old are still treasured, translated, and performed, little attention has been paid to the evocative sensorial worlds referenced by these literary compositions. This book offers a material interpretation of an understudied poem that defined an entire genre of South Asian literature -Tirukkovaiyar-the 9th-century Tamil poem dedicated to Shiva. The poetry of Tamil South India invites travel across real and imagined geography, naming royal patrons, ancient temple towns, and natural landscapes. Leah Elizabeth Comeau locates the materiality of devotion to Shiva in a world unique to the South Indian vernacular and yet captivating to audiences across time, place, and tradition.

**Hindu Pluralism** Elaine M. Fisher 2017-02-24 A free ebook version of this title is available through Luminos, University of California Press's Open Access publishing program. Visit [www.luminosoa.org](http://www.luminosoa.org) to learn more. In *Hindu Pluralism*, Elaine M. Fisher complicates the traditional scholarly narrative of the unification of Hinduism. By calling into question the colonial categories implicit in the term "sectarianism," Fisher's work excavates the pluralistic textures of precolonial Hinduism in the centuries prior to British intervention. Drawing on previously unpublished sources in Sanskrit, Tamil, and Telugu, Fisher argues that the performance of plural religious identities in public space in Indian early modernity paved the way for the emergence of a distinctively non-Western form of religious pluralism. This work provides a critical resource for understanding how Hinduism developed in the early modern period, a crucial era that set the tenor for religion's role in public life in India through the present day.

**Powers of Protection** Gergely Hidas 2021-06-21 This sourcebook explores the most extensive tradition of Buddhist dhāraṇī literature and provides access to the earliest available materials for the first time: a unique palm-leaf bundle from the 12th-13th centuries and a paper manuscript of 1719 CE. The Dhāraṇīsaṃgraha collections have been present in South Asia, and especially in Nepal, for more than eight hundred years and served to supply protection, merit and auspiciousness for those who commissioned their compilation. For modern scholarship, these diverse compendiums are valuable sources of incantations and related texts, many of which survive in Sanskrit only in such manuscripts.

**Democracy against Development** Jeffrey Witsoe 2013-11-05 Hidden behind the much-touted success story of India's emergence as an economic superpower is another, far more complex narrative of the nation's recent history, one in which economic development is frequently countered by profoundly unsettling, and often violent, political movements. In *Democracy against Development*, Jeffrey Witsoe investigates this counter-narrative, uncovering an antagonistic relationship between recent democratic mobilization and development-oriented governance in India. Witsoe looks at the history of colonialism in India and its role in both shaping modern caste identities and linking locally powerful caste groups to state institutions, which has effectively created a postcolonial patronage state. He then looks at the rise of lower-caste politics in one of India's poorest and most populous states, Bihar, showing how this increase in democratic participation has radically threatened the patronage state by systematically weakening its institutions and disrupting its development projects. By depicting democracy and development as they truly are in India—in tension—Witsoe reveals crucial new empirical and theoretical insights about the long-term trajectory of democratization in the larger postcolonial world.

**Garland of Visions** Jinah Kim 2021-02-16 *Garland of Visions* explores the generative relationships between artistic intelligence and tantric vision practices in the construction and circulation of visual knowledge in medieval South Asia. Shifting away from the traditional connoisseur approach, Jinah Kim instead focuses on the materiality of painting: its mediums, its visions, and especially its colors. She argues that the adoption of a special type of manuscript called pothi enabled the material translation of a private and internal experience of "seeing" into a portable device. These mobile and intimate objects then became important conveyors of many forms of knowledge—ritual, artistic, social, scientific, and

religious—and spurred the spread of visual knowledge of Indic Buddhism to distant lands. By taking color as the material link between a vision and its artistic output, *Garland of Visions* presents a fresh approach to the history of Indian painting.

*We Were Adivasis* Megan Moodie 2015-08-20 Anthropologist Megan Moodie examines the Indian state's relationship to 'scheduled tribes', or adivasis - historically oppressed groups that are now entitled to affirmative action quotas in educational and political institutions. Through a deep ethnography of the Dhanka in Jaipur, Moodie brings readers inside the creative imaginative work of these long-marginalised tribal communities.

**Tantric Traditions in Transmission and Translation** David B. Gray 2016-03-14 Tantric traditions in both Buddhism and Hinduism are thriving throughout Asia and in Asian diasporic communities around the world, yet they have been largely ignored by Western scholars until now. This collection of original essays fills this gap by examining the ways in which Tantric Buddhist traditions have changed over time and distance as they have spread across cultural boundaries in Asia. The book is divided into three sections dedicated to South Asia, Central Asia, and East Asia. The essays cover such topics as the changing ideal of masculinity in Buddhist literature, the controversy triggered by the transmission of the Indian Buddhist deity Heruka to Tibet in the 10th century, and the evolution of a Chinese Buddhist Tantric tradition in the form of the True Buddha School. The book as a whole addresses complex and contested categories in the field of religious studies, including the concept of syncretism and the various ways that the change and transformation of religious traditions can be described and articulated. The authors, leading scholars in Tantric studies, draw on a wide array of methodologies from the fields of history, anthropology, art history, and sociology. *Tantric Traditions in Transmission and Translation* is groundbreaking in its attempt to look past religious, linguistic, and cultural boundaries.

*Polemics and Patronage in the City of Victory* Valerie Stoker 2016-09-30 A free ebook version of this title is available through Luminos, University of California Press's Open Access publishing program for monographs. Visit [www.luminosoa.org](http://www.luminosoa.org) to learn more. How did the patronage activities of India's Vijayanagara Empire (c. 1346–1565) influence Hindu sectarian identities? Although the empire has been commonly viewed as a Hindu bulwark against Islamic incursion from the north or as a religiously ecumenical state, Valerie Stoker argues that the Vijayanagara court was selective in its patronage of religious institutions. To understand the dynamic interaction between religious and royal institutions in this period, she focuses on the career of the Hindu intellectual and monastic leader Vyasaṭirtha. An agent of the state and a powerful religious authority, Vyasaṭirtha played an important role in expanding the empire's economic and social networks. By examining his polemics against rival sects in the context of his work for the empire, Stoker provides a remarkably nuanced picture of the relationship between religious identity and sociopolitical reality under Vijayanagara rule.

*Modernizing Composition* Garrett Field 2017-03-22 A free ebook version of this title is available through Luminos, University of California Press's Open Access publishing program. Visit [www.luminosoa.org](http://www.luminosoa.org) to learn more. The study of South Asian music falls under the purview of ethnomusicology, whereas that of South Asian literature falls under South Asian studies. As a consequence of this academic separation, scholars rarely take notice of connections between South Asian song and poetry. *Modernizing Composition* overcomes this disciplinary fragmentation by examining the history of Sinhala-language song and poetry in twentieth-century Sri Lanka. Garrett Field describes how songwriters and poets modernized song and poetry in response to colonial and postcolonial formations. The story of this modernization is significant in that it shifts focus from India's relationship to the West to little-studied connections between Sri Lanka and North India.

*The Archaeology of Early Medieval and Medieval South Asia* Swadhin Sen 2022-11-30 This book looks at the ways in which archaeological methods have been used in debates concerning the early medieval and medieval periods in South Asia. Despite the incorporation and use of archaeological data to corroborate historical narratives, the theories and methods of archaeology are largely ignored in and excluded from the dominating, institutionalized, and hegemonic disciplinary discourses. The volume offers contesting insights, polemical narratives, and new data from archaeological contexts to initiate a debate on many foundational premises of archaeological and historical narratives. It focuses on the much-neglected region of the Eastern Ganga-Brahmaputra Basin as a spatial frame to do this and studies themes such as spatial and temporal scales of concepts and methods, multi-scaler factors and processes of continuity and changes, the settlement archaeology of the alluvial landscape, changing patterns of agrarian transformation, and material cultures, including coins, inscriptions, pottery, and sculptures, in their contexts in sub-regional, regional, and supra-regional intersections. Dedicated to historian Brajadulal Chattopadhyaya, this volume presents a crucial and unprecedented intervention in the study of the early medieval and the medieval periods. It will be useful for scholars and researchers of archaeology, ancient history, medieval history, water history, earth sciences, palaeoecology, historical ecology, epigraphy, art history, material culture studies, Indian history, and South Asian studies in general.

Receptacle of the Sacred Jinah Kim 2013-04-12 In considering medieval illustrated Buddhist manuscripts as sacred objects of cultic innovation, *Receptacle of the Sacred* explores how and why the South Asian Buddhist book-cult has survived for almost two millennia to the present. A book "manuscript" should be understood as a form of sacred space: a temple in microcosm, not only imbued with divine presence but also layered with the memories of many generations of users. Jinah Kim argues that illustrating a manuscript with Buddhist imagery not only empowered it as a three-dimensional sacred object, but also made it a suitable tool for the spiritual transformation of medieval Indian practitioners. Through a detailed historical analysis of Sanskrit colophons on patronage, production, and use of illustrated manuscripts, she suggests that while Buddhism's disappearance in eastern India was a slow and gradual process, the Buddhist book-cult played an important role in sustaining its identity. In addition, by examining the physical traces left by later Nepalese users and the contemporary ritual use of the book in Nepal, Kim shows how human agency was critical in perpetuating and intensifying the potency of a manuscript as a sacred object throughout time.

**Culture of Encounters** Audrey Truschke 2016-03-01 *Culture of Encounters* documents the fascinating exchange between the Persian-speaking Islamic elite of the Mughal Empire and traditional Sanskrit scholars, which engendered a dynamic idea of Mughal rule essential to the empire's survival. This history begins with the invitation of Brahman and Jain intellectuals to King Akbar's court in the 1560s, then details the numerous Mughal-backed texts they and their Mughal interlocutors produced under emperors Akbar, Jahangir (1605–1627), and Shah Jahan (1628–1658). Many works, including Sanskrit epics and historical texts, were translated into Persian, elevating the political position of Brahmans and Jains and cultivating a voracious appetite for Indian writings throughout the Mughal world. The first book to read these Sanskrit and Persian works in tandem, *Culture of Encounters* recasts the Mughal Empire as a polyglot polity that collaborated with its Indian subjects to envision its sovereignty. The work also reframes the development of Brahman and Jain communities under Mughal rule, which coalesced around carefully selected, politically salient memories of imperial interaction. Along with its groundbreaking findings, *Culture of Encounters* certifies the critical role of the sociology of empire in building the Mughal polity, which came to irrevocably shape the literary and ruling cultures of early modern India.

The Monastery Rules Berthe Jansen 2018-10-23 A free ebook version of this title is available through Luminos, University of California Press's Open Access publishing program. Visit [www.luminosoa.org](http://www.luminosoa.org) to

learn more. The Monastery Rules discusses the position of the monasteries in pre-1950s Tibetan Buddhist societies and how that position was informed by the far-reaching relationship of monastic Buddhism with Tibetan society, economy, law, and culture. Jansen focuses her study on monastic guidelines, or *bca' yig*. The first study of its kind to examine the genre in detail, the book contains an exploration of its parallels in other Buddhist cultures, its connection to the Vinaya, and its value as socio-historical source-material. The guidelines are witness to certain socio-economic changes, while also containing rules that aim to change the monastery in order to preserve it. Jansen argues that the monastic institutions' influence on society was maintained not merely due to prevailing power-relations, but also because of certain deep-rooted Buddhist beliefs.

**Merchants of Virtue** Divya Cherian 2022 Power -- Purity -- Hierarchy -- Discipline -- Non-harm -- Austerity -- Chastity.

*The Hegemony of Heritage* Deborah L. Stein 2018-05-11 A free ebook version of this title is available through Luminos, University of California Press's Open Access publishing program. Visit [www.luminosoa.org](http://www.luminosoa.org) to learn more. The *Hegemony of Heritage* makes an original and significant contribution to our understanding of how the relationship of architectural objects and societies to the built environment changes over time. Studying two surviving medieval monuments in southern Rajasthan—the Ambika Temple in Jagat and the Ékalingji Temple Complex in Kailaspuri—the author looks beyond their divergent sectarian affiliations and patronage structures to underscore many aspects of common practice. This book offers new and extremely valuable insights into these important monuments, illuminating the entangled politics of antiquity and revealing whether a monument's ritual record is affirmed as continuous and hence hoary or dismissed as discontinuous or reinvented through various strategies. The *Hegemony of Heritage* enriches theoretical constructs with ethnographic description and asks us to reexamine notions such as archive and text through the filter of sculpture and mantra.

Questioning the Buddha Peter Skilling 2021-08-17 An important new book unlocking the words of the Buddha contained in the vast Tibetan canon, one of the main scriptural resources of Buddhism. In the forty-five years the Buddha spent traversing northern India, he shared his wisdom with everyone from beggar women to kings. Hundreds of his discourses, or sutras, were preserved by his followers, first orally and later in written form. Around thirteen hundred years after the Buddha's enlightenment, the sutras were translated into the Tibetan language, where they have been preserved ever since. To date, only a fraction of these have been made available in English. *Questioning the Buddha* brings the reader directly into the literary treasure of the Tibetan canon with thoroughly annotated translations of twenty-five different sutras. Often these texts, many translated here in full for the first time, begin with an encounter in which someone poses a question to the Buddha. Peter Skilling, an authority on early Buddhist epigraphy, archaeology, and textual traditions, has been immersed in the Buddhist scriptures of diverse traditions for nearly half a century. In this volume, he draws on his deep and extensive research to render these ancient teachings in a fresh and precise language. His introduction is a fascinating history of the Buddhist sutras, including the transition from oral to written form, the rise of Mahayana literature, the transmission to Tibet, the development of canons, and a look at some of the pioneers of sutra study in the West. Sutras included in this volume are: Four Dharmas Not to Be Taken for Granted; The Benefits of Giving; The Exposition of Four Dharmas; The Merit of the Three Refuges; Four Dharmas Never to Be Abandoned; Advice for Bodhisatva Dharmaketu; Advice for Bodhisatva Jayamati; Sutra Comparing Bodhicitta to Gold; Bodhisatva Maitreya's Question about the Gift of the Dharma; Four Summaries of the Dharma Spoken to the Naga King Sagara; The Stanza of Dependent Arising; The Heart Formula of Dependent Arising; Prediction of the Boy Brahmasri's Future Buddhahood; Ksemavati's

Prediction to Future Buddhahood; The City Beggar Woman; An Old Woman's Questions about Birth and Death; The Questions of Srimati the Brahman Woman; The Questions of the Laywoman Gangottara; Brahma Sahampati's Question; Advice to King Prasenajit; Passage to the Next Life; Instructions for King Bimbisara; Instructions for King Udayana; Buddhas as Rare as a Grain of Golden Sand; and Predictions on the Eve of the Great Final Nirvana.

*Cut-Pieces* Lotte Hoek 2013-11-19 Imagine watching an action film in a small-town cinema hall in Bangladesh, and in between the gun battles and fistfights a short pornographic clip appears. This is known as a cut-piece, a strip of locally made celluloid pornography surreptitiously spliced into the reels of action films in Bangladesh. Exploring the shadowy world of these clips and their place in South Asian film culture, Lotte Hoek builds a rare, detailed portrait of the production, consumption, and cinematic pleasures of stray celluloid. Hoek's innovative ethnography plots the making and reception of *Mintu the Murderer* (2005, pseud.), a popular, Bangladeshi B-quality action movie and fascinating embodiment of the cut-piece phenomenon. She begins with the early scriptwriting phase and concludes with multiple screenings in remote Bangladeshi cinema halls, following the cut-pieces as they appear and disappear from the film, destabilizing its form, generating controversy, and titillating audiences. Hoek's work shines an unusual light on Bangladesh's state-owned film industry and popular practices of the obscene. She also reframes conceptual approaches to South Asian cinema and film culture, drawing on media anthropology to decode the cultural contradictions of Bangladesh since the 1990s.

**The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Religion** Hephzibah Israel 2022-12-19 The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Religion is the first to bring together an extensive interdisciplinary engagement with the multiple ways in which the concepts and practices of translation and religion intersect. The book engages a number of scholarly disciplines in conversation with each other, including the study of translation and interpreting, religion, philosophy, anthropology, history, art history, and area studies. A range of leading international specialists critically engage with changing understandings of the key categories 'translation' and 'religion' as discursive constructs, thus contributing to the development of a new field of academic study, translation and religion. The twenty-eight contributions, divided into six parts, analyze how translation constructs ideas, texts or objects as 'sacred' or for 'religious purposes', often in competition with what is categorized as 'non-religious.' The part played by faith communities is treated as integral to analyses of the role of translation in religion. It investigates how or why translation functions in re-constructing and transforming religion(s) and for whom and examines a range of 'sacred texts' in translation—from the written to the spoken, manuscript to print, paper to digital, architectural form to objects of sacred art, intersemiotic scriptural texts, and where commentary, exegesis and translation interweave. This Handbook is an indispensable scholarly resource for researchers in translation studies and the study of religions.

*Writing Self, Writing Empire* Rajeev Kinra 2015-09-22 A free ebook version of this title is available through Luminos, University of California Press's new open access publishing program for monographs. Visit [www.luminosoa.org](http://www.luminosoa.org) to learn more. *Writing Self, Writing Empire* examines the life, career, and writings of the Mughal state secretary, or munshi, Chandar Bhan "Brahman" (d. c.1670), one of the great Indo-Persian poets and prose stylists of early modern South Asia. Chandar Bhan's life spanned the reigns of four different emperors, Akbar (1556-1605), Jahangir (1605-1627), Shah Jahan (1628-1658), and Aurangzeb 'Alamgir (1658-1707), the last of the "Great Mughals" whose courts dominated the culture and politics of the subcontinent at the height of the empire's power, territorial reach, and global influence. As a high-caste Hindu who worked for a series of Muslim monarchs and other officials, forming powerful friendships along the way, Chandar Bhan's experience bears vivid testimony to the pluralistic atmosphere of the Mughal court, particularly during the reign of Shah Jahan, the celebrated builder of the

Taj Mahal. But his widely circulated and emulated works also touch on a range of topics central to our understanding of the court's literary, mystical, administrative, and ethical cultures, while his letters and autobiographical writings provide tantalizing examples of early modern Indo-Persian modes of self-fashioning. Chandar Bhan's oeuvre is a valuable window onto a crucial, though surprisingly neglected, period of Mughal cultural and political history.