

Special Issue

Preserving the Master's Word: Rituals and Protective Accessories for Sacred Scriptures in the Himalayan Culture

Message from the Guest Editor

This Special Issue aims to explore one of the receptacles of the Buddha, namely the Buddha's word, represented by books.

Since the Buddha's Parinirvāṇa, books have represented His Teachings; in these, the Truth is revealed to disciples and believers, and they are therefore considered to be sacred. The use of books for daily practice requires their prior consecration, which is performed in both Buddhist and Bon religious traditions. Such rituals also ensure the protection of scriptures, so that books can be preserved as long as possible. The various elements that constitute a manuscript or a xylograph, from punctuation marks to book covers, and from sacred syllables to illuminations, are specifically designed to safeguard scriptures as 'protective accessories'.

The scope of this Special Issue includes, but is not limited to, the following topics: Buddhist and Bon manuscripts and xylographs produced in the Tibetan, Indian, Nepalese and Bhutanese cultural sphere; philological, historical, religious and literary research on rituals associated with book and book production; art-history; codicology; materiality; paleography; and book conservation.

Guest Editor

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Fresh developments in the disciplines that consistently make significant contributions to our understanding of religious personality, authority, devotion, and community – disciplines ranging from psychology, sociology, and anthropology to history, art history, philosophy, literary criticism, and political science – fuel general, as well as scholarly, interest in the world's religions.

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