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Tibetan bronze sculptures studies with neutrons – impact to history and art market

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It has been shown by many important studies that neutrons can very efficiently be used to investigate cultural heritage object in a non-invasive way [1, 2]. Neutrons provide alternative and complementary contrast features compared to the more common X-rays. In particular, the higher penetration of metals and the high sensitivity for light elements make neutron imaging applications attractive for samples with a metallic cover and an organic content.

This is particularly valid for Buddhist bronze objects, which contain a sacred assembly of ritual materials like bones, flowers, wooden pillars or textiles. Although this kind of filling is practiced until today, the tradition goes back about a thousand years. Such old objects can be found in museums and collections and have historical and cultural, but also commercial values on the art market.

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