



Sacred Matters: Material Religion in South Asian Traditions

Tracy Pintchman, Associate Professor of Religious Studies Corinne G Dempsey

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Explores how objects shape the worlds of religious participants across a range of South Asian traditions.

Sacred Matters explores the lives of material objects in South Asian religions. Spanning a range of traditions including Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Buddhism, and Christianity, the book demonstrates how sacred items influence and enliven the worlds of religious participants across South Asia and into the diaspora.

Contributors examine a variety of objects to describe the ways sacred materials derive and confer meaning and efficacy, emerging from and giving shape to religious and nonreligious realms alike. Material forms of deity and divine power are considered along with commonplace ritual items, including images, clay pots, and camphor. The work also attends to materiality's complex role within the "materially suspicious" contexts of Islam, Theravada Buddhism, and Roman Catholicism. This engaging collection presents new frameworks for contemplating the ways in which historical, social, and sacred processes intertwine and collectively shape human and divine activity.

Tracy Pintchman is Professor of Religious Studies and Director of the International Studies Program at Loyola University Chicago. Her books include *The Rise of the Goddess in the Hindu Tradition* and *Guests at God's Wedding: Celebrating Kartik among the Women of Benares*, both published by SUNY Press.

Corinne G. Dempsey is Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Nazareth College. She is the author of *Bringing the Sacred Down to Earth: Adventures in Comparative Religion* and *The Goddess Lives in Upstate New York: Breaking Convention and Making Home at a North American Hindu Temple*.

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