

Special Issue

Interlacing Networks: Aspects of Medieval Japanese Religion

Message from the Guest Editors

The focus of this Special Issue is on medieval Japanese religion. Although Kamakura “new” Buddhist schools are usually taken as unquestioned landmarks of the medieval religious landscape, it is necessary to add complexity to this static picture in order to grasp the dynamic and hybrid character of the religious practices and theories that were produced during this historical period. This Special Issue will shed light on the diversity of medieval Japanese religion by adopting a wide range of analytical approaches, encompassing various fields of knowledge such as history, philosophy, materiality, literature, medical studies and body theories. Its purpose is to expand the interpretative boundaries of medieval Japanese religion beyond Buddhism by emphasizing the importance of mountain asceticism (Shugendō), Yin and Yang (Onmyōdō) rituals, medical and soteriological practices, combinatory paradigms between local gods and Buddhist deities (medieval “Shintō”), hagiographies, religious cartography, confluences between performative arts and medieval “Shintō” mythologies, and material culture.

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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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