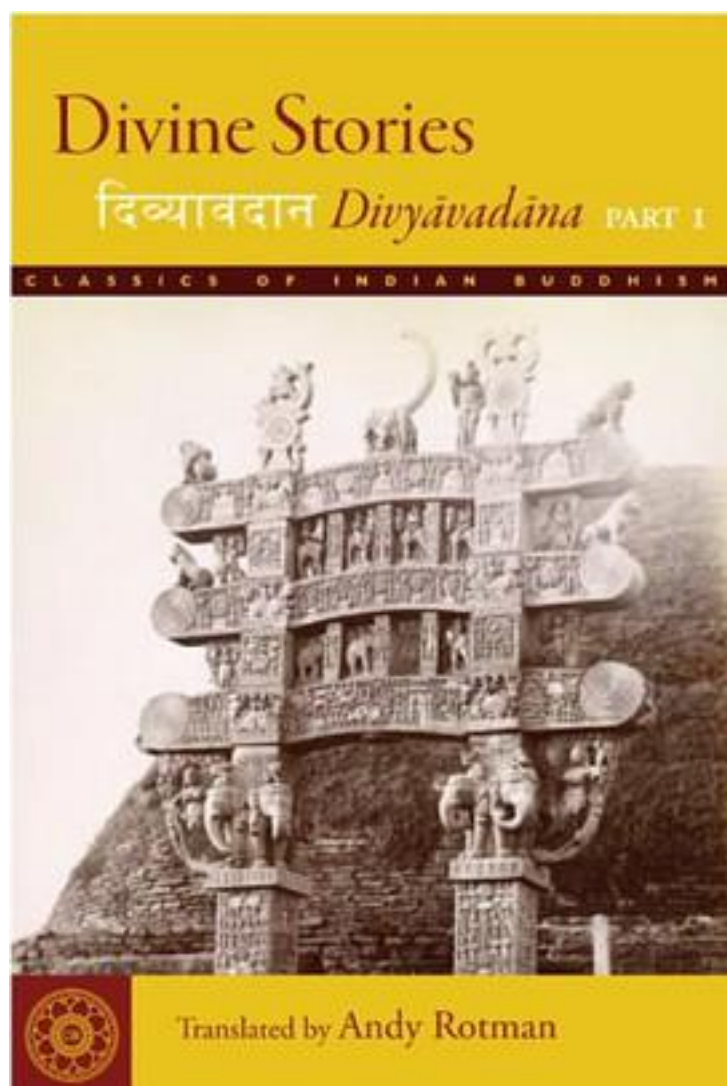


Divine Stories



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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.

作者介绍:

Andy Rotman is an associate professor in the Religion Department at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts. He received his Ph.D. in South Asian languages and civilizations from the University of Chicago in 2003. His research concerns the ways in which narratives and images in South Asia function as a part of social history and material culture.

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