



PROANTIC
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Antique Poth Puskola Sri Lanka Ceylon Theravada Buddhist Sutra Manuscript

480 EUR

Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Other



Description

A Puskola poth Ceylonese Buddhist sutra manuscript with traditionally decorated painted wood covers.

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INFORMATIONPeriod - 19th century or

earlierCondition - Good conditionMeasurements -

Width 34 cmSOLD WITH A CERTIFICATE OF

AUTHENTICITY

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methods are available please ask. Writing
on ola leaves

Buddhist texts were documented in 'puskola'
- ola or talipot leaves. The
practice of writing on ola leaves continues to
this day although it's not

widely practised. Until recent times
horoscopes were written on ola leaves
mainly to be preserved for several
generations. They were rolled up and
kept.

The material for preparing the writing leaf is
taken from young unopened tender
leaves from young trees. When the tender
leaf is about to open, it is cut and
taken off and slit open. Then the leaflets
within are separated and taken out
one by one. The midribs are removed and
the strips of leaf blades in rolls are
immersed in a pot filled with cold water. The
vessel is placed over a slow fire
till the water is gradually raised to boiling
point. The heat is then reduced
and the leaves are allowed to simmer in
water for three or four hours. The
leaves are later taken out and dried for a few
days in the sun. This is
followed by the exposure of the leaf in the
open air to the dew for three
nights for the leaf to be supple.

These leaves are rolled and kept until they
are put through a process of
smoothing and finishing. For this, each leaf
is taken out and a weight is
attached to one of the ends. It is then pulled
up and down against the smooth
surface of a horizontal cylinder of wood.
Normally the trunk of an areca palm
is used tied to two posts at a convenient
height.

The leaf blades are cut into lengths ranging
from nine to 32 inches and formed
into book leaves. The width of each is two to
three inches. Using a steel punch
two holes are punched and filed together by
passing pegs through each of the
holes and through wooden boards on either

side.

The writing on a palm leaf is done with an 'ulkatuva' - a stylus having a steel point. It is sharpened from time to time on an oiled stone. The lines forming letters are incised on the surface of the leaf. The stylus is made of metal such as gold, silver, copper or brass. Some are plain while some are ornamented.

Once a book is completed the leaves and the covers are strung together with a cord which passes through the punch holes on the left side of the leaves and the boards. A 'puskola potha' is thus born.

Invariably the Buddhist texts written on ola leaves are preserved in temples.

The 'pirith potha' is one such text which is brought out whenever there is an all-night chanting of the stanza. In Sri Lanka, Sinhalese is both a spoken language of the Sinhalese people and a writing system in which one may also write in Sanskrit and Pali; indeed, Pali is a common language found in Sinhalese manuscripts.

While palm leaf manuscripts are used for all sorts of works, from the Pali-Sinhalese medical treatise Yogaratnakara to the Ramayana, Sinhalese palm leaf manuscripts are particularly famous for their importance in preserving texts of Theravada Buddhism, including sutras and histories.