Narrative Visions and Visual Narratives in Indian Buddhism

Edited by Naomi Appleton

“This entire volume is a noteworthy contribution, remarkable in its thoughtful approach to the diverse relationships between textual/oral storytelling practices and visual narratives.”

Catherine Becker, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Art History, University of Illinois at Chicago, USA

“A brilliant synthesis that is sure to appeal to a wide cross-section of scholars and will no doubt be cited many times in the years to come.”

Andy Rotman, Sydenham Clark Parsons Professor and Professor of Religion, Buddhist Studies, and South Asian Studies, Smith College, USA

This volume explores the interaction between text and image in Indian Buddhist contexts, including not only the complex relationship between verbal stories and visual representations at Indian sites, but also the ways in which visual imagery is used within textual narratives. The chapters are authored by textual scholars and art historians, bringing together different disciplinary perspectives to seek a richer understanding of how text and art relate, and of the role of narrative imagery in different media and contexts.

The book opens with an introduction that explores what narratives and visual narratives are, and why we might want to study narrative images alongside imagery-rich literary narratives. The volume is then divided into three parts that explore visual depictions of stories in their own right, the relationship between specific visual and verbal narratives, and investigate how visual imagery and visualisation work in textual narratives.

Narrative Visions and Visual Narratives in Indian Buddhism bridges the divide between textual scholars and art historians, and challenges the contributors to think beyond the usual boundaries of their work.

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Naomi Appleton is Senior Lecturer in Asian Religions at the University of Edinburgh. She is author of Jātaka Stories in Theravāda Buddhism (Ashgate 2010), Narrating Karma and Rebirth (CUP 2014), and Shared Characters in Jain, Buddhist and Hindu Narrative (Routledge 2017).

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