

Divine Stories Divyavadana

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the divyavadana is an enormous compendium of indian buddhist narratives written in sanskrit from the early centuries of the
common era whose stories have since spread throughout asia as both narrative and narrative art leaving an indelible mark on

buddhist thought and practice the stories in the collection were frequently used in the education of both monastics and laity in premodern asia exerting a powerful influence as moral exempla and legal precedent and they were considered by many to be the word of the buddha himself these stories were likewise canonical in their influence on buddhist art representations of these stories can be found across asia from kizil in china to sanchi in india to borobudur in indonesia it is not hyperbole to say that these are some of the most influential stories in the history of buddhism the stories presented here among the first texts to be inscribed by buddhists highlight the moral economy of karma illustrating how gestures of faith especially offerings can bring the reward of future happiness and ultimately liberation

explore this second volume of translations in vivid prose from one of the most celebrated collections of ancient buddhist stories actions never come to naught even after hundreds of millions of years when the right conditions gather and the time is right then they will have their effect on embodied beings ancient buddhist literature is filled with tales of past lives the buddha surrounded by his followers is asked how it came to be that a certain person has met a particular fate with his omniscience the buddha looks into eons past and uncovers the events that led to the present outcome and foretells the future as well with stories of wicked wives patricidal princes and shape shifting serpents divine stories offers a fascinating illustration of the law of karma the truth that the power of good and bad deeds is never lost these are some of the oldest buddhist tales ever committed to writing illuminating the culture of northern india in the early centuries of the common era and bringing to life the buddhist values of generosity and faith andy rotman's evocative translation combines accuracy with readability with detailed editorial notes comparing readings in various sanskrit pali and tibetan sources divine stories is a major contribution to indian and buddhist studies

divine stories is the inaugural volume in a landmark translation series devoted to making the wealth of classical indian buddhism accessible to modern readers the stories here among the first texts to be inscribed by buddhists highlight the moral economy of karma illustrating how gestures of faith especially offerings can bring the reward of future happiness and ultimate liberation originally contained in the divyavadana an enormous compendium of sanskrit buddhist narratives from the early common era the stories in this collection express the moral and ethical impulses of indian buddhist thought and are a testament to the historical

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although buddhism is often depicted as a religion of meditators and philosophers some of the earliest writings extant in india offer a very different portrait of the buddhist practitioner in indian buddhist narratives from the early centuries of the common era most lay religious practice consists not of reading praying or meditating but of visually engaging with certain kinds of objects these visual practices moreover are represented as the primary means of cultivating faith a necessary precondition for proceeding along the buddhist spiritual path in thus have i seen visualizing faith in early indian buddhism andy rotman examines these visual practices and how they function as a kind of skeleton key for opening up buddhist conceptualizations about the world and the ways it should be navigated rotman s analysis is based primarily on stories from the divyavadana divine stories one of the most important collections of ancient buddhist narratives from india though discourses of the buddha are well known for their opening words thus have i heard for buddhist teachings were first preserved and transmitted orally the divyavadana presents a very different model for disseminating the buddhist dharma devotees are enjoined to look not just hear and visual legacies and lineages are shown to trump their oral counterparts as rotman makes clear this configuration of the visual fundamentally transforms the world of the buddhist practitioner changing what one sees what one believes and what one does

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description divyavadana is a quite voluminous book written in mixed sanskrit and belonging to the school of the sarvastivadh

buddhists the main emphasis in the text is on the buddhist concept of karma and the consequent result phala religiosity and charity have been consciously stressed by the author authors of the text to increase the interaction between the laity and the monastic establishments being a student of buddhist philosophy as well as history the author has tried to study the text from various angles with a multidisciplinary approach some questions have been raised for further research work the work hopefully will benefit the students of buddhist studies particularly for the study of changes in thought as well as in religious perception that took place in different buddhist schools it will also help the students of ancient indian history as the text is replete with information on the socio economic political and religious ideas and institutions of india during the first few centuries of the christian era

taking a comparative approach which considers characters that are shared across the narrative traditions of early indian religions brahmanical hinduism jainism and buddhism shared characters in jain buddhist and hindu narrative explores key religious and social ideals as well as points of contact dialogue and contention between different worldviews the book focuses on three types of character gods heroes and kings that are of particular importance to early south asian narrative traditions because of their relevance to the concerns of the day such as the role of deities the qualities of a true hero or good ruler and the tension between worldly responsibilities and the pursuit of liberation characters including character roles and lineages of characters that are shared between traditions reveal both a common narrative heritage and important differences in worldview and ideology that are developed in interaction with other worldviews and ideologies of the day as such this study sheds light on an important period of indian religious history and will be essential reading for scholars and postgraduate students working on early south asian religious or narrative traditions jain buddhist and hindu as well as being of interest more widely in the fields of religious studies classical indology asian studies and literary studies

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