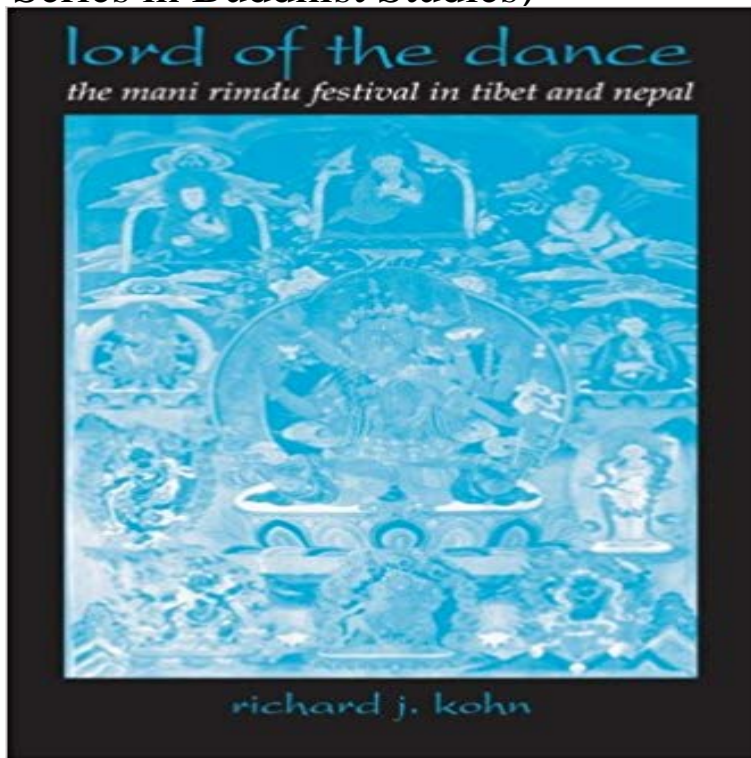


# Lord of the Dance: The Mani Rimdu Festival in Tibet and Nepal (SUNY Series in Buddhist Studies)



A first-hand description of the Mani Rimdu festival of Tibet and Nepal, an event which encapsulates the Himalayan Buddhist experience. Richard Kohn's book transports the reader to the high Himalayas for an in-depth look at the inner workings of the three-week long Mani Rimdu festival. This event encapsulates the breadth and depth of the Himalayan Buddhist experience, from the profound practices of Great Perfection meditation to the worship of the gods of the neighboring mountains. The festival uses archaic material as well as prayers written by contemporary lamas, and it entails the preparation of numerous works of ritual art such as mandalas constructed of colored sand and sculptures of barley flour and colored butter called tormas. Two days of public performance, a day of spiritual empowerment, and a day of masked dance complete the festival. A description of Mani Rimdu from beginning to end, *Lord of the Dance* goes on to consider the structure of Tibetan ritual and its place within the history of South and Central Asian religions. In addition, the author discusses ritual as an art form and analyses the transformation of a textual tradition into performance art. Through the small window of the Himalayan festival, the book overlooks the vast horizon of the Buddhist experience. The great contribution of this work lies in its almost unparalleled comprehensiveness. Kohn has left us with a legacy of admirably disciplined and impassioned research on an ill-understood aspect of Tibetan religious culture. It stands as an excellent reference work and point of departure for further study. *Journal of the American Oriental Society* *Lord of the Dance* presents a wonderful mass of observed detail woven together with an emphasis on the Tibetans' lived experience of underlying dynamics and rationales. The detail not only concerns the performance of the ritual, but also the participation and role of the wider circles

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