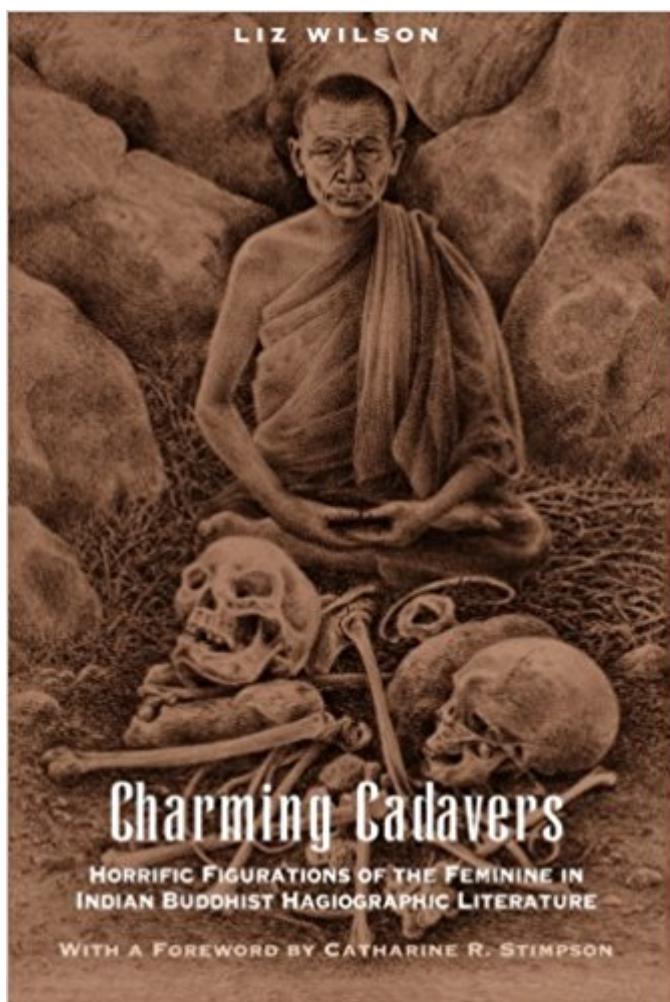


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Charming Cadavers: Horrific Figurations Of The Feminine In Indian Buddhist Hagiographic Literature (Women In Culture And Society)



Synopsis

In this highly original study of sexuality, desire, the body, and women, Liz Wilson investigates first-millennium Buddhist notions of spirituality. She argues that despite the marginal role women played in monastic life, they occupied a very conspicuous place in Buddhist hagiographic literature. In narratives used for the edification of Buddhist monks, women's bodies in decay (diseased, dying, and afterdeath) served as a central object for meditation, inspiring spiritual growth through sexual abstention and repulsion in the immediate world. Taking up a set of universal concerns connected with the representation of women, Wilson displays the pervasiveness of androcentrism in Buddhist literature and practice. She also makes persuasive use of recent historical work on the religious lives of women in medieval Christianity, finding common ground in the role of miraculous afflictions. This lively and readable study brings provocative new tools and insights to the study of women in religious life.

Book Information

Series: Women in Culture and Society

Paperback: 276 pages

Publisher: University Of Chicago Press (December 1, 1996)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0226900541

ISBN-13: 978-0226900544

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.7 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 2 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #531,997 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #99 in Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Religious Studies > Buddhism #1617 in Books > Textbooks > Social Sciences > Gender Studies #2004 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Worship & Devotion > Devotionals

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I recommend this book to anyone, esp. American women who are interested in studying Buddhism for any reason. It's informative, and it stirs the curiosity of anyone who has had thoughts of the impermanence of life and lust. She's a really gutsy writer, and though this book takes an open, and intelligent mind to understand, I believe anyone with at least a high school education will be able to

follow it down the winding paths of ancient Buddhism. Enjoy!

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