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Sommario/riassunto	The issue of saints is a difficult and complicated problem in buddhology. This study is the first comprehensive examination of the figure of the Buddhist saint in a wide range of Indian Buddhist evidence. Drawing on an extensive variety of sources, Ray seeks to identify the prototypical Buddhist saint as a "renunciant of the forest." This classical type, Ray argues, provides the presupposition for, and informs the different major Buddhist saintly types and subtypes, including the buddha, pratyekabuddha, arhant, and bodhisattva.

Discussing the nature, dynamics, and history of Buddhist hagiography, Ray surveys the ascetic codes, conventions, and traditions of Buddhist saints, and the cults both of living saints and of those who have "passed beyond." He traces the role of the saints in Indian Buddhist history, particularly at the times of Buddhist origins and the formation of the Mahayana.
