

The Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC)
announces a Lecture
by
Prof. Dr. Nalini Balbir
University of Paris-3 Sorbonne Nouvelle

**An Exemplary Manuscript Culture in India :
the Case of the Jains – Ideas and Objects**

The Jains form one of the oldest communities in India. They are divided into monks and nuns, on the one hand, and layfollowers on the other hand. Mendicants lead a wandering life, except during the rainy-season, and depend on layfollowers for their subsistence. Jain teachings have been first transmitted orally (in the 6th-5th c. BCE) were put to writing in the 5th c. CE (according to the Śvetāmbara tradition). The first manuscripts available to us, however, are not earlier than the 11th c. but from this period onward we have ample evidence that manuscript culture became a central concern of the Jains. Statements by Jain ideologues as well as manuscript colophons clearly show how commissioning manuscripts became an integral part of Jain ethics and a social marker. This was even more so when manuscripts were richly decorated with paintings. Making use of several examples of Jain manuscripts preserved both in European and Indian collections, this lecture will try to present the wealth of this heritage and understand its underlying concepts.



Thursday, 4 June 2015 at 6 pm
Room 0001, CSMC

Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC)