



Signs from the Unseen Realm: Buddhist Miracle Tales from Early Medieval China (Classics in East Asian Buddhism)

Robert Ford Campany

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In early medieval China hundreds of Buddhist miracle texts were circulated, inaugurating a trend that would continue for centuries. Each tale recounted extraordinary events involving Chinese persons and places—events seen as verifying claims made in Buddhist scriptures, demonstrating the reality of karmic retribution, or confirming the efficacy of Buddhist devotional practices. Robert Ford Campany, one of North America's preeminent scholars of Chinese religion, presents in this volume the first complete, annotated translation, with in-depth commentary, of the largest extant collection of miracle tales from the early medieval period, Wang Yan's *Records of Signs from the Unseen Realm*, compiled around 490 C.E.

In addition to the translation, Campany provides a substantial study of the text and its author in their historical and religious settings. He shows how these lively tales helped integrate Buddhism into Chinese society at the same time that they served as platforms for religious contestation and persuasion. Campany offers a nuanced, clear methodological discussion of how such narratives, being products of social memory, may be read as valuable evidence for the history of religion and culture.

Readers interested in Buddhism; historians of Chinese religions, culture, society, and literature; scholars of comparative religion: All will find *Signs from the Unseen Realm* a stimulating and rich contribution to scholarship.



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